

Vancouver

scooter / motorcycle parking initiative

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Press release

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First Scooter / Motorcycle Parking Rally Set For Saturday May 1st

Council foot dragging spurs action.

VANCOUVER – Vancouver Scooter / Motorcycle Parking Initiative group will hold its first parking rally in the center of Vancouver on the morning of Saturday May 1, 2010. This Saturday, supporters will descend on downtown streets to park as the city bylaws dictate; **one bike per metered parking space thereby displacing automobiles.**

The purpose of the rally is to inform citizens of the challenges faced by riders of motorized cycles. Current city legislation generally mandates that powered two wheeled commuters occupy single vehicle metered parking spaces if they wish to park on-street. In the past, riders have been reluctant to occupy entire vehicle parking spaces, considering it both a poor use of space and discourteous.

Vancouver City has just 42 on-street designated parking spaces for motorized cycles in thereby forcing riders to park between cars and other quasi legal locations. The result has so far been, among other negatives, increased insurance costs for all motorists due to damage as motorized cycles, forced to park between autos, regularly get knocked down while they endure punitive arbitrary ticketing and towing by Vancouver City.

Vancouver City has 27,000 licensed scooters and motorcycles. Motorized cycle use in BC grew dramatically more than passenger vehicle use in BC (35% vs. 7.5% for the 5 yrs ending in 2007) as fuel costs rose and commuters sought alternative forms of transportation.

On October 6th, 2009, and over five years after the BC Coalition of Motorcyclists (BCCOM) requested it, COPE Councilor David Cadman introduced a motion to designate low cost and free on-street parking for scooters and motorcycles. However, the motion was prevented from discussion as the subject was instead referred to City Staff for review and recommendations. Following two failed attempts by City Staff to produce a satisfactory and logical report, including one prepared for a council meeting on the subject on January 19th 2010, neither Council nor the City Manager can comment on the motion status.

The originator of the initiative Ian Tootill, said Wednesday “To see the way we (riders) have been treated, one might logically conclude city officials are encouraging divisive politics...however we will not be drawn into a Critical Mass style battle between cyclists, pedestrians, automobiles and motorized cycles. We motorcyclists have the right to use the road like everyone else and it is our intention to inform the public about our treatment and the failure, thus far to do the obvious, this Saturday. I am still waiting for a return

phone call from Mayor Robertson initiated last summer.” Tootill further elaborated, “City officials are doing a marvelous job with green initiatives in many ways including bicycle lanes. However there is a vacuum with respect to motorized cycles and if virtually everywhere else in the world can encourage alternative transport by scooters and motorcycles, then Vancouver can do it.”

Motorized cycles are a necessary and integral component of any comprehensive transportation plan worldwide. It is because they are fuel efficient, produce less carbon, use less space and have low impact on infrastructure (because they are light) that many cities, including those close to Vancouver, have encouraged their use. Toronto offers free (and on sidewalk), San Francisco offers free and low cost (\$.40 per hr) and Portland offers free. Burnaby offers free and the Province of BC encourages motorcycle use in HOV lanes.

Motorized scooters and cycles are part of the global transportation solution. Whereas bicyclists tend to be users of transit, powered cycles divert commuters from automobiles. Therefore, powered cycle use should be encouraged if city officials wish to reduce auto use and promote more efficient movement of traffic in Vancouver. Further, unlike other modes of transit proposed by the city, since motorcycles are capable of speed, they do not slow the movement of traffic and they provide safety for commuters who are capable of maintaining traffic flow and range.

This Mayor and Council have had a workable solution and motion in its hands for many months. We are requesting they act on it NOW.

The Vancouver Scooter/Motorcycle Parking motion can be viewed at <http://www.bccom-bc.com/>

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The Vancouver Scooter / Motorcycle Parking Initiative is sponsored by private individuals who are members of a group of riders of over 27000 licensed motorcycles in Vancouver. Scooters and motorcycles are low impact, reduce congestion, are fuel efficient and more environmentally friendly than automobiles and are a key component in all comprehensive transit strategies. Vancouver City currently has 42 on-street parking spaces designated for motorcycles.