

COMPLETE STREETS STRATEGY REPORT

DRAFT FOR COMMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over 60 active transportation advocates, organizations, and community leaders from all across the Nation's Capital took part in Ecology Ottawa's Complete Streets Strategy Forum held on March 28th, 2014. The one-day event featured a panel discussion from Councillors Egli, Chernushenko, Fleury, Holmes, and Wilkinson, followed by an interactive strategy session whereby participants discussed ways to help ensure that walking, cycling, and public transit would continue to be prioritized in the city.

A Complete Street can be defined as a street that is “designed for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel. On Complete Streets, safe and comfortable access for pedestrians, bicycles, transit users and the mobility-impaired is not an afterthought, but an integral planning feature” (*Complete Streets for Canada*).

The first half of this report provides a summary of the councillor's panel discussion. All five councillors expressed what a Complete Street looked like in their respective wards, and the current challenges that they faced in moving towards their implementation. Key points that were highlighted throughout the two-hour conversation included the importance of creating a network of integrated and connected streets, as well as the need for communities to work together and to engage their city councillors on issues that mattered to them.

The second part of this report is a working strategy that has been compiled from the feedback received from the participants at the Forum. The strategy has been broken down into four key opportunities where community organizing and engagement is needed in order to move the Complete Streets discussion from policy into action.

1. **Complete Streets policy:** While the adoption of a Complete Streets policy in the City's Transportation Master Plan is a step in the right direction, we need to ensure that the policy contains the 10 key elements of a comprehensive complete streets policy, as established by the *National Complete Streets Coalition* (see appendix A). This includes language that outlines specific next steps for policy implementation, as well as the development of concrete and measureable performance measures.

2. **2014 Municipal Election:** With new elected officials coming into office this year, we need to ensure that all candidates are knowledgeable and willing to prioritize Complete Streets in their wards and in the city.

3. **Budget:** For the 2015 fiscal year, the City needs to adopt a budget (from transportation to infrastructure) that supports the Complete Streets policy and implementation.

4. **Streets:** We need to mobilize community support around specific streets that have already been designated by the City for work to be completed, and would benefit from the elements of a good Complete Street design. This includes streets that will be reconstructed for either sewer/water renewal, as well as ones that are included in Transit-Oriented Development Plans, Community Design Plans, or the Downtown Moves study.

Under each opportunity, we have included tasks that individuals and groups can take leadership roles on within their communities. This strategy is intended to help communities identify opportunities, work together, and begin to move towards having safe and accessible streets in each neighbourhood.

OUR VISION

We believe that the City of Ottawa will benefit immensely from the implementation of a Complete Streets policy. We believe that streets should be designed as places and destinations in their own right, and not just conduits for cars. We believe that streets should be accessible to and inclusive of all citizens, regardless of age, gender, or ability. We believe that people should have real transportation choices, so that they have real alternatives to driving. We believe that streets should be designed with people's safety, health, and comfort in mind, in whatever mode of transit they choose. We believe that Complete Streets should be an integral part of the planning process for the construction, retrofitting, and maintenance of all roadways. We believe that individuals and organizations who care about these issues should work together to demand action.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Ottawa stands at a pivotal point in its development of sustainable planning and transportation policies. Since the City's Infrastructure Master Plan and Transportation Master Plan were updated in 2009, Ottawa has experienced accelerated population growth, expansion of the city's urban area, and rapidly progressing high-density development.

Last year, the City undertook a citywide review of land use, transportation and infrastructure policies that make up its Official Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Cycling Plan, and Pedestrian Plan. Together, these five plans set the vision for building a more livable Ottawa in the next 17 years.

With that in mind, thirty groups – representing over 100,000 people across the City of Ottawa – joined Ecology Ottawa in launching a Complete Streets for Ottawa campaign. Since the campaign launch, more than 3000 citizens have signed our petition urging City Council to

support the approval and implementation of a comprehensive Complete Streets policy into the City's official planning documents.

