

the Urban cyclist

April 2000, Issue 6

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The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition quarterly

Way to Go! GVRD Greenways

By Richard Campbell and Marion Orser

The GVRD is preparing a recreational greenway plan for the Lower Mainland. Greenways connect major parks and open spaces with trails, waterways, and other corridors. The Burrard Peninsula/Richmond Sector plan includes the Vancouver Seawall, Richmond Dikes, Fraser River, Brunette River, and Still Creek. Many of the planned greenways are also important connections for commuter cyclists. They will enable cyclist avoid hills and traffic. The plan is being co-ordinated by GVRD Parks in co-operation with the municipalities, the Fraser River Estuary Management Program, BC Gas, TransLink, BC Hydro, the various port authorities, and the Vancouver International Airport.

Several of the greenways include corridors the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition has been lobbying for.

Central Valley Route

This route goes from Vancouver through Burnaby to New West and Coquitlam. It starts at Science World, goes along the False Creek Flats, in or beside the Grandview Cut, along Still Creek, by Burnaby Lake then along the Brunette River. This is a really good flat route that is relatively car free and direct. Much of it will likely be completed as part of the new SkyTrain line. The section from False Creek to the Grandview Cut will be included as part of the redevelopment of the Finning Site.

BC Parkway

The BC Parkway is in major need of improvement. The VACC is involved in the BC Parkway Improvement Committee, which has recently sent a report on recommended improvements to the municipalities of Burnaby, New Westminster, Vancouver and to TransLink.

Fraser & Lougheed Greenways

At last a route from New Westminster following the flats from New West Quay through the to be developed Fraser View Park, along the Fraser River and then following the Brunette River to meet the Central Valley Route. At the foot of Braid, joining the extensive routes already planned for Coquitlam, there will be a route meeting United

Boulevard.

While some of the Greenways follow terrain unsuitable for cycling, the VACC is encouraging the ones that are suitable, be constructed to standards that will allow cyclists to safely co-exist with other Greenway users. Hard surfaces should be used, preferably asphalt but hard packed gravel is OK in environmentally sensitive areas. Separate bicycle and pedestrian paths should be constructed where possible to avoid conflicts. Shared paths should be at least 3.0m but preferably 4.0m.

The Richmond, Burrard Peninsula plan is to be reviewed and approved by the participating agencies, the municipalities and the GVRD by May 2000. The Northeast Sector Recreational Greenway Plan (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Belcarra, and Anmore) is complete and available from GVRD Parks.

For more information or to voice support for the Greenways plan, please contact the following organizations:

GVRD Parks

4330 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC V5H 4GB
Fax: 604-432-6296
Phone: 604-432-6393

Joan Sawicki

Victoria Office:
337, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
Phone: 250-387-1187
Fax: 250-387-1356
E-mail: joan.sawicki.office@leg.bc.ca.

Burnaby Office:
4732 Imperial Street
Burnaby, BC V5J 1C2
Phone: 604-437-5700
Fax: 604-775-1102

To support the upgrading of the BC Parkway bike path, please write:

Chair George Puil and Board of Directors

TransLink
1700-4720 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC V5H 4N2
Fax: 604-453-4626.

To support the path along the new SkyTrain, please contact:

Hon Graeme Bowbrick

Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and Minister Responsible for Youth And Minister Responsible for RTPO;
Victoria Office:
166F, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
Phone: 250-387-2324
Fax: 250-387-7156.
E-mail: graeme.bowbrick.office@leg.bc.ca.

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The views in this publication are not necessarily those of the VACC.

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British Columbia Cycling Coalition



MEET US

The VACC Board meetings are open to all interested in bicycling in Greater Vancouver. We meet on the second Tuesday for the following months at 6:00 pm.

- Jun 13 . Sanctuary Foundation, 34 Sixth St, N West
- Aug 8 ... Sanctuary Foundation, 34 Sixth St, N West
- Oct 10 . Sanctuary Foundation, 34 Sixth St, N West

E-MAIL LIST SERVE

Join our list serve by sending an email to vacc-subscribe-on@sustainability.com.

Our website is www.vacc.bc.ca

GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

We welcome articles (400 words or less) and letters about cycling in Greater Vancouver.

Submissions may be sent to:

THE URBANE CYCLIST
3 - 1676 WEST 10TH AVENUE
VANCOUVER, BC V6J 2A1



Or e-mail: vacc-news@canada.com.

We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity and length.

NEXT DEADLINE

FRIDAY, JUNE 23RD, 2000

The battle of Pender St.

By Ken Wuschke, VACC President

When will cyclists be recognized as an equal in the transportation spectrum? This question was on the lips of several cyclists through the winter and spring as the City of Vancouver entertained the concept of bike lanes in the downtown district.

