

The Council
on Aging
of Ottawa



Le Conseil sur
le vieillissement
d'Ottawa

Worried about Winter Walking?

Join the Snow Mole Patrol

Friday, December 4

Presented by the COA Age-Friendly Pedestrian Safety
and Walkability Sub-Committee



Today's Team

**Janet Luloff**

Chair, Pedestrian Safety
and Walkability Sub-Committee

Dianne Breton

Outgoing Chair, Pedestrian Safety
and Walkability Sub-Committee

Bonnie Schroeder

COA Staff
Director, Age-Friendly
Ottawa

Bryden Denyes

Manager, Operations
Road Maintenance, City of Ottawa
Sub-Committee Member

Alton Legault

Orléans Community Leader
Sub-Committee Member

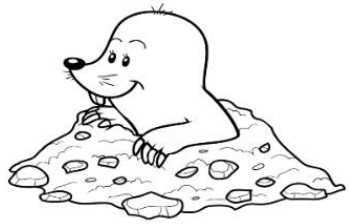
Mary Gick

Glebe Community Leader
Sub-Committee Member

Agenda



1. **Snow Mole Report 2020**
2. Winter Maintenance in the City of Ottawa and WMQS Review
3. Health & Mental Benefits of Walking & Safe Walking during COVID-19
4. COA's Safe Winter Walking Tips and the 2021 Snow Mole Campaign Launch
5. Snow Mole Community Leaders



Snow Mole Report 2020

Winter Walking in Ottawa



Dianne Breton

Age-Friendly Pedestrian Safety and Walkability Committee





I WONDER IF
I'LL SLIP?

I WONDER IF
I'LL HAVE SCHOOL?

I WONDER
IF MY CAR
WILL START?

WINTER WONDERLAND

SPEEDBUMP.COM
DIST. BY CREATORS

©2014
OVERLY
12-8

Goals

1. **Encourage** pedestrians, especially seniors, children and people with mobility problems to **audit and report** on their experience of winter walking in their own community in Ottawa.
2. **Raise** awareness and **identify** themes and concerns, as well as the effects of hazardous winter walking on the well-being of older residents.
3. **Use** the collected information to provide recommendations to the City and the community on how to make walking in winter safer and more accessible for seniors and all other vulnerable and valuable pedestrians.



SNOW MOLE 2020

Respondents



Summary:

199 audits

195 reported locations across 11 greater regions

Demographics:

