

Peel Walking Audit

Dixie Road Walking Audit
Results and Recommendation Report
Healthy Peel by Design
May 3, 2024

Project Description

Peel Public Health conducted a Walking Audit as part of the Peel Region Dixie Road Complete Corridor Study and Preliminary Design. The project limit runs along Dixie Road from Rometown Drive to Lakeshore Road East in the City of Mississauga, Ontario. The Region of Peel is leading the project and Arcadis Professional Services (Canada) Inc., has been retained as the project consultant for the Study. The objective of the project is to transform the Dixie Road Corridor into a “complete street” that supports all modes of transportation.

As part of the public consultation for this project, a group of community stakeholders were invited to participate in the Walking Audit, including:

- City of Mississauga Cycling Committee
- City of Mississauga Active Transportation Staff
- Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Lakeview Business Networking Group
- Lakeview Ratepayer’s Association (LRA)*
- Fairways Condominium
- Orchard Heights Homeowner’s Association
- Sherway Homeowner’s and Recreation Association*
- Peel Regional Police*
- Peel Region Traffic Operations and Traffic Safety Staff
- City of Mississauga Ward 1 Councillor*

*Denotes participants that were invited but unable to attend the Walking Audit.

Appendix A: Pictures and Descriptions from Walk

Appendix B: Participant Feedback Survey

Appendix C: Facilitation Mapping

Walking Audit Results

Location: The Walking Audit started at the Intersection of Dixie Road and Lakeshore Road, Mississauga
Date: May 3, 2024
Time: 3:00-6:00pm
Number of participants: 12 (includes 1 Region of Peel student)
Males: 6
Females: 6
Other: 0
Ages: 17 and under = 0 (0%), 18-29 = 0 (0%), 30-49 = 6 (50%), 50-64 = 1 (8.5%), 65+ = 1 (8.5%),
Undisclosed = 4 (33%)

Overall Score

Peel Walking Audit Score:	53%
Your neighbourhood is less walkable than others, but improvements can be made	

Walking Audit Tool: Summary by Section

The table below summarizes the scores by participants from the Walking Audit Score Sheet. The table provides examples of the statements that had the highest scores and the lowest score.

Section	Average Score	Highest Score(s)	Lowest Score(s)
Destinations	42%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can easily do all or some of my shopping from the starting point. • Parks and walking trails are within easy walking distance of the starting point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot easily walk to work from the starting point. • Cannot easily walk to a secondary school from the starting point. • Cannot easily walk to an elementary school from the starting point.
Mix of Destinations*	38%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to walk to local shopping, restaurants, parks, playgrounds, and walking trails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would take a long time to walk to secondary schools, library, elementary schools.
Street Layout	59%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the walk in the neighbourhood, you can easily recall the route taken. • Can easily describe to friends the way to walk to various destinations within this neighbourhood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distances between intersections in this neighbourhood are greater than 100m. • Alternative routes for walking from place to place do not exist in this neighbourhood.
Walking Experience	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have no difficulty describing the walking routes in this neighbourhood by referring to the buildings, trees, gardens, parks, stores, and views. • You can see homes and buildings with a variety of designs and styles. • Neighbours can easily see me from their porches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major walking barriers exist, making it difficult to walk from place to place. • The amount of traffic and noise makes it difficult to carry on a conversation. • Traffic speeds exceed the posted speed limits. • The sidewalks and paths are not well lit at night.
Sidewalks	62%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are sidewalks on both sides of the street. • Sidewalks have curb ramps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks are not separated from street traffic. • Sidewalks are difficult to walk on because of large cracks, uneven surfaces, or other barriers.
Nature	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the summer months, green is the predominant colour seen when walking. • Natural amenities such as the Lake Ontario shore, rivers and creek valleys are in or close to this neighbourhood. • Shade trees line the streets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow and ice would limit my walking in this neighbourhood during winter months.
Overall	53%		

*Many participants left sections of this survey blank as they did not feel they knew the area well enough to comment.

