

## Engagement and Telephone Survey Research Summary

### Engagement Overview

The City undertook a comprehensive engagement process between March and July 2015 that included **three streams** of engagement. The three streams of feedback were the **Main Streets project** undertaken by Planning, Development and Assessment (PDA); multiple **public events and outreach** focused on the Pedestrian Strategy; and an **online** engagement tool MindMixer that supplemented the in-person engagement.

### Main Streets Project

The Pedestrian Strategy team partnered with the PDA Main Streets project. The focus of the Main Streets project was to identify future growth potentials in 24 of Calgary's traditional main streets. It was recognized early on in the Main Streets process that the pedestrian realm was being identified. Administration formed a partnership for these two projects. Through 13 workshops consisting of 450 participants, a number of issues and opportunities for improvement were identified.



### Public Events

The Pedestrian Strategy team held a series of public events across the city within each quadrant and downtown in March 2015. Participants were asked two questions: "What's important to you when walking?" and "What would encourage you to walk more?" A total of 136 participants attended the 5 sessions in March.

### Outreach

In April and May 2015, asking the same public-event questions City staff engaged people where they were: Stephen Avenue, shopping malls, universities and colleges, as well as LRT stations and community centres. Through 13 engagement opportunities 239 Calgarians conveyed issues and opportunities for walking.

### Online (Mindmixer)

There was opportunity for Calgarians to provide input online through the MindMixer tool throughout the engagement process. Participants could pin locations on a map and provide insight into what made that location great in terms of walkability, or presented a challenge. The format also allowed for participants to interact, offering others the ability to support or challenge the assertions made, sparking additional dialogue. Over 70 days, 170 participants made 617 interactions through the MindMixer tool.

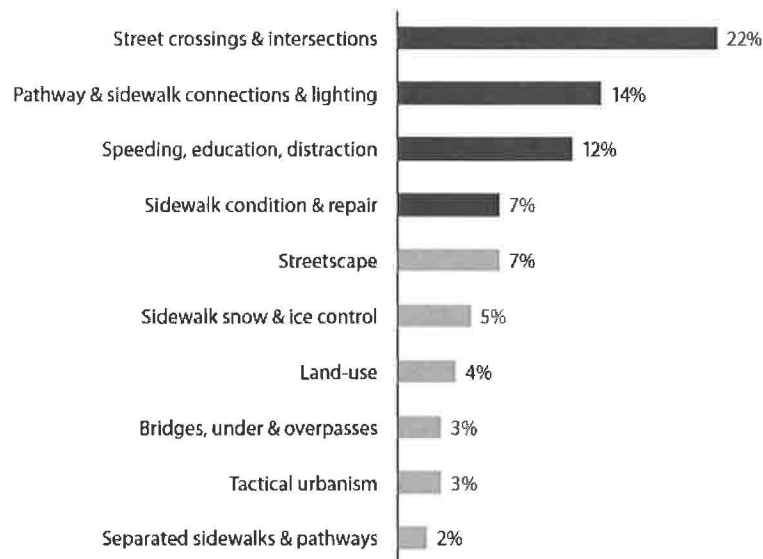
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### What We Heard

Out of all the engagement responses the project team developed 4 focus areas with a total of 37 recurring themes. The other activities that influenced the creation of the focus areas and themes were supplementary research, internal project consultation and best practices review.

The table below provides the top 10 concerns, the recurring issues combined from all engagement responses.

### Top 10 concerns (% of total responses)



### Summary – Pedestrian Strategy Telephone Survey

To help inform the development of the Pedestrian Strategy, The City of Calgary's Transportation Planning (TP) business unit engaged PRA Inc. to conduct a telephone survey on the topic of walking in Calgary. Working with The City of Calgary, PRA Inc. designed a survey instrument to capture the issues of interest. PRA provided a draft version for review by The City, which resulted in several modifications. A revised draft was then shared and the process continued until The City approved a final version for pretesting.

In a typical month when there is no snow on the ground, almost all respondents (93 per cent) report walking at least once a month to commute to work, to travel to destinations within their community, or for pleasure or exercise. The proportion of respondents who walk in months when there is snow on the ground drops significantly (76 per cent).

### METHODOLOGY

PRA pretested the survey and then conducted a stratified random telephone survey including both landline and cellphone numbers. The survey was conducted between March 30, 2015 and April 11, 2015. In total, 500 adult residents of Calgary participated in the survey. The profile of the sample was compared to key demographic characteristics and weighted to correct for discrepancies. A sample of 500 provides a theoretical error rate of +/-4/.1 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

## **CURRENT PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY**

### **COMMUTING ACTIVITY**

About 7 in 10 respondents report that they commute to work or school. Among those who work or attend school, 4 in 10 report that they commute to downtown. While driving alone is the most common method of commuting (54 per cent in no-snow months, 57 per cent in snow months), in the past 12 months respondents have used a number of other methods at least once, including public transit (27 per cent in no-snow months), walking (8 per cent in no-snow months), or cycling (3 per cent in no-snow months).

