



Being Walk Friendly in Small & Rural Communities

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Vision

A Canada where everyone can enjoyably, easily and safely walk to school, work, play, shopping and transit.

Mission

To help communities be more walk friendly by:

- ▶ Raising awareness of the health, economic, social and environmental benefits,
- ▶ Inspiring and celebrating success,
- ▶ Sharing resources and best practice on infrastructure, policy and programs,
- ▶ Bringing partners together to make walking happen.

Why are walk friendly communities so important?

- ▶ Safety
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Inclusive
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Economy
- ▶ Social Cohesion
- ▶ Mental health & happiness

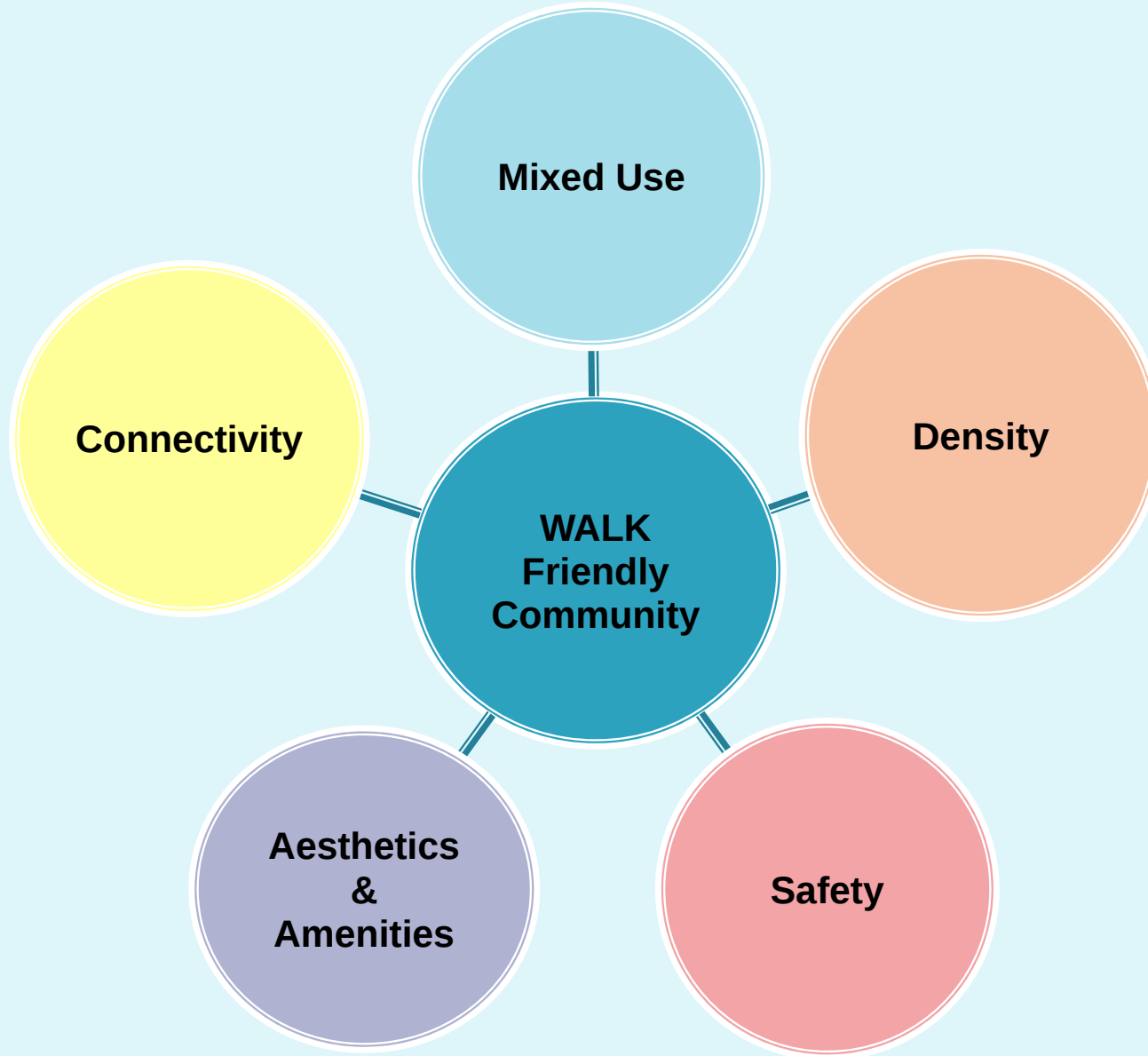


WALK Friendly Ontario

WFO is a recognition program from Canada Walks that encourages municipalities to create and improve the conditions for walking by awarding Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum designations.