After an extensive period of consultation with all user groups of downtown streets, the Transportation and Traffic Committee at City Hall chose the mixed bike and bus lane option for Pender Street. Essentially cyclists are no better off then before.

Perhaps the oddest part of the situation is that the staff report commented that over 80% of the respondents to the survey wanted dedicated bike lanes stretching from Cambie to Cardero. However, the staff report was to have a shared bike/bus lane in the tighter sections east of Burrard. Meanwhile, the western portion is to have only bike stencils showing that cycling is allowed.

Through some consultation with staff, the VACC found out that TransLink was very concerned about the movement of buses along this corridor. And installing bike-only lanes might cause problems with buses turning off Pender onto Granville, Howe, and other streets. What was odd was that a no time did representatives of TransLink and the cycling community get together to discuss these concerns.

Are City Hall staff doing their part to ensure that open lines of communications between all the stakeholders groups exists? It certainly doesn't appear to be the case. As such they have missed an important step in developing their report.

However Pender Street is not entirely lost. The current situation is only a six-month trial and the Transportation and Traffic Committee will be discussing the project again this fall to implement a more permanent facility.

Before the committee sits down to discuss the situation it is important that city staff have a meeting with TransLink, the City of Vancouver Bicycle Advisory Committee, and the VACC to discuss what necessary steps are needed between buses and bikes for a smooth traffic flow.

Now you and the VACC have to work together in getting bike lanes for downtown Vancouver. One is to ride, ride, ride... Staff advised the Transportation and Traffic Committee that there were only 60 cyclists per hour during the peak periods. Anytime you are cycling downtown go out of your way and ride along Pender Street. We have to make bikes on the street a strong force. Another is to put pen to paper and write the Transportation and Traffic Committee as well as the City of Vancouver Bicycle Advisory Committee. Tell these bodies you are mad as hell and you're not going to take it anymore.

Finally, the VACC is establishing a community committee to look at issues in the City of Vancouver and UBC. The Vancouver Committee will be lobbying City Hall for a better cycling environment not just downtown but throughout the city.

Let's not lose Pender Street. It's going to be a hard fight, but worth it if we win.

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Delta

The Corporation of Delta completed construction of an access path under Highway 99 via an agricultural tunnel just west of 64 Street. The completion of this facility will mean that cyclist travelling between the Massey Tunnel shuttle and the Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal will no longer need to cycle along Highway 17. Previously, cyclists needed to travel along the shoulders of Highway 17 and needed negotiate the Highway 99 interchange on and off ramps. The new route is mostly along rural roads will provide a better route for cyclists travelling to and from the Tsawwassen and Ladner communities. Funding for the facility was from the Corporation's annual cycle network capital program and from a Provincial Cycling Network Program grant.

Rick Walters (604) 946-3245

Rwalters@corp.delta.bc.ca

Lions Gate Bridge

The Lions' Gate Bridge Cyclist Shuttle will be extending its weekend schedule to 6:20 PM. This extended service operates until further notice.

Lions' Gate Project Office (604) 873-1500

Richmond

The City of Richmond's Citizens Cycling Committee is looking for new members to join them work on cycling issues within city hall. The committee is looking for cyclists who ride in Richmond for recreation, commuting, and shopping purposes. For further details contact:

Jane Fernyhough (604) 276-4288

jfernough@city.richmond.bc.ca

Surrey

Surrey will be constructing a multi-use pathway within the "Serpentine Greenway" (a hydro corridor running along the 125 St alignment) between 64 Ave and 80 Ave in 2000. The Serpentine Greenway forms part of the newly adopted "southern spur" to the Trans Canada Trail through the Lower Mainland. Surrey will be focussing its main works on the completion of the Trans Canada Trail over the next few years.

Brad Fisher (604) 591-4214

Bfisher@city.surrey.bc.ca

White Rock

The City of White Rock is receiving public comment on its Bike Plan, as part of the City's Five Year Financial Plan public consultation process. If approved, implementation of the Bike Plan should begin this year. Contact the White Rock Planning Department for details.

Tom Leatham (604) 541-2142

tleatham@city.whiterock.bc.ca



BCCC to update MVA


By Colin Brander, cbb@canada.com

The BCCC has been looking at getting changes made to the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) for awhile, so we set-up a MVA committee. It was felt that the Act is quite antiquated and needs major updating. Many jurisdictions have more up to date and better worded laws that provide a better legal operating environment for cyclists.

Among our many concerns were the "as near the right clause", passing laws and that according to the MVA, there is no such thing as "bicycle lanes" There are instances where the Act doesn't conform to what cyclists are trained by professionals to do.

