

MODY ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

COUNCIL CHECK-IN

February 13, 2024

Objectives



- Share initial public and stakeholder engagement findings with Council.
- Seek input on how Council would like to see the Active Transportation Plan approach the development of the proposed Active Transportation Network.
- Discuss and receive direction as to how potential overlap with the Nova Scotia Blue Route should be considered.

Engagement Themes – What We Heard

- **Recreational uses of existing active transportation facilities were typically more common** than commuting purposes for numerous reasons including weather, distance, and road safety.
- Attempting to **fill existing gaps in the active transportation network** was considered *equally* as important as developing new cycling and pedestrian connections.
- There is a strong desire to see **improvements to existing infrastructure to improve comfort, safety, and accessibility**, such as providing more lighting, paving/expanding shoulders, integrating wayfinding, and removing other barriers.

Engagement Themes (cont.)

- It is critical to **integrate MODY's active transportation network with the Town of Yarmouth's**, and as much as possible, to connect to key destinations within the Town.
- There was strong **support for several projects in high-traffic areas** including **Lake Milo, the Airport Stretch, and Cape Forchu**, along with improved **connections to and along the Yarmouth County Rail Trail**.

Engagement Themes (cont.)

- **Education and awareness-building** were identified as being important in **teaching necessary skills** to AT users and drivers, as well as **providing tools** for residents and visitors to **navigate the existing/planned networks** and other supporting transportation services/amenities.
- **Developing capacity, both on a staff and volunteer basis**, will also be crucial to successfully deploying new and improved AT infrastructure that is supported through community buy-in.

AT Network Development Options



Regional Network

- Develop inter-community connections across MODY
- Emphasize active transportation for commuting and recreation to regional destinations
- Implement routes with high potential to improve connectivity across MODY – connect to schools, commercial zones, and other community amenities



Local Networks

- Develop individual, potentially standalone AT facilities in distinct areas of the Municipality
- Prioritize recreational and commuting trips to local destinations
- Geographically distribute the AT network in more communities across the Municipality



Regional Network

Opportunities

- Network can suit multiple AT functions (commuting, recreation, school travel etc.) by connecting to key destinations
- Existing active transportation assets can be leveraged within a broader network
- Potential to encourage modal shift in MODY related to commuting to and from places of employment and education

Challenges

- Ensuring an equal geographic distribution of active transportation investment in more communities
- Larger investments may be required for inter-community projects as distances may be greater than standalone, local AT facilities
- Facilities may be located further away from some communities



Local Networks

Opportunities

- Provides convenient, closer access to an active transportation facility in more communities
- Increased potential for reduction in GHG emissions associated with trips to access existing trails and AT facilities
- Potential to limit overall financial investment required with fewer projects and less overall length

Challenges

- Less connections between communities and key destinations
- Less of a regional, more of a local network
- Lowered potential for reduction in GHG emissions associated with commuting trips to and from regional schools and workplaces
- Gaps in AT network continue for potentially longer time frame
- Less leveraging of existing facilities to form a broader AT network



Hybrid Network



Opportunities

- Provides investments in both a connected, municipality wide network as well as local, potentially standalone facilities
- Increased opportunities to recreate closer to where people live, reducing need to drive to access trails and parks
- More communities have access to AT facilities

Challenges

- Longer time frame needed to build a connected network
- May not address existing gaps in network in as timely a manner
- Creates new assets to maintain across more of the municipality
- May not serve as large a segment of the population if facilities are geographically distributed as opposed to located in areas of greatest density/amenities
- Less leveraging of existing AT facilities to form a broader AT network



The Blue Route

- Original RFP document suggested avoiding active transportation projects that coincide with the Province’s planned Blue Route through MODY. (“avoid projects where the NSPW Blue Route is required but either not built or not on the NSPW 5-year capital plan.”)
- Recent conversations with Cycling Nova Scotia and NSPW (as well as previous conversations with NSPW in other NS communities) conveyed and recommended aligning future AT networks *with* the Blue Route to increase the likelihood of provincial funding. No timeline for this potential funding was shared.
- Possibly altering the route to align with priority routes for MODY was also discussed.



How would Council like the AT Network Plan to proceed regarding potential alignment or avoidance of the Blue Route?

Rockville Trail

- Very little feedback received on the Rockville Trail from the 217 responses to the online survey and interactive map, 85 Attendees at 3 Open Houses, 17 Focus Group conversations, and 2 Stakeholder and Partner Meetings – including an Open House in Arcadia.
- The project team is recommending a dedicated mailer to residents in the area of the Rockville Trail. This mailer will direct local residents to a short survey with information on possible design options for the Trail, outline the associated challenges and opportunities of each design, and solicit input on respondents preferred option.
- This feedback will be used to inform the recommended design option for the trail, and this recommended design will be shared in the second round of public engagement for further feedback and refinement.

Next Steps



- Proceed with Council direction to develop draft Active Transportation Plan.
- Engage with the community and stakeholders on the draft plan.
- Return to Council with subsequent engagement findings and plan refinements.

THANK YOU!

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