PROJECT 529

Project 529 Benefits

Project 529



Over the last two decades, bicycle theft has grown to epidemic proportions, impacting over two million North Americans at an estimated economic impact of exceeding $500 million annually. Within the province of British Columbia, StatsCan data suggests about 50,000 BC citizens are affected by bike theft yearly with as many as 15% of these thefts attached to secondary crimes. Compiling the best research we have, we estimate the direct impact of bike theft to BC residents, businesses and agencies to be approximately $70 million annually.

This epidemic undermines the tremendous investments being made to establish cycling as a first-class mode of transportation. Theft reduces engagement amongst its victims, resulting in fewer trips and less desire to join the mobility movement. International studies suggest that victims of theft do not replace their bicycle (16.1% on average) or reduce trips made by bike (27.3% on average). In Vancouver, 37% of cyclists cite a fear of theft and 64% say that secure destination parking positively motivates trips by bike. It's clear that bicycle theft is dragging the momentum for increased cycling down across the Lower Mainland.



Project Beneficiaries

Implementation of the program has assisted B. C. citizens and the cycling community, local bike shops, law enforcement, cycling advocacy groups, schools, and universities. The program aims to strengthen the connection between Vancouver's public transit system and cycling accessibility through education and engagement efforts. Activities focus on correct locking techniques, safer bike locking areas, the importance of bike registration, theft deterrence, and safer riding habits. The net benefits of these activities will continue to decrease bike thefts, and in parallel, increase ridership across Metro Vancouver, while also reducing the number of cars and emissions on the urban streets.



Program Impact

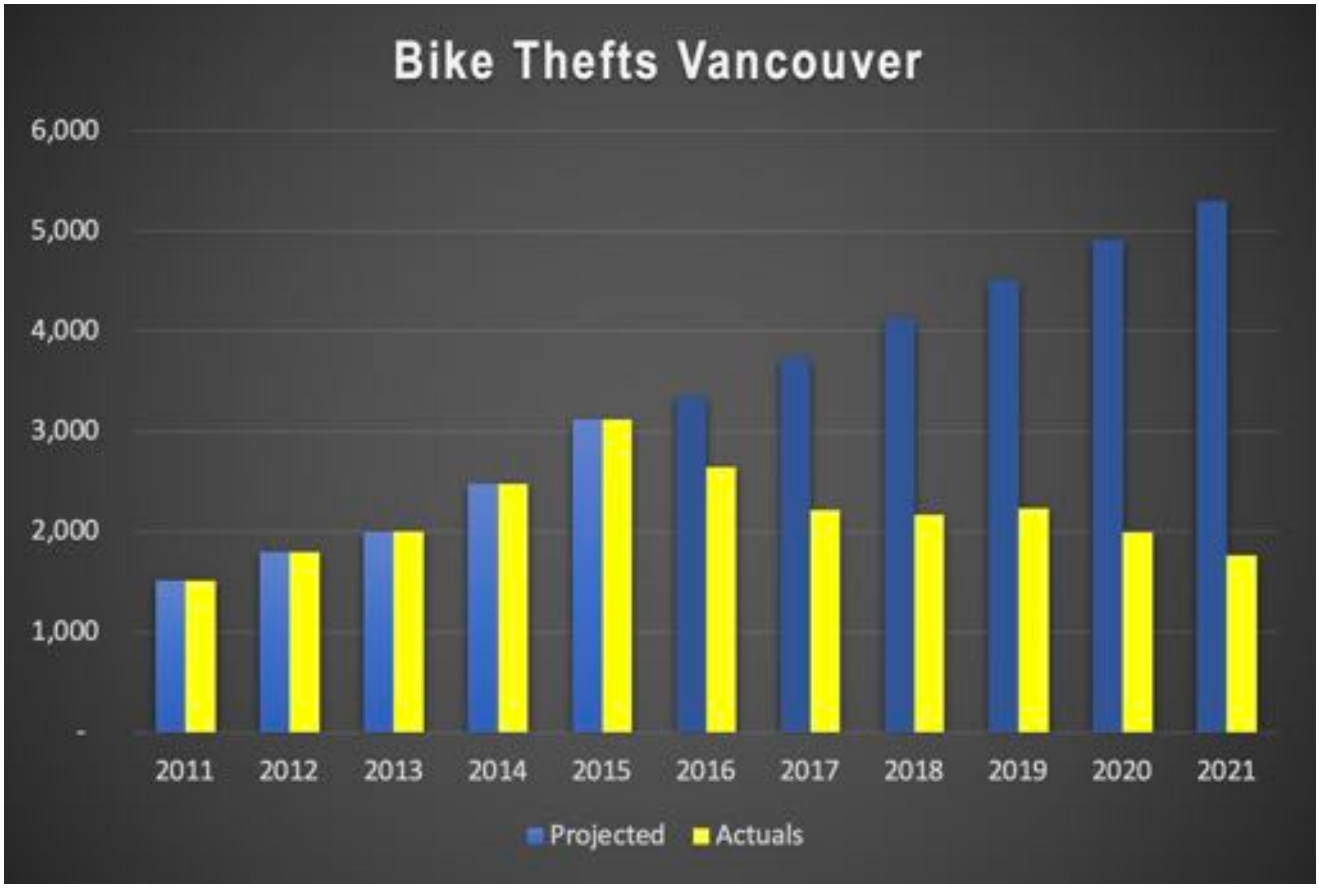
So what is the impact to a city? Using the metrics above form the City of Vancouver we can pull some highlights from the program started in November of 2015

