

**Active Transportation Plan:
The Old City Neighbourhood of Guelph, Ontario**

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RPD 6290 – Healthy Rural and Small-Town Communities

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Disclaimer: The following plan was completed in partial fulfilment of course requirements for the RPD*6290 Healthy Rural and Small-Town Communities Course, offered by the University of Guelph's School of Environmental Design and Rural Development Rural Planning and Development program. The following document has no formal affiliation with the City of Guelph.



Active Transportation Plan

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Executive Summary

Active transportation is defined as “any form of human-powered transportation” which is utilized on any trip to get yourself or others to a particular destination, such as work, school, the store, or anywhere else within your community (CIP, n.d.). Active transportation most commonly includes walking and cycling, but it can also include any other form of non-motorized travel and can be combined with using public transit.

Active transportation is fundamental to community health and sustainable communities (OPPI, 2012). It provides many benefits to communities across Canada, many of which are tangible and intangible, including encouraging community members to become more active and in turn, improving overall physical and mental health (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014). Simultaneously, active transportation can help our environments, economies, and societies by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, costs and expenses related to driving, road congestion, facilitating social interactions, and providing more equitable means for travel (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014).

In recognizing the relationship between public health and planning for active transportation, the City of Guelph is responding by developing and delivering an Active Transportation Plan for a predominately automobile-dependent neighbourhood – the Old City. The Old City will benefit from an Active Transportation Plan that promotes active transportation to serve present and future generations of residents and visitors in the City of Guelph. The Plan establishes a vision, goals, and priority areas to improve active transportation with a focus on walking and cycling.

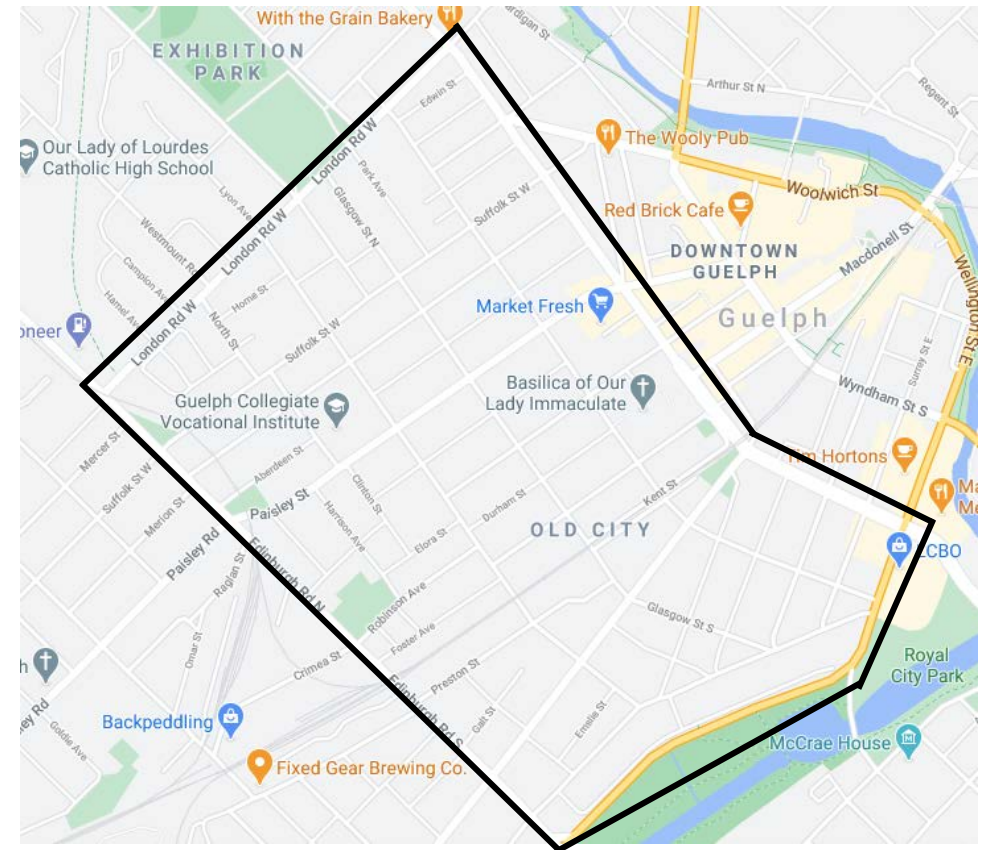


Community Profile

Old City Neighbourhood

The scope of this plan is intended to apply to the Old City Neighbourhood in Guelph, Ontario. As the name implies, this community is adorned with heritage reflected in the infrastructure and built forms that encompass it. The neighbourhood includes three schools, several spiritual centres including the iconic Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate, two major parks, and two small specialised grocery stores. Aside from these exceptions, the predominant zoning for the area is single detached homes (R.1), with some higher density pockets included within (City of Guelph, 2020).

The geographic boundary for this neighbourhood can be defined by the arterial roads that surround it: Edinburgh Road (South-West), London Road (North-West), Norfolk Street which continues into Gordon Street (to the North East), and Wellington Street (South-East), which borders the Speed River and Royal City Park. The community primarily follows a grid pattern with several internal roads (predominantly Paisley Street, Waterloo Ave, and Suffolk Street) connecting horizontally across the neighbourhood towards the eastern boundary of downtown Guelph (City of Guelph, 2020).



City of Guelph Vision & Strategic Plan

The City of Guelph released and updated edition of their strategic plan in 2019 (City of Guelph, 2019). This strategic plan is set to last until 2023, upon which time the relevancy of goals will be reassessed for the growing City. This plan intends to guide subsequent plans throughout the City on projects such as economic development, sustainability, governmental administration, social well-being, and transportation systems. This final element is what ultimately guides the vision and goals set forth by this active transportation plan.

