

Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Ride Report

September 2022

To: Kevin Quinn, Matt Craig, Shezana Hassko, Rex Hodgson

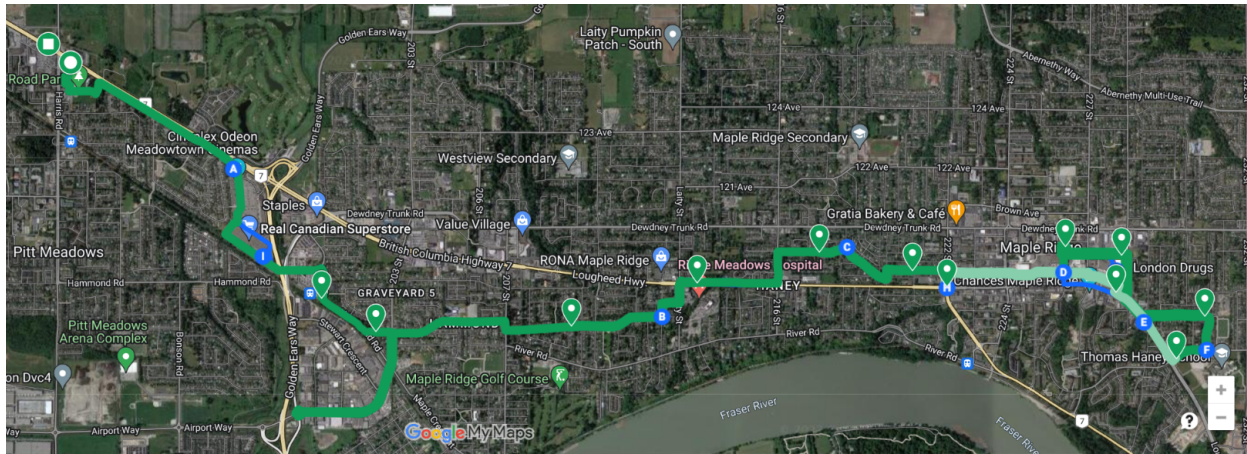
On your journey from Coquitlam to Pitt Meadows, you may have noticed the different infrastructure sections on this MBN corridor - there is some decent BICCS funded infrastructure there, as well as significant gaps, particularly from Westwood through to Oxford, which is a big pinch point, literally squeezing anyone cycling between a curb and highway speed traffic, in the same lane. Alternatives are significant detours that force you onto unpaved, unlit trails to cross the river. The current local bike routes meander through Port Coquitlam, and add at least 20 minutes, with inadequate wayfinding along the route. This presents an **opportunity for BRT-related cycle highway construction through Port Coquitlam**. The existing cycle highway segment from the Pitt River Bridge to the Meadowtown Mall shows that a direct, paved, intuitive bikeway is possible, and is popular with people cycling. **TransLink can endorse the cycle highway position paper [here](#).**

At Harris and Lougheed, where we met, there is a significant opportunity for on-demand bike lockers at the rapid bus stops - particularly westbound to connect to Skytrain. There is plentiful space around this stop - the only all-day frequent transit stop in the city. The land is not owned by TransLink, but whether it is MOTI's or private, or a connection to the City's electrical grid, there is high potential for collaboration and mutual benefit.



You saw the need for wayfinding to connect on to the mini cycle highway segment from Harris Road Park. Thank you for co-hosting last week's wayfinding webinar and raising awareness with municipal staff and contractors of the importance of - and funding for - cycling wayfinding.

We look forward to programming to attract more bike parkade users at Maple Meadows station in summer 2023 with geo-targeted advertising, route planning and bike education, which will increase ridership on West Coast Express and the buses at this loop. We are looking forward to the upcoming multi-use pathway (MUP) along Hammond Road to help local residents feel more comfortable cycling to the station. Thanks for your funding support there.



