

# 2014

# WALKABILITY WORKSHOP



# *Manning*





## Acknowledgements

Communities ChooseWell and Alberta Health Services would like to thank the following people and organizations for their contributions to the WalkABLE Alberta workshop in Manning:

- Janine Gray, Health Promotion Facilitator, Alberta Health Services – Communities ChooseWell leader
- Graham Matsalla, Health Promotion Facilitator, Alberta Health Services

Communities ChooseWell and Alberta Health Services would like to thank the following groups and organizations for participating in the Walkability Workshop in Manning:

- Mayor Sunni-Jeanne Walker
- City Councilors
- Senior Star Center
- City Administrators

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## Introduction

### Communities ChooseWell

Communities ChooseWell is a provincial healthy eating, active living initiative managed by Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA), and funded by Alberta Health. This initiative fosters healthy communities through education, community capacity building and partnerships. ChooseWell offers funding, education, resources, challenges, networking opportunities and more to enable and enhance a community's ability to create supportive healthy environments. Since 2006, more than 300 Alberta communities, including hamlets, villages, towns, municipal districts, cities, urban neighbourhoods, schools, organizations, and First Nations and Métis communities, have participated in Communities ChooseWell.

### Winter Walking Challenge

In 2014, Communities ChooseWell hosted a Winter Walking Challenge in partnership with UWALK during the month of February. The challenge was meant to align with Winter Walk Day on February 5th and to encourage Albertans to both walk and move more during the month of February, and also to consider how their communities can support walking and physical activity. To extend the impact of the challenge, Communities ChooseWell partnered with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to offer a walkability workshop to two communities that participated in the challenge – one community with the highest average number of steps per participant and one randomly selected community. Manning had 8 participants in the challenge with an average number of steps of over 170,000 per person and was randomly selected from a draw of all participating communities to win the prize of hosting a Walkability Workshop within the community.

### Walkability Workshop

The Walkability Workshop is a strategy from Alberta Health Service (AHS)'s WalkABLE Alberta initiative, which aims to improve walkability, create supportive walkable communities, and encourage citizens in communities to walk more often. These Walkability Workshops use the principles of the International Charter for Walking as guides to help provide key actions to create walkable communities. This charter helps identify things already being done to support walkable communities, as well as determine current challenges and future opportunities for promoting walkability. Recognizing some of the great work already being done in communities, these workshops are a great way to spark ideas and initiatives for key actions to help advance this work, ultimately creating walkable communities across Alberta.



## Background Information from Manning

Manning was asked to fill out a benchmark questionnaire prior to the workshop. This questionnaire was completed by Manning's Chief Administrative Officer as well as other town council members. See Appendix C for Benchmark Questionnaire Template.

When asked what Manning was most proud of having achieved for people walking in the community they answer that over the last few years the Town of Manning has formalized and improved its walking trail system. This has helped to support more recreational walking and increased Manning's overall walkability.



Three priorities identified in the Benchmark Questionnaire for encouraging more people to walk in Manning were:

- 1) Adding to and maintaining the existing sidewalk network. Particularly, the road to the Manning Community Health Center, which currently has no sidewalk.
- 2) To introduce more walking oriented programming such as walking challenges.
- 3) To improve communication around walking in Manning. There are many different destinations that residents can easily reach on foot.

Three main barriers to encouraging people to walk in Manning were determined as:

- 1) The lack of completed sidewalk network and the supporting infrastructure (e.g. benches, tress, dog waste bags etc...). There are also challenges to maintain these existing sidewalk networks.
- 2) Unfriendly highway and local traffic can be intimidating to pedestrians.
- 3) Cold and snowy weather.

## The Manning Walkability Workshop

The Manning Walkability Workshop was hosted in the Manning & District Fire Hall. The workshop was a 1 day event, held on June 14th, 2014. The attendees for the Walkability Workshop were:

- Sunni-Jeanne Walker – Mayor, Town of Manning
- Brenda Kerr – Town of Manning
- Melody Howell – Town of Manning
- Marcella Bacso – Seniors Star Center
- Carol Knouft – Seniors Star Center
- Marg Greschner – Seniors Star Center
- Frazer Stone – Town of Manning
- Babak Behnia – Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency

This single-day, intensive workshop began with AHS Health Promotion Facilitator, Graham Matsalla, explaining why improving walkability is important to health. He then described what walkability means through the International Charter for Walking, drawing on international, national and provincial examples. Shortly after this introduction, Mayor Sunni-Jeanne did a short welcome from Manning and signed the International Charter for Walking. See Appendix B for the International Charter for Walking.

From here, an interactive workshop took place in which all attendees actively participated. Participants were split up into two groups and brainstormed ideas focusing on six of the eight principles of the International Charter for Walking. For each principle, participants were asked to identify what the community has now, what could be done better, and discuss new ideas to improve walkability. The groups reviewed one another's ideas, added new ones, and ranked the existing ones according to priority for action. See Appendix A for more information about the interactive workshop and for the breakdown of the 8 International Charter for Walking principals.

