

Canada Walks Walkolution News

**Canada
WALKS**
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Canadian Walkability Master Class

The Canadian Walking Master Class supports the implementation of active and sustainable transportation policies and plans in communities across Canada through a step-by-step process that includes inspiring political and senior decision makers, training professionals, engaging the public and providing international expertise and ideas to specific walkability issues and opportunities.

Building on the success of the Canadian Walkability Roadshow 2007, this past spring we visited four Canadian communities: Hamilton, ON; Moncton, NB; Kelowna, BC;



Walking experts in Whitehorse



Walkability Master Class in Vancouver

2007 Walkability Roadshow Participants Continue their Progress

Collingwood was a participant in Green Communities' 2007 Walkability Roadshow (case studies available at www.canadawalks.ca) and it is continuing to make progress on improving walkability and other forms of active transportation. A recent development is the creation of a blog (<http://www.yourcodes.blogspot.com/>) to facilitate the development of Urban Design Standards for this vibrant community. The Urban Design Standards will direct the way new commercial, industrial, and multi-unit development will look and function in Collingwood. These standards will be drafted to provide the streetscape design and the pedestrian convenience necessary to support walkability.



and Whitehorse, YK; with a stop in Vancouver to participate in the Simon Fraser University Shifting Gears Lecture Series with a presentation 'Walking Around the World' and a full-day professional workshop.

The International Charter for Walking was used to benchmark walking within these communities, and as the foundation for building more walkable communities through ideas, initiatives, inspiration and action. A set of Canadian Best Practice Notes, structured around the eight principles of the Charter, will be created as a result of the Master Class, to be posted to the www.canadawalks.ca web site in the fall and presented at the October Walk21 New York City conference.

Funding for the Walkability Master Class is provided by Transport Canada's Moving on Sustainable Transportation (MOST) initiative and by the participating communities (<http://www.tc.gc.ca/mediaroom/releases/nat/2008/08-h246e.htm>).

Green Communities Canada has received a \$25,000 two-year grant from The Ontario Heart & Stroke Foundation's SPARK Community Advocacy Fund to assist with the development and implementation of a School Travel Planning (STP) pilot project in the City of Ottawa (<http://www.heartandstroke.ca/spark>) utilizing the Canadian model STP framework developed over the past three years. The project will involve ten elementary schools and four secondary schools.

**Green
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CANADA



Ontarians Walking Now

The Ontarians Walking Now (OWN) project blazed a trail across Ontario throughout April and May, with workshops held in Markham, Sarnia, Six Nations, Ottawa, and Blind River.

A two-part webinar for small, rural, and mostly northern communities was held in late May to wrap up Phase One of the project. In looking back at the workshop experience, what stood out most of all was the enthusiasm and passion from the participants in every case.

A second observation was the incredible diversity of participants, which far exceeded our expectations. Part of the richness of the action planning discussions was due to the incredible mix of people who participated in the OWN workshops, representing town councils, public health, heart health networks, planning, engineering, transportation demand management, tourism, economic development, parks, recreation, trails organizations, seniors groups, environmental groups, active transportation committees, public works, festivals committees, service clubs, churches, corporations, schools, transportation consultants, and citizen activists.

Organizations represented included the Heart & Stroke Foundation, the Diabetes Association, the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, and



the Canadian Volkssport Federation. This diversity also gives testament to how walkability impacts so many facets of our society.

The workshops and webinar were the initial phases of the Ontarians Walking Now project. Over the next nine months we will be following up with the 64 organizations involved across the province and reporting on their action steps towards improving walkability in their communities and contributing to a culture of walking in Ontario.



HEALTHY LIVING PERTH building active communities

Healthy Living Perth (HLP) is one of 36 Ontario Heart Health Coalitions across Ontario supported by the Ministry of Health Promotion. HLP is planning to incorporate walking and biking into the HLP strategic plan. HLP has struck a working group to oversee the implementation of their OWN action plan, with a focus on building active communities (e.g. improving walkability and bikeability in Stratford). The next step for the working group is to undergo a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis, invite community stakeholders to a facilitated community session and send a representative to an Urban Poling instructor course. HLP has applied to be involved in the Ontario Communities walkON project (see below for details on this exciting provincial initiative).

Ottawa Pedestrian Plan approved

Ottawa City Council approved the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan on June 24, 2009. The Ottawa Pedestrian Plan is a long-term strategy to develop, strengthen and support a pedestrian culture throughout the City of Ottawa.

