

The Urbane Cyclist

The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition quarterly

Issue 19

www.vacc.bc.ca

Winter 2003/04

YESSSSSS.....ANOTHER SUCCESSSSSS!

Let's Keep Bikes on SkyTrain

Ursula Scheid and Marion Orser

The VACC has been lobbying towards "Bikes on SkyTrain" for many years now. We are proud to celebrate that bikes have been allowed on SkyTrain since June 2003.

Thank you to Richard Campbell and the rest of the VACC Board, past and present for spearheading this campaign and a big pat on the back to all the letter writers, meeting attendees and spokespersons. You all gave your time and energies to what at times was a discouraging and seemingly impossible mission.

And thank you to those persons in authority in the transportation community who received our letters and acted on the pleas.

Let's reap the rewards of "Bikes on SkyTrain" for many years to come, and let future cyclists discover new terrain and go comfortably beyond their community's limits. Help us keep the "Bikes on SkyTrain" pilot project in good standing by continuing to consistently follow TransLink rules.

Following are a list of the rules and regulations currently in place for bikes using SkyTrain.

1. Bicycles transported on SkyTrain are restricted to the following times, subject to safe boarding conditions:

a. Monday to Friday, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm; and 6:30 pm to closing

b. Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays, all day

2. The above times may be further limited without notice, under the direction of TransLink staff subject to operational difficulty or excessive loading conditions.

3. A maximum of two bicycles are permitted per train in the designated boarding location - the last door of the last car. Bicycles are



A cyclist stands in the correct location on SkyTrain

to remain in the doorway and not be moved into the aisles of the train. Cyclists are responsible to hold on to their bicycles at all times while on trains and in stations.

4. Cyclists under 13 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

5. Only standard bicycles with a maximum length of 185 cm (73 inches) will be permitted. Trailers or other obstructive attachments are not permitted.

6. Bicycles are not permitted on escalators. All access to or from the platforms is restricted to elevators or stairways only.

7. Wheelchairs, scooters, and baby strollers wishing to board have priority at all times. If present, cyclists will be required to wait for a following train.

8. Bicycles may not be ridden anywhere inside stations or trains.

9. When boarding or leaving trains, cyclists are required to use extreme caution to avoid bumping into other passengers.

Note: Bicycles are restricted from using either Granville or Metrotown stations at any time for safety reasons until such time as station entry and exit provisions can be improved

For your information, see the TransLink website: http://www.translink.bc.ca/Programs_and_Services/Bikes.asp

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

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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 Wednesday for the following
months at 6:30 p.m. Dec 10 Jan 7
Feb 11

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,
January 23, 2004**



President's Message

Marion Orser

After three months away, cycling eight of Canada's provinces in a 'little' Prince Rupert to Halifax ride, your president is back with a fresh outlook. Colin, our Vice President has been ably manning (personning) the fort in my absence.

I was stunned with the amount of work the group accomplished. It is a known fact that if something affects us or those we care about personally, then we are more inclined to put in the effort to ensure the result is bicycle friendly. This in turn will result in a more vibrant, livable community. This effort is more likely to be effective with support. Andrew, the chair of the New Westminster VACC committee, with the support of others in the VACC and those in the Queensborough community, has spearheaded the lobby to get the bridge sidewalk added to the mandate of the MoT and consultant. (See article page 4.) This is a wonderful example of how the VACC operates and why you too might wish to join and/or become involved. Your support can be as simple as joining the VACC. If we can write a letter saying we are speaking on behalf of 1000 cyclists that is a powerful statement.

Often when working as an advocate we think nothing is changing. But on my return it was wonderful to see so many positive changes.

It was very exciting to take my bike on SkyTrain for the first time.

In New West the new trail from the Braid Station through Hume Park was completed. The ability to cross North Road at a signalized light was a welcome relief. This section is a part of the GVRD Fraser River Greenway or the BEST Central Valley Greenway. Since the GVRD did this without consultation from the cycling community, the design is less than desirable but it is passable.

The South end of the Pattullo Bridge on the other hand is great. It can be very difficult to retrofit an existing structure and the design team and Surrey are to be commended. (See article page 3.)

Richmond is continuing the Bike route along Westminster Highway and has also completed a section from Dyke Road to Rice Mill Road.

Vancouver is moving ahead in leaps and bounds.

We would love to hear of other cycling projects completed in your area. Happy, safe riding this winter. And keep those lights on!

The Urbane Cyclist is now accepting advertising!

Prices are very reasonable ranging
from \$50 to \$150 per issue with savings for block
pricing.

