

Edmonton Bicycle Commuters' Society
Executive Director Report
October 2011

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Details of Activities

1. Administration/Office Organization

1.1 Internet

Was working intermittently at best for most of the month, notably for the wireless connection. A new router seems to have stabilized the wired connection. Unfortunately small issue reduces the office and BikeWorks operations to very low/unproductive since most data and communication files are contained in emails. See 1.3 for further discussion.

1.2 Wiki

After much postponement of learning how to contribute to the wiki, I slowly learned how to log in, edit and format pages. I added the missing Board minutes from July-October in the proper format. Updated the template for meeting minutes.

1.3 File Consolidation

Recognizing the disorder of Google Docs and reliance on internet to access files contained in e-mails, I have begun to download all files to the main (Project Coordinator) computer. This will help with offline work and also enable more effective file organization for future employee and board orientation. This can also be backed up weekly (or perhaps daily) to ensure that files are secured.

To be addressed by Board:

All non-confidential EBC-related documents on Board members' personal computers or personal email accounts should be consolidated to the EBC computer. Please review your files and load any EBC files onto a USB and bring to future Board meeting for me to upload. Ensure that complex files have all the associated fonts and graphics (usually possible to 'package for CD' then save as a file). Alternatively, small files may be emailed to me for downloading.

2. Advocacy

2.1 City of Edmonton Budget Consultation, Oct 11

City administration held public consultations to gather input on citizen priorities for the 2012-2014 budgets. The [operating budget](#) covers ongoing expenditures such as snow clearing and road & trail maintenance. The [capital budget](#) covers new & renewed infrastructure, including bike lanes and LRT construction. I attended the consultation to represent the concerns of EBC with the high probability of stalling the implementation of the Bicycle Transportation Plan if the suggested budget cuts/restrictions are approved. The proposed budget is incongruent to the City's [strategic goals](#), specifically to "shift Edmonton's transportation modes" where "public transportation and active transportation are the preferred choice for more people." The facilitators (including EBC ally Jason Darrah) noted the many examples how lack of funding to active transportation development contradicted the City's stated goals.

Next steps: I will speak on behalf of EBC at the non-statutory public hearing on November 23.

2.2 Old Strathcona Business Association Annual General Meeting, Oct 18

As a member of the OSBA, I attended the AGM to network with members and learn about opportunities to move forward with neighbouring organizations on active transportation projects. Most OSBA members in attendance represented restaurants, fashion stores, gift shops, or banking institutions. The OSBA identified the need to have more and better bicycle parking available in the area and expressed specific interest in supporting bicycle rentals in the area. The OSBA also described their intention to buy the Imperial Oil site on 106 st and Whyte ave for a tourist info centre, outdoor stage/performance space, bicycle end-of-trip facilities, and new OSBA office.

Next steps: I will send OSBA staff information to advertise EBC's bicycle rental program. Promotional materials have not been created for the program so a volunteer opportunity for this project is available. I will send a formal expression of interest in participating in the design concept for bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities.

Issues to be addressed by the Board:

I would like clarification as to whether I am able to purchase memberships for related organizations, such as OSBA, as part of my operational authority. Does this required Board approval before moving forward or is it within my power?

2.3 Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues Living Local Summit, Oct 28

This event brought together various levels of government (notably OH&S, police, fire dept, sustainable transportation engineer, office of natural areas, community services, etc), school board planners, school trustees, councillors, developers, real estate agents, academics, health professionals, not-for-profit/community organizations, business owners and community league board members. I attended having contributed to the planning of this event as a Living Local stakeholder. EBC is well poised to facilitate all types of "living local" activities, since bicycle transportation allows residents to explore their neighbourhood in an engaging, active way. Everyone I spoke with about EBC's programs and services was supportive but it felt like preaching to the choir. Much of the discussions centered on engaging the aging population of boomers who have the money and time to live locally.

Next steps: I will follow up with Jennifer, EPSB Planner, who is responsible for the Active Trips to School program to discuss partnership opportunities.

