

Thank you for giving our Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Chapter of the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition the opportunity to introduce ourselves to members of your BIA at your meeting on May 18. As a short intro to those members who were not present at the meeting: we promote cycling as a viable means of transportation. We feel that much can be done to improve cycling conditions in Maple Ridge for people of all ages and abilities, so that we can all feel safe using our bikes to get around, especially for short distances, including trips to restaurants and other businesses in the downtown area.

Getting more people to bike has many benefits to our community, a.o.:

- it relieves congestion,
- it reduces noise and pollution,
- we need less car parking (but yes, we do appreciate bike parking!),
- there are more “eyes” on the street, which will result in a reduction of crime,
- people will be able to save money on transportation, which means they will have more money to spend on other things (since most cyclists ride shorter distances, this money is more likely to stay within our local economy),
- and it will help to make our streets more inviting for people, which is always good for business!

We are looking forward to working together with the BIA to make the downtown area a more welcoming place for cyclists, and people in general, and we’re hoping to be able to do some brainstorming with BIA members in the near future on ideas on how to make this happen.

Finally, I would like to say that we’re excited about the idea that has been floating around recently about artsy – but functional - bicycle racks. It’ll be interesting to see what kinds of designs the various businesses will come up with. I found the following websites just to give you some ideas:

http://www.davidbyrne.com/art/bike_racks/index.php

<http://www.bicycleparkingonline.org/case%20studies/bike-racks-public-art>

<http://www.bicycleparkingracks.com/items.asp?itemcode=I279-1001&Cc=IBR-ARC>

<http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?a=184578&c=34813>

It would seem appropriate to consult with Maple Ridge’s Engineering Department on requirements for bike racks as a first step.

Thanks again, and we’ll keep in touch!

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