

Strathcona Transportation Management Plan

**Community Meeting
March 25, 2009
Crossfire Assembly**

Meeting Notes

The City of Hamilton began work in 2009 to develop the Strathcona Transportation Management Plan for the Strathcona neighbourhood. This plan has been temporarily slowed down until a decision is made about the location of the East-West Light Rail Transit project. The results of the studies of LRT and a decision by Metrolinx should be made by November 2009, so it is hopeful that the Strathcona Transportation Plan will be up and running again by January 2010.

In preparation for the Transportation Management Plan, a community meeting was held to discuss guiding principles for the Plan as it is being developed. Presentations were given by Jill Stephens (City of Hamilton – LRT proposal and its impact on the Strathcona neighbourhood), Ray Bacquie and Darren Hardenbrook (I-Trans – Consultants for the Strathcona Transportation Management Plan), and Sharon Mackinnon (City of Hamilton – Public Health – International Charter for Walking). Representatives from Environment Hamilton were also on hand to assist in developing the guiding principles. The goal for these principles is to reinforce that the car should not continue to be the focus mode of transportation in the Transportation Management Plan. Alternate modes of transportation, such as walking or cycling, need to be looked at more closely in developing the Transportation Management Plan so that they naturally become the preferred methods of moving around the neighbourhood.

Following the presentations from the City of Hamilton and I-Trans representatives, residents provided their thoughts and comments about what these guiding principles would look. When putting together these comments and thoughts, it became apparent that the desired guiding principles of the community closely mirrored the 8 strategic principles and corresponding actions found in the International Charter for Walking, approved by Hamilton City Council and endorsed by Mayor Fred Eisenberger in April 2008. The Charter provides a framework to create healthy, efficient, and sustainable communities where people have the opportunity to walk. Highlights of the Charter include:

- identifies the needs of people on foot and provides a common framework to help authorities refocus their existing policies, activities and relationships to create a culture where people choose to walk.
- Acknowledges the universal rights of people to be able to walk safely and to enjoy high quality public spaces anywhere and at anytime
- Charter shows how to create a culture where people choose to walk
- Charter supports improved health of society as walking offers health, happiness and an escape. It has the ability to restore and preserve muscular, nervous, and emotional health while at the same time giving a sense of independence and self-confidence. The more a person walks the better they feel, the more relaxed they become, the more they sense and the less mental clutter they accumulate.

Following are the 8 Strategic Principles of the Charter, with each corresponding action to achieve the principle, as well as the related feedback from the participants at the meeting:

Eight (8) Strategic Principles:

1. Increased inclusive mobility

People in communities have the right to accessible streets, squares, buildings and public transport systems regardless of their age, ability, gender, income level, language, ethnic, cultural or religious background, strengthening the freedom and autonomy of all people, and contributing to social inclusion, solidarity and democracy.

Actions:

- i. Ensure safe and convenient independent mobility for all by providing access on foot for as many people as possible to as many places as possible particularly to public transport and public buildings.
- ii. Integrate the needs of people with limited abilities by building and maintaining high quality services and facilities that are socially inclusive

2. Well designed and managed spaces and places for people

Communities have the right to live in a healthy, convenient and attractive environment tailored to their needs, and to freely enjoy the amenities of public areas in comfort and safety away from intrusive noise and pollution.

Actions:

- i. Design streets for people and not only for cars, recognising that streets are a social as well as a transport space and therefore, need a social design as well as engineering measures. This can include reallocating road space, implementing pedestrian priority areas and creating car-free environments to be enjoyed by all.

Community Feedback:

- Vehicles [should be treated] as guests in the neighbourhood
 - Maintain a community that is liveable and enjoyable to come home to at the end of the day
 - Personal/perspective of sightlines – increased inclusive mobility - keep in mind what people in wheelchairs, scooters, & children see from their vertical perspective (truck tires)
- ii. Provide clean, well-lit streets and paths, free from obstruction, wide enough for their busiest use, and with sufficient opportunities to cross roads safely and directly, without changing levels or diversion.

Community Feedback:

- Design sidewalks for pedestrians – curb cuts, remove obstructions (snow, low hanging tree limbs)
- iii. Design legible streets with clear signing and on-site information to encourage specific journey planning and exploration on foot.

3. Improved integration of networks

Communities have the right to a network of connected, direct and easy to follow walking routes which are safe, comfortable, attractive and well maintained, linking their homes, shops, schools, parks, public transport interchanges, green spaces and other important destinations.

