

MINUTES
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held virtually via Microsoft Teams
Thursday October 28, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Karen Harper (Chair), Trevor Barry, Brian Collier, Rachel Corder, Graham Elder, Jim Grayson, Karen Laberee, Dave Marecek-, Robert McLeod and Darrell Wick

Staff: Troy McKay, Manager, Transportation & Development Services; Megan Squires, Senior Transportation Planner; Pam Hartling, Senior Planner (Community Planning); Steven Kruk, Saanich Police; Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk.

Guests: Pam Harrison and John Potter, Livable Roads for Rural Saanich

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

AGENDA

MOVED by B. Collier and Seconded by R. Corder: “That the order of business included on the agenda of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee meeting, be amended to consider item 4 - Draft Cordova Bay Local Area Plan prior to item 3.”

CARRIED

MINUTES

MOVED by B. Collier and Seconded by R. Corder: “That the minutes of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee meeting held June 24, be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIRS REMARKS

The Chair provided information on recent topics of interest to the committee, the following was noted:

- The 2021 Greater Victoria Vital Signs Report was recently released. This included information including the creation of 15 km of new buffered and protected bike lanes, statistics on transit use and other active transportation information from 2020.
- Active transportation use went down during the COVID-19 pandemic as many people were working at home and avoiding many activities such as dining out and recreation.
- Housing in the Greater Victoria Region had a D+ grade, which is the lowest it has ever been. There is a need for Saanich to create compact livable neighbourhoods within the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB).
- The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) recently passed a motion related to the need for safe passing distance laws in our province. There is interest in how police currently apply safe passing rules, and if there is consistency between jurisdictions in the region.
- The recent Committee recommendation to Council related to the regional management of the interurban trail was supported on October 18th. This item will be added to the

agenda for the future joint meeting with Central Saanich.

- The Saanich E-bike Incentive Program is currently underway, rebates will be provided to residents who qualify and complete the registration process.

PROPOSED CORDOVA BAY LOCAL AREA PLAN

The Chair provided information on the inclusion of the Proposed Cordova Bay Local Area Plan on the agenda. This item was discussed during the May 27, 2021, Active Transportation Advisory Committee meeting, and a motion of support was provided. This item has been included again now that the Housing Strategy has been approved. The committee mandate does not relate to housing, and it was agreed that this item was adequately dealt with previously. It was determined that the previous motion of support could be provided again.

MOVED by K. Laberee and Seconded by B. Collier: “That the Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommends that Council approves the Cordova Bay Local Area Plan.”

CARRIED

LIVABLE ROADS FOR RURAL SAANICH

P. Harrison spoke about the concerns of Livable Roads for Rural Saanich (LRRS), along with the summary and requests the group has sent to Saanich. The following was noted:

- Rural road require a different approach in order to achieve safety and comfort for vulnerable users. Accident statistics do not mean that a road is useable for all.
- Sidewalks, bike lanes and infrastructure are not realistic or timely for the current issues faced on rural roads. Speed reduction is the most logical and cost effective option.
- The recent Council motion to have the Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommend short term options to promote active transportation is promising.
- LRRS would like to have the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) wording improved to be more inclusive to rural roads during the 2023/2024 refresh.
- LRRS would also like Council to consider a speed reduction pilot program for some lined roads. The current Provincial Pilot Program is only proposed for unlined roads.
- Narrow pavement shoulder width, blind corners and rocky outcrops complicate the driving conditions on many rural roads.
- There could be two approaches to lowering the speed limit in rural Saanich, a general lowering of all roads in rural Saanich, or certain lined collector roads in rural Saanich which fall below the safety specs for collector roads.
- The lens is for vulnerable user safety and comfort, not driver convenience or traffic flow, there are alternative routes which allow for higher speeds and more volume.
- LRRS has assessed the rural roads with a focus on vulnerable users, bike safety, connectivity, and signage requirements. There is a need for meaningful change, 40 km/h would be much more suitable for most roads in rural Saanich.
- There are budget restraints, LRRS would like the committee to encourage Council to allocate more funds for small impactful changes outside of big projects.
- There is interest in Council working with Central Saanich to improve traffic calming measures on Oldfield, Old West Saanich and Sparton Roads. There is a need to prioritize vulnerable users, including equestrians, on some roads.
- The Truck Bylaw should also be reviewed with Central Saanich to lower the number of courier and delivery vehicles who regularly violate the bylaw.
- There are many opportunities for traffic calming and speed reduction pilot programs.

