

Grant helps connect bike network

by [Sylver McLaren - Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Times](#)

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More than \$1.46 million for biking infrastructure could lead to some old-fashioned fun.

If you've got your bike stored in your garage, this will be another reason to dust it off and take it out for a spin. This is an opportunity to have some old-fashioned fun, said Marc Dalton, MLA for Maple Ridge-Mission.

About 20 people at the Local Ride Bike Shop, including Alex Pope, chair of the bicycle advisory committee, got the news that more than \$1.46 million will be put into the cycling infrastructure in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows on Thursday.

It's a really good start, said Pope. It bridges a gap that is hard for our cyclists to access, he added.

Maple Ridge will get the greater share of the grant money, in the way of nearly \$1.25 million. The money will fund a 655-metre cycle track on Lougheed Highway from Laity Street to 216th Street providing a vital east-west link that is designed with a buffer and track width of three to four metres.

The hospital takes up so much space between River Road and Lougheed Highway, and then the cemetery between Lougheed and Dewdney Trunk Road. There are no side streets between Laity Street and 216th Street. This bridges that gap, Pope explained.

The provincial government will give \$488,956, the District of Maple Ridge will provide \$488,957, and TransLink will ante up \$269,875.

The Kennedy Road Multi-Use Pathway project in Pitt Meadows will benefit from \$215,000. The City will put up \$115,000 and the provincial government will pay \$100,000.

This new separated bike path will run from Lougheed Highway to Ferry Slip Road, allowing cyclists to avoid using Kennedy Road, where truck traffic is high and the shoulders are narrow.

Even with separated bike paths people aren't comfortable on residential streets. Kennedy Road is busy with large trucks. Again, it's an important gap to fill, Pope explained.

It will provide a safe connection to an existing pathway that links downtown to the dike system along Pitt River, said Dalton.

It is very important for us to take advantage of these types of grants, said Walters.

And we have a new trail and cycling map coming out soon that will show all the bike trails. Grants make these types of projects happen, she added.

Local pharmacist Elizabeth Rosenau, who is the NDP candidate hoping to represent the riding of Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows, was less than enthusiastic about the announcement.

I'm welcoming any improvements to cycling infrastructure. Maple Ridge has had more than their share of carnage in the roads. This is long overdue, she said.

But Rosenau said the timing to do it now, with less than four months to go until the election, reduces the credibility.