

GET ACTIVE WITSET



Active Transportation Network Plan | **2021**



WITSET FIRST NATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge that the Witset Active Transportation Network Plan is on the Laksilyu Clan territory of the Witsuwit'en First Nation. Thank you to Witset community members, Witset First Nation staff and the Project Committee for supporting and helping to create this plan.

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GET ACTIVE TOP 6

Here are a few of Witset's top projects to support residents in choosing active forms of travel more often.



1. HIGHWAY CONNECTOR TRAIL

A separated multi-use trail along Highway 16 from Two Mile to the canyon provides a safe alternative to walking & biking on the Highway.



2. INTERSECTION UPGRADES

Intersection improvements and a new crossing at the north end of Beaver Road addresses identified safety concerns, especially those traveling with children.



3. TRAILS TO THE LAKE

New trails provide a way for residents to get to the lake and completes the Perimeter Trail loop.



4. SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks along Beaver Rd. & Grace Lane offers a safe and convenient way for residents to access community services & recreation facilities.



5. SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Lighting & secure bike storage are ways to address expressed safety concerns. Design of future projects to incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles.



6. TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Trail maintenance is needed on existing trails. Organizing a trails club is one way to formalize this work and access funding.

1. ABOUT THIS PROJECT

The purpose of the Witset Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP) is to establish a long-term vision for active transportation for the community of Witset. The aim is to support Witset residents to increasingly choose active forms of transportation that are safe, fun and convenient.

A safe, connected, and accessible community network, and an increase in active transportation, won't happen on its own; it needs to be planned. Planning now creates future opportunities for infrastructure development that will support healthy habits and lifestyles for Witset residents, today and in the future. A plan will also help the community qualify for infrastructure and program funding opportunities and support future Witset First Nation and partner projects.

WHY ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION?

The community of Witset faces considerable health challenges, including high levels of diabetes and obesity. The community also faces many health-related social challenges such as alcohol use and lateral violence.

Witset First Nation is taking strides to address these challenges, increase support services and coordinate with other programs. Witset has identified supporting healthy minds and bodies as key to overcoming health and health-related social challenges, as well as strengthening the community and Nation as a whole.

Being active can improve the physical and mental health of Witset residents. It's also good for the environment and can have economic benefits.

FOCUS AREA

This plan focuses on four main reserves that make up Witset Village:

- Moricetown Reserve 1
- Coryatsqua 2
- Babine 17
- Bulkley River 19

Witset's other three reserves are not included as they are largely undeveloped and removed from the village area.

WHAT IS ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION?

Active transportation is **using your own power** to get from one place to another. Active transportation is...

- 1 Human-powered & **non-motorized**
- 2 Good for **mental & physical health**
- 3 Many different **activities**:



walking



biking



pushing a stroller



skiing



swimming



skateboarding



running

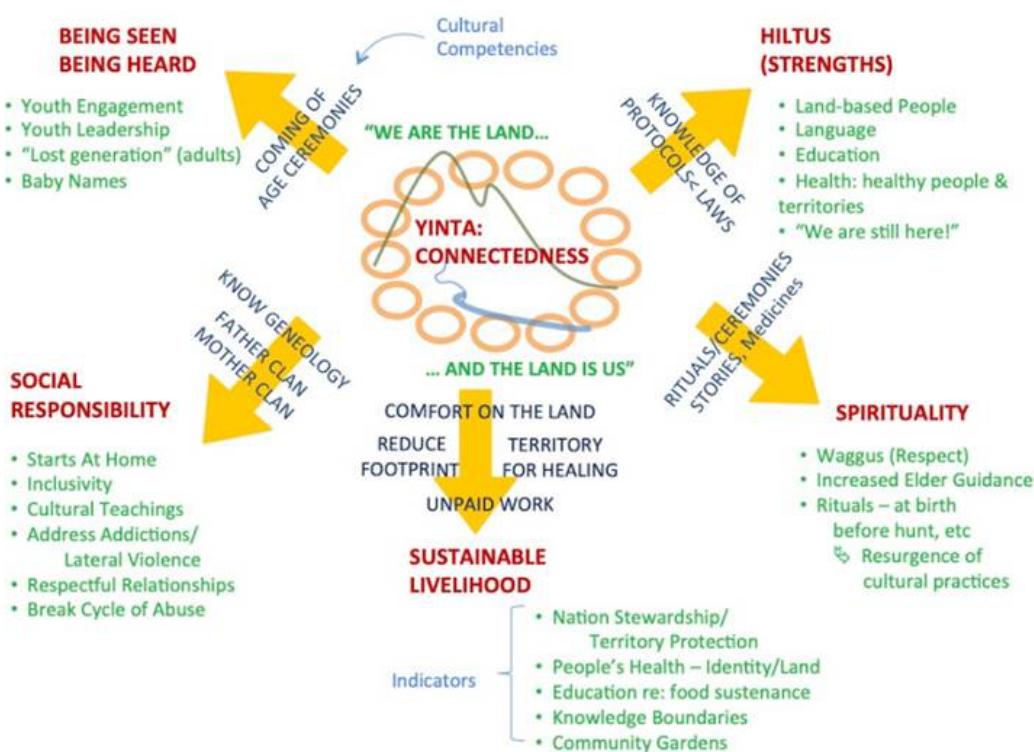


paddling

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

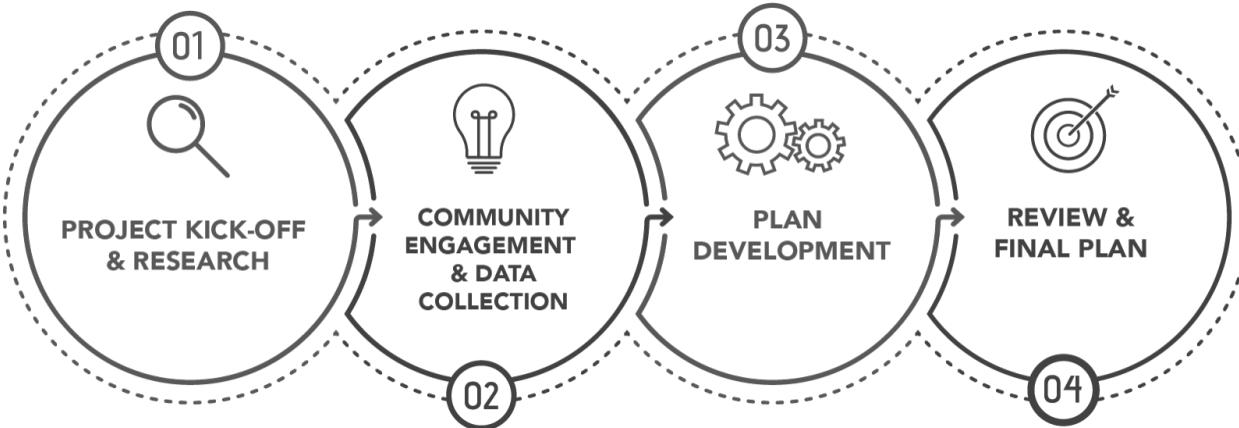
The plan development process was shaped by the Wet'suwet'en Holistic Wellness Conceptual Framework to ensure respectful cultural protocols and practices were followed. The Framework identifies the elements of wellness for the Wet'suwet'en Nation and was used to guide the overall approach of the planning process. This included:

- Obtaining permissions from the Laksilyu Clan, the traditional territory holders, at project on-set and prior to the community engagement, particularly the House of the Flat Rock.
- Meeting with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en early in the project process to discuss culturally significant areas and traditional protocols.
- Participation of Laksilyu spokesperson on the Project Committee.



Source: Office of the Wet'suwet'en

The plan was developed in four distinct phases, in just under a year. This included:



Project Phase

Activities Completed

1. Project Kick-Off & Research

Marked start of the project. Engaged with traditional territory holders Laksilyu Clan prior to the launch of wider community engagement.

- Project Committee Meeting #1
- Office of the Wet'suwet'en Meeting
- Laksilyu Clan Permissions
- Background Documents Review

2. Community Engagement & Data Collection

Engaged with Witset community and collected available information to understand the current situation and areas for improvements.

- Project Committee Meeting #2
- Community Interviews
- Community Survey
- Photos & Videos
- Gathering of Statistics

3. Plan Development

Created a draft plan and maps. Completed field work to locate trails and routes. Assessed current situation and key community features.

- Engagement Summary
- Network Development Draft
- Field Work

4. Community Review & Final Plan

Community and project committee reviewed draft plan. Finalized and submitted plan to Witset First Nation.

- Project Committee Meeting #3
- Laksilyu Clan & Community Review
- Plan Revisions
- Final Plan Submission

This plan connects with and builds on other planning projects and studies completed by Witset First Nation. For a summary of those projects, and a better understanding of the planning and policy context in which this plan was developed, see Appendix A.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement provided a way to better understand existing conditions in Witset and ideas for future improvements to better support active travel in the Village. This included:

13

Project Committee Members
were the “eyes & ears” of the process by providing local insights & guidance.

94

Survey Responses

Witset residents & visitors took the Get Active Witset Survey as a way to share their experiences with active transportation in the community. A \$100 gift card was offered as a prize.

9

Images Shared

Residents submitted photos & videos from around the village to show areas they like going to and areas they'd like to see improved

6

Youth Workshop Participants

I Count youth shared their ideas on activities they currently enjoy, changes they'd like to see & their big ideas for the future.

