



Liveable Community Project

Evergreen Brick Works

*8-80 Cities
Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Evergreen Brick Works.*





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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>



Evergreen Brick Works

Evergreen Brick Works is a community environmental centre that inspires and equips visitors to live, work and play more sustainably. Evergreen, a national charity, has transformed the former Don Valley Brick Works from a collection of deteriorating heritage buildings into an international showcase for urban sustainability and green design that is open year-round.

For more information about Evergreen Brick Works, please visit their website at:

<http://ebw.evergreen.ca/>

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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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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', written in a cursive style.

Gil Peñalosa
Executive Director 8-80 Cities

Executive Summary

Situated in the heart of the Don Valley in Toronto, the Evergreen Brick Works is “a community environmental centre that inspires and equips visitors to live, work and play more sustainably.”ⁱ For nearly 100 years, the Don Valley Brick Works produced bricks for buildings across Toronto, but in 1984, the factory was closed. Evergreen, a national charity committed to reconnecting people with nature in an urban setting, formally took over the site in 2008. Evergreen and its various partners are committed to turning the Brick Works site into a hub of recreational, civic and environmental activity.

The Brick Works site is not without its challenges. Due to its location in the Don Valley ravine system, Evergreen Brick Works is difficult to access by foot, bicycle or public transit. In response to these challenges, Evergreen Brick Works has supplemented regular Toronto Transit Commission service at Broadview Subway Station with a shuttle bus to the site. This has not, however, addressed the challenges faced by people seeking to walk or bicycle to the site. Trails are poorly marked, poorly lit and often indirect. Streets lack proper sidewalks and bike lanes, forcing people to travel under unsafe conditions.

On Saturday, November 27th, 2010, in partnership with the Toronto Cyclists Union, the 8-80 Cities team visited the Evergreen Brick Works site. Over the course of the day, the team led two walking tours, conducted walking and cycling assessments of the Evergreen Brick Works site and held a public presentation with Evergreen staff, Toronto Cyclists Union members and community members. The team’s intent was to engage a wide audience on issues related to walking, cycling and parks and public places.

The recommendations in this report stem from the feedback we received through the walking and cycling assessments and what we heard from the public throughout the day. While Evergreen and its partners have transformed a formerly active industrial site into an environmental community centre, much needs to be done to improve the state of walking and cycling to the site.



Walking to the Evergreen Brick Works



Trails and pond to the north of the Evergreen Brick Works site



Chapter 1

Liveable Communities for All: Creating an 8-80 City

Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Evergreen Brick Works.

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.

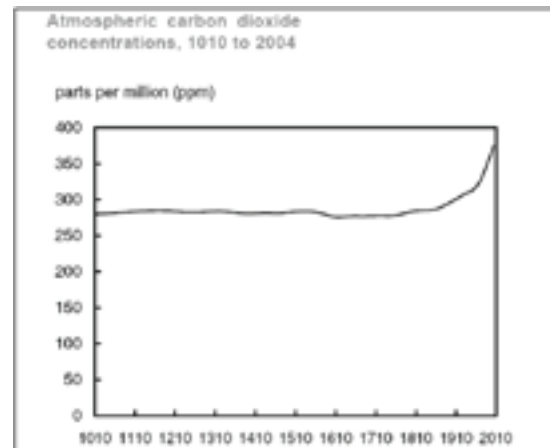
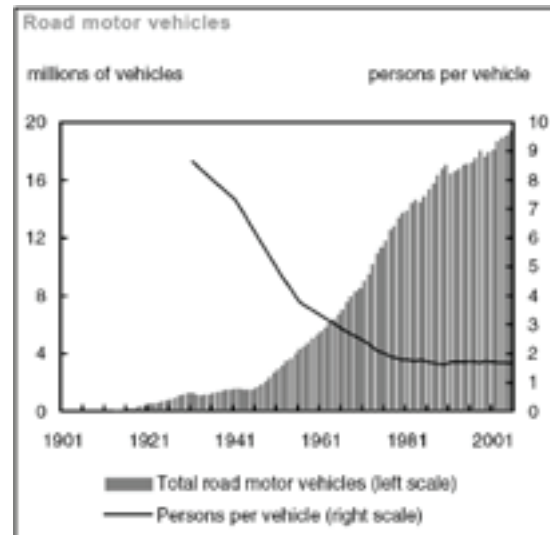


The **EARTH** concept:

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.ⁱⁱ In 2004, emissions from the transportation sector accounted for 25% of all the GHGs 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 Toronto 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.ⁱⁱⁱ

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.^{iv}

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.^v 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.^{vi} 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.^{vii} 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.^{viii}

Cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam have invested heavily in bicycling infrastructure and have achieved significant results. In Copenhagen, bike mode share^{ix} 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.^x 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.^{xi} 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.^{xii}

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.^{xiii}

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.

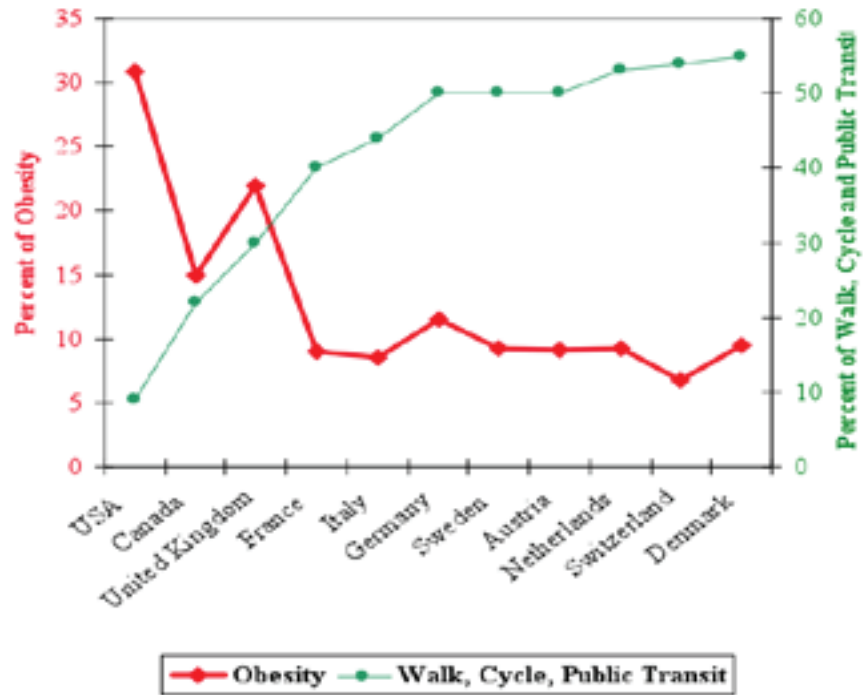


Figure 2: Obesity rates fall sharply with increased walking, bicycling and public transit use.

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.^{xiv}

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.^{xv}

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 Evergreen Brick Works

Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Evergreen Brick Works.

Liveable Community Project Methodology

8-80 Cities recognizes that citizens have 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 at Evergreen Brick Works where we held a guided walking tour with members of the community, led a public presentation and facilitated discussion. 8-80 Cities partnered with the Toronto Cyclists Union for the event, where bike union members participated in Gil Penalosa's rousing presentation ahead of the re-launch of their Ward Advocacy Program.

Guided Walking Tour to Evergreen Brick Works

On Saturday, November 27th, at 9:00 am, the 8-80 Cities team met with Evergreen staff and community members to lead a guided walk from two specific start points to the Evergreen Brick Works site. Participants were given assessments to complete throughout the walk. Walking Route #1 started in St. James Town and moved toward the Bloor St. Viaduct, behind Rosedale Heights School of the Arts and down along Bayview Ave. to a trail leading to Evergreen Brick Works. Walking Route #2 also started in St. James Town and proceeded up Bleecker St. to Sherbourne St. The group then turned right on Elm St., moved up South Dr. and turned down Milkman's Run along several trails to the Evergreen Brick Works site. Jared Kolb led Walking Route #1 and Emily Munroe led Walking Route #2.

The goal of both walks was to provide 8-80 Cities with detailed information on the walkability of various access routes to the Brick Works site. Detailed analysis is provided below.

Cycling Assessments

In addition to walking assessments, 8-80 Cities also produced and distributed cycling assessments for completion by people choosing to bicycle to the presentation. Participants were asked to focus their responses on the streets, trails and access points surrounding Evergreen Brick Works. Detailed analysis based on these assessments is included below.

Public Presentation and Facilitated Discussion

Later on the morning of the 27th, 8-80 Cities joined Evergreen staff and community members at Evergreen Brick Works for a presentation on walking, cycling and parks and public places. Gil Penalosa led a rousing presentation on the case for creating more people-oriented communities, using colourful international and local examples. The presentation was followed by a facilitated discussion.



Walking down into the Don Valley.



Gil Peñalosa makes the case for creating better infrastructure to enable more people to walk and bicycle to Evergreen Brick Works



Participants discuss barriers to walking to Evergreen Brick Works.

Walking and Cycling Assessments

Evergreen Brick Works is located in the heart of the Don Valley. Formerly known as the Don Valley Brick Works, the site has provided bricks to the area for more than 100 years. Seeking to revitalize the site, Evergreen took over the Brick Works and converted it into “a community environmental centre with programs that celebrate the site’s unique geological, industrial and natural heritage.”^{xvi} The site is not without its problems; significant barriers prevent people from walking and cycling to Evergreen Brick Works in greater numbers.

In order to learn more about these barriers, Evergreen partnered with 8-80 Cities to deliver an inspiring presentation about walking, cycling and parks and public spaces; to field questions; and to collect information. 8-80 Cities developed and distributed assessments to gather information on the walkability and bikeability of the roads and trails surrounding Evergreen Brick Works. While the walking assessments focused on two specific walking routes, the cycling assessments were left open ended. The following sections discuss assessment results.

Walking Trends

Overview

The following is a discussion on the data we collected from both walking routes. As participants walked the selected routes, we asked them to fill out a walkability assessment tool that gauged the following attributes of the routes:

- **Connectivity:** describes the quality of the sidewalks and their connection to other places.
- **Proximity and Access to Amenities:** goes beyond the route's access to services to include the degree to which people are out and about and the mix of different kinds of homes, businesses, stores and schools.
- **Aesthetics:** describes the attractiveness of the route and the degree to which there are interesting sights that inspire you to walk.
- **Safety:** includes the physical infrastructure created to keep people safe: crosswalks, lighting and physical separation between roads, bike paths and sidewalks.

