



# > > > 2009 COMMUNITY ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Electoral Area "A" - Regional District of Nanaimo, BC



# Acknowledgements

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## Preparation

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# 1.0 Introduction

Automobile use has been a central component of a lifestyle which, for years, North Americans have been drawn to, a lifestyle characterized by a freedom of mobility, reliance on available, cheap fossil fuels, and a short-term comprehension of the long-term repercussions of our travel choices. Land development and infrastructure have responded directly to our travel habits, and the resulting transportation network is one that reinforces automobile use. Where previously personal transportation had involved some form of physical activity and contributed virtually no negative environmental impact, modern automobile travel has proven detrimental to the health of individuals, our communities and the natural environment we occupy. Gradually over the past few decades and with increasing urgency in recent years, there has been an awakening to the fact that our towns and cities are arranged around a travel mode that is inefficient, unsafe, unhealthy and unsustainable in the long-term.

In response to this growing concern, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has produced this Community Active Transportation Plan (AT Plan) for Electoral Area 'A' (EAA). The AT Plan sets forth a new approach to satisfying transportation and recreation demand, working toward a multi-layered active transportation (AT) network of roadways, trails, waterways, and supporting programs and services that facilitate sustainable, safe and healthy transportation. The AT Plan aims to shift demand to active modes that encourage physical activity and reduce carbon emissions, while building a healthier, more sustainable community.

## 1.1 Objectives and Approach

The AT Plan is meant to outline a plan and implementation framework to increase AT use in EAA. EAA seeks to increase AT to achieve the following objectives:

1. Increase physical activity and facilitate healthy living;
2. Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions;
3. Improve road safety and comfort for all users;
4. Increase mobility options for non-vehicle users (youth, elderly, mobility-impaired);

In addressing the primary objective of increasing AT use, the AT Plan is guided by a series of principles that explain the approach to realizing increased AT use.

- > Identify infrastructure and policies that encourage all self-propelled travel modes;
- > Promote both recreational and purpose-driven active transportation, combining the two where possible;
- > Emphasize areas around schools and parks;
- > Explore educational and promotional opportunities to build community capacity for AT;
- > Provide outcomes that are transferable to the on-going Official Community Plan (OCP) review and guide future work by the RDN's Recreation and Parks Department;
- > Identify directions that are consistent with existing community and regional plans, such as EAA's Official Community Plan, Parks and Trails Strategy, and the RDN's 2005-2015 Regional Parks and Trails Plan; and
- > Encourage coordination between the various organizations that oversee the provision of transportation and recreational facilities, and explore strategies for on-going funding and maintenance.

## 1.2 How to Use the Plan

The AT Plan is intended to guide the long-term development of a transportation network that is conducive to active transportation. The Plan is organized as follows:

- > Section 2.0, titled *AT: What and Why?*, provides a working definition of AT and explores the benefits of having local travel fulfilled by AT. It also highlights a few examples where AT has been particularly effective.
- > Section 3.0, titled *Understanding Area A*, highlights the existing AT context in EAA and the outcome of the research and consultation undertaken in developing the plan, including a community assessment, public mapping workshop and review of existing studies.
- > Section 4.0, titled *Community AT Network*, outlines the proposed long-term AT network, indicating community routes and facilities. It includes a breakdown of the infrastructure and programming improvements needed to realize the long-term network.
- > Section 5.0, titled *AT Implementation Strategies*, lays out priorities for the proposed improvements and suggests a number of strategies to fund and develop the improvements.

## 2.0 AT: What and Why?

### 2.1 What is Active Transportation?

*Active transportation is any human powered, self-propelled transport that may make use of both on- and off-road facilities.* Active transportation includes walking, jogging, cycling, horseback riding, in-line skating, skateboarding, kayaking, canoeing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and travel by wheelchair and push scooter. AT is used for both transport and recreational purposes, sometimes both.

An AT network should provide residents with an interconnected system of roadways, trails, and blueways (explained in Section 4.0) that they may utilize to arrive at their daily destinations, providing alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle. Ideally, this network will be multi-modal, providing the user with multiple options for travel; for example, a roadway that is useable by pedestrian or cyclist, or a trail that may be utilized by wheelchair or equestrian. AT modes may be combined with non-active modes such as transit or rail; a cyclist could ride to a transit stop, place their bicycle on the bus bike rack or train, and continue to their destination via transit or rail, or they may simply walk or rollerblade to the nearest transit stop.

AT is supported by providing AT infrastructure, which includes facilities ranging from bike racks and boat launches, to trails, bridges, and sidewalks. AT is also encouraged through community capacity building strategies, such as marketing, promotion and education.





### **2.1.1 AT and Sustainable Transportation**

Sustainable transportation objectives are quite similar to AT in that they present the community with viable alternatives to vehicle travel. However, where AT focuses on human-powered travel modes, sustainable transportation considers any mode that presents a more sustainable alternative to single-occupancy vehicle travel, including motorized travel via transit and ridesharing. From this perspective, the primary objectives of sustainable transportation and AT are the same, reducing vehicle travel, but the emphasis of each is on differing travel modes. This AT Plan recognizes sustainability objectives and seeks to encourage them through active transportation, but focuses on encouraging only those travel modes that are self-propelled.

### **2.1.2 AT and Transportation Demand Management**

Transportation demand management (TDM) is an emerging, integrated approach to improving the efficiency and sustainability of a transportation network through managing travel demand and modal integration. By definition, TDM does not preclude vehicle travel, but in reality, transportation networks are already developed to facilitate widespread vehicle use. Accordingly, TDM tends to encourage all self-propelled and multi-passenger travel modes, as well as look at factors that influence travel habits such as land use and work arrangements. While not a TDM plan, the AT Plan recommends a number of similar measures that would be found in a TDM plan to encourage travel in EAA via self-propelled modes.



## 2.2 What are the Community Benefits?

*“Active transportation is one of the best ways to improve health and local air quality as well as reduce personal and employer costs.”*

– B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

### Personal Health and Well-being

Physical inactivity is a leading contributor to a number of health implications. Inactivity is directly linked to obesity, a problem that has more than doubled over the past twenty years. The list of serious health conditions associated with inactivity include heart disease, hypertension, strokes, diabetes, osteoporosis, depression and certain forms of cancer. Inactivity is also known to affect personal mood, self-esteem, energy levels and sleep patterns. By engaging residents in purpose-driven physical activity, AT works toward greater overall community health and well-being. (Source: Go for Green Canada)

#### **DID YOU KNOW...**

... the Canadian Heart & Stroke Foundation notes that rural residents are more car-dependent, less active and at a higher risk of being overweight and obese.

### Air Quality

Automobile exhaust contributes a whole host of harmful substances into the atmosphere, including Greenhouse Gases (GHGs), NoX, Hydrocarbons (potentially carcinogenic and important in the formation of ground level ozone, a component of smog), carbon monoxide, and particulates. GHG emissions are responsible for global warming, a phenomenon that is global in scale and with serious long-term implications. Airborne toxins and particulates reduce the quality of the air we breathe. AT modes are emissions-free and encouraging their use will result in improved local and global air quality. (Source: Go for Green Canada)

#### **DID YOU KNOW...**

... Go for Green notes that each vehicle mile replaced by walking or cycling prevents 2.6g of hydrocarbon, 367g of carbon dioxide, and 1.6g of nitrogen oxides from entering the atmosphere.

### Affordability

Relying on a personal automobile as the primary transportation mode can be a prohibitive expense for some community members, requiring gas, on-going maintenance, parking and insurance. AT modes such as walking, cycling and transit, require little to no capital cost and minimal on-going maintenance costs. Encouraging AT and providing appropriate facilities will allow community members to fulfill their transportation needs more inexpensively.

### Equity

There is a significant portion of the population that do not have the option to drive. Our youth, elderly and those with disabilities all rely on automobile alternatives to meet their transportation needs. By improving AT facilities, a community can fund transportation infrastructure that meets the needs of ALL community members.

## 2.3 AT Success Stories

### 2.3.1 District of Saanich, BC

The District of Saanich developed a Bicycle Master Plan that laid the foundation for a network of neighborhood focused connector routes and longer distance commuter routes. The municipality has diversified its transportation choices by limiting road expansions and providing mixed use trails, boulevard sidewalks, greenways, and bike lanes on major roads. More recently, the municipality adopted a Commuter Bicycle Network that identifies and prioritizes streets which will eventually be modified to accommodate cycling. New multi-unit residential buildings, institutions, workplaces and parkades in Saanich are required to provide bicycle parking. The district also worked with local police and ICBC to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and others. As a result of this plan, Saanich now has extensive trails and 50 kilometers of on-road cycling facilities. Since the implementation of the plan, the bicycle commuter rate has jumped from 4% to 11%.



*The District of Saanich has developed an extensive network of dedicated bicycle facilities, such as the lanes shown on Interurban Avenue.*

### 2.3.2 City of Edmonton, AB

In 1992, the City of Edmonton developed a Bicycle Transportation Master Plan to increase its trail network. In 2002, Edmonton's Multi-Use Trail Corridor Study recommended 62 kilometers of new trails along rail lines and other rights of way to connect residential areas, downtown, and other major amenities and the more than 250 kilometers of already existing trails and shared use sidewalks. Daily cycling trips have increased in Edmonton from 10,000 in 1994 to 25,000 in 2005.

