

Ontario Good Roads Conference 2024
Sunday, April 21 ~ Wednesday April 24, 2024
Toronto, Ontario

Attendees:

Sally Hagman, Mayor

Dan Middaugh, Councillor

Katie Scott, CAO/Clerk

Chris Zagar, Director of Infrastructure & Public Works

First of we would like to thank Council and the residents of Blind River for supporting our attendance to this conference. There were so many interactions and discussions that took place between the sessions that are equally beneficial to what we are learning from the sessions themselves. These bonds of communication are intangible and set the framework for future dialogue between municipal staff. As we weave the spider web of communication across our province, it makes us stronger as a municipality forging ahead with development for our residents to enjoy!

Sunday, April 21, 2024

Scott Butler,

- Spoke about our broken fiscal systems noting that there are 41.7 Billion dollars required to fix our roads and bridges and there just isn't the finances available to accomplish this

Robin Dunn, CAO, Township of Oro-Medonte

- Gave an overview of strategies for hiring and retaining top talent

John Parsons, President of the Good Roads Association

- Gave an overview of the Good Roads Association and what has been accomplished by the Board & Staff over the past year. He also talked about the perfect storm and what municipalities are facing with aging infrastructure relating to asset management. "Our roads are a mess and we can't pay for them"

Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure

- Related to having every municipality preparing an asset management plan in respect of its core municipal structure
- Each asset category shows the level of service that the municipality proposes to provide for each of the 10 years following the year in which all information required is included in the asset management plan, determined in accordance with qualitative descriptions and technical metrics.

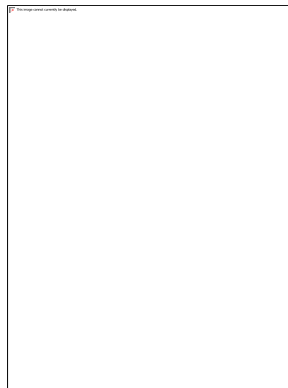
The exhibitor booths were open from Sunday afternoon to Tuesday at noon and we were able to see the innovations of the exhibitors during a social hour.

Monday, April 22, 2024

The day began with a welcome from the Board and a smudging exercise from First Nations representatives.

Olivia Chow – Mayor, City of Toronto

- Expressed a warm welcome from her municipality
- Spoke about potholes and her desire to fix these over the next three years
- Pleased that the Ontario Government has accepted financial responsibility for the repairs to the Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Expressway



Jeff Speck – Key Note Speaker Author of ‘Walkable City Rules’ 101 Steps to Making Better Places

Jeff Speck, FAICP, FCNU, LEED-AP, Honorary ASLA

Jeff Speck is a city planner and author who advocates internationally for more walkable cities. As Director of Design at the National Endowment for the Arts from 2003 through 2007, he presided over the Mayors' Institute on City Design and created the Governors' Institute on Community Design. Prior to his federal appointment, Mr. Speck spent ten years as Director of Town Planning at DPZ & Co., the principal firm behind the New Urbanism movement. Since 2007, he has led Speck & Associates, an award-winning private design consultancy serving mainly American cities.

With Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Mr. Speck is the co-author of Suburban Nation, which the Wall Street Journal calls "the urbanist's bible." His 2012 book Walkable City was the bestselling city-planning title of the past decade and has been translated into eight languages. He is also the principal author of The Smart Growth Manual and Walkable City Rules.

Jeff Speck has been named a fellow of both the American Institute of Certified Planners and the Congress for New Urbanism. In a recent Plane Tizen poll, he was voted one of the ten "most influential urbanists of all time." Mr. Speck was the 2022 recipient of the Seaside Prize, whose former awardees include Jane Jacobs and Christopher Alexander. His TED talks and YouTube videos have been viewed more than six million times.