For a detailed look at how participants responded to each question, please see Appendix B: Charts and Graphs

Walking Route #1 – Bloor/Bayview (WR1)



Connectivity

Across all indices, participants ranked the connectivity of WR1 low. Eighty-one percent of participants either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement “sidewalks and trails are in good repair,” reflecting poor walking conditions along Bayview Ave. Importantly for Evergreen Brick Works, participants felt that sidewalks and trails did not provide a direct enough pathway from St. James Town to Evergreen Brick Works.

Proximity and Access to Amenities

Trends followed a similar direction along indices associated with proximity and access to amenities. Seventy-five percent of participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that there was a good mix of housing, shops and businesses along the walking route. While the majority of participants did not think there were enough people out and about along the route, acting as eyes on the street, the respondents agreed that destinations were within walking distance. This suggests that improvements to the route could increase the rates of walking to Evergreen Brick Works.

Aesthetics

Participants largely agreed that the attractiveness and aesthetic appeal of WR1 was low. Participants overwhelmingly disagreed that the route was attractive and felt that the landscaping along the route was unattractive. Seventy-five percent of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that there were benches and other places to rest along the route. While half of the respondents felt there were interesting features along the route that compelled them to walk, the other half disagreed.

Safety

Safety was another important issue for participants along WR1. Sixty-nine percent of participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that sidewalks were separated from the road. Another 69% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that cars obeyed pedestrian crossings and signals. While participants agreed that pedestrian signage was legible along the route, 100% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the path was well lit at night.

Walking Route #2 – Sherbourne/Milkman’s Run (WR2)



Connectivity

Participants who walked WR2 had fairly positive views of the connectivity of their walking route. Seventy-five percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the sidewalks and trails along their route were wide enough for two to three people to walk side-by-side. A similar majority felt that sidewalks and trails were in good repair, although about half of participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed that paths were clear of obstacles. A significant majority felt that wheelchairs and strollers could not navigate easily along the route. A majority of participants felt it provided a direct route to their destination.

Proximity and Access to Amenities

While participants overwhelmingly felt that Evergreen Brick Works was within walking distance, they had issues with other indicators within the broader category. Respondents felt that there was a poor mix of homes, shops and businesses and an overall lack of different styles of housing. Participants were evenly split about whether there were enough people out and about along the route, acting as eyes on the street.

Aesthetics

The attractiveness of WR2 was mostly positive for participants, with some similar issues as WR1. All participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the route was attractive, that the landscaping along the route was eye-catching and that there were interesting features that compelled them to walk. However, similar to WR1, participants felt there was a distinct lack of seating areas. A majority also felt that shops and businesses were not well maintained and accessible.

Safety

Participants generally agreed that sidewalks were safely separated from the road, that pedestrian crossings were well marked and that cars obeyed those crossings along WR2. While about half of the respondents disagreed that signage is legible, all respondents felt that sidewalks and trails were poorly lit at night.

Improvements

In addition to participant observations on the connectivity, proximity and access to amenities, aesthetics and safety of their walking route, 8-80 Cities also asked participants about the need for specific improvements to their walking routes. Participants who walked WR1 and WR2 had remarkably similar opinions about the need for specific programs; therefore, for the purposes of this study, we have grouped them together.

According to respondents, two programs in particular leap off the page as crucial to increase the number of people walking to Evergreen Brick Works: better crosswalks and better integration with transit. Pedestrian crosswalks should be improved at Sherbourne St. and Bloor St. and at points along Bayview Ave. Considering that Evergreen Brick Works has done a good job of linking their in-house shuttle service to Broadview Subway Station, more should be done to promote and increase usage of this service.

Each of the other programs suggested by 8-80 Cities enjoyed similar popularity amongst participants. Fifty-eight percent of respondents felt there was a high or very high need for more evenly graded paths to increase the number of people walking to Evergreen Brick Works. Fifty-three percent of participants felt there was a high or very high need for pedestrian-bike bridges over major arterials to increase the number of people walking to Evergreen Brick Works. Another 50% of respondents agreed that there was a high or very high need for better path lighting.

On the low end, 63% of participants felt that there was only a low or moderate need for traffic calming in order to increase rates of walking to Evergreen Brick Works. Respondents felt the same way about promotion at schools and places of work.

Discussion and Recommendations on Walking Infrastructure and Programs

Walking Route #1 – Bloor/Bayview (WR1)

Based upon the results, Walking Route #1 requires major improvements in order to boost rates of walking from St. James Town to Evergreen Brick Works. Some of these improvements are low cost and low risk with high visibility, whereas other improvements are longer term with higher cost and risk. The following recommendations are based on the feedback 8-80 Cities received through the cycling assessment survey. Many of these recommendations require partnerships with various institutional bodies such as the Toronto District School Board and the City of Toronto:

- Bayview Ave. is an obvious starting place; participants were forced to walk alongside the road over cracked pavement and debris, directly beside car traffic. A physically separated pathway along Bayview Ave. would dramatically increase the route's safety.
- Although there is a stairway providing an important linkage from behind Rosedale Heights School of the Arts into the Don Valley, lighting at the school must be improved along the stairway as well as along Bayview Ave. to promote safety at night.
- Parts of the route require informal access to places such as Rosedale Heights School of the Arts. Wayfinding signage should be added to the route to provide direction to people seeking access to the Don Valley and Evergreen Brick Works. Wayfinding signage not only provides direction, but also increases the sense of place and suggests to people that the place is well used.
- Winter weather poses a barrier for pedestrians; after a fresh snowfall, pedestrians find it difficult to walk to destinations when pathways are left uncleared. Regular maintenance of sidewalks and trails is an important motivating factor for people choosing to walk to Evergreen Brick Works.
- Seating is an important feature of a good place. Well-placed benches and tables provide a place for people to sit, relax and watch people pass. Well-suited seating gives incentive for people to stay and enjoy a place. More benches and tables should be added throughout the Don Valley ravine system.

Walking Route #2 – Sherbourne/Milkman’s Run (WR2)

Although Walking Route #2 scores better than Walking Route #1, WR2 also requires major improvements in order to boost rates of walking from St. James Town to Evergreen Brick Works. Like WR1, some of these improvements are low cost and low risk with high visibility, whereas other improvements are longer term with higher cost and risk. The following recommendations are based on the feedback 8-80 Cities received through the cycling assessment survey. As with WR1, many of these recommendations require partnerships with various institutional bodies such as the City of Toronto:

- Parts of the route require informal access to places such as Craighigh Gardens, which is administered by the City of Toronto. Wayfinding signage should be added to the route to provide direction to people seeking access to the Don Valley and Evergreen Brick Works. The signage should guide pedestrians from the surrounding communities of St. James Town, Church Wellesley Village, and Rosedale, as well as the transit hubs at Sherbourne, Castle Frank, and Yonge/Bloor stations. Wayfinding signage not only provides direction, but also increases the sense of place and suggests to people that the place is well used.
- Winter weather poses a barrier for pedestrians; after a fresh snowfall, pedestrians find it difficult to walk to destinations when pathways are left uncleared. Regular maintenance of sidewalks and trails is an important motivating factor for people choosing to walk to Evergreen Brick Works.
- Seating is an important feature of a good place. Well-placed benches and tables provide a place for people to sit, relax and watch people pass. Well-suited seating gives incentive for people to stay and enjoy a place. More benches and tables should be added throughout the Don Valley ravine system.
- Insufficient lighting makes pedestrians feel vulnerable, unsafe and unwelcome after dark. Improved lighting along the walking route would create a more inviting atmosphere and improve safety.
- Cracked and uneven sidewalks, poor lighting and scattered garbage were cited as problems along the walking route as it passed through St. James Town. Improvements to the public realm would be an invitation to the residents of the community to walk, bike and enjoy their parks and public spaces.

Cycling Trends

Overview

Participants who cycled to the Community Engagement Day at Evergreen Brick Works were encouraged to complete a cycling assessment reflecting their opinions on the on- and off-road challenges of their ride, the frequency of those challenges and the programs that could be adopted to overcome those problems. We asked participants to focus on the infrastructure around Evergreen Brick Works rather than on a specific route. The recommendations in this section reflect the more general quality of the feedback 8-80 Cities received.

For a detailed look at how participants responded to each question, please see Appendix B: Charts and Graphs

Quality of Off-Road Facilities

Off-road trails provide an important linkage for people entering the Don Valley. Fifty-three percent of participants felt that the directness of the off-road component of their route was high or very high. Whereas 48% of participants felt that the compact trail material around Evergreen Brick Works was high or very high, only 38% felt it was of moderate quality. Ninety-five percent of participants felt that the quality of cycling and wayfinding signage along the off-road component of their route was of low or moderate quality. Another 94% felt that the quality of safety features (including lighting) along the off-road component of their route was low or moderate.

Quality of On-Road Facilities

On-road facilities around Evergreen Brick Works fared poorly. Eighty-two percent of participants felt that the quality of painted bike lanes was low or moderate, 81% agreed that the quality of paved shoulders was low or moderate and 76% felt that the quality of the road materials was low or moderate. All respondents agreed that the quality of cycling signage was low or moderate. One potential bright spot was bicycle parking; 48% of respondents felt that the quality of bicycle parking along this section of their route was high or very high.

Frequency of On- and Off-Road Challenges

In addition to understanding the types of on- and off-road challenges, 8-80 Cities wanted to understand the frequency of such challenges. Eighty-two percent of participants felt that the frequency of cracked pavement was high or very high, 70% felt that the frequency of uneven surfaces was high or very high and 62% felt that the frequency of potholes was high or very high. On the other hand, 68% of participants agreed that the frequency of dangerous grates was low or moderate. An overwhelming majority of participants experienced a high or very high frequency of challenges along their routes.

Need for Programs and Facilities to Increase the Number of People Cycling to Evergreen Brick Works

Participants agreed that there were a number of programs and facilities that would increase the number of people cycling to Evergreen Brick Works. Seventy-five percent of participants agreed that there was a high or very high need for physically separated bike lanes and 70% felt that there was a similar need for painted bike lanes. Seventy-five percent of participants felt that there was a high or very high need for better integration with transit and 58% felt that there was a high or very high need for traffic calming and slower speeds along neighbourhood roads. Participants also felt there was a high or very high need for promotion at schools and promotion at places of work to get more people cycling.

