



CYCLIST COUNTS, WHY THE FUSS?

“What will we learn...”

Organizing cyclist counts, or broader non-vehicle counts, enhances what we know about how people move about in the Comox Valley and generates accurate numbers to back our assumptions.

“Why is this important?”

Data from the counts supports the CVCCo planning and advocacy especially when we are partnering with various players in the transportation field.

“A bigger picture...”

Cyclists are part of a bigger picture of moving people in a manner that meets their particular needs for any trip. This includes taking transit, walking (sometimes with young children and/or a stroller), riding a mobility scooter or driving. Some trips will use more than one mode. Transportation options that are safe, easily accessible, and flexible allow people to save time and money while increasing their health and well-being.

In recent months the Comox Valley Cycling Coalition, with the help of many volunteers, has conducted a few roadside counts. On June 13 cyclist counts were conducted at 10 key locations around the Comox Valley. On August 6 & August 10 all non-vehicle crossings over 5th Street Bridge were counted.

The August 5th Street Bridge counts were organized at an exciting time when a new Mayor and Council in Courtenay had been voicing a high priority for increased active transportation, including a safer downtown crossing of the Courtenay River for pedestrians, cyclists, mobility scooters and others.

Coalition Board members have been engaged in discussions with Council members and other parties. The report on the 5th Street Bridge counts has been shared to help ensure discussions and decisions on a downtown crossing are informed by accurate information. Such a crossing is an important opportunity to improve a weak link in the regional cycling network.

During the counts, we gathered several types of data. Firstly we noted how many? These numbers are useful for assessing the amount of bicycle traffic at each of the locations and also for comparing traffic at different locations, possibly providing comparisons for



“The Final Report”

If you are interested, check out the reports on the two recent counts at:

<http://www.cyclecv.com/home/2019/9/4/2019-cvcco-counts.html>

The roads don't control us, we control them. We can design them to carry whatever types of traffic we feel are useful, and provide for safe and convenient passage of those different modes. - Adam Mann 11.12.2014

Nine things drivers need to stop saying in the bikes vs cars debate



“A special thank you”

The impetus for these counts comes from Board member Gregg Strong. Gregg joined the Cycling Coalition Board at the 2019 AGM. He brings a background in data collection and analysis as well as a wealth of cycling experience around the world. His knowledge and skills have allowed us to implement these counts.

different times of the day. Secondly, what characteristics of cyclists were noted? These included the number of Ebikes, youths or seniors and, in the case of the 5th Street Bridge, skateboarders and strollers. We gathered this information to get some general indications to help us better understand and represent the Comox Valley cycling community.

An additional benefit of the count was our visible roadside presence which gave a boost to the profile of the Coalition. A variety of folks stopped by the roadside counting stations or emailed the website/Facebook page to express interest and support.



The City of Courtenay does not currently do mechanical counting of bicycles. Over in Comox, where counts are done, the Coalition has been discussing new locations for the town's Engineering Department to set out mechanical counters. Data from the counts that the Coalition is doing strengthens our ability to add value when partnering with various players in the transportation field.

The reports will also support future activity. Having accurate numbers about how many cyclists are on the roads is not an outcome in itself. However, it can support future decisions around which activities and projects the Coalition participates in, most notably in the area of routes advocacy. In the future we may also use the information that we collect from such counts to inform other Coalition priorities, like safe cycling education and safe routes for children to cycle to schools.



To wrap up - a special word of thanks to the fabulous volunteers (now up to around 50!) who have helped make the recent cyclist counts possible. Some helped us set up stations, completed the counts while others delivered snacks and beverages to volunteers who were counting.