

2011

Youth Moving Safely With Active Transportation

Hanover/Walkerton Active Transportation
Committee

Sixteen youth in the Hanover and Walkerton areas were contracted to record their travels over the course of one week using portable GPS units. This report includes a detailed account of the project and the findings as reported by the youth participants.



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through funding from the
Heart and Stroke Foundation
of Ontario



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1. Executive Summary

The Hanover/Walkerton Active Transportation Committee (H/W ATC) began discussing the “Youth Moving Safely with Active Transportation” project in October 2010. With financial assistance from the Heart and Stroke SPARK Advocacy Grant, the Committee formulated a plan to address a variety of health concerns confronting Grey Bruce youth including high rates of motor vehicle collisions, physical inactivity, pedestrian and cyclist safety and access to recreation and leisure. Sixteen area secondary school youth were recruited to take part in data collection using portable GPS units. Participants were compensated with a \$100 honourarium and a \$25 gas card to assist in travel costs for meetings. Each participant was expected to attend an initial training session, complete one week of data collection, fill out a walkability checklist and participate in a post data collection focus group.

The development of a Youth Moving Safely with Active Transportation project in Hanover and Walkerton was led by staff at the Grey Bruce Health Unit. Active Transportation has been an ongoing focus of the Health Unit and community partners since the Board of Health passed an Active Transportation resolution in 2010 (see appendix A). Due to the large, rural nature of Grey Bruce, transportation is regularly identified as a major barrier for individuals of all ages. In particular, transportation for youth can be challenging due to limited vehicle access and long distances between locations making active modes of transportation unfeasible.

Partners in the program include the Town of Hanover, the Municipality of Brockton, the Counties of Bruce and Grey, the Bluewater District School Board, the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board and the Hanover Youth Coalition. Input and feedback was also received from the Bruce Trails Network, Grey Bruce Geo-Spatial and Saugeen Mobility and Regional Transit. Walkerton and Hanover were chosen as pilots for the program due to an appropriate level of readiness from the community, an interest in actively partnering in the project and the proximity of three secondary schools in the two communities.

Short term goals of the project were to raise awareness of the benefits of active transportation with both the participants and the broader community. Additional immediate deliverables include the training of youth on the GPS unit, collection of data and feedback through the focus group and walkability checklists. Longer term goals of the project are to address barriers, improve safety and ultimately change attitudes about active and safe transportation at the community, municipal and county level.

2. Rationale

The rationale for the development of a Youth Active Transportation project in Hanover and Walkerton is multi-faceted. Active Transportation has increasingly been on the radar of community residents, stakeholders and leaders over the past couple of years. This has led to a number of key active transportation initiatives in Grey Bruce including presentations by Gil Penalosa from 8-80 Cities, Mandy Johnson from Canada Walks and Kate Hall from Green Communities Canada. It is no secret that transportation presents a major barrier for individuals of all ages in the Grey Bruce region. Youth, in particular, face challenges as they may not have regular access to a vehicle, live outside the urban community and rely on travel by school bus on a daily basis. This is of particular importance as the risk of obesity increases 6% for each hour spent sitting in a vehicle and many youth spend 1-2 hours per day commuting between home and school. Sixteen percent of Grey Bruce youth are currently overweight or obese (Youth Today the Real Picture, 2007). Given the health impacts (obese adults are expected to die at least 7 years earlier than peers at a healthier weight) and economic costs of obesity (\$4.3 B spent in Ontario each year) (Johnson, 2011) it is hoped that this project will help identify the transportation challenges, choices and travel routes of youth in these two communities.

“There is no public transit to get anywhere...if there was...it would help” Grey Highlands Youth

2.1 Importance of Active Transportation

- Grey Bruce residents tend to be worse off on almost all health measures in comparison to both the province and the country. One of the main reasons is that the geography makes us reliant on vehicular transportation. People living in rural communities rely more on cars to travel and therefore get less physical activity and are at greater risk of being overweight.
- Walking or cycling, in at least 10 minute segments, can have some positive health effects.
- Youth overweight and obesity rates have tripled in the past 25 years and now 16% of youth in Grey Bruce fall into these categories (Youth Today the Real Picture, 2007).
- Only 7% of children and youth are active enough for proper growth and development. This will be the first generation of kids who are not likely to outlive their parents (Active Healthy Kids Report Card, 2011).
- 14 % of Grey Bruce youth report getting no physical activity outside of school time (Manske, 2007).
- 79% of youth deaths in Grey Bruce are due to motor vehicle accidents. This statistic is substantially higher than both the Provincial average 31% and the National average 35% (Leffley, Health Status of Grey Bruce residents, Board of Health Presentation, 2009).

- Safety concerns can be a barrier to physical activity and keep 1 in 5 Canadians from walking and bicycling.
- According to the Canadian Automobile Association, it can cost up to \$14,363 a year to own and drive a car (Canadian Automobile Association, 2009).
- Active transportation positively affects water quality, air quality, social opportunities and mental health.
- Families without cars have limited access to safe, low-cost options for physical activity.



3. Project Description:

The project is designed to address a variety of issues faced by youth in Grey Bruce including physical inactivity, obesity, safety and access and equity to recreation and leisure opportunities. The Grey Bruce Health Unit, in partnership with the Town of Hanover, the Municipality of Brockton, the Counties of Bruce and Grey, the Bluewater District School Board, the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board and the Hanover Youth Coalition implemented the project with the aim of identifying youth travel corridors and barriers to active transportation within the two communities. Methods and findings from Hanover and Walkerton will be shared with surrounding communities to support active transportation across Grey Bruce.

The focus of the project was to determine the following:

- What mode of transportation are youth currently using
- What opportunities and infrastructure is currently available to support active transportation
- What opportunities and infrastructure is currently lacking to support active transportation
- What actions could be taken in the future to increase opportunities for active transportation
- what actions could be taken to ensure safer active transportation routes

3.1 Project Goals

- Increase opportunities for youth in the community to use active transportation to reach choice destinations.
- Improve the safety and acceptability of active transportation routes in South Grey Bruce.
- Increase access to physical activity opportunities by eliminating transportation barriers.
- Change attitudes about active and safe transportation at the community, municipal and county level.

3.2 Project Objectives

- Investigate and record the routes youth currently use in the community.
- Complete community walkability checklists to determine the barriers faced by youth for using active transportation routes.
- Report on the findings of the checklist and make suggestions for improvements.
- Present the findings to community leaders and stakeholders (municipalities, counties, and school boards).

- Work with the H/W ATC and the community to determine next steps based on the findings of the project.
- Work with local government at the county level to identify this issue as high priority for all of Grey and Bruce.

3.3 Location

The “Youth Moving Safely with Active Transportation” project was piloted in the Hanover and Walkerton areas of Grey and Bruce Counties. Hanover and Walkerton were chosen as pilot sites for the following reasons:

- Hanover and Walkerton are approximately 10 kilometers apart with regular travel between the two communities.
- Hanover falls within the boundaries of Grey County while Walkerton is located in Bruce County.
- The two communities feature three secondary schools and two school boards.
- There is ongoing commitment from stakeholders in each community to partner on the project.
- There is a belief that Hanover and Walkerton could lead the way in Grey Bruce on transportation concerns for youth.
- There is an appropriate level of readiness required to address the concerns within the communities



3.4 Methods

Data to support the project was collected through a variety of methods. The H/W ATC requested preliminary information from the youth including participant demographic information and completion of appropriate consents. Participating youth were requested to gather information through the following means:

- Tracking of travel data using of a hand held GPS unit over the course of seven days.
- Completion of the icanwalk checklist.
- Completion of the PLAY Active Transportation checklist.
- Sharing of information during the focus group session which included completion of a questionnaire, PLAY Self-Assessment Checklist and verbal feedback.

3.5 Timelines

<u>Planned work/activities</u>	<u>Date of Completion</u>	<u>Expected Outcomes</u>
• Planning Meeting with key stakeholders (youth & agencies)	Nov. 2010	• Clarify goals, objectives and process; community assets and barriers for active transportation are identified
• Engage audit participants (youth & adults)	Jan. 2011	• Approach local secondary schools for support/present to classes
• Finalize recruitment of youth	Feb. 2011	• 16-20 youth identified and commitment confirmed for project
• Train audit participants	April 2011	• Youth provided 2 hour workshop related to active transportation and use of GPS unit
• Youth Data Collection	May 2011	• Youth chart travelled routes over a period of seven days
• Host focus group	June 2011	• Youth participate in final session and provide feedback regarding their findings
• Write report on audit findings	August 2011	• Final report completed for sharing of findings with Council and other communities
• Present findings to decision makers	October 2011	• Youth work with and advocate to community leaders for what they need to be healthy; Opportunity to address infrastructure changes based on feedback from youth; community leaders understand the challenges for youth and transportation
• Work with committee & community to develop next steps	November 2011	• Youth and community leaders work together to develop solutions to barriers and challenges, including appropriate policy changes

4. Project Development and Implementation:

4.1 Budget

“Youth Moving Safely with Active Transportation”
Heart & Stroke -Spark Advocacy Grant – Budget
Submitted by: Hanover/Walkerton Active Transportation Committee

- **Approved Grant Amount - \$5000.00**

Program Expenditures	Item Details	Amount Budgeted
Professional Development and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of training and meetings (refreshments) • Incentives for youth participants (\$100.00 X 15 youth)* • GPS training for committee members and youth • Creation of promotional materials to highlight results of the project 	\$400.00 \$1500.00 \$400.00 \$500.00
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas cards to cover youth travel costs (\$25.00 X 15 youth)** 	\$375.00
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 GPS units- youth to use for field work- \$250.00/per X 4 • Batteries for GPS units 	\$1,000.00 \$100.00
Additional Mapping as Requested by the Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ 2 additional youth to complete GPS mapping at request of the municipality 	\$225.00
Awareness & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional material/media 	500.00
TOTAL		\$5000.00

*Incentives – Each youth participant was paid an incentive for mapping their usual travel routes with GPS for a one week period in their respective communities

**Gas cards- Each youth did receive a gas card valued at \$25.00 that will cover travel costs to meetings/trainings for them or their families/friends for the duration of the project.