Please contact Teresa for details
unonym@hotmail.com or (604) 253-3910

More Cyclist Push Buttons at Traffic Signals on the Way ***Jack Becker***

On Tuesday, July 29th, the City of Vancouver Council approved the installation of 40 additional cyclist buttons at about 20 intersections with traffic signals that have pedestrian buttons. It is encouraging to see that the City continues to support this program that now has been underway for at least ten years. The 1999 Vancouver bikeway survey has shown the strong support for cyclist buttons among the cycling community.

It appears that there are still about 146 pedestrian activated signals that do not have cyclist buttons. At this rate, it will take another seven or so years to complete this program. What after then?

Will all new semi-activated traffic signal installations automatically come with cyclist buttons? Will all fixed timed traffic signals with a timing sequence over 60 seconds have a cyclist button and a cycling priority sequence? If not, how many cyclists will get impatient and try a quick dash across the intersection on a red? Will all new multi-phase traffic signals have cycling buttons and also a time sequence that will not encourage intersection dashes on red lights? Will all crossings of bike routes across secondary roads with a yellow centre line have cyclist-activated traffic signals?

The City is trying to use loops at some semi-activated traffic signals instead of cycling buttons. For these to be effective, the location of the loops need to be marked, as is done in many other cities, for cyclists to know where to position their bikes. Also, there needs to be an ongoing effective maintenance plan for tuning the loops and replacing the bicycle markings. There seems to be an issue with maintenance people being able to properly tune the sensitivity of the loops for bicycles. Somehow, cyclist buttons seem to be more dependable. Maintenance, commitment, and consistency are critical to the success of loops working for cyclists.

It seems that the City has embarked on a direction with cycling buttons that has found favour among cyclists and helps encourage people to commute by bicycle, rather than using their private motorized vehicle. Now, it is time for the City to expand the program to other types of signalized intersections and make this

City even more cycling friendly. With the potential increase of tourists coming to this city in the next few years from the appeal of the 2010 Olympics and the City boasting of Vancouver as an environmentally friendly place, now is a good time for the City to move more quickly forward and complete the job.

A comprehensive cycling friendly traffic signal program would move this city forward to reaching Council's transportation priority of pedestrians first, then cycling, then transit, commercial vehicles, and lastly, in the order list, private vehicles.

If you have some favourite locations where you would like to see cycling buttons, then let the City (E-mail: cycling@city.vancouver.bc.ca, Bicycle Hotline - 604-871-6070) and your Councilor know.

The Slow Sure Wheels of Cycling Advocacy ***Marion Orser***

And there it was. Instead of a weed and garbage strewn narrow path at the south end of the Pattullo Bridge, there was a wide paved multi use path starting at the end of the bridge abutment right down to Bridge Road. Additionally, the sidewalk has been repaved beginning at the sudden drop on the south end of the bridge. The bump is gone.

So how did this come about? When the New Westminster VACC first met and started planning goals for the group, they decided 'bridges' was one of the main problems with cycling in the city, and in particular for cycling out of the city.

With the help of the local New Westminster committee, the VACC sent letters in April 2001 to New Westminster, TransLink and Surrey regarding the deficits on the Pattullo Bridge and the access/egress for their respective areas of responsibility.

The consultant for Surrey obviously saw more potential for improvement than we did. The change included more than we had hoped was possible. We are pleased to note that a wide path has been built, as well as a friendlier pedestrian staircase.

Now if there was just signage to let cyclists know what route to follow from here to their respective destination!

Thank you Surrey for an excellent job on an existing difficult facility.

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

Queensborough Bridge Advocacy Update

Andrew Feltham

As was described in the last edition of the Urbane Cyclist, the VACC has been actively advocating to the Minister of Transportation, Judith Reid, for improved sidewalk facilities for pedestrian and cyclists on the Queensborough Bridge as part of the current MoT project to upgrade the north end access to the bridge. Since this article was published, there have been a number of developments which are of interest to the cycling community in the lower mainland.

Foremost was the tragic death of a pedestrian on the bridge during a morning rush hour in early August. The pedestrian was knocked off the bridge by a vehicle which had mounted the curb and knocked out a section of railing. This unfortunate and unnecessary fatality brought to the news headlines the safety issues impacting the sidewalk users of the bridge. Thanks to the sidewalk traffic counts carried out by VACC volunteers throughout the summer, the VACC was able to distribute a press release which emphasized that, at more than 200 trips/day, the bridge sidewalk is well used. We were able to quickly dispel the notion that this tragedy was a freak accident with an occasional sidewalk user. It has since come out that in ten years, more than 20 vehicles have jumped the curb and knocked out sections of railing on the bridge. This information has clearly put the Ministry in a position that they have to do something about the safety of the sidewalk on the bridge.

