



[Go here for info on voting in the plebiscite!](#)



May 2015



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Dear Readers,

The BEST office is really humming along – so much so that it’s hard to find a seat most days! What with adding events to The Bicycle Valet calendar (and basking in the glory of a special award), planning the May 31 start to the Commuter Challenge, organizing a party for Living Streets, and continuing to grow The Bus Co-op, we are delighted to have a lot on our collective plate! But our top priority these days is, of course, the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite – and that’s where this newsletter begins ...

Transportation Plebiscite: People! Get that ballot in!



The clock is ticking on the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite. [Elections BC](#) or one of the nine [Plebiscite Service Offices](#) must receive your ballot by **8 p.m. on Friday May 29** – which means that if you are mailing it you should probably get it in the post by no later than May 22, to be safe.

If you haven't received a voting package you can ask for one at 1-800-661-8683 or elections.bc.ca/ovr before midnight on May 15.

In the event you haven't yet completed and returned your ballot and need a bit of encouragement, we'd like to remind you what we are voting for. Some of the highlights of the [Mayors' Transit & Transportation Plan](#) include:

- Increasing bus service across the Region by 25%
- Increasing B-Line routes from 3 to 14
- Increasing Night Bus service by 80%
- Building light rail in Surrey and the Langleys
- Adding 2700 km of cycling routes, including 300km of separated paths
- Extending the Broadway subway line

The plebiscite asks whether or not you support funding the Mayors' Plan by increasing the sales tax in Metro Vancouver by 0.5%. The funding raised through this Congestion Improvement Tax would be subject to annual independent audits and public reporting and be 100% dedicated to reducing congestion on our roads.

For more information on how to vote visit the Elections BC plebiscite website: <http://www.elections.bc.ca/plebiscite/index.html>.

So for the last time in this newsletter: Don't forget to return your ballot, and remind your family and friends to do likewise. And, if you are so inclined, this may also be a good time to direct some beseeching words to the gods and goddesses of sustainable transportation!

The Bicycle Valet: All over the place in May!



The Bicycle Valet's award-winning volunteer photo

In important Bicycle Valet news, [The Bicycle Valet](#) has just received an [Honourable Mention](#) for our photo entered into [Volunteer BC's National Volunteer Week Photo Contest](#)! We won all the glory!!

Looking for us this May? We're going to be all over the place!

May 2 - [Vancity Members' Day](#) at Science World

May 3 - [BMO Vancouver Marathon](#) thanks to TravelSmart at the corner of West Hastings and

Bute Street

May 7 - [Vancity AGM](#)

May 9 - [Whitecaps](#) at BC Place Gate C

May 12 - [SFU Philosophers' Café Bike Café](#) at Musette Café

May 13 - [Whitecaps](#) at BC Place Gate C

May 16 - [Whitecaps](#) at BC Place Gate C

May 28 - [Happy Hour at the Museum of Vancouver](#) thanks to Travelsmart

May 29 - [Bike to Work Week Wrap-up BBQ](#) at Creekside Park

May 30 - [Whitecaps](#) at BC Place Gate C

May 30 - Burnaby Environment Fair

We're expecting to be at even more during May, so check the calendar regularly at our [Events Calendar](#) to find out the BEST places to park your bicycle!

And of course, it's never too late to sign up to be a Bicycle Valet volunteer! If you are interested, click [here](#), or get in touch with Sinead Stinson at sinead.stinson@best.bc.ca or call [604.710.6071](tel:604.710.6071).



Commuter Challenge: The race is on!

Registrations for Commuter Challenge 2015 are accelerating and BC currently holds the lead for most organizations across Canada! Several large employers such as ICBC and the regional health authorities are signed up, in addition to small businesses of every description. Manitoba and Ontario are usually stiff competitors so we need your help to stay on top. Sign up your workplace today at commuterchallengebc.com or drop Stuart a line - he can be reached at commuterchallenge@best.bc.ca.

Commuter Challenge runs May 31 to June 6, 2015 and rewards employees and organizations that choose sustainable transportation. All sustainable modes of transportation are accepted, from walking, biking, transit and carpooling, all the way to kayaking and rollerblading.

