

5.0 Public Consultation - Pedestrians Have a Say

5.1 The Consultation Process

Extensive consultation was undertaken to provide opportunity for residents, community representatives, and professionals to provide input into the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan, the strategies for changing travel behaviour to increase walking in Ottawa and solutions for making the walking network more efficient.

The consultation process involved a series of events designed to gain insight into the pedestrian perspective and discuss the key principles and themes for making Ottawa a more pedestrian friendly City. The process included:

- Visioning Workshops;
- Opportunities Workshops;
- Public Open Houses;
- A Pedestrian Survey;
- Presentations to staff, and;
- Presentations to Public Advisory Committees.

In addition to these scheduled events and formal data collection methods, staff, stakeholders and the public were invited to submit comments by fax, email and telephone at any time during the study.

5.1.1 The Pedestrian Plan Public Advisory Committee

For the purposes of the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan, with the assistance of Members of Council, a special Public Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed comprising resident representation from urban, suburban and rural wards. Representatives from the Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee, the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Rural Affairs Advisory Committee, the Federation of Community Associations, local school councils and walking clubs were recruited to participate. The PAC assisted in the development of the Terms of Reference for the study (approved by Council 24 August 2005), and participated in the Visioning and Opportunities Workshops at key stages as the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan progressed. The PAC participants are listed in **Appendix A** (under separate cover).

5.1.2 The Pedestrian Plan Technical Advisory Committee

In concert with the PAC, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was established to draw on the expertise of professionals in planning, urban design, engineering, maintenance, recreation, health, transit, transportation and operations. Representatives from the City of Ottawa Public Works and Services Department, Planning, Transit and Environment Department, Community and Protective Services Department and Business Transformation Services provided technical expertise as well as valuable business perspectives and service delivery insight. The TAC assisted in the development of the Terms of Reference for the study (approved by Council 24 August 2005), participated in the Visioning and Opportunities Workshops and reviewed the draft Pedestrian Plan at key stages as it progressed. The TAC participants are listed in **Appendix A** (under separate cover).

5.2 Visioning Workshops

October 5, 2006 - Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier, 1:00 to 4:00 pm (TAC), 4:00 to 6:00pm (PAC).

Visioning Workshops engaged members of the project TAC and PAC to develop major principles and themes, and to give direction on key actions and strategies for making Ottawa more pedestrian friendly.

Key themes that emerged from the Visioning Workshops are:

1. Social Marketing
2. Urban Design and Land Use Management
3. Network Connectivity
4. Targeted Implementation
5. Institutional Strengthening

5.2.1 Social Marketing

The concept of **Social Marketing expresses the premise of shifting societal attitudes toward walking such that walking is an accepted and respected transportation choice.** From the 1930s on, North American cities generally developed in patterns responsive to the pervasive influence of vehicular travel and fostered the perception and attitude that driving is the most convenient and desirable mode of transportation. Visioning Workshop Participants recognized that in an environment where the social norm is for motor vehicles to dominate streets, and streets to be designed principally for motor vehicular travel, societal tendency is to preserve the attitude. Streets that are intended for motor vehicles first, have resulted in a lesser regard for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized road users. Participants further recognized that promotion of walking is key to the shift in North Americans current behaviours and the social mind-set toward pedestrians. Challenging improper driver behaviours, the “vehicle-first” mind-set and the “walking is uncool” attitude involves a wholesale change in societal ideals.

Visioning Workshop Participants concluded that facilitating this wholesale shift and encouraging residents and businesses to adopt behaviours and practices that are supportive of walking could be approached through an effective combination of:

- Broad information campaigns that utilize education and advertising,
- Focused initiatives delivered at the community level, and
- Traffic enforcement consistent with the public messaging,

These would all be aimed at raising awareness of pedestrians and being equally accommodating and respectful of walking as an accepted transportation mode.

Respectful attitudes towards pedestrians and walking as an equitable transportation choice will broaden driver’s perspectives to the challenges faced by all road users, beyond the motorist’s perspective. Cultivating a greater tolerance and understanding of pedestrians fosters walking and supports a shift in the North American mind-set.

Education and advertising campaigns positively influence behaviour, especially when they are proactive, consistently reinforce key messages, and are not simply

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reactionary. It was acknowledged that change is not likely to occur immediately though consistent and frequent messages but will influence behaviour over time.

It was also recognized that social marketing **delivered at the community scale** could address deterrents to walking while simultaneously promoting the benefits of walking. Campaigns could focus on congestion, the environment, economics, and the health and social benefits of walking, targeting those who would immediately benefit from walking.

Outreach programs that effectively engage residents to be more aware of local pedestrian facilities could lead to a greater sense of community responsibility and ownership of these facilities. This could foster a desire to use them as a means to further strengthen the sense of community cohesion.

