



A New Vision for Sparks Street

Background Report

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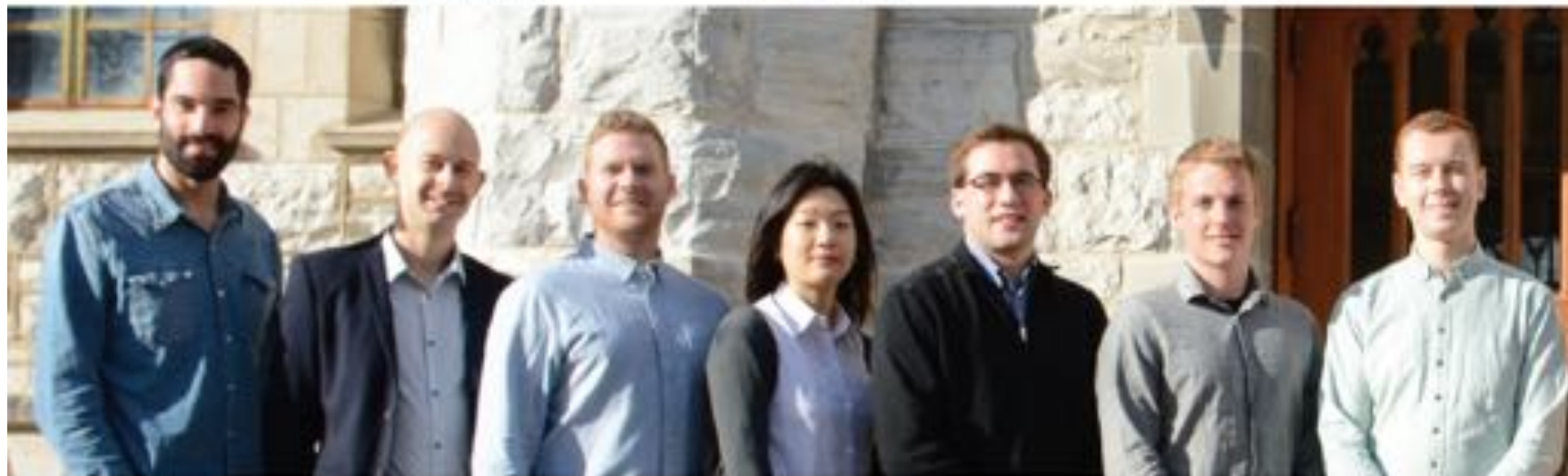
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Background Report Overview

A series of studies were conducted analyzing the existing condition of Sparks Street as part of the larger effort to compile the list of recommendations that if taken, can revitalize and rejuvenate the Mall. In essence, the project team sought to examine the issues on Sparks Street that have resulted in the Mall failing to deliver on its potential as a vital and vibrant piece of downtown Ottawa. It has maintained its pedestrian character and heritage, but it has not yet defined itself within Ottawa as a true destination. Taking this into consideration, the project team has studied the Mall's physical condition, taken inventory of its physical amenities, examined how people interact with it, and looked at how it functions.

Using the information gathered from this series of studies and analyses, the project team has analyzed the positive and negative attributes of the Mall, taking both objective and subjective perspectives in doing so. These assessments contributed to the team's direction in seeking out best practices from around the world and ultimately, to the creation of a set of recommendations that can potentially improve the issues that have been identified.

The following is a list of studies undertaken by the project team:

- 1 The Placemaking Concept**
- 2 Stakeholder Consultation**
- 3 Existing Physical Conditions**
- 4 Physical Amenities Analysis**
- 5 Public Space, Public Life Study**
- 6 Building Frontage Analysis**
- 7 Shadow Analysis**
- 8 2016 Programming Analysis**
- 9 Relevant Policy Analysis**
- 10 Market Analysis**
- 11 Demographic Analysis**

1 The Placemaking Concept

Placemaking has become a commonly utilized term in the fields of urban planning, design, and architecture, and reflects both a *process* and a *philosophy*.

The *process* is recognized as inspiring people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces within their own communities. The key attributes of placemaking are its ability to enable collaborative frameworks and its power to shift the behaviours of citizens from being passive consumers of services to actors, co-creators, and agents of change. Community-based participation is at the core of the process of placemaking, fundamentally utilizing local community's assets, inspiration, and potential. This collaborative process helps to foster quality public spaces and maximize their shared value. Placemaking illustrates effectively just how influential a community's collective vision can be.

The *philosophy* of placemaking is centred around observing, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live work, and play in a particular space in order to understand their needs and aspirations for that space, and for their community as a whole. Working with the community to create a vision around places they view as important to the community and to their daily experience is necessary to building a strategy for implementation. Starting off with short-term, experimental improvements can immediately bring benefits to public spaces and the people who use them, which also help to inform long-term improvements.

Placemaking is not a new concept. It can be traced back to the first human settlements, as Cities for People (2016) noted, “any discussions of placemaking must take into account that the original placemakers were Aboriginal people who did not see themselves as separate from their everyday life in their environment” (p. 16). Within the last 50 years, placemaking is linked to the 1960's works of Jane Jacobs, William H. Whyte, and Jan Gehl who introduced ideas about designing cities for people, not just the cars and shopping centres that dominated their respective eras. However, at that time, the term ‘placemaking’ had yet to exist.

The origin of the term, as it is currently used, is connected to Project for Public Spaces, a leading non-profit organization in helping people and communities create better public spaces around the world; they began using the term consistently during the mid 1990's. Currently, the term is not only used by citizens and organizations committed to grassroots community improvement, but also by planners and developers who use it more as a brand to imply authenticity and quality, even if their projects do not necessarily live up to the true concept of placemaking.

It should be fundamentally understood that placemaking belongs to everyone. It is a message and mission that is bigger than any one person or organization. Making a place is not the same as constructing a building, designing a plaza or developing a commercial zone. A great public space cannot be measured

by its physical attributes alone – it must also serve people as a vital community resource in which function is more important than form. When people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds can come together to not only access and enjoy a

space, but play the primary role in the identity, creation, and maintenance of the space, that is when genuine placemaking has been achieved.

11 Key Principles of Placemaking

Underlying ideas	
The community is the expert	Members of the local community are best suited to provide historical perspective and an understanding of important issues; it is best to start with them in any placemaking exercise.
Create a place, not a design	Emphasize physical design elements that make people comfortable, and in doing so, develop more effective relationships between public spaces and surrounding retail amenities.
Look for partners	Examples of partners can be local institutions, museums, or non-profit organizations, and these groups can prove to be very important in the effort to get a project started.
They always say, "It can't be done."	There are always obstacles to any placemaking exercise, and so starting with smaller scale improvements and proving the legitimacy of this effort, in order to help to generate momentum behind it.
Planning & outreach techniques	
Have a vision	A vision must originate with each community, and their activities in the future space are the most essential consideration. This will allow people to feel a sense of pride in a space.
You can see a lot just by observing	Learning why people use or do not use a space is one of the most informing elements in this type of exercise. This is important not only in the conceptual stage of a project, but in the nurturing of the space once it is completed; places evolve over time.

Translating ideas into action	
Form supports function	Physical design is critical but input from the community about how a space can function is equally important in accomplishing a vision for a space.
Triangulate	<p>"Triangulation is the process by which some external stimulus provides a lineage between people and prompts strangers to talk to other strangers as if they knew each other"</p> <p>The definition of this process is attributed to Holly Whyte, and in placemaking, triangulation can commence based upon the developments of a project.</p>
Experiment: Lighter, quicker, cheaper	There is a trial and error element to placemaking; a focus on experimenting with short-term physical design improvements can foster a knowledge base about what works and what does not.
Implementation	Physical design is critical but input from the community about how a space can function is equally important in accomplishing a vision for a space.
Implementation	
You are never finished	If a great place is created and fostered, people will have more enthusiasm for a project and will not view its cost as detrimental, especially in comparison to the benefits.
Translating ideas into action	The completion of a project does not exist; physical amenities wear out and external conditions are always changing. Flexibility in management is critical, as is being open to the need for change when it arises.

2 Stakeholder Consultation

There are a wide variety of stakeholders involved in the operation and success of Sparks Street. Indeed, the Mall is important to the local residents of Ottawa as a central asset in the City's downtown. The Mall offers itself as a tourist draw, especially given its close proximity to Parliament Hill. Further, its history and reputation as Canada's first pedestrian mall make it a space of national importance.

The National Capital Commission (NCC) have a stake through ownership of several buildings on the street, as well as a more general interest in the beautification of Ottawa and its assets. Public Service and Procurement Canada (PSPC) manage nearly the entire north side of the Mall as part of the Parliamentary Precinct; meaning that they also have both a key influence and interest in the status of the Mall.

Local business owners are involved through the Sparks Street Business Improvement Association (BIA). Given that their enterprises rely on the Mall's vitality, which in turn attracts potential customers, they have a noteworthy stake in its future. Finally, the Mall is situated within the City of Ottawa and as such, is bound by the municipal policies and by-laws which underpin the right-of-way and numerous other facets of the built form.

Consequently, a major challenge associated with the Mall lies in managing the interests and expectations of this complex array of stakeholders. In order to appropriately and adequately gauge the role that these agents have in this process, we undertook stakeholder interviews with the relevant parties.

The interviews were designed to attain a general assessment of the current dispositions and future visions for the Mall that numerous individuals from each agency has in mind. They covered discussions of the built form, programming on the Mall, and the general issues which face the Mall. While the identity of the interviewees will remain confidential, the groups consulted included staff from the City of Ottawa, the NCC, PSPC, and the Sparks Street BIA. There were overwhelming trends between the different groups, and there were some distinct differences that related to issues which may be of higher concern to some stakeholder groups.

Inter-Agency Communication

All of the stakeholders that were consulted noted that there was inadequate communication among the interest groups. It was acknowledged that this leads to an inability to operate the Mall at a desirable level of efficiency; there have been instances where multiple agencies undertake the same measures without knowing another is doing the same thing or nobody undertakes a particular task because all agencies assume it is the responsibility of another. Further, there has been a lack of intention to streamline different construction projects along the Mall in order to minimize the impact it has on its customers. Although some agencies have suggested that communication has improved, all cite better communication as being essential to a successful Sparks Street revitalization.

Lighting

It was nearly universally acknowledged that the lighting throughout the Mall is in need of improvement. Currently, the

light posts are an eclectic mix of designs and types because they were installed at different times. The result is that there is a lack of uniformity along Sparks Street; the eastern end is distinctly different from the western end and there are more differences in the middle of the Mall. The exact design of new lighting is not universally expressed or agreed upon. Specific suggestions have included stringing bulb lights across the street from building to building as well as illuminating light upwards onto heritage buildings to better show off their facades during the evening.

Maintenance

Many stakeholders recognized that one of the failures of previous attempts to invigorate the Mall is that they did not acknowledge and accommodate for the operational cost of the long-term maintenance of new implementations. It was emphasized that new policy guidelines should put a priority on ensuring that there is a budget for any new measures to be financed long-term, including the operational expenses.

Pedestrian Presence

Stakeholders discussed both mix and frequency of pedestrian use on the street. It is understood that the main users of the Mall are government employees during their break periods, and tourists. The periods of high frequency are typically during weekday business hours and on weekends dependent on weather and programming. The street is largely vacant during evenings aside from patrons entering or exiting one of the bars on the Mall. Stakeholders agree that the vitality of the Mall could be further ensured if it is busier at more periods during the day. Stakeholders view enhanced retail and reduced vacancies as essential towards facilitating this condition.

Programming

While programming is viewed as one of the most positive aspects of the Mall, there is a general consensus that more programming consistently throughout the year is desirable to give the Mall consistent pedestrian activity. Some have identified the “food truck” style festivals as a distraction from the business on the street, and others have referred to them as “carnavalesque” and not appropriate for Sparks Street. Nevertheless, the stakeholders seem rather divided as some consider this type of programming to be a key component of the street’s vitality.

Retail Mix

All stakeholders recognize that the success of Sparks Street relies on the mix of retailers whose stores front onto the Mall – it is suggested that convenience uses and a greater amount of reputable retailers should be incorporated.

Surfacing and Streetscape

It is generally understood that the surfacing of the Mall is very poor in quality and coherence. Numerous types of stone have been used, many of which are in disrepair; random patches of asphalt are present throughout. It was agreed that a clean, cohesive surface for the Mall would significantly improve its aesthetic appeal. Concerning the streetscape itself, stakeholders have generally advocated the “less is more” approach where clutter should be reduced where possible. Stakeholders have noted that the best parts of the current Mall, and pedestrian malls elsewhere is that they have tasteful planters and minimal obstructions on the street.

Stakeholders agreed that a key factor for the mall to be successful is a cohesive atmosphere from one end to the other. However, there were differences in opinion with regard to what this atmosphere should be. 5 themes were identified:

Family Friendly

Multiple stakeholders suggested that a successful mall would be oriented in a way that caters to all ages. It was noted that Sparks Street is desirable for taking children downtown as the limited vehicle traffic means that parents can be less stressed about their children walking around. One stakeholder recognized that a central part of Sparks Street is *tradition* – this is to say that patrons who bring their children are creating generational relationships with the Mall where these children will grow up and interact with the Mall themselves, and perhaps even bring their own children there as well.



Arts & Culture

Numerous stakeholders noted that given the street's history, its close proximity the *National Arts Centre*, and its pedestrian nature, it would make an excellent street for "Arts and Culture" type uses, including boutiques, cafes, "Shakespeare-in-the-Park" style pop-up performances, and galleries. It was noted that Ottawa does not currently have a domain like this, and creating one would fit well with the prestige value associated with Sparks Street.

Refined Experience

Some stakeholders noted that the Mall does not necessarily need a specific theme to it – it simply needs to be an effective mall with good tenants and a good patron experience. These stakeholders suggest that the priority should be to invest in good quality materials, and negotiate with property owners to provide attractive leasing arrangements that can bring in more noteworthy and profitable tenants.



Night Life

While only a few stakeholders took this position, some suggested that the Mall would be most desirable as a new night life area. Its advantage for this domain lies in the fact that its pedestrian nature allows for easy walking between different establishments. Further, this arrangement also allows for closed-off street party events. With the introduction of the Confederation Line on Queen Street in 2018, accessing the Mall for a night out would be very easy. Numerous other stakeholders suggested that the Mall does not necessarily require a night life and simply needs more foot traffic during the day.

Heart of Canada

Some stakeholders have suggested that Sparks Street should be tied thematically to the Parliament buildings. This is to say that the street should celebrate “All things Canadian” and act as a commercial extension of what is being communicated to both tourists and locals on Parliament Hill. Its proximity to the Hill and the history of the site make Sparks Street the only place this could occur.



Winterization

Stakeholders identified the issues laden with winter conditions at the Mall identifying this as the worst time of year to be there. Multiple groups suggested the implementation of more winter programming including an ice rink on the street and portable heaters placed at strategic points.

Stakeholder Consultation Summary

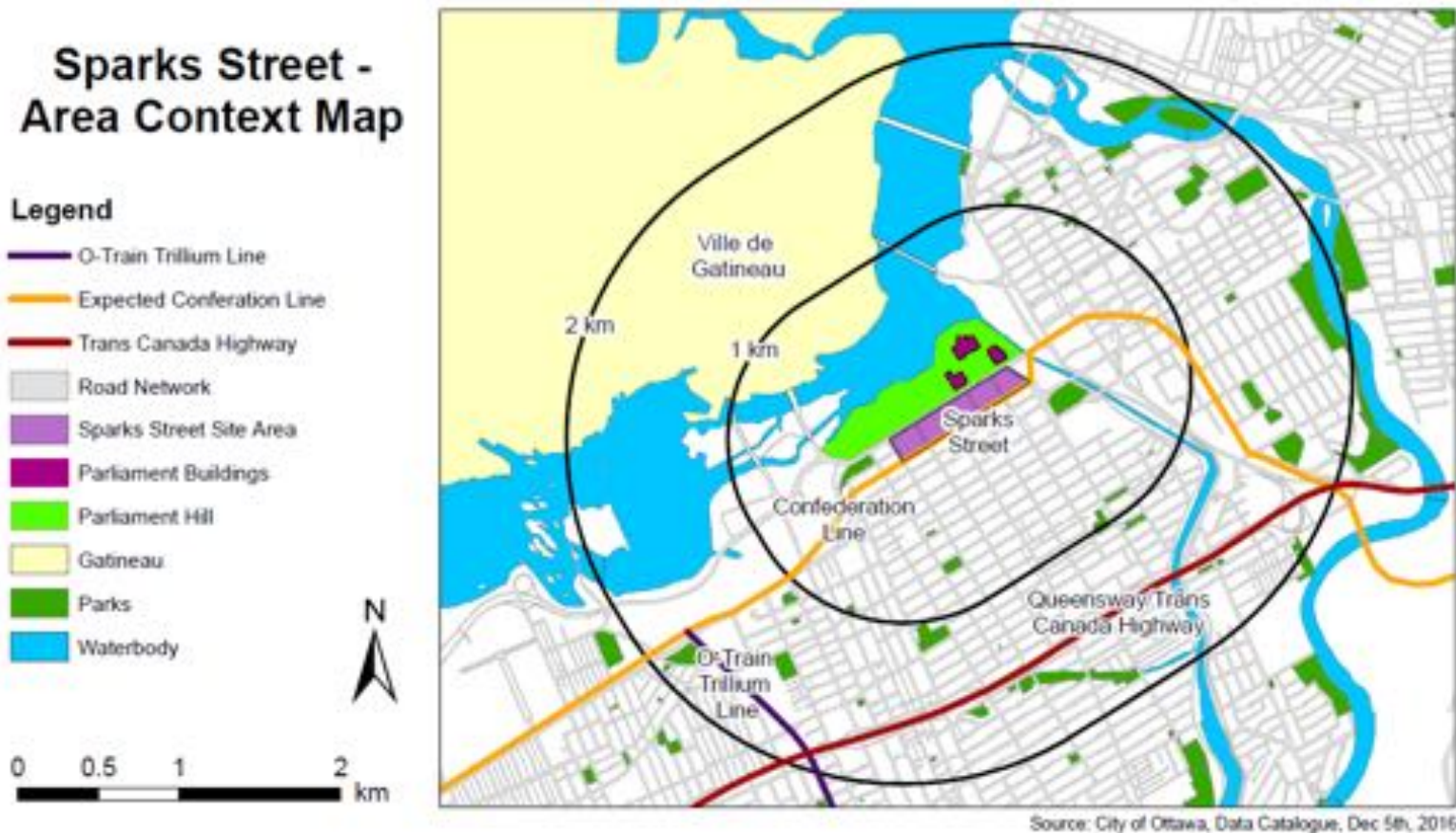
The stakeholders appeared to assign more priority to the development of a cohesive, well thought-out direction forward for the Mall rather than to focus on a specific thematic direction. The stakeholder consultation led the project team to create a vision which consolidated diverse stakeholder input while ultimately satisfying the overarching desire for a strong and dynamic concept for Sparks Street.



