

Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability Assessment Report



Photo courtesy of Healthy Living Hamilton, Photographer Ann Marie Busch

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The committee was sponsored by the Ainslie Wood Westdale Community Association (AWWCA) and championed by Brian McHattie, Ward 1 Councillor. In addition, the team was made up of many community stakeholders including the Westdale BIA, Public Health Services, Parent Councils from neighbourhood schools and McMaster University including McMaster students.

As of March 2007, committee members included:

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The committee would also like to express sincere appreciation to the residents of Ainslie Wood and Westdale for their input on walkability through consultations at Westitalia, G.R. Allan School, McMaster, Ainslie Wood and Westdale Community Association general meetings and the walkabouts held in September 2007.

Conclusions in the report do not necessarily reflect those of the individual members of the Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability committee or their affiliated organizations. The work is a true collaborative effort aimed at celebrating and improving walkability in the Ainslie Wood Westdale community.

Executive Summary

Older neighbourhoods in Hamilton were designed and built in an era when cars were few and walking, cycling and taking public transit were the norm for citizens. Much of the built environment in our city's older neighbourhoods facilitate active living and Ainslie Wood Westdale's (AWW) residents have a high regard for the principle of walkability. The mandate of the AWW Walkability Committee was to investigate, celebrate and improve walkability in the community.

The committee completed a pilot of two areas within the larger neighbourhood, Westdale South and Ainslie Wood East. The committee reviewed the principles of walkability, studied the neighbourhood characteristics and developed a community engagement approach. The approach both promoted walkability and provided multiple venues in which walkability needs could be voiced. The committee conducted four separate booth consultations in the community and guided two walkabouts in the study areas.

The findings reveal that while being a walkable community with respect to community design (proximity, scale and compatibility of uses), still more can be done to enhance walkability in AWW by improving safety, aesthetics, and connectivity.

The committee developed more than 60 recommendations around seven major themes:

- Improve connectivity
- Improve real & perceived pedestrian safety
- Invest in the public spaces in AWW, which are known pedestrian magnets
- Develop, promote and maintain neighbourhood beautification program
- Invest in traffic calming initiative
- Provide ongoing support of neighbourhood walkability assessments and audits
- Promote and support neighbourhood schools

The recommendations are targeted at various stakeholders including the Ainslie Wood Westdale Community Association, Westdale BIA, City of Hamilton and Hamilton School Boards.

In addition the committee reviewed its process and auditing tools and has developed resources to help other groups undertake similar work.

Next steps include:

- Sharing findings and recommendations with key stakeholders
- Collaborating with key stakeholders to identify priorities from the recommendations

- Developing a toolkit on walkability based on the Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability process.

The committee has fulfilled its mandate and hopes the work will result in improved walkability in AWW and throughout Hamilton.

Background

Older neighbourhoods in Hamilton were designed and built in an era when cars were few and walking, cycling and taking public transit were the norm for citizens. Much of the built environment in our city's older neighbourhoods, facilitate active living. As society became ever more car dependent, active modes of transportation became less utilized and new neighbourhoods started to cater more to cars than to citizens. As we now begin to understand the impacts of heavy car use on our health, safety, community well-being and air quality, we need to preserve and promote these active forms of transportation for ourselves and our neighbourhoods.

Citizens are aware of the benefits of living in neighbourhoods which support active living. In a marketing study conducted by the Ainslie Wood and Westdale Community Association¹ in 2006, walkability topped the list of "what makes Ainslie Wood Westdale great". Residents particularly appreciated walking to their neighbourhood schools, attractive shops/restaurants, the Westdale Theatre and community-based amenities. The study also revealed that certain enclaves were deemed more "walkable", particularly the area surrounding the Westdale Village core.

This finding is not surprising since Westdale is commonly cited as one of Canada's first planned community.² Westdale's street plan was designed by New York landscape architect, Robert Anderson Pope, who used Garden City principles. The result was a self-sufficient, community-centred neighbourhood that veered away from the traditional grid pattern and instead had streets radiating in concentric rings around a central shopping village with several parks and schools within walking distance. Active living has been a part of Westdale since it was built in 1925.

Resident's high regard for the principle of walkability inspired the neighbourhood association to learn more about walkability as Westdale's key asset and more importantly, to foster walkability in other parts of the Ainslie Wood and Westdale neighbourhoods. At nearly the same time and more significantly, Councillor McHattie made a motion requesting that a city-wide pedestrian committee be established. Following meetings with staff, Councillor McHattie spearheaded a plan to hold a pedestrian workshop in Hamilton which took place on November 20, 2006. The AWWCA's Vice President attended the City's Pedestrian workshop which was facilitated by Dan Burden, a North American expert in walkability.

Following the workshop, and with Brian McHattie's enthusiastic support, the Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability Committee was formed. The committee was struck with

¹The AWWCA was formed in 1998 and is the largest due-paying neighbourhood association in Hamilton with over 525 members.

²Hamilton Economic Development <http://www.investinhamilton.ca/communitiesneighbourhoods.asp> see Hamilton.

membership from AWWCA, residents of the neighbourhoods and representatives from key stakeholder groups including staff support from Public Health. The first meeting was held in March 2007. Councillor McHattie notes that the work is significant since the group is the first organization in Hamilton working with the City to promote walkability. The pilot and templates developed by the committee have the potential to set the stage for the larger city by enabling others to investigate walkability. The project is an exciting grass roots initiative in which health, environmental, urban planning and social capital domains intersect, creating the potential to improve the quality of life for residents.

The Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability Committee

The mandate of the Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability Committee was developed:

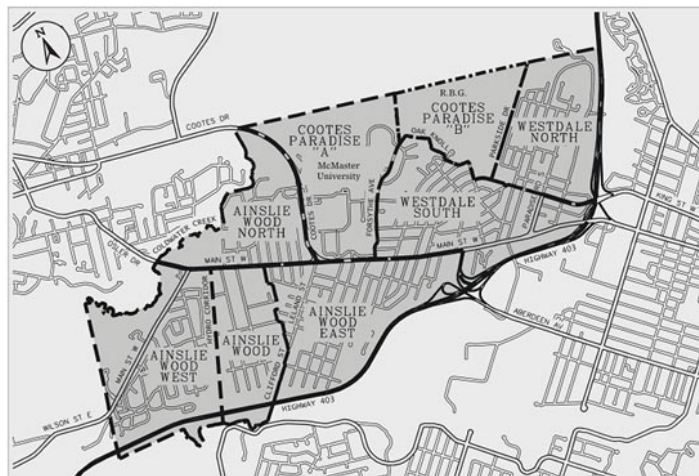
- To investigate and understand the benefits of walkability; i.e. health, safety, social, environment, etc.
- To celebrate one of Westdale's most important assets, its walkability
- To identify, assess and promote walkability in the Ainslie Wood Westdale community
- To partner with organizations and institutions to improve walkability within the Ainslie Wood Westdale community

The objectives of the initiative were to:

- Audit Ainslie Wood Westdale's walkability using formal criteria
- Develop a claim of Ainslie Wood Westdale's walkability
- Identify areas to improve Ainslie Wood Westdale's walkability
- Develop strategies to promote walkability for Ainslie Wood Westdale

The operational definition of the Ainslie Wood and Westdale area is:

- East of Osler Drive; West of the 403; South of Cootes Paradise; North of 403. It is the L8S area.
- There are eight areas:
 - Westdale North
 - Westdale South
 - Cootes Paradise A and B (include green space owned by RBG and also McMaster University, but do not have homes)
 - Ainslie Wood North
 - Ainslie Wood East
 - Ainslie Wood
 - Ainslie Wood West



The committee will undertake a pilot of the larger neighbourhood focusing on two areas:

- Westdale South
- Ainslie Wood East

Neighbourhood Characteristics

i) Community Profile

The Westdale South and Ainslie Wood East neighbourhoods are part of the larger Ainslie Wood Westdale Community (AWWC). While they are distinct neighbourhoods comprised of differing demographics and built form, they are part of a larger synergistic community relationship. The structure of these neighbourhoods and the larger community (AWWC) play an integral role in the walkability of these neighbourhoods.

ii) Built Form

The Ainslie Wood Westdale Community includes six residential neighbourhoods, one institutional campus and a large open space area that accommodates a diversity of land uses, population demographics, and community and social services (Secondary Plan, 2005). The community was developed largely between 1900 and 1950. The original subdivision (Westdale South), planned by an American architect Robert Allen Pope, was based on a central shopping hub with radial streets extending out from a core of a central shopping district, parks, schools and into approximately a dozen subdivisions catering to different income levels (Background Report, 2002). As this community was planned at the beginning of the automobile revolution, the design reflected the need for most residents to walk or take transit. This design still functions today.

Early building forms in the new suburb were predominantly one-and-a-half storey dwellings. Towards the middle 1900's the residential buildings were larger. Public buildings also made dramatic marks in the new urbanizing environment and included George R. Allan School (1927) and Westdale Collegiate (1930). The original McMaster University campus and Sunken Gardens had also been substantially completed by 1930 (Background Report, 2002).

