

# U<sup>the</sup>rbane cyclist

December 2000, Issue 8

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The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition quarterly

## George Massey Tunnel

By Ken Wuschke

The flatlands of Richmond and Delta provide cyclists some of the easiest riding going in the Lower Mainland. After all, there are no hills to get in your way of riding around. While the two municipalities are side by side on the map, there remains an obstacle that is almost as impervious as the Himalayan Mountains.

The South Arm of the Fraser River can only be crossed at two points below New Westminster – the Alex Fraser Bridge and the George Massey Tunnel. While the Alex Fraser is not the best crossing for cyclists, it does allow twenty-four hour access. However, the Massey Tunnel is rather different.

In the late 1960s it was not unheard of that Highways staff would close a lane down to automobiles and allow cyclists to ride through the Massey Tunnel. But with the growing population south of the Fraser River this right of access was eventually taken away. The Highways Department responded by providing a shuttle service for cyclists that only runs during the summer months. It does not accommodate the needs of cyclists commuting between Richmond and Delta outside the summer months.

By the mid-1990s BC Transit, predecessor to TransLink, began a trial program of having buses equipped with bike racks running through the Massey Tunnel. This compliments the bicycle shuttle provided by the Ministry of Transportation and Highways (MoTH), the descendant of the Highways Department. However, there are still several problems that have not been dealt with.

A year ago Shannon Craig, a Victorian cyclist, wrote in *The Urbane Cyclist* of her frustrations trying to ride across the Fraser River. She rode along Highway 17 until she reached a bike route

sign that directed her to cycle against the traffic on the on-ramp from southbound Highway 17 to northbound Highway 99 to access the MoTH bicycle shuttle. Since her experience MoTH has improved the on-ramp to prevent trucks from rolling over, as this was chronic problem at this location.


Although the Highway 17 on-ramp to Highway 99 was designed prior to the

introduction of the MoTH cycling policies, it did go against basic highway design practices as outlined in the Transportation Association of Canada guidelines. That is bicycles and automobiles should be travelling in the same direction. The *MoTH Cycling Guide*, issued in April 2000, says that “cycling groups often feel that they are not consulted on matters that effect their ability to use the provincial highway system”. This is one case where the cycling community was not even consulted and we wound up with another dangerous facility.

The Massey Tunnel is used by more than just touring cyclists. Many people commute by bicycle between Richmond and Delta using TransLink’s bike racks on the buses. This critical service has its own problems. Vancouver cyclist Karl Winkler recently wrote in *The Delta Optimist* that using the bus for the one stop just to get through the Massey Tunnel cost \$5 for the return trip. Meanwhile motorists whiz by without paying any toll. It is not fair to charge the road user that does the least amount of damage to the infrastructure. Yet, that is exactly the situation.

Finding out where the responsibility lies to allow cyclists free passage through the Massey Tunnel by bus has not been easy. In recent correspondence with Helen Cook, TransLink’s Program Manager for Alternative Transportation, it seems that MoTH is to provide the lead in getting more bicycles through the Massey Tunnel without a toll. Currently TransLink does offer an adequate level between Ladner Trunk Road and Steveston Highway. During the morning rush period there is the opportunity for about sixty bicycles an hour. Now it is time for MoTH and TransLink to work together to offer free service to cyclists just between these two stops. The question remains as to which agency, MoTH or TransLink, will pay for this service.

Currently the VACC is trying to find out which agency is going to actually deal with a comprehensive policy in conjunction with the other. However, this takes time and lobbying effort. One avenue for the VACC is to use the newly created Provincial Advisory Cycling Committee to address this concern. Another options is to encouraged concerned cyclists, such as yourself, write to the appropriate persons that bicycle access to the Massey Tunnel is not good enough. You will find contact people on page 3.

Regardless of the method chosen, the VACC wants to have a frequent service that is toll free and available throughout the day all year round. Lengthening the MoTH bicycle shuttle season and coordinating efforts between MoTH and TransLink can do this. The main thing is that currently crossing the Fraser at the Massey Tunnel is inadequate for many cyclists and it is restricting their movement between Richmond and Delta. 

### Beyond this page

Highways talks .....	2
New Westminster .....	3
GVRD bicycle network .....	3
Annual General Meeting ...	3
Winterizing your bike .....	4
Getting involved .....	5
Vancouver report .....	6
Membership form .....	6

# the Urbane cyclist

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

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**FOUNDING MEMBER**

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 Wednesday for the following months at 6:30 pm.

