

Moving Around Pender (MAP) Shared Roadways  
Proposal to the North Pender Local Trust Committee  
Submitted by the Moving around Pender ad hoc committee.

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## INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this document is to examine issues around the establishment of a designated cycle/pedestrian route on the main transportation corridor of North Pender Island. The report has been prepared by the ad hoc MAP committee at the request of the Local Committee of the Islands Trust for North and South Pender Islands for presentation to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI). The impetus for the report is twofold. The first reason is the recognition that the roads of the Pender Islands are used almost exclusively for car and truck traffic despite the rural setting. It is the widespread belief that this is because there are no provisions to ensure the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. The majority of the population believe that it is unsafe to walk and cycle on the main thoroughfares of the island. The second rationale for this report is in response to the CRD's mandate to reduce green house gas emissions. Provincial Bill 44 (The Green House Gas Reduction Targets Act -2008) has legislated a 33% reduction in province-wide greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions by 2020 and 80% by 2050. Through Bill 27, the Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act, the province will *"provide local governments with tools to help them reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve energy and work towards creating more compact and sustainable communities."*

The Pender Island OCP, approved in June 2011, incorporates targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and policies and actions to achieve these targets. The planned target is to reduce Pender Island's greenhouse gas emissions by 33% by 2020 from 2007 levels. The plan states that: *"emission reductions within the local trust area may result from individual and community initiatives"*. Included among the objectives of the OCPs climate change statement is a commitment to, *"To support efforts and policies to help our community adapt to climate change impacts."* **AND** *"To work with others to support actions to limit emissions."* **AND** *"To facilitate and encourage community discussion of future development patterns and options."*

Most of the roads on the Penders are narrow and have inconsistent and uneven shoulders. It is widely felt that these roads are unsafe for pedestrian and cyclists to use. The development of pedestrian and cycle routes on the main transportation corridor will make them safer for cyclists, and other non-motorists, will encourage greater pedestrian and cycle use and will reduce ferry traffic and carbon emissions. The danger to motorists posed by cyclists is not to be underestimated. The narrow roads mean that cars have to substantially encroach on oncoming lanes to pass cyclists. A situation where two cars are passing in opposite directions and trying to negotiate cycle traffic and be very dangerous for cars and cyclists.

An existing agreement between the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and the Islands Trust (Appendix A) provides that during upgrading of designated roads, paved bicycle paths – (separated from the vehicle lanes with painted lines) - will be constructed on both sides of the road. This would apply to routes that have been designated by the Local Trust Committee within an official plan for a cycling route. At present, no such plan for a cycling route exists for the Penders. The following report outlines a proposed initial cycling route. Stretches of the route that have safety risks are identified together with recommendations regarding means of addressing those risks.

The focus of this report is “on side of road” cycle paths. Pedestrians, young children, people using electric carts, strollers, and walkers are also potential users of these paths. This report should be considered a component of the larger “Community Transportation Plan” which has been submitted by MAP.

Pender is a desirable cycling destination because it offers interesting natural and cultural features, portions of the Gulf Islands National Park, unique art galleries, resorts, B&Bs, and splendid scenery as well as overnight camping facilities.

Although, in general, drivers are considerate of cyclists and vehicular traffic is light compared to urban settings there are data showing that rural cycling is more dangerous than urban cycling. Touring cyclists are usually experienced riders who can deal with a range of grades and hazards but many potential local cyclists are relatively inexperienced and intimidated by real and perceived risks.

## **PENDER ISLANDS OCP RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***OCP Statement***

Current statements in the Penders’ Official Community Plan (OCP) related to cycling and pedestrians include:

*2.6.7 The Local Trust Committee will identify locations that are a priority for the creation of pedestrian walkways, linear parks and trails, cycling paths and trails, pull-outs and lay-bys, and public ocean accesses in cooperation with other agencies and community groups.*

*2.6.12 Development of trails and creation of pedestrian and bicycle paths along a public right of way shall be encouraged.*

*2.6.13 The Ministry of Transportation shall be requested to allocate sufficient space within a road right of way to allow for the development of pedestrian and bicycle paths separate from vehicular traffic and to construct such paths should the*