Comments and Recommendations from Facilitated Discussion with Community Members

Section	Comments	Recommendations
Destinations & Mix of Destinations	<p>Destinations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two golf courses on each side of Dixie Road. • Dixie Outlet Mall – at Dixie Road and QEW. 	
	<p>Land Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not many houses on either side – some on the east side at Dixie Road and Lakeshore Road up to the golf course. • Mix of housing types - free-standing homes at Lakeshore, apartments/condominiums single and midrise on both sides of Dixie Road. • Fairway condominiums - mostly seniors. 	
Street Layout	<p>Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very busy long stretch of road from Lakeshore Road and Dixie Road up to QEW. • No access to east-west crossings with the exception of Lakeshore Road and Rometown Drive. • No traffic lights at Fairway condominiums and it is difficult to turn out of complex. No street crossing provided for residents. • Street lighting only on west of Dixie Road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider pedestrian crosswalk signals/traffic lights when there is a significant distance between intersections (e.g., in front of Fairway Condominiums). • Re-imagine sidewalk/bike/multiuse pathways. • Increase lighting levels along the corridor.
	<p>Sidewalk Conditions and Accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are sidewalks on both sides of the street, but they are narrow and in poor condition especially under and approaching the bridge/underpass. Uneven surfaces and cracks in the sidewalk are an accessibility issue for pets and residents walking or using mobility devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider sidewalks or multi-use paths due to limited space on sidewalks especially on garbage days. • Improve and level out sidewalk area beside paved path. • Go beyond the minimum standards in Book 18 to make it safer and more comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists along this corridor (especially on East side of corridor).

Section	Comments	Recommendations
	<p>Drainage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creek north of St. James/railway is a flood plain. Water pools on the sidewalks and becomes mossy/slimy and slippery especially in the winter making it unpleasant and unsafe to walk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve current drainage system.
	<p>Transit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No bus stops along the Dixie Corridor (Lakeshore to Fairway condominiums and Dixie Mall). A bus stop at Fairways would be great. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase services or ease of access to services such as Places of Worship, libraries, etc. Consider adding a transit route along Dixie Road, between Lakeshore Road up to Dixie Mall.
	<p>Traffic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy traffic currently and will increase with new development. • High traffic volume and fast cars/trucks (traffic to increase due to current and future development). • Many drivers use the centre lane to pass very aggressively and dangerously. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In future planning, consider the possible increase in traffic due to the expansion of condominiums.
Walking/Cycling Experience	<p>Speeds and Traffic Calming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speed limit was recently reduced from 60km/hr to 50km/hr, between 260 meters north of Lakeshore Road east to the QEW, but most cars are driving over the speed limit. Not safe for kids to walk or bike. • Cars' speed – southbound (SB) on Dixie Road and westbound (WB) on Lakeshore when making right turns - 60+km/hr. People using centre lane to pass - poor behaviour - long straight road. Traffic is very loud, feels fast, not ideal for having a conversation. • Wide sidewalks on the east side; separated from traffic lanes by bike lanes, makes it feel more comfortable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase frequency of speed signs/monitoring of traffic speed. • Traffic calming features are needed and desirable to slow traffic and can add to the visual appearance of the road (e.g., medians, greenspace, different pavement markings/materials).

Section	Comments	Recommendations
	<p>Streetscaping, Aesthetics and Nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes/gardens between Lakeshore & rail bridge - make it feel nice/a bit scenic. Not very aesthetically pleasing when walking route. • Corridor lacks visual appeal. • Some low-hanging branches along the bridge southwest side. Not enough lighting. No garbage cans or benches. • Sidewalks are adjacent to the golf courses but have no access and the visual is not aesthetically pleasing to the eye. • No way finding signs. • Residents like the mature trees. They provide a canopy and a nice amount of greenery (grass, trees, and golf course). If not for high-speed traffic it reminds them of England. • Overhanging branches on path. • No benches for sitting/resting or garbage cans e.g., for dog walkers. • Fencing along Toronto Golf Course old, damaged, slopes up poorly maintained, feels isolated, and not aesthetically pleasing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a mural/artwork to the bridge underpass. Improve greenery under and around bridge. • Enhance welcome sign on bridge (no digital sign). • Add garbage cans along the corridor including benches for resting. • Move road signs higher and away from cross walks. • Increase cleaning along the corridor and tree trimming operations to improve aesthetics and safety measures for residents. • Increase the number of places to sit and rest including additional garbage cans along corridor. • Consider discussions with Toronto Golf Course to replace the fence.
	<p>Safety Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors opt to travel along Dixie Road using motorized scooters, utilizing the bike lanes instead of the sidewalk. Their preference for bike lanes is often attributed to the smoother and flatter surface they offer. This raises safety concerns, particularly given the existing traffic and sidewalk conditions. • It feels unsafe for cyclists due to the high traffic and speeds. Unsafe for residents on motorized scooters (i.e., 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve overall corridor with monitoring or studying the speed of traffic.

