

LAKE COWICHAN // ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK PLAN

June 2021



Prepared for

Town of Lake Cowichan
39 South Shore Road
Lake Cowichan BC V0R 2G0

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1. OVERVIEW

Located on the traditional land of the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation, the Town of Lake Cowichan is a vibrant and compact lakeside community where residents enjoy a high quality of life with unparalleled access to recreation and nature. The town describes itself as “Vancouver Island’s best kept secret” and offers a relatively compact urban fabric resulting in walkable distances to complete essential trips.

The Town of Lake Cowichan’s first ever Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP) will help guide investments in walking, cycling and other forms of active transportation to support a more balanced transportation system—one that is more accessible, cost-effective and efficient in terms of infrastructure investments.

Promoting walking and cycling as attractive and convenient transportation choices can help reduce automobile dependence, increase physical activity levels, improve public health, reduce infrastructure demands, and create a more livable and vibrant community.

The Town’s ATNP was funded through the *B.C. Active Transportation Planning Grant* program. Its adoption will improve eligibility for multiple granting opportunities to support the plan’s implementation.



“I would love to see Lake Cowichan lead the way as a more environmentally friendly community. Encouraging a pedestrian and cyclist friendly town is a great start.”

- Survey Response

// What is Active Transportation?

Active transportation includes any form of human-powered transportation. Walking, which includes travelling with the support of a mobility device, and cycling are the most popular and well-known forms of active transportation, however the definition extends much more broadly to include skateboarding and in-line skating, as examples.

// What is the ATNP?

The ATNP describes the Town's vision and priorities for active transportation facilities. This includes identifying the envisioned long-term active transportation network, the type and design of active transportation facilities, and priorities for implementation.

// Who is the ATNP for?

The ATNP is intended to be used primarily to guide staff and elected officials in their decision making. The plan has been developed with input from community members and stakeholders – all of whom may reference the plan for their own purposes. The plan ensures priorities are well understood and the future network is well mapped providing a shared future for investment.

// How will the ATNP be used?

The ATNP will be used to inform priorities and guide investment in active transportation facilities. It will be used to inform capital planning and public investment in infrastructure, as well as to guide land development toward providing the type of active transportation facilities sought in Lake Cowichan. It will also communicate the Town's priorities for walking and cycling infrastructure to Provincial and Federal funding agencies to help strengthen future grant applications.

// Why Active Transportation?

Investments in active transportation generally help to create a more balanced transportation system, one that is more accessible to a broad range of community members and represents a more effective investment in public infrastructure.

The following are some of the benefits associated with active transportation:

Health

Human-powered travel contributes to increased activity levels, thereby reducing the health risks associated with a lack of physical activity such as heart disease and conditions resulting from high blood pressure and obesity. Secondary health benefits are achieved through reduced automobile emissions and lower stress levels.

Quality of Life

Engaging in active transportation provides improved access to Cowichan Lake and the Cowichan River, the community's many parks and recreation opportunities, as well as increasing opportunities for face-to-face interaction thereby improving social connectedness and combating social isolation.

Equity

Investment in active transportation infrastructure and services supports the creation of a more equitable transportation system that can be utilized by a broader range of community members, including children, older adults, and individuals with physical, sensory, or cognitive challenges that prevent may them from driving, as well as other equity-seeking groups. Access to public transportation and active transportation infrastructure is also often recognized as a "game changer" to addressing poverty reduction.

Safety

Increased use of active travel modes leads to fewer vehicles on the road and decreases road safety concerns. Consistent with key objectives in the OCP, the provision of safe and comfortable active transportation facilities is important in providing safe travel conditions and encouraging more walking and cycling.

Environment

Active travel modes contribute significantly less greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and air pollution compared to motor vehicle use further supporting the Town's climate change objectives. Trails and walking paths also allow for the preservation of green space and reduced overall spatial requirements associated with roads and parking facilities.

Local Economy

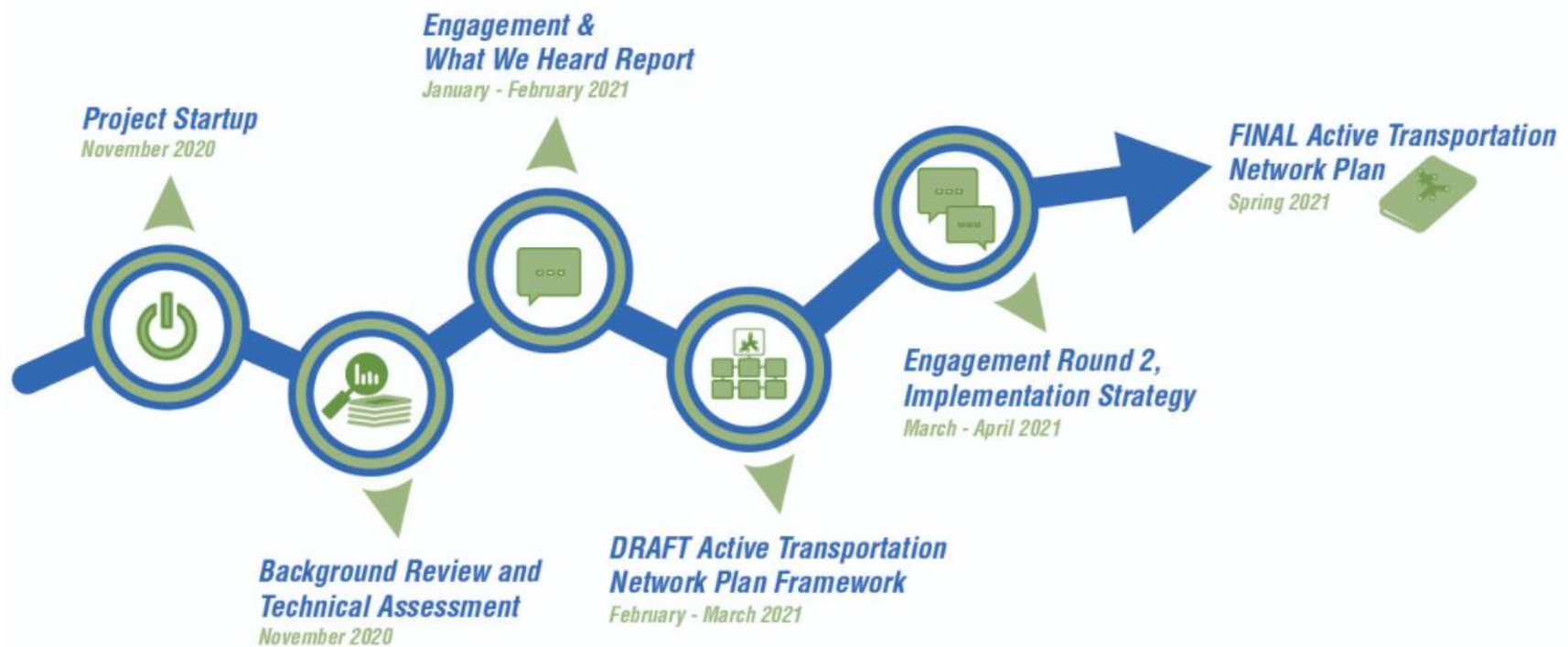
The local economy stands to benefit from an increase in pedestrian activity, particularly businesses along South Shore Road in the Town's Uptown and Downtown areas. Further, improved trails and cycling infrastructure present new opportunities for bicycle touring and recreational hiking that support local business and increase exposure for some of Lake Cowichan's small-scale businesses and surrounding tourism destinations.

Financial

Walking and cycling facilities are generally less expensive than larger road infrastructure investments, representing a more effective use of public funds. Responsible investments in infrastructure is a key goal of this plan. Further, the cost to purchase and maintain a vehicle is typically a much more expensive approach to personal transport as compared to active transportation options.

1.1 ATNP PROCESS

A high-level overview of the ATNP process is provided below. The process includes technical activities and community engagement and has followed an iterative and collaborative process involving on-going analyses, ideas generation, plan development, and feedback from Lake Cowichan residents, local stakeholders and potential partners, Town staff and Council, and the consulting team.



1.2 PARTICIPATION

Lake Cowichan residents participated in a number of engagement activities held as part of the ATNP process. Engagement approaches were adapted to ensure all current public health orders related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic were adhered to.

Participation in community engagement activities is summarized below.



344

Visits to
Story Maps Page



70

Survey
Responses



29

Social Media Shares
(from 4 posts)



42

Sounding Board
+ Open House
Participants

1.3 “WHAT WE HEARD”

An essential component of successful community planning initiatives is ensuring that resident and community input is integrated into the project. The community was engaged through a variety of opportunities in order to reach as broad an audience as possible given the challenges of direct engagement during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The “What We Heard” engagement summary is included in **Appendix A**.



A series of sounding boards were installed at Country Grocer seeking input from Lake Cowichan residents

Key Themes


Throughout the engagement process several key themes emerged. The points below include those themes identified through virtual open houses and community discussions as well as those that emerged through the online surveys.

- Active transportation is popular for daily trips throughout the community with nearly as many survey respondents walking or cycling to access services as those driving or travelling as a passenger in a motor vehicle. This demonstrates an interest in active transportation and potential to increase the numbers of active trips completed to fulfill essential needs with increased facility availability as the community grows. This is also evidence of community character that generally supports active transportation use.
- Upgrading and expanding the sidewalk network is a clear priority for the community, including identifying opportunities to improve maintenance standards and enforcement.
- Accessibility concerns were identified throughout the community, and included general concerns with vegetation overgrowth, utility pole placement narrowing sections of sidewalk and impeding mobility devices, and general surface conditions and access (lack of curb cuts, etc.). Access to the river and lakefront was also an identified challenge.
- Transit use is relatively low in Lake Cowichan, with residents citing infrequent and unreliable service, a lack of transit facilities, and limited destinations as transit-related challenges in the community.
- Desire for improved connections to the Trans Canada Trail & Cowichan Valley Trails and continued advocacy for a pathway across the future weir, and improvements to trestle infrastructure at other crossing locations.



**“Our sidewalks
need huge attention!”**

- Survey Response



**“I am so glad accessibility
is being considered the
norm, not an exception”**

- Open House
Participant

Survey Responses

An online community survey was available for all members of the public from December 23, 2020 to January 29, 2021 on the project's dedicated ArcGIS StoryMap project page and was promoted through the project's webpage and Town of Cowichan Lake Facebook posts. A mailout was also prepared and circulated to all residents by mail to encourage recipients to complete the online survey, request a paper survey if needed, and attend the virtual open house sessions. In total, the survey received 70 responses.

The online survey aimed to understand how community members travel through Lake Cowichan, and identify barriers, opportunities, and priorities for active transportation in the community. The following section provides a summary of the online survey results.

Who Responded?

The "Tell Us About Yourself" section provided an opportunity to understand the demographics of survey respondents, including their relationship with Lake Cowichan, their age, and any mobility limitations they may face.

Most survey respondents were residents of Lake Cowichan and Ts'uubaa-asatx (80%), with the remaining respondents regularly travelling through the Town (11%), often visiting Lake Cowichan (5%), and Other (4%).

Participants were also typically from older age cohorts, with 76% of respondents above the age of 45.

Identified Challenges & Opportunities

Understanding opportunities to address current barriers, perceived or real, to active transportation improves the ability for a plan to prioritize the most impactful recommendations.

To understand the opportunities, the ATNP online survey asked participants, “What are the barriers for walking more often than you currently do in Lake Cowichan?” (select up to three), the top four responses were:



The same question was posed for cycling challenges. The top four responses included:



16%
LACK OF DEDICATED
ON-STREET BICYCLE
LANES



13%
LACK OF BICYCLE
ROUTES SEPARATED
FROM TRAFFIC



11%
WEATHER



10%
INTERSECTION
SAFETY

Opportunities were also identified and mostly addressed the participant identified challenges. The following top opportunities were identified by survey respondents:



17%
REPAIR EXISTING
SIDEWALKS



16%
IMPROVE
MAINTENANCE ON
EXISTING FACILITIES



9%
BUILD MORE PAVED
TRAILS OR MULTI-
USE PATHS



8%
BUILD MORE
SIDEWALKS



8%
EXPAND ON-STREET
CYCLING NETWORK









8%
SPOT ACCESSIBILITY
IMPROVEMENTS



8%
INCREASE TRANSIT
SERVICE, IMPROVE
SCHEDULING, AND
DIRECT SERVICE

Locations of Concern

Residents were asked to identify locations of concern through the online Story Map project page, at the sounding board events, and at the virtual open houses. Themes emerged through these input opportunities for both walking and cycling when considering all input opportunities. These included:

-  Improve access to the lakefront, including at Lakeview Park and Kinsmen Duckpond
-  Enhance connections to the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation's pathway along North Shore Road to facilitate active transportation along the north shore
-  Improvements to the duck pond bridge crossing, including improved decking / surface and personal security considerations
-  Crossing improvements along Lake Cowichan Road for improved pedestrian safety
-  Utilize the wide roadway along Point Ideal Drive to create new cycling facilities connecting the Point Ideal neighbourhood and Lakeview Park with the Town Centre and Trans Canada Trail
-  Better incorporate the Trans Canada Trail into the Town Centre and the Town's trail network



Trans Canada Trail trailhead
nearby Hammond Road

2. SHAPING INFLUENCES

2.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Town of Lake Cowichan lies within the traditional territory of the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation (formerly known as the Lake Cowichan First Nation). The Ts'uubaa-asatx people have resided along the Cowichan Lake watershed for millennia. The Ts'uubaa-asatx people were severely affected by the introduction of diseases from European settlers, as well as accompanying land loss, Residential Schools and warring with neighbouring tribes. Their numbers declined significantly as a result.

Today, Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation has approximately 30 people residing on its reserve which lies to the northwest of the Town boundary. Non-native settlers first arrived at the forested area around Cowichan Lake by the end of the 19th Century. A small community originally called Sutton Creek was formed, centered around logging. The Cowichan River was used to transport harvested logs, and the town and surrounding area became home to several sawmills. Many of these sawmills continued for years; the final mill, the Youbou Mill, was closed in 2001.

Following news of a rail line into the region in 1910, the community's name was changed to Riverside, and in 1922 it was renamed to Lake Cowichan. Lake Cowichan was subsequently incorporated as a Village in 1944 and became a Town in 1996.

A protocol agreement was signed with the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation in 2013. The two entities collaborate on shared infrastructure including water and sanitary service, with future shared infrastructure anticipated as well. In 2015, the Ts'uubaa-asatx Town Square was officially opened – a symbol of the healthy, collaborative relationship between the Nation and the Town.

2.2 OUR COMMUNITY

A fulsome understanding of the characteristics of our community is needed to determine how best to plan for active transportation. The following are some of the key community demographics from the 2016 Census.

8.29

km²

Land Area //

The Town encompasses an area of 8.29 square kilometres (805 hectares). A small geographic area compared to most other small and mid-sized communities, this results in active transportation trip distances that are suitable and comfortable for a large number of Lake Cowichan residents.

3,226

people

Population //

Our community has a relatively small population, similar in size to communities like Chemainus, Cowichan Bay, Cobble Hill...

small population allows greater opportunity to shape active transportation to meet the specific needs of both existing and future populations.

49.5

median age

Median Age //

With a median age of 49.5 that is considerably higher than the Provincial average (43), we have an aging population. A particularly large portion of our community is between the ages of 50 and 70, as shown on the following page. Active transportation infrastructure should reflect this and ensure facilities are well maintained and prioritize accessibility improvements.

Lake Cowichan Resident Age Distribution, 2016



2.3 OUR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Lake Cowichan and the surrounding area boast some excellent active transportation opportunities. These include the Trans Canada Trail and Cowichan Valley Trail that connect Lake Cowichan to the rest of the Cowichan Valley, as well as new roadside pathway constructed by the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation on North Shore Road, immediate north of the Town's boundary.

Sidewalk coverage is good within the Town, with approximately 45% of all streets having a sidewalk on at least one side. The existing sidewalk network includes approximately 28km of sidewalks. Sidewalk condition varies significantly, and includes new sidewalks on South Shore Road as well as sidewalks with significant cracks and heaving in older neighbourhoods. The sidewalk and trail networks are supported by approximately 40 crosswalk locations.

Dedicated on-street cycling facilities are limited. An expanded on-street cycling network connecting existing off-street pathways are an important consideration of the ATNP.

Active transportation connections across the Cowichan River are vital to facilitating walking and cycling with the community, limiting trip distance, and providing an alternative to travel along roadways. There are currently two dedicated active transportation crossings – Duckpond, Cowichan Valley Trail – as well as the opportunity to cross via South Shore Road.

A summary of existing active transportation facilities and key community destinations for active transportation trips is included in **Map 1**.

