

Part A: Frequently Asked Questions about Walkley Road Modifications:

1. What work is proposed on Walkley Road between McCarthy Road and Airport Parkway?

The Recommended Plan includes a new southbound off-ramp from the Airport Parkway which would connect to Walkley Road with a new roundabout. The proposed west-side multi-use pathway running along the Airport Parkway will also connect to and cross Walkley Road at the roundabout.

West of the roundabout, the Walkley Road corridor would be modified to provide for protected bike lanes with flex posts, pinned-curbs, and ride-behind bus stops. A ride-behind bus stop design has cyclists ramp up and “ride behind” the boarding zone of the bus stop. Cyclists are required to yield to pedestrians/transit riders.

The Walkley Road lane arrangement would be modified to accommodate a 3-lane cross-section with one general-purpose traffic lane per direction and a center two-way left-turn lane.

2. Why does the City plan to do these modifications on Walkley Road?

Walkley Road is a designated Cycling Spine Route and is designated a Phase 2 cycling project by the Ottawa Cycling Plan (implementation 2020-to-2025) which connects the Rideau River Pathway to the Sawmill Creek Pathway as well as Walkley Station on the Trillium Line LRT, and beyond to Bank Street. This project presents the opportunity to improve connectivity for active transportation modes by re-allocating the existing lane arrangement while maintaining an adequate capacity for all vehicles. Improved cycling and walking conditions are anticipated.

The southbound off-ramp from the Airport Parkway and its roundabout connection to Walkley Road will improve the connectivity and resiliency of the City’s network of Arterial, Major Collector, and Collector road networks.

3. What is the timeline for construction of this project?
Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2027.
4. Will the traffic become congested after lanes on Walkley are reduced from 4 lanes to 3 lanes? Does the 3-lane operation provide enough capacity?

Transportation studies undertaken as part of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment and the current Detailed Design process have determined that Walkley Road will have adequate capacity and will successfully fulfill its planned function as an Arterial Road. The transportation studies are based upon traffic information collected

pre-pandemic and include the potential for future traffic growth from intensification of surrounding communities.

Traffic operations will remain acceptable between McCarthy Road and the Airport Parkway, where traffic flow is expected to be steady and continuous. The risk of delays to east-west vehicles associated with volume, and delays associated with vehicles accessing Walkley or turning from Walkley, are anticipated to be manageable by the proposed street design which includes turning lanes and other design measures.

5. The left-turn traffic from Walkley Road to McCarthy Road is congested during the rush hours. Are there any planned changes to the intersection of Walkley Road and McCarthy Road, including changes to signal timings?

The Recommended Plan includes a lengthening of the westbound left turn storage bay to increase the number of vehicles that can wait for the left turn during peak periods. City traffic staff will monitor signal timing performance and can make adjustments in response to changing traffic conditions.

6. How does the Walkley Roundabout design address safety concerns about the westbound downhill grade from the Walkley transit bridge to the new roundabout, particularly in winter with sun glare impacting motorists during afternoon rush-hour?

The roundabout design will include clear and obvious signage directly in the line of sight of approaching westbound drivers. This will make the need to slow down and potentially yield apparent to approaching vehicles. Sun glare poses a challenge to drivers for all types of intersection control, including traffic signals. Roundabouts mitigate the risk by slowing all vehicles, reducing the severity of collisions when mistakes are made.

7. After the new Airport Parkway off ramp is constructed, how much traffic will be added to Walkley Road and how much cut-through traffic will be added to Southmore Drive?

Walkley Road westbound traffic is forecast to increase by approximately 10%, which is in the range of 100 new vehicles in the afternoon peak hour. The proposed design includes afternoon peak period left-turn restrictions at Walkley Road westbound at Southmore Drive to mitigate potential for cut-through traffic.

8. How does the City address the cut-through traffic issue at Southmore Drive and Thorndale Drive?

The design includes afternoon peak period left-turn restrictions at Walkley Road westbound at Southmore Drive to mitigate potential for cut-through traffic. Should monitoring find that cut-through traffic remains a key community issue, the option remains to implement a raised median to physically obstruct left turns onto Southmore Drive and/or at Thorndale Drive at all times of the day.

9. Will the left turn from Walkley Road to Wexford Way be restricted?

The design includes an afternoon peak period left-turn restriction at Walkley Road eastbound and Wexford Way. This restriction is intended to improve safety, as the left-turn onto McCarthy Road is anticipated to have vehicle queues that extended to, and occasionally beyond, Wexford Way. The movement will be permitted at all other times, and a left turn lane will be provided.

10. What is the impact of the proposed roundabout on pedestrians and cyclists considering the potential for heavy traffic at rush hour?

Pedestrian crossovers with flashing beacons will be provided at each of the four roundabout legs. This gives pedestrians and dismounted cyclists priority over traffic. As a result, delays to active users will be minimal regardless of traffic volumes.