- Started his journey as a child drawing cars, then buildings then neighbourhood
- Created a walkability framework which is just good planning
- Streets are keeping us from reaching our full potential
- How do we get people to walk
 - Make it useful, giving people are reason to walk
 - Safe
 - Comfortable
 - Interesting
- USA has the highest death toll, Norway has the least related to pedestrians to cars where pedestrians had the right of way
- What makes a good road
 - Width of street supports the neighbourhood. People drive faster on wider streets
 - More lanes = more danger – congestion is the reality regardless of lanes. Many Cities have more lanes than they need which raising the price of driving. 10' is appropriate in urban areas – rules need to change on road width from speed to yield width.

Two lanes handles 10,000 cars per day. Block size is important – longer blocks = faster speed

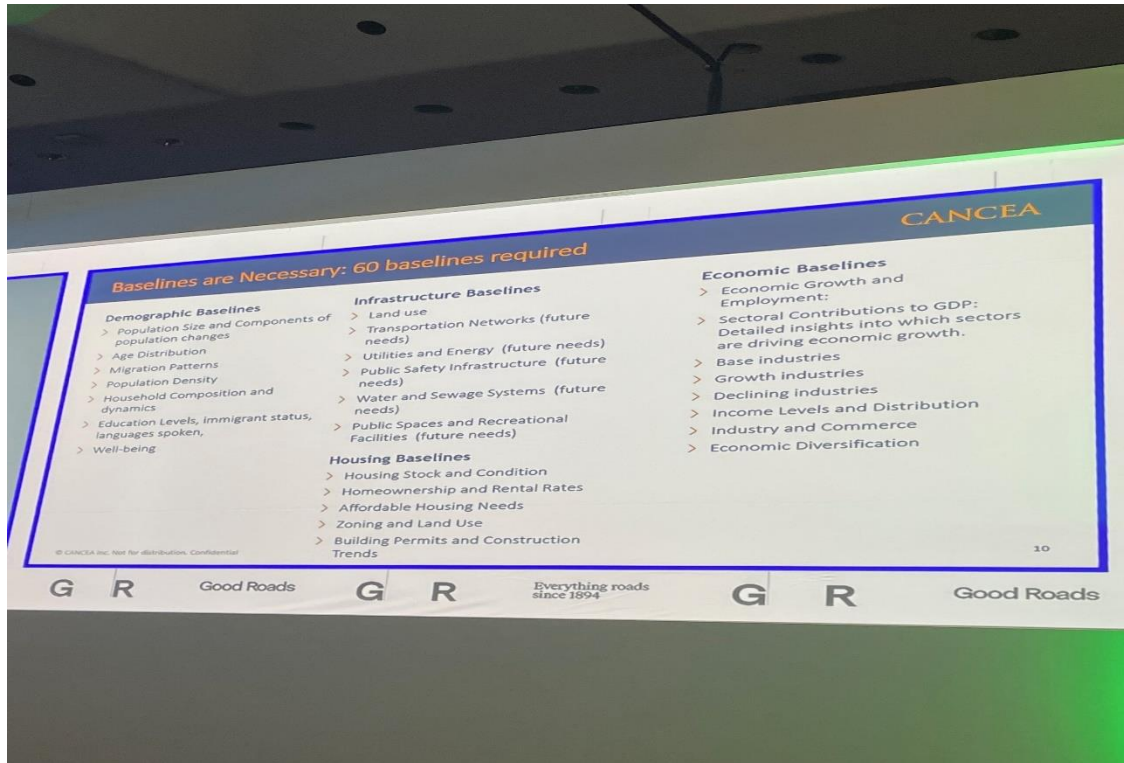
- 52 Billion repair backlog in highways, roads, bridges
- Transit provides mobility to people
- 2 ways streets are better than one way as there are less accidents, less crime and bike paths can be added
- Curb parking is a barrier to sidewalks
- Street trees create a barrier between the driver and the pedestrian
- Centre turning lanes should be removed as there is a reduction in speed
- Create pedestrian lanes on sides by removing two lanes
- Signal lights are more dangerous than stop signs, less crashes, less pedestrians hurt
- Smart cities are creating bike lanes and these are separated from the sidewalks by trees

Data-Driven Decisions: Revolutionizing Asset Management Strategies

CANCEA President Paul Smetanin delved into the transformative potential of data modules in shaping the future of asset management.

