

Spring Peer-to-Peer Summary and Notes

Date: Monday, March 14, 2022, 7:00-8:00

Topic: Possibility of Cycle Highways in Metro Vancouver

Presentation by Evan Hammer, followed by Question and Answer period

Questions and Answers

Why wasn't equity one of the criteria?

We put Equity under 'Major Destinations', which has a 30% weighting on the score. Maybe it should have been spun out to its own criteria, but this is how we did it in the study. When we ran our GIS analysis, routes that ran through or close to areas that scored highly on the social and spatial equity areas, they got additional points.

The Translink Major Bikeway Network designation has some implications for funding with municipalities.

Does this initiative imply more of a BC Government target, given the intersections with health, tourism, etc, which are beyond Translink?

We are still power mapping who exactly we want to target with some of this information. Certainly, TransLink has been really involved already in the development of this report—they were on the advisory committee. The crossover with the Major Bikeway Network is of course, very helpful for them as well as us, as we are trying to accomplish basically the same thing. The majority of MBN would be considered 'cycle highways'. The Provincial government also has cost-sharing that crosses municipal boundaries and regional boundaries. We ultimately would like to see cycle highways across the province, but we are focusing primarily in Metro Vancouver.

Wondering about low slope as a criterion. Don't high slope areas need special attention to keep them away from traffic, and attention to find routings that minimize slopes?

The idea behind the cycle highways project was not present these criteria and routes that were used in the analysis as *the* criteria and routes, but just to get the conversation going, so it's great to hear these different ideas.

Higher slope ones shouldn't necessarily be precluded from being a cycle highway, but the reason we chose low slope was because people are more likely to ride when there is less slope.

Does a cycle highway need to support a certain speed? If not, what would the definition be?

In terms of design speed, they're typically built to a 15 km/hr design speed, which is a leisurely pace that you can do for a longer distance.

If it's shared in the roadway, ideally it would be a lower-speed road, around 30-40 km/hr with lower traffic volume.

For example, 10th Avenue in Vancouver is traffic calmed, traffic diverted.

What is the definition of a cycle highway vs a greenway?

For this study, we looked at both greenways and cycle highways. The examples we looked at in Minneapolis and on Vancouver Island are greenways.

Greenways tend to be not as much for transportation, and don't necessarily connect major destinations. They can be more multi-use. With cycle highways, you're generally trying to get more mode separation—especially between people cycling and people walking. Greenways are a bit more recreational, while cycle highways are more transportation-oriented.

How do you see cycle highways evolving to meet the increase in e-bikes and their differential needs and speeds versus conventional commuter bikes?

Cycle highways are perfectly designed for e-bikes and the increase in electric-assist mobility. They are intended to be wide enough so people can pass if people are going past. They are ideally separated from motor vehicle traffic and other modes, so it reduces some of the confusion with other differential modes.

It seems like retrofitting a bike highway to the SFPR would be a relatively low cost effort, but it doesn't appear in this analysis...

Any routes we didn't look at does not mean that they are not good candidates for routes. We cherry-picked some routes to start with, and did a back analysis to see if there were any we missed, but that was just based on the six criteria that we used in the analysis. We aren't trying to preclude any of the other routes—hopefully there are other routes that are good candidates that we did not look at.

How much right-of-way is readily available to convert along SkyTrain lines? How about along power lines?

We can't speak on the specifics, but generally, tying in with something existing like with CVG and BC Parkway or new SkyTrains, or jumping in on old rail lines or utility right-of-ways is a good idea. It provides a great opportunity.

Would designating a route a cycle highway result in paving of a road and entail intersection improvements like tunnels and overpasses to avoid slowing and stopping at intersections?

Ideally, yes. When we looked at how other jurisdictions upgraded a bike facility to a cycle highway, they had a number of criteria that they established. Some of them have a scoring system, with some minimum criteria. If it was included in TransLink funding like the MBN is, then municipalities would be able to apply for funding, or more funding, if they meet the criteria. This doesn't exist yet, but this is what we're hoping for.

What would be a specification for a cycle highway through urban sections, such as the CVG through UBC?

We've identified some of the specifications in the criteria we outlined, in addition some other criteria, such as ample width, lighting. Drawing from the experience from other jurisdictions, the specifications on how to shift existing routes to cycle highways should be agreed on by the region—getting municipalities, regional authorities to agree on the specifications.

Did we take into account the Metro Vancouver Regional Greenways Report?

We looked at the regional context, including the work that Metro Vancouver has done. We didn't have enough of the data to incorporate it into this phase of the project, but that's something we're hoping to do in the next phase.