



[Sign the Communities on the Move Declaration!](#)



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SOUND TRANSPORTATION

February 2017



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Dear Readers,

Welcome to BEST's February e-news, the little newsletter with the incredible monthly subscription list of 3.5 million people. Really! ... In other, more fact-based news, this month we are once again happy to share with you a number of great stories. Read on, and you will find out about The Bicycle Valet's accomplishments in 2016, be introduced to the 21st incarnation of the BC Commuter Challenge, and hear from our intrepid GM about her recent experience riding the rails in Sri Lanka. We then move on to cover the recently-announced Metro Vancouver transportation improvements, the Communities on the Move Declaration (which we encourage everyone to sign), upcoming events around the development of NE False Creek, and the launch of the Biko app in Vancouver.

All great stories, and all perfectly true, every one of them. We hope you enjoy our newsletter!

The Bicycle Valet: Looking backwards and forwards

Here is [The Bicycle Valet's](#) super sweet 2016 wrap-up stats infographic!



Last year was our biggest year yet with over 25,500 bikes parked at 208 event days. We partnered with Granville Island, the Vancouver Police Department, and Garage 529 to reduce bike theft on the Island by 60%. Our first event was March 6th, and our last event was December 31st. We cracked past 150,000 bikes safely parked since 2006, and this year promises to be even bigger! Come park with us at our first event Saturday, February 4th, at BC Place Gate C for the [Canada Women's National Soccer Team playing against Mexico!!](#)

Interested in volunteering or having us out to an event? Know of an event where you'd like to see us? Want to be a sponsor? Have random questions about The Bicycle Valet? Get in touch with Sinéad Stinson at sinead.stinson@best.bc.ca or [604-669-2860 ext. 207](tel:604-669-2860) for more information.



Introducing the 21st BC Commuter Challenge

Twenty-one years later, the [Commuter Challenge](#) still has the same simple formula: Register, commute sustainably, see the impact, and win! And this year's Commuter Challenge promises more ways to win than ever!

The week long "Challenge", to be held from June 4-10, provides an opportunity for colleagues to work

together and make responsible choices. By recording commutes online, statistics are gathered and compared to other workplaces in BC and across Canada. Participants from anywhere in BC may choose to walk, run, cycle, skate, paddle, carpool, carshare or take public transit – all of which help to reduce CO2 emissions and reduce traffic congestion.

Registration and participation in the Commuter Challenge is 100% FREE! Keep reducing your emissions every day before and after the event to make an even bigger impact!

For more information on the 2017 BC Commuter Challenge, check out the [website](#) or contact Steve at stephen.white@best.bc.ca.

ROAD STORY

Trainspotting in Sri Lanka

By Stephanie Williams



With its scenic vistas and budget price, train travel is a big hit with Sri Lankans.

After a seemingly endless number of 24-hour-plus bus rides in Argentina, I was ready for shorter distances, better food (no, Malbec is not food), and some old-fashioned train travel. Old being the operative word here, as Sri Lankan trains were built in the time of British colonization, beginning in 1864. The railway system was constructed to transport tea from the plantations, so the views are amazing, and thus, popular.

The popularity of the trains by foreigners is matched by the appeal to locals, as train travel in Sri Lanka is heavily subsidized by the government. For example, a two hour trip in second class costs the equivalent of \$1 CAD, but the same bus ride costs \$2.50, a two and a half times price increase. To accommodate this demand, the railways sell an unlimited number of unreserved second and third class tickets, which works out pretty much as you might imagine.

Crowded or not, there is something about train travel. The socialization with the person in the seat facing you, the vendors roaming the aisles, or the people waving as you go past – it all just feels very different than the experience of taking most buses, or cars. But perhaps my favourite time wasn't spent actually riding the train, but on the train tracks. While the road above was the exclusive domain of cars speeding along at irregular intervals, the tracks were the domain of the kids walking to school along the fastest and safest route, and the residents living en route. Trespassing signs warning of danger could be found, but in reality, the trains traveled slowly, gave ample warning, and more importantly, came at scheduled times, so everyone walked along the tracks.

