

News from Canada's walking movement.

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CANADA WALKS NEWS  
December 2015

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Canada Walks



Canada Walks



WALK Friendly



WALK Friendly

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[Happy Holidays](#) from Canada Walks. We hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

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#### **FEATURE:**

### [Peterborough wins WALK Friendly designation](#)

THE CITY of Peterborough, Ontario has been awarded a silver designation under the WALK Friendly Communities program delivered by Green Communities Canada (Canada Walks).

Peterborough boasts impressive cross-sector collaborations to increase walkability through design, intersection treatments, and winter maintenance. One such collaboration, Shifting Gears, is a partnership with five organizations and businesses. This year, the annual Shifting Gears challenge expanded beyond workplaces to encourage all citizens to walk, bike, take transit, carpool, and/or telework.

Peterborough also engaged with community organizations and businesses to deliver the first Open Streets event, Peterborough Pulse, in the summer of 2015. This event created a 3 km car-free route between Peterborough's downtown core and the Saturday Farmers' Market.

As seen in the recent [GCC-CAA 2015 Walking Survey](#), snow and ice clearing is a concern for most Canadians. Peterborough also has a maintenance standard to clear sidewalks of snow within 24 hours of a snow fall of more than 4 cm, and will salt or sand within 24 hours of a freezing rain event.



Peterborough has a strong adult crossing guard program, with 35 community crossing guard locations at 22 elementary schools. The crossing guards are active during all travel-to-school times. The city also uses the CAA's Safety Patrollers program, a great way to engage kids and their peers on the issue of walking and safety. In addition, Peterborough has used pedestrian and cyclist counts for a number of years, with active school travel being tracked since 1999.

Peterborough's 2015 Silver WALK Friendly designation will be presented to Council 1 February 2016.

Visit the [Canada Walks](#) website for more information about how our consulting services can help your community improve the conditions for walking.

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## Thunder Bay receives honourable mention

THE CITY of Thunder Bay's application received an honourable mention from the WALK Friendly Communities review team. Follow-up workshops with city staff and community partners in December will help them move forward in their efforts to make Thunder Bay a great place to walk.

Visit [Canada Walks](#) for more information about how our consulting services can help your community improve the conditions for walking.

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## Ottawa Walking School Bus: from pilot to program

AFTER ITS successful launch last fall as a 12-week pilot project (see [case study](#)), the Ottawa Walking School Bus hasn't looked back.

The pilot, initiated by GCC, has now become a fully funded program of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA). Its popularity is growing. This fall, registration numbers have more than doubled over last spring with several routes at full capacity (20 walkers).

For the latest information including new promotional videos:  
[www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/wsb](http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/wsb).

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## Get ready for Winter Walk Day 2016



WINTER WALK Day, on Wednesday, 3 February 2016, is an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful winter weather and take a nice brisk walk to school. Visit our [Winter Walk Day page](#) to download posters and find more information about the annual event. Click [here](#) for ideas on how to celebrate Winter Walk Day 2016.

And don't forget to sign up for the [IWALK/IWHEEL club](#), a great way to encourage students and families to leave the car at home and walk or cycle to school.



We love to hear about your events! Please send us quotes and photos of your celebrations at [info@canadawalks.ca](mailto:info@canadawalks.ca).

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### Holiday walk-wheel to school event planned

NELLES PUBLIC School in Grimsby, Ontario, is planning a Christmas themed walk-wheel to school event for 18 December, and it's rumoured that Santa will be joining them!





## Project LifeCYCLE increases cycling to school



WITH SUPPORT from the Ontario Sports and Recreation Community Fund, Green Communities Canada is developing a best-practice model to increase cycling to school.

Project LifeCYCLE builds on existing School Travel Planning projects in Toronto by inspiring students in grades 5-8 to try cycling as a form of active transportation to and from school.



Project LifeCYCLE connects schools with Ontario Triathlon/Cycling athletes for motivational presentations, and offers safety skills training. The project gives students opportunities to get involved in assessing barriers and participating in finding solutions while building on existing community assets.

Project partners are Toronto District and Toronto Catholic School Boards, CultureLink Settlement Services, Triathlon Ontario, Metrolinx, Toronto Public Health, City of Toronto Cycling Infrastructure, and CAN-BIKE.

Early results from the initial three schools show that only 1-10% of students currently cycle to/from school but these rates are increasing. The aim is to engage more Toronto schools for a total of eight.