On July 17th, 2013, City Council voted to redevelop Main Street into the City's first Complete Street, marking a major milestone. With the momentum gained from the Main Street development, City Council passed the Transportation Master Plan on November 28th, 2013, which included a Complete Streets discussion.

But our work is not done yet. The decisions we make today will determine whether we will be able to enjoy increased rates of walking, cycling, and transit-use in the future, or whether we will pave the way for increasing traffic congestion, infrastructure costs, and greenhouse gas emissions.

PART I: COUNCILLOR'S PANEL SUMMARY

The Complete Streets Strategy Forum began with a panel discussion that included Councillors Egli, Wilkinson, Holmes, Chernushenko, and Fleury. The councillors expressed what a Complete Street looked like in their respective wards, and the current challenges that they faced in moving towards their implementation.

WHAT IS A "COMPLETE STREET"?

There is no one-size-fits-all Complete Street design; what is considered to be a "Complete Street" will vary between communities and wards in the City of Ottawa. This is acknowledged throughout the Transportation Master Plan, which states that "each setting requires a road to perform different functions, and for this reason, each road must be sensitive to its immediate context". Additionally, as outlined in the *Building a Livable Ottawa 2031* policy proposal, when designing a street from a Complete Streets framework, "the needs of the most 'vulnerable users', pedestrians and cyclists, are considered first, followed by the needs of transit users and motorists." Trade-offs are made among competing users, guided by the street's intended function. To accommodate all users, Complete Streets often include features such as on-road bike lanes, wider sidewalks, protected crossings, landscaped areas, and traffic calming measures. Below are two examples of Complete Streets in the city's suburban and downtown areas.

SUBURBS: KNOXDALE-MERIVALE

For residents living in suburban communities, accessibility to arterial roads is crucial. In Councillor Egli's ward of Knoxdale-Merivale, city staff proposed implementing a sidewalk on Sherry Lane, a small residential street that was slated to undergo infrastructure reconstruction. However, after consulting the local community, they quickly realized that residents did not want

a sidewalk, but rather a multi-use pathway that would allow them to better access public transit on the larger arterial roads. While a multi-use pathway was what this community wanted, Councillor Egli emphasized that it may not be what other communities want. This is why community engagement and organizing is critical to ensure that a proposed Complete Street meets the needs of all residents.

DOWNTOWN: RIDEAU-VANIER

Modifications that give priority to pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users will be essential to support and accommodate the implementation of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) project in downtown Ottawa. Councillor Fleury provided Queen Street as an example of a street that would soon be benefiting from a new LRT station. A Complete Street in this case would mean providing a safe environment for the huge influx of pedestrians that will be arriving by train. In order to make the street a safer environment, he suggested including widened sidewalks and trees to act as physical barriers to vehicle traffic.

ROLE OF COMMUNITIES

“BOY, DO WE HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO.”

During the panel discussion, councillors acknowledged the progress being made on Complete Streets in the city. “If you look at the Transportation Master Plan, there is this great policy discussion about Complete Streets,” said Councillor Holmes. “It’s an improvement, and we are getting somewhere.” At the same time, Councillor Holmes made it very clear that there was much work to be done—as indicated by the long list of new roads and road widenings included in the Transportation Master Plan. The real challenge ahead would be translating the Complete Streets policy into practice. The following three measures were suggested by councillors as effective actions that your community can take to move this issue forward.

1. MAKE NOISE: TALK TO YOUR COUNCILLOR

One message that was continuously brought up during the councillor’s panel session was the importance of engaging with your city councillor. Councillor Holmes emphasized the power of numbers, stating that “we need more noisy parents, cyclists, and pedestrians” because “we already have plenty of noisy drivers”. Regardless of what aspect of Complete Streets is important to you, councillors made it very clear: mobilizing your community and getting out to talk to your city councillor is critical.

2. BE SPECIFIC: ESTABLISH CLEAR DEMANDS

Councillors also emphasized the importance of having clearly articulated, well-thought-out demands. “The City is willing to work with [residents],” explained Councillor Chernushenko, “but your demands have to be very specific - don’t just yell that they’re doing it all wrong”. His advice was echoed by Councillor Egli, who suggested that getting residents to identify the

strengths and weaknesses of a particular street design would “give [the City] the tools to work with to come up with a Complete Street that works for your community”.

