

The Hunt Club Community Organization (HCCO) partnered with the *Council on Ageing* to do a walkability survey in Hunt Club. The community association's area of concern is the area bordered by Hunt Club Road, Riverside Drive, the Airport Parkway and the railroad tracks crossing McCarthy Road. We had 11 participants including representatives from the Council on Ageing, the City of Ottawa Transportation division and the local newspaper, the Community Voice. The day of our walk was sunny, with a temperature of around -5 Celsius but was held after a weekend of snowfall and freezing rain. Therefore, we encountered slushy and icy conditions.

We set out from and finished at the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre (3320 Paul Anka Drive) and covered 4 different routes:

- McCarthy Rd, Cahill Dr. West and the Airport Bridge to the South Keys Transit Station (Appendix A – green line on map)
- Paul Anka, Uplands Drive, Shearwater Court, Paul Landry Park through to the Hunt Club Centre parking lot (Appendix B – white squares on map)
- McCarthy Rd, Hunt Club Rd, Uplands Dr., Cahill Dr. West (Appendix C – brown squares on map)
- Plante Dr., Owl Dr., Pigeon Terrace (Appendix D – blue squares on map)

We used the All Season Age-Friendly Pedestrian Safety and Walkability Checklist developed by the Council on Aging to assess the **Safety, Accessibility, Convenience and Connectedness and Comfort & Attractiveness** of the sidewalks on our selected routes. This audit is one tool to use in engage our councillor, city staff, businesses, institutions and our citizens to identify walkability and access issue resulting in short and long-term improvements to safety and accessibility in Hunt Club.



Walkability Survey Routes

Safety

Generally, public transit stops were not well ploughed neither were sidewalks and curbs cleaned sufficiently to enable persons using mobility vehicles (powered wheel chairs and scooters), walkers or canes or for the visually impaired to navigate the sidewalks. In fact one of our auditors using a motorized wheelchair had to drive on McCarthy Road and the rest of his survey route because he kept getting stuck in the slushy sidewalks and on the curbs to get onto the sidewalks. However our survey took place after a weekend of snowfall and freezing rain.



Snow covered Bus Stop

There are no audible signals at lights and crosswalks on McCarthy Road. As well, there are no painted diagonal lines and/or **Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSI)** at key crossing points in the neighborhood, particularly at the entrances to the Hunt Club Centre mall at McCarthy Road and Paul Anka Drive. This is challenging and potentially unsafe for mobility and visually impaired citizens. In addition, “No Stopping” signs were damaged or destroyed by snow clearing operations on Owl Drive across from Holy Family School. Parents tend to park there and they and/or kids dart across to the school, creating potentially unsafe situations.

Given the freeze and thaw conditions this winter, there are numerous potholes in the pavement in Hunt Club, particularly in the crosswalk at Plante Drive and McCarthy Road. This could cause pedestrians to stumble and fall and injure themselves.

Although we walked in bright sunshine, some auditors indicated that they would feel unsafe walking at night, in particular on the route described in **Appendix B - Paul Anka, Uplands Drive, Shearwater Court, Paul Landry Park through to the Hunt Club Centre parking lot**. Part of that route goes through the woods of Paul Landry Park where there are a lot of trees and brush cover and no lighting. Also this is the area where 2 recent shootings, including a homicide, took place. Another area of concern is at the northwest side of Uplands Drive at Hunt Club. The street lighting is insufficient and a 20-foot cedar hedge hugging that corner, further obstructs the streetlight. There is a bus stop at that corner and there have been assaults in the past there. In addition, walking across the pedestrian bridge across the Airport Parkway to the transit station (**Appendix A**) by oneself or in darkness would make a person feel unsafe because of isolated paths with brush nearby and lack of lighting.

Accessibility

The major issue was snow-covered sidewalks and curbs, thus limiting accessibility to mobility or visually impaired persons. One of our auditors, who is legally blind, had to maneuver around snow piles and mounds of slush on McCarthy Road when crossing the northwest intersection with Hunt Club Road. Also, when crossing the northeast corner of Uplands Drive at Hunt Club road across the exit ramp from Hunt Club to the island, we noticed that the yield sign is right beside the pedestrian crosswalk and not immediately visible to a vehicle. Our legally blind auditor had to dodge a car exiting Hunt Club at great speed. Crossing Cahill Drive West at the intersection of Twyford was also hampered by snow and ice.

