

The Urbane Cyclist

The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition quarterly

Issue 18

www.vacc.bc.ca

Fall 2003

Southeast False Creek Development Plan - Lets Make it a Great Place for Cycling Jack Becker

Council has decreed that the Southeast False Creek shall become a sustainable neighbourhood and eventually house 14,500 residents. This stretch of land with Cambie St. on the west, Second Ave. on the south, Main Street on the east, and False Creek on the north may also turn out to be the future site of the 2010 Olympic Games athletes' village. Located on the waterfront, the lands are 22.4 hectares publicly held and 13.6 hectares privately held. The City is taking another attempt at developing an official plan for these lands.

The first round of public input has been completed with the next round coming up most probably later this year.

What the planners presented to the public included a combined 12 metre pedestrian and cycling path along the waterfront, an Ontario St. greenway and 1.5 metres bike lanes along First St. Now, one needs to judge the adequacy of this proposal on the following criteria:

- Are the proposed cycling facilities sufficient for the next 25 to 35 years?
- Do the cycling facilities support the target of a sustainable community?
- Do the staff plans support Council's transportation strategy order of priority for pedestrians first, then cyclists, then transit, commercial vehicles, and only then private vehicles?

Currently the plans call for the Ontario Greenway, a cycling route, to be used as an access road to parking garages. Will the proposed facilities handle future cycling volumes? Currently there are about 1,000 to 2,000 cycling trips through this area with Ontario St. meeting the Seaside Bike Path. There will be



The new coloured bike lane at the north end of the Burrard St. Bridge. (see pg 4)

natural growth of at least one to three times in the next 25 years or so. In addition, the equivalent of a new town will be built here. With 14,500 people or so, there will be 10,000 bicycles within this community generating 1,000 bike trips growing to upwards of 3,000 trips as more people switch to cycling. Within Vancouver today, 3.3% of the trips are by bicycle and in some areas the rate is as high as 10%. This community is ideally located for people to cycle to work and for other commuting trips. It is located just three km from downtown with roads that have little or moderate hills. Granville Island, the Broadway shopping areas, and the False Creek Flats are well suited to have a high cycling mode split.

With the completion of these lands and the Carrall Greenway, the tourist trade will generate significant trips through this area.

Cyclists should be out there in masses in the next round of public consultation to lobby and advocate for better cycling facilities that will meet future demands.

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Cycling Coalition (VACC)

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

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Marion Orser - President	604 520-7636
Colin Brander - Vice President	604 733-9265
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Jim Alix	
Richard Campbell	604 733-1764
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MEET US

The VACC Board meetings are open to all interested in bicycling in Greater Vancouver. We generally meet on the second Tuesday for the following months at 6:30 p.m. Sept 9 Oct 14

Phone **604 878-8222** for details.

INTERNET

Keep up on the latest cycling issues and events. Join one of our e-mail lists at www.vacc.bc.ca/lists

GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

We welcome articles (300 words or less) and letters about cycling in Greater Vancouver.

Submissions may be sent to:
The Urbane Cyclist
Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition
PO Box 40074 RPO Royal City
New Westminster BC V3M 6J7
604 878-8222
Or e-mail: vacc@canada.com

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

Next deadline:

**Friday,
October 24, 2003**



Upgrades to the Queensborough Bridge Andrew Feltham

Anyone who has cycled across the major bridges of the Lower Mainland has usually found the experience to be somewhere between unpleasant and terrifying. It is painfully clear that they were not designed with cyclists in mind. Cyclists deal with the bridges by gritting their teeth, by forgoing their trip, or simply by using other transportation modes. Somehow we accept these structures, knowing they are expensive and difficult to bring up to modern standards. But what happens when an upgrade is planned to a bridge in our region?

In March of this year the Ministry of Transportation (MoT) announced a \$59 million upgrade of the access to the Queensborough Bridge in New Westminster. The last time the MoT "upgraded" the Queensborough Bridge - in the early 1980's - cyclists' access was significantly "downgraded". For example, a feeder road was built with such a poor line of sight that it was necessary to close the east sidewalk of the bridge on the grounds of driver safety. Sadly, this and other deficiencies could have been avoided if cyclists had been considered at the planning stages of the last "upgrade". Even worse, we were stuck with the faulty "upgrade" for 20 years before an opportunity came along to fix it.