### 2.3.3 Haliburton County, Ontario

As a large rural area consisting of two main villages, Minden and Haliburton, the County of Haliburton faces obstacles such as large distances between destinations, a prevalent "car culture", an extensive road network, and a small tax base. To advocate and plan for AT, two focus groups made up of volunteers and professionals were formed in 2004 and 2005, as were partnerships between various stakeholders such as public health, tourism, trails, transportation planning, recreation, and community development groups. The result was an Active Transportation Plan for Minden and a Cycling Master Plan for Haliburton County. Both plans emphasize long-term advocacy with decision makers, stressing that plan implementation requires leadership and partnership with local governments. The plans also emphasize active transportation promotion, including a "Park the Car and Get Movin'!" campaign and a cycling festival. Results of these plans include the provision of bike racks and AT signage, various promotional events, increased interest and engagement from municipal and county councils and staff, a successful letter writing campaign to the county that advocated shoulders on an upcoming road reconstruction project, and increased participation in, and funding for, AT trails, festivals, and workshops.

### 2.3.4 St. John's Metropolitan Area, Newfoundland and Labrador

The Grand Concourse is a 120km integrated system of walkways and amenities linking each of St. John's large parks, rivers, ponds and greenspaces for use by pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchairs. The walkways are designed for use by pedestrians and wheelchairs, but permit cycling on the Newfoundland T'Railway section, which is a converted railway line connecting St. John's, Mount Pearl and the Town of Paradise. There are identification signs along the walkways to guide users, as well as interpretive storyboard panels with maps and descriptions of each of the 37 routes. A 148-page guide to the walkways includes detailed maps and full color photographs of all of the walks in the system. When planning the Concourse, special attention was paid to community destinations such as parks and schools, and while parking areas are provided for access, the walkways are integrated with the area transit system. Monitoring has shown that 38,000 local residents use the Concourse on an average summer day, and 85% of one telephone survey's respondents were found to use it at least once a week during the summer months.



*St. John's Grand Concourse is an impressive 120km multi-use walkway used by up to 38,000 people on an average summer day.*

### 2.3.5 Winnipeg, Manitoba

In 1997, the City of Winnipeg, Manitoba began various Green Commuting Initiatives to promote sustainable and active transportation practices in workplaces and schools. These programs include the Off Ramp program, which is a secondary school vehicle trip reduction plan encouraging students to become leaders in the green commuting initiative, an Active and Safe Routes to School program, which works with parents and teachers to get elementary-aged children to and from school via AT modes, the Winnipeg Commuter Challenge, which fosters friendly competition between workplaces and schools to commute via active transport, and the Going Green program, which provides tools to workplaces to support alternatives to driving. Each of the programs has been successful and has had increases in participation over the years; for instance, during the 2003 Commuter Challenge, Winnipeg had the highest number of participants and the best participation rate among major cities. The Active and Safe Routes to School program is being expanded to other elementary schools in Manitoba after having 6,000 students from 21 schools participate in Clean Air Day and 30,000 students from across Manitoba participate in International Walk to School Day. The Off Ramp program presentations have been given to student groups from six high schools and are expanding to other schools in Winnipeg. Results of the Going Green program include a rideshare program at Winnipeg's main hospital and transportation surveys, green commute plans and commuter challenges at various other employment centres.

## 3.0 Understanding Area “A”

A basic understanding of EAA is necessary to understand the strengths and weaknesses surrounding AT in the community, and develop strategies for improvement that build on existing facilities and are coordinated with community needs. This section reviews current conditions in EAA that inform decisions made on AT, including existing land use and infrastructure, existing policy and planning documents, and community feedback. It also makes constant reference to Maps 1 & 2, which highlight the existing context and conditions in EAA.

### 3.1 Existing Conditions

#### 3.1.1 Location

EAA is the RDN's southern-most electoral area. It has a population of approximately 6,750, but is part of the larger Nanaimo-area population of over 100,000. EAA relies heavily on the City of Nanaimo for access to employment and services. The Town of Ladysmith is approximately 10km south of EAA and, to a lesser extent, also functions as an employment and service destination for EAA residents.

EAA is located on the western shore of Stuart Channel and possesses approximately 8km of shoreline. EAA is sheltered from the Strait of Juan de Fuca by Gabriola and Valdes Islands, to the east. EAA is bisected by the Nanaimo River, which runs north-south. The Nanaimo River Estuary is immediately north of EAA and is an important natural habitat for its abundant biodiversity. The Nanaimo River flood plain consumes a considerable portion of the lands surrounding the River, and the low-lying surrounding lands are especially suitable for agriculture. Haslam Creek is a tributary to the Nanaimo River, and is located at the south of EAA. Two significant lakes are at the centre of EAA - Quennell Lake and Holden Lake - both of which are fed by a number of small creeks (shown in Map 1).

EAA is home to some of the mid-Island's most important transportation facilities. The Nanaimo Regional Airport is located in the south of EAA and provide air travel for the central portion of Vancouver Island. The Duke Point Ferry Terminal is located in the City of Nanaimo, but is accessed by the Duke Point Highway which travels through the northern portion of EAA. The Harmac Pacific Pulp Mill is located immediately east of Duke Point, and is serviced by a large pipeline travelling through the centre of EAA. Both Duke Point and the Harmac Mill attract a great deal of truck traffic.

### 3.1.2 Land Use

EAA is a predominantly rural and is comprised of nearly 60% rural residential lands, 27% agricultural lands, and a number of parks and crown lands. EAA contains four schools, two fire halls, and three community halls, all of which are key community AT destinations. Local residents rely on two primary service centres - the Cedar Village (within EAA) and the South Nanaimo-South Parkway Plaza area (in City of Nanaimo). The Cedar Village is the primary service destination for residents east of the Nanaimo River, but EAA residents west of the Nanaimo River tend to rely on the South Nanaimo area for their daily services. This is largely due to poor connectivity over the Nanaimo River. The South Nanaimo and Cinnabar Valley residential areas tend to rely on the City of Nanaimo for commercial/service needs, rather than EAA.

Two Urban Containment Boundaries (UCB) are identified in the Area "A" Official Community Plan (OCP) - Cedar and Cassidy - which specify that the majority of future development will occur in these areas (shown in Map 2).

- > The Cedar Village area is the social and cultural "heart" of EAA. It is comprised of single-family residences, a small portion of multi-family residential, and some important commercial/retail services, such as a groceries, a pharmacy and restaurants. The Cedar village area also boasts elementary, intermediate and secondary schools, a fire hall, and two community centres.
- > The Cassidy Village area is located at the south of EAA, directly adjacent to the Nanaimo Regional Airport. Cassidy contains the highest land use densities in EAA, consisting of single-family residences, on both small and large lots, and some small-scale retail services. It is also home to a Maritime Training Institute and has historically focused around manufactured homes. Cassidy is isolated from the rest of the area in both distance and lack of connections.

There are also a number of neighborhoods in EAA that, while not part of the UCB, contain considerable built-up area and a portion of EAA's population.

- > South Wellington is near the northwest edge of EAA. It includes a number of single-family residential properties and a commercial/industrial area adjacent to the Trans Canada Highway. There is a school, fire hall, and community centre at the centre of South Wellington. The area is home to the historic Morden Mine, which dates back to the early 1900's.
- > Cedar-by-the-Sea is at the northeast of EAA, and is comprised almost entirely of single-family residences.
- > Yellow Point is located at the southeast of EAA. It contains a large-lot residential uses and a number of Bed-and-Breakfasts.

Beyond the five neighborhoods mentioned, the remainder of EAA was previously used for forestry or is currently used for agriculture.



### 3.1.3 Transportation

All transportation in the EAA centres around the Trans Canada Highway, which runs north-south through the EAA and connects residents to the City of Nanaimo to the north and Town of Ladysmith to the south. There are ten highway access points where EAA residents enter/exit the Trans Canada Highway, including the interchange at the Duke Point Highway, and signals at Morden Rd, Spitfire Rd (airport access), Timberlands Rd and Yellow Point Rd (shown in Map 2). The Duke Point Highway runs along the northern edge of the EAA and is accessed by MacMillan Rd, via Holden-Corso Rd and Cedar Rd. The Duke Point Highway is the access route for the Duke Point Ferry Terminal and the Harmac Pacific Pulp Mill.

EAA Major Roads include Holden-Corso Rd, Barnes Rd, Brightman Rd, Woobank Rd, Cedar Rd, Yellow Point Rd, Greenway Rd, Morden Rd, Nanaimo River Rd, Quennell Rd, Haslam Rd, Spruston Rd and Adshead Rd. Major Roads have either a narrow paved shoulder separated by a painted line or no shoulders at all. There is also an extensive network of Secondary Roads that provide local access to residential properties. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoT) has jurisdiction over all existing and new roads in EAA.

The Cinnabar/Cedar (no. 7) bus is currently the only transit service provided in EAA. The route travels through the Cedar Village area along Cedar Rd, Woobank Rd and Holden-Corso Rd, and connects to the Cinnabar Valley area and South Parkway Plaza, at the south of Nanaimo. Passengers travelling to central or north Nanaimo must transfer to another bus at South Parkway Plaza. The Cinnabar/Cedar bus only travels through Cedar seven times per day.



*The majority of Electoral Area "A" roadways have either a very narrow shoulder or no shoulder, making non-vehicular travel difficult and unsafe.*

### 3.1.4 Parks and Trails

EAA is currently home to a whole series of parks and trails (refer to Map 1), including:

- > 3 Provincial Parks – Morden Colliery, Hemer and Roberts Memorial;
- > 1 Regional Park – Nanaimo River;
- > 1 Regional Trail – Morden Colliery; and
- > 10 Community Parks and 1 Community Water Access – Fawcett Rd, Ivor Rd, Glynneath Rd, Addison Way, Morden Colliery Adjunct, Kipp Rd, Woodridge Rd, Thelma Griffiths, Whiting Way, MacMillan Rd and Nelson Rd.



