

Cycling Advocacy Committee Newsletter

December 2022



Bike Maps

Do you have a pet cycling hazard in town? Why not record it on bikemaps.org?

This site provides a map on which you can zoom in to see details of road networks and add your own notes about hazards, crashes, near misses and thefts. By building a visual database of areas of concern we can draw attention to what needs to be done (and it's a lot!).

Bike Skills Workshops

Look for the City to organize a skills workshop for eBike riders during the May GoByBike Week. E-Bikes have made cycling accessible to many people who haven't saddled up for many a year and who may benefit from some education.

Of course, it's not just eBike riders who may be a little rusty. Should the bike club be hosting some sessions for people getting back into cycling or looking to develop the confidence to ride on the road with traffic? We'd welcome your ideas!

Hello and thanks for expressing interest in the development of safe, attractive and efficient cycling transportation in Campbell River. That's the goal of the RCCC's Cycling Advocacy Committee and we're happy to have your help!

We're publishing this monthly newsletter to share our plans for advocating for better active transportation and to build a community of people who share our goals.

Annual Report 2022

Here's the report we submitted to the River City Cycle Club's Annual General Meeting. There's no faster way to find out what we've been doing for the past year!

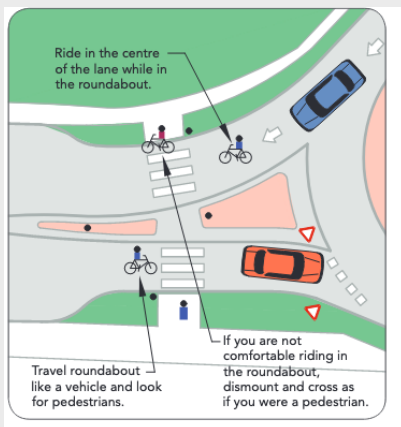
The Cycling Advocacy Committee has been active on a number of fronts during 2022. Through advocacy with City Council and Staff, club initiatives and community outreach we have worked towards the goal of making safe cycling part of a healthier, more liveable and more sustainable city.

- During the **City budget process** for 2022 we pressed for an increase to the \$15,000 historically allotted to cycling infrastructure per year. As a result, the outgoing council voted to increase that amount to \$200,000 per annum (drawn from the Gas Tax refund from the BC Government). This has the potential, especially if matched by Active Transportation grants, to have a real impact on cycling facilities.

- We continued to support City Staff with best evidence and local feedback, particularly with respect to the plans for **bike lanes on Hilchey**. These bike lanes were slow to materialize, but they benefitted from the decision by staff to partially protect one lane by placing it between the sidewalk and parked cars. We will continue to advocate for more effective separation of cyclists from traffic over ¹ time.

Rockland Roundabout

Perhaps you've noticed that the most egregious "cyclists dismount" signs have been removed from the roundabout. One still remains on the southbound entrance; this is intended to inform cyclists who wish to use the crosswalk that they should get off and walk - though it may give drivers the false impression that bikes aren't allowed in the roundabout. Ambiguity and uncertainty are dangerous in the context of traffic and we'd prefer this sign to be removed also.



Please remember that people on bikes have a legitimate choice at a roundabout - take the lane as a vehicle or dismount and act as a pedestrian.

Have you encountered difficulties with motorized vehicles at the roundabout?

Please let us know so we can pursue the issue.

Email us:

advocacy@rivercitycycle.ca

- We were pleased to have the co-operation of city staff in establishing **"pop-up" bike lanes along Pier Street** on Canada Day and again on the last two Sunday Market Days of the summer. It was an excellent demonstration of how easy it would be to create a permanent cycling route into the downtown area from the south.

- Speaking of Canada Day, we hosted a **"bike valet"** site downtown where people could safely leave their bikes for free while they enjoyed the festivities. We borrowed bike racks from the Comox Valley Cycling Coalition and hosted over 80 cyclists throughout the day. Considering there was no advance publicity for this service we far exceeded expectations. We did the same for one of the "Live Streets" events put on by the City. This is clearly a valuable and welcomed service and a great opportunity to connect with cyclists new and old. We intend to pursue this further.

