



## REPORT

**TO:** Mayor Avis & Council

**FROM:** Jason Kabel, Community Services Division Manager

**DATE:** August 31, 2018

**RE:** Active Transportation – Strategic Plan Initiative #26

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### Preface

In the 2015 Strategic Plan, Mayor & Council included Active Transportation as an item for consideration in the current term of Council as follows:

*'The Town will present the recommendations of Phase II of the Active Transportation Plan to Council and implement any direction received in this regard.'*

In a press release issued in 2012 by Rick Wiedenhoeft & Elaine Fischer, the last two members of the Active Transportation Committee, was a summary of the Active Transportation Committee's concept of the next step for Fort Frances from an active transportation perspective.

*'Starting back in 2009, the Active Transportation committee of Fort Frances started down the path of creating a network of on-road and off-road biking, inline skating, and walking paths. The goal was to connect all areas of the town, parks, and schools with one another to create a safe, non-motorized active means of transportation.'*

*In Phase One, a feasibility study was undertaken to lay out all possible routes with priorities given to a strategic development throughout the community. The concept of Active Transportation was also built into the Town's official plan that was just recently passed by council.*

*In Phase Two, the routes were modified, prioritized again, and cost analyzed to give the committee some idea of the financial implications and the knowledge to pursue grants.*

*From a community perspective, the Active Transportation plan encourages individual and community health through the facilitation of a more active lifestyle while connecting and bringing the community closer together. More and more people realize and understand the critical nature of becoming and staying fit. Our children need more rather than less opportunity to stay active but without safe and marked bicycle routes, parents are reluctant to turn their kids loose.*

*To the largest extent possible, the active transportation plan will be implemented synergistically with ongoing improvements within the town. **When road improvements take place, the inclusion of the aspects of Active Transportation framework such as painting bike lanes on new roads will minimize capital costs while managing ongoing infrastructure development.***

*With the completion of Third Street from Mowat to Victoria, the timing is right to develop one of our priority routes linking all local schools. **This will involve a series of off-road paths and dedicated on-road lanes along 3rd and 4th streets. The long-term plan also includes an off-road path to link with McIrvine Rd.** Visit [fort-frances.com](http://fort-frances.com) to view the proposed infrastructure of on and off-road bicycle lanes and pathways so all residents can walk and bike safely throughout the Town.*

*Because the Highway Traffic Act prohibits 2 – way bike travel on just one side of the road, it becomes necessary to put a dedicated 1.5 metre wide bike lane on each side of the road. The downside of this safe passage for bikers (primarily our kids) will be the elimination of parking from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm along Fourth Street West and Third Street East from Wright Avenue to Armit Avenue on both sides of the road from May First to November First. These streets were chosen because they are wide, relatively new, have a low traffic pattern and see very little on street parking at any time and they initiate the connectivity from east to west, school to school.*

*This is a very small, inexpensive start to a community wide project that will require resident buy-in, driver education and significant funds from Provincial and Federal Grant Programs.'*

Attached is further information and maps that are part of the Active Transportation Plan completed in 2007 by Marr Consulting Services in conjunction with Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram Architects.


### **Recommendation**

Determine the feasibility of Active Transportation initiatives as stand-alone developments or future capital projects.

Specific short-term opportunities include:

- painting bike lanes on new roads
- a series of off-road paths and dedicated on-road lanes along 3rd and 4th Street on the attached map
- off-road path to McIrvine Road