*opportunity present itself.*

### **3.1.3 Road Transportation**

- 1) To protect the scenic beauty and rural character of the island's roadways.*
- 2) To minimize the impacts of new roads on the rural character of the island.*
- 3) To provide safe transportation routes that do not invite excessive speed.*
- 4) To ensure safe access for emergency vehicles.*
- 5) To create safe paths for pedestrians and cyclists.*

*3.1.3.2 The Local Trust Committee will support initiatives to reduce autodependence, including, but not limited to, buses, mini-buses, carpooling, car-stops, neighbourhood zero-emission vehicles, paths and trails, car coops, electric vehicle plug-ins, and park-and-ride.*

*3.1.3.3 The Local Trust Committee will identify locations that are a priority for the creation of pedestrian walkways, linear parks and trails, cycling paths and trails, pull-outs and lay-bys, and public ocean accesses in cooperation with other agencies and community groups.*

*3.1.3.13 The Local Trust Committee will request that the Ministry of Transportation develop a network of pedestrian walkways, cycling paths and trails, and public ocean accesses.*

## **PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED MAGIC FERRY PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTE**

This report focuses on the development of a pedestrian/cycle route paralleling the main transportation corridor between the Otter Bay Ferry terminal and Magic Lake Estates -. The main reason to focus on this main transportation corridor as a first initiative is that it is the busiest stretch of road on Pender Island. It services the ferry, the Community Hall, the Driftwood Center, Prior Centennial Provincial Park, the School, the Medical Clinic and the Magic Lake store. All traffic bound for South Pender follows this route. In addition to high traffic the route has a number of corners and slopes that are perceived as being dangerous.

## CURRENT SAFETY ISSUES ON THE PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTE

There are a number of safety issues on the proposed Magic Ferry route that have been identified as priorities in the establishment of the plan. There are 6 areas that have been identified as highest priority, due to the most severe safety concerns. These are graded using the “grim reaper” rating scale. This 3 point scale includes Grim, Grimmer and Grimmet as indicated by one, two or three reapers; 3 being of most concern. All areas of concern are identified in red on the attached Vision Map and the areas of special concern are documented below.



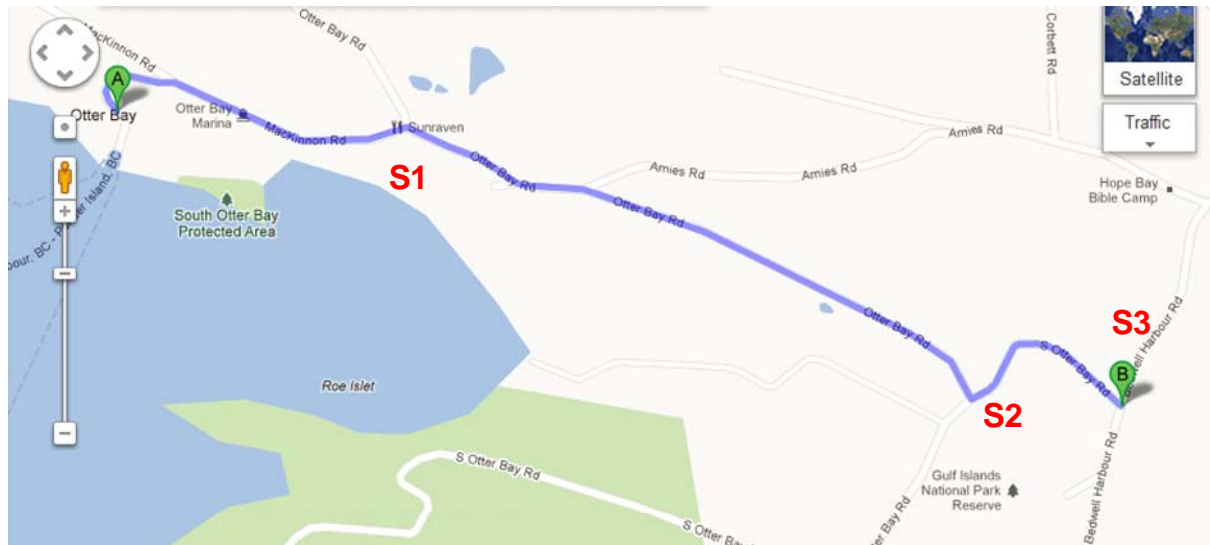
The recommended action for all of these dangerous sections of the route is the establishment of an on-road cycle/pedestrian path. As an alternative, where there are issues of lack of provincial right of way or physical barriers like rock walls, off road two way paths that bi-pass the hazard is a possibility. Where there are additional recommended actions they are noted in the document.