*The Morden Colliery Regional Trail is a tremendous asset that is well used by residents of EAA and the RDN.*

EAA's provincial parks are intended for use by residents within and beyond EAA and are operated by private operators arranged by BC Parks. The RDN manages both regional and community parkland. Regional properties are funded by all RDN residents and promoted broadly as regional attractions. The RDN's 2005-2015 Regional Parks and Trails Plan addresses the principles and policies governing the management and development of the regional portfolio, including Nanaimo River Regional Park and the Morden Colliery Regional Trail (MCRT). Community parks are local amenities funded by and serving EAA residents.

EAA's community parks are largely undeveloped, with the exception of the recently upgraded playground facilities at Thelma Griffiths in South Wellington (see Map 2). There are no parks in the Cassidy area, although the Trans Canada Trail is located nearby with access at the west end of Timberlands Rd. The Nelson Rd boat ramp is the first developed community water access along the EAA oceanfront and the only public boat launch.



*Thelma Griffiths Park, in South Wellington, was recently upgraded to include playground equipment.*

The MCRT is the only publicly managed and funded trail in EAA, discounting trails that exist within parks. The Trail is situated on what remains of the old Morden Mine rail corridor that once ran between South Wellington and Boat Harbour. The rail corridor that remains today runs from Morden Colliery Provincial Park to Hemer Provincial Park, with a couple discontinuous pieces west of the Trans Canada Highway. The RDN occupies and manages the Morden Colliery corridor under license from the Provincial Crown as part of the Regional Trail portfolio. The section of corridor between the Nanaimo River and Cedar Rd is not yet developed; a bridge over the Nanaimo River is planned in future.



There are also a number of foot paths scattered throughout EAA. Some cross private land while others run along undeveloped public road allowances. None of these paths are publicly managed trails supported by agreements between the RDN and the private or public landowner.



Area "A" is home to a number of informal pathways used by local residents on a regular basis.

### **ABOUT THE MORDEN MINE...**

(adapted from historical information displayed at Morden Colliery Provincial Park)

The Morden Mine remains are the most complete above ground remains of a coal mine left on Vancouver Island. It will soon be a hundred years since the Minister of Mines reported an 8 foot seam of coal was struck at a depth of 600 feet. Two weeks after discovery, the United Mine Workers of America union persuaded all miners in the area to go on strike. All underground work at Morden ceased immediately and the shafts were allowed to flood.



The Pacific Coast Coal Mines Company decided to use this break constructively. An engineer had come up with a revolutionary new design for the above-ground structures of a mine. To combat the danger of fire or collapse which was always a problem with wooden structures, he had successfully used concrete for building pitheads in Britain and South Africa. Concrete from BC's first cement plant was shipped by sea from Victoria to Boat Harbour. The PCCM already operated a rail line that ran from Boat Harbour to one of its other mines near South Wellington. This rail line conveniently ran right past the Morden mine so it was used to transport all the concrete used to construct the Morden pithead.

The pithead structure supported the hoist that moved the wooden cages up and down the shaft. The cages, once filled with coal, would be hoisted all the way up to the surface and up to the top of the "tibble". Here the cars would dump automatically, sending the coal down through a chute to the sifting screens, where it would be separated into different sizes. Each size of coal would then be collected in a different chute under the screens. When full, these chutes would be opened to load the railway cars waiting on the tracks below. The same cages that brought the coal cars up also carried the miners down the 600 foot below ground, where they would work for the day.

## **3.2 Community Plans**

### **3.2.1 Electoral Area “A” OCP**

The 2001 Electoral Area ‘A’ OCP identifies the Cedar Village Centre as the main commercial and service centre for EAA, with the objectives of promoting a complete nodal community within the Centre by encouraging innovative mixed use development consisting of residential, commercial, public, and parkland and public open spaces and by encouraging safe pedestrian, cycling, and vehicular movement. The Cassidy Village Centre is recognized as a Local Neighborhood Service Centre, and it is recommended that growth is limited and safe pedestrian and vehicular movement is encouraged.

The EAA OCP notes that a well-developed trail system is of particular importance to the community. Objectives include integrating and expanding regional and local park lands and trail ways with the existing provincial parks, improving access to all waterfront areas, and developing a trail system that links the Trans Canada Trail with provincial parks, community parks, the Nanaimo River, other trails, and the waterfront. Policies include developing the trail system along the Morden Colliery right-of-way to connect to the Nanaimo River, supporting the acquisition of properties along the Nanaimo River, and developing a Trails Master Plan (explained later in this plan).

The EAA OCP also highlights the need for pedestrian and bicycle routes and trails, specifically around schools. OCP policies include investigating the possibility of providing alternate pedestrian and cycling routes between neighborhoods and school sites, and protecting the E&N Railway corridor as a transportation route.

### **3.2.2 Electoral Area ‘A’ Community Trails Study (2002)**

The Area ‘A’ Community Trails Study was developed in 2002 in an effort to work toward the area’s OCP vision of linking the community with trails and paths. The Community Trails Study predates the RDN’s Regional Parks and Trails Plan (2005) and the regional initiative underway to develop rail trail along the E&N corridor. The Study is meant as a planning tool to identify future trails and connections to be developed over the next 20 to 50 years. The findings given highest priority in the Community Trail Study include:

- > A rail-side trail is desired along the E&N Rail Corridor (now being addressed through the regional rail trail initiative);
- > Maintenance and completion of the MCRT is prioritized, with fundraising for a Nanaimo River crossing, blocking access to motorized users, and pursuing public access to Boat Harbour listed as potential actions;
- > Yellow Point Rd and Cedar Rd were targeted as primary walking, cycling and equestrian routes that are in need of widening, improved shoulders or a separate multi-use trail to improve user comfort and safety;
- > Existing, undeveloped public rights-of-way should be developed as trails; and
- > Long-term public access to the Harmac Pipeline corridor is sought for trail use, with recognition of the issues of private property and security.

### **3.3 Community Feedback**

#### **3.3.1 Community Survey**

An Internet-based survey was administered by the consultant team to gather background information on current use of AT and the community's desire for future facilities. The survey was available on the RDN webpage over an eight week period. A total of 21 responses were received and produced the following key findings:

- > The majority of respondents regularly travel via single-occupant vehicle to/from work or school;
- > A large portion of respondents indicated they live 0-2 km from work or school, while a large portion also live 10-25 km from work or school;
- > A large portion of respondents live at least 5 km from their primary shopping/service areas and most use vehicles to access shopping/services;
- > Many people indicated that they travel via the Trans Canada Highway to reach shopping/services, but fewer use it for work or school travel, and no one indicated they use it for recreational purposes;
- > The majority of people indicated they walk more than five days per week for recreation, but few indicated they ever utilize less traditional self-propelled modes, such as rollerblades or skateboards;
- > Most commonly cited barriers to using AT more often include a lack of adequate walkways/trails/pathways and a lack of road shoulders and bike lanes, as well as distance to destinations and personal safety concerns;
- > Improved cycling routes/facilities and the provision of multi-use trails/pathways were indicated most often as the improvements that would encourage AT;
- > The MCRT was noted as a preferred recreational route; and
- > Cedar Rd, Yellow Point Rd and Woobank Rd were indicated as routes in need of improved roadside facilities, while a non-vehicle connection over the Nanaimo River between Morden Rd and Cedar was also indicated as a priority.

### 3.3.2 Mapping Workshop

A public mapping workshop was held on Saturday, October 25, 2008, from 10:00am – 2:00pm at the Cranberry Community Hall in South Wellington. A summary of workshop feedback is included as an Appendix. In total, 23 residents attended the workshop. The first half of the workshop focused on identifying existing barriers to the use of AT and attendees indicated the following barriers:

- > Trans Canada Highway shoulders are too small, inconsistent and poorly maintained for AT use. Specific roads were mentioned that lack shoulders, including Hemer Rd, Yellow Point Rd, Cedar Rd, Woobank Rd, Morden Rd, Barnes Rd, Holden Corso Rd, and Aikenhead Rd;
- > A lack of adequate shoulders or sidewalks on the roads near all schools, and specifically connecting the Cedar and South Wellington residential areas to the Cedar Village, and Hallberg and Timberlands Rd connecting to Cassidy;
- > The route from EAA to Nanaimo is fragmented and lacks convenient linkages;
- > Trails are divided by “No Trespassing” or “Private Property” signs/fences; and
- > There is a lack of bicycle parking in prominent locations, including the Cedar and Cassidy Villages, and Hemer Park.

The second half of the workshop focused on identifying improvements that would encourage active transportation in the community. Attendees indicated the following:

- > A path or trail from EAA to Nanaimo or the Southgate area;
- > A pedestrian tunnel or overpass at the Duke Point Connector intersection;
- > Linking the MCRT with a bridge over the Nanaimo River;
- > Developing boat launches in Quennell Lake and Holden Lake, and improving beach access along the oceanside; and
- > Designating Nanaimo River as a transportation route.