Respectfully Submitted,

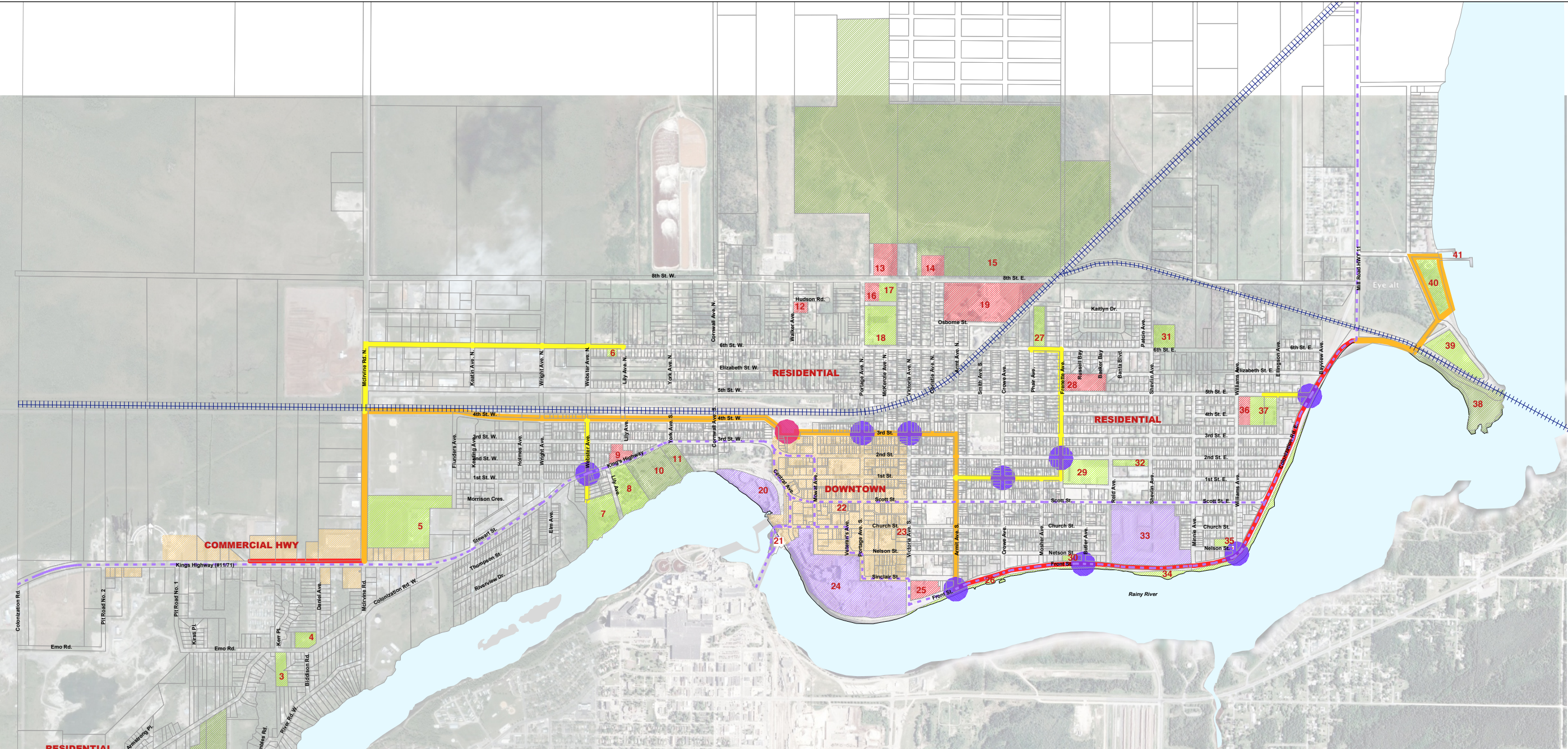


Jason Kabel

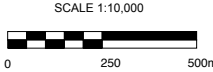
**Council approval of this report will** agree with the recommendation of the Community Services Executive Committee to:

- 1) explore active transportation possibilities with any new road development done in the Town.
- 2) seek active transportation opportunities with Resolute property that may become available.
- 3) set a priority for active transportation with the new Council.





# Fort Frances Active Transportation Plan Existing Base Plan



## LEGEND

- EXISTING PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
- TRUCK ROUTE
- TOWN FORT FRANCES TRAIL - PHASE 1
- TOWN FORT FRANCES TRAIL - PHASE 2
- COMMERCIAL
- UNIQUE PARK
- PARK/RECREATION FIELD
- INDUSTRIAL
- INSTITUTION

- 1 Holy Cross Cemetery
- 2 Riverview Cemetery
- 3 McIrvine Park
- 4 McIrvine Rink
- 5 Fort Frances & District High School, Confederation College, Townshed Theatre and J.W. Walker School
- 6 Elks Lillie Avenue Park
- 7 West End Sports Field
- 8 Legion West End Park
- 9 Alexander McKenzie School
- 10 Fort Frances Cemetery
- 11 St. Mary's Cemetery
- 12 Alternative Ed.
- 13 Curling Club
- 14 Snowmobile Club
- 15 Trails
- 16 Child Day Care Centre
- 17 Rotary North End Park
- 18 Sixth Street School
- 19 Rainycrest
- 20 Paper Mill
- 21 Customs (Border Crossing)
- 22 Fort Frances Museum
- 23 Library
- 24 Kraft Mill
- 25 La Verendrye Hospital
- 26 La Verendrye Parkway
- 27 Phair Avenue Park
- 28 St. Micheal's School
- 29 Memorial Sports Centre & Arena Park
- 30 Royal Purple Park
- 31 Knights of Columbus Playground
- 32 Lions Second Street Park
- 33 Shevlin Yard, Abitibi
- 34 Sorting Gap Marina
- 35 Nelson Street Park
- 36 F.H. Huffman School
- 37 East End Community Centre and Park
- 38 Koochiching Land
- 39 Vanjura Stadium
- 40 Pither's Point Park
- 41 Point Park Docks

Source:  
Town of Fort Frances Map, Town of Fort Frances, ND.  
Parks & Cemeteries, Town of Fort Frances, 2006.  
Truck Routes - Re-Inventing Fort Frances Transportation Review,  
ND Lea Engineers and Planners, 2002.





# TOWN OF FORT FRANCES ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Final Report  
December 2007

Prepared for:  
The Town of Fort Frances

Consulting Team:

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### Consulting Team:



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Jim Cumming	Chair of the Recreation Advisory Committee
Bill Caul	Airport and Parks Manager, Parks Department, Town of Fort Frances
Faye Flatt	Municipal Planner, Town of Fort Frances
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# INTRODUCTION

## Active Transportation Defined

“Active Living and Active Transportation helps protect, enhance or restore the environment.”

*Go for Green  
The Active Living & Environment Program*

**Active Transportation** (AT) is a sustainable form of transportation and is defined as any human-powered mode of transportation, such as cycling, walking, jogging, in-line skating, skateboarding, ice-skating or cross-country skiing.

In North America, the main interest in active modes of transportation has been restricted to recreation and leisure. However, there has been a rising interest in using AT to commute to work, school or shopping. Additionally, modes that have been previously considered exclusively recreational, such as skateboarding and in-line skating, are growing in popularity as a form of transportation.

An Active Transportation Plan must emphasize facilities, but programming, policy and other non-facility based initiatives form important elements of a plan, and may be particularly important in encouraging the use of the facilities. Education, encouragement and enforcement elements in an Active Transportation Plan offer cost-effective means to achieve the broader goals of reduced use of motor vehicles for recreation and transportation. Even within the facility category, the range of possible options is extensive, and could include signage, bike-parking facilities, changing lane stripings on roads as well as bike lanes and multi-use paths. In an environment of reducing funding for major infrastructure projects, creative solutions are possible to encourage and support AT.

The undertaking of an Active Transportation plan is compatible with other efforts Fort Frances is making, downtown and along the waterfront, in creating interpretive routes and spaces that are pedestrian friendly, celebrate its heritage and provide points of interest throughout Fort Frances.

Active Transportation represents a significant opportunity for the Town of Fort Francis to simultaneously improve the health of its residents, increase quality of life, enhance the tourism experience, and achieve other environmental and socio-economic benefits.

Figure 1: Examples of Active Transportation





## Project Objectives and Scope

To develop a plan for a continuous parkland and trail system throughout the community

To provide linkages between the waterfront park and the community's west end and north end residential areas.

To identify needs for parkland development and identify redundant parks.

## An Active Transportation Plan for Fort Frances

A well conceived Active Transportation Plan should suit the needs of its community. In developing an ATP for Fort Frances, the community must be involved in determining what will work best for Fort Frances. The plan outlined within this report has taken into consideration the demographics of the community, the geography and infrastructure, and the unique constraints and opportunities.

There are, however, common elements that must be inherent in all Active Transportation initiatives. These are:

### Bicycle/Walking Network

The bicycle/walking network consists of arterial and connector routes that may be comprised of roadways and trails. The routes should connect people from all areas of the community to recreation and park facilities, to the downtown and to work places.