By the 1960s, the landscape of the Ainslie Wood Westdale Community had been largely transformed into a residential suburb. Many of the original farms had been developed with much of their history being recalled in the naming of streets (Background Report, 2002). In 1966, the Chedoke Expressway (Highway 403) was completed across the Escarpment face. The McMaster University Medical Centre was opened in 1972 and by the 1990s the medical complex and university comprised a major institutional campus and employer (Background Report, 2002).

iii) Economic Activity

In AWW, there are several employment generators. The major employers are McMaster University and McMaster University Medical Centre as well as limited manufacturing companies, and business services in the community (Background Report, 2002). Two commercial areas are present, along Main Street West and

along King Street West (including the Westdale Business Improvement Area). The commercial strip along Main Street West is sporadic and does not form a cohesive commercial area. The commercial area along King Street West does form a cohesive commercial area that functions as both a regional and a local destination.

The Westdale South neighbourhood provides a broad range of commercial services including a larger supermarket, pharmacy, an independent theatre, coffee shops, banks, restaurants, and smaller and specialized retail establishments. The majority of these commercial sites are located within mixed use buildings and along several bus routes and a signed bike route.

The Ainslie Wood East neighbourhood contains limited commercial services with a convenience store, personal services, a coffee shop, restaurants, and smaller specialized retail. The commercial area is located along the major arterial road (Main Street West) and well serviced by local bus routes.

iv) Demographics

The residential components of the community consist predominantly of single detached dwellings and apartments - a higher proportion than the City as a whole (Background Report, 2002). The community also has a higher proportion of renters than the City as a whole (Background Report, 2002). The higher proportion of renters can be attributed to the proximity of a major post-secondary institution (McMaster University). The population of AWWC is reflective of the diversity of the area with a higher proportion of immigrants, residents with a university education, and low-income families and single persons than the City as a whole (Background Report, 2002).

v) Parks and Schools

The larger AWW Community has twenty-three parks, fifteen of those are City owned, while eight are owned by others, such as the Royal Botanical Gardens and the local Boards of Education (Secondary Plan, 2005). Five of the City owned parks and four of the parks owned by others are located in the two study areas. One of these is Churchill Park, a large regional park owned by the Royal Botanical Gardens located to the north of the Westdale South Neighbourhood. The larger AWW community contains three elementary schools (JK-Grade 5, two public and one Jewish); one elementary middle school (Grade 6-8); two elementary schools (JK-Grade 8, one Catholic and one Jewish); four secondary schools (one public, one Catholic, one French, and one private); one Jewish Seminary; one Montessori School; one school for children with special needs; two educational resource centres and McMaster University (Background Report, 2002). Several of these schools fall within or are adjacent to the two study neighbourhoods, and have a significant impact on of the perceived walkability of the neighbourhoods.

vi) Community and Social Services

Both the larger AWW community and the two study neighbourhoods are well serviced with local and regional community and social services. The services available range from twenty places of worship, a library, a recreation centre, an arena, an outdoor pool, a hospital, a children's hospital, museums, Ronald McDonald House, four daycares, a co-operative pre-school and nine residential care facilities with a total of seventy-five beds (Background Report, 2002). While the Westdale South neighbourhood and the McMaster campus contains the larger concentrations of community and social service facilities, the majority of these facilities are located along the border of the neighbourhoods and the Ainslie Wood East neighbourhood, which provides relatively good pedestrian accessibility to these services from both study areas.

vii) Transportation

The AWW community accommodates a variety of modes of transportation. There are several major and minor arterials (Main Street West, Cootes Drive, Longwood Road and King Street West) that act as the major local bus routes (a total of thirteen) for the community and a regional bus (GO Transit) services Main Street West between the eastern edge of the community and McMaster Campus.

The larger AWW community also contains four different types of bicycle paths (on-street bike routes, cautionary on-street bike routes, signed bike routes, and multi-use paths). The study neighbourhoods contain signed bike routes and on-street bike routes.

All of these factors can impact the walkability of a neighbourhood by offering destination for walkers by clustering complimentary land uses and by providing an enticing streetscape or natural environment that encourages residents to walk. This neighbourhood (Ainslie Wood Westdale study area) was designed to be walkable and has evolved over time to maintain its walkability with the inclusion of higher density developments, employment areas adjacent to residential areas, and a thriving commercial core.

Methodology

The methodology was designed to mobilize members of the community by:
a) building knowledge in the principles of walkability and b) providing multiple venues in which walkability needs could be voiced.

i) Knowledge Transfer amongst the Committee

The committee drew upon the expertise of its members and in a presentation format shared current literature on the definitions and principles of walkability, the benefits of walkability, and strategies to improve the walkability of a community.

The presentation by the Public Health member helped other committee members build a common understanding of walkability. While several perspectives were discussed, the committee found there were a number of emerging themes. The principles of walkability are described in “Appendix A”.

Since the presentation was deemed to be highly valuable, the committee felt that knowledge transfer ought to be part of its community engagement strategy. The committee decided that developing education materials would be an important aspect of its future consultation process.

See “Appendix B” for the presentation.

ii) Community Consultation

The size of the neighbourhoods was too large for a first initiative, assessing the whole community would be prohibitive. Therefore, the committee deemed its effort a “*pilot*” initiative and for the purpose of this research, identified two smaller neighbourhoods to assess: Westdale South and Ainslie Wood East.

The strategy for assessing the walkability of the Ainslie Wood and Westdale neighbourhoods was two pronged:

1. Booth Consultations

To gather feedback and information from residents on neighbourhood walkability “hot spots”. The committee established an inviting booth operated by committee members at four separate venues in the month of September 2007:

- Westtalia Festival, a community festival which draws hundreds of people to the Westdale village
- Open house and BBQ evening at GR Allan Public School
- The AWWCA annual general meeting (AGM)
- Environmental fair at McMaster University.

Handouts on walkability and the committee’s terms of reference were provided at the booths.

Two data gathering tools were used at the booth consultations:

- Large scale maps of the neighbourhoods were mounted on foam core with attached coloured markers with instructions for people to mark important places, walking routes, areas of concern and suggestions.
- Comment sheets were available for people to write longer comments or comments not related to the maps.

To generate interest and encourage participation, promotional incentives were provided to people who gave feedback. The promotional items were donated by various businesses in the Westdale BIA and Public Health. The booth consultations and promotional incentives were very successful – over **100 people** provided insights into walkability “hot spots”.

People were also actively recruited to the second engagement venue: the “walkabouts”, which were structured and facilitated Walkability Audits.

2. Ainslie Wood and Westdale Walkabouts

The walkabouts were designed to give people a structured, educated and full sensory walking experience applying the principles of walkability.

Using a best-practice approach, a walkabout tool was adapted from the Kansas City Walkability Plan (“Appendix C”). The tool was tested by committee members during two trial walkabouts.

Walkabout routes were developed by the committee based on the information taken from the maps and comment sheets from the community consultations. The routes were selected based on identified problem areas, while maintaining a manageable distance (for an hour walkabout).

Walkabouts were held Sunday, September 30th in the two neighbourhoods, Westdale South and Ainslie Wood East. Presentations on walkability and its importance were given prior to the walkabout. The Ainslie Wood East Walkabout had one group with a facilitator and a note-taker, while the Westdale South Walkabout had two groups, each with a facilitator and designated note-takers. The facilitators and note-takers were committee members.

Each participant was given a map and coloured pens for making individual comments. The materials were collected at the end of the walkabout and the comments were summarized. Upon completion of the walkabout each participant was asked to complete the walkabout tool (a survey) either in groups or individually.

A total of twenty people participated in the walkabouts and there was a diverse mix of community members including children, seniors and even a person walking their pet dog.

iii) Walkabout Walking Routes

Walking route on September 30th in Westdale starting at the Global Village Store:

- head west along King Street until Marion Street
- cross King Street at Marion Street
- head west along the south side of King Street
- head south at Paisley Avenue until Barclay Street
- head west on Barclay Street until Newton Street
- head north on Newton Street until the north side of King Street
- head east on King Street
- finish at the Second Cup

Walking route on September 30th in Ainslie Wood starting at Williams Coffee Pub:

- cross Main Street (at nearest cross walk)
- head west and cross at Leland Street
- head south on Leland Street
- turn east on Sussex Street
- follow Sussex Street until Broadway Street
- turn north on Broadway Street
- finish at Williams Coffee Pub

See “Appendices D and E” for copies of the maps.

Summary of Findings

The larger Ainslie Wood Westdale Community is a highly walkable neighbourhood, with tree-lined streets, lovely homes, a community core that includes valued institutions (libraries, churches, and schools), stores/amenities offerings both needs and wants (pharmacies, groceries, gift shops, restaurants, and a movie theatre), and a varied park system that includes both natural and manicured environments. The AWW community has a definitive sense of place that attracts its residents and workers to get out and walk. This study found that whilst being a walkable community with respect to community design (proximity, scale and compatibility of uses), still more can be done to enhance walkability in AWW by improving safety, aesthetics, and connectivity.

“Appendices F, G and H” details the findings by venue. The following summarizes the findings of both data gathering tools (the booth method and walkabout) by major themes.

i) Strengths

Compatibility and Proximity

The booth method of consultation found that the land use mix and scale of the community defined the neighbourhoods’ walkability. As most of the important places that were identified are located in Westdale South, this community was viewed as much more walkable than Ainslie Wood East. Although it is important to note that Westdale South is a walkable destination of its own for the residents of Ainslie Wood East.

