



## **The Lane Ahead**

2020/2021 was, without doubt, the most action-packed eventful year for Vélo Canada Bikes in its tender history. All this during a global pandemic that shut down so much of the world that we had taken for granted.

In March of 2020 VCB was approving its budget and workplan for the year. A keystone of VCB's work was the annual National Bike Summit, and the 2020 Summit was shifting away from a spring summit to a fall event. Also in March, the federal government announced its desire to launch a National Active Transportation Strategy. In the announcement from the government, they specifically recognized the work that Vélo Canada Bikes had done to get us to the point where this was a priority for the government.

Then, that same March 2020, the COVID pandemic was declared and all our plans, and the world, ground to a halt. We scrambled to lobby to ensure that bike shops were recognized as an essential service. We tracked all the streets being opened for cycling and walking and made sure that cities right across the country were responding to what people needed to be able to stay active, safe, and sane!

2020, for VCB, was like 2020 for so many others. We worked to realign, to identify new ways of working and engaging with stakeholders and continuing our advocacy. Our past supporters within the cycling industry, those who sponsored VCB through the National Bike Summits, became our supporting Partners. Rather than sponsoring an event, they supported our work, directly and indirectly.

We found new ways of engaging our community stakeholders, initiating monthly National Advocacy Check Ins. Representatives from cycling organisations coast to coast to coast get together each month to share victories and frustrations, share ideas and advice. Each month, the opportunity to connect with others across the country builds the community and advocacy we need on the ground in our cities and towns to be able to improve and increase cycling.

Along with our AT Alliance Partners (CAA, Heart and Stroke, TransCanada Trails, Active School Travel Canada, Green Communities Canada, Piétons Quebec) we continued our work both in our conversations with the government and with our stakeholders across Canada.