### Education and Marketing

An education program teaches all members of the community how to use, share and understand the route network effectively and safely. It is important that automobile and truck drivers be educated as well. They must understand how to share the roadways and treat cyclists and pedestrians with respect.

Informing and advertising Active Transportation promotes the principles and benefits of this movement and allows the general community to become informed.

### Associated Infrastructure

Route signs, road signs, bike racks, benches should be part of the program to facilitate active transportation

The vision and implementation plan will outline the process for Fort Frances' adoption of it's own Active Transportation Plan.



Figure 2: La Verendrye Parkway  
- Fort Frances



Figure 3: Scott Street

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Conditions Map

Mapped Routes, Photographic Survey Key and Typical Street Widths

Photographic Survey

Trail Classification Matrix

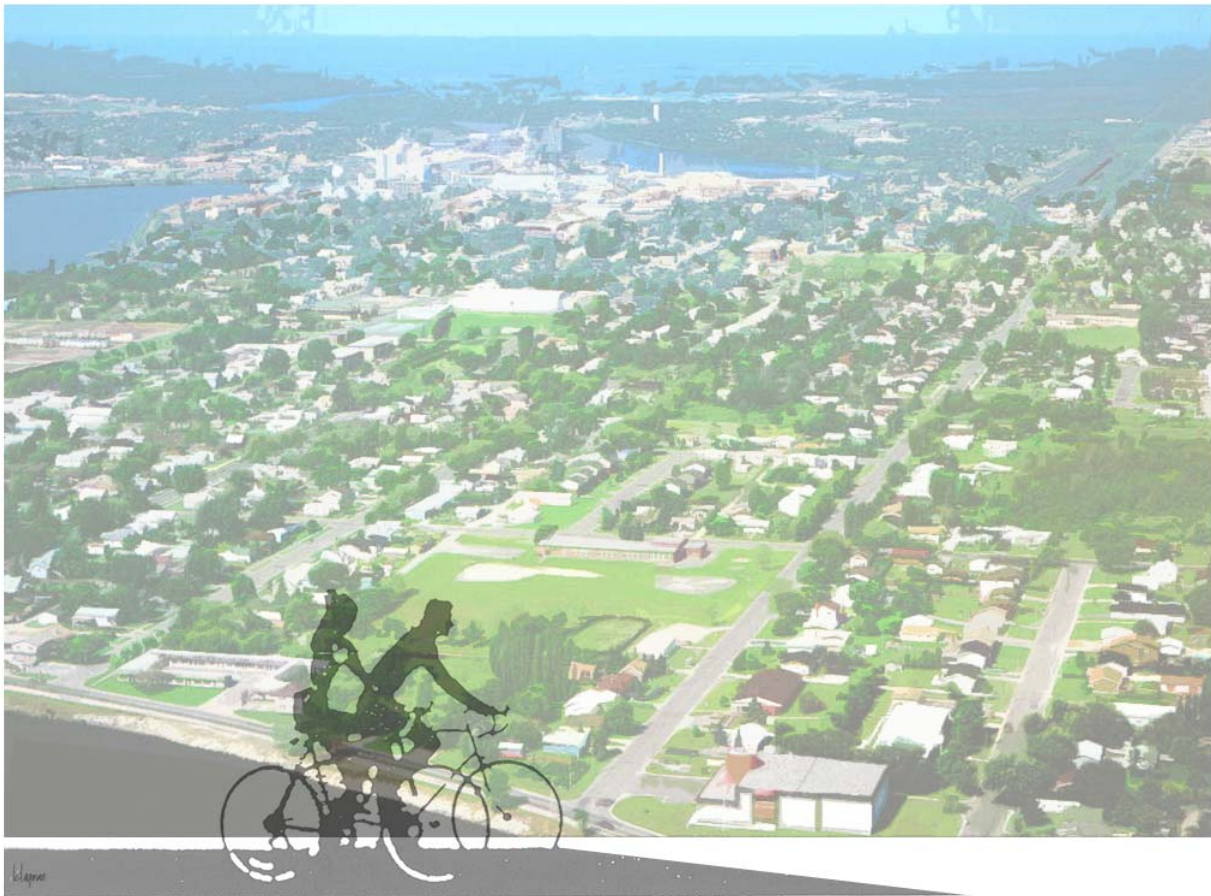
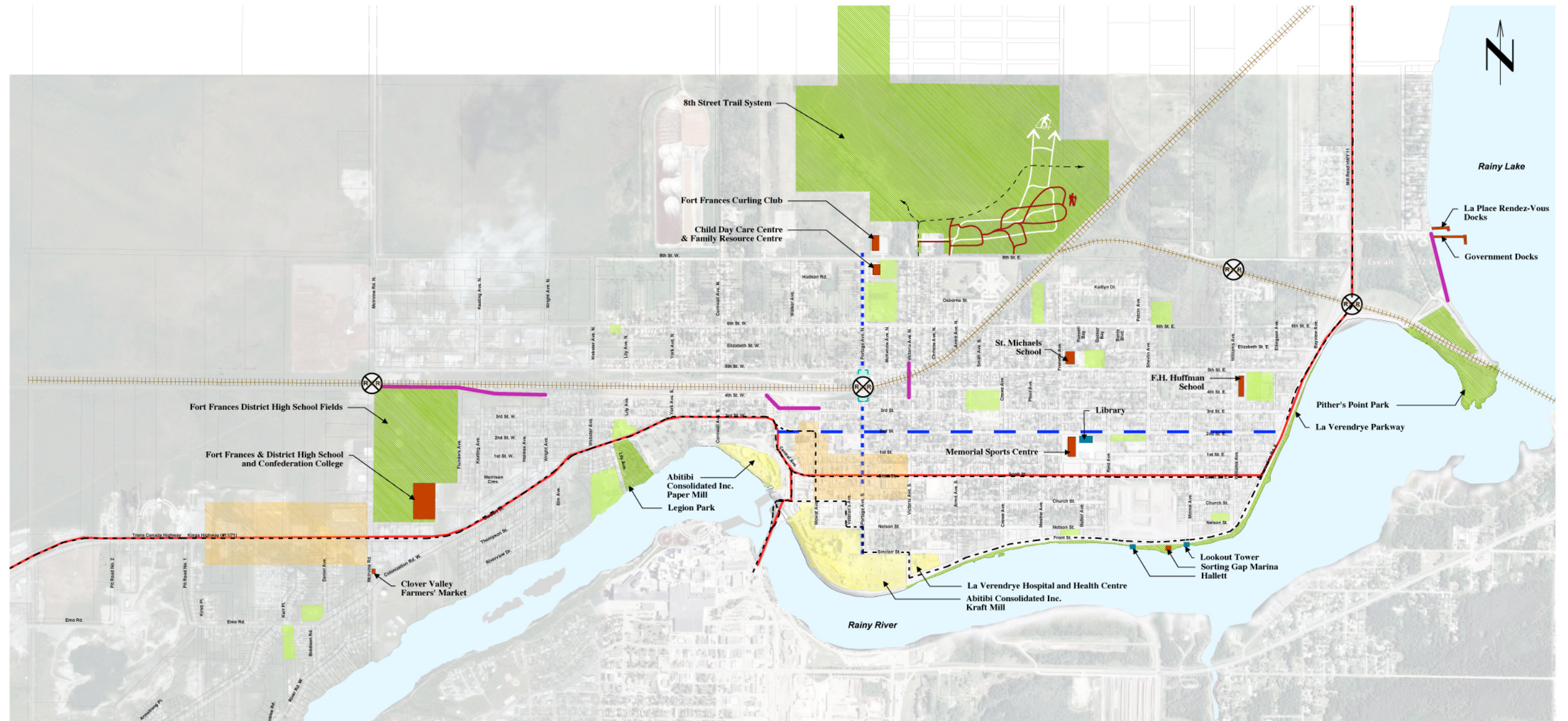
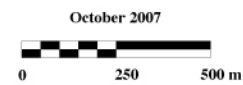


