



Pedestrian Improvements in the Village of Potsdam

Through its *Creating Healthy Schools and Communities (CHSC) program*, the *St. Lawrence Health Initiative* has assisted the Village of Potsdam’s work to implement its *Complete Streets policy* by supporting an inventory of the municipality’s pedestrian infrastructure and upgrades to pedestrian facilities.

Assessment of Sidewalks and Crosswalks

After receiving complaints about sections of deteriorating sidewalk, an inventory was initiated of all sidewalks, crosswalks, and crosswalk signals in the Village. Its purpose was to document their condition and help set maintenance priorities.

“Residents have made us aware of the state of deterioration of some sidewalks and crosswalks in the Village. Our hope is an inventory will help us prioritize projects to get them back into shape.”

*- Greg Thompson,
Potsdam Village Administrator*

To conduct the inventory, the Health Initiative engaged a consulting group from Clarkson University. Two graduate students, overseen by faculty from Clarkson’s Construction Engineering Management Program in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department were contracted to complete a village-wide sidewalk survey. “The civil engineering students are tracing every sidewalk in the village, verifying the condition of each five-foot sidewalk block,” said Village of Potsdam Planning and Development Director Fred Hanss. They are taking photos of each block, rating and recording their condition, and fixing their

locations in a GIS database. “This will give the Department of Public Works (DPW) Superintendent a tool to use in deciding how to deploy DPW employees. It will save us a great deal of time and money,” Hanss said.

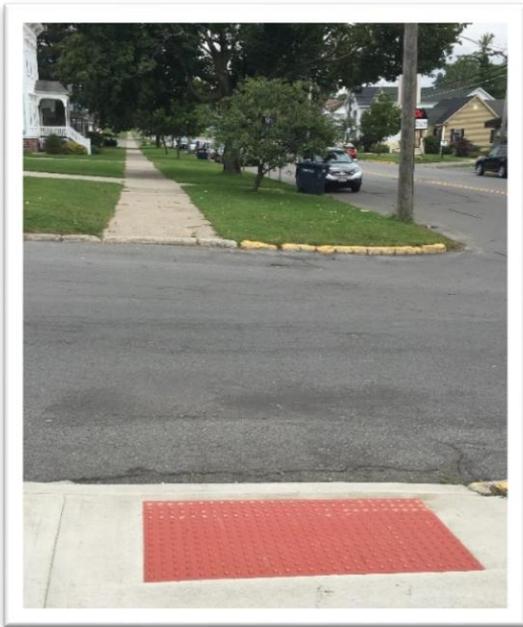
Improvements for Accessibility and Safety

Additionally, the Village of Potsdam’s DPW has worked to improve pedestrian safety and make the Village more accessible. Twenty-five crosswalks are being renovated to ensure each meets universal accessibility guidelines such as the pitch of the crosswalk, warning plates, and associated sidewalks, curbing, and striping.

Contingent on New York State Department of Transportation approval, the Village will install a pedestrian-activated crossing signal at a designated school crossing, located on one of St. Lawrence County’s busiest roadways.



Clarkson University students inventoried all 75 miles of roadways in the Village of Potsdam, including busy Market St. Information about pedestrian facilities was collected digitally and uploaded to the Village’s GIS system for use in project planning.



How does this happen? While one side of the crosswalk is accessible, the other remains an inaccessible four-inch granite curb.

The Village's project received financial support from the Health Initiative's CHSC grant to purchase materials necessary for the crosswalk repairs and the crossing signal. The Village DPW provided labor and equipment to complete the work. Of the crosswalks being upgraded, over half are located in and around the Potsdam Central School campus and the Canton-Potsdam Hospital - two busy traffic and pedestrian areas.

In addition to the inventory and crosswalk projects, the Health Initiative has, in previous years, provided grant funding to the Village for purchase of speed radar units. A mobile unit is deployed on Village roadways as need is identified. A fixed radar controller near the

“Several years ago, Potsdam Village adopted a Complete Streets policy to guide our efforts to ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists using the community's sidewalks and roadways. The Health Initiative has been a great partner in making the policy come to life on the ground.”

- Ron Tischler,
Village of Potsdam Mayor

SUNY Potsdam campus is designed to slow traffic entering the Village from a 55-mph speed zone outside Village limits. Both speed radar units help to slow vehicular traffic which in turn increases pedestrian safety.



That's better!

Complete Streets – Improved Health

As summarized by Anne Marie Snell, Executive Director of the Health Initiative, “Partnering with local municipalities to adopt Complete Streets policies and to then make infrastructure improvements are ways the Health Initiative works to ensure the good health of community members. We're pleased to assist the Village of Potsdam in implementing Complete Streets enhancements to promote safe and inclusive active transportation.”

To learn more about our Complete Streets work in St. Lawrence County:

email: karen@gethealthyslc.org

visit: www.gethealthyslc.org



This work was supported by Creating Healthy Schools and Communities (CHSC), a five-year (2015-2020) New York State Department of Health-funded initiative, is helping build stronger, healthier communities.