

MINUTES
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
Thursday April 22, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Karen Harper (Chair), Brian Collier, Dave Marecek, Karen Laberee, Darrell Wick, Jim Grayson, Rachel Corder, Trevor Barry and Graham Elder (4:36 p.m.).

Staff: Pam Hartling, Senior Planner (Community Planning); Troy McKay, Manager, Transportation & Development Services; David Williams, Engineering Supervisor; Mike Goldsworthy, Park Planner Designer; and Megan MacDonald, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Susan Kerr and Jade Yehia (non-voting liaison).

MINUTES

MOVED by T. Barry and Seconded by B. Collier: "That the Minutes of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee meeting held March 25, 2021, be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

CHAIRS REMARKS

The Chair provided a verbal update on the active transportation initiatives, the following was noted:

- The Parks Department has begun a geotag quest, which involves participants visiting different parks and trails. This is a COVID friendly event that encourages exploring Saanich. There are prizes that can be won.

CORDOVA BAY LOCAL AREA PLAN

The Senior Planner provided a presentation highlighting the active transportation aspects of the Draft Cordova Bay Local Area Plan (LAP). The following was noted:

- The LAP is part of the Official Community Plan framework. The LAP provides detail at a neighborhood level, incorporating the latest municipal direction including Indigenous content, housing policy, climate change and the Active Transportation Plan.
- There were many opportunities for community input while the plan was being drafted. This input helped identify issues, priorities, and the future vision for transportation and active transportation. A village design charrette was created, a transportation workshop was held, along with advisory committee input and survey feedback.
- Cordova Bay is a car dependant and car oriented area, 50% of Cordova Bay is outside the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB). There is only basic transit service, which is provided hourly, with no evening service and minimal service on the weekend. There are challenging topographical restraints, and a curvilinear street pattern.
- The village area has been designated for growth and density, as well as creating a welcoming pedestrian realm. Safety and comfort will be improved in the village with a treed boulevard, crossings every 100 meters, sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides, and implementing new design guidelines to orient buildings to the pedestrian realm.
- Additional active transportation improvements will be made based on goals outlined in the Active Transportation Plan (ATP). Improvements to Lochside Drive at the Lochside Regional Trail (LRT) are planned to minimize conflicts between multiple user groups.

- Further improvements to Lochside Drive include traffic and parking reduction strategies, a trail connector at Doumac, a wayfinding/signage program, prioritizing north-south travel and potentially considering a lower speed limit. The intention is to maintain the intimate treed character of the street with shoulders for pedestrians.
- Proposed improvements to the major corridor includes 10 new pedestrian crossings, bike lanes on both sides, sidewalks on both sides within the UCB, separating bike lanes and sidewalks where possible with a landscaped boulevard, and traffic calming measures.
- The Lochside Regional Trail is an asset which runs through Cordova Bay. Shared streets will further improve local connections around Cordova Bay, and increased densification will help support improved transit service.
- Some residential streets on the Ridge serve as collector streets, and the LAP provides a vision for how pedestrian facilities will be added in the future.
- Increasing transit service levels is a priority for the community. Long term service level improvements will require increased density. Improved bus stops and better access to transit stops along with park and ride facilities on pat bay highway which will improve service for all.
- The new crossings on Cordova Bay Road and ongoing ATP improvements are high priorities, other improvements will be implemented in the medium to long term.
- A pedestrian crossing to Elk/Beaver Lake is mentioned as long term goal.

In response to questions and comments from the committee, the following was noted:

- The draft LAP proposes a plaza or amenity at Doumac Ave and Lochside Drive.
- There is a route down the steep hill on Sea Ridge as well as a connection from Sea Ridge to Amblewood, the Committee would like to see this route reflected in the plan.
- Current cycling on Lochside Drive is not All Ages and Abilities (AAA).
- Europe has chicanes, one way traffic and lower speed limits on shared streets, it would be ideal to have additional measures in place to slow traffic on Cordova Bay Road.
- It is important to ensure that secure bike parking is available in private and public areas, the design guidelines should reflect the need for secure bike parking.
- The East/West green connector to Elk/Beaver Lake is a great idea. The committee would like the LAP to indicate that the connector is not exclusively for pedestrians and can support cyclists as well.
- Cordova Bay is an area characterized by narrow streets that are intimate and heavily treed. The LAP designs will work to maintain this non-standard streetscape.
- Municipal parking standards are being reviewed, developments are generally trending towards lower parking requirements, especially in areas close to villages or centers.
- The Lochside Trail may require improvements to make it family friendly. Considerable improvements are proposed in the LAP. These changes will improve much of this trail, including lower speed limits and pedestrian segregation.
- Community amenities including bike racks and benches, toilets and fountains are a priority to residents. Wayfinding signs will improve beach access in multiple areas.
- The increased pedestrian crossings on Cordova Bay are not expected to lead to traffic diversions by motorists. The LAP includes sidewalks on both side of Cordova Bay Road, which may decrease the need to cross the road to seek a sidewalk.
- Additional factors which may lead to a reduction in speed on Cordova Bay Road include less distance to accelerate between long straight stretches and enforcement campaigns to go along with a lower speed limit.
- Transit is problematic at this time, increased density and connectivity will help to increase the number of users of transit and support more service.

