

Mar 23, 2021

I'm writing today to express our concern over the soon-to-be released truck routing plan for construction of the new St. Paul's Hospital.

For years, Strathcona residents have been fighting to calm Prior Street. It was never designed to be an arterial. It passes through a residential neighbourhood, by two large seniors' homes, our local park and a community garden. The intensity of traffic made crossing Prior, even walking along the sidewalks, uninviting and unsafe. The levels of vehicle pollution so close to homes and parks, particularly diesel particulate matter, are deemed an unacceptable health risk in many other cities.

On Oct. 9, 2019, Vancouver City Council passed a motion that included a commitment to downgrade Prior from an arterial to a collector street. Part of that motion states "THAT existing City rights-of-way and priority truck routing on Malkin Avenue be retained and enhanced as necessary, to facilitate access to hospital and produce terminals by way of National Avenue at Station Street, and Raymur Avenue at Prior Street respectively."

The city is currently conducting a pilot project designed to slow and lessen traffic along Prior/Venables, including 24/7 parking, jersey barriers and bump outs to restrict through traffic to a single lane and lowering the speed limit to 30KPH along the park. We are grateful to finally be seeing some progress. We have recently begun working with the Park Board to re-imagine Strathcona Park as a healthy and accessible greenspace for all residents.

The thought of thousands of diesel trucks roaring through our neighbourhood for the next four years is completely contrary to all of those efforts. It will spark fear and anger in the many residents who have worked long and hard for change. As we have been left in the dark as to the traffic plan, we can only fear the worst. Before it is finalized, we strongly urge both PCL and City Transportation staff to factor in the safety and well-being of neighbouring residents and respect City Council's commitments.

Strathcona Residents Association