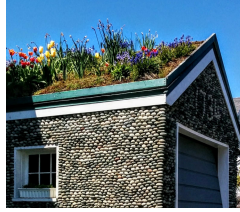


## GONZALES NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION



Mayor and Council  
City of Victoria

Dear Mayor and Council,

RE: REQUEST COUNCIL TO ADDRESS INCREASING PEDESTRIAN AND TRAFFIC SAFETY RISK ON MADDISON STREET & GLENLYON-NORFOLK SCHOOL

The purpose of this letter is to express support for the residents surrounding Glen-Lyon Norfolk Private School (GNS) and their position respecting the **Maddison Street People Priority Greenway**. A detailed analysis of traffic generated risks, and the projected traffic increases has been provided to the Gonzales Neighbourhood Association (GNA) by the Maddison residents.

The Board also recognizes the failures of GNS to honour previous commitments to build a suitable drop-off and pick-up on Richmond Avenue. This communication is also intended to provide additional perspective regarding issues associated with GNS's impact on the neighbourhood.

### **ISSUE:**

The lack of a suitable, safely designed and implemented drop-off and pick-up area for the school has resulted in an unsafe situation around the school. This risk can be expected to increase further in the event of the school rezoning and constructing new facilities. The most recent school plan includes additional parking off Maddison and the use of Maddison as the Schools "front door."

This is a complex issue involving a number of current and interdependent initiatives including the Maddison Pedestrian Priority Greenway as part of the city's Greenways Plan, the city Bicycle Master Plan, the Gonzales Neighbourhood Plan, the Richardson bike lane plan and most importantly for this particular risk, the expansion plans for the private enterprise, GNS.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The residential roads adjacent to GNS have been taking the brunt of GNS's traffic for many years. In 2002, as part of a rezoning proposal, GNS committed to building a designated pick-up and drop-off area on Richmond Road. The rationale for the GNS 2002 proposal was as follows:

*The original property layout of Glenlyon Norfolk House School has always provided for a driveway connection off Richmond. Richmond Road is designated by the City of Victoria as a collector road and is designed for a volume of traffic well above that of Bank, Maddison or Laurentian, which are local residential streets. Maddison and Bank St residents are currently bearing most of the school traffic load. Our proposal is based on the principle of balancing access and moving congestion off the street and onto the campus. Our transportation studies have indicated that the overall impact to Richmond Road would be minimal.*

The proposal also included blocking the entrance to parking on Maddison. After receiving rezoning based on its proposal, GNS built a theatre on a large portion of the land where the pick-up and drop-off was to be located. Consequently, the resulting driveway is now less than 1/3 the length of the promised driveway and is not usable as a functioning pick-up and drop-off area.

The sports field, which is located off Richmond Road, was built as part of the rezoning plan. It produces additional revenue for the school and users of the field are now directed to use Maddison Avenue for parking, pick-up and drop-off.

The actions taken by GNS since receiving rezoning in 2002 have, in fact, produced the opposite effect to what had been promised in the rezoning proposal and has exacerbated traffic issues and safety concerns.

## **DISCUSSION:**

There are several complex interactions between various city initiatives underway, including:

- the Pedestrian Priority Greenways,
- the Bicycle Master Plan,
- the Gonzales Neighbourhood Plan,
- the Richardson bike lane plan with traffic diversion strategy, and
- the GNS's expansion plan.

**It can be expected that changes caused by any of these initiatives will have an impact on the neighbourhood and competing priorities.**

The GNA board prefers that city staff conduct a thorough assessment as to the best way to address the risks identified by the Maddison residents. As we have witnessed in the past, taking action without fully reviewing the impact of overlapping interests can result in worsening the situation for other stakeholders.

**Although the GNA board supports the designating and enforcing the use of Maddison to that of a people priority greenway, cutting off traffic in one or more locations, in conjunction with the changes proposed for Richardson Avenue may create serious problems for other neighbouring roads, including Quamichan, Runnymede, and Gonzales. These issues must be addressed when reviewing traffic plans. In fact, limiting traffic on all residential roads surrounding GNS and diverting traffic to Richardson may be a more effective approach.**

We can assume that if GNS had honored its prior commitments, the current traffic problems on Maddison would not exist. Therefore, the GNA board strongly believes that GNS should be required to honor its previous commitment to build a safe drop-off and pick-up area, parking, and a main entrance off Richmond Road.

Actions to remedy this situation may include disqualifying GNS from using the remaining land on the Richmond side of the school for further development. That land could instead be used to provide a safe pick-up and drop-off for students. Although this solution may have a financial impact on GNS, it is important to note that the theatre that stands where the safe pick-up and drop-off was supposed to be located should not have been constructed before the pick-up/drop off area, parking, and main entrance off Richmond Avenue had been established.

As a commercial operation, and one that also receives some public taxpayer funding, GNS must be held to its commitments rather than being permitted to abandon them in favour of more revenue.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Council direct city staff to review the current traffic issue around GNS, and the relationship between it and GNS's failure to provide a safe and suitable area for pick-up and drop-off purposes, as well as parking on its own property off Richmond Road.
2. Council request that GNS fulfill the commitment made in 2002 to provide safe pick-up, drop off and parking on the Richmond side of the school.
3. The City designate and enforce the use of Maddison as a PPG.
4. The City review the impact of designating and enforcing use of Maddison as a PPG in conjunction with cutting off access to Richardson from Foul Bay on

neighbouring roads, and consider appropriate actions to ensure that the existing “problem” is not simply shifted to another neighbouring road.

Please inform us of the responsible contact within the city staff for this activity in order to coordinate input from the GNA on this review.

Regards

Susanne Rautio, President  
Gonzales Neighbourhood Association  
gonzalesneighbours@gmail.com

ANNEX A to .....