*** G. Elder entered the meeting at 4:36 ***

MOVED by T. Barry and Seconded by B. Collier: “That the Active Transportation Advisory Committee supports the approval of the Draft Cordova Bay Local Area Plan in principle. The committee would like to see any proposed changes to the draft plan which are based on the feedback provided by the committee, as an item on the next agenda.”

CARRIED

LEADING PEDESTRIAN INTERVALS

The Senior Manager, Transportation and Development Services introduced the Engineering Supervisor who provided information regarding signals in the municipality. The following was noted:

- Leading pedestrian Intervals (LPI) are a priority in the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), which Engineering has begun working on in the past couple years.
- LPIs or pedestrian head-starts are currently installed at 15 intersections. They give a priority “walk” signal to pedestrians, which allows pedestrians to enter the intersection before traffic gets a green light, making them more visible in the intersection.
- There are 112 traffic signals in Saanich, but we don’t have control over all of them.
- Twenty-two of the busiest signals (located along Blanshard, Vernon, and McKenzie) are under the control of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI).
- There are 84 intersections are under Saanich’s control; 61 are vehicle and pedestrian crossings, while 23 are pedestrian actuated.
- Feedback received about the walk signal indicated that the time was too short.
- The walk signal is when pedestrian can proceed and has right-of-way over all vehicles.
- It is illegal for pedestrians to enter the roadway if the “don’t walk” light is flashing or on.
- Over the years there has been much progress to update signal timings for slower walkers. Timing used to be 4-7 seconds to cross the street regardless of length.
- Saanich has used 8 seconds since 2005 but are still hearing they need to be longer.
- Pedestrian timing with leading pedestrian intervals changes were made because this improves safety, barriers and comfort for pedestrians. Saanich is a leader with this technology in BC along with Surrey, and also nearby Seattle.
- A trial project at Cedar Hill Cross Road at Braefoot in 2019 showed LPI helps drivers see pedestrians crossing. Drivers stopped inching forward and behave more considerately. Positive feedback has been received on this system. There is no extra delay for drivers as they would already be waiting for pedestrians anyway.
- One more recent project took it a step further and Saanich installed LPI and a Leading Bicycle Interval (LBI) signal at Royal Oak and Lochside Drive trail crossing.
- Increasing the length of time to cross the road benefits all pedestrians. Since adoption of the ATP rapid intersection safety improvements have taken place.
- One of the successes is they are cost effective; the cost is less than \$10,000. This improves accessibility and includes countdown timers. Additionally an ICBC partnership is available for funding. The safety benefits are significant: there are no stats available yet in a Saanich context but other jurisdictions are seeing a 60% reduction in collision with vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists.
- Phasing of signals is not compatible with all areas as it can cause ‘yellow trap or left-turn trap’ with left-turn phases for areas where cars turn left first.
- Staff have identified about 30 more LPIs that can be added in the next two years.
- Information can be located on the Saanich website on where LPIs are installed and planned to be installed. Some of these are done via requests received and also through the safe routes to schools program. There are many LPIs close to schools, and also near major commercial centres (areas with lots of drivers and pedestrians).

In response to questions and comments from the committee, the following was noted:

- The LPI is not ideal for all intersections, especially those with a priority left turn arrow. In some cases taking away the priority left turn may be an option at a later date.
- Driver education on this new initiative is important, especially the LBI. The Communications Department may be able to help with an awareness campaign.
- It would be beneficial to have a cyclist button on center meridians/islands to turn left.
- The Gorge Road and Admirals Road intersection is greatly improved with the installation of an LPI, members of the committee appreciate how much better it is.
- The committee would like to see more LBI's installed in Saanich.
- The scattergun approach used in Europe on Government Street and Wharf Street/Humboldt Street in Victoria is an interesting approach. Engineering has looked at possibly implementing one in Saanich, however it is difficult in larger intersections.

BIKE SKILLS PARK AT GEORGE TRIPP STATION

The Park Planner Designer provided a brief update of the bike skills park at George Tripp Station. Three potential designs have been posted online as a virtual open house for feedback from the community. The committee was encouraged to provide their feedback on the options online. Given time constraints of this meeting, the full presentation will be provided at the May meeting instead.

ROUNDTABLE

The following was noted:

- Committee members mention concerns about the trail between McKenzie and Quadra. The Senior Manager of Transportation & Development Services stated that the CRD and Saanich have this area included on the work plans for the summer.
- The Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition has been renamed to Capital Bike. This includes renaming Bike to Work Week to Go By Bike Week.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is Thursday May 27th, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

Councillor Harper, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary