Cycle Space Report

15 March 2025

1. Executive Summary

Advancing Cycling for Everyone (ACE) is a Burnaby-based registered society dedicated to advocating for cycling infrastructure, policies, and programmes that make cycling accessible for people of all ages and abilities (AAA). In partnership with the Neighbourhood Fund for Climate Action—an initiative launched by Urban Resilient Futures Burnaby to empower residents and institutional leaders in accelerating climate resilience—ACE undertook the CycleSpace project to enhance secure cycling facilities in the Heights neighbourhood of Burnaby.

The CycleSpace project assessed existing cycle parking, identified barriers to cycling, and engaged the community to guide infrastructure improvements. **While existing bike parking is underutilized, security concerns remain a significant deterrent to people cycling to the Heights.** Recommendations include installing secure, weather-protected parking and improving cycling access. This report outlines key findings and provides actionable steps to enhance cycle parking in Burnaby Heights, with insights applicable to other commercial corridors in Burnaby.

2. Introduction

The CycleSpace project was funded by the Neighbourhood Fund for Climate Action, an initiative of Urban Resilient Futures Burnaby. This fund aims to co-power Burnaby residents and institutional leaders to implement projects that accelerate climate resilience, fostering collaboration among community members, local agencies, and climate-focused organizations.

Led by Advancing Cycling for Everyone (ACE), a Burnaby-based cycling advocacy group committed to making cycling safe and accessible for individuals of all ages and abilities, the project focused on enhancing secure cycle parking along Hastings Street (from Boundary Road to Gamma Avenue) and adjacent north-south streets (Albert to Pender). Through a combination of a bike parking audit, user surveys, and a World Café discussion, this project evaluated existing infrastructure, identified cycling barriers, and explored community-driven solutions. The following sections detail the study methods, key findings, and recommendations for improving cycling infrastructure in the Heights, with potential applications in other commercial areas.

3. Methodology

Study Area: Hastings St (Boundary Rd to Gamma Ave) and adjacent segments.

Stakeholder Engagement: During the initial project scoping phase, we engaged the Heights Merchants Association (HMA) to review our project objectives and survey approach. Their input helped refine survey questions and align project goals with the needs of local businesses, ensuring a more relevant and actionable study.

Data Collection:

- Surveyors counted all bicycle racks and determined parking space availability.
- Google's "Popular Times" data informed peak observation times.
- The audit was conducted on fair-weather days in April 2024.
- The area was divided into four sections, each surveyed separately.
- Utilisation rates were calculated for weekday and weekend peak periods.

Survey Development & Dissemination

- Target Audience: People who currently cycle or would like to cycle to Burnaby Heights.
- Purpose: Identify cycling motivators, barriers, and perceptions of cycle parking.
- Distribution:
    - Posters with QR codes at community locations and businesses.
    - Digital outreach via the Heights Merchants Association newsletter.
    - Meta ads targeting local cyclists.
    - In-person engagement at community events.
- Response Rate: Over 200 responses pre-screened for eligibility were collected by September 2024. Pre-screening was to ensure participation from those who currently or would like to cycle to the Heights.

World Café Discussion

- A World Café discussion was held with community members to explore key issues and inform recommendations.
- Date & Location: November 7, 2024, at Gilmore Elementary School.
- Format:
    - Presentation on project goals and findings.
    - Small group discussions on secure parking, cycling access to the Heights, and infrastructure improvements, such as safer crossings of Hastings Street.

4. Findings

Bicycle Rack Utilisation Audit
Across 170 racks providing 387 total spaces, observed weekday and weekend utilisation rates were:

- Weekday mid-day: 0.97%
- Weekday PM peak: 0.82%
- Weekend mid-day: 0.67%

Survey Results
Respondent Demographics:

- 80% live in Burnaby; 70% from the Heights or nearby.
- Bike Type: 69% conventional, 31% electric/cargo.
- Gender: Half (50%) of respondents were men.

Cycling Frequency & Purpose:

- 88.6% have cycled in the past month.
- 73.7% cycle to shop or conduct business in the Heights.
- Only 29.2% of those working in the Heights cycle to work.
- 92.4% would like to cycle if conditions improved.

