



January 9, 2015

David Eby
MLA, Vancouver-Point Grey
2909 West Broadway
Vancouver BC V6K 2G6

Reference: 229791

Dear MLA Eby:

Re: Cycling on Northwest Marine Drive

Thank you for your letter regarding the shared-use cyclist/pedestrian sidewalk near the entrance to Acadia Park on Northwest Marine Drive in Vancouver.

Safety is the ministry's highest priority, and I appreciate you bringing this issue to my attention on behalf of your constituent. I am pleased to advise that the ministry has been investigating traffic safety and options for improvement at this location in response to local concern.

Whenever possible, the ministry encourages cyclists to use shared-use pedestrian and cyclist pathways to get around. In this case, however, due to the narrowness of the sidewalk, it was determined that cyclists uncomfortable with using the path should be permitted to ride on the road as an alternative. As a result, in October, ministry staff replaced signs you mention with "Share the Road" signs to notify drivers and cyclists travelling in both directions of the change.

Cycling offers broad economic, social, environmental and health benefits. Our government is working hard both to encourage cycling for recreation and commuting and to improve and build infrastructure to support it. You can be sure cycling will be an important component of B.C. on the Move, the ministry's ten-year transportation plan, which you can read more about by visiting <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/transportationplan/>.

Should you have any further questions or concerns regarding the cyclist/pedestrian sidewalk near Acadia Park, please do not hesitate to contact Thomas Chhun, the local Operations Manager, at 604-527-2242 or Thomas.Chhun@gov.bc.ca. He would be pleased to assist you.

.../2

- 2 -

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd G. Stone', written in a cursive style.

Todd G. Stone
Minister

Copy to: Thomas Chhun, Operations Manager
 Lower Mainland District

Derkson, Debra TRAN:EX

To: Transportation, Minister TRAN:EX

Hi,

I am resending you the email below in case the original did not get through as it seems most but not all recipients have received it.

s.22

From: s.22

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2014 5:49 PM

To: Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca

Cc: brcmp@rcmp-grc.gc.ca; david.eby.mla@leg.bc.ca; Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office; Morrell, Bill (Metro Vancouver); uel@gov.bc.ca; s.22

Subject: RCMP directing cyclists to hazardous cycling route on NW Marine Drive

Honourable Todd Stone

Minister, Transportation and Infrastructure

PO BOX 9055 STN PROV GOVT

VICTORIA BC V8W 9E2

RE: Hazardous Bicycle Route along NW Marine Drive to UBC

Honourable Minister;

This past Sunday morning, 28 September 2014, the RCMP were directing Westbound cyclists to use the outside shoulder on NW Marine Drive while ascending the Spanish Banks Hill as per the singular, deteriorated and obliquely oriented sign.

This action was being taken by the RCMP even though the hundreds of cyclists outnumbered motor vehicles at that time by at least 5:1, with the number of pedestrians, joggers, and dog walkers collectively a close second to cyclists.

This action on the part of the RCMP is very concerning. This action put cyclists, and other users of this route, in direct and imminent peril.

According to your Ministry guidelines,

The One Thing Drivers and Cyclists Need to Know

<https://tranbc.ca/2013/01/17/the-one-thing-drivers-and-cyclists-need-to-know/>

People riding a bicycle have the same rights and responsibilities as those driving a motor vehicle.

Moreover,

“It can be safer for (bicycles) at times to take the centre lane. This is **especially true when the road is narrow and there are hazards where they would normally ride**. While we work to keep our roads safe and clear, cyclists could face any number of potential dangers that could force a cyclist from the side of the road, like pot holes, or branches and debris.”
(Emphasis added)

In this case, the RCMP were directing cyclists to proceed into a highly dangerous situation. At least 1-200 cyclists were being forced onto a restricted pathway which quite possibly represents the most dangerous cycling path in the entire Lower Mainland.

The shoulder on the outside of the concrete barrier is extremely narrow. The surface is in poor shape with extensive debris and features an abrupt edge perched atop a steep embankment.