The goals set forth by the transportation segment of the City's strategic plan include broad, overarching goals to cover all elements of transportation within the City. Though this section's goals include details like preparing for autonomous vehicles through future-proof road networks and strengthening the connectivity of public transportation systems, promoting active transportation can be seen as inherently built-in. Active transport is explicitly benefitted by higher connectivity rates, and the modernisation of infrastructure (as will be outlined further in the proceeding sections).

The vision for transportation within the City of Guelph as outlined by the Strategic Plan is to "...foster easy, accessible movement through trails, paths, roads and corridors to tie the community together and connect Guelph's economy with other regions" (City of Guelph, 2019). This vision cannot be achieved without more localised transportation considerations such as those made by the following active transportation plan for the Old City Neighbourhood.

Research:



City Demographics and Characteristics



Walkability Mapping



Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats





City Demographics and Characteristics

Due to the limitations of census data, the following will be an assessment of the demographic features of the city at large. However, owing to the comprehensive nature of this data, it is reasonable to interpret these findings to an individual neighbourhood, understanding that the assumption is made that this community is roughly homogenous with the rest of the city. The following research has been conducted to establish the typical representation of residents and their need/opportunities for the development of active transportation.

Population Demographics

An image of the typical resident must be established to understand the typical lifestyle and subsequent proclivity towards active transportation. The proceeding paragraphs paint the picture of what the general population breakdown is within the city as a whole.

Guelph has seen consistent population growth over the last two decades. As of 2016, the population in the city is 131,790 permanent residents, not factoring in the significant student population (Statistics Canada3, 2016). The nature of the old city neighbourhood allows for reasonable comparison to this data owing to the limited student housing/rental properties within the area.

Of this population, the majority of residents (68.2%) are aged 15-64, with an average age of 39 years old (Statistics Canada3, 2016). The sex breakdown of respondents is 51.36% female with 48.63% male (Statistics Canada3, 2016). Further, of the responding population, the majority of residents are Canadian citizens (94.2%), where 77.2% are non-immigrants, and most of the immigration took place before 1981. Finally, 60.9% of the population have some form of post-secondary education (college/university certificate, diploma, undergraduate/graduate degrees) (Statistics Canada3, 2016).



Economic Activity

Elements of economic development and activity generally reflect the opportunity of residents to include active transportation in their daily lives through several potential variables. The following expands on the previous research illustrating the typical economic activity of residents in Guelph.

Unemployment of residents actively engaged in the work force is quite low in the city at 6.1% with an overall employment rate of 66.1% (Statistics Canada³, 2016; Statistics Canada⁴, 2016). Typical employment is mostly within sales and service (21.4%), education (13.5%), and business/finance (13.4%). Further, the median income for individuals is \$37,540, but for households, the median moves up to \$77,984. Though the medians are fairly comparable to the majority of surrounding cities, the income bracket breakdown does show that the typical household is within the \$100,000-\$124,999 category, which reflects a fairly economically stable community (Statistics Canada³, 2016; Statistics Canada⁴, 2016). Only 10.8% of residents 18-64 are categorised as low-income.

Housing and Infrastructure

A significant component of the inclination to engage in active transportation is derived from purpose and location. Where people live relative to their work and other general activities can often influence their decisions in commuting or not.

In Guelph, 50.8% of the population lives in single-detached dwellings (which, for the sake of analysis of the Old City, based on zoning this figure would be substantially higher) (Statistics Canada³, 2016). Only 23.9% of residents live in apartments and 7.2% live in some other form of multiple family/multiple non-family unit style housing. 67.3% own the home in which they reside where the remaining population are renters (Statistics Canada³, 2016).

48.5% of all housing within the city was built before 1980. Again, it is reasonable to assume that this number is substantially higher in the Old City, given the number of registered heritage homes in the neighbourhood (City of Guelph, 2020). The average price of homes within the city is \$426,504, and the average monthly housing costs are \$1,434 if the resident owns the property, and \$1,050 for renters (Statistics Canada³, 2016). These values are relatively high, owing to the already compact nature of the older communities where much of the housing supply and greenfield land is fixed and quite limited (City of Guelph, 2020).

Owing to the economic prosperity of the City outlined above, most respondents (68.9%) work in the City. Though this statistic may seem in favour of promoting the use of active transportation, 77.3% of the in-city commute is done by personal cars (7.2% are passengers in carpool arrangements) (Statistics Canada³, 2016; City of Guelph, 2020). This level of commuting could be due to the available infrastructure and the distance of economic/business centres from residential communities (and the subsequent lack of mixed-use development present in our communities). From here, the remaining 14.6% are divided into 7.1% using public transit, and only 5.9% walking, and 1.6% commuting via bicycle. These statistics illustrate the massive disparity that exists based on the orientation of infrastructure towards facilitating the use of personal cars.

