

DATE: July 29, 2022

**ATTENTION: Central Saanich Council**

I request that this letter be reviewed by Council and referred to the **Traffic Safety Committee**.

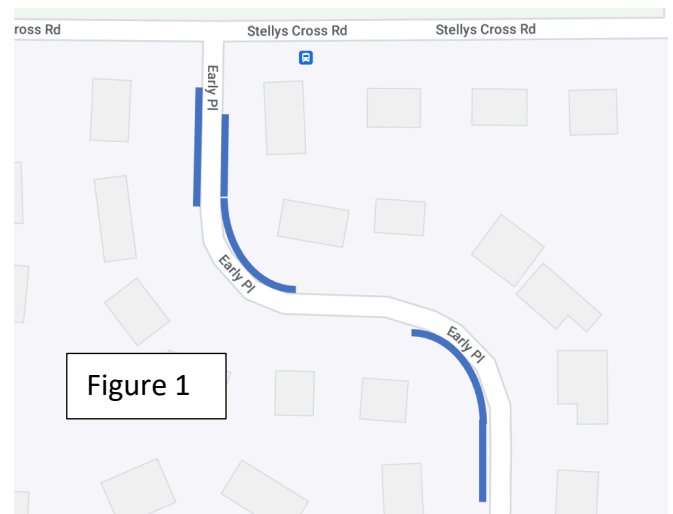
This letter is regarding **traffic safety on Early Place**. The main issue I would like to bring to attention is concerning excess traffic and an increasing frequency of speeding vehicles leading to deteriorating road safety for all user types. I propose that several mitigation measures be considered to align Early Place with the prescriptions and guiding principles in the Central Saanich Active Transportation Plan. I ask that council states their position on the intended use of Early Place for vehicle traffic and proposes alternative solutions and rationale if in disagreement with aspects of this letter.

**Background / Issue**

Early Place (and the connecting Verdier Road) have a history of being used as a bypass through Brentwood Bay, given that they connect West Saanich Road and Stellys Cross Road. Because of this, the relatively small street is subject to frequent speeding by vehicles that should otherwise be travelling on the main route (West Saanich & Stellys Cross). Speeding motorists regularly create unnecessary safety risks for other drivers, pedestrians, cyclists etc. More specifically, the curves in the road of Early Place have become particularly hazardous given the increasing use of legal on-street parking from the neighbouring Meadows community on Stellys X-Road; I have indicated the subject areas in the figure 1, below. Parked cars on inside corners of the road impede the line of sight for in-motion vehicles travelling in both directions. Many drivers identify this and will approach with caution. However, many do not and are these drivers are creating dangerous situations for other cars, pedestrians, cyclists, etc. On certain occasions, when cars are parked on both sides of the street (not just the bends), there is only sufficient room for one vehicle to pass. To compound this issue, some commercial vehicles also use this route (also as a bypass); full length tractor trailers even appear on occasion and have great difficulty navigating the road amongst the many parked cars.

**Why do cars use this route as a bypass?**

The rationale to continue to foster the use of Early Place/Verdier road as a bypass is limited. West Saanich Road and Stellys Cross road are arterial and collector roads (respectively) and is the main route with which vehicles should use to travel.



Interestingly, vehicles using Early place and Verdier road as a bypass only achieve time savings if they are speeding. If travelling the posted speed limit, the bypass actually takes more time (see Table below). I present this as support for mitigation measures described below.

Start / Finish	Route	distance	Speed limit	Travel time
Circle to Stelly's X and Early place	Verdier and Early Place	550 m	30 km/h	66 seconds
Circle to Stelly's X and Early place	West Saanich and Stelly's Cross	750 m	50 km/h	54 seconds

### **Early Place Traffic Safety Considerations:**

#### **1. Lower Speed Limit**

Lowering the speed limit would be largely ineffective on its own, it is (as stated in the Central Saanich Active Transportation Plan) an important first step to improving road safety. The number of parked cars and the regular occurrence of pedestrians and cyclists have made the current speed limit of 30 km/h unsafe in many sections of this road. It is also assumed that a proportion of drivers regularly exceed the posted speed limit. Lowering the speed limit would provide a foundation for other road safety measures.

Some important support for this measure from the Central Saanich Active Transportation Plan:

**Page 84:** Areas with high concentrations of pedestrians are suitable for reduced speed limits to strengthen the identity and sense of arrival in defined village or residential areas and reinforce safe motorist behaviour.

**Page 90:** Reducing the posted speed limit is an important first step to improving road safety in critical village / residential areas.

#### **2. Traffic Calming Measures**

I suggest that council consider, at a minimum, the use of traffic calming measures on Early Place. As stated in the Central Saanich Active Transportation plan, "Traffic calming is most commonly applied on Local streets where operating characteristics (speed, volume, short-cutting) exceed target levels." In this case, speed and short-cutting are both operating targets that (I would assume) are exceeding target levels; perhaps traffic volume is, too. To further support for this measure, I would like to note that **(1)** traffic calming measures have already been requested by residents of Early Place via a petition with 26 Signatories (see **Regular Council Meeting – March 2, 2009**), and **(2)** the motion to install the two speed humps passed in 2009 (**Regular Council Meeting – October 5, 2009**, see Figure 2, below).