Although the sidewalks had been initially ploughed on Uplands Drive, Twyford, McCarthy and Cahill Drive West, the city street plough went by and sprayed wet slush over many of the sidewalks, burying them.



Sidewalks buried with slush by City Street plough

One of our auditors noted that the walkway to the South Keys transit station, just before turning the corner into the OC Transpo tunnel, has 2 spots of deep water that could cause someone to stumble and fall. This problem area was reported to 311 last spring, some repairs were made, but the problem still exists.

The walkway on Twyford Road at the entrance to the Metro parking lot needs a curb cut for wheel chair accessibility.

Many of the points addressed under Safety above, apply here.



Water covered dip in pathway to South Keys Transit Station

Convenience and Connectedness

Generally, there are direct routes between homes, workplaces and other destinations, such as transit stops, the two schools on Owl Drive, the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre and its sports fields and the Hunt Club Centre businesses on McCarthy Rd. Although the pathways and pedestrian bridge over the Airport Parkway connect well to the South Keys transit station, there is no pedestrian signage on Cahill Drive West to indicate the path to the pedestrian bridge and the transit station. We didn't see any signage until we crossed the bridge and were almost at the transit station. We feel there should be multi-use signage for the pathway and for the transit station.



Snow covered entry to pathway to the pedestrian bridge over the Airport Parkway

Comfort & Attractiveness

Generally, auditors felt their routes went through attractive neighbourhoods, free of graffiti and garbage. The exceptions were on Twford Street due to a continuous dumping of garbage at the curb of the Cardinus CO-OP parking lot. In addition, there is graffiti on the fences bordering Paul Landry Park (PLP). Requests to the property managers of the two developments bordering PLP have stopped the Hunt Club Community Organization (HCCO) from taking advantage from such programs as Paint It Up to cover and reduce graffiti. Such a program would have potentially engaged at risk youth. Finally, there were non-functioning community mailboxes on the north side of Cahill Dr. West off of Twyford and a broken bench at the bus stop.

There were benches and shelters at bus stops and benches on the pathway to the Airport Pedestrian Bridge. The only public art installation is a large recently mounted mural on the side of the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre.

Age Friendliness and Walkability of Route

The major issue was snow-covered sidewalks; slushy curbs and inaccessible community mailboxes due to snow build up. This makes accessibility a challenge for mobility or visually impaired persons as well as the frail and elderly.

As an example, the sidewalk on the west side of McCarthy Rd between Paul Anka Drive and Hunt Club was improperly cleared of snow, not salted, quite icy and would be an impediment to any person who is visually impaired or mobility challenged and using a wheel chair, walker or scooter.



Inaccessible Mailboxes



Snow covered curb

Recommendations

The major issue for safety and accessibility for all persons, whether mobility or visually challenged or aged, was improperly cleared sidewalks and curbs which could result to an inability to walk or ambulate safely to access mailboxes, transit stops, the community centre or the shopping mall. Accordingly, we recommend that the City accelerate the time to clear, salt and sand sidewalks after inclement weather events. This is necessary if we are to encourage elders to stay in their homes as long as possible and is key in making Ottawa an age-friendly city.

In addition, we recommend that the traffic lights on McCarthy be reviewed as to including audible signals for the visually impaired.

Key crossing points such as those on McCarthy and Paul Anka Drive going to the Hunt Club Centre mall, should be reviewed as to the feasibility of including **Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSI)** and diagonal painted lines.

Another concern on Paul Anka Drive is overflow parking from the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre (HCRPCC) in the Hunt Club Centre parking lot. Users of the community centre that park across the street are often not crossing at the lights at McCarthy Road. This is a concern due to the high level of traffic from cars and buses.

We recommend that the City review putting a pedestrian crosswalk from the community centre to the Hunt Club Centre.

The “No Stopping” signs on Owl drive across from Holy Family elementary school need to be replaced.

Signage is needed on McCarthy, Cahill Drive West and Plante Drive to direct pedestrians to the pedestrian bridge over the Airport Parkway, the pathways around the settlement ponds, and the South Keys Transit Station.

Better lighting is needed at entry points to Paul Landry Park.

