



Liveable Community Project

Vaughan

*8-80 Cities
Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Vaughan.*





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Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport

The Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport was created in 2005 with a mandate to support and deliver programs promoting healthy lifestyles and healthy choices in the province of Ontario. The Ministry recognizes that health is determined by complex interactions between social and economic factors, the physical environment and individual behaviour.

The Ministry focuses on a number of key priority areas including active living, healthy eating, injury prevention, Ontario's smoke-free strategy, and mental health. As part of its work the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport has established the Healthy Community Fund (HCF), designed to assist and support the projects and organizations that are dedicated to helping Ontarians lead a healthy and active lifestyle.

The HCF plays a key role in helping the Ministry achieve its vision of "Healthy communities working together and Ontarians leading healthy and active lives." The Fund consists of three streams, one of which is the HCF Grants Project Stream. The grants stream provides funding opportunities for eligible organizations to address two or more of the following health promotion priorities:

- Physical activity, sport and recreation;
- Healthy eating;
- Tobacco use/exposure;
- Substance and alcohol misuse;
- Injury prevention; and
- Mental health

For more information about HCF, please visit the Ministry's website at:

<http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/healthy-communities/hcf/default.asp>



Vaughan

The City of Vaughan is a model community that places citizens first through service excellence. We are a smart City that gives a competitive edge in the marketplace and promotes a safe, livable and sustainable environment. The City of Vaughan Department of Recreation and Culture is committed to providing a range of quality recreation and cultural programs in a fair, accessible and equitable manner so as to ensure that all Vaughan citizens have a maximum opportunity for the safe, enjoyable, satisfying, and creative, use of their leisure time. As identified in the Vaughan Vision 2020, it is a strategic priority of the City is to enhance and ensure community safety, health and wellness.

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Forward by Gil Peñalosa

It has never been more obvious that the North American urban norm characterized by design and development dictated by the personal automobile must change. Obesity rates have never been higher, our population never older, our environment never more tested, resources never so strained and in recent memory, the economy never so delicate.

How we build and live in our cities affects all of these mounting challenges. We need to create cities that encourage physical activity, reduce our reliance of fossil fuels, provide mobility options for people young and old, and support our recovering economy in a sustainable and responsible way.

Cities across the province are growing at an incredible rate. In the Greater Toronto Area alone, the population is expected to grow by almost 50% by 2036. The urgency to change our normal development practices and shift to a focus on people-oriented design cannot be overstated. With newly elected officials across the province, we need to take advantage of fresh ideas. Our cities need to change and they need to change fast.

We are confident that with the support of dedicated local champions; gutsy politicians who uphold the general interest; and innovative members of the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, we can begin to develop healthy and sustainable people-oriented communities.

At 8-80 Cities we hope that through our community engagement projects, such as the one this report is based on, we can help contribute to this change.

I invite you to read this report, and I hope that it will help inspire you to push for the change we need to develop our cities in a new and more sustainable way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gil Peñalosa'.

Gil Peñalosa
Executive Director 8-80 Cities

8-80 Cities is a Canadian-based non-profit organization with an international outlook. Our goal is to contribute to the creation of vibrant cities and healthy communities, where residents live happier and enjoy great public places.

We promote walking and bicycling as activities and urban parks, trails and other public spaces as great places for ALL.

These activities and public spaces improve our environment, advance economic development, boost and complement our transportation systems, make better recreation for all, and enhance our personal and public health.

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Executive Summary

Located north of Toronto, the City of Vaughan is Canada's fastest growing municipality. The city grew by 80.2% between 1996 and 2006 and is anticipated to grow by another 80% by 2031. Vaughan is an amalgamation of a number of historic communities, including Woodbridge, Maple, Thornhill, Concord and Kleinburg.

Vaughan is heavily dependent on the automobile. According to the most recent Canadian census, 79% of people commuted to work in single-occupancy vehicles, and another 8% rode as passengers. Only 2% of commuters walked or biked to work, while only 10% took public transportation; according to Money Sense's 2010 list of Canada's Best Places to Live, Vaughan was ranked 179th of 179 communities in terms of walking and cycling to work. However, considering Vaughan's suburban settlement patterns and the lack of safe cycling infrastructure on its roadways, it is no wonder so few people walk or bike to work.

While Vaughan is projected to grow by another 80% by 2031, the city's footprint is physically constrained by the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Ontario Greenbelt to the north, Markham to the east and Brampton to the west. Vaughan's suburban character will be challenged by increasing pressures to intensify development. This presents the city with a unique opportunity to invest in better pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and better parks and public places.

On February 25th, 2011, the 8-80 Cities team was called to Vaughan to lead a presentation and workshop on increasing walking and cycling to schools across the city. The day was a first for the city as it brought together elected officials, City of Vaughan staff, York Region staff, principals, teachers and students from across the city. The Vaughan Schools Workshop's most important contribution was to get leaders from the various bureaucracies talking with one another about the steps necessary to get more students walking and cycling.

The recommendations in this report are distilled directly from the input we received throughout the day.



Community Snapshot

- Fastest growing municipality in Canada; grew by a rate of 80.2% between 1996 and 2006 and has nearly doubled since 1991 ⁱ
- Ranked 55th on Money Sense's list of Canada's Best Places to Live; ranked 179th of 179 ranked communities in terms of walking and cycling to work ⁱⁱ
- Wide arterial roads make walking and cycling difficult for the public

Population

2006: **238,866**

2001: **182,022**

2001 to 2006 growth rate: **31.2%** ⁱⁱⁱ

Population Projections

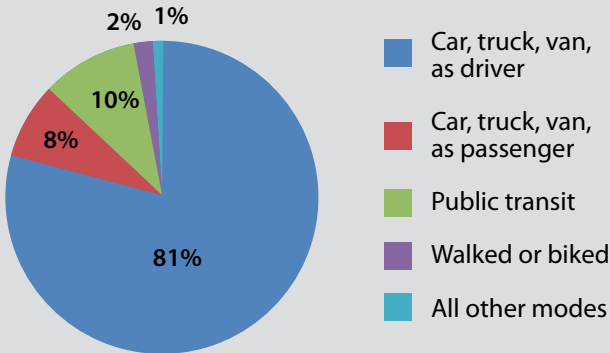
2031: **430,000**

2006 to 2031 growth rate: **80%** ^{iv}

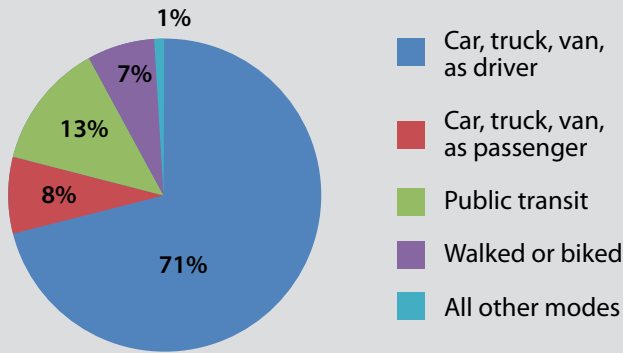
Vaughan median after-tax income – all census families: **84,312**

Ontario median after-tax income – all census families: **59,377**

Mode of transportation to work (Vaughan)



Mode of transportation to work (Ontario)





Chapter 1

Liveable Communities for All: Creating an 8-80 City

Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Vaughan.