WALK Friendly = the human-scale land use and design elements that attract walkers.



Rural Context

- ▶ Distance & density
- ▶ Capacity
- ▶ Rural car culture



WFO Assessment Framework

- ▶ Planning & Policy
- ▶ Engineering & Community Design
- ▶ Education & Encouragement
- ▶ Enforcement
- ▶ Evaluation



Building Capacity for Active Transportation in the Haliburton Highlands



Photo: Sue Tiffin, The Highlander

Haliburton Highlands





Communities in Action Committee



- ▶ HKPR District Health Unit
- ▶ Haliburton Real Easy Ryders Cycling Club
- ▶ Haliburton County Development Corporation
- ▶ Rural Transportation Options Committee
- ▶ Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition
- ▶ Riverwalk Committee
- ▶ Local CARP chapter
- ▶ Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce



The CIA is a project of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative.



PLANNING

- Planning for walking happens at many different levels
- A plan for walking provides a vision for action
- Engaging citizens is vital to the planning process
- Allows you to be proactive in addressing walkability issues



Planning

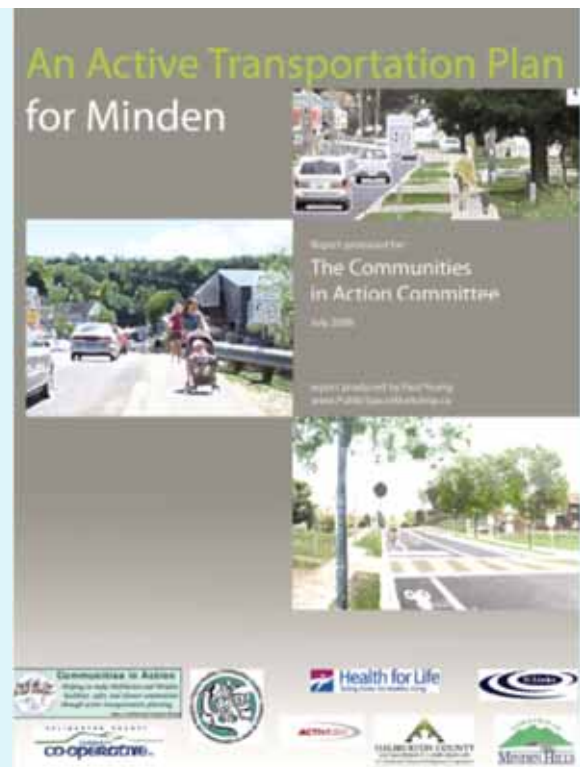
- ▶ Developed AT plans – Haliburton & Minden
- ▶ Helped create a vision
- ▶ Conducted community based research
- ▶ Builds an evidence base
- ▶ Builds credibility
- ▶ Tool for both municipality and CIA



BEFORE



Unused roadway converted to sidewalk
Paved pedestrian crossings with pavement markings
Wooden planters relocated
Benches and bicycle parking added
Concrete planters replaced with trees planted in tree pits
Flashing light converted to three-way stop



Policy

- ▶ Advocate for supportive land use policy
- ▶ Participated in Official Plan reviews
- ▶ All plans now have policies re: AT, walking, cycling

The Dysart et al Official Plan, 2010 more specific policy direction on active transportation in the following sections:

Section 2.2.7: “Promotion of Liveable Settlements”

Section 3.2.2.3: “Municipal Roads”

Section 4.1: “Settlement Patterns”

Section 4.8: “Active Transportation and Recreation Trails”

ENGINEERING & DESIGN

- Engineering involves designing, operating, and maintaining quality roadways and walking facilities
- Designers and engineers play a key role in creating a safe, inviting, and accessible streetscape for walking
- Designing for walkers makes it safer for all modes



Engineering & Design

- ▶ CIA doesn't 'do' infrastructure
- ▶ Role of community-based group:
 - Advocacy i.e. paved shoulders
 - Add value to municipal efforts – AT Plans, community awareness raising, funding



Minden: Riverwalk





FIG. 4 Area 2: York Street



Haliburton, York St.