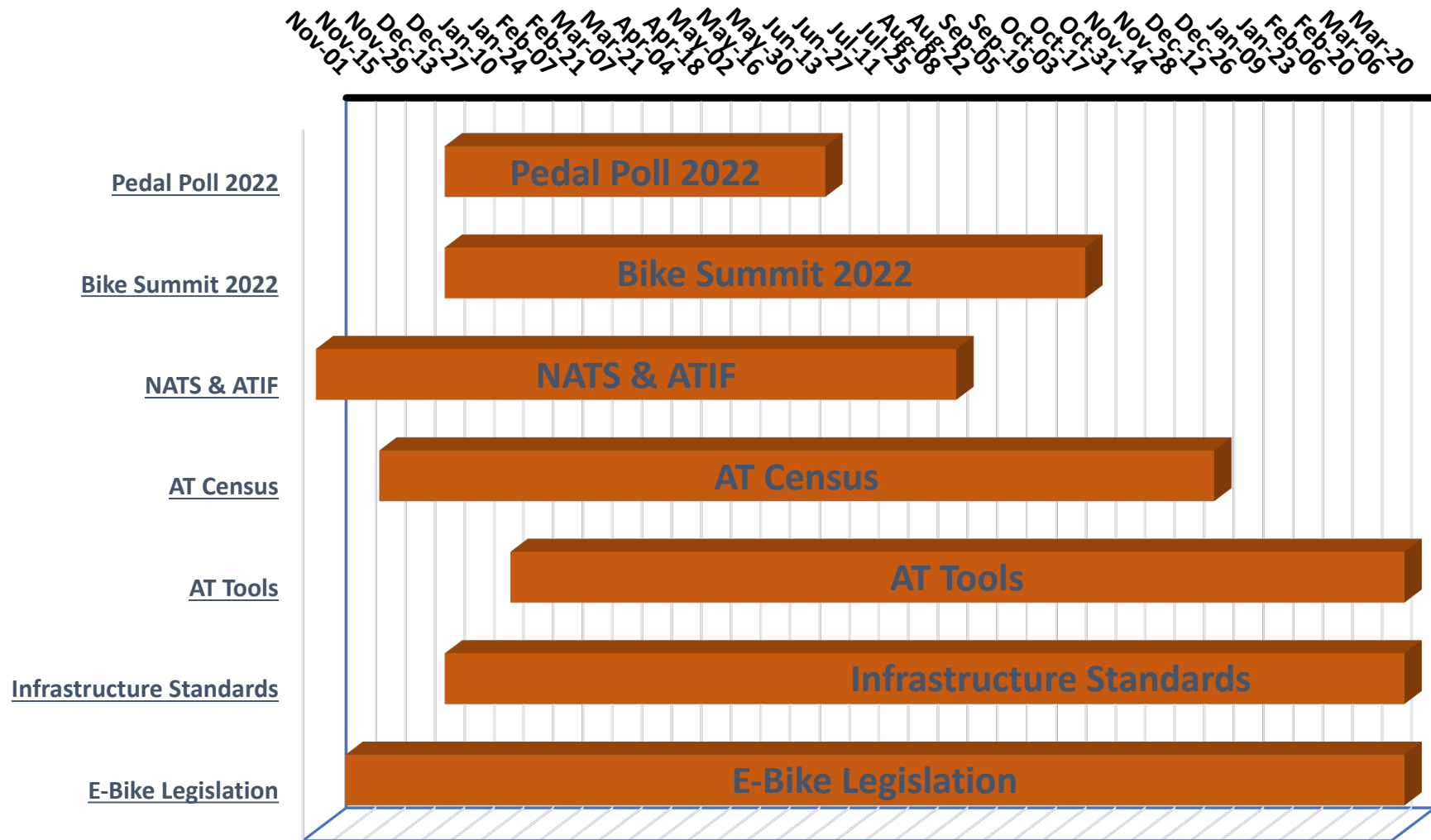
## **Where we are going from here**

Going forward, VCB's plan is to build on the successes, initiate projects to address gaps, support local advocacy and government, and renew our efforts in areas where we need to do more work. While we want to highlight the larger projects and initiatives here, we have a considerable amount of work going on outside of the highlighted project areas.

VCB is undertaking organizational review and governance work, to reflect the growth of the organization. We are developing a "member benefits" program to support the growth of our membership base, and the need to grow it further. Outreach and engagement with all stakeholders remain a key priority, and we will be working to find ways that VCB can continue to add value to our members and stakeholders.

Vélo Canada Bikes is at a point where we are now looking to expand our larger externally focused project work. Building on existing programs, such as the Bike Summit and the Pedal Poll, but also undertaking the work needed to address the gaps that all stakeholders have identified.