3. BE PERSISTENT: ORGANIZE AROUND STREETS

Once communities have established their demands, the next step is to organize around them. Councillor Holmes highlighted two examples of successful community engagement in her ward. On Preston Street, local businesses wanted a romantic street for pedestrians – one lined with decorative trees, attractive lighting, and wider sidewalks. Similarly, on Somerset Street in Chinatown, sidewalks were widened and Chinese-inspired benches and lighting were added. Despite having to struggle with city staff over these changes, both communities’ demands were ultimately fulfilled because “they knew what they wanted and they went after it”.

THE PATH TO SUCCESS: MAIN STREET

The fight to convert Main Street into the City of Ottawa’s first Complete Street was not an easy one to win. When it became clear, however, that Main Street would be undergoing water and sewer renewal, Councillor Chernushenko knew that this would be a “once in a lifetime opportunity” to change the face of the street. Thanks in part to his efforts, the new Main Street, with construction slated to be finished in 2016, will be designed for pedestrians, cyclists, transit-users and motorists alike.

TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

Main Street is currently made up of four lanes of “fast, loud, and scary traffic”. The vehicle-dominated road has reduced what little pedestrian presence there once was, and this has been bad for commerce – in fact, most of the stores in the area have closed up.

Councillor Chernushenko wanted to transform Main Street into a “place where people wanted to be”, and this meant generating more foot and cycling traffic. From a technical perspective, the challenge was to design the street to carry most of the traffic during peak hours while creating a modal shift, a condition where enough people would be willing to choose a slightly different time to travel or a different form of transportation to use. The key was to provide “real transportation choices for all users—ages 8 to 80”. Whatever his vision, he knew that this couldn't be something that he imposed – it had to come from the community. At the open house held by the City, the feedback received from the community was overwhelmingly positive, with 198 out of 200 local residents in favour of the newly proposed conceptual design. The proposal included reducing the total number of lanes in half, while installing elevated bike lanes, widened sidewalks, additional trees and bus shelters.

POLITICS AND PERSUASION

From the very beginning, Councillor Chernushenko knew that a lot was riding on the Main Street proposal. “The message was quite clear: the vote on Main Street must not fail,” he stressed, “because this was essentially a ‘referendum’ on Complete Streets”. In essence, if the recommendation had gone to City Council and lost, it would have been interpreted as “the City does not want Complete Streets”. Convincing people to embrace the concept of Complete Streets was going to take “baby steps”, added Councillor Egli. “Once [Main Street] is in place and working, I think we’re going to see a lot more acceptance on this issue. That’s why getting these projects to pass is so important”.

In order to get City Council to approve Main Street as a Complete Street, there were numerous political hurdles to be overcome. To start, getting support from city staff was “critical” for getting other councillors on board. The support of city staff, Councillor Chernushenko emphasized, would be contingent on the support of the local community; in other words, staff needed to be convinced that a Complete Street was what residents wanted. Equally important, was the backing from the Mayor's Office, as the proposed project had significant policy implications.

SUBURBS VS. DOWNTOWN: A FALSE DICHOTOMY

Furthermore, Councillor Chernushenko’s motion needed suburban and rural votes for it to pass; this could not be a downtown versus the rest of the city scenario. So how do you get suburban councillors on board with converting a downtown street into a Complete Street? The answer is “like every change, we had to go at it tactically,” suggested Councillor Egli. What this meant was that “we had to have everybody feel like the renewed, complete Main Street would be good for them”.

In the end, the Main Street proposal received 18 votes—and only 5 of them were from urban councillors. That meant that 13 of them were either from suburban or rural councillors! So what was the significance of this vote? “What I take from this is that we are actually more united than divided,” said Councillor Chernushenko, “even if we have different optics.”

ROAD BLOCKS

BALANCING THE BUDGET

A problem that many councillors are facing is the lack of flexibility in the yearly budget.

For her part, Councillor Wilkinson described the challenges related to the growing number of employment opportunities in her ward of Kanata North, and not enough transit service to get workers where they need to go. With over 22,000 employers in the region, Kanata North is the

second largest commuter hub in Ottawa, next to downtown. But the push for Complete Streets has been particularly futile due to the lack of “dependable” bus service to the area.

Given the lack of available funding in the transportation budget, Councillor Wilkinson’s efforts to expand the area’s bus routes have been largely met with resistance at City Hall. In fact, “the City has continued to reduce bus services in the last 4 or 5 years despite the fact that 80 to 90 per cent of the growth of the population in Ottawa is happening outside of the Greenbelt”. “How can we get people out of their cars if they have no other choice,” asked a clearly exasperated Councillor Wilkinson.

Part of the issue, she suggested, is that “they don’t like us changing anything in the budget”. In other words, if you want to put something in, something needs to be taken out. This is a clear indicator that there needs to be a strong, organized demand when City Council tables the budget every year to ensure we have the adequate funding. At the end of the day, “you do not get money without asking,” advised Councillor Holmes, “This is why it is so important for residents to demand things like data and more money.”

This isn’t to say that there hasn’t been any progress. “Seven years ago, the City had zero dollars in the budget for sidewalks - zero! We only got money when new roads were being built,” said Councillor Wilkinson. Now, they are seeing money being allocated to more diverse range of infrastructure projects, but “we’ve got to keep moving forward.” And while Councillor Wilkinson supports the “huge amounts” of money being invested into Light Rail Transit right now, she notes that there’s a need for “a better balance”.

Moreover, despite budget limitations, councillors noted that there were many cost-effective initiatives that could be undertaken to make significant improvements to roadside safety. Small-scaled projects such as putting up flexible bowers and speed boards are funded by councillors’ constituency budgets, Councillor Egli explained. Councillor Fleury provided an example of road painting for a cycling lane as a minor, inexpensive method of drastically improving the safety of cyclists. Similarly, Councillor Wilkinson added that streets could be transformed simply by adding well-lit multi-use pathways for children to walk safely to and from school.

CONNECTIVITY

Another barrier to the implementation of Complete Streets is poor street connectivity due to inconsistent winter maintenance. In order for a Complete Street to fulfill its intended function, the City must ensure that street connectivity is prioritized. A continuous, integrated network that supports all modes of transportation is necessary to allow all users to move freely between any number of origins and destinations. The Transportation Master Plan explicitly states that “a complete street in insolation is much less effective than a connected network of complete streets that provide freedom of movement to all users by the travel mode of their choice” (pg. 65).

Councillor Fleury pointed out how connectivity and winter maintenance are closely related because “if the City did as much as they could for winter maintenance, that would go a long way to create those connection points for cyclists and pedestrians”. He suggested to approach this challenge from a different lens, by looking at “which connections could give us the most bang for our money or most quick wins”, as a means of prioritizing streets.

ORGANIZING OPPORTUNITIES

How do we go about implementing Complete Streets? Several of the Councillors provided examples of what they see as opportunities for organizing around Complete Streets. Councillor Holmes put it best, describing the Complete Streets process as being “ad hoc”, with different opportunities coming out of different projects. These opportunities were considered in creating the strategy report and will be further elaborated on in the strategy discussion below.

1. STREET RENEWALS/ RECONSTRUCTION/ NEW ROADS

Councillor Egli highlighted three ways in which the City would be implementing the Complete Streets concepts and ideas that run throughout the Transportation Master Plan. First, when the City looks at a street for reconstruction (not just repaving, but the infrastructure underneath the pavement), they are now mandated to do so from a Complete Street lens. Every project will now be looked at with that unique lens, that perspective of “can it be made into a Complete Street, and what does that mean for the particular street, in this particular community?”. Additionally, all Environmental Assessments will conduct reviews from a Complete Street lens. The final opportunity comes from new road projects, whereby city staff will look at how they can make new road proposals a complete route for the people living and travelling through that community. For his part, Councillor Fleury referenced the upcoming renewal of streets, specifically for Rideau Street and Sussex Avenue in Lowertown, as opportunities for Complete Streets. Also noted were the streets outlined in the *Downtown Moves Study*, which was released last year. Seizing these opportunities would be essential, because “once [things are] implemented, it’s too late to change”.

2. COMMUNITY DESIGN PLANS

Community Design Plans provide the blueprints for future development plans, and as such, are crucial opportunities for communities to mobilize around and have their voices heard. Councillor Holmes provided Rochester Street as an example coming out of the Carling/Preston Community Design Plan. She described Rochester Street as a “big fight between city staff and surrounding neighbourhoods”, with the City in favour of drawing more cars down Rochester in an effort to divert traffic away from Parkdale Avenue. With their Councillor’s help, the local community created a petition—and was ultimately successful—in achieving their goal of transforming Rochester Street into a Complete Street.

3. TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The City's future Light Rail Transit system will dramatically alter downtown streets, with LRT stations expected to be installed along Queen and Rideau Streets. As noted by Councillors Fleury and Holmes, modifications will be necessary to reallocate and accommodate the resulting street space and higher pedestrian traffic in these areas. These design plans can be found in the City of Ottawa's Transit-Oriented Development Plans, and could involve the widening of sidewalks, increasing patios in the business district, increasing bike lanes and decreasing on-street parking.

PART II: STRATEGY DISCUSSION

Following the Q&A session with city councillors, it was time to develop a strategy that could organize the work that was being undertaken across Ottawa to ensure that Complete Streets would be prioritized at City Hall.

Community leaders who attended the Strategy Forum had a wide range of interests including health, safety, cycling, walkability, and transit use. Attendees sat in groups, and each group was asked to discuss two or three of the following issues:

- What specific policy changes need to be made in order to implement the new Complete Streets policy?
- How can we best organize around the upcoming municipal election?
- How do we get a budget that supports full implementation of the Complete Streets policy?
- What specific streets or neighbourhoods should we be mobilizing around as a priority?

The recommendations that were communicated by the participants have been organized into four separate action plans. Even though they are separate, each of these action plans are critical for moving forward with the Complete Streets Policy.

1. TAKE ACTION AROUND THE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

The City has explicitly expressed its commitment to incorporate the Complete Streets approach into existing policies/guidelines. The Transportation Master Plan states that the City will be updating the *Regional Road Corridor Design Guidelines* and the *Road Corridor Planning and Design Guidelines: Urban and Village Collectors, Rural Arterials and Collectors*, to embrace the concepts included in Complete Streets.

On April 28th, 2014, the City of Ottawa held an internal Complete Streets workshop with participants ranging from transportation planners, signal designers, roadway designers, pavement marking designers, maintenance staff, transit operations staff, land use planners, and public health officials. An outcome of this workshop was that the principles in both the *Regional Road Corridor Design Guidelines* and the *Road Corridor Planning and Design Guidelines: Urban and Village Collectors, Rural Arterials and Collectors* already conform to the mandate of Complete Streets.

While both guidelines were believed to fall within the Complete Streets framework, the City's Infrastructure Services Branch had already retained a consultant to review all of the city's road design guidelines to identify any missing gaps between policy and design. This review will go towards creating a "*Road Design Guideline*" document that will be up-to-date and include the Complete Street principles. This is expected to be a 2-year project that will be completed in 2015.

At the internal City of Ottawa workshop, there was also consideration of a *Complete Streets Implementation Plan* that would focus more on decision-making rather than road cross-section designs. Currently, we have a commitment from the City to ensure the road design guidelines support a Complete Streets approach, but we do not have a commitment for when a Complete Street will be implemented. Without an implementation plan there is no accountability for when a Complete Street will and will not be built.

Based on examples from other cities, it is best practice for Complete Streets policies to come in the form of an all encompassing Complete Streets Guideline that include the necessary street designs, concrete performance measures, and an implementation strategy. (See Appendix A for a link to examples of comprehensive Complete Streets Guidelines from Calgary and Edmonton.)

These recent developments within the City of Ottawa do not undermine the recommended policy actions that came out of the Strategy Forum. It was recommended at the Forum to keep track of the consultation/review dates for the *Regional Road Corridor Design Guidelines* and the *Road Corridor Planning and Design Guidelines: Urban and Village Collectors, Rural Arterials and Collectors*, and to engage city councillors and staff with best practices of Complete Streets across Canada. This strategy can now be applied to the "Road Design Guideline" that will be completed in 2015 and to the proposed Complete Streets Implementation Plan.

2. TAKE ACTION AROUND THE ELECTION

October 27th, 2014, is Election Day in the City of Ottawa, and to ensure that the Complete Streets policy will be implemented in the next term of council, candidates must be knowledgeable about the policy and ready to prioritize infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists,

and transit users. To achieve this goal, participants at the Strategy Forum recommend action on the following:

- Define a concrete demand or “ask” for the candidates running in your ward (tangible, one thing)
- Produce “election/candidate kits” that would provide advocates/candidates with a toolkit that can educate people on the importance of Complete Streets and create key messages (for example, include a simple definition of a Complete Street, the benefits of Complete Streets, and debunking the myth that it creates more traffic)
- Hold meetings/debates to allow people to engage with the candidates about the Complete Streets policy
- Conduct outreach to get people to attend the candidates debate

An event that is already being planned and can be used as model event for other communities is the Somerset Ward Municipal election transportation debate. This is being held on Monday June 16th from 6:30-9:00 pm at Knox Presbyterian Church (being hosted by Centretown Citizens Community Association, Dalhousie Community Association, and Ecology Ottawa)

3. TAKE ACTION AROUND THE BUDGET

The City’s annual budget often sets the tone for what is and is not possible within the City. It is important for City Council to adopt a budget that will fund the programs needed to put the Complete Streets Policy into action. As noted in the previous section, city councillors highlighted the challenges of moving forward with the Complete Streets policy without the budget to back it up. Before the budget is tabled for 2015, it is important for the City to see that there are a large number of residents that want to see a budget that is able to support full implementation of the Complete Streets Policy.

To have this amount of influence on the budget, the participants at the Strategy Forum recommend action on the following:

- Develop a report card to clearly identify how much the City is currently spending on walkability, cycling, and transit use (and the degree to which the City is prioritizing new roads and road expansion).
- Collect data for concrete evidence about the use of the streets (for example, conducting an active transportation audit)
- Community groups and individuals host consultations within their ward and include their city councillor

There are different ways to approach a budget ask, and the following were identified as options:

- Think creatively and leverage the money that already exists in the city for smaller more cost effective initiatives (for example a councillor reaching into their constituency budget)
- Ask for a small and specific number of projects to be funded rather than demanding more money on top of what the City is already spending
- Push for the projects that will be funded in the next five years in the Transportation Master Plan to be in the front end of those five years

4. TAKE ACTION IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

*“The focus of implementation of complete streets will be on new construction, renewal projects, and as part of other construction projects (e.g. transit priority/ rapid transit). This ensures a cost effective approach to implementation”
(pg. 66, Transportation Master Plan)*

With the City’s focus for implementation in the Transportation Master Plan, it is to our advantage to follow their intention and mobilize around specific projects/streets that has already been designated by the City for work to be completed.

STREETS AS AN ORGANIZING TOOL

A specific street is a key organizing opportunity that allows residents to come together and decide what a Complete Street would look like in their community. These ideas can then be presented to their city councillor with a unified voice. (See Appendix B for the list of streets that were identified at the Strategy Forum as potential priorities in need of a Complete Street redesign).

The City has prepared a list of streets that are going to be renewed between 2014-2018 for each ward. The list is a valuable planning tool for deciding which street would be the best opportunity to organize and build support around. Ecology Ottawa has obtained the list for all wards in Ottawa.