3 Existing Physical Conditions

Sparks Street is located within Ottawa's downtown and is adjacent to the Federal Parliamentary Buildings. Ville de Gatineau on the O-Train Trillium Line, and the Queensway Highway are within 2 kilometres of Sparks Street. The Confederation Line is planned to run directly south of Sparks

Street along Queen Street, which will enhance accessibility into Ottawa's downtown. Sparks Street is centrally located in Ottawa's downtown core and act as a major transportation corridor for pedestrian movement.



For this report, The Sparks Street study area consists of the pedestrian mall from Elgin Street in the east to Lyon Street in the west. Many of the buildings along Sparks Street are primarily mixed-use buildings containing offices with retail space at grade. In addition, there are a series of buildings along Sparks Street that have been acknowledged as heritage properties. These properties contain facades that have visual qualities that are to be maintained in order to secure the integrity of Sparks Street's heritage.

Existing amenities have been identified on Sparks Street to understand the context of the streetscape. By acknowledging Sparks Street's physical characteristics, it will give an indication of which street elements play a positive or negative role within the space, and an analysis of existing amenities will highlight what can be done to improve and reshape the street.



Lighting & Sunlight

The lights along Sparks Street are known for their unique S-shaped light feature, which illuminate the street during the late hours of the evening and stay on throughout the night. Baskets containing flowers are hung from the lights, while planters containing foliage surround each one. These lights are placed in a uniform pattern along Sparks Street from O'Connor Street to Bank Street. However, the lights have been placed sporadically without much uniformity west of Bank Street. The light bulbs on each street light have been known to require a large amount of maintenance, which can result in constant repair and replacement. In this vein, it is not uncommon to spot street lights that are missing a few light bulbs. Sparks Street's lights have been noted by the City of Ottawa as being outdated and are inconsistent with the City of Ottawa's goal of providing a new and modern Sparks Street.

Sunlight is also a major element when providing light and heat to the streetscape. The heights of the buildings can block sunlight from reaching the pedestrian promenade during the morning, as well as the evening hours of the day. The lack of sunlight entering the space can make the street feel cold and dark. Further, it is when the street is not well lit that the space loses a large portion of its pedestrian activity, especially those that want to linger on the street and explore. The need to improve the lighting along Sparks Street has been acknowledged by both the City of Ottawa and the NCC.



Lighting posts featuring glass globe fixtures.

Seating & Patio Spaces

There are a total of 54 benches along Sparks Street. While seating is abundant, many pedestrians find seating on the raised cement platforms that can be found along the street; this can be referred to as “secondary seating”. Both the cement platforms and benches provide seating, although many of the benches are often left unused. The benches on Sparks Street were designed by *Maglin*, a company that manufactures public street furniture. These benches have an old-fashioned design that makes them appear heavy within the streetscape. The weight and texture of the wooden material can make the benches appear uncomfortable to sit on; replacing the existing seating could enhance the Mall.

The City of Ottawa has recognized the importance of seating along the pedestrian promenade and the aesthetic benefit of providing benches near key scenic views. Benches are to be placed along the street without impeding pedestrian circulation by ensuring at least two metres of sidewalk space around each bench (City of Ottawa, 2015). Certain areas of the street have uniform seating, while other sections of the street have seating that is not spaced in a clear pattern.

Restaurants can be found on the southern side of Sparks Street and during the summer months there are patio spaces that take up a portion of the Mall. These patio spaces are removed during the fall and winter season. A lack of sunlight reaching the patios has been cited as a reason why they may not attract as many patrons, thus they tend to be left empty outside of peak periods. Tourists and local professionals are the primary clientele of these restaurants.



▶ Secondary seating and patios along Sparks Street.



▶ Benches and planters arranged in a circle.

Green Space & Planters

Much of the foliage along Sparks Street can be found in planters, which have been placed throughout the pedestrian corridor. These planters are then subsequently removed during the colder months of the year. When the plants die in the colder months of the year, it is unclear whether the Sparks Street Business Improvement Association (BIA) or Public Service and Procurement Canada (PSPC) are responsible for their re-planting; as a result, planters can be left containing dead vegetation. To avoid having to restore dead vegetation, some planters contain fake foliage. These planters are placed throughout the Mall with no consistency or uniformity, this can lead to the space feeling cluttered and disorganized.

There are very few trees along the Mall between Elgin Street to Kent Street and although this considerably reduces the natural aesthetic of Sparks Street, it also preserves views of Confederation Square. Trees can be found between Kent Street and Lyon Street, which makes this street more inviting, in comparison to other streets in the area.



► Presence of small shrubs and planters.



► Planters and hanging baskets.



Pavement & Pavers

Sparks Street lacks a consistent pattern of pavement or pavers. The streetscape has undergone several renovation efforts leaving no order or smooth surface to the street. Patching up the street with cement or asphalt is common, leaving an inconsistent and rough texture. This inconsistency makes the street unpleasant to walk through and at some points, creates a

potential tripping hazard. During the winter months the pavers freeze and can crack resulting in a frequent need for repair and maintenance. The rough texture of the pavers, as well as the areas where cement and asphalt have been used for patching and repair, reduce the pleasant nature of the street which is a major concern for a pedestrian-oriented space.



Asphalt patches and brick repairs along the Sparks Street Right-of-Way.

Public Amenities & Utility Features

Sparks Street has an abundance of public amenities from garbage cans, recycling bins, mailboxes, newspaper boxes, telephone kiosks and fire hydrants. These amenities are found throughout the Mall but not in any pattern or uniform manner. In some locations, multiple garbage cans are placed together rather than spread out for convenience, while public telephone kiosks are placed in the way of pedestrian movement and are rarely used. The mix of amenities in this manner makes the street feel disorderly. Fire hydrants are in locations that are difficult for fire trucks to get to and some hydrants are placed in the middle of the street in what should be clear paths for pedestrians. These essential street features provide services and convenience to pedestrians, which make the street aesthetically pleasing. However, much can be done to improve the overall quality and placement of the amenities.



► Examples of utility features on Sparks Street.

Bike Racks & Transportation Routes

Sparks Street is a favourable environment for cyclists; bike racks can be found throughout the pedestrian corridor. Specifically, there is a large concentration of bike racks located at the intersection of Sparks Street and Bank Street. Having a large supply of bike racks allows the street to support active transportation and also facilitates pedestrian movement on and around Sparks Street.

Wellington Street, running parallel to Sparks Street one block north, is a major bus route and receives a high volume of bus traffic. Further, OC Transpo bus routes #1 and #7 travel through Bank Street. The close proximity and intersecting nature of these routes mean that Sparks Street is currently well-served by public transit. Having public transit is beneficial to citizens and tourists who are looking to visit the Mall because parking around Sparks Street is limited. These bus stops that are laid out around Sparks Street allow for the movement of people to and from Ottawa's Downtown. The City of Ottawa is planning the introduction of the Confederation Line in 2018, which will be an LRT route running underneath Queen Street, one block south of the Mall, which will further encourage the movement of people into and through the area. The Confederation Line will provide two new LRT stations in Ottawa's Downtown. One will be located close to the intersection of O'Connor Street and Queens Street, and the other will be located near the intersection of Lyon Street and Queen Street. It is expected that the new rapid transit line will make Sparks Street even more accessible, and that it will be responsible for large increases in pedestrian activity on Sparks Street and the rest of Ottawa's downtown.



Several type of bike racks are present on Sparks Street.



Public Art

The presence of thoughtful, provocative public art is a key component of good streetscape design. Public art, when executed well, helps give spaces identity and allows for effective placemaking. Currently there are two major public art installations on Sparks Street, both of which are the work of Canadian sculptor Bruce Garner. The more notable of the two is a piece called “Territorial Prerogative”; it is a four-metre long bronze sculpture of a grizzly bear. Since 1990, this piece has acted as a significant feature of the street as it faced toward the Mall’s eastern entrance at Elgin Street. At the end of September 2016, the sculpture was moved a block west to the corner of Sparks Street and Metcalfe Street. In the process, the central bear sculpture was “reunited” with its cub and three salmon; original parts of the installation that were removed to allow more room for service and emergency vehicles.

The other major sculpture on Sparks Street is another piece Garner designed called “Joy”. It is a copper-welded installation that depicts a family sharing a moment of happiness. It is also situated at the eastern end of the Mall. Other than these two examples, there are no other major public art pieces. This is likely to be partly due to a prioritization of easy vehicle access in addition to limited access to funding.

There is one upcoming public art installation for the site. It is intended be situated at the entrance located at Sparks Street and Elgin Street, where “Territorial Prerogative” was previously installed. Referred to as “Lord Stanley’s Gift”, this is the result of an ongoing design competition overseen by the Canadian Council for the Arts. There are currently eight designs on the

shortlist; a winner will be selected by a panel of judges in conjunction with public input. The installation will commemorate the 125th anniversary of the gift of the Stanley Cup as well as 100th anniversary of the National Hockey League.



Territorial Prerogative by Bruce Garner.

Wayfinding & Signage

When an individual enters Sparks Street they will find two large entranceway pillars, which indicate that one has arrived at the Mall. However, these pillars are only located along Sparks Street at Elgin Street and Bank Street, and as a result, it could be unclear whether you have entered the pedestrian promenade, if you are traveling into the space from other locations. Signage exists in proximity to these entranceway pillars which promote businesses and events. Advertisements and events posted on signage may not be directly associated with any activities that are located along Sparks Street but rather are businesses or events located within the surrounding area. With a lack of clear and organized wayfinding signage, pedestrians walk through the space and pay much less of their attention to the Street's significant qualities and features.

Finding one's way around Sparks Street is difficult as there is no clear street information or map to help you navigate your journey. Sparks Street contains cultural and historic value but these qualities are not communicated to visitors. Pedestrians tend to move quickly down the pedestrian promenade to get to their destinations rather than linger, spectate, and enjoy the space; in this way, Sparks Street is often more of a thoroughfare than a destination on its own. Further, with Sparks Street acting primarily as a pedestrian thoroughfare rather than a place to be, the average person is not encouraged to return to the street in their leisure time leading to segregated times where the street is mostly utilized between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday-Friday, and largely vacant, on evenings and weekends.



4 Physical Amenities Analysis

Each block segment along Sparks Street contains certain characteristics and amenities that differentiate each location from one another. The blocks have been given the following names based upon their most prominent characteristics (often the most prominent building located on the block):

- Memorial Block: Elgin Street to Metcalfe Street
- Valour Block: Metcalfe Street to O'Connor Street
- McDonald Block: O'Connor Street to Bank Street
- Museum Block: Bank Street to Kent Street
- Justice Block: Kent Street to Lyon Street

The characteristics unique to each block are described within this section and in each, an inventory of amenities is provided.

Features	Quantity
Entranceway Pillar	4
Lord Stanley's Gift	1
Public Art	3
Fire Hydrant	10
Benches	54
Signage	13
Light	82
Mail/Newspaper Box	17
Garbage/Recycling Bin	35
Planter	80
Bike Racks	26
Kiosk/Telephone Booth	3
Tree	49



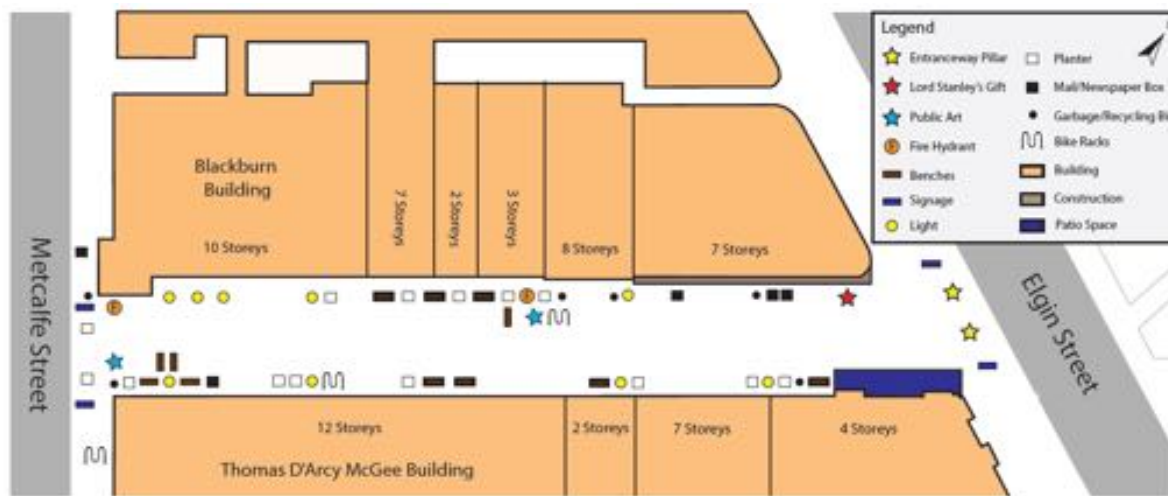
Patio and street furniture amenities on Sparks Street.



Memorial Block

At Elgin Street there are two entranceway pillars that indicate the entrance to the Spark Street Mall. Lord Stanley's Gift will be placed at the corner of Sparks Street and Elgin Street, which will assist in highlighting the importance of the entranceway. The public art found between Elgin Street and Metcalfe Street accounts for almost all of the public art on the street. This block contains benches, lights and planters, although there is little consistency in their placement within the streetscape (see map).

The northeastern portion of the street does not contain as many lights as the western sections of Sparks Street, although this could be attributed to construction happening at the C. D. Howe Building. It is these inconsistencies in lighting that can make the street feel less enjoyable, especially during the evening hours.



