

City of Kelowna

Commonwealth Road – Jim Bailey Road Connection

Engagement Summary

Prepared by Urban Systems Ltd. on behalf of the City of Kelowna

March 2025

URBAN
SYSTEMS



INTRODUCTION

The City of Kelowna is developing a preliminary design for improvements on Commonwealth Road and the future Commonwealth Road-Jim Bailey Road intersection. The purpose of the preliminary design is to understand how to make Commonwealth Road suitable for all users once it's connected to Jim Bailey Road.

This preliminary design will provide a strong foundation for the upcoming detailed design phase. It will also inform the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement between Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), City of Kelowna, and District of Lake Country.

Phase 2 of engagement (Concept Generation and Evaluation) took place in February 2025. This phase focused on sharing the preliminary design with members of the public, OKIB Members and Duck Lake Locatees for feedback on what works well with the preliminary design and what needs to be improved. Based on the input gathered through this phase of engagement, the preliminary design will be refined and finalized to ensure it meets the needs of OKIB Members, local businesses and residents.

Figure 1: Study area



ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS



611 participants provided **554 comments** through an open house, survey, online map, OKIB Community Meeting and meetings with OKIB Locatees.



Engagement took place from **January 29 to March 3**.



The most **liked features** were:

- Multi-use path and sidewalk
- Alternate route to Highway 97
- Access to Meadowbrook Estates
- Safer for all
- Noise reduction



The top areas for **improvement** were:

- Access to Holiday Park Resort
- Manage speeding
- Limit industrial traffic
- Improve noise reduction
- Manage traffic volume

KEY FINDINGS

Feedback on the preliminary design was gathered from January 29 to March 12, 2025, through an open house, an OKIB Duck Lake Community meeting, a survey, an online interactive map, and meetings with OKIB Locatees.

The key findings across all engagement methods included:

Positive elements of the design

- **Improved active transportation:** the multi-use path and sidewalk will make it easier and more comfortable to walk or bicycle in the area.
- **Alternate route to Highway 97:** the Commonwealth Road – Jim Bailey Road intersection will create an alternate route to Highway 97 for people who live and work on Jim Bailey Road, reducing congestion on Beaver Lake Road and providing a different exit in emergencies.
- **Access to Meadowbrook Estates:** left turn lanes to access Meadowbrook Estates will make it easier for residents to get to and from their homes.
- **Safer for all:** the traffic signal and crossings will make Commonwealth Road and the future intersection at Jim Bailey Road safer for all users.
- **Noise reduction:** the noise wall will help reduce traffic noise for people who live south of Commonwealth Road.

Concerns and suggestions for improvement

- **Access to Holiday Park Resort:** residents of Holiday Park Resort on the south side of Commonwealth Road shared many concerns about how the increased traffic volume will make it difficult to enter and exit, especially given how close it is to the future Jim Bailey Road intersection, delays caused by waiting for the gate at the Resort to open, and the space needed for an RV to safely turn.
- **Manage speeding:** many participants shared a concern that drivers already tend to speed on Commonwealth Road and that the connection to Jim Bailey Road will make this work. Some participants suggested speed bumps or other ways to encourage drivers to slow down.
- **Limit industrial traffic:** participants were generally concerned about the increase in industrial traffic on Commonwealth Road that may be caused by connecting to Jim Bailey Road. This was the main cause for overall opposition to the project, and also related to concerns about safety, noise and privacy.
- **Improve noise reduction:** participants were concerned that increased traffic would lead to more noise, especially since a noise wall is only proposed on the south side of Commonwealth Road to fit within the City's property lines.
- **Concerns about traffic volume and congestion:** increasing capacity to reduce congestion was important for many participants, who suggested making the road wider or adding more lanes to prepare for increased traffic volumes on Commonwealth Road.

Priorities for Commonwealth Road

Survey participants were asked to rank priorities for Commonwealth Road from most to least important, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. Overall, the top priority for survey participants was emergency access, followed by livability and safety, and increased traffic capacity. Improved sidewalks, bike lands and crossings were the least important priority for participants. **Table 1:** Priorities for Commonwealth Road ranked by average score shows the overall score and ranking for all survey participants, as well as the average scores given each priority by survey participants who identified themselves as living near Commonwealth Road, working or owning a business near Commonwealth Road, and OKIB Locatees or Members. Where each group's ranked priorities differ in the overall priority ranking, that average score has been highlighted in yellow.