11. Will bus stops be built in such a way that the bus does not block the traffic when they pick up riders? If not, what will be the impact on traffic at rush hour?

Transit stops have been designed to keep the bus in the general purpose travel lane to maximize transit travel time and reliability. The bus stops have been designed with ride-over bulb-outs to improve the safety of cyclists and pedestrians near bus stops. The movements of 2-to-4 busses per hour along Walkley Road are not anticipated to have significant effects on traffic.

Part B: Frequently Asked Questions about the Walkley Pilot Project:

1. What was the objective of the pilot project?

The Walkley Road Pilot Project was intended to simulate a lane reduction strategy along Walkley Road to specifically measure the change in:

- I. Vehicle operating speeds
- II. The number of vehicles using Walkley Road
- III. The number of vehicles using neighborhood streets as possible cut-through routes

2. How did the pilot project's design and implementation respond to the objective?

Walkley Road was re-configured using construction pylons to form a 2-lane Walkley Road, with one general purpose travel lane per direction between the Airport Parkway and McCarthy Road. The pilot project was administered for three weeks in June 2022. Traffic information was collected the week prior as well as during the second and third weeks of the pilot project.

3. What were the limitations, opportunities, and constraints of the pilot project?

The Walkley Road pilot project could not exactly imitate the future Walkley Road design. Namely, the pilot project did not simulate the future 3-lane Walkley Road corridor which includes a center two-way left turn lane, which would have required re-painting of the length of Walkley Road. The pilot project was administered using construction pylons which may have given drivers the impression that the Walkley Road corridor was a construction zone, potentially affecting their behaviour.

It is important to note that a construction detour associated with a roadway construction project was in place during the same time of the pilot project. Specifically, motorists using the corridor would have experienced congestion and delay in the Walkley Road segment to the east of the Airport Parkway, where four travel lanes were funnelled into two to enable a construction project. This congestion and delay was unrelated to the pilot project. Because of this concurrent construction project, the timing of the pilot project was not ideal.

4. What transportation results were observed?

Regular observations of Walkley Road were undertaken by City staff in addition to the transportation information collected before and after the pilot project. City staff did not observe any undue roadway congestion unbecoming of the Walkley Road corridor. An analysis of the traffic information found minimal changes in roadway traffic volume while east-west travel speeds were reduced. Similarly, traffic along neighborhood streets remained relatively consistent indicating that cut-through traffic was largely unaffected.

5. What are the lessons learned from the planning, design and implementation of the pilot project?

Communication with the community on all aspects of the pilot project remains a key take away from the overall process. Future similar pilot projects will ideally be completed during time frames where directly adjacent construction detours are not in place.

6. To what degree, if any, can the results of the pilot project inform the ongoing preliminary and detailed design of the functional design that was subject to the EA and Council approval?

The pilot project represented a condition for Walkley Road with more impediments to traffic flow (i.e. vehicles stopped in the through lanes waiting to turn left to local streets) than the proposed condition. However, observations and traffic data support the premise that there remains sufficient east-west vehicle capacity to accommodate a lane reduction along the corridor. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that the 3-lane Walkley Road design is expected to be successful in accommodating users in all modes while reducing vehicle speeds and thereby improving the safety and comfort of corridor users.

7. Based on the pilot project findings, is any follow-up transportation analysis or modelling recommended?

Yes. Following construction of the modifications, the City will monitor traffic patterns on Southmore Drive and Thorndale Drive and will determine whether additional interventions are recommended to deter any remaining undesirable cut-through traffic conditions.

Part C: Expressed Concerns about The Walkley Pilot Project:

1. Increased traffic congestion and travel time to transit associated with the Walkley Road Lane reductions during the pilot project

The Walkley Road pilot project, which simulated a reduced capacity along Walkley Road, was expected to increase vehicle travel times primarily by reducing vehicle speeds. The pilot project resulted in lower traffic speeds which were observed and documented. However, while vehicle speeds were slower than current conditions, traffic progression was observed to be consistent during peak periods.

It is important to note that a construction detour associated with a roadway construction project was in place during the same time of the pilot project. Specifically, motorists using the corridor would have experienced congestion and delay in the Walkley Road segment to the east of the Airport Parkway, where four travel lanes were funnelled into two to enable a construction project. This congestion and delay was unrelated to the pilot project. Because of this concurrent construction project, the timing of the pilot project was not ideal.

2. Longer waiting time and increased difficulty in accessing Walkley Road from residential streets during the pilot project

The Walkley Road pilot project was limited in its ability to provide for a complete 3-lane Walkley Road and promote a consistent environment due to the presence of orange construction pylons. The resulting experience of drivers accessing and turning to/from Walkley Road is not considered a true representation of future traffic operations. With the proposed Walkley Road modifications, provision of a center two-way left turn lane coupled with slower traffic speeds are anticipated to provide appropriate means for turning to and from the street.