*The October 25, 2008 mapping workshop offered local residents an opportunity to provide the project team with specific feedback on AT in the community.*

### 3.3.3 Open House

A public open house was held on Tuesday, January 20, 2009, from 3:00pm – 8:00pm at the Cranberry Community Hall in South Wellington. The purpose of the open house was to present the preliminary findings of the AT Plan to the community and gather feedback on the recommended strategies. The open house had a number of informational panels and maps on display, and there was a presentation from the project team. A number of comments were received through discussion and the exit survey that was made available. Feedback included:

- > The community strongly supports the notion of increasing viable automobile alternatives and hopes that staff/politicians will continue to pursue it.
- > Attendees reiterated the need to develop a bridge over the Nanaimo River and complete the MCRT to Boat Harbour.
- > Not all attendees consider the Nanaimo River and Harmac Pipeline as suitable active transportation routes, noting trespassing and safety concerns.
- > Bus service needs to be improved, particularly increasing the frequency of service into EAA.
- > Concern was voiced over the disconnect between both Cassidy and South Wellington, and the rest of EAA, which is a result of both the Trans Canada Highway and the Nanaimo River.



*The January 20, 2009 community open house offered Area "A" residents a chance to review preliminary findings and provide feedback before the AT Plan was finalized.*

### 3.3.4 OCP Review Outcomes

Currently, the RDN is undertaking a review of the EAA OCP. The RDN held three community mapping sessions related to transportation. The results of these sessions confirm many of the community barriers and AT improvements identified at the mapping workshop.



### 3.4 Community Assessment

The consultant team undertook a community assessment on Tuesday, September 23, 2008. The team walked, biked, jogged and drove the majority of the roads and trails in the community to observe the opportunities and barriers to AT, and to gain a better understanding of how AT occurs in EAA. The team noted the following:

- > There are no sidewalks, except in Cedar Village. In a number of cases, young children were observed cycling or walking along roadways with limited protection from traffic.
- > Many roads do not have shoulder paint markings separating roadside users from vehicle traffic, or have very narrow shoulders.
- > Higher vehicle volumes and large trucks and trailers were observed travelling at high speeds along major routes through the communities, with a particularly large number on Cedar Rd.
- > A number of “Private Property” or “No Trespassing” signs were observed preventing access to public right-of-ways.
- > There are a number of informal pathways that are used by residents, but are unmaintained and in poor condition.
- > The lack of a Nanaimo River crossing for the MCRT is preventing the trail from becoming an extremely valuable east-west AT connection.



*Non-vehicular road users are provided little, if any separation from vehicle traffic, making road travel uncomfortable for pedestrians and cyclists.*

## 4.0 Community AT Network

The community AT network is the envisioned long-term network of routes and facilities that are appropriate for AT use. The primary objective of the AT Plan, and the subject of this section, is identifying actions that may be taken to improve the AT network and facilitate increased AT use in EAA. Accordingly, this plan recommends the following nine actions (as shown in Map 3):

1. Establish compatible land use framework;
2. Improve roadside conditions;
3. Support Continuing Development of Regional Trails in EAA;
4. Make Full Use of Existing Public Lands for Trails;
5. Prepare for Future Trail Corridor Acquisition;
6. Formalize “blueway” network;
7. Provide trip-end facilities;
8. Improve community signage; and
9. Undertake Community-based social marketing.

A number of supplementary actions were uncovered in the AT Plan process that are either secondary to the primary actions or contingent on cooperation from various other jurisdictions. They do not formulate the primary findings of this plan, but are worth bringing forward for future planning processes and in case existing conditions change and they become viable options. Recommended supplementary actions are explored in detail in Section 4.2, and include:

- > Improve neighbourhood connections;
- > Support transit improvements;
- > Pursue use of Harmac Pipeline;
- > Prevent motorized users on trails; and
- > Mitigate truck traffic.



## 4.1 Future Network Improvements

### Action 1:

#### Establish Compatible Land Use Framework

Land use, the places where people travel to and from, have the largest impact on the community's ability to use AT. There are two key land use elements impacting AT use:

1. Land use density has a positive relationship with AT. Increasing the total number of potential AT users increases the demand for AT in the community, and supports further expansion of facilities.
2. Land use diversity, or mixed land uses, reduces the distance travelled between the places people live, work and recreate, making AT a more practical choice.

Rural communities like EAA have traditionally been opposed to both intensifying land use density and mixing land uses. However, the AT Plan process revealed that there is some community desire to create village core areas that are conducive to walking and cycling, and that the community is willing to channel development pressure into the village areas in order to preserve rural areas.

Land use planning in EAA is carried out by the RDN, through the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), the EAA OCP and Zoning Bylaw. The RGS includes two primary goals that work toward land use that supports AT:

- > Goal 1 is for strong urban containment, meaning that the Cassidy and Cedar village areas support the majority of future land development in EAA so that the village areas may intensify and the integrity of rural lands is preserved.
- > Goal 2 is to create complete communities, meaning that the village areas contain an appropriate mix of land uses types so that EAA residents can satisfy their needs with the services in the village areas.

The AT Plan does not contain specific recommendations around land use in EAA, only that it supports the concepts of focusing development and promoting mixed land use in village areas to develop a land use framework that encourages AT.



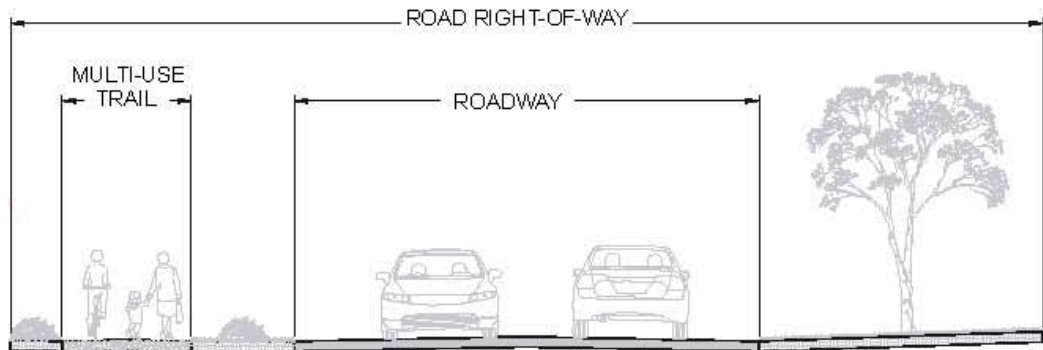
*The Cedar village area contains some of the increased density and mixing of land uses sought for the village areas.*

## Action 2:

### Improve Roadside Conditions

The most often cited barrier to AT in EAA was unsafe and uncomfortable conditions on EAA roadways. Residents noted that any combination of sidewalks, widened shoulders and/or separate roadside trails would all increase AT use. As roadways are under MoT jurisdiction and MoT does not typically build sidewalks in rural areas, sidewalks are not pursued. There are two methods to improve roadside conditions for AT users:

- > The preferred solution is a roadside trail located in the right-of-way that is separate of the roadway. Most of the road right-of-ways in EAA are 20m with an 8 to 10m built roadway and room for a 2 to 3m multi-use trail on one side.
- > Where there is insufficient right-of-way or roadway construction precludes separate trails, the shoulder may be enlarged to better accommodate AT. Where possible, shoulders should be widened to the MoT standard of 1.5m.



Perhaps the most important feedback from the community during the AT Plan process was prioritizing roads for improvement, realizing that not every route can be improved. Generally, each of the neighborhoods in EAA - Yellow Point, Cassidy, South Wellington and Cedar-by-the-Sea - needed an improved AT route into the Cedar Village area, prioritized as follows (refer to Map 3):

1. Yellow Point Rd from the Yellow Point area;
2. Holden-Corso Rd, from the waterfront to MacMillan Rd;
3. Timberlands Rd, coordinated with an improved crossing of the Trans Canada Highway and a direct link with Haslam Rd; and
4. Morden Rd, between the MCRT and Dick Ave.



*Yellow Point Rd is currently used for AT, but is unsafe for AT users due to a lack of separation from vehicle traffic.*

The community also indicated a need for secondary roadside improvements along specific road segments to provide access to parks and schools. The following is a list of secondary roadside improvements (refer to Map 3):

- > Cedar Rd, especially near the village area;
- > Hemer Rd, particularly between Cedar Rd and Woobank Rd; and
- > South Wellington Rd and Dick Ave, in South Wellington.

The costs associated with improving an entire roadway is considerable. It is suggested that more detailed analysis of each route is undertaken to determine those routes that can be improved with simple filling or resurfacing, and those that require full-scale redesign. The areas most easily improved could be prioritized for short-term improvement, while the expensive sections could be pursued as funding is available.

**Action 3:**

**Support Continuing Development of Regional Trails in EAA**

The MCRT, inaugurated as a community trail in the mid-1990s and elevated to a regional trail in the early 2000s, is well-used by the residents of EAA. While subject of considerable development by RDN Parks over the last decade in terms of bridge, culvert, trail and other works, the existing licensed regional trail corridor has yet to be developed to its full potential. The portion of the corridor between Cedar Rd and the Nanaimo River is not yet in trail, and the planned crossing of the Nanaimo River has yet to be developed. It is noted that a crossing of the Nanaimo River along the MCRT corridor will be a major undertaking that must meet environmental standards for development within a floodplain. Completion of these two regional trail projects would provide a much needed east-west AT connector in EAA. Residents of EAA strongly support completion of these projects and show great willingness to assist in fundraising.



Map showing the location of the existing portions of the Morden Colliery Regional Trail, the unbuilt portion, and the approximate location of the future Nanaimo River bridge crossing.