20

One-on-One Interviews

Interviews with representatives from local organizations, groups & agencies helped understand the needs, challenges & future opportunities for development of an active network in Witset.

61

Draft Plan Comments

Residents provided feedback both in-person (36) and on social media (25) on the projects they'd like to see happen first in Witset.

A variety of community engagement activities provided a better understanding of the current situation in Witset.

- For results from a community survey, see Appendix B.
- For results from one-on-one interviews, see Appendix C.
- For results from a youth workshop, see Appendix D.
- For results from the community review event, see Appendix E.

2. CURRENT SITUATION

Witset is a Witsuwit'en village located in northwest British Columbia within the traditional territory of the Laksilyu Clan. Situated along the Witzin Kwah (Bulkley River), Witset is located on Highway 16, approximately 30 kms northwest of Smithers and 32 kms southeast of Hazelton. Witset First Nation (formerly known as Moricetown Band) has approximately 2,000 members, 655 of which live on-reserve.

The current village of Witset was formally built in the early 1900s and is classified as a First Nation Reserve. The canyon, a distinct geographic feature where the Witzin Kwah narrows, has long been a sacred gathering area and traditional fishing place for the Witsuwit'en for thousands of years.

GEOGRAPHY

Witset is a rural, linear community. Four of its seven reserves make up Witset's main village, which is 9.5 km² (555 ha) in size. These four reserves are clustered along Highway 16 with the Widzin Kwah (Bulkley River) running through the eastern edge of the Village and a CN rail line running through the west. Highway 16 runs through the centre of the Village and is the common link that joins Witset's streets and neighbourhoods together.

The majority of Witset's land is residential with most of the village services and amenities concentrated in a hub along Beaver Road/Hwy 16. Nearby Tats'ik'a Bin Lake is a popular recreation area that has been upgraded in recent years.

Witset has a four-season climate. Winters are cold and snowy with temperatures sometimes going below -20. Summers are warm, with average highs of 22 degrees Celsius. Daylight hours are short in the winter and long in the summer.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Witset is home to approximately 655 registered, on-reserve members. This is just over 30% of Witset's total registered members. Witset's census data and other information supplied by Witset First Nation, point to some of the current demographics that influence transportation choices and travel patterns in Witset.



Witset is a **young community**. Residents 0 to 19 years old make up 30% (195) of all residents living on-reserve. Because of their age, none of these residents can drive independently.



Witset's residents are also **getting older**. 11% (55) of on-reserve residents are the age of 65 – more than double the amount in 2006 (3%). Elders aged 65 years and older account for 9% of Witset's total population.



Witset's population has **grown** by 7.6% in 10 years - from 590 in 2006 to 635 in 2016. Population growth is expected to continue, influenced by the availability of housing and local employment.



Major community **economic drivers** are tourism, forestry, education and health services. Witset has invested in the Witset Health Centre, Kyah Wiget Education Society (KWES), Museum & RV Park/Campground, Kyahwood (currently closed), Kyah Food & Fuel, and Indigenous Bloom.

NETWORK BY NUMBERS

Witset currently has little developed infrastructure to support active transportation choices as shown below and on the Existing Conditions Map. **Of significant note is that no pedestrian or cycling infrastructure currently exists.**

Paved Local Roads **3 km**

Gravel Local Roads **15.6 km**

Provincial Highway **4.7 km**

Community Trails **5.5 km**

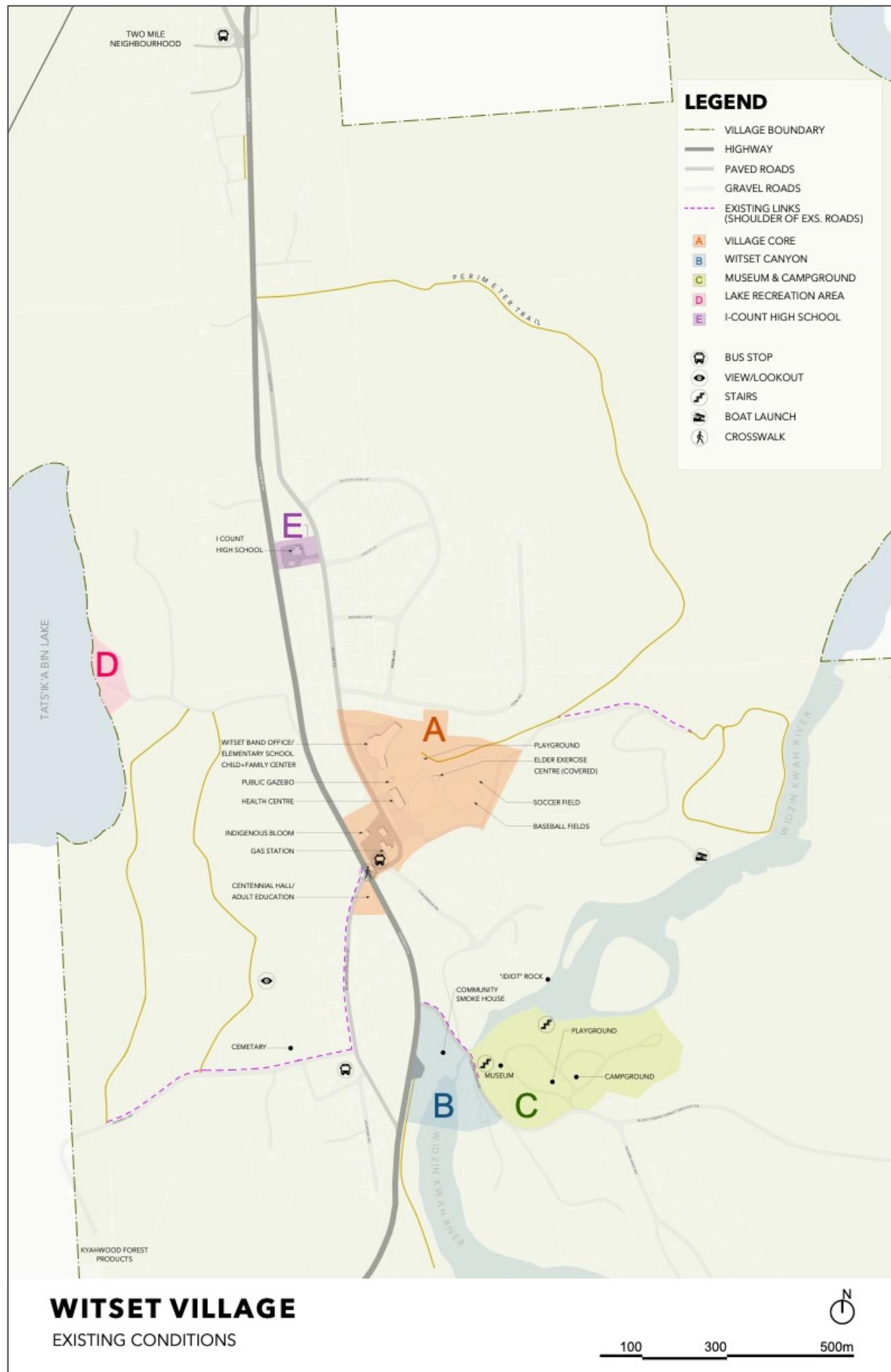
Pedestrian Infrastructure **0 km**

Cycling Infrastructure **0 km**

Highway Pedestrian Crossing **1**

Canyon Stairs **2**

Bus Stops **3**



COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS

Witset has five main community destination areas: Village Core, Witset Canyon, Museum & Campground, Tats'ik'a Bin Lake Recreation Area and I Count High School.

1. VILLAGE CORE

- **Multiplex** – Houses the Witset administration, elementary school, early childhood programs, Council chambers, community Feast Hall, gym, community kitchen, and other facilities.
- **Health Centre** – Houses a variety of health services and programs for community members as well as home care programs for individuals with chronic injuries or illnesses.
- **Centennial Hall** – Houses Kyah Wiget Education Society's Adult Education programs. Used as community gathering space outside of class hours.
- **Kyah Food & Fuel** – Offers variety of groceries and other products, gas, and automotive supplies. Houses a restaurant, outdoor patio and pay at the pump system.
- **Sports Facilities** – Includes two baseball diamonds, playground, covered outdoor exercise area, soccer field, and bleachers for viewing annual Mud Races.

2. RIVER & CANYON

- **Widzin Kwah** (Bulkley River) & Witset Canyon – Is an area of cultural significance and community gathering area, fishing spot and tourist attraction. Includes:
 - Unofficial access trails, mostly around the canyon
 - Community smoke house
 - Laksilyu Clan smoke house
 - Fishing areas
 - Highway rest stop and viewing area (with washrooms & handicraft building)

3. MUSEUM & CAMPGROUND

- **Widzin Kwah Canyon House Museum**– Includes displays, artifacts and small gift shop that sells arts and crafts made by community members.

- **RV Park & Campground** – Is a serviced 40-site RV Park with a campground regularly used for community events and gatherings. Includes accessible bathrooms and picnic tables, office, and children's playground.
- **Stairs** – Two sets of stairs exist. Canyon Stairs provide fishing access to the river from the campground. Recently constructed Witset Stairs, a popular place to exercise, provides pedestrian link from Canyon Bridge to Museum.