What is an 8-80 City?

8-80 Cities are communities for people.

They are cities that reflect social equality and promote people's happiness in their urban form.

They nurture our need to be physically active by providing safe, accessible and enjoyable places for everyone to walk and bike in their daily routines.

They recognize that people are social creatures and prioritize human interaction by fostering vibrant streets and great public places where people can rest, relax and play.

8-80 Cities encourage sustainable and healthy lifestyles for people regardless of age, gender, ability or social status



The 8-80 Rule

When roads are built, planners do not build one road for new drivers and a separate road for experienced drivers.

When creating sidewalks and bikeways, we cannot make them accessible only to experienced cyclists and agile pedestrians.

8-80 Cities has created a rule of thumb to help individuals when they are evaluating bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure: We have dubbed it the 8-80 Rule.

Step 1:

Think of a child that you love and care for who is approximately 8 years of age. This could be a child, grandchild, sister, brother, cousin etc.

Step 2:

Think of an older adult, approximately 80 years of age, who you love and care for. This could be a parent, grandparent, friend etc.

Step 3:

Now, think about the pedestrian infrastructure and bikeways in your community. Would you send your child to cross that intersection? Would you send your grandmother out to buy milk riding her bike? If so, then the sidewalk or bikeway is safe. If not, then it must be improved.

Every citizen, including all elected officials and staff as well as community members should keep this rule in mind when thinking about their neighbourhoods.

What if the 8-80 Rule guided everything we did in our community including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, parks and other public spaces? Eventually we'd end up with a great city for all.



Key Concepts for Creating People-oriented Communities

The Benefits of an 8-80 City

A city is only
a means
to a way of **life.**

If we choose to plan and design our cities for people, we must do it in a way that maximizes people's happiness and quality of life. For decades, city planning has been focused on cars' mobility. A human-scaled approach to planning recognizes the benefits to providing safe and convenient facilities for people to walk and bike as a means of transportation and recreation. This approach also emphasizes the importance of parks, trails, and public spaces as great places for interaction and community cohesion.

Walking and bicycling: More than just fun and games

It would be easy to write a laundry list of the perfect conditions needed to make the case for active transportation. These could include increased public concern and awareness about environmental degradation, climate change, a global economic crisis, an obesity epidemic, and worsening traffic congestion. Today, all of these conditions exist, creating a perfect storm of challenges that make investing in safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities a relevant solution to many of today's problems.

8-80 Cities has developed the **EARTH umbrella concept**, which represents a shelter from the storm of challenges we are facing today and highlights some of the most significant benefits of walking and bicycling and great public places.

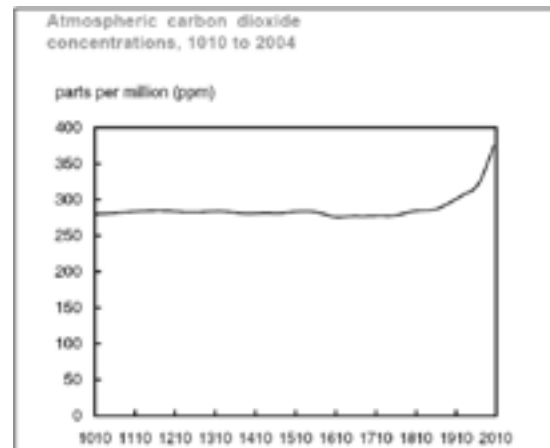
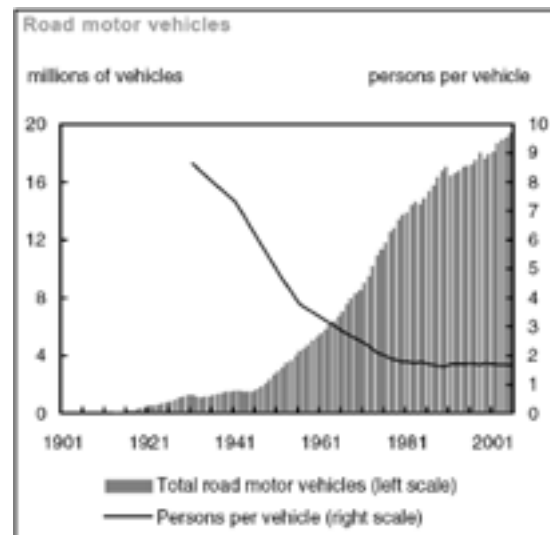


The **EARTH** concept:

Environment

Only a few years ago, scientists questioned the very existence of human-induced climate change. Now there is general agreement within the scientific community that global atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) such as carbon dioxide have increased markedly as a result of human activities, particularly through the use of fossil fuels and land use change.^v In 2004, emissions from the transportation sector accounted for 25% of all the GHG emitted in Canada. Private vehicles alone (passenger cars and trucks) accounted for over 11% of total GHG emissions. With such a significant portion of our emissions released through transportation, moving toward more sustainable transportation options such as public transit, bicycling, and walking could drastically reduce Canada's carbon footprint.

Shifting away from private car use and toward non-motorized forms of transportation is less daunting than one might think. Research shows that a large percentage of trips made by car are within walking and bicycling distance. Metrolinx, the regional transportation authority in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), reported in 2008 that 40% of the total trips taken across the GTHA were within biking distance (under 5 km) and 17% were within walking distance (under 2 km).



The number of motor vehicles on the road has increased sharply in the last 30 years, as the number of people per vehicle has decreased. A dramatic rise in carbon dioxide, the most prevalent greenhouse gas, has accompanied this trend.

Economic Activity

In the 19th century, wealth was measured in terms of land, making land the most valuable of any asset. By the 20th century, the market's focus had shifted to capital. Today, knowledge is at the heart of the economy. Attracting and retaining highly educated, creative people is the greatest economic challenge facing cities in the 21st century.

In an ever-more globalized world, the most skilled people—be they carpenters, artists, or doctors—can live anywhere they choose. Why live in Vaughan and not Vancouver, Paris or Sao Paulo? A walkable, bikeable community is a critical factor in creating lively, attractive neighbourhoods, and quality of life has become a main element of economic competitiveness.

Mercer's Quality of Living survey, used by thousands of companies to decide where to locate their offices, recognizes the importance of active transportation. Pedestrian and bicycling facilities positively influence 5 of the 10 categories used in the survey to determine the best places to set up a business.^{vi}

Vibrant commercial districts, and the small businesses which populate them, rely heavily on foot traffic. Walkable, bikeable neighbourhoods are safer, more attractive, and more pleasant to shop in. Traffic calming is so good for business that business owners in affected areas often go from initial fear over the loss of parking to passionate support for further traffic calming, both in their own neighbourhood and in others.^{vii}

Tourism is a billion dollar industry. Have you ever heard anyone return from a vacation in Paris and talk about how beautiful the highways were? Great public spaces, pedestrian plazas, parks and trails attract tourists and generate economic activity. In 2007, tourism in Canada generated \$19.7 billion in government revenue alone.^{viii} Tourists in urban areas are primarily pedestrians. Increased investment in the unique beauty of Canadian cities through well-placed trails, parks and public spaces will add to the appeal—and bank accounts—of our neighbourhoods.



