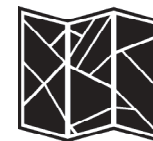
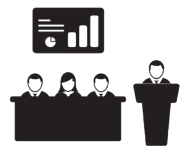




TOWN OF GRAVENHURST

AGE-FRIENDLY ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN OF ACTION 2017

 Ontario
Funded by the Government of Ontario



**If you can't differentiate
your community from
any other, you have no
competitive advantage.**

Ed McMahon, Urban Land Institute



PREFACE

This Plan of Action for Active Transportation has been created for the Town of Gravenhurst, and is intended to be a tool for the community to be creative; leverage their assets; facilitate participation; and focus on practical solutions to improve Gravenhurst through various active transportation projects with specific attention to initiatives that support an age-friendly community.

This Plan is specifically structured as a series of distinct projects designed to be implemented in both near and longer-terms and be completed by citizens, businesses, as well as the Municipality.

These projects were crafted so that they would work together and build upon each other. Overall, this Plan was developed with a focus on:

- a) age-friendly community*
- b) community building;*
- c) neighbourhood scale improvements;*
- d) walkability and bikeability;*
- e) human-centered design; and,*
- e) practicality of implementation.*

The projects in the Plan relate to the planning for, and development of active transportation infrastructure, facilities and supportive culture; as well as, ways of engaging and mobilizing citizens to help with implementation.


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A healthy community supports the quality of human well-being, nourished and nurtured by an interrelationship between the build environment and nature that facilitates, social, psychological, physical, spiritual and cultural development for all individuals and the community alike.

Robert Voigt RPP MCIP

INTRODUCTION

Citizens, home buyers and the new economy insist on all-ages friendly, dynamic, innovative, walkable and livable communities. We know what they are, but how do we build them when we are stuck with a culture and regulations that are still focused on building towns for the past?

Successful communities, good public spaces, vibrant business communities, attractive neighbourhoods and active commercial districts don't happen on their own. All the features of our communities are created over time through the many choices and actions of its citizens and the municipality that governs it.

Building economically successful and healthy neighbourhoods and towns for the future requires teams with a broad spectrum of knowledge and skills. The community builders we need now are right in front of us, they just need the right tools, tactics and training. All planning and economic development programs, no matter how bold and visionary, lack sticking power without: creating the common lift among all stakeholders; providing clear and compelling evidence that it will build community and personal health; exhibiting how it will reduce the costs of running a city; and, building social capital.

During the summer and fall of 2016 the Town of Gravenhurst undertook the development of an active transportation plan for the community. The intent was to identify opportunities, options, and ideas relating to possible improvements to the community that would make it more walking and cycling friendly for all ages; with special attention to the needs of an aging population.

This Plan is not intended to be exhaustive, nor does it fully reflect all of the awaiting opportunities in the community that will arise as progress begins to be made through the implementation of the projects described here. Progress toward a more walking and

cycling friendly community takes time, and is an evolutionary process. The information in this Plan is designed to begin the process of implementing strategic actions that will result in physical changes, programming, and collaborations that will benefit Gravenhurst.

As world renowned active transportation expert Dan Burden, of Blue Zones recommended: "take this information and be practical and strategic, gain momentum, discover the broad-based desire throughout the community to provide greater respect for your children and elders to have a more active lifestyle and then expand outward".

To address the many aspects of active transportation the recommendations of this Plan collectively have consideration for:

- Healthy community design
- Economic development;
- Placemaking;
- Active lifestyles; and,
- Asset Based Community Development.

Changing Perspectives

Active transportation means any form of transportation that is human-powered. In fact, all trips include active transportation components, sometimes even just the act of walking to and from a car or transit vehicle. The most popular modes of active transportation are walking and cycling. Walking/wheeling is the only form of transportation that can be taken completely independently of all others for an entire trip from beginning to destination.

Over the past decade the value of active transportation to the

success and livability of communities has become increasingly better understood. The importance of this has been described in a vast number of professional journals, books, documentary films, conferences, and studies. This will continue to increase in importance due to an aging population; challenging peoples' quality of life and enhancing the appeal of compact, walkable communities. In fact, active transportation affects:

- livability, accessibility and community health
- economic and business resiliency and success
- real estate development
- potential tax revenue
- the cost of services
- traffic congestion
- access and mobility for residents
- safety and security
- business and population attraction and retention
- placemaking
- reduction of municipal costs for transportation and services.

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) identifies that moderately intense physical activity such as walking and cycling increases health benefits and has the potential to reduce cardiovascular disease by as much as 50 percent. Communities designed with active lifestyle infrastructure that prioritize pedestrians and cyclists, support healthy daily physical activity.

Overall, the demographic, cultural and economic conditions under which contemporary planning and community & local economic development must work requires more advanced and dynamic approaches than it did in recent decades. We can no longer use the tools and methods of the past, and expect the results we require for community success.

Things have changed drastically, and quickly, and most communities have not been able to keep pace with the needs of 21st century community building. Those that do not adjust accordingly in the near and mid-term, will likely find themselves with exasperated challenges and reduced quality of life and economic activity.

Placemaking

As described by the Urban Land Institute:

In the new economy, the precursors to economic growth (talent, entrepreneurship, knowledge industries) are attracted to locations that are enhanced through placemaking. Other places across the nation and the world have learned to respond to this changing paradigm in the built environment and the choices they offer.

The Knight Foundation's Soul of the Community report shows leaders across North America what makes cities successful; it's quality of life. If people love where they live, the more economically vital the place will be. Aesthetics, social and cultural offerings, and the openness of a community are what residents care about most. People want to live active, connected lives in places that are accepting to all.

Additional research echoes the importance of a well-designed public realm. The United Kingdom's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) reports:

Good design is not just about the aesthetic improvement of our environment, it is as much about improved quality of life, equality of opportunity, and economic growth.

Public leaders should prioritize activities to reflect these guiding principles; and active lifestyles and placemaking is what people want. Recent data in planning, economic development, real estate industries show that people of all ages increasingly want to live in walkable, mixed-use communities. Even during economic downturns compact pedestrian-oriented neighbourhoods, with quality access to nature, and nearby retail best held their value.

This shift toward healthy places and communities with a high quality sense of place represents an enormous opportunity for communities. Two of the largest and most sought-after market segments—millennials and baby boomers—are increasingly choosing vibrant, walkable communities. Active transportation, placemaking, and place-based economic development all go hand-in-hand to provide opportunities for social connections, and community building; exactly what these generations are seeking and what the projects in this plan will help facilitate. For this Project we have reviewed many dozens of reports, plans, articles, presentations, and videos; all of which confirm this type of recommended direction.

Active Transportation & Active Living

Paying attention to all modes of transportation in street planning can also create a more efficient system that responds better to travel demand (National Complete Streets Coalition, Complete Streets Ease Congestion, 2011).

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute identifies five areas of



People of all ages benefit from active transportation facilities. Even a paved roadway shoulder can give a greater sense of safety for cyclists.

community benefits from active transportation¹; these benefits are significant, far ranging, and are affected by a variety of planning and engineering activities undertaken by the Town:

1. Health;
2. Safety;

¹ Ontario Professional Planners Institute, Planning and Implementing Active Transportation in Ontario Communities: A Call To Action, 2012 pg. 3

3. Environmental;
4. Social/community; and,
5. Economic.

Walkable and livable communities are designed to accommodate an individual over the course of their lifetime regardless of age or ability; a built environment that is supportive of people performing their daily activities. While we know that physical activity is good for us, more than half of Canadians do not meet the daily recommendations set by national and provincial health agencies. The solution for much of what ails us resides in building walkable communities. Adults living in high walkability neighbourhoods engage in forty-one more minutes of total physical activity per week than those in low walkability neighbourhoods. Also, people who have sidewalks in their neighbourhoods reported more minutes of recreational walking.

Active transportation is not just a recreational activity, and people's perspective of its desirability and potential role in their lives has identified the importance people place on select destinations being within walking distance to their homes. The understanding of the importance and connection between community health and how we build our communities, including our street systems, is growing and includes:

- World Health Organization;
- Ontario Medical Association;
- Ontario College of Family Physicians report on Urban Sprawl;
- Ontario Professional Planners Institute;
- Province of Ontario;
- Heart and Stroke Foundation; and,
- Canadian Index of Well-being.

Many health experts now recognize that basic urban planning practices - specifically, transportation and land use policies - can help to achieve population health objectives. In fact, zoning, subdivision regulations and building codes were originally intended to enhance the health, safety and welfare of the public.

This Project had the benefit of having Dan Burden (pictured to the right) provide expert analysis and recommendations. Dan is the Director of Innovation and Inspiration at Blue Zones, as well as cofounder and former Executive Director of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute. Dan works throughout North America and the world to create healthy, connected communities that support active living and advance opportunities for all people through walkable streets, livable cities, and better built environments.

In his work, Dan brings together many disciplines and issues — such as street design, public safety, economic development and land-use planning — to create a holistic vision for healthy communities that are pedestrian and bicycle-friendly.

Burden has spent more than 40 years helping to get the world "back on its feet." His efforts earned him the first-ever lifetime-achievement award, issued by the New Partners for Smart Growth and the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals. Additionally, in 2001, Burden was named by TIME magazine as "one of the six most important civic innovators in the world." Also that year, he became Distinguished Lecturer for the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences. In 2009, a user poll by Planetizen named him one of the Top 100 Urban Thinkers of all time. Dan is also an Honourary Member of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute.

Aging Population

Active transportation is particularly important recognizing that it is necessary for people that do not have a choice outside of these modes for getting around. People who are physically, economically and socially disadvantaged often rely on walking and cycling, so



non-motorized modes can help achieve social equity and economic opportunity objectives. Paying attention to all modes in street planning can also create a more efficient system that responds better to travel demand (Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, Whose Roads? Evaluating Bicyclists' and Pedestrians' Right to Use Public Roadways, May 31, 2012). The Walkable and Livable Communities Institute states:

“Communities that support walkability (active transportation) have better health and well-being, lower rates of traffic injuries and deaths, better access for people of all abilities, higher property values, better air quality and less greenhouse gas emissions”.

Transport Canada states that physical activity from active transportation can help elderly individuals continue to live independently. (Transport Canada, The Links Between Public Health and Sustainable and Active Transportation, December 2006). Ontario’s Action Plan for Seniors published in 2013 addresses Healthy Seniors, Senior-Friendly Communities, and Safety and Security. Various aspects of active transportation and walkable community planning and design are identified as part of this. Support for what the World Health Organization (WHO) calls Age-Friendly Communities is becoming increasingly widespread.

As defined by the WHO, age-friendly communities adapt their “structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities. According to the WHO, age-friendly communities must address the needs of seniors across eight dimensions:

- outdoor spaces and buildings (walkways, roads, parks, ect.)
- transportation
- housing
- social participation
- respect and social inclusion
- civic participation and employment
- communication
- community support and health services.

Social Capital

Social networks and community involvement have positive health effects on people resulting in them being physically and mentally healthier and living longer lives. (Leyden, Kevin M., PhD, Social Capital and the Built Environment: The Importance of Walkable Neighbourhoods, Research

and Practice, American Journal of Public Health, September 2003, Vol 93, No. 9). The more connected we are with our community, the less likely we are to experience various illnesses. Many studies over the last 20 years have shown that people who are socially disconnected are between 2 and 5 times more likely to die from all causes. (Putnam RD. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster; 2000 - quoted in Leyden, Kevin M., PhD, Social Capital and the Built Environment: The Importance of Walkable Neighbourhoods, Research and Practice, American Journal of Public Health, September 2003, Vol 93, No. 9).

Persons living in walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods have higher levels of social capital compared with those living in car-oriented suburbs; and that walkable, mixed-use neighbourhood designs can encourage the development of social capital. (Leyden, Kevin M., PhD, Social Capital and the Built Environment: The Importance of Walkable Neighbourhoods, Research and Practice, American Journal of Public Health, September 2003, Vol 93, No. 9)

The World Health Organization recognizes that cities that invest in active transportation programs and policies can: Save money on transportation infrastructure; Have more productive citizens and workers; Be more livable and attractive to residents, employers and visitors; Have less air and noise pollution and better access to green spaces; Enhance neighbourhood revitalization, social cohesion and community identity; and, Expand social networks. (Transport Canada, Active Transportation in Canada, a resource and planning guide, 2011)

In fact, communities should be taking all these things into account when they create their strategic plans, design and build infrastructure, and create new developments and neighbourhoods. The recently released Call to Action from the Ontario Professional Planners Institute states:

“New planning and engineering policies and standards are being developed throughout North America and globally, not only to allow, but to require the safe, efficient and effective accommodation of active transportation modes within the shared right-of-way. Planners in



When active transportation projects and networks are done correctly they can aid in providing greater accessibility and freedom for persons with disabilities.

Ontario should be facilitating adoption and implementation of similar requirements, plans, and projects”.

Key Practices for Success

There are a number of practices used by communities that successfully support local economic development that have been identified by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Economic Development Case Study Handbook). The recommendations described in the Plan address many of these practices.

Practices of Successful Communities

a) Unique Attributes: Identify unique attributes and determine how to use them to the municipality's advantage.

b) Research & Marketing: Investment in innovative ways of researching and marketing the municipality.

c) Partnership and Regional Collaboration: Develop partnership and regional collaboration across a wide range of stakeholder groups, including businesses, local government, educational institutions and citizens. Develop understanding of how others are linked, interdependent and compete.

d) Local Leadership: Having a strong local champion is a major factor to community success.

e) Quality of Life: Focus on the quality of life within the municipality to attract business and a talented work force.

f) Long-Term and Strategic Planning: Long term and strategic planning is essential for a community to establish a vision and priorities to better serve the needs of citizens, and be prepared when opportunities arise.

g) Citizen Engagement, Youth Empowerment and Vision: Engaging citizens and identifying the community vision is a foundation for the community to meet the needs and wants of citizens. The meaningful participation and involvement of the youth of a community plays a critical role.

h) Social Diversity and Inclusion: Embracing the diversity of the population serves to strengthen the community and present opportunities.

i) Business Expansion and Retention Programs: Many municipalities focus on business expansion and retention programs to improve community economic readiness, provide jobs, and build a stronger local economy.

j) Adaptability and Innovation: Being able to recognize changes promptly, adjusting plans and being adaptable are major keys to success.

k) Economic Diversification: Planning and building a community that has a broad economic base and a variety of income and employment opportunities.

Context

Interest in active transportation is growing throughout Canada. People are looking at walking and cycling as more than just recreation. Active transportation as viable and desirable ways of traveling for daily activities is increasingly common. The Active Living & Environment Program has identified that 70% of Canadians indicated they would be willing to travel up to 30 minutes to work if they could enjoy the safety and convenience of a bike lane. (Go for Green The Active Living & Environment Program, Fitting Places: How the Built Environment Affects Active Living and Active Transportation)

Compared to more urbanized areas, in rural communities like Gravenhurst, the challenge for connectivity and proximity for active transportation is greatly exacerbated by lower population densities, and the often limited capacity for capital/infrastructure improvements. The arrangement of a community's land uses directly influence the ability of active transportation to be a viable choice for its citizens. If

compatible uses are physically separated by great distances and/or barriers such as busy roadways, it becomes very difficult for people to use active modes to participate in daily activities.

Transport Canada's, Sustainable Transportation in Small and Rural Communities (June 2006) highlights the following two municipalities (with similar challenges as the Town of Gravenhurst) and how they can improve active transportation with the right plans and commitment:

Saanich: The District of Saanich, BC is a good example of a community that has improved its active transportation infrastructure. Approximately half of its 110,000 population is classified as rural. Since 1993, the district has constructed more than 50 kilometres of on-road cycling infrastructure and pedestrian linkages have been improved by constructing new sidewalks and a multi-use trail system. As a result, bicycle commuting increased from 4% in 1999 to 11% in 2004.

Whitehorse: Despite its extreme climate, Whitehorse, Yukon has one of the highest year-round cycling populations. The city decided to capitalize on this by introducing Wheel 2 Work, a campaign that encourages people to commute by bicycle during the summer season. In order to support active transportation in its community, the city spent approximately \$2 million improving its cycling infrastructure. Improvements included upgrading multi-use paths, installing new lighting along selected pathways, and constructing a new bicycle/pedestrian bridge and new bicycle lanes. In early 2006, the City partnered with the Recreation Parks Association of the Yukon to create an incentive-based program to help encourage more people to cycle to work between May and September. Participants signed up to track the number of kilometres they cycled over the five-month period and prizes were offered as incentives. In its first summer, 210 people participated in the program, logging almost 40,000 kilometres.

The community of Gravenhurst generally has the open space, block pattern and land use arrangements to become a thriving active lifestyle community far beyond where it is currently, and a model for the region. It is time to expand on this to improve the built environment to ensure that the community can attract the younger Generations X and Y, and the retiring baby boomers who will want to settle, stay in

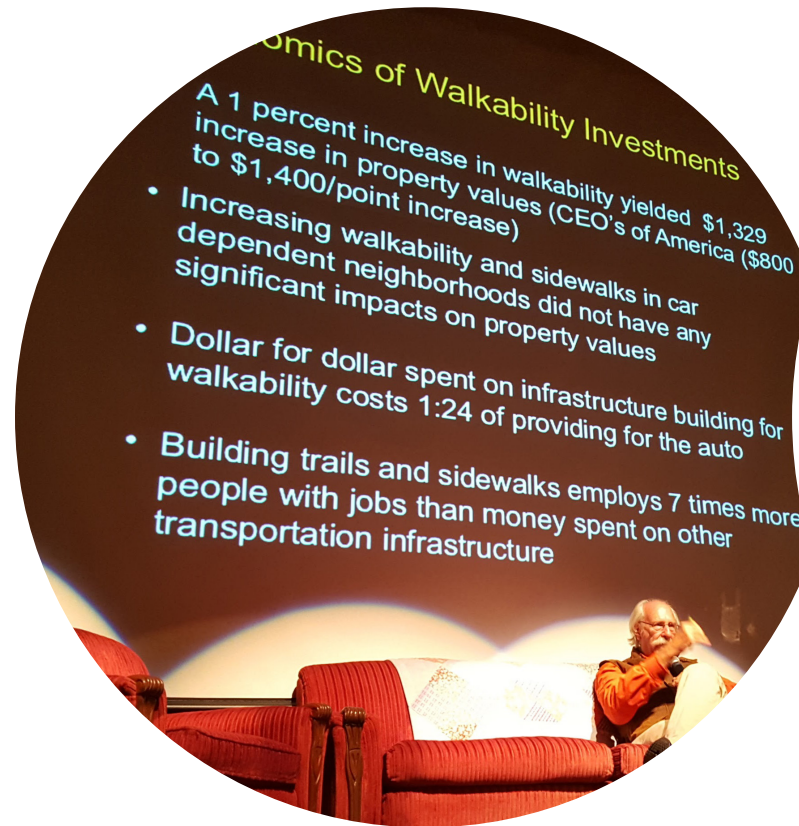
place, go to school or visit here. If they do, they will bring increased jobs, investment, social life and social cohesion to this community.

A number of the specific local challenges that will need to be addressed to do this are:

- Roads with higher design speeds than posted speeds
- Street treatments are inconsistent with support for active transportation
- End-of-trip facilities missing for bicyclists
- Gaps in walkway networks
- Poor wayfinding
- Active transportation network does not support people of all ages and abilities
- Crossings need to be updated
- Public information and education about active transportation needs to be improved
- Active lifestyles needs to be supported

Many efforts have been made, or are underway, in and around Gravenhurst and in other similar communities to support active living and active transportation. This Plan of Action complements these efforts, and suggests taking the strength of community “champions” and potential investors to ratchet up solutions to a much higher level. The observations from this project and the recommendations in the Plan will help the community move forward in a way that supports these various findings. The key responsibility and capacity for evolution toward a more healthy community rests with its citizens. The recommended courses of action listed here are intended to help the Town of Gravenhurst collaboratively leverage its influence and its built environment and craft a successful evolution into the future.

Through the projects described in the Plan, the Town and its community partners will be able to address these challenges and realize the multiple benefits of being a community that supports active transportation and active lifestyles.



Dan Burden at his presentation in Gravenhurst highlighting the economic benefits of investments in walkability.

The way we plan and design places has a significant impact on their social and economic fortunes. This is true in the regeneration of existing neighbourhoods and the development of new communities. Good urban design can help increase property values, reduce crime, contribute to public health and ease transport problems

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)

PURPOSE

This is not a “vision” document that defines a final goal that the community is expected to develop. This is an action-oriented plan that supports the long range policy of the Town to improve the wellbeing of residents and the overall livability of the community through a series of strategic improvements.

The intent is for this plan to be a tool for the Town, and the public to affect positive change and give the community a series of projects it can implement to make it more walking and cycling friendly for all ages. The goal is to create active transportation improvements that:¹

- Supports the community and placemaking
- Supports economic activity
- Maximizes transportation choice
- Integrates with the natural setting and built form
- Emphasizes walking and cycling as fundamental community options
- Creates harmony with other transportation networks.