Important places in the Ainslie Wood Westdale neighbourhoods to walk to are:

- G.R. Allan and more generally, all local schools (Dalewood Middle School, Westdale Secondary School, Hamilton Hebrew Academy, Kehila Jewish Day School, Temple Playhouse)
- All banks – TD Canada Trust, Scotiabank, CIBC, McMaster Credit Union
- Coffee shops and restaurants in Westdale Village
- Shopper’s Drug Mart
- Westdale Library
- Bookstores – Bryan Prince Bookseller and The Westdale Bookworm
- Grocery stores – notably The Barn Fruit Markets, Westdale Food Mart, and Hamilton Kosher Meat Market
- McMaster University
- Churchill Park is a very important destination

The findings are consistent with the literature on walkability. Not surprisingly, the built environment and public destinations are key drivers to walking. As such, the area in the village core, extending from east of the BIA to McMaster University along

King Street West and Main Street West, are critical walking destinations and magnets for pedestrian activity.

There are a few noted hubs or groups of destinations particularly appreciated by segments of residents. For example, schools, Westdale library, Churchill Park, the splash pad, Dalewood Recreation Centre, Coronation arena and pool are all located in close proximity to each other and well used destinations for families and children. Similarly, the restaurants, banks, coffee bars, and retail stores are located in close proximity and are favoured destinations for adults. The geography, with natural boundaries such as the escarpment, Cootes Paradise and highway 403, have limited sprawl. As a result, AWW and its' residential areas are contained and small enough to encourage people to walk to the important places in the neighbourhood.

Compatibility and Scale

Both data gathering tools revealed that the scale of the community with its built form, along with the compatible mix of land uses contribute to the walkability of the community.

At the community consultation booths, many expressed that the neighbourhoods were generally very pleasant for walking. The rail trail was considered to be a great benefit to the community. Neighbourhood schools with a large student walking population were noted positives. Abundant mature trees, planters and parkettes add to the enjoyment of walking in the neighbourhoods. Bike racks, water fountains and benches facilitate walking and active transportation. Curb ramps, which have been installed in many places, are valued by pedestrians. Shops and street patios (Second Cup) were identified as positive attributes, as were well-kept greenery, housing facades and residential front-gardens.

The walkabout findings paralleled the community booth consultation main themes. The assets of these neighbourhoods include the area's aesthetic qualities, the nice shops and facades along King Street, the mature trees and flower beds, corners parkettes and benches. Westdale Village has a pleasing human scale and there is appealing landscaping in front of some of the businesses and shops.

Valued pedestrian amenities identified included bike racks, benches, patios, water fountains, shade trees and telephones.

ii) Weaknesses

Aesthetics

There are a few noted issues affecting the walking experience in the neighbourhoods studied which may be generally described as aesthetics and quality of life concerns. There is inconsistent streetscape (i.e. intersection of Sterling and King West), unsightly asphalt in front of shops by the TCBY and Judy Marsales Real Estate and heaved interlocking sidewalks (along King Street West in the Village

Core) as well as unsightly overhead wires and utility boxes. People expressed concern over some dead and dying trees. While there are some mature shade trees, there aren't enough. The area has too few benches and areas to sit and rest, particularly near shade. People also felt the sidewalks were too narrow, particularly on side streets.

There is a lack of garbage, recycling and composting receptacles and there were many complaints of litter in main areas (e.g. corner of King Street West and Marian Street). Garbage cans are not being picked up by residents right away and therefore serve as obstacles to walking on sidewalks. People found the commercial garbage by Newton and South Oval and other parts of the core unsightly. People also complained of dog feces on sidewalks.

In addition to removing unsightly objects, there is a lack of public/outdoor art and people expressed the need for more planters with appropriate plantings that change with season. The area would benefit from more fixed water fountains and a new dog water fountain.

Safety

Another common issue was safety. There are some physical features that make walking difficult along sidewalks: heaved cobblestones along King Street West and uneven sidewalks by the Global Village. People expressed concerns with children riding their bikes on the sidewalks, as well as rollerbladers using sidewalks – sharing sidewalks with non-pedestrians was considered risky for those walking on sidewalks. Barriers on sidewalks included dumpsters, residential recycling bins or garbage cans, sandwich board signs, overgrown or overhanging bushes and branches. Seasonally related barriers were also identified: namely, snow and weeds. People suggested that snow clearing in winter and weed clearing in summer (on rail trail) were ways to improve walkability.

In Ainslie Wood, there were complaints of too few crosswalk lanes at many intersections (i.e. Sussex and Broadway, Cootes and Main). Some intersections in the neighbourhoods are difficult for pedestrians to cross safely, especially near the McMaster entrance at Main Street -- there simply isn't enough time to cross with the light. Another area of concern is near Westdale High School during the school drop off and pick up times. To improve safety, people suggested: adding four-way stops on some streets (i.e. Whitney at Merricourt, Emerson and Sussex) and improving lighting.

Vehicular traffic is problematic on some streets. There is high volume combined with high speeds that create safety issues for pedestrians. Traffic calming measures are insufficient to control these issues. Cootes Drive moves too fast, and traffic alongside schools is problematic for pedestrians. The speed limit on Cootes Drive has been reduced to 50km/h around the University. Signage is absent at some alleyways, so cars do not always yield or stop. Main Street is not pedestrian

friendly; the streetscape is not to human scale because it is too wide. Drivers do not slow down. King Street through the Village core was also identified as a heavy traffic area. Parallel parking on King Street was suggested as a way to help the traffic situation in Westdale Village.

Connectivity

From an active transportation perspective, there are too few bike lanes making for poor connectivity. Connectivity is poor between bike lanes, bus routes and pedestrian trails (signage linking the bus routes and bike lanes to the trails was suggested). Many people complained about a lack of bike lanes on Main Street and that bike lanes are not clearly distinguished from vehicle traffic flow. Also, bike lanes are not connected so key destinations have disjointed routes. For example, bike lanes end at King/Macklin but reappear again at Sterling. In the disjointed area along King Street West, vehicles are not reminded that the road is shared with cyclists.

There are missing sidewalks on some residential streets (i.e. Devon) and around Churchill Park, which is a key destination for the community. Visibility is impaired by street parking along both sides of residential streets. In Ainslie Wood, there were complaints of too few crosswalk lines at many intersections (i.e. Sussex and Broadway, Cootes and Main).

People were also concerned that a future “important place”, the new McMaster Innovation Park may be disconnected from neighbouring communities. At present, there isn’t a walking/biking path to connect McMaster Innovation Park to the South West (Durand) to Westdale without having to use bridges over the 403.

The promenade in the heart of Westdale Village has evolved from a round-about to staggered sidewalks and angled parking area, and this area was identified as particularly problematic. People found the area “confusing” and difficult to navigate. The promenade has many varied surfaces and visibility is impaired by street parking along both sides of residential streets. The design is not safe for cars, bicycles, and pedestrians alike. Since King Street West has four lanes with on street parking and then turns into four lanes with no parking, the road could be modified to include on street parking and sidewalks adjacent to the road if the angled parking became parallel parking. This would allow pedestrians to continue straight through the (now difficult) area or make the jog to visit one of the shops that are setback because of the original round-about design.

iii) Process

The committee debriefed on the consultation process and assessed its strengths and weaknesses. The following chart summarizes the discussion.

What Worked

- Having a diverse committee with a mix of residents with varied interests and backgrounds (e.g., AWWCA representation, Westdale BIA, City expertise including Planning and Public Health Services, Parent Council representation and McMaster student involvement)
- Sponsorship by AWWCA and support of Brian McHattie, Ward 1 Councillor
- Two step consultation with booths and walkabouts
- Sharing information on walkability to committee members at the outset and to the community participants of the walkabouts
- Incentives for participants
- The walkability tool was well researched and received
- Group summary at the end of the walkabout worked well in the Westdale walk where there was group consensus (more difficult in Ainslie Wood due to fewer participants and less familiarity with the area)
- It's good to give people the option of participating in a group or individually (during the debrief)
- Festival event worked well. Lots of people attended the event and booth. The maps helped to engage participants
- The banner looked very professional and people really noticed the booth
- GR Allan Parent night worked well, kids were very interested
- Committee members were knowledgeable and acted as facilitators on the walkabouts (for smaller breakout groups)
- Providing materials for the walkabouts is essential (e.g., clipboards, multi-coloured pens)
- Essential to have large maps at the booths and smaller maps at the walkabout
- Having city staff to support the project

What Didn't Work

- Would have preferred a larger turnout for the walkabouts. To improve future turnout, consider holding the walkabout on a Saturday not a Sunday
- The walkabout occurred on a Sunday afternoon – not a peak traffic time. Select a time with peak traffic conditions.
- Take a targeted approach – McMaster students to do McMaster area, parents/students to do schools, etc
- Some map information was difficult to decipher and had lots of repetition
- Maps used on walkabout were difficult to find space to write comments on
- Didn't get much interest at the AWWCA AGM, so would not recommend this venue (people are already busy with the meeting)
- Had two McMaster students on the committee but few McMaster students participating in the walkabouts.

Recommendations

The following chart summarizes the recommendations to improve walkability in AWW.