#### 4. Correspondence Pertaining to the Request for Traffic Calming Measures on Early Place:

- a) T Cameron, September 21, 2009
- b) Copy of two Resolutions which were adopted on July 6, 2009, pertaining to this issue

R Hodd, Resident, spoke to this matter.

691.09            MOVED AND SECONDED

*That in regards to the request for traffic calming, speed control and street lighting measures on Early Place, Council approve the 2009 the installation of two speed humps and associated signage at an approximate cost of \$4,000.00, with the source of funding to be Reserves and Accumulated Surplus.*

Figure 2

CARRIED

Some important support for this measure from the Central Saanich Active Transportation Plan:

**Page 94:** Reducing vehicle travel speeds – a key issue in Central Saanich – is one objective of traffic calming. It may also be used to achieve one or more of the following:

- Reduce traffic volumes
- Discourage neighbourhood short-cutting
- Minimize conflicts between vehicles and other street users
- Improve the neighbourhood environment

### 3. Neighbourhood Bikeway

As described in the Central Saanich Active Transportation Plan, a neighbourhood bikeway is intended for low traffic, low speed streets where cyclists have the priority but share the road with motor vehicles. Traffic calming is noted as a possible measure to reinforce lower traffic speeds and volumes. Early Place would be an ideal candidate for this measure because the volume below 1000 vehicles per day and is the preferred route of many cyclists each day, despite the lane allowance on Stelly's Cross Road.

The Active Transportation Plan has identified the West Saanich Road and Stelly's Cross road as the future on-road cycling route (see Figure 3). I suggest that council considers the creating of a neighbourhood bikeway via Early Place would offer increased security for those users and would better separate cyclists and vehicles. Cyclists would also encounter vehicles at 30 km/h instead of 50 km/h. This would also support the **Ready Set Roll** program which encourages active transportation to school. An active transportation corridor on Early Place would also eliminate the need to create cycling lanes on the affected section of Stelly's Cross Road.

Some important support for this measure from the Central Saanich Active Transportation Plan:

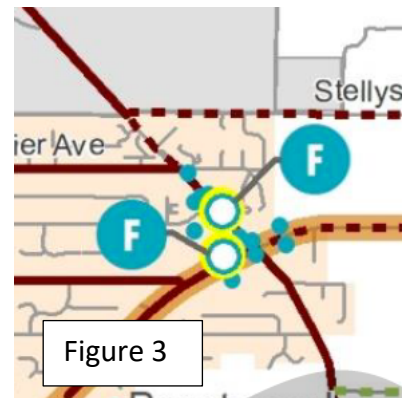


Figure 3

- **Page 24:** Pursue cycling infrastructure that appeals to cyclists of All Ages and Abilities (“AAA”) including providing physical separation from vehicles where possible to create cycling conditions that appeal to a broad range of cyclists.
- **Page 25:** Address traffic safety concerns, particularly where they impact multi-modal safety and/or impact willingness to engage in active transportation
- **Appendix A:** Neighbourhood bikeways are best suited for streets with average daily traffic volumes of 500 or fewer motor vehicles (maximum 1,000 vpd) and posted speeds of 30 km/h or less. **Various traffic calming and diversion measures may be used to reduce the motor vehicle speeds and volumes of an existing roadway to make it suitable for use as a neighbourhood bikeway.**

#### 4. Early Place as a “no-exit” road

Because Early Place is a small, local road, it could be considered to no longer be a thru-street (e.g. cul-de-sac). This would effectively limit vehicle traffic to residents only. As there are viable alternatives to those affected (e.g. residents on Verdier that use Early Place), I present this option for consideration. This measure was proposed to me through conversations with my council representative. We both agreed that this may be a dramatic option, but it would solve the traffic issues immediately and also provide a very safe active transportation corridor for pedestrian and cyclists. I am aware that this measure was proposed to council in the late 1990s but was, obviously, not adopted. Community benefits would be similar as stated above in “Neighbourhood Bikeway” except the road would be safer for users given that would not be any through traffic.

#### Final Notes

I would like to thank all that have reviewed this letter and I hope that some action will result. I have presented what I believe, are practical options that offer an increased benefit to the community and align well with aspects described in the Central Saanich Active Transportation Plan. While I believe a dedicated transportation corridor (option 4, or option 3) would best suit the community, I will continue to campaign for the installation of traffic calming measures as a minimum, given that it is apparent that the implementation of these measures is several years overdue. I don’t believe enforcement is a practical option at Early Place due to the chronic nature of the road safety issues. I have focused mainly on the aspect of vehicles using Early Place as a bypass; however, it is important to note that some residents of Verdier Road travel on Early Place in excess of the posted speed limit. The committee should take this into account when considering mitigation options, cause of the issues is not limited to non-residents. In anticipation of the committee’s response to my concerns, I would contend that any driver “inconveniences” that would be experienced by any of the mitigation measures described above are negligible, and that drivers lacking the respect for road safety on Early Place are encouraged to use the arterial and collector route, through the implementation of traffic safety measures.