Local business owners in Copenhagen had a huge boost in economic activity from increased foot traffic after car dominated streets were replaced with pedestrian-only streets.

Recreation

In the year 1700, most physical activity occurred in the workplace. In North America in 2008, only about 5% of our physical activity occurred in the workplace, while recreational activities accounted for the highest percentage.

Walking, bicycling, and running are now some of the most popular forms of physical activities in the world. In addition, current trends show that people are turning increasingly to unscheduled and unorganized activities such as walking and bicycling as a form of daily exercise.

According to Statistics Canada's 2005 Community Health Survey, walking is by far the most popular form of physical activity in Canada, with bicycling ranked in the top five.^x These activities are free of charge, enjoyable in groups or alone, and accessible to all ages.

In order to build communities that facilitate participation in these activities, it is important to provide city dwellers with the facilities that encourage spending time outdoors. Well-maintained and managed trails, urban parks and public spaces allow residents to enjoy, relax and take pride in their city.

In addition, more localized recreational facilities encourage more frequent use by community members because people have both a physical and mental connection to them. That is, these facilities are physically accessible to users through a short walk or bike ride and are mentally connected to them as a result of frequent events, festivals and promotions. For example, you are probably more inclined to take your dog for a walk on a Thursday evening if you can walk to the nearby neighbourhood trail or park as opposed to driving to it. You may even be more inclined to take that walk if you can grab a coffee on your way, or if there are interesting things happening in and around the trails or park.

Recreation is something more than what people do on the weekend; by building and improving upon community trails, parks, greenways and public spaces, it can become part of people's daily routine and serve as a way to unwind, connect with nature, and to just have fun.



Figure 1: The ways in which we get our physical activity have changed drastically in the past 300 years, as recreation has come to play an increasingly important role in our lives and our physical health.

Transportation

Transportation is about moving people, not about moving cars. Yet from the way some North American cities have been built, it would appear the opposite is true. Thirty-six percent of GTHA residents do not have a driver's license.^x To live up to the Canadian principles of equity and accessibility, our cities must be built to allow the mobility of those who cannot—or choose not to—drive.

Furthermore, providing safe, extensive infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians has been proven to alleviate congestion. Such infrastructure paves the way for affordable, convenient transportation, which in turn can have a profound impact on the economy. Traffic congestion contributes to delays in moving goods, lost productivity and higher fuel costs. Congestion costs Ontario over \$5 billion in lost GDP every year.^{xi}

Cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam have invested heavily in bicycling infrastructure and have achieved significant results. In Copenhagen, bike mode share^{xii} has gone from less than 10% in 1975 to 36% in 2004, outperforming automobile mode share. With 329 km of cycling tracks in place, Copenhagen has continuously been improving its infrastructure.^{xiii} Furthermore, it recognizes that increasing active transportation use is a matter of planning-for- people and creating a cultural shift.



Transportation infrastructure must be designed for the mobility of all users, not just drivers.

Health

Many Canadians today find themselves driving to the gym to walk on a treadmill. Meanwhile, 23% of Canadians over the age of 18 are obese.^{xiv} Obesity is at the root of myriad diseases and health problems, and inactivity is one of the major contributing factors to obesity. Sedentary living is creating a huge strain on our healthcare system and our wallets.

Today, health experts agree that 30 minutes of moderate physical exercise daily can cut vulnerability to heart disease in half, control blood pressure, and reduce cholesterol. Experts say that exercise also increases energy levels and improves moods, sleeping habits and digestion.^{xv}

Building convenient and accessible pedestrian and cycling infrastructure makes it easier for physical activity to become a part of our daily routine. A study from the American Journal of Preventive Medicine published in 2004 found that every additional hour spent in a car was linked to a 6% increase in a person's chances of becoming obese. Conversely, each kilometer walked was linked to a 4.8% decrease in the chance of becoming obese.^{xvi}

Furthermore, as illustrated in Figure 2, obesity rates for several highly industrialized countries consistently drop when alternative forms of transportation, such as walking, cycling, and public transit, are used.

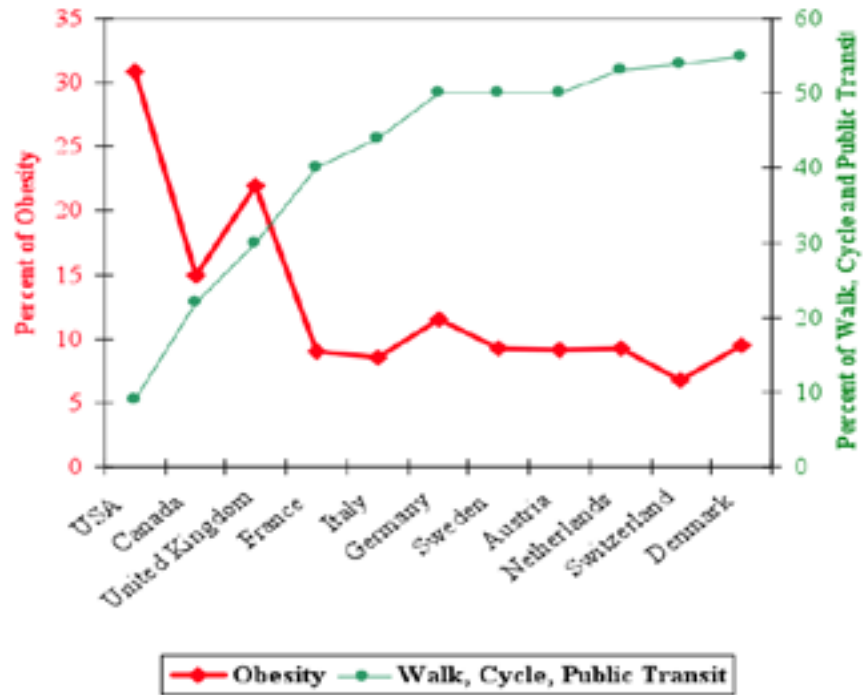


Figure 2: Obesity rates fall sharply with increased walking, bicycling and public transit use.

Characteristics of a Great Place

Public spaces have both “Emotional” and “Quantifiable” benefits.

The “Emotional” benefits greatly increase the quality of life of public spaces’ users and local residents. They are social equalizers and sources of happiness for community members. They also strengthen communities and improve safety in neighbourhoods.

