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Opinion: This Burnaby street should absolutely be closed to commuters

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Audrey Flagel says she's tired of the traffic on the street outside her home.

Photograph By KELVIN GAWLEY



When I was growing up in North Burnaby, I couldn't understand why some of the streets near my home were blocked to traffic.

I lived near Broadway and Springer Avenue in the 1970s and '80s. Just northwest of there are several concrete barricades all along Springer blocking traffic from accessing Delta Avenue.

As a kid, I didn't get it, but as an adult who knows all about ratrunning, I understand all too well the need to block off some streets.

So when I look at how all these streets along Springer are blocked, I wonder why the city doesn't do the same at the far northern end of Duthie Avenue.

At the end of Duthie, vehicles can jump onto the Barnet where Hastings ends. The problem with this is that it's a quiet residential area that has been plagued with drivers racing to get to the Barnet on their commutes home.

The **NOW** wrote about this in 2018, interviewing area resident [Audrey Flagel](#) about how this traffic has hurt the neighbourhood. "Quality of life is not enjoyable, listening to the traffic continuously," she said at the time. "I might as well be sitting on a highway."

In the six years she's lived in the housing complex between Duthie and Barnet, Flagel said the amount of traffic has increased dramatically. Commuters take Duthie to access Barnet via Ridge Drive, she says.



This is where vehicles turn onto the Barnet in Burnaby. Google Street View

It's the high volume and speeds of vehicles on Duthie that bothers Flagel and her neighbours, 40 of whom signed a petition presented to the City of Burnaby's public safety committee in May 2018.

"We've become an extension of Barnet Highway," she said. "When I open my windows, it feels like the traffic is coming through my place."

Flagel wants to see the Ridge Drive access to Barnet closed off entirely and Duthie reserved for local neighbourhood traffic only.

"Some residents may use [the highway access], but for all intents and purposes it just causes us excessive noise, high vehicle emissions, and it's not necessary because it doesn't serve the purpose for us."

Now, some people will set their hair on fire at the thought of closing off a road, but as I noted above with Springer, there is precedence for this in the city.

There is access controlled by a light where Hastings and Barnet meet. Drivers should just use this instead of turning into this quiet residential area. The few seconds drivers saves isn't worth the problems created in this neighbourhood.

It's the smart, safer choice.

Follow Chris Campbell on Twitter @shinebox44.