Table 1: Priorities for Commonwealth Road ranked by average score

Priority	Overall	Survey participants who live near Commonwealth Road	Survey participants who work or own a business near Commonwealth Road	Survey participants who are OKIB Locatees or Members
Emergency access	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6
Livability and safety	2.6	2.5	2.9	2.6
Increased traffic capacity	2.9	3.1	2.5	3.4
Access to properties	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.0
Improved sidewalks, bike lands and crossings	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.4

HOW WE ENGAGED

Input on the preliminary design was gathered from **January 29 to March 12, 2025**. There were several opportunities for community members to provide feedback, including an open house, survey and online interactive map. As this project is located within Okanagan Indian Band Duck Lake Indian Reserve #7, a priority was placed on gathering input from OKIB Members and Locatees along Commonwealth Road through attending a OKIB Duck Lake Community Meeting and holding one-on-one meetings with Locatees near Commonwealth Road.

Altogether, **611 participants** provided **554 comments** or questions related to the project. The breakdown of participants and comments provided through each engagement method are shown in **Table 2: Public engagement** and **Table 3: OKIB engagement**.

Table 2: Public engagement

Method	# of Participants	# of Comments
Open House (February 6, 2025)	160 participants	86 comments
Online Interactive Map	44 contributors	64 comments
Survey	357 contributors	388 contributions
Direct emails	4 emails	

Table 3: OKIB engagement

Method	# of Participants	# of Comments
OKIB Duck Lake Community Meeting (February 3, 2025)	~50 attendees	16 questions received
OKIB Locatee meetings	3 meetings	
Holiday Park Resort meeting	1 meeting	

HOW WE INFORMED

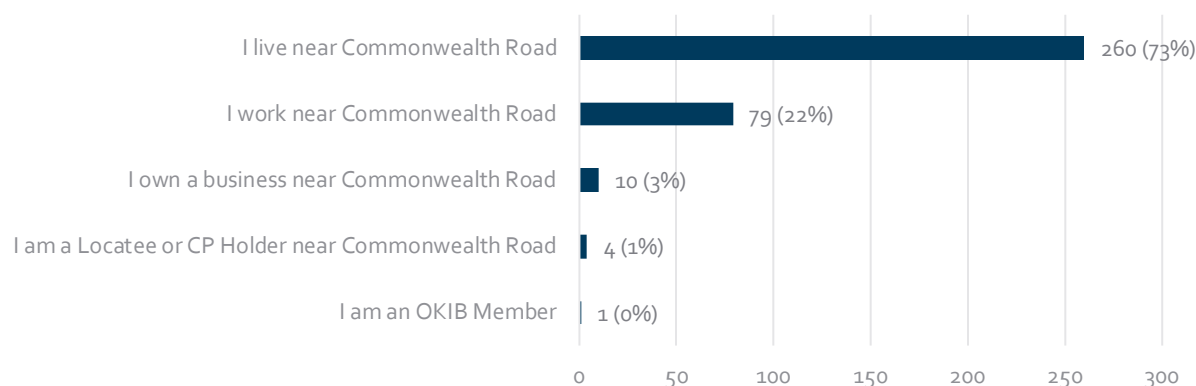
The engagement opportunities were promoted through a variety of channels, including:

- City of Kelowna [GetInvolved page](#), which received 5,693 views from 3,992 visitors.
- A [news release](#) on January 29, 2025, shared with 5,311 subscribers.
- A [public service announcement](#) on February 18, 2025, shared with 5,653 subscribers.
- **Social media posts** on the City of Kelowna Facebook, Instagram and X accounts which received an average of 11,659 views per post.
- **Direct mail letters** sent to 1,000 within a radius of Commonwealth Road and south of Beaver Lake Road.
- An advertisement in the **Kelowna Courier**, which has 5,300 paid subscribers.
- **Electronic road signs** on Commonwealth Road and Beaver Lake Road.

WHO PARTICIPATED

Survey participants were asked to share why they chose to participate in the survey and the first three digits of their postal code. Almost all participants either live or work near Commonwealth Road, with 73% of participants saying they live near Commonwealth Road and 22% saying they work near Commonwealth Road.

Figure 2: Survey participants' interest in the project

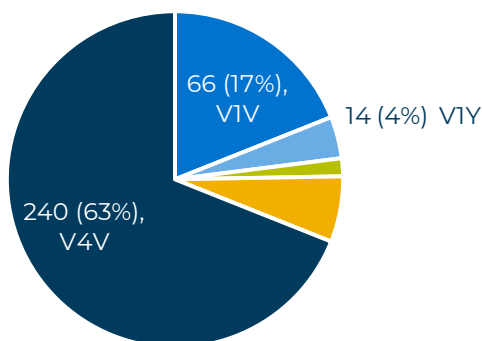


N=324 total responses

Other responses to this question shared that they commute from Lake Country to Kelowna, live on Jim Bailey Road or Beaver Lake Road, frequently visit family and friends in the area, or are cyclists who often use the Okanagan Rail Trail.

This is also reflected in the high number of participants (63%) that have V4V as the first three digits of their postal code, which includes Lake Country and the northern boundary of Kelowna. The next highest number of responses came from V1V (North Kelowna), followed by V1X/V1P (East Central Kelowna/East Kelowna), then V1Y (Central Kelowna) and V1W (South East Kelowna).