- Technology has made comprehensive municipal planning both possible and affordable.
 - Making the case for provincial and federal government grants.
 - Showing off the community profile of the municipality to the world and investors etc.
 - Having a baseline allows for forward looking projections of where the municipality is going and the expectations based on growth
 - Factors to be looked at within the population growth include
 - Balance between young workers and seniors
 - Well-being of residents
 - Housing and affordability
 - Labour force
 - Cost of Living
 - Community profile
 - Economic growth – what businesses are growing/shrinking
 - Infrastructure needs, roads, water/waste water
 - Land use and zoning
 - Municipal services
 - Sustainability of the Community
 - Provincial and federal requests
 - Questions to be asked in the analysis include what is expected, factors and risks

- Knowing the communities sustainability, prosperity and planning for the future includes looking at least 60 baselines which are required to support planning in a municipality
- Today Ontario municipalities can get access to over 60 baselines necessary for planning for \$5-\$10,000



Ontario Minister of Transportation ~ Prabmeet Sarkaria

- Spoke to delegates about the role the provincial government is playing in ensuring a robust and skilled workforce across the province.
- The population increased by 500,000+ in 2023
- Our infrastructure needs to grow with this population
- Following the minister's presentation there was a panel discussion

Rebecca Li, Manager of the Contract Management Office spoke about the general conditions of Contract OPSS.Prov 100 Update

Mike Pearsall – Manager of Highway Design spoke about drainage policy changes

Stephen Lee, Head of Pavements Section/Engineering Materials Office spoke about advancing asphalt pavement using cold mix technologies as a cost effective and ecofriendly alternative.

- Environmental Benefits include:

- Reduced energy consumption
 - Lower emissions
- Cost Savings include:
 - Reduced production costs
 - Economical use of Recycled Asphalt Pavement (RAP)
- Long Term Performance includes:
 - Proven durability with over 30 years of cold in place recycling (CIR) and Cold in Place Recycling with Expanded Asphalt mix experiences has shown that in the initial layer can exhibit equivalent or even better long-term performance compared to strictly using hot mix asphalt.
- Versatility and Adaptability:
 - Suitability for multilayer pavements: the use of 1000 CPAM in the first layer of a multilayer hot mix pavement demonstrates the adaptability of this technology to various pavement structures offering flexibility in design and construction methods
 - Performance in Various Climates: CPAM has been employed successfully in a range of climates, showcasing its versatility and effectiveness in different environmental conditions.
- Resource Conservation: Minimized aggregate heating: CPAM reduces the need for extensive aggregate heating, conserving natural resources and minimizing the environmental impact associated with hot mix production
- Preservation of raw materials: by incorporating higher percentages of RAP, CPAM helps preserve valuable raw materials, contributing to sustainable and responsible resource management in construction today.

Infrastructure – Something Old May be New (and Improved) Again

A structure that was innovative almost two decades ago that was used to successfully finance more than \$3 billion of public infrastructure assets may be ripe for revival

- Debenture financing enables a municipality to spread the cost of constructing roads over a life time (economic useful life) of a road to a maximum of 40 years creating the benefit principle and intergenerational equity
- Sinking fund recent development – Section 418.1 of the Municipal Act can be viewed as an additional fiscal tool to generate revenues from financial investments in sinking funds. When investing sinking funds under section 418.1, municipalities must exercise care, skill, diligence and judgment that a prudent investor would exercise in making such an investment. Commencing later in 2024 and existing joint investment board will invest sinking funds for qualifying municipalities.

