



Your Cycling Connection

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29 December 2020

Attn: Noreen Kassam
Director of Finance
City of Burnaby
4949 Canada Way
noreen.Kassam@burnaby.ca

Re: Staffing Proposal to be Considered for Adoption in the City of Burnaby 2021-25 Financial Plan

In our recent correspondence, our Committee stated its intention to participate in the City's 2021-25 Financial Plan development process. We submit this proposal as part of our participation.

The City has ambitious strategic goals to ensure that people can move easily through all areas of Burnaby using any form of transportation. From our Committee's experience working with the City over several years, it seems that more resources are needed to meet these goals efficiently and satisfy the needs of citizens who wish to use active transportation more often.

To achieve the long-term strategic goals adopted by City Council, we propose that the City create and fill two specialized positions that will be responsible for active transportation infrastructure planning, coordination, and implementation. Specifically, these positions would be an Active Transportation Infrastructure Planning Engineer and an Active Transportation Infrastructure Coordinator. The estimated annual salary and benefit cost for both positions is \$253,000.

Both positions would resolve ownership of active transportation projects across City departments, minimize costs from project revisions and corrections, and help create a safe active transportation network for all ages and abilities. Rationale for the proposal and benefits of the positions are detailed in the attachment. We request that this proposal be included in the City's 2021-25 Financial Plan development process.

Thank you for your continued correspondence and we look forward to more engagement in the City's budgeting process.

Cordially,

Cathy Griffin
Co-chair, HUB Cycling Burnaby Local Committee

cc: Mayor and Council, City of Burnaby
Leon Gous, Director, Engineering Transportation
Doug Louie, Assistant Director, Engineering Transportation
Ed Kozak, Director, Planning and Building
Dave Ellenwood, Director, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Active Transportation (AT) Infrastructure Personnel Proposal

HUB Cycling Burnaby Local Committee Proposes:

- **\$253K for 2.0FTEs, consisting of:**
 - **\$145K and 1.0FTE for an AT Infrastructure Planning Engineer; and,**
 - **\$108K and 1.0FTE for an AT Infrastructure Coordinator**

Note: We recognize that AT encompasses many transportation modes. We have deliberately proposed specialized personnel for all AT infrastructure planning, coordination, and implementation. However, our analysis focuses on only the cycling component of AT since it is our main area of expertise and experience.

Background

City of Burnaby's Strategic Goals and AT

- AT strategic goals and actions are prominent throughout the City of Burnaby's approved and draft strategic plans, such as the Corporate Strategic Plan, Community Energy and Emissions Plan, and the draft Transportation Plan. The plans aim to make AT easier, safer, and more comfortable to support a healthy community and environment.
- Burnaby is a national leader in commute by transit and AT, with a 35 per cent share of commute mode in 2016¹. However, there are 15 percentage points to go from the 2016 commute share to reach the City's 2030 mode shift target of 50 per cent of trips by transit or AT.

Analysis

Cycling Ride Share vs. Cycling Access

- Census data in Table 1 below shows slow growth in AT commuting in comparison to transit.
- Access to AT options is not the main barrier. A document funded by the City of Burnaby states that over 60 per cent of Metro Vancouver residents own or have access to a bicycle.²
- This contrast begs the question: if Burnaby residents can cycle, why don't they cycle to work or school more often?

¹ Statistics Canada. 2017. *Burnaby, CY [Census subdivision], British Columbia and Greater Vancouver, RD [Census division], British Columbia (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census.* Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.

² BC Cycling Coalition, Travel Smart, Mosaic. 2011. *The Metro Vancouver Cyclists Handbook.*

Table 1: Main Mode of Commuting in Burnaby			
	2006 (per cent)³	2016 (per cent)⁴	Increase/(Decrease) (percentage points)
Transit	17.9	29.4	11.5
Walking	3.9	4.5	0.6
Cycling	1.0	1.1	0.1
Total	22.8	35.0	12.2

Research and Public Perception of Cycling Facilities

- Academic research shows many links between the quantity and quality of cycling infrastructure, perceived ease of use of infrastructure, and cycling usage.
- In the long run, the more cycling infrastructure that is built, the greater the shift from commuting by motor vehicle to AT.⁵
- The easier commuters think it will be to cycle or take transit to work, the more likely they are to use those modes.⁶
- Public opinion has highlighted that using Burnaby’s cycling network is not easy⁷. And there are safety concerns about the lack of physical barriers between people cycling and people driving on major arteries.⁸
- From our perspective, the marginal growth in cycling mode share seen in Table 1 above is reflective of the lack of continuity and type of infrastructure available to Burnaby cyclists. Multi-use pathways (MUPs), for example, are often not suitable for all ages and abilities (AAA) of people cycling due to the hazards posed by pedestrians, driveways, laneways, and cross streets.
- MUPs are not an attractive option for people cycling because of the poorer safety and transportation outcomes of MUPs.⁹

HUB Cycling’s Experience

- The Burnaby Committee of HUB Cycling has worked with the City over many years and has recognized a lack of leadership, co-ordination and consistent approach to cycling promotion and infrastructure that impedes progress toward the City’s AT strategic and mode share goals.

³ Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 97-561-XCB2006015.

⁴ City of Burnaby Corporate Strategic Plan

⁵ Song, Yean, John Preston, and David Ogilvie. 2016. “New walking and cycling infrastructure and modal shift in the UK: A quasi-experimental panel study.” *Transportation Research Part A* 95 (2017): 320-333.

⁶ Abrahamse, Wokje, Linda Steg, Robert Gifford, and Charles Vek. 2009. “Factors influencing car use for commuting and the intention to reduce it: A question of self-interest or morality?” *Transportation Research Part F* 12 (2009): 317-324.

⁷ Campbell, Chris. 2020. “Opinion: Burnaby cyclists left to play ‘Indiana Jones’ due to selfish parking.” *Burnaby Now*. June 19.

⁸ Campbell, Chris, and Dustin Godfrey. 2020. “Opinion: Burnaby built a protected bike lane, but it sure is tiny.” *Burnaby Now*. November 1.

⁹ Teschke, Kay et al., “Bicycle Crash Circumstances Vary by Route Type:A Cross-sectional Analysis”. *BMC Public Health*, 14:1205 (2014) 1471-2458.

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- **Outdated Paradigm:** The previous Council prioritized the movement of motor vehicles, with cycling considered a recreational pursuit rather than a means of transportation. This paradigm is still followed. City staff have told us that MUPs will continue to be built until a significant increase in cycling is seen.
- **Constrained Resources:** We have heard from City staff that transportation, planning, and engineering staff are stretched thin by their workloads, leaving little time to devote to cycling planning, design, coordination, oversight, or consultation with the cycling community. Cycling seems to be a low priority, despite its prominence in the City's strategic plans.
- **Low Emphasis on Best Practices:** Best practices that produce AAA cycling infrastructure have been established by national and international jurisdictions. The City has begun to implement some of these practices (e.g., protected bike lanes, cyclist activation buttons), though many projects still do not implement AAA standards. For example:
 - There are no cyclist activation buttons at crossings on the Willingdon Linear Park (other than at Frances/Union) and crossings at new developments on Hastings Street despite the City's engineering standard mandating them. Retrofitting will cost more than if installation had happened at the outset;
 - Protected cycling lanes end before intersections along main cycling corridors, making cyclists very vulnerable; and,
 - Only some intersections on the BC Parkway have road markings indicating a cyclist crossing.
- **A Lack of Coordination Amongst Transportation Staff:** The City's Planning and Building, Engineering, and Parks, Recreation, and Culture departments are all involved in the establishment and maintenance of Burnaby's cycling infrastructure. Coordination issues between these departments manifest in various ways:
 - Bike lanes are sometimes obstructed by construction crews working on an adjacent project with no safe or signed detour routes;
 - Lack of signage along roads, and signposts along designated cycling routes that create confusion for cyclists and can bring them into conflict with people or vehicles; and,
 - Inaccurate signage along designated cycling routes, which created the possibility of illegal use of these routes.

Proposal

HUB Cycling's experience and the available research demonstrate that there is a gap between the current state of the City's AT infrastructure and the optimal state. Specialized staff could implement AT best practices and improve the safety of AT infrastructure projects, improve project teams' understanding of AT design and construction requirements, and avoid costs related to corrective work following project completion.

To achieve the City's strategic AT goals, to increase the safety for all ages and abilities of AT users, and to improve the efficiency of AT project construction, we see an opportunity for the City to create two specialized personnel positions—an AT infrastructure planning engineer and an AT infrastructure coordinator.