Safety issues that apply to several parts of the proposed cycle/pedestrian route include:

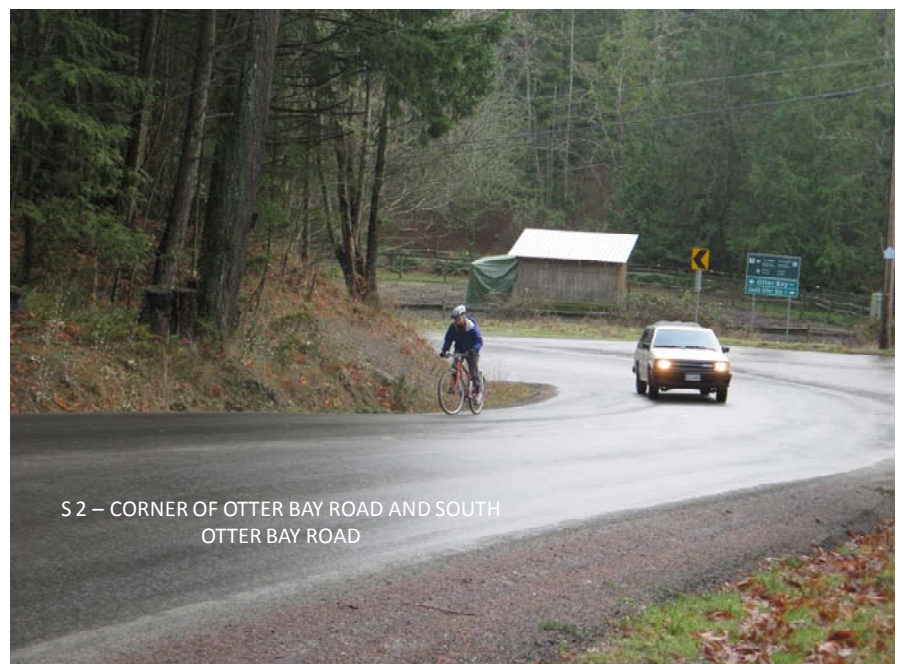
- A. Vehicles tend to exceed the speed limit throughout the island.
- B. Maintenance of road shoulders/verges: There are often branches and debris on the shoulder that creates a safety hazard for cyclists. Regular cleanup of the shoulder is required.
- C. Potholes and large cracks along the edge of the road and shoulder create safety hazards for cyclists and require fixing on a regular basis.
- D. Inadequate signage – many blind curves, corners and hills are not marked. Signs that encourage road sharing and cycle friendly driving are needed.

## Otter Bay to Community Hall: Identification of Hazardous Areas

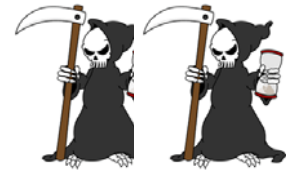
1. The junction of Otter Bay Road and MacKinnon road (S1) where a three way intersection makes it difficult for cyclists to make a left turn when travelling east. Besides the construction of a marked bike lane, a paved “pull-out” at the top of the hill adjacent to the intersection would provide safety.