4.2 Recruitment of Youth Activation Leaders

Youth in the three local secondary schools were recruited to track their travel routes using the GPS units. Health Unit staff approached contacts within the school system and made arrangements to make presentations to a number of classes regarding the parameters of the project. Following the initial presentations there was interest from approximately 50 students; many more than the project could allow. By the time of the orientation there were 22 students who still interested in participating. No students were omitted from the project – all those who continued to express an interest were given the opportunity to participate.

4.3 Youth Demographics

While a total of 22 youth were initially recruited to participate in this project only sixteen attended the orientation workshop and GPS training session. Fifteen youth completed the data collection portion of the project, providing 15 data sets to review. Fourteen youth attended the final focus group and one additional youth submitted a feedback form.

The average age of the participants was 17 years. The youngest participant was 16 and the oldest was 19. Six males and nine females participated. Six of the youth lived in Walkerton, three youth lived in Hanover and the remaining youth lived in Durham, Mildmay or Neustadt. Eight youth attend Walkerton District Secondary School, three attend John Diefenbaker Secondary School and four attend Sacred Heart High School in Walkerton.

4.4 Orientation

The participating youth were requested to attend one of two training sessions offered. The first training session was held on April 27th in Walkerton and the second was held on May 3rd in Hanover. For youth unable to make either training session due to previous commitments, a one-to-one training session was arranged. The two hour training session included an overview of active transportation, an introduction to the GPS units and an opportunity to practice using the units to collect tracks and mark waypoints. Each youth was also provided a copy of the icanwalk checklist (www.icanwalk.ca) for completion during their week of data collection. At this time, the youth also received full written details of the parameters of the project and signed the consent form.

Role of Youth Activation Leader:

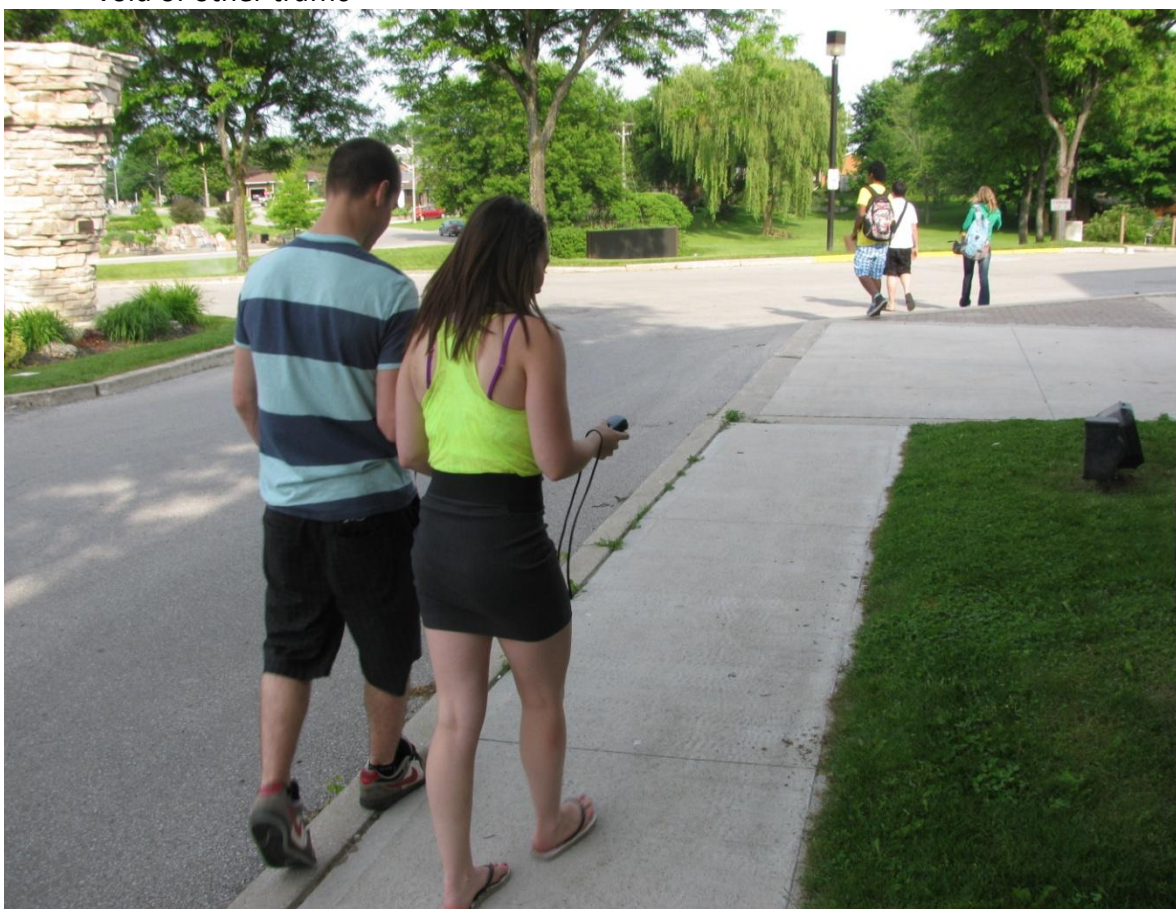
- Represent local youth at the Active Transportation Steering Committee meetings.
- Attend a training session on GPS mapping.
- Collect data in your community using GPS units for 7 days.
- Take photos of your community related to active transportation (where applicable).
- Attend and share experiences at a local focus group.

4.5 Field work

Using the GPS units, purchased through the grant process, four of the sixteen youth started their field work the week May of 9-15, 2011. At the beginning of each week the youth picked up their units from the school guidance department during their lunch hour. Units were expected to be returned to the same location by 9AM the following Monday. This allowed Health Unit staff time to download and clear data from each unit prior to returning them to the school for the next user. With the four units and sixteen participants data collection was completed in four weeks. Due to the capacity of the GPS units purchased, the participants were unable to collect the full complement of data as originally planned. Students were, however, able to track routes, mode of transportation, reason for choice destination (personal, work, school) and also include any noteworthy comments along the route.

Students were advised of a “safety first” approach to data collection (see Appendix C). To limit the risk of potential harm the participants were instructed to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Always put your personal safety first
- Never stop in an unsafe place or put yourself in an uncomfortable situation
- Follow all road safety rules regardless of form of transportation
- Complete all inputting of data after ceasing operation of your vehicle and in an area void of other traffic



Two youth participants in Walkerton record their travels during the project.

4.6 Focus Group

To conclude the data collection process all participants were required to attend a focus group on June 15th (please see Appendix E for focus group discussion summary, Appendix F for questionnaire results and Appendix G for checklist results). Expectations of this session were:

- completion the PLAY Active Transportation checklist
- participation in the group discussion and answer questions as posed by the facilitators
- sharing of additional details related to the completion of the icanwalk community walkability checklist
- determine who wished to remain involved with the project as findings were presented to Council



Youth participate in post project focus group at Bruce County Council Chambers in Walkerton

4.7 Findings/Outcomes

The most common places for trips to start or end were home, school, and work. Other destinations that youth visited included friends' houses, downtown areas and stores, church, recreation centres such as the arena or pool, the beach, banks, and coffee shops.

Community assets for active transportation were identified by marking waypoints on the GPS. Some of the assets marked were safe bus stops, flowers, benches, good sidewalks, parks, trees, slow moving traffic, and places that sidewalks were present.

Figure 1: Active Transportation Assets in Walkerton



Figure 2: Active Transportation Assets in Hanover



Barriers to active transportation were also identified. Barriers marked on the GPS unit included places that have no sidewalks, busy streets, high speed of traffic, litter, lack of benches, sidewalk only on one side of the street and sidewalks needing repair.

Figure 3: Barriers to Active Transportation in Walkerton



Figure 4: Barriers to Active Transportation in Hanover



Eight of the participants travelled between the communities of Hanover and Walkerton during their week of data collection. Nine of participants travelled within Grey and Bruce Counties, while four of the participants travelled outside of Grey and Bruce Counties. The images below depict the routes that were used within Walkerton and Hanover throughout the project.

