

DELEGATION REQUEST

Names of persons speaking: Bruce Renooy, John Borer

Primary purpose of the organization: Request Lazo Road Upgrades

Number of members: 70

Mailing address:
176 Butchers Road
Comox, BC V9M 3X1

Contact name: Bruce Renooy

Subject matter: The section of Lazo Road between Butchers Road and Gage Road has seen a significant increase in pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic due to residential development in the area. There is now a significant safety concern for all users.

Specific request of the regional district, if any (i.e. letter of support, funding): We are requesting road widening in this area which should include paved shoulders for bike lanes/pedestrian activity.

Requested meeting date: September 10, 2019

Audio-visual equipment needed: Large computer screen for photo presentation (no power point).

Lazo Road Delegation
Presentation to the
Electoral Areas Service Committee

Sept.16, 2019
Speaker: Bruce Renooy



Introduction:

We represent 65 ratepayers in the area of Nob Hill, Lazo Road. We have organized over the past two months in an effort to bring awareness to road traffic issues along Lazo Road.

We are asking for upgrades to the section of Lazo Road in the area between Torrence Road and Gage Road. Our main concern is for the safety of anyone travelling on this narrow, relatively shouderless piece of road which has seen a very significant increase in vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian and other forms of traffic in the past few years.

This section of Lazo Road is within the Area B of the Regional District but is owned and maintained by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI), Province of BC. It is not part of the Town of Comox although the traffic density is directly related to developments in the Town of Comox, and Area B of the Regional District.

Google Maps to locate Lazo Road section of concern.

Lazo Road Dimensions

Discussion:

Lazo Road is an artery for traffic travelling back and forth from Comox to Point Holmes. This is an important commercial truck route, a residential commuter route, a recreational route, and a green space. The road is surfaced in asphalt and is generally in good repair but is severely lacking in dimensions and shouldering.

The BC Ministry of Transportation sets guidelines for road dimensions:

	<u>MoTI Requirement</u>	<u>Lazo Road</u> Torrence Rd to Butchers Rd	<u>Lazo Road</u> Butchers Rd to Gage Rd
Design Speed	50-80 kmph		
Lane Width	11.8 ft	11 ft	9 ft
Total Vehicle Width	23.6 ft	25 ft	18 ft
Paved Shoulder*	3.28 ft	2.2 ft	none
*if present			

Wide Vehicles on Lazo Road

Discussion:

There is an acute narrowing of Lazo Road eastbound at the corner of Butchers Road south. This restriction then continues eastward to the corner of Lazo east/Lazo north (across from Gage Road). Commercial trucks have dimensions that maximize road coverage. Most of these trucks measure 8.5' to the outside of their wheels, and 9.5' to the outside of their mirrors. Oversize Permits are commonly issued to low bed trailers for equipment measuring 9.5' to the outside of their wheels.

Recreational trailers and boat trailers also maximize their width to 8.5', and are also eligible for Oversize Permits of 9.5'.

Two commercial trucks cannot safely pass each other on the eastern end of this section of Lazo Road without moving off of the paved area and onto the shoulders. This result also extends to some recreational trailers and some boat trailers, as well a "dually" one ton passenger trucks.

This results in the destruction of the gravel shoulders on this road.

Irregular and Uneven Shoulders

Most of Lazo Road between Torrence Road and Gage Road has very uneven and irregular shoulders. The eastern section again is completely lacking in paved shoulders and takes a beating from the heavy equipment and other vehicles which drive off of the narrow pavement.

The pinch point at the eastern corner of Butchers Road south and Lazo Road results in traffic running off of the road and into the gravel shoulder. This results in a long standing large pot hole that is dangerous for any vehicle.

Gravelled and uneven shoulders are not considered to be a safe surface for bicycles (Comox Valley Cycling Plan, 2007).

Speed Limits on Lazo Road

Speeding by motorized vehicles is common along this section of Lazo Road. The semi rural nature of the area appears to provide an opportunity for vehicles to exceed posted speed limits. Given the hazards of the narrow and unmaintained shoulders, speeding vehicles risk loss of control in addition to being a physical threat to any other users of the roadway. The residential nature of the area leads to a significant cyclist user group, as well as pedestrian traffic. Speeding vehicles endanger these users.

