



October 29, 2019

Canisius Chan
Senior Transportation Planning Engineer
City of Coquitlam
3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC V3B 7N2

Dear Canisius;

Re: United Blvd Connection Between Central Valley Greenway and Port Mann Bridge

HUB Cycling is a charitable organization that works to make cycling better through education, events and collaboration. HUB believes that cycling creates healthier, happier and more connected communities.

The purpose of this letter is to emphasize the importance of the City of Coquitlam connecting the critical gap between the Central Valley Greenway (CVG) and the Port Mann Bridge. As discussed more below, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) has recently recognized the importance of this gap by applying their new Evaluation Framework to determine possible solutions for the portion within the City of Coquitlam, and now is the opportunity to close this gap. This gap is depicted in Figure 1 below, in red:

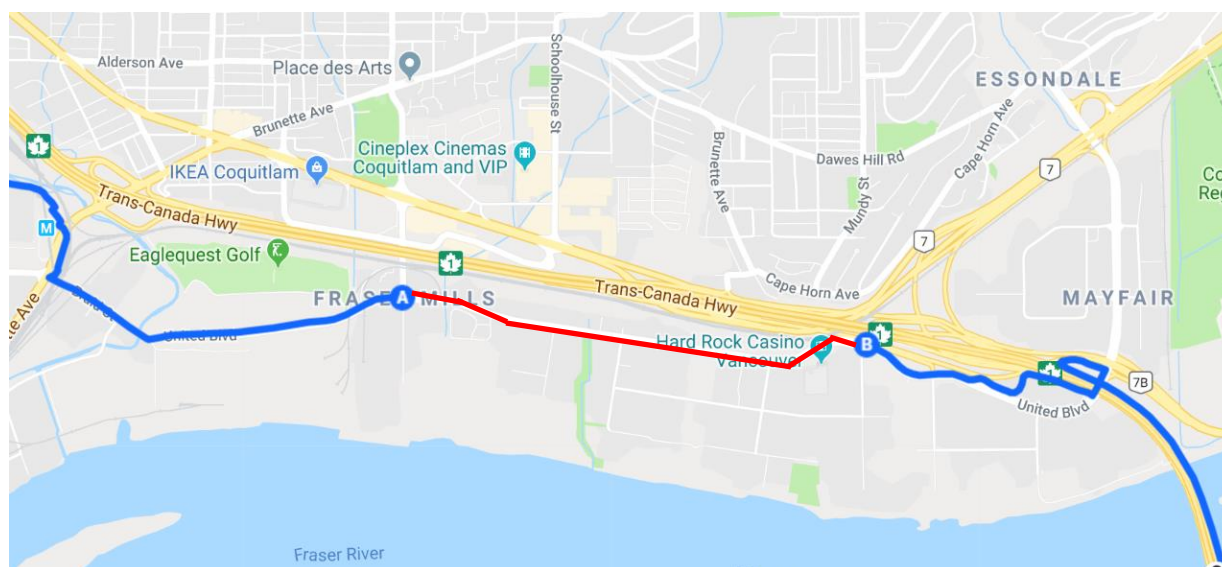


Figure 1 - Gap along United Boulevard

A connection along this route is critical for safe and convenient access from Surrey and North Delta to Coquitlam, Burnaby, New Westminister and Vancouver. With upcoming improvements to the Central

Valley Greenway path through New Westminster, related to the Sapperton Green development, even more people will be wanting to connect through this area to the Port Mann Bridge.

Completing this connection will enable both residents and visitors in this region to maximize the benefit of cycling investments in this region. The Central Valley Greenway, Port Mann Bridge path and the PoCo Trail represent an investment of around \$100 million in cycling and walking. Great progress has also been made in building cycling routes along United west of Fraser Mills.

The gap along United also critically disrupts Translink's proposed Major Bike Network, which is depicted in Figure 2, below.