- In the lead-up to the new **Master Transportation Plan** we actively participated in the public engagement process. As well one of our members, Amanda Frazer, has had a seat on the Community Advisory Panel. As a result of this we were able to take the lead engineer on the project for a bike ride around town. As you can imagine, he found it informative and revealing! Amanda has also been invited to sit on the Quinsam Heights Neighbourhood Advisory Committee, designed to give feedback on the new residential developments west of town. This is one other way of ensuring that active

As 2023 approaches, we have a number of short-term goals, including:

- Developing an email list of people, club members or not, who support improved cycling infrastructure and are willing to advocate for it.
- Acquiring portable bike racks and a tent suitable for bike parking to be used for public events
- Monitoring the refreshed Master Transportation Plan and lobbying for the implementation of its recommendations (in contrast to the 2012 MTP, from which no cycling infrastructure recommendations were completed)
- Providing education to the public about safe cycling
- Continuing to press for solutions to specific problems/hazards facing cyclists

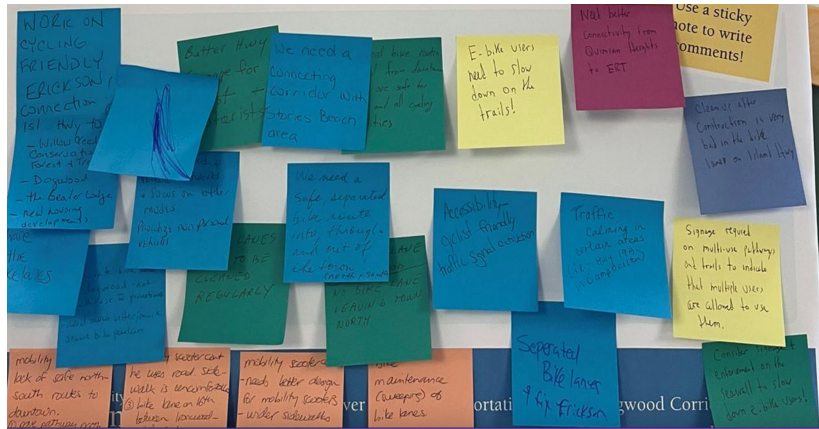
Elder College

If you're experienced enough to qualify, keep an eye out for the Elder College catalogue for this Spring - you'll find a workshop led by Amanda Frazer on the connections between active transportation and healthy communities.

Birch Street Bikeway

The previous city council made a significant increase in the cycling infrastructure budget, up from \$15,000 to \$200,000 annually. City staff prioritized making Birch Street a safe North-South corridor with these funds, possibly leveraged by matching grants. Unfortunately, the cost estimates proved to be more than the funds available and the plans were shelved for this year. Staff are hopeful that this year's budget can be carried over and a major improvement implemented in 2023. Our committee has argued that safe infrastructure in and out of downtown on Hwy 19A should be the number one project but we recognize the potential for Birch to be an important part of a connected cycling network. It's pretty disappointing to see the City miss an opportunity to take advantage of a Provincial Active Transportation grant for the umpteenth time. We understand that part of the problem is a shortage of staff time and it takes time as well as money to make progress. We live in hope.

Master Transportation Plan



On a related note, the City has contracted Watt Consulting from Victoria to develop a new Master Transportation Plan for Campbell River. You can find their first technical document - a very interesting "baseline" description of the current situation - posted on the City of Campbell River's web page. Of course the last Master Transportation Plan (2012) made many great suggestions for cycling infrastructure, none of which were completed. We live in hope.



Bike Valet

Last year we offered a bike valet service, where bikes could be left safely under supervision, for several community events. It was well received and we'd like to expand it. To do so the RCCC has applied for a grant from the BC Cycling Coalition to purchase some portable bike racks. Other communities have found this to be a way to encourage active transportation and to connect with cyclists who may not belong to the bike club. If we're successful we'll be looking for volunteers. Stay tuned!

RCCC Christmas Light Ride

The Truck Parade has nothing on the annual Christmas Light Bike Ride!

Stick some lights on your bike and join us at 6 pm on December 15 at Frank James Park (across from the Willow Point Tim Hortons). It's a family ride along the Rotary Seawalk to Hidden Harbour and back, with complimentary hot chocolate for kids. (No kids? Continue downtown for the unsanctioned and convivial ride to local establishments.)

Contact Us

We'd appreciate hearing your concerns and suggestions with respect to active transportation in our city. Please feel free to contact us at:

advocacy@rivercitycycle.ca