While many people may romanticize trains, their predictability, relative comfort, and views of anything other than lanes of traffic, makes that easy to do.



*The author's travelling companions
walk the rails.*

Transportation Plan improvements: keep 'em rolling



(Photo: Daily Hive Vancouver)

TransLink announced on January 17 that SeaBus service will be doubled on Sundays and holidays and more frequent service will be added at peak times on the Expo, Millennium and Canada Lines. These changes are part of the first phase of TransLink's [10-Year Investment Plan](#).

Also in January, TransLink began public consultations on the [Broadway Extension of the Millennium Line](#) and the [Surrey-Newton-Guildford LRT project](#). The Broadway Extension will bring the Millennium Line from VCC southwest to Broadway and Main and then west to Arbutus Street, while the Surrey project will introduce 27 km of LRT in Surrey and surrounding communities.

TransLink said that they intend to roll out improvements every three months over the next several years.

As of yet, the provincial and federal governments have not announced how much they will be contributing towards the plan, although they have suggested that more detail will be provided in their 2017 budgets.

BEST is in support of this much-anticipated and -needed plan and is excited to see it finally moving forward.

Communities on the Move: Where do we sign up?



[BC Health Living Alliance](#) has a vision of what equitable transportation in healthy communities could look like:

“We envision that in 10 years, across BC – in communities small and large, it will be easy, safe and enjoyable to get around, whether by walking, biking, ride-sharing, by public transit or in a wheelchair. We want to see the provincial government making progressive investments that support active, connected and healthy communities.”

Here at BEST we subscribe to BC Healthy Living’s vision and its guiding principles: safety for all road users, healthy communities, mobility for everyone, clean air and environment, a consideration of community needs, and cost savings and economic opportunities.

In fact, this all sounds so much like our own sustainable transportation wish list that we are happily signing on to their [Communities on the Move Declaration](#). By signing on we are endorsing their argument that we need more provincial investments to support active, connected, and healthy communities.

For more information on the Declaration, including a place where you can sign on too, we encourage you to visit their [website](#).

NE False Creek: City looking for your input



During the fall the City of Vancouver asked people what they would like to see in the [redevelopment of Northeast False Creek](#). Upcoming are a number of events where people can learn about emerging directions and let the City know if they think they are on the right track.

Pop-Up Planning Storefront

When: January 31-February 7, 2017, 10am-5pm daily (Closed Sunday)

Where: International Village Mall at 88 W. Pender Street (at Abbott St.)

NEFC Project team staff members will be available to answer questions on Thursday, February 2 from 5pm – 8pm and on Saturday, February 4 from 11am – 4pm.

A series of focus days at the Planning Storefront will explore specific topics:

PLAY + WORK – Tuesday, January 31, 10am – 5pm

LIVE – Wednesday, February 1, 10am – 5pm

PARKS + OPEN SPACE – Friday, February 3, 10am – 5pm

STREETS – Monday, February 6, 10am – 5pm*

ARTS + CULTURE – Tuesday, February 7, 10am – 5pm

* The removal of the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts creates some exciting new opportunities for sustainable transportation in the area.

Park Design Presentation and Discussion

In addition, the Vancouver Park Board and the City of Vancouver, in partnership with SFU City Conversations, are hosting a [presentation and discussion](#) by the park designers, James Corner Field Operations.

When: Thursday, February 2, 12-1 pm

Where: Creekside Community Centre

This event is free but tickets are required. Go to nefcparkdesign.eventbrite.ca or RVSP to NEFCParks@vancouver.ca.

Biko launches in Vancouver



[Biko](#) is an innovative, new app that encourages urban commuting by offering riders rewards for walking, jogging or biking. Recently launched in Vancouver, Biko is already operating in Bogota, Medellin and Mexico City, and plans are underway to expand to 40+ cities in 20+ countries over the next 3 years.

The folks at Biko believe that the greatest impacts on global communities will come from encouraging people out of their cars and onto bikes for their daily commutes and leisure activities. Their new app helps make this happen by rewarding people who have made the shift.

Download the [Biko app](#) today and start earning your bikos!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:





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.

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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