The pathway width (measured at 72 cm in multiple locations) is less than one-third (29%) of the width of the Ministry’s own guidelines:

If the pathway next to a barrier is used by cyclists and pedestrians, the minimum width from the edge of barrier to the outside edge of pavement should be:

- 2.5 m for one-way bicycle traffic
- 3.5 m for two-way bicycle traffic

In fact, taking into account the narrow pathway and the steep slope, according to the Ministry’s own Supplement to the Canadian Transport guidelines, there should be a fence erected to protect the pedestrians from the steep slope and another fence erected to separate cyclists, who would be expected to travel in the roadway, from Pedestrians using the trail/sidewalk (Ref Fig. 660.C).

Given its narrow width and poor condition, it is not possible for any user to share the designated pathway with any other user nor to pass another user, of any kind, safely.

It is not uncommon for joggers and walkers to jump the concrete barrier onto the roadway to pass each other let alone to avoid cyclists who may have strayed onto the ‘Sidewalk’ by foolishly obeying the lone sign’s direction.

Please consider the following four recommendations:

1. Please instruct the RCMP to ignore the signage until it can be safely removed.
2. Please remove the singular, misguided sign as soon as safely possible.
3. Please install new signage indicating that the roadway is multi-use to further warn drivers of the potential conflict. Such advisory signage would be consistent with the multiple kilometers of roadway preceding the hill.
4. Please repair the edge of the roadway on the outside of the concrete barrier such that pedestrians may travel safely.
5. Finally, please request that the RCMP monitor and caution motorists who harass, speed or otherwise imperil cyclists and other co-users of the roadway.

Your thoughtful consideration of this situation is greatly appreciated.

Yours Truly,

Cc: Cycling BC, RCMP University Detachment, David Eby MLA Vancouver-Point Grey, University Endowment Lands, Vancouver Mayor & Counsel, Metro Vancouver, Bike Hub

Facts:

- There is a singular sign on NW Marine Drive, without prior precedent or warning, that directs cyclists onto a 'Sidewalk' pathway, or more accurately a ledgeway, whose entry is less than one meter wide.
- The ledgeway on the outside of the concrete barrier is barely 29" (72 cm) wide at multiple points (i.e. just slightly wider than a typical bicycle handlebar)
- The roadway leading up to the Spanish Banks hill is clearly and regularly marked as a bicycle pathway for multiple kilometers; thus the shared presence of cyclists in no way can represent any surprise to any motor vehicle driver
- The shared roadway leading up to the Spanish Banks hill features lanes that are 128" wide (10'8") between the center line and the curb, with no separating white line or any kind of shoulder
- The lane on the hill is 133" (11'1") in the approach to and through the corner. In other words, this part of the roadway is actually wider than the Spanish Banks roadway lanes preceding it. This lane also features another 29" of white lane demarked shoulder between the roadway lane and the concrete barrier, unlike the roadway along Spanish Banks. Thus, there is more room for shared usage here than in the previous two kilometers of roadway.
- The ledgeway is in poor shape with uneven and broken asphalt. Extensive debris is present from the heavy tree canopy. The terrain drops precipitously to a steep embankment directly from the ledgeway, adding further danger to all users and most particularly to cyclists.
- The ledgeway is already multi-use with pedestrians, joggers, and dog walkers forced to share it. Elsewhere along Spanish Banks pedestrians and cyclists have been provided with separated pathways
- It is too narrow for any user of the ledgeway to safely pass another user, of any kind, going in the same or opposite directions and even pedestrians frequently jump the concrete barrier into the roadway.
- Cyclists do not have the option to easily jump the concrete barrier to pass any other user once they elect or are forced onto the outside of the barrier.
- Cyclists do not have adequate room to even stop and dismount, let alone to do it safely. Thus, it is physically difficult and highly dangerous for cyclists to "Yield to Pedestrians" as the signage instructs
- This roadway is heavily used by cyclists. The popularity of this route by cyclists is second only to Stanley Park in all of the Lower Mainland, and usage well exceeds that of the Burrard Street bridge which now features extensive investment in improvements for cycling usage. Usage at the time of the ~ 1/2 – 1 hour redirection by the RCMP was approximately 5-10:1 cyclists or more per vehicle user. Pedestrians, joggers and dog walkers were a close second in usage to cyclists.
- Once cyclists have been forced onto the other side of the barrier, there is no opportunity to turn off onto one of the secondary roads at the various intersections to either avoid traffic or proceed to other destinations