	Recommendations	Sources	AWWCA	BIA	City	School Boards
1.0	Improve connectivity – walking paths, bike lanes, transit.	Community booths Walkability Audit				
1.1	Path through McMaster Innovation Park to connect with Durand and Westdale without having to use bridges.	Community booths			√	
1.2	Bike lanes separated from vehicle traffic.	Community booths			√	
1.3	Bike lanes on Main Street W., from Macklin to Cootes Drive	Walkabout			√	
1.4	Bike lanes connected on King Street W., from King and Macklin to King and Sterling.	Walkabout			√	
1.5	Bike lanes on King Street all the way to Jackson Square.	Community booths			√	
1.6	Paint bike lane in front of GR Allan (between Bond N and Cline N).	Community booths				
1.7	Pave/maintain the dirt path at the side of GR Allan (north west corner of Bond Street N., and King Street W.,)	Community booths			√	√
1.8	Comprehensive, connected sidewalks in Westdale village core between Paisley and Marion.	Walkabout		√	√	
2.0	Improve real & perceived pedestrian safety	Community booths Walkability Audit				
2.1	4-way stop at: Whitney at Mericourt and Emerson at Sussex	Community booths Walkabout			√	
2.2	Improved street lighting on Macklin at Longwood.	Community booths			√	
2.3	More lighting on Bowman Street and railway crossing.	Community booths			√	
2.4	Lighting installed on stairs from Paradise N., down to Coronation Area.	Community booths			√	
2.5	Snow clearing on all sidewalks in winter – large priority.	Community booths Walkabout			√	
2.6	Removal of barriers to pedestrians on sidewalks (e.g. dumpsters, signs, overgrown greenery).	Walkabout			√	
2.7	Continue to repair broken sidewalks – see recommendation 4.14 regarding ongoing campaign.	Walkabout			√	
2.8	Repair pot hole near cross walk (North Oval and Marion N.), see recommendation 4.14 regarding ongoing campaign.	Walkabout			√	
2.9	Add/widen curb cuts to improve sidewalk access. Widen curb cut at Newton & South Oval (south-east), smooth-out curb cut at Newton & South Oval (north-east). Add curb cut in front of bike racks by GR Allan. See recommendation 4.14 regarding ongoing campaign.	Walkabout			√	
2.10	Hedge, tree trimming for driver/pedestrian visibility – Emerson at Sussex. Also at 85 Barclay. See recommendation 4.14 regarding ongoing campaign.	Walkabout			√	

	Recommendations	Sources	AWWCA	BIA	City	School Boards
2.11	All streets have at least one sidewalk - add sidewalks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - North east corner King Street W., and Paisley - East side of Marion N., on west side of Churchill Park) - Devon Place between Longwood and Bond 	Community booths			√	
2.12	Continue to review dead and dying trees (using a public process).	Walkabout			√	
2.13	Add cross walk lines and signage for all crosswalks at Main and Cootes.	Walkabout and community booths			√	
2.14	Increase pedestrian crosswalk time at Main and Cootes.	Walkabout and community booths			√	
3.0	Invest in the public spaces in AWW, which are known pedestrian magnets.	Community booths Walkabout			√	
3.1	Introduce street art – recommend that Westdale be a pilot project site for public art.	Walkabout		√	√	
3.2	Introduce street furniture in Westdale Core (e.g. along King Street W.)	Walkabout		√	√	
3.3	More planters and more attractive planter vessels and plant materials – Village Core (e.g. along King Street W.)	Walkabout		√	√	
3.4	More trees in the village Core.	Walkabout		√	√	
3.5	Add outdoor chess table in front of Second Cup.	Walkabout				
3.6	Introduce an outdoor fountain (by Second Cup, Scotia Bank or GR Allan). Add more fixed water fountains in the village Core.	Walkabout		√	√	
3.7	More benches in key public areas, particularly near shade (e.g. along King Street W.). Replace bench in front of GR Allan and add more benches by GR Allan.	Walkabout		√	√	
3.8	A new dog water fountain in the village core and park.	Walkabout			√	
3.9	Garbage, recycling and composting cans are needed to address litter problems on King Street and Main and throughout neighbourhoods.	Walkabout		√	√	
3.10	Cover the unsightly traffic box on King Street W./ Marion (in front of Second Cup).	Walkabout		√	√	
3.11	Improved by-law enforcement re: garbage.	Walkabout			√	
3.12	Develop a fundraising body (AWWCA) and support upcoming projects (City) which seeks to improve the quality and enjoyment of AWW public spaces (e.g. naturalization or landscaping projects near schools and Westdale Village, reviving recreational grounds such as tennis courts, in Westdale village, improvements to Churchill Park).	Walkabout	√		√	
3.13	Invest in AWW recreation centres – maintain and enhance the assets in the community which serve as “important places” to encourage walking and social, healthy activities.	Walkabout			√	
4.0	Develop, promote and maintain neighbourhood beautification program	Community booths Walkabout				
4.1	Contests/garden awards.	Walkabout	√ promote	√ develop		

	Recommendations	Sources	AWWCA	BIA	City	School Boards
4.2	Continue with tree planting initiatives.	Walkabout			√	
4.3	Continue with community clean up days.	Walkabout	√	√		
4.4	Carve (artistically!) the 25 foot tree stump in front of Judy Marsales Real Estate.	Walkabout		√		
4.5	Request that the Keep Hamilton Clean Committee investigate ways to improve the garage situation in AWW and across the City, e.g., consider piloting program in which a City staff person is responsible for garbage cleanup.	Walkabout			√	
4.6	Introduce more parkettes (like the Paisley Parkette). Suggested sites: north side of Paisley and King Street W., in front of Second Cup; by Weil's Bakery; TD Canada Trust; Scotia Bank; Tim Horton's; Sterling & King Street W., in front of GR Allan.	Walkabout		√		
4.7	Provide seed money for beautification campaigns in AWW.	Walkabout			√	
4.8	Continue with anti-graffiti projects.	Walkabout	√		√	
4.9	Adopt-a-street program – explore corporate and private sponsorships for beautification projects.	Walkabout		√	√	
4.10	Weed clearing in summer on pedestrian surfaces (e.g., sidewalks, rail trail, by alleys, etc.). Remove weeds under the trees and between the interlocking stones all along King Street W., in BIA area.	Community booths Walkabout			√	
4.11	Announce the AWW Neighbourhoods using signs, art, flowers. Suggested sites: on traffic calming island by GR Allan ("Village"); between Macklin and Longwood on King Street W., (by the Barn market); on the south side along Main West (Wislon Street, Cootes Drive)	Community booths			√	
4.12	Remove tar and landscape the boulevard between Bond Street N., and Cline N., in front of GR Allan.	Community booths			√	
4.13	Educate members and residents on things they can do to maintain and enhance walkability (e.g., trim branches and greenery, quickly remove recycling bins and garbage cans).	Walkabout	√ email + website		√	
4.14	Have a semi-annual campaign to ask residents and community members to identify specific areas of walkability concern by email. Include: barriers on sidewalks; broken sidewalks; curb-cuts; tree and greenery trimming which obstruct driver/pedestrian visibility.	Walkabout	√ email			
5.0	Invest in traffic calming initiative	Community booths Walkabout				
5.1	Traffic assessment (speed, number of cars) in Westdale core along King Street between North Oval and Sterling and in Ainslie Wood along Main Street between Dalewood and Cootes.	Walkabout			√	
5.2	Traffic calming in Westdale village core and along Main Street in front of McMaster.	Walkabout			√	
5.3	Parallel parking on King Street, might help traffic situation in Westdale Village.	Community booths Walkabout			√	
5.4	Pilot bump-outs along Newton (bump-outs with plantings).	Walkabout			√	

	Recommendations	Sources	AWWCA	BIA	City	School Boards
6	Provide ongoing support of neighbourhood walkability assessments and audits	Committee debrief				
6.1	Dedicated City staff to assist community groups with walkability assessment.	Committee debrief			√	
6.2	Maps to community groups doing a walkability assessment.	Committee debrief			√	
6.3	Councillor support.	Committee debrief			√	
6.4	Continue to sponsor walkability projects – have subcommittees or community groups report back to neighbourhood associations and the City.	Committee debrief	√		√	
6.5	Promote walkability on websites – provide links to resources.	Committee debrief	√		√	
6.6	Promote the resources developed by the committee as a neighbourhood walkability toolkit.	Committee debrief	√			
6.7	Conduct phase 2 walkability initiative in AWW.	Committee debrief	√			
6.8	For future phases, have targeted recruitment - Go into classes at Mac to recruit (community-focused classes) like nursing, social work, arts and sciences - Go into high school and recruit students to do their campus and surround.	Committee debrief	√			
6.9	For future phases, have one large group for a presentation at beginning and then split up to do the audit.	Committee debrief	√			
6.10	For future phases, have small groups (3 to 4 people) with a facilitator and cover different sections of the same neighbourhood.	Committee debrief	√			
7.0	Promote and support neighbourhood schools	Committee debrief				
7.1	Support and protect the walkability of all schools in AWW (e.g. primary to post secondary).	Community Booths				√
7.2	Formally assess and celebrate the City's most walkable neighbourhoods.	Committee debrief			√	
7.3	Continue to advocate the walkability of quality of life advantage of having JK-grade 12 schooling within the neighbourhood.	Committee debrief	√			

Next Steps

The committee suggests the next steps include:

- Sharing the findings and recommendations with the Ward 1 Councillor
- Sharing the findings and recommendations with the AWWCA (sponsors)
- Sharing the findings and recommendations with the Westdale BIA
- Sharing the findings and recommendations with G.R. Allan school council
- Collaborating with key stakeholders to identify priorities from the recommendations
- Develop a toolkit on walkability based on the Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability process

The committee has fulfilled its mandate and hopes the work will result in improved walkability in AWW and throughout Hamilton.

