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PLANNING POLICIES TO SUPPORT THE ROLE OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IN BUILDING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE TOWN OF INNISFIL

by

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A Major Research Paper
presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Planning
in
Urban Development

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2013

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PLANNING POLICIES TO SUPPORT THE ROLE OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IN BUILDING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE TOWN OF INNISFIL

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Master of Planning

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Urban Development

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ABSTRACT

The past decade has been marked by a substantial shift in planning for more compact, complete and pedestrian-oriented communities. Amidst this broader evolution, greater emphasis is being increasingly placed on creating healthy and 'complete communities', particularly through the provision of enhanced 'active transportation' networks. The overall purpose of this Major Research Paper (MRP) will be to recommend Official Plan policies to more effectively support the role of 'active transportation' in creating more 'complete communities' in the Town of Innisfil, a rapidly growing municipality located approximately one hour north of the City of Toronto. The underlying argument of this MRP is that enhanced active transportation networks can play an integral role in building more sustainable, healthy and 'complete' communities within the Town of Innisfil, because of the substantial environmental, economic, and social benefits that they can provide. Furthermore, planning policies must encompass all elements of planning, designing, implementing and monitoring in order to support the achievement of enhanced active transportation networks.

Key words: planning policies, active transportation, complete communities, Town of Innisfil

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The past decade has been marked by a substantial shift in planning for more compact, complete and pedestrian-oriented communities. This is particularly the case in the Province of Ontario, through significant changes to planning legislation such as the *Provincial Policy Statement (2005)* and the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006)*. This shift in planning has occurred in an attempt to address the negative consequences associated with traditional development, which have been generally characterized by urban sprawl, traffic gridlock and the inefficient use of our land and natural resources. Amidst this broader evolution towards a 'smart growth' planning framework, greater emphasis is being increasingly placed on creating healthy and 'complete communities', particularly through the provision of enhanced 'active transportation' networks. The overall purpose of this Major Research Paper (MRP) will be to recommend Official Plan policies and explore how 'active transportation' can play a greater role in creating 'complete communities' in the Town of Innisfil, a rapidly growing municipality located approximately one hour north of the City of Toronto. The underlying argument of this MRP is that enhanced active transportation networks can play an integral role in building more sustainable, healthy and 'complete' communities within the Town of Innisfil, because of the substantial environmental, economic, and social benefits that they can provide.

The terms 'complete communities' and 'active transportation' are central to the subject matter of this Major Research Paper (MRP). Transport Canada (2011) provides the following definition of 'active transportation':

> Active transportation refers to all human-powered forms of transportation, in particular walking and cycling. It includes the use of mobility aids such as wheel chairs, and can also encompass other active transport variations such as in-line skating, skateboarding, cross-country skiing, and even kayaking. Active transportation can also be combined with other modes, such as public transit.

The term ‘complete communities’ is defined within the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (2006) as follows:

> Complete communities meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, a full range of housing, and community infrastructure including affordable housing, schools, recreation and open space for their residents. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, non-motorized travel is also provided.

Overall, the Growth Plan requires municipalities to plan to achieve ‘smart growth’ through more sustainable land use patterns that enable residents to live, work, shop and play in close proximity to one another. As indicated in the Growth Plan definition, a significant component of ‘complete communities’ is the provision of enhanced ‘active transportation’ networks to help reduce dependence on the automobile.

The exploration and discussion contained within this MRP will be structured in the following manner. After a brief description of the ‘Locational Context’ of the Town of Innisfil (Section 2) and the overall ‘Research Approach’ that this MRP utilizes (Section 3), what follows is a ‘Literature Review’ (Section 4) that assesses the overall environmental, economic and social benefits of ‘smart growth’ and ‘active transportation’. This section is followed by a discussion of the ‘Policy Context’ (Section 5), that outlines the over-arching provincial planning legislation and relevant local Innisfil planning policies and strategies as they currently pertain to the role of active transportation in building complete communities. This will lead into an assessment of ‘Best Practices’ (Section 6), which will explore how other municipalities in Ontario have developed effective policies to enhance their active transportation networks. This MRP will conclude with general ‘Policy Recommendations’ (Section 7) for the Town of Innisfil to consider incorporating into its Official Plan. These recommendations will support efforts to plan, design, implement, and monitor the achievement of active transportation networks within Innisfil, helping ensure that the Town will become a more complete, healthy community.

2.0 LOCATIONAL CONTEXT

The Town of Innisfil, located approximately 1 hour north of the City of Toronto within Simcoe County (see Figure 1), currently has a population of approximately 33,000 people (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Figure 1: Town of Innisfil – Regional Context Map (Source: www.business.innisfil.ca)

The Town of Innisfil remains a predominantly rural, agricultural municipality, despite an increasing urban influence due to its proximity to the City of Barrie and its role as a bedroom community for a growing number of commuters into Toronto. The Town's Official Plan identifies four 'Village Settlements' (Stroud, Churchill, Fennel's Corners, and Gilford) and four 'Urban Settlements' (Alcona, Cookstown, Lefroy-Belle Ewart and Sandy Cove) that are interspersed and connected within the Town by a grid-like network of roads (see Figure 2). The Town's location along Lake Simcoe makes Innisfil a destination that attracts not only tourists, but also approximately 4,000 seasonal residents (*Inspiring Innisfil 2020,* 2010).

Figure 2: Town of Innisfil Map (Source: www.business.innisfil.ca)

By the year 2031, the population of the Town of Innisfil is projected to grow to reach approximately 56,000 people, a total growth rate of 70% from 2011 (3.5% annually), considerably greater than the forecast growth rate of 50% for Simcoe County over this same period (2.5% annually) (Growth Plan: Simcoe Area Amendment, 2012). This marks a significant acceleration in the traditional growth rate for Innisfil, as the Town grew at a rate of 34% from 1996 to 2011 (2.3% annually), about the same as the 35% growth rate for all of Simcoe County. This rapid growth will significantly challenge the Town as it attempts to plan for complete communities and the adequate provision of housing, jobs, local services, schools, transportation, and recreation opportunities. While this presents the Town with substantial challenges when planning for future growth, it also presents important opportunities. The Town is essentially starting with a blank slate in several large subdivision developments, particularly within Alcona, where its current population will more than double to a total of 32,000 people (Town of Innisfil Official Plan, 2010). This provides the Town with an opportunity to leverage growth in a way that helps ensure that all the elements of a complete community are incorporated. As such, since Alcona was identified as a 'Primary Settlement Area' within the Simcoe Area Amendment (2012) to the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006)*, it will become the focal point for this MRP, since this is where the majority of the Town's future growth and largest subdivisions will be constructed. It is therefore important to provide opportunities for linkages to promote active transportation between these newly created neighbourhoods. The Town is also attempting to develop Alcona as the downtown core of the municipality, in accordance with its designation by the Province as a 'Primary Settlement Area', and active transportation can play a vital role in supporting this vision.

Since a limited number of jobs and services currently exist within the Town, travel patterns in Innisfil are currently dominated by the automobile. Specifically, 80% of Innisfil's residents commute out of the Town for employment on a daily basis (Innisfil Transportation Plan, 2013). Furthermore, the 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada, 2011) indicates that 'a car, truck, or van as a driver or passenger' is the primary mode of transportation to work for nearly all (95%) of Innisfil's residents (see Figure 3). Additionally, only 2% of Innisfil's residents bike or walk to work as their primary mode of transportation. This reflects the challenge of the Town in planning to achieve a greater mode share for active transportation.

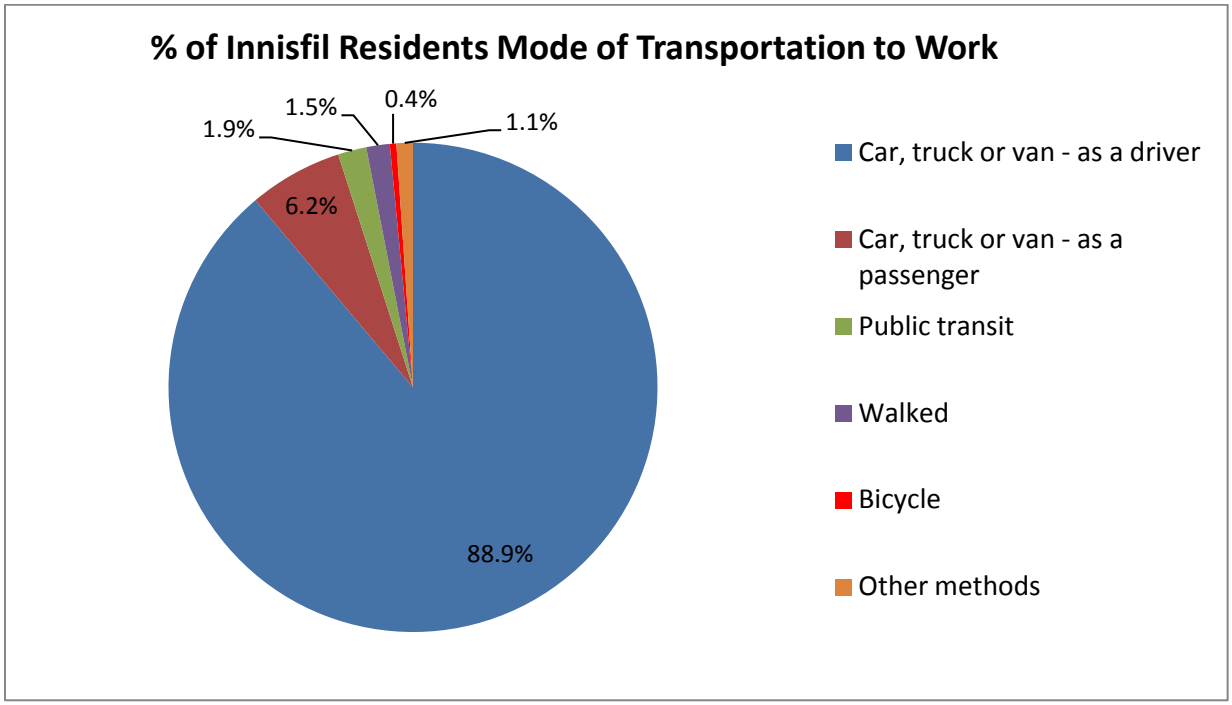

Figure 3: (Source: National Household Survey, Statistics Canada, 2011)

While this indicates the substantial challenge that the Town will face in attempting to enhance its active transportation networks, local residents have identified a lack of sidewalks, trails and paths as one of the most important transportation issues facing the Town (Innisfil Transportation Plan, 2013). This suggests that within Innisfil, greater emphasis will need to be placed on the role of active transportation in creating healthier and complete communities. Particularly, when

residents were asked in a survey (administered in 2012 as part of the consultation for the Town's Transportation Plan) if they would use a walking or cycling trail to travel around Innisfil, 74% of respondents said yes and over 80% of the 271 respondents that lived in Alcona said yes. This highlights the strong demand for active transportation that exists in Innisfil, particularly in the rapidly urbanizing area of Alcona, where the majority of the Town's growth is forecast to occur. This further suggests that as the Town plans for a total employment of 11,000 jobs within the Innisfil Heights Strategic Employment Area (Town of Innisfil Official Plan, 2010), which the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe identifies, it is likely that residents would choose to walk or cycle to work if an adequate active transportation network was provided to this area (Innisfil Heights is approximately 10 kilometres west of Alcona, which is within cycling distance). Furthermore, Figure 4 indicates that Innisfil's population is characterized by a greater proportion of its population in the '45-64' and '0-14' age groups. In addition to children relying almost exclusively on active transportation networks in order to independently travel within Innsfil, the trend of its population aging indicates that the demand for a strong active transportation network within the Town will only continue to grow into the future. This is because as seniors are no longer able to drive independently, they will require safe, alternative modes of transportation in order to access various services/destinations as well as to exercise.

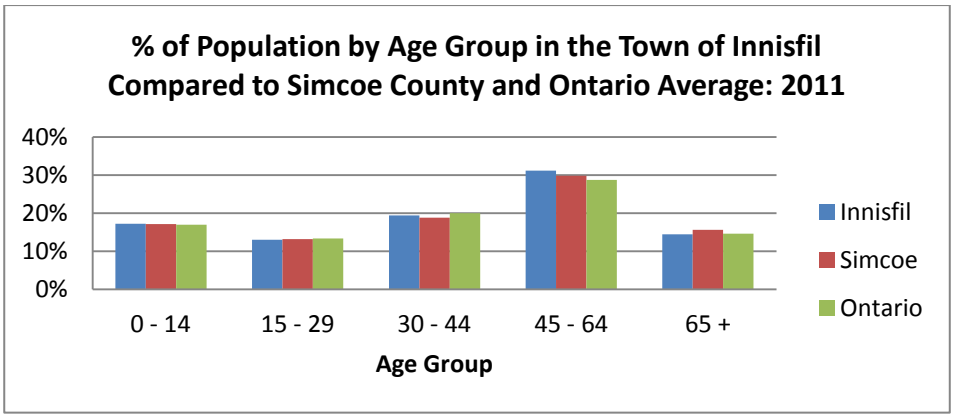

Figure 4: (Source: 2011 Census, Statistics Canada)

3.0 RESEARCH APPROACH

The Town of Innisfil is about to undertake an update of its Official Plan as mandated in the Planning Act, the policy document which contains planning principles and policies to determine how the Town grows and develops over the next 20 years. The specific purpose of this MRP will be to feed into this process by recommending policies that can be practically applied and incorporated into the Town's Official Plan. Amidst this overall purpose, this is the central research question that this MRP will aim to address:

- ***What policies can be incorporated into the Town's Official Plan to help ensure that active transportation plays a greater role in the creation of complete communities?***

Further sub-questions that will also need to be addressed include:

- ***What are the benefits associated with active transportation networks and how can they better facilitate the development of complete communities?***
- ***What are the issues and opportunities associated with developing an enhanced active transportation network in the local Innisfil context?***

As briefly outlined in the introduction, the process of recommending new Official Plan policies will be informed by a literature review that emphasizes the social, economic and environmental benefits that active transportation and smart growth principles can provide in building complete communities; an assessment of existing provincial and local municipal planning legislation and strategies relevant to active transportation; and an exploration of best practices in municipal planning policy approaches to develop enhanced active transportation networks. Overall, the research approach of this MRP is grounded in a 'textual analysis' of secondary sources such as books, journal articles and planning documents. This analysis will draw upon and synthesize the major themes and issues related to active transportation policies that the Town of Innisfil OP Update process should consider.

4.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In its broadest sense, this MRP reflects the significant evolution that has occurred in planning since the 1990s. Overall, to address the negative consequences associated with the interspersed development that has generally occurred across North America since about the 1950s, there has been a strong movement towards planning for more vibrant downtowns and compact, pedestrian-oriented communities. This literature review will outline the general principles of this 'smart growth' movement and overall vision to achieve 'sustainable development'; it will then specifically assess the environmental, social and economic benefits of enhanced active transportation networks; and will conclude with an assessment of the role of active transportation in supporting successful downtown development. The underlying argument of this literature review will suggest that within this overall 'smart growth' movement, active transportation networks should be viewed as an integral element in building healthy, 'complete communities.'

While there is a significant amount of academic literature surrounding the general topic of 'smart growth', much of this work has focused on larger urban centres with only a limited amount of research focused on the role of active transportation in supporting the sustainable growth of smaller towns and urban centres. Bunting et al. (2007) generally note that from 1994 to 2004, seven percent of all articles in the *Journal of the American Planning Association* were focused on mid-sized cities (with populations less than 500,000 people), compared to 87 percent of articles that were focused on cities with populations greater than one million people. As such, since there is also a limited amount of research that specifically studies the role and benefits of active transportation in building complete communities in smaller towns and cities, this MRP seeks to play an important role in helping fill this existing gap within the academic literature.

4.1 'Smart Growth' and 'Sustainable Development'

'Smart growth' is a term and movement in planning that emerged in the United States in the 1990s (White, 2007). This was a time when communities were expressing concerns regarding the automobile-oriented suburban development that had characterized growth since about the 1950s. Generally, quality of life issues were becoming increasingly important as residents questioned the economic, environmental and social costs associated with the rapid outward growth of cities (Smart Growth Network, 2002). As such, 'smart growth' became viewed as the primary solution to address these challenges and can be defined as follows:

> Smart growth is development that serves the economy, community, and the environment. It provides a framework for communities to make informed decisions about how and where they grow. Smart growth makes it possible for communities to grow in ways that support economic development and jobs; create strong neighborhoods with a range of housing, commercial, and transportation options; and achieve healthy communities that provide families with a clean environment (Smart Growth Network, 2002).

'Smart growth' advocates were therefore calling for a more balanced form of 'sustainable development' that would achieve all three goals of 'economic development', 'environmental preservation' and 'social equity', as discussed by Campbell (1996). The Smart Growth Network (2002) identifies 10 principles of 'smart growth' that were meant to guide community planning efforts to achieve 'sustainable development':

Smart Growth Principles

1. Mix land uses
2. Take advantage of compact building design
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
4. **Create walkable neighborhoods**
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
8. **Provide a variety of transportation choices**
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

Since two of these 'smart growth' principles are to 'create walkable neighbourhoods' and 'provide a variety of transportation choices', this indicates the significant role of active transportation networks in supporting community planning efforts to foster 'sustainable development.' Additionally, the 'smart growth' movement that initially took hold in the United States, soon spread into Canada and is particularly reflected in the aims of Ontario's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006). This Provincial Plan, which will be further assessed in Section 5 of this MRP, is based upon the same general 'smart growth' principles in its aims of building 'complete communities' (as previously defined in Section 1).

