

Clause embodied in Report No. 11 of the Policy and Finance Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its Special Meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002.

1

City-Wide Program for Provision of Essential Sidewalk Links (All Wards)

(City Council at its Special Meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002, amended this Clause:

(1) to provide that this program include the completion of the existing pedestrian walkway networks parallel to City-maintained highways, such as the WR Allen Road and Highway No. 27 in Etobicoke, as well as the walkway under Highway No. 401; and further, that the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services be requested to submit a report on this matter to the Works Committee, for consideration by the Committee no later than its October 9, 2002, meeting;

(2) by adding thereto the following:

“It is further recommended that:

- (i) the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services be requested to submit a report to the Works Committee on a policy with regard to the provision of sidewalks in industrial areas;*
- (ii) in cases where construction of a sidewalk would require the removal of a significant number of mature trees, that a joint report from Urban Forestry and Works and Emergency Services staff be submitted to the appropriate Community Council, prior to the approval of the project; and*
- (iii) if requested by the local Councillor, staff reports regarding sidewalk construction on collector and arterial roads be prepared for submission to the appropriate Community Council.”)*

(City Council on June 18, 19 and 20, 2002, deferred consideration of this Clause to the next regular meeting of City Council scheduled to be held on July 16, 2002.)

*(Clauses No. 9 of Report No. 10 of the
Policy and Finance Committee entitled, “City-Wide Program for
Provision of Essential Sidewalk Links (All Wards)”)*

The Policy and Finance Committee recommends the adoption of the Recommendation of the Works Committee embodied in the following communication (May 28, 2002) from the City Clerk:

Recommendation:

The Works Committee recommends the adoption of the report dated May 9, 2002, from the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services.

Background:

The Works Committee at its meeting on May 28, 2002, had before it a report (May 9, 2002) from the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services respecting a city-wide program for the provision of essential sidewalk links.

The following persons appeared before Committee in connection with the foregoing matter:

- Ms. Rhona Swarbrick, Member, Toronto Pedestrian Committee, and submitted a communication with respect thereto; and
- Mr. Wayne Scott, Toronto Hoof and Cycle Coalition.

(Report dated May 9, 2002, addressed to the
Works Committee from the
Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services)

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to respond to a request from the Works Committee for further information on missing sidewalks on arterial and collector roads, and to seek approval in principle for the establishment of an expanded city-wide program for the installation of essential sidewalk links on arterial and collector roads.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

The estimated cost of the enhanced City-wide program for installing essential sidewalk links outlined in this report is \$2.0 million annually over the next ten years. Funds for this program will be identified in the Works and Emergency Services Five-Year Capital Works budget submission (2003-2007).

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council authorize the construction of new sidewalks on both sides of arterial and collector roads which are currently lacking sidewalks;
- (2) approval in principle be granted to establish an accelerated city-wide program for constructing new sidewalks on both sides of arterial and collector roads, and that funding for this project be included in the Works and Emergency Services Five Year Capital Works budget submission (2003-2007) for consideration; and
- (3) the appropriate City officials be authorized to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The Works Committee, at its meeting held on January 10, 2001, in considering a communication entitled "Missing Sidewalks on Public Transit Routes," requested that the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services submit a report on the following (Clause No. 15, Report No. 1 of the Works Committee):

- (i) the length of missing sidewalks on all arterial and collector roads that carry public transit;
- (ii) the cost of completing these sections of missing sidewalks; and
- (iii) the dollar figure (and time frame) Works and Emergency Services is recommending in this round of Capital Budget deliberations (current and four-year projections) to complete missing sidewalks.

Discussion:

Sidewalks Are Essential Pedestrian Infrastructure:

Walking is the simplest and most common form of transportation. Every trip in the city begins and/or ends on foot. Provision of safe, comfortable and accessible sidewalks on all public streets is a fundamental objective of the Transportation Services Division. While we currently maintain an extensive network of approximately 8,200 km of sidewalks, there is still a lack of sidewalk continuity in many areas of the city. In locations where sidewalks are missing, pedestrians often have no alternative but to walk on an unimproved boulevard or shoulder, which may be inaccessible during winter conditions. Walking on the roadway is not a safe alternative for pedestrians on arterial and collector roads.

While this report responds to the request for information on missing sidewalks on transit routes, its scope has been expanded to outline an important new program for providing essential sidewalk links on all arterial and collector roads. Connected and continuous sidewalks must be in place throughout the city in order to facilitate a safer and more accessible walking environment. This is especially important for more vulnerable groups, such as children, seniors, and people with reduced mobility or vision. Providing sidewalks on all streets is consistent with

the direction being articulated in the development of the City's new Official Plan, specifically to provide a street design that will encourage walking and cycling.

