



INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Completing the assessment in the wfo application

It takes a community to be walk friendly. Most of the information requested for completion of this assessment tool can be soundly estimated or is relatively easy to find, and will likely come from a variety of sources including:

- Planning
- Public Health
- Public works
- Engineering departments
- Transit service provider(s)
- Parks and Recreation/Community Services
- Committees of Council
- Police departments
- Local nonprofit organizations
- Advocacy groups
- Elected officials

Since municipalities are responsible for planning and infrastructure in the public realm, staff from multiple municipal departments will need to be involved. Therefore, it will be important to coordinate across departments when filling out this application. In some cases one department will be able to complete an entire section. In other cases, it will make the most sense to have agencies or individuals, such as a local School Travel Planning coordinator, Public Health professionals or members of a citizens group answer certain questions. Collaboration with community partners in completing the application is encouraged.

Who should submit the application?

The award designation will be given to the municipality, therefore municipal staff will likely take the lead on the application. Community agencies (e.g., external public health agencies), committees (e.g., the Active Transportation Committee

of Council) or non-governmental organizations (e.g., a local advocacy group) may also take the lead. However, Canada Walks requires that community agencies and groups that wish to initiate the process seek approval and support in writing from their local government via resolution of Council, or from the CAO/General Manager or another senior staff member with the authority to commit the required staff time across municipal departments. The letter of support should be forwarded via email to info@walkfriendly.ca as you begin the application process.

What we're looking for

When answering the questions please think broadly. Do any provincial or national programs (not directly implemented by you) have a positive impact in your community? Are there policies administered by other local departments that may affect the walking environment? Are there private organizations or advocacy groups doing work in your community?

When completing the application please be certain to mention any evidence-based programs or approaches your community is using, any in-depth or ongoing programs or activities, and any specific efforts to create a community-wide culture of walking. This assessment tool seeks to learn how communities are supporting safe, convenient and enjoyable walking, and how well those efforts are working. Therefore, please describe both the nature of your policies, programs, and projects as well as any outcome or evaluation of those approaches.

Though this assessment tool is meant to be comprehensive, we recognize that each community is unique. Every city and town will have its own unique set of challenges and opportunities, so each will have a different approach to walking and related issues.

The assessment is long and we anticipate that it will take 20-30 person hours to complete. If you get stuck on a particular question, move onto the next one and come back to it later. The important thing is to record the information that you have close at hand and this in itself will indicate to you where your gaps in information are.

How to answer the questions

There are several different types of questions included in this assessment tool. We have described them here to clarify how each one should be answered.

Descriptions and Summaries. Some questions in the assessment ask about your municipality's plans, policies, projects, and programs. In those cases, please include a link (web address) to those documents, or attach a copy. If a concise summary already exists, you may use that description. Include in your summary a description of the nature, scope, and results of the policy, program, or project in question.

Check all that Apply. The checklists are meant to make it easy for you to indicate all that you are doing in a certain topic area. When you check "other", you have the option of elaborating on anything you are doing that may not have been addressed in the list offered.

Yes, No, n/a and Checkboxes. Some questions require simple yes, no, N/A or checkbox responses. In those cases, please check the appropriate box and include a URL address or attachment to the most up-to-date version of any requested policy, plan, or relevant document.

NOTE: If the question requests a brief description, please summarize the policy, activity, or process in your own words. Ensure that you use this opportunity to give a concise yet detailed account.

Scoring process and designation

This assessment tool is divided into seven sections:

- Community Information
- Planning
- Engineering & Community Design
- Education & Encouragement
- Enforcement
- Evaluation
- Summary

Scoring is based on the potential impact on walkability of the content addressed in each question. Points will be awarded based on a combination of standardized scoring for fixed option questions and a sliding scale based on the judgment of our panel of expert reviewers. **Additional points may be awarded for responses to descriptive questions, e.g. “If yes, please describe” and “If other, please describe”.**

Please answer the questions in the application as completely as you can. The judges cannot award additional points for information that isn't provided.

Some questions may be worth more than others. For example, plans provide a community with a vision and guide for action; policies express values and leadership; and infrastructure and design is where plans and policies are reflected on the ground, providing for safe places to walk.

Designations and honourable mentions will be awarded based on the over-all score as well as consensus among reviewers. Achieving true community walkability is a long process that requires commitment to improvement in all areas that are being assessed. Each level of designation will reflect the accomplishments of your community. It will be a challenge to other communities to follow in your footsteps, and a challenge to your own community to continue along the path to becoming even more walk friendly.