Figure 4: View of Fort Frances, Ontario





# Fort Frances Active Transportation Plan Existing Conditions



Source:  
Town of Fort Frances Map, Town of Fort Frances, ND.  
Parks & Cemeteries, Town of Fort Frances, 2006.  
Truck Routes - Re-Inventing Fort Frances Transportation Review,  
ND Lea Engineers and Planners, 2002.











Route 1: <1 Fifth St. East looking east



Route 2: < 7 - Corner of Calder Dr. and Calder Dr. East



Route 3: < 13 Colonization Rd. East and Minnie Ave.



Route 4: < 19 Looking north on Frenette Ave. from Third St. East



Route 5: < 25 Looking west on Third St. East from Mowat Ave.



Route 5: < 31 Fourth St. West ends at Wright Ave.



Route 7: < 37 Looking west on Kings Hwy. from McIrvine Rd.



Route 10: < 43 Eighth St. Trailhead



Route 1: < 2 Fifth St. E looking west



Route 2: < 8 Monkey trail along Rainy Lake



Route 3: < 14 Sorting Gap Marina



Route 4: < 20 Looking east on First St. East



Route 5: < 26 Corner of Mowat Ave. and Second St. East



Route 5: < 32 Monkey trail connecting Fourth St. to McIrvine Rd.



Route 8: < 38 McIrvine Rd. from Sixth St. West



Route 10: < 44 Eighth St. Trailhead, looking west



Route 1: < 3 Corner of Colonization Rd. East and Fifth St. East



Route 2: < 9 Beach south of monkey trail



Route 3: < 15 Looking west from Sorting Gap Marina



Route 5: < 21 Armit Ave. at Nelson St. looking south



Route 5: < 27 Field on corner of Second St. East and Central Ave.



Route 5: < 33 Railroad crossing on McIrvine Rd.



Route 8: < 39 Sixth St. W from McIrvine Rd.



Route 10: < 45 Looking south on Portage Ave. from Eighth St. West



Route 2: < 4 Calder Dr.



Route 2: < 10 Lake Rd.



Route 3: < 16 Front St. at Armit Ave. South looking west



Route 5: < 22 Armit Ave. at Nelson St. looking north



Route 5: < 28 Monkey trail connecting Third St. East and Central Ave.



Route 5: < 34 McIrvine Rd. by school entrance



Route 9: < 40 Walking path on Colonization Rd. West, looking east



Route 10: < 46 Underpass at Portage Ave. from Fifth St. West



Route 2: < 5 Rough pavement on Calder Dr.



Route 3: < 11 Colonization Rd. East and Third St. East looking east



Route 4: < 17 Looking west on Sixth St. East from Frenette Ave.



Route 5: < 23 Looking south on Armit Ave. from Third St. East



Route 5: < 29 Trail connecting to Central Ave. and Fourth St. West



Route 5: < 35 McIrvine Rd. looking north



Route 9: < 41 Walking path on Colonization Rd. West, looking west



Route 2: < 6 Railroad crossing on Calder Dr.



Route 3: < 12 Colonization Rd. East and Scott St.



Route 4: < 18 Looking south on Frenette Ave. from Sixth St. East



Route 5: < 24 Looking west on Third St. East



Route 5: < 30 Fourth St. West



Route 6: < 36 Webster Ave. from Fourth St. West, looking south



Route 9: < 42 Colonization Rd. West after Biddison Rd.