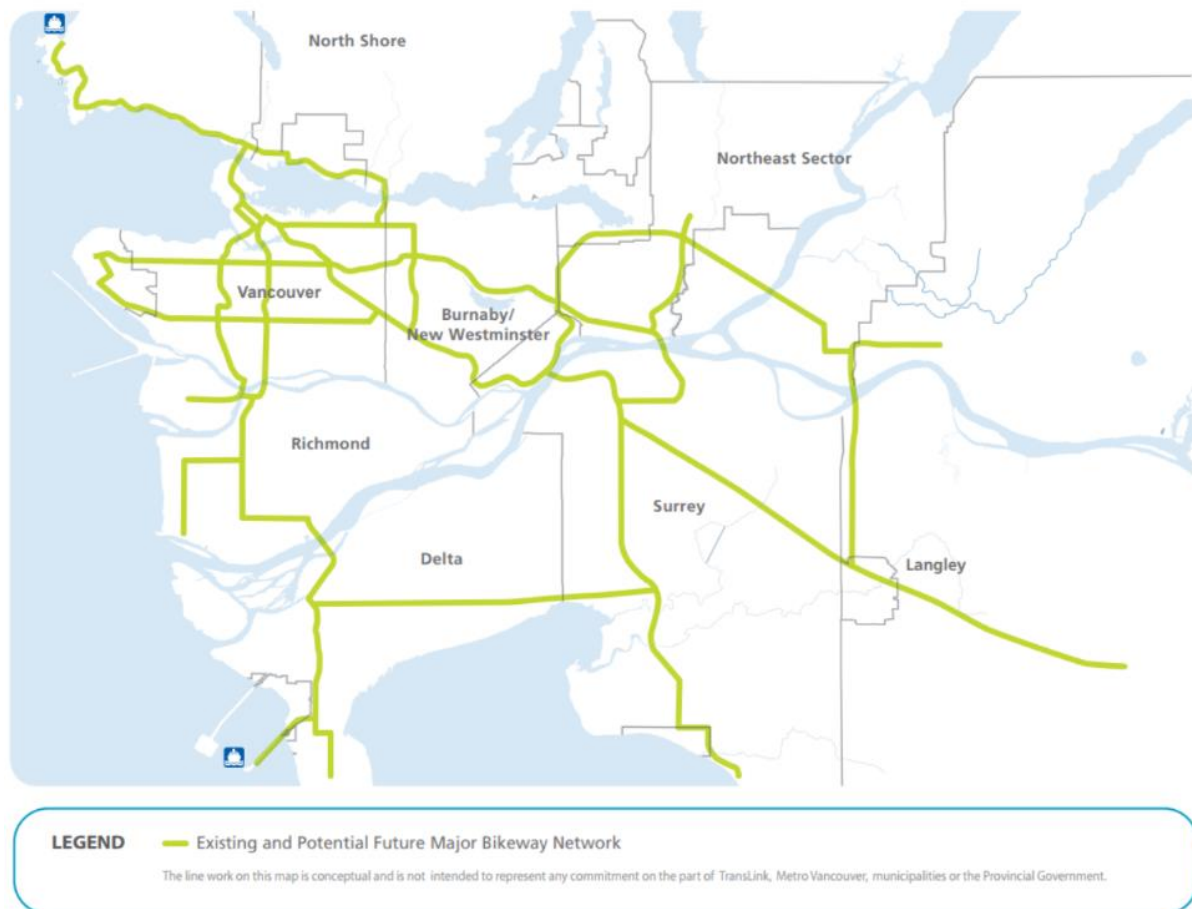


Figure 2 - Translink Major Bikeway Network

The City's Current Connection

Currently the City's partial connection for this gap is a route along Fawcett and Hartley and Brigantine, as shown in Figure 3:

