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Residents fight traffic circle

[Brent Richter](#) / North Shore News

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A temporary roundabout at First and St. Andrews is raising the concern among area residents who say the traffic calming measure puts pedestrians at risk. Photo Mike Wakefield

They're showing up in neighbourhoods around the Lower Mainland but a group of Lower Lonsdale residents is hoping the City of North Vancouver will tear out a traffic circle at First Street and St. Andrews Avenue.

The city installed the temporary traffic circle as part of the Lower Lonsdale east traffic calming area — a series of temporary traffic circles and curb extensions, as well as controlled intersections meant to slow traffic on the streets between Lonsdale Avenue and Queensbury Avenue.

But for Gloria Lorenz, who lives near First and St. Andrews, the so-called traffic calming measure has done nothing but put pedestrians, including herself, at risk. The intersection is simply too small for the large circle, she said.

"The way the cars drive, they end up turning on a 90-degree angle, right into the path of people crossing the street," Lorenz said. "They're showing up right in front of you, right behind you, right beside you. They're not paying attention to the pedestrians and they're going right into where you'd be walking. ... I saw a man just about jump out of his skin when a car did a quarter-turn."

When Lorenz complained to the city, a staff member told her she could cross farther up the street to avoid the intersection, though, she said, that wouldn't be any safer.

"Then you'd be jaywalking and someone coming around the corner on the circle won't see you until they're right into you. There are a lot of close calls happening," she said.

Larger vehicles, like garbage and courier trucks, don't even bother trying to negotiate the circle when making left turns and just cut through, putting them at risk of meeting oncoming traffic, Lorenz added.

Lorenz isn't alone in her concerns about the traffic circle. Someone else in the neighbourhood circulated a petition netting 27 names of people asking council to address the problem.

What happens with the First and St. Andrews traffic circle and the rest of the infrastructure added to slow vehicles down, will soon be up for public comment. The city will be hosting a public open house in May to collect feedback on the five-year-old plan's measures and decide which ones are worth keeping, according to City of North Vancouver spokeswoman Connie Rabold.

"(The engineering department) has been investigating her complaints and looking into that. They have monitored the area in her zone and the issues within it," she said. "That will be going before council after their evaluation and determining which of the temporary roundabouts will be staying and which will be going."

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