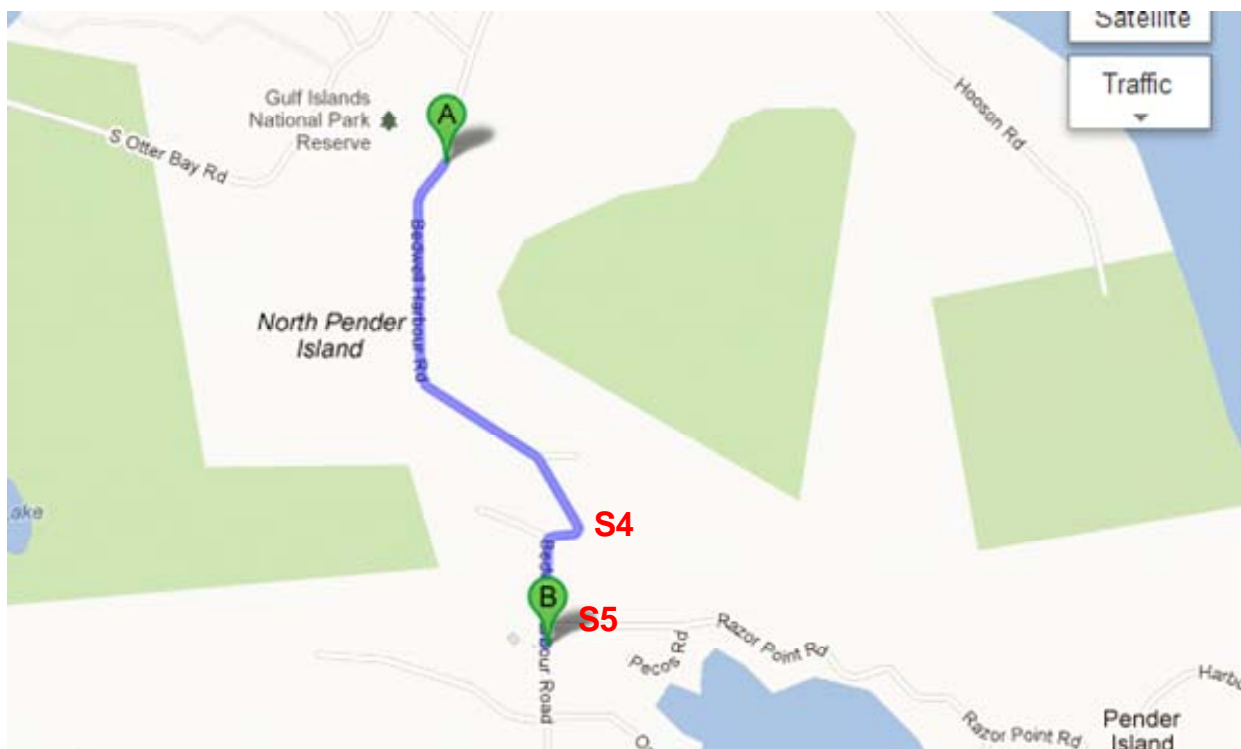
2. The junction of Otter Bay Road and South Otter Bay Road (S2) where a steep downhill is combined with a sharp left hand curve which affords poor visibility. The hazard is compounded by the presence of the driveway to Gulf Islands Excavating near the junction and thus the frequent presence of mud or gravel on the road as well as the frequent exit of trucks.



3. Although not directly on the Otter Bay – Magic lake transportation corridor the section of road from the Otter Bay Road-Bedwell Harbor Road intersection directly opposite the Community Hall northeastward to the Community Library, Play Group and Nu to You as well as the Community Church represents an area of real concern. (S3) This area is it is a community hub with considerable pedestrian traffic between these locations. In addition the extensive on road parking on market and Nu to You days obscures the shoulder and make pedestrian traffic especially hazardous. We propose the construction of a designated spur trail linking the Community Hall to the Library, Nu to You, Playgroup and Church.



#### Community Hall to Driftwood Center:



4. The fourth area of safety concern is Einer's hill (S4). This acute angled bend to the west occurs on a steep hill with poor visibility for motorists and cyclists. In addition the road surface is not ideally cambered for the descending right hand turn increasing the possibility that cyclists well stray into the oncoming lane. An additional hazard is contributed by the occasional presence of fine gravel on the road with makes it particularly dangerous. In addition to wider shoulders and





marked bike lanes a potential solution to this hazard is a proposed by-pass following an historic Ministry of Highways right of way which skirts around the west end of the Liberto Rd (Hastings) airstrip, and crosses a corner of Parks Canada land to join the main road beside the Driftwood Center.

