

Vancouver UBC Local Committee - HUB Cycling Assessment of the Central Valley Greenway Intersections

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Saturday, January 24, 2014

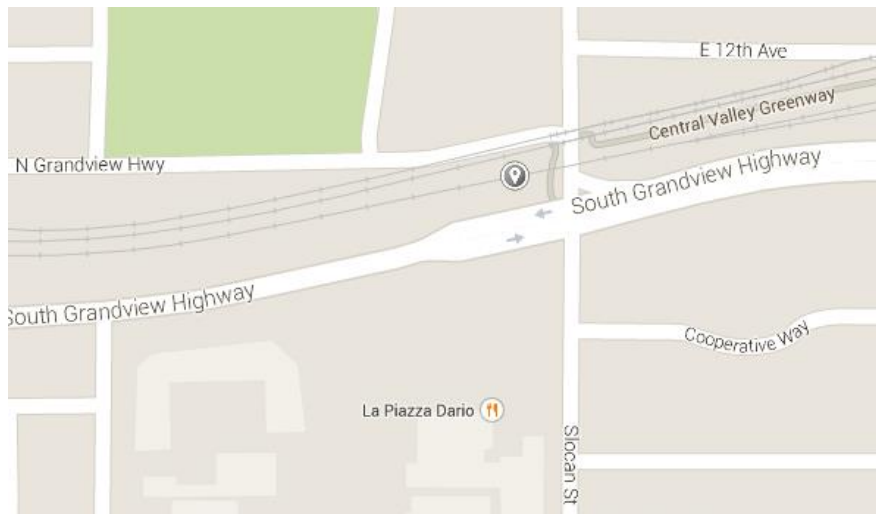
The Central Valley Greenway (CVG) is a separated path for cycling and walking that travels between New Westminster and False Creek. Built by Translink, it parallels the Millennium Skytrain Line. Overall, the CVG is an excellent separated bike route except for some confusing intersections where pedestrians and cyclists share narrow spaces.

For this assessment ride, the group took the CVG from East Broadway and Victoria Dr. to just past Boundary Rd. We stopped at several intersections to observe traffic and make notes on infrastructure and signage. Bicycle and foot traffic was light, as it was a grey and rainy Saturday. We also made suggestions and comments during and after the ride.

For each intersection, this document details:

1. Assessment & issues
2. Needs for section
3. Suggested solutions

Intersection 1: Slocan St. between South Grandview Highway and North Grandview Highway



Assessment: The Slocan crossing can be very confusing for cyclists, especially those heading west. According to existing maps and signage, those heading east should travel along North Grandview Hwy, cross Slocan St, and continue on the shared pedestrian path. For those traveling west, a sign at the intersection indicates that cyclists can share the crosswalk that

connects to a pedestrian path on the west side of Slocan St, parallel to the CVG. A second sign, further ahead on North Grandview Hwy indicates the CVG pathway. Currently, a cyclist

entering the signed crosswalk must move diagonally out of the crosswalk into the westbound lane in order to continue along the CVG.



A potential hazard was also identified at this intersection where motorists who turn off South Grandview Highway encounter train tracks and encounter what appears to be only a pedestrian crosswalk. They may not be expecting cyclists. Although there are markings ('elephant's feet'), not all drivers will see or understand these.

Needs: The bike route and crosswalk should be marked in a clear manner for

motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. Clear signage is needed to indicate how cyclists should transition between the separated pathway and roadway. It should also be clear to motor vehicles that they are approaching a shared crosswalk.

Suggestions:

- An unmarked dip in the curb grade allows those cycling to travel directly into their westbound lane on North Grandview Highway. Move the bike path between Slocan St. and Renfrew St. to the north side of the SkyTrain tracks. This would align the CVG route across Slocan St. and avoid confusion over how to continue westbound along the CVG. It would also avoid the awkward turn in front of eastbound traffic that cyclists must currently make.
- Alternatively, indicate with clear signage that westbound cyclists may travel directly across Slocan St. onto North Grandview Highway.
- Add signage warning motor vehicle traffic to yield to both pedestrians and cyclists in the crosswalk, as well as those merging between the separated pathway and roadway. (This is also applicable at other crossings without traffic lights on the CVG.)

Intersection 2: Kaslo St. and Central Valley Greenway

Assessment and Needs: The CVG continues on either side of Kaslo St. as a separated path. Similar to Slocan St., this intersection could also benefit from signs to yield to both cyclists and pedestrians.

Suggestions: Add additional signage warning motor vehicles to yield to both pedestrians and cyclists in the crosswalk. (This is also applicable at other crossings without traffic lights on the CVG.)

Intersection 3: Renfrew and Central Valley Greenway

Assessment: There is a light-controlled intersection at Renfrew St. The high pedestrian and school traffic can result in congestion, causing conflicts between those traveling by bike and by foot. Additionally, just past the east side of the intersection, the asphalt is degrading and should be redone.

Suggestions:

- Move cyclists from the separated path on the west side of Renfrew St. to the roadway immediately north (which is closed to motor vehicle use).
- Repair damaged asphalt

Intersection 4: Rupert SkyTrain Station



Assessment: On the west side of Rupert St., where the CVG meets the street, there is a dangerous meeting of pedestrians and cyclists. For those heading east, it is difficult to see around the concrete column of the Skytrain tracks. This creates a blind spot for all CVG users heading toward the westbound pathway. The pathway is also not visible (aside from a small sign peeking out from the bush).

On the west side of the Rupert St. intersection, a bus stop placed between the CVG and the crosswalk presents another hazard. The CVG continues as a narrow path behind the bus shelter,

and this path is shared by those waiting for the bus.

Both of these hazards (the blind spot and the bus stop) are exacerbated by the large ornamental bushes on the corner property of the BC Liquor Distribution Branch Building. The bushes further obscure the blind corner and encroach on the CVG path, pushing cyclists closer to the bus shelter.

The large crosswalk across Rupert St. is adequate for reducing conflicts between users in the crossing, but its location just north of where the CVG intersects Rupert St. creates the problems previously noted. Additionally, the button for the pedestrian-controlled crossing on the west side of the intersection is on the wrong side of the crosswalk, encouraging cyclists to travel on the left side of the road (contrary to the City of Vancouver bylaws).

Needs: For all users, the blind corner on the west side of the intersection is a hazard, as is the pinch point of cyclists and pedestrians. This intersection needs a significant improvement of its shared facilities.

Suggestions:

- Request the BC Liquor Distribution Branch to trim back, or ideally remove, the bushes on the east side of the intersection.
- Remove the blind corner by making the other side visible or perhaps by allowing cyclists to travel through.
- More clearly mark that the pathway is shared.
- Move the pedestrian/cyclist-activated crosswalk button to the right side of the crosswalk on the west side of the intersection.
- If bushes are removed, widen pathway or separate cyclists from pedestrians.
- Alternatively, add a second crosswalk that would run diagonally from CVG on east side of the street to CVG on west side.
- Improve signage marking the bicycle route as it passes under the SkyTrain so pedestrians know where it is.

Additional Notes on the CVG:

- Even with the sparse number of people travelling by foot on the weekend, it was difficult for those on bicycle to pass them as they are often listening to headphones. It would be good to separate these two path users wherever possible on this route (or at least more often than is currently done).
- Destination signage was too small to be visible and should be installed to face the path, similar to signs for motorists
- Drains from the overhead SkyTrain tracks often drain on to pathways creating pooling or getting path users wet
- The Welcome to Vancouver sign at Boundary Rd. is in terrible shape and is facing the wrong lane in the wrong direction. Could use replacing and realigning.