Highlights

- 58% reduction in bike theft, which equals about 11 thousand bikes
- Prevention of $8,000,000 in stolen bikes (6 years)
- $400,000 in returned stolen bikes (2021)
- 33,000 hours in police hourly savings
- 11,000 less calls for service over the 6 year period
- 300% increase in bike trips in COV (2000-2021)
- 30% increase in bike theft reporting (Project 529 survey)
- 97% of all seized registered 529 bikes are returned to owner vs going to police property office

- Immeasurable results from contact with the community and satisfaction of reducing crime in the community

"The number of reported bike thefts in Vancouver have been declining since 2015 and Project 529 has played an important role in this success. This program gives law enforcement tools to easily identify stolen bikes and locate their owners," said VPD Chief Constable Adam Palmer. "We are asking Vancouver residents to help us fight bike theft by registering with Project 529."
Chief Adam Palmer Vancouver Police Department



Key Partners

This year, Project 529 teamed up with VPD, TransLink, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST), Vancouver School Board, Emily Carr, Vancouver General Hospital, EHS, Vancouver Parks Board, City of Vancouver, Granville Island, Science World, Vancouver, University of British Columbia UBC, 35 Police Departments and RCMP Detachments throughout BC Canada and the USA , with over 400 bike stores, to help increase awareness about bike security, locking techniques, and bike theft prevention.

Some Of Our Earned Media

Project 529 generated significant media coverage in 2022 across British Columbia and Canada. Much of the coverage was focused on theft reduction for Vancouver residents. Notably, a key storyline was the recognition of Vancouver as a global leader in reducing bike theft in Maclean's magazine. The highlights are noted below:

Print Media & News Websites

https://www.macleans.ca/society/meet-canadas-only-full-time-bike-theft-detective/

https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/the-state-of-bike-thefts-in-vancouver

https://financialpost.com/feature/stop-bicycle-thief-inside-an-ex-microsoft-wunderkinds-canadian-crusade-to-save-your-bike

https://www.vancouverpolicefoundation.org/2021/04/project-529-reduces-bike-theft-in-vancouver-by-40/

https://globalnews.ca/news/8055404/vpd-stolen-bikes/

https://www.capitaldaily.ca/news/victoria-has-a-bike-theft-problem-heres-how-to-fix-it

https://utown.ubc.ca/articles/10-1-2021/get-ready-ride-project-529

https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/local-news/stolen-bikes-found-in-vancouver-returned-to-burnaby-11-year-old-and-edmonton-man-3678679

https://bc.ctvnews.ca/45-000-in-stolen-bikes-recovered-in-vancouver-police-hoping-to-return-them-to-owners-1.5520817

https://www.thewestendjournal.ca/blog/2021/8/1/a-closer-look

https://voiceonline.com/dont-let-organized-crime-steal-your-bike-this-summer/

https://www.straight.com/news/vancouver-officers-recover-almost-30-allegedly-stolen-bicycles-from-east-vancouver-storage

https://www.victoriabuzz.com/2021/03/vicpd-transitions-bicycle-registry-to-project-529-garage-app/

https://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/bc-news/the-internet-just-found-this-vancouver-wheelchair-users-stolen-bicycle-photos-4534207

https://www.darpanmagazine.com/news/national/vpd-recovers-dozens-of-bikes-in-stolen-property-investigation/

https://www.newwestrecord.ca/bc-news/video-catches-man-making-off-with-bike-still-locked-to-bike-rack-4227617

Broadcast

Global BC: Project 529 helps return one stolen bike a day in Vancouver (web & TV)

CTV News: VPD pilot project credited with 44 per cent drop in bicycle thefts (web & TV)

CBC TV





CBC





French (National)

CBC French (Local)

CityTV

Omni

Global BC Morning Show

Radio

News 1130 (also online)

