

# MUNICIPAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICY TEMPLATE & GUIDE

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The following template was developed by the Ecology Action Centre with the support of the Province of Nova Scotia.

The purpose of the Active Transportation Policy Template is to provide a document that will guide a municipality in developing its own active transportation (AT) policy. The template is meant to provide a high-level policy which outlines the commitment the municipality has to AT. Municipalities may copy, add to and revise in order to tailor it to their needs. The intent is that all Nova Scotia municipalities will adopt an AT policy. In addition, see the AT 101 document for guidance on creating an AT Plan.

For all policies and publications referenced below, a web link is provided at the end of the document.

**Title** - Include the policy title, number and date by which it was made effective (after approval by Council).

**MUNICIPALITY OF \_\_\_\_\_**

**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

**POLICY \_\_\_\_\_**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_**

## **1. Purpose**

Include a short section of 3-5 sentences, including, in paragraph form why the policy is being written, the benefits of AT, a definition of AT and why the municipality wants to promote AT.

**Example from the City of Edmonton (Policy C544)** – *Active Transportation includes any form of human-powered transportation, the most common modes being walking and cycling. The purpose of the Active Transportation Policy is to optimize Edmontonian’s opportunities to walk, roll, and cycle, regardless of age, ability, or socio-economic status; to enhance the safety, inclusivity and diversity of our communities, and to minimize the impact of transportation activities on the Edmonton’s ecosystem.*

**Example from the City of Whitehorse (page 88)** – *Active Transportation: any form of human-powered transportation, such as walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, in-line skating, or skateboarding.*

**Example from District of Lunenburg (Appendix E, page 91 0 proposed AT Policy)** – *Active transportation includes any form of human powered movement such as walking and biking, but also in line skating, jogging, skateboarding, canoeing/kayaking, and the use of motorized personal mobility devices such as powered wheelchairs or medical scooters. While in many other jurisdictions, active transportation focuses on commuter or utilitarian activities, given the rural nature of the area, within the Municipality it also includes a significant recreational and tourism function.*

See the additional definition of AT in the AT 101 document, linked below.

## **2. Guiding Principles**

Include guiding principles upon which the policy is based. Things to consider include:

- a) Principles are written in a clear, precise list.
- b) These should be things that form the base or foundation of the policy.
- c) Touch on the benefits of AT – social, economic, environmental, health.
- d) Does the municipality want to recognize themselves as a leader in AT?
- e) Who is the target audience? Business people? Families? School-aged kids?
- f) Ensure your principles are not re-iterating points.

Example from Chester (page 2) –

*The following guiding principles form the foundation of this policy:*

- a) *When real or perceived safety barriers are removed, people will make the easy and attractive choice to be active.*
- b) *People will embrace the social and health benefits of AT. We recognize walking and cycling are social pursuits that enable people to interact. We recognize that AT builds stronger bodies and stronger minds.*
- c) *The Municipality of the District of Chester should be recognized as an AT leader — particularly in rural Canada.*
- d) *We will both create and satisfy demand by building facilities and infrastructure that people will want to use.*
- e) *Our citizens will benefit economically from AT. We will create new opportunities to enhance and build infrastructure, and host visitors. Building healthier communities will decrease healthcare costs.*
- f) *Parents and children of school communities are particularly vital in re-building a culture that embraces AT.*

### **3. Goals**

If there are more specific goals than what is included in the Purpose statement above, then consider including a short section of 4-6 sentences, in paragraph or bulleted form, on the overarching goals that will be satisfied by the policy. If your municipality has an AT Plan, it could be as simple as restating the goals of the plan. If you do not yet have an AT Plan, consider including the following in your goal statements for the policy:

- Improvement to mobility and accessibility;
- Increase in safety;
- Decrease in environmental impact;
- Promotion of physically active lifestyle, etc.;
- Adding to the identity, image and vitality of the community; and/or
- Attract tourists or new families to the area.