Appendix A

Walkability Principles

A walkable community can be described by the PROXIMITY of different land uses, the COMPATIBILITY of those land uses, the SCALE or intensity of land use, CONNECTIVITY of the pedestrian environment, and the SAFETY and/or attractiveness of the public realm. According to the Smart Growth Network, walkable community locates goods (such as housing, offices, and retail) and services (such as transportation, schools, and libraries), that a community resident or employee needs on a regular basis, within an easy and safe walk. Walkable communities make pedestrian activity possible. To foster walkability, communities must mix land uses and build compactly, and ensure safe and inviting pedestrian corridors (“Smart Growth”, n.d)

PROXIMITY – This can be achieved through a mix of land uses, or through density. In order to have a sustainable commercial area or for other community uses, a certain population threshold is required. This threshold is a sliding scale depending on type and scale of use. A low threshold is required for a convenience store or a library outlet. A high threshold is required for big box retail or recreation centres.

COMPATIBILITY – The land use mix must also be compatible and complementary. Certain types of uses complement a pedestrian environment while others do not.

SCALE –This term refers to how people interact with their environment. While our individual sense of scale will differ based on a number of factors such as cultural, personal preferences, and experience, generally we prefer buildings and spaces that fit well with the average person’s body. Windows at an appropriate height and streets, sidewalks and buildings that are in scale to each other are examples. Human scale should be incorporated into the design of the street.

CONNECTIVITY – This can be measured by the difference between the ‘As the Crow Flies’ distance from one point to another and the walking distance. The less distance required to travel the more likely the mode of choice will be walking. Connectivity extends to sidewalks and bicycle paths.

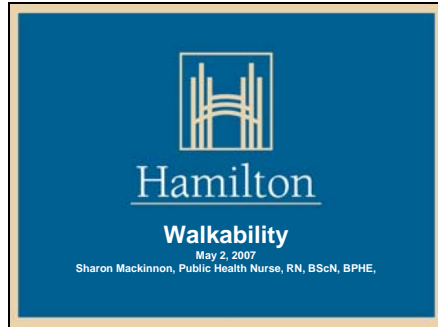
SAFETY/AESTHETICS – This is best expressed as ‘perceived safety’, as statistics from Statistics Canada and from local police departments all show that crime and violent crime rate have been declining for quite some time, while our impression of safety is that our streets are becoming less and less safe.

Perceived safety can be also improved through adequate lighting, landscape design, and urban design. The more people who can see the street, the safer it feels. Locating buildings closer to the sidewalk with patios and porches inviting people to sit and watch the street, and reducing large shrubberies that can conceal criminals are inviting to pedestrians.

Appendix B

Walkability Presentation


Slide 1



Slide 2

Why Walking?

- Contributes to health
- Reduce risk of obesity
- Reduce risk of diabetes
- Reduce risk of stroke
- Reduce risk of some cancers
- Reduce falls/injuries in elderly




Slide 3

Burden of Obesity and Inactivity

- In 1997, ~ \$40.7 million in direct health care costs in Hamilton were attributable to obesity
- Estimates included costs associated with obesity related diseases – hypertension, type 2 diabetes, stroke, certain types of cancers

(Wong, 2005)




Slide 4

Obesity and Overweight in Adult Hamiltonians

- 18.3% are obese
- 35.3% are overweight
- 44% are inactive
- 78% not active enough to achieve optimal health benefits


(CCHS, Cycle 2.1 2003)



Slide 5

Childhood Obesity in Canada


- Between 1981 and 1996 childhood obesity tripled (Tremblay & Willms, 2000)
- Over 50% of children/youth 5-17 years are not active enough for optimal health benefits (CFLRI, 2000)



Slide 6

Walking to School

- 68% of Canadian children live within walking distance of school (within 30 minutes) but only 36% walk (Go for Green, Environics, 1998)




Slide 7

What is a Walkable Environment?

- Neighbourhoods that encourage walking by having:
 - Wide sidewalks
 - Street furniture
 - Short building setbacks
 - Well-marked/frequent crosswalks
 - Traffic calming
 - High residential and commercial densities
 - Mixed land use
 - Parks, squares, gathering places

(Frank et al, 2003)




Slide 8

The Built Environment

- Refers to physical form and character of community
- Consists of transportation systems, land use patterns and urban design characteristics

(Frank et al, 2003)



Slide 9


The Built Environment affects our health



Slide 10

What influences Pedestrian activity?

- Density – how many people in an area
- Diversity – retail, grocery, residential, businesses within walking distance increases walking
- Design – street that are more connected and gridlike promote PA



Density – the more people the more likely there will be pedestrian activity
 Diversity – increases the likelihood of walking for errands, shopping and dining
 Design – curvilinear, mazelike streets do promote PA; streetscape (i.e. storefronts, sidewalks, and streets)

Slide 11

- Safety
- Aesthetics
- Parks and green space
- Trails
- Sidewalks




Slide 12

Relationship between the Built Environment and Walking

- 2002 study of adults 65 + years in King County, Washington
- Statistically significant association found between neighbourhood walkability and self-reported walking for physical activity in adults 65+

(Berke et al. 2007)




Slide 13

Urban Form, Walking and Youth

- Data from 3161 youth collected by SMARTRAQ in Atlanta, Georgia
- Access to recreation or open space was most important urban form variable r/t walking for all age groups
- 12-15 year olds may be particularly influenced by urban form (all urban form variables were related to walking)

(Frank et al, 2007)



SMARTRAA – Strategies for Metropolitan Atlanta’s Regional Transportation and Air Quality 5-20 years of age; adult filled out forms for those 14 years and younger
 Urban form variables – residential density, land use mix, intersection density, commercial space, recreation space

Slide 14

Built Environment and Physical Activity among Children

- 422 children 6-11 years in Netherlands – SPACE study 04/05
- Pa significantly associated with the amount of green space, with residential density, activity-friendliness of the neighbourhood, frequency of terraced houses, sports fields, water, dog waste, heavy traffic, safe walking/cycling conditions
- PA best predicted by frequency of parallel parking spaces in the neighbourhood and activity-friendliness of the neighbourhood

(de Vries et al., 2007)




SPACE – Spatial Planning and Children’s Exercise study
 422 children 6-11 years in Netherlands – SPACE study in 2004/05

Slide 15

Overweight in Children and Environmental Factors


- 7334 children/youth 3-18 years in Indiana
- Looked at neighbourhood vegetation and proximity to food retail
- Increased neighbourhood vegetation was associated with decreased risk for overweight in children living in higher population density areas
- Increased distance b/t child's home and nearest brand name supermarket associated with increased risk for overweight but only for children living in lower population density areas
(Liu et al., 2006)



Slide 16

Obesity Results – Driving and Walking


- Every additional 30 minutes spent driving per day translates into a 3 percent increase in the likelihood of obesity
 - Time spent driving increases as walkability decreases
- Every additional Kilometer (.6 miles) walked translates into 4.8 percent reduction in the likelihood of being obese
 - Distances walked increases with walkability
(Frank, 2004)



Slide 17

Obesity results – Mixed Use


- A white male 5' 10" on average weighs 190 lbs in the least mixed use and 180 lbs in the most mixed use environments of Atlanta
 - A 10 pound difference
(Frank, 2004)



Slide 18

Current evidence says

- **Changing Land Use**
 - Bringing Residential, Commercial, Office, Institutional, and Recreational Uses Closer Together
 - Increasing the ability to travel directly between Residential, Commercial, Office, Institutional, and Recreational Uses
 - Requiring open space within existing and newly developing communities
- **Transportation Investment Priorities**
 - Increased funding for pedestrian, bike, and transit facilities
 - Providing direct linkages between walk, bike (local) and transit (regional)
 - Focusing transportation investments in existing centers
(Frank et al. 2006)



Appendix C

Walkability Tool

(Last Revised: May 30, 2008)

Adapted from Kansas City Walkability Plan and Partnership for Walkable America, Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Centre, U.S. Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency.

<http://www.kcmo.org/planning/pdf/walkability.pdf>
<http://www.walkableamerica.org/checklist-walkability.pdf>

Neighborhood Walking Tool:

The Neighborhood Walking Tool has been developed to help people who live and work in a neighbourhood, determine for themselves what they need and want in terms of walking in their neighbourhood. The tool will probably take 1-2 hours to complete and is designed to be completed while out walking in the neighbourhood. It is divided into three sections:

- Section 1: Where you are Walking - informs where you are walking to and from today, and where you might want to walk in the future.
- Section 2: Walking Condition in Your Neighbourhood - rates walking conditions in your neighbourhood.
- Section 3: Changes You Would Like to See - outlines what improvements would make your neighbourhood more walkable.

How to use this tool:

- Follow the instructions and use the map to highlight destinations, problem areas and areas that work.
- Fill out the additional questions in sections two and three.
- Submit the completed tool to the Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability committee.

SECTION 1: WHERE YOU ARE WALKING

Where do you want to go?

What are the places in your neighbourhood that you get to by walking? Use the map and coloured pens to do the following:

Major Destinations

Major destinations (major places you go) are identified on the map in **BLACK** (i.e. shopping locations, workplaces, schools, parks, places of worship, recreation, library, medical appointments, movie theatre, restaurants etc.).