We recommend a follow up safety audit of the area around Paul Anka, Uplands Drive and Paul Landry Park where shooting incidents have taken place. We will follow up with Councillor Brockington.

Residents wishing to report accessibility issues with sidewalks, curbs, bus stops and community mailboxes should be able to contact Ottawa 311 for all of these issues.

Appendix A – McCarthy Rd, Cahill Dr. West, Airport Pedestrian Bridge to South Keys Transit Station

Safety

- Sidewalks were not well ploughed and our auditor using a motorized wheelchair had to drive on the street until we came to the pathway to the Airport Pedestrian Bridge. There was a bit of snow partially blocking access to the pathway, but our auditor managed to finesse his way through. We also noticed that there was a city plough clearing the bus stop and then working on the access to the pathway to the Airport Pedestrian Bridge as we left it.
- The Airport Bridge was well maintained, as was the pathway to the South Keys Transit Station.
- Many bus stops were not ploughed out and inaccessible for mobility-impaired persons.
- There were snow banks obstructing crossing point views however, we also observed that there were signs indicating impending city snow clearing.
- There are number of deep potholes noticed in the cross walk at Cahill Dr. West and McCarthy Rd.

Accessibility

- Accessibility on our route was very poor due to slush covered sidewalks and curbs. As indicated under safety, our auditor using a motorized wheel chair had to drive on the road because he kept getting stuck.
- Although there are smooth curb ramps at street crossings, these were not accessible to mobility-impaired persons because of snow cover.
- We noticed that a snow bank obstructed access to a community mailbox at McCarthy & Pigeon.
- There weren't audible signal devices at crosswalks and lights along McCarthy Road.

Convenience and Connectedness

- There was no pedestrian signage on the part of our route (Cahill Dr. West to Plante Drive) going to the Airport Pedestrian Bridge and the South Keys Transit Station. We didn't see any signage until we crossed the bridge and were almost at the transit station. We feel there should be multi-use signage for the pathway and for the transit station.
- Otherwise the route did connect to public transit locations, 2 public schools on Owl Dr., and the South Keys mall.

Comfort and Attractiveness

- The area we walked through was an attractive, suburban neighbourhood with no evidence of ill kept properties, garbage or graffiti.
- There were benches and shelters at bus stops and benches once we were on the pathway to the Airport Pedestrian Bridge.
- The only public art installation is a large recently mounted mural on the side of the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre.

Age-Friendliness and Walkability of Route

- The major issue was snow-covered sidewalks; slushy curbs and inaccessible community mailboxes due to snow build up.

Appendix B - Paul Anka, Uplands Drive, Shearwater Court, Paul Landry Park through to the Hunt Club Centre parking lot

Safety

This is a major route for residents of the Ottawa Community Housing Shearwater Court residents as well as those of Uplands Drive south of Paul Landry Park

- There were a number of observations regarding safety issues, namely:
 - Not feeling safe on this walk (woman auditor if she was alone)
 - Not well lit at night (no lighting at all through the park, elsewhere was adequate)
 - Sidewalks or other safe walkways not being available on all streets of this route
 - Some evidence of broken or hazardous sidewalks (sidewalks were solid but the recent snow and freezing rain made them hazardous)
 - Inadequate plowing of sidewalks
 - No lights or pedestrian crossings at Paul Anka and Uplands Dr.
 - Not feeling safely separated from road traffic at Paul Anka and Uplands Drive
 - Crossing points not free of obstruction by snow banks
 - Inadequate signage identifying the need to slow down near schools and residences for older people

Accessibility

The major issue was snow-covered sidewalks and curbs, thus limiting accessibility to mobility-impaired persons. Although the sidewalks had been initially ploughed, the city street plough went by and sprayed wet slush over the sidewalks burying them.

Convenience and Connectedness

Generally walkways link with public transit services and this route links to the Hunt Club Centre mall and the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre.

Age Friendliness and Walkability of Route

Not walkable due to snow cover for mobility challenged individuals.

