



April 27, 2005

Mayor and Council
453 West 12th Ave.
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing today regarding the Carrall Street Greenway Concept Design.

Overall, the VACC believes that the concept design is good. The offstreet bicycle lanes are quite welcome, and will bring a new style of bicycle facility to Vancouver. Offstreet facilities, common in many European jurisdictions, will be particularly valuable to the recreational cyclists coming from the seawall, who may not feel comfortable riding in traffic.

Like the Bicycle Advisory Committee, we do have some concerns regarding the accommodation of commuter cyclists on Carrall St. Commuters entering downtown from the Adanac or Ontario bicycle routes may want to connect to the Pender St. bicycle lanes, and the Downtown Transportation Plan intended this connection to be made via Carrall St. The Carrall St. design needs to consider how recreational and commuter cyclist traffic will interact on the street. Also, during events and festivals, the concept design calls for the closure of bicycle lanes, which could inconvenience commuters who rely on the route. The VACC would like to see Abbott St. designed as an alternative corridor for commuter cyclists.

We also have some concerns regarding traffic calming on this street. At present, traffic volumes are relatively low, and it is possible to envision commuter cyclists using the roadway if recreational traffic is moving slowly. However, if this street becomes an attractive public space as intended, motor vehicle traffic volumes would likely increase. Also, as the Northeast False Creek, Chinatown and Southeast False Creek areas develop, population in the area will rise substantially, bringing new traffic concerns. We therefore encourage the city to include adequate traffic calming features on the Greenway, to ensure that vehicle traffic, now and in the future, is limited and moves at a speed appropriate to a Greenway.

At the north end there are plans for a new pedestrian bridge crossing the rail tracks and connecting to Portside Park. If a new structure is constructed, we would prefer a bridge that also accommodates cyclist crossing.

Finally, the staff report describes a long-term vision for the street. That vision includes diverting cyclists to the roadway and converting the recreational paths to sidewalk space. We disagree with these aspects of the long-term vision, and we would prefer to keep cyclists at sidewalk level and to maintain recreational space along Carrall St. We have no problems with the other aspects of the long-term vision: reduced parking, lower traffic volumes, and diversion of TransLink buses from Carrall St.

Although we think it important to point out these issues, overall, we like the basic street layout and the concepts suggested in this greenway plan. We look forward to further discussions with staff as this project enters the detailed design phase.

Sincerely,

H-JEH (Jack) Becker
Chair, VACC Vancouver Committee
Director, Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition