

“As we heard it” report: Leacock Drive Proposed Sidewalk

Introduction

This “As we heard it report” includes the results from the consultation for the *Leacock Drive Proposed Sidewalk Project* from *Beaverbrook Road (west) to The Parkway (west side)*. The consultation consisted of an online survey led by the City of Ottawa, a virtual public open house held by the Ward Councillor, and individual comments received from the public addressed to the Ward Councillor and the City’s project manager.

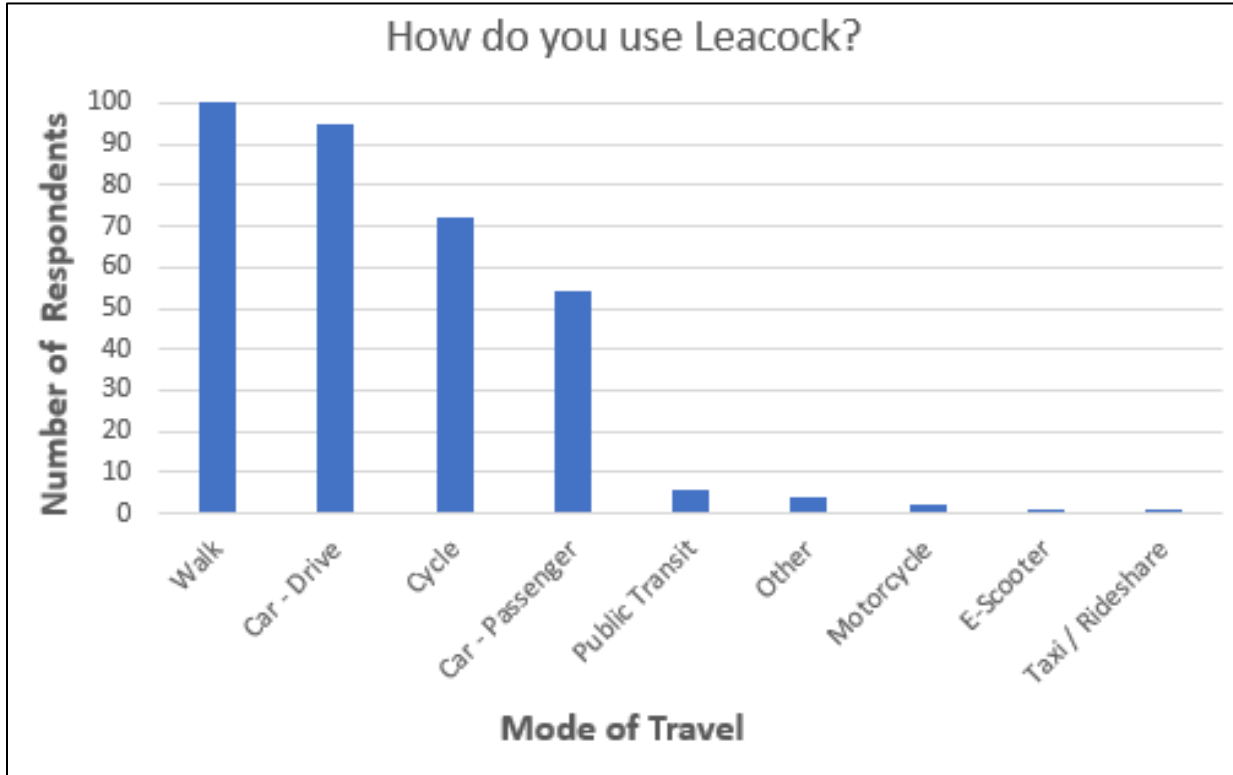
The report is broken down into the following three sections:

- A) Online public survey results
- B) Public comments during the live virtual open house
- C) Individual public comments received by email

A) Online Public Survey Results

The online public survey was available from January 6 - 31, 2021, and was completed by 107 people. This section includes the results of the online survey.

