

The Urbane Cyclist

THE VANCOUVER AREA CYCLING COALITION QUARTERLY

Issue 22

www.vacc.bc.ca

Fall 2004



Cycling to School - MICHELLE BABIUK

The decline of physical activity during early adolescence can be partially attributed to middle and high school students' changing commuting patterns. As students move to schools further away from their homes, they are less likely to walk to school. This is unfortunate as active commuting is a form of healthy exercise that is accessible to a wide range of students, regardless of their economic circumstances and athletic ability. While high schools may not be within walking distance for all their students, they are certainly often within cycling distance of many. In the case of New Westminister, its only high school is within comfortable cycling distance of most of the city.



Unfortunately in its current form, New Westminister Secondary School provides no facilities to encourage students or staff to ride their bikes to school. However the school is scheduled to be

replaced within three years, and the New Westminister chapter of the VACC sees this as an ideal opportunity to create appropriate bike facilities for the school's students and staff. VACC members recently attended an open house to view the design proposal for the new school. The current plans have the potential to encourage active living, with increased green

space, reduced parking, and greenways leading from the city's greenway network directly to the school's doors. However, several of the barriers to cycling which existed at the old school are still present in the new plans. For example, the amount and type of bike parking is still undetermined. This means that it could include anything from outdoor bike racks to bike cages inside the car parkade. The VACC has written to the school principal and to the project architects asking them to commit to bike parking which is convenient, secure from theft and vandalism, conducive to personal safety, and which includes end-of-trip facilities such as showers and clothing lockers.

If you are interested in increasing transportation options for youth by supporting this project, contact:

Cheryl Beaumont, Principal
New Westminister Secondary School
835 Eighth Street
New Westminister, BC V3M 3S9
Fax: 604-517-6204

Project Contact:
Mr. Doug Wong, Secretary Treasurer
School District No. 40
821 Eighth Street
New Westminister, BC V3M 3S9
Fax: 604-517-6390

The Urbane Cyclist

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

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Cycling Coalition



MEET US

The VACC Board meetings are open to all interested in bicycling in Greater Vancouver. We generally meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 8:30 pm. 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
641 Columbia Street, P.O. Box 0074
New Westminster, BC V3M 1A8

Or e-mail: newsletter@vacc.bc.ca

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



Next deadline:
Friday, October 29, 2004

President's Message - COLIN BRANDER



One of the greatest qualities of cycling advocates is that we are a patient lot, but we are also very persistent! Our fight for bikes on SkyTrain is a good example of both of these qualities. Through the efforts of the volunteers of the VACC and of other organizations, things are slowly improving for cyclists around the Lower Mainland.

We are most effective in areas where we have active committees, but we also have more work to do to become better known to staff and to the various councils around the region. A good example of this is the VACC's North Shore Committee, which has made its mark with the media and the councils of both the City and District of North Vancouver after only a few months' existence. While we haven't had any major successes since this committee's formation, staff and both councils now know that they need to listen to us. It is important for the VACC to increase our volunteer base so that we can expand to areas where we don't already have active committees.

TransLink is also aware of our work, as we have provided input to them on numerous occasions and have had a positive influence on their direction. However, we have no formal channels of communication with them. It is due to their lack of communication with cycling advocates that TransLink had to scramble at the last minute to arrange a shuttle service during the sidewalk closures on the Pattullo Bridge. For this reason and others, we have asked TransLink to create a bicycle advisory committee. Consulting with cyclists at an early stage in projects means a better outcome for both cyclists and government, as well as cost savings to taxpayers.

This region has great potential for cycling. The average commuting distance in the GVRD is about eight kilometres. This means that many residents are within cycling distance of their workplace. With our temperate climate, our numbers could easily be much higher. On the positive side, the modal share is slowly rising across the region. This is especially evident in Vancouver and other areas where infrastructure has been built or improved, and is also happening - although at a slower pace - where change has been slower.

Many cyclists have commented that they are seeing more bikes on the road now than they did in the past. With concerns about childhood obesity and related diseases, global warming, and other factors, cycling is being seen as one of the solutions. I look forward to the day when cycling is considered a major form of transportation instead of being marginalized as "alternative transportation." This day will come; we are working patiently and persistently to ensure that it happens sooner rather than later.



Photo (Right):
Bikes on Transit

Cleaning Up Pays Off with New Bike Storage Space - SHEREE GABLE

It's a situation most of us have come across before: you want to ride to work, but where can you leave your bike when you get there? For most people, locking your bike up outside of your office ensures you'll be thinking about it all day when you are seven floors up trying to concentrate on your job. Also, most employers won't be thrilled if you bring your bike upstairs and lean it against your cubicle. Why is it that golf clubs in the office are fine and nobody blinks an eye, but a bicycle is seen as a hazard that must be removed? That of course, is another discussion for another time.

