AGE-FRIENDLY WALKABILITY PROGRESS REPORT 2017

SAFE STREETS FOR SENIORS AND OTHER VALUABLE PEDESTRIANS IN OTTAWA

Produced by:
The Pedestrian Safety Committee
A sub-committee of the Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee.

The Council on Aging of Ottawa.
May 2017.
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Background

The Pedestrian Safety Committee, which is part of the Council on Aging of Ottawa’s Seniors Transportation Committee, works with the Age-Friendly Ottawa project, the City of Ottawa and Community Associations and neighbourhood groups to make Ottawa a more age-friendly city.

Safe and accessible walking environments are particularly important for seniors and people of all ages who live with a disability and/or mobility problems.

The walkability checklist was used to carry out audits in all seasons in three Ottawa communities in 2014-2015, through active partnerships with community associations, senior centres, residents and city of Ottawa councillors and staff members. The collected data was analysed, and a report of the findings along with recommendations was launched at a community event in 2016. An Age-Friendly Walkability Report: Safe Streets for Seniors and Other Valuable People in Ottawa is available at www.coaottawa.ca (tab Action Committees-Transportation) or direct link at https://coaottawa.ca/wp-content/uploads/documents/EN-Age-friendly-pedestrian-report_HighQuality.pdf. The All-Season Age-Friendly Pedestrian Safety and Walkability Checklist is published as an Appendix in this report.

To follow up on the recommendations made in the 2016 Report, we are pleased to present this Progress Report, 2017. The Report measures our progress by discussing new community audits – including those with school children, the use of a Snow Mole questionnaire, and a personal blog – to find out more about winter walking in Ottawa. It presents a follow-up review of the communities audited in 2015, and reviews the status of the key recommendations and issues listed in the 2016 Age-Friendly Walkability Report. The Report also discusses what we have learned and suggestions for moving forward–feet first.

Thank you to the Community Association of Blackburn Hamlet and the leadership of Laura Dudas; students from the Good Shepherd School in Blackburn Hamlet, the individuals and communities who participated in the Snow Mole project and John Woodhouse for writing a winter walking blog. Special thanks to the volunteer members of the Pedestrian Safety Committee: Dianne Breton (Chair), Peggy Edwards, Karen Scott, John Woodhouse, Les Whitney and Jessica Sheridan (representative of Safer Routes to School and leader of the student audits); Megan Michie, Josie Muggeo and Anne Huneault (representatives from the City of Ottawa). Special thanks to Peggy Edwards for writing and editing this report.
Measuring Progress: What We Did and What We Learned

In 2017, the following monitoring activities were carried out:

1. Walking Audit in Blackburn Hamlet by Community Members
   An additional Walk Audit using the Age-Friendly Questionnaire was undertaken by Blackburn Hamlet community members on January 21, 2017. Fifteen people, ranging in age from 6 to 96, examined the age-friendly walkability of residential and retail areas of the area after a period of high snowfall and freezing rain.

   Blackburn Hamlet is a suburban community surrounded by the Greenbelt, served by a network of green spaces and pathways and home to almost 10,000 people. The walkers, runners and cyclists in Blackburn Hamlet include seniors living in the seniors’ residence and at-home seniors, school children attending the 6 schools in the community, dog walkers, parents with young children and babies in strollers, and pedestrians using wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

   Everyone enjoyed their walks on January 21 and some felt the audit approach got them to see their community with fresh eyes.

   Recommendations focused on winter path and sidewalk clearing issues to resolve site specific issues, to develop a dialogue on maintenance schedules with the city, and to encourage cooperation between City and business groups to make winter walking safe and enjoyable. Intersection crossing times, particularly across Innes Road, was of concern to all as was the need for new pedestrian X-walks, notably one from the library across Glen Park Drive to the Community Hall and Arena. New benches were recommended for bus stops and key road and trail intersections. It was resolved that the community should continue to seek permanent solutions to speeding and unsafe driving in areas with schools and seniors’ residences.

   The full audit report which includes maps, photos and detailed recommendations is available at www.blackburnhamlet.ca.