Add Important Places You Go

Place an **"IP"** in **BLACK** for the 2 "important places" you go most often, or have a need to go.

How do walking conditions in your area rate?

Identify the strengths in **PURPLE** and weaknesses in **RED** of your neighbourhood for walking.

Street Crossings

Safe street crossing is an important part of walkability. It might be fairly easy to cross a local two lane street, but it is more difficult to cross a street with 3-4 lanes and lots of traffic. How safe are street crossings in your neighbourhood?

Draw Street Crossings in Red

- **Circle** the most important places to cross in **red**.
- Draw a **red "S"** for each traffic signal.
- Draw in crosswalks in **red**.

Directness

The distance the walker must go affects whether they choose to walk. If they have to go a long way to get around barriers, they might decide to drive instead. How direct are walking paths in your neighborhood?

Draw Barriers in RED

- Draw a jagged **RED** line to show barriers to walking.
- Write a short explanation on the map. (These barriers might be physical – such as a freeway, deep ditch, snow bank, or fence – or they might be barriers like a wide, busy street which is unsafe to cross.)

Physical interest and Amenity

Walkers like places that are pleasant, visually interesting and well maintained. Do you enjoy walking in your neighborhood?

Draw the Best Places in PURPLE and Worst Places in RED

- Highlight the best places to walk with a solid **PURPLE circle** (1purple = flowers/beautification; 2 purple=bike racks; 3 purple=gabage/recycling cans)

- Highlight the worst places to walk with a dashed **RED circle** (1 red=sidewalk uneven, crack, completeness; 2 red=foliage overgrowth onto sidewalk; 3 red=curbs not stroller/wheelchair friendly)
- Write a short explanation for your choices. Explain why each of these places are either good or bad.

Security

If people feel unsafe walking in an area, they will typically choose not to walk there. In general, how safe do you feel walking in your neighbourhood?

Draw Security Issues in RED

- Circle and label any areas where you think you are unsafe walking.
- Write the two or three reasons you feel an area is unsafe on the edge of the map.

SECTION 2: WALKING CONDITIONS IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Getting Started

Read over this checklist before you go and as you walk, note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give an overall rating to each question and then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk.

Rating Scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Excellent	Very Good	Good	Some Problems	Many Problems	Awful

Location of Your Walk

From: _____ To: _____

1. Did you have room to walk?

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| There were sidewalks, paths, or shoulders | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sidewalk started and stopped (completeness) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sidewalks were broken or cracked | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Too much traffic | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Something else? _____ | | |
| Locations of Problems _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

1. Was it easy to cross streets?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| There were crosswalks and walk/don't walk signals | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Road was too wide | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

Timing on walk signal was long enough Yes No
 Parked cars blocked our view of traffic Yes No
 Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic Yes No
 There were curb ramps in good repair Yes No
 Something else? _____
 Locations of Problems _____

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Did drivers behave well?

Looked before backing out Yes No
 Yielded to people crossing the street Yes No
 Turned into crosswalk when people were crossing Yes No
 Drove Slowly Yes No
 Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through red lights Yes No
 Something else? _____
 Locations of Problems _____

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Did cyclists/skateboarders/scooters behave well?

Yield to pedestrians? Yes No

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Was it easy to follow safety rules? Could you...

Cross at crosswalks where you could see and be seen by drivers? Yes No
 Easily see both directions before crossing streets? Yes No
 Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks? Yes No
 Cross with the light? Yes No
 Something else? _____
 Locations of Problems _____

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Was your walk pleasant?

Some unpleasant things Yes No

Needed more grass, flowers, trees, or interesting sights Yes No

Scary dogs Yes No

There was good lighting Yes No

Clean, little litter Yes No

Something else? _____

Identify pleasant things _____

Identify unpleasant things _____

Locations of Problems _____

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

SECTION 3: CHANGES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE

Walking Wishes

Now that you have reviewed and summarized your work, think about the five most important changes you would like to see in your neighbourhood. Write down five specific “walking wishes” in the space provided below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

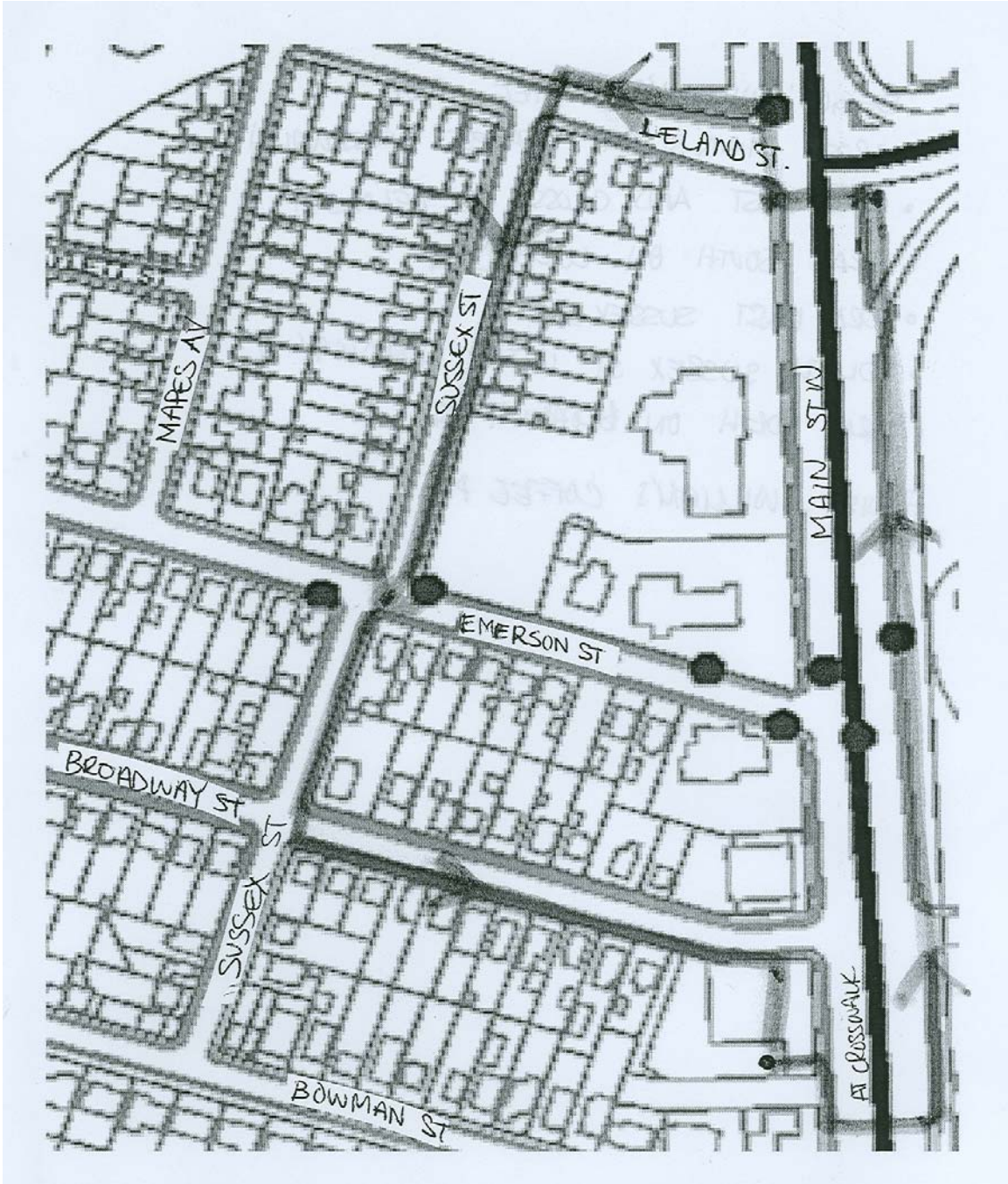
4. _____

5. _____

Thank you for your time and effort in letting us know what you think about improving walkability in the neighbourhood.

