

BURNABY BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

RE: BC PARKWAY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council support the goals of the BC Parkway Improvement Committee to improve the BC Parkway to better facilitate use of the parkway for all users, and to consider conversion of the existing abandoned railroad within the right of way as a commuter cycling facility.

REPORT

The Burnaby Bicycle Advisory Committee, at its meeting held on 1999 May 27, received and adopted the attached report to amend the recommendation from the 1999 March 23 BC Parkway Improvement Committee report and clarify Council concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor D. Drummond
Chair

Councillor D. Lawson,
Vice Chair

<p>:COPY - CITY MANAGER - DIRECTOR ENGINEERING - DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES</p>

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1999 MAY 17

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

SUBJECT: BC PARKWAY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

PURPOSE: To amend the recommendation from the 1999 March 23 BC Parkway Improvement Committee report and clarify Council concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council support the goals of the BC Parkway Improvement Committee to improve the BC Parkway to better facilitate use of the Parkway for all users, and to consider conversion of the existing abandoned railroad within the right of way as a commuter cycling facility.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

At the 1999 January 28 regular meeting of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC), correspondence was received from the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition regarding a start-up meeting of the BC Parkway Improvement Committee (BCPIC). Staff were requested by the BAC to attend the meeting and provide a report at the following BAC meeting. Staff submitted a report to the 1999 March 30 regular BAC meeting and made recommendations for representation from the BAC and support of the BCPIC's goals.

This report with two recommendations was received by Council at its regular meeting of 1999 April 12. The first recommendation regarding appointment of a BAC member to the BCPIC was approved in principle by Council. The second recommendation regarding improvement of the Parkway and goals of the BCPIC, "THAT Council support the BC Parkway Improvement Committee in improving the BC Parkway to better facilitate use of the Parkway for all users, and convert the existing abandoned railroad within the right of way as a commuter cycling facility", was referred back to the BAC to amend the recommendation and clarify concerns relating to both the initiation of the BCPIC and the reference to user conflicts involving the Parkway.

This report seeks to provide background information on the BC Parkway, clarify the two concerns, and amend the second recommendation for Council's consideration.

2.0 BC PARKWAY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The BC Parkway was constructed as part of Skytrain development and is generally considered to be made up of two trail systems associated with the current Skytrain alignment, the John Molson Trail (1.5 metres gravel) and the 7-11 Trail (3.0 metres paved asphalt). Early BC Parkway promotional information and a staff report of 1983 November 15 supported the need for separated pedestrian and bicycle use and identified each trail accordingly (gravel - pedestrian, paved - bicycle). The Parkway was subsequently built to these standards.

Over the years the gravel trail has proven to be unpopular with pedestrians resulting in the paved trail becoming a heavily used defacto mixed-use facility narrower than the City's current mixed-use Urban Trail standard of 4.0 metres.

The right-of-way that the BC Parkway utilizes presents complex ownership and underground services issues.

3.0 BC PARKWAY USER CONFLICTS AND SAFETY ISSUES

The BC Parkway is a tremendously popular facility that nonetheless suffers from a number of problems related to bicycle/vehicle safety at intersections, poor connectivity across intersections, inadequate signage, and use concentrated onto a substandard facility. Its use is expected to increase as neighbourhoods redevelop, recreational and commuter cycling gains popularity, and as GVRD Parks develops a Regional Sector Greenway Plan for Burrard Peninsula - Richmond area (which includes Burnaby). Given that the agencies responsible for maintenance of the BC Parkway do not have the resources to enforce separated trail use there is potential for user conflicts in some areas.

Although the City is unaware of any complaints related to physical injury or serious conflicts between users, anecdotal information, staff observation, input from the BAC, expected increase in use, and analysis of surrounding land uses and their associated pedestrian travel patterns all indicate that there are safety concerns for users in some areas and that the facility does not meet one of its original published goals of providing for a safe recreational experience for pedestrians and commuter cyclists.

At some point in the future the City may wish to consider landscape redevelopment of the BC Parkway corridor in the Metrotown area in order to better integrate uses and travel patterns, as well as provide a unified and attractive linear open space complementing the Metrotown urban environment.

4.0 VANCOUVER AREA CYCLING COALITION INVOLVEMENT

BC Transit and 7-Eleven have been jointly responsible for maintenance and operational issues along the length of the BC Parkway. Apparently, due to budget related issues, operational concerns have been infrequently addressed by these agencies. Often this has resulted in members of the cycling public communicating unresolved operational issues to City staff as City maps indicate the BC Parkway as part of the Urban Trail Network.

Staff have been able to resolve some issues that involve City owned property and rights-of-way, but do not have the jurisdiction to do so elsewhere on the Parkway. Resolution in the latter case is further complicated because of detailed ownership and agency-related funding issues.

