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2010

SHARED ROADWAYS - GABRIOLA ISLAND BICYCLE ROUTE PLAN

Proposal to: Gabriola Local Trust Committee | Submitted by: Ad Hoc Gabriola Transportation
Committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Most of the roads on Gabriola Island are narrow with inconsistent and uneven shoulders. It is widely felt that this is one of the main impediments to the use of bicycles. Development of on-road cycling lanes on designated routes will make roads safer for cyclists and other non-motorists, will encourage greater use of bicycles over cars (and hence will reduce the island's carbon emissions), will reduce ferry congestion and will lead to improved health for Gabriolans and visitors.

An existing agreement between the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and the Islands Trust (Appendix A) provides that during upgrading of designated roads paved bicycle paths - separated from the vehicle lanes with painted lines - will be constructed on both sides of the road. This would apply to routes that have been designated by the Local Trust Committee within an official cycling route plan. At present, no such cycling route plan exists for Gabriola Island.

The following report outlines a proposed cycling route, together with a corresponding Land Use Bylaw. Stretches of the route that have safety risks are identified together with recommendations regarding addressing those risks. The recommended routes and required changes for the Gabriola Village area are outlined in a separate section.

The focus of this report is on side of road cycle paths. Pedestrians, young children, people using electric carts, strollers, and walkers are also users of these paths. This report should be considered a component of the larger concept of "Shared Roadway" strategies and actions.

Gabriola is a known cycling destination because it offers a circle-route with numerous interesting natural and cultural features to visit as well as overnight camping facilities. In general, drivers are considerate of cyclists and vehicular traffic is light compared to urban settings. Touring cyclists are usually experienced riders who can deal with range of grades, hazards and adventures that come with cycling on Gabriola Island.

GABRIOLA OCP AND LAND USE BY-LAW RECOMMENDATIONS

OCP Statement

The current statement in Gabriola's Official Community Plan (OCP) related to a cycle route is:

"Roads designated as being part of a bicycle route plan developed in accordance with the agreement with MOTI and the Islands Trust shall include provision for a paved bicycle path of not less than 1.2 metres (4 feet) and a painted line should be provided on the road surface to delineate a separation between the vehicle and bicycle lane portions of the road surface."

Concerns identified with the preceding statement relate to the defined width of the on-road cycle path. There are stretches of road that would be difficult to implement 1.2 metre on-road cycle paths on both sides of the road. So, for purposes of flexibility and to ensure that large trees and geographical factors, such as escarpments are kept it is recommended that the OCP statement reads as follows:

"Roads designated as being part of a bicycle route plan shall include provision for bicycle paths in accordance with the Letter of Agreement between the Islands Trust and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure."

Land Use By-Law

In order to reference the cycle route map required to implement the protocol agreement a statement is required in Gabriola's Land Use By-Law. The proposed Map (x) can be found on page 7. The following statement is recommended:

On-road bicycle paths will be established on the roads identified on Map (x) in accordance with the agreement between MOTI and the Islands Trust. It is recommended that the width of the cycle paths be 1.2 metres except in the following situations where:

- a) Changes to natural geographic features, such as escarpments, would be required in order to implement the 1.2 metre cycle path.*
- b) Mature trees would need to be removed in order to implement the 1.2 metre cycle path.*

It is recommended that the cycle route be at least 0.6 metres in the preceding situations.

All other roads on the island should also be considered bicycle routes, although lower traffic speeds mean that separate paths may not be required. The construction of on-road bicycle lanes on roads that are currently a public safety hazard are priority in development of island bicycle paths. These priority areas are identified on Map (x).

CYCLE ROUTE PLAN

The proposed Cycle Route Plan referenced in the Official Community Plan and the Land Use Bylaw can be found on the following page. This route closely mirrors the proposed bus route for Gabriola Island.

While the prime purpose for the on-road bike paths is to support non-motorized commuting to work and shopping many Gabriolans and visitors to the Island also cycle to the beautiful scenic locations on Gabriola. For obvious reasons, one should hesitate to mention the pubs of Gabriola as cycling destinations, but they are located in areas of interest towards the extremities of the island and they do also offer food and restrooms. The three BC Provincial Parks are each esteemed day-use destinations. Gabriola Sands offers sandy beaches that form an isthmus that divides Taylor and Pilot Bays. There is a pleasant loop ride with interesting shore access on the on the tide-island beyond the park. Sandwell Provincial Park is well worth the required walk or ride beyond the end of The Stand, but the final gravel road descending to the beach is too steep to ride except by mules. Drumbeg Provincial Park has lovely gravel beaches and sandstone shorelines that give out onto the active waters of Gabriola Pass and the vistas toward Valdez and Galliano Island. There are other interesting loops available in the Easthom/Harrison, Norwich/Hemlock (Phase 4) Horseshoe and the Whalebone neighbourhoods.