Figure 5: Routes in Walkerton, all modes of travel



Figure 6: Routes in Hanover, all modes of travel



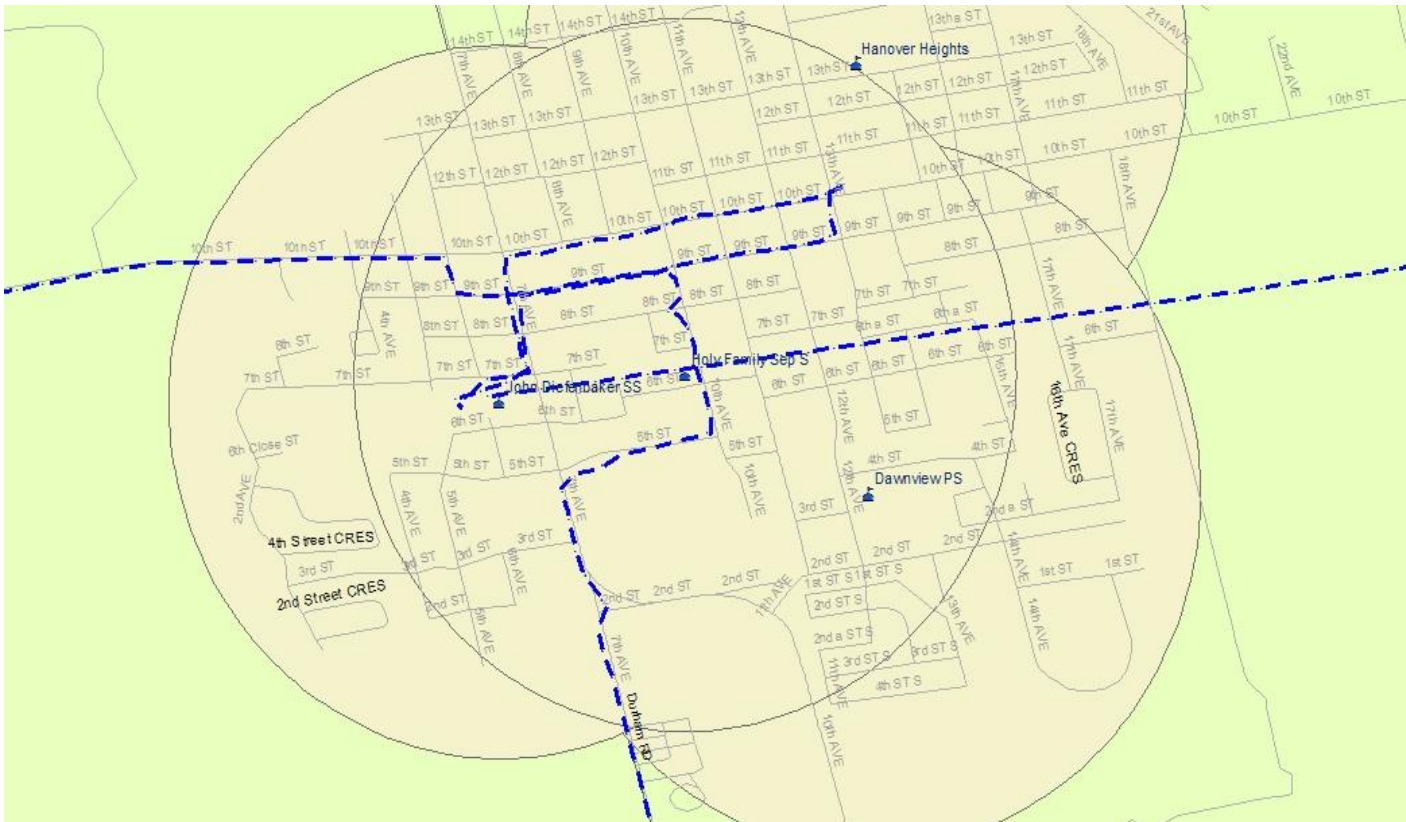
The most common mode of transportation was driving. When youth were asked to estimate at the end of the data collection how much time they drove 11 out of 15 youth said they spend more than 50% of their time driving. Walking trips were identified both within Hanover and Walkerton. Walking and cycling trips were also identified in the towns nearby but are not reported here. Twelve walking routes were identified in the project; however, analysis indicates the true number of tracks is likely seven. Walking tracks were eliminated based on the distance one is likely able to walk in one trip. Images illustrate the walking routes below and all walking routes were included in the images. It is important to note that the entire track may not actually represent the distance walked and some parts of the track may be due to errors in saving the walking track on the GPS unit.

No cycling trips were identified in either Hanover or Walkerton. Only one cycling track was noted for the entire project. Five waypoints indicated bicycle use but these points were not connected to the cycling track recorded. Seven trips were made by school bus. These tracks represented travel between towns.

Figure 7: Walking Tracks in Walkerton



Figure 8: Walking Tracks in Hanover



Youth participants did indicate that being part of the project made them think about using different transportation choices. All 15 participants said they would recommend this project to a friend.

4.8 Focus Group Summary

The feedback from the Focus Group was quite insightful to the H/W ATC and the participating youth. Although a variety of topics were discussed, both the conversation and the walkability checklists highlighted three major areas of concern in both Hanover and Walkerton:

1. Safety – youth expressed the need to ensure the safety of children, youth and seniors walking along highly traveled roadways. Youth felt that the speed of traffic was a huge concern and that this infraction was typically under-enforced in the community. Crossing the street in many locations was challenging, confusing and even dangerous. One participant described crossing the street in some locations as “chaos.” Youth participants pointed out that if they struggled to cross busy streets safely then this problem would be compounded for younger students and seniors.
2. Sidewalks – the participants indicated a need for greater consistency in sidewalk placement. In most instances sidewalks were likely to be found on only one side of the roadway and would often end abruptly. This sidewalk would regularly appear on the opposite side of the street at some point. The condition of the sidewalks was also a concern. Cracked, bumpy and deteriorating sidewalks were noted as were overhanging branches and litter that made walking unattractive. It was suggested that garbage bins be placed more regularly throughout the community.
3. Benches – Youth suggested the addition of appropriate resting places along popular routes to enhance the walking experience. Unfortunately, very few of these amenities exist in the communities.

(Please see Appendix E for full details provided during the Focus Group.)

Youth participants were asked to rank the priority and current status of various features related to active transportation at school, in the municipality and at work using the adapted PLAY Checklist. See Appendix D for the full results of the Checklist. The areas of highest priority for change were as follows:

- i. Sidewalks are consistently cleared of snow and ice in a timely manner for students who walk to school. The current status of this item was mainly in the good to satisfactory to poor category.
- ii. Routes to schools, and other places frequented by children and youth have bike-lanes, sidewalks, speed control and are tree-lined. The majority ranked

the current status as satisfactory. None of the youth ranked this area as excellent.

- iii. In transport and land-use planning, the needs of children and youth received as much priority as the needs of other populations and the requirements of business. The current status of this area had mixed results with 6 participants indicating “satisfactory,” while 6 participants indicated “excellent” or “good.”
- iv. Routes to school, and other places frequented by children and youth have good street lighting to ensure safety and security. This question had the greatest number of youth rank it as “excellent,” however 7 youth felt this priority be rated as “good.”
- v. Transportation support is offered and readily available for student to get to and from physical activity opportunities (e.g. late busing program). Seven participants ranked this as “poor.”

The other area that is noteworthy is the area of “students are provided with secure areas for storing equipment like helmets, rollerblades, and skateboards.” This particular area was not identified as high priority but 12 of the participants indicated the current status was “poor.” Of the three secondary schools participating in the project there was a total of two bike racks on these sites.

4.9 Dealing with Lack of Access to Safe Routes

Studies indicate that most trips (70-83%) are short, for non-work purposes and take place relatively close to home. Moreover, 82% of Canadians are willing to walk more and 66% are willing to cycle more if there are safe and convenient facilities (Johnson, 2011). One of the most common barriers to active transportation is the environment related to the conditions within our communities. Lack of bike lanes and safe sidewalks, lack of facilities/amenities, lack of destinations and safety concerns have all been cited as major barriers. According to the American Journal of Preventative Medicine, the biggest single factor influencing physical activity around the world is accessibility to sidewalks (Ding et al., 2011).

From a child and youth perspective, more and more travel is being conducted in a car. There are fewer opportunities for children and youth to incorporate physical activity such as walking or biking into their daily routine. Some of the reasons for this shift in behaviour include parental influences, long travel distances, hazardous streets and lack of safe sidewalks and fear of “stranger danger”. It is well recognized if we want more people walking it is important to make it as easy as possible. One way to achieve this is through street design.

Design Elements of a Walkable/Bikable Community?

- Connectivity (the directness or availability of alternative routes from one point to another within a street network)
- Continuous Sidewalks
- Compact, mixed land use
- Aesthetics
- Bike racks
- Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Measures
- Lively Public Places
- Pedestrian Furnishings
- Street Trees and Landscaping
- Safe Pedestrian Crossings



Although the Bluewater District School Board office in Chesley, Ontario features some elements to support walkability, the car culture still dominates.

5. Limitations

- i) **Quality of GPS Units** - Through the support of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the H/W ATC was able to purchase GPS units. However, the quality of the units was a limitation. This project was designed to be carried out using GPS units that allow a great deal of information to be entered easily and directly into the hand held unit. Unfortunately, the GPS units purchased only allowed the youth to save and name a track and to save, name, and enter a short comment for waypoints. The limited amount of space for data entry was a barrier. With the limited amount of space available to save information, the project used a coding technique to identify mode of transportation and to give a unique file name. This was identified as confusing during project planning and also identified as a challenge by the youth participants. Participants also indicated that remembering to carry the GPS, working the GPS (including waiting for the satellites to load), and remembering to save tracks and waypoints was a challenge in the project.
- ii) **Time of Year** – Due to the time required to purchase the GPS units, train staff and hold the initial orientation sessions, it was challenging for all participants to complete the week of data collection and the focus group prior to the end of the school year. More time would have allowed for additional days of data collection or for the recruitment of additional youth.
- iii) **Participants Residing Outside Chosen Communities** – Due to the fact that a number of participating students live outside of Hanover and Walkerton, it was challenging for them to accumulate a large number of tracks. Time within the chosen communities was limited to lunch hours and special visits. To enhance the project in the future, students should be required to reside within the focus communities.
- iv) **Location of Project for Public Health Staff** – Although the Grey Bruce Health Unit has a satellite office in Walkerton, none of the Health Unit staff associated with the project are located in this office or live in the near vicinity. With staff offices being located in Owen Sound, a one hour drive from Walkerton, this presented additional work load challenges that could have been avoided were the project to have focused on a closer community.

6. Lessons Learned

School Support

Three schools were involved in the project: John Diefenbaker Secondary School, Sacred Heart High School and Walkerton District Secondary School. All three schools were quite accommodating and assisted with the recruitment of youth. Arrangements were made to allow the Youth Engagement Advisor to promote the project to youth audiences during class time. Engaging the school boards and individual schools, most notably through support of specific members of the faculty, made recruitment of the youth easier and provided a direct line of communication between the H/W ATC and the participants.