The recently formed (1998) Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition (VACC) is the only known organised group of users of the Parkway and recognizes many of its problems. Cyclists tend to have keen insight to the issues of the Parkway as they use the BC Parkway as part of a larger cycling system, are sensitive to vehicle/bicycle conflicts and connectivity issues, and have the only official means of communicating a particular BC Parkway problem for resolution (via the Bicycle Advisory Committee).

Although the VACC is a cycling advocacy group, it also recognizes that any improvements made to the Parkway would be beneficial to all users, including pedestrians. Hence it initiated the start up of BCPIC with a thought to acquiring funding from a number of sources, including but not limited to:

- 7-Eleven funding on its 5 year cycle (comes up in 2000);
- Potential provincial and federal millennium project funding;
- GVTA funding.

The BCPIC would welcome any other organised user group of the Parkway to the round-table discussions.

5.0 BCPIC MEMBERSHIP

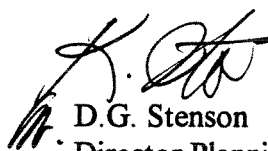
It is intended that the Committee be made up of staff from the Greater Vancouver Regional District Parks(GVRD), Translink, BC Hydro, staff from each of the three jurisdictions that the BC Parkway passes through (Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster), representatives from each jurisdiction's Bicycle Advisory Committee, executive members of the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition (VACC), and any other interested user group(s). The 1999 February 18 meeting had representation from each of these parties with the exception of GVRD Parks, BC Hydro, Burnaby Bicycle Advisory Committee and other user groups. The 1999 April 27 meeting was attended by all except BC Hydro and other interested user groups (see *Minutes attached*).

6.0 BC PARKWAY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE GOALS

The 1999 February 18 meeting represented a brainstorming session as to the issues and direction of the Committee. Two goals arose from this discussion, the first being to generally improve the BC Parkway so as to better facilitate use of the Parkway and increase safety for all users including pedestrians, recreational cyclists, commuter cyclists, and those using scooters or wheelchairs. The second goal represents a longer term vision to consider conversion of the existing abandoned railroad within the right of way as a commuter cycling facility. Doing so would remove commuter cyclists from the existing paved facility and create a safer and more enjoyable experience for all. Conversion would require agreement from all stakeholders in terms of ownership, financing, liability, operational issues, and compatibility with surrounding land uses and travel patterns. The Committee developed a Mission Statement to reflect these goals.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

The improvement of the BC Parkway is considered a worthwhile objective as the Parkway connects several important features of Burnaby, intersects with Urban Trails and Cycle Roads, and fosters inter-municipal recreational links. It is recommended that the Burnaby Bicycle Advisory Committee support the goals and vision of the BCPIC and that staff work with the BCPIC to ensure improvements are compatible with surrounding uses, both existing and proposed. Any improvements would first require a report to Council seeking approval. Such a report would include detailed information pertaining to project planning, design, costs, contingencies, and implementation schedule.


D.G. Stenson
Director Planning and Building

MP:lf
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cc: Director Engineering
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

BC Parkway Improvement Committee

MINUTES

Tuesday April 27, 1999
Metrotown Library

Attendance:

Ken Wuschke (Vancouver BAC), Emma Dal Santo (Vancouver BAC), Mike Peel (Burnaby BAC), Emmanuele Fuldauer (Burnaby BAC), Andrew Feltham (N. West BAC), Martin Pardoe (City of Burnaby Planning), Peter Stary (City of Vancouver Engineering), Don Wathmough (GVRD Parks), Dick Loomer (Past BCPIC Chair).

Noted Absents: Ken Kuo (GVTA/Translink), Mark Allison (City of New Westminster Engineering).

Meeting was chaired by Ken Wuschke and commenced approximately 6:18.

1.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Items of new business were added:

GVRD Greenways Plans, Highland Branch of City of Burnaby's Urban trail System, Translink Funding, Meeting Protocol, BCPIC's Working Time line.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Minutes adopted.

2.2 Discussion concerning Goals under Part III, Section 2.0 second bullet: "Long term goal of converting existing abandoned RR as a commuter cycling facility." Martin noted that this goal went to Burnaby Council and was not adopted. A recommendation was suggested that the goal be softened to read "and considering conversion of...".

ACTION	BY
Revise goal for BBAC who will likely approve it and forward to Council.	MP

3.0 REPORTS

Andrew had not yet arrived so this item was deferred till later in the meeting.

4.0 INFORMATION

Several informal discussions arose:

4.1 Translink/Pat Ryan/Helen Cook.

A motion was made to invite Pat Ryan's replacement at Translink, Helen, to next meeting with BCPIC and ask her to investigate issues identified in Feb. 18 minutes: Ownership and lease patterns, funding process.