3. Funding/Budget

3.1 City of Edmonton Community Investment and Operating Grant, Oct 19

The [CIOG](#) was completed and submitted, albeit 25 minutes late. I have confirmed that our application was accepted despite the tardy submission. The total eligible operating expenses that was applied for is \$19,250 (max amount available to a single organization) which is the same amount that EBC applied for in 2010 (of which we received \$10,000). The application was significantly more detailed this year with some fields which I felt uncomfortable filling out without wider consultation with the Board. However, I did not budget enough time to recruit feedback from the Board on the particular fields.

Next steps: I will submit the required documents (updated bylaws and annual return) when they are approved and returned by Corporate Registries.

Issues to be addressed by the Board:

Board members must begin to record volunteer hours to include in total organization volunteer hours.

The fields which I felt should be discussed by the Board were:

- "How do you know or gauge that your organization is making a difference in the lives of participants and volunteers?" My response discussed the traceable increase in demand/participation in our services, the (unsolicited) positive feedback we receive from participants, and the (solicited) feedback we receive in user surveys. I am interested in ideas or direction the Board has about how determine patron and volunteer satisfaction.
- "What (3) challenges does your organization have in governing itself? How is your organization responding to those challenges?" My response was based on convenience in having a truthful answer to the second half of the question: strategic plan, board succession planning, staff professional development. I'm interested to know the Board's (individual and collective) assessment of the challenges and responses.

3.2 Summer Student Overpayment

Upon finalizing the paperwork for the two grants for the two summer positions, it was identified that we overpaid the Education Coordinator by one week. Neil and I addressed the issue and Michael has paid back the overage.

Issues to be addressed by the Board:

Neil (Treasurer) to confirm whether the Summer Events Coordinator was overpaid or not. If so, I will follow up with him.

4. Member Relations

4.1 Website and Social Media

The creation of website homepage news, website calendar listings, facebook event postings, twitter reminders about EBC events and opportunities (which automatically get posted to the facebook fanpage as well) have taken a significant amount of time, as usual, this month. Happily, the social media content is increasing our online popularity as the content becomes more up to date and engaging.

Next steps: Researching programs or applications which allow website, facebook, Google calendar and twitter to sync automatically rather than having to create the same content four times—specifically for events, but ideally for news items as well. Suggestions are welcomed.

4.2 Newsletter

No newsletter was sent to members in October. Website and social media presence were slightly increased to offset the reduced communication. Newsletters will continue as usual (monthly) next month.

4.3 Course organizing, marketing and registrations

In response to member inquiries, I scheduled two winter cycling workshops (Oct 14 Intro, Oct 21 Tire Studding). This was the first course which was set without an instructor offering to host, so I administered the course marketing, registrations and payments. It is apparent to me now that our mash up of course pages is a large barrier to getting instructors.

Next steps: I will ask Alex to formulate a *Course Cancellation Policy* and a *Volunteer Registration In EBC Courses Policy*. These are ambiguous and misunderstood by course registrants and volunteers, respectively. I will have Alex create a *Course Instructor Manual* to ensure that the process for setting up a course is clear and accessible for all volunteers. The BikeWorks Committee will be consulted for these documents.

5. Media

5.1 Alberta PrimeTime TV, Oct 18

EBC was invited to speak about cyclists' views of the new bike lanes in Edmonton in a session which would compare Edmonton and Calgary bike infrastructure additions over the past year. I was informed upon arriving at the inconvenient (184 street/Stony Plain Road) location that they had decided to focus on Calgary only. Link to the aired segment sans Edmonton: ["The Traffic Turf War in Alberta: Motorists vs. Cyclists."](#)

5.2 CJSR 88.5 FM Fundrive, Oct 27

For the special Fundrive edition of Full English Breakfast, host Peter Garden dedicated a hour of the show to Bike Bits with co-host Karly Coleman. I was a guest speaker and we discussed EBC's programs and services and how we, as a community cycling organization, fit with community radio like CJSR. Link to recording [here](#).