In a typical month, when there is no snow on the ground, 35 per cent report that on at least one day they walk as a major part or all of their commute to work or school. This includes 20 per cent who report walking 20 days or more in a typical month (although most of these are individuals who also take transit). Their feeling that walking is a major part of their commute is supported by the fact that the typical transit commuter walks about six blocks from their home to the transit stop and then from the transit stop to their work or school.

About 1 in 4 (23 per cent) of all respondents have school-age children attending kindergarten to grade 12. When asked what methods these children use to commute to and from school, the most common methods are being driven by parents (from 45 per cent in the no-snow months to 54 per cent in snow months) and walking (40 per cent in no-snow months, and 32 per cent in snow months). The method of transportation likely depends, in part, on the age of the child.

### **OTHER DESTINATIONS**

When asked about six neighbourhood destinations that are within about two kilometres of their home, almost all respondents (98 per cent) report that they visit at least one on a regular basis. The most common destinations regularly visited are: grocery stores (90 per cent); parks, playgrounds, and community centres (73 per cent); and restaurants (73 per cent).

Thinking of transportation to these, as well as to other social and personal destinations in their neighbourhood, in a typical month when there is no snow on the ground, 8 in 10 (78 per cent) report that they walk. This includes 1 in 5 (20 per cent) who report walking 20 or more times in a month. These numbers drop significantly in months when snow is on the ground. Only about 6 in 10 (57 per cent) walk in a typical month, including 1 in 10 (10 per cent) who walking 20 or more times a month.

### **WALKING FOR PLEASURE OR EXERCISE**

Over 8 in 10 respondents (85 per cent) report that they walk, run, or jog in their neighbourhood at least once in a typical month when there is no snow on the ground. This includes 1 in 4 (26 per cent) who do so almost daily (20 or more times a month). In months when there is snow on the ground, walking for pleasure or exercise falls to about 6 in 10 (57 per cent).

### **ATTITUDES TO WALKING**

Most Calgarians have a very positive attitude to walking. Almost all agree (at least somewhat) that walking is a good way to get fit and stay healthy (99 per cent) and that walking reduces their impact on the environment (88 per cent). Most respondents — 80 per cent — agree that Calgary is a good city for walking, although only about half (45 per cent) strongly agree, suggesting that for the other half, more could be done to improve the city's walkability. Fewer agree that walking is a convenient way of getting around (64 per cent).

Generally, while Calgarians report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood or downtown during the day, they are more likely to have concerns walking alone at night in either location. Only 44 per cent strongly agree they feel safe walking alone at night in their neighbourhood, while 12 per cent strongly agree that they feel safe walking alone at night in downtown. Younger respondents and men are more likely to report feeling safe walking at night.

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Asked to select one out of four statements that best describes their attitude to walking as a form of transportation, over half (56 per cent) say they would like to walk more, whether they already walk a lot (26 per cent) or currently do not walk often (30 per cent).

### **BARRIERS TO WALKING AND CHANGES TO ENCOURAGE MORE WALKING**

The single most common barrier to walking as identified by respondents is that walking is said to be impractical (28 per cent): the distances they have to travel are too great; they need their vehicle for work or to carry items (e.g., groceries); or opportunities to walk more are often the same times they have children with them. Almost 1 in 4 (23 per cent) indicate they are just too busy to find the time to walk more, while almost 1 in 5 (19 per cent) say the weather prevents them from walking more.

Asked what they would say to encourage people to walk more, most would focus on the health or fitness benefits. Respondents say they would explain the health benefits of walking (23 per cent), that walking is good exercise (19 per cent), or that it is simply good for you (10 per cent). It is something credited with making people feel better because it is a stress release (6 per cent) and helps with losing weight (1 per cent).

Participants were asked to consider 16 different changes that might encourage them to walk more often. Of these 16, the top five changes that would encourage them to walk more or much more are ensuring snow is cleared off sidewalks and pathways (60 per cent would walk more or much more if this was the case); if sidewalks, paths and streets are well lit (47 per cent); if The City continued sidewalks or pathways to fill in gaps (46 per cent); if there were more businesses or destinations in their neighbourhood (44 per cent); or by making it easier to and safer to cross the street (38 per cent). The top five appear to be same regardless of whether respondents report wanting to walk more or not.

### **DESTINATIONS AS A DRIVER FOR INCREASED WALKING**

Although these five may have the greatest impact on the frequency residents walk, only having more businesses or destinations in my neighbourhood of the 16 changes was significantly related to Calgarians' overall perception of Calgary being a good place to walk. Although it did not rank as the most mentioned way to increase walking, it indicates that people's perceptions of Calgary are largely driven by having destinations that are close enough to their home that they can walk there. It is not only about having infrastructure (i.e., clear paths, safety) or promoting lifestyles, but about having destinations within neighbourhoods that would improve the perception of Calgary being a walkable city.