   “Over 357,000 vehicles used Bearbrook Road (one of the three main routes in and out of the Hamlet) in the last 2 ½ months of 2016, an average of almost 4,700 vehicles each day. There are two stop lights on Bearbrook and two pedestrian cross walks (one with an activated stop light) serving the many pedestrians crossing Bearbrook Road each day. Efforts to install ‘traffic calming’ on Bearbrook Road and introduce crossing guards for school children have become a priority in the community.” … Blackburn Hamlet Walk Audit January, 2017

2. Walking Audit in Blackburn Hamlet by Students
   On January 20, 2017, a group of Grade 6 students from Good Shepherd School provided important input by carrying out a winter walking audit in the Blackburn
Hamlet neighbourhood surrounding their school (see map below). The walkabout took about 30 minutes.

With many easily accessible businesses, adequate lighting, and plenty of sidewalks, the Student Community Auditors felt that their neighbourhood was safe for walking to and from school. They did note that there were quite a few puddles and that many of the sidewalks and pathways in the parks were not properly winter maintained, and that sanding/salting was inconsistent. Some of the sidewalks were in poor condition. Bus stops were well cleared.

Another concern the students would like to address is the lack of garbage disposals. They noted cigarette butts, trash and empty pop containers at several intersections and at the bus stops. This could be a great project for the area Councillor or Community Association to take on. The students also would like additional lighting in the parks, as they mentioned that some of the lights are burnt out around the rinks.

For the full report and photos from the student walk please contact Wallace Beaton at wbeaton2@sympatico.ca.

“Sidewalk salting is inconsistent on both Bearbrook and Innes. Bearbrook hill is VERY icy on cold days. Some days there is too much salt and some days not enough.” … Student Snow Mole/Community Walkability Audit, 2017
3. Snow Mole Audits

In order to provide extra focus on winter walking, the Committee invited pedestrians in several communities (Lowertown, the Glebe, Old Ottawa East, South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre, Alta Vista and Old Ottawa South) to be “snow moles”. Snow moles used the Snow Mole Questionnaire (see Appendix A) to report on walking conditions on a winter day. Although the activity was promoted in three community newspapers and with community groups, the take up was small: a total of 14 questionnaires were returned. The snow moles were all female and ranged in age from 58 to 81 years old; 2 used mobility aids. They walked in the months of January and February mostly to access stores, services and meetings, although some walked for recreation and/or to walk their dog.

In addition to individual snow mole audits, John Woodhouse, a pedestrian who travels in a motorized wheelchair, kept a daily blog of his experience walking from January 1 to February 16, 2017 (see Appendix B).

Although the number of returned snow mole audits was small, they provide some useful insights into the problems seniors and other vulnerable, valuable pedestrians face when walking in winter. These were confirmed and expanded upon in the blog by John Woodhouse. Problems included the following:

- **Hazardous sidewalks.** Changing temperatures and winter conditions lead to hazardous sidewalks. All but 2 snow moles reported that they were unable to safely get to their destination on sidewalks that were inadequately ploughed, salted or sanded. Sidewalks that incline to allow cars to get in and out and are then covered in ice are particularly treacherous. Deep ruts are problematic. Pedestrians are often forced to use the road. Older people fear falling and can become housebound and isolated if these conditions persist. Seniors and people using mobility aids report that dangerous sidewalks and pathways mean they cannot safely get to essential destinations, including grocery stores and health services. Heavy snow and slush and waist-high snow banks can also make sidewalks impassible, especially for those using mobility aids and for people with strollers.

- **Lack of attention and priority given to sidewalks and pathways in residential areas with vulnerable pedestrians.** While all reported that sidewalks were better maintained in high traffic areas and around transit stops, sidewalks in residential areas with high concentrations of vulnerable pedestrians and around seniors’ residences were poorly maintained.

- **Inconsistency and poor coordination of ploughing and snow removal between streets and sidewalks.** Sometimes sidewalks are cleared only to be followed by street ploughing which pushes the snow and ice back up on the sidewalk and makes intersections difficult. Curbs and intersections require particular attention. Curbs that are unploughed or have snow bank barriers make walking and wheeling from one street to another very difficult. Private contractors sometimes block public sidewalks when clearing snow from private driveways and paths.

- **Inaccessible bus stops and mailboxes.** People using mobility aids are sometimes faced with poorly ploughed and inaccessible transit stops outside of the main
fairways. Several seniors report they are unable to get to their mailboxes due to poor snow maintenance around the area.

