

# TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN 2020 UPDATE

## APPENDIX B – UPDATED SIDEWALK POLICY



TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE  
*LOOKING AHEAD*







**STAFF REPORT**  
**Transportation Services**

Title: Updated Sidewalk Policy  
Report Number: [Report Number]  
Author: Chris Hodgson  
Meeting Type: Choose an item.  
Council/Committee Date: Click here to enter a date.  
File: [File]  
Attachments: [Attachments]  
Ward No.: All Wards

**Recommendations:**

1. That report IPPW2020-000 be approved.
2. Sidewalks or multi-use-paths shall be required on both sides of all streets, except under the following conditions:
  - a) Local roads where projected or measured Annual Average Daily Traffic volumes (AADT), are less than 1,000, then a sidewalk or multi-use-path shall be required on one side of the street only, unless the street is a defined route on the Ultimate Network as shown in the Transportation Master Plan 2020 Update, then a sidewalk or multi-use-path shall be required on both sides of the street;
  - b) Streets defined as cul-de-sacs shall not require any sidewalk or multi-use-path, unless a walkway, emergency access, municipal trail, park and/or parkette, or school is accessed from the cul-de-sac, then a sidewalk or multi-use-path shall be provided on one side of the cul-de-sac from the intersecting street up to the walkway, emergency access, municipal trail, park and/or parkette, or school access;
  - c) Local roads that are internal to business parks and industrial areas, then a sidewalk or multi-use-path shall be required on one side of the street, unless the street is a designated transit route, then shall be required on both sides of the street;
  - d) Boundary roads, in which the applicability of sidewalks and/or multi-use-paths will be reviewed with the adjacent municipality.

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3. The ultimate location of sidewalks and/or multi-use-paths within the municipal right-of-way shall be at the sole discretion of the Director of Engineering Services or his/her delegate;
4. This policy shall apply to all development applications, construction, reconstruction and retro-fit projects within the municipal right-of-way;
5. Existing streets that currently have sidewalk and/or multi-use-path on both sides of the street shall retain sidewalk and/or multi-use-path on both sides of the street when being planned for future reconstruction or rehabilitation;
6. This policy shall become effective upon approval of the Transportation Master Plan 2020 Update Final Report.
7. Notwithstanding the challenges with timing of developments and capital works in the municipal right-of-way, in all circumstances the road right-of-way shall be protected for the future provision of sidewalks or multi-use-paths. Given this:
  - a) At its sole expense, a developer is required to construct AODA-compliant municipal concrete sidewalk or asphalt multi-use-path fronting a proposed development (e.g. through a site plan application, etc.);
  - b) Alternatively, and at the sole discretion of the City's Director of Engineering Services or his/her delegate, cash-in-lieu of sidewalk or multi-use-path may be required. The cash-in-lieu amount shall be calculated using appropriate unit rates, subject to the approval of the Director of Engineering Services or his/her delegate;
  - c) The cash-in-lieu will then be used at an appropriate time to construct the sidewalk or multi-use-path fronting the development or to construct sidewalk or multi-use-path in an alternate location as part of the City-wide infill sidewalk program, at the sole discretion of the Director of Engineering Services or his/her delegate.
8. Sidewalks along frontage to educational institutions shall be a minimum width of 2.1m.

### A. Executive Summary

The City of Waterloo recognizes pedestrian sidewalk infrastructure as an essential component of the City's transportation network. Sidewalks provide areas for safe pedestrian movement and access, they enhance connectivity, promote walking, offer an alternative to automobiles and, where installed, are designed to address regulatory obligations posed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. Numerous studies and research have noted that sidewalks are an essential component of good urban design and enhance overall general public health.

In 2005, Council approved the City's first Sidewalk Policy to assist staff in the planning for and placement of sidewalks. Given the policy is 15 years old, an update is recommended to better reflect Waterloo's commitment to active transportation and to align with today's urban context, current policies and strategic direction, including the Official Plan; 2019-2022 Strategic Plan; Complete Streets Policy; Pedestrian Charter and principles of the Vision Zero Program.

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Based on the existing and/or planned active transportation network, a multi-use-path maybe constructed in lieu of a sidewalk.

#### **B. Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications with this report.

#### **C. Technology Implications**

There are no technology implications with this report.

#### **D. Link to Strategic Plan**

(Strategic Objectives: Equity, Inclusion and a Sense of Belonging; Sustainability and the Environment; Safe, Sustainable Transportation; Healthy Community & Resilient Neighbourhoods; Infrastructure Renewal; Economic Growth & Development)

(Guiding Principles: Equity and Inclusion; Sustainability; Fiscal Responsibility; Healthy and Safe Workplace; Effective Engagement; Personal Leadership; Service Excellence)

- Expanding the active transportation network will provide safer travel options for active users and will help facilitate a modal shift in active transportation and public transit use.
- Planning for and implementing active transportation infrastructure eliminates physical and psychological barriers ensuring that everyone has access to equal opportunity and the benefits of the services the community provides.

#### **E. Previous Reports on this Topic**

Report PWS2005-35 Sidewalk Policy

Report PWS2005-35.1 Sidewalk Policy

F. Approvals

Name	Signature	Date
Author:		
Director:		
Commissioner:		
Finance:		

CAO

DRAFT



### Updated Sidewalk Policy

[Report Number]

#### 1.0 Background:

The City of Waterloo recognizes pedestrian sidewalk infrastructure as an essential component of the City's transportation network. Sidewalks provide areas for safe pedestrian movement and access, they enhance connectivity, promote walking, offer an alternative to automobiles and, where installed, are designed to address regulatory obligations posed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. Numerous studies and research have noted that sidewalks are an essential component of good urban design and enhance overall general public health.

The pedestrian realm is a vital component of a liveable and healthy community. It includes sidewalks, multi-use-paths and trails and are both a community asset and need. They are an important form of exercise and recreation as well as for commuting purposes. Pedestrians include residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. In order to travel safely, conveniently, directly and comfortably, they require an urban environment and infrastructure designed to meet their needs.

Perceived and physical barriers to walking can also greatly influence a person's mode choice. The frequency and severity of barriers can range from being a simple inconvenience and increasing travel time, to preventing a user from being able to physically access a destination.

Providing services such as sidewalks and multi-use-paths is key to offering individuals mobility choices and serving a broader segment of the community, especially people who choose not to drive, are unable to drive or do not have access to an automobile because of age, income and/or physical disability. Planning for and implementing active transportation infrastructure ensures that everyone has access to equal opportunity and the benefits of the services the community provides.

Waterloo's urban landscape has grown and changed dramatically over the past two decades. Intensification along key nodes and corridors and the planning of compact urban form has helped support residential employment growth in key areas of the city, specifically along and around the ION light rail transit system. A well-designed and well-connected transportation network for pedestrians is a critical element to the future success of the ION service, particularly for the first and last mile of their trip. Equally as important is the need to examine opportunities at locations outside of nodes and corridors where sidewalk was not originally installed due to historical reliance on automobile travel.

### 2.0 Update to the policy:

In 2005, Council approved the City's first Sidewalk Policy to assist Staff in the planning for and placement of sidewalks. Given the policy is 15 years old, an update is recommended to better reflect Waterloo's commitment to active transportation and align with today's urban context, current policies and strategic plans. These include the Official Plan; 2019-2022 Strategic Plan; Complete Streets Policy; Pedestrian Charter and principles of the Vision Zero Program (for details see section 6.0 of this report, 'Policies and strategic direction').

### 3.0 Primary objective of the policy:

During land development, road construction, and road re-construction/rehabilitation, sidewalk installation must be a primary objective along with any other design considerations. More specifically, where there is an opportunity to install sidewalks every effort shall be made to install those sidewalks in keeping with the details of this sidewalk policy. The following factors are not recognized as valid reasons to preclude sidewalk installation:

- Loss of street trees;
- Loss of automobile parking;
- Loss of snow storage;
- Property valuation;
- Private landscaping encroachments into City right-of-way;
- Claims that sidewalks are aesthetically unpleasing ;
- Absence of existing sidewalk in previously developed locations;
- Snow clearing requirements; and
- Driveway impacts.

The City endeavors to maintain street trees and/or mitigate impacts to trees wherever possible when planning, designing and optimizing the space within the municipal right-of-way. However, where trees are impacted or removed due to a design or because of their condition or age, the City will replace lost trees at a 2:1 ratio wherever possible. New trees will be planted in the municipal right-of-way or elsewhere in the community, based on the guidance of the City's Arborist.

Based on the existing and/or planned active transportation network, a multi-use-path may be constructed in lieu of a sidewalk.

### 4.0 Snow clearing:

The clearing of snow and ice from sidewalks and multi-use-paths is the responsibility of property owners, as per City of Waterloo By-law #09-156.

### 5.0 Definitions of sidewalk and multi-use-paths:

The following definitions derive from the Transportation Master Plan 2020 Update:

#### 5.1 Definition of a sidewalk:

- A raised concrete path for pedestrian travel either directly adjacent to the roadway or separated by a boulevard.

#### 5.2 Definition of a multi-use-path:

- A wide, paved, off-street pathway that is separated from motor vehicle traffic by a strip of grass (often referred to as a “boulevard” or “verge”) or by a paved “splash strip”. It is a combined single path shared by cyclists, pedestrians and roller-bladers etc.

### 6.0 Policies and strategic direction:

Planning for and implementing sidewalks and/or multi-use-paths aligns with many local, regional and provincial strategic directions and policies. Examples are:

#### 6.1 Accessibility Standards

The Accessibility Standards were prepared to assist Staff and developers in implementing the accessibility requirements of Part IV.1 Design of Public Spaces Standards of Ontario Regulation 191/11 (Integrated Accessibility Standards), under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA). Where sidewalks and multi-use-paths are planned/installed, developers and organizations are obligated to follow these standards in order to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that persons with disabilities can access and participate in activities within the community.

#### 6.2 Official Plan

The Official Plan is the comprehensive municipal planning document that outlines a framework for land use decision-making for the City.

The City's transportation system is designed to facilitate the safe and convenient movement of people and goods between land uses within the city and to external destinations. Achieving a healthy and livable city and a transportation system that is sustainable into the future will require placing increased emphasis on moving people. As a result, this means managing our travel to reduce reliance on the automobile in favour of transit and more active forms of movement, such as walking and cycling.

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### 6.3 2019-2022 Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is a road map developed with the community that sets the strategic direction for the City's volunteers, Staff, leadership and Council.

One of the Strategic Pillars of the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan is "*Safe, Sustainable Transportation*" with the objective to improve all modes of transportation to make Waterloo more mobile, accessible and connected. Key goals of the plan are to:

- ▶ Adopt Vision Zero practices and tactics to enable safe travel by all modes of transportation; and
- ▶ Facilitate a modal shift, enable increased use of active transportation and public transit.

### 6.4 Complete Streets Policy

Complete Streets is essentially the planning, design, building and operation of the roadway for all users and recognize the health, social, environmental and economic benefits of a multi-modal network.

The Complete Streets vision is one of leveraging the potential for streets to support a variety of uses and a more diverse mode-share with focus areas of safety, health, multi-mobility, transit, accessibility, sustainability and equity. Complete Streets policies aim to achieve the goal of being "economically viable, sustainable, vibrant, walkable, bicycle friendly, age friendly, accessible and diverse."

### 6.5 Pedestrian Charter

In September 2008, City Council supported the fundamentals of the Pedestrian Charter, which are:

- ▶ To advocate for walking as a safe, comfortable and convenient mode of urban travel respecting the following:
  - Accessibility;
  - Equity;
  - Health and well-being;
  - Environmental sustainability;
  - Personal and community safety; and
  - Community cohesion and vitality.
- ▶ To create an urban environment in all parts of the City that encourages and supports walking, aiming at the following goals:
  - Ensure that residents' access to basic community amenities and services does not depend on car ownership or public transit use;
  - Set policies that reduce conflict between pedestrians and other users of the public right-of-way; and,

- Promote laws and regulations that respect pedestrians' particular needs.

### 6.6 Vision Zero

There are many facets to Vision Zero; however, it starts with the ethical belief that everyone has a right to move safely in his/her community.

- ▶ Typical focus areas include:
  - Positioning road safety as a top priority for all road users;
  - Improving road infrastructure for all road users; and
  - Enhancing the safety of vulnerable road users.
- ▶ Key activities to ensure Vision Zero becomes a reality include:
  - Road infrastructure changes;
  - Enhanced regulations and enforcement;
  - Advocacy for policy change; and
  - Raising public awareness and commitment to road safety.