



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Municipal Hall
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Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

Legislation Text

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REQUEST FOR DECISION

DATE: February 2, 2022 Report No. EPW-22-003

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Joel Clary, Acting Director of Engineering and Public Works

SUBJECT:

Active Transportation Network Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive the Active Transportation Network Plan and direct staff to bring forward initiatives for Council consideration that include budget and capacity implications.

RELEVANT POLICY:

Official Community Plan (OCP)
Climate Action Mitigation/Adaptation Plans

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

Healthy, Livable & Diverse Community - Multi-Modal Transportation Strategies
Local Services and Infrastructure - Support Ongoing Improvements to Transportation Corridors

BACKGROUND:

The Township of Esquimalt adopted its Official Community Plan (OCP) in 2018. The OCP includes specific objectives to help improve conditions for people walking and cycling in Esquimalt. In alignment with these objectives, the Township's Strategic Priorities identify a need to develop an Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP).

In October 2020, the Township hired WATT Consulting Group (Consultant) to develop the Township's ATNP. The purpose of the ATNP is to:

- Identify deficiencies in the pedestrian and cycling network;
- Identify gaps in the pedestrian and cycling network;
- Develop the vision and goals for the network to address the deficiencies and gaps; and
- Create an implementation plan to identify the critical projects needed in the short-term (1-5 years) and the long-term.

The Consultant has completed the following deliverables as part of the development of the ATNP:

- Baseline Condition Report

- Public Engagement Round 1
- What We Heard Report
- Plan Summary Report
- Public Engagement Round 2

The following are the statistics from the two rounds of public engagement on the ATNP:

- 3200 total visits to Engaging Esquimalt website
- 253 responses to public survey No.1
- 351 interactive online mapping submissions
- 35 ideas submitted
- 485 responses to public survey No.2

Based on the engagement, technical analysis, and discussions with staff, the ATNP (Attachment 1) was developed by the Consultant. If directed by Council, the ATNP will be used to guide active transportation improvements in Esquimalt.

ISSUES:

1. Rationale for Selected Option

The ATNP provides an Implementation Plan (see Section 8 of the ATNP) that will aid Council and staff in achieving the active transportation goals set out in the OCP, Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plans, and Council's Strategic Priorities. The ATNP identifies the "Big Five Moves" described below as short-term priorities that are to be implemented within the next five years. The ATNP outlines medium and long-term actions, but recommends to refresh the priorities in five years through public engagement.

Big Five Moves

1. Quick-build Cycling Network

The purpose of this action is to implement quick-build cycling facilities with the focus on north-south and east-west spines as short-term priorities. This will address public feedback that said the top barrier for cycling in Esquimalt is due to a lack of comfort cycling on major roads without painted bike lanes. Based on the feedback from the public and technical review, the following projects are identified in the ATNP as short-term priorities for implementing protected quick-build cycling facilities in order of priority:

1. Tillicum Road from Gorge Bridge to Craigflower Road
2. Tillicum Road from Craigflower Road to Colville Road
3. Lampson Street from Craigflower Road to Colville Road
4. Lampson Street from Colville Road to Esquimalt Road
5. Esquimalt Road from Canteen Road to Dominion Road
6. Head Street from Esquimalt Road to Lampson Street

Tillicum Road was chosen as the top priority as it tied as the number one priority with Esquimalt Road in the second public survey, but Esquimalt Road already has sections of painted bike lanes.

This is a change from the previously approved capital project to design bike lanes on Lampson Street between Transfer Street and Esquimalt Road. The ATNP recommends completing Lampson Street after Tillicum Road to complete a north-south route. Following the completion of the north-south route, Esquimalt Road would be the next priority.

The ATNP recommends quick-build facilities for the short-term cycling projects as a way to efficiently build out the network. Quick-build facilities focus on improvements between the existing curbs. This approach will utilize parking lanes (ex. Esquimalt Road) or vehicle travel lanes (ex. removing a lane on Tillicum Road) as a way to gain the necessary space for bike facilities. Quick-build facilities are cost effective compared to more permanent facilities behind the existing curb. Costs for quick-build facilities include necessary improvements at intersections to allow for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists through the intersection.

See Section 6.2.1 in the ATNP for more details on the short-term cycling improvements.

2. Lower Speeds

The purpose of this action is to lower speeds on Major Roads to 40km/hr and on Residential Collector and Local Roads to 30km/hr. Vehicle Speeds do not always cause crashes, but they play a significant role in determining the severity of the crash. Lowering speeds, even a small amount, can mean a drastic difference for pedestrians and cyclists.

On Local Roads, the change to 30km/hr aligns with the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) pilot project that the District of Saanich is leading to reduce speeds on roads without a continuous centreline to 30km/hr. Changes to Residential Collectors and Major Roads could be achieved through an update to the Streets & Traffic Bylaw, similar to Craigflower Road.

See section 7.1.2 of the ATNP for more details.

3. Short-term Intersection Reviews and Improvements

The purpose of this action is to complete crossing and intersection reviews to determine necessary improvements for both pedestrians and cyclists based on feedback from the public and technical analysis. The short-term priority crossing reviews identified in the ATNP are:

- Tillicum Road - new crossing on Tillicum between bridge and Craigflower
- Esquimalt Road / Dunsmuir Road - new crossing on Esquimalt
- Craigflower Road (Admirals Rd to Tillicum Rd) - improved crosswalks
- Fairview Road / Devonshire Road - E&N trail crossing improvements
- Esquimalt Road / Fernhill Road - conflict markings at Esquimalt Plaza

The short term-priority intersection reviews identified in the ATNP are:

- Admirals Road / Colville Road - improved sign and paint markings
- Esquimalt Road / Head Street - sign, paint, and signal changes
- Fraser Street / Munro Street / Bewdley Avenue - new stop controls
- Esquimalt Road / Admirals Road - sign, paint, and signal changes
- Craigflower Road / Tillicum Road - sign, paint, and signal changes

The improvements noted above are based on a desktop review and will require detailed analysis and design to determine the exact scope of the improvements.

See Section 7.2 in the ATNP for more details on crossing and intersection improvements.

4. Fill in Sidewalk Gaps

The purpose of this action is to construct high priority sidewalks to fill out the sidewalk network based on feedback from the public. Gaps in the sidewalk network was identified by the public through engagement as the top desired improvement for walking in Esquimalt. The following projects are identified in the ATNP as short-term priority sidewalk projects in order of priority:

1. North side of Old Esquimalt from Lampson Street to Rockheights Avenue
2. West side of Archie Browning parking lot from Lyall Street north to existing
3. Munro Street from Fraser Street to Lampson Street
4. East side of Kinver / Swinford Street from Lyall Street to Munro Street
5. Bewdley Avenue from Fraser Street to Macaulay Street
6. Wychbury Avenue from Fraser Street to Kinver Street
7. Wollaston Street from Lampson Street to Macaulay Street

Implementing projects 1-3 above is a change from the Sidewalk Master Plan, which prioritizes new sidewalks where a sidewalk doesn't exist on either side of the road. Each of the top three projects above either already have a sidewalk on one side of the road or are in a park; however, through the public engagement process for the ATNP, the public identified these projects as the top new sidewalk projects. Implementing the ATNP will see these projects prioritized above the projects in the Sidewalk Master Plan. The remaining projects listed above are on the Sidewalk Master Plan.

See Section 5.2.1 in the ATNP for more details on the short-term sidewalk priorities.

5. More Staff

The purpose of this action is to highlight the staffing needs to successfully implement the ATNP. In addition to the implementation of the other actions listed above, there are several other actions listed in the ATNP that will need to be coordinated. The ATNP recommends a Project Coordinator position to do the following:

- Serve as public face to ATNP efforts
- Coordinate ATNP improvements
- Review designs to improve active transportation accommodation
- Oversee bike parking improvements and policy updates
- Oversee education and encouragement efforts
- Oversee monitoring and deliver progress updates to Council
- Oversee bike sharing and micromobility efforts
- Coordinate with regional partners
- Project manage active transportation improvements

Although the ATNP identifies the action as a new Project Coordinator, the above tasks can be managed in several ways including existing staff, new staff, consultants, or a combination of these

options. Any new staff request will be completed as part of the Township's annual budget process.

See Section 6.4.4 in the ATNP for more details on staffing.

Implementation of the "Big Five Moves", along with the other actions listed in the ATNP (see Section 8.3 for the Action Plan), will improve active transportation in Esquimalt. Staff are requesting that the ATNP be received for information. If received, the ATNP will be used as a guiding document for active transportation improvements in Esquimalt. All actions will still have to go through Council for approval through the budget, bylaw, or policy process.

2. Organizational Implications

Engineering will start the implementation of the ATNP with existing staff. Depending on the funding received for the associated ATNP budget requests in the 2022 to 2026 Financial Plan, further staffing may be required, including up to a project coordinator, as described above. Staffing needs will be reviewed and requested as part of the Township's annual budget process. Engineering will lead the implementation of the ATNP and coordinate with other Departments in the Township.

3. Financial Implications

The estimated cost to implement the short-term priorities identified in the ATNP over the next five years is approximately \$7,450,000. This estimate is a Class D estimate that should be refined through the detailed design of each project. All budget requests will be made for individual projects as part of the Township's annual budget process. Staff will apply for grant funding as opportunities become available.

Section 8.2 of the ATNP for further details on the cost to implement the ATNP.

4. Sustainability & Environmental Implications

Active transportation plays a significant role in mitigating climate change as the transportation sector accounts for 33% of the community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The vision and goals of the ATNP recognize active transportation's role in climate change. The vision statement in the ATNP includes a focus on reducing overall greenhouse gas:

Esquimalt's active transportation network offers all residents, regardless of age, ability, or socio-economic status, greater protection from motor vehicle traffic so that all trips - regardless of purpose - can be done safely and comfortably by walking, cycling, or rolling. Esquimalt's overall transportation network has roads that are designed for slower motor vehicle speeds and its active transportation facilities are well connected, allowing residents to complete a larger share of trips without a car and reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions in the Township.

The second goal of the ATNP is to "Reduce Climate Impact" by increasing the number of trips made by active transportation. Section 8.5 of the ATNP provides measurable targets for this goal, which align with the goals set out in the OCP, Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plans, and Council's Strategic Priorities.

5. Communication & Engagement

Two rounds of public engagement on the ATNP were completed in 2021, as described in Section 3 of the ATNP. If the ATNP is received by Council, the Consultant will finalize the report and provide a condensed graphical version that can be posted to the Township website and social media. The full document will also be posted online.

The ATNP recommends doing a refresh of the ATNP in five years to update the short-term priorities. Engagement with the public would be completed at that time.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. That Council receive the Active Transportation Network Plan and direct staff to bring forward initiatives for Council consideration that include budget and capacity implications.
2. That Council receive the Active Transportation Network Plan as amended and direct staff to bring forward initiatives for Council consideration that include implications for budget and capacity.
3. That Council request additional information from staff.
4. That Council provide alternate direction to staff.