



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the General Committee**

From: **W.H. Jackson,
Commissioner of Infrastructure and Planning Services**

Meeting Date: **June 6, 2018**

Subject: **Report IPSTR18-013
Sidewalk Strategic Plan Update**

Purpose

A report to provide an update on the Sidewalk Strategic Plan, including the status of Priority 1 and 2 missing sidewalks.

Recommendation

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report IPSTR18-013, dated June 6, 2018, of the Commissioner of Infrastructure and Planning Services, as follows:

That Report IPSTR18-013 Sidewalk Strategic Plan Update be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no additional budget or financial implications associated with receiving this report outside of the yearly budget allocation for the installation and maintenance of sidewalks and roads.

Background

At its meeting of March 24, 2008, Council, in considering Report USTR08-008, approved the following recommendations related to the Sidewalk Strategic Plan:

- a) That Council adopt the 14-year implementation schedule for Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks as provided in Appendix A to this report;
- b) That Council direct staff to use the Sidewalk Strategic Plan to evaluate new sidewalk requests.

The original Sidewalk Strategic Plan was subsequently updated in 2012, and was approved by Council as part of Report USTR13-005. By 2012, this report noted that since the approval of the original plan in 2008, 19.6 km of new sidewalks had been constructed in high demand locations, and 45 km of Priority 1 and Priority 2 sidewalks were left remaining to be built.

City Council, at its meeting of December 11, 2017, in considering Report USTR17-017B, requested:

“That staff report to Council, all of the priority 1 and 2 sidewalk locations needing construction and the approximate costs of installation.”

The original Sidewalk Strategic Plan was developed and approved by Council in 2008 to provide a tool for staff to review and prioritize the construction of missing sidewalks in various areas of the City.

Overview

The Sidewalk Strategic Plan (Plan) prioritizes all missing sidewalks using a multi-variate analysis. Through this prioritization process, the Plan identifies the highest priority sidewalks for construction. The priority 1 and 2 sidewalks are needed by the broader community, not just by people or businesses on the segment of the street where the sidewalk will be located, which is why they are generally implemented without specific consultation for that project.

The value of sidewalks is particularly high for vulnerable pedestrians such as people with disabilities, children and seniors. Sidewalks provide people with disabilities greater ability to live independently, with dignity and to participate fully in all aspects of life. Sidewalks are also a critical factor in encouraging more people to use transit. Every transit trip begins and ends with a walk, so sidewalks are necessary to connect activity areas to our transit routes in order to have a successful transit system as well.

The Sidewalk Strategic Plan is typically updated every 4 years to ensure that changes in land use or other criteria are reflected in the sidewalk ratings. For example, if a new school is opened or an existing one closed, the ratings reflecting the need for sidewalks in that area may change as well.

The 2016 update to the plan is provided in Appendix A. As of the end of 2018, it is expected that there will be 364 km of missing sidewalks with 24 km rated a Priority 1 or 2. Table 1 shows the percentage of roads with sidewalks on both sides, one side and with no sidewalks.

Table 1: Provision of Sidewalks along Roads

Provision of Sidewalks Along Roads	Percent
Both Sides of Road	43
One Side of Road	20
No Sidewalks*	37

* 5% of the roads with no sidewalks are on cul-de-sacs

Provision of New Sidewalks on Existing Streets

Implementation of the Plan is primarily funded either through the capital program that was established for implementing the Sidewalk Strategic Plan or through road reconstruction project budgets. In cases where cycling infrastructure is also needed and there are few driveways, a multi-use trail can be constructed in lieu of a sidewalk. Examples of where this has been done are Brealey Drive, Airport Road south of Sir Sandford Fleming Parkway, the Parkway and Medical Drive, and the west side of Ashburnham Drive between Lansdowne Street and Maria Street.

Constructing sidewalks along existing streets is more difficult and costly than on new streets, yet 31.6 km of sidewalks have been constructed along existing streets over the last 10 years. Appendix B is map showing the sidewalks that have been constructed between 2009 and 2018.

There has been opposition to two projects that were rated a Priority 1 or 2. One of these projects was not brought to Council because it was a short section of sidewalk that can be addressed at a later date and the other one was Middlefield Drive where a sidewalk was only built on one side of the road.

Many of the sidewalk projects that have received the most opposition have been ones where the sidewalks are ranked a Priority 3 or 4, but have been recommended by staff due to the high number of students walking to school and safety conflicts that often arise between students walking on the street and parent pick-up and drop-off activity. There are also many sections of Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks that are not being built yet due to mature trees and physical constraints such as topography or bridges that make implementation very difficult and/or costly.

Remaining Priority 1 and 2 Missing Sidewalks

Appendix C provides a map showing the location of all missing sidewalks and their priority rating. Of the 24 km of missing Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks:

- 4 km will be constructed as part of road reconstruction or sidewalk projects planned in the near term on Lansdowne Street East, Water Street, Sherbrooke Street, Chemong Road and Bethune Street;
- Several segments are on roads that have not been urbanized. Generally, these sidewalks are implemented when the road is urbanized because boulevard and driveway grades are often changed when curbs are installed and this often requires the removal and reinstallation of a sidewalk;
- Several segments cannot be readily constructed due to physical constraints such as narrow bridge structures, steep slopes or restricted right-of-way width;
- Several segments are not recommended to be built at this time because they would infringe on mature trees e.g. west side of Brealey Drive between Stenson Avenue and Sir Sandford Fleming Drive;
- A few are outliers in the analysis that are not as high a priority as the mathematical ranking score would suggest; and
- A few are being planned to be built as part of agreements with developers such as the short section of missing sidewalk on the west side of Fairbairn Street between Parkview Drive and Highland Road.

The cost to construct a basic sidewalk project averages about \$575 per metre, in 2018 dollars, for simple sidewalk projects with no major constraints. To construct the remaining 16 km of Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks which are not included in other capital works would cost about \$9,200,000. Assuming the capital budget assigned to new sidewalk construction remains at just over \$800,000 per year, adjusted for inflation; it would take about 12 years to finish implementing the Plan to construct Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks at this rate.

Of the Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks, 3 km are on local streets. When there has been opposition to a new sidewalk, it has most often occurred for locations proposed on local streets. The local streets that have missing sidewalk segments ranked as Priority 1 and 2 are typically characterized by the following:

- all are in a school walking zone
- 75% are close to or in the downtown
- 75% have a slope of 10% or greater
- all are in close proximity to high density housing
- all are close to a park
- all but 1 are located near a seniors activity centre or retirement home

Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks have the greatest effect on the broader community interests and the benefits reach beyond the local properties adjacent to the sidewalk itself. Staff recommend adhering to the Sidewalk Strategic Plan for Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks on

local streets unless it is physically not possible to construct a sidewalk or there are mature trees that warrant delaying implementation.

Priority 3, 4 and 5 Sidewalks

Sidewalks that have a priority rating of 3, 4 or 5 are not typically implemented as part of the current Sidewalk Strategic Plan, but can come forward as projects due to local issues and safety concerns that arise in a neighbourhood. These issues can be related to concerns with pedestrians walking on the road in areas with poor sight lines, a high number of vulnerable users, conflicts between pedestrians and parked cars, and traffic speed and/or volume issues. The current Traffic Calming screening process used by staff requires that a street have a sidewalk on at least one side of the road, before other more restrictive forms of traffic calming are considered to improve pedestrian safety, as the best safety improvement is to reduce the conflict that creates the risk in the first place. There are several Priority 3, 4 or 5 sidewalk projects that have been proposed by staff or the community that have been contentious in the past. The broader community benefit for these projects may be less than for a Priority 1 and 2 sidewalk, yet the interest or need for the sidewalks can be quite high.

No evaluation process is perfect, and situations where lower priority sidewalks are requested for safety reasons create difficult decisions for staff where the need can appear to be quite high, while at the same time there can often be opposition to the sidewalk(s) on the street. Similarly, the reverse can also happen, where the sidewalk is wanted along a street, but it is a low priority and/or not urbanized yet and staff cannot justify putting it forward for construction, given the potential throw away costs, despite the neighbourhood support. Because these projects generally have some merit or local support, staff typically brings these to Council for consideration and a decision. It is recommended that this practice continue.

Summary

Continuing to support the implementation of the Sidewalk Strategic Plan makes more streets accessible for pedestrians, leading to positive transportation, environmental and health outcomes.

More than half of the Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks have been constructed, with 24 km remaining. Of the remaining Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks, about 1/3 are not likely to be constructed in the near future due to the presence of mature trees and physical barriers to construction. The remaining 2/3 are expected to be constructed over the next 12 years through future road reconstruction projects or the sidewalk capital program.

The Sidewalk Strategic Plan remains a valuable tool to assist staff in prioritizing how Council's investment in sidewalk infrastructure should be made to the maximum benefit. Sidewalks with a lower priority that merit consideration for implementation can arise due

to local factors that cannot always be reflected in the ranking process, and these projects will continue to be brought to Council for consideration as appropriate.

Submitted by,

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Appendices:
Appendix A - 2016 Sidewalk Strategic Plan Update
Appendix B - Sidewalks Constructed from 2009-2018
Appendix C - Map of Priority Missing Sidewalks