64% over the age of 65

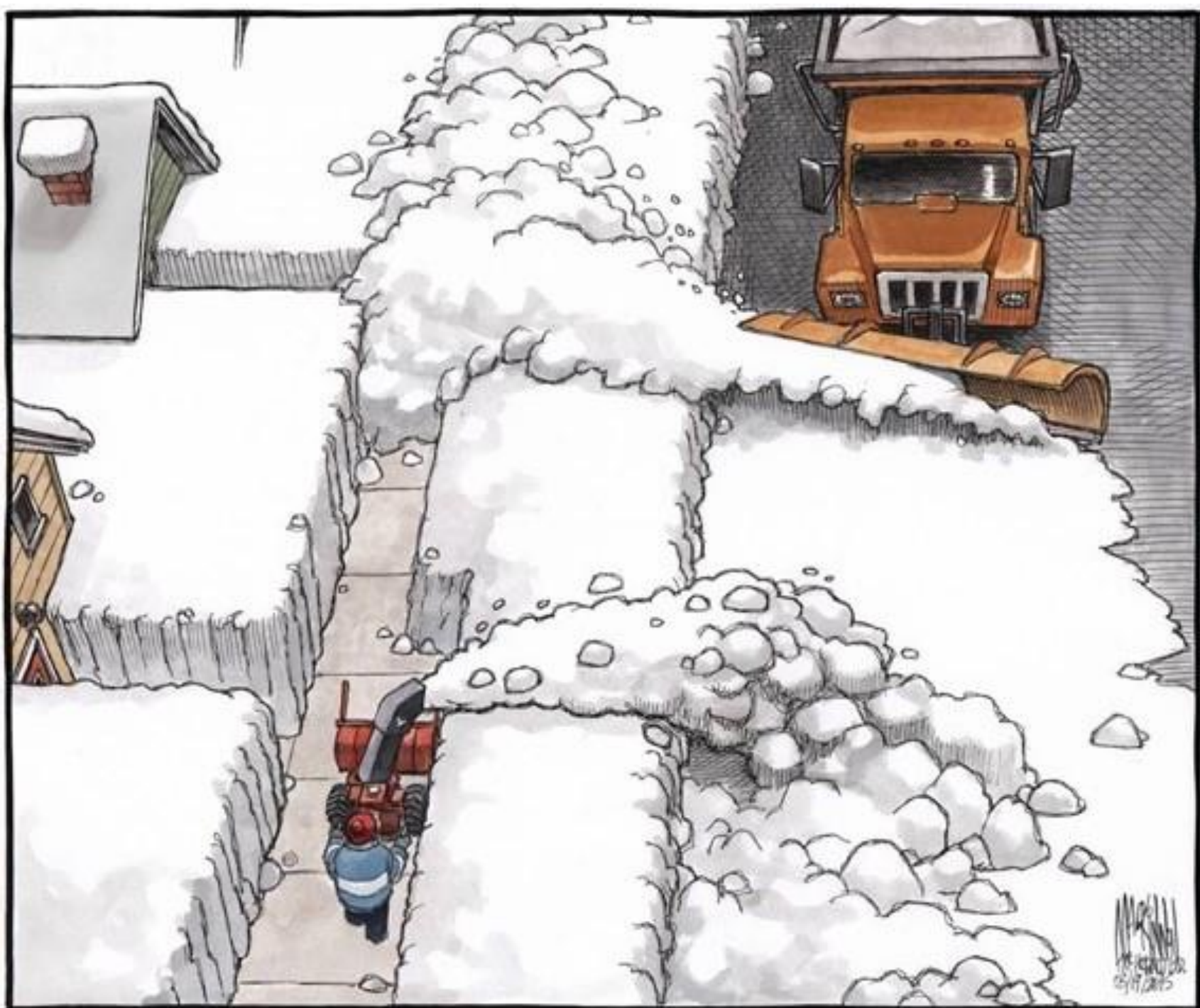
76% were female

36% used ice grips on their boots; **10%** used walking poles

9% used a mobility aid

Over 80% were able to get to their destination and home safely

A map of the Ottawa region in Ontario, Canada, showing numerous red location pins. The pins are concentrated in the central urban areas, particularly around Gatineau, Nepean, and Kanata. The map includes major roads like Highway 417 and Highway 401, and the Ottawa River. Other municipalities shown include Dunrobin, Kinburn, Goulbourn, Ficko, and Russell. The pins represent various locations, likely related to the 'Ottawa Region' mentioned in the text.



SNOW MOLES 2020



Conditions:

