"Best Practices for *Walkability*."

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Slides for a presentation and discussion about roundabouts, naked streets, walkability indices, the "Walkability Challenge Cup" and other ideas.

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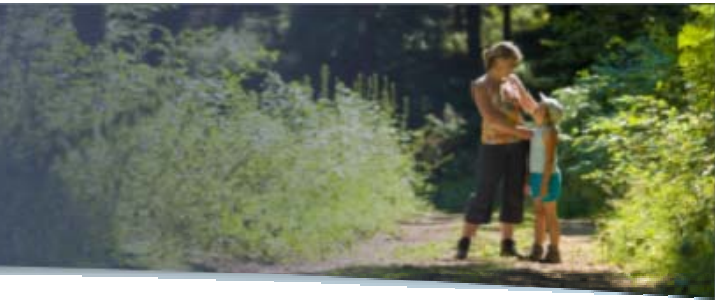
Walkability Best Practices

Walkability best practices are initiatives and activities that most effectively contribute to increasing the number and frequency of work, recreation, shopping, school, fitness, and other walking trips, increasing the walk share of all people trips made in a community, and improving the safety, comfort, convenience, and well-being experience of walking throughout a community.

Figure 1. Factors and Forces Affecting the Achievement of Walkability Best Practices*



Architectural	Engineering	Media
Attitudinal	Ethical	Methodological
Climatological	Environmental	Ontario Municipal Board
Commercial	Financial	Planning
Demographic	Geographical	Political
Design	Health	Safety
Economic	Institutional	Social
Educational	Jurisdictional	Technical
Enforcement	Legal	Technological

* The listing of factors and forces is alphabetical, and indicative; the final selection and prioritizing of entries is a local decision.

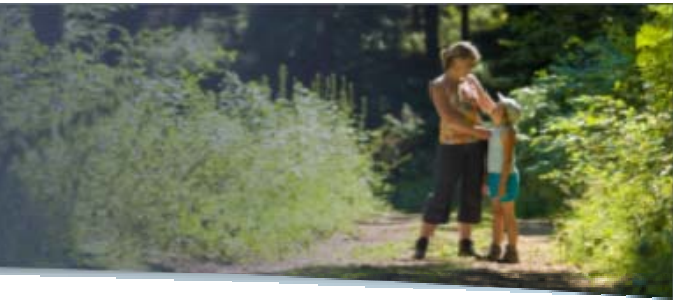
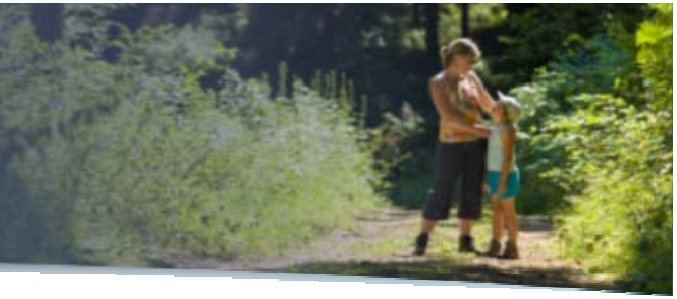


Figure 2. Framework for a Record of Walkability Best Practices in a Municipality

Name, Title or Phrase Describing Walkability Best Practice	Level and Year Practice		
	Identified	Adopted	Implemented
Integration of land use and transportation planning	1974	1991	--------
Application of walkability test to transportation projects, planning applications, and rezoning applications	2007	---------	--------
Bike rack requirement at private commercial buildings and public facilities	1993	2001	2005
Signal activation by transmitters in city buses	1988	1999	2006
Application of Walking Security Index to assess intersection performance for pedestrians	1998	2004	--------
Use of traffic calming devices to promote walking and cycling	1983	1987	1994
Moratorium on road or intersection widenings	2000	2001	2003

Selected Observations on Understanding and Achieving Walkability Best Practices (Source: Publications listed at end of presentation)



1. The essence of achieving walkability best practices is to simultaneously increase the share of walk, cycle, and transit trips while decreasing the share of private motor vehicle trips. The time is long overdue for Canadian municipalities to produce detailed annual reports on exactly what has been achieved by each mode regarding sustainable transport practices in general. However, the mode most in need of attention due to abject neglect by municipalities is the walking mode.

2. Bad, worse, and worst walkabilty practices are rooted in part in bad, worse, and worst land use planning and development practices.

Selected Observations on Understanding and Achieving Walkability Best Practices (Source: Publications listed at end of presentation)

3. Good, better, and best walkability practices are rooted in part in good, better, and best land use planning and development practices.

