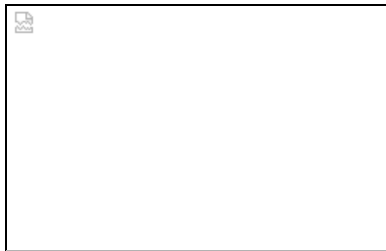


February 2011 Walkolution e-News

Walk21 Metro Vancouver 2011: Transforming the automobile city: walking steps up!

October 3-5, 2011. Call for papers now available at www.walk21.com – papers due February 18.

Ontario Walkability Award of Excellence Winners – Haliburton-Minden



Last month we highlighted the accomplishments of one of our three Walkability Award winners, Brantford. This month we bring you an update on the walkability achievements of Haliburton-Minden, our rural award winner.

Photo caption: From left to right Karen Donaldson-Howden, judge (Panache Life Inc.); Sue Shikaze, Health Promoter with Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit; Kate Hall, Green Communities Canada; and Dan Leeming, judge (The Planning Partnership).

In 2005 the Heart and Stroke Foundation's Report Card indicated that rural residents are more car dependant, half as likely to be as physically active as their urban counterparts and at an increased risk of being overweight or obese. In response to this, a community-based group called the Communities in Action Committee (www.communitiesinaction.ca) formed to address some of these issues through active transportation promotion and planning. When they began their work, there were virtually no examples of rural communities implementing active transportation initiatives.

The work to improve walkability began with focus groups, surveys and observation studies to find out from residents where the "hot spots" were that presented challenges for pedestrians. The committee then contracted the services of a landscape architect to create concept drawings of these locations that incorporated pedestrian friendly design elements. These illustrations provided a vision for what COULD be in the community and helped to gain the support of local governments.

Brantford's Active Transportation group recently reported that the City's newly elected Council has been signed by all members! Way to go Brantford.

See the Charter at www.walk21.com.

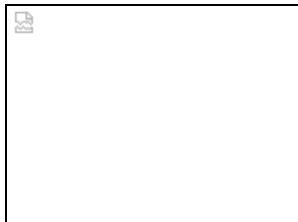


Photo caption: Brantford Mayor Chris Friel signing the Charter.

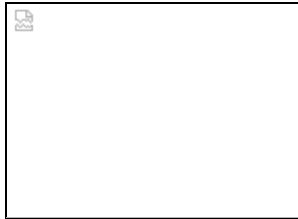
In 2007, the villages of Minden Haliburton participated in Green Communities' Walkability Roadshow (see case study at www.canadawalks.ca/case_haliburton.asp) where walkability workshops and community walkabouts, led by a team of international experts, were held to raise awareness of the importance of creating walk friendly communities. In October of 2007, all four local

municipalities in Haliburton County hosted walks as part of the World Record Walk.

Since then support for creating more walkable communities has grown. Both villages have Active Transportation Plans in place and have adopted official plan policies that support pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, infrastructure projects such as the implementation of a Streetscape Plan in Haliburton Village and the Riverwalk trail project in Minden have improved conditions for walking in each community.

To learn more visit www.mindenhills.ca and www.haliburtonecho.ca

Grey-Bruce County are MovingON!



Green Communities Canada and 8-80 Cities visit Owen Sound to speak at two MovingON community forums.

Green Communities Canada and 8-80 Cities brought the Ontario Communities walkON project to Owen Sound on January 19th, where over 100 eager participants attended two MovingON Community Forums hosted by Play in Bruce-Grey and the Grey-Bruce Health Unit. Play in Bruce-Grey creates strategies in all 17 Grey-Bruce communities to increase the number of residents who are regularly physically active through play (<http://playbrucegrey.com>). As walkable and bikeable communities increase the opportunities for unstructured play, coordinator Catherine Smart recognized the synergistic connection between the two initiatives. Catherine promoted the event extensively throughout the counties and worked hard to engage key municipal decision makers and stakeholders along with concerned citizens. The Grey-Bruce Health Unit also threw tremendous support behind the walkON launch. On February 19, 2010, Medical Officer of Health Dr. Hazel Lynn signed off on a resolution supporting active and alternative transportation to support healthy living, making the Grey-Bruce Health Unit a leader of public health support: www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca. Green Communities staff will be back in the beautiful Grey-Bruce region over the next few months to deliver train-the-trainer and walkability workshops.

