



# GREATER SUDBURY

## Active transportation to improve a neighbourhood's health

The Donovan neighbourhood is located to the northeast of downtown Sudbury. The commercial portion of Kathleen Street is the heart of the community, with popular stores, restaurants and a vibrant energy. The neighbourhood's small lots and narrow alleyways are unusual for Sudbury, making this an intimate neighbourhood with a village-style feel. It is very walkable. Based on these observations, in 2016, TCAT, with Active Neighbourhoods Canada, in partnership with EarthCare and the City of Greater Sudbury, launched consultations with stakeholders with the aim of producing a strong vision that could improve public spaces and walkability, and make Donovan a neighbourhood built for active transportation. This vision can help form a basis for any future Community Improvement Planning (CIP) implemented by the municipality. The goal with this project was to build a rich and accessible participatory process that reaches diverse resident voices.



## IMPROVING RESIDENTS' HEALTH: A TOP PRIORITY

At the outset, the working group drafted a set of values to guide all future actions. Inclusiveness, affordability and health were identified as the top three values central to the neighbourhood's future. There was also a long-term goal: improving neighbourhood pride and the sense of belonging by transforming the neighbourhood into a model of active transportation and healthy living.

Several activities were organized with the aim of demonstrating the benefits of having a neighbourhood focus on active transportation. A large-scale mapping project helped document problem areas for active transportation. The information produced reveals that walking is an

appealing option, given the neighbourhood's layout, and that it is inexpensive to promote, since it requires minimal new infrastructure. Many popular destinations are a short walk or bike ride away, and some of them are public spaces suitable for physical activity in all seasons. A clear conclusion emerged: the Donovan neighbourhood has the foundation it needs for residents to live actively year-round.

## CHALLENGES ON THE HORIZON

More than 100 people were interviewed in order to determine how residents use the streets and identify obstacles to active transportation. Unsurprisingly, the factors that influence the choice to use a given street are mainly linked to the street's design and safety. Likewise, the reasons given for avoiding certain streets

are often related to feelings of reduced safety due to suspicious activities and traffic hazards.

The results obtained from the local population indicate that the neighbourhood's dynamic character can be built on with several low-cost design and programming solutions to support the community's desire to become healthier and more active. By continuing the conversation with residents and embracing this movement for change, the Donovan neighbourhood could become a model for the prioritization of active transportation.

## AN INVALUABLE ALLY: THE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

The plan promotes the benefits of active transportation for health and physical fitness, as well as its economic advantages. It recommends principles for planning the transportation network and a method for assessing future decisions in order to ensure that they account for the benefits of active transportation.

*Long-term goal: increase sense of community among residents and neighbourhood pride by becoming a model for active transportation and healthy living.*



VIEW THE PORTRAIT HERE:

Donovan neighbourhood vision  
WWW.TCAT.CA