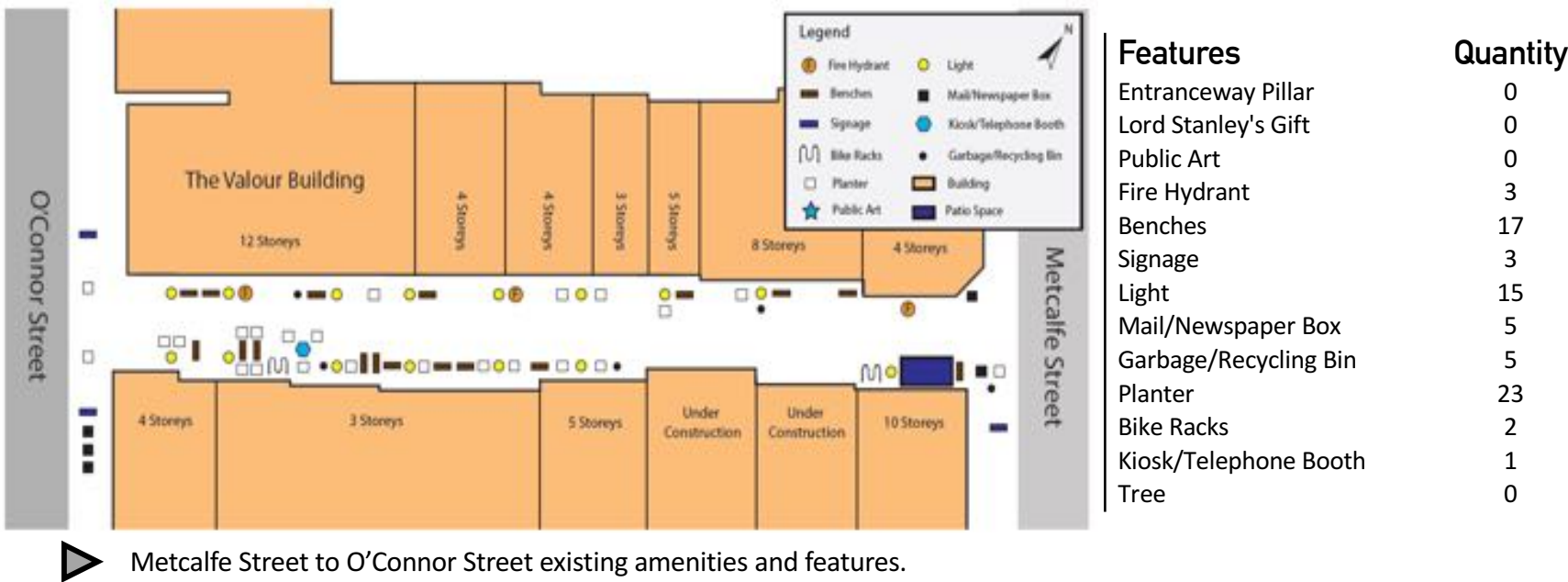
► Elgin Street to Metcalfe Street existing amenities and features.

Features	Quantity
Entranceway Pillar	2
Lord Stanley's Gift	1
Public Art	2
Fire Hydrant	2
Benches	12
Signage	4
Light	8
Mail/Newspaper Box	5
Garbage/Recycling Bin	6
Planter	14
Bike Racks	3
Kiosk/Telephone Booth	0
Trees	0

Valour Block

Metcalfe Street to O’Connor Street contains a larger quantity of lights than the block segment from Elgin Street to O’Connor Street. Further, the lighting is more symmetrical giving a more even distribution of lighting along the block. It is the western portion of this stretch of the Mall where there is a large quantity of amenities grouped together. These amenities include planters, benches, and lights, which are not well spread out and instead can make the space feel cluttered during the hours of high pedestrian traffic. Trees are absent from this block; the section

relies on planters to provide greenspace. The worst examples of pavers in poor condition can be found between Metcalfe Street and O’Connor Street; cracks can clearly be seen throughout the block. Much of the pavement along this block has been filled in by concrete or asphalt, which makes the street less visually appealing to walk on. Nevertheless, the PSPL study found within this report identified this block as the most heavily trafficked along the Mall. The poor condition of the ground could be a result of this.

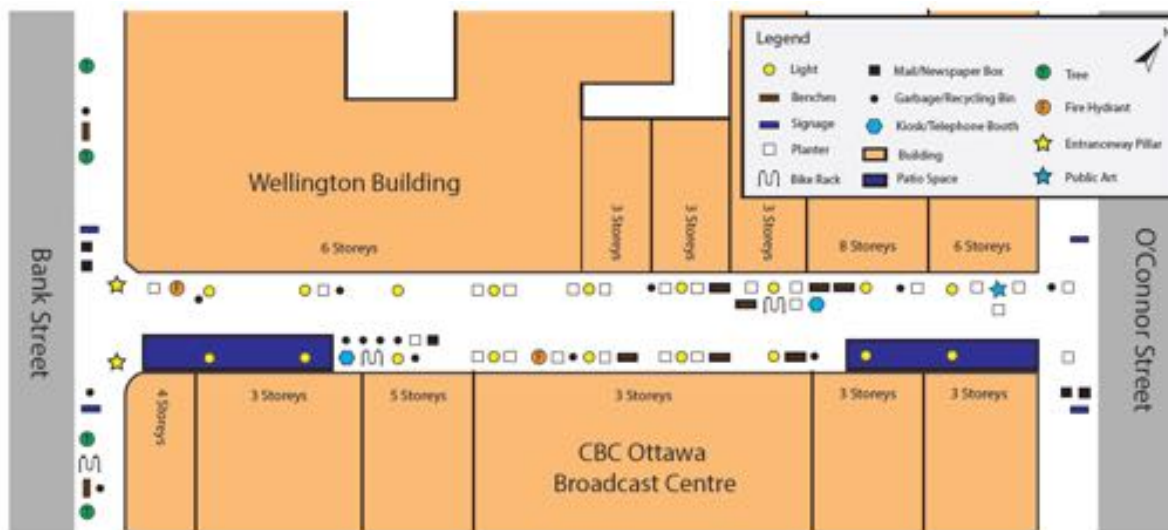


► Metcalfe Street to O’Connor Street existing amenities and features.

Macdonald Block

What is unique about the block segment from O'Connor Street to Bank Street is the uniformity in lighting along the block making it one of the more successfully well-lit areas of the Mall. Two entranceway pillars are located at the corner of Sparks Street and Bank Street and this block contains the largest variety of amenities and features on Sparks Street. A significant concentration of garbage cans can be found along the street. Having a large assortment of garbage bins placed in close proximity can be visually unappealing. During the summer

months, temporary patio spaces take up a large portion of the Mall. The mix of patios and landscaping features can make the space feel disorganized. Notably, street trees can be found along Bank Street which helps provide some visual aesthetic at this location.



Features

Quantity

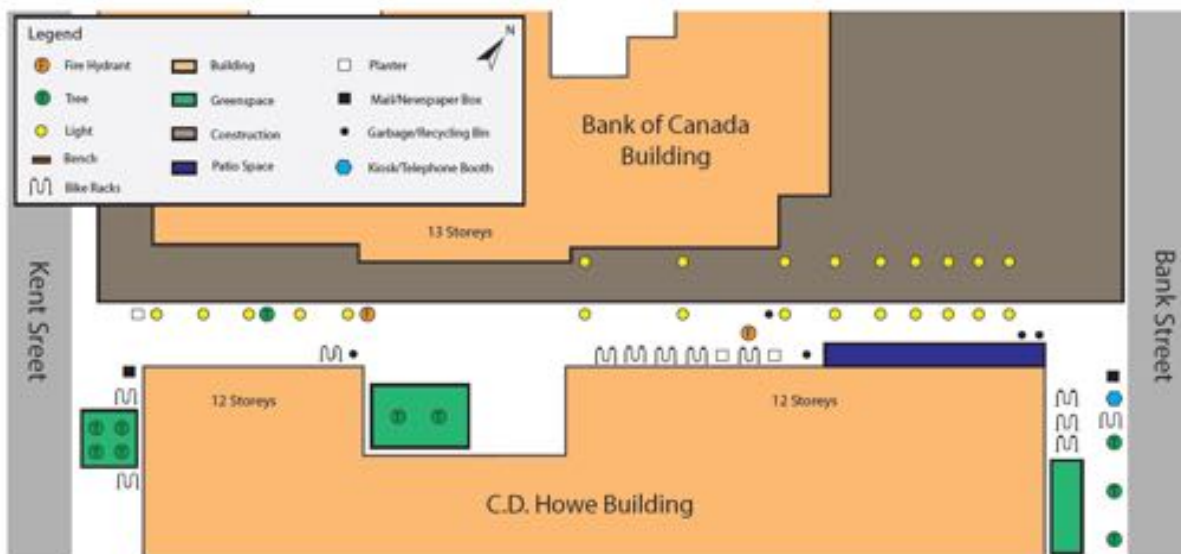
Entranceway Pillar	2
Lord Stanley's Gift	0
Public Art	1
Fire Hydrant	2
Benches	9
Signage	4
Light	18
Mail/Newspaper Box	5
Garbage/Recycling Bin	14
Planter	24
Bike Racks	3
Kiosk/Telephone Booth	1
Tree	4

► O'Connor Street to Bank Street existing amenities and features.

Museum Block

The entire northern portion of the block segment from Bank Street to Kent Street, home to the Bank of Canada Museum, was under construction during the study period of this report. This block segment has the highest quantity of lights but due to construction, nine of them are not currently in use. There are a significant amount of bike racks to support active transportation along this block segment. The bike racks along this block are heavily utilized by cyclists, especially those located close to Bank Street. The street does not contain a significant number of

planters but does have trees and areas of greenspace. There are no benches along this block segment, so individuals resort to using informal or secondary seating. However, an open plaza space at the northwest corner of Bank Street and Sparks Street, scheduled to open in 2017, figures to provide a significant amount of public seating.



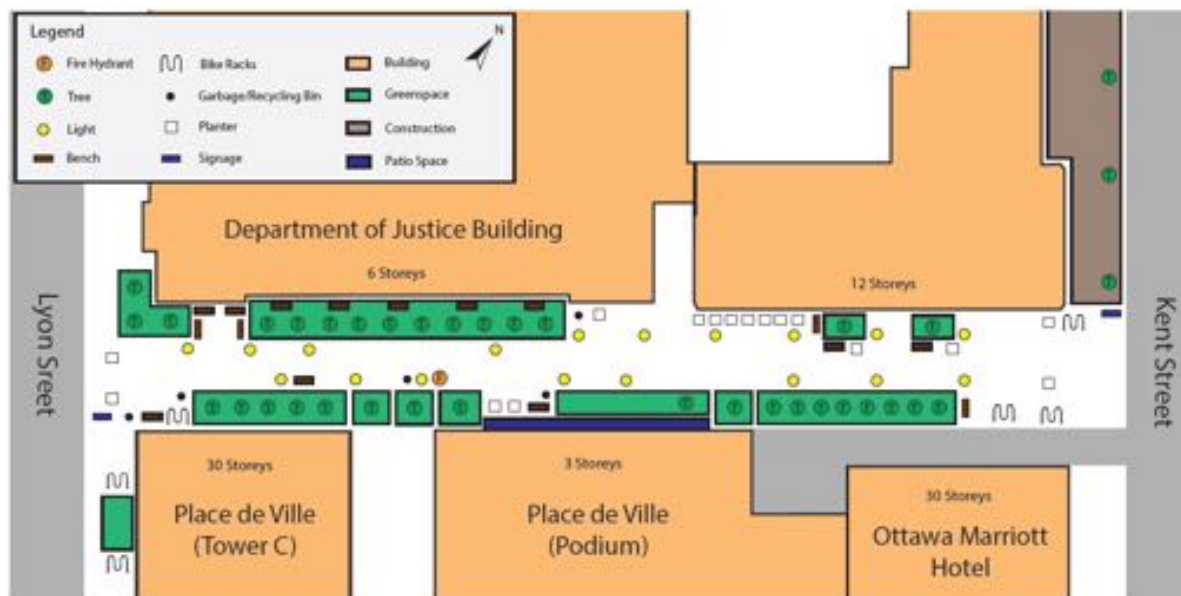
Features	Quantity
Entranceway Pillar	0
Lord Stanley's Gift	0
Public Art	0
Fire Hydrant	2
Benches	0
Signage	0
Light	23
Mail/Newspaper Box	2
Garbage/Recycling Bin	5
Planter	3
Bike Racks	12
Kiosk/Telephone Booth	1
Tree	9

► Bank Street to Kent Street existing amenities and features.

Justice Block

What is significant about the block segment between Kent Street and Lyon Street is the abundance of greenspace. There are a total of 36 trees on this block making the street visually pleasing. These areas of greenspace offer secondary seating, but also benches a significant number of benches. The block's light features are not uniform or consistently placed making certain areas of the street not well-lit.

A notable aspect of this street is the access route to Queen Street on the south side of the block. This access route is not well-lit and has a limited number of amenities within it. Pedestrians can travel down Sparks Street's pedestrian promenade without even knowing that the access route exists, because greenspace and other features block the views into the space.



Features	Quantity
Entranceway Pillar	0
Lord Stanley's Gift	0
Public Art	0
Fire Hydrant	1
Benches	16
Signage	2
Light	18
Mail/Newspaper Box	0
Garbage/Recycling Bin	5
Planter	16
Bike Racks	6
Kiosk/Telephone Booth	0
Tree	36

► Kent Street to Lyon Street existing features and amenities.

5 Public Space, Public Life Study

Drawing inspiration from Jan Gehl's work on public life research, a *Public Space, Public Life* (PSPL) study is a rudimentary tool created by Gehl during the middle of the 20th century to study the public life of urban settings all over the world. *Public life*, in the broadest sense, should be understood as everything that takes place between buildings, to and from school, on balconies, seated, standing, walking, biking, and all other activity. It is everything that can be observed and is far more than just street theatre and café life. *Public space*, is understood as streets, alleys, buildings squares, bollards – everything that can be considered about the built environment.

The project team conducted a *PSPL* study on Sparks Street to gain a more intimate understanding of how the public space is currently being used, and help to inform revitalization efforts. The study was based off of Jan Gehl and Birgitte Svarre's 2013 book, *How to Study Public Life*. It should be noted that the *Gehl-style* of studying public life is not the only method used to study the subject – it is just one of the many methods in achieving a better understanding of a public space. However, his method has been used to conduct studies in different countries and cultures over several decades and it enables comparisons across geographic lines, and more importantly over time. In other words, the results gathered from this *PSPL* study of Sparks Street would allow the city to follow their own development and compare their results with other cities.

Purpose of a Public Space, Public Life Study

As Gehl & Svarre's (2013) book outlines that a *PSPL* study is a

method or tool used to help examine the interplay between public life and public space. The purpose of conducting these studies is to improve the physical conditions for people in cities by obtaining specific knowledge about individual public spaces and how and when they are used. These studies can provide decision making input in political debates on plans and strategies, or be used more concretely to assess the effect of initiatives already being carried out by comparing before and after registrations. For research purposes, it can be very beneficial to look at how *PSPL* studies are conducted over a longer timeframe, which by doing so allows for the opportunity to draw general conclusions about the historic development of city life.

Origins of Public Space, Public Life

Research into the intersect of public space and public life began during the 1960s when critical voices began to notice that something was missing in many of the new neighbourhoods being built during this period of rapid population growth. The organic evolution of medieval cities encompassed a building tradition based on generations of experience in creating cities and communities centred on the interaction between life and space. However, this knowledge was evidently lost in the process of industrialization and modernization of the 19th and 20th centuries. Although at the time it was hard to pin point exactly what was missing, people such as Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte in New York, Jan Gehl in Copenhagen, and Christopher Alexander in Berkeley, denounced that life between buildings had been forgotten as a result of the supremacy and prioritization of cars instead of people.

Despite Jacobs, Whyte, Gehl and Alexander leading the discussion about the absence of public life in cities during the time, the first iterations of *PSPL* studies were conducted within academic institutions. By the end of the 1980s, it became evident that the analyses and principles regarding public life and public space should be transferred down and used within the urban planning practice.

Examples of PSPL Studies and Their Influence

Copenhagen, Denmark

Copenhagen, Denmark was the first city to conduct a *PSPL* study, and it was conducted by Gehl and the School of Architecture where he was a faculty member. The pedestrianization of Strøget in 1962 – one of the most famous pedestrian streets in the world – was based off of Gehl's work and his *PSPL* studies. Since then, the city has created a *PSPL* knowledge bank as a result of repeating studies using the identical method under similar conditions every 10 years to assist in the documentation of how the city has changed over time. These studies have become a crucial part of city planning in Copenhagen; they are viewed as having equal importance to studies of traffic patterns. The documentation of public life development and of the connection between city quality and city life continues to serve as a useful tool in debates about city transformation, assessing plans already carried out, and setting goals for future development.

Melbourne, Australia

In 1994, Gehl and his team took to the streets of Melbourne, Australia to help the city to better understand how projects and initiatives were performing after they were implemented. The *PSPL* study was used as a baseline for documenting the effect of the changes implemented by the city between study periods. Although Gehl & Svarre noted that it was not necessarily the *PSPL* studies that brought about the positive changes to Melbourne, they acted as a tool in the process that helped to increase the understanding of the importance of providing quality public spaces.

New York City, USA

Gehl Studios conducted several comprehensive *PSPL* studies around New York City during the early 2000's. These studies helped to propel the city's policy agenda of creating a more sustainable city by improving city streets forward, reducing private car traffic, and rethinking public space. Ultimately, the *PSPL* studies helped to facilitate the pedestrianization of Times Square in 2009 – one of the most notable projects Gehl and his team are known for in North America. Similar to Melbourne's case, it was not necessarily the *PSPL* studies that brought about changes, but rather their role as a tool to help document and understand the rapid changes happening in the city, as well as help measure individual pilot projects happening within the city. The speed in which the pedestrianization of Times Square happened in the early 2000's is proof of the City's commitment to create more quality public spaces for residents and visitors.

Sparks Street PSPL Study Method

How many?