The purpose of the Plan is to define implementation projects that will guide the evolution of the Town of Gravenhurst to better support walking and cycling. This includes the development of a cycling route network that is safe, easy to use, desirable, and, convenient; while also ensuring that active transportation infrastructure and improvements are also integrated to further support active lifestyles and future recreation oriented projects as well.

The Plan is focused on a shorter than typical timeframe and the following characteristics to facilitate implementation:

- a) Defining projects that have a range of timelines, associated costs, required partnerships, and key responsibilities (including public and private organizations);
- b) Facilitating citizen participation; and,
- c) Defining projects that strategically fit within the Town’s current capacity for implementation.

Beyond the simple goal of developing an extensive network of walking and cycling routes throughout the community that make it possible for people to travel without a vehicle, there are key characteristics that are equally, and arguably more important when planning for active transportation. An easy acronym to remember this is to think of the word SAFE, which stands for: Secure, Accessible, Functional, and Efficient. This is why the Plan has the variety of projects it does.

Do you want the character of your community to shape new development - or do you want new development to shape the character of your community?

Ed McMahon, Urban Land Institute

¹ Adapted from the Congress for the New Urbanism, Sustainable Street Network Principles

Making a community walking and cycling friendly requires an understanding of the complex interrelationships between the elements of the build environment and human nature. Some of the factors that are involved and that can enhance walking and cycling in a community are listed below (there are many others that have also gone into the crafting of this Plan and its recommendations):

Street connectivity: Streets should be arranged in a fine-grain grid without unnecessary culs-de-sac, with many route options.

Road widths that contribute to slower vehicle speeds.: The wider a road/travel lane is (or appears to be), the faster the drivers tend to travel. The faster cars are traveling, the less safe and comfortable a person feels living, walking, or bicycling next to them.

A sense of security: A feeling of comfort is created by facing homes & buildings toward the street, and providing transparency (windows & doors at street level) so people can watch over the street.

Traffic speeds that are appropriate for the context: In retail environments, roads should be designed to keep vehicle speeds between 30 & 40 kmph. At that speed, pedestrians are comfortable on sidewalks and motorists yield at crosswalks.

Pedestrian crossings that are comfortable & convenient: Providing safe, frequent crossings for pedestrians along major vehicle corridors is an important element of walkability and completing the pedestrian network.

Gateway features that create a sense of arrival: When motorists are given visual cues that they have entered a community and are no longer on the open highway, they reduce their speeds and are more respectful of all users on the road.

A pedestrian network that is accessible: When these steps are taken, it improves accessibility not just for pedestrians but also persons who use wheelchairs or walkers, and, for people pushing strollers, etc.

Human oriented and interesting places: locations that are appealing and provide the comforts of seating, wayfinding, restrooms, drinking water, etc.

Infrastructure improvements: the way on-street cycling routes are created has a great influence on their use. To determine the appropriate cycling infrastructure, vehicle traffic speeds and traffic volumes, and right-of-way widths all need to be considered.

End of trip facilities: how the system of cycling routes and infrastructure addresses the need to secure bicycles at the end of peoples' trips greatly impacts their desire to use the system. Providing convenient and secure bike parking in highly visible places near destinations are necessary for a well functioning system.

In recent decades, conceptualizations of health and disease have shifted from individual treatment to acknowledge the importance of disease prevention and health promotion in populations. This has included increased attention given to the impact of environments on collective wellbeing and on the interdependence of physical environments and human behavior.

Australian Healthcare Design 2000-2015

ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DRIVEN

Asset Based Community Driven (ABCD) is an approach to guiding the incremental evolution of a community, or neighbourhood, to greater success by focusing on and working with its existing assets.

As an analogy think of ABCD as working with a community Lego set. Each piece represents one of the many characteristics, skills, people, places, and things that we can combine to create a new and better reality of the community. It can be built, changed, added to, and subtracted from; a generally malleable framework that we have control over to define the reality we want.

ABCD is not a solution or project, but an approach to community and economic development based on principles focused on self-sufficiency, appreciative enquiry, creativity and entrepreneurship.

Asset-based approaches use community assets, and strengths of all kinds, seeing these as the key building blocks for successful and livable communities. Within the process, this includes a shift in focus from "outputs" or "products" and procedures such as meetings, to "outcomes" which are definable actions and desired results.

The core principles of the Asset Based Community Driven approach is that we cannot know what a community needs until they first know what they have. Every community has more gifts, skills, talents and resources than any one person or organization can know, and these are easily disabled by professional intervention and solutions that are not context specific.

These gifts, skills, talents and resources need to be identified, brought together and converted into innovative action to improve people's lives and economic opportunities in a community-driven way. ABCD involves developing a keen understanding of the community, which often begins with asset inventory map-

ping that is developed collaboratively with citizens. A community's assets can be generally categorized as follows:

Whole Assets Approach - takes account of all assets that are part of people's view of their community and includes natural, social, economic, and scarce elements of the community system.
Storytelling Approach - which focuses on pieces of social history.
Heritage Approach - which is a map or listing of any physical features (natural & built) the people identify as important.

The categories that are recommended for working with a Whole Asset Approach are:

People: community members that play important roles now, in the past, or even promising futures.

Places: any place that people find an attachment to or cherish.

Culture: things that define a town's culture as a whole, or the cultural groups of community members.

Leaders: people that play a significant role in the community.

Events: organized, informal, official, or ad hoc events that happen throughout the community.

Institutions: the organizations within the community (religious, sport, ethnic, business, services).

Businesses: key businesses that have an influence beyond that of their primary activity.

Natural Setting: elements of the natural landscape that influence the sense of place and activities.

Stories: history of the community as experienced by its citizens & stories of the people in the community.

Note that once the assets have been identified there are innumerable re-categorizations and groupings of these that can be done as part of the process of developing a work program with specific projects as identified in this Plan.

Problem Focused Planning & Economic Development	Asset Focused Planning & Economic Development
Focus on Deficiencies	Focus on Assets
Problem Response	Opportunity Identification
Charity Orientation	Investment Orientation
Grants to Agencies	Grants, Loans, Investments, Leverage
More Services	Fewer Services
High Emphasis on Agencies	Emphasis on Associations
Focus on Individuals	Focus on Neighbourhoods/ Districts
Maintenance	Development
See People as Clients	See People as Citizens and Co-producers
Fix Problems	Develop Potentials
Programs are the Answer	People are the Answer

ABCD is generally best conducted from an Appreciative Enquiry approach to look at the challenges at hand. It works to enable relationship building that can be merged with other data-oriented information. The intent of such activities should be to actively identify, connect and mobilize assets.

ABCD also involves action research into the strengths of individuals, neighbourhood and community competencies. The focus is on enabling practice and success, and thereby allowing for policy and projects to be informed by good practice, and not the other way around.

This is also applicable for the projects of this Plan that are under the primary control of the Town. By using organizational knowledge and the strategic role of the municipality, it can act as an influencer and catalyst for community leaders, that can help bring about positive change. The Town needs to move away from processes that are more effective at drawing out criticism than insightful critique and positive action. It needs to adapt and play a greater role as facilitator and catalyst of community action, and less of a purely regulatory role.

By focusing on the things that are working and on the existing successes and assets of the community, attention will be on actions that support success. The traditional “gap-analysis” or SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) approaches, which are typical, leave communities seeking additional resources (people, money, outside influences). The ABCD approach has communities building, scaling, adapting, integrating what they have already proven to have success with. It is far easier to adapt, share, and scale an existing success, than it is to mobilize an entirely new program/project/initiative. It also builds a culture of entrepreneurial support and problem solving.

**Focus on what’s strong,
not what’s wrong.**

*Cormac Russell, Asset Based Community
Development (ABCD) Institute*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The intent is that through the implementation of the projects in this Plan over approximately the next five to seven years, the community will become more walking and cycling friendly for all ages through infrastructure, education, and culture.

The results of completing the Plan's projects are expected to be:

Changed Culture: Making active transportation easier for daily activities; and supporting the local neighbourhoods and economy.

Changed Environment: Addressing a variety of active transportation characteristics, including: people-oriented design; better walking and cycling facilities; better signage; and, complete streets approaches, that will all make the community's physical form more supportive of walking and cycling.

Empowered Citizens: Making it easier for citizens to get involved in projects and facilitate partnership with the Municipality.

Changed Scope: Facilitating improvements to the variety of elements that support active transportation.

Changed Expectations: Improved understanding and ongoing community input throughout the Plan's lifetime.

The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) has identified the "most important" barriers that impede progress toward community objectives for greater active transportation activity, these relate directly to the challenges that this Plan must face. To address these, they have also defined eleven principles to guide practitioners and communities across Canada. Each one of these have been carefully considered during the development of the projects that make up the Plan. They are listed below:

Leadership: Proactive change requires leadership, and can come from within government and from outside.

Partnerships: Use a multi-disciplinary approach, and work effectively across departments and jurisdictions.

Public involvement: Successful public involvement benefits from non-traditional approaches and involve stakeholders in a focused dialog.

Financial and human resources: Make the most of available resources through strong partnerships and creative approaches reflecting diverse community benefits.

Knowledge and skills: Use data collection programs and pilot projects to build local knowledge and improve practices.

Policy and planning: Support trails and active transportation in plans and policies at all levels.

Travel Facilities: The provision of safe, comfortable and convenient facilities for walking and cycling is fundamental.

Road safety: Improved facilities such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes are key; as are, road safety audits and with strong community and stakeholder representation to effectively identify and remedy problems.

Crime and personal safety: Overcoming real and perceived concerns.

Affecting attitudes and perceptions (culture): Increase the profile trail use and cycling and walking as viable, enjoyable, safe, and convenient for all ages.

Outreach to encourage active lifestyle choices: Help interested people overcome barriers to walking and cycling as modes of transportation.

Communities that support active transportation have better health and well-being, lower rates of traffic injuries and deaths, better access for people of all abilities, higher property values, better air quality and less greenhouse gas emissions.

Walkable and Livable Communities Institute



An example of placemaking where a community leveraged its assets to create a weekly recurring music and food oriented event during the summer months. This included combining: human scaled courtyard; pedestrian connections; local businesses; municipal support; cultural organizations; community groups, etc.

COMMUNITY & OBSERVATIONS

LOCAL CHARACTERISTICS

The community of Gravenhurst has a great number of characteristics and programs that already make it supportive of active lifestyles and active transportation. However, there are equally as many challenges and unused opportunities that are being ignored and are critical to its long term success. Overall the community would benefit from a coordinated approach, and place-based community development.

The strategy presented here includes a variety of action oriented initiatives that are at different scales, to facilitate completion by a variety of stakeholders. In completing this strategy the Town should also be sure to consider and address the following for each project:

- the community culture
- existing form of development
- public realm
- economic development and land use
- contextual design
- citizen engagement

Overall the physical form and built environment of Gravenhurst is well suited to supporting active transportation relatively easily. It has great connectivity, provided by overlapping sections of parks, trails, roads, and sidewalks. It has also developed at a scale that is generally very walkable and bikeable with an overall size that is well within the accepted thresholds for peoples' desire to use active transportation modes.

Essentially Gravenhurst has the attributes, and scale, of a complete community. The challenge is to take these characteristics and build

upon them to further support active transportation and healthy community design for all ages.

A growing body of national and international research agrees on a basic set of features and elements that make communities walkable. According to the research, the most walkable environments generally include the following (which are mostly present in Gravenhurst):

- Building scales that are comfortable for pedestrians
- Mixed-use development near neighborhood services
- Distinct and identifiable centre
- A variety of connected transportation options
- Lower speed streets
- Accessible design
- Street grid or other connected network of local streets.

At the July public meeting, participants expressed a diversity of interests on active transportation/healthy community design, including:

- Improved citizen engagement for planning issues;
- All-ages oriented community development;
- Effect on businesses;
- Health of the community;
- Safety;
- Regional connections;
- Rural & town roads;
- Site development;
- Communication and education;
- Long-term planning for better community design.

RURAL CONTEXT

Active transportation, is part of a healthy and sustainable transportation system that can encourage people to become more healthy. Although active transportation in small and rural communities is more often used for recreational purposes, it can also be used in conjunction with other transportation modes for getting around the community and commuting.

For very good reasons, many small and rural communities are “car-first” places where the habits and attitudes of the most influential citizens tend to be automobile-focused. This means that efforts to improve travel options in small and rural communities must first overcome a culture of decision-making that favours cars and people that have access to them, while it disadvantages residents who cannot use cars, such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Fortunately, these same communities benefit from a strong culture of neighbourliness that is an important resources for volunteer-based programs that can improve travel options for those who need it. (Transport Canada, Improving Travel Options in Small & Rural Communities, 2009).

The 2012 Ipsos Reid poll done for the Ontario Professional Planners Institute identifies the following about Ontarians' views on infrastructure planning for active transportation:

- 60% would place more emphasis on cyclists compared to 6% that would place less;
- 52% would place more emphasis on pedestrians compared to 4% that would place less; and,
- while increased emphasis on infrastructure for private vehicles was split between 24% for more, 25% for less and 51% for no change.

By bringing together different sectors (such as education, health, recreation, social services and tourism), smaller communities can also shift focus from their individual responsibilities to a more collective view of how best to meet the travel needs of individuals. Small communities have the inherent benefit of flexibility. Their municipal administrations have fewer layers of management, streamlined processes and more direct access to senior decision-makers, making it easier to get new directions approved. It is also more likely that one person with a good idea can be an effective champion, building the attention and support they need to move forward with it. (Transport Canada, Improving Travel Options in Small & Rural Communities, 2009). All of this has been considered in the crafting of this Plan and its projects.

The lack of resources is no longer an excuse not to act. The idea that action should only be taken after all the answers and the resources have been found is a sure recipe for paralysis. The planning of a city is a process that allows for corrections; it is supremely arrogant to believe that planning can be done only after every possible variable has been controlled.

Jaime Lerner - Architect, former mayor of Curitiba, Brazil



With an increasingly aging population, the Town of Gravenhurst needs to address transportation options to support health, wellness, social cohesion, and accessibility.

THEMES & CHARACTERISTICS

Overall, a number of themes and characteristics became evident through the analysis conducted for this project. These are briefly described in the following list. Note that further refinement of some of these will be part of the process of moving forward on the strategic action planning and work program identification as the Town of Gravenhurst undertakes the work on each project.

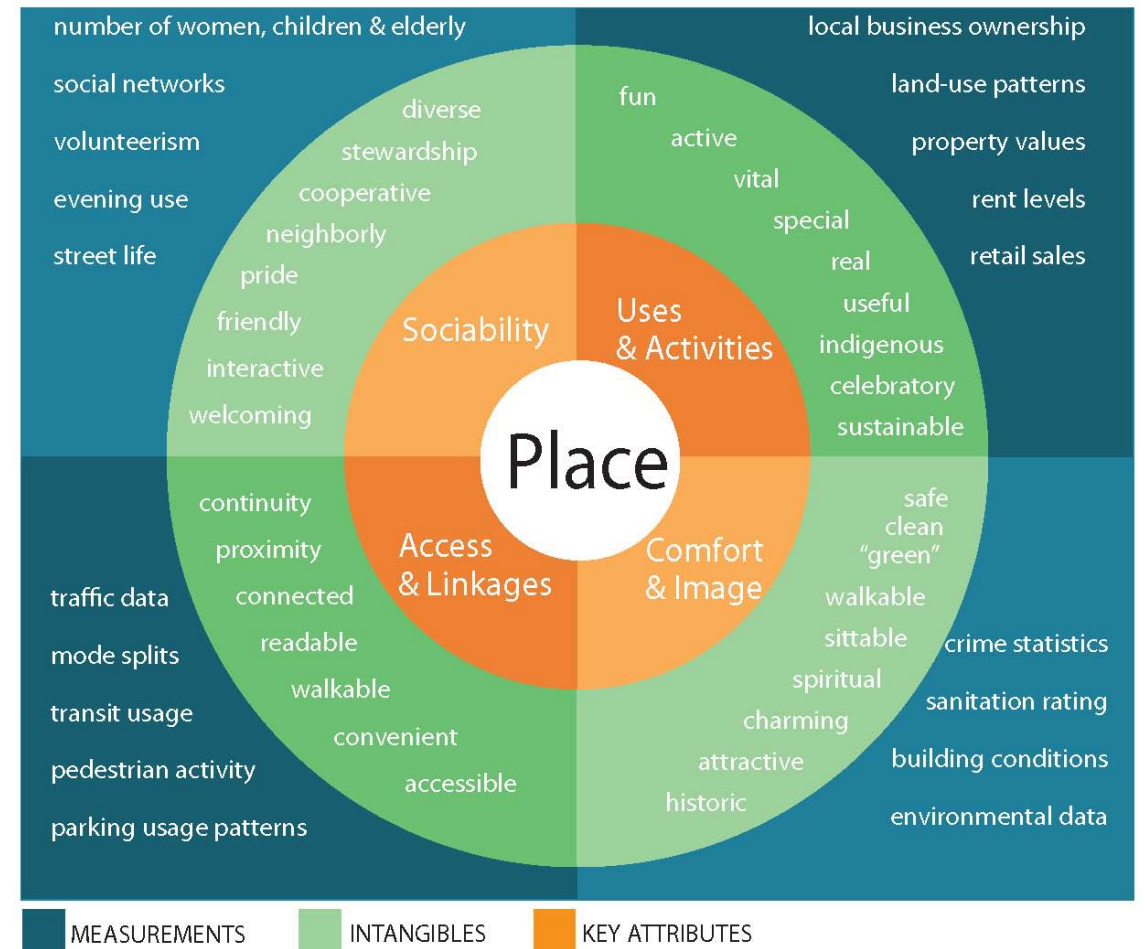
This listing provides insight into the scale and scope of the elements that need to be considered for this Plan to move forward:

- the community has a noticeable cycling culture

- there is a variety of information available relating to active lifestyles and active transportation;
- opportunities to make the community more walking and cycling friendly with relative ease exist throughout the community;
- end of trip facilities for cycling are generally lacking
- pedestrian and cycling oriented way finding signage for the most part is not provided
- opportunities to create an identifiable sense of place focused on active lifestyle experiences have not been developed
- pedestrian crossing improvements are necessary
- there is interest from a variety of stakeholders to be involved in

making the community more walking and cycling friendly

- age-friendly community development strategies would be helpful to maximize the inherent characteristics of the community to better support active lifestyles
- land use regulations could be amended to support placemaking and infill development
- a comprehensive community engagement program is needed to build capacity and community awareness about active transportation
- there are instances of businesses undertaking improvements that support active lifestyles and placemaking; these could be expanded throughout the community
- the Town is in a position to support this work with a number of interrelated programs currently underway or in development
- the community has a unique sense of place that could be enhanced with key actions and infrastructure improvements
- members of the community appear to have a strong desire for an integrated plan of action
- there are opportunities to create collaborative systems of implementation between the public and private entities, and citizens as well
- there are many opportunities for both small and larger scale projects that will support active lifestyles for all ages
- shifts in use of municipal resources (people, data, etc) could greatly facilitate the objectives described in the Plan.



This illustration shows the various relationships and characteristics of placemaking. All of these should be considered as part of the process to implement the Plan.



New forms of development occurring in Gravenhurst are not always conducive to walking and cycling.



There is clearly a need for making walking and cycling safer, and more practical throughout Gravenhurst. Fortunately most of the street rights-of-way could easily support dedicated infrastructure for walking and cycling.



Dan Burden spoke with stakeholders during the walking audit exploration of the downtown about the opportunities that are present to improve placemaking and make the downtown more pedestrian friendly.



no crossings

no street trees

poorly defined streetscape

separated land uses

no sidewalks

no walkways

no shade trees

As shown on the right, suburban auto-oriented development patterns and forms are having an impact on the unique character of the community. This is also reducing walkability.



no pedestrian crossing

confusing routes

**walkway ends with no connection/
alternative**

There are a number of opportunities where existing infrastructure could be improved; as well as, places where infrastructure for pedestrians/cyclists is completely missing.



There are opportunities for making the community more pedestrian/bicyclist friendly by creating defined pathways through parking lots. Most of these can be accomplished by private property owners and take little more than paint and signage to complete.



Pedestrian crossings in the downtown, and throughout the community, need to be better defined with highly visible markings.



There are many instances where people's preferred walking routes are visible, but the built environment does not support them.



There are many ways that dedicated spaces and routes for people walking and cycling can be achieved with low cost high impact designs.



Design standards and zoning provisions that facilitate a variety of housing options and direct development to be more human scaled and pedestrian oriented would make Gravenhurst more all-ages friendly. This award winning development in Mississauga was noted for its compact form, and including a community garden in the shared space between the townhouses.



The downtown could greatly benefit from street trees and more places to sit. These elements improve the sense of place and make it more people friendly.