As you experienced, **113B through the industrial area** feels daunting on bike, as riders are forced between parked cars and large vehicles driving by. The sightlines to the many driveways are poor and collisions have occurred with people cycling along this route. The new industrial zone area is going through council decision-making now - **HUB Cycling's Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows local committee would like to see protected bike lanes here as a Development Cost Charge (DCC) of the development and/or cost shared with the City and/or TransLink. This route is part of the MBN and connects directly to the Golden Ears Bridge.** It is currently highly congested. There is plenty of space in the parking lane as well as a grassy median beside. TransLink owns some land near here and TransLink is planning to upgrade the Airport Way roundabouts and overpass in the next few years when Airport Way gets widened along its full length due to intensive increases in warehouse space in Pitt Meadows. It is important to provide cycling options for the many people that need to access jobs and homes in this neighbourhood, to reduce congestion and parking requirements.

Further along our ride, you saw the construction on 117 Avenue that cost over \$3million (~\$1.2 million from TransLink). The benefits for people cycling are negligible as this is a neighbourhood street. The increased risks are that people driving are not looking for people cycling both directions on one side of the street, and there is little intersection treatment provided. Few people know what elephant feet crosswalks are for - HUB recommends adding green paint and raised crosswalks but the City has rejected this option. Ideally, the City would have used walking funding for sidewalks and signed the route 30km/h max. Right now, the plan is still to keep the speed limit at 50km/h. Cycling on the road will become more challenging due to added non-permeable curb bulges at intersections and an expected increase of residents using street parking rather than their shortened driveways, which increases the risk for people cycling of getting doored.

The local HUB Committee suggested to discuss with TransLink the possibility of rerouting bus # 744, which presently runs along 117 Ave., to River Road to allow for more effective traffic calming and possibly adding a bike permeable diverter at Steeves St. This option was rejected by the City.

117 Avenue is a prime example of where TransLink leadership and direction in bike infrastructure decision making could be improved. We understand that TransLink takes the lead of the municipality in terms of selecting bike infrastructure improvements, but **much stronger incentives and education from TransLink could help guide municipalities to build infrastructure with a better return on investment to increase ridership and safety.**

HUB Cycling recommends that TransLink incentivize or require that cycling projects along neighbourhood bikeways (with no centre line) have a maximum speed limit of 30km/h. Ideally all neighbourhood bikeways should be 30km/h maximum for the safety benefits illustrated in Figure 1. **TransLink can show their support to make this easier for municipalities and improve road safety legislation and regulation more broadly, by endorsing the Position Paper to Modernize the BC Motor Vehicle Act.**



Figure 1

We then rode the small segment of cycling highway parallel to Lougheed from Laity to 216th. There is 2022 TransLink funding allocated for connecting MUP between 220 St. and 216 St, which HUB Cycling supports. The only alternative in the plans is the West Ridge Greenway, which is expected to take 30 years to complete as re-development occurs. There is no other bike route between Dewdney and the Fraser River. The existing sections of the West Ridge Greenway are circuitous, with frequent stop signs. Definitely a more quiet and pleasant route than the direct route along Hwy. 7, but slow.

Ideally future cycle highways maintain a consistent grade for the people cycling, rather than dipping down, prioritizing motor vehicles who should be yielding. **We are glad to see the existing bike counter and encourage TransLink to incentivize bike counters on the projects they fund.**

In the Maple Ridge downtown core we spoke about the nearby 227 St protected bike lanes that Maple Ridge staff had identified to better connect people to Haney transit exchange. There were very few comments from the public in opposition and the HUB Cycling Local Committee supported

the separated bike lane project. After the present Council was elected, the project was quietly removed from the planned projects on the City website and the planned designated (AAA) cycling network. HUB Cycling asked to have it included again, but since the focus seems to be on bi-directional MUPs, which as mentioned with 117 Avenue, are often less safe. **We encourage TransLink to provide education and BICCS incentives to avoid inappropriate use of bi-directional MUPs in areas with many intersections and driveways.**