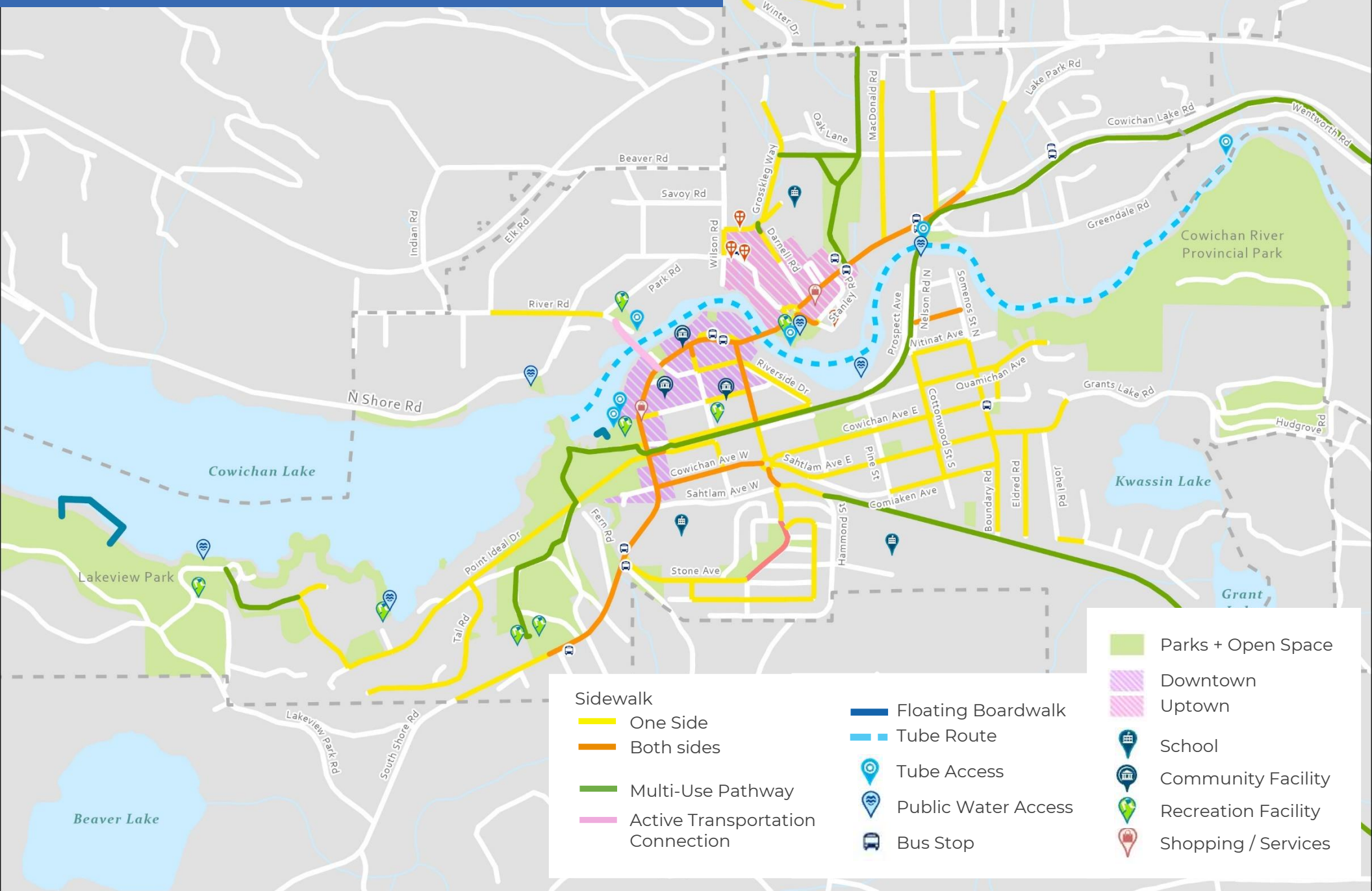
28km

Sidewalk length within
the Town boundary

45%

Streets with sidewalk on at
least one side

Map 1 // Existing Active Transportation Facilities + Community Destinations



Sidewalk

- One Side
- Both sides
- Multi-Use Pathway
- Active Transportation Connection

Floating Boardwalk

- Floating Boardwalk
- Tube Route
- Tube Access
- Public Water Access
- Bus Stop

Parks + Open Space

- Parks + Open Space
- Downtown
- Uptown
- School
- Community Facility
- Recreation Facility
- Shopping / Services

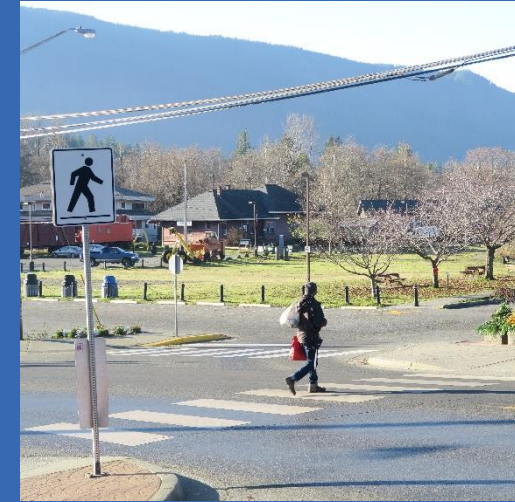
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS



We are fortunate to have both the Cowichan Valley Trail and TransCanada Trail in our community, providing a key corridor within Lake Cowichan and to the east to other destinations in the Cowichan Valley. These facilities are important active transportation corridors that are key building blocks for the ATNP and future active transportation facility development.



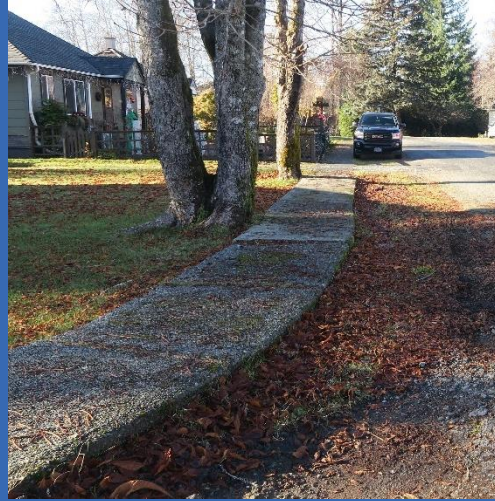
The roadside multi-use pathway on North Shore Road recently completed by the Ts'uubaa-asatx First Nation provides for safe, comfortable roadside walking conditions beyond the Town's boundary. Connections to this existing facility should be a key objective for the ATNP.



Improvements made to South Shore Road in 2013 allow for wide sidewalks, frequent pedestrian crossing opportunities and on-street parking in support of local businesses.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS, cont.

A series of off-road trails are provided through local parks and other natural areas that contribute to our active transportation network, as well as facilitate access to recreation and nature.



Our community includes a number of areas where old sidewalks are in disrepair with large cracks and uneven surfaces that have become tripping hazards. The Town will work to balance the need to repair old sidewalks with building new sidewalks to address network gaps.



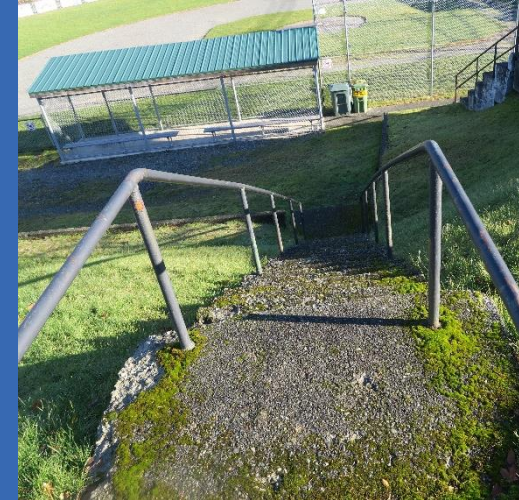
Our community includes three locations to cross the Cowichan River. Improving active transportation conditions on these crossings, as well as building connecting facilities at current crossings, is important to minimizing walking and cycling travel distances and promoting active transportation as an alternative to driving for local trips.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS, cont.

Access to Cowichan Lake and the Cowichan River is provided in a number of key locations throughout our community. There is potential to enhance existing access locations and add new locations through targeted active transportation improvement projects.



Sections of North Shore Road, as an example, include a wide shoulder area to accommodate walking and cycling, but without physical protection from adjacent vehicles.



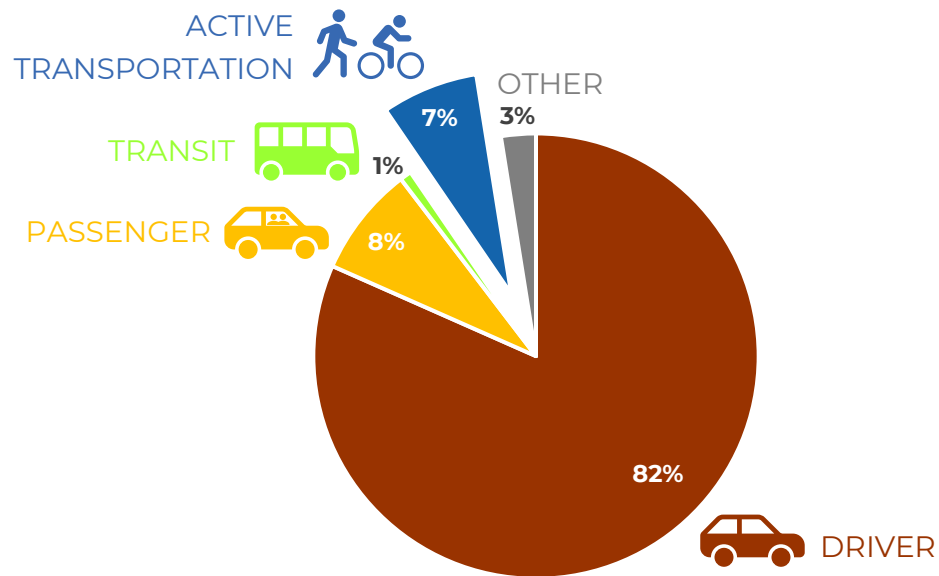
There are a number of locations in our community where improperly planned infrastructure result in physical barriers to certain community members. Opportunities to ensure future active transportation facilities allow for universal access are included in the ATNP.

2.4 GETTING AROUND

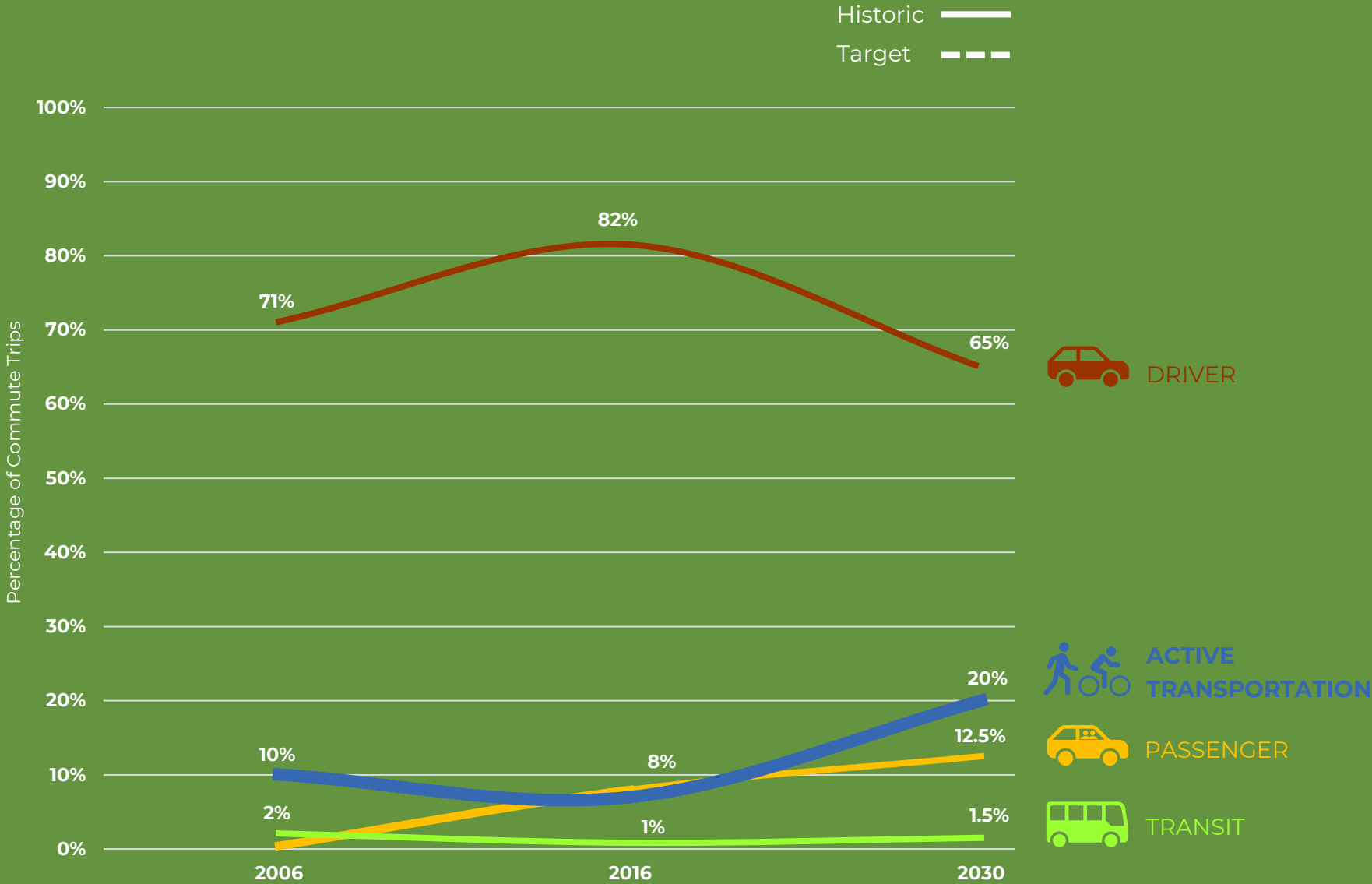
Single-occupant vehicle travel is the primary mode among Lake Cowichan residents, representing 82% of all commute trips, with a further 8% of trips as a passenger in a vehicle. While this represents only commute trips and that the non-vehicular mode share may be higher for other trip purposes, it still highlights the challenge and need to create conditions that encourage a greater number of trips by active modes and public transit.

The Town's Official Community Plan (OCP) contains strong policy direction in support of active transportation, as is explored in further detail in **Section 2.6**. This includes 20% of all commute trips by active modes (walking, cycling) by 2030 and a reduction in single-occupant vehicle use to 65% of all trips.

MODE SHARE FOR TRIPS TO WORK (2016)



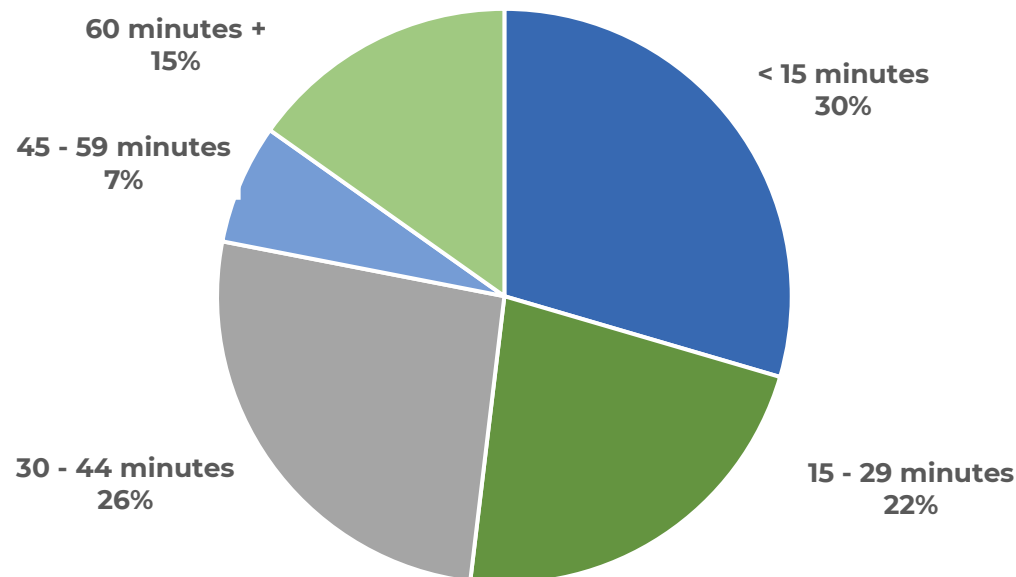
HISTORIC + TARGET MODE SHARE FOR TRIPS TO WORK



67% of commute trips are to jobs outside of Lake Cowichan, per the 2016 Canadian Census. The remaining third of trips within the Town are most easily targeted via active transportation to support a move away from single-occupancy vehicle trips.

The commute duration among Lake Cowichan residents ranges significantly as shown below. Trips lasting 15 minutes or less are most easily influenced to shift towards active modes as they are most likely to be within feasible walking or cycling distance particularly with the emerging popularity of e-bikes. Longer trips are likely to other employment centres, such as Duncan, Ladysmith and Nanaimo, and would be more difficult to fulfill through active means.

