

# CHAINMAIL

Spring 2007

The newsletter of Citizens for Safe Cycling  
Volume 23 Issue 1

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Proper bicycle parking will be one of CfSC's goals in the year ahead.

Image I. Bickis

## City Slashes Cycling Funding

In a determined effort to pass a "tax-freeze" budget, Ottawa City Council has virtually eliminated all funding for cycling programs and infrastructure.

Gone is the \$80,000 allocated to promotion and education. Gone is last year's already small \$150,000 to improve infrastructure.


CfSC had anticipated this funding shortfall, but despite a concerted lobbying campaign, was unable to stop the cuts.

This has caused CfSC to seriously pare down operations this year in an effort to remain financially stable.

### A Last Hope

On March 7, the Ottawa Transportation committee voted 6-0 in favour of granting – not contracting – CfSC \$50,000 for 2007 to continue to run education

programming. This motion must still be passed by City Council on March 28. Indeed, there requires a two-thirds majority to even bring forth the motion, as it technically re-opens the budget debate. But it is a last chance for CfSC to receive funding from the city for this year.

Inform your councillor if you want cycling education in 2007. 

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## CfSC Looks Forward

CfSC has always been committed to helping cyclists. For the past few years this has most noticeably materialized in the cycling-skills courses.

This year CfSC hopes to help cyclists in a wider range of activities. We will be concentrating on advocacy, pressuring government and the private sector to do more for cycling.

Priorities for the year include: improving "rack-and-roll" by expanding the number of buses involved and lengthening the season of operation; improving cycling parking to reduce bike theft; monitoring progress on the Ottawa Cycling Plan and pressuring the city to change flaws within; operating bike parking at city festivals as a service to the city's cyclists; advising the city on construction plans such as the Wellington Street restructuring; and much much more!

Look for details of our plans in the next issue. Feel free to contact us if there is a project that you think we should work on, or if you want some help starting one yourself! 



Improving bike-lane plans in the Ottawa Cycling Plan is another goal for the year.

*Chain Mail* is published by Citizens for Safe Cycling, the non-profit association that promotes cycling as a viable means of transportation in Ottawa by advocating:

- **Acceptance** of the responsible cyclist as a legitimate road user,
- **Education** of all cyclists to improve riding and traffic skills, and of other road users to accommodate cyclist traffic as part of their normal driving skills,
- **Engineering** improvements to facilitate cyclist traffic, such as proper traffic control systems, adequate lane width, and sufficient parking,
- **Legislation** that is effective and enforced, and
- **Representation** of cycling issues to all levels of government.

Opinions expressed in *Chain Mail* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of CfSC, its board, or its members. Reproduction is permitted provided both author and source credits are given.

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**Contributions are welcome. Text may be edited for style, length, and clarity. Please send submissions to editor@SafeCycling.ca**  
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The 2006-2007 board is:

**President:** Charles Akben-Marchand

**Vice-president:** Tom Trottier

**Secretary:** John Calvert

**Treasurer:** Peter Sloan

**Directors at Large:** John Stevenson, Ian Bickis, Will Hallam, Peter Sloan, and Dave Yarker, (One vacant position)

Board members can be reached through CfSC at (613) 722-4454 or Info@SafeCycling.ca.

The CfSC Board meets monthly on Monday nights at 19:00. All interested members are welcome to attend. Contact secretary@SafeCycling.ca for time and place.

For inquiries about CfSC memberships, contact CfSC's Membership Administrator at Membership@SafeCycling.ca.



## CfSC's New Logo!

Watch for this new logo on CfSC's new volunteer t-shirts at cycling events around town!

