



[There's still time to complete the The Bicycle Valet survey!](#)



January 2015



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Dear Readers,

Happy New Year everyone! We hope you had a good break, stayed healthy, and are excited about the New Year. There sure is a lot going on in 2015 – and at the top of the list is the transit referendum, which takes place March 16 to May 29. BEST is resolved to do everything we can to ensure that it passes, and in our newsletter we give some suggestions as to how you can help. We hope that in addition to voting Yes yourself you will be able to join with us in spreading the word and getting the vote out!

Transit Referendum: This is it!

Well, the transit referendum is finally upon us and we will need to act fast and act together to make sure it is passed. The Better Transit and Transportation Coalition, made up of diverse business, union, student, environmental and community groups, has been formed to lead the Yes campaign, which will launch soon.

Referendums are won by getting out the vote. It's that simple. Here are some things you can do to make a Yes vote happen:

- Support and/or volunteer with an organization that is actively involved in promoting the Yes side: You can sign up to volunteer with [Get On Board BC](#), or though [The Metro Vancouver Alliance](#), which is collecting names of potential volunteers.
- [Moving in a Livable Region](#) is an educational website chock full of factual

information about transit, transportation, infrastructure and financing.

- Talk to your friends and family. Educate them. Then badger them incessantly until they complete their ballot and mail it in marked “yes”. Ballots will be sent out beginning March 16, with people having until May 29 to vote.
- To help inform yourself about the issues and how other jurisdictions have dealt with a transit referendum, you may want to attend of Carl Guardino’s SFU Harbourfront [lecture](#) on January 19, "**Transportation Referendum: Lessons Learned from the Front Line.**" It's free, but [pre-registration](#) is required; the event will also be live streamed.
- Write to local newspapers (print and online), phone radio talk shows, post on your Facebook. Tweet ([#cutcongestion](#), [#bcpoli](#), [#vanpoli](#), [#bctranspo](#)).

As you may have noticed, there is a lot of misinformation swirling around out there about the referendum. Here are some fast facts that you can use to help you beef up your arguments in support:

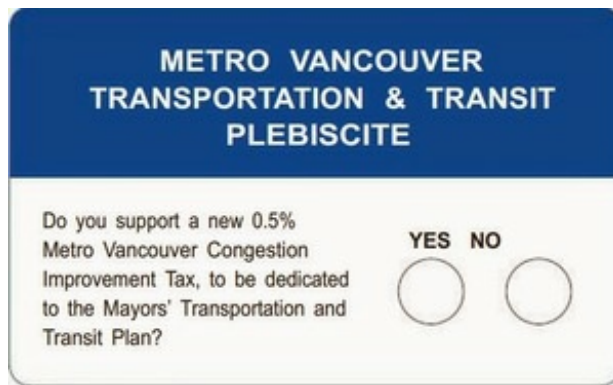
- The 0.5% Congestion Improvement Tax will be collected in Metro Vancouver only.
- It will be used only for better transit and transportation.
- These monies will be strictly audited every year. (Some goods and services may be exempt from the tax, but this is yet to be determined).
- The tax will raise about \$250 million per year for 10 years as the region’s contribution to the \$7.5 billion Mayors’ [Transportation and Transit Plan](#).
- The funds will not be gobbled up by “a subway to UBC” but improvements will be spread equitably throughout the region with:
 - increased service on all transit lines including new B-lines
 - light-rail lines in Surrey and Langley
 - extended rapid transit along Broadway to Arbutus Street
 - extend cycling and pedestrian walkway networks
 - a new Pattullo Bridge
 - maintenance and upgrade of the region’s major roads

The Mayors' plan has been receiving broad, diverse, [across-the-board support](#), including from the Vancouver Board of Trade, BC Taxi Association, David Suzuki Foundation, the Business Council of British Columbia, and the majority of the regional mayors. Transportation Minister Todd Stone says the Province will back the Yes side.

