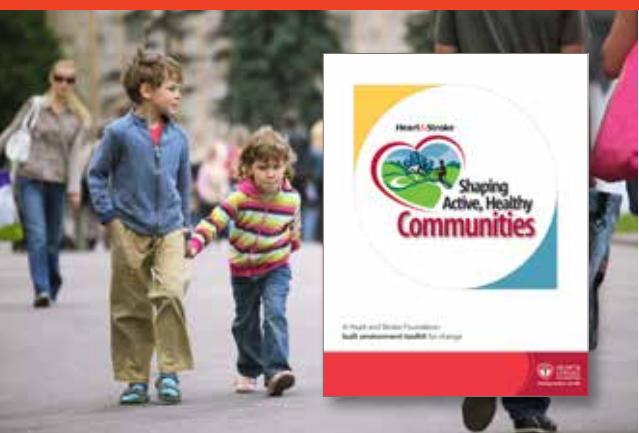




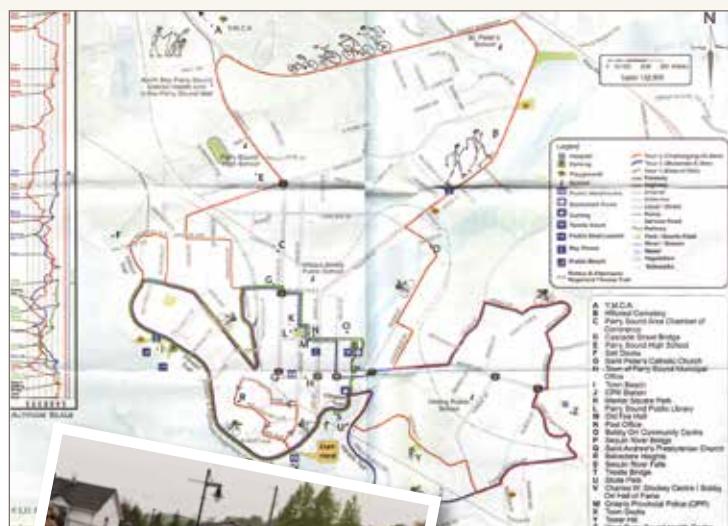
Heart and Stroke Foundation's Shaping Active, Healthy Communities Workshops in Action



CLASP funding enabled the Heart and Stroke Foundation to develop a [workshop guidebook](#) and related outreach materials for its [Shaping Active, Healthy Communities Toolkit](#). These resources provides an overview of the linkages between the built environment and health, as well as suggestions of actions Canadians can take to help create communities that are built to make "healthy choices, easy choices" for all. The workshop guidebook aims to assist Heart and Stroke Foundation staff and volunteers--and any Canadians--in mobilizing colleagues, friends, neighbours and community stakeholders to bring a health voice to the land use planning table. Below, we provide a snapshot of the *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* workshop in action!

SUCCESS STORY : Parry Sound's Active Transportation Committee

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- In Parry Sound, Ontario, Heart and Stroke Foundation staff, Sam AbiSaab, learned that a small group of citizens had formed an Active Transportation Committee to advocate for the provision of Active Transportation corridors to a new school. Here, Sam saw an opportunity to use the Heart and Stroke Foundation *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* workshop to bring these efforts to a next level of impact. And, he was right.



The Parry Sound Active Transportation Committee

Fall 2010, Sam and the Parry Sound Active Transportation Committee organized a *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* workshop. Physicians, politicians, and local residents attended, including many new faces. Workshop volunteer Joel Kirk says, "The Heart and Stroke Foundation workshop really helped define what the issues are in Parry Sound, and to present active transportation as a solution to the concerns of various groups in the community."

As a result of the workshop, Parry Sound now has an Active Transportation Committee with expanded membership and mandate extending well beyond the initial school-based advocacy initiative. The Committee has broadened and sharpened its strategy, received a Heart and Stroke Foundation Spark advocacy grant, and launched an Active Transportation Master Plan campaign. Their goal is for the West Parry Sound area to adopt a comprehensive approach to active transportation promotion—one that takes into account the broader needs of the community and is adopted by area municipalities.

This work started with the development of an Active Community Charter for Parry Sound which has been endorsed by 35 individuals and organizations including the Parry Sound Area Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Parry Sound Business Association, the Rotary Club of Parry Sound, and the Parry Sound Medical Society. "This workshop raised the profile of active transportation in the community," says Joel Kirk. "It enabled and inspired us to aim bigger."

SUCCESS STORY : Nova Scotia's Impactful Heart & Stroke Walkabout

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• ► **In Nova Scotia, Heart and Stroke Foundation staff, Christina MacLeod used the *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* workshop to build on the work currently underway through the Nova Scotia Foundation's signature walking program – Heart&Stroke Walkabout.**



Photo: www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

"Walkabout is a program with many components and its goal is to create a province-wide culture of walking. But, because walking is so influenced by government policy – at all levels – it's important to talk about how everything comes together and to show, visually, what a walkable community can look like. That's a large part of what the workshop has enabled us to do and it's made a significant impact."

So far, adds MacLeod, a total of three workshops have been delivered in three months and more are planned. "We have been getting a number of requests for more workshops and have also been asked to deliver close to twenty presentations on the topic. I guess word of our efforts is spreading because we've also been invited to be a partner in a coalition of organizations who are developing a response to the upcoming five-year regional planning review within the Halifax Regional Municipality. We're having success in terms of community reach, creating partnerships, and making a difference for participants."

One participant who would agree with that assessment is Halifax resident, Laena Garrison. For Garrison, the workshop's impact has been both personal and professional.