## Bike Store Discounts

<b>The Cyclery</b> 1073 Bank Street - 10% off parts and accessories	<b>Joe Mamma Urban Cycles</b> 216 Pretoria (at Bank) - 10% off parts and accessories
<b>Westboro Sports Centre</b> 327 Richmond Road - 10% off parts and accessories	<b>Full Cycle *NEW*</b> 427 St. Laurent Blvd - 10% off parts and accessories
<b>McCrank's Cycles</b> 889 Bank Street - 10% off parts and accessories 	<b>Valiquette's Source for Sports *NEW*</b> 1740 Carling Avenue - 20% off in-stock accessories
<b>Tommy &amp; Lefebvre Stores</b> 464 Bank Street, 2206 Carling Ave, 499 Terry Fox Drive, 2615 Lancaster Road, Unit 107B, 250 Centrum Blvd (Orleans) - 10% off regular price cycling clothing and accessories	 <b>Fresh Air Experience</b> 1291 Wellington Street - 10% off parts, accessories, and clothing; 5% off bikes
<b>Orleans Cycles *NEW*</b> 2404 St. Joseph Blvd 10% off parts and accessories	<i>Note: MEC and CycleLogik are CfSC corporate members, but are unable to offer discounts.</i>
<b>Bushtukah Outdoor Store</b> 203 Richmond Road 10% off parts and accessories	<b>Rebec and Kroes *NEW*</b> 1695 Bank Street 10% off parts and accessories

## Editor's Note

Hello. This is my first attempt at the newsletter; I hope you approve. Feel free to send comments or suggestions to me at editor@SafeCycling.ca. I'll try and improve it with each issue. I also hope to improve the CfSC website for communication with members and the general public. Suggestions on improvements there are also welcome.

Regards,  
 Ian Bickis

## Letters

*We receive letters from members and the public from time to time. The following letters, and CfSCs' replies, are printed here because of the important and interesting information within. We always like to hear from you, so give us a shout!*

To whom this may concern,

This morning while I was cycling to work, a city snowplow pulled up behind me and started to pass. Prior to passing, the operator lowered the blade of the snowplow onto the bare concrete which made a horrendous scraping sound. An extremely dangerous pass was then made with the blade inches from my body.

There is no snow at this time of year, so this was a deliberate aggressive act which was extremely frightening for me and had there been any slight deviance in course by myself or the driver of this snowplow, I would have been killed.

This is absolutely unacceptable behaviour. Unfortunately I was not able to obtain a license plate number as the vehicle was travelling too fast. If I had managed this, I would be contacting the police.

Regards, M. B.

M.B.,

You should still report the incident to the Police. It is important that they know that such things are happening, even if they can't track down who is doing it.

However, all commercial vehicles are required by the HTA to have a log of who drives them at what time. It is possible that with a detailed description of the vehicle, location and time, the driver of the vehicle could be identified.

I agree that this behaviour, intentional or not, is very dangerous. I suggest forwarding your e-mail to your City councillor,

and (if different) the councillor for the area in which this incident occurred.

Sincerely,  
CfSC.

Good morning,

I am not a member of CfSC, so I am not sure if you can assist me. I am a year-round cyclist in Ottawa and I have been taking the same route every day since May. In the last few weeks, a motorist has begun harassing me by rolling down his window and screaming at me to MOVE!!! while driving by me a bit faster and closer than the rest of the traffic. I am not scared of this individual, but the possibility exists that he could catch me or another cyclist off guard and cause a fall.

I called the police last week, and the lady with whom I spoke indicated that this individual was just "expressing his opinion of cyclists" and that nothing could be done unless he directly threatens me. I disagree. I think this individual is making a sport of trying to scare cyclists off their bikes. It is strange that he is compelled to roll his window down in -24 degree weather every time he passes me to yell at me when I am doing nothing illegal or inconsiderate.

Anyway, I was looking for some advice on how to handle this. I hope it doesn't sound petty. Like I said, I think this individual's behaviour is potentially dangerous and at the very least, it is harassment. If I can't do anything, then I can't. I just want to know if this is the case.

Thanks for your assistance, N. M.

N.M.,

Thanks for contacting us and kudos for riding in the winter.

