

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public input sought for regional active transportation in the Cowichan Valley

Duncan, BC – The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is seeking public input for the continued development of its Regional Active Transportation Plan (ATP).

The CVRD does not currently have an identified regional active transportation network. Instead, cyclists and pedestrians wishing to use ‘human-powered’ travel within the region are met with inconsistent and often sub-standard active transportation infrastructure.

“While active transportation has been a popular topic in CVRD for many years, increased awareness of climate change has increased the urgency to make lifestyle changes,” said Lori Iannidinardo, Board Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “Having an Active Transportation Plan will help us prioritize future projects and enable our ability to access grant funding programs available through senior levels of government. These grants offer considerable funding to save us money, reduce our climate impact, and provide us with the simple joys of cycling and walking through our beautiful region.”

The CVRD ATP builds off other, local area plans that have been developed for municipalities and territories within CVRD, such as Lake Cowichan First Nation and Cowichan Tribes, including planning projects underway in the City of Duncan and Municipality of North Cowichan. While these other plans focus on specific local, urban areas, the CVRD ATP will focus on connections between CVRD’s many community village centers and prioritize routes based on feasibility, safety, cost/benefit and public engagement factors.

“The project team has worked with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), who have authority over regional road networks, to establish potential infrastructure improvements that are applicable to our large number of rural, community-connecting roadways,” said Brian Farquhar, Manager of Parks & Trails for the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “By providing widened shoulders or multi-use pathways, we can improve the safety and comfort of cyclists and pedestrians while creating regional routes that enhance connectivity and reduce our reliance on fuel-powered transportation.”

The ATP project team is currently seeking input from residents regarding both enthusiasm for the plan and prioritization of routes. The draft plan currently prioritizes the completion and improvement of the Cowichan Valley Trail (CVT). The CVT offers an existing north/south connection, a connection west to Lake Cowichan and south to Shawnigan Lake. However, the CVT also has various connectivity gaps and lacks adequate wayfinding in various locations. Completing and improving this spine-like route is currently ranked as a top priority.

The plan also recommends an eastern route that would build off the CVT and connect the communities of Chemainus, Crofton, Maple Bay, Duncan, Cowichan Bay, Cobble Hill, Shawnigan Lake, and Mill Bay. This ‘closer to the ocean’ route would create a scenic option to be enjoyed by both residents and visitors. The proposed ‘third layer’ of improvements, referred to as Community

Connection and Extension Routes, include further connections of schools, commercial areas, and public facilities.

The project team continues to engage with First Nation leaders so that the advantages of improved roadway shoulders, trails and paths can be shared by all residents of the region. Public participation in the survey now available at [Plan Your Cowichan](#) will strengthen grant applications and ultimately help realize a regional active transportation network that can be enjoyed by residents, visitors, and generations to come.

Residents are encouraged to share input at www.planyourcowichan.ca/regional-active-transportation-plan.

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-  Ferry Terminals
-  Trans-Canada Highway
-  Highway 18
-  Cowichan Valley Trail
-  CVT Route Completion
-  East Routes
-  Regional Community Connections

Cowichan Valley Trail Completion and Improvements

Connects Ladysmith, Chemainus, North Cowichan, Duncan, Lake Cowichan, Shawnigan Lake.

East Routes

Connects Crofton, Maple Bay, Cowichan Bay, Cobble Hill, Shawnigan Lake and Mill Bay.

Community Connections

Connecting main routes, schools, major commercial areas, public institutions.

Exhibit 6: CVRD Regional Community Active Transportation Network

