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Item No. 13.2.1
Transportation Standing Committee
February 27, 2025

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

FROM: Hugh Millward, Chair, Active Transportation Advisory Committee

DATE: February 13, 2025

SUBJECT: **Prioritization of Sidewalks or Multiuse Pathways in Cherry Brook**

ORIGIN

February 13, 2025 meeting of Active Transportation Advisory Committee, Item 9.1.1.

RECOMMENDATION

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommends that the Transportation Standing Committee request the Chief Administrative Officer direct staff to prepare a report on prioritizing construction of sidewalks or multi-use pathways within the Cherry Brook community.

BACKGROUND

On February 13, 2025 the Active Transportation Advisory Committee received a joint presentation from HRM Active Transportation staff, Catherine Driesbeck, Program Manager, Hike Nova Scotia and Sherry Smith, representative from the community of Cherry Brook on the Walking Audit Project for Cherry Brook.

The presentation outlined the results of the audit which indicated there was a high need for sidewalks on Cherry Brook Road from Graham Creighton Junior High to Cherry Brook United Baptist Church. The presenters sought to have HRM move this project into the detailed design phase by adding it to the 5-Year Capital Plan where implementation would be based on project feasibility, priority and budget availability.

For further information refer to the attached presentation dated February 13, 2025.

DISCUSSION

Active Transportation Advisory Committee considered the presentation, discussing the need for more sidewalks, wider multi-use pathways and reduced speed limits within the Cherry Brook community. The Committee approved a motion to the Transportation Standing Committee as outlined in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications at this time. Financial implications would be identified in a future report.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk considerations were identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee is comprised of 12 citizen members and 1 Councillor. Meetings are live webcast on Halifax.ca. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

Active Transportation Advisory Committee did not provide alternatives.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Active Transportation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference:

2. MANDATE

The mandate of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee is to advise the Transportation Standing Committee on all matters relating to active transportation in Halifax Regional Municipality, using the Active Transportation Plan as a guide.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Presentation dated February 13, 2025.

NSWalks HALIFAX

Walking Audit Project
Cherry Brook

Presentation to Active Transportation Advisory Committee
February 13, 2025



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New Horizons for Seniors Program



Welcome & Introductions

Objectives of meeting:

1. Share & discuss results of walking audit
2. Recommend that HRM staff participate in future walking audits
3. Recommend the construction of a sidewalk on Cherry Brook Road (from Graham Creighton Junior High to Church)
4. Discuss possible next steps

History of Project

Hike NS Pilot project funded by Connect2 (Province of Nova Scotia)

Goal: To improve walkability in communities through engagement and awareness of challenges

Cherry Brook - one of 10 communities across the province in the Pilot

Cherry Brook Walking Audit event took place on Saturday, November 2nd, 2024

Walking Audit Organizers

Carmalee Netu - Community Champion and
CMT member- Cherry Brook

Anders Turim - Active Transportation Planner -
HRM

Catherine Drosbeck - Hike Nova Scotia



Cherry Brook Walking Audit Participants

- 2 community members (plus CMT)
- HRM Planner
- HRM Engineer
- HRM Manager of Urban Forestry
- Province of NS employee (manager)
- Member of Community Mobilization Team
- Community Health Board member
- Ecology Action Centre Planner
- Hike Nova Scotia staff member
- (Municipal Councillor unable to attend)

Total: 10 people



Why a Walking Audit in Cherry Brook?