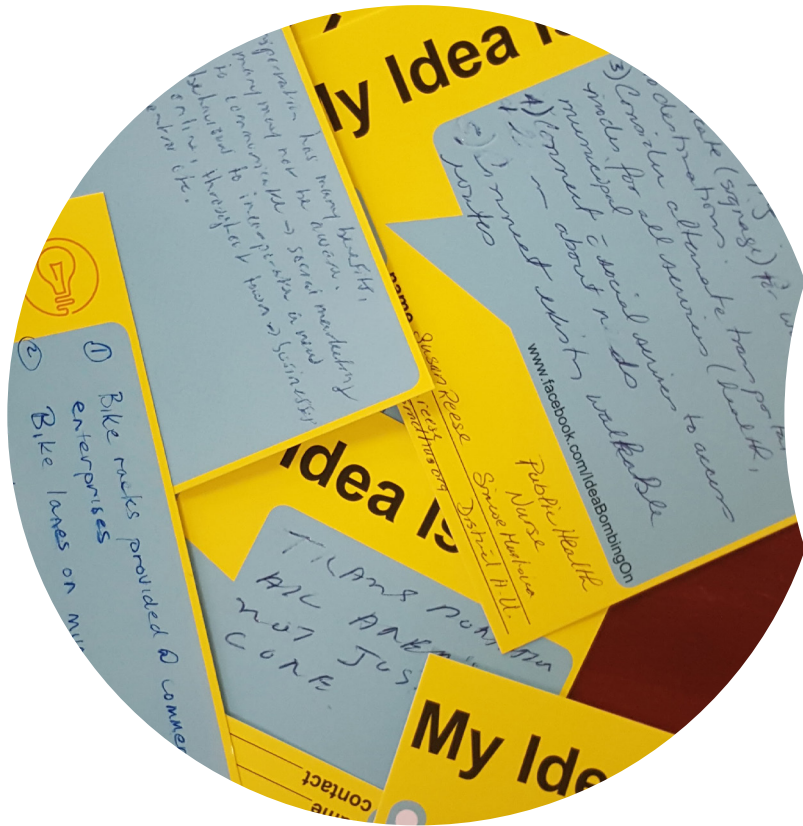
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

For the development of the Plan, information was presented to stakeholders in an appealing variety of settings and formats, such as engaging and comfortable public meeting; online videos, and graphic illustration techniques and an online survey. These techniques were used to broaden appeal of the Project. and gather information

These were designed to maximize convenience and opportunities for direct personal input by all stakeholders, no matter where or when they wished to participate. In the end, the process was designed to be enjoyable, friendly, and focused on the community; and the final Plan is designed to build on the successes and capacity of the community to move forward in positive and effective ways.

Dan Burden with Town staff make a short presentation at a local Rotary club meeting. Here they are discussing the potential of improving the community through specific projects focused on walking and cycling and all ages friendly designs.





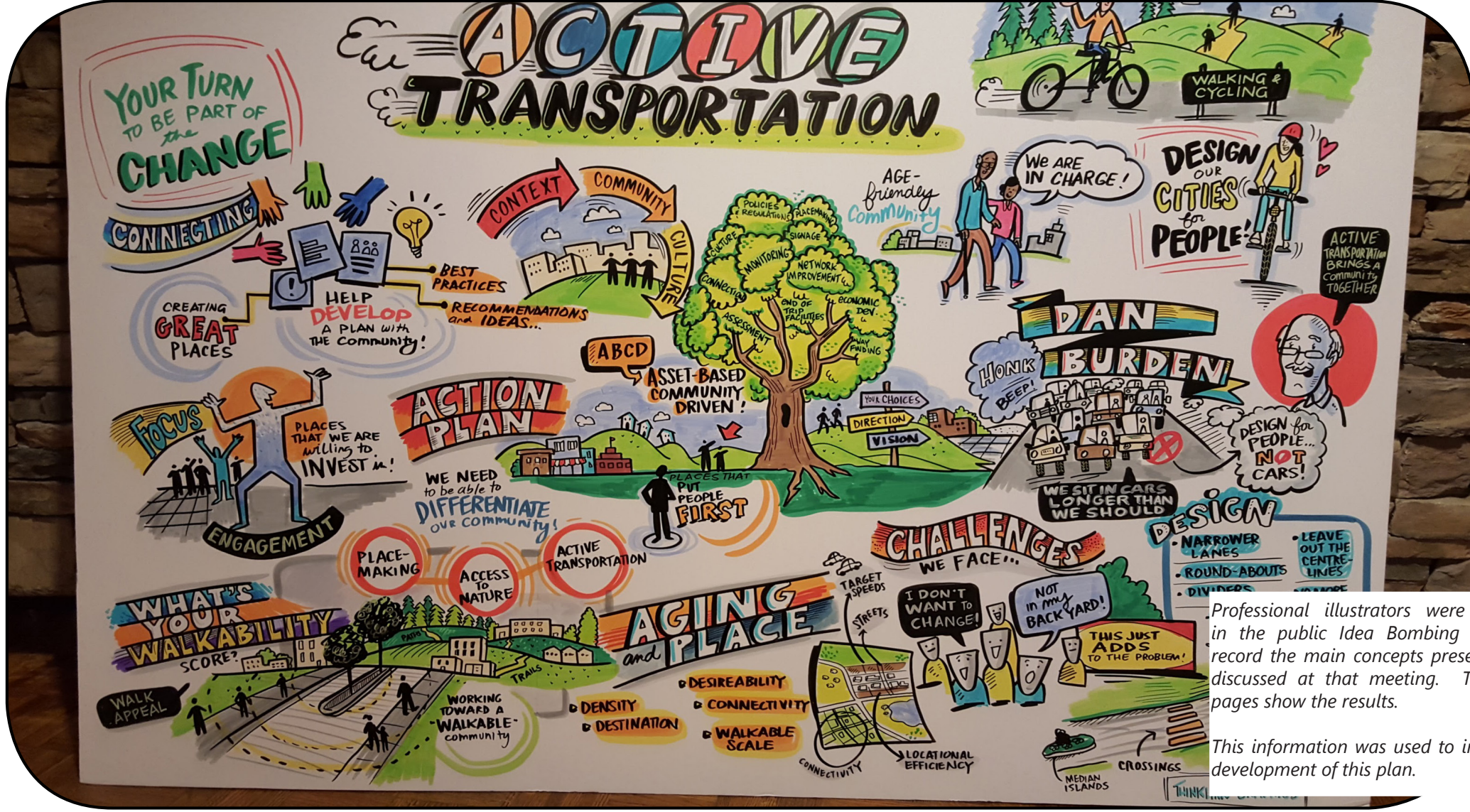
Citizens and stakeholders participated in a number of outreach activities associated with this Project, including an Idea Bombing event where they were asked to provide ideas and questions to help inform the Plan.



People participated in the Idea Bombing event in a variety of ways, including: video info wall with background materials; mapping table; idea cards; graphic recording.



Videos and online invitations were distributed and broadcast to invite people to the July public meeting which featured international walkability expert Dan Burden of Blue Zones and Robert Voigt from Cambium.



Professional illustrators were included in the public Idea Bombing event, to record the main concepts presented and discussed at that meeting. These two pages show the results.

This information was used to inform the development of this plan.



GRAVENHURST

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

IDEA BOMBING



IMPLEMENTATION

There's this tremendous fear of doing anything that's out of the ordinary. Whenever some fad gets hot, whether that be 'creative class' or streetcars or bicycles, everyone jumps on it... They're all trying to check the boxes of what they think makes a world-class city instead of thinking of how they can add some new boxes.

Will Doig, Salon

The Town of Gravenhurst is dominated by the astounding presence of nature. This is as defining of the area as the built up village. This outstanding relationship between nature and the community could rightfully be considered its lifeblood and heart.

It is this "sense of place" that needs to be part of every aspect of this Plan, ensuring that change and growth does not sacrifice this critical "value of place" and supports an all-ages friendly community.

The projects in the Plan have been designed to be interrelated and address different needs and challenges and have been informed by contemporary best practices and existing policies/ documents.

The timing of when the recommended projects are undertaken, the resources allocated to them, and the way they interrelate, is equally as important to success. That is why this Plan has been developed in such a way that the community and Municipality can focus on concise well-defined projects as opposed to grand statements of future actions.

This Plan is the **BEGINNING** of the process to take action and make things happen!

CATEGORIES

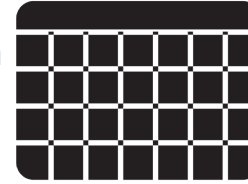
The following sections of the Plan describe its specific projects. Note that these relate to strategic actions, and some require building physical features and infrastructure, while others support the culture of active lifestyles and active transportation.

Some projects provide the necessary design, analysis, and direction to inform larger capital projects that will take longer to complete.

All the projects are arranged by general time frame. Note that these groupings are not related to priority, nor a sequence within which they must be completed. Projects may be undertaken as best suited to the conditions, funding, or opportunities in the community at the time.

Long-term

5+ years



Mid-term

2-3 years



Near-term

1 year



Immediate Action

100 days



ACTION STRATEGIES FOR EACH PROJECT

As part of developing work programs for implementation, the Town will need to ensure that the various parts of each project are well defined, This will typically involve refining the following for each project for the current context:

- specific goal(s);
- key attributes;
- assets and asset holders;
- needed assets for completion;
- realistic and aggressive timelines;
- key participants/partners and decision makers;
- relationships to other projects (completed and planned);
- measurements for assessing success;
- champion(s) and leaders;
- workforce;
- understanding of site function & characteristics;
- clearly defined design;
- funding;
- monitoring strategy; and,
- management strategy.

Once action has been decided it is recommended that the projects should also be arranged in a critical path that shows how they are interrelated. What is intended with this is to show priorities, and relationships of convergence or divergence between different projects/actions. This will help the Town plot work programs and identify opportunities to magnify benefits of specific projects.

One of the key themes of the work and discussions associated with crafting this Plan revolved around Asset Based Community Driven strategies. With this kind of

work, the members of a community come together to identify, recognize and build upon each others' skills and knowledge; the assets and perceived challenges at hand; and the unique characteristics of the physical form and cultural identity of their town to move their community toward a positive and successful future.

Keeping an Asset Based Community Driven perspective in mind (as has been used to define the projects in the first place), the Town should be able to make meaningful change happen through incremental repeated successes with smaller scaled initiatives. Remember the wise words of Emily Pilloton, founder of the design firm Studio H: "In order to do good, first you have to do something".

STAKEHOLDERS, CHAMPIONS and VOLUNTEERS

This Plan will require the input of a wide network of people, including the municipality and private land owners. As with all meaningful work done to create livable communities supporting high quality of life, citizens need to be informed and engaged in the process. Their ideas, questions, and needs have to be made known and understood so that they can influence design, building, and maintenance decisions.

The entire community needs to have a sense of the overall Plan and projects as well as a sensibility of the way decisions impact possibilities. To achieve this, there needs to be easily available and understandable information about the Town's progress on this work.

In addition to gathering input and ideas from citizens, the Town should recognize these people as potentially being involved as volunteers and stakeholders for the implementation of the Plan's projects. Keep in mind that many of the project champions will be working outside of their paid or professional roles as volunteers and that one of the greatest problems that these kinds of projects can encounter is that they mistakenly underestimate volunteers' purpose as simply free labour. This overly restricted perspective misses key points that can result in serious difficulty or failure of projects.

Not all volunteers are the same, and individuals need to be sought out for their specific skill sets and appropriately paired with work programs that match these skills. Their personal interest and rewards for doing this work also needs to be well understood and appreciated. Therefore, a volunteer coordination strategy and roles should be developed as part of the Town's implementation program.



Chart your PATH

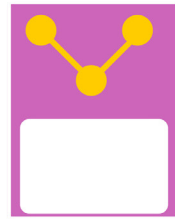
- The teams has a set of between 75 and 120 foam core cards, note pads, markers, sticky notes.
- Each set contains between 10 and 16 different icon cards representing major characteristics of strategic actions for a plan of action.
- Each card also has a blank portion for writing down the name of the element (space on the back & sticky notes can also be used).
- The teams arrange the cards and sticky notes to illustrate the strategic action path(s) they are describing.
- The groups will then be asked to report to the others about their approach, actions, ideas, and goals.
- The final step is to have the groups come together to develop a hybrid path together.



10 Idea



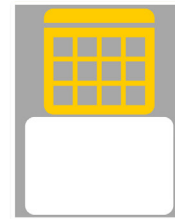
10 Stakeholders



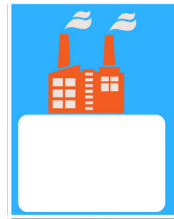
5 Partner/Network



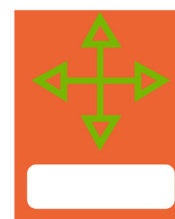
5 Residential Project



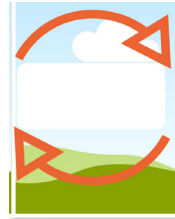
10 Schedule



5 Business/Industry Project



5 Decision Points



5 Reassessment



5 Results/Deliverables



10 Process/Direction



5 Major Stages/
Benchmarks

There are many ways in which Town and its partners can develop the schedules and work plans for each of the projects. When doing this, it will be important to consider ways to maximize potential for success, and reduce volunteer "burn out". This is why working tools such as the one on the left are recommended (as they are engaging, easy to use, inclusive, adaptable, and inexpensive).

Another important consideration is to avoid making the process too formal and relying only on a committee structure for the Projects. This is because committees have common shortcoming that reduce effectiveness, for example:

- members not selected for their skills relating to the project
- participation dwindles over time
- meetings are mistaken for progress
- committees are often not youth friendly
- committees are often vision and strategy focused, not action focused
- committees become introspective, often spending more time on their own inner workings and outputs, than on tangible outcomes

"If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places."

Fred Kent, Project for Public Spaces

TASK FORCE

The Town should consider the recommendations provided in this report as a recipe for success. The successful implementation of these rests in a collaborative effort with a variety of key stakeholders, influencers, staff, the municipality and Council.

Therefore, it is recommended that the Town form a task force that will provide the necessary guidance and creative energy to move these recommendations forward. This group needs to be able to work effectively alongside the political, bureaucratic, and business systems of the community. It is also expected it will work seamlessly with planning, economic development, and engineering staff, as well as, neighbourhood groups, and business associations.

This task force is not intended to duplicate work programs that already exist, but to provide strategic guidance and insights on projects that bridge organizations, and/or fall outside of the specific responsibility of a particular group. The role of the task force should include:

- overseeing/directing future strategic actions;
- crafting schedules;
- project review; and,
- reporting on project results.

The task force should have members that enable it to do more than just provide direction/guidance, but also fill gaps of knowledge, add depth of experience and mentorship, and provide skilled assistance where needed. While it will be up to the Town of Gravenhurst to determine the structure, membership, and procedures for this implementation task force, the following should be considered:

- a) To ensure broad ranging perspectives the task force should be made up of a diverse group, including representation from community youth and business owners;
- b) Based on well documented knowledge about effective organizational structures the task force should have no more than seven members;
- c) Diversity is an important consideration: consider representation from a broad range of people; and,
- d) To ensure that the task force is well prepared, people should be selected for its membership based on specific skill sets that they can bring to the organization.



Improving the livability of our towns and cities commonly starts at the street, block, or building scale. While larger scale efforts do have their place, incremental, small-scale improvements are increasingly seen as a way to stage more substantial investments. This approach allows a host of local actors to test new concepts before making substantial political and financial commitments.

Studio H defines six key perspectives that influence their work and their strategy for making positive change happen. These should be adapted as part of the working strategy that Town develops for implementing the Plan:

- design through action
- design with, not for
- design systems, not stuff
- document, share, and measure
- start locally, and scale globally
- build

Strong, prosperous local communities will be built by smart, forward-thinking councils that have the courage to look at big issues – and sometimes look at them in different ways

Gord Hume

FOCUS

Small-scale pedestrian improvements along streets results in increased physical activity and high levels of public support.

Walk Boston, Good Walking is Good Business

The Plan has been carefully refined to have the following characteristics:

Project Oriented: Describing specific recommendations that are easy to understand and take action on.

Connectivity: The Projects are interrelated. While they may fall within different time lines or organizational responsibilities, they will all relate to the overall principles and goals, and to each other.

Cumulative Effects: The projects have been selected, designed and arranged so that the recommendations build upon each other. Generally, as one is completed it will incrementally improve the ability for additional projects to be completed.

Dynamic: Assessments of progress, and a community-based stewardship approach make it easier to complete. This makes the work more flexible and able to meet the needs of the community.

The projects have been crafted to address one or more of the key components of successful active transportation plans listed to the right.

This will help ensure that when these different projects are completed there will be a combined effect and influence on the community that will make it more walking and cycling friendly.



**Policies &
Regulations**



**End of Trip
Facilities**



Assessment



Placemaking



**Economic
Development**



Wayfinding



Connections



**Network
Improvements**



Accessibility

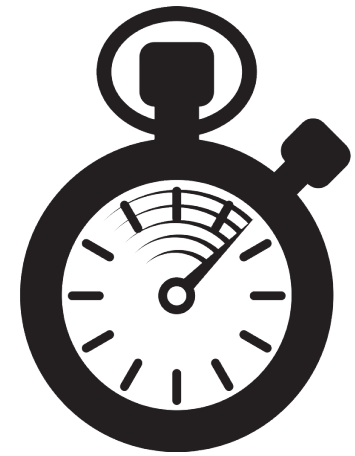


Culture

IMMEDIATE ACTION

100 DAY IMPLEMENTATION

- 1** *Downtown "Walk Your Town" Signage Program*
- 2** *"Go Here" Program*
- 3** *Neighbourhood Pace-Car*
- 4** *Bike Repair Stations*
- 5** *Downtown Bike Corrals*
- 6** *Bicycle Valet Service for Town Events*



These are quick action-oriented projects that can be completed with approximately 100 days of dedicated and focused effort (at any time within the life of the Plan). They are low-cost, high-impact, and affect all aspects of active transportation in the community. They build on placemaking, community asset development, community participation, communication, and support for a culture of active living.

IMMEDIATE
ACTION
100 DAYS

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Programming & Culture

SCALE
Downtown

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION**
\$100s



WAYFINDING



CULTURE

1

DOWNTOWN “WALK YOUR TOWN” SIGNAGE PROGRAM

Challenge

“A recent poll indicated that 82% of Canadians would like to walk more and that 66% would like to bike more”.¹ To support a culture of walking where this desire is so strong, it is important to provide coherent and consistent information and signage systems.²

This project is intended to meet the challenge of developing a signage program that is centered around pedestrians’ experiences in the downtown.

1 Go for Green The Active Living & Environment Program, *Fitting Places: How the Built Environment Affects Active Living and Active Transportation*, pg. 2

2 Walk21, *International Charter for Walking*, 2010

Action

This project will highlight the walkable scale of Gravenhurst’s downtown and make it easier for people to get around the district with ease. This will be achieved through creating a temporary pilot project signage system that is based on the time it takes a person to walk from one location to another, not just on the distances between locations. This unique approach addresses how people interpret their environment and travel through it when they are on foot.

The inspiration for this signage program comes from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill “Walk Raleigh” project. This sign program included information such as how many minutes it would take to walk to various destinations like Raleigh City Cemetery, as well as mobile device QR codes for downloading directions to smartphones.¹

In cooperation with businesses, and service groups the Town should develop the walking-time signage program modeled after the Walk Raleigh project. It is a temporary project that is intended to be used as a pilot for an eventual permanent wayfinding signage system in the downtown district.

Ideally, the templates and signs available through www.walkyourcity.org would be used for this project.

1 Media5 Interactive Corporation web site, www.media5.org

This is a low-cost, yet highly effective, wayfinding signage system that is easily implemented and has been done by a number of cities and towns.

Once the effectiveness of the program is evaluated, the Town may seek to implement a more permanent signage system. At this time, it may require an assessment and amendment to the Town’s existing by-laws relating to signage.



The Walk Your City program was just recently launched in Sudbury.



Once the effectiveness is determined, and wayfinding decision points have been refined, the Town may wish to develop a permanent wayfinding system that builds on the same pedestrian oriented principles; such as this example from Kelowna, but substituting travel time for distances.



The Walk Your City web site has all the tools needed for planning the routes, designing, and ordering the signs for this project.

IMMEDIATE ACTION 100 DAYS

LEAD AGENCY
Businesses

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Programing & Culture

SCALE
Downtown

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION**
\$100s



ACCESSIBILITY



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

2

GO HERE PROGRAM

Challenge

One of the key elements most often missed in planning communities for walkability, is access to public restrooms. Their design, location and construction is too often focused on cost and exaggerated concerns about vandalism. The end result is that in many communities there are very few, if any, public restrooms.

By not providing the necessary facilities for people to feel comfortable, and addressing their basic needs as human beings, we fail in our ability to make our community a great place to live and or visit.

The importance of this issue of public restrooms is heightened for people with some medical conditions.

Action

For this project we recommend addressing this need by having businesses in the downtown join an "GoHere" initiative developed to support the needs of people with Crohns and colitis.

This is a restroom accessibility program that businesses can participate in to make the downtown more appealing and comfortable. It is intended to support people with medical conditions and is being used in other communities in Ontario.