“The sidewalk in front of my seniors building (Rideau and Charlotte) is mostly left unplowed or deeply rutted. Many here have motorized wheelchairs or canes and most are frail. There is also an elementary school nearby. This is a dangerous situation.” … 78-year-old woman, Lowertown

February 16, 2017, 6:00PM: “Within the last block and a half, I was almost run over twice. The sidewalks are covered in 2 to 4 inches of moisture-laden snow. I am unable to steer, lack traction and it eats my power. So, it has to be the roadway. I have been unable to use the sidewalks in days. This last small storm of winter highlights again the lack of coordination in snow clearance.” … John Woodhouse in his daily winter walking blog

4. Status Review in the Neighbourhoods Audited in 2015/16

Members of the Committee reviewed the status of the three communities audited in 2015/16. Here is a summary of the findings as of February, 2017 (three follow-up reviews). It is gratifying to report that most of the concerns raised in the 2016 audits have been dealt with (although there is still room for improvement). Thank you for listening and acting, City of Ottawa.

KANATA BEAVERBROOK

A pedestrian crosswalk at Earl of March School and a rebuilt intersection at the Parkway and Leacock are now in place in response to audit observations. There is now a signed crossing near Varley Park and the deteriorated pathway on Teron Drive has been repaved. Improvements have also been made to most sidewalks through paving. While improvements have been made, the larger issues of pathway width for shared use and connection to public transport stops have not been addressed. There is no practical solution to safety concerns about the low pedestrian underpass other than improved lighting and brush clearance.

GLEBE

The NCC has completed a pedestrian crosswalk on the QE Drive at Bank Street and the City has connected this with a multi-use path to the Bank Street bridge. Cracked and broken sidewalks have either been replaced or paved throughout with the exception of a section in front of new construction at the Fifth and QE Drive intersection. Crossings have been repainted, signage improved, and obstructions cleared from Bank Street. Pedestrian signal times have been adjusted for most locations. A few new benches are in place and the streetscape south of the Bank St bridge has been greatly improved by attractive planters. Street lighting remains partially blocked by trees, particularly at the O’Connor entrance to the park. There have been no new bus shelters and no progress made on access to toilets.
HINTONBURG

The audit route followed Scott and Albert streets from Smirle to Empress avenues. Safety and security issues raised have been addressed through improvements to sidewalks and pathways, new or better marked pedestrian crossings, better signage and wider multi-use pathways. Repairs to sidewalks and curb cuts have been completed in most cases with paving, not a permanent solution but may be adequate until light rail construction is completed. The City has responded to concerns about separation of pedestrians and speeding traffic by installing metal fencing or concrete barriers east of the Bayview O-train Station and through adding bike lanes to the west. Issues raised about comfort and attractiveness have not been addressed yet but benches, trees, etc. are included in the overall plan for connecting the light rail system to the city infrastructure.

5. Status Review of the Key Recommendations and Issues from the 2016 Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Reporting indicators</th>
<th>Action Taken (as of April 5, 2017)</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lengthen crossing times at large/busy intersections</td>
<td>Number of intersections with crossing times adjusted</td>
<td>Adjustments at 5 intersections with high concentration of seniors (Carling Avenue)</td>
<td>City Ottawa Traffic Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equip all signalled intersections with audible signals and provide signage to teach people how to activate them</td>
<td>Number of intersections with audible signals and information and how to use them</td>
<td>As of Dec. 2016, 874 signals were equipped out of 1,160 (75%); 50 audible signals installed. Future: all audible signals will include vibro-tactile push button. No signage has been attached to the signals. The new audible signal installations receive funding from the Older Adult Plan. Locations are based on analysis. A rating system looks at 2011 census tract to find highest densities of 65+, locations of bus stops, seniors’ homes, community centres, hospitals, and libraries.</td>
<td>City Ottawa Traffic Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies to prevent collisions with seniors, people in wheelchairs and people with other disabilities</td>
<td>Number of collisions</td>
<td>Number of collisions with pedestrians (2014): age 65-plus = 202 (11.3%); age 16-20 = 245 (13.7%). Highest numbers of collisions occur at intersections; and from November to January. Most common cause by driver action is failure to yield.</td>
<td>Safer Roads Ottawa, Ottawa Police</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2017 City-wide intersection and