However, you may not know that your office can yield unexpected storage space. This happened to my employer during the spring; recent renovations to our office area caused much evaluation over what was needed and what could be thrown out. During this spring cleaning process, a spare storage room was "discovered" in the basement of our building. This room had not been used for some time, and was filled with various boxes, old office supplies and papers. Now it serves as a storage room for seasonal and promotional items plus my bike. I asked my boss for a key to this room to store my bike and she agreed. Now whenever I ride to work, I know that my company is providing secure storage space for my bike and I never have to worry about it during the day. So take a look around your office; who knows what you will uncover when you start cleaning up!



Bike Month Raffle

The VACC Bike Month Raffle was the most successful ever. Thank you to those who bought tickets as well as to those who sold them.

The winners of the VACC Bike Month Raffle are:

1st Prize: *Harriet Rueggeberg*, Lantzville

2nd Prize: *Mike Horner*, Vancouver

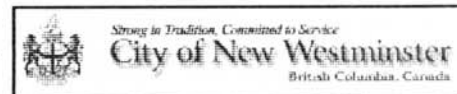
3rd Prize: *Tony Damji*, Surrey



above: Harriet Rueggeberg, winner of the VACC Bike Month raffle draw with her Norco Mountaineer

The VACC would like to recognize the following organizations for their donations

Other sponsors we also wish to thank:



Thank you... your support is greatly appreciated.

The Point Grey Road Concept: A Step Towards a Bike-friendly Urban Setting - DAVE SMULDERS

(letter to Mayor and Council of the City of Vancouver)



I understand that City of Vancouver Council will be discussing the possibility of converting part of Point Grey Road to a bike lane. I am writing in support of this proposal and I encourage City Council to continue discussions like these for the greater well-being of Vancouverites.

*My wife and I have chosen not to own a car for various reasons. I believe that a city like Vancouver should take the lead in making urban settings friendly for those without cars. We mostly travel around on bicycles with our two children in a trailer. From East Vancouver, we can ride to Science World and then all the way to Stanley Park on the north side of False Creek, or to Kits Beach on the south side. Point Grey Road, however, is a dangerous route for cyclists and the currently prescribed cycling route from Kits Beach to Jericho Beach involves a nasty hill that anyone travelling on their own steam can be forgiven for avoiding. **A safe, physically separated cycling route would allow cyclists (and other alternate, self-propelled travellers like wheelchairs) to travel safely from Science World, or Stanley Park all the way to UBC without having to give up any space to automobiles.***



Cycling on off-road, specially designated routes is a wonderful experience. I encourage all council members to ride (bike) or roll (wheelchair) from Science World to Kits Beach and get a sense of how convenient it is currently to travel this way. Separated cycling routes are not only much more pleasurable to ride on as opposed to city streets, but they are much safer. Because my wife and I ride with two children in a trailer, we are very concerned that any cycling/non-automobile infrastructure built in the city allow for the safest of alternatives. That is why I very much support a physical separation of the cyclists from the vehicular traffic.

*I also believe that **non-streetside cycling routes should be as important to city planners as any public transit schemes** that cross the breadth of the Lower Mainland. I am heartened to hear these discussions are taking place in council chambers. As a citizen of Vancouver and a voter, I feel that the voice of the people is being heard (sometimes!), and knowing that there are cycling advocates on council is very encouraging. Please accept my hearty support for plans to convert Point Grey Road according to the proposals offered by the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition.*



photo: Dave Smulders

A Ride Down Legal Lane - DAVID HAY

In the summer issue, I wrote about the distinction between Rules, as found in statutes like the Motor Vehicle Act; and principles, as set out in the common law. In a number of decisions involving cyclists this year, the Courts have again demonstrated this distinction.

Collin Morris was riding his bicycle after sunset in the early spring without a light, clearly in breach of the Motor Vehicle Act. He was seriously injured when he collided with a vehicle driven by someone who had decided to take a shortcut to a video rental store by proceeding down the wrong side of the road. In that decision, the Court was asked to consider the legal duties of the respective parties. Despite the fact that the cyclist had no light, the Court was not prepared to accept, on the basis of evidence before it, that, as a matter of principle, the Plaintiff should be found to have contributed to his own loss. The Court held that the Defendant needed to establish that the failure to employ a light causally contributed to the accident.