4. LAKE RECREATION AREA

- **Tats'ik'a Bin Lake** – Is a popular swimming and community use area. Includes covered shelter, picnic tables, garbages, and a dock.

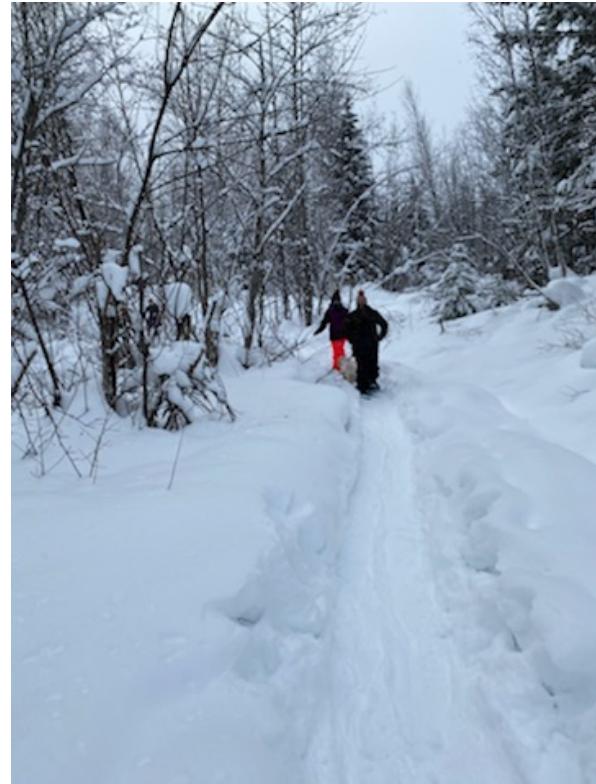
5. I HIGH SCHOOL

- **I Count High School** – Located on the North end of Beaver Road.

COMMUNITY TRAILS

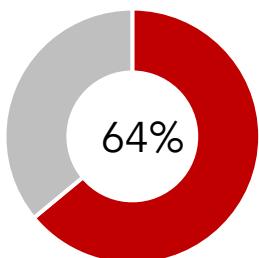
A variety of informal community-built and community-maintained trails throughout Witset are popular amongs walkers, snowshoers and bikers.

- Perimeter Trail (2.2 km) – Runs from Witset Elementary to end of Beaver Road. Used for hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.
- Lake Trail (2.3 km) – Runs to and from Lake Road to Sawmill Road with a lookout point overseeing the village. Maintenance and improvements are needed to remove obstructing trees and remedy low-lying swampy areas.
- River View Trail (1 km loop) - Located south of gravel pit. Offers nice ridge view of Widzin Kwah (Bulkley River).

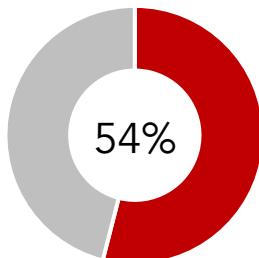


GETTING AROUND

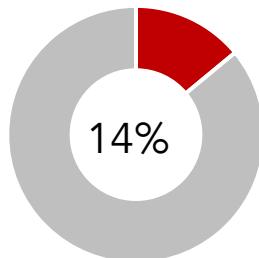
According to 2016 census data, Witset residents have the following **commuting patterns**:



DRIVE TO
WORK



DRIVE 15 MIN OR
LESS TO WORK



WALK TO
WORK

Many Witset residents reported they enjoy walking in the community, especially on the community-built trails. Many children have bikes, yet don't ride them due to the lack of safety and security. High school students also have access to mountain bikes through the I Count High School and enjoy biking on the informal trails for recreation.

Many Witset residents indicated the following specific safety concerns when walking or biking in the community:

- **Crossing Highway 16** at Beaver Road (both ends), especially with young children.
- Kids / youth **walking along Highway 16** (Route is clear of snow in the winter.)
- **Off-leash dogs** in residential areas.
- **Lack of lighting** and poor visibility.

Between 2015 and 2020, ICBC reported¹ three vehicle crashes in Witset. Two were at Highway 16 and Beaver Road and the other at Beaver Road and Seaton View Road. One of the crashes (Beaver Rd / Hwy 16) involved a collision with a pedestrian but did not result in a fatality or casualty. Near misses with pedestrians and vehicles do not get reported.

¹ ICBC Crash Statistics. Accessed from: <https://www.icbc.com/about-icbc/newsroom/pages/Statistics.aspx>

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

While community input was diverse, several **overarching themes** emerged from the community engagement activities. Below is a summary of the current strengths and challenges.



STRENGTHS

- Diversity of **programs** related to health, wellness & culture.
- Good use of **existing infrastructure**, such as the stairs & community trails.
- Close-knit **community**.
- Walking, biking & playing sports are **popular activities**.
- **Unique assets** that are centrally located, such as the lake & river.
- Creation of a **Dog Bylaw** with education & enforcement approach under development.



CHALLENGES

- Overall **lack of infrastructure** & amenities in the village to support active travel.
- **Safety concerns** include walking along Highway 16, crossing the highway, off-leash dogs & wildlife.
- **Social barriers** & lack of mental health **supports** to encourage healthy living.
- Concerns for **youth**, such as internet / **gaming use** & loss of **traditional** ways.
- Limited organizational **capacity** & **aging** infrastructure.

COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Through a community survey, 94 residents shared their experiences and reflections on using active transportation in Witset. Below are a few highlights: See Appendix B for all the survey results.

Top Activities



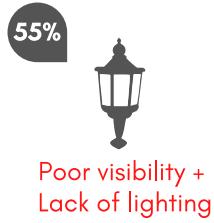
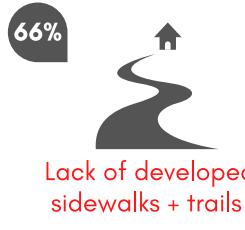
Top Motivators

- 1 Health + Fitness (67%)
- 2 Spend time with friends + family (54%)
- 3 Fun (52%)

Top Destinations



Top Barriers



Top Improvements

83%

MORE SIDEWALKS
+ TRAILS

+

66%

IMPROVE LIGHTING

+

50%

HWY 16 CROSSING
UPGRADES

3. FUTURE VISION

This section sets the long-term vision for a future active transportation network, facilities and supporting recommendations in Witset. This plan and project vision aim to address identified challenges and reflect community priorities. The vision was shaped by feedback and direction from community, the Project Committee and Witset staff.

VISION

"Witset's non-motorized, multi-use network supports residents in safely getting to where they need to go. It is designed for everyone – from children to elders – to improve physical and mental well-being, and to strengthen connections with each other, our land and our culture."

KEY DIRECTIONS

Witset's active transportation network is designed to build the essential infrastructure necessary to improve safety, create connectivity and support a diversity of users. Key foundational directions shaping the network plan are:



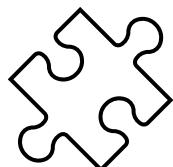
1. SAFE OPTIONS

Infrastructure provides residents with safe & connected active travel choices.



2. MULTI-USE FOCUS

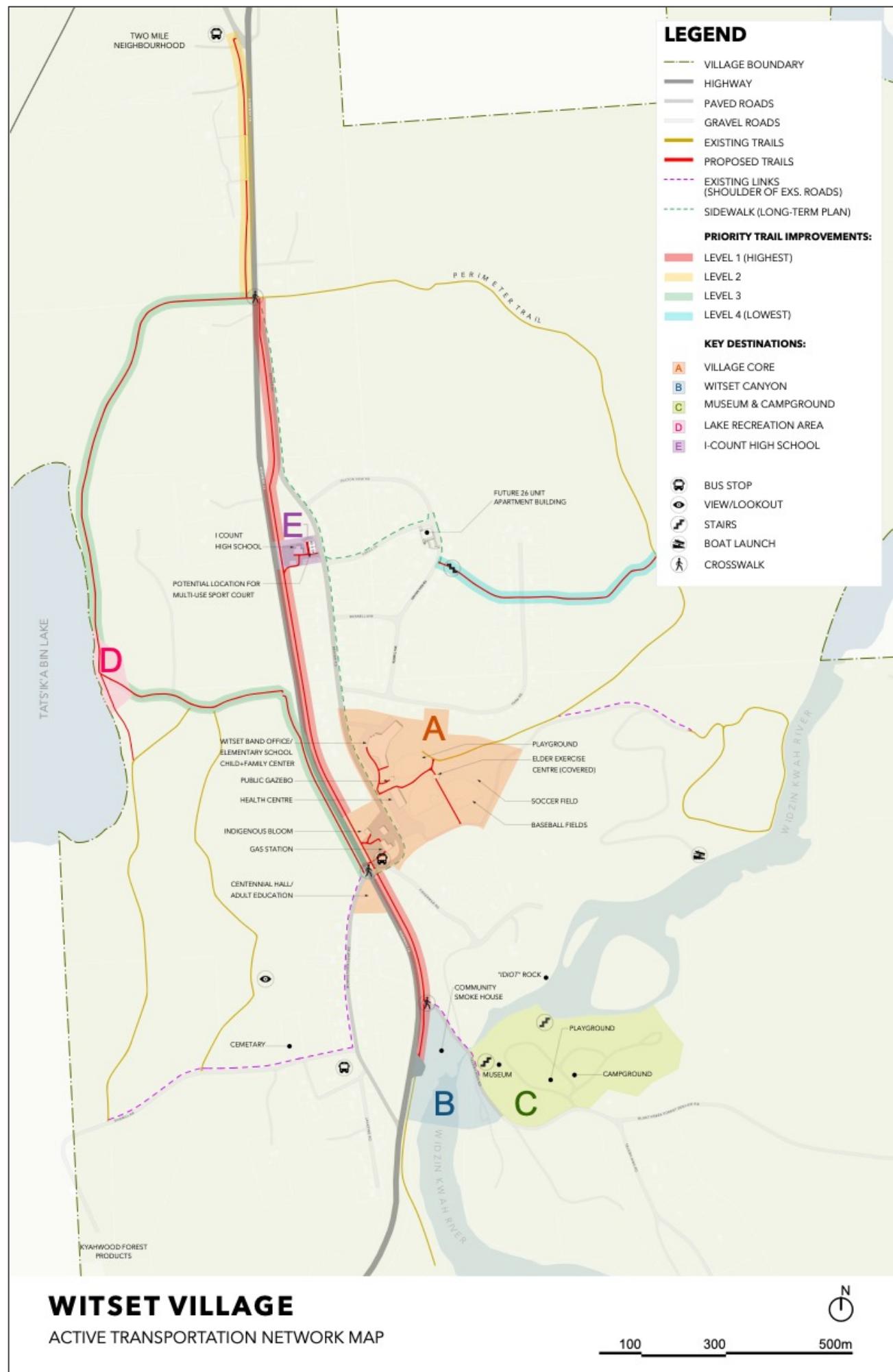
Infrastructure benefits a wide variety of non-motorized users.



