Open Letter to UVic administration and Saanich Council: Real Climate Leadership – Bus Lanes on McKenzie to UVic Now!

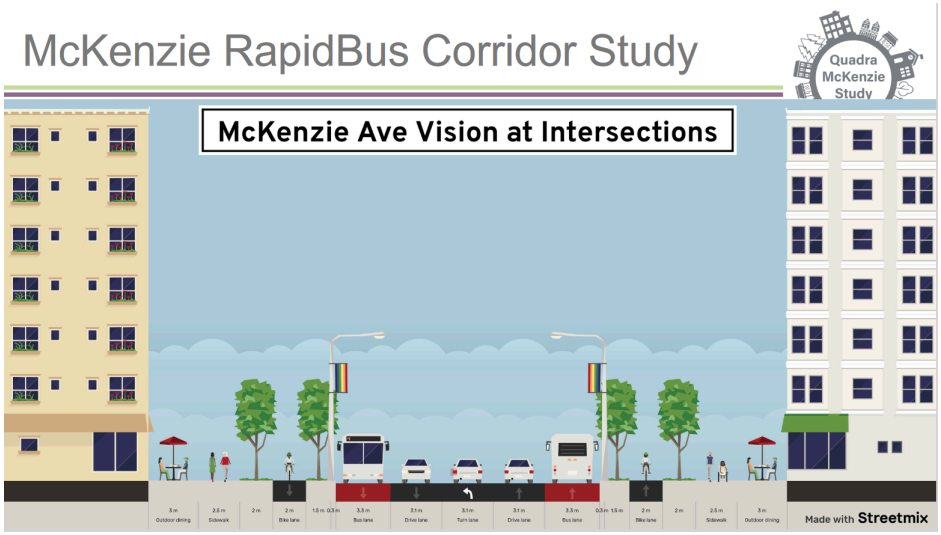
We the undersigned organizations, professors, students, and members of the public call on the UVic administration and the District of Saanich to show real climate leadership and get bus lanes built on McKenzie Avenue to UVic as soon as possible.

Saanich's Quadra McKenzie Study process is an opportunity that must not be wasted. Pressure from UVic could get bus lanes created this year, and get climate pollution from transportation trending down.

Saanich has good policy on climate action and prioritizing public transit riders over car drivers. But when it comes down to allocating road space, in the past transit riders got studies and cars got priority. It is no wonder that many people choose to drive to campus, even when parking is a major pain.

Saanich's Quadra McKenzie Study presentation includes illustrations of continuous bus lanes on a reconstructed McKenzie with many tall new buildings, but as of right now this study is in the draft planning stages and will take decades to be realized.[1] Bus lanes can and should be created now on the existing roadway, rather than waiting for redevelopment and major road reconstruction.

Saanich's Vision for a reconstructed McKenzie - decades in the future



[1] Quadra McKenzie Study Transportation & Mobility Workshop presentation. January 20, 2024 https://s3-ca-central-1.amazonaws.com/mysppca/uploads/redactor_assets/documents/a19aa8159911d2faff2586024f368e2cc8b3dc337052f38cb1f6ab1f38a0b2c1/4557/Final_Presentation_QMS_Transportation_Jan_20_2024.pdf pp 5 & 11

An example of how long these kinds of projects often take is that the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan started with an open house in 2010, and bike and roll lane completion is still years away. Victoria's plans for transit lanes on Douglas through downtown have taken even longer, with successive plans gathering dust for half a century.

As The Martlet reported, last year Climate Justice Victoria, the University of Victoria Student Society (UVSS), and other student groups endorsed the BC Climate Emergency Campaign's open letter on transportation. The letter calls for reallocating "road space from private automobiles to transit lanes, protected bike & roll lanes, pedestrian priority spaces, and space for trees." It also asserts that road space "reallocation to trigger traffic evaporation will be essential for meeting the ambitious CleanBC" target of reducing traffic (vehicle kilometers traveled - VKT) 25% by 2030.

As a provincial institution, UVic is ethically obligated to help meet this ambitious provincial VKT reduction target. According to UVic's Sustainability Action Plan, the University has set a goal of increasing the use of transit, cycling and carpooling to 70% of the modal split.

We call on Saanich to paint in 24/7 bus lanes on all four-lane and wider sections of McKenzie this year, and for the UVic administration to actively and publicly lobby for this.

Signed by,

Students & Public:

> **462 people** have signed as of August 16 - for current total see https://you.leadnow.ca/petitions/i-support-bus-lanes-on-mckenzie-to-uvic-now

Groups:

> Better Transit Alliance of Greater Victoria
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> Climate Justice Victoria
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> Community Cabbage
>
> Council of Canadians Victoria Chapter
>
> Fraser Valley Climate Action
>
> Greater Victoria Acting Together
>
> Greater Victoria Community Climate Hub

Society of Geography Students (SOGS) - UVic

South Island Climate Action Network

Spring Magazine

Undergraduates of Political Science - UVic

UVic professors:

Heather Buckley, Ph.D. P.L.Eng., Associate Professor of Civil Engineering

Keith Cherry, Assistant teaching professor

Dr. Trevor Hancock, Adjunct Professor

Dr. Christina E. Hoicka, Canada Research Chair in Urban Planning for Climate Change, Associate Professor of Geography and Civil Engineering, University of Victoria

Dr. Yvonne Hsieh, Professor Emerita of French Studies

Tamara Krawchenko, Assistant Professor Public Administration

James Rowe, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies

Kara Shaw, Professor of Environmental Studies

Dr Stephen Tyler, Adjunct Assoc Prof (ret)

Anelyse Weiler, Assistant Professor, Sociology

If you want to sign on, go to
https://www.climatejusticevictoria.ca/2024/03/13/bus-lanes-on-mckenzie-to-uvic-now/