Looking forward, the VACC sees the upgrade funding as an opportunity to correct some of the deficiencies which impact the cyclist and pedestrian users of the bridge. We also stress the need to **avoid new problems** when planning the current upgrade. *If only cyclists' usage patterns could be included in the design parameters of the project.* To promote the importance of upgrading the bridge for cyclists and pedestrians, the VACC has met with and gained the support of New Westminster MLA, Joyce Murray; we have written the Minister of Transportation, Judith Reid; we are conducting "traffic counts" on the bridge to establish a baseline for current cyclist/pedestrian usage, and we are directing a letter writing campaign to establish broad support for cyclists and pedestrians in the upgrade.

The Queensborough Bridge sidewalk is used daily by commuters, students, recreational cyclists and tourists. With well-developed facilities, the potential for increased use is substantial. Considering the monies allocated to bridge improvements, it would be a shame to miss an opportunity to fix old mistakes on this bridge and a crime if new barriers to cyclists were introduced.

In conclusion, it is interesting to compare two other bridge "upgrades" which have happened in the past five years. While the only bikes traveling over the Port Mann Bridge today are attached to bike racks, the Lions Gate Bridge has seen a huge increase in bicycle traffic thanks to a greatly improved sidewalk width, railing height and south side access path. There is no question that the letters written by hundreds of individuals in support of that project ensured the success of the Lions Gate upgrade. The VACC would like to see a similar success with the Queensborough Bridge upgrade. Please check out our website at http://www.vacc.bc.ca/bridges/queensborough_bridge.htm and support our campaign by writing the Minister of Transportation, and your MLA.

Bike Month 2003 - Advocacy and Education *Bonnie Fenton*

Another Bike Month is past and we'd like to take this opportunity to let you know about the work that VACC volunteers have been doing on your behalf.

This year, the VACC participated in bike month events in New Westminster, Burnaby, Vancouver, Richmond, North Vancouver, and Surrey, with a focus on education, advocacy, and teaching by example.

We worked with Martin Prestage on three children's bike safety rodeos, teaching more than 300 kids something about cycling safety. Information tables offered an opportunity for one-on-one advocacy and public education at Mountain Equipment Co-op, the Commuter Challenge breakfast, and Multi-Fest in Richmond and attracted more than 20 new members. The VACC also led rides to the Stanley Park Bike Festival, along the Central Valley Greenway, and on the Trans Canada Trail in Burnaby.

34 people volunteered their time to make those events happen. In round (but conservative) numbers, approximately 340 person-hours were put in, or more than 40 eight-hour work days. For all of that, and much, much more, we'd like to offer a huge thank you to all of those who volunteered their time at bike month events. Their knowledge, enthusiasm, good humour, and good sense were, as always, much appreciated. They are:

Andrew, Araz, Bonita, Bonnie, Brian, Bruce, Carl, Colin, David, Dawn, Fulton, Gavin, Gertjan, Ian, Jack, Jeannette, Jenni, Jim, Kathy, Leslie, Linda, Marion, Mary, Maureen, Mona, Narayan, Rachel, Raji, Robert, Shu, Su-Laine, Thang, Ursula

Although Bike Month is a big focus for the VACC, we don't want to disappear until next June. If you know of any events that you think the VACC should be involved in, please let us know. We'd especially like to strengthen our presence in the less central municipalities, so ideas along those lines would be appreciated. If you have suggestions for other VACC-initiated events or activities - advocacy-related, educational, social, or other - please pass those on as well. Contact Bonnie at volunteer@vacc.bc.ca.

Transport Canada - Towards Sustainable Transportation *Jack Becker*

Transport Canada ⁽¹⁾ is preparing its third Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) that will be presented to Parliament in the fall. The SDS will identify specific actions for Transport Canada to undertake to promote sustainable transportation within its own operations and policies, as well as with other organizations and the Canadian public.