3. STRATEGIC

Investments build foundation of a community network & enhance local capacity.

The Active Transportation Network Map illustrates the overall future network in Witset.



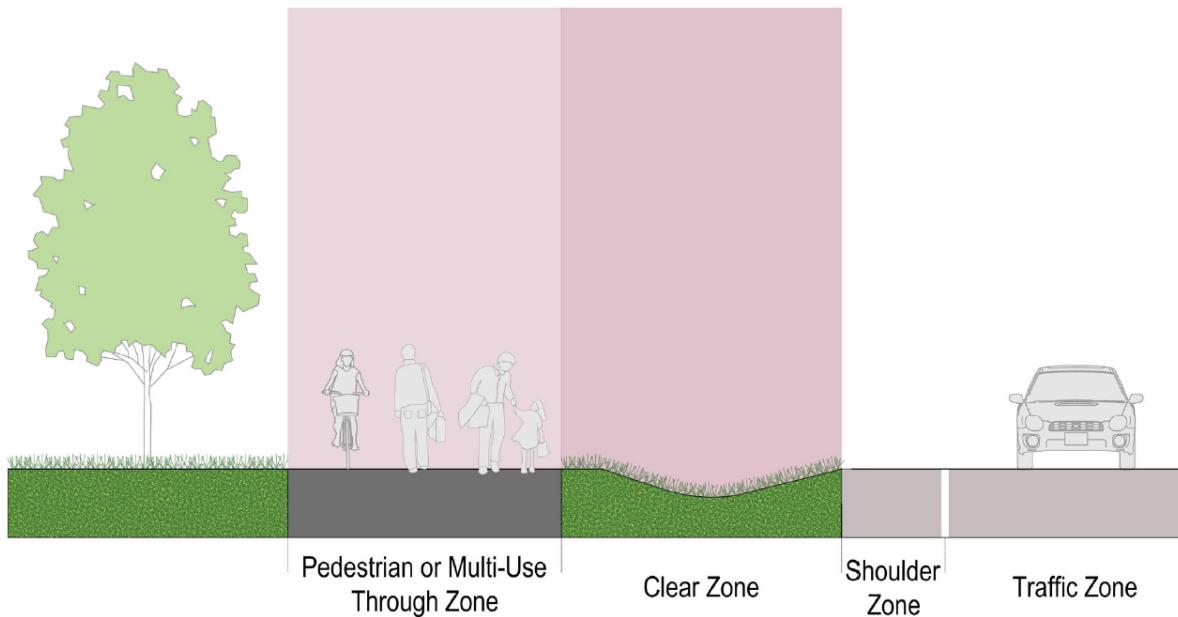
Network Facilities

The proposed new network facilities include multi-use trails, sidewalks and Highway 16 crossing improvements that build off Witset's existing community trails and travel patterns. Facilities are summarized below.

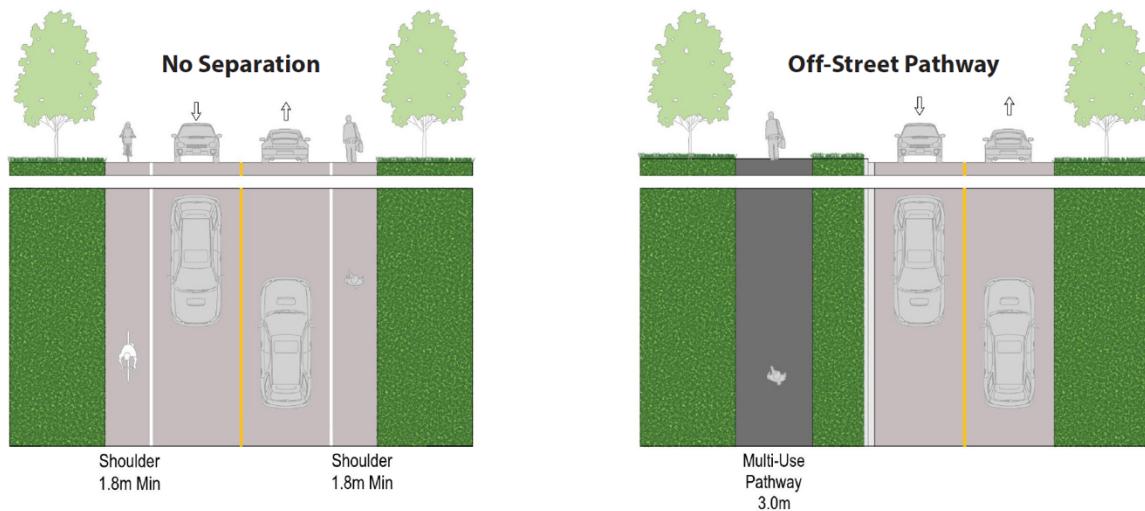
Facility	Description	Why This?
Highway 16 Connector Trail	Separated trail adjacent to Highway 16 that connects Two Mile & Witset Canyon (2.4 km).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links north & south Witset. • Safe alternative to walking & biking on Highway.
Highway 16 Crossing Improvements	Includes enhancing safety of existing pedestrian crossing at Beaver Road & Highway 16, as well as a new crossing at the north end of Beaver Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses top area of concern for residents, especially those with young children. • Second crossing provides more options & safe crossing.
Lake Trail & Perimeter Trail Extension	Two new trails to access the Lake recreation area from both the south (0.95 km) and north (1.15 km). This also serves as an extension to the existing Perimeter Trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key link to a community recreation area. • Potential for trail expansion, such as mountain bike trails. • Potential site of future Healing Lodge.
Amenity Links	New trails provide links to I Count, Village core (internal connections) & Russel Ave – Perimeter Trail (0.58 km). This includes new stairs connecting Seaton View Road and Park Ave and a replacement of the existing campground stairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves internal site movement and accessibility for all ages (i.e. access to gazebo, exercise equipment). • Provides connections to larger trail network.
Beaver Road & Grace Lane Sidewalk	New separated multi-use sidewalk along Beaver Road (1.5 km) and Grace Lane (0.4 km).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides safe option for residents to access the Village Core, schools & sports infrastructure. • Links to future 26-unit housing project.

A key feature of Witset's network is on multi-use trails. The benefits of focusing on multi-use infrastructure is that its versatile (can be used by all non-motorized users) and provides a high degree of safety due to the physical separation from the road.

Separated Multi-Use Trail Example



Separed Multi-Use Trail Over Walkable Shoulder



SUPPORTING RECOMMENDATIONS

The design of future facilities should strive to meet the recommendations of the BC Active Transportation Design Guide. The below elements should also be considered along with the physical network facilities:

1. SECURE BIKE STORAGE

Many Witset residents identified the need for secure bike storage at community destinations around the Village. The below bike racks adhere to current best practices regarding performance criteria and generally work for all types of bikes.

RECOMMENDED RACK TYPES	NOTES
Inverted U (also called loop or staple rack) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can support two bikes per rack• Can be installed alone or in a series on rails• Many variations available• Can be efficiently located
Post & Ring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can support two bikes per rack• Can be efficiently located

2. AMENITIES

Amenities along routes, and at destinations, can help enhance the comfort and function of the network. Examples of amenities that support active transportation include benches, picnic tables, garbage receptacles, drinking fountains, with consideration given to users of all ages and abilities.

There was also strong community support for new accessible walkways connecting the Band Office, gazebo, Health Centre and exercise area and upgrades to the existing playground

structure. The construction of a new accessible walking track around soccer field also received strong support as a safe, visible walking area for residents.

3. SIGNAGE

Signage allows trail users to navigate the network and helps prevent potential conflicts between users, the environment, and other potential hazards. Signage also helps communicate important details of the intended use and difficulty of certain trails. Signs can remind users of rules and etiquette they should follow, as well as provide cultural learning opportunities.