We were unable to go further east due to time constraints, but the **need for a cycling highway that continues parallel to Lougheed - including the Haney Bypass - persists eastbound.** Part of our cycling tour there would have included walking or riding on sidewalks as there is no reasonably safe way to navigate the area otherwise. Right now there is no safe way to travel east-west through the city. **The jurisdiction largely lies with BC MOTI but support from TransLink and the City would help them plan and design appropriately and more quickly.**

On our way back, we stopped at 123 and 203. The north-south bi-directional separated bike lane on 203 was an expensive project that received a lot of public pushback, largely about loss of street parking, and wait times behind buses, then Council hesitated on completing the east-west connection on 123, although 123 serves four schools within a couple of blocks as well as Volker Park, Burnett Church, connects to the dike trails via Laity, and is essential for bike travel to the Town Centre. This leaves 203 underutilized, providing further fuel that it was not money well spent. HUB Cycling would have preferred protected bike lanes on both sides of the street which would have reduced the challenge for locals crossing the lane. **We encourage TransLink to update their BICCS criteria and funding incentives to encourage municipalities to choose the most effective cycling route and design.**

We rode back to our start location so folks could head home. For future rides, we would hope that there were a cycle highway to go directly parallel to Lougheed to get you back along a similarly convenient route to driving or transit or the **ability to catch the West Coast Express westbound in the afternoon/evening. Any support TransLink can provide would be appreciated. We encourage TransLink to show support for cycling highways by signing HUB Cycling's position paper in support of Cycle Highways [here](#).**

We also want to give credit to Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows for seeing the value of school cycling education - they have been funding most of their elementary schools to receive HUB Bike to School courses where they learn rules of the road and build confidence in cycling, and experience the joy and independence it brings. TransLink also supports these education programs.

The value of promotions and enabling must not be underestimated. Although it costs far less than the physical facilities, [it can bring double to quadruple the number of people using infrastructure](#). TransLink was a front runner in requiring a minimum % of each cost-shared cycling project go towards promo and enabling. This amount, however, is rarely maximized. There is a strong case to **allocate any unused part of the up to 5% to TransLink's TravelSmart department to program the new infrastructure in collaboration with municipal staff.** TravelSmart staff are the experts in TDM promo and enabling, whereas many municipalities don't have the staff experience and capacity to make this happen. TravelSmart would then work together with the municipality to deliver meaningful promotion and enabling of the new infrastructure.



It was great to hear about TransLink's internal **ArcGIS platform** that allows triangulation of multiple datasets to determine high potential cycling facility improvement areas. **HUB Cycling would appreciate access to the tool and its capabilities to inform project prioritization, understand cycling desire lines, conduct an equity analysis of the cycling network and better understand TransLink's opportunities and limitations. Similarly, it would be great to provide access to all local municipalities, as Matt mentioned.**

We look forward to the eligibility map that TransLink will send municipalities and HUB Cycling this month with State of Cycling, MBN, cycling potential data, etc.

HUB Cycling supports the idea that Translink identify MBN or cycle highway corridors and earmark funding available with municipal commitment in the short term to complete the corridor or TransLink will move on to another municipality and corridor.

It is great to hear that TransLink has analyzed the % of MBN that is Comfortable for Most from 2019 data. **We look forward to Translink updating that with 2021 data and expanded MBN definitions and sharing with HUB Cycling so we can continue to pursue our shared goals most effectively. We would also appreciate the TransLink MBN and FTN datasets that staff said they could share with us earlier in the year.**

Thank you for joining us on this cycling infrastructure tour of parts of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge. We appreciate your time and attention, and we look forward to inviting local mayors on the next ride in one of our regional city centres. Better informing our mayors and councils is a key part of getting better decisions and investments for cycling.

Please continue to let us know how we can support improved cycling conditions and reach out any time with questions or to have further discussion.

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