

# Road Safety Discussion Notes



Date: Tuesday, December 11, 2012  
Time: 1:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
Place: M.D. Foothills Council Chambers

Summary Notes prepared by Suzanne Oel, MD of Foothills Councillor  
These notes are not an official statement. They reflect the topics of conversation for your information.

**Topic:** Concerns have been expressed regarding safety for both motorists and vulnerable road users in light of the Municipal District of Foothills, Rocky View County and west provincial Highway roads becoming more popular as scenic recreation destinations for cycling and events. Before the next busy season for events and cycling, we had a chance to review the advantages, challenges and concerns brought forward by the increasing pressure on the roads to accommodate multiple road users.

Our meeting provided an opportunity to have a dialogue about bringing AWARENESS to the various perspectives of the road users, from motorists to vulnerable users - including pedestrians/cyclists/motorcycles/animals. With a goal to work to improve ROAD SAFETY through cooperation and mindfulness, hopefully this meeting will inspire further discussions and projects.

Many stakeholders attended - different positions and users were well-represented: M.D. Foothills Councillors, MD of Foothills protective services Peace Officers, Rocky View Peace Officer, High River RCMP & Sherriff, Turner Valley RCMP, Town of Turner Valley representative, City of Calgary cycling coordinator, nine cycling representatives – both local and regional groups, Alberta Bicycle Association, Alberta Trail Net, Alberta Transportation Regional Traffic Safety Consultant for South Alberta and Alberta Transportation Operations Manager... I had consulted with our Regional Traffic Safety Consultant – Calgary Region, beforehand. Excellent information was presented during discussions and a broader perspective and insight were gained by all. Thanks to everyone who participated in conversations or attendance!

## **Various perspectives and suggestions shared**

- Many complaints led to a need to investigate this topic - people are concerned about both motorist and cyclist safety, and increasing pressure on the roads to accommodate multiple users and need for solutions...
- We need to find common ground and use common sense
- Ideas for “Share the Road” campaigns
- Consider the idea of reciprocal use - we use each other’s services – city and country, opportunities and benefits for all parties
- Road use is only going to get busier as this area increases in popularity for events and scenic recreation destinations, cycling increases in popularity, and population increases
- We need a mutual respect and understanding of each other’s needs
- There should be mutual accountability
- Don’t “paint” all motorists and cyclists by the worst behaviour in each user group “brush”. We are dealing with behaviour of individuals in cases which require the most patience. Behaviour takes time and strategy to adjust, especially when there is a need to adjust attitudes on both sides of a situation
- Deal with road rage in addition – behaviour problem
- Work on safety and issues through awareness, communication with cyclists and motorists, promoting understanding and fairness
- Recognize seasonal pressure – lots of activity here in the good weather months, work together to plan
- Remember to BE CAREFUL, as motorists come out ahead in the event of an unfortunate accident
- Work on visibility of cyclists, awareness of the presence of cyclists, need to pay attention
- Cyclists can get a rear view mirror – helps with prevention and safety
- Idea of flashing lights for bicycles – helps with visibility
- No ear plugs – cyclists and motorists should be listening and watching

- Reach cyclists in the places where they will purchase their bikes and in clubs, with education, risk training and best practices, need more of this
- Same Road Rules for all of us – bicycles are considered a vehicle in terms of enforcement... no travelling side by side
- 3 types of users: singles, small casual groups and planned group events – challenge to reach casual small groups where most of the problems occur, need to get the word out there to travel in single file if your group is going out onto the country roads
- A lot of groups and ideas can be accessed online – recent campaigns such as: UK “Think Cyclist”, revised laws and signage to encourage passing at a safe distance, learn from other people’s work and campaigns
- More education could occur when people are tested for driving (motorists), we don’t test people frequently enough, education and re-testing?
- Need for repetition
- Try signage, message boards, bumper sticker campaign
- Direct vulnerable user traffic to less busy roads?
- Direct vulnerable users to trails
- Even though some trails will be developed, they will not be all things to all people. There will still be cyclists/events who will choose to use the roads
- Drive a route in advance to be sure the road is in good enough shape to cycle it
- Events should be planned well to inform road users in advance, pre-planning and debriefing important, use traffic experienced volunteers, be aware of huge traffic congestion on some event days and plan for this
- Contact the municipality where your events are to be held – many events are going on and they need to be scheduled and safety measures need to be imparted, etc.
- See opportunity such as economic development and increased healthy lifestyles, rather than a problem: more cyclists = \$ for someone to make off of this
- Affecting people’s attitudes in a positive way can make this a win-win situation
- Keep this dialogue going...
- Need to plan ahead with knowing motorist and cyclist needs – on roads etc., which segues into Alberta Transportation’s work under way

### **Government of Alberta - recent info update**

Alberta Transportation is reviewing engineering guidelines and working to review and update the Traffic Safety Regulations to include cycling particulars and make things standard throughout the province – lanes, “green” bike boxes, guidelines, etc.

Alberta Transportation – new safety dialogue going on... Need Education & enforcement to teach all the road users about safe practices. To reach user groups, A.T. makes information available at bike shops and has bike rodeos at schools (approx. 50x). When analysis of accidents is done, people report: I didn’t see him... Let people know you are there - visibility. They have found that many Drivers have a poor understanding of road rules – A.T. is working with partners to educate on this and create more awareness.

Alberta Transportation along with the safety partners and stakeholders continues to implement the Traffic Safety Plan, a strategy to reduce fatalities and injuries on Alberta roadways. Pedestrian and cyclist safety are part of this plan – a month of education and awareness is dedicated towards different aspects, examples: November 2012 – pedestrian, July 2012 – motorcycle...

Alberta Transportation and Alberta Tourism Parks & Recreation are developing a new Provincial Trail Network and Policy for Paths inside Highway Right-Of-Ways, example: Highway 8 pilot project... suggested Hwy 22x... (innovation)

Government of Alberta is committed to promoting healthy living through its Active Alberta Policy. One of the priorities is to work with partners to identify and implement best practices in land use and transportation planning and to facilitate active transportation like cycling and walking. Check online...

### **Final Messages**

Be safe and pay attention  
 Follow the Rules of the Road  
 Be patient and enjoy our beautiful area  
 See opportunity with challenges to be solved  
 Affecting people’s attitudes in a positive way can make this a win-win situation  
 Share the message about sharing the road  
 Participate in the Alberta Transportation’s focus of education about safety and understanding rules of the road...