EAA is home to a second regional trail corridor: the E&N. The RDN, along with four other regional districts, is in the process of assessing the active rail corridor for development of trail beside the rail, or “rail trail”. The Island Corridor Foundation which governs the E&N, the private rail company that runs the rail operations, and the Regional governments involved are also in the process of establishing common rail trail development standards and guidelines. Because this trail will co-exist with an active rail line, safety and security of both rail and trail components are paramount. Given the lay of the land along with the difficulty and cost of bridging major creeks and rivers, it is not expected that rail trail development will be possible the length of the E&N in the short to mid-term. Some stretches will be more feasible than others and development will likely stretch out over time. First development projects will reflect ease of building and value for community connectivity.



*An 8km portion of the E&N Trail has already been developed between Rosehill Ave and Mostar Rd, in Nanaimo.*

#### Action 4:

##### **Make Full Use of Existing Public Lands for Trails**

The land use skeleton of a community is the public road network, which is often laid out in legal terms long before it is developed for vehicles. Undeveloped road allowance (URA) offers ideal grounds for trails because the land is already publicly owned (under MoT control) and typically connects to existing developed roads. Water accesses are simply URAs that end at water, fresh or sea.

For over a decade, the RDN has been taking out development permits from the MoT on URAs and water accesses for the purpose of developing trail and facilitating public access to water. The MoT does not itself develop or maintain road allowance for purposes other than vehicle access. While no permit is required by the public to pass along a URA, RDN permitted and managed passage ensures the trail does not stray off public land, the trail is properly maintained and any required structures or water management works meet appropriate standards and regulatory requirements.

In simplest form, all that is often needed to develop a URA is signage so the public knows where it has legal right to proceed along a trail. This clarity is important since over time the occasional unauthorized ‘no trespassing’ sign, fence or other barrier has been placed by unknown persons in an attempt to block rightful public access to undeveloped public road. Beyond visibly establishing basic access and URA trail location, the RDN has also helped electoral area communities pursue the installation of improved trail, parking areas, boat ramps, toilets and garbage facilities on URAs. The public works and boat ramp at the end of Nelson Rd are an example of permitted URA development in EAA, the only such permitted use of URA in EAA to date.

There are many URAs in EAA and the community has identified the following as worth developing into trail (see Map 3):

- > Nairne Rd to Cedar Rd via Ryeland Rd;
- > Haro Rd from Holden-Corso Rd to the ocean;
- > Lofthouse Rd to the ocean;
- > Headland Rd from Holden-Corso Rd to the ocean;
- > Tiesu Rd/Thomas Place between Yellow Point Rd and Cedar Rd; and
- > Tees Ave between Harold and Waring Rds.

In addition to Roberts Memorial Provincial Park, there are 27 URAs that provide public access to the oceanfront in EAA, including the one developed example at Nelson Rd. Informal trails can be seen on some of the oceanfront access URAs, e.g., Leask Rd, Barnes Rd and Headland Rd.

EAA is fortunate to contain a number of public lakes. URAs provide the public with access to these lakes. There are nine URAs around Quennell Lake, two of which (east and west off Ritten Rd) are well-used by the community. There are three URAs leading to Holden Lake, which is well accessible to kayaks and canoes via Hemer Provincial Park. Small York Lake is served by the York Lake Lane URA. Water access URAs are discussed specifically under Action 6 below, Blueway development.

Crown Lands also provide an opportunity for further connection of the AT network. Remnant rail corridor parcels in EAA, particularly on the west side of the Trans Canada Highway, could eventually be incorporated into AT routes. Some of these may prove useful in providing public access to Kipp Rd Community Park in the northwest corner of EAA. School properties also offer opportunity for AT connectors.

#### Action 5:

##### **Prepare for Future Trail Corridor Acquisition**

Community input to the AT Plan revealed that residents are using a number of foot paths situated on private lands to get around EAA. This use reflects informal access arrangements between landowners and neighbours as well as the difficulty landowners, particularly large tract landowners, face in keeping the public from trespassing. A viable AT network requires the establishment of authorized public access across the landscape.

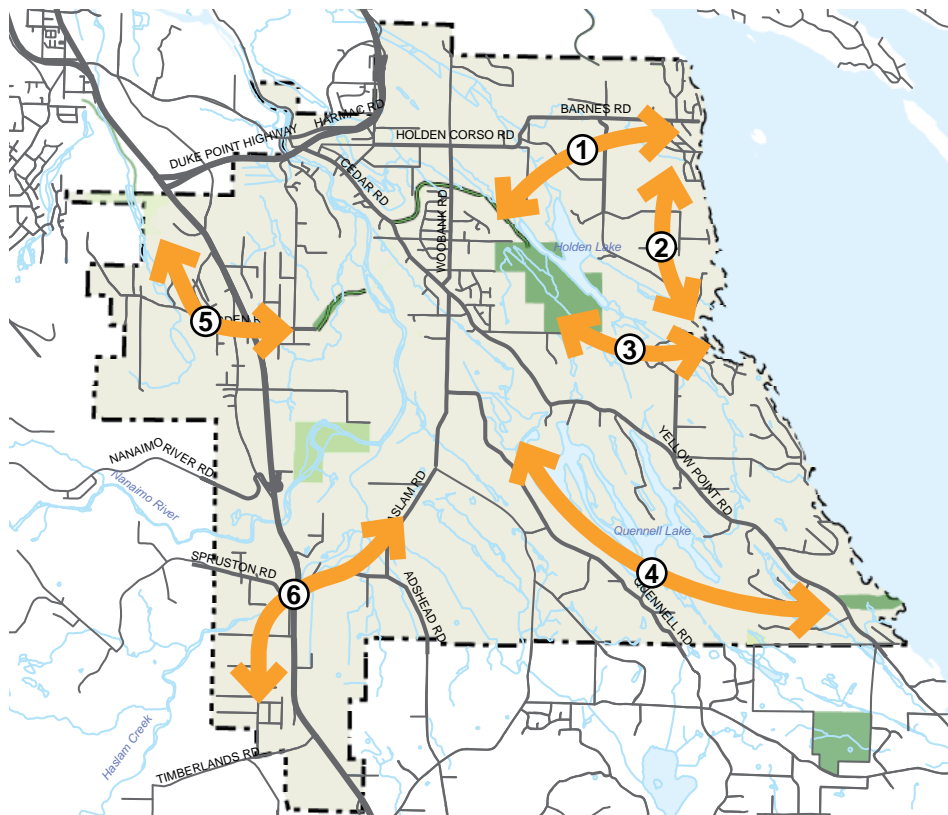
Authorized access to private lands for trail can be achieved in various ways. In simplest terms, access can be obtained through private land licence agreements. The RDN has undertaken a number of such private land agreements at both regional and community level in order to gain managed public trail access through private lands. However, the primary vehicle for creating public access to the land for trail corridor remains the residential land development process. Subdivision law requires small lot land developers to provide for park or trail lands; cash in lieu of land may also be accepted by the community. As part of the subdivision process, the AT connectors residents are seeking can often be acquired as public park land (more in Section 5.0).



To prepare for the future acquisition of park lands and trail corridor, it is helpful if the community has previously expressed its areas of interest for connectivity. These areas or corridors of interest can then be reflected in the Official Community Plan and addressed by the RDN as land comes up for development. It is important to remember that until formal trails are acquired, the rights of the private landowner must be respected. Desired future AT corridors include (as shown below):

1. North-east: a direct link from the north-east EAA to the MCRT.
2. North-east: a connection from the Cedar-by-the-Sea neighbourhood to the Boat Harbour area.
3. Central-east: new trail connection from the Boat Harbour area, the original end point of the Morden Colliery rail route, to Hemer Provincial Park and the MCRT.
4. South-east: trail linkages around the south end of Quennell Lake that connect the Yellow Point area to Quennell Rd and central EAA .
5. Kipp Rd: improved access from the South Wellington area to the large Kipp Rd Community Park at the north-west boundary of EAA.
6. Cassidy: improved connections between Cassidy and central EAA, facilitated by improved highway crossings.

In addition, the Harmac Water Line is well situated to be a valuable AT corridor and should be monitored for potential public access; see Section 4.2.



#### Action 6:

##### **Formalize “Blueway” Network**

Blueways are a layer of the AT network that facilitate water-borne travel and recreation, such as canoeing, kayaking, swimming and inner-tubing. Blueway considerations include both suitable routes and access points. While a number of routes and access points are desired by the community, each must be looked at in detail to determine suitability and feasibility prior to development. Any proposed development around water must uphold environmental Best Practices, meet all Riparian Area Regulations governing development near and in water bodies, and conform to applicable federal law, e.g., the Fisheries Act and the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Environmental assessments are typically required for any significant proposed development around water. A strategic environmental management plan for developing proposed blueway routes, particularly along the Nanaimo River, would be advisable.

The following routes are identified for long-term blueway use (refer to Map 3):

- > The Nanaimo River;
- > The Strait of Georgia waterfront;
- > Holden Lake; and
- > Quennell Lake.

To facilitate use of the desired blueway routes, it is necessary to provide water access. EAA is home to approximately 50 existing water access locations, ten of which are developed. The community indicated a desire for developed water access at the following specific locations (refer to Map 3):

- > A number of potential Nanaimo River accesses near its crossing with the Trans Canada Highway, and north of the MCRT;
- > Oceanfront accesses all along the waterfront, where there are currently only two formal accesses (Roberts Memorial Park and Nelson Rd);
- > Holden Lake accesses via undeveloped road allowances at the northeast of the lake; and
- > Quennell Lake accesses via undeveloped road allowances at the north of the lake, near the end of Ritten Rd, and off Yellow Point Rd.