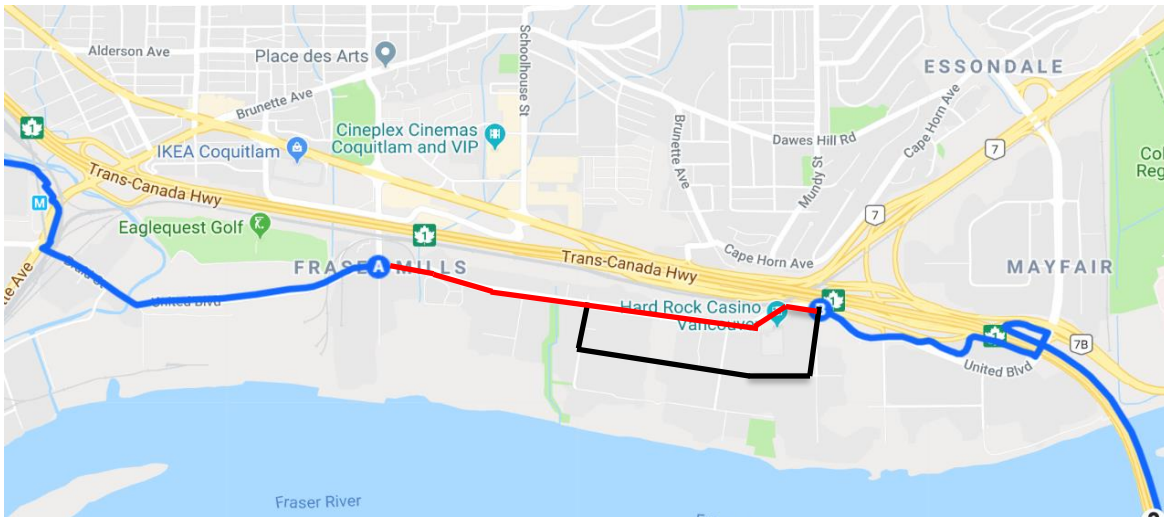


Figure 3 - Current partial connection along Fawcett, Hartley, and Brigantine, in black

This route is neither safe nor convenient for those wishing to cycle. Specifically, this route:

- forces people cycling to cross busy United Boulevard twice, increasing both the risk of collision and travel times;
- is around 900m longer, increasing travel times and risk of collision;
- forces people cycling to cross United at Fawcett which is a truck exit from Highway 1 - this intersection has not been designed for safe and convenient crossing on bicycle;
- is not intuitive, such that many first-time tourist riders likely travel down United Boulevard or its sidewalks;
- forces people cycling to use Fawcett and Hartley and Brigantine, streets in an industrial area with significant truck turning movements increasing the risk injury to people cycling – as shown in Figure 4, on Brigantine facing north:



Figure 4 - Truck traffic on Brigantine facing north

Most importantly, the current connection does not connect the gap, but returns people cycling west back to United without a continuing bike route. This leaves people cycling to choose between the sidewalk or a congested high-speed lane on United, with a high volume of large trucks, as shown in Figure 5 facing westward:



Figure 5 - Traffic on United Boulevard facing west

This route is not attractive to people cycling. It is through an industrial area, so it is especially unattractive to people cycling for recreation and touring. As well, due to the turns, visitors not familiar with the area may not be able to find the route.

HUB Cycling's Proposed Route

Our proposed route is simply to construct safe cycling facilities continuously on United, as follows in green. We support specifically a northside separated multi-use pathway (MUP) along this route, to match the existing multi-use paths at either end of the gap:

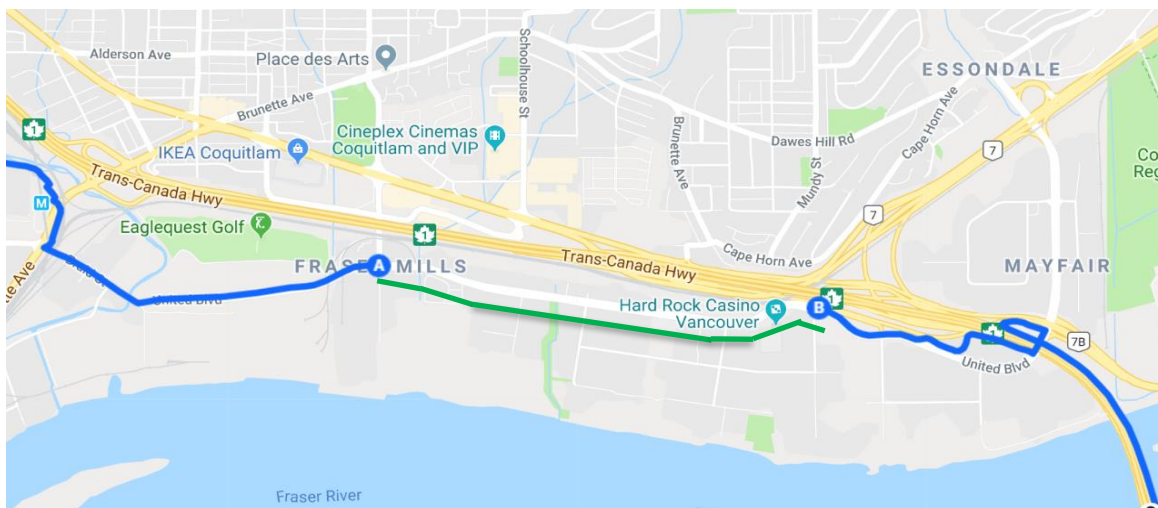


Figure 6 - Proposed route along United Boulevard

This direct connection would provide a critical linkage between the following locations:

- Central Valley Greenway/Braid Skytrain;
- New King Edward Overpass and associated cycling facilities accommodating the Maillardville Community and people on the north side of the highways and tracks;
- Port Mann bridge and associated cycling facilities, with connections to Surrey;
- Traboulay Poco Trail in Port Coquitlam with connections to Pitt Meadows via the Pitt River Bridge;
- Colony Farm and points north;
- Downtown Port Coquitlam and Coquitlam Town Centre.

This route is:

- Direct and obvious and
- Could be safely separated from traffic and requires no crossing of roads making it much safer and more comfortable for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

MoTI Recommends this Route as the Best Long-Term Option

In a recent MoTI study entitled, *Metro Vancouver Regional Cycling Connections Study* (April 12, 2019), MoTI recognized the importance of this gap and identified and ranked several possible options. One of the options assessed was the option we propose here (called option “3W” in the *Study*).

The *Study* assessed the following options:



Figure 7 - Route Options evaluated by MoTI

Regarding “3W”, MoTI identified the opportunities and constraints in Figure 8. Note specifically that, as stated in this table, Translink supported reducing the road widths to create this route, but the City of Coquitlam had not. Note also that MoTI notes that a median can be removed, and left turn bays maintained.

MoTI also provided concept drawings for a Multi Use Path along the north side of United Boulevard, as shown in figures 9-11.

<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Constraints</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most direct and legible route from a user perspective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires significant upgrades to United Blvd to make it comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to create new cycling infrastructure along United Blvd. that is comfortable for people of all ages and abilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are several driveways along the south side of United Blvd.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If an overpass at Blue Mountain Road is built, it will change the Brunette interchange which will have unknown impacts to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are several overlapping easements on the north side of the corridor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to improve connection to the Central Valley Greenway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is projected to be increased truck traffic in this area due to the relocation and future capacity of the new transfer station.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial modelling by TransLink suggests that there may be excess vehicular capacity on United Blvd. and that the road could be narrowed to accommodate a new multi-use pathway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City of Coquitlam has indicated that it is not supportive of reducing the width of travel lanes at this time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TransLink has identified it would be supportive of reducing widths of travel lanes to 3.3m or 3.2m; however, the City of Coquitlam has not indicated that it would be supportive of these modifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of left-turn bays would likely require more detailed review to assess impacts to Major Road Network capacity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It may be possible to conduct roadway modifications to remove the concrete median, but maintain the left turn bays through roadway striping. This would provide an opportunity for further reallocation of roadway space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modifying existing Statutory Right-of-Ways to permit Multi-use pathway construction would require sign off from each of the affected property owners, and may require the City to provide compensation to those owners (because property rights are changing). From experience, it can take up to a year to negotiate with property owners to alter the conditions on their land.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TransLink Major Road Network Operations and Maintenance funding might be able to be used to support the upkeep of cycling facilities. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West of 1315 United, the road right-of-way widens, and there are no Statutory Right-of-Ways fronting United Blvd. A northside multi-use pathway would be achievable west of 1315 United Blvd. 	