Moreover, while 'smart growth' may be thought of as only being applicable to larger urban areas, the concept is still of particular relevance to rural areas. This is especially important to emphasize because the Town of Innisfil remains a predominantly rural municipality, despite growing urban influences. As such, further to the ten 'smart growth' principles previously identified, the Smart Growth Network (2010) suggests that in structuring a rural 'smart growth' approach, the following three overarching goals and sub-strategies should be used:

GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND POLICY TOOLS FOR RURAL SMART GROWTH

Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3
Support the Rural Landscape *Create an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands.*	**Help Existing Places Thrive** *Take care of assets and investments such as downtowns, Main Streets, existing infrastructure, and places that the community values.*	**Create Great New Places** *Build vibrant, enduring neighborhoods and communities that people, especially young people, don't want to leave.*
1.a. Ensure the viability of the resource economy in the region	2.a. Invest public and private funds in existing places	3.a. Update strategic and policy documents to accommodate new growth through compact and contiguous development
1.b. Cultivate economic development strategies that rely on traditional rural landscapes	2.b. Encourage private sector investment	3.b. Reform policies to make it easy for developers to build compact, walkable, mixed-use places
1.c. Promote rural products in urban areas and support other urban-rural links	2.c. Build on past community investments	3.c. Recognize and reward developers that build great places using smart growth and green building approaches
1.d. Link rural land preservation strategies to great neighborhoods	2.d. Foster economic development in existing downtowns	

Table 1: (Source: Smart Growth Network, 2010)

The Smart Growth Network (2010) further indicates that these overall goals are particularly useful when applied to rapidly growing rural areas. Therefore, an overall approach that aims to 'Support the Rural Landscape', 'Help Existing Places Thrive', and 'Create Great New Places', will help ensure that a high quality of life is maintained in the rural areas of Innisfil, in addition to a high quality of life within the urbanizing areas of the Town. This dual approach will ensure that the growth of all areas of the Town is addressed within this same 'smart growth' framework. From the previous table, of particular relevance to the subject matter of this MRP is sub-strategy 3b, which directs planners to: "Reform policies to make it easy for developers to build compact, walkable, mixed-use places." This further indicates the significant role that active transportation networks can play in supporting the sustainable development of rural communities.

4.2 Benefits of 'Active Transportation' in Building 'Complete Communities'

In the past few years, the strong role of enhanced active transportation networks in building healthy, complete communities has become increasingly realized. This is evident in the numerous reports that have been completed to assess and champion their numerous public health, safety, social, economic, and environmental benefits. Transport Canada, for instance, prepared a report entitled *Active Transportation in Canada: A Resource and Planning Guide (2011)*, the Heart and Stroke Foundation prepared a report entitled *Shaping Healthy, Active Communities: A Toolkit for Built Environment Change (2010)*, while the Ontario Professional Planners Institute prepared reports entitled *Planning By Design: A Healthy Communities Handbook (2009)* and *A Call to Action: Planning and Implementing Active Transportation in Ontario Communities (2012)*. These reports indicate how the broader planning community is increasingly recognizing the significant role that active transportation can play in creating healthier and more vibrant, pedestrian-oriented communities. While the challenge lies in effectively conveying this message

and receiving ‘buy-in’ and support from the broader community, the various benefits of active transportation as described in these reports will be summarized in the next several paragraphs.

Enhanced active transportation networks can provide significant health benefits for communities as the transportation choices that people make, will significantly impact their overall health and well-being. Generally, suburbanization trends and emphasis on building transportation networks solely for the private automobile have had a negative influence on public health. Current research indicates that 60% of Canadian adults are considered overweight or obese, along with 26% of Canadian children and youth. This has resulted in an estimated $5.3 billion per year in direct and indirect health care costs (Transport Canada, 2011). As such, the effective promotion of walking and cycling can importantly increase physical activity and combat against the rise in obesity and the incidence of diabetes. Active transportation can also contribute to improved mental health by increasing opportunities for social interaction, which can reduce social isolation (OPPI, 2012).

Active transportation networks can also provide numerous safety benefits to communities since “well-designed and purposeful infrastructure” can reduce the frequency and severity of pedestrian and cyclist injuries and fatalities, especially for more vulnerable users such as children and seniors. Research shows a “safety in numbers” effect whereby an increase in the number of pedestrians and cyclists on the road will increase its overall safety for all users (OPPI, 2012). This reflects the growing emphasis on creating ‘complete streets’ that aim to enhance the capacity of roads to support all modes of transportation (OPPI, 2009). From this, the role of active transportation networks in contributing to safe, ‘complete communities’ is evident.

Active transportation provides significant environmental benefits for communities as virtually zero greenhouse gases are emitted. Replacing short vehicle trips with active

transportation can particularly reduce air pollution because emissions are highest when a car is first started (Transport Canada, 2011). It is estimated that 90% of the emissions in a typical 11-kilometre trip are generated in the first 1.6 kilometres before the engine warms up (Transport Canada, 2011). Therefore, since trips in areas of the Town of Innisfil such as within Alcona can cover very short distances, significant environmental benefits can be gained through an enhanced active transportation network that reduces automobile dependence. However, greater emphasis needs to be placed on creating more destinations within Alcona in order for residents to be inclined to walk or cycle on a regular basis.

Active transportation modes offer an "intimate perspective of communities beyond the confines of the automobile" and can thus provide substantial social benefits. Since more people cycling or walking around a neighbourhood puts more "eyes on the street," active transportation "encourages social interaction, fosters a sense of place and increases the perception of personal safety." Additionally, active transportation networks are more inclusive of all people regardless of their age, health, or socio-economic condition (OPPI, 2012). Specifically, approximately 20% of all Canadian households do not own a car (this proportion is likely to be lower in rural areas such as Innisfil), another 10% cannot drive because of a disability, while a further 10% simply do not have the income to support car ownership. Furthermore, approximately 40% of the average Canadian's life is spent either as a child or senior citizen, and people of these ages often do not have a driver's license (Litman, 2010). As a result, it is evident that enhanced active transportation networks can create a more socially inclusively and safe community.

Active transportation networks can also provide significant economic benefits to communities because they increase its overall quality of life and 'liveability', which can thereby assist efforts to attract and retain residents and businesses. Campbell & Wittgens (2004)

quantified the economic benefits of active transportation to be $3.6 billion dollars per year in Canada. Furthermore, as theorized by Florida (2002), there are substantial economic benefits associated with providing amenities such as active transportation to attract knowledge-based businesses and the 'creative class', a term broadly defined to include "people engaged in professional, product development, entrepreneurial, artistic, and management occupations" (Filion et. al., 2004). Emphasis on active transportation can also provide substantial economic cost savings to municipalities since active transportation infrastructure is considerably less expensive to construct and maintain than motor vehicle transportation infrastructure (Transport Canada, 2011). It has been estimated that the cost of creating a bike lane is approximately $20,000/ km if no road widening is needed and $150,000/ km if road widening is required. Comparatively, it costs approximately $1.3 million/km to widen a two lane urban arterial road to four lanes (Transport Canada, 2011). Furthermore, active transportation also supports local businesses because studies have proven that cyclists and pedestrians are more likely to spend their money at local destinations. Therefore, despite concerns that eliminating on-street parking to create bike lanes may harm local businesses, the experiences of various cities has actually shown otherwise (Transport Canada, 2011). Active transportation networks can also provide additional tax revenues as they have the effect of increasing house prices and property values (EPA, 2012). It is consequently evident that active transportation can play a significant role in building 'complete communities', supporting local businesses and generating additional tax revenues for local governments.

4.3 Role of Active Transportation in Successful Downtown Development

Enhanced active transportation networks can also play an important role in supporting successful downtown development. This is important because largely as a result of

suburbanization trends, downtowns face particular challenges in their revitalization efforts. The downtowns of smaller towns and cities often face greater challenges in their redevelopment efforts, because they may not have the financial resources of larger cities (Filion et al., 2004). Additionally, bedroom communities essentially become residential suburbs to larger cities, and this further challenges the fostering of a strong downtown core and distinct community identity. In the local Innisfil context, the City of Barrie can be viewed as having this effect on the Town. As such, the role of active transportation networks in supporting successful downtowns will be assessed in this section because the Town of Innisfil is aiming to create a downtown core in Alcona, to support its aims of facilitating a distinct community identity (*Inspiring Innisfil 2020*, 2010). This is evident in the *Urban Design Guidelines for Innisfil Beach Road* (2005) that were adopted by the Town, and have been implemented with zoning provisions to allow the development of buildings for a height up to 7 storeys (*Innisfil Beach Road Zoning By-Law Study*, 2010). This assessment into successful downtowns will therefore support the Town of Innisfil's efforts into developing Alcona as an urban core.

Filion et al. (2004) emphasize that "interest in downtowns may be bolstered by present-day environmental and economic development thinking." This is because the compact and pedestrian-oriented characteristics of downtown areas are consistent with the smart growth principles that aim to contain urban sprawl and reduce automobile dependence. Filion et al. (2004) further emphasize how from an economic development perspective, downtowns that are "lively, entertainment- and culture-rich" are considered highly appealing to the "creative class." As such, since Florida (2002) emphasizes how attracting the "creative class" can stimulate local economic growth, the ability of downtowns to attract these types of people will enhance their overall 'success.' Additionally, because members of the 'creative class' are typically younger

and more likely to walk and/or cycle as their primary modes of transportation, this therefore suggests that an enhanced active transportation network will further assist downtowns in attracting the 'creative' people extolled in the literature as significantly helping stimulate local revitalization and economic development processes.

The research conducted by Filion et al., (2004) is the most relevant piece of scholarly literature with respect to its assessment of successful downtowns in smaller cities, which they define as having a population between 100,000 to 500,000, throughout North America. This group of researchers identified the common characteristics found in what they considered to be the most successful downtowns. While the Town of Innisfil is planning for Alcona to accommodate a population of approximately 32,000 people (Town of Innisfil Official Plan, 2010), a number that is much less than the downtowns that were the focus of this study, the results of the study by Filion et al. (2004) are nevertheless applicable to Innisfil's planning efforts. This is because their general research findings and 'success' characteristics can be applied to downtowns of any size. Overall, Filion et al. (2004) were generally led to conclude that the revitalization policies of smaller cities should concentrate on niche markets that focus on the retention and enhancement of the characteristics that clearly distinguish their downtowns from their surrounding 'homogeneous' suburban environments. Filion et al. (2004) also noted that not only did successful downtowns tend to have a "magnet" to attract people; they also promoted and facilitated a form of urban design that maximized "pedestrian-based synergy between downtown activities." This is evident in the results of the survey administered by Filion et al. (2004), which revealed that the top five factors identified by planners as being 'very important' to the success of smaller city downtowns included: 'an active retail scene', 'pedestrian environment', 'cultural activities', 'street-oriented retail', and 'people on sidewalks.'

As such, these results and conclusions posed by Filion et al. (2004) indicate how an enhanced active transportation network can play a significant role in downtown revitalization by promoting an active, vibrant pedestrian environment and by providing increased connectivity between major 'downtown activities'.

The results of the study conducted by Filion et al. (2004) further indicate how although portions of Innisfil Beach Road in Alcona have already been redeveloped with a separated sidewalk and bike lane to promote walking and cycling opportunities, the Town of Innisfil needs to increase their efforts in promoting 'an active retail scene' and developing more 'magnets' to attract people into Alcona. This might be achieved by the development of a public square/park along Innisfil Beach Road and/or the development of a restaurant/café district, as indicated in the *Urban Design Guidelines for Innisfil Beach Road* (2005). These types of amenities and community destination would significantly support the current planning efforts to develop Alcona as an urban core, while enticing greater amounts of people to walk and cycle within the Town.

Overall, the academic literature and planning reports explored in this literature review provide strong support for the argument that greater emphasis on the development of enhanced active transportation networks can play an important role in the building of complete communities and assisting successful downtown development. This is because active transportation can provide significant health, safety, social, environmental, and economic benefits, in directly reflecting 'smart growth' principles. As such, the Town of Innisfil should place greater emphasis on the development of active transportation networks in its planning strategies that aim to build complete communities and a downtown core within Alcona. A strong core is needed to provide 'destinations' that promote walking and cycling opportunities.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Planning in Ontario is conducted through a top-down policy framework in which the overarching legislation is established by the Provincial Government and then implemented through local municipal planning documents. This section will outline the relevant legislation and policy directions as they pertain to planning for active transportation at the Provincial, County of Simcoe, and Town of Innisfil level.

5.1 Provincial Policy Context

5.1.1 Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990

The Planning Act sets out the overall legislative framework for how planning is to be conducted in the Province of Ontario. The Planning Act (s.2) identifies 17 matters of 'Provincial interest' that the Minister, the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board and the Ontario Municipal Board "shall have regard" to when carrying out their responsibilities under the Act. The following 'provincial interests' are of most relevance to the provision of enhanced active transportation networks in communities:

- The adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems;
- The orderly development of safe and healthy communities;
- The protection of public health and safety; and,
- The promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians.

Therefore, the matters of 'provincial interest' identified in the Planning Act, which aim to plan for 'safe and healthy communities' and promote pedestrian-oriented development, directly support and encourage the provision of enhanced active transportation networks.

5.1.2 Provincial Policy Statement (2005)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), last updated in 2005, is issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act and provides policy direction on the matters of 'provincial interest' that the Act identifies. The new PPS came into effect in 2005 with the basis of building strong communities, protecting the natural environment, and supporting a strong economy. The PPS states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained, in part, by promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term. The PPS further states that "in implementing the Provincial Policy Statement, the Official Plan is the most significant vehicle for its implementation" and on this basis, Official Plans are required to include policies that identify and protect Provincial interests. The Planning Act requires Official Plans to "be consistent with" the PPS.

The PPS provides three umbrella principles ('Building Strong Communities', 'Wise Use and Management of Resources', and 'Protecting Public Health and Safety') and a series of supporting policies to provide the provincial direction that municipalities are required to reflect in their Official Plans. Each of the overarching principles of the PPS provides direct support for the provision of enhanced active transportation networks in communities. This is because, as emphasized in the literature review, greater amounts of people walking and cycling helps build 'strong communities' and promotes the 'wise use and management of resources.' Additionally, active transportation infrastructure such as bike lanes, sidewalks and trails, help in 'protecting public health and safety', as they reduce collisions between pedestrians/cyclists and motor vehicles.

Various sections of the PPS provide more detailed policies to recognize the important role of active transportation in supporting these three overarching principles. Particularly, policies included within the 'Transportation Systems' (1.6.5), 'Public Spaces, Parks and Open Space' (1.5), and Housing (1.4.3) sections (see Appendix) provide clear direction and also indicate that enhanced walking and cycling networks are a vital component in building complete, healthy communities. The 'Transportation Systems' section provides direction for a transportation system that is safe, energy efficient, interconnected, and supported by an appropriate mix of land uses and densities that promote alternative transportation modes. To reflect the importance of transportation objectives within the PPS, this section also directs that "transportation and land use considerations shall be integrated at all stages of the planning process."

The policies contained within the 'Public Spaces, Parks and Open Space' section of the PPS provide further direction in planning 'transportation systems' to achieve 'healthy, active communities' by "planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, and facilitate pedestrian and non-motorized movement, including but not limited to, walking and cycling." This direction reflects the growing movement to plan for 'complete streets', which accommodate all road users, including motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Additionally, since residential land uses comprise a significant proportion of the total land area of communities, the 'Housing' section of the PPS provides direction for residential densities, which "efficiently use land resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities, and support the use of alternative transportation modes." Therefore, as a component of its overall aim and direction to achieve more efficient land use patterns, these policies in the 'Transportation', 'Public Spaces, Parks and Open Space' and 'Housing' sections of the PPS aim

to achieve enhanced multi-modal connectivity and reduced automobile dependence. As such, emphasis on the construction of active transportation networks will substantially support any community planning efforts aiming to achieve this shift. This direction of the PPS also indicates the substantial focus on active transportation and the building of complete, healthy communities that will be required in the process for updating the Town of Innisfil OP.

5.1.3 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006)

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is a provincial plan that came into effect in 2006 to establish a policy framework for managing growth in the GGH to the year 2031. In accordance with the Planning Act, all municipal planning decisions must conform to the legislation of the Growth Plan. With a vision to building stronger, more prosperous, and 'complete communities', the Growth Plan guides municipal and provincial decisions on a wide range of issues that include transportation, infrastructure planning, land use planning, urban form, housing, natural heritage, and resource protection. The Growth Plan intends to achieve this overall vision through specific policy directions that aim to:

- Revitalize downtowns to become vibrant and convenient centres;
- Create complete communities that offer more options for living, working, shopping, and playing;
- Provide greater choice in housing types to meet the needs of people at all stages in life;
- Curb urban sprawl and protect farmlands and green spaces; and,
- Reduce traffic gridlock by improving access to a greater range of transportation choices.

These overall policy directions reflect the intent of the PPS to achieve more efficient land use development patterns and 'complete communities.' To connect with the Literature Review of this MRP, the Growth Plan directly reflects the principles of the 'smart growth' movement that had taken hold in the United States.

In its overall attempt of building 'complete communities', the Growth Plan places particular emphasis on reducing automobile dependence by providing a greater range of transportation opportunities such as by walking, cycling and public transit. The 'Transportation' section of the Growth Plan contains policies that directly require municipalities "to ensure that pedestrian and bicycle networks are integrated into transportation planning" to:

- Provide safe, comfortable travel for pedestrians and bicyclists within existing communities and new development; and,
- Provide linkages between intensification areas, adjacent neighbourhoods, and transit stations, including dedicated lane space for bicyclists on the major street network where feasible (Growth Plan, 2006).

As such, within the local Innisfil context, the Town will need to ensure that linkages are provided that safely and comfortably facilitate walking and cycling networks, in both new and existing neighbourhoods.

The Growth Plan also places significant emphasis on achieving growth through residential and employment intensification. Specifically, as part of an overall attempt to limit urban sprawl and create more 'complete communities', municipalities are required to direct 40% of all residential development to their existing built areas. As an additional measure to revitalize downtowns and more strategically achieve intensification, 25 'urban growth centres' were identified with prescribed population and employment density targets (Growth Plan, 2006). Therefore, to support its aims of directing growth to 'urban growth centres' and along 'intensification corridors', the Province established the agency Metrolinx, which in 2008 released *The Big Move*, a regional transportation plan for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. While the Town of Innisfil is located just outside its jurisdiction (a similar *Simcoe Area Multi-Modal Transportation Strategy* is currently being prepared by the Province for the local municipalities in Simcoe County), this plan highlights the role of active transportation networks

in achieving a more efficient regional transportation network. As such, the role of walking and cycling networks in contributing to more efficient land use patterns and transportation networks is evident within both the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006)* and *The Big Move (2008)* regional transportation plan.