Figures



Figure 1: NW Marine Drive along Spanish Banks – Usage and Speed Signage, Lane Width, No Shoulder, Large Puddle forcing cyclists into mid-laneway



Figure 2: Sole sign, obliquely oriented, requiring Cyclists to Use 'Sidewalk'



Figure 3: 'Sidewalk' width at access point less than one meter



Figure 4: 'Sidewalk' width along route less than 3/4 meters with abrupt edge. Extensive debris

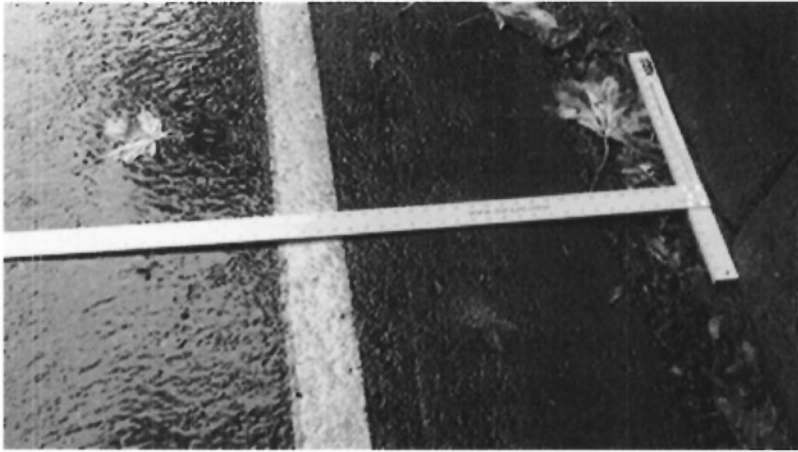
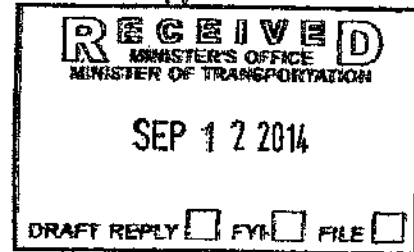


Figure 5: Laneway shoulder on other side of barrier of equal width to 'Sidewalk'

Legislative Office
Room 201, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Constituency Office
2909 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6K 2G6



August 26, 2014

Minister of Transportation
PO Box 9055
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8V 9E2

VIA Fax: 250-356-2290

Dear Minister:

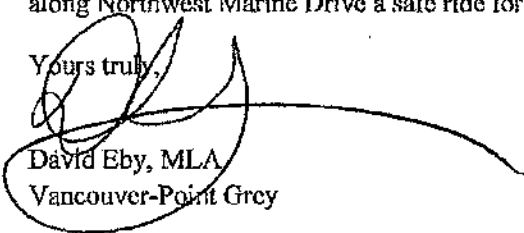
I am writing today in regard to a transportation safety concern in Vancouver-Point Grey.

A constituent has brought to my attention that there is a safety concern for cyclists commuting to UBC along Northwest Marine Drive. It appears there is a section of road near the entrance to Acadia Park, heading west up the hill to UBC through the Foreshore Park with an extremely narrow shared-use sidewalk. This narrow passage has been washed out over time and is located beside a substantial drop off to cliffs below with no existing fencing. At the entrance to the narrow passage is a road sign that states cyclists must use the sidewalk rather than the road at this crossing.

Please see attached for photographs documenting this dangerous passage for cyclists.

I look forward to hearing from you how we can address this situation and make the commute to UBC along Northwest Marine Drive a safe ride for all commuters.

Yours truly,



David Eby, MLA
Vancouver-Point Grey

Enclosures: Photographs (4) documenting the aforementioned road conditions.

CC: UBC Campus & Community Planning, 2210 West Mall, Vancouver BC, V6T 1Z4

DE: gm
bcgeu.