69% said their sidewalks were **slippery/icy**

48% said sidewalks were **not adequately plowed**

62% said sidewalks were **not well sanded or salted**

56% walked on roads because there was **no sidewalk or pathway**

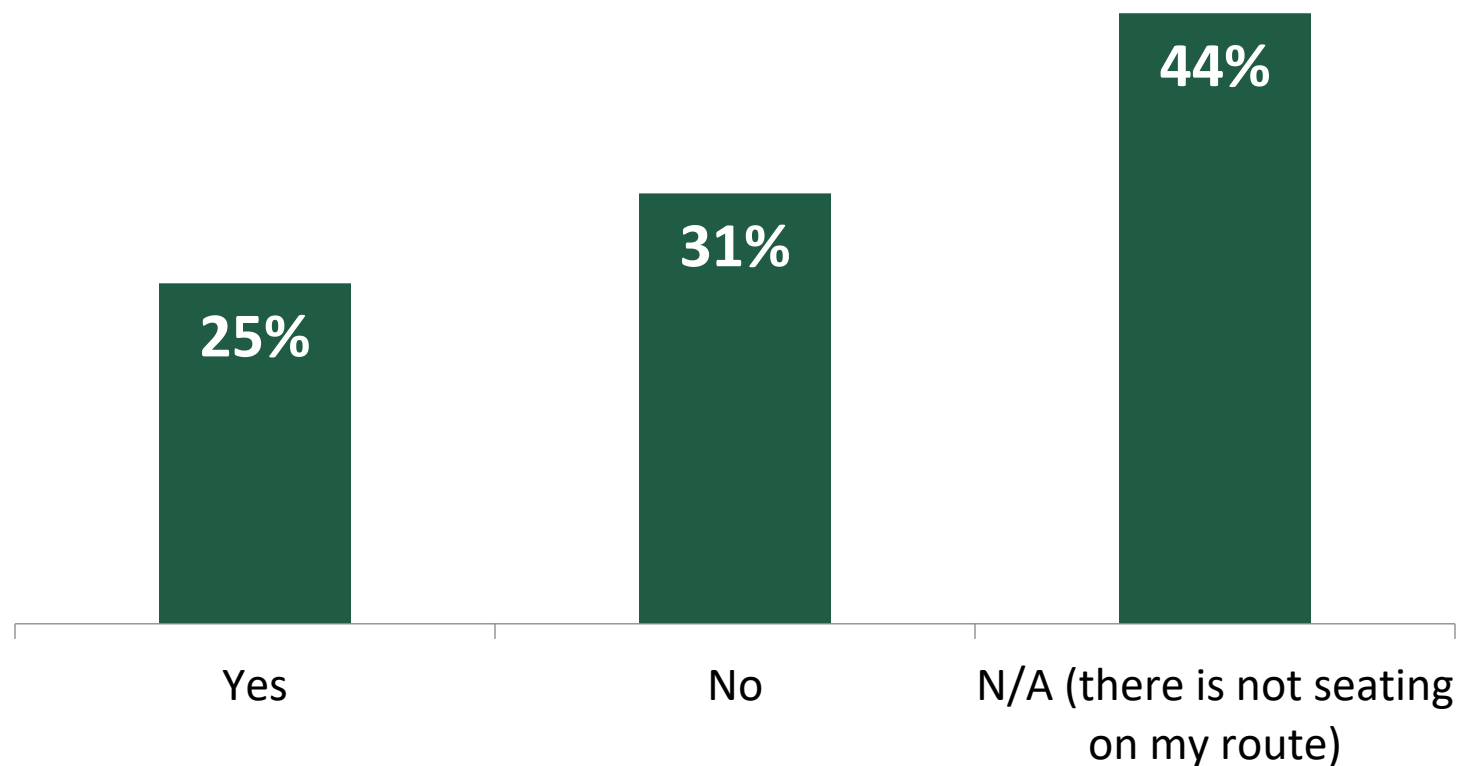
15% said that their closest **bus stop was not accessible**

Falls:

68% stated that **fear of falling** kept them from going out to walk

51% have **fallen while walking in the past 2 years**

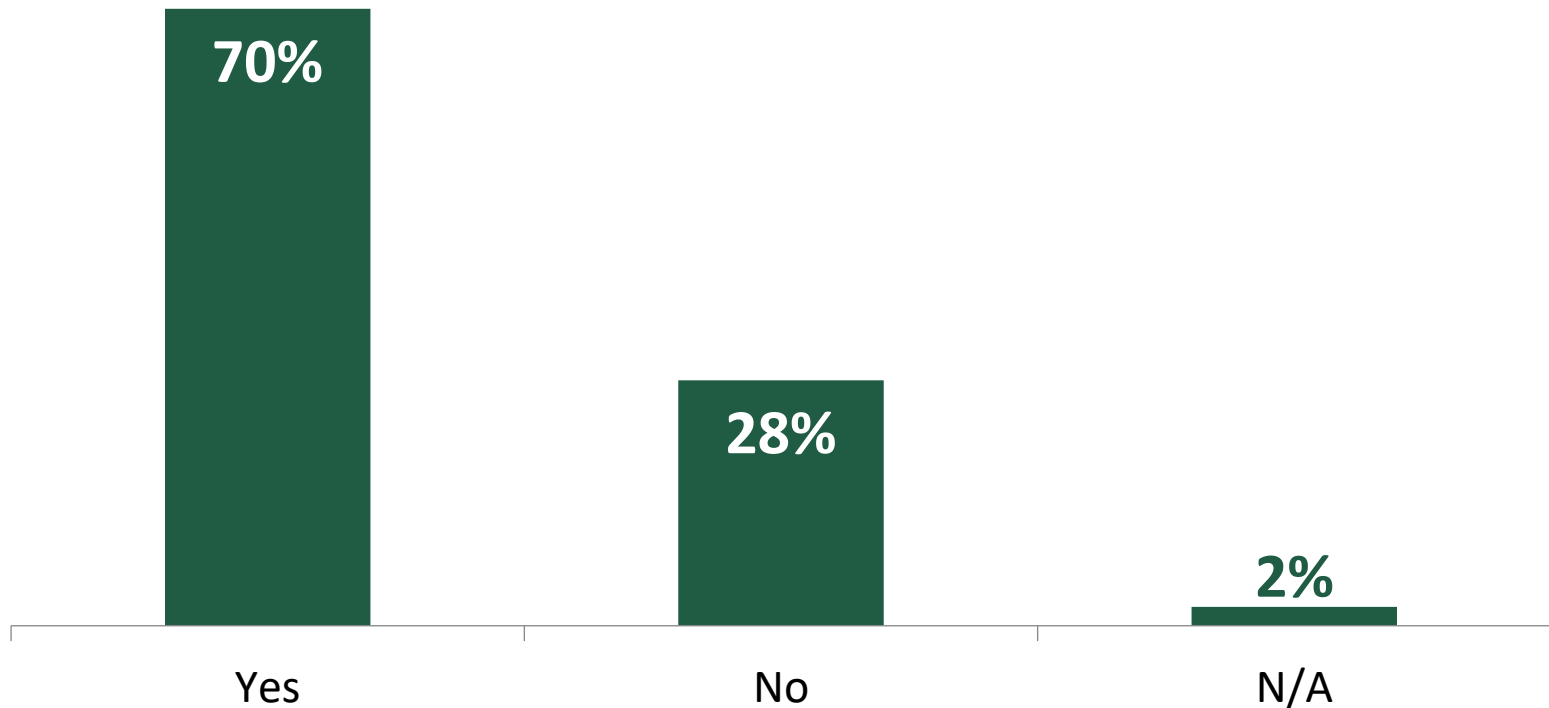
Is any seating on your route, or near a bus stop, kept clear of ice and snow?



“There is seating on the route but there is a snowbank in front of the bench and the bench isn’t clear.”