The need for signs to raise awareness of the existing community trails in Witset was identified by many residents. Signage types to consider are:

SIGN TYPE	PURPOSE	PLACEMENT	COMPONENTS
Trailhead Kiosk & Directional	Kiosks provide information to trail users regarding safety, the environment, etiquette, and wayfinding while directional signs indicate direction, level of difficulty and permitted user types.	Trailheads / Intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area map • Safety information • Trail etiquette • Terrain information • Cultural information • Trail name, direction, difficulty & users
Property	To alert users when they are crossing a property line.	Where trail crosses property lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small information sign
Interpretive	Points out important historical, environmental, or cultural information at special points of consideration.	Points of special consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretive content
Warning	Provides information about potential hazards or trail etiquette.	At hazards, busy roads, trailheads / intersections, as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning information

4. LIGHTING

Lighting is important to identify potential hazards and ensure that users are visible to each other and to motor vehicle traffic at intersections and crossings. Providing well-lit multi-use facilities can help make a facility safe and comfortable in all seasons and at all times of day.

Note, however, that providing lighting along the length of a multi-use trail can be cost prohibitive and may require additional maintenance. As such, Witset can consider ‘future proofing’ facilities for lighting in strategic locations, such as the Highway Connector Trail between Beaver Road north and south and at future pedestrian crossings.

5. CRIME PREVENTION

It’s possible to prevent crime through design. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is an approach to crime prevention that uses design elements and management of the built and natural environment to create safer areas. Considerations include vegetation management, site lines and connectivity. Integrating CPTED principles at the project design stage helps prevent crime and other potential safety-related challenges.

6. MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of any new facility is an important consideration at all stages of network development. Currently, Witset does not maintain any of the community trails or have the required equipment to maintain them - for example, snow clearing and trail sweeping equipment. Future new facilities should consider the desired level of service, an associated budget, and establish maintenance procedures. This would clearly define which trails will be maintained, how and how often. The Highway Connector and future Beaver Road & Grace Lane sidewalks are facilities that would benefit from regular upkeep, including snow removal, to maximize year-round use.

7. EDUCATION & ENCOURAGEMENT

While the network plan focuses on the physical infrastructure, programs to educate and encourage active transportation are an important part in creating a more active community. Witset is already taking great strides towards this through the Health Centre and local programming. Other ideas to build on this work are:

- Involve youth in skill development & trail planning / construction, such as participating in the Indigenous Youth Mountain Bike Program.

- Work with RCMP on dog safety & establish reporting protocols, such as using an app-based reporting tool, such as Civic Labs.
- Create a “walking school bus” neighbourhood program.
- Host trail building / maintenance clinics, bike maintenance clinic.
- Sponsor community driven and lead initiatives, where community members champion the activity, they want to do and work with a program coordinator to bring their idea to life.
- Create active lifestyle incentives, where prizes are earned for achieving health goals. (i.e. new pair of running shoes after 4 weeks of consistent walking or running)
- Offer workshops to parents on how to monitor your child’s internet usage and combat online gaming addiction.
- Create a lending library where community members can sign out equipment such as basketballs, paddleboards, toddler toys, etc.

8. COMMUNITY TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Many residents indicated they use and enjoy the existing informal network of community-built and maintained trails throughout Witset. It was also pointed out that many of the trails need maintenance to clear brush, remove fallen trees. In addition, some trails, like those between Sawmill Road and Lake Road, are not accessible year-round use. To improve the existing community trails the following is recommended:

- Complete a Trail Assessment of all existing community trails, including re-routes, as required.
- Encourage the formation of a volunteer trails club, which would participate in the assessment and future upkeep of the trails, including accessing funding.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Below are first step actions and associated priorities to move Witset towards creating an active transportation network necessary to improve safety, create connectivity and support a diversity of users.

PRIORITY 1 ACTIONS	WHO'S INVOLVED
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete a conceptual design followed by detailed design & construction (Phase 1) for:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highway Connector Trail between Beaver Road North to Witset Canyon.• Lake Trail between Beaver Road intersection to start of Lake Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Witset FN• Consultant• MOTI• Utility Companies• Community• Office of the Wet'suwet'en• Laksilyu Clan
<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Work with Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share findings of the Get Active Witset Plan.• Upgrade the existing Highway pedestrian crossing to improve safety.• Develop a new pedestrian crossing with lighting at the north end of Beaver Road and explore the feasibility of a new crossing at Lake Road.• Reduce Highway vehicle speed from 70 km/hr to 50 km/hr beginning at Two Mile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Witset FN• MOTI
<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Host a community meeting to gauge interest in forming a volunteer trails club to oversee an assessment of the existing community trails, prioritize improvements & explore available funding resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Witset FN• Health Centre• Trail Users• Community
<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Supply & install bike racks at key community destinations, including elementary school, I Count, Witset First Nation Administration, Health Centre, lake, gas bar, museum, canyon, ball fields & entrance to Idiot Rock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Witset FN• Community

<p>5. Develop a Wayfinding Trail Strategy, consistent with community branding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witset FN • Trail Users • Community Dev. • Consultant
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PRIORITY 2 ACTIONS	WHO'S INVOLVED
<p>6. Complete a Trail Feasibility Study for new Lake Trails (includes Perimeter Trail extension).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witset FN • Health Centre • Trail Users • Youth & community • Consultant
<p>7. Develop a conceptual design followed by detailed design and construction of the remainder of the Highway Connector Trail between Beaver Road North & Two Mile (Phase 2).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witset FN • MOTI • Consultant • Community
<p>8. Design & construct an accessible walking / running track around the soccer field as well as connections between the Band office, gazebo, Health Centre & covered exercise area that includes lighting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witset FN • Health Centre • Community • Consultant

PRIORITY 3 ACTIONS	WHO'S INVOLVED
<p>9. Replace the existing campground stairs to the Bulkley River.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witset FN • Laksilyu Clan
<p>10. Design & construct a separated multi-use sidewalk along Beaver Road & Grace Lane.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witset FN • Consultant • Community
<p>11. Plan, design & construct a trail connecting Park Ave to the Perimeter Trail that includes new stairs connecting Park Ave and Seaton View.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witset FN • Consultant • Community

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

The timelines to construct the facilities depends on Witset First Nation's priorities, capacity, and available funding. Below is a high-level overview of a 10-year implementation schedule based on active transportation being a high priority of Witset First Nation.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE										
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
1. Highway Trail (Phase 1)											
2. Highway crossing upgrades											
3. Trail club community meeting											
4. Supply & install bike racks											
5. Wayfinding strategy											
6. Lake Trails Feasibility Study											
7. Highway Trail (Phase 2)											
8. Walking track and connections											
9. Campground stair replacement											
10. Beaver Rd / Grace Ln. sidewalk											
11. Park Av. to Perimeter Trail											

POST IMPLEMENTATION MAINTENANCE

Ongoing maintenance programs to accompany new facilities ensures infrastructure remains safe and comfortable for users. At a minimum, semi-annual maintenance should be conducted in the spring and fall to clean up debris and repair any damage that has occurred because of seasonal changes. As active transportation facilities will be new to the community, Witset band can:

- Include maintenance considerations & costs in all future planning and design phases.
- Develop maintenance standards for each trail throughout the seasons, such as surface quality & snow clearing. This includes choosing to purchase necessary equipment or contracting the service out.
- Establish inspection / maintenance schedule & tracking. Note that maintenance budgets are necessary to meet maintenance targets (or adjust maintenance targets to match budgets).

FUNDING STRATEGY

The following grant funding is currently available to support the next steps in the design and construction phases:

- Active Transportation Infrastructure Grant provides up to \$500,000 per project for indigenous governments for up to 80% of total eligible costs.
- Small Communities Fund provides funding for infrastructure projects to small communities, which includes Highway, roads, and innovative projects. First Nations projects located on-reserve are eligible if benefits extend beyond the reserve community.
- Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Covid-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream provides 100% eligible funding for active transportation projects up to a maximum of \$10,000,000. This includes parks, trails, multi-use paths, parks, and playgrounds.
- Enabling Accessibility Fund is a federal program that supports community accessibility improvement projects, including removing barriers to participating in activities, programs, services or employment. Streams are small projects (\$100,000 per project) and mid-size projects (up to 3 million).
- Northern Development Initiative Trust has a variety of programs related to economic development, community infrastructure and recreation.

Funding applications can be for stand-alone projects, or a value-added addition to applications already underway or in the future. For each application submitted, consideration should be given to staff capacity to manage the project and a project manager retained, as required. Examples are:

- Piggy-back trail network improvements as part of new projects, such as housing, new subdivision areas, Healing Lodge or the Canyon Revitalization Project.
- Integrate project management into funding applications to address organizational capacity constraints at both the design and construction phases.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESS

While the future network plan provides an overarching vision to guide future infrastructure development, key actions are necessary to move from planning to construction. In addition to this plan, other considerations, such as the following, are required for success.

- Collaborating with key agencies, such as the Health Centre, Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure & Office of the Wet'suwet'en.
- Honoring traditional protocols & permissions in conjunction with future planning and construction projects.
- Following Witset First Nation's Land Use Development Guidelines contained in the Community Land Use Plan regarding environmental and cultural protection.
- Maintaining open communication & dialogue with community members, property owners & Laksilyu Clan.
- Including project management and contract administration services in grant applications.
- Supporting local capacity building, such as mentorship, training & local employment opportunities.
- Communicating with the Witset maintenance department during all phases of infrastructure projects to determine whether the department has the capacity to maintain the constructed infrastructure or if planning is needed to prepare for changes in workload. This may include time to hire additional maintenance staff and / or obtaining new equipment and supplies.