Section	Comments	Recommendations
	<p data-bbox="422 228 1083 297">Feb 2020 a person on an electric wheelchair/motorized scooter was hit by a car).</p> <p data-bbox="327 310 491 337">Bicycle Lanes</p> <ul data-bbox="375 350 1108 792" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="375 350 1108 483">• Limited to no use of bike lanes and sidewalks as there is no protection, bike lanes are not clearly defined in some sections (single white line only). Across the driveway of 1400 Dixie bike lane disappears. <li data-bbox="375 496 1108 634">• The biggest barriers to cycling along Dixie Road are traffic volumes and speeds creating an uncomfortable experience for people biking and walking (unsafe, loud, and gas fumes). <li data-bbox="375 647 1108 792">• One participant noted that he drives in Dixie Road to get from his house to the waterfront, which is only about 1km – he would be willing to bike if there were less traffic / better cycling facilities. 	<ul data-bbox="1184 310 1938 483" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1184 310 1938 410">• Repaint and repair current bike lanes and extend along the corridor to increase visibility for cars and cyclists. Provide protective barriers on the corridor for cyclists and scooters. <li data-bbox="1184 423 1938 483">• Wider sidewalks or multi-use paths due to limited space on sidewalks especially on garbage days.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Operations

Participants noted several challenges relating to Dixie Road that impact pedestrians, cyclists, and those using a mobility device. Throughout the facilitated discussion, participants provided a number of comments and recommendations which helped identify the following considerations for the Dixie Road Complete Corridor Study:

1. **Low-Hanging Signs and Hazards:** Low-hanging signs near sidewalks pose risks to pedestrians. Sign placement should be adjusted where possible to improve safety.
2. **Speed Signs and Traffic Monitoring:** The corridor lacks sufficient posted speed signs. Increasing their presence and monitoring traffic can enhance safety.
3. **Population Growth and Increased Traffic:** The current development on both sides of Dixie Road have the potential to increase traffic. Opportunities to address and mitigate traffic impacts should be considered.
4. **Bike Lane Maintenance and Barriers:** Fading bike lanes require repainting. Installing barriers between cars, cyclists, and scooters can enhance safety.
5. **Poor Sidewalk Conditions:** Wet, moss-covered, and uneven sidewalks deter residents from walking, cycling, or scootering. Opportunities to improve sidewalk conditions should be explored.
6. **Pedestrian Challenges:** Narrow sidewalks force single-file walking by Dixie Road and Lakeshore Road especially on garbage days. Low-hanging street signs also impact the pedestrian environment.
7. **Crosswalk Deficiencies:** The Dixie Road and Lakeshore Road intersection is missing a crosswalk leg and crossing button on the northeast side. Additionally, there are only three locations to cross Dixie Road east-west along the study corridor – Rometown Drive, at the mall entrance (just south of Rometown Drive), and Lakeshore Road – with over 1 km between Lakeshore Road and the mall entrance crossings. Additional crossing opportunities should be considered between these locations to improve connectivity between the east and west sides of Dixie Road for vulnerable road users.

Design and Aesthetics

The participants indicated to enhance the aesthetics, accessibility, and walking experience for all residents in the area, the following improvements are to be considered:

1. **Infrastructure Enhancements:**
 - Repair broken fences, cracks, and uneven sidewalks, improve drainage system and the maintenance of over growing trees and cleaning of sidewalks.
 - Consider the implementation of multi-use pathways and/or enhanced cycling infrastructure along the corridor.
 - Provide garbage containers along the corridor for pedestrians and dog walkers to reduce garbage and waste.
 - Install benches for resting along the corridor.

2. **Beautification Efforts:**
 - Add flowers and plants to create an inviting environment.
 - Consider artwork on and under bridge and a welcoming sign on the water tower.
3. **Lighting Installation:**
 - Install lighting on the east side for safety and visibility.
4. **Crosswalks and Traffic Control**
 - Consider additional crosswalks and or traffic lights along Dixie Road within the study area, for example by the golf courses and Fairway condominiums.

Appendix A: Pictures from the Walking Audit

Dixie Road and Lakeshore Road Intersection

Three crosswalk legs at a four-way intersection. No crosswalk on the east side of the intersection. Also, no crosswalk indicator button from the north to the west side.



Sidewalks

As pedestrians head north on Dixie Road toward the golf courses, they encounter narrow sidewalks that force them to walk single file. Low-hanging street signs add to the challenge. On the west side of Dixie Road, two walkers and a non-electric scooter user share the space, with the pedestrian very close to the bike lane.





Drainage Concerns

Poor drainage causing sidewalks to be wet, covered in leaves, and moss making it slippery. In addition, cracks, and uneven sidewalks were noted by the participants, a deterrent for residents to walk, cycle or scooter. Addressing these concerns would improve accessibility and safety.



Bike Lanes

It was identified that the current bike lane pavement markings are fading and cracking in areas, requiring repainting and repairs. Barriers were also suggested between the cars, cyclists, and scooters as an enhanced safety measure.