Ottawa Snow Mole, 2020

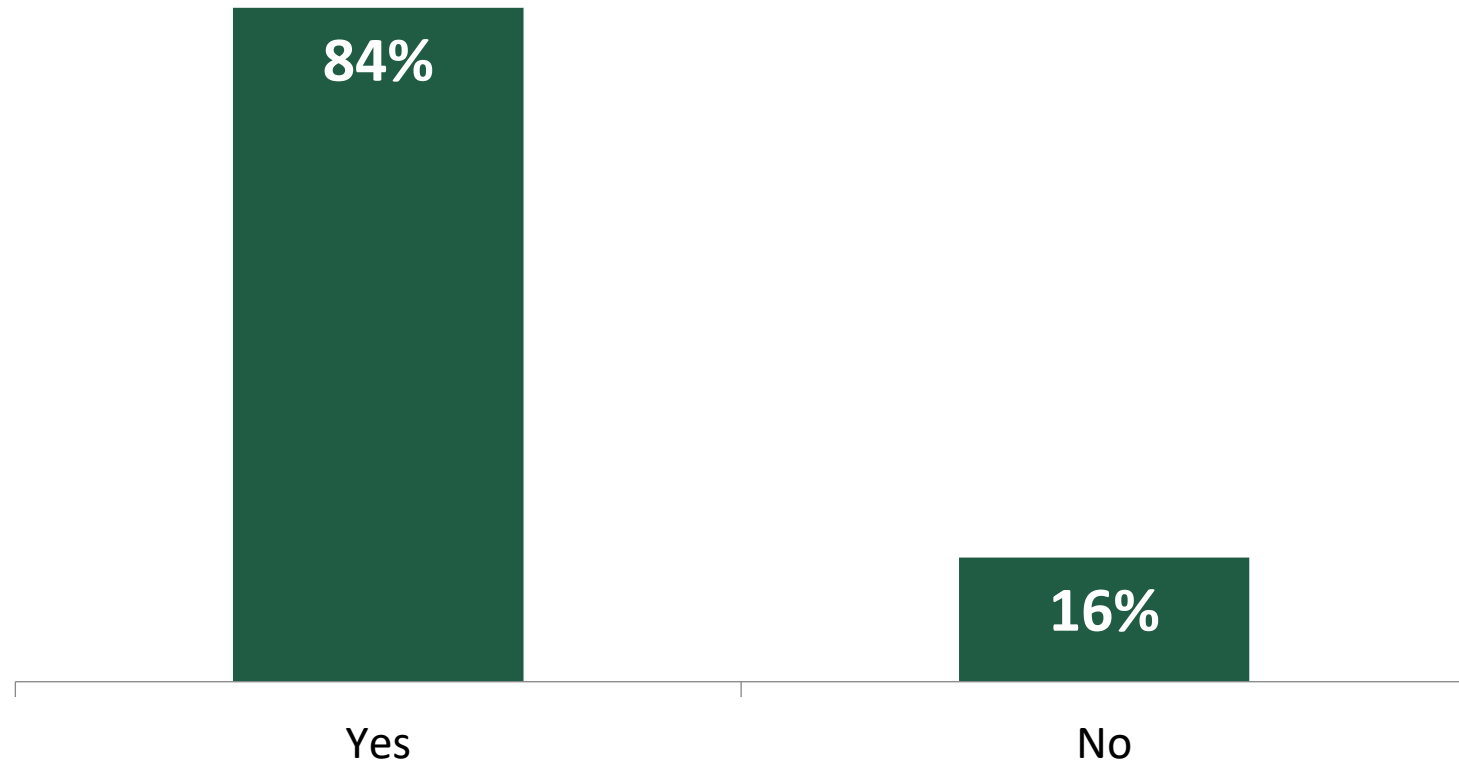
Are the snowbanks shorter than your waist?



“In most areas they are higher but in some they have been minimized by snow clearing operations.”

Ottawa Snow Mole, 2020

Are you able to get to your destination and back home safely?



“Please note, I am an able-bodied woman. But a senior or a person with mobility issues would have great difficulties maneuvering the conditions I experienced. These conditions pose a fall risk to pedestrians.” **Ottawa Snow Mole, 2020**



“I try to walk to the Community Centre every morning for an exercise class. In spite of the fact that I walk on the sidewalk of a major street (bus route) the sidewalks are almost always treacherous. I always have grips on my boots but still slip. The sidewalk plows leave a layer of snow that freezes and turns to ice with tread marks and footprints making the surface rough. There is never any salt or sand spread on the ice after a thaw/freeze event. This seriously impacts my ability to access the local community centre or the bus stop.”

Key Recommendations

1. **Prioritize safety** and **put pedestrians first** in city snow clearance from Class B (snow packed) to Class A (bare pavement) on high density residential sidewalks.
2. **Ensure** that annual training of sidewalk plow operators includes awareness of the high importance of key issues related to safety.
3. **Remove** snowbanks on residential streets before they become hazardous to pedestrians and before thawing and freezing into ice buildup that is difficult to remove and dangerous to walk on.
4. **Plow** to connect sidewalks to transit stops, corners and curbs to pedestrian crossings and residential streets to pathways.
5. **Implement** solutions to ice build-up problems due to plowing and freeze-thaw cycles.
6. **Improve** safe access to city parks through the winter months.



Ottawa is a **winter city**, and clear priority must be given to the **safety of all pedestrians**, especially the most vulnerable who are often fearful of leaving home and falling on icy streets, sidewalks or pathways – and can become socially isolated.



Agenda



1. Snow Mole Report 2020
2. **Winter Maintenance in the City of Ottawa and WMQS Review**
3. Health & Mental Benefits of Walking & Safe Walking during COVID-19
4. COA's Safe Winter Walking Tips and the 2021 Snow Mole Campaign Launch
5. Snow Mole Community Leaders

Questions?



