

From:
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 9:00 PM
To: Councillors
Subject: Feb. 5 PLUC Meeting Hillside Quadra NAG correspondence

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Highway Access Bylaw Amendment

The Hillside Quadra Neighbourhood Action Group is supportive of the amendment to the Highway Access Bylaw being put forward by Councillors Ben Isitt and Jeremy Loveday, to give the Director of Engineering more discretion in determining appropriate vehicle access to a site, rather than requiring access from the most minor road.

The City has put in place a Greenways Plan, Cycling Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan and Official Community Plan. On some projects the requirement that vehicle access be from a minor street conflicts with some or all of the above active transportation planning priorities.

The requirement for access from a minor street can result in conflict between community desires for safe streets and developers requirements to advance their projects with minimal delay. Most recently this was seen in the Bosa proposal utilizing Mason Street for access in the North Park neighbourhood.

In the Hillside Quadra neighbourhood we are concerned that the current Highway Access Bylaw will require that access to the 320 bed, 5 story "Summit" Seniors health facility planned for 955 Hillside, to be from a narrow unnamed side alley which deposits traffic onto a congested part of Kings Rd. Kings Rd is a designated Greenway and also a proposed "All Ages and Abilities Route" on the new Bicycle Master Plan. It is currently an area active with cyclists, pedestrians and skate boarders.

This alleyway is also adjacent to the Wark Street Playground, recently upgraded by the City of Victoria, and a popular neighbourhood café with outdoor seating. In short, this area is a vital part of our neighbourhood where we gather to chat, have coffee and watch our kids in the playground, experiencing the type of community promoted in City of Victoria planning objectives.

According to the City of Victoria's website "a greenway is a corridor of protected open space that is managed for conservation and/or recreation." Also from the website regarding the Cycling Master Plan "potential All Ages and Abilities routes will be designed to feel comfortable for a range of riders and offer a low-stress, high quality cycling experience." This is further described as possibly including traffic calmed local streets and off-street pathways.

A small road absorbing the vehicle traffic for a large development is not consistent with many of the competing values the City of Victoria has established, but the current bylaw gives City staff no ability to take such factors into account. Therefore, we ask you to adopt the proposed amendment to the Highway Access Bylaw.

Thank you,

Rowena Locklin
On behalf of the Hillside Quadra Neighbourhood Action Group