



November 1, 2016

Mayor and Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC
V5G 1M2

**DELEGATION
2016 NOVEMBER 07**

RE: Walking and Cycling Facilities on the Willingdon Greenway

Dear Mayor and Council,

HUB Cycling is a charitable organization that works to make cycling better through education, events and collaboration. We are Metro Vancouver's leader in making cycling an attractive choice for everyone. We have over 2000 members throughout the region and active local committees in ten municipalities across Metro Vancouver, including Burnaby.

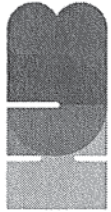
The Burnaby Committee of HUB Cycling has long looked forward to the opportunity provided by the Willingdon Greenway corridor to significantly enhance Burnaby's cycling network. At the open house on September 14th, members from the Burnaby Committee reviewed the design for the Willingdon Avenue Greenway project. We are concerned that the proposed design is neither safe nor comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists, and does not support Burnaby's active transportation goals. We are also concerned that the consultation process undertaken so far has not allowed meaningful input and appears not to have reflected Burnaby's aspirations in this regard. Consequently, we respectfully ask that Council direct staff to take another look at this project, to further consult with stakeholders and to consider contemporary design solutions that will maximize not only the aesthetics but also the usefulness and safety of this important corridor.

Context and Connections

High-density transit oriented development in Brentwood Town Centre will need to be supported by a high capacity active transportation network. The Willingdon Greenway will connect the approximately 20 000 new residents that will call the Brentwood Town Centre home with the nearest high school, library, public pool, seniors' community centre, and vibrant local shopping district. It will also, of course, connect the residents of North Burnaby with the Brentwood Town Centre. In the future, Willingdon Avenue south of Brentwood is slated to be upgraded in order to provide an important cycling connection to BCIT and nearby high tech industrial development, via the recently upgraded Willingdon overpass across Highway 1. Lastly, the Willingdon Greenway will connect to significant east/west cycling routes on Frances-Union, Lougheed Highway, and in the future, the Central Valley Greenway. The Willingdon Greenway must therefore be able to safely accommodate the higher cycling and walking volumes that major redevelopment will bring, in addition to supporting City targets for growth in these modes.

Current Design

The Burnaby Transportation Plan, adopted in 1995, appears to be the source of the current design concept released to the public. The Plan calls for an Urban Trail along Willingdon Avenue. The Plan also calls for Willingdon to be developed as a Cycle Road, with curb lanes at least 4.3 m wide. The current design shows a shared Urban Trail but there is no mention of providing a Cycle Road standard on Willingdon Avenue. This leads to the question:



when will Willingdon be upgraded to the Cycle Road standard if not now when an \$8 million (City of Burnaby, 2016a) project that includes rebuilding the east curb is underway?

Consultation

The Burnaby Transportation Plan sets forth a vision for transportation in Burnaby. This vision is intended to be achieved "in consultation with [Burnaby] residents and other public and private agencies" (Burnaby Transportation Plan, 2004, p.26). The *Social Sustainability Strategy's* Strategic Priority 6: Getting Around, highlights the need for opportunities to "facilitate and promote cycling...by providing more cycling route options," (SSS, 2011, p. 78) and to establish partnerships with "cycling-focused organizations" (p.78) to provide expertise. Burnaby staff appear not to have consulted with either HUB Burnaby, the members of Burnaby's former Bicycle Advisory Subcommittee or the larger cycling community before proposing a shared-path design. Only a single design concept was presented to the public, with no design options even though the *Burnaby Transportation Plan* contemplates both shared and separated paths on Urban Trails (BTP, 2004, p.76) and Willingdon is designated as a Cycle Road (BTP, 2004, p.75).

Objectives and targets

A primary objective of the Transportation Plan is to "encourage the use of cycling as a mode of transportation" (BTP, 2004, p.45). The City of Burnaby and TransLink have set targets for increasing the proportion of trips by bicycle. TransLink's regional cycling strategy *Cycling for Everyone* sets a regional target for cycling so that by 2040 10% of trips are made by bicycle (TransLink, 2011). The City of Burnaby's draft *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* (ESS) also supports growth in cycling through network improvements to safety, comfort, and directness. The ESS's goal 5.2 is to "make walking and cycling easier, safer and more comfortable, especially north-south connections" (2016b, p.23).

Burnaby's multi-use paths have not generated growth in cycling. Since the early 1990s, shortly before the *Burnaby Transportation Plan* was adopted, the proportion of trips by bicycle in Burnaby has remained flat, below 1%. By contrast, over the same period the proportion of cycling trips on the North Shore has doubled and in Vancouver more than quadrupled (TransLink, 2005; TransLink, 2013; City of Vancouver, 2015).

The Burnaby Transportation Plan acknowledges that "further growth in cycling...will be dependent on measures to increase the safety and convenience of the mode" (BTP, 2004, p.45). Recent research in Metro Vancouver demonstrates that paved shared paths are less safe for cycling than most major street configurations, and ranked as the third most dangerous out of 14 facility types evaluated (Teschke et al., 2012). The risk of negative interactions among people walking, cycling, and wheeling, including those with children and pets, grows significantly with even small increases in activity, leading to an uncomfortable environment for all. Apart from conflicts with other users, shared paths typically present risks to cyclists at street crossings, especially at intersections where vehicles are turning. Consequently, they work best where user volumes are low and there are few intersections.

Bicycle-specific facilities, like cycle tracks on arterial streets, are key to both encouraging cycling and making it safe. A cycle track is a protected bicycle-only facility similar to what is being built on Town Centre streets, including Willingdon south of Brentlawn Drive to which the Willingdon Greenway will connect. People new to cycling, and those who don't currently cycle but would like to, prefer these types of facilities. If well designed, they represent good choices for encouraging cycling and preventing injuries.



Conclusion

There are compelling reasons to consider separate bicycle and walking facilities for the Willingdon Greenway project. A separated facility would greatly improve safety by removing conflicts with pedestrians and mitigating conflicts with motor vehicles. It would provide attractive, high capacity facilities for those walking and cycling to school, shopping and community services and would support the growth of active transportation in Burnaby. HUB Burnaby supports the use of cycle tracks on Willingdon Avenue. We also ask the City to review Willingdon Avenue's evident departure from the Cycle Road design standard specified in the *Burnaby Transportation Plan*. In conclusion, HUB Burnaby and the cycling community welcome any opportunity to help develop a design for the Willingdon Greenway that works for everyone.

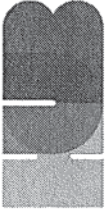
Sincerely,

Cathy Griffin
Acting Chair
HUB Burnaby
burnaby@bikehub.ca

Note: Petition with 137 signatures to build a separate cycle path on the Willingdon Avenue Greenway - Available in the City Clerk's Office.

Copied to:

City Manager
Dir. Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Dir. Planning
Dir. Engineering



Reference List

City of Burnaby, *The Burnaby Transportation Plan*. 2004.

City of Burnaby, *Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy*. 2011.

City of Burnaby, *2016-2020 Annual Financial Plan*. 2016a.

City of Burnaby, *Draft Burnaby Environmental Sustainability Strategy*. 2016b.

City of Vancouver, *Walking + Cycling in Vancouver 2015*. 2015.

Teschke, K, MA Harris, CCO Reynolds, M Winters, S Babul, M Chipman, et al., 'Route infrastructure and the risk of injuries to bicyclists: a case-crossover study.' in *American journal of public health*, 102, 2012, 2336–43.

Translink, *Cycling for Everyone*. 2011.

TransLink, *Greater Vancouver Trip Diary Summary 2004*. 2005.

TransLink, *2011 Metro Vancouver Regional Trip Diary Survey: Analysis Report*. 2013.