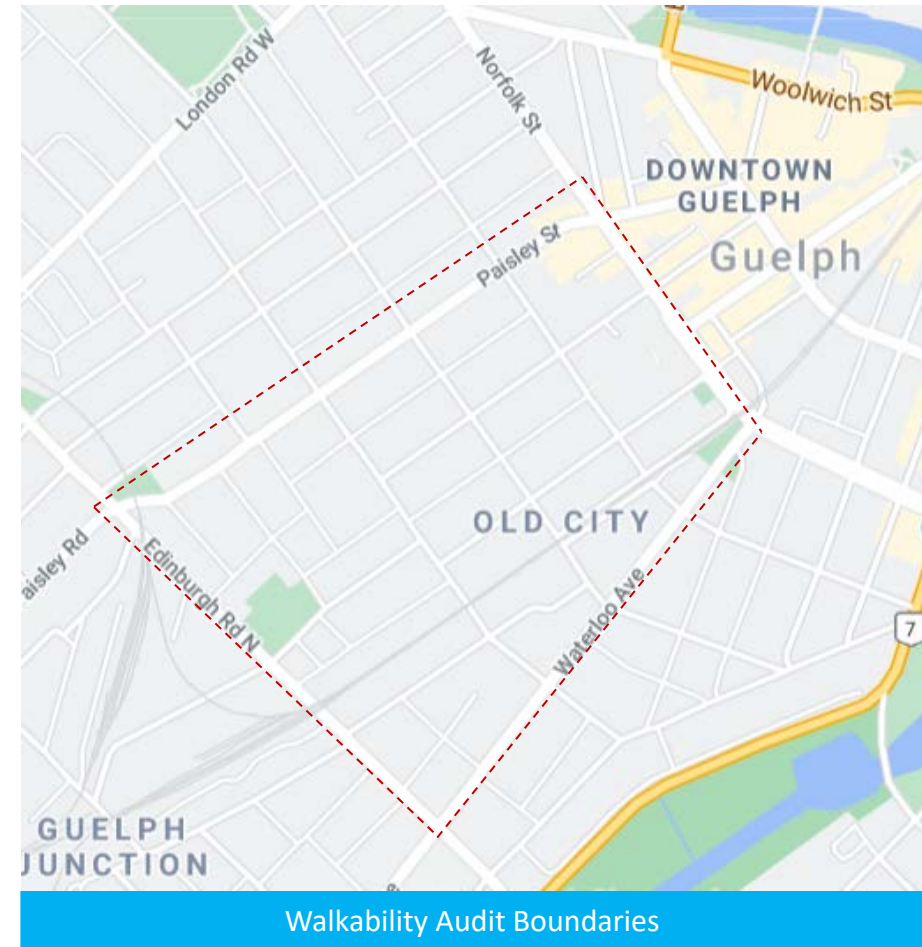


Walkability Mapping

A walkability audit was conducted to establish a more practical understanding of the community and the weaknesses and opportunities that existed within the built environment. The audit sampled a smaller portion within the middle of the City. Specifically, it covered neighbourhoods opposing Edinburgh Road and Norfolk Street, but with a narrower reach from North to South, being restricted to Paisley Street to the North, and Waterloo Ave at its South (City of Guelph, 2020).

The area was selected as a representation of the typical zoning of the community which included some of the core defining features including Sunny Acres Park, Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate, and an elementary school. The area represents a reasonable walking distance based on a regular pace where it takes a maximum of around ten minutes to get from each border to its opposing parallel.

Based on these outlined parameters, several key findings were made which informed the decision-making process for the goals and plans for this active transportation plan. The following is a highlight of the strengths and weaknesses found within the Old City Neighbourhood sample study.



Strengths

Due to the age of the infrastructure present, the community factors in a lot of old design principles. This design has led to a balance of positives and negatives when it comes to the benefit of active transportation. The initial design of this community was not planned around the dependent use of personal cars, and as such, has very narrow streets within, which act as an intrinsic mechanism to slow traffic. Cars which are entering from the wider and higher-capacity arterial roads slow to a much more reasonable pace (typically a posted speed limit of 30km/h). This slowdown in traffic allows for community members to build a sense of safety and comfort within their neighbourhood as they are freely able to walk through the streets where necessary.

There are also many appealing locations and public spaces which encourage residents to engage in active transportation. The visual aesthetic many of the century homes and historic landmarks create a sense of community, which inspires residents to become involved. The plethora of public spaces further allows exploring and spending time outside while encouraging activities like walking or bicycling.

This community features extensive greenspace and encourages a positive sense of safety and community. These factors success will be expanded upon and utilised moving forward as areas to further improve active transportation in the community.

Weaknesses

Unfortunately, owing to the same factors which positively encouraged active transportation, the ageing infrastructure can often impede the utility of these services. The findings of this audit noted that of primary concern was the lack of maintenance and the dysconnectivity of areas that would actively inhibit public utility. The roads and sidewalks were found to be riddled with potholes or other significant cracks and elevation changes. The sidewalks were relatively narrow which limited the ability for more than one person to walk comfortably down each side of the road (most sections of the audited community had parallel sidewalks on each street; however, some exceptions created limited connectivity).

Additionally, the layout of the community is primarily composed of single-use, detached residential dwellings (***SEE FIGURE X***). As such, the community streetscape is tightly spaced and reasonable to walk across, although significant travel is to be done to reach any public services or places of interest. Due to the noted significant greenspace and old-growth vegetation, lighting in this area is also limited at night, which makes the travel from one side of the neighbourhood to the other feel unsafe, again limiting the inclination to engage in active transportation as observed by the auditors.

The outlined weaknesses are areas by which significant room for improving active transportation can be found. Though this sample is limited and does not encapsulate the entirety of the surveyed area, it reflects the conditions which characterize the majority of the Old City Neighbourhood. The noted areas for improvement can be extrapolated and used throughout the community, creating targeted priority areas, strategies, and actions to address the issues.