Safer Roads
| Access to public transportation | driver education strategies | crosswalk campaign targets drivers, cyclists, walkers and those in wheelchairs. Slogans include: “Be Safe-Be Seen” and “Get There with Care”. Advertising and social media, educational videos, radio ads, bus ads – “Make Peace on our Streets” |
| Enforcement at crossings and high collision intersections | | At pedestrian crossovers: Failure to yield to pedestrians = $500 fine and 3 demerit points. Charges are laid only if there is a pedestrian collision. |
| Improved pedestrian crossings | | Pedestrian safety enhancement (including pedestrian count-down and signal programs) targeting 4 intersections by 2018. |
| Identification of locations where curb cuts make it difficult for people in wheelchairs to navigate and corrections in these areas | | City to install up to 60 Pedestrian Crossovers each year for the next 3 years at warranted locations including new crossings where no crossing existed before, retrofitting of existing crossings, and roundabouts. At roundabouts where Pedestrian Crossovers are installed, pedestrians will have the right of way over vehicles. |
| Bus pads are inaccessible in many residential communities (no cuts or ramps to allow access to | | Curb cuts are typically only installed at controlled intersections. 42 service requests through 311 identified as an accessibility issue with a sidewalk. Remedial work done to maintain safety. |

<p>| Ottawa | Ottawa Police | City Ottawa Road Services | OC Transpo | City Ottawa Transport Services |
| Speed reduction strategies | Number of speed limit reductions especially in areas near schools and seniors’ residences | Speed reduction policy to 30 km on certain streets adopted by Ottawa Transportation Committee in 2017. Some zones near schools (but not all) reduced to 30 km. There are 151 roadways adjacent to schools with posted speed limit of 40 kph. There are 64 additional roadways near schools with reduced speed zones in different city wards. No speed limit reductions near seniors’ residences. A pilot project to install photo radar in school zones is under consideration. Hintonburg neighbourhood’s community association got enough support to change the speed limit to 40 kph. Under consideration in other residential neighbourhoods. Red light cameras installed -- 33 in 2017 and plans to add 20 more by 2018. Each city councillor has $40,000 annually for speed boards in areas seen to be dangerous, mid-road posts, speed bumps, lawn signs “Slow down for us” (5,000 requested in 2016) New in 2016: 175 flex stakes; 215 new or refreshed pavement markings; 4 new planter boxes, 120 new speed boards. |
| Number and types of new traffic calming measures (e.g. speed bumps, islands, electronic read out of speed) | Safer Roads Ottawa Transport Services Traffic Services |
| Enhance winter walking safety and accessibility | Improve snow | COA-Pedestrian Safety has submitted a request to the Transportation Commission (March 1st, 2017) to review and improve the city’s Maintenance Quality Standards (MQS) for roads, sidewalks and pathways (established in 2003) with a link to the city Pedestrian Plan. | Council on Aging for Ottawa |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>and ice removal around transit stops and in areas near schools and seniors’ residences</th>
<th>Experience and perceptions of seniors walking in winter conditions</th>
<th>COA-Pedestrian Safety Committee conducted Snow Mole audits and carried out a daily blog (John Woodhouse). Snow mole questions have been integrated with Ottawa Neighbourhood Study questionnaire.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification and correction of hazardous sidewalks and walkways</td>
<td>Number of sidewalks and pathways identified as hazardous (via Sidewalk Hazard form or 311) and correction</td>
<td>2,342 Requests to 311 regarding sidewalks. Number of 311 Calls marked as completed = 2,245.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Council on Aging for Ottawa Neighbourhood Study</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Road Services</td>
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More Information about Seniors and Walking in Ottawa

In 2017, the Council on Aging Ottawa released the report *How Age-Friendly is Ottawa? An Evaluation Framework to Measure the Age-Friendliness of Ottawa* (https://coaottawa.ca/af). This report uses identified indicators and multiple reliable sources to provide baseline data for the continuing monitoring of Ottawa as an Age-Friendly city. Several of the findings relate to seniors and walkability.