Figure 3: Postal code of survey participants



N=379 total responses

WHAT WE LEARNED

Commonwealth Road Preliminary Design

The preliminary design for improvements on Commonwealth Road aims to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and all users along Commonwealth Road. Features include a multi-use path on the north side of the road, a sidewalk on the south side of the road, pedestrian and cyclist crossings, a noise wall to reduce traffic noise for residents, and left turn lanes where possible to access Meadowbrook Estates on the north side of the road. These improvements fit within the City's property lines.

Features

1. Multi-use path on the north side of the road for walking and biking
2. Sidewalk on the south side of the road
3. A treed boulevard with streetlights separates the multi-use path and sidewalk from traffic
4. Noise wall on the south side where it will reduce traffic noise for residents
5. Left-turn lanes at property access roads where possible
6. Pedestrian and cyclist crossing



Findings

Survey and open house participants were asked:

- What do you like about the preliminary design of Commonwealth Road?
- What do you think should be improved in this preliminary design of Commonwealth Road?

Survey and open house participants primarily liked that the multi-use path, sidewalk and crossings would make it **easier, safer and more comfortable to walk and cycle in the area**. Another key benefit that participants shared was that connecting Commonwealth Road and Jim Bailey Road will provide an **alternate route for people who live and work on Jim Bailey Road** to access Highway 97, reducing congestion on Beaver Lake Road and creating another exit in case of emergencies.

The top areas for improvement were related to concerns from residents on Commonwealth Road about the **impact of increased and industrial traffic**, including the speed of drivers, the volume of industrial traffic, and the potential for more noise on the road. Another key aspect highlighted by participants at the open house and the survey was access for RVs **entering and exiting the Holiday Park Resort**, which is on the south side of Commonwealth Road close to the future Jim Bailey Road intersection.

Notably, almost a quarter (22%) of respondents felt that the design did not need any improvements and met their needs as is. Few participants (4%) didn't support the project at all.

The top 10 responses to each question are included in **Table 4**: Top themes related to Commonwealth Road preliminary design. The total number of responses for each theme and the percentage out of all responses to the question are shown in **Figure 4**: Top 10 responses to "What do you like about this preliminary design of Commonwealth Road?" and **Figure 5**: Top 10 responses to "What do you think should be improved?".

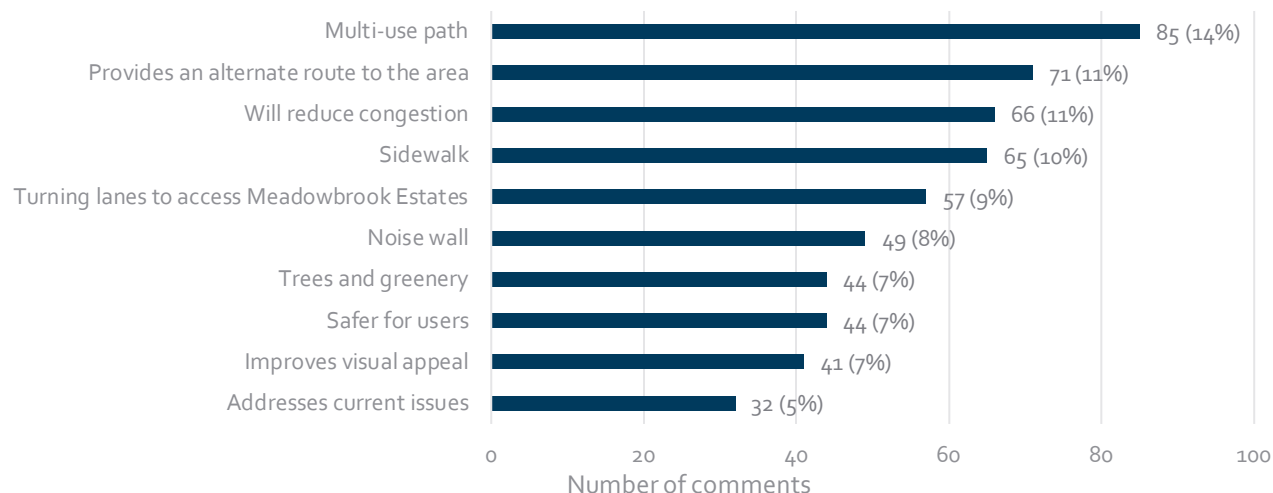
Table 4: Top themes related to Commonwealth Road preliminary design