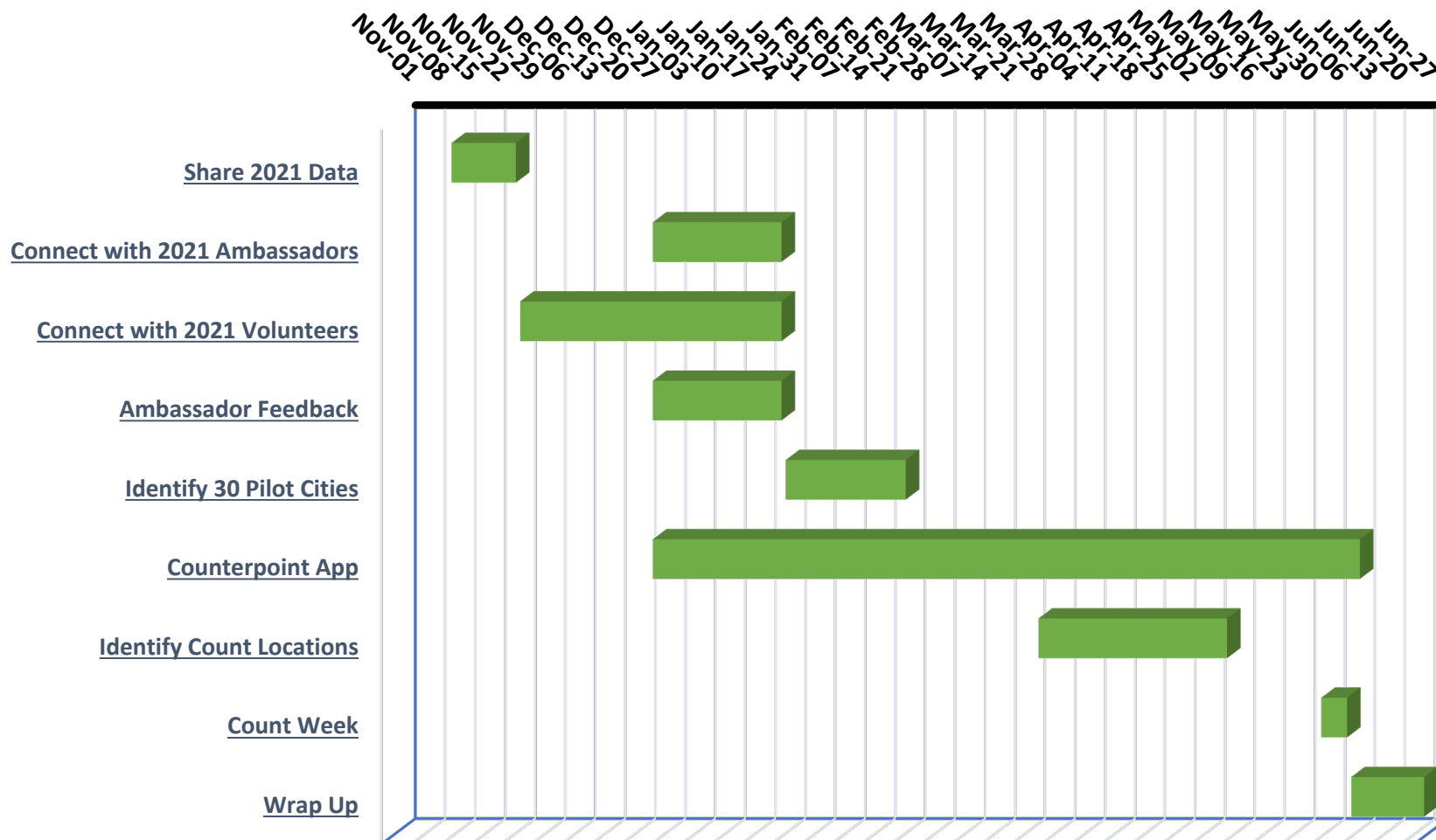
# VCB Work Plan Timeline



## Pedal Poll 2022

Work is underway for the 2<sup>nd</sup> national bike count, Pedal Poll 2022. We are looking to double the number of pilot cities and refining the data collection process. There were a lot of bumps in the road in PP 2021, mostly because of the unanticipated interest and take up for volunteers and a budget that did not match that scale of project. We are planning to be ready for the incredible demand for this kind of data and participation. This kind of data is incredibly necessary right across the country.

