



City of Cornwall – Transformation to an Active Transportation Community Nomination for 2012 TAC Sustainable Transportation Award

We are pleased to nominate the City of Cornwall for the 2012 TAC Sustainable Transportation Award. Specifically, the City of Cornwall is being nominated for its efforts towards becoming an Active Transportation Community. Cornwall's transformation goes well beyond the simple completion of an active transportation plan and includes rapid implementation of key initiatives combined with an on-going corporate and community change in attitudes towards active transportation.

OVERVIEW

A city of some 45,000 people and a diverse range of employers, Cornwall's is often described as **'a great place to live and work,'** and many of the City's economic initiatives are tied to this theme. However, over the past few years it has become clear that promoting Cornwall as a great place to live and work can be significantly enhanced by creating a walkable and bicycle-friendly community. In fact, whether the overall objective relates to retaining youth in the City, promoting the environment, or increasing tourism potential, there are strong links to the improving conditions for walking and cycling.

In 2010, the City of Cornwall Completed its first ever Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Drawing on TAC's recent publication "**Active Transportation-making it work in Canadian Communities**", the plan identified a number of strategic initiatives to increase the uptake of active transportation in the City. Over the last two years, the City has been aggressively implementing a number of initiatives identified in the plan with very successful outcomes.

The City of Cornwall's Active Transportation Plan and follow-up implementation is very much in line with the criteria for the Sustainable Urban Transportation Award and the results are highly transferable to other Canadian communities. One of the most exciting features of this project is that the time from initial planning to implementation and subsequent transformation was less than three years.

DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSPORTATION

Since the Cornwall's population is only 45,000, there are limited tools that are available for promoting more sustainable transportation. For example, it would be impractical for the City to consider implementing rapid transit. As a result, Cornwall's ability to address sustainable transportation is best met by shifting more trips to walking and cycling and, as a spin-off benefit, extending the viability of the existing bus system. It is noteworthy that active transportation is also very practical since most activities within the City are no more than 10 km apart, a feature that Cornwall strives to maintain by controlling urban sprawl.

The City of Cornwall Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was initiated in September 2009 in order to create a document which on which the City will largely base its bicycle and pedestrian related decisions in the next decade and beyond. Although the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master plan was focused on active transportation, the overarching goals were about creating a more sustainable transportation system and specifically to:

- Create an environment that encourages people to cycle and walk more for work, school and other trips;
- Make cycling and walking a safe, comfortable and convenient alternative for everyone, young and old alike;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption; and
- Support economic development and quality of life.

The Cornwall Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was designed to meet the needs of the most current and potential pedestrians and cyclists getting to and from work, school and recreational pursuits. Both pedestrian and bikeway networks are realistically achievable and can be implemented over time with minimal disruption to traffic, business and people.

This Plan was developed with considerable input from the public and city staff and therefore reflects the priorities identified in public workshops and of concern to municipal planners and elected officials.

The Cornwall Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is a comprehensive series of recommendations addressing needed policy, practice and programmatic changes that better accommodate the planning and implementation of pedestrian and cycling interventions in Cornwall, as well as a network plan.

Recommendations to improve the bicycle network include addressing:

- network gaps, with particular attention to specific areas e.g., downtown, Brookdale Avenue (the City's major north-south arterial), and employment areas;
- street- and intersection-specific design standards; and,
- implementation of bike lanes, types of multi-use trails, shared use markings, paved shoulders, trail crossings and bikeway intersection markings.

Exhibit 1 illustrates the proposed long term bicycle network and the recommended facility types by location. Some of the key projects involve providing dedicated bicycle facilities along the entire length of Second Street (see Degree of Innovation) and the establishment of several new multi-use trails around the outer portions of the City. The expansion of the multi-use trail network will help to create the possibility for "looped" bicycle trips, a desire expressed by many recreational cyclists during public consultations.