What do you like about this design?	What do you think should be improved?
• Multi-use path • Provides an alternate route to the area • Will reduce congestion • Sidewalk • Turning lanes to access Meadowbrook Estates • Noise wall • Trees and greenery • Safer for users • Improves visual appeal • Addresses current issues	• Manage driver speed • Limit industrial traffic • Improve noise reduction • Improve access to Holiday Park Resort • Wider or more lanes • More lighting • Pedestrian crossings • Improve access to Meadowbrook Estates • More trees and greenery • Separated bike lanes

Chart labels

The following charts show the responses from the survey and open house summarized into the top 10 themes. Chart labels are shown as: *number of responses (percentage out of total responses to the question)*

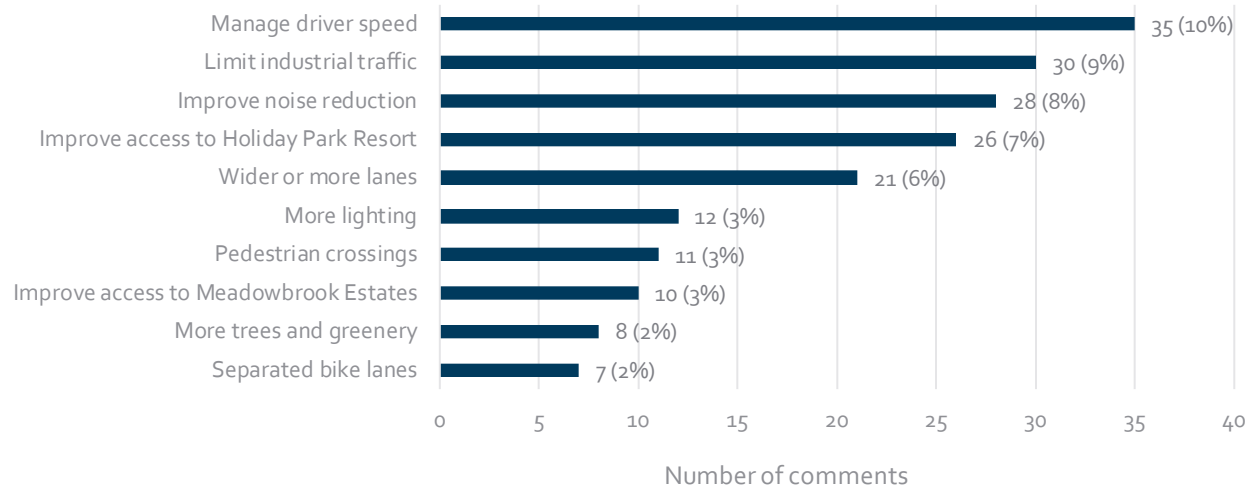
Figure 4: Top 10 responses to "What do you like about this preliminary design of Commonwealth Road?"



N=627 total comments

Other responses (12% of the total number of responses) included that the participant didn't like anything, concerns about traffic volume, that there was a good use of space, it would be more accessible for all users, and questions about impacts on property taxes.

Figure 5: Top 10 responses to "What do you think should be improved?"



N=347 total comments

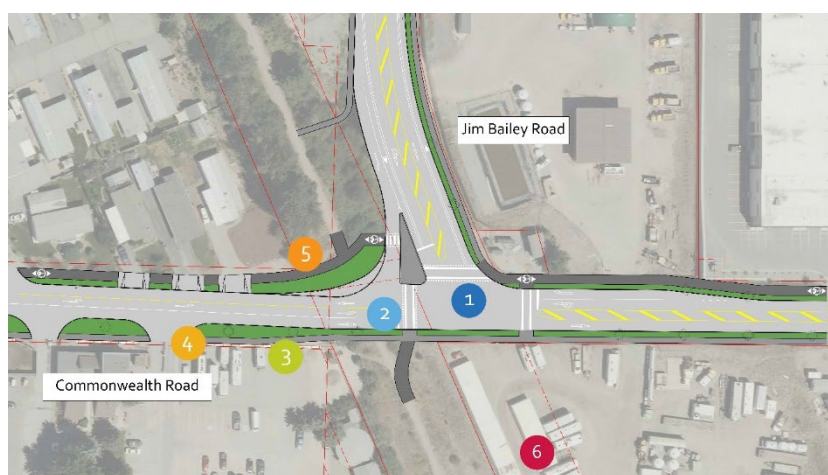
Almost a quarter (22%) of responses said that nothing needs to be improved and have not been included in this chart. Other responses (24% of the total number of responses) included adding a roundabout at the intersection, there should be no trees, that the south leg should be added immediately, that there should be a noise wall on both sides, and that there should be fire hydrants on both sides of Commonwealth Road.

Commonwealth Road – Jim Bailey Road Intersection

The preliminary design for the Commonwealth Road and Jim Bailey Road intersection was developed to accommodate the projected traffic volumes in the future, support development within OKIB and Jim Bailey industrial lands, and make it safe and comfortable to drive, walk and cycle through the intersection.

