



June 24, 2013

Mayor and Council
City of North Vancouver
141 West 14th Street
North Vancouver, BC
V7M 1H9

Chesterfield Avenue Cycling Improvement Project (4th – 13th Street)

Dear Mayor and Council,

The HUB North Shore Committee would like to thank Dragana Mitic, Manager, Transportation and Stephen Blore, Transportation Planner, from the City of North Vancouver, for their presentation of the proposed Chesterfield Avenue Cycling Improvements, at our June 6th, 2013 meeting. We appreciate the City soliciting feedback and recommendations from the HUB North Shore Committee.

We strongly support improving cycling facilities on Chesterfield Avenue. Chesterfield Avenue has been identified in the North Vancouver Bicycle Master Plan for over 10 years. It is a direct route to the SeaBus, as well as a conduit to the 17th, 13th, 4th Street, Esplanade and Spirit Trail cycling routes. It is a major route in the bike network on the North Shore and deserves a commensurate design. Unfortunately, the current proposals do not meet these criteria. Please consider the following recommendations from HUB so that the City encourage and support cycling on the part of all of its citizens.

Feedback on Options Presented

The three options presented for Chesterfield Avenue fall short of the City's stated priorities for active transportation modes and the objectives of the North Vancouver Bicycle Master Plan.

The Long-Term Transportation Plan (2008) states that the City's priority transportation modes are walking, cycling, transit and goods movement. The North Vancouver Bicycle Master Plan (2012) identifies the following goals for cycling:

#1: Establish a Bicycle Network that Strengthens Community Connections and Improves Safety

#2: Promote Cycling as a Key Part of a Sustainable Transportation System

To achieve the goals of the City's Long-Term Transportation Plan and the North Vancouver Bicycle Master Plan, cycling infrastructure design must consider the needs of cyclists of **all ages and abilities**. This means that on an arterial street with relatively high traffic volumes like Chesterfield Avenue,



cycling facilities should be physically separated from vehicle traffic.

Option 1: “Separated” Northbound Lane (shared lane downhill, painted bike lane uphill, no separation from traffic)

This option is only a small improvement from existing conditions. Shared lanes are acceptable as infrastructure for all ages and abilities only on quiet, traffic-calmed streets. The uphill painted bike lane next to parked cars offers no separation from the much faster-moving car traffic and it is not suitable for all ages and abilities cycling.

Option 2: “Separated” Bike Lanes (painted bike lanes both ways, no separation from traffic)

We strongly recommend against the design of the southbound bike lane in this option. Southbound (downhill-moving) cyclists would travel in the door zone of parked cars. At the potentially high rates of speed cyclists will travel down Chesterfield Avenue, it would be extremely difficult for cyclists to stop if a car door was to unexpectedly open. Even if a cyclist is able to swerve around a car door, they are likely to collide with a car in the vehicle travel lane. As in Option 1, the uphill painted bike lane next to parked cars offers no separation from the much faster-moving car traffic.

Option 3: Off-Road Shared Path (uphill only separation from traffic, shared lane downhill)

We do not support this option. We are concerned that an off-road shared pathway on the west (northbound) side will create too many pedestrian-cyclist conflicts. In particular, this option may result in cyclists using the path for southbound (downhill) trips to avoid riding in car traffic, resulting in an increased risk of collisions with pedestrians and other cyclists, and with cars at intersections.

Bike Routes for All Ages and Abilities

To provide the highest return on investment and attract the most users, bike routes should provide convenient and efficient transportation while being suitable for all ages and abilities.

While we acknowledge that painted bike lanes on major streets like Chesterfield Avenue improve cycling safety as compared to no cycling facilities at all, according to numerous research studies most people are unlikely to ride a bike on arterial streets unless there is a physical separation between cars and bikes.

This is apparent on Chesterfield Avenue itself, where we regularly see people riding on the sidewalk below 4th Street where painted bike lanes currently exist.

The Chesterfield Cycling Improvement Project presents an opportunity to provide cycling facilities separated from both motor vehicles and pedestrians (i.e. cycle tracks). The physical barrier between the cycle track and the vehicle lane could consist of parked cars, a raised curb, planter boxes, a planted buffer, or bollards -- designed to fit and enhance the streetscape.



Arterial Streets that are Designated Bike Routes

Chesterfield Avenue is an arterial street, an emergency response route and a designated bike route in the Bicycle Master Plan. The design of the street should be based on the street designation, which is primarily traffic movement (cars, bikes and emergency vehicles).

Given the space limitations on Chesterfield Avenue, on-street parking may need to be removed to allow for the needs of all users.

We understand that one of the concerns with removing parking along Chesterfield Avenue is that there are sections of residential permit parking along this street. A resident permit parking bylaw based on zones instead of on blocks would allow residents to retain the option to park on streets near their home. We suggest that the City consider zone-based resident permit parking so that arterial streets can be better designed for their intended uses.

Conclusion

The City can only achieve the goals of the Bicycle Master Plan by ensuring that the “average” person is able to ride safely and comfortably to destinations throughout North Vancouver. This means that on an arterial street with relatively high vehicle traffic volumes like Chesterfield Avenue, cycling facilities should be physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Given the space limitations on Chesterfield Avenue, on-street parking may need to be removed on one side of the street to allow for separated cycle facilities.

We look forward to the revised designs for the Chesterfield Cycling Improvement Project.

Sincerely,

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