



Sidewalks for all seasons

Wind, rain, and snow make walking conditions unpleasant and uninviting. Poor snow clearance, pooling water, mud, and ice are significant impediments to walking.

"There's a sewer grate that overflows with water because it's blocked, especially during the winter and spring." - Walkability workshop participant

Location of pooling water, mud, etc _____



Snow removal

Snow and ice clearance can present a serious impediment for walkers. Seniors and people with mobility impairments are at even greater risk of slipping and injuring themselves.

"Not many people use the sidewalk in winter because they don't clear the snow. Most people just walk down the road."

- Walkability workshop participant

Locations with poor snow clearance _____



Missing sidewalks

In areas originally designed for cars, sidewalks are often missing. Sidewalks are needed to make it easier to get around on foot.

"When you come from the store there's no sidewalk there. It's a big mud path. Lots of people use it and there's no sidewalk. We need one."

- Walkability workshop participant

Streets with missing sidewalks _____



Space on sidewalks

Walkers need enough room to walk safely without being forced into the street by the volume of walkers.

"The sidewalk is too narrow. You often bump into the people coming towards you. Sometimes you have to walk in the road."

- Walkability workshop participant

Places with narrow sidewalks _____



Curbs and barriers

Steps, concrete blocks, and curbs limit access to people in wheelchairs, with strollers, and the elderly. Curb cuts and ramps make places more accessible.

"And if you have a scooter or chair, God help you because you can't get over the mounds."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Places with missing curb cuts and ramps _____



The best offence is a good de-fence

Walking routes are often unnecessarily blocked with fences, barriers, bollards, and gates. Removing obstacles on paths would make popular shortcuts easier and safer to use.

"The fence acts as a social divider. It makes it harder to blend and walk between the sides, so it makes that divide more real."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Unnecessary fences and barriers _____



Where there's a will, there's a walk

Fences interrupt the flow and 'connectivity' of direct walking routes. People often cut holes in fences or go over them, creating unsafe passageways and snags. Shortcuts should be formalized and made safer with pathways and good lighting.

"Most kids take the short cut and go through the fence. It's lonely and scary."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Fences with holes _____



Walking ON the beaten path

Shortcuts help people walk directly to their destinations. By formalizing these routes, and adding lighting, sidewalks, and signage, these paths would be more safe and comfortable.

"The shortcut path gets icy. It's unpaved and not level. So we hold onto the fence line as we walk down."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Difficult shortcuts _____
 Why? _____



Broken and uneven pavement

It is discouraging to walk through a neighbourhood with uneven, broken pavement and potholes.

"That street is nice, but there are some big holes in the sidewalks. You can fall and break your ankle. I fell there once, and then I got up and thought, 'fine, I'll be alright,' and then I fell again."

- Walkability workshop participant

Sidewalks with broken pavement _____



Blocked sidewalks

Light and sign posts, electrical boxes, newspaper boxes, and other objects should not block sidewalks and walkways. Walkers should have a clear path free of obstructions.

"There's a big post in the sidewalk right there and I can't get the stroller by. And my father, he's in a wheelchair. That sidewalk is not accessible."

- Walkability workshop participant

Blocked sidewalks _____
 What's in the way? _____



Clean pathways make walking pleasurable

Well maintained and clean paths are critical for making walking desirable. Garbage bins and smells are also a deterrent.

"When it is all ugly around you and nowhere nice to walk it makes you feel bad and unappreciated. We live here and want to make it beautiful."

- Walkability workshop participant

Location of garbage and smells _____



Everyone should have a place

Complete street design takes all users into account – not just vehicles. Walkers must be safely separated from auto traffic. Trees, planters, or bike lanes provide ideal buffers.

"A bike lane would help walkers. Cyclists go on the sidewalk because it is dangerous on the road. There is not enough room on the sidewalk for people much less for bikes too."

- Walkability workshop participant

Streets with separated sidewalks _____
 What is the buffer? _____



13.

Crossing signals should be located where we cross

Crosswalks are needed where people already cross the street. Mid-block crossings without signals are common around schools, malls and community centres.

"People walk across to go to bus. A lot of old people go across, but there's no crosswalk, nothing... they just cross in the middle there. It's surprising no-one has been killed there." - Walkability workshop participant

Common crossing places without signals _____



14.