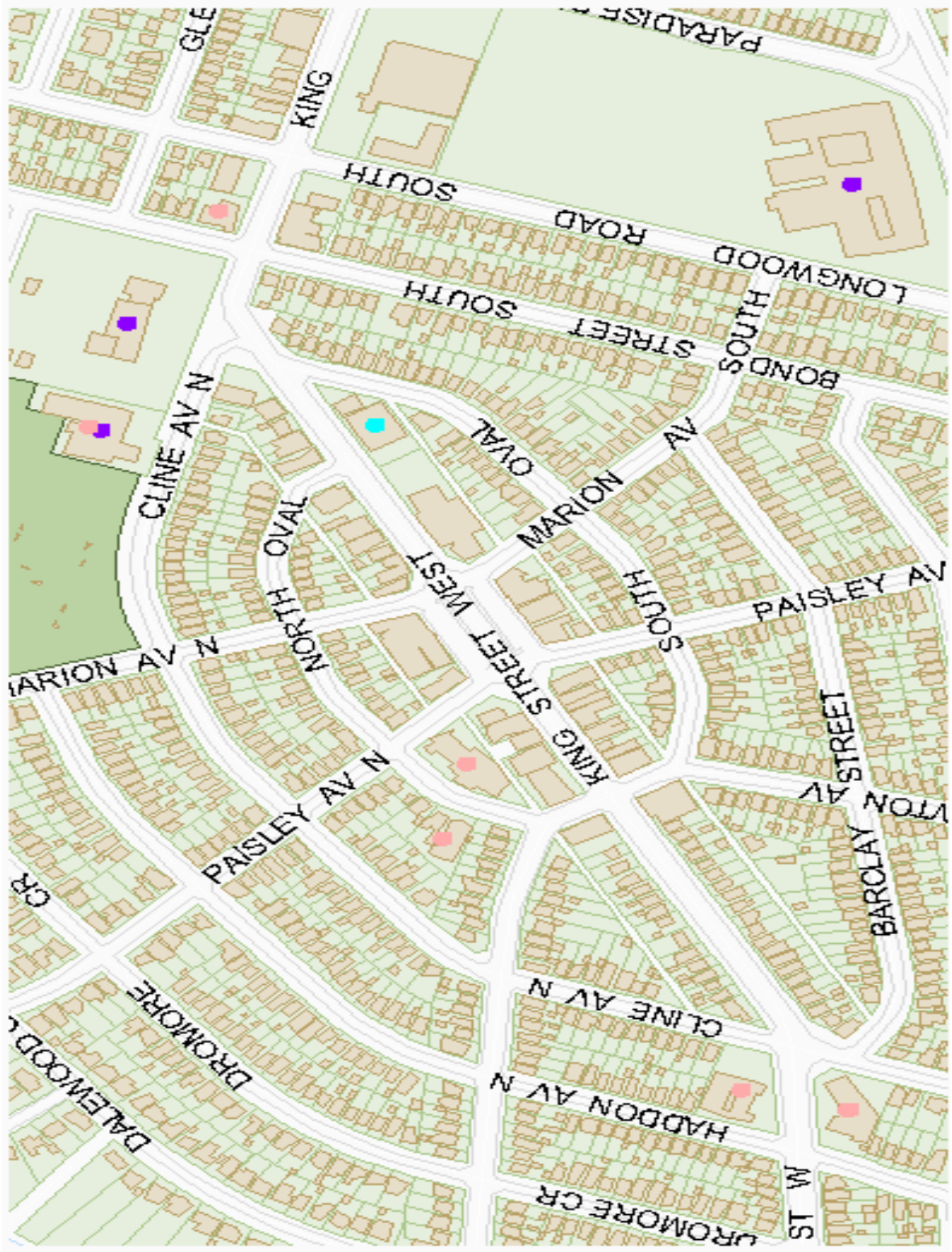
Appendix D

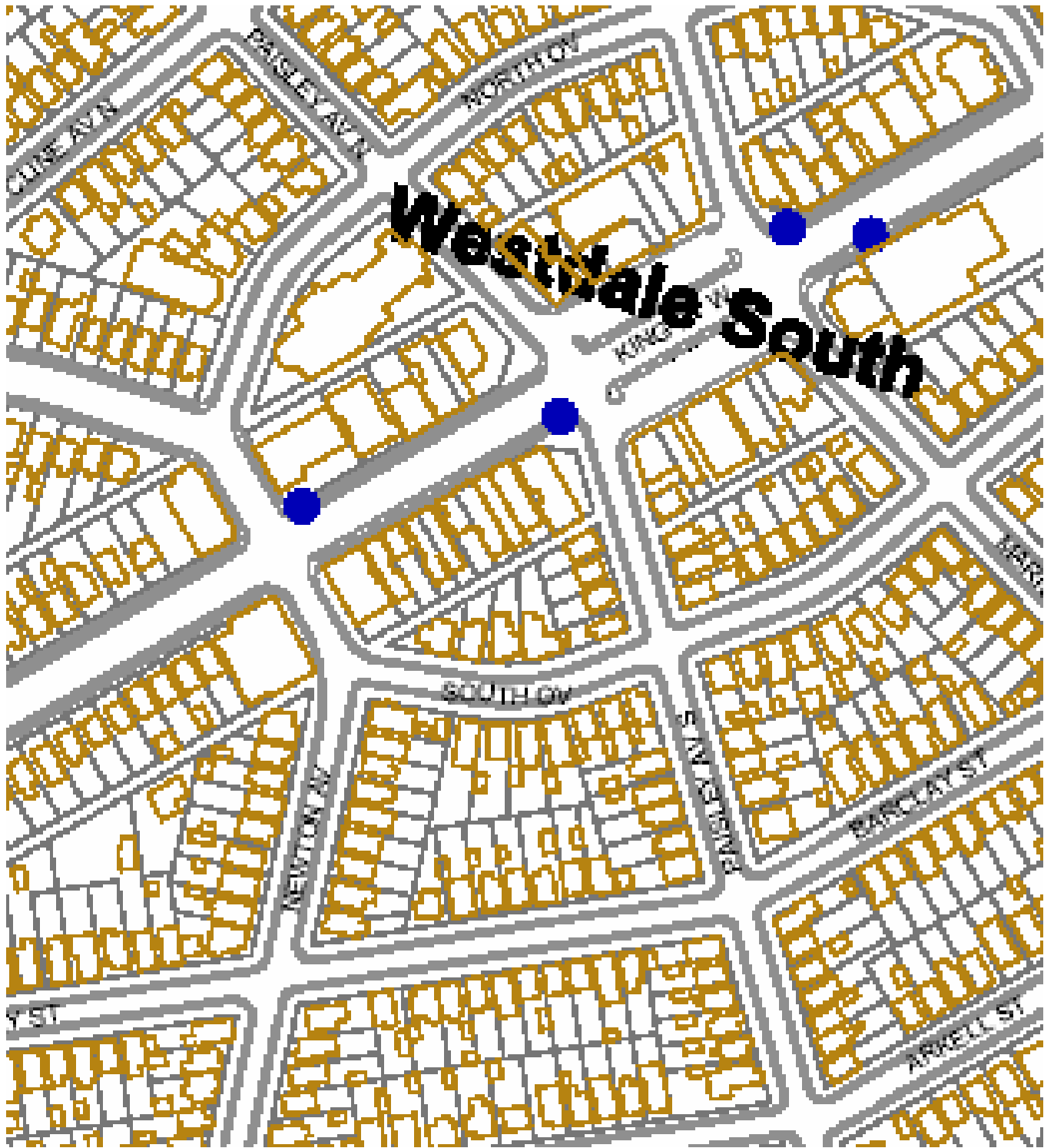
Walkabout Maps of Ainslie Wood East



Appendix E

Walkabout Maps of Westdale South





Draw BARRIERS In RED

1. Cracks in sidewalks, uneven sidewalks, poor curb-cut design
2. Poorly maintained landscaping, other obstructions
3. Unsafe intersection (light too short, no crosswalk, no stop sign)

Draw BENEFITS In PURPLE

1. Nice streetscape (benches, trees, nice garbage cans, shade)
2. Bicycle amenities (bike racks, on and off street bike lanes)
3. Aesthetics (nice views, landscaping, interesting architecture, etc.)

Appendix F

Qualitative Comments from the Community Consultation Booths

(September 8, 2007 Westitalia, AWWCA AGM, GR Allan, McMaster)

Important Places/Walking Routes:

To GR Allan to drop off and pick up children

Problems/Concerns:

Aesthetics

- Dog poop not being scoped
- Poor lighting on Bowman Street and railway intersection
- Garbage cans on garbage pick up days left on sidewalks instead of lawns

Sidewalks

- Kids riding bikes on sidewalks
- McMaster
- More pedestrian shortcuts across fields, parks, alleys – make it easy

Vehicular Traffic

- Too many cars turning left from right hand lanes on one-way streets (for eg. Cline and Haddon), need to add turning mark
- Cootes Drive traffic is too fast, should not be a major thoroughfare through conservation area
- Have to alter walking due to heavy traffic congestion near University at night class time
- On small highly dense streets, parking should only be on one side of the road
- Please remove the Beeline stops in Westdale (King and Sterling and King and Marion – Shopper's. These slow the Beeline considerably and removing this stop could permit a new stop at Wellington or Victoria where it is really needed. There is a four stop at Longwood which can serve Westdale and the highschool
- More buses please – King Street toward campus
- Speeding cars by Westdale High - put a speed trap and call by-law, no parking allowed in school zone

Active Transportation

- Main Street West at McMaster entrance, there is not enough time to cross the street at certain times of the day
- Bike paths separate from the roadway – smooth pavement
- Poor, one might say terrible. Main entrance to Mac, where are the bike lanes? Beware pedestrians, very dangerous

- There needs to be bike lanes connecting Mac with the 403 bridge at King Street. Right now you just get lost. Contra-flow all the way from King Street and Dundurn to Mac
- Bike trail is disrupted across 403 ramps
- There is increased bike and pedestrian traffic along Sanders. At night there are more bikes without lights or reflectors

Positives:

- City response to install curb ramps along Paisley Avenue North accomplished quickly
- Nice new park on corner of Stroud and Baxter
- Rail trail is great
- Ideal place to walk, diverse streetscapes and terrain, accessible
- Very walkable, community has good schools and close proximity.
- Lots of children in close proximity, encourages walking in neighbourhoods
- Pleasant to walk in

Suggestions:

- A four-way stop at Whitney and Mericourt
- A pathway from McMaster Innovation Park to connect with Durand and Westdale without having to use bridges
- Cut back weeds on rail trail
- Extend bike lane on King Street all the way to Jackson Square
- Walkway over 403 to allow pedestrian traffic from the Upper Paradise staircase towards Mac via Stroud Street
- Need more lighting on Bowman Street and railway intersection
- More buses on King Street towards campus
- Bike paths separate from the roadway with smooth pavement
- Clear sidewalks and bus stops of snow. This will encourage people to go out during winters. Safer to ride bikes
- Pedestrians should have the right of way at marked cross walks and intersections, especially outside of school (cross at King Street West by Bond for GR Allan). I come from Manitoba where this is law, why not here in Hamilton
- Stairs from Paradise North down to Coronation Arena could use a light
- Need a sidewalk on Devon Place between Longwood and Bond, used by many families to get to GR Allan from the North. Crossing Longwood at Glen is too dangerous
- Put sidewalks around Churchill Park

Appendix G

Comments from the Westdale South Walkabout

(Sept. 30, 2007, 12:30 – 3:00 p.m.)