COMMUTE DURATION AMONG LAKE COWICHAN RESIDENTS (2016)



KEY STATISTICS

(2016 CENSUS)



Commute Trips
by Walking

6%



Commute Trips
by Bicycle

1%



Commute Trips
by Vehicle

90%



Commute Trips to
Locations Outside
Lake Cowichan

67%

2.5 STREET NETWORK + MULTI-MODAL SAFETY

The Town's street network consists of Highway, Main Street, Collector and Local street classifications. Key major streets include South Shore Road, North Shore Road, King George Street, Sahtlam Avenue and Point Ideal Drive. Each street classification plays an important role in the overall network, generally with the more major roads focused on moving traffic and the local streets primarily providing access.

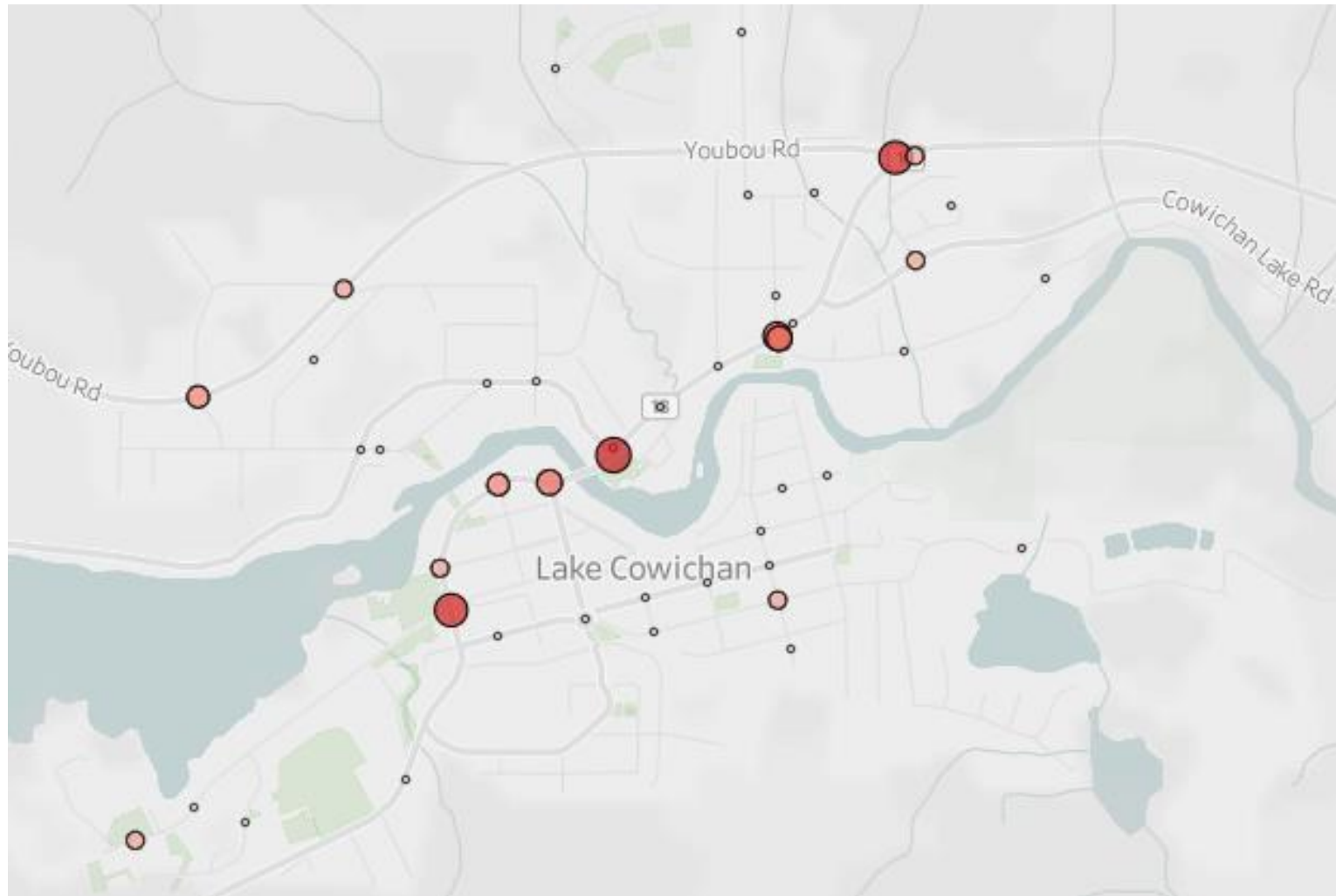
Understanding the street network and the specific function of each street classification is important in planning appropriate routes for active transportation and determining appropriate walking and cycling facilities given the volume and speed of adjacent vehicle traffic. The Town's street network map is included in **Map 2**.

Five-year (2016-2020) crash data provided by ICBC was summarized for locations in Lake Cowichan. This information includes both casualties (injury, death) and property damage, and accounts for crashes involving vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. The following locations were found to have the highest number of crashes among locations within the Town's boundaries, as summarized in the figure on the following page:

- Cowichan Lake Rd / Greendale Rd / Cowichan Valley Trail (9)
- Cowichan Valley Hwy / Youbou Rd (9)
- Cowichan Lake Rd / North Shore Rd / South Shore Rd (8)
- Point Ideal Rd / South Shore Rd / Wellington Rd (7)
- King George St / South Shore Rd (4)
- Corontation St / South Shore Rd (3)
- Indian Rd / Youbou Rd (3)

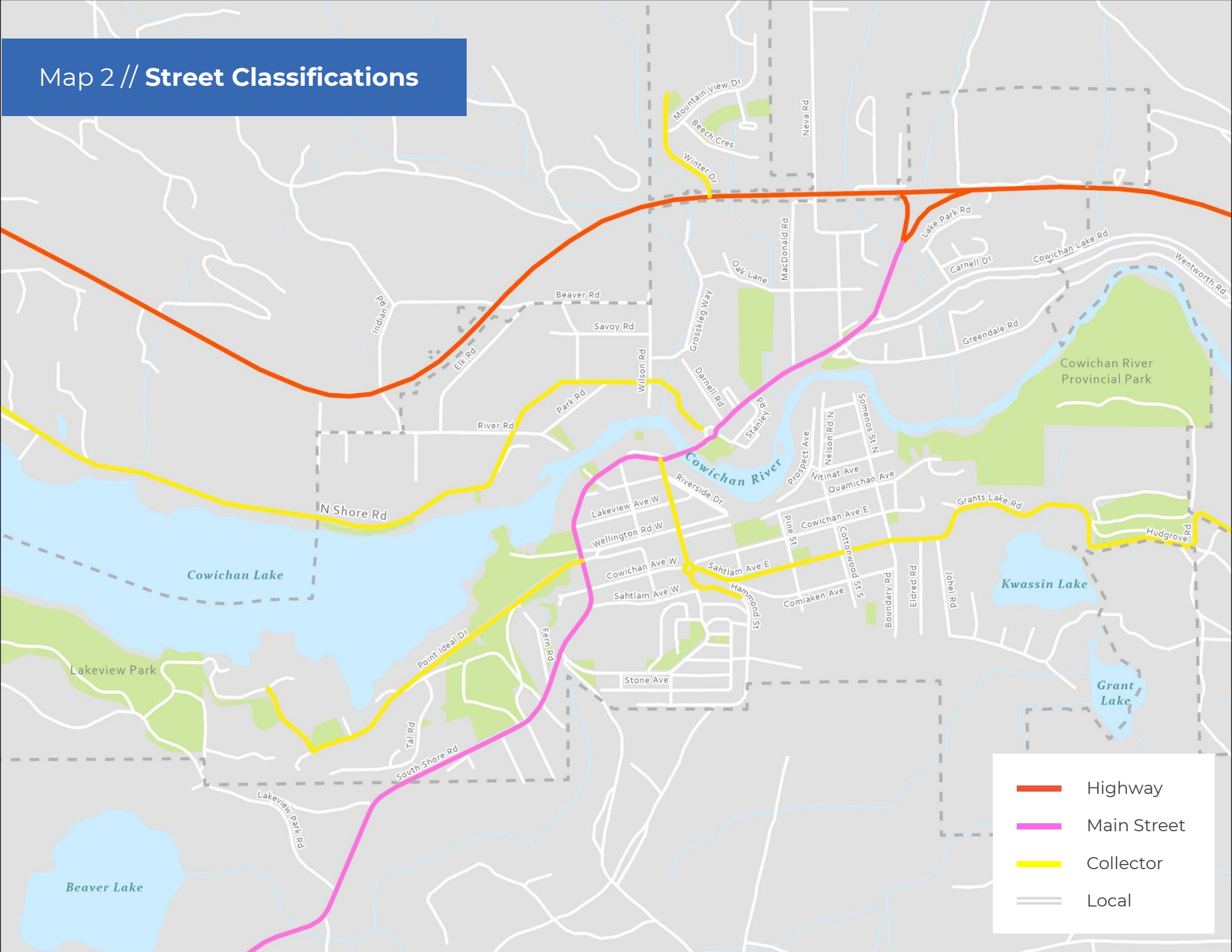
While the number of reported pedestrian and cyclist collisions is low, there are likely a number of more minor incidents or "near misses" that go unreported. Where vehicle collisions occur often indicates the location of underlying traffic safety issues and motorist indecision, which may impact comfort and safety among pedestrians and cyclists.

FIVE-YEAR CRASH DATA (2016-2020)¹



¹ Insurance Corporation of BC, Vancouver Island Crashes – 2016 to 2020. Available online at: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/icbc#!/vizhome/VancouverIslandCrashes/VIDashboard>

Map 2 // Street Classifications



2.6 POLICY CONTEXT

The ATNP is guided by key policy directions contained in the Town's established planning documents. The Official Community Plan (OCP) is a key guiding document providing the policy foundation and directions for the ATNP, as well as the Age Friendly Action Plan.

Key directions from both documents are summarized below.

Official Community Plan

The following are the key policies from the OCP that give direction to the ATNP:

3.4 Waterfront and Blueways

- 3) Improve existing public access points with wayfinding and with enhanced trail, boardwalk, seating, and beach facilities improvements as identified on Map 7 Parks, Open Space and Public Facilities – Greenways and Blueways,
- 5) Establish a network of pedestrian links between uses along waterfront areas, using existing trails and sidewalks;
- 6) For all redeveloped waterfront developments, negotiate with landowners to purchase or secure right-of-way to provide for a future trail in Downtown between Saywell Park and Central Park
- 7) Develop a trail within the North Shore Road Greenbelt (North Shore boardwalk in consultation and partnership with Lake Cowichan First Nations).
- 8) In areas of existing development where a trail location is desirable, negotiate with the landowner to acquire public access.

3.5 Greenways

- 1) Improve and enhance the greenways network in accordance with Map 7 Parks, Open Space and Public Facilities – Greenways and Blueways, with activities affecting them conducted in an environmentally sensitive manner. Priority improvements include:
 - a) Create wayfinding signage for trails and destinations
 - b) Create educational and historical signage
 - c) Create partnerships with Lake Cowichan First Nation, Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society, the CVRD, the Province, Timber West, developers and private property owners to promote, enhance and expand the greenways network.
 - d) Consider the acquisition of land or improvements to the greenways network when reviewing development applications.
- 2) Improvements may include:
 - a) The acquisition of land or rights of way for greenways corridors through purchase or lease, in cooperation with the Town;
 - b) The voluntary protection of greenways located on private property through restrictive covenants, easements, or gifting; and
 - c) The construction of physical improvements such as trails, signs and displays, riparian fencing, re-vegetation and erosion control measure.

4.5 Transportation

- 2) Adopt “complete street” standards to ensure safe access for all transportation modes and for people of all capabilities.
- 3) Build a comprehensive network of safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities using Town funds, grant funds and developer required improvements in accordance with applicable Town Bylaws. The annual capital budget shall include a line item specifically for replacing and updating sidewalks.
- 4) Improve pedestrian connections throughout the Town, along watercourses and in residential areas.
- 5) Ensure safe access for all is provided in the design and modification of all streets, sidewalks and pathways.
- 9) Create an Active Transportation Plan by 2020.

4.7 Accessibility

- 1) Develop and implement universal design guidelines for the public realm, and ensure these are consistent with our other urban design goals.
- 4) The Town shall work with other government agencies to achieve full accessibility to all public facilities.
- 6) Ensure accessibility and safety is considered for planning and design of buildings, the public realm and public parks.

5.3 Recreation, Parks + Institutions

- 3) Include age-friendly design elements such as level and wide walkways, wheelchair accessible picnic tables, older adult playground with exercise equipment.
- 4) All facilities and amenities provided by the Town must take into consideration the ability of all members of the community to access and enjoy them.

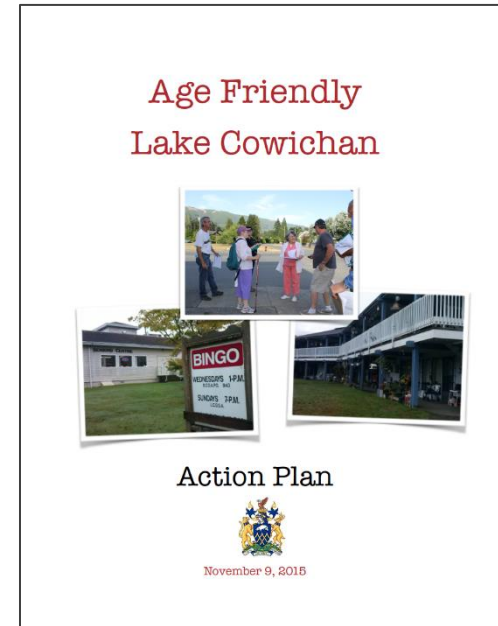
5.4 Community

- 3) Build pedestrian accessibility features in all new and renovated Town facilities, including parks, buildings, and mobility infrastructure.

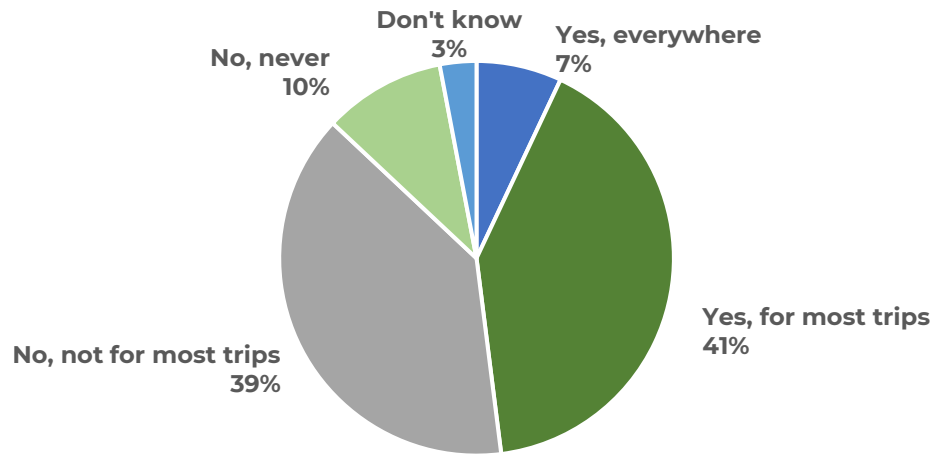
Lake Cowichan Age Friendly Action Plan

Developed in 2015, the *Lake Cowichan Age Friendly Action Plan* identifies a series of discrete actions to help the Town become a more age-friendly community. Transportation and mobility were identified as key areas for improvement, including the completion of a mobility audit that found specific improvement needed for sidewalks, crosswalks, curb letdowns and general maintenance.

A key action from the Age Friendly Action Plan included the need to prepare a plan and program to logically address specific sidewalk and crossing improvements as part of the Town’s on-going work program (e.g. sidewalks on North Shore and King George). The creation of this ATNP is addressing this need expressed in the Age Friendly Action Plan which expressed a desire for improved and/or expanded sidewalks to ensure those experiencing mobility challenges are able to travel throughout the community as shown below.



Question asked during survey for the Age Friendly Lake Cowichan Action Plan
"Are safe and comfortable sidewalks available where you need to go?"



2.7 NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES + JURISDICTION

A number of government agencies influence the provision of active transportation services and infrastructure in Lake Cowichan. The following is a summary of the organizations with influence over transportation in the community and their roles and responsibilities.

Town of Lake Cowichan //

The Town is responsible for planning, design and maintenance of infrastructure in road rights-of-way within the municipality (with exceptions, see below), including sidewalks and cycling facilities. The Town is also responsible for trails (excluding the Cowichan Valley Trail and Trans Canada Trail).

Ministry of Transportation + Infrastructure //

The Ministry of Transportation + Infrastructure (MoTI) has jurisdiction over the Cowichan Valley Highway / Youbou Road (Highway 18) corridor, as well as South Shore Road / Cowichan Lake Road through Lake Cowichan.

Additionally, MOTI has jurisdiction over roadways on the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation lands and in the CVRD.

Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation //

The Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation (formerly Lake Cowichan First Nation) have lands immediately northwest of the Town, with on-going land development along North Shore Road including a new roadside multi-use pathway.