The GoHere Washroom Access Initiative is an innovative program that increases washroom access for people living with Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, or other medical conditions related to incontinence. Crohn's and Colitis Canada and their organizational partners launched this program that encourages businesses across Canada to open their washrooms and play an important role in building accessible communities and improving lives.

This helps ease the anxiety in finding washrooms and reduce the stigma associated with the disease by proactively identifying open facilities identified by the GoHere decal sticker on storefront windows. Other components of the initiative include the GoHere Washroom Finder App and the GoHere Washroom Access card.

The GoHere decal encourages businesses to open

their washroom facilities to people living with Crohn's, colitis and other incontinence issues. Businesses identify their participation in the project by posting GoHere decals.

The project has been launched in: Calgary, Barrie, and Mississauga. If successful, the initiative will roll out in other areas across the province and country.

The GoHere Washroom Finder App is freely available and uses GPS to track nearby washroom facilities. It also provides a mapping system of available washrooms along a route to a particular destination. The app is available for all Apple, Android and Blackberry Touchscreen devices.

The GoHere Washroom Access Card will act as an identification medical card for businesses that may be concerned about those who may violate use of washroom facilities. The cards are virtually available on the GoHere Washroom Finder App.

Not only does this project help people with these medical conditions and increase accessibility for them; it also signals a level of caring throughout the community that will make it more human focused and pedestrian friendly.



Participating businesses will be identified by displaying the GoHere decal on their store front window. The decal signals to people with incontinence that washrooms are open and available, no questions asked. There is no cost to join, yet the benefits to the whole community are transformational.



The Go Here app is a mapping tool that helps people find a publically available restroom.

In general, the most successful shopping sections are those that provide the most comfort and pleasure for pedestrians.

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

IMMEDIATE ACTION 100 DAYS

LEAD AGENCY
Service Groups

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Programming & Culture

SCALE
Community-wide

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION**
\$100s



CULTURE



NETWORK
IMPROVEMENTS

3

NEIGHBOURHOOD PACE CAR

Challenge

There are a number of locations where we have observed people driving at excessive speeds through residential neighbourhood streets. This creates a challenge for making these streets for all ages to feel safe when cycling. This has been confirmed as a concern by members of the community that have participated in the public workshops and open houses.

With higher speeds, vehicle stopping distances are increased; collisions are more damaging within significantly increased risk of death; and the effectiveness of reaction times and visibility are reduced for avoiding collisions. Overall, people are instinctively aware of this, and as a result, real and perceived safety is reduced for for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Action

The Neighbourhood Pace Car program enables residents to reduce traffic problems in their neighbourhoods without requiring intervention from local government and without breaking any laws. To help keep drivers behaving in safe a courteous ways this program involves people signing on as neighbourhood pace cars. They get a bumper sticker and a pledge to be good driving neighbours throughout the community, acting as a mobile traffic calming measure..

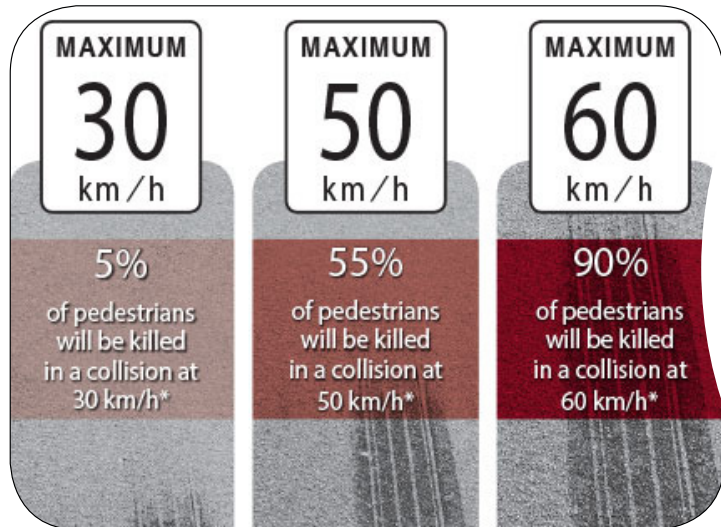
In 2000, Australian activist David Engwicht worked with residents in Boise, Idaho to create the first neighborhood pace car concept to control cut-through traffic on what was once a quiet residential street. They created a humorous “pace car” decal for their cars, and make a point of driving no more than the speed limit to safely escort people through traffic. Since then, the Pace Car program has expanded to Washington DC; Salt Lake City; Mesa, AZ; San Carlos, CA; Las Cruces, NM; Davis, CA; Freehold Township, NJ; Reno, NV; Santa Cruz, CA; and dozens of other locations.

The Pace Car program is a locally delivered, nationwide program that focuses on raising awareness around speed reduction in the community, especially in school zones and pedestrian-dense areas. You can find out more at: www.parachutecanada.org

This website also includes:

- Pace Car Community Guide
- Pace Car Supporters Pledge
- Pace Car sign-up sheet
- Pace Car Promotional Poster
- Pace Car Promotional Flyer
- Pace Car Media Advisory Template
- Pace Car Media Release Template
- Pace Car Community Walkabout Guide
- Pace Car Community Walkabout Tool - Urban
- Pace Car Community Walkabout Tool - Rural
- How to Improve Pedestrian Safety Guide
- What's Speed Got To Do With It Handout

The Pace Car program involves seeking out community members to sign up as Pace Car drivers. Participants will sign the Pace Car Supporters Pledge. The Pace Car Pledge is an agreement stating that they will drive no more than the posted speed limit and also to be more aware of, and courteous to, other road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists, and to minimize car use by using active transportation. They then display the official Pace Car emblems on their car window. To reduce the chance of road rage, it's important for Pace Car drivers to display the Pace Car stickers so other motorists know why they are driving courteously. If someone urgently wishes to pass, a Pace Car driver simply lets them by.



Here is an illustration of the magnitude of risk of potential fatality for pedestrians involved in collisions with increased vehicular speeds.

After signing the pledge, a Pace Car Driver recognizes that quality of life for all residents is enhanced when responsible drivers adhere to the laws and safe driving practices on every street in their neighborhoods. A Pace Car Driver also serves as an example to others so that they become more aware of safety on local streets. The more people who participate, the better it works.

To receive a free Pace Car Bumper Sticker, a driver must pledge to:

- Be aware of and observe the speed limit
- Slow down near schools and other areas such as playgrounds, parks, residential



Pace Car sticker that is the key element of this safety initiative. This is an effective and extremely low cost project to launch and maintain.

streets where children are often present.

- Always yield to pedestrians crossing the street
- Come to a complete stop at stop signs, then look carefully before proceeding
- Be courteous to bicyclists and other road users.
- Do not tailgate
- Do not block walkways, a bike lane, or a driveway when parking

Streets should be designed from the outside in.

Dan Burden, Blue Zones

- Consider using alternative means of transportation and consolidate car trips to lessen traffic on residential streets.
- Display the Pace Car Bumper Sticker on their vehicle so other drivers know why they are driving courteously and at a safe speed.
- Encourage others to sign the pledge.

IMMEDIATE ACTION 100 DAYS

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance

SCALE
Community-wide

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION**
\$10,000s



**END OF TRIP
FACILITIES**



**NETWORK
IMPROVEMENTS**

4

BIKE REPAIR STATIONS

Challenge

End of trip facilities are some of the most often misunderstood elements in communities that are not active transportation friendly. End of trip facilities are those things that help make a person's trip convenient and practical. Providing these can be low-cost, high-impact and scalable.

This relates to both pedestrian and bicyclist's needs, and includes things such as:

- Wayfinding signage
- Walkway connections
- Short and long-term bike parking facilities
- Access to bike tire pumps

Of particular value are bike repair stations. For casual, recreational, and sport cyclists having to use service centres or gas stations to tend to "on the road" maintenance issues is difficult, uncomfortable, and often inaccessible.

Action

By providing four bicycle repair and tire pump stations throughout Gravenhurst, this project will help make it more appealing to cyclists (and provide much needed infrastructure).

A bike repair station is an all-in-one structure that contains all the tools necessary to perform basic bike repairs and maintenance, from changing a flat to adjusting brakes and derailleurs. The tools and air pump are securely attached to the stand with stainless steel cables and tamper-proof fasteners.

These units can be easily installed at trailheads, parks, and any other location where cyclists would easily come across them and find them convenient.

For this project it is envisioned that the Town will partner with local businesses, and service groups and clubs, to install four of these in Gravenhurst. Note that businesses and private property owners could implement this project on their own where the stations are not located on public property. Two of these should be located in the downtown; recommended locations are at the Opera House and the Recreation Centre. Two other locations where they could serve the most people should be determined as well,

Funding for the repair stations themselves could come from grant sources, with the installation being covered by volunteers, or partners.

Note that in locations where these are on public property, or right-of-way, the Town will have to be involved in defining final locations and installation. Once the initial units have been installed the Town may wish to expand the project if there is a determined need.



A bike station is a simple piece of infrastructure that contains a number of key hand tools, a work rack, and a tire pump for cyclists. These should be located in areas that have good oversight, and are convenient.

As the economic role of “place” gains greater significance, the role of land-use planning for economic development is being reflected in deliberate, placemaking efforts. Using forward-looking planning, design and programming to manage the built environment, municipalities are positioning themselves to attract and retain the people and investments they need to strengthen their economies.

Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

IMMEDIATE ACTION 100 DAYS

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance

SCALE
Downtown

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION**
\$10,000s



END OF TRIP



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

5

DOWNTOWN BIKE CORRALS

Challenge

Parking is also one of the necessary components of an active transportation system. The municipality has provided significant resources for vehicle parking. While proportionally lagging behind in terms of bike parking, the Town has however recently begun installing more bike racks in the downtown area. An effective active transportation bike network includes not only designated routes and signage, but also supportive end of trip infrastructure such as bike parking. Additionally, community members need to be made aware of these if the culture of active transportation is to be supported.

High quality, publicly accessible long-term bike parking in the downtown areas does not currently exist. There are too few bicycle parking facilities overall as well. Those that do exist do not provide shelter from the elements, nor are they supported by security options or high pedestrian traffic to provide oversight.

There are many locations throughout downtown that are not optimal for automobile parking and other uses, but could accommodate secure bike parking/bicycle corrals, without sacrificing the facilities and amenities of other modes of transportation. By using these areas in the downtown to support bicycle transportation, the Town could increase the overall number of parking spaces for citizens, visitors, and tourists alike.

Action

The availability of dependable, convenient bike parking has repercussions on where and when people will stop to spend their money. When there is nowhere people feel comfortable locking up their bicycles, they generally decided to go elsewhere. This is important to business because commuting makes up only 20 per cent of bike trips. The rest is for shopping, dining, banking, and so on. "No matter how seamless your ride across town, no matter how well-timed the traffic lights or low-conflict the bike lanes, it's all pointless if when you arrive at work, or the store, or the music venue or party, and have nowhere to put your ride." (The Grist online)

This project will result in the design and development of appropriate long-term bike parking corrals for the downtown district. A bike corral is a piece of infrastructure that replaces on-street a car parking space with parking for 10 to 12 bicycles.

This project should be undertaken as a partnership between sponsoring businesses and the Town, and should result in no less than four bike corrals in the downtown. Businesses with private parking areas should be encouraged to provide their own bike parking as well.

As part of this project, locations for bike parking shall be reviewed and selected through a collaborative

process with businesses and community members. Part of the process will be to determine bike corral locations (recognizing that long-term bike parking has specific requirements in terms of design). This kind of bike parking needs to include the following:

- Clear wayfinding signage indicating parking locations;
- Consistent passive surveillance from users and passers-by; and,
- Central location.

If possible, weather protection should also be provided.

This kind of on-Street Bicycle Parking provides many benefits where bicycle-use is growing, for example:

Businesses: Corrals provide a 10 to 1 customer to parking space ratio and advertise "bike-friendliness." They also improve the outdoor café seating environment by removing locked bicycles from the sidewalk.

Pedestrians: Corrals clear the sidewalks and serve as de facto curb extensions.

People on bicycles: Corrals increase the visibility of bicycling.

Motor vehicle drivers: Corrals improve visibility at

intersections by eliminating the opportunity for larger vehicles to park at street corners; and can reduce the number of vehicles on the road and seeking parking.

By inducing more people to ride bicycles, it contributes to better health, less poverty, safer streets, more breathable air—and perhaps of most direct financial value, it reduces congestion and frees up car parking. It does cost money to provide bike parking for free—but this cost is so low in relation to the benefits.

It is noteworthy that most of Portland's bicycle parking is provided in bike racks on the sidewalk. However, in a growing number of commercial areas the high demand for bicycle parking is too much for the sidewalk. In other cases, local businesses simply prefer bicycles in the parking strip rather than autos in order to attract a customer base that is turning more to the bicycles for transportation. In all cases, corrals are installed at the express request or cooperation of the adjacent businesses. The City requires that the immediately adjacent business owner and property owner approve of the corral installation and sign an agreement requiring minor, regular sweeping of the corral to discourage the accumulation of debris. This approach could be considered for those areas where there aren't suitable locations on private preoperty.

Providing ample, convenient, comfortable and secure bicycle parking is an important part of serving those who currently use bicycles for transportation and encouraging future cyclists. Bicycle parking is an inexpensive and efficient means of increasing both public and private parking capacity for the community as a whole.

Business owners tend to like bike parking. Many are wary at first, especially when car parking spaces are being replaced. But once a bike corral is put in,



the value added becomes immediately clear, and as they become more common, they are more broadly accepted and welcomed.

Bike parking is undeniably an affordable investment. For each vehicle, bike parking takes up ten times less space than car parking and the cost is from 30 to 300 times less. Additionally, when bike parking is available at destinations, people are more likely to choose to ride to those places, and also to ride overall.

A study in Melbourne, Australia found that bike parking brought in five times the revenue of car parking. A study in Toronto found that customers who biked and



These images show bike corral arrangements that could be adopted for use in Gravenhurst's downtown district.

walked to local businesses spent more money overall than those who drove.

Corrals should be located on the sidewalk streets as close to the main shopping area of the downtown as possible. In Gravenhurst, the few corner spaces where a car parking spot is replaced with a bike corral could easily be regained many-fold through proper painting of car parking spaces with appropriate dimensions (something that is lacking throughout the community).

BICYCLE VALET SERVICE FOR TOWN EVENTS

IMMEDIATE
ACTION
100 DAYS

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance

SCALE
Downtown

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION**
\$1,000s



END OF TRIP



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

6

Challenge

During some of the most successful events in Gravenhurst, traffic and parking availability is at its worst. The more people that could be encouraged to attend events without taking a car, the more this problem could be reduced.

However, with a lack of bicycle parking in the downtown that one can rely on during such busy times, it is difficult to reasonably expect larger number of people to take their bikes to these events. The challenge is how to overcome this need specifically during events.

Action

The recommended action is to provide bicycle valet service during downtown events. As part of the implementation of this project the Town will have to determine who will be responsible for management, as this could be done by the Municipality and/or a private sector partner, or volunteers.

Saskatoon Cycles identifies a long list of benefits for the program they run. It is expected that the Town could mirror their efforts for the Gravenhurst context.

Benefits for event organizers:

- Increased attendance when the Bike Valet is promoted in the event advertising. The Bike Valet is anticipated and appreciated by non-motorized transportation users who often plan their attendance around the valet availability.
- The Bike Valet is a turnkey operation. Just book the Bike Valet and all the work (setup, operation and take down) is done by Saskatoon Cycles.
- Reduces event staff needed to direct traffic. Reduced traffic congestion.
- Convenient & free parking at the gate of your event. Attendees will not have to walk from a far off parking.
- Organizers receive an After Event Report

with relevant information such as number of cycles parked, comments, input etc.

- Reduce bottlenecks & congestion on paths in the event area by giving security workers a location to direct cyclists to.
- Further reduce parking pressure by encouraging staff/volunteers to cycle. Unclaimed bikes can be delivered to the worker/volunteer if they are not able to pick it up before the Bike Valet closing time

Benefits to attendees:

- Offers a safe, secure and tidy place for bikes and accessories to be left.
- Accepts all electric assisted or human powered transportation as well as bicycles. Trailers, skates, jogging strollers, etc. are all welcome.
- Encourages immense health benefits from cycling.
- Provides cycle repair supplies for minor repairs

Benefits to the community:

- Builds Saskatoon as a bike friendly city.
- Creates a "greener" city and reduces our carbon foot print.
- Increases health and reduces stress.
- Greater sociability, greater communication
- Less wear and tear on our streets

- Reduced vehicle pollution and traffic congestion
- Increased volunteerism

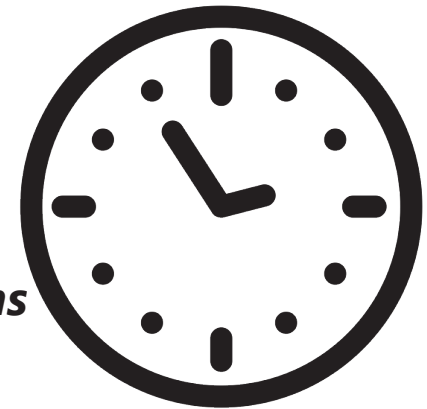


These images show the Saskatoon Bike Valet logo on the left, and a community run bike valet in Portland's Pearl District neighbourhood.

NEAR-TERM

1 YEAR IMPLEMENTATION

- 7 *Wheelchair Accessible Beach*
- 8 *Bike Share*
- 9 *Cycle Friendly Tourism Program*
- 10 *Cycle Route Naming and Wayfinding*
- 11 *Healthy Community Design Standards*
- 12 *Accessible Parking*
- 13 *Community Engagement, Patio Policy & Open Streets Celebrations*
- 14 *Coordinated Review of Existing Municipal Regulations & Policies*
- 15 *Cycling Without Age*



These projects are expected to be completed within 1 year. These include projects to amend community-wide regulations and access. These projects are designed to help make active transportation more practical and functional, improve infrastructure for walking and cycling through new development, and engage the community in the process of creating an improved active transportation system.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE BEACH

NEAR-TERM
1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance

SCALE
Downtown

MAGNITUDE OF IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s



7

Challenge

As noted earlier in this Plan, Gravenhurst has a wonderful natural setting. The beach at Gull Lake Rotary Park located near the downtown district is an example of how the community has developed in a way that allows people to have direct access to nature.

Unfortunately, as is the case in most communities, the beach area presents significant barrier to people with disabilities that affect their mobility. People using wheelchairs or walking assistance devices cannot easily gain access to the water by crossing the sandy beach area.

Providing better access to the water would go a long way to helping make Gravenhurst more all-ages friendly and more fully accessible.

Action

This accessibility project will enhance the use of the waterfront park and beach area for people with mobility issues. This involves installing a series of specially designed mats making it possible for people with mobility assistive devices to access the water directly across the beach sand.

This project is inspired by a similar one recently completed in Wasaga Beach. In that community they installed a Mobi-Mat RecPath at Beach Areas 2 and 5. These mats are:

- lightweight
- require little maintenance
- environmentally friendly
- easy to install
- can channel traffic through sensitive areas thereby increasing environmental protection
- safe for public use
- 100% recycled polyester
- cool comfortable surface to walking barefoot on or users with sensitive feet

This is a portable rollout access pathway that provides continuous walkway and enhanced access to the Beach and Bay. It is designed to assist pedestrians, wheelchairs, strollers, and bicycles on unstable ground.

Just as done in Wasaga Beach, it is recommended

that the Town of Gravenhurst undertake a similar project. For their project a partnership arrangement was made with Wasaga Beach Provincial Parks, the Town, and a private developer. Together they found a way to acquire, install and maintain (which includes rolling out and installation of the mats in the spring, maintaining them during the summer and rolling them back up and storing them in the fall), a permanent mobimat solution. This has enabled the Town to promote their beaches as uniquely accessible to all residents and visitors.

The funding for the project also included a successful grant application under the small project component of the Enabling Accessibility Fund – Human Resources & Skills Development Canada.

By mirroring this success in Wasaga Beach, the Town should be able to make a significant impact on the people of Gravenhurst with this active living and active transportation infrastructure project.

Below are a series of comments that were recorded by people using the accessible beach mat in Wasaga Beach:

A client of CNIB was able to use the mats independently and walk to the water using her cane to determine the difference in texture between the mat and the sand and able to reach the water with no issues.

People with disabilities are choosing Wasaga Beach for vacations because they can now access the water, where they couldn't before.

An elderly lady commented that she will now have her daughter take her to the beach she loves so much now that she can get to the water.

An elderly man stated that this is the first time he has been to the water in 20 years –he uses a walker.



Providing access for all to the places that make Gravenhurst a special place to live is exactly the kind of project the Plan is intended to facilitate.



The accessible water access is a direct benefit to those with mobility challenges, as well as to the friends, family, and caregivers that accompany them.

NEAR-TERM 1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Businesses

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance

SCALE
Downtown

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION**
\$10,000s



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CONNECTIONS**



8

BIKE SHARE

Challenge

There are large numbers of people that visit Gravenhurst that arrive by car or boat. Those that stay for more than a day visit are limited by traveling only on foot, or having to seek car parking over and over again (particularly when coming into the Downtow). This has a number of impacts on the quality of their stay:

- creates excess downtown traffic
- reduces parking availability for others
- reduces the convenience of shopping (for those visiting by boat)
- reduces their social connection to the community when having to rely on car trips back and forth to lodging and downtown.

