

PROCEEDINGS

Built Environment Summit Building the Vision: Turning Active Transportation Plans Into Action

April 20th, 2010 9:00 AM – 4:30PM
Radisson Hotel
Vancouver, BC

Hosted by the Built Environment & Active
Transportation Initiative (BEAT). A joint initiative
of the BC Recreation and Parks Association
and Union of BC Municipalities



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	1
Background.....	1
Attendance at a Glance.....	1
Welcome and Opening Remarks.....	3
Suzanne Allard Strutt Chief Executive Director, BC Recreation and Parks Association.....	3
Walkable Communities.....	3
Dan Burden Executive Director, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute	3
Active Transportation Planning in BC	4
Highlights from 2009 Grant Communities	4
Updates on Implementation from 2008 Grant Communities.....	5
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) and Active Transportation ..	7
Integrating active travel modes into roads and highways - Kurt Edmunds, Operations Manager	7
Bike BC Update - Erin Moxon, Project Manager, Climate Action Program.....	7
Richmond Walk Tour	8
Cost Effective Solutions	8
Patti Ferguson, Administrator, City of Armstrong	8
Gavin Davidson, Senior Planner, TransLink	8
Sara Rocchi, Vice President, Opus International	9
The Way Forward in BC.....	9
Appendix 1- AGENDA	10

Presentations are available at www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca

Acknowledgements

Thank you very much to the Steering Committee who guided the planning process:

Marilyn Chiang, Policy Analyst, Union BC Municipalities

Keltie Craig, Planner, HB Lanarc

Samantha Hartley-Folz, Grant Liaison Manager, BC Healthy Living Alliance

Luke Sales, Special Projects Planner, Town of Qualicum Beach

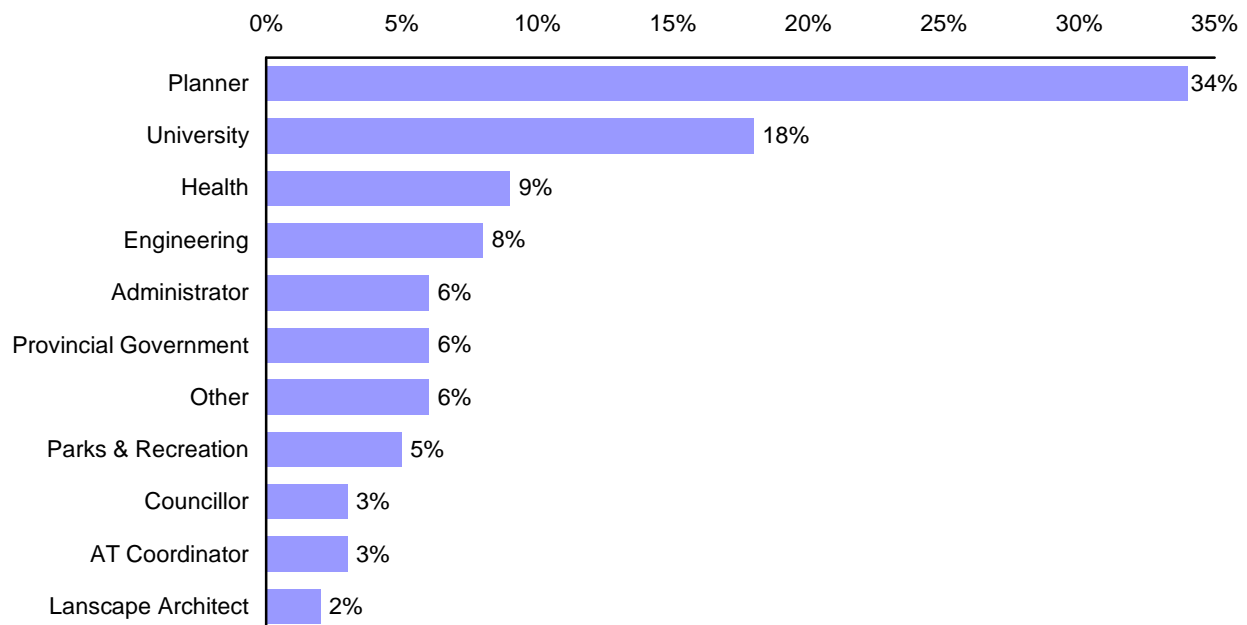
Background

The 4th BEAT Summit hosted in the City of Richmond on April 20th 2010 focused on how communities are putting their active transportation plans into action. Topics discussed include:

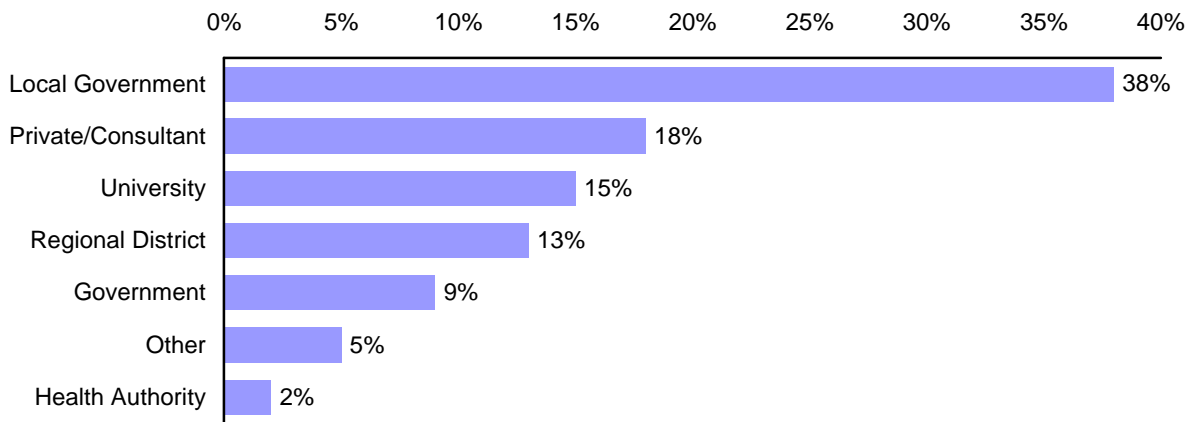
- Active transportation planning in BC with highlights from grant communities;
- Update from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on integrating active travel modes into road and highway and Bike BC;
- Cost effective solutions to implementing active transportation;
- Setting strategic priorities for moving active transportation forward in BC.

ATTENDANCE AT A GLANCE

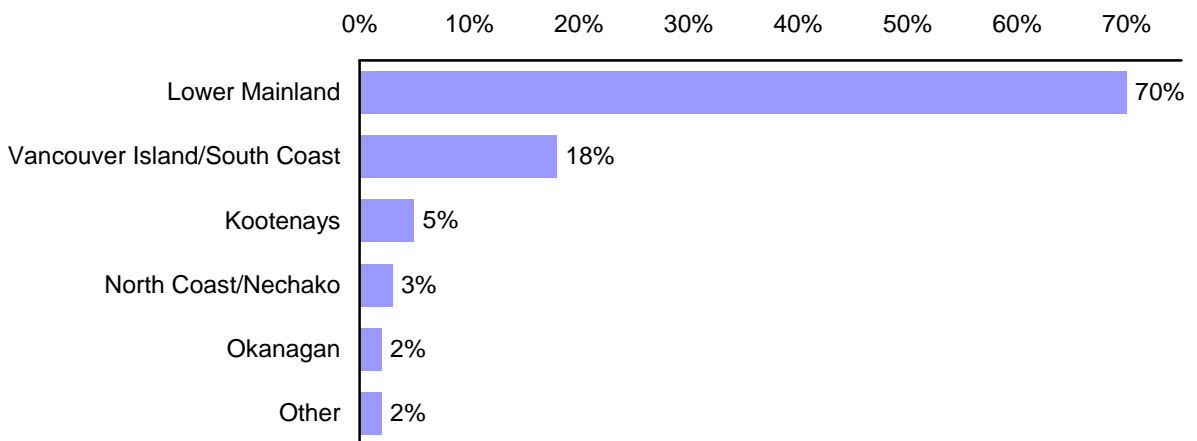
Distribution by Role/Position (n=65)



Sector Representation (n=65)



Regional Representation (n=65)