Starting with the basic question of *how many* serves as the integral part of a *PSPL* study. Therefore, counting is the essential requisite. The study team counted pedestrians and cyclists for 10 minutes, at the top of every hour, at two predetermined locations within each of the five blocks that make up Sparks Street. Gehl & Svarre's report noted that counting for 10 minutes, once very hour, provides a rather precise picture of the daily rhythm. It was described that city life has shown to be quite rhythmic and uniform from day to day.

The first location was located on the eastern side of a block, while the second on the western side. Not only does this allow for the analysis of flow through the east-west street, but also at the intersection of Sparks Street with busy north-south streets.

Who?

Gathering knowledge about people's behaviour in public spaces is another cornerstone of a *PSPL* study. Basic knowledge about the behaviour of different groups of people can be used to plan for more inclusive places that accommodate the needs of women, children, the elderly and disabled – groups that are often overlooked. With the counting of pedestrians and cyclists being the primary activity to be done every hour, at the top of the hour, noting pedestrian and cyclists' age and gender was one of the two secondary activities done to help better understand the demographic that currently uses Sparks Street. After the study team conducted their two 10-minute pedestrian/cyclist counts, they returned to their first location



Sample sheet from the October 7th PSPL study.

within their designated block and once again counted the number of pedestrians and cyclists that passed by, but this time by noting their gender and estimating their age, and recording it in the appropriate age bracket on their study sheet. This secondary activity is done only during the odd hours of a shift (e.g. during hour 1 and 3).

Where and what?

Planners and architects can design public space based on where people are expected to go and stay. However, as demonstrated by trampled footpaths across an otherwise pristine lawn or fresh patch of snow attests to the fact that people do not

necessarily act as intended. As Gehl & Svarre noted, in order to encourage crowds of pedestrians to flow and to create the ideal conditions for inviting people to use and stay in public spaces, it is imperative to have specific knowledge of where people move, and where they choose to stay. Mapping what happens in a public space is a method of gaining knowledge of the activity in an area.

A stationary mapping activity was done on every even hour of a designated shift (e.g. during hour 2 and 4) after the study team would be done their two 10-minute pedestrian/cyclist counts. The study team member started at one end of the highlighted path outlined on their block's map and walk to the other end of the highlighted path, while along the way marking any activities taking place on the map itself. Activities include people sitting on benches, sitting on curbs, standing, exercising, taking photos – any activity besides walking, cycling or other being mobile using another mode. By making a note of where these stationary activities were taking place directly on the map allows for the later analysis to where people like to stand, sit, play, which can help influence the future design and installation of additions to Sparks Street.

Lastly, the average of pedestrians during each 10-minute study period was documented. Generally speaking, lower walking speed is considered to be favourable because it indicates a greater likelihood that the pedestrian is interacting with the amenities of the street (e.g. shopping). In comparison, a faster average walking speed would indicate that the majority of pedestrians were using the Mall as a thoroughfare; as a route to get to a different destination.

When?

It was established that Sparks Street on a weekday is quite different to the Sparks Street on a weekend, a characteristic that is typical for many streets and public spaces in general. Therefore, the standard PSPL study done by Gehl and his team is done once on a weekday to capture the life of those who are locally employed, and once on a weekend to capture the activity of residents and visitors. In addition, it is recommended that studies be done on days that have good weather as this generally provides the best conditions for outdoor public life (i.e. sunnier days means more people on the street versus rainier days).



Sample sheet from October 17th PSPL study.

The weekend portion of the study was conducted on Saturday, October 7, 2016, with weather conditions of sunny skies, a high of 19° C and a low of 6° C. The weekday portion of the study was conducted on Monday, October 17, 2016, with weather conditions of partly sunny skies during the day and rain in the evening, with a high of 15° C and a low of 3° C. The study started at 9:00 am and ended at 8:00 pm on both days. The team decided to skip the week of Thanksgiving because long weekends and holidays are likely not representative of the site's normal activity levels.

Tools Used

One of the main advantages of a Gehl-style *PSPL* study is the fact that they stress on the use of tools that are simple and inexpensive – pen and paper. The main rationale behind this stems from the ideas of the city life pioneers previously mentioned – Jacobs, Whyte, Gehl and Alexander – who encouraged people to see the interaction of city life and space with their own eyes because it provides for greater understanding. Strictly relying on rudimentary tools allows one to focus their attention to notice the ordinary interactions that unfold in public spaces that we move through quite unconsciously on a daily basis. Gehl and his team still believe in this method as the critical starting point for going into the city to observe, and continue to select this method when conducting their *PSPL* studies around the world, despite having access to automated registration equipment.

The Sparks Street *PSPL* study team chose to follow through on the Gehl-style of registration by simply using pen and paper to record data, in addition to the use of a tally counter to ensure creditability of the numbers documented.

Study Limitations

Time, in its many contexts, served as the major limitation of this study. Ideally, the study would have been conducted during the summer to capture Sparks Street when it is most vibrant. Data collected on a summer day with good weather would have made for a great comparison to the data that the project team did collect. However, due to time constraints, the project team could only do the *PSPL* study on one weekend day and one weekday during October, 2016.

The scheduling of people to conduct the studies was also another limitation. Due to other obligations, each of the weekend and weekday studies had five people working almost 15-hour days. It would have been ideal to have more people to help facilitate the study and allow for better rotations (i.e. people working for only 4 hours rather than 15). By allowing more people to work for shorter amounts of time, data integrity would be increased as it is expected for varying levels of fatigue to set in due to the long hours. Distance also limited the study, because the project team is based in Kingston, while Sparks Street is located in Ottawa. It would have been preferred to have started the study earlier than 9:00 am, however, the distance, time and scheduling of people unfortunately did not allow for this, not to mention the lack of a budgetary resources to arrange for hotel accommodations to circumvent this issue.

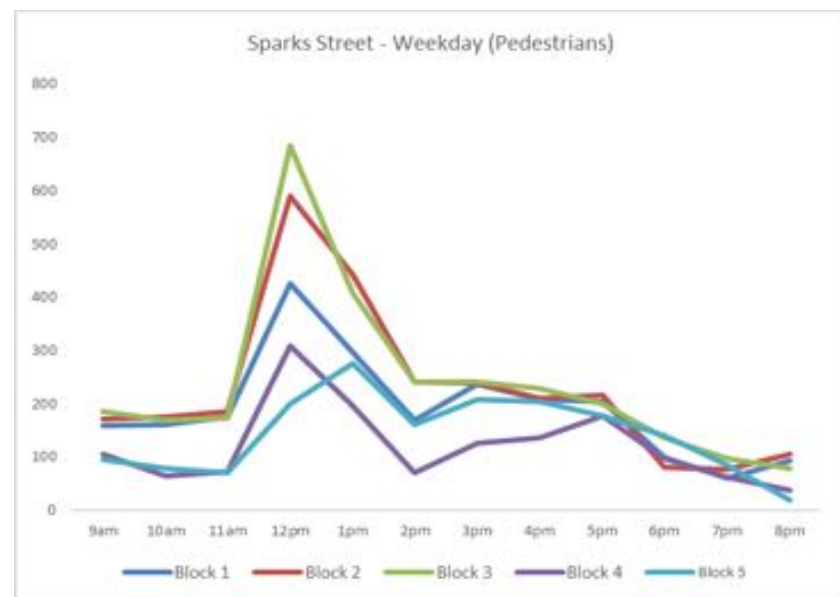
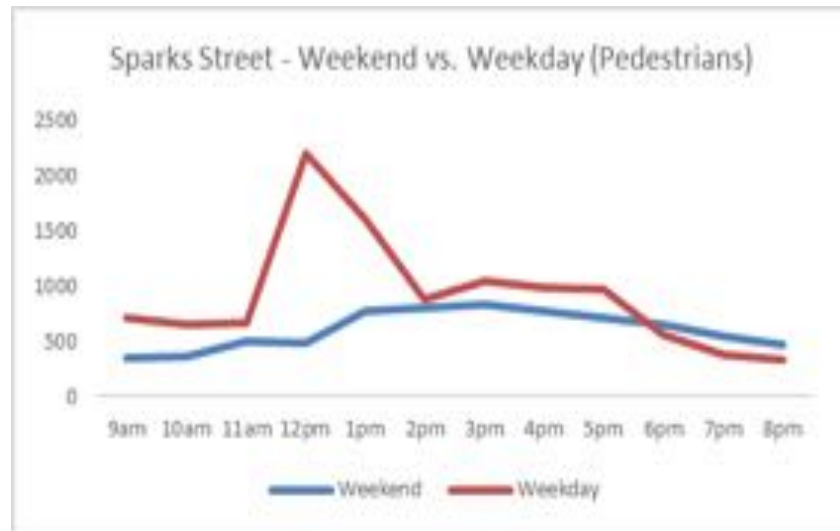
Findings & Observations

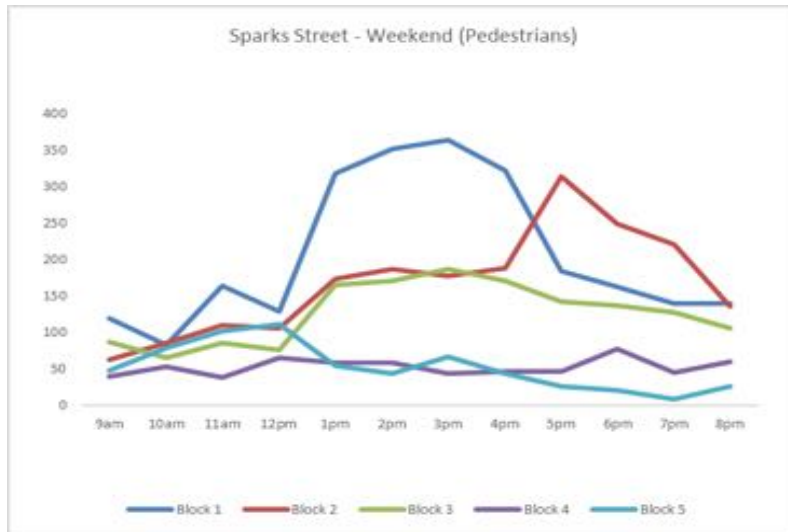
The results collected from the Sparks Street *PSPL* study emphasize the general notions many have had about the street, such as that it is mostly used as a thoroughfare, there are more people on the street during the weekday versus the weekend, and the evenings are essentially lifeless. However, the study did allow for some more detailed insights into the nuances of the five blocks.

Pedestrian Counts

It is evident that there is quite a difference between the flow of pedestrians on a weekday versus a weekend. As expected, on the weekday there is a sharp peak in pedestrians during lunch hour. However, there is not a significant peak during the evening rush hour but rather a steady flow of people likely leaving work beginning just after 2:00 pm and ending at 5:00 pm (of note, the weekday study was conducted on a Monday). On the weekend, it is a much smoother flow of pedestrians versus the weekday although in total, there were significantly less people on the street. It is interesting to note that there were more people on the street during the evening on a weekend in comparison to a weekday evening. From 6:00 pm onwards was the only time when there are more people on the Mall on a weekend compared to a weekday.

A few ideas can be drawn from this observation. It may be plausible to say that there is a stronger nightlife on Sparks Street during the weekends than weekdays. More people are choosing to spend their weekend evenings on Sparks Street instead of going for drinks or dinner after the work day, despite the many offices along and around the street.





Looking at each block individually, it is clear that there are certain blocks that are consistently busier than others. The McDonald and Valour Blocks were the busiest for the majority of the observed weekday. Further, these two blocks recorded the highest amount of pedestrians during the lunch hour, an indication that office workers concentrate on these blocks at this time. Memorial Block is busy for a sustained period on Sparks Street during the weekend and It is interesting to note that the Valour Block is the second busiest on both weekdays and weekends. The Museum Block on a weekday and a weekend is one of the most underutilized blocks, but this can be attributed to the construction happening at the Bank of Canada Museum.

Taking raw counts of 10-minute periods into consideration, the following tallies represent the highest pedestrian traffic points during the study period (each on Monday, October 17, 2016):

- 234: Pedestrians at Elgin Street and Sparks Street (the eastern entrance to the Mall) at approximately 12:00 pm
- 330: Pedestrians at Metcalfe Street and Sparks Street (western side of the intersection) at approximately 12:00 pm
- 382: Pedestrians at O'Connor Street and Sparks Street (western side of the intersection) at approximately 12:00 pm
- 303: Pedestrians at Bank Street and Sparks Street (eastern side of the intersection) at approximately 12:00 pm

Pedestrian Walking Speed

Pedestrians travelling on the street were categorized by the project team based upon how fast they were walking with “1” being notably slow, “2” indicating an average speed and “3” being demonstrably fast. It should be noted that the information presented in this section is representative of the average recorded speed on each block during the study period. Wildly varying speeds were observed within each presented data category.

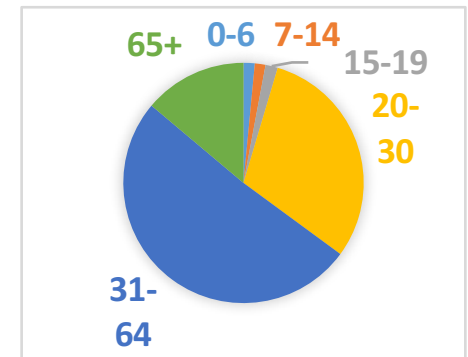
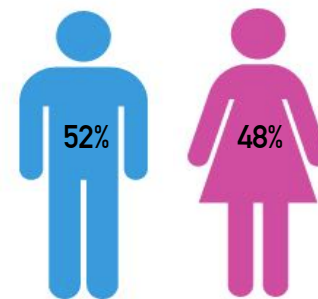
Of note, on average, pedestrian speeds were demonstrably slower on the weekend in comparison to the observed weekday, indicating that people are travelling in less of a hurry on the weekend. As expected, more people were trying to get from point A to B faster on a weekday while more were walking at a leisurely pace on the weekend. On the weekend, more pedestrians were observed walking slowly on the Macdonald Block than anywhere else and the difference was quite

noticeable. This indicates a greater interaction of the pedestrians with the considerable amenities on that stretch of Sparks Street.

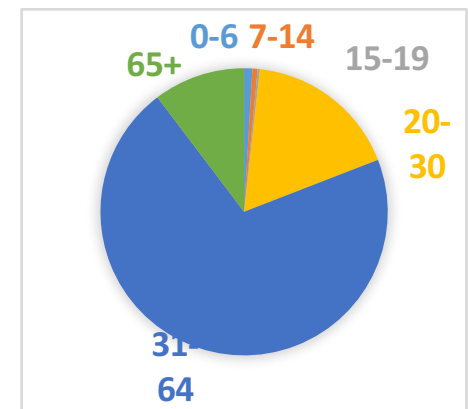
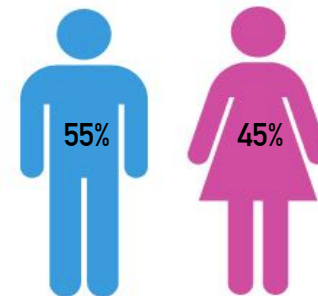
On the weekday, the fastest average speeds were observed on the three eastern blocks, with the Valour Block showing the highest aggregate speed. This is somewhat surprising because these three blocks contain the greatest number of pedestrian amenities on the Mall and the project team expected this to cause people to walk slower. In contrast, the Museum Block was under construction during the study period, hypothetically giving people little reason to walk slowly through it. However, people may have been walking slowly to observe the construction, an observation that, in all likelihood, is not very meaningful moving forward. The highest amount of slow walking pedestrians, on the weekday, were observed on the Justice Block, despite the lack of ground level amenities on that stretch of Sparks Street. This could be because of the presence of the Marriott Ottawa hotel, whose patrons could be on vacation and not in a rush while walking on Sparks Street. Further, rushed people walking on the three eastern blocks likely had little reason to walk to this block.

Demographics

The study also allowed for a deeper understanding of the demographics of the pedestrians using the Mall. Figures 7 to 10 show that the patrons of Spark Street during the days of the *PSPL* study were predominantly male and between the ages of 31 and 64. During the weekend, there was a slightly younger demographic that was observed with more people under the age of 30 walking along the street. It is interesting to note that the 65+ population is relatively similar regardless of the day of the week.



Sparks Street Gender & Age: Weekend



Sparks Street Gender & Age: Weekday

6

Building Frontage Analysis

Building frontages along Sparks Street were analyzed to determine where ground floor conditions were fostering pedestrian activity and where they were not. Sparks Street's active and inactive frontages were mapped based on their physical features to help illustrate where ground level improvement is necessary to support greater pedestrian activity.

An *active frontage* is considered to be the space located in front of a building that is able to support and promote pedestrian interaction. Building entranceways, glass window façades that display retail goods, and areas outside buildings containing amenities such as benches or patios are considered to be active frontages by the project team. Typically, they are commercial façades that separate private space from the public realm. An *inactive frontage* is a location of the streetscape that does not have amenities that support pedestrian interaction; likely, this is characterized by empty façades consisting of concrete or glass that are missing significant physical elements to draw in pedestrians.