There is still opportunity for two more regions of the province to participate in the Ontario Communities walkON project in 2011. For more information visit www.canadawalks.ca/project_walkon.asp. Contact Mandy Johnson at mjohnson@greencommunitiescanada.org.

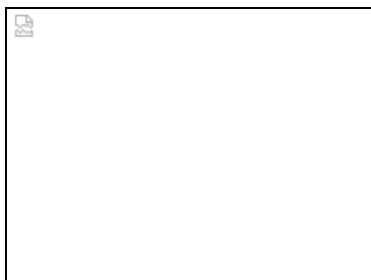
Facebook Links:



Getting Active in Thunder Bay

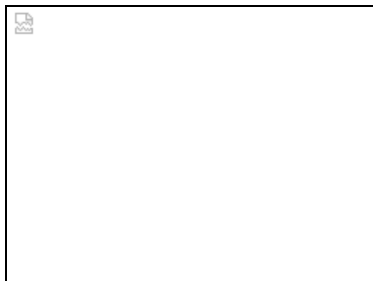
Thunder Bay's location is superb and the landscape beyond picturesque! Access to canoeing, camping, hiking/walking and skiing (downhill & cross country) exists within city limits or just a few kilometers away. There are no excuses not to be active, but unfortunately, Northwestern Ontario and Thunder Bay have a higher rate of obesity and cardiovascular disease than the Ontario average.

In 2008 an Active Transportation plan was presented to Thunder Bay's City Council to address part of this issue. In 2009, two EcoSuperior staff, the Active Transportation (AT) Coordinator and the local health unit joined forces to create an Active & Safe Routes to School Committee. Since then, there have been numerous achievements in promoting active transportation in the community including the creation of 2 km of shared lanes, and the installation of 8 km of bike lanes on test routes with 310 AT-related signs installed along these routes. In May 2010, the new bike lanes were launched and over 200 residents signed the 'We Bike Lanes' poster which was then presented to City Council. Thunder Bay has developed a Transportation Demand Management Plan, developed bicycle parking guidelines, delivered 44 Active Transportation presentations and hosted two bike rodeos.



International Walk to School Day 2009, Winter Walk Day 2010 and Clean Air Day 2010 were celebrated with Thunder Bay's Mayor leading hundreds of students on guided walks around the neighbourhood. Earth Day 2010 saw students, staff and parents of St. Francis School launch their "No Idling at School Campaign". Ten Thunder Bay Schools received Toolkits and four of them installed "No Idling" street signs which were purchased by the ASRTS Committee. 2010's International Walk to School Day was celebrated with the Mayor

cutting the ribbon to the new Windsor Street sidewalk. Also on hand were ASRTS committee members, school board officials, students and local residents who can now actively travel more safely.



Plans are already underway for Thunder Bay's Winter Walk Day 2011, with 5 schools registered and 2 Special Olympians scheduled to walk alongside local students. The ASRTS committee has recently signed on to participate in the School Travel Planning process. "We have a lot of momentum happening in our community in the ASRTS program area, and the time is right to introduce School Travel Planning" says Ellen Mortfield, EcoSuperior's Executive Director. To learn more about EcoSuperior's programs visit <http://www.ecosuperior.org>.

Sustainable Happiness: Health Education Webinars

February 16, 23 or March 2. Please register by emailing scjones@telus.net.

Visit the World Health Organization's web site to learn about the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020: www.who.int

The upcoming series of Sustainable Happiness and Health Education webinars, presented by Dr. Catherine O'Brien of Cape Breton University, focus on an exciting new curriculum resource. These webinars will be of particular interest to facilitators and teachers so please forward this invitation to your contacts and colleagues. Visit <http://sustainablehappiness.ca/for-educators> for the NEW teachers' guide.

Ontario Schools: Celebrate the new season and *Spring into Spring*



Challenge your students to walk (or jog, skip or bike) for a week between "Earth Week and Clean Air Day" to promote:

- Daily physical activity
- A healthier environment
- Safer streets
- Making friends and having fun!

Register your school here for *Spring into Spring*: www.saferoutestoschool.ca/registration.asp.