Important Places/Walking Routes:

- All banks
- Shopper's Drug mart
- All local schools
- Library
- Bookstores
- Grocery stores

Walking Routes - Start at Global Village Market, walk west along King Street to Marion Street. Cross to the south side of King Street. Walk west along King Street to Paisley St. Walk south along Paisley to Barclay then head west along Barclay to Newton. Turn south on Newton and walk back to King Street. Walk east on King Street to Second Cup. Finish.

Problems/Concerns:

Aesthetics

- Continuous line of storefronts with one depth setback and parking behind where it is now in front (e.g. corner of Sterling and King – Westdale Optical, Cupcakes, etc.)
- TD band – high visibility corner with lots of litter that is not cleaned often enough
- There should be more parkettes
- Consider the idea of Paisley parkette to be added to the other three corners of village (i.e. Scotiabank, Second Cup, Saigon restaurant)
- There should be more foliage and plants and flowers but not in planters; should be “park like” setting as at corner where clock tower located
- Laneways and alleyways should be made more sightly
- There should be outdoor art, public art, gateways
- There should be more benches along King Street West BIA
- There should be more trees in public area
- Loose the big utility boxes on corners (King and Marion; Newton and King)
- More seating, more street parkettes, sheltered places to sit and chat with neighbours
- Incorporate underground wires through the BIA
- Ainslie Wood Westdale secondary plan recommend adding apartments above stores; too many one story buildings; add second floor apartments above the storefronts on NE corner of King /Sterling
- More landscaping in front of stores

- Better maintenance in BIA – heaved cobblestones, ugly asphalt in front of businesses like TCBY (sterling and King) and Marsales Real estate
- Green strips/blvd and road jut outs; road diets on key streets; King, Newton, Marion
- Fix up heaved cobblestones on King Street West (Between Marion and Cline)
- Some residential properties look unkept and neglected
- New trees withered/withering
- Cobblestone heaved
- Ugly alley between CIBC and Snooty Fox
- Need to cover hydro boxes
- Need planters
- Non-uniform surfaces, i.e. tar, sidewalk, cement, cobblestone
- Remove parking meters by Subway and put in one box to buy ticket
- The ‘promenade’ on both sides of King complicated by too many surfaces, deteriorated and mixed infill
- Sewer smell
- No garbage cans beyond King
- No benches beyond King
- Dead tree trunk on King
- Dead/dying trees

Sidewalks

- Pedestrians should be the only ones on the sidewalks
- Timing on walk signal was not long enough
- There should be countdown crossing lights
- Sidewalks should be made of clean consistent material and kept in good repair
- Unlevel sidewalk in front of Global Village
- Sidewalks are broken or cracked in areas
- Sidewalks on side streets too narrow
- There should be better surfacing throughout all of pedestrian “promenade”
- There needs to be crosswalks in front of library (at N. Oval) and between Tim Horton’s and TD bank
- King and Marion can be difficult to cross
- Improve pedestrian thoroughfare in village centre – better parking, more walkways
- Core – inconsistent sidewalks; sidewalk has to go straight across
- Some sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
- It is hard to walk side by side – there are overgrown shrubs in spots
- Hydro box blocking corner by Second Cup
- Sidewalk is not continuous by boulevard parking
- Crosswalks not clear/maintained
- There is a long wait for pedestrians to cross at light (King at Marion)
- Need strip of sidewalk along King by CIBC
- Parking meters block passage on sidewalks
- Icy walks (Newton and S Oval)

Vehicular Traffic

- Traffic should slow down
- There is a high volume of traffic
- There should be more signage for alleys, yield or stop signs for cars in alleys
- There should be “bump outs” on Newton to calm traffic – all traffic calming
- Newton – cars don’t always stop
- Parked cars blocked view of traffic
- Newton – need road diet – bump outs – greenery, boulevard

Active Transportation

- There should be more bike lanes – connected
- On King – rollerbladers and bikes – scary for pedestrians – no bike riding sign on sidewalk
- Newton and S. Oval and the alleys +++ awkward crossing

Positives:

- Scale of things; number of pedestrians
- Love trees through pedestrian areas, flower beds and corner parkettes “+” benches
- Planters are good – need more and more up to date
- Some shops are nice to walk past
- King and Newton – nice greenery
- Nice textured cement pad under garbage cans
- Very pretty Paisley parkette
- Bike racks and benches
- Blue signs – continuity nice (library)
- Nice landscaping at Scotia Bank – nicely maintained
- King and Paisley is terrific
- Love brickwork gutters on road – Marion Street
- Nice shops
- Patio at 2nd cup
- Nice facades along King
- Water fountains
- Lovely shops
- Clock and garden
- Shops and theatre

Suggestions:

- Rooftop gardens or public art
- Dog fountain
- Planters with mums in fall
- Need more trees
- Go to two lanes and bus pullover/second turn lane (King)

- Increase parking and add parking on both sides (King)
- Fix fountains
- Tree trunk on King – should be art
- Flower beds better served with shrubs and perennials in filled with annuals
- Consider parallel parking on King
- Signage for alleys
- More benches by Second Cup
- Recycling cans
- Composting cans

Appendix H

Comments from the Ainslie Wood East Walkabout

(September 30, 2007; 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.)

Important Places/Walking Routes:

McMaster University

Walking Route - Start at William's Coffee Pub, cross Main Street, walk west along the north side of Main to Coote's intersection. Cross back to the south side of Main Street and walk south along Leland to Sussex Street. Walk east along Sussex Street to Broadway Street then north along Broadway back to Williams's Coffee Pub. Finish.

Problems/Concerns:

Aesthetics

- Garbage should be stored in large enough containers
- Garbage should be cleared away
- More garbage cans and recycling centres should be provided - nice ones
- Better cleanup of litter and shrubbery - old dead trees to be removed
- Yards should be kept tidy (i.e. one garden (front yard) that was lovely with new owner has gone wild)
- There should be more trees for shade around church and school yard
- A few more benches (shaded)
- Interesting landscaping along Main
- A more defined street (higher buildings/closer to street)
- More trees and flowers for visual appeal
- No trees, no garbage cans on Main

Sidewalks

- all sidewalks should be cleared in winter especially in front of public buildings and large/small businesses
- Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
- Uneven walkways
- Cross walks identified at busiest intersections; bike lanes on Main Street
- Adding more time at crosswalks for safety
- Intersection at Emerson and Sussex – needs four-way stop
- Main Street is not very pedestrian friendly even with wider sidewalks and street Braille – streetscape is not human scale
- Crosswalk no use can't see for hedge (Emerson and Sussex)
- Sidewalk missing on Sussex between Broadway and Emerson
- No crosswalk identified at Main and Cootes
- Crosswalk lanes needed at Sussex and Broadway

Vehicular Traffic

- Heavy traffic on Main
- Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
- Poor crosswalk and driver visibility (hedge too far forward) at Sussex and Emerson
- Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
- Addition of stop signs at Sussex and Emerson
- Drivers do not drive slow
- Drivers speed up to make it through traffic lights or drove through red lights
- Street too wide – not to scale (Main)

Active Transportation

- There should be a bicycle lane along Main Street West
- There should be a bicycle lane on the other side of the sidewalk away from the road on Main by Mac
- Light too short at Main and Emerson
- No bike lanes on Main

Positives:

- Front gardens in place of grass
- Birds along Broadway
- A lot of trees
- Mature trees, flowers
- Shade, trees, telephones
- Good centre spot in crosswalk (Main)
- Landscaping; church fence (Sussex)

Suggestions:

- Even walkways
- More garbage/recycling cans
- Better clean up of litter
- Cleared sidewalks in winter
- More trees for shade; more flowers
- More benches (in shade)
- Cross walks identified at busiest intersections
- Bike lanes on Main
- Stop signs at Emerson and Sussex

Appendix I

References

Walkability Tools/Checklists

There are a number of walkability tools and/or checklists available on the internet to help with assessing walkability in your community.

Ainslie Wood Westdale walkabout we adapted a tool from the Kansas City Walkability Secondary Plan and Partnership for Walkable America, Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Centre, U.S. Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency. The Kansas City Neighbourhood Walking Survey can be found at: <http://www.kcmo.org/planning/pdf/walkability.pdf>

Following the walkabouts we used the 'Improving your Community's Score' from Safe Routes National Centre for Safe Routes to School, Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Centre, U.S. Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency, for meaningful solution based discussion. This tool can be found at: <http://www.walkableamerica.org/checklist-walkability.pdf>

A helpful resource guide on walkable communities called 'A Residents Guide for Creating Safe and Walkable Communities' can be found at: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/ped/ped_walkguide/

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