

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 21, 2017</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>OAKRIDGE AREA NEW SIDEWALKS IN 2017 &amp; 2018 EAST MILE ROAD, OBAN CRESCENT, WEST MILE ROAD, NORTH MILE ROAD AND GREEN LANE</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental & Engineering Services and City Engineer, the installation of sidewalks on East Mile Road, Oban Crescent, West Mile Road, North Mile Road, and Green Lane **BE ENDORSED**, in accordance with section 349 of the *London Plan*.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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none

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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**Purpose**

This purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to install sidewalks as part of the 2017 and 2018 Infrastructure Renewal Program on several streets in the Oakridge neighbourhood as prescribed in the Council approved *London Plan*. The underground infrastructure on these streets has been scheduled for renewal over these two years. This work requires the disturbance and replacement of the entire road surface as well as a portion of the boulevard. The restored surface has been designed with sidewalks so that it is accessible to all users and complies with Council policies, including the *London Plan*. This program is separate from the Warranted Sidewalk Program which solely constructs sidewalks at the response of requests received by the public.

**Background**

East Mile Road, Glen Crescent, and Oban Crescent are scheduled for reconstruction in 2017 as part of the Infrastructure Renewal Program to replace aging infrastructure. The remainder of East Mile Road, West Mile Road, North Mile Road and Green Lane are scheduled for reconstruction in the 2018 Infrastructure Renewal Program.

In established neighbourhoods without sidewalks where the road is being reconstructed, new sidewalks are proposed based on sound engineering principles and established Official Plan policies. Three particular policies in the *London Plan* relate specifically to the need and location of sidewalks:

228\_ Neighbourhood streets and all infrastructure will be planned and designed to enhance safety by implementing the principles of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*, encouraging greater levels of passive surveillance, and providing sidewalks of sufficient width to support planned levels of activity.

346\_ Active mobility, with a key focus on walking and cycling, is recognized as a mode of transportation that can play a positive role in improving mobility and quality of life as part of a balanced mobility system.

349\_ To support walkability, sidewalks shall be located on both sides of all streets. An exception to this requirement may be considered in the following instances. In most of these instances a sidewalk will be required on one side of the street.

1. Cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets that extend less than 200 metres and do not connect to neighbourhood features or amenities.
2. Portions of streets flanking natural heritage features or areas.
3. Portions of streets flanking a Green Space that includes alternative active mobility infrastructure parallel to the street.
4. Portions of streets that have a designated multi-use pathway within the boulevard on one side.
5. Streets classified as Expressways or Rural Thoroughfares.
6. Road reconstruction projects, where the existing conditions such as mature trees, right-of-way widths, or infrastructure would impede sidewalks on both sides of the street.

Policy 349 requires that in all reconstruction projects, sidewalks must be considered for both sides of the street, with some conditions that allow a sidewalk to be placed on only one side of the street and limited circumstances under which no sidewalk would be considered.

The Ontario Human Rights Code is a law that recognizes the dignity and worth of every person and gives equal rights and opportunity without discrimination. The AODA requires municipalities to remove barriers and provide safe routes for all. Vulnerable road users include people who walk and use mobility devices and includes particular consideration for the young and elderly. Sidewalks provide an exterior path of travel for vulnerable road users that is separated from motor vehicle traffic. The provision of sidewalks greatly reduces the risk to vulnerable road users by reducing the intermingling with motor vehicles.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Oban Crescent and East Mile Road Sidewalk Design

In accordance with the policies mentioned above, the design for Oban Crescent, and East Mile Road included sidewalks on one side of the street. Sidewalks on both sides of the street were evaluated but ultimately not recommended due to tree and grading impacts in line with exception 6 of the policy. Total incremental cost of the sidewalk (sidewalk costs minus the topsoil and sod that would otherwise be placed there) is estimated at approximately \$48,000 out of a total contract value of approximately \$2.7M. Funds for the installation of the sidewalk are available within existing budgets.



## Community Engagement

Area residents were first notified of the installation of new sidewalks in a letter sent on November 14, 2016 to property owners within and adjacent to the 2017 project limits. A drop in style Public Information Meeting was held November 30, 2016 that included information handouts, numerous project drawings/displays boards, and a fly over video display showing a finished streetscape.

Over 30 residents signed into the public meeting and it is estimated that over 50 people attended. The majority of meeting attendees either did not comment on the sidewalk or indicated to staff that they were neutral on the issue. Comments were received from a group of five to seven residents that were concerned that the sidewalk was not needed and that the sidewalk would lead to a loss of enjoyment of the front portion of their property. Several residents also provided comments in favour of the sidewalk; notably the Principal of nearby Riverside Elementary School expressed his support for the sidewalk installation. The residents in support of the installation of the sidewalk commented that they supported the installation of the sidewalk on the basis of child safety.

Comments were also received from Riverside Elementary School's Active & Safe Routes committee. The Active & Safe Routes to School program is "a community partnership working together to promote and sustain programs that encourage children and families to choose active school travel." The committee has requested that the City make the surrounding neighbourhood more pedestrian friendly, particularly with the installation of sidewalks. The information sent to the City outlines the benefits of active school travel and particularly outlines research that identifies a lack of sidewalks as being among the top five barriers to students walking to school. This group also sent a map showing points where a lack of sidewalks was identified by parents of students as a problem around the school. Several of these points were within the project limits. The full letter is attached as Appendix 'A'.

The Transportation Planning and Design Division has worked with Active & Safe Routes to school at over a dozen locations throughout the City to improve student and pedestrian safety. Most recently, the closure of Lorne Avenue Public School has resulted in planned improvements for 2017 construction on the Quebec Street Bridge.

## Petition

Staff have been told that a petition has being circulated opposing the installation of sidewalks in either phase of the project and it is understood this will be presented to Civic Works Committee on February 21st.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Installing new sidewalks on East Mile Road, Glen Crescent, and Oban Crescent is consistent with the Council approved *London Plan*. While it is noted that several people oppose the sidewalk, City staff have also heard from members of the community in support of the sidewalk installation. Ultimately, the installation of new sidewalks benefit the community beyond the particular street, particularly children travelling to school. The benefits of children walking to school are supported by well-established research and the presence of sidewalks has been demonstrated as an important factor in whether

children walk or are driven to school. Also, The AODA requires municipalities to remove barriers and provide safe routes for all and sidewalks greatly reduce the risk to vulnerable road users by reducing intermingling with motor vehicles.

**Acknowledgements**

This report was prepared by the Water Engineering Division and the Transportation Planning & Design Division.

<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	<b>REVIEWED &amp; CONCURRED BY:</b>
<b>JOHN LUCAS, P.ENG. DIRECTOR, WATER AND WASTEWATER</b>	<b>EDWARD SOLDI, P.ENG. DIRECTOR, ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
<b>KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER</b>	

Attach:

Appendix 'A' – Letter from Active & Safe Routes to School