Discussion and Recommendations on Cycling Infrastructure and Programs

Participant feedback paints a disturbing picture of the state of cycling around Evergreen Brick Works. Survey respondents felt that there were significant on- and off-road barriers to cycling around Evergreen Brick Works and that many of them occurred frequently. Fortunately, participants identified many programs and facilities that could be used to boost rates and quality of cycling around Evergreen Brick Works. The following recommendations are based on the feedback 8-80 Cities received through the cycling assessment survey:

- Many of the recommendations in this section require partnerships with other institutions such as the City of Toronto, Toronto District School Board and various workplaces. Increasing rates of cycling to Evergreen Brick Works relies upon the improvement of facilities that it does not control. Evergreen Brick Works should continue working to build these partnerships to improve facilities throughout the Don Valley.
- Signage is a crucial component of good cycling infrastructure. It alerts road users to their rights and responsibilities and helps direct users to their destinations.

Cycling signage such as “Share the Road” signs should be added to major arterials leading to Evergreen Brick Works.

Wayfinding signage should be added to arterials and off-road trails around Evergreen Brick Works, displaying the number of minutes to various destinations. The average person bicycles at 15 km/hr and walks at 5 km/hr. Signage should include transportation times for pedestrians and cyclists where appropriate. Wayfinding signage is an important tool used to promote trails and access points while adding an element of security for users.

- Safe, dedicated facilities are crucial for all road users. Although the roads leading to Evergreen Brick Works are outside of Evergreen’s jurisdiction, the quality of these roadways has a significant bearing on whether people choose to cycle to Evergreen Brick Works. Evergreen should work with the City of Toronto to create a strategy to improve cycling infrastructure in the area surrounding Evergreen Brick Works. Although evidence suggests cyclists feel safest on physically separated bike lanes, the strategy could explore interim solutions such as paved shoulders and painted bike lanes.
- In addition to dedicated on-road facilities, other safety features should be added to off-road facilities. Better lighting should be installed along major trailways and access points leading to Evergreen Brick Works.
- Although Evergreen Brick Works has a strong service providing a linkage for transit users between Broadview Subway Station and the Brick Works site (roughly 2.2 km), users do not currently have the ability to bring bicycles. During off-peak times, Evergreen Brick Works should provide transit users the option of bringing a bicycle to the Brick Works site.
- Evergreen Brick Works should continue working to promote its programs and recreational activities to children and youth at local schools and adults at workplaces.

General Trends

8-80 Cities asked all participants who completed walking and cycling assessments several uniform questions. We wanted to know participants' opinions on Evergreen Brick Works as a place to walk, cycle, and enjoy parks and public places, as well as their opinions on the importance of creating communities where people can enjoy walking, cycling, and parks and public places.

Most participants agreed that Evergreen Brick Works was a good or very good place to walk (75%) or bicycle (65%) for recreation. Conversely, respondents felt that Evergreen Brick Works was either an adequate or poor place to walk (61%) or bicycle (64%) for transportation. The vast majority of participants agreed that Evergreen Brick Works was either a good or very good place to enjoy both parks and public places.

This presents Evergreen Brick Works with a dilemma: participants obviously find the site an excellent place for outdoor recreational activity; however, transportation to these facilities is a major barrier for participants. This bolsters the case for a further investment in facilities and programs to increase walking and cycling for transportation.

An overwhelming majority of respondents strongly agreed that it's important to create a community where people can enjoy walking, biking and great parks and public spaces.

More information on each question can be found in Appendix B: Charts and Graphs



Though participants feel that Evergreen Brick Works is a fantastic place to enjoy outdoor activities, such as this skating rink, transportation to the site is a significant barrier



Chapter 3

Moving from Talking to Doing

Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Evergreen Brick Works.

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

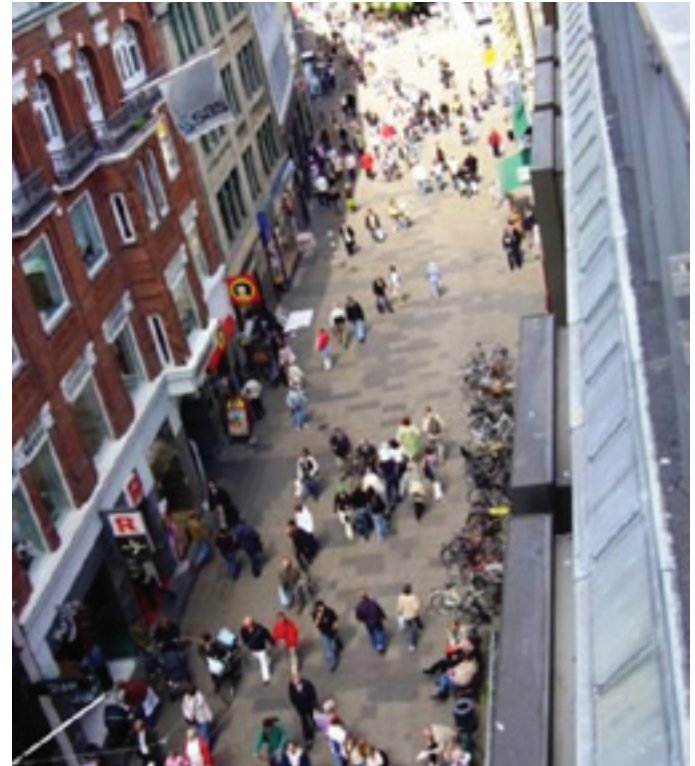
Physical Education Teacher
Montgomery Village Public School
Orangeville, Ontario, Canada

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.^{xvii} 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.

Appendix A

Walking and Cycling Assessments

Evergreen Brick Works Pedestrian Assessment

In partnership with Evergreen, 8-80 Cities seeks your input into the walkability of the Evergreen Brick Works site. When completing this survey, please think critically about a) your walking path and b) the path in the context of the Evergreen Brick Works site. Your feedback will be compiled with that of other respondents for the purposes of a final report, which will be made available by Evergreen. 8-80 Cities thanks Walk On for permission to use their [Walkability Checklist](#), which helped inform the design of this assessment.

1. Connectivity: Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Agree	4-Strongly Agree
Sidewalks and trails are wide enough for 2 to 3 people to walk side-by-side				
Sidewalks and trails are in good repair				
Wheelchairs and strollers can navigate easily				
Sidewalks and trails are clear of obstacles				
Sidewalks and trails provide a direct route to destination				

2. Proximity and Access to Amenities: Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Agree	4-Strongly Agree
Good mix of homes, businesses, stores, and schools				
Different styles of housing (apartments, town homes, single family)				
People are out and about and there are “eyes on the street”				
Destinations are within walking distance				

3. Aesthetics: Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Agree	4-Strongly Agree
The route is attractive and pleasant				
The landscaping is attractive				
There are benches, and other places to rest, along the walking route				
There are interesting features that make you want to walk				
Shops and businesses are well maintained and accessible				

4. Safety: Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Agree	4-Strongly Agree
Sidewalks are separated from the road				
Pedestrian crossing signals are well marked and give enough time to cross the street				
Cars obey pedestrian crossings and signals				
Cars obey the set speed limit in the area				
Signage is legible				
Paths are well lit at night				

5. Rate the need for the following programs and facilities to increase the number of people walking to Evergreen Brick Works on a regular basis:

	1-Low	2-Moderate	3-High	4-Very High
Better off-road trails near natural areas				
More evenly graded trails and sidewalks				
Better street and trail lighting				
Pedestrian-bike bridges over roads/rivers				
Increased availability of local services (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, day care)				
Promotion at schools				
Promotion at places of work				
Better crosswalks				
Better integration with public transit				
Traffic calming/slower speeds on neighbourhood roads				
Other: _____				

6. Describe any short-term actions that could be taken over the next year that could be done to improve the walkability of the Evergreen Brick Works site.

7. Describe any long-term actions that could be taken over the next 2–5 years that could be done to improve the walkability of the Evergreen Brick Works site.

8. How do you rate Evergreen Brick Works as a place to:

	1-Poor	2-Adequate	3-Good	4-Very Good
Walk for recreation				
Walk for transportation				
Bicycle for recreation				
Bicycle for transportation				
Enjoy public places				
Enjoy parks				

9. I believe it is important to create a community where people can:

	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Agree	4-Strongly Agree
Enjoy walking				
Enjoy biking				
Enjoy great parks and public spaces				

Evergreen Brick Works

Cycling Assessment

In partnership with Evergreen, 8-80 Cities seeks your input into the bikeability of the Evergreen Brick Works site. When completing this assessment, please think critically about a) your walking path and b) the path in the context of the Evergreen Brick Works site. Your feedback will be used for a final report, which will be made available by Evergreen.

1. Rate the quality of the following facilities along the off-road component of your route:

	1-Low	2-Moderate	3-High	4-Very High
Directness of route from start point to destination				
Safety of crossing zones when trail intersects roadway				
Compact trail material				
Safety features (e.g., improved lighting, public telephones)				
Pedestrian-bike bridges over roads/rivers				
Overall grade of trail				
Availability of services (bike parking, seating areas, etc.)				
Cycling signage				
Wayfinding signage				
Other: _____				

2. Rate the quality of the following facilities along the on-road component of your route:

	1-Low	2-Moderate	3-High	4-Very High
Painted bike lanes				
Painted shoulders				
Compact road materials with few potholes and made for comfortable riding experience				
Safety features (e.g., improved lighting, public telephones)				
Pedestrian-bike bridges over roads/rivers				
Overall grade of road				
Increased availability of local services (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, day cares)				
Cycling signage (e.g., "Share the Road")				
Bicycle parking				
Other: _____				

3. Rate the frequency of on- and off-road challenges during your ride:

	1-None	2-Little	3-Some	4-High
Potholes				
Cracked or broken pavement				
Debris (e.g., gravel, broken glass, etc.)				
Dangerous drain grates				
Uneven surface or gaps				
Slippery surfaces when wet				
Bumpy or angled railroad tracks				
Steep hills				
Angry drivers				

4. Rate the need for the following programs and facilities to increase the number of people bicycling to Evergreen Brick Works on a regular basis:

	1-Low	2-Moderate	3-High	4-Very High
Better off-road trails near natural areas				
Bike lanes				
"Bike lanes" with physical separation from cars/pedestrians				
Pedestrian-bike bridges over roads/rivers				
Increased availability of local services (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, day care)				
Promotion at schools				
Promotion at places of work				
Safe and convenient bicycle parking				
Better integration with public transit				
Traffic calming/slower speeds on neighbourhood roads				
Other: _____				

5. Describe any short-term actions that could be taken over the next year that could be done to improve the bikeability of the Evergreen Brick Works site.

