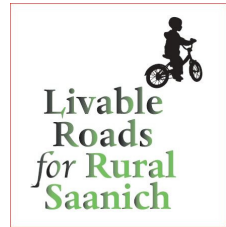


Sharing Our Rural Roads
October 2021 Presentation to Saanich ATAC



Part 2: Rural Saanich pages from ATP and LRRS comments

We would like to shed light on rural Active Transportation gaps, **through the lens of the roads LRRS represents.**

Currently Rural Saanich is referenced in 6 Actions in *Strategy 1E on pages 48 and 49 of the ATP*. All italics are exact wording from current ATP.

These actions are inadequate and we will refer to each.

STRATEGY 1E: ENCOURAGE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IN RURAL SAANICH

Many rural areas of Saanich have specific issues and opportunities that are unique when compared to other parts of Saanich. Through engagement with residents and stakeholders several issues emerged, including: concerns over motor vehicles speeds, concerns about truck traffic on non-designated truck routes in rural areas, and the importance of spreading education and awareness to all road users that there are people living, walking and cycling along the streets within Rural Saanich. There are also significant gaps in the sidewalk, trail and pathway, and on-street bicycle networks in Rural Saanich. As a result, people are often using the paved shoulder to walk or bike. More wayfinding is also needed.

LRRS Comments:

- **Correction:** generally on these roads there are no paved shoulders; people use the unpaved and unreliable shoulder, or where the shoulder is totally non-existent, the edges of the paved traffic lanes. This is dangerous, with current traffic speeds.

ACTION 1E.1

ENFORCE EXISTING POSTED SPEED LIMITS.

As the speed of vehicles travelling through Rural Saanich has been identified as a concern by residents and stakeholders, the Saanich Police Department should continue to enforce existing posted speed limits on all streets in Saanich, including Rural Saanich.

LRRS Comments:

- No criticism of the police, but **effective** enforcement simply does not happen on these roads.
- We have been told by Engineering that this clause is included just to remind police that enforcement is their responsibility.
- In addition, the existing default speed limit of 50 kph, even if it were enforced, is too high for the safety of all, particularly vulnerable users, given their need to actually share the paved traffic lanes with vehicles.
- This is a totally ineffective Action.



ACTION 1E.2

WORK WITH NEIGHBOURING MUNICIPALITIES TO ENSURE CONSISTENT SIGNAGE ACROSS MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES.

Through engagement, concerns were raised that street designation and signage was not consistent across municipal boundaries. Additionally, it is often not always clear when individuals have crossed into another municipality. Saanich will work with neighbouring municipalities to ensure consistent signage is posted across municipal boundaries this includes speed limit, truck route and gateway signage.

LRRS Comments:

- This is a narrow and minimal Action providing little practical improvement for residents and road users.
- The Gateway signage would be the only portion of this action realized, and only on some roads.
- Truck route signage, where it exists, is inconsistent, confusing and unenforced.
- The more substantial action of working with Central Saanich to discuss traffic issues relevant to AT users is elusive. LRRS has tried for five years, without success, to get Saanich Council to engage with Central Saanich to discuss the broader issues. These would include: accurate signage, definitions of local delivery, redirection of non-local delivery trucks to truck routes, and commuter pressure through rural neighbourhoods to and from an industrial area. **In fact LRRS was told to approach CS ourselves.**
- If working with neighbouring municipalities were indeed taken seriously for AT, there could be tremendous benefits to all.

ACTION 1E.3

ENFORCE SAANICH'S EXISTING TRUCK ROUTE BYLAW.

Saanich has a Truck Route Bylaw that regulates which streets trucks can travel on. The existing bylaw will continue to be enforced to ensure vehicles identified as trucks are using designated routes within the municipality.

LRRS Comments:

- There is no effective Truck Route enforcement. Active Transportation is negatively impacted.
- Again we have been told by Engineering that this Action is included as a reminder that enforcement is the responsibility of the Police.
- Although none of these roads are truck routes (Pat Bay, West Saanich and Keating are the truck routes) these roads are heavily used by oversized/overweight trucks, many not on 'local delivery'. There are no deterrents, no education, no willingness to tackle this systemic problem.