I agree completely that this person's behaviour should be addressed. Like you, I am often yelled at or passed unsafely by motorists, and I will report to the police anyone who breaks the law and creates a dangerous situation.

The decision on when to file a police report is up to you. But here are some **general tips on making a police report**:

- Call 613-236-1222, extension 7300. Say you'd like to make a traffic complaint.
- Give the exact location(s), time(s), and date(s) of the incident (include direction of travel)
- Have a description of the car (colour, make, model, approximate age, plate number)
- Have a description of the driver (Skin colour, hair colour/length, approximate age, etc.)
- Mention that you were riding your bike. This will make it more likely that the report will be assigned to an officer who cycles themselves.
- Ask for a report number. That's the only way you can be sure that they will actually create a report. If a report is not filed, then it will likely not be followed up on.

While unlikely that the report will result in any charges, it may well go on the driver's record. The follow-up officer might contact the driver to get their side of the story, and will inform them of cyclists' rights to the road.

Sincerely,  
CfSC. 



## No bags are good bags at the Co-Op


By Anne Duggan

Last fall Mountain Equipment Co-op gave Citizens for Safe Cycling a \$1,600 Urban Sustainability Grant. The grant is funded through MEC's biodegradable shopping bag program. Each time a customer makes a purchase without taking a bag, MEC passes on the savings to an environmental organisation like CfSC.

Canadians use millions of plastic shopping bags every year and most of them end up in landfills or as litter. Regular plastic bags can take more than a century to break down. The BioBags which MEC chooses to use cost several times more than conventional plastic bags but are fully biodegradable.



From June to November 2006, approximately 40% of MEC members in Ottawa declined shopping bags. This raised \$1,600 which went towards producing our newspaper, *Better Bicycling*. We also received cycling supplies for our workplace courses.

Thank you to MEC and the 32,000 customers who brought their own bag. 

### Did You Know??

The three yellow dots at intersections are for you? They indicate where you must stop your bike to activate the traffic-light sensors. So look for them, and stand on them, next time you're on the road. You'll get rolling again faster.

## President's Report: A very new leaf for CfSC

By Charles Akben-Marchand

Dear CfSC members,

2007 still young, but already there has been plenty of news for cyclists.

The good news is that January had some great cycling weather--I hope you considered cycling this winter!

However, our climate is not the only thing that has changed.

As you may have heard on the CfSC discussion list, in the *Citizen*, or on Rogers TV's *CityDesk*, CfSC's Board of Directors decided to close the CfSC office. As of March 1, it is no longer regularly staffed, and by April 30, we will have moved out.

While there were many reasons for this decision, it boils down to the fact that the City of Ottawa discontinued the programs which we were contracted to run. Without the core funding and programming from these contracts, and without any staff to use the office, it was neither financially viable nor logical to keep the office open. (a more detailed version of the reasoning is on the newslist archives at <http://www.flora.org/flora.cfsc>)

Because we no longer have these contracts, we are no longer able to coordinate cycling courses in the City, and it will be much harder to develop and distribute materials that promote cycling and cycling safety. The City's Safety & Promotion Program will apparently be run by City Staff, whereas the Education Program--which ran the courses--was cut completely.

## City Budget Omits Cycling

The City of Ottawa's 2007 budget, which was recently passed, contains almost no funding for cycling. There was only a small amount for an overall Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program, and there was but one project in the whole city to install cycling facilities (bike lanes on Huntmar Drive in Stittsville).

When I made my budget presentation to City Council, I emphasized the frustrations that small groups like CfSC face when dealing with the City: contract renewals up in the air every year; delays in getting paid; being left out of consultation on cycling projects.

All of these frustrations have driven our staff and volunteers to pursue more fruitful opportunities elsewhere, and impair the work that the City was getting from CfSC.

By deciding to close our office and to stop playing the City's annual cup-and-ball game, our volunteers have more time to focus on cycling advocacy and building membership--and we'll be needing a lot of both.

