

**Edmonton Bicycle Commuters' Society
BikeWorks Coordinator November Report
Alex Hindle**

BikeWorks Monthly Statistics

volunteer hours accrued: at least 289
volunteers who put in time at the shop: 31
patrons (estimated by # of transactions):120
bikes sold:17
\$ bikes sold: \$1110.00
\$ parts sold: \$1540.10 (total), \$1139.00 New / \$401.10 Used
workshops/courses for public:
workshops/courses for volunteers (including new volunteer orientations):
new volunteers:3

Bike Building Monthly Statistics

bikes built:15
\$ initial value of bikes built:\$825
\$ added value to bikes built:\$975
\$ total value of bikes built: \$1800
\$ spent on bikes built (in parts): \$280
volunteer hours spent building bikes:126.5
staff hours spent on bike building program:14
\$ cost of food for bike building: \$209

Alberta Cycle Building Open House

On November 14 Anna and I attended an info session on updates on the Alberta Cycle Building renovations. Work seems to be progressing slowly on the renovations. There seemed to exist the opinion that EBC was no longer interested in the space because of the theoretical offer of the Eastwood School facility. We informed Christy Morin and Linda Huffman that we were still very much interested and would like to be kept informed of any developments.

Bike Donation to Aspen School

Darcy Rogusky, a teacher at Aspen School, made a special request to EBC to build a durable, simple bike for one of his special needs students who enjoys biking. Darcy provided a number of old bikes to BikeWorks and while we don't as a rule accept donations in lieu of payment I felt an exception could be made in this instance. A suitable bike was built up and donated to Aspen School. Total cost of new parts for the bike was \$34.

Bike Rental Program Final Report and Future Plans

I completed a Final Report to submit to MEC as per the requirements of the Access and Activity Grant we were given to start the Bike Rental Program. The report was sent to the board last week for review. Of major concern is the discrepancy between the budget submitted in our original proposal to MEC and the actual expenses we accrued. The

grant was to provide \$8050 in total from MEC, half of which was received upon the grant being awarded with the remaining funds to be disbursed following submission of the final report. My accounting of the expenses to date is \$4762.57, meaning that there is \$3287.43 of unspent money. A major part of the issue is that the original submitted budget was very vague, contained some mathematical errors and allocated unrealistic amounts of money to certain things. The question at hand is whether or not MEC will disburse the full amount of money if we have not yet spent it. The money was intended to be used for a one season trial of the project and though I've explained in the report the particulars of how we will use the remaining funds, MEC may be loathe to provide them if we don't have existing expenses to cover. The lateness of the report is not a barrier to receiving the funds. To date I have received very little feedback from the board on this issue and guidance would be appreciated.

Bike Storage

We have been storing completed bikes in Adam's garage such that we will have a large selection of finished bikes for sale come spring. At present, we have 14 complete bikes with an estimated sale value of \$1350, as well as 7 rental bikes in storage. More are to be added with the goal of having around 30 fully finished saleable bikes for March.

BikeWorks User Survey

The BikeWorks User Survey was conducted between July and October of 2011 and was completed by 69 respondents. I sorted, analyzed and presented the gathered data in a power point presentation (sent to the board earlier this month). There are some serious weaknesses in the survey, primarily the relatively small sample size and bias in the respondents towards BikeWorks regulars including volunteers. As such, there are limitations on the usefulness of the data, however, the results do have definite value and provide some insight into the thoughts of patrons on our services. Some of the most useful information came from the qualitative, open ended questions concerning suggestions on improvements.

Of particular concern was the number of patrons who stated the BikeWorks can be intimidating, that it can be difficult to identify volunteers and that there is insufficient signage to make it clear how to navigate the shop. Luckily these are problems that can be fairly easily addressed.

A sense of intimidation seems to be fostered by both the physical nature of BikeWorks (alley entrance, sometimes dark, cluttered yard, messy shop, etc.) as well as a lack of coherent access to its services (patrons not being properly welcomed, sense of chaos on busy days, inconsistencies in shop policies, etc.). The pending introduction of position based volunteers including formal Shop Host positions should help to remedy some of this concern. Further education of the volunteers to ensure consistent understanding and application of shop policies will occur in tandem with the introduction of the new position based volunteer system. Maintaining a clean yard and shop must be given high priority to ensure the shop is welcoming. I plan to install additional yard lighting to make the yard and entrance to BikeWorks brighter which should also help.