6. Describe any long-term actions that could be taken over the next 2–5 years that could be done to improve the bikeability of the Evergreen Brick Works site.

7. How do you rate Evergreen Brick Works as a place to:

	1-Poor	2-Adequate	3-Good	4-Very Good
Walk for recreation				
Walk for transportation				
Bicycle for recreation				
Bicycle for transportation				
Enjoy public places				
Enjoy parks				

8. I believe it is important to create a community where people can:

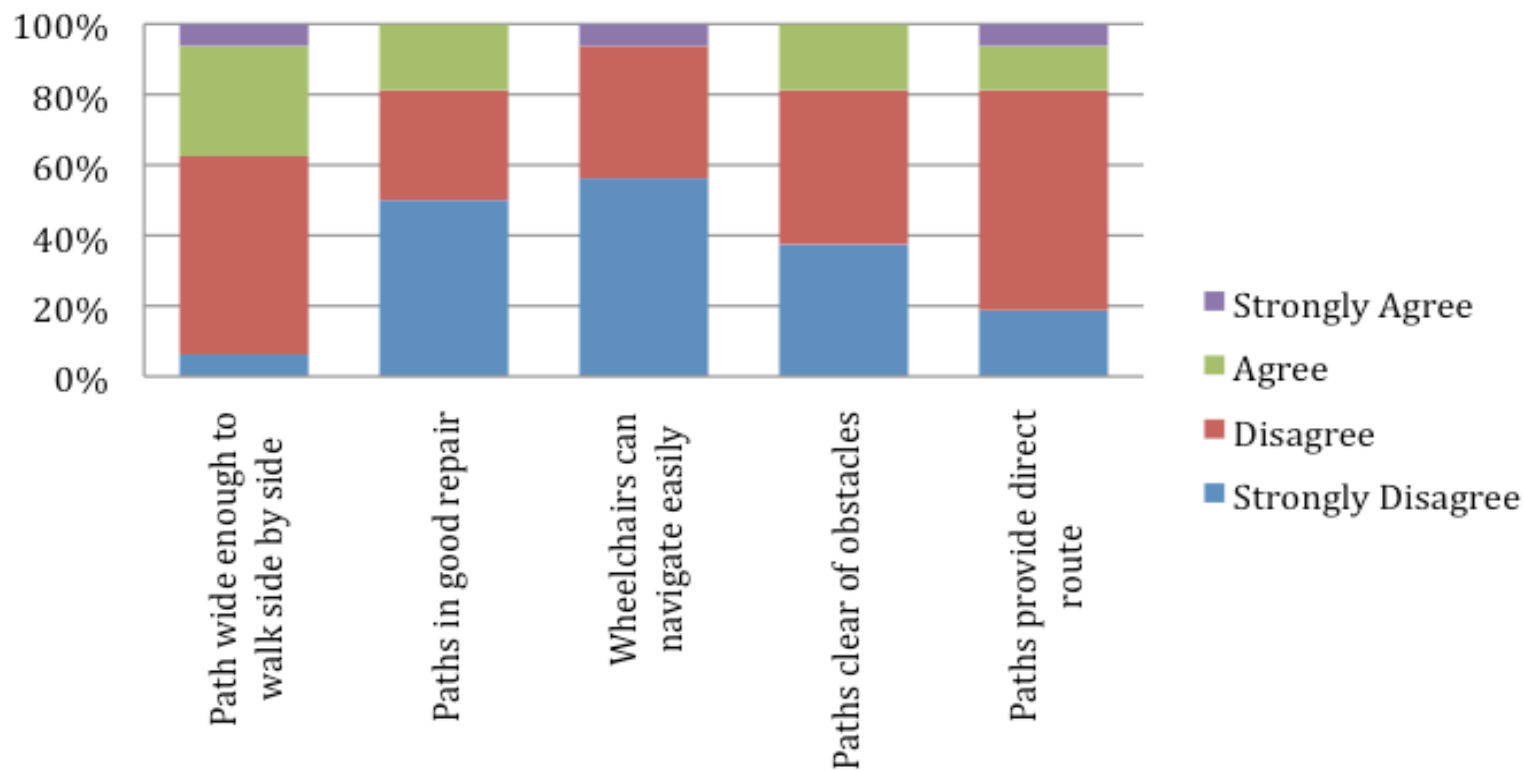
	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Agree	4-Strongly Agree
Enjoy walking				
Enjoy biking				
Enjoy great parks and public spaces				

Appendix B

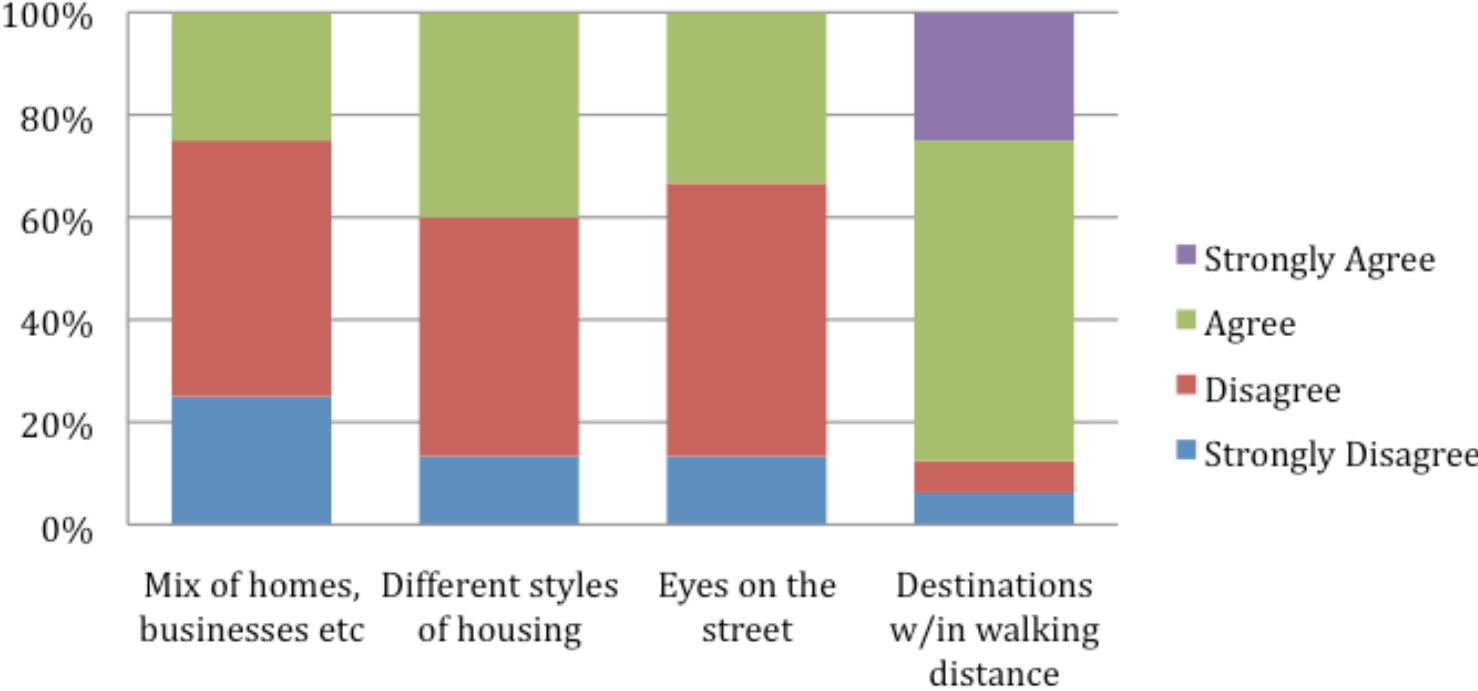
Charts and Graphs

Walking Route #1 – Bloor/Bayview (WR1)

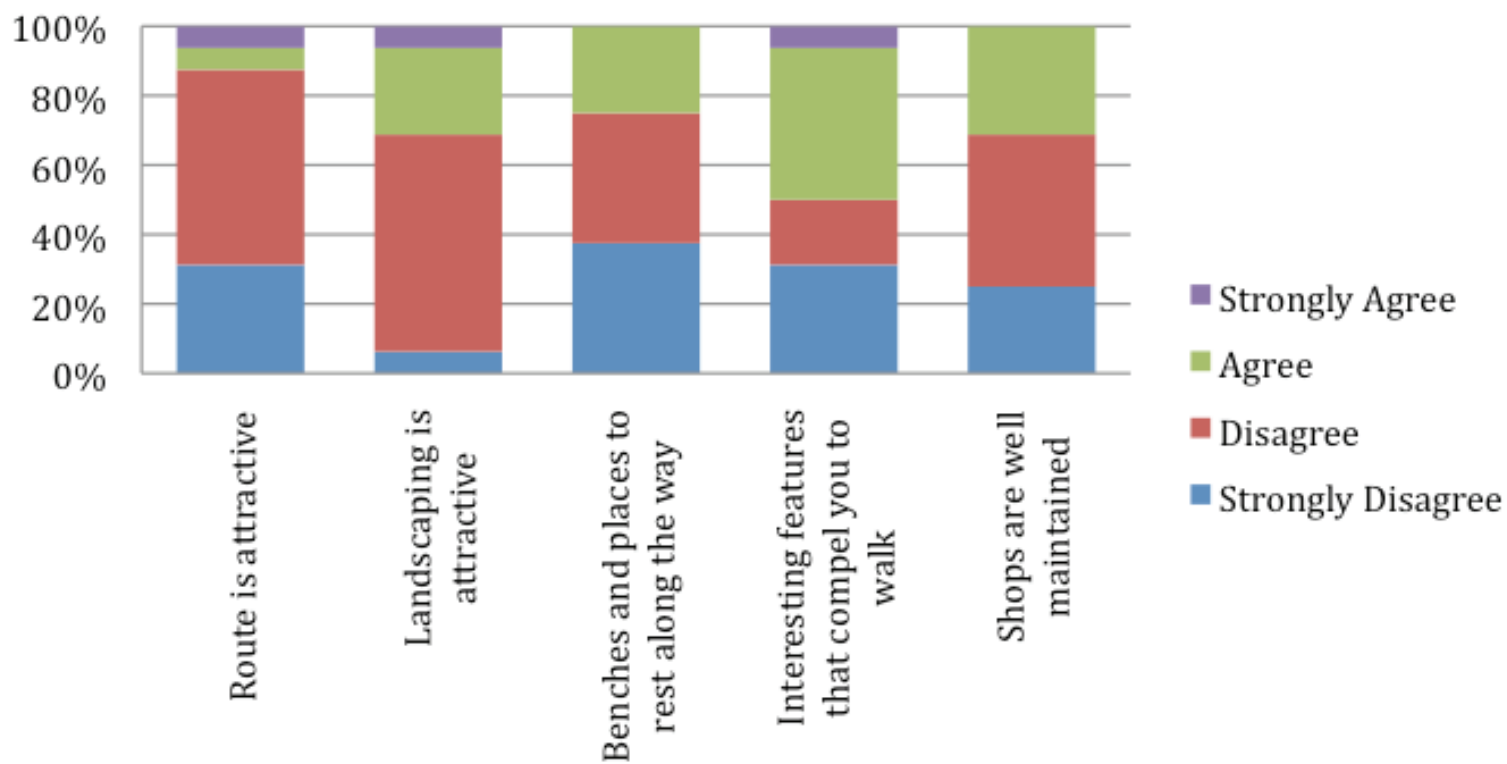
Connectivity (WR1)



