

FOR: COUNCIL
MEETING DATE: February 2, 2026
DEPARTMENT: ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS
SUBJECT: **2026 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION UNALLOCATED – PHASE 1 INITIATIVES**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To recommend three initiatives for partial expenditure of Council’s 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget.

Recommendation

That Council allocate \$400,000 from the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget towards the following initiatives:

- a. Roundabout at Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road (\$350,000)
- b. \$50,000 towards crosswalk improvements at Townsite Road and Holly Avenue

BACKGROUND

Active Transportation Unallocated Program

In 2018, Council began allocating \$300,000 annually towards emerging, small-scale pedestrian improvement projects through the “Pedestrian Unallocated” budget.

The following summarizes recent changes and updates to this budget:

- On 06-OCT-2025, Council allocated \$245,000 of the 2026 Pedestrian Unallocated budget towards Active School Travel projects in South Nanaimo, to leverage a potential grant opportunity
- On 08-DEC-2025, Council broadened the scope of the unallocated budget to include active transportation projects more generally, rather than focusing solely on pedestrian improvements, and approved an increase from \$300,000 to \$600,000 annually
- Also, on 08-DEC-2025, Council added a further \$1,157,100 to the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget, by reallocating funds previously assigned for E&N Trail lighting

In total, Council has allocated \$1,512,100 towards the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget (excluding the Active School Travel Projects). Staff will recommend projects for funding

allocation in phases, with this report containing Phase 1 recommendations. This report is the first of several phases of rolling out this program.

DISCUSSION

The first suite of recommendations for the Active Transportation Unallocated budget, comprising \$400,000, are as follows:

1. Roundabout at Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road (\$350,000)

Hammond Bay Road at Brickyard Road

Traffic safety hot spots have been identified in the vicinity of Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road, with public concerns amplified since the reopening of Rutherford Elementary School in September 2025. The ongoing Hammond Bay Area Utility and Transportation Upgrade project has also drawn attention to the area. Most concerns are related to high traffic speeds and volumes along Hammond Bay Road, and inadequate active transportation infrastructure despite high usage by children.

Limited Active Transportation upgrades were included in the Hammond Bay Area Utility and Transportation Upgrade project, which is currently under construction, and only in areas where existing infrastructure had to be removed and replaced to accommodate the underground utility work.

The larger Active Transportation Unallocated budget for 2026 has created an opportunity to consider more holistic mobility improvements at this location in conjunction with the ongoing utility project. Staff are recommending a roundabout at the intersection of Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road, given its potential to address speed management, right of way conflicts, and reduced potential for conflicts between drivers and pedestrians.

A roundabout would have the potential to address issues at the following “hot spots”:

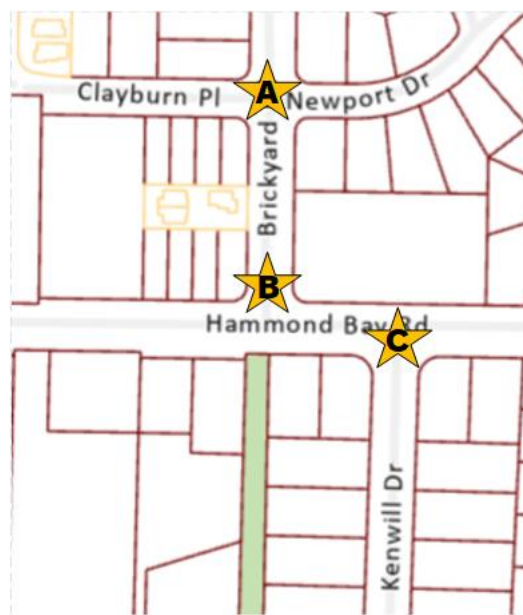


Figure 1: Traffic safety hot spots

A. Clayburn Place/Newport Drive at Brickyard Road

Clayburn Place provides a continuous active transportation route from Brickyard Road to McGirr Road via a local road and multi-use path. This route continues East of Brickyard Road along Newport Drive and connects with Rutherford Elementary. This creates a strong pedestrian desire line across Brickyard Road, but no crossing facilities currently exist at this location, with the nearest formal crosswalk at Brickyard Road and Hammond Bay (hot spot location B).