APPENDIX A: Planning & Policy Context

In the past few years, Witset has completed many planning studies and projects that serve as the foundation for which this plan connects with and builds upon. The Witset ATNP is a vehicle to implement many of these policies and actions outlined in these broader frameworks. These include:

- **Witset Comprehensive Community Plan (2018).** Outlines Witset's future community vision, goals, and actions. Improving community health and wellbeing is a cornerstone of the plan. Road paving (improve access, reduce road dust / air quality, improve safety and aesthetics) and improving access to and into Takiga Lake to increase youth recreation options are identified as specific actions for improvement.
- **Witset Community Land Use Plan (2018).** The plan provides a framework for land use and development in Witset. The plan identifies areas for future housing growth, established development guidelines and a development review framework.
- **Witset Canyon Revitalization Project (current).** Witset is in the feasibility stage of a new facility to be constructed adjacent to the canyon that includes new washrooms, handicraft centre and viewing areas.
- **26-Unit Passive House Project (current).** Witset is currently working on a proposed 26-unit social housing project to be constructed on a vacant property located on Seaton Road.
- **Witset Healing Lodge (current).** Witset is in the pre-design stage for a Witset Healing Lodge focused on providing safe and accessible healing space for Indigenous youth. Community engagement is currently underway.

Witset does not have any greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction studies or plans in place. However, the benefits of residents choosing active transportation means people may drive less often, especially on short trips, leading to less emission. On a broader scale, Witset's ATNP aligns with the Province of BC's Active Transportation Plan by providing local solutions to support residents in choosing active transportation.

APPENDIX B: Survey Results

Results of the "Get Active Witset are provided below (percentages have been rounded).

Q1. Where do you live?

86%	Witset	14%	Elsewhere
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Q2. Which house do you belong to?

18%	Beaver House	6%	Sun House
15%	Not sure	4%	Dark House
11%	Grizzly House	2%	Thin House
11%	Where it Lies Blocking the Trail	1%	Birchbark House
8%	Owl House	1%	Eagle
7%	House of Many Eyes	1%	Not applicable
7%	House of Namoks	0%	House Beside the Fire
6%	House on Top of the Flat Rock	0%	House in the Middle of Many

Q3. How old are you?

7%	Under 20 years	29%	41 – 60 years
48%	21 – 40 years	17%	Over 60 years

Q4. What non-motorized activities do you currently enjoy doing in Witset?

93%	Walking / hiking	16%	Running
27%	Biking	15%	Cross Country Skiing
20%	Pushing a stroller	1%	Snow shoeing
		1%	Using a mobility device

Other:

- Soccer field games
- Passing baseball around outside the house in the summer
- Swimming
- Sledding
- Home activities
- Stairs by the bridge
- Stairs at canyon
- Skateboarding
- Snowshoeing
- Outside cleaning and traditional work

Q5. What motivates you to choose active travel?

67%	Health / fitness	16%	It's convenient
54%	Spend time with family / friends	13%	I do not drive or cannot drive
52%	It's fun	12%	Save money

Other:

- Love biking & hiking
- Learning to be more mobile
- Love to see these activities in our community
- Doctor's orders

Q6. When choosing active travel, where do you like to go?

50%	Bulkley River
46%	Participate in community events / ceremonies
43%	Shop at local stores
35%	Playgrounds / parks
34%	Collect berries / medicine / food
35%	Perimeter trail
24%	Hunting trails
27%	School / work
5%	Catch the Transit Bus

Other:

- Visit family
- Smithers because they have safe trails
- Just ride or walk along the highway
- To family
- Witset Lake
- Just for a ride
- Smithers perimeter trail - safer for kids
- Roads
- Can't walk too many dogs near community hall
- Walk in town
- Smoke house
- Walk to Canyon and love the steps up to the museum

Q7. What are the top challenges / barriers you face when choosing active travel in Witset?

66%	Lack of developed sidewalks or trails
60%	Off-leash dogs
55%	Poor visibility / lack of lighting
54%	Winter conditions (snow / ice)
50%	Wildlife
40%	Speed of cars
32%	General feeling unsafe
28%	Lack of sporting equipment or skills
24%	Poor condition of existing infrastructure
23%	Gaps in routes
21%	Crossing Highway 16
12%	ATVs or snow mobiles
9%	Distances too far
8%	Accessibility challenges

Other:

- No safe trails
- healing from an injury that prevents me from lengthy walks
- Need more trails. Some for atvs and people
- Possible intoxicated pedestrians
- Need a safe place for children n dogs maybe a dog park like smithers. A fenced area for children to be safe from rez dogs and strangers. A side road trail like Hazelton has. Street lights on all the streets. Sidewalks so people feel safe to walk even high fenced areas for safety from wild animals. Bring back spad n neutering for cats and dogs pretty expensive to get your dogs and cats fixed. Make it mandatory for people that

have animals roaming the village. Especially vicious dogs. Give out ride tickets for transportation to Smithers and back. Or even have our own transportation back and forth from Smithers, Hazelton n even Houston because a lot of Witset residences live there, BECAUSE Bus only leaves at certain times need later ones for people that work real earlie or later in the evening. A Elder companionship for walks and talks, that INCLUDE ALL Elders, (I remember our parents weren't included in any events for senior and travels) Now we are the ELDERS.. More play ground areas for children, so they DON'T have to walk all the way to school area to a play ground. Financial help for elders n low incomes people to get fences put around the houses for safely for their children n family pets, as dogs are getting injured or killed by speeding vehicles n mortorize machines, four wheelers, ATVS, motor cycles n skiddo's ect... especially for animals that are tied up outside residential areas 24/7. plus there should have a Designated areas for them to ride there machines as they NOT to riding n speeding around village, especially LATE at nite. Ride share programs as not everyone has a licence or a vehicle.

- Unsafe play grounds, needles found in the parks.
- Dogs, dogs, dogs, dogs
- Too many dogs
- Dust and mud
- Rez Dogs

Q8. Are there areas in Witset that you'd like to go but cannot access?

- Perimeter Trail
- Existing perimeter trail that was used in the past five years
- More trails around the lake would be awesome. Trails developed behind the campground would also be really nice. Also, a new loop to bring the perimeter trail back to the roads that does not cross private property.
- During the winter unable to enjoy the stairs as it is full of ice and snow. also cannot walk the highway because of snow conditions and on coming vehicles.
- I would love to walk the perimeter trail but afraid of wildlife.
- Need to know more of the trails and such, along the highway is so dangerous.
- Trails
- Perimeter trail
- Mountains around here
- The perimeter trail from ball field the Two Mile. Access is denied by a tenant living in a social house.
- Outdoor gym in winter / stairs at canyon in winter, Moricetown needs more trails and security at all times can't trust anyone these days. Lighting all around community there are places it's too dark
- Gitdumden territory
- Up the stairs by the Museum

- Yes and no some of the places thay I can't get to due, because I don't know how
- Trails due to wildlife
- The Lake... Boat Launch...
- More trails. All good
- Behind the old sawmill trail
- Behind the Morris land around train track
- Easier access to local beach by the river on Dennis ranch. Stairs and bathroom facilities n monitoring of children there. A overhead or underground crossing on Highway by gas bar n canyon areas.
- Riverside trails
- The Moricetown lake.
- Perimeter trail
- Snow on the steps by bridge - no snowshoes.
- Lake, parks (because of the needles found)
- I see they lock the witset lake. I understand with vandalism youth does.
- Walking to the canyon and campground area or the graveyard area- dogs are scary!
- I believe they are all accessible
- Through the village during winter but too many dogs
- Walking to the Old ballpark -afraid of bears
- Can't play basketball outside, took our courts away for the health station
- Just trails in general
- Idiot rock needs more stable crossings and across needs better stairs again, also Jelly beach needs a better way to get to, cleared etc.
- Around the lake, Up Blunt Road
- On the highway to two and back and to alder road and back
- Perimeter trail don't know where it is.....
- Part of perimeter trail
- idiot rock not made for elders
- Walk through the village but too many dogs this is during winter
- Campground stairs. Not canyon stairs.
- The lake
- Most of the areas like past mill up towards the mountains are all grown in

Q9. What Improvements would you like to see to better support you and / or your family in choosing active travel more often:

- | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------|
| 83% | More sidewalks & trails |
| 66% | Improve lighting |
| 50% | Highway crossing upgrades |
| 48% | Upgrade the Perimeter trail |
| 44% | Improve the condition of existing sidewalks & trails |
| 42% | Improve snow / ice management |

- 42% Increase regular maintenance
- 42% Improve snow / ice management
- 40% Improve accessibility to support elders and those with mobility impairments
- 36% More amenities, such as garbage receptacles, secure storage, places to rest & shelters
- 35% More education and safety improvements for children getting to school
- 26% Improve connections between places I need to go
- 25% Improve signage
- 23% More opportunities to learn new skills / access gear
- 14% Improved access to transit facilities

Other:

- Have benches in certain areas
- Water fountains for those who don't have water on their runs and walks. Especially for the dogs as well.
- Make a gym in Witset
- Rec centre again for young kids to hang out like they use to have long time ago.
- Rental shop for lake toys! Paddleboards, kayaks, tubes
- Add a gym such as: weights, mirror, treadmill, squat rack, bench, stretching/yoga area
- Implement spay n neutering. Especially on animals that wonder the village.
- Ice rink
- A safe supervised place, for kids, to slide.
- Lighting the streets at night, loop lighting is few and far in between
- Dogs! No off leash dogs!
- Basketball Court
- Baseball field upgrades for fans too
- Events Witset Sun Run ...Game of the Wet'suwet'en's

Q10. Are there specific areas in Witset you'd like to see improved?