A discussion with committee members took place, the following was noted:

- The focus of the presentation is not on traditional active transportation methods, the presentation shows that there are legitimate concerns of rural Saanich residents.
- Although the ATP is primarily focused on urban development, a section of the plan is specific to rural Saanich as a result of communication with residents.
- The term “shared pavement” is concerning for those who use the roads. This term means that there are no sidewalks. Equestrians, cyclists and pedestrians share the roads with motorists, which leads to many close calls and discomfort for all.
- There are additional roads and routes which are of concern. LRRS focuses on roads where they have authentic knowledge.
- The concerns on the roads that have been mentioned are valid, the roads are rural residential roads that have a high volume of traffic due to also being connectors.
- To make the changes requested to lower speed, a bylaw would need to be created which specifically names each street that is to be lowered.
- Speed bumps are effective at slowing people down. Policy and signs are good, but a deterrent or traffic calming devices are likely needed too.
- The hierarchy of roads in Saanich includes highways, major roads, collector roads, and local roads, which are defined in the Official Community Plan (OCP). Most concerns are related to the major roads and collector roads. Changing the classification of the roads would require changes to the OCP and the LAP.
- The Provincial pilot project to lower speeds applies to roads without a yellow centre line. This would not apply to the roads that LRRS has expressed concerns about.
- If the objective is to lower the speed in rural Saanich, it would be best to change the bylaw and install the signs as currently permitted under the Motor Vehicle Act.
- The pavement width on collector roads does not allow for the safety of all users.
- Reducing the speed limit to 30 km/h on all rural roads is likely not necessary.
- It would be best to take the three pronged approach, policy, signage and passive forms of speed reduction such as speed bumps and traffic circles.
- This project is not currently on the Engineering work plan, in order for staff to begin work, a motion to Council to direct staff to begin this project would be needed.
- Speed bumps are good at slowing cars down to about 40-45 km/h, however they often lead to complaints from nearby neighbors. Centre line bollards and one way yield points are useful, however they come with a significant cost.
- This complex topic would be appropriate for more in depth discussions, a working group to consider mores detail prior to making a formal motion would be preferred.

MOVED by D. Maracek and Seconded by T. Barry, “That the Active Transportation Advisory Committee form a working group to discuss the concerns raised by Livable Roads for Rural Saanich, and come up with possible actions for next steps.”

CARRIED

COUNCIL REFERRAL MOTIONS

On October 18th, 2021, Council passed two motions related to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, which were:

- “That Council ask the Active Transportation Advisory Committee to consider and recommend short-term and/or pilot projects to improve road safety/active transportation within the District of Saanich where Active Transportation projects are determined medium-to long-term priority areas.”

- “That Council direct staff to coordinate with the Township of Esquimalt on active transportation designs for Tillicum Road as soon as possible and identify the Tillicum Road from Arena Way to Tillicum Bridge Active Transportation Project as a short term priority in the Active Transportation Plan 2023/24 refresh.”

The committee will be able to consider alternative approaches to address and implement active transportation initiatives in Saanich. Work on the first motion related to short-term and/or pilot projects has officially begun with the creation of the working group to look at options in rural Saanich. It was requested that staff bring forward a list of ideas they see as being beneficial or impactful. The Chair will research what is being done in nearby municipalities for short term initiatives and report back with ideas.

ROUNDTABLE

The following was noted:

- Saanich Police will provide information on safe passing laws and how they are enforced in Saanich and around the region at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is Thursday, November 25, 2021.

Councillor Harper, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary