



WALKABILITY IN TORONTO'S HIGH-RISE NEIGHBOURHOODS

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Walkability in Toronto's High-rise Neighbourhoods – Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Walkability is a quantitative and qualitative measurement of how inviting or un-inviting an area is to pedestrians. Walking matters more and more to towns and cities and the connection between walking and the social vibrancy of neighbourhoods is becoming clear. Built environments that promote and facilitate walking — to stores, work, school and amenities — are better places to live, have higher real estate values, promote healthier lifestyles, have lower greenhouse gas emission rates and show higher levels of social cohesion.

This walkability study examines eight Toronto high-rise neighbourhoods – seven in the inner suburbs and one in the core. They include: Chalkfarm, Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park, North Kipling, The Peanut, St James Town, Scarborough Village, Steeles L'Amoreaux, and Thorncliffe Park. Group discussions, surveys and mapping exercises took place in these neighbourhoods between the fall of 2009 and 2010. In each neighbourhood, a small sample of residents (25 to 40) were asked to share their opinions of the walking environment, highlighting safety concerns, traffic and connectivity problems, how they access shopping, work or school,

where they like to walk and other issues. The results were compiled and discussed in preliminary reports. This overview report brings together the cross-tabulated data gathered from all eight high-rise study areas and presents a summary of findings.

Our findings are the result of community-led examinations of walking conditions in Toronto's high-rise neighbourhoods. These walkability studies are the first of their kind in North America. They were jointly funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the Toronto Community Foundation (TCF).

Principal investigator, Paul Hess, Professor of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto, brings his expertise in pedestrian environments, urban policy and design to this project. Community walking advocate, Jane Farrow, co-authored this report and several of the preliminary reports on behalf of Jane's Walk, the walkability studies' partner organization.

PDF copies of the Executive Summary and this full report are available at:

http://faculty.geog.utoronto.ca/Hess/hess_home.html
www.janeswalk.net/walkability
www.citiescentre.utoronto.ca



Walkability workshop participants in Chalkfarm

FINDING #1: Many residents of high-rise neighbourhoods do not have cars and are dependent on walking and transit to perform their daily activities.

Most discussions about the suburbs assume car ownership is universal. This was not true among our study participants. The majority (56%) reported that they do not have a driver's licence and 42% reported their household does not own a car. Another 43% of respondents rely on one vehicle shared among several adults in their household. Among participants aged 25 or over, 84% of households have fewer vehicles than potential drivers. For single-parent households, 67% have no car.

With low rates of auto-ownership, study participants rely heavily on walking and transit. For women in particular, of whom only 36% reported holding a licence, walking is extremely important to their daily lives. In general, walking was the most important mode for grocery shopping, doing general errands and helping children to school. To grocery shop, for example, 32% of participants normally walked and 21% used multiple modes. In most cases, this entails people walking to the store in one direction and taking transit or a taxi with their groceries on the return trip.

Residents are also highly dependent on walking to get to work. Among participants, 16% report walking to work as their principal mode and 41% use transit, which includes walking to and from the transit stop. This compares to only 21% who drive or are driven to work.

In sum, these suburban neighbourhoods are busy with pedestrians and do not conform to stereotypical images of empty suburban streets.

“The whole community's not [designed] for walking, and all immigrants, they don't have cars.”

- Scarborough Village Participant

FINDING #2: Residents of high-rise neighbourhoods face hostile environments that were not designed for walking.

High-rise neighbourhoods are a product of a post-war planning model that assumed apartment dwellers would have cars. As a result, current residents face hostile walking environments both within their apartment complex and in the area that surrounds it.

Within high-rise complexes, pedestrians face poor connections to their surroundings and lack basic infrastructure. Residents must often force pedestrian connections across property boundaries and through and around fences to access essential destinations like grocery stores and bus stops. Post-war planning ensured that local schools were accessible from single-family areas, but did not forge connections to apartments where many children now live. Pedestrian facilities, including walkways and basic lighting, are often missing, are in the wrong locations or are of very low quality.

Once pedestrians leave their high-rise areas, they find themselves on large arterial roadways. Although these roads were conceived as facilities for moving vehicles as efficiently as possible, they now act as de facto local main streets for high-rise residents and must be traversed to access most destinations. Sidewalks are often narrow and directly abut roadways with fast-moving traffic. There are few crosswalks and traffic lights. When crossing signals are present, participants report that crossing times were too short to cross safely. Albeit designed for cars, these roadways are used every day by hundreds of thousands of pedestrians across Toronto.

FINDING #3: Most people see car ownership as the solution to their mobility challenges.

Many study participants live in ways lauded by planners and policy makers: they shop locally, walk and use transit instead of driving. They do so, however, in very difficult conditions and not by choice.

Although many study participants yearn for improvements to their walking environment, they see car ownership as a clear means of improving their lives. Our data suggest income is the chief barrier to car ownership. When asked if they wanted a car, almost every person in the focus groups raised their hand. This was also reflected in the survey data; more than half (52%) of respondents said that they were hoping or planning to get a car in the future.

In other words, these are not places to “get people out of their cars,” but are instead, places to support people who are not yet in them. This requires sustained and substantial efforts to improve walking environments and transit service.

Interestingly, the amount of time a participant has lived in Canada is not related to the likelihood of car ownership. Our data reveal that newer immigrants own cars at the same rates as longer-term residents with similar household incomes. In other words, there is no adjustment period to Canada’s automobile-oriented culture.

FINDING #4: Different groups perceive walking conditions differently.

Despite challenges, on the whole, study participants were consistently positive about their walking environments; 61% agreed or strongly agreed that their neighbourhood “is a good place for walking.” This positive overall assessment weakened for different groups with regard to specific issues.

Parents, and single parents in particular, were fearful for their children. Their evaluations of the overall walking conditions, traffic safety and regularity of crossings were more negative than non-parents. Overall, only 24% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt comfortable letting their children walk unaccompanied in their neighbourhood.

Young people, who are exceedingly reliant on walking for travel, reported anxiety over personal security when walking in their neighbourhood and concern about “scary people” or places with “too few people.” They were also more likely to cross streets without traffic lights or crosswalks and to use shortcuts.

Men were less likely than women to adapt their behaviour over security concerns. In survey results, 56% of women and 73% of people 65 years and older reported avoiding walking at night due to security concerns. Both groups kept to well-lit areas if they needed to walk at night.



Pedestrians exposed to traffic on Markham Road in Scarborough Village

FINDING #5: There are substantial variations in the walking conditions of high-rise neighbourhoods.

Although most high-rise neighbourhoods have design and infrastructure shortcomings typical of urban environments built for cars, each high-rise community's walking environment is distinct. For instance, the layout and planning of Thorncliffe Park is advantageous to pedestrian movement and connectivity. Thorncliffe Park's relatively slow-moving, three-lane road encircles a densely-populated central core with community amenities, schools and shops, augmenting connectivity and fostering social cohesion. Residents in this community reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the walking environment among all eight study areas.

Conversely, road conditions in other high-rise neighbourhoods are more hostile and may constrain pedestrian movement and produce un-walkable conditions. For instance, in The Peanut, Don Mills Road behaves like a racetrack encircling the central core of schools and shops. This road creates a major threat to the safety and security of pedestrians getting to and from schools or services.

In North Kipling, the community's linear layout —with several high-rises extending along one wide arterial road, almost one kilometre from shops — contributes to residents' sense of isolation and dependency on transit, which is perceived as unreliable, crowded and costly.

Scarborough Village faces a different challenge. The community has services, schools and shops nearby, but very few direct or formal routes to access them. This forces people to take risky, unmaintained shortcuts, or cross six lanes of traffic at mid-block, often with the burden of children and groceries.

In Chalkfarm, the amenities are also relatively nearby, but high levels of anxiety and fear about personal security appear to substantially constrain people's mobility.

FINDING # 6: A poorly maintained walking environment contributes to residents' disenfranchisement and feelings of resignation, which, in turn, makes maintenance and repairs less likely.

In most neighbourhoods, residents expressed feelings of despair and hopelessness about their living conditions, their mobility and the prospects for improvement. Persistent issues of concern include litter, pooling water, broken benches, poor lighting, missing curb cuts, slushy and icy sidewalks and overflowing garbage bins.

Walking environments are not simply routes from A to B, they are connective tissue where critical social interactions can occur that knit people together. Poor walking environments destabilize communities; they increase the likelihood that people avoid walking and interacting with each other in favour of staying inside, using cars where possible or simply moving away.



Residents stop to chat in Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park

FINDING #7: In spite of the shortcomings, people enjoy walking in their communities because it connects them with their neighbours and their neighbourhood.

In every community we studied, people spoke glowingly of particular places and things in their neighbourhood — the parks, the people, the shops, the front steps of their buildings, the community gardens, the ravines, the playgrounds, the trees and flowers and the places to sit and chat. Our respondents were highly aware of the positive correlations between sitting and walking, prompting one resident to coin the term “sitability”. Many people, especially youth and seniors, said they felt safer with people around. They wanted places on their paths to sit, rest and socialize.

Residents understand that outsiders view their neighbourhoods with suspicion and unease. For many, this was a source of discontent, frustration and embarrassment. Despite these external perceptions, most study

participants stated they liked where they live and wanted to stay to make it better. This extraordinary neighbourhood commitment testifies to a resilience and desire for community stability. These community sentiments would be validated and enhanced by investments in the walking environment on public and private property.

Walking environments are not simply routes from A to B, they are connective tissue where critical social interactions can occur that knit people together. Poor walking environments destabilize communities; they increase the likelihood that people avoid walking and interacting with each other in favour of staying inside, using cars where possible or simply moving away.



A busy sidewalk in North Kipling

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STUDY BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

This study describes the walking conditions faced every day by residents in Toronto's high-rise neighbourhoods, particularly in inner suburbs of Etobicoke, York, North York, East York and Scarborough. This report follows a series of walkability workshops with residents in eight neighbourhoods. Preliminary reports, which detail the local walking environment, were produced for each area. This overview report draws together the data gathered through the studies, examines similarities and differences across the eight neighbourhoods and makes general conclusions and recommendations.¹

The preliminary reports are available at http://faculty.geog.utoronto.ca/Hess/hess_home.html and at www.janeswalk.net/walkability.

Transportation experts and planning officials recognize the importance of creating good places for people to walk. Increased rates of walking reduce the congestion, greenhouse gas emissions and general pollution associated with automobile use (Perrotta, 2011). Walking is also an integral part of a healthy lifestyle. Planners and public health researchers acknowledge that the design of cities, and especially the design of their suburbs, dissuades people from walking regularly and has thereby contributed to rapidly rising rates of physical inactivity, obesity and type-two diabetes (Healthy Living Network, 2005; Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2009).

As the benefits of walking are recognized, designers, planners and policy makers are finding ways to make cities more attractive to pedestrians. In newer subur-

1. There are slight differences in the data presented in the preliminary reports due to minor irregularities in the data collection and samples. This was corrected for this report.



High-rise towers in Chalkfarm

ban areas, planners and architects are implementing the ideas of New Urbanism. New Urbanist developments reject conventional low-density development models with looping streets and cul-de-sacs in lieu of high-quality walking environments, with connected street systems and houses that directly front sidewalks (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2010). The Cornell development in Markham is a well-known example, but these ideas are being adopted and implemented in many jurisdictions across Canada and the United States. Likewise, “smart growth” principles have been incorporated in plans by many levels of government, including the Province of Ontario’s Places to Grow Plan and Toronto’s Official Plan. Smart growth principles encourage high development densities, the proximity of different types of activities — such as living, working and shopping — and the use of transit and walking over driving (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2005). The idea of “complete streets” is also gaining ground. This idea challenges transportation planners to consider all street users when designing or redesigning streets, including drivers, transit users, cyclists and pedestrians of various ages and abilities (McCann & Rynne, 2010). Multiple jurisdictions across the United States have already adopted the idea of complete streets and Toronto, too, has been moving in this direction.

Despite this activity, most discussions of walking environments do not adequately address inner suburban areas built in the decades immediately following World War II. Instead, most attention is focused on downtown areas, where development densities are already high, uses are mixed and many elements of good walking environments are already in place. Alternatively, attention is paid to greenfield areas in outer suburban regions where new development may create supportive walking environments from scratch (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2005). A much smaller body of research and policy considers retrofitting older suburban areas like those found in Toronto’s inner suburban areas. Most of this work involves only hypothetical design studies, showing, for example, how a suburban shopping centre can be transformed into a mixed-use, pedestrian precinct (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). These studies usually assume that few, if any, people are already walking in suburban areas and, therefore, do not examine the experiences of existing suburban pedestrians.

This study starts by acknowledging that many people do walk in the suburbs. To our knowledge, it is the first of its kind to focus on suburban high-rise neighbourhoods where low-income, suburban pedestrians have very limited access to cars. It represents a unique effort to understand how residents in suburban apartment neighbourhoods perceive and use their local pedestrian environments. The study is not intended as an inventory or instrument to systematically assess the walking environment. Elsewhere, researchers and planners have developed tools with the purpose of statistically measuring conditions that are positively associated with walking (Moudon & Lee, 2003). These types of tools are designed to improve local conditions to increase low or very low walking rates.

This study takes the opposite approach. Instead, we are concerned with very large numbers of people who walk despite the unsupportive, often hostile, conditions found in many inner suburban areas. Additionally, we are particularly interested in residents’ own knowledge and experiences of the walking conditions they face every day. With this in mind, we designed our study to be community-focused; it is based around a series of workshops and focus groups conducted with over 250 residents in eight high-rise neighbourhoods across Toronto.

This is the first study to focus on suburban apartment neighbourhoods where low-income suburban pedestrians have no, or only limited, access to cars. It represents a unique effort to understand how residents in suburban apartment neighbourhoods perceive and use their local pedestrian environments.

STUDY CONTEXT: TORONTO'S SUBURBAN APARTMENT NEIGHBOURHOODS

Contrary to most people's impressions of the suburbs, North American suburbs include large numbers of apartments. In the United States, for example, more than a quarter of suburban housing does not conform to a detached single-family housing type (Larco, 2010).

Modernist high-rise apartments were integral to the development of Toronto's post-war suburbs. Between the 1950s and the 1980s, almost 1,200 apartment buildings were built with five stories or more, containing nearly 280,000 apartment units (E.R.A. Architects, 2010). These buildings were located in clusters across suburban municipalities surrounding the Old City of Toronto, but are now located within the city limits. These apartments, which were mostly privately owned, account for more than 30% of Toronto's housing stock, and over half of the city's rental units (E.R.A. Architects, 2010).

Unlike single-family housing, where subdivisions were purposefully planned around schools and parks, most suburban high-rise areas were created piecemeal by

individual developers along arterial roadways. Some apartment areas, like Thorncliffe Park, were designed with access to shopping, services, schools and transit in mind, but this was the exception. At the time of building, planners believed that apartments should "be developed under controls which protect neighbouring single-family dwellings against unfavourable influences" (Metro Toronto Planning Board, 1959: 96). As a result, developers were often prohibited from connecting high-rise complexes to subdivision streets and were even required to erect fences between their developments and single-family houses, in some cases, making local primary schools very difficult to reach (Hess, unpublished). Likewise, although many apartments are located near strip malls and shopping centres, pedestrian travel to these services was not envisioned. Consequently, pedestrian routes from apartments to these centres are often indirect, rely on paths across private land, necessitate crossing large roadways, and lack basic infrastructure such as paving and lighting. Finally, these areas are underserved by public transit. Although most nearby arterial roadways have bus routes, service is often inadequate and distances to job centres are great.



High-rise towers in Steeles L'Amoreaux



The north end of the Peanut Triangle

WHO LIVES IN THE TOWERS?

To understand the difficulty of pedestrian travel in suburban high-rise areas, it is critical to understand their residents. Home to over 200 distinct ethnicities, Toronto is a city of international networks, high levels of education and great economic potential. Like many areas of Toronto, residents in high-rise neighbourhoods represent this diversity. These neighbourhoods also reveal how Toronto is an increasingly divided city, where affordable housing, jobs and educational opportunities are becoming harder to access for greater segments of the population — particularly for newcomers.

In terms of housing, Toronto is considered a “severely unaffordable city.” In 2009, it was ranked 215th least affordable city of 272 in industrialised countries (United Way Toronto, 2010). Whereas the downtown core of Toronto was once the reception area for new immigrants and a centre for low-income households, over the past two decades, these people have tended to settle in more affordable inner suburbs. Suburban apartment buildings have increasingly become the city’s source of rental housing for low-income families, which include

both newcomers and longer-term residents of Toronto. This is not because apartments were built as social housing; indeed, more than three-quarters of buildings are under private ownership. Rather, these buildings represent much of the city’s less expensive housing because of their disrepair and location in neighbourhoods far from the centre, with limited access to amenities and transit.

In their report *Vertical Poverty*, United Way Toronto shows that the percentage of families classified as “low-income” in Toronto’s high-rise rental buildings has risen: from 25% in 1981, to 39% in 2006. In Scarborough, 48% of families renting apartments in high-rises are classified as low-income (United Way, 2011: 37).² Likewise, E.R.A. Architects’ 2011 report *Tower Neighbourhood Renewal in the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, found that over 70% of Toronto’s apartment towers are located in census dissemination areas with very high or high social need, measured by variables such as low income attainment and unemployment rates.³

With scant data available, exact figures are unknown, yet many buildings appear to house large numbers of new

immigrants to Canada. University of Toronto research on Toronto's income polarization found a statistical relationship between renters in suburban areas and new immigrants (Hulchanski, 2011). Likewise, United Way Toronto's non-random sample of almost 2,200 tenants in private-sector high-rise buildings found that 30% had arrived in Canada since 2004. These numbers roughly accord with the percentage of new arrivals among our workshop participants. Aside from affordability, immigrants tend to settle into these neighbourhoods to be close to kin and community, creating minority enclaves where supportive relationships help make ends meet.

As well as a disproportionate number of newcomers and low-income earners, many high-rise apartments house families with children, which was not the original intention of the builders. Apartments were generally seen as middle-class housing more suitable for working singles and couples without children. Nevertheless, many apartments built in the 1960s and 1970s were large and had multiple bedrooms, prompting occupation by families with children even early on. This was often deemed problematic. For example, a 1966 report entitled *A Preliminary Study of the Social Implications of High Density Living Conditions* concluded with some concern that "there are indications that a large part of the apartment supply will have to serve as the *only* form of housing for large numbers of families, from newlyweds through child-rearing and the grandparent phases" (emphasis in the original). This trend has only accelerated. In the Vertical Poverty study sample, 30% of households were run by single parents and another 45% by two-parent families. In other words, 75% of the households in the sample had children (United Way, 2011: 142). This figure is somewhat higher than the proportion of families with children in our study. Still, more than half of our workshop and survey participants came from households with children. With non-random samples, both figures are only rudimen-

tary. Still, these figures fly in the face of persistent beliefs and planning models that assume children live in single-family detached housing.

TOWER APARTMENTS AND TRANSPORTATION

Low-income, recent immigration and large families characterize the population in these neighbourhoods only in part. These high-rise towers also house many high-income earners, people born in Canada or who have lived here for many years, and singles and couples without children. These common characteristics are important, however, as they signal a population with complicated travel needs. For example, most residents are unlikely to have a driver's licence and access to a car. Indeed, 2006 *Transportation Tomorrow* survey data show that residents in most towers have low car-ownership rates and above average rates of walking and transit ridership. Suburban neighbourhood location may also complicate travel needs for newcomers. Obstacles to employment, including limited English skills and the lack of recognition for foreign credentials, often mean that newcomers find themselves in low-paying service sector jobs, which involve long commutes to the core or to other suburbs.

This population exhibits behaviours considered desirable according to City and Provincial policies aiming to reduce auto-use and related greenhouse gas production, and promote sustainability. Despite this sustainable behaviour, the tenor of most debates around transportation in the suburbs assumes that everyone drives. As such, the activities of these residents go largely unacknowledged. Although they exhibit some of the most sustainable travel habits, this is not by choice. Indeed, they face some of the worst walking environments and have had to learn to cope with sub-standard infrastructure that privileges the movement of cars. As a result they endure onerous trips for daily activities and risk their physical health and safety for travel.

Our report is a response to this situation. It highlights the often difficult conditions faced by suburban pedestrians and tries to understand their experiences and perceptions. We believe that understanding the use of these places is crucial for positive change. We also believe that residents themselves must have a strong voice and play a central role in decision-making and advocating for change. Our work provides both residents and the City with information to foster dialogue.

2. Statistics Canada defines low-income by high proportional expenditures on food, clothing and shelter. The figure is adjusted for family size and area of residence. For a family of four in a large metropolitan area, the 2006 cut-off was \$38,610.

3. Dissemination areas are the smallest geographical unit of statistical data. The socio-demographic statistics for DAs give only an indication for apartment dwellers, as some DAs contain apartments along with other types of housing. (See E.R.A. Architects, 2010: 17 app. B).



Don Mills Rd, The Peanut

We encourage the wide-spread use of this study, in Toronto and beyond, and urge readers to access our Walkability Toolkit as well, to better understand walking environments and become advocates for your own community's walkability.

Please see www.janeswalk.net/walkability.

Albeit not by choice, inner suburban high-rise residents exhibit some of the most sustainable travel habits in Toronto, while also facing some of the worst walking environments.



High-rise towers in North Kipling

METHODS

STUDY AREA SELECTION & RECRUITMENT

This research draws on information gathered during field visits to eight Toronto high-rise neighbourhoods and in intensive workshops held with residents in the following locations:

North Kipling:
2667/2677 Kipling Avenue, Etobicoke

Scarborough Village:
215 Markham Road, Scarborough

The Peanut:
175 Shaughnessy Boulevard, North York

St James Town:
200 Wellesley Street East, Downtown Toronto

Steeles L'Amoreaux:
331 Glendower Circuit, Scarborough

Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park:
4040 Lawrence Ave East, Scarborough

Chalkfarm:
180 Chalkfarm Drive, North York

Thorncliffe Park:
18 Thorncliffe Park Drive, East York

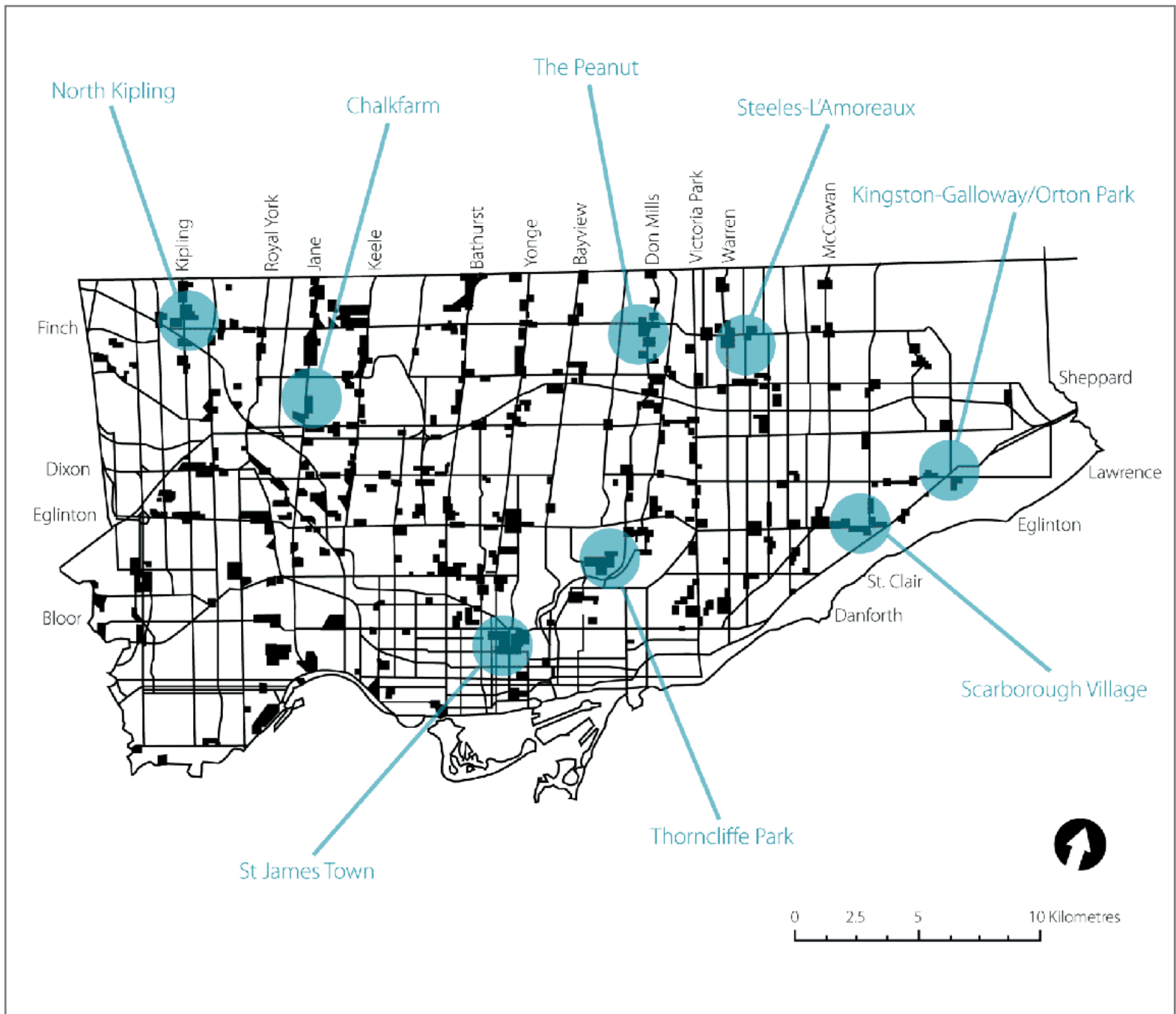
This report primarily focuses on general findings rather than on particular neighbourhoods, although the Study Area Snapshots provide individual neighbourhood descriptions and discussion in a subsequent section.

Study areas were selected based on their geographic distribution within Toronto's inner suburbs. They represent a variety of environments, from master-planned areas with high-rises intentionally sited around community facilities to much more speculative, incrementally built areas with high-rises distributed along arterial roadways. Areas were also selected because we either had connections with local organizations that were already engaged in on-going community building or

because the City of Toronto had selected them as pilot sites for the Tower Renewal program. In the Tower Renewal sites (North Kipling, Scarborough Village, The Peanut, St James Town), the City's Tower Renewal office assisted with outreach and workshop logistics. The support of community organizations and enthusiasm of local residents was critical for participant recruitment and workshop success.

Participation was sought through flyers posted in community centres and apartment lobbies and through the help of active community members who informed friends and neighbours of the workshops. In Scarborough Village and North Kipling, recruitment also took place during Tower Renewal community barbecues. To help recruit a wide range of residents, we provided childcare and some language interpretation support. All information gathered in the workshop was treated as confidential; identifying information of any participant was not collected. About 250 people participated in the study, representing an average of 32 per site. More than one workshop was conducted at some sites in order to recruit a larger number or wider range of people, most often to better access a range of ages. The socio-demographic characteristics of participants are presented in a subsequent section.

The St James Town site is an exception in the study as it is the only area located in central Toronto. It was selected both because it is a Tower Renewal pilot site and because its proximity to services, employment and transit, provides a counterpoint to the inner suburban study areas. The differences and similarities between all eight sites are discussed at length in this report.



Map of study areas

FIELDWORK, PHOTOGRAPHY & MAPPING

In preparation for workshops, sites were visited multiple times by research staff. Staff walked each site carefully, noting sidewalk conditions, major crossing locations, and locations of fences, shortcuts, shopping areas, schools, parks, playgrounds and other neighbourhood features. Large numbers of photographs were taken to document local conditions. Field notes from these visits were used to supplement GIS data to produce maps used in the workshops, as described below. More importantly, familiarity with the neighbourhoods helped research staff have more meaningful conversations with residents. Staff members were able to ask about

particular conditions noted in surveys and better understood local references used by residents in discussion. After the workshops, additional site visits were made to observe and document issues brought up by residents.

Focus group discussions

Facilitated focus groups of six to ten residents were used to further understand how people perceive their walking environment and local public spaces. Discussions were semi-structured around themes including shopping, sidewalk quality, street crossings, shortcuts, places people like, places people avoid, etc. Focus group participants were seated around a large display map of their area so they could point out particular places and features. These comments were directly recorded on the maps by the facilitator or residents themselves. Summary maps from this exercise are found in appendix 3. A second researcher also took detailed notes from the discussion. During analysis, maps and notes were coded and organised into themes according to the focus of individual group discussions and to issues that emerged across groups.



Jane Farrow conducting a focus group in Scarborough Village

PRELIMINARY REPORTS

The results of the workshops were discussed and disseminated in preliminary reports produced through the study, from fall 2009 to spring 2010. They describe the project, note which community organizations participated in the workshop and provide a preliminary summary of the findings from each study area. This report draws from and extends the preliminary reports.

These reports are available on Paul Hess' website at: http://faculty.geog.utoronto.ca/Hess/hess_home.html and on the Jane's Walk website at: www.janeswalk.net/walkability.



Paul Hess conducting a focus group in Thorncliffe Park

STUDY POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

This section describes some socio-demographic characteristics of our survey participants and some differences between neighbourhoods. A total of 253 people completed surveys, an average of 32 participants in each area. Although they characterize a wide range of ages and backgrounds, survey participants should not be taken as representative of the individual study areas, or of Toronto's high-rise neighbourhoods in general; producing a large, random sample was not feasible given the resources available. Although not statistically representative, our data are useful to better understand the travel patterns of people in these areas and begin

to supplement existing datasets that still do not capture pedestrian challenges. This work is intended as the beginning of an important discussion of walking conditions in Toronto's high-rise neighbourhoods and not as a definitive description.

WHO PARTICIPATED?

Dwelling Type

Just over 80% of survey respondents rent units in high-rise buildings. Another 13% live in townhouses. Steeles L'Amoreaux presented the only exception to this trend, where respondents were split equally between townhouses and high-rise apartments. See table 1.

Table 1: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Dwelling Type

STUDY AREA	APARTMENT	TOWNHOUSE	OTHER
Chalkfarm	83	7	10
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	67	13	20
Steeles L'Amoreaux	42	42	16
North Kipling	84	13	3
The Peanut	84	13	3
St James Town	89	11	0
Scarborough Village	97	0	3
Thorncliffe Park	100	0	0
All Areas	80	13	7



A busy driveway in Cougar Court, Scarborough Village

Table 2: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Length of Time at Dwelling

STUDY AREA	<1 YEAR	1-3 YEARS	4-10 YEARS	10+ YEARS
Chalkfarm	48	17	21	14
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	13	20	37	30
Steeles L'Amoreaux	23	26	36	16
North Kipling	19	44	31	6
The Peanut	10	55	16	19
St James Town	0	19	15	67
Scarborough Village	13	36	46	5
Thornccliffe Park	5	33	14	48
All Areas	17	32	28	23

Length of Time at Current Address

The length of residence in the respondents' current dwelling varied widely. See table 2. In general, there were high rates of residential mobility among participants; more than three-quarters reported residing at their current address for less than 10 years. In Chalkfarm, many residents had lived in their place of residence for less than one year (48%). In North Kipling and The Peanut, many people reported local residence of between one and three years (44% and 55%). Many participants in St James Town and Thornccliffe Park have lived in their current dwelling for more than ten years (67% and 48%). These rates may not be representative of the larger local population.

Sex and Age

Overall, two thirds of survey respondents were female (66%) and one third was male (34%). This distribution varied by study area, but most participants were female across all of the areas. See table 3.

Overall, respondents represented a broad range of ages, but most commonly fell in the 40-64 year old group. See table 4. The 18-24 year-old group was under-represented in our results and the representation of seniors and youth were also uneven between sites. Seniors and youth rely heavily on walking during their day-to-day activities. As a result, the data gap in some study areas should be kept in mind when interpreting the results; we believe there is even more reliance on walking in these areas than captured in our data.

Table 3: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Sex

STUDY AREA	FEMALE	MALE
Chalkfarm	73	27
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	64	36
Steeles L'Amoreaux	65	36
North Kipling	70	30
The Peanut	65	36
St James Town	70	30
Scarborough Village	56	44
Thornccliffe Park	67	33
All Areas	66	34

With respect to the survey's representation of age and sex, most study areas included a strong sample of women who work and are responsible for doing household maintenance activities such as shopping and helping children to and from school. These women have complex travel needs, which may be especially difficult to carry out on foot in these adverse environments.

Table 4: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Age Group

STUDY AREA	0-17	18-24	25-39	40-64	65+
Chalkfarm	4	16	36	44	0
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	21	4	14	36	25
Steeles L'Amoreaux	10	16	7	19	48
North Kipling	13	10	37	40	0
The Peanut	0	0	30	47	23
St James Town	22	0	11	33	33
Scarborough Village	13	15	39	33	0
Thorncliffe Park	29	10	29	5	29
All Areas	13	9	26	33	19

Household size and structure

Complex travel needs are also revealed in the types of households that participated in the study. Most participants came from households that are larger than Toronto averages, as reported in 2006 census data. Only 14% came from single person households, compared to 30% in the city as a whole. Conversely, 52% came from households with 4 or more people, compared to 24% for the city as a whole. See table 5.

Large households are due in part to numbers of children. More than half of survey respondents reported having children, 39% report being married or in a partnership with children and 17% stated they are single parents. Almost half of households have children aged 6 or under.

Table 5: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Household Size and Toronto Averages

STUDY AREA	SINGLE PERSONAL HOUSEHOLD	FOUR OR MORE RESIDENTS
All Study Areas	14	52
Toronto	30	24

Thirty-one per cent of respondents reported living in households without children, 16% as single adults, 10% as couples without children, and 5% as households of unrelated adults. The remaining 14% reported living in "other" types of households, which include households both with and without children, that did not fit the given categories on the survey. See table 6.

Table 6: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Household Composition

STUDY AREA	MARRIED NO KIDS	MARRIED W/KIDS	SINGLE NO KIDS	SINGLE PARENT	UN-RELATED ADULTS	OTHER
Chalkfarm	0	46	15	31	8	0
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	14	24	21	24	3	14
Steeles L'Amoreaux	0	38	0	14	3	45
North Kipling	7	60	0	13	7	13
The Peanut	24	41	17	3	0	14
St James Town	8	12	58	12	0	12
Scarborough Village	8	53	8	17	11	3
Thorncliffe Park	4	24	18	24	0	12
All Areas	10	39	16	17	5	14

These figures vary substantially by neighbourhood. North Kipling, for example, had especially large numbers of participants in partnerships with children, Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park had large numbers of single-parent households, St James Town saw many elderly and single-adult households and in Steeles L'Amoreaux, large numbers of people from multi-generational households reported coming from "other" types of households. See table 6.

Length of time in Canada

Toronto's high-rise neighbourhoods are home to many people born outside Canada. Participants in our studies reflect this pattern with 77% born abroad. This said, many respondents have spent a considerable amount of time in Canada; 30% report living here more than 10 years, 15% have lived in Canada between 5 and 10 years, 24% between 1 and 5 years and 9% less than 1 year. Length of residence in Canada varies by neighbourhood. For example, many very new Canadians were in the Chalkfarm group and many long-term and Canadian-born residents were part of the St James Town group. When examining this data against income levels, the data suggest that longer residence in Canada is associated with higher incomes, but incomes are generally low for all groups and the relationship is not statistically significant. See table 7.

Language spoken at home

The range of languages spoken by respondents reflects the vibrant diversity of the inner suburbs. We encountered over 35 languages in the eight communities including Twi, Yoruba, Somali, Tamil, Tagalog, Igbo, Hindi,

Amharic, Japanese, Russian, Pashta, Dari, Ounjabi, Korean and Kikuyu.

For our analysis, we grouped participants who spoke English only (33%), who spoke English plus another language (36%) or who did not speak English (36%). Study areas with a high proportion of people who spoke other languages at home included Chalkfarm (Spanish), Steeles L'Amoreaux (Mandarin) and the Peanut (Mandarin and Farsi). Thorncliffe Park had the highest number of participants who speak English and at least one other language at home — most often Gujarati and Urdu. See table 8.

Income

Our survey asked residents to indicate their annual household income from four ranges from "less than \$24,000" to "\$120,000 or more." Over one third of respondents either chose not to answer this question or reported that they did not know their household income. Of the remainder, participants reported low levels of household income. Fifty-one per cent chose the lowest category, indicating that their household earned less than \$24,000 annually. No households chose the highest category and only 5% chose between \$80,000 and \$120,000. Combined, 80% of respondents who reported income data came from households earning less than \$40,000 annually. This compares to 38% of households in Toronto earning less than this according to 2006 census data.

Between study neighbourhoods, income varied less than other socio-demographic descriptors. Our participants in St James Town, who were more likely to live

Table 7: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Length of Time in Canada

STUDY AREA	<1 YEAR	1-5 YEARS	5-10 YEARS	>10 YEARS	FOR LIFE
Chalkfarm	35	13	13	30	9
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	7	7	18	25	43
Steeles L'Amoreaux	17	28	14	35	7
North Kipling	0	40	13	30	17
The Peanut	10	45	16	26	3
St James Town	0	8	0	46	46
Scarborough Village	3	18	23	26	31
Thorncliffe Park	5	29	14	29	24
All Areas	9	24	15	30	23

Table 8: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Language Spoken at Home

STUDY AREA	ENGLISH	ENGLISH & ANOTHER	NO ENGLISH
Chalkfarm	12	20	68
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	54	27	19
Steeles L'Amoreaux	30	10	60
North Kipling	30	43	27
The Peanut	17	23	60
St James Town	63	15	22
Scarborough Village	42	42	16
Thorncliffe Park	5	75	20
All Areas	33	31	36

Table 9: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Household Income

STUDY AREA	<24K	25-39K	40-70K	80-119K
Chalkfarm	56	31	13	0
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	65	25	5	5
Steeles L'Amoreaux	50	38	13	0
North Kipling	40	52	4	4
The Peanut	44	30	22	4
St James Town	70	10	20	0
Scarborough Village	52	17	17	13
Thorncliffe Park	31	23	39	8
All Areas	51	28	16	5

in social housing, had the most low-income residents among the study areas. Thorncliffe Park had the highest income participants, with almost 40% reporting annual household income in the range of \$40,000-\$79,000. See table 9.

Education

Because participants were educated in different systems around the world, there was no simple way to characterize educational attainment. We asked people to describe their educational background in their own language. Later, we interpreted responses and coded them as either “post-secondary education” or “no post-secondary education.” Excluding participants less than 18 years-old, 57% reported that they had some kind of post-secondary education such as college or university. Many reported graduate school education. At 44%, post-secondary education was least common in St James Town and highest in the Peanut, at 77%. See table 10.

Given low incomes and relatively high rates of educational attainment, we imagine that some participants may possess certificates and degrees obtained from non-Canadian universities that are not recognised locally. However, investigating this matter was beyond our study’s scope.

Employment

Low incomes may be partly explained by low employment rates. The survey offered respondents seven categories to describe their employment status. Write-in comments indicated that these categories were insufficient to capture the complexity of people’s working lives, which included full-time jobs, part-time jobs, multiple part-time jobs, serial employment with temporary jobs, volunteer and community work, etc. We categorised respondents with any kind of job as “employed.” We defined people looking for work, people without paid employment, and retired people as “unemployed.”

Other respondents were then classified as either “students” or “other.” Through this categorization, 37% of respondents were considered “unemployed.” See table 11.

Among respondents over 18 years of age, 57% reported they had some kind of post-secondary education, such as college or university. Many reported graduate school education.

Table 10: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Education

STUDY AREA	POST-SEC	NO POST-SEC
Chalkfarm	45	55
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	-	-
Steeles L'Amoreaux	48	52
North Kipling	48	52
The Peanut	77	23
St James Town	33	67
Scarborough Village	44	56
Thorncliffe Park	40	60
All Areas	57	43

Table 11: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Employment Status

STUDY AREA	EMPLOYED	NOT EMPLOYED	STUDENT
Chalkfarm	28	52	20
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	53	26	21
Steeles L'Amoreaux	38	63	0
North Kipling	48	26	26
The Peanut	40	50	10
St James Town	29	52	19
Scarborough Village	38	35	27
Thorncliffe Park	44	50	6
All Areas	40	43	17

SECTION SUMMARY:

- Our participants represent a diverse group of local residents, from a range of ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, language groups and household types.
- Many participants were newcomers to Canada and have lived here for less than five years.
- Most participants live in high-rise apartment towers.
- About two thirds of study participants were women.
- Household incomes were low; 79% of participants reported a combined annual household income of less than \$40,000 per annum, but educational attainment was high, with more than 57% reporting some post secondary education.

STUDY AREA SNAPSHOTS

Although our study looks for conditions shared among Toronto's high-rise neighbourhoods, each area is unique. The following sections detail the reasons underlying neighbourhood choice and present a snapshot of the distinctive issues facing each neighbourhood.

In addition, appendix 2 presents some general socio-demographic statistics and compares the study areas with Toronto averages. While the tables in the appendix present some trends, the dissemination areas used to compile the data only roughly accord with the study area borders and may not accurately reflect our study participants.

The issues identified in the study area snapshots are also illustrated graphically in the neighbourhood maps in appendix 3.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHOICE AND TENURE

Workshop participants were unanimous in their praise for their neighbourhoods. Although improvements are needed, people told us they remained connected and, for the most part, were committed to living in their neighbourhood. Reasons for choosing their neighbourhoods varied, but for most, affordability was the biggest factor. Other important factors included proximity to family and work. Closeness of shops and ame-

nities also figured highly. A smaller but significant portion of respondents (almost one quarter) believe that the social-cultural feel of a neighbourhood was also important. Table 12 provides a summary of the reasons for neighbourhood choice, as indicated by our survey.

Notwithstanding these figures, residents may not experience a wide range of choice in their place of residence, and are, therefore, captive to the poor local conditions they encounter. The following sections identify the individual challenges and some benefits of each study area. Each is unique.

Table 12: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Reason for Neighbourhood Tenure

STUDY AREA	NEAR WORK	NEAR FAMILY	LOCAL AMENITIES	AFFORDABLE HOUSING	UNIT SIZE	SCHOOL QUALITY	SOCIAL-CULTURAL FEEL
Chalkfarm	53	37	23	20	7	3	10
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	33	40	33	80	30	13	23
Steeles L'Amoreaux	15	49	5	24	5	0	2
North Kipling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Peanut	47	34	56	38	19	13	41
St James Town	22	37	37	59	19	15	37
Scarborough Village	28	15	20	28	13	5	15
Thorncliffe Park	48	43	62	38	14	10	62
All Areas	34	36	31	39	14	8	24

SNAPSHOT: CHALKFARM WALKING ENVIRONMENT

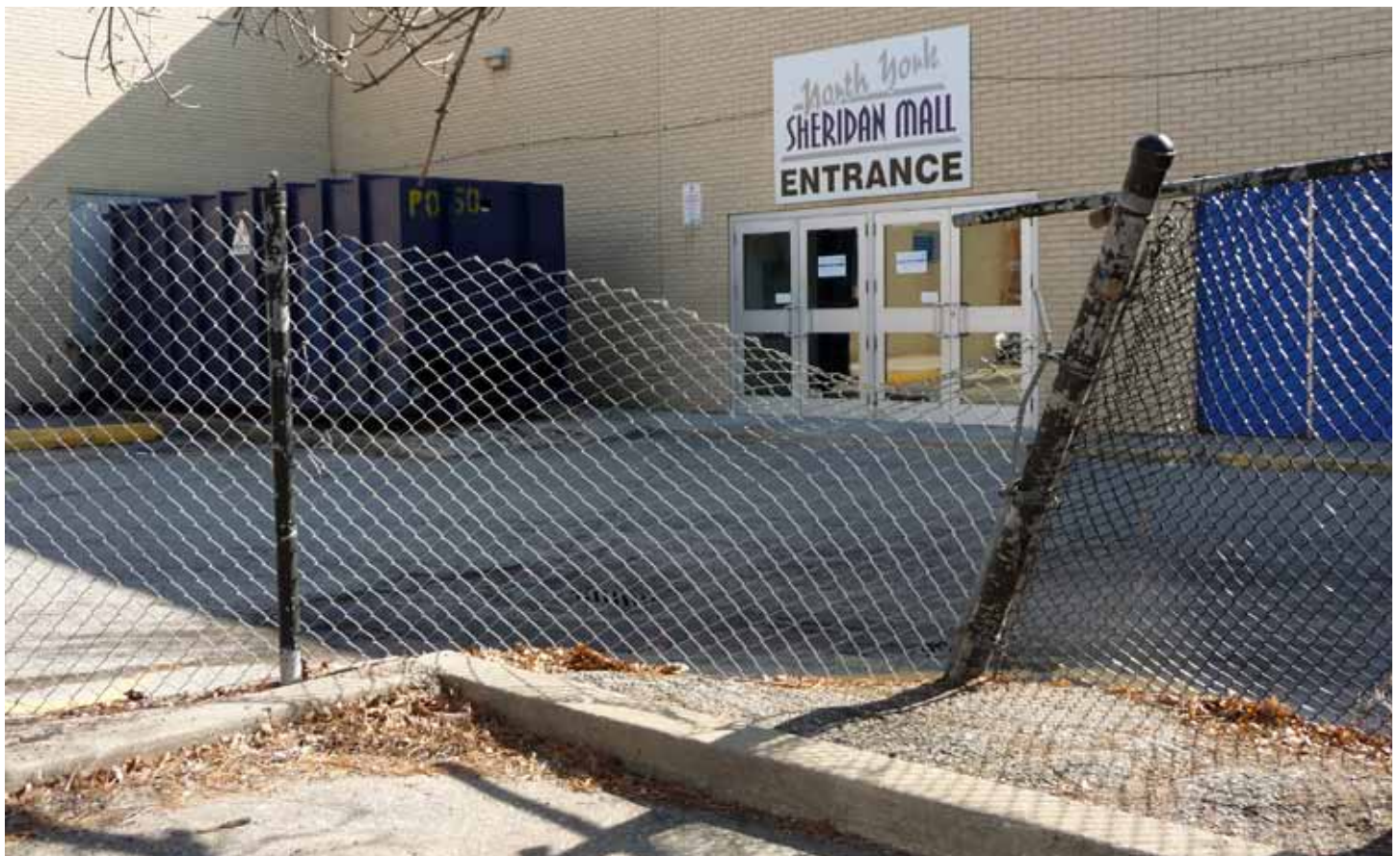
Chalkfarm community is located around Chalkfarm Drive, in the northwest quadrant of Toronto, near the intersection of Jane Street and Wilson Avenue. The neighbourhood is comprised of a subdivision and four high-rise buildings built in the 1970s. The Jane-Exbury Towers, a series of five iconic apartment buildings designed in the late 1960s, are found along Jane Street, north of Sheridan Mall.

Jane Street has five travel lanes and an intermittent centre turning lane. This arterial roadway forms the main north-south route for area residents travelling to and from the commercial area. Wilson has four travel lanes and an intermittent centre turn lane. It also has a traffic island in front of the mall. Busy bus stops are located at the intersection of Jane and Wilson.

The high-rise towers are directly behind the Sheridan Mall, which provides stores, services and restaurants, including a Zeller's department store and a Food Basics supermarket. Across Wilson Avenue to the south, there is another shopping area, which includes a Shopper's Drug Mart and a No Frills supermarket.

The pedestrian bridge behind 180 Chalkfarm Drive is the most popular and direct walking route to the Sheridan Mall. The bridge is difficult to access due to its steep and uneven ramp, which creates hazards for those with strollers, buggies, walkers or scooters. To reach the back entrance of the mall, pedestrians must negotiate a parking lot that fast-moving cars cut through to avoid the intersection at Jane and Wilson.

In Chalkfarm, the conflict between pedestrians and cars is on-going. On Wilson, people regularly cross four to five lanes of traffic between the two shopping centres, often waiting in the centre lane for a break in the traffic. When people do use the signals to cross Jane or Wilson, they note insufficient crossing times. Although most people did not feel comfortable crossing mid-block in this neighbourhood, the signals were widely spaced and required long walks to cross safely. Missing sidewalks also make the busy roads uncomfortable for residents. Sidewalks are absent in several high traffic areas, including behind the fire station, in front of Tim Horton's at Sheridan Mall, Letchworth and Deevale Streets and near Beverly Middle School. Sidewalks along Jane were said to be too narrow and crowded. Snow clearance was described as inadequate and, in



The entrance to Sheridan Mall from the high-rise towers in Chalkfarm

all seasons, pooling water means that pedestrians are frequently splashed by passing vehicles.

Off the streets, Black Creek threads its way through a series of public parks that extend six kilometres to the north to Steeles Avenue. Chalkfarm Park, the last park in the chain, is separated from the others by the Oakdale Golf and Country Club. Downsview Park, located two kilometres to the east, is another major local park. Despite the presence of these resources, access is an issue for local residents. For example, Downsview Dells, has automobile access from the northeast, via Shepard Avenue, and from the subdivision to the east, but there is no formal entrance from Jane Street, making access difficult for the residents of Chalkfarm.

Participants thought that Black Creek Ravine had great potential, but many avoided these spaces feeling they were unsafe and unkempt. The spaces between buildings were identified as nice places for recreation, but they lack places to sit. Mothers were discouraged that benches in these green spaces had been taken away years ago and not replaced, despite the local councillor's promises. Several people told us they avoid hanging out near the buildings because they are afraid of getting hit by garbage thrown off the balconies. Better lighting, play areas, garbage cans, seating, basketball courts, water fountains and trees for shade were identified as features that could be added to make the neighbourhood's public spaces more inviting.

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Among all study groups, participants in Chalkfarm were least satisfied with their pedestrian environment. Overall, people felt that the community was well-located and close to many services but several key obstacles and weaknesses in the walking environment made getting around difficult. This was reflected in lower than average rates of shopping on foot, walking children to school and using the bus for errands and work trips. When asked why they chose to live in the neighbourhood, Chalkfarm residents rated proximity to work or school higher than other study areas (at 53%, compared to an overall study average of 33%). Proximity to amenities and affordability were important factors in all other study areas, but were ranked comparatively low in Chalkfarm (at 23% and 20% respectively). It is worth noting that 48% of the study participants indicated that they had lived in the area for less than two years, making it the most mobile group of study participants.

Some Chalkfarm participants clearly do not feel safe moving about the neighbourhood. This is partly due to walking conditions, but social fears and safety concerns were also found to influence local walking routes and overall mobility. For example, a great deal of anxiety and caution is associated with the pedestrian bridge to the Sheridan Mall. Some concerns were related to lighting (noted by 53% of respondents), while "scary people" caused others to avoid certain places or avoid going out at night. There is a long and troubled history of violence in the area and heightened police surveillance, which some participants mentioned as a source of tension. Despite these challenges, many participants spoke positively about the neighbourhood.

SNAPSHOT: KINGSTON-GALLOWAY/ ORTON PARK WALKING ENVIRONMENT

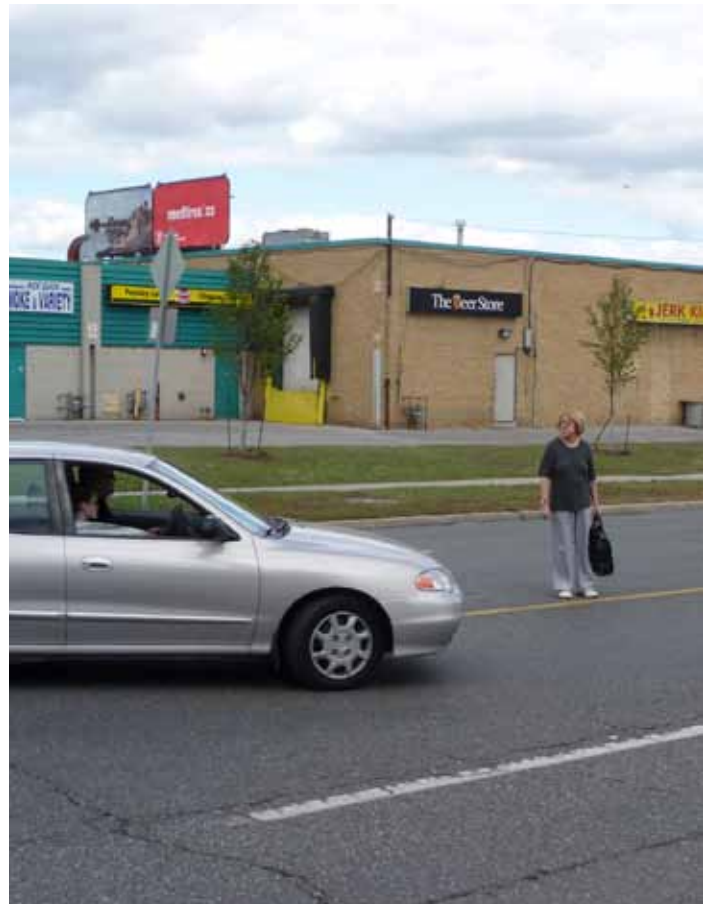
Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park is located in northeast Scarborough. The neighbourhood is intersected by the major arterial roadway of Lawrence Avenue East, Kingston Road and Morningside Drive, and also bisected by a ravine spanned by an 800 metre stretch of Lawrence Avenue. Participants often spoke of “the triangle” area, a busy junction of the three major arterials. The local intersections are very large. At the intersection of Lawrence and Kingston Road, for example, both roadways have six traffic lanes plus additional turn lanes and traffic islands. There are also special turn lanes that allow right turning vehicles to avoid stopping at red lights, which further expands the roadway that pedestrians have to cross. Most people do their shopping and errands in this area and deem walking conditions perilous.

Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park is home to a dense and vibrant community, almost half of which lives in high-rise buildings. It has very large concentrations of social housing and a large proportion (42%) of single-parent families. It is a City-designated “priority neighbourhood” and faces limited resources, services, transit and employment opportunities. While income levels are low, levels of education among participants were high; 46% reported attending college or university and 21% reported attending graduate school. A significant number of the workshop participants were also still in high school. Despite physical and social challenges, neighbourhood attachment and local enthusiasm were high. Many workshop participants actively advocate for change through the well-established, and much appreciated, East Scarborough Storefront at 4040 Lawrence Avenue East, where the walkability workshop was held.

Discussions about the walking environment focused on the arterial roadways. There was much discussion around missing curb cuts, uneven pavement, fast-moving traffic, pedestrian islands where people got stranded and confusing traffic signals. Respondents noted several places where people make mid-block crossings. Some people told stories of being grazed by cars. People also noted few places to rest, benches, bus shelters, garbage cans, or safe walkways through mall parking lots. Only 10% of respondents reported that they did not face any major barriers to their daily travel in the neighbourhood.

Most workshop participants shop by foot and bus within the neighbourhood and many also walk or take the bus to work and school. Participants mentioned over-crowding on the sidewalks due to the diverse mix of users, including people on bicycles, skateboards and scooters, and people with strollers and dogs. One participant observed “I’ve been run down before... it’s safer to walk on the road,” highlighting the need for bike lanes. Half of respondents report living in households without cars. Almost three-quarters (72%) do not hold a driver’s licence, but among unlicensed drivers, half say that they hope to get a licence in the future. With so many residents on foot, snow clearance and transit service were the source of great concern. The number 54 bus service is almost universally considered unreliable and crowded, with far too infrequent service.

Public spaces were valued by all respondents. Local parks, including Morningside Park, Cedar Brook, Heron, Thomson and a green space at St Margaret’s Church, were mentioned as places of calm, recreation and neighbourhood connection. Like Chalkfarm, access to green space is challenging in Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park. Pathways and pedestrian connections were



Crossing an arterial in Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park

deemed unsafe by many residents. Access points are too steep, muddy or indirect.

Some people did not feel safe moving about the neighbourhood due to traffic and other security concerns. Some issues relate to physical design or insufficient lighting. Residents were cautious expressing their concerns but noted “scary people” and the isolation of certain places. Some participants avoided certain areas or tried to avoid going out at night. Twenty-nine per cent said poor lighting was a security concern and indicated areas near parks, malls, schools and bus stops that were too dark at night.

Since conducting the walkability workshop in fall 2008, local residents have created a Safety and Walking Group through the East Scarborough Storefront. The group has undertaken informal audits of the walking environment to make improvements. Largely made up of senior women, the group feels it has had some success in getting the City to add time to pedestrian countdowns and to replace bulbs in streetlights. Improvements were also made to the Lawrence Avenue bridge that connects Kingston-Galloway to Orton Park

to make it more inviting. The Bridging Project, undertaken by local youth, added an 800 metre long mural along the top of the bridge and graffiti works by local artists underneath.

Since conducting the walkability workshop in fall 2008, local residents have created a Safety and Walking Group through the East Scarborough Storefront. The group has undertaken informal audits of the walking environment to make improvements.



The pedestrian environment in Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park

SNAPSHOT: NORTH KIPLING WALKING ENVIRONMENT

North Kipling is in northern Etobicoke, between Finch and Steeles Avenue West. The neighbourhood stretches along Kipling Avenue, where the east side is dominated by a chain of apartment towers. Schools, churches and a number of residential bungalows lay opposite the towers. Behind them, the Humber River and ravine create a natural eastern border. The largest shopping destination in this area is the Albion Mall, which is at Finch and Kipling Avenues. Both are very busy streets with four travel lanes and additional turn lanes and islands.

The walkability workshop was held in a building designated as a pilot site for the City's Tower Renewal project. It was facilitated by the local Action for Neighbourhood Change, an initiative funded by the United Way to address the lack of resources and opportunities in priority neighbourhoods.

People in North Kipling face substandard infrastructure, a lack of amenities, poor maintenance, an absence of vi-

brant public spaces and a high degree of fear and anxiety for personal safety. Most pedestrian travel relies on walking along Kipling Avenue. Otherwise, pedestrian connectivity in the neighbourhood is poor. Well-travelled shortcuts and holes cut in fences are evidence of more direct routes made by locals to save time moving between buildings, bus stops and stores. These informal routes are unlit, muddy and generally avoided at night due to safety concerns.

Despite these problems, people first told us that the neighbourhood is generally a good place for walking, but a deeper ambivalence emerged in response to more specific questions concerning safety, security and ease of movement. The focus groups were dominated by discussions of jay-walking that takes place along Kipling Avenue between the residential towers at 2667 and 2677 and close to the bus stops and school on the west side of the street. Traffic fatalities have heightened residents' concerns about local traffic safety and the speed of local traffic. Residents feel that these concerns go unheard by municipal authorities.



A lone pedestrian walks along Mount Olive in North Kipling



Walkers cross a parking lot in North Kipling

Other safety concerns included the presence of “scary people” and inadequate lighting. Respondents’ ambivalence about safety was reflected in their feelings about letting children walk in the neighbourhood alone. Only 23% agreed with the statement “I feel comfortable letting my children walk to places on their own,” while 38% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Despite these feelings, many people said they enjoyed living in North Kipling, liked their neighbours and hope to help make local improvements. Residents report feeling generally safe during the daytime, but do change their walking routes at night, opting for paths with more traffic and better lighting.

Most of the participants in North Kipling have lived in the area for less than 10 years. The majority of households do not have access to a car, making them highly dependent on walking. In spite of the car-oriented built form and other obstacles, 93% of the survey respondents shopped locally on foot and many walked or took the bus for work and school. During winter, inadequate snow clearance was identified as an impediment to walking; icy areas develop in front of towers

and piles of snow at intersections make dangerous conditions along Kipling Avenue even more treacherous. Several participants noted that younger children have problems scaling the large snow banks that line Kipling, and run the risk of slipping into oncoming traffic when scrambling to cross them.

Despite the large ravine adjoining the area, participants noted a lack of accessible, well-kept parks. Play areas for children were a special concern. Many also expressed frustration over the neglected basketball courts, tennis courts and swimming pools. One valued neighbourhood asset is a separated bike path that runs on Kipling between Finch and Steeles Avenues. People enjoy promenading, riding their bikes and interacting with neighbours on this busy strip of sidewalk and adjoining bike path.

People in North Kipling face substandard infrastructure, a lack of amenities, poor maintenance, an absence of vibrant public spaces and poor connectivity.

SNAPSHOT: THE PEANUT WALKING ENVIRONMENT

The Peanut is in North York, straddling Don Mills Avenue between Sheppard and Finch Avenues East. The neighbourhood's namesake is a large peanut-shaped block created by the separation of the northbound and southbound traffic of Don Mills Road. The peanut-shaped central area contains a school complex with George Vanier Secondary School and Woodbine Junior High School, a community centre, a park, a church and a shopping plaza. These community facilities are surrounded by high-rise apartments and a few townhouse complexes. Fairview Mall, to the south, is a popular regional shopping facility and the terminus of the Sheppard subway line. The Peanut is a pilot site of the Tower Renewal initiative.

The Peanut stood out from the other high-rise neighbourhoods in several ways: the respondents in this study area had slightly higher levels of education; 65% have live in the neighbourhood for less than four years; and they were older than average, generally between 40 and 64 years. This sample offered us insight into the transportation habits of working adults, but did not capture the perspective of youth who are heavy users of the walking environment.

Household sizes in the Peanut group were smaller than for our other study areas on average; there were fewer families with children reported and higher numbers of

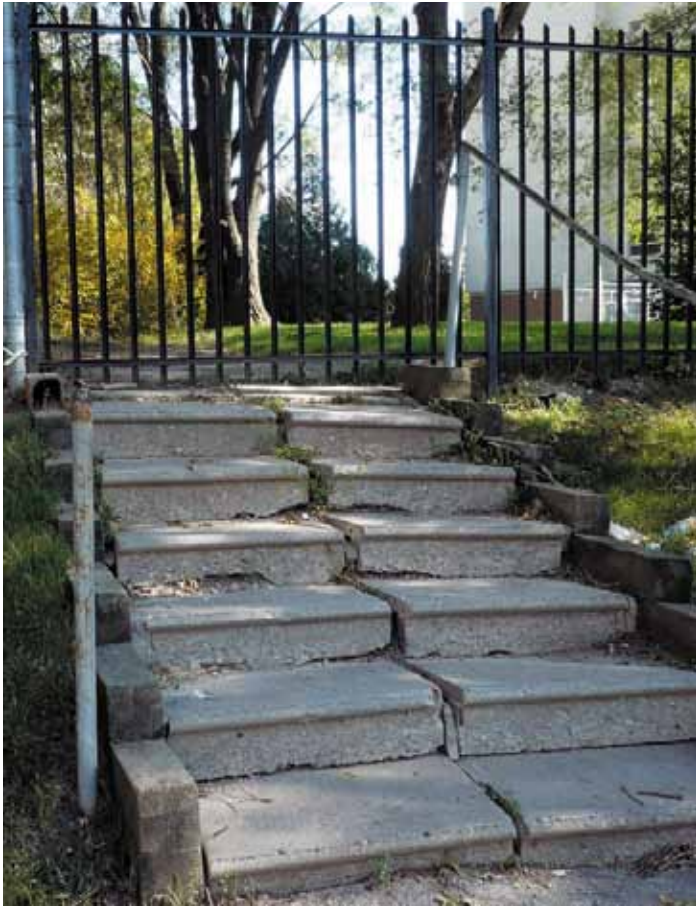
people living alone (18%). This was reflected in higher car ownership; 72% of respondents lived in households with at least one car. Correspondingly, car use was higher in this area; about half reported driving to work and driving children to school. Most respondents (87%) did their shopping near their home. Half did their shopping by car and 39% on foot.

Respondents in the Peanut were somewhat more likely to express dissatisfaction or ambivalence about their overall walking environment compared to many other study areas. In response to the statement "my neighbourhood is a good place for walking," 25% agreed, 34% strongly agreed, 31% were neutral, 42% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. Reasons underpinning this range are unclear, although most respondents indicated that they enjoy walking and walked in some cases even with car access. Our field evaluations of the area did not reveal poorer walking conditions than other areas and we speculate that participant evaluations of the walking environment may relate to the higher reliance on cars in the neighbourhood; the less people walk, the more ambivalent they may be about walking.

Respondents shared concerns about fast-moving traffic and dangerous crossings across Don Mills Road at Sheppard. With seven lanes of traffic at some major intersections, many people are hyper-vigilant and fearful crossing the road. Pedestrian access at the entrances of



Children cross Don Mills on bicycle to access the central area of The Peanut



A blocked path in The Peanut

Peanut Plaza and Fairview Mall were also the subject of particular concern. Respondents told us they feel unsafe from traffic on both formal and informal approaches. In front of the Peanut Plaza, on the south split of Don Mills Road, a triangular shaped island acts as an informal refuge from moving vehicles. Here people report “getting stuck” waiting for a break in traffic. Walking routes through mall parking lots were described as hazardous. For instance, the most direct walking route into Fairview Mall from the north side involves walking through a parking garage. There is a series of short walkways and painted crosswalks to guide pedestrians in some places, but at one point they are funnelled into the driving lane of the parking lot at a distance from the mall entrance.

Like other suburban apartment areas, the Peanut has curving local roadways that make formal walking routes longer and less direct. To shorten walking distances, residents create more direct, informal routes through fences, parking lots and neighbouring high-rise green spaces. These informal routes are well-travelled but risky, as they lack formal lighting and are not maintained. A number of fences that block walking paths were discussed as problematic.

Respondents were particularly frustrated because, in some cases, these fences blocked old formal pathways built for residents. For example, the most important shortcut for study participants is behind 185 and 175 Shaughnessy leading directly to Don Mills Road and to bus stops, schools, plaza and park. This pathway is now fenced-off, though there are often holes cut in it to allow people through. Locals remember when the pathway was open. They want the fence removed, the path restored, and the route maintained with lighting and regular snow clearance.

Residents appreciate the range of goods and services in the neighbourhood, but many found walking distances to be too far. Still, many people enjoy the sense of community and access to amenities such as banks and parks. Godstone Park, Lescon Park, Oriel Park and St Timothy’s were all discussed favourably as places to play, connect with neighbours and enjoy the outdoors. The lack of fences in these parks was noted with some relief by participants who face their omnipresence in the rest of the area. These important community amenities would be improved with drinking fountains and washrooms.

Respondents had specific concerns about pedestrian barriers and personal safety. The lack of lighting, on streets, sidewalks, parks and informal pathways behind the towers was seen as a serious threat to their safety by 57% of respondents. Negligent snow and ice clearance was also deemed a serious impediment to pedestrian mobility. Without dedicated bike lanes, cycling was also seen as a safety risk. This was very frustrating for residents, especially those from countries, like China, where they once relied heavily on cycling for transportation.

Participants in The Peanut lament a number of fences that block paths. Residents were particularly frustrated because, in some cases, these fences blocked formal pathways built for residents.

SNAPSHOT: ST JAMES TOWN WALKING ENVIRONMENT

St James Town is unique in several ways. With eighteen towers and more than 18,000 residents within a few city blocks, it is extremely dense. As one of the few affordable housing options in Toronto's downtown core, there are tenancy waiting lists for many buildings. The walkability workshop was held in 200 Wellesley Street East. This building, called The Montreal, is one of the Tower Renewal pilot sites and is owned and operated by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. With 700 units, it is the largest social housing apartment tower in Canada.

Conceived and built in the 1960s, St James Town was originally intended as a "city within a city" and promoted as a desirable address for urbanites, professionals and "swinging singles." It removed many through streets making new superblocks, intended to facilitate pedestrian traffic with internal pathways, built an underground network of multipurpose rooms and parking arcades, and provided outdoor amenities like plazas, swimming pools and tennis courts. With so many high-rise towers built within a few blocks, St James Town was one of Toronto's bolder experiments in the 1960s. The experiment continues to unfold with many people of all ages engaging actively in the neighbourhood's on-going development and revitalization.

Initially, St James Town successfully attracted an upwardly mobile demographic, but within a decade, high-rise living lost its appeal and the buildings started to be occupied by a much less wealthy population. Today, the diverse population is dominated by Canadian newcomers with large families, seniors, unemployed persons and working poor. When asked why they chose to live in St James Town, study respondents were more likely to note the neighbourhood's affordability, social cultural feel, quality of schools and proximity to amenities.

The St James Town workshop participants are highly dependent on walking and transit. Car ownership is very low among respondents (31%). Almost all respondents (97%) reported shopping locally on foot. When participants left the neighbourhood for work or school, most of them used transit. Indeed, along with its walkable proximity to the downtown, St James Town is the only study area with a nearby subway station. Still,

some participants noted poor subway access because the nearest entrance on Glen Road only accepts fare cards and tokens, forcing seniors and students who use less expensive tickets to walk much further to the Sherbourne Street entrance, because Glen Road, with several abandoned houses, was deemed unsafe at night, and because the station is only accessible by escalator or stairs, creating a barrier for people with mobility impairments.



A muddy, blocked path in St James Town



Parking lots are used as pathways in St James Town

Most people told us there were enough places to safely cross busy streets like Wellesley or Sherbourne, but a significant number of respondents also said that they frequently jay-walked and walked on roads. Seniors were more likely to suggest a shortage of pedestrian crossings and to report that they needed to hurry across streets because pedestrian signals changed too quickly.

Most people agreed that the neighbourhood was a good place for walking overall. People enjoy local public spaces, parks and common areas where there are benches and walkways, which allow them to sit, people-watch, relax and connect with neighbours. The condition of the pathways and sidewalks were discussed as problematic. Many respondents noted muddy areas, pooling water, uneven pavement and places where there were no sidewalks at all, making people walk in the road. Many people mentioned that the curbs were unusually high in places and curb cuts were either missing or in a very bad state of repair. Most of these facilities are located on private land in the interior of the development, but are used as public routes by many people. Participants did not distinguish between the ownership status of public and private infrastructure.

Most participants reported feeling safe moving around the neighbourhood in the daytime but were cautious about going out at night. They limit their movement to main roads and routes where the lighting and sight-lines were better. Many of the interior walking routes

are considered “out of bounds” in low light conditions. Sidewalk and walking conditions in winter were also seen as a big impediment to pedestrian mobility. Inadequate snow removal, and the incidence of ice, slush and snow banks inhibited people’s movements. Some participants reported being virtually “shut-in” their homes during winter.

Fences were also an impediment to people’s movement and seem to arbitrarily divide up the community and create onerous disconnections and safety hazards. In some cases the fences seemed to generate social division. For instance, the youth in this study felt strongly that the Bleecker Street fence — running north/south just east of Bleecker — exacerbated perceived social division and negative stereotypes between the east and west side of the neighbourhood.

St James Town is a well-situated, dense and vibrant downtown neighbourhood, reasonably well-serviced and comparatively walkable. Despite these advantages, the residents of this high-rise neighbourhood face sub-standard walking conditions, jeopardizing safety and eroding social cohesion.

“When it is all ugly around you and nowhere nice to walk it makes you feel bad and unappreciated. We live here and want to make it beautiful.”

- St James Town Participant

SNAPSHOT: SCARBOROUGH VILLAGE WALKING ENVIRONMENT

Scarborough Village is in Scarborough at the eastern end of Eglinton Avenue at Kingston Road, by Markham Road. As in other study areas, these are large arterial roads. Both Kingston Road and Eglinton Avenue have six travel lanes through much of the study area, and carry large volumes of traffic. In addition, Eglinton has a centre turn lane. The walkability workshop was conducted at a local high-rise on Cougar Court, a small cul-de-sac off Markham Road with four tower high-rise buildings. This building is a pilot site for the City's Tower Renewal program. According to 2006 Statistics Canada data, about 2,500 people live here in just over 700 apartment units. There are also another dozen tower blocks within 500 metres of Cougar Court.

The Scarborough Village participants are highly dependent on walking and transit. While 45% reported

having at least one vehicle in their household, most do not own a car and only 32% have a driver's licence. Participants walk to shop, to do errands and to travel to school.

Participants only weakly agreed with all statements provided on the survey concerning why they chose to live in Scarborough Village, including proximity to work and school, friends and family, neighbourhood services, quality of schools, size of houses and social-cultural feel. Even affordability was only noted by 27% of respondents as a key factor for local residence (the study average was 39%). This may suggest that participants do not feel they exercised a choice in selecting this neighbourhood.

Residents in Scarborough Village encounter hostile and unsafe walking conditions for the most part, sub-standard infrastructure, poor connectivity and the absence of vibrant informal social spaces. As a result, partici-



Pedestrians cross Eglinton Avenue mid-block in Scarborough Village

pants scored their general walking environment poorly in relation to almost all study areas (except Chalkfarm), with only 43% agreeing or agreeing strongly that their walking environment was good. Deeper ambivalence emerged in follow-up questions over safety and ease of movement in the neighbourhood. For instance, only 15% said they agreed with the statement “I feel comfortable letting my children walk to places on their own,” while 73% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Participants reported feeling generally safe during the daytime, but change their walking routes at night to places where there is more traffic, lighting and better sightlines. Day or night, obstacles in the walking environment include the condition of the pathways and sidewalks, pooling water, uneven pavement and places where sidewalks were missing, forcing people to walk on active driveways and roads. Snow clearing was also considered a serious impediment to pedestrian mobility.

Many participants felt threatened by fast traffic on Kingston Road, Eglinton and Markham. A shortcut from the Cougar Court Apartments, through the back of a strip mall and across Eglinton Avenue to the community shopping area, Markington Square, was a particularly hot topic of discussion. Although the shortcut is on private property, community efforts are currently underway to make this shortcut safer to travel by trimming shrubs, removing barriers and holding regular clean-ups. The community is more divided over the pedestrian crossing at Eglinton. While some participants recommended installing a crosswalk others felt that mid-block crossings were safer because, unlike an intersection, cars only came from two directions, and because they force pedestrians to be more vigilant, rather than relying on drivers to obey signals.

Another site of concern is the well-used shortcut behind 25 Cougar Court, known to residents as the “ghost house shortcut” because it passes by an abandoned house. This informal pathway crosses private property and connects the high-rise community with adjoining residential streets, the local grade school and a popular park. A fence inhibits the flow of walkers, but has been frequently broken or cut down by people wanting to take this more direct informal route. Residents shared colourful stories about this shortcut and have mixed feelings about this route. Children, the heaviest users of the path, told us about the path’s current state of

repair and the “scary inhabitants” of the empty house. Although this is a crucial community linkage, many residents are uncomfortable using it.

Despite challenges of community safety and access to resources, many residents said they enjoyed spending time in local coffee shops, malls, public spaces and parks where there are sometimes places for them to sit, people-watch, relax and connect with neighbours, but they described the lack of facilities around the apartment buildings, especially benches and play equipment for children.

A fence erected to inhibit the use of the “ghost house shortcut” is frequently broken or cut down. Residents shared colourful stories about this shortcut and have mixed feelings about this route. Children, the heaviest users of the path, told us about the path’s current state of repair and the “scary inhabitants” of the house. Although this is a crucial community linkage, many residents are uncomfortable using it.

SNAPSHOT: THORNCLIFFE PARK WALKING ENVIRONMENT

Thorncliffe Park is located about ten kilometres north-east of downtown Toronto. According to 2006 Statistics Canada data, the area houses a diverse population of almost 18,000 people, although some local informants suggest the population is much higher, perhaps closer to 30,000. Planned and built in the late 1950s, thirty mid and high-rise apartment buildings are arranged around a shopping mall, primary school and park. The area also houses an industrial district. There no detached or semi-detached houses in the neighbourhood.

This neighbourhood is distinguished from others by a comparatively high level of satisfaction with the walking environment. According to residents, Thorncliffe Park is walkable, dense and vibrant. When asked to identify why they live in the neighbourhood, the most popular reasons were the “social-cultural feel of the area” and “neighbourhood amenities” (both noted by 62% of participants). “Living close to school/work” was also common (noted by 48%) as was “living close to family or friends” (noted by 42%). Thorncliffe Park residents prioritize the social environment and neighbourhood amenities. “Affordability,” which was ranked much higher in other neighbourhoods, was noted by 38% of participants. “Quality of schools” or “desirable housing size and/or features” ranked lowest, although many spoke highly of the local schools.

Workshop participants told us they are highly dependent on walking and transit. The majority of people in our study reported shopping for groceries on foot (81%) and getting to work or school on foot (53%) or by bus (46%). Only half the households reported having a car. Many families that had access to a car still preferred walking; 46% of car owners agreed or agreed strongly that they often walk to do errands and shop. Thorncliffe Park’s proximity to amenities is the neighbourhood’s greatest advantage. People feel comfortable crossing mid-block, using shortcuts and feel more comfortable letting their children walk unaccompanied in the neighbourhood than participants in other study areas. They also appreciate the relatively high quality bus service which connects them to the subway system at Pape station in about fifteen minutes.

Despite this overall satisfaction, obstacles and shortcomings in the walking environment were reported. In particular, good places to sit and rest are lacking. Participants also noted that while they loved the public and community spaces, overuse and overcrowding was a concern.

Walking routes in and out of the East York Town Centre were discussed as poorly maintained and dangerous. Sidewalks are missing in high traffic areas across from the Islamic Society and en route to the popular Iqbal’s Halal Foods. Pathways around the central playground area, in R.V. Burgess Park, are inadequate and get mud-



Pedestrians chat on the path from the Mall to R.V. Burgess Park

dy when wet. Paths are also dangerous in the winter and snow clearance was noted as a mobility issue, especially for seniors.

Participants were proud that their sidewalks are bustling, their parks are full of people and their community is walkable. Still, several participants noted that they would like to see additional crosswalks in some locations, such as the east side of Thorncliffe Park Drive, half-way between Overlea Boulevard and the primary school crosswalk.

Many also highlighted a dangerous crossing at the west end of the Overlea Boulevard bridge where hundreds of students and other locals cross every day. This dangerous crossing is directly connected to a well-travelled shortcut. Despite being in very poor repair and isolated, this shortcut remains a popular, more direct route to the Overlea Bridge for students and adults going to Don Mills Road. Local residents would like to see the route improved, with better lighting and winter maintenance.

Fences in Thorncliffe Park limit important pedestrian movement. Some participants felt fences increased security, while many felt they created security problems, discouraged use of needed green spaces, made walking routes longer and encouraged people to jump over them. Overall, personal safety was not flagged as a major issue in the neighbourhood. Still, a small number of

people did not feel safe moving about the neighbourhood and many people told us they avoid walking on the internal pathways at night.

Residents value and regularly use public spaces, including R.V. Burgess Park, Ernest Thompson Seton Ravine, Leaside Park and the community gardens. Some expressed a desire for more community gardens. Besides these green spaces, the East York Town Centre provides a public and social space, to seniors in particular.