During the summer many people throughout the region have written the Minister of Transportation, local MLAs and City Councils asking for better facilities on the bridge. We have also received welcome support from New Westminster City council which passed a motion, stating to the Minister of Transportation, that the City considers as "immediate high priority" the implementation of interim safety measures and long term improvements to the safety, comfort and convenience of pedestrian and cycling users of the bridge sidewalk. This position was reiterated at a meeting between New West City council and the Minister during the UBCM meetings last September.

In August, a representative of the VACC met with stakeholder consultants, working on behalf of the MoT, to discuss cyclists' objectives for the outcome of the bridge upgrade. This was a welcome process initiative by the MoT, as we were able to get the perspective of cyclists on the table at an early stage of the project. The main objectives discussed were safety, comfort (mitigate the height, exposure to traffic and weather), convenience (access to many possible destinations from north end of bridge), and multi-mode use (pedestrians, cyclists, etc). Now they know what we want... next is the political will to implement it!

The lack of clear political commitment was evident at the first public open house on the bridge upgrade project which took place in Queensborough in September. Although there was a statement committing improved sidewalk safety, no details were provided. We were repeatedly told that the bridge deck was outside the scope of the current project. There was however a more concrete commitment from the Ministry to investigate and implement interim safety improvements for sidewalk users before the end of the year. This is indeed good news, and a step in the right direction.

We have since written Minister Reid to ask for clarification of her position on the bridge sidewalk, and have asked her to commit to improving the entire sidewalk crossing as part of the current project mandate. We continue to need the support of the cycling community on this issue. Poor bridge facilities affect all cyclists in the region, by discouraging cycling and reducing the demand for better facilities everywhere. It is critical that all readers write Minister Reid and express support for safe,

comfortable and convenient sidewalk facilities for all users of the Queensborough Bridge. The successful realization of the entire sidewalk project remains in the hands of the politicians. It is up to us to let the politicians know what we want. Please see the VACC website for more information.

Who are the VACC?

You're holding in your hands the quarterly newsletter of the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition. This newsletter, along with everything else done by the VACC, is entirely the work of committed volunteers, and is based upon a set of core values. If these values speak to you, we hope you'll consider supporting us by purchasing an annual membership and/or becoming actively involved.

- We are pro-bicycle; we are not anti-car. While we might like to have fewer cars on the road and the public using more healthy and efficient forms of transportation, that is not our primary goal.
- We support cycling for itself, not as a way to further another agenda such as environmentalism. We may be environmentalists, but cycling is our main agenda.
- We are inclusive. We support a variety of styles and approaches to cycling. We encourage anyone who shares our values to join with us.
- We believe in making friends, not enemies. Protest rides to gain attention by disrupting traffic are not our style.
- We are an independent group and maintain our independence by avoiding any funding or support that might compromise our ability to speak, lead, or criticize.
- We work to institutionalize change. Rather than fight the same battle many times, we strive to have policy or legislation put in place to create lasting change.
- We believe in action and are each committed to doing a fair share of the work.
- While we encourage cycling as a means of transportation for more people, we respect those who choose or need to use other forms of transportation.

Cars Outnumber Drivers in the US

There are now more cars than drivers in the US. It had to happen sometime. The US Bureau of Transportation Statistics has put the 2001 National Household Transportation Survey online. The results are available in a variety of formats, but a quick way to absorb them is to read the executive summary. What's striking is that the US love affair with the automobile shows no sign of slowing down. If anything, the affair is even deeper and more serious than suspected. At least now we know why all those one-person houses have two-car garages.

http://www.bts.gov/products/national_household_travel_survey/highlights_of_the_2001/

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 Westminster | 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!

New TransLink Bike Maps Available Jack Becker

Rand McNally is distributing the new TransLink Bike Maps now available at the following stores and in your local bike shops:

- 1) Shoppers Dug Mart
- 2) Chevron Town Pantry
- 3) Wal-Mart
- 4) Zellers
- 5) HDS Retail (formerly UCS)
- 6) Chapters/Indigo
- 7) Safeway
- 8) IGA
- 9) Mohawk & Husky

Our thanks to TransLink for producing the maps.

The VACC is a member of **The Coalition For Active Living**. Their mandate is “to make sure that the environments where Canadians live, learn, work and play support regular physical activity.” Check out their website at: <http://www.activeliving.ca/>

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.

- Please e-mail The Urbane \$20.00 Individual
- Cyclist* to me \$10.00 Fixed/Student/Low Income
- \$ 5.00 Each additional
- \$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: _____

11/03

Please make cheques payable to:

Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition

And mail, along with this application to:
VACC Memberships
0074 - 641 Columbia Street
New Westminster, BC V3M 1A8

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

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wwright@city.new-westminster.bc.ca

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Burnaby, BC V5H 4N2
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Fax: 604 453-4626
www.translink.bc.ca/Service_Info_and_Fares/Buses/Community_Shuttles/Langley.asp

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453 west 12th Avenue
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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.