After lunch, photos of various areas and infrastructure in Manning were reviewed. These areas were discussed as they highlighted both negative and positive things pertaining to walkability in Manning. Attendees were then able to discuss opportunities to promote walking and support current walkers in the community. Features such as sidewalks, pedestrian walks, street lights, and active transportation infrastructure (such as bike racks, park benches etc...) were discussed.

To pull all final thoughts together, the attendees reviewed the raised items and moved forward with goal setting. Groups discussed four theme principles from the International Charter for Walking, as determined to be the most relevant to Manning. They then identified who, when and how the themes could be addressed in the community.

The four top choices of actions determined by the workshop attendees follows, broken down in short, medium and long term actions:

## Top Choices of Action: Short, Medium, Long term

### 1) More Infrastructure in Different Areas

- Short Term
  - \* Pilot a pedestrian light (a lower one) at the major intersection
  - \* Assess drainage issues (i.e. in the area surrounding the post office)
  - \* Build sidewalks by library
- Medium/Long term
  - \* As internal or below ground infrastructure is replaced, new above ground strategies will be implemented simultaneously (i.e. proper drainage, sidewalks, etc.)

### 2) Linked Community (i.e. linking community destinations)

- Short term
  - \* Create a walkability group to identify areas of need; engage stakeholders to develop GRP
  - \* Create a new development planning policy so that all new neighbourhoods must include sidewalks
- Medium term
  - \* Apply for funding
  - \* Promote walking groups (i.e. establish usage to justify the need); use GRPs/areas
  - \* Have a plan in which areas of walkability improvements are prioritized
  - \* Attract volunteers, manpower & equipment (linking community for sustained action)
- Long term
  - \* Follow through on plans and sustained maintenance

### 3) Governmental involvement to promote walkability

- Short term
  - \* Communicate with town council; attend open pit and have Town & County representative involvement
  - \* Get ChooseWell group in Manning to work towards getting support from Town of Manning & County for walking group
  - \* Attend meetings, work to get ideas & support
  - \* Invite public to council meetings to get ideas to promote walkability
- Medium/Long Term
  - \* Apply for grants from Provincial/Federal government (engage appropriate stakeholders)
  - \* Approach the Town & the County about expanding walking trail network (e.g. to museum, May Developments, wetlands, link from ball diamonds to Grimms Road)
  - \* Link with AHS worker to continue to pursue funding for walkability
  - \* Fix and maintain existing trails
  - \* Efforts for individual engagement, not just groups, for entire community representation

#### 4) Street Furniture

- Short term
  - \* Install diverse types of seating/park benches around Manning
  - \* Create an assessment of current seating available, new possible locations, type of seating wanted, associated costs & maintenance required
  - \* Create a map of existing walking trails (partner with Mackenzie Municipal Service Agency [MMSA])
  - \* Install maps in decorative holders that can be changed out regularly to encourage use of walking trails
- Medium/Long Term
  - \* Highlight town focal points
  - \* Maintain state of cleanliness and usability in Manning
  - \* Update maps with any changes through MMSA

### Next Steps

Overall, workshop attendees were enthusiastic and passionate about the state of walkability within their community. The workshop effectively increased awareness of opportunities and tools for enhancing walkability in Manning, with attendees leaving eager to begin working on some of the identified future actions. Communities ChooseWell and the Town of Manning will be in communication to determine where funding from ChooseWell will be used to support key opportunities identified in the workshop.

### For more information contact:

**Communities ChooseWell**  
**(780) 415-1745**  
**[choosewell@arpaonline.ca](mailto:choosewell@arpaonline.ca)**



### Key Websites:

Walk Score: <http://www.walkscore.com/>

Alberta Health Services: Walkable Alberta: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7282.asp>

Walk 21: <http://www.walk21.com/charter/>

UWALK: <http://uwalk.ca/>

Walkable Edmonton: [http://edmonton.ca/transportation/cycling\\_walking/walkable-edmonton.aspx](http://edmonton.ca/transportation/cycling_walking/walkable-edmonton.aspx)



## Appendix A

### 8 Principals of the International Charter for Walking: Flip Chart Paper Notes

#### 1) Increased inclusive mobility

##### What do we have now?

- Curb hubs (extensions that bulb out)
- Flashing pedestrian light
- Sidewalks
- Paved Roads
- Stairs
- Street furniture: planters, benches, bike stands
- Park Areas

##### What can we do better?

- Flashing pedestrian light should be lower so it can be easier for pedestrians & cars to see; add on the sides
- More curbs should be painted and made visible
- Need more sidewalks and need to properly maintain sidewalks
- St James Steps need improvement; need better snow removal in winter
- Need more planters, need more businesses on side
- Need more maintenance/upkeep; need to assign a municipal person responsible

##### What can be added?

- Insert maps at strategic locations; identify hubs & points of interest; keep maps current and up to date
- Have maps of walking trails available at tourist info booth (paper copies)
- Proper signage to encourage walking e.g: ped specific signage
- Street level pedestrian lighting
- Annual community challenges: UWALK, Canada Day
- Art installations
- Talk to businesses about wheelchair accessibility
- Connect to the museum
- Trail on sewer lagoon land