Making Sidewalks a Priority:

Each of the former municipalities had different processes and funding levels for new sidewalk requests and varying levels of sidewalk provision. The adoption of the City of Toronto Road Classification System (adopted by City Council on February 29, March 1 and 2, 2000) was the first step in establishing a harmonised policy for the provision of sidewalks. The June 29, 1999, report entitled "Proposed Road Classification System" established guidance on a range of traffic and road operations issues affected by a road's classification, including the need to provide sidewalks. The report states, "Sidewalks are normally provided on one or both sides of local streets. While sidewalks are beneficial for pedestrians, people in wheelchairs and people with strollers, on quiet local streets it may often be safe for non-motorized road users to share the road with vehicles. On collectors, minor arterials and major arterials the option of walking in the road is generally not advisable and separate facilities (sidewalks) are recommended on both sides of the street. This becomes even more necessary when a street is a bus or streetcar route, as passengers need to be able to access transit stops from both sides of the road."

"Some arterial and collector streets have evolved without sidewalks. When these streets are reconstructed, the opportunity should be taken to build sidewalks on both sides of the road as a pedestrian safety measure..."

"When new streets are built, local streets should have sidewalks on at least one side. On new collector and arterial roads, sidewalks should be built on both sides. Proposed deviations from this policy should be considered by the Works Committee."

Since the adoption of the Road Classification System, Transportation Services has moved towards harmonising the processes and policies of the former municipalities for responding to sidewalk requests and for installing essential sidewalk links. In that time, new sidewalks have been installed, at a moderately accelerated pace, under three scenarios. During the development review process a developer can be required to provide a new sidewalk as a condition of development, at no cost to the City. Also, in connection with programmed work, new sidewalks are routinely constructed or upgraded when an arterial or collector road or bridge is being reconstructed or resurfaced, as part of the Capital Program. In cases where there is no future planned work and a request has been received from the public, new sidewalks are provided if feasible, subject to funding availability.

Taking the Next Step:

To improve pedestrian safety and accessibility we need to take the next step, to proactively program the construction of essential sidewalk links at an accelerated pace, with a goal of completing the arterial and collector road sidewalk network over the next decade.

In order to program this work, Transportation Services staff have assembled an inventory of 220 locations, representing approximately 130 km of missing sidewalks on arterial and collector roads. This type of inventory was not readily available from most of the former municipalities

and is being verified in the field over time and updated on a regular basis. This inventory represents approximately \$20.0 million of new sidewalks.

The following chart illustrates the total number of missing sidewalk locations on arterial and collector roads that have been identified to date:

Summary of Missing Sidewalks, by Transportation District (2002)

Transportation Districts	Number of Missing Locations		Length of Missing Sidewalks	
	Arterial	Collector	Arterial	Collector
District 1	37	26	17,430 m	9,675 m
District 2	34	33	32,660 m	22,575 m
District 3	19	40	14,415 m	19,295 m
District 4	13	18	3,240 m	10,950 m
Total	103	117	67,745 m	62,495 m
	220		130,240 m (130.2 km)	

The overall sidewalk budget has increased over the past few years to eliminate the backlog, to maintain the state of good repair and to begin filling in the gaps in the sidewalk network. The Works and Emergency Services approved 2002 Capital Budget includes \$6.3 million for sidewalk construction and repair, up from \$5.3 million in 2001. However, at the current rate, it will take well over 20 years to construct all of the essential sidewalk links on arterial and collector roads given the competing demands for state of good repair and backlog needs.

To provide these essential sidewalk links over the next ten years will require approximately \$2.0 million per year of additional funding. From a budget perspective, this program should be advanced as a Health and Safety initiative and considered as part of the 2003 budget process within the current context of City Council's capital budget priorities.

These projected costs are based on a sidewalk width of 2.0 metres, and do not include utility relocations, excavation and/or construction of retaining walls. A 2.0 metre wide sidewalk can accommodate two-way unimpeded pedestrian travel, or a person in a wheelchair and a pedestrian side by side. However, there are some locations where the desired 2.0 metre wide sidewalk may not be feasible and a narrower sidewalk can be provided. In these locations, 1.5 metres is considered to be the minimum sidewalk width.

Clear Process for Evaluating Sidewalk Priorities:

In an urban environment such as the City of Toronto, sidewalks should be provided on all streets, including local streets. However, given the large backlog of missing sidewalk locations on arterial and collector roads, which generally carry the highest volumes of pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic, they should be given the highest priority.

A clear process for setting priorities will assist in making the most effective use of the funds allocated for constructing essential sidewalk links. For example, it is cost-effective to construct a new sidewalk at the same time as a road is being reconstructed. However, to wait until an arterial or collector road is reconstructed in order to construct a new sidewalk means there are many missing sidewalk locations where a sidewalk will not be provided for a considerable length of time, despite need and demand.