- Over a week, most seniors walked between 1 and 5 hours. Senior men are more likely than senior women to report no walking. Younger seniors (less than age 75) are more likely to walk over one hour when compared to those age 75-plus. (Source: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2012)

- In 2012, seniors found their neighbourhoods more walkable for leisure than for errands, such as shopping and going to the library or post office. (Source: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2012)

- The majority of seniors do NOT find their neighbourhoods to be easily walkable. Neighbourhoods are easy to walk around if they have a score of 70 and above. In 2012, the average walkability score in Ottawa was 50 with a range of 35 to 91. Byward Market had the highest walkability score (91), while Centrepointe had the lowest (35). Both neighbourhoods had a high number of seniors (20 and 21%) and low numbers of low-income seniors. (Source: Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, 2012)

- In 2012, five neighbourhoods with higher than average numbers of seniors (15 - 22%) and high numbers of low-income seniors (14-32%) had high walkability scores (70+). These neighbourhoods were Lowertown, Old Ottawa East, West Centertown and Hintonburg/Mechanicsville. Four other neighbourhoods, had low walkability scores and higher than average numbers of seniors (20 - 52%) and low-income seniors (10 - 25%). These neighbourhoods were Woodroffe -Lincoln Heights, Hunt Club East-Western Community, Wateridge Village, Vanier South and Qualicum-Redwood Park (Source: Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, 2012)

- In 2013 only 23% of seniors used public transit, despite being close to a bus stop. Slightly more women (25%), Francophone Seniors (24%), and older seniors (24%) use public transit. (Sources: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System 2013; Area Coverage Data, 2011)

- In 2012, 11% of people involved in car crashes were seniors on foot (n = 37). While older women were more likely to be involved in a crash, men were more likely to have died in the crash; 46% of the seniors in crashes had minor injuries. (Source: Ontario Road Safety Annual Report, 2012)

- Between 2000 and 2008 in Canada, 63% of walkers killed at intersections were 65 or older (Transport Canada, 2011). In 2004-2005, 30% of people who went to hospital after being hit by a car while walking were aged 60 years and older. In addition, seniors stay in hospital longer after being injured (16 days vs. 7 days for all age groups) and are more likely to die in hospital (Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2007).
Moving Forward

As this report shows, significant progress has been made in the last two years. To continue to move forward—feet first—we offer the following recommendations for action.

Recommendations Regarding Winter Walking

Ottawa is a winter city and climate swings that produce hazardous walking conditions are likely to get worse. All sectors need to pay more attention to making winter walking safe and pleasurable to all, but especially for vulnerable, valuable pedestrians (including seniors, young children and people using mobility aids).

To the City of Ottawa

- Review and explore opportunities to improve the current winter operations Maintenance Quality Standards related to roadway, sidewalk and pathway maintenance.
- Identify areas and hot spots across the city that are representative of older adults and persons with disabilities and implement policies and operations that allow them to navigate the transportation network safely and with ease.
- Review and explore opportunities to improve current practices related to operating logistics and timing for clearing sidewalks, pathways and roadways.
- Increase priority for maintaining safe sidewalks and pathways and full accessibility around schools, senior’s residences, seniors’ centres and transit stops.
- Develop and pursue measurable goals for improving winter walkability in the Older Adult Plan, the Pedestrian Plan and the Master Transportation Plan.
- Enhance ice removal on sidewalks and pathways on residential streets, and escalate snow removal standards from Class B (snow packed) to Class A (bare surface) around all transit stops and schools, and immediately around seniors’ residences and seniors’ centres.
- Participate in winter walk audits organized by local community associations and neighbourhoods.

To the Private Sector

- Enhance winter walkability and pedestrian safety by reviewing and improving winter operation standards and practices related to private property (e.g. hospital property), public places (e.g. mail box areas maintained by Canada Post) and snow dumping from private driveways (private snow removal contractors).
- When possible, coordinate snow removal from private areas with snow clearing and removal carried out by the City.

To the Community and the Council on Aging Ottawa
• Encourage citizens to conduct snow mole audits in their neighbourhood and to report hazardous conditions immediately via the 311-telephone line or online reporting on the City website.

• Conduct winter walking audits in your community in groups that include older people, people with mobility aids, young children and representatives from the City (elected officials and staff). Forward the results and recommendations to the City and/or private contractors and monitor what action is taken.

• Contact Canada Post and ask for improved maintenance whenever you encounter barriers to picking up your mail.

• Advocate for policies and programs that provide safe, accessible and pleasurable winter walking for all and especially for vulnerable, valuable pedestrians.

• Lend a hand to vulnerable pedestrians who may be housebound due to severe winter conditions.

