



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee

Date: December 11, 2013

From: Victor Wei, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation

File: 01-0100-20-
RCYC1/2013-Vol 01

Re: **RICHMOND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE – PROPOSED 2014 INITIATIVES**

Staff Recommendation

1. That the proposed 2014 initiatives of the Richmond Active Transportation Committee, as described in the report, be endorsed.
2. That a copy of the above report be forwarded to the Richmond Council-School Board Liaison Committee for information.

Victor Wei, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation
(604-276-4131)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Parks Services Recreation Services Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

The report reviews the 2013 activities of the Richmond Active Transportation Committee (RATC) and identifies a number of initiatives for 2014 that would support its mandate. In early 2013, Council endorsed that this Committee evolve from the Richmond Community Cycling Committee with an expanded mandate to allow for members' consideration of other human-powered or electric motor-assisted wheeled devices when providing feedback on the planning and design of the City's transportation infrastructure as well as encouraging more people to cycle and roll in Richmond.

Analysis

1. Summary of 2013 Committee Activities and Achievements

The RATC undertook and participated in a number of activities in 2013 that contributed to enhanced cycling and rolling opportunities, and increased education and awareness of active transportation in Richmond.

1.1 Expansion and Improvement of Active Transportation Network

The City continued to add to the active transportation network in 2013, which now comprises nearly 65 km of on- and off-street bike and rolling routes, with the contribution of funding grants from external agencies including TransLink, ICBC and the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure that totalled \$686,500, which in turn supported projects with a total value of nearly \$2.5 million. The Committee provided feedback on the planning, design, construction, and/or improvement of the following facilities.

Railway Avenue Greenway: Design of this major north-south pedestrian, cycling and rolling greenway that connects Steveston with the Middle Arm Greenway including intersection treatments and signage (see Figure 1).

Future Neighbourhood Links: Members participated with staff on an assessment ride of two planned neighbourhood walking and cycling routes (new east-west Crosstown route aligned between Blundell Road and Francis Road, and new north-south route aligned parallel to and east of Gilbert Road) and offered valuable and constructive feedback with respect to route planning, infrastructure improvements and wayfinding.

Parkside Neighbourhood Link (Phase 1): Upgrade (i.e., widening and paving) of the existing off-street multi-use pathway along the perimeter of Walter Lee Elementary School (including addition of a new accessible ramp at Glenacres Dr) to safely accommodate two-way cycling, rolling and walking as part of Phase 1 of this second neighbourhood bike route that connects the South Arm area (Williams Road at Ash Street) to Garden City Park (see Figure 2).



Figure 1: Railway Greenway crossing at Princeton Ave



Figure 2: Before & After Off-Street Path along Perimeter of Walter Lee School

Westminster Highway Pathway (No. 6 Road-No. 8 Road): Removal of centre bollards from the existing off-street pathway and review of further potential improvements including the addition of new streetlights, painted white edge lines and reflectors to improve visibility and the legibility of the pathway at night.

No. 6 Road Pathway (Westminster Hwy-Commerce Parkway): Construction of a new two-way off-street multi-use pathway on the west side of No. 6 Road as part of the scope of a road widening project.

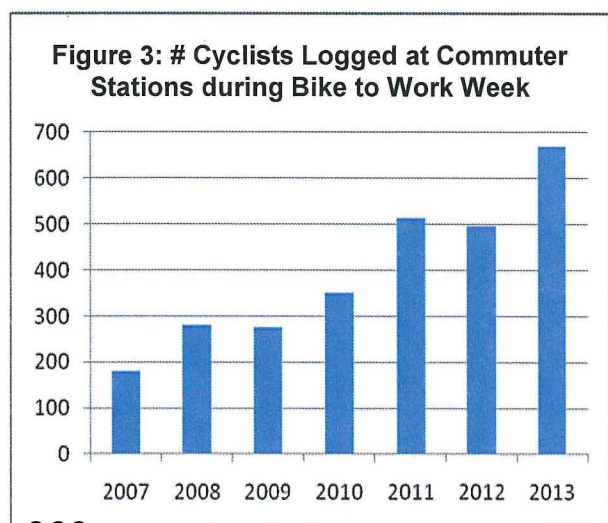
City Paving Program: Worked with Engineering and Public Works staff to identify priorities for the restoration of roadways with cycling facilities impacted by development activities.