The World Commission on Environment and Development ⁽²⁾ defines a sustainable transportation system as one that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Canadians ⁽¹⁾ have long recognized that a sound transportation system is critical to the well being of our society and economy. The challenge is to balance this need while addressing the three elements of a sustainable transportation system - economic, social, and environmental.

Transport Canada held public consultation sessions across Canada in the second quarter of 2003 asking for input on its proposed seven strategic challenges and opportunities. Representatives of the VACC attended the Vancouver session. After reviewing the background documentation and participating in the discussion forum, it became apparent that there are significant shortcomings in the seven strategic challenges that Transport Canada is planning to pursue. In the documentation there were just two references to cycling and no strategy to improve the quality of the air (i.e. sustainability) through increased usage of cycling for any type of trip. Cyclists need to draw this to the attention of the Ministers of Transportation and Environment as well as their local Member of Parliament (http://canada.gc.ca/directories/direct_e.html)

Two areas that have not been addressed within the strategic challenges are:

- cycling, and
- passenger intermodal commuting involving cycling as a feeder transportation mode, for part of the trip.

The VACC would like to offer to Transport Canada 19 cycling related strategies (full list - <http://www3.telus.net/public/hjbecker/Cycling>)

[Perspective on TC SDS/Proposed Cycling Strategic Challenges.htm](#)) that would contribute to achieving the Kyoto protocol commitments. These strategies with their five focuses should be included in Transport Canada's SDS.

1. National Roadway Infrastructure

Funding of a national cycling infrastructure at a level based on regional, cycling mode split percentages of the total transportation budget. Sustainable development strategies specifically target urban or rural areas, rather than just on a global approach. Strategy for increasing commuting and tourism by bicycle through use of railway active and abandoned right of ways for rail-trails.

2. Cycling Infrastructure - Urban

Strategies for providing private vehicle drivers an alternative to commuting to work. Enhancing the cycling transportation mode alternative with strategies and support for cycling modal split targets, national and jurisdictional level cycling master plans, proactive use of Mobility Management or TDM, and vehicle specifications that will address a significant safety barrier for many people to cycling.

3. Cycling Facilities as an Integral Part of any Federal Infrastructure Funding

As a condition of receiving federal funding for any transportation mode, excluding freight only, provinces and municipalities must agree to provide cycling facilities as part of any federally funded infrastructure program.

4. Intermodal Commuting including Cycling as Part of the Trip

Strategies for promoting and facilitating intermodal commuting with cycling as part of the trip.

5. National Expertise or Centre of Excellence - Cycling

Strategies for Transport Canada to provide leadership in developing national expertise and capabilities in cycling as a transportation mode and in actively promoting and supporting ongoing discussion between government, the cycling communities, and transportation specialists.

References:

1. *Transport Canada, Toward Sustainable Transportation, A Discussion Paper for Transport Canada's Third Sustainable Development Strategy, 2004-2006, May 2003 July 26*
2. *Transport Canada, Sustainable Development Strategy 2001-2003, TP 13123*

New West Bike Fest 2003

Fulton Tom

This was the fourth year for this New Westminster event and the third year in which the event was held in conjunction with the Hyack Festival. The objectives of Bike Fest are to teach families about safe cycling and to encourage cycling, an activity that reinforces the livability in New Westminster.

Bike Fest 2003 was an unqualified success. Through the financial assistance of the City of New Westminster and the members of the VACC, ninety children learned safe cycling skills by participating in the Bike Safety Rodeo run by LifeCycle. Over one hundred kids also made decorated, reflective ankle bands to use when cycling. Bike Fest 2003 also presented a display of the City's Bikeways/Greenways. Members of the VACC and the City's Bicycle Advisory Committee were on hand to provide information on the routes. Several families commented that this was the first time that they had heard about the Bikeways/Greenways. There were also displays by the Sanctuary Foundation and Xtracycle. Gordon Hobbs of Cap's Bicycles provided a display of antique and unique bicycles. Visitors were able to get their pictures taken on a penny farthing and go on rides in a New York style pedicab provided by Cap's Bicycles.

The VACC is continuing with its Wednesday Night Rides in the summer months to highlight Bikeways in and around New Westminster. Participation has been phenomenal; 18 cyclists, on average, have come out for the rides.