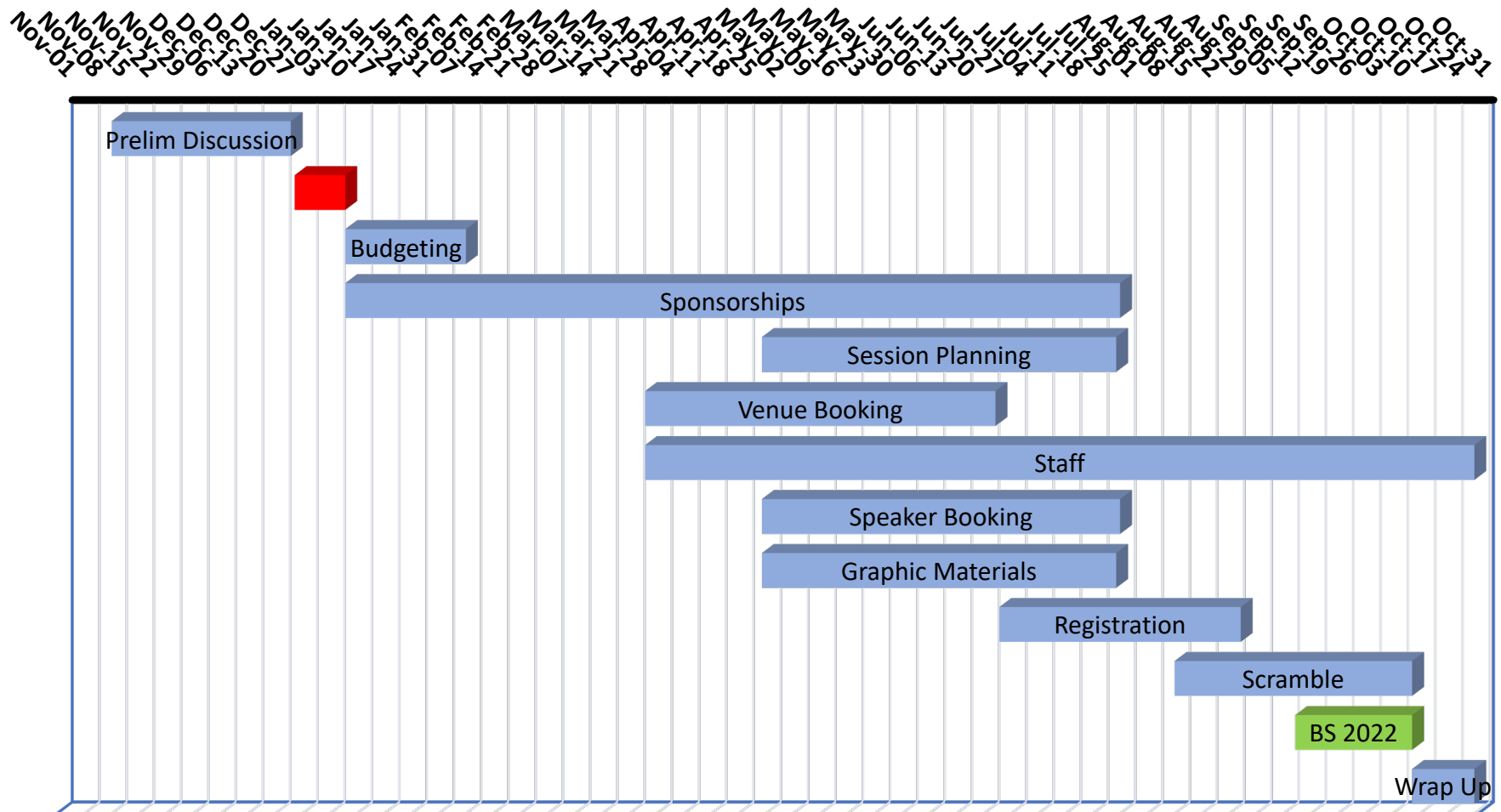
### Pedal Poll 2022



## Bike Summit 2022

We are in the initial exploration stages for the next Bike Summit. While the Bike Summit has been cancelled the past two years due to the pandemic, we are beginning to explore holding an in-person summit in the late summer/early autumn of 2022. The annual National Bike Summits have been successful events bringing industry, decision makers, and cycling advocates together. With both the hiatus, as well as the launch of the National Active Transportation Strategy, there is a great opportunity to revamp the Summit and look at a new format and programming.

### Bike Summit 2022



## **National Active Transportation Strategy & Active Transportation Infrastructure Fund**

The launch of the NATS and ATIF in 2021 was a great success for Vélo Canada Bikes. The 5-year commitment to federal funding for cycling & pedestrian infrastructure is the very first time this has been identified specifically. It was also incredibly rewarding to see VCB's hard work & contribution being prominently recognized.

But we still have a lot of work to do. We need to ensure that the funding flows and results in good infrastructure being built. We need to ensure that the NATS remains current and keeps on-the-ground stakeholders engaged. We also need to continue to push to increase the level of funding. The need for more is already there, and it will only continue to grow.

Ensuring the success of the National Strategy also requires a strong municipal presence. It is in municipalities right across Canada where the cycling infrastructure is going to be built, and VCB needs to ensure that local organizations are strong and supported, and that they have the tools they need to make sure their local government is following the NATS and accessing all available funding.