The “Quantifiable” benefits of public spaces are ones that can be calculated in terms of several different criteria. They provide benefits that increase property values, increase tourism, increase economic activity, lower healthcare costs, and create greener and more environmentally sound cities by reducing GHG emissions.^{xvii}

Creating great public places is one of the main characteristics of a successful city. One challenge that many cities face is the lack of such places and poor connections to surrounding neighbourhoods. It is difficult to define what exactly makes a great place; it is a subjective topic. Although each great place will be different to almost anyone, NYC’s Project for Public Spaces has come up with some common characteristics of great public spaces.^{xviii}

Good places to sit



It is simple but often overlooked. Seating is critical to creating an inviting space for people to rest, people watch and/or interact.

Sociability/People in groups



People meeting in groups and being social with one another is an indicator of a great public space.

Diversity



A place with a diversity of ages, ethnicities and abilities is another indicator of a great public space that is accessible and inviting to all.

Affection



People are generally affectionate when they feel comfortable in a place

High proportion of women



Women are much more discerning when it comes to choosing a place. If there are a high proportion of women in a place it usually means the area is safe, clean and aesthetically pleasing.

In a general sense, these symptoms paint the image of a safe, socially active, comfortable, and happy place. The place can be either a neighbourhood corner, a park, an entire community, a district, or a whole city. A variety of these places connected by a great active transportation system can create a city that has so many great places in it that it eventually becomes one great city. This is the goal of many cities; however, as big as they are, cities tend to forget that city life blooms on the street corner.



Chapter 2

The Liveable Community Project: Engaging Vaughan

Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Vaughan.

Liveable Community Project Methodology

At 8-80 Cities, we recognize that citizens hold the greatest expertise when it comes to the communities in which they live, work and play. 8-80 Cities' Liveable Community Project uses this idea as the basis for its approach to community engagement in promoting more walking and cycling-friendly places. 8-80 Cities spent time in the City of Vaughan, where we held a Schools Workshop with elected officials, city and regional departmental staff, public health and school principals, teachers and students to increase dialogue and generate ideas about how to get children and youth to more actively walk and bike to school.

City of Vaughan Presentations

9:00 – 10:00, Friday, February 25th, 2011

Description of the event:

After an introduction by Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, city staff gave presentations on their Environmental, Transportation, Active Together, Green Directions and Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plans and held a question-and-answer period. The goal of the session was to introduce participants to the city's ongoing projects to encourage walking and cycling.



Mayor Bevilacqua encourages participants to think big

8-80 Cities Presentation

Moving from Talking to Doing

10:00 – 12:00, Friday, February 25th, 2011

Description of the event:

After the City of Vaughan presentations, Gil Penalosa held a participatory presentation entitled Moving from Talking to Doing. Gil presented the case for creating more walkable, bikeable spaces with great urban places alongside international best practices. The 8-80 Cities team then led a lively discussion on improving the livability of Vaughan.



Participants discuss practical improvements to make transportation routes to schools more walkable and bikeable

8-80 Cities Presentation

Re-creating Places Overview

1:30 – 2:00, Friday, February 25th, 2011

After lunch, Gil Penalosa made a presentation to workshop participants on Re-Creating Places. Gil spoke about the need to revitalize parks and public places through a participatory place-making process. Gil touched on the key components of successful parks and public places, several rules of thumb such as the Power of 10 and described a successful revitalization project in Guadalajara, Mexico.



Participants discuss practical improvements to make transportation routes to schools more walkable and bikeable

8-80 Cities Workshop

Re-creating Places Activity

2:00 – 4:00, Friday, February 25th, 2011

8-80 Cities asked participants to break up into groups to begin discussing strategies for revitalizing schools with the goal of encouraging more students to walk and bicycle. The 8-80 Cities team handed out large aerial photographs of an unnamed Vaughan school and asked participants to think about short- and long-term goals that would encourage more walking and cycling to school. We asked participants to draw their specific improvements on their maps. We also asked participants to think about the stakeholders who should be engaged to encourage such changes.

After lengthy discussions, groups presented their findings to the larger group. 8-80 Cities also kept track of the specific improvements on chart paper at the front of the room. Participants were then given coloured dots to place next to the improvements they thought would go furthest to increase the number of students walking and cycling to school.

This report's recommendations are distilled directly out of the ideas expressed by workshop participants.



Participants discuss short- and long-term goals



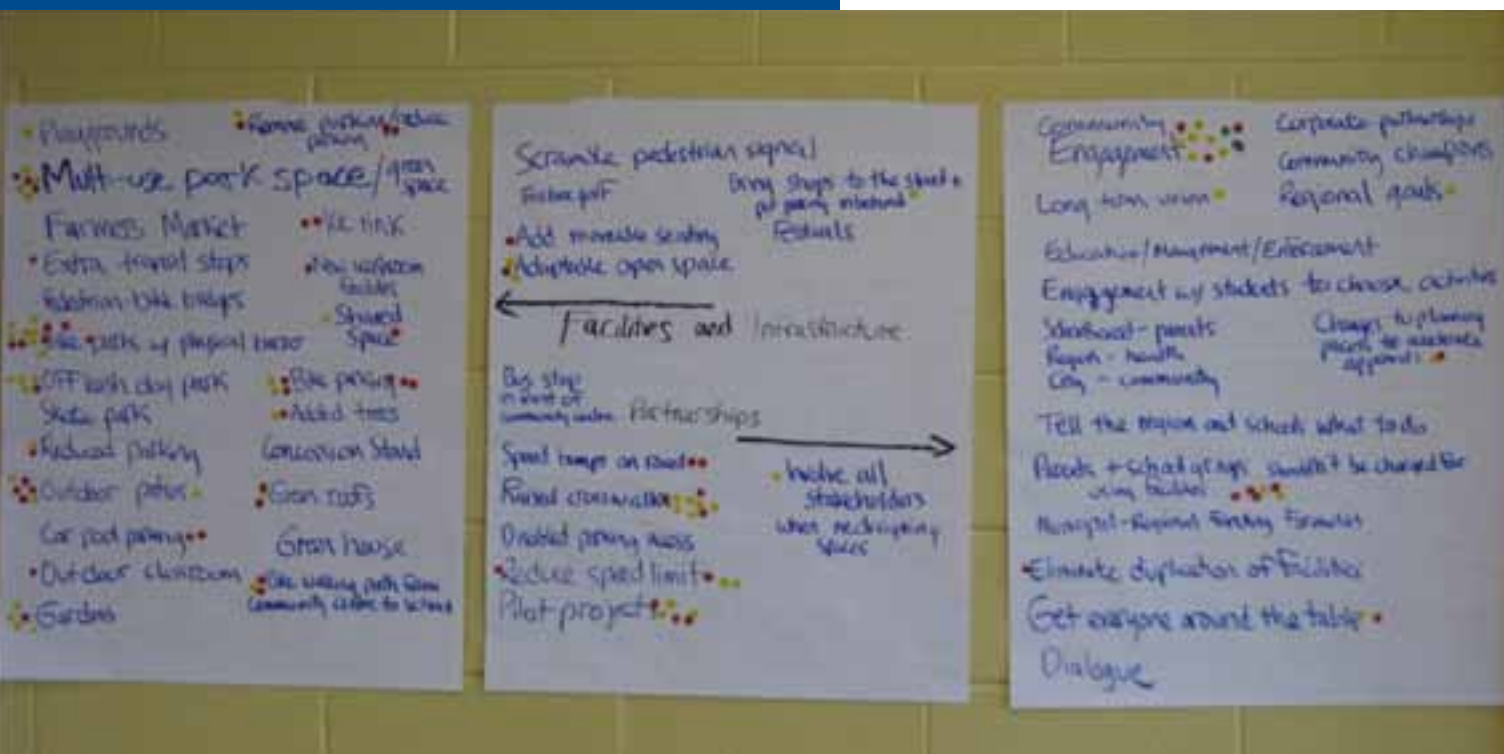
Participants draw out their suggested improvements on maps



