

CHAPTER SIX

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6.1 Best Practices

Excellent sources of best practice information are available through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Canadian Institute of Planners, and the federal government. However, the information is usually not specific or focused on the relationship between physical activity and obesity. Much of the information is related to urban planning and transportation, and health implications are not examined in detail.

6.2 Websites

Walking and Biking

www.walkON.ca

walkON is a partnership of Central West Ontario regional municipalities that have identified a need to support the development of walkable communities. walkON promotes the development of communities that support walking for transportation, health and recreation. It provides resources and programs to support local communities in increasing their “walkability.”

www.walkandbikeforlife.com

This website features useful information, pictures of some best practices and useful links, with the objective of providing assistance to people interested in promoting walking and cycling as activities, and parks, trails and open spaces as great places.

www.goforgreen.ca

Go for Green is a national charitable organization that encourages Canadians to pursue healthy outdoor physical activities that protect, enhance or restore the environment. Numerous resources focus on active transportation and the built environment.

www.americawalks.org

(USA) America Walks is a national coalition of local advocacy groups dedicated to promoting walkable communities. Its mission is to foster the development of community-based pedestrian advocacy groups, to educate the public about the benefits of walking, and, when appropriate, to act as a collective voice for walking advocates.

www.walkinginfo.org

(USA) The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) is a clearinghouse for information about health and safety, engineering, advocacy, education, enforcement and access and mobility. The PBIC serves anyone interested in pedestrian and bicycle issues, including planners, engineers, private citizens, advocates, educators, police and the health community.

www.bikewalk.org

(USA) The National Center for Bicycling & Walking (NCBW) helps create bicycle-friendly and walkable communities across North America by encouraging and supporting the efforts of individuals, organizations, and agencies. It provides bicycle and pedestrian advocates and professionals, transportation engineers and planners, public health specialists, and others with easy access to the information, training, tools, and experts they need to foster active living through community design.



6.2 Websites

continued...

Children:

www.saferoutestoschool.ca

Green Communities Active & Safe Routes to School is a comprehensive community-based initiative that taps into the increasingly urgent demand for safe, walkable neighbourhoods. Active & Safe Routes to School promotes the use of active and efficient transportation for the daily trip to school, addressing health and traffic safety issues while taking action on air pollution and climate change. The web site provides resources, tools, information and links for schools and communities to create their own unique Active & Safe Routes to School program.

Health Issues:

www.heartandstroke.ca

The Heart and Stroke Foundation is a national voluntary non-profit organization. Its mission is to improve the health of Canadians by preventing and reducing disability and death from heart disease and stroke through research, health promotion and advocacy. Resources are available on obesity and the built environment.

www.ocfp.on.ca

The Ontario College of Family Physicians website features an excellent series on “The Health Impacts of Urban Sprawl” covering air pollution, road fatalities, obesity and mental health issues.

www.activeliving.ca

The Coalition for Active Living is a national action group of more than 90 organizations committed to ensuring the environments in which we live, commute, work, learn and play support regular physical activity.

www.sprawlwatch.org

(USA) The Sprawl Watch Clearinghouse was launched in 1998. Its mission is to make the tools, techniques, and strategies developed to manage growth accessible to citizens, grassroots organizations, environmentalists, public officials, planners, architects, the media and business leaders. The Clearinghouse identifies, collects, compiles, and disseminates information on the best land use practices.

Planning and Design:

www.tc.gc.ca

This is Transport Canada’s website. Its mission is to develop and administer policies, regulations and services for the best transportation system for Canada and Canadians — one that is safe and secure, efficient, affordable, integrated and environmentally friendly.

www.cip-icu.ca

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) is a collaborative national federation that advances professional planning excellence through the delivery of membership and public services in Canada and abroad. It has been dedicated to the advancement of responsible planning throughout Canada since 1919.