## Fort Frances Active Transportation Plan Photographic Survey



Trail Classification Matrix

		Route Assignment					Surface Type				Surface Condition			Details		Connectivity			Lighting		Bicycle Route		Notes								
No.	Route	Route Description	Vehicular	Large Truck Traffic	Walking Path	Bicycle Route	Informal Trail		Asphalt	Gravel	Dirt	Interlock Paving		Good	Fair	Poor		Width (m)	Sidewalk		Railway Crossing	Identified Crosswalk	Accessible Walkway		Street Light	Pedestrian Light		Bicycle Route	Width (m)		
1.	Fifth Street East																														
	A Fifth St. East to Colonization Rd. East	East End Hall to Parkway	•						•					•				11							•						Potential: Bike storage at East End Hall
2.	Pithers Park Loop																														
	A Calder Dr. (West)	End of parkway into Pithers Point Park	•		•				•						•			5.5			•				•						Repair; asphalt roadway is in bad condition.
	B Calder Dr.	From railway crossing to beach parking	•							•					•			6			•				•						
	C Monkey trail	Along the lake from Calder to Lake Rd.					•				•							>.5													Potential: Bike storage at Pithers Point Park
	D Calder Dr. (East)	Calder Dr. to Lake Rd.	•						•							•		7.5							•						
	E Lake Rd.	Calder Dr. E. to Rainy Lake	•						•						•			9							•						
3.	Parkway	Pither's Point to Armit Ave.	•	•		•			•			•		•				13.5				•	•		•			•	2		
		Parkway Pedestrian Walkway			•				•					•				2.5	•				•			•					Potential: Bike Storage at Sorting Gap
																															Potential: Bike Storage at shelters
4.	Frenette Ave.																														No dropped curb at Butler Ave. + Colonization.
	A Sixth St. East	Sixth St. E. 1 block from Phair to Frenette	•						•						•			7.5							•						Colonization and 2nd, 3rd + 5th St - no lined crosswalk
	B Frenette Ave.	Frenette between Sixth St. E & Fifth St. E.	•						•					•				11							•						
	C Frenette Ave.	Frenette between Fifth St. E & First St. E.	•						•					•				11	•						•						
	D First St. East	First St. East - Frenette Ave. to Armit Ave.	•						•					•				11	•						•						
																															NE corner at Armit not dropped.
5.	Armit Ave. to Mclrvine Rd.																														
	A Armit Ave.	Armit Ave. from Parkway to 3rd. St. E.	•						•					•				11	•			•	•		•						
	B Third St. East	Third St. East to Mowat Ave.	•						•					•				11	•				•		•						
		Mowat Ave. to Central Ave. Second St. E. and/or monkey trail	•				•		•		•			•				11	•				•		•						3rd + Victoria; SW corner not dropped.
	D Fourth St. West	Fourth St. W. from Central to Wright Ave.	•						•					•				11	•				•		•						Monkey trail used frequently to cross from Third St. E. to Central Ave.
	E Fourth St. West	Holmes Ave. to Mclrvine Rd.	•				•		•							•								•							Barely a path through field/bush.
	F Mclrvine Rd.	Monkey trail to Kings Highway	•				•		•		•			•				7.5							•						This is town property. No lighting.
6.	Webster Ave.	Fourth St. W. to West End Sports Field	•						•					•				11							•						
7.	Kings Highway	Mclrvine Rd. to Walmart	•						•					•				13.5	•			•	•		•						
8.	Mclrvine Rd.																														
	A Mclrvine Rd.	Fourth St. W (monkey trail) to Sixth St. E.	•						•		•			•				7.5			•				•						
	B Sixth St. W.	Mclrvine Rd. to Lily Ave. N.	•						•						•			7.5							•						
9.	Colonization Rd. West																														
	A Colonization Rd. West	Kings Highway to Biddeson Rd.	•						•					•				7.5	•			•			•						
	B Colonization Rd. West	Biddeson Rd. to Oakwood	•						•					•				7.5							•						
		*Part of this may be out of town limits.																													
10.	Eighth Street Trails																														
	A Eighth St. Trails	Eighth St -. Trails to Portage Ave.	•						•							•		6							•						
	B Portage Ave.	Eight St. Sixth St.	•						•					•				11	•			•			•						
	C Portage Ave.	Sixth St. Rail Way Underpass	•						•					•				11	•						•						



## SWOT Analysis

The purpose of this SWOT Analysis is to help evaluate the existing conditions against the criteria for a good Active Transportation Plan.

### ON-ROAD BIKE PATH

#### Criteria for a good on-road bicycle path

- Ample space for cyclists to ride alongside traffic.
- Paved smooth lane.
- Appropriate and clear signage, painted lane.
- Direct route to destination.
- Vehicular speed to suit road sharing.

#### Existing Conditions - Fort Frances Infrastructure

##### Strengths

- Roads are wide enough to be reconfigured.

##### Weaknesses

- No dedicated on-road bike lanes.
- Limited space for cyclists to ride in downtown commercial district due to on street parking.

##### Opportunities

- 11m (36') wide streets can accommodate bike lanes.
- Reduce vehicular speed limit where appropriate.
- Reconfigure on-street parking to accommodate bicycle lane.

##### Threats

- Cyclist's use of uses sidewalk if there is no on-road bike path.
- Cyclists must contend with traffic.
- \*Logging truck route is along main roadways.

### OFF-ROAD PATHS

#### Criteria for a good off-road bicycle/small wheels & pedestrian path

- Separate cycling, in-line skating and walking paths.
- Wide sidewalks and paths.
- Room for two way traffic.
- Continuous barrier free route.
- Comfortable slope.
- Interesting or stimulating aesthetic.
- Destination points on route.
- Rest stops with benches & trash receptacles.
- Well-lit sidewalks and trails.
- Adequate way finding signage.
- Parking lots at primary trails access points.
- Identification and way finding signage.
- Good connections between neighbourhoods.

#### Existing Conditions - Fort Frances Infrastructure

##### Strengths

- Excellent off-road dedicated path along waterfront.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Street Trails.

##### Weaknesses

- Linkages – in all directions.
- Safe bicycle parking.



Figure 5: Wide streets in Fort Frances, Frenette Avenue



Figure 6: Existing Off-Road Bicycle Path, Colonization Road

- Lack of public washrooms.

#### **Opportunities**

- Improve linkages between off-road and on-road routes.
- Improve signage.
- Improve amenities along all routes.
- Safety education at school and recreation centres.

#### **Threats**

- CNR Railway Tracks – very few crossing opportunities.
- \*Logging truck route is along main roadways.

## **LINKAGES**

### **Criteria for good linkages**

- Direct route from origin to destination.
- Safe crossings.
- Clear signage.
- Route information available so people may plan their course.

### **Existing Conditions - Fort Frances Infrastructure**

#### **Strengths**

- Roads are wide enough to be reconfigured.

#### **Weaknesses**

- No direct linkage from east to west.
- One main artery from north to south.
- Railway track crossings from north to south.
- Must cross truck route to get to La Verendrye Parkway.

#### **Opportunities**

- Improve linkages across major roadways and truck routes.
- Plan routes from origin to destination.
- Reduce vehicular speed limit where appropriate.
- Safety education at school and recreation centres.

#### **Threats**

- CNR Railway Tracks
- \*Logging truck route is along main roadways.