B. Crosswalk over Brickyard Road at Hammond Bay Road

This crosswalk has a prioritization score of 44 points (out of a possible 100), primarily due to risk factors such as long crossing distance and reported ICBC crashes involving active transportation users (9 collisions total, two of which involved pedestrians). The crosswalk crosses three lanes which results in a crossing distance exceeding 20 metres with multiple points of conflict. This creates a complex environment where driver and pedestrian attention is divided. These risks are heightened for children, who lack the developmental ability and experience to anticipate driver behaviour.

C. Crosswalk over Hammond Bay Road at Kenwill Drive

This mid-block crosswalk has been the subject of several complaints from the public. It was identified as a secondary priority during the 2025 Pedestrian Unallocated project review, receiving a Crosswalk Improvement Prioritization tool score of 41 points; 6-9 points below the projects selected for that year. While the selected 2025 projects had high scores related to trip generation factors (such as proximity to services), the Kenwill/Hammond Bay location's score is primarily driven by risk factors, including high traffic volumes (+/-12,000 vehicles per day), speeds (majority 63 km/h), and a long crossing distance (13 m).

Recommended solution:

Staff are recommending a roundabout at Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road to:

- Reduce speed on Hammond Bay Road without introducing the delay associated with traffic signals.
- Reduce conflict points at the intersection for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists.
- Reduce crossing distances, both over Hammond Bay Road and over Brickyard Road.
- Manage traffic movements with more predictability
- Provide a safer crossing option for pedestrians travelling east-west along Clayburn Place/ Newport Drive

While a roundabout provides numerous benefits, it is also important to acknowledge that some pedestrians find roundabouts less appealing to navigate than traffic signals. These concerns are most commonly raised at multilane roundabouts, whereas this is a single lane. A traffic signal was considered, however there are fewer safety benefits, and the cost would be higher, so it was not considered further.

This project was developed under a compressed timeline and has not gone through a full public engagement process. Emergency Services and Transit have both been consulted as has the property owner at 5971 Hammond Bay Road. Emergency Services and Transit do not have any objections to the proposed works whereas the property owner has expressed some reservations but is willing to work with the City to move the project forward.

Should Council decide to proceed with a roundabout, staff propose to remove the mid-block crosswalk at Kenwill Drive, to focus pedestrian crossings at the new crossings at Brickyard.

Alternate consideration:

Staff note that the crosswalk on Hammond Bay Road at Kenwill Drive has been the primary concern raised by the public. Adding a roundabout represents a larger undertaking compared to typical “unallocated” projects. Given this, Council may wish to consider an alternative approach: simply enhancing the existing crosswalk at Kenwill Drive.

This could include installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, a raised center median (two stage crossing), and adding Tactile Warning Indicator Strips, for an estimated cost of \$150,000. While these improvements would be expected to deliver some safety benefits, this type of treatment is not expected to result in the same speed/safety benefits as provided by a roundabout. Staff recommend proceeding with the roundabout option, as it addresses multiple issues in the area, provides greater safety outcomes, and requires a relatively small portion of the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget.

2. Top up funding for Townsite Road at Holly Avenue Crossing Upgrades (\$50,000)

Townsite Road at Holly Avenue

The crosswalk at this location forms part of City Plan's primary active mobility network and was selected for improvements as part of the 2022 Pedestrian Unallocated program. When approved, the proximity to the rail crossing was known, however through the design process multiple design iterations and revisions were needed to ensure that the rail operator was satisfied with design. This additional work delayed construction during a period of significant construction cost escalation and so the 2022 estimate has become insufficient.

The Active Transportation crossing at Townsite and Holly supports mobility along one of the City's Primary Active Transportation routes, providing a critical link between Downtown, the Hospital Area, Departure Bay, and the Country Club Urban Centre. Council selected this project for Pedestrian Unallocated funding in 2022.

Consultation with Southern Vancouver Island Rail was required to ensure the project aligned with the interests and needs of all parties. These discussions resulted in mutually agreeable solutions; however, the extended time needed to complete them coincided with rising construction costs. As a result, the overall project cost now exceeds the 2022 estimate by \$100,000. Of this amount, \$50,000 will be offset using funds from a recently completed pedestrian improvement project that finished under budget.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on Class D estimates, a total of \$400,000 of the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget would be required to complete the recommended initiatives. Should Council approve staff's recommendation, the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget would have a remaining balance of \$1,112,100 for subsequent 2026 projects.