Figure 8 - MoTI Connections Study - opportunities and constraints along United Boulevard

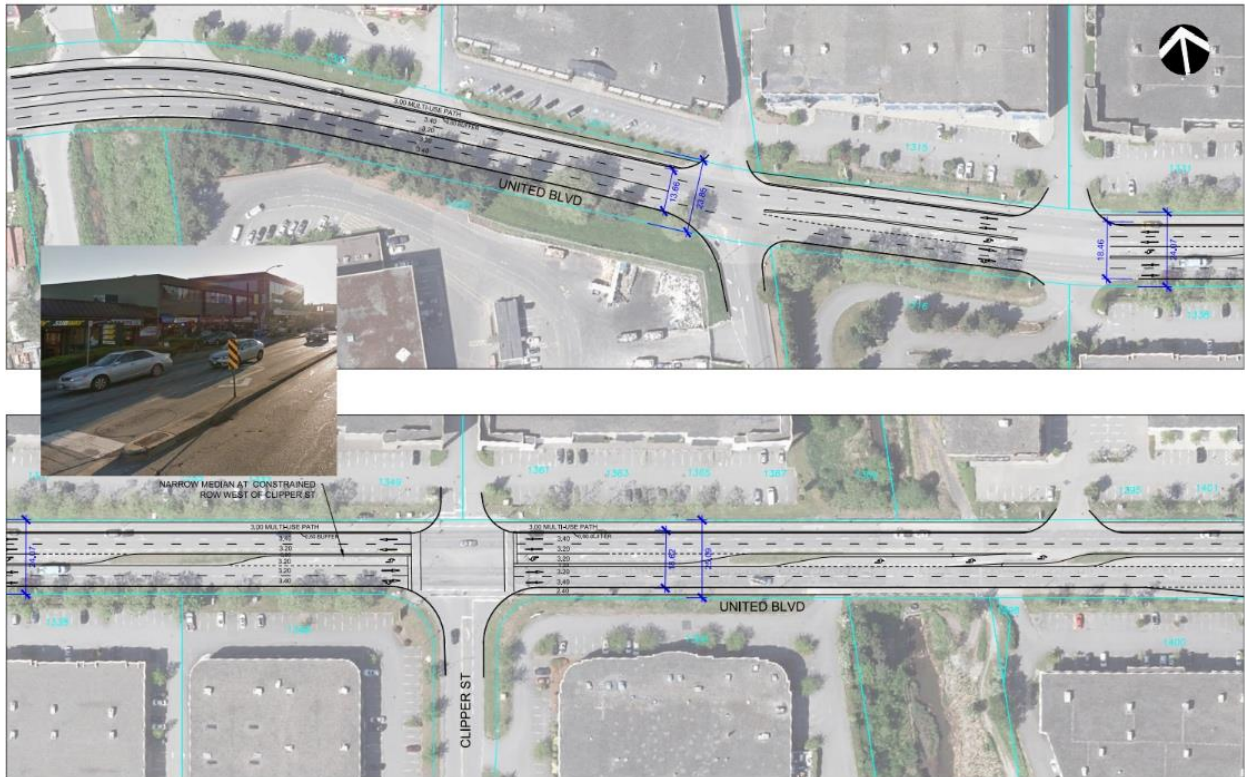


Figure 9 - United Boulevard North Side MUP Concept Drawings

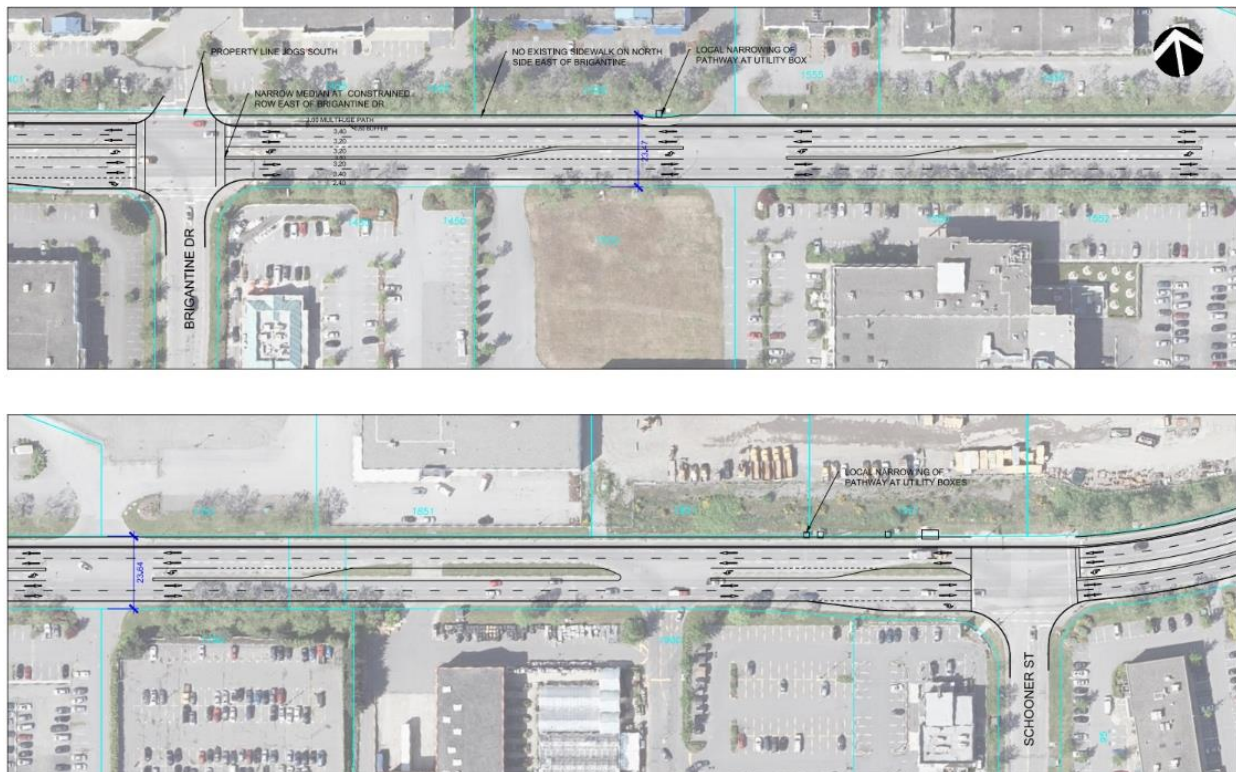


Figure 10 - United Boulevard North Side MUP Concept Drawings

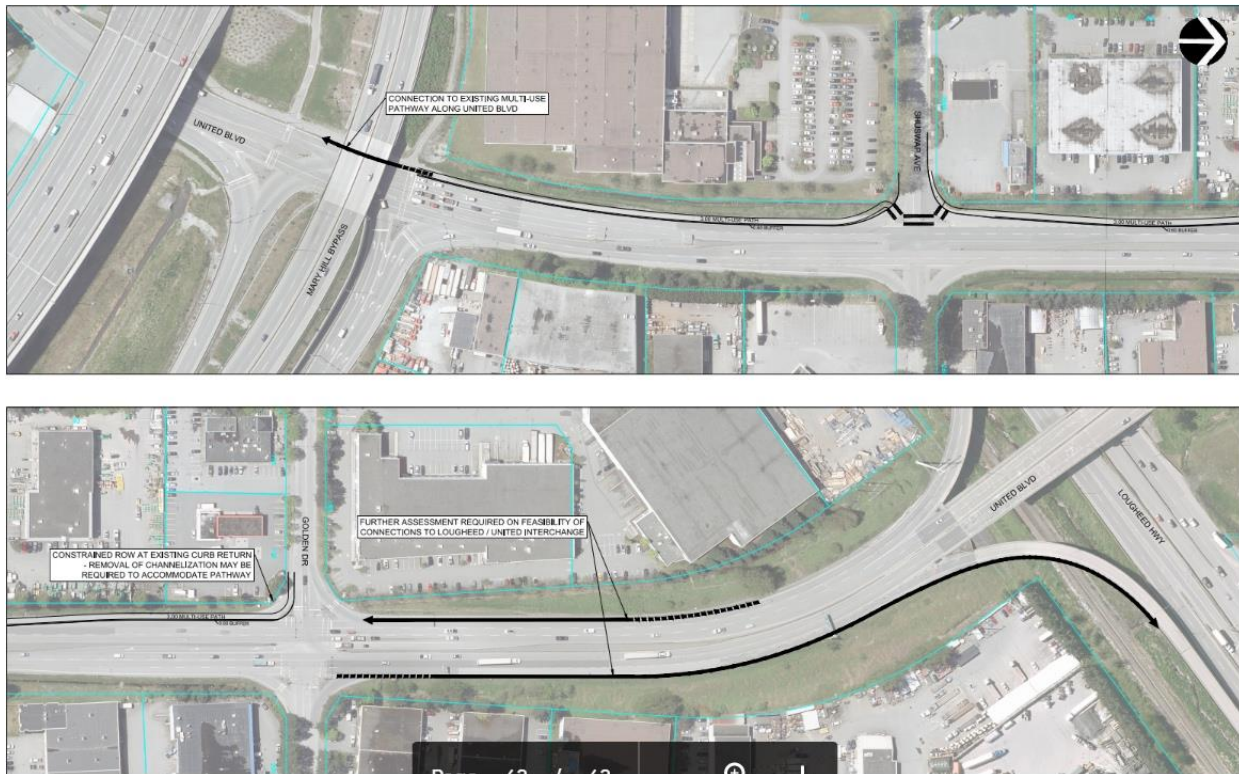


Figure 11 - United Boulevard North Side MUP Concept Drawings

The *Study* recommends 3W as the best long-term option. The following is a quote from the *Study*:

Recommended Alignment (Long-Term):

Option 3W

Preliminary traffic analysis and design suggest that a new multi-use pathway along route Option 3W for the length of United Boulevard could be accommodated. This option also provides the greatest connections to businesses and jobs along the route which aligns it with the TransLink goal of connecting key regional destinations.