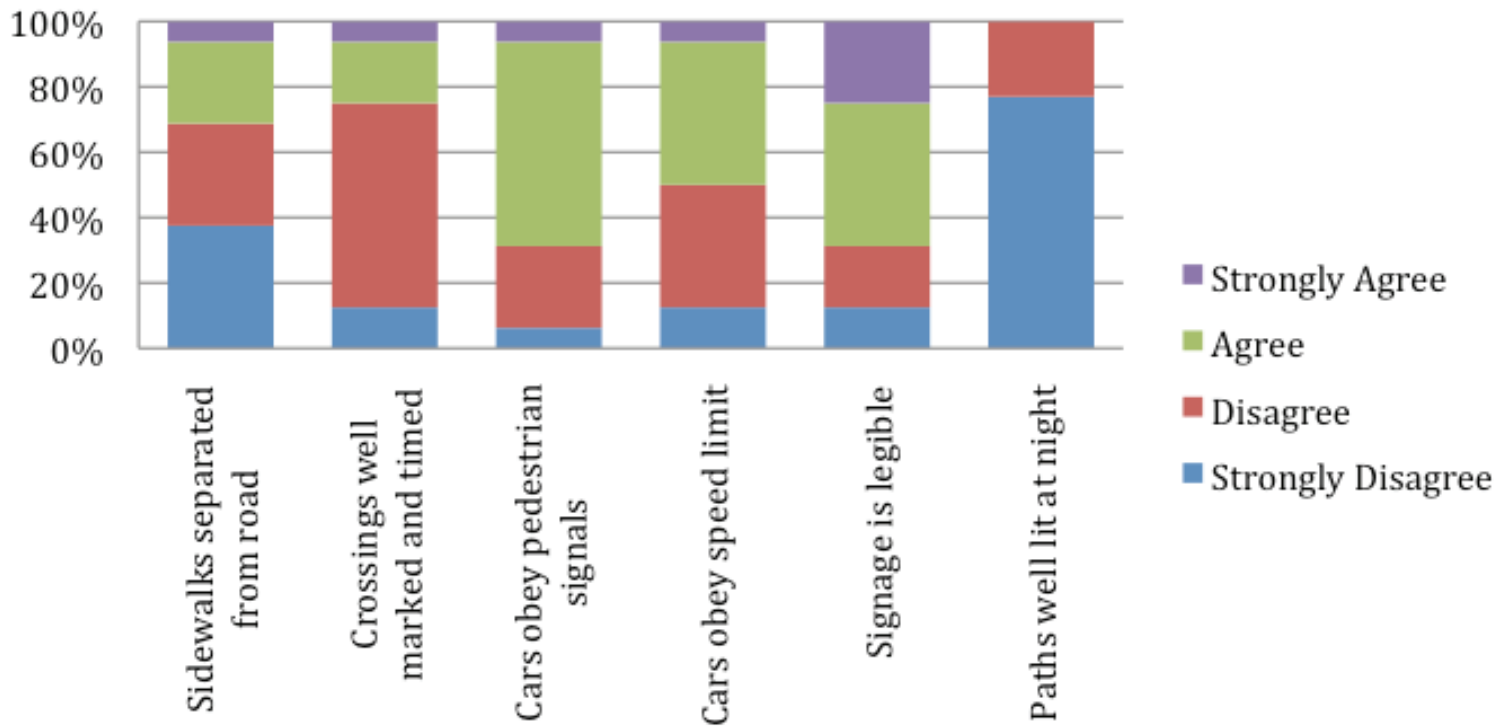
Proximity and Access to Amenities (WR1)



Aesthetics (WR1)

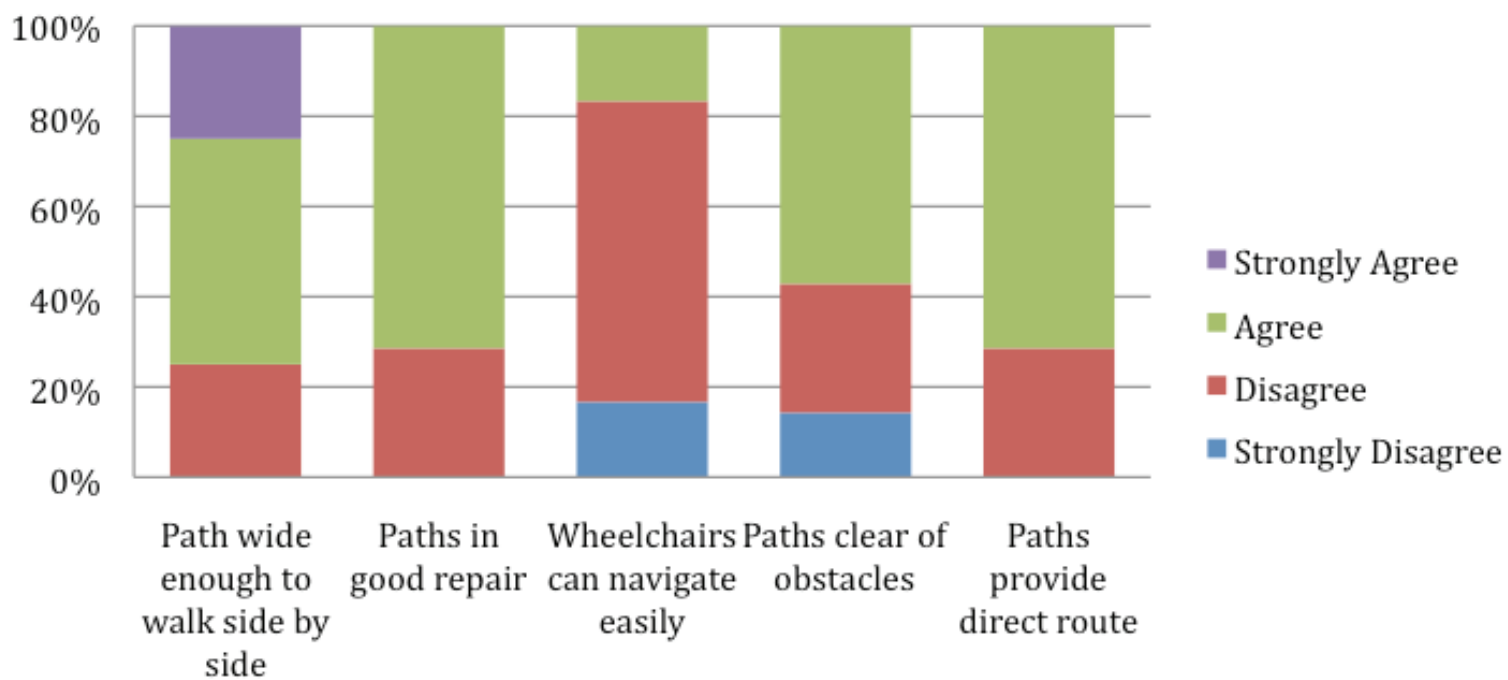


Safety (WR1)

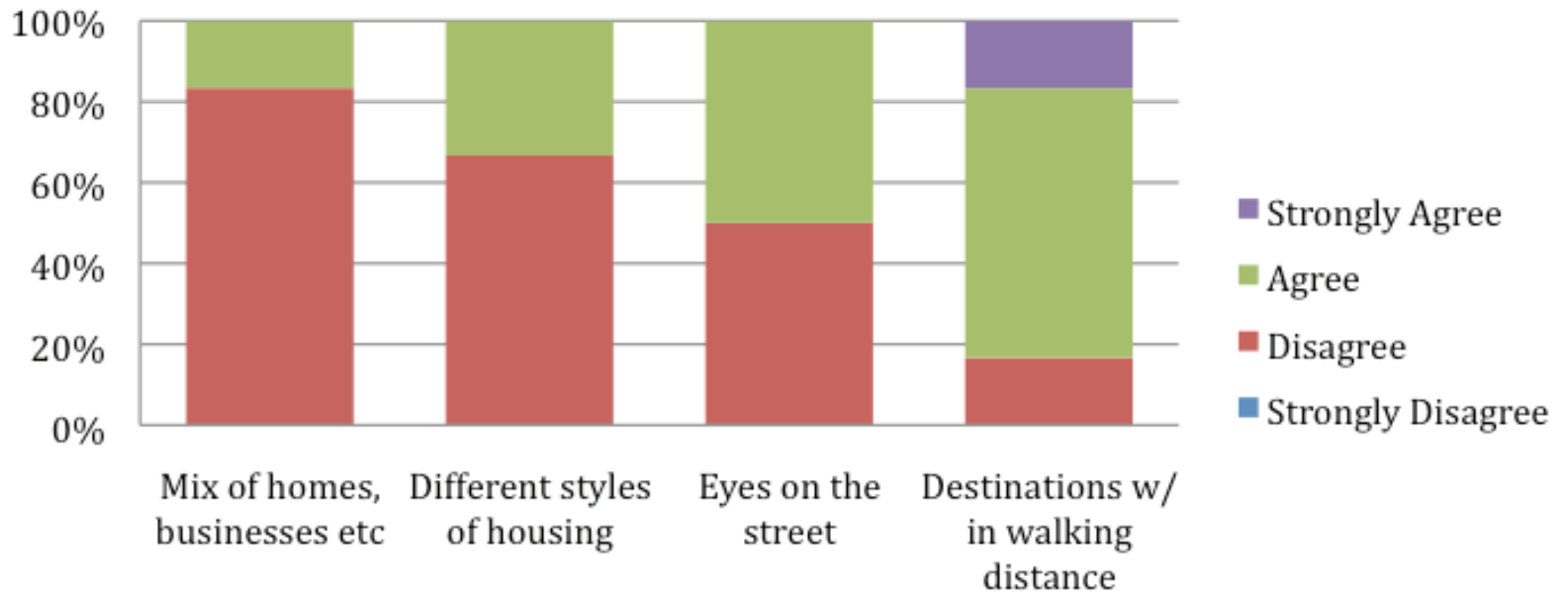


Walking Route #2 – Sherbourne/Milkman's Run (WR2)

