



Fox Creek

2015 Walkability Workshop

WalkABLE
ALBERTA 

The main title "Fox Creek" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, slanted upwards. Below it, "2015 Walkability Workshop" is written in a smaller white font. At the bottom, "WalkABLE ALBERTA" is written in a bold white font, with a small logo to the right that depicts a stylized person walking.

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Introduction

WalkABLE Alberta

WalkABLE Alberta, provided by Alberta Health Services (AHS), is an initiative that aims to improve walkability, create supportive walkable communities, and encourage citizens in communities to walk more often. The principles of the International Charter for Walking (Appendix B) are used as a guide to promote key actions that would improve the walkability of communities. This charter helps identify things that are already being done to support walkable communities, as well as determine current challenges and future opportunities for promoting walkability.

Communities ChooseWell

Communities ChooseWell is a provincial initiative funded by Alberta Health and managed by Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA). Communities ChooseWell fosters healthy communities through education, community capacity building and partnerships that support healthy eating, active living and social well-being. ChooseWell offers seed grants, educational resources, networking opportunities and more to enable and enhance a community's ability to create supportive healthy environments. In 2015 alone, over 230 Alberta communities, including hamlets, villages, towns, municipal districts, cities, urban neighbourhoods, schools, organizations, and First Nations and Métis communities, have registered with Communities ChooseWell.



The Fox Creek Walkability Workshop

Alberta Health Services' (AHS) WalkABLE Alberta and Communities ChooseWell met with stakeholders in the Town of Fox Creek to open up the dialogue on community walkability. Discussions with stakeholders aimed to address what is currently in place to support walking in Fox Creek, what needs to improve to increase community walkability, and what are considered the highest priority issues for the community.

The one-day workshop was held at Fox Creek's town office on October 19, 2015. The complete agenda that was developed prior to the workshop is available in Appendix B.

The workshop attendees were:

- Mitch Carter – Director of Parks and Recreation
- Miranda Kuss - Recreation Administrative Assistant
- Alicia Bourbeau - Director of Corporate Services
- John Greathead – Director of Operations and Public Works
- Evelyn Rogers – Point person for Fox Creek's International Walking Club

The workshop began with Sarah Wildgen providing a brief introduction of the Communities ChooseWell program. Communities ChooseWell will be providing a Walkability Grant to the Town of Fox Creek following the WalkABLE workshop, pending submission of a project proposal. AHS Health Promotion Facilitator, Graham Matsalla, followed with a presentation describing the benefits of walking and the application of the International Charter for Walking at the community level.

Next, the attendees participated in a brainstorming exercise in which they were asked to discuss the following questions in relation to each Charter principle:

- What do we have now?
- What can we do better with what we have?
- What can we add?

The discussion was recorded using flip chart paper. The transcribed notes can be found in Appendix C.

Following the discussion, attendees were asked to choose two items which they perceived to be the highest priorities for creating a walkable community (a complete list of these items can be found in Appendix D). The items were then listed on flip chart paper and attendees were given the opportunity to vote three times to reflect their top three priority items, thereby further refining the list. The resulting top three priority items are as follows:

- Signage to recreation areas and community maps;
- Accessibility to major parts of town resources; and
- Improved connection between Kaybob pathway and recreation centre.

A brief walk through the new recreation trails behind the town hall was led by Mitch Carter, as the majority of the town had already been explored and photographed by Graham Matsalla prior to the workshop. Upon return, a virtual walkabout was presented by Graham. The photos of the town were used to demonstrate areas that are in need of improvement and areas of success.

The workshop concluded with a final discussion to determine short, medium, and long-term actions that were needed to accomplish each of the top three priority items. These actions can be found in the next section of the report.