Appendix C - McCarthy Rd, Hunt Club Rd, Uplands Drive, Cahill Drive West

Safety

- Metro Entrance off McCarthy – **no Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSI)** or painted diagonal lines.
- An additional sign indicating a Pedestrian Crossing is needed below the Fire Station sign on the west side of McCarthy Rd., just north of the Fire Station.
- Bus stops 9160, 8480 & 8984 on McCarthy needed snow clearing to allow wheelchair, scooter and stroller access.
- McCarthy @ Cahill Dr. West, No TWSIs.
- NW corner of McCarthy/Hunt Club, no TWSIs or pedestrian painted diagonals or at westbound right turning lane from McCarthy Road to Hunt Club Road.
- Non-functioning walk button @ NW corner of Hunt Club/McCarthy.
- Yield side @ NE Hunt Club & Uplands needs to be moved approximately 30 ft. east on Hunt Club Rd before the exit lane.
- No east/west walk buttons on north or south side of Hunt Club @ Uplands and no sound cues either (for the visually impaired).

Accessibility

- No TWSI and diagonal painted lines at Uplands and Cahill Dr. West crossing.
- No TWSI anywhere on Cahill Dr. West or Uplands Dr.
- Community mailboxes, 4146 McCarthy Rd, west side south of Plante Dr., are blocked by snow
- Community mailboxes 4366, further south on McCarthy Rd, are inaccessible due to snow.
- Sidewalk on Uplands north of Hunt Club not adequately ploughed.
- Sidewalk on Cahill Dr. West not adequately ploughed.
- Bus Stop 4184 on Cahill Dr. West sign has no bus number indicated.
- Walkway from Twyford @Paul Landry Park entrance to the Metro parking lot needs curb cut for wheel chair accessibility.
- No cross walk curb cut or pedestrian diagonal painted lines at stop on Cahill Dr. West at Twyford.
- Community mailboxes on Twyford at Cahill Park play structure are backset 15 feet without a curb cut.
- Path between 166 and 170 Twyford to the Hunt Club Centre parking lot and mall has high traffic use but was not cleared at all in order to accommodate mobility or visually challenged persons



Un-ploughed pathway



Mailbox set back 15 feet with no curb cut

Convenience and Connectedness

- Generally, there were direct routes between homes, the shopping centre, community centre and its sports fields and transit stops.
- There was a lack of pedestrian signage on the route identifying public transit locations such as the route to the South Keys Transit station using the pedestrian bridge over the Airport Parkway.

Comfort & Attractiveness

- Walmart shopping cart stuck in snow bank near 3478 McCarthy Rd across from the Quicky.
- Non-functioning community mailboxes on north side of Cahill Dr. West off of Twyford plus broken bench.
- Continuous garbage dumping in spite of signage in front of the Cardinus Coop on Twyford.

Age-Friendliness & Walkability

- The sidewalk on the west side of McCarthy Rd between Paul Anka Drive and Hunt Club was improperly cleared of snow, not salted, quite icy and would be an impediment to any person who is visually impaired or mobility challenged and using a wheel chair, walker or scooter.

Appendix D - Plante Dr., Owl Dr., Pigeon Terrace

Safety

Generally, the walkers found the route safe with the following exceptions

- Sidewalks were not well ploughed and would be difficult for mobility challenged persons to navigate.
- Bus stop 9030 at McCarthy and Pigeon was inadequately cleared of snow.
- Intersection of Plante and Owl Drives (NW corner) was flooded and the SW corner was not ploughed (ever); access only by driveway up the street.
- Community mailbox at Pigeon and McCarthy was blocked by snow.
- “No Stopping” signs between Pigeon and Cahill Drive West opposite Holy Family School were shredded or destroyed by snow clearing operations. These signs are very important as parents stop on the wrong side of the street, making it very narrow and then children/parents dart across Owl Drive to the school. This can create some very unsafe situations.

Accessibility

Generally sidewalks were snow covered and difficult to walk on. The youngest team member walked on the road. Access to the community mailboxes at Condor and Owl streets was limited due to snow and ice.

Convenience & Connectedness

Generally, there are direct routes between homes, workplaces and other destinations, such as transit stops, the two schools on Owl Drive, the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre and its sports fields and the Hunt Club Centre businesses on McCarthy Rd.

There is well-ploughed pathway through Owl Park that link to the two schools, rink, fields and play structures and that are very convenient. Pathways through the condo development at Owl and Pigeon are well maintained.

Comfort and Attractiveness

All team members enjoyed the attractive neighbourhood. Everything looked well maintained and made the walkers feel comfortable.