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**Subject:**

Email - Communication - Lonnie Bley - Victoria Avenue Bikeway project - CK 6000-5

I am wondering if the transport committee really heard? Or really listened to the community. The Transport Committee didn't even listen to their own research and surveys supplied by the Active Transport Group. I am hoping more from the councillors when the motion comes to city council. The Active Transport Committee recommended option #4 to the Transportation Committee. This option met most of the criteria for residents and bikers. It was the best compromise. If there needed to be a bike lane on Victoria avenue, option #4 struck the best balance for residents and bikers. I am not sure how the Transport Committee got to option #1 so quickly. There was little or no discussion how #1 answered any of the concerns. Other than the bikers concerns as their spokesperson was present for questions and comments. The residents were not given a second thought. There was only one slight pause. This was by Mayor Charlie Clark. He was wondering how a bike lane could be accomplished without so many negative consequences to the residents. He actually even mentioned Melrose avenue as this is a road he bikes on as well. I applaud Charlie for stopping and asking the committee to think. However, the committee did not stop, they merely mentioned the increased cost of #4 and how this would stop future projects. Then there was a rushed motion to support #1 at the city council meeting. This is all accomplished in under an hour. The residents worst fears came to life and came to threaten their homes and families with out any real consideration or thought. The residents are scared and vulnerable and now at your mercy.

Why did the committee not stop and check the list of what was heard? Why did the committee not consider what the Active Transport Group put forward. The Active Transport group spent years coming up with the recommendation. And the councillors put it down in minutes. Why did the city put so much time, more than 5 years, and so much money, hundreds of thousands, into the research if it was going to be ignored. This is ludicrous use of time and energy and money. A well done project is always backed by research, and is well designed by professionals. I was actually surprised that the Active Transport group put it all together and came up with an amicable solution. It was a lot of information to gather and compute. Believe me after talking to many of them many times, I was impressed that they heard and followed through the best they could with all the research they had. They came up with a compromise for Victoria avenue. Residents would have preferred one of the wider side streets. But #4 was the best option for Victoria avenue. I was even more surprised when all the research and recommendations were ignored by the Transportation Committee.

After ignoring the research and the recommendations by the Active Transportation Group, the committee never gave any consideration to any of the concerns by the residents. There was no discussion about how residents were going to access their homes, how residents were going to maintain their homes, how deliveries could be made to the homes, how services could reach the homes, how regular home activities were going to be carried out, how disability transport and taxis were going to be accessed. These issues need to be addressed. Front access cannot be blocked with out any proper alternatives. The back alley is not a solution. The alley system is not maintained and not accessible for several months each year during the snow filled winter and the icy ruts of spring. There is no lighting and no paths. There will be injuries if residents, service personnel, and visitors are forced to use these alleys. I might also mention that the alleys are seeing increased traffic and are a concern to families with children and pets. The residents have even posted signs for drivers to slow down and pay attention. There is just no room for pedestrians and local traffic and service vehicles.

The committee needs to think of the disabled and how they will access their homes or homes of their friends and family. Where will the cabs and specialty transport vans drop off and pick up residents. Even the city's Access transit will not have a place to drop off. It's impossible for residents to conduct their lives several blocks from their homes. It will be impossible to access your own home and for any services to access your home. It is impossible to live fully and enjoy your home with out front street

access.

There is the obvious issue of decreased parking as well. The city has increased the density of the neighborhood, increasing the number of residents and vehicles. Where there was a single dwelling, there are now 2. And each of these new homes also has a suite. So one family home has turned into an area with 4 families, and probably 6-8 vehicles. This has caused increased demand for parking for residents and visitors as well as deliveries and services. Some homes do not have any access to off street parking. It is an old neighborhood, where the homes are built with front street access only.

The committee went through processes very quickly to skip to the motion after very little debate. There were no comments just a motion. The committee didn't even pause to consider other routes and solutions. No mention how residents would be affected and what solutions were planned. Even after Mayor Charlie Clark mentioned Melrose avenue as this was his habit of biking with his family there was no reflection on the residents. Melrose is also the preferred route for most residents. Victoria residents are wondering why the wide streets with little traffic and few street facing houses wouldn't be considered. Is the mayor the only one concerned about the residents and how they are negatively affected by #1. Is he the only one who can see that Melrose and Eastlake are empty canvases ready for the infrastructure to be added to include any activity. There are no walks or pathways, no boulevards or meridians. It seems like the perfect spot to add a bike lane. The cost would be minimal. Victoria avenue is very busy with cars, pedestrians, and bikes, along with parks and businesses and of course homes. And this brings us to another comment of the transportation committee, the cost. They mentioned that #1 is a cheaper option. Of course it's cheaper, because it's an inferior design and inferior outcome. It just won't work well. And it will not be supported. Cost is a consideration for sure, but you also have to look at the final outcome, it's way better to have a superior project that adds to the community and is supported. If people are blocked from their homes to accommodate a bike lane, there will be no further support for any of these projects in any area. People will be scarred that their street will be the next to be blockaded. People already don't want bike lanes, there is certainly less support for poorly designed bike lanes that block access to homes and disrupt family living.

It was mentioned that if too much was spent on this project, other projects will not be able to proceed. Let's think about that, This is a good thing. Who wants a bunch of poorly executed, unsupported projects, just because they are cheaper. We need projects that are fully designed and completely realized and supported by the city residents. An example might help illustrate. The city may get a recommendation by the transport committee to buy a more economical bus for the city. The bus turns out to be a dud, it is in need of constant repairs, it is uncomfortable for the passenger, it is hard for passengers to embark and disembark. This leads to driver fatigue, increased injuries, less ridership. In the meantime the city purchases more of these buses because of course they are economical and the city can afford more. A cheap project should not lead to more cheap projects. This does not make sense. That is not how a city should be implementing its projects. One cheap bike lane should not lead to more of the same. It's just not well thought out and will not be supported. Please think about the design and the implementation and the consequences, along with the cost.

I hope the Transportation Committee understands the full consequences of the option they selected to support. I also hope all the councillors will check out the research, and information gathered by the Active Transportation Group. This is an important decision, the residents are relying on you to make a decision based on research, and communication with the community. For Victoria avenue, Option #4 is the best option put forward by the Active Transportation Group. Let's make sure the city gets the best results for all the residents. There should be no group of residents that are affected negatively for some thing that should be a positive. All city projects should have a positive outcome for all residents.

Thanks for listening to my comments about the Transportation Committee Meeting.

If you have any other questions for me. Please let me know. Communication is always a good thing.

Lonnie Bley