

New multi-use path in Oceanside a good start, according to cycling group

By **Daryl Major**

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Photo credit: Greater Nanaimo Cycling Coalition

PARKSVILLE – Pedestrians and cyclists are pleased with a new safer path linking Coombs to Parksville.

The RDN's Rail Trail is now open, allowing people walking and biking a safe alternative to being in the side of the road.

The Greater Nanaimo Cycling Coalition believes the trail is just the start. Spokesman Leo Boon sees it connecting with the Parksville Cycling Network in the future.

"The greatest opportunity here is to get this trail all the way connected to the resorts," he said. "So that people can come from the resort area and walk or cycle all the way from the downtown core and resort area all the way up to Coombs."

According to Boon though, there are some issues with the surface of the new multi-purpose path.

"It's a bit on the soft side and we've been working with the RDN on making sure we get the right material there," said Boon. "And of course there are some crossings. We have issues of making sure that we have the right signage and the easiest way and safest way for both pedestrians and cyclists to get across."

The RDN's Joan Michel has said that there are a few minor projects needed to finish the job, including railroad crossing work, landscaping and signage.

The coalition also has some recommendations for the city of Parksville's Master Transportation Plan, which includes solutions for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. A submission has been made to council asking the city update to update some of the data being used in the plan because it's not the latest information available, according to Boon.

"They really need to look at the Transportation Association of Canada guidelines as to what are urban collectors and how do we build them and how do we use particular pedestrian crossings."

Boon says they will be making a presentation to Parksville council in February.

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