As part of the *Public Space, Public Life (PSPL)* Study, pedestrians were recorded performing specific activities at specific locations on the Mall throughout the day. The data gathered from the *PSPL* Study was mapped to identify the locations where pedestrians tend to concentrate along Sparks Street; this undertaking was critical in determining the success of a building's frontage. The major access points to buildings were also identified because these entranceways allow for connectivity from Sparks Street to the surrounding downtown streets.

Sparks Street's ground floor land uses were mapped to indicate what types of activities occur for each building at grade. By analyzing Sparks Street's building frontages and ground floor land uses, the zones of the street that were not well utilized could be analyzed and compared to the information gathered from the *PSPL* Study. These analyses, taken into consideration together, allowed the project team to identify Spark's Streets "dead spots", which are subsequently referred to as *unsuccessful frontages* in this section. The following map summarizes these efforts; it illustrates these areas, while the remainder are categorized as *successful frontages*.



▶ Frontage analysis along the 5 blocks of Sparks Street.

Memorial Block

From Elgin Street to Metcalfe Street, the majority of the pedestrian population was observed at either end of the block. These locations contain art features to support the *active frontages* along the street and were well-utilized public spaces. Notably, children were recorded interacting with the space at the corner of Metcalfe Street and Sparks Street.

Along the ground level of the Thomas D'Arcy McGee Building on the south side of Sparks Street and otherwise known as the Royal Bank Centre, there are portions of the building that are inactive at grade. The glass exterior of the building and the cement façades of the retail businesses nearby are not physical

elements that attract users to engage with this space. Evidently, this location could be utilized in a way to better support the public realm.

The Blackburn Building, located at the northwest corner of Memorial Block at Metcalfe Street, did not have a large portion of pedestrian activity according to the *PSPL* Study. In contrast, the ground level of this building can be categorized as an *active frontage* due to the presence of retail businesses with windows allowing interaction with Sparks Street. Therefore, while this area is an *active frontage*, it was not observed to be *successful frontage*.



► Memorial Block - Active Frontage & PSPL Data.



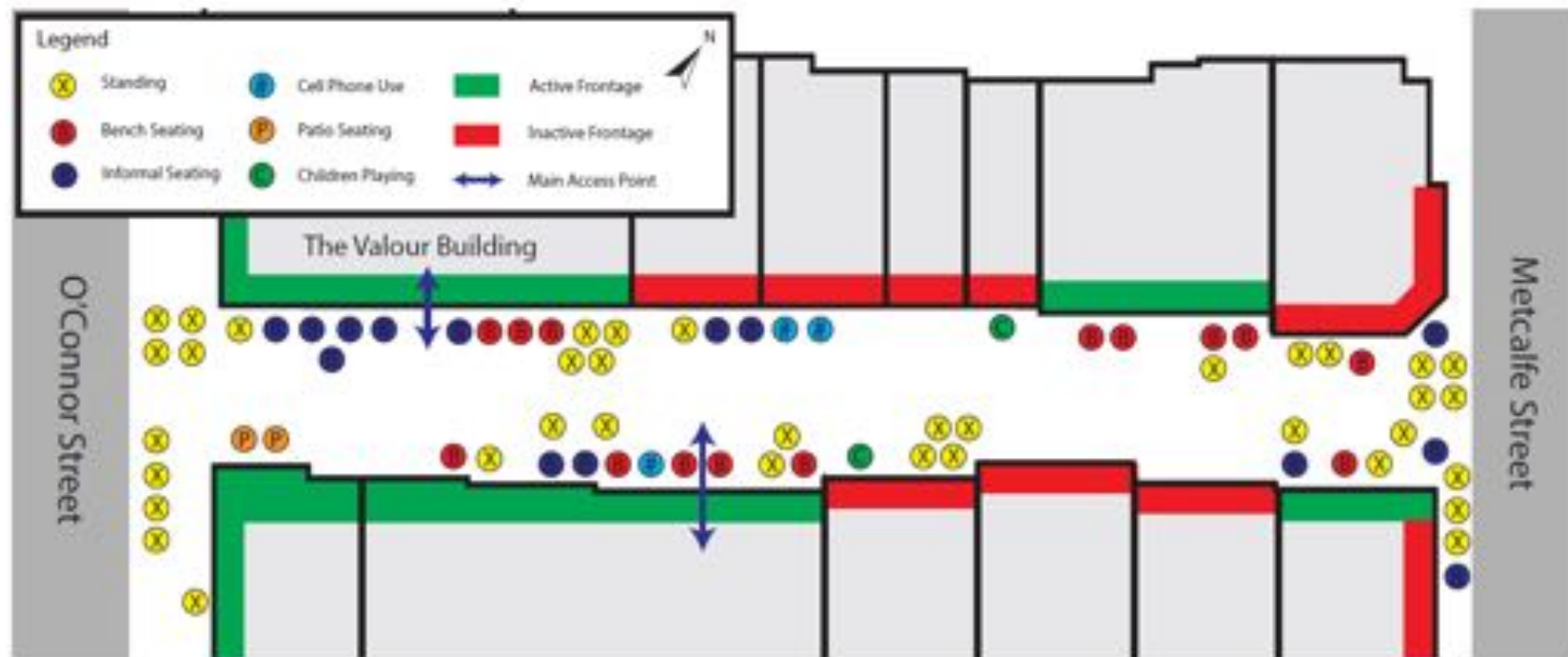
► Memorial Block - Ground Floor Land Use & Frontage Assessment.

Valour Block

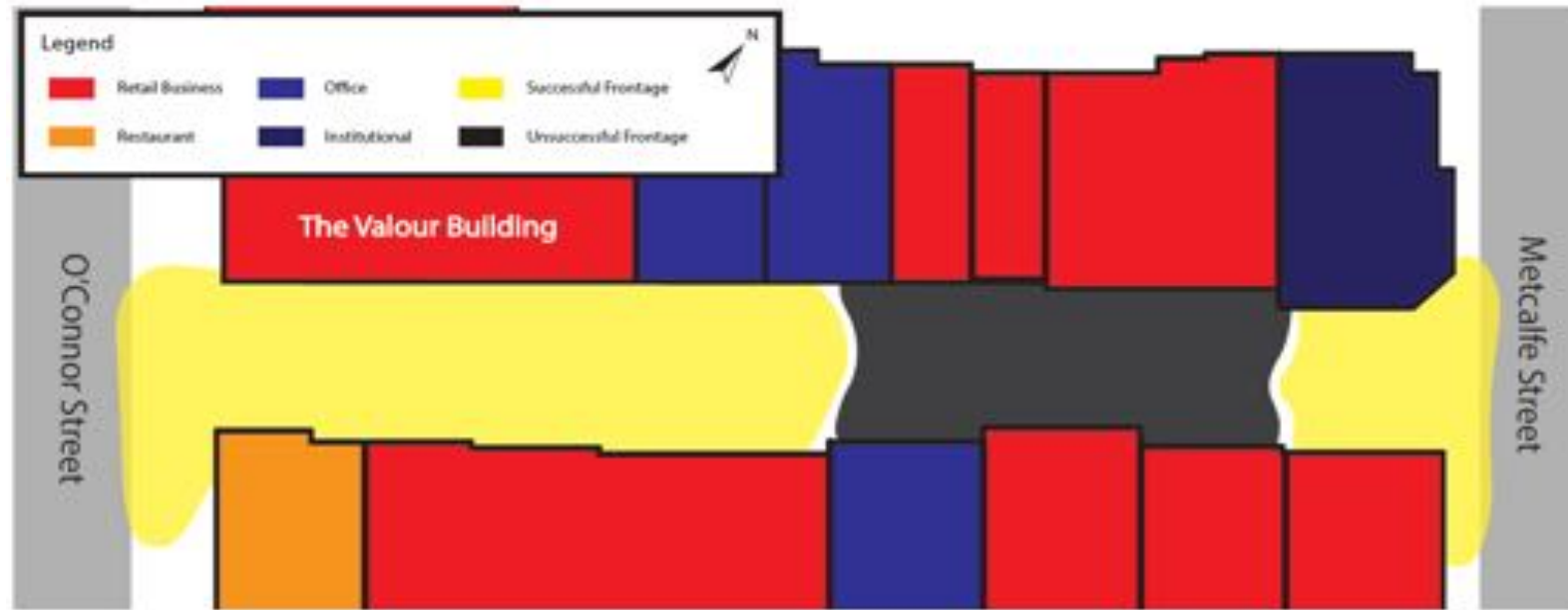
A series of *inactive frontages* were identified at the centre of Valour Block. Many of the façades consist of concrete or glass that do not contain consistent retail window features for pedestrians to gaze through. During the study period, a condominium project was under construction on the southeast portion of the block, near Metcalfe Street. This location was observed to be an inactive frontage at the ground level but is expected to feature a restaurant or retail space upon the completion of the project; this will likely result in the space becoming an *active frontage* on Sparks Street.

According to the *PSPL* Study, a considerable amount of space located at the centre of the Valour Block was not bustling with activity in comparison to other areas on the block. The *PSPL* Study also revealed that not many individuals use the patio spaces outside of the restaurants throughout the majority of the day. While they are frequently used during peak hours, they are not consistently used. Nevertheless, many pedestrians were observed sitting on some of the secondary seating features located on this block.

During the study period, *unsuccessful frontages* on the Valour Block include the areas in front of both of the banks found on the block (CIBC and Scotiabank) and the area located in front of the residential condominium project. This indicates that physical features or programming outside of these buildings could be utilized to make these street frontages more inviting and attractive.



Valour Block - Active Frontage & PSPL Data.



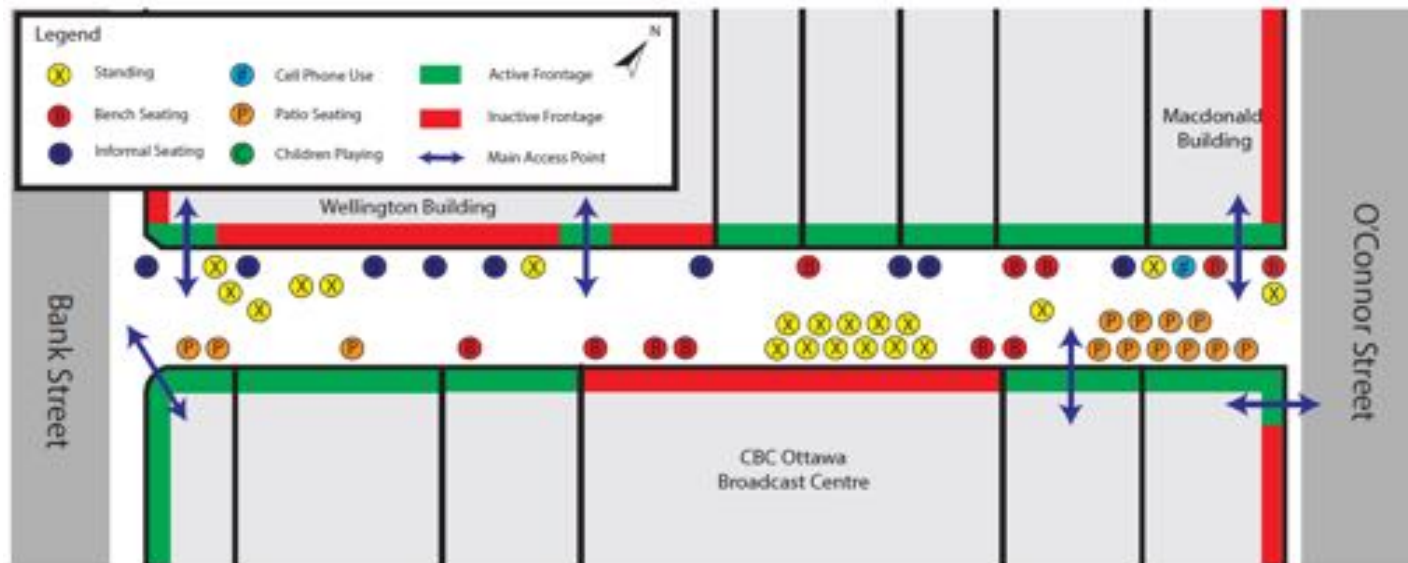
► Valour Block - Ground Floor Land Use & Frontage Assessment.

Macdonald Block

The *PSPL* Study determined that many pedestrians linger in the eastern end of the block, directly outside Beir Markt's patio space; upon further observation, it was more utilized than the patio spaces located on the western side of MacDonald Block, closer to Bank Street. A number of pedestrians were identified as standing outside the CBC Ottawa Broadcasting Centre, located mid-block.

The Wellington Building on the northwest corner of Macdonald Block does not feature retail at grade; its ground-level façade

consists of stone and concrete. Only the entranceways to the Wellington Building act as active frontage. However, people were observed outside of this Building because there is secondary seating on Sparks Street at this location. The primary *unsuccessful frontages* of the Macdonald Block are the locations outside the GoodLife Fitness and the majority of the area in front of the CBC Building. On the north side of this stretch of Sparks Street, the *unsuccessful frontages* are the retail businesses that do not draw in pedestrians, as well as the eastern section of the Wellington Building.



▶ Macdonald Block - Active Frontage & PSPL Data.

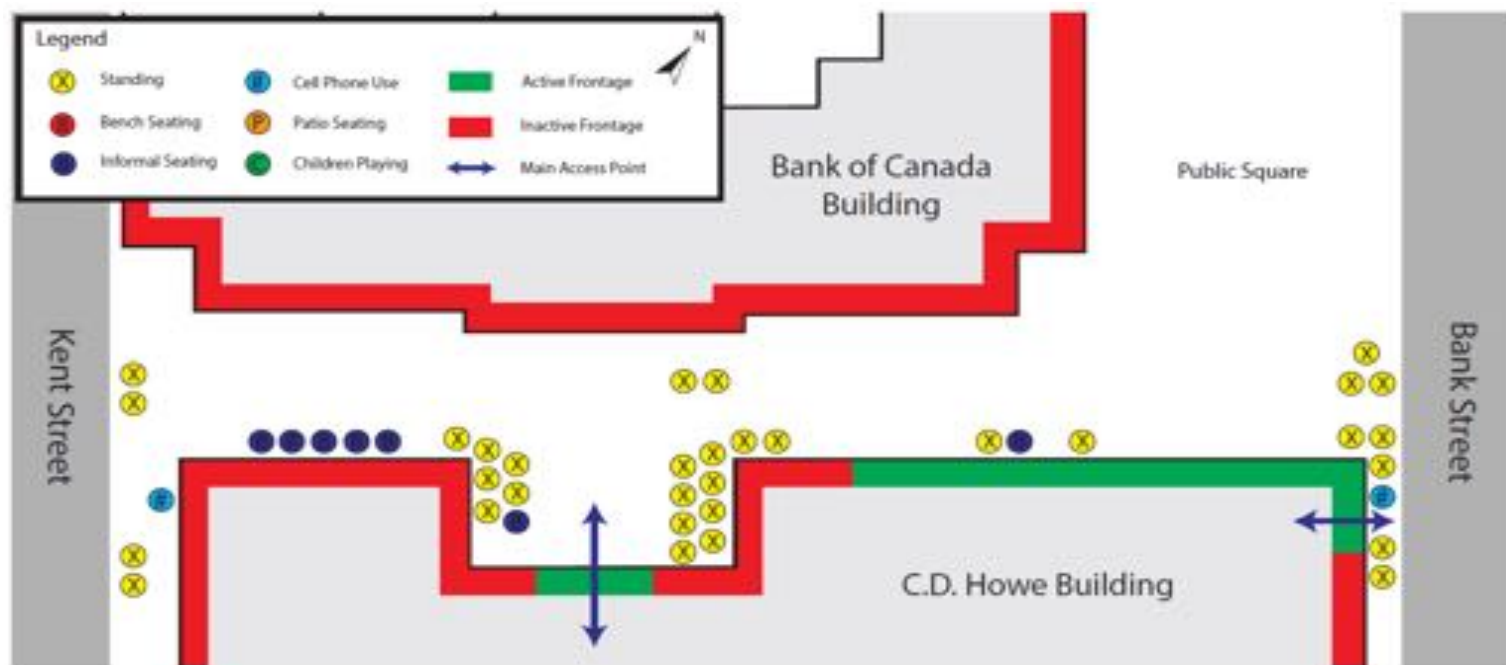


▶ Macdonald Block - Ground Floor Land Use & Frontage Assessment.

