

McBride Active Transportation Plan

October 2022

*Welcome to McBride: An Active Transportation Community.
We Share Our Roads and Look Out for Each Other!*



Corporation of the Village of McBride



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The Consultant

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Executive Summary

Active transportation is the simple act of using human powered means to travel, instead of a vehicle. It includes, but is not limited to, walking, biking, cross-country skiing, and different types of rolling (skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, etc.).

What's the best part of active transportation? It depends who you ask! For many, it's the reward of getting physical exercise and fresh air; for some it's an opportunity to connect with friends or family outdoors; while others love that it is great for the environment and saves money on vehicle expenses. Those that incorporate it into their daily routines, through commuting to school, work or other destinations by active transportation or recreating actively, speak passionately about why it works for them.

Governments worldwide are recognizing the benefits of active transportation and finding ways to increase active transportation rates in their communities. The BC Government, for example, aims to double the percentage of trips taken by active transportation by 2030, citing improvements in physical and mental health, community health and social connectedness, reduced environmental impact, and cost savings for individuals and municipalities.

McBride is well situated to become a model active transportation community. It is relatively compact and level with a condensed downtown core and community services within close proximity. It already has strong rates of active transportation (with 39% of residents walking or biking to work or school, compared to the national average of just 7%¹) and a population base that appreciates active living.

The McBride Active Transportation Plan, commissioned by the Village of McBride offers recommendations that:

- ❖ Improve the safety, accessibility, efficiency, and enjoyment of active transportation for all users (walkers, bikers, rollers, etc.).
- ❖ Foster a culture of active living and active transportation which will benefit residents' and the community's physical, social, environmental, and financial health.

¹ Statistics Canada (2016).

- ❖ Increase the overall number of active transportation users in the community for both commuting and recreational purposes.
- ❖ Improve the overall liveability of the community, which benefits residents and tourists, and can attract new residents and businesses.

Methodology & Objectives

Methodology

The 2022 McBride Active Transportation Network Plan was written with information from a variety of sources including:

❖ **Local Consultation**

- An Active Transportation Survey was distributed in McBride (hardcopy and electronically) to gather citizens' input regarding the current state of active transportation as well as to generate ideas on future improvements. See the *Highlights from Active Transportation Survey* section of this report and *Appendix 1* for a template of the survey. There were a total of 43 responses.
- Farmers' Market Table: the consultant set up a table at the July 22nd McBride Farmers' Market. At this event, the consultant informed people about the project; collected a list of what citizens thought was good about active transportation in McBride and what could be improved; distributed surveys; gathered contacts for informal interviews; and advertised the upcoming community event.
- Community Event: the consultant held a community event on July 23rd in the form of a family friendly bike ride/walk scavenger hunt around the Village along a route designed to maximize exposure to commonly visited places in the community (hospital, schools, recreation centre, downtown core, etc.). Attendance was encouraged by offering free bike tune-ups (consultant hired a bike mechanic to attend) and a free pizza lunch. Attendees and consultant had informal discussions about active transportation in McBride. Surveys were distributed.

- Meetings with Individuals and Groups: consultant had meetings with the McBride Community Revitalization and Beautification Committee, Mayor and Council, McBride EDO and CAO, Chamber of Commerce, Old Age Pensioners Organization, Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure staff, Robson Valley Mountain Bike Association, Robson Valley Chapter: Back Country Horseman of BC, Yellowhead Ski Club, local business owners, and informal interviews with citizens and survey respondents.

- ❖ **'Ground Truthing:**' is a practice that refers to a reconnaissance of actual on-the-ground conditions to confirm the accuracy of higher level data collection. The dictionary definition is: "to check the accuracy of remotely sensed data by means of in-situ observations."
As a geographer, the consultant did considerable 'ground truthing' of McBride's streets, trails, sidewalks, and recreational infrastructure to gain intimate knowledge of the study area as well as to verify information gathered during local consultation.

- ❖ **Review of Existing Planning Documents:** consultant reviewed pertinent McBride planning reports/bylaws in order to provide recommendations that aligned and complemented existing priorities. For a list of documents reviewed, including extracts from these documents pertaining to the advancement of active transportation related objectives, see the section of this report titled: *Review of Pertinent Planning Documents*.

- ❖ **Review of Other Active Transportation Network Plans:** the consultant reviewed a number of ATNPs, programs, and infrastructure from other municipalities, both within BC and Canada, and elsewhere. This generated ideas and informed best practices.

- ❖ **Review of Provincial & Federal Information:** the consultant reviewed provincial and federal policy & legislation, funding streams, active transportation programs, research papers, and government strategies surrounding active transportation use.

Objectives

Put simply, the goal of this Active Transportation Network Plan is to increase active transportation rates in McBride. Already, McBride has a high rate, with 39% of citizens walking or biking to work, as demonstrated in the *Statistics Canada Journey to Work* portion of the 2016 population census (comparisons with other municipalities can be found in the *Why Active Transportation* section of this report).² While there are certainly some challenges to increasing this rate, the benefits, as listed in the *Benefits of Active Transportation* section of this report, make this endeavour worthwhile.

While the goal is to increase rates, it's acknowledged that humans are creatures of routine and that changes to transportation habits happen gradually over time. We each conduct a nearly subconscious cost/benefit analysis of sorts when deciding how to travel. There is no expectation for *everyone* to use active transportation to go *everywhere, all the time*. Rather, by implementing recommendations that will improve the safety, accessibility, and enjoyment of active transportation, the benefits of active transportation will begin to outweigh the 'costs' for more and more people.

A fictional example of someone's internal cost/benefit analysis of deciding whether to drive or bike to work:

Benefits	Costs
I'm saving the planet! Okay not quite...but at least it's something.	I pressed snooze 3 times, do I really have time or energy to bike to work?
I don't have to worry about parking.	It's hot out...I'll arrive to work a sweaty mess.
I'm saving money on gas	It's cold out. I'll have to put on a bunch of layers.
I always feel mentally sharp and physically awake after I bike to work	I don't have any panniers yet. Where will I put the groceries and mail?
It's a relaxing way to de-stress after my workday.	The gears on my bike aren't working well....and that big hill I have to bike up is always a challenge.
20 minutes of exercise without having to go to the gym...sweet!	I think my colleagues think I'm a cheap skate for biking.
I will be setting a good example for my	I have to bring a change of clothes...what a

² Statistics Canada (2016).

kids.	hassle!
It's so easy to stop and talk to neighbours or friends on a bike ride home.	It might be dark when I finish work and errands....are my lights working?
I don't have to find a parking spot when I stop at the grocery store.	A car nearly backed right into me last time I biked....is that going to happen again?

The objectives from McBride's Active Transportation Network Plan Request for Proposals have also helped to identify the challenges and prioritize recommendations.

Why Active Transportation?

What is Active Transportation?


Active transportation (AT) is defined as using human powered means to travel and includes walking, biking, rolling (i.e. scooter, skateboard, rollerblades) and also other less common modes of self-propelled movement (paddling, cross-country skiing, etc.). By some definitions it includes other emerging technologies, like electric bikes or e-scooters, which assist human-powered movement.





An Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP) is a strategy designed to improve human-powered movement opportunities in a community, with an overall goal of increasing the number of people travelling this way, as opposed to vehicles (cars, busses, trains, etc.). ATNPs can include a variety of recommendations on improving:

- ❖ AT network infrastructure
 - (i.e. bike lanes, multi-use pathways, benches, bike racks, signage, etc.)
- ❖ AT education and culture building
 - Education for traditional road users (drivers) as well as AT users
 - Programs or events that foster AT use

Benefits of Active Transportation

Active Transportation is not a passing trend, very much the opposite. Municipalities worldwide are recognizing the benefits of encouraging active transportation for a variety of reasons:

 <p>Physical Health</p>	<p>Canada's Physical Health Guidelines suggest 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity every week for adults and at least 60 minutes per day for children and adolescents. Physical activity reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, cancers, and type 2 diabetes. It strengthens bones and muscles,</p>
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	enables you to carry out everyday activities with ease, and helps you live longer. ³
 Mental Health	Regular physical activity helps keep thinking, learning, and judgement skills sharp as we age. It reduces depression and anxiety, improves sleep quality, and helps executive functioning in the brain (including the ability to plan and organize; monitor, inhibit, or facilitate behaviours; initiate tasks; and control emotions). ⁴
 Social Health & Equality	Active transportation builds stronger community connections and social health. Active transportation encourages interactions between community members, which build relationships and creates a sense of belonging to one's community. ⁵ It is easier to stop to talk to a neighbour or stop into a shop while walking or on a bicycle than it is in a car. This makes a more liveable community. Having an active transportation network also promotes equality. It provides opportunity to visit places in the community regardless of whether you travel by car or by foot.
 Environment	Motorized transportation in Canada accounts for almost 50% of air pollution, more than 33% greenhouse gas emissions, and nearly 20% of water pollution. ⁶ Active transportation greatly reduces or completely eliminates these impacts. In addition, active transportation infrastructure requires significantly less land area and resources to build and maintain. By using active transportation instead of driving, people save 206 grams of carbon per kilometre travelled. ⁷
 	Citizens who commute by active transportation save significantly on car costs including maintenance, fuel, insurance, repairs, and ownership. It is estimated that it costs ~\$ 0.58/km to drive when all costs are considered. ⁸

³ Centre of Disease Control (2022).

⁴ US Department of Health and Human Services (2019).

⁵ Partnership for Active Transportation (2018).

⁶ University of Alberta (2017).

⁷ International Energy Agency

⁸ American Automobile Association (2012).

<p>Cost Savings</p>	<p>Municipalities save money on decreased infrastructure and maintenance costs associated with roads, bridges, and parking facilities.⁹</p>
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Challenges to Increasing Active Transportation

Understanding why people choose the transportation methods they do is vital when creating recommendations on how to increase active transportation rates. By addressing the main reasons why people choose vehicles over active transportation for example, we might help those people adopt active transportation for future trips.

The survey asked citizens what some of the challenges are to commuting by active transportation, with the option to choose more than one response.

% of Respondents	Challenge to Active Transportation
33%	Where I need to go is too far to travel to by active transportation
33%	I don't feel safe because the infrastructure is insufficient
28%	The weather is unpredictable
26%	It takes too much time - I'm in a rush or very busy
26%	It's not convenient (i.e. I have to carry too much stuff; I have to transport my family, etc.)
23%	I don't feel safe because of vehicles on the road
18%	I don't have the equipment (i.e. bicycle, scooter, etc.)
15%	I have mobility issues that make active transportation challenging
5%	No specific reason; just not in the habit
5%	Lack of bicycle racks to park bike at destinations

⁹ Ibid

Community Profile & Current Situation

McBride, BC: A Prototype Active Transportation Community

- ❖ McBride is a compact & level community of 4.6 square kilometres. It is approximately 700 metres east to west and north to south.¹⁰ At an average walking speed of 5 km/h, it takes less than 10 minutes to traverse.
- ❖ McBride is an incredibly active community, with 39% of citizens walking or biking to school or work, compared to the national average of 7%.¹¹
- ❖ McBride's downtown core, schools, hospital, recreation centre, seniors' housing, library, community centre, and other services are all located in close proximity.
- ❖ While McBride does have a significant population residing outside of Village boundaries, many of these citizens live in two 'neighbourhoods,' Mountain View area and Dore River area, both within a relatively easy bike ride of 5 kilometres of downtown.

Location

McBride, BC is situated in the Rocky Mountain Trench, 200 km southeast of Prince George, 160 km Northwest of Jasper, AB, and 65 km Northwest from the junction of Highway 16 and Highway 5 near Tete Jaune Cache. It is flanked by the Rocky Mountains and Cariboo Mountains and is adjacent to the Fraser River.

Due to McBride's distance to a larger population centre, vehicle ownership is important to access further education, work opportunities, professional services (health, finance,

¹⁰ While McBride's streets & avenues are not laid out exactly north/south and east/west, we will refer to them as being so for simplicity's sake. These measurements are for the commercial and residential core and exclude areas North of Columbia Street and East of Hwy 16.

¹¹ Statistics Canada (2016).

etc.), and shopping, as public transportation options (train, bus) are limited. There are no bike shops (sales or repairs) within McBride.