- Jan 10 ..... Firehall Library, 1455 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Av, Vancouver
- Feb 7 ..... Sanctuary Foundation, 34 Sixth St, N West
- Mar 14 ..... Firehall Library, 1455 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Av, Vancouver

**INTERNET**

Join our list serve by sending an email to [vacc-request@sustainability.com](mailto:vacc-request@sustainability.com) with the words **subscribe VACC** in the body of the message.

Our website is [www.vacc.bc.ca](http://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  
VANCOUVER AREA CYCLING  
COALITION  
BOX 40074  
NEW WESTMINSTER, BC V3M  
6J7**



Or e-mail: [vacc-news@canada.com](mailto:vacc-news@canada.com).

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

**NEXT DEADLINE**

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2001

# Highways talks with cyclists

By Ken Wuschke

As most cyclists who have been involved in advocacy over the years know, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways (MoTH) seems to be slow to react to the needs of cyclists. That is, if it reacts at all. Yet, this past year there appears to be some changing of the old ways at MoTH.

In April MoTH finally made permanent its own guidelines for designing highways for cyclists. This was only after having an interim policy in place since 1992. *The Cycling Guide* encompasses the MoTH Cycling Policy and has information on “how to plan, design and construct safe and functional cycling facilities”. Most of which is reiteration of the Transportation Association of Canada’s guidelines, which have flaws when designing some of the bicycle facilities. Nonetheless, this is a major step forward.

And last month saw the first meeting of MoTH’s Provincial Advisory Cycling Committee (PACC). Essentially this is a bicycle advisory committee similar to those that many Lower Mainland municipalities have. Except this is on provincial level focusing on MoTH’s property – mainly highways. Currently the PACC is made up of representatives from Victoria, Nanaimo, and Vancouver’s cycling advocate groups, agencies such as TransLink, and staff members from MoTH. While the BC Cycling Coalition (BCCC) represents the province as a whole, it was felt that the PACC should be more reflective of the province’s cycling picture by bringing in cycling groups from Kelowna, Kamloops, Nelson, and elsewhere in the province.

The first PACC meeting was on establishing the group’s protocols and procedures. There was also the appointment of the co-chairs. These are John Dyble and Francis van Loon. John is the Assistant Deputy Minister for MoTH’s Planning and Major Projects section, while Francis is the President of the BCCC.

There was also time to bring up the various concerns of cyclists on provincial routes. When it came to the Lower Mainland there was an extensive listing of issues. The following is a summary of those issues and what the VACC is asking MoTH to look at.

- ✘ **HIGHWAY 1 (Vancouver to Abbotsford)** - As cyclists are not permitted to cycle on this route the VACC asked MoTH to work with local municipalities to develop a signed route to carry cyclists between Vancouver and the Fraser Valley.
- ✘ **HIGHWAY 1 (Capilano Road to Lynn Valley Road)** - North Vancouver cyclists had long brought to the attention of MoTH the need to gain access to this corridor. A few years back MoTH conducted a report discussing the issue but nothing has been done about it. John Dyble assured the PACC that he would follow up with local MoTH staff to ensure that the issue is brought to the table and properly dealt with.
- ✘ **HIGHWAY 91 (No. 6 Road to Westminster Hwy)** - As the alternatives in this portion of Richmond are the circuitous River Road and the ditch lined, narrow shoulder Westminster Highway, the VACC feels this portion of Highway 91 should be opened to cyclists.
- ✘ **HIGHWAY 91 (Alex Fraser Bridge to Highway 99 in Delta)** - MoTH staff are going to try to review the reports written in support of banning of cyclists.
- ✘ **HIGHWAY 99 (Highway 10 to King George Highway)** - As the only cycling route available in the area requires climbing up Panorama Ridge in Surrey and there is only one interchange between these two locations, the Highway 99 shoulders should be open to cyclists.
- ✘ **SECOND NARROWS IRONWORKERS MEMORIAL CROSSING** - The VACC raised the need for improved access to Burnaby at the south end of the bridge.
- ✘ **QUEENSBOROUGH BRIDGE** - Because of the narrowness of the westside sidewalk MoTH has been requested to look at developing ideas to reopen the eastside sidewalk. Also, to improve the situation in accessing the bridge at both ends.
- ✘ **ALEX FRASER BRIDGE** - We discussed the steel plate sidewalks and the need to improve the surface to a non-slip surface. It was also suggested that the access routes at both ends be upgraded.
- ✘ **OAK STREET BRIDGE** - To improve access at the Richmond end of the bridge.
- ✘ **MASSEY TUNNEL** - For MoTH and TransLink to work together at improving the access for cyclists for passing through the Tunnel.