ACTION	BY
Call and discuss with Helen	KW
Draft formal letter	MP/KW

4.2 BC Parkway Deficiencies Survey.

A discussion ensued regarding the best means of collecting data identifying deficiencies in the Parkway System. Decided that each BAC should get together on their own and do a survey, ideally with staff. EF suggested that each BAC go one major street outside of their municipal boundaries to ensure connectivity and overlap. DW noted that we should also document examples of where things were done right. DW noted that a regional perspective should also be considered to insure consistency in survey and prioritization of improvement projects. GVRD may be able to provide a regional base map. DW noted that safety should be the first improvement priority. Next step would be a group ride along the length of the Parkway would be made to achieve a regional perspective and consistency between jurisdictions. The following dates were discussed as potential "End to End Ride" dates: Mon May 17, Mon May 31, Mon June 7, Wed June 9. Starting location Tourism New Westminster, west end of Quay next to paddle-wheeler. Time 5pm.

NOTE: RIDE DATE NOW CONFIRMED TO MAY 31 STARTING AS NOTED ABOVE

ACTION	BY
Confirm date of End to End ride.	All
Specific base maps, contact Ken Kuo	MP
Regional base map	DW
Each BAC to complete survey for their jurisdiction.	Staff coordinate with respective BAC's. Note deadline date in point above.
Each BAC to circulate B&W copies of findings to other jurisdictions and BAC's in preparation of end to end ride.	All
BCPIC end to end ride	date to be finalized

Andrew Feltham (N. West BAC) arrived during this discussion.

5.0 REPORTS

5.1 New Westminster BCP Improvements - Andrew Feltham

AF, a member of the NWBAC presented a draft photo essay of deficiencies as well as safety and usage issues. This information was collected and prepared by Mark Allison (NW Staff) and Marion Orser (VACC). Marion had prepared a diagrammatic plan specific to the 22 St Station with photos. Both forms were seen as an effective means of communicating issues. Discussion followed. Regarding signage, felt that signage system be somewhat analogous to a highway system where destinations/points of interest and relevant distances be noted along the route. Regarding photo documentation, a reference map, supporting text identifying deficiency as well as remedy (if there is one!) should be included, and that examples of good things also be documented. DW raised concern regarding potential conflict between recreational and commuter users and that GVRD Parks is seeking mixed use recreational Greenways. KW, PS indicated that there may be sufficient space to accommodate all ranges of abilities/users with a portion dedicated for commuter cycling. Andrew also had preliminary ball park costs associated with relevant deficiencies. Mark and Marion to be thanked for their effort to date.

ACTION	BY
Distribute N.West prelim costs via email	AF/MA
Each BAC to generate similar material and document location, supporting text, possible remedies.	BAC's
Circulate completed B&W surveys to other BCPIC members prior to BCPIC end to end ride.	All

6.0 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 GVRD Greenways Plan

DW gave a review of the GVRD's Greenways vision and plans to date. Exciting things are underway in not only the Burrard Peninsula (which includes the BC Parkway) but the whole region. GVRD sees bike commuting as a spin off of Greenway development and there are concerns related to conflict of use. Don also noted changes to occupiers liability act and the opportunities that this may invoke.

ACTION	BY
Bring draft report and NE Sector Plan to next BCPIC meeting.	DW
Investigate any GVRD utilities along BCParkway	DW

Dick Loomer arrived at approximately 7:45pm.

6.2 Highland Parkway Line

MP reported that the Highland Parkway line is currently leased from BC Hydro by the City of Burnaby for a nominal fee. In the past the City has had some concerns regarding liability, but with changes to the occupiers liability act this situation is expected to improve. It was felt that a BC Hydro contact should be invited to next meeting.

ACTION	BY
Call and discuss with Gary Holisko? ownership, lease status, opportunities etc.	MP
Draft formal letter of same	MP/KW

6.3 Translink Funding

Question was asked at recent MBC meeting regarding access to GVTA/Translink funding. Told that BCPIC needs to determine regional priorities and submit to Translink. PS asked if Translink improvements would be cost shared with municipalities. KW informed that Translink has responsibility due to BCP being underneath Skytrain. This to be confirmed with Helen. DW suggested applying for "seed" or matching funding that first addresses public safety.

6.4 Meeting Protocol

MP to circulate draft minutes shortly after meeting for review and comment. Minutes to include action items. Agenda to be circulated 4 - 5 days prior to next meeting.

6.5 Time Frame

KW suggested that over the short term BCPIC should, by the end of June, have completed survey of BC Parkway and work on Translink funding over the summer to achieve fall funding allocation. In the fall, BCPIC would commence long term property acquisition discussions. Concerns raised over validity of 7-11/Molson commitment to 5 year funding improvements.

ACTION	BY
BAC's to complete surveys as noted above	As above
Find 7-11/Molson contact	DL, EDS, MP
Draft appropriate letter	MP, KW

7.0 NEXT MEETING

Next meeting scheduled for 6pm Thursday June 10 at Bob Prittie Metrotown Library.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52pm

NOTE: RIDE DATE NOW CONFIRMED TO MAY 31 STARTING AS NOTED ABOVE