Agenda



1. Snow Mole Report 2020
2. Winter Maintenance in the City of Ottawa and WMQS Review
- 3. Health & Mental Benefits of Walking & Safe Walking during COVID-19**
4. COA's Safe Winter Walking Tips and the 2021 Snow Mole Campaign Launch
5. Snow Mole Community Leaders

Why Walk?

Physical Benefits

- Improves your health
- Can give you the most enjoyable moments in your day
- Promotes cardiovascular health
- Reduces risk for dementia
- Can lessen stiffness and inflammation
- Can lower cholesterol and blood pressure



Mental Benefits

**More than physical health;
it's good for your brain!**

- Helps circulate more blood *to* your brain
- May reduce feelings of anxiety, stress, depression and isolation
- Can make you feel more energetic
- May help you to get better quality sleep





Safe Walking During COVID-19

- Step-aside or pass others quickly and courteously on sidewalks
- Passing someone on the sidewalk is not considered a close contact or a significant risk for exposure to COVID-19
- Before going outside, consider the following questions and assess whether you can keep a 2 metre (6 feet) distance from others:
 - Does my home environment (i.e. a tall apartment building with limited elevators or narrow hallways) make it difficult to have space from others?
 - Is my normal walking route crowded right now? Should I change my route or the time of day that I should go out?
 - Will I be tempted to talk with others and not maintain a 2 metre (6 feet) distance?
- Always be **COVIDWise**



Sources: Ottawa Public Health

<https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/sports-recreation-and-being-active-during-covid-19.aspx>

<https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/be-covidwise.aspx>

Agenda



1. Snow Mole Report 2020
2. Winter Maintenance in the City of Ottawa and WMQS Review
3. Health & Mental Benefits of Walking & Safe Walking during COVID-19
4. **COA's Safe Winter Walking Tips and the 2021 Snow Mole Campaign Launch**
5. Snow Mole Community Leaders



Worried about Winter Walking?

Join the Snow Mole Patrol

Yes, but...



Winter Walking

- is **good** for physical and mental health
- can be **safe**





Tips for Winter Walking

1

Plan ahead.

Check the weather before you go. Give yourself extra travel time so you can walk without being rushed.



2

Choose a good pair of winter boots.

For warmth and stability look for these features: well-insulated, waterproof, thick non-slip tread sole made of natural rubber, wide low heels, light-weight.



3

Consider wearing ice grippers when walking on packed snow and ice. Before buying the grippers, be sure that you can easily attach and remove them from your boots (or keep them on a pair you only use for outdoor walking). Most grippers become dangerously slippery when you step indoors and must be removed before walking on smooth surfaces such as stone, tile and ceramic.



4

Use supports to increase stability.

Use handrails when available and steady yourself on the door frame of a vehicle when getting in and out. Nordic (urban) walking poles with tips that dig in on icy surfaces can also help. Take some instruction on how to use these poles.



5

Be cautious in all temperatures.

In cold temperatures, assume that all wet, dark areas on pavements are slippery and icy.



6

Look for good traction. If you encounter a snow- or ice-covered sidewalk or driveway, especially on a hill, travel along its edge for traction.

7

Increase your centre of gravity and stability. Do the Penguin Shuffle: point your feet out slightly like a penguin and take small steps while walking on slippery surfaces. Keep your knees loose — let them bend a bit. Place your whole foot down at once—this breaks through a crusty surface and also slows your walking speed.



8 **Keep your balance.**

Walk with your arms swinging at your sides. Keep your hands out of your pockets (remember your gloves).



9 **Stay on maintained routes.**

Walk on walkways, paths and sidewalks that receive winter maintenance. Taking shortcuts over snow piles and other frozen areas can be hazardous.



10 **Salt or sand** your stairs, driveway or walkway. Make use of grit boxes in public places.

Call 3-1-1 to report hazardous pedestrian conditions.

Be a snow mole and help us report on winter walking conditions.