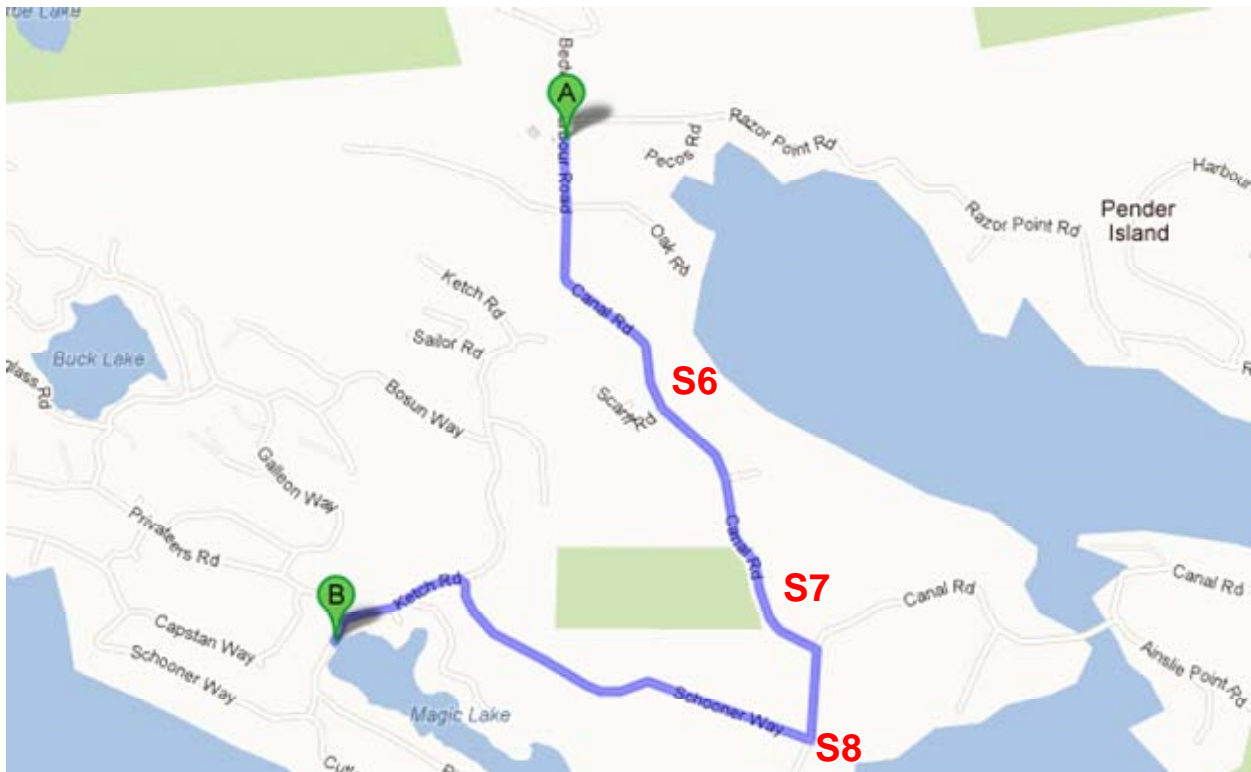


5. S5 refers to the safety concerns posed by the fast moving traffic in front of the Driftwood Center. Cars pulling out of the parking lots, pedestrians crossing the road and livestock are at risk in this busy area. In addition to the cycle lanes, potential solutions are to include pedestrian cross walks, speed bumps and/or a pedestrian activated red light.





## Driftwood Center to Magic Lake Estates:



6. Scarf hill (S6) is an area of concern. The hill is steep especially heading south west and has a narrow shoulder and a blind corner. Cyclists climbing the hill frequently wobble into the traffic lane and it is especially hazardous when a group of cyclists are on the hill. The hill is also a big barrier for pedestrians who don't like being hemmed in between traffic and the cliff. There is also a dangerous lack of visibility for those coming down the hill moving northeast particularly at constricted curves.