Developed access points should permit safe, environmentally appropriate access and, where warranted, may also include supporting facilities that facilitate comfortable use by AT users, e.g., boat ramps, parking areas, bicycle storage, washrooms/changerooms, and equipment rentals. The level to which individual water accesses are developed will determine the types of potential water body users. It may therefore be strategic to development certain water accesses to permit a wide range of users, while leaving other undeveloped to limit potential users. Further consultation should be undertaken to develop an access management strategy and to determine appropriate types of uses for each watercourse and address potential environmental impacts. The general desire should be reflected in the OCP.



## Action 7:

### Provide Trip-end Facilities

Trip-end facilities are infrastructure and services that increase travel convenience for users of certain travel modes. Vehicle parking is an example of an end-point facility that is typically offered to vehicle users. End-point facilities may also be targeted to AT modes, such as cycling, jogging, horseback riding and other self-propelled modes. They should be considered for locations where AT users are typically travelling to/from, such as schools, shopping areas, office/employment, parks/trails, and water access points.

End-point facilities are becoming commonplace in certain municipalities. The following facilities would improve AT opportunities:

- > Bicycle parking requirements may be included in the Zoning Bylaw, stating that a certain number of Class 1 and Class 2 bicycle parking stalls must be built per residential unit or per area of floor space in commercial and institutional uses.
- > Bicycle end-point facilities could also be examined by BC Parks and RDN Parks for EAA's existing major parks and trail. The RDN may also wish to seek out additional grant monies to fund these facilities.
- > Equestrian users seek appropriate parking and turn-around facilities for vehicular access to equestrian routes.

**Class 1** bicycle parking fully protects the bicycle and its components from theft, vandalism, and weather.

**Class 2** parking is a stand or post that allows the user to lock their bicycle in an upright position.

Specific EAA locations have been identified as areas where trip-end facilities are especially warranted. Locations have been selected that are believed to be especially attractive destinations for AT users, such as community facilities and parks, as well as locations that the community uses for largely recreational use. Identified locations include (refer to Map 3):

- > The Cedar village area;
- > South Wellington Elementary and Cranberry Hall area;
- > Main trailheads along the Morden Colliery Trail;
- > Main accesses to Hemer Provincial Park, Roberts Memorial Provincial Park, and Nanaimo River Regional Park;
- > North Cedar School and the Cedar Community Hall; and
- > Future accesses to Holden Lake and Quennell Lake (as needed).

Developing trip-end facilities in EAA will involve, first, getting public agencies to provide appropriate facilities, showing leadership to the wider community. Over time, community members may develop facilities that improve their community, taking advantage of partnership and funding opportunities.

Action 8:

**Improve Community Signage**

The MoT has jurisdiction over all aspects of EAA roads. There is an opportunity for the RDN to work with the MoT's Area Manager to suggest specific road sections needing warning signage to alert drivers of the presence of roadside AT users. The MoT Manual of Standard Traffic Signs and Pavement Markings contains two signs that are especially relevant to EAA:

- > The Horse and Rider Sign (W-126) warns motorists of potential horseback riders on the roadway. The Horse and Rider Sign is meant for use on narrow or winding roads where horseback riding is known to take place.
- > The Cyclists on Roadway Sign (W-130) warns both vehicle drivers and cyclists that each may be present on the roadway. The Cyclists and Roadway Sign is meant to be used where the presence of cyclists would be unexpected by the motorist, or on routes where there is a particularly heavy volume of cyclists.



Effective trail signage improves AT network comfort and orientation. As AT facilities are developed in EAA, RDN park and trail signage can be supplemented to reflect connectivity opportunities and the presence of AT facilities, such as bicycle parking and nearby bus stops. RDN park and trail lands also offer good signage locations for general information postings on EAA AT route descriptions, e.g., suitable roadside routes and blueway connections.



*The Morden Colliery Regional Trail includes trailhead markers to identify trail access points and display regulations.*

Action 9:

**Undertake Community-based Social Marketing**

A community-based social marketing program is a functional approach that emphasizes direct contact among community members and focuses on removing social barriers that prevent people from changing travel behaviors. These types of programs are especially effective in influencing social change in the community.

The following four tasks are suggested:

**Task 1.** The RDN should go about formulating a community-based AT group to 'champion' AT in the community. The AT group should function under a name that is known throughout the community, something that portrays the group's intent, and may be a multi-functional community group, incorporating aspects of community development, tourism/promotions and/or local commerce/industry. It is suggested that the group be comprised of the general community populace, as well as any willing elected officials and/or key business owners.

**Task 2.** The AT group should organize regular events that showcase AT. This could be a bike ride once-monthly along a designated route, a rotating horseback tour along little-known routes, a winter ski/sled tour as the weather permits, or a multi-modal route along the former Yellow Point Pant and Paddle Race course. Each of these regularly-scheduled events will create awareness for the available AT opportunities and help build a greater sense of community in EAA.

The AT survey indicated that a small portion of respondents are already in a group that encourages AT, and almost all respondents who are not already in a group noted that they might be interested in joining one.

**Task 3.** The AT group needs to develop a series of informational and promotional materials. For example:

- > Suggested walking, jogging, bicycle, horseback and/or canoe/kayak route maps;
- > Promotional brochures for specific AT-related events;
- > Website(s) that highlight up-coming events and provide maps; and
- > Signs along a specific AT route through the community.

The **Yellow Point Pant and Paddle Race** was a run-bike-paddle race held in EAA once per year, from 2001 to 2007. The race began and ended at the Crow and Gate Pub (on Yellow Point Rd), and featured six race legs: an 8.5km run, 7km canoe across Quennell Lake, 28km on road bike, 5km by kayak, 13km by mountain bike, and a 10km run to the finish line.

(Source: [www.pantandpaddle.net](http://www.pantandpaddle.net))

**Task 4.** The AT group should be an advocate for AT in the community. They should regularly advertise the events they hold and actively promote AT opportunities so that EAA residents and visitors are aware of opportunities and, even if they don't participate, are constantly reminded that the opportunities are available to them.

Promotional approaches could include:

- > Distribute information/promotional materials at community events (ie. market, meetings, etc);
- > Advertise in local newspapers, newsletters and email list-serves;
- > Establish a monthly/bi-weekly column in a local newspaper that focuses on AT and sustainability issues; and
- > Be engaged in local community planning activities to ensure AT intentions are conveyed.

The Government of Canada has developed a thorough social marketing approach available at: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/Programs/Environment/utsp/commsocialmarketing.htm>

## 4.2 Supplementary Actions

A number of supplementary actions were uncovered in the AT Plan process that do not formulate the primary findings of this plan, but await significant change in conditions before they might fall within immediate range of an AT action plan. These factors need to be kept in sight through long-range planning, particularly by RDN Development Services; when conditions change favourably, the factors can be brought forward for action. Recommended supplementary actions include:

- > Improve neighbourhood connections;
- > Support transit improvements;
- > Pursue use of Harmac Pipeline;
- > Prevent motorized users on trails; and
- > Mitigate truck traffic.

### Improve Neighbourhood Connections

The AT Plan process highlighted the current disconnect of the Cedar village area from both the Cassidy village area and South Wellington. As the Cedar village continues to expand and attract the day-to-day uses that serve the residents of EAA, it is imperative that the links from both Cassidy and South Wellington are strengthened. This plan recommends improvements to Timberlands Rd and the connection with Haslam Rd (Section 4.0, Action 2), and developing a Morden Colliery Regional Trail crossing of the Nanaimo River (Section 4.0, Action 3) as primary actions to improve connectivity. However there is a need to work towards multiple points of safe access across the Trans Canada Highway and the Nanaimo River. There are numerous long-term options to improve connectivity, e.g., highway pedestrian overpass; and each should be pursued as the AT network expands.

### Support Transit Improvements

Transit service in EAA was identified as an ineffective alternative to vehicle travel, and not encouraging EAA residents to combine AT travel with transit to satisfy travel demand. All opportunities to work Nanaimo Regional Transit to improve service in EAA should be explored. There may also be opportunities to provide strategically placed Park & Ride facilities that would encourage transit use and carpooling. Both Cassidy (Timberlands/Trans Canada Highway or Vowels/Trans Canada Highway) and South Wellington (near the Trans Canada Highway/Duke Point Highway intersection) are suitable Park & Ride locations (refer to Map 3).

### **Pursue Use of Harmac Pipeline**

The Harmac Pipeline contains two above-ground water pipes that travel north-south through EAA, supplying the Harmac Mill to the north. Public access to the Pipeline is presently restricted for reasons of safety and security. However, the Pipeline presents a significant opportunity for a central and continuous route through EAA. This plan strongly supports the 2002 Community Trails Study recommendation that the RDN work toward long-term public access to the right-of-way for purposes of AT.



*The Harmac Pipeline is a continuous utility corridor cutting through the centre of EAA that is not publicly accessible at present, but should be monitored for long-term opportunities for public access.*

### **Prevent Motorized Users on Trails**

Trails are intended to provide low stress environments oriented at non-vehicle users. They are typically separated from the travelled roadway to decrease conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users, resulting in increased comfort and safety. Unlicensed motorized vehicles are not authorized to use any MoT road allowance, including roadside, nor are they permitted to use any park or trail governed by the RDN. All-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes are also excluded from any Provincial park land.