Actions:

- i. Build and maintain high-quality networks of connected, functional and safe walking routes between homes and local destinations that meet community needs.

Community Feedback:

- Bear in mind that destinations in the Strathcona neighbourhood are mixed use
- ii. Provide an integrated, extensive and well-equipped public transport service with vehicles which are fully accessible to all potential users.

Community Feedback:

- Make the commitment to the most sustainable modes of transportation

- iii. Design public transport stops and interchanges with easy, safe and convenient pedestrian access and supportive information.

4. Supportive land-use and spatial planning

Communities have the right to expect land-use and spatial planning policies which allow them to walk to the majority of everyday services and facilities, maximising the opportunities for walking, reducing car dependency and contributing to community life.

Actions:

- i. Give slow transport modes such as walking and cycling priority over fast modes, and local traffic precedence over long-distance travel.

Community Feedback:

- o Bear in mind the needs/interests of local residents first, less on people passing through the neighbourhood, Key is not strictly to move traffic from one safe traffic "island" to another
- ii. Re-allocate road space to pedestrians and close the missing links in existing walking routes to create priority networks.

5. Reduced road danger

Communities have the right for their streets to be designed to prevent accidents and to be enjoyable, safe and convenient for people walking – especially children, the elderly and people with limited abilities.

Actions:

- i. Reduce the danger that vehicles present to pedestrians by managing traffic (i.e. – implement slower speeds), rather than segregating pedestrians or restricting their movements.
- ii. Encourage a pedestrian-friendly driving culture with targeted campaigns and enforce road traffic laws.
- iii. Reduce vehicle speeds in residential districts, shopping streets and around schools.
- iv. Reduce the impact of busy roads by installing sufficient safe crossing points, ensuring minimal waiting times and enough time to cross for the slowest pedestrians.

Community Feedback:

- o Pedestrian safety of Kids/youths when they cross the street
 - o Reduce speeds to eliminate fatalities by using traffic calming (physical changes)
- v. Ensure that facilities designed for cyclists and other non-motorised modes do not compromise pedestrian safety or convenience.

6. Less crime and fear of crime

Communities have the right to expect an urban environment designed, maintained and policed to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

Actions:

- i. Conduct pedestrian audits by day and after dark to identify concerns for personal security and then target areas for improvements.
- ii. Provide training and information for transport professionals to increase awareness of the concerns of pedestrians for their personal security and the impact of such concerns on their decisions to walk.

7. More supportive authorities

Communities have the right to expect authorities to provide for, support and safeguard their ability and choice to walk.

Actions:

- i. Involve all relevant agencies (especially transport, planning, health, education and police), at all levels, to recognise the importance of supporting and encouraging walking and to encourage complementary policies and actions.

Community Feedback:

- o Collaborate on ideas (gather from all groups involved), Liaise with other levels of government/agencies – Hwy 403 overpass – pedestrian crossing, Liaise with adjacent neighbourhoods- AWWCA, KNA
- ii. Consult (on a regular basis) local organisations representing people on foot and other relevant groups including young people, the elderly and those with limited ability.
- iii. Collect quantitative and qualitative data about walking (including the motivations and purpose of trips, the number of trips, trip stages, time and distance walked, time spent in public spaces and levels of satisfaction).

Community Feedback:

- o Look at/consider alternative methods of collecting information/data (vs only using those methods used traditionally)
- iv. Implement pilot-projects to advance best-practice and support research by offering to be a case study and promoting local experience widely.

Community Feedback:

- o Visionary – be brave, bold – plan for future, sustainability
- v. Measure the success of programmes by surveying and comparing data collected before, during, and after implementation.

8. A culture of walking

Communities have a right to up-to-date, good quality, accessible information on where they can walk and the quality of the experience. People should be given opportunities to celebrate and enjoy walking as part of their everyday social, cultural and political life.

Action:

- i. Provide coherent and consistent information and signage systems to support exploration and discovery on foot including links to public transport.

Additional Community Feedback:

- Transportation Management Plan should support the creation of a Sustainable Neighbourhood
- Reduce vehicle use by 20% by 2031
- Decisions need to reflect our principles
- Air pollution, climate, health
- Short-term goals
- Refer to Strathcona Secondary Plan – the two plans should complement each other, not work independent of each other