



## Let's make Commercial Drive an even safer and more inviting business community



December 9, 2024

### **Commercial Drive is special**

We all love Commercial Drive as a unique community that has resisted development for decades to retain its special character. Now, let's make Commercial Drive an even safer and more inviting business community.

This proposal shows how we can easily extend this special character to make it safer and easier for all shoppers and visitors, regardless of which transportation method they choose: pedestrians, personal wheeled vehicles, car drivers, bus passengers, and delivery drivers. None of these stakeholders lose; they all benefit.

### **Aligning Commercial Drive north and south of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave**

Commercial Drive has one lane of traffic each way north of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave to Adanac and two lanes of traffic each way south of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave to 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. To align the two areas, the consensus is to move the parking in the curb lane south of 1<sup>st</sup> over one lane, keeping one lane of traffic each way; the curb lane can then be devoted to patios, merchandizing, street furniture and greenery.

### **Making Commercial Drive safer for all shoppers and visitors**

To calm the 24 blocks of traffic from Adanac to 14<sup>th</sup>, the speed limit should be reduced to 30 kph in the traffic lane, we add special smart traffic lights for each mode of traffic, and we don't allow right turns on red. The flow is much smoother and safer since intersection congestion is reduced. All crosswalks should be painted so that irate drivers don't honk at or bully pedestrians using the crosswalks.

### **Free electric Hop-On Hop-Off buses**

Critical to this new plan are free electric Hop-On Hop-Off buses from Adanac to 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. This gives much more flexibility to all shoppers and visitors and allows the #20 bus to become an express, freeing up many long bus stops that currently take up five parking spaces for reuse as parking, patios, locking stands, street furniture, buskers, etc.

### **Making more space on sidewalks**

These changes remove obstacles such as parking meters, sandwich signs, and locking stands on the sidewalk, essentially doubling the capacity of the sidewalks without having to widen them.

### **Benefits for each user**

- Pedestrians and wheelchair users – We are all pedestrians when we get out of our cars or get off our personal wheeled devices to shop or visit.
  - Fewer obstacles on the sidewalk – signage and lock stands moved to the curb lane
  - Extended access to stores and shops via Hop-On Hop-Off buses
  - All crosswalks are painted to make it safer for pedestrians crossing Commercial or the cross streets
  - More amenities in the curb lane
- Personal Wheeled Vehicles – manual or electric: wheelchairs, bikes, scooters, one wheels, etc.
  - Traffic lane is calmed and has lower speed limit to make it safer
  - More lock stands in the curb lane
- Car drivers
  - Less congestion at intersections and less interaction with pedestrians
  - More street parking in the parking lane
  - More passenger zones
  - Il Mercato underground parking is more convenient
  - Better access to stores and shops via Hop-On Hop-Off buses
- Bus passengers
  - Express passengers have fewer stops; local passengers use Hop-On Hop-Off buses.
- Delivery drivers
  - More loading zones

## Implementation – Pilot program for Hop-On Hop-Off buses

To confirm buy-in from the stores, shops, and residents, the first step is a pilot program for free Hop-On Hop-Off buses. Once we see how this concept is accepted, we can finalize the full plan.

Without any physical changes to Commercial Drive, we can start a loop of Hop-On Hop-Off buses in a 24 block loop from Adanac to 14<sup>th</sup> Ave and back. This pilot program is supported by Build Local Communities, the Grandview Woodland Area Council, and Hey Ya! Rentals. We are in discussions with the Commercial Drive Business Society, Niki Sharma (our BC MLA), Jenny Kwan (our federal MP). We also welcome any community centres and municipal parties who want to support local communities.

The pilot program can start for a month and be extended to three months. There will be one 8 passenger electric golf cart making the loop from 11 am when most stores have opened until 2 pm. We already have one volunteer driver covering Monday and are looking for another six to complete the week. If we have more volunteer drivers, we can add another golf cart or extend the hours to 5 pm.

To cover expenses during the pilot program, we will ask for donations in the Loonie Bin on the bus – “your small change makes a big change in our community”. Stores and shops who want to help can purchase a Hop-On Hop-Off bus stop sign for their window for \$75 per year. This will help bring more shoppers to their location.