In another case, James Schmidt was riding on the sidewalk in Richmond adjacent to No. 6 Road. Before entering a crosswalk, he

saw an oncoming motorist and erroneously concluded that it was the motorist's intention to make a right turn onto No. 6 Road. The cyclist did not dismount from his bicycle and continued to ride down a ramp from the sidewalk into the crosswalk on the road surface, obviously contrary to the Motor Vehicle Act, and was struck by the car. The lawyer for the cyclist attempted to argue that the cyclist was a pedestrian for purposes of the Motor Vehicle Act. The judge found, however, that the lawyer had misconceived the definitions under the Motor Vehicle Act and concluded that the cyclist was not a pedestrian in those circumstances. The judge found that the cyclist had specifically violated the prohibition relating to riding in a crosswalk. However, while the judge agreed that a person riding a bicycle in a crosswalk does not have a statutory right of way, the judge refused to decide the case summarily, and ordered a full trial. The judge held that justice required all of the evidence relating to the conduct of the parties be considered on principle.

These cases are reminders that cyclists are not necessarily negligent in a way significant to a claim for compensation arising from injuries, simply because they broke the rule of the road. Each case has to be considered carefully on its own facts. The rules of the road are certainly always considered, but are never determinative of a cyclist's legal rights.

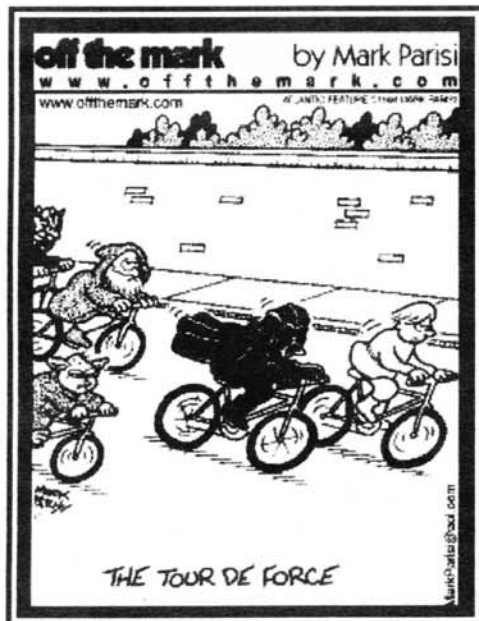
David W. Hay is a litigation lawyer and partner at RBS Lawyers. RBS Lawyers is a full service downtown Vancouver law firm delivering legal advice and solutions in all areas of practice. The information above is not legal advice. Anyone seeking legal advice should call David directly at 604-661-9250, or e-mail dwahay@rbs.com.

Bike Month 2004 - BONNIE FENTON

As always, it's a pleasure to acknowledge and thank all of those who participated in Bike Month 2004. Literally dozens of VACC volunteers participated in events throughout June, including the BEST Clean Air Day Breakfast, the Stanley Park Bike Festival, Bike Film Night, the Central Valley Greenway ride, the Sapperton Bike Festival in New Westminster, the Farmers' Market in Coquitlam, the bike drop at Mountain Equipment Co-op, the opening of the Trans Canada Trail bridge Burnaby-Vancouver connector, Island City by Bike in Richmond, the Canada Day celebrations in Cloverdale, and much more.

As well as educating the public on cycling issues, local bike routes, and safe cycling, our participation at events like these goes a long way towards developing our membership and our volunteer base, and raising the profile of the VACC and of the work we do in the public eye. To all of those who participated, thank you.

One final note: Since our regular newsletter editor, Leslie Love, is away cycling for a month just now, it also seems like a good time to slip in an acknowledgement of all the work she has done over the past two years in editing this newsletter and keeping us updated on local cycling-related issues.



2004 Canada Day Bike Safety Skills Event, Cloverdale - MARY EICKHOFF

The 3rd Annual Canada Day Bike Safety Skills Event was an even greater success than the previous two years! To quote Martin Prestage of LifeCycle Consultants, "2004 topped the bill with 179 kids through the safety course, and I know if I hadn't 'closed the gate' at 4:45, we would have had 20 more at least. The sun shone, we all went thirsty, but it was worth it I'm sure. So thank you to all."

300 copies of the 'hot off the presses' Surrey Bike Map provided by Surrey Parks & Rec went like the proverbial hotcakes from the VACC display table as volunteers were kept busy dialoguing with visitors inquiring about routes and sharing cycling stories.

The Surrey committee gratefully acknowledges the volunteers from other Vancouver area groups who arrived to provide enthusiastic and valuable support for the event. Fulton's shelter was most appreciated to protect us from over-exposure as the sun reigned.