CBC French

CFOX

Global Radio Toronto

CBC Montreal

CKNW AM-980 Talk Radio Vancouver

Social Media

	Impressions	Followers
Twitter	1,469,000	2700
Facebook	2000	1287
Instagram	30000	551



Event	Date	Location	Approx # of contacts
Pop-up w/Granville CPC	January 21st	David Lam Park - 1300 Pacific Blvd	75
Rad Power Bikes	January 23rd	Rad Power Bikes - 275 W 5th Ave	75
Pop-up w/WECH & Granville	January 30th	Sunset Beach (Beach/Broughton)	100
Rad Power Bikes	February 27th	Rad Power Bikes - 275 W 5th Ave	150
Pop-up w/WECHCPC	March 6th	Sunset Beach (Beach/Broughton)	160
Pop up w/Kits CPC	March 23rd	Olympic Village	150
Rad Power Bikes	March 28th	Rad Power Bikes - 275 W 5th Ave	40
Pop up w/KOM	March 30th	KOM CPC (Arbutus Greenway)	125
Bee's Knees Bike Shop	March 31st	Bee's Knees - 1315 Burrard St	100
Pop up w/Granville CPC	April 8th	David Lam Park - 1300 Pacific Blvd	75
Pop up w/Kits CPC	April 15th	Olympic Village	150
Pop up w/KOM	April 16th	Nat Bailey Stadium	50
Pop up w/Kits CPC	April 27th	South End Of Burrard Bridge	150
Pop up w/Granville CPC	May 5th	David Lam Park - 1300 Pacific Blvd	50

Pop up w/Kits CPC	May 12th	Olympic Village	150
Pop-up w/WECH & GWCPC	May 15th	Sunset Beach (Beach/Broughton)	200
Pop-up @ Crescent Beach	May 21st	3085 McBride Ave	60
Side Saddle	May 23rd	3400 blk Commercial Street	75
Pemberton Heights	May 29th	Corner Stone - 1096 W 22nd St	100
Rad Power Bikes	May 30th	275 W 5th Ave	40
BTWW w/WECH & Strathcona	May 31st	Devonian Park - W Georgia/Denman	100
BTWW w/multiple CPCs	June 1st	Landyachtz - 1100 blk Union St	150
BTWW w/Kits CPC	June 2nd	South End Of Burrard Bridge	250
BTWW w/KOM CPC	June 3rd	Arbutus Greenway (6070 E Blvd)	50
BTWW w/multiple CPCs	June 4th	Olympic Village	150
Bicycle Sports Pacific	June 12th	20241 Fraser Hwy	20
Pop up w/KOM	June 18th	Granville/67th Ave	50
Pop up w/BSP (DT location)	June 19th	999 Pacific St	70
Pop up w/SVCPC	June 22nd	W 45th/Inverness	40
Pop up w/Kits & WECH	June 26th	S. End of Burrard Bridge	150
Rad Power Bikes	June 27th	275 W 5th Ave	40
Pop up w/Kits CPC	July 8th	Olympic Village	100
Pop up w/WECHCPC	July 10th	Devonian Harbour Park	100
Pop up w/KOM & WECHCPCs	July 16th	67th/Granville St	50
White Rock RCMP	July 21st	15299 Pacific Ave	120
Pop up w/SVCPC	July 22nd	37th/Ontario St	75
Pop up w/WECH & Strathcona CPCs	July 23rd	Linear Park - 787 Prior St	120
NVan RCMP	July 29th	Harbourside	75
Rad Power Bikes	July 31st	275 W 5th Ave	50
Pop up w/SVCPC	Aug 11th	37th/Ontario St	60
Pop up w/KitsCPC	Aug 12th	Olympic Village	125
Pop up w/KOMCPC	Aug 13th	67th/Granville St	10
Pop up w/WECH/GW/& Strathcona CPCs	Aug 14th	Beach Ave/Broughton St	150

Reckless Shipyards (Bike to Shop w/HUB)	Aug 15th	150-125 Victory Ship Way	50
Cathedral Square (Bike to Shop w/HUB)	Aug 16th	566 Richards St	25
Pop up w/Kits CPC	Aug 19th	South End Of Burrard Bridge	150
Rad Power Bikes	Aug 22nd	Rad Power Bikes - 275 W 5th Ave	60
Pop up w/Kits CPC	Aug 31st	S. End of Burrard Bridge	150
Pop up w/Strathcona CPC	Sept 3rd	Strathcona Linear Park	150
Pop up w/Granville CPC	Sept 7th	David Lam Park - 1300 Pacific Blvd	75
Pop up w/Granville CPC	Sept 14th	Bicycle Sports Pacific (999 Pacific Blvd)	10
Pop up w/KOM	Sept 15th	Nat Bailey Stadium	75
Pop up w/sVCPC	Sept 21st	S end of Kerr St (River District)	50
NVan RCMP	Sept 24th	Harbourside - Spirit Trail	75
BTWW w/KOMCPC	Sept 27th	6070 E Blvd	40
BTWW w/multiple CPCs	Sept 28th	1100 blk Union St	100
BTWW w/Kits CPC	Sept 29th	S End of Burrard Bridge	125
BTWW/WECHCPC/Granville	Sept 30th	Sunset Beach (Beach/Broughton)	150
BTWW w/multiple CPCs	Oct 1st	Olympic Village	250
Pop up @ VGH	Oct 21st	VGH (866 W 10th Ave)	50

