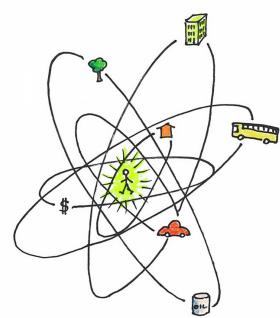


THE PEDESTRIAN POCKET

Cities exist to facilitate exchange, whether it be business, personal, social or cultural. It is easier for that to happen when people and places are closer together.

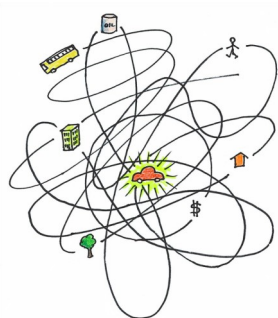
Imagine going to the store. If you walk there, you may say hello to a neighbor, nod to the mailman, watch kids playing a game of tag, wave to the little old lady who always watches out her window, drop a letter in the mailbox and enjoy the squirrel that runs across your path before you finally get to the store.



Source: Glatting Jackson

When the pedestrian is the basis for city design, the other elements are easier to fit into place (like once people figured out the planets orbit the sun.)

Now imagine driving there. Are there as many opportunities for exchange?

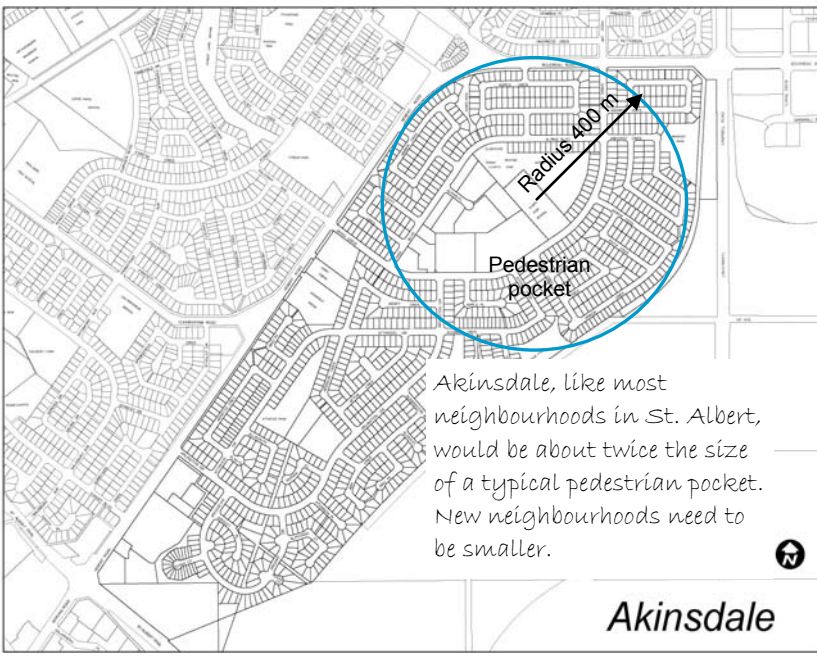


Source: Glatting Jackson

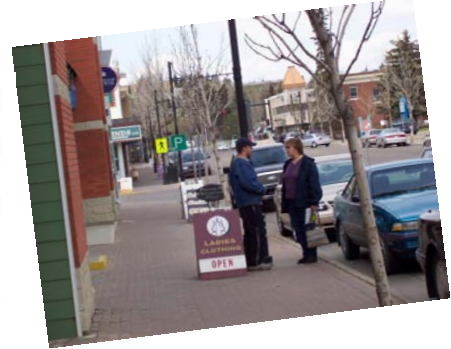
When the car is the basis for city design, it is more challenging and complicated for the other elements to work, (like the orbital patterns when people believed the planets and sun orbited the Earth.)

WHAT IS THE PEDESTRIAN POCKET?

Pedestrians are willing to walk about 400 m, about a quarter of a mile. It generally takes about 5 minutes. To encourage people to walk or cycle more, neighbourhood design needs to be thought of at the geographic scale of the pedestrian, rather than of the car. Therefore, a pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood should be built around the walkable distance people are willing to travel. This area is called the Pedestrian Pocket.



Akinsdale, like most neighbourhoods in St. Albert, would be about twice the size of a typical pedestrian pocket. New neighbourhoods need to be smaller.



What kind of exchange would you prefer to encourage in your community?



THE PEDESTRIAN POCKET AND ZONING

Conventional zoning - what we do now

Currently, neighbourhood Area Structure Plans cover an area larger than a typical pedestrian pocket. Block lengths and street systems are sized and designed according to what works best for cars. Sidewalks are not fully connected, especially to areas outside a neighbourhood. Pedestrian connections are not always there, like to and along St. Albert Trail, for instance.

The current land use regulations make it harder to incorporate mixed uses, and generally great distances separate different uses.

Form-based zoning - what we're proposing

The size of neighbourhoods would need to be based on a pedestrian pocket. Block lengths, street connectivity, and design all focus on the pedestrian's mobility. Vehicle traffic is still accommodated, but in a way that balances with other forms of transportation.

The form-based zoning enables a mix of compatible uses within a smaller area, which helps reduce the number and distance of vehicle trips.