

April 19, 2016

Mayor Robertson and Members of City Council  
City of Vancouver  
453 West 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Vancouver, BC

Dear Mayor Robertson and Council,

It has come to the attention of the Seniors Advisory Committee that Council is considering the permanent closure of the 800 block Robson Street to all vehicular traffic. Due to time constraints at our last meeting, the Committee was unable to have a fulsome discussion of this proposal; however, previous Seniors Advisory Committees considered the impact of temporary closures on this block and we feel that their conclusions are relevant to any consideration of a permanent closure.

The previous committees did not oppose the temporary closures, understanding that the # 5 bus route would return to normal each fall. Nevertheless, members noted that the closures were difficult for many seniors, especially those from the West End. Many became isolated from the downtown area due to longer travel times and the inconvenient location of bus stops. Longer walking distances are a limiting factor for those with mobility issues.

As Council is aware, seniors are at high risk for social isolation; any changes in public transit that interfere with access to public amenities like the central library put them at even greater risk. This is especially the case during dark, wet winter months, when many seniors are reluctant to travel around the city unless they have safe, convenient access to public transit and safe and convenient access to their destinations.

sac letter to mayor and council re 800 robson 19.4.16.docx

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**We implore you to listen compassionately to the West End representatives who will be speaking to you about these issues. We also request that you instruct staff to develop, with Translink, alternate transportation solutions that address these transit issues.**

Sincerely

A. Colleen McGuinness  
Chair

Copies to: Mayor and Councillors  
City Manager  
Janice MacKenzie, City Clerk

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