VACC T-Shirts



Did you know the VACC has t-shirts? They come in various sizes (men's and women's) in white, blue, and grey. They have a bike and the word "because" in the centre of a spiral pattern followed by a list of all sorts of good reasons to ride a bike. The **VACC T-Shirts** are \$15 for VACC members and \$18 for non-members. Contact Bonnie at volunteer@vacc.bc.ca if you'd like to buy one.

THE VACC head-LIGHTS THE WAY TO SAFER AND BETTER CYCLING!

LED headlights will be included with membership, in fall promotion
Dave Perfitt

Light-emitting-diode (LED) headlights and taillights...one of the great dividends of modern technology! They're lightweight and inexpensive, and the batteries last for hundreds of hours of use! While they may not light up the road ahead they do make cyclists much more visible!

With the coming shorter daylight hours the VACC would like to see increased use of headlights. Planet Bike (www.planetbike.com) has generously donated and deeply discounted BRT Spot LED Headlights for the VACC. As such, we will be including them free with each new membership and membership renewal received between September 15th and October 31, 2003. This applies to all types of VACC membership as supplies last. Early renewals will have an additional 12 months membership added to their expiry date. (For further details on eligibility, please refer to the footnote*.)

The BC Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) requires cyclists to use a headlight and taillight, and rear reflector, when their bicycle is being operated between ½ hour after sunset and ½ hour before sunrise. This is a good regulation that helps protect cyclists from potential collisions and injury. Many less experienced cyclists start with a taillight only. This arises from the fear of being hit from behind, which is understandable, because we tend to fear what we cannot see. However the collision statistics show cyclists are more likely to be cut off by "left turning or pulling out from a cross street" motorists. Understanding this is even more important when cycling at higher speeds (e.g. downhill) after dark. So headlights are important for safe night riding.

Do you already have a retina-burning *über-headlight system*? Then join or renew with the VACC and get a back-up LED in case your batteries die while you are out on the road. Already got a back-up LED headlight? Then join/renew and pass your included (free) headlight on to that "un-headlighted" cyclist in your family or circle of friends. Better yet, offer it to that hard-to-see cyclist that you encounter on your favorite bike route. As long time cycling advocates, every once and a while we need to

fend off some anti-cycling (crank pot) detractor that is full of stories about some "no-headlight, no-helmet, law flouting cyclists causing chaos on the roads." Your help in getting headlights out to those cyclists not yet using them will reduce the time countering these red-herring arguments. Further, having a good take-up rate of this headlight/membership offer will increase the VACC's overall credibility, boost our numbers, and give cyclists a louder voice to the infrastructure deliberations.

The VACC Board appreciates yours and Planet Bike's support.

* "\$20.00 Individual Members" will receive one LED headlight per membership. "\$10.00 Student/Fixed or Low Income Members" will receive one LED headlight per membership. "\$5.00 each additional person" memberships will have the offer capped to one "additional LED headlight" (plus the LED headlight for the primary membership). \$80.00 Corporate Members will receive 4 LED headlights per membership.

The Urbane Cyclist is now accepting advertising!

Prices range from \$50 to \$150 per issue with savings for block pricing.
Please contact Teresa for details
unonym@hotmail.com or (604) 253-3910

80k for 80 years Jim & Kathy Alix

We had just moved (back) to Nanaimo at the end of June. On our first social ride with the Greater Nanaimo Cycling Coalition's ChainGang riding group, we learned that John Van Beek, a long-time member of the GNCC (and now their representative to the BC Cycling Coalition) would be celebrating his 80th birthday by riding 80 kilometres.

The 21st of July dawned bright and clear. Eleven cyclists met at Longwood Pub and set off north, up the Island Highway. A pair on a tandem joined us on the way through Lantzville, bringing our numbers up to thirteen.

We decided to stay on the highway through Nanoose and up the hill before Parksville, leaving Northwest Bay Road for the return trip. The highway through this area has nice, wide

shoulders (without rumble strips!) and much of it is beside the ocean, with few intersecting roads on the northbound side.