Active Transportation Infrastructure Planning Engineer (\$145K, 1.0 FTE)

- An AT infrastructure planning engineer would be the lead planner for all AT infrastructure projects in the City's capital plan. They would ensure that the capital plan is on track to meet the City's long-term goals, safety and accessibility requirements, and continuity of the AT network.
- Benefits of this position would include but not be limited to:
 - Clear ownership of responsibility for AT infrastructure project planning and implementation;
 - Reduced workload for City superintendents and engineers;
 - Strong potential to reduce project cost due to fewer revisions and corrections;
 - Increased safety of AT infrastructure;
 - Dedicated resource to implement the City's AT goals; and,
 - Development of a subject matter expert within City staff.
- The engineer would:
 - Develop and update the City's AT infrastructure capital plan;
 - Review the scope of the City's and external organizations' public works projects for continuity with AT infrastructure plans;
 - Review design and construction documents related to AT infrastructure (including projects adjacent to AT infrastructure), ensure all design elements adhere to the recent BC AT Design Guide as well as City of Burnaby engineering standards;
 - Issue revisions to project designs and scope, and communicate revisions to project teams;
 - Estimate project costs and communicate costs to management, AT infrastructure coordinator;
 - Inspect AT infrastructure projects during and after construction to ensure conformity to approved plans, specifications, and standards;
 - Update AT asset registry and create maintenance plan for AT assets; and,
 - Work with the AT infrastructure coordinator to prepare project status reports for management.
- We estimated an annual budget of \$145K for the position based on the average remuneration of the City's Senior Engineer Project Management positions as noted in the 2019 Financial Statements, plus 10 percent for the employer's pension contributions.
- Due to the long-term nature of the City's strategic plans, this position is best suited as a permanent full-time position and would provide the greatest benefit if created and hired in the 2021 fiscal year.
- **The HUB Cycling Burnaby Local Committee recommends that the City create a permanent full-time Active Transportation Infrastructure Planning Engineer position beginning in the 2021 fiscal year.**

Active Transportation Infrastructure Coordinator (\$108K, 1.0 FTE)

- We understand that planning and spending for AT infrastructure occurs within three departments: Planning & Building, Engineering, and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services.
- Such distribution of responsibility can create situations where responsibility and decision-making authority are difficult to determine. Elements of project implementation may be missed, and disruptions to cycling routes can occur during adjacent project construction, which increases commute time and creates safety risks.
- A coordinator would resolve these difficulties by 'owning' oversight and coordination responsibility for AT projects and/or AT elements. They would be the central point of contact for AT projects and would stay in constant communication with the AT planning engineer, relevant project departments, and contractors to ensure all project tasks are coordinated, communicated, and feasible.
- The coordinator could also work with utilities, and regional and provincial government organizations to find opportunities to align public infrastructure project timelines, which could lower costs and disruptions to residents.
- Benefits of this position would include:

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- A central point of contact on AT infrastructure projects and capital plans for internal and external stakeholders, reducing workload for City superintendents, engineers, and coordinators;
- Clear ownership of responsibility for arranging consultation with relevant stakeholders and tracking AT infrastructure project planning and implementation;
- Reduced project cost due to fewer revisions and corrections, and increased coordination with other public works projects;
- Reduced disruption to City residents' travel because of increased coordination of construction projects between City departments and external contractors;
- Dedicated resource to implement the City's AT goals; and,
- Development of a subject matter expert within City staff.
- The coordinator would:
 - Be the central point of contact on AT infrastructure projects for internal and external stakeholders;
 - Initiate and maintain stakeholder engagement for AT projects issued by the City to assist with meeting project timelines and identify opportunities to align the timing of public works projects;
 - Coordinate with the City's Finance, Planning & Building, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services and Engineering departments to develop AT capital budgets, provide project estimates, and revise project costs;
 - Create resources and policies in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders to encourage and support a modal shift toward AT;
 - Screen external public works project designs prior to the AT infrastructure engineer to identify potential AT infrastructure scope;
 - Ensure all project tasks and documents related to AT infrastructure are assigned and completed according to project timelines and budgets;
 - Prepare project status reports in coordination with the AT infrastructure planning engineer; and,
 - Liaise with local businesses, organizations, and citizens to identify opportunities to improve and maintain ridership.
- We estimated an annual budget of \$108K for the position based on top of range pay for a level 25 unionized employee (\$45.50/hr, or \$44.83/hr plus 1.5% Special Benefit) at 35 hours per week, plus 30 percent for the employer's benefit and pension contributions.
- A different methodology was used to estimate the cost of this position based on the availability of out-of-scope rates of pay and fewer comparable positions within the City's 2019 financial statements.
- Due to the long-term nature of the City's strategic plans, this position is best suited as a permanent full-time position and would provide the greatest benefit if created and hired in the 2021 fiscal year.
- **The HUB Cycling Burnaby Local Committee recommends that the City create a permanent full-time Active Transportation Infrastructure Coordinator position beginning in the 2021 fiscal year.**