

FAQ

Active Transportation Plan



Q. What is active transportation?

A. Active Transportation is any active trip you make to get yourself, or others, from one place to another without using a motor vehicle, whether it is to work, school, shopping, recreation, or for social visits. Active transportation includes any form of human powered transportation.

Walking and cycling are the most popular and well-known forms of active transportation. However, the definition extends much further than that – as long as it's active, you choose the mode of travel. This can include skateboarding, riding a horse, in-line skating, using a mobility aid, or using any of these travel modes to get to where you can catch the bus.

Increasingly, active transportation also includes travelling with the help of a device that gives you a boost, such as an electric bike or electric scooter.



Q. What is the Active Transportation Plan?

A. The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) is a 30-year plan for investments in active transportation in Saanich.

It establishes a vision, goals and targets to improve active transportation and it outlines a series of strategies and actions related to three overarching themes: connections, convenience and culture. An implementation and monitoring plan is included in the ATP. Its purpose is to prioritize investments and actions over the short, medium and long-term, as well as monitor progress towards achieving the plan's goals.

Q. Why is Saanich updating its Active Transportation Plan?

A. In 2023 the ATP will be five years old. A lot has changed since the plan was adopted and an update is needed to keep the plan relevant and actionable. In addition, with five years of implementation completed it is necessary to update and establish new priorities for the next five years.

Since adoption of the plan in 2018:

- The population in Saanich has increased by approximately 3%, adding approximately 3,500 new people to the community. Approximately 23% of the population is 65 years or older and the median age of Saanich residents is 44.4 years. As the population increases, pressure on the transportation system in Saanich will continue to grow. Similarly, as the population ages, the needs and travel patterns of older residents will require special consideration to ensure that individuals can participate in their communities regardless of their age or ability.
- The global pandemic resulted in a historic shift to remote work and learning, which contributed to declines in transit ridership and increased demand for more active transportation modes, such as cycling. Ridership on public transit is increasing again, as public health measures strengthen, and more people are returning to work and school.
- In 2020, Saanich Council adopted the Climate Plan – 100% Renewable and Resilient Saanich, which includes an accelerated target for trips taken by walking and cycling. The updated ATP will include the new target timeline (year 2030 instead of 2036). Changes to the implementation plan and prioritization of future actions may also be required to support this more aggressive target.
- Current use of electric bikes (e-bikes) in Saanich is unknown, but anecdotally local sales of e-bikes is growing rapidly, which is consistent with worldwide trends.



Q. What is an electric bike?

A. An electric bicycle, or e-bike, is a bicycle classified as a “motor assisted cycle” in BC’s Motor Vehicle Act. To be a motor-assisted cycle, an e-bike must have:

- an electric motor of 500 watts or less;
- functioning pedals; and
- a maximum speed of 32 km/h without pedaling.

To operate an e-bike, a person must be 16 years or older and wear a bicycle helmet. A driver’s license, registration and insurance are not required.



Q. What is micromobility?

A. Micromobility refers to ways of travelling around on small, wheeled devices including human-powered devices like skateboards and push-scooters, as well as electric devices like e-scooters. Micromobility can provide convenient ways to get around for short trips, and for connecting with transit or shared vehicles for longer trips. Currently, electric kick scooters are only permitted in communities taking part in BC’s electric scooter pilot project.

Q. What is Vision Zero?

A. Vision Zero is an international initiative that was first adopted in Sweden in 1997 and has gained momentum in many other countries in Europe, as well as cities throughout Canada and the United States. The core principles of Vision Zero are:

- Traffic fatalities and serious injuries are preventable;
- Human life and health are prioritized within all aspects of transportation systems;
- Human error is inevitable and transportation systems should be forgiving;
- Safety should focus on systems-level changes above influencing individual behaviour; and
- Speed is recognized and prioritized as the fundamental factor in crash severity.

Vision Zero is commonly supported by a systems-based approach referred to as a “Safe Systems Approach”, which recognizes that the systems in place to guide safety on roads, including policies, physical infrastructure, education and awareness, and enforcement must be multi-faceted and collaborative.

Through a Safe Systems Approach, safety for all road users is prioritized through:

1. Safe road designs
2. Safe speeds
3. Safe vehicles
4. People behaving safely

Q. Will traffic calming be included in the update to the ATP?

A. Yes. As part of the process to update the ATP, Saanich will be developing a traffic calming policy framework to address safety through road design.

Q. Will timelines and priorities be reviewed as part of the plan update?

A. Yes. The update of the ATP will include a review of current priorities and timelines for implementation.



Q. Where can I review Saanich's current Active Transportation Plan?

A. The current Active Transportation Plan is available [here](#). General information about active transportation in Saanich can be found at www.saanich.ca/atpupdate.

Q. How can I get involved in this process?

A. Updates about the planning process for the ATP are available [online](#). Follow the link on the webpage to register to receive email updates.

Additional resources

- [Saanich 2020 Climate Plan](#)
- [Saanich Electric Mobility Strategy](#)
- [Electric Bikes – E-Bike Info Sheet](#)
- [ATP Report Card 2021](#)
- [ATP Report Card 2020](#)
- [ATP Report Card 2019](#)