The community indicated a strong desire to uphold lawful use of EAA trails; but there are no easy solutions. The creation of an expanded AT network will likely increase the potential for conflict between lawful and unlawful users. The Province is examining potential legislation requiring that ATV and dirt bike users be licensed; most other provinces already have such legislation.

### **Mitigate Truck Traffic**

Residents of EAA indicated that there is significant truck traffic on certain local roadways, which makes roadside AT uncomfortable and unsafe. It was noted that the majority of large trucks that venture off the Trans Canada Highway into EAA are traveling to reach the South Wellington Industrial-Commercial area, near the northwest of EAA. To concentrate truck traffic on appropriate routes, away from schools and residential areas, the RDN should approach the MoT to formalize a truck route in the area that limits trucks to appropriate roads.



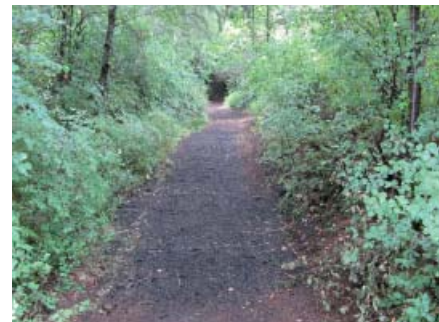
*Truck traffic can make roadways very uncomfortable for AT users.*

### 4.3 AT Facility Design

The following guidelines are for consideration in developing safe and comfortable AT facilities in EAA.

#### 4.3.1 Trails

- > Trails need to meet the needs of intended users; in general, authorized users of RDN trails include pedestrians, cyclists and horses. As necessary, depending upon available land and environmental sensitivity, multi-tracking to separate equestrians and cyclists from pedestrians or to limit use to pedestrians may be appropriate.
- > Physical abilities of all intended trail users are to be considered in trail design, working with natural terrain. Accessible trails increase the range of potential users and improve ease of use for all.
- > Aside from user type, trail design will reflect intended traffic volume so while rough un-surfaced footpaths with tread surfaces of three to four feet may suffice for rural low-use trail connectors, fully developed trail surface widths of two to three metres (2.2 m is the basic standard for two bikes abreast) and managed trail corridor widths of four to six metres are required for higher traffic trails. In general, the greater the use, the greater the requirement for level of development, signage and all associated facilities, e.g., parking, garbage cans, etc.
- > Sensitivity to the environment and wildlife habitat are critical in trail design, especially around water. Curved or winding trail that obviates any need to fall large trees is preferred. Curved trail also helps reduce the speed of bikes and unlawful motorized users.
- > The EAA wishes to maintain a rural character and this should be reflected in trail design. It may be appropriate to incorporate some of the historical character of the EAA into trails, e.g., old coal slag as trail surfacing material on the Morden Colliery Regional Trail.



*Old coal slag was used for surfacing along the Morden Colliery Regional Trail, shown above.*



#### **4.3.2 Shoulders and Roadside Trails**

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's standard for roadways with a shoulder bikeway is 1.5 meters. However, it was noted that very few, if any, EAA roads are built to this standard. The EAA community indicated that the lack of roadside shoulders makes AT unsafe and uncomfortable. The RDN should work with MoT at all opportunities to improve roadside conditions, emphasizing routes identified in this plan. It should be reiterated that RDN roadways are under MoT jurisdiction and altering their standards to reflect the recommendations of this plan is unlikely, particularly in the short-term. The RDN should be strategic and creative in identifying long-term opportunities to effect change. Developing partnerships is key in this regard. One avenue to consider would be to engage the Ministry of Environment in a pilot project of altered road standards in EAA.



# 5.0 AT Implementation Strategies

The AT Plan is intended to help EAA work toward realizing an improved AT network. This section outlines the actions and opportunities available to realize the AT network outlined in the previous sections.

## 5.1 Development Funding Opportunities

### 5.1.1 Land Development

Land development and subdivision, while rare in EAA, present an opportunity to leverage funds or property for AT facilities. The following mechanisms may be considered:

- > The Local Government Act (Sec. 933) permits local governments to impose development cost charges (DCCs) to assist the local government in paying the capital costs of community or regional parks/trails to service the development for which the charge is being imposed. The local government must have a formal DCC Bylaw in place that states the intent to levy DCCs and must contain a schedule outlining the amount of each applicable charge.
- > The Local Government Act (Sec. 941) states that any land owner subdividing their property into 3 parcels or more, where at least one parcel is less than 2.0 ha, must provide the local government with a park provision, either lands up to 5% of the land to be subdivided or a payment equal to the market value of the required land contribution. Where the OCP contains policies respecting acquisition of parks, the local government may decide on the form of contribution.
- > The Local Government Act (Sec. 906) gives a local government the power to require new development to provide a certain number of off-street parking spaces, as defined by bylaw. The LGA also permits a land owner to make a monetary contribution to the local government in-lieu of each required parking space, the value of which is specified in the Bylaw. Monies received are put into a reserve fund and may be used for the purposes of providing either off-street parking spaces or transportation infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, public transit or other alternative forms of transportation. While there is little development in EAA that would present this opportunity, it is something that should be explored.
- > The Local Government Act (Sec. 904) permits a local government to grant a private land owner the right to increase the achievable density of their parcel in exchange for amenity contributions sought by the local government that are beyond what is required. Amenity funds may be used for park and trail acquisition.

### 5.1.2 Provincial and Federal Grants

The Provincial and Federal governments have put emphasis on making funds available for local governments to develop community infrastructure, often targeted specifically at infrastructure to improve community sustainability and for rural communities. Grants are typically some form of cost sharing agreement, involving contributions from two or three levels of government. The following is a sample of programs currently available:

- > LocalMotion is a Provincial initiative providing funds for capital projects that make communities greener, healthier, and more active places to live. Details are available at <http://www.localmotion.gov.bc.ca/>.
- > Towns for Tomorrow is a grant program intended for infrastructure improvements that address climate change and improve the health, sustainability and livability of regional districts and municipalities up to 15,000 people. Details are available at <http://www.townsfortomorrow.gov.bc.ca/>.
- > The LiveSmart BC Green Cities Awards is a program offering funds to leading-edge communities for initiatives aimed at making them greener and healthier. Details are available at <http://www.greencitiesawards.gov.bc.ca/>.
- > The Active Communities Initiative Grant Program is a BC Parks and Recreation initiative providing funds to assist communities in the planning *or* development of walkways, trails and bikeways. Details are available at <http://www.activecommunities.bc.ca/>.
- > The Cycling Infrastructure Partnerships Program (CIPP) is a Provincial costshare program that encourages cycling for transportation purposes by accelerating the development of cycling infrastructure with the goals of reducing traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. Details are available at <http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/BikeBC/CIPP.html>.
- > The Canada/BC Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund is a grant program for infrastructure in communities with populations less than 250,000 with the purpose of improving municipal and rural infrastructure to ensure that communities are sustainable, competitive and healthy centres of economic growth. Details are available at <http://www.canadabcmrif.ca/en/guide.htm>.
- > EcoMOBILITY is an initiative under the Canadian ecoACTION program aiming to reduce passenger transportation emissions by promoting less polluting forms of transportation, such as walking, cycling, public transit and ridesharing. Details of the program are available at <http://www.ecoaction.gc.ca/ecotransport/>

While this list indicates those infrastructure programs currently available, grant opportunities will change over time. It is important that RDN remain active in seeking out new Provincial and Federal funding initiatives that may be used for further AT planning or developing AT infrastructure.

## 5.2 Initial Actions

It is important that the AT Plan is put into action once approved. The following are the initial steps that the RDN should take in implementing the AT Plan.

1. Integrate the findings of the AT Plan with the on-going EAA OCP review process.
2. Investigate grants to support an RDN-MoT study of roadside improvement potential in EAA, and then pursue grants to support specific development projects.
3. Pursue a range of strategies to realize the funding, access to land, community awareness and other resources required to achieve AT.

## 5.3 Ongoing Communications

There are a number of stakeholder organizations that need to be communicated with to coordinate the development of the EAA AT network over time.

- > Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD);
- > City of Nanaimo;
- > Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure;
- > Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans;
- > Island Corridor Foundation and the E&N railway trail team;
- > Harmac Pacific;
- > Nanaimo Regional Airport; and
- > EAA and surrounding area land owners and prospective developers.