Go to www.coaottawa.ca/snowmoles for full information and the snow mole audit questionnaire.



www.coaottawa.ca



[/COA_Ottawa](https://twitter.com/COA_Ottawa)



[/coaottawa](https://www.facebook.com/coaottawa)



613-789-3577



snowmoles@coaottawa.ca

SNOW MOLES 2021

Age-Friendly Winter Walkability and Pedestrian Safety Audits for Seniors and Other Valuable Pedestrians



Worried about winter walking? Be a Snow Mole

We are looking for volunteers to report on what it is like to walk outside on a winter day between **January 4th and March 30th, 2021**. We will use the information to inform the City and others of ways that winter walking can and should be improved.

It is easy to be a snow mole!

1. Pick a day and a destination (e.g. bus stop, library, seniors centre, store, bank, school)
2. Use the snow mole questionnaire to audit your walk (www.coaottawa.ca/snowmoles)
3. Fill in the questionnaire online

Questions? snowmoles@coaottawa.ca | 613-789-3577 ext. 103

An initiative of

The Council
on Aging
of Ottawa



Le Conseil sur
le vieillissement
d'Ottawa

**Thank you for joining
the Snow Mole Patrol!**

SNOW MOLE Checklist

Age-Friendly Winter Walkability and Pedestrian Safety Audits for
Seniors and Other Valuable Pedestrians



1. I was able to walk to and from my destination easily and safely. Yes ___ No ___
2. On your walk today, are you walking on (please check all that apply):
 - a) a sidewalk
 - b) a pathway (e.g. multi-use pathway or a footbridge)
 - c) a street or road

Comments: _____

3. If you are walking on a street or road, it is because (please check all that apply):
 - a) there is no sidewalk or pedestrian path
 - b) there is too much snow and/or ice on the sidewalk to safely walk, or to push my stroller, walker or wheelchair
 - c) the road/street has been plowed and is safer to walk on
 - d) there is more space for COVID distancing on the road/streets

Comments: _____

The Council
on Aging
of Ottawa



Le Conseil sur
le vieillissement
d'Ottawa

SNOW MOLES 2021



LES TAUPES DES NEIGES 2021

January 4 to March 31

4e janvier au 31 mars

www.coaottawa.ca/snowmoles

[www.coaottawa.ca/fr/
les-taupes-des-neiges/](http://www.coaottawa.ca/fr/les-taupes-des-neiges/)



Complete your Snow Mole Questionnaire | Remplissez la fiche d'évaluation en ligne

Agenda



1. Snow Mole Report 2020
2. Winter Maintenance in the City of Ottawa and WMQS Review
3. Health & Mental Benefits of Walking & Safe Walking during COVID-19
4. COA's Safe Winter Walking Tips and the 2021 Snow Mole Campaign Launch
- 5. Snow Mole Community Leaders**