The Town of Innisfil is located within Simcoe County, an area experiencing significant development pressures. In 2011, the census population within the County was recorded to be 446,063 people, a growth rate of 35% from the 1996 Census, substantially higher than the growth rate of 20% for the Province of Ontario as a whole over this time. Since Simcoe County is forecast to reach a population of 667,000 people by the year 2031, the Growth Plan was amended in January 2012 to further control the growth of the 'Simcoe Area.' This amendment included population and employment forecasts for each local municipality in Simcoe County. These forecasts, provided in Schedule 7, allocate a total population of 56,000 and total employment of 13,100 for the Town of Innisfil to the year 2031. The 'Simcoe Area Growth Plan Amendment' also identified two specific areas in Innisfil that will be targeted for intensification: the 'Alcona Primary Settlement Area' and the 'Innisfil Heights Strategic Settlement Employment Area.' As such, the Town will be required to direct a significant proportion of its population and employment growth to these two areas. This management of the Town's growth will occur in accordance with the targets established for the County of Simcoe, which must plan for 40% of its overall residential development to occur within its existing built areas, while the County's designated greenfield areas and newly developing subdivisions must be planned to achieve an average density of 50 residents and jobs per hectare.

The Growth Plan contains policies (see Appendix) that aim to guide the development of 'Designated Greenfield Areas' (generally the un-built portions of Settlement Areas as of the

Plan's adoption), and assist municipalities in achieving this overall density target. Through policy directions that aim for designated greenfield areas to be "planned, designated, zoned and designed" to create "street configurations, densities, and an urban form that support walking and cycling", these policies are of particular relevance to the subject matter of this MRP and its focus for 'complete communities.' The Growth Plan envisions that the development of complete communities and vibrant neighbourhoods will be supported by a "diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses", in addition to "high quality public open spaces" that "support opportunities for transit, walking and cycling." Therefore, the policy directions of the Growth Plan emphasize that in addition to the provision of a range of housing densities and mixed land uses, an enhanced active transportation network can strategically support the development of 'complete communities'. As such, emphasis on walking and cycling will greatly assist the Town's efforts in planning to achieve the Growth Plan's development targets and vision for building more 'complete communities', particularly within its newly developing 'designated greenfield areas.'

5.1.4 Transit-Supportive Land Use Planning Guidelines (2012)

To further support the growing movement to plan for more pedestrian-oriented and transit-supportive communities, in 2012, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) updated its Transit-Supportive Land Use Planning Guidelines. While these guidelines are not a statement of provincial policy, they are intended to assist municipalities in planning to achieve the objectives of provincial legislation such as the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The guidelines place significant emphasis on promoting development that supports increased transit ridership in existing systems, while helping facilitate the establishment of new transit

systems. The MTO indicates that in the case of smaller centres such as the Town of Innisfil, which currently do not have a public transit system, the guidelines will be useful in providing tools and strategies to create a more compact land use pattern that supports walking and cycling, in a way to help optimize the effectiveness and financial feasibility of future transit services. This indicates how smaller towns that envision public transit services, must first place particular focus on ensuring that a supportive walking and cycling network is established. These Guidelines established by MTO will be assessed further in the process of recommending new policies for inclusion into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan.

5.2 County of Simcoe Policy Context

5.2.1 County of Simcoe Official Plan (2008)

As an upper-tier municipality, the County of Simcoe Official Plan (OP) is the overarching policy document that lower-tier municipalities such as the Town of Innisfil must conform to. The current County OP was adopted in 2008 and subsequently amended in 2012, although several portions of this document are currently under appeal at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). To reflect the growing emphasis and direction of provincial planning legislation, the County of Simcoe OP states that the "development of complete and healthy communities is a priority", and further directs that "the design of streetscapes, building orientation, and traffic flow should be planned to provide safe pedestrian and cycling access and movement in downtowns, main streets, and other activity areas" (Simcoe OP, 2008, 4.1.5). To implement this direction, the 'Transportation' section of the County OP (4.8.33) contains policies to require that all development proposals and/or secondary plans within settlement areas include "pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive urban design elements." Each of these 'elements' is listed in the

‘Appendix’ at the end of this MRP and will need to considered as part of Innisfil’s OP Update process. While this section of the County OP includes general aims to reflect the PPS such as ensuring a mix of residential and employment uses are provided to support a system of ‘walkways and bicycle paths’, specific design guidelines to support active transportation are also identified. Particularly, the County directs that 75% of all residents should be located within 400 metres of an existing or potential transit stop (approximately a 5-10 minute walk), and no more than 200 metres for 30% of residents (to conform to the Growth Plan). This is a measure to ensure that residential development occur at densities and in locations that promote walkability and the use of alternative modes of transportation. This is a useful policy measure that the Town of Innisfil Official Plan should consider incorporating as a way to support the role of active transportation in building complete communities.

Within its overall framework to plan for more complete, healthy, pedestrian-oriented communities, the County Official Plan also includes policies (see Appendix) to require local municipalities to develop an active transportation plan. The County OP identifies various elements that this type of a plan should contain to ensure that walking and cycling networks are effectively planned, designed and implemented. In addition to developing a map “identifying existing and proposed sidewalks, multi-use trails, and associated facilities”, the County OP emphasizes the importance of the “dedication of lands in new development areas to complete future trail and sidewalk connections.” Furthermore, developing and implementing accessible design standards and safety measures such as traffic calming, narrower streets, signage, and cycling lanes are also emphasized. These are measures to overcome the barriers to greater amounts of people walking and cycling, such as a perceived lack of safety and the lack of an interconnected network. Therefore, to reflect the overarching provincial planning legislation, the

Simcoe County OP places substantial emphasis on the development of active transportation networks in building complete, healthy communities. These County OP policies helped provide direction for the development of the Innisfil Transportation Master Plan, which the Town's OP will need to help implement. Generally, the Town's OP will need to include comprehensive policies that aim to ensure that the envisioned active transportation is not only planned and developed, but also that it is accessible, safe and supported with the necessary infrastructure such as end-of-trip facilities (e.g. bike racks and showers/change rooms).

5.2.2 Simcoe County Transportation Master Plan (2008)

In 2008, to accompany its Official Plan update, Simcoe County adopted its first Transportation Master Plan (TMP). This plan was developed around a vision for a balanced transportation network that would service all modes: pedestrian, cycling, transit and automobiles/trucks. In addition to reflecting the general aims of the County OP policies previously summarized, the specific 'strategic directions' within this TMP also identify the need to 'permit active transportation infrastructure on some County Roads.' The TMP identifies that lower volume County roads should 'allow' on-road bike lanes, while higher volume County roads should 'allow' off-road trails within boulevard areas. This growing emphasis on the provision of active transportation networks in building complete communities is even further reflected in the Simcoe County TMP Update that is currently underway. The over-arching vision for the updated TMP is "to provide a comprehensive and adaptable multi-modal transportation system." In addition, the benefits of active transportation in enhancing the overall social, economic and environmental health of communities have been particularly emphasized in the public consultation sessions surrounding this process.

5.2.3 Simcoe County Trails Strategy (2011)

To build upon the Simcoe County Transportation Master Plan and Official Plan that were adopted in 2008, the County developed a Simcoe Trails Strategy in 2011 to coordinate the development of an interconnected system of trails and active transportation routes. While significant emphasis within this strategy is on developing a 'world-class network' to boost tourism, it is also focused on improving the health and quality of life of all existing residents in the County. The Strategy includes the development of both on and off-road trails that are to be constructed in three phases over a period of 10 years. The trails that are planned for construction within the Town of Innisfil as a part of this strategy include:

<u>Phase 1 (1 – 3 years)</u>
- Innisfil Beach Road from Yonge Street to 20th Sideroad

<u>Phase 2 (4 – 7 years)</u>
- Innisfil Beach Road from 10th Sideroad to Yonge Street
- Yonge Street from Lockhart Road to the Innisfil / Bradford West Gwillimbury boundary

<u>Phase 3 (8 – 10 years)</u>
- North on 20 Sideroad from the Innisfil / Bradford West Gwillimbury boundary to Gilford Road.
- Gilford Road from 20th Sideroad to the lakeshore.
- Along the lakeshore from Gilford Road to 13th Line.

While these trails have yet to be constructed within the Town, the significant economic and health benefits associated with trail and active transportation development are nevertheless evident within the Simcoe County Trails Strategy. For instance, a study of a trail in Quebec determined that each cyclist spends approximately $22.50 – $25.00 dollars per trip (on items such as maps, hotels, restaurants, cycling equipment, etc.) resulting in a total annual spending of $3 million to 3.4 million (Trails Strategy, 2011). Therefore, because of this potentially significant local economic impact of trails, the Town of Innisfil should consider whether additional policies are needed within its Official Plan to lend support to the development of the trail networks identified within its boundaries in the Simcoe County Trails Strategy.

5.3 Town of Innisfil Policy Context

5.3.1 Town of Innisfil Official Plan (2006)

As a lower-tier municipality, the Town of Innisfil Official Plan (OP) conforms to the Simcoe County Official Plan and implements the policies of the Province of Ontario. The Town's OP provides greater detail in terms of land use designations and policies to reflect the local Innisfil context. The Town of Innisfil OP was adopted in 2006, while portions have since been approved by the OMB in 2009, 2010 and 2011. As such, the Town is set to embark on an Official Plan Update process, as mandated by the Planning Act, with the purpose of implementing recent strategic planning exercises that have been undertaken by the Town, and to conform to recent amendments to the County OP and provincial planning legislation. Overall, the Town's current OP identifies that "it is a defining principle that Innisfil will be a healthy, liveable and safe community". Furthermore, the OP generally directs that the Town should grow as a 'complete community', "providing for a greater choice for housing, increased employment and self-sufficiency with shopping, recreation and community services" (Town of Innisfil OP, 2011). This statement was taken from the 'Growth Management' section contained within the OP, and it is noteworthy that this entire section does not contain the words 'walking' or 'cycling' or 'active transportation' in any part of it. As such, the purpose of this section of the MRP will be to assess the extent to which the role of active transportation in building 'complete communities' is currently recognized within the Town of Innisfil OP. This assessment will therefore help identify where new policies should be incorporated to more effectively support active transportation.

The 'Transportation and Transit' section of the Town of Innisfil OP contains policies to establish the transportation vision for the community (see Appendix). While the 'Intent' of this

‘Transportation and Transit’ section of the Town’s OP indicates that “it is a policy of the Town to encourage and support the implementation of other less energy intensive forms of transportation”, it is clear that these transportation policies are largely focused on facilitating automobile traffic. Furthermore, since only one of the 12 transportation policy objectives currently bears any mention to the provision of an active transportation or trail network, they do not fully reflect how walking and cycling networks are being increasingly viewed as an essential element of building ‘complete communities.’

Within this overall ‘Transportation and Transit’ section however, the ‘Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails’ sub-section (8.4, see Appendix) makes explicit mention of the aims of the Town to prepare a Trails Master Plan to implement the vision for a “continuous pedestrian and bicycle trail system linking parks and community facilities,” comprised of both ‘on-street and off-street routes.’ The OP further states that “it is the policy of Council to include bicycling considerations in new development and redevelopment proposals.” While these policies represent laudable aims, they are somewhat hidden within the overall structure of the OP and particularly within the ‘Transportation’ section, which is largely focused on facilitating an efficient road network for automobiles. As such, this has likely helped result in the automobile-oriented development patterns that are currently prevalent within the Town. The Town’s OP Update process must consider policies that aim to create a more balanced transportation network within Innisfil.

The ‘Urban Design’ section (5.0) of the Town of Innisfil OP makes considerably greater attempts to recognize the role of active transportation in building ‘complete communities.’ Sub-section 5.1 (see Appendix) includes nine overall principles for an ‘Integrated Community Urban Structure’, several of which directly support the role of active transportation in building complete communities. Generally, these principles aim to ‘develop interconnected street and pedestrian

systems for Urban Settlements to promote walkability and clarity of orientation.' These overall principles are further reinforced through policies in sub-section 5.2 ('Neighbourhood Structure, Road Network & Block Patterns') (see Appendix) which specifically pertain to the design, structure and layout of neighbourhoods. This sub-section contains specific aims for designing neighbourhoods to feature shorter block lengths with mid-block pedestrian routes, in order to support the overall aim of having the majority of residents located "within 400 metres of focal areas and amenities such as parks, schools, and convenience commercial establishments." As such, these 'Urban Design' policies indicate how the Town desires to build walkable, pedestrian-oriented communities. This is further reflected in sub-section 5.3 (Streetscape) which states: "Streets and roads shall provide for the safety and ease of use of multiple means of transportation including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and transit." However, these policies are also somewhat 'hidden' within the OP and could be more effectively reflected upfront in the 'Municipal Structure' section, since this is where the overall vision for growth is established. They could also be further refined with more specific design requirements and updated to address certain barriers to cycling such as the lack of end-of-trip facilities such as bike storage and shower/change room facilities.

The Town OP also places emphasis on developing an interconnected system of open spaces to support its envisioned trail network. This is reflected in section 5.4 ('Open Space System, see Appendix), which emphasizes that "the open space system shall be fully linked and connected to create a network that encourages access for all residents and promotes convenience of pedestrian and bicycle movement." Furthermore, a 'multi-use trail system' is envisioned as linking "all the settlements and neighbourhoods within the Town", in addition to connecting "residential areas as well as commercial core areas, employment areas and community

amenities." To help implement this system of open space areas, the Town's OP (policy 3.10.20) also states that "Secondary Plans shall identify and map a continuous public trail system consisting of linkages through Parks and Open Space, natural heritage features, storm water management ponds, off-street linkages and on-street linkages." An example of where this policy has had effect is the following statement from the 'Energy Conservation' section contained within the Alcona Secondary Plan (OP policy 10.2.7.2): "Plans of subdivision shall be designed to maximize the use of energy efficient modes of travel and reduce energy consumption by automobile travel by increasing opportunities for non-automobile transportation such as cycling, walking." Therefore, these policies as a whole generally provide a strong basis for the Town to develop an interconnected network of trails through on-street and off-street linkages. However, they need to be clearly identified as over-arching growth objectives within the Town's Official Plan Update process. They should also be updated to reflect the design requirements specified in the Simcoe County Official Plan to more effectively support active transportation.

5.3.2 Innisfil Beach Road Urban Design Study (2005)

In 2005, the Town of Innisfil conducted an Urban Design Study for Innisfil Beach Road, the main street of the Alcona settlement area. This Study identified the overall vision for Innisfil Beach Road to become the 'urban downtown corridor of Alcona', characterized by 'a vibrant, mixed use main street environment' and "pedestrian-supportive streetscape" (Innisfil Beach Road Urban Design Study, 2005). As such, this study provided the urban design framework to guide the transformation of Innisfil Beach Road and Alcona into a more vibrant urban core within the Town of Innisfil. Prominent within this framework is the role of active transportation in contributing to a vibrant streetscape. However, while a bike lane has been recently

constructed along Innisfil Beach Road, there are very few destinations or 'magnets' to attract people along this street to make it feel like a pedestrian-friendly downtown. An assessment of the Town of Innisfil OP also indicates that the vision for Alcona as the downtown core of the Town is not adequately reflected. As such, the 'Recommendations' section of this MRP will also provide policies that should be considered for inclusion into the OP to more effectively leverage the existing active transportation infrastructure and promote Alcona as a pedestrian-friendly 'core'.

5.3.3 Inspiring Innisfil 2020 (2010)

In 2010, the Town of Innisfil completed a community visioning exercise which is expressed in the *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* document. The strategic vision for the Town has been recently updated to reflect the three pillars of 'Community', 'Economic Development' and 'Tourism and Culture'. Within this overall strategic planning framework, six key priorities were identified for the community, two of which directly relate to the subject matter of this MRP: to 'Complete a review of the Town's Official Plan' and to 'Plan Alcona as the urban core.' To help implement these over-arching priorities, a number of key strategies are outlined, two of which directly relate to the provision of active transportation networks as follows: 'Connect residents and neighbourhoods' and 'Make Innisfil a regional destination for outdoor recreation' (see Appendix).

The strategy to 'connect residents and neighbourhoods' within the *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* strategic plan aims to "enhance the networks that enable people to move within and between Innisfil's neighbourhoods." This is a response to the fact that neighbourhoods and settlement areas within the Town are physically isolated from one another. Since "community cohesion

depends on the easy movement and interaction of people within and between neighbourhoods", the strategic plan identifies it as a 'key action' to create a Community Linkages Plan in order "to allow pedestrians and bicyclists better movement within and between neighbourhoods, as well as better access to the Lake and community assets" (*Inspiring Innisfil 2020*). The plan further specifies that the OP should "require physical linkages connecting neighbourhoods and all new developments." As such, this strategy of the *Inspiring Innisfil* community strategic plan strongly reflects how enhanced active transportation networks are viewed as an important element to help create a more unified, cohesive community in the local context.

Furthermore, the strategy of *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* to 'make Innisfil a regional destination for outdoor recreation' reflects the role of active transportation networks in helping stimulate tourism and supporting the local economy. Particularly, in an attempt to capitalize on the location of Innisfil along Lake Simcoe and its proximity to the urban areas of Toronto and Barrie, *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* identifies it is a strategic initiative to attract tourists and visitors by promoting activities such as walking, cycling, ice fishing, sports fishing and snowmobiling. Therefore, the strategic goal of Innisfil to "establish a network of recreational trails" is envisioned as providing transportation options, recreation opportunities and providing off-road and on-road linkages within the community (*Inspiring Innisfil 2020*). This reflects how trails can be utilized for various recreational and utilitarian purposes and be promoted for use by both local residents and visitors/tourists.

Overall, these two key strategies within *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* indicate the strong role that active transportation is envisioned as playing in unifying and building Innisfil as a 'complete community' and providing support for the local economy. The Town's Official Plan Update process therefore needs to ensure that these aims are effectively translated into planning policies.

Furthermore, since Transport Canada (2011) identifies that active transportation needs to be strategically planned for through the multi-disciplinary efforts of numerous municipal departments and stakeholders, the prominence of enhancing 'community linkages' within *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* indicates that the Town is well positioned to achieve this aim.

5.3.4 Town of Innisfil Transportation Master Plan (2013)

To effectively supplement the *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* vision for enhanced 'community linkages', the Town is currently finalizing its first Transportation Master Plan (TMP) to address existing and future automobile, transit, cycling and pedestrian traffic needs within the Town to the year 2031. To guide the development of the TMP, the following vision was established by the Town, in consultation with the community: "Innisfil's transportation network connects people and communities, fostering healthy living and operates efficiently across the Town as an environmentally and financially sustainable system." This vision was selected to address the over-arching 'problem statement' of the TMP (see Appendix), which identifies the general transportation issues and challenges that the Town of Innisfil is facing. Overall, because of the significant growth that the Town is experiencing, "without a balanced transportation strategy to handle the growth in travel, Innisfil residents will face town-wide traffic congestion and will not be able to attain its vision and goals" (Innisfil TMP, 2013). Therefore, there is an urgent need to ensure that the Town's transportation system is planned to keep pace with the steady growth in traffic of approximately 2-4% that Innisfil has been experiencing over each of the past 10 years. As such, while the Town faces significant challenges in achieving its established TMP vision, particularly since currently "almost all travel is made by car" and "only 14% of all Innisfil work trips stay within Innisfil," the TMP nevertheless states that "there needs to be a greater emphasis

on non-auto travel choices such as cycling, walking and transit particularly for seniors, students, and those without access to a vehicle." The need to reduce dependence on the automobile is therefore emphasized.

To support the development of a more balanced transportation network within Innisfil, the TMP places significant emphasis on creating an interconnected walking and cycling network. Overall, the TMP recommends an incremental approach to improving active transportation facilities. As a starting point, it suggests providing interim low-cost active transportation facilities (e.g., a paved shoulder), prior to multi-use trails, sidewalks, or on-road bike lanes being accommodated. The Innisfil TMP also recommends for the Town to participate in the implementation of proposed trails along the County's key corridors in the Town (such as along County Road 21/Innisfil Beach Road and County Road 4/Yonge Street). The ultimate vision for the Town's active transportation network is conceptually illustrated in the TMP (see Figure 5). This envisioned active transportation network aims to tie together each of the communities within the Town of Innisfil. Figure 6 provides the conceptual vision for a network of sidewalks and trails in Alcona, to further expand upon the networks that already exist. This also includes extending active transportation facilities to connect to other communities within Innisfil. Therefore, the Innisfil TMP provides a significant vision of an enhanced active transportation network throughout the Town. A major purpose of this MRP will be to consider policies for incorporation into the Town's OP to most effectively help implement this envisioned network. For instance, as a starting point, each of the conceptual network maps of the TMP (i.e. Figures 5 and 6) should be incorporated as a 'Schedule' to the Town OP. Policies that aim to support the overall planning, design, and implementation of these envisioned networks should then be developed.

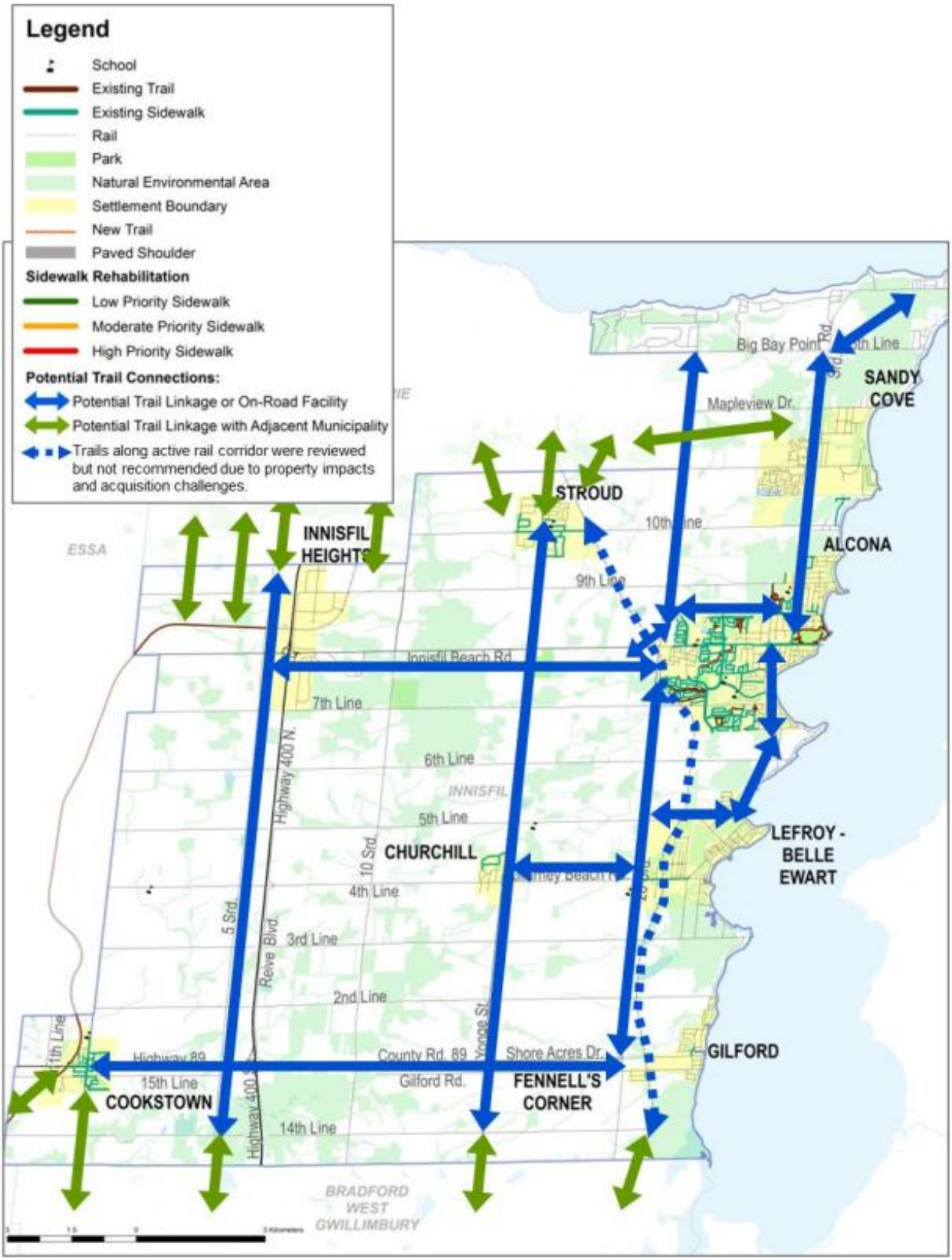

Figure 5: Proposed Active Transportation Connections in Innisfil (Source: Innisfil TMP, 2013)

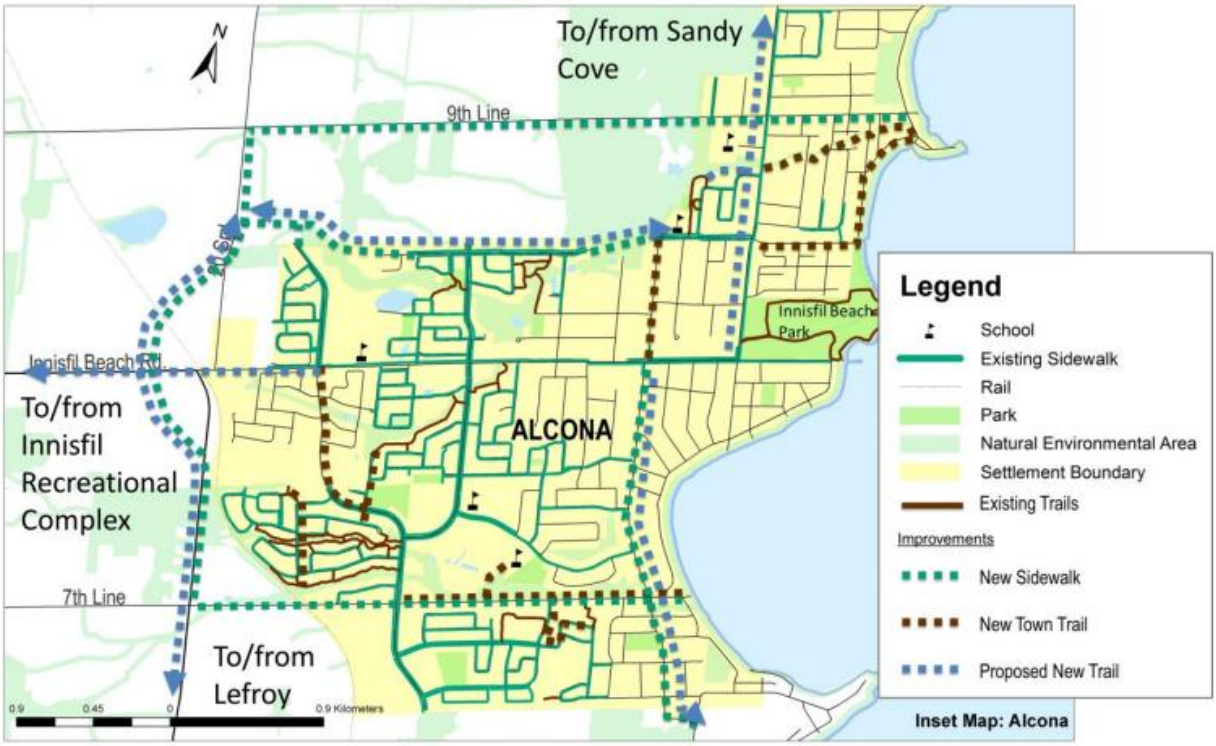

Figure 6: Proposed Active Transportation Improvements in Alcona (Source: Innisfil TMP, 2013)

Moreover, while the Innisfil TMP acknowledges that it is costly for the Town (e.g. approximately $11 million to construct all identified off-road trails) to develop the active transportation network it envisions, it identifies several provincial and federal funding programs that should be actively pursued (see Appendix). One of the most widely used programs is the Federal Gas Tax Fund. These funds are generally allocated to municipalities on a per capita basis and are to be used for "environmentally sustainable municipal infrastructure." Eligible expenditures include active transportation infrastructure such as bike lanes (Innisfil TMP, 2013). Furthermore, when active transportation projects are being considered in the Town's capital budget process, the numerous health, safety, social, environmental, and economic benefits that active transportation can provide to the community should also be emphasized. This will ensure that enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure is assessed by not only its construction cost.

Overall

Overall, this assessment of the 'Policy Context' that surrounds the subject matter of this MRP indicates the significant emphasis in planning for enhanced active transportation at all levels of government – by the Ontario Government , County of Simcoe , and Town of Innisfil. While the Town of Innisfil's existing policies in its Official Plan are generally effective in supporting the provision of active transportation, amendments to the Simcoe County as well as the recently prepared Innisfil Transportation Master Plan, provide an opportunity for these existing policies to be further updated and strengthened. As such, the following assessment into 'Best Practices', will build into the 'Recommendations' section where general active transportation policies and themes will be presented for the Town to consider during its Official Plan Update process.

Furthermore, this assessment of the ‘Policy Context’ provides insights into the general aims, issues and challenges that surround the development and implementation of policies that aim to provide enhanced active transportation networks. First and foremost, the overall aim of the planning policies presented in this section is to address the current lack of safe and interconnected active transportation infrastructure that is generally evident not just within Innisfil, but throughout Ontario. This deficiency is perhaps the greatest barrier to increasing the total amount of people walking and cycling. Particularly, the lack of safe and connected walking and cycling infrastructure heightens the risk of motor vehicle and pedestrian/cyclist collisions, mainly on roads with higher traffic volumes and speeds. Therefore, the provision of safe and interconnected active transportation routes, which are physically separated from automobiles, are strong motivators for people to walk and cycle (Winters et al, 2011). This is precisely the aim of the various land use planning policies and strategies identified, which generally aim to facilitate

the design of an interconnected active transportation that provides safe and convenient walking and cycling opportunities to various community destinations.

While somewhat outside the scope of land use planning, it is also important to identify other barriers to walking and cycling such as the lack of adequate and secure bike parking as well as other end-of-trip facilities such as showers and change rooms, particularly if the aim is to have greater amounts of people biking to work (Transport Canada, 2011). Furthermore, the physical geography and climate of most communities can be a significant barrier to active transportation. Cold, wet, or snowy winters along with hills and windy stretches can make walking and cycling uncomfortable and inconvenient. The challenge for municipalities therefore is to promote year-round active transportation and to make walking and cycling easier, safer and more convenient for people in all types of weather (Transport Canada, 2011). In order to encourage this, municipalities can clear sidewalks and bike paths on designated ‘winter routes’ and hold seasonal promotional events such as 'walk-to-school day' or 'bike-to-work week' (Transport Canada, 2011). Municipalities can also look beyond just walking and cycling and promote other forms of active transportation during the winter months such as cross country skiing and ice skating, to follow the example of many Scandinavian countries (Arsenault & Reid, 2005). In the local context, this idea for transforming portions of walking and cycling paths as cross country ski trails provides an interesting consideration and unique opportunity for Innisfil, which reflects the strategy of *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* to promote the Town as an ‘outdoor recreation destination.’

This brief discussion of the barriers to walking and cycling indicates that the implementation of active transportation policies, and the effective design of walking and cycling networks, needs to be efficiently supported by various infrastructure (e.g. end-of trip facilities)

and strategic program initiatives. Therefore, this holistic perspective, which is required to ensure an effective active transportation network, should be reflected in the planning policies to be recommended for incorporation into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan. Furthermore, since "active transportation is not just a transportation issue" (Transport Canada, 2011), planning for active transportation within the Town of Innisfil should be integrated with existing planning and development activities across all municipal departments and community stakeholder groups (e.g., Planning, Engineering, Economic Development, Transportation, Health, Recreation, etc.). It was earlier identified how this 'strategic planning' approach for active transportation is evident within the *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* community vision. This reflects how the Town of Innisfil is well-positioned in planning for active transportation, which has been identified as a priority by the community.

Moreover, this assessment into the 'Policy Context' indicates that in order to most effectively support active transportation, Official Plan policies should generally encompass each aspect of their 'planning', 'design', 'implementation', and 'monitoring' as follows:

- By stating the clear vision and intent of the municipality, upfront within its overall growth objectives, that an enhanced active transportation network will be **planned** for;
- By supporting this vision and intent by specifying how the transportation and street network will be **designed** to be interconnected to facilitate all users and modes, and particularly how these design guidelines will promote active transportation;
- By identifying strategies as to how the active transportation will be **implemented** and particularly, which programs and initiatives will be used to address various barriers to walking and cycling; and
- By outlining a framework or indicator for how progress towards planning for active transportation will be **monitored**.

As such, this synthesis provides a general framework to begin assessing the policy examples presented in the forthcoming 'Best Practices section.

6.0 BEST PRACTICES

This section will assess the 'Best Practices' of municipalities in establishing policies within their Official Plans to effectively support the process for planning, designing, implementing, and monitoring enhanced active transportation networks. Overall, this is important because Transport Canada (2011) recommends that as a necessary first step, particularly because of the generally slow pace in which planning for active transportation occurs; municipalities should develop high-level policies that are supportive of various walking and cycling initiatives. This approach will allow communities to incrementally plan for active transportation (Transport Canada, 2011). It is therefore important that strong 'high level' policies are incorporated into the Town of Innisfil OP to support active transportation planning.

6.1 Active Transportation Policy Elements - Plan, Design, Implement and Monitor

A study conducted by the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT) (2012) provides an effective basis for this assessment into municipal planning policy elements and 'best practices' for active transportation. In this study, TCAT identifies ten policy elements that should be incorporated into municipal Official Plans to support efforts to provide enhanced walking and cycling networks and implement 'complete streets', streets that accommodate all road users – motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. The 'purpose' of each of the ten elements outlined by TCAT is summarized in Table 2, along with Official Plan policy 'best practices' from various Canadian municipalities. Since this Table clearly highlights 'high level' policies that can be incorporated into Official Plans to effectively support active transportation, it will also provide a useful basis from which the existing policies in the Town of Innisfil Official Plan can be assessed and new policy considerations developed (the 'Recommendations' section of this MRP will include this specific assessment of Innisfil's existing Official Plan policies).

Table 2: 10 Policy Elements to Effectively Support Active Transportation: Policy Examples from Canadian Municipalities (Source: TCAT, 2012)

Element	Purpose	Policy Examples – 'Best Practices'
Language and Intent	Uses strong policy language such as 'must implement' or 'will implement' when referring to Complete Streets elements.	City of Peterborough Official Plan (2009) – Section 5.2 Transportation Objectives "The development of the City's Transportation System shall be directed towards the following objectives: iii) Plan for a more balanced transportation system to accommodate increased use of public transit, cycling and pedestrian facilities"
Users and Modes	Must mention, at minimum, that 'all users' includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users of all ages and abilities.	City of Waterloo Official Plan (2011) – Section 5.4 The Road Network: Policies "Roads under the City's jurisdiction will be planned as 'complete streets', enabling users of all ages and abilities – pedestrians, bicycles, transit riders and motorists – to interact and move more safely along and across City streets."
Projects	Must apply to all projects including new projects, reconstruction projects, and repair/maintenance and/or other projects for the entire right-of-way.	City of Kitchener Official Plan (2011) – Section 2.2 Active Transportation "The City will ensure, whenever feasible, the provision of facilities to encourage walking and cycling, and to address the needs, safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists when constructing or reconstructing public facilities."
Exceptions	Exceptions to the policy are clear and require a procedure for approval.	City of Peterborough Official Plan (2009) – Section 5.7 Pedestrian Network Policies "Sidewalks shall be required in all new residential subdivisions as follows:...Where Council determines that physical or practical circumstances would prohibit or not warrant a sidewalk connection, such facilities may not be required to be constructed."
Connectivity	Aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network to benefit all users and modes.	City of Hamilton Official Plan (2011) - Section 4.2.8 Urban Design and Complete Streets "Establishment of a continuous (emphasis added) grid road network as the preferred street layout to allow pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles, automobiles and goods and services vehicles to move efficiently through municipalities."
Jurisdiction	Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads at the municipal, regional/county/district, and provincial level.	City of Cambridge Official Plan (2011) - Section 6 Transportation and Infrastructure "To provide, in partnership with the Province and Region, for a safe, sustainable, effective, accessible and energy efficient transportation system using a wide range of travel modes to move people and goods"

Design	Cites the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines to aid in implementation.	City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan (2009)– Section 3.3. Activity Centres "When designing new streets or retrofitting existing streets, use the Complete Streets policies and guidelines of the Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP)."
Context Sensitivity	States the context of the roadway and the surrounding community context dictates what Complete Streets elements will be accommodated.	City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan (2009)– Section 2.5.3 Complete Streets "Different types of streets have different functions, so their design should fit with the community context. The road and street design must consider which elements are appropriate in each Complete Streets zone based on the function of the transportation facility and adjacent land use context."
Performance Measures	Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.	City of Ottawa Official Plan (2003) - 2.3.1 Transportation "In keeping with the Transportation Master Plan, the City will seek to achieve the following increases in the share of morning peak-hour travel by pedestrian, cycling and public transit modes by 2031: • Walking modal share of all person trips – from 9.6 per cent in 2005 to 10 per cent in 2031; • Cycling modal share of all person trips - from 1.7 percent in 2005 to 3 per cent in 2031; • Public transit – from 23 percent of total motorized trips in 2005 to 30 percent in 2031."
Implementation	Includes specific next steps for policy implementation.	City of Ottawa Official Plan (2003) - 2.3.1 Transportation, Walking "The City adopted a Pedestrian Plan in 2009 that provides guidelines and standards for pedestrian facilities and circulation, identifies discontinuities in the pedestrian network, and develops a network implementation strategy. The plan will guide the City in the development and implementation of new programs and facilities to encourage people to walk and reduce their dependency on the automobile".