ACTION 1E.4

CONSIDER THE ROADWAY DESIGN GUIDELINES OUTLINED IN THE RURAL SAANICH LOCAL AREA PLAN WHEN CONSIDERING PROJECTS IN THE AREA.

The Rural Saanich Local Area Plan was adopted in 2008, and is a detailed Plan that includes guidance on planning within the Rural Saanich area. The Plan includes a section on Mobility, which outlines roadway design guidelines based on road classification. This includes minimum widths for a road right-of-way, vehicle lanes and shoulder and boulevards. When considering installing new and upgrading existing active transportation projects, roadway design guidelines outlined in the Rural Saanich Local Area Plan will be considered. Additionally, there is opportunity to consider other bicycle facility types such as advisory bicycle lanes which are used internationally in similar contexts and are outlined in the TAC Geometric Design Guidelines.

LRRS Comments:

- Although there is a nod to the clear indications in the 2008 RS LAP that many rural roads do not meet Collector Road guidelines, up to now, this is a weak and ineffective Action.
- There is nothing in this Action to actually address the current situation of non-conforming Collector roads, those which do not meet the safety and design specifications for Collector roads, but which are still given the default speed of 50 kph.
- This Action contains hopeful references to the 2008 RS LAP, and to considering ‘other bicycle facility types such as advisory bicycle lanes’, but the language is vague, makes no commitments and does not confront the issues of speed and safety on these roads.
- “When considering installing new and upgrading existing active transportation projects”: we wonder what is meant here; not only are there very few existing AT projects on these roads, **we have been told nothing is planned** in the 30 year cycle of this ATP for the roads for which we advocate (Oldfield and Old West Saanich for example).
- As this Action references the 2008 RS LAP it is important to note that on pages 66 and 67 of the LAP recommendations are made for road re-classification, but these have not been followed. Roads should be designated by the degree to which they meet the safety and design specifications for that designation, not by the function (heavy commuter/commercial use) which they have been allowed to fulfill. This is too long a discussion to embark on here, but significantly undermines safe Active Transportation use and **so has to be dealt with in this Active Transportation Plan.**

ACTION 1E.5

ENHANCE WAYFINDING FOR TRAILS AND PATHWAYS IN RURAL SAANICH.

It was noted through engagement with residents and stakeholders that there are a number of trails and pathways in Rural Saanich that are not well marked or easy to find unless people are familiar with the community. It was recognized that enhanced wayfinding of these trails and pathways would help to make traveling through Rural Saanich by foot and



bike more convenient. Wayfinding will be enhanced for trails and pathways in Rural Saanich.

LRRS Comments:

- This is a good idea but 'icing on the cake' if AT use of the roads to get to those pathways is dangerous and uncomfortable.

ACTION 1E.6

CONSIDER THE NEEDS OF EQUESTRIANS AND OTHER PATHWAY USERS WHEN IMPROVING PATHWAYS IN RURAL SAANICH.

As identified in the Rural Saanich Local Area Plan, the equestrian community is important in Rural Saanich and horse riding is a recreational pursuit for many residents. The Rural Saanich Local Area Plan also identifies equestrian routes in Rural Saanich that have been identified as popular well used routes. The special needs of equestrians and other pathway users will be carefully considered when considering changes to pathways and trails in Rural Saanich improvements.

LRRS Comments:

- Equestrians and other users need to use the roads to get to these paths, and this is often not a safe and comfortable journey. (For example, equestrian users must use Oldfield and Brookleigh to access the Elk Beaver Lake paths).
- Roadway use, for access to these path networks, has to be safe and comfortable for Active Transportation users.
- There is nothing in this Action to ensure that safe road use. In short, Equestrian (and other) needs are not actually being considered in a meaningful way.
- In addition, we understand that existing off road pathways are not maintained and are hard for equestrians to use. Finally, we have recently been told by Parks that there is no current funding for any proposed pathways.

In summary the Actions in the ATP, as it is currently written, are neither adequate nor effective for rural AT needs.

In Part 3 of our presentation we outline how these gaps could start to be remedied.

LRRS