Highland St. Haliburton



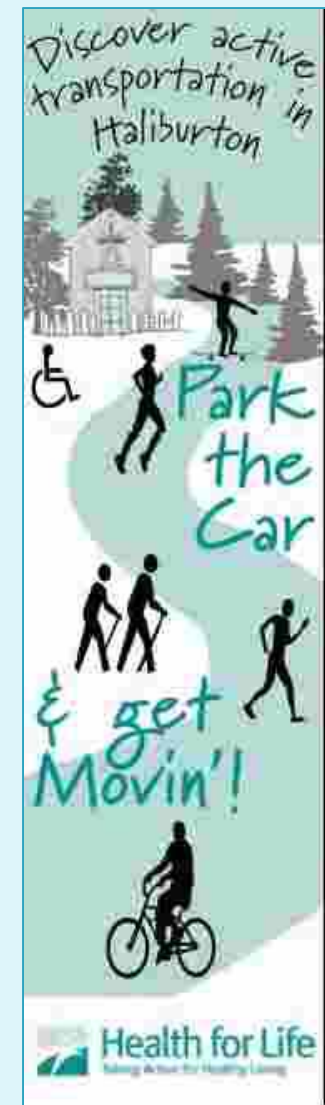
FIG. 2 Area 1: Highland Street at Courtesy Crossing

EDUCATION & ENCOURAGEMENT

Fun and interesting programs and activities that inform, inspire, motivate, and/or reward walkers.



Education & Encouragement



Education & Encouragement

SHARE THE ROAD



*Most of our roads don't have separate space for people to bike or walk.
Let's keep everyone safe!*

MOTORISTS

- Slow down and give at least one metre clearance when passing a cyclist or walker
- Wait to pass until the road ahead is clear
- Look for cyclists and walkers when making turns

CYCLISTS

- Obey all traffic laws, signs and signals
- Be predictable: Ride on the right and use hand signals
- Be visible: Use reflectors and lights in low light conditions
- Ride in single file when being passed by vehicles

WALKERS

- Where there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic & single file
- Be visible: At night wear bright clothing with reflective strips
- Be sure you can see and hear traffic around you

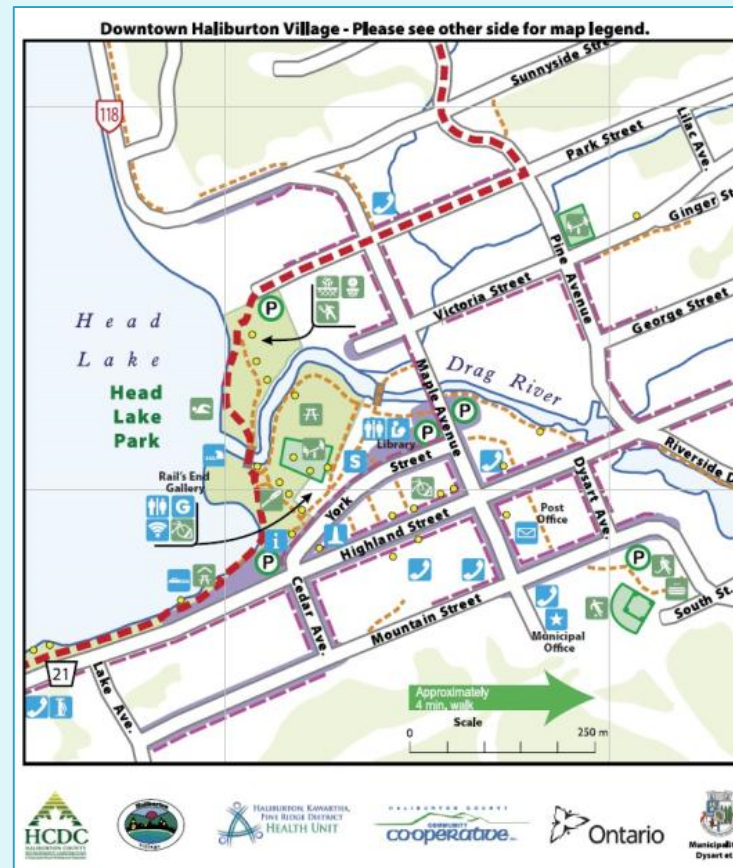
Same Roads ~ Same Rules ~ Same Rights

For more information, visit
www.cyclehaliburton.ca









Walk, Bike
& Be Active in
Haliburton Village

*Includes a map of the
Head Lake Trail*

For more information please contact:

HKPR District Health Unit
705.457.1391
www.communitiesinaction.ca



1 Metre



SHARE the ROAD

www.cyclehaliburton.ca

ENFORCEMENT

- There may be safety concerns if traffic laws are not properly understood or adequately enforced
- A successful enforcement program will usually require the involvement of law enforcement officials, community members, municipal staff and councillors and the media
- Designating a traffic safety officer can prioritize traffic safety enforcement
- Seeing that traffic laws are being regularly enforced may change behaviour



Enforcement



Photo: Angelica Blenich,
Haliburton Echo



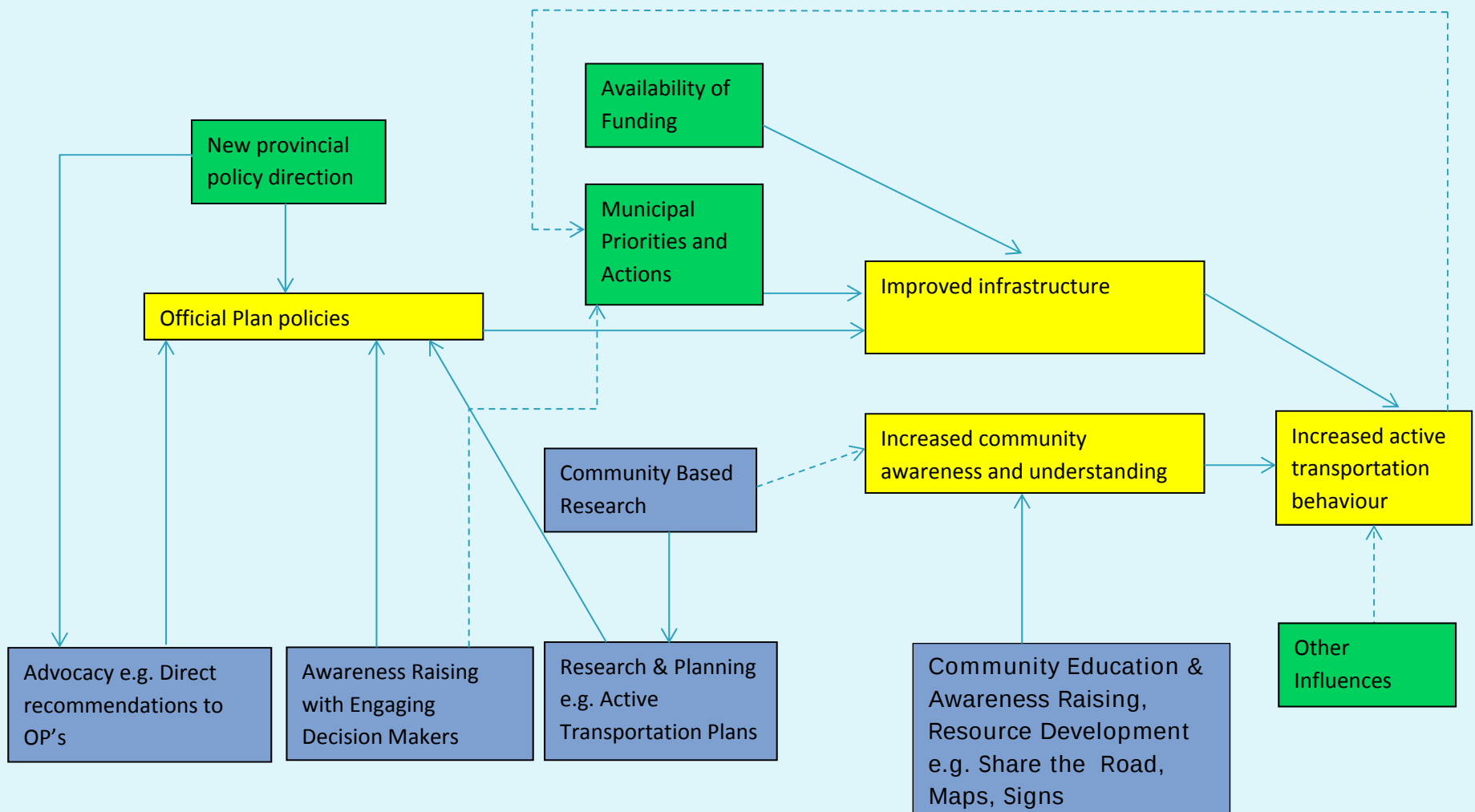
EVALUATION

- Evaluation of the physical walking environment and behaviour plays a crucial role in problem identification and countermeasure selection
- on-going; formally and informally



Evaluation

- ▶ Inventory: policy and infrastructure changes
- ▶ Survey: asked residents about their AT awareness and behaviour
- ▶ Observational Study: manual counts of people walking and cycling
- ▶ Key Informant Interviews



CIA actions



Observed and measured changes



External factors

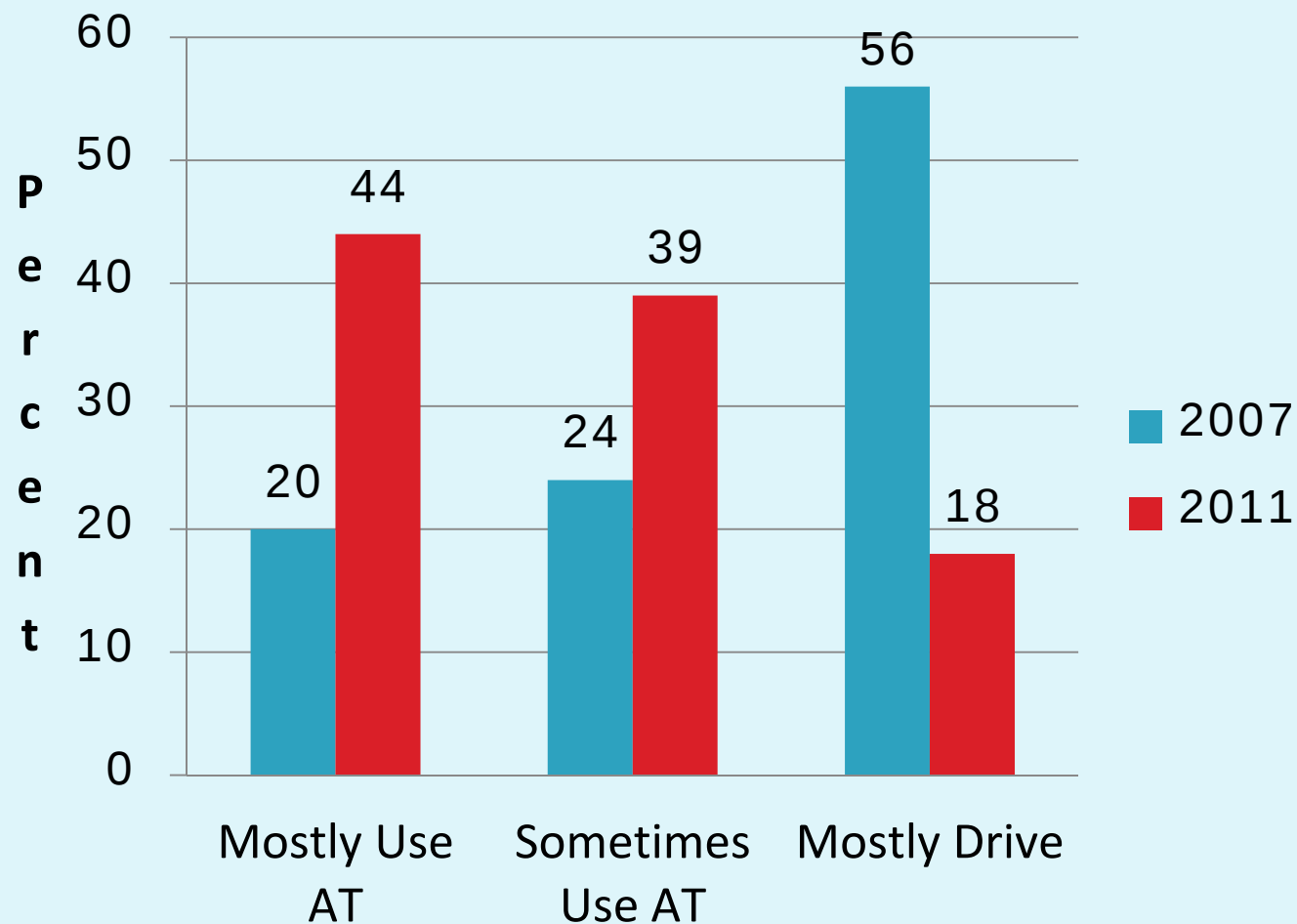
— Evidence indicates strong influence (more than one data source)

- - - Evidence indicates possible influence (one data source or more research needed)

*Arrows indicate direction of influence

Results: AT Activity – survey

Self-reported frequency of AT use



Results: AT Activity – Obs. Study

Minden

Invergordon Ave.		Pritchard Lane		Water St.	
2007	2012	2007	2012	2007	2012
10	21	7	24	5	75

Haliburton

Highland St.		York St.		Courtesy Crossing	
2005	2012	2005	2012	2005	2012
146	277	106	135	55	56

Average number of people using AT based on 3 hours of observation.

Results: CIA as a Credible Resource

“...to have them as an independent body to provide the municipal and county levels with direction and to highlight best practices and bring resources to the table is very effective.”

“The CIA has been the main reason for us incorporating active transportation into our planning in the village.”

“The CIA has been a great partner for council and for lobbying other levels of government. Lots of projects would not have been put into place if it weren't for them.”

Results: Cultural Shift in Decision Making

“Politicians are more aware of the needs and impacts of cyclists and pedestrians now.”

“(My role..) has been to ensure that we are all thinking about active transportation when making decisions regarding roads and sidewalks.”

“The population is aging and so this has become an economic strategy for our municipality – making it a destination for retirees and creating places for walking has influenced our whole decision-making.”

Conclusions from the data

- ▶ Awareness raising and promotion contributes to encouraging more walking and cycling
- ▶ Improved infrastructure for walking and cycling makes a difference in activity levels
- ▶ CIA activities contributed to observed changes in AT policy, planning, infrastructure and activity
- ▶ The CIA added to the capacity of municipalities around AT planning; AT Plans were effective resources
- ▶ The CIA's participation in the review of official plans was an effective strategy to affect policy change

Implications

- ▶ Implementation of AT initiatives is achievable in small, rural communities!
- ▶ Leadership on AT can come from community groups and enhances municipal capacity
- ▶ Having and articulating a consistent vision is important
- ▶ Measurement, monitoring and evaluation are required to better understand the return on investment
- ▶ Community-based research is a valuable and effective approach to evaluation

Lessons Learned

- ▶ Build partnerships with multiple sectors
- ▶ Public Health is a key partner
- ▶ Take evidence-informed action
- ▶ Relate the message to municipal priorities
- ▶ Top down and bottom up
- ▶ Provide a visual
- ▶ Identify manageable message and focus
- ▶ How the message is delivered is as important as the message itself
- ▶ Find opportunities for knowledge exchange

For more information:

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www.communitiesinaction.ca

www.hkpr.on.ca

“Walkers are the
indicator species of a
vibrant community.”



WALK Friendly Communities

Silver

- ▶ City of Hamilton – Silver
- ▶ City of Ottawa – Silver

Bronze

- ▶ Town of Richmond Hill
- ▶ Town of Wasaga Beach
- ▶ City of London



Benefits of Participating

- ▶ Access to resources to assist with on-going improvements
- ▶ Brings all walking related plans, policies and programs together in one document – a great resource for municipal staff
- ▶ Builds stronger relationships with stakeholders around walkability



Benefits of Participating

- ▶ Provides valuable feedback from a team of walkability experts
- ▶ Potential for marketing the community to attract new residents and businesses



Applying for a designation

- ▶ Review the Application Guide
- ▶ Identify who will take the lead on the application
- ▶ Seek out a municipal champion
- ▶ Engage people from all sectors in the application process
- ▶ Use the nature of small communities to your advantage
- ▶ Begin....

Upcoming Events

Join Canada Walks for these upcoming webinars:

- ▶ **June 10th**, 1:00-2:30 pm – *Completing the WFO Application*
 - this event will lead participants through the ‘how’ and the ‘what’ of the WFO application
- ▶ **June 26th**, 1:00-2:30 – *Showcasing Pedestrian Plans*
 - informative presentations from three WALK Friendly Community award recipients about their Pedestrian Plans.
 - City of Hamilton (Silver)
 - City of Ottawa (Silver)
 - Town of Wasaga Beach (Bronze)

How WALK Friendly is your community?

Apply for a WALK Friendly Community
designation today! www.walkfriendly.ca

Follow us on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/WalkFriendlyON>
and Twitter @walkfriendlyON