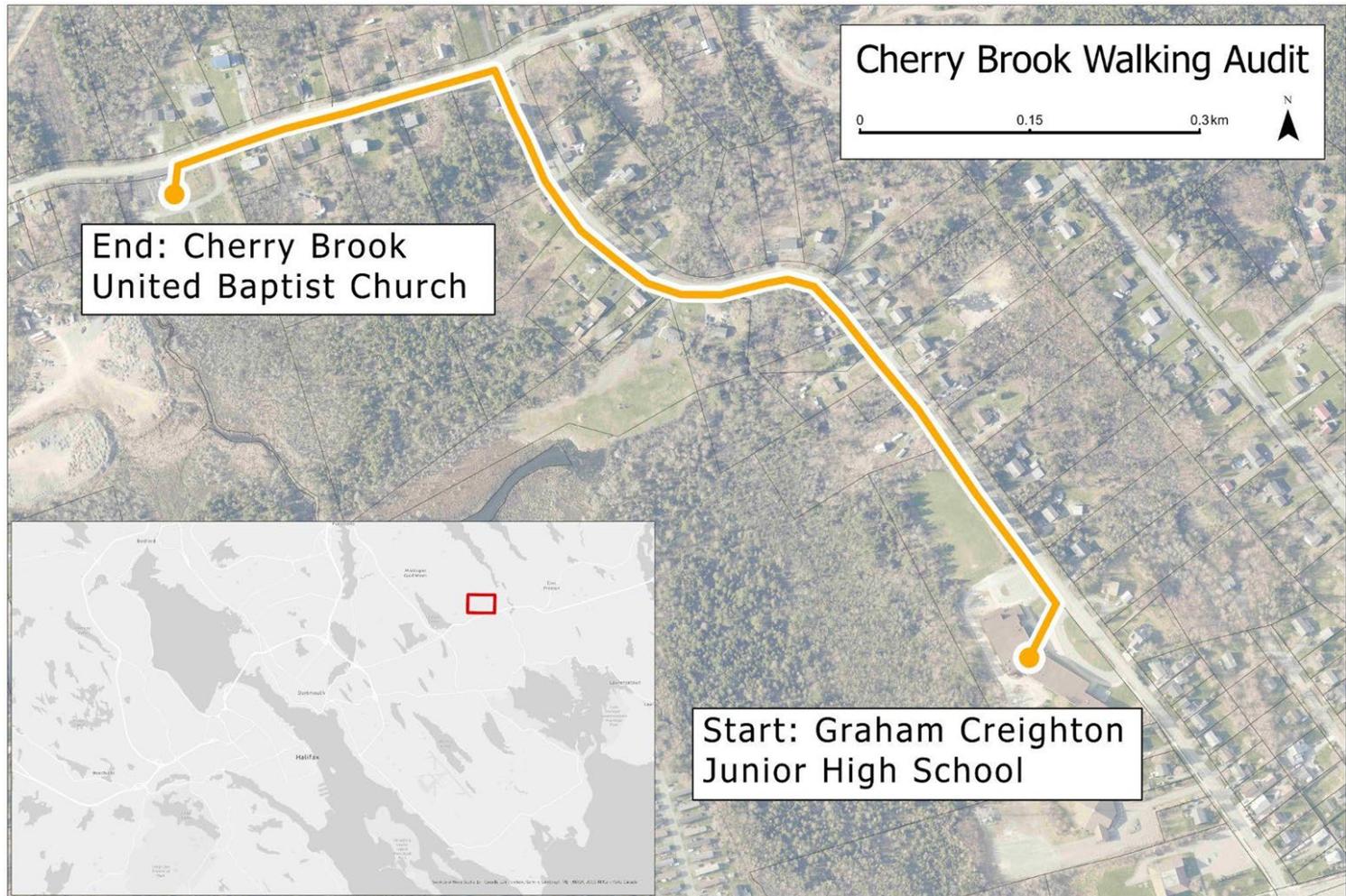
Frequent requests for sidewalk

HRM staff is aware of the need due to:

- Disconnected bus stops
- Cherry Brook being a Minor Collector Road
- Proximity to a Junior High, places of worship, community centre and playground
- Relatively high levels of socioeconomic need

Walking audit presented opportunity to engage with community and have staff gain an understanding of the walking experience and community in Cherry Brook





Walking Audit Tool

NSWalks WALKABILITY AUDIT TOOL

HOW WALKABLE IS OUR COMMUNITY?

COMMUNITY: _____ DATE: _____

Thank you for participating in our community walk audit! Before our walk, review the audit to familiarize yourself with the contents. During or after the walk, rate the items in each section. At the end of the audit, add the totals from each section. Your responses will be combined to create an overall walkability rating for our community.

SIDEWALKS Rating: 0 - 5

- ▶ There are sidewalks _____/5
- ▶ The sidewalk is continual (not starting and stopping) _____/5
- ▶ The sidewalk is easy to walk/roll on _____/5
- ▶ The sidewalk is safe (ex: salting, snow plowed, filled cracks) _____/5
- ▶ The sidewalk is wide enough _____/5

Total: ___/25

APPEAL Rating: 0 - 5

- ▶ The area is clear of litter _____/5
- ▶ The route is nice/pleasant _____/5
- ▶ There are trees/plants _____/5

Total: ___/15

SAFETY Rating: 0 - 5

- ▶ There is enough lighting _____/5
- ▶ There are other people walking the route _____/5
- ▶ You can see other people coming/they can they see you _____/5