Top Priority Items: Short, Medium and Long-Term Actions

Action plans based on selected priorities

1. Improved connection between Kaybob pathway and recreation centre

Short Term:

- Cones and signage to pilot pathway/link
- Include messaging in newsletter and other communications tools about the new link
- Engage the public in this discussion in order to receive feedback to determine the medium and long term actions

Medium Term:

- Painted cross walk

Long Term:

- Paved cross walk



2. Accessibility to major parts of town resources

Short Term:

- Pedestrian counter to evaluate intersection of Kaybob Drive and 1st Avenue

Medium Term:

- Assessment of the intersection of Kaybob Drive and 1st Avenue
 - Pilot different crossing options
 - Engage with businesses where necessary

Long Term:

- Ensure a complete walking network



3. Signage to recreation areas and community maps

Short Term:

- Assess what is already there and where more signage is needed
 - Including community maps

Medium Term:

- Develop/install signage to identify the start to recreation trails
 - Create signage within residential areas to direct individuals to trails and other destinations
- Possibly add recreation trail directions to existing signage
- Engage businesses (i.e. hotels) to contribute to a town map (way finding)
 - Engage the Fox Creek Chamber of Commerce in discussion



Long Term:

- Assess and maintain signage/way-finding as pathways/town develops

Recommendations

Policy Change

- Increase walking as a sustainable form of transportation within the community.
 - Pedestrian support should be on par with the car, and support from authorities in policy, laws, and infrastructure should represent that.
- Ensure that pedestrians are considered in all new development projects and that deficiencies are addressed in any redevelopment and/or infrastructure repair.



Stakeholder Engagement

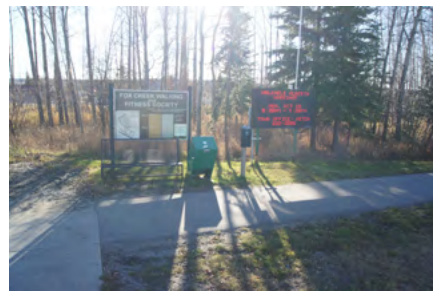
- A community walkability component should be included in the community engagement session(s) that are currently used by the Town of Fox Creek Administration to engage community members in discussions about new and adaptations to community developments.
 - Discussion with community about how walkable issues have been considered in order to support sustainable transportation in the community.
- Formation of a committee of community stakeholders whose purpose is to address walkability issues and increase the priority of walking as a sustainable transportation option within the community; this could be the creation of a new committee and/or the engagement of an existing committee. This group can help to make decisions, assist in implementation, and facilitate community support. Representation from the following groups should be considered:
 - Public Works/Operations
 - Recreation
 - Representative(s) for recreational pathways/walkways
 - Representative(s) from Nordic and Trail Club
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Older adult groups
 - Young family representatives
 - Persons with disabilities
 - School representatives
- Continue to engage and work with provincial organizations that support walkability improvements (e.g. Alberta Health Services, Alberta Recreation & Parks Association, Communities ChooseWell, Alberta Motor Association, etc.)

- Work with specific groups within the community (e.g. Chamber of Commerce) on initiatives that can support walkability and provide improved opportunities for that group.
 - Improvement of the walking network can provide some support to visitors the community and encourage them to visit businesses.



Community Infrastructure

- Build on the momentum of existing infrastructure that supports walkability.
 - Link trails to existing community walking infrastructure. Trails that are used for recreation need to be linked to destinations within the community; and those who are using community sidewalks/walkways should be able to easily find links to the trail system. This can be accomplished through way-finding (maps and signage).
 - Ensure that walking infrastructure and way-finding adequately links walkways to community destinations, such as green space (e.g. Oasis Park), recreation areas (e.g. skate park, rink, arena, community centres), and other areas that community members visit (e.g. schools, businesses, places of worship, and other destinations).
 - Commercial court provides a nice area that supports walkability which can be used to build momentum for the creation of a walkable commercial area.



- Improvements of community infrastructure should include walkability improvements.
 - Highway Avenue is a street that represents the Town of Fox Creek. Although this street needs to remain available for commercial traffic, there are ways to connect people to the businesses that they would like to access (e.g. people trying to reach restaurants/grocery store from hotels).

- A phased approach could be used to make walkability improvements while other infrastructure improvements are made.



- Assess the community walking network and complete the network in a prioritized way.

- As Fox Creek has developed, there are portions of the walking network that have been missed and/or were not completed at the time of development. The network should be assessed for infrastructure gaps. Improvements should be made if/when other infrastructure is being addressed.



Maintenance

- Determine if the creation of, or sharing of, the prioritization of walking networks, in terms of sidewalk repair and/or debris removal (e.g. snow removal), could/should be shared with the public and updated annually.
- Encourage community participation in the maintenance and upkeep of their community's infrastructure
 - Snow Angel program
 - Sharing a message that your neighbours in the community have contributed to their community by removing snow/debris – encouraging community members to get involved in the improvement of their community.