- The community perimeter trail
- The spot on the trail between lake and old saw mill this spot overlooks the village
- recycling receptacles
- regular maintenance of existing trails, trees get blown down often & water pools in ruts often
- The transit doesn't really help people who need to get into town for work or to get back. There is no frequency in their trips.
- It would be nice to have an activity center. Ice rink, Gym, and arena full of activities. At the ball field where the old soccer field is. Would be a great recreational centre.
- Trails on the side of the hi-way 10klm for the safety of community members and the animals that walk with them

- Along the highway
- Playground is too dirty and stuff is broken up there.
- More lighting
- Just all the trails for snowmobiling
- Old houses..tear down or rebuild.
- Sewage smell goes straight to the park by health station, low visibility of that park
- Just make sure walks
- I'd like to see sidewalks because there's to many kids in middle of the street
- More Lighting areas where it's too dark when members are walking at night
- along highway for walkers/runners/cyclers & Witset Lake walking route
- parks
- perimeter trail
- Trailer Park!!!!
- Lake.
- the old ballpark
- Park Ave - it's ugly. Tell people to clean up
- Sidewalks on main areas people access for walking n running on streets and especially on the Highway. Even parents with strollers and families.
- A trail access for walkers n bikers on highway. N even a Trail to Smithers would be great for safety of waters bikers etc...
- Ball fields perimeter trials
- Ball field
- Speed bumps along beaver road.
- side walks
- Baseball Park, condemned houses.
- We have great walking areas but again it's the loose dogs!
- Dog problem
- The lake perimeter trail would be a great update l. Also adding a dog park for people who take care of their pets.
- Walk on highway to river
- More improvement on leashing dogs!!!! Maybe more visible clearance along route to the lake?
- Gym equipment
- Outside basketball courts
- Keeping near the stairs clean and tidy
- The campground- walking bridge to idiot rock A bike route around lake too! The Canyon - Tourist attraction, restaurant with traditional foods
- Potholes on the highway
- make stairs by park ave and grace lane
- Ball field could use an upgrade
- Ball field should be like a sporting area
- Baseball field upgrade, cooking place for locals, coffee shop

- Perimeter trail would be nice if it was maintained year-round.
- Walking path around campsite
- Mental health and addictions for people to access the help they need
- Be able use stairs during winter
- The stairs at the campground, not the canyon stairs. The other set.
- The stairs at the campground, not canyon stairs the other ones.
- The lake road it's too bumpy and wildlife
- The Telkwa High Road. I walked the high road when I was pregnant w my 1st daughter in 2017
- Trail down to Jello beach
- Improve more of walking areas trails
- the trail from park rd to the mudbugs/gas bar, gives quicker access to trails behind the sawmill.

Q11. Are there areas in Witset you would like to see be for private community member use only (i.e. not public)?

- I think if there would be a traditional centre where elders can tell their stories. Where there can be addictions counselors, mental health. a team that is actually certified with education. would suffice. like a round house. for our people.
- A gym with all equipment would be beneficial for all
- Fishing or swimming spots
- No! Everyone should enjoy our town
- Nope
- Don't understand
- Only private property that is owned by member with CP. Unless the band wants to honor all traditional stakes to family-owned land! The band needs to be consistent and not selective when supporting this.
- Canyon smoke houses, protocols and tradition need to be respected
- A gym so we don't need to travel further to go to one
- Canyon fishing area have better and more sitting areas campground side Elders like to watch
- Witset Lake walking trail
- The Lake!!! Would Be Nice To Enjoy It At Least For a Little Bit
- Walking trail around the lake. One section may need a walking platform.
- A track N field area to do laps like at SSSS. That is fenced for safely.
- A fenced area to walk safely around a track.
- Moricetown Lake. It's so beautiful when it's just us natives.
- our trails
- We need an indoor fitness centre for our community
- Beach Sein access The lake
- Workout room nice fancy treadmill tread climber elliptical at least four of each

- trail around the lake
- The lake because if we let others that don't live here use it they never clean up after themselves and a couple of years ago there was a fire up there
- The lake
- More & better access to the areas around Witset
- clan and house group yinta (territory). try to stay within the reserve boundaries. Or respectful collaboration with that house group, if planning to venture off reserve boundaries.

Q12. Do you agree with any of these statements regarding active travel improvements?

- | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 83% | Helps elders continue to participate in community life |
| 79% | Contributes to a higher quality of life for residents in my community |
| 77% | Supports me & or my family in improving personal health |
| 70% | Helps improve community and land connections |
| 49% | Supports local tourism and economic development potential |

Other:

- *Something our youth can build and utilize*
- *Supports youth*
- *All income levels can participate in common activities*
- *Community building/community members involvement. We've all become so independent that we no longer help others in need. We have become to judge more than we try to understand.*
- *Elders Camp, upgrade ball field*
- *Connects neighbours who live here but not a member of Witset nation*

Q13. Do you have any additional thoughts or stories you'd like to share?

- It would be nice to have stairs like the Canyon one from Seaton View Rd. to Park Ave
- Hurry up already! By the time the trails get built I'll be an elder!
- Yes, there are many of our people that live in their addictions. and or suicidal from trauma. Intergenerational trauma. I would be nice to have our own treatment centre. Again with well-educated people that went to post-secondary to get their degrees. Workshops aren't an education. We need people that know what they are doing to help our people.
- Safer trails for all to use would be nice

- I walk the highway because if I walk with my dog, that is on a leash, we get charged or followed by roaming dogs that are not looked after properly. There really should be a bylaw for pets, for this reason I try to avoid walking through the community
- Start working on helping the people in this village, upgrading their houses instead of building other structures.
- Kids need an ice rink and skate park
- I was walking to the gas bar and I almost got attacked by a black bear
- That band should pay for all young children to go camp in summer time. Let them experience camp summer days. Like way back when yak gis tah camp in Tyhee lake had it. Those were the best days. Omg. Bring back the Marry go around at the ball park and slides and swings. There. And they should have left it there. You can't access the one near the heath clinic too dark there. And should fix up the old funeral place near the church and have the church expanded for all members and they should left the centennial hall the way it was too they should not built that other extension that's a no no.
- Renting lake equipment at Witset Lake would be amazing!
- Long time ago. Everyone walked n ran. Now parents let kids play electronic. If kids are inactive, they tend to blame band
- its a good idea
- Security in village 24/7, 7 days a week n a EMERGENCY Contact # i liked the idea of security checking up on Elders on a daily basis. Especially during Covid, have family activities for residents that are not able to get out n about. Loneliness set in pretty quick.
- Regular visits of Elders n health check-ups n help for single families child care for parents to be able to participate in activities n especially to have free time to themselves without worrying about children.
- Witset needs a ice rink
- We had our own sliding smaller hills but we used cardboard for our magic carpets.
- connect youth with elders
- Bringing our culture and laws to the band office. Clans have territory on the reserve just like we do on the yintah. It would be nice to incorporate that into the bands practices.
- This last summer was limited with ref to walking. Maybe designate someone to Kill the bears or remove them from community. Could not take walks with granddaughter unless I was carrying a gun for bears...lol. Scary! We must be able to call someone to kill the bears if coming into our living space. When conservation remove them....they are not relocating but killing them. The demand for conservation officers was so high this last summer that they did not attend when called.
- Used to have outdoor basketball hoops
- I really wish the stairs weren't built at the canyon! I liked it better without...
- Jello Beach should be closed to the public too! Most go there to drink; its not safe for kids not supervised. The rec centre had games, pizza night, video night, pool, football. Kept me from doing other stuff not healthy. Maybe turn our lake into a NON

drugs/alcohol area for kids. Get a big plastic float to jump on, make a day camp during summer.

- Baseball is big in our community the ball field should be up graded and named
- Have a sign at camp ground tell history of it from being a race track to a baseball field in early days
- Love watching baseball
- Show the kids what we did as youngsters hunting trapping fishing and collecting berry
- We need an indoor exercise gym
- Our family has lived in your community for many years. We have appreciated the kindness and always being accepted by your community.
- Make up more fun walking running games - Witset Mud Races or something
- The stairs have been a great motivator for community members. The Witset health page is very motivating.
- N/a but improving more actively for youths during summer and winter sports

APPENDIX C: Interview Results

20 individuals representing the following organizations took part in the one-on-one interviews:

- Witset Band First Nation Administration
- Witset Maintenance
- RCMP
- Witset Peacekeepers
- Motorized Users
- Kyah Wiget Education Society
- Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre
- First Nations Health Authority
- Local Businesses
- Faith Community
- BC Transit
- Office of the Wet'suwet'en
- Ministry of Transportation
- Provincial MLA
- Federal MP

A summary of the one-on-one interview responses are provided below:

Current Barriers & Challenges:

- Gaming
- Parents justifying their kids gaming (kids are safe)
- No mental health worker. Joanne retired. Finding someone is challenging, takes time to establish trust
- Covid isolation is affecting community. Many are grieving but can't hug.
- Isolation is becoming a bad habit/ way of life. When pandemic is over people will remain in their homes.
- Does not want Off-reserve trail network to be made public. Cabin and maintenance equipment is stored on-site. Snowmobile and quadding groups maintain it. They have had issues in the past with squatters and users not replacing resources.
- 10% of community take advantage of active health initiatives. (same core individuals/families make use of most programs)
- Social anxiety, past trauma, don't ask for help b/c scared of being judged and shamed.
- Gaming and internet addictions
- Gambling (bingo), addictions and fast food.
- No home schedule, routine, or good habits, parental neglect.
- Expect large increase in foot traffic in beaver road subdivision with 26-unit apartment development. Many inhabitants will be elders.
- Population increase, but no infrastructure for active transportation
- Elders are choosing spots to harvest medicinal plants that are easily accessible with vehicle.