# Appendix:

**SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM THE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION WORKSHOP  
October 25, 2008**

## **Summary of Feedback from the Active Transportation Workshop**

October 25, 2008

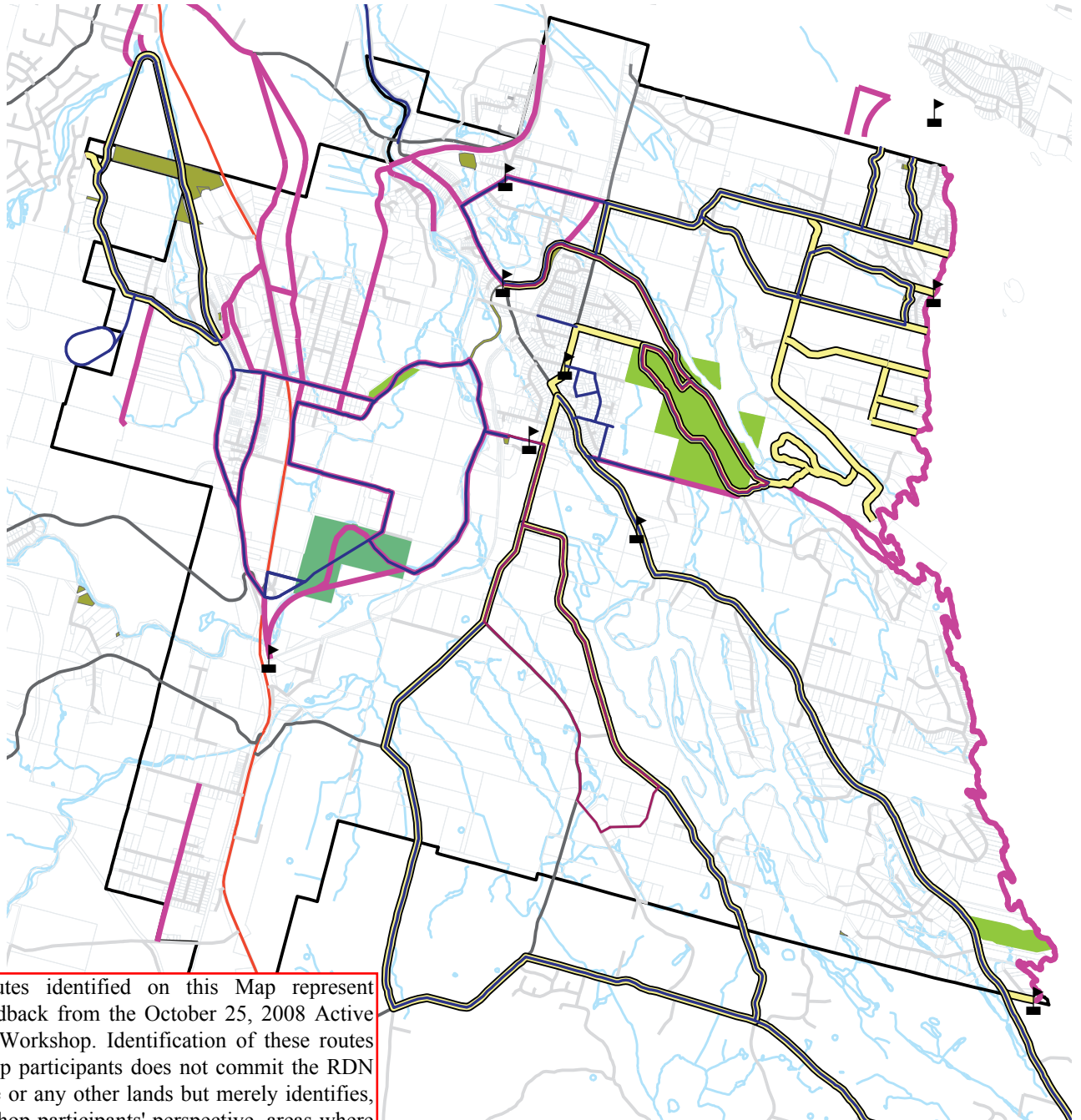
The following two maps present a summary of feedback from the October 25, 2008 Active Transportation Workshop. They represent an un-edited summary of the maps and drawings created by workshop participants, not the project team. The outcomes of the workshop do not directly represent the recommendations of the AT Plan, but the Plan uses the workshop feedback to help direct final recommendations.

Workshop feedback is summarized in two maps on the following pages:

- > Map A summarizes the routes that workshop participants indicated were the routes that they currently use for AT; and
- > Map B summarizes the community improvements that workshop participants indicated would facilitate increased use of AT.

# Map A - CURRENTLY USED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

Summary of Feedback from the Active Transportation Workshop - October 25, 2008



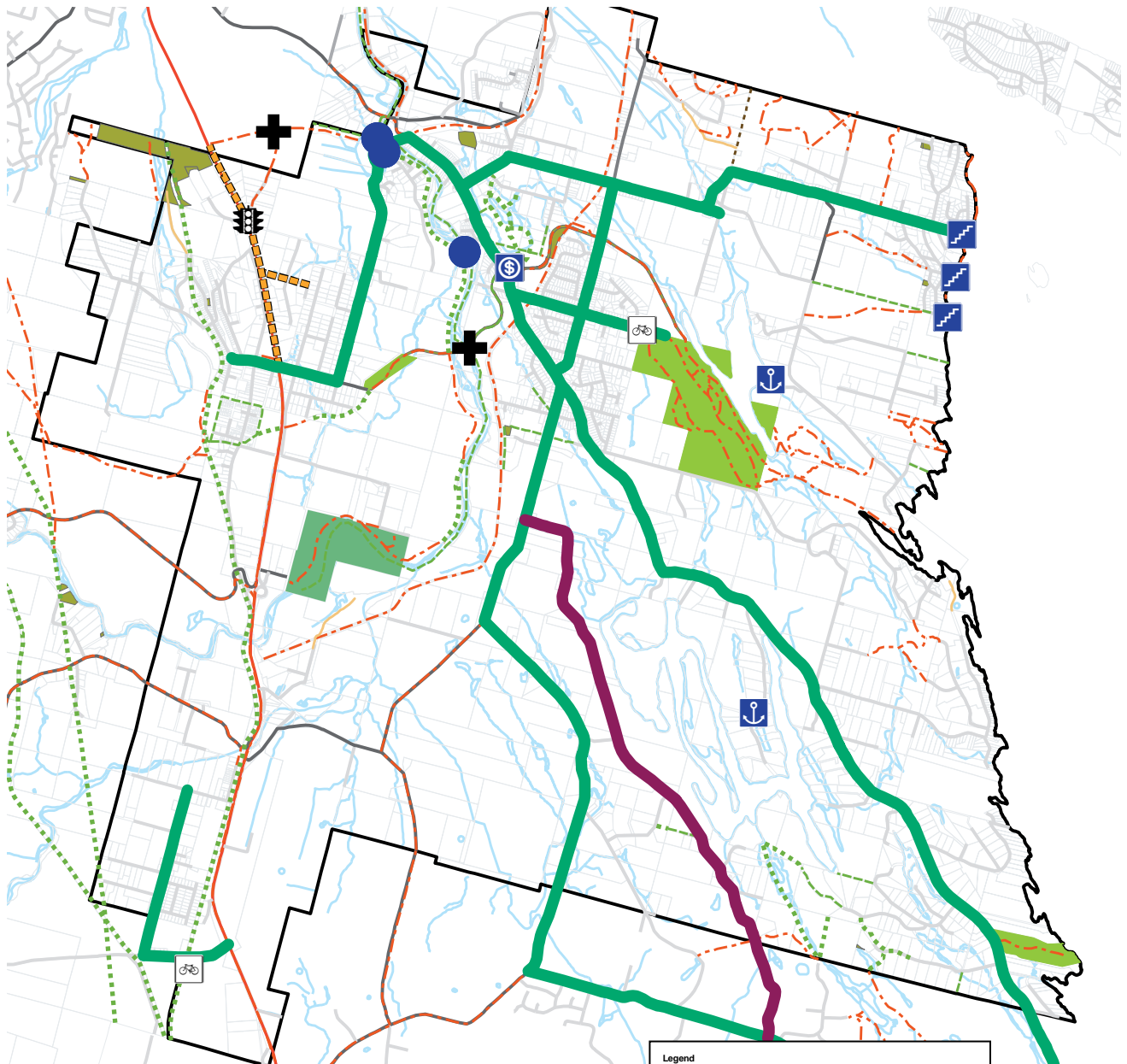
Note: The routes identified on this Map represent community feedback from the October 25, 2008 Active Transportation Workshop. Identification of these routes by the workshop participants does not commit the RDN to acquire these or any other lands but merely identifies, from the workshop participants' perspective, areas where active transportation is currently being used. Furthermore, the routes identified on this map have not been verified on the ground, do not represent the recommendations of this study, and are not currently endorsed by the RDN. Should the RDN wish to pursue any of these routes, communication and agreement with private landowners and more detailed planning will be required

Destinations	<b>Roads</b>	MAJOR	Lots
Running Routes	HIGHWAY 1	PRIVATE	Water Courses
Cycling Routes	INTERCHANGE	PVT	
Equestrian Routes	LOCAL	SECONDARY	
Walking Routes		PROVINCIAL PARKS	
		RDN COMMUNITY PARKS	
		RDN REGIONAL PARKS	
		OCP	
		Area A	



# Map B - DESIRED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Summary of Feedback from the Active Transportation Workshop - October 25, 2008



Note: The desired routes identified on this Map represent community feedback from the October 25, 2008 Active Transportation Workshop. Identification of these routes by the workshop participants does not commit the RDN to acquire these or any other lands but merely identifies, from the workshop participants' perspective, areas where there is a desire for active transportation routes to occur in the future. Furthermore, the routes identified on this map have not been verified on the ground, do not represent the recommendations of this study, and are not currently endorsed by the RDN. Should the RDN wish to pursue any of these routes, communication and agreement with private landowners and more detailed planning will be required.

**Legend**

Required Improvements	Possible Truck Route	<b>Roads</b>
Required Improvements	Existing	HIGHWAY 1
Beach Access	Potential	INTERCHANGE
Bicycle Rack	Proposed	LOCAL
Boat Launch	Unknown	MAJOR
Shopping Centre	Unknown	PRIVATE
Swimming Facility		PVT
Bridge/Underpass		SECONDARY
Traffic Signal		Provincial Park
Improve Road Surface		RDN Community Park
Widen Road Shoulders		RDN Regional Park
		Area A
		Lots
		Water Courses