### Back to Bicycling

Just because we are closing our office, it doesn't mean that CfSC is no more. In fact, it opens up many new opportunities!

In the dozen or so years that CfSC has run the City's cycling programs, nearly everything we've done was focused on those programs--either running them, managing them, or fighting for their continued funding. Now, we're creating something new. For CfSC, it's back to

## A crate idea

By John Stevenson

I was in Staples a while back and I noticed this stacking crate. I thought it was perfect for picking up groceries on my bike.

So I bought one (can't complain about the price) and strapped it to my rear rack.

I put the milk, canned goods and other heavy items in the crate, and light items, like bread, in my pack sack.

I can carry a reasonable size grocery order this way. Try it out for yourself; it doesn't just have to be used for groceries!

## CfSC Thanks You

A big thank you, and sad goodbye, goes out to **Linda Ulyett**, for her tireless work in masterfully running the CfSC educational programs and office for the past two years. She brought great credibility to the organization and made immeasurable contributions to cycling here in Ottawa. She left CfSC in January and we wish her the best in her future endeavours.

Thanks also go to **Anne Duggan**, who bravely stepped in to fill Linda's big shoes until a long-term solution was found. She worked hard to ensure everything that needed to get done.

Thank you both.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Get involved, learn the issues, and make a difference! Here is a selection of the wide array of volunteer opportunities.

### Join the CfSC Newslist

For over 10 years, CfSC's public e-mail list is where cycling news and upcoming CfSC events and discussions on current cycling issues have been posted!

View past discussions at [www.flora.org/flora.cfsc/](http://www.flora.org/flora.cfsc/)

To join the current discussions, visit [www.safecycling.ca/news/newsgroup.html](http://www.safecycling.ca/news/newsgroup.html)

### Host a CfSC Booth

CfSC has booths all the time! The best way to learn about CfSC and cycling issues is by hosting a booth with someone who knows lots about them!

Contact [Education@SafeCycling.ca](mailto:Education@SafeCycling.ca) to find out when upcoming booths will be.

### Advocacy & Membership Committee

Come to an Advocacy & Membership Committee meeting.

Come help out the committee that works to get more CfSC members to

make CfSC fun! This group coordinates projects to raise awareness of cycling issues. There are many little tasks that come up that we can use your help with!

The Advocacy & Membership Committee meets on the fourth Monday of the month at 19:00 at the Bridgehead coffee house on Third Ave, just off Bank. Email [Info@SafeCycling.ca](mailto:Info@SafeCycling.ca) to confirm the date, time and location.


### Board meetings

Come to a Board meeting. CfSC's Board discusses the highest level of CfSC business, but also a wider variety of subjects than the committees.

The Board usually meets on the second Monday of the month at 19:00. Check out the Newslist or email [Secretary@SafeCycling.ca](mailto:Secretary@SafeCycling.ca) to confirm the time, date and location.

### Promotion & Education Program Management Committee

This committee is currently inactive, but if someone wishes to organize an educational event please contact us and we'll rally support!

If you are interested in contributing, contact [Info@SafeCycling.ca](mailto:Info@SafeCycling.ca) . 



## An Appeal to Members

Dear Editor,

CfSC did a good job of surveying candidates in last fall's municipal election about their support for cycling, and publishing the results. City Council support for cycling has been sorely lacking and it's essential to keep the pressure up.

One of those candidates was former CfSC president and long-time volunteer Brett Delmage, who ran in College Ward. Many of you know and have benefitted from Brett's years of volunteer work in cycling, and we are asking for your support to defray some outstanding campaign expenses.

Brett was one of the few candidates who ran a campaign emphasizing sustainability and strong protection of the environment, and whose campaign specifically included putting police on electric bikes to increase effectiveness and decrease costs. Brett ran because the incumbent, who received an F minus from environment groups for his voting record, was likely to be acclaimed again. Brett believed residents deserved a better choice, and nobody else was

rising to the challenge.