Certainly there are a lot of issues beyond this listing that require addressing by MoTH to

*Please see MoTH and cyclists on page 6.*


# New Westminster

by Andrew Feltham

If you are cycling across New Westminster in the next few weeks, you might notice a couple of interesting developments along your cycle route. Recently the City has completed the first bike-friendly crossing of Moody Park, thereby connecting the eastern and western sections of the cross-town cycle route (7<sup>th</sup> Ave.). At the same time, the McBride Blvd overpass is under construction at the eastern end of this cross-town connector. Upon completion of this structure, cyclists and pedestrians will have civilized access to the wilds of Sapperton and the forests of Coquitlam. (there is some concern however that bears may start cycling in from the hinterland to pick berries in the gardens of Burnaby).

Yes, fellow cyclists, New Westminster is on the verge of having its first significant (and useful!) bike route! Once the major infrastructures are complete, it will be mostly the small things which are missing... equitable distribution of stop signs, route markings, and a couple of controlled crossings at major intersections. If you are out cycling in the New Year, give the route on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. a spin, and tell your friends!

This past fall the members of the VACC in New Westminster have been quite active. We continue to meet on the last Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Sanctuary Foundation (34-6<sup>th</sup> St.) to discuss issues of interest to cyclists in New West. With the shorter days, our weekly evening ride became a monthly weekend ride. The year-end ride was a tour of the Christmas lights of New Westminster (by bike of course) on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. At the end of October VACC-New Westminster hosted a "Riding into Winter" Seminar at the public library, which was well attended. Those in attendance heard useful ideas about what to wear while riding in winter, how to select routes for night riding, and tips for bike maintenance for winter riding. Most recently the elf and reindeer members of the VACC got together, with decorated bikes, to ride in the New Westminster Santa Claus Parade. Yes Virginia... you really can ride your bike in December!

We are already scheming about more cycling advocacy ideas for the New Year. We always welcome new members to join us at our monthly meetings or participate in our list serve discussions. Give Andrew a call at 604-521-2742 or email (feltham@telus.net). 


# GVRD Bicycle Network

By Richard Campbell

The VACC's lobbying efforts over the last two years have been rewarded by the inclusion of the Regional Bicycle Network and the funding for the network in TransLink's 5-year Strategic Transportation Plan (STP). As a result cycling routes throughout the region and connections between municipalities will greatly improve. This level of regional support for cycling is unique within North America.

Since Municipalities must provide at least 50% of the funding for projects, the amount of money spent on cycling facilities in the region will be over twice as much as TransLink's contribution. For 2001, \$1 million has been approved and is in the process of being distributed to the municipalities in the region. The STP calls for the amount to increase to \$5 million in 2005. However, until the vehicle levy is finalized or other funding sources are found, the funding for future years is still up in the air.

TransLink and the municipalities are still negotiating exactly what the network will look like and the formula for distributing funding among the various cycling projects submitted by the municipalities. Currently there is no formal means of public input for the Network. The VACC is encouraging TransLink to form a bicycle advisory committee.

While the STP specifies yearly funding levels for the Network, the actual amount for each year is determined by the Program Plan and may be higher or lower than that specified in the STP. Thus, it is important that you contact TransLink to show your support for the Regional Bicycle Network to ensure that it receives the funding it deserves. Write to the TransLink Board of Directors at the address below. 

## Annual General Meeting

Sat., February 10th, 2001

1 pm to 4 pm

Vancouver Racquets Club

4867 Ontario Street, Vancouver  
(Ontario Bikeway at 33rd Avenue)

## Who to write about issues in this edition of The Urbane Cyclist.

✉ Hon. Harry Lali  
Minister of Transportation  
and Highways  
306 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4  
Phone: ..... 250-387-1978  
Fax: ..... 250-356-2290  
Harry.Lali.Office@leg.bc.ca

✉ Board of Directors  
TransLink  
1700 - 4720 Kingsway  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4N2  
Phone: ..... 604-453-4500  
Fax: ..... 604-453-4626

✉ Ms. Valerie Roddick  
Delta South MLA  
201 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4  
Phone: ..... 250-387-3820  
..... 604-940-8877  
Fax: ..... 250-387-2749  
..... 604-940-8878  
vrodickmla@leg.bc.ca

✉ Mr. Geoff Plant  
Richmond - Steveston MLA  
201 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4  
Phone: ..... 250-387-2805  
..... 604-241-5590  
Fax: ..... 250-387-8596  
..... 604-241-4325  
Geoff.plant.mla@leg.bc.ca

✉ Mayor Lois Jackson and Council  
The Corporation of Delta  
4500 Clarence Taylor Crescent  
Delta, BC V4K 3E2  
Phone: ..... 604-946-4141  
Fax: ..... 604-946-3390

✉ Mayor Greg Halsey-Brandt &  
Council  
City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Road  
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1  
Phone: ..... 604-276-4123  
Fax: ..... 604-278-5139  
mayorandcouncillors@city.richmond.bc.ca

## Winter presents harsh riding conditions

- ⊠ Water, salt & other road chemicals, mud, silt, oils, sludge.
- ⊠ The bike has many gaps which allow contaminants to enter internal mechanisms.
- ⊠ Accumulation of crud holds moisture like a sponge, thus encourages corrosion.