This Table emphasizes the holistic and comprehensive policies that should be included within Official Plans at a 'high level' in order to most effectively support the strategic intent of the municipality to plan, design, implement and monitor progress towards achieving enhanced active transportation networks. Particularly, in the above table, the 'Language and Intent', 'Users and Modes', 'Projects', 'Exceptions', and 'Jurisdiction' elements (and associated policy examples) all reflect how the municipality can support its

intent to *plan* to achieve active transportation. Moreover, the 'Connectivity', 'Design', and 'Context-Sensitivity' elements all support the efforts of the municipality to effectively *design* interconnected networks to accommodate active transportation, while the 'Implementation' element outlines which strategic initiatives or policies will be used to help *implement* the envisioned active transportation network. In addition, the 'Performance Measures' element outlines how the municipality should include a measure or indicator (e.g. mode share target) that can be used to *monitor* progress towards achieving active transportation. As such, by incorporating each of these 10 'policy elements' identified by TCAT into the Town of Innisfil OP, the Town would be establishing policies to effectively support its efforts to plan, design, implement and monitor the incremental provision of an enhanced active transportation network.

Additionally, the following Table from the City of Winnipeg's Transportation Plan (2011) provides an effective basis from which the specific elements in designing more 'complete streets' to accommodate all modes of transportation can be considered in the local Innisfil context. In using the same approach as Winnipeg, the Town of Innisfil could clearly specify in a table within its Official Plan, the elements to support walking and cycling (e.g. sidewalks and bike lanes) that will be encouraged for each of its arterial, collector and local street classifications. As such, Table 3 can be viewed as a 'Best Practice' in the clarity it provides in supporting 'high level' efforts to effectively design for 'complete streets' and active transportation. However, including this type of a Table within the Official Plan may limit the extent to which walking and cycling facilities will be considered for certain streets in ensuring that the design is 'context-sensitive'.

Table 3: City of Winnipeg Elements for Complete Streets (Source: City of Winnipeg Transportation Plan, 2011)

EX 5-1 Elements of Complete Streets

Network	Road Category	Pedestrian	Cyclist	Transit	Parking	Motorist	Goods Movement
Provincial Road Network	Provincial Truck Highway	Design AT into overpasses/ interchanges		Potential express and regional bus service	Not Permitted	Primary focus	Provide direct access into goods movement facilities
	Provincial Roads	Sidewalks in urban areas safe crossings	Paved Shoulders		Permitted where required		
Winnipeg Road Network	Major Arterials	Sidewalks separated by boulevards	Separated bike facilities where road speed >50km/h	Diamond lanes, dedicated rapid transit, transit priority	Permitted in commercial areas	Maximize efficiency but design with regard for other road users	Primary roadways for heavy-duty vehicles
	Minor Arterials	Sidewalks on both sides	Bike lanes or cycle tracks	Signal priority, enhanced bus stop amenities	Encourage on-street parking to reduce off-street parking requirements	Balance movement with other road user needs	Discouraged except for direct access to origin/ destination
	Collector	Sidewalks on both sides	Bike lanes or bike boulevards	Local on-street bus routes			
	Local	Sidewalks and consideration for shared space				Traffic calming measures, encourage low speed	

Colour Legend

Primary focus	Accomodate with caution	Discouraged

The two tables and discussion presented thus far in this section provide 'high level' policy suggestions and 'best practices' for the Town of Innsfil Official Plan to consider. The *Transit-Supportive Land Use Planning Guidelines* prepared by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) however, provide more specific strategies for the design and layout of street networks to most effectively support all users and transportation modes (see Appendix). These strategies are based upon two guiding principles which overall, aim to ensure that streets are designed as an 'interconnected grid network' to 'minimize travel distances to surrounding streets, uses and open spaces' (see Appendix). The MTO also identifies that streets should be designed through a 'comprehensive planning process' in order to balance and accommodate the "full range of potential users within a community including users of all ages and abilities, pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles and motorists." These principles are useful to consider

incorporating as 'objectives' into the ‘Transportation’ section of the Town of Innisfil Official Plan, because they provide clear support for the design and implementation of streets that balance the needs of all road users.

The 10 specific design strategies that MTO identifies aim to implement these principles (in addition to being included in the Appendix, each of these strategies is listed in a table in the Recommendations section of this MRP, where the extent to which they are reflected in the current Town of Innisfil OP is assessed). Specific guidelines provided by MTO include: ensuring that a majority of residents or jobs (e.g. 90%) are located within 400 metres of transit stops, minimizing block lengths (e.g. residential blocks should be less than 250 metres), and achieving a street intersection density of greater than 0.3 intersections per hectare, with higher street intersection densities in mixed-use nodes and corridors (see Figure 7). As such, because these specific strategies would substantially assist efforts in designing streets to accommodate active transportation, they serve as useful ‘best practices’ and should be considered for incorporation into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan.

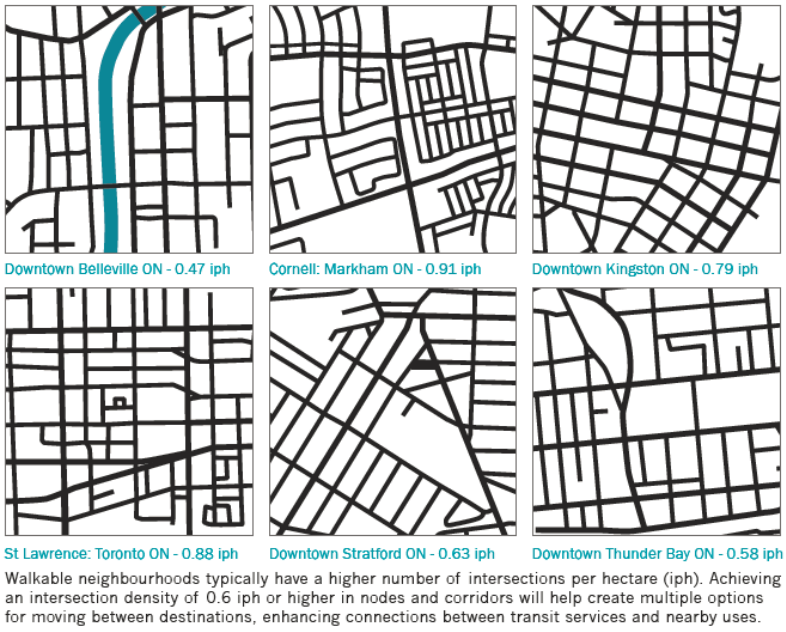

Figure 7: Intersection Densities (Source: Transit-Supportive Land Use Planning Guidelines, 2012)

To assess the MTO design strategies further, a target for street intersection densities is particularly useful to consider for application in the local Innisfil context. This is a measure of the number of intersections within a given area and is a useful way of comparing the walkability of various neighbourhoods and areas. Generally, the higher the street intersection density, the greater potential the area has to become a walkable environment (MTO, 2012). As such, applying an intersection density target to the Town's newly developing subdivisions will significantly assist efforts in encouraging walking and cycling opportunities. Higher intersection densities will also provide an interconnected road network that will substantially support future public transit investments. The strategies identified by MTO also identify useful policy approaches to address some of the barriers to active transportation such as the perceived lack of safety and the general choice of people to limit walking and cycling during winter months. This is particularly evident in the strategy which specifies that mid-block pedestrian routes should be constructed of non-slip materials, be illuminated at night, and maintained year round and clear of ice during winter months.

6.2 Municipal Planning Policy 'Best Practices' – Case Studies

To further enhance this assessment into Official Plan 'best practices', what follows is an exploration of policy examples from the Town of Ajax, City of Waterloo, and the City of Peterborough. These municipalities were acknowledged by TCAT as having strong Official Plan policies to support active transportation. Specifically, their Official Plan policies were assessed to explore the extent to which they holistically support all the aspects of planning, designing, implementing and monitoring towards achieving enhanced active transportation networks, in addition to promoting complete, healthy communities. Furthermore, the approach of these Official Plans to embed and implement the vision/objectives of their respective Active

Transportation Plans and/or Transportation Master Plans was also particularly assessed. This is because the upcoming Town of Innisfil Official Plan Update will need to incorporate and support the vision for the enhanced active transportation network that the recently developed Innisfil Transportation Master Plan (2013) identifies.

6.2.1 Town of Ajax, Ontario

The Town of Ajax recently amended its Official Plan (OP) to include policies that provide effective support for the planning of 'Vibrant Streets' and active transportation (see Appendix). These policies reflect the ten elements that TCAT identifies as being necessary to effectively plan for 'complete streets' at a high level, while they also provide more specific policies to effectively support the design, implementation, and monitoring of enhanced active transportation networks. Particularly, the 'Language and Intent' element identified by TCAT is reflected in the 'Vibrant Streets' section (4.1), as Ajax's vision for a 'multi-modal transportation network' is clearly established. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the 'Vibrant Streets' section is positioned as the first sub-section within the 'Transportation' section of Ajax's OP. This therefore indicates that the development of 'Vibrant Streets' and the promotion of more sustainable modes of transportation is a high priority for the Town. This also indicates how all transportation and land use planning decisions will be assessed in the context of how well they contribute to achievement of the Town's vision for 'Vibrant Streets.' This is particularly reflected in the comprehensive policies that aim to guide the review of all development applications (4.1.2), where the requirement for "transportation facilities, including transit, trails, accessible sidewalks, bicycle facilities and walkways to serve the needs of local residents" is identified for all plans of subdivision. As such, similar policies should be included within the Town of Innisfil OP, because of the significant subdivision growth that the Town is

experiencing, and also because of the support that such policies would provide in planning, designing and implementing enhanced active transportation networks. In addition, certain policies from this section of the Ajax OP can be adapted to the local context, particularly 4.1.2i, which reflects the opportunity that exists to plan for more intensive land uses surrounding a potential GO Transit station within Innisfil. This would provide substantial support for active transportation within Innisfil, as a GO Transit station would represent a key 'destination' to promote walking and cycling opportunities.

Ajax's OP also includes policies (4.1.3, see Appendix) that provide direct reference to the Ajax Transportation Master Plan (TMP), and emphasize the significant role that the TMP will play in achieving the Town's envisioned active transportation network. To further embed the vision of the Ajax TMP and to support its achievement, the Town of Ajax OP includes a comprehensive section entitled 'Active Transportation System' (4.4, see Appendix). In addition to a map of the envisioned active transportation network that is attached to the OP as a 'Schedule', the policies in this section encourage 'safe', 'convenient', and 'comfortable' walking and cycling opportunities. These policies are useful to consider incorporating into the Innisfil OP because their overall aims of promoting active transportation are supported by comprehensive policies to address the main barriers associated with greater amounts of people walking and cycling. For instance, by aiming to plan for an active transportation network that is flexible and can be used by all people, including "residents, employees, and tourists", they state that the Town of Ajax shall pursue such measures to support active transportation as acquiring land to support the development of the envisioned network; requiring barrier-free design; developing a 'way-finding program' that directs people to important destinations along the network; implementing 'weekend pedestrian and cycling streets'; and requiring bike

racks/lockers in the review of development applications. Overall, the policies in the Town of Ajax OP provide strong support for the planning, design and implementation of an enhanced active transportation network within Ajax. As such, similar policies should be considered for inclusion into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan, particularly to implement the envisioned active transportation network that the Innisfil Transportation Master Plan identifies.

6.2.2 City of Waterloo, Ontario

The City of Waterloo has also been acknowledged by TCAT for its strong OP policies regarding 'complete streets' and active transportation. The 'Transportation' section of the City of Waterloo OP places high priority on the integration of 'Transportation and Land Use', by particularly emphasizing the "creation of pedestrian, bicycle and transit -friendly streetscapes." Waterloo's OP contains an 'Active Transportation' section (6.5.1, see Appendix) which includes the statement that the City "supports active transportation as a low cost form of travel that promotes physical exercise and social interaction and results in a reduced impact on the environment." Overall, the policies contained within Waterloo's OP provide clear objectives and policies to support the provision of active transportation. In comparison to the policies in Ajax's OP, Waterloo's policies are somewhat less comprehensive in terms of identifying specific program initiatives (e.g. 'wayfinding') to support the implementation of an enhanced active transportation network. However, Waterloo's OP contains distinct policies to ensure that all elements of site and building design will consider how the development "provides for the convenient and comfortable movement of pedestrians and cyclists." Furthermore, in conjunction with these active transportation policies, the 'Road Network' section of Waterloo's OP (5.1.3, see Appendix) states that the City's roads will be planned, designed, operated and maintained based on the principle of providing 'complete streets', to ensure "that users of all ages and

abilities – pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and motorists – are able to interact and move safely along and across City streets." As such, these policies from the City of Waterloo OP emphasize the role of walking and cycling in supporting the development of complete and healthy communities, in addition to emphasizing the need to appropriately integrate transportation and land use planning. Because of the support that they provide in planning, designing, and implementing active transportation networks, they should also be considered for incorporation into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan.

6.2.3 City of Peterborough, Ontario

The City of Peterborough OP was also acknowledged by TCAT as containing strong policies to support a balanced transportation network. The 'Transportation Goals' section of Peterborough's Official Plan (5.1, see Appendix) identifies the goal of the City to "encourage the use and development of all modes of transportation." When compared to the policies of both the Ajax and Waterloo OP's, these 'high level' policies are generally more outdated and considerably less comprehensive. Particularly, they do not fully reflect the role of active transportation in building more complete and healthy communities, as the Ajax and Waterloo policies indicate. However, this is perhaps because the City of Peterborough has effectively planned for active transportation through smaller scale strategic planning initiatives. For instance, the City has developed a Central Area Master Plan (2009), which includes 22 strategies to guide the growth and revitalization of its downtown core. One of the objectives within this Plan was "to foster pedestrian connectivity throughout the Central Area." To implement this vision for enhanced pedestrian connectivity within Peterborough's downtown, various strategies were identified in the Master Plan and adopted into the City's Official Plan (see Appendix). As such, enhanced pedestrian connectivity within Downtown Peterborough is envisioned as

significantly assisting with its revitalization, through complementary strategies such as the development of an urban square. Therefore, within its Official Plan Update, the Town of Innisfil should also consider ways to more effectively foster enhanced pedestrian connectivity and provide destinations within the envisioned downtown core of Alcona. Furthermore, the City of Peterborough case indicates that although its 'high level' policies were somewhat outdated in terms of providing support for active transportation, smaller-scale strategic plans (upon adoption into the OP) can be equally effective in terms of facilitating enhanced walking and cycling opportunities. As such, the Town of Innisfil should consider utilizing its OP Update process to articulate specific strategies to stimulate the development of a vibrant downtown within Alcona. This would provide key 'destinations' to attract people and lend further support to an enhanced active transportation network within the Town of Innisfil.

Overall

From a policy perspective, this section has identified municipal planning 'best practices' to effectively support the planning, design, and implementation of active transportation networks. Specific policy examples from the Town of Ajax, City of Waterloo and City of Peterborough were assessed, in consideration of the 10 'policy elements' provided by the TCAT study. In building off the 'Policy Context', the policy examples and discussion of this section provide a solid basis from which the existing policies in the Innisfil OP can be assessed and recommendations for new planning policies developed. The Town of Innisfil will particularly need to consider policies that aim to address the various barriers to walking and cycling and help implement its recently completed Transportation Master Plan; ensure linkages to support walking and cycling are created within its newly developing subdivisions; and that active transportation networks support the transformation of the Alcona downtown core.

Moreover, while the policy examples from the respective Ajax, Waterloo, and Peterborough OP's generally provided strong support for the planning, design and implementation of active transportation networks, they were not effective in providing a monitoring framework or 'Performance Measure' (as TCAT identifies) to assess their incremental achievement. For instance, these municipalities did not include a mode share target for alternative modes of transportation within their OP's like the City of Ottawa did (identified in Table 1). This is therefore a weakness in each of their policies as it would be beneficial for municipal planners and the community to gauge the effectiveness of their efforts in incrementally planning to achieve active transportation. Therefore, the Town of Innisfil should considering incorporating an appropriate 'Performance Measure' within its OP so that it can be used to monitor achievement of the active transportation network that the Innisfil TMP envisions. Various 'Performance Measures' that can be established in the local context (which have been identified in this 'Best Practices' section) include a mode share target for active transportation, as well as an intersection density per hectare target for the Town's new subdivisions to promote walkability. These measures would provide a framework to appropriately monitor the collective efforts of the Innisfil community in planning, designing and implementing enhanced active transportation networks.