Participants present improvements to the larger group



Dot-mocracy allows participants to vote on their favourite improvements



Physically separated bike lanes, raised crosswalks and more community engagement all ranked high amongst participants

Recommendations

The following recommendations stem from the most popular improvements suggested during the Re-Creating Places workshop. Participants felt these improvements would have the greatest impact on increasing the number of students walking and cycling to school. We have developed these ideas further in this section.

Keep the discussion going. Develop an advisory committee with representation from the City of Vaughan, York Region, York Region District School Board, York Catholic District School Board and the public to develop and implement policies that would encourage students to walk and bike to school more often.

- This advisory committee would create a strong business case for creating more walkable, bikeable communities with great parks and public places. The members would also support extensive local community engagement to gain input into the process from citizens, businesses and bureaucrats. This committee would also be tasked with building partnerships with businesses and community groups.

Create a network of physically separated bike lanes along arterial roads.

- The City of Portland conducted a major study to understand the needs of their citizens with respect to cycling facilities. They found that 1% of their population cycle regardless of cycling facilities. Another 7% cycle if cycling infrastructure gives the perception of safety (this includes bike lanes with painted lines), and 30% do not cycle regardless of the infrastructure provided. Surprisingly, 62% of the population indicated they would cycle if the streets had physically separated bike lanes. ^{xix}
- The City of Portland's study indicates that safety is a crucial motivating factor shaping individual cycling preferences.
- The City of Vaughan should work to build a network of physically separated bikeways that would enable people to go North/South and East/West in a safe and convenient manner.
- Building high-quality cycling infrastructure in Vaughan faces bureaucratic challenges. Many schools in Vaughan are located on arterial roads which fall under the jurisdiction of York Region. The City of Vaughan should focus on developing a strategy with York Region and the school boards to create a unique vision for to create a network of safe and convenient physically separated bike lanes.



A pedestrian-friendly street in Ottawa, Ontario where there is physical separation between the different users of the street.

Increase traffic-calming measures including reduced speed limits on neighbourhood roads, speed bumps and raised crosswalks.

- Speed limits have a remarkable impact on the severity of incidents resulting from collision. Evidence from the United Kingdom suggests that about 45% of pedestrians hit by cars travelling at 30 m / hr (48 km / hr) are severely injured or killed. Incredibly, only 5% of pedestrians hit by cars traveling at 20 m / hr (32 km / hr) are severely injured or killed. 8-80 Cities recommends reducing speed limits and increasing traffic-calming measures on neighbourhood roads.^{xx}
- Raised crosswalks are marked pedestrian crossings constructed at a higher elevation than the adjacent roadway. In high pedestrian-traffic areas, such as those around schools, they are important tools that compel drivers to slow down to the posted speed limit. According to the New York City Department of Transportation's Street Design Manual, raised crosswalks not only improve drivers' awareness of pedestrians but allow for "convenient pedestrian circulation between high foot-traffic destinations on opposite sides of a street."^{xxi}

Create a policy framework that encourages more outdoor patios and better street furniture

- Participants also wanted to see more outdoor patios and better street furniture
- Outdoor patios at cafes and restaurants add vitality to public places. Since people are naturally drawn to other people, patios bring people outdoors, adding eyes to the streets and creating a sense of place. Fantastic street furniture is another important component of vibrant parks and public space. Moveable tables and chairs allow people to modify their environment in ways that suit them best. During hot summer days, people can move their chairs into shaded areas and adjust them as the shade moves with the position of the sun. Such options create more flexible urban space by allowing people to sit alone or assemble in groups. Moveable furniture also respects the needs of different groups who may need more or fewer seating areas.
- For all of these reasons, 8-80 Cities recommends creating a policy framework that encourages more outdoor patios and adding moveable furniture to parks and public spaces across Vaughan.



Moveable tables and chairs, such as those shown at Bryant Park in New York City, allow people to adapt the public space for their needs.

Provide more cycling facilities. Add more bike parking to transit nodes and hubs, schools, malls and along major streets. Add more bike lockers to transit hubs and malls.

- People ride bicycles for many different reasons. Some cycle for recreation, while others cycle to pick up groceries or commute to work. Regardless of the reasons for cycling, a city with an active population of bicycle users has fewer cars on the road, releases less greenhouse gas emissions and has a healthier population. However, people will never switch to bicycling without adequate infrastructure promoting safety and convenience.
- 8-80 Cities recommends that the City of Vaughan work with York Region and the school boards to continue its investment in cycling infrastructure by adding more facilities such as bike parking to major streets, schools and other destinations and bike lockers to transit hubs and malls.



Ring and post bicycle parking in downtown Collingwood

The City of Vaughan, York Region and the school boards should develop a strategy to allow parents and school groups to use municipal, regional and education facilities free of charge.

- Our schools, arenas and community centres are the hubs of our communities. These spaces act as focal points for our children, youth, parents, athletes, book lovers, seniors and other civically minded people. In too many cases, our schools are open only Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 4:00 ten months of the year. We should devise partnerships between community groups and our civic facilities to offer free access to these spaces to encourage more people to get out into our communities.

The City of Vaughan should use pilot projects as a novel method of creating a more active community

- When considering new programming, the city should act boldly and try out new and creative ideas using pilot projects. Pilot projects send a message to citizens that the city is interested in making positive changes. However, since the projects are not permanent, they allow an objective evaluation of the programming. If the pilot doesn't work, then the project can be scrapped. If the pilot works, then it opens the door to making the project permanent.
- Pilot projects such as Car Free Sunday programs, physically separated bike lanes and revitalized parks and public spaces could be implemented across Vaughan.



Chapter 3

Moving from Talking to Doing

Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Vaughan.

Moving from Talking to Doing

NEXT STEPS



A group of concerned citizens and stakeholders have the power to advocate real change.

Applying this form of people-oriented planning can help cities become more liveable, enjoyable, and overall world-class destinations. But how do we turn these ideas into action? 8-80 Cities has spent many years working on walking, bicycling, parks, public spaces and trails in cities. After reflecting on its successes, 8-80 Cities has identified the following five elements that are necessary in order to move from talking to doing:

Leadership

A movement needs many leaders. Having passionate, committed and knowledgeable leaders can inspire people to not only understand these issues but also act upon them. It's not about knowing everything; it's about motivating others and making them understand the importance of your work.