Welcome and Opening Remarks

SUZANNE ALLARD STRUTT

Chief Executive Director, BC Recreation and Parks Association

Suzanne Allard Strutt welcomed participants to the Summit on behalf of the BC Recreation and Parks Association. She suggested that the way in which we design our communities reflects who we are as a people-not just in terms of aesthetic values-but in terms of how we want to shape our lives. For the past two years, BEAT – an initiative designed to facilitate better planned, connected, and active communities - has offered provincial summits, planning tools and resources including regional workshops, and community grants. She went on to further comment on how the Summits have brought together a cross section of community leaders interested in designing and building communities for active living, from local governments, planners, engineers to parks and recreation professionals. The Summits have provided opportunities for grant communities to network and learn from existing projects and current research.

Suzanne acknowledged and thanked the many BEAT project partners.

Walkable Communities

DAN BURDEN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WALKABLE AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INSTITUTE

Dan Burden is an expert on active transportation and shared his experiences working with communities in the United States and Canada. He began his presentation by commenting that British Columbia is an inspiration in the field of active transportation; going well beyond moving vehicles and is paying attention to bicycling, walking, aesthetics and planning. He then provided some historical context about active transportation and North America's reliance on the automobile and how this reliance has deconstructed our cities and communities. This deconstruction, Dan commented, has gotten us where we are today and we are now remaking North America one block at a time. Dan believes this is a human health issue, as walking is crucial for good health; it is a prescription without the medicine. In recreating our cities to make them more walkable, Dan believes that we need to treat walking and bicycling equal to other transportation modes. He suggests that in planning our cities, we should ensure that cities meet the needs of the young and the old and once we do that everyone will be able to participate.

Dan further discussed a number of key variables to walkable and livable cities. These include: place making, connectivity, taming our roads, and the gift of density. The message is that if we create a connected network of streets and add more density we will increase walking and liveability. To do this, we need to ensure, a mix of land users (e.g retail, residential); tame our roads to reduce the spread of cars (e.g narrowing roads, increasing the size of bike lanes, aesthetics, angle parking, better crossings); and ensure we incorporate the gift of density, which, Dan commented, Vancouver has done well. Dan concluded by saying that we need to break the cycle of strip malls. All sectors need to work together under a community planning umbrella. This will lead to increased mobility, more walking and bicycling and increased access for all.

Presentation slides available at www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca

Active Transportation Planning in BC

Cara Fisher, BEAT Coordinator, provided an update on BEAT grant activities. Twenty-four community planning grants were awarded to BC communities ranging in value from \$15,000 to \$25,000. These grants were provided to communities to develop shelf ready active transportation plans. In addition, 15 aboriginal communities in BC received grants of \$5000 to develop or enhance existing trails in communities. The grant communities were distributed throughout the province, ensuring representation of rural/urban, and varied geographic location. Lessons learned from the grant program include: acknowledgement of limited capacity in small and aboriginal communities, the significant costs associated with implementation of active transportation plans and the challenge this can have on budgets; the challenges that highway based communities face with implementing active transportation plans; and the need for less planning and more action (i.e., infrastructure and facility improvements).

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2009 GRANT COMMUNITIES

City of New Westminster - John Starke, Community Planner *Wheelability Assessment*

John shared the City of New Westminster's experience in implementing the BEAT Wheelability Project. The goal of the project was to improve mobility and enhance active transportation options for people who are reliant on wheelchairs, walkers, scooters and other mobility aids. The impetus for the project was the Senior Services Task Force expressing concern about the challenges of moving around the city. Project activities focused in two neighbourhoods in New Westminster both of which are comprised of a significant number of seniors - Uptown and Downtown. The objectives of the project were to: assess the wheelability of the neighbourhoods; involve the target population, city staff and elected officials to determine needs; prepare a map outlining gradients, surface treatments, accessibility and safety features and pedestrian conveniences; and share results with relevant city departments to inform policies and practices and design related to wheelability.

As a result of this work, the City of New Westminster has an audit tool which has been piloted (pre-assessment which is technical and assessment which asks mobility users challenges and obstacles to mobility); a map to facilitate way finding and contact information to express concerns and a video for training purposes. John commented that in addition to informing transportation infrastructure improvements in the City of New Westminster, the project has captured the interest of the Gerontology Research Center at SFU and the Department of Occupational Therapy at UBC. It has also raised awareness about wheelability within the community.

