



# Esquimalt Active Transportation Network Plan

Plan Summary

Township of  
**ESQUIMALT**



March 2022

# INTRODUCTION

## About this Plan

The Township's Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP) is the first comprehensive plan that identifies how active transportation can play a multifaceted role in achieving Esquimalt's broader strategic priorities including a healthy, livable, and diverse community.

The ATNP provides an overall vision, goals, and guiding principles for Esquimalt's future active transportation network. By following through and implementing the recommended projects, programs, and policies identified in this document, Esquimalt's future active

transportation network will reduce the community's climate impact, address the needs of vulnerable road users, and enhance overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Undertaken from January 2021 to February 2022, the ATNP was guided by a collaborative process involving Township's staff, neighbouring municipalities, community stakeholders, and the consulting team—all of whom played an important role in reshaping the future of active transportation in Esquimalt.



## What is Active Transportation?

According to the BC Active Transportation Design Guide (BCATDG), active transportation is defined as follows:

*“Any form of human-powered transportation, including walking, cycling, or rolling using a skateboard, in-line skates, wheelchair, or other wheel-based forms of human-powered transportation. It also includes winter-based active modes, water-based active modes, and horseback riding, although these modes are typically more recreational in nature.”*

Active transportation users are a diverse group and include those who are walking, cycling, rolling (e.g., skateboarding, longboarding, scootering) and people using mobility devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers.



## Why Active Transportation?



Environmental Benefits



Health Benefits



Safety Benefits



Economic Benefits



Societal Benefits

# ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

## Overview

The public engagement process included two distinct rounds of feedback:

**Round 1** – the Esquimalt community was invited to share their thoughts and feedback on current concerns, challenges, and opportunities surrounding the active transportation network. The community was asked to identify, using an interactive map, locations in the community that present a barrier to using an active transportation mode. Residents also responded to a survey and provided information about their use of active transportation, barriers in the network, and the types of improvements they would like to see in the ATNP.

**Round 2** – the Esquimalt community was invited to share their feedback on the draft pedestrian and cycling networks along with the draft vision and goals for the ATNP.

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the engagement for the ATNP was done virtually on the Township's Engaging Esquimalt website.*

## Did you know?

Esquimalt's compact geography and short distances between origin and destinations help explain why the community has one of the highest walking mode shares in the Capital Region. About 35% of all trips within Esquimalt are completed by foot.