Youth Need to Drive the Project More

Given the short project timelines for recruitment and field work, youth were not active in the development of the parameters of the project or in the writing of the grant application. It was not until the focus group session (after the field work was complete) that youth started openly expressing their opinions about the project and their concerns regarding safe and active routes within their communities. In hindsight, a focus group with perspective youth should have been conducted prior to recruitment process. This would have allowed the youth an opportunity to discuss active transportation and for the youth to express their thoughts on the issue prior to completing their field work. It also would have also given the H/W ATC additional feedback for data collection and could have enhanced youth recruitment.

Youth Participation

Youth were asked to take part in four areas of the project. The first three areas – orientation, field work and the focus group - were agreed upon by the youth based on monetary incentives. The fourth part of the project, which had no monetary incentive attached, was to complete follow-up work and deputations to Council. It was after the focus group that youth participants were asked if they would be interested in continuing on with the project. Of the 16 youth who participated six agreed to continue working with the H/W ATC to promote the findings and to assist in making the deputations to Council.

Diversity of Youth Participants

Youth were recruited from three secondary schools in the communities of Hanover and Walkerton. While this seemed necessary to represent the two chosen communities it did affect the results. Additionally, these schools have a large catchment area; much of the travel was not exclusive to the communities of Hanover and Walkerton but also captured

data from Durham, Mildmay and Ayton. There may be value, in the future, to narrowing the eligibility criteria to get more data in the community of interest or alternatively increasing the number of participants.

The age of participants may also be a contributing factor in the modes of transportation chosen. All of the youth participants were aged sixteen and older, an age when most youth begin to drive. It is highly possible we may have seen more active travel if the youth were less than sixteen years of age.

Stipends

Youth participants were compensated for their time with a \$25 gas card and \$100 stipend. These incentives proved quite valuable in the initial recruitment process. Upon completion of the focus group some youth were interested in continued participation, in a volunteer capacity, to carry out the next steps of the project. For future success, without reliance on seed funding, projects may wish to consider whether eliminating financial incentives would still allow for successful recruitment of youth. It seems reasonable youth might consider involvement to accumulate community service hours, to enhance a resume or for general interest in the topic area. Eliminating financial incentives would allow for a greater number of participants to be engaged.

Data Collection

The knowledge and ability of the youth to use the GPS to collect information was remarkable. The time required to train the youth was, by most accounts, considerably less than expected. As with many forms of current technology, the youth demographic grasped the training quicker than most members of the adult community. The youth participants were also quite interested and engaged when viewing the data they collected within their community. It also helped build a sense of self-awareness about the particular modes of transportation they used most often. Although the data from the GPS units was not as detailed as desired this did not hinder the final outcomes. A number of students mentioned that increasing the duration for data collection might have resulted in a clearer picture of travel routes and choice destinations. For this project, data collection for each student participant was intended to begin on Monday and continue for seven days. Due to school Professional Development Days and Statutory Holidays some weeks were found to be slightly shorter than others.

The walkability audits using the icanwalk checklists were very well done. Information collected from these paper audits were extremely detailed and provided many examples of the barriers and assets facing youth in these communities. The checklists also provided an opportunity to cite ideas for change. Due to the success of these audits with the participating youth the checklists were distributed to additional youth in isolation from the training and data collection. In isolation from education and training, the data collected from the youth outside the project was not very useful and lacked detail.

Training & Communication

Ten out of the 15 participants indicated that a bit more training on the GPS units would have improved the project, though overall 10 participants indicated that the amount of communication throughout the project was “Just Right.” The biggest challenge was the lapse in time between the GPS training and the actual data collection. Many of the youth participants indicated that by the time their week of data collection rolled around they had forgotten many of the items discussed at the orientation session. It is also suggested that training and orientation for the project should be more detailed in the future. The training should include more background information about active transportation and perhaps use more examples to highlight assets and barriers within a community. Additionally, it would have been helpful to include youth in designing the parameters around the training and data collection. Determining the amount of information to share with the youth on assets and barriers is a balancing act. The project wanted to get the perspective of youth, and not the trainer’s ideas of assets and barriers.



7. Next Steps

A number of next steps were identified by the Committee and the participating youth. The next steps were identified as follows:

1. Share the completed report with the H/W ATC.
2. Share the completed report with the participating youth.
3. Receive and document any feedback or suggestions from these groups.
4. Bring interested youth participants back together to formulate a communication and promotion plan. A number of youth participants volunteered to take on some of these next steps at the focus group session.
5. Depending on the communication strategy determined, youth will develop the necessary material to share with the media, within the schools, on Facebook and with elected officials.
6. Present project details and findings at Parks and Recreation Ontario conference in November 2010.
7. Arrange delegations with Brockton (Walkerton) and Hanover Councils.

A variety of feedback, related to next steps, was shared by the youth at the focus group session and is highlighted below:

- “Advocate for more sidewalks”
- Go to the Mayor – formal Power Point presentation to Council. “I wouldn’t write a letter because they don’t take that as seriously”
- “Write to the newspaper...it gets everyone else...thinking about it”
- “Contact the Roads Department”
- “Get a petition and get everyone to sign it”
- “Do a presentation at different schools...go for a walk and ask them what they see”
- “Definitely Facebook – a group.

8. Conclusion

22% of grades 7-12 students in Ontario said they use active modes of transportation to get to school in the morning and 32% indicated active modes in the afternoon (Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, 2009). Although a much smaller sample size was used in Grey Bruce, these numbers appear to exceed active travel patterns of Grey Bruce youth. There is much work to be done to alter the attitudes about and the opportunities for active transportation as outlined in the goals of the project. As such, these goals may not be fully met for some time given the recommended policy and infrastructure changes highlighted by the youth participants:

- improved sidewalks
- traffic calming measures
- improved aesthetics (benches, garbage cans, etc)

Hopefully, the next steps outlined in Section 7 will assist the H/W ATC in meeting these goals in the coming months and years. On a larger scale, there is a belief that the issues identified in the Hanover/Walkerton area would be reflected in other areas of the two counties as well. As such, there will be a push to take the findings and recommendations from the Hanover/Walkerton area to the County level.

It is clear that youth need both internal and external incentives to alter their modes of transportation. Although the youth identified both overall health and financial gains as motivators for change these factors alone are unlikely to result in long term behavior change. While some minor changes in attitude and behaviour were noted there is a need to address concerns within each community to result in lasting change. Until the healthy choice is the easy choice this will continue to be a challenge. Given the nature of Grey Bruce, rural youth will continue to be dependent on vehicular travel to access the larger centres. The focus now becomes on ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is in place for youth to travel safely and comfortably within these centres. By providing quality sidewalks, appropriate crossings, safe vehicle speeds, attractive surroundings and places to rest communities increase the opportunity for residents of all ages to travel by active modes. These are the items to address in the next stages of the project.

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10. Appendixes

Appendix A

February 19, 2010

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty
Premier and Minister of Research and Innovation
Hepburn Block
Room 281, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier McGuinty:

**Re: Building Healthy Communities Together: Active and Alternative
Transportation to
Support Healthy Living in Grey Bruce**

On February 19, 2010, at a regular Board of Health meeting for the Grey Bruce Health Unit, the Board passed the following resolution:

Resolution 2010-13

WHEREAS Health Canada recognizes that physical activity is essential for the health of all people at all life stages however only 53% of Grey Bruce residents are physically active; and

WHEREAS 62% of Grey Bruce residents are overweight or obese; and

WHEREAS cardiovascular disease and cancer are preventable and are the leading causes of death in residents of Grey and Bruce Counties; and

WHEREAS motorized vehicle crashes are a preventable cause of injury and death and are the number one preventable cause of injury and death among children and youth in Grey Bruce; and

WHEREAS the number of falls in Grey Bruce is nearly double the provincial rate. Falls were significantly higher in number for all ages, but adults 65 and older represent a prominent difference between Grey Bruce and Ontario; and

WHEREAS over 3000 families in Grey and Bruce are considered low income (live below the poverty line) which may preclude them from owning a car thus negatively affecting a

person's ability to find work, access public services or educational institutions and limit consumer and recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS vehicle dependency is consistently identified as a major contributor to ill health in low density areas, due to poor air quality and reduced motivation for physical activity; and

WHEREAS the Ontario Medical Association's *Illness Cost of Air Pollution Model* estimates 93 premature smog related deaths occurred in 2005 within Grey Bruce; and

WHEREAS vehicles and roadways contribute to water pollution through contaminants and chemicals that collect and wash away into ground or surface water; and

WHEREAS carpooling, cycling, walking or taking public transit can help improve mental health and counteract the negative effects of driving according to the Ontario College of Physicians; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health urge upper and lower tier municipalities to incorporate healthy public policy into official and master plans, bylaws, and land use planning approvals which supports increasing active and alternative transportation while reducing motor vehicle dependency

THAT policy decisions are made with special attention paid to creating access and equity for all residents, especially children, youth, and older adults, people with low or limited income and others who may normally be at a disadvantage

THAT an increase in active and alternative transportation and decrease in motor vehicle dependency may be accomplished by, but not limited to:

- Providing opportunities for and promoting intensification of residential and employment areas
- Providing opportunities for a mix of land uses where homes are in proximity to workplaces, shopping, entertainment and daily amenities
- Increasing the connectivity of and options for alternative transportation including public/mass transit, car pooling, walking, cycling, etc., both within and between municipalities and regions; and, where appropriate, provide and improve the necessary amenities to support alternative transportation (e.g. bicycle racks and storage in safe well-lit areas, benches for resting)
- Increasing walking and cycling opportunities through the development of a connected trail network and improving existing trail accessibility
- Improving sidewalk quality and connectivity throughout communities
- Improving safety and providing aesthetically pleasing built and natural environments for alternative transportation. This might be accomplished by creating or modifying playgrounds and green space, implementing traffic calming measures, creating bike lanes and retro-fitting existing infrastructure
- Improve pedestrian safety by requiring sidewalks in all development areas including residential, commercial, and industrial, creating raised pedestrian islands

to ease street crossings, using pedestrian friendly traffic signals, reducing the widths of roads, driveways, and intersections, separating pedestrians from vehicles with curbs and street trees, and reducing vehicle speed

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Grey Bruce Health Unit will work with upper and lower tier municipalities to support the development of healthy public policy and will provide information to encourage individuals and organizations to use the infrastructure and services available.

FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario; Ontario Minister of Transportation; Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Ontario Minister of Health Promotion; Ontario Boards of Health; all Ontario Medical Officers of Health; Grey and Bruce County MP's and MPP's; Bruce County Council; Grey County Council; Bruce County Planning Department; Grey County Planning Department; Bruce County Transportation Department; Grey County Transportation Department; and Councils, Planning, and Works Departments of the Municipalities of Arran-Elderslie, Brockton, Kincardine, Northern Bruce Peninsula, South Bruce, Meaford, Grey Highlands, West Grey, Townships of Huron Kinloss, Georgian Bluffs, Chatsworth, Southgate, Towns of Saugeen Shores, South Bruce Peninsula, Blue Mountains, Hanover and City of Owen Sound.

Building Healthy Communities Together,

Original Signed by

Hazel Lynn, MD, FCFP, MHSc
Medical Officer of Health

Copies to:

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of
Transportation The Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister of
Affairs and Housing The Honourable Margaret Best,
Minister of Health Promotion Larry J. Miller, MP Grey-
Bruce-Owen Sound
Ben Lobb, MP Huron-Bruce
Helena Guergis, MP Simcoe-Grey
Bill Murdoch, MPP Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
Carol Mitchell, MPP Huron-
Bruce Jim Wilson, MPP
Simcoe-Grey Ontario Boards
of Health
Ontario Medical Officers of Health
Bruce County Council, Planning Department and Transportation
Department Grey County Council, Planning Department and
Transportation Department Councils, Planning and Works Departments
for All Grey and Bruce County Municipalities

Attachment: *Backgrounder: Building Healthy Communities Together; Active And Alternative Transportation To Support Healthy Living In Grey Bruce*

APPENDIX B

Building Healthy Communities Together: Active and alternative transportation to support healthy living in Grey Bruce

Prepared for:
Operation Safe Strong Clean Committee,
Grey Bruce Health Unit, Owen Sound, ON

Prepared by:
Tammy Aitken
Jason Cranny
Crystal Ferguson
Robert Graham
Bev Middleton

December 23, 2009



Executive Summary

A healthy community ensures that each person in the community has the opportunity to live to his or her fullest potential. There are many different components to building healthy communities; the purpose of this paper is to highlight the effects of transportation on health and make recommendations to improve health.

A transportation system which aims to increase active and alternative modes of transportation while decreasing the use of personal automobiles can help to improve mental health and physical activity levels, maintain air quality and water quality, reduce motor vehicle crash risk, and increase accessibility to employment, schools, recreation and other essential services. By implementing a variety of healthy public policies to support active and alternative transportation, all people in the community will have the opportunity to enjoy a high quality of life.

Introduction

The leading causes of death in Grey Bruce are cardiovascular disease, cancers, injury and poisoning (Leffley, 2008). In 2004, cardiovascular disease alone accounted for 37% of deaths, equivalent to over 300 deaths a year (Leffley, 2008). Cancer accounted for 28% of deaths in 2004 (Leffley, 2008). In 2001, there was nearly double the number of falls in comparison to Ontario, totalling 889 falls. Falls were significantly higher in number for all ages, and there is a prominent difference between Grey Bruce and Ontario for adults 65 and older (Leffley, 2008).

In Grey Bruce, motor vehicle crashes (MVCs) are the number one preventable cause of injury and death in children and particularly youth (Ministry of Health Promotion, 2007). MVCs accounted for 79% of deaths amongst youth in Grey Bruce, 31% higher than both the provincial and national averages (Ministry of Health Promotion, 2007).

These major health concerns all have multiple risk factors and require multi-faceted approaches to improve quality of life and reduce the burden of death and disease in Grey Bruce. Individual and community health is affected by the environments in which we live, work, play, and learn. “It is unreasonable to expect large proportions of the population to make individual behaviour changes that are discouraged by the existing environment and social norms” (Schmid, Pratt & Howze, 1995, p.1207). Modifying and creating a healthy built environment can support positive health outcomes in our community. A healthy built environment encourages and enables people to walk and cycle more often, use their automobile less, and create opportunities for social interaction.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is linked with better health. It reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, cancers, and falls. Physical activity contributes to well-being and reductions of depression. While many people know that physical activity is good for their health and well-being, only 53 per cent of residents report being physically active in their leisure time (Leffley, 2009). Individual choices and behaviours, like physical activity, are often shaped by broad social and environmental factors including the location of housing, employment, and other services, the design of transportation systems and the ease with which people can access places to be active (Labonle, Muhajarine, Winqvist & Quail, 2009).

Designing and retrofitting the built environment to have higher residential densities, connected streets, and a mixture of land uses has shown that people walk and cycle more (Brownson, Haire-Joshu & Luke, 2006). People walking to and from public transit can accumulate a substantial amount of physical activity. In a study by Besser & Dannenberg (2005), 29% of transit walkers achieved more than 30 minutes of activity solely getting to and from transit. To further emphasize the need to get out of our cars and be physically active, research

indicates the risk of obesity can decline 5% for each additional kilometre walked per day. In comparison, the risk of obesity can increase by 6% for each hour spent in a car per day (Frank, Andresen & Schmid, 2004).

Safety

MVCs are more than two times higher in Grey Bruce than that of Ontario. Collisions were significantly higher in all ages with the greatest difference seen in the 15-24 age group (Leffley, 2008). In a report examining the amount people travel and crash risk, it was found that “strategies that reduce per capita vehicle travel tend to reduce overall crash risk” (Litman & Fitzroy, 2009).

Motor Vehicle Dependence

Motorized vehicles are essential in Grey and Bruce due to our large geographic area. This has created an auto-oriented culture where motorized vehicles are perceived as the principle mode of transportation to get to and from work, access retail and social services, and recreate. Most children are driven to school either by bus or car (Manske, 2007). Eighty eight percent of the Grey Bruce labour force drives to work either by car, truck, van or passenger (Statistics Canada, 2007). Our dependence on motorized vehicles will only continue to rise unless alternative means of transportation are developed and supported locally. Increasing and supporting opportunities for public and alternative transportation to employment, schools, services, recreation and other amenities may decrease the number of motor vehicle crashes and increase people’s physical activity levels.

Mental Health

The growing use of motor vehicles has a direct impact on the mental health and quality of life for residents in Grey Bruce. The more time one spends in the vehicle is less time spent with family and friends, less time for oneself and less time to engage in community activities. As a result, people who do a substantial amount of driving may not have a strong sense of belonging, trust or social ties with their community which puts them at risk for poor mental and physical health (Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2005). The limited ability to enjoy nature and have meaningful interaction with others contributes to feelings of powerlessness and lack of belonging (Young, 2009). According to the Ontario College of Physicians (2005), carpooling, cycling, walking or taking public transit can help improve mental health and counteract the negative effects of driving. It has been shown that thriving societies emphasize centrality and easy access to services (City of Toronto & City of Hamilton, 2008).

Accessibility

Not all members of our community have access to a vehicle. Those with the financial means to own and operate a personal vehicle must realize that they are only able to drive temporarily on the basis of age and financial, physical, and cognitive ability.

Automobiles are expensive to operate, where it is estimated that the cost of owning and operating a car is about \$8441 per year¹ (Canadian Automobile Association, 2009). With few other transportation options, this expense may force people with lower incomes to spend large portions of their budget on transportation leaving little left over for healthy food choices, educational opportunities, and other essentials for daily living. For other families, it may mean no, or limited, access to a vehicle.

There are many people who are simply unable to drive or hold a drivers licence, regardless of financial position. Children under the age of 16, people with various physical and cognitive impairments, and many seniors are unable to operate an automobile. Many of these people become isolated and have limited access to social services and programs that they need (Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2005).

In areas with limited public transportation, people must live with limited access to employment, social and recreation opportunities, shopping and other services (Campbell & Wittgens, 2004; Brownson, 2006; Papas, 2007). “Active transportation can provide people with increased mobility and thus improved quality of life” (Campbell & Wittgens, 2004). For many people, walking and bicycling can offer a low cost alternative for making short trips. To improve accessibility for all residents, a greater emphasis is needed on safe, affordable, and sustainable transportation, such as walking, cycling, and public/mass transit.

Air Quality

Rural Ontario remains dependent on motorized vehicles to sustain industry, agriculture, business, schools, workplaces, recreation and pleasure. However, automobile emissions are a major contributor to poor air quality and pollution in Ontario and the transportation sector is one of the main emission sources in Ontario. Road vehicles contribute 33% of nitrogen oxides and 18% of volatile organic compounds emitted into the air, both of which contribute to the formation of ozone (Ontario Ministry of Environment, 2002; Bray, Vakil & Elliot, 2005).

Vehicle dependency is consistently identified as a major contributor to ill health in low density areas due to poor air quality and reduced motivation for physical activity (Association of Public Health Epidemiologists of Ontario, 2004). The health impacts from smog range from itchy eyes and sore throats to respiratory illnesses such as asthma, cardiac illnesses, cancers and even premature death. People that are especially sensitive to the adverse health effects of air pollution include children, older adults, and those with pre-existing cardiac or respiratory diseases.