Re-grouping at the Info Centre at the south end of Parksville (water and restrooms...necessities on social rides) we said goodbye to Stephanie, who would visit a farmer's market in Parksville before returning to Nanaimo.

The rest of us continued north through Parksville, to the southern end of Qualicum Beach, where we went off-road on newly woodchipped trails, coming out in the Qualicum Beach town centre. Here, the group split; those who had carried lunches from Nanaimo relaxing on the lawn of the Town Hall, several others repairing to Lefty's Café.

While at Lefty's, we were approached by a frustrated cyclist, visiting from Alberta and wanting to know where best to do a long-ish road ride. We told her to ride north, up the "old" Island Highway to Courtenay. The shoulder isn't always that great, but the big trucks and RVs are now taking the Inland route, leaving the scenic ocean-side route quite pleasant.

After lunch, our return route kept us off the highway until the Englishman River, at the south end of Parksville, courtesy of a new foot bridge across French Creek.

After a short stop at the Parksville Info Centre, we continued our ride on Northwest Bay Road, re-joining the highway south of the Nanoose hill for the final stretch back to Nanaimo and the Longwood Brew Pub, where John insisted on treating us to dinner (I didn't hear too many protests!)

The GNCC and the ChainGang host social rides through the summer on Sundays and Thursday evenings.

Greater Nanaimo Cycling Coalition:

www.thegncc.org

The ChainGang ride schedule:

www.calsnet.net/GNCC

Tailwinds

- *Spot improvements from the Downtown Transportation Plan are being implemented by the city:*
 1. *Improving a blind corner for eastbound cyclists on the Seaside Path around the concession stand by the parking lot at the foot of Butte St.*
 2. *Improvement of the narrow passage just east of the Granville Bridge and at the foot of Seymour.*
- *New line painting and a short bicycle lane on Quebec St. at Terminal Ave. between the through traffic and the right turn lane.*
- *New short, coloured bike lane southbound on Burrard accessing the Burrard Bridge and crossing the right turn lane from Pacific St. Two colours are being used - red for a section before the right turn lane and blue through the right turn lane. Should be a good trial to see which colour is most visible in night and inclement weather cycling.*

Bike Shop Discount Program

The Bike Doctor

1350 Commercial Dr., Vancouver
163 West Broadway, Vancouver
Phone: 604 215-7433
www.thebikedr.com/

Guywires cycle tech, PO Box 28603,
Burnaby, V5C 6J4 Phone: 604-420-9722
www.gonecycling.com/guywires.html

Sideshow Cycles,

6579 Victoria Drive, Vancouver
Phone: 604-323-8477

Cycling Portion of the Downtown Transportation Plan - Will it be Implemented Aggressively?

Jack Becker

In June, Council authorized Engineering Services to acquire sufficient additional engineering resources for the implementation of the cycling portion of the Downtown Transportation Plan (Plan) within the next three years and also for evaluation of some potential additional bike routes on Georgia, Robson, and Homer Sts.

The conditions are now in place for the cycling environment in downtown to be dramatically changed, to address the cycling needs for the

next 25 years, and to move towards a more sustainable and environmentally friendly city, in the process providing the tourist industry with another marketing opportunity for a worldwide audience. Not only will Stanley Park draw tourists to rent and take bicycles along its paths; the downtown could be opened up as a place to cycle and to see the city.

What remains to be seen is the approach that will take in implementing the Plan. The Plan calls for bike lanes, bike routes, and cycling friendly greenways.

When difficult trade-offs need to be made, what will be brought to Council? Will staff recommendations support Council’s transportation strategy of pedestrian first, cycling next, then transit, commercial vehicles, and only then private vehicles? Will recommendations be more to the “easy way out”, with minimum change maintaining the status quo? Will on-street car parking spaces take precedence over bike lanes?

Will only favoured recommendations be brought to Council or will cycling options consistent with the Plan be brought to Council, as well, along with their implementation costs? Sometimes there is more than one alternative to address the intention of the Plan.

Is there any internal resistance to supporting the cycling priority of the transportation strategy by staff or in Council? The Plan calls for bike lanes. We can only hope that this will not be watered down. Will arguments such as “it is too costly” be used retain the status quo, or will Council be given choice, understanding the cost implication?