Cowichan Valley Regional District //

Planning, maintenance and operations of regional parks and trails is undertaken by the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD), which includes the Cowichan Valley Trail and Trans Canada Trail, as well as trails within regional parks. The CVRD also undertakes regional planning in the Electoral Areas "F" and "I" immediately adjacent the Town's boundaries that relate to active transportation.

Cowichan Valley Trail crossing
of the Cowichan River

3. PLAN FRAMEWORK

3.1 VISION

A vision statement was developed to articulate what our active transportation network will look like in Lake Cowichan once the ATNP has been successfully implemented. The vision builds on directions established in the OCP and input received from Lake Cowichan residents.

Lake Cowichan is home to a connected network of high-quality, well-maintained active transportation facilities that enable people of all ages and abilities to walk and bicycle safely and comfortably throughout the community.



3.2 PRINCIPLES

There are two overarching principles that act as the foundation for all future active transportation investments and should guide facility prioritization and the ultimate design of each facility. These principles, combined with the goals outlined in the following section are fundamental to all future active transportation investment. The principles have been informed throughout the engagement process and discussions with Town Council, and build upon best practices and guidance in the Province's *Active Transportation Design Guide*.

These principles are **Universal Design** and **All Ages and Abilities**. Each is described below.

Principle no.1 //

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal design (sometimes also called inclusive design or barrier-free design) is the design and structure of an environment that is understood, accessed, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age or ability. This means creating a community and transportation system that is planned and designed around peoples' diverse needs and abilities (like children, parents, seniors, people with injuries or illnesses, and people with disabilities).

Universal design is a key direction for the ATNP, with the understanding that facilities provided for universal design benefit all community members. All future active transportation infrastructure is to be designed in accordance with the seven principles of universal design:

- 1// Equitable Use
- 2// Flexibility in Use
- 3// Simple and Intuitive Use
- 4// Perceptible Information
- 5// Tolerance for Error
- 6// Low Physical Effort
- 7// Size and Space for Approach and Use

Principle no.2 //

ALL AGES AND ABILITIES

All Ages + Abilities (also referred to as 'AAA' throughout this document) is the approach to active transportation planning and infrastructure design that aspires to create facilities that are comfortable, convenient, safe, and attractive for everyone, regardless of their age or physical ability.

Through the ATNP and future projects, we will seek to ensure that Lake Cowichan is a community where people of all ages and abilities are able to meet their day-to-day transportation needs.

3.3 GOALS

In support of the above vision and principles, the ATNP has six goals that are intended to provide direction to help achieve the vision identified above.



Goal 1 //

Create accessible and well-maintained walking, rolling, and cycling facilities



Goal 4 //

Build a culture and promote active transportation for both our residents and visitors



Goal 2 //

Make responsible investments in infrastructure and consider active transportation in all Infrastructure projects



Goal 5 //

Improve access to our community's natural, recreational, and tourism amenities



Goal 3 //

Encourage a shift to sustainable and active transportation to reduce GHG emissions



Goal 6 //

Improve road safety and livability by expanding the active transportation network



4. LONG-TERM NETWORK

The long-term network describes the location and design of active transportation facilities upon the successful completion of the ATNP. It represents improvements and investments in active transportation to help our community realize our vision and goals, as well as support the community building and land development directions contained in the Official Community Plan.

The long-term networks will not be realized until sometime into the future, likely well beyond the lifespan of this ATNP. This is a reality of our small town with limited infrastructure budget. Importantly though, the long-term networks provides a “roadmap” for how incremental network improvements may be made in a coordinated manner, working toward the longer-term vision. These incremental improvements are important initial steps toward realizing the longer-term vision and ensuring that investments made today are coordinated and consistent with improvements that may be made in future.

The following sections describe the multi-modal transportation network plans, active transportation facility types, and guidance for universal design and supporting active transportation facilities.

4.1 NETWORK PLANS



WALKING + ROLLING NETWORK

Walking and rolling are fundamental travel modes – every trip begins or ends with walking or rolling. The build-out of the walking and rolling network will help support pedestrian activity, as well as improve access and accessibility, and connections to nature. A key directive is to work toward sidewalks on all streets and sidewalks on both sides of busy, major streets (Collector, Main Street).

The Long-Term Walking + Rolling Network, shown on **Map 3**, highlights an interconnected network of sidewalks, walkways and pathways that provide access for people walking and rolling.



CYCLING NETWORK

The Long-Term Cycling Network, shown on **Map 4**, identifies on- and off-street cycling routes that connect all corners of our community. The planned network builds on the foundational Trans Canada Trail and Cowichan Valley Trail corridors, with future connecting pathways and new on-street cycling facilities connecting cyclists to key destinations throughout the community.



BLUEWAYS NETWORK

We are a waterfront community. A key component of our active transportation network is facilitating access to the Cowichan River to allow residents and visitors to reach the waterfront and enjoy opportunities for tube floating. This not only provides recreation and enjoyment, it helps encourage a greater number of trips via active travel modes.

The Long-Term Blueways Network, shown on **Map 5**, identifies key access points to the Cowichan River to provide access to the water and facilitate tube float activities, all coordinated with other planned active transportation network enhancements.

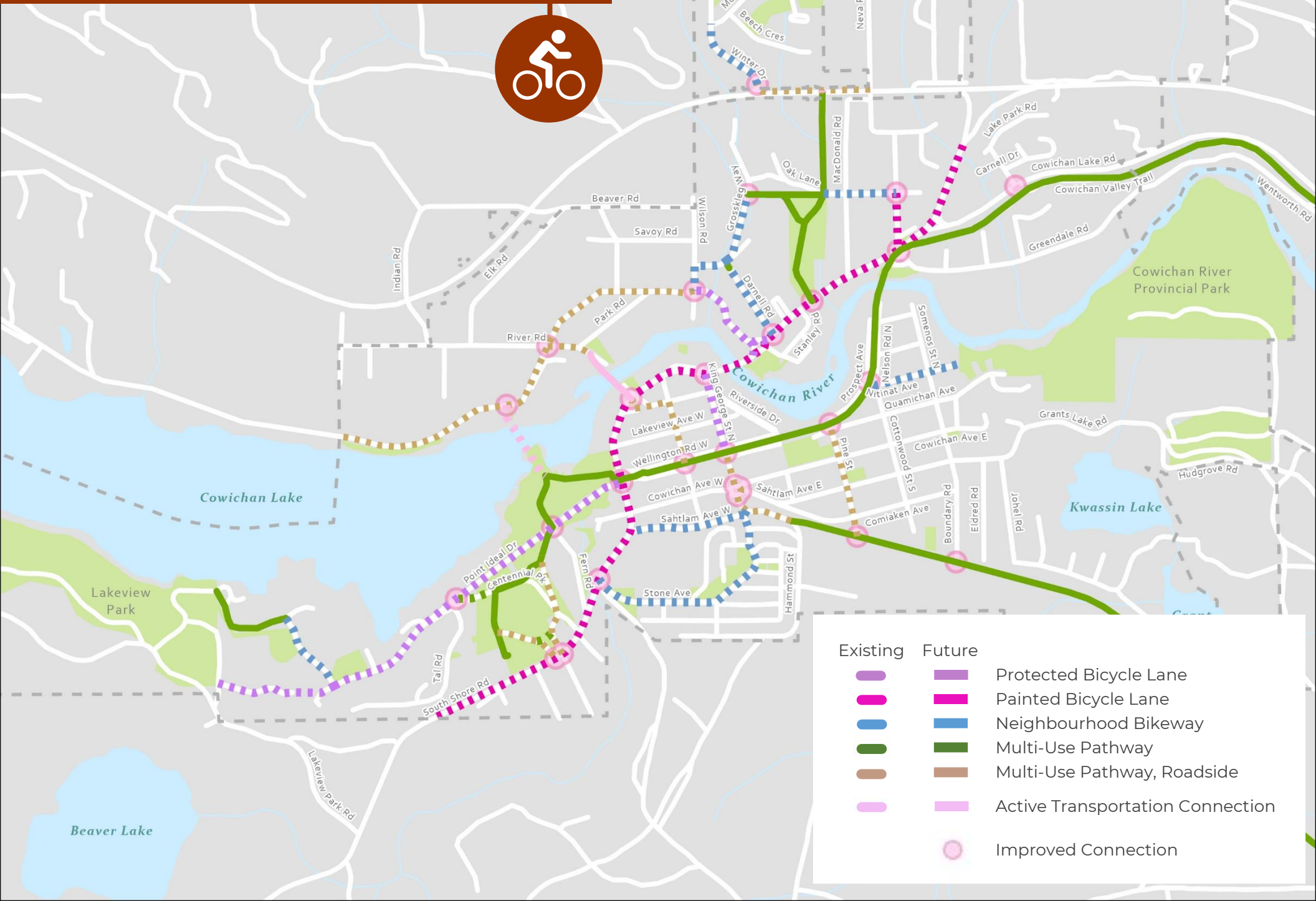
Map 3 // Long-Term Walking + Rolling Network



Existing		Future	
	Multi-Use Pathway		Multi-Use Pathway
	Multi-Use Pathway, Roadside		Multi-Use Pathway, Roadside
	Active Transportation Connection		Active Transportation Connection
	Improved Connection		Improved Connection
	Bus Stop		Bus Stop

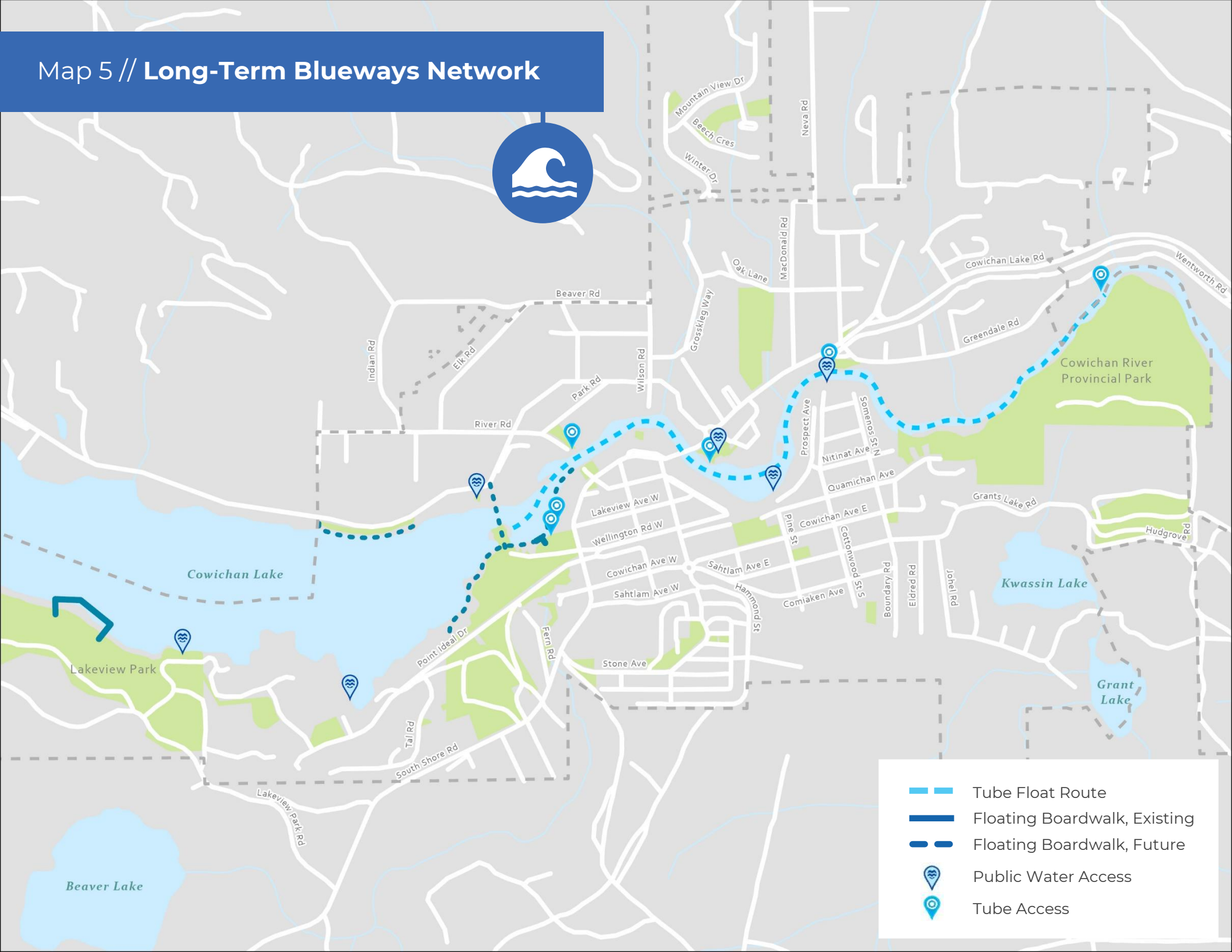
Sidewalk	
	Existing
	Upgrade (to 1 side)
	Upgrade (to 2 sides)






Map 4 // Long-Term Cycling Network



Existing	Future	
		Protected Bicycle Lane
		Painted Bicycle Lane
		Neighbourhood Bikeway
		Multi-Use Pathway
		Multi-Use Pathway, Roadside
		Active Transportation Connection
		Improved Connection

Map 5 // Long-Term Blueways Network

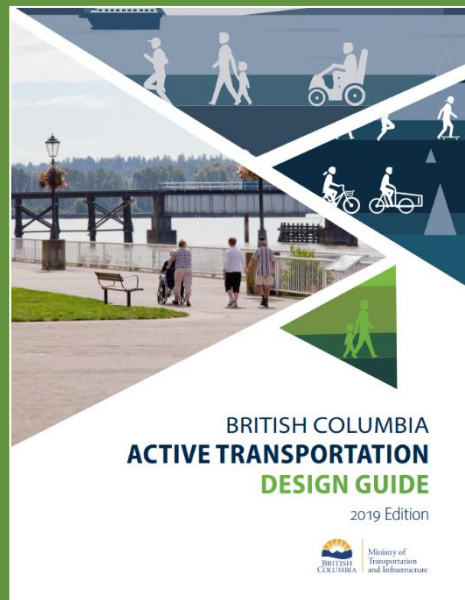


-  Tube Float Route
-  Floating Boardwalk, Existing
-  Floating Boardwalk, Future
-  Public Water Access
-  Tube Access

4.2 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The Lake Cowichan ATNP includes a range of active transportation facilities that will enhance the overall transportation network and make it easier to walk, bike, and roll throughout the Town. The ATNP facility types are introduced below, along with design guidance regarding the facility's purpose, key characteristics, dimensions, and surface type.











Facility design guidance is consistent with facilities described in the Town's OCP and with guidance and best practices contained in the B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide. In all cases, active transportation facilities are to be designed to be compatible with the surrounding context, including land use, road design, and road function.



B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide

The *B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide* contains comprehensive design guidance for walking, rolling, and cycling facilities in throughout British Columbia, helping ensure safe facility design and consistency across the Province. It has been used in developing facility design guidelines for the Lake Cowichan ATNP and should be further referenced as future active transportation infrastructure projects are advanced.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FACILITY TYPES

a. Sidewalk		
b. Walking Trail		
c. Protected Bicycle Lane		
d. Painted Bicycle Lane		
e. Neighbourhood Bikeway		
f. Multi-Use Pathway		
g. Waterfront Floating Boardwalk		
h. Tube Float Route		



a. Sidewalk

A dedicated walking and rolling facility that is physically separated from the roadway by a raised curb. Sidewalks can be located directly adjacent the roadway or separated from the roadway by a furnishing zone or boulevard space. Separated sidewalks are preferred where feasible, as they provide increased user comfort and opportunities for vegetation and stormwater management.

Sidewalks are to be provided on at least one side of all streets and on both sides of Highway, Main Street and Collector streets (refer to **Map 2**).

How wide does a sidewalk need to be?

A minimum of 1.8m (6 feet) is required for two wheelchairs to pass in opposing directions. This width is also required for mobility scooters, strollers and buggies to pass one another.

Recommended sidewalk widths have been established to ensure that all new sidewalks constructed in Lake Cowichan are safe and convenient for all residents.

Sidewalk Width:

- 1.8 - 2.1 m (desirable)
- 1.8 m (constrained)

Note: Width varies by land use and roadway type. Areas with high pedestrian activity benefit from wider sidewalks.

Boulevard Width:

Where sidewalk and street are separated, a minimum width of 1.5 m is required to support landscape and street trees.

Surface Material:

Concrete (preferred)
Special pavers and asphalt may be considered in select locations



b. Walking Trail

Typically contained in natural areas and parks, a walking trail is intended for recreational enjoyment. It supports other walking and rolling routes in the active transportation network, providing key connections to recreation, nature and other community destinations.

Walking trails are to be designed for low to moderate use by both beginner and advanced hikers. Achieving universal access on walking trails is a key goal, but can prove challenging in natural areas with physical and topography constraints.