The challenge is to make it easier for these people to travel by bicycle for these short in-town trips.

Action

For this project the Town and business partners could create a bike share program to overcome this challenge.

With a bike share program Gravenhurst will be able to reduce traffic during busier times of the year, and provide a great benefit for visitors.

The program is focused on people staying at local inns, B&Bs, and hotels, and those using the marinas. It is modeled after a program called Right Bike (based in the Ottawa area).

While Right Bike is a social business that delivers a community-based bike share service, it also provides jobs and training for individuals in the community who are working to overcome barriers to employment. Originally conceived by a business improvement association and grassroots environmental organization as a means to build community and reduce congestion in Ottawa West, the initiative was brought to Causeway Work Centre in 2011 to explore its potential for job creation and training.

In partnership with local businesses and organizations, the bike share service has gone on to connect neighbourhoods across Ottawa with our ever-expanding fleet of signature purple bikes. They also partner with local agencies to promote

bike safety. Right Bike has also become a centre for training and employment in bicycle mechanics.

The social enterprise characteristics of Right Bike are not required of a Gravenhurst model. However, it would be valuable to explore how that might be duplicated, or translated for highschool students or young entrepreneurs seeking business management experience.

What is envisioned is a small fleet of bicycles and cargo bikes that can be used by people staying in local lodging establishments and/or using the marinas. The bicycles would be sponsored and made available to these people to travel around Gravenhurst, shop, get supplies for their boating journey; go to restaurants, etc. If there were enough bikes for a family at each lodging facility and a few at the marinas, then these people would not have to keep getting into their cars to enjoy the community. This will reduce traffic in the downtown and make their stay more enjoyable. For boaters, access to cargo bikes would make shopping for supplies easier, and also likely result in them spending more in local retail establishments.

Developing a sponsorship system for this fleet of bikes should be considered part of the Project.

The online planning and community design resource Planetizen recently noted that the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) has published *The Bike-Share Planning Guide*, a comprehensive and well researched report that examines many of the 600 bike-share systems from around the world to establish best practices for everything from how to conduct a feasibility study to how to develop a sustainable financial model. It is recommended that the lead person in charge of this initiative review the document to identify key considerations and common themes that are appropriate; and then translate and adapt them to your community.



For marina visitors access to a bike share fleet of cargo bikes would be a huge benefit. These could be used to travel to the shopping areas of town and return with their purchases with much greater ease than on foot. Partnerships and sponsorships between retailers would be an obvious starting point for exploring this project.



Right Bike is Ottawa's community bike share service. The distinctive purple bikes are available to locals and tourists for short day trips in exchange for a modest rental fee. The community of Mississippi Mills is the home to the first rural hub for Right Bike; contacting them for more information would be helpful.

CYCLING FRIENDLY TOURISM PROGRAM

NEAR-TERM
1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Businesses

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Programing & Culture

SCALE
Community-wide

MAGNITUDE OF IMPLEMENTATION
\$1000s



9

Challenge

The economic benefits of cycle tourism are well documented and can affect everyone from shop keepers, to hoteliers, to restaurateurs, and others. The scale at which these benefits are felt can also range from single businesses to entire regions depending on the services provided and experiences offered to visitors.

There are numerous excellent examples of communities and regions that have benefited from economic development initiatives centered on cycling tourism, for example Quebec's Route Vert system.

Gravenhurst is located within a regional context that already has distinct characteristics around which a cycling-oriented economic development programs could be developed. Because of this potential and its impact on active transportation a cycle tourism oriented strategy should be developed and implemented.

The challenge will be to quickly build a program that is focused on cycling to support economic activity.

Action

The intent is to actively work on expanding the Ontario By Bike initiative. This is a great "plug and play" type effort that makes it easy and inexpensive for local businesses to become more cycle tourism friendly.

The Ontario By Bike™ Network (formerly the Welcome Cyclists Network) is a project of Transportation Options, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering sustainable mobility and tourism solutions across Ontario. It is focused on providing key facilitation and support services that support cycling tourism for communities.

They do so by engaging in projects that research, develop and promote new transportation and tourism choices, with a focus on those that are integrated, environmentally sound, healthy, service-oriented, and improve the experience of users.

It is recommended that the Town work with key business leaders/organizations to implement the tourism friendly system developed by Ontario by Bike. The Ontario By Bike system has a number of characteristics that make it appropriate for Gravenhurst:

- relatively easy to execute
- member driven
- scaleable
- low investment
- partnership opportunities

In developing this project the lead person responsible should as soon as possible connect with the people at Ontario By Bike to seek their guidance/assistance in launching/expanding the program. They are seasoned experts that are exception at working with community leaders.

This project will not only benefit the community economically, the supporting infrastructure and bike-friendly cultural associated with it will benefit active transportation throughout town as it evolves.

The Ontario by Bike program includes the following certification criteria for business areas. Reviewing this will help the Town define the work program for this project:

Obligatory/Minimum Requirements

- Bicycle-Friendly Business Areas (BFBA) must submit the registration for the designation through a Business Improvement Area, Chamber of Commerce or similar association
- At least five (5) applicable businesses participating and certified as bicycle friendly locations, including one of each category – accommodations, food services, attractions. Note: A certified bicycle-friendly accommodation business located no further than a 3km distance away for proposed business area.
- Ample bike parking available within proposed business area.
- Allocation of (at least) one storefront location designated and clearly promoted as a Bike Welcome Centre, equipped with a bike repair station and up to date local cycling information and maps.
- Cycling infrastructure and/or signed route in and out of proposed business area.
- Dedicated web page indicating the BFBA designation, listing certified bicycle-friendly business locations.
- Participating locations display Ontario By Bike Network Decal in visible locations.
- BFBA must be located within a region supporting the Ontario By Bike Network.
- Bicycle-Friendly Business Area champion(s) to outreach and promote Ontario By Bike Network to member businesses through distribution of the Business Outreach Kit.
- When hosting community events, additional bike parking or bike valet service is made available. Cycling promoted as an option to get to and from local events.
- Assistance with Ontario By Bike Network evaluation, including an annual Business Perception Survey of both participating and non-participating businesses.
- All association staff informed of participation in the Ontario By Bike Network, the Bicycle-Friendly Business Area designation and above services and amenities.

Suggested Additional Services

- Establishment of leadership team (BIA staff, business owners, community members, etc) to meet periodically to evaluate efforts and share lessons learned.
- Bike Welcome Centre equipped with First aid kit and readily available.
- Access to public washrooms (where possible), rest area (preferably covered) and water (either from a water fountain or by purchase from a concession stand)
- Promotion of bike parking locations.
- Provision of larger bike parking options, including bike corrals.
- Creation and promotion of discount programs for cyclists.
- Bike share station or bike rental location within proposed business area.
- Customer deliveries made by bike where possible.
- Shared bikes available for business operators and staff to sign out for local area use.
- Installation of signs showing bicycle-friendly status and welcoming cyclists to Bicycle-Friendly Business Area
- Creation of an integrated marketing campaign that highlights the Bicycle-Friendly Business Area designation and participation in the Ontario By Bike Network.
- Upon designation, promote participation with media release and outreach to media outlets working to maximize public relation opportunities. Bike-themed launch event may be considered.
- Where applicable participation in other complementary programs promoting cycling, safety, health and education, as well as programs that promote cycling activities for residents. (E.g. Share the Road, CAN Bike, etc).
- Working with municipality to promote and provide improved bicycle infrastructure and parking.



Ontario By Bike is an exceptional program in the spirit of Asset Based Community Driven initiatives. Their system is set up to help local businesses benefit from bicycle oriented tourism and also creates links with the Ontario-wide network they have developed. It improves end of trip facilities, creates a culture supportive of cycling, adds to local economic development efforts at a very low cost, and creates potential for collaboration..

CYCLE ROUTE NAMING & WAYFINDING

NEAR-TERM
1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Regulations & Policy

SCALE
Community-wide

MAGNITUDE OF IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s



10

Challenge

One of the principle features of the on-street bike route network is the notification marking system that will have to be developed. The National Association of City Transportation Officials describes these as wayfinding systems; consisting of comprehensive signing and/or pavement markings to guide bicyclists to their destinations along preferred bicycle routes.

The challenge is designing and implementing a bicycle route wayfinding system throughout the community (including signage for bicycle parking).

Action

A wayfinding system enables people to orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place. It helps answer the questions "Where am I?", "Where is ___?" and "How do I get There?" As part of the process of building the cycling route network in Gravenhurst, a wayfinding and naming system needs to be developed.

It is recommended that the route signage system design should begin with the Bicycle Route Marker Signs described in OTM Book 18 Bicycle Facilities which defines parameters for placement and frequency. The recommended sign design should however be adapted to a more context appropriate and visually appealing design for Gravenhurst.

While the Town will be responsible for all installation of signage in the rights-of-way. To ensure that the signage system is effective and attractive, this project should be undertaken by a team that includes professionals skilled in signage and wayfinding systems.

In its most basic terms a wayfinding system includes signs that are typically placed at decision points along routes; at the intersection of two or more bikeways; and, at other key locations leading to and along routes. However, this overly simplified approach can lead to a signage system that fails to

address the needs of the "real" users, by favouring the design choices of the committee responsible for the project.

A design framework that organizes the information of the wayfinding system into five themes is suggested. This approach is adapted from the recently completed Toronto 360 Wayfinding Strategy and corresponds with the parameters of other highly successful wayfinding systems. The five themes as adapted from 360 are as follows, and should be used to develop the parameters of this project:

Consistency: Consistency of content and the way it is presented needs to be established and maintained throughout the system.

- Hierarchy of information
- Use of common conventions for the way and kind of information that is presented
- Positioning to facilitate understanding and wayfinding throughout the town and along routes

Inclusivity: The system should address the needs of all users and consider ways of advancing the goals of universal design.

- Access and accessibility of information to address different user users and increase access to information
- Legibility of signage should be considered for the intended users and type of signage

- Technology for mobile access to information should be integrated into the overall system.

Sustainability: the full life-cycle costs associated with the system need to be considered (not just the initial production and installation).

- Reduce signage and pole clutter with careful design and placement of wayfinding features, taking into consideration other signage needs (such as street, business and regulatory signs)
- Flexibility should be considered so that information can be easily updated
- Long-term maintenance of wayfinding features should be cost effective

Transition: connecting places and making third party input possible to help people move throughout the community.

- Multi-modal information should be presented and consistent throughout the system
- Route legibility should be supported through intuitive wayfinding by implementing lighting, sidewalk, public art, or other urban design features
- Fill in the gaps by providing information about how to negotiate unclear connections

Local identity: building upon the unique context and sense of place of the community.

- Historic names should be used wherever possible
- Landmark buildings, spaces and nature features should be promoted and used to orient people
- Local character through the participation of citizens and businesses should be encouraged during the development of the wayfinding system



Mural art that highlights active living and active transportation could be created throughout the community as a way of adding visual interest and clues for people to orient themselves in the community. Generally this should only require collaboration with the building owners and artists and does not depend on municipal funding or timing. Many communities have been able to leverage this kind of artistic expression to make their communities more human scaled and pedestrian oriented.



Wayfinding signage does not always have to be plain. This example from Europe adds an artistic flare that helps create a sense of place and makes the public realm more appealing. The Town may want to initiate an art-oriented wayfinding system (particularly in the downtown district), with installations being located on private properties.

NEAR-TERM 1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Regulations & Policy

SCALE
Community-wide

MAGNITUDE OF IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s



POLICIES & REGULATIONS



PLACEMAKING

11

HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN STANDARDS

Challenge

Urban (or community) design can be complex, not only in terms of what it relates to, but also who does the actual design work. There is no universally accepted definition of urban design, and the professional practices of planners, landscape architects, engineers, and architects all include community or urban design.

Essentially community design is the definition of space through the careful arrangement and design of architecture, landscaping, and use, to create livable places for people. Community design is best executed through the cooperative work of professional disciplines and informed by the community through their insights and participation in the process.

Unfortunately, most contemporary development does not exhibit quality community design principles. The result is development that is auto centric, out of context, lacks connectivity for pedestrians, has inconsistent relationships between neighbouring areas, provides low quality public realm, and isn't human-scaled. To make a community more appealing and functional for people, the design quality of developments needs to improve.

Action

Creating interesting, safe, wondrous, and engaging places for people is important to making a community age-friendly and active transportation supportive. Without places that are attractive, interesting and supportive of many different peoples' needs, your community's active transportation network (walkways, trails, bike routes, et cetera) acts more as a recreational amenity, than as an integral part of people's daily lives. Through this project the Town will complete and launch design standards for new development. These will support active transportation and overall healthy community design.

These design regulations will relate to many different elements of the built environment, including: public spaces, trails, walkways, sidewalks, lighting, building facades, locations of doorways and windows, landscape treatments, street furniture, wayfinding and signage, parking areas, et cetera. They should provide guidance to ensure that development projects are:

- of high-quality
- pedestrian oriented
- interconnected
- provide adequate public facilities and infrastructure
- address aesthetics
- connect with nature

- function well

Through their implementation the standards would help ensure that as the community evolves and new projects are built, the physical environment will be supportive of all modes of transportation for all ages.

When quality design merges with active community use of a space that can be called "placemaking". This is an important goal for communities. Because placemaking, and a sense of place, are key to the future success of towns and cities. The trends for new home buyers, business investors, young people looking for communities to move to, and seniors seeking a place to settle down are all pointing to the quality of place as being of highest desirability. In fact, on April 15, 2011 the Governing Council of UN-Habitat adopted the first-ever public space resolution. It urged the development of a policy approach for Placemaking; for fostering social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits for the overall livability of communities. Over the past decade the specific value of active transportation or walkability and placemaking to community livability; economic and business resiliency and success; real estate development; and, community health has become increasingly understood.

The design of individual buildings and development



With community design standards the public realm can be improved to better support community health and well-being. These standards should also be crafted to help build on the unique attributes of a community to define its sense of place.



Design standards can require blank building facades to be embellished in ways that reduce their negative impact on the streetscape, making it more pedestrian friendly.



Flexible designs that improve the walkability of the community can also facilitate easy winter maintenance when well thought out.

sites is also important to pedestrians and cyclists. Key features include secure and convenient bicycle parking at major destinations and multiple-unit dwellings, canopied and at-grade store entrances, parking lots behind or beside buildings rather than next to the street, and pathways that link building entrances to nearby sidewalks. (Transport Canada, Improving Travel Options in Small & Rural Communities, 2009). The design standards should include these.

This project is completely the responsibility of the Town, as it is in their pervue to facilitate development that supports community livability and well-being. It is recommended that the the following simple twelve point criteria¹ be used for the preliminary structure of this project's active transportation parameters/goals for new design standards. In this way they can use these questions to fomulate their thoughts:

On-site arrangements:

- Are the buildings arranged to minimize walking distance to and from the local network?
- Do all front doors face directly onto the street?
- Is all street frontage "active frontage" with windows and activities that face the public realm?
- Are there "dead" spaces that are out of view, hidden, or create unnecessary restrictions to pedestrian movement for the overall intended use of the site, that have no function and which could become the focus of unsocial behavior?
- Are all areas compliant with accessibility standards?
- Is the arrangement of the pedestrian network throughout the site practical, efficient, safe, and secure for pedestrians?

Off-site provision:

- Is the proposed development connected to all adjacent areas for people traveling on foot (by bicycle)?
- Is the proposed development permeable to those on foot (by bicycle) to travel throughout it and beyond to adjacent areas/developments?
- Are there opportunities to create new pedestrian (bicycle) connections?
- Are there new walkway/vehicle crossings or conflict points proposed; and can they be avoided, or designed in such a way to minimize danger to the pedestrians?
- Will the development lead to an increase in walking activity?
- Are walkways and waiting areas adequate in width and area for the volume of pedestrians and other activity?



¹ London's Improving Walkability: Good practice guidance on improving pedestrian conditions as part of development opportunities, page 22

**Small-scale pedestrian
improvements along
streets results in increased
physical activity and high
levels of public support.**

Walk Boston, Good Walking is Good Business

DOWNTOWN ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES

NEAR-TERM
1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance

SCALE
Downtown

MAGNITUDE OF IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s



12

Challenge

The Town of Gravenhurst is quite progressive in that it has dedicated accessible on-street parking spaces in the downtown district. These are an important addition for making the district accessible and all ages friendly.

Because all trips begin and end with active transportation modes, this kind of parking arrangement in the downtown makes it more appealing for people with mobility challenges. Unfortunately, there are a number of challenges with these spaces, and this project is intended to address them. These relate to the overall effectiveness of the parking spaces and the design details associated with them.

Action

For this project the Town will reevaluate the on-street accessible parking spaces it currently provides, with the intent of making them more effective.

The strategy should specifically look at, and include the following:

- the accessible parking spaces should be in a regular pattern on cross streets so that they are in predictable locations
- all spaces should be clearly marked
- all spaces should have direct adjacent access to the sidewalk with curb cuts
- look at potential to merge the locations of these with the bike corrals (as described in the Plan) because of the mutual benefits that could be realized for each of these uses.

This is a relatively simple project that involves looking at the existing pattern of accessible parking spaces and making sure that they are designed to be as effective as possible. The results are expected to be: moving some parking spots; providing curb cuts for some spaces; and, relocating others.



Above is an example of a local business that has provided both accessible parking and family friendly parking spaces for their patrons.



Some of the challenges with the accessible parking spaces in the downtown, and in newer developments, is that they are not connected to a safe route of travel; there are missing curb cuts; they are not located in the optimal locations. These are all easy things to address.

NEAR-TERM
1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Programming & Culture

SCALE
Downtown

MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$1,000s



CULTURE



ASSESSMENT

13

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, PATIO POLICY & OPEN STREETS CELEBRATIONS

Challenge

The Town has used a variety of methods to communicate with the public on this and other projects. However, while some of these methods work better for informing people, they all share similar limitations in terms of engaging people. The most effective way to have meaningful exchange with citizens is still face-to-face.

There is no forum currently available for the people of Gravenhurst to get together on a regular basis to exchange ideas and information relating to walking, cycling, and the mobility of citizens. This is just as much about “educating” people as it is about learning from them, and creating opportunities to experience active transportation and age-friendly facilities first hand. The Transportation Association of Canada speaks to how important this is in relationship to implementing initiatives associated with walking and cycling:

Public education will be a major key to success. Without it political leaders will not have the mandate to move in the right direction.

Also, plans such as this are often referred to a “living documents”, implying that they are amendable to deal with changes in circumstances or community needs. Unfortunately there is seldom a process or mechanism for the plan, or even its components,

to be reviewed and potentially changed within a time line that is effective and not reactive. When changes are made to these kinds of plans, it is often done well past the time when it could have been most effective and instead results in a plan that becomes inherently less effective at guiding the community’s actions.

As with all meaningful work done to create livable communities supporting high quality of life, citizens need to be informed and engaged in the process when creating/changing a community to be active transportation friendly. Their ideas, questions, and needs have to be known so that they can influence design, building, and maintenance decisions.

Public information and education plays an important role in terms of active transportation because **individual travel behaviour is influenced by a combination of factors – infrastructure, promotion, education – all of which are integral to increasing the number of active transportation users. In addition to building new active transportation infrastructure, it is important to test and promote new facilities and offer information on safe cycling skills and sharing the road.**

Action

For this project the Town will have to develop a community awareness/media program about active transportation; which should include an annual event such as an open streets celebration, a seasonal patio policy and program,.

Most town plans, reports, and strategies quickly fall from citizens’ awareness and interest shortly after their adoption. This is partially due to their complexity and the often technical nature of their presentation. It is also partly due to the lack of updated information on these. The Ontario Professional Planners Institute describes how this information/education plays an important role in active transportation. They state that travel behavior is influenced by a mix of factors (infrastructure, promotion, education) which are all integral to increasing the number of people using active transportation. They also specifically identify that it is important to not only build new active transportation facilities, but also to promote them and offer information on safe cycling. (Ontario Professional Planners Institute, Healthy Communities and Planning for Active Transportation: A Call to Action, 2012).

The Town will also have to work with other partners to develop the process and schedule to conduct the annual Open Streets event(s) and develop the necessary resources. By providing this cohesive community



Globally, Open Streets events are being used in towns and cities to celebrate active living and active transportation by opening the public realm of our roadways to all users. These events are celebrations, idea generators, and program testing opportunities.

The City of Peterborough has also developed an Open Streets program. The people that are involved with this initiative could be useful resources for the Town.

The Town should be considering the full variety of available media and public gathering formats as part of its community awareness and information programme.

awareness program the Town will be rising to the challenge of an important recommendation made by the Chief Coroner of Ontario:

A comprehensive public education program should be developed to promote safer sharing of the road by all users... Such a program should include: - a targeted public awareness campaign, in the spring/summer months, with key messages around cycling safety.