Other Recommendations

1. Consult with and have older adults and other vulnerable pedestrians at the table when examining maintenance standards and planning improvements in the built environment and the transit system.

2. OC Transpo to carry out the proposed audit of all bus stops for accessibility and ensure that there are ramps or entrance/exit ways to all bus pads.

3. Make available smart phone apps that allow walkers to report hazards and positive features and send photos. Using GPS, the app can locate the walker on city maps and easily be transferred to the to do list for action.

4. Continue to include pedestrians, cyclists and the accessibility community in regional shared conversations on access, mitigating conflicts and sharing the road. As the population ages, recognize and plan for more scooters and motorized wheelchairs on transit paths and sidewalks.

5. Officially adopt speed reduction policies and rules that are currently under consideration.

6. Create a network of safe, accessible, free, clean and environmentally responsible public toilets in parks, major transit stops and key public places.

7. Adopt a Vision Zero goal that aims to reach zero fatalities and serious injuries to pedestrians and cyclists by 2020.

Concluding Remarks

It is time to relook how best to make Ottawa a walkable, safe an age-friendly city for all residents and visitors. As we move forward, it is important to consider that:
• Ottawa’s population is aging. By 2031, more than one in five residents in Ottawa will be over age 65. Age-friendly walkable environments are particular important for seniors and people of all ages who live with a disability or mobility problems. Vulnerable pedestrians walk for recreation and social connections, for health and to access essential services, goods and public transit. When faced with poor walkability conditions they face increasing isolation and an increased risk of falling and sustaining injuries.

• Ottawa is a winter city and weather patterns are changing. The City’s winter operations Maintenance Quality Standards were developed 14 years ago (2003) and do not adequately reflect current needs and barriers to walkability, especially for vulnerable pedestrians.

• The population has grown and there are many more cars on the roads. Traffic control, speed limit strategies and effective public transit have become increasingly important.

The Pedestrian Safety Committee of the Council on Aging Ottawa recognizes that there is a limited budget for transportation and transit in the city and region. But if we really want to get people out of their cars and using active transportation (walking, cycling and public transit), it is time to rethink spending and assign higher priority to efforts that ensure age-friendly walkability. The Council on Aging of Ottawa appreciates the opportunity to work with the City and the community to monitor our progress. We look forward to further collaboration as we strive to make Ottawa a city that is truly age-friendly and walkable for all.
Appendix A: Snow Mole Questionnaire

You are invited to be a SNOW MOLE and complete a Winter Pedestrian Safety Audit. SNOW MOLES are volunteers who report on what it is like to walk outside on a winter day in Ottawa.

Instructions to Age-Friendly Ottawa SNOW MOLES
1. Pick a time of day when you need to go out a day or two after winter weather (e.g. heavy snow, freezing rain)
2. Pick a destination: e.g. school, grocery store, bank, drug store, medical appointment
3. Answer the questions below and use the Snow Mole Checklist to audit your walk.
4. Return the completed audit form to your community contact. THANK YOU!

Questions about you and your winter walk
Date (day/month/year): _____________ Time of day: _____a.m.; _____p.m._____
Describe winter conditions (i.e. snow, freezing rain, slushy) ___________________
City/ Neighbourhood of walk audit: _____________________________________________
Names of main streets on route: _________________________________________
Approximate distance: ____less than 1 km., ____ 1 km., ____1.5 km, ____more than 1.5 km.

About you: Age___; Female ___ Male ___
I have a mobility aid: ☐ Yes ☐ No
I walk this route for (check all that apply):
☐ Transportation: to reach a specific location
☐ Recreation: for enjoyment and/or physical activity
☐ To question safety and accessibility of this route.

