

FOR: ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS
MEETING DATE: January 14, 2026
DEPARTMENT: ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS
SUBJECT: **TRANSPORTATION 2026 WORK PLAN**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To share with the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness a list of projects and initiatives that the Transportation group will be working on in 2026 and to identify which items may be of interest to the Committee.

BACKGROUND

A goal of City Plan: Nanaimo Reimagined is “An Empowered Nanaimo: Reconciliation, Representation and Inclusion”. While this goal applies to every aspect of the City’s work, there is special applicability to transportation. Transportation options and designs can have significant implications for residents’ ability to access services and participate in the community. As such, it is important that the needs and interests of equity-seeking groups are integrated into transportation projects and initiatives.

DISCUSSION

The Transportation group has several planned projects and initiatives taking place in 2026, and the ones with obvious accessibility and inclusion considerations are listed below. Staff are requesting the Committee’s input on which 2026 projects and initiatives they would like to be kept informed about. The 2026 projects and initiatives are at varying stages of completion. Some are in early planning stages, some are annual/ongoing initiatives, and some are fully planned and will be built in 2026. Please note, it is possible that new projects not listed here will come up over the course of the next year. These would include projects with smaller budget requirements.

Projects in the Early Planning stage

Haliburton Primary Active Transportation Route – Corridor Plan

City Plan identifies Haliburton Street as a Primary Active Transportation Route, linking the Downtown and Southgate Urban Centres. Using information gathered through the Nanaimo Waterfront Walkway project, Staff will be advancing plans for the corridor and developing an implementation strategy.

Active Transportation Unallocated Budget

In 2018, Council began allocating \$300,000 annually towards emerging, small-scale pedestrian improvement projects through the “Pedestrian Unallocated” budget. In December 2025, Council broadened the scope of the unallocated budget to include Active Transportation projects more generally, rather than focusing solely on pedestrian improvements. They also increased the annual amount to \$600,000 and topped up the 2026 budget for a total of \$1,512,100 this year.

Ongoing and Mid-Stream Projects

Country Club Urban Centre Mobility Upgrades Project

This project will enhance infrastructure along Norwell Drive, including a new transit exchange and Complete Streets improvements.

Bowen Road Active Transportation Improvements – Labieux Road to Boxwood Road/Beban Parkway

In conjunction with scheduled Bowen Road repaving, plans are being developed to incorporate cycle tracks and an enhanced mid-block pedestrian crossing to improve connectivity between transit stops and the Beban Park complex.

Car-Free Access to Daily Needs Assessment

As part of City Plan monitoring, Staff developed a model and online mapping tool to measure walking access to daily needs such as grocery stores, parks, pharmacies, and schools. The model, which only includes routes with continuous facilities meeting reasonable accessibility standards, revealed that just 5% of Nanaimo has walking access to these needs. The model is being expanded to assess cycling access and will be rerun in future years to track progress toward improving car-free access to daily needs.

Planned for Construction or Implementation in 2026

Madsen at East Wellington Intersection and Off Bowen Bikeway Project

The Off Bowen Bikeway was identified in the 2014 Nanaimo Transportation Master Plan as a critical link between the Country Club Urban Center and VIU/Downtown. Several sections of this route have been constructed over the past 5 years, and this project will provide a key connection across East Wellington through to Caspers Way.

Lawlor at Eleventh Intersection Upgrade

As part of a major Stormwater Management project along Wexford Creek, the intersection of Lawlor and Eleventh Street will be reconstructed. This will raise the intersection and install a new crosswalk with Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFBs).

Uplands at Turner Intersection Re-Build

The intersection of Turner Road and Uplands Drive has been identified as having accessibility barriers for pedestrians with limited mobility. The signal hardware at this intersection will be

rebuilt in 2026, providing an opportunity to evaluate options for addressing the accessibility issues at the same time.

Third Street Complete Street

This project will replace aging underground utilities and provide transportation upgrades. These include optimized lane widths, raised pedestrian crossings, protected cycling facilities, and improved intersections with tactile warning surfaces.

Speed Limit Reductions near Elementary Schools

In December 2025, Council approved a new School Zone Policy, which Staff will begin implementing in 2026. Per the policy, roads within +/- 400 m of an elementary school will be considered for 30 km/h speed limits, regulated by the Municipal bylaw. Currently, school zones are regulated by the Provincial *Motor Vehicle Act*, which limits the extent of school zones to school property frontages only.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The projects listed above will require varying levels of community engagement. The purpose of this report is to identify which 2026 initiatives may require special engagement related to accessibility and inclusiveness.

ALIGNMENT WITH CITY PLAN

The report is aligned with the following City goals:

- ☒ A Green Nanaimo: Resilient and Regenerative Ecosystems
 - C1.1 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction
- ☒ A Connected Nanaimo: Equitable Access and Mobility
 - C2.1 Connected Communities
 - C2.2 Integrated Walk, Roll, Cycle & Transit Network
 - C2.3 Recreational Trails
 - C2.4 Safe Mobility (Vision Zero)
 - C2.5 Complete Streets
- ☒ An Empowered Nanaimo: Reconciliation, Representation and Inclusion
 - C4.2 Equity and Inclusivity
 - C4.3 Access for all
 - C4.4 Political Voice and Engagement

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The report is aligned with the following Council Strategic Framework priorities:

- ☒ Implementing City Plan Action Plans and Key City Management Plans
- ☒ Social, Health and Public Safety Challenges

- Maintaining and Growing Current Services
- Capital Projects
- Communicating with the Community
- Governance and Corporate Excellence

NEXT STEPS

Staff are requesting the Committee's thoughts on which projects may be of interest to the Committee. Staff will then plan to present regular updates on the chosen projects so the Committee can be kept informed about the accessibility and inclusivity components.

KEY MESSAGES

- Transportation projects can have considerable influence on accessibility and inclusiveness in the public realm.
- Staff are seeking input about which Transportation projects the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness would like to be kept informed about in 2026.

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