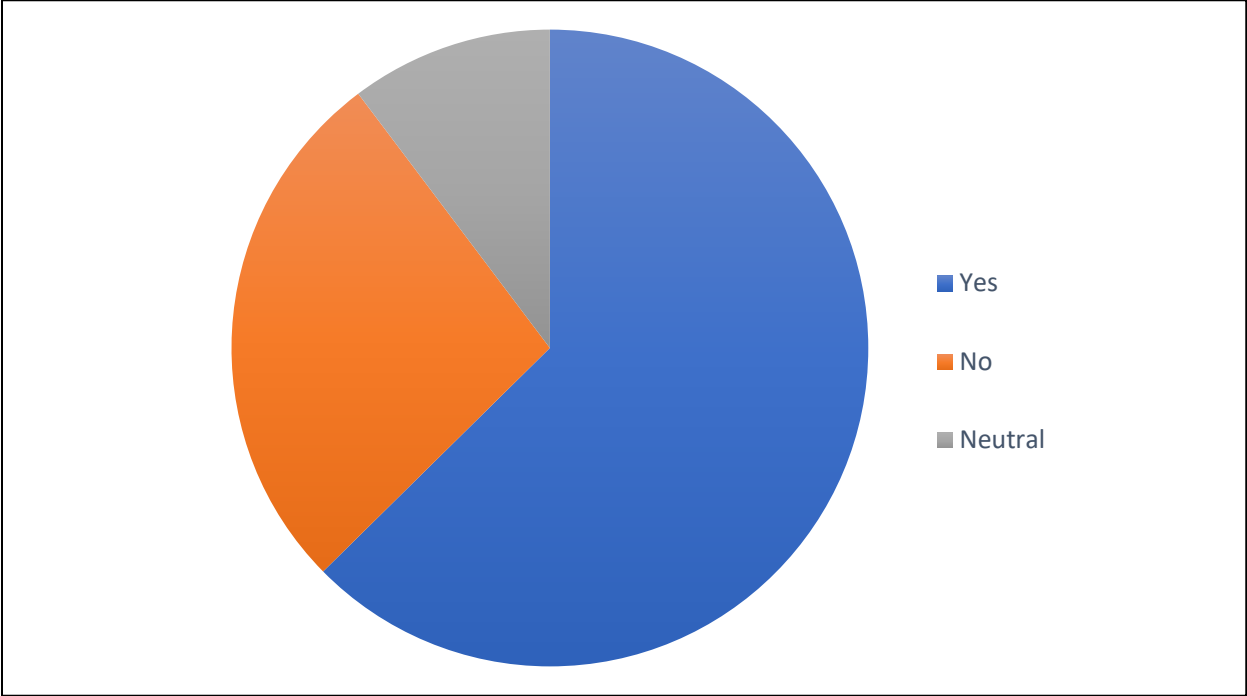
1 - What mode(s) of transportation do you use when travelling along Leacock Drive? (Choose all that apply)



Mode of Travel	Total # of responses
Walk	100
Car - Drive	95
Cycle	72
Car - Passenger	54
Public Transit	6
Other	4
Motorcycle	2
E-Scooter	1
Taxi / Rideshare	1

* Respondents were able to select more than one mode of travel. There was a total of 335 responses from the 107 respondents.

2a - Do you have any concerns with regards to pedestrian safety within the project limits?



Response	Total # of responses	Total % of responses
Yes	67	63%
No	29	27%
Neutral	11	10%