For the proposed roundabout, the ongoing Hammond Bay Area Utility and Transportation Upgrade project provides opportunities for cost-sharing between projects by aligning construction schedules. This project is also being considered by ICBC for Road Improvement Funding, which could offset project costs.

The additional funding for the Townsite at Holly crossing, would allow for completion of a high-value active transportation project selected by Council in 2022.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Aside from the engagement referenced for the Brickyard Roundabout, community engagement programs are not planned for the recommended initiatives.

Based on input submitted by the public through the general Transportation inbox, there is strong support for traffic safety improvements in the vicinity of Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road. While the need and desire for improvements are clear, the proposed solution of a roundabout has not been discussed with the public. Given the strong need, anticipated benefits, and time-sensitive opportunity to align with the ongoing utility project, staff feel the direct engagement with the affected property owner and other partnership agencies is sufficient.

Relevant consultation for the crossing at Townsite Road and Holly Avenue has previously taken place. |

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
 - C2.4 Safe Mobility (Vision Zero)
 - C2.5 Complete Streets]
- An Empowered Nanaimo: Reconciliation, Representation and Inclusion
 - C4.2 Equity & Inclusivity
 - C4.3 Access for All |

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

NEXT STEPS

Should Council approve staff's recommendations, the following next steps would occur:

- Detailed design of roundabout; further engagement with adjacent property owners; construction scheduling in alignment with utility project, targeted for completion in 2026
- Construction of crossing improvements at Townsite Road and Holly Avenue
- Staff to bring a report recommending a second round of 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated projects to Council in late spring/ early summer 2026 with updates on these projects, and recommended projects for expenditure of the remaining budget |

OPTIONS

1. That Council allocate \$400,000 from the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget towards the following initiatives:
 - a. Roundabout at Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road (\$350,000)
 - b. \$50,000 towards crosswalk improvements at Townsite Road and Holly Avenue
- The advantages of this option:

- Address a suite of traffic safety issues in the vicinity of Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road
 - Coordinating this work with other active projects will result in cost efficiencies.
 - Complete a high-value active transportation project on a primary active mobility route, supported by Council in 2022
 - The disadvantages of this option:
 - Scope of a roundabout project is significant, but time sensitivity (alignment with utility project) prevents broad community engagement
 - A portion of the 2026 Active Transportation unallocated budget will not be available for other projects
 - Financial implications:
 - \$400,000 of 2026 Active Transportation unallocated budget would be required, leaving \$1,112,100 for subsequent 2026 projects.
2. That Council allocate \$200,000 from the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget towards the following initiatives:
- a. Crosswalk improvements, including Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, at Hammond Bay Road and Kenwill Drive (\$150,000)
 - b. \$50,000 towards crosswalk improvements at Townsite Road and Holly Avenue
- The advantages of this option:
 - Provide moderate traffic safety issues at one traffic safety hot spot
 - An additional \$200,000 would remain in the 2026 Active Transportation Unallocated budget, compared with Option 1.
 - Complete a high-value active transportation project on a primary active mobility route, supported by Council in 2022
 - The disadvantages of this option:
 - Focusing improvements at the Kenwill Drive and Hammond Bay Road crosswalk only addresses one traffic safety hot spot, and is not expected to have a significant impact on speeding.
 - A portion of the 2026 Active Transportation unallocated budget will not be available for other projects
 - Hammond Bay Road at Brickyard Road will eventually need to be upgraded (signal or roundabout) to accommodate vehicle demand from Brickyard Road.
 - Financial implications:
 - \$200,000 of 2026 Active Transportation unallocated budget would be required, leaving \$1,312,100 for subsequent 2026 projects.
3. That Council provide alternate direction. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- Council recently broadened the scope of their annual Pedestrian 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 made a one-time increase to the 2026 budget, for a total of \$1,152,100 available for projects this year.

- Staff are recommending an initial expenditure of \$400,000 for construction of a roundabout at Hammond Bay Road and Brickyard Road (\$350,000), and a budget top-up to allow construction of a previously approved project to improve the crossing at Townsite Road and Holly Avenue (\$50,000).
- Staff will be returning to Council later in the year with recommended projects for expenditure of the remaining Active Transportation Unallocated Budget.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: 2022 Staff Report Titled “Allocation of Pedestrian Unallocated Funding”
ATTACHMENT B: Hammond Bay Road at Brickyard Location Plan
ATTACHMENT C: Brickyard and Hammond Bay Roundabout Concept Design |

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