



PROMOTING pathways FOR WALKING AND CYCLING IN NORFOLK

May 28, 2015

Norfolk County Council

On behalf of Norfolk Pathways for People, I wanted to express our collective disappointment in Council's 5-4 decision, on Tuesday, May 26th, to not install any sidewalks on Delhi's Argyle Ave as part of an upcoming road reconstruction project.

For the information of new members of Council, Pathways for People is a community coalition that advocates for the development and improvement of connected pathways in Norfolk County. We also promote the regular use of trails, sidewalks and roadways for health, recreation and active transportation. Our objectives include:

- Advocating for new and improved trails and pathways [which include sidewalks] in Norfolk County.
- Building a healthier, accessible and connected community.
- Promoting the safe use of local trails and pathways.

As you know, the Public Works and Environmental Services Department's proposed plan is to install a sidewalk on the north side of Argyle Ave. In 2014, Phase 1 of the project from James St. to Churchill Ave. had a sidewalk added with the intent that the later phases would continue the connectivity to the east end where the new subdivision is under construction. The south side of Argyle Ave. is industrial with multiple entrances and truck traffic. The sidewalk would provide a safe alternative to walking on the south where pedestrians would be exposed to industrial traffic.

Argyle Ave. borders a densely populated residential area, connecting the east and west parts of the neighbourhood. There are two schools within the immediate area. A sidewalk would provide safe routes to school for students in that neighbourhood. Additional housing at the east end translates into more people and more traffic, increasing the risk to students trying to walk to school in the absence of sidewalks.

The importance of sidewalks in our communities cannot be stressed enough. Community design best practices put the safety of ALL residents first. Sidewalks create an environment that supports more walking – for those who choose to walk rather than drive and for those who have no alternative due to age, ability or cost. Walking is recognized as the only mode of travel that is universally affordable, and allows children and youth, older adults and people using mobility aids, to travel independently.

According to the 2014 Population Projection Study, Norfolk County, like many rural communities in Ontario, has a higher than provincial average proportion of older aged residents, with 19% of the



PROMOTINGpathways FOR WALKING AND CYCLING IN NORFOLK

County's current population over age 65, and 35% over 55. Within Norfolk, the communities of Port Dover, Simcoe and Delhi have the highest proportion of older residents.

Pathways for People encourages Norfolk Council to reconsider this decision and, in future, consider the greater good of the community and its residents, as a whole, when making these legacy decisions.

Respectfully,

Gordon Mason, Chair
Norfolk Pathways for People
519-583-9500