## By the numbers...



**3,200** Total Visits to Engaging Esquimalt Website



**253** Responses to Public Survey no.1



**351** Interactive Online Mapping Submissions



**35** Ideas Submitted



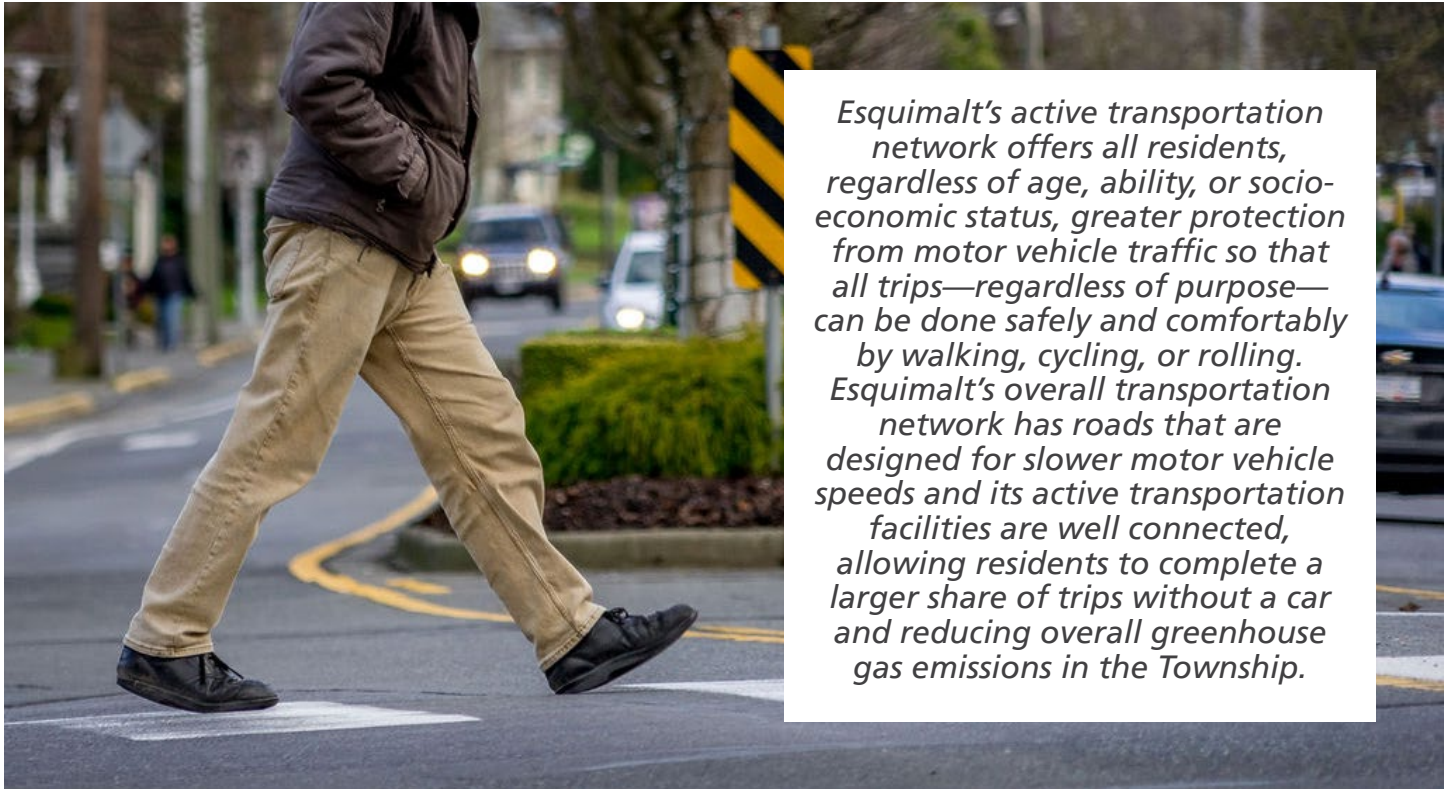
**485** Responses to Public Survey no.2



# PLAN FRAMEWORK

## Vision

A vision statement has been developed based on the extensive feedback shared by the community.



*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.*

## Goals

The goals set the stage for Esquimalt's active transportation network to be developed over time with a focus on the short-term improvements.



### More Protection from Motor Vehicles

*Provide dedicated and protected space to people walking, biking, and rolling on all Major Roads and Residential Collectors to improve safety and comfort.*



### Reduce Climate Impact

*Increase the share of trips made by active transportation to align with the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets in the Official Community Plan.*



### Better Active Transportation Facilities

*Improve the quality of walking and cycling facilities to meet the needs of residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.*



### Regional Collaboration

*Work with neighbouring jurisdictions to improve the connectivity of the active transportation network to make it easier for residents and visitors to travel within, to, and from Esquimalt.*

## Overview

The Active Transportation Network Plan identifies 43 actions to put Esquimalt on a path to achieving the vision and goals. All of the actions are critical and should be implemented to increase the share of people walking, rolling, and cycling. However, recognizing resource, financial, and staffing limitations, the following identifies the five big moves that are expected to yield the greatest benefit to Esquimalt's active transportation network.

See section 5.2, 6.2, 6.4, 7.2, 7.3, and 8.1 of the ATNP for more information.

### 1. Quick-build Cycling Network



### 2. Lower Speeds



### 3. Short-term Intersection Reviews & Improvements



### 4. Fill in Sidewalk Gaps



### 5. Add More Staff



## Did you know?

The Township of Esquimalt has set a corporate target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 45% by 2030. The transportation sector currently accounts for 33% of total community emissions (2020 data), which is consistent with other municipalities in BC. Active transportation can cut GHG emissions and air pollution and is a critical part of lowering overall emissions in the Township's transportation sector.

# FIVE BIG MOVES: QUICK-BUILD NETWORK

## What is a Quick-Build Cycling Network?

Over the next five years, Esquimalt will develop a 5.3 kilometer quick-build cycling network on three major roads that allow residents and visitors to travel around the community in a safe, connected, and efficient manner.

### The quick-build network is:

- 1) Temporary and can be treated as a pilot.
- 2) Quick-build materials are flexible and inexpensive.
- 3) Allows the Township to make adjustments to the facilities after implementation as needed.

### Quick-build networks have many advantages over longer and more permanent buildouts:

- 1) They do not require the removal of existing infrastructure.
- 2) The current geometric layout of the streetscape does not require many changes.
- 3) It does not significantly impact utilities, drainage, or transit operations. It may change where some parking is located.