7.0 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This section will recommend policies for incorporation into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan to better support the role of active transportation in building complete communities. These recommendations are based on the findings of the 'literature review' and the assessment into the 'policy context' and 'best practices' of municipal planning policies. Overall, as specified near the end of the ‘Policy Context’ section, this MRP indicates that in order to most effectively support active transportation, Official Plan policies should generally encompass each aspect of their ‘planning’, ‘design’, ‘implementation’, and ‘monitoring’ as follows:

- By stating the clear vision and intent of the municipality, upfront within its overall growth objectives, that an enhanced active transportation network will be **planned** for;
- By supporting this vision and intent by specifying how the transportation and street network will be **designed** to be interconnected to facilitate all users and modes, and particularly how these design guidelines will promote active transportation;
- By identifying strategies as to how the active transportation will be **implemented** and particularly, which programs and initiatives will be used to address various barriers to walking and cycling; and
- By outlining a framework or indicator for how progress towards planning for active transportation will be **monitored**.

As such, within this framework, the 'Recommendations' in this section will aim to provide policies to more effectively support the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of an enhanced active transportation network within the Town, as envisioned in the Innisfil Transportation Master Plan.

7.1 Assessment of Existing Town of Innisfil OP Policies

The TCAT study (referenced in the Best Practices section) identifies ten policy elements that are necessary to support active transportation and effectively implement 'complete streets'.

These ten elements were used to assess areas in the existing Town of Innisfil Official Plan where policies could be added or strengthened to more effectively support an enhanced walking and cycling network (Table 4). In addition, the specific strategies identified in the *Transit-Supportive Land Use Planning Guidelines* (2012) published by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation were also used to assess the Town's existing Official Plan policies (Table 5). The elements identified by TCAT provide broader policy considerations for the Town's Official Plan to support active transportation, while the MTO guidelines identify more specific strategies for designing streets to provide an additional layer of support for active transportation. As such, they provide a comprehensive basis from which to recommend policies for incorporation into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan to more effectively support all aspects of the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of community efforts to achieve active transportation. The policy considerations for the Innisfil OP identified in each of these tables should be particularly incorporated into the 'sections of focus' for the OP Update that are identified in Section 7.2 of this MRP.

Table 4: Assessment of Existing Town of Innisfl Official Polices and Considerations for OP Update, Based on 10 Policy Elements Identified by TCAT

TCAT 'Policy Element'	Purpose	Existing Policies in Town of Innisfil Official Plan	Considerations for OP Update
Language and Intent	Uses strong policy language such as 'must implement' or 'will implement' when referring to Complete Streets elements.	Road Network and Block Pattern - Policy 5.2.2a Street systems shall offer alternative ways of moving through neighbourhoods and enable pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular movement including incorporation of mid-block pedestrian routes.	This existing policy would have more prominence within the OP if it was also reflected as an Objective in the 'Transportation' and 'Municipal Structure' sections
Users and Modes	Must mention, at minimum, that 'all users' includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users of all ages and abilities.	Streetscape - Policy 5.3.3a Streetscape design shall adhere to the following policies: b) Streets and roads shall provide for the safety and ease of use of multiple means of transportation including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and transit.	This existing policy would have more prominence within the OP if it was also reflected in the 'Transportation' section
Projects	Must apply to all projects including new projects, reconstruction projects, and repair/maintenance and/or other projects for the entire right-of-way.	Pedestrian and Bike Trails - Policy 8.4.2 It is the policy of Council to include bicycling considerations in new development and redevelopment proposals. Secondary plans, draft plans of subdivision and site plans shall implement the Trails Master Plan where appropriate.	Re-word this existing policy to state that the provision of both walking and cycling infrastructure will be considered in all road construction projects.
Exceptions	Exceptions to the policy are clear and require a procedure for approval.	Streetscape - Policy 5.3.3i Sidewalks shall be provided on at least one side of all streets, except rural roadways, or at extensions to existing village streets where they do not exist. Sidewalk locations and design may vary relative to their context and local natural or heritage features. Sidewalks shall avoid where possible existing street trees.	In addition to this existing policy for sidewalks, a similar policy stating exceptions for bike lanes should be considered.
Connectivity	Aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network to benefit all users and modes.	Integrated Community Urban Structure - Policy 5.1.2g Develop interconnected street and pedestrian systems for Urban Settlements to promote walkability and clarity of orientation.	Within this policy or section, state that an interconnected street network will aim to benefit all users and transportation modes.

Jurisdiction	Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads at the municipal, regional/county/district, and provincial level.	<u>Streetscape - Policy 5.3.2</u> The Town will work cooperatively with the County to implement these policies on County Roads.	This existing policy could be revised to state that the purpose for co-operation will be to provide an enhanced active transportation network.
Design	Cites the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines to aid in implementation.	*The Town OP does not specifically reference any external design guidelines.*	Include a policy stating that specific design guidelines may be applied in certain areas (e.g. Innisfil Beach Road or Lefroy Design Guidelines already developed by Town, or MTO guidelines)
Context Sensitivity	States the context of the roadway and the surrounding community context dictates what Complete Streets elements will be accommodated.	<u>Streescape - 5.3.3e</u> In this regard, a variety of development standards and streets section types may be applied to promote pedestrian scale and reflect the local context. Consideration should be given to the use of a range of roadway section detailing - urban, semi-urban rolled curb, and rural – to develop streets that are appropriate to their context. Generally, the use of reduced or alternative standards is encouraged.	This policy could be supplemented by specifying the types walking and cycling infrastructure (e.g. on/off street bike lanes, multi-use paths) that could be applied on certain streets to suit the local context.
Performance Measures	Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.	*The Town OP does not establish any performance standards to monitor progress on achieving an enhanced active transportation network.*	As performance measures, the Town OP could establish a mode share target for walking and cycling as a proportion of all trips; and/or identify an intersections per hectare target for newly developing subdivisions to promote walkability.
Implementation	Includes specific next steps for policy implementation.	<u>Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails - Policy 8.4.1</u> A continuous pedestrian and bicycle trail system linking parks and community facilities shall be identified as part of a Trails Master Plan. The bicycle trail system component of the Trails Master Plan shall include both on-street and off-street routes.	This policy should be revised to reference the Innisfil Transportation Master Plan

Table 5: Assessment of Existing Policies in the Town of Innisfil Official Plan and Considerations for OP Update, Based on Transit-Supportive Guidelines Identified by MTO

MTO Design Strategy	Existing Policies in Town of Innisfil Official Plan	Considerations for OP Update
1. Establish an interconnected network of streets in new developments and retrofit existing areas to maximize routing options between destinations.	Neighbourhood Structure - 5.2.1d Road networks shall be designed to create an interconnected street system or grid that responds to existing landform, natural and heritage features. The street system shall also reflect the scale and context of local existing street grids where appropriate.	Emphasize that networks can also be retrofitted to maximize routing options between destinations.
2. Extend new streets and block connections across property lines and design networks to link with existing and proposed streets within the community.	Integrated Community Urban Structure - 5.1.2g Develop interconnected street and pedestrian systems for Urban Settlements to promote walkability and clarity of orientation.	Include a policy (e.g. the wording of this MTO strategy) that will guide how new streets will link into existing streets.
3. Design or retrofit street networks so that a significant majority of residents or jobs (e.g. 90%) are located within a 400 m (approximately 5 minutes) or less walk from a transit stop.	Neighbourhood Structure - 5.2.1a The majority of neighbourhood residents should be within approximately 400 metres of focal areas and amenities such as parks, schools and convenience commercial establishments.	Expand policy to identify a proportion (%) of residents to be located within these identified uses as well as planned transit locations (e.g. County OP specifies 75%, see Appendix).
4. Achieve a street intersection density of greater than 0.3 intersections per hectare (iph), with higher street intersection densities of over 0.6 intersections per hectare in mixed-use nodes and corridors.	*Existing OP does not specifically address this.*	A policy that identifies an intersections per hectare target of 0.3 for newly developing subdivisions.
5. Minimize block lengths to promote greater connectivity and enhance the walkability of neighbourhoods. Generally, residential blocks should be less than 250 m along their longest side, with maximum block lengths of 120 m in mixed-use activity nodes and corridors.	Road Network & Block Pattern - 5.2.2 Street systems shall be pedestrian friendly in character. In this regard, the design of block patterns should be based on short block lengths (generally in a range of 140m to 230m).	As in the MTO strategy, the Town OP could further specify where shorter block lengths will be required (e.g. certain streets or areas)
6. Design local streets to minimize the need for backtracking and provide direct pedestrian access to primary streets, transit stops and stations where possible.	*While the existing OP does not specifically address 'backtracking', this is generally the intent of the existing 5.2.1a policy identified above for Strategy 3.*	The Town OP could specifically identify that local streets will be designed to provide direct pedestrian access to major streets and amenities that minimizes backtracking.

7. Avoid the creation of dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs to maximize street connectivity.	*Existing OP does not specifically address this.*	Include a policy specifying that an interconnected street network can be achieved by avoiding dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs.
8. Avoid the creation of lay-by lanes (a designated paved area beside a road that enables vehicles to stop temporarily to drop-off or pick-up passengers without disrupting traffic), which result in increased street widths and decreased pedestrian space within the sidewalk and boulevard area of the street.	*Existing OP does not specifically address this.*	Include a policy specifying that an interconnected street network can be achieved by avoiding lay-by lanes.
9. Avoid the use of window streets, which double up road infrastructure and pull uses away from the street. Where limited access is required, buildings facing onto streets should be accessed via a rear drive or lane.	*Existing OP does not specifically address this.*	Include a policy specifying that an interconnected street network can be achieved by avoiding window streets.
10. Where it is not possible for the layout of streets and blocks to achieve the walking distance criteria, a mid-block connection or pedestrian pathway can be used to minimize walking distances. These should be: a) constructed of durable, non-slip materials; b) direct, visible from adjacent uses and illuminated at night to enhance personal safety; and c) maintained year-round and cleared of snow and ice during winter months.	<u>Road Network & Block Pattern - 5.2.2a</u> Street systems shall offer alternative ways of moving through neighbourhoods and enable pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular movement including incorporation of mid-block pedestrian routes.	To promote safety and comfort, this existing policy could be expanded to include the specific considerations from the MTO Guidelines for the design of mid-block pedestrian routes.

7.2 'Sections' of Focus for Town of Innisfil OP Update

Within the Town of Innisfil Official Plan, the policies of Section 2 (Municipal Structure), Section 5 (Urban Design) and Section 8 (Transportation and Transit) should be most thoroughly assessed for ways in which they could incorporate the recommendations presented in the previous two tables and be enhanced to more effectively recognize the role of active transportation in building complete communities. For the purposes of this MRP, more specific policy recommendations (included in Appendix) will be focused on these three key sections of the Official Plan, while more general recommendations will be made to other supplementary sections. This is because although the 'Municipal Structure', 'Urban Design', and 'Transportation and Transit' sections contain the policies to most specifically address the goals and objectives for active transportation, there are other sections of the Official Plan that can also usefully promote walking and cycling. For instance, since it has been discussed that a successful, pedestrian-friendly downtown can lend substantial support to an enhanced active transportation network, general recommendations are also made to help transform Alcona as Innisfil's core in such a way.

Additionally, the specific policy recommendations included in the Appendix are only meant to serve as a useful starting point to translate the discussion and considerations of this MRP into actual policies within the Town of Innisfil OP. The Town of Innisfil is therefore encouraged to adapt and customize these policy recommendations to suit the local context, based on the dialogue and community consultation that is undertaken during the OP Update process. The major recommendation and argument arising out of this section is that the Town needs to ensure that its policies are strengthened in order to support all aspects of planning, designing, implementing and monitoring for achieving enhanced active transportation networks.

7.2.1 'Municipal Structure'- Section 2

The 'Municipal Structure' section of the Town of Innisfil Official Plan "sets out the overall framework with respect to the future character and development of the Town." Sub-sections 2.1 ("Intent") and 2.2 ("Vision") identify the overall growth objectives and vision for the Town. Particularly, section 2.1 states that "it is a defining principle that Innisfil will be a healthy, liveable and safe community" and provides seven principles to achieve this 'strategic intent.' The current principles of this section should be strengthened to reflect the overall 'strategic intent' of the Town to develop an interconnected and balanced transportation network that is supported by a pedestrian-friendly downtown core in Alcona (see Appendix). This section could also place emphasis on positioning Innisfil as more of a live/work community, particularly by stimulating the growth of the Innisfil Heights Strategic Employment Settlement Area (located at Highway 400 and Innisfil Beach Road), and providing direct links to this employment area as part of an enhanced active transportation network.

Sub-section 2.2 identifies a 'Vision Statement' which aims to "guide the overall strategic direction of the municipality." As such, this vision should be assessed with regards to how it can be improved to more effectively support active transportation. Within this 'Vision Statement', the Innisfil TMP vision should be particularly reflected in order to provide greater support for active transportation (see Appendix). Furthermore, this entire 'Vision Statement' should be reassessed in light of what *Inspiring Innisfil 2020* identified as the desired direction for the community. Particularly, the statement that "Innisfil will be a community of communities" should be reconsidered as this goes against the community strategic vision of creating an integrated, cohesive community. In addition, the statement that "the Municipal Civic Campus will assist in promoting that identity and become recognized as the centre of the Town" should

also be reconsidered. This is because Alcona has now been identified as the Primary Settlement Area of the Town by the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, and all planning policies and strategies should position the core of Alcona as the 'centre of the Town.' A strong core within Innisfil will provide further support for active transportation, as it will provide key destinations to promote a greater number of walking and cycling opportunities.

7.2.2 'Urban Design'- Section 5

Section 5 ("Urban Design") of the Town of Innisfil Official Plan contains policies to "address issues of urban design relating to the overall urban structure of the Town and its neighbourhoods, the character of its streets, built form and the relationship of built form to the surrounding rural landscape." Sub-section 5.2 contains specific policies that aim to "contribute to the development of attractive, compact, walkable and interconnected neighbourhoods." These policies guide the development of the Town's new subdivisions and should be particularly assessed to identify ways in which they could be improved to further promote active transportation. Particularly, they should look to incorporate many of the design guidelines identified by the MTO, which serve as best practices in ensuring that street networks are designed to promote safe and convenient travel for pedestrians and cyclists (see Appendix). Overall, because of the significant subdivision growth that the Town is experiencing, further clarity and direction is needed to ensure that the street network is planned and designed to facilitate all modes of transportation and promote pedestrian-connectivity.

7.2.3 'Transportation and Transit' – Section 8

Section 8 ('Transportation and Transit') within the Town of Innisfil Official Plan contains the transportation goals and objectives for the Town. This section needs to be reassessed in order to reflect and implement the vision of Innisfil TMP and particularly, to ensure

that policies are in place to effectively support active transportation. As a starting point, the overall transportation 'Goal' within this section should reflect the vision statement of the Innisfil TMP: "To develop a transportation network that connects people and communities, fosters healthy living and operates efficiently across the Town as an environmentally and financially sustainable system." To further support this vision, the Town's Official Plan should incorporate a section to mirror the 'Vibrant Streets' policies adopted into the Town of Ajax Official Plan. Ajax is similar to Innisfil in that a large proportion of its population commutes by automobile to work. As such, adopting policies such as these would lend substantial support to the planning, development and implementation of a multi-modal transportation network that provides enhanced enhanced walking and cycling opportunities.

The overarching policies of a similar 'Vibrant Streets' section in the Innisfil OP would also need to be reflected in the current 'Roads', 'Rail Lines', 'Transit', and 'Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails' sub-sections of the Town's Official Plan, found within this overall 'Transportation and Transit' section. While the 'Roads' sub-section may not need substantial revisions because of the detailed recommended changes to sub-section 5.2 ('Neighbourhood Structure, Road Network and Block Patterns'), the 'Rail Lines' sub-section should include a policy stating that the development of walking and cycling trails alongside rail lines will also be considered. Furthermore, the 'Transit' sub-section should specify policies or state that a Secondary Plan will be prepared to more strategically guide and stimulate transit-oriented development to surround the future GO Transit Station within Innisfil. Furthermore, since sub-section 8.4 ('Pedestrian and Bike Trails') of the Official Plan currently provides very limited support to providing an enhanced active transportation network within Innisfil, it should be renamed 'Active Transportation' and replaced with several of the strong policies and initiatives

contained within the Town of Ajax Official Plan. These policies would lend comprehensive support to the similar 'Vibrant Streets' policies already recommended, and would provide the basis for several implementation strategies (e.g. safe routes to schools, installation of bike racks at public facilities) intending to address barriers to walking and cycling and enhancing the Town's active transportation network. They would particularly help implement the active transportation network envisioned in the Innisfil TMP, as the map of all proposed walking trails, bike lanes and multi-use paths would be incorporated as a 'Schedule' into the Official Plan.

7.2.4 Additional Sections

The development of an enhanced active transportation network that supports the development of a complete and healthy community is all-encompassing and touches upon almost all aspects of built form. As such, there are numerous supplementary sections throughout the Town of Innisfil OP where policies could be refined to further help achieve this aim.

a. <u>'Community Improvement Area' - Section 9.17 / 'Alcona Central' – Section 10.1</u>

   The existing 'Community Improvement Area' (section 9.17) policies should be amended to utilize the provisions of the Planning Act (s. 28) to enable the Town to provide various grants and loans to support the development of the Alcona downtown core (e.g. tax-increment financing grants to support the redevelopment of certain properties as envisioned in the Town's *Innisfil Beach Road Urban Design Study*). This is because more 'destinations' are needed within the community in order to more effectively promote active transportation. It is also recommended that the 'Alcona Central' policies within the OP be revised to include specific strategies to support the development of Alcona as a pedestrian-supportive urban core (similar to the City of Peterborough's approach for adopting specific strategies to revitalize its 'Central Area').

b. <u>‘Secondary Plans’ – Section 9.18/ ‘Subdivision Control’ – Section 9.9</u>

The current policies in the ‘Secondary Plans’ (section 9.18) and ‘Subdivision Control’ (Section 9.9) sections could be revised to provide more effective support for active transportation. The Town could clearly specify that during the review of subdivisions and design of secondary plans, the Town will carefully consider how the concepts of ‘complete communities’ and ‘complete streets’ are applied, and how well the active transportation network identified in the Innisfil TMP is implemented.

c. <u>‘Complete Application’ - Section 9.19</u>

The ‘Complete Application’ (section 9.19) policies, which identify studies that the Town may require to support various development applications, could incorporate the requirement for a ‘Health Impact Assessment’, based on policies from the Town of Ajax OP (see Appendix). The purpose for a ‘Health Impact Assessment’ would be to more holistically consider how a particular development affects all aspects of human health.