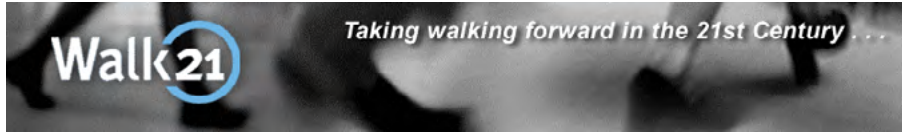
Analysis

- Conduct analysis to guide decision making.
 - Pedestrian counts, vehicle counts, and pedestrian movements to/from destinations, can help develop priority routes and provide evidence to support walkability improvements.
- Conduct community evaluation on walkability and walkability issues through a new or existing community survey.

Celebrate

- Encourage and support walking to/from community events.
 - This can include the promotion or support of alternative transportation modes as part or all of the trip to/from community events.
- Walking challenges and/or other events can be used to celebrate new or existing infrastructure that supports walking in the community.

Appendix A



International Charter for Walking

**Creating healthy, efficient and sustainable communities
where people choose to walk**

I/We, the undersigned recognise the benefits of walking as a key indicator of healthy, efficient, socially inclusive and sustainable communities and acknowledge the universal rights of people to be able to walk safely and to enjoy high quality public spaces anywhere and at anytime. We are committed to reducing the physical, social and institutional barriers that limit walking activity. We will work with others to help create a culture where people choose to walk through our commitment to this charter and its strategic principles:

1. ***Increased inclusive mobility***
2. ***Well designed and managed spaces and places for people***
3. ***Improved integration of networks***
4. ***Supportive land-use and spatial planning***
5. ***Reduced road danger***
6. ***Less crime and fear of crime***
7. ***More supportive authorities***
8. ***A culture of walking***

Signed

Name

Position

Date

www.walk21.com

Appendix B

WalkAble Alberta One-Day Workshop Agenda – Fox Creek

Town of Fox Creek

Monday, October 19, 2015

Town of Fox Creek Office 8:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. Meet and Greet

8:45 – 9:00 a.m. Welcome from Mayor Jim Ahn

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Introduction from Alberta Health Services

9:30 – 10:00 a.m. Signing of the International Charter for Walking

10:00 – 10:15 a.m. Break

10:15 – 11:45 a.m. Interactive Workshop: Walking Priorities

- Walking Challenges
- Walking Successes
- Walking Initiatives

12:00 – 1:00 p.m. Lunch

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Town Walkabout

2:45 – 4:30 p.m. Moving Forward: Review and Goal Setting

Initiative Sharing

Wrap Up

Appendix C

Group Brainstorming (Flip Chart Notes on the International Charter for Walking)

1. Increased inclusive mobility

What do we have now?

- Connector sidewalks
- Informal policy for ramped curbs
 - There is an opportunity to make this a formal policy
- Increase zebra sidewalks
 - Particularly near schools

What can we do better with what we have now?

- Unpaved connector sidewalks leading into grass/green space at the school
- Pathway down Kaybob gets very icy in the winter – some choose to walk on the road to avoid falling

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- Wheelchair access to the splash park
- Intersection near town hall needs improvement
 - No crosswalk
 - The light only goes across Kaybob but not the other 2 Avenues
 - Signs prior to the lights? (Pedestrian lights OR painting on roadways)
- Sidewalk along Highway Avenue
- Improved sight lines by reducing car parking near crosswalks to increase pedestrian visibility (near Marnevic Memorial park and bike park)

- Need to slow traffic into different pilot programs and temporary solutions
- The trail stops at the golf course entrance

2. Well designed and managed spaces and places for people

What do we have now?

- Oasis Park – paved path, benches, dog bag containers
- Signage on the trails
- Commercial Court by drugstore
- Benches along the trails
- Benches at Community Garden (water tower)
 - 3 or 4 near fire hall
 - Water tower and mural on tower
 - Beautification project
- Two outdoor washrooms available seasonally
- Outdoor washroom by COPs park

What can we do better with what we have now?

- Sidewalks would be wide enough in residential area if the residents would cut their grass back to remove obstacles
- Strengthen partnership with Nordic and Trail Club and other groups

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- Noise curfew (not enforced) at 10 p.m.