**Example from the City of Moncton (page 7)** – *The City of Moncton active transportation system is a safe and comfortable multi-modal network that connects communities to the schools, parks, work and shopping areas. The well-designed system combined with citywide education encourages everyday use of public transit, trails and active transportation routes.*

**Example from Chester (page 2)** – *The goal of an active transportation network is to improve citizen's accessibility and mobility regardless of age, ability, or socio-economic status; to enhance the safety of our communities; and to minimize the impact of transportation activities on our natural environment. Achieving a well connected and comprehensive active transportation will enhance the promotion of physical activity as a means to improve the health of residents, and will improve social and environmental conditions in ways that attract families, businesses and workers, and contribute to economic and tourism development.*

#### 4. Policy Statements

This section should include all policy aspects that need to be addressed. List them in numbered bullets. Consider the following:

1. What does AT infrastructure include?
  - a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *The Municipality recognizes that active transportation infrastructure includes, but is not limited to: sidewalks, gravel shoulders, paved shoulders, bike lanes, transit amenities, safe crossings, traffic calming measures, multi-use trails, non-motorized trails, and end of trip facilities (e.g. bike racks).*
2. Who is targeted? A specific group? All ages and abilities? Gender?
  - a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *The Municipality should consider the specific active transportation needs of people of all ages and abilities (children, youth, seniors, and disabled populations) in all street design, trail, parkland, public space, and bikeway projects.*
  - b. See the Child- and Youth-Friendly Land-Use and Planning Guidelines for Nova Scotia document for additional guidance.
3. Will there be a pathway or network system for pedestrians, cyclists or both?
  - a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *Active transportation solutions shall strive to create a connected and comprehensive network with dedicated and useable space for pedestrians and cyclists; protection and refuge; greater visibility; stable pathways; mode segregation; predictable traffic movements; more appropriate functional speeds; and options for route selection.*
4. Will the facilities be new road networks or existing?
  - a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *Active transportation facilities should be incorporated into existing roads, as opportunities arise, or needs dictate.*
5. Will there be encouragement to consider AT solutions in new projects?
  - a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *Active transportation solutions should be considered in the initial phases of all new projects. The Municipality recognizes that integrating appropriate facilities into the initial design of street projects and public spaces avoids the expense of retrofits later.*
6. Will the policy and efforts be reviewed yearly? 2-years? 5-years?
  - a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *The Municipality should annually review active transportation improvement opportunities as part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and/or operations budgeting process.*
7. Will there be encouragement to consider AT principles for incorporation into land-use policies when they are up for review?
  - a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *When land use planning policies (e.g. Land-Use Bylaw, Municipal Planning Strategies, Sub-division bylaws) are being reviewed, AT principles should be considered for incorporation. This could include innovative mechanisms such as density incentives, easements, healthy community checklists, and expanded street design guidelines.*
8. Will a maintenance program be necessary for upkeep and repair as necessary?

- a. **Ex. from Chester (page 3)** - *The Municipality should establish an infrastructure maintenance program to ensure AT facilities will be kept in good repair, remain accessible, provide safe passage, improve visibility, and be upgraded as warranted.*
9. Is raising awareness about the benefits of AT to be considered?
  - a. **Ex. from Edmonton (page 1)** - *Raise awareness of the Active Transportation options available to Edmonton's citizens and the benefits of active, healthy living, recreation, and sustainable communities, through special events and promotions.*
10. Is educating the public about their rights/responsibilities as a driver/pedestrian/bicyclist necessary?
  - a. **Ex. from Edmonton (page 1)** - *Educate users of Edmonton's transportation systems about their rights and responsibilities, including drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians, through targeted outreach and educational campaigns.*
11. Are building partnerships with local businesses, schools and institutions helpful or important to build the AT network?
  - a. **Ex. from Moncton (page 15)** - *It shall be Council's intent to encourage the AT coordinator to develop infrastructure and program public/private partnerships to implement the 2002 City of Moncton Active Transportation Plan.*
12. Will new infrastructure be provided? If new roads are being constructed will AT considerations be put into place?
  - a. **Ex. from Yellowknife (page 68)** - *Provide pedestrian and cycling infrastructure when building new roads in accordance with the Municipal Design Standards defined for each road classification, pursuant to Section 5.4.*
13. Is the improvement or addition of signage and road markings necessary?
  - a. **Ex. from Yellowknife (page 68)** - *The City will improve signage and markings for existing pedestrian and cycling facilities.*
14. Will landscaping and lighting have to be reconsidered or altered in order to ensure the safety and security of AT users? Consider applying Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
  - a. **Ex. from Whitehorse (page 63)** - *Safe, convenient, and accessible pedestrian corridors, as well as appropriate landscaping and lighting, shall be considered as part of any development or redevelopment of parking facilities within the City.*
15. Should an AT map for the entire area be created for users?
  - a. **Ex. from Whitehorse (page 63)** - *An Active Transportation map for the entire City shall be created. Trail improvements shall be implemented as funds allow and in conjunction with implementation of the City Trail Plan.*
  - b. Bridgewater has an excellent interactive map on their website that shows routes, completed projects, proposed projects, trails and parks, share the road, bike racks, and destinations. <http://www.bridgewater.ca/active-transportation>
16. Is it necessary to establish an AT Committee?
17. Should there be mention of the universal design principles?
  - a. A document describing the principles is located in the reference list below, however some principles may be more appropriate than others.
18. Will a Complete Streets policy be developed to complement your AT policy?

