

MINUTES
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
Thursday March 24, 2022, at 4:01 p.m.

Present: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau (Chair), Julia Cutt, Philip Marciniak, Reed Poynter, Dave Marecek, and Trevor Barry.

Staff: Troy McKay, Manager, Transportation & Development Services; Megan Squires, Senior Transportation Planner; David Williams, Engineering Supervisor; Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability; Mike Goldsworthy, Park Planner Designer; and Austin Winters, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Jade Yehia (non-voting liaison), Karen Laberee and Juliet Van Vliet.

MINUTES

MOVED by T. Barry and Seconded by P. Marciniak: “That the Minutes of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee meeting held February 24, 2022 be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Chair noted the following items during her Chair’s remarks:

- There is the potential for a field visit with the Committee sometime in the future to see some of the new improvements to active transportation infrastructure within Saanich.
- There have been several applications received for the ATAC membership call for an individual in a parent advisory committee, an individual that is a transit user, and an individual that is a UVic or Camosun Faculty member.

2021 CLIMATE REPORT CARD

The Manager of Sustainability delivered a presentation on the 2021 Climate Report Card. The following was noted:

- The updated Climate Plan was approved by Council in January 2020.
- The Plan provides a renewed policy framework and action plan for a comprehensive response to climate change in Saanich over the next 10 years.
- The Plan aims to cut community wide greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 and to net zero by 2050.
- The Plan also sets new targets for municipal operations which assists in Saanich’s aim to lead by example.
- Saanich has a goal to cut GHG emissions in half operationally by 2025 and then to get to net zero by 2040.
- The focus areas of the Plan include mobility; buildings and infrastructure; food and materials; ecosystems; community well-being; and leadership in district operations.

- The 2021 Report Card is about positive action that is being taken in Saanich, but Saanich is cognisant of the climate emergency that is taking place currently.
- There has been a 17% reduction in GHG emissions since 2007 community wide in Saanich.
- There are 131 actions in the Climate Plan with 86 of those actions were to be initiated within the first two years of the Plan and 62 of those actions are ongoing or on track.
- 24 actions are currently behind schedule or on hold for the Plan.
- 46% of Saanich's total community wide emissions are related to transportation for 2020.
- Accelerating the objectives of the Active Transportation Plan is a key priority of the Climate Plan.
- The e-bike incentive program is also a key part of the Climate Plan to encourage e-bike use.

The following was noted during discussion with committee members:

- With respect to the consumption based inventory for buildings going down by absolute and relative percent an inquiry was made over why it is going down.
- Staff noted they would get back to the committee on this inquiry.
- There was questioning over whether there are any actions in place to reinforce the increased active transportation behaviours established during the pandemic to ensure the behaviours last long term.
- For new immigrants different programs may be established to encourage e-bike usage and to teach individuals.
- An inquiry was made if anything can be done to encourage working from home to limit the amount of vehicle GHG emissions.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ATAC COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERISM

The Chair led a discussion about potential opportunities for ATAC community volunteerism. The following was noted:

- On April 23rd, Saanich is hosting the “Saanich Earth Day Festival,” which is a variation on the “Saanich Cycling Festival” which has occurred in years past.
- It is an event for community members to come to using different forms of active transportation and it is intended to be both family-friendly and educational.
- There will be opportunities to try e-bikes and examples of electric vehicles at the event.
- Committee members are encouraged to attend the event as a booth will be set up for the Active Transportation Plan.
- There is a need for good quality photos of active transportation infrastructure and users within Saanich.
- All photos submitted must ensure that no identifiable people are in the photos or a release would have to be signed to allow the use of their face or any others in the submitted photo.
- A potential public contest may be held to encourage the submission of active transportation photos and the winning may be posted onto the cover of the Active Transportation Plan Update.