Trail Width:

- 0.5 – 1.0 m (desirable)
- 0.5 m (constrained)

Clear Width (adjacent trail):

1.1 m – 1.3 m

Surface Material:

Compacted mineral soil



c. Protected Bicycle Lane

An on-street bicycle lane separated from motor vehicle traffic by a curb, median, planters, parking, or other physical barrier. Uni-directional protected lanes (shown at left above) are designed for one-way operation and are typically located on both sides of a roadway, while bi-directional protected lanes (shown at right above) are designed for two-way operation and are located one side of the roadway.

Bicycle Lane Width, Uni-Directional:

- 2.5 m (desirable)
- 1.8 m (constrained)

Bicycle Lane Width, Bi-Directional:

- 4.0 m (desirable)
- 3.0 m (constrained)

Buffer / Protection Width:

- 0.9 m (desirable)
- 0.6 m (constrained)



d. Painted Bicycle Lane

An on-street bicycle lane separated from motor vehicle traffic by a painted line. A painted buffer area may also be provided to create additional lateral and visual separation from motor vehicle traffic.

Bicycle Lane Width:

- 1.8 (desirable)
- 1.5 m (constrained)

Buffer Width:

A buffer space between the bicycle lane and vehicle lane is preferred wherever possible. Buffer widths are as follows:

- 0.6 m (desirable)
- 0.3 m (constrained)



e. Neighbourhood Bikeway

A continuous neighbourhood street with limited vehicle traffic and low speeds that provides a safe, comfortable cycling condition shared with traffic.

These facilities are preferred on roadways with speeds limits 50 km/h or lower and with fewer than 500 vehicles per day. Traffic calming may be used to help create desirable motorist behaviour.

Neighbourhood bikeways are to considered only on Local streets (refer to **Map 2**).

Roadway Clear Width:

- 5.5 m (desirable)
- 4.0 m (constrained)

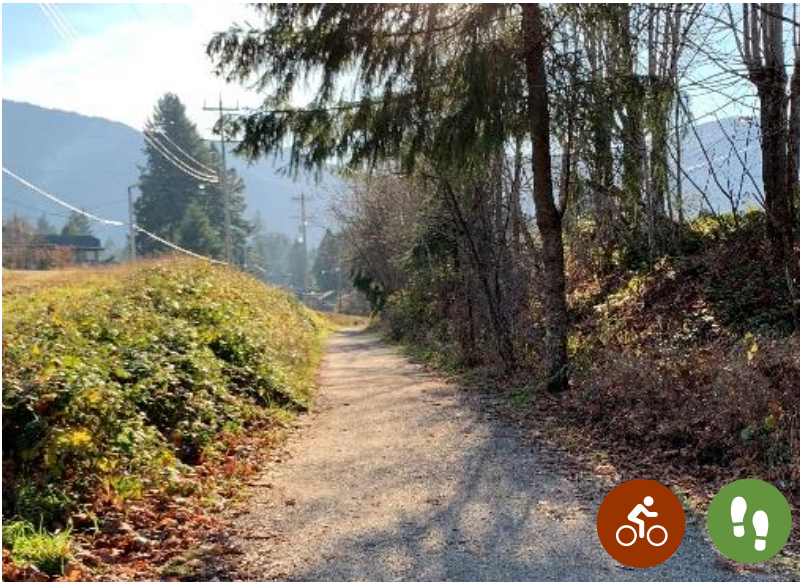
Traffic Volumes:

No more than 500 vehicles per day

Traffic calming may be considered to reduce traffic volumes

Traffic Speed:

Posted speed limit less than 50 km/h



f. Multi-Use Pathway

A pathway with sufficient space and designed to accommodate walking, rolling, cycling, and other active transportation users. Multi-use pathways may be located off-street or at the roadside.

The OCP identifies two types of Multi-Use Pathway:

- Type 1 are regional and community connectors typically located along the waterfront and connecting to downtown
- Type 2 are community and neighbourhood connectors typically located along local secondary routes and in non-urban areas

Multi-Use Pathway, Type 1

Pathway Width:

- 3.0 – 4.0 m (desirable)
- 3.0 m (constrained)

Buffer Width: 0.5 m

Lateral Clear Width: 4.0 m

Surface Material:

Paved, usually with special paving (e.g., pavers, stamped concrete, or stamped asphalt). Asphalt provides a desirable surface for both walking and wheeled modes.

Multi-Use Pathway, Type 2

Pathway Width:

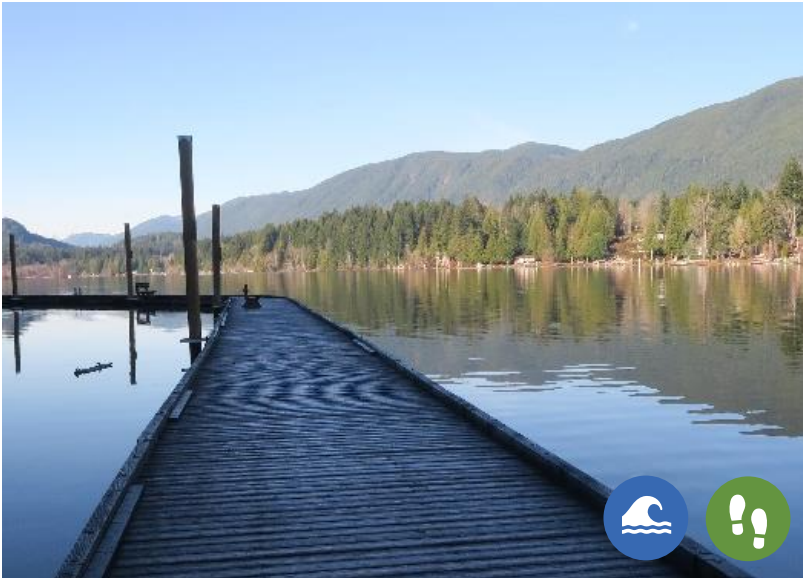
- 1.5 – 3.0 m (desirable)
- 1.5 m (constrained)

Buffer Width: 0.3 – 1.0 m

Lateral Clear Width: 1.6 - 5.0 m

Surface Material:

Well compacted gravel or other granular material as a standard; asphalt as needed in the future for high use urban routes



g. Floating Boardwalk

A unique walking and rolling facility that floats on the water, providing excellent waterfront views and recreation, and enjoyment. Floating boardwalks help support the active transportation network by both facilitating active travel and providing a key community destination.

Of paramount importance is ensuring universal design is adhered to allowing all community members to access existing and future boardwalk and waterfront facilities, including suitable widths, grades and non-slip surfaces in the materials used.

Boardwalk Width:

- 4.0m (desirable)
- 3.0m (constrained)

Note: Width varies by land use and roadway type. Areas with high pedestrian activity benefit from wider sidewalks.

Surface Material:

Wooden boardwalk, floating elements and transitions



h. Tube Float Route

The tube float route is the section of the Cowichan River between Saywell Park and Little Beach. The River's slow-moving nature in summer months provides ideal conditions for people of all ages and abilities to float.

Access to the tube float route is via a series of tube access points (refer to **Map 5**) that will continue to be enhanced in future.



The tube float between Saywell Park and Little Beach typically takes two- to three-hours

4.3 SUPPORTING FEATURES + UNIVERSAL DESIGN

In addition to the active transportation facilities described in **Section 4.2**, several supporting features are necessary for making the active transportation network safe, convenient, and accessible. These include considering walking and cycling crossings, bicycle parking, and universal design principles to ensure that people of all ages and abilities can access the Lake Cowichan community.

Key supporting features and accessibility considerations are described below.

Pedestrian Crossings

Intersections and crossing points are critical locations in any active transportation network. When crossing the road, people walking and using mobility aids are exposed to potential conflicts with motor vehicles, bicycle users, and other road users. Providing safe and accessible crossings is crucial to building a convenient and attractive active transportation network.

Various crossing treatments and traffic control devices such as signage, pavement markings, and in some cases enhanced crossing features can be used to increase the visibility of a pedestrian crossing. The *TAC Pedestrian Crossing Control Guide* and the *Pedestrian Crossing Control Manual for British Columbia* contain guidance and warrants for determining the appropriate levels of crossing treatments for each context. Warrants provide decision support for whether a traffic control device is justified and what type should be used in each context. Professional engineering judgement should be applied in addition to utilizing the warrant system.

The choice of crossing treatment(s) depends on several factors, including:

- Road geometry and classification
- Motor vehicle speeds and volumes
- Surrounding land uses (e.g. school zones, parks, etc.)
- Number of active transportation users
- Other context-specific considerations (e.g. visibility)

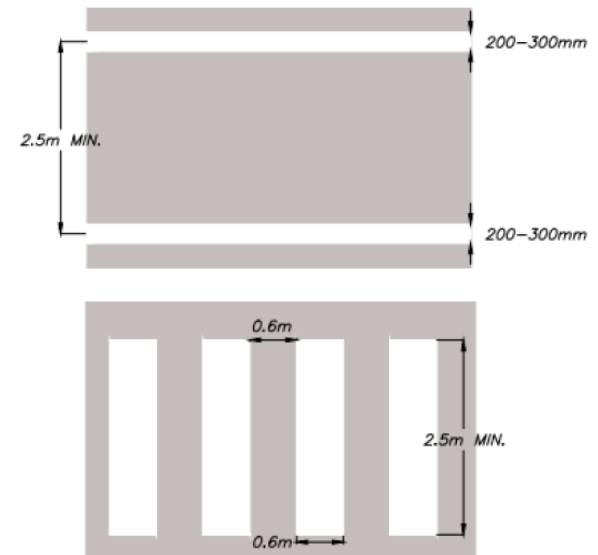
Marked crosswalks include a combination of crosswalk signage and pavement markings and typically take two forms:

1. **Twin parallel line crosswalk:** the standard pedestrian crosswalk pavement marking, suitable at signalized and stop controlled intersections.
2. **Zebra crossings:** wide white parallel lines that offer enhanced visibility and may be used at mid-block crossings, crossings near schools, and other areas where there are higher volumes of children, seniors, or people with reduced vision.

The TAC *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada* and the TAC *Pedestrian Crossing Control Guide* provide national guidance for the installation of crosswalk signage and pavement markings. The B.C. MOTI oversees the B.C. Provincial Sign Program and maintains the *Catalogue of Standard Traffic Signs and Supplemental Traffic Signs*, which apply on all roadways under provincial jurisdiction, including Highway 18 and South Shore Road.

Enhanced crosswalks including overhead pedestrian flashers and rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) can further improve crosswalk visibility and motor vehicle yielding behaviour. Additionally, crossing accessibility and safety can be further improved by providing pedestrian countdown timers, accessible pedestrian signals, tactile walking surface indicators (TWSI), and geometric crossing enhancements, such as improving sightlines, providing curb extensions, reducing corner radii, creating pedestrian medians, and providing raised crosswalks or intersections. The B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide provides more detailed guidance for each of these features.

Twin Parallel Line (top) and Zebra (bottom) Crosswalk Markings



Bicycle + Shared Use Crossings

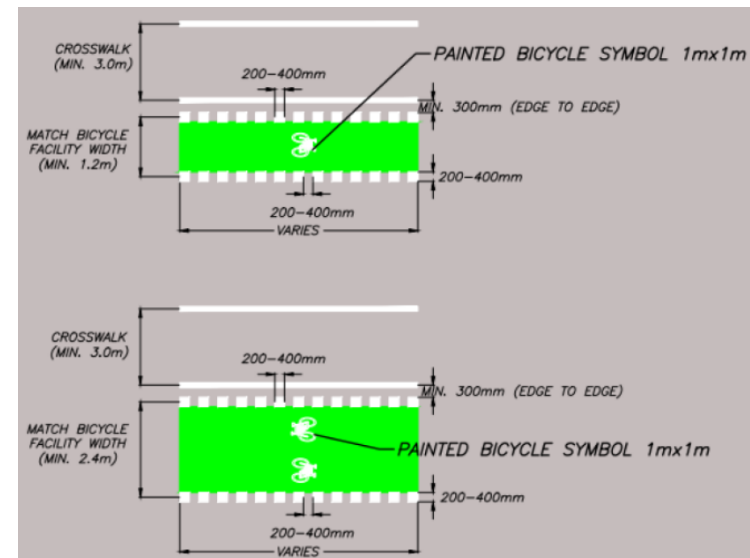
Intersections and crossings involve complex multi-modal interactions that may be unsafe and uncomfortable for people cycling, just as they can be for people walking. Intersection design that makes crossings more comfortable for people of all ages and abilities can enhance safety for all road users and increase the uptake of active transportation.

Key crossing design principles include:

- Minimize conflict between users
- Ensure clear sightlines and clarity of right-of-way
- Reduce speed (all modes) at conflict points
- Make intersections as compact as possible

Signage, pavement markings, geometric design elements (e.g. concrete medians and setback crossings), and bicycle-friendly signal timing can increase safety for cyclists. Cross-ride (or “elephant’s feet”) pavement markings are the bicycle equivalent of a crosswalk, although they do not have the same legal definition in the B.C. Motor Vehicle Act, meaning they are typically used to help reinforce the right-of-way of bicycles over turning motor vehicles. They can be enhanced using green conflict zone pavement markings, which help further increase visibility and make bicycle movements more predictable. Green pavement markings are typically reserved for dedicated bicycle facilities at locations such as cross-rides through intersections, crossings, and driveways, as well as bike boxes and two-stage turn boxes.

Cross-ride / Elephant’s Feet Markings (with Green Conflict Zone Pavement Marking)

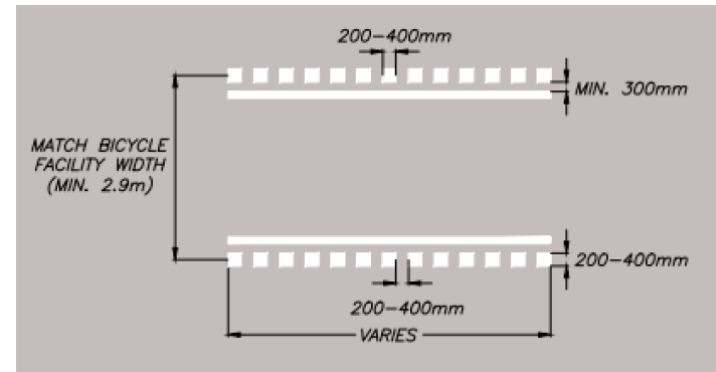


Note: Cross-ride markings are only recommended for bicycle facility crossings where bicycle users have the right-of-way over cross traffic (e.g. at stop/signal controlled intersections, driveways, laneways, etc.)

In places where multi-use pathways cross a roadway, a combined crosswalk and cross-ride may be used. Green pavement markings are not recommended in combined crosswalk and cross-rides.

Bicycly turning movements – especially left turns – must also be considered in intersection design. Design elements such as bike boxes and two-stage turn boxes can help to position cyclists ahead of motor vehicles at intersections, increasing visibility.

Combined Crosswalk / Cross-ride



Note: Twin parallel lines or zebra crossings may be used depending on the context



Combined crosswalk and cross-ride on the Spirit Trail in North Vancouver, B.C.

Bicycle Parking

There are several types of bicycle parking, each of which is suitable in different situations depending on the duration of the stay and trip purpose. Bicycle parking should be designed to fit a wide range of bicycle types and sizes, including children's bicycles, bicycles with trailers, cargo bicycles, and other non-standard bicycles.

Short-Term Bicycle Parking often consists of bicycle racks distributed in the public right-of-way in commercial areas and at key destinations. Bicycle racks come in a variety of styles that vary greatly in functionality. The two most secure and user-friendly designs are inverted 'U' racks and post-and-ring racks. Bicycle racks should be constructed of theft-resistant materials and installed securely.

Bicycle racks should be located as close to destinations as possible in convenient and highly visible locations. They should be located outside of the clear travel path for people using the sidewalk and should be installed with enough clearance to ensure that bicycles can be properly parked without impeding doorways or entrances. Bicycle parking is more attractive when it is protected from the weather, which can include locating racks under awnings or installing custom structures to shield from rain.

Long-Term Bicycle Parking is more secure than short-term bicycle parking and is generally oriented towards cyclists needing to park a bicycle for an entire day or longer, such as at workplaces, schools and multi-family residences. It can include bicycle lockers or larger secure facilities, such as bicycle rooms, bicycle cages, secure bicycle parking areas, or full-service bicycle stations. With the increasing prevalence of electric bicycles, it is also important to provide access to electric outlets for charging. The *B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide* recommends that 10% of short-term spaces and 50% of long-term spaces accommodate e-bikes.

Inverted 'U' + Post-and-Ring Rack



Covered Bike Parking



Bike Room + Bike Locker



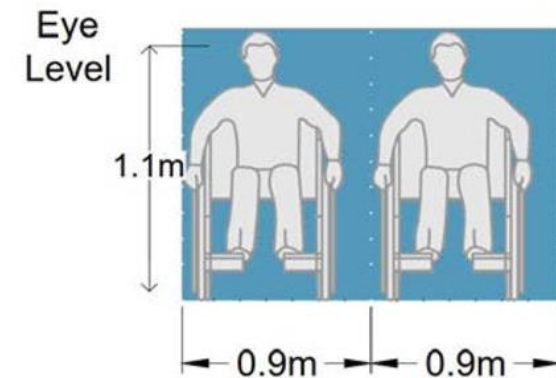
Universal Design + Accessibility

Universal design is a fundamental design principle that ensures the built environment is safe, accessible, and inclusive for all, regardless of age, ability, or any physical or cognitive impairment. Consistent with OCP Policy 5.4 (3), the Town intends to ensure universal design principles and accessibility features are included in all new and retrofit infrastructure projects.