6.2 Websites

continued...

www.ontarioplanners.on.ca

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) is the recognized voice of the province's planning profession. Its 2,600 practicing planners work for government, private industry, agencies, and academic institutions. Members work in a wide variety of fields, including urban and rural community development, urban design, environment, transportation, health and social services, housing, and economic development.

www.smartgrowth.ca

The Smart Growth Canada Network (SGCN) is a national organization founded in May 2003 to help advance the implementation of smart growth and sustainability principles across the country.

www.smartgrowth.bc.ca

Smart Growth BC is a provincial non-governmental organization devoted to fiscally, socially and environmentally responsible land use and development. Working with community groups, businesses, municipalities and the public, Smart Growth BC advocates for the creation of more livable communities in British Columbia.

www.cmhc.ca

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's website includes "Choosing a Neighbourhood with Sustainable Features" and other resources

www.activelivingbydesign.org

(USA) Active Living by Design is a national program which establishes innovative approaches to increasing physical activity through community design, public policies and communications strategies. Active Living by Design funds community partnerships across the U.S. to demonstrate how changing community design will impact physical activity.

www.cnu.org

(USA) The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) is the leading organization promoting walkable, neighborhood-based development as an alternative to sprawl. CNU takes a proactive, multi-disciplinary approach to restoring communities. Members are the life of the organization – they are the planners, developers, architects, engineers, public officials, investors, and community activists who create and influence our built environment, transforming growth patterns from the inside out.

www.activelivingresearch.org

(USA) Active Living Research is administered by San Diego State University. It is a \$12.5-million national program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation® (RWJF). It supports research to identify environmental factors and policies that influence physical activity. Findings from this research will be used to help inform policy, design of the built environment and other factors which promote active living.



Appendix A Sample Mission Statements



walkON is a partnership of Central West Ontario heart health projects that, together, have identified a need to support the development of walkable communities.

MISSION

To promote the development of communities that support people-powered transportation.

VISION

walkON envisions an Ontario where people value and seek to live in communities that are safe, convenient, and accessible for people powered-transportation to meet their daily needs.

GOALS

walkON seeks to...

- Mobilize communities to focus on improving the built environment
- Improve the built environment to support people powered transportation
- Increase the proportion of residents in Central West Ontario who choose people powered transportation as a way to be active



Walk San Francisco promotes walking as a safe and sustainable form of transportation that increases our city's livability, enhances public life, and improves public and environmental health. We are a coalition of organizations and individuals that seeks to improve San Francisco's walking environment through activism and policy advocacy that educates residents, city agencies, and elected officials regarding the need for more pedestrian-friendly streets.

Our goals are:

- To ensure the design of a human-scaled, pedestrian-oriented city
- To promote community attitudes and government policies that favour walking
- To increase funding for pedestrian-friendly transportation planning and projects
- To reduce pedestrian deaths and injuries
- To increase walking in San Francisco by making it fun again
- To make San Francisco the most walkable city in the United States



Vision

We envision a community where citizens of all ages can enjoy walking and other forms of people powered transportation in safety in their neighbourhoods, parks, trails and business districts.

Mission

Walkable Edmonton is using a multifaceted approach that encourages awareness and behavioural changes to enhance individual ownership, community ownership and environmental well-being through walking. We also recognize that walkability is one critical element of larger initiatives around people-powered transportation



Appendix B Sample Terms of Reference

walkON Terms of Reference Approved: November 24, 2006

MISSION

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STRUCTURE

Coordinating Committee

Membership of the Coordinating Committee shall consist of heart health coordinators from the participating communities, and a Project Manager. The Coordinating Committee shall:

- Meet regularly, independently of the Central West Network Meetings
- Record minutes and post in Choices 4 Health electronic library until the walkON member's only library is established
- Set direction and make decisions to move the project forward
- Establish ad-hoc task groups, lead by a coordinating committee member, to work on defined project activities
- Authorize budget expenditures
- Report to the Ministry of Health Promotion
- Ensure communication occurs with local community partnerships
- Monitor and evaluate progress of initiatives
- Hire and oversee any contract work

Task Groups

The role of each of the task groups is to plan and organize a specific activity. Each group will do the necessary work to complete the task. Task groups have full autonomy to make decisions. If an activity falls outside of the approved plan, the sub-committee will approach the Coordinating Committee with recommendations. When decisions need to be made, the task group will make recommendations and forward to the Project Manager at least one week prior to the meeting. Each task group will forward monthly budget updates to the Project Manager and will forward any web updates to the Media and Community Relations task group.