Economy

McBride, BC, has a blended economy of forestry, agriculture, transportation (railway, highway services), tourism, professional services, and retail. While it has experienced losses in the forest economy, similar to other interior BC forestry communities over the past two decades¹², the blended nature of the economy and stability of transportation and agriculture has helped it maintain a relatively static population (currently 588) since 2011.¹³ McBride, BC still has relatively affordable real estate relative to other parts of the province, which could contribute to future growth.

Village Layout

McBride, BC was founded in 1913 and laid out in a typical Grand Trunk Pacific Railway design of the time. This includes two parks directly adjacent to the railway station on either side of Main Street.

McBride also has residents that live outside of the municipal boundaries, in the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, that are not captured in the Statistics Canada Census data.¹⁴ Two areas of highest population density outside of the municipal area are: Mountain View Road area (mobile home park and acreages/farms) and Dore River area (Dorval Rd. Dyke Rd., Dore River Rd.) which will be addressed in the recommendations section.

McBride's commercial and residential lots are small, providing a high population density and small footprint relative to other small municipalities. The Village is roughly as wide

¹² Due to changes to provincial appurtenance laws - requirement to process wood near to where it was harvested - restructuring of provincial ministry offices and personnel, and changing global market conditions.

¹³ Statistics Canada (2021).

¹⁴ Rural McBride residents are captured in RFFFG Area H (Robson Valley & Canoe)

as it is long, and relatively flat, both attributes that are advantageous to active transportation.



Figure 1: Ron finds it easy to get around town on his electric mobility scooter

Climate

McBride has four distinct seasons and significant rainfall and snowfall. While climate, weather, and temperature present challenges to adoption of active transportation in some seasons, there are provisions that can lessen the challenges associated with environmental conditions (i.e. studded tires, properly ploughed, salted/sanded sidewalks, etc.) that will be covered in the recommendations.

Studies show that the quality of active transportation infrastructure, and whether it makes it safe, accessible, efficient, and enjoyable to walk or bike, is the main predictor of active transportation rates, not climate and weather, as some might believe.¹⁵

For an informative and amusing review of why Canadians cite 'cold weather' as a reason why they don't cycle in the winter, watch *Why Canadians Can't Bike in the Winter, but Finnish People Can*, which explores this topic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uhx-26GfCBU> (Not Just Bikes YouTube Channel)

¹⁵ Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (2019).

Recreation & Quality of Life



Figure 2: McBride Open Gate Community Garden: A testament to the strength of McBride's local community spirit

McBride is surrounded by the Rocky and Cariboo Mountains, lush valley bottom agricultural lands, and majestic forests, fields, alpine, rivers, creeks, and wetlands. Recreation and quality of life are intricately linked for many citizens of McBride, as many describe access to the outdoors and beautiful scenery as significant factors in choosing to live here. Other reasons people choose to live in McBride include: strong sense of community, affordable residential living, and safe friendly place to raise a family.¹⁶ Popular and accessible outdoor activities include, but are certainly not limited to: hiking, mountain biking, boating, horseback riding, hunting, snowmobiling, cross country and backcountry skiing.

McBride is a very active community, as those that choose to recreate outdoors often incorporate active transportation into their daily routine, and vice versa. Statistics Canada collects data about how Canadians commute to work as part of the *Journey to Work* segment of the Population Census. A substantial 39% of McBride's population is walking or biking to work or school, compared to the national average of 7%.¹⁷ Below are active transportation rates of a few more municipalities for comparison purposes:¹⁸

Valemount, BC: 11%	Smithers, BC: 23%	Clearwater, BC: 5%	Jasper, AB: 45%
Nelson, BC: 31%	Prince George, BC: 6%	Kimberley, BC: 10%	Quesnel, BC: 8%

¹⁶ McBride Active Transportation Plan, Request for Proposals (2022).

¹⁷ Statistics Canada (2016).

¹⁸ *ibid*

Some local recreational opportunities include:

- ❖ **McBride Mountain Trails** - featuring 25 km of mountain bike focused multi-use trails created & managed by the Robson Valley Mountain Bike Association: <https://www.mcbridetrails.ca/>
- ❖ **Belle Mountain Equine Trails** - created & managed by the Robson Valley Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen of BC: <https://bchorsemen.org/belle-mountain-equine-trails-a-must-see/>
- ❖ **Dore River Backcountry Trails & Cabins** - created & managed by the Ozalenka Alpine Club: <https://ozalenkaalpineclub.ca/>
- ❖ **Belle Mountain Cross Country Ski Area** - created & managed by the Yellowhead Ski Club: <https://www.facebook.com/yellowheadskiclub>
- ❖ **Backcountry Snowmobiling** - managed by McBride Big Country Snowmobile Association: <https://www.facebook.com/McBrideSnow?fref=ts>

Current Active Transportation Infrastructure

Walking

Sidewalks:

McBride has an existing network of sidewalks covering much of town. Along most streets, the sidewalks are separated from the roadway by a drainage ditch. The sidewalks were constructed long ago and are in various states of repair.

Most of the sidewalks do not meet the Village of McBride's Subdivision & Servicing Bylaw (bylaw 704, 2010) or the Province's Active Transportation Guidelines. That being said, McBride is fortunate to have sidewalks as many rural communities of similar size (and larger) in BC do not have sidewalks at all, other than in select commercial areas.

The sidewalks along Main Street (both sides), as well as the sidewalks along both sides of 5th Avenue, South of Main Street to Dominion Street (hospital and seniors' housing route) are in good to great condition and are sufficiently wide.

Columbia Street's sidewalk is in good condition and sufficiently wide.

Many of the other sidewalks are narrower than recommended by the Village of McBride's Subdivision and Servicing Bylaw and BC's Active Transportation Guidelines. Many sidewalks are missing portions altogether or blocked by private vehicles being parked on the boulevard. Vegetation from private property is impeding sidewalk use in many areas.

Citizens are fond of the sidewalks and prefer using them to walking on the road. 62% of survey respondents identified sidewalk improvements as being a top priority.

There are painted crosswalks in many locations and drivers are generally respectful of pedestrians.

In areas where there are no sidewalks, or poorly maintained sidewalks, citizens walk on the streets. While the streets are quite narrow to accommodate vehicle traffic and walkers, low traffic volumes typically allow drivers to move into the oncoming lane to provide more room to pedestrians.

Discussions with Village personnel have revealed that sidewalk improvements are incredibly costly given the current revenue and that outside funding would be required for anything beyond the level of ongoing sidewalk maintenance they have been doing in recent years.

There is one pedestrian controlled crossing at Highway 16 and Main Street that allows for a safer pedestrian crossing.



Benches:

There are a number of benches around town (Village Office, Post Office, Fire Department, Beaverview Lodge), though a few more locations will benefit from additional benches, as noted in the *Recommendations* section.

Biking / Rolling**Biking Routes:**

There are no separated bike lanes within the Village of McBride, but low traffic volumes allow cyclists to safely share the roadway with vehicles in most cases.

Main Street (travelling W/SW) has been identified as a more dangerous biking route because of the angle parking. Drivers have a difficult time seeing cyclists when backing out. Parking is parallel on the opposite side of Main Street making bike travel safer in that direction.

Many citizens that live outside of Village boundaries are commuting by bicycle, e-bike, or walking into town.

Residents that live in proximity to Dore River (Dore River Rd. Dyke Rd. Dorval Rd.) can use Westlund Rd, to McBride South Rd, to Samson Rd. to travel into town, thus avoiding Highway 16 and the highway overpass, however, this does add approximately 2.5 km to the journey (6 km vs. 3.5 km).

Residents that live in the Mountain View Rd. area (Mobile home park and properties along Mountain View Rd. use Highway 16 to travel into town. There was significant feedback about this route as the residents that currently use this route don't always feel safe and many more residents would like to bike or walk this route but don't because of the speed of



traffic and the bridge crossing. The Highway 16 and Mountain View Rd. intersection is 3 km from town, making a relatively easy bicycle commute.

Bike Racks:

There are some bike racks around town (Post Office, Museum, Library, Hospital, Recreation Centre, Community Centre), but more are needed.

The McBride Pedicab Company, owned and operated by local residents Allan Frederick and Rick Thompson, offers rides throughout the community by donation. They offer free rides to seniors and those with mobility challenges.



Figure 3: McBride Pedicab Service -Operated by Rick Thompson (shown) and Allan Frederick

Active Transportation at Night:

The Village of McBride will be installing 30 new ornamental street lights along Main Street that will improve active transportation use in darkness. In addition, BC Hydro is in the process of replacing street lamp bulbs with brighter and more efficient LED bulbs, which will also contribute to safe active transportation opportunities in darkness.

Equestrian Use

Meetings with the Robson Valley Chapter of the Back Country Horseman of BC and other user groups have informed the consultant on the benefits and consequences of sharing the trails with horses.

McBride has a productive relationship of collaboration between the local trail user groups (hikers, bikers, horses, skiers, snowmobilers, etc.) that benefits all user groups. **It is recommended to continue in this tradition and include horses on all trails that are addressed in this report, including the multi-use pathway.**

Bridges in Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park and Dominion Creek trail systems will need to be engineered with equestrian use in mind. This will likely add engineering and construction costs to these upgrades.

The Robson Valley Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of BC is interested in contributing resources to building and maintaining McBride's trail networks and has a demonstrated history of doing just that. While there are some emblematic disputes that arise between equestrian users and other user groups, these can often be addressed through minor changes to the infrastructure in addition to education and awareness signage and campaigns aimed at educating users how to interact with one another.

One of the recommendations in this report is to organize an annual or bi-annual meeting of all trail user groups in the McBride area. This meeting is a chance to cooperate on meeting shared objective and pre-emptively address any compatibility issues that could arise.

Active Transportation Safety

Between 2017 and 2021, ICBC reported crash data shows 354 vehicle crashes for the Village of McBride and 'Rural McBride,' which extends between the rural areas of

Crescent Spur and Dunster.¹⁹ There were zero reported crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists.

There were four crashes at intersections within the Village of McBride along Highway 16 at the following intersections: 1st Ave, Main Street, SE Frontage, and Koeneman Rd.²⁰

While residents express that they generally feel safe walking, biking, and rolling around McBride, there are a few exceptions. The following locations came up repeatedly in surveys, meetings, and informal discussions, as feeling 'unsafe' to active transportation users:

❖ **Highway 16 & Main Street Intersection:**

Only 55% of survey respondents reported feeling safe crossing Highway 16 at the Main Street intersection on a regular basis as a pedestrian or cyclist. Residents have reported a number of 'close calls' where a pedestrian was crossing or had just crossed and an oncoming vehicle did not notice and/or did not respect the pedestrian activated crossing light. Many children from both schools frequent this crossing during breaks to travel to and from the convenience stores located on the opposite side of the highway for snacks.

"Koeneman Rd. turn off Hwy 16 [is dangerous]. Highway speed should be 70 rather than 90 here and there should be no passing lane until after the Mountainview turnoff. Have seen a number of accidents here and many cyclists turning off the highway at Koeneman."

❖ **Highway 16 & Koeneman Road Intersection:**

"Highway 16 intersection with Main Street [is dangerous], particularly on the bridge road side where the frontage roads join bridge road just before the highway. This is not a family friendly intersection. The pedestrian controlled light has helped but still it is an awkward intersection with the frontage roads. Have seen a few vehicular accidents here." Resident

¹⁹ ICBC (2022).

²⁰ Ibid

The Highway 16 and Koeneman Road Intersection, approximately 270 metres East of the Fraser River Bridge is another location of safety concern. ~15 residents have specifically identified this location as being dangerous for all users (drivers, cyclists, walkers, etc.).

The speed limit here is 90 km/hour with many Mountain View Road area residents turning left here, without a designated turning lane. In addition, this stretch of Highway 16 has a dotted yellow centre line, allowing passing from both directions. This results in many drivers passing a turning vehicle on the right hand side, partially or fully on the shoulder. Cyclists turning left have nowhere to safely wait for oncoming traffic to pass in order to complete their turn. They are stuck in the middle of the lane with 90 km/hour traffic passing on both sides of them in either direction.