Figure 7: Existing monkey trail connecting Central Avenue and Fourth Street West

## **CROSSWALKS**

### **Criteria for good crosswalks**

- Have clearly marked & safe (walk signals, painted lines and signage).
- Have traffic signals that allow for enough time to cross the street safely.
- Do not make a person wait too long to cross the intersection.

### **Existing Conditions - Fort Frances Infrastructure**

#### **Strengths**

- Wide, painted, dropped curb crossings along Scott St.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Very limited controlled crosswalk with lights and painted lines.
- Pedestrian traffic signals exist crossing north and south, but not crossing east and west in the Downtown.
- Some painted crosswalks have been covered by asphalt repair.
- No pedestrian crossings at railroad track other than Portage subway.



Figure 8: Crossing at the corner of Mowatt Avenue and Second Street East

### **Opportunities**

- Safe pedestrian crossings at railways tracks.
- Improve signage.
- Reduce vehicular speed limit where appropriate.
- Safety education at school and recreation centres.

### **Threats**

- CNR Railway Tracks
- \*Logging truck route is along main roadways.

## **BIKE STORAGE OR PARKING**

### **Criteria for good bike storage and parking**

- Provide a safe or secure place to park bike at destination.

### **Existing Conditions - Fort Frances Infrastructure**

#### **Strengths**

- Public amenities & destinations points can accommodate bike storage.
- Weaknesses
- Lack of lockable bike storage.

#### **Opportunities**

- Provide well-lit and highly visible bike parking at destination points.
- Provide employees with well-lit and monitored lockable bike storage at work (Mill, Hospital)

#### **Threats**

- Theft if no lockable storage/parking is available.

## **SIGNAGE**

### **Criteria for good signage**

- Clear and legible – universal symbols.
- On route signage.
- Road markings.
- Trail and route maps.

### **Existing Conditions - Fort Frances Infrastructure**

#### **Strengths**

- Roads are wide enough incorporate road markings.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Lack of road markings.

#### **Opportunities**

- Improve signage along routes.

#### **Threats**

- Conflict between vehicular traffic, pedestrians and cyclists if route designation is not clear.
- CNR Railway Tracks
- \*Logging truck route is along main roadways



Figure 9: La Verendrye Parkway Signage



## EDUCATION

### Criteria for good education

- Bicycle and small wheels safety courses.
- Road sharing information.
- Promote health, wellness and environmental benefits.

### Existing Conditions - Fort Frances

#### Strengths

- 7.5% population bike or walk to work (2001 Census, Statistics Canada)
- Established and informal groups exist: Borderland Bicycle Club, Rendezvous Yacht Club, running group.

#### Weaknesses

- Lack of active transportation routes.

#### Opportunities

- Early education curriculum.
- Safety education at school and recreation centres.
- Public campaign.

#### Threats

- Lack of funding.



Figure 10: Tricycle Race

## Barriers and Potential Problem Areas

The main barriers to implementation of the Active Transportation Plan are:

- The logging truck route along the La Verendrye Parkway and other main roadways
  - The Abitibi Consolidated Pulp and Paper Mill is located just north of the customs crossing and west of the business district. The Shevlin Wood Yards are located on the waterfront, north of the Sorting Gap Marina. Both industries are located in the centre of Fort Frances, adjacent to major roadways and visitor routes. Logging truck traffic is frequent and constant along roadways that are prime locations for active transportation routes.
- Limited crossings of the rail line, which divides the north and south sides of Fort Frances
  - There are only 4 rail line crossings to access north or south Fort Frances. Three of the crossings are east of the main Portage underpass and the fourth crossing is at the west end of town. There are a number of locations where pedestrians or cyclists can cross but these crossings are potentially very dangerous.
- Habitual behavior with regard to daily activities such as, going to and from work, grocery shopping, visiting family and friends
  - Fort Frances residents, like most Canadians, are reliant on the car as a means of everyday transportation. We drive to most of the places we have to get to on a daily basis. Changing those habitual activities is a barrier to Active Transportation and a challenge to meet. The benefits of better health and more respectful use of the environment are both compelling reasons to change these habits.



Figure 11: Logging truck leaving Shevlin Wood Yard



Figure 12: Monkey Trail crossing CNR rail line at Victoria Avenue

# FUTURE NEEDS ANALYSIS

## Fort Frances Demographics

### Town of Fort Frances Demographic Makeup

#### Source:

2001 Statistics Canada Census

Town of Fort Frances - 2001

Statistics Canada. 2007. Fort Frances, Ontario (table). 2006 Community Profiles.

2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE.

Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007. <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profilcommunity/Index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed July 24, 2007).

#### Note:

Highlighted items to be released December 4, 2007

	Topic	2001 Census		2006 Census	
A	<b>Population Total</b>				
	2006			8103	
	2001	8315			
	1996	8790			
	% Pop. Change 2001-1996	-5.40%			
	% Pop. Change 2006-2001			-2.50%	
B	<b>Age</b>		% of population		% of population
	0-4	465	5.6	430	5.31
	<b>5-14</b>	1115	13.4	1030	12.7
	15-19	545	6.6	550	6.8
	20-24	450	5.4	465	5.7
	<b>25-44</b>	2255	27.1	1905	23.5
	<b>45-54</b>	1170	14.1	1280	15.8
	55-64	790	9.5	915	11.3
	65-74	720	8.7	660	8.1
	75-84	590	7.1	610	7.5
	85+	220	5.3	260	3.2
	Median Age	40.2		42.3	
C	<b>Language</b>		% of population		
	Total	8155			
	<b>English only</b>	<b>7325</b>	<b>89.8</b>		
	French only	145	1.8		
	English and French	20	0.2		
	Other Languages	370	4.5		
	• English used most often at work				



