

**Presentation to Public Works and Transportation Committee meeting -
December 21, 2022**

Good afternoon, my name is Les Kiss and I live at 5251 Hummingbird and have been a resident of Richmond since 1977. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you on the proposed multi-purpose pathway for the South side of Steveston Highway between Railway Avenue and No. 2 Road.

I am an avid cyclist biking between 20 and 25 kilometers daily and estimate I have cycled over 5,500 kms this year alone, mainly on routes that are not exposed to congested and high-speed vehicle traffic. I support bike lanes when they are located with safety in mind and make cyclists less vulnerable to potential serious vehicular accidents. This 3-metre-wide proposal on Steveston Hwy fails to meet the safety test for cyclists, pedestrians as well as motorists.

Steveston Hwy is an arterial route with incredibly increasing traffic volumes. Despite the posted speed at 50 kmph, motorists tend to travel at 60 to 70kmph, if not faster on a regular basis. I believe safety must be the priority consideration, but for this proposal it appears to be trumped by the City's desire to have TransLink fund \$2.85 million **(which is not guaranteed)** of the estimated \$5.7 million cost with TransLink's stipulation the pathway must be located on Steveston Hwy.

A quick search on the internet identifies desired design standards for multi-use pathways:

- they should not be located immediately adjacent to highways because of safety considerations at intersections with driveways and roads. **The proposal fails this test.**
- ideally, separated bike lanes should not be located along the same side of the roadway at high-frequency transit routes as transit stops present a challenge among interactions with cyclists, transit vehicles, and those accessing these stops. **TransLink's route demand fails this test.**
- If a pathway must be located parallel to a highway due to a lack of an alternative location, a minimum separation of 1.5 m (5 ft.) should be provided between the roadway and multi-use pathways. **This proposal includes a 1 m boulevard which falls short of the desired minimum.**

- a path wider than 3 m is very desirable to provide adequate width for two-directional use by both cyclists and pedestrians. **This proposal's 3-metre width is again short of the desired minimum.**
- sidewalks should never be designated as multi-use pathways. **Not clear how the existing sidewalk will be dealt with.**
- pathways should not just end, leaving cyclists and pedestrians stranded with no nearby connections. The pathway should function as a mode of transportation between well-defined locations, such as schools, residential subdivisions, and shopping centers. **The proposed pathway is to end at Shell Road well short of the Ironwood development.**
- studies have shown that such parallel multi-use pathways are approximately twice as dangerous for bicyclists as riding in traffic with motor vehicles.
- If pedestrians or cyclists are involved in crashes with motorized vehicles driving faster than 30km/h, they run a significant risk of severe or fatal injuries. **Traffic speeds along Steveston highway can be in excess of 70 kmph.**

It is clear the City's proposed 3-metre-wide pathway between Railway and No. 2 Road does not stack up to desired design standards.

The proposed project intends to reduce the travelled traffic lanes by 20 to 30 cm each to accommodate a 1-metre separating boulevard. This is another significant safety concern.

- The current travelled road lane widths are 3.7 metres (12 feet).
- The proposed reduction will result in a 3 metre (11 feet) travel lane width which is the minimum width of the standard 11 to 13 feet favoured for arterial roads.
- Lane widths of 10 to 11 feet are more appropriate for urban roadways, not arterial highways.
- If you have ever followed a transit bus or six to eight axle transport trucks on Steveston you know they take up most of the existing lane widths. A lane width reduction of the magnitude being proposed will likely increase side-swipe collisions, not a desired outcome.

Overall, the math does not compute:

- The proposal is targeting a 3-metre pathway with a 1-metre curb / boulevard buffer = 4-metres.
 - the recommended width for a separation barrier on a highway is 1.5 metres
- the current south sidewalk width including allowance for lamp post locations is 2.6 metres (8.5 feet).
 - It is not clear whether the existing sidewalk will remain as is, and if not where the replacement lampposts, 10 just in this stretch of the highway, will be located.
 - Further, what will happen to existing storm drain structures? **Not ideal or safe to have either lampposts or storm drains in the middle of the pathway.**
- Maximum width reduction of the four traffic travel lanes will provide an additional 1.2 metres.
 - current sidewalk width at 2.6 metres and lane reduction of 1.2 metres gives you 3.8 metres to work with, short of the minimum standard by 0.2 metres and well short of the desired standard by 0.7 metres or 2.3 feet.

I understand current councilors want to respect previous council decision, but in this case, I urge the planning department and the current council to pull back on this proposal and either decide on an alternate safe route, upgrade existing routes, or spend the money on more priority infrastructure projects in Richmond. Governments at all levels regularly change policies and projects where and if appropriate.

Thank you.