

Issue 31

Winter
2006/2007



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The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition Quarterly

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Make cycling an integral part of the transportation culture of the Lower Mainland

Cambie Street Bike Lanes by Richard Campbell

Upon completion of the Canada Line construction, it is possible that Cambie Street will have bike lanes from Kent Street to the north end of Cambie Street Bridge! Following strong presentations from the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition (VACC) and Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST), Vancouver City Council recently approved bike lanes from Kent to 49th. City Council also directed city staff to report back on bike lanes from 49th to King Edward and bicycle facilities from King Edward to the north end of the Cambie Street bridge.

It is expected that there will not be many issues associated with bike lanes from 49th to King Edward. However, north of King Edward, the road right-of-way is narrower and the traffic volumes are higher so implementing bike lanes on this section will involve some trade-offs. The most difficult section is from 20th to 17th where either a lane of traffic or parking will have to be reallocated. The preferred option is the reallocation of a lane of traffic as this will slow traffic speeds and volumes creating a safer and more pleasant cycling environment. Some merchants along Cambie Street might object to the removal of on-street parking.

Access to the Bicycle Path on the Canada Line Bridge

The Bicycle Path on the Canada Line Bridge is the most expensive investment in bicycle infrastructure in the region and most likely the province. To maximize the benefit of the investment in the bridge to the people of Vancouver, it is critical to have multiple routes that provide convenient access to the bridge for cyclists of all ages and abilities. Most bridges designed for automobiles have many access routes so it makes sense to provide multiple access routes for a bicycle bridge as well. While the Ontario, Heather and Kent Bikeways will provide access for those who don't want to cycle near traffic, Cambie Street Bike Lanes will provide more direct access and faster travel times to Downtown Vancouver.

Access to Shopping and Canada Line Stations

The Cambie Bike Lanes will provide good access to Canada Line stations, shopping and other destinations along Cambie Street. They will also encourage cyclists not to cycle on the sidewalk.

The Canada Line will Increase Capacity for Automobiles

With the commencement of operation on the Canada Line, 14 bus routes will be eliminated, freeing up road capacity for other uses such as bike lanes. Based on current schedules, about 600 weekday diesel bus trips would be removed from Granville Street and 40 trips from Oak Street.

Continued back page

The Urbane Cyclist

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The views in this publication are not neces-
sarily those of the VACC

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The VACC Board meetings are open to all
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Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.
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INTERNET

Keep up on the latest cycling issues and
events, Join one of our e-mail lists at
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GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

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

Submissions may be sent to:

The Urbane Cyclist
Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition
Box 0074 667 Columbia Street
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, Jan 19, 2007

President's Message by John Fair

The year is passing by a lot more quickly than I ever imagined. I've heard that this seems to happen as you get older. Another reason that time is passing by so quickly may be because I took five weeks to cycle to the ProBikeWalk conference in Madison, WI. Check out their website: www.bikewalk.org. It was my first long bike tour and I thoroughly enjoyed it. (Except for the extreme heat this year!) The conference was a wonderful, exhilarating experience: hanging out with 650 people that also think biking is the best way to travel. It was great to explore many small towns across America and see some interesting methods used to encourage people to cycle. I hope I can pass some of these ideas on to our local municipalities.

This year we added the Bike Skills courses to our activities. They were very popular. Judging from some of the feedback we had from participants, I would like to believe that the course recruited a lot more commuter cyclists. Kudos to Bonnie Fenton, and all the instructors for all their dedication and hard work! (See page 7.)

Next year, the VACC will add another exciting event: **Bike To Work Week**. Styled after the wildly successful Victoria event, we hope to increase the public awareness of cycling and encourage an even larger number of cyclists to hit the streets.

I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Bad weather? It's just a matter of perspective.

Let's ride!

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The Urbane Cyclist

In Memoriam: Cycling supporter and former Burnaby Mayor Doug Drummond passes away by Mike Peel with assistance from Peter Stary

The cyclists of the Lower Mainland lost a friend when former Burnaby Mayor Doug Drummond succumbed to cancer on November 2nd. Mr. Drummond started the Burnaby Bicycle advisory committee in 1994 and chaired it for its first four years. (And then later co-chaired it with former councillor Nancy Harris in 2001-2.) While on this committee, I will always remember how he not only ran an orderly meeting, but ensured that it didn't drag on for over two hours. Mr. Drummond felt that anything longer caused people to get restless, and wouldn't allow for after meeting socializing. This pattern is something that I've noticed in other meetings I attend, so I think it's wise words for any group.