Features

1. Traffic signal
2. Safe pedestrian and cyclist crossings are aligned with the Rail Trail
3. Noise wall
4. Sidewalk
5. Multi-use path
6. Ability to add a road to the south of the intersection in the future



Findings

Survey and open house participants were asked:

- What do you like about the preliminary design for the Commonwealth Road and Jim Bailey Road intersection?
- What do you think should be improved in the preliminary design for the Commonwealth Road and Jim Bailey Road intersection?

Overall, a large percentage of participants (20%) felt that the design was good overall. Specific features that participants liked included the **traffic signal** at the intersection to manage traffic flow and improve safety, and the creation of an **alternate route** to Highway 97 for residents and workers on Jim Bailey Road was a highlighted as a key benefit. Participants also appreciated a **pedestrian and cyclist crossing** on Commonwealth Road that connects to the Okanagan Rail Trail and the **ability to add a south leg** on the intersection in the future.

Many participants (28%) felt that the design didn't need any changes. The top suggestions for specific improvements were that the City consider a **roundabout** rather than a traffic signal, that the **pedestrian and cyclist crossing** should be changed to either straight across Commonwealth Road, a tunnel or an overpass, and that **access in and out of Holiday Park Resort** should be improved,

considering the length of the RVs that have to turn in and out of the access roads and the delays caused by the gate at the entrance and exit.

The top 10 responses to each question are included in **Table 5**: Top themes related to the Commonwealth Road - Jim Bailey Road intersection preliminary design. The total number of responses for each theme and the percentage out of all responses to the question are shown in **Figure 6**: Top 10 responses to "What do you like about the preliminary design for the Commonwealth and Jim Bailey Road intersection?" and **Figure 7**: Top 10 responses to "What do you think should be improved in the preliminary design for the Commonwealth Road and Jim Bailey Road intersection?".

Table 5: Top themes related to the Commonwealth Road - Jim Bailey Road intersection preliminary design

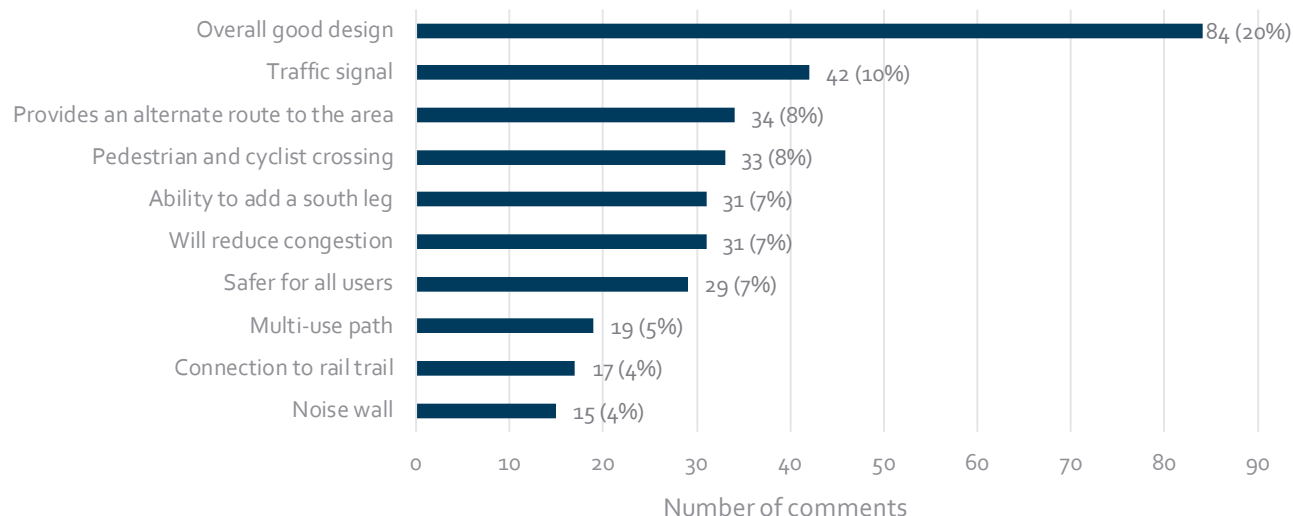
What do you like about this design?	What do you think should be improved?
• Traffic signal • Provides an alternate route to the area • Pedestrian and cyclist crossing • Ability to add a south leg • Will reduce congestion • Safer for all users • Multi-use path • Connection to rail trail • Noise wall • Turning lane to improve traffic flow	• Consider a roundabout • Improve access to Holiday Park Resort • No traffic signal • Manage speed of drivers • Change pedestrian and cyclist crossings • Add the south leg • Improve safety of turning lane • Add a south noise wall • Limit truck traffic • Add more lanes

Was a roundabout considered at the Commonwealth Road and Jim Bailey Road intersection?