Many residents have experienced and/or seen 'close calls' here. Though the ICBC Crash Database lists only one vehicle crash here in the last 4 years, there may have been many more. This ambiguity as to actual location is because most of the 354 crashes that occurred in 'McBride' and 'McBride Rural' have only "Highway 16" listed as the crash location.

❖ **Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge (~800 metres east of McBride)**

58% of survey respondents said they would not feel safe using the Highway 16 bridge on a regular basis as a pedestrian or cyclist. Another 24% were unsure. The consultant received numerous comments (through surveys and interviews) regarding this bridge crossing.

The speed limit is 90 km/hour and the bridge itself is a continuous passing lane. While there is a raised sidewalk on the east bound side, there is no physical barrier between it and traffic. On the west bound side, there is no raised sidewalk and the narrow shoulder has drainage grates for cyclists to navigate around, leaving very room between cyclists and traffic.

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has been proactive to try to partially remedy the situation by constructing pathways the lead from the west bound shoulder, under the bridge and back up to the east bound shoulder (and the same on the opposite side of the bridge) so that west bound cyclists and walkers could safely access the raised sidewalk on the east bound side for their crossing.

❖ **Main Street On Bicycle**

Cyclists have identified travel down Main Street (heading west/southwest towards train station) as being somewhat hazardous. The traffic is slowed to 30 km/hour which is good, but the angle parking presents a hazard. Drivers backing out of the angle parking have a very difficult time seeing a cyclist until they are in very close proximity.

"Main street is difficult to go on as a cyclist. The street parking and sidewalks make it uncomfortable to bike along." Resident

❖ **Sidewalks and Streets in Winter**

"During winter months [...] our streets and sidewalks are often very slippery. Also, when snowfall is heavy there's no place to put snow except on sidewalks, so we walk on the streets where there is some gravel. I see no 'cure' for this except the accept it as part of living in a cold climate and be good sports about it." Resident

Some residents, especially those with mobility challenges, find winter walking hazardous. Snow, icy sections, and unplowed sidewalks were some of the more common concerns.

Residential sidewalks are not the highest priority, and due to limited Village staffing and resources, do not always get plowed and/or salted or sanded quickly enough for residents to use safely.

Review of Pertinent Planning Documents

McBride has a wealth of knowledge contained in its planning documents. Many of these documents support active transportation, directly or indirectly, and have identified strategic projects which would benefit active transportation.

There is no need to re-invent what has already been identified. Instead, this report adopts many recommendations from previous reports, some exactly as recommended in prior reports, other times with updates or modifications to better suit current objectives.

Below is a list of the reviewed planning documents along with excerpts that align with this report's objectives and recommendations.

❖ **McBride Downtown Revitalization Plan 2021**

- Add painted crosswalks, shade trees, & benches to Main St.
- Incorporate a multi-use pathway along 1st Ave.
- Build on existing strengths: "McBride has a walk-able, interconnected street pattern based on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway company, which laid out the town site in a standard GTP design with the station as the focus of Main Street, flanked by two parks, that remains the same to this day."

❖ **Village of McBride Official Community Plan 2008 (Bylaw 682)**

- 2.8 Transportation: "Council supports the provincial policy of creation of bicycle lanes along provincial highways during new construction."
- 2.9 Tourism: "It is Council's objective to promote a healthy tourist economy"
- 2.14 Heritage, Recreation, & the Arts: "It is the objective of Council to encourage the development of recreational opportunities to promote healthy living for the residents of the Village of McBride."
- 2.14 Trails: "Public walking trails are considered to be important for both locals and tourists alike. It is the objective of Council to support and encourage the development of a linking trail system within Village boundaries."

- 2.15 Greenhouse Gas Reduction: "It is the policy of Council that the Village will work to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas generated within the village boundaries, with a goal to seeing a measurable reduction by 2015, with further reduction by 2020."

❖ **McBride Economic Development Action Plan 2018**

- 3.6.2.3 Develop Tourism and Recreation Trails and Access: "Develop a connector trail that links the Village of McBride to the McBride Peak Mountain Bike Trail Network."
- 3.6.4.1 Support Quality of Life and Liveability: "Improve social assets and infrastructure that encourages in-migration."

❖ **McBride Strategic Priorities 2021-2023**

- Strategic Priority #1: Increase Economic Capacity and Community Development: "The Village will strive towards long-term economic resiliency and sustainability; as well as bolstering community vibrancy and well-being."

❖ **McBride Snow & Ice Removal Policy**

❖ **McBride Subdivision & Servicing Bylaw 2010**

- 3.3 Sidewalks: Where required, sidewalks shall be a minimum of 1.4 metres wide when constructed adjacent to barrier curbs or 1.5 metres wide at all other locations. In commercial land use zones, the sidewalk shall be a minimum of 2 metres wide or constructed the full width from the roadway curb to the property line as determined by the Authorized Person."

❖ **McBride Tourism Master Plan 2020**

- Appendix D: Key Strength #5: "Downtown has a historic mountain town feel. We appreciated the historic walking tour and oversized images on buildings depicting area history. More of this can be done."

❖ **McBride Traffic & Parking Bylaw 1997 (Bylaw 568)**

❖ **McBride Zoning Bylaw 2010 (Bylaw 703)**

❖ **McBride Age Friendly Plan 2021**

- McBride has a median age of 47 compared to the BC average of 43.
- "Age-friendly barriers in public buildings and outdoor spaces include: physical barriers (improper snow removal, uneven sidewalks, etc.). not enough public bathrooms, poor lighting at night, not enough benches to rest, low consideration for accessibility."
- 1.1 Apply an age-friendly lens (refer to Appendix A) to future new park design, upgrades and improvements.
- 1.2 Look for opportunities to extend, improve and maintain multi-purpose trail systems and pathways (for all seasons) with older adults and senior residents in mind, to support continued active living.
- 1.3 Apply an age-friendly lens (refer to Appendix A) for future public realm improvements, infrastructure and capital projects.
- 1.4 Review the existing Village Snow Removal Policy - priorities for sidewalks.
- 2.2 Include objectives and support for active transportation and community-based transportation options with the next OCP review and update.
- 2.5 Review angle parking along Main St. for any potential improvements to bike and pedestrian safety

❖ **McBride Cycling Culture Development Plan 2019**

- 4.4.1: "McBride should offer bike racks within the Village core"
- 4.2 reference to Cycling BC's iRide Program for young riders

❖ **Charlie Leake Airport Development Plan 2019**

❖ **Dominion Creek & Gaglardi Trails Improvement Plan**

- Comprehensive plan to improve Dominion Creek and Gaglardi Park trails

❖ **McBride Loop Trail Plan**

- Comprehensive plan to create a "McBride Village Loop" trail

Highlights from Active Transportation Survey

An Active Transportation Survey was distributed in McBride (hardcopy and electronically) to gather citizens' input on the current state of Active Transportation in McBride as well as to generate ideas on future improvements. There were a total of 43 responses. Here are a few notable highlights of the multiple choice questions from the survey (Respondents were allowed to choose more than one response for some questions, resulting in totals not adding to 100% - numbers rounded to nearest percentage):

- ❖ 55% of respondents live within the Village of McBride. The remaining live in the Regional District of Fraser Fort George (RDFFG)
 - Of those that live within the RDFFG, 81% live within 10 km of town, 52% with 5 km.
- ❖ 54% of respondents are employed/self-employed; 32% are retired, the remaining are students, stay-at-home parents, or caregivers.
- ❖ 26% are 20-40 years old; 38% are 40-60 years old; and 36% are 60+ years old.
- ❖ 30% of respondents are biking or walking to and from school or work on a daily basis (Statistics Canada *Journey to Work* data showed 39% as of 2016)
- ❖ For trips other than school or work (i.e. visiting, recreation, errands, appointments), 71% are often or occasionally using active transportation (walk, bike, roll)
- ❖ Why do you commute by active transportation? (choose all that apply):
 - Health / exercise - 57%
 - Cost savings - 41%
 - Enjoyment - 39%
 - Environmentally impact - 31%
 - Convenience - 26%

- ❖ What are the challenges of commuting by active transportation? (choose all that apply):
 - Where I need to go is too far - 33%
 - I don't feel safe because the infrastructure is insufficient - 33%
 - The weather is unpredictable - 28%
 - It takes too much time - 26%
 - It's not convenient (i.e. I have to carry stuff or transport people) - 26%
 - I don't feel safe because the vehicles on the road - 23%
 - I don't have the equipment (i.e. bike/scooter) - 18%
 - I have mobility issues that make active transportation challenging - 15%
 - No specific reason; just not in habit - 5%
 - Very few bike racks in town - 5%

- ❖ What is currently good about McBride's Active Transportation Infrastructure? (choose all that apply):
 - Everything in town is near by - 81%
 - It's flat - no big hills to walk or bike up or down - 81%
 - There is little traffic - 71%
 - Drivers are respectful of walkers, bikers, and rollers - 38%
 - Traffic is limited to 30 or 40 km/hr. - 2%

- ❖ What could improve McBride's Active Transportation Infrastructure? (choose all that apply):
 - Better maintained recreational infrastructure (Dominion Creek Trails, Gaglardi Park Trails, etc.) - 69%
 - Better sidewalks - 62%
 - More bike racks - 62%
 - Improved walking/biking route to Mountain View Rd. area - 62%
 - Dedicated active transportation pathways (separate from road) - 55%
 - Better connectivity between high-use areas of town (i.e. schools, hospitals, seniors' housing, downtown) - 45%
 - Delineated bike lanes (painted bike lanes on road) - 19%
 - Improved pedestrian/cyclist crossing at highway - 31%
 - Improved winter snow clearing on roads and sidewalks - 19.2%
 - Better signage - 17%

- ❖ Do you feel safe using the Highway 16 bridge, East of McBride, on a regular basis, as a pedestrian or cyclist?
 - No - 59%
 - I'm unsure - 24%
 - Yes - 17%

- ❖ Do you feel safe crossing Highway 16 on a regular basis, at the Main Street intersection, as a pedestrian or cyclist?
 - Yes - 55%
 - I'm unsure - 22%
 - No - 22%

Recommendations

These recommendations were created from the research & consultation outlined in the *Methodology and Objectives* section of this report. The draft recommendations were then presented to Village staff and the Beatification Committee for review and input before being finalized.

These recommendations all promote one or more of the following underlying goals:

- ❖ Improve the safety, accessibility, efficiency, and enjoyment of active transportation for all users (walkers, bikers, rollers, etc.).
- ❖ Foster a culture of active living and active transportation which will benefit residents' and the community's physical, social, environmental, and financial health.
- ❖ Increase the overall number of active transportation users in the community for both commuting and recreational purposes.
- ❖ Improve the overall liveability of the community, which benefits residents and tourists, and attracts new residents and businesses.

Each recommendation also offers one or more of the benefits of active transportation, as outlined in the *Benefits of Active Transportation* section of this report, including: physical health, mental health, community health and equity, environmental sustainability, and cost savings.

While the main focus of the report was to identify recommendations for the Village of McBride, it is recognized that McBride and its residents are very much connected to the people and places outside of Village limits. As such, additional recommendations were identified for other organizations with jurisdiction in those areas (i.e. Regional District of Fraser Fort George & Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure).

