

Town of Orangeville

Sidewalk Policy

December 2011

Adopted by Council on December 12, 2011

Sidewalk Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard approach to locating and constructing sidewalks in Orangeville, in association with new road development and road reconstruction and to set clear and equitable priorities for spending the annual sidewalk budget in the best interest of taxpayers.

This policy establishes guidelines for the provision of new sidewalks in the Town of Orangeville and supports the basic transportation principles of accessibility, equity, health and well-being, environmental sustainability and community cohesion and vitality. A comprehensive sidewalk policy will ensure that consideration is given to pedestrian safety and needs, and implements the policies set out in the Official Plan.

History of Sidewalks in New Developments

Prior to the late 1990's, the design standard generally used for local roads was a 20 metre wide right-of-way (ROW), with a 1.2 metre wide sidewalk on one side of the street and an 8.0 m wide asphalt driving surface. Collector roads (i.e. 26 to 30 metre wide ROW's) were to be constructed with a 1.5 m sidewalk on both sides of the street.

In 1997 the current 18.5 metre wide local ROW design standard was introduced. The narrower road standard was developed in consultation with the development community to create a more efficient use of land and configuration of utilities in new development areas. With the 18.5m standard, a wider 1.5 m sidewalk could still be included on one side of the local roads while maintaining the required 8.0 m width of asphalt necessary for snow storage. The standards for collector roads with 26 m and 30 m ROWs continue to have a sidewalk on each side.

The 18.5 metre wide local road standard remains in place, with 8.0 m of asphalt for snow storage and a 1.5 m wide sidewalk, with project specific adjustments being made as required. This standard forms the basis for setting out the layout for all new local roads.

Lot Sizing and On-Street Parking

Over time, average lot sizes for all unit types in Orangeville have decreased. With reduced widths zoning requirements have been adjusted to bring dwellings closer to the street. While it works to maintain the size of the rear yard areas of the lots and it results in a better neighbourhood aesthetic as it reduces the garage-dominance of housing on the streetscape, it results in off-street (driveway) parking limitations as the dwellings are now closer to the street thereby shortening the length of driveways. With the evolution of subdivision design and the presence of a sidewalk only on one side of local roads (on the side of the street without the fire hydrants), home owners are often able to park vehicles in tandem, between the garage and the curb; this typically cannot be done on the side of the street with the sidewalk. This has evolved into a restriction of on-street parking to one side of the street only, i.e. the side without the sidewalk. That is also the side where fire hydrants, and other street furniture such as transformers and bell

pedestals, are typically installed. This situation results in one that is safer for pedestrians and vehicles as it improves visibility for motorists while keeping one side open for emergency vehicles.

The Provincial Policy Statement and the Provincial Growth Plan both encourage development with increased density. One simple way to increase the development density of a residential subdivision, while not affecting lot or unit sizes, is to reduce the amount of land required for municipal roads. As noted above, the use of the 18.5 metre ROW for local roads reduces the land needed for new development while still accommodating the above and below ground infrastructure needs. As the Town approaches build-out of the remaining greenfield areas, there will be more pressure and requirement to utilize development lands more efficiently.

Current Planning Context

The Official Plan (OP) is supportive of ongoing efforts to support modes of transportation other than private vehicles, walking in particular, for a number of health and environmental reasons. The policies of the OP set the framework for the review and consideration of all manner of development applications.

Section G of the OP supports the development of *“a transportation system that minimizes impact on the environment”* (S. G5.4) and the creation of *“an environment conducive to cycling and pedestrian circulation”* (S. G8.1). The OP also requires that the Town: *“...consider ways to incorporate amenities and features for pedestrians and cyclists... [including] the provision of sidewalks, bike lanes and off-street linkages and trails”* (S. G8.6). It is clearly stated that the promotion and encouragement of walking for recreation and transportation is very important to the sustainability and health of the community. Providing sidewalks in new developments implements this policy direction.

The predominant consideration in the technical design of the thoroughfare for local residential streets is the achievement of:

- safe and deliberate traffic flows within communities;
- balancing the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles and emergency vehicles; and
- the protection and safety of all road right-of-way users.

In evaluating the design of new development projects, Council will consider ways to incorporate amenities and features for pedestrians and cyclists.

This includes the provision of sidewalks, bike lanes and off-street linkages and trails. Council will also encourage the use of materials and designs which reduce the risk of injuries and accidents to pedestrians and cyclists.

It is the Town’s goal to: 1) provide a transportation network for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through the Municipality; 2) encourage a reduction in the dependence on the use of motor vehicles; and, 3) encourage active

transportation alternatives through the introduction or extension of such things as bicycle lanes, multi-purpose trails, sidewalks and public transit opportunities that provide safe, comfortable travel opportunities within existing communities and new neighbourhoods.

Schedule "E" of the Official Plan is the Roads Plan for the Town of Orangeville. Schedule "E" provides guidance for obtaining road dedications and widening of road allowances as a condition of approval of plans of subdivision, consents, or site plans. The roads of the community are classified as follows:

Provincial Highways

Provincial Highways are primary roads that connect the Town to the provincial highway network. The Town will circulate development proposals affecting provincial highways to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) for review and comment, in accordance with MTO policy.

Arterial Roads

Arterial roads are intended to facilitate traffic movement between major land use activities, as well as accommodate through traffic. Access to arterial roads shall be restricted in order to facilitate the through traffic function. Arterial road allowances range from 30 to 45 metres in width, and are capable of accommodating four lanes of traffic, as well as turning lanes.