Planning and transportation issues can be incredibly complex and controversial. However, by having leaders who are more focused on doing the right things rather than doing things "right," cities can begin to develop on a human-focused scale.

Leaders often occupy positions of power, but this is not always necessary. You can become a leader in your community by gathering the knowledge and resources necessary to inspire and create action. Getting involved in relevant community events is a great way to get yourself connected to other actors within your community. Even if you are not leading, it is imperative that you make your voice heard by those who are. This can be done through emails, letters, petitions or events.

Although having passionate, progressive leaders in your area makes it much easier to implement change, don't give up if this is not the case. There are still four more factors that can turn [talking into doing](#).



Ann C. Fenton

Physical Education Teacher
Montgomery Village Public School
Orangeville, Ontario, Canada

Ann was fed up with the chaos and idling that accompanied the drop-off time in the morning at her school, so she **took action!** When the students came back to school after the Christmas holiday, the school parking lot was blocked off and five zones were set up outside of the school where parents could drop off their children. Volunteers would help the children walk to school the remaining kilometre—in the middle of winter! Initially, many parents were upset with this change, but Ann dressed up as a pylon, the kids loved her, and parents soon warmed up to the idea as well.

Political Will

When it comes to building infrastructure in a city, community members can only do so much. The plans and proposals for new roads, trails, public spaces and parks need to come from our politicians. It takes guts to take an innovative idea and move forward with it—but the rewards of being that person are considerable and long lasting. In Copenhagen, the first steps toward improved public spaces met with an intense backlash on multiple fronts. Not only were business owners worried about the impact on their profits, but drivers were worried about decreased car mobility. Despite this reaction, the leaders in office had a long-term vision that they stuck with—and now residents are grateful for their politicians' foresight. With the improved economic activity and decreased congestion brought about by their plans, Copenhagen's placemakers proved that great politicians and city staff with the courage to create real change can build world-class cities.

That having been said, politicians work for the people. If there is no visible constituent support for an issue, then politicians will be much less likely to fight for it. We cannot expect politicians with so many matters on their minds to focus on issues that are not being brought to their attention. Local groups and citizens must work together to make these topics visible to politicians as well as encourage them to make the gutsy decisions necessary to create real change.



One of Copenhagen's successful pedestrian plazas

“Doers” in the public sector

It's not enough for politicians to talk about their goals and ideas; someone needs to do the work to follow through on those promises. An excellent example of this is Janette Sadik-Khan, Transportation Commissioner for New York City who was inspired by the cycling facilities that she saw around the world. Thirty days after she announced New York City's new bike plan, a physically separated bicycle lane was set up on 9th Avenue. Sadik-Khan is now transforming the meaning of transportation in New York City and being hailed as a visionary for her actions.

It is a common theme within the public sector to find different departments, who often work on similar or neighbouring infrastructure, to lack communication or cohesion. Often you will find work being duplicated because certain departments don't think to, or prefer not to, work together. Local organizations, citizens, and politicians must work to bring these departments together in order to improve co-operation and efficiency. For example, many municipal, regional and provincial transportation and public works departments build infrastructure without consulting each other. This often leads to different areas of the same road or public space being worked on at different times or with different characteristics. This is not only a waste of time, but a massive waste of money. Promoting a more cohesive communication system will help to align departments in both principle and practice. This alignment will in turn lead to more efficient and effective action.

Everyone in the public sector should remember that citizens are paying them to get things done, not to have 20 reasons why things can't be done.



New York City's first physically separated bicycle lane.

Community Engagement

It takes the work of a strong and active community to make change in our cities. Everyone has their own cause, so if you aren't writing letters and making calls to city officials, then someone else is. If city representatives are not hearing about an issue, they have no way of knowing that it is a priority to their constituents. So citizens need to speak up, speak to their elected officials and make it known that transportation is an important issue in this community – politicians are paid to listen. Get involved through public meetings or the media (e.g., letters to editors).

Sense of Urgency

With carbon emissions pushing the globe's temperature to rise at record rates and unpredictable fuel prices making it difficult for households and public agencies alike to budget from one year to the next - transportation is one of the most urgent issues facing us today.^{xxii} So why aren't we feeling the pressure to invest in active transportation? The connections are not being made concerning the important role that transportation will play in meeting the great challenges of this generation. A lack of urgency permits complacency and procrastination – attitudes that cities cannot afford. The importance of this issue must be made clear so that all stakeholders pay attention and begin taking action now. With the issues of traffic congestion, obesity, global warming and the financial crisis, this should be very clear, but it is not.





SÖTORVET

Fridolfstend

Chapter 4

Tool Kit: Case Studies on Walkable, Bikeable Communities with Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Vaughan.

Case Studies on Walkable, Bikeable Communities with Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

Sometimes you need to see it to believe it. Each of the following cities had hurdles to overcome similar to those faced in Vaughan. Taking inspiration from their innovation and experiences can help us to work towards building our cities into unique, healthy and happy communities.

Chain of Lakes – Minneapolis

Minneapolis has 64 km of dedicated bicycle lanes along its streets and 134 km of off-street bicycle paths.^{xxiii} The city has placed a lot of emphasis on getting their commuters to bike, walk or use transit. The Minneapolis Pedestrian Program has resulted in 92% of streets having sidewalks on both sides which totals 2900 km of sidewalks.^{xxiv} There are also 100 pedestrian/cycling bridges.^{xxv}



Integrating walking into one's daily routine means providing safe infrastructure for people to do so, such as this bridge that is exclusively for walking and cycling

They have also implemented programs to promote cycling such as the Guaranteed Ride Home program, which provides free transit passes to cycling commuters for use in an emergency.

The Bike Walk Ambassador Program has also been implemented, where ambassadors work in Minneapolis and in the 13 adjacent communities to educate people about the importance of increasing walking and biking and minimize driving.^{xxvi xxvii}

Another program that has recently been initiated is the Bicycle Rack Cost Share Program where the city shares the cost of putting in bike racks in front of private businesses to encourage employers to do so.^{xxvii}

Much of the rapid walking and cycling promotion and infrastructure improvement is due to the Non-motorized Transportation Pilot program which has been providing Minneapolis and its adjacent communities as well as three other communities in the US with



This section of Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis is a high quality pedestrian environment, including benches, trees, garbage cans, pedestrian-level lighting and comfortable sidewalk widths.

the funds for walking and cycling community improvement projects.^{xxix xxx}

Putting their beautiful waterfront scenery to good use, Minneapolis created their famous "Chain of Lakes." With parks and trails located along the lakeshore and 21.4 kilometres of walking/jogging/biking friendly pathways, the Chain of Lakes provides a safe and accessible opportunity for residents to actively transport and enjoy themselves.

