



Metro Vancouver's Cycling Advocates

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VACC Input to Stanley Park Cycling Master Plan

The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition works toward getting more people cycling through education, encouragement and advocacy.

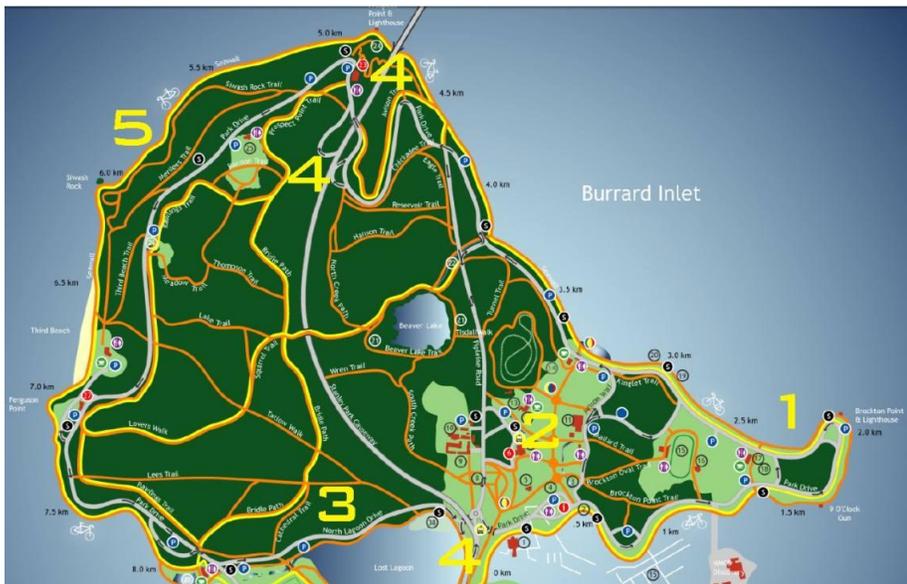
We are very pleased that the Vancouver Parks Board is in the process of creating a cycling master plan for Stanley Park. We see cycling opportunities as an essential component of recreation and transportation in Stanley Park. Riding on the seawall path around Stanley Park is an incredible experience for tourists and locals alike. Cycling on the trails is also a nice way to experience the natural beauty of Stanley Park. However there are many challenges facing cyclists in Stanley Park and improving the cycling infrastructure would greatly enhance the enjoyment of visitors to the park. Furthermore, by creating safe cycling facilities to destinations like the Aquarium and by creating safe and shorter return routes for cyclists, more people will access destinations like the Aquarium by bike, thereby reducing car traffic in the park.

Enhancements to the bike routes and bike flow in Stanley Park.

As input to the Stanley Park Cycling Master Plan, the VACC Vancouver/UBC Chapter would like to present some ideas and concerns. These ideas relate to

- A) The desirability of some shorter return paths for seawall cyclists.
- B) Some general issues with the accessibility of Stanley Park for bikes.
- C) Park access to/from Lions Gate Bridge

The numbers in the map refer to the subsequent proposals.



VACC Vancouver/UBC, Stanley Park Proposals, 2011.09.30

A) Bike flow through Stanley Park: Possible shorter return paths for seawall cyclists.

When one enters the Seawall route from either Second Beach or from the base of the causeway at Lost Lagoon, one can only bike (or skate) counter clockwise in order to return to the point from which one started. There are, however, some attractions that one can access without having the intention to proceed all the way around the park. These cases are:

1 — Brockton Point and the Totem Poles.

We would like to see it possible to be able to go back directly from here to the Park entrance at Georgia Street. One could follow the Beaver Lake and Lovers Walk trails, however there is no safe way to access this trail without riding on a road with traffic. Return is also possible via Pipeline Road but this road does not even have bike lanes.

.There are many options for a return path, and we list two possible options:

- a) Create a two way separated path on or parallel to Pipeline Road.
- b) Widen the Seawall Path to be a two way path between park entrance and the Aquarium.

2 — Vancouver Aquarium.

There is currently no way to access the Aquarium by bike without riding with traffic on Avison Road or walking one's bike on a walking path. Even then, there is no safe way to return to the city without either walking one's bike on a walking path or riding all the way around the Stanley Park seawall. At a minimum, a two-way cycling path should be built on or parallel to the Avison road. For a shorter return path, one could use one of the two options described above.

3 — Connecting Second Beach and the beginning of the Stanley Park Drive at the roundabout.