Encouraging safe and active travel **marketed towards Ottawa's youth could instill good habits for the future**, and has the potential to influence siblings and parents. The City of Ottawa's current *Active and Safe Routes to School Program* is an ideal example of an effective social marketing program aimed at increasing walking among youth and family members. Another example is the Region of Waterloo's *You Can Clear The Air* program that supplements the grade 3 curriculum to educate students about making wise travel choices.

Initiatives striving to **educate the motoring public as well as employers to the real cost** of personal vehicle transportation could serve to further promote the potential monetary advantages of walking. Raising awareness of the true costs associated with owning, driving, insuring, and parking motor vehicles as well as the costs associated with building and maintaining infrastructure for vehicles could effectively promote active transportation choices.

Encouraging safe and active travel marketed toward Ottawa's commuters supports the modal share and modal shift targets set forth in the City of Ottawa's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan. **Engaging local businesses to promote active transportation** could be advanced through a program supporting **workplace audits**. These would examine how employees get to and from work, the level of pedestrian activity engaged in while at work, and an assessment of pedestrian supports (for example walkways on the employers property, access to change rooms, lockers and showers, etc). Particularly in areas where congestion is an issue and/or parking is at a premium, there could be value in questioning the perception of employees requiring a vehicle for work (which necessitates driving it to the workplace before it can be driven to sites beyond). Consideration could then be given to incentives such as encouraging the use of transit, rental cars or corporate fleets of environmentally-friendly cars for business related travel.

Workshop participants acknowledged that implementing programs with monetary disincentives such as imposing a congestion fee, for example, through tolls for roads or fares charged for entering the city core with a vehicle, are alternatives currently used in some metropolitan centres throughout the world.

Undesirable driving habits, intended or not, negatively impact the pedestrian experience and the perception of pedestrian safety. Key messaging combined with effective and consistent enforcement could effectively reinforce driver behaviours detrimental to pedestrians. Examples of behaviours that could be reinforced as unacceptable include:

- Turning into pedestrians at cross walks;
- Driving quickly through puddles and splashing sidewalk users;
- Running red lights, and;
- Excessive driving speeds.

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5.2.2 Urban Design and Land Use Management

Ottawa has experienced many decades of middle urban and suburban development patterned on curvilinear street layouts resulting in the establishment of dispersed and multiple nuclei neighbourhoods. It was recognized that long-term application of these multiple nuclei development patterns have had a dramatic effect on Ottawa's walkability leading to isolated residential communities where a vehicle is the necessary travel mode to reach amenities.

Visioning Workshop participants expressed that pedestrian-oriented design and optimal land use is critical in making Ottawa more walkable. It was recognized that sound community planning principles and initiatives must support a "complete communities" model, encouraging the development of:

- Compact, dense communities incorporating mixed-use development.
- Key amenities and destinations within comfortable walking distance.
- Direct access to retail and employment areas.
- Direct access to transit.
- Pedestrian access to major community destinations such as parks, community centres and open greenspace.
- Comfortably scaled, multi-modal infrastructure.
- Re-establishing modified-grid patterns as the preferred form.
- Attractive, year-around accessible and safe pedestrian routes with facilities such as waste baskets and benches.
- Incorporating natural features, trees and other landscape treatments.

It was also recognized that establishing shared agendas between the city, residents, developers, designers and business owners (for example Business Improvement Areas) was necessary to changing current development patterns and establishing design patterns that promote "complete communities" more responsive to pedestrian needs.

5.2.3 Network Connectivity

An obvious characteristic of a pedestrian-friendly city is network connectivity. Without a well connected network of walkable sidewalks, pathways, and structures (for example bridges), pedestrians are limited in how far they can comfortably travel and how easily they can access their destinations.

Visioning Workshop participants recognized the importance of connectivity and that for walking to be an attractive alternate to travel by other modes, the provision of direct, continuous, connected walking facilities is essential.

Principles supporting network connectivity as identified by Visioning Workshop participants are:

- Pedestrian connectivity to transit is a top priority.
- Connectivity requires that missing links and dead ends be connected to the existing network.
- Direct routes - not circuitous routes - facilitate travel.
- Identifying then removing or overcoming barriers (especially where there is an expressed need) is essential to both accessibility and connectivity.

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- Consolidated maps depicting network facilities (electronic, interactive and print) promote pedestrian travel choices.
- Categorization of facilities creating a hierarchy establishes pedestrian network priorities.
- Maintenance, particularly in winter, should relate to the pedestrian network hierarchy (not the road hierarchy).
- Networks are required in all communities, even those not originally developed with sidewalks.
- Consistent directional and way-finding signage is essential to orientation.