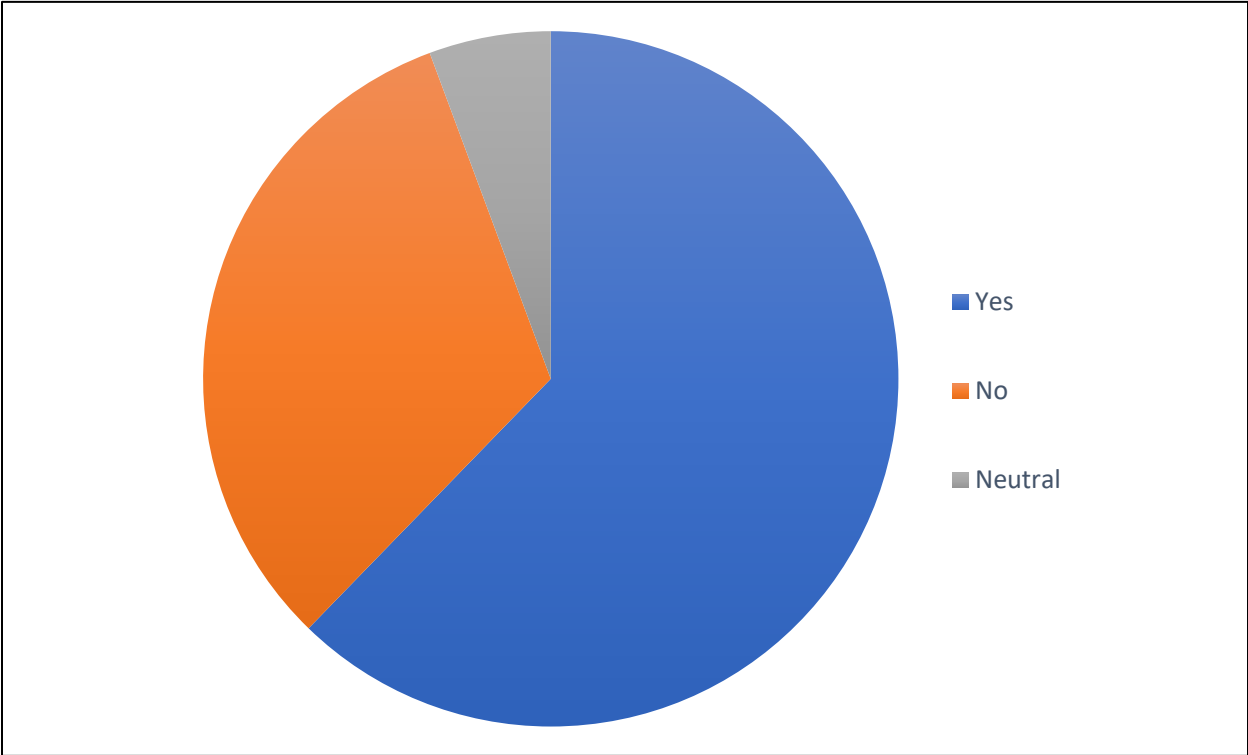
*107 respondents

2b - If you answered yes to question 2, what is your concern and where?

A total of 50 responses were provided. Concerns are summarized in the table below with the number of responses that correspond to the concern.

Concern / Issue	Total # of responses
Sidewalk should also be provided on the east side of Leacock Drive.	1
Pedestrian safety, especially for children and vulnerable users. Walking on the street. Walking to school. Walking at night on the street.	33
Speeding vehicles. Traffic volumes. Reduce speed limit. Designate area a Community Safety Zone.	13
Restrict turning movement on Leacock from Beaverbrook. No right turns from 7:30am to 9:00am onto Leacock from Beaverbrook. No left turns from 3:00pm to 5:00pm from Leacock to Beaverbrook.	1
Existing sidewalks suddenly end. Existing pathways are very bumpy and need fixing.	2
Pathway from The Parkway eastward should be paved and cleared in the winter up to Sandwell Green for Earl of March High School students walking.	1
Use of existing pathways for pedestrians and cyclists as opposed to sidewalk. Consider other options than a sidewalk.	7
Add sidewalk in front of Stephen Leacock Public School on the west side.	1
Four-way pedestrian crosswalk needed at Beaverbrook and Leacock.	1

