



## Better Environmentally Sound Transportation e-News January 2014

[New Years Greetings from the ED](#) | [BEST wins big in Wreath Decorating Contest!](#) | [Transportation Referendum Update](#) | [Living Streets Event in Surrey](#) | [STAR in the Fraser Valley](#) | [Cycling Countries are Happy Countries](#)

### In This Issue:

1. [New Years Greetings](#)
2. [Wreath Decorating Contest](#)
3. [Transit Referendum Update](#)
4. [Living Streets Event](#)
5. [STAR in the Fraser Valley](#)
6. [Cycling Countries = Happy Countries](#)

Find us on Facebook



Follow us on Twitter



@BESTmobility  
@TheBicycleValet

### Did you know?

**BEST is a registered Charity and donations are tax deductible.**



Thanks for reading our newsletter.

Thank You to our  
Partners & Sponsors:

vancouver  
foundation

### New Years Greetings from our Executive Director

I hope every one of you has had the gifts of health and happiness throughout the past months, and that you face into the New Year full of energy and anticipation – even if spring still feels a long ways off.

Here at BEST we are starting into the long ride to what will be a busy and exciting spring. We have already started to get organized for the sixteenth year of the [Commuter Challenge](#), which now takes place in over fifty communities in BC. It's such a great way to help people make the first steps away from car dependence for their work needs, and while that is an easier thing to do in the urban density of Vancouver, it is a herculean task in many BC communities, which still lack decent transit, bike routes, and even sidewalks. Bravo to all those who join us for Commuter Challenge, we look forward to working with you!

And we are of course gearing up for the 2014 [Bicycle Valet](#) season, with a goal of breaking the 25,000 mark for bikes parked in one year. We are proud to be with the Whitecaps again for their season, and would like to suggest that you keep an eye open for further big seasonal announcements in this newsletter and on our Facebook page.

Last but not least we're very pleased to continue work in providing solutions to transportation needs of the elders amongst us, look to our [STAR](#) webpage to see new tools coming up in the next couple of weeks.

All the best to you all in 2014,

Margaret Mahan  
Executive Director, BEST

***PS: This year the BEST AGM will be held on Wednesday, May 7, 2014 from 6-8:30 pm at the YWCA, 733 Beatty Street, Vancouver. All BEST members are very welcome to attend – it is a great opportunity to learn more about BEST and to meet our staff, Board, and other members. To renew your membership or join BEST, please visit our [website](#) or contact the BEST office at 604 669 2860.***

[Top](#)

### BEST wins Best Overall in Wreath Decorating Contest

Call it a Christmas Wreath, call it a piece of extravagantly original public art, call it upcycling gone berserk – whatever you call it, this year's entry in the [Mount Pleasant BIA](#) Wreath Decorating Contest won big – taking home the highly-coveted and hotly-contested **Best Overall** trophy!

In the hands of the BEST Design Team, our humble wreath was transformed into a visual statement of the theme "Santa Goes Sustainable." Clearly amazed, the shrewd and discerning team of judges bestowed on our wreath the highest possible honours.

Thank you to the [Mount Pleasant BIA](#) for organizing this annual event. We are already looking forward to next year's competition!



**United Way**  
of the Lower Mainland  
Community Partner



**Vancity**



The Hamber  
Foundation



*BEST's Steve Beck accepts the Best Overall trophy from Kara Mintzberg of the Mount Pleasant BIA.*



*BEST Design Team member Beth Hurford puts some finishing touches on our wreath before the arrival of the judges.*

[Top](#)

## Transportation Referendum Update

In mid December, Premier Christie Clark stated in an interview with the [Globe and Mail](#) that the referendum on the transportation system in Metro Vancouver will take place in November 2014, together with the municipal elections. She further specified that "a simple 'yes' or 'no' doesn't do justice to the questions that are there [and that] it needs to be a multiple-choice question." Premier Clark remained vague about the question and didn't give more details except to indicate that it will ask how much transit people want and how they want to pay for it. On the other hand, she was quite clear about her degree of involvement in the referendum, stating that she is "not going to try to decide for people what their answer should be."

However, comments by BC Transportation Minister Todd Stone have confused matters. While Ms. Clark is telling one story, BC's Transportation Minister Todd Stone has been telling a different one, and contradicting her on major points. According to him, the structure of the question has not been decided yet, so the referendum will not necessarily consist of a multiple-choice question, as earlier suggested by the Premier. Moreover, unlike Ms. Clark, Mr. Stone wants to take an active role in making sure that the referendum will pass.