Presentation slides available at www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca

Village of Burns Lake - Natasha Letchford, Director Corporate Services
Active Transportation Plan

Natasha explained the experience Burns Lake had with developing and implementing their active transportation plan. She began by describing the demographics and geography of Burns Lake which is a young community challenged by steep topography and surrounded by First Nations reserves. The latter being a key impetus of the active transportation plan-an interest in connecting the reserves to the town. She also mentioned that community ratings for self propelled travel conditions in Burns Lake are very low. She then shared the various components of the Burns Lake Active Transportation Plan which includes a number of crossings, walkways, trails and greenways. She pointed out that implementing all the components of the plan is challenging due to budgeting restrictions. As a result, the community has chosen to focus on one of the priorities identified in the plan and are presently looking for funding from the Job Opportunities program (\$250,000) to commence work on this priority which involves building and upgrading a trail. In addition, the funding will provide an opportunity to employ out of work resource workers who live in the community.

Presentation slides available at www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca

UPDATES ON IMPLEMENTATION FROM 2008 GRANT COMMUNITIES

District of Kent - Kerry Hilts, Director Community, Recreation and Parks
Bicycle Network Plan

The aim of the District of Kent Bicycle Network Plan was to update the District of Kent and Harrison Hot Springs Bicycle Network Plan which was developed in 2002. The process began with extensive consultation with district staff, a steering committee and AECOM. This process took place from 2008 to 2009. As a result of the consultation a number of priorities were identified. These are: a trail loop (6 km); a rural route between Harrison Hot Springs and Agassiz which has been a project of interest for a number of years but presents a number of challenges; and a dyke path (3 phases = 22km). Kerry Hilts discussed the various challenges regarding implementation which include: agricultural lands; highways; scope of plan (transit, waterways, roads, pathways, trails); varied geography; rural vs urban needs; and budgetary restrictions. Despite these numerous

challenges the District of Kent has had some successes, they have increased transit by 50%, completed the marina and breakwater development and council has endorsed the Bicycle Network Plan priorities. Kerry finished his presentation by commenting on what he would do differently next time which is narrowing the scope of the plan.

Presentation slides available at www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca

District of Invermere - Chris Prosser, Chief Administrative Officer
Active Transportation Plan

The District of Invermere has a small permanent population (3100 people) but has a large influx of second home owners on long weekends and holidays which boosts the population to approximately 50,000 people. Chris commented on how this difference presents competing challenges in terms of needs and interests with regard to the active transportation plan. Chris explained how the Invermere Active Transportation Plan builds on the Invermere Community Enhancement Plan which was completed in 2008 and identified 28 community projects some of which were related to active transportation. Chris explained how the process started with community consultation through open houses and how the attendance at the open houses was very low (2 people). As a result, Chris and his team decided to distribute a survey to community residents asking about active transportation needs and interests. One hundred and twenty residents completed the survey and the message was “just get it done”, which they did. Once the plan was complete, Invermere submitted the shelf ready plan to a number of funding agencies and managed to secure an estimated \$1 million in funding. The community is now focusing on building the pathways and has built a green gym program. The first 3 km of pathway is now complete and the building cost was significantly less than the estimated budget. Chris commented that this is due, in large part, to the fact that the District used local resources such as laid off forestry workers and internalized costs wherever possible. In terms of challenges, Chris mentioned that the local topography poses a challenge as does the decision whether to use asphalt or gravel on the pathway. Chris concluded his presentation by saying that if had not been for the BEAT funding, “we would not be here today and would not have been able to leverage 1.3 million in funding.”

Town of Qualicum Beach - Luke Sales, Special Projects Planner
Cycling Plan and Dollymount Trail

Luke reviewed the geography of the Town of Qualicum Beach which is a coastal community with narrow landscape with residential areas on either side of the town centre. Luke also mentioned that the mean age of Qualicum Beach residents is 61 years old, many of whom like to keep active. The town is also in the process of adopting a sustainability plan as transportation accounts for 60% of green house gas emissions. The Town of Qualicum Beach used their shelf ready cycling plan to leverage funding for construction of a 3 meter wide multi-use pathway which is presently under construction and nearing completion.