There are also recommendations that have been identified as offering value towards active transportation, but are outside of the Village of McBride's mandates. Some of these have been assigned organizations whose scope they align with, while some other

recommendations have been left 'unassigned.' In these cases, a local organization may see the correlation with their mandate, and undertake the recommendation.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation	Description
Recommendations for the Village of McBride	
Village Loop - Multi-use Pathway	Construct a 3 metre wide, asphalt surfaced, multi-use pathway around the perimeter of McBride's commercial and residential core.
Sidewalk Improvement Program	Implement a sidewalk improvement program to improve usability of existing sidewalks and complete missing portions to improve connectivity.
Village of McBride Signage	Install active transportation signage at key locations in McBride
Recreational Trails Improvement Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Recreational Trails Partnership 2. Annual User Groups Meeting 3. Dominion Creek Trail Improvements 4. Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park Trail Improvements 5. Recreation & Tourism Coordinator Position
Active Transportation Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bike racks 2. Benches 3. Public restroom facility 4. Bicycle repair stand
Recommendations for Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure	
Highway 16 Improvements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extend 70 km/hr. zone eastward 2. Implement traffic slowing measures on Highway 16 3. Install bike/pedestrian/horse route signage 4. Maintenance and Signage for trails circumnavigating Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge 5. Reposition barricades on Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge
Brush vegetation on Mountain View Road	Brush vegetation in ditches along the first few kilometres of Mountain View Road to improve visibility for vehicles and active transportation users
Recommendations for the Robson Valley Mountain Bike Association	
McBride Mountain Trails Network	Easy/beginner level trails
Cross-Country Bike Trail Network	Lucille Mountain staging area
Expand Mandate	Include other types of cycling
Recommendation for Old Age Pensioners' Organization	
Rental mobility scooter and trikes	Purchase a mobility scooter and two trikes (3 wheel bicycle) to rent to members
Recommendation for Beaverview Seniors' Residences	
Parking for bikes, trikes, mobility scooters	Provide outdoor covered parking, or indoor parking, suitable for trikes, bikes, mobility scooters, and other pieces of active transportation equipment.
Recommendations (unassigned)	
Rainbow Falls Park	Explore the Possibility of Creating a Rainbow Falls Park or Protected Area to Ensure Public Access to this Attraction
Rental fleet of AT Equipment	Explore the idea of a rental fleet of active transportation equipment (i.e. bicycles, trikes, scooters, etc.)
Bike Culture Events	Events to promote active transportation

Recommendations for the Village of McBride

Recommendation 1: Village Loop - Multi-use Pathway

Construct a 3 metre wide, asphalt surfaced, multi-use pathway around the perimeter of McBride's commercial and residential core. This pathway will be used for commuting and recreational purposes and be suitable for a variety of users including: cyclists, walkers, strollers, mobility scooters, e-bikes & e-trikes, rollers (skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, etc.) and horses.

Why: A Village loop is not a new idea. In November 2008, the Village of McBride applied to the Provincial *Active Communities Initiative Grant Program* for funding to develop the McBride Village Loop plan.²¹ The grant was awarded and the comprehensive *McBride Village Loop Plan* was prepared by McBride resident Jill Williams for the Village of McBride. While the Village loop wasn't constructed at that time, the idea has stayed with the community and is more relevant than ever.

During the community events, informal discussions, interviews, and the survey, residents spoke passionately about the benefits of a Village Loop.

When asked '*What could improve McBride's active transportation infrastructure?*' 55% of survey respondents answered 'dedicated active transportation pathways, separate from roadways,' and 45% answered 'better connectivity between high use areas of town.'

When asked '*Are there other communities that you've been to or lived in that had good active transportation networks? If yes, what made them good?*' Survey respondents spoke frequently about: 'separated pathways,' 'paved perimeter trails,' The Bigfoot trail in Valemount,' and many more examples of communities that had separate pathways that they enjoyed using.

Separated pathways provide a very different experience than a sidewalk or walking on the side of the road. Users can relax because they do not have to be looking over their shoulder for vehicles; they can enjoy the conversation with their walking or biking

²¹ Village of McBride, Jill Williams (2009).

partners because the width allows them to travel side by side and not have to dodge fire hydrants, utility poles, and other infrastructure regularly found on sidewalks. Multi-use pathways are known to drastically increase active transportation rates because residents incorporate them into their daily exercise routine.

This multi-use pathway will meet all four of the underlying goals listed at the beginning of the *Recommendations* section of this report.

The Village Loop Multi-use Pathway also addresses a number of objectives found in McBride's planning documents, including:

❖ **Official Community Plan**

- 2.14 Heritage, Recreation, and the Arts: *It is the objective of Council to encourage the development of recreational opportunities to promote healthy living for the residents of the Village of McBride.*
- *Public walking trails are considered to be important for both locals and tourists alike. It is the objective of Council to support and encourage the development of a linking trail system within Village boundaries.*

❖ **Downtown Revitalization Plan**

- Strategic Priority 4: *Incorporate a multi-use pathway for pedestrians and bikes along the edge of 1st Avenue, passing by the Train Station and linking downtown to the 1st Avenue entrance and to Horseshoe Lake.*

❖ **Economic Development Plan**

- *Develop tourism and recreation trails and access (pg. 20)*
- 3.6.4.1 Support Quality of Life and Liveability: *Improve social assets and infrastructure that encourages in-migration.*

❖ **Age Friendly Plan**

- *1.2 Look for opportunities to extend, improve and maintain multi-purpose trail systems and pathways (for all seasons) with older adults and senior residents in mind, to support continued active living.*

The planned route connects a variety of community destinations directly, or within one or two blocks (Community Centre, Recreation Centre, High School, Hospital, Seniors' residences, residential areas - especially McBride Crescent which is not currently

connected by sidewalks, Community Services building -Post Office, Village Office, etc., and Dominion Creek trail). Future phases can connect with other important destinations.

The map shows the intended route and suggests three different segments that could be completed at the same time, or constructed in phases depending, on budgetary constraints.

1. Village Loop 2.8 km (red) - multi-use pathway around the perimeter of McBride's commercial and residential core.
2. 1st Ave. & 2nd Ave. Connecting Loop 800 metres (yellow) - connects High School and future seniors' residences ('Robson Valley Legacies') to Village Loop
3. 3rd Ave. Spur 650 metres (purple) - transects town to improve connectivity to Village Loop. Connects foot path from High School to 3rd Ave.



Equestrian use:

Consultations with the Robson Valley Chapter of the Backcountry Horseman of BC have indicated their interest in a Village loop as suggested above. They believe that visiting equestrian users as well as local riders would very much enjoy the opportunity to access the Village. Many equestrian users would like to access town, but realize that riding down Main Street or other major through-fares is not the most practical or safe option, nor is it as popular with some other residents that are concerned with manure or conflicts among users. As such, they believe that the multi-use pathway, being located at the perimeter of the Village is a more suitable route for them.

Horse riders have the same rights and responsibilities as vehicle traffic under the motor vehicle act. Because of this, they are able to use the roadway for sections of the multi-use pathway that are not suitable for them.

Because an asphalt surface is not the most ideal for horses, and the added responsibility of sharing with other users, it is preferable for equestrian users to be on a pathway separate from the multi-use pathway where possible. From discussions with the Robson Valley Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen of BC, they would be best served by being allowed to ride adjacent to the pathway in the ditch or right-of-way. They do not require a trail bed, just a marked route that is permissible for horse traffic. They are obliged to meet with the design team to identify the best route should this project progress to that stage.

Funding:

This project aligns very well with the requirements for a Provincial Active Transportation Infrastructure Grant. Many similar sized communities and First Nations have received funding of up to \$500,000 to construct multi-use pathways.

Additionally, this project is eligible under the Federal Government's Active Transportation Fund.²²

This project may also be eligible under the CleanBC Communities Fund.²³

²² <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/trans/index-eng.html>

²³ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/clean-buildings/cleanbc-communities-fund>

If availability of funding were preventing progression of this idea, the Village of McBride could consider a gravel pathway as a much more affordable interim solution. It wouldn't be as safe, accessible, efficient, or enjoyable for all user groups, but it would allow the project to progress in phased segments while funding became available. Estimates suggest a gravel pathway would cost 1/3 of the cost of an asphalt surfaced pathway.²⁴

Valemount's 3km Bigfoot Trail (3 m asphalt surfaced multi-use pathway) cost \$429,107 in 2012 for an average of \$143 / metres (see footnote for breakdown of costs).²⁵

Village staff can review eligibility criteria, program guidelines, application deadlines (fall 2023), examples of previously funded projects, and more on the B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program website (see footnote).²⁶

In order to apply, construction must be ready to begin (i.e. all preliminary work completed). Because of this, The Village of McBride will need to have completed the design phase (surveying & engineering) and in adherence with BC's Active Transportation Guidelines before applying. The federal government's active transportation fund is available for planning projects, so the design stage of this project might be able to access funding from this program (the Provincial AT Fund does not support planning).

The proposed route, as indicated on the map, has been identified through community consultation, on-the-ground reconnaissance, and review of multi-use pathways in other communities.

If the pathway crosses fewer roadways and driveways, construction costs will be less. This will also allow users to travel without stopping at as many intersections and reduce interference with vehicle traffic.

Below describes which side of the roadways the multi-use pathway should be located, but realizes that the design, planning, and engineering work may suggest alternative routing (for simplicity, we've used the cardinal directions to refer to McBride's Streets and Avenues, though they aren't aligned precisely this way):

²⁴ https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/Countermeasure_Costs_Summary_Oct2013.pdf

²⁵ Valemount EDO. Breakdown: survey, planning, and engineering: \$36,890; total construction: \$362,137; additional excavation and fill on Main St.: \$19,649; additional work on CN Crossings: \$10,431.

²⁶ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/funding-engagement-permits/funding-grants/active-transportation-infrastructure-grants>

- West (train tracks side) of 1st Avenue. There is already a sidewalk on some portions of the east side. This will allow for a long stretch without any crossings or other infrastructure to contend with.
- North side of Columbia Street. While there is an existing sidewalk here in good condition, the multi-use pathway could be located directly adjacent, providing a wider surface for users. This would allow walkers to use sidewalk and rollers to use pathway (a narrower pathway, i.e. 2 metres, might suffice here).
- West side of SE Frontage. This will allow for best access to the Community Services Building and connection with the existing sidewalk to the Community Services building from Main Street.
- South side of Dominion Street. This will allow the most direct route with the fewest street and driveway crossings. This section could be directly adjacent to roadway, with paint indicating that there is separate use (similar to The Bigfoot Trail in Valemount) along portions that parallel roadways. There will be an access point to the Dominion Creek trail from here.

Recommendation 2: Sidewalk Improvement Program

Implement a sidewalk improvement program to improve usability of existing sidewalks and complete missing portions to improve connectivity.

Why: Residents highly value the sidewalk grid, citing it as being preferable to walking on the streets. Many small communities in BC do not have a sidewalk grid in residential areas, making McBride fortunate in this way. While the existing sidewalk grid is in varying states of repair, it continues to serve a valuable function, allowing residents travel



around town off the roadways, separated from traffic (see the *Current Active Transportation Infrastructure* section of this report for a description of the current sidewalk grid).

The sidewalks were built decades ago, when The Village of McBride had more robust revenue from industry, and inputs (construction costs, materials, & labour), were significantly cheaper. Discussions with the Village of McBride (EDO & public works) have suggested that McBride is not in the position to spend significantly more on the maintenance of the sidewalk grid at current prices (the latest sidewalk improvement project in McBride cost \$12,960 for 41 metres x 1.5 metres = ~ \$315 / metre). 1.5 metre width is the minimum suggested for residential areas in BC's Active Transportation Guidelines. The current budget is \$35,000 per year.

An approximate tally suggests McBride's existing sidewalk grid totals about 9 km, for a complete replacement cost of \$3 million (very rough numbers - there would likely be significant savings by completing large portions at a time). Regardless, massive increases to the sidewalk replacement and maintenance budget are unlikely, so the following recommendations are in areas to get highest value for the least spending.

In many cases, small inputs can result in big improvements to safety, accessibility, efficiency, and enjoyment. For example, for someone using a wheelchair or walker device, a 4+ centimetre raise or drop can cause difficulty. A small windrow of snow that hasn't been cleared can prevent passage. For those with balance issues, ice covering a small incline (i.e. a letdown from sidewalk to crosswalk) can be dangerous. It is useful for maintenance staff to view the sidewalks through the lens of someone with a mobility challenge, thus identifying areas that could use additional attention.

