

Morley Community Conversation

March 8, 2017
Chiniki Community College
Noon – 3pm

Background

Morley is a [First Nations](#) settlement within the [Stoney 142, 143, and 144 Indian reserve](#). It is home to the [Bears paw](#), [Chiniki](#) and [Wesley first nations](#) of the [Nakoda](#). The interaction between the three bands creates a unique governance structure. Changes within the community of Morley require the agreement, or at least the discussion, between the bands.

Attending the Community Conversation were 15 – 20 participants with varying level of engagement. Some participants just dropped into and out of the conversation. Others spent a significant amount of time talking about:

- What does walkability mean to you?
- What is your biggest dream/thoughts on walkability improvements for walkability improvements in Morley?
- What are ways in which other initiatives move forward in your community (who should be engaged, who else should be a part of the conversation)?

Issues Identified by Attendees

Address gangs – unemployment:

- Important issues of the community is youth engagement. Unemployment and social support drives youth to gangs. To address gang activity such as mischief work options could be offered.

Safety:

- From wildlife was identified as a concern (e.g. dogs, bulls, and cougars). Within town site is perceived as safer but could be improved.
- A potential solution could be increased lighting.
- Uncontrolled driving habits like speeding is a challenge to walkers. Back roads do not have any speed-related signage. Where there are signs, it is rarely enforced. Impaired driving is also a safety issue for pedestrians

Recreational trails:

- Walking trails created by users to hike around outside of the town site are not developed and not necessarily safe at all times.

Trespassing:

- An identified issue of non-community members entering in and near the community uninvited (e.g. Seebe).

Community links:

- There are areas of the community that are not linked to each other. Destination pathways can be seen from people who have created their own paths. These paths could be improved to provide safe paths to reach destinations within the community. The new trailer park, west of the community, is not connected to the community as well as it could be.

Recommendations

The walkability requirements of a community are a function of the community's identification of their own needs. There are a few opportunities that were mentioned in the Community Conversation Session where Alberta Health Services and Communities ChooseWell felt that capitalized on:

Leadership engagement – Discussion with the 3 bands to create buy-in and interest in walkability supports is required. Depending on what is worked on and where could require two out of three bands and/or agreement from band whose land is where the project will occur.

- Specific changes needs to engage the appropriate band
- Engaging the bands in the discussion could be to garner leadership support, important link to strategic directions of the community, and essential advisement of next steps that need to occur.

Pathway improvement – specific areas within the community have been identified (linking new trailer park west of the community to the rest of the community). Trail creation and maintenance could provide employment opportunities for youth. Including additional components such as lighting could be included. An environment grant for solar powered lights to be used along a new pathway. The paved trail from Canmore to Banff was identified as a desirable model as well as many local locations for hiking paths (like Chiniki Lake or Yamnuska Provincial Park)

School Travel Plan – could incorporate these components within it. The local elementary school has high quality track that the principal maintains. Community members also use it for walking groups. Children are interested in using active transportation to get to school but are limited by the fact there are no linking paths to the community. It is possible that community members would rally around this idea as it supports the youth. Plus, all three bands jointly are involved with the elementary school

Broad community plan addressing walkability – includes an engagement plan, promotion, education, and challenges (like the community's Suicide Prevention Walk) to promote walking. This plan could include different aspects of walkability like: Programs/initiatives, community member/group engagement, built environment (trail) improvements, and linking to improve other community issues.

Conclusion

There are many opportunities within Morley and some terrific assets to build upon. Alberta Health Service's WalkAble Alberta and Communities ChooseWell look for to further supporting the community in their desire to increase community walkability and bring about healthy community change.