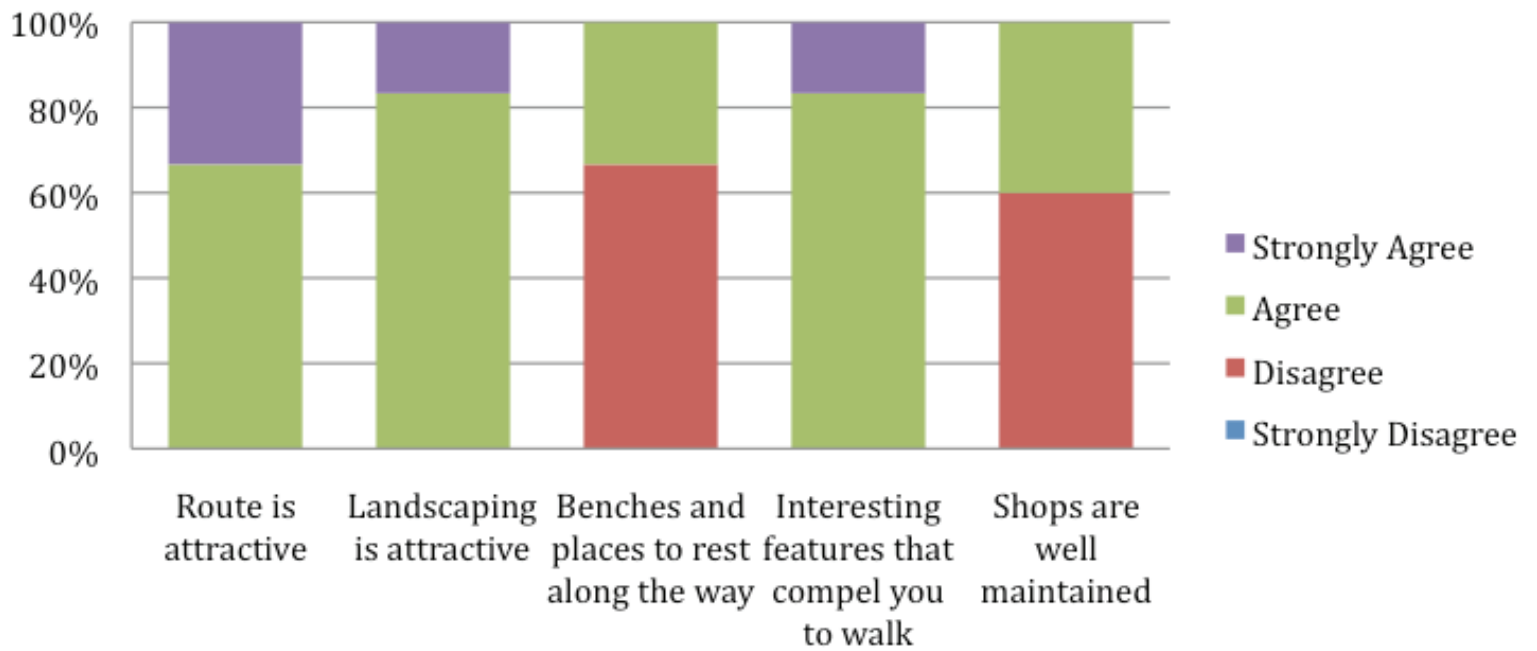
Connectivity (WR2)



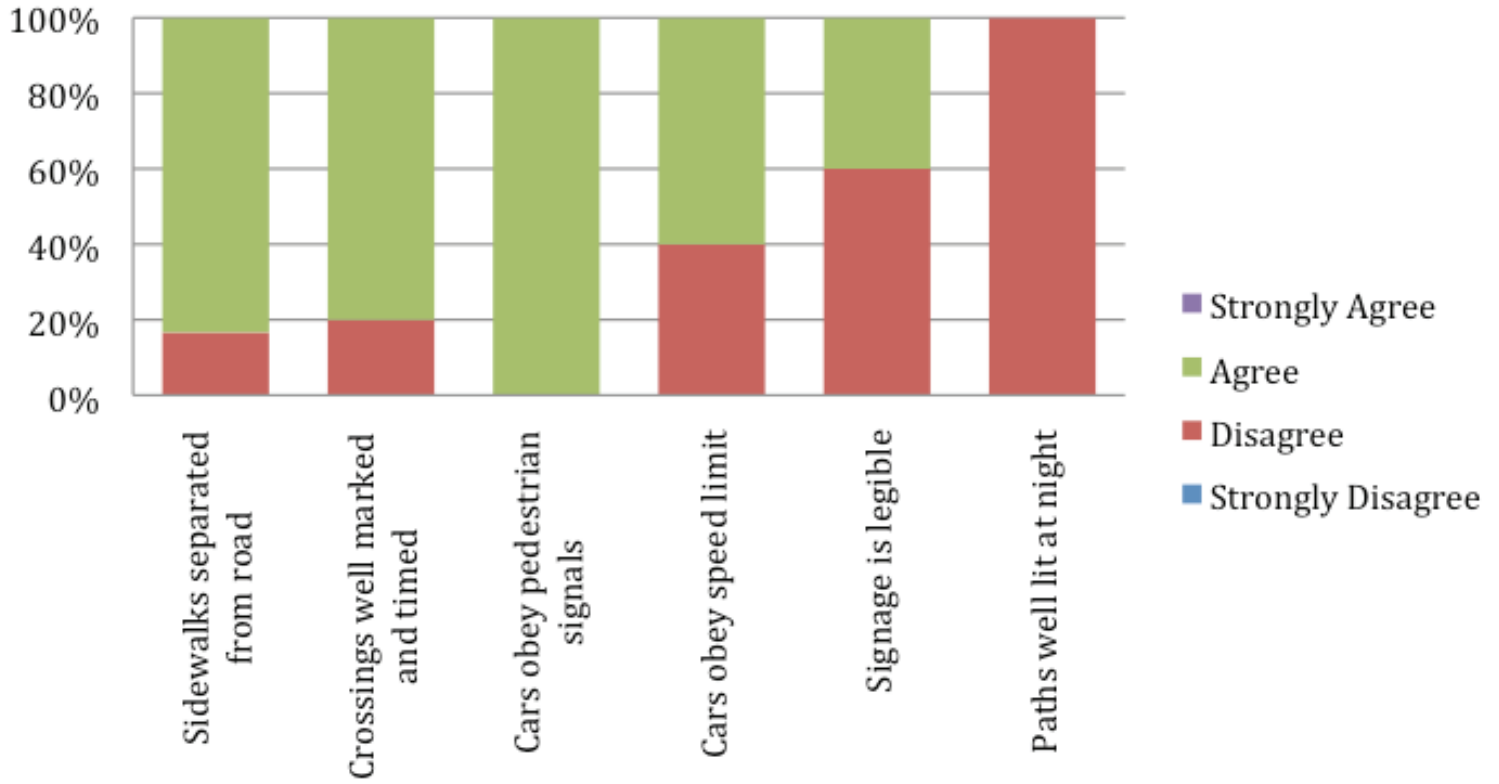
Proximity and Access to Amenities (WR2)



Aesthetics (WR2)

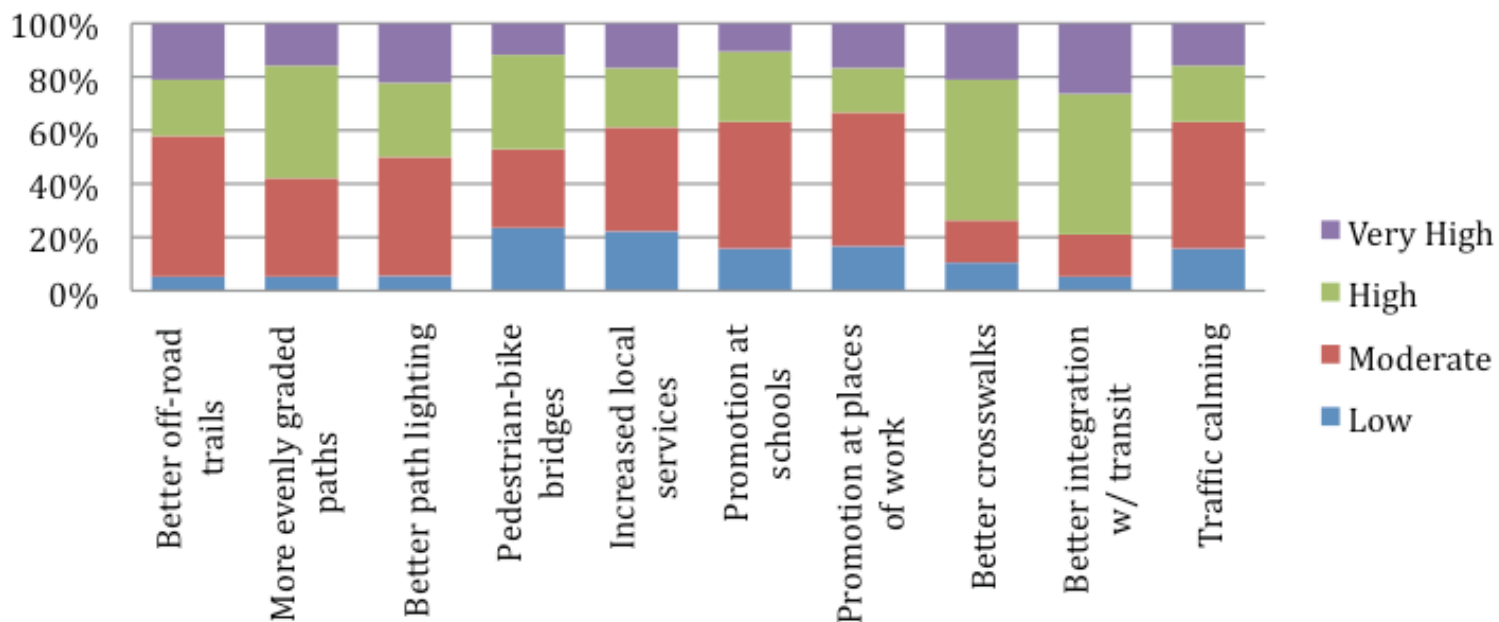


Safety (WR2)