Arterial roads shall be designed to accommodate a 1.5m wide sidewalk on each side of the road allowance, wherever possible and/or feasible. A 2.5 metre wide asphalt trailway, designed and constructed to the Town's trail standards as set out in the Trails Master Plan, may be substituted for one or both of the sidewalks if connections between trail segments are desired/required.

Collector Roads

Collector roads facilitate traffic within and between neighbourhoods and new development areas and connect to the arterial road system. Collector roads reduce traffic on local streets and provide a range of access options. Major Collector road allowances are up to 30 metres in width and are able to accommodate two lanes of traffic, as well as bike lanes and centre turning lanes. Minor Collector road allowances are up to 26 metres in width and are able to accommodate two lanes of traffic, as well as bike lanes and centre turning lanes.

Collector roads in, adjacent to or connecting residential areas shall be designed to accommodate a 1.5m wide sidewalk on each side of the road allowance, wherever possible and/or feasible. A 2.5 metre wide asphalt trailway, designed and constructed to the Town's trail standards as set out in the Trails Master Plan, may be substituted for one or both of the sidewalks if connections between trail segments are desired/required.

Local Roads

Local roads allow access to abutting properties and are designed to provide for a fine grain of local access and connectivity but discourage through traffic. Road allowances may range from 18.5 to 20 metres.

Local roads in, adjacent to or connecting residential areas shall be designed to accommodate a 1.5m wide sidewalk on one side of the road allowance, wherever possible and/or feasible. A 2.5 metre wide asphalt trailway, designed and constructed to the Town's trail standards as set out in the Trails Master Plan, may be substituted the sidewalk if connections between trail segments are desired/required.

Summary Table

Road Type	S/W Requirement	Alternative
Local Road	1.5m wide, one side	2.5m wide asphalt trail, one side
Minor Collector Road	1.5m wide, both sides	2.5m wide asphalt trail, one or both sides
Major Collector Road	1.5m wide, both sides	2.5m wide asphalt trail, one or both sides
Arterial Road	1.5m wide, both sides	2.5m wide asphalt trail, one or both sides

Construction of sidewalks in non-residential areas

Sidewalks will only be necessary in areas of pedestrian traffic or on walking routes to and from or between school/residential areas.

Generally, areas where there are both high pedestrian and high motor vehicle use are high priorities when establishing the need for sidewalks. Employment areas, commercial establishments, Schools, Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Seniors Complexes and Recreation Facilities generate the highest intensity of pedestrian traffic, thus giving these areas a higher priority for the introduction of sidewalks outside of residential areas. Roads with high traffic volumes that include arterials, major and minor collectors, Provincial and County Roads become difficult to cross, especially for children and handicapped pedestrians which would carry a higher priority for the provision of sidewalks.

Construction Considerations

General Construction Standards

- Sidewalks will be typically constructed of poured concrete and be a minimum of 1.5 m wide;

- Sidewalk construction is to conform to the Town of Orangeville and Ontario Provincial Standard Drawings (OPSD) standards;
- Wheel chair accessible ramps will be built at all intersections where construction takes place with grooves for the visually impaired (OPSD standard);
- Sidewalks are to be generally located on the side of the local road which permits on street vehicular parking;
- Sidewalks are to be generally located on the side of the street which does not have the majority of utilities (i.e. watermain, hydrants, hydro boxes, etc.);
- Where specific needs are identified, increased sidewalk widths may be required; and
- In site-specific situations where a physical barrier prevents the construction of a sidewalk(s) on a new street, Council may grant an exemption to this policy.

Missing Sidewalk Links

Many road allowances, especially in the older areas of the community, do not include sidewalks. In those neighbourhoods, when it comes time to reconstruct the roadway, the Town will endeavour to include new sidewalks in the design on one side of all local roads and two sides of collector roads. While these sidewalks are proposed, their inclusion in the final design of any given project is subject to several factors, including public input, Council input, site topography and other area specific requirements or factors such as, but not limited to, the width of the road allowance and the availability of space to accommodate a sidewalk(s).

In those instances where reconstruction is not planned for a road that does not include a sidewalk, Council may choose to initiate a capital project to add a sidewalk(s) on a case-by-case basis, and subject to available funding.

Public consultation

Prior to final approval of construction of new sidewalks in the existing built up area, where they didn't previously exist, all affected property owners within the limits of construction will be given an opportunity to comment and/or attend a Public Information Centre at which the Town will present options.

The results of the questionnaire and/or Public Meeting will be made available to Town Council before final approval is granted to proceed with the road/utility/sidewalk construction project.

Where sidewalks are not required

Sidewalks may not be required to be constructed where it has been determined that:

- there is insufficient pedestrian traffic and/or;
- significant man-made or natural obstacles exist and/or;

- the introduction of a sidewalk(s) would be cost prohibitive or not in the public interest.

Summary and Conclusions

It is the Town's practice in new residential developments to require the provision of sidewalks on one side of all local roads and both sides of collector and arterial roads. This approach, which has been in place since 1997:

- expands the pedestrian network as the community grows;
- supports the Official Plan policies with respect to encouraging active transportation choices and healthier social and natural environments;
- allows for a more efficient use of land as it maximizes residential development density and lot yield in greenfield development areas; and;
- provides home purchasers with a choice as to whether they prefer to have a sidewalk across the frontage of their house or a more useable length of driveway.

For road reconstruction projects, it is the Town's practice to reconstruct sidewalks where they currently exist, and propose new sidewalks and connecting links on roads where there is no sidewalk as appropriate, and in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

The maintenance of the existing sidewalk network and the timely provision of new sidewalks as the community grows is essential to ensuring pedestrian safety, encouraging healthy lifestyles, providing convenient and connected transportation choices, and reducing the community's overall ecological footprint.