## First Defense — Keep your bike clean

- ⊠ Rinse or wash it often (daily, weekly).
- ⊠ Use puddles (cautiously) to rinse rims and brakes of silt.
- ⊠ Use a gas station water hose on the way home to rinse off dirt.
- ⊠ Get a QUICKY Bike Wash Kit – fast and easy, \$35 from Guywires.
- ⊠ WAX the bike to repel water and dirt. This makes it easier to wash the bike. Water and dirt slides off more easily so the bike stays clean longer.
- ⊠ Clean all metal parts except rim sides and chain.
- ⊠ Use Armor-All to protect tires and plastic, but do not treat the saddle which will make it slippery!

## Second Defense — Use Shields

- ⊠ Install protective accessories to deflect dirt and water.
- ⊠ Install fenders.
- ⊠ Derailleur boots/shrouds – enclose derailleurs but allow proper function.
- ⊠ Boots around suspension fork legs, or rear suspension cartridge.
- ⊠ Boots around headset, especially lower stack (cut section from inner tube).
- ⊠ O-rings on BB spindle and wheel axles, against cup gaps, helps deflect and seal out contaminants and water.
- ⊠ Rubber boot around seat post/seat tube seam (cut section from inner tube) prevents ‘trickle down’ from seat tube slot down into bottom bracket shell.
- ⊠ Many newer Shimano hubs have integral designed rubber boot seals.
- ⊠ Improvise! Some riders have wrapped duct tape over exposed points.

## Third Defense — Lubrication

- ⊠

# Interested in getting more involved?

By Bonnie Fenton

As a VACC member, you may recall getting a phone call earlier this fall asking you if you had any concerns or questions about the VACC and its future direction, or if you were interested in volunteering some (more) time to the VACC. The results of that informal survey indicated that many people are indeed interested in getting more involved but aren't clear about what needs to be done. Realizing that we also weren't entirely clear about it, the position of volunteer coordinator was created, and I've taken on the challenge of organizing volunteer efforts.

By developing a strong network of active members and volunteers, the VACC hopes to develop a sense of community among cyclists in the Lower Mainland and to raise awareness of cycling issues among municipal and provincial officials as well as the general public. We feel more work (and therefore more people) is needed to fulfil our goals of advocating better, safer conditions for all cyclists and institutionalizing positive change. With this in mind, the VACC is actively working to broaden its base of support. The process to date has included:

1. brainstorming to determine what the VACC needs to do more of or do better in order to better serve the Lower Mainland cycling community;
2. naming and defining possible volunteer positions and the degree of commitment required so that people know at the outset "what they're getting into";
3. developing a questionnaire for potential volunteers to allow you (and us) to determine what time and talent you may want to contribute; and
4. publicizing what has been done to date (i.e. what you're reading right now) so that those with an interest can offer suggestions or ideas on the process as it unfolds.

The following are a few brief examples of the volunteer positions being developed. These reflect a range of time and energy requirements as well as background in cycling-related issues.

## Newsletter Distributor

- ✕ Pick up copies of the newsletters from the editor.
- ✕ Distribute newsletters to designated locations (neighbourhood houses, bike shops, etc.) in an assigned neighbourhood.
- ✕ If possible, try to develop other potential distribution sites.
- ✕ Time commitment: 2 to 4 hours, 4 times a year

## Information Table Staff

- ✕ Bring promotional materials to community events
- ✕ Be aware of the information contained in the material and be able to talk about it and about the VACC in general.
- ✕ Encourage people to become members or otherwise get involved.


- ✕ TIME COMMITMENT: 2 to 4 hours per event; number of events is flexible.

## Bike Route Review Leader

- ✕ Schedule and advertise rides on the VACC list serve (and/or elsewhere).
- ✕ Lead rides with the purpose of reviewing potential or existing bike routes and offering feedback.
- ✕ Record feedback from ride participants.
- ✕ Summarize and report comments (by e-mail or in person) to the relevant committee or to the Board.
- ✕ TIME COMMITMENT: 2 to 4 hours per ride plus reporting time.

