



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: April 21, 2009
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Meeting Date: June 2, 2009

TO: Standing Committee on Transportation and Traffic

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Cyclist Pushbuttons for Existing Pedestrian Signals (2009 Program) and Bicycle Parking

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the installation of cyclist pushbuttons at 17 pedestrian-activated signals as described in this report at a total cost of \$202,500; source of funds to be Development Cost Levy funding from the Engineering Streets Capital Budget - 2009 Cycling Network, subject to approval of the 2009 Basic Capital Budget.
- B. THAT Council approve the installation of bicycle parking at various locations around the City as described in this report at a total cost of \$30,000; source of funds to be Development Cost Levy funding from the Engineering Streets Capital Budget - 2009 Cycling Network, subject to approval of the 2009 Basic Capital Budget.

COUNCIL POLICY

The 1997 Vancouver Transportation Plan emphasizes the need to promote bicycling by providing more facilities for cyclists, including connections to neighbourhood centres and end-of-trip facilities, and identifies cycling as among the City's top transportation priorities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to install cyclist pushbuttons at selected existing pedestrian signals and permanent bike racks at various locations. These recommendations further the goals of the Greenest City Action Team by improving safety and convenience for cyclists.

BACKGROUND

The City of Vancouver 1999 Bicycle Plan identified action items in the four fundamental "E's" of cycling (Engineering, Education, Enforcement and Encouragement). The overall purpose of the action items is to better integrate cyclists into the existing transportation network and to promote and encourage the use of bicycles as a safe and convenient mode of transportation. Cyclist pushbuttons and bicycle parking encourage residents to cycle around the City by making cycling a more convenient transportation choice.

Cyclist Pushbuttons

The City has been retrofitting existing pedestrian-activated signals throughout Vancouver with cyclist pushbuttons placed close to the curb so that cyclists can easily activate the signals. They have been a feature of Vancouver's local street bikeways since the early 1990s. In a 1999 survey of Vancouver bikeway users, this feature was the second-most popular after traffic calming. Since the City began installing cyclist pushbuttons, and since pedestrian-activated signals on existing bikeways have all been retrofitted, staff have received requests from the public for more cyclist buttons at locations that are not on designated bikeways.

Many pedestrian-activated signals installed in the late 1990s and all pedestrian-activated signals installed since 1999 have included cyclist buttons. However, many older pedestrian-activated signals typically do not have cyclist buttons unless they are located on a designated bikeway.

Cyclist pushbuttons located off of designated bikeways improve neighbourhood accessibility by bicycle and help to reduce some of the perceived barriers to cycling for local needs and short trips.

Bicycle Parking

The number of bike racks located on City of Vancouver property has increased significantly in recent years due to ongoing bicycle parking programs and street redevelopment projects such as the Main Street showcase and Cambie Street reconstruction due to Canada Line. Bike racks are also located throughout the City near local businesses, private developments and in downtown Vancouver at designated EasyPark parking lots.

As the number of cyclists continues to increase, the City receives requests from the public for additional bike parking at specific locations throughout the City. A lack of secure public bike parking has been cited in surveys as a barrier for many potential cyclists. Once a request is received staff investigate to see if there is sufficient parking nearby. If not, staff reviews the site and finds an appropriate place to install new bike racks. Staff work with other departments in getting bike parking installed during street upgrade work.

Other options for bicycle parking are also being considered. The concept of an on-street bicycle parking corral is being considered, whereby a car parking spot is replaced with bike racks in busy commercial areas. This type of parking could provide approximately 10 additional bike parking spaces at the expense of one car parking space. An added benefit is the preservation of sidewalk space for pedestrians as bicycle racks and bikes would be located on street space; there is also a potential for fewer cyclist/pedestrian conflicts.

Bicycle parking is also installed by private organizations. Businesses may purchase racks and install them on City property near their premises with the City's approval. Developers are often required to provide bicycle parking. TransLink has committed to installing bicycle parking facilities at all SkyTrain stations beginning in 2006. In 2004, Vancouver Park Board added bicycle racks to its Gifts for Parks Program, enabling individuals, businesses and organizations to donate bike racks to the City's park system.

DISCUSSION

Cyclist Pushbuttons

There are presently 32 pedestrian-activated signals throughout the City that do not have cyclist pushbuttons. The City's goal is to complete the retrofit of all remaining locations within the next two years.

Staff have identified 17 locations as the top priorities for cyclist buttons in 2009. These are generally located in neighbourhood commercial areas to support cycling for everyday local needs.

A list of recommended locations is provided in Appendix A. Staff will report back through future programs on the remaining locations for cyclist pushbuttons.

Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking is distributed throughout the City as requested by the public and as needs are identified by staff. Staff identify locations throughout the City by noting areas where bikes are often locked to other items such as sign posts, parking meters, and street trees. These bike racks will be in addition those provided through to the existing street furniture contract.

Staff are interested in trialling a bike corral in areas that have high bicycle volumes to assess its effectiveness and to gain response from users and businesses. The corral would be constructed so it could be moved around the City to trial different locations or be stored in winter months and used in seasons with higher cycling volumes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Cyclist Pushbuttons

The total cost of installing cyclist buttons at 17 intersections is estimated at \$202,500. It is recommended that funding for this project be provided from Development Cost Levy funding in the Engineering Streets Capital Budget - 2009 Cycling Network, subject to approval of the 2009 Basic Capital Budget.

Bike Parking

The cost of expanding the bike parking system throughout the City for 2009 is estimated at \$30,000. Installation of bike corrals could impact City revenues by displacing parking meters from the City streets network. It is recommended that funding for this project be provided from Development Cost Levy funding in the Engineering Streets Capital Budget - 2009 Cycling Network, subject to approval of the 2009 Basic Capital Budget.

CONCLUSION

Installation of cyclist pushbuttons at existing pedestrian-activated signals is a cost-effective way to enhance opportunities for cycling around the City and should encourage more citizens to choose cycling for transportation around their neighbourhoods.

Installation of bike parking in busy commercial zones encourages residents to cycle by giving them a safe and secure place to lock their bicycle. To increase the bicycling mode share throughout the City we will have to continually expand bike parking opportunities so people will be confident that, if they ride their bike, they will have a place to lock it once they reach their destination.

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RECOMMENDED LOCATIONS FOR CYCLIST PUSH BUTTONS

Recommended Locations for Cyclist Push Buttons

Bayswater Dr at West 4th Ave
Burrard St at Drake St
Commercial Dr at East 3rd Ave
Dunbar St at West 28th Ave
Dunbar St at West 31st Ave
Fraser St at East 46th Ave
Granville St at West 63rd Ave
Hawks Ave at Hastings St
Hawks Ave at Prior St
Miller St at Kingsway
St. George St at Kingsway
Templeton Dr at Hastings St
Victoria Dr at East 36th Ave
Victoria Dr at Waverley Ave
Wessex St at Kingsway
Yew St at West 41st Ave
Yew St at Cornwall Ave