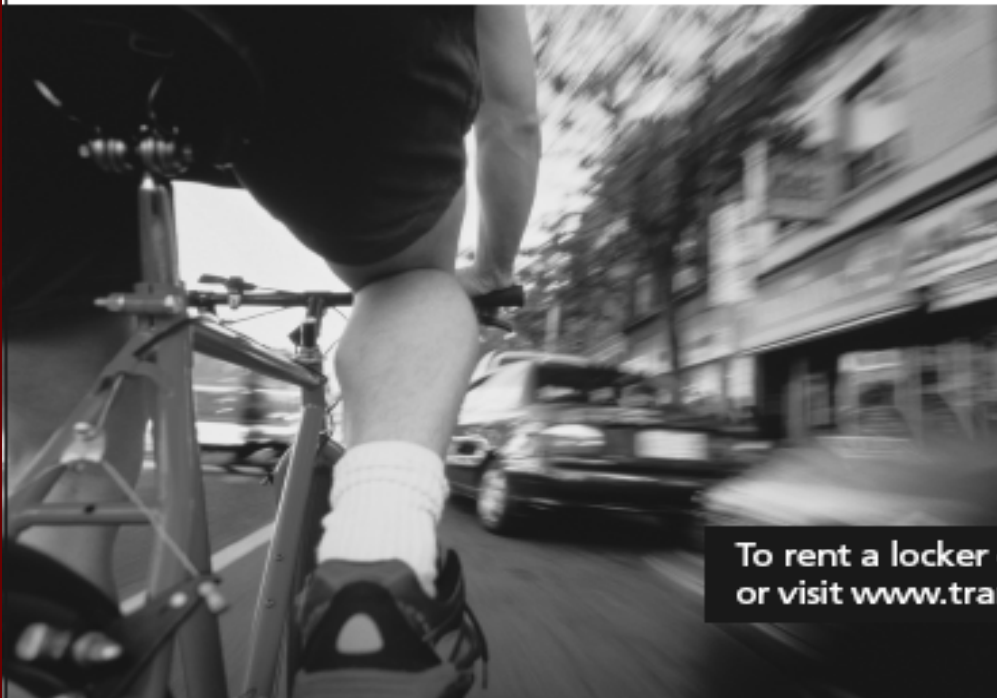
Doug was also one of the first to envision the Central Valley Greenway (15 years before it's time, but now currently being built). During the opening of Burnaby's first section last June, in the pouring rain, Councillor Nick Volkow told the attendees how Doug Drummond had been the major proponent for all the urban trails. Councillor Volkow also mentioned that Doug came up

with the idea of urban trails from the city of Ottawa, during a Federation of Municipalities conference there during the 90's.

Doug was also a strong proponent for the development of parks on Burnaby's waterfront, many of which are accessible by the urban trails - and will be more so once the urban trail network is complete. These urban trails provide areas for inexperienced cyclists to explore Burnaby, and many, like me, found themselves eventually venturing off the trails and onto the local roads thereby giving us ideas on how best to form Burnaby's on-street bike network.

I still find it incredible that he remained in Burnaby politics for 27 years - that's 27 years of Council meetings, committee meetings, public events and public open houses. The sacrifice of Doug's personal time is a testament to his passion for Burnaby and for it's citizens. Why did he do it? As Doug himself put it "I'm interested in making stuff happen."

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That was No Accident by David Hay

When a cyclist is a victim of a motorist's negligence, damages arise from the cyclist's injuries. Any assessment of those damages must integrate concepts of civil responsibility between members of a civilized community. If an accident occurs and negligence is established, the compensation owed to the victim is based on the foreseeable harm or injury suffered by the victim. Accordingly, damages typically include an assessment of pain and suffering, anxiety, inconvenience, disruption, income loss, loss of capacity to work and care for one's home and out of pocket expenses. All of these items are said to be the direct or probable consequence of the act complained of.

