

Memo to Central Saanich Staff and Council re: Stelly's Cross Road Pathway

1. Firstly, thanks again for the decision and action last summer to create the crusher-dust topped sidewalk along the north side of Stelly's Cross Road from Tomlinson Road to the west gate of the Fair Grounds. This very much improves pedestrian traffic safety on a busy road.
2. As a consequence of significant rainfall last week you should know that there has been erosion damage to the sidewalk/path. The area of concern is c. 40 meters east of the Saanich Fair Grounds west gate (No. 6). The surface has been worn away to a depth of some 30 centimeters completely across with width. These pronounced rivulets affect some 2 meters of sidewalk and, in my opinion, create both a safety hazard --- especially in darkness --- and an obstacle for those on scooters and walkers ... not to mention those with visual impairment.
3. A related if less challenging, concern are the wide puddles further to the east that completely cover this path after a heavy or protracted period of rain. Specifically, water flows from a swale on the SFG property across the sidewalk but not into the ditch adjacent to Stelly's X Rd. This is at a point on both sides of the utility pole directly across the street from the secondary school bus shelter situated on the south side of the Road. The only solution for pedestrians trying to avoid wet feet in such circumstances is leaping the ditch! The best (permanent) solution would be to place sub-grade piping to channel the run-off to the ditch. A short term improvement would be to at least lessen the puddle depth by cutting a narrow drainage conduit in the turf between the path and the ditch so this water could flow off the sidewalk.
4. To a different concern now. Like many others who live on Stelly's and in the local area, I welcomed the appearance of this new sidewalk with enthusiasm. It is a wonderful improvement towards active transportation and road safety for all. Alas, soon after it opened to the public there was cause for concern of a different order. Especially the eastern half of this one kilometer path began to attract equestrian traffic with two problematic results: 1) the smooth surfacing began to be degraded by hoof prints that make transit over the path noticeably bumpy/uneven and 2) the inevitable deposition of horse droppings ensued. Because I like to run before dawn and this new path has become part of my preferred route, I have three times undertaken reluctantly to brush the piles of turds off the path as best as I could. Other "donations" I have left in place. However, neither I nor anyone else who is not responsible for this "unsociable" detritus should have to do this. There are several solutions that I can think of to solve the threat of being out for a walk (especially after dark) on a public sidewalk and nervous about one's footwear becoming a manure spreader. What does Council think would be an acceptable solution? It was once considered acceptable to smoke in confined places, irrespective of the hazard to or wishes of others. Why should the vast majority of pedestrians have to be "on the receiving end" of an unpleasant experience because of the indifference of a very few?
5. Thanks for your time in considering these matters through your public service on Council.

Roger B., resident at The Meadows