One of the top questions received at the open house was about whether the intersection could be a roundabout rather than having a traffic signal. A roundabout was considered when the City was developing options for the intersection, but the technical analysis found that it wouldn't be feasible based on the available space and anticipated traffic patterns, including industrial traffic.

Roundabouts require more space at the intersection than the traffic signal, so it would extend beyond the City's existing property line. This would impact the Okanagan Rail Trail right of way, other private property, and the lift station on the east side of Jim Bailey Road. The lift station is a critical piece of utility infrastructure for the area and would be extremely costly to move. The roundabout would also lead to more delays than a traffic signal based on the projected traffic patterns and the Okanagan Rail Trail pedestrian and cyclist crossing.

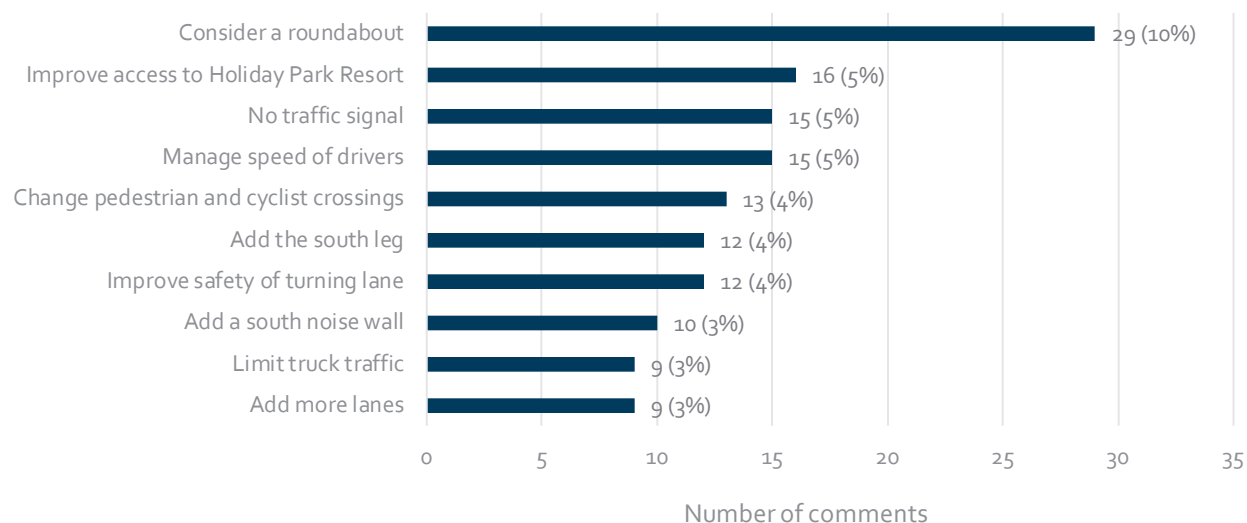
Figure 6: Top 10 responses to "What do you like about the preliminary design for the Commonwealth and Jim Bailey Road intersection?"



N=287 total comments

Other responses (11% of the total responses) liked the sidewalk, that it enabled multiple modes of transportation, the trees, the reduced speed, and that the intersection will enable better access to properties on Jim Bailey Road and enable new development.

Figure 7: Top 10 responses to "What do you think should be improved in the preliminary design for the Commonwealth Road and Jim Bailey Road intersection?"



N=291 total comments

A large proportion of responses (28%) felt that the design didn't need any improvements and have not been included here. The remaining 24% of total responses felt that access to Highway 97 should be improved first, that Beaverlake Road should be improved, and that the design should better accommodate large trucks.

General feedback

Preliminary design priorities

Survey participants were asked to rank their priorities for Commonwealth Road, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. The priorities including emergency access, livability and safety, increased traffic capacity, access to properties, and improved sidewalks, bike lanes and crossings. As shown in **Table 6**: Survey participant's average score of priorities for Commonwealth Road., **emergency access** was the top priority overall with an average score of 2.5, followed by **"livability and safety"** and **"increased traffic capacity"**.

Table 7: Survey participants' who live near Commonwealth Road average score of priorities, Table 8: Survey participants' who work or own businesses near Commonwealth Road average score of priorities, and Table 9: Survey participants who are OKIB Locatees or Members average score of priorities show how survey participants who identified themselves as different groups ranked the priorities on average, including survey participants that live near Commonwealth Road, work or own a business near Commonwealth Road, or are OKIB Locatees or Members. The priorities that were ranked differently than the overall rankings are highlighted in yellow in each table. Key differences include:

- Participants who work or own businesses near Commonwealth Road ranked **"increased traffic capacity"** higher and **"livability and safety"** lower than the overall ranking.
- Participants who are OKIB Locatees or Members ranked **"access to properties"** higher and **"increased traffic capacity"** lower than the overall ranking.

Table 6: Survey participant's average score of priorities for Commonwealth Road.