COMMUNITY DESIGN PLANS

“The development of community design plans for villages and urban communities will provide an opportunity for the City to identify important walking and cycling routes, including linkages to greenway systems, neighbouring communities and transit facilities”. (pg.31, Transportation Master Plan)

A Community Design Plan maps out neighbourhood growth spatially, socially, and economically, while aiming to incorporate the fundamentals and policies in the City of Ottawa’s Official Plan to the neighbourhood scale. They evolve with the needs of the community and reflect current issues that residents may be facing. The development of Community Design Plans are a critical organizing opportunity because it allows residents to come together and be involved with the framework that will guide future road developments within their communities.

Residents can get involved with the Community Design Plans in their wards by engaging their city councillor with an email, a phone call, or attending an open house consultation meeting. With each Community Design Plan in progress there is a City staff member who can be reached for information on how to get involved as well. It is advantageous to use the development phase of the Community Design Plan’s to reach our goal of having Complete Streets in our neighbourhoods.

Rochester Street is an example that highlights the potential for this opportunity, with the plans for it to be transformed into a Complete Street coming from the Preston-Carling District Community Design Plan. This plan will be going before the Planning Committee and City Council in June 2014. See Appendix C for some key dates and how to get involved with a few of the many Community Design Plans that are currently in progress.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Transit Oriented Development encourages neighbourhood planning that is designed around facilitating transit access, movement, and appeal. This includes creating density around transit stations and designing safe streets and neighbourhood layouts to encourage transit use and active transportation over car use.

“Primary goals of the Transit Oriented Development plans include improving pedestrian and cycling access to the stations, and providing opportunities for additional development at transit-supportive densities” (pg.33, Transportation Master Plan)

The first three Transit Oriented Development studies for the land surrounding the future Tremblay, St.Laurent and Cyrville Light Rail Transit stations were approved in 2012, and three more were approved for Lees, Hurdman, and Blair stations in January 2014. There are many streets included in the Transit-Oriented Development plans that are designated for new pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The entire plan or a specific street in the plan can be a mobilizing opportunity to ensure the Complete Streets approach is being incorporated as the City moves forward with implementation.

DOWNTOWN MOVES

Downtown Moves is an Urban Design and Transportation Study that identifies ways to create more vibrant, inclusive, safe and accessible streets for residents, workers and visitors of all ages and abilities across Ottawa's Central Business District. The overall aim is to make walking, cycling and transit use more comfortable and convenient by redistributing and improving the streetscape environment. The Study informs the City on how to best capitalize on the transformative opportunities presented by the implementation of the Confederation Line light rail transit (LRT) project, and seamlessly integrate the future stations at street level. - Building a Livable Ottawa 2031

The Downtown Moves report includes a new street design decision-making framework, a street design toolkit with Complete Streets design solutions, and “Vital Moves” that are considered to be physical projects that will enhance the safety and mobility of the downtown streets. There are 13 “Vital Moves” that are recommended in the study, and 5 of those have been highlighted as first priority moves.

The list of “Vital Moves”, and especially the first priority moves provide opportunities to mobilize around and build support around. Residents can engage their city councillor about the importance of these projects, and the need for full investment from the City to support the transformation of the downtown core. See Appendix D for a link to the Downtown Moves study.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AUDITS FOR BUILDING COMPLETE NEIGHBOURHOODS

In an active transportation audit, a group of volunteers with a range of physical abilities and age walk around their community on a predetermined route to identify obstacles to walking, biking, and wheelchair use. Active transportation audits are a key tool that can be used in any community, whether one is organizing around the municipal election, the budget, or specific streets in your neighbourhood.

The audits that have been conducted in Lowertown and Centretown have produced a comprehensive list of positive and negative observations for specific streets and what actions should be taken to rectify problem areas. The actions can further be broken into what the community determines to be short-term and long-term recommendations for improving walkability, cycling, public transit, and wheelchair use in their area. The audit can be used to immediately engage with your city councillor and the broader community to showcase the work that needs to be done, and to begin the discussion of how it will be completed. See Appendix E for the checklist that is used to conduct the audits, and the Lowertown audit that has been completed.