Clear and consistent communication was viewed as an important element of network connectivity; residents not aware and not comfortable with pedestrian routes are less likely to travel on the facilities. Providing well-designed, legible way-finding tools such as orientation kiosks, signage or mapping in electronic, audio and print formats providing orientation ("You Are Here"), depicting routes and potential destinations informs the public regarding route options. Wayfinding systems with features such as tactile and large print signs, street names in concrete pads at road crossings are a few of the more recent innovations that are helpful for people with low vision, blind persons and those with cognitive impairments. It was also considered of value to establish and clearly identify a **hierarchy of facilities** for different types or levels of use as a means of optimizing assets.

5.2.4 Targeted Implementation

Visioning Workshop participants were cognizant of the fiscal restraints and monetary challenges associated with the provision of programs, infrastructure and services that support walking. While it was recognized that walking is desirable and a priority for the City, **specific pedestrian priorities need to be established to optimize the competition for suitable funding.** Essentially, not every place can be serviced to the same level.

Middle urban and suburban areas and village centres, where the existing network is not as complete as in the downtown core were identified as priorities. Generally it was accepted that the downtown core, with grid-like streets, has a relatively connected network when compared to the non-core areas.

In support of the premise that priorities be refined to focus implementation, two priority zones were recommended:

1. **Transit Zones** - Proximate to transit and transitway stations is a priority area as direct accessibility by walking was accepted as an important factor in selecting transit. Transportation Demand Management principles further support integration of alternate transportation modes to encourage sustainable transportation choices.
2. **School Zones** - Walking is a primary and universally available mode of transportation for students. Provision of adequate, connected pedestrian facilities in proximity to schools supports safe and active travel to and from school. In addition to operating as learning institutions, many schools function as community buildings during non-school hours for services such as daycares, fitness activities or general interest courses. Supporting accessibility to these community institutions contributes significantly to community walkability.

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5.2.5 Institutional Strengthening

Institutional Strengthening expresses the concepts of Civic Teamwork and Integrated Practices. This key theme identified by Visioning Workshop participants centres on implementation of pedestrian supportive policy at the core of municipal service delivery.

Given that the majority of participants were City of Ottawa employees, the group was well positioned to offer insightful and realistic recommendations. Pedestrian Policies identified in the City's Official Plan (OP), Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and now the intent of the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan is to provide direction to inform business practices and decision-making processes. Participants acknowledged that a potential disconnect exists where this direction has not yet been incorporated into the daily work practices of the city's various business areas. **Participants were adamant that the pedestrian-related OP, TMP, and Ottawa Pedestrian Plan policies must be reflected in the programs and operational work plans of City Branches and Departments.**

Land use and transportation planning, and roadway construction, rehabilitation and maintenance, are all opportunities to implement pedestrian policy. It was suggested that transportation projects need to recognize and reinforce the pedestrian vision to include priority for walking, cycling and transit, not just motor vehicles.

It was further recognized that political will aligned with adequate funding to implement the pedestrian supportive policies is essential. To fund the pedestrian supportive initiatives, Council must be able to fully support considerable benefits that are, unfortunately, somewhat intangible:

- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) benefits;
- Health benefits;
- Economic benefits;
- Sustainable Growth benefits;
- Environmental benefits; and,
- Quality of Life benefits.

The complete October 5, 2006 Visioning Workshops "As it was Heard" document is listed in **Appendix B** (under separate cover).

5.3 Opportunities Workshop

March 29, 2007 - Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier, 1:00 to 4:00 pm (TAC), 4:00 to 6:00pm (PAC)

In further support of the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan, members of the project Technical Advisory Committee and Public Advisory Committee were engaged in Network Development Approach exercises at an Opportunities Workshop.

Following a presentation of findings to date, participants were divided into groups and focused on maps of four areas of the city, each developed during a different era and having different development patterns:

- Downtown (an example of a Pre-war development area);
- Middle Urban (an example of a Post-war development area);
- Suburban (an example of a modern development area), and;
- Rural centre.

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Participants were asked to consider network accessibility, design, location, connectivity, historical development patterns and other attributes of walkability to identify challenges and barriers, and to identify and evaluate potential network opportunities. Specifically, participants were asked to identify the following:

1. Facilities and infrastructure located in the district represented on the map.
2. The challenges (barriers and constraints) to walkability in the district represented on the maps and what can be done to improve them
3. Opportunities to improve walkability within each district represented on the map.

The following is a summary of the topics discussed for each of the four different areas. The complete March 29, 2007 Opportunities Workshops “As it was Heard” can be found in **Appendix B** (under separate cover).

5.3.1 Downtown Development Area

Facilities and Infrastructure

The downtown and core areas have a fairly complete pedestrian network. Generally, the street network was designed and constructed between the mid 1800's and early 1900's. The hierarchy of streets and the mix of development types make the downtown area walkable. Store fronts add a degree of comfort to the pedestrian environment. During the daytime, pedestrian traffic is heavy in the downtown area and tends to be commuter based. By comparison many streets are much quieter at night except for areas with higher concentrations of establishments that cater to the “night life”.