It would be an enhancement to be able to connect these points with a two-way bike path along Lost Lagoon Road. The current road is somewhat over-dimensioned for the amount of traffic (one lane used to be reserved for a bus), and is, except at Second Beach, wide enough. The best option would be to install a physical separation between bikes and motor vehicles..



<<-- The start of
Lost Lagoon Drive
at Second Beach;
Here the road is
somewhat
narrower.

At the causeway,
Another challenge
-->>



B) Accessibility.

4 — Along the Causeway.



<<-- Going North
(uphill) or going
South (downhill)
-->>
creates some less
intuitively flowing
bike lanes that
also do not offer a
good view of
traffic coming up
from behind.



We understand that the causeway may be MOTI responsibility, but add this paragraph for completeness. The existing exits for drivers who want to turn off the causeway into the park are somewhat awkward for cyclists. In order to negotiate the exits via the sidewalk dropdowns, one has to move partly out of sight of traffic coming from the rear, thus losing sight of this traffic. The exit going south, away from the Lion's Gate Bridge, is especially problematic. A slightly extended slip road and a partially raised crossing in line with the overall flow of the bikepath/sidewalk could be a solution. Such a treatment would also immediately reduce the speed of cars to 'park speed'.

Another challenge for cyclists is cycling between the causeway paths and the pedestrian cycling overpass at mid-causeway. These cycling connections are of very poor quality and should be improved.

5 — Along the Seawall.

The views from the Stanley Park seawall path are world-class, but unfortunately the path itself should be upgraded so that tourists and locals can enjoy a world-class cycling experience. The path is too narrow for the heavy summertime traffic and often cyclists and pedestrians are confused as to which path is which. The path needs to be widened and more signage or stencils installed in order to indicate the proper path for pedestrians and cyclists. A safe and convenient return path should be provided for those who do not wish to cycle completely around the park.

6 — Throughout the Park.

There are situations where a cycling path meets a roadway, but there is no dropdown to allow cyclists to transition to the roadway. One example is shown in the picture on the right, where the path would allow easy access from park entrance to Park drive, but there is no dropdown.

We appreciate the installation of map boards throughout the park as these make way finding easier. However way finding is still an issue for cyclists. Way finding signage indicating which paths are suitable for cycling would be a great enhancement.



Going onto Stanley Park Road, bypassing the roundabout.

C) Park access to/from Lions Gate Bridge.

Cyclists frequently wish to enjoy a ride in the park while travelling between Vancouver and North Vancouver via the Lions Gate Bridge. There are many cyclists who are intimidated by the speeding traffic with no barriers from traffic and little space on the sidewalk for both pedestrians and cyclists on the causeway. The preferred trails are the Reservoir Trail and Hanson Trail, however access to these trails is problematic, especially for cyclists travelling in a southerly direction. Also, these trails are not currently listed as cycling trails. For cyclists heading southbound, the Reservoir Trail can be accessed in several ways, none of which work very well:

- a) Cyclist could take the road connection from the Causeway to Park Drive, however the connecting road is quite narrow. A bike lane on this connecting road would be very desirable. To access points east, a cyclist would have to use one of the two paths over the causeway overpass.
 - Using the north path, a cyclist could take Avison Trail but there is currently only an informal trail connecting Avison Trail to Park Drive near the entrance to the Reservoir Trail. If the sidewalk path on the overpass could be widened and the informal connecting path to Reservoir Trail could be improved, then this would be a useable option.
 - Cyclists could take the south sidewalk over the causeway overpass and then take the sidewalk path counterflow with traffic to the Reservoir Trail. The path would need to be widened to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.
- b) Cyclists could take the path under Lions Gate Bridge and proceed counterflow on the causeway path toward Reservoir Trail. The causeway path would need to be widened to accommodate bi-directional cycling traffic.

For cyclists heading north, access to the reservoir trail is a bit problematic, since the roadway is one way southbound at the Reservoir trailhead. A counter flow path for cyclists would be very welcome at this location so that access via Pipeline Road could be improved..

In the interest of pedestrian safety, it would be best to make the Reservoir Trail a cycling only trail while making the Hanson Trail a shared pedestrian/cycling path.

For cyclists entering the park from the south end of the Lions Gate Bridge, it would be helpful to have a map board placed at the point where the park access road meets Park Drive, just west of the causeway overpass.

Conclusion.

Improved cycling infrastructure in Stanley Park will:

- Improve the safety for cyclists and walkers.
- Provide more real choice of transportation modes.
- Reduce car traffic in the park, thereby reducing noise and pollution.
- Provide a world-class cycling experience.

We look forward to the creation and implementation of a Stanley Park Master Plan.