FACILITATION GUIDE: POLICY SCAN

UNDERSTAND THE POLICY CONTEXT IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND TIE PROJECT GOALS TO POLICY OPPORTUNITIES

Activity Type: Understand, Vision, Demonstrate & Evaluate

Participant Audience: Organizational Partners, Decision-Makers, Researchers

Objectives

Policy can be a valuable tool to advance your project. Often, you can leverage your municipality's policy goals to support the visions that residents lay out. You can also use the policy scan early on to understand if there are areas of alignment between the project and upcoming opportunities in your city. For example, are there any upcoming capital projects scheduled in the neighbourhood? Is the neighbourhood part of a special planning area in your official plan? The policy scan can also be valuable background research for advocacy or policy change work. To see examples of policy scans, read the vision documents from our pilot projects, by visiting the "in the field" page on www.participatoryplanning.ca.

Using the Tool

Materials needed

1. Computer and access to internet

CO-DESIGNING THE ACTIVE CITY
participatoryplanning.ca

Facilitation Process

1. The policy scan you undertake is very specific to your project and your community. You will need to conduct background research on the policy context in your community. We suggest starting by familiarizing yourself with:

   • Provincial planning policies that impact your region

   • Your municipal Official Plan, and other local higher-level municipal plans (such as Transportation Master Plans, or municipality-wide community engagement policies)

   • More granular or local scale municipal policies and plans (e.g. community improvement plans, capital project plans, accessibility plans or others).

2. Try to find areas where your project goals can align with policy and use policy goals to support and reinforce resident visions for their neighbourhood.

Tip: If you have a formal partnership with your municipality, municipal staff people can be a great resource to help you navigate the policy context in your community.

Tip: This can be a great opportunity to engage post-secondary student researchers.

Tip: Depending on your context, you can also engage decision-makers, like municipal councillors, in the Policy Scan.

Sample Materials

1. Sample tool output: "Connecting the Vision to Policy", Stewart Street Neighbourhood, Peterborough (via GreenUP, TCAT and Ryerson University)

CONNECTING THE VISION TO POLICY

The **PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (PPS)** provides direction for planners on matters of provincial interest. The PPS supports land use decisions that increase the use of active transportation, support a mix of transportation choices, and promote recreation and access to park spaces. The new vision for Bethune Street helps to promote healthy, active communities by meeting the needs of pedestrians, providing amenities to foster social interaction, and enabling active transportation.

The **PLANNING ACT** requires all planning decisions conform to provincial plans like the **GROWTH PLAN FOR THE GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE.** The plan vision for Bethune Street conforms to the Growth Plan by providing connectivity among transportation modes, linking residents to nearby transit stops and stations, while encouraging cycling and walking.

The **ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (AODA)** was written to promote accessible communities for all residents. The plan vision was developed in consideration of best practices for building accessible streets and public spaces. Particular attention has been given to accessibility along paths and at intersections, the use of design materials that create a legible environment for people with visual impairments, and the provision of street furniture that allows pedestrians to rest along corridors.

The **OFFICIAL PLAN (OP)** outlines a vision for the future of the City of Peterborough that is as interested in the social development of the community as its physical structure. The new vision for Bethune Street supports the OP goal of building complete communities that offer an inclusive range of transportation choices (Section 2.4.3.3). The plan helps implement the OP vision for its Commercial Core by enhancing pedestrian linkages and enhancing access to open areas (Section 4.3.2.2.2). It addresses the need to encourage increased use of transit, cycling, and pedestrian activity; and further supports the OP vision for its cycling network by connecting new bicycle routes to the Trans Canada Trail (Section 10.9.3.1.3, Section 2.1.6).

The **CENTRAL AREA MASTERPLAN** clarifies and complements the Official Plan policies for the municipality's downtown core. The plan vision for Bethune Street acknowledges that the Masterplan considers Bethune a priority corridor for enhancements (Chap. 9, Section 7). Its intent is to support the vision for the Transitional Uses Sub-Area designation by enhancing pedestrian linkages to the Commercial Core (Chap. 3).

The new design for Bethune Street is also consistent with the **SIDEWALK STRATEGIC PLAN**, which encourages the provision of sidewalks on both sides of public streets; and the **COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**, which encourages the use of active transportation and identifies Bethune Street as a component of an Ultimate Cycling Network. It responds to the **URBAN FOREST STRATEGIC PLAN** to create corridors of trees that contribute to Peterborough's overall urban canopy.