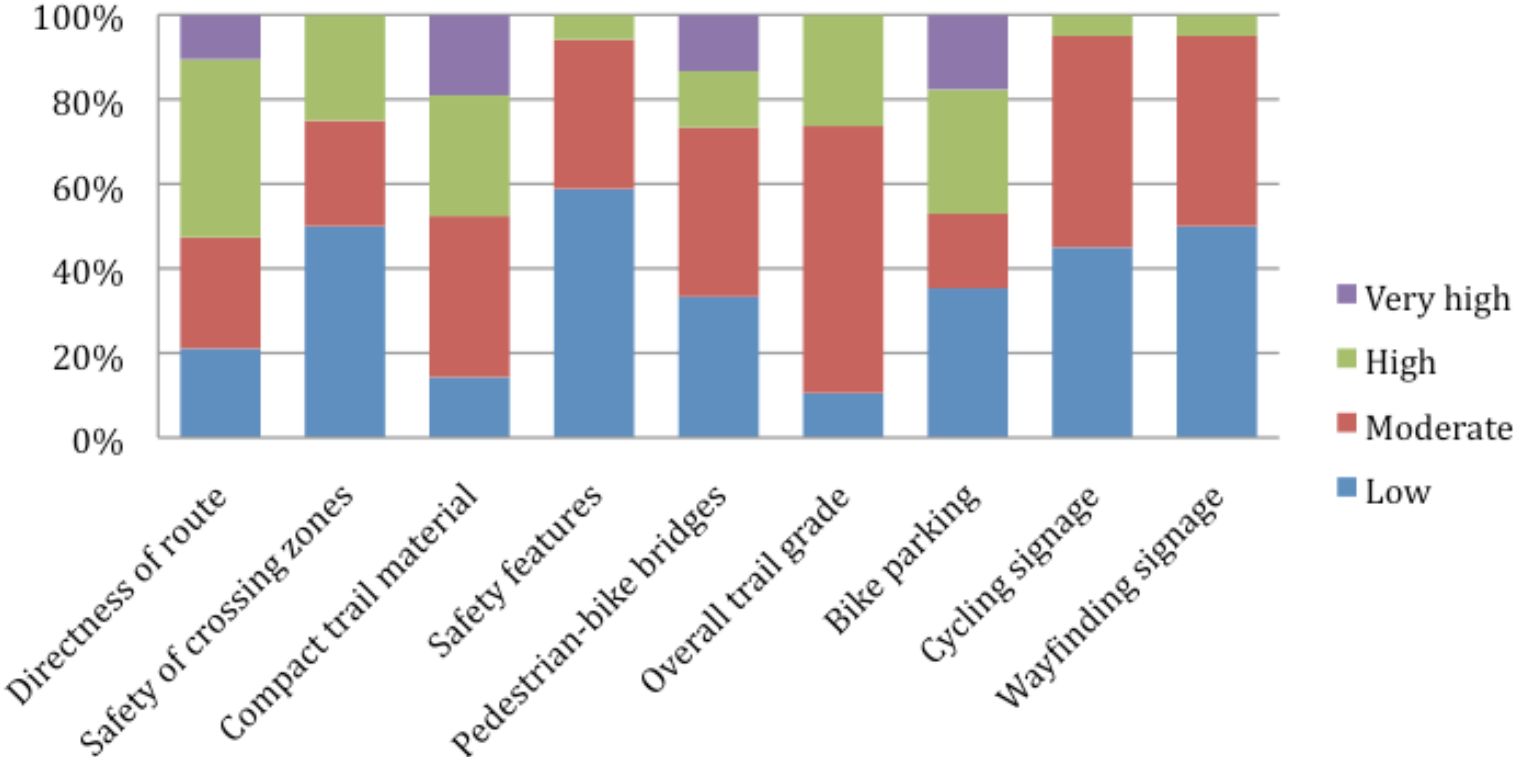


General Walking Questions

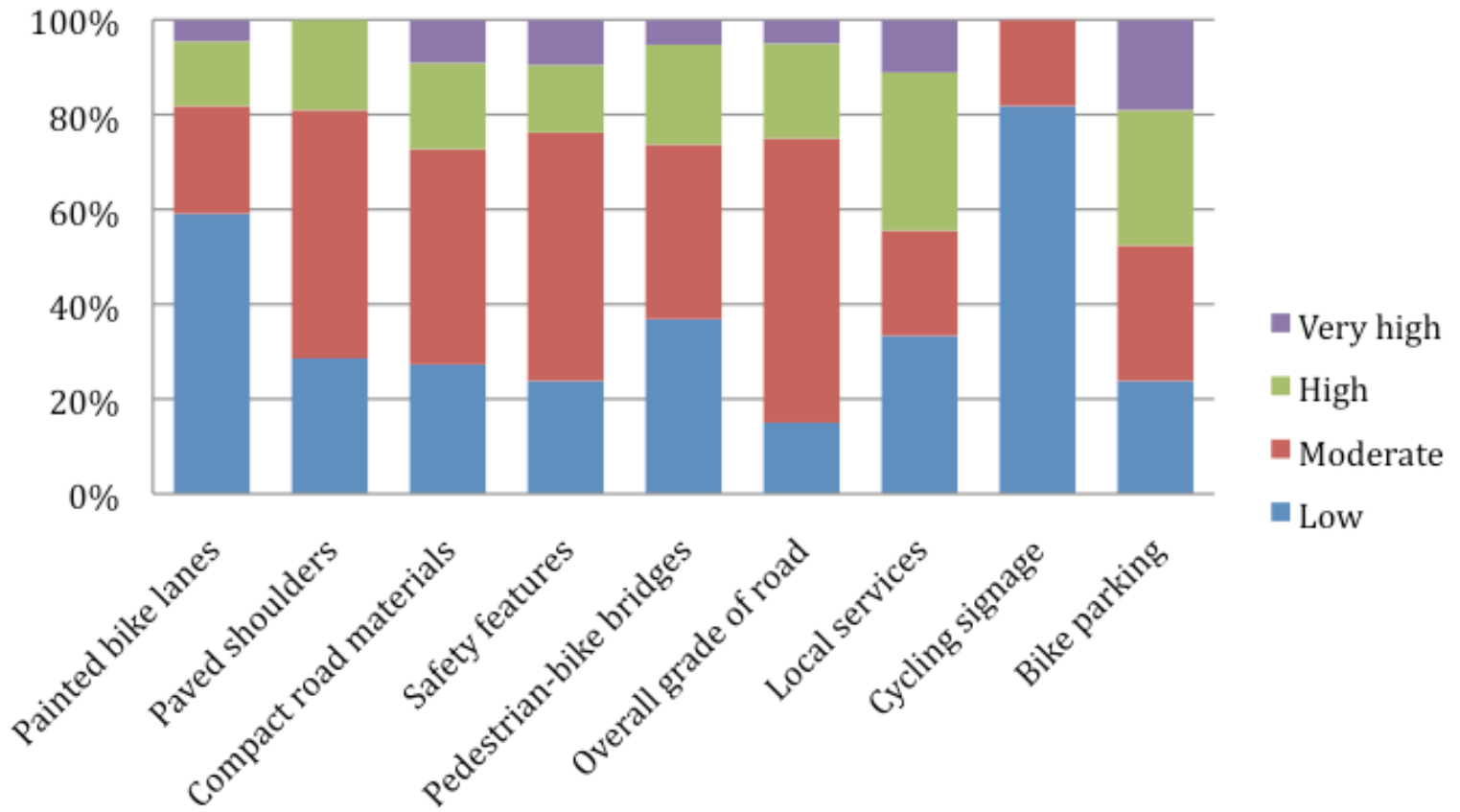
Need for programs to increase the number of people walking to Evergreen Brick Works