What happens if the act complained of is not negligent, but intentional, such that it can no longer be characterized as accidental. Unfortunately, driving is often another form of aggression. Road rage involving cyclists is unfortunately not uncommon. In these cases, the courts must access an exceptional tool called "punitive" damages. Punitive damages are exceptional because they are designed to punish the wrongdoer rather than compensate the injured. They have their root in the actions of the wrongdoer. These damages are also "exemplary" damages because they are awarded to punish the wrongdoer and also to deter others from similar conduct. Punitive damages can be awarded even if the victim suffers no actual loss at all, though the victim must be directly involved. Again, this is because they are not meant to address the injuries of the victim, but the conduct of the assailant.

Conduct which gives rise to an award of punitive damages is typically criminal in behaviour. However, as many cyclists have sadly experienced, the Police and the Crown will often not bring charges in circumstances where they can not establish what was in the mind of the assailant. This is called mens rea, a fundamental component of criminal behaviour. If it cannot be demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt in a criminal court investigation that the accused intended to do what he or she did, that is, that they had the requisite mens rea, the charges will be dismissed. However, in a civil case, the civil burden of proof is on a balance of probabilities and not beyond a reasonable doubt. Accordingly, it is much easier to establish on a balance of probabilities that a motorist intended to do what he or she did, based on the circumstances of the event.

Naturally, in light of the easier burden of proof, the courts take a restrictive approach to an award of punitive damages and exercise the discretion to make those awards extremely cautiously. The behaviour usually needs to be harsh, vindictive, reprehensible and malicious, or at the very least extreme, in its nature. In cycling cases, once it is established that a motorist deliberately collided with a cyclist, this is usually sufficient to

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Headwinds and Tailwinds

*"May the wind be always at
your back."*

Tailwinds

- To the City of Vancouver for proposing a bikade (or bike station) as part of a redevelopment of the Pacific Centre. This is now at a feasibility stage, but city council has expressed a keen interest in having this go ahead.
- To the City of North Vancouver for new bike lanes on W 1st Street, from Fell Ave to MacKay road.
- To Vancouver City Council for agreeing to put bike lanes on Cambie Street. (*See articles page 1 and 8*)
- To Vancouver City engineers for bike lanes on 49th Ave between Granville and Cambie Streets, with wide median facilitating cyclists left turns into Heather St northbound.

Central Valley Greenway Improvements in New Westminster by Fulton Tom

The City of New Westminster has established bike lanes in each direction along Columbia Street in downtown New Westminster. The lanes are part of the Central Valley Greenway. In addition, the City has removed two lanes of motorized traffic and implemented back-in angle parking on Columbia Street.

Many downtown business owners support the initiative and anticipate the road diet will make the area a more popular destination by slowing down traffic.

Recently, members of the VACC examined the 1.3 km route on a ride and were pleased with the improvements.



Back-in Angle Parking in New Westminster. Photo by M Orser

Northeast Coquitlam Update – David Avenue Bike Route by John Seinen

Coquitlam has a great new cycle route in the northeast sector. The city is opening up a large new housing development in the Burke Mountain part of the City – a development that will add up to 7500 new households, making it at least 50% larger than the Westwood Plateau development which has been underway for more than 15 years. In August, the City opened the first major east-west connection into this area with the grand opening of the new David Ave from town center to Coast Meridian. From a cyclist's perspective, this new road shows how to do things right when developing a new road – it has bike lanes on both sides for the entire stretch of road, and it also has a separate 'urban trail' on the south side. This separate paved trail will be great for pedestrians and those recreational or less confident cyclists who

choose not to use the bike lanes on the roadway itself. This will be the logical bike route for commuter cyclists using the multi-modal option of connecting with the Evergreen LRT line, since there will be an LRT station at the western end of this route at Douglas College. Next up on the planning agenda for this area is Coast Meridian which will be one of the main north-south routes to access the new subdivisions, and a key part of the bicycle network in Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam. The south end of Coast Meridian is in Port Coquitlam which is planning an overpass over the railway yards to connect with the Mary Hill bypass. They have committed to bicycle lanes on this overpass, and the Tri-Cities Committee of the VACC is actively promoting bike lanes connecting all the new construction pieces in the area to help complete the bicycle network.

New Opportunities for Cycling Infrastructure at Vancouver Airport by Ted Mann

Vancouver Airport is at a crossroads as far as cycling is concerned. 26,000 people now work at the airport and that number will increase up to 53,000 in 40 years according to the Airport Authority. There are currently 20 million car trips to the airport per year. In the next 40 years the number of car trips to the airport is expected to double to 40 million per year. The decisions made now about cycling infrastructure will have a profound impact on our efforts to increase cycling and reduce air pollution in Vancouver.

