

# Cycling: Getting communities on the move

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It sometimes surprises me that more people aren't interested in becoming involved in how our cities are designed and how people get around.

Probably I am interested because I've lived in a variety of urban and suburban cities in Europe, Asia and Canada, and I find it fascinating to see the tremendous impact urban design and transportation have on many aspects of our lives.

Perhaps many people don't speak up because they think politicians and bureaucrats don't listen.

After nine years of advocacy work through HUB Cycling, I can tell you that the input that we give to politicians, planners and traffic engineers definitely does matter. We don't always get what we want, but every nudge towards a more livable and people-vibrant city helps.

All over the world, cities and towns are trying to reduce their residents' dependence on cars. We know driving everywhere has made us less healthy, and led to increased congestion. Our cities continue to rapidly grow outward, and it's becoming increasingly expensive to provide more parking.

Livability suffers in any city that puts the car first, and people last.

Change can happen much faster when organizations, municipalities and groups that value sustainable transportation options, equity, and healthy, livable cities, join together to ask our provincial leaders for more investment, and the guidance that will help cities to slowly but surely change how we live.

I'm excited about [Communities on the Move](#), which is an inspiring initiative in British Columbia that does just that. It already has been endorsed by a multitude of organizations and groups, such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the cancer society, various municipalities, cycling and walking groups and others.

As many people will realize, Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows keep growing and traffic congestion will continue to get worse. Any road expansion or so-called improvement of our road system only provides relief for a short time, and often leads to bottlenecks elsewhere.

Giving people viable alternatives – walking, cycling, car-share, more frequent and convenient transit and better access to transportation for those using wheelchairs or other mobility aids – as well as a better integration of the different modes is necessary to reduce the pressures on our road system and to make our cities more desirable and healthy places to live.

In the end, change only happens when enough people ask for it. The upcoming election presents some great opportunities to let your candidates know about Communities on the Move, the collective vision of better cities, and better ways to get around for everyone.

Talk to your candidates at all-candidates meetings, at candidates' individual campaign events, or visit them at their campaign offices.

I would be really interested to hear the response you got.

- For more information, e-mail me at [jchow23708@yahoo.ca](mailto:jchow23708@yahoo.ca).

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