Challenges

Although the pedestrian network is fairly complete, barriers still do exist and include main thoroughfares such as:

- The Queensway which has limited crossing points for pedestrians.
- Arterials such as Bronson that serve as main auto commuter routes to and from the downtown core.
- Streets such as Rideau and King Edward that carry high volumes of truck traffic.
- The Rideau Canal, although an attraction, is also a barrier as crossing points are limited.

Some crossings of barriers are not very pedestrian friendly (i.e. Heron Road bridge), and in some cases the pedestrian networks on the opposite side of the crossings are discontinuous.

Opportunities

The question was raised “Is downtown already done?” Some participants felt that the priorities in the downtown include closing minor network gaps, and focusing on the details of making places more walkable. It will be important to have “BIA's” buy-in to the recommendations of the plan that affect the sidewalks and streets in front of their stores. Transit is a popular mode for pedestrians to get into the downtown and move around once there, therefore high quality transit facilities are important.

5.3.2 Middle Urban Development Area

Facilities and Infrastructure

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The area is very diverse, including large scale institutional lands such as the Ottawa Hospital Civic Campus, areas that are primarily residential such as Meadowlands, and large scale commercial and industrial areas. Much of the street network was designed and constructed between the early and mid 1900's. This has resulted in a diverse street network consisting of both grid and curvilinear patterns, and a range in the extent and quality of pedestrian facilities. Pedestrian facilities are much more complete in the northern extents such as the Merivale Road area and are more discontinuous in the southern parts.

Challenges

The size and scale of spaces seem to be more oriented towards the car than the pedestrian. Large commercial nodes such as South Keys contain an array of shops and services accessible to transit that can be difficult to reach as a pedestrian. Arterial roads such as Baseline, Hunt Club, Bank and Merivale as well as large parking lots can be inhospitable and significant barriers to the pedestrian.

In areas such as Greenboro, the density of pedestrian facilities, which includes both sidewalks and pathways, is satisfactory, however the connections to transit are challenging, as are the mid-block crossings of arterial roads by the pathway system. Furthermore, the "warrant" (criteria) system for signalized crossings (i.e. mid-block) is seen as onerous when trying to rationalize pathway crossings, particularly of arterial roads.

Opportunities

Improving access across barriers such as arterial roads and creating a better separation between main pedestrian access routes and parking lot access to major commercial zones is a priority. Though some areas contain a high density of schools, pedestrian connections and/or the continuity of pedestrian routes is lacking in some cases, therefore gaps in the pedestrian network need to be identified. Public transit service also requires enhancement to encourage a higher level of use.

5.3.3 Sub Urban Development Area

Facilities and Infrastructure

In many ways pedestrian infrastructure in the Sub Urban area is similar to the Middle Urban development area. Community planning and resultant street networks were generally developed between the mid 1900's and today. It is characterized by grouped or segregated land uses with significant barriers to pedestrian movement such as arterial roads and rail corridors. The pedestrian network of sidewalks and pathways varies widely from one neighbourhood to the next and continuity between neighbourhoods may be lacking.

Challenges

The main priority in road projects has been the movement of cars and often there is little available right-of-way once vehicle movement has been addressed. However, inclusive transportation design requires that pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and pathways be a considered priority. For example, a number of neighbourhoods in Beacon Hill and Orleans have very few or no sidewalks, with a higher percentage of streets having a rural cross section (no curb and gutter). Kanata, another Sub Urban development area also has fewer sidewalks as compared to neighbourhoods in the Downtown or Middle Urban area, but community planning here included the development of a fairly extensive network of pathways through parks and public open space.

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Destinations are very widely spaced prompting questions such as: “Are more destinations needed, and, is it better to have destinations grouped, or regularly placed and more widely dispersed?” Creating access to transit is a challenge in some areas where there are no or few sidewalks, pathways or crossings of barriers. It was generally felt that residents of suburban neighbourhoods may have less of a sense of community and the level of engagement with community associations may also be lower. Therefore more effort may be needed for promotion and education programs as compared with some of the older neighbourhoods.

In some of the most recent development areas, such as the newest neighbourhoods in Barrhaven that have been developed since the late 1990’s, sidewalks are more prevalent and continuous.

Opportunities

Survey data suggests that a higher percentage of walking trips are for leisure and recreation, therefore creating and identifying pedestrian loops may help to encourage more walking. Creating pedestrian access from new communities to arterials at regular intervals (i.e. every 250-300m) may assist in developing walking loops and improve access to arterial roads and transit stops.

Participants recognized that the pedestrian trip doesn’t necessarily have to start and end “at home”. Therefore, providing high quality, accessible and connected pedestrian systems at major nodes (i.e. recreational and commercial) may help to encourage users to choose to walk between destinations rather than drive from parking lot to parking lot.