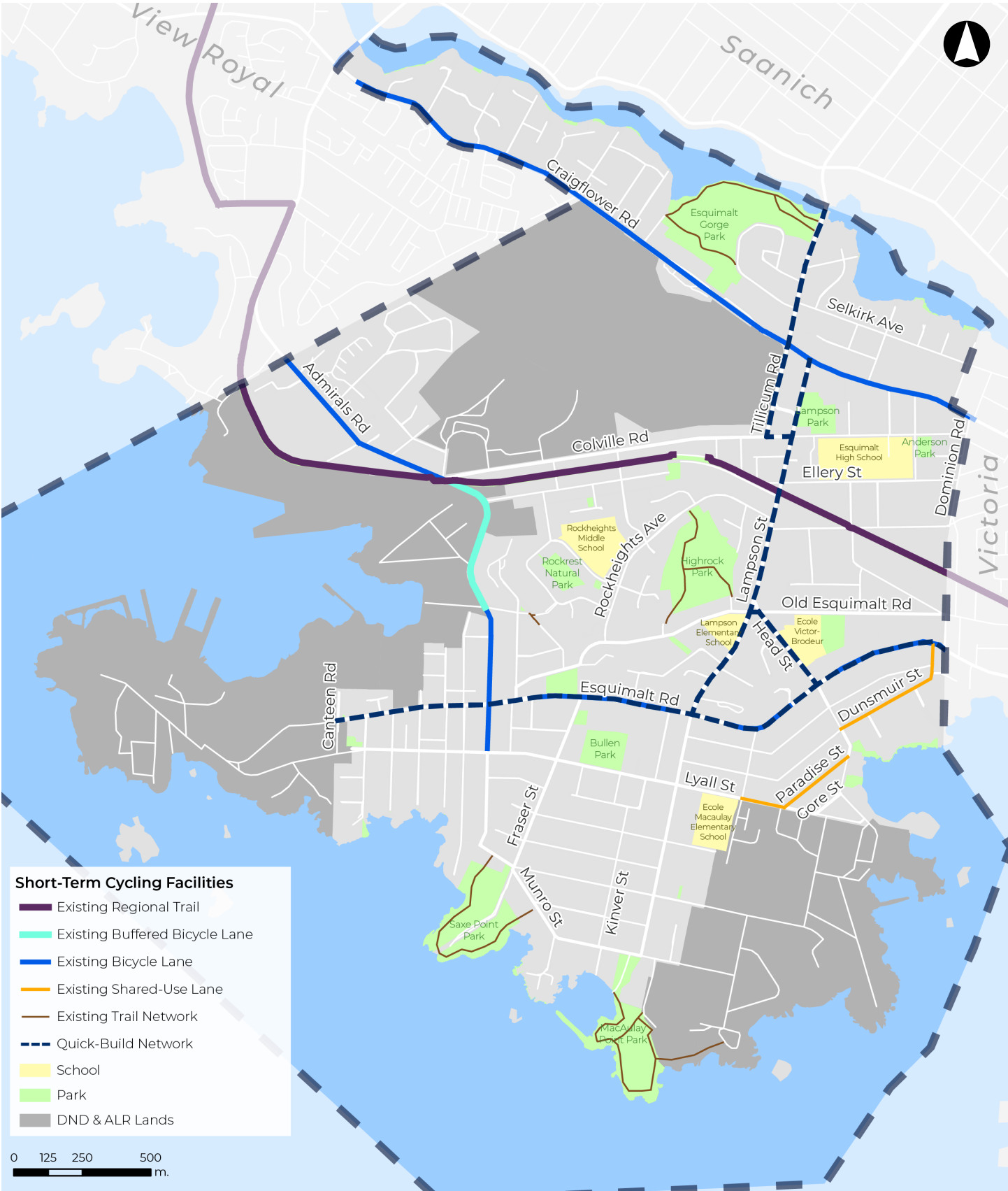
## What is the Move?

If implementation of the short-term (quick-build) network cannot be done simultaneously, then facilities should be constructed in the following order of priority:

- 1) Tillicum Road cycling facilities (Craigflower Rd to Gorge Bridge) & Lampson Street cycling facilities (Craigflower Rd to Esquimalt Rd)
- 2) Esquimalt Road cycling facilities (Canteen Rd to Dominion Rd)
- 3) Head Street cycling facilities (Esquimalt Rd to Old Esquimalt Rd)



# FIVE BIG MOVES: QUICK-BUILD NETWORK



# FIVE BIG MOVES: SPEED REDUCTIONS

## Why is it Important?

Speeds are a major factor in creating a pedestrian and bike friendly environment.