Rising to another challenge one year ago, Brett spent over \$130 of his own money to personally appeal to all CfSC members to ask them to come to the 2005 Annual meeting to help him revive the organization. This resulted in a full and effective board of directors and renewed energy and strength continuing to this day. Last year, Brett volunteered hundreds of hours as treasurer in order to implement new accounting software; ensure staff, instructors and volunteers were reliably paid/reimbursed; and to manage a cash flow emergency caused by the City's refusal to pay promptly. He also continued his three years of effort into developing CfSC's review and 50-page response to the draft City of Ottawa Cycling Plan.

In past years, Brett's volunteer leadership and fundraising efforts led to a healthy bank account for advocacy activities. He led successful advocacy campaigns for over \$5 Million of municipal government support for cycling, continued funding for the city-wide cycling safety and promotion program (multiple times!), and the establishment of the city's cycling advisory committee. He donated all

of his instructor fees (over \$1000) from cycling skills courses to CfSC so that he could always speak fully in support of cycling education without conflict of interest.

Although Brett's recent campaign for city councillor was frugally run, it still has a \$4000 shortfall, for which he is personally responsible. As past CfSC presidents, we would like to call on CfSC's members and cyclists to support our own loyal supporter, advocate, educator and volunteer. We have enthusiastically contributed to Brett's campaign and we hope that you too will support it.

Please send your donation (no amount is too small) to The Brett Delmage Campaign, 389 Holland Avenue, Ottawa, K1Y 0Y9.

Only by standing together can we show that cyclists and cycling deserve support at City Hall. Thanks for your help!

Melanie Ransom, former CfSC president  
Alayne McGregor, CfSC life member, and former president.



*Editor's Note: CfSC did not endorse any candidates in the 2006 municipal elections.*

## Spring Riding Tips

Spring is in the air and its getting high-time you get out on your bike, if you haven't already yet. There are, however, a few things to remember this spring. If you're pulling the bike out of its long-winter nap, make sure you give it a once-over. Check tyre pressure, oil the chain, give it a shake, and make sure the bolts and quick-releases are tight.

Once on the road, remember that

they're not yet clean. Lots of salt and sand make for undependable steering. Just remember your traction isn't what it is during the summer. There's also enough salt on the road to still damage your bicycle; don't forget to oil the chain and give the bike a wash.

Early spring can be wet, and cold. Try getting full fenders installed on your bike; they'll keep you dry and happy. Also, it still gets dark earlier, remember to always have your lights with you, and wear bright clothing to stand out in the drab gray environs.

Don't forget that sidewalk riding is never allowed. If you feel the roads are unsafe, it's best to find alternative means of transportation, or take a cycling-skills course to boost your confidence and ability.

Finally, enjoy yourself! Revel in the warm air and budding greenery. Say hello to your fellow cyclists. Don't forget to bike responsibly, and happy roads.



## Go for Green


By Peter Sloan

Despite the refusal of the City of Ottawa to properly fund cycling education, some interesting and positive things are still happening in this city to promote cycling and its benefits.

At a recent "round table" on cycling for city staff, which CfSC attended, there were two worthwhile presentations: **Go for Green** is a national program to promote

"active transportation" in small and medium sized comm.-unities. They give seminars for town officials and planners on how to make their community more cycling and walking-friendly. The program has been initiated across Canada, especially "down east" and in the "Golden Horseshoe" areas. Michael Haynes, the National Coordinator, is based in Ottawa, so let's hope the ideas rub off on our City Hall. For more info, see: [goforgreen.ca](http://goforgreen.ca)

A more local initiative was

conducted by **TRANS**, a joint transportation planning committee serving the NCR. Quite dry stuff, you might think, but they *did* run a large phone survey on cycling origins and destinations. The methodology is maybe questionable but the results are detailed and (not surprisingly) show that there are more short than long bike commutes. For the findings, see the 2005 O-D survey at: [www.ncr-trans-rcn.ca](http://www.ncr-trans-rcn.ca) 

## President's Report

Continued from page 4

bicycling, and back to advocacy.  
Continued on page 7...