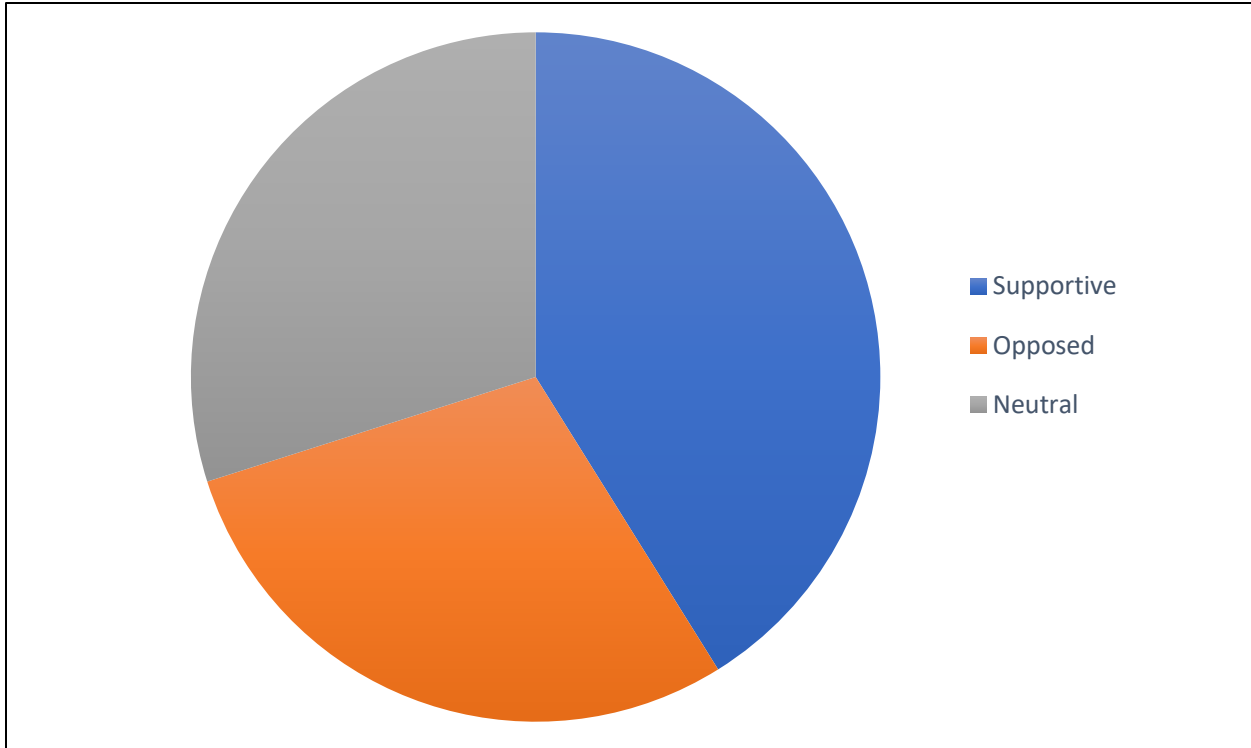
3 - Do you support the proposed sidewalk on Leacock Drive?



Response	Total # of responses	Total % of responses
Yes	67	63%
No	34	32%
Neutral	6	6%

*107 respondents

4 - To help us refine the recommended plan, please indicate your support of the following infrastructure: Tighten corner radii – Narrowing at the intersection of the side street by tightening the corner radii and shortening the crossings to reduce pedestrian crossing distances at intersections.



Response	Total # of responses	Total % of responses
Supportive	44	41%
Opposed	31	29%
Neutral	32	30%

*107 respondents

5 - Do you have any additional comments?

A total of 50 individual comments were provided in the survey. Comments are summarized in the table below with the number of responses that correspond to each theme or idea.