Crossing the road on Overlea Blvd by the bridge to Flemington is scary and very unsafe. A “do not cross” sign is not a deterrent. There is a crosswalk with traffic lights about 100 meters from the bridge, but youth prefer to jaywalk to more directly access a shortcut behind the apartment buildings and access the foot of the bridge. Local residents consider these places “accidents waiting to happen.”



Young pedestrians cross Overlea Boulevard by the bridge

SNAPSHOT: STEELES L'AMOREAUX WALKING ENVIRONMENT

Steeles L'Amoreaux is a large neighbourhood centred on Warden and Finch in north Scarborough, northeast of downtown Toronto. The main shopping area is the Bridlewood Mall, surrounded by some 20 high-rise apartments. The walkability workshop was held with residents of apartments and townhouses almost a kilometre to the east along Finch, at Birchmont. Characterized by winding residential streets, high-rises, mid-rises, and townhouses, much of the neighbourhood was built in the 1960s and 70s. The arterial streets are large, with four or more travel lanes, and a few connections to surrounding subdivisions of single-family houses on winding streets. Once a middle class suburb, it is now home to many diverse newcomers and to significant Chinese and South Asian populations. Because of the community's poor access to services, transit and amenities, it is designated a "priority neighbourhood." The walkability workshop was facilitated by the local chapter of the Action for Neighbourhood Change.

When asked why they chose to live in the neighbourhood, respondents in Steeles L'Amoreaux were more



L'Amoreaux Park

likely than other study areas to note proximity to family and friends as a motivating factor. Some factors scored lower than average, including "proximity to neighbourhood amenities" (5%), "social-cultural feel" (2%) and "affordability" (24%).

The participants from the Steeles L'Amoreaux study area are highly dependent on walking and transit. Most people agreed that the neighbourhood was a good place for walking overall, but several problems stood out. The distance from most respondents' homes to Bridlewood mall is an important barrier. For some seniors this journey takes 30 minutes or more each way, and is made throughout the year for shopping. Household car ownership was reported by 41% of respondents, but only 22% reported having a driver's licence. Most shop by foot within the neighbourhood and many walk or take the bus to work and school.

While more than half use buses to get to work or school, few participants reported using buses for local trips, such as shopping. Some Mandarin speakers did not take the bus because they do not feel confident with their English skills. Among transit users, most reported adequate service, but also complained of delays with the number 43 buses, which arrive in clusters.

Most participants believed there were enough places to cross large streets safely; still, many crossed at places without crosswalks. They tend to feel that traffic threatens local safety, particularly at "dangerous" intersections along Finch (at Birchmont, Kennedy and Warden), where the signal countdowns did not provide enough time to cross. This was of particular concern to the elderly. Cycling on the sidewalks was seen as a safety

L'Amoreaux Park is a critical community asset for socializing and exercising. Almost 70% of participants reported walking, running or practicing tai chi in the Park at least three times a week, and more than half report doing so every day. This park was highlighted on most pedestrian route maps. Steeles L'Amoreaux participants made comments such as "I love it" and "it's my favourite place."



Parents traverse a parking lot by the Mall in Steeles L'Amoreaux

issue for pedestrians in Steeles L'Amoreaux. Many participants thought bicycle lanes on Finch would help resolve this threat.

Sidewalks along Finch, the main walking route, were uneven, broken, and flooded after rain. People told us of climbing snow banks to cross streets and access bus stops during winter. Delays in snow and ice removal suggested to residents that “they don’t care about us.” Shortcuts are common in the neighbourhood but also tend to be icy in winter and poorly lit.

Like other areas, fences impede movement and connectivity in several key places in Steeles L'Amoreaux, including the St Sylvester Catholic School, around the condominiums at Bridlewood Mall and in the Silver Springs area, where gates across pedestrian routes are often locked. Many participants also flagged pedestrian difficulties between the corner of Finch and Warden and the Mall, where there is a steep ramp and pedestrians must make their way to the mall through an active parking lot without a designated walkway.

The Bridlewood Mall was perceived of as unsafe by some seniors — “scary people” and “purse snatchers” were mentioned in discussions. In other locations, like the well-travelled shortcut along Brigadoon Creek, lighting was praised. Some people did not feel safe moving about the neighbourhood, and many people do not walk at night, but overall, personal security was not a major issue. Garbage and odours were, however, identified as deterrents to walking in several commercial areas.

Residents reported using L'Amoreaux Park regularly. It is a critical community asset for socializing and exercising. Almost 70% of participants reported walking, running or practicing tai chi in the park at least three times a week and more than half report doing so every day. This park was highlighted on most pedestrian route maps and people made comments such as “I love it” and “it’s my favourite place.” Public space is appreciated but improvements are also desired. For example, some older Mandarin-speakers living in apartments expressed a strong wish for a community garden.

AUTOMOBILE ACCESS AND TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

This chapter situates walking within a larger transportation context. First, we explore rates of driver's licensing and household automobile ownership as indicators of daily auto access. Second, we present general travel patterns and the travel modes used by participants to shop and conduct other activities. By examining where people go and how they get there, we can better understand how the residents negotiate their local environment and what sorts of limitations and obstacles they encounter.

DRIVER'S LICENSING & AUTO OWNERSHIP

Licensing

Less than half of the study participants (44%) reported having a driver's licence. See table 13. Although other members of respondents' household had licences in some cases, this rate is low. These rates are not only a function of regional location. As expected, because of its proximity to the subway and central services, in St James Town, few participants had driver's licences. However, rates are even lower in places with suburban development patterns — ones without reliable transit or proximity to services — like Steeles L'Amoreaux and Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park. Socio-demographic variables such as household structure, employment status and income appear to be much more important to explain licensing than proximity to the downtown core. We explore these variables below as they relate to

Table 13: Percentage of Survey Respondents with Driver's Licences

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	62
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	28
Steeles L'Amoreaux	22
North Kipling	56
The Peanut	56
St James Town	30
Scarborough Village	46
Thorncliffe Park	55
All Areas	44

auto ownership rates, which are analogous to patterns of driver's licensing.

The variation in licensing rates between men and women is striking. Most men (60%) reported having a driver's licence compared to just over a third (36%) of women. The duration of residency in Canada does not have a clear relationship with licensing; new arrivals are almost as likely to have a licence as participants who are born in Canada or who have lived here for many years.

Auto ownership

Auto ownership rates follow similar patterns as licensing, as seen in table 14. Among study groups, 42% of participants reported living in a household without a private vehicle. Another 43% reported living in households with one vehicle shared between several adults. Almost three-quarters (72%) of households have fewer vehicles than adults aged 25 or over. With low rates of car ownership, most study participants rely on walking or transit to travel at least some of the time.

Like licensing, vehicle ownership varies substantially by study area and is not a function of regional location. Almost 74% of participants in Thorncliffe Park reside in households without vehicles, followed by St James Town (69%), Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park (54%), Chalkfarm and North Kipling (both 47%) and Scarborough Village (37%). The overall ownership average was increased by Steeles L'Amoreaux, where only 22% of participants reside in households without a vehicle, and by The Peanut, where only 7% of participants reported that their household was carless. Even in The Peanut,

Table 14: Percentage of Survey Respondents with Automobile Ownership

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	53
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	46
Steeles L'Amoreaux	78
North Kipling	53
The Peanut	93
St James Town	31
Scarborough Village	63
Thorncliffe Park	26
All Areas	58

however, the vast majority of households (72%) have only one car, even though almost 80% of households have more than one adult.

Like licensing, there is no clear relationship between vehicle ownership and how long a study participant has lived in Canada. Newer immigrants own cars at the same rates as longer-term residents with similar household incomes. In other words, the data suggest there is no adjustment period to Canada's automobile-oriented culture. Even if newcomers arrive from countries with lower levels of car dependency, in Toronto, they get cars as soon as they are able.

Auto ownership rates do vary with other socio-demographic variables such as household structure. For example, ownership rates are highest (70%) for households with couples and children. Particularly worrisome are ownership rates for single parents, which are the lowest overall (67% are without a vehicle). For these households, given the additional demands of employment and household maintenance, undertaking basic tasks without a car in an automobile-oriented environment is burdensome.

Income clearly plays a role in car ownership; ownership rates fall with educational attainment and numbers of employed workers in a household. For households reporting annual incomes of \$24,000 or less, 56% reported being without a vehicle. This compares to 33% of households with incomes of \$25,000-\$39,000 and 29% of households with incomes of \$40,000 or more.

The desire to own a car was clear among study participants. Our data suggest that purchasing a car is only prevented by lack of funds. One third of participants living in carless households reported that they are "saving to purchase one in the near future." When participants were asked if they wanted a car in focus group sessions, almost every person raised their hand.

Newer immigrants own cars at the same rates as longer-term residents with similar household incomes. In other words, the data suggest that there is no adjustment period to Canada's automobile-oriented culture. Even newcomers who arrive from countries with low levels of car dependency get cars as soon as they are able.

TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

Low licensing and auto-ownership rates influence most participants' travel patterns. In our survey we asked respondents to rate their agreement with the statement: "I only walk because I don't have access to a car." Almost half of participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Agreement was higher among lower-income participants, new immigrants and in study areas where walking distances tend to be far, such as Steeles L'Amoreaux and North Kipling. The following section details how important walking and transit are for participants according to the purpose of their trip.

Going to work and school

One hundred and thirty people in the study identified themselves as students or working people. Transit is the most common mode of transport to reach job and school sites; it is used by 41% of the participants who self-identified as workers or students. Many residents (20%) also combine modes. This may include taking a car trip in one direction and returning on transit. Only 19% told us they drive to work or school. Almost as

many (16%) told us they walk to their workplace or school. As expected, having a driver's licence and having more vehicles in the household increases the likelihood that residents drive to work or school.

Between the study areas, there are substantial variations in the transportation modes used to access work and school. Notably, centrally-located St James Town is the only site that did not report any driving for these trips. Conversely, in The Peanut, where auto-ownership rates among participants are high, more people drive to work or school than take transit. Walking rates were also particularly high in Thorncliffe Park. This can be attributed to the high youth participation rates — a group more likely to walk to school. In Steeles L'Amoreaux a high number of people report cycling, although the reason for this is unclear. See table 15.

Children's travel to school & other activities

Most households (55%) have children under the age of 14, and many have more than one. Among parents, 62% report that their children walk to school, accompanied or alone.⁴ Other modes of travel account for a



Pedestrians cross to a busy bus stop in Chalkfarm

Table 15: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Mode of Travel

STUDY AREA	TRANSIT	DRIVE	WALK	CYCLE	PASSENGER	MULTI-MODE
Chalkfarm	50	8	8	0	0	33
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	33	13	20	0	0	33
Steeles L'Amoreaux	36	9	9	18	9	18
North Kipling	48	24	14	0	0	14
The Peanut	11	50	11	0	6	22
St James Town	46	0	36	9	0	9
Scarborough Village	57	17	7	0	3	17
Thorncliffe Park	33	8	42	0	0	17
All Areas	41	19	16	2	2	20

smaller share of school trips: 21% of households report often driving children to school and 6% report using transit to help them there.

In Thorncliffe Park and St James Town, almost all children walk to school. This is facilitated by the location of primary schools in the centre of apartment areas, away from busy streets. Steeles L'Amoreaux also sees a great proportion of walking trips to school, despite its adverse walking conditions. In most areas, a large percentage of children walk to school. The Peanut provides an exception, where almost half of children are driven and only 30% walk. These general patterns of modal split prevail when taking children to other activities.

Food shopping

Travel patterns for food shopping were similar to other types of errands. Accordingly, we only detail travel associated with food shopping here. Walking was reported as the most common way of accessing food shopping, marked by 27% of survey respondents. This was closely followed by people who used more than one mode (noted by 26%). These mixed-mode shopping trips usually include walking in one direction and the use of transit or taxis in the other. In the focus groups, people explained this behaviour as a way to carry heavy loads of groceries and save travel fare. As one focus group participant stated, "Sometimes we don't shop for a long time, and we'll wait a long time to take a taxi." Driving oneself accounted for 24%, and 7% reported being driven to and from the store by another person. Overall, between walking and mixed-mode trips, walking is by far the most important way people travel for food shopping.

These travel patterns are influenced by local shopping opportunities. A recent study noted that 51% of Torontonians live in "food deserts" — neighbourhoods where grocery stores are more than one kilometre from the home (Martin Prosperity Institute, 2010). This pattern is more pronounced in the inner suburbs and priority neighbourhoods. For our study participants, the median walking distance to a supermarket was 675 metres, but distances to supermarkets were highly variable. Where supermarkets were integrated within apartment areas, like St James Town and Thorncliffe Park, driving rates were low and walking rates high. In these areas, almost 60% of respondents reported walking to supermarkets. In contrast, for study participants in Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park and North Kipling, the median walk to the nearest supermarket exceeds three-quarters of a kilometre and extends to more than one kilometre for some. In Steeles L'Amoreaux and The Peanut, Asian supermarkets were within about a half-kilometre from workshop sites, but larger supermarkets were further than one kilometre. This helps explain why driving rates are high in some of these neighbourhoods; in The Peanut, almost half of food shopping trips are made by car, and in North Kipling, car trips constitute more than a third of food shopping trips.

Regardless of travel mode, over 80% of participants reported accomplishing their regular shopping "near to my home." The percentage of participants who agreed with this statement ranged from 74% in Scarborough

4. Although the age group samples differ slightly, these walking rates are substantially higher than the 41% of students aged 11-15 who walk to school across the city as a whole. (See Buliung et al., 2009).

Village and Thorncliffe Park, to over 90% in St James Town and North Kipling. This is not just a function of the nearness of shopping. As might be expected, unemployment, low household income and being without a vehicle resulted in slightly higher rates of shopping near home. In general, higher income means that more shopping is accomplished in cars, further from the home. As our data on licensing suggest, women have less access to cars in these study areas than men. Women have more household responsibilities, and ultimately do more shopping, errands and childcare duties without the benefit of cars.

In general, higher income means more shopping is done with cars, further from the home. Women have more household responsibilities, and ultimately do more shopping, errands and childcare duties without the benefit of cars.

These trends agree with participants' stated reasons for choosing where they shop: the "type of transportation available" was noted by 37% and the "closeness of the store" by 38%. See table 16. These factors were surpassed by "price/affordability," which was selected by almost half of participants as the reason for shopping where they do. In focus groups, many participants discussed travelling greater distances, and even taking extra transit, to shop at cheaper stores. In Scarborough Village, for example, a nearby Metro supermarket is passed in lieu of travelling two kilometres north to a cheaper No Frills supermarket. In this neighbourhood, 58% of participants listed price as most important in their choice of shop.

"Quality of food" and "availability of culturally specific food," were also listed as somewhat important to participants, at 30% and 26% respectively. We heard anecdotal evidence about some families going to great lengths to follow a traditional, healthier diet that emphasizes fresh produce and ingredients over processed foods. Workshop discussions about the best local bargains were animated and participants swapped tips on local sources and small grocers. Residents in some areas were also enthusiastic about local entrepreneurs who frequented their neighbourhood to sell small quantities of produce from vegetable vans. These providers

helped residents acquire fresh produce close to home and avoid the strain of carrying heavy bags of groceries from the shop. The food desert study, cited above, concluded that "replacing food deserts with fresh, accessible food choices may not entail just building more large grocery stores, but supporting the development of a vibrant local grocery and market sector, able to supply healthy and appropriate food to Toronto's diverse neighbourhoods" (Toronto Community Foundation, 2010: 57). Our findings reveal an eager market for these food amenities, which would improve people's food choices and reduce the burden of travelling for basic needs.

Finally, upwards of 68% of participants indicated they run errands and go shopping more than twice a week. Shopping and doing errands with friends and neighbours was a common activity. Sometimes cars were shared to transport heavier loads of groceries to the home. Beyond economics, shared trips, whether in a car, on transit or walking, were reported as sources of sociability and pleasure. The sociability associated with shopping may not be as important in neighbourhoods with a higher dependence on cars. Focus group participants clearly enjoy combining everyday tasks with visiting neighbours and family, whether doing errands, shopping or helping kids to and from school.

Table 16: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Reasons for Shopping Area Selection

REASON	%
Price/Affordability	47
Proximity	38
Transportation Used for Journey	37
Quality of Food	30
Culturally Specific Food	26
Combining Errands	22

SECTION SUMMARY:

- Less than one half of study participants and just over one third of female participants reported having a driver's licence.
- Auto-ownership rates are low. More than 40% of households reportedly do not own a car, and about another 40% have only one. Three-quarters of households have fewer cars than adults.
- Low car ownership rates are related to low incomes. These rates are particularly low for single-parent households.
- Newer immigrants own cars at the same rates as longer-term residents with similar household incomes. Most participants report planning to purchase a car when they are financially able.
- Low licensing and auto-ownership rates are reflected in travel patterns. Transit is the most common mode of travel to work or school, and walking, or a combination of walking and other modes, is the most common mode to shop.
- Household responsibilities outside the home are most often carried out by women and usually accomplished by transit and on foot.
- To save money and ease the burden of carrying heavy loads home, people without cars may walk to shops and take transit or a taxi to return.
- Shopping and doing errands with friends or family is both a strategy to transport heavy loads home, in the case of car access, and a form of sociability and pleasure.
- Most participants shop locally, especially if they have low incomes or do not have car access.
- Participants value nearby, affordable, healthy and culturally-specific food options, but with the median distance to supermarkets 675 metres away, some study areas border on being "food deserts."
- Many participants seek out less expensive supermarkets, even if transportation is difficult.
- Children walk to school in almost all neighbourhoods.



A vegetable van visits Thorncliffe Park

GENERAL WALKING CONDITIONS, TRAFFIC AND CROSSING STREETS

This section highlights general attitudes toward local walking environments and evaluates participants' feelings about traffic and safety crossing large streets. Respondents were asked if they had enough places to safely cross busy streets and if they crossed large streets at places without crosswalks or traffic signals. Average survey scores were used to understand overall perceptions and to compare responses between study areas and types of participants. For example, we compared households with and without children.⁵ On a five-point scale, a score above three suggests a generally positive perception and a score below three suggests a generally negative one. This quantitative information was supplemented with qualitative feedback from the focus groups.

SURVEY FINDINGS

General evaluation of the walking environment

At each focus group we asked participants to evaluate the statement: "My neighbourhood is a good place for walking." Agreement with this statement was positive on the whole, with an average score of 3.7 across all neighbourhoods. This translates into 61% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, only 16% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, and the rest remaining neutral. The average ratings show some variation between neighbourhoods. See table 17.

The highest average levels of satisfaction were recorded in Steeles L'Amoreaux (4.0) and in Thorncliffe Park and St James Town (3.9). Communities that were the least positive were Chalkfarm and Scarborough Village (both had average ratings of 3.2). As discussed below, overall ratings generally agreed with perceptions of traffic safety and the ease of crossing large streets more than they agreed with assessments of other elements of the pedestrian environment.

Parents tended to give their neighbourhoods much lower walkability scores than adults without children. When asked to rate the statement "I am comfortable letting my children walk to places on their own," parents' ratings dropped precipitously: 66% disagreed or strongly disagreed, with an average score of 2.3. In part, this may relate to a general culture of fear found in many neighbourhoods around Toronto. It is also possible that specific neighbourhood worries, including hostile pedestrian environments, negatively affect the autonomy and mobility of local children and youth. Our study offers some such evidence. There was a significant relationship between people's comfort levels allowing children to walk alone and the perceived overall walkability of the area.

Aside from having children, we did not find any other strong relationships between general walkability ratings and socio-demographic variables, including income, car ownership, length of time in Canada, and

5. These questions were not asked in the first neighbourhood studied, Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park.

Table 17: Percentage of Agreement with: "My neighbourhood is a good place for walking"

STUDY AREA	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Chalkfarm	4	27	27	35	8
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	-	-	-	-	-
Steeles L'Amoreaux	0	10	10	35	45
North Kipling	7	4	15	48	23
The Peanut	3	6	31	25	34
St James Town	4	8	17	33	38
Scarborough Village	10	15	33	30	13
Thorncliffe Park	5	5	15	40	35
All Areas	5	11	22	34	27

regular transportation mode for shopping or for work and school.

Traffic and crossing streets

Fast-moving traffic and wide streets profoundly shape the walkability of the inner suburbs. Cars hit fewer total pedestrians in the suburbs than in the city centre, but the risk of collision, and the possibility of getting seriously injured or killed, is higher in the suburbs due to high speeds of travel. Most Toronto suburban arterials have posted speed limits of 60 kilometres per hour — a speed at which risk of death or serious injury is high. The chances of death or incapacitating injury from a car-pedestrian accident rises from about 22% on streets with posted speeds of 40 kilometres per hour to 40% on streets with posted speeds of 64 kilometres per hour. Take note, that these posted speeds are often exceeded by traffic. Someone hit by a car travelling at 60 kilometres per hour has a 60% chance of being killed or receiving an incapacitating injury. This possibility is higher with older pedestrians (Leaf & Preusser, 1999).

Study participants evaluated their traffic environment on our survey and eagerly discussed traffic issues in focus groups. Generally, survey results were more positive than comments made during group discussions. As discussed above, the overall assessment of the pedestrian environment by survey participants was related to their evaluation of the traffic. The survey asked people to rate these two statements: “I feel safe from traffic when I’m walking in my neighbourhood” and “there are enough places to safely cross the large streets.”

Arterial roads running through the inner suburbs prioritize the movement of cars over pedestrians, bikes or transit users. Long distances between lights frequently results in pedestrians crossing mid-block.



Mid-block crossing on Eglinton East

The average score for the first statement was 3.4 and the second, 3.2; more than half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with both statements. See tables 18 and 19. It is worth noting, however, that more than a quarter of respondents did not feel safe from traffic and nearly 30% did not think there are enough safe street crossings in their neighbourhood. Likewise, when asked to indicate issues that participants face in their daily travel from a list, traffic was important. It was indicated as a major barrier by between 10% of respondents in Thorncliffe Park and Steeles L'Amoreaux, to 38% of respondents in Scarborough Village. See table 20. Although there are discrepancies in the ways people rated traffic safety and approached traffic as a barrier, together these points indicate that traffic is a serious concern for many people.

Scarborough Village stands out as the lowest-rated neighbourhood. Positive responses to safe street crossings in Thorncliffe Park are also notable. This may be a consequence of the urban form and low traffic speed in the neighbourhood where high-rise buildings are clustered along Thorncliffe Park Drive, which is not a major arterial. Thus, many residents can walk to important destinations like the shopping centre, R.V. Burgess Park and Thorncliffe Park Public School without crossing a major street. Chalkfarm is an anomaly: people generally feel that there are enough safe street crossings, but most do not feel safe from traffic. This may be because most participants in Chalkfarm do not have to cross the major streets to access common destinations like the mall, but reported feeling threatened by cars driving quickly in the parking lot.

Table 18: Percentage of Agreement with: "I feel safe from traffic when I'm walking"

STUDY AREA	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Chalkfarm	11	42	19	27	0
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	-	-	-	-	-
Steeles L'Amoreaux	4	23	15	43	15
North Kipling	7	11	7	44	30
The Peanut	0	19	7	52	23
St James Town	8	17	17	50	8
Scarborough Village	8	24	22	35	11
Thorncliffe Park	0	10	5	55	30
All Areas	6	22	14	43	16

Table 19: Percentage of Agreement with: "There are enough places to safely cross the large streets"

STUDY AREA	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Chalkfarm	13	26	9	35	17
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	-	-	-	-	-
Steeles L'Amoreaux	4	15	26	41	15
North Kipling	7	11	4	54	25
The Peanut	0	16	16	55	13
St James Town	4	29	25	33	8
Scarborough Village	14	35	19	19	14
Thorncliffe Park	11	16	21	42	11
All Areas	7	22	17	39	15

Table 20: Percentage of Survey Respondents Indicating “Fast Traffic” as a Major Barrier

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	26
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	23
Steeles L'Amoreaux	10
North Kipling	16
The Peanut	16
St James Town	11
Scarborough Village	38
Thorncliffe Park	10
All Areas	19

Mid-block crossings

The tendency to cross mid-block provided another gauge of how people viewed the traffic environment on large streets. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statement: “To make my walk shorter, I often cross large streets even where there is no light or crosswalk.”

We found little connection between people engaging in such mid-block crossings and their feelings of traffic safety. Across all neighbourhoods, the statement received an average rating of 2.9, that is, people tended to slightly disagree that they cross large streets mid-block. People in St James Town were the most likely to report crossing mid-block, and people in North Kipling and the Peanut reported they were least likely. Respondents in all three neighbourhoods felt fairly safe from traffic. It is also not clear how forthrightly people answered this question, as many people believe that crossing outside an intersection or crosswalk constitutes “jaywalking” and is illegal, even though there is no Provincial or City law prohibiting mid-block crossings. In other words, people may engage in this behaviour more than they admit.

Respondents who had lived in Canada for less than five years were less likely to report crossing mid-block. This may be related to newcomers’ concern for following the rules and the perceptions that mid-block crossing is illegal. Compared to longer-term residents, newer immigrants were also more likely to report satisfaction with existing crossings and generally feeling safe from



A mother with children crosses mid-block in wintery conditions in Thorncliffe Park

traffic. On the question of street crossings, for example, newer immigrants strongly agreed there are enough (average rating of 3.7) compared to participants that have lived in Canada for 10 years or more, whose ratings were neutral (average rating of 3.1). The reasons for these differences are not clear. It may be that new immigrants make comparisons to their homelands where traffic dangers are worse, or where war or other social conflict are greater concerns. Or perhaps they are simply more focused on settlement and employment issues, so traffic is not yet a major concern. These causes are speculative.

Participants under 18 years of age reported the high frequency of crossing large streets at mid-block rather than at crosswalks or traffic signals (average score 3.7). People 65 years of age or older reported the unlikelihood of doing so (average score 2.5). Households with children were more neutral on the issue of adequate safe crossings (average score 3.1) than households without children (average score 3.6), and were also less likely to report crossing outside a crosswalk or without a traffic signal. More interestingly, people who regularly walk to do their shopping were reportedly more likely to cross mid-block (average score 3.5) compared to those that normally drive (average 2.6). Perhaps those who carry larger loads regularly feel the need to limit walking distances by making these crossings more often and feel more “street smart” than those who avoid jaywalking.

Frequent walkers in focus groups spoke of “taking charge of their own safety” in face of busy traffic and purposely avoiding formal pedestrian crossings. In Scarborough Village, for example, some participants described feeling safer at a mid-block crossing than at crossing lights where traffic moves in more directions. Snow banks at main intersections also encouraged people to cross mid-block as snowy driveways restrict safe sidewalk access.

On Eglinton Avenue East, people use the centre turn-lane as a pedestrian refuge. When asked if he ever stood in the middle of the road while crossing a participant replied, “That’s why it’s there.” Despite the hazard, some people believe crossing mid-block is safer than using the adjacent traffic light and pedestrian signals.

Facilitator: *Are people afraid of making that crossing?*

Participant: *You’re at greater risk standing at this corner [at Markham & Eglinton] than you are [crossing mid-block]. There have been three hit-and-runs at this corner... drivers are turkeys. The pedestrian has an expectation of safety [at the corner]... because it’s a crosswalk. The pedestrian has no expectation of safety here [mid-block]. If you’re crossing at the middle of the block, you use the centre median. You make damn sure it’s safe.”*

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

As noted above, assessments of traffic were more critical in focus groups than in survey results. Workshop participants spoke of the fear they experience negotiating arterials like Jane, Wilson, Steeles, Markham, Kingston, Kipling, Eglinton, Lawrence and Finch. Many navigate these arterials every day. The volume and speed of the traffic is not the only source of fear and perceived danger. Participants shared stories about being grazed by cars, inattentive drivers taking wide radius corners at high speeds, getting marooned on medians and traffic islands, rear wheels of tractor trailers jumping curbs and being confused by traffic signals and advance green lights. They also reported that crossing signals did not give pedestrians adequate time to cross.

These comments highlight typical community concerns:

“A girl was crossing the street and got hit there and died. We were complaining before. That’s why they put that light in. People almost get hit at the light. Sometimes people run the light, they almost run the guy over. Somebody had to die before they put in a light.”

- North Kipling Participant

“I almost got killed. If you come out, a person can turn right on you, two cars can come right at you, and sometimes two cars turn left at the same time to go on to Don Mills from the highway.”

- Peanut Participant

“There’s a light there [and people go through on the red] and I’ve seen the police flag down traffic, TTC buses... dangerous... traffic too fast... children can’t get across.”

- Steeles L’Amoreaux Participant

“Right on that corner there... those people come ripping around. They don’t look. I don’t feel safe there.”

- Scarborough Village Participant

“The lights are changed too fast... I walk slow. The lights change too fast ... by the time I get [to middle of the intersection], it’s time for the cars to start coming.”

- St James Town Participant



An elderly woman crosses an arterial road in Steeles L’Amoreaux

Respondents' attitudes toward their traffic environment were complex and conflicted. Even though participants spoke with frustration about drivers' inattention, speed and recklessness, people were also inclined to say that they did not want to interfere with traffic flows. In other words, there was a basic acceptance of the automobile-orientation of their neighbourhoods, even if they did not own a car themselves. In Steeles L'Amoreaux, for instance, residents noted that although they had to walk great distances to protected crossings they did not want to install more lights or crosswalks because "that would slow down traffic."

At times, there was also a palpable sense of resignation related to traffic conditions; even if these conditions were hostile, participants had little hope to change them. In Chalkfarm, for instance, when someone suggested reducing the speed limit on Jane Street, other group members laughed and one insisted that the City would never do this for pedestrians. These sentiments were fuelled by experiences recounted in most study areas — many respondents had contacted the City or local councillors about various problems yet "nothing had changed."



Intersection of Kipling and Finch Avenues

SECTION SUMMARY:

- Participants generally agreed with the statement: "My neighbourhood is a good place for walking"; 61% agreed or strongly agreed.
- Variations in overall evaluation accorded with perceptions of traffic safety and ease of street crossings, not with other elements of the pedestrian environment.
- Parents score their local walkability much lower than non-parents; two-thirds of parents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement: "I am comfortable letting my children walk to places on their own."
- Responses to the statements: "I feel safe from traffic when I'm walking in my neighbourhood" and "there are enough places to safely cross the large streets" were also positive, but more than 25% did not feel safe from traffic and nearly 30% did not feel there are enough street crossings.
- Compared to longer-term residents, newer immigrants were more likely to report adequate crossings and feeling safe from traffic.
- Respondents tended to slightly disagree with the statement: "To make my walk shorter, I often cross large streets even where there is no light or crosswalk," although youth were more likely to report crossing mid-block and older people, new immigrants and people with children were less likely to report doing so.
- People who walk to shop are more likely to use mid-block crossings than people who drive.
- People were more critical of traffic in the focus groups than in the survey results. People shared stories of being grazed by cars, inattentive drivers taking wide corners at high speeds, getting marooned on medians and traffic islands, etc.
- Duration of crossing signals is a concern, particularly for the elderly who report inadequate crossing time.
- Attitudes to traffic were complex and conflicted; some rejected changes that would interfere with traffic flow.
- People were frustrated that the City and local councillors were unresponsive to requests for improvement.

CONNECTIVITY: DISTANCES, FENCING AND SHORTCUTS

A well-connected pedestrian network allows people to walk directly and safely to the places they most often go. Most of the suburban high-rise neighbourhoods in this study are not well connected. In many study areas, the distance between things makes walking difficult. As noted, some participants had to walk one kilometre to the nearest supermarket. As one participant in The Peanut put it: “There’s no fast way — in the suburbs, everything’s far apart.”

Even if shopping amenities and other destinations are nearby, indirect travel routes dictated by private property, fencing or hazardous conditions make walking trips longer. In suburban street systems, the streets curve, loop and have many cul-de-sacs that add to walking distances.

Notwithstanding challenges of overall neighbourhood design, the pedestrian realms of high-rise properties

themselves are even more complex. Suburban high-rise buildings frequently lack formal walkways connecting them to sidewalks and public streets. Disconnections in pedestrian infrastructure force residents to navigate parking lots or driveways, scale curbs without cuts and traverse roads without markings. High-rise complexes are purposefully disconnected from surrounding streets, schools, and shopping areas by tall fences that line property boundaries.

In the face of these obstacles, many pedestrians find shorter routes to their desired destinations. Holes cut through fences, informal ladders and make-shift bridges are testaments to pedestrians’ determination to take direct routes, in spite of impediments and risks. This section explores these connectivity issues through survey responses and focus group discussions.

“There’s no fast way — in the suburbs, everything’s far apart.”

- Peanut Participant



Sign in The Peanut

SURVEY FINDINGS

Distances

The survey asked respondents about major barriers they face in their daily travel. We asked respondents to rate their agreement with this statement: "Places I want to go are very far apart."

Almost 17% of respondents agreed that the distance between places was a major barrier to daily travel. See table 21. For the most part, results accord with our own analysis of relative distances in different areas. With its downtown setting and two supermarkets nearby, St James Town scored very well, as did Thorncliffe Park, which is compactly oriented around a park, school and shopping centre. By contrast, high agreement with the above statement is understandable in The Peanut, where shopping entails a considerable walk from where workshop participants reside. Respondents in Chalkfarm and Scarborough Village also agreed that distance was an obstacle, although the reason for this is less clear, as both have shopping centres and schools nearby. Agreement may relate more to missing con-

Table 21: Percentage of Agreement with: "Places I want to go are very far apart"

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	23
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	13
Steeles L'Amoreaux	15
North Kipling	13
The Peanut	25
St James Town	7
Scarborough Village	25
Thorncliffe Park	5
All Areas	17

Holes cut in fences, informal ladders and make-shift bridges are testaments to pedestrians' determination to take direct routes, in spite of the impediments and risks. A "cat and mouse" game ensues between property owners and pedestrians, and is endemic in the suburbs.



The hole in the Goodview path fence in The Peanut



"Ladder" in Scarborough Village

nections and indirect walking routes than to distance alone.

An analysis of the respondents' walking route maps helped understand the distances walked and obstacles faced. We measured the total length of all routes normally used. For 191 maps that were interpretable, the median length across all study areas was 3.4 kilometres. People may not use all routes every day, and they likely use some multiple times. The routes also include people's recreational walking, in some cases. Still, the network of walking routes used is quite extensive in most areas. See table 22.

Distances are not related to the compactness of the study area or how respondents rated their overall walking environment. The median distances in compact St James Town and in Thorncliffe Park are quite great. This distance is furthest in Steeles L'Amoreaux, one of the least compact areas. Likewise, total median distance is very short in Scarborough Village, where residents gave the lowest rating to the overall environment. In some areas, extensive total walking routes may be an indication of an environment that encourages walking.

Route distances to the closest supermarket are easier to interpret and were discussed briefly in the section on travel patterns. Across all study areas, the median distance from home to supermarket was 675 metres. This means that half of the respondents who produced maps lived further than this. Distances in some study areas were very long, particularly in Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park (890 metres), Steeles L'Amoreaux (835 metres) and North Kipling (756 metres). See table 23. For respondents without cars, these distances represent a significant barrier to accessing food. We did not analyze other destination types, but we expect results are similar.

Table 22: Median Length of Total Walking Routes

STUDY AREA	KM
Chalkfarm	2.5
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	4.9
Steeles L'Amoreaux	5.5
North Kipling	2.3
The Peanut	3.5
St James Town	4.2
Scarborough Village	1.6
Thorncliffe Park	3.4
All Areas	3.4

Table 23: Distance to Nearest Supermarket

STUDY AREA	M
Chalkfarm	343
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	890
Steeles L'Amoreaux	835
North Kipling	756
The Peanut	562
St James Town	136
Scarborough Village	323
Thorncliffe Park	359
All Areas	675

Across all study areas, the median distance from home to supermarket was 675 metres. This means that half of the respondents who produced maps lived further than this. For respondents without cars, these distances represent a significant barrier to accessing food.

67% of study participants agreed or strongly agreed they "often use shortcuts to get around the neighbourhood."

Poor connections and indirect routes

Survey respondents were also asked to rate their agreement with a second statement related to connectivity: “Places in my neighbourhood are not connected well / I’m forced to use indirect routes.”

Some 22% of all respondents agreed with this statement. Many believed that connectivity problems were as serious an impediment to travel as traffic. See table 24. Again, Thorncliffe Park scored well on this issue, with less than 10% of respondents noting connectivity as a major barrier. St James Town, which has multiple fences dividing the community interior, did not fare as well. The Peanut, where former pedestrian walkways have been fenced-off, scored even more poorly. Here, more than a third of participants noted that connectivity was a problem. In Steeles L’Amoreaux and North Kipling poor connections and indirect travel routes were not considered major problems. It is not entirely clear why this is the case, as both areas have limited travel networks. In both areas, however, pedestrians rely on large arterial streets to get to places and there are few off-street paths and shortcuts.

Off-street pedestrian routes and shortcutting

Every study area included many types of off-street pedestrian routes. Routes through parks, parking lots and between buildings are all common. Some of these are good quality, purpose-built, public, cement walkways, like those in Thorncliffe Park. Others are rough dirt paths that go through, or even over, fences, like those in Scarborough Village and St James Town.

These routes are heavily used. We calculated the percentage of total route length off formal streets from respondent maps. Across all study areas the median value for participants’ off-street pathway use was 24%. This varied from between 50% in Thorncliffe Park to less than 10% in Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park. See table 25.

As another way to gauge respondents’ use of informal routes, respondents were asked to rate their agreement to the following statement: “I often use shortcuts (unpaved paths, cut across parking lots, etc.)” Sixty-seven per cent of all study participants agreed or strongly agreed that they often use shortcuts to get around the neighbourhood. Depending on how shortcutting is

Table 24: Percentage of Agreement with: “Places in my neighbourhood aren’t well Connected / I am forced to use indirect routes”

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	30
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	-
Steeles L’Amoreaux	12
North Kipling	13
The Peanut	34
St James Town	30
Scarborough Village	28
Thorncliffe Park	10
All Areas	22

Table 25: Percentage of Participants’ Total Routes which are Off Formal Streets

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	48
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	9
Steeles L’Amoreaux	11
North Kipling	26
The Peanut	26
St James Town	15
Scarborough Village	45
Thorncliffe Park	51
All Areas	24

defined, rates might be even higher. What constitutes a shortcut is often ambiguous and some shortcuts are so heavily used that residents might not even recognize them as such. Study participants also reported occasionally cutting through buildings, particularly in the winter, to get from one place to another.

Local conditions explain some variation in shortcut use between study areas. See table 26. In St James Town and Thorncliffe Park — which both have many formal, off-street pathways — around 80% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they use shortcuts. In Scarborough Village, informal connections are also very important and many residents reported using them. Conversely, fewer (but still almost half of) residents in North Kipling reported using shortcuts. This is consistent with the layout of North Kipling, where residents must walk along Kipling Avenue to get to their destinations, thereby reducing reliance on shortcuts. Rea-

Table 26: Percentage of Agreement with: "I often use shortcuts"

STUDY AREA	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Chalkfarm	4	30	13	35	17
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	-	-	-	-	-
Steeles L'Amoreaux	4	7	11	36	43
North Kipling	37	11	4	22	26
The Peanut	20	10	0	33	37
St James Town	4	8	8	40	40
Scarborough Village	3	24	5	43	24
Thorncliffe Park	0	16	5	16	63
All Areas	11	15	6	33	34

sons for the low reported use of shortcuts in Chalkfarm, where residents do navigate many off-street paths and parking lots, is less clear. Frequent use of shortcuts does not necessarily mean most walking is done off-street. Residents in St James Town, for example, often use internal local connections, while much of their walking still takes place on surrounding streets and sidewalks.

Those who report using shortcuts were often the same who reported crossing large streets mid-block. Participants from households with children, especially young children, were less likely to report using shortcuts and informal paths than households without children. This

rate would likely improve if the shortcuts were better maintained. Younger people were more likely to report using shortcuts than older people. Finally, newcomers to Canada were also less likely to report using shortcuts than longer-term residents. This may relate to anxiety around crossing private property. Such sentiments were expressed by some participants but are not conclusive.



A well-travelled shortcut in Scarborough Village connects a high-rise parking lot with Cedar Drive Public School

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Residents raised concerns with shortcuts, related to private property, walking conditions, isolation and security. These issues are addressed in sections below. Here, we discuss fences, blocked routes and walking conditions in parking lots.

Fences and blocked routes

Many respondents noted the lack of direct formal connections in their communities and lamented the closure of frequently used shortcuts and the erection of fences.

“We can’t get to the park. [At] the side of the tennis court, there used to be a path and they closed it and put in a fence. About a year and a half ago, two years ago, it was closed.”

- North Kipling Participant

The [fence] behind the veterinary clinic is shut down. There’s the irony. They spend thousands of dollars renovating... And then they lock the gate.”

- Scarborough Village Participant

“In ‘69 there was a path and they put [in] a fence and I was bloody mad. I had to walk all the way up Goodview to take my kids to the pool. Then they built a path and we used to scramble up the path.”

- Peanut Participant

“They’ve put unnecessary fences around [the shopping plaza]. Again, the big fence blocks everyone from walking where they used to. So we have to walk around. There’s always walking around.”

- Peanut Participant

The Goodview path was created between apartment properties through constant use. It leads up a steep hill to a hole in the fence. When asked who uses the path, participants were clear: “We all do, of course.” Use persists despite discomfort associated with its being on “private property” and because it is unsafe.

“I won’t use the hole, because it’s very steep. When it’s raining, it’s slippery.”

- Peanut Participant



The hole in the Goodview Path fence

“Near Silver Springs School there is a fence. [It] need[s] repairs because [it’s] falling down... falling down because of trees and people disrupting them. [We] would like the fence removed so that people can walk through. Even the kids need better access to the school.”

- Steeles L’Amoreaux Participant

There were hopeful stories too. With permission from local property owners and help from the City, the Scarborough Village Neighbourhood Association was able to make modest, but important improvements to a well-used shortcut that runs from the Cougar Court apartment area to Eglinton Avenue between two strip malls. A gap in a fence was widened, trees were cut to improve sightlines and the walking surface was improved by removing a concrete parking stop and laying

gravel. These improvements, however small, required long periods of organizing and are exceptional.

Shortcuts are a point of community contention; people depend on them to save time and walking distance, while landowners, whose property is trespassed, worry about security and liability. Additionally, the influence of municipal authorities and local councillors is limited to zoning and property standards which do not apply in these circumstances. Public officials are also restricted from spending money on private walkways and facilities. Thus, when local residents advocate for improvements or maintenance of these valuable shortcut routes, they encounter resistance from both property owners and local authorities. A “cat and mouse” game results where pedestrians continue to find ways across private property and owners erect and re-erect fences to stop them.



Residents in Scarborough Village clean up a local walkway

Pedestrian routes through parking lots

Informal paths crossing property lines are not the only important off-street pedestrian routes. Routes across parking lots, both within apartment complexes and in shopping areas, form part of the pedestrian system in all the study areas and are part of the traffic environment discussed in the previous section.

“There’s lots of truck traffic in back of the mall, there’s no set walkway for pedestrians and you have to juggle with the trucks delivering stuff to Zeller’s”

- Thorncliffe Park Participant

Parking lots often lack pedestrian walkways connecting buildings to streets. Where walkways do exist, they are often in the wrong place, forcing pedestrians to walk along driveways and parking lanes instead. In addition, many of these private walkways are narrow, have steps and lack curb cuts, making them inaccessible to people who use strollers, wheelchairs or scooters. Walkways between public streets and public facilities are also missing in some cases, including Valley Park Middle School near Thorncliffe Park. Pedestrians are forced to compete with cars and trucks in these contexts.

Participants noted that cars sometimes use mall parking lots as shortcuts, often at high speeds, to avoid the busy intersections. With blind corners and without stop signs or signage indicating the presence of pedestrians, some participants are frightened of these areas and may take longer routes to avoid them completely. These conditions were reported in mall parking lots in Thorncliffe Park, The Peanut Plaza and Fairview Mall, Chalkfarm and Scarborough Village.



An elderly woman crosses a snowy parking lot in Chalkfarm

The “ghost house shortcut” in Scarborough Village demonstrates the consequences of poor connectivity. It crosses property with an abandoned house at 34 Cedar Drive. When this shortcut is open, it is an important walking route to Cedar Drive Public School and Scarborough Village Park. However, it is not always open, which results in on-going skirmishes: the fence is often replaced or repaired to dissuade shortcutting and then users cut it open again or find other ways over it.



The “ghost house shortcut” in Scarborough Village

In The Peanut, residents access the mall through the library on Fairview Mall Drive. Pedestrians follow a series of short walkway segments and a yellow painted crosswalk, to find themselves in the driving lane of a parking lot, still at a distance from the mall entrance.



Painted crosswalks in the Fairview Mall parking lot



A walker navigates the Fairview Mall parking lot

SECTION SUMMARY:

- Travel distances and indirect travel routes make walking difficult for many study participants. Almost 17% of respondents noted that distance between places was a major barrier to daily travel and 22% marked poor connections and indirect travel routes as major barriers. They indicated that travel distances and indirect routes pose as big a barrier to travel as traffic.
- The median total length of walking routes was 3.4 kilometres. In some cases, longer total route lengths were associated with more compact walkable environments.
- Median route length to the closest supermarket was 675 metres and over 800 metres in some neighbourhoods. This distance represents a very significant barrier.
- Off-street pedestrian routes are important in all study areas. Some are high-quality formal paths, while others are rough, informal paths that go through fences, along driveways and through parking lots.
- The use of informal paths and shortcuts is very common: 24% of pedestrian routes mapped are not on formal streets and 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I often use shortcuts.”
- Youth are more likely to use shortcuts. Older people, families with young children, and newer Canadians are less likely. These patterns are similar to behaviours at mid-block crossings.
- Focus group discussions highlighted the importance of shortcuts and the barriers to maintaining informal paths. Fences force people to take much longer walks and closing paths creates community tension.
- Making improvements to these paths is difficult because they are on private property and often involve several landowners. Although they are a key part of the suburban pedestrian environment, the City has little jurisdiction over these routes.
- Routes across parking lots, in apartment areas and around shopping centres are dangerous and expose pedestrians to fast-moving traffic.



A muddy informal path in Steeles L'Amoreaux

SIDEWALKS, WALKWAYS AND WINTER CONDITIONS

Flat and clean walkways, free of debris, gaps, pooling water and holes are critical to a comfortable pedestrian environment. As discussed, even informal routes with poor infrastructure are important to the pedestrian environment in high-rise neighbourhoods. These routes can be long and inhospitable. In Thorncliffe Park, for example, a long narrow route cutting behind apartment buildings, is often used by youth to access their school across the Overlea Boulevard bridge:

“There’s a two foot drop near the bridge that leads to the path that gets icy. It’s unpaved and not level. So we hold onto the fence line as we walk down.”

- Thorncliffe Park Participant

Although the path noted above is on private property, for the most part, survey respondents did not distinguish between public on-street paths and private off-street paths. Both are deficient.

SURVEY FINDINGS

One third of respondents (33%) identified “poor sidewalk and walking conditions” as a major barrier to daily travel. This statistic was surpassed only by the presence of “scary people.”

Participants from study areas with the most extensive off-street pathways were most affected by walking conditions. More than 40% of respondents in Chalkfarm, St James Town and Thorncliffe Park marked sidewalk conditions as a major barrier. See table 27.

Table 27: Percentage of Agreement with “Poor sidewalk and walking conditions are a barrier”

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	47
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	33
Steeles L’Amoreaux	32
North Kipling	13
The Peanut	22
St James Town	44
Scarborough Village	38
Thorncliffe Park	43
All Areas	33



A high-rise walkway in a poor state of repair on Jane Street in Chalkfarm



A well-travelled Thorncliffe Park route close to the Islamic Centre and Iqbal's grocery

More than 41% of households with children identified sidewalk conditions as a problem, compared to only 24% of households without. Likewise, 45% of people who walk for groceries and use sidewalks extensively gave sidewalk conditions a poor mark. This is compared to 27% of people who drive. Interestingly, responses from people 65 years and older — 23% of whom self-identify as walking-impaired — agreed with overall averages.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The focus group discussions helped understand the role of sidewalk conditions and environmental conditions more generally.

Sidewalk and walkway conditions

Participants brought up a variety of concerns about sidewalks and walkways. The absence of sidewalks and walkways in high traffic areas was the most basic and was noted in almost all study areas. In some areas, pathways start in asphalt or concrete and then suddenly stop, degenerating into mud paths.

Many people reported uneven pavement in their communities. Cracks in pavement, potholes, uneven slabs, missing uni-lock bricks, tree roots that poke through pathways, and steep curbs are all hazards. Residents in every study area recounted frequent falls and injuries due to uneven pavement. These incidents occur more often on private walkways than public ones.

People with mobility limitations were unanimously dissatisfied with insufficient curb cuts on private walkways. Walkways typically include steps which hamper mobility for those with strollers, shopping carts, wheelchairs and scooters. Sub-standard infrastructure and poor accessibility forces people who need wheelchairs or scooters to compete with vehicles on driveways and roads. In other places, curb cuts are awkwardly placed or located by obstacles that make manoeuvring difficult or impossible.

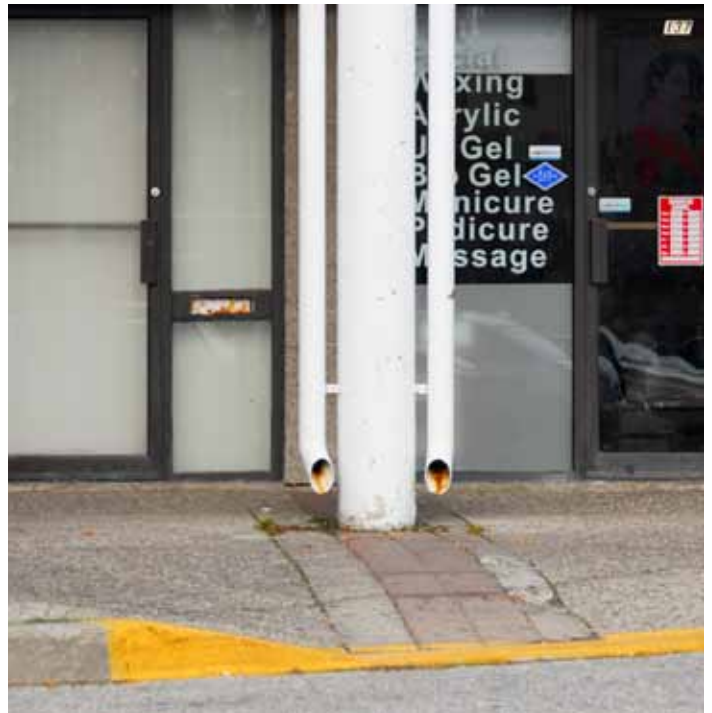
St James Town is full of privately-owned walkways, many of which are poorly maintained and irregular in width and height. Many respondents lament the lack of curb cuts. Where curb cuts do exist, they are steep and uneven. People with scooters and wheelchairs are afraid to use them. Many fear they will tip over or damage their scooters.

"I used to walk. I've got the walker. I can't walk that far anymore... Some of the curbs are not built for handicapped people. Like, I have my walker, and I've got to lift it up and... it's not level."

- St James Town Participant

"They have some nice trees... but they have big holes around them. You can fall and break your ankle. I fell there once, and then I got up and thought, "fine, I'll be alright," and then I fell again. I couldn't get up.... I got two men to pick me up."

- St James Town Participant



A drainage pipe meets pedestrian curb cut in Scarborough Village

"To get over here, you're supposed to walk all the way around. Sometimes I can't get the stroller up on the step, because there's cars parked here. My father's in a wheelchair. He has to go all the way down and then come around. The path to the sidewalk is not accessible."

- Scarborough Village Participant



Missing and broken curb cuts in St James Town make sidewalks inaccessible to people with chairs and strollers



Bicycles and pedestrians on a sidewalk in Steeles-L'Amoreaux.

Crowding on sidewalks was also highlighted by participants in several study areas. Many sidewalks and pathways are not wide enough to accommodate pedestrian flows, forcing people to walk along their edges, or even in the street. The combination of users on sidewalks caused conflicts in some areas, especially in those areas with high bicycle use.

“[There are] too many things and people on the sidewalk [with] everything other than cars on sidewalks... bicycles, skateboards, strollers, scooters, dogs and people on sidewalks. [It’s] not safe. I’ve been run down by a scooter before. It’s safer to walk on the road”

- Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park Resident



A busy, narrow sidewalk in Scarborough Village

Aesthetic issues, general maintenance, garbage and odour problems

The unease caused by physical barriers on sidewalks is exacerbated by litter, smells, overflowing garbage bins and broken benches and lights. When asked to rate agreement with statements about sources of unease, 28% noted “pathway not maintained or unkempt.” Some respondents took these conditions as evidence that they “don’t matter” to municipal authorities or building owners, or as evidence of disrespect and bigotry. The adjacent comments are indicative:

“There’s not a lot around... Nothing is, “ah, beautiful.” It’s just like, “boom, boom, let’s do it.”... The smells, the broken stuff, it’s just depressing. And when it’s dirty... I’m just like, “oh my god.” And you just came from areas where trees are clean.... As soon as you get here, broken stuff, stuff smells....”

- Scarborough Village Participant



Path from Sheridan Mall to high-rise tower in Chalkfarm



Dumpsters by the entrance to an apartment on Markham Road in Scarborough Village. This is a “rear” entry, but the closest door to Markham Road and used frequently by residents.

“Some of the buildings are maintained pretty well, and some are not. [We need] more lighting, more facilities for children, benches so you can sit down. At the back of the building, they used to have benches. There’s nothing there now. I don’t know [why]. I have a theory. To put it nicely, the demographic of this neighbourhood changed. As the population got browner and browner, the facilities all left, the standards went down, the lighting went down... and the police went up.”

- Scarborough Village Participant

Exposure to garbage is unavoidable around many high-rise buildings, where bins are stored in the walking environment. Many residents use back entrances that face main streets instead of more formal entrances

by lobbies and car garage entrances. Unfortunately, these back entrances also provide service access to the building and are where garbage dumpsters are placed. As such, residents end up walking through the garbage area. At focus group meetings, participants shared strategies to avoid these unsightly conditions, like taking longer routes, averting their eyes and holding their noses.

Besides the formal locations of garbage bins, many study areas were plagued with litter. Some respondents told us about local efforts to clean up the garbage, by picking it up themselves, trying to get help from building owners or the City or even organizing community clean-ups. For the most part, people felt their efforts had little effect and believed trash was a persistent and demoralizing problem.

“You’re walking around with a Kleenex over your nose until you get away.”

- St James Town Participant

Pooling water, and ice and snow clearance

Focus group participants were eager to discuss walking conditions in inclement weather. Pooling water and the clearance of ice and snow posed significant obstacles to local mobility and safety. Poor drainage was identified as a barrier on many public and private walkways. Typical comments concern: bad drainage and flooded paths; being splashed by passing vehicles; and snow clearance, particularly around inattention to mounds of snow left by ploughs between sidewalks, intersections and bus stops.

“Here, between the buildings there’s a man-hole. They overflow with water.... Like the ocean! Winter is worse, but especially during the spring, when it’s raining.”

- Scarborough Village Participant

“... the whole neighbourhood, they don’t clean the snow... They only care about the traffic, they don’t care about us...When they plough the roads they pile it up at the corner... [you] have to climb over three feet of ice and snow.”

- Steeles L’Amoreaux Participant

“There’s no way to go. Somebody passes by... I had nice clothes on, going to church. I was covered in mud, snow, people splashing water by the bus stop.”

- North Kipling Participant

“The snow bank forms a barrier to the sidewalk and the bus stop, so that sometimes kids are climbing the snow trying to get off the road while traffic is rushing at them.”

- North Kipling Participant

When snow is not adequately cleared, respondents frequently abandoned the slippery, un-shovelled pedestrian routes and walked in the road alongside traffic instead. Many people also noted poor snow clearance on walkways and in parking lots around apartment buildings and in shopping areas. In Chalkfarm, for instance, participants reported that snow from the mall parking lot gets ploughed into a large mound which blocks a pedestrian bridge that links to the adjoining high-rise apartments.

Snow clearance was a special concern for seniors and for women with small children. For both groups, mobility constraints are magnified by slippery walkways. Many reported injuries from slipping on ice and snow. Seniors, in particular, reported that poor snow clearance and walkway maintenance contributes to social isolation, because they rely on walkers, wheelchairs, and scooters, all of which are ineffective in winter.



Pooling water on a path in St James Town

SECTION SUMMARY:

- 33% of respondents identified “poor sidewalk and walking conditions” as major barriers to daily travel. This was second only to the presence of “scary people.”
- More than 41% of households with children, and 45% of people who walk to do their food shopping, identified sidewalk conditions as a problem.
- Both public and private pathways exhibit poor walking conditions.
- Participants are concerned about missing walkways, uneven surfaces, missing sidewalk ramps or curb cuts, and sidewalks that were too narrow to accommodate pedestrians, scooters and bicycles.
- Garbage, smells, broken benches and other negative conditions were an issue for many people. Many took this as evidence that they “don’t matter.”

- Poor drainage and pooling water on sidewalks and on streets are problems in all study areas. Many pedestrians report getting splashed by passing vehicles.
- Snow and ice on sidewalks, walkways and parking lots, and mounds of snow blocking intersections and bus stops, are significant barriers to walking.
- Snow clearance is a special concern for seniors and for parents with small children. Many respondents reported injuries from slipping and falling. Some seniors reported feeling socially isolated because mobility constraints prevent them from going out in winter.

“I’m pretty well stuck here in the winter. The clearing of snow and ice is disgraceful. Two years ago I had to lose two weeks of work because I fell and hit my head. Every winter it’s the same, it’s disgusting.”

- St James Town Participant & Scooter User



Difficult winter conditions in Thorncliffe Park

PHYSICAL SAFETY AND SOCIAL FEAR IN THE WALKING ENVIRONMENT

Beyond physical barriers in the walking environment, survey responses and focus groups highlighted personal security concerns that shape walking behaviour. Residents often tempered their comments and were protective of their neighbourhoods. Still, they are committed to improving them and did stress some local challenges. A significant proportion of respondents spoke about negative perceptions of their neighbourhood held by outsiders and the media. They believe the gap between perceptions and reality had a corrosive effect on social cohesion. In Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park, for example, a young participant noted:

“The media’s ideas about Galloway make people feel that Galloway is unsafe.”

- Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park Resident

Nonetheless, in some of the study areas, murders have taken place along important walking routes, and, as in all neighbourhoods, personal safety is a concern. Safety issues are exacerbated by poor lighting and sightlines, and by constrained and narrow spaces. This section discusses how people rate these conditions and examines how they modify their behaviour in the interest of personal safety.

FEELING UNSAFE & LOCAL CONDITIONS

Responses varied by study areas, and 18% reported feeling “pretty safe” overall. Specifically, poor lighting was most often cited and noted by 40% of respondents. Even in disaggregated results, lighting emerged as the greatest or second greatest concern in all study areas. See table 28. Focus groups often commented on this issue:

“Going north, the lighting is so bright and nice, we feel safe, even at two o’clock in the morning. But going south, for the elders, it’s very dark and scary, and they can fall down.”

- North Kipling Participant

“My only thing is that it’s too dark. [The] fronts of the buildings are too dark, [and] need more lighting. The whole road needs more lighting. Where the houses are, it’s okay. Where the houses are on the next street from here — those lights, perfect.”

- Scarborough Village Participant

Many people felt safer with increased police presence. However, not everyone agreed on the positive impact of police.

Table 28: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Elements Contributing to Feelings of Insecurity

STUDY AREA	POOR LIGHT	SCARY PEOPLE	LITTER ETC.	NARROW FENCES	TOO FEW PEOPLE	SIGHT-LINES	N/A: I FEEL SAFE
Chalkfarm	53	47	40	20	30	23	10
Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park	27	47	33	17	17	30	10
Steeles L’Amoreaux	20	10	22	32	7	10	15
North Kipling	34	28	13	13	22	3	38
The Peanut	41	22	25	28	9	16	16
St James Town	52	63	33	33	26	15	15
Scarborough Village	60	33	38	20	25	28	10
Thorncliffe Park	38	5	19	10	14	14	38
All Areas	40	31	38	22	19	17	19

"It's taken the police 20 months, 25 months, to clean up the area. But progressively over the last two years, there has been a higher confidence level. It's a world of difference."

- Scarborough Village Participant

"The proportion of police force to the activity is, like, unbelievable. Nothing really happens and there's police cars, like ten, fifteen, and what? Like two weeks ago, did you see how many police were here? They had SWAT guys on the roof and hours and hours, they're looking... The response is unbelievable, you know what I mean? The response was blown out of proportion."

- Scarborough Village Participant

The presence of "scary people" was an important concern in some areas, especially where it was associated with drug use and dealing.

"Right around the building, the swimming pool, you'll get gangs of young guys from the high school that hang out there during the day, break bottles, urinate, do all kinds of stuff. If you approach them like I did, they say "shut up old man." They hang out there during the day. Sometimes they are smoking."

- North Kipling Participant

As a corollary to the issue of "scary people," respondents also reported feeling more anxious when fewer people are out on the sidewalks. The presence of many people increased the general sense of safety. In Thorncliffe Park, for example, where almost 40% of participants reported feeling fairly safe, few people were concerned by either "scary people" or "too few people." In focus group discussions, several participants mentioned that "always having people walking around" contributed to their feelings of safety.

Garbage, discussed in the previous section, is also worth noting again here. "Unkempt sidewalks and litter" are associated with social fear, which suggests that poor maintenance not only presents physical risk and injury, but carries negative psychological weight as well.



Residents socializing on sidewalk in North Kipling

Fencing and narrow spaces

As discussed, fencing is a common feature of high-rise neighbourhoods. Fences separate high-rise complexes from streets and adjoining properties, and, in some cases, line both sides of formal off-street walkways and informal pathways. Although fencing was not singled out as a top contributor to feelings of insecurity, it was the subject of animated discussions in focus groups.

Participants' attitudes to fencing were, at times, ambivalent or contradictory. In discussion groups, people said fences sometimes made them feel safer and kept "scary people" away, but in other cases said fences made them feel unsafe and trapped, so they could not "get away from scary people." Participants across all the study areas agreed that many fences seem unnecessary and only serve to lengthen their walk. In The Peanut, some focus group participants reacted bluntly to the dominance of local fences: "Get rid of the fences!" "It so o-FENCE-ive!" A Thorncliffe Park resident wondered more pointedly about the psychological impact of fences:

"And the fences, what are they saying? To keep the kids out? Out of where? That becomes a matter of safety for people — if there's a threatening incident, what do you do? No one can get in to help you. There are other neighbourhoods in Toronto where there are no fences. I know private property owners own the land, but they don't own the air over the land. It sends a wrong message."

- Thorncliffe Park Participant

In some places, fences contribute to feelings of social division or isolation. For example, a fence in St James Town inhibits a great amount of foot traffic and creates an unofficial divide between the east and west sides of the community. Local youth, interviewed during workshops and later while hosting a Jane Jacobs neighbourhood walking tour, were emphatic that this fence is contributing to perceived and real social divisions within the neighbourhood:



A warning sign on a fence in the Peanut

"There's the Bleecker side of the fence, to the west, and then the east side, what you would call the St James Town side, but nobody says that, they just say "Bleecker side," meaning the west side of the fence. The fence acts as a divider, a social divider. People think the Bleecker side is scarier, because they think there's lots of violence, and gangs and stuff. But the fence just makes that divide more real, it makes it harder to blend and walk between the sides. It's not really like what they say, but the fence makes it feel that way."

- St James Town Participant



A narrow, fenced pathway in Thorncliffe Park

Youth, households with children and gender

Sensitivity of young people to the social impact of fencing was reflected in their responses to other questions about sources of insecurity. While older respondents often identified young people as intimidating, the respondents under 18 years of age actually reported the highest levels of social fear. Indeed, 61% marked feeling unsafe because of “scary people,” and 36% marked that “too few people” were around. Although our sample was limited, both results are nearly double the rates of other groups. It is challenging to interpret this data accurately, but in our discussions with youth in several areas, fear was anecdotally associated with illicit activities, demarcations of “turf” and gang affiliations. According to some youth, these social fears were mitigated by living in a dense, high-rise neighbourhood which increased the likelihood of knowing the people encountered on local streets and sidewalks. Some youth said that being watched closely by police in the community and by security staff in malls only increased their fears and anxieties.

Respondents from households with children also expressed concern about “scary people” and “too few people” at slightly higher rates than households without children, but the differences were not nearly as dramatic when compared with youth. Surprisingly, gender was not a factor in participants’ responses.



Fences in St James Town divide the neighbourhood into east and west

MANAGING SECURITY FEARS

We also explored security issues by asking people what they do to feel safe. Our survey asked, “Do you do any of the following to feel safe when you are walking in your neighbourhood?” and provided a list of behaviours for participants to consider. Table 29 presents ranked findings.

“You don’t go out after dark in this area, unless you’re a moron, because you’re going to get hurt.”

- St James Town Participant

“I don’t walk a lot at night, but one time I did use the walkway at night, and people said, ‘oh, you shouldn’t do that’. But I feel generally safe here.”

- Thorncliffe Park Participant

About 30% of all respondents kept to areas with good lighting, walked with others, avoided some areas and kept to main streets. Many of these behaviours were adopted in some areas day or night. In Chalkfarm, for example, some respondents always avoided the pedestrian bridge where “teenagers hang out,” and took the long walk around to Jane Street to get to the mall. Similarly, in Scarborough Village, a respondent discussed one of the main informal paths:

“People take this pathway. You know what? Only people who are brave. Otherwise you walk around.”

- Scarborough Village Participant

More encouragingly, a North Kipling respondent noted that, if you walk on the main arterial, Kipling Avenue:

“People will watch you, you feel safe.”

- North Kipling Participant

Only 22% of people reported carrying a phone for safety reasons, and few reported crossing streets to avoid people. In addition, 35% of all respondents who had both driver’s licences and car access noted they periodically use cars instead of walking to stay safe. This response was strongest in multiple car households. Differences between study areas could not be parsed for car use, due to low levels of car access.

“I never walk around in the evening. I’ll drive the car. For safety, I don’t go at night. Never, never.”

- Peanut Participant

Table 29: Percentage of Survey Respondents by Actions Taken to Stay Safe

STUDY AREA	AVOID NIGHT	KEEP TO LIGHT	WALK WITH OTHERS	AVOID PLACES	KEEP TO MAIN STREETS	CARRY PHONE	CROSS STREET	N/A
Chalkfarm	53	67	37	33	67	33	23	7
Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Steeles L’Amoreaux	44	83	12	12	93	12	2	12
North Kipling	44	66	44	38	56	34	13	25
The Peanut	50	53	56	25	56	25	9	6
St James Town	59	52	44	56	48	22	37	4
Scarborough Village	53	53	30	45	75	35	15	18
Thorncliffe Park	29	57	43	33	62	5	10	40
All Areas	42	33	32	30	29	22	13	13

Respondents most commonly avoided walking at night to avoid feeling unsafe; this behaviour was noted by more than 40% of participants. Only in Thorncliffe Park was walking at night less of a concern. Focus group participants were also vocal on this issue.

In the cross-tabulated results, households with children reported slightly higher levels of fear and anxiety, people with cars feel less fear (perhaps because they walk less), and women and the elderly were slightly more likely to report that they avoid walking at night and keep to well-lit areas if they do.

It is worth emphasizing that many people feel relatively safe, even though only 13% report not changing their behaviour to ensure safety. The results vary greatly by study area, and are not always related to actual crime levels. Residents in Chalkfarm, the Peanut and St James Town appear to be particularly fearful; less than 10% deny changing their behaviour to keep safe. In some cases this may relate to the particular group of workshop participants. Thorncliffe Park rated well, as few people feel the need to modify their behaviour to feel safe walking in the community.



The entrance to a parking garage in Scarborough Village

SECTION SUMMARY:

- Social fear is a significant issue for people walking in the study areas; only 18% reported generally feeling safe. This varied tremendously by study area.
- In our survey, people noted elements that contribute to feelings of insecurity. Poor lighting topped the list and was noted by 40%.
- Both “scary people” and “too few people” in the community were significant issues. Unkempt pathways, places with fences and poor sightlines were also noted by many.
- Focus group participants generally reported that an increased police presence improved safety, although youth reaction to the police was complex, especially as it relates to surveillance.
- Reactions to fencing were sometimes contradictory, but many reacted negatively to the ubiquity of fencing in their areas, which constrained movements and lengthened walking distances.
- Respondents use many strategies to feel safer when walking; 42% reported not walking at night.
- Other important strategies to feel safe include using a car (when one is available), keeping to areas with good lighting, walking with others, avoiding certain areas and keeping to main streets.
- Only 13% of people reported that they do not do anything special to improve their safety when walking. This varies by study area.

PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

The streets and parks of the high-rise neighbourhoods are among the most important community spaces for walking, socializing, recreation and exercise. This section analyzes survey results related to recreation and focus group discussions related to public space and the role of benches in socializing and walking.

RECREATIONAL EXERCISE

Few survey questions explored the use of parks and public spaces directly, although one question did ask about the frequency of recreational walking and running. Almost half (49%) of participants reported walking or running in their neighbourhood — for pleasure or exercise — at least three to five times a week. See table 30. Scarborough Village and Chalkfarm both ranked poorly on general walkability and had the lowest rates of recreational walking and running. The reasons for these discrepancies are unclear and levels of

recreational walking cannot be reduced to park access alone. Scarborough Village does not have accessible parks or quiet residential streets suitable for recreational walking and running. Chalkfarm, on the other hand, does have a pedestrian path along Black Creek. Still, both ranked poorly. In general, older age groups engage in recreational walking activities the most and households with children the least.

Table 30: Percentage of Survey Respondents who Walk or Run Three to Five Times per Week

STUDY AREA	%
Chalkfarm	33
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	67
Steeles L'Amoreaux	67
North Kipling	48
The Peanut	52
St James Town	52
Scarborough Village	30
Thorncliffe Park	45
All Areas	49



People enjoying Dallington Park in The Peanut

PARKS

Neighbourhood parks are among a community's most valued and intensively used assets. Sixty-seven per cent of participants reported that they visit a local park two to five times a week. An additional 23% say they visit local parks daily. Although some participants mentioned they are afraid to visit parks alone, most people want better access to them, more walkways, facilities, benches, water fountains and washrooms.

"There's a park in Rosedale, I don't know what it is called, but you go up the road across Bloor Street, up Glen Road, under the tunnel and everything. (To others:) Do you know where that is? ("Craighigh Gardens", they reply.) It's beautiful. Nobody bothers you. The dogs love it... I can go there blindfolded but I don't know the names of the streets."

- St James Town Participant

People prefer walking and socializing in park spaces that are busy and populated. People-watching was mentioned as a source of enjoyment and sociability across the neighbourhoods. In some places, parks and ravines functioned effectively as community centres, knitting people together through activities like daily tai-chi, walking group meet-ups, people-watching and picnics.

In some neighbourhoods the parks are well-loved but deemed too small to accommodate heavy demand. Some participants in Thorncliffe Park said they avoid R.V. Burgess Park at peak times because of overcrowding and competition for play space. One respondent noted:

"The kids play cricket in the schoolyard, with running kids and bicycles. Sometimes I think there will be an accident."

- Thorncliffe Park Participant

"I love the (R.V. Burgess) Park the most. It is small but still, I love to go there. All the mothers [do]."

- Thorncliffe Park Participant



R.V. Burgess Park in Thorncliffe Park



In North Kipling, a swimming pool was filled with asphalt

Where playground facilities exist, they are highly valued as places for children and parents to be outside and connect with neighbours. Many participants want recreational and social spaces around their buildings, nearer to home. Given the general anxiety and resistance to letting children walk around in neighbourhoods unsupervised, playgrounds and recreational spaces near the high-rise buildings are of great interest.

“There should be more parks for the kids in the building. There should be a pool. There were two pools, but they closed them. And now the kids go further, and you can’t go with them, so they go with friends.”

– North Kipling Participant



An abandoned playground in North Kipling

In most study sites, play areas were modest, if they existed at all, and any equipment tended to be poorly maintained. Many buildings' swimming pools were closed, filled in or paved over. Fences around older, disused recreational spaces created another kind of hazard; people disliked passing them for fear of encountering "scary people" or "illicit activities" at these sites.

Participants told us that teenagers lack places to go. Youth participants reported the highest levels of anxiety and fear about walking in their neighbourhood, yet they had few options but to spend their time in public spaces like parks, malls and streets. Few alternatives were identified, which made some members of the community, who avoided spaces where "youth hang out," even more anxious. Participants suggested many ideas for appropriate community play areas, including pools, basketball courts, rollerblading and skateboard parks, soccer fields and cricket pitches.

Some parks and green spaces are neglected, lacking investment, maintenance and landscaping. Some participants noted that the parks in wealthier areas were better maintained. In several neighbourhoods people wanted more trees, flowers, grass, benches and shade, as well as community gardens. Some people were concerned that shrubbery was not always well-trimmed to keep sightlines on walkways clear, but overall, green spaces and parks were a source of pride. They contributed to an overall sense of well-being and connection to the neighbourhood.



Poor landscaping in North Kipling

*"There should be flowers, a garden... grass. It always looks bald. We need a better garden."
- North Kipling Participant*

"Everybody goes to Lescon [Park]— there's no drinking fountain, no washrooms, and everybody goes there when it's hot, they go down they relax with their families and everybody walks down the park, no washrooms and no drinking fountain. How do people use it in the summer?"

- Peanut Participant



Lescon Park in The Peanut

Parks adjacent to ravines provided important public space in several of the study neighbourhoods, including Thorncliffe, St James Town, North Kipling and Chalkfarm. Nevertheless, access is an issue.

“In spring and summer the ravine is beautiful. You can walk to Sunnybrook and Edwards gardens, this is the most beautiful part. It’s really beautiful, it’s all green now, but not maintained well enough. Picnics, barbeques, family parties, socials, all happen there.”

- Thorncliffe Park Participant

“Right now the green spaces [are] mostly used by drivers who can access them that way and people lucky enough to own a spot by them... because [it’s] difficult to get to otherwise.”

- Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park Resident

“I’ve seen somebody going fishing in that river. It was exciting for me to see. I got to sit on that bridge for a while — I feel good there, I like flowing water — and I saw someone in their boots once walking in the water. I don’t know if he caught a fish or not.”

- North Kipling Participant

Access issues are shared by other areas. In Chalkfarm, The Downsview Dells Park along Black Creek borders Jane Street near participants’ homes, but the nearest formal pedestrian entrance is almost a kilometre away. The auto entrance is two kilometres away.

Finally, malls and plazas with indoor social spaces are valued places for walking and socializing with neighbours. These spaces function as the “community centre” or “squares” in neighbourhoods where these sorts of public facilities and amenities are lacking.



Many high-rises in North Kipling directly adjoin the Humber Ravine and Rowntree Mills Park. Residents like the park but want better connections to it.



Residents socializing in the East York Town Center Mall, Thorncliffe Park

BENCHES AND "SIT-ABILITY"

Respondents across study areas told us they enjoy going for walks, sitting down in their neighbourhoods and socializing with neighbours. The residents of Scarborough Village, for instance, told us that meeting each other in this way contributed to a positive community feel.

"People are really friendly in our neighbourhood."

- Scarborough Village Participant

Many also noticed that having places to sit and chat with neighbours helps them feel safer and builds a sense of belonging. Despite the social benefits of benches, residents reported that benches and other places to sit were missing or derelict. Several study respondents rightly connected the presence of benches with walking:

"You can walk anywhere in the community but you can't sit. If it's too far to go, you have to sit, but there are no benches, so then you don't want to walk."

- St James Town Participant

"That's why I don't walk. I am too old. I can walk so far and then I have to look for somewhere to sit, and there is nowhere to sit, so that's why I take my car."

- Peanut Participant

In several neighbourhoods, people told of benches removed by authorities who thought they promoted drug dealing and loitering.

"There used to be more benches in St James Town but they were taken away to prevent drug dealers, but that didn't stop the drug dealers from dealing drugs. They put back the benches for a while and the drug deals stayed too. So stop taking away our benches because you think that will stop the drug dealing — it won't — it just means the other people who live here can't sit and talk and enjoy the neighbourhood's open spaces."

- St James Town Participant

Shade was discussed in conjunction with benches, partly because outdoor seating areas are used in the summer when un-air-conditioned apartments get hot and residents need to cool off.

SECTION SUMMARY:

- Residents report heavy use of neighbourhood streets, parks and malls for exercise, recreation and socializing.
- Almost half of study respondents report walking or running for exercise three to five times a week.
- Parks are greatly appreciated, but residents had complaints about their lack of facilities and maintenance.
- In several study areas with ravine parks, access is difficult and formal entrances are far from residents' homes.
- Study areas lack recreational and play space around buildings or have facilities that are in poor conditions. Former swimming pools, tennis courts and play equipment have been removed in many areas.

- Recreation space for teenagers was identified as inadequate.
- Many residents complained there were too few benches in their neighbourhood. Many benches had been removed as an anti-crime strategy. This has not stopped crime, but only prevented residents from sitting outside, and prevented those residents who need to rest frequently from walking at all.



A typical Scarborough Village apartment without benches near the building entrance

TRANSIT AND CYCLING

While public transit and cycling were not the focus of this study, both came up as issues in the workshops. This section summarizes some of the most common themes.

TRANSIT

A dependable, safe, affordable transit system goes hand-in-hand with a good walking environment. As reported in the travel behaviour section of this report, transit is the most common way study participants get to work, but many people use the transit system for other purposes too, including shopping, getting to medical appointments, and visiting friends and relatives.

On the whole, people were dissatisfied and frustrated with the frequency of transit service, its reliability and its routing. Many described long commutes and long waits.

“The buses along Albion are disgusting. In the wintertime sometimes people freeze waiting for the bus. They don’t come on time. Twenty-five minutes, forty-five minutes. Sometimes you’re waiting for over an hour. It’s supposed to come every twenty to twenty-five minutes, but sometimes it takes forever.”

- North Kipling Participant

Crowding was an issue. People complained that buses often pass without stopping because they are full. More encouragingly, some respondents noted buses were clean and in good working order and drivers were polite and helpful.