"I've worked with organizations in the past who have understood the link between health and community design. It's important to me professionally, and as a Nova Scotia resident, to live in an environment that supports options for physical activity," says Garrison. "The Heart and Stroke Foundation has done a great job in spreading the word about the role we all play in creating built environments that support healthy lifestyles. It's not a simple matter of just getting off the couch and heading outside," adds the 37-year old, who also points out that the workshop's design and accessibility is of equal importance to the message it provides. "Anyone can deliver *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* and it's relevant in any community, so the workshop has the potential to make a really big impact."

Impact is exactly the term that Christina MacLeod says applies to the results of the workshops delivered to date.

"As a result of our *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* Workshop and the link to Walkabout, we were able to generate momentum leading to the proclamation of June as Active Transportation Month by the Nova Scotia Government. In addition, Walkabout and its partners were provided with funding to support local active transportation events and awareness campaigns throughout June."

"That's not all," adds MacLeod with a smile.

"In June, the Government of Nova Scotia will be announcing legislation focused on the one metre rule for bicyclists. The one-metre rule means that drivers must give one metre of space between the car and the cyclist they are passing. This is the first of its kind in Canada."

MacLeod insists that *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* has become a valued resource for non-governmental groups, physical activity and active transportation advocates as well as provincial and municipal politicians and policy makers in Nova Scotia. "It's had a tremendous impact and we've only just begun."

"It's had a tremendous impact and we've only just begun."

Christina MacLeod

SUCCESS STORY : Kerry Hamilton Makes a Difference by Connecting with City Councilors

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• ► **Back to Ontario, Heart and Stroke Foundation volunteer and Queen's University Masters student, Kerry Hamilton downloaded the *Shaping Active, Healthy Communities* materials and organized a workshop, May 2011, for the County of Lanark just West of Ottawa. The event attracted 35 participants including six councilors, four planners, public health staff and other key community stakeholders in the area.**

As a result of the workshop, Kerry was invited to present to the Carleton Place Town Council on July 7, 2011. During her 45-minute presentation, she proposed that Council includes a Healthy Communities section in the 2012 municipal budget, as well as establish a rails-to-trails network connecting the three area townships together.

Carleton Place Mayor and all Councilors were in favour. Councilors committed to report their ideas and next steps to a municipal staff member, who will estimate costs and include them in the 2012 budget to be discussed fall/winter 2011. More importantly, all Councilors agreed that they wanted to create policy and action around building a "Healthy, Active" Carleton Place, and have proposed some innovative small and long term steps to make this a reality. "Carleton Place is definitely a success story," say Kerry Hamilton. "The *Shaping Active Healthy Communities* toolkit and workshop templates made it possible for me to make a tangible difference in my community. I look forward to reporting on future wins."

News

Tell developers to build walkable places: Hamilton

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moving and active, and to offer an alternative to the car to get up and down the street.

"Carleton Place has done a lot with their new development, so I commend them for that," said Hamilton.

The main thrust of Hamilton's speech was to highlight how an area's built environment could impact - positively and negatively - on the health of the people in that area. If a child has no place to exercise, then they will not exercise, for example.

"We really need to be building a lot of parking lots instead of pedestrian walkways," said Hamilton. "We've been building a lot of roadways, but not a lot of walkways ... We're presenting physical activity, but not a physical environment."

She pointed out that she has seen her family twice on Joseph

Street near Notre Dame Catholic High School in the town's north end as a guinea pig in an online computer program that measures pedestrian friendliness. Joseph Street itself scored 22 out of 100.

"We don't have enough great like intersections," said Hamilton. "I only have a school that I can walk to; she said, adding that a live-to-walk window was good to walk when she was not the only walkable thing in her neighbourhood though.

"I know we have a Mac's Milk store across," said Hamilton. "My mom walks. If whenever we run out of milk, we need more stuff like that."

A walk from Joseph Street to the downtown core of Bridge Street scored a low six out of 100.

In order to make Highway 7 more interesting - and maybe encourage people to stay a while and shop, Hamilton suggested a median could be installed in the middle of the road. She even suggested that, in the future, a pedestrian bridge could be built over Highway 7 so that walking distance could be built along the highway's southern edge and beyond.

The intersection of Moore Street and Lansdowne Avenue is an area where Hamilton felt that the town had regressed somewhat and lost its walkable appeal. An area drives south as Bridge Street becomes Moore.

McNewly Avenue fared better at 45 per cent, since it was walkable, close to green space and, of course, plenty of stores. Hamilton said that the big box stores along Highway 7 could still be made more green and pedestrian friendly by adding more walking paths, adding more cycling infrastructure, crosswalks and other stores in existing parking.

"We need to make active choices easy choices," said Hamilton. She added that of six councilors, four had ever walked or cycled in the big box stores. Coun. Jerry Flynn said that he had cycled there, once.

"I took a taxi back," Flynn said.

Even Hamilton, herself, an avid cyclist, said that while she loves the low-traffic at the lakeside and shop near Pyramid Road and Highway 7, she has only used that level in cycle only and would not want to repeat the experience.

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"I kind of disapp...

The members going to the town council at the intersection, and shopping at the Giant Tiger, are aware that used to be in The Mees.

"I don't see a lot of pedestrian activity down there any more," said Hamilton.

Bridge Street, however, fared very well at 86 per cent walkability, with plenty of shops and homes mixed together.

"We want environments like that," said Hamilton.

Hamilton is a big proponent of chapter crosswalks, but some councilors had their reservations about them.

"We have an issue here with roadway crosswalks," said Coun. Rob Probert.

Coun. Louis Antoniou pointed out that courtesy crosswalks are not consistent with provincial standards.

Photo by Deanne Dwyer

A family makes its way down Bridge Street in Carleton Place after a show at the town hall auditorium. Bridge Street scores very high in terms of walkability.

July 14, 2011 Canadian Gazette article featuring Kerry Hamilton's presentation.





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