- Walking trails are underdeveloped especially around the smoke houses by the canon and is worried about injury at my age.
- Safety concerns for those walking on highway. Walking path is needed
- Currently, No sidewalks in Witset. Will need to purchase maintenance and snow clearing equipment if sidewalks were to be built.
- Concerned for children's safety, small children unsupervised playing at the playground, teens hanging around I-count or elementary trying to get wifi.
- Many areas underutilized like gazebo, community garden and covered activity area. Intended purpose needs to be clear and well communicated.
- Poor community buy-in when it comes to leashing dogs.
- FNHA suggest that all FN health centers conduct annual review of current program offerings. Cost/benefit analysis and determine if any programs could be remodeled to lower expenditures and make room for other initiatives.
- Lack of lighting around the Ball fields. Hangout for teen drinking at night
- Property owners blocking access to the perimeter trail due to theft
- ICount students walk along beaver rd. daily to get to Multiplex for Gym use. Snow plowing has made the road narrower and unsafe. More trail access to new lake development.
- Live 5 min walk from daycare but chooses to drive due to dogs.
- Very little discussions with MOTI & Witset regarding Hwy 16 safety in the past.
- There is limited Hwy 16 right-of-way (ROW) around intersection.
- It's a long process to work through to find solutions, especially when it involves changing an intersection – safety is always a key concern.
- Interested to learn more about how to improve ridership of the BC Transit bus.
- There are low ridership numbers of Witset residents (on par w/other rural communities) – COVID has further reduced participation.
- Outdoor recreation opportunities are not evenly distributed between FN + Non-FN communities.
- Points of contention or challenges are also points of opportunity.
- Challenge of how to change “patterns of behavior” to make choosing active travel normal and routine. It’s more than just building infrastructure.
- How to fund maintenance of infrastructure once built? Federal funding streams for Reserves are closely earmarked.
- Residents walking highway is a safety issue. There are little alternatives.
- Lots of attention paid to addressing safety, especially to reduce hitch hiking.
- Residents drive because the BC transit bus is not convenient (i.e. location / schedule), especially if you live in Two Mile.
- Obtaining infrastructure dollars for construction is easier than managing infrastructure.
- Funding to maintain infrastructure is a key challenge in FN communities due to Federal funding streams.

Areas for Improvement:

- Get rid of the internet (Granisle)
- Kids, bike park, at old playground
- Kids Club / Youth programs
- Bring back Wilderness Trails Program. Very successful program in the past. Youth spend 2 weeks in the bush learning survival skills.
- Some on-reserve trails are actively used by motorized vehicles. Those should be identified, and safety signs be put up.
- Maintain Trail from the canyon to John brown creek
- Best way to increase engagement is by having active participants invite family members and friends out with them. "Bring a buddy" incentive
- Life coaching programs
- Incentives for getting parents involved through the elementary school
- Plan for a bus stop by the apartment for once project is complete
- Improve accessibility of the canyon with safe pathway to the smoke house.
- Dog enforcement program in the works. Currently converting old cabin by the sawmill into dog pound.
- Significant decrease in theft at the works yard after installing LED lights and new fence.
- Designated running trail or track.
- Walking path along highway.
- Spay and neuter program.
- Most successful programs in other communities come from those taking ownership of the activity (community driven & lead). Members champion the activity they want to do.
- Incorporate incentives like healthy snacks, free running shoes after 4 weeks active participation.
- Have an inventory of all activities. (ex. Fishing activities – who to talk to, where to go, what to bring).
- Hire professionals to educate on proper techniques to prevent injury.
- More lighting improves security.
- Fencing for properties adjacent to trail.
- Community fencing program - could help with the dog problem.
- Ice rink
- More benches and picnic tables.
- Stairs at the end of Park rd.
- Build trails from loop road to lake.
- Fill in ditch for gravel pedestrian walkway along beaver road.
- Dog pound needed and owners fined.
- Tunnel option or yellow traffic light can be explored to improve intersection safety.
- Like idea for a separated pedestrian path along Hwy to give pedestrians / cyclists a place to go that's off the Hwy.
- Years back there were pathway improvements around transit stop in efforts to improve access and increase ridership.

- Want to hear from the community on transit needs and creative solutions.
- Getting kids outside and addressing safety are key issues and ones that are easy to gain support around.
- Improvements should have broad support of different jurisdictions to maximize buy-in on projects.
- Focus on how shared challenges are also opportunities.
- Multi-use nature of infrastructure (i.e. people walking the stairs for exercise).
- Improvements and standards need to match the band's ability to maintain it.

Ways to Support Active Transportation:

- Witset social media – Facebook group
- Help purchases equipment
- Give access to bikes
- Regularly does Pizza nights, where she invites 2 families (targets those who are grieving) to her house to make homemade pizzas
- Advice – consistency is key.
- Youth group volunteers should be parent of kid participants.
- Learn from the past: No program leader to continue youth groups and programs ended. Succession planning for volunteers
- Funding for initiatives
- Grant writing
- Commitment to planning, good communication and capacity building with staff to ensure the department can follow through on projects and initiatives that increase the workload of the department.
- Host Zoom meeting to discuss the funding process and meet with FNHA funders.
- Apply for funding through health initiatives.
- Letters of support
- Offering programs to support active lifestyle i.e., snowshoe event
- Apply for funding through educational funding sources to support more outdoor recreational programs.
- Letters of support
- MOTI can meet to discuss Highway 16 safety.
- Funding for design work / construction has been provided by MOTI in the past (ie. Cycle 16, Hazelton).
- BC Transit will be doing consultations in 2021 and will be seeking Witset feedback.
- Look for funding agreements to include maintenance / upkeep.
- Align future funding with broader themes of climate change, healthy communities.
- Focus plan on opportunities that address shared challenges (i.e., kids, community health, safety). There are things that the plan can and can't do (be realistic).
- Letter of support for funding applications.
- Office can keep Witset band in the loop on funding opportunities.

APPENDIX D: Youth Workshop

Results



WHERE: I Count Highschool, Witset, BC

WHEN: March 26, 2021

WHO: 6 students (5 male, 1 female)
2 staff members

Identified hangout spots:

Lake, forest behind elementary school (perimeter trail), baseball field, home (gaming)

Question 1: What modes of active transportation are currently utilized?

Walking:

- 67% walk to/from school, others take the bus
- 100% Students walk to Elementary school daily for Gym usage

Biking:

- 3 times/week. Bikes supplied by the school.
- Routes
 - School to end of fisherman's road trail to campground
 - School to lake trails – trail needs improvements, some parts are swampy

Skateboarding:

- 50% skateboard
- Will travel by car (parents driving) to Smithers or Hazelton skate park
- Will skateboard around gas station or band office

Other activities offered through the school (school owned equipment):

- Cross-country skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Inflatable kayak
- Rafting (Skeena Water Shed): leaves from Witset boat launch

Question 2: Changes you want to see

- Paved roads for roller skating and skateboarding
- More biking trails
- Skatepark
- Ability to rent paddleboards, kayaks or canoes at Witset Lake
- Access to boxing arena (insurance/liability issues)
- Basketball hoops at I Count/ can convert to skating rink in winter
- Gym Climbing wall at Elementary school (Ebenezer school has one)
- Soccer Field upgrade, new turf, lines painted annually

Question 3: What will get you to be more active? (Big Idea Poster)

Secondary question: Out of these activities what would get you excited the most?

- **Bike Race *voted as top choice**
- Bike to Smithers (via Telkwa high Road)
- Skateboard Park by Health Centre
- **Amazing Race *Voted as top choice**
- Bringing in more role models
- Step Count Challenges (utilizing tech/social media)
 - Broken down by categories (Age, % weight loss)

Question 4: If money wasn't an objection, write down incentives would you like to see

- Boxing Gloves
- Bike from McBike
- Season Pass to HBM
- Go Pro
- Fit Bit/Apple Watch
- \$100 Amazon gift card
- \$100 Google Play card

APPENDIX E: Community Review Results

WHERE: Village Gazebo, Witset, BC
WHO: 36 Attendees (In-person)

WHEN: June 23, 2021

Participants were asked to place a sticker next to the project they would like to see happen first or would start if they had \$100,000. Overall, there was strong support for any infrastructure projects that would support residents in getting active more often, with the focus on addressing safety concerns. The gas station to Witset Canyon section of the Highway Trail received the most support as a first project. An additional 25 comments were received via Witset's Facebook page and included support for both infrastructure and community amenity projects.