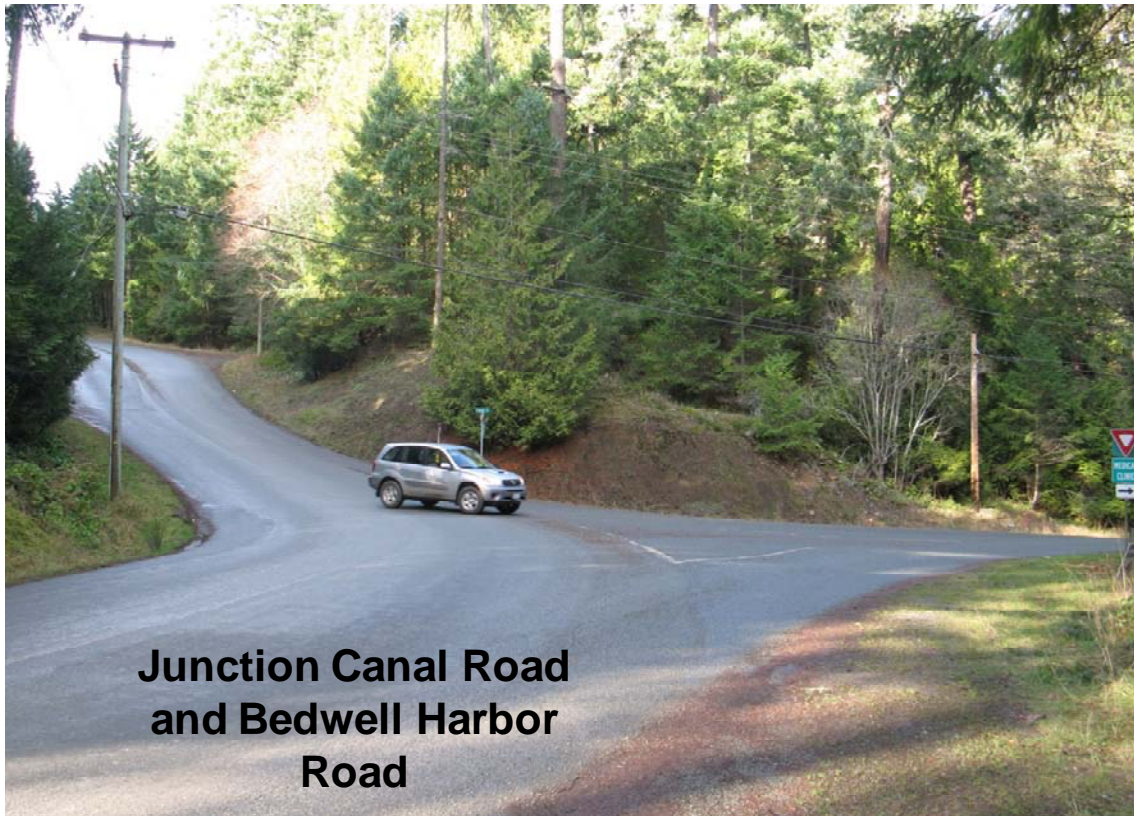




SCARF HILL

7. The next hazardous area (S7) is the three way junction where Canal Road meets Bedwell Harbor Road and turns left toward the School, Medical Center and South Pender Island. Visibility for those making a left turn is severely restricted and the whole intersection is on a slope. Proximity to the school increases the chances of encountering children on foot or bicycle. This is probably the most hazardous corner on the Island, not only for cyclists and pedestrians but also for motorists. Besides the cycle/pedestrian path, stop signs, cross walks, speed bumps or other traffic calming measures need to be considered.