It's also getting back to grassroots, and that means power from the people. Get your fellow cyclists to join or donate to CfSC, or let us know that you'd like to volunteer (e-mail [info@SafeCycling.ca](mailto:info@SafeCycling.ca)). We need to increase our representation in many areas of the city, and if you can help us do that, we'd like to hear from you.

We'll also need some help to close down the office and move to a "virtual" office. This means we'll need people with good communication skills to further develop

our website to contain more useful information, and to better communicate with our members.

### Working with the community

CfSC will also be able to spend more time working with the community.

We've got a great partnership with Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) - we're giving a \$5 discount to MEC members who become CfSC members. We will once again run the Supervised Valet Bicycle Parking at this year's Bluesfest, and there are other festivals who have approached us (this is a great volunteering opportunity, by the way!).

CfSC has joined the City Centre Coalition, which is an association

of downtown-area groups that focus on transportation issues. CfSC also has a representative on the naming committee for the new Rideau Canal Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge, and on the Pathway Patrol's Steering Committee. We have regular contact with the re-Cycles Bicycle Co-op, with the Human Powered Vehicle Operators of Ottawa, with Cycle Ontario Alliance, and with cyclists at the University of Ottawa.

Let's use this newfound energy to make sure that next year, the City pays a lot more attention to cycling!



## Join/Renew Today!

If your membership has expired or expires in the next 3 months, you should renew soon. Member cards for renewing members are sent out with each mailing, usually every two months. You can send updated contact information to [Membership@SafeCycling.ca](mailto:Membership@SafeCycling.ca)

Send your completed form with payment to:

Citizens for Safe Cycling  
Box 248, Station B  
Ottawa, ON K1P6C4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: H: \_\_\_\_\_ W: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member  Renewing

Please select one membership option:

Individual:  1 Year (\$20)  2 Years (\$35)

Household\*:  1 Year (\$25)\*  2 Years (\$45)\*

Low Income:  1 Year (\$10)

Please send me information on volunteering

Send mailings by e-mail when possible

My **additional contribution** of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to assist CfSC volunteers with their work is enclosed.

Any cycling comments/concerns? \_\_\_\_\_

\*Household Memberships Only:

2<sup>nd</sup> Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Member's E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

[www.SafeCycling.ca](http://www.SafeCycling.ca)

## Cycling in the news/News briefs

The **re-Cycles Bicycle Co-op** has a new website at [www.re-cycles.ca](http://www.re-cycles.ca). Note that until March 31, they will still be open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, but only from 18:00 to 21:00. During the summer, the hours extend until 22:00.

Reports indicate that the **Ottawa Cycling Plan** will be brought forth this spring. We want to see it passed by the new Council, but we want to make sure any dangerous aspects of it are removed. Pay attention and be ready to comment

The **National Capital Commission** announced a long-term vision plan that includes 56km of new pathways. Some planning went into better integration with city paths, but there is still no indication that they will re-classify the multi-use pathways for anything other than recreation.

A substantial piece in the *Ottawa Citizen* entitled "**Shifting to under-drive**" ran in January. It profiled several citizens who get about in life without a car, including CfSC member Richard Guy Briggs, who got along just fine with only a bicycle.

The *Ottawa Citizen* also ran two stories dealing very closely with CfSC. They were "**Cyclists spinning their wheels over delays in creating bike lanes**" and "**Citizens for Safe Cycling shuts doors over funding.**"

*Note: You can access Ottawa Citizen articles for free using the Ottawa Public Library website.*

CfSC has acquired the results of the feasibility study regarding year-round Rack & Roll. To view the results please contact [info@safecycling.ca](mailto:info@safecycling.ca)



Margo Sproat enjoying some very early-spring riding



Best leave this rack to the professionals...