



MEDIA RELEASE

The Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie

COMMUNITIES ON-BOARD FOR WALK FRIENDLY ONTARIO PILOT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 19, 2012: Canada Walks is pleased to announce the six communities that will participate in our WALK Friendly Ontario pilot this fall: City of Kingston, Town of Fort Erie, City of Thunder Bay, Municipality of South Huron (Exeter), City of Hamilton and City of London. These six communities represent all four regions of the province, range in population from 4,500 to 520,000 and are at varying stages of their work to create and improve walkability.

“Fort Erie is excited to be a part of this pilot as it will kick start the newly formed Fort Erie Active Transportation Advisory Committee, providing the committee with the opportunity to begin their work together as a team, and to begin to explore the walkability of Fort Erie while laying the groundwork for future projects and initiatives”, says Dennis Hernandez-Galeano, Chair of the Fort Erie Active Transportation Committee (FEAT).

WALK Friendly Ontario is a recognition program designed to encourage municipalities to create and improve spaces and places to walk (www.walkfriendly.ca). The assessment tool that communities will pilot test will measure walkability in the areas of policy and planning, engineering and community design, education and encouragement, and enforcement and evaluation. Jay Stanford, Director of Environmental Programs & Solid Waste for the City of London says that “we are pleased to be participating in the WALK Friendly Ontario pilot to help shape how we measure walkability in Ontario communities”.

All six communities will assist Canada Walks in evaluating the tool by applying the assessment to their communities and using the support materials. This will be invaluable in ensuring a smooth roll out of the program across the province in 2013. For their efforts communities will receive a package of promotional items, feedback on their assessment from a panel of expert reviewers and media attention for the work that they are doing to become more walk friendly. “As a pilot city, Kingston hopes to set an example for other Ontario communities in becoming more walkable” says Stephanie Sciberras, Physical Activity Specialist with KFL&A Public Health.

Kate Hall, Project Manager of WALK Friendly Ontario is looking forward to working with such a diverse group of cities and towns. “We have so much to learn through this pilot and we’re open to receiving feedback from everyone that will help to make the program a huge success.”

WALK Friendly Ontario is a project of Canada Walks, a division of Green Communities Canada.

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