In the active transportation realm, universal design focuses on making the pedestrian environment equitable, flexible, and intuitive to navigate for people of all ages and abilities, with a focus on people facing accessibility challenges. This includes people with reduced mobility, vision, hearing, strength, dexterity, and comprehension. The *B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide* identifies a range of opportunities to improve accessible infrastructure that may be applied in Lake Cowichan, including:

- Providing sufficient width for people using wheelchairs to pass one another on sidewalks and pathways (min 1.8m)
- Ensuring surfaces are smooth, firm, slip-resistant, free of tripping hazards, and well maintained year-round
- Accessible curb ramps
- Safe, accessible access to the waterfront
- Frequent resting spots, especially on uphill segments
- Detectable warning surfaces, including Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSI)
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Intuitive wayfinding

Space Required for Two People in Wheelchairs to Pass One Another



Accessible Curb Ramp



Universal design is especially important for making Lake Cowichan an age-friendly community. For example, reduced mobility is common among older demographics. This includes people who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs, mobility scooters, canes, and walkers, but it also includes people who walk without a mobility aid but may require longer crossing times at intersections and more frequent rests. Rest spots with seating should be provided along pathways to allow people to travel comfortably. Providing public washrooms is another important consideration that can benefit a wide range of active transportation users.

Providing access to transit stops is another important universal design consideration. This includes ensuring connected pedestrian facilities and curb ramps. Accessible transit stop design includes accessible landing pads at all stops, allowing passengers with mobility aids to board and disembark using a ramp or lift. Providing seating and shelters at transit facilities also makes them more accessible and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

Walking Distances Between Resting Spots

People using a cane	50m
People with reduced mobility without walking aid	100m
People using a wheelchair	150m
People with reduced mobility	150m



5. ACTIONS + IMPLEMENTATION

Success in meeting the ATNP framework requires a targeted and strategic approach to implementation. The following section contains the path forward toward realizing the objectives of the ATNP, describing priority investments in active transportation infrastructure, targeted policy and regulatory changes, and funding and partnership opportunities.



5.1 ACTION PLAN

A. Infrastructure + Funding

A series of actions are identified to help the Town establish funding and secure external grant monies to support new active transportation infrastructure:

A1. Active Transportation Improvement Fund

Establish an Active Transportation Improvement Fund with an annual budget contribution that is to be used to pursue Priority Active Transportation Projects (refer to **Section 5.2**).

A2. Sidewalk Improvement Fund

Establish a Sidewalk Improvement Fund with an annual budget contribution that is to be used to pursue Priority Sidewalk Projects (refer to **Section 5.2**) and minor improvements to existing sidewalks.

A3. Grant Coordination

Establish a formal Town staff function to allocate time and resources to identifying active transportation grant funding opportunities and preparing grant applications (may be combined with non-active transportation grants).

A4. Downtown Bicycle Hub

Develop a bicycle hub at Saywell Park that includes covered bicycle parking, accommodation for electric bicycle charging and maps / information for cycling routes and supporting businesses (signage and connections to be included as part of Trans Canada Trail / South Shore Road intersection improvements, refer to **Active Transportation Project Priority List, Section 5.2**)

B. Planning + Study

Further planning and technical study initiatives are identified to further explore key themes from the ATNP and guide the Town toward strategic investment in infrastructure:

B1. Trail Wayfinding

Complete a trail wayfinding sign strategy to support resident and visitor navigation throughout Lake Cowichan. Signs are to direct people to key corridors and destinations such as parks, water accesses, and shopping area.

B2. Enforce Sidewalk + Boulevard Maintenance

Have Bylaw Enforcement staff work pro-actively to address locations of landscape and hedges extending into the right-of-way presenting an obstacle to people walking and rolling and/or impeding driver sightlines. This may include a system of communication and warning citations to incent landowners to address issues.

B3. Sidewalk Inventory

Develop a comprehensive inventory of sidewalks and crosswalks to identify improvement locations and consider improvement locations as part of the Sidewalk Improvement Fund, identified above (consider engaging a summer intern).

B4. Accessible Infrastructure Audit

Undertake a comprehensive accessibility audit of Town pedestrian facilities and accesses to public spaces and buildings to identify locations for improvement (consider engaging a summer intern).

B5. Blueways Strategy

Develop an inventory of water access and tube float access locations and create an improvement program to support floating as recreation and an economic driver.

C. Policies + Regulations

A series of changes and updates to the Town's existing policies and regulations are identified to better align with the ATNP and help achieve improved active transportation infrastructure:

C1. "Complete Streets" Standards

Update the Subdivision, Works & Services Bylaw no. 974, Schedule A to include new "complete streets" cross-sections and requirements based on key design parameters established in the ATNP, including minimum sidewalk widths, requirement for boulevards, updated bicycle facility design and lighting.

C2. DCC Update

Update the Town's Development Cost Charge (DCC) Bylaw no. 603 to include active transportation projects within the "roads" costs and update DCC Roads rate to reflect new transportation project priorities.

5.2 PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS

The long-term walking + rolling, cycling and blueways networks in **Section 4** represent the build-out of active transportation and supporting facilities that will take decades to realize. Recognizing the desire to advance improvements in the coming years, a series of priority projects are identified that improve network connections, address safety concerns, and have been identified by the community and Town. Each is a shorter-term investment that helps our community work toward achieving our long-term vision for active transportation.

On the following pages and shown on **Map 6** are priority project lists for active transportation and sidewalk improvements. The active transportation improvements represent projects that benefit all active transportation modes and generally involve more substantial investment. The sidewalk improvements either address gaps in the sidewalk network or rehabilitation on existing sidewalk facilities.

Priority Active Transportation Project List

Project		Length	Cost
1. South Shore Road Intersection Improvement Multi-modal crossing improvements of South Shore Road at Point Ideal Drive / Wellington Road, including tie-in and extension of Cowichan Valley Trail		100m	\$200,000
2. North Shore Road Multi-Use Corridor, West Roadside multi-use pathway (south side) connecting existing Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation facility with River Road and the Duck Pond Bridge		800m	\$1.5-million
3. Duck Pond Bridge Improvements Improve bridge decking and upgrade lighting (short-term), with possible enhanced bridge access, clearance and/or widening (longer-term)		160m	\$300,000 (short-term only)
4. North Shore Road Multi-Use Corridor, East Street reconstruction to include protected bike lanes and new sidewalks on North Shore Road between Cowichan Lake Road and Wilson Road		300m	\$800,000
5. Cowichan Lake Road / Greendale Intersection Improvement Improvements to connect Cowichan Valley Trail across Greendale Avenue, with consideration of pedestrian and cyclist crossing of Cowichan Lake Road		N/A	\$300,000
6. Trans Canada Trail Connection Roadside multi-use pathway extension between the Trans Canada Trail and Cowichan Valley Trail along King George Street		250m	\$300,000
7. Lakeview Park Connector Improvement New bike lanes and street connection between Lakeview Park and Point Ideal Drive		250m	\$250,000
8. North Shore Road Multi-Use Corridor, Centre Install physical separation and create roadside multi-use pathway on the south side of North Shore Road between River Road and Wilson Road		550m	\$500,000
9. Point Ideal Drive Roadside Bikeway Roadside protected bikeway (bi-directional, south side) on Point Ideal Drive connecting Centennial Park and the Trans Canada Trail		320m	\$150,000

Priority Sidewalk Project List

Project		Length	Cost
A. South Shore Road Stone Avenue to Sall Road (south side)		380m	\$300,000
B. Lakeview Avenue South Shore Road to Coronation Street (north side)		160m	\$130,000
C. Cowichan Lake Road North Shore Road nearby Stanley Avenue		140m	\$110,000
D. Stone Avenue South Shore Road to Hammond Road (south/east side)		700m	\$550,000
E. Cowichan Lake Road Town Entry / Highway 18 to Lake Park Road (north side)		270m	\$220,000
F. Sahtlam Avenue East King George Roundabout to Pine Street (north side)		320m	\$250,000
G. Cowichan Avenue East King George Roundabout to Pine Street (north side)		300m	\$240,000
H. Winter Drive Highway 18 to Mountain View Drive (east side)		180m	\$150,000

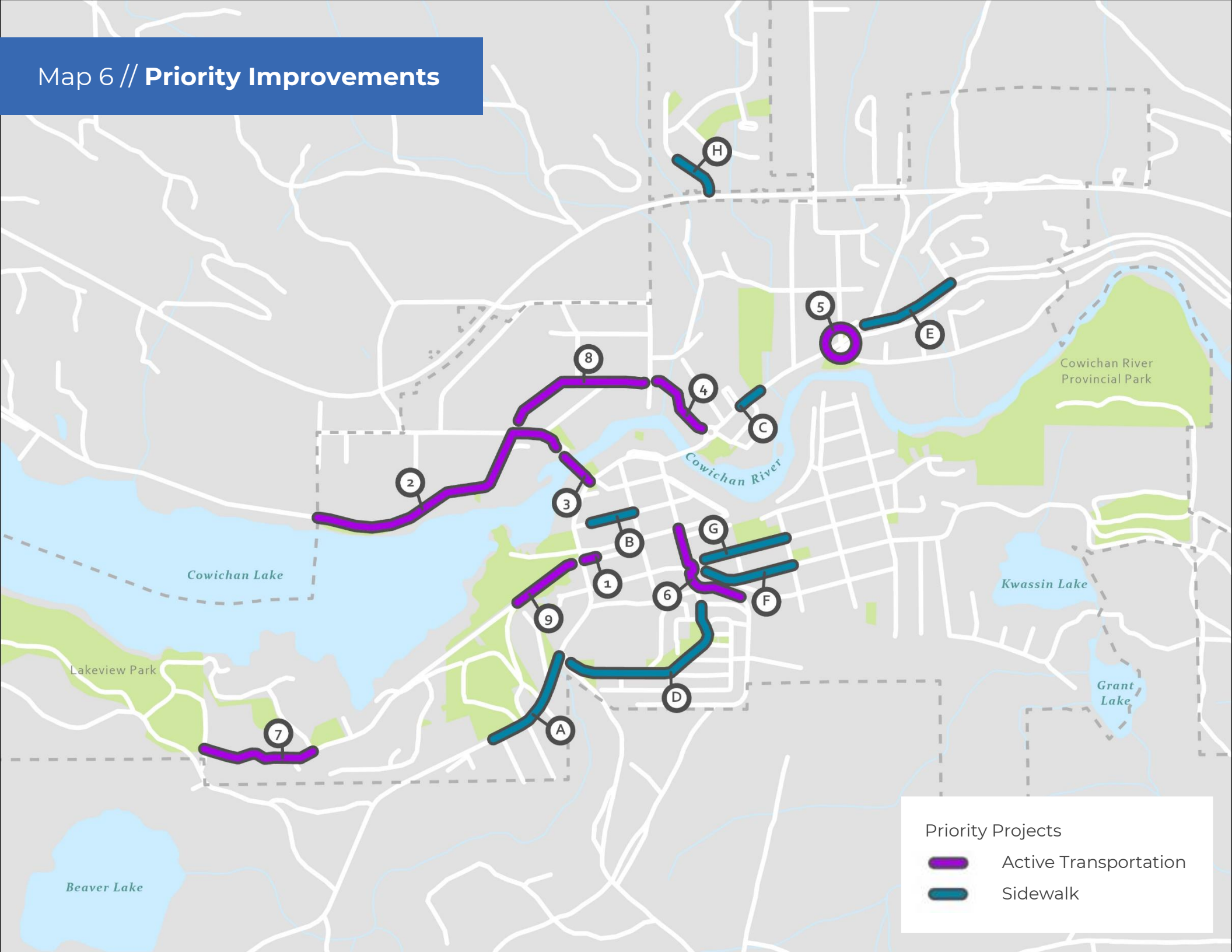


New Sidewalk



Sidewalk
Rehabilitation

Map 6 // Priority Improvements



Priority Projects

- Active Transportation
- Sidewalk

5.3 PARTNERSHIPS + FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Capital Planning

Planned capital expenditures to support implementation of the ATNP would allow the Town to make progress toward realizing the long-term network plans. Where success in securing funding through land development and external grant funding (both covered in the following sections) are beyond the Town's control, the Town has direct influence over capital planning for new infrastructure and the ability to realize new active transportation facilities.

Capital funding is generally achieved through taxation. Establishing municipal capital funds for active transportation projects requires that annual budget items are created to support active transportation facility development (refer to Section 5.1, above), and that either existing funds are redirected to support active transportation or additional taxation is levied to cover these new costs.

Town Council must ultimately determine opportunities to achieve active transportation infrastructure through future capital planning processes, as well as the level of interest in creating additional funds via taxation to support the ATNP.

Lake Cowichan Trailblazers

The Trailblazers group was formed in 2017 as a result of trails for hiking and biking being suggested to help expand tourism season within the community. Today the group works to develop, maintain, and promote hiking and biking trails throughout the Cowichan Lake region while working with the local communities to enhance the support structures and services required to create sustainable, environmentally sound experiences for residents and tourists.

Land Development

Projects funded through developer contributions made during the land development approvals process are a key tool to finance new active transportation infrastructure. Contributions through land development are primarily achieved through the following opportunities:

- Property frontage improvements and upgrades as directed by the Town's the Subdivision, Works & Services Bylaw no. 974. Opportunities to improve the Subdivision, Works & Services Bylaw to better reflect ATNP directions are included in **Section 5.1**.
- Development Cost Charges (DCCs) levied through rezoning or subdivision that offset public infrastructure costs incurred to service the needs of new development. The Province recommends that municipalities update their DCC Bylaw every five years, which should include updated costs to account for active transportation improvements.

Further, the Town will direct prospective land developers to the ATNP to understand how land development may help contribute to our community's vision for active transportation through new corridors, compatible facility design and provision of supporting amenities. Between the Official Community Plan and ATNP, a number of desired future active transportation and trail corridors have been identified that may be achieved as subdivision and rezoning occurs.

External Funding

External funding sources provide a significant opportunity to fund new active transportation infrastructure in Lake Cowichan. A large number of funding opportunities have emerged in recent years specifically to fund active transportation facilities in support of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and public health objectives. The COVID-19 outbreak has also resulted in several economic stimulus funding opportunities from senior levels of government, many of which may be used toward active transportation infrastructure. The criteria and requirements for each vary, ranging from simple applications to more complex submissions requiring design drawings and supporting study.

The following are the key grant opportunities currently available to support and fund active transportation infrastructure. Grant program opportunities are constantly changing. The Town should remain proactive in seeking out new opportunities, particularly as COVID-19 stimulus programs are initiated.

Active Transportation Grant Opportunities

Program	Agency	Key Parameters
B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grant Program	BC Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds 70% of total eligible project cost, up to \$500,000 • Projects must be “shovel ready” and should prioritize connectivity, safety, economic opportunities, GHG reductions
Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for up to 75% of eligible costs, with municipality financing project construction • Requires Council resolution, project study and cost estimate
Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides funding equivalent to 100% of carbon taxes paid directly by a local government, to encourage climate action • Must fulfill annual reporting requirements
Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program	Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various opportunities available and frequently changing, geared towards climate-focused municipal projects
Green Municipal Fund		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers up to 80% of eligible costs, varies between initiatives • Funding for municipal fleet fossil fuel reduction and greener modes of transportation (incl. active transportation)
Community Works Fund (Federal Gas Tax program)	Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding based on per capita formula, delivered bi-annually • Local governments undertake eligible projects (including active transportation) and report annually on outcomes
Road Safety Improvement Program	Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICBC works directly with communities to fund safety improvements
BC Transit Bus Stop Improvement Program	BC Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially funding for transit shelter installations



FOREST W
MEMO

ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used throughout the ATNP and are described below as they may not be readily understood by all readers.

AAA	All Ages and Abilities
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
AV	Autonomous Vehicle
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
DCC	Development Cost Charge
EV	Electric Vehicle
LOS	Level of Service
OCP	Official Community Plan
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TWSI	Tactile Warning Surface Indicator

GLOSSARY

The following terms are referenced throughout the ATNP and are defined below as they may not be readily understood by all readers.

Accessible	A disabled person, without assistance from another person, is able to approach, enter, pass to and from and make use of an area and/or its facilities.
Active Transportation	Sustainable forms of transportation including walking, cycling, wheelchairs or mobility aids, inline skates and skateboards.
Climate Change	A change of climate (synonymous with global warming) attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and is in addition to natural climate variability. Possible affected weather conditions include temperature, precipitation and wind.
Complete Street	Streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.
Cycling	The use of human powered cycles or motor-assisted cycles with a motor rated at less than 500 watts and not capable of speeds in excess of 32 km/hr on level ground without pedaling.

Disabled Person	A person who has a loss, or a reduction of functional ability and activity, and includes a person in a wheelchair and a person with sensory disability.
Greenways	Corridors or protected open spaces that are publicly or privately owned and managed for conservation and recreation purposes.
Human Powered	A vehicle powered solely by human power and may include vehicles such as Vehicle bicycles, roller skates and skateboards.
Infrastructure	The physical systems the Town provides to the community including roads, water, sewer and utilities, which are considered essential for the community.
Mode Share	The percentage share of all trips associated with a particular travel mode.
Mode Split	The total number of trips assignment (or split) between each travel mode.
Traffic Calming	The combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behaviour and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)	Initiatives that reduce emissions and other negative impacts of vehicle travel by encouraging use of other modes, reducing the number and length of vehicle trips, and shifting trips to less congested times and routes
Universal Design	The design approach of environments, products and services that are usable by all people regardless of age, size or ability.



Appendix A.

“WHAT WE HEARD” ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK PLAN

WHAT WE HEARD SUMMARY

FEBRUARY 2021

TOWN OF
LAKE COWICHAN





1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Lake Cowichan (“the Town”) is completing its first ever Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP). This “What We Heard” report summarizes the input received from community members and will therefor act as a foundation for which the development of Lake Cowichan’s active transportation infrastructure and programs to support walking, rolling, and cycling in the community will be built.

As part of this process, research, technical analysis, and engagement activities are being undertaken to better understand existing active transportation conditions and community priorities. The findings of these tasks will support the final plan and ensure that the policies, recommendations, and long-term active transportation network are implementable and fulfill the community’s needs.

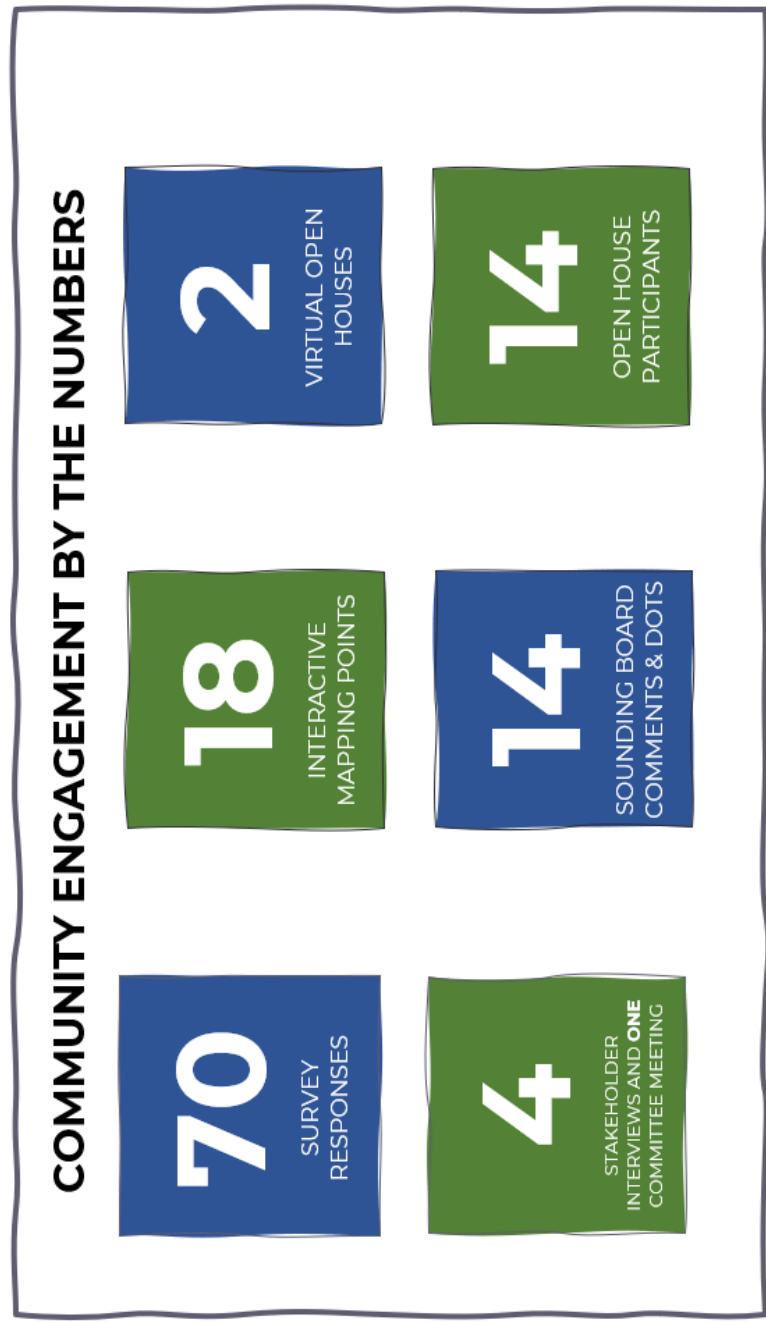
All successful community planning initiatives ensure that resident and partner input is integrated into the project. Throughout January and February 2021, the community was engaged through a variety of opportunities to reach as broad an audience as possible given the proven challenges when facing the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic. This included distanced, in-person engagement through sounding boards activities outside Country Grocer, and online activities including a survey, interactive mapping, and virtual open houses. These activities were promoted through the Town’s dedicated project webpage and social media accounts.

This document provides highlights of the individual engagement activities and summarizes the key themes arising from the community’s feedback and expressed interests. It is important to note that this is a summary document and not all engagement results have been included. Rather, the focus of this summary is to summarize input that is most valuable for understanding the community’s priorities that will be most applicable to the Plan’s development moving forward.



2.0 ENGAGEMENT

An essential component of successful community planning initiatives is ensuring that resident and community input is integrated into the project. The community was engaged through a variety of opportunities in order to reach as broad an audience as possible given the challenges of direct engagement during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.





2.1 KEY THEMES

Throughout the engagement process several key themes emerged. The points below include those themes identified through virtual open houses and community discussions as well as those that emerged through the online surveys.

- Active transportation is popular for daily trips throughout the community with nearly as many survey respondents walking or cycling to access services as those driving or travelling as a passenger in a motor vehicle. This demonstrates an interest in active transportation and potential to increase the numbers of active trips completed to fulfill essential needs with increased facility availability. This is also evidence of community character that generally supports active transportation use.
- Upgrading and expanding the sidewalk network is a clear priority for the community, including identifying opportunities to improve maintenance standards and enforcement.
- Accessibility concerns were prevalent throughout the community, and included general concerns with vegetation overgrowth, utility pole placement narrowing sections of sidewalk and impeding mobility devices, and general surface conditions and access (lack of curb cuts, etc.). Access to the river and lake front was also an identified challenge.
- Transit use is relatively low in Lake Cowichan, with engagement participants citing infrequent and unreliable service, a lack of transit facilities, and limited destinations as transit-related challenges in the community.
- Desire for improved connections to the Trans Canada Trail & Cowichan Valley Trails and continued advocacy for a pathway across the future weir, and improvements to trestle infrastructure at other crossing locations.



2.2 SURVEY RESPONSES

An online community survey was available for all members of the public from December 23, 2020 to January 29, 2021 on the project's dedicated ArcGIS StoryMap project page and was promoted through the project's webpage and Town of Cowichan Lake Facebook posts. A mailout was also prepared and circulated to all residents by mail to encourage recipients to complete the online survey, request a paper survey if needed, and attend the virtual open house sessions. In total, the survey received 70 responses.

The online survey aimed to understand how community members travel through Lake Cowichan, and identify barriers, opportunities, and priorities for active transportation in the community. The following section provides a summary of the online survey results.

2.3 WHO RESPONDED?

The "Tell Us About Yourself" section provided an opportunity to understand the demographics of survey respondents, including their relationship with Lake Cowichan, their age, and any mobility limitations they may face.

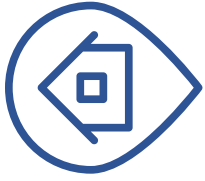
Most survey respondents were residents of Lake Cowichan and Ts'uubaa-asatx (80%), with the remaining respondents regularly travelling through the Town (11%), often visiting Lake Cowichan (5%), and Other (4%). Participants were also typically from older age cohorts, with 76% of respondents above the age of 45, 21% between 25 and 44 years, and no respondents between 19 and 24 years and 3% of respondents were 18 years or younger. These results are shown below.

"I am so glad accessibility is being considered the norm, not an exception."

– Virtual Open House Participant



80%
RESIDENTS OF LAKE
COWICHAN OR
TS'UUBAA-ASATX



11%
REGULARLY TRAVEL
THROUGH LAKE
COWICHAN



5%
VISIT LAKE
COWICHAN OFTEN



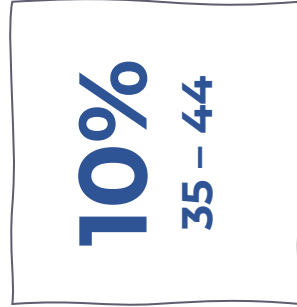
4%
OTHER



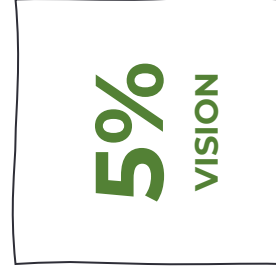
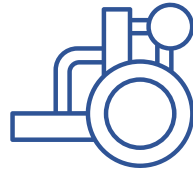
“Tell us about yourself” survey respondent results.



When asked “what is your age?” respondents provided the following:



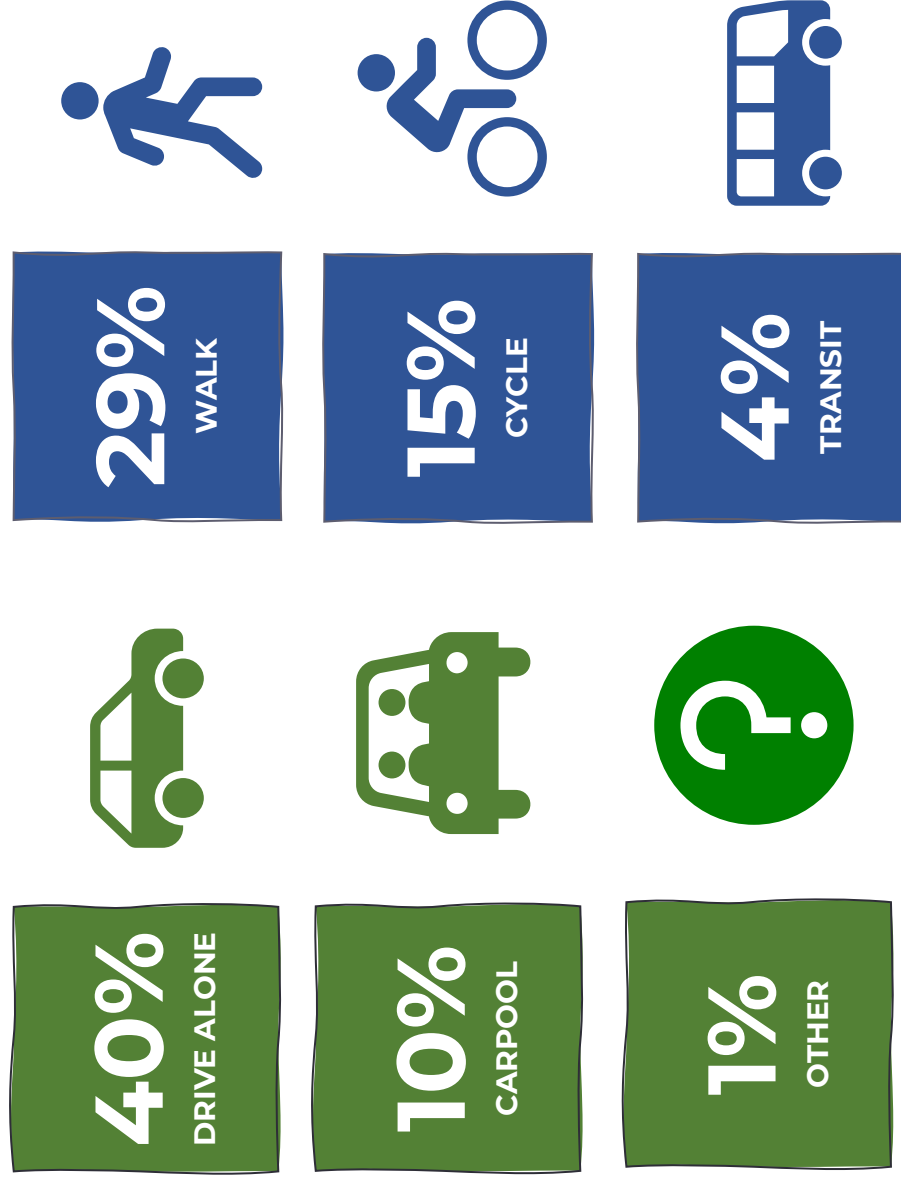
The 23% of survey respondents that self-identified as having a limitation, as shown below.





3.0 TRAVEL PATTERNS

When asked “On a typical day, what is your usual mode of transportation for commuting purposes (e.g. work, school, picking-up groceries, appointments)? (select all that apply)” active modes were popular, with 44% of respondents indicating that they walk or cycle to fulfill these essential trips. Other respondents indicated that they drove their own vehicle or carpooled with others (50%), while few respondents travelled mostly by transit (4%).





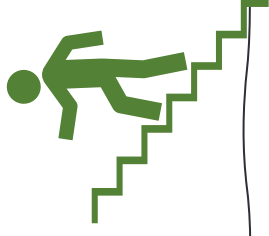
3.1 WALKING

As outlined in the previous section, walking was the most popular active transportation mode among survey respondents. Further questions specific to walking were asked to understand motivations for walking, levels of perceived safety when walking, and opportunities for improving walking facilities or encouraging more walking within the community.

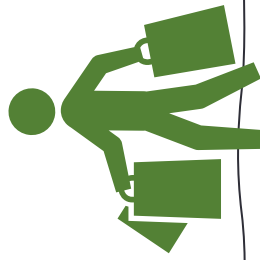
When provided the statement, “when I walk, it’s to: (select all that apply)” the top four responses were:



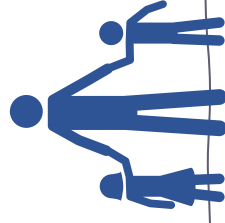
23%
ENJOY NATURE,
PARKS, OR TRAILS



20%
EXERCISE



20%
ACCESS SHOPS,
RESTAURANTS, OR
SERVICES



15%
SPEND TIME WITH
FAMILY AND
FRIENDS



When asked “how safe do you feel walking in Lake Cowichan” most respondents indicated that they felt safe, or very safe (58%). This may indicate that walking facilities are available in many parts of the community, with lower vehicle volumes on many streets.



27%
FELT
VERY SAFE



31%
FELT
SAFE



33%
FELT
NEUTRAL



2%
FELT
UNSAFE



1%
FELT
VERY UNSAFE

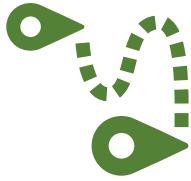
When asked “What are the barriers for walking more often than you currently do in Lake Cowichan?” (select up to three), the top four responses were:



20%
CONDITION OF
SIDEWALKS OR
PATHWAYS



15%
WEATHER



15%
LACK OF
SIDEWALKS OR
PATHWAYS



20%
POOR LIGHTING



3.2 CYCLING

Participants were asked a similar set of questions to those related to walking, with specific attention to understanding the motivations for cycling, perceptions of safety when cycling, and barriers related to cycling throughout the community.

When asked to complete the statement “When I cycle, it’s to:” (select all that apply) survey respondents indicated they cycle to:



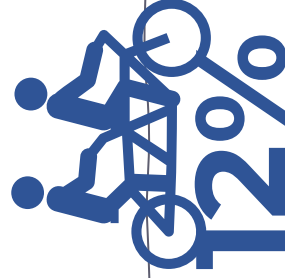
22%
ENJOY NATURE,
PARKS, OR TRAILS



20%
EXERCISE



16%
HAVE FUN



12%
SPEND TIME WITH
FAMILY AND
FRIENDS



When asked “How safe do you feel cycling in Lake Cowichan?” 10% of respondents indicated they feel very safe, while 19% indicated they felt very unsafe. This indicates varying levels of comfort when cycling, likely due to few dedicated cycling facilities resulting in varied levels of cycling comfort throughout the community.



10%
FELT
VERY SAFE



26%
FELT
SAFE



31%
FELT
NEUTRAL

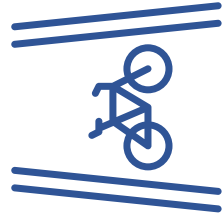


14%
FELT
UNSAFE



19%
FELT
VERY UNSAFE

When asked “What are the main issues or challenges for cycling in Lake Cowichan?” (select up to three), the top four responses were:



16%
LACK OF DEDICATED
ON-STREET BICYCLE
LANES



13%
LACK OF BICYCLE
ROUTES SEPARATED
FROM TRAFFIC



17%
WEATHER



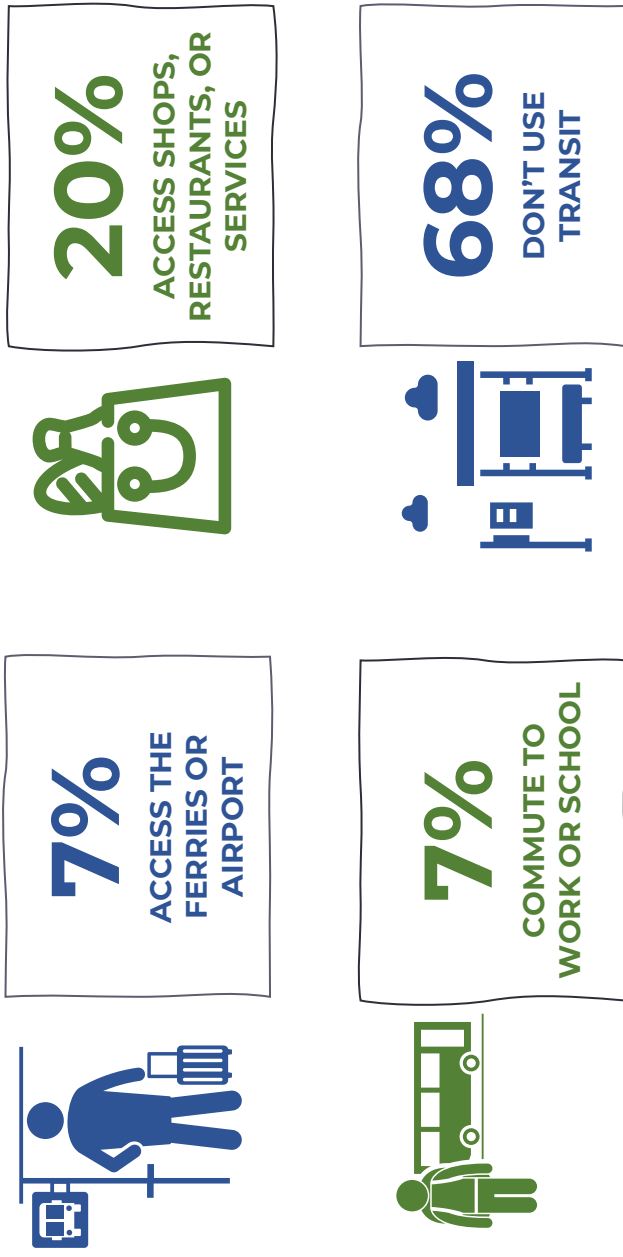
10%
INTERSECTION
SAFETY



3.3 TRANSIT

Transit was the least commonly used transportation mode in Lake Cowichan, with 4% of respondents indicating they use the bus to complete daily activities. Recognizing the barriers that prevent community members from travelling by bus is important, since transit can be an essential component of a thriving active transportation network, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to travel longer distances without the use of a motor vehicle. This section provides the key findings from the transit related survey questions including if and why respondents use transit, exploring access to transit within the Town, and the issues and challenges for transit throughout the community.

When provided the statement “When I use transit, it’s to: (select all that apply)” survey respondents indicated they use transit to access ferries or the airport, access shops and restaurants or services, and commute to work or school. 68% of respondents indicated they do not use the transit available transit service.





When provided the statement “Access to transit stops in Lake Cowichan is: (select one)” respondents provided the following response. The largest portion of responses indicated neutral sentiments towards access to transit.



11%
GREAT



23%
GOOD



40%
NEUTRAL

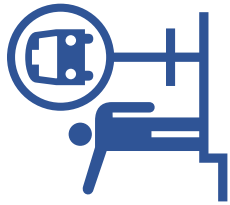


14%
POOR



11%
NOT GOOD

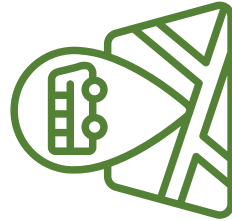
When asked “What are the main issues or challenges for transit in Lake Cowichan? (select up to three)” the following most frequent responses were provided:



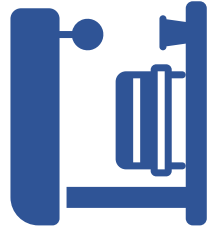
27%
INFREQUENT
SERVICE



17%
TIME CONSTRAINTS



15%
TRANSIT DOESN'T
GO WHERE I NEED
TO GO



13%
LACK OF TRANSIT
FACILITIES



3.4 YOUR PRIORITIES

Prioritizing improvements in Lake Cowichan's active transportation network will be a key outcome of this project. Understanding what community members believe will have the greatest impact on improving active transportation within the community allows for projects to be prioritized and guided by community needs. This section identifies key areas for improvement as identified by survey respondents.

The following active transportation priorities were identified by survey respondents:



17%
REPAIR EXISTING
SIDEWALKS



16%
IMPROVE
MAINTENANCE ON
EXISTING FACILITIES



9%
BUILD MORE PAVED
TRAILS OR MULTI-
USE PATHS



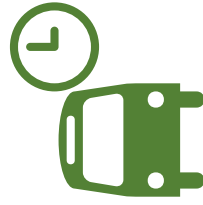
8%
BUILD MORE
SIDEWALKS



8%
EXPAND ON-STREET
CYCLING NETWORK



8%
SPOT ACCESSIBILITY
IMPROVEMENTS



8%
INCREASE TRANSIT
SERVICE, IMPROVE
SCHEDULING, AND
DIRECT SERVICE

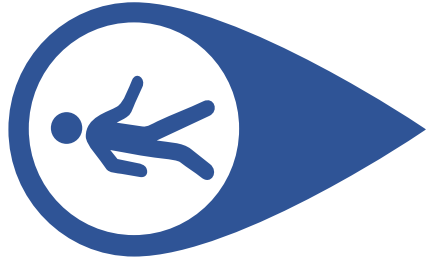


4.0 INTERACTIVE MAPPING

Engagement participants were invited to provide location-specific input for areas that currently present challenges for active transportation throughout Lake Cowichan by entering them on the project webpage's dedicated interactive mapping tool. 18 points were placed by participants throughout the community, with points being specific to walking (6 points), cycling (1 point), or in some cases, both walking and cycling (5 points). Other locations were identified without descriptions being provided (4 points).

These points identified several locations of concern, with suggestions to improve accessibility, network connectivity, wayfinding, maintenance, and traffic safety. The following section organizes these locations by travel mode identified in the interactive mapping exercise.

Walking Locations

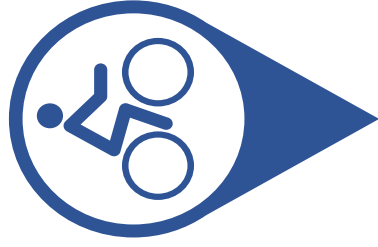


- Need for improved access and repair on the floating walkway in Lakeview Park
- Highlighting and enhancing accessible beach access around the Lakeview campground
- Suggesting a pedestrian connection from Castley Heights to North Shore Road
- Improved access to the water at Kinsmen Duck Pond for people with strollers and mobility aids
- Lower posted speed limits and improved crossing of Cowichan Lake Road at Lake Park Road to access the Cowichan Valley Trail, also a request to consider more parking in the area



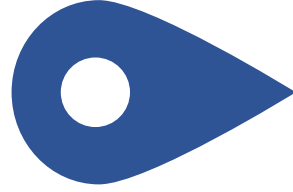
Cycling and Multi-Modal Locations

- No bicycle route along Point Ideal Road
- Improved signage and maps suggested at Pine Street Trans Canada Trail access
- Improved drainage along the Trans-Canada Trail from Pine Street to Boundary Road to ensure the trail remains level and mostly accessible
- Formalize trails around Hobson Avenue through a park dedication in this area
- Improved trails around Johel Road to make them more stroller friendly
- Suggestion for a crosswalk or a roundabout at Neva Road and Lake Cowichan Road intersection



Other Locations (No Comment Specified)

- King George Street between Renfrew Avenue and Lakeview Avenue
- Renfrew Avenue between King George Street and Coronation Street
- North Shore Road near boat launch entrance
- Cowichan River near Stanley Creek



These locations have been reviewed by the project team to better understand context of these inputs.



5.0 SOUNDING BOARDS

Interactive sounding boards with information on the ATNP project and opportunities to provide feedback were used. The sounding boards were primarily used to promote the online survey and upcoming virtual open houses and were attended to by Town Staff to ensure appropriate physical distancing and other COVID-19 safety measures were maintained. This was the project's only in-person engagement activity. These boards were located at the Country Grocer from January 22nd and January 27th.

The boards also allowed participants to identify opportunities and constraints for walking, rolling, and cycling in the Town through “dotmocracy”, or stick dots that can be placed on the specific opportunity that participants supported or prioritized. Additionally, participants were able to provide location specific feedback on a map showing the Town's existing active transportation facilities. A total of 11 points and 3 post-it comments were placed on the sounding boards, identified below. Participants also shared community-based concerns with staff that did not necessarily align with the project's objectives but offered an opportunity to share with staff and be heard.

5

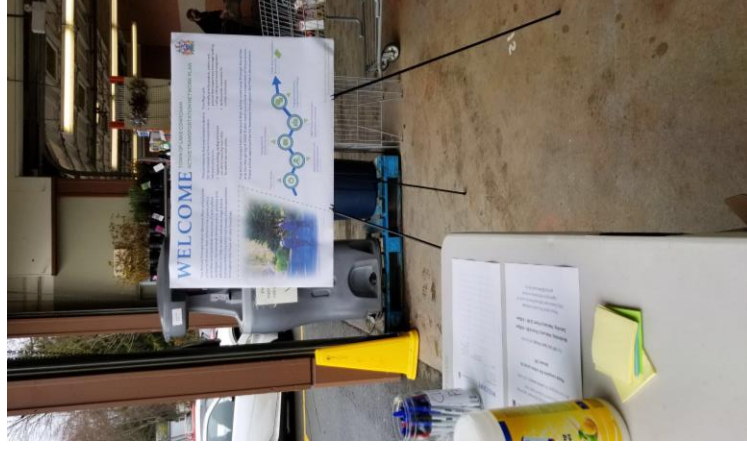
points identifying constraints for cycling improvements

- Connect existing bike routes (fill gaps) (3 dots)
- Ensure bike routes are properly maintained year-round (1 dot)
- Improve routes to school (1 dot)

6

points identifying actions for pedestrian improvements

- Build more sidewalks (2 dots)
- Improve condition of sidewalks (2 dots)
- Ensure sidewalks / pathways are well lit (1 dot)
- Build more trails / pathways (1 dot)





6.0 VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSES

Two virtual open houses were held to familiarize residents with the ATNP and to facilitate discussion around the community's experiences and aspirations for active transportation. Both sessions were held "virtually" using Zoom videoconferencing. A total of 15 participants attended the two open house sessions. Each was held over a 90-minute period on the following dates:

1. Wednesday, February 3rd 2021, 6:00-8:00pm
2. Saturday, February 6th 2021, 12:00 – 1:30pm

The project team presented on the process, progress made on the ATNP including existing conditions of active transportation within the region, and some applicable engagement results, before dividing into breakout room activities with an assigned facilitator in each, as needed.

Several polls were provided throughout the presentation on Zoom to help familiarize participants with the platform, assess their interests in the event to ensure their interests were being met through the virtual open house, and assess levels of support for the plan's draft vision statement. Polls results for both virtual open houses are shown below in Section 6.1.

Discussion from the first open house centred on improving traffic safety through traffic calming measures, enhanced lighting, crossings, and other intersection treatments. Concern was also expressed for conditions of certain facilities like the Kinsmen Duck Pond Bridge, and how these connections can be improved to benefit all active transportation users.

Among the key focuses of the second open house were accessibility considerations throughout the community including challenges with access to the lake and river fronts for those with limited mobility, future connection to the existing walking path along North Shore Road at North Shore Estates, general challenges with vehicles parking along North Shore Road and blocking the painted on-street pathway, connections from the regional trails into and through the community, and future connections to Centennial Park.



6.1 OPEN HOUSE INPUTS

Poll No. 1

What are you hoping to get out of this Virtual Open House Session?

Poll Options Selected	Open House No. 1	Open House No. 2
I like to stay informed about what's happening in my community	0	5
I'd like to learn more about the project	2	3
I'd like to share some priority improvement locations	3	1

Poll No. 2

I took the online survey

Poll Options	Open House No. 1	Open House No. 2
Yes	2	2
No	2	3

Poll No. 3

Response to draft vision statement which read:

“LAKE COWICHAN IS HOME TO A CONNECTED NETWORK OF HIGH-QUALITY ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES THAT ENABLE PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES TO WALK AND BICYCLE SAFELY AND COMFORTABLY THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.”



Poll Options Selected	Open House No. 1	Open House No. 2
This hits the mark!	2	4
It could use a bit of work or improvement	2	1
Try Again!	0	1

Vision Statement Comments:

- We have beautiful mountains, trails, etc. around community – there’s work to be done and maintenance. But the outdoors is our backyard, need to get out there! Connect the facilities in town to the recreational facilities and include this in the vision statement.
- We should include something about routes being well-maintained

“Lake Cowichan ticks all the boxes in terms of walking and cycling. You can walk everywhere in this town. In spite of the Town being quite small and compact, it has all essential services. I can walk to the Post Office, grocery store, pub... I think it’s great!”

- Virtual Open House Participant

7.0 MAPPING EXERCISE INPUT & DISCUSSION

The breakout sessions focused allowed participants to identify areas of concern and opportunities for improving active transportation throughout the community. Each session allowed for questions and answers once breakout room activities were complete and were a great opportunity.

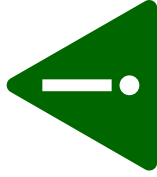


Key Themes:

While participants have varying priorities, some key themes emerged through discussions with open house participants. These themes include:



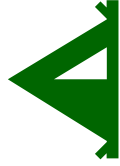
Maintenance of existing facilities which focused primarily on existing sidewalks which are overgrown, have varying levels of surface conditions, and are often blocked with utility poles, however treses and trails were also mentioned as areas for improved maintenance



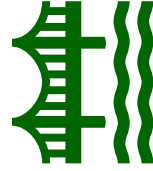
Safety concerns including lack of lighting and roadways shared with motor vehicle traffic and active transportation users.



Accessibility concerns were mentioned throughout the community with existing sidewalks conditions presenting challenges for those with mobility impairments, in addition to limited access to the Town's natural amenities and lake front.



Tourism was highlighted as an area that would benefit from improved connectivity throughout the community, particularly in summer months.



Connections to surrounding areas and existing active transportation facilities were mentioned such as the North Shore Road walkway, and ensuring seamless integration with regional trails and other recreational trailheads and other upcoming capital projects or development areas.

8.0 COMMUNITY & NEIGHBOR OUTREACH

To ensure that community interest groups and neighbors were informed of the project and had opportunities to provide input on active transportation, discussions were held various interested parties. These discussions focused on upcoming initiatives or projects the project



team should be aware of, some findings from engagements that may pertain to the groups (where applicable), and priorities for improvements or other items that may help shape the plan and should be considered moving forward.

These conversations occurred with the following organizations:

- **Cowichan Lake Trail Blazers (Community Tour, December 4, 2020)**
- **Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI, February 15, 2021)**
- **Cowichan Valley Regional District (February 17, 2021)**
- **Ts-'uubaa-asatx (February 18, 2021)**

Through these discussions various items for the project team to consider were identified. For example, any requirements for improvements along South Shore Road are required to be pursued through MOTI's approvals process such as warrants for crosswalks and other road improvements. Other items included references to existing plans such as the CVRD's Regional Parks and Trails Master Plan and proposed community trail connections. The importance of connecting active transportation facilities to the larger recreational network was also mentioned and several priority recreational connections identified by the Cowichan Lake Trail Blazers. In addition, several conversations highlighted the potential for the Cowichan Lake Weir project to connect the south and north sides of the lake. The preliminary weir design options were mentioned and shared with the project team which include the potential for a walkway and connections to the surrounding park and trail system. Other future trail connections were also identified through these conversations including a planned long-term trail connection from Ts-'uubaa-asatx's North Shore Estates, an emerging development area which will result in increase demand along North Shore Road, to Lake Town Ranch. These efforts are ongoing.

9.0 COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

The project team presented to the Town of Lake Cowichan Strategic Planning Committee on February 9th, 2021, providing updates on the Active Transportation Network Plan, recently completed engagement activities, and providing an overview of potential directions for the Plan.

10.0 NEXT STEPS

The input received throughout the Active Transportation Network Plan's engagement process will ensure the directions and priorities identified within the emerging Plan are reflective of community interests while aligning with existing supporting policies where



applicable. These priorities will be outlined within the draft ATNP. The project team would like to thank those that shared their input throughout this process and encourage anyone interested to stay informed through the project's webpage and invites them to join the second round of engagement which will include a second round of virtual open houses.