The Ontario Medical Association’s Illness Cost of Air Pollution Model calculates the number of premature smog deaths that occur in a census area. In 2005, 93

¹ based on Cobalt LT driven 18,000 km per year.

premature smog related deaths were identified in Grey Bruce (Ontario Medical Association, 2005). These numbers reinforce that the problem of smog is not confined to cities but that rural areas can be equally, and sometimes even more affected by smog than larger cities (Bray, Vakil, & Elliott, 2005). While automobiles contribute largely to air pollution, walking and cycling produce virtually no air pollution.

Water Quality

Water quality and quantity is generally excellent in Grey and Bruce Counties. However, land use decisions can influence water quality. “Any disruption to a watershed, even at very minor levels, has relatively large impacts,” which in turn, degrades water quality (Frank, Kavage & Litman, 2005, p 31).

Impervious asphalt parking lots, roadways, driveways and rooftops constrict the amount of water that gets absorbed into the ground. Run-off water that collects on these surfaces impacts surface water sources, is largely unfiltered, and contains pollutants, chemicals and other contaminants that have accumulated in it.

Waterborne-related contamination can have negative health effects on healthy people, but it particularly can affect the fetus, children, older adults and those who are immuno-compromised (Williams & Wright, 2007). The impact of the built environment on water quality is significant. Sprawled communities, lack of green space, paved surfaces and the automobile are all contributors to contaminated runoff and degradation of watersheds and watercourses (Williams & Wright, 2007).

Recommendations

Building healthy communities requires a commitment from regional and local governments, community organizations, private sector businesses, and individuals to advocate for, implement and make use of healthy public policy that supports making healthy choices easier. Creating an environment where all people can choose to walk, cycle or use alternative transportation is one way to build a healthy community. No one single recommendation will completely change a community overnight, rather it will be the collection of healthy public policies over time that will help the community achieve a high quality of life for all citizens.

Municipalities are of primary importance as they are responsible for developing and implementing policy for many components of healthy communities. In developing and reviewing policy at the municipal level, the following is recommended:

1. Upper and lower tier municipalities should incorporate healthy public policy into official and master plans, bylaws, and land use planning

approvals which supports increasing active and alternative transportation while reducing motor vehicle dependency

2. Policies should be made and reviewed with special attention paid to creating access and equity for all residents, especially children, youth, and older adults, people with low or limited income and others who may be at a disadvantage
3. Increase active and alternative transportation and decrease motor vehicle dependency, this may be accomplished by, but not limited to:
 - a. Providing opportunities for and promoting intensification of residential and employment areas (Brownson et al., 2006; Williams and Wright, 2007)
 - b. Providing opportunities for a mix of land uses where homes are in proximity to workplaces, shopping, entertainment, and daily amenities (Brownson et al., 2006; Heath et al., 2006)
 - c. Increasing the connectivity of and options for alternative transportation including public/mass transit, car pooling, walking, cycling, etc., both within and between municipalities and regions; and, where appropriate, improve accessibility to necessary amenities (e.g. bicycle racks and storage in safe well-lit areas) (Williams and Wright, 2007)
 - d. Increasing walking and cycling opportunities through the development of a connected trail network and improving existing trail accessibility (Brownson et al., 2006; Heath et al., 2006)
 - e. Improving sidewalk quality and connectivity throughout communities (Health et al., 2006)
 - f. Improving safety and providing aesthetically pleasing built and natural environments for alternative transportation. This might be accomplished by creating or modifying playgrounds, implementing traffic calming measures, creating bike lanes and retro-fitting existing infrastructure. (Health et al., 2006)
 - g. Improving pedestrian safety by requiring sidewalks in all development areas including residential, commercial, and industrial, creating raised pedestrian islands to ease street crossings, using pedestrian friendly traffic signals, reducing the widths of roads, driveways, and intersections, separating pedestrians from vehicles with curbs and street trees, and reducing vehicle speed (Ewing, Frank, & Krutetzer, 2006; Frank & Engelke, 2006).

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Appendix C



Youth Activation Leaders For Active Transportation Committee - Walkerton/Hanover (ATC W/H)

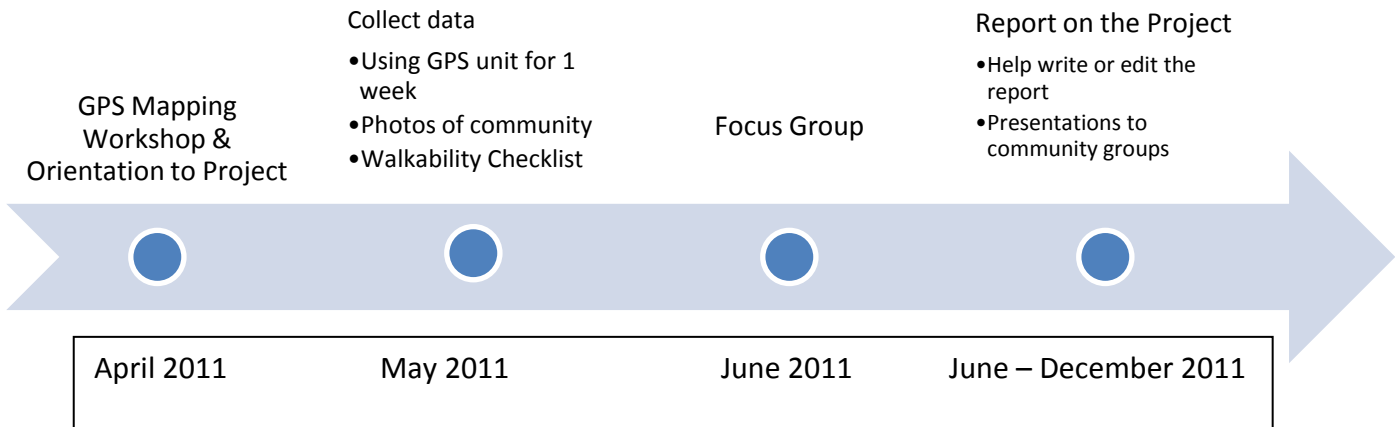
Purpose of the Project

The Grey Bruce Health Unit, in partnership with the Town of Hanover, The Municipality of Brockton, and others, has received a grant from the Heart and Stroke Foundation to understand and address barriers for physical activity that youth experience. The focus for this project will be to collect information on what mode of transportation youth currently use, what opportunities and infrastructure is available to support active transportation, and what actions could be taken in the future to encourage more active transportation and safer active transportation routes.

Role of Youth Activation Leader

If you agree to participate in this project, you will be asked to:

- Represent local youth at the Active Transportation Steering Committee meetings. This will be approximately 3 meetings in 2011. Each meeting is about 90 minutes.
- Attend a workshop on GPS mapping. The workshop will be approximately 2 hours in duration.
- Collect data in your community using GPS units supplied by ATC W/H. You will be asked to collect information on transportation routes you use for 7 days.
- Take photos of your community related to active transportation (where applicable)
- Attend and be an active member of a local youth focus group (1 meeting for 90 minutes)



If you agree to participate in this project, you may be asked to:

- Communicate and work with ATC W/H on issues relevant to youth health and healthy communities (as requested)
- Assist with creating and delivering presentations to other youth, professionals, and funders (if needed)
- Assist with understanding the data collected from GPS units (when requested)
- Conduct interviews with local media (if needed)

Qualifications to be a Youth Activation Leader

Must be a local youth attending one of the following schools

- WDSS- Walkerton District Secondary School
- JDSS- John Diefenbaker Secondary School
- Sacred Heart Secondary School
- Strong Communication Skills

Voluntary Participation

The Youth Activation Leader is a voluntary position. Before participating in this project, you will be asked to sign a consent form for your participation.

Compensation & Costs

To assist with your participation, you will receive a \$25 gas card and a \$100 stipend. A complimentary meal will be provided to Leaders at the workshop and focus group. You will receive the \$100 stipend when you attend the focus group session in June. To be eligible for the stipend, you must have completed the one week of data collection and returned the GPS unit to the Grey Bruce Health Unit.

Youth Activation Leaders will be responsible to provide his/her own transportation to and from meetings, the focus group and while collecting data. You will receive the \$25 gas card at the initial workshop and orientation to the project in April.

Early Withdrawal

If the Youth Activation Leader chooses to withdraw from the position and/or project, they may do so at any time. Any compensation owed to the resigning Leader for the work carried out will be honoured, based on the compensation timeline and description above. If you wish to withdraw from the project, please contact Jason Cranny at j.cranny@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca or 519-376-9420.

Benefits of Participation

You are helping us to understand how youth travel in your community, how safety can be improved and physical activity can be increased among youth. Your data, pictures and comments might show us some of the things that you feel make it easy for you to be healthy and some of the things that make it difficult for you to be healthy. It is possible that this information will help your community by leading to programs or policies that support the community in being healthy.

Risks of Participation

It is hoped that participation in this project will be a positive experience. This project is designed to incur “minimal risk” for each participant. It is the expectation of the project that the choices made by participants limit all risk of possible harms. Travel of youth activation leaders should be their regular patterns of travel which limits any additional risk related to travel. Your level of risk should be the same as times when you are not participating in this project.

Safety of Youth Activation Leaders

To limit the risk of potential harm please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Always put your personal safety first
- Never stop in an unsafe place or put yourself in an uncomfortable situation
- Follow all road safety rules regardless of form of transportation
- Complete all inputting of data after ceasing operation of your vehicle and in an area void of other traffic

Confidentiality

To keep your information private, we will:

- Not use your name in any notes or reports.
- Keep your consent and the information you give locked up in separate places

While data will not be collected or reported with the purpose of identifying a specific individual; it is possible, that by using the data collection method identified within the project and the small number of people in the project, some information could be potentially traced back to the Youth Activation Leader.

If you chose to participate in the dissemination of the report, you will be identified in some cases. For example if you volunteer to make a presentation to Municipal Council, you are identifying yourself as being connected to the Project.

