



## **WALK Friendly Ontario Feedback Report City of PETERBOROUGH**

### **SUMMARY**

Peterborough showed impressive cross-sector collaboration in completing the application, and this is an ongoing demonstrated strength for the city. Your sustained community involvement and variety of initiatives being undertaken in partnership with Public Health, GreenUP and other partners are praiseworthy. The Review Team was also encouraged by your progress toward a more walk friendly community in the last year, which happened at both the policy (indicators report, Active Transportation By-Law) and community level (open streets). You have a well-informed sense of what your challenges are and articulate them well.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Progressive sidewalk policy
- On-going implementation of the Sidewalk Strategic Plan
- Active transportation By-Law
- Precedent setting Peterborough City and County Active Transportation and Health Indicators Report
- Strong community partnerships
- Winter maintenance of sidewalks

### **TOP PRIORITIES**

- More progressive street and intersection design standards to support a safe and comfortable walking environment
- Greater emphasis on pedestrian safety
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans required in the site plan agreement
- More aggressive approach to completing gaps in the sidewalk network
- Increasing walking mode share

### COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- Broaden the interests represented on your Committee of Council to engage community groups and agencies including police, BIAs, school board representatives, etc., to expand your reach and build support.
- We recommend that the Mayor of Peterborough sign the [International Charter for Walking](#) as an expression of the City's commitment to the principles in the Charter. This could be done at an open streets event or new trail opening where media is present and it can be publically celebrated.

### Status of Walking

- Your journey-to-work numbers have been trending down. Although you don't have data after 2011, it would be great to see an upward trend. It's surprising and unfortunate that after all of your efforts with school and workplace TDM programs that school travel and work commutes have declined over time.
- It is great to be able to report zero pedestrian fatalities as a result of vehicle collisions in the last 5 years. However, you indicate that there is an over-all increase in pedestrian-vehicle collisions. It would be interesting to know more about the causes of these collisions, e.g. road/intersection design, vehicle speed, distracted walking, and develop counter measures and strategies to address them.

Despite the potential unreliability of the data, both TTS and census data show a decrease in walking and there has been an increase in collisions involving pedestrians. These are the most important indicators of success of walking initiatives, policies and programs, and need to be addressed. Of course Peterborough is not alone in having this problem.

### PLANNING

The City of Peterborough is showing leadership in the area of policy and planning to support walking. Your progressive Sidewalk Policy, on-going implementation of the Sidewalk Strategic Plan, recent development of an Active Transportation By-law and supportive targets in your Comprehensive Transportation Plan all demonstrate the City's understanding that **walking is the fundamental mode in any integrated mobility solution.**

- One of the three aspects of your community most in need of improvement in order to better accommodate walkers of all ages and abilities identified in your application is more mixed/complete land-use in new neighbourhoods. With a residential infill rate of 62% in 2014, a diversity of land uses should be the focus of this development opportunity so that there are destinations within walking distance. Complying with, and exceeding the higher density developments required by the Growth Plan can help in this regard.

**Recommendation:** Incorporate elements of "complete communities" into site plan agreements and stop allowing single use, low density residential development – period.

## Appendix A

- While the program pieces of your TDM Plan seem to be well underway, the policy pieces are lacking. The Town of Richmond Hill (WFC Bronze) requires developers to submit a TDM plan as part of the site plan. TDM plans are expected to include accommodations for sustainable travel modes including walking, cycling and access to public transit, and details for implementation.

**Recommendation:** Require developers to submit a TDM Plan as part of their site plan agreement to ensure that sustainable travel modes are included in neighbourhood design.

- Although there have been some Complete Streets projects undertaken on Brealey Dr., Ashburnham Dr. and Riverside Dr., the City has not yet adopted a Complete Streets policy. There are many resources that can be drawn upon for progressive engineering standards and best practices. It's not a one size fits all scenario and at times there are trade-offs. However, a Complete Streets policy is one way to ensure that this lens is brought to bear on every new road construction and re-construction project.

**Recommendation:** Adopt a Complete Streets policy making implementation "routine accommodation", and incorporate Complete Streets into your Transportation Master Plan (TMP). See the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation's document [Complete Streets by Design](#) for more information and also [Making Canada's Roads Safer for All](#) from Transport Canada.

- The Review Team felt that the City's mode share target of 8% for cycling and walking combined in the TMP is only modest relative to the current rate. They would also like to see targets for cycling and walking be separated.

**Recommendation:** Set separate and more ambitious targets for walking and cycling in your TMP.

- Also, the absence of pedestrian-safety related goal(s) in the Transportation Plan is a limiting factor, especially given the observed increase in pedestrian-vehicle collisions.

**Recommendation:** Set safety targets such as the reduction in collisions between walkers and motor vehicles in your TMP so that this can be a tool to address this issue through the evaluation of current design and management strategies, and appropriate counter measures can be implemented.

- Your sidewalk policy is great. However, the Review Team felt that it could be made better through more aggressive implementation, e.g. Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks won't be completed until 2022. It's good to see that annual targets for implementation are being met despite opposition.

