

The Guardian
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
July 15, 2017

P.E.I. roads safer for cyclists since Elizabeth Sovis death, says Biggar

Ryan Ross



Edmund Aunger places a wreath on the bike he was riding the day his wife Elizabeth Sovis was killed by a drunk driver during a cycling trip in P.E.I. in 2012. Aunger held a memorial service in Hunter River on Friday to mark the five-year anniversary of his wife's death. About 100 people attended a service at Central Queens United Church in Hunter River before a procession that included cyclists made their way to the place where she died several kilometres away on Route 13. Aunger left his bike, which was painted white and called a ghost bike, behind as a memorial to Sovis. Ryan Ross/The Guardian



A procession of cyclists head back to Hunter River on a recently paved shoulder as traffic drives by them on Route 13 following a memorial service for Elizabeth Sovis on July 14, 2017. The road was not as wide when a drunk driver hit and killed Sovis in 2012 while she was cycling with her husband Edmund Aunger. Ryan Ross/The Guardian

P.E.I.'s roads are safer for cyclists than they were five years, says Transportation Minister Paula Biggar.

Friday marked the fifth anniversary of Elizabeth Sovis's death after a drunk driver struck and killed her with a van while she was cycling on a road near Hunter River.

Biggar said the legislature passed an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act in May that requires vehicles to stay at least one metre away from a bicycle when passing.

"Sharing the road," she said.

After his wife's death, Edmund Aunger said the road the couple was on was not safe for cyclists and had unpaved shoulders.

Part of that road has since been widened with more work to come on it and other roads, Biggar said.

She also said the province is working with Cycling P.E.I. on an education program and has been developing biking trails.

Biggar said the province has strengthened its impaired driving legislation since Sovis's death.

“If somebody's drunk, no matter what regulations or laws or whatever you have in place is not going to prevent that,” she said.

It takes a comprehensive approach to make roads safer for cyclists, Biggar said.

“One thing is not going to solve it all.”