

June is Recreation and Parks Month

Biking fun in Banff

Written by Sue Webb

Cycling is the best way to get around Banff – whether you're on the way to work, or going for a pleasure cruise or hill workout. Recommended bike routes that avoid busy Banff Avenue are marked with painted symbols and signage. If you're heading out of town to the west, Bow Avenue is a pleasant route; if heading east, try Muskrat Street to get to the north end of Banff Avenue. Our streets can be busy: stay safe by being alert; riding with, not against, the traffic flow; and wearing a helmet.

Local cyclists are excited about new cycling opportunities that will be completed this season by Parks Canada: Vermilion Lakes Drive has always been a popular biking route, but soon you'll be able to continue past Vermilion Lakes and connect with the 1A Highway without having to ride on the Trans-Canada Highway. The other exciting development is the Legacy Trail – a paved trail between Canmore and Banff that will be open this fall.

If you'd prefer to stay closer to Banff, scenic road rides include the Sundance Road past the Cave and Basin (watch for beaver and muskrat in the river, and enjoy the beautiful view of Mt. Edith); the Golf Course Loop (take a picnic and sit by the river, and check out the hoodoos from this different vantage point); and Mt. Norquay Road (for a good workout!) Pick up a copy of Parks Canada's *Mountain Biking and Cycling Guide* at the Information Centre (224 Banff Avenue) for more route ideas.

Kids in Banff can practice their mountain biking skills at the Banff Bike Park, located at the Recreation Grounds just past the basketball court. The bike park boasts fun stunts for different skill levels, a pump track, and a jump line.

Bikes are welcome on our trails in Banff, but there are some areas where they are not allowed. These include the Tunnel Mountain Trail, the clifftop section of the Bow Falls Trail and its adjacent fragile hills, and the Bow Falls riverside pedestrian trail downstream of the Bow River Bridge. The section of the Bow River Trail between Central Park and Wolf Street is popular with pedestrians: cyclists, please use Bow Avenue in this area. Riding on sidewalks is allowed only for children under 12.

So grab your bike and helmet, and celebrate *Parks and Recreation Month* by going for a ride!

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Painted symbols mark recommended bike routes in Banff