- a. The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities created a document called Resolution Establishing a Complete Streets Policy for Nova Scotia Municipalities to use as a guide. Complete Streets for Canada also provides guidance and information.

### **Other Considerations for Your AT Policy and Other Work**

Your municipality might consider supporting or adopting the following, in addition to the AT Policy:

- Walking Charter, developed through Walk 21;
- Active School Travel Charter, developed by Green Communities Canada; and
- Complete Streets Policy, as described above.

For additional information or assistance please contact Janet Barlow, Active Transportation Coordinator at the Ecology Action Centre.

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Phone: 902.442.5055.

Website: <http://www.ecologyaction.ca/issue-area/transportation-issues>.

## **References**

**Active School Travel Charter** – <http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/active-travel-charter-canadian-children-and-youth>

**AT 101** – [http://www.ecologyaction.ca/files/images-documents/AT101-2013\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.ecologyaction.ca/files/images-documents/AT101-2013_WEB.pdf)

**Chester** – P-73 Active Transportation Policy, <http://www.chester.ca/policies/view-category.html>

**Child- and Youth-Friendly Land-Use and Planning Guidelines for Nova Scotia** – <http://www.kidsonthemove.ca/uploads/Guidelines%20NS%20Apr30.pdf>

**Complete Streets for Canada** – <http://completestreetsforcanada.ca/>

**Edmonton** – C544 - Active Transportation Policy,  
<http://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/C544.pdf>  
[http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/pub/htmldocs/pub\\_universaldesign/design.pdf](http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/pub/htmldocs/pub_universaldesign/design.pdf)

**Lunenburg** – Active Transportation Plan, <http://www.modl.ca/recreation/active-transportation>

**Moncton** – Active Transportation Plan,  
[http://www.moncton.ca/Residents/Recreation\\_Parks\\_and\\_Culture/Active\\_Living/Active\\_Transportation.htm](http://www.moncton.ca/Residents/Recreation_Parks_and_Culture/Active_Living/Active_Transportation.htm)

**Resolution Establishing a Complete Streets Policy for Nova Scotia Municipalities** – <http://www.ecologyaction.ca/files/images-documents/RESOLUTION%20ESTABLISHING%20A%20COMPLETE%20STREETS%20POLICY%20FOR%20NOVA%20SCOTIA%20MUNICIPALITIES.pdf>

**Universal Design Principles** –  
[http://www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/pubs\\_p/docs/poster.pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/pubs_p/docs/poster.pdf)

**Walking Charter** – <http://www.walk21.com/charter/>

**Whitehorse** – Official Community Plan 2010,  
<http://www.city.whitehorse.yk.ca/index.aspx?page=249>

**Yellowknife** – By-Law No. 4656,  
<http://www.yellowknife.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=12905>