The Open Streets event(s) will help inform and “recalibrate” the Plan, providing opportunities for ongoing community input into the evolution, implementation, and review of the Plan’s projects and fostering meaningful relationships between various stakeholders. This also includes opportunities for additions to the list of Immediate Action Projects and to replace those that have been completed.

The Town should also craft a seasonal patio policy that allows businesses to install patios within the public right-of-way. These are often referred to as parklets. Cities such as Barrie and Orillia have by-laws and requirements in place to facilitate these business building and placemaking projects. The 2016 Parklet manual from the City of Vancouver is an excellent reference resource. Implementation of this could be linked to the Town’s Community Improvement Program.

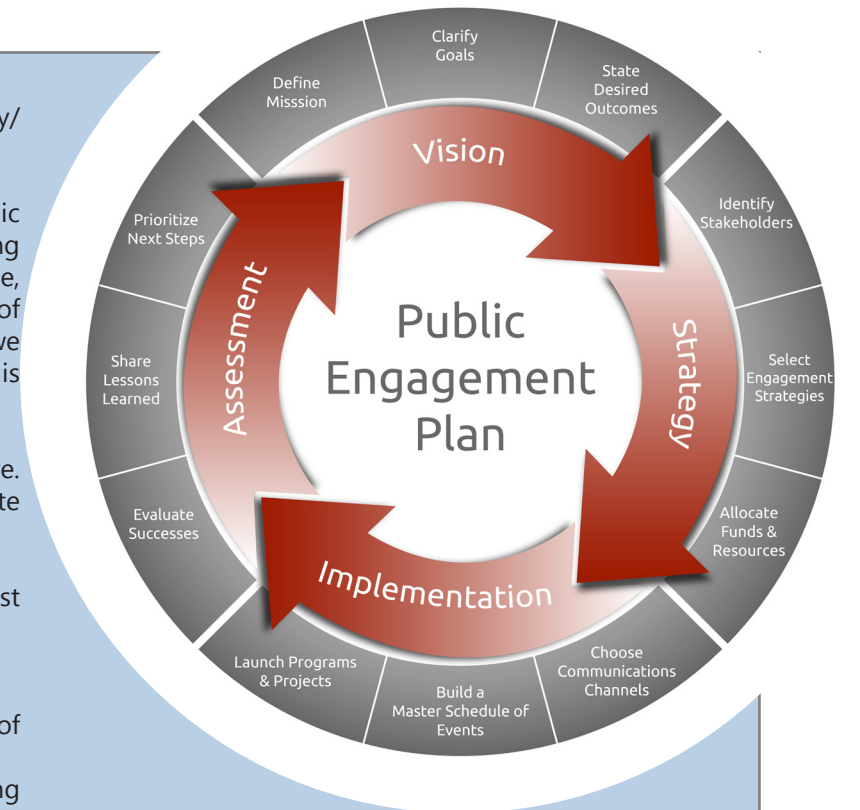
From communication and community engagement experts Coady/Bowman:

What is Public Engagement? is a common question. Public engagement is a process to connect diverse stakeholders, ensuring inclusive participation and reciprocal learning. Based in dialogue, public engagement allows for a deepening understanding of a particular topic by drawing forth those who add vigour as we question, discover, challenge and innovate. Public engagement is not just dissemination of information.

Public engagement allows us to offer ideas for others to improve. It is in articulating and defending a position that we may evaluate its merit. Specifically, public engagement:

- Maximizes the flow of ideas across society, rather than just within groups
- Breaks down barriers and cross-cuts boundaries
- Ensures a multi-disciplinary approach to problem-solving
- Opens the door for ongoing dialogue, stimulating a sense of inclusion
- Enriches and broadens thinking by refining ideas and ensuring relevancy
- Promotes coalition-building to effect lasting change
- Allows for participation in decision-making which grows personal responsibility
- Deepens social cohesion and the development of a healthy civic identity
- Strengthens both individual and program-level efforts
- Develops participants’ skill-sets, especially in leadership and conflict-resolution
- Provides a platform for evaluating the impact of our efforts across populations

Oftentimes, public engagement strategies are mistakenly substituted for a clear public engagement plan. A public engagement plan has four cardinal points: Vision, Strategy, Implementation, and Assessment. By focusing on these four elements, it is possible to advance a course of action that is unique to each effort





To create awareness, and build the culture of active living and active transportation, open street events can be adapted for the local context. In this case, a community dinner is the focus of the event. Similar events were recently held in Collingwood and the Town of The Blue Mountains. The scale of the events can also be adapted to include portions of roadways, laneways, or parking lots initially, and then have them expand as they become more successful. Often open streets events are scheduled for one or more weekends, or regularly throughout the summer on specific days of the week.



The Town should consider ways of maximizing the use of online tools, mobile technology, and social networks as part of their community outreach for the various projects listed here.



As the Town develops its strategy for this project they should be sure to include ways of connecting with citizens in less formal ways, and in places where they will already be. Asking people to attend meetings and formal presentations will have less success.

NEAR-TERM
1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Regulations & Policy

SCALE
Community-wide

MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s



POLICIES &
REGULATIONS



ASSESSMENT

14

COORDINATED REVIEW OF EXISTING REGULATIONS

Challenge

All over North America, we have applied advanced engineering to move more cars and to move them faster. With that as our benchmark, we passed the test with flying colours. The unintended result, though, is a system of streets and places that accommodate cars but deter people from walking, biking, and socializing. This impacts human health, the economy of our towns, and the potential for a sustainable future. Looking back, we must collectively realize that there are much broader goals that our streets and places must serve, and it is these goals that we should now pour our passion, energy, and engineering into.

A singular focus on vehicle speed and efficiency has had many negative effects on the retail and the social life of streets, as well. People often find it difficult to get across these streets and feel uncomfortable walking along them, especially when traffic speeds are higher. When pedestrians feel unsafe, they are not likely to linger on the street and spend their money in local shops. This has impacted land values, and it has driven more people to drive more of the time.

Level of Service (LOS) measures also focus on vehicle mobility at the expense of all other modes. We generally do not consider acceptable Levels of Service for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, people living along the street, or retailers

attempting to make a living. In smaller and rural communities this has resulted in connectivity to and between communities and their downtowns to be subordinated for easier auto-oriented access to regional shopping centres. It has also resulted in development patterns that forgo the historic forms that support active transportation, placemaking, and healthy community interaction. Through misdirected long-range plans and capital improvements that place premiums on suburban-style development patterns as opposed to leveraging existing assets and investments, many rural downtowns and existing neighbourhoods are now faced with competing auto-oriented residential subdivisions and shopping malls and plazas.

The Town of Gravenhurst is not immune to these types of transportation (and associated development patterns) networks, and the resultant negative impacts.

As with all municipalities, the Town is faced with managing many documents defining policy direction as well as their resulting implementation programs and By-laws. As the community evolves it becomes necessary to review the direction given by newly adopted policy documents against those that have been adopted previously. This is also needed because the physical and social context of the community changes over time as well.

Therefore, for this project the Town should undertake a review exercise to ensure that the different existing policies, regulatory and implementation documents/processes are complementary and supportive of a more walking and cycling friendly community.

Action

In this project the Town will undertake a review/ updating of all its policies and regulations, and design standards to ensure that they are supportive of active transportation.

There are number of documents that need to be reviewed and amended as part of this exercise to ensure that they support a walkable and bikeable community. To complete this work will require input from all departments, as well as the citizens.

The end result of this project will be updated and mutually supportive regulations and work programs relating to active transportation.

Once complete, there are will be follow-up projects that will be required. This will allow for "cross pollination" of ideas, facilitate better collaboration, reduce costs and timelines, and improve integration and mutual benefits.

Once a developer's shovel hits the ground, the die has been cast for generations. We have to do this right.

Scott Stinger, NYC Comptroller

CYCLING WITHOUT AGE

NEAR-TERM
1 YEAR

LEAD AGENCY
Service Groups

SCOPE
Community Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Programing & Culture

SCALE
Community-wide

MAGNITUDE OF IMPLEMENTATION
\$1,000s



ACCESSIBILITY



CULTURE

15

Challenge

As people age, their ability to participate in active lifestyles, and active transportation is often significantly reduced. This is because of their own physical conditions, as well as the built environment and infrastructure.

This has obvious negative impacts on the lives of seniors. However, on a community-wide scale this also negatively affects social networks, families and friends, business activity, and community vibrancy.

For this project the challenge is to make active transportation a viable and enjoyable part of the lives of Gravenhurst's seniors.

Action

This is an opportunity for Gravenhurst to help seniors become more active in the community. It is a program that involves local citizens taking seniors out for rides in special trishaw/rickshaw bikes. The Town will have to partner with local seniors groups /facilities; and develop a volunteer program to complete this project.

As stated by the founder of this imaginative, yet simple, project, it starts with the simple act of generosity, to those of the community previously gave us their care and time.

To start a chapter of Cycling without Age in Gravenhurst is relatively easy. The Town can find the information needed at: <http://cyclingwithoutage.org/>

The non-profit organization has launched a simple affiliate model for communities, nursing homes, cities and individuals worldwide to become part of the movement. They have a wealth of experience in working with nursing home staff and management, city councils, other volunteer organizations, cyclists federations as well as great ideas of how to get the initiative off the ground and locals excited about it.



The Cycling Without Age program began in the Netherlands, and has recently expanded into a few communities in Canada. With its launch in Gravenhurst, the Town and its partners will be able to significantly impact peoples lives and help create a cycling positive social culture in the community.



This project does not require the Town for completion. This is designed to be an effort by citizens and local community interest groups, working with seniors focused partner organizations.



This project does a lot to improve community well-being and social cohesion. It is a wonderful way for people of all ages to enjoy the community by bicycle.

MID-TERM

2 - 3 YEAR IMPLEMENTATION

- 16** *Final Bicycle Route Assessment and Improvements*
- 17** *Active Transportation Expertise*
- 18** *Crosswalk Improvements*
- 19** *Complete Streets Policy & Design Matrix*



The projects listed in this section are generally greater in scale and scope than the previous. These are projected to be completed within 2 to 3 years. This section includes projects that address a variety of important aspects of active transportation, and active lifestyles, including: networks; infrastructure that supports different modes of transportation; and the resources to continue with implementation.

MID-TERM
2-3 YEARS

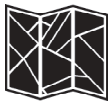
LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance

SCALE
Community-wide

MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000 to \$100,000s



NETWORK



IMPROVEMENTS PLACEMAKING

16

FINAL BICYCLE ROUTE ASSESSMENT & IMPROVEMENTS

Challenge

The desire to use cycling as a mode of transportation, as opposed to just recreation, is quite high throughout Ontario. The 2008 Ontario Walkability Study identified that nearly 75% of students surveyed would prefer to walk or cycle to school; and although 3.5% said they currently ride their bicycle to school, 26.8% would prefer this mode of transportation.¹ Also "Go for Green" identifies that 70% of Canadians indicated they would be willing to travel up to 30 minutes to work if they could enjoy the safety and convenience of a bike lane.²

While the Town has provided some bicycle facilities, there is no dedicated on-road network of cycling routes throughout Gravenhurst, and unfortunately this does not meet the needs for active transportation in the community now or into the future. On-street bike routes generally consisting of bike lanes, marked shared lanes, and streets that are specifically designed as family-friendly bike routes would provide the safety, comfort, and directness needed to make active transportation a viable choice for Bobcaygeon residents.

¹ Catherine O'Brien, PhD. Centre for Sustainable Transportation, *Child and Youth Friendly Planning*, presentation, 2008

² Go for Green The Active Living & Environment Program, *Fitting Places: How the Built Environment Affects Active Living and Active Transportation*, pg. 18

Action

Throughout much of the research and literature on cycling and active transportation, cyclists are often categorized by their level of comfort with riding in traffic. *The Ontario Bike Plan*³ describes these categories:

The Strong and the Fearless: 1% of the population will ride regardless of the condition of roadways.

The Enthused and the Confident: 5 to 10% of the population who are cycling now, attracted by improvements made to bikeway networks. They may be comfortable sharing the road with motorists, but appreciate bike lanes and other facilities designed specifically for them. They are likely to cycle more often as further improvements are made.

The Interested but Concerned: This represents approximately 60% of the population. They may like riding a bicycle but are afraid to ride regularly. These citizens will ride if they feel the roadways were calmer and safer.

No Way No How: Around one third of the population will never be interested in or capable of cycling.

³ Cycle Ontario Alliance, *Ontario Bike Plan*, February 2008, pg. 5

This project is intended to improve safety for cyclists traveling throughout the community. This will be done by developing a defined community-wide network of bicycle routes. These will be improved based on the characteristics of the routes in question and based on the guidance described in MTO Book 18.

The network(s) need to have very specific characteristics to be successful:

- Routes need to be connected and convenient;
- Routes need to be purposeful, in that they connect locations people want and need to go;
- People need to feel safe and secure and enjoy their journey;
- Routes need to be understandable by users.

Bicycle Routes

Not all streets can be redeveloped or retrofitted to provide cycling lanes or other improvements for active transportation. Sometimes this is the result of the characteristics of the roads in question, the amount of roadways in a town, the short and long-term costs of improvements, or any combination of these.

To complete this project the Town will require a

multi-disciplinary team of planners and engineers to assess and confirm the recommended routes identified here. Given the basic characteristics of the roads in question, it is expected that the network will principally consist of a combination of bike lane and shared lane markings. The map on the following pages illustrates the suggested bicycle route network.

Determining the appropriate on-street bicycle facility type should be done through the clearly defined process as described in the Ontario Traffic Manual: Book 18 Bicycle Facilities. This will have to be done for each of the routes recommended in the Plan. The Ontario Traffic Council briefly describes the three basic steps of the selection process as follows:

Step 1 - Preselection Nomograph

- Collect and review existing and future volume and motor vehicle operating speed data
- Plot on Nomograph
- Nomograph provides a general guide for facility types to be considered

Step 2 - Examine other factors

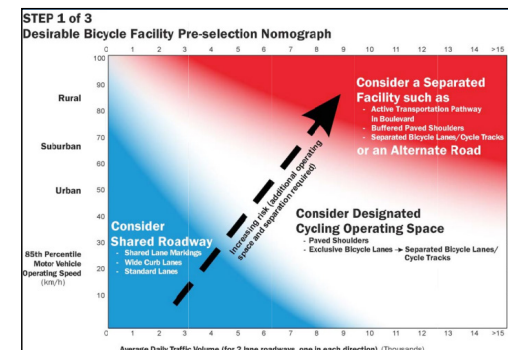
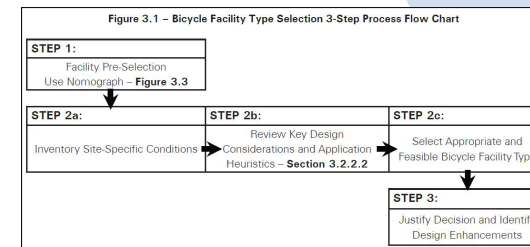
- Skill level of anticipated users
- Number of lanes
- Traffic characteristics
- Number and frequency of potential conflict points
- Adjacent land uses and lot patterns
- Frequency of transit stops
- Pedestrian safety
- Collision patterns

Step 3 - Select Appropriate Facility Type

- Based on results from Steps 1 and 2, plus sound engineering judgement

Bicycle parking is space efficient and so generates about five times as much spending per square meter as car parking.

Victoria Transport Policy Institute



Characteristic	Experienced/Confident Riders	Casual/Less Confident Riders
Comfort	Most are comfortable riding with vehicles on streets, and are able to navigate streets like a motor vehicle, including using the full width of a narrow travel lane when appropriate and using left-turn lanes.	Prefer shared use paths, bicycle boulevards, or bike lanes along low-volume, low-speed streets.
Traffic	While comfortable on most streets, some prefer on-street bike lanes, paved shoulders, or shared use paths when available.	May have difficulty gauging traffic and may be unfamiliar with rules of the road as they pertain to bicyclists; may walk bike across intersections.
Directness	Prefer a more direct route.	Often use a less direct route to avoid arterials with heavy traffic volumes.
Sidewalks	Avoid riding on sidewalks. Ride with the flow of traffic on streets.	If no on-street facility is available, may ride on sidewalks.
Speed	May ride at speeds up to 40 km/h on level grades, up to 72 km/h on steep descents.	May ride at speeds around 13 km/h to 20 km/h.
Distance	May cycle longer distances.	Cycle shorter distances. 1 to 8 km is a typical trip distance.

These two tables show simplified descriptions of the characteristics of different bicycle rider types and the difference between recreational and utilitarian trips.

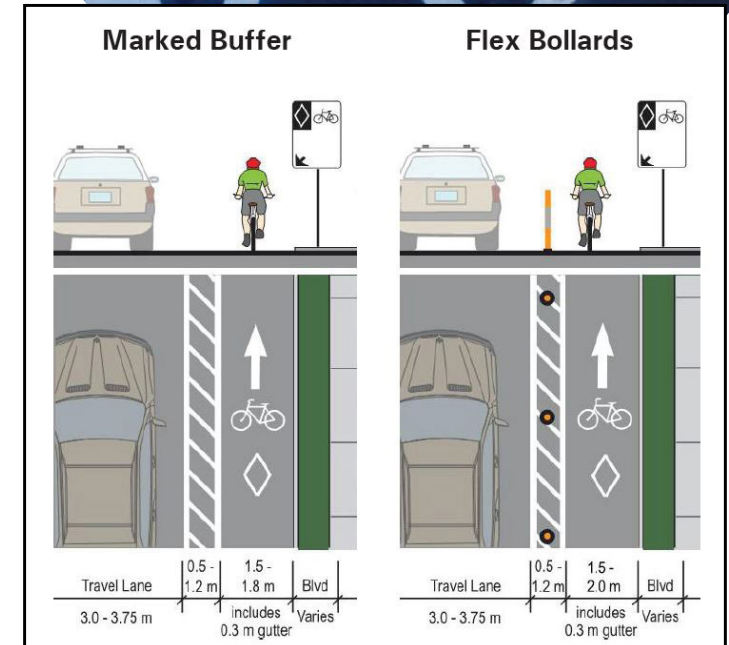
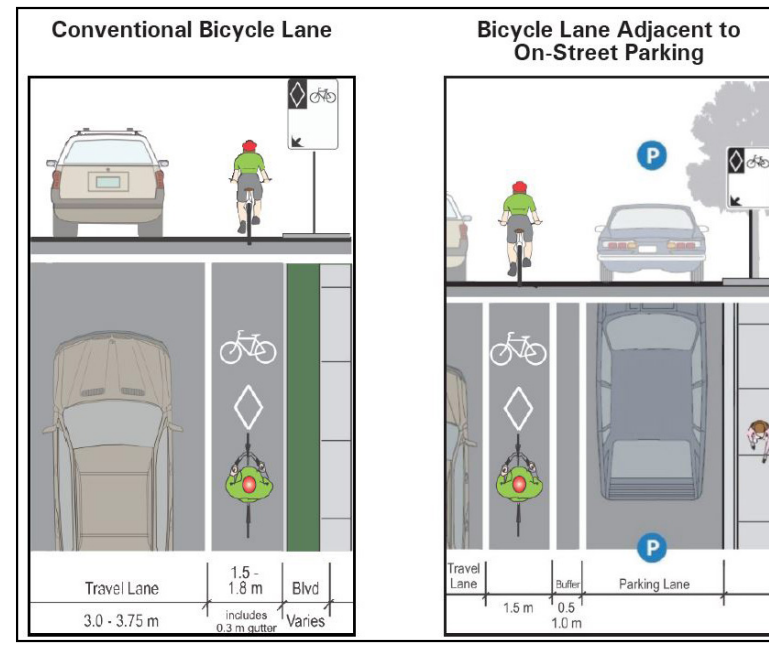
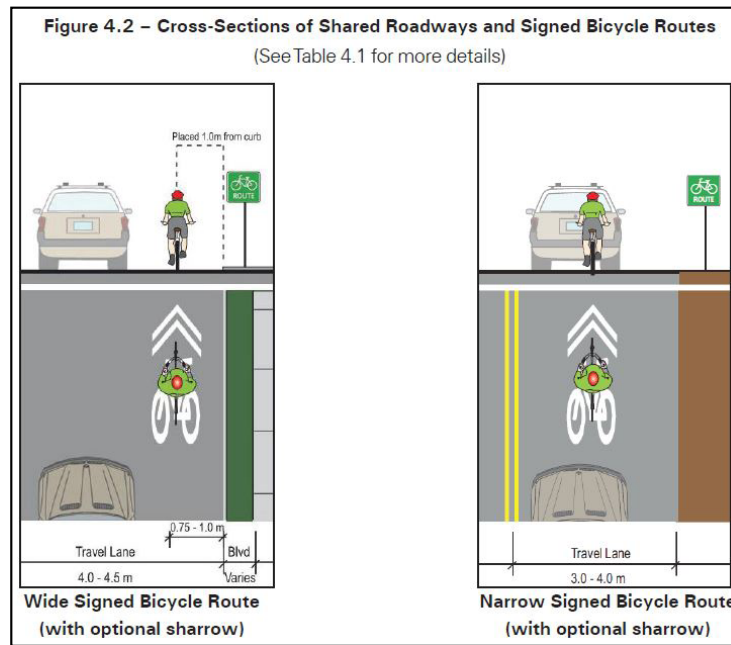
These are all elements that have been considered in the crafting of the Plan and the recommended cycling routes.