## Appendix A

- Although your rate of public transit use to get to work is low at 10%, we suspect that your student ridership is much higher. While daytime headways of 20 minutes are an improvement on 4 of your bus routes during peak times, a fifteen minute wait time is something to aim for.

It was noted that only 10-25% of bus stops have shelters, concrete pads, seating or waste receptacles. While the new software will provide riders with access to real time transit information, better quality facilities at bus stops also make public transit a more appealing option. Is this included in the Transit Stop Improvement Plan/Program? What percent of the Plan is complete? Are you meeting annual targets?

**Recommendation:** Install more and better quality facilities at transit stops to accommodate people waiting for a bus, such as shelters, concrete pads, seating and waste receptacles.

- The City's parking strategies sound good, e.g. lower parking requirements for residential units in the downtown area and cash in lieu of parking. The latter is a great revenue tool that allows the city to prioritize where parking should be placed. Consider limits for new developments that are in close proximity to transit hubs and where there are facilities provided for other modes such as bike lockers. The City of Guelph has allowed for reduced parking requirements when TDM strategies are implemented (e.g. Market Commons). The Town of Richmond Hill has outlined recommendations for maximum parking standards in their Parking Strategy.

**Recommendation:** Develop maximum parking standards that allow for reduced parking requirements when TDM strategies are implemented and include these in your Parking Strategy.

### ENGINEERING & COMMUNITY DESIGN

A fairly high percentage of your sidewalk network meets AODA standards, which is good and you've indicated that only 10-25% of your existing sidewalk network is in need of repair. There appears to be good follow-through on your audits and maintenance standards. The Review Team was also impressed with the general maintenance of your sidewalks and trails – especially snow clearing on both during the winter months.

- Less than 10% of your walking infrastructure is lit using human scale lighting. Human scale lighting is essential to illuminate sidewalks and paths in a manner to make it safe and inviting to walk. For example, during the winter months it's dark during commuting times. Lighting is one aspect of [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#) (CPTED), which can be used to assess safety in specific areas of the City.

**Recommendation:** Inventory your lighting, especially at transit stops, as part of your asset management plan/program in order to schedule and budget for improvements.

## Appendix A

- One of the 3 aspects of your community identified in the application in most need of improvement in order to better accommodate walkers of all ages and abilities is intersection design. It was noted that new intersections that are being built are typically wider than older ones with more turning lanes and wider turning radii, particularly on arterial roads.

Turning radii can have a big impact on the safety and comfort of pedestrians in intersections as vehicles tend to approach right turns faster and make rolling stops on red lights. The City of Kitchener has a standard curb radius of 6 m on all road types. This can be increased to up to 12 m at an access point to a commercial area in order to accommodate turning emergency vehicles. Newer developments are being encouraged to maintain a 6 m radius but have a mountable section that would increase the radius to 12 m to accommodate an emergency vehicle if needed.

**Recommendation:** Adopt a standard curb radius of 6 m on all new neighbourhood streets and collectors and a radius not greater than 12 m on all arterials.

Many intersections have pedestrian signals and most meet the OADA standards. Beyond this, however, it does not appear that much is being done with respect to pedestrian oriented design to facilitate safer and more comfortable crossings. Intersections are the places in corridors where all travel modes mix the most and user safety is paramount. Implementing “no right turn on red” by-laws and installing lead pedestrian intervals/signals are two things that can help to reduce collisions between pedestrians and vehicles making right hand turns. Your collision data can help to determine if and where these treatments should be located.

**Recommendation:** Develop and consistently implement guidelines for pedestrian oriented intersections that address the needs of the most vulnerable users of these spaces – people walking. See the City of Ottawa’s (WFC Silver) guidelines on [Intersections, Driveways and Pedestrian Crossings](#) as an example.

**Recommendation:** Pedestrian signals should display with every phase of the light as this is what gives walkers the right of way in the intersection. A program to install count-down signals in the downtown should be implemented immediately.

- The posted speed limit on neighbourhood streets and in the downtown area is too high at 50 km/hr. Canada Walks fully supports the recommendations made in the [Ontario Chief Coroner’s Pedestrian Death Review](#) to lower the speeds on residential streets to 30 km and to 40 km on other roads. A person has a 90% chance of surviving a collision with a car at speeds of 30 km/h or lower, but that drops to a 50% chance of survival at a speed of 45 km/h.

**Recommendation:** Reduce posted speed limits on neighbourhood streets, near schools and seniors residences to 30 km/hr and to 40 km/hr in your downtown area, in conjunction with an education and enforcement campaign.

- The traffic progress in the downtown of 35-40 km/h is good and the low signal cycle lengths (35 sec) is helpful for people crossing the street. Consider checking your signal timing in other locations across the city with the Pedestrian Signal Delay calculations that are available in the US Highway Capacity Manual. This gives a rating for intersections and relates it to pedestrian comfort and delay (and likelihood of jaywalking), e.g. more than a 30 second delay results in low adherence to traffic signals by pedestrians.
- Ensure that pedestrian crossings are safe and efficient, particularly on arterials and collectors in suburban areas where there may be greater distances between signalized crossings. Mid-block crossing pose a unique challenge and it's good to see that median refuge islands have been successful in providing some element of safety to pedestrians.