Recommendation	Rationale
Complete missing portion of sidewalk from Highway 16 crossing to Old Chevron Site (see photo below table).	Users with mobility challenges (i.e. wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers) currently need to use the roadway at this location.
Require new sidewalk to be installed whenever a section of street is replaced or repaired. This will require a specific by-law.	This will guarantee that active transportation infrastructure gets the same attention as vehicle infrastructure which is the most equitable distribution of resources to all user groups and income brackets.
When new sidewalks are	Active Transportation Design Guidelines will ensure

<p>installed, ensure they meet the Provincial Active Transportation Design Guidelines (see footnote for link and page number).²⁷ Update Subdivision & Servicing Bylaw to reflect this.</p>	<p>safety, accessibility, efficiency, and enjoyment for all user groups while requiring for the least maintenance.</p>
<p>Prioritize sidewalk replacement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5th Ave from Main to Columbia (route from Seniors' residences & Hospital to Recreation Centre and Community Centre) 2. Perimeter of Elementary School 3. 2nd Ave from High School to Main Street 4. Complete missing portions (see map below)
<p>Increased sidewalk maintenance This will likely require additional budget and/or time allowances.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patch cracks, frost heaves, and uneven sections to allow easier and safer travel for residents with mobility issues and for those using mobility assistance devices (walkers, canes, scooters, wheelchairs, etc.). 2. Increased sidewalk snow removal and additional salting/sanding (this was suggested often during the surveys and community consultations). 3. Remove vegetation and grass that is growing between sections and in cracks. 4. Remove vegetation growing on private property and hanging over sidewalk, impeding access. 5. Ask residents to move any existing property (i.e. vehicles) from sidewalk right of way and to cease parking on sidewalks and blocking access. 6. Schedule bi-annual sidewalk inspections to identify issues.
<p>Partner with RVCS to grow the "Snow Angel" program.</p>	<p>Robson Valley Community Services offered a snow-angel program in 2021/2022 which paired volunteers with residents that needed help to complete their snow clearing. The Village of McBride may be able to partner with RVCS to promote this program.</p>

²⁷ Sidewalk Design Guidelines - pg. 92 of: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/driving-and-transportation/funding-engagement-permits/grants-funding/cycling-infrastructure-funding/active-transportation-guide/2019-06-14_bcatdg_compiled_digital.pdf



Figure 4: Missing portion of sidewalk at NW corner of Highway 16/Main St. Intersection

This sidewalk improvement plan addresses some of the recommendations found in **McBride's Age Friendly Plan**:

- 1.3 Apply an age-friendly lens for future public realm improvements, infrastructure and capital projects. *Adding new sidewalks and sidewalk repairs and replacement in high pedestrian traffic areas. Widening sidewalks in high pedestrian traffic areas, and adding sloped access to roadways.*²⁸

²⁸ Village of McBride (2021).



Figure 5: Missing segments of existing sidewalk grid (does not account for areas that don't have a sidewalk)

Recommendation 3: Village of McBride Signage

Install active transportation signage at key locations in McBride

Signage is a critical component of active transportation infrastructure. It serves a variety of purposes including:

- Educating AT users on proper infrastructure etiquette
- Educating vehicle users on how to respect AT users
- Promotes AT use by bringing awareness to these forms of transportation
- Reminding different users of their shared rights (i.e. cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as vehicles when travelling on the roadway)

Why?

An important component of increasing active transportation in McBride is education and awareness. Many people are simply not in the habit of commuting by active transportation. Seeing signage, along with active transportation infrastructure and users, reminds drivers that it is a viable alternative to driving. Signage also reminds drivers that the roads are a shared resource for cars, cyclists, scooters, and other users and to be respectful and aware of one another.

Signage Recommendations:

1. **Install signs at both entrances to the Village of McBride (1st Ave and Main St.) indicating that McBride is an active community and that the roadways are shared with all users.** Example: *"Welcome to McBride: An Active Transportation Community. We Share Our Roads."*

This sign will remind locals to drive carefully and watch for other road users. It will also remind them of alternative forms of transportation that they could adopt. To visitors, it will brand McBride as an active community and also remind them to be drive carefully and be aware of other road users.

Sign could have a visual component (possibly with input from local artist) that shows multiple road users.

Signs could also be combined with a map of McBride and locations of common tourist amenities (i.e. information centre, downtown, parks, public bathrooms, vehicle charging station, local points of interest, route of multi-use pathways, etc.). This might improve the likelihood of McBride obtaining grant money for the signs.

This signage is eligible for the Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) Marketing Initiative funding program.²⁹

²⁹ <https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/community-development/marketing-initiatives/>



Figure 6: Example of McBride entrance signage

- 2. Install Pedestrian/Bike Route signage on both ends of 1st Avenue** (1st Ave & Eddy Rd. and 1st Ave. and Hwy 16). This reminds vehicles entering McBride to watch for pedestrians and cyclists. They could also be posted along other key active transportation routes.



- 3. Purchase Walk & Bike Stencils for Street Painting.** This will remind drivers to be aware of other road users (see footnote for Canadian supplier).³⁰ These icons can be painted on the multi-use pathway and roadways that are identified as key active transportation routes and other routes where raising awareness would be beneficial (on routes to schools, downtown, community centre, recreation centre, etc.).

³⁰ <https://roadly.ca/product-category/road-marking/pavement-stencils/bicycle-path-stencils/>



4. **Traffic Mirror:** Install a traffic mirror at the CN Rail underpass (Sansom Road) to improve visibility and safety for active transportation users (and vehicle traffic). This is a tight 90 degree turn where visibility is obstructed because of the abutments for the railway track. These mirrors are not particularly expensive (\$500 CAD) and are easy to install.³¹

Recommendation 4: Implement a Recreational Trails Improvement Plan from the Following Recommendations

The survey asked residents to choose from a list of projects that would be most beneficial to improving active transportation in McBride. The highest rated answer, with 69% of respondents selecting it, was: *"better maintained recreational infrastructure (i.e. Dominion Creek trails, Gaglardi Park trails, Horseshoe Lake, etc.)*.

When asked which locations in town are most important to have active transportation infrastructure (i.e. bike lanes, walking paths, sidewalks, etc.) to access, the highest rated answer, once again, was *Recreation Trails (i.e. Dominion Creek trails, Gaglardi Park trails, Horseshoe Lake, etc.)*. Recreation trails were also brought up during the survey when residents were asked what active transportation features of other communities they had visited that they enjoyed using.

During community consultation and informal discussions, residents spoke repeatedly how much people enjoy the recreation trails and how they wish they could be better maintained and more accessible.

³¹https://www.grainger.ca/en/category/convex-safety-and-security-mirrors/traffic-safety/c/26610?q=%3AtopSeller%3A149386_ATTR%3A36%2522&text=&remove_token=&type=category&cptype=category&filterType=149386_ATTR&filterName=Diameter&filterValue=36%22&isWildCard=false#

Accessible, well-maintained recreation trails within walking distance of a community are beneficial for many reasons:

- **Equitable access** - accessible to all residents, whether they have a vehicle or not. Accessible to all user groups (i.e. walkers, bikers, rollers, skiers, dog walkers, horses, etc.).
- **Frequently used** - because they are close, people can use them on a daily basis when they have an hour or two (i.e. mornings or evenings for those working).
- **Contributes to healthy lifestyles** - because of their accessibility, recreation trails close to the community core encourage people to build them into their daily routines, becoming more active.
- **Community building** - local trails offer a healthy way to get outside that can be enjoyed amongst family members and friends.
- **Improves community connectivity** - some trails have the benefit of linking up various destinations, encouraging higher active transportation use.
- **Promotes tourism** - many visitors desire accessible, well-marked, well-maintained, walking paths that are accessible from town. They often want a break from driving and enjoy parking and accessing a trail for a short to medium length walk.

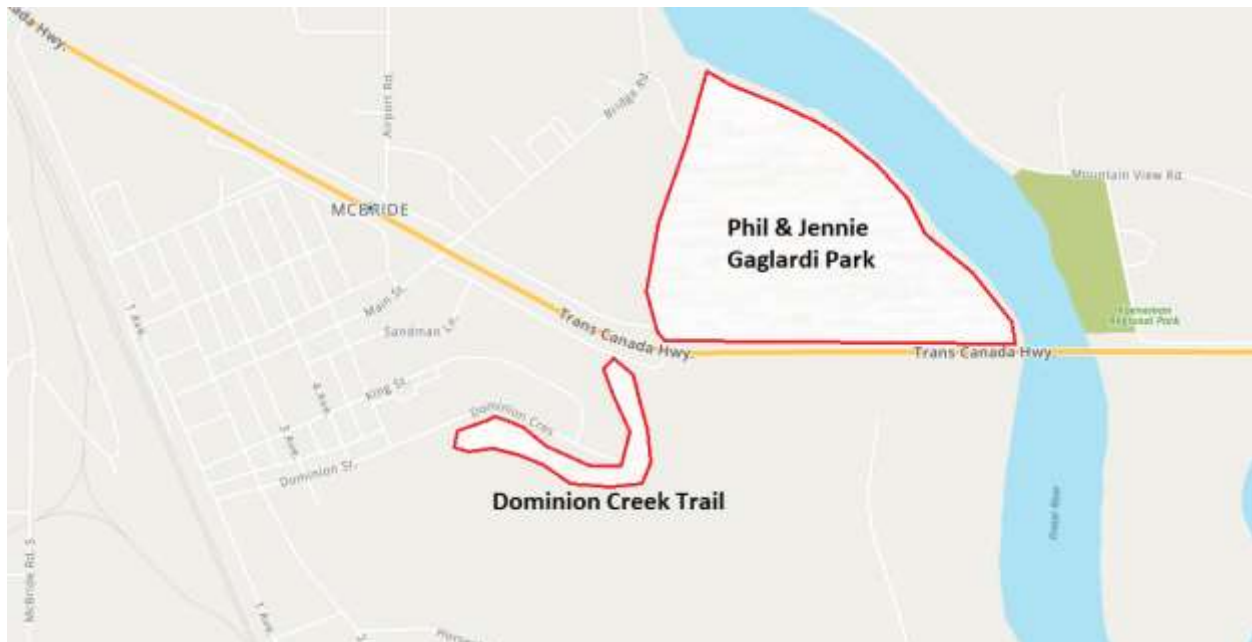
McBride has many great moderate to difficult level hiking trails near to the community that access the forests, mountains, and alpine (Dore River alpine trails, McBride Peak, Lucille & Belle Mountains, etc.). It also has great snowmobile trails (Lucille, Bell, Renshaw), horse trails (Teare Mt., Belle Mountain), bike trails (Teare Mt.), and cross country ski trails (Belle Mt.) within five to eight kilometres of town.

What it is seriously lacking, is close-to-town, accessible, well-maintained, well-marked, trails that are suitable for all users. There is very little that someone wearing running shoes could access on their lunch break for a 30 minute stroll, or that a tourist could

walk in sandals for an hour long break from driving. Similarly, there are no trails suitable for parents pushing a stroller or pulling a wagon.

And realistically, it is these types of trails that see the most use. As noted above, citizens spoke continually about their desire for better maintained recreation trails both in town (i.e. multi-use pathway) and close to town (i.e. Dominion Creek & Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park Trails). In addition, conversations with visitor information staff estimate that upwards of 60% of visitors are looking for an easily accessible trail to access nature that is less than one hour in length.

The good news is that the Village of McBride has two conveniently located nature areas with existing trail networks within the municipality (See map below - Dominion Creek & Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park). What is needed is a comprehensive improvement plan with capital investment and increased ongoing maintenance to make these trails safe, accessible, and enjoyable for local citizens and visitors alike.



Intended Users: As noted before, it is recommended to construct and maintain all local recreational trails for the use of all active transportation users, including, but not limited to: walkers, bikers, strollers, horses, and cross country skiers. It is important to include all user groups in consultation during the design stages to incorporate their needs. All these users groups have similar requirements, so major changes are usually not

required. Sometimes an alternate pathway for a horse around a wooden bridge, or signage indicating which users yield, along with awareness and education are all that are required to provide an inclusive trail experience. In other instances where a horse cannot use an alternate pathway around a bridge, the bridge may need to be engineered and constructed to handle the additional load (compared to other AT users). The recommendations regarding annual collaboration sessions among user groups will help address any concerns.



In particular, all user groups consulted are very interested in being part of the improvement projects at Dominion Creek and Phil and Jennie Gaglardi Park trail networks.

Recommendation 4.1: Create a Local Recreational Trails Partnership Agreement for Dominion Creek & Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park trail networks between the Village of McBride and Local, Volunteer User Groups.

