

CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, May 16, 2001

SUBJECT:

Application of the ICBC Safer Bicycle Planning Tool to the Regional Cycling Network

BACKGROUND:

- Jan 17, 2001 Regional Planning Committee directs staff to establish a Regional Cycling Advisory Working Committee (RCAWC) that advises Regional Planning Services on technical and policy matters as input on cycling for a regional transportation strategy.
- February 1, 2001 First meeting of the newly established RCAWC.
- February 15, 2001 RCAWC begins to develop a draft Regional Cycling Network.
- March 8, 2001 ICBC representative Kelvin Roberts presents to RCAWC the Safer Bicycle Planning Tool.
- March 22, 2001 RCAWC pass a motion to support staff on examining a potential partnership with ICBC and the use of the Safer Bicycle Planning Tool for regional network planning purposes.
- April 26, 2001 RCAWC finalizes a draft Regional Cycling Network and recommends that it be forwarded to the Regional Planning Committee for approval as a basis for stakeholder and technical evaluation.

DISCUSSION:

The RCAWC advised RPS that the Regional Transportation Strategy should include priorities related to regional cycling issues. For RPS to identify related priorities a technical assessment and an evaluation process that involves municipalities and other stakeholders must be first established. The evaluation approach should provide a consistent method that responds to local concerns and yet offers a common method of assessment

RPS recently reviewed a new ICBC product called "*The Safer Bicycle Planning (SBP) Tool*". This tool is geared to assist local or regional practitioners that are undertaking bicycle-planning projects to include local planning, design, evaluation, planned cycling infrastructure and allow users to assess the merits of cycling routes and their priorities.

Our assessment of this tool to date indicates that there could be significant regional and municipal benefits in using this tool. These benefits include:

- a common method to evaluate routes and determine route priorities;
- a product that is free to all municipalities and agencies and is relatively easy to update;
- components that allow agencies to evaluate the cost/benefit of cycling infrastructure as part of any roadway design;
- components that allow agencies to evaluate cycling safety on roadways;
- free training on the use of the Tool and its theory for municipal staff by ICBC;
- the option to tailor the evaluation process to reflect local policies and restraints; and,
- information that could strengthen funding applications to cost-share cycling infrastructure improvements programs.

We were also advised that if RPS uses this tool, the CRD and ICBC would share in the work as follows:

- 1) The CRD would be responsible for collecting all the data necessary to populate the Tool, including curb lane width, lane configuration, percentage of on-road parking, location of steep grades, and pavement condition. The CRD would also be required to undertake a consultation process with stakeholders on how to rate various aspects of the Tool.
- 2) Entering data into the Tool and its operation would be shared equally between ICBC and the CRD (50% in kind contribution by the CRD).
- 3) ICBC would make available a technical resource person to assist and to train RPS staff and others interested in using the Tool, provide accident data, and provide the SBP Tool to the CRD at no cost. The Tool would also be made available at no cost to CRD member municipalities.

Based on the general information reviewed by RPS, this tool could provide RPC, municipalities and other decision-makers with important technical information about possible regional cycling routes especially information about the merits and priorities for these routes. RPS believes that the ICBC Safer Bicycle Planning tool should now be fully tested so the department can be in a position to determine the costs associated with evaluating the overall cycling network and the benefits to local agencies. The RCAWC supports RPS testing the ICBC Tool on parts of the proposed regional cycling network.

Since significant staff-time is needed to test the ICBC Tool (approx. 6 weeks for one staff member), RPS believe RPC should be aware of this initiative and consider the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Regional Planning Committee support full testing of the ICBC model on part of the proposed regional cycling network and that staff report back to RPC on the findings.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

W.M. Jordan, Executive Director