Overall

Overall, the incorporation of these recommendations and policy considerations into the Town of Innisfil Official Plan would lend substantial support to the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of an enhanced active transportation network within the Town. These policies would effectively implement the vision of the Innisfil Transportation Master Plan to provide increased walking and cycling opportunities. Particularly, they would also help establish a framework to ensure that all development applications be considered on the basis of the support that they would provide to an enhanced active transportation network, and the development of Innisfil as a more complete, healthy community. In achieving these aims, the Town’s OP Update process will allow for the further refinement of these policies.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Overall, there is a significant movement in planning to provide a built form that facilitates enhanced active transportation networks. This is largely because of the significant health, safety, social, environmental, and economic benefit that active transportation can provide. As such, this MRP has provided strong support for the argument that greater emphasis on the development of enhanced active transportation networks can play an important role in the building of complete communities, while supporting successful downtown development. As such, the policy recommendations of this MRP should be considered and further refined by the Town of Innisfil as it proceeds in its Official Plan Update. They will greatly support planning efforts to develop an enhanced active transportation network within the Town and aid in the implementation of the Innisfil Transportation Master Plan. They will also ensure progress towards the development of complete communities and support the transformation of Innisfil's settlement areas, including the downtown core of Alcona.

In conclusion, despite the adoption of planning policies that effectively support active transportation within the Town of Innisfil Official Plan, the ultimate success of these policies will be determined by the extent to which they are embraced and championed in the community. As such, in attaining progress and community acceptance for various active transportation initiatives, Transport Canada (2011) discusses the need to 'sell' the various associated benefits with elected representatives and various community stakeholders. Overall, four key messages are identified by Transport Canada (2011), which should be used to help promote and collectively build support for active transportation in the community as follows:

1. Active transportation meets multiple planning objectives.
Active transportation improves efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation system, builds transit ridership, supports 'smart growth' planning, climate change and greenhouse gas reduction strategies, as well as revitalization and economic development initiatives.

2. Active transportation improves community health, safety and well-being.
Active transportation is a major component of supporting more active, healthier lifestyles that will help reduce obesity levels and associated chronic diseases. The benefits of physical activity promote well-being and help combat mental illness and social isolation.

3. Active transportation is good for the bottom line.
Active transportation is cost effective and supports "triple bottom line" initiatives. Communities built to support active transportation are often more attractive to live in and retain property values better than more auto-dependent communities. Transportation infrastructure built for active transportation is less costly than infrastructure for cars.

4. Active transportation matters to many groups, departments and people.
Active transportation is about helping people and making communities better, safer, healthier places to live, work and play. With its wide ranging benefits, it should be everyone's agenda, from planning departments to school boards, and from chambers of commerce to health care providers. (Transport Canada, 2011)

These four key messages provide an effective synthesis of the discussion contained throughout this MRP and are highly useful to emphasize when generating community acceptance for various active transportation initiatives within the Town of Innisfil. This broad-based community acceptance will help result in the 'cultural shift' that must also occur in order to reduce automobile dependence and transform the traditional development patterns of the Town to become more supportive of active transportation. Since these shifts will not occur suddenly, particularly because of the predominance of the automobile within the local Innisfil context, the Town should therefore take an incremental approach in its efforts to provide a balanced transportation network as the Innisfil TMP envisions. As such, this emphasizes the important role for the Town's OP Update to incorporate policies that effectively support all aspects of planning, designing, implementing and monitoring for the incremental achievement of an enhanced active transportation network within Innisfil.

APPENDIX

SECTION 5: POLICY CONTEXT

Provincial Policy Statement (2005)

Principles

1. Building Strong Communities - Efficient land use and development patterns that support liveable and healthy communities, protect the natural environment and public safety, and promote economic growth;

2. Wise Use and Management of Resources - In order to maintain the long-term prosperity of the Province, environmental health and social well-being depend on the protection of natural heritage, water, agriculture, mineral and cultural heritage and archaeological resources; and

3. Protecting Public Health and Safety – Development shall be directed away from areas of natural or human made hazards that pose the risk of public cost, safety, and property damage.

1.6.5 Transportation Systems

1.6.5.1 Transportation systems should be provided which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and are appropriate to address projected needs.

1.6.5.2 Efficient use shall be made of existing and planned infrastructure.

1.6.5.3 Connectivity within and among transportation systems and modes should be maintained and, where possible, improved including connections which cross jurisdictional boundaries.

1.6.5.4 A land use pattern, density and mix of uses should be promoted that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support the development of viable choices and plans for public transit and other alternative transportation modes, including commuter rail and bus.

1.6.5.5 Transportation and land use considerations shall be integrated at all stages of the planning process.

1.5 Public Spaces, Parks and Open Spaces

1.5.1 Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:
a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, and facilitate pedestrian and non-motorized movement, including but not limited to, walking and cycling;
b) providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, open space areas, trails and, where practical, water-based resources.

1.4 Housing

1.4.3 Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the *regional market area* by:
d) promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of alternative transportation modes and public transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006)

3.2.3 Moving People

3.2.3.1 Municipalities will ensure that pedestrian and bicycle networks are integrated into transportation planning to:
a) Provide safe, comfortable travel for pedestrians and bicyclists within existing communities and new development; and,
b) Provide linkages between intensification areas, adjacent neighbourhoods, and transit stations, including dedicated lane space for bicyclists on the major street network where feasible.

2.2.7 Designated Greenfield Areas

1. New development taking place in designated greenfield areas will be planned, designated, zoned and designed in a manner that –
a) contributes to creating complete communities;
b) creates street configurations, densities, and an urban form that support walking, cycling and the early integration and sustained vitality of transit services;
c) provides a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, to support vibrant neighbourhoods; and
d) creates high quality public open spaces with site design and urban design standards that support opportunities for transit, walking and cycling.

County of Simcoe Official Plan

4.8.33 Development proposals and/or secondary plans within settlement areas appropriate to the hierarchy determined by the local municipality as set out in Section 3.5.8 of this Plan, shall include pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive urban design elements, including but not limited to, the following:

- providing for a broad range of housing types in the community at overall transit supporting densities;
- community design around a focal point or community or civic centre;
- a mix of uses in order to improve the possibilities for working and living in close proximity;
- a system of walkways and bicycle paths linking the community internally and externally to other areas;
- community design that emphasizes public access and safety;
- in areas with existing or potential future transit service or in locations within Transit Service Areas, distances to existing or potential transit stops of generally no more than 400 metres (a 5-10 minute walk) for 75% of the residents and no more than 200 metres for 30% of the residents;
- locating medium and higher density urban development adjacent to urban arterial roads; providing for and promoting the provision of parking and drop-off facilities for commuters in appropriate locations and as close to commuter trip origins by developing and implementing carpool and commuter facilities;
- providing continuous collector road systems that permit the linking of several adjacent developments and provide for direct transit routings;
- creating site plan control urban design guidelines that gives priority to pedestrian access and transit over automobile access and parking in urban areas; reducing the prominence of parking areas; and
- discouraging reverse lotting along local and County Roads within settlement areas.

4.8.37 With cooperation and support from the County, local municipalities shall develop a municipal Active Transportation Plan as background to inform the local municipal official plans for primary settlement areas which should include, as a minimum:

1. An active transportation system map identifying existing and proposed sidewalks, multi-use trails, and associated facilities, including proposed connection to the County Trail System;
2. Policies requiring the provision of sidewalks and/or multi-use trails through all new development areas and standards outlining a minimum number of development units for application of the policy;
3. Policies outlining the requirements and conditions related to the dedication of lands in new development areas to complete future trail and sidewalk connections identified in the official plan;
4. Policies outlining cycling and pedestrian safety measures to reduce injuries and fatalities associated with motor vehicle collisions (i.e. traffic calming, narrower streets, signage, cycling lanes, etc.);

5. Policies and plans that identify where new sidewalks and trails should be provided through existing built up areas;
6. Policies and standards specifying the design parameters that should be used for new trails and sidewalks that reflect Ontario Provincial Standards, Accessibility Act requirements, and best practices;
7. Policies requiring the provision of secure bicycle racks and shelters, showers and change rooms, and sidewalk connections between buildings and municipal sidewalks for all new community centres, schools and other public use buildings, meeting halls, and major employment land uses that meet a minimum floor space threshold to be established by each municipality.

Simcoe County Transportation Master Plan (2008)

Strategic Directions

1. Encourage the development of local policies to require provision of sidewalks/trails in all new development areas.
2. Encourage municipalities to prepare Active Transportation Plans for their municipalities and settlement areas as part of their Official Plan updates.
3. Permit active transportation infrastructure on some County Roads (primarily lower volume County Roads) in/around built up areas, where requested by municipalities or where required to connect to County or local trail system.
4. Develop standards for on road active transportation infrastructure within County Road Rights-of-way based on the roadway classification (i.e. low volume roads would allow on road bike lanes – high volume roads would allow off road trails in boulevard areas).
5. Major focus for the County should be on the development of the off-road trail network.
6. Incorporate active transportation infrastructure into County Road improvement projects where policies permit and where cost sharing agreements can be reached with municipalities (Simcoe County Transportation Plan, 2008).

Town of Innisfil Official Plan

SECTION EIGHT: TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT

Intent:
While this Plan is based on the assumption that existing modes of transportation will predominate over the planning period, it is a policy of the Town to encourage and support the implementation of other less energy intensive forms of transportation. These could include public transit including GO Transit for commuters or the encouragement of greater pedestrian movement or the greater use of bicycles. Bicycling is recognized as an alternative mode of transportation, which can play a positive role in improving mobility and quality of life as part of a balanced transportation system. In this regard, the Town shall encourage higher density development at key nodes and a stronger linkage between living and working places than has been the case in the past.
Goals:
To develop an adequate and efficient road system to meet the transportation and transit needs of the Town.
Objectives:
11. To improve and expand the trail system in the Town.

8.4 PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRAILS

8.4.1 A continuous pedestrian and bicycle trail system linking parks and community facilities shall be identified as part of a Trails Master Plan. The bicycle trail system component of the Trails Master Plan shall include both on-street and off-street routes.
8.4.2 It is the policy of Council to include bicycling considerations in new development and redevelopment proposals. Secondary plans, draft plans of subdivision and site plans shall implement the Trails Master Plan where appropriate.

8.4.3 The Town shall cooperate with the TransCanada Trail Foundation and other local trail organizations in exploring options for extending the TransCanada Trail through Innisfil.

5.1 Integrated Community Urban Structure

f) Create and maintain a pedestrian-scale for Urban Settlements, which emphasizes a walkable and pedestrian-friendly scale.
g) Develop interconnected street and pedestrian systems for Urban Settlements to promote walkability and clarity of orientation.
h) Promote the creation of diverse and mixed use neighbourhoods.
i) Design new development areas to accommodate the integration of transit potential and foster diverse transportation connections within the Town's structure.

5.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD STRUCTURE, ROAD NETWORK & BLOCK PATTERNS

Intent:
The following policies are formed to contribute to the development of attractive, compact, walkable and interconnected neighbourhoods:

5.2.1 Neighbourhood Structure
a) The design of neighbourhoods should include neighbourhood focal areas, diverse residential areas and amenities within a comfortable pedestrian walking distance to the edges of the neighbourhood. The majority of neighbourhood residents should be within approximately 400 metres of focal areas and amenities such as parks, schools and convenience commercial establishments.
b) Neighbourhoods shall be designed to create smooth transitions at their interfaces with adjacent lands. These edges may be comprised of natural features, agricultural lands, existing settlement areas, community amenities, adjacent neighbourhoods or a combination of these. The design of new development shall provide appropriate transitions accordingly.
c) The range of densities within neighbourhoods should generally be structured to create higher densities within and around the neighbourhood focal areas with generally lower densities at rural and agricultural edges. This is encouraged to promote walkability and transit efficiency.
d) Road networks shall be designed to create an interconnected street system or grid that responds to existing landform, natural and heritage features. The street system shall also reflect the scale and context of local existing street grids where appropriate.
e) Neighbourhood structure shall locate parkland within walking distance of most residences.

5.2.2 Road Network & Block Pattern
a) Street systems shall offer alternative ways of moving through neighbourhoods and enable pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular movement including incorporation of mid-block pedestrian routes.
b) Street systems shall be pedestrian friendly in character. In this regard, the design of block patterns should be based on short block lengths (generally in a range of 140m to 230m).
c) Block widths may vary within neighbourhoods to allow flexibility of housing type and a range of densities.
d) The design of street systems and block patterning shall be configured to promote retention of lakeshore views, significant landforms, and other natural, cultural and heritage features.
e) Bicycle Network and Transit Network plans will be developed by the Town to anticipate future growth. These plans are expected to evolve along with the development of subsequent neighbourhood concept plans and Secondary Plans. Expanded boulevards for multi-use trails may be requested in key locations.

5.4 OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

b) The open space system shall be fully linked and connected to create a network that encourages access for all residents and promotes convenience of pedestrian and bicycle movement. Street boulevards and sidewalks, and elements of the Town's environmental natural features may act as key links for this network.

f) A multi-use trail system shall be developed as a major connecting element of the open space system for pedestrians and cyclists, and as a recreational feature of that system. The trail system may utilize natural features, buffers, parks, Stormwater Management facilities, rail corridors and street corridors.
g) The multi-use trail system should be planned to link to all the settlements and neighbourhoods within the Town. It should connect to residential areas as well as commercial core areas, employment areas and community amenities.

Inspiring Innisfil 2020 (2010)

Connect residents and neighbourhoods.
Strategy: Enhance the networks that enable people to move within and between Innisfil's neighbourhoods.
Why this is important: Innisfil's neighbourhoods are physically isolated from one another. Community cohesion depends on the easy movement and interaction of people within and between neighbourhoods. A range of ways people can move between existing and planned neighbourhoods.
Key actions:
1. Create a Community Linkages Plan (CLP) through the Official Plan process, mapping out existing and planned transportation networks throughout Innisfil (including all public roads, sidewalks, recreational pathways, trails1, etc.).
2. Examine transportation needs within the CLP, including known issues such as the need to re-route truck traffic around Cookstown.
3. If CLP identifies a need for public transit, complete a study examining the financial feasibility of various public transit solutions.
4. Examine, within the CLP, improvements to allow pedestrians and bicyclists better movement within and between neighbourhoods, as well as better access to the Lake and community assets.
5. Ensure that land-use planning policies as identified in the OP require physical linkages connecting neighbourhoods and all new developments (i.e. roads, recreational pathways, and sidewalks connecting residential subdivisions and commercial developments).

Make Innisfil a regional destination for outdoor recreation.
Strategy: Expand and create activities and experiences such as walking, cycling, ice fishing, sports fishing and snowmobiling. Establish a network of recreational trails, including road cycling routes.
Why this is important: People in nearby urban markets, along with visitors staying in Barrie and in South Simcoe, want outdoor recreational fun. Innisfil has the potential to deliver. A trails network will accomplish several things: provide transportation options, recreation opportunities, and provide off-road and on-road linkages within the community.

Innisfil Transportation Master Plan (2013)

Problem Statement
The transportation issues facing the Town of Innisfil are twofold. Firstly there is a need to address residents concerns today. Secondly, the Town is facing significant growth to 2031 and must plan for the future.

Today, almost all travel is made by car. Traffic has grown steadily by 2-4% per year over the past 10 years resulting in traffic congestion during peak periods; while only 14% of all Innisfil work trips stay within Innisfil. There needs to be a greater emphasis on non-auto travel choices such as cycling, walking and transit particularly for seniors, students, and those without access to a vehicle.

Communities within Innisfil are not well connected and the existing sidewalk and trail network is inadequate to accommodate future needs to travel within residential neighbourhoods, and to travel to access Town facilities and services.

By 2031, people and jobs in the Town are expected to double. Without a balanced transportation strategy to handle the growth in travel, Innisfil residents will face town-wide traffic congestion and will not be able to attain its vision and goals.

Funding Opportunities for Active Transportation

The Innisfil TMP identifies funding opportunities that the Town should pursue in order to reduce taxpayer costs on active transportation improvements:

- Federal Gas Tax
- Transport Canada's MOST (Moving on Sustainable Transportation) and ecoMobility (TDM) grant programs
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care grant programs
- Ontario Ministry of Environment Community Go Green Fund (CGGF)
- Ontario Ministry of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Municipal Grant program
- Partnership funding with Simcoe County for infrastructure and health promotion related initiatives
- The Communities in Action Fund available through the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for programming and promotional initiatives related to health/active living/active transportation
- The Canada-Ontario Infrastructure Program
- Ontario Trillium Foundation that was recently expanded in response to the money collected throughout the Province by casinos
- Human Resources Development Canada program that enables personnel positions to be made available to various groups and organizations. For example, the Ontario Trails Council has been able to hire two people under this program
- Corporate Environmental Funds such as Shell and Mountain Equipment Co-op that tend to fund small, labour-intensive projects where materials or logistical support is required
- Corporate donations which may consist of money or services in-kind, and have been contributed by a number of large and small corporations over the years
- Potential future funding that might emerge from the Province in rolling out the Ontario Trails Strategy
- Service clubs such as the Lions, Rotary and Optimists have assisted with a number of high visibility projects at the community level
- Private citizen donations / bequests, that can also include a tax receipt for the donor where appropriate.

SECTION 6: BEST PRACTICES

MTO Transit-Supportive Land Use Planning Guidelines (2012)

Strategies:

1. Establish an interconnected network of streets in new developments and retrofit existing areas to maximize routing options between destinations.
2. Extend new streets and block connections across property lines and design networks to link with existing and proposed streets within the community.
3. Design or retrofit street networks so that a significant majority of residents or jobs (e.g. 90%) are located within a 400 m (approximately 5 minutes) or less walk from a transit stop.
4. Achieve a street intersection density of greater than 0.3 intersections per hectare (iph), with higher street intersection densities of over 0.6 intersections per hectare in *mixed-use nodes* and *corridors*.
5. Minimize block lengths to promote greater connectivity and enhance the walkability of neighbourhoods. Generally, residential blocks should be less than 250 m along their longest side, with maximum block lengths of 120 m in mixed-use activity nodes and corridors.
6. Design local streets to minimize the need for backtracking and provide direct pedestrian access to primary streets, transit stops and stations where possible.
7. Avoid the creation of dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs to maximize street connectivity.
8. Avoid the creation of *lay-by lanes (*a designated paved area beside a road that enables vehicles to stop temporarily to drop-off or pick-up passengers without disrupting traffic), which result in increased street widths and decreased pedestrian space within the sidewalk and boulevard area of the street.
9. Avoid the use of *window streets*, which double up road *infrastructure* and pull uses away from the street. Where limited access is required, buildings facing onto streets should be accessed via a rear drive or lane.