5.3.4 Rural Centres

Facilities and Infrastructure

In many cases the rural centres mimic Ottawa’s urban area and include Downtown, Middle Urban and Sub Urban type development areas, but on a much smaller scale. In some rural centres the Middle Urban and Sub Urban development areas may not be as prominent or clearly evident as seen in Ottawa’s urban area. Pedestrian facilities vary widely among different villages and hamlets depending on their population, the policies and practices that were in place when they were developed.

Challenges

There is an interest in walking for leisure/exercise but this is not supported by the available infrastructure. Some main streets are not considered walkable due to substandard sidewalks, road crossings that are widely spaced and higher volumes of traffic than in the past.

Opportunities

Some of the villages and hamlets are currently or are expected to experience significant pressure from new development. Thoughtful planning of the pedestrian realm will reap significant benefits in the future.

Many of the rural centres present opportunities for tourism, and the provision of good pedestrian facilities will help to support the tourist industry. Abandoned railways running through some of the rural centres present significant opportunities for recreation/exercise, tourism, pedestrian travel to local destinations such as schools, and have the potential to become main pedestrian spines in new development areas.

5.4 Public Open Houses

Three Public Open Houses (POH) were hosted as primary components of the broader public consultation process for the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan. The POHs were intended to introduce the study, provide members of the public an opportunity to comment on key principles and themes, and discuss network planning opportunities. The dates and locations for these events were:

- POH #1, November 28, 2006 - Downtown location, Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier, 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
- POH #2, May 2, 2007 - East End location, Sir Wilfred Laurier High School, 1515 Tenth Line Rd, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm.
- POH #3, May 29, 2007 - West End location, Holy Trinity High School, 180 Katimavik Rd, 6:30 pm to 8:30pm..

POH #1 was held during the first phase of the project and POH #2 and 3 were held during the second phase. The same information was presented at POH #2 and POH #3. Information and opinions were shared between the study team and the public through several methods. These included:

- **Display Panels** - A series of colour panels provided a summary of project scope, schedule and findings at each stage of the project. Participants were encouraged to write/post comments directly on mapping panels depicting existing sidewalks, pathways and key points of interest/destination. In addition, two panels were used to encourage participants to provide their opinion on the characteristics of walkable places and potential strategies to get more people walking more often. The results of the opinion panels exercise are discussed in Section 5.4.1.
- **Pedestrian Plan Survey** – The Pedestrian Plan Survey was available for pick up at the Open Houses. Section 5.5 provides details about the survey and summarizes the results. A copy of the Pedestrian Plan Survey is provided in **Appendix C** (under separate cover).
- **Comment Sheet** - Available at each POH, the Comment Sheet was intended to allow participants to voice their opinion on any aspect of the study or pedestrian affairs in the city that they felt were not covered by the Pedestrian Plan Survey. A total of 28 completed Comment Sheets were received, 22 at POH #1 and 6 at POH #3. Comments are summarized in Section 5.4.2. A copy of the comment sheet is provided in **Appendix D**.(under separate cover)
- **Automated Presentation** – A timed slide show providing images and ideas of walkable places across North America and Europe ran for the duration of all 3 Open House events.
- **One-on-one discussions** with the study team and City staff representatives in attendance.

5.4.1 Opinion Panels

Two of the display panels solicited residents' opinions on:

- What makes places walkable and attractive?
- What needs to be implemented to get more people walking more often?

For each of these questions, a list of criteria was provided and participants were given opportunity to select their top three choices for each question using stick-on dots. In total, 137 people participated in the exercise. **Tables 5.1 and 5.2**

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summarize the results. Additional information regarding the complete list of criteria and unsolicited comments is available in **D** (under separate cover).

Table 5.1 What makes places walkable and attractive?			
Item	Downtown Area	Suburban Area	Total City²
	Rank¹	Rank	Rank
Integrated with Transit	1	1	1
Connected Street Network	2	4	2
Physical Separation from Vehicles	3	2	3
Mixed Land Use	5	3	4
Wide Sidewalks	4	Not in top 5	5
Vibrant Public Places	Not in top 5	3	Not in top 5
Low Traffic Volume / Low Speeds	Not in top 5	4	Not in top 5
Green Space	Not in top 5	5	Not in top 5
<p>1. The table summarizes the top 5 criteria selected the most frequently by respondents for the Downtown and Suburban areas separately.</p> <p>2. The Total City category is the ranking of the sum of most frequent responses for the Downtown and Suburban areas combined.</p>			