Rank	Priority	Average Score (out of 5)
1	Emergency access	2.5
2	Livability and safety	2.6
3	Increased traffic capacity	2.9
4	Access to properties	3.3
5	Improved sidewalks, bike lands and crossings	3.5

Table 7: Survey participants' who live near Commonwealth Road average score of priorities

Rank	Priority	Average Score (out of 5)
1	Emergency access	2.5
2	Livability and safety	2.5
3	Increased traffic capacity	3.1
4	Access to properties	3.2
5	Improved sidewalks, bike lands and crossings	3.5

Table 8: Survey participants' who work or own businesses near Commonwealth Road average score of priorities

Rank	Priority	Average Score (out of 5)
1	Emergency access	2.5
2	Increased traffic capacity	2.5

3	Livability and safety	2.9
4	Access to properties	3.3
5	Improved sidewalks, bike lands and crossings	3.7

Table 9: Survey participants who are OKIB Locatees or Members average score of priorities

Rank	Priority	Average Score (out of 5)
1	Emergency access	2.6
2	Livability and safety	2.6
3	Access to properties	3.0
4	Increased traffic capacity	3.4
5	Improved sidewalks, bike lands and crossings	3.4

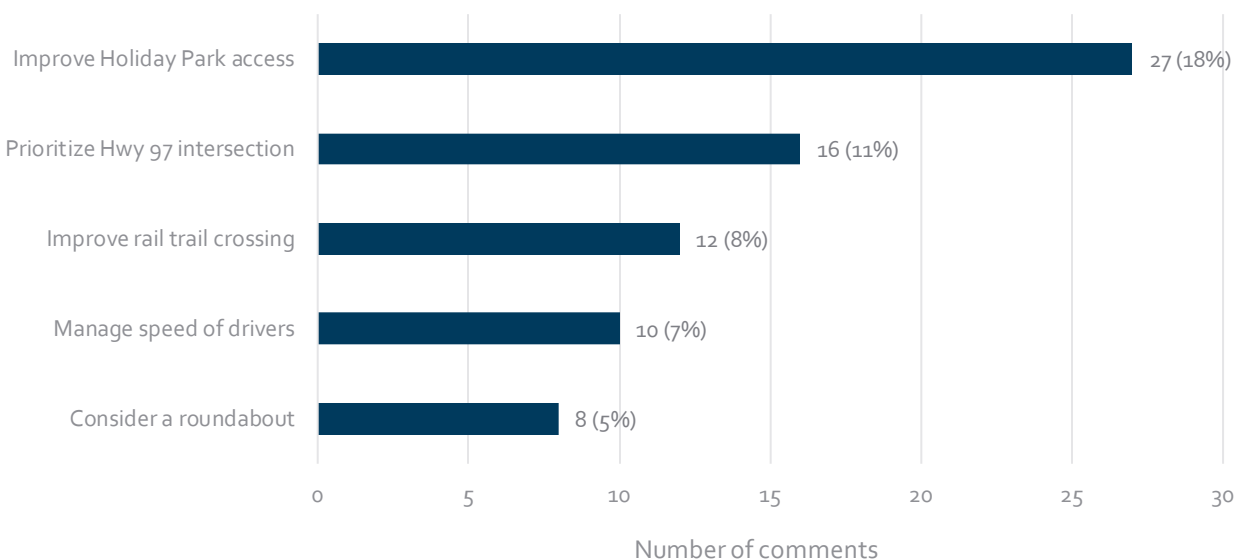
Commonwealth Road map comments

At the open house and on the online project page, participants could leave comments on a map of the Commonwealth Road preliminary design. These comments shared location-based concerns, questions and positive feedback on specific features.

The top five themes from comments left on the online and open house map were:

- Improve access to the Holiday Park Resort
- Prioritize the Highway 97 – Commonwealth Road intersection improvements before the Jim Bailey Road-Commonwealth Road intersection
- Improve pedestrian and cyclist crossing through the intersection
- Manage the speed of drivers on Commonwealth Road
- Consider a roundabout at the Commonwealth – Jim Bailey intersection

Figure 8: Top five themes of map comments



N=146 total comments

Ministry of Transportation and Transit Highway 97 intersection improvements

Many comments on the online and open house map focused on the need to prioritize improvements at the Highway 97 intersection before Commonwealth Road is connected to Jim Bailey Road.