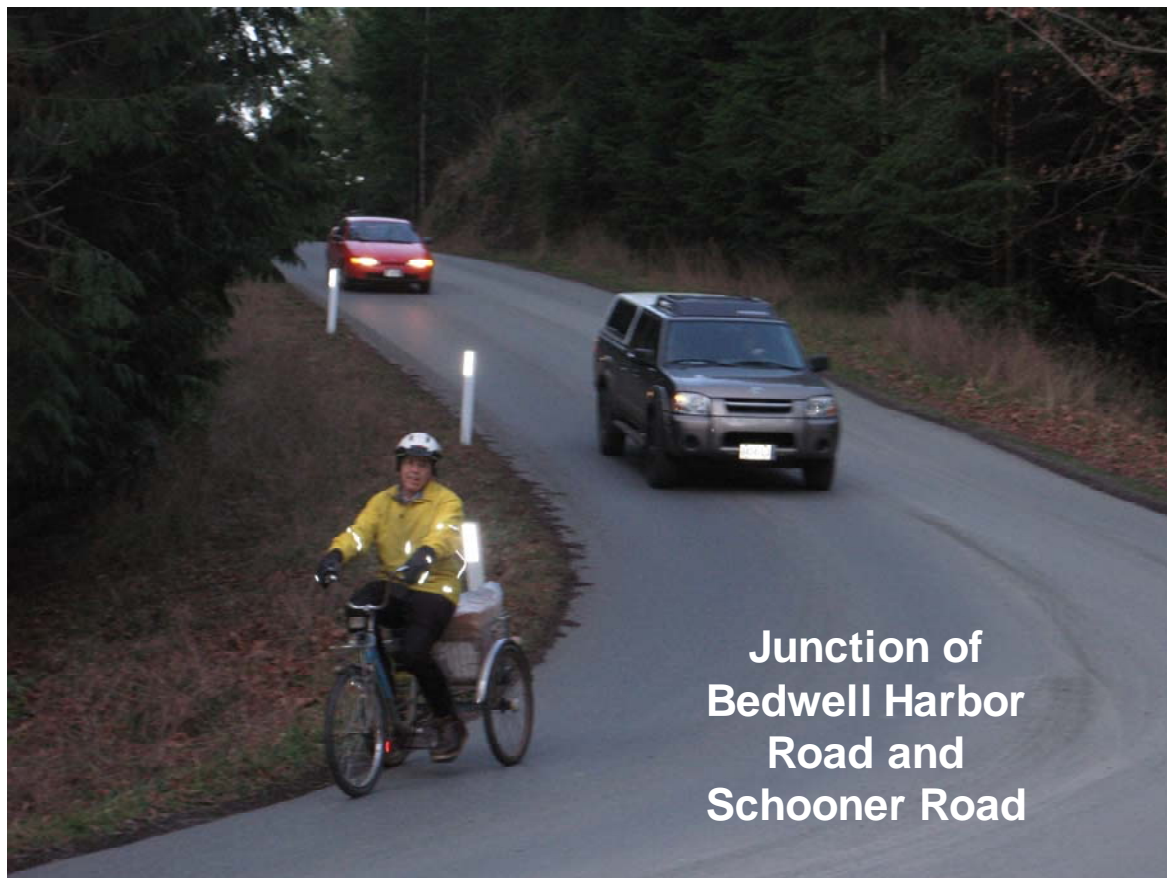




8. The final hazard on the Magic Ferry Route is the sharp corner at the bottom of the hill beyond the South Pender turn off where Aldrige road meets Schooner Road (S8). Poor visibility, insufficient camber, steep slope, acute corner and occasionally loose material on the road make this a dangerous section of the route for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists.







### **Off-road cycling and pedestrian trails**

Although bike lanes located on the road-shoulder bike lanes are preferred by some cyclists, many other cyclists and most pedestrians prefer to have trails that are further removed from traffic. It is proposed that, in addition to the road-shoulder cycling lanes, consideration should be given to construction of an off-road hard-surface trail along portions of the route. For example:

- a. Between the Community Hall and the Library/Nu to You/Playgroup
- b. Around Einer's Hill using the existing Ministry of Highways right of way (Alice – Church)
- c. Earl's trail connecting the Driftwood Center to Browning Harbor
- d. Between the Canal Road – Bedwell Harbor Road junction and the School leading to Magic Lake or at least the Medicine Beach market where older children go at lunch