Thanks to Douglas Smith of the City of Surrey, Special Events, who coordinated corporate sponsorship for the event, provided by Edgar Maldonado of Clarica. The Clarica booth bore a huge banner as proud sponsors of the "Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition Bike Safety Skills Event". We greatly appreciate their support of our aim to inspire and educate residents on safe cycling in the City of Surrey.

Burnaby Update - MIKE PEEL

The Burnaby VACC Committee is taking a summer hiatus: recharging its bike batteries and getting prepared for the onslaught of new Burnaby projects that we hope will happen in the fall to coincide with the escalating gas prices, chronic obesity in today's society, and the declining air quality.

The June Bike Month events in Burnaby, such as the opening of the Trans Canada Trail Burnaby-Vancouver trail connector where the VACC had a display table - were well attended. We also had a contingent attend the Bike Month film night at the Pacific Cinematheque, which was a very good venue and had some great films. The Stanley Park Bike Festival was another great event. Burnaby VACC members escorted riders from the Burnaby McGill Library area and from Central Park, and then rode together to Stanley Park. Some of the riders were new to riding on busy streets, but we hope that after the Stanley Park ride they will feel more confident. All in all, we have to compliment all the volunteers, BEST and VACC for running a great Bike Month!

Other than that, if you notice any sub-standard bike infrastructure in Burnaby, please come to our September 23 meeting and tell us about it:

Date: SEPTEMBER 23, 2004

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: BURNABY ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, 2702 Norland Avenue, Burnaby (NE corner of Douglas and Norland, 4 blocks SW of Holdom Skytrain station, bike parking and entrance at rear of building).

Headwinds:

- To the Ministry of Transportation for the unfindable access to the Alex Fraser Bridge
- To TransLink for closing the Patullo Bridge sidewalk without warning
- To the crazy congestion of dump trucks, concrete barriers, dragon boaters and their cars who contribute to a dangerous stretch of bike route between Science World and 1st Avenue

Tailwinds:

- To the Ministry of Transportation for the new access at the north end of the Lion's Gate Bridge
- To the Ministry of Transportation for the well-marked access to the Knight Street Bridge
- To TransLink for providing a cyclist shuttle service across the Patullo Bridge during the sidewalk closure
- To the City of New Westminster for the first coloured bike lanes in New Westminster eastbound on Boyd St. at the intersection with Howes St.

- To all the people who made Bike Month and the Stanley Park Bike Festival such successful events

- To the City of Burnaby for beginning construction of the new Gilmore north south bike route.

- To the City of Vancouver for making improvements to the sightlines at the intersection of Fir and 7th

- To the Ministry of Transportation for (finally!) fixing the slippery sidewalks on the Alex Fraser Bridge.

- To all the people who made Bike Month and the Stanley Park Bike Festival such successful events



photo: Andrew Felthan
Bike lane at Boyd and Howes in
New Westminster



Work with the VACC

Yes, I'm willing to work at improving cycling in Greater Vancouver! I would like to register on the following committees:

Burnaby	Mike	604-444-4068
New Westminster	Andrew	604-521-2742
North Shore	Dave	604-988-5454
Surrey	Ian	604-576-4425
Vancouver	Jack	604-681-5744
Central Valley Greenway and SkyTrain	Richard	604-733-1764
Fundraising	Fulton	604-526-3585

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

Thank you!

Upcoming event in Surrey:

CLOVERDALE COUNTRY FESTIVAL

Saturday, Sep 18, 2004: 10 am - 4 pm

The VACC Surrey Committee will participate in the annual Cloverdale Country Festival to be held Saturday, September 18, 2004, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. This family event attracts 1,500 to 1,800 people throughout the day, and offers various activities such as a petting zoo, crafts, magician, face painting, henna body art, skills and games, and exhibits. The VACC-Surrey will be on hand to promote safe and enjoyable cycling in Surrey.

Volunteers are most welcome!!! Please contact *Mary Eickhoff* at eickhoff@telus.net.

Did you know...?

... The more letters written and the more phone calls made, the more likely cycling conditions will improve.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

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

Honourable Gordon Campbell *Premier*

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premier@gov.bc.ca
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wwright@city.new-westminster.bc.ca

CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

Mayor Barbara Sharp

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Mayor Doug McCallum and Council

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CITY OF VANCOUVER

Mayor Larry Campbell and Council

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mayorandcouncil@city.vancouver.bc.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.

- \$20 individual
- \$10 fixed/student/low income
- \$5 each additional member
- \$80 corporate/organisation

Please e-mail me the Urbane Cyclist

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: _____

Please make cheques payable to:

Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition

And mail, along with this application to:

VACC Memberships
641 Columbia Street, PO Box 0074
New Westminster, BC
V3M 1A8