10. Where it is not possible for the layout of streets and blocks to achieve the walking distance criteria, a *mid-block connection* or pedestrian pathway can be used to minimize walking distances. These should be:
    a. constructed of durable, non-slip materials;
    b. direct, visible from adjacent uses and illuminated at night to enhance personal safety; and
    c. maintained year-round and cleared of snow and ice during winter months.

Town of Ajax Official Plan

4.0 TRANSPORTATION

4.1 VIBRANT STREETS

Ajax is in a strategic central location within Durham Region and its approach to transportation infrastructure is instrumental in directing economic, social, and environmental improvement. The vision for Vibrant Streets includes the efficient movement of people and the establishment of a multi-modal Transportation Network where residents and workers are offered a full and practical range of travel options. For the purposes of this Plan, the transportation network consists of the Road System, the Transit System, the Active Transportation System, and the Railway System. In support of this vision, the Town shall be guided by the following principles:

a) Ensure that the movement of people and goods within the Town and other areas is improved by means of an integrated, environmentally sensitive, safe, efficient and balanced transportation system;

b) Support initiatives and approaches which support multi-modal nodes and corridors that serve the needs of an increasingly diverse population including growing families, the senior population and an evolving business community;

c) Ensure that the transportation network is planned, designed, built and managed in a manner that directs growth within the urban boundary, particularly already built-up areas and away from areas where development is discouraged by the policies of the Plan, such as the Greenlands System;

d) Continue its commitment to Federal, Provincial and Durham Regional policies that support and encourage greater participation in sustainable transportation alternatives by seeking measures to increase the share of trips taken by transit, walking and cycling; and,

e) Support improvements to the transportation network through advances in green infrastructure, transit-oriented development, enhanced road safety, and through accommodating all road users that make Ajax a walkable, livable and thriving community.

4.1.1 Goals

The Town supports the design and development of an integrated transportation network for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and shall:

a) Promote the development of an integrated transportation network that safely and efficiently accommodates various modes of transportation including trains, automobiles, trucks, public transit, cycling and walking in a sustainable manner;

b) Promote the increased use of public transit, cycling, and walking as energy efficient, affordable and accessible forms of travel;

c) Protect transportation corridors, including GO Rail stations that will facilitate the development of a transportation system compatible with and supportive of existing and future land uses and that are sensitive to environmental features;

d) Supports improvements to public transit service and active transportation facilities in order to provide better mobility choices for residents, employees and visitors;

e) Reduce auto dependency by supporting opportunities for multi-modal use such as carpooling, active transportation and increased transit use over single occupant vehicles;

f) Promote idle-free zones in the vicinity of schools, community centres and other suitable locations, as necessary;

g) Promote and implement Safe Routes to Schools plans;

h) Implement weekend pedestrian and bicycle streets where appropriate;

i) Support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiatives that promote alternative modes of transportation and increase transit ridership, walking and cycling;

j) Ensure that all development applications for major commercial, employment or institutional development include a TDM strategy; and,

k) Support and promote the safe and efficient movement of goods within the Town and Durham Region.

4.1.2 General Policies

Through the review of development applications, the Town shall:

a) Ensure that transportation facilities, including transit, trails, accessible sidewalks, bicycle facilities and walkways required to serve the needs of the local residents are planned, or are in place in accordance with the site specific conditions of Draft Approval and/or Subdivision Agreement and/or Development Agreement;

b) Develop and review the appropriate levels of service for winter maintenance on multiuse and boulevard trails;

c) Ensure that the effects of noise, fumes and vibration on existing and future residential development are minimized when developing and constructing for transportation facilities, by ensuring consistency with the objectives and policies of this Plan;

d) Ensure that development proceeds with the adequate infrastructure improvements to support the impact of that development on the transportation network, or the phasing of development until the transportation supply is achieved;

e) Protect for the needs of vulnerable road users such as children, youth, persons with disabilities and seniors as part of the development review process and as part of the design of all facilities;

f) Support approaches which optimize the use of existing and proposed future parking facilities and support development proposals which adhere to transit and active transportation supportive land use planning and design principles;

g) Support initiatives that encourage developers and employers to utilize Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies such as carpooling, vanpooling and provide preferred parking spaces for participants;

h) Promote the use of public transit, carpooling, and flextime as strategies to reduce travel demand on the Road System; and,

i) Ensure that intensive land uses are provided along planned and existing transit routes and transit nodes, including the Ajax GO Station.

4.1.3 Transportation Master Plan

The Town shall develop and adopt regular updates to the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) at least every five (5) years which shall include policies, programs and infrastructure improvements required to address the Town's Transportation and Active Transportation Network including the Transportation vision, goals, objectives and policies of this Plan.

4.4 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The priority elements of the Active Transportation System are provided within Schedule "C-3" – Priority Active Transportation Facilities. The Town recognizes that walking and cycling is the primary mode of transportation for all people. The Town encourages higher participation in walking and cycling and supports the provision of **safe** dedicated pedestrian and bicycle facilities, **convenient** walking distances to transit stops, schools and local shops and a **comfortable** pedestrian experience. The Active Transportation System includes sidewalks, trails and on-road bicycle facilities. The Active Transportation System is designed exclusively for all pedestrians, cyclists on designated trails and on-road bicycle facilities including electronic bicycles and scooters required for persons with disabilities. The Town shall:

a) Require measures that provide for barrier-free design;

b) Encourage trail development within the boulevard of a road allowance, utility corridor, abandoned rail line, park, open space, storm water management area or valley corridor subject to the approval of the appropriate authorities such as the Conservation Authority having jurisdiction;

c) Facilitate the development and continuation of a complete and connected Active Transportation System by:

i) Planning and designing trails to be flexible to respond to changes in demand and to serve the needs for a wide range of users including residents, employees and tourists;

ii) Facilitating trail and pedestrian crossings at roadways that enhance the continuity of the Active Transportation Network;

iii) Acquiring lands for the Active Transportation Network in accordance with the locations identified within Schedule 'C-3', Priority Active Transportation Facilities;

iv) Developing a comprehensive wayfinding program for the Active Transportation Network that identifies connections, cross streets, destinations, distances, landmarks and end-of-trip facilities; and

v) Providing bicycle parking and/or storage facilities at primary destinations;

d) Develop and facilitate active and safe routes to schools within the Town;

e) Promote the continuation of recreational trails through the Greenlands System for current and future populations in order to support stewardship of open space areas and the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles;

f) Establish and promote guidelines for cycling including signage and the delineation of bikeways;

g) Encourage the completion of the pedestrian sidewalk network through the review and approval of development applications and through the Town's capital works initiatives;

h) Promote increasing the modal share of trips through active transportation;

i) Require the provision of bicycle storage including bicycle racks and/or lockers through the review of development applications;

j) Ensure that there is adequate and secure bicycle parking available on park property where appropriate;

k) Ensure that lands required for the provision of bikeways, multi-use trails, and/or sidewalks are included with the land requirements for roads;

l) Promote the provision of bicycle lanes within the road allowance of an urban cross-section;

m) Ensure that lands for bikeways, multi-use trails and sidewalks are clearly marked;

n) Promote seamless connectivity of Active Transportation facilities by working with Durham Region and adjacent area municipalities;

o) Ensure new pedestrian and cyclist routes are situated and designed in accordance with the Town's long term Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, and thus assist in achieving Ajax's goals by:

i) connecting to existing routes and movement patterns;

ii) linking residential, shopping, recreation and employment areas within the Town and adjacent municipalities to improve connectivity; and,

iii) providing for the installation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities coincident with adjacent development;

p) Require all cycling and pedestrian routes to be identified on development and redevelopment applications, including the details of any associated outdoor lighting fixtures, and their compliance with the policies of the Official Plan and other municipal requirements confirmed by the Town prior to final approval;

q) Require main building entrances to be located where they are clearly visible and directly accessible from the public sidewalk; and,

r) Promote the development of a comprehensive continuous pedestrian weather protection system in the form of awnings, canopies, building recesses and arcades, along significant pedestrian public streets and through private development areas.

2.1.14 Health Impact Assessment

This Plan recognizes that there is a relationship between land use, infrastructure and public health that affects the vitality and resilience of the community. Elements such as built form, urban design, road and trail networks, open spaces, the public realm, the natural heritage system and infrastructure shape citizens" physical and psychological well-being.

a) To support a health-promoting, age-friendly community, the Town may require a Health Impact Assessment in support of development applications, which shall address the following:

i) how physical activity and pedestrian mobility is addressed in project designs that are safe and convenient for persons using all modes of travel regardless of age or ability;

City of Waterloo Official Plan

6.5 SUPPORTING TRANSIT AND ACTIVE FORMS OF TRAVEL

6.5.1 Active Transportation

(1) This Plan supports active transportation as a low cost form of travel that promotes physical exercise and social interaction and results in a reduced impact on the environment.

(2) Active transportation will be accommodated and encouraged within and across the City's networks, and in particular, the road network and the trails and open space network. To encourage safe and convenient

movement within and between these networks, the planning, design, operation and maintenance of the City's active transportation routes and corridors shall be based on the following principles:

(a) The system shall be comprehensive, continuous, well-connected and provide linkages between major activity areas throughout the City;

(b) The system shall incorporate signage that is clearly visible to the public;

(c) The system shall minimize conflicts between motorized and non-motorized travel and between pedestrians, cyclists and other users; and,

(d) The system shall address the comfort of the users, giving consideration to such matters as shading and seating along the routes.

(3) Several connected and inter-related components of the City's networks are an important part of supporting active transportation to the extent that they connect neighbourhoods and Districts throughout the City as well as connecting the City to adjacent municipalities. These include:

(a) City-wide multi-use routes and cycling routes;

(b) King Street corridor, identified as a Major Corridor within the City that will be planned to accommodate high density, transit supportive uses; and,

(c) Sidewalks, a localized component of the active transportation system.

(4) The road network and the trails and open space network will be planned, designed, operated and maintained to support pedestrian and bicycle travel in all parts of the City as outlined in the policies in the Networks Chapter of this Plan. Key routes and corridors throughout the City that will support active transportation are illustrated on Schedule 'F' – Active Transportation. It is the intent of this Plan that Schedule 'F' provides an overview of major active transportation routes and corridors and that:

(a) The Transportation Master Plan, as a key implementation document, will define more detailed linkages as well as an implementation strategy for the design, operation and maintenance of active transportation routes;

(b) Where privately owned lands are shown on Schedule 'F' – Active Transportation, this Plan does not imply that the lands are accessible to the general public or that the lands will necessarily be acquired by the City.

(c) The active transportation system shown on Schedule 'F' – Active Transportation consists of existing and planned routes that are designed to connect neighbourhoods and planning districts within the City, and to connect the City with adjacent municipalities.

(d) Planning for active transportation includes the development of complete streets. Schedule 'F' – Active Transportation is not intended to illustrate the comprehensiveness of the complete street policy in Waterloo.

(5) The City will plan for the development of buildings, sites and streetscapes that are safe, attractive, well maintained and provide for the convenient and comfortable movement of pedestrians and cyclists. Consistent with the Urban Design policies of this Plan as further implemented by the City of Waterloo Urban Design Manual, such measures may include consideration of:

(a) Site Organization and Design – Includes elements such as building placement, parking lot size and configuration, access to/from/within the site, passenger pick-up and drop-off areas, road/bikeway/sidewalk design and materials, that support safe and convenient movement of cyclists and pedestrians with varying degrees of mobility;

(b) Site Amenities – Includes the provision and appropriate siting (i.e. relative to buildings and streets) of elements such as landscaping, street furniture, transit stops and shelters, short and long term bicycle parking and storage facilities, security features and lighting, in a manner that supports safe and convenient movement of cyclists and pedestrians with varying degrees of mobility;

(c) Building Design and Orientation - Includes locating and designing buildings to provide for direct and safe pedestrian access to destinations such as building entrances, transit routes and amenity spaces.

5.1.3 Road Network

(1) Plan for, design, operate and maintain a road network that provides for complete streets, meaning that users of all ages and abilities – pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and motorists – are able to interact and move safely along and across City streets.

(2) Support a reduction in demand for automobile use in favour of alternative modes of travel.

(3) Plan for a road network with differentiated speeds and vehicular capacities to suit individual areas and include traffic calming design elements, where appropriate

City of Peterborough Official Plan

5.1 TRANSPORTATION GOALS
5.1.1 It is the Goal of Council to:
i) encourage the use and development of all modes of transportation, considering such factors as land use, economics, growth and urban form, economic development, affordability and energy conservation to provide access to services and facilities within the City;
ii) ensure that private and public transportation systems for all travel modes including parking will be provided, operated and managed in a complementary and supportive manner; and
iii) implement a Transportation System that includes the management of transportation demand within the City, through the application of appropriate, selective Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures in order to affect how, when and by what mode travel is conducted within the City.

e) To foster pedestrian connectivity throughout the Central Area particularly the completion of linkages to the Otonabee River, Little Lake and Jackson Creek, new trail and walkway development, and the further development of the Otonabee River Trail.

10.5.4.4 Strategies to Foster Pedestrian Connectivity
a) The assignment of priority to the completion of the Otonabee River Trail connections to Downtown.
b) The establishment of a north-south walkway/cycling corridor serving the Central Area connecting the Trans Canada Trail at Brock Street and Bethune to the Extension of the Crawford Trail at Townsend Street and Bethune, as part of the refreshed Bethune Street right-of-way.

SECTION 7: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
(NOTE: specific recommendations/considerations are bolded)

Section 2: Municipal Structure

2.1 INTENT
It is a defining principle that Innisfil will be a healthy, liveable and safe community. The Official Plan can promote this principle through its municipal structure, its strategic policies and its implementing land use designations. In particular, it is the strategic intent of this Plan to:

vii) develop an interconnected transportation system that efficiently facilitates all users and modes, particularly through the provision of enhanced walking and cycling opportunities; and
viii) transform Alcona as Innisfil's downtown core, to provide pedestrian-friendly amenities that support a safe walking and cycling environment.

2.2 THE VISION
Innisfil's future will build on its small town and scenic rural character through managed growth that will result in a complete community providing for a greater choice for housing, increased employment and self-sufficiency with shopping, recreation and community services. A thriving employment area will be focused along the Highway 400 corridor, and in strategic locations within settlements. The existing settlements will be intensified while respecting the village character and identity of each individual settlement. Innisfil will continue to be a community of communities, but a strong identity as one "Town" will be promoted. The Municipal Civic Campus will assist in promoting that identity and become recognized as the centre of the Town. **Innisfil's transportation network will connect people and communities, foster healthy living and operate efficiently across the Town as an environmentally and financially sustainable system. Transportation choices will be improved with enhanced walking and cycling networks and future public transit service anchored around the new GO Station terminal.** Innisfil's countryside ambiance will be maintained through protection and enhancement of the rural agricultural areas and natural features with support for the viability of farming. Increased public access to the shoreline and improved health of Lake Simcoe will be a draw for residents and visitors alike. Lakefront parks will be a place for community gathering. Growth will be based on prudent infrastructure planning and strong policies that will define where growth will occur, preserve the natural environment, maintain the quiet and peaceful countryside and foster the building of active communities.

Section 5: Urban Design

5.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD STRUCTURE, ROAD NETWORK & BLOCK PATTERNS

Intent:

The following policies are formed to contribute to the development of attractive, compact, walkable and interconnected neighbourhoods:

5.2.1 Neighbourhood Structure

a) The design of neighbourhoods should include neighbourhood focal areas, diverse residential areas and amenities within a comfortable pedestrian walking distance to the edges of the neighbourhood. The majority of neighbourhood residents **(i.e. 75%)** should be targeted within approximately 400 metres of focal areas, **planned transit stops** and amenities such as parks, schools and convenience commercial establishments.

5.2.2 Road Network & Block Pattern

a) Street systems shall offer alternative ways of moving through neighbourhoods and enable pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular movement including incorporation of mid-block pedestrian routes. **Where mid-block pedestrian routes are provided, they should be:**

i) constructed of durable, non-slip materials;

ii) visible from adjacent uses and illuminated at night to enhance personal safety; and

iii) maintained year-round and cleared of snow and ice during winter months.

b) Street systems shall be pedestrian friendly in character. In this regard, the design of block patterns should be based on short block lengths, generally in a range of 140m to 230m. **Within, this general range, block lengths to a maximum of 140 metres will be targeted within and in proximity to mixed-use nodes and corridors.**

c) Streets shall be designed to minimize the need for backtracking and provide direct pedestrian access to primary streets, transit stops and stations where possible. To help achieve this, the Town will aim to:

i) Avoid the creation of dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs to maximize street connectivity.

ii) Avoid the creation of *lay-by lanes (*a designated paved area beside a road that enables vehicles to stop temporarily to drop-off or pick-up passengers without disrupting traffic), which result in increased street widths and decreased pedestrian space within the sidewalk and boulevard area of the street.

iii) Avoid the use of *window streets,* which double up road *infrastructure* and pull uses away from the street. Where limited access is required, buildings facing onto streets should be accessed via a rear drive or lane.

c) Block widths may vary within neighbourhoods to allow flexibility of housing type and a range of densities.

d) The design of street systems and block patterning shall be configured to promote retention of lakeshore views, significant landforms, and other natural, cultural and heritage features.

e) **The active transportation network envisioned in the Transportation Plan will be implemented through the street design** and development of subsequent neighbourhood concept plans and Secondary Plans. Expanded boulevards for multi-use trails may be requested in key locations.

Goal:

To develop a transportation network that connects people and communities, fosters healthy living and operates efficiently across the Town as an environmentally and financially sustainable system.

Additional Sections

Health Impact Assessment

a) To support a health-promoting, age-friendly community, the Town may require a Health Impact Assessment in support of development applications, which shall address how physical activity and pedestrian mobility is addressed in project designs that are safe and convenient for persons using all modes of travel regardless of age or ability.

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