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## PowerStream Inc gets top Smart Commute Award

REGIONAL EMPLOYER of the year, Smart Commute's most coveted award, went to PowerStream Inc. for their outstanding initiatives such as their vanpool program and remote-work program. PowerStream's vanpool program began in 2009 with two routes and has quickly grown to 10 vanpools (63 participants), travelling six different routes throughout the Greater Toronto Area. The program is so popular that there is a waiting list of



employees hoping to join. In addition, their carpool program has 110 riders in 51 carpools. The company also boasts over 30% of their staff commuting sustainably.

The [Smart Commute Awards](#) recognize employer members and partners for their exceptional efforts and achievements in implementing the Smart Commute programs. Our own Katie Wittmann hosted the event on 19 November, in downtown Toronto. As the MC, Katie entertained the audience and kept the evening flowing smoothly.

The awards were introduced in 2007 to officially recognize employer members or partners who have put forth exceptional effort in implementing Smart Commute programs.

Smart Commute is a program of [Metrolinx](#) and the municipalities in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

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## Project builds physical literacy for women

WOMEN WALKING For Life is an opportunity for women aged 55-70+ to address deficiencies in “fundamental movement skills.”



Jan Murdoch, a retired physical education teacher, offers workshops in Burlington, Ontario that include a movement skill assessment. Jan says it is surprising how often participants target walking for improvement.

Based on the assessment, women are provided with activities to help reinforce the under-developed skill. Using Nordic poles is one activity to build walking skills.

A retest after a few months gauges progress.

Fundamental movement skills is a focus of the elementary school curriculum. Murdoch developed Women Walking for Life after attending a workshop by the National Coaching Certification Program on fundamental movement skills in adults, particularly women.

Women Walking for Life is designed to build competence, confidence, and motivation. The project is funded by the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity. For more information, view [womenwalkingforlife.com](http://womenwalkingforlife.com) or contact [Jan Murdoch](#).

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## Peel Region shares walk and wheel resources



CHECK OUT Peel Region's [walk and wheel school videos](#), prepared for parents, schools, and community with a strong focus on safety, fitness, and academic benefits for all on the school journey.

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DONATE

[CANADA WALKS NEWS](#) profiles actions to help create communities where walking is safe, easy, enjoyable, and inviting. Donate to the Green Communities Foundation to provide vital support for this work. Just click on the DONATE button and indicate in the comments section that you'd like your gift to go to the work of Canada Walks.

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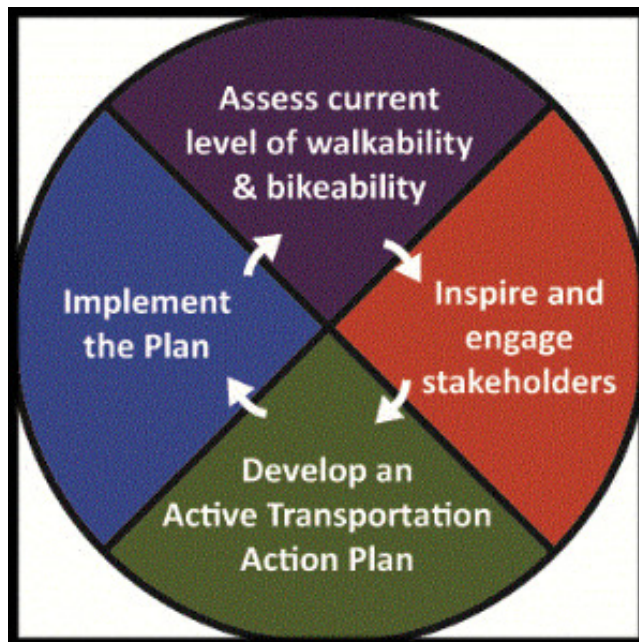
## Your ideas please

If you have story ideas or walking news you'd like to share, please send to us at [info@canadawalks.ca](mailto:info@canadawalks.ca). Be sure to include your contact details.

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## Canada Walks workshops and services

CANADA WALKS offers a variety of customized services, including webinars, half- and full-day on-site workshops, and intensive community visits. School Travel Planning training is also now available. Training is offered in a modular format so that each community can learn about topics relevant to their current level of experience with active school travel. Contact [Jacky Kennedy](#) to learn more.



## Our partners



Green Communities' Canada Walks is a member of the International Federation of Pedestrians

[www.pedestrians-int.org](http://www.pedestrians-int.org) | 



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