Residents in The Peanut, Thorncliffe Park and St James Town were satisfied with their proximity to the subway lines. Thorncliffe Park also enjoys a TTC community bus. This smaller bus runs a local loop on weekdays and efficiently gets people around the local area. This



Locals find makeshift seats while waiting for the bus at Jarvis and Wellesley, near St James Town

is especially appreciated by seniors and shoppers who can ask the driver to stop at any point along the way. St James Town residents greatly appreciated their proximity to Sherbourne subway station, although some participants noted that without wheelchair access it was not accessible:

“Sherbourne [Station] doesn’t have an elevator to the subway. They should have an elevator, because there’s a lot of handicapped people that live in this complex, and we really do need an elevator there. They should have one. There are mega people who live in St James Town.”

- St James Town Participant

Respondents were dissatisfied with deficient street furniture at bus shelters. Participants noted many bus stops lack places to sit, lighting, garbage cans or shelters. Concrete pads are often missing at bus shelters and pathways around the stops are seldom formalized.

This results in muddy, slippery conditions in inclement weather and creates problems for walkers. In follow-up discussions with residents, some noted that shelters were too small to accommodate the people waiting; benches “only hold two people” and are uncomfortable to sit on. The disrepair and disorder of bus stops caused revulsion and sadness; overflowing garbage cans, graffiti and litter were widely reported.

For seniors and parents with young children, crowding and unreliability of the transit system makes routine transit trips an ordeal. One Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park respondent who uses a walker noted she will not take the bus if it requires a transfer for fear of being caught away from home not knowing when the next bus is coming. In the same neighbourhood, a mother of young children said she is less likely to get on a crowded bus during peak times because of her stroller.

As noted previously, transit trips necessitate a walking trip as well. In some areas, residents must cross four to seven lanes of fast-moving traffic to access their bus stop. Because of the long waiting times at crossing signals, people often miss the bus waiting for the light to change.



A shopper boards a bus near the Albion Center in North Kipling



A Thorncliffe Drive bus stop lacks formal seating

“Even if the bus driver sees you and you wave, they keep going. They just go anyway.”

- North Kipling Participant

CYCLING

In downtown Toronto, as many as half of adult residents report cycling regularly to work, to school or for recreation (Ipsos Reid, 2010). There has been a concerted push for cycling infrastructure in the core and there have been some improvements in recent years. The same cannot be said for the inner suburbs. Cycling infrastructure is lacking despite the presence of cyclists in most of the study areas. Because of traffic fears, few people ride on arterial roadways, choosing to ride on sidewalks instead, even though it is illegal. We did not hear directly from regular riders in this study, but many residents told us that a lack of safe cycling routes prevented them from riding bikes in their neighbourhoods.

Participants unanimously agreed that cycling was too dangerous in their neighbourhood without dedicat-

ed bike lanes, traffic buffers and secure bike parking. Although cyclists in the core face threats from traffic, traffic speeds on suburban arterials are much higher (speed limits are posted at 60 km/h). Some younger residents said they had wanted to continue cycling beyond their high school years, but found it too risky to take their bicycles outside the neighbourhood, to jobs, colleges, universities or local transit hubs. Most participants had not tried cycling in their neighbourhood, but several said they would try it “if it was safer.” For example, a middle-aged couple in The Peanut who were accustomed to cycling in China before immigrating to Canada expressed frustration at not being able to cycle about the neighbourhood:

“[My husband] likes to ride, but it’s dangerous. Because there is no place on the road for bicycle. In China, there’s a road [just for bicycles].”

- Peanut Participant



The separated bike lane in North Kipling

“We have a bicycle path, it’s lovely. Bikes don’t get in the way.”

- North Kipling Participant

One notable exception to the overall absence of bike lanes was in North Kipling. A wide paved bike path runs up Kipling from Finch to Steeles and is appreciated by all locals, not only cyclists. Because of the wide sidewalks and the separation from the bicycle lane, residents said that this part of Kipling is one of the best places to walk in the community.

In almost all other study areas, people identified bicycles on sidewalks as a “big problem” for pedestrians. One participant said, “I grab my children because they don’t slow down.” On August 6, 2009, while working on this study, a pedestrian-bicycle fatality occurred near one of the study sites — at Kennedy Road near Sheppard Avenue East. A 50-year-old woman was killed when struck by a teenager who was riding his bike on the sidewalk. This highlights the importance of moving bikes off sidewalks into bike lanes.

In many neighbourhoods, people lamented the absence of safe bicycle storage. Cycling was considered less viable because the risks of bike theft were thought to be high. Youth in St James Town acknowledged that the abandoned or stripped bicycle frames locked to the fences are a source of embarrassment. They see it as an outward display of the lack of security in their neighbourhood.

On August 6, 2009, a 50-year-old woman was killed when struck by a teenager who was riding his bike on the sidewalk. This highlights the importance of moving bikes off sidewalks into bike lanes.

SECTION SUMMARY:

- Transit is a key mode of travel for study participants.
- On the whole, people were dissatisfied and frustrated with the frequency of transit service, reliability and crowding.
- Mud around bus stops was a problem because of the lack of concrete pads and formal pathways. Shelters in disrepair and overflowing garbage cans were widely reported.
- Many participants expressed the desire to ride bicycles, but most agreed that it was too dangerous without dedicated cycling infrastructure.
- People who do cycle do so almost exclusively on sidewalks because they do not feel safe riding on arterial roadways. Many reported that this created a hazard for pedestrians.
- Many people identified the lack of secure bicycle storage around their buildings as a barrier to cycling.



Youth refer to the fence on the east side of the main St James Town concourse as “the bicycle graveyard”

SECTION SUMMARIES

STUDY POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Our participants represent a diverse group of local residents, from a range of ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, language groups and household types.
- Many participants were newcomers to Canada and have lived here for less than five years.
- Most participants live in high-rise apartments.
- About two thirds of study participants were women.
- Household incomes were low; 79% of participants reported a combined annual household income of less than \$40,000 per annum, but educational attainment was high, with more than 57% reporting some post secondary education.

AUTOMOBILE ACCESS & TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR:

- Less than one half of study participants and just over one third of female participants reported having a driver's licence.
- Auto-ownership rates are low. More than 40% of households reportedly do not own a car, and about another 40% have only one. Three quarters of households have fewer cars than adults.
- Low car-ownership rates are related to low incomes. These rates are particularly low for single-parent households.
- Newer immigrants own cars at the same rates as longer-term residents with similar household incomes. Most participants report planning to purchase a car when they are financially able.
- Low licensing and auto-ownership rates are reflected in travel patterns. Transit is the most common mode of travel to work or school, and walking, or a combination of walking and other modes, is the most common mode to shop.



Pedestrians in a St James Town driveway

- Household responsibilities outside the home are most often carried out by women and usually accomplished by transit and on foot.

- To save money and ease the burden of carrying heavy loads home, people without cars may walk to shops and take transit or a taxi to return.

- Shopping and doing errands with friends or family is both a strategy to transport heavy loads home, in the case of car access, and a form of sociability and pleasure.

- Most participants shop locally, especially if they have low incomes or do not have car access.

- Participants value nearby, affordable, healthy and culturally-specific food options, but with the median distance to supermarkets 675 metres away, some study areas border on being “food deserts.”

- Many participants seek out less expensive supermarkets, even if transportation is difficult.

- Children walk to school in almost all neighbourhoods.



A pedestrian navigates busy traffic

GENERAL WALKING CONDITIONS, TRAFFIC AND CROSSING STREETS:

- Participants generally agreed with the statement: “My neighbourhood is a good place for walking”; 61% agreed or strongly agreed.

- Variations in overall evaluation accorded with perceptions of traffic safety and ease of street crossings, not with other elements of the pedestrian environment.

- Parents score their local walkability much lower than non-parents; two-thirds of parents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement: “I am comfortable letting my children walk to places on their own.”

- Responses to the statements: “I feel safe from traffic when I’m walking in my neighbourhood” and “there are enough places to safely cross the large streets” were also positive, but more than 25% did not feel safe from traffic and nearly 30% did not feel there are enough street crossings.

- Compared to longer-term residents, newer immigrants were more likely to report adequate crossings and feeling safe from traffic.

- Respondents tended to slightly disagree with the statement: “To make my walk shorter, I often cross large streets even where there is no light or crosswalk,” although youth were more likely to report crossing mid-block and older people, new immigrants and people with children were less likely to report doing so.

- People who walk to shop are more likely to use mid-block crossings than people who drive.

- People were more critical of traffic in the focus groups than in the survey results. People shared stories of being grazed by cars, inattentive drivers taking wide corners at high speeds, getting marooned on medians and traffic islands, etc.

- Duration of crossing signals is a concern, particularly for the elderly who report inadequate crossing time.

- Attitudes to traffic were complex and conflicted; some rejected changes that would interfere with traffic flow.

- People were frustrated that the City and local councillors were unresponsive to requests for improvement.

CONNECTIVITY: DISTANCES, FENCING AND SHORTCUTS:

- Travel distances and indirect travel routes make walking difficult for many study participants. Almost 17% of respondents noted that distance between places was a major barrier to daily travel and 22% marked poor connections and indirect travel routes as major barriers. They indicated that travel distances and indirect routes pose as big a barrier to travel as traffic.
- The median total length of walking routes was 3.4 kilometres. In some cases, longer total route lengths were associated with more compact walkable environments.
- Median route length to the closest supermarket was 675 metres and over 800 metres in some neighbourhoods. This distance represents a very significant barrier.
- Off-street pedestrian routes are important in all study areas. Some are high-quality formal paths, while others are rough, informal paths that go through fences, along driveways and through parking lots.

- The use of informal paths and shortcuts is very common: 24% of pedestrian routes mapped are not on formal streets and 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I often use shortcuts.”
- Youth are more likely to use shortcuts. Older people, families with young children, and newer Canadians are less likely. These patterns are similar to behaviours at mid-block crossings.
- Focus group discussions highlighted the importance of shortcuts and the barriers to maintaining informal paths. Fences force people to take much longer walks and closing paths creates community tension.
- Making improvements to these paths is difficult because they are on private property and often involve several landowners. Although they are a key part of the suburban pedestrian environment, the City has little jurisdiction over these routes.
- Routes across parking lots, in apartment areas and around shopping centres are dangerous and expose pedestrians to fast-moving traffic.



An informal path in North Kipling

SIDEWALKS, WALKWAYS AND WINTER CONDITIONS:

- 33% of respondents identified “poor sidewalk and walking conditions” as major barriers to daily travel. This was second only to the presence of “scary people.”
- More than 41% of households with children, and 45% of people who walk to do their food shopping, identified sidewalk conditions as a problem.
- Both public and private pathways exhibit poor walking conditions.
- Participants are concerned about missing walkways, uneven surfaces, missing sidewalk ramps or curb cuts, and sidewalks that were too narrow to accommodate pedestrians, scooters and bicycles.
- Garbage, smells, broken benches and other negative conditions were an issue for many people. Many took this as evidence that they “don’t matter.”
- Poor drainage and pooling water on sidewalks and on streets are problems in all study areas. Many pedestrians report getting splashed by passing vehicles.
- Snow and ice on sidewalks, walkways and parking lots, and mounds of snow blocking intersections and bus stops, are significant barriers to walking.
- Snow clearance is a special concern for seniors and for parents with small children. Many respondents reported injuries from slipping and falling. Some seniors reported feeling socially isolated because mobility constraints prevent them from going out in winter.



The path from Sheridan Mall to a tower in Chalkfarm

PHYSICAL SAFETY AND SOCIAL FEAR IN THE WALKING ENVIRONMENT:

- Social fear is a significant issue for people walking in the study areas; only 18% reported generally feeling safe. This varied tremendously by study area.
- In our survey, people noted elements that contribute to feelings of insecurity. Poor lighting topped the list and was noted by 40%.
- Both “scary people” and “too few people” in the community were significant issues. Unkempt pathways, fences and poor sightlines were also noted by many.
- Focus group participants generally reported that an increased police presence improved safety, although youth reaction to the police was complex, especially as it relates to surveillance.
- Reactions to fencing were sometime contradictory, but many reacted negatively to the ubiquity of fencing in their areas, which constrained movements and lengthened walking distances.

- Respondents use many strategies to feel safer when walking; 42% reported not walking at night.
- Other important strategies to feel safe include using a car (when one is available), keeping to areas with good lighting, walking with others, avoiding certain areas and keeping to main streets.
- Only 13% of people reported that they do not do anything special to improve their safety when walking. This varies by study area.

PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES:

- Residents report heavy use of neighbourhood streets, parks and malls for exercise, recreation and socializing.
- Almost half of respondents report walking or running for exercise three to five times a week.
- Parks are greatly appreciated, but residents had complaints about their lack of facilities and maintenance.
- In several study areas with ravine parks, access is difficult and formal entrances are far from residents' homes.
- Study areas lack recreational and play space around buildings or have facilities in poor condition. Swimming pools, tennis courts and play equipment have been removed in many areas.
- Recreation space for teenagers was identified as inadequate.
- Many residents complained there were too few benches in their neighbourhood. Many benches had been removed as an anti-crime strategy. This has not stopped crime, but only prevented residents from sitting outside, and prevented those residents who need to rest frequently from walking at all.



A well-used bench in St James Town

TRANSIT AND CYCLING:

- Transit is a key mode of travel for study participants.
- On the whole, people were dissatisfied and frustrated with the frequency of transit service, reliability and crowding.
- Mud around bus stops was a problem because of the lack of concrete pads and formal pathways. Shelters in disrepair and overflowing garbage cans were widely reported.
- Many participants expressed the desire to ride bicycles, but most agreed that it was too dangerous without dedicated cycling infrastructure.
- People who do cycle do so almost exclusively on sidewalks because they do not feel safe riding on arterial roadways. Many reported that this created a hazard for pedestrians.
- Many people identified the lack of secure bicycle storage around their buildings as a barrier to cycling.

Despite many major pedestrian issues, residents of Toronto's inner suburban high-rise apartment neighbourhoods love their communities and want help to make them better.



Pedestrians and cyclists share space in North Kipling

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Informal infrastructure in Lotherton Village, a high-rise neighbourhood in North York / photo: Ian Malczewski

APPENDIX 1: WALKABILITY SURVEY

Survey: Walkability and Mobility in Toronto's Apartment Communities

Instructions:

- We have staff to help you - please raise your hand if you have any questions or need help.
- Some questions will not be applicable to everyone – there are directions to skip questions that do not apply to you (for example, if you do not take the bus)
- Please raise your hand when you are finished and we will collect your survey

– Thank you.

4. What are the most important reasons you live in the neighbourhood? (Check all that apply)

- Living close to work/school
- Living close to family and friends
- Neighbourhood amenities (eg. parks, stores)
- Housing affordable
- Desirable housing size and/or features
- Quality of school
- Social/cultural feel of the area
- This is where my parents/guardians live
- Other (please specify) _____

TRANSPORTATION

5. Do you have a driver's license?

- Yes
- No

6. How many other people in your household have a drivers licence? (Not including yourself)

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

HOUSING

1. In what type of housing do you live?

- Detached single family house
- Semi-detached or townhouse
- Apartment Building, less than 5 storeys
- Apartment Building, 5 storeys or more
- Other (please specify) _____

2. How long have you lived there?

- Less than 6 months
- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-10 years
- More than 10 years

3. Does your household own or rent your home?

- Rent
- Own
- Don't know
- Other (please specify) _____

7. If you *do not* have a driver's license, are you planning on getting one?

- No, I do not plan on driving
- No, I would like to drive but will not have a car
- Yes, I plan on getting my license when I can
- Not applicable, I already have a license
- Not applicable, I am not eligible for a license
- Other (please specify) _____

8. How many vehicles (cars, minivans, etc) are owned by the people in your household?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

9. If you do not currently own a vehicle, are you saving to purchase one in the near future?

- Not applicable, I already own a vehicle
- No
- Yes, I hope to purchase the first vehicle in the household
- Yes, I hope to purchase an additional vehicle for the household

10. Do you purchase a transit pass (TTC/Go Transit) on a regular basis?

- No
- Day pass
- Weekly pass
- Monthly pass

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

11. Where do you do most of your regular shopping?

- Near to my home
- Near to my workplace/school
- In between home and work/school
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify) _____

12. If you regularly shop *outside* the neighbourhood, where do you do so?

Name of shopping mall:

OR

Closest major intersection of mall or shopping area:

13. Which of the following are important in deciding where you shop? (Check all that apply)

- Length of time to get there
- Type of transportation you can use to get there (e.g. bus, car, walking)
- Ability to combine with other shopping and errands
- Price
- Availability of culturally specific food or goods (eg. Halal, West Indian, Asian, etc)
- Quality of food or goods
- Other (please specify) _____

14. If you don't always have access to a car, do you sometimes travel with a friend or neighbour to shop or do errands?

- Not applicable, I almost always have access to a car
- Yes, I sometimes shop with a friend or neighbour who drives his/her car
- Yes, I sometimes shop with a friend or neighbour using public transit together
- Yes, I sometimes shop with a friend or neighbour by walking to the stores together
- No, I only usually shop by myself or with members of my household
- Other (please specify) _____

15. How often do you do the activities listed?

	Rarely or never	1-2 times a week	3-4 times a week	More than 4 times a week	Not applicable
Food shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
General shopping & errands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking children/siblings to school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking children/sibling to other regular activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. What form of transportation do you *most often* use to do the listed activities?

Food Shopping
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

General Shopping & Errands
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

Taking Children/Siblings to School
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

Taking Children/Siblings to Other Regular Activities
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES

17. Who is the *main* person that does the following activities for your household?

	I am	Another adult in household	Extended family member	Parent/Guardian	A friend	My child	Other
Food shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
General shopping & errands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking children/siblings to school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking children/siblings to other regular activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If your response was 'Other,' please specify: _____

18. What form of transportation does that person *most often* use to do the listed activities? (If you are the person responsible

for the activity, please put a line through the question box and skip the question.)

Food Shopping
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

General Shopping & Errands
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

Taking Children/Siblings to School
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

Taking Children/Siblings to Other Regular Activities
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Driver
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle Passenger
<input type="radio"/> Taxi
<input type="radio"/> Bus/Subway
<input type="radio"/> Walk
<input type="radio"/> Bicycle
<input type="radio"/> Electric Scooter
<input type="radio"/> Not applicable
<input type="radio"/> Other, please specify: _____

NEIGHBOURHOOD TRANSPORT ENVIRONMENT

19. Please mark your agreement with the following statements about walking in your neighbourhood:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not applicable
My neighbourhood is a good place for walking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I only walk because I don't have access to a car	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have access to a car, but often walk anyways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are enough places to safely cross the large streets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe from traffic when I'm walking in my neighbourhood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often use shortcuts (unpaved paths, cutting across parking lots, etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often cross large streets where there is no light or crosswalk to make my walk shorter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel comfortable letting my children walk to places on their own	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. What are the major barriers you face in your daily travel in your neighbourhood? (Check all that apply)

- Poor sidewalk & walking conditions
- Walking is difficult for me – I need an aid like a cane or walker or I can only walk short distances
- Places in my neighbourhood aren't connected well, forced to use indirect routes
- Traffic
- Poor bus service
- Biking without bike lanes present
- Doesn't feel safe
- Places I want to go are very far apart
- Not applicable, there are no major barriers
- Other (please specify) _____

21. If you feel unsafe walking in certain parts of your neighbourhood, what are some of the reasons why? (Check all that apply)

- Poor lighting
- Pathway not maintained or unkempt (e.g. sidewalk broken, littered, etc)
- Too much and/or too fast traffic
- Too few people around
- Scary people around/hanging out
- Places with trees, bushes or buildings where I can't see who is there
- Places with fences and narrow spaces where I feel nervous
- Not applicable, I pretty much feel safe
- Other (please specify) _____

22. Do you do any of the following to feel safe when you are walking in your neighbourhood?

(Check all that apply)

- Use the car instead of walking because of safety reasons
- Avoid certain streets, places
- Avoid walking at night
- Keep to places that have good lighting
- Keep to the main streets
- Walk with other people
- Cross the street to avoid people
- Carry a cell phone for safety reasons
- Other (please specify) _____
- I don't do anything special to keep safe

23. How often you walk or run for pleasure and/or exercise in your neighbourhood?

- Never or rarely
- 1-2 times a week
- 3-5 times a week
- Every day

24. How often do you go to the park or playground with your children?

- Not applicable/I don't have children
- Never or rarely
- 1-2 times a week
- 3-5 times a week
- Every day

EMPLOYMENT

28. What best describes your current employment situation? (Check all that apply)

- Full-time job
- One part-time job
- Multiple part-time jobs
- Student
- Currently unemployed/Don't work
- Retired
- Other (please specify) _____

29. How many wage earning workers are in your household? (Include yourself)

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

30. Where do you work/go to school? (Check all that apply)

- Not applicable
- In my neighbourhood
- Downtown Toronto
- Another area of Toronto
- Outside Toronto
- Other (please specify) _____

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

25. What best describes the household you live in?

- Single adult, no children at home
- Single parent, children at home
- Married/partner, no children at home
- Married/partner, children at home
- Two plus unrelated adults/roommates
- Other (please specify) _____

26. How old are the people in your household? (Include yourself)

	Number of people in household
Children under 6	
Children 7-14	
Youth 15-24	
Adults 25-64	
Seniors 65+	

27. What languages are spoken at home?

31. What method of transportation do you use most often to get to work and/or school? (Skip the question if you do not work for wages or go to school)

	Vehicle Driver	Vehicle Passenger	Bus/Subway	Commuter Rail	Walk	Cycle	Work from Home
To Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
From Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

32. If another household member works outside the home, how do they usually get to work? (Please skip the next question if this does not apply to your household)

	Vehicle Driver	Vehicle Passenger	Bus/Subway	Commuter Rail	Walk	Cycle	Work from Home
To Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
From Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OTHER INFORMATION

33. Are you male or female?

- Male
- Female

34. How old are you?

- Below 18
- 18-24
- 25-39
- 40-64
- 65 or older

35. What is the approximate annual income of your household?

- Less than \$24,000
- \$25,000 - \$39,000
- \$40,000 - \$79,000
- \$80,000 - \$120,000
- More than \$120,000
- I don't know

36. How long have you lived in Canada?

- My entire life
- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 5-10 years
- More than 10 years

37. What is the highest year/level of education you have completed?

38. Anything else you would like to tell us about traveling in your neighbourhood? (Continue on the back if necessary)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!

APPENDIX 2: LOCAL STATISTICS

STUDY AREA DISSEMINATION AREAS

Chalkfarm 35202079	Steeles L'Amoreaux 35200148	Scarborough Village 35204329	Thorncliffe Park 35200545 35204071 35204072 35204073 35204074	35203061 35204059 35204124	35204287 35204289 35204291
35202080 35202084 35202085 35202086 35204111	35200149 35200150 35200204 35200205 35203948	35204330 35204331 35204332 35204333 35204335 35204344	The Peanut 35200309 35200313 35204028 35204306	Kingston- Galloway/ Orton Park 35203331 35203658 35203659 35203661 35203664 35203766 35203958 35204133	St James Town 35200756 35200757 35200774 35200782 35200783 35204562 35204563 35204564 35204565 35204566 35204567
			North Kipling 35203059		

Table A: Toronto vs Study Areas: Household income, Employment, Unemployment and Education

	MEDIAN HOUSE- HOLD INCOME (\$)	% EMPLOYMENT RATE	% UNEMPLOY- MENT RATE	% W/ DEGREE, CERTIFICATE & DIPLOMA
Toronto	52,833	60.1	7.6	49.5
Chalkfarm	31,398-79,397	60.5	6.9	39.3
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	15,042-62,220	54.4	10.7	44.5
Steeles L'Amoreaux	19,551-81,852	53.2	15.2	45.0
North Kipling	45,725-61,543	55.7	8.4	43.4
The Peanut	40,852-61,084	60.9	9.7	53.1
St James Town	24,565-50,191	64.2	9.6	57.4
Scarborough Village	16,825-61,382	52.5	13.4	39.7
Thorncliffe Park	30,784-46,503	42.2	6.7	37.9

Table B: Toronto vs Study Areas: Percentage of Large Families and Lone-Parent Families

	% OF FAMILIES IN PRIVATE DWELLINGS W/ 5+ MEMBERS	% TOTAL LONE- PARENT FAMILIES - FEMALE	% TOTAL LONE- PARENT FAMILIES - MALE
Toronto	8.9	17.2	3.1
Chalkfarm	12.7	33.1	6.0
Kingston-Galloway/ Orton Park	12.6	32.7	4.1
Steeles L'Amoreaux	10.5	20.8	4.3
North Kipling	13.9	19.0	3.6
The Peanut	7.8	18.4	2.5
St James Town	8.3	22.3	4.9
Scarborough Village	17.9	24.7	2.0
Thorncliffe Park	16.7	17.4	2.2

Table C: Toronto vs Study Areas: Language Spoken at Home

	% TOTAL POP BY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME - ENGLISH	% TOTAL POP BY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME - NON-OFFICIAL	% TOTAL POP BY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME - ENGLISH & NON-OFFICIAL
Toronto	64.4	31.2	3.7
Chalkfarm	59.3	33.3	6.6
Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park	69.5	25.1	4.4
Steeles L'Amoreaux	37.6	57.6	4.6
North Kipling	39.5	54.5	5.8
The Peanut	34.9	59.8	4.8
St James Town	52.9	39.1	6.7
Scarborough Village	51.0	41.2	5.7
Thorncliffe Park	49.3	43.1	7.0

Table D: Toronto vs Study Areas: Rented Dwellings, Dwellings with 5+ Storeys and Mobility