The sub-committees and their respective roles are outlined below:

Resource Tools

- Develop and adapt resources to be used in conjunction with the walkON project.

Community Education

- Background research, pre and post tools, developing the plan

Advisory Board

- Advisory Board membership consists of representatives from a variety of stakeholder groups, including community services and the Ministry of Transportation. Other members should include politicians, the Medical Officer of Health, planners, community members, people-powered transportation advocates, and developers.
 - o Provide technical expertise, input and guidelines around different aspects of resources offered by WalkON
 - o Conduct meetings at a minimum of two times per calendar year; one face to face with a professional development opportunity and the other via teleconference.



Partnership Groups

- Membership consists of regional/provincial groups who share the same values and commitment to encouraging an environment that supports people-powered transportation.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Lead

- Champion annual strategic objective-setting process
- Act as gatekeeper of the strategic plan and ensure that objectives are set, met and revised as needed
- Lead the development of the multi-year plan, including potential provincial roll-out
- Identify potential funding sources and facilitate decisions about necessary processes such as completion of proposal, reporting, and accounting
- Regularly liaise with Project Manager to ensure the alignment of strategy and program execution

Treasurer and Ministry Liaison

- Coordinate the payment of the invoices from the Central West budgets
- In collaboration with the Project Manager, allocate and reallocate program and evaluation budgets as needed
- Coordinate Ministry budget reporting
- Establish budgeting mechanism
- Complete planning and report documents on behalf of walkON to the MOHP
- Provide a draft copy to each community partnership for input
- Provide a final draft to each community partner who will be responsible for submitting a copy with their local reports/plan
- Liaise with ministry representative as needed

Media and Community Relations

- Respond to media requests (internal and external)
- Ensure the develop of media release templates
- Identify opportunities for media releases
- Determine involvement in presentations
- Write abstracts for presentations
- Identify presenter and resources for conferences
- Liaise with web master to complete updates
- Maintaining and update website needs
- Develop guidelines for use of website
- Respond to general requests outside of Coordinating Committee
- Develop the highlight report schedule and content

Walkability Workshop and Information Session Coordinator

- Liaise with coordinators to ensure community workshops are planned and coordinated
- Manage consultants to ensure they are meeting deliverables
- Coordinate supporting resources
- Identify and provide opportunities to connect consultants to necessary resources and people
- Maintain presentation for use at information sessions
- Monitor delivery of information sessions and assume responsibility for any necessary changes
- Support evaluation collection, data analysis and final summary for both workshops and information sessions

Partnership Relations

- Establish relationships of Central West partners and determine working relationship moving forward
 - o Develop a communication plan for partnership group
 - o Coordinate Advisory Board's annual meeting
 - o Coordinate a communication mechanism for the Advisory Board
 - o Maintain a representative Advisory Board to ensure all appropriate disciplines are represented
 - o Explore potential partnerships with groups outside of Central West who may want to become part of walkON



Appendix B continued...