Comment	Total # of responses
Support the proposed sidewalk for the safety of the community, children, vulnerable users, elderly and those with accessibility issues. Safety of students attending Stephen Leacock Public School and Earl of March Secondary School.	19
Oppose the proposed sidewalk. Will detract from the original Garden City concept of Beaverbrook. Impacts to lawns, driveways and property values.	22
Consider traffic calming measures as opposed to proposed sidewalk. Crossing guards during peak times.	6
Upgrade existing pathway system. Better use of funding.	11
Tightening corner radii will not address pedestrian safety. Increased risk for cyclists.	3
Extend sidewalk on Leacock Drive from The Parkway to Sandwell Crescent.	2
Ensure mature trees are protected.	1
Consider radar/speed signs.	2

B) Public Comments during Virtual Public Open House

A virtual public open house for the *Varley Drive and Leacock Drive Proposed Sidewalk Project* was held by Councillor Jenna Sudds on January 19, 2021, from 7:00 pm to 8:30pm. A total of 69 people attended. The platforms used included: Zoom, Facebook and Twitter. During the virtual event individuals participated in the discussion, asking questions or providing comments. All comments were recorded by the Councillor's office and are summarized below. This number is the total number of people in attendance: 52 people on zoom (including city & consultant staff) and 17 people following on facebook. This section includes comments on both the Varley Drive and Leacock Drive proposed sidewalks.

Comment
Location of crossing guard point in front of Leacock is incorrect on the plan.
Concerns about property impacts, driveways, retaining walls, loss of trees. Concerns about impacts to the natural environment i.e loss of natural drainage, loss of trees.
Existing pathways are not easily accessible to people with mobility issues (grade /slope /access from road) and are not accessible at all in the winter.
Safety of pedestrians walking on a sidewalk cannot be compared to walking on the road. The proposed sidewalk will complement the existing pathway system.
Speeding vehicles and traffic speed are a big issue. Consider traffic calming measures i.e. speed bump, traffic cameras, raised crosswalk. A sidewalk will not slow down traffic.

Existing pathway system is enough and there is no need for a sidewalk. Pathways connect to the school. Use funds to improve existing pathway system.

Need to address the traffic from the parents dropping off and picking up their children at school.

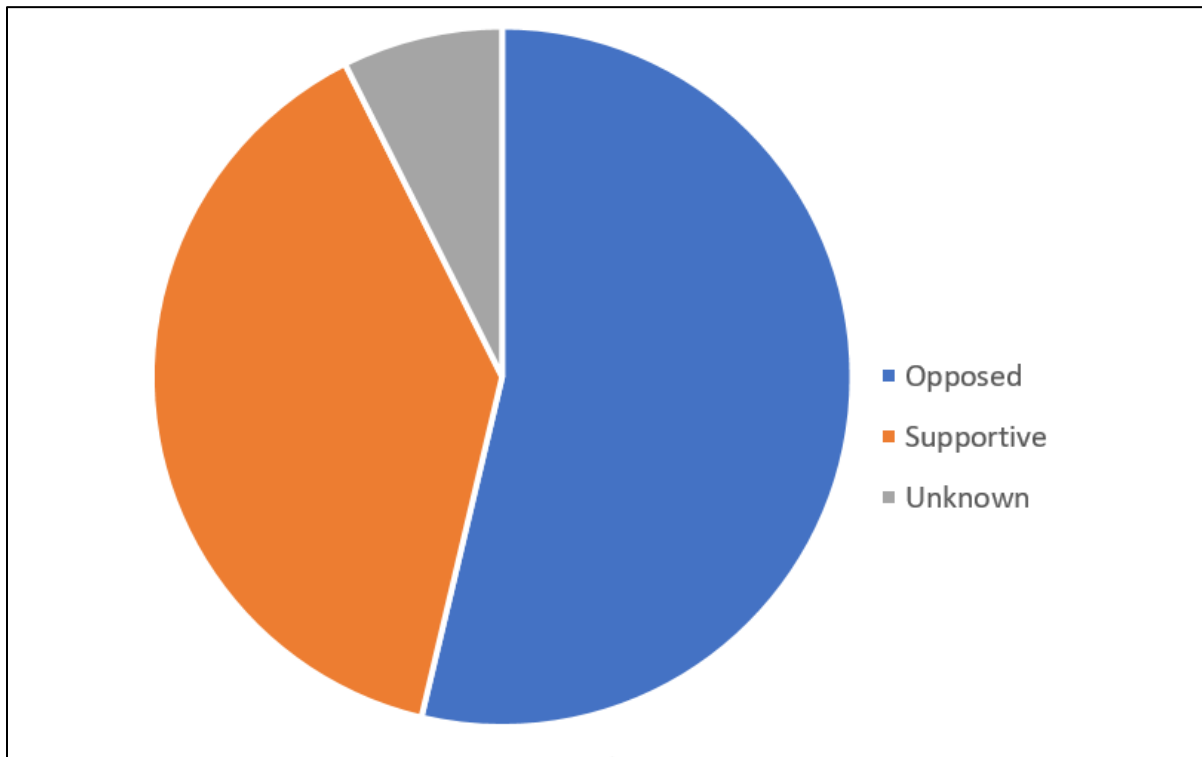
Not everyone has a pathway in their backyard. Many children need to walk on the street to get to the existing pathway system.