The pathway is designed to accommodate walkers, cyclists, wheelchairs and strollers. One of the key challenges is whether the pathway should be gravel or asphalt. When Luke commented on issues related to implementation of the cycling plan, he cited the following: broaden the scope between grants; budget increases; license of occupation for all ROW; construction complications; and expectations for a multi-use trail.

Presentation slides available at www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) and Active Transportation

INTEGRATING ACTIVE TRAVEL MODES INTO ROADS AND HIGHWAYS - KURT EDMUNDS, OPERATIONS MANAGER

Kurt began his presentation by commenting on the ways the MOTI gets their road inventory. He then spent some time explaining the history of the MOTI in approving rural land approvals and the role of the Provincial Approving Officer. This was followed by a review of the process for approvals in which Kurt pointed out local governments can play a key role as they have an opportunity to express their concerns regarding pedestrian and cycling lanes. Kurt highlighted changes in the MOTI approach when approving new or changes to existing roads. These changes include: consideration of the environment ; clearing and work near water courses; revised cycling policy; and lower speed green vehicles. He also shared goal #3 of the annual service plan which includes the reduction of green house gases for the transportation sector; increased use of transit, cycling and other alternate modes of transportation; building rapid transit backbone and creating rider options; investment in public transit infrastructure; improvement in high occupancy vehicle and transit priority measures; encouragement of increased land use around high density transit stations; and investment in integrated cycling network and supporting pedestrian networks. Kurt wrapped up his presentation by commenting that MOTI staff are working with local government to collect input from communities, bicycle working groups and from planning meetings and that these concerns are documented and monitored.

BIKE BC UPDATE - ERIN MOXON, PROJECT MANAGER, CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAM

Erin provided an update on the Bike BC Grant Program and discussed the way in which local governments can position themselves for future funding opportunities. She explained that the Bike BC Grant Program is a \$31 million dollar grant program which has 3 components: 1) Provincial Cycling Investment Program (15M) 2) Cycling Infrastructure Partnership Program (6M) and 3) The Gateway Cycling Program (10M). The goal of these programs is to increase the provincial cycling mode share and make cycling a viable alternative commuting transportation choice. She then spent some time reviewing progress to date and commented that momentum in this area is building and the BC Ministry Service Plan shows a continued investment in cycling. Erin then reviewed some ways local governments can position themselves for future funding. These include: creating a bicycle master plan; having some conceptual designs ready with cost estimates; acquire property and have

approvals in place; have at least one detailed design ready; and meet Bike BC requirements. She also mentioned that a high quality facility does not mean an expensive facility, it means approving the appropriate facility for the target group and context. She concluded her presentation by mentioning an initiative that the MOTI and BEAT are working on which is a Bicycle Facilities Design Course; the course will be tailored to local government staff, engineers and designers who are involved in the cycling facilities, in rural to urban settings. It will be a BC-specific course recognizing many challenges surrounding the design and construction of high quality cycling facilities, from wide shoulders through to separated multi-use facilities.

Presentation slides available at www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca

Richmond Walk Tour

Participants were invited to participate in one of two walk around activities - the first walk was an urban walk looking at aspects of the value to active transportation near the Aberdeen Skytrain Station. The second was a walk along a multi-purpose trail - the Middle Arm of the Fraser River - along the dyke. Participants then spent some time discussing what they valued from their walk experience.

Cost Effective Solutions

PATTI FERGUSON, ADMINISTRATOR, CITY OF ARMSTRONG

Patti started her presentation by saying “when the going gets tough, the tough get going” and commented that the City of Armstrong, which has a population of approximately 4500 people, rarely receives new money, except when they receive grant funding (such as the BEAT). As a result, Patti commented, that their cost savings approach is to prioritize capital cost activities and work on one capital project a year (their capital project works plan is a thirty-three year plan). If a new project arises that is not part of the capital works plan, such as bike lanes, the City of Armstrong, works to incorporate the idea or components into the plan. The City is about to embark on updating the OCP and they have asked the consultants to review the Active Transportation Plan and suggest ways the various components can be incorporated into the OCP. Patti’s message to the group was look at how you can get things accomplished with what you are already doing.

