



# NORTH COWICHAN MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Round 3 Public Engagement What We Heard Report

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## 1.0 WHAT WE DID

A draft of the North Cowichan Master Transportation Plan (MTP) was presented to the community in the late winter/early spring of 2024. The purpose of the final round of engagement (round 3 of 3) was to offer the community one final opportunity to share their feedback on the MTP before finalization and adoption by Council. The community had two opportunities to share their feedback, as follows:

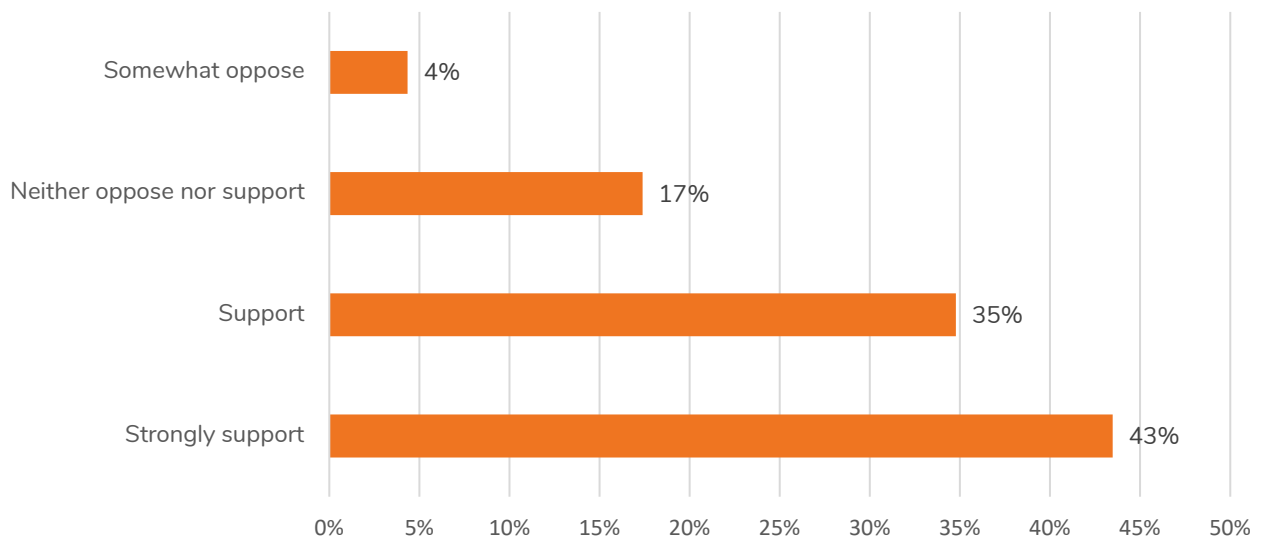
- **Online Questionnaire** – The draft Master Transportation Plan was presented to the community through an online questionnaire available on Connect North Cowichan from February 23 to March 18, 2024. The overarching goal of the questionnaire was to ask the community if we got it right and whether the MTP reflects their priorities. The questionnaire received 23 responses. A total of five questions were included in the questionnaire, as follows:
  1. What is your overall level of support for the directions outlined in the Master Transportation Plan?
  2. What is your general feedback on the Master Transportation Plan?
  3. Are there any particular recommendations in the MTP that you would like to see prioritized?
  4. As part of meeting that future mode share target, what would it make it easier for you to walk, bike, or use transit for some or all of your trips?
  5. Does the MTP miss any important direction that you think requires attention?
  
- **Open House** – To extend the reach of the online questionnaire, an open house was held at the Cowichan Community Centre (Aquatics Lobby) on March 7, 2024. Similar to the online questionnaire, the purpose of the open house was to gauge whether we got it right and offer one final opportunity for input. A total of 30 people attended the open house. Both WATT and Municipal Staff were on hand to answer any questions or clarifications and gather general feedback on all aspects of the plan.



## 2.0 WHAT WE HEARD

### 2.1 Level of Support for MTP

In the online questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for the directions outlined in the MTP. As shown in **Figure 1** below, 78% of respondents (n=18) indicated that they either support or strongly support the MTP. Note, only 23 people responded to the survey and as such, the results may not be representative of wider the community.



**Figure 1. Level of Support for MTP Directions (Online Questionnaire)**

### 2.2 Demographic & Geographic Profile

Respondents to the online questionnaire represented all areas of North Cowichan as shown in **Figure 2** below. Note, due to the small sample size, the results should be interpreted with caution and may not be representative of wider the community or sub-area. The questionnaire also asked respondents to indicate which age group they belong to. The results show a mix of ages from 30 to 79.