Even though vehicle speed does not always cause crashes, it usually determines the severity of a crash. A small difference in speed can mean the difference between life and death, especially for pedestrians, motorcyclists, and cyclists.

Results from the community engagement showed that the speed of motor vehicles is among the top barriers for both people walking and cycling in Esquimalt.

Several jurisdictions across Canada are considering lowering their posted speed limits as part of their 'Vision Zero' initiatives and active transportation planning efforts.

Reducing default speed limits can lower vehicle operating speeds, improve road safety, and improve neighbourhood livability.

## What is the Move?

It is recommended that amendments be made to the Street & Traffic Regulation Bylaw to lower the posted speed limits, as shown below. To achieve this, the Township should first develop a Speed Reduction Implementation Strategy that identifies changes to the signage, potential regulatory barriers in the Motor Vehicle Act that may result in challenges to amend the posted speed limits, what the specific amendments are for Street & Traffic Regulation Bylaw, and what the overall costs would be to implement the changes.

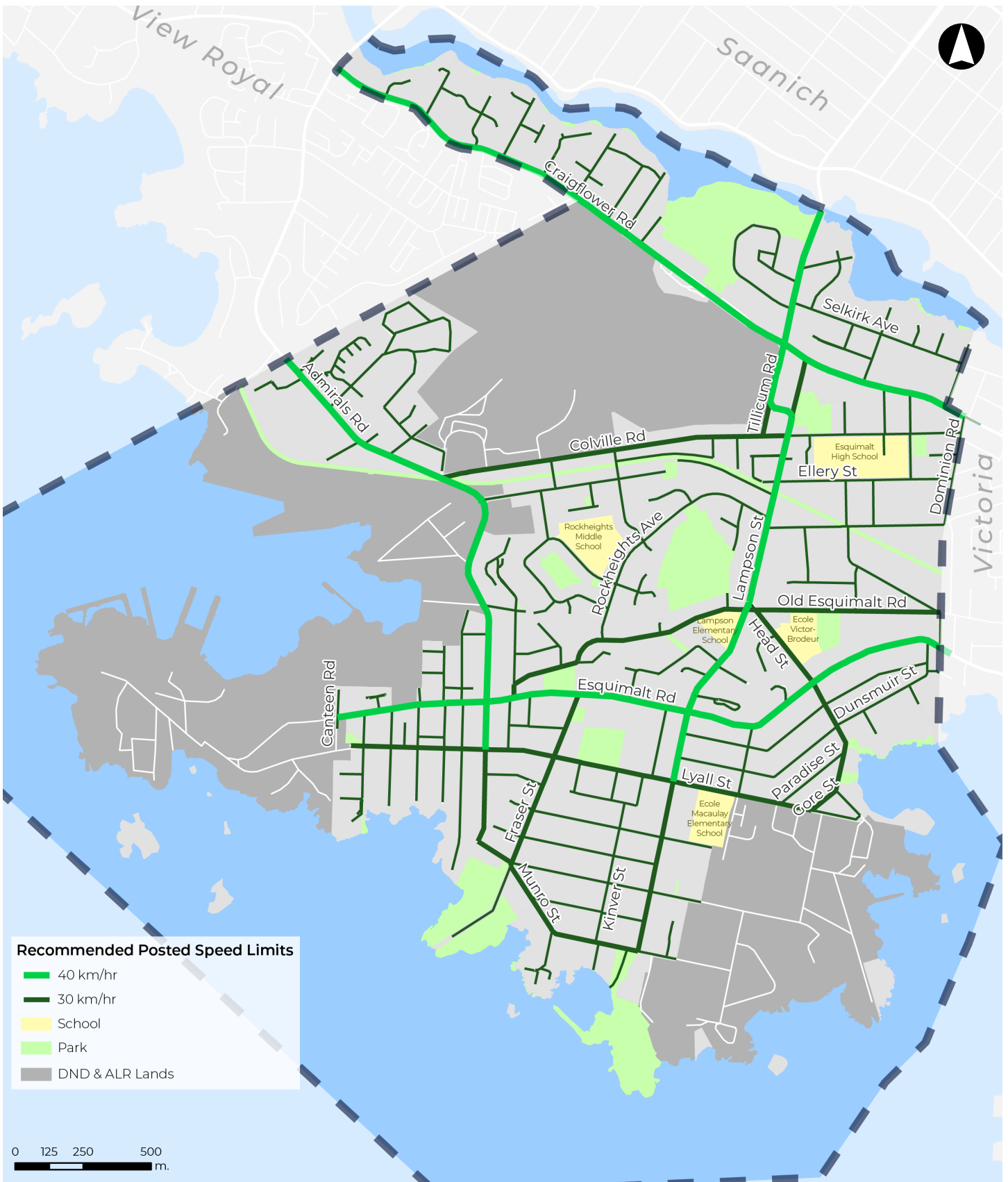
- 1) All Residential Collectors and Local Roads should be posted at 30 km/hr.
- 2) All Major Roads should be posted at 40 km/hr.

