



Sadly, stats show that cycling in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows in recent years has actually decreased. Hopefully this last year plus, during COVID, has helped motivate more people to use their bike to get around. Some food for thought during Go By Bike Week. (Janet Dwillies/Special to The News)

CYCLING: Deadline today for input into Maple Ridge transportation plan

Fitting kickoff to Go By Bike Week, the municipality is seeking input on a 10-year plan

May. 31, 2021 10:00 a.m. / [COLUMNISTS](#) / [COMMUNITY](#)

By Jackie Chow/Special to The News

Go by Bike Week is upon us (May 31 to June 6).

Since way before I started volunteering for **HUB Cycling** – a long time ago – we used to celebrate Bike to Work Week.

I'm thrilled that we now officially celebrate each and every trip made on a bicycle.

I always wondered why we would only focus on work trips when so many of our daily trips are for other purposes. Why exclude so many people and so many reasons to travel?

A three-year old learning to balance on a runner bike and a senior pedaling a few kilometres per day to stay healthy matter just as much as a super fit cyclist clad in spandex who cycles an impressive distance to get to and from work.

I think we should all be happy when people choose a bike to get around.

RELATED: QUIZ – Are you ready for a bicycle ride?

I concur with the late writer H.G. Wells, to whom the quote “Every time I see an adult on a bicycle, I no longer despair for the future of the human race...” is often ascribed.

Cities around the world are coming to the realization that the humble bicycle can play a big role in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, as well as congestion and parking problems.

They're putting out the welcome mat in the form of separated bike lanes and, in general, re-designed roads to make them safer for everyone, especially for those walking and cycling.

More people walking and cycling also tends to be a good indicator that your city is a happier and healthier city. Cycling helps us regain or strengthen that often lost connection with our natural world, with our neighbourhoods and with our own bodies.

Unfortunately, only a tiny 0.3 per cent of all trips in Maple Ridge are now made by bike. That's down from 0.5 per cent in 2016, and from 1.1 per cent in 1996. I find the continuing downward trend alarming.

About 68 per cent of all the trips originating from Maple Ridge have a destination within Maple Ridge.

Many of those trips would be quite doable by bike. With the advent of the e-bike, we no longer have the excuse that "it's too far," or "it's too hilly."

Sure, sometimes it rains. But we've got rain gear for that.

Perhaps with Go by Bike Week upon us, this is a good time to think about why we're not making that choice. What is it that stops us from doing it?

There's a lot going on in the coming days to provide encouragement and inspiration to Go by Bike. Details about the online screening of the inspiring documentary Motherload, webinars, courses and prizes can be found at btww.ca and on social media.

RELATED: Oil up the chain, it's Go by Bike Week

Of special interest to Metro Vancouver suburban communities like Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, HUB is putting on a special lunch-time webinar on Monday, June 7, following Go by Bike Week.

The presenter is cycling safety researcher Kay Teschke (professor emeritus at University of British Columbia's school of population and public health), who will be discussing

“Cycling in Metro Vancouver suburbs: Barriers and Opportunities.”

Ms. Teschke’s insights can help provide residents and decision makers with a better understanding of what’s needed to make our roads safer for cycling, and thus for everyone. Send me an email at jchow23708@yahoo.ca, and I will send you the link to register for this webinar.

This webinar is rather timely.

Maple Ridge has started the process of updating its 20-year transportation plan and is now asking residents for their feedback.

Ten years ago, when the last plan was adopted, there was no thought of e-bikes, micromobility, electric vehicles, car and bike share, or self-driving vehicles.

The transportation landscape is changing fast, and if cities don’t plan for it, industry will take the lead in determining what our cities are going to look like.

In responding to the city’s current survey on transportation needs, I believe the most important questions we should be asking ourselves are: how do we want to live, and how do we make sure nobody gets left behind?

The deadline for giving your **feedback** in this round is today, May 31, but there will be more opportunities to give further feedback over the coming year.

.

– Jackie Chow is a member of the Maple Ridge-Pitt

Meadows chapter of HUB:

Your Cycling Connection

LAST COLUMN: CYCLING – Increasing use of dikes and trails sparks quick review of trail etiquette

Is there more to the story? Email:

editor@mapleridgenews.com

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

BIKING **CYCLING** **MAPLE RIDGE** **PITT MEADOWS** **TRANSPORTATION**