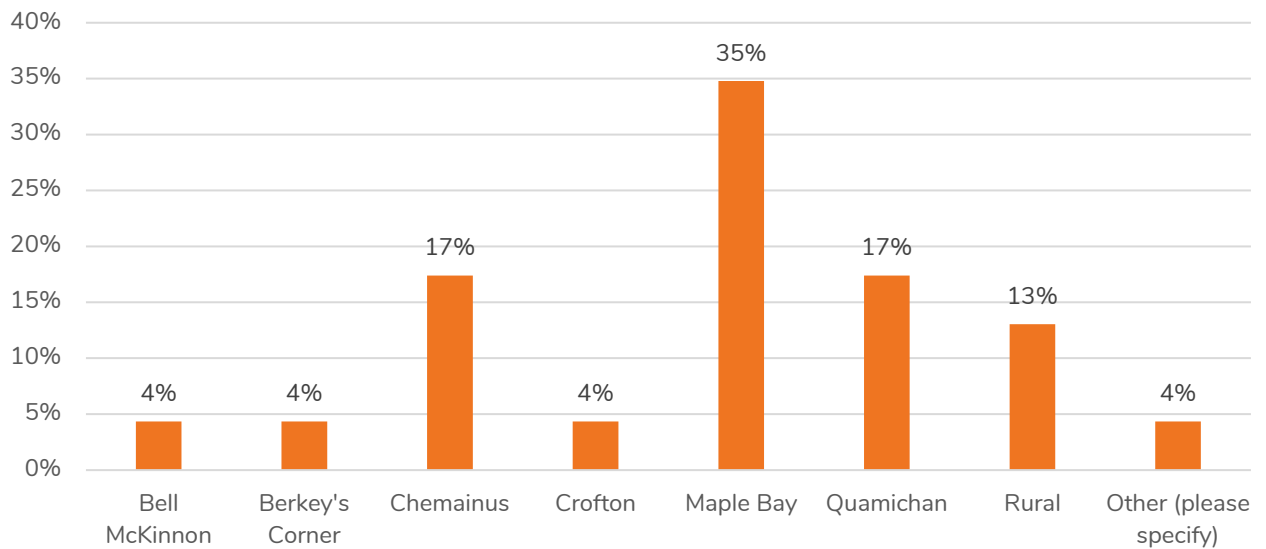


Figure 2. Where do you live? (Online Questionnaire)

### 2.3 Key Themes

The feedback from both the online questionnaire and the open house was generally specific to a transportation mode or network. As such, the feedback is thematically organized, as follows:

- **Road Network:** some members of the community indicated that the future road network must be designed in a way that maximizes safety for all users. Specific comments were centred around the need to improve and prioritize the intersections identified in the MTP along with addressing ongoing speeding concerns with some vehicles travelling at operating speeds that are higher than the posted speed limit.
- **Pedestrian Network:** some members of the community indicated that the plan for the pedestrian network is comprehensive and supportable. However, some concerns were expressed about how pedestrian facilities are not always designed with pedestrians in mind. For example, community members indicated that the Municipality needs to improve accessibility standards in the design of its pedestrian infrastructure. Further, there was commentary about how multi-use pathways should not only prioritize people cycling; it was indicated that the Municipality should consider separating



pathway users in the future if they get busy, which can help ensure a more comfortable and safe experience for people walking.

- **Cycling Network:** comments were largely supportive of the cycling network. The three common themes of feedback surrounding the cycling network are that (1) the Municipality must prioritize separating people cycling from motor vehicles through the provision of protected cycling facilities; (2) cycling facility projects should be prioritized where there is a critical gap to a key destination including a school, community centre, and/or from one growth centre to another and (3) the Trans-Canada Highway is a major barrier for east-west connectivity and that future crossings are required to make it safer for people to cross the highway by bicycle.
- **Transit Network:** participants echoed similar comments around transit that have been articulated throughout the MTP process—transit service and frequency is lacking in North Cowichan, which makes transit less attractive. Participants stressed that transit service improvements are critical part of the future network and should be prioritized.
- **Other:** there were comments in both the online questionnaire and the open house that were not supportive of the MTP and its general direction. Feedback was focused on the high costs associated with plan implementation and that too much attention is focused on supporting sustainable transportation modes and not enough on motor vehicles.

### 3.0 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FEEDBACK

Overall, the feedback heard in both the online questionnaire and the open house largely indicate support for the MTP and corroborate its overall directions. According to the feedback, the MTP did not miss anything critical in the eyes of those who responded from the community. Rather, the feedback largely confirmed that the MTP is a supportable document and that the community wants to see it implemented.