2022 Highlights

- 60 registration events across lower mainland
- 20 registration events across Vancouver Island

- 4232 registrations at Granville Island Bike Valet
- Registrations done at all 11 VPD CPC
- 2.5 million users across Canada
- 21,000 additional bikes registered in COV 2022
- 262 recoveries/reunited bikes with owners
- 44% reduction in bike theft with a 300% increase in bike trips COV
- Equals approx a 3 million dollar reduction in stolen bikes for 2021
- 12,000 hours in police hours saved
- City of Vancouver recognized as world leaders in bike theft reduction
- Adoption across Canada and the USA

On Friday, 07 June , I received a call from the RCMP , - to notify me that my stolen Giant Trance 2 had been recovered . Const. Terry Kineshenko and his partner asked “when” would it be convenient to return my wayward mountain bike .
Within 15 minutes these two Mounties reunited me with my bike ….. WOW !!!
The bike is banged up and has been abused , but with a little TLC it will be a stellar back up .
Kudos to our policemen and their efforts !!!
Have a Happy Summer ,
Peter Ypma .

Manuelle Chanoine
“Reunited with my bike and I’m so happy! I really didn’t think that I would be seeing it again because this is such a common story in Vancouver... but Project 529 is changing the narrative. Their collaboration with the Vancouver Police Department to reduce bike theft in Vancouver is truly incredible. Words can’t describe how relieved and happy I am to have my bike back so I can continue to commute to work and go on adventures around and outside the city! Thank you Project 529!”

I imagine you get more negative feedback than positive (something that I’m familiar with as a city planner), so here’s one for the department fridge.

I recently had my bike stolen from my locked bike locker, in a secured bike room, within the secured parking of my building. This theft felt oddly personal and obviously was not a pleasant experience. However, I have to say, that’s really where the unpleasantness ended. From start to finish, my interaction with the various VPD members who assisted me was exceedingly positive.
From the moment I reported my bike stolen, to when my bike was recovered (and afterwards), the level of service was exceptional.

The people who I spoke to on the non-emergency line when I initially reported the bike stolen, and later when I saw my bike for sale on craigslist, were friendly, helpful, and professional. They made the process easy and clear. The officers who helped me recover my bike contacted me quickly, walked me through the process of setting up the meeting with the suspect, and then did all the hard work. I literally waited on a patio and had a coffee while listening to a busker play an excellent acoustic version of Stairway to Heaven (and other classics). I understand that there were three officers involved in the recovery, and I later learned that there was a hard take-down involved with the suspect. That officers put themselves in harm's way to recover my personal property is not something I would have asked for, but I appreciate and respect their commitment.

After getting my bike back I committed to registering it with Garage 529 (along with my other bikes). I logged-in to register my bike, only to find that the thief had already registered it and reported stolen. I contacted Garage 529 to help me address this and received a prompt response. I even received a follow-up phone call from the Garage 529 VPD Liaison. All of our bikes are now registered with this app and I am actively encouraging everyone I know to do the same. I think this is a fantastic program and I wish I had known about it sooner. I hope the City continues to support this program as imagine it makes the work of your members easier, helps reunite stolen bikes with their owners, and likely reduces thefts to begin with.

If you can believe it, this is not the first time I've witnessed this level of service. Last summer, my wife's bike was stolen downtown. The story was the same. After reporting it stolen and finding it on craigslist, VPD helped to recover it.

This is not necessarily the level of "customer" service that one expects from a police department. It is definitely a reflection of the character of the individuals that helped me, but I believe that the consistency of service that I experienced is indicative of an organization and leadership that makes this a priority for its members.

I would like to express my gratitude to the all of the members of the VPD who assisted me. Please share this with them, their colleagues, and their supervisors. To help make sure this finds its way to all the right people, I have included some file numbers and specifics below.

Thanks again, and keep up the great work!
Sincerely,
Ryan Gilmore

Theft File No. VA18-182-193
Recovery File No. VA18-185-611. Constable Blue (and 2 other officers)

Garage 529
Robert Brunt
Chief Outreach Officer
(Retired VPD Detective 30 years)