## **National AT Infrastructure Census**

VCB has long recognized the data gaps right across the cycling spectrum. The launch of our coordinated national bike count was a step towards filling one of those gaps. The next area of focus is to undertake a national AT Infrastructure Census.

With the NATS and associated funding, it has become ever more important that we have a strong census in place to understand what is already built and where. Beginning work on an AT Infrastructure Census will allow us to start bringing some cohesion to our understanding to help moving forward. This census will fill another very important data gap.

## **AT Tools**

Advocating for cycling infrastructure remains a challenge at the local level. The lack of understanding of the costs and benefits around mobility choices is a major barrier to getting more cycling infrastructure on the ground, quickly.

Over the course of the next couple of months, we will be developing funding proposals for a few projects to provide more tools for governments and advocates both. These tools will support decision makers going forward.

### **Cost Benefit Analysis Calculator**

VCB is working with a G-20 economist to put together a funding proposal to develop a CBA calculator. This tool will be useful for municipalities to support infrastructure decision making.

### **GHG Calculator**

Developing a useful GHG calculator for cycling infrastructure is another tool that will assist those advocating for more cycling as well for municipalities being able to meet their GHG reduction targets.

### **Infrastructure Catalogue**

As has been demonstrated by research, cycling infrastructure in Canada takes a wide variety of forms and using a wide variety of nomenclature. A survey of installed infrastructure by CHATR identified over 250 different names and definitions for cycling installations. This project will develop a visual catalogue of different types, definitions, as well as examples of applications from right across Canada, in municipalities big and small.

## **Cycling Infrastructure Standards**

In discussions with stakeholders a consistent comment and concern is a lack of cohesive and appropriate infrastructure standards. Standards applied to cycling infrastructure vary between provinces, municipalities, and often, within a municipality itself. With the increased demand for safe cycling infrastructure and interest in municipalities to actually build it, it is important we have a common understanding of minimum requirements, nomenclature, and maintenance.

While there are generally 5 different types of facility, a recent survey found they are called 269 different names across Canada. As well, the facilities vary in specifications. Standardizing nomenclature and specifications will not only assist municipalities in their installations, but more importantly, will give clear understanding to cyclists as to what to expect.

This work will primarily be directed towards developing partnerships with the Transportation Association of Canada and the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers. We will work to leverage existing connections and relationships with transportation engineers both in the municipal sector as well as the private sector.

This work will also be heavily informed by the work of the AT census team.



## **E-Bike legislation**

Everything VCB warned the federal government about, leading up to February 2021, has come to pass. This summer we began to see provincial regulation that was disjointed, inconsistent, and in inadvertently broad, leading to confusion and in some cases, essentially outlawing e-bikes.

E-bikes continue to be the fastest growing segment of both the market and of new cyclists. They can be a game changer for many, expanding the possibility of cycling mobility for people who have never been able to consider it before. Preliminary research is also showing that e-bikes are more likely to be a replacement to the automobile rather than simply a supplement to car use.

To support our work in this area we are going to need to enlist supporters to work with us. One of the major challenges in our lobbying against the repeal of the federal regulations is that VCB was the only organization speaking out against the changes. Identifying allies and bringing them to the table is going to be key to our success.

### **Federal**

VCB will renew its work with Transport Canada, to build the case that the federal government has an important role to play in regulating e-bikes. To support the booming Canadian e-bike market, consumers, retailers, and suppliers need consistency across the country.

### **Provincial**

Provincial governments are beginning to legislate e-bikes in the void. So far, they have been inconsistent leading to situations where e-bikes that might be legal in one province are illegal in the next province over. Another concern is that so far consultations have focussed on how to regulate them, with a heavy emphasis on enforcement. To date, the conversation seems to be ignoring the utility and functionality of e-bikes.

### **Municipal**

Municipal governments get to set the rules for where e-bikes can be used. It is important that pedal-assist e-bikes be considered and treated the same as a regular pedal bike. E-bikes need to be able to use the same infrastructure and go the same places as regular bikes. VCB will be advocating and supporting local advocates to ensure that people can ride their e-bikes throughout their community.