Cycling Improvements in Steveston: Identified additional locations for bike racks along Chatham Street in Steveston Village as well as potential improvements to Bayview Street east of No. 1 Road to enhance cycling (e.g., removal of raised granite pavers).

1.2 Promotion

The Committee participated in the following activities to promote cycling and other active transportation modes in Richmond.

Bike to Work Week (May and October 2013): The Committee worked with organizers of this region-wide annual initiative to continue to successfully stage these events in Richmond. Four bike commuter stations recorded a total of 398 cyclists (i.e., stopping at the commuter station or passing by) during 2-hour periods in May and 272 cyclists were recorded at two bike commuter stations during 2-hour periods in October (see Figure 3).



13th Annual “Island City, by Bike” Tour (June 9, 2013): Each year in June, as part of regional Bike Month activities and the City’s Environment Week events, the Committee and the City jointly stage guided tours for the community of some of the city’s cycling routes. The 13th annual “Island City, by Bike” tour was based at Woodward’s Landing and offered short (7-km) and long (21-km) rides with escorts provided by volunteer members of the Richmond RCMP bike squad. The loops featured the South Dyke Trail and the recently completed cycling connection through



Figure 4: 2013 Bike Tour Participants

Riverside Industrial Park that links Shell Road to Rice Mill Road. Activities included a bike and helmet safety check prior to the ride plus a barbecue lunch and raffle prize draw at the finish. Despite rain that morning, the event attracted 94 cyclists of all ages and cycling ability (see Figure 4). Attendance at the event has consistently grown over the past several years and now averages 110 participants, up from 75 in the first five years of the event.

Expanded Committee Mandate: To raise community awareness of the Committee’s expanded mandate, a notice was placed in the City Page section of the *Richmond Review* inviting members of the public to participate or attend a meeting to present and discuss a topic of mutual interest. Staff have also advised other appropriate City advisory committees (e.g., Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee) of the Committee’s role.

1.3 Education

The City also provided funding of \$4,375 to *HUB: Your Cycling Connection*, a non-profit organization focused on making cycling better through education and events, to operate the following cycling education courses for local residents with input from the Committee.

Ride the Road Bicycle Education for Students: In September 2013, four classes of a total of 100 students in Grades 4 to 7 at Tomsett Elementary School participated in a five-day bike education course, which was the first held in Richmond in co-operation with Richmond School District. The goals of the course are to:

- promote and demonstrate that cycling is a fun, healthy, social and inexpensive way to experience freedom and independence as well as a viable option to driving a car;
- build rider competency through the practice of a complete range of bike handling skills;
- teach traffic dynamics, including rules of the road, to develop safe, responsible cyclists;
- promote safe riding through visible clothing, safe routes, helmets, lights, and bells; and
- teach the basics of bike security, bike parts and maintenance, bike fit, and bike equipment.

The course included in-class lessons, on-bike playground cycling safety training for younger students and neighbourhood road ride education for older youth. The course was well received and enjoyed the enthusiastic participation of all students. Post-program survey

responses indicated that 66 per cent of students stated that the likelihood of riding their bike increased post-course and 70 per cent of students said that their confidence about their ability to ride in traffic improved post-course.

Learn to Ride: In October 2013, a beginner's course targeted to new Canadians (both adults and their children) was offered in co-operation with Richmond Family Place. The workshop takes participants through the most common situations faced when riding a bike in traffic and provides tips to make cycling commuting a fun and regular activity (see Figure 5). Two separate lessons were held with bicycles provided for those that needed them. A total of 16 participants attended over two instructional days including three adults were learning to ride and nine youth who joined with their parents. Feedback from participants was very positive.



Figure 5: Participants in Learn to Ride Course

1.4 Other Initiatives related to Active Transportation

The Committee participated in the following initiatives with elements related to active transportation:

Transportation Forum: Members attended a public forum (“Have Options Will Travel”) organized by the Richmond Poverty Response Committee in April 2013 that featured a panel of speakers on the topic of sustainable transportation including transit, car-sharing, cycling, and walking.