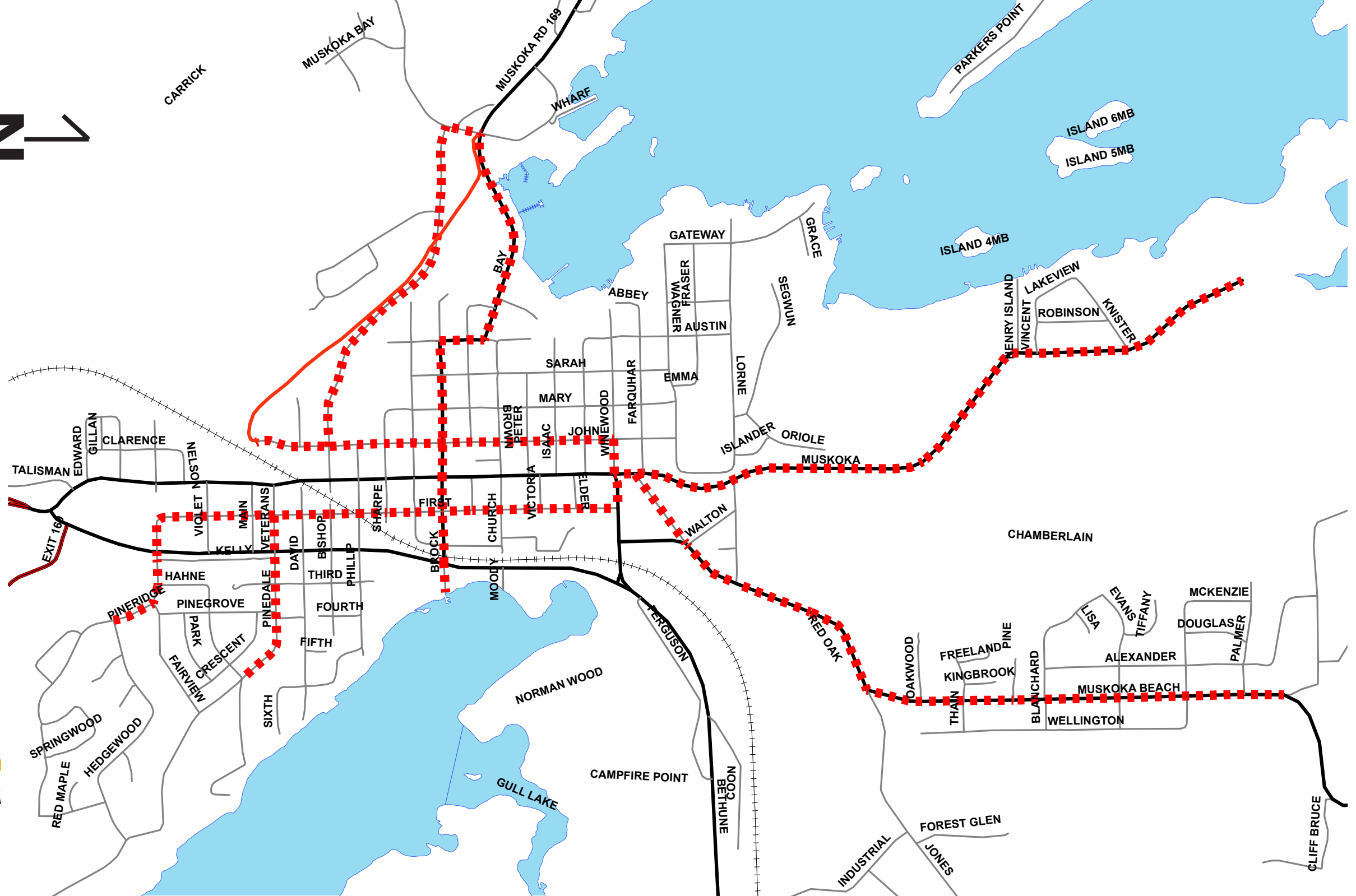
Characteristic	Recreational Trips	Utilitarian Trips
Directness	Directness of route not as important as visual interest, shade, protection from wind.	Directness of route & connected, continuous facilities more important than visual interest.
Connectivity	Loop trips may be preferred to backtracking; start and end points are often the same.	Trips generally travel from residential to schools, shopping, or work areas and back.
Distance	Trips may range from under a mile to over 50 miles.	Trips generally are 1-10 miles in length.
Parking	Short-term bicycle parking is needed at recreational sites, parks, trail heads, and other recreational activity centres.	Short-term & long -terms bicycle parking is needed.
Topography	Varied topography may be desired.	Flat topography is desired
Riders	(Individuals) May be riding in a group.	(Individuals) Often ride alone.
Destinations	(Individuals) May drive with their bicycles to the starting point of a ride.	Use bicycle as primary transportation mode; may transfer to public transportation; may not have access to a car for trip.
Time	Typically occur on the weekend or on weekdays before morning commute hours or after evening commute hours.	Bicycle commute trips may occur at any hour of the day.



BELOW: The illustrations shown here are the recommended configurations identified in Book 18. For the routes in Bobcaygeon it is expected that when the engineering assessments are completed the majority of the improvements will be those shown in the first four panels.

RIGHT: Fully separated cycling lanes are increasingly being shown to be the best and safest infrastructure for cyclists. Although not fully separated this arrangement is a viable option for the community (particularly the relatively low volume of vehicular traffic at most times). Additionally, these types of markings are not problematic for snow removal, and can allow for cycling lanes to be cleared as well with ease. Given the general road surfacing and right-of-way widths observed in Bobcaygeon, this type of option should be relatively easy to develop. Trial projects with temporary markings could be used to "test" this approach and gather data about its effectiveness.





The map on the left shows the recommended bicycle route network.

This has been developed through a number of steps, briefly listed below:

- review of recommended routing presented by the Town
- on-site verification of entire Town route
- extensive on-site analysis of community-wide roadway system and points of interest
- review of information/discussions with stakeholders
- assessment of possible configurations to meet criteria, such as:
 - directness of routes
 - community-wide coverage (within 200m of a defined route)
 - street characteristics
 - opportunities (such as the Main Street redevelopment project)
 - connectivity of areas/land uses/sites that support daily needs of residents
 - connectivity/convenience for tourist populations
 - reduction of potential conflicts with vehicular traffic
 - network complexity (given the characteristics of

traffic throughout the community)

- review of OTM Book 18
- placemaking opportunities
- wayfinding and legibility of network
- scale of the network and scope of improvements
- necessary (to address opportunities for ease of implementation)



The online Streetmix tool is excellent for citizens and professionals to work together on the spatial arrangement of roadway elements. This can be used in discussions: with Town staff as a way of communicating ideas about improvements; with citizens to increase awareness of physical limitations and opportunities in rights-of-way; and with elected officials to communicate concepts and concerns.

**MID-TERM
2-3 YEARS**

**LEAD AGENCY
Town**

**SCOPE
Municipal Focus**

**GENERAL CATEGORY
Regulations & Policy**

**SCALE
Community-wide**

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s**



17

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION EXPERTISE

Challenge

The necessity to integrate the needs of pedestrians and cyclists directly into the design of streets is now widely recognized by municipalities. This is because of the impacts they have on the mobility and health of citizens, the benefits to economic development, and improvements to traffic.

To successfully support active transportation, municipalities must have appropriate planning and design requirements that place it “front and centre” of planning and engineering work. One of the challenges will be to provide dedicated technical expertise in this area to implement the Plan.

In fact the the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) speaks to directly to this need in their Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (4th Edition update - 2012):

All roads, streets and highways, except those where bicyclists are legally prohibited, should be designed and constructed under the assumption that they will be used by bicyclists. Therefore, bicyclists’ needs should be addressed in all phases of transportation planning, design, construction, maintenance and operations. All modes of transportation, including bicycles, should be jointly integrated into plans and projects at an early stage so that they function together effectively.

Additionally, the Transportation Association of Canada, in recognizing the increasing costs municipalities are facing to fund transportation infrastructure, recommends:

Realistic means must be found to provide adequate and sustaining sources of funds for new, expanded and properly maintained urban transportation infrastructure and services.¹

They also identify that funding should be stable over time, predictable in magnitude, transparent, open and easily understood by decision makers and the public, and designed to foster transportation systems that operating at the lowest possible cost.

Given the role that active transportation plays in the mobility, health, and the economic success of a community, it is important that funding specifically for active transportation initiatives be integrated into the Town’s budget.

Action

To help move these projects forward and continue building on their wins, the Town should be training staff, or adding resources with active transportation and placemaking expertise. This will help ensure that the needs of walkers and cyclists are being met, and the projects in this Plan are being effectively implemented.

While different departments will be responsible for various components of the projects listed in the Plan, it is generally not appropriate to divide responsibility for its implementation to more than one department. Therefore, the Town should support implementation of the Plan by the Planning Department through the allocation of training and additional staff and/or consulting assistance.

The funding of this work program needs to be consistent and predicable. As such it is also recommended that a specific multi-year budget be developed for the implementation of the projects defined in this Plan.

¹ Transportation Association of Canada, Urban Transportation Council, *A New Vision for Urban Transportation*, Reprint November 1998, pg. 1



Intersections can also be improved to make them more practical and safer for pedestrians in a variety of ways. Here a centre refuge island allows pedestrians to navigate only one lane of traffic at a time.

Traffic lanes can be reduced with curb extensions or even with at grade markings, to allow the pedestrian a shorter distance to cross the road; which also reduces the time drivers need to wait for foot traffic.



As the economic role of “place” gains greater significance, the role of land-use planning for economic development is being reflected in deliberate, placemaking efforts. Using forward-looking planning, design and programming to manage the built environment, municipalities are positioning themselves to attract and retain the people and investments they need to strengthen their economies.

Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

**MID-TERM
2-3 YEARS**

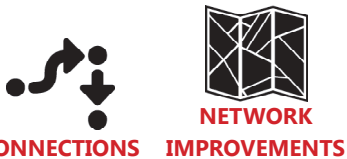
**LEAD AGENCY
Town**

**SCOPE
Municipal Focus**

**GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance**

**SCALE
Community-wide**

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s**



18

CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Challenge

This challenge is somewhat unique to the Plan in that it relates to the maintenance and updating of existing infrastructure, specifically the crosswalks. This is important because this network provides needed accessibility for all ages and abilities.

The National Bicycling and Walking Study 15-Year Status Report from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, states:

Numerous intangible benefits are associated with bicycling and walking. Providing more travel options can increase a sense of independence in seniors, young people, and others who cannot or choose not to drive. Increased levels of bicycling and walking can have a great impact on an area's sense of livability by creating safe and friendly places for people to live and work.¹

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) report, A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 2001 specifically identifies the need to design and develop streets with regard to pedestrian needs. It states that pedestrians are a part of every roadway

environment, and attention should be paid to their presence in rural as well as urban areas... provisions should be made, because pedestrians are the lifeblood of our urban areas, especially in the downtown and other retail areas. In general, the most successful shopping sections are those that provide the most comfort and pleasure for pedestrians.

The challenge is to create a more accessible system of crossings, specifically in the downtown district.

Action

This project involves improving crosswalks throughout the downtown district, so that they are more pedestrian friendly and up to date with contemporary practices.

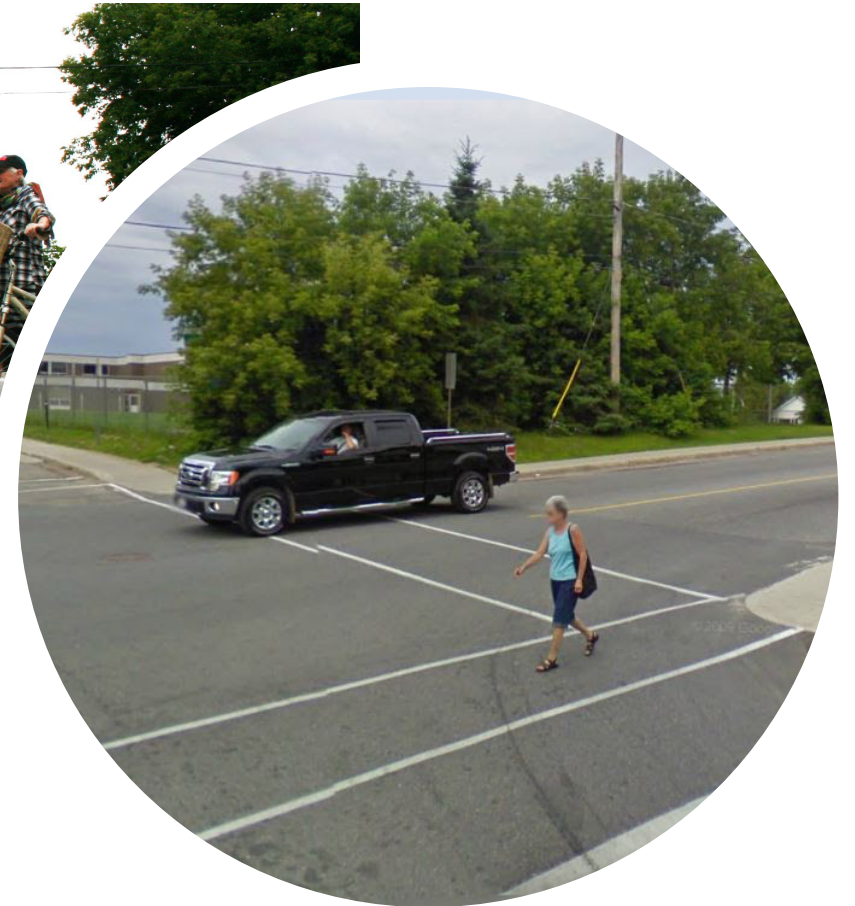
The Town should look at improving the downtown district crossings with the following elements. This work should also be coordinated with the other projects defined in the Plan. The suggested priority includes the following:

- safe routes to schools
- all streets adjacent to schools
- downtown links
- streets adjacent to seniors facilities, hospital, and civic/public buildings and parks

The improvements should include:

- updated crossing markings with "ladder crossings"
- automatic pedestrian signals at all downtown crossings
- countdown timers on crossing signals in the downtown
- audible signals for all crossings in the downtown

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, National Bicycling and Walking Study 15-Year Status Report, May 2010, page 2



Additionally, overall the Town should continue the existing maintenance and improvement program that they already have, with two added components:

1. Develop a refined criteria for identifying and selecting areas where gaps in the sidewalk network can be closed with new sidewalks, to ensure that those with the highest identified need are addressed first; and,
2. Update the design and maintenance of pavement markings for pedestrian crossings to meet current best practices throughout the community.

Note that the Town should also consider opportunities to use alternative markings for pedestrian crossings such as unique symbols or artistic designs. Using these could help support the design component of placemaking, while also increasing the awareness and culture of active transportation by highlighting these crossings. Combining this type of

creative design with courtesy crossings should also be explored as part of this project.

Experienced and qualified professionals should be involved in the design and implementation of these alternative crossing types.

All pedestrian crossings in the community should be upgraded to contemporary standards. As shown here, the markings at this intersection are far more visible with the "ladder" pattern. These kinds of markings are more visible from a distance and in reduced lighting circumstances.

MID-TERM
2-3 YEARS

LEAD AGENCY
Town

SCOPE
Municipal Focus

GENERAL CATEGORY
Regulations & Policy

SCALE
Community-wide

MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$1,000s to \$10,000s



ASSESSMENT



POLICIES &
REGULATIONS

19

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Challenge

In recent decades the design parameters of the roads constructed throughout North America have relied heavily on level-of-service (LOS), thereby skewing their use towards a single mode of transportation. This has negatively impacted adjacent land-use and values, as well as the overall safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and other users. Streets have been designed, built, and maintained in ways that favour vehicle movements over the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. In fact, "People who choose active transport modes face an increased risk of injury from collisions, relative to motor vehicle users".¹

Marginalizing safety for pedestrians and cyclists in the design of transportation systems has resulted in dangerous road networks.

However, there is encouraging evidence that injury and fatality rates decrease as active transportation use is shared/increased, and this effect that has been dubbed "safety in numbers". This safety in numbers effect is prevalent where infrastructure has been designed to promote sharing.²

¹ National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health, *Active Transportation in Urban Areas: Exploring Health Benefits and Risks*, 2010

² National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health, *Active Transportation in Urban Areas: Exploring Health Benefits*

One of the effects of not designing "complete streets" is increased risk to people that use non-motorized transportation. The National Collaborating Center for Environmental Health cautions:

to minimize the risk of injury, it is important that urban transportation infrastructure be carefully designed for active modes.³

Just as with designing for moving vehicles, designing for people requires close attention to how people move and how they use spaces, including the specific dimensions of the people using the environment; for example, people walking side-by-side, parents pushing a stroller, or persons traveling in wheelchairs. Streets can be designed to move cars efficiently without sacrificing the ability of people to walk or bike along them.

The characteristics of each street is different and should be acknowledged in the design process; for example: intended use, the setting, traffic volumes, and intended speeds. In the Congress for New Urbanism's 2012, *Sustainable Street Network Principles*, they define the following as a principle

³ National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health, *Active Transportation in Urban Areas: Exploring Health Benefits and Risks*, 2010, pg. 3

⁴ National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health, *Active Transportation in Urban Areas: Exploring Health Benefits and Risks*, 2010, pg. 5

for road design that should be considered a priority:

All people should be able to travel within their community in a safe, dignified, and efficient manner. A sustainable street network makes that possible and ensures a choice of transportation modes and routes. People can walk, bicycle, take transit, or use a vehicle. Each mode is integrated, as appropriate, within each street.⁴

The first recommendation defined in both the Pedestrian Death Review⁵ and Cycling Death Review from the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario is focused on developing complete streets:

A 'complete streets' approach should be adopted to guide the redevelopment of existing communities and the creation of new communities throughout Ontario. Such an approach would require that and (re-) development give consideration to enhancing safety for all road users, and should include:

- Creation of cycling networks (incorporating

⁴ Congress for New Urbanism, *Sustainable Street Network Principles*, 2012, page 14

⁵ Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, *Pedestrian Death Review*, September 2012

strategies such as connected cycling lanes, separated bike lanes, bike paths and other models appropriate to the community.)

- Designation of community safety zones in residential areas, with reduced posted maximum speeds and increased fines for speeding.⁶

The Toronto Centre for Active Transportation describes the benefits of complete street design strategies:

The implementation of Complete Streets results not only in improved conditions for cyclists, pedestrians, seniors, and children but also supports vibrant, healthy communities. Evidence shows that Complete Streets:

- Provide better and more transportation options
- Improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Create more walkable, therefore, livable communities
- Stimulate economic growth with increased shopping activity, sales, and property values.

All the fancy economic development strategies, such as developing a biomedical cluster, an aerospace cluster, or whatever the current economic development 'flavor of the month' might be, do not hold a candle to the power of a great walkable urban place.

Jeff Speck, Walkable City



Using complete streets design principles improves livability and accessibility for all in the community.

⁶ Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, *Cycling Death Review*, June 2012, pg. 20

The challenge for this project requires the City to develop a decision making process, for (re) developing roads that is complete streets focused.

Action

As recommended by the Chief Coroner of Ontario, this project involves the City adopting a complete streets policy and design practice for all its new roadways, and reconstruction projects.

More than 700 jurisdictions in Canada and the United States are adopting a complete streets approach to their roadway engineering and design, so many examples exist for reference.

The development of this will be a multi-disciplinary process including active transportation experts, planners and engineers. The complete streets policy and design approach shall include specific sections for each type of transportation mode, as well as public participation and stakeholder involvement.

The basic complete streets design approach from which this should be developed is outlined in the following categories that should all be addressed:

Safe:

- for people first
- real and perceived

Reliable:

- well designed
- appropriate infrastructure for all transportation modes
- integrated modes of transportation

Effective:

- for all transportation modes
- for needs of citizens and businesses
- interconnected
- efficient

Human-centred

- addresses peoples' needs
- age appropriate transportation options
- easily understood
- aesthetically designed

Context sensitive:

- land use supportive
- land value enhancing
- target speed appropriate
- Accessible:
- diversity of transportation modes facilitated
- affordable
- "8/80" accessibility



When all modes of transportation are considered in the design and development of streets, everyone benefits. The effects include improved safety, comfort, and traffic movement. Neighbouring land uses are also better supported with well designed street corridors that use complete streets focused principles.



The following are excerpts from the City of Toronto's complete streets policies. These could be adapted for the City of Kawartha Lakes work on this project.

City streets are important public open spaces which connect people and places and support the development of sustainable, economically vibrant and complete communities. New and existing City streets will incorporate a 'complete streets' approach and be designed to perform their diverse roles by:

A) balancing the needs and priorities of the various users and uses within the right-of-way, including provision for:

i. the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians of all ages and abilities, cyclists, transit vehicles and users, goods and services vehicles, emergency vehicles, and motorists across the network; and

ii. space for other street elements, such as utilities and services, trees and landscaping, green infrastructure, snow and stormwater management, wayfinding, boulevard cafés, marketing and vending, and street furniture;

B) improving the quality and convenience of active transportation options within all communities by giving full consideration to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users;

C) reflecting differences in local context and character;

D) providing building access and address, as well as amenities such as view corridors, sky view, and sunlight; and

E) serving community destinations and public gathering places.

The 'complete streets' approach recognizes that there is no single way in which to make a street 'complete'. It depends on numerous factors whose relative importance varies according to the character and context of each particular street.

While it may not be viable or appropriate to accommodate every type of user or use on every streets, the overall objective is to create a well-functioning street network that is planned and designed to provide safe access and efficient operation for all street activities and functions.

Guidelines for applying the 'complete streets' approach will be developed to assist in resolving and balancing the competing demands placed upon the use of street rights-of-way and applied when streets are constructed, reconstructed, or otherwise improved.

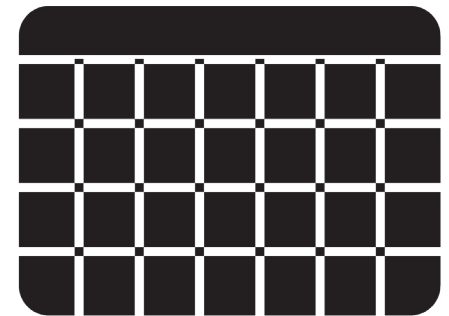
The battle for quality is won in the small scale.

Jan Gehl, Architect

LONG-TERM

5+ YEAR IMPLEMENTATION

- 20 Neighbourhood Urban Acupuncture*
- 21 Family-friendly Bikeway*



The projects that are in this group are generally of a larger scale and relate to long-term or larger scale infrastructure and design direction that will guide the evolution of the community. They also include programming that supports community evolution and collaboration, and creative thinking. These are expected to take a number of years to complete.

**LONG-TERM
3-5 YEARS**

**LEAD AGENCY
Town**

**SCOPE
Municipal Focus**

**GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance
Programing & Culture**

**SCALE
Community-wide**

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s**



CULTURE



PLACEMAKING

20

NEIGHBOURHOOD URBAN ACUPUNCTURE

Challenge

A community's built environment is constantly evolving. This means that not all features of what has been constructed in the past can meet the needs of the community today or into the future. However, similar to many communities, the Town is not able to allocate large amounts of resources for active transportation infrastructure in a short timeframe to update the community to meet new needs.

This project is intended to create a process by which the Town can partner with citizens to test, and make practical, active transportation improvements inexpensively.

This can be very helpful for the community. As the ASSHTO Guide to the Development of Bicycle Facilities identifies:

Many of the most successful bike plans have been implemented through a pragmatic approach involving phasing of improvements and opportunistic partnerships with other projects.¹

Another characteristic this project addresses is the need to develop ways that help leverage

the assets within the community that may be helpful in improving the active transportation infrastructure, how it functions, or the culture of active transportation.

The idea is to make it easier for the community to affect change and test designs by using resources that are readily available.

Action

The purpose of this project is for the Town to develop a defined process to provide facilitation for small scale neighbourhood improvements or "Urban Acupuncture" initiatives. Once this is in place it is expected that Town will lead efforts to work at the "grass roots" local level to launch these temporary improvement test projects.

This is a type of local development strategy that has produced successful public spaces and active transportation infrastructure across North America at a much lower risk and cost for the projects. It capitalizes on the creative energy of the community.

Urban acupuncture is a deliberate approach to community building that features the following five characteristics:

1. A deliberate, phased approach to instigating change;
2. An offering of local ideas for local planning challenges;
3. Short-term commitment and realistic expectations;
4. Low-risks, with a possibly a high reward; and
5. The development of social capital between

¹ ASSHTO, Guide to the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 2012 pg. 2-14

citizens, and the building of organizational capacity between public/private institutions, non-profit/NGOs, and their constituents.

Action can take many forms, requiring varying degrees of time, money, and effort. The spectrum of interventions should be seen as an evolving means to build lasting change. By championing use over design aesthetic, and capital-intensive construction, these projects strike a balance between providing comfortable spaces for people while generating and leveraging local resources and interest necessary for further development.

The purpose is to facilitate ways of creating demonstration “tools” that show, test, and review the potential of projects to create great walkable, vibrant neighborhood streets and places.

The Town will have to determine the level of assistance for these community-based projects and if it includes funding or just staff expertise and assistance. By working together, this provides a way for creating and implementing small-scale projects that:

1. Are focused on improving the built environment of the community;
2. Improve one or more of the requirements for effective active transportation (including quality public places, connections, improved safety, improved aesthetics and



Professional Planner Robert Voigt RPP, MCIP was recently featured on CBC Radio's "Spark" show, discussing Tactical Urbanism. You can go online and listen to the recording of the show to hear about many of the benefits of undertaking these kinds of projects.

Numerous intangible benefits are associated with bicycling and walking. Providing more travel options can increase a sense of independence in seniors, young people, and others who cannot or choose not to drive. Increased levels of bicycling and walking can have a great impact on an area's sense of livability by creating safe and friendly places for people to live and work.

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

Traffic calming

One particular type of urban acupuncture initiative that should be facilitated through this are traffic calming projects.

Traffic calming is a way to design streets using physical measures to encourage people to drive more safely. It creates physical and visual cues that induce drivers to travel at slower speeds. Traffic calming is inherently self-enforcing due to principles applied to roadway design for a desired effect, and does not rely on compliance through traffic control devices such as signs and signals.

Traffic calming is specifically identified and recommended in the Chief Coroner of Ontario's report *Pedestrian Death Review*¹ to improve road safety. Traffic calming has four basic principles in terms of design:

- Vehicle speed (significant determinant of crash severity; critical factor when modes conflict; needs to be reduced to context appropriate target speed);
- Pedestrian/bike exposure risk (reducing the amount of time that pedestrians are in the street with reduced crossing distances and appropriate pedestrian infrastructure);

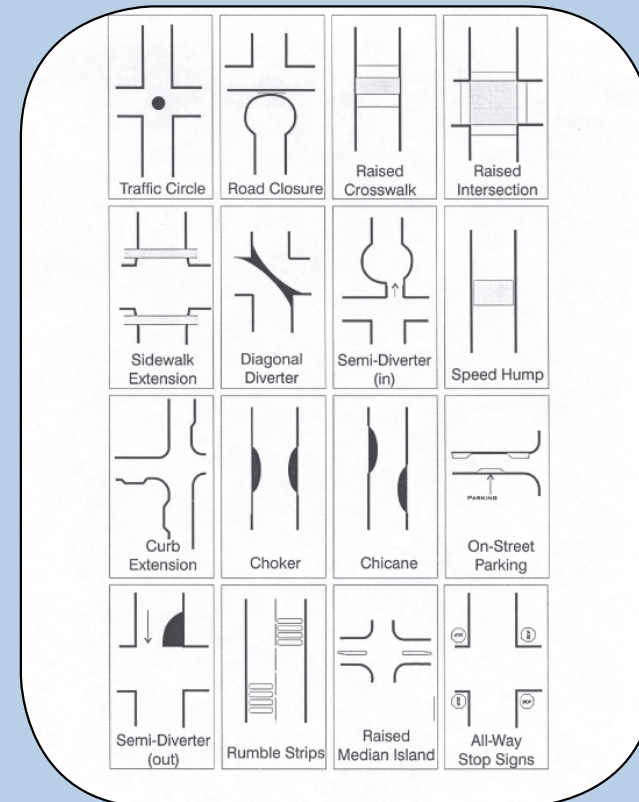
- Driver predictability (making vehicle movements predictable for others); and,
- That traffic calming measures are active 24 hours a day, seven days a week (do not rely on enforcement)²

By working with groups of citizens to implement traffic calming projects in their neighbourhoods through urban acupuncture, the City will be able to foster meaningful dialog with citizens as well as improve their neighbourhoods.

The principle goal should be designing streets where people walking, parking, shopping, bicycling, working and driving can cross paths safely.³

Regardless of the final outcome of urban acupuncture projects, the benefit to the Township and general public in working together to execute the project will be significant. Anytime community members come together in co-operation for everyone's benefit, the collaboration itself is a positive outcome. Pilot projects also help inform future projects, as well as develop local best practices.

Part of this project will require a shift in perspective, where streets are not only looked at in terms of traffic performance (measured through speed, delay, and congestion), but in terms of the multiple real world roles they play in public life as public spaces.



This is a simplified illustration of traffic calming arrangements.

¹ Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, *Pedestrian Death Review*, pg. 54, September 2012

² Michael King, Nelson\Nygaard Associates, *Designing Complete Streets* presentation, May 29, 2007

³ NACTO, *Urban Street Design Guide*, October 2012, pg. 9

visual appeal, improved pedestrian crossings, et cetera);

3. Are permanent, or temporary pilot projects; and,
4. Are initiated by community members and facilitated or assisted by the City.

The kinds of projects envisioned for this include:

- Public spaces such as public squares, meeting spaces, and places for outdoor activities
- Support projects for non-vehicle transportation such as improved lighting, signage, way-finding
- Neighbourhood traffic calming
- Increased quality and quantity of bike parking
- Installing signage
- Bicycle parking facilities
- Pedestrian crossings

Once designs have been tested they can then be made permanent. NACTO describes the benefits of short-term improvements in Urban Street Design Guide (October 2012):

Short-term improvements allow residents and visitors to experience new street configurations without the commitment of major funding for new curbs and other capital improvements. This method has many advantages:

Neighbourhood Aesthetics: designs for temporary treatments can be selected together with local merchants and neighbourhood organizations, and they can be involved in ongoing activities.



These are two examples of how temporary urban acupuncture projects can be constructed to test out street improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

Health & Safety: a quick turnaround project can immediately address unsafe conditions on streets and at intersections.

Low Cost: materials like paint or gravel are inexpensive compared to asphalt and cement curbs.

Changeable: if a pilot project has negative impacts on parking or traffic patterns, it is easy to restore the roadway to its original condition.

The scale of the City's level of facilitation and support should be based on the characteristics of the project, such as those defined by the Street Plans Collaborative manual Tactical Urbanism:

- Deliberate phased approach to change

- Offering of local solutions for local challenges
- Short-term commitment and realistic expectations
- Low-risks, with a possibly a high reward
- The development of social capital between citizens and the building of local organizational capacity

The success of this project will be significantly influenced by the ability of Town to find neighbourhood partners that are interested and capable of launching these test projects.

**LONG-TERM
3-5 YEARS**

**LEAD AGENCY
Town**

**SCOPE
Municipal Focus**

**GENERAL CATEGORY
Capital & Maintenance**

**SCALE
Community-wide**

**MAGNITUDE OF
IMPLEMENTATION
\$10,000s to \$100,000s**



**NETWORK
IMPROVEMENTS**



PLACEMAKING

21

FAMILY-FRIENDLY BIKEWAY

Challenge

An active transportation network has to be designed, developed, and maintained to function well for the many different kinds of people in a community. This includes young people and those who may not be as comfortable or proficient at cycling in traffic. This project is intended to making cycling enjoyable, efficient, and practical throughout the community but particularly for families and children/youth.

Statistically, most cyclists can be identified as “interested but concerned”. This group prefers physical separation from cars, off-the-street cycling opportunities, and quiet neighbourhood streets. They are not comfortable riding in traffic and prefer low-volumes and low-speeds. Based on this knowledge, the Plan calls for a network of dedicated routes near the downtown that are more family-friendly and comfortable for less experienced or less confident riders. These routes are to be improved as Family-Friendly or Bike Priority Routes.

These should be a series of contiguous street segments modified to accommodate bicycle traffic and minimize through motor traffic.¹

¹ ASSHTO, *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, 2012, pg. 1-2

Action

This is a project to upgrade a part of the suggested cycling route network so that it is particularly comfortable for all ages. The intent is to make a series of routes “special” with extra improvements.

In some areas, particularly residential neighbourhoods, design treatments can be used to create ‘Bicycle Priority Streets’, which are often referred to as ‘Bicycle Boulevards’ or ‘Local Bicycle Streets’. Bicycle Priority Streets are typically low-volume, low-speed streets that have been optimized for bicycle travel through treatments such as traffic calming, traffic reduction, signage, pavement markings and intersection crossing treatments. These treatments allow through movements for cyclists while discouraging similar through trips by non-local motorized traffic. These streets have been “optimized” for bicycle traffic. Bicycle boulevards discourage cut-through motor-vehicle traffic but allow local motor-vehicle traffic. They are designed to give priority to bicyclists as through-going traffic. They are intended as a low-cost, politically popular way to create a connected network of streets with good bicyclist comfort and/or safety

Some of the design elements, such as signage and pavement markings are already an integral part of on-road bicycle facilities such as signed bicycle routes and bicycle lanes. Other design elements are context sensitive and should be considered based on the unique set of site characteristics of the corridor and with active transportation and engineering expertise.

Traffic Reduction on bicycle boulevards may be achieved through treatments such as priority given to travel on bicycle through the use of pavement markings as well as stop and yield signs on intersecting roadways. Traffic Calming measures such as mini-roundabouts, speed tables, road diets and reduced speed limits. For families to use bike routes², there needs to be a dedicated set of streets that achieve the following:

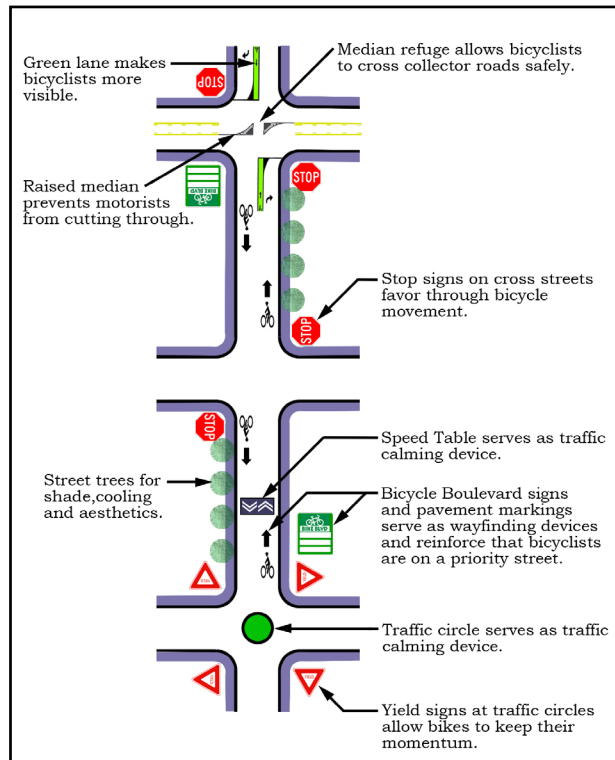
1. Provide routes with design features enhanced for safety (families, elderly people, and less proficient cyclists) focusing on residential areas where practical. Travel lanes can be strategically narrowed (through the use of curb extensions);
2. Provide aesthetic enhancements such as street trees along entire lengths because they improve user comfort and increase appeal of the routes;
3. Connect with the rest of the bike routes and trails;
4. Prioritize the movement of cyclists over

² OTM Book 18 describes the five design elements of Bicycle Priority Streets as follows: Signage, Traffic reductions, Intersection treatments, Priority, Traffic calming

cars through traffic calming using “road diets” to create a lower target speed geared requirements of cyclists. Foreexample Shy space around features such as refuge islands can be enhanced with wide drain gutters and/or wide striping to reduce vehicular speeds;

5. Link key destinations within the community; and,
6. Include enhanced wayfinding signage.

The illustration below shows the typical traffic calming, signage, and bicycle priority improvements for these kinds of routes.



This is an example where improvements have been made to create a higher level of comfort for cyclists on a seasonal basis.

Note: The implementation of the design features for each of these should be based on the *Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18: Bicycle Facilities*.

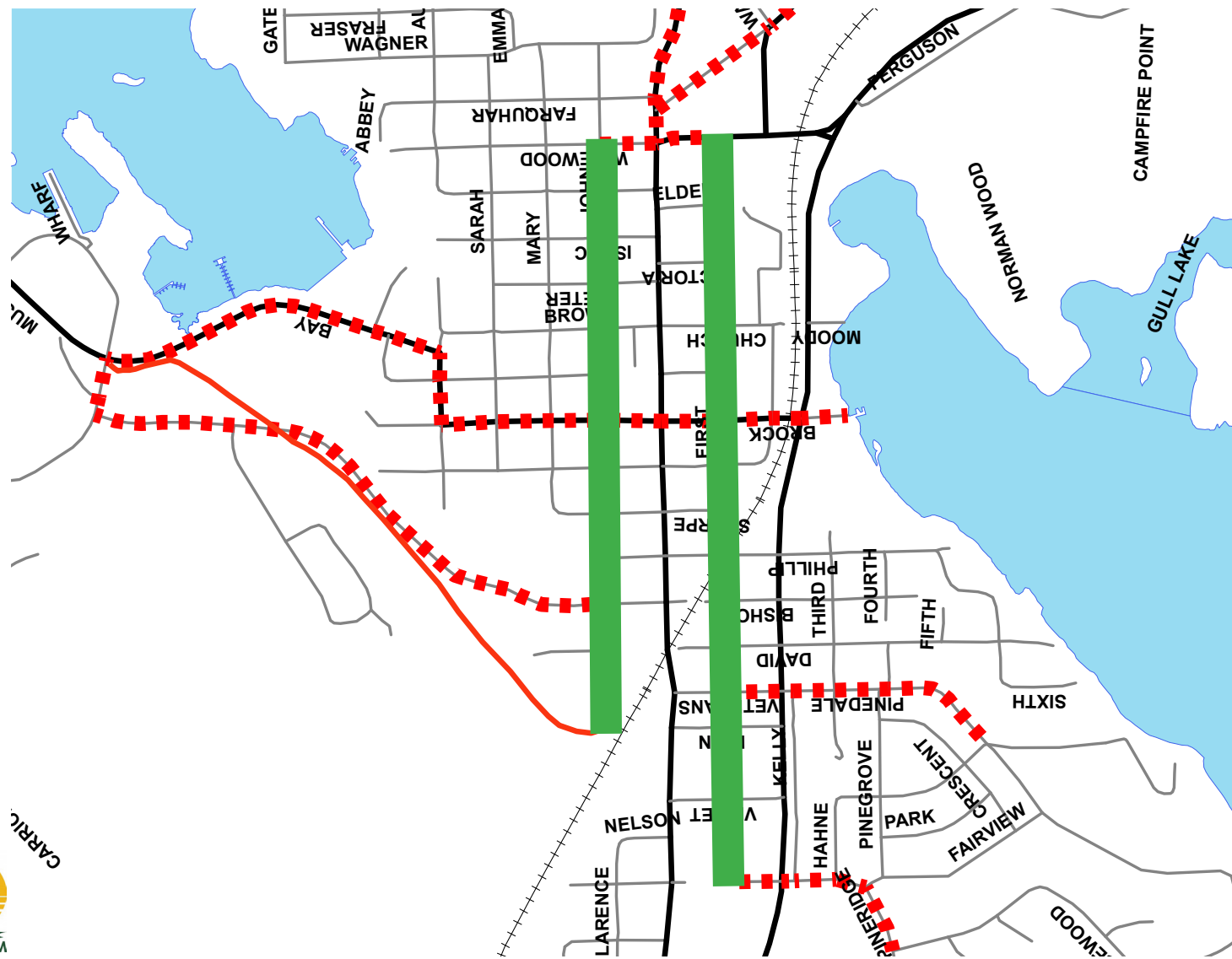
The project to develop a network of family-friendly bicycle priority streets is one of the more complex defined for this plan. However many of the other projects defined here will help inform the design elements and processes/experiences needed to complete this network, for example the Plan has projects that relate to: wayfinding and signage; traffic calming and traffic reduction/management; intersection and crossing treatments; and design expertise

through the urban acupuncture projects.

This project should be completed by a multi-disciplinary team with a strong community engagement component. A monitoring and assessment strategy will have to be developed to coincide with these test projects. The Town’s role will be to generate the local neighbourhood interest in this project and communicating that to the community. An initial test project under the urban acupuncture approach is envisioned for this process.

New planning and engineering policies and standards are being developed throughout North America and globally, not only to allow, but to require the safe, efficient and effective accommodation of active transportation modes within the shared right-of-way. Planners in Ontario should be facilitating adoption and implementation of similar requirements, plans, and projects.

Ontario Professional Planners Institute



This is an example of what a Family-Friendly Bikeway may look like when completed.

The recommended routes to consider for this project are those highlighted in green on the map to the left.



This is an example where temporary urban acupuncture improvements are being used to test out a separated bike lane.



For these routes special signage that highlights their intent should be included in the design.

Take this information and be practical and strategic, gain momentum, discover the broad-based desire throughout the community to provide greater respect for your children and elders to have a more active lifestyle and then expand outward

Dan Burden, Blue Zones