Volunteer identification can be addressed by ensuring volunteers wear the red 'staff' aprons while on shift. I have ordered more aprons to ensure there are enough for all volunteers. And again, the introduction of clearly defined volunteer positions, specifically Shop Host should make using BikeWorks a more predictable and simple experience for patrons.

Additional signage, specifically identifying the 'show room', used parts room and bathroom will be added shortly. Signage explaining the use of key tools as well as common repair procedures will also be developed and displayed.

EBC Brochure Design Updates

Updated the EBC brochure file to include information on the Bike Rental Program, and other changes made since the last design, as well as new photographs. Currently seeking an appropriate cover photograph (difficult to get in winter!) before having more brochures printed (we're almost out of stock).

Volunteer Orientation

Volunteer orientations are occurring monthly at the very least. Most are attended by three or more people and there seems to be considerable interest in volunteering in spite of the season. More of the orientation attendees seem to be becoming committed volunteers than previously. Recently, two young volunteers, one referred by the Youth Emergency Shelter and the other a keen youngster recommended by his mother have started to volunteer. The later is 13 years old. I am confident that he is mature and responsible enough to volunteer at BikeWorks but his age raises some concerns over liability as well as the possibility of very young volunteers requiring a degree of supervision from other volunteers who may be disinterested, unable or unwilling to act in a supervisory capacity. I believe we may have a policy regarding the minimum age of volunteers but I cannot find any record of it. Does anyone know if we do? This is an issue that has come up before. If no policy exists I would like to suggest that we not prohibit anyone from volunteering based on age but rather develop a parental waiver. We could also require very young volunteers to be chaperoned by a parent or guardian. I strongly feel that many young people have the skills and capacity to be a major help. Plus they're a good source of enthusiastic help. Guidance in this area would be appreciated.

Storage for the Spoke

The Spoke moved the contents of its storage 'POD' to BikeWorks. Most of the bikes brought over were of very low quality or in rough shape and were stripped and scraped with the understanding that we supply bikes for future sessions of the Spoke if necessary. Some miscellaneous tools and supplies were absorbed into our own collection with the repair stands and tool kits being held here in storage.

Stripping of Bikes

Several keen volunteers have been working hard to thoroughly strip scrap bikes of all useable parts. This has the dual advantage of providing us a better supply of used parts and minimizing the space occupied by scrap bikes. The yard is also kept cleaner if scrap bikes are processed regularly.

Tire Recycling

I am having difficulty having our tube and tire recycling bin emptied. Liberty Tire Recycling came in the late summer and removed a very small portion of the tires. I contacted Liberty to ask if they would be able to remove the remainder and have been repeatedly promised that they will send someone. Eventually I received a voicemail indicating that a truck would come between 8:30 and 9:00 AM the following day but unfortunately it did not. I am attempting to communicate with Liberty to see what the hold up is but am going to call other tire recyclers and see if they will pick them up instead.

Volunteer Edmonton and SUB Volunteer Listings

Submissions were made to both Volunteer Edmonton and the U of A's SUB volunteer opportunity listing service. This will help to expand the profile of our volunteer opportunities. Volunteer Edmonton should also soon be listing EBC as a resource on its 211 services site. There seems to be a delay in our being listed with Volunteer Edmonton, however, and my queries to them have so far been ignored. I will pester them more and hope for results.

Volunteer Management Plan

I am still working on the Volunteer Management Plan. It is currently my top priority and it should be completed shortly. Please see October report for details of the plan. In brief, it is identifying volunteer management priorities, challenges and solutions as well as benchmarks to gauge success. The plan will be presented to the board ASAP. Please note that due to the relatively low demand for BikeWorks by patrons during the winter months, most shifts can be comfortably covered by 2 volunteers. The Management Plan, specifically the division of the volunteers into Shop Hosts, Mechanics and Shift Leaders will be introduced in the early spring of 2012 (March) with explanation and any required training occurring prior to this.

Volunteer Recruitment Poster

Designed a BikeWorks volunteer recruitment poster to be printed and put up come spring at targeted locations. Please see attached file.