#### 2) Well designed and managed spaces and places for people

##### What do we have now?

- Walking trails
- Sitting areas (by Browns, information booth bench, bench by bridge, bench in park)

##### What can we do better?

- Walking trails need to be cleared, cleaned & brushed
- Bikes need to be able to share the trail (assessment - priority - removal)
- Sitting areas need to be maintained and cleaned
- Need closed garbage bins (that will be cost effective)
- Change brown spaces changed to green spaces

- Lighting- assess & improve, tree cover, increase lighting
- Improve path from lodge onto path

#### **What can be added?**

- Seating by river/park (cement tables with umbrella holes)
- Walking trail behind houses along river (however, previously closed for flooding issues)
- Walking trail north of town (i.e. to the baseball diamond)

### **3) Improved Integration of Networks**

#### **What do we have now?**

- Painting of roadways - i.e. footprints to indicates continuance of walking trails
- Upgrading/replacing existing sidewalks
- Expand and integrate strategic planning
- Assessing/addressing missing links in trail system
- Linking our current destinations (museum, ball diamonds, wetland area, may subdivision)

#### **What can be added?**

- Create a policy to keep trails, walkways maintained
- Signage to promote walkability
- Walking groups to encourage walking and networking (leadership required)

### **4) Supportive land-use and spatial planning**

#### **What do we have now?**

- No parking zone established at “old hospital” loop lot

#### **What can we do better?**

- Ensure developments includes access to sidewalks
- Change brown sites into green sites
- Planning where the gazebo & benches go (NOT at sewage dump)
- Enforcement of town policies regarding maintenance of existing trails

#### **What can be added?**

- Gather volunteer support to maintain walking spaces & green areas (incentive)
- Winter walking trail along river
- Move current benches to better locations
- Dog use zones (maybe integration into existing parts of trail networks)

### **5) Reduced Road Danger**

#### **What do we have now?**

- Street level warning lights (town hall corner, Patricia Ford)
- Trees & planters to give “narrow” appearance to slow down traffic

#### **What can we do better?**

- Teaching youth safety tips

#### **What can be added?**

- Crosswalk by the post office, skate park
- Crosswalks to be clearly marked by bright/fresh paint
- Paint lines to designate intersections (specific areas to prevent cars from stopping in the middle)
- Paint curb juts
- Remove and replace grates/coverings on downtown hubs

## **6) Less Crime and fear of Crime**

### **What can we do better?**

- Address fear of crime in expanding pathways & walkways
- Assess problem areas- where are people spending their time and why
- The campsite area at night

## **7) More Supportive Authorities**

### **What can we do better?**

- Voice opinion to town council to enforce bylaws/walkway clearing
- Team up with AHS to promote walkability (intergovernmental coordination)
- Engagement of community leaders to encourage recreational activities
- Community stakeholders engaged to develop strategy (active transportation, walking)

### **What can be added?**

- Better monitoring by the town
- Path needed at/leading up to hospital
- Programming/cultural events
- MDP Plan newly established
- Work/communicate with facilities to expand usage

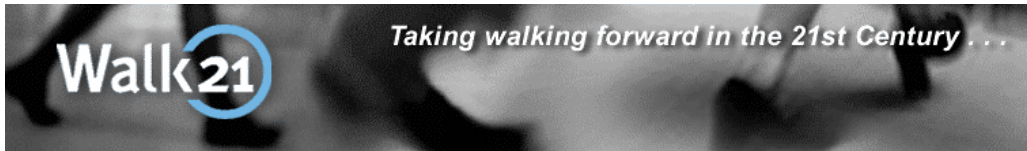
## **8) A Culture of Walking**

### **What can we do better?**

- Cycle for utility, not just for recreation
- Engagement with school officials with planning
- Speak to children earlier, work with parents

### **What can be added?**

- Policy for land-use, urban design
- Bike racks (that actually lock frame)
- Workshops w/ students; work with students, to figure out what they want
- Take part in programs that promote walking (i.e. UWALK)



# 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](http://www.walk21.com)

# Appendix C

WalkABLE Alberta  
Benchmark Questionnaire



## WalkABLE Alberta Benchmark Questionnaire

### Introduction

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This questionnaire is the first step toward the visit from the team of walkability analysts for the facilitated workshop.

The survey has 3 goals:

1. To review (benchmark) your community against Walk21's International Charter for Walking
2. To identify what makes it easy for people to choose walking in your community
3. To identify what makes it hard for people to choose walking in your community

The benchmark questionnaire will provide a full picture of:

- Existing policies, plans and projects to support and manage walking
- Recent achievements and initiatives for walking
- Opportunities for improving how walking is delivered and promoted
- Current barriers to be addressed.

If you have any questions please contact:

**Graham Matsalla**

**Email:** [Graham.Matsalla@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Graham.Matsalla@albertahealthservices.ca)

**Phone:** 403-943-6781