The Chain of Lakes system is a part of an even larger system of trails that totals 80.6 kilometres. This is the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway. This trail system connects users from many parts of the city, and provides its users with a variety of activities. Along the Grand Rounds there are many hiking, biking and skiing trails. There are also golf courses, scenic pathways, historic sites, gardens and many other natural features to explore.^{xxxi}



Minneapolis residents and visitors making the most of their waterfront location.

It draws over 14 million visitors a year. With the purchase of food, services and accommodation that those visitors make, the trails are generating millions of dollars in revenue for the city.

Ottawa, Canada A City That Embraces All Seasons

Ottawa is home to the Rideau Canal Skateway in the winter, which is the largest outdoor skating rink! With a length of 7.8 km, this is a great site for outdoor events and festivals that often take place on the weekends.^{xxxii} Not only do many people come out to the canal for recreational skating, many also use it as a means of transportation to work or school.



Rideau Canal Skateway in Ottawa spans 7.8km.



Pedestrian street through shopping district with outdoor cafes creates a safe public space.



Ottawa River pathway is shared among different users.

Ottawa is also home to a network of 180 km of bike paths throughout the city known as the Capital Pathway.^{xxxiii} Gatineau Park is another highlight of Ottawa, where one can enjoy the 361 square km for one's recreational activity of choice – in addition to the protected wildlife and green space there are many trails for biking, hiking or cross-country skiing.^{xxxiv}

Car Free Sunday

Every Sunday from Victoria Day to Labour Day between 6am and 1pm, Ottawa closes its streets to cars and opens them to people. Over 65 km of roadways are shut down each week allowing citizens and tourists to actively enjoy the city's streets. There are attractions to see along the route as well, such as the Hog's Back Falls, the Experimental Farm, Dow's Lake Pavilion, Mooney's Bay and the Parliament buildings. ^{xxxv} Car free Sundays are a great way to foster a community atmosphere – not only do they keep people active, but they change our perceptions by presenting our well paved, wide and comfortable roads as public places for all citizens.



Sunday Bikedays in Ottawa — enjoying wide open road space on the city's summertime Car Free Sunday program.

Copenhagen, Denmark The best cycling city in the world

83% of residents think Copenhagen is great to cycle in.

2006 → 36% cycled to workplaces

2015 → goal is 50% of commuters cycling

Every day 1.2 million kilometres are cycled in Copenhagen

Serious cyclist casualties dropped from 124 to 92 between 2004 and 2006

388 km of cycle routes

55% of all trips are cycled! ^{xxxvi}



The best cycling city in the world was not created overnight; the City of Copenhagen has spent the last 30 years transforming the roads and communities into cycling-friendly environments, starting primarily in the 1970s and 1980s. The 1973 oil crisis struck a nerve in Denmark and it is then that residents witnessed how much they were relying on cars and how easily that could be compromised. Thus, decisions were made in the city of Copenhagen to begin to minimize how much they rely on oil by promoting green energy production and walking and cycling.



Bicycle parking can be found everywhere in Copenhagen.

Significant funds were allocated towards the implementation of adequate cycling infrastructure and programs. It is the consistent planning and prioritizing of cyclists that has created the city as it is today.^{xxxvii}

Not only was Copenhagen transformed into a cycling city through proper infrastructure, such as bike routes and bike parking, but also through various programs such as the bike-sharing program. Cars are also highly taxed through parking and insurance which has incentivised the use of bikes.

Because the infrastructure for cycling is safe and separated from motor vehicles, cycling in Copenhagen is in no way limited by clothing or shoes. It is common to see businessmen in their suits or ladies in their high heels. In fact, it has turned into a fashion statement. The evidence can be found everywhere throughout the city that cycling is highly valued, promoted and prioritized. Not only is there a vast cycling infrastructure network but there is also an amazing network of pedestrian-only streets where people can enjoy the shops, markets and cafes. There are public self-cleaning washrooms that have been placed all around the city. There are parks, green spaces and events to enjoy throughout the city and with the abundance of bicycle parking (both indoor and outdoor), riding your bike to all these areas is made easy and convenient!

Winter Cycling in Copenhagen, Denmark

In light of Ontario's winters, some might say that cycling infrastructure is a waste of time and money, claiming that even if bikeways were cleared and salted, no person would want to leave the comfort of their car for the cold of winter. In fact, a number of cities with cold, snowy winters have looked past this perceived impediment and found such perceptions to be unfounded. In Copenhagen, Denmark, 30% of residents cycle to work and 70% of those cyclists continue to bike even during Copenhagen's cold, snowy winters.^{xxxviii}



Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Spans: 105km²

Population: 18,700

Population density per square kilometre: 177

24% of the Yellowknife community who work, walk or cycle to get there!^{xxxix} Yellowknife is considered a 'City in the Wilderness' as you can find 17 lakes and 38 acres of parks within the city. There is also a network of trails which connects many of the main destinations within the city, such as the Heritage Centre, Assembly Building, Long Beach and various parks including Fred Henne Territorial Park.^{xi}

Every year Yellowknife hosts various events and festivals which bring the community out to enjoy the streets and the surrounding areas. These events include Caribou Carnival, Canadian Championship Dog Derby, Aboriginal Day, Raven Mad Daze, Midnight Sungolf Tournament, Snow King Winter Festival and Folk on the Rocks, Yellowknife.^{xi}



Yellowknife is embedded in lakes, forests, and rocky terrain allowing for plenty of trails to explore and opportunities for recreational activity.



Raven Mad Daze, an annual event celebrating the longest day of the year. The festival runs all day and night with live bands, street sales and plenty of food.

Brantford, Ontario

The City of Brantford is located on the Grand River with a population of 90,192 in 2006. The City has recently invested heavily in the downtown in reaction to the dwindling economy in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of manufacturer bankruptcies. In order to bring people into the downtown, the City created Harmony Square which serves as an attraction and meeting place for the community with various events involving music, art and movies as well as the ice rink which is open in the winter. For a video on Harmony Square go to <http://www.brantford.ca/harmonysquare>. The streets of Brantford have also been enhanced through various streetscape designs. These changes have brought more people into the downtown as it has become more appealing and enjoyable. Wilfred Laurier opened a campus in downtown Brantford 10 years ago and since then the size of the student body has grown significantly. This is largely due to the creation of Harmony Square, a public space which the students can enjoy while attending the university. Thus, not only has this new space enhanced the lives of the community members, it has also revitalized the local economy.



Harmony Square in downtown Brantford. The town has recently invested heavily in this destination for the downtown and has reaped the rewards. This space is used for skating in the winter and movie nights and festivals in the summer.



Brantford, Ontario has recently invested in beautification of its downtown streets.

World Class Streets – New York

New York's World Class Streets program is developing several new streetscape projects across the city to enhance public spaces. The World Class Streets initiative incorporates several methods for enhancing public spaces. It includes: a public plaza program, Broadway boulevard project, complete street projects and design standards, safe streets for seniors and students, a public art program, coordinated street furniture and weekend pedestrian and cycling streets. New York is committed to achieving its goal of having a public open space for residents within 10 minutes' walk for every resident. To do this, the city is creating or enhancing a public plaza in every community. In June 2008, New York launched the NYC Plaza Program that established long-term partnerships between the NYC Department of Small Business Services and community groups in order to maintain and program the plazas so they continue to be well managed and active destinations. One of the great accomplishments of the project is the revamping of 9th Avenue. The before and after photos show the extensive transformation through which the street went.



