



January 17, 2022

Michael Braun, Operations Manager  
Shannon Payne, Area Manager  
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
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Sent by e-mail: Michael.Braun@gov.bc.ca  
Sent by e-mail: Shannon.Payne@gov.bc.ca

Dear Michael and Shannon,

**Re: Sea to Sky Road Cycling Maintenance and Infrastructure Priorities – January 2022 Update**

**Introduction**

The Whistler Cycling Club offers the following assessment of progress made during recent years to improve the safety of road cycling throughout the Sea to Sky corridor and the club's priorities for further improvements. The club and its members are grateful to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and its contractors for the safety improvements that have been made over the past years.

The Covid-19 pandemic has played havoc with road cycling group rides and events during the 2020 and 2021 riding seasons. At the same time, the recognition that cycling is a healthy form of outdoor recreation has resulted in record bike sales and many new riders on the roads. Also, the recent active transportation initiatives by federal, provincial and municipal governments will add to the volume of riders in urban areas of the Sea to Sky corridor.

An October 2020 *Transportation Action Plan 2020 Results* report to the Resort Municipality of Whistler noted that, "Summer traffic volumes [at Brio] increased steadily from 2006 through to 2016, and remained consistent from 2016 through 2019." During the past two pandemic summers, club members noted increasing volumes of Highway 99 traffic, which highlights the need for drivers and cyclists to safely share the road.

Our comments are focused on sections of Highway 99 from Squamish to Lillooet Lake, plus the Callaghan Valley, Pemberton Meadows and Portage Road to D'Arcy. Previously, we commented on the section of Highway 99 from Horseshoe Bay to Squamish. However, due to increasing traffic and the very narrow and dangerous northbound shoulder from Britannia Beach to Murrin Park, we don't encourage club members to ride on the highway south of Squamish.

**Maintenance**

In general, a 1.5 to 2 m wide paved shoulder, free of gravel/debris/potholes/cracks and separated from vehicle traffic by a white fog line, is the most important factor for the safety and enjoyment of recreational and transportation cyclists using Highway 99.

Recent progress made to improve cycling safety:

- The sweeping of the Highway 99 shoulder was generally good between Nicklaus North and Callaghan entrance during the 2021 riding season.
- Pemberton Meadows Road and Portage Road from Mt. Currie to D'Arcy were clear of gravel and debris throughout the riding season.
- Fog line repainting was completed in mid-spring from Pemberton to Lillooet Lake.



WCC priorities for continued improvement:

- Improve shoulder sweeping between Emerald Estates and Pemberton. In particular the amount of gravel on the highway shoulder between Emerald Estates and WedgeWoods, in combination with the poor condition of the shoulder pavement (see below), forced cyclists to ride in the vehicle lane.
- The Highway 99 shoulder pavement is in very poor physical condition in most areas between Emerald Estates and Pemberton, except for the seven kilometres that were repaved in 2015-16. The approximately 3 kilometres between the end of new pavement at Emerald Estates and WedgeWoods is the worst; repaving of this entire section of road surface would be the best remedy.
- Fog line repainting following the spring sweep is recommended annually in all areas, including those with recessed fog lines. In 2021 the fog line between Function Junction and Nicklaus North was repainted on October 29, so it was not visible to drivers for the entire riding season. A recessed fog line makes the paint last longer, but does not negate the need to repaint annually in the spring.
- When lane repaving is carried out, ensure that the new pavement does not partially overlap the shoulder, creating a seam in the shoulder pavement, which can be a hazard for road cyclists. This overlap is present on all repaving projects carried out by Miller Capilano from Function Junction south to Squamish. The original shoulder pavement is in good condition and does not require new asphalt.

### **Infrastructure Enhancements and Investments**

Highway capital projects are an opportunity to make lasting one-time advancements to cycling infrastructure. The seven kilometres of paving north of WedgeWoods completed in 2015-16 and the five kilometres of paving from Nicklaus North to past Emerald in 2021 are improvements that will benefit drivers and cyclists for years to come. The highway upgrade from Horseshoe Bay to Whistler (with a few exceptions) prior to the 2010 Games also created a road cycling amenity that made the Whistler Gran Fondo possible.

Recent progress made to improve cycling safety:

- The full repaving in 2021 from Nicklaus North to Emerald Estates has created an excellent highway shoulder for recreational and transportation cyclists.

WCC priorities for continued improvement:

- Continue to repave sections of Highway 99 from Emerald Estates to Pemberton using the same pavement width and quality as the 2015-16 improvements. The section from Emerald Estates to WedgeWoods should be given priority.
- Continue to repave deteriorated sections of the Callaghan Valley Road to Whistler Olympic Park. The road is a wonderful amenity for cyclists and is now part of the medio route of the Whistler Gran Fondo. The vehicle lanes and shoulder are very badly cracked and are increasingly dangerous to cyclists.
- Complete the northbound shoulder widening between Britannia Beach and Murrin Park. With the increasing volume of traffic this remains the single most dangerous section of Highway 99 for cyclists in the corridor.

### **Communication, Education, Regulation**

The Highway 99 shoulder can be safe for cycling if it is well maintained and if both cyclists and drivers know and follow the rules for sharing the road. Road signage and pavement markings can reinforce those rules and indicate to cyclists and drivers that cycling is permitted. Proposed new regulations, such as safe passing distance legislation, can make cycling even safer.



Recent progress made to improve cycling safety:

- Share the Road signs have been installed in some areas, and Sea to Sky Cycling Route signs have been installed at each community from Horseshoe Bay to Pemberton.
- The Whistler Cycling Club has been educating its members in the practices of safely, legally and respectfully sharing the road, including the use of daytime lights to be more visible to drivers.

WCC priorities for continued improvement:

- Install additional Share the Road signs throughout the corridor, especially between Whistler and Squamish.
- Consider painting bicycle stencils in urban areas.
- Continue to educate cyclists and drivers of safe practices for sharing the road.
- Utilize the overhead signs at Alice Lake and Alta Lake Road more frequently throughout the summer to alert drivers to the presence of cyclists.
- The Whistler Cycling Club will continue to advocate for legislation in B.C. to require that vehicles maintain a minimum 1.5 m separation distance when passing a bicycle.

We would be pleased to have the opportunity to discuss with MOTI staff.

Sincerely,

Bob Barnett  
President, Whistler Cycling Club  
[www.whistlercyclingclub.ca](http://www.whistlercyclingclub.ca)

cc: Jordan Sturdy, MLA for West Vancouver-Sea to Sky  
James Hallisey, General Manager, Infrastructure Services, RMOW  
WCC Advocacy Committee: John Morley, Ged Hague, Frank Savage