Maintenance of recreational trail networks has been a challenge for the Village of McBride. In some cases, inadequate initial trail construction and design has led to challenging maintenance conditions. Natural occurrences, especially flooding and beaver activity has contributed to the very difficult conditions at Phil and Jennie Gaglardi Park, for example. Maintenance also requires time. The Village of McBride has limited revenue from which to operate and a small team of Public Works Department staff with many ongoing responsibilities.

As repeated throughout this report, residents have a strong desire for improvements and maintenance on these two trail networks. In addition, local volunteer user groups (i.e. RVMBA, Yellowhead Ski Club, Robson Valley Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of BC, etc.) have an interest in using these trails. Most of these groups already manage, maintain, and build a variety of trails. Some of them also have the willingness and capacity to significantly contribute towards a successful improvement plan as well as ongoing maintenance and upkeep at Dominion Creek and Phil and Jennie Gaglardi Park trail networks.

Because of this, there exists a substantial opportunity for collaboration. The Village of McBride could explore the concept of creating a local recreational trails partnership agreement for Dominion Creek & Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park trail networks between the Village of McBride and local, volunteer user groups. This could reduce the time and cost burdens on the Village of McBride and benefit all users by seeing increased maintenance and user group specific needs addressed.

This agreement could include topics such as:

- Local user groups' ability to provide input during the design stage of the improvement project
- Local user groups' ability to provide maintenance for free, or charge, on the trail networks
- Local user groups' ability to groom the trail networks for the purposes of cross country skiing, or walking (grooming with a snow-dog style groomer as done in Valemount and Jasper³²). The opportunity to cross country ski on these trails has been brought up on numerous occasions throughout consultation.
- The possibility of having user groups listed on Village insurance policies to allow them to maintain trails or groom country ski tracks.

In Valemount, for example the Starret Wildlife Sanctuary (also known locally as 'Cranberry Marsh') has a partnership between: The Nature Trust of BC, Ducks Unlimited Canada, and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

Recommendation 4.2: Organize & Host an Annual Collaboration Session of Local Trail User Groups (if above recommendation is not implemented)

If a partnership agreement does not come to fruition as recommended above, a Village of McBride staff member could act as a liaison and gather the various trail user groups together annually or bi-annually to discuss their projects and find areas where collaboration and resource sharing would be beneficial. If the Village is successful in creating a Tourism & Recreation Coordinator position, they could assume this liaison role.

³² <https://www.fitzhugh.ca/ezadmin/snowdog-flat-packing-trails-around-town/>

Recommendation 4.3: Dominion Creek Trail Improvements



Figure 7: Dominion Creek Watershed by McBride (photo courtesy of McBride Trail Assessment & Condition Survey)

This pleasant ~1 km stroll beside Dominion Creek is directly adjacent to McBride, just a five minute walk from downtown. The location, trail length, and ease of travel make this an incredible asset to McBride. It would be very well used by locals and visitors after additional improvements, as suggest below.

Recommendation 4.3a

Implement the recommendations as found in the *McBride Trail Assessment and Condition Survey* completed by First Journey Trails (2018).

Recommended amendments:

- Increase tread width to a minimum of 1 metre (preferably 2 metres). This allows for a wider variety of users (i.e. double wide stroller) and easier passage of users travelling in different directions. It also allows two walkers side by side.
- Install two or more benches along trail at viewpoints
- Install trail map signage on all access points to trail (including how to accommodate equestrian users).

Recommendation 4.3b

Explore the possibility of extending the Dominion Creek trail from the access at Dominion Crescent south westward to the footbridge at the end of 3rd Avenue that accesses the High School Property. There may be enough room within the publicly owned riparian zone (which abuts private properties along this section) to accommodate another segment of trail. This would provide an additional ~500 metres of creek side trail and offer wonderful access to both the schools and also a more direct connection to downtown.

Recommendation 4.4: Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park Trails Improvement

This park includes ~3 km of trails through wetlands and riparian areas adjacent to the Fraser River. There is a parking lot, interpretive signs, picnic area, gazebo, and boat launch all located at the staging area, just ~1 km east of McBride. Locals love this area for walking, horse riding, biking, and cross country skiing. Unfortunately, periodic flooding has made maintenance of this trail system difficult.



Figure 8: Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park Interpretive Area (photo courtesy of www.visitmcbride.ca)

Recommendation 4.4a

Implement the recommendations as found in the *McBride Trail Assessment and Condition Survey* completed by First Journey Trails (2018).

Recommended amendments:

- **Phase 1 (red on map):** complete trail improvements to perimeter trail. This trail is currently in the best overall condition. It has the fewest bridges to repair or replace while providing a very scenic ~ 1.5 km route. It connects town (NE Frontage) to the existing staging area. An existing spur also connects to Bridge Road, offering even more connectivity.
- Increase tread width to a minimum of 1 metre (preferably 2 metres). This allows for a wider variety of users (i.e. double wide stroller) and easier passage of users travelling in different directions. It also allows two walkers side by side.
- Install two or more benches along trail at viewpoints
- Install trail map signage on all access points to trail (including how to accommodate equestrian users).
- Focus improvements and maintenance on perimeter trail. If resources permit, trail network within perimeter (around lagoons) could be considered for repair, however, considering current constraints, this does not seem worthwhile at this time.
- **Phase 2 (yellow on map):** this section traverses low lying area and is more prone to flooding from high water events as well as flooding from beaver activity. It was impassable as of August 2022. Significant amounts of fill and extensive bridge work will be required to complete this segment. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile as this section will complete the circuit, allowing users to make a loop without using Highway 16. If constructed to a high standard, it will also be used by active transportation commuters travelling into McBride from Mountain View road area.



Figure 9: Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Park Improvements. (Phase 1 in red; Phase 2 in yellow)

Funding for all trail improvement recommendations:

These trail improvements may be eligible for funding under Northern Development Initiative Trust's Community Places funding program.

There may also be funding available under BC's Destination Development Fund (though program information is not yet available for this year's intake).

Trail improvement projects are also eligible expenditures under the province's Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT), a 2% tax applied to short-term accommodation stays, that McBride is now collecting (as of August 2022).³³

³³ <https://www.destinationbc.ca/what-we-do/funding-sources/mrdt/>

Recommendation 4.5: Create a Recreation & Tourism Coordinator Position for the Village of McBride

(The Village of McBride is already currently exploring this idea)

Like many other rural BC communities that were historically driven by resource extraction, especially forestry, McBride is undergoing a transformation to a more diversified economy. Forestry, simply put, does not provide the same number of jobs per volume cut as in previous decades.

Tourism has been a growing component of McBride's economy, and for good reasons, such as: its location along a major highway and tourism route; its proximity to other tourist destinations (i.e. Jasper, Banff, Lake Louise, Valemount, Wells Gray, the Ancient Forest, etc.); and most importantly, its spectacular environment, friendly locals, and variety of recreational activities.

A handful of local, volunteer supported, non-profit groups have created and maintained an incredible diversity of recreation infrastructure including trails (hiking, biking, walking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling), cabins, campsites, picnic spots, interpretive signs and more. This has provided for wonderful recreational opportunities for both locals and visitors alike. While there are likely more, a few of the groups that are most involved in these endeavours are:

- [Robson Valley Mountain Bike Association](#)
- [Robson Valley Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of BC](#)
- [McBride Big Country Snowmobile Association](#)
- [Fraser Headwaters Alliance](#)
- [Yellowhead Ski Club](#)
- [Ozalenka Hiking Club](#)

In addition, other volunteer committees work hard at increasing the attractiveness of McBride as a destination for tourists (Tourism Committee), and at improving the liveability and beauty of McBride as a place to live and visit (Beautification Committee).

McBride is fortunate to have such an abundance of hard working volunteers with strong community spirit and ability to work together. In fact, McBride's residents' willingness to

help one another out is one of the defining characteristics of the town that many locals spoke about during consultations and discussions.

It is true, however, that volunteers can get burnt-out or feel a little overwhelmed. Challenges to affordability, such as we see now, give people less available time and resources to give away, as they may need them to support themselves and their families.

A paid Tourism & Recreation Coordinator position can help alleviate some of these stresses. This position does not replace volunteers by any means, but rather fills those roles that volunteers are not best suited for or would rather not be doing (such as applying for permits or writing grant applications). This can give the volunteers more time to do the work they are most passionate about (such as building local trails or grooming ski or snowmobile routes).

If McBride is serious about increasing revenues from the tourism sector, this position will become increasingly important in the coming years as more of its competitors in this sector (other communities looking to expand tourism), have fulfilled this role.

Funding could come from the Municipal and Regional District Tax received from short-term accommodation stays.³⁴

Recommendation 5: Active Transportation Infrastructure

Recommendation 5.1: Install Additional Bike Racks

There are certain pieces of infrastructure than can greatly improve the safety, accessibility, efficiency, and enjoyment of active transportation; bike racks are one of them. When they are there, we hardly notice them, often taking them for granted. When they are not there, however, we recognize the hassle of spending valuable time searching for a safe place to lock or lean a bike, that is close to our destination, safe

³⁴ As stated under "Prescribed Purposes 5 (1)(a) of the Designated Accommodation Area Tax Regulation: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/93_2013#section5

from theft, convenient to lock to, and that doesn't impede other users (i.e. other users on the sidewalk or customers entering a store front).

In the survey, 62% of respondents answered "more bike racks around town" when asked what could improve McBride's active transportation infrastructure. Drivers in McBride are usually able to park within 10 or 20 metres of their destination. Bikers should enjoy that same advantage.

In addition, bike racks are an inconspicuous way to encourage more active transportation use. Just seeing them around reminds residents that biking is a really great alternative to driving, especially around McBride.

Bike racks do not need to be fancy or expensive to be functional. In fact, it is the simple inverted-u design that is recommended in BC's Active Transportation Design Guidelines (see footnote for page number and link).³⁵ As such, Village could consider advertising for locally designed and constructed bike racks. There could be a local competition for artists to offer their design and cost to the Village. It is quite possible that there are local residents with the skills and tools to create them.



Figure 10: Creative Bike Racks (photo courtesy of Active Transportation Design Guide)

³⁵ Pg. 414: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/transportation-infrastructure/engineering-standards-guidelines/traffic-engineering-safety/active-transportation-design-guide>

An inventory of existing bike racks (Village owned and public) has been conducted. The remaining locations that would benefit from bike racks have been identified and are listed below:

Location	Number of Bike Racks & Details (inverted-u or post & ring style: each accommodates 2 bikes)
Community Services Building (see figure 7)	(4) In yellow striped no parking zone - SW corner of parking lot This will provide spots for all offices and outlets in Community Services Building (Liquor Store, Post Office, Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure office, Community Forest, Village Office).
Fire Department	(2) Anywhere deemed suitable by Fire Department staff
Visitor Information Centre (also - Whistlestop Gallery & Beanery Café)	(4) At end of Main Street in front of building occupying 2 parking spots. This location receives a lot of traffic and in front of the building will be obvious to new arrivals (on side of building would not be noticeable).
Both Grocery Stores	(3) at TGP and (3) at AG Foods. Ideally located in existing parking stall directly adjacent to entrances (see below for public-private partnership idea - P3)
Along Main Street on both sides of the street at every block	(6 to 8) Along Main Street, there is currently one multi-bike rack on front of the Library and another single post & ring style rack in front of the Scotia Bank. Another 6 to 8 back racks should be placed along Main Street on both sides of streets wherever there are businesses (every block except Elementary school).



Figure 11: Bike rack location at Community Services Building

Recommendation 5.2: Install Additional Benches

There are a number of benches located around town, both publicly and privately owned. The only feedback received was that there could be additional benches along Main Street. This suggestion was from seniors living in Beaverview Lodge and walking to the business district, especially the grocery stores. Some with mobility challenges need a bench every block or two in order to safely complete this walk.

Location	Number of Benches & Details
Beaverview Lodge	(1) Adjacent to sidewalk so that it is accessible in the winter.
Beaver Manor	(1) Adjacent to sidewalk so that it is accessible in the winter.
Along Main Street	(2 to 3) Located between 5 th Avenue and 2 nd Avenue

Public Private Partnership: there may be an opportunity for partnerships between the Village of McBride and private local businesses or organizations to supply benches and bike racks in key locations around town. In some areas, there is not a suitable place on public (Village owned) land to place a bench or bike rack. Sometimes the best location is on private property owned by a business or organization. In these locations, the Village could purchase the benches and bike racks in bulk, at reduced pricing, and offer for free or at-cost to businesses or organizations who would then assume ownership and liability for the infrastructure.