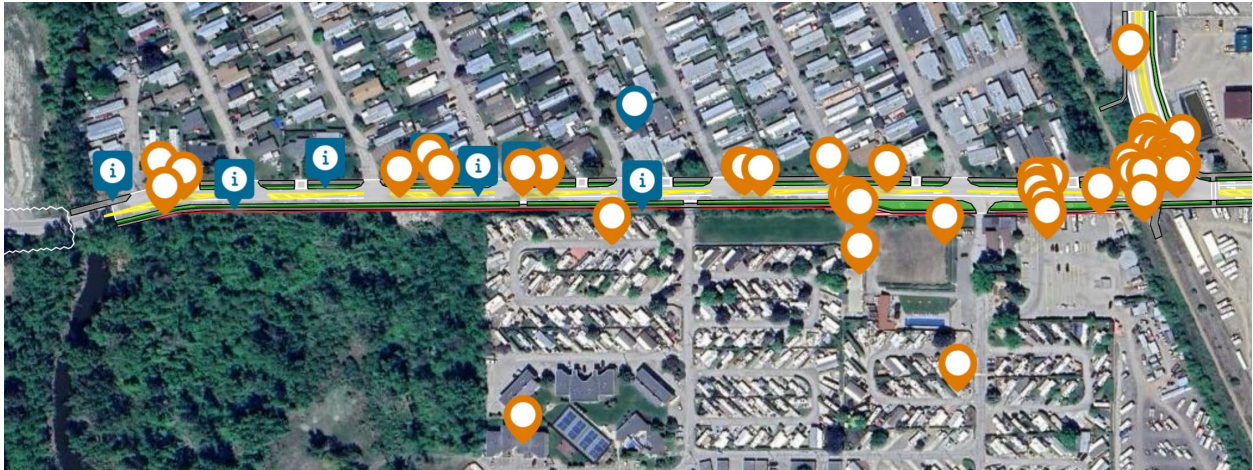
Alongside the City of Kelowna's Commonwealth Road project, the Ministry of Transportation and Transit is undertaking a separate traffic analysis and preliminary design work to support improvements at the intersection of Commonwealth Road and Highway 97. Although these are separate projects and advancing on different timelines, the City of Kelowna is working with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to coordinate these two projects along Commonwealth Road.

More information on the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Highway 97 – Commonwealth Road Improvements can be found at: gov.bc.ca/highway97commonwealth

Figure 9: Comments on map at open house



Figure 10: Comments on online map



OKIB engagement

OKIB Members and Locatees were engaged at an OKIB Duck Lake Community Meeting and through one-on-one meetings. All OKIB Locatees near Commonwealth Road were invited to meet with the project team, and three meetings were held with Locatees and complex operators.

The top themes from these meetings were:

- Concerns about **increased traffic volume** and how traffic will be accommodated
- The need to understand the **impacts on residents**, especially Elders, families and youth, focusing on safety.
- Consider the **environmental impact** and plan for flood mitigation at Middle Vernon Creek
- Improve ways to **reduce noise on the north side** of Commonwealth Road
- Consider **renaming Commonwealth Road** to a new name that better reflects the history and land in the area
- Improve **access to Holiday Park Resort**
- The need to **plan for transit** on Commonwealth Road in the future
- The benefits of the project, including the **provision of water and sewer service** for the Duck Lake community, related to the proposed agreements in the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Kelowna, OKIB and District of Lake Country. This included concerns on who is paying for the connection to the utilities.
- The need to **upgrade the surrounding road network**, including improving Jim Bailey Road and adding a south leg to the future Commonwealth Road – Jim Bailey Road intersection.

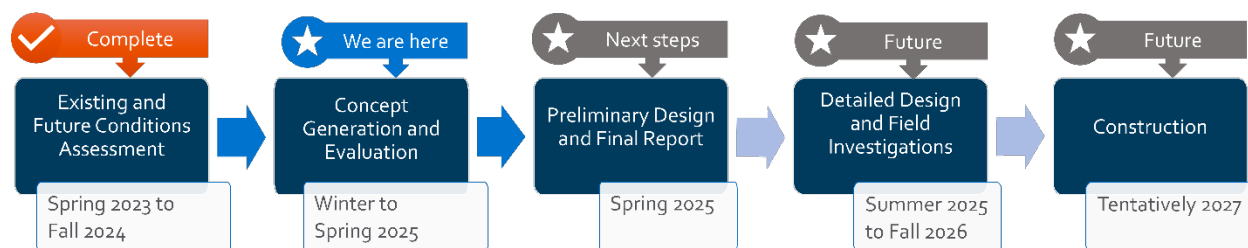
Renaming Commonwealth Road

The City of Kelowna, in collaboration with OKIB, is exploring changing the name of Commonwealth Road. The new name will incorporate input from the OKIB Language and Culture Department and community feedback.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The input gathered from community members, OKIB Members and Locatees during this phase of engagement will be used to refine and finalize the preliminary design in spring 2025. This preliminary design will provide a strong foundation for the detailed design in summer 2025 to fall 2026. It will also help create a shared understanding of what the project will include to inform the Commonwealth Road Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement between Okanagan Indian Band, City of Kelowna, and District of Lake Country.

Figure 11: Project timeline



Attendees at open house