Snow Mole Checklist: Please circle or highlight your answers
1. Have the sidewalks and streets in front of your house, residence or school been:
   Plowed? Yes No Not applicable
   Sanded? Yes No Not applicable
   Salted? Yes No Not applicable

2. Are the sidewalks on your route well sanded or salted?
   Yes No Not applicable

3. Does snow thrown onto the sidewalk from snow plows or people’s snow blowers interfere with walking?
   Yes No

4. If there are paths or walkways on or near your route, are they well plowed?
   Yes No Not applicable
5. Are the snow banks shorter than your waist?
   Yes  No

6. Can you walk (or use a mobility device) to safely get to your destination or to the nearest bus stop?
   Yes  No

7. Is the closest bus stop area clear of snow/ice?
   Yes  No  Not applicable

8. Is the bus stop area fully accessible?
   Yes  No  Not applicable

9. Is any seating on this stretch of road kept clear of ice and snow?
   Yes  No  Not applicable

10. Are you able to get to your destination and back home safely?
    Yes  No

11. Do you have any other safety concerns?

______________________________________________________________________________

Please report any hazards or problems needing immediate attention to the City of Ottawa’s phone line 311

Thank you for completing and returning this Winter Pedestrian Safety audit to:

______________________________________________________________________________

This checklist was put together by the Council on Aging of Ottawa Age-Friendly Pedestrian Safety Committee and by Elizabeth Kristjansson and her team at the University of Ottawa.
Appendix B: John’s Snow Mole Blog

January 1: Street was down to a one-person goat trail. Then later the puddles were at every corner. Not nice to drive in. Temp was around zero degrees.

Jan 5: Clean up all night. Snow along my route to the clinic varied. Bus stops were clear but the sidewalks were an icy rutted path.

Jan 6: Same icy rutted path. Just enough width to travel the sidewalk. But the ruts give you a very bone jarring ride. I take the road and save getting a headache.

Jan 7: Sidewalks have been worn down so they are not as bumpy as before. Now they are smooth and icy.

Jan 8 - Jan 13: Temperatures varied wildly this week with cold one day and the next above freezing. The constant filling in of the curb cuts make it hard to get on or off the sidewalks and the little attention paid to clearing snow from bus stops continues.

Jan 14: Sidewalks are still icy. Bare pavement is showing on the main streets, Rideau St. Roads are bare. It is cold and windy at times.

Jan 15 – 21: The state of the sidewalks is bad what with thawing and freezing. So bad that I move around on my seat. I take the bike lanes but try/test different sidewalks until it is too uncomfortable. With the thaw, I sink into the snow on the sidewalk. This limits my movements. I up my power.

Jan 22: Mild day; I heard the water running into the sewers under the mini glaciers along the side of the road. Yes, I am on the road again. But joy—Rideau Street is relatively clear. The sidewalks along Rideau I am told are the widest in the city, then they should get wider plows. It was a nice day so I thought I would work on the walking map. Toured the neighbourhood on the road. I would have used the sidewalk but this would mean wear and tear needlessly to chair and the dumb ass in the chair. The area on a Sunday is laid back. Sidewalks had areas of packed snow that is now also messy (temperature is +2) Bus stops are hit or miss.

Jan 23- Feb 2: It went from mild and sloppy to -14 tonight to a high of -8 tomorrow. Over this period of time, the sidewalks in my area and Rideau went from a one foot at a time goat path to the evolution of bare pavement/concrete 32 in-wide enough on Rideau for
2-3 abreast. I am waiting for that storm on Wednesday to start the snow mole survey.

Feb 2-5: Not much change. I fell out of the chair again. This time I was near home. Called a friend and got back on my way. Messed up the front left wheel. That goes with a cracked bearing in the same wheel that was fixed with my mortar.

Feb 6-8 (midday): The wind was blowing snow onto the sidewalks causing snow drifts in sections of the walkway.

Feb 8: Saw the same mistakes in cleaning as before.

Feb 16: 6:04 pm. Within the last 5 minutes or block and a half, I was almost run over twice. Drivers were in a hurry to get home and were not paying attention. The sidewalks have moisture laden snow about 3 to 4 inches high. The clear spots are Rideau Street in front of driveways and in heavy pedestrian traffic areas. The rest of the sidewalk is covered by 2-4 inches of this ripe snow. I am unable to steer, lack traction and it eats my power. I have not used the sidewalks in days. It has had to be the roadway. Just like periods every other winter. The weather has made sidewalks covered with snow become like mud. Very hard to walk through. The last small storm of winter highlighted the lack of coordination in snow clearance.

NOTE: Pedestrian John Woodhouse travels with a motorized wheelchair. His routes are shown on the map below and the catchment area is Cobourg Street to Old St Patrick’s Street to Beausoleil Drive to Rideau Street (between Cobourg and Nelson). Key bus stops are 2402, 6825, and 7325.