Total: ___/15

Notes: _____

NSWalks WALKABILITY AUDIT

CROSSING Rating: 0 - 5

- ▶ There are crosswalks _____/5
- ▶ There are enough crosswalks _____/5
- ▶ The crosswalk location makes sense _____/5
- ▶ There is enough time to cross the road _____/5
- ▶ The crosswalks are safe (ex: flashing lights, flags, and crossing guards) _____/5

Total: ___/25

TRAFFIC Rating: 0 - 5

- ▶ The speed limit is posted _____/5
- ▶ The drivers follow the speed limit _____/5
- ▶ There are things that calm traffic (ex: speed bumps, curb bump outs) _____/5
- ▶ There is protection for people walking from cars on the road _____/5
- ▶ There is too much traffic _____/5

Total: ___/25

FACILITIES Rating: 0 - 5

- ▶ There is street furniture: benches _____/5
garbage cans
bike racks
- ▶ There is enough signage: Maps _____/5
Street signs
- ▶ There are trees for shade/shaded areas _____/5

Total: ___/15

HOW WALKABLE IS YOUR COMMUNITY?

Add up the totals from each section.

___/120

Below 60 It's a disaster for walking!

60-79 Okay, but it needs work.

80-99 Pretty good - not very many issues.

100-120 Let's celebrate!

We have a great community for walking.

Notes: _____

Walking Audit Results

Sidewalks: 0/25

Appeal: 9/15

Safety: 4/15

Crossing: 6/25

Traffic: 11/25

Facilities: 6/15

Overall rating: 30/120 - “A disaster for walking”



Community Food
cupboard

Key Findings

No sidewalks, paved shoulders, or separate space for walking

Steep ditch at several points

Curve in road creates significant safety hazards

Quotes from Walking Audit participants:

- “The segments where there are curves are incredibly dangerous”
- “Extremely unsafe to walk...”



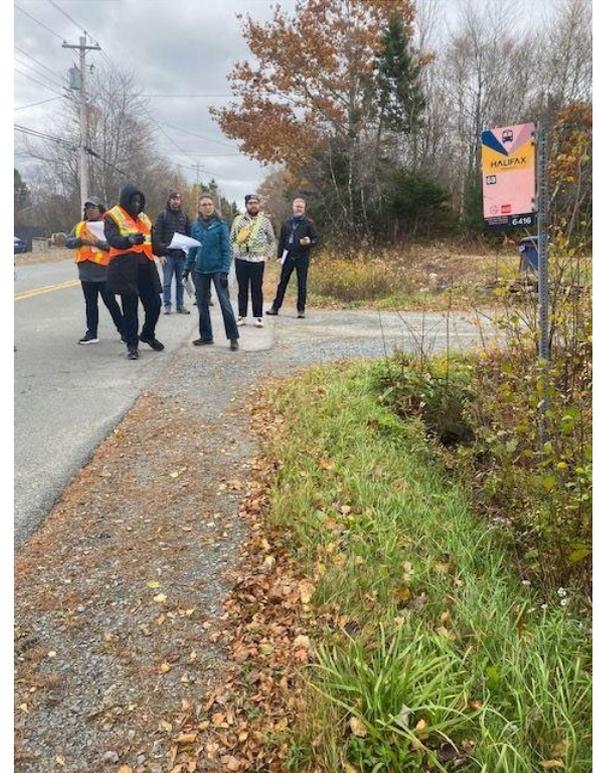
Key Findings - Facilities

Inadequate space for bus stop

Trimming of plants could make more room for people walking

Walking Audit participants:

- “...No lights for bus stops. Bus Stop signs are hidden by trees. No garbage cans or benches with bus stops. Not safe to walk at night because of no lights.”



Recommendations & Next Steps

The results of this audit indicate that there is a high need for sidewalk on Cherry Brook Road from Graham Creighton Junior High to Cherry Brook United Baptist Church.

HRM staff recommend moving this project into the detailed design phase and adding it to the 5-Year Capital Plan where implementation will be based on project feasibility, priority and budget availability.

Walking audits can be a useful way for municipal staff to meet with community members and get on the ground understanding of the walking experience. This is something that could be done more as an organization.

Questions & Comments

We invite any questions or comments you may have!



The discussion after the walk

Thank you and feel free to contact us

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Anders Turim, Active Transportation Planner, HRM anders.turim@halifax.ca



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