FOLLOW-UP ABOUT SHORT TERM IMPROVEMENTS FOR ROAD SAFETY

The Chair gave an update on the memo that was brought to Council regarding short term improvements for road safety. The following was noted:

- Saanich council approved 7.5 of the 8 recommendations brought forward by ATAC for short term improvements for road safety.
- There was a number of community members that wrote in support the ideas brought forward by ATAC.
- The .5 of the recommendations that was not approved was the reduction in travel lanes on Quadra Street, which was the most costly of the project ideas coming to 1.5 million dollars of the total 3.3 million proposed for the recommendations.
- One of the reasons for this recommendation not being approved was due to the potential impacts on transit as that is the best served corridor in the region currently.
- There was also recognition that through the planning process there will be a corridor plan for Quadra Street in the near future which sets out the vision for that corridor.
- The recommendations will not impact the budget thanks to some gas tax funds being put towards the projects.
- There was one position that was identified by the engineering staff as critical to expediting the Active Transportation Plan and that position also got added to the draft budget.
- The Committee may still be requested to add their input into where some of the recommendations should be implemented within Saanich.

The following was noted during discussion with committee members:

- An inquiry was made as to what schools would be targeted for the 3rd recommendation.
- Staff clarified that for all of the places that have major or collector roads there would be roughly 55 schools targeted and for the signage which is adding an extra strip to every school zone sign that says school zone in neon green there is about 125 locations for that to take place.
- The hope is to have everything completed with regards to recommendation 3 by September 2022.
- An inquiry was made as to where the bike boxes will be installed to which staff noted that no decision has been made yet.
- There was questioning over the fifth recommendation and how are residential streets transitioned to one side parking while the other side is for active transportation as well as what the criteria is for selecting these roads.
- Community associations will be contacted to get a better understanding of which roads should be targeted for this project.
- To transition roads to the desired ideal would include implementing no parking signs on one side of the road with a new curb and a pedestrian symbol on the remaining asphalt as well as some hazard bollards to signify the pedestrian pathway.

GUIDING POLICY FOR BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PRIORITIZATION AT SIGNALS

The Engineering Supervisor delivered a presentation on the guiding policy for bike and pedestrian prioritization at signals. The following was noted:

- There has been a lot of work done to the phasing of pedestrian signals.

- More work needs to be done with regards to the detection of users.
- Phasing refers to the period of time a certain direction of traffic can go or stop.
- Most intersections within Saanich have buttons from which the pedestrian must push to request for the cycle to allow the user to get the walking signal.
- The push buttons have been disabled during the busy periods of the day throughout the week and this information comes from signal datasets.
- There are three forms of detection used in Saanich for active modes:
 1. There are magnetic sensors in the pavement that detect cyclists;
 2. There are push buttons for cyclists and pedestrians; and
 3. Radar sensors have also been installed for cyclists.
- Every year new cyclist detection signals are installed, but currently improvements are needed at about 60% of Saanich's signals
- At the current pace it would take at least 10 years to see all signals retrofitted.

The following was noted during discussion with committee members:

- An inquiry was made over the feasibility of creating an application that would illuminate signals and traffic flow for cyclists.
- There was questioning into whether or not the sensors detect carbon fiber to which the staff clarified that the radar sensors do in fact recognize carbon fiber but more so it detects mass.
- Preference was noted towards sensors that allow the user to know that they have been detected.

DISCUSSION ABOUT SAANICH AND SEASIDE TOURING ROUTES DESIGNATION

The Manager of Transportation & Development Services led a discussion on Saanich and Seaside touring routes designation. The following was noted during the discussion with committee members:

- To view the Saanich touring route follow the link below:
 - <https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Community/Documents/Engineering/SaanTR%20Signed%20Route%20May%202004.pdf>
- Nearly all of the Saanich touring route does not meet the standards set out by the BC Active Transportation Design Guidelines.
- By advertising this route as a touring route for cyclists it could be seen as misguiding cyclists to believe this route is up to standards.
- More needs to be done to recognize and manage both the seaside touring route and the Saanich touring routes.
- The current routes may need to be changed to better exemplify and utilize Saanich's upgraded active transportation infrastructure that is already in place and safer for cyclists.
- A suggestion was made to alter the name from touring route to sight-seeing route.
- Potentially implement signage to indicate that these routes are in fact touring routes for cyclists and that vehicles should pass cyclists slow and wide.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is Thursday, March 24, 2022.

Councillor Mersereau, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Austin Winters, Committee Secretary