In this light, we have a golden opportunity to improve cycling at the airport with the new Canada Line construction. We have recently met with The Airport Authority about just such a subject. Some of the ideas that we discussed: wider bike lanes and improved hi-speed bicycle entrances on to and off of the Arthur Laing Bridge; a new path that completely bypasses the present busy interchange and connects to the new Templeton Station, and a new bike path that will improve the connection from the industrial area to the South of the terminal to Richmond and Vancouver.

There are also plans to expand the industrial area on the North part of Sea Island, and to build an overpass that takes Templeton over Grant McConachie Way. With lots of money coming in to these projects, the Airport Authority has no reason not to build them, and they have been fairly receptive to our ideas. But we need more input from the cycling public as to what improvements they would like to see. In this way we can hopefully increase the number of cycling trips taken daily to the airport, and reduce our car dependency.

Comments can be sent to mannt@shaw.ca

Vancouver and UBC Report by Jack Becker

Advocacy needs continue at a hot clip.

- Bike lanes on Cambie St. will be a hot topic for the next few months, along with the developments along Canada Line.
- Vancouver Council is showing interest in a Bike Station as part of the Pacific Centre rezoning.
- The developments along Ontario St, including Southeast False Creek and the Ontario Bike Route do not go away.
- East Fraserlands is also moving into the public consultation stages.
- What about the slow progress in getting resolution on the Burrard Bridge improvements for pedestrians and cyclists?
- False Creek Flats Railway Corridor Strategy will come forth for discussion.

MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS



Lisa Nolan (Secretary)

Lisa has recently moved back to BC after a stay in Toronto where she helped to create the "infamous" P.S. Kensington festival (Pedestrian Sundays in Kensington Market). She works in educational advertising and marketing and is currently the Recycling Co-ordinator for the South Surrey White Rock Food Bank, to which she rides her self built "Frankenbike" every day. A passionate cyclist, Lisa has moved from anarchist to activist to advocate,

Kudos to the VACC and the Commuter Cycling Skills Course Organizers and Instructors

I'd like to thank Mary and your organization for sponsoring the recent bike safety course held at Mt. Pleasant Community Centre. It was most beneficial and gave me more courage to be on the road and occupy space; to realize that my bike and I are a part of the traffic. We belong! In addition, the course brought to my attention how important it is to be properly equipped with good lighting, a CURRENT helmet and REFLECTIVE TAPE.

Just recently I was at Bicycle Sports Pacific and the clerk told me of an accident she recently witnessed. A woman and her dog were crossing the road. The woman was dressed in black with no reflective tape on her clothing. She was struck down by a vehicle. Her dog had a reflective collar and did not get hurt.

*Once again, a big thank you.
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Zoe Napier-Hemy



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meet the criteria, given the potential for serious injury.

One regrettable phenomenon in these cases is the correlation between outrageous behaviour and subsequent denial. It is rare for malicious assailants to come clean. Rather, in my experience, the intentional wrong doer has a tendency to conjure fanciful reconstructions in order to somehow explain the conduct. These cases not only involve intentional harm but intentional misstatements and omissions, and a reckless regard for the truth approaching fraudulent behaviour. It should come as no surprise that a defendant's complete lack of credibility can often lead to a higher award of punitive damages against a defendant.

Intentional conduct is of course not insured. Therefore, in order to recover punitive damages, a cyclist usually needs to go all the way to trial for that relief, whereas, in a simpler case involving the principles of negligence and

compensation, a just result can and often is achieved by way of a negotiated settlement. There is an inescapable irony that intentional harm often leads to a more protracted process than harm caused by a motorist's negligence. Intuitively, society should be quicker to remedy intentional conduct. However, unless charges are laid, and they are often not, a civil claim for punitive damages may lead to a longer legal journey. One wonders whether or not insurers should start selling Third Party protection against road rage and intentionally inflicted harm. This may sound radical, but it does invite important considerations relating to the nature of the human driving experience, and the conduct it inspires.

David W. Hay is a litigation lawyer and partner at Richards Buell Sutton LLP. The information above is not legal advice. Anyone seeking legal advice should call David directly at 604.661.9250 or email him at dhay@rbs.ca for a free consultation.

Why Should You Support Bike Lanes on Cambie Street? by Jack Becker

Why are cycling advocates calling for bike lanes on Cambie Street?

Vancouver has an objective that 10% of all trips be on bicycle by 2010. That means a lot of people will need to be attracted to cycling, including those that do not currently cycle at all or who do not cycle regularly for transportation. New approaches for this city will be needed. Direct bike lanes on a road with reasonable hill climbs connecting Downtown, Richmond, workplaces, rapid transit stations, and passing through shopping areas will appeal to people.

Quite simply, Cambie Street is the easiest street to cycle, requiring the least effort, in the central corridor from False Creek to the Fraser River. The street has the lower grades to climb than the adjacent Ontario and Heather Bike Routes. Commuting cyclists want the shortest, fastest way to their destinations and these bike lanes will provide it. With the new bike deck opening in 2008 on the Canada Line Bridge crossing on the Fraser River, Cambie Street provides a direct cycling route between Richmond, through South Vancouver and downtown.

Bike lanes on Cambie Street will provide good connections feeding the Canada Line stations from homes in South Vancouver and also from workplaces from 20th Ave and north.

Retail businesses will benefit, allowing cyclists easy and safe access to their shops from 19th Ave and north.

Like car drivers, cyclists want route options. Cambie Street bike lanes along with Ontario and Heather bike routes will provide choice.

Tri-Cities Committee Update by John Seinen

The Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody committee of the VACC has been very busy in the last few months and has been meeting with some success. We recently made a presentation to Coquitlam City Council to point our key priorities for the City – the Lougheed Highway and United Boulevard, Coquitlam Town Centre, and the Coast Meridian connections to Burke Mountain. See the VACC website for details on the presentation. We will be following up with city staff and councillors to help prioritise their commitment to implement the bicycle network plan adopted five years ago. The Tri-Cities Committee is participating in city bike route studies for Coquitlam Town Centre and the North Road - Burquitlam corridor, and we have recently completed two exploratory rides for

United Boulevard and Coast Meridian – both of which will result in recommendations to the city. Our first advocacy ride last year on Foster Street resulted in a report to city staff and we are pleased to say that this route is the first one the city will be improving, based at least in part on our suggestions and advocacy. The Committee has had a productive 18 months since our formation in the spring of 2005, but we would like to encourage participation of more cyclists in the Tri-cities – new ideas are always welcome and more voices will make a bigger impression with the three local governments with which we need to deal. We meet at 7:00 pm on the first Wednesday of the month at the Coquitlam Public Library – Town Centre Branch.

Vancouver Sunday Greenway? by Jack Becker

Is it time for Vancouver to have its own Ciclovía?

Bogotá has its weekly Ciclovía.

Guadalajara has its Via Recreativa since 2004.

Ottawa has its Alcatel Sunday Bikeways.

Paris has its Reprise.

Chicago is working on its Sunday Park Project.

Other cities have it or are in the process of developing their own version.

Now, should Vancouver have its own Sunday Greenway on significant shopping roads?

Ciclovía is a Spanish term, meaning "cycling street," and used in Latin America to mean either a permanent designated bicycle route or a temporary event closing of the street to automobiles to allow dominance by other users.

Every Sunday, from 7:00 am to 2:00 pm, Bogotá, Columbia closes down about 120 km of its most important roads to cars. The Ciclovía started small with only 18 kilometres of street closed down in 1995. Demand has made the activity grow.

The streets are taken over by bicyclists, joggers,

and walkers; by solo participants, groups of friends, families, and children. About 1.5 million people get out and enjoy their streets. There is an annual Bicycle Day as part of the Ciclovía with a recreation ride attracting 50,000 participants. There are aerobics and recreation points along the Ciclovía routes, with cultural events, and opportunities to stop at sidewalk cafés, and to shop.

But, what attracts people most to this weekly Sunday event? It would appear it is other people. "When you define your city around cars, you get more cars! When you define your city around people, you get more people!"⁽¹⁾

What about Vancouver? Does it have a signature bicycle event? Does it have an equivalent to the annual 30,000 plus cyclists that take part in Montréal's Tour de L'Île or Tour de la Nuit, or Tour des Enfants? Well, it does have the annual Randonneur 100 km ride though the streets of the city. For 50,000 joggers there is the Vancouver Sun Run.

What does the city have for the ordinary cyclist, in-line skater, skateboarder, wheel chair user, or walker? Imagine Broadway, or Robson / Denman / Davie, or Commercial Drive closed

Continued back page

Use of Cycling Helmets by Jack Becker

An observation from my three-month summer cycling trip through many American urban areas, large and small!

Vancouver cyclists helmet wearing exceeds by far that of most of the American cities and towns I passed through. For the most part, it seemed that the only ones wearing helmets were the more speed and distance oriented cyclists; the randonneur and the racers types.

Given this observation, some questions come to mind:

Should the police focus on conformity with helmet legislation or put their efforts into behaviours that cause drivers to collide with cyclists?

Should the police focus on reducing the consequences of a collision or crash, or focus on the conditions that caused it?

Should conformity to a law be achieved through enforcement or through education and leading by example?

In the City of Vancouver this summer, police action seemed to focus on wearing of helmets while cycling. Tickets were handed out and, in September a back to school helmet media event was held.

Should action be taken that may discourage those who will not wear helmets by choice? Instead, should the effort be directed toward offensive driving behaviour that discourages some people from cycling in the first place? Where should Vancouver police put their efforts?

Why do people want to cycle without wearing their helmets? There may be freedom issues to some; the feeling of wind flowing through their hair. There may be personal health factors or heat and comfort issues. Each has their own reason.

Cycling helmets are extremely useful when a cyclist crashes to the ground or into a vehicle. Personally, I would

Continued next page



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The Urbane Cyclist

Continued from previous page

not cycle without wearing a helmet. I have had enough unplanned encounters with terra firma to understand the value of a helmet on the head, not on the handlebar.

Helmets do nothing towards the prevention of a collision or crash or other types of incidents. Maybe public focus, people effort and other resources should be focused on reducing the potential of such collisions or crashes instead of fining cyclists for not wearing helmets.

But, does that mean that all cyclists should wear helmets? Maybe I think so considering the value of a helmet when something does occur and head injury which may result. Others may have different perspectives and thinking. After all, it is their body and especially their brain which is at risk. Does that mean it needs to be legislated or enforced? A belief in something has a much longer effect than a fine. Beliefs come from education and example. If it means more people cycling instead of driving, do we all not win?

Work with the VACC

To become involved, please contact:

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Who to write about issues in The Urbane Cyclist:

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Refer to our website for more contact information.

Cambie Street Bike Lanes: Continued from front page

RAV is also expected to result in 18,000 fewer weekday automobile trips in the corridor. Unless capacity for automobiles is reduced, this excess capacity will be quickly used up by more people driving, thus reducing the environmental and community benefits of the Canada Line.

Reducing Capacity on Cambie Street will Increase Transit Ridership

Decreasing automobile capacity on Cambie Street will encourage more people to use the Canada Line, ensuring ridership targets and thus revenue targets are met or exceeded. This will make the business case stronger for the Millennium Line Extension and the Downtown Streetcar. The more revenue generated by the Canada Line, the more funding will be available for transit improvements in Vancouver.

If Vancouver is to reach its goal of 10% of trips by bicycle by 2010, excellent bicycle facilities must be provided for cyclists of all ages and abilities. While many do prefer low-traffic bikeways, a significant number of people already cycle on busy streets such as Cambie. Bike Lanes on Cambie Street will make the trip safer for the brave people who prefer such roads, as well as encouraging more people to cycle on Cambie Street.

Please contact Mayor Sullivan and Council regarding Cambie Street Bike Lanes: mayorandcouncil@vancouver.ca

Further contact information can be found at: <http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/councilmembers.htm>

Ciclovía: Continued from front page 9

every Sunday for a few hours for use by people, enjoying the city, and doing so in peace and quiet.

Maybe it is time to test the appetite of Vancouverites for such an event. Over the next few months this will happen. If you would you like to be involved in this, then visit the web site - <http://www.vancouverundaygreenway.thecyclistwebhouse.com/index.htm>

⁽¹⁾ *Economic spin-offs and Marketing Opportunities. Cycle Ontario Alliance Conference. Gil Penalosa, 2005-10-22*

<http://www.cycleontario.ca/conference/Economics.pdf>

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Nov 2006

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