Museum Block

The north portion of the Mall located between Bank Street and Kent Street was under construction during the study period and as a result, the entire building has been classified as an *unsuccessful frontage* as part of this analysis. In addition, the façades of the Bank of Canada Building are made of steel and glass, including at the ground level, which are physical qualities that also make the building an *inactive frontage*, regardless of the construction. Still, once construction is completed, improved landscaping and amenities should help support the pedestrian

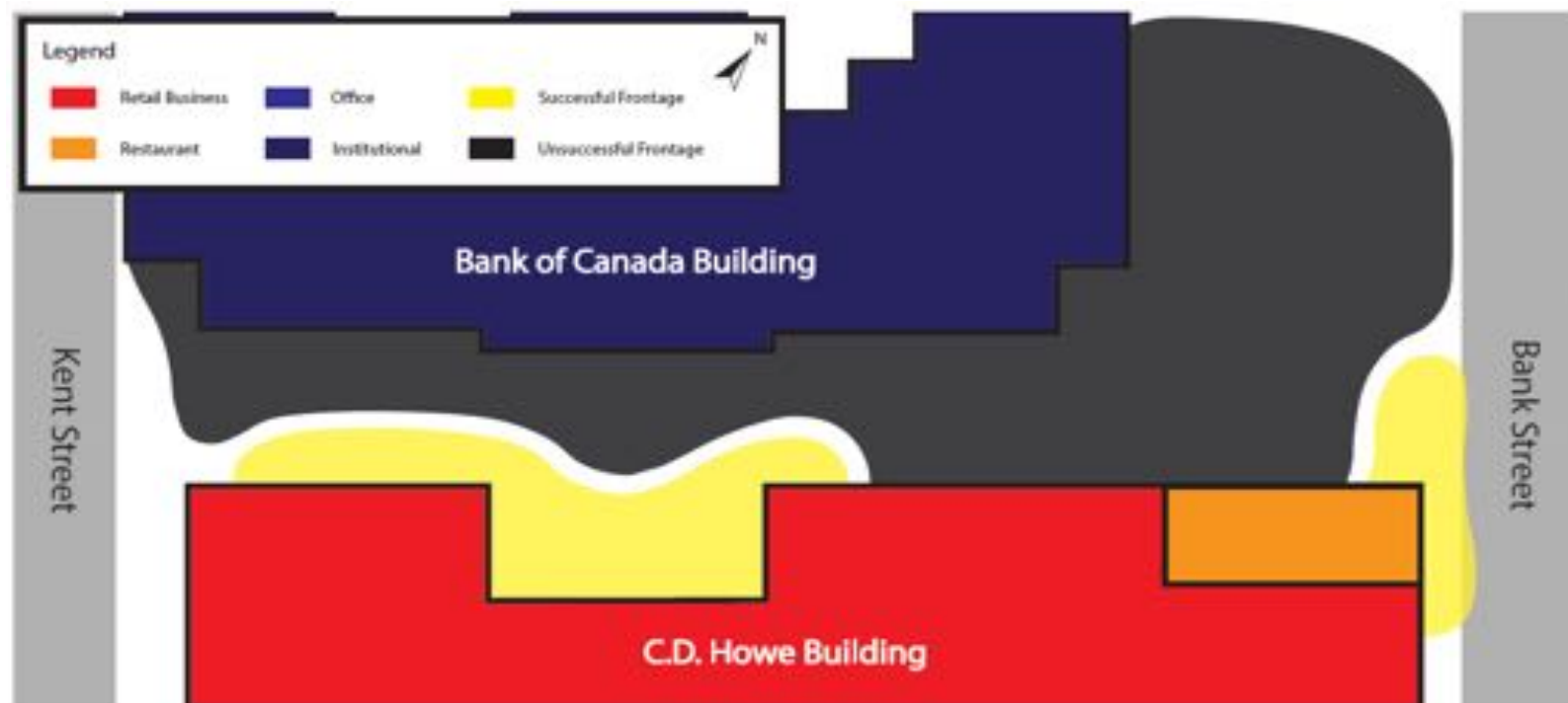
realm on Sparks Street, particularly in the public square adjacent to the building. The C.D. Howe Building is located on the south side of Museum Block and has a series of *inactive frontages* along the western portion of the structure. Like the Bank of Canada Building, the façade of this building is made of concrete and glass and retail is lacking at the ground level. Nevertheless, Les 3 Brasseurs is a restaurant located at the intersection of Bank Street and Spark Street and its extended patio space makes it an *active frontage* in relation to the Mall.



► Museum Block - Active Frontage & PSPL Data.

The *PSPL* Study indicated that pedestrians tend to concentrate in proximity to the main entranceways of the C.D. Howe Building. There is a large area of *unsuccessful frontage* around the Bank of Canada Building and the eastern portion of the C.D. Howe Building, indicating that there is simply a lack of pedestrian

activity along this block. The *PSPL* Study did not identify a significant amount of patio users outside of Les 3 Brasseurs. It appears that the active frontages along Museum Block are underutilized and do not have amenities that engage people as they travel along the pedestrian promenade.

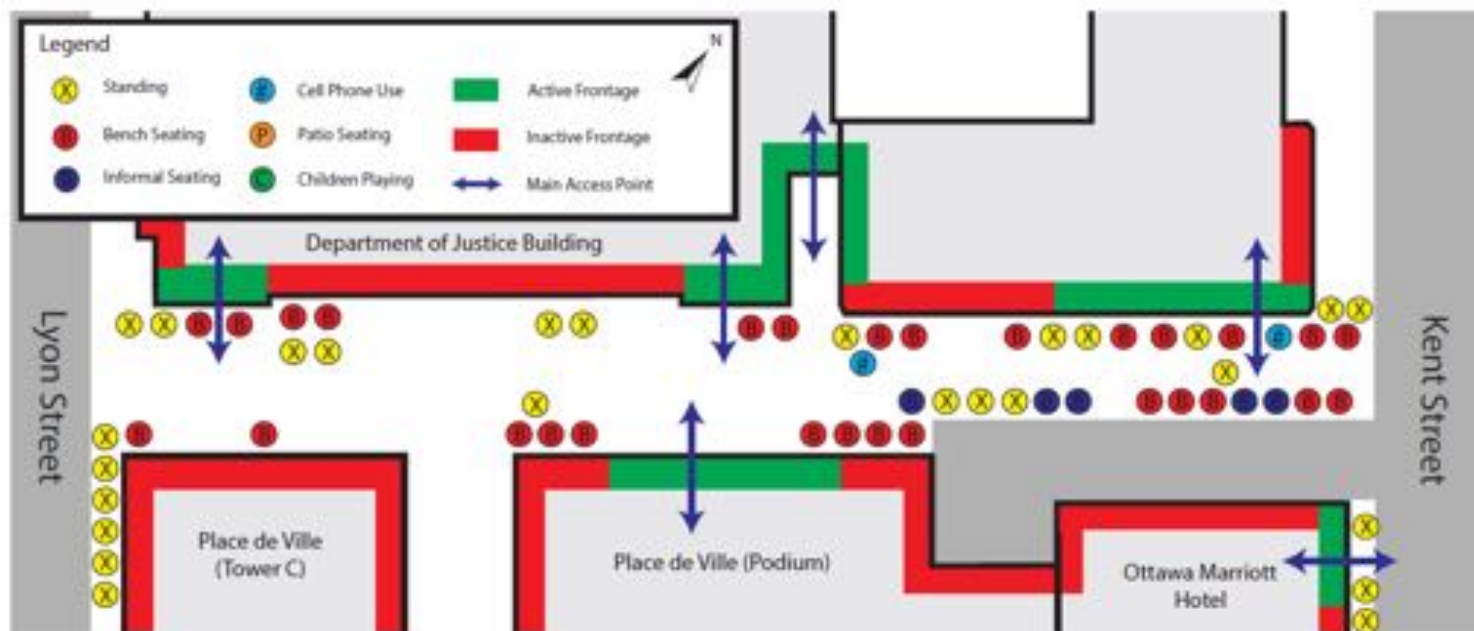


► Museum Block - Ground Floor Land Use & Frontage Assessment.

Justice Block

The majority of the pedestrian activity observed during the PSPL Study was concentrated at the eastern corner of Justice Block, at Kent Street. Nevertheless, the ramp to the underground parking for the Marriot Hotel, located at Kent Street, creates a barrier for pedestrians as they cannot easily access that building directly from Sparks Street. The area outside the Marriot Hotel is considered to be an *inactive frontage* due to this separation from the street by this roadway, despite the presence of ground-level retail at this location.

The Department of Justice Building, located on the northwest corner of the block, has a stone façade. This stone façade does not provide this section of the street with active frontage but there are a series of main entranceways into the structure that are frequently used by pedestrians. The office building known as Place de Ville Tower C is located at the southwest corner of Justice Block, and its main entranceway is accessed from Lyon Street. The structure's façade is made of cement and glass making it an inactive frontage.



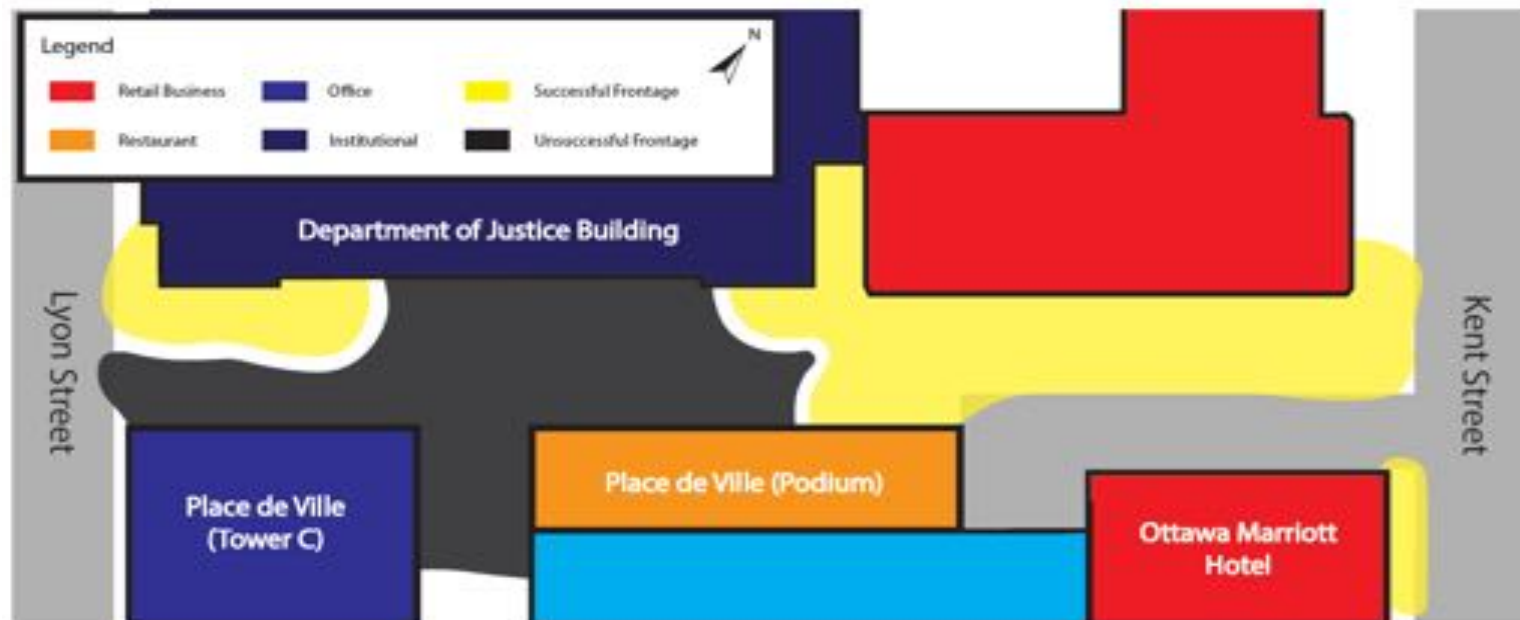
► Justice Block - Active Frontage & PSPL Data.



Successful frontages were observed where high concentrations of pedestrian interaction with existing physical street amenities were found on this block. The area between the entranceways of the Department of Justice Building, portions of Place de Ville Tower C, and the Place de Ville Podium Building were identified as having *unsuccessful frontages*.



Inactive Stone Façade of the Department of Justice Building.



Justice Block - Ground Floor Land Use & Frontage Assessment.

7 Shadow Analysis

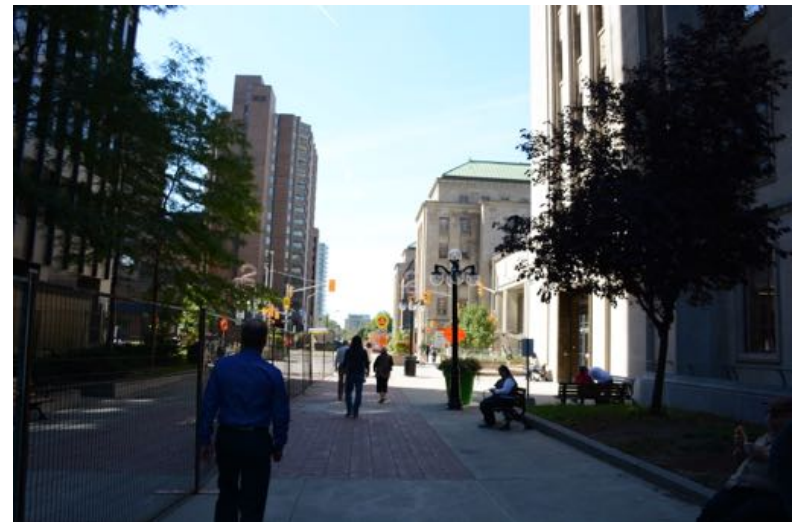
Analysis was conducted for each of the five blocks of the Mall to illustrate the impact that the buildings have on the amount of sunlight that reaches Sparks Street. A variety of checkpoints throughout the year were examined, including the winter solstice, summer solstice, vernal equinox, and the autumnal equinox, and on these days, three snapshots of light exposure are analyzed including at 9:00 am, 1:00 pm, and 5:00 pm. These times were selected to represent key times of activity along the street including the conclusion of the morning rush hour, the end of the lunch period for many employed in the area, and the beginning of the evening period, which has been identified as an opportunity for increased usage on Sparks Street.

The analysis provided in this section is unlike a traditional shadow analysis that seeks to assess a particular development proposals impact on sunlight within the pedestrian realm; it is only intended to highlight natural sunlight exposure on the Sparks Street right-of-way. In essence, the purpose of this analysis is to assess where greater lighting elements are required along the Mall.

The primary lesson learned in the Shadow Analysis is that each of the five blocks on the Mall experience a shadow effect from the buildings that line Sparks Street throughout much of the day and throughout much of the year, making the improvement of lighting on Sparks Street a high priority.



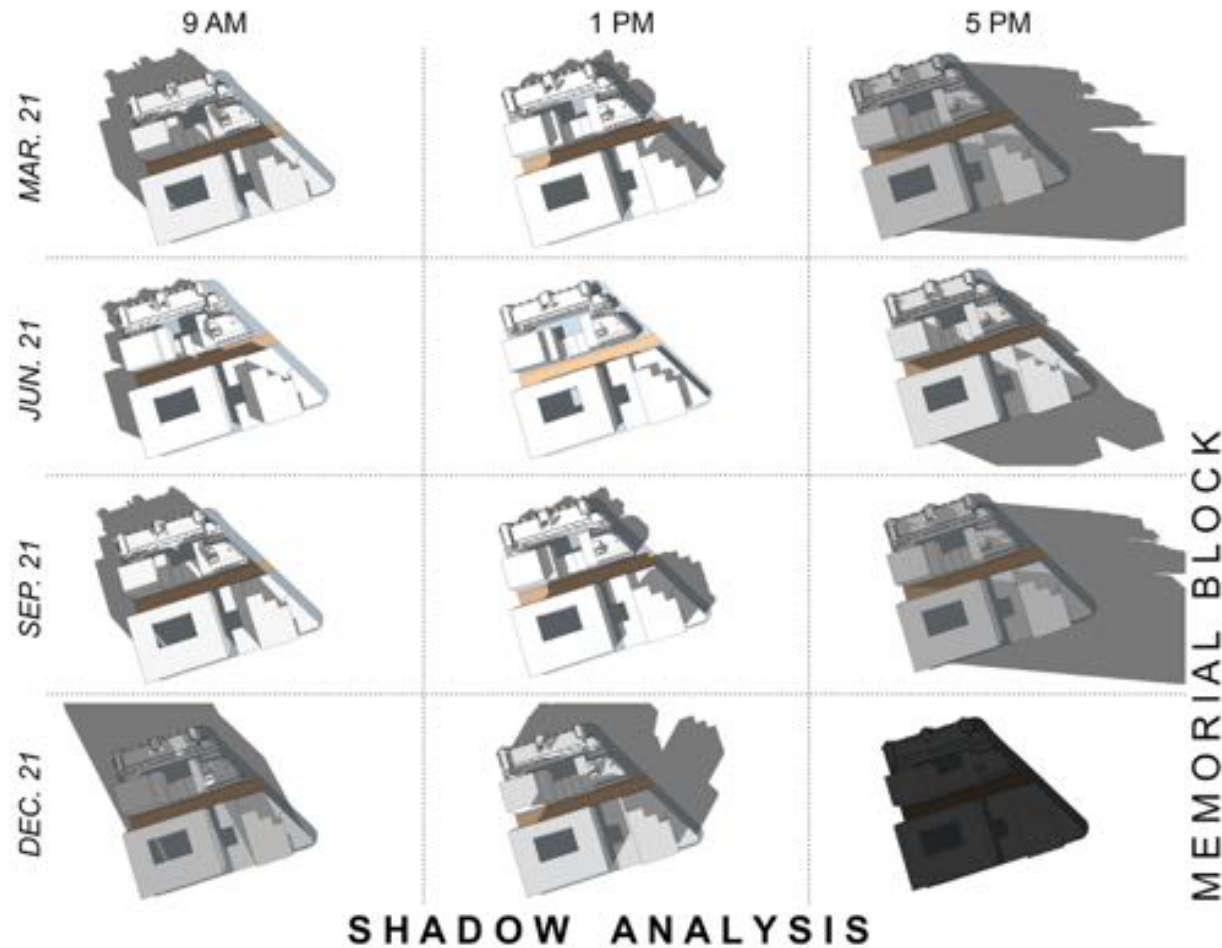
Shadowing on the Memorial Block (top) and Justice Block (bottom).