"I just wanted to say thank you for the resources and the continued support. As a school, we will be participating in the Winter Walk (Feb 9th) and *Spring into Spring*. The most rewarding aspect of the program is how excited the students are about the I Can Walk to School..Can You? pledge."

Maria Simone,
St. Stephen's Catholic Elementary School, Woodbridge, Ontario

Spring is just around the corner! Schools can celebrate through active transportation and walking and wheeling initiatives through our *Spring into Spring* activity from April through June. *Spring into Spring* provides a great opportunity to get active, on the journey to and from school as well as during school time. We are continuing our theme for this school year of 'iCANwalk to school...can you?' so schools can use *Spring into Spring* to take part in this fun activity. Schools can track the kilometers walked by your students and staff,

both to school and at school, here: www.saferoutestoschool.ca/icanwalk/. Remember, we are offering super prizes at the end of this school year, donated by our partner, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario. Schools that log their kilometers on the web site are eligible for prizes selected from the Heart and Stroke Foundations HeartSmart™ Points.

Green Communities will provide promotional posters for your school and stickers for your students for *Spring into Spring*. If your school has not registered then do so now!

This initiative is brought to you by Green Communities Canada and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario. The Heart and Stroke Foundation believes that every child deserves to grow up healthy and is committed to helping schools create healthy community environments. Spark Together for Healthy Kids, Jump Rope for Heart and the Heart Healthy Kids tool kits are three unique resources to help our children be active and healthy. Get involved and be informed at <http://tinyurl.com/2dkd9pg>

We Walk to School in Windsor/Essex

Inspired by Green Communities' Walk Across Canada activity, the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit have created a great website [We walk to school](#) for teachers and parents. Here you can download resources that not only help to increase physical activity among elementary school students but have direct links to the curriculum, including math.

The [We walk to school](#) website is a result of an Active & Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) coalition that was formed in January 2008 and represents the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Windsor/Essex school boards, local health centres and municipalities. During 2008/09, the coalition held community forums at eight pilot elementary schools to discuss with parents and school members how ASRTS activities could be implemented in their schools. The pilot project was funded for two years by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, through a Community Action grant, ending in December 2009.

Visit www.apfo.org.uk for the report: Value for Money: An Economic Assessment of Investment in Walking and Cycling, prepared by Dr. Adrian Davis for the U.K. Dept. of Health. This interesting study, completed in October 2010, compares the cost benefit ratio of walk to school schemes and shows how a small investment can have big payoffs. A must read for all working on active school travel initiatives.

Teacher resources include the [Walk Across Canada Teaching Kits](#), in English and French, designed to assist school staff and volunteers to implement a Walk Across Canada Challenge in their school. This challenge invites schools to 'walk' the 7428 km between St. John's, Newfoundland and Vancouver, British Columbia, by having them accumulate steps taken by participating students. The opportunities for integration into math lessons are endless! The Walk Across Canada Challenge kit, available for download, contains posters, teaching kit outlines for primary, junior and senior division, graphics, and an evaluation.

The web site also features a [Parent Section](#) that suggests actions for parents who want their children to walk to school outside of a structured walking program, and a formal program for those who want to start a structured walking program at school. The [Kid Section](#) offers fun activities : Word Search, Name that Sign, and Matching Up Words games.

Canada's Physical Activity Guidelines

Released on January 24, 2011, the updated Canadian physical activity guidelines (www.csep.ca/english/view.asp?x=804) along with the tip sheets (<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/04paap-eng.php>) that accompany them, describe the amount and types of physical activity that offer substantial health benefits to children, youth, adults and older adults. The guidelines reflect advances in exercise science and input from experts in the field and align with international guidelines used in other countries. The Public Health Agency of Canada supported the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) in reviewing the scientific evidence on physical activity and developing new physical activity guidelines.

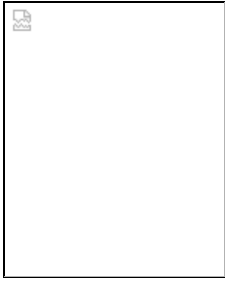
"Our students are looking forward to our Winter Carnival on February 9 and we just want to make the day extra special. I think we will start a 'Spring km walk and talk club' at lunch recess since not many of our students walk to school. I wanted to have a greater participation thus the club!"