Publications of Findings

At the completion of this project, the Grey Bruce Health Unit will be preparing a report to share with the communities of Hanover, Brockton, and Grey Bruce. Once the report is finalized, it may be shared to other individuals and organizations. The report will become a public document. The information in the report will keep the identity of individuals confidential, as described above.

Questions

Any questions you may have about the project can be directed to the Grey Bruce Health Unit

Grey Bruce Health Unit
c/o Jason Cranny, Jason Wepler, or Crystal Ferguson
101 17th St. E., Owen Sound, ON, N4K 0A5
519-376-9420
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This information sheet is yours to keep.

You will also be given a copy of the signed consent form to keep.

This project was made possible
through funding from the
Heart and Stroke Foundation
of Ontario



**Youth Activation Leaders
For
Active Transportation Committee - Walkerton/Hanover (ATC W/H)**

Consent to Participate

I hereby consent that I, _____, will actively participate as a **Youth Activation Leader** with all identified duties outlined under “Role of Youth Activation Leader.”

I understand the following:

- I have read this information sheet and all of my questions have been answered
- All trainings are designed as a means to educate myself and others within the communities of Walkerton and Hanover about strategies for educating youth/adults, community development and possibly policy development.
- The data I collect during my time as Youth Activation Leader can and will be used to formulate a report that will be sent to but not limited to Hanover and Walkerton Municipal Councils, Grey Bruce Public Health and the Heart and Stroke Foundation
- I agree that no one other than myself will be held responsible for any injuries or damages occurring while I am a participant in all trainings/meetings, data collection and education presentations.

Youth Activation Leader

Printed Name: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Person Obtaining Consent

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Appendix D

Youth Moving Safely with Active Transportation Youth Activation Leader Job Description Stipend (Honorarium)/Volunteer Opportunity

Duration of work: April 25th- December 31st, 2011

Position Title: Health Promotion- Youth Activation Leader

Summary:

The purpose of this youth placement is to provide an opportunity for the youth to build skills and develop work experience to the mutual benefit of both the youth and the Active Transportation Committee-Walkerton/Hanover (ATC W/H). The youth will work with the ATC-W/H team to promote healthy living among community youth through data collection, focus group work, media campaigns and community council presentations. The youth may be asked to involve other youth of high school age in activities or awareness campaigns if needed.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Represent local youth at the Active Transportation Steering Committee meetings (approximately 3 meeting in 2011 for 90 minutes)
- Attend workshop on GPS mapping (approximately 2 hours in duration)
- Collect data in local community using GPS units supplied by ATC W/H (tracking for 7 days)
- Attend and be an active member of a local youth focus group (1 meeting for 90 minutes)
- Communicate / work with ATC W/H re: issues relevant to youth health and healthy communities (as requested)
- Assist with creation and delivery of presentations to other youth, professionals, and funders (if needed)
- Assist with analyzing data from GPS units (when requested)
- Take photos of community regarding active transportation (where applicable)
- Conduct interviews with local media (if needed)

Qualifications:

- Must be a local youth attending one of the following schools
 - WDSS- Walkerton District Secondary School
 - JDSS- John Diefenbaker Secondary School
 - Sacred Heart Secondary School
- Strong Communication Skills

Compensation: \$100 stipend + \$25 gas card

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Appendix E

Youth Moving Safely With Active Transportation Focus Group Summary

The purpose of this youth placement was to provide an opportunity for the youth to build skills and develop work experience to the mutual benefit of both the youth and the Active Transportation Committee - Walkerton/Hanover (ATC W/H). The youth will work with the ATC-W/H team to promote healthy living among community youth through data collection, focus group work, media campaigns and community council presentations. The youth may be asked to involve other youth of high school age in activities or awareness campaigns if needed.

In total, 14 youth participated in the 90 minute focus group session. Two additional youth participants, who were unavailable for the focus group, were requested to share feedback through the PLAY Checklist, Focus Group Questionnaire and icanwalk checklist. The following highlights the dialogue from the June Youth Focus Group:

Following the completion of this project, do you feel you have a better understanding of Active transportation?

All participants indicated that they did not have a good understanding of Active Transportation prior to participating in the project. The majority of youth indicated they had a better understanding of Active Transportation after the project and felt they would be comfortable sharing the information they learned with their peers with some adult assistance.

What did you enjoy most about the project?

- “Seeing the routes I had taken and how much I actually had driven”
- “Seeing how far you went”
- “I realized I did the same thing everyday – to school, to home, to work...”

What did you find challenging about the project?

- “The process for the naming of the tracks was quite difficult”
- “Using the GPS – marking waypoints and saving the tracks”
- “I noticed that the satellites took a long time to register”
- “I kept forgetting to turn the unit on”
- “The time lapse between the training and the actual tracking”
- “I think naming the tracks was definitely weird...simple would be better”

Would you do the project over again? If so, would you feel more comfortable doing so the second time?

Were the opportunity to be available, all participants expressed an interest in doing the project for a second time. Each student thought it would be easier to complete the project the second time around.

Did you contemplate making different transportation choices during the project?

The majority did indicate that “YES” they did consider making different choices but rarely did this level of contemplation result in behavior change either during or following the project (please note – participants were instructed during the pre-training session that they were not to change their transportation behaviours).

- The first few days I didn’t necessarily track as much as I would have and so by the end of the week I was like can I walk here and you can pick me up just so I have more tracks”
- I personally walked a couple more times that I normally would have. A couple times I forgot the GPS when walking to lunch so I would walk to work to make up for it”

After the project, will you consider different transportation choices?

Although the response to this question was generally “no” much of the dialogue focused on the rural nature of Hanover/Walkerton and surrounding communities which limited choice around the chosen mode of transportation. Many of the participating students were confined to travel by car or bus for at least a portion of their day. Some additional thoughts were captured below:

- “I will try to carpool more often”
- “I realized I don’t do a lot of walking...it’s a lot easier just to drive”
- “During the week I don’t go anywhere but school and I can’t really walk from Mildmay to Walkerton but I walk everywhere else”

After showing the youth the data collected staff framed some questions using the following model:

- **S** - What did you **SEE** in your community?
- **H** – Was it easy to make **HEALTHY** choices?
- **O** – How does this relate to/affect **OUR** lives?
- **W** - **WHY** does this situation, concern or strength exist?
- **E** – Share specific **EXAMPLES**.
- **D** – What can we **DO** about it? Action Steps?

What did you SEE?

- “No benches or garbages”
- “Messy sidewalks everywhere...trees are down you’ve got to duck to get under”

Was it easy to make HEALTHY choices?

- “Living in the country makes it difficult”
- “If Walkerton lowered their gas prices I would drive less – Hanover is \$0.05 cheaper so if I’m in Walkerton I’ll drive to Hanover to get it and that’s like 20 minutes of driving not necessary. I could have got my gas in town and gone for a walk”
- “I’ll drive for lunch a lot downtown because there are not a lot of good places to eat around WDSS”
- “More places to go to – destinations”
- “If there were more benches and better sidewalks we would be encouraged to walk more”
- “Longer lunches so we would actually have time to walk to places”

How does this relate to/affect OUR lives?

How do these choices and the things that affect those healthy choices? What does all this mean to you whether you are walking, cycling or driving?

- “Even if it is just simple little things it does cause extra stress sometimes – like having sidewalks on one side of the street and wondering when am I going to be able to cross over – I need to get on that side of the road. It’s not that big of a deal I guess but it does add extra stress”
- “The one intersection where Yonge Street turns off and then turns into Jackson Street there is no hand signals on one side of the street – you have to cross further down. I just feel like I don’t know what to do...because it just has the signals”

WHY does this situation, concern or strength exist? Share specific **EXAMPLES**.

- “Because the sidewalk is only on the one side so if you are walking on the other side it only comes half way up the road and then you have to go up to the lights and over again”
- “On Jackson Street there is one part where you go from sidewalk to no sidewalk and switch sides of the road and you are standing there waiting forever waiting for someone to stop. There is nothing to tell you when to go so...it’s just like chaos”
- “There are four schools...so everyone that walks to school basically has to walk around there and there is nothing there. The hospital is there too. It is an area they (the Municipality) just thought people knew”
- There are busy, busy streets in Hanover. You stand at the corner and you stand there for like 10 minutes...you have a random intersection with two stop signs and you just can’t get across the intersection”
- “On my route to school, I walk to and from school, I think there is only one sidewalk and it only goes up the hill and then there is like no sidewalks at all. It is really hard and dangerous to walk on the side of the street”
- “Cycling would be 5 times more dangerous b/ at least when you are walking you are more in control.
- “I have one friend who bikes to school sometimes but they will not leave their bike at the school whether they are afraid of it being stolen or damaged. If I bike to town I don’t like to leave my bike unattended...but for the school factor you don’t really know if someone will touch your bike or if you will have a flat tire when you come back out”
- “Yeah, I can agree with that. I know sometimes when I would bike to school I wouldn’t leave it outside, I would talk to teachers and bring it into the school and leave it in the classroom”
- “We need bike lanes. I live outside of Durham, like two kilometers between the centre of Durham and where I live...there are no sidewalks anywhere. For me to bike to my works is like 10 minutes. To walk is 25-30 minutes, and walking most of the time with no sidewalk. I find sharing the road with cars is extremely difficult.”
- Water drainage on Hick’s is poor especially behind the track.
- Schultz Street in Hanover is full of potholes
- Need for recycle bins alongside garbage cans

Did you witness any positive infrastructure during your travels?

- Bike rack at the library
- Garbage cans in downtown Walkerton; only on Durham Street
- Main street sidewalks were good – both sides, nice, wide

What can we **DO** about it? Action Steps?

