



## INFORMATION ONLY

To: Mayor & Members of Council

Title: Manager of Planning and Building and City Engineer – Active Transportation Requirements in Rural Areas

Date: February 24, 2025

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### **Background:**

At the January 13, 2025 Regular Council Meeting a letter authored by Scott Syme and Mike Schroeder was presented that outlined concerns with the identification of Active Transportation Routes in the rural areas and the negative impacts of infrastructure development and public use within agricultural and rural areas.

To summarize, the authors cite that frontage requirements at the time of development are particularly onerous for owners of agricultural land. Frontage requirements, in some areas, include road dedication, multi-use path and/or bike lane design and construction, road widening and ditching. As noted in the correspondence, these requirements compounded by the length of frontage typical for agricultural properties and the area necessary to complete the improvements removes that land(s) from agricultural productivity.

Staff recognize that the scale of development in rural areas is typically limited to the construction of a single-family dwelling or an accessory dwelling. In some instances, the estimated cost of the frontage improvements is appreciably more than the estimated cost of the development. Furthermore, in some areas the existing road right of way is narrow and in combination with required ditching the required area of road dedication can be substantial. Additionally, due to legislative amendments in 2019, road dedication and construction of infrastructure through land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) requires the separate approval of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). Therefore, there may be situations in which the landowner seeks to complete the requirements of the bylaw, but the road dedication and/or infrastructure construction are not approved by the ALC.

Owners may apply for a Development Variance Permit to request that Council waive all or some of the servicing requirements of the bylaw.

Staff note that from 2020 to 2024 there have been eight (8) servicing variances to address waiving all or some of the servicing requirements in rural areas or areas outside of the Urban Containment Boundary. Of these variance requests Council waived most if not all of the requirements.

Staff also note that in the Active Transportation Network Plan (ATN Plan) endorsed by Council in 2022, multi-use paths and/or bike lanes were identified along major streets in the Gleneden, Salmon Valley and North Broadview areas as desired bike routes. The ATN Plan also prioritized

routes in the community and highlighted major project priorities within a ten (10) year timeframe (refer to attachments). It is worthwhile to note that very few of the priority projects are located in the rural areas. In implementing the ATN Plan, the mechanism to see non-priority routes develop is through development triggered frontage improvements. The Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw (SDSB) was amended to include widened shoulders on rural roads as opposed to offset multi-use paths. The ATN Plan recommended a study be completed to determine appropriate AT facility types on various roadway types which may result in recommend changes to the SDSB. This study is anticipated to be completed in 2026.

Given the correspondence and information above, should Council wish to consider amendments to the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 4293, below is a summary of amendments that could be considered:

1. Amend the service level in the rural areas to reduce the service level of AT infrastructure in rural areas:

Require that future AT Facility Type study reviews options for AT infrastructure and optimal facility types that can fit within existing or reasonable dedication (18 – 20m ROW) in rural areas. Review options to amend SDSB and/or ATN plan upon completion of the study (note that in the meantime current SDSB requirements would be in force).

2. Amend the service level in rural areas to remove AT infrastructure in rural areas:

Remove the requirement for constructing or dedicating land for AT improvements (shoulder widening, bike lanes, MUPs) for developments in all rural areas. This option would be a significant departure from our major project priorities as identified in the ATN plan.

3. Amend the service level in rural areas to remove AT infrastructure in rural areas where not in the short/medium term priorities of the ATN plan:

Remove the requirement for constructing or dedicating land for AT improvements (shoulder widening, bike lanes, MUPs) for developments in the rural areas excluding those fronting the ATN plan priority projects.

4. Transfer the responsibility of constructing AT projects in rural areas to the City:

Require dedication of land for future ATN identified projects but remove requirement of developers to design and construct the works. Staff's experience is that significant trail development bisecting agricultural land should be forwarded as a community project given the multiple applications that need to be made to the ALC. On a parcel-by-parcel basis this is problematic.

The City is currently working towards a Complete Streets guide that would append to the SDSB and allow for varying service levels throughout the City. Currently a single road cross-section standard holds for all roads of a certain type (rural local roads, urban collector roads, etc.). A Complete Streets Guide adds flexibility to add a variety of service levels along the same road type while offering clarity to developers on requirements. The Complete Streets Guide will be attached to any future SDSB amendments and will be enhanced over time as specific studies are completed such as the Sidewalk Infill Study for approved in the 2025 budget.

Council direction to advance any of the changes noted above will effectively amend the ATN Plan either through reduced service levels or anticipated timelines and would give staff direction to amend the SDSB where necessary. With the upcoming Complete Streets Guide, the City would have the tools to implement any of the above changes easily.

If Council was to decide to provide any guidance or direction, staff would suggest that Option 3 would be the most likely to provide much of the relief sought by the authors of the correspondence, while still maintaining some focus on AT projects in rural areas.

**Legislative authority / plans / reports:**

	Official Community Plan		Master Plan
	Community Charter/LGA	x	Active Transportation Network Plan
x	Bylaw No. 4293		Corporate Strategic Plan
	Zoning Bylaw		2024-2028 Financial Plan
			Long Term Financial Plan

**Financial Considerations:**

N/A

**Alternatives & Implications:**

1. Information Only – No Motion Required.

**Communication:**

Prepared by: City Engineer  
 Prepared by: Manager of Planning and Building  
 Reviewed by: Director of Engineering and Public Works  
 Approved by: Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachments:**

- Active Transportation Network Plan – Figure 17: Priority Infrastructure Projects