

## Canadian Pedestrian Organization Applauds Ontario Chief Coroner's Report Pedestrian death prevention report a 'breakthrough' for walkers

September 19<sup>th</sup> – Toronto -- Canada Walks, the leading champion for walking and walk friendly communities, has hailed the report on preventing pedestrian deaths released today by Ontario's Office of the Chief Coroner as a breakthrough in its efforts to create vibrant, safe, **Walk Friendly** communities.

"It is gratifying to see the Office of the Chief Coroner address the important issue of pedestrian safety – and death and injury prevention in particular. Every trip we take begins with a walk and a community is only as viable as the ability of its citizens to walk safely. Walking is fundamental to our well-being, and to our transportation network -- indeed it is a lifelong pastime. As such, we must embrace the recommendations from the panel as a huge step forward in addressing issues related to improving the conditions for walkers everywhere," said Jacky Kennedy, Director of Canada Walks, a division of Green Communities Canada. "We look forward to working with the Office of the Chief Coroner, and with our stakeholders in communities across Ontario – and indeed Canada – to leverage these recommendations and ensure their implementation," she added.

"When people feel safe in their communities, they are more likely to walk to nearby destinations - which is great for their health, the environment, the character and vitality of the community, and business. Encouraging walk friendly outdoor environments not only reduces the risk of injury or death from vehicles, it helps to decrease the 21,000 Canadian deaths per year that result from sedentary lifestyles," noted Kennedy.

"Further, simple changes such as those recommended by Toronto's Medical Officer of Health including lowering the speed on high traffic pedestrian routes from 50 kph to at least 30 kph -- significantly increases the chance of survival as the result of a collision from 5 percent to 80 percent, according to the World Health Organization. Other provinces in Canada -- BC, Alberta and Nova Scotia -- have reduced speeds in school zones to 30 km/hr; we'd love to see Ontario implement such a change across the province", said Kennedy.

Positive changes to improve the walking environment in our towns and cities across Ontario have the potential to raise the mode share for active transportation significantly. With changes to the walking environment, the Netherlands has managed to increase the number of daily walking trips to 25%. We would like to see Ontario aim for such an improvement, especially in our densely populated areas, over the Canadian average of 11%. And reducing the risk of walking fatalities can save the province money when it results in more walking trips; according to Transport Canada, an active transportation trip saves Canadians \$1.70 per kilometre travelled over kilometre travelled by car.

- 30 -

For more than a decade, Canada Walks has worked with municipalities, school districts and local organizations across Canada to make walking safe, convenient, and enjoyable.

Contact: Jacky Kennedy, mobile 416-992-5496 or toll free 1 877 533-4098 Ext. 411; [asrts@sympatico.ca](mailto:asrts@sympatico.ca).  
Website: [www.canadawalks.ca](http://www.canadawalks.ca) / [www.saferoutestoschool.ca](http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca) / [www.walkfriendly.ca](http://www.walkfriendly.ca)