In June 2015, the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) was amended through Bill 31 – Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act (Making Ontario's Roads Safer), and included changes to enhance the rights-of-way for pedestrians in crossovers and regulations respecting pedestrian crossovers (PXO). These amendments came into force in January 2016.

In conjunction with this, the Ministry of Transportation recently completed its update to Ontario Traffic Manual Book 15 Pedestrian Crossing Facilities. Within this update, the Province has introduced three new variations of the Pedestrian Crossover. These crossing treatments will allow pedestrians to cross with the right-of-way under a greater number of conditions than before, and will provide municipalities with more cost effective solutions to ensure pedestrian safety – particularly for mid-block crossings. The updated version of OTM Book 15 is set to be released early this year.

**Recommendation:** Engage in a process to identify priority locations for mid-block crossings that considers collision data, need expressed by citizens, block length and land use context.

- Less than 10% of your current signal or stop controlled crosswalks have painted ladder markings.

**Recommendation:** Paint ladder markings at all signal controlled intersections, crosswalks and pedestrian crossovers (PXOs) to clearly delineate the crossing. This provides a strong visual cue to drivers that the crossing area is pedestrian space.

- It was noted that you don't have a warrant process for traffic calming in the city. The City of Hamilton (WFC Silver) recently updated its [Traffic Calming Policy](#), which includes a Traffic Calming Program that operates based on neighbourhood need with no technical pre-requisites prior to installation of traffic calming/management measures. Instead, the technical requirements are used to prioritize proposed traffic calming/management measures.

## Appendix A

**Recommendation:** Develop and implement a traffic calming policy that includes a process to address issues brought forward by citizens.

### EDUCATION & ENCOURAGEMENT

The Review Team was pleased to see a TDM program in place and the partnership with GreenUP for program delivery is excellent. You also have a strong ASRTS program, with good participation rates at all three school levels and core funding from the City, which is so important for sustainability. Kudos for getting high school students involved with the Shifting Gears Transportation Challenge! While your workplace participation rates are fabulous and increasing, the rate of municipal staff participation seems low at only 4% - this could be an area for improvement. You have a very impressive amount and range of mature partnerships – you embody the phrase “it takes a community to be walk friendly” – well done. Congratulations on a very successful Open Street program! It would be great to see this happen more than once a year. We would have liked to hear more about your individualized marketing and incentives initiatives.

Over-all this is a strong section of the application. Here are a couple of areas for improvement:

1) It would be good if all walking initiatives could have a measurement component using the same methodology so that a grand total of walkers and event participation could be provided to key decision-makers to further build the case for walking.

2) Consider implementing a policy/process to make it easy for residents to organize a street event. In the City of Thunder Bay (Honourable Mention), a staff member helps community organizations (guides them through the process of closing down a street) and a procedural manual is provided and available online. Funding is also available as well as free equipment “rental” such as AV, pylons, first aid signs, tables, tents, etc. There is an events committee that the liaison from the community organization meets with to help gain approval from all parties/departments that need to be involved in closing a street for an event.

### ENFORCEMENT

It’s great to see that municipal by-laws are being enforced to make streets safer for walkers. The “Top 10” list compiled by city police is a great initiative as is their follow up with increased enforcement in these areas once identified. With regard to children's walking, the crossing guard program, in combination with the CAA School Safety Patrollers program is impressive. Local police seem very engaged in road safety education.

**Recommendation:** Consider working with the Police to implement a [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#) initiative to assess areas of the city for personal safety. There may be places that people don’t feel comfortable walking due to factors in the built environment that could be addressed, e.g. human scale lighting.

**Recommendation:** Consider engaging the Police in quarterly meetings with traffic engineers, planners and others to review sites in need of traffic safety improvement for motorists and pedestrians. For example, information collected for their Top 10 list from collision reports

could be useful in determining counter measures in design that could help to address pedestrian-vehicle collisions and other traffic safety issues.

### EVALUATION

The Review Team felt that this section was very strong. Peterborough's ongoing participation in the National Pedestrian and Bicyclist Documentation Project and tracking school travel since 1999 is wonderful. What have you learned from your efforts to track children walking to school? What trends have you found? It is obvious that you have a good understanding of the importance of measuring and monitoring, and how to use the data to build a strong case for support for walking with key decision-makers. It's good to see walkability audits being used in multiple ways.

**Recommendation:** Consider expanding the data collection methods used at schools to other parts of the community, for example, workplaces, community centres, shopping areas and other places where useful.

**Recommendation:** Implement better tracking and monitoring of the number of people engaged in TDM initiatives, events and activities to enable you to evaluate what's working and what's not in relation to mode shift and engagement in walking for transportation, enjoyment, health and well-being.

Peterborough is definitely on the right track with progressive plans and policies in place to support walking. Your community partnerships are exemplary and community involvement in your programs, especially ASRTS, is impressive. A strong focus on design changes and getting Complete Street-type processes and principles embedded in City departments would be effective in creating more positive change.