*\*This excludes school zones next to 40 km/hr roads.*





# FIVE BIG MOVES: SPEED REDUCTIONS





# FIVE BIG MOVES: INTERSECTION REVIEWS

## Why is it Important?

Almost four out of five (78%) pedestrian accidents take place at intersections. The same is true for people cycling who are also at higher risk of a collision at intersections.

Both the technical analysis and engagement process determined several locations in the community that either lack a safe crossing or warrant an improved crossing facility, as well as several problematic intersections in the community that do not safely accommodate people walking and cycling.

## What is the Move?

The ATNP identified two type of intersection reviews:

**Minor Intersection Review** review refers to locations where a local road meets and crosses a major road. These locations should be reviewed to ensure that people walking and cycling have been accommodated safely and comfortably. Many of these locations have been identified to help people cross the road to access a transit stop, a pedestrian facility or future cycling facility, as envisioned in the quick-build cycling network. Reviews could result in changes related to signage, pavement markings, intersection geometry, vehicle speeds, or a RRFB.

**Major Intersection Review** refers to locations where two major roadways meet. Many of these locations have been identified to make it safer for people walking and cycling along major roads in Esquimalt. The context of each location and possible solutions will vary.

Following these reviews and within a short timeline, the Township should improve each intersection.

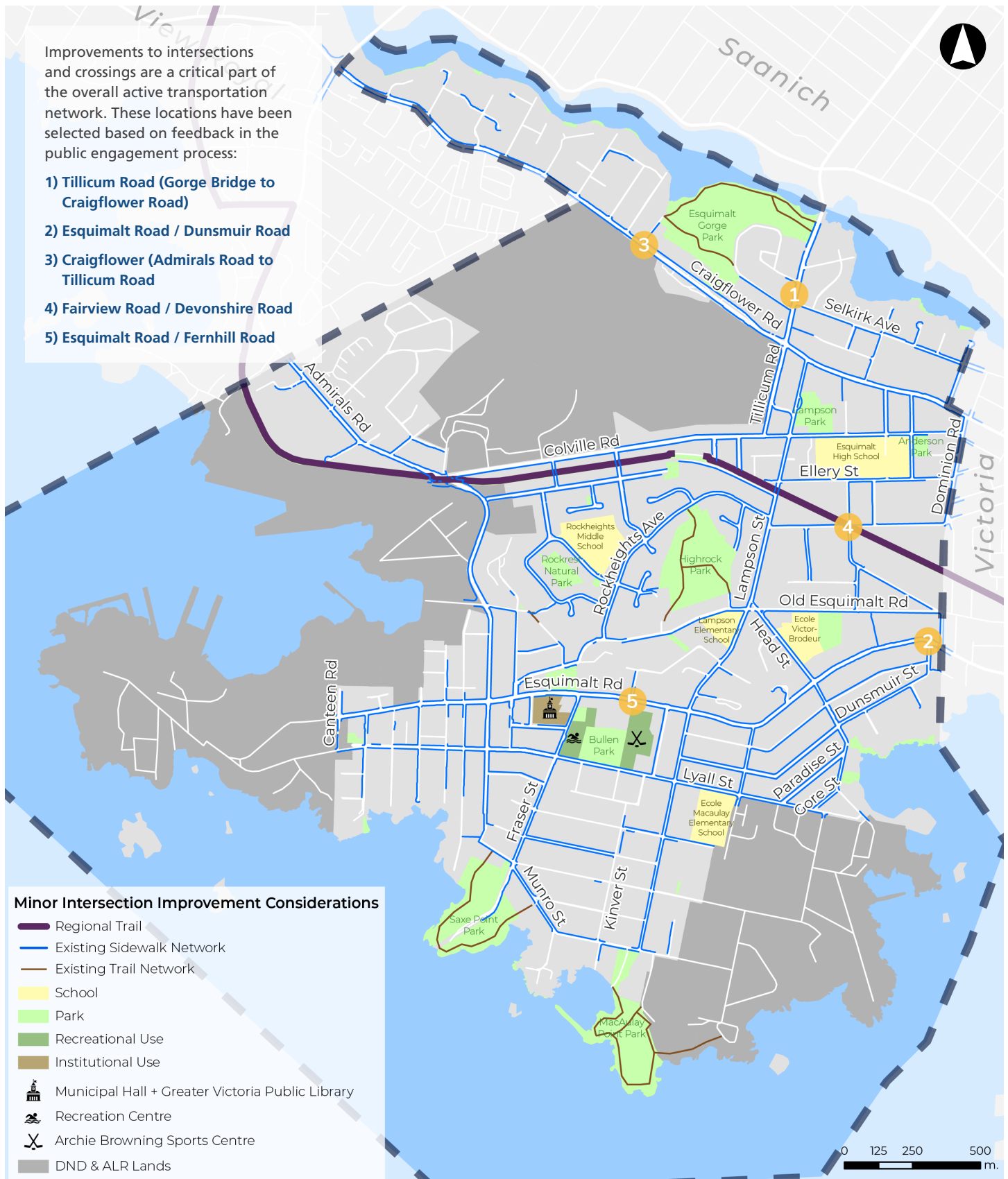


The Tillicum Road corridor is the highest priority location for a minor intersection review. It is a busy vehicle corridor with 18,000 vehicles per day. A new traffic signal is recommended along Tillicum Road between Craigflower Rd and the Gorge Bridge to make it safer for people walking and cycling to cross the road.

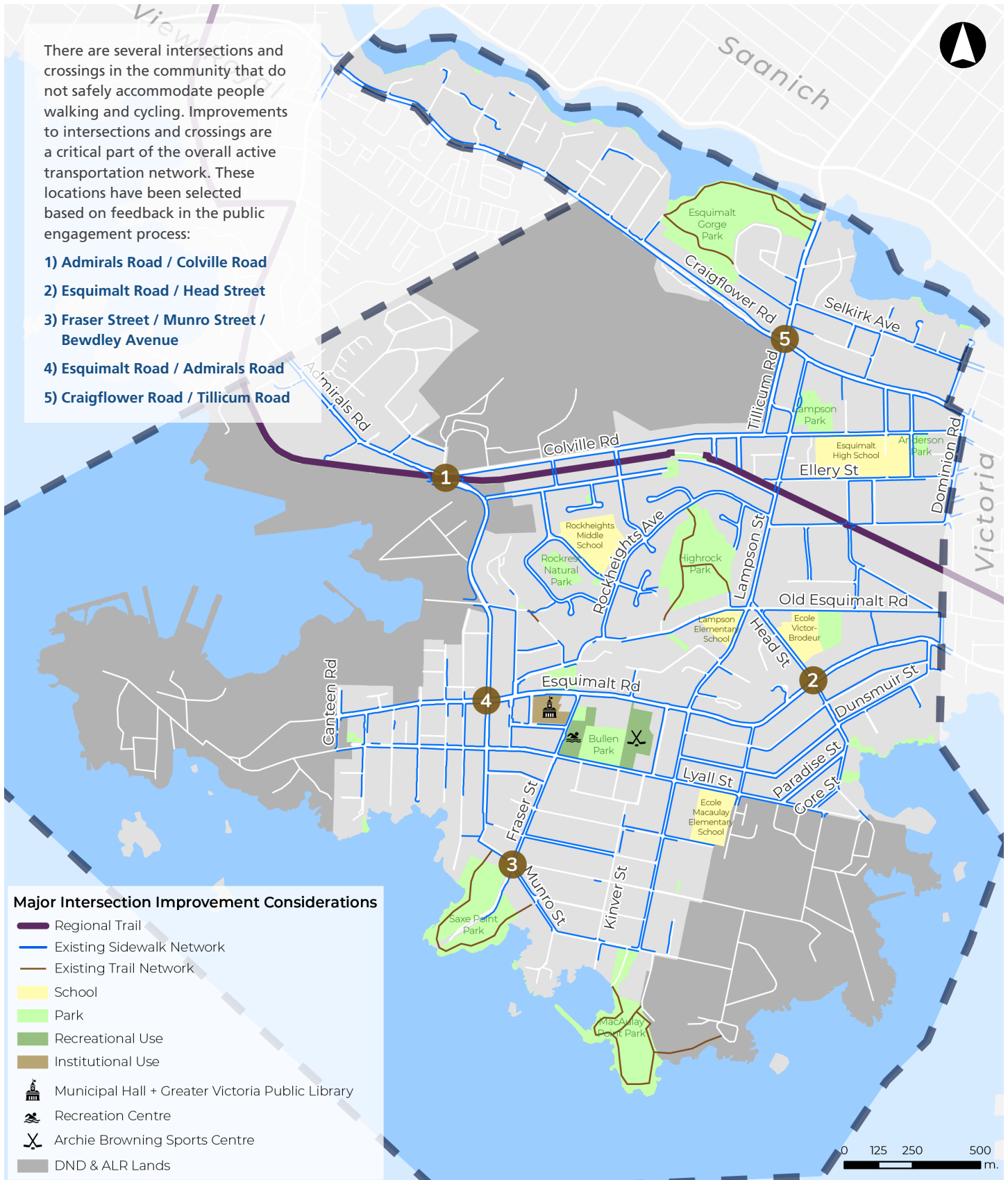


The Admirals Road / Colville Road intersection is the highest priority location for a major intersection review. The public engagement identified the confusing nature of this intersection for people cycling, the challenges trying to connect to the E&N rail trail, and the railway tracks presenting a hazard to bikes. An intersection review is recommended to identify the specific improvements required.

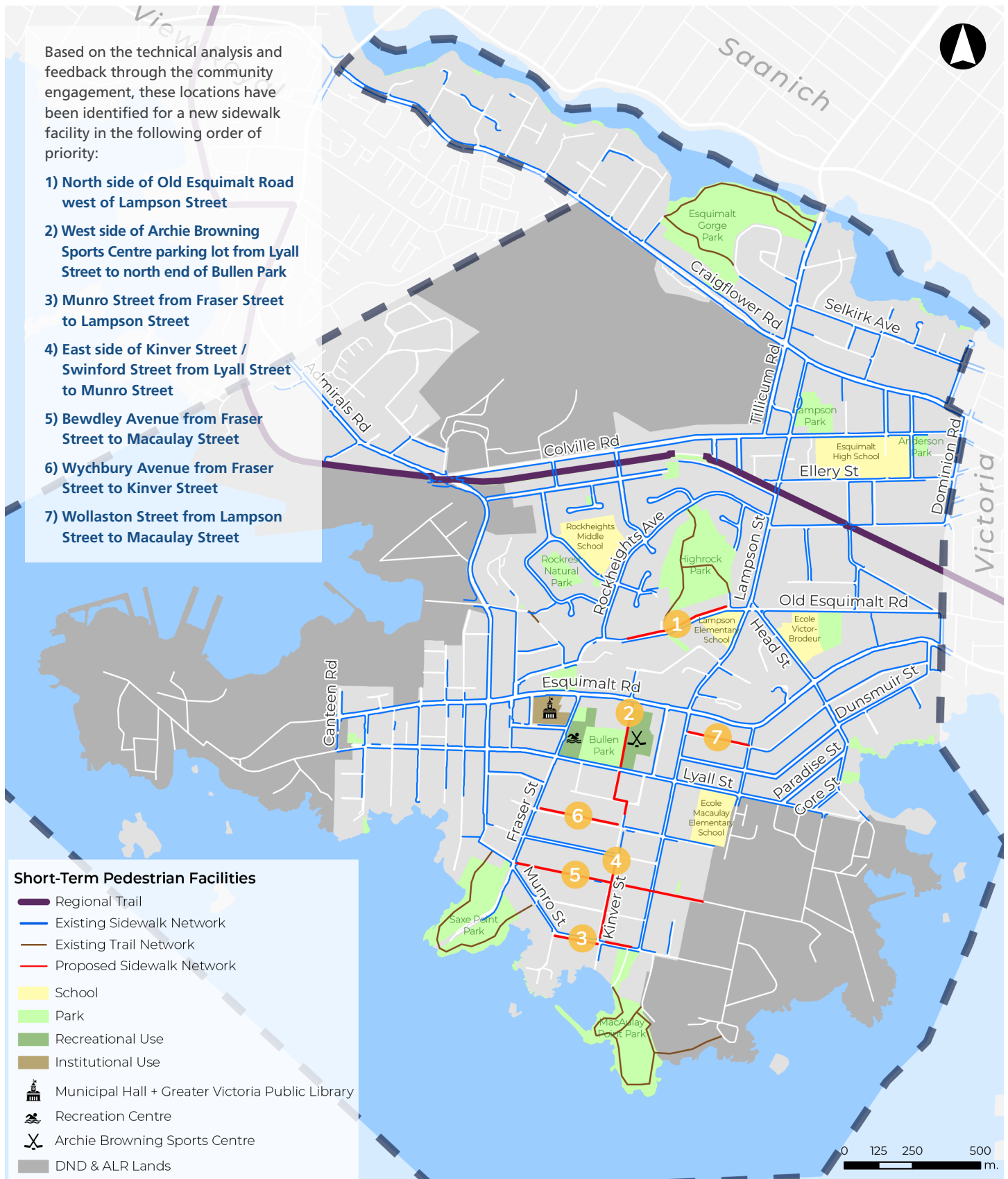
# FIVE BIG MOVES: INTERSECTION REVIEWS



# FIVE BIG MOVES: INTERSECTION REVIEWS



# FIVE BIG MOVES: FILL IN SIDEWALK GAPS



# FIVE BIG MOVES: ADD MORE STAFF

## Why is it Important?

The Active Transportation Network Plan cannot be implemented without adequate staffing. A dedicated active transportation coordinator is required to ensure this plan can be achieved as envisioned.

## What is the Move?

A dedicated active transportation coordinator (1.0 FTE) is recommended within the Engineering Department. This staff member's responsibilities could include planning, engagement, and coordination of active transportation improvements. The full time Active Transportation Coordinator position is envisioned to do the following:

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



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS



### Programming

To get more people using active transportation, the Township will need to devote resources towards education and encouragement efforts. This can include ongoing support for existing programs like the CRD's Ready, Step, Roll, which is intended for elementary schools.

New programs should also be developed to encourage walking such as the creation of a walking map, and the development of a wayfinding strategy. To encourage cycling, the Township should update its Parking Bylaw to include bicycle parking requirements in new developments as well as design guidelines for oversized bicycles such as cargo and electric bikes. Other recommendations include a municipal e-bike incentive program (similar to the District of Saanich) to increase e-bike ownership, bicycle skills training, and partnering with other municipalities on future bike or scooter sharing programs.

*See section 5.4, 5.5, 6.4, and 6.5 of the ATNP for more information.*

### Maintenance

An active transportation network only works if it is operational year-round and well maintained. Leaves, snow, ice and other debris can be hazardous to people walking and biking. While private property owners are required to clear sidewalks of snow, the Township must ensure that sidewalks in front of municipal properties and at intersections are cleared in a timely manner after snow events. The introduction of protected bike lanes will introduce similar challenges. The narrower width of these facilities will require smaller, more nimble machinery to clear each corridor. Small equipment will need to be acquired to handle cleaning and clearing duties.

With each fall season comes a plethora of leaves and other debris. This debris often ends up on the edges of streets where people ride. When these leaves mix with rain they have a tendency to become slippery. In winter, homes and businesses will likely push snow from their property and sidewalks into the bike lanes. The Township will need to clear this debris in a timely manner to ensure that people cycling can ride on bare asphalt without obstructions or hazards year-round. Transitions to and from ramps are also critical to maintain.

*See section 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 8.2, and 8.3 of the ATNP for more information.*



## Short-term Cost Estimates

Transportation facilities range greatly in price. While a single highway interchange can cost in excess of \$50m, safe and comfortable infrastructure to walk and cycle is far less expensive by comparison. The entirety of the ATNP short-term recommendations are estimated to cost **less than \$10m**. See section 8.2 of the ATNP for more information.



### Pedestrian Facilities

**\$2.35m**



### Quick-Build Cycling Network

**\$5.1m**



### Additional Short-Term Capital Requests

*Annual costs to conduct intersection reviews and improvements, retrofitting and installing new short-term bicycle parking facilities, new equipment for maintenance*

**Up to \$1m**



### Operational and On-going Funding Needs

*Active Transportation Coordinator position, programming, on-going maintenance*

**TBD**

## Policy Support and Next Steps

The Township of Esquimalt Council approved the Active Transportation Network Plan on February 7, 2022. Council has directed staff to bring forward ATNP funding requests for the next budget planning process to see that the plan is delivered in a timely manner. Implementation of the ATNP will bring several benefits to the community including greater road safety, a reduction in GHG emissions, and enhanced quality of life. Read the full plan and find out more about active transportation in Esquimalt at [esquimalt.ca/ActiveTransportation](https://esquimalt.ca/ActiveTransportation).



26 VIA MCKENZIE

9392

BC Transit

VR-1216