Table 5.2. What needs to be implemented to get more people walking more often?			
Item	Downtown Area	Suburban Area	Total City²
	Rank¹	Rank	Rank
Commercial Activity Close to Work Home and Transit	1	1	1
More Pathway Linkages (Short Cuts)	3	2	2
Enhance Snow Removal	2	Not in top 5	3
Better Sidewalk Conditions	4	3	4
More Sidewalks	Not in top 5	3	Not in top 5
Enhance Crosswalks and Signals	Not in top 5	4	Not in top 5
More Greenery / Trees	5	5	5
<p>1. The table summarizes the top 5 criteria selected the most frequently by respondents for the Downtown and Suburban areas separately.</p> <p>2. The Total City category is the ranking of the sum of most frequent responses for the Downtown and Suburban areas.</p>			

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5.4.2 Comment Sheet Summary

The following is a synopsis of comments received from Comment Sheets available at Public Open Houses. Some comments have been included as direct quotations, and in cases where a number of people provided the same or similar opinion, comments have been paraphrased. They are grouped around the following themes:

1. Streetscape Design
2. Sidewalk Design
3. Sidewalk and Pathway Maintenance
4. Street Crossings and Traffic Calming
5. Traffic Operations
6. City Planning
7. Enforcement
8. Pedestrian Network
9. General Comments

5.4.2.1 Streetscape Design

- Separating pedestrians from traffic is important. Some responded that trees, planters and bollards perform the same buffering function as on-street parking but the space used by such features either results in additional sidewalk clutter or results in a loss of parking spaces. Sidewalk clutter was noted in several instances as a detriment to the function of the streetscape. Several respondents felt that more on-street parking helps to slow cars and enhance pedestrian safety.
- There were opposing opinions on sidewalk width. Some felt “the wider the better” especially in busy high pedestrian areas. Others felt that some of the busiest and best pedestrian streets in the city (i.e. Elgin and Bank St N.) function very well with the limited sidewalk width that could be achieved between building facades and the curb.
- Sidewalks should be set back as far as possible from the curb and traffic. In cases where high volume, high speed traffic (particularly buses and trucks) travel close to pedestrians, barriers should be installed. (i.e. McKenzie King Bridge).
- There should be a sign with the name of the street in all orientations at the corners to improve wayfinding.

5.4.2.2 Sidewalk Design

- Any road that is reconstructed should have a 1.8m to 2.0m sidewalk with a boulevard if possible.
- Sidewalks should be built to be flatter where there is no room for boulevards between the sidewalk and curb. Roller coaster” sidewalks where numerous driveway ramps exist should be avoided.
- Sidewalks must be aligned with crosswalks at intersections. Forcing pedestrians and wheelchairs to navigate through cars to get to the crosswalk is dangerous.
- Where a walking path or sidewalk is located adjacent to a multi-use pathway, the walking path should be designated for pedestrian use only (i.e. Kanata Avenue).

5.4.2.3 Street Crossings and Traffic Calming

- There were divided opinions on the value of mid-block crossings. Some commented that they are a bad idea, taking up valuable space, slowing

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traffic flow, encouraging laziness and jay-walking. Others commented that more, safe mid-block crossings are beneficial and needed.

- Islands for pedestrians on two-lane streets were noted as a bad idea as they impede emergency vehicles and restrict traffic flow.
- Crosswalks (at intersections) need to be redesigned to be more user-friendly. Road designers have added corner radii to make it easier for cars to move, therefore the same should be done for pedestrians.
- The value of speed bumps was questioned as they may force drivers closer to the edge of the street and closer to pedestrians.
- Concrete and interlocking stone treatments in intersections were seen as a waste of money by some—they break up after a couple of years and do not seem to accomplish much.
- Bump-outs are hazards for cyclists. They also lead to a loss of parking spaces, which discourages people from living in town as they can't have cars.

5.4.2.4 Traffic Signals and Operations

- Traffic signals must switch immediately when the walk button is pushed—waiting for the walk sign is frustrating and discouraging. Push buttons should be removed at intersections that already have signals, and the walk signal should be activated automatically.
- More consistency, shorter and more predictable wait times are necessary at mid-block pedestrian-activated crossings. Pedestrians are frustrated by wait times and sometimes cross before the signal changes.
- The flashing “don't walk” signals should be removed as drivers “cue” on them and speed through the intersection before signals turn red.
- A preference for pedestrian countdown signals at intersections was noted.
- The city should look at alternatives in busy high volume pedestrian intersections such as the “pedestrian scramble”.
- Changing one-way streets in the downtown to two-way (i.e. O'Connor) may have negative effects on pedestrians as they have to be aware of traffic flowing in two directions rather than one. Furthermore, the “right turn on red” should not be permitted for turns from a one-way to a one-way. Allowing drivers to make the turn on red seems to encourage them to ignore pedestrians.