Steveston Streetscape Open Houses: Members participated in two joint open houses held by the City in April (invited stakeholders) and May (general public) regarding an update of the *Steveston Village Conservation Strategy* and proposed long-term streetscape visions for Chatham Street and Bayview Street. The Committee subsequently submitted a document that detailed the Committee's preferred long-term visions for both streets. In support of the Committee's mandate to encourage active transportation modes, the Committee's goals and preferred streetscape features included provision of wider sidewalks to enhance rolling travel modes, and pedestrian-scale features such as benches and lighting.

Move for Health Festival: The Committee staffed a booth at this inaugural City event held May 10, 2013 at Minoru Park as part of a week-long campaign to promote awareness of the benefits of healthy active living for people of all ages.

2. Proposed Committee Initiatives for 2014

In addition to providing input on the planning, design and implementation of major capital infrastructure projects designed for active modes of transportation, the Committee proposes to undertake various activities in co-operation with the City and external agencies that encourage and raise awareness of active transportation, and educate all users how to safely share facilities.

2.1 Active Transportation Network Expansion & Improvement Projects

The Committee will provide input at the earliest conceptual stage on the prioritisation, planning, design, and implementation of the following projects that expand and/or improve the network of infrastructure that can be used by active transportation modes.

Planned Active Transportation Network Expansion: Completion of the Parkside Neighbourhood Link with the provision of a multi-use pathway connection (for cycling, walking and rolling) from the north end of Ash Street to Garden City Park and the upgrade of the special crosswalk on Blundell road at Ash Street to a pedestrian signal, initiation of the Crosstown Neighbourhood Link and further improvements to the Railway Avenue Greenway.

Cycling Network Improvement Projects: Localised improvements to existing on-street cycling facilities such as improved pavement markings (e.g., green painted bike lanes at potential conflict areas), additional signage and installation of delineators to prevent motorists from encroaching into bike lanes.

Planned Park, Road and Development Projects: Review of additional projects that impact existing or would incorporate new active transportation infrastructure as part of the overall project such as Westminster Highway widening (Nelson Road-McMillan Way), interim Lansdowne Road extension (Minoru Blvd-Alderbridge Way) and new civic facilities at Minoru Park.

Promotion of Completed Routes: Develop new and/or enhanced promotional campaigns to raise the awareness of new active transportation facilities both locally and regionally such as news releases, regular City notices in local newspapers and wide distribution of the trails and cycling map.

2.2 Education and Encouragement Initiatives

The Committee will encourage and promote active transportation as sustainable travel modes that also have significant health benefits via the following activities.

Railway Greenway Opening: Participate in an event tentatively planned for Earth Day to celebrate the new greenway and educate users on greenway etiquette (e.g., sharing the facility between multiple users, safely crossing at intersections, etc).

14th Annual "Island City, by Bike" Tour: Assist in the planning, promotion and staging of the fourteenth annual bike tour of Richmond during Bike Month in June 2014, which is set for Sunday, June 8th at Thompson Community Centre. Both the long and short routes will utilize the Railway Greenway to raise community awareness of this new amenity that supports walking, cycling and rolling activities.

Bike to Work & School: Assist in the planning, promotion and staging of this region-wide event during May and November 2014, which includes the provision of bike commuter stations throughout the city.

Bicycle Education for Students: In co-operation with HUB and the Richmond School District, build on the success of the first course held at Tomsett Elementary School in 2013 to expand the delivery of the course to additional elementary schools in Richmond.

Learn to Ride Courses: Work with HUB and a variety of community agencies to host and promote safe cycling education courses in Richmond.

City Page and City Website: Provide education and awareness notices regarding active transportation in the City Page of the *Richmond Review* and continue to update, revise and enhance related information on the City's website and Facebook site.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Over the past year, the Richmond Active Transportation Committee has successfully transitioned from a focus on cycling to a broader mandate that includes other rolling transportation modes such as in-line skating and low-powered scooters. The Committee's proposed 2014 initiatives would continue efforts to further encourage greater and safer use of active transportation modes in Richmond, which in turn will support progress towards meeting the City's target for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as well as the travel mode share targets of the City's Official Community Plan.



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