Marit Stiles – Leader of the Official Opposition ~ New Democratic Party

- Municipal infrastructure connects people
- People want predictability & transparency
- The more we repair and build, the more we grow

Bonnie Crombie – Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party

- Liberals want to grow the Ontario economy – focusing on education
- They want transparency and accountability
- They have a strong track record of performance and delivery
- Ms. Crombie has been a business person and former Councilor then Mayor of Mississauga

Pedaling Toward Sustainable Communities – Promoting Cycling and Active Transportation

Cycling and active transportation are integral components of sustainable mobility, offering a myriad of benefits including improved public health, reduced congestion, and minimized environmental impact. This session will delve into the multifaceted aspects of promoting cycling and active transportation within communities. Leading experts and advocates shared innovative strategies, successful case studies, and best practices aimed at enhancing infrastructure, fostering a culture of cycling, and promoting safety for cyclists and pedestrians alike. From dedicated bike lanes to bike-sharing programs, they explored a range of initiatives aimed at encouraging active modes of transportation and creating more livable cities.

- Protect your cycling lanes using paint
- Cycling is good for business – only 9% visit businesses by car, the rest are travelling via other means (cycling, walking, public transit)
- The legal challenges include no winter maintenance, road disrepair (catch basins) potholes, confusing cycling infrastructure, construction projects and negligence impeding bike lanes
- Success stories include: having access to data, bike share stations, bike share program and bylaws

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Doug Ford – Premier of the Province of Ontario & Leader of the Conservative Party

- The province will increase by one million in two years
- More newcomers will be coming

Keynote: Katharine Hayhoe - Mitigate, Adapt or Suffer: Connecting Global Change to Local Impacts and Solutions

- Industrial revolution brought benefits but these benefits created a side effect ~ essentially, we created our own crisis
- One in 6 people died burning coal, gas and oil, we have microplastics in our bodies
- We created pollution, biodiversity and climate change
- We first knew about climate change in the 1850's and in 1988 it became political
- Climate is changing—throughout Canada, across the United States, and for the planet as a whole. Temperatures are increasing, rainfall patterns are shifting, and extreme precipitation and heat wave events are becoming more frequent.
- Climate change isn't just a problem for polar bears or future generations any more – it's affecting us, here and now. Not only that, but the choices we make today will have profound impact on our future: the faster we cut our carbon emissions, the less adaptation will be needed, and the more suffering we can avert.
- In such a politically charged environment, are we still able to act on climate? Or is it too late? Katharine Hayhoe untangles the complex science connecting our choices to future impacts and highlights the actions that are being taken to combat this critical issue today.
- As seen on Jimmy Kimmel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVjmGVufADk>

Mike Schreiner, Leader, Green Party of Ontario

- outlined the Green Party of Ontario's concerns with the government's current approach and lay out the party's alternative vision.
- Want to create a housing supply
- 26.2 billion needed for climate change as it relates to infrastructure
- Watch Mike Schreiner on the Good Roads Podcast: <https://youtu.be/r4c5V9T-OQs>

Smart Cities: Innovations in Infrastructure Service Delivery

This session provided a platform for discussing & exploring innovations in technical products & solutions for improving the way the public sector delivers infrastructure services. This platform showcased the potential of innovative and intelligent technologies.

- 1- Using Mobile and Cloud Technology for Guide Rail Condition Assessments in Ontario
- 2- Transportation Automation at Scale – using AI vehicles to deliver fast food
- 3- Using AI for Analyzing Images for Pavement Condition Evaluation

Navigating Climate Change Challenges at the Municipal Level

Climate change presents unprecedented challenges to communities worldwide, impacting infrastructure, ecosystems, and livelihoods. This session delved into the urgent need for climate change adaptation measures and explored innovative strategies for building resilience and promoting sustainability in the face of a changing climate.

Leading experts in climate science, urban planning, and environmental policy shared insights into effective adaptation strategies, from nature-based solutions to infrastructure upgrades. Through case studies and practical examples, we gained valuable knowledge on how communities are proactively addressing climate risks and safeguarding against future impacts.

- The City of Guelph has earned the green city award
- Brantford received FCM funding for LED street lights
- Brantford also has a public tree by law – plant 3 trees for every tree cut down

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

Hon. Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure

Ontario Minister of Infrastructure Kinga Surma spoke to delegates about the role the provincial government is playing in municipal infrastructure.