	Topic	2001 Census		2006 Census	
D	<b>Immigration Characteristics</b>				
	Total	8155	% of population		
	<b>Canadian-born population</b>	<b>7715</b>	<b>94.6</b>		
	Foreign-born population	440	5.7		
	• Immigrated before 1991	400			
	• Immigrated between 1991-2001	40			
E	<b>Visible Minority Population</b>				
	Aboriginal	1085			
	Chinese	30			
	South Asian	15			
	Black	15			
	Arab	10			
	Multiple visible minorities	15			
	All others	8075			
F	<b>Ethnic Groups</b>				
	English	34%			
	Scottish	27%			
	Canadian	25%			
G	<b>Income</b>				
	Median individual income	\$30,820			
	Median family income - Couple families	\$63,441			
	Median family income - Lone parent families	\$25,936			
H	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	7.1%			
I	<b>Place of Work Status</b>		% of population		
	<b>Abitibi Consolidated Inc.</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>9.6</b>		
	Rainy River District School Board	450	5.4		
	Riverside Health Care	240	2.9		
	Town of Fort Frances	160	1.9		
	Canada Safeway	140	1.7		
J	<b>Modes of Transportation to Work</b>		% of population		
	Total - All modes	3625	43.6		
	<b>Car, truck, van - As driver</b>	<b>2640</b>	<b>31.7</b>		
	Car, truck, van - As passenger	310	3.7		
	Public transit	10	0.1		
	<b>Walked or bicycled</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>7.5</b>		
	Other method	45	0.5		

	Topic	2001 Census		2006 Census	
K	<b>Labour Force by Industry</b>				
	Health/Social Science	18%			
	Manufacturing	16%			
	Trade	15%			
	Tourism	8%			
	Education	7%			
	Construction	6%			
	Government	6%			
	Finance/Insurance	4%			
	Communication	3%			
	Transportation	3%			
	Agriculture	1%			
	Finance/Insurance	4%			
L	<b>Town Revenue and Expenditures</b>				
	Net Required Taxation	38.1%			
	Community Services	25.2%			
	Operations and Facilities	17.7%			
	Corporate	10.9%			
	Administration and Finance	6.6%			
	Planning and Development	1.5%			

## Fort Frances Visitor Profile

The following describes Fort Frances Visitor activity, as reported in Reinventing Fort Frances Report, 2002:

- Fort Frances is the gateway to Sunset Country
- The United States is the most significant market area for Fort Frances to consider in its pursuit to expand its role in tourism.
- About 420,000 American visitors cross the border each year (another 100,000 cross at Rainy River)
- About 240,000 American visitors stay overnight or longer in Canada
- Most of the American visitors to Sunset Country enter Canada at Fort Frances. Most visitors to Sunset Country are American.
- Most of these visitors do not contribute a lot to Fort Frances (other than traffic congestion). Their destination is elsewhere in Sunset Country.
- About 170,000 Americans cross for same day trips...over 400 people every day during the winter and over 500 people every day during the summer...what do these people do?
- The tourism industry in Northwestern Minnesota is at least twice as large as Sunset Country. These people are recreating within 2 hours of Fort Frances.
- International Falls, Minnesota shares many of the same issues as Fort Frances

The following describes Ontario's current and future visitor activity according to statistics and projections researched by the following sources:

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Tourism. Ontario Tourism Outlook 2007-2011 – Forecasted in June 2007.

On line: <http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca> (accessed 15 October 2007).

Government of Canada, Canada Border Services Agency. Travel Documents for Crossing the Border. On line: <http://www.cbsa.gc.ca/agency/whti-ivho/menu-e.html> (accessed 15 October 2007).

- A strong Canadian dollar has increased outbound travel from Ontario to the U.S. while inbound U.S. visits have decreased. The ongoing strength of Canadian dollar will contribute to a continuation of these trends over the next few years.
- Ontario inbound visits rose 1.4% in 2006 to 114.8 million visits. Inbound visits are expected to grow in 2007 and 2008, up 2.3% and 1.8% respectively. Growth over the five years to 2011 will be weaker, averaging 1.2% per year, mainly due to the impact of The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) on U.S. visits to Ontario.
- WHTI is a U.S. law that will require all travellers, to present a valid passport or other secure document when travelling to the United States from within the western hemisphere.



Figure 13: Canada Customs - Fort Frances



- Until the summer 2008 at the earliest, Canadian citizens driving or boating to the United States do not need a passport to cross the Canada-U.S. border.
- At this point in time there are no provisions for U.S. travelers to present a valid passport when traveling to Canada.
- Future trends that may inhibit U.S. travelers from visiting Canada are new passport regulations, high fuel prices and the strong Canadian dollar.
- The number of total visits by intra-provincial travellers is expected to grow to 98.3 million in 2011, reflecting an average annual compound rate of 1.6%.
- Visits from U.S. travelers to Canada from 2006 through 2011 has been projected to decline by 1.7% per year on average with same day and leisure travel experiencing the largest declines.
- Travel from overseas origins is expected to increase in the coming five years as strong economic fundamentals support average annual growth of about 4.9% per year through 2011.
- It is predicted that the number of visitors from other provinces to Ontario will be decline at an annual average of 0.2% per year through 2011. Part of this sluggish growth relates to the stronger Canadian dollar that will favour Canadian travel to the U.S. and overseas countries and reduce the growth of travel within Canada.

Considering these projections, the most significant market area for Fort Frances to consider in its pursuit to expand its role in tourism is intra-provincial, or Ontario, tourists.



Figure 14: Tourism in Fort Frances

## Parks, Greenspaces, Recreation Facilities – Future Needs and Linkages

Fort Frances has a number of parks, playing fields and green walkways. Its location, on the Rainy River, is an obvious asset to the town. All of these green amenities can contribute to development of a strong Active Transportation network. The following improvements will reinforce the uses of green spaces and their roles in improving the AT network in Fort Frances.

- Currently, there is only one public washroom in Legion Park. More public washroom facilities in major green spaces are required.
- Facilities to safely store bicycles, etc. are lacking throughout Fort Frances greenspaces, parks and along the waterfront.
- There are gaps in linkages between greenspaces. The development of a continuous pathway system, linking parks and greenspaces throughout Fort Frances will help to encourage cycling, walking and other means of active transportation on a daily basis.



8th Street Walking Trails



Lions Memorial Park



Pither's Point Park



Royal Canadian Legion Park

Figure 15 - Parks in Fort Frances

## Current Active Transportation Activity

Fort Frances citizens are currently involved in recreational, health conscious activities as evident in the following list of clubs that regularly host events directly related to Active Transportation. The implementation of an Active Transportation Plan will lead to improved trail systems and venues and will encourage more activities of this nature.