Resource and Research Coordinator

- Evaluate incoming resources and share as appropriate
- Establish criteria for determining which resources to circulate and prepare summaries as appropriate
- Collect and lead development of FAQs
- Support coordinators in responding to FAQs
- Coordinate and support interested research students
- Make recommendations to subgroup for future resource support
- Maintain connections with other government and NGO organizations and leveraging resource development

Project Manager

- Maintain budget – program and evaluation and take decisions to Treasurer around allocation and reallocation of budget
- Ensure tasks are completed including in support of evaluator
- Ensure timelines are being met
- Support strategic planning process
- Facilitate meeting, set agendas and circulate provided pre-meeting work
- Ensure clarification of decisions needing to be made
- Ensure decision making process is being followed
- Liaise with coordinators to determine the most appropriate contact person for each task
- Provide support to coordinators to ensure optimum group functioning
- Complete in-depth evaluation of program
- Organize mentoring of new coordinators

DECISION-MAKING

Members work collectively and decision-making is by consensus, when possible. When consensus cannot be reached, a simple majority (50% + 1) will be needed to reach a decision. Each of the six sites will be awarded one vote.

CONFLICT

Any conflict of interest will be declared and recorded.

OWNERSHIP

All materials and resources created by walkON will be the property of the joint partnership and will be made available equitably across the participating community partnerships.

- Use of WalkON Logo:
The walkON logo will appear on all promotional materials and resources developed for the project. The consistent use of our logo will make our activities, promotions and resources readily recognizable. The Coordinating Committee shall approve use of the logo. Any conflict regarding use of the logo will be identified, discussed and resolved by the Coordinating Committee.

DATA

Data collected as part of the in-depth evaluation will be jointly owned by the walkON Partnership and will not be used for purposes other than evaluation of walkON programs. No officials of the health units other than evaluators, data entry clerks, and data analysts contracted or subcontracted by the walkON Partnership or by its contractors (in accordance with their agreements for the purposes of the evaluation with the Partnership) will have access to raw data during the in-depth evaluation.

BUDGET

Each heart health coordinator will be responsible for overseeing the allocation and spending of their budget for this project. However, all budget allocations and expenditures should be reported to the project treasurer to be captured on the master budget spreadsheet. Consideration of contributing the GST rebate for eligible expenses will be at the discretion of each heart health coordinator. Budget expenses will be approved by the Coordinating Committee and will include the following categories: external conferences, internal workshops, contracts (such as those for coordination, administration, development



Appendix B continued...

and research), promotional materials and services (for example, graphic design of communication materials), and meeting expenses.

COMMUNICATION

The Coordinating Committee and the Ad-hoc Task Groups shall keep a record of their meetings and relevant actions/decisions made at meetings. Minutes will be shared with all by posting on the website.

Appendix C Sample Agenda

Meeting:		Date & Time:	
Location:			
Chair:			
Time:	Topic:	Speaker:	Decision to be made:

Appendix E Sample Short Letter

Date:

Name

Street

Town, Province

Postal Code

Re: Walkable Communities & The New Bridge Construction

Dear _____:

As a member of walkON in Small Town, Ontario, I am writing to express support for Small Town's proposal for design modifications and phased-in construction of the new "A" Street Bridge. The success of this project depends heavily on the proper allocation of incentives and disincentives. As currently proposed, the design for the bridge provides a level of convenience for single occupant vehicles that will keep most drivers in their cars. Virtually every downside of the project – including the intersections, free right turn lanes, and skewed intersections – adversely affects pedestrians.

walkON supports the recommendations for reducing the design speed of the bridge, eliminating the free right turn lane, and eliminating an eastbound right turn lane from the bridge at "B" Street. walkON also recommends reducing the lane width to 11 feet and reducing the turning radii at intersections.

Additional right of way purchased for the later phases of the bridge could be used for attractive medians and public space. These modifications would encourage behaviour to change, possibly eliminating the need for future expansion of the bridge. Phased construction would also enable our town to obtain more accurate forecasts of traffic conditions before building additional capacity.

Small Town is currently one of the most intense pedestrian environments in the region and this is the trend we wish to support. walkON encourages you to support the proposal for design modifications and phased construction of the bridge. Small Town cannot build its way out of congestion, but must rely on changing travel behaviour. Give pedestrians a chance!