Memorial Block

The stretch of Sparks Street from Elgin Street to Metcalfe Street experiences minimal sunlight exposure during the morning period throughout the year, due to the height of the buildings that line this part of Sparks Street, and because of the relatively low width afforded by the ROW. Limited natural light reaches

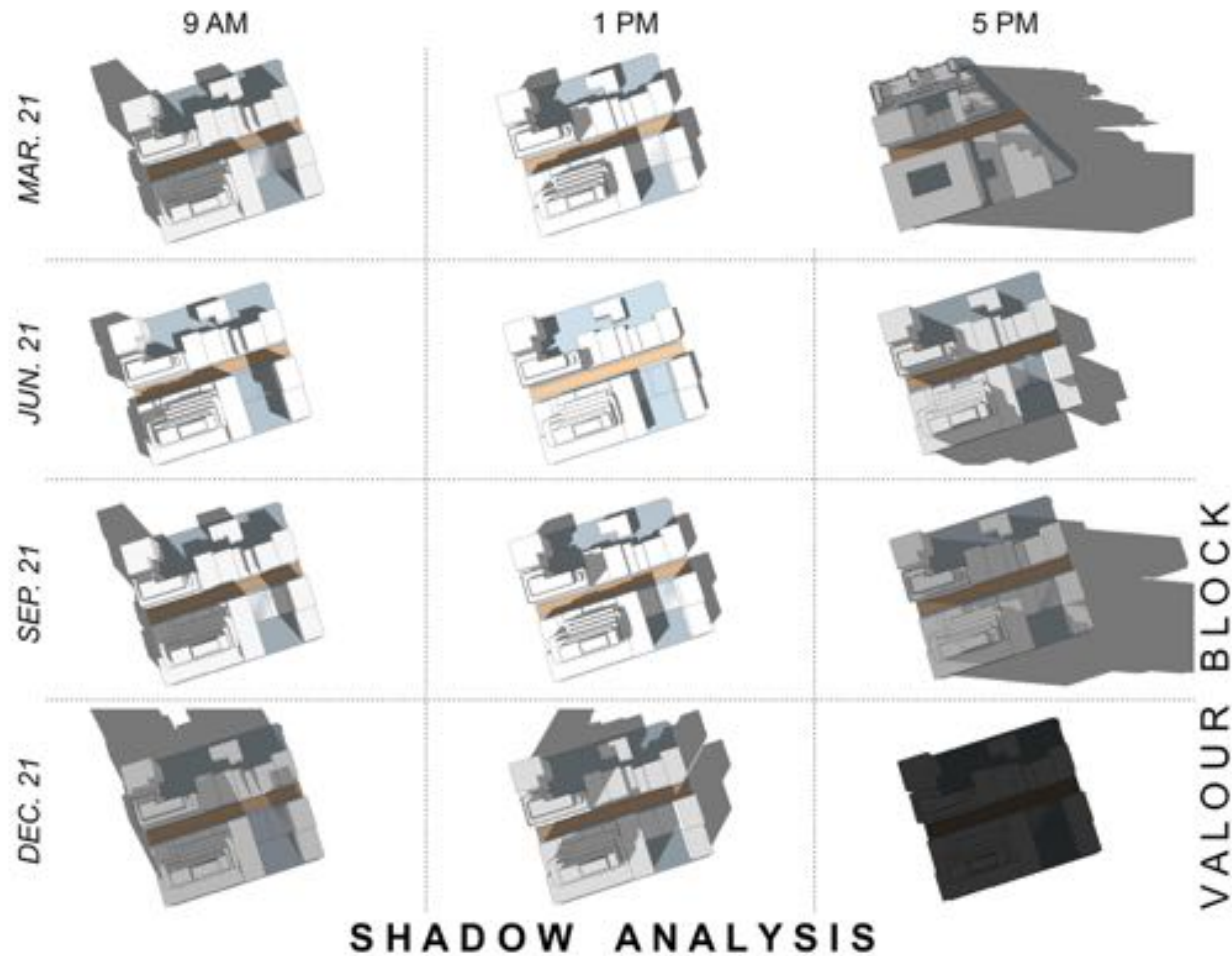
Sparks Street during the lunch period with the exception being June 21, where the block experiences significant exposure. At 5:00 pm, the amount of natural sunlight that reaches this stretch of the Mall is negligible.



Valour Block

From Metcalfe Street to O'Connor Street, Sparks Street experiences pockets of sunlight during the morning hours due to the configuration of the buildings on the street. Naturally, there is a lot of natural sunlight at 9:00 am on June 21 while

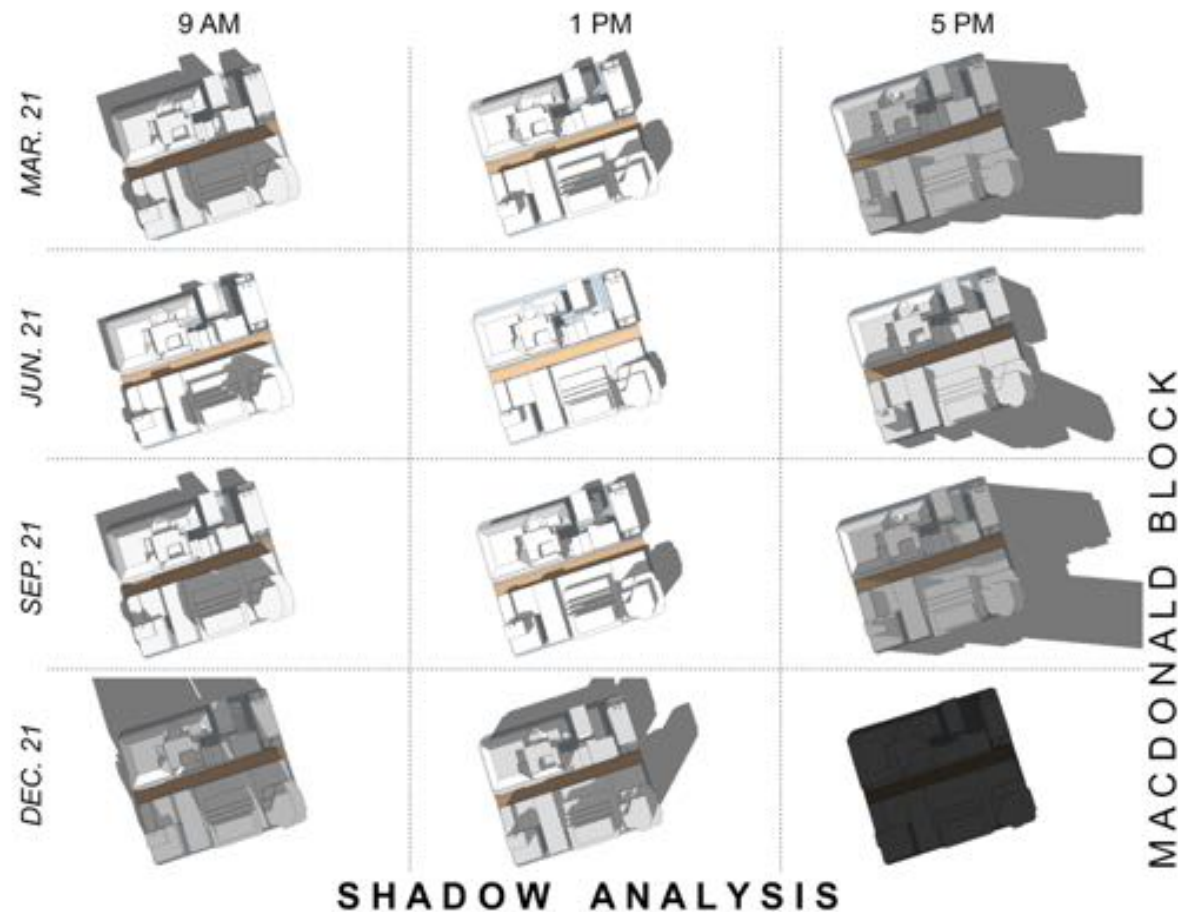
the opposite is true on December 21. There is significant sun exposure at 1:00 pm throughout the year with the exception being during the winter. Sunlight fails to reach this part of Sparks Street at any point of the year at 5:00 pm.



Macdonald Block

With the exception of the summer period, the stretch of the Mall from O'Connor Street to Bank Street experiences minimal sunlight at 9:00 am, but similar to the Valour Block, there is significant sun exposure during the lunch period for much of the year with the exception of on December 21. A notable difference with the Macdonald Block in comparison to the

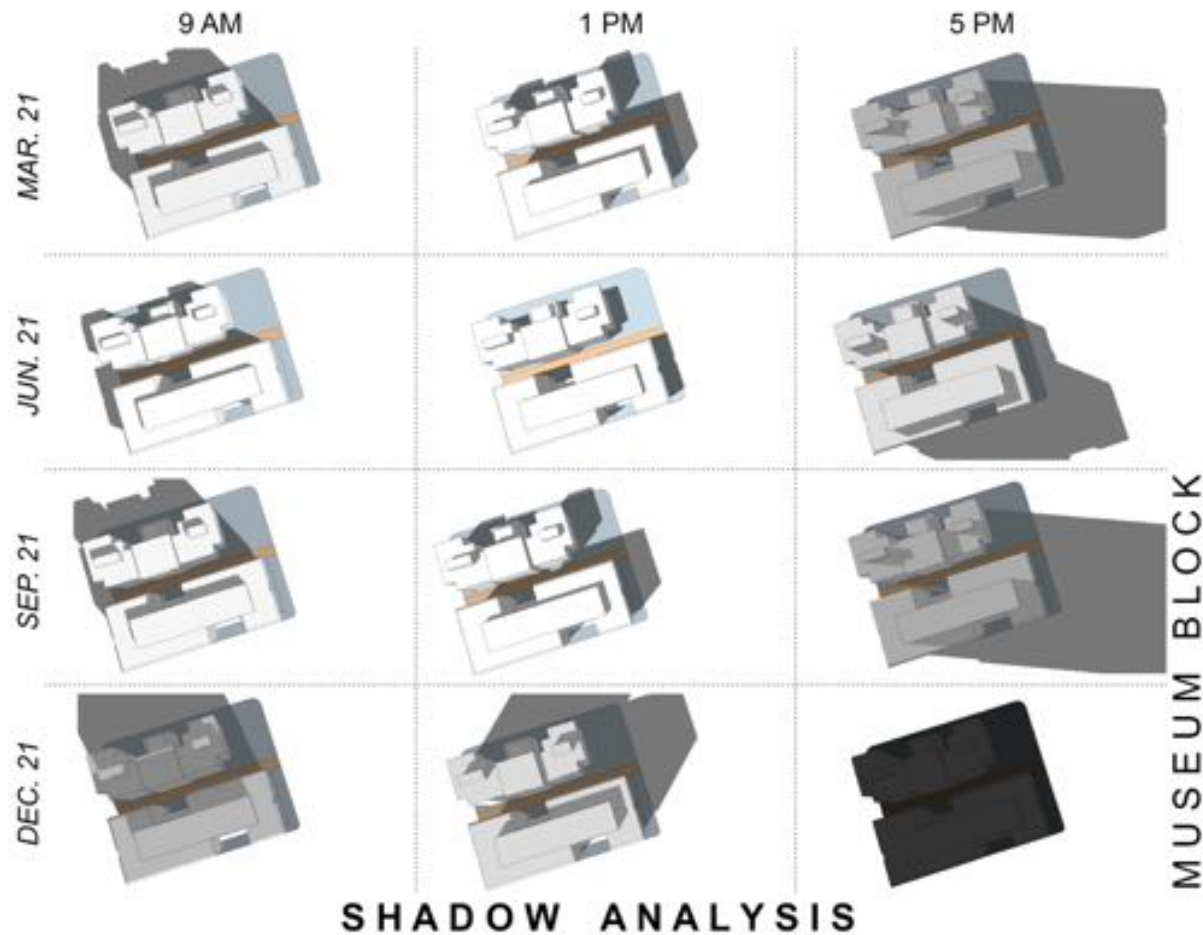
others is that the buildings on the south side of the street are stepped back, meaning that only three stories face the street while there is a setback at that level to additional building height. This feature allows more sunlight to reach the street during daytime hours. At 5:00 pm, only faded sunlight reaches the Mall while none reaches the street on December 21.



Museum Block

The stretch of Sparks Street between Bank Street and Kent Street is characterized by tall buildings on both sides that limit sunlight exposure at many times throughout each day. There is a shadow effect at 9:00am at each checkpoint, with only

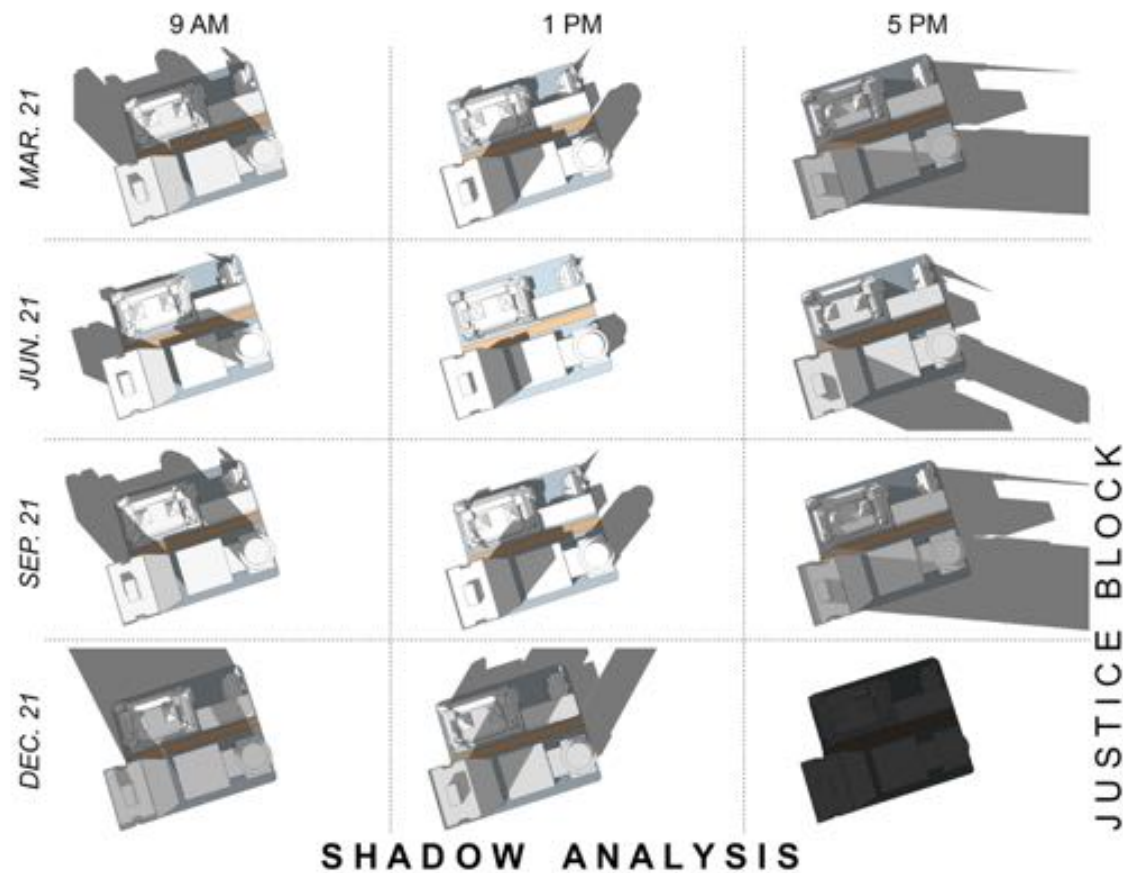
minimal natural light experienced during the summer. The same is true at 1:00 pm except for on June 21. The evenings along this block, similar to other blocks along the Mall, are completed covered by shadows.