Karolina Donkers, St. Vincent de Paul School, Cambridge, Ontario

The same week StatsCan released the results of a research report (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/4060784-eng.htm>) that showed that only 15% of Canadians achieve the recommended amount of exercise each week, 150 minutes, which is in contrast to the results of a 2009 StatsCan survey where 50% of Canadians reported that their own fitness levels were much higher than the reality. The new research showed that only 7% of children are getting 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity at least six days a week. In the research study, participants wore accelerometers to track the duration and intensity of their physical activity for one week. Based on these findings, the outlook for our long term health is not encouraging.

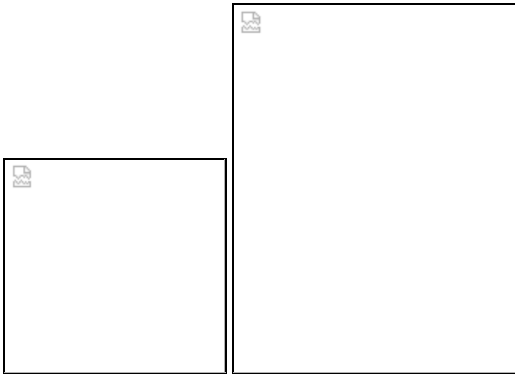
If more Canadians, both children and adults, incorporated active transportation into their day to get to and from local destinations we could start to reverse this alarming trend.

Take Me Outside



Colin Harris, an environmental education masters student with a decade of experience in outdoor education, is a man on a mission to get children active outside. On January 17, from Signal Hill in St. John's, Newfoundland, he began an epic run across Canada along the Trans Canada Highway, following in the famous footsteps of Terry Fox, to bring attention to his mission. Colin will be stopping at schools across Canada to give presentations and inspire kids from coast to coast to get outdoors. If you would like Colin to inspire the children in your community, visit <http://takemeoutside.ca>.

Earth Hour 2011 – Saturday, March 26 at 8.30 PM



2011's Earth Hour will take place on Saturday, March 26 at 8.30 pm (local time). This Earth Hour, the World Wildlife Federation wants people the world over to "go beyond the hour" to think about what else you can do to make a difference in the effort to reduce climate change. What better way than to take the iCANwalk pledge to walk and bike more and drive less when making short trips to school, work, shop, play, or transit? To take the pledge today visit: <http://icanwalk.ca>.

REMINDER Injury Prevention Webinar, presented by Kim Bergeron

Injury Prevention and the Built Environment: Evidence and Strategies for Action webinar scheduled for **February 22, 9:30 – 11:00 am**.

2nd International Study Tour on Ciclovía/Open Streets from March 4-6, 2011 in Guadalajara, Mexico

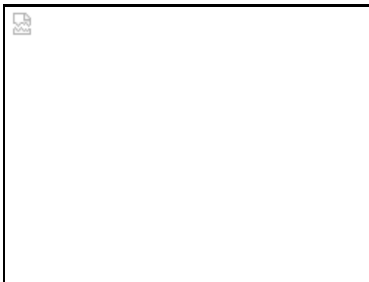
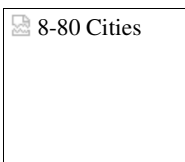


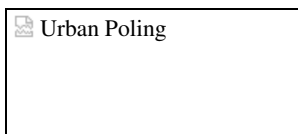
Photo caption: Guadalajara's Via RecreActiva in action with 300,000 weekly participants, March 2010

Join international leaders and expert speakers from Ottawa, Portland, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Bogotá and Guadalajara in workshops and dialogue around creating, innovating and improving Ciclovias/Open Streets programmes while enjoying one of the world's most successful programs – [Guadalajara's Via RecreActiva](#).



This annual study tour is built to be highly interactive while immersing participants in people-friendly design that applies innovative approaches to creating sustainable and healthy cities. For more information visit www.8-80cities.org.

Nordic Walking Project Development



Urban Poling offers assistance to any community interested in pursuing a local Ontario Healthy Communities Grant to start a Nordic walking program for the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport's March 31st deadline. If interested please contact mandy@urbanpoling.com.

Our Partners