Crosswalks should be clearly marked

Crosswalks need to be marked with bright road paint. When the paint wears off, it is unclear where walkers should go and where vehicles should be.

"In our neighbourhood we need the wide white stripes to make it more visible." - Walkability workshop participant

Intersections without crosswalk markings _____



15.

Crossing times

Crosswalk signals must last long enough to help people across all lanes of traffic.

"When you press the walk button, it takes ages to change. And by the time you get to the middle of the street, it's done. It's too quick."

- Walkability workshop participant

Intersections with short crossing times _____



16.

Crosswalks should be reasonably spaced

Safe street crossings should be provided at regular, short distances.

"There's no crossing for the kids or anyone. You have to take a chance and see if there are no cars coming. Or you can walk way up to the light and then come all the way back again. It's far."

- Walkability workshop participant

Places where crosswalks are too far apart _____



17.

Rounded corners increase vehicle speed

Rounded corners at intersections encourage cars to go faster. Sharp corners reduce auto speed, which makes intersections safer for walkers.

"Those people come ripping around that corner. They don't look. I don't feel safe there."
 - Walkability workshop participant.

Intersections with round corners _____



18.

Road design, for cars or people?

Wide roads with fast moving traffic make it very difficult and unsafe to get around on foot. Road design should tell drivers pedestrians are here.

"The main road is very busy, cars averaging well over 60 clicks per hour. It is six lanes wide, like a highway, so it is not walkable."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Crossings of four lanes or more _____



19.

Traffic calming

Traffic calming measures slow traffic and make crossing safer. These may include speed humps, on-street parking, and extending curbs to shorten crossings.

"I feel safer where the traffic is moving slower. The drivers are more attentive."
 - Jane's Walk participant

Places with traffic calming _____
 What kind is used? _____



20.

Parking lots should have walking routes

Many pedestrian collisions occur in parking lots around malls and neighbourhood amenities. These accidents could be prevented with clearly marked and protected pedestrian paths.

"There's lots of truck traffic in the back of the mall, there's no set walkway so you have to juggle with the trucks delivering stuff."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Parking lots without clearly marked paths _____



21.

Blind and confined spaces are unpleasant

Narrow, confined spaces and blocked views are uncomfortable for walking. They can make people feel claustrophobic and trapped, especially with high fencing.

"When I walk, I like to watch people, look at the gardens and houses."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Confined paths _____



22.

Dark places feel uncomfortable

Good lighting is key to making pedestrians feel safe.

"Going north, the lighting is so bright and nice, we feel safe, even at 2 o'clock in the morning. But going south, for the elders, it's very dark and scary, and they can fall down."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Paths with inadequate lighting _____



23.

Mixed-use and active streets

Popular walking streets are often animated with a mix of uses – like shops, housing, schools, and services – good places to sit, and bustling street activity. Well-used public spaces are safe because all people provide 'eyes on the street'.

"I like to walk in the neighbourhood because I get to know people. I talk to everybody."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Popular walking area _____

What makes it attractive? _____



24.

Accessibility

Walkways and building entrances should be accessible and useable to everyone, allowing all sidewalk users open and safe clearance.

"I don't like using some of the curb cuts because they are uneven and steep. I'm afraid my scooter will tip over."
 - Walkability workshop participant

Difficult pathways _____

Why? _____



Sit-ability

Benches and tables encourage walking by providing resting places. Street furniture also increases social interaction and makes places safer by providing ‘eyes on the street’.

“You can walk anywhere in the community but you can’t sit. If it’s too far to go, you have to sit, but there are no benches, so then you don’t want to walk.”

- Walkability workshop participant

Where are benches needed? _____



Transit stops

Good transit service is critical to good walking environments. Bus stops should be well lit and provide sheltered places for people to wait with benches and garbage cans.

“There’s no winter protection at bus stops here... often no bus shelter to wait in and some shelters don’t have seating, which makes it really difficult for old people.”

- Walkability workshop participant

Bus stops missing benches, shelters, garbage cans, or lights



Parks & public spaces

Neighbourhood parks and public spaces are important places for socializing and exercising. People tend to prefer spaces that are busy, have playgrounds, and activities in them.

“I love the park the most. It is too small but still, I love to go there. All the mothers are there, like a public square.”

- Walkability workshop participant

Great parks and other public spaces _____

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All Walkability Toolkit resource materials are free to people using them to determine walking conditions in their neighbourhood. Not for commercial use.

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