Justice Block

From Kent Street to Lyon Street, the Mall is characterized by a larger ROW in comparison to the rest of Sparks Street, although the presence of tall buildings negates the potential for longer periods of sun access at the ground level. There is some sun exposure at 9:00 am on June 21, but minimal exposure during the rest of the year at this time. During the

lunch period, this block experiences significant exposure during the summer period, intermittent sunlight during the spring and fall, but almost no natural light during the winter. Like much of Sparks Street, very little sunlight reaches the Mall at 5:00 pm.



8 2016 Programming Analysis

Great streets are characterized not only by their function, design, and aesthetic, but also by the activities taking place on them. Even the most attractive and desirable streets cannot thrive without a diversity of activities that help to draw and retain visitors. Sparks Street is widely recognized as an interesting destination offering a mix of retail, dining, entertainment, as well as heritage and unique architecture. Serving as a key artery in the heart of downtown Ottawa, Sparks Street features a variety of activities and events throughout the year, which help create interest and draw a critical mass of visitors. Programming along Sparks Street ranges from food and beverage showcases, music and live performance, as well as cultural events, which collectively are targeted to capture a wide and diverse audience.

Event Summary

At the completion of 2016, Sparks Street will have hosted a total of 56 outdoor events along its right-of-way.

- 48% of events were cultural events,
- 32% involved live performance,
- 7% were food and beverage showcases, and

In total, 80% of all events were featured from May to August.

Month	Number of Event by Type				Total Events
	Live Performance	Cultural Event	Food and Beverage	Other	
January		1			1
February			1		1
March					0
April			1		1
May	1	1		5	7
June		8	2	1	11
July	5	5			10
August	9	8			17
September	2	3		1	6
October	1	2			3
November					0
December					0
Total	18	27	4	7	56
Percent of total events	32.14%	48.21%	7.14%	12.50%	100.00%



Summary of events on Sparks Street during the year 2016.

Monthly Event Analysis

Of note, 80% of events occur from May to August. While corresponding programming with the most attractive times of the year and when more tourists are visiting the street is practical, it is important to recognize that winter and fall seasons represent areas of opportunity moving forward for programming efforts. As will be discussed later in the report, many options exist for public spaces to feature unique events and activities in the autumn and winter seasons that continue to draw visitors, and help create continued attraction to the street.

Live Performance Highlights

Live music and performance events accounted for 18 of the events on the street in 2016. The largest recognized live performance event hosted is the annual Ottawa International Busker Festival (Buskerfest). This was a 5-day event that ran from July 27 to August 1, featured 15 acts and drew a total of 175,000 visitors. Five specialty food vendors serviced the attendees for the event's duration. The critical mass attracted to Sparks Street through this festival highlights the importance of event programming, and also helps to highlight some of the successful programming already occurring along Sparks Street.

Additional live performance and music events include weekly performances hosted through two local restaurant anchors, D'Arcy McGee's and Bier Markt, where weekend performances throughout the year provide consistent entertainment for visitors.

Local establishments are important to the promotion and success of the Mall, as they have significant capacity to contribute to the allure and destination drawing power of Sparks Street.

Toonie Tuesday's is a weekly performance event, which is organized through Sparks Street, that features local musicians and performers that entertain along the street to increase activity and interaction. A key element for all successful places is having engagement and interaction, and having opportunities for visitors to stop and linger; this event provides such an opportunity. Additional performance events hosted to note include a mix of local choirs, the Sons of Scotland Pipe Band, and other various seasonal and cultural performers.



Live performances occur along the right-of-way.

Cultural Event Highlights

Accounting for a total of 27 events in 2016, culturally-focused events are highly important for Sparks Street and they represent an opportunity for growth moving forward. The Mall featured three pop-up cinema nights between July and August. By showcasing movies in an open non-traditional setting, Sparks Street is helping further establish itself as a destination that goes beyond the store fronts and heritage façades. Another highlight for the year is expected to be a New Year's Eve event to be held on Sparks Street.

Food & Beverage Highlights

The last category to discuss is food and beverage showcases, which represented 7% of the total events in 2016, but also account for two of Sparks Street top three events in total attendance. Ribfest and Poutine Fest both feature a total of 20 vendors offering world class dining within their respective niches. Ribfest, which ran from June 22 through 26, attracted approximately 200,000 visitors during the four-day festival, which represented the highest visitation for any programmed event during the year. Poutine Fest, which ran from April 28 through May 1, brought in about 75,000 visitors, finishing third in total attendance. It is clear that the annual food showcase events are very popular in the City of Ottawa and over time, have become successful anchors for the City.



Poutine Fest and entertainment on Sparks Street.

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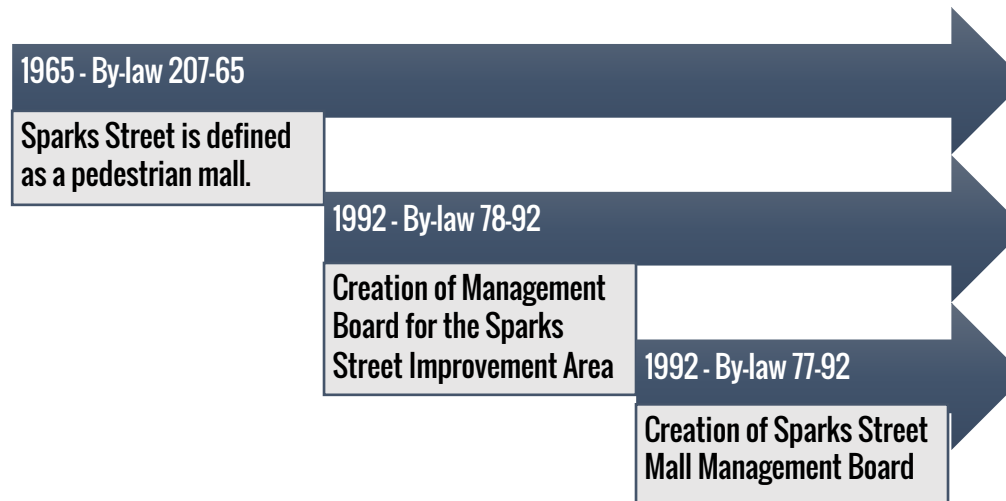
Relevant Policy Analysis

Sparks Street was initially defined as a pedestrian promenade in 1965 with the passing of by-law 207-65. Subsequent plans, policies, guidelines, and by-laws have been implemented that have helped shape how the Mall exists today. A comprehensive review of the existing policies and plans which influence Sparks Street (specifically the right-of-way) provide necessary context. All recommendations and conclusions reached in this document will be in conformity with existing policies, and are largely shaped by the overarching goals and objectives of the existing plans. A key consideration in

discussion of existing policy is that multiple stakeholder groups have influence over Sparks Street.

In April of 1992, City Council passed by-law 78-92 which created a Management Board for the Sparks Street Improvement Area to further promote the street.

By-law 77-92 passed by City Council in 1992 created a Sparks Street Mall Management Board with the authority to control, operate, and manage Sparks Street.



Provincial Policy

The Government of Ontario provides guidance for growth and management to municipalities across the province, partly through the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Section 4.2 indicates that municipal planning decisions must be consistent with the PPS. The many directions set forth in the PPS include the mandate to maintain and enhance, where possible, the vitality of downtown areas and main streets. Further, municipalities should encourage a sense of place through maintaining built and cultural heritage features and promoting good design. The PPS ultimately encourages municipalities to become strong, healthy, and livable communities through planning decisions.

Official Plan & Secondary Plan

The City of Ottawa's Official Plan and Central Area Secondary Plan are the primary documents that guide development and growth within the city's downtown. These documents provide a general vision for the city, including considerable policy direction for Sparks Street. The Official Plan was consolidated in 2001 and offers seven guiding principles to help shape the City of Ottawa. One of the principles and a theme throughout the Official Plan is the City of Ottawa's status and identity as the nation's capital. Another theme that is present throughout the Official Plan is the idea that Ottawa is rich in heritage and that this should be maintained. Heritage features can include areas of influence such as Sparks Street. The idea of Ottawa as a healthy, walkable, and livable city permeates through the policy in the Official Plan. Livability is an interesting concept introduced in the Official Plan in that it calls for Ottawa to be attractive to residents at all time of the day, week, and year.

The *Central Area Secondary Plan* provides the clearest direction for the future of Sparks Street. The three primary objectives of the secondary plan that pertain to Sparks Street include:

- Protecting the historical, architectural and cultural significance of the street through maintaining a vehicle-free environment;
- Promoting the functionality of the street as a gateway connecting the central area to significant landmarks to the east and west; and
- Maintaining Sparks Street as a theme street with a mix of uses.

The policies that guide Sparks Street are outlined in section 1.13.3, and focus mainly on the pedestrian experience. The policy indicates a desire for the street to become more pedestrian friendly during evening hours, and encourages further animation of the street to encourage more activity. It is a goal of the City of Ottawa to make the Mall more of a destination and vital shopping centre within the Central Business District. Encouraging tourism is part of this destinations desire, including better promotion of the street and incorporating improved signage to increase the accessibility of the space. Streetscaping treatment receives particular attention, encouraging cohesive paving, landscaping, and other design elements throughout the extent of the pedestrian mall; upgrades to these elements should encourage greater volumes of pedestrian traffic. The Secondary Plan also calls for City Council to establish an appropriate theme for the street, which will be reflected through design elements. A theme that would

be determined appropriate appears to be open to interpretation. The heritage character on Sparks Street shall also be maintained and enhanced as outlined in the policy.

Sparks Street is defined as a distinctive street:

An important street or road which extends through the Central Area which links important focal points, and which has a unique role and/or character such as through landscape treatment, architectural features, land use, and/or pedestrian or vehicular movement.

The Central Area Secondary Plan is somewhat contradictory with regard to the future vision for Sparks Street. One of the three main objectives for Sparks Street in section 1.13.2 was to protect the unique qualities of the street, including maintaining a vehicle-free pedestrian mall. However, one of the subsequent policies was a targeted strategy in which consideration would be given to opening the Mall to vehicular traffic during specific periods. Most of the other policies, however, were geared towards enhancing and promoting the pedestrian environment, rather than reintroducing cars on Sparks Street.

Sparks Street is also described in the Central Area Secondary Plan as a major open space corridor linking the Central Area to the east and west. The City is to promote the Mall as an open space area that links LeBreton Flats (currently being planned to become a major destination) to the west and canal areas to the east. Sparks Street is intended to be a major thoroughfare for pedestrians travelling between these destinations, and is to be able to continue to efficiently service large volumes of pedestrian movement. The northwest corner of Sparks Street and Bank Street is intended to become an open space plaza

within the extent of the Sparks Street corridor. This area is to become more animated and vibrant, and will be protected for increased use.

Zoning By-law

The City of Ottawa Zoning By-law 2008-250 was consolidated in 2008 and implements the policies set forth in the Official Plan. The entire block is zoned as various forms of Mixed Use Downtown, with specific buildings also having a Heritage Overlay. The zoning pertains mainly to the use of the buildings and their physical forms; the use of the right-of-way is not significantly impacted by zoning by-law 2008-250. In addition, the Federal Government owned north side of Sparks Street is zoned as MD S11, also zoned for Mixed Use Downtown, but separate from the south side of Sparks Street.

Heritage Policy

Sparks Street was designated as a heritage conservation district in 2000 with the passing of by-law 174-2000 under the authority of the Ontario Heritage Act. The extent of the heritage conservation district is between Elgin Street and Bank Street along Sparks Street, and it includes the pedestrian mall. As part of this designation, the City is required to pass a series of guidelines to help protect character and assist in future development of the area. *The Central Area West Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan* was produced in 1999 and broadly outlines objectives and goals for the area. The plan is not an urban design strategy, but rather a tool for preserving the character of the district and ensuring any new development maintains or enhances that character. The three guiding principles include:

- The preservation and maintenance of architecture with historic and artistic value;
- The encouragement of new development that fits and suits its setting; and
- The improvement and maintenance of the pedestrian environment.

Several other design objectives guide development on Sparks Street as written in this plan. The most relevant series of guidelines pertain to heritage in the public environment:

- Point to and reveal the material traces of past environments
- Make apparent the passage of time
- Encourage diverse understandings of the past
- Tell stories that explain the present environment
- Encourage wide involvement in making decisions about the future
- Share widely the resources and responsibilities for public projects
- Make attractive places for all times and seasons (Fram, Baird, Lefebvre & Angel, 1999, p. 161)

Further, pertinent to the public realm on Sparks Street is the proposition that “...obstructions to the pedestrian movement and servicing be removed and replaced with more open conditions that support the traditional retail functions of the street” (Fram, Baird, Lefebvre & Angel, 1999, p. 153). The focus of the public right-of-way is to *restore* the Mall in the form of a Pedestrian Street rather than as a pedestrian mall. The idea of *less is more* is consistent throughout this document; the intent is never to reintroduce automobiles but rather to maintain the consistency of the public environment and enhance the walkability of the street.

Design Guidelines & Promoting Pedestrian Mobility

The City of Ottawa has an *Urban Design Reference Guide* (2007) which showcases six design objectives, and 24 design themes to be applied throughout the city. The first design objective is to create unique communities that reflect history and culture. Within this objective, design themes include preserving views and accentuating significant building facades, as well as incorporating public art and defining boundaries through themed amenities. Another relevant objective was to enhance safety and accessibility within the city to further encourage active lifestyles. Strategic lighting and improved wayfinding features were themes that help to realize this goal, creating an environment that is accessible to all at all times of day.

Downtown Moves

Downtown Moves was approved by Council in 2013 and “is an urban design and transportation study that identifies ways to create vibrant, inclusive, safe and accessible streets for pedestrians, cyclists and transit customers” (p. 2). This study came largely in response to the introduction of the Confederation Line project, and was meant to help inform the city on how to best leverage this transformative project to transform the downtown. Through discussions with citizens, the *Downtown Moves* study was able to determine recurring issues, two of which included bringing more life to Sparks Street, and the issue of a lifeless downtown in the evenings and weekends. *Downtown Moves* attempts to realize the major themes found in the *City’s Transportation Master Plan* and *Pedestrian Plan*, in addition to addressing the concerns raised by citizens

throughout the discussion process. Of relevance, Sparks Street is identified as a priority streetscape, indicating that it is one of the strongest candidates for street enhancement through new furnishings and materials.

Further, Sparks Street is defined as a “Plaza Street” within *Downtown Moves*:

Plaza Streets are primarily oriented to pedestrians, and take on the characteristics of pedestrian plazas. The streets have distinctive surfaces, such as paving stones, and are constructed with amenities to provide for pleasing walking environments. Service vehicles can access the street for deliveries and emergencies. Buildings are street-facing with an active at-grade orientation, and with narrow occupancies that provide for interesting storefronts. In downtown Ottawa, Sparks Street and William Street Mall are Plaza Streets. (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 28)

Interestingly, “Plaza Street” was not found as a definition or descriptive term in any other policy document reviewed.

Downtown Moves concludes with a series of action items, one of which is to renew Sparks Street. The objective is to further promote the street as a mixed use commercial plaza and to revitalize the space. A series of subsequent actions are suggested to realize this goal. It advocates for the promotion of more street-oriented uses such as additional food vending, entertainment, and retail, to further animate the street. It also encourages a street theme to be developed and implemented. Interestingly, this plan calls for not only the introduction of cycling on the street, but to consider limited vehicle access within specific times and seasons.

Downtown Moves includes a street design toolkit, which includes 12 pedestrian mobility criteria for guiding design and development of streetscapes. Those 12 criteria are:

1. High pedestrian level of service
2. Comfortable sidewalks and crosswalks
3. Sustainable planting
4. Family of light standards, furnishings, and amenities
5. Clear signage and wayfinding
6. Pedestrian connections between and through buildings
7. Buildings that create a visually stimulating public realm
8. A network of publically available open spaces
9. Public art to add interest to pedestrian environment
10. Clearly identifiable gateways and nodes
11. Integrated accessibility for all
12. Pedestrian easements for enhanced pedestrian mobility

NCC Core Area Plan

The *NCC Core Area plan* is described as a third level plan that is specific to the core area, and it is intended to pave the way for more specific area plans in the future, including one for Sparks Street. Sparks Street is described as a character area within this document containing three policy themes:

- To preserve and enhance character;
- Improve connectivity; and
- To enrich use, enjoyment and animation of the Mall.

This plan advocates for Sparks Street to become a destination through a greater level of connectivity, improved wayfinding, and attention to illumination. Sparks Street was consistently mentioned as a place that should be a destination at all times of the day and evening, and on weekends.

It is suggested that improved illumination of the Mall and its noteworthy buildings to accentuate the heritage of the area can help to enhance its nighttime use. Connectivity to surroundings areas was a key component, with recommendations to improve wayfinding on and around the site.

Capital Core Area Illumination

The NCC is currently in the process of developing a *Capital Core Area Illumination* plan, and have released a report on phase one of the process. One relevant theme emerged in the report that could influence Sparks Street in the future in that a hierarchy of lighting could be implemented that will accentuate the primacy of parliamentary buildings. There will be five