6. North Location

6.1 Eastwood School Lease

As of Oct 24, Kris Andreychuck (Edmonton Police Service Neighbourhood Empowerment Team contact from the spoke and our negotiator for Eastwood) said that EBC could tour Eastwood soon but not yet. He said, "The reason for the delay is related to an issue that was recently ironed out between EPS and EPSB. Long story short, I will have possible tour dates for everyone to choose from within the next two weeks. I was told to please not interpret this delay as a sign of a lack of commitment to EBC. The space is your's, it's just taking some time." Kris remains optimistic about a January 2012 move in.

Next steps: Attend the ArtsHab open house in November to receive updates on Alberta Cycle building.

Issues to be addressed by the Board:

In order to begin marketing and developing promotional materials for the north location, I suggest that we officially name the north location "BikeWorks North" and rename the current location "BikeWorks South." This allows some flexibility if we move from Eastwood to Alberta Cycle building without having to rebrand. It also carries the existing patron and public understanding of what BikeWorks offers in services and programs, which would not exist if we use a completely unique name for the north location (i.e. start from square one). Please confirm the Board's preferred names for current and future locations.

7. Organizational Development

7.1 Strategic Plan

Of the 10 strategic goals identified at the Strategic Planning workshop in August, I received feedback from the Board retreat (see 7.2) on the top priorities for the coming year. A vision statement (currently non-existent) was also identified as being an important part of the Strategic Plan.

Next steps: Draft document will be submitted with November report for discussion and approval at December Board meeting.

7.2 Board Development, Oct 5 meeting and Oct 29-30 retreat

Feeling an urgency to start the new Board off on a sure foot and seeing no other organizing, I scheduled the first board meeting and retreat. Booked rooms, organized catering, researched orientation materials, put together draft agendas. I hope that the official transition from outgoing to incoming Board members allows the Board to resume organizing its tasks so that I can resume operational rather than governance duties. I have registered EBC for the Alberta Government Board Development Program workshop, which has been scheduled for January 27-28, 2012.

Next steps: I am completing applications for the [Serving Communities Internship Program](#) and the [U of A Non-Profit Board Internship](#) in order to get an intern to help develop Board policies and transition materials. SCiP deadline is open; U of A deadline is April for Sept 2012 intern.

7.3 Active Transportation Network meeting, Oct 12

Upon learning about the ATN at a [Trails, Paths, Routes Advisory Committee](#) meeting, I inquired if EBC could have a seat at the table. The ATN is comprised of various sector representatives who work on active transportation in Edmonton: Alberta Bicycle Association, Alberta Health Services, Alberta Motor Association, City of Edmonton, Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL), Government of Alberta, Edmonton Public School Board, Edmonton Catholic School District, [Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere](#) (SHAPE Alberta), University of Alberta, etc. This will be an excellent space for EBC to network with the health, transportation, and school sectors in a formal and ongoing manner. The meetings are used for information sharing across members and developing best practices for Edmonton.

7.4 Volunteer Orientation, Oct 25

A smaller Orientation than usual this month, with 4 attendees. Of special interest is a Grant MacEwan Professional Relations student, Andrew Bone, who is now developing a Volunteer Communications Manual to help orient new and current volunteers with the suite of EBC programs and services. He is keen to develop talking points which would help volunteers, staff and board members respond to inquiries in a succinct manner.

Next steps: To ensure greater registration, I will create general volunteer posters for EBC to display at various community organizations and schools. I will provide ongoing support for Andrew's communications project.

7.5 Partnerships

A draft partnership agreement has been completed with Alberta Public Interest Research Group. The major benefit available to EBC once the agreement is approved is free booking of U of A space for meetings and events. I also provided EBC prizes to the [Exposure Festival](#) and [Terra Informa](#). These two organizations strengthen EBC's relations with the LGBTQ and environmental community, respectively.

8. Outreach

8.1 Bike Art Auction, Oct 1

Art sold at the art auction totaled, \$1,737.00, of which \$1,266.23 went to EBC and \$638.77 went to the artists. Bar sales totaled \$518.35, while admissions, donations, and zine sales came to \$657.00. Overall, costs associated with putting on the auction, asides from wages, came to \$660.48. Including 250 hours of wages (\$3,350), total costs for the auction came to \$4,010.48. This included time we spent creating art pieces to be included the auction.

8.2 Artists In Residence Completion

Kim Smith, Leila Sidi and I met to review their work this season and discuss what is required for their final report. The report will be submitted to me on November 15, and after any revisions, they will submit the report to the Board. An issue arising from a personal misunderstanding between a contributing artist and one of the AIRs required my mediation throughout October. After many discussions and emails, a solution has been identified and all parties seem to be willing to move forward.

Issues to be addressed by the Board:

The Artists have asked these questions to forward to the Board: Upon receipt of the final report, does the Board need anything else from the Artists? As the report will likely be discussed at the December board meeting, should the Artists attend to answer any questions? Is payment contingent upon the approval of the report or simply paid out?

8.3 Campus Food Bank Trick or [Tr]Eat, Oct 31

Continuing on our past few years of support for the Campus Food Bank, EBC once again provided bike trailer volunteers and spotters for their annual food drive. Unfortunately 4 of the 6 volunteers who signed up for the event did not attend so EBC's capacity was reduced to 2 trailers. However, the CFB was still able to bring in a hefty 7,500 pounds of donations and was well-supported by their own volunteers.

8.4 U of A Community Service Learning intern project

I have been providing the students with ongoing support and resources for this project. Throughout October, the students have been gathering online and in-person [survey responses](#) from the neighbourhood residents. The results will help distill the current community needs and interest to produce a targeted marketing campaign. Background: EBC successfully pitched a marketing project proposal to the School of Business students in a course entitled 'Sustainability and Responsible Marketing.' The course is designed to explore innovative ways to solve social responsibility and sustainability issues, from a marketing perspective. A group of 3 students will be completing a professional marketing strategy for us, which will include a demonstration campaign for the opening of the Eastwood location. The internship will be completed at the end of this school term in December.

8.5 Operation Fruit Rescue Edmonton Pedal Powered Grant

OFRE received a [microgrant to partner with EBC](#) to learn how to make a pedal powered apple crusher to allow them to process apples for cider. The original plan for a 3 series workshop hosted by Jan Przysieszniak was extended as per Jan's request. Jan reports that they will begin construction in November. Jan and EBC will be paid for the workshops and OFRE will promote EBC in their unveiling of the apple crusher (and in all related media).

8.6 Grant MacEwan Film & Design Project

EBC was chosen by Dan Wilberg, a Fine Arts & Design student, for his assignment to develop a Public Service Announcement video for a not-for-profit organization. The completed project can be viewed online in [30 second](#) format or [60 second](#) format. The quality of the audio is mediocre which reduces the impact of the clip. I will post the video on our website to honour Dan's time commitment.

8.7 Jasper Place High School Collatoration

Discussions began about a project with bikes to be carried out at the school through teachers Julia Dalman and Dustin Bajer. Our discussions were not related to the proposed mechanic training workshops which Chris Chan received funding for, but such workshops may be included. Julia and Dustin were more interested in a student-led build of a pedal-powered generator for various school events, as well as workshops around student transportation autonomy.

Next steps: Confirm project goals and timelines with Julia and Dustin to determine next steps.

9. Professional Development

9.1 Not for profit board books, resources

With little experience in not-for-profit management, I took to improving my understanding of common practices and procedures. I feel that this has greatly helped me to see my roles and responsibilities as an Executive Director and my relation to the Board of Directors. Many books and online resources are available at no cost and I am keen to get more formal training in this area.

Next steps: Register in workshops and courses which will enhance my knowledge and experience in not-for-profit management. I am happy to receive suggestions from Board members if anyone can recommend specific courses or organizations.

9.2 'Midterm' Review Feedback

In the interest of learning from the feedback received by the Board for my 'midterm' review (this past September), I request the compilation of anonymous, raw feedback. I hope that information can be included about the feedback process that was used (eg. Who? When?). I was rather disappointed that I was not asked to provide feedback or fill out an evaluation for Alex, since I am obviously the one who works with him most closely and have been overseeing his past year of progress.

Issues to be addressed by the Board:

If approved, please send me the anonymous comments and feedback procedure. A process should be clarified for both the Board and the staff about the upcoming midterm reviews which were scheduled for 3-4 months into the contract (January-February).