This year we are delighted to once again have a wide variety of great prizes, including car share registrations and minutes from car2go, Zipcar and Modo. We also have tickets/passes for a wide range of activities and events, including Aquabus, the Vancouver Canadians, Open Door Yoga, Comedy Mix AND Yuk Yuks, Science World, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria Butterfly Gardens, Vancouver Folk Music Festival, Capilano Suspension Bridge, the Museum of Anthropology, and the Vancouver Art Gallery. There's also some great coffee from Ethical Bean, Kicking Horse, and Green Mountain; a beautiful book courtesy of Hemlock Printers; a gift basket from Left Coast Naturals; and a buddy pass for the workshop of your choice at SPEC's Urban Farmer Field School. And that's not all, as more prizes are being donated all the time!

So, if you already use sustainable transportation, sign up and win some of these great prizes! And if you don't, find out how good it can be!



Living Streets: Come to our wrap-up party!

The [Living Streets 2014 Wrap-Up Party](#) takes place on Tuesday, May 19 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Surrey City Centre Library (Room 418) – and you are invited!

This event is an opportunity to see the results of our 2014 street audits and to chat with BEST staff & volunteers, Living Streets participants, and City of Surrey staff.

Come by if you would like to see our results, if you have something to say about barriers to sustainable transportation and development planning in Surrey, or if you're just interested in what we've been doing! There will be snacks and refreshments. We hope to see you there!

Living Streets is also **looking for volunteers** for **Spring and Summer 2015**. If you're interested in being a part of this great program, please contact Coral at coral@best.bc.ca.

The Bus Co-op: A successful first membership drive



Hello Everyone,

My name is Tanya Paz, and I'm the new Manager of [The Bus Co-op](#). It's a great pleasure to be serving this growing start up co-op.

The Bus Co-op is a bus sharing service in Langley that started last fall. It now has 3 member organizations and 2 buses that seat 18-22 people each – one which has 2 wheelchair lifts. Bus sharing is sometimes the least expensive and most environmentally-friendly way to get access to a bus – especially if your organization doesn't need one every day.

At the moment all 3 Bus Co-op members are seniors' organizations that take care home residents or independent seniors on scheduled trips to go shopping, to a casino or concert, or sightseeing. Sometimes, the socializing on the bus is the most fun part. It wouldn't even matter if there was a destination with all the catching up going on!

Besides, in our wiser years we know the journey *is* the destination.

The Bus Co-op had its first membership drive in April. One visitor compared bus sharing rates of \$40.00 per hour plus the driver to the last bus her organization had rented, and found the savings to be over \$200.00 for a 4-hour tour.

Vancity Credit Union, sponsor and supporter of the co-op, found it handy to book a bus for taking employees around to different Vancity supported projects and branches south of the Fraser River.

For more information on your organization becoming a member for those times you need a bus, please contact me via BEST: 604-669-2860 or tanya.paz@best.bc.ca.

BEST AGM: Please join us

When: **Wednesday, May 6, 2015**, from 6:00-8:30 pm (registration from 6:00-6:30)

Where: YWCA Hotel, Canfor Room, 733 Beatty Street, Vancouver

RSVP: Please email margaret.miller@best.bc.ca or call our office at 604-669-2860 by **Friday, May 1**.

Details: The BEST Annual General Meeting is an opportunity for members to speak with the board and staff about our programs and initiatives and to give input as to BEST's future directions. If your membership has expired or you have not yet joined BEST you can renew or

join [online](#), or you will have the opportunity to renew or join at the meeting. Snacks and refreshments will be available.

We hope you will join us!

SFU Bike Café series continues



Another gathering of SFU's popular [Bike Café](#) series is coming up in May at Musette Caffé in Chinatown. These Cafés are great opportunities to get together with members of Vancouver's cycling community and others interested in discussions regarding the sustainable evolution of our cityscape. [The Bicycle Valet](#) will be at this event.

May 12 @ 6:00 p.m., Musette Caffé, 75 East Pender Street

Topic: Mayors Council Plan: What's in it for Cycling?

Moderator: Jim Bailey

For more information on the Bike Cafés, visit [here](#).

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Thank you for your continued interest in BEST!

Our Mission:

To advance the transformation to sustainable transportation

Our Vision:

Vibrant, healthy communities built around sustainable modes of transportation

As Canada's new [Anti-Spam Legislation](#) came into effect July 1st 2014, we are in the process of updating our mailing lists and documenting subscriber consent. We currently send you electronic communications that you have opted into in the past, or because you have participated in one of our events, utilized our services, or supported us in some way. We will continue to send you news and updates about our organization, but please note that you are free to unsubscribe at any time. If you would like to give us your permanent (until you unsubscribe) express consent, please click [here](#).

We hope you will choose to stay with us at BEST!

Get in touch with us! info@best.bc.ca | 604.669.2860 | best.bc.ca

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