- “Advocate for more sidewalks”
- Go to the Mayor – formal Power Point presentation to Council. “I wouldn’t write a letter because they don’t take that as seriously”
- “Write to the newspaper...it gets everyone else...thinking about it”
- “Contact the Roads Department”
- “Get a petition and get everyone to sign it”
- “Do a presentation at different schools...go for a walk and ask them what they see”

How can we get the word out?

- “Definitely Facebook – a group.

How high is Active Transportation on your priority list?

- “Well, when it comes to your safety it should be a high priority”

What about priority populations (wheelchairs, strollers, children, seniors, etc.)?

- “I thought about kids sometimes...at those lights (Jackson St) I was thinking if I can’t handle this a little kid wouldn’t know what to do”
- “My old roommate had two kids and it was hard for strollers for some parts of the sidewalk. Down by BMO (Bank of Montreal) down by the lights whenever you cross you have to be back 2-3 feet because people that are making the right hand turn come so close to the sidewalk”
- “There is an old lady who walks in my neighbourhood our sidewalks are kind of elevated and kind of cracked...and she tripped going up on the sidewalk and was having a really difficult time”

What are some actions steps Public Health can take?

- Focus on the health benefits...people are obsessed with driving their cars...so just raising awareness about that will make a lot of us walk here today”
- Pointing out “on average a teenager spends “X” number of dollars on driving a car”

Which is more important the cost benefits or the health benefits?

Cost – 10 responses

Health – 4 responses

Does the idea of getting from Point A to Point B quicker influence your transportation choices?

The consensus was a resounding “Yes”

- “Kids are always in a rush”
- “Some people drive regardless of the distance”

If you knew how quickly you could get from Point A to Point B on a bike, would you take it more often?

- “Bike routes are the most important thing, you don’t want to run over people on the sidewalk and I personally have never been taught to bike with cars on the road...so I don’t know where to bike. Walking is too slow so biking would be ideal”

Bike Racks at Hanover and Walkerton Secondary Schools (for hundreds of students):

- JDSS – 1 rack
- SHHS – 1 rack
- WDSS – 1 rack

If there were bikes available in the community and they were free would you use them?

All participants (100%) responded that “yes” they would use the bikes if they were available (and free).

- “We were just talking about that because in Toronto where (bikes)are like taxis”
- “We would need the bikes to be sanitized”
- “There would need to be multiple pick up and drop off points”
- “More places to park our bikes
- “People aren’t going to share helmets”
- “The public taxi bike thing you could have it for free just have TD Canada Trust right on the side...people biking around with their logo”

14 CHECKLISTS SUBMITTED



your way, every day

PLAY IN BRUCE GREY

**ADVOCACY TOOLKIT
SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS**
(adapted March 2011)



Use this checklist to review what the currently exists to support physical activity and active transportation. Then rank the items in the list for its priority for change within your community.

Schools / School Board		
Priority H = High M = Medium L = Low Summary below is in order as above.	When considering “current status” keep the following in mind: A= We have a formal and approved policy in place that is consistently followed E = We have never considered this issue before	Current Status A = Excellent B = Very Good C = Good D = Satisfactory E = Poor Summary below is in order as above.
5 - 7 - 2	Students are provided with adequate and appropriate bicycle parking.	0-2-3-3-6
1 - 8 - 5	Students are provided with secure areas for storing equipment like helmets, rollerblades, and skateboards.	0-0-1-1-12
6 - 7 - 1	Vehicle drop-off and pick-up traffic is controlled to minimize barriers for students who walk and bike to school.	0-2-7-5-0
3 - 6 - 5	Active transportation is used to field trip locations instead of driving (weather and safe routes permitting).	0-0-4-5-5
9 - 3 - 2	Transportation support is offered and readily available for students to get to and from physical activity opportunities (e.g. late busing program).	1-2-2-2-7
5 - 8 - 1	We advocate for active and safe routes to school to our local council.	1-4-7-2-0
7 - 7 - 0	We encourage and promote active transportation to both students and parents.	0-3-9-2-0
6 - 5 - 3	Incentive programs/challenges are regularly implemented to increase student enjoyment of physical activity (e.g. World Record Walk, Stepping Out on the Bruce Trail pedometer challenge, GPS/compasses within school setting, Walk to School Week)	0-1-4-6-3
Municipality		
13 - 1 - 0	Sidewalks are consistently cleared of snow and ice in a timely manner for students who walk to school	1-1-4-4-4
12 - 2 - 0	Routes to schools, and other places frequented by children and youth have bike-lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, speed control and are tree-lined.	0-2-3-8-1

9 - 5 - 0	Routes to schools, and other places frequented by children and youth have good street lighting to ensure safety and security.	4-0-7-1-2
7 - 4 - 3	Planning and design maximizes pedestrian and bicycle travel.	0-4-3-6-1
6 - 7 - 1	School travel is considered part of overall municipal transportation policies and plans	3-3-6-1-0 <u>1 not answered</u>
11 - 3 - 0	In transport and land-use planning, the needs of children and youth receive as much priority as the needs of other populations and the requirements of business	3-3-1-6-0 <u>1 not answered</u>
3 - 11 - 0	We have an established forum for children and youth to bring their perspectives to transport and land-use planning issues.	1-5-2-2-4
5 - 7 - 2	We are aware of and address the by-laws that create barriers for physical activity in our community (e.g. no riding bicycles on sidewalks).	1-0-9-2-2
8 - 5 - 1	Playing fields and other facilities are available and easy to access through active or city transportation.	0-4-6-3-1
5 - 7 - 2	Adequate and appropriate bicycle parking is provided throughout the community and at all municipal buildings.	0-1-2-8-3
4 - 5 - 4 <u>1 not answered</u>	Events and recognition programs are in place to celebrate successful physical activity strategies and community champions	0-1-4-6-2 <u>1 not answered</u>
Community Groups		
5 - 7 - 1 <u>1 not answered</u>	Active transportation is used to get to and from events whenever possible	0-0-4-8-0 <u>2 not answered</u>
Workplace		
8 - 2 - 2 <u>2 not answered</u>	Adequate and appropriate bicycle parking is provided	2-0-2-4-3 <u>3 not answered</u>
5 - 4 - 3 <u>2 not answered</u>	Secure areas area available for storing equipment like helmets, roller blades, and skateboards	0-1-1-3-6 <u>3 not answered</u>
2 - 8 - 2 <u>2 not answered</u>	Educational resources are provided about the benefits of physical activity and/or active transportation	0-0-4-3-5 <u>2 not answered</u>
3 - 4 - 5 <u>2 not answered</u>	Employees are encouraged to make active choices through the use of promotional resources (e.g. Bike Walk to Work).	1-0-2-6-2 <u>3 not answered</u>
2 - 6 - 4 <u>2 not answered</u>	We have mapped out walking routes in the surrounding area and posted them with times and distances	0-1-1-4-5 <u>3 not answered</u>
1 - 6 - 4 <u>3 not answered</u>	Lunchtime activity groups are encouraged (e.g. walking club)	0-1-1-2-6 <u>4not answered</u>
4 - 4 - 3 <u>3 not answered</u>	Incentives are provided for employees who walk or cycle to meetings.	0-0-1-4-6 <u>3 not answered</u>
6 - 1 - 5 <u>2 not answered</u>	Changing rooms and shower facilities are provided.	1-0-2-1-7 <u>3 not answered</u>

14 QUESTIONNAIRES SUBMITTED

**Youth Activation Leaders
For
Walkerton/Hanover Active Transportation Committee - (W/H ATC)
Questionnaire**

What did you enjoy most about the project?

- “Knowing how much we travel opened my eyes about how sidewalks were taken care of”
- “How I got to see how I go on the same route everyday”
- “Realizing/observing things I never noticed on my walks before”
- “Collecting data with the GPS” (x 3)
- “Became aware of the issues surrounding active transportation and my community” (x 4)
- “Noticing the positive and negative aspects of my community”
- “I got to see how many places I go in a week”
- “I was able to physically see the past in the sense of where I travelled, how I got there, and how I could improve upon it”
- “Having free responsibility”
- “Seeing my routes and kilometers drove”

What did you find most challenging about the project?

- Remembering/working/tracking/marketing waypoints with the GPS x 12.
- Finding points of interest that were problems
- Not enough time

What percent of the time did you use each mode of transportation throughout the week?

- Walk 5% = 2 Walk 10% = 3 Walk 20% = 1 Walk 35% = 2 Walk 40% = 2 Walk 45% = 1
Walk 60% = 1 Walk 80% = 1 Walk 90% = 1
- Bike 0% = 10 Bike 5% = 2 Bike 15% = 1 Bike 20% = 1
- Drive 10% = 1 Drive 20% = 1 Drive 40% = 2 Drive 55% = 1 Drive 60% = 2 Drive 65% = 1
Drive 70% = 1 Drive 80% = 1 Drive 90% = 2 Drive 95% = 2

Did you think about making different transportation choices by being part of the project?

Yes = 11 No = 3

Please Comment:

- "I felt the need to get out and check the sidewalks out"
- "I realized how I need/want to walk/bike more" (x 7)
- "I walk everywhere, nothing out of ordinary, but walked more"
- "It made me aware of places that only required a short distance and didn't need a car"
- "You said not to, just act normal"
- "It showed me how much I drive/walk"
- "I travel really long distances everyday and it would be unrealistic to expect to walk or bike them"
- "Wanted to bike but weather wasn't nice"

What would have improved the project?

- More training time/efficient/easier GPS (x 10)
- More time
- Nothing

How was the amount of communication you received about the project?

Not Enough		Just Right		Too Much
1 = 0	2 = 3	3 = 10	4 = 1	5 = 0

Would you recommend this project to a friend?

All participants answered yes. Below are additional comments:

- "It was a real eye-opener for me"
- "It was an excellent experience"
- "Some friends were interested when I was collecting the data and thought it was a great idea"
- "It is a great way to become involved in their community and issues that are important"
- "You guys were really organized and did great"