There is no doubt that if the transit referendum is passed, it will have a major, positive, ongoing impact on transportation throughout Metro Vancouver. Imagine a community where:

- Reliable high quality transit connects your neighborhood to the whole region
- Reduced carbon emissions meet targets set in provincial law and prevent disastrous climate instability
- Local workers have green jobs they can feel proud of
- Transportation is affordable
- Seniors and people with disabilities have better access and quality of life
- The political gridlock which is preventing progress on transit projects comes to an end
- Roads are properly maintained, resulting in lower vehicle repair costs
- Pedestrians and cyclists have better access to transit hubs and throughout the region
- Our communities are quieter, cleaner, safer and more livable

Sounds like the way it should be. And we really don't want to imagine the alternative. Here is a visual of the ballot:



2014 Bicycle Valet Survey: It's only 4 questions!

We've got 2 amazing prize packs, each containing 2 books of 1-zone transit tickets, up for grabs for people who take our 4-question [Bicycle Valet Survey](#)! You read that right, **only 4 questions**, and you can win a whole bunch of 1-zone transit tickets for those days when biking isn't your best option. By completing the survey you will also be helping us to improve our service and to identify more events we should be attending!

So, if you are able, please take 2 minutes to fill out our survey:
<http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/best-fcq/bv-2014-annual-survey/>



Thank you for supporting BEST

Thank you to all the people who responded to our [annual Fundraising Appeal](#). Your ongoing generous support of BEST helps us further our mission of a transformation to sustainable transportation in Metro Vancouver. We really couldn't do it without you!

BEST-Hub Holiday Party: Ye olde good time!



There was a fantastic turnout and pleasant buzz at the second annual BEST – HUB Holiday Party in December. The theme of this year’s party was numerical milestones: The Bicycle Valet parked its 100,000th bike since starting up in 2006 and HUB celebrated over 10,000 first-time riders since Bike To Work Week’s inception in 2007!

All in all, it was a great way to get together and build our ever-growing sustainable transportation community, and generally have a good time!

We would like to extend a special thank you to [Central City Brewers + Distillers](#) and [Shift It Wine](#) for the drinks and [TravelSmart](#) for the door prizes!

Volunteer Testimonial:

The First Step is the Hardest!



By Anne Simonen

I grew up in the West Kootenays and have been on a bike for as long as I can remember. However, when I moved to Vancouver for school, the idea of riding on a road with real traffic was very intimidating, and I more or less stopped. That all changed when I started dating my current boyfriend, who eased me into biking by first recommending we ride in to work on the Central Valley Greenway. Once I was comfortable with that, we started doing 10th, Woodland and Adanac, slowly working our way up to higher-traffic streets. As we started to get out more on our bikes, I started

seeing The Bicycle Valet at events and I thought of how fun it would be to help with them one day.

That day started late last year, when I began the Duke of Edinburgh Award program. The program is designed to inspire young people under 25 worldwide to expand their horizons, learn new skills, be physically active, and explore nature by volunteering in their communities. It has inspired me to take action on a lot of the things that I had previously told myself I would do "some day." So when the 2014 The Bicycle Valet season came around, I eagerly signed up as a volunteer. I really enjoy volunteering with The Bicycle Valet because I get to meet great people with BEST, great people on bikes, and spend some time outside being active.

BTW: The photo of me is from when I was travelling Canada this summer, and took a day to cycle some of PEI on a rented bike. I was surprised when it only took 1.5 hours to cycle from Charlottetown to the PEI National Park – which is well worth the ride as the park has a separated bike lane right on the water with extraordinary views!

Bicycle Cafés: Engaging with the cycling community

This month SFU's Continuing Studies department in collaboration with the City Program is starting a series of Bicycle Cafés. The cafés will take place twice a month from January-April along major commuter cycling routes at two cyclist-friendly coffee bars – [Musette Caffé](#) in Chinatown and [Tandem Bike Café](#) on Heather Street. This series will engage with Vancouver's cycling community and others interested in getting together to discuss sustainable evolution of our city.

Coming up in January:

January 13 @ 6:00 p.m., Musette Caffé, 75 East Pender Street

Topic: All Weather Cycling

Moderator: Richard Campbell

January 29 @ 6:00 p.m., Tandem Bike Café, 3195 Heather Street

Topic: Building the Bicycle Culture We Want

Moderator: Chris Bruntlett

For more information on these and future Bicycle Cafés, visit [here](#).

Coming up next month in the BEST eNews: In our Road Stories column, The Bicycle Valet's Manager tells us all about fixing bicycles in rural India!

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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

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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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