

## Transportation Policy Brochure

The Town of Smiths Falls is creating a new Official Plan (O.P.). This is a key guiding document that provides context for, and directs, transportation planning in the Town. Five brochures provide information on key themes that have been identified as important to the development of the new O.P.: Housing, Community Spaces, Downtown Revitalization, Transportation, and Sustainability.

### Transportation in Smiths Falls

Beckwith Street has undergone improvements to become a multi-modal street, complete with cycling lanes, street parking, and sidewalks to become a well-connected avenue for all types of transportation. Effective multi-modal transportation in Smiths Falls is important for mobility in the community, job growth, protection of neighbourhood character, reduction of automobile dependency, and the creation of new, vibrant, neighbourhoods.

*A **complete or multi-modal street** is designed to accommodate multiple forms of transportation, rather than being focused solely on cars. These streets provide safe and accessible spaces for a variety of users, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transit, and vehicles.*

## Key Policy Influences on Transportation in Smiths Falls

### Provincial Legislation

*The Planning Act* encourages placemaking by requiring municipalities to create Official Plans to guide long term land use and development. Official Plans must promote healthy, livable, and safe communities, which includes the design of vibrant public spaces that encourage social interaction and community cohesion.

### Provincial Policies

Ontario's Provincial Planning Statement (PPS 2024) includes policies related to transportation in Chapter 3, Infrastructure and Facilities.

### Municipal Policies

#### Strategic Plan of Council (2023-2026)

The Town of Smiths Falls Strategic Plan 2023-2026 identifies short term goals for the development of the Town. For the Smiths Falls Transportation Network, the plan identifies a goal of "enabling improved mobility by examining existing transportation networks both within Town and beyond in a way that supports employment and accessibility." The plan puts emphasis on the expansion of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

#### Active Transportation Master Plan

The Active Transportation Master Plan serves as a strategic guide for future decision-making and investment in non-motorized transportation modes. The vision statement of the Active

Transportation Plan is to "Provide a safe, accessible, and convenient active transportation network that connects major local and regional destinations, encourages diverse travel options, and promotes a high quality of life for residents of all ages and abilities." The new O.P. will help implement these recommendations and policies contained therein.

## Centre Street Visioning and Design Report

The Centre Street Visioning and Design Report identifies an underutilized commercial and industrial area adjacent to the Downtown Core of Smiths Falls as a potential waterfront development. The redesign aims to create an area that is "walkable, sustainable, and well connected."

## Downtown Revitalization and Waterfront Integration Master Plan

The Downtown Revitalization and Waterfront Integration Master Plan sets out guiding principles for the downtown design, including "increasing density and providing access to areas along the canal." The Town sees the downtown redevelopment as an opportunity to increase walking and cycling trips.



## Assessment of Existing O.P. Policies

**Balanced Transportation System:** The current O.P. identifies policies to encourage the use of non-automobile transportation modes and reduce vehicle trip generation. Transportation system design should aim to support the mobility needs of bicyclists and pedestrians while ensuring the safe and efficient movement of automobiles, buses, and trucks.

**Walking and Bicycling:** The current O.P. aims to enhance walking and bicycling infrastructure town-wide by coordinating the planning and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This includes prioritizing safety and access improvements at street crossings to ensure a seamless, continuous network that enhances connectivity. Traffic signal modifications should be considered to enhance pedestrian safety and efficiency.

**Vehicular Circulation:** The current O.P. encourages the safe and efficient movement of automobile and truck traffic while accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians. The policies

emphasize categorizing streets according to function and type, considering the surrounding land use context, and integrating the "complete streets" concept. The Plan aims to maintain and enhance an interconnected street network with short blocks that support all travel modes, provide direct access, calm neighborhood traffic, reduce vehicle speeds, and improve safety.

**Goods Movement:** The current O.P. aims to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods, to support commerce and industry within the town. Key policies focus on minimizing conflicts between trucks and other modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access and circulation on streets frequented by truck traffic. The Plan encourages through-truck traffic to utilize arterial and collector roads while ensuring that trucks with origins or destinations within Smiths Falls adhere to designated truck routes.



## Potential Policy Directions for the Future

### Strategies and/or Policies to Consider:

**Support for Multi-Modal, Complete Streets:** Multi-modal streets (also known as Complete Streets) would be beneficial as they support the mobility needs of bicyclists and pedestrians while ensuring the safe and efficient movement of automobiles, buses, and trucks. These streets prioritize safety and access improvements at street crossings to ensure a seamless, continuous network that enhances connectivity. Policies supporting these streets would strengthen the Transportation Master Plan.”

**Identifying Proposed Complete Streets in The Transportation Master Plan:** Identifying proposed Complete Streets in the Transportation Master Plan is beneficial because it ensures a cohesive, long-term vision for transportation networks, guiding future development and infrastructure investments toward creating safer, more inclusive, and sustainable streets that serve diverse users and modes of travel. It also helps align policies with community needs and fosters better collaboration among stakeholders.

**Improved Transit:** Improving transit in Smiths Falls would be beneficial as it aligns with the Town's goal to support the mobility needs of all travel methods. Enhanced transit options would reduce vehicle trip generation and encourage the use of non-automobile transportation modes, contributing to a more balanced transportation system. Improved transit can also help in maintaining an interconnected street network that provides direct access to different places,

calms neighborhood traffic, reduces vehicle speeds, and improves safety. Certain strategies and policies to consider include investment in transit routes and innovative transit solutions beyond the typical bus service, such as dial-a-ride and community shuttles.

## Questions for Consideration

1. What upgrades in Smiths Falls that have happened throughout Smiths Falls to improve transportation and connectivity have resulted increased foot and bike traffic?
2. How is the connectivity to different areas of Smiths Falls right now? Where are spots for improvement?
3. What would make your commute easier? How do we make commuting easier for those that don't drive a car?

Let us know what you think!

Visit [smithsfalls.ca/opupdates](https://smithsfalls.ca/opupdates) to find out more information about the New Official Plan and ways you can get involved. You can also connect with us at: [opupdate@smithfalls.ca](mailto:opupdate@smithfalls.ca)