While most people in BC were enjoying turkey over the holidays, the MVA Committee was hard at work, reviewing material and deciding on what changes needed to be made. I am sure that many of the committee members were overwhelmed by the volume of email from this committee. (There were 190 postings to this group just in December.) Thanks to the internet, we were able to easily see what other jurisdictions do. We found that there are many excellent examples of sections that are better written than sections of BC's Act and in other cases, we found the best changes were a combination of what other jurisdictions have.

On January 18, 2000, I made a formal computer graphical presentation to the ICBC Cycling Advisory Committee (ICBC CAC). The presentation and material was well received. The committee members took copies of the presentation away and I was invited back in March to answer questions. ICBC President Thom Thompson has seen a copy of the committee's material and is quite impressed.

Where do we go from here? The committee would like the ICBC CAC to endorse the proposed changes in principle and forward them on to ICBC staff to do research and to work with the BCCC MVA Committee to finalize changes and then to push them forward through the legislative process. The BCCC will also work behind the scenes to ensure that these changes become law. 

WORK WITH THE VACC

YES, I'M WILLING TO WORK AT IMPROVING CYCLING!

I want to contribute on these working groups:

- Burnaby Committee Chrystal 604-521-2801
- Delta/North Surrey Committee Ken 604-731-6220
- New Westminster Committee Andrew 604-521-2742
- North Shore Committee Ken 604-731-6220
- South Surrey/White Rock Committee Ken 604-731-6220
- Tri-Cities Committee Ken 604-731-6220
- Vancouver Committee Rachel 604-254-3554
- SkyTrain Committee Marion 604-520-7636
- Communications Committee Ken 604-731-6220
- Also I want to contribute to the VACC by doing the following:



New West Bike Fest

By Ken Wuschke, wuschke@canada.com

Currently there is a dedicated group of volunteers that are working hard at putting on a two day festival for cycling in New Westminster.

This event will be held on Saturday, June 10th and Sunday, June 11th in the Royal City and feature many events that are of interest to all people.



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While much of the event is still in the planning stages, there are many activities for everyone. These include:

- 🚲 a bike parade from the Westminster Quay Market into Downtown New Westminster ending at Hyack Square.
- 🚲 a colouring contest for New Westminster students.
- 🚲 bike rides from Vancouver, Richmond, and other locations.
- 🚲 A bike rodeo for children and riding tips for adults.

However, all these events require volunteers to put it together. If you want to help out for what should be the premiere event for cycling in the Lower Mainland, then please call Bruce Mol at 604-519-1442.

BC Gets Policy

By Colin Brander, cbb@canada.com

The province of British Columbia has had an Interim Cycling Policy since 1992. The policy was often ignored by the Ministry of Transportation and Highways (MoTH) and when it was applied, it appeared to be used as a rationale for excluding cycling facilities. Each subsequent draft became more and more watered down. The policy was not working and it seemed that MoTH had no intention of improving it.

In May 1999, at one of the BC Cycling Coalition's (BCCC) meetings with Transportation and Highways Minister Lali, the minister stated that he was ready to rip the cover off the interim policy and adopt it as the "Cycling Policy". This was acceptable to the BCCC, as we felt the policy was too weak. The BCCC requested a workshop with MoTH staff to address our concerns. The workshop took place on September 9, 1999. At the meeting six BCCC members, (including VACC board members Richard Campbell and myself), senior MoTH staff and other provincial government employees, discussed the issues and came to an agreement on the policy. After the workshop, the BCCC continued to work with MoTH staff to finalize the wording of the policy. Amongst the improvements agreed to were a provincial bicycle coordinator, a provincial Bicycle Advisory Committee, an evaluation process with the emphasis on the inclusion of bicycle facilities, not on exclusion and that they will be using current design standards.

Minister Lali said "Cyclists and local government will be involved throughout much of the project planning processes so that, as much as possible, highways and bridges are designed to accommodate cycling traffic." The BCCC will make sure that this happens by remaining vigilant by monitoring the implementation of the policy to ensure that it is properly followed and will take action if it isn't.

Due to the efforts of the various cycling organizations and the many cycling advocates who have taken on this issue over the years, we were able to keep this issue alive and finally achieve an excellent policy. It is impossible to thank everybody involved, but special thanks go to David Cubberley, Todd Litman and VACC members Peter Stary and Helen Warn who stayed with this issue for over eight years and spent countless volunteer hours reviewing and researching and providing valuable input to the process. 🚲

JOIN THE VACC !

YES, I WANT TO CYCLE FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY.

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 2nd Person: _____
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 E-mail: _____

The VACC does not sell or give out address information.

I heard about the VACC:

- through the media.
- from this newsletter.
- via the website.
- from a friend.
- from another cyclist.
- at a community event.
- other: _____

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c/o 4351 Tucker Avenue
Richmond, BC
V7C 1L9



Thank you!

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