Neighbourhood specific Planning and design is certainly part of the New Official Plan, however, the details are missing as to something like sidewalk/pathway policy for Active Transportation.

How can we formally object to this proposed sidewalk project?

C) Individual Public Comments Received by Email

A total of 54 people submitted comments by email to the ward Councillor and the City's project manager. This number includes additional people included within a given email. 29 people stated their opposition, 21 stated their support and 4 were included as "position unknown" to the propose sidewalk. The following pie chart illustrates the breakdown.



Response	Total # of responses	Total % of responses
Supportive	21	39%
Opposed	29	54%
Position Unknown	4	7%

The following is a consolidation of the comments received by email.

Comments

Beaverbrook Community:

- Difficult to retrofit an old community.
- The sidewalk will change the uniqueness of the community design by Bill Teron.
- The current neighborhood design lacks consideration for those that have accessibility requirements.
- Uniqueness of the neighborhood should not be prioritized over safety and traditional ways of moving through the neighborhood.
- Changes to Ontario school policy have resulted in much higher student populations of students outside the community.
- Beaverbrook has received awards for its design concepts over the years.
- Greenspace will be replaced with concrete.
- The installation of a concrete sidewalk as described in the plan would have a serious negative aesthetic and environmental impact on both Leacock Drive and Varley Drive without addressing any of the existing safety issues.
- Any future plans for sidewalks in Beaverbrook (or any established community) should be subject to a professional environmental assessment.

Vehicle traffic/speed:

- Speed is the primary issue.
- Install traffic calming measures such as stop signs, speed bumps, radar speed signs, regular police radar patrols, traffic speed trap cameras, and road/curb modifications.
- Speeding vehicles and vehicles don't stop at the stop signs at Beaverbrook.
- Increase in traffic degrades pedestrian safety. Elementary children at higher risk.
- Pedestrian traffic on the west end of Leacock is light.
- Narrowing the street is a good way to slow the traffic.

Property:

- The proposed sidewalk will have impacts to driveway parking, especially those with shorter driveway space.
- The sidewalk would have negative impacts to green space, lawns, lawn maintenance and berms.
- Disturbance to property owners, privacy concerns to private properties.
- Greenspace – Sidewalks will take away the greenspace.
- Difficult to understand how a city element that makes life safer, healthier and facilitates social interaction (by allowing folks to walk outdoors in a comfortable manner) does not make houses more valuable and attractive.