## VACC Board Member (by election at the AGM)

- ✕ Attend monthly Board meetings.
- ✕ Chair or act as a Board liaison to a committee.
- ✕ Participate in regular e-mail communication with other Board members.
- ✕ Keep abreast of issues of interest or concern to cyclists.
- ✕ Be prepared to initiate new directions for the VACC.
- ✕ TIME COMMITMENT: 8 to 12 hours per month.

For a more complete list of positions, check the VACC website or come to the AGM in February. If you can't wait until then to get started, you can also contact Bonnie Fenton at [vacc@canada.com](mailto:vacc@canada.com) or at 604-734-1385. We hope you'll get involved. By doing so, you'll become a part of the positive changes that are going to take place across Greater Vancouver. Besides, it can be fun. 

# WORK WITH THE VACC

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

### I want to volunteer on these working groups:

- Burnaby Committee ..... Chrystal 604-521-2801
- Delta/North Surrey Committee ..... Sheila 604-930-1673
- New Westminster Committee ..... Andrew 604-521-2742
- North Shore Committee ..... Ken 604-731-6220
- South Surrey/White Rock Committee ..... Jean 604-531-3484
- 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:

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# MoTH and cyclists

Continued from page 2

make the Lower Mainland and the rest of BC better for cyclists. And the VACC will be there every step of the way trying to convince MoTH that these are essential for a safer environment for all road users.

One of the key issues in the discussion was that the MoTH representatives at the PACC are aware that none of the advocacy groups present are giving up their right to lobby the Minister directly. However, we will take all reasonable steps to discuss these issues at the local level first. Should the local MoTH staff only give the cycling community lip service, the PACC offers another avenue to be heard.

All together it looks like this is going to be a promising time for improving those vital bridges and highways that link the region together.

If you have a concern about any cycling issue that you feel the VACC should be taking to Victoria, then contact the VACC by calling 604-731-6220 or e-mailing [vacc@canada.com](mailto:vacc@canada.com).



# Vancouver Report

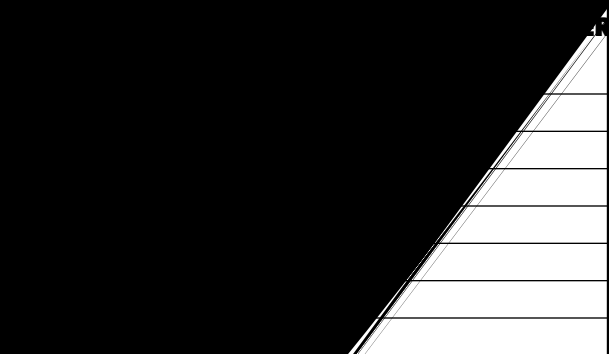
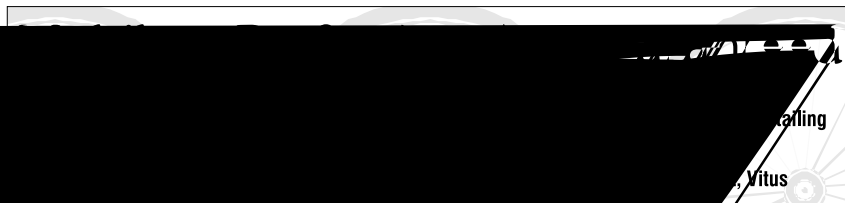
by Rachel Jamieson

The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition started the Vancouver Committee this year. Hot topics of discussion included the Downtown Transportation Plan, the Pender Street Bike Facilities, the Arbutus Corridor, and cycling issues at UBC.

The committee of 10 - 15 people met several times at various locations in downtown Vancouver. The Downtown Transportation Plan Brainstorm Picnic at English Bay in late August was a particularly interesting meeting, attended by several new people. The evening's discussions started with the City of Vancouver's 1997 Transportation Plan and led to a "Wish List" of downtown cycling facilities that was presented to the Vancouver Bicycle Advisory Committee the following week.

VACC-Vancouver projects pursued in 2000 include:

- ☒ raising awareness among facility managers at UBC of the dangerous situation for cyclists associated with parked vehicles on the shoulder of 16th Avenue;
- ☒ participating in public input and letter writing



...not sell or give out address info  
...contact individual members through

- \$20.00 Individ
- \$10.00 Fixed/
- \$ 5.00 Each A
- \$80.00 Corpor

Please make cheque  
**Vancouver Area C**  
and mail, along with  
**VACC**  
**c/o 4351 Tucker**  
**Richmond, BC**  
**V7C 1L9**

*Thank you*