## Implementation – Detailed Planning

While the Hop-On Hop-Off pilot program is progressing, we can work on detailed planning. The current suggestions are below. When we finalize the plan, we will need to work on financing. Luckily, there is relatively low infrastructure cost since we do not need to actually increase the width of the sidewalks.

### Single Traffic Lane, each direction

- 30 kph speed limit
- Signage and signals for “No right turn on red”

### Parking Lane

- Parking spaces – can adjust for more or fewer depending on demand
- Parking meters
- Signage for loading and passenger zones
- Store’s sandwich boards that used to be on the sidewalk
- Bicycle and scooter lock stands
- Patios – north of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave

### Curb Lane, south of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave

- Merchandise tables, clothing racks
- Patios, street furniture, greenery
- Pop up space for buskers and Fix It Cafes
- Commercial bulletin boards; community bulletin boards
- Every two blocks on alternate sides of the street
  - Porta Potty
  - Containers for landfill, returnable bottles and cans
  - Containers for recycling:
    - plastic bags & film,
    - styrofoam packaging and meat trays,
    - batteries, light bulbs, electronics, small appliances
    - single use coffee cups

### Sidewalks

- Less congested since sandwich signs, parking meters, and mobility stands are moved to the parking lane
- Space available next to building for two sets of tables and chairs if desired

### Intersections

- “No right turn on red” at all corners.
- Smart traffic lights:
  - Pedestrians – all directions at one time; scramble intersections. There is only one lane of traffic each way so the duration of traffic light can be shorter. Right arrow for traffic will be steady red.
  - Commercial Drive cars, trucks, transit – no pedestrians. Right arrow will be steady green.
  - Cross streets – as usual but “No right turn on red” and separate general light for all pedestrians. Commercial Drive right arrow will be blinking red so right turn allowed if safe.

## Implementation – What you can do now

1. Comment on this document. Especially what do you think we have done wrong?
2. Consider volunteering as a driver for the pilot program.
3. Talk to your friends and neighbours.
4. Contact us if you have connections with the City or TransLink.

Please contact [build.local.communities@gmail.com](mailto:build.local.communities@gmail.com).

## Sponsors

**Build Local Communities**



## Visual Aids

**South from 1st Ave to 14th Ave**, there are currently two lanes of traffic and one parking lane in each direction. Add “fun activities” in curb lane and remove one lane of traffic.

	Current layout	Proposed plan
Sidewalk	Pedestrians, pets, manual & motorized wheelchairs, signs, lock stands, tables & chairs, clothing racks, merchandise tables	5 kph: Pedestrians, pets, manual & motorized wheelchairs. Optional table with two chairs.
Curb lane	Parking, some patios, loading zones, passenger zones	Fun activities: patios, signs, clothing racks, merchandise tables, street furniture, greenery, recycling
Middle lane	50 kph: Commuting cars, local cars, deliveries, local #20 bus, personal wheeled vehicles	Parking, loading zones, passenger zones, lock stands
Centre lane	50 kph: Commuting cars, local cars, deliveries, local #20 bus, personal wheeled vehicles	30 kph: Local cars, deliveries, personal wheeled vehicles, express #20 bus, free Hop-On Hop-Off buses

**North from 1st Ave to Adanac**, there is only one lane of traffic and one parking lane in each direction.

	Current layout	Proposed plan
Sidewalk	Pedestrians, pets, manual & motorized wheelchairs, signs, lock stands, tables & chairs, clothing racks, merchandise tables	5 kph: Pedestrians, pets, manual & motorized wheelchairs. Optional table with two chairs
Curb lane	Parking, some patios	Parking. Optional patios, signs, clothing racks, merchandise tables, street furniture, greenery, bike stands
Centre lane	50 kph: Commuting cars, local cars, deliveries, local #20 bus, personal wheeled vehicles	30 kph: Local cars, deliveries, express #20 bus, personal wheeled vehicles, Hop-On Hop-Off buses