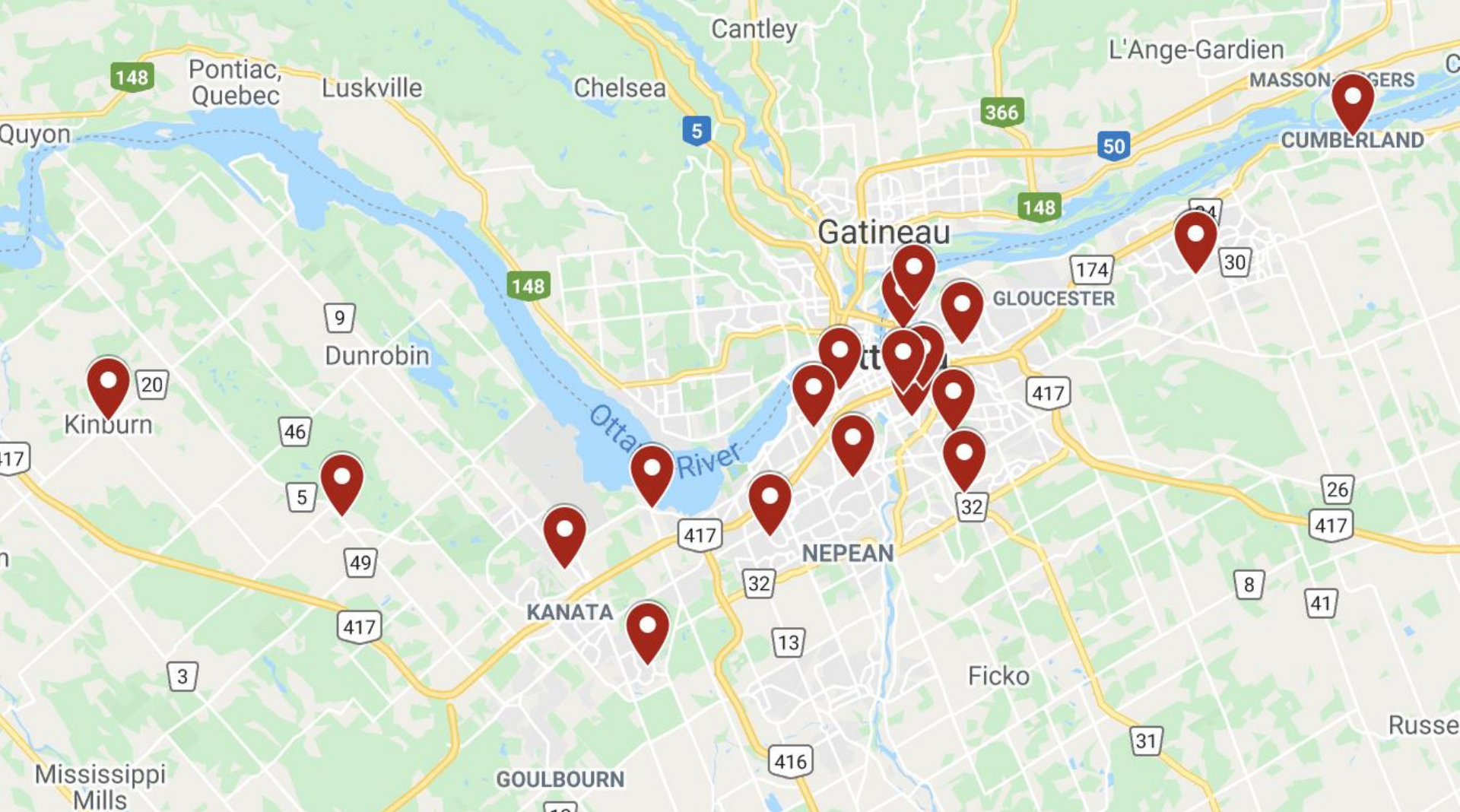
SNOW MOLES 2021



LES TAUPES DES NEIGES 2021

Age-Friendly Winter
Walkability and Pedestrian
Safety Audits for Seniors
and Other Valuable
Pedestrians

Activités d'évaluation des
conditions hivernales
d'accessibilité et de
sécurité piétonnières pour
les aînés et autres
personnes d'importance



Snow Mole Community Leaders 2021



Snow Mole Community Leaders 2021



Old Ottawa South: Anna Cuyllits

Old Ottawa East: Dianne Breton

Orleans: Alton Legault

Orleans: Janet Luloff

Lowertown: John Woodhouse

CentrepoinTE (Nepean): Les Whitney

Hintonburg: Cheryl Parrott

Carp: Margaret Dunn

Alta Vista: Bonnie Schroeder

New Edinburgh: Ann Moore

Fisher Heights: Jayne Belanger

Kanata North: Julie Gourley

Kanata South: Annette Keough

Westboro: Sally Scott

Overbrook: Carole Larose

Glebe: Mary Gick

Kinburn (West Carleton): Mary Porritt

Cumberland: Ardyth Elliott

South Keys: Jennifer Brooks

Crystal Bay: Kathy Riley

Manor Park: Joan Blanchard

www.coaottawa.ca/snowmoles

[www.coaottawa.ca/fr/
les-taupes-des-neiges/](http://www.coaottawa.ca/fr/les-taupes-des-neiges/)

Questions?



Thank you!



Merci !

For more information | Pour plus d'informations



**Snow Mole Report 2020 | Rapport du projet: Les
Taupes des neiges 2020**

**Tips for Winter Walking | Petits conseils pour la
marche sécuritaire en hiver**

**coaottawa.ca/ | [coaottawa.ca/fr/
transportation](http://coaottawa.ca/fr/transportation) | [committees/transportation](http://coaottawa.ca/fr/committees/transportation)**

snowmoles@coaottawa.ca | taupesdesneiges@coaottawa.ca