Cycling Motivators & Barriers:

- Motivators:
  - 80% want safer cycling routes
  - 76% want secure bike parking.
  - 70% support safer cycling routes and better crossings.
- Barriers:
  - Top deterrent: Unsafe cycling routes (53%).
  - 25% cited a lack of secure parking.
  - Many are concerned about bike theft, lack of secure parking, and difficulty finding racks for e-bikes/cargo bikes.

Parking Practices & Security Perceptions:

- 85% lock bikes to outdoor racks, trees, or posts.
- 60% limit business stays to keep bikes in view.
- 58% prefer parking within 10-30m of destinations.
- While 71.4% of respondents working in the Heights reported that lack of secure parking does not prevent them from cycling to work, many still cited concerns about security and theft affecting trip frequency and duration.
- Mixed perceptions on security: Some felt the Heights was safe; others cited theft concerns.

World Café Feedback

Key Themes:

1. Demand for secure, weather-protected bike parking.
2. Need for safer cycling routes and improved crossings of Hastings Street, including cyclist-accessible push buttons at traffic signals to facilitate safer and more predictable crossings, similar to those used by pedestrians.

Preferred Parking Solutions:

A summary of the advantages and limitations of different secure parking options, including bike lockers, Bikeep-style locking stations, and covered bike shelters (Table 1).

Table 1: Comparison of Preferred Secure Bike Parking Solutions

Option	Pros	Cons
Bike Lockers	Secure, weather-protected, can store paniers, bike lights etc.	Most standard lockers do not fit larger e-bikes or cargo bikes, highlighting the need for more inclusive storage solutions.
Bikeep Stations	Alarmed, app-based security	No weather protection, short-term use only
Enclosed Bike Shelter	Fairly secure, weather protected	Less secure unless actively monitored


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Figure 1-3: Examples of Secure Bicycle Parking Solutions. Illustrations of three preferred parking solutions identified in the study: Figure 1 – a secure, weather-protected bike locker; Figure 2 – a Bikeep-style locking station with app-based security; Figure 3 – an enclosed bike shelter providing security and weather protection.

5. Discussion

- Audit vs. Perception Gap: While observed usage rates were low, survey responses indicate that security concerns influence how and where people choose to park their bikes. Many respondents cited theft as a deterrent, which may explain reluctance to use outdoor racks in certain locations.
- Parking vs. Infrastructure: These findings suggest that while secure cycle parking is important, improvements to cycling access—including safer crossings of Hastings Street and better route connectivity—may have a greater impact on increasing cycling rates in the Heights.
- Short vs. Long-Stay Needs: The discussion reinforced the need for a combination of secure long-term and convenient short-term cycle parking. Participants highlighted concerns about weather protection and the suitability of standard lockers for e-bikes and cargo bikes.
- A mix of infrastructure improvements and parking enhancements is needed to encourage higher cycling rates.

Based on these insights, the following recommendations outline steps to enhance secure parking and cycling infrastructure in Burnaby Heights.

6. Recommendations & Conclusion

Recommendations:

- Install a mix of secure & short-term parking solutions.
    - Lockers for long-term security.
    - Bikeep-style stations for quick stops.
    - Traditional racks in well-lit areas.
- Improve cycling access to the Heights.
    - Advocate for safer crossings of Hastings Street. This refers to cyclist-accessible push buttons at traffic signals, similar to those used by pedestrians, to facilitate safer and more predictable crossings of the major street.
    - Include safer and more comfortable cycling facilities to reach the Heights.
- Collaborate with local businesses.
    - Work with local businesses to install secure cycle parking that supports both short- and long-term use, improving accessibility for customers and employees.
- Pilot high-security parking solutions, considering e-cargo bikes
    - Conduct pilot projects to assess user adoption before investing in large-scale installations.
- Track utilisation and infrastructure impact through follow-up audits.

- Conduct a follow-up audit in 2-3 years after implementation.

Conclusion:
Improving cycle parking in the Heights requires a holistic approach, integrating infrastructure upgrades, strategic placement, and ongoing stakeholder engagement to ensure long-term success. Burnaby Heights serves as a case study for improving cycle parking in commercial districts, with lessons that can be applied to high streets across Burnaby, including Lougheed and Edmonds.

Applying these lessons—such as the need for a mix of short- and long-term secure cycle parking, weather protection, and business engagement—can help Burnaby create a city-wide network of commercial streets that better support people cycling, making business districts more accessible and sustainable.