An ad hoc working group, consisting of Toronto Pedestrian Committee members and Transportation Services staff, recommended the following general guidelines for setting priorities for constructing essential sidewalk links on arterial and collector roads:

- (i) sidewalks should be included in all future planned work, such as road construction and resurfacing, and as part of streetscape improvements tied to development agreements; and
- (ii) sidewalks should be constructed where there is no future planned work, with highest priority given to locations with the highest levels of pedestrian activity, including streets with transit routes, schools, community centres, parks and employment centres. Areas with a high concentration of a special needs population (such as the elderly, children and disabled) would also receive priority consideration.

These general guidelines are not intended to be a rigid set of criteria, but will serve to guide staff in identifying priorities for the annual capital program, in consultation with the Pedestrian Committee and members of Council.

The process for reviewing new sidewalk installations will be determined by the classification of the road. It must be emphasized that sidewalks are required on both sides of arterial and collector roads for safety reasons. The posted speed on collector roads is typically 40 or 50 km/h with a daily motor vehicle traffic volume ranging from 2,500 to 8,000. The posted speed on arterial roads ranges from 40 to 80 km/h, with most at 50 or 60 km/h, and with daily motor vehicle traffic volumes ranging from 8,000 to 40,000 or more. Under these conditions, walking on the road or on an unimproved boulevard is not an acceptable option for pedestrians and the provision of sidewalks on arterial and collector roads is a matter of necessity rather than choice.

The following process has been developed to identify and program new sidewalk installations on arterial and collector roads:

- (i) staff identify priority missing sidewalk segments (from inventory), in consultation with the Toronto Pedestrian Committee;
- (ii) staff determine technical design feasibility and cost estimate;
- (iii) staff include proposed sidewalks for consideration in the Capital Works Program;

- (iv) pending budget approval, staff undertake detailed design and prepare Design Initiation Notice, if applicable;
- (v) in consultation with the Ward Councillor, staff determine appropriate public consultation; and
- (vi) staff program sidewalk construction under the Transportation Services Capital Works Program.

New sidewalk installations on local streets will only be considered for the time being on a request basis, or when a roadway is being reconstructed. These streets typically have fewer than 2,500 motor vehicles per day and posted speeds of 40 or 50 km/h, however, there can be a very wide range of operating conditions on local streets. While sidewalks are desirable on at least one side of these streets, it is important to recognize that there is often community resistance to the introduction of new sidewalks on local streets. Under the current process, proposals for new sidewalks on local streets are subject to a poll of abutting property owners. The polling process is currently under review. In the interim, informal polls are often conducted by the Ward Councillor to measure community support for a proposed sidewalk. Once the polling process has been resolved, a report will be submitted to the Works Committee outlining a recommended process for responding to requests for sidewalks on local streets. In the interim, the following process will be followed to review requests for new sidewalks on local streets:

- (i) staff receives request from the public, Ward Councillors, special interest groups or staff;
- (ii) staff advise Ward Councillor of request, if applicable;
- (iii) staff provide technical design feasibility and cost estimate;
- (iv) staff consult with Ward Councillor to determine community support (at this time property owners abutting the proposed new sidewalk location are polled by the Ward Councillor's office); and
- (v) if community supports the proposed sidewalk, staff include it in the Works and Emergency Services Five Year Capital Works Program, pending funding availability.

In anticipation that there will continue to be relatively few requests for new sidewalks on local streets relative to the number of new sidewalks on arterial and collectors, every effort will be made to accommodate them within the annual sidewalk program. If demand exceeds our resources for responding to requests, a more formal program and funding source for sidewalks on local streets will be established and introduced.

New sidewalk installations will only be reported to City Council when road alterations are required to provide a sidewalk.

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Toronto Pedestrian Committee.

Conclusion:

Connected and continuous sidewalks provide benefits to all residents and visitors to the city. They provide a safe place to walk, enhance street appearance, encourage people to walk to the facilities in their community and provide access to transit stops. This report proposes an expanded City-wide program for providing sidewalks where they currently do not exist. The

missing sidewalk inventory includes 220 locations, representing 130 km of missing sidewalks on arterial and collector roads.

The cost for providing sidewalks at all of these locations is approximately \$20.0 million, or \$2.0 million per year over ten years. This program will focus primarily on arterial and collector roads because walking on these roads is not a safe option for pedestrians. Given that the provision of sidewalks on both sides of arterial and collector roads is a matter of necessity, this program should be considered as a Health and Safety initiative within the current context of City Council's capital budget priorities.

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Ms. Rhona Swarbrick, Member, Toronto Pedestrian Committee, appeared before the Policy and Finance Committee in connection with the foregoing matter, and filed a written submission in regard thereto.

(City Council on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002, had before it, during consideration of the foregoing Clause, the following communication (June 25, 2002) from Councillor Moscoe:

You may recall that at Council I suggested that this matter, which was not completed, be brought forward with the amendments that were being proposed by Councillors.

I intend to move the following motion "that this program include the completion of pedestrian walkway networks on either side of City maintained highways like the WM Allen Road, the DVP (Don Valley Parkway) and Highway #27 in Etobicoke".)