1. Rendez-Vous Yacht Club
  - Sails from the Rendez-Vous Docks
  - Participates in community sailing and racing
2. Fit For Life Kids Running Club “A great way for kids to get in shape or stay in shape for other sports/activities. This running club provides a positive focus, builds self-esteem and encourages healthy lifestyles.” Program at Memorial Sports Centre
3. The WoodSPORT International Marathon is a unique running event, spanning two countries, three communities and miles of scenic terrain. Runners travel along beautiful Rainy Lake and Rainy River through Ranier, International Falls USA, then travel across an international border and Fort Frances, Canada, ending at the waterfront. After the race, participants are ferried a short way back to the USA, via a "Boat Parade" through international waters. Currently, people of all ages and abilities are welcome to participate in the half-marathon or 10K run/walk. It is the hope of organizers that the WoodSPORT International Marathon will continue to grow into a world-class event featuring a full marathon.
4. Borderland Bicycle Club, Fort Frances, Ontario / International Falls, Minnesota
  - a. Easy Wheeler (Casual)

Members enjoy a 15-20 km ride at speeds between 12-18 km/h. This is a relaxed pace that makes it easy to catch up with friends and for younger members to keep up with the adults.
  - b. Rockin' & Rollin' (MTB)

Members enjoy a challenging 7 km loop of pure NW Ontario Mountain biking single-track. A loop takes 45-60 minutes at an average speed of 7-10 km/h. Two loops or more in one day earns you hardcore status!
  - c. River Road Ramble - This recreational, family-friendly ride starts at the Public Landing below the water tower at the bottom of McIrvine Road and travels west for 10 to 50 km along beautiful Highway 602. (annual)



Figure 16: Rendez-Vous Yacht Club



Figure 17: Memorial Sports Centre



Figure 18: WoodSPORT International Marathon



Figure 19: Borderland Bicycle Club



- d. The Run For Recovery  
In partnership with Parents Against Illicit Narcotics (PAIN), the Borderland Bicycle Club hosts the Run for Recovery. It is held at the Reef Point/Hopkins Bay Multi Use Trail. Participants choose between a 7 km trail run or a 3.5 km walk. The emphasis is on hiking for health.
- e. Purina Walk for Guide Dogs  
This is a community walk, hosted by the Leo's Club.
- f. Rainy River Nordic Ski Club has a membership of 40 and is a member of Cross Country Canada, the national sport governing body for cross-country skiing in Canada.
- g. Borderland Bicycle Club has expressed interest in improved routes outside of Fort Frances. The following routes have been noted as desirable for multi-use trails:
  - Link to multi-use trail along Highway 11 in the US
  - Route along Reef Point to Kouchiching
  - River Road, going west
  - Route to Devlin / Emo / Stanjilcoming



Figure 20: Purina Walk for Guide Dogs



Figure 21: Cross Country Canada

# FORT FRANCES ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN VISION

## Vision for Fort Frances' Active Transportation Plan

A vision for Active Transportation in Fort Frances can be captured in a minds-eye image of the future. Picture town residents and tourists of all ages and different abilities cycling, walking, in-line skating, skateboarding and using other active modes for simple pleasure or to travel to their destination. Perhaps they are out for an evening walk to the park, or cycling to work or the grocery store. In that picture, you can see young children pedaling to the playground and seniors walking to meet friends at the coffee shop. You note that some of the people in this image are cycling on the road and walking on the sidewalk while others are sharing a pathway with multiple types of Active Transportation users.

Note how the surface conditions of these roads, sidewalks and pathways are well maintained and suit a variety of travel modes. The various routes blend both on-road and off-road sections to create a network that leads to popular destinations, including major workplaces, schools, community centres, parks, restaurants, shopping areas and more. The routes are well marked, with both way finding signage as well as signs that direct visitors and residents alike to cultural and heritage points of interest.

Bike racks are available at multiple locations throughout the community and residents know where to find them. Washrooms and rest areas are provided at key spots. Safety courses are available to residents of all ages to increase their skill and confidence on the road or trail, and an educational campaign has increased motorists' awareness of how to safely share the road with cyclists. Active users on the road are segregated from heavy truck traffic and all routes are accessible year-round, with snow clearing in winter and cleaning of debris in spring.

In this picture, the residents of Fort Frances are aware of the various Active Transportation options available to them and many are participating. This increased physical activity has resulted in a healthier population overall and played a role in reducing obesity levels, improving heart health, and generally reducing risk factors for a range of diseases including type 2 diabetes, arthritis and cancer. The health of the environment has also improved with fewer vehicles on the road, resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions, smog and particulate matter from personal transportation. Visitors are pleasantly surprised to discover they can easily walk or cycle to get around in the community, and choose to stay an extra day or return for another holiday. Fort Frances is recognized as a forward-thinking community and quality of life is enhanced, with more opportunities for residents to be active, healthy and environmentally responsible. This becomes one



Figure 22: Multi-Use Path Way

of the reasons young people choose to find work and raise their families in Fort Frances. And as an added benefit, the Active Transportation network has created a stronger sense of community through increased opportunities for residents to intermingle.

That is the picture. The VISION.

## Creating The Reality

Turning this vision into action will require a phased approach over time. It will need to build upon existing infrastructure and programs, and ensure policies that support and integrate Active Transportation into all capital projects. It will need to engage decision-makers from a wide variety of fields: public works, transportation, education, community development, recreation, health, environment, and tourism among others.

It will require a range of infrastructure and programming solutions, such as on-road bike lanes, reduced vehicular speed limits where appropriate, repaving and maintaining surfaces, traffic signals adequately timed to allow safe crossing for pedestrians of all ages, safe railway crossings, new trail development to link routes and destinations, addition of sidewalks and controlled intersections, signage and road markings, route maps, bike racks, and safety courses and share-the-road or -path education, and a public awareness campaign among other options.

## Building on What We Have

Fort Frances is well positioned to embark upon an Active Transportation Plan. The infrastructure already in place along the La Verendrye Parkway, along with the work in progress for the Heritage Tourism Plan, will contribute greatly to the development of the ATP.

As demonstrated earlier in the report, there are a number of regular activities and events that meet the goals of AT. This planning process recognizes the benefits of building upon the work that has been done and on being able to draw from the citizens who are currently active proponents and who recognize the value of Active Transportation.

The following plan is built upon this strong foundation.



Figure 23: Off-Road Trail