An additional risk exists to all users of the Butchers Road south corner at Lazo Road due to impaired visibility from a high shoulder cut along the roadside. Vehicles entering onto Lazo Road at this corner cannot see an approaching vehicle from the west until it is within 85-100 meters of the intersection (depending on the height of either vehicle).

Vehicles travelling the posted speed of 50 kmph are travelling at 14 metres/second. Vehicles entering onto Lazo Road from Butchers Road south have **6.08 seconds** to react to oncoming traffic once visualized. In the case of a speeding vehicle travelling at 70 kmph in the same location, the approaching vehicle will now be travelling at 19.45 metres/second, and the vehicle entering onto Lazo Road from Butchers Road south will have **4.37 seconds** to react before impact. This is not enough reaction time for many drivers.

Increased Residential Development

The Town of Comox has seen a significant expansion of residential developments along the north side of this piece of Lazo Road. New housing projects have occurred along Butchers Road north and the new Forester Road Development. Additionally, the opening of Butchers Road north has provided additional commuter traffic to Comox to travel down and onto Lazo Road.

An estimate of 480 vehicles per hour was noted between 3:30 pm and 4:30 pm on Monday, Sept.9/19 at the corner of Butchers Road and Lazo Road. This was approximately 8 vehicles per minute.

Increased Pedestrian and Cycling Activity

There are many more pedestrians and cyclists on Lazo Road now. This may be due to the increase in residential development but is also in part due to efforts by many residents to reduce their carbon footprint, and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Green spaces are more desirable in this community. Residents have expressed a sincere interest in maintaining a rural environment. This can be achieved partly by offering Greenways to safely move pedestrians away from vehicular traffic.

Lazo Road Bike Lanes and Greenways

The CVRD Transportation Road Network Plan (TRNP 2014) was one result of the 2011 Regional Growth Strategy for the Comox Valley Regional District. This Plan confirms that the existing road network needs to be maintained. The document also suggests that an emphasis should be placed on promoting walking and cycling opportunities.

The Town of Comox has indicated that it will be constructing a new pedestrian Greenway along Lazo Road in the section of Lazo Road that runs north from Gage Road to Guthrie Road in the spring of 2020. Unfortunately, this Greenway will dead end onto our section of Lazo Road and result in further loading of pedestrian activity onto a narrow and dangerous road. We are not aware of any Greenway plans at present for our area of Lazo Road.

The TRNP clearly indicates that priority bikeways include Lazo Road.

Summary:

As mentioned in our Introduction, Lazo Road is an artery for traffic in the region.

- Speeding by motorized vehicles is common along this section of Lazo Road.
- Gravel shoulders are unmaintained, pot holed, and narrow.
- Lazo Road between Butchers Road and Gage Road is too narrow for the existing variety of traffic. Widening the narrow sections of our Lazo Road to meet the provincial guidelines would reduce shoulder damage from vehicle traffic
- Residential density has risen rapidly in the area, resulting in a significant increase in pedestrian, bicycle, and scooter traffic on the roadway.
- Greenways are bringing more pedestrian, bicycle and scooter traffic into the area yet there is no cohesive connection to these greenways along this section of Lazo Road.

Requests:

- Shoulder repairs and upgrading along Lazo Road be prioritized to provide safe pavement surfaces for all traffic. Shoulder repairs should include the removal of burden from the Lazo Road westerly approach to Butchers Road south. Lazo Road between Butchers Road and Gage Road should be widened to meet the MoTI Guidelines for local roads.
- Traffic calming in the form of Speed Reader Boards should be introduced along Lazo Road;
- Roadside Bike Lanes should be built along Lazo Road between Torrence Road and Gage Road.
- Greenways should be connected in the area to allow safe transit throughout the community.
- The Town of Comox, MoTI, and the representatives from the Regional District Area B should meet to develop a unified improvement plan for Lazo Road which could include bike lanes and greenways.