Madison Square after the PPS pilot project.



9th Avenue Before.



9th Avenue After.

Appendix A - Group Activity Instructions

Re-Creating Places Activity:

Transforming schools into walkable, bikeable and inviting public spaces

Instructions:

- Identify a note taker and reporter/s for your group
- As a group, work through the questions below
- Draw/map your impatiens and orchids on the large maps provided

PART A – Impatiens & Orchids

1. What would make this a good public space?
2. **Impatiens** – List the things that would improve this place that could be done in the short term and wouldn't cost a lot.
3. **Orchids** – What changes would you make in the long term (3 to 5 years) that would have the greatest impact?

PART B – Stakeholder Engagement

1. What local stakeholders can you identify that would help implement some of your proposed improvements? Be as specific as possible.
2. How could you get these stakeholders involved?

Appendix B

Dot-mocracy Activity Results

After listing results from the group activity, participants had the chance to vote on their favourites using coloured dots. Each participant was given 4 dots to use. Below is a list of each improvement, as well as the number of votes the improvement received in parenthesis.

Bike Paths with physical barriers (13)
Raised crosswalks (9)
Outdoor patios (7)
Bike parking (7)
Parents and school groups should not be charged for using facilities (6)
Pilot Projects (6)
Community Engagement (5)
Gardens (5)
Off leash dog park (5)
Adaptable open space (3)
Get everyone around the table (3)
Get everyone around the table (3)
Reduce speed limit (3)
Green roofs (3)
Reduced parking (3)
Carpool parking (2)
Shared space (2)
Added trees (2)
Ice rink (2)
Speed bumps on road (2)
Outdoor classroom (1)
New washroom facilities (1)
Add moveable seating (1)
Bring shops to the street and put parking behind (1)
Changes to planning process to accelerate approvals(1)
Eliminate duplication of facilities (1)
Involve all stakeholders when redesigning spaces (1)
Long term vision (1)
Education/Management/Enforcement
Engagement with students to choose activities
School board –parents
Region-health
City-Community

Tell the region and schools what to do
Municipal-Regional funding formulas
Dialogue
Scramble pedestrian signal
Frisbee golf
Festivals
Bus stop in front of the community centre
Disabled parking access
Concession stand
Green house
Bike/walking path between the community centre and school
Skate park
Farmer's market
Playground
Pedestrian bridge across Clark Ave W

End Notes:

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- ⁱⁱ Money Sense. <http://list.moneysense.ca/rankings/best-places-to-live/2010/lifestyle/Default.aspx?sp2=3&sc1=0&d1=a>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Statistics Canada. <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=3519028&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=vaughan&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>
- ^{iv} City of Vaughan. http://www.vaughantomorrow.ca/vv2020/pdf/vv2020_StrategyBook.pdf.
- ^v IPCC, p. 2.
- ^{vi} Categories positively affected by high-quality pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure: Medical and Health Considerations (Air Pollution), Natural Environment (Climate), Public Services and Transit, Recreation (Sport and Leisure Activities), Socio-Cultural Environment (Limitation on Personal Freedom).
- ^{vii} Drennen, E. 2003.
- ^{viii} Statistics Canada, 2007.
- ^{ix} Statistics Canada, 2008.
- ^x Metrolinx, 2008, p. 62.
- ^{xi} Ontario Chamber of Commerce, 2004, p. 8.
- ^{xii} Nelson et al., 2007, p. 9.
- ^{xiii} Unknown author.
- ^{xiv} Statistics Canada, 2005.
- ^{xv} Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, 2008.
- ^{xvi} Frank, Anderson, & Schmid, 2004.
- ^{xvii} Ontario Trails Council.
- ^{xviii} Project for Public Spaces.
- ^{xix} "Portland Bicycle Plan for 2030." City of Portland Department of Transportation. ftp://ftp02.portlandoregon.gov/PBOT/Bicycle_Plan_for_2030/Plan_Documents/Complete_Plan/Portland_Bicycle_Plan_for_2030_as-adopted.pdf P. 11.
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- ^{xxi} Street Design Manual. New York City Department of Transportation. Pg. 90.

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- ^{xxiii} City of Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Minneapolis: Bicycling in Minneapolis."
- ^{xxiv} City of Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Minneapolis: Walking in Minneapolis."
- ^{xxv} City of Minneapolis, 2009.
- ^{xxvi} City of Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Minneapolis: Walking in Minneapolis."
- ^{xxvii} Transit for Liveable Communities, 2009.
- ^{xxviii} City of Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Minneapolis: Bicycle Rack Cost Share Program."
- ^{xxix} City of Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Minneapolis: 2007 & 2008 NTP Funded Projects."
- ^{xxx} City of Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Minneapolis: Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program."
- ^{xxxi} Minneapolis Board of Parks and Recreation.
- ^{xxxii} National Capital Commission, 2008.
- ^{xxxiii} National Capital Commission, 2009a.
- ^{xxxiv} National Capital Commission, 2009a.
- ^{xxxv} Ottawa Information Guide, "Biking in Ottawa."
- ^{xxxvi} City of Copenhagen: The Technical and Environmental Administration, 2007.
- ^{xxxvii} Savage, M., BBC News, 2009.
- ^{xxxviii} Unknown author (a), 2007.
- ^{xxxix} Statistics Canada. 2006c.
- ^{xl} NorthWest Territories Tourism.
- ^{xli} Northern Frontiers Visitors Association. "Things to do: Visitor's Top Ten."

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Chapter 1

Graphs produced by 8-80 Cities.

Chapter 2

Images from Vaughan presentations thanks to Jared Kolb and Emily Munroe

Images from Ottawa thanks to Gil Penalosa

Images from Collingwood and New York City thanks to Jared Kolb

Chapter 4

Minneapolis Case Study:

Image of Franklin Street and pedestrian bridge taken from The City of Minneapolis Master Plan

Copenhagen Case Study:

Copenhagen Cycle Chic image retrieved from: http://www.rogerkramercycling.org/HTML/2007_11_01_archive.php

Ottawa Case Study:

Image of the Rideau Canal Skateway retrieved from: http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16297-24515-25108&lang=1

Yellowknife Case Study:

Image of Yellowknife shoreline taken by David Marcus, Outcrop and retrieved from Northern Frontiers Visitors Association at http://www.discovernorth.ca/08_Thingstodo/photoGallery.html

Image of Raven Mad Daze taken by Denie Olmstead, NFVA and retrieved from Northern Frontiers Visitors Association at http://www.discovernorth.ca/08_Thingstodo/photoGallery.html.

Brantford Case Study:

Image of Harmony Square retrieved from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/hlast/2571670659/>

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Liveable Community Project

Vaughan

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