The plan identifies and recommends changes in infrastructure, policies and programs that will encourage more people to walk more often, even in the winter. With its step-by-step approach, the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan capitalizes on local

opportunities to make Ottawa one of the most pedestrian-active cities in North America.

As part of the Capital Budget deliberations in 2010, staff will put forward for Council consideration, a request for an annual funding of \$3.5 million for the pedestrian program. A funding request of about \$9.6 million to support provision of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure has been put forward to the Federal Government under the Stimulus Fund.

Congratulations to the City of Ottawa for becoming one of a handful of North American cities to have a comprehensive pedestrian plan that establishes key principles for giving pedestrians a more prominent role in the transportation hierarchy.

For further information:
http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/onthemove/walking/pedestrian/pedestrian_plan_en.html

Uxbridge announces plans to be the Trails Capital of Canada!

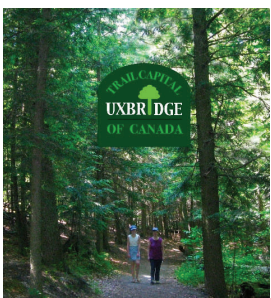
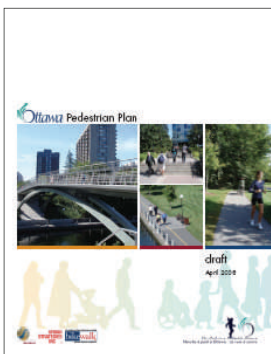
The Town of Uxbridge, population of approximately 20,000, is situated in a beautiful valley on the northern slope of the Oak Ridges Moraine, about 64 km northeast of Toronto. Amanda Ferraro, Recreation & Culture Coordinator, and Victoria Walker, Trails Coordinator attended the Markham workshop on April 2, and by April 8, Victoria was a certified Urban Poling Instructor! But that was just the start as they have managed to complete several action items to date including:

- Signing of the International Charter for Walking at council on May 4 with a signed Charter to be placed in a public location to remind residents of

Uxbridge's ongoing commitment to creating a healthy efficient and sustainable community where people choose to walk;

- Setting up a pedometer lending library;
- Introducing Urban Poling to the community and integrating it into trails programs;
- Designating the month of October as "Walking Month in Uxbridge;"
- Incorporating the concept of "Walkability" into the October 3 launch of Uxbridge as the Trails Capital of Canada! Launching an "indoor walking trail" this winter in the corridors of the local high school

For more information: <http://www.town.uxbridge.on.ca/index.asp?pgid=96>



Ontario Communities walkON

With the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation¹, Green Communities Canada, in collaboration with Walk and Bike for Life and walkON, launched **Ontario Communities walkON**, a program that will, over the next three years, help make 24 Ontario cities and towns more walkable.

To date, a knowledge exchange network comprised of professionals from various organizations with an interest in sustainable transportation has been created to give guidance and support to the project. A recruitment process was established and all Ontario Heart Health Network Coordinators were contacted.

The Heart Health Coalitions who will participate in the first year of the project are: Healthy Living Perth, Simcoe County Good for Life, Life Works (Hastings and Prince Edward Counties), Health for Life (East Northumberland) and Durham Lives! Ontario Communities walkON is based on the success of walkON, six community partnerships of the Ontario Heart Health Program who collaborate to engage and support their communities to create environments that support walking.

walkON works in partnership with politicians, planners, engineers, and citizens from 17 community groups, using comprehensive, easy-to-use resources and tools designed to educate, empower and inspire community members.

¹ Ontario Communities walkON is generously supported by a three-year, \$248,500 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (www.trilliumfoundation.org). The Foundation is an agency of the Government of Ontario and works to help build healthy and vibrant communities by strengthening the capacity of the voluntary sector through investments in community-based initiatives.



The Canadian Volkssport Federation National Convention

By Mandy Johnson

I was invited to give a presentation on Canada Walks at the Canadian Volkssport Federation (CVF) Annual General Meeting and National Convention, that was held in May in North Bay, Ontario. What a delightful assignment that turned out to be! The CVF Convention brought their mission of promoting non-competitive walking for fun, fitness, and friendship to life! It was a lot of fun, there were several scheduled walks at both the 5 km and 10 km distances to work on my personal fitness, and I made so many acquaintances and a few new friends in an extremely friendly and inviting environment! What surprised me most was how many people from clubs all over the country knew each other, from attending previous conferences and regional or local events.

To give an overview of how CVF works, clubs across the country hold at least one event walk per year, although most offer events on a regular basis, with volunteer walk leaders and a meal at a pub, café, or restaurant to finish off the event. These walks are usually either 5 km or 10 km. Year round walks, which are usually set routes of 5 km or 10 km are established at various locations of interest around the country. These walks are self-guided, with CVF members



André Tardif, Trails Director of the Gateway Walkers (North Bay).

picking up a descriptive map from the designated “walk box” which is located in a hotel, restaurant, or community centre that has agreed to house it. Whether it be an event walk or a year round walk, stamps are available to stamp both your event book and distance book and various achievement awards are available for accumulating a certain number of event stamps and a certain distance.

The CVF is part of the International Volkssport Federation and many members travel to events and year round walks around the world. Volkssporting was introduced to

Canada by the military, which explains the fact that most clubs are in the vicinity of active or former military bases. At the present time, there are no clubs active within the Greater Toronto Area, although there are several year round walks that have been set up, including one in downtown Toronto.



Beginning of a 10 Km walk

As communities, health units, and trails organizations look at ways to encourage people to walk, and may be considering starting a local walking club, consider forming a Volkssport Club, to take advantage of plugging into an existing network of clubs, expertise, and walking opportunities that the CVF can offer.

For more information about the Canadian Volkssport Federation visit: www.walks.ca or visit the specific information for the King's Town Trekkers at this page: <http://www.walks.ca/CVF/KingsTown.html>

Upcoming Walking/Walkability Events

- ♦ **October 7 - 9, 2009:** Walk21 New York City, 2009 conference, More Footprints Less Carbon - New York City, USA, (<http://www.walk21.com/conferences/newyork.asp>)
- ♦ **October 5 - 9, 2009:** International Walk to School Week; **Wednesday, October 7, 2009** - IWALK Day
- ♦ **February 10, 2010:** Winter Walk Day



Active Healthy Kids Canada 2009 Report Card

The annual Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card, 2009 edition once again gave Canadian children a failing grade for physical activity levels. Of interest to groups promoting walkability is the section on Active Transportation, for which the score for the second year in a row was a “D” with the comment: “Although nearly two-thirds of Canadian families indicate that they live within a reasonable distance to walk or cycle to school, just over one-third of children report having walked to school, and 80% report never having cycled to school, according to parent reports.” Page 19 of the Executive Summary includes a section entitled: “Community and the Built Environment”. In this section the grade for Municipal Policies and Regulations was also a “D” calling for municipal involvement in school-based Transportation Demand Management.

Executive summary: http://www.activehealthykids.ca/Modules/-cms.com/ecm.s.ashx/ExecSummary/AHK_ReportCard_ExecSummary_ENG.pdf

Walkable Edmonton

According to the June 3rd Walkable Edmonton newsletter, "During the City's capital budget deliberations last fall, Councillor Don Iveson made a motion to increase funding for active modes of transportation by more than \$10M over the next three years, which was approved." "In addition to current funding, this totals approximately \$17M over 3 years. The programs that are covered by this budget include connecting isolated bus pads, developing multi-use trails, dealing with missing or poor condition sidewalks, building bicycle facilities, curb ramps, wooden walks and stairways."

For more information refer to the Walkable Edmonton newsletter, June 2009: <http://www.industrymailout.com/Industry/View.aspx?id=131239&q=131609170&qz=df988f>

Walkable Edmonton website: http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/resident_services_programs/walkability-strategy-project.aspx

Canada Walks Website Survey

Have you signed our Canada Walks website survey yet? It is simple - just indicate that you support the concept of more walkable communities and provide us your contact information. There is the opportunity, if you wish, to provide a comment.

Here is an example:

"We chose to buy our home in a community that provided safe and easy access to the necessities in life. We can walk to the grocery store, pharmacy, several schools, universities and work. Our connection to each other has increased and our sense of responsibility to the community has never been stronger."

~Waterloo, Ontario



Every e-signature helps to send a message.

Please consider adding your name to the growing list of people who share our vision of making walkable communities the social and cultural norm across Canada: <http://www.canadawalks.ca/survey.asp#results>

Green Communities Canada would like to thank all of our supporting partners:



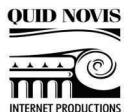
Transport Canada

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