Residents of the City who want to see cycling as a true alternative way of commuting around downtown will need to stay vigilant in the upcoming months and be ready to strongly voice their opinions to Council and to staff, as cycling related initiatives are brought forward. There will be a number of open houses coming up on planned and proposed bike lanes, routes, and greenways. It will be critical that cyclists attend these sessions well. Let your voice be heard.

Donor Recognition
Fulton Tom

The VACC wishes to recognize the following organizations for their support of Bike Fest, Bike Month, and the Canada Day Safety Skills Event:

Bard on the Beach, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST), Book Warehouse (James Ferrier), Capilano Suspension Bridge, City of Burnaby (Burnaby Village Museum), City of Surrey, Corporation of the City of New Westminister, Greater Vancouver Zoo, Hemptown Clothing, HR MacMillan Space Centre, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Surrey Metro Savings

Work with the VACC

Yes, I’m willing to work at improving cycling in Greater Vancouver!

I would like to volunteer on the following committees:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delta/North Surrey | 604 878-8222 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Westminister | Andrew 604 521-2742 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Shore | Dave 604 988 5454 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> South Surrey/White Rock | Jean 604 531-3484 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surrey | Ian 604 576-4425 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tri-Cities | Brian 604 522-2977 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vancouver | Jack 604 681-5744 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | Richard 604 733-1764 |

I want to contribute to the VACC by doing the following:

Thank you!

Canada Day Safety Skills Event

Fulton Tom

This was the second year in which the VACC has been part of the Canada Day celebrations in Surrey at the Cloverdale Millennium Amphitheatre.

Through the financial assistance of Surrey Metro Savings, the support of the City of Surrey, and the volunteer efforts of VACC members, 190 children learned safe cycling skills. The number was even higher than last year. Martin Prestage of LifeCycle designed the colorful Bike Safety Rodeo course. All participants also received reflective ankle bands to use when cycling.

The safety rodeo was one of the highlights of the day. Several families commented that the safety rodeo was the most worthwhile activity at the Canada Day celebrations and they were pleased that the City of Surrey was supporting safety education.

JOIN THE VACC!

Yes, I want to cycle for a better community

1st person _____
2nd person _____
Address _____

City/Postal Code _____
Phone _____
E-mail: _____

The VACC does not sell or give out address information.

The VACC reserves the right to contact individual members through the above information.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please e-mail The Urbane
<i>Cyclist</i> to me | <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 Individual |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00 Fixed/Student/Low Income |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5.00 Each additional |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$80.00 Corporate/Organization |

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: _____

09/03

Please make cheques payable to:

Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition

And mail, along with this application to:
VACC Memberships
PO Box 40074 RPO Royal City
New Westminster BC V3M 6J7

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

Hon. Gordon Campbell
Premier
PO Box 9041
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9E1
premier@gov.bc.ca
Phone: 250 387-1715
Fax: 250 387-0087

Honourable Judith Reid
Minister of Transportation
PO Box 9055
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9E2
Phone: 250 387-1978
Fax: 250 356-2290
Minister.Transportation@gems5.gov.bc.ca

City of New Westminster
Mayor Wayne Wright and Council
511 Royal Avenue
New Westminster BC V3L 1H9
Phone: 604 527-4522
Fax: 604 527-4594
wwright@city.new-westminster.bc.ca

TransLink
Chair Doug McCallum and Board of Directors
TransLink
1600-4720 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC V5H 4N2
Phone: 604 453-4500
Fax: 604 453-4626
[www.translink.bc.ca/Service Info and Fares/Buses/Community Shuttles/Langley.asp](http://www.translink.bc.ca/Service_Info_and_Fares/Buses/Community_Shuttles/Langley.asp)

City of Vancouver
Mayor Larry Campbell and Council
453 west 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4
Phone: 604 873-7273
Fax: 604 873-7750
mayorandcouncil@city.vancouver.bc.ca

Remember....

The more letters that are written to these government officials, the more likely that conditions will get better for cyclists. If you do not write or call these officials, it is less likely the situation will improve.

It's entirely up to you.