CONCLUSION

Beginning the Strategy Forum with a councillor's panel was a valuable moment to not only converse with our elected officials about Complete Streets, but to demonstrate to them that there is a large group of community leaders who are ready to come together and work on the issues surrounding walkability, cycling, and public transit use. The city councillors were able to express what they believe are the current barriers to the Complete Streets policy and how we can overcome the challenges. The overriding message from the city councillors was to be organized as a community and engage your councillor.

Using their advice and the recommendations that came out of the strategy discussion we have compiled a working strategy that is based on those two very things: community organizing and engagement. We have identified the Complete Streets policy development, the budget, the municipal election in October 2014, and specific streets as areas to take action on. Moving forward with this strategy, we need individuals and groups to take on leadership roles in mobilizing around these actions.

Appendix A

10 Key Elements of a Comprehensive Complete Streets Policy:

<http://completestreetsforcanada.ca/policy-elements>

The Complete Streets Guidelines for the City of Edmonton:

http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/RoadsTraffic/Edmonton-Complete-Streets-Guidelines_05062013.pdf

The Complete Streets Guidelines for the City of Calgary:

http://www.calgary.ca/_layouts/cocis/DirectDownload.aspx?target=http://www.calgary.ca/Transportation/TP/Documents/CTP2010/2011-interim-complete-streets-guide.pdf&sf=1

Appendix B

The following streets were identified as potential priorities for a Complete Street redesign:

- St. Patrick Street
- Eagleson Road
- March Road
- Bridge that connects Somerset Street East and Donald Street - multi use pathway crossing of the Rideau river
- Bridge from VIA Rail station to North Coventry
- Ogilvie Road
- Presland Road
- Smythe Road
- Queen Street
- Albert Street - Albert-Scott corridor
- Slater Street
- O'Connor Street
- King Edward Avenue
- Bronson Avenue
- St. Joseph Boulevard
- Woodroffe Avenue North from Carling to Parkway
- Gladstone Avenue
- Heron Road
- Merivale Road
- Rideau Street between King Edward and Cummings

Appendix C

Resources to get involved with your Community Design Plan:

The Uptown Rideau Community Design Plan

<http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-consultations/uptown-rideau-community-design-plan>

- Between June and September 2014 the Draft CDP and Secondary Plan will be developed for consideration by Committee and Council

For more information contact Melanie Knight at planning@ottawa.ca.

South Keys to Blossom Park: Bank Street Community Design Plan <http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-consultations/planning-and-infrastructure/bank-street-community-design-plan-south>

- Between April and July 2014 the City will be holding a second public open house (to present CDP options, begin refinements, etc.)

For more information contact southbankstreetCDP@ottawa.ca.

Gladstone Station Community Design Plan

<http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-consultations/gladstone-station-district-community-design-plan>

- In June 2014 the CDP recommendations will be presented for approval at the Planning Committee and adoption by Council

For more information contact Taavi.Siitam@ottawa.ca.

The Mer Bleue Expansion Area Community Design Plan

<http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-consultations/planning-and-infrastructure/mer-bleue-expansion-area-community-design>

- Between Spring 2014 and Summer 2014 the City will be holding a third public open house (to present preferred land use concept, servicing and transportation demands, draft studies, and obtain public input) and will finalize the Community Design Plans and Master Plans.

For more information contact merbleuecdp-pcc@ottawa.ca.

To see the full list of Community Design Plans in progress:

<http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/planning-and-development/community-plans-and-design-guidelines/community-plans-and-stu-340>

Appendix D

The Downtown Moves report:

<http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/planning-and-development/community-plans-and-design-guidelines/design-and-planning-0-101>

Appendix E

The Neighbourhood Walkability Checklist that can be used to start an audit in your community:

<http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living/Documents/Neighbourhood-walkability-checklist.pdf>

The Lowertown Active Transportation Audit:

<http://ecologyottawa.ca/2013/09/19/active-transportation-audit-calls-for-safe-and-accessible-streets/>