Pathways:

- Missing pathway signage.
- Winter maintenance concerns of exiting pathways.
- The pathway system does not connect to all houses.
- Original community design was to have the pathway system take pedestrians to parks and school yards.
- Add a tunnel under Beaverbrook from pathway to pathway.
- Pathway down Beaverbrook to West lock is in need of repair and the pathway north (near to the creek) is in poor shape.
- Pathways are sufficient and connect to different pods in the neighborhood.
- The existing pathways provide a safe route around Beaverbrook but the proposed sidewalk could draw pedestrians away from the pathways.
- The existing pathway system has served us well for over 50 years and most people have easy access to them.
- Pedestrians, and particularly schoolchildren, should be informed about the pathway system and encouraged to use it.
- Reinstate the crosswalk where the pathway crosses Beaverbrook Road. (The original crossing was removed by the City on the grounds that it was not a legal crossing. However, similar crossings were left in place on Knudson and Weslock for the golfers, on Hurlihy Way for the shoppers, and on Walden and Knudson for pedestrians. The latter even has a "Stop for pedestrians" sign and a school crossing guard.).
- Both the pathways and walking on the road put my child at higher risk.
- The pathways provide access to amenities in the neighborhood.
- Repair of exiting pathways.
- Children walking to school use the pathway corridor regularly.

Safety:

- Feel unsafe as a pedestrian walking on the roadway.
- Street lighting is dim at night, Update Lighting to LED.
- Children are safer on the east side.
- Noncompliance at the Beaverbrook stop sign.
- Road narrowing will create issues for cyclists.
- Priority should be safety of children and other pedestrians.
- In the interest of road safety, urgent action is needed to enforce the speed limit, stop signs and no-stopping zones. This should be prioritized over sidewalks.
- Safety is more important than NIMBYism.
- Safer travel for children to walk to school and a better solution than the back pathway system.
- Sometimes it is necessary to walk on Varley. Perhaps the presences of pedestrians slow traffic down.

Sidewalk:

- Install the sidewalk on the east side - bus stops and school are located on the east side.
- Repair existing sidewalks and existing pathways.
- The proposed sidewalks will encourage people to walk next to the road. Better to encourage people to use the pathway system.
- Missing winter-maintained pathway through Alice Woods / Sandwell Park.
- New sidewalks would be a major asset.
- Unwanted and unnecessary.
- The proposed sidewalks would entice children to walk along the roadway rather than the pathways.
- Raised sidewalks do not provide safety measures for pedestrians.
- Sidewalks would also mean that children would be required to cross intersections – Additional safety concerns.
- Environmentally unfriendly.
- Only a few parents using the road to take their children to Stephen Leacock.
- Road narrowing will increase the risk to children biking to school.
- Sidewalk will have a negative impact on the environment and a negative impact on children's safety.
- Sidewalks will benefit children walking to school, residents walking for exercise, residents running for exercise, residents retrieving their mail and resident walking dogs/ pets.
- Safe passage for seniors or others with vision or hearing impairments or other disabilities requiring mobility aids.
- Safe passage when there are both automobiles and bicycles on the road.
- Safe plowed passage in the winter when snowbanks and parked cars would otherwise prohibit passage.
- Availability of safe outdoor opportunities for activity and exercise is important and even more apparent with the recent COVID 19 pandemic.
- Any plans for sidewalks on both sides of the road in Beaverbrook should be abandoned. They are neither needed nor appropriate.
- If a decision is made to proceed with the Varley and Leacock sidewalks, the entire length of the sidewalk should be installed on the outside (rather than inside) of the existing curb in order to avoid destruction of the trees, to minimize the need to relocate fire hydrants and other obstacles, to address the environmental issues and to reduce the risk to cyclists from protrusions into the road at every short drive, retaining wall, berm etc. A straight sidewalk on the road would be safer and, by narrowing the road, could possibly encourage speed reduction.
- The sidewalk would be great for children walking to school, seniors and people wanting to walk for exercise within the community.
- The sidewalks proposed for Varley and Leacock are overkill for the neighborhood and will take away from the design of the community.
- Great idea for walkers and runners.
- People walk on the road sometimes where there are sidewalks in the wintertime.

- Added car lights and noise.

Costs:

- Not a good use of taxpayers' dollars including the maintenance costs.
- Maintenance costs (winter).
- Unnecessary expenditure during the financial hardship of COVID 19 and money should be directed to high priority projects.

Trees:

- Impacts on mature trees.
- Impacts to the roots if nearby by trees.