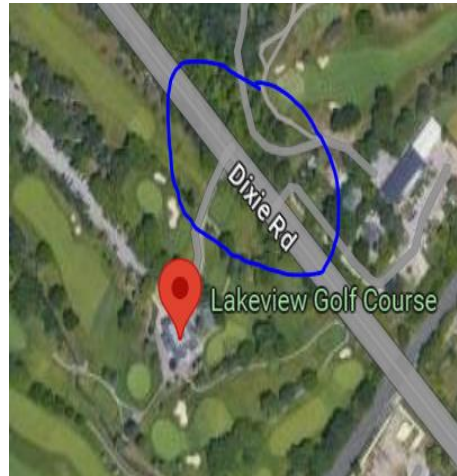
Signage

There are several low hanging signs along the corridor and close to the sidewalks, making this a hazard for those using the sidewalks. It was identified to have more speed signs along the corridor and monitor area for speed and increased traffic.



Fairways Condominium (mostly seniors) and Golf Courses

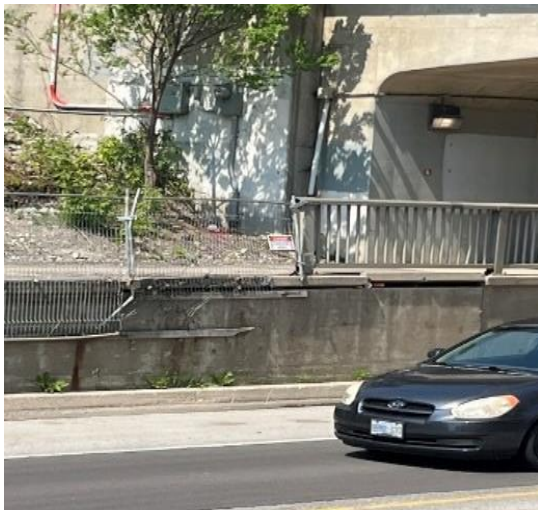
At the condominium, there are no crosswalks, stop signs, or traffic lights, making it difficult to turn out of the condominium or safely cross the street. The heavy, fast-moving traffic from the QEW and Lakeshore Road exacerbates the situation. Similarly, those exiting both golf courses on Dixie Road face the same issue due to the lack of existing crosswalks or traffic lights.



Aesthetics

While the existing walking infrastructure is in place, there are specific areas that require enhancements to ensure residents can fully enjoy safe walking, cycling, and scooter use. Addressing issues such as garbage and broken fences, adding more flowers, plants, benches, and garbage cans, installing lighting on the east side, and considering artwork or a welcoming sign on the water tower would contribute to a more pleasant and inviting environment.





Future Development – Dixie Road and Lakeshore Road

The already busy area has the potential to experience an increase in traffic due to population growth and development on both sides of the corridor.



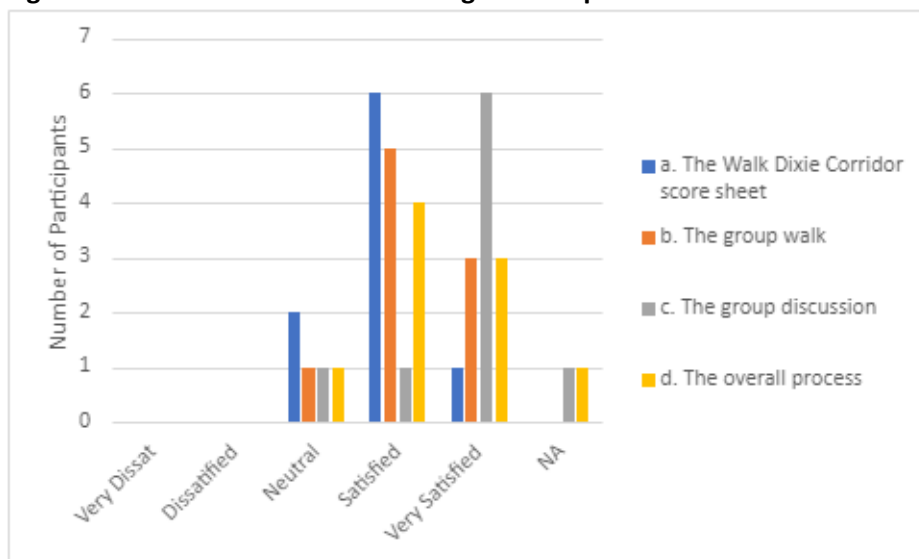
Appendix B: Participant Feedback Survey

Nine participants completed the Feedback Survey. Five participants were male and four were female. Ages of participants ranged from 30 to 65+ years with six participants aged 30-49 years, three participants aged 50-64 years, and one participant over 65 years of age.

Most participants agreed (n=7) or strongly agreed (n=1) that the Walking Audit enabled them to provide good feedback as a community member. One participant responded “not applicable”.

Most participants were satisfied or very satisfied with the Walking Audit score sheet, the group walk, the group discussion, and the overall process. Some participants responded neutral or not applicable; however, none responded as dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. For a detailed breakdown, see Figure 1.

Figure 1: Satisfaction with the Walking Audit experience



Appendix C: Facilitation Mapping