GAVIN DAVIDSON, SENIOR PLANNER, TRANSLINK

Gavin provided an update on the Transportation of Canada Bikeway Traffic Control Guidelines revisions. He spent time reviewing the changes to the guidelines which included changes to the regulatory signs where he provided some examples. This was followed by a discussion on the new and modified lane markings with Gavin showing some of the changes to the bike box, single and double lane roundabouts and conflict zone markings. Gavin concluded his presentation by commenting on emerging priorities which include, cycle tracks, transit stations and colored pavement and showed a number of cycling initiatives from around the world. The value of this information is that paint is cheap and by using a variety of traffic pavement markings can improve the pedestrian and cycling environment.

SARA ROCCHI, VICE PRESIDENT, OPUS INTERNATIONAL.

There are a number of funding sources available for active transportation projects which Sara reviewed. These include: ICBC Road Improvement Program; piggy backing-incorporating active transportation plans into planned capital or maintenance projects; many corporations will pay for active transportation facilities in turn for naming rights, goodwill or advertising; local area service plans-property owners will fund active transportation projects through additional taxes on their property taxes; and developers will often fund active transportation facilities as part of development requirements or plans. Sara concluded her discussion by providing contact information for the various funding opportunities.

After the three presentations the presenters formed a panel to answer questions from the audience.

The Way Forward in BC

Cara Fisher, BEAT coordinator, asked the audience to share some ideas about what they will take away from the Summit. There were several comments from the group such as: the impact of the aging population and looking at the angle of wheelability; building for children and seniors; the impact the BEAT program has had at the community level; and the importance of making sure the general public is aware of all of the good work that is going on in active transportation. Cara commented that BCRPA is looking at how active lifestyle can be incorporated into active transportation. She mentioned that she was speaking at a conference in Manitoba where they are interested in bridging the gap between active transportation and recreation and working with this group made her cognizant of how BC is leading the movement in active transportation on the ground. Other provinces are recognizing this emerging area and both Ontario and Manitoba have formed provincial Active Transportation Working Groups. It was suggested that this could be something for BC to model and is a great way to continue the momentum that the BCRPA and the BEAT has fostered.

Dan Burden agreed and commented that BC is doing an incredible amount of work in the area of active transportation and as a result is beginning to make in roads and changing the culture/mindset around active transportation in BC. He wrapped up by saying that those who live in smaller places, will have the most miraculous achievements and that the small towns of North America will bring about some of the greatest changes.

Appendix 1- AGENDA

Built Environment Summit
Building the Vision: Turning Active Transportation Plans into Action

Richmond Room, Radisson Hotel, 8181 Cambie St., Richmond

April 20th 2010 ~ 9:00 am – 4:30pm

8:00 – 9:00

Continental Breakfast & Registration

9:00 – 9:25

Welcome & Opening Remarks

~ Suzanne Strutt, CEO BC Recreation and Parks Association

9:25 – 10:15

Dan Burden, Walkable Communities

Dan Burden an expert on active transportation will share his experience working with communities in the United States and Canada.

10:30 –
12:00

Active Transportation Planning in BC

Highlights from 2009 grant communities:

- City of New Westminster – John Starke, Community Planner
- Village of Burns Lake – Natasha Letchford, Director Corporate Services

Updates on the implementation from 2008 grant communities:

- District of Kent – Kerry Hiltz, Director Community, Recreation & Parks
- District of Invermere – Chris Prosser, Chief Administrative Officer
- Town of Qualicum Beach – Luke Sales, Special Projects Planner

**12:00 –
12:45**

Lunch

12:55 – 1:55

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and Active Transportation

Integrating active travel modes into road and highway - Kurt Edmunds, Operations Manager
Bike BC Update – Erin Moxon, Project Manager, Climate Action Program

2:00 – 3:00

Walk Around Activity

3:00 – 4:00

Cost Effective Solutions

Panel discussion on implementing active transportation

- Patti Ferguson, Administrator, City of Armstrong
- Gavin Davidson, Senior Planner, TransLink
- Sarah Rocchi, Vice President, Opus International

4:00 – 4:30

The Way Forward in BC

Setting strategic priorities for moving active transportation forward in BC
Closing remarks and wrap up