SWOT Analysis

Active Transportation: SWOT Analysis Old City Neighbourhood, Guelph, Ontario	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A very engaged community within the City of Guelph (e.g. signs put up by community members) ✓ Narrow streets with often one lane are common, slowing down traffic ✓ Green space is plenty (i.e. parks, landscaped parkways, mature trees on streets, etc.) ✓ Many public spaces available just outside of residential zones ✓ Heritage adds to community character and identity ✓ Several stakeholder groups already working on active transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Highway 6 dividing through the middle of the City ✗ Public activity, destinations, and access to services concentrated within the Downtown Core ✗ Already narrow streets and sidewalks in some areas limit what can be done to expand space to accommodate more active transport ✗ Neighbourhood consists of mostly single-detached dwellings
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Resurface/improve existing built infrastructure ➤ Widen the existing sidewalks ➤ Educate and incentivize residents to maintain and upkeep responsibility in keeping sidewalks and parkways clear and accessible year-round (i.e. free from snow, gravel, overgrown gardens) ➤ Alleviate physical barriers, hazards, and fragmentation of sidewalks and bike lanes to improve connectivity and safe active transport ➤ Improve lighting and visibility of streetscape for both pedestrians and drivers (overgrown trees, parking, etc.) ➤ Heritage offers opportunity to blend old with the new in promoting active transportation while also maintaining the “Old City” feeling in the built environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚡ Limited financial resources to build new active transportation infrastructure ⚡ Current zoning by-laws may limit what can be done and additional resources will need to be allocated to zoning by-law amendments ⚡ Tactics to enhance active transportation may not align with City of Guelph’s Strategic Vision ⚡ Attitudes and preferences of Old City Residents remain fixed on automobile dependency ⚡ Hilly topography of Guelph makes active transportation difficult for some



Vision

Vision

As part of the Active Transportation Plan process, a vision was developed through public engagement. The engagement process was conducted based on the principles of inclusivity, equity, shared leadership, representation, and diversity in perspectives. For more information on the engagement process which collected the input required to develop this vision, please see Part II: Developing an Approach to the AT Plan.

The shared vision statement

To recognize, value, and support active transportation as a relied upon and enjoyable means of mobility for all residents. Active Transportation connects the Old City Neighbourhood to other communities, contributing to a resilient, equitable and healthy city.

Goals

Supporting goals were created to serve as a basis from which actions, improvements and investments are identified and prioritized. Together, the vision and goals will guide outcomes of this ATP and ensure the Old City neighbourhood is a safe, healthy and vibrant community.

- 1 To develop a complete active transportation network that connects the historic area to all neighbourhoods in the greater City of Guelph.
- 2 To improve active transportation to ensure it is equitable, safe, and accessible for all residents year-round in the Old City Neighbourhood.
- 3 To support sustainable land-use planning decisions which makes all forms of transportation convenient and enjoyable for those in the Old City.
- 4 To improve the quality of the physical infrastructure in the Old City to be conducive to active transportation.
- 5 To encourage a healthy lifestyle and foster a culture for active transportation in the Old City Neighbourhood and the greater City of Guelph.



Priority Areas



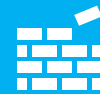
Connected Communities



Safety



Land Use & Site Design



Infrastructure



Public Awareness

In addition to the supportive goals, five key priority areas were identified through public consultation and stakeholder input. Each priority area recognizes the importance and benefits to be derived from addressing key gaps in the current context. This brief discussion is followed by a brief review of the current conditions and challenges characterizing the priority area, as well as strategic directions and specific actions to be taken to address the priority.

Each priority area will include a comment from a member of the public, to be reflective of the sentiments expressed by many in the public consultation phase in developing this plan. Additionally, photos collected in the cycling and walkability audits, and participatory-mapping exercises, which were undertaken by the Old City community in the research phase of developing an approach for this active transportation plan will be included. In providing this evidence, a greater context to what is to be addressed will be provided.

It is important to note that these priority areas, their levels of significance, challenges and current conditions, as well as their identified strategies and actions to address and respond to the priority are not independent of any other priority area listed in this plan. To realize the benefits of the planned priority areas, they must be addressed collectively with consideration of implications for the other priority areas. For example, the priority of connecting communities cannot be achieved without land-use planning policies which are conducive to improving the connectivity of streetscapes. Likewise, improving connectivity alone will not enhance the uptake of active modes of transport by Old City residents without a general level of public awareness in using the active transportation network. In doing so, the impact of each action taken to address each priority will be heightened and will collectively advance the AT Plan vision.





Priority 1: Connecting Communities

Why this is important

Establishing a complete, connected and convenient network that encourages walking or cycling is a fundamental component of making active transportation a desirable travel option. Interconnected trails, sidewalks, laneways and parks offer a safe and enjoyable system for pedestrian traffic and contribute to the adoption of an active and healthy lifestyle, while reducing dependence on a single mode of transit. Our goal is to connect the historic neighbourhood to key destinations across the city that are safe, convenient, and practical.

Current Conditions and Challenges

The City of Guelph has not made significant progress with installing or upgrading the cycling or pedestrian walkways, as expressed by several members of the public. While there is an extensive sidewalk system within the neighbourhood, there are no established bike lanes or bike signage. Many Guelph residents indicated that they are already walking, cycling or using transit for recreational and transportation purposes; however, several Old City residents stated frustration with a lack of an established bike route and no bike lanes.

•The quickest way to travel around Guelph is by arterial roads that experience high volumes of cars. These car-heavy roads detract cyclists from using these routes as the high speeds, and lack of separation between cyclists and vehicles raise safety concerns. These concerns are enough to pressure cyclists to ride on narrow, residential streets, which in turn, increase the length of their journey, in terms of both time and distance. In doing so, residents may opt to take the perceived more convenient and 'safer' option, which is to get to their destination by car. Often, cycling networks are built when reconstruction or road upgrades occur. The historic neighbourhood has not seen road upgrades in decades, as evidenced by its crumbling infrastructure and outdated design, and therefore lacks connectivity.

Public Comments on Active Transport in the Old City

Profile

Resident
Male
45 years old



“**Biking in the old city area is quite difficult**, especially along Edinburgh. Not only is there a **considerable amount of traffic**, but **there aren’t any bike lanes** or shoulders along either Edinburgh or Waterloo. This makes **biking on the road dangerous**, and **city bylaws indicate you aren’t to cycle on sidewalks**, which are your only safe choice.”

“Busing is also difficult if you live in the Old City Area because you need to take multiple transfer buses or **walk a considerable distance** to do things like go to the University of Guelph or get groceries.”

Strategy

Bike Routes & Signage: establishing preferred bike routes and implementing signage that indicates routes for cyclists will help connect residents to their destinations and improve connectivity to other neighbourhoods.

Bike Lanes: where possible, bike lanes will be created to indicate that the roadway is shared and automobile drivers and cyclists are to give one another space.

Actions

Signed Routes: The first step in addressing connectivity will be to develop a bike route within the historic neighbourhood. Once the network has been established, signs will be posted that indicate to cyclists the preferred courses that are safe and convenient. The bike route will be available online and through the transit app so that residents can have easy access to the overall network.

Bike Lanes: Due to the built form of the historic neighbourhood, the City is limited by the design of existing infrastructure. It is nearly impossible to widen certain roads and accommodate independent lanes for both cars and cyclists. As an alternative, the City of Guelph will create sharrows along high volume roads, including Paisley Road, Edinburgh Road S, and Norfolk Street. These sharrow markings will indicate to cyclists their preferred lanes and create awareness for drivers of the shared space.



Signs for bike route



Sharrows



Priority 2: Safety



Why This is Important

The ability to walk or cycle comfortably to destinations is at the centre of developing an inclusive and sustainable transportation system. The design of a community will impact residents' perceptions of safety, as well as contribute to public health and physical activity levels.

The goal of improving pedestrian safety is to ensure that residents feel comfortable travelling within their community. Communities should be designed in a manner that promotes public safety, health, and well-being.

Current Conditions and Challenges

Throughout the engagement process safety was stated as a considerable concern for some residents. These safety concerns were attributed to not having enough crosswalks, lack of crosswalk indication, tripping hazards on sidewalks, not enough resting spots, limited visibility during the day and night (i.e., lack of light, and narrow sidewalks with many obstacles). Despite these concerns, Guelph has maintained boulevards on most roadways in the area, that create buffers between pedestrians on sidewalks and cars on the road.

Public Comments on Active Transport in the Old City	
<p>Profile</p> <p>Resident Female 20 years old</p>  	<p>"I would benefit from more spaces to rest along the streets and sidewalks."</p> <p>"I feel safe walking during the day, but at night is a different story. It's much too dark and I feel almost claustrophobic walking in the Old City at night. Who knows if something were to happen, where or who I could go to for help with no one else around?"</p>

Strategy

Crosswalk Safety: improving crosswalk indication will allow for the safe movement of people, enhance the visibility of pedestrians by individual driving cars, and the awareness of and reduce incidents between pedestrians and vehicles.

Resting Areas: placing more pedestrian seating in along active transportation routes accommodates a variety of residents and their needs to rest in between destinations.

Actions

Crosswalk Safety: The City will place contrasting colours on roads and at busy intersections, improve lighting by trimming shady, mature trees more regularly, and invest in more pedestrian crossovers to improve crosswalk safety. The intersections of Paisley Street at Dublin Street and Edinburgh Street at Paisley Street will be redeveloped to enhance the visibility of pedestrians at crosswalks. Pedestrian only crossovers will be installed on Waterloo Ave between Kent Street and Glasgow Street, as well as on Edinburgh Street between Robinson Ave and Sydenham Street.

Resting Areas: A bench will be placed at all bus stops in the neighbourhood, every 500-metres along active transportation routes, major intersections, and in all public parks.



Signs for bike route



Resting spot



Crossover



Priority 3: Land Use & Site Design

Why this is important

The ways communities are designed and used influences how individuals interact with their environments. The design and land use of communities should be prioritized to maximize feelings of comfort and enjoyment in active transport, ability to meet needs within the community, connectivity, and overall senses of safety. Ensuring that the Old City Neighbourhood has an active transportation connection to the city-wide transit network is core to increasing walking, cycling or alternative forms of transit. This connection is because active transport is often combined with public transportation to get residents to farther distances in shorter amounts of time. Additionally, it is critical to ensure that there are adequate access points that provide direct connections to other neighbourhoods for all residents and support both longer and shorter trips. Well-designed communities make walking or cycling the most efficient mode of transportation for local in-city trips. Concentrating growth around neighbourhood clusters has been identified as a critical strategy to increase sustainability by promoting compact development and making walking, cycling, and transit more viable.

Current Conditions and Challenges

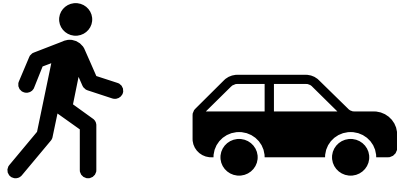
The City of Guelph provides several amenities for its residents, including parks, trails, scenic riverfronts, recreational opportunities, and access to entertainment opportunities. Although these amenities are available, they are mostly concentrated in the downtown core, rather than dispersed throughout the City. The land-use framework in the City of Guelph Official Plan focuses on ensuring the downtown is a vibrant destination, supported by residential, commercial, employment and institutional uses (City of Guelph, 2018). The Old City Neighbourhood is adjacent to these amenities and is close to significant employment and regional destinations including the University of Guelph and Downtown. As such, opportunities to coordinate land use plans and policies to make transportation networks convenient in meeting all the needs (i.e., residential, employment, services, etc.) of Old City residents exists.

The Old City Neighbourhood is predominately a low-density residential neighbourhood, comprised mainly of single-detached dwellings. Multi-residential developments within this neighbourhood tend to be located along main arterial routes. Improving community design and land use patterns which encourage a balanced and interconnected transportation system requires cohesion across policies that result in consistent implementation and action.

Public Comments on Active Transport in the Old City

Profile

Resident/Young Professional
Female
31 years old



“While **the old historic buildings and homes in the Old City make for a pleasant walk**, there aren’t many places to actually walk to. **I’d like to see some diversity in places** we can visit in this neighbourhood. **Otherwise, I drive** to the downtown area to run my errands.”

Actions

Implement Design Guidelines: building off the Official Plan design guidelines, the City will continue to encourage a variety of development and redevelopment in the area that supports street-level activity, designed and built with safe pedestrian movement in mind. The designs will locate vehicle parking behind commercial and multi-family buildings, creating more intimate, pedestrian-friendly streets which encourage "parking and walking," cycling, and/or reliance on other active modes of transport to and from popular destinations. Additionally, in keeping with the neighbourhood boundaries, laneways will be required for all new developments. These laneways will contain natural green space inclusive of city-maintained and privately-owned garden beds and trees; laneways will have spaces for resting areas, and ramps and pathways into the streets to easily access sidewalks must be included. The goal is to promote a distinctive and accommodating street design to accommodate and welcome complete streetscapes.

Strategy

Implement Design Guidelines: developing street-level ambience with the sensory pedestrian experience in mind will contribute to a vibrant streetscape that attracts active transportation in all seasons. The guidelines will ensure that all operational transportation facilities to be developed will be consistent in meeting standards to promote this experience.

Consistent Policy Application and Implementation: all City and Provincial policies should be consistent regarding active transportation implementation and application within the Old City Neighbourhood. With consistent policy comes desired outcomes, where residents can understand and trust the direction of City plans, programs, and policies, along with their associated action items.

Integration of Future Developments: Ensuring that existing and future developments integrate active transportation connections and safety measures into the Old City Neighbourhood, of which are consistent with the priorities identified in policy and within this plan, is key to promoting more active modes of transport.

Consistent Policy Application and Implementation: to ensure all policies are consistent in promoting the Old City Neighbourhood vision for active transportation, City staff will conduct a technical policy review. Any amendments to city policies or documents will reflect the goals of this ATP as well as provincial policies. Such documents include (see Table 2):

Integration of Future Developments: The City should prioritize redevelopment projects that provide walking, cycling and transit connection to other destinations across the City. The City will continue to work with developers and other stakeholders to ensure the neighbourhood is pedestrian-friendly. The City is also developing a checklist that will outline criteria that must be considered when redeveloping lands in the community. This checklist can be used to review applications and outline changes needed before approval. The checklist will warrant any current or future developments to have adequate access to transit service, with a goal that all residents be located within a 400-metre walk to transit, and that active transportation connections are provided directly to bus stops. The City will continue to require funding contributions for the construction of future sidewalks when appropriate.



Site design



Future developments

Table 2. Relevant policies and legislation to be consistent with the Active Transportation Plan.

Provincial Policies	Municipal Policies
Ontario Climate Change Strategy, 2015	Transit Growth Strategy
Places to Grow Act, 2005	Cycling Master Plan – Bicycle Friendly Guelph
CycleON Action Plan 2.0	Parking Master Plan
Ontario Trails Strategy, 2010	City Strategic Plan
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005	Transportation Master Plan
Provincial Policy Statement, 2020	Official Plan
Municipal Act, 2001	Parks and Recreation Master
	Community Road Safety Strategy



Priority 4: Infrastructure

Why this is important

The quality of infrastructure, such as roads and sidewalks, influence resident behaviour and their decisions to uptake active transportation or not. Having poor quality roads and sidewalks deter people from participating in active modes of transit due to safety concerns and the presence of hazards. There must be appropriate sidewalk and road infrastructure that is maintained year-round so that residents feel more comfortable and able to be active. Improved infrastructure, which is of quality and conducive for active transport, will contribute to a better-quality streetscape, improve overall safety, and create a more accessible and inclusive active transportation network.

Current conditions and challenges

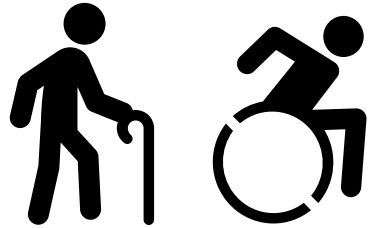
This priority area was overwhelmingly identified as a priority in promoting active transportation, as many residents expressed much concern over the surface quality of roads and sidewalks. Most road routes are physically damaged with potholes brought on by car use, while sidewalks are cracked, and often overgrown with weeds. Cyclists do not enjoy biking on rough, uneven roads. At the same time, walkers, including pedestrians who use mobility devices, are physically unable to utilize the sidewalks due to the hazards the surfaces present. Unfortunately, the City has spent a lot of energy and capital investment in other areas of the City, neglecting the infrastructure in the Old City Neighbourhood that dates back several decades ago. The goal of improving the road and sidewalk quality for this area is to look at both short term and long-term solutions.



Public Comments on Active Transport in the Old City

Profile

Resident
Female
60 years old



"I mostly use a wheelchair to get around. I can get around on my chair for the most part, although **in the winter it is difficult** with snow, salt, and ice on the sidewalks. **My neighbours recognize how much I depend on using the sidewalks to get around**, so they're always quick to make sure they are clear."

"On days I'm feeling well, I **use my walker** to get around. I usually run into a few obstacles with **my wheels getting caught on holes or joints** and whatnot. Other pedestrians have been kind to help me up over the curb at times, although **I'd like to just be able to do so with ease by myself.**"

Public Comments on Active Transport in the Old City

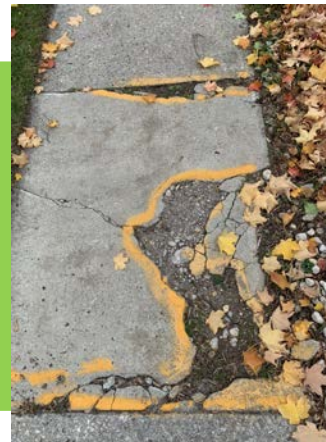
Profile

Resident/Student
Male
15 years old



"I can only travel by longboard when the weather is nice. I typically longboard on sidewalks, even though it's not allowed, because **traffic on the road** can be busy. Even then, **it's difficult when the sidewalks became too narrow**. While they look nice, I have trouble switching from longboarding in the streets onto the sidewalks with all the **gardens in the parkway.**"

"I think **bike lanes would also be beneficial** on Wellington Street W. and Edinburgh Road S., to **help connect people across the City.**"



Strategy

Pilot Programs: temporary programs are an excellent opportunity to trial innovative strategies for efficacy and efficiency without long-term investment. Dependent on the achievement of successful and desired outcomes, pilot programs can become more permanent and implemented on a grander scale.

Zoning By-Law Amendments: reviewing and amending city by-laws may alter residential responsibility of property and sidewalk maintenance to ensure surfaces are cleared and accessible all year round.

Reserve Funds: creating a fund dedicated to the maintenance of the Old City Neighbourhood through property tax revenue and development charges will assist in capital spending on upgrades.

Actions

Pilot Programs: using pilot projects to test and seek stakeholder and public feedback on the viability of innovative initiatives serves as both a short-term and long-term solution for addressing infrastructural issues. There are numerous opportunities to explore with pilot programs, such as vehicle-free rights of way, bike lanes and biking infrastructure, as well as *woonerf* shared space and seasonal pedestrian-only streets. The City is currently looking into turning Kent Street South into a pedestrian-only street, and Waterloo between Dublin and Gordon into a *woonerf* (McNaughton, 2017). *Woonerf* is a Dutch concept that embraces the idea of a living street, that has room for pedestrians, cyclists and cars (Wysocki et al., 2017). The street is viewed as a social space rather than a space for getting from destination A to destination B.



Zoning By-Law Amendments: in amending zoning by-laws to regulate property owner responsibilities, sidewalks will be more pedestrian-friendly. Currently, residents will leave their yards overgrown and even plant private gardens in the publicly-owned parkways, which contributes to overcrowding on already narrow sidewalks. Additionally, residents are responsible for clearing the sidewalk portion in front of their house, year-round, regardless of the season. It is recognized that if each resident is responsible for a small part of the sidewalk in front of their property, then cumulatively (and efficiently) the sidewalks will be clear for all to use. The City will review zoning by-laws and ensure these laws are enforced, including regulations on parkway gardening, and making discovering additional tactics to regulate the sidewalks to be free of debris year-round.



Reserve Fund: establishing a reserve fund will help accumulate capital that can be spent on infrastructural upgrades. This reserve fund will be solely for the Old City Neighbourhood, and any spending will require the input from residents in the area. Typically, improvements occur when water mains need replacing or when new developments are being built. It is the intent of the reserve fund to support capital projects in the area but also contribute to minor fixes, such as broken lamp posts, or severe potholes. The first significant improvement will be to replace the water mains along Elora Street, Robinson Ave, and Foster Ave, which will result in upgraded sidewalks and roads.





Priority 5: Public Awareness

Why this is important

Raising public awareness of the benefits and opportunities of utilizing the active transportation network as part of their daily habits, as well as property owner responsibilities in living in the Neighbourhood, will have positive outcomes on resident behaviour and choices in choosing active transportation, as well as mitigation of conflict over public space.

Current conditions and challenges

The City has run several pilot programs and community events for other neighbourhoods in Guelph, however, has not invested much time or resources in raising awareness or encouraging public outreach in the Old City Neighbourhood. Many residents indicated that they were unaware of by-laws regarding sidewalk maintenance and were unaware of any ongoing city efforts to improve active transportation in the City, despite many efforts by stakeholder groups already taking place. The goal of this priority area is to increase awareness of active transportation routes, its benefits, opportunities, and responsibilities of various stakeholders.

Public Comments on Active Transport in the Old City

Profile

Retired Resident
Male
65 years old



“I would only bike during **dry and clear weather**. I’d like to bike more, but I **wouldn’t know where to store my bike, how to maintain my bike, or learn the rules of the road.**”

“I think the biggest barrier I have to using active transportation are **safety concerns**. For me, **it is the feeling that my bike would get stolen** if left outside and **feeling unsafe biking** alongside cars on the road.”

Strategy

Events and Activities: holding community events to promote on-going awareness of active transportation opportunities in the Old City. These events and activities will be in-person and online to reach a variety of audiences.

Partnerships: forming partnerships and collaborating with the stakeholders outlined below will enhance a more significant collective effort and outreach in addressing this priority area (and all others identified in this plan).

Actions

Events and Activities: The City will host community events, such as History at a Glance, once a month. In this event, residents can explore the Old City on a guided tour of some of the most important landmarks. Similarly, Cycle Guelph is an event where cyclists can partake in a 20-kilometre bike ride through Guelph's trails. Other events will relate directly to the introduction of new pilot programs, as well as educational programs that help residents navigate the transit system.



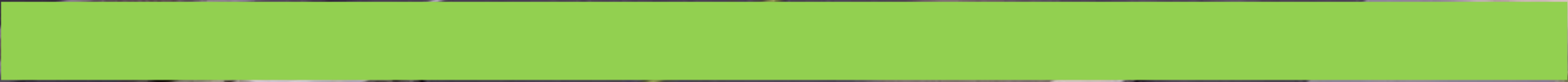


Partnerships: The following partnerships will be formed with the following stakeholders to address the outlined objectives in addressing this priority area:

- **City of Guelph By-law Enforcement:** to take an education-first approach in raising awareness amongst property owners on their responsibilities in maintaining sidewalks in front of their property, as well as to enforce by-laws for those who do not comply
- **Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health and Guelph Community Health Centre:** to raise awareness on mental, physical, and social benefits of active transportation
- **Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition:** to discover opportunities in connecting neighbourhoods across the City
- **Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation:** to accrue benefits and leverage work being done to promote active transportation
- **Downtown Guelph Business Association:** to promote economic development opportunities using active transportation for the benefit of local businesses and residents in the Old City
- **Speed River Cycling Club:** to collate opportunities and bridge connections between cycling for recreational or active transport purposes, as well as educate the public on bicycle safety, existing networks and trails, rules of the road, and bicycle maintenance and repairs
- **Guelph Police Service:** to raise awareness about pedestrian and cycling safety for all age groups and abilities
- **Welcoming Streets Initiative:** to advance efforts and mitigate conflict between downtown business owners and vulnerable populations using the downtown space

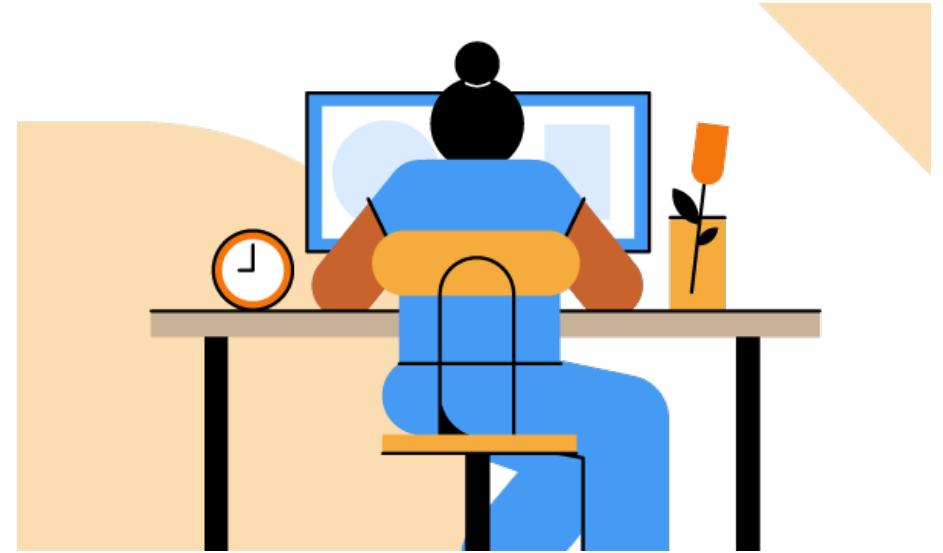


Next Steps



1

The implementation of this active transportation plan requires the use of both public and private financial resources. Additionally, the City requires the hiring of staff to facilitate the implementation of various strategies. The City will kick off the implementation of the plan by hiring a dedicated full-time Active Transportation Coordinator position within the first year. This position will be supplemented within two years by a full-time Transportation Demand Management Coordinator and Active Transportation Engineer. Within five years, the City will also hire a full-time Active Transportation Planner. This growing team will work together and with other municipal departments, agencies, and stakeholder organizations to implement the Active Transportation Plan.



2

The Active Transportation Plan will occur over ten years, with a five-year review in 2026. In this review, the City will evaluate how successful the implementation has been, and what priorities require further improvements. Furthermore, the City will establish an online performance dashboard that will highlight performance data as it relates to progress on the Active Transportation Plan. Each priority area and action items will be featured and their level of completeness.



Timeline

Phase	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Establish dashboard	Active	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive
AT Coordinator	Active	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive
Transportation Demand Management Coordinator	Passive	Active	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive
AT Engineer	Passive	Passive	Active	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive
AT Planner	Passive	Passive	Passive	Active	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive
5 Year Review	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Review	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive
Review Spending	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Active	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive
On-going Monitoring	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Active	Active	Active	Passive
Re-develop AT Plan	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Passive	Review

Conclusion

The City of Guelph's Old City Active Transportation Plan has been developed as a strategic guide to facilitate the implementation of short-term action-oriented priorities to enhance the active transportation network in this neighbourhood. This Active Transportation Plan for the Old City Neighbourhood in the City of Guelph was comprised of three parts, each contributing to the delivery of the final plan itself. First, Part I of this document outlined a review of the existing active transportation plan for Thunder Bay was undertaken, to identify lessons and implications for developing an active transportation plan for the Old City. Part II of this document outlined the approach to developing the plan, while part III included the plan itself. Collectively, these three components contributed to the publicly-identified vision for active transportation in the Old City, to address public priority areas to reap the benefits for public and community health associated with normalizing active transportation as part of one's community.