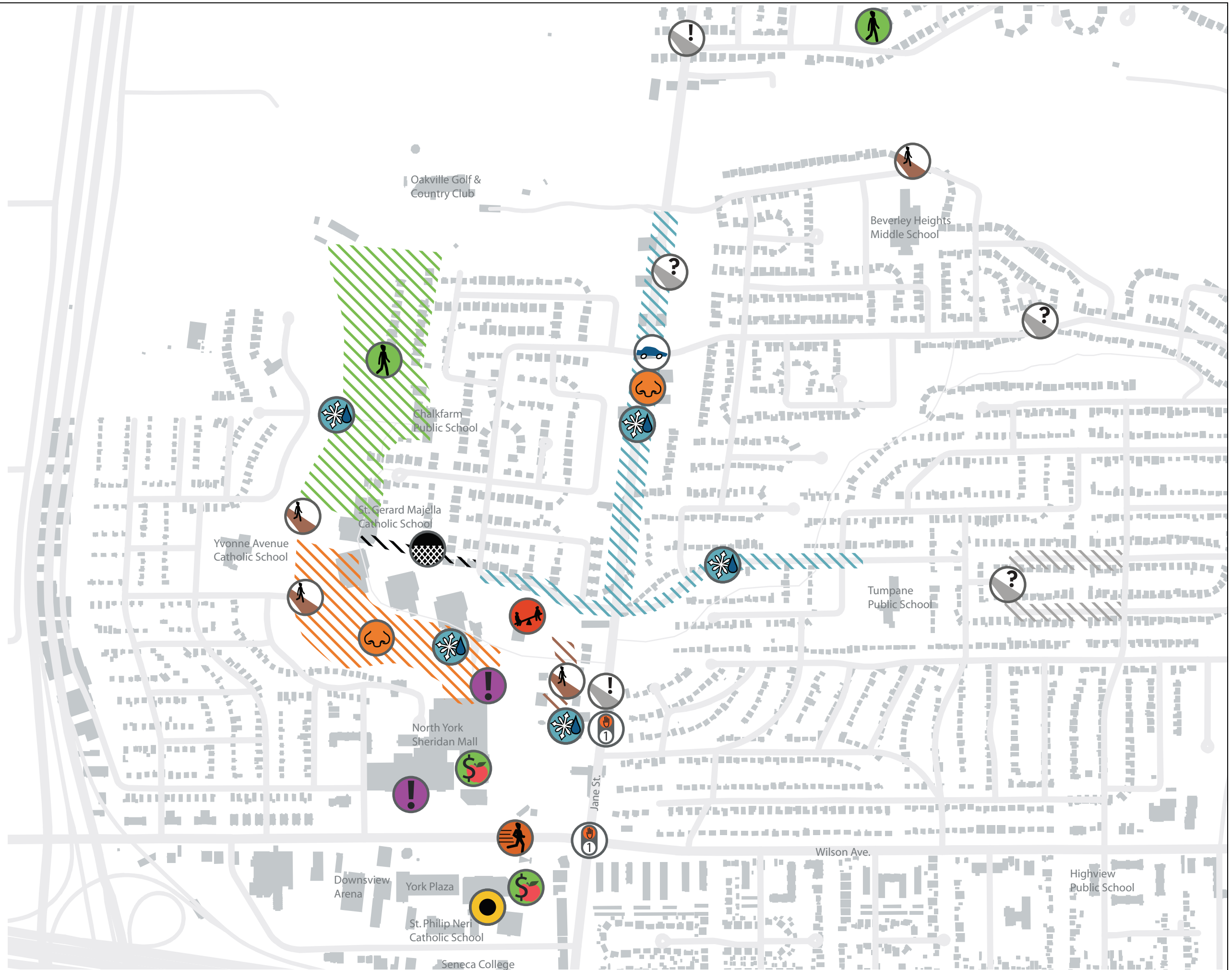
	% TOTAL DWELLINGS BY TENURE - RENTED	% TOTAL DWELLINGS BY TYPE - 5+ STOREYS	% TOTAL MOBILITY STATUS 1 YEAR AGO - MOVERS	% TOTAL MOBILITY STATUS 5 YEARS AGO - MOVERS
Toronto	45.6	38.8	15.6	43.2
Chalkfarm	81.7	70.6	17.7	44.0
Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park	66.6	67.4	14.2	50.7
Steeles L'Amoreaux	45.5	53.3	18.7	47.4
North Kipling	55.7	85.8	21.3	61.3
The Peanut	89.7	77.9	23.1	63.1
St James Town	96.8	93.0	22.8	55.9
Scarborough Village	68.5	87.1	20.0	54.1
Thorncliffe Park	90.7	93.0	21.6	55.6

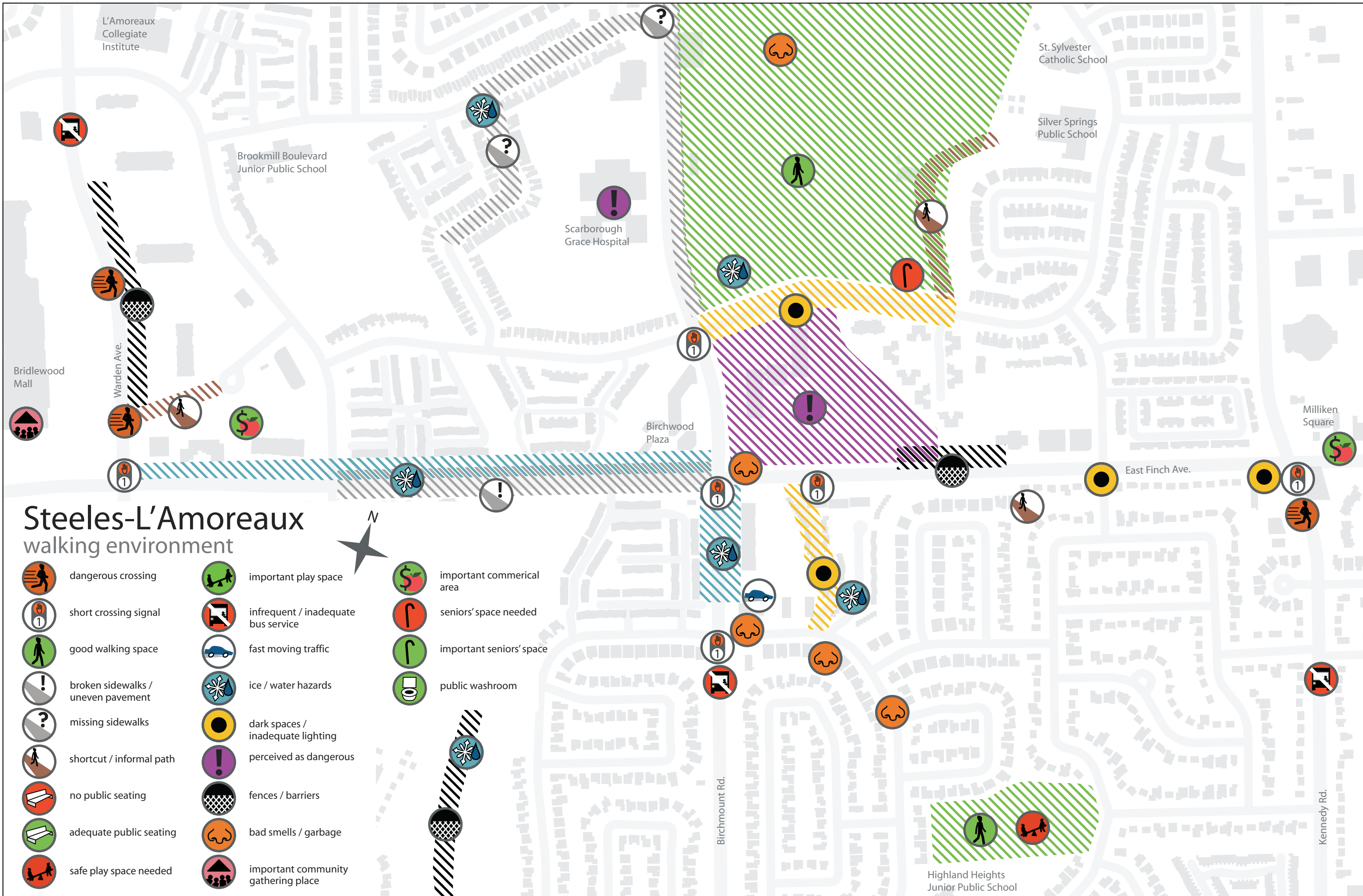
APPENDIX 3: NEIGHBOURHOOD MAPS

This section presents summaries of the maps produced in the workshop focus groups. Each summary map represents a compilation of several maps that residents helped create.

Chalk Farm / Black Creek walking environment

-  dangerous crossing
-  short crossing signal
-  good walking space
-  broken sidewalks / uneven pavement
-  missing sidewalks
-  shortcut / informal path
-  no public seating
-  adequate public seating
-  safe play space needed
-  important play space
-  infrequent / inadequate bus service
-  fast moving traffic
-  ice / water hazards
-  dark spaces / inadequate lighting
-  perceived as dangerous
-  fences / barriers
-  bad smells / garbage
-  important community gathering place
-  important commerical area
-  seniors' space needed
-  important seniors' space
-  public washroom





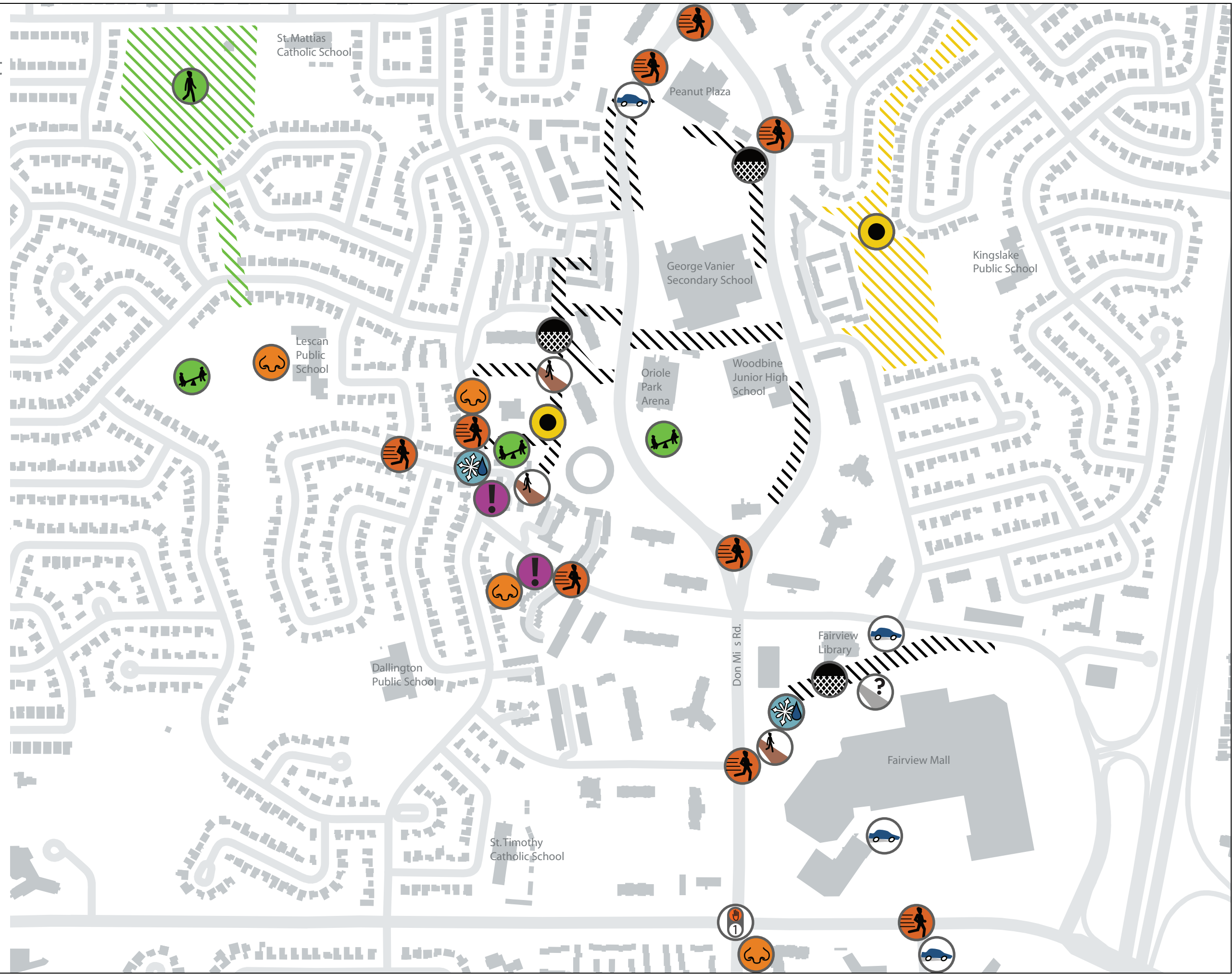
Steeles-L'Amoreaux walking environment



- | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | dangerous crossing | | important play space | | important commercial area |
| | short crossing signal | | infrequent / inadequate bus service | | seniors' space needed |
| | good walking space | | fast moving traffic | | important seniors' space |
| | broken sidewalks / uneven pavement | | ice / water hazards | | public washroom |
| | missing sidewalks | | dark spaces / inadequate lighting | | |
| | shortcut / informal path | | perceived as dangerous | | |
| | no public seating | | fences / barriers | | |
| | adequate public seating | | bad smells / garbage | | |
| | safe play space needed | | important community gathering place | | |

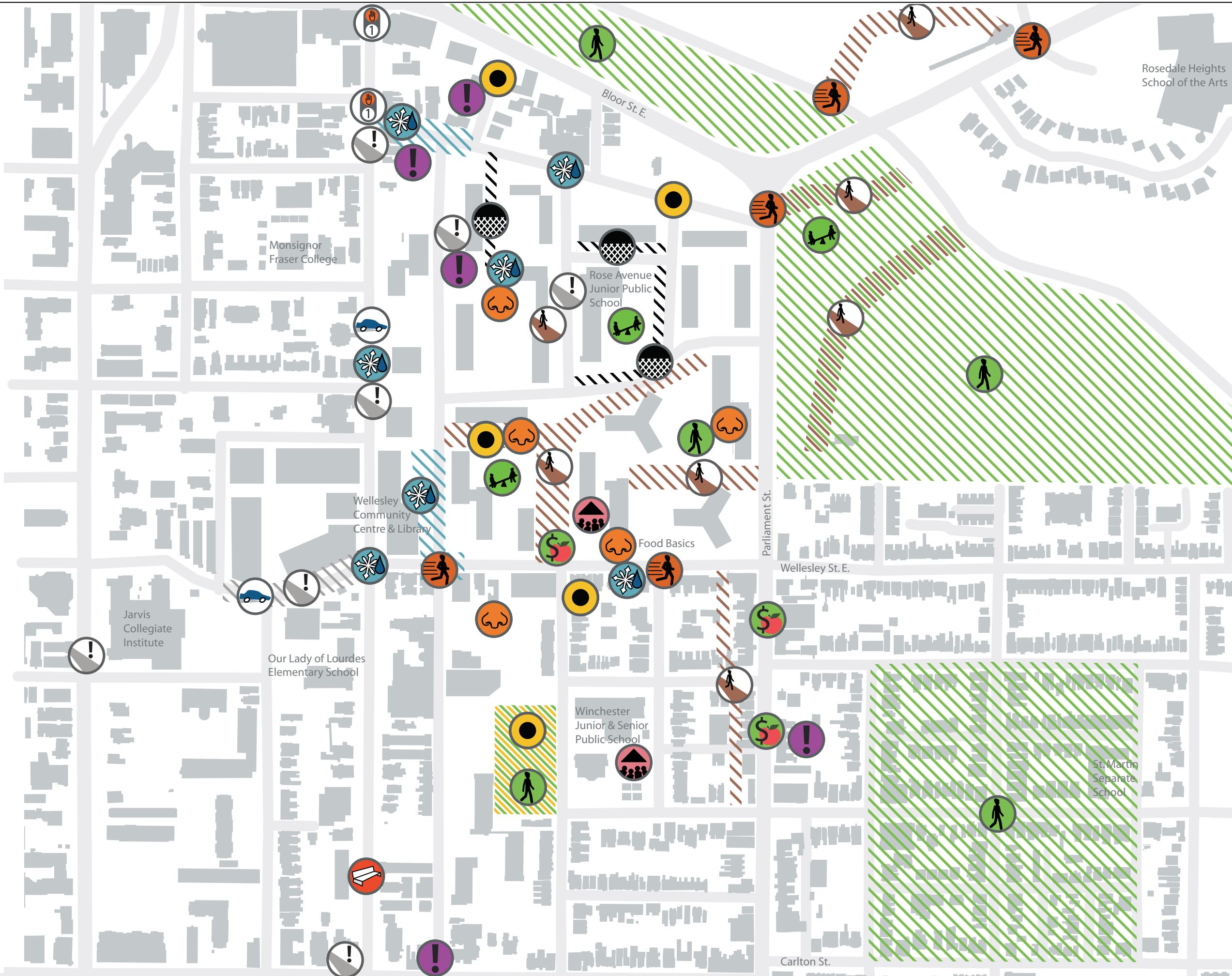
The Peanut walking environment

-  dangerous crossing
-  short crossing signal
-  good walking space
-  broken sidewalks / uneven pavement
-  missing sidewalks
-  shortcut / informal path
-  no public seating
-  adequate public seating
-  safe play space needed
-  important play space
-  infrequent / inadequate bus service
-  fast moving traffic
-  ice / water hazards
-  dark spaces / inadequate lighting
-  perceived as dangerous
-  fences / barriers
-  bad smells / garbage
-  important community gathering place
-  important commercial area
-  seniors' space needed
-  important seniors' space
-  public washroom



St. James Town walking environment

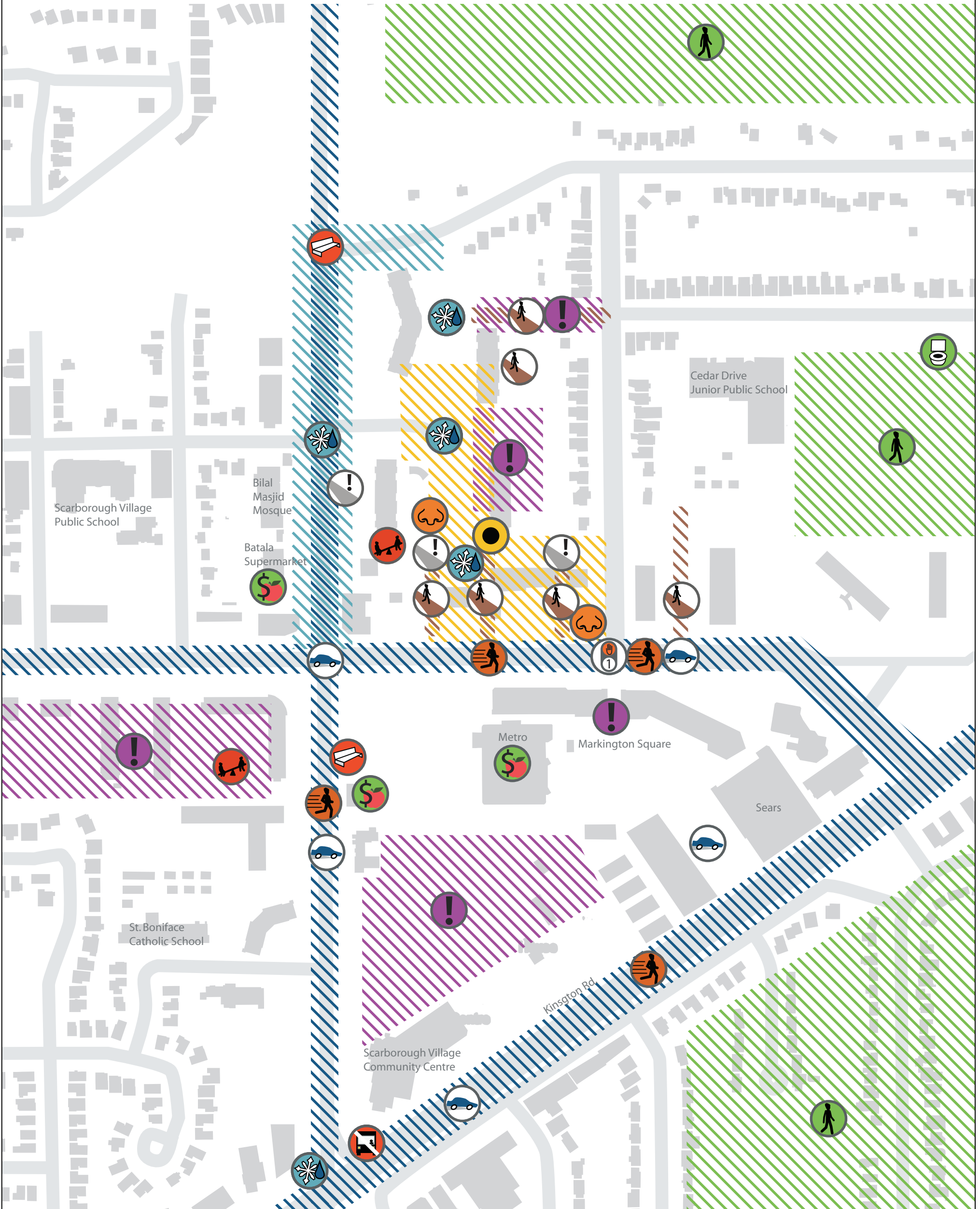
-  dangerous crossing
-  short crossing signal
-  good walking space
-  broken sidewalks / uneven pavement
-  missing sidewalks
-  shortcut / informal path
-  no public seating
-  adequate public seating
-  safe play space needed
-  important play space
-  infrequent / inadequate bus service
-  fast moving traffic
-  ice / water hazards
-  dark spaces / inadequate lighting
-  perceived as dangerous
-  fences / barriers
-  bad smells / garbage
-  important community gathering place
-  important commercial area
-  seniors' space needed
-  important seniors' space
-  public washroom



Scarborough Village walking environment

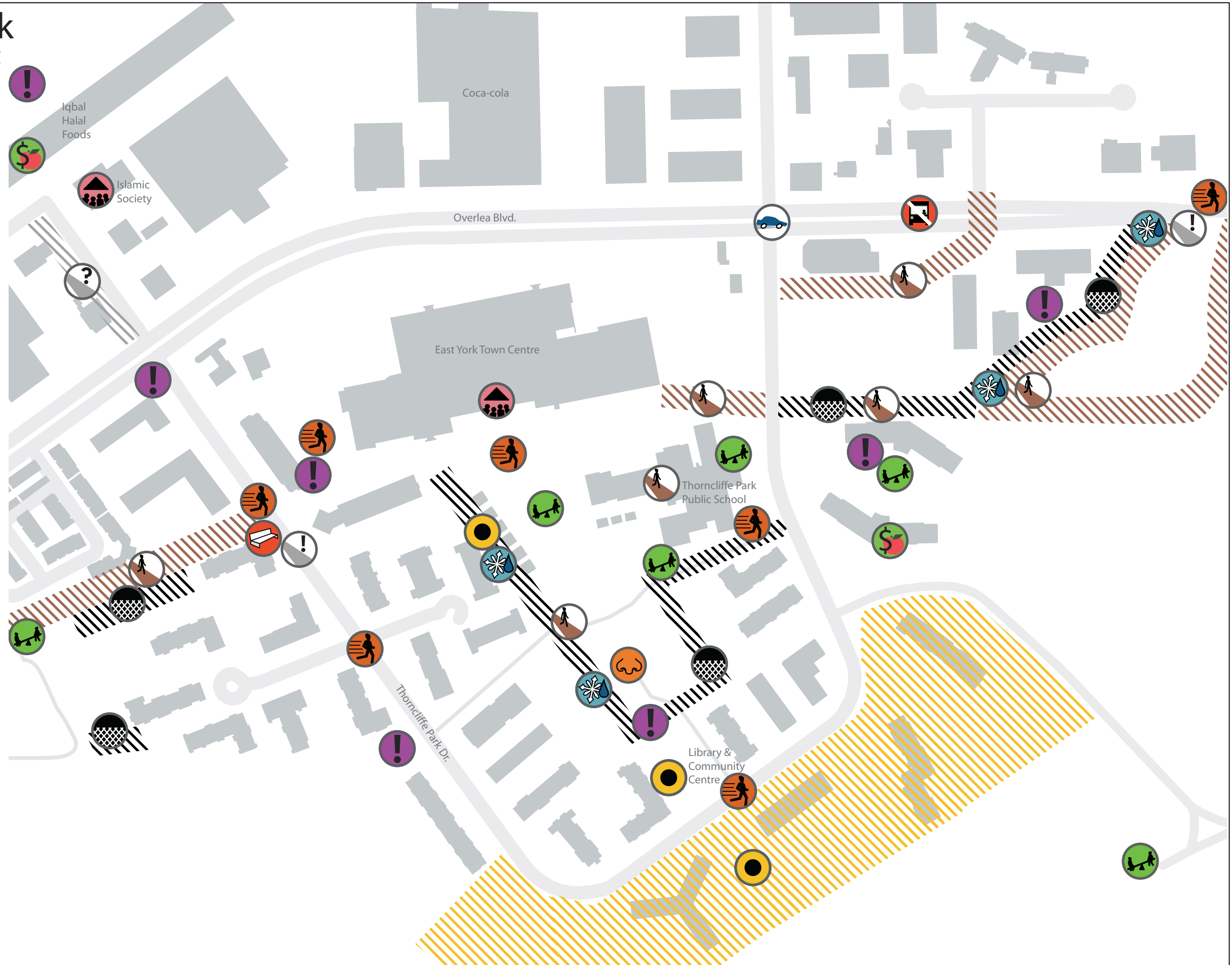


- | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| | dangerous crossing | | shortcut / informal path | | infrequent / inadequate bus service | | fences / barriers | | important seniors' space |
| | short crossing signal | | no public seating | | fast moving traffic | | bad smells / garbage | | public washroom |
| | good walking space | | adequate public seating | | ice / water hazards | | important community gathering place | | |
| | broken sidewalks / uneven pavement | | safe play space needed | | dark spaces / inadequate lighting | | important commercial area | | |
| | missing sidewalks | | important play space | | perceived as dangerous | | seniors' space needed | | |



Thornccliffe Park walking environment

-  dangerous crossing
-  short crossing signal
-  good walking space
-  broken sidewalks / uneven pavement
-  missing sidewalks
-  shortcut / informal path
-  no public seating
-  adequate public seating
-  safe play space needed
-  important play space
-  infrequent / inadequate bus service
-  fast moving traffic
-  ice / water hazards
-  dark spaces / inadequate lighting
-  perceived as dangerous
-  fences / barriers
-  bad smells / garbage
-  important community gathering place
-  important commercial area
-  seniors' space needed
-  important seniors' space
-  public washroom



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