5.4.2.5 Sidewalk and Pathway Maintenance

- Consider a level of winter sidewalk maintenance like the transit and bicycle system so pedestrians know which local streets are cleared first and to the highest standard.
- City standards for ice and snow removal, particularly the speed of response, must be improved especially at corners/intersections.
- Use more grit instead of salt and put it on the sidewalks early in the day so people can walk.
- There needs to be better clearing of leaves in the fall—they impair drainage and lead to pedestrians getting splashed. Leaves are also a hazard to cyclists.
- Plough the NCC pathways in winter, especially those that people use as basic transportation routes.

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5.4.2.6 City Planning

- The Pedestrian Plan needs to identify “carrots” (i.e. reduced transit rates in downtown) and “sticks” (i.e. better enforcement of red-light running, speeding and tax on downtown parking).
- Respondents felt that it is good that there was consideration being given to not only hard infrastructure but also to urban/city planning (proximity of services, density etc.).
- Better dialogue is needed between city staff responsible for roads and those responsible for pedestrian design.
- “It is very important to choose a future in which the urban core is highly pedestrian oriented. A general goal of 10% (modal share) is very disappointing. It would be particularly disappointing if we did not target a higher percentage in the downtown and adjacent neighbourhoods.”
- Public art on barren streets such as Albert and Slater may encourage more pedestrian use.
- “On-street parking is not the enemy and street meter parking encourages people to walk from store to store. Large lots on the other hand cater to commuters”.
- In the suburbs, land-use policy and design policy changes are needed to increase pedestrian traffic. All new subdivisions should include sidewalks to encourage walking. An action plan is needed to put short cuts in cul-de-sac neighbourhoods and make walking routes shorter and easier.
- “Don’t build so many roads.”
- Manotick is expected to double in size in the next 10 years with no apparent plans for infrastructure improvements. Increased traffic makes pedestrian and bicycle travel almost impossible. A truck bypass of the main area is essential.
- It is necessary to accept that walking is very important to transit and that the city should be designed so people don’t need to own a car to live in it.
- Busing of school children should be given a lower priority to encourage more walking.

5.4.2.7 Enforcement

- More rigorous enforcement of traffic laws is needed for the benefit of pedestrians and cyclists. For example, a mechanism is needed to penalize vehicles that do not stop behind the stop bar at stop signs. When they fail to do so they force pedestrians, strollers and wheelchairs into the traffic lane.
- Red-light cameras should be installed at every intersection to penalize red-light runners. Contract-out their installation so there will be no cost to taxpayers.
- “More police foot patrols are needed.”
- Enforce no bicycle riding on sidewalks, bicycles riding the wrong way on one-way streets and red-light running, and lack of proper lighting on bikes at night.

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- The plan needs to address pedestrians “running into” cyclists, rollerbladers and skateboarders on city walking pathways (i.e. “slower users stay to the right”).

5.4.2.8 Pedestrian Network

- “The Corkstown Bridge is well worth the money it cost.”
- “Three cheers for those who fought for the new bike and pedestrian bridge over the canal. Now let’s do the same at Clegg and Fifth.”
- Pedestrian bridges should be added over Airport Parkway from Cahill to South Keys, over Queen Elizabeth Drive and Colonel By.
- Replace the pedestrian bridge that used to link Strathcona Park and Vanier (old floating bridge).
- Wider sidewalks are needed on O’Connor and Metcalfe between Nepean and Queen Street. There is heavy pedestrian usage and sidewalks are too narrow.
- Bells Corners is a perfect area to improve walkability—many destinations are in close proximity to one another and traffic on Richmond is very heavy.
- More pedestrian islands are needed (i.e. Wellington and Bank).
- The informal path from the transitway bridge along the Rideau River up to the paved path at Belmont is in poor condition. This should be upgraded to an official pathway.
- “Villages like Manotick are quickly being consumed into the urban area with heavy traffic but they lack sidewalks.” Places like Manotick need to be connected to the broader community. A pedestrian crossing of Bridge/Main Street is needed as there is only one set of signals and it is very difficult to cross. There are very few sidewalks and none between two schools. Shoulders are very narrow on Long Island Drive making it difficult for children to walk to school.
- Merivale has some completely different areas, some that are quite walkable such as the Civic Hospital and Carlington areas, however areas south of Baseline Road and west of Clyde are not pedestrian friendly. “Link all the parking lots on Merivale Road with sidewalks so you don’t have to go back to the sidewalk along the road to get through.” Long blocks south of Meadowlands make it difficult to travel north-south as connections are farther between.
- “The Experimental Farm is a wonderful area for walking and cycling and must be preserved entirely as such.”
- Refurbish, repaint, and fix the signage on the pedestrian/cyclist bridge over the Queensway at Harmer. This is an important link for children to get to school and an important access point over the Queensway.
- “The Auriga/Antares (Nepean) Business Park from Merivale to Hwy. 16 and centred around Hunt Club is a disaster for pedestrians. If you work there, there is no place to go within walking distance. It should be redesigned and include retail destinations.”
- “The NCC lands near Navaho and Woodroffe are also an important cycling and walking link. The city must ensure that the NCC does not sell off these lands.”
- “The roadway under Rideau Centre is awful and should be redesigned.”
- Pedestrian activated signals at the National Art Gallery and on Main at Clegg and Beckwith take too long to change and are poorly coordinated.