So, although we will start this year with a bit more information, we have to continue, as Vancouver Mayor



Robertson described recently in an interview with the [Vancouver Sun](#), to “work in the dark.”

For more information on transportation in Metro Vancouver and the upcoming referendum, visit Moving In A Livable Region, <http://www.movinginalivableregion.ca/>. We at BEST would also like to hear from you – please feel free to email us at [transitreferendum@best.bc.ca](mailto:transitreferendum@best.bc.ca) with any ideas or comments.

[Top](#)

## Living Streets prepares to meet with Surrey officials

Throughout the year Living Streets participants have been completing street audits across the City of Surrey. The results have now been compiled, maps have been made, photos have been taken – and we are preparing to share our results with the City of Surrey transportation team.

Groups of participants and individuals will present their findings to city staff and staff will respond by sharing the processes required to address overall concerns. By doing so city staff will be more aware of residents concerns, and residents will be aware of the necessary steps to making change happen within their neighborhoods.

The date has been tentatively set for January 28 at Guildford Library in Surrey and is open to the public. If you are interested in attending and learning more about transportation-related challenges and opportunities please contact Beth Hurford at [beth.hurford@best.bc.ca](mailto:beth.hurford@best.bc.ca). More information will be available on our [Facebook](#) page, on [Twitter](#), and on our [website](#).

We can't wait to share our results with our BEST friends! Here's to another great year!



*Lower Mainland Green Team volunteers learning how to navigate the city of Surrey on foot!*

[Top](#)

## STAR analyzes Seniors Transportation in the Fraser Valley

The year 2013 saw STAR undertake a major analysis and business case for coordinated seniors transportation services in the Eastern Fraser Valley. Under the auspices of Fraser Health, STAR worked with four local agencies from Hope, Agassiz-Harrison, Chilliwack and Mission, examining current services, gaps, and how seniors transportation service across the region might be enhanced through a coordinated approach.

A coordinated service, with support of the Health Authority, would build on existing strengths of the community organizations already doing an admirable job with limited resources and increasing demand. It would enhance the capacity for organizations to provide consistent service standards while ensuring local expertise and knowledge is fully utilized. The network of service providers could share ride management system software, standardized statistical reporting, policies and procedures, and volunteer management practices. Working in partnership with the Health Authority, costs could be reduced, allowing for shorter

stays, fewer hospital transfers, and a more comfortable experience for patients.

Such a partnership and coordinated approach among agencies would have many benefits, including:

- A coordinated shared services model that provides assisted (door-through-door) transportation in a manner that addresses the needs of the seniors community.
- Service providers will be part of a coordinated and collaborative group that allows for effective and efficient use of funding and resources at a sustainable level.
- The demand for operational funding of medical rides from the Health Authority would be reduced as community groups build capacity.
- Demand for assisted living facilities, and the use of emergency room services would be reduced, saving considerable amounts of money in the long term.
- Fewer missed appointments, giving additional savings to the Health Authority
- Seniors have an increased sense of personal wellness and can age in place, contributing to their community as much as they choose.

STAR salutes the dedicated agencies and volunteers doing a remarkable job filling important needs for seniors transportation, and the Fraser Health Authority for being forward-thinking and willing to consider alternatives and for examining the business case for those alternatives. Here's to continued progress in 2014!

[Top](#)

## Cycling Countries are Happy Countries

This will come as little surprise to our readers, but the data is now in: countries with the highest percentage of cyclists are also the happiest countries.

The United Nations' "[World Happiness Report](#)" attempts to establish the levels of perceived happiness in the countries according to a range of criteria, including average income, mental wellness, and freedom of movement and action.

In the just released second edition of the report, the world's happiest countries also rank at the very first places in the [ECF Cycling Barometer](#). In other words: the more a country rides, the happier it is.

For more information, visit [here](#).

[Top](#)

[Visit us at best.bc.ca](#)

Thanks for reading!

---

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

[Click here](#) to forward this email to a friend

Better Environmentally Sound Transportation Association (BEST)  
209 - 175 East Broadway  
Vancouver, British Columbia V5T 1W2  
CA

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

**vertical** DELIVERED BY  
**response**  
Try It Free Today!