4. Reducing the proclivity of many adults to drive, seemingly at every opportunity, is a difficult task, and increasing their proclivity to walk may be an even more difficult task. It appears evident that the focus of walkability efforts must be on children if future generations of adults are to embrace walkability practices.

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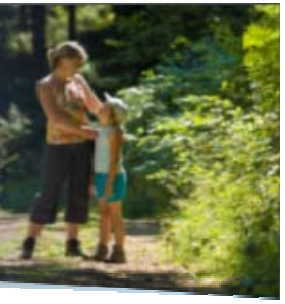
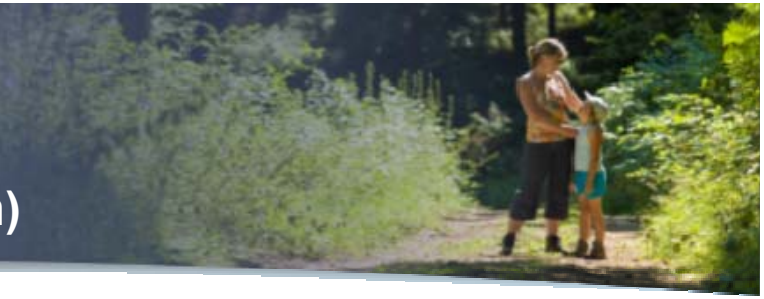


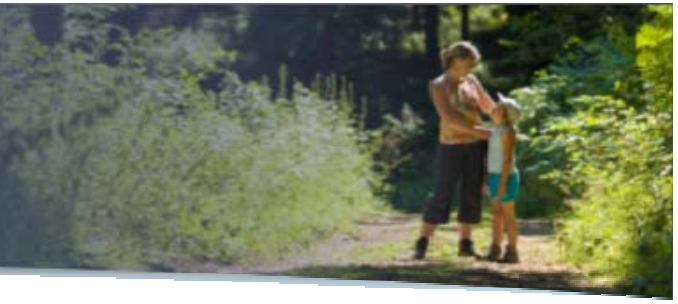
5. Identifying, adopting, and implementing a logical way of classifying walkability practices is required in order to become a walkability winner. There are at least six classes of walkability practice: worst, worse, bad, good, better, best. Governments, corporations, and people using this or a similar rating system could systematically become walkability winners because of their ability to intelligently match practices to policy, plan, program or strategic objectives. Recall Figure 1, which illustrates the various forces and factors that affect achieving walkability practices.

Selected Observations on Understanding and Achieving Walkability Best Practices (Source: Publications listed at end of presentation)



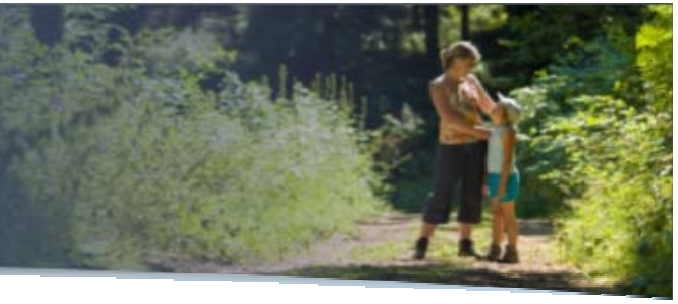
6. Requiring a municipality to create a record of performance is a powerful means of "stimulating" municipal officials responsible for achieving walkability best practices. As shown in Figure 2, the walkability best practices record of Municipality X is there for everyone to see, monitor, evaluate, replicate, improve on, etc. When a public record of this nature is created there is nowhere to hide, nowhere to run, and we can quickly see which municipalities are heading for the winner's and loser's brackets in the race for the Walkability Challenge Cup.

Figure 3. Good, Better, Best Walkability Practices in Urban Metro Regions: List 1



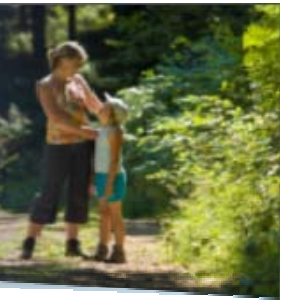
- Land use and transportation system integration based on walk, cycle and transit as primary transport modes
- Signal light priority given to pedestrians at intersections
- Intersections designed to achieve safety, comfort, convenience, and well-being of pedestrians
- Roundabouts designed to achieve safety, comfort, convenience, and well-being of pedestrians
- Sidewalks and pedestrian paths designed and constructed to serve and promote community and neighbourhood walkability
- Walkability test applied to transportation projects, official plan amendments, rezoning applications, site plans

Figure 4. Good, Better, Best Walkability Practices in Urban Metro Regions: List 2



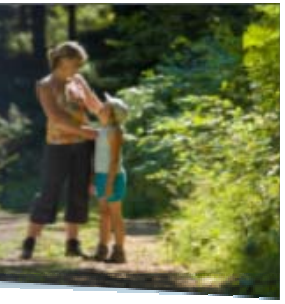
- Transit vehicles equipped to change signal lights
- Transit vehicles given priority right-of-way to enter traffic lanes
- As private motor vehicle use declines, roads and streets are removed from city networks and converted to alternative transport uses, or other land uses
- Surface parking lots removed from areas served by transit
- Moratorium imposed on road and street expenditures
- Road maintenance budgets reduced to accelerate the shift from private motor vehicle to walk, cycle and transit modes

Figure 5. Bad, Worse, and Worst Walkability Practices in Urban Metro Regions: List 1



- Intersections expanded to reduce private motor vehicle congestion negatively affect safety, comfort, convenience, and well-being of pedestrians
- Traffic signals timed to increase flow speeds of private motor vehicles (e.g., dedicated left turn lanes allow vehicles to move, but freeze intersection in all directions for pedestrians)
- Hiring of transit operators who dislike people
- Transit service reduced to balance the transport budget
- Cutting transit fare subsidies for seniors, students, and persons with special needs

Figure 6. Bad, Worse, and Worst Walkability Practices in Urban Metro Regions: List 2



- Reducing sidewalk maintenance budgets
- Lack of sidewalks along arterial roads
- Sub-standard sidewalk maintenance practices
- Inadequate vehicle traffic enforcement
- Inadequate lighting of sidewalks and paths
- Failure to meet ice-snow standards for scraping, cleaning, salting and sanding/gritting sidewalks

Figure 7. Bad, Worse, and Worst Walkability Practices in Urban Metro Regions: List 3

- Failure to properly locate and maintain pedestrian markings in intersections
- Failure to properly maintain sightlines at intersections
- Failure to properly locate signs alerting vehicle operators to crossings for schools, senior's residences, community centres and facilities, parks, playgrounds, and recreation areas

Links to Publications and Conference Materials Dealing with Walkability Issues and Approaches

Adapting Walking Security Index Concepts and Procedures to Serve and Promote the Mobility of Children (2007)
http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/tgsg/publications/Mobility_Children_2007.pdf

An Advisory to Council About Solving Ottawa's Transportation Mess (2008)
http://www.transport2000.ca/

Geographic Factors as a Core Element of Sustainable Transport Best Practices in Metropolitan Regions in Canada. (2007)
http://www.transport2000.ca/
http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/tgsg/publications/Mobility_Children_2007.pdf

Sustainable Transport Practices in Canada: Exhortation Overwhelms Demonstration (2007)
http://www.transport2000.ca/

Sustainable Transport: Is There Anybody Here Who Can Win This Game? (2007)
http://www.transport2000.ca/

Sustainable Transport by Design or by Default? Either Way, the Wasteful Ride is Over. (2007)
http://www.transport2000.ca/

Dr. Barry Wellar Bio-Note for Pedestrian Charter Steering Committee (PCSC) Region of Waterloo "Best Practices for Walkability" Presentation and Workshop, April 1, 2008

Dr. Barry Wellar is Distinguished Research Fellow, Transport 2000 Canada, and President, Wellar Consulting Inc. He is a Registered Professional Planner in Ontario, and a Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners. He is the author of more than 100 papers in the transportation-land use domain, and has received the Anderson Medal and the Ullman Award for his internationally recognized achievements in applied transportation research.

From 1995-2002 Dr. Wellar directed the Walking Security Index project for the Region of Ottawa-Carleton and the (new) City of Ottawa. His recent public presentations include "*Geographic Factors as a Core Element of Sustainable Transport Best Practices in Metropolitan Regions in Canada"* (April 2007 in San Francisco), "*Sustainable Transport by Design or by Default? Either Way, the Wasteful Ride is Over"* (November 2007 in Belfast), and he recently authored *An Advisory to Council about Solving Ottawa's Transportation Mess.*

Dr. Wellar is Professor Emeritus of Geography, University of Ottawa, and is a frequent media commentator on transportation issues. He has been qualified in Saskatchewan and Ontario as an expert witness in the field of urban planning and transportation, and has successfully used the Walking Security Index research in his testimony involving injuries to pedestrians.

Acknowledgement

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