Sincerely,

Chair, WalkON



Appendix F Sample Long Letter

Date:

Name

Public Works Department/Planning Department

City, Ontario

Postal Code

Re: Proposed New Sub-Division

Dear _____:

walkON is a partnership of Central West municipalities that, together, have identified a need to support the development of walkable communities. We believe that together, we can build sustainable, walkable communities to improve the health of our citizens, our children and our environment. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on your new sub-division plan and appreciate your assistance in meeting with us to help us understand the nature of this complex project.

Outline of Our Comments:

walkON finds that the proposed project, if implemented, would constitute a significant negative impact to the planned pedestrian environment. The City's policies and standards support an improved pedestrian environment. The proposed project negates that vision.

To minimize the significant negative impact, we recommend that the proposed project:

- Provide shade street trees in the planter strips along all streets of the proposed project.
- Include utility poles and traffic boxes in the planter strips to leave the sidewalks clear for walkers including persons with disabilities.
- Provide crosswalk design that encourages pedestrian usage by including pedestrian islands on all arterials, flashing lights when pedestrians are in the crosswalks, and crosswalks on all corners of the streets.
- Manage the speed on the arterials by reducing the lane width to 11 feet, and by timing the signals to maintain the traffic at the appropriate speed.
- Continue to allow parking on streets with lower traffic volumes. This will be positive for businesses, will help slow the traffic and will provide a barrier between the traffic and pedestrians, enhancing the pedestrians' safety.

OFFICIAL PLAN – CONTEXT

Overall Goals Related to Transportation: (emphasis added)

- Create a safe, efficient surface transportation network for the movement of people and goods.
- Provide all citizens in all communities of the region with access to a transportation network that serves both the City and region, either by personal vehicle or transit. Make a special effort to maximize alternatives to single-occupant vehicle use, such as public transit.
- Maintain a desirable quality of life, including good air quality, while supporting planned land use and population growth.



In the proposed sub-division plan the discussion focuses mainly on bicycles and the Bicycle Master Plan. There is little analysis of the needs of pedestrians even though the Official Plan calls for an increase in this mode of transit.

The proposed sub-division does include some pedestrian improvements – the elimination of free right turn lanes on two roadway segments, the addition of sidewalks to streets that do not now have sidewalks, and the increased street connectivity. However, these improvements are far short of what would support an “increase in the pedestrian mode.” They make pedestrian access barely possible but not safe, comfortable or desirable. The improvements do not offer a good alternative to the automobile. The automobile continues to receive priority in this facility design, to the detriment of pedestrians.

The key elements that are needed to make the environment pedestrian-friendly include:

- Direct Routes providing the opportunity to go directly to one’s destination. This includes connectivity of the sidewalk and trail system.
- Safety along the street and on the crosswalks to help eliminate concerns about speeding traffic, large trucks, the time it takes to walk across busy, wide streets, lighting, and eyes on the street.
- Convenience – pedestrians should be able to cross the street from all corners and approximately every 300 – 500 feet.
- Comfort – trees that shade the sidewalk from summer heat and benches to provide places for pedestrians to stop and regain strength.
- Attractive – trees, landscaping, interesting vistas, etc., enhance the comfort for pedestrians. Additionally, such amenities will slow traffic and will enhance the attractiveness of the roadway both for pedestrians and drivers. Trees that provide a canopy over the roadway will also reduce the heat island effect of the additional asphalt, an air quality benefit. Trees also by protect the asphalt, thereby extending its life, a cost savings.
- Intersections – The provision of islands in the median and adjacent to turn lanes, and the estimated time it will take a pedestrian to cross a particular intersection, must be considered.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this proposed project and to offer our suggestions for making it a positive improvement for pedestrians and the overall community. We would be happy to meet with you to answer any questions you may have regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

Chair, WalkON
(area code) 888-0099

c.c. Neighbourhood Association
Regional Transit
Area Bicycle Advocates
Trails Association