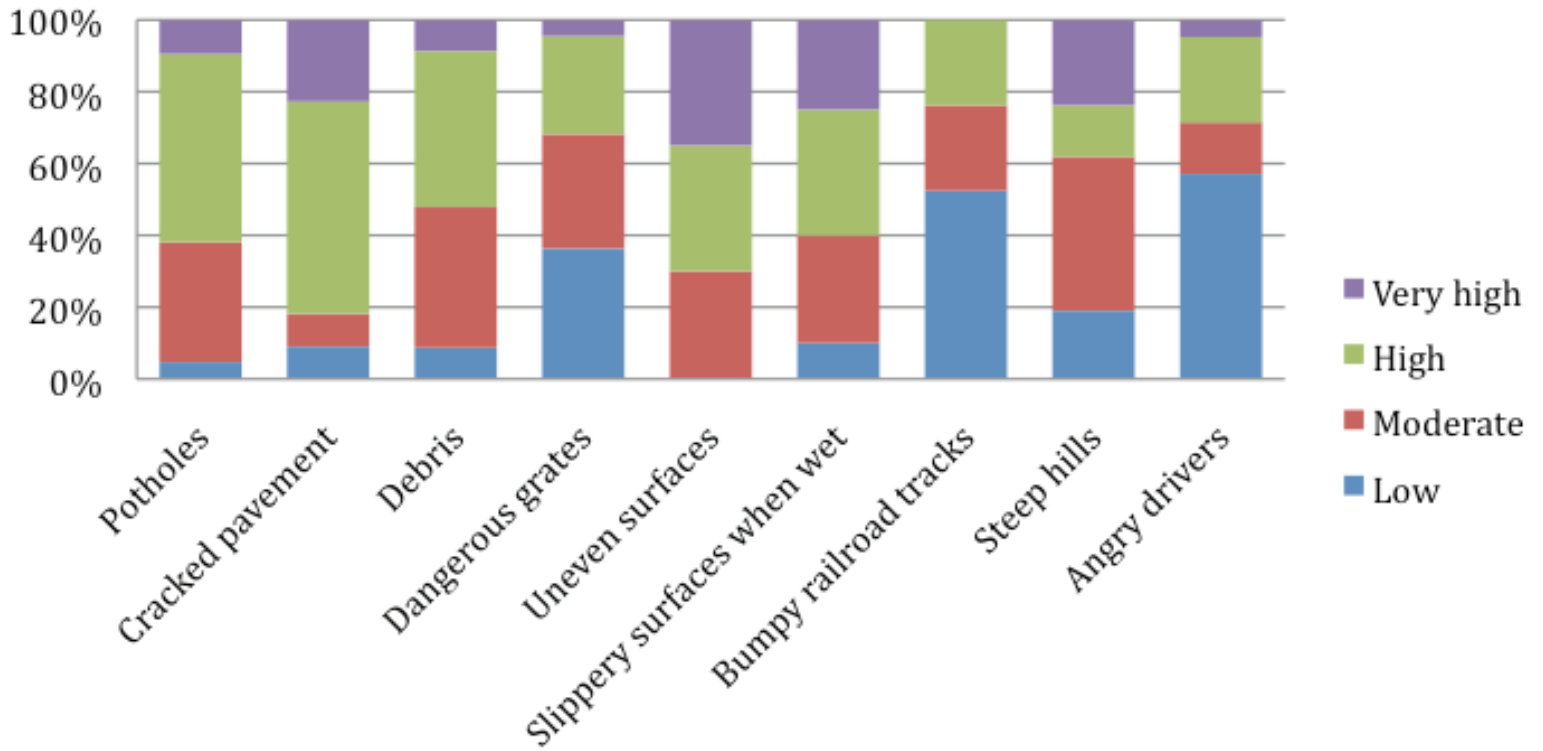
Quality of off-road facilities



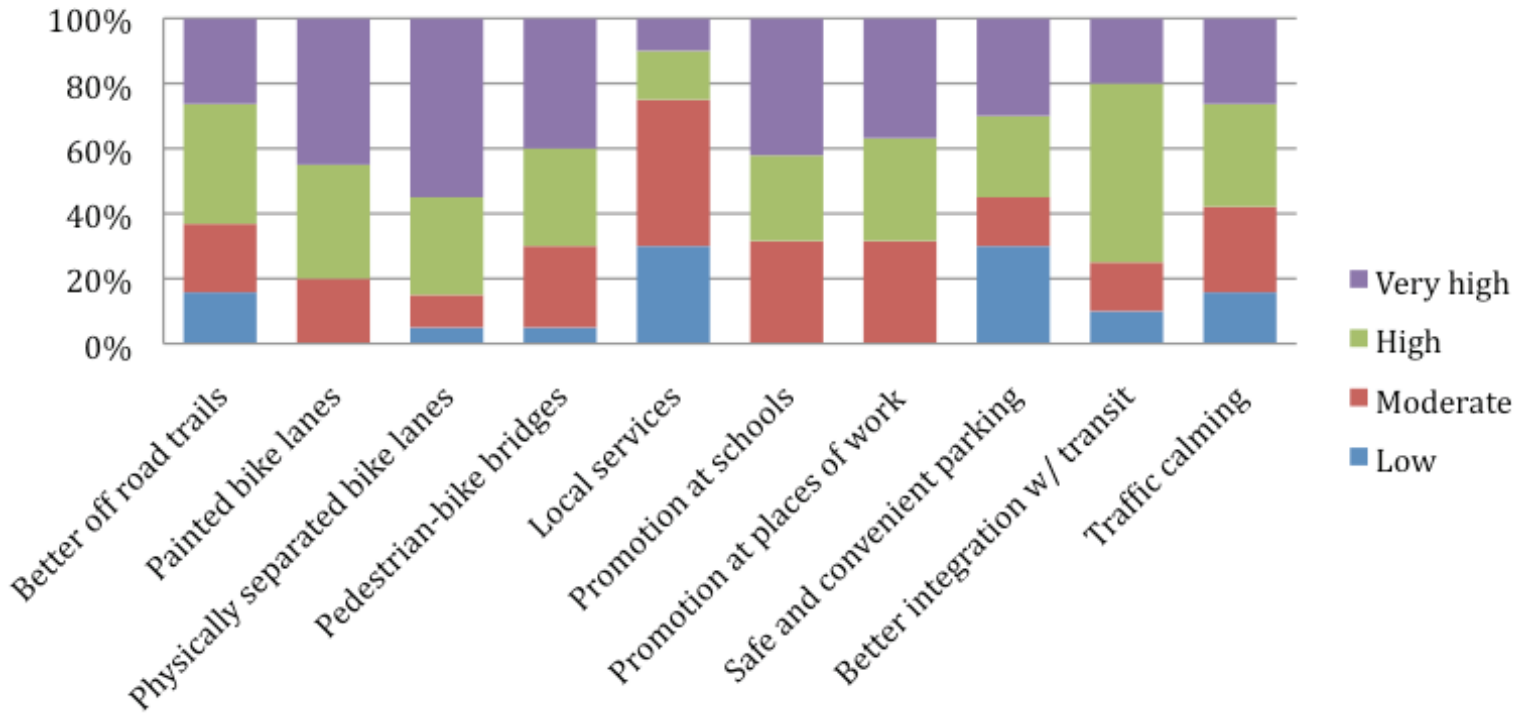
Quality of on-road facilities



Frequency of on- and off-road challenges

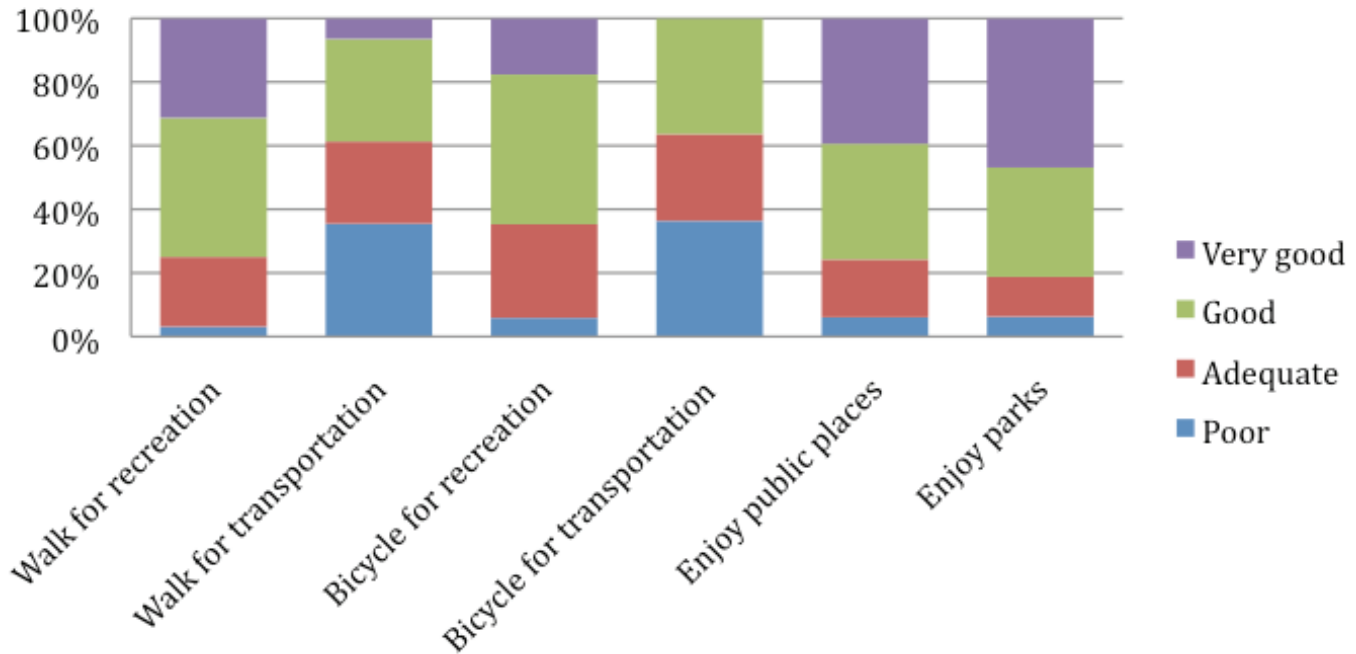


Need for programs to increase the number of people cycling to Evergreen Brick Works



General Trends

Evergreen Brick Works as a place to...



It's important to create a community where people can...



End notes:

- i Evergreen Brick Works – About Evergreen Brick Works. <<http://ebw.evergreen.ca/about/>>
- ii IPCC, p. 2.
- iii 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).
- iv Drennen, E. 2003.
- v Statistics Canada, 2007.
- vi Statistics Canada, 2008.
- vii Metrolinx, 2008, p. 62.
- viii Ontario Chamber of Commerce, 2004, p. 8.
- ix Nelson et al., 2007, p. 9.
- x Unknown author.
- xi Statistics Canada, 2005.
- xii Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, 2008.
- xiii Frank, Anderson, & Schmid, 2004.
- xiv Ontario Trails Council.
- xv Project for Public Spaces.
- xvi Evergreen Brick Works – The Site.
<<http://ebw.evergreen.ca/about/site/>>
- xvii Ontario Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, 2006, p. 3.

Image Credits:

Chapter 1 graphs

Produced by 8-80 Cities.

Chapter 2

Images from Evergreen Brick Works walking tours thanks to Erika Ivanic.

Image from Evergreen Brick Works skating rink thanks to Evergreen

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Liveable Community Project

Evergreen Brick Works

*8-80 Cities
Creating a More Liveable and Sustainable Evergreen Brick Works.*