Recommendation 5.3: Construct a Public Restroom Facility at Steve Kolida Park

The Village of McBride is well aware of the importance of public, centrally located bathrooms for local and tourist use and has been working towards the construction of this facility.

Adding it to the recommendations in this report will contribute to the possibility of acquiring funds through a Provincial Active Transportation Infrastructure Grant.

Active transportation users typically travel a lot slower than vehicles. Active transportation users that originated from outside of Village boundaries have been travelling for a lot longer than their vehicle driving counterparts by the time they arrive in town. Because of this, they may need to use the restroom before they are ready for the next activity in their trip (i.e. going to work, shop, do errands, visit, etc.). A public bathroom facility provides this. It is also useful for local residents, especially seniors and children, as well as tourists.

Recommendation 5.4: Install a Bicycle Repair Stand at Steve Kolida Park

Public bicycle repair stands usually consist of a stand or 'rack' to place the bike on, several commonly used bicycle repair tools (i.e. allen keys, screwdrivers, spoke wrench, etc.) attached to the stand by cables to prevent theft, and a bicycle tire pump compatible with schrader and presta type valves (see footnote for link to prototype with price).³⁶

Bicycle repair stands are handy for locals that don't have access to bicycle repair or maintenance tools, especially when there is not a bicycle shop in town. It's also useful for people travelling with or by bike that don't carry tools with them.



Figure 12: Bicycle Repair Stand in Tofino, BC

³⁶ <https://www.theparkcatalog.com/bike-repair-stand>

Recommendations for the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure

Highway 16 is an important transportation corridor for McBride and all of Northern BC. McBride's history is based on transportation with the railway and then the highway being instrumental in its development. Being a high speed through-fare, Highway 16 does present some challenges to active transportation users.

When asked in the survey if residents feel safe using the Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge on a regular basis as a pedestrian or cyclist, 59% of respondents said 'no' and another 24% said they were 'unsure.' When asked the same about using the Highway 16 and Main Street intersection, 55% said 'no' and another 23% said they were 'unsure.'

The intersection of Highway 16 and Main Street, the Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge, and the Koeneman Rd. turnoff were all identified by numerous respondents when asked if there were any 'problem spots' for active transportation in McBride and in a question that asked if there were any areas where respondents would feel unsafe as pedestrian or cyclist.

There are a significant number of residents that live in the Mountain View Rd. area, consequently, improvements to the segment of Highway between there and the Village of McBride is a high priority to improve active transportation opportunities.

The following recommendations are designed to improve the safety, accessibility, efficiency, and enjoyment of active transportation users along the Highway 16 corridor that travels through McBride. Please see the *Active Transportation Safety and Highlights from Active Transportation Survey* sections of this report which describe the safety concerns along this corridor, especially around the Highway 16 bridge (east of town), the Koeneman Rd. turnoff, and the two intersections with Highway 16 located within municipal boundaries (Main St. & 1st Ave.).



Recommendation 1: Extend the 70 km/hr. Zone Eastward

Currently, for westbound vehicles entering McBride, the speed limit changes from 100 km/hr. to 90 km/hr. before Mountain View Road, and then to 70 km/hr. just before the municipal boundary after the Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge. Three areas of conflict that have been identified in ICBC crash statistics and feedback from local consultations are:

- Mountain View Rd. turnoff
- Koeneman Rd. turnoff
- Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge

All of these locations present risk to active transportation users because of turning vehicles, congestion, and high vehicle speeds.

The consultant spent considerable time biking around McBride and intentionally crossed the bridge as a pedestrian and cyclist on numerous occasions to understand this section. Being on the bridge as a cyclist or pedestrian, when two vehicles are travelling opposite directions (especially transport trucks) at 90+ km/hr., is an intimidating experience.

An extension of the 70 km/hr. zone to before the Mountain View Rd. turnoff (before the last corner before this intersection), an extension of approximately 2 km, would greatly increase the safety of these areas to current active transportation users and encourage new users to feel safe enough to consider using this route.

Recommendation 2: Implement traffic slowing measures on both sides of the intersection of Main Street & Highway 16

As reviewed in the Active Transportation Safety: Highway 16 & Main Street Intersection section of this report, this intersection does not feel safe as a pedestrian or cyclist to most residents.

Anecdotal data from residents suggest that some vehicles just don't notice or chose to disregard it when the light changes to red for highway traffic. There were numerous reports of pedestrians that had the right of way but didn't proceed because a vehicle did not stop for the red light. This is of significant concern because McBride is divided by Highway 16, with a sizeable residential area along with commercial services district on the east side. All residents should feel safe travelling throughout their community, by active transportation or vehicle.

The automatic speed indicator signs are a great tool to make vehicles aware of their speed while entering into McBride. Some other measures to make vehicles more aware of the pedestrian crossing could be:

- Multiple rumble strips (as installed before the Fraser River Bridge & Intersection of Highway 16 & Highway 5)
- Flashing lights warning of pedestrian controlled crossing

It would be ideal if the Ministry of Transportation could review this location and apply their expertise and tools to improve the safety of this intersection.

Recommendation 3: Install Bike/Pedestrian/Horse Route Signage

McBride has a significant population residing outside of Village boundaries. Many of these citizens live in two 'neighbourhoods,' Mountain View area and Dore River area, both within a relatively easy bike ride of 5 km of downtown.

As such, there are already a significant number of active transportation users travelling along Highway 16 from both directions (NW and E). Appropriate signage to make vehicles aware of these users would enhance the safety for all users. Installation of sign Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure graphic sign (item number B-G-002) and Share the Road Equestrian sign (W-064-11 & W-064-11-Tb) at the following locations would be beneficial:³⁷

- East of McBride Before the last corner of Highway 16 before Mountain View Rd. (at the same location as the new recommended commencement of the 70 km/hr. zone).
- Northwest of McBride before the Highway 16 Dore River bridge.



³⁷ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/driving-and-transportation/transportation-infrastructure/engineering-standards-and-guidelines/traffic-engineering-and-safety/traffic-engineering/traffic-signs-and-pavement-markings/standard-traffic-signs/standard-traffic-signs/bicycle_signs.pdf

Recommendation 4: Maintenance & signage for trails circumnavigating the Hwy 16 Fraser River Bridge

(see the *Active Transportation Safety* section of this report)

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has been proactive to try to partially remedy the situation by constructing pathways that lead from the west bound shoulder, under the bridge and back up to the east bound shoulder (and the same on the opposite side of the bridge) so that west bound cyclists and walkers could safely access the raised sidewalk on the east bound side for their crossing.

These short trails need better signage and maintenance. Geotextile cloth should be installed on the trail bed to prevent vegetation growth and additional crushed gravel should be placed and mechanically compacted to ensure a long lasting surface. Attention should be paid to where the trails connect to the shoulder of the Highway. Recommendations for the Ministry of Transportation (in another section) will address the placement of the concrete barriers that are making access more difficult.

Recommendation 5: Reposition Barricades on Highway Fraser River Bridge

The barricades on the west and east end on the upstream side of the Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge are impeding access for active transportation users to access the sidewalk on the bridge and the trail that the Village of McBride has built to allow westbound users to cross under the bridge to access the sidewalk on the upstream side of the bridge. Reposition concrete barricades to facilitate active transportation users' ability to travel uninterrupted between the shoulder and the sidewalk or the shoulder and the trail (see figure 6).



Figure 13: Fraser River Bridge - barricades blocking users on shoulder from accessing sidewalk (looking westward)

Recommendation 6: Brush vegetation along Mountain View Road

A few responses in the survey indicated that walking or biking along the first few kilometres of Mountain View Road felt unsafe because vegetation in the ditches obstructed visibility for vehicles, especially around the corners.

Recommendations for the Robson Valley Mountain Bike Association

Thanks to the dedicated volunteers of the Robson Valley Mountain Bike Association, the locally created and maintained **McBride Mountain Trails Network** is an incredible asset to the community and visitors. They have done this with support from the Village of McBride and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations and with funding from the BC Rural Dividend.

Most community bike parks have paid coordinator positions that undertake much of the planning, grant and permit applications, and work supervision. This is a significant workload which local volunteers have provided.

Because of this, it is imperative to state that that the recommendations should be taken as suggestions. The other recommendations found in this report are targeted at municipal and regional levels of government, and government agencies, with dedicated mandates of supporting their constituency. Those recommendations came directly from consultations with their constituencies, thus providing legitimacy to the recommendations and some expectation that they will reviewed and considered. A volunteer organization (incorporated society in this case) creates and follows its own mandate, based on its support base and is accountable only to its directors, members (if applicable), and Recreation Sites and Trails BC.³⁸

Recommendation 1: McBride Mountain Trails Network - Additional Easy/Beginner Level Mountain Bike Trails

Local residents' input and input from the larger mountain bike community suggest that if resources allow new trails to be built within the trail system, that more easy/beginner trails would be an asset. Both beginners, and veteran riders seeking a more relaxed outing, enjoy easy climbing trails and cross trails without significant elevation gain and

³⁸ "[RB MBA's] mission is to promote an active lifestyle, community involvement, and inspire fun times through the creation and maintenance of recreational trails in the Robson Valley." Cycling Culture Development Plan, 2019.

drop. If the trails are easy enough, families are able to introduce the sport to their children in a safe environment. Beginner and easy trails can often be built with options of accessing more advanced features. In this case, a single trail can provide a great experience to a wider range of users.

Recommendation 2: Exploration of Alternative Location for Easy/Beginner Trails

The hillside upon which the McBride Mountain Trails are located is quite steep and rocky, making construction of beginner trails more difficult.

If the construction of easy/beginner rated climbing and/or cross country trails is too difficult because of this, an additional cross country mountain bike/cross country ski trail network could be developed, with a focus on easy/beginner level trails.

Preliminary reconnaissance suggests that an area that might be suitable for easier cross country trails is at the base of Lucille Mountain, using the snowmobile parking as staging. This area is not as steep or rocky, and boasts a beautiful forested setting. If trails were developed in this location, they may also be suitable for cross country skiing as the west side of the valley receives more snow and less wind than other areas. This location is close to town (~3.7 km) along a publicly maintained forest service road.

Recommendation 3: Expansion of Mandate to Include Other Types of Cycling

Cycling culture in McBride needs advocates. Many of the recommendations in this report, or any other ideas or projects that have the potential to promote cycling culture will not progress without dedicated human intervention. The Robson Valley Mountain Bike Association has done a tremendous job of promoting mountain bike culture and infrastructure with the creation and maintenance 8 trails with a combined length of 25 km.³⁹ If they have members that are inclined to broaden their scope, they could consider becoming more active in promoting other types of cycling and undertaking events related to the general promotion of bike culture. Examples of these types of events or projects are: bike to work week, bike skills programs in schools, and more (see

³⁹ *As of 2019, from Cycling Culture & Development Plan 2019

the *Recommendations (unassigned)* section of this report for more examples). If the opportunity became available, they could also provide input into the Phil and Jennie Gaglardi Park and Dominion Creek trails improvement projects to ensure they support the needs of bike users.

Recommendations for Beaverview Seniors' Residences (BC Housing) & the Old Age Pensioners Organization

Many seniors adopt active transportation to move around town. This is sometimes in the form of walking, using a mobility scooter, riding a stable three wheeled bike (trike), or other means.

Some seniors choose this for exercise, enjoyment, or practical reasons. For others who can no longer drive, this might be their only option to keep their mobility.

The consultant met a few seniors using mobility scooters and e-trikes as their primary form of transportation. The following two recommendations are to encourage new users to consider alternative forms of active transportation to stay active and mobile and to make storage of this type of equipment easier, safer, and more accessible.