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5.4.2.9 General Comments

- “A person’s choice to walk is very personal. If someone wants to walk they will and if they don’t want to they’ll justify some other means.”
- “I want to live in a people city, not a car city.”
- “The City should look at naturalization as a way to make the city more walkable.”
- “This is a winter city. Cut transit prices in the winter and raise parking prices in the summer.”
- “This study shouldn’t be limited to pedestrians. Cyclists should be included.”

5.5 Pedestrian Plan Survey

Another significant component of the broader public consultation process for the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan was the Pedestrian Plan Survey available at Ottawa.ca and distributed to residents at the Public Open Houses. In addition, all interested residents, community representatives, and city staff consulted during the study were given opportunity to complete the survey. A total of 107 surveys were submitted, and varied in their degree of completion. A copy of the survey form is included in **Appendix C** (under separate cover).

The survey, while not intended to be statistically valid, was administered to gauge public opinion regarding the ‘walkability’ of Ottawa. It provides a snapshot of opinions regarding the desired improvements to the pedestrian realm across the city.

The survey was comprised of 13 questions arranged in four parts:

1. Why You Walk
2. Walkable Places
3. Walking Promotion
4. General Comments

The detailed results for each question are presented in **Appendix C** (under separate cover).

Overwhelmingly, survey respondents agreed that walking was a more desirable mode of transportation than vehicular travel, although residents were equally divided as to whether or not Ottawa was a walkable City. Respondents were most likely to walk for recreation and shopping. Safety and/or the perception of safety, and poor winter maintenance, were common factors discouraging people from walking. When asked to provide good examples of walkable cities outside of Ottawa, residents primarily chose Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, due to their attractive streetscapes, well-maintained walking routes, and mix of services and shops.

In order to improve the walkability of Ottawa, survey respondents felt that improved city planning, better maintenance, and more attractive streetscape design were the most important factors. Walking promotion and education programs targeting young people were recommended, as well as programs for seniors and commuters. Unexpectedly, the same downtown and centretown areas identified as being highly desirable locations for walking were also considered to be high priority areas for pedestrian facility improvements. It is important to note, however, that the majority of survey respondents were from more central areas of the city and may have skewed the results.

5.6 Presentations to Other Stakeholders

5.6.1 Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee

April 19, 2007 Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee, Ottawa City Hall, at 7:00 pm

A presentation delivered to the Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC) provided an update on the status of the study and findings to date. Following the presentation a number of items were discussed. They included:

- School zones;
- Roundabouts;
- Speed humps;
- Crosswalk markings;
- Walk home to school campaigns;
- Advertising emphasis on scenic routes in Ottawa, and;
- Listing (Providing) this information at hotels.

A copy of the presentation is included in **Appendix E**.(under separate cover)

5.6.2 Public Health Branch

October 4, 2007, Public Health Branch, Ottawa City Hall, 2:00pm

Given the substantial correlation between walking and the health benefits of physical activity, the Public Health Division had a vested interest in the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan. A presentation was made to staff and management of the Public Health Branch. As part of the discussion, the group was ask to identify areas or initiatives where Ottawa Public Health might collaborate with efforts by other City departments to improve the pedestrian environment. The following key areas were identified:

- **Walking promotion**
 - Participating in an integrated or collaborative communication strategy at a variety of levels from broad public campaigns to specific programs they undertake with individual organizations and neighbourhood groups.
 - Partnering for events related to Active Transportation and generally being ambassadors for the Active Transportation agenda.
- **Identifying partnership opportunities and facilitating their creation** — Through the type of work that they do, Ottawa Public Health is very well connected at numerous levels in the community, from the management levels to individuals and small groups that they work with on a day-to-day basis. These existing relationships could be further explored with a view to include the pedestrian agenda.
- **Collaborating with other city departments on funding applications** — For example, jointly pursuing funding for programs that support crime prevention where part of the solution may be improvement of the pedestrian environment.
- **Participation in pedestrian roundtable discussions** — Representatives of various departments meeting to brainstorm ideas of different aspects of walking in Ottawa.

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A copy of the presentation is included in **Appendix F** (under separate cover).

5.7 Summary

Through the variety of consultation used to generate discussion and solicit opinions, it is clear that staff, stakeholders and the public recognize the many facets **any plan** aimed at getting more people to choose to walk more often in Ottawa must address. **Chapters 6** through **12** of the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan provide the foundation for an integrated strategy.