Recommendations to improve the pedestrian environment include:

- efforts to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk network by adding sidewalks where there exists a sidewalk on only one side, and adding sidewalks to both sides of high activity roads where they are missing (e.g., transit routes, school areas and employment lands);
- the use of high visibility crossings and yield signs;

- installing modified pedestrian signals at intersections, and,
- the use of special design treatments in the downtown areas.

Exhibit 2 shows the planned pedestrian system improvements, which consists of sidewalks and multi-use trails, as well as a number of crossing improvements.

DEGREE OF INNOVATION

A number of innovative initiatives were recommended in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan ranging from reconfiguring intersections to better accommodate pedestrians to constructing a loop trail for cyclists around the City. However, the most innovative initiative was the design and implementation of a road diet on Second Street. Second Street is of Cornwall's most important east west streets from a vehicular movement perspective, it was also deemed one of the most important from a cycling perspective.

The Second Street road diet consisted of reducing the number of vehicular lanes from 4 to three and re-stripping it to include two travel lanes and a centre left turn lane, with bike lanes on both sides. This concept is illustrated in **Exhibit 3**.

The removal of travel lanes for vehicles is always controversial and given that Second Street is Cornwall's major east-west street, the approval of this project was a bold move and not without risk of public backlash.

This road diet was successfully completed in 2011 and is now attracting a significant numbers of cyclists. Moreover, the road is operating well from a vehicular perspective and there have been few complaints.

TRANSFERABILITY TO OTHER CANADIAN COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Its often hard to see the results of sustainable transportation initiatives in large urban areas, but conversely, when a smaller centre such as Cornwall make a bold changes such as a road diet, the results are very transparent. In the case of Cornwall the results were extremely positive and are a model for other communities considering what might seem like controversial changes but which are required for the advancement of sustainable transportation.

One of the aspects of the Cornwall Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan that is transferrable is the holistic approach that was taken in developing the plan. Issues extended well beyond cycling and pedestrian infrastructure to include land use planning, site design and public education on sustainable transportation.

The process for implementing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and its recommended actions built in continuous effort on the part of Council, staff, key advisors and the general public. The adoption of the BPMP was just the first step in the overall implementation process. Following this, policies, programs and recommendations on infrastructure are being carried through **to annual programming exercises** including the annual budgeting process wherein investment priorities and timings are established. The **planning and design phase** for future infrastructure is also taking into account the recommendations of the BPMP. Physical implementation is now occurring with **construction**, and continues into the **operation and maintenance** of the facilities. **Monitoring** is being undertaken to gauge the

effectiveness of the policies, programs and infrastructure improvements in achieving the master plan goals and objectives.

ADDED VALUE

The City of Cornwall's economic development plan is focused on attracting families and promoting Cornwall as a great place to live and succeed. Early in the development of the BPMP, several different organizations quickly recognized how transforming to an active transportation community would help achieve their objectives. Even the Youth Committee of Council took an active role in helping to shape the plan.

Exhibit ES.1: Proposed Cycling Network



**City of Cornwall
Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan**




Proposed Bicycle Network

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destination School Industrial park Cornwall Waterfront Plan boundary 	<p>Existing Bicycle Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing bicycle lane Existing boulevard multi-use trail Existing multi-use trail 	<p>Proposed Bicycle Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bicycle lane Boulevard multi-use trail Multi-use trail Bicycle boulevard Marked shared lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paved shoulder with bicycle lane Signed route Proposed traffic signal Proposed crossing improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special treatment area Future residential development *
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* Bicycle facilities and supporting features to be included

Exhibit ES.2: Proposed Pedestrian Network



**City of Cornwall
Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan**




Proposed Pedestrian Network

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Destination ■ School Industrial park Cornwall Waterfront Plan boundary 	<p>Existing Pedestrian Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing sidewalk Existing boulevard multi-use trail Existing multi-use trail 	<p>Proposed Pedestrian Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidewalk - one side only Sidewalk - both sides Proposed boulevard multi-use trail Proposed multi-use trail + Proposed crossing improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special treatment area Future residential development *
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* Pedestrian facilities and supporting features to be included

Exhibit 3

Second Street Road Diet



Before-After Renderings



As built photo