- Curfew for young people at 11 p.m.; only allowed passed 11 p.m. with adult supervision
- Highway Avenue renovations
- Signage to get from residential area to Nordic and Trail Club and other trails

3. Improved Integration of networks

What do we have now?

- Several Connector sidewalks throughout residential areas
- Snow Angel initiative to start this winter
- Debris clearing policy – town priority and residential areas

What can we do better with what we have now?

- Pave goat paths made by kids (e.g. path to the skate park)

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- Golf course entrance, bike path – there is no direction for where to cross to the other side
 - Need pedestrian crosswalk/signage on both sides
- Crossing Kaybob to get to recreation centre is missing
 - Need to walk up to the crosswalk at the top of the hill
 - Goat path is strong
- Skate park goat path – no clear/formal pathway

4. Supportive land-use and spatial planning

What do we have now?

- New bike trails
- Snowmobiles packed snow near old firewall (ends at 1st street) and then walking group uses the trails during the winter.
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street within new developments
- Community comprehensive plan has pedestrian networks built in (30m wide, asked to reduce this size)
- Sloped curbs in newer areas (residential)

What can we do better with what we have now?

- Community comprehensive plan

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- Switch backs to reduce steepness up Kaybob hill – seniors are avoid the hill
- Highway Avenue – needs a plan – add to community comprehensive plan

5. Reduced road danger

What do we have now?

- Current peace officer is doing a great job at enforcement/supervision

What can we do better with what we have now?

- Recreation vehicles (this year) have been better, they have been parked out of the way
 - Improvements could still be made through education and awareness of current curfew of when they are required to be off the road
 - Paper
 - Website

- Social media
- Improve sight lines near cross walks with parking policies
 - Each household has several vehicles

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- High risk intersection:
 - Kaybob near Town Hall (1st Ave)
 - Mac's store/Petro Canada
 - Kaybob and Highway Ave (near Husky) – has had accidents there
 - 2nd Street and 2A Avenue (Island)
- Cross walk between Kaybob and 2nd Avenue, then sidewalk up by the ball park to get to the recreation facility

6. Less crime and fear of crime

What do we have now?

- Citizens on Patrol Group (firefighters and RCMP) – walk streets on days/nights when kids would be out
- Block Parents signs in the windows
 - Supportive at one time – not sure if this still exists in Fox Creek
 - Children did use these when needed
- Public relations is active in schools (DARE program and others)
- Well lit
- Minor crimes happen

What can we do better with what we have now?

- 8th and 7A Ave (near school) is dark, not very walkable
 - Could be assessed though a night walking audit

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- Highway Ave at night is dark

7. More supportive authorities

What do we have now?

- Some stakeholder involvement
- “Lighting” was on strategic planning session and has been addressed
 - This is different from the comprehensive plan
 - May not be in line with funding that is currently available
- Council is relatively supportive of walking
 - Varied group of members brings a variety of opinions to the table

What can we do better with what we have now?

- Authorities are reactive in nature
 - Move to preventive in nature can be a challenge

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- Potential option:
 - Collect walking data (i.e. pedestrian counters)
 - Help assess priority trails – use as evidence for change
- Measure success of programs: surveys, data collection

8. A culture of walking

What do we have now?

- Mural by watertower

- Recreation trails
- Fire hydrant in front of police station – more to come

What can we do better with what we have now?

- Increased incentives for Communities in Bloom
- Growing Oasis Park
 - Future developments (new multiuse building)
 - Communication with developers

What can we add (Big ideas)?

- Engage local artists to paint fire hydrants and power boxes
 - Ongoing discussion with the community
- Enhancement committee to fix up/beautify
- Ensure/encourage signage to all new recreation trails
 - Privately developed and maintained therefore requires engagement with the Nordic and Trail Club

Appendix D

List of Each Attendees' Top Two Choices

- Improved interaction of network on Kaybob Drive at golf course entrance (1 vote)
- **Signage to recreation areas and community maps (2 votes)**
- **Accessibility to major parts of town resources (3 votes)**
- Improved sight lines in residential areas (1 vote)
- Icy walking on Kaybob (1 vote)
- Night walking audits (2 votes)
- Highway Avenue incorporating walkability improvements during infrastructure change
- **Improved connection between Kaybob pathway and recreation centre (3 votes)**
- Walkway connecting 1st Avenue and Visitor Information Centre (1 vote)

Contact

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