The City of Coquitlam's new transfer station is anticipated to increase truck traffic on United Boulevard.

The Ministry should continue negotiations and consider conducting additional traffic modelling under an increased traffic scenario along United Boulevard.

A preliminary design for a new multi-use pathway was developed for United Boulevard and is included in Appendix C.

Suggested Next Steps:

1. Conduct additional traffic analysis to review the impacts of increased truck traffic along United Boulevard that could accompany the new transfer station

2. Further discussion required with City of Coquitlam and TransLink to confirm design criteria, including recommendations on reduced lane widths.
3. Explore options for a new multi-use pathway on the north side of United Blvd

Potential Funding Sources

When the Port Mann Bridge was constructed, MoTI provided funding to the City of Surrey for the construction of connecting routes on Surrey property. While that offer was available to the City of Coquitlam, it was not taken up. We recommend that MoTI be approached and asked to support closing this gap, with work to be led by the City of Coquitlam. There has been additional funding made available for qualifying projects, relating to the BC Active Transportation Strategy. Translink also has funding available for cost sharing with municipalities. Given this analysis from MoTI, and the apparent support from Translink, now is the time for the City of Coquitlam to begin planning work on this work. HUB Cycling commits to work to support your funding requests from other levels of government, in consideration of the importance of closing this gap.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss closing this critical gap in the cycling network.

Sincerely,

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