Recommendation 1 (for Old Age Pensioners' Organization): Consider Purchasing a Mobility Scooter and Trike (3 wheeled bicycle) for Rent to Members

Some seniors are curious about using a mobility scooter or three wheeled bicycle (trike), but haven't had the opportunity to try it out to see if it's a worthwhile investment for them. Others like the idea, but would only use it on rare occasion, making purchase not worth it, especially as many seniors are on a fixed income. If the Old Age Pensioners' Organization had a mobility scooter, and one or two trikes (with baskets), members could rent them to try them out or on occasion when the need arose. This idea was discussed with OAPO president and treasurer and was deemed to be worth exploring further. OAPO could ask another service organization with experience in applying for grant funding to explore funding opportunities and help with an application (possibly Robson Valley Community Services or Public Library).



Figure 14: Local resident Leonard Dovich uses his e-trike to commute into town

Recommendation 2 (for Beaverview Lodge - BC Housing): Covered Outdoor or Indoor Parking for Bicycles, Trikes, and Mobility Scooters.

At Beaverview Lodge, BC Housing could construct outdoor covered parking, or indoor parking, suitable for trikes, bikes, mobility scooters, and other pieces of active transportation equipment. This should include electrical outlets for charging. Building residents and the Old Age Pensioners Organization should be consulted to identify needs and determine suitable design and features.

Recommendations (unassigned)

The following recommendations do not have an obvious organization that should carry the responsibility of implementation. Rather, organizations, levels of government, businesses, non-profits, or locals might see these recommendations and identify with their purpose and see how they fit in with their goals or mandates.

Recommendation 1: Explore the Possibility of Creating a Rainbow Falls Park or Protected Area to Ensure Public Access to this Attraction

Rainbow Falls is a magnificent local attraction. The trail head is within a few kilometres of town, does not require a four wheel drive vehicle, and the short trail (just a few hundred metres long), accesses a very picturesque series of waterfalls in a scenic canyon.

Unfortunately, this waterfall is on private property, making public access technically illegal at this time. A recent article in the Rocky Mountain Goat newspaper, confirmed by a letter submitted to the Regional District of Fraser Fort George by the current owner, Leafar Lands Ltd., states that they are planning to sell the property and are interested in seeing public access guaranteed by the formation of a park.^{40 41} Because of the seller's timeframe, the opportunity to acquire this land may be short, requiring a level of urgency when exploring this idea.

As mentioned before, feedback from the survey and consultations indicated that residents are very interested in having access to local recreation trails (see *Recommendation 4: Implement a Recreational Trails Improvement Plan* section of this report).

This location is outside of Village boundaries, providing little opportunity for the Village of McBride to get involved or promote this idea directly. There are, however, other

⁴⁰ Letter to the RDFFG (Sept. 19, 2022) by Leafar Lands Ltd.: <https://pub-rdfff.escrimeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=5396>

⁴¹ Rocky Mountain Goat Newspaper article (Oct. 13, 2022): https://www.therockymountaingoat.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/RMG-Oct13-13-37_MASTER-WEB.pdf

levels of government or organizations that might be able to explore the feasibility of this project.

What this concept needs at this point is an advocate willing to contact other organizations that have the jurisdictional and organizational capacity to explore and/or pursue this as a project. The Village of McBride could indicate the community's interest in exploring this idea and ask them to consider this proposal. Organizations to be made aware of this idea include, but are not limited to:

- The Regional District of Fraser Fort George (RDFFG)
- Recreation Sites & Trails BC (RSTBC)
- McBride Community Forest
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Fraser Headwaters Alliance

Recommendation 2: Rental Fleet of Active Transportation Equipment

The consultant heard (through surveys and consultations) that many people were interested in riding a bike, trike, or scooter, but did not own one. Without a rental shop or bike store, options are very limited for residents wanting to try something out before making a big purchase.

If there was a rental fleet of active transportation equipment, residents could 'rent' or 'borrow' a bike for a week, for example, and then decide if they are interested in purchasing their own.

This rental fleet could include a single type of equipment, say bicycles, or multiple types of equipment, such as bicycles, trikes (3 wheel bicycle, often with basket on back for carrying items), and scooters.

Potentially suitable organizations: McBride & District Public Library, Robson Valley Recreation Centre, Robson Valley Community Services, etc.

Recommendation 3: Bike Culture Events

Active transportation is much more than the infrastructure and equipment that makes it possible. It is also education, awareness, and a culture of active living. It takes time to develop new habits and the more we are exposed to an idea or way of doing something, the more open we become to seeing the value.

The following are ideas for events, programs, or campaigns to promote active transportation in the Village of McBride:

1. **Bike to work/school week** - popular throughout the world, this event aims to get people biking to work or school for a week (or longer!). Often takes place in May or June.
2. **Cycling BC's 'HopOn'** (previously known as 'iRide') - teaches cycling skills and safety awareness to over 65,000 children annually in British Columbia's schools. <https://hopon.cyclingbc.net/>
3. **HUB Cycling's Learn2Ride:** this is a free web-based course that helps children ages 9-12 years old learn about basic cycling safety. This online course is based on HUB Cycling's Learn2Ride program. [Learn2Ride Online | HUB Cycling: Bike Events, Education, Action in Metro Vancouver \(bikehub.ca\)](#)
4. **Bike Mechanic brought to town once or twice a year:** there is currently not a bike mechanic in town offering services to the public. For many, this is an obstacle in bike ownership, as maintenance is important. A bike mechanic coming to McBride with tools and spare parts makes more sense than multiple people from McBride travelling somewhere else with their bikes to get the serviced or repaired. If someone were to arrange the mechanic and advertise the service locally, it is likely the costs of the repairs would make it worthwhile for the mechanic to attend requiring no costs to be incurred by the organizer. Once in the spring and again in the fall might be suitable.
5. **Bicycle Show & Shine Event:** this could be a fun event where people bring their bikes to show to the community. Many people are interested in seeing e-trikes,

scooters, fat tire mountain bikes and more. This provides people that don't yet have a bicycle to see what exists and get ideas as to what might work for them. It could be organized around an existing event, such as Pioneer Days, to attract attention.

- 6. Bicycle Rodeo:** in years past, the RCMP hosted annual bike rodeos to teach children cycling safety skills. Participants enjoyed this event. The RCMP or another organization could host this event again. It could be offered in conjunction as the other two events listed above for school age children (Learn2Ride and HopOn).

Conclusion

Active Transportation is an important part of McBride's transportation and recreation infrastructure. It contributes to increased physical and mental health, makes the community more liveable, reduces the community's environmental impact, and saves the municipality and its citizens money.

As noted before, McBride is well situated to become an active transportation leader with its compact and level footprint and residential and commercial core being in close proximity. Its existing high rates of active transportation provide a strong foundation from which to expand from.

The Village of McBride can also incorporate principles of this report into future planning documents, such as the Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, and Community Sustainability Plan, much like this report has built on the ideas and knowledge from past planning document. In this way, future planning can be accomplished while considering the benefits of incorporating active transportation into daily life.

The Village of McBride can, through the recommendation in this report, contribute to the success of active transportation in McBride. Any investments in active transportation will benefit the residents and municipality for years to come.

Appendices

Appendix 1: McBride Active Transportation Network Plan Survey

McBride Active Transportation Network Plan Survey (for residents of McBride and vicinity).

The Village of McBride is creating an Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP). An ATNP is a strategy to improve human powered movement opportunities (walking, biking, rolling) throughout the community. Its goal is to increase the number of people that commute through active transportation as opposed to vehicles.

We need your input! What do you like about walking, biking, or rolling around McBride? What can be improved? What are the challenges to commuting this way?

Please complete this survey by August 12, 2022 and return to the Village Office or Library and be entered to win one of (2) \$50 gift certificates to a local business of your choice. This survey is anonymous. Your name and contact information will be collected only to award the prizes or if you'd like to share more information.

Please contact the report consultant, Jared Smith, with any additional input or questions at 250.566.4022 or summit_66@hotmail.com

Thanks for your time!

1. Where do you live:

- Within the Village of McBride (within town limits)
- in the Regional District of Fraser Fort George (proceed to next question)
- Elsewhere (please do not proceed with survey)

2. If you live outside of McBride, in the Regional District of Fraser Fort George, how far from the Village of McBride do you live? (feel free to specify which area of regional district in "other." I.e. Mountain View, Dore River, etc.)

- 1 - 2 km
- 2 - 5 km
- 5 - 10 km
- Further than 10 km
- Other _____

3. What is your current daily activity?

- Student
- Worker
- Stay-at-home parent or caregiver
- Retired
- Other _____

4. What is your age?

- 10 - 20
- 20 - 40
- 40 - 60
- 60+

5. If you commute on a daily basis (for example, to school or work), how do you most often travel?

- Vehicle
- Walking
- Biking
- rolling (i.e. scooter, skateboard, rollerblades, etc.)
- I don't commute on a daily basis

6. For trips other than daily commuting (for example, appointments, visiting, recreation, errands), how do you travel? (select all the apply)

- Vehicle
- Walking
- Biking
- rolling (i.e. scooter, skateboard, rollerblades, etc.)

other _____

7. If you commute by active transportation (walking, biking, rolling), why do you? (select all that apply)

- Convenience
- active living (health, exercise, etc.)
- more environmentally sustainable
- cost savings
- enjoyment
- from necessity, I don't have a vehicle and/or license
- I don't commute by active transportation

8. What are some challenges to commuting by active transportation (walking, biking, rolling)? (select all that apply)

- it takes too much time - I'm in a rush or very busy
- where I need to go is too far to travel to by active transportation
- I have mobility issues that make active transportation challenging
- I don't have the equipment (i.e. bicycle, scooter, etc.)
- the weather is unpredictable
- I don't feel safe because of vehicles on the road
- I don't feel safe because the infrastructure is insufficient
- it's not convenient (i.e. I have to carry too much stuff, I have to transport my family, etc.)
- No specific reason; just not in the habit
- Other _____

9. What is currently good about McBride's active transportation infrastructure? (select all that apply)

- there is little traffic
- everything in town is near by
- it's flat - no big hills to walk or bike up
- drivers are respectful of walkers, bikers, and rollers
- Other _____

10. What could improve McBride's active transportation infrastructure? (select all that apply)

- better signage
- dedicated active transportation pathways (separate from roads)
- delineated bike lanes (painted bike lanes on roadways)
- more bike racks around town

- improved pedestrian / cyclist crossing at highway
- improved walking / biking route towards Mountain View road residential area
- better maintained recreational infrastructure (i.e. Dominion creek trails, Gaglardi park trails, etc.)
- better connectivity between high use areas of town (i.e. schools, hospital, senior's housing, downtown business district, etc.)
- Other _____

11. Which locations in town are most important to have active transportation infrastructure (i.e. bike lanes, walking paths, sidewalks, etc.) to access? (select all that apply)

- Schools
- Hospital
- Senior's housing
- Downtown core
- Highway commercial
- recreation areas (i.e. Dominion Cr. Gaglardi Park, Horseshoe Lake, etc.)
- residential areas
- Mountain View road area
- Other _____

12. Would you feel safe crossing Highway 16 on a regular basis, at the Main Street intersection, as a pedestrian or cyclist?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

13. Would you feel safe using the Highway 16 Fraser River Bridge on a regular basis as a pedestrian or cyclist?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

14. Are there any 'problem spots' for active transportation around McBride that you're aware of? (examples: difficult or dangerous street crossing, sidewalk to nowhere, lack of bicycle rack in important location, pedestrian/cyclist conflict area, etc.)

15. Are there any areas within McBride that you would feel unsafe as a pedestrian or cyclist?

16. List one or two active transportation infrastructure projects that you think should be the highest priority.

17. Please share any ideas you might have of how to get more people commuting by walking, biking, or rolling in McBride?

18. Electric bikes (e-bikes) are becoming a popular way for people to commute. Are you using an e-bike? If so, what is your experience? Do you know of other people using e-bikes? How are they using them? Have you considered getting an e-bike? What are your thoughts on this emerging transportation technology?

19. Imagine that McBride was able to develop the active transportation network of your dreams.....describe what it would be like.

20. Are there other communities that you've been to or lived in that had good active transportation networks? If yes, what made them good?

21. Please share any other ideas, suggestions, questions about Active Transportation in McBride.

22. Would you like to be contacted to share more of your ideas or thoughts? If so, enter your name, phone number, and best time to call below.

23. To be entered to win one of (2) \$50 gift certificates to a local business of your choice, enter your name and phone number below.

Thank you very much for your valuable contribution to this project!

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