Beyond recognized roads there is an off-road network of trails that are being developed and mapped by Gabriola Land and Trails Trust. Trails are also being developed in Regional and Community Parks administered by the Regional District of Nanaimo.



Map Legend

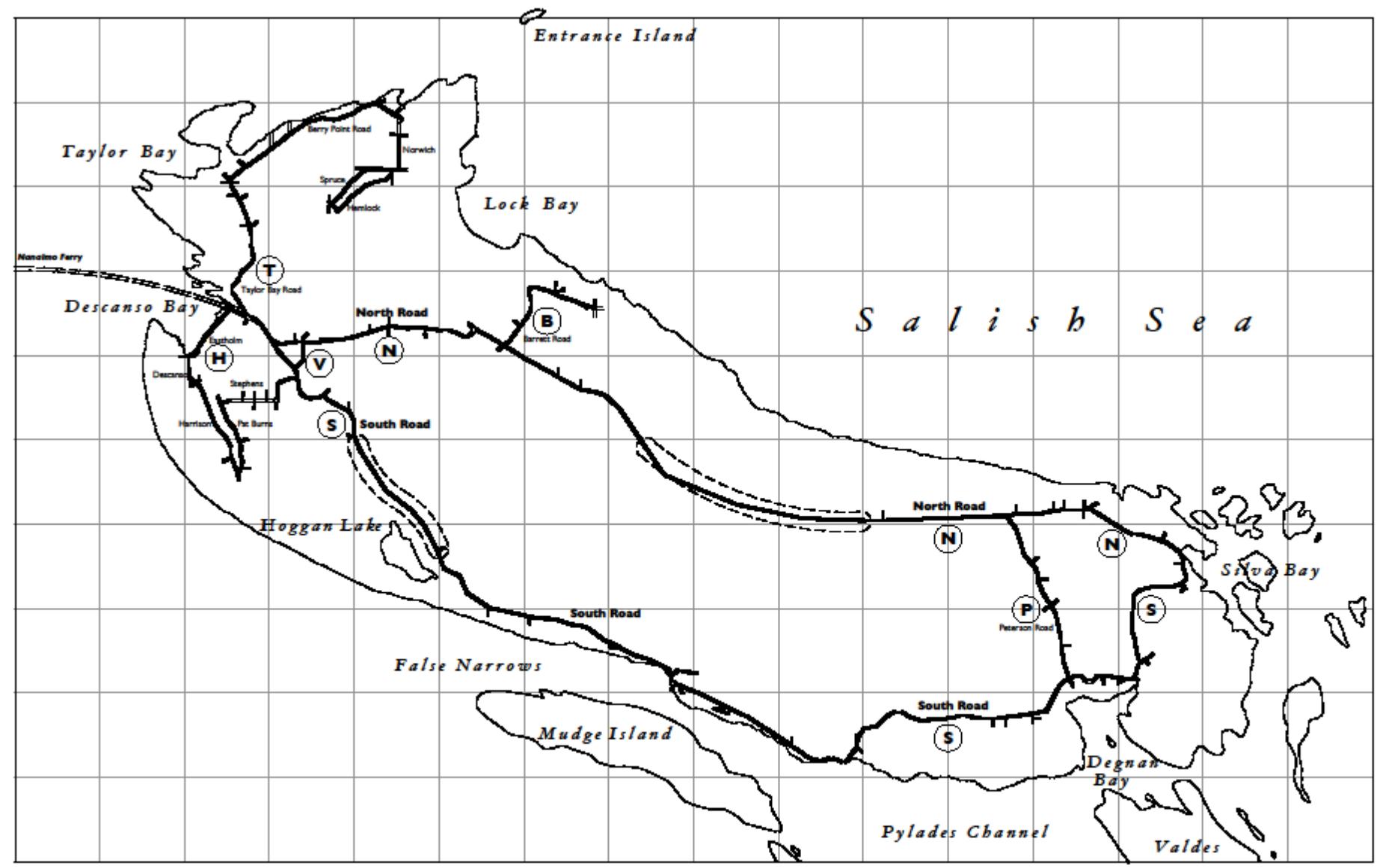
- Principal Bicycle Routes
- Village Area
- South Road Route
- North Road Route
- Barrett Road Route
- Taylor Bay Road Route
- Harrison Way Loop
- Peterson Road Route
- Road Allowance Absent



March 30, 2020

Shared Roadways Gabriola Island Cycle Route Plan

Scale 1:50,000



Map Sources A/ Natural Resources Canada, Nananaimo, 92G4, 1998. B/ Islands Trust, Gabriola Island, Land Use Bylaw 177 Schedule B, 2008. C/ Gabriola Island Community Directory, 2010.

CURRENT SAFETY ISSUES ON PROPOSED CYCLE ROUTE

(Issues related to Village area are found in following section)



There are numerous safety issues on the proposed cycle route that have been identified as priorities in the establishment of a on-road cycle route path for Gabriola Island. There are 9 areas that have been identified as high priority, due to the severe safety concerns and therefore liability issues if these areas are not corrected. These are identified by three vultures and red type on the small maps found in this section. The other safety issues are identified in black type on the small maps and either one or two vultures depending on level of risk.

Issues are identified for all of the points together with corresponding pictures. The recommended action for all of these issues is the establishment of an on-road cycle path. Where there is an additional recommended action that recommendation is noted.

Six safety issues that apply to several parts of the proposed cycle route include:

- A. Vehicles tend to exceed the speed limit throughout the island.
- B. Side of road maintenance: There are often branches and debris on the shoulder that creates a safety hazard for cyclists. Regular cleanup of the shoulder is required.
- C. Potholes and large cracks along side of road and shoulder create safety hazards for cyclists and require fixing on a regular basis.
- D. Inadequate signage – many blind curves, corners and hills that are not marked. Signs that encourage road sharing and cycle friendly driving are needed.
- E. There are several unsurveyed parts of the road which may present difficulties when road crews attempt to pave shoulder of road.
- F. There are deep ditches alongside many of the island roads that have no water in them (even after a heavy rain), indicating that they are not required for drainage purposes. These ditches reduce the ability for the cyclist to ride safely on the shoulder. If drainage is required culverts would provide a safer solution.

SOUTH ROAD & NORTH ROAD

The following data refers to a circumnavigation of Gabriola via the South/North Road beginning at the RCMP station and proceeding south past the golf course, the cemetery, Silva Bay and on around through the Tunnel arriving back at Folklife Village. The name of the road changes from South Road to North Road at the intersection of Westgyle so all points of interest between the RCMP and there are labeled "S" and everything from Westgyle to the Village is labeled "N". Most of the points referenced are potential trouble spots but also included are a couple where the situation for cyclists and pedestrians is actually quite good. The file names of the photographs correspond to the item numbers of the text.



S1: South Road just below the RCMP > 10U 438278 5446687 elevation 249 m AMSL (above mean sea level)

Issue: Dirt/embankment on the shoulder, west side of roadway



S2 - 617 South Rd > 10U 438622 5446479 elevation 76 m AMSL

Issue: Paved shoulder ends



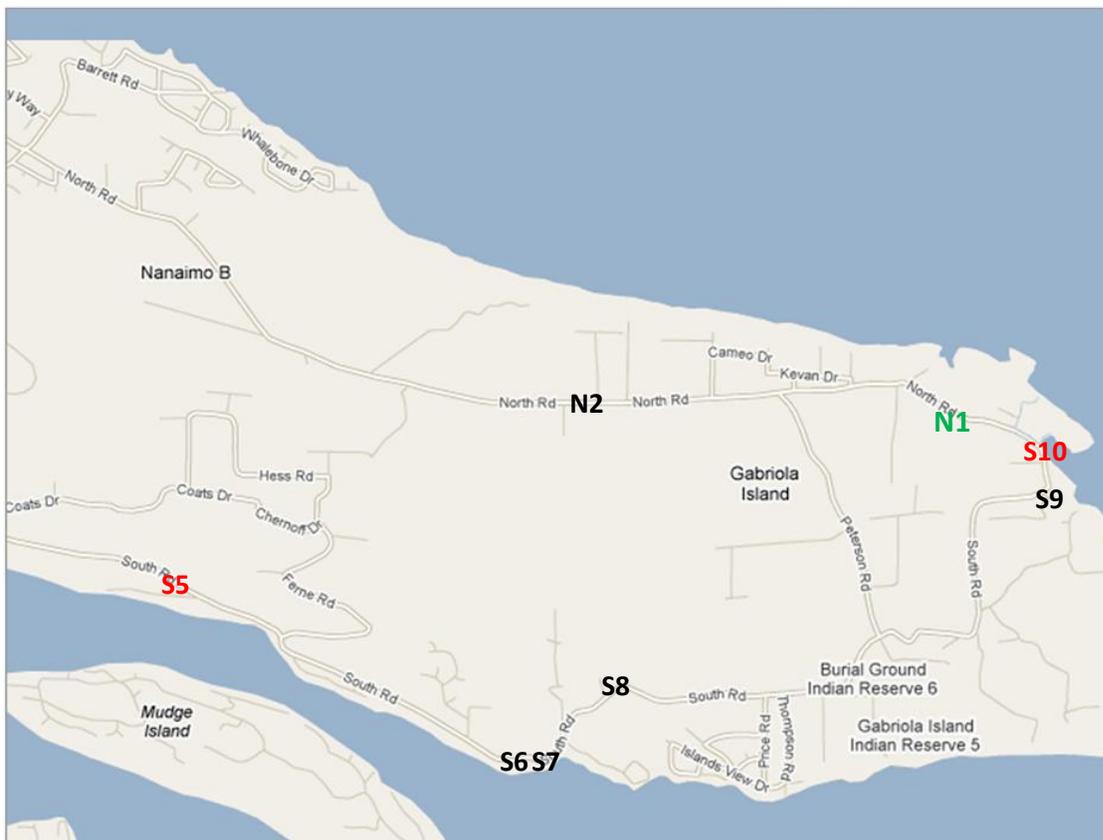
S3: 905 South Rd @ Quarry Stone Drive > 10U 439764 5444987 Elevation 73 m AMSL

Issue: Roadway extremely narrow with ditches on both sides



S4: 990 South Rd just south of Loft Gallery > 10U 440026 5444481 Elev 87 m AMSL

Issue: Concrete barrier on right (west) side of roadway, no shoulder at all, ditch on the left. Very narrow and dangerous.



S5: Brickyard Hill > 10U 441740 5443740 Elevation 81 m to 9 m AMSL

Issue: Road narrows with ditches on both sides before beginning descent down Brickyard Hill. Once the descent begins, there is a concrete barrier on the right (west) side. There is a narrow path on the other side of the concrete barrier, which is extremely dangerous right now as it is right on the edge of a cliff.



S6: 10U 444596 5442216 Elevation 3 m AMSL

Issue: Shoulder disappears in the middle of a curve



S7: 10U444596 5442216 Elevation 3 (slightly further south than S6) AMSL

Issue: Concrete barrier on south side, very tight.



S8: Just past the Community Hall > 10U 445018 5442562 Elevation 19 m AMSL

Issue: Very narrow shoulder, uphill curve



P1: Peterson Road, heading west as the road begins its' descent down to the South Road and Degnen Bay > 10U 447369 5443392 Elevation 139 AMSL

Issue: No shoulder on either side of the road and deep ditches on both sides.



S9 – Silva Bay > 10U 448768 5444288 Elevation 23 m AMSL

Issue: Series of very narrow, blind curves



S10: 10U 448767 5444590 Elevation 11 m AMSL

Issue: Very narrow, blind curve, hill, concrete barrier, hidden driveway, bones of dozens of dead cyclists scattered on both sides of the roadway, vultures circling above.



N1: North Road > 10U 448030 5444962 Elevation 33 m AMSL to 10U 446593 5445085 Elevation 55 m AMSL

Easy to cycle: Paved shoulder



N2: North Road > 10U 444162 5445094 Elevation 85 m AMSL

Issue: Deep ditch on east side of roadway



N3: (see Map for Barrett Road p. 13) **North Road @ Horseshoe Rd** > 10U 440360 5447284 Elevation 73 m AMSL

Issue: Semi-blind curve, cars approach fast down the hill but roadway has paved shoulder.



N5: Ferry Hill (see map for Harrison area page 24) > 10U 437542 5447480 Elevation 19 m AMSL

Issue: Steep hill and extremely busy road when ferry loading and unloading traffic, often cars are parked along south side of road waiting for ferry passengers, while north side of road is packed with ferry traffic.

BARRETT ROAD



B1: Barrett Road at top of hill > 10U 441030 5447548 Elevation 95 m AMSL

Issue: Downhill curve with limited visibility



B2: Barrett Road at hairpin turn > 10U 441018 5447778 Elevation 78 m AMSL

Issue: Frightening downhill hairpin curve with little shoulder



B3: Barrett Road towards bottom of hill > 10U 441186 5447760 Elevation 43 m AMSL

Issue: Path between concrete barrier and ravine on north side of road difficult for cyclists, on-road cycling not enough space for vehicle and bicycle.

Recommendation: Deep ditch on south side of road doesn't appear necessary for drainage – south side of road could be widened to allow for cycle path on both road shoulders.

TAYLOR BAY ROAD





T1: Taylor Bay Road and North Road > 10U 437669 5447447 Elevation 27 m AMSL

Issue: Very difficult left turn from North Road onto Taylor Bay Road – extremely busy road, especially in ferry traffic. Left turn is up steep hill, starting point to turn is on an incline and beside ferry line-up, difficult to see vehicles coming up North Road heading towards village.



T2: Taylor Bay Road and private road (Peacock corner) > 10U 437508 5447781 Elevation 26 m AMSL

Issue: Steep embankments on either side, holes on side of road, concrete barriers along side of road, potential ferry line up on west side of road.

Recommendation: Put barrier further to outside of curve to leave space for cycle path on both sides of road.



T3: Descanso Bay Campground Road and Ivory Road intersecting with Taylor Bay Road > 10U 437628 5447988 Elevation 34 m AMSL

Issue: There is a steep escarpment and very narrow space off south side of road across from three way intersection. As cyclist heads west there is limited to no visibility around escarpment and no room for cyclist to move to the right if cars in each lane.

Recommendation: Shift centre line north to allow room for bike path on south side of road and put off road cycle path in space between hydro pole and guy ropes on North side.



T4: Taylor Bay Road hill to McConvey Road > 10U 437775 5448125 to 10U 437748 5448211 Elevation 37 m to 43 m AMSL

Issue: Steep hill with curves and visibility issues at both top and bottom of hill. Road barriers on both sides of hill. Gravel path on West side of road approximately one foot wide beside steep ravine, extremely unsafe for cyclists. Paved path wide enough on East side but debris and slope down make it difficult to ride on for cyclists. Cyclists travelling up the hill have very poor visibility at top of hill.

Recommendation: Ensure 1.2 metre width for more than one person travelling and ensure on-shoulder paving around rock outcrop. Centre line could be shifted northwest at McConvey Road to allow for paving of shoulder for cycle path on southeast.



T5: Taylor Bay, Davis, King and Berry Point intersection > 10U 437477 5449039 Elevation 27 m AMSL

Issue: Tight curve with no visibility and several roads intersecting at various angles. Large Trees on East side of road reduce both visibility and ease of moving to far right if vehicles are in both lanes.

Recommendation: Move the centre line towards the west side of the road to ensure space to put adequate bike path. An option for the stretch from King to just past the large Arbutus tree is to have the cycle route off the road and then come back onto the side of the road before the large Douglas fir tree.

BERRY POINT ROAD/PHASE IV



T6: Berry Point Road – 10U 439961 5450234 Elevation 6 m AMSL

Issue: For cyclists heading northeast around the curve there is no line of sight to vehicles coming from opposite direction and no space at the curve for vehicle in each lane plus bicycle.



T7: Norwich and entrance to Camp Mariam > 10U 439485 5449772 Elevation 26 m AMSL

Issue: Steep hill, hidden road from Camp Mariam at northeast curve. Drivers and cyclists can't see vehicles in dip when heading down hill (North). Southwest curve has hydro pole where cycle path would be located.

Recommendation: Ensure cyclists have clearly marked path on northeast curve and right of way over cars coming from Camp Marion. Place cycle path on southwest curve to the right of hydro pole.



T8: Norwich and Clarendon > 10U 439474 5449589 Elevation 53 m AMSL

Issue: Busy intersection (Clarendon and Norwich) between two hills, both with dips that prevent cyclists or drivers from seeing vehicles in dip.



T9: Curve on Spruce Road > 10U 439085 5449180 Elevation 61 m AMSL

Issue: Combination of curve and hill that dips on Spruce Road, hiding cars plus no shoulders.



T10: Hemlock Road > 10U 439079 5448973 Elevation 70 m (drops to 64 in dip) AMSL

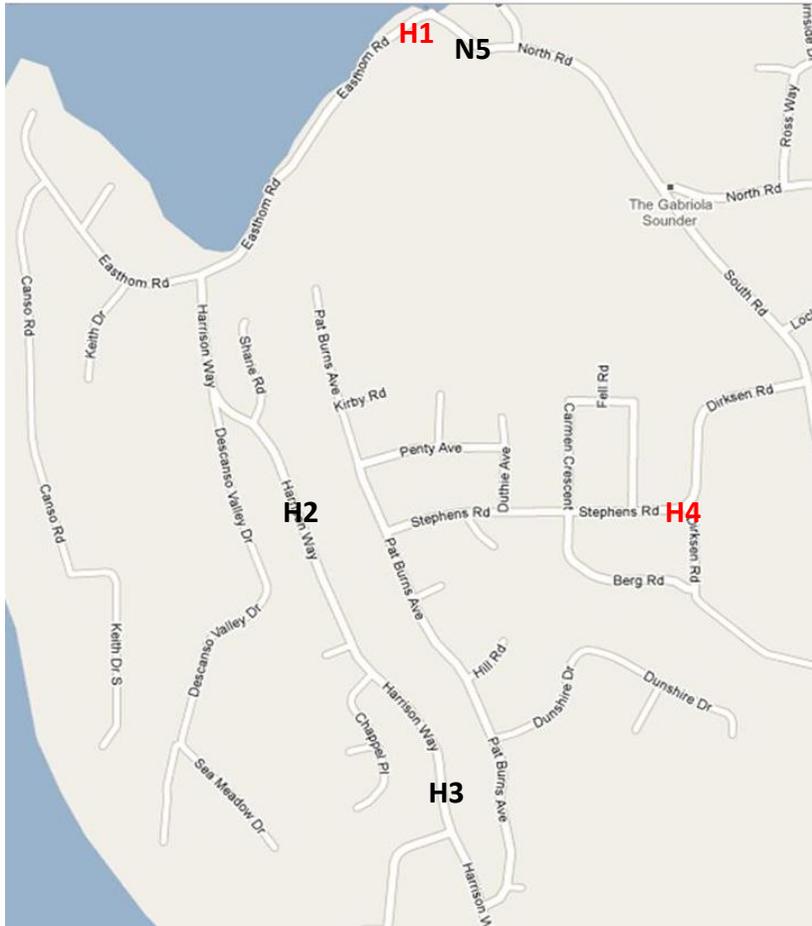
Issue: Dip in road hides cars for cyclists travelling northeast on Hemlock Road.



T11: Hemlock and Larch intersection > 10U 439382 5449096 Elevation 66 m AMSL

Issue: Cars invisible to cyclist heading southwest around curve, intersection of Hemlock and Larch, several driveways invisible to cyclist just around curve.

HARRISON AND PAT BURNS LOOP



H1: Easthom Road > 10U 437361 5447443 Elevation 22 m AMSL

Issue: Curve very tight and between Ferry Terminal and 'roadside parking' after curve the road narrows to a single vehicle lane.



H2: Harrison Way "Flats" between Sharie Dr. and Chappel > 10U 437400 5447005 to 10U 437346 54461111 Elevation 30 m to 41 m AMSL

Issue: The danger here is one of speed, as the road in similar fashion to North Rd. Tunnel extends for a long stretch, very straight, giving a false sense of safety as well as limited to no shoulder and rough pavement.



H3: Harrison Way Hill between Chappel Place beyond Pat Burns > 10U 437346 54461111 to 10U 437593 5445555 Elevation 41 m to 100 m AMSL

Issue: Very poor condition pavement, zero shoulder for the uphill lane, with a steep drop on the right of the uphill lane. Pedalling up the downhill lane is not an option either.



H4: Intersection of Dirkson & Stephens > 10U 438016 5446455 Elevation 96 m AMSL

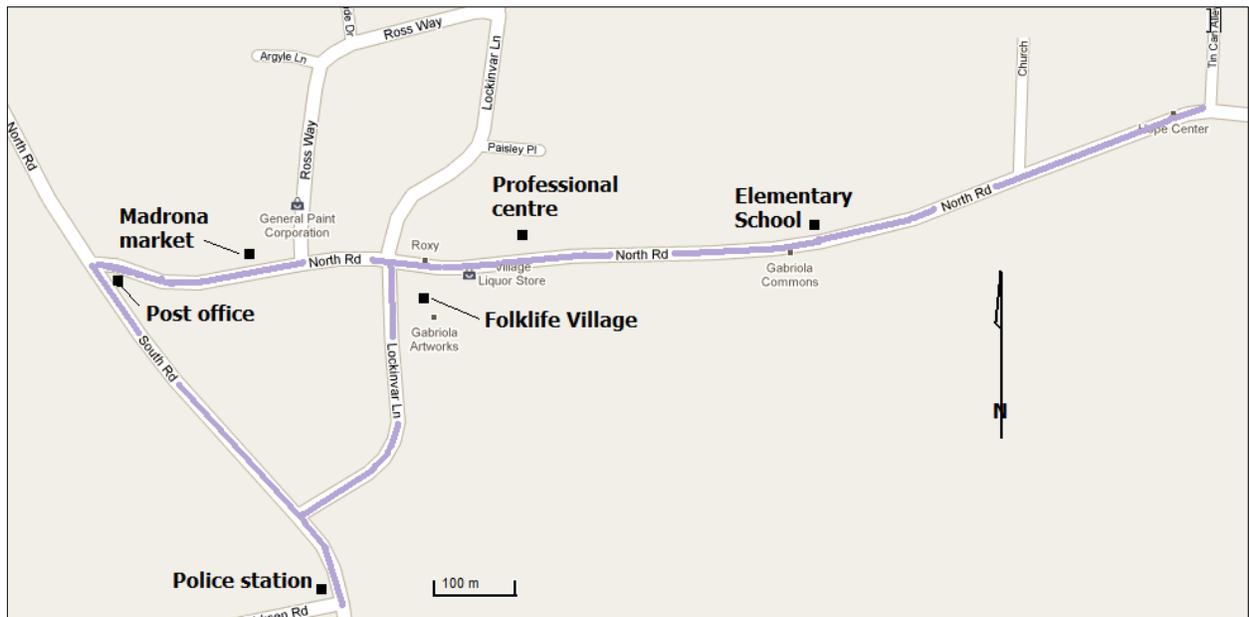
Issue: Vehicles build up speed coming down Stephens from Pat Burns Rd. Pedlars and walkers trying to cross Stephens to head south on Dirkson must cross here, with no possible view of oncoming traffic. If you can't hear the cars coming, you'll get run over.

ISSUES RELATED TO PROVISION OF BIKE LANES IN THE VILLAGE AREA OF GABRIOLA ISLAND

Introduction

The busiest roads in the Village area of Gabriola Island include:

- South Road from the intersection with North Rd. to Dirksen Rd.,
- North Road from South Rd. to Tin Can Alley, and
- Lockinvar Lane from South Road to North Road.



All of these roads warrant inclusion in the Gabriola Cycle Route Plan, and in fact all merit special consideration as they are amongst the busiest sections of road on the entire island.

This section includes a summary of issues—including property ownership, safety and feasibility—related to construction of road-shoulder commuter bike lanes along these sections of road. The concept of constructing an off-road cycling and pedestrian path beside North Road from South Rd. to Tin Can Alley is also put forward.

Road shoulder bike lanes

Property ownership

As far as can be determined from the RDN web-based map there should be no issues related to property ownership along any of the routes in question. In all areas the 1.2 m road-shoulder will fall well within the existing road allowance.

Safety

Although the routes in question are amongst the busiest on Gabriola Island, the vehicular traffic and bicycle volumes are low compared with those in most urban parts of British Columbia. The busiest intersections in this area are along North Rd. especially at Ross Rd, Lockinvar Lane and Tin Can Alley, and at the entrances to the Co-op gas station and Govt. Liquor Store, the Folklife Village mall, the Professional Centre mall and the Elementary School. It is felt that the provision of road-shoulder cycle lanes can only make the use of these roads safer for both cyclists and drivers, as there will then be more room for both.

Feasibility

There are no significant physical limitations to the construction of road-shoulder cycling lanes along the routes in question, although there are some minor issues as follows:

North Road

On the north side of North Rd., between the South Rd. intersection and Lockinvar Ln., there are several areas where there is a relatively steep embankment (down) adjacent to the road and there is currently insufficient room on the shoulder to accommodate a 1.2 m wide cycling lane. The embankment is not high, however, and it would be relatively simple and inexpensive to extend the shoulder. (See locations A and B on Appendix 1a)

On the north side of North Rd. there are a few places where there are drainage curbs within 1.2 m of the traffic lane, including the area opposite the Post Office, part of the area in front of the Madrona Mall construction site, and the area in front of the Co-op gas pumps. (See locations C, D and E on Appendix 1a.)

South Road:

Along the west side of South Rd. for approximately 100 m from the intersection with North Rd. the existing unpaved shoulder is too narrow to allow for a 1.2 m cycling lane, and some fill will be required. (See location F on Appendix A1.)

Along the east side, in front of the Women's Institute, the existing unpaved shoulder is too narrow to allow for a 1.2 m cycling lane and some fill be required. There is also an existing drainage curb within the 1.2 m allowance that will have to be relocated. (See location G on Appendix A1.)

1.2 m paved shoulders already exist on both sides of the road, from the Women's Institute to the Dirksen Rd.

Lockinvar Lane

1.2 m wide road-shoulder cycling lanes already exist on both sides of Lockinvar Lane, from South Rd. to North Rd.

Off-road cycling and pedestrian trail

While road-shoulder bike lanes are preferred by most serious cyclists, many other cyclists and most pedestrians prefer to have trails that are further removed from traffic. The 1.4 km long section of North Road from South Rd. to Tin Can Alley is easily the busiest transportation corridor on Gabriola Island for vehicle, bicycles and pedestrians (including elementary school students), and it is proposed that—in addition to the road-shoulder cycling lanes—consideration should be given to construction of an off-road hard-surface trail along this route. The arguments in favour of this are as follows:

- It would encourage more village-area island residents to cycle and walk.
- It would remove most pedestrians and recreational cyclists from the road shoulder.
- It would allow more students to get to school on foot or by bicycle, perhaps giving them a start on a life of self-propelled transportation.
- It would encourage both residents and summer visitors who visit the Farmers Market the shops and/or the Commons to walk through the village rather than drive.

A potential route for a hard-surface off-road trail from South Rd. to Tin Can Alley is shown on the following map. The trail would be 2 to 3 m wide and would be situated either within the road allowance or on private property. It would extend along the north side of North Rd. from South Rd. along the front of the Madrona Mall property, across Ross Rd. and then along the front of the Raven Feeds, Liquor Store and Co-op gas station property. It would then cross to the south side of North Rd., across the front of the Folklife Village property, through Huxley Park and part of the Commons. It would then cross back to the north side of North Rd., through the elementary school and RDN properties, and continue as far as Tin Can Alley.



Planning and construction of such a trail could be spearheaded by the Gabriola Cycle Route committee and GALTT, but it can only be realized with the cooperation of numerous property owners and the enthusiastic support of the Gabriola community, and with financial assistance from the RDN and provincial government.

If this concept is embraced by the community, care must be taken to ensure that plans for its construction do not conflict with the plans for road-shoulder cycling lanes along this route.

ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Suggested processes for approval and ongoing administration and implementation:

Approval

- 1) Gabriola LTC determine best approach for community consultation regarding proposed Cycle Route Plan
- 2) Gabriola LTC register finalized route and identified priorities with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), in accordance with the 1992 agreement (Appendix A).
- 3) Gabriola LTC provide cycle route path and identified priorities to local MOTI representatives.

Ongoing administration and implementation

- 4) Gabriola LTC representative meet with local MOTI representatives at least twice per year (this may already be occurring), in order to determine the feasibility of implementing the recommendations in this report, together with other issues regarding road maintenance and upgrading on Gabriola Island.
- 5) Cycling Routes for all of the islands be raised by the Islands Trust at the Interagency Task Force meeting, scheduled to meet at least twice annually, as described in the “Amending Agreement to the Letter of Agreement between The Ministry of Transportation and Highways and The Islands Trust” dated July 18, 1996, with the subtitle “Road Standards, Classification and the consultative Process in the Islands Trust Area”.
- 6) Gabriola LTC establish Advisory Transportation Committee as per resolution made in 2008. Advisory Transportation Committee continues work on this plan, together with off road and recreational cycle paths.

Shared Roadways Bicycle Route Plan and the Regional District of Nanaimo

The Regional Parks & Trails Plan 2005-2015 for the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) discusses a class of trail called shared roadway as extracted below. Once the Gabriola Island Cycle Route Plan is completed and accepted to the OCP for Gabriola, it should be forwarded to the RDN for inclusion in the Regional Parks & Trails Plan. One mechanism for moving the Gabriola Island Cycle Route Plan (GICRP) to the RDN could be through a review and consideration by the Electoral Area B - Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC-B).

RDN Regional Parks & Trails Plan 2005-2015

6.5.1 Shared Roadway

Shared roadways are of two types:

- Lightly used residential or rural roads that provide pleasant cycling and walking opportunities.*
- Highways with wide (greater than 1 meter) paved and maintained shoulders.*

Shared roadways are promoted as recreational and commuting routes. They are mostly used by cyclists, but also walkers. They can be long distance routes connecting local trails as part of longer loops.

Anticipated improvements to this class of trail include:

- Line painting and roadside directional signage.*
- Roadside sweeping and debris removal.*
- Road widening if required.*

Shared Roadways Bicycle Route Plan and Gabriola Land and Trails Trust (Galtt)

Gabriola Land and Trails Trust (Galtt) has participated in and is supportive of the Ad Hoc Gabriola Transportation Committee. The RDN Regional Parks & Trails Plan and maps include reference to a conceptual trail **from Descanso to Drumbeg** and on road trails to be achieved through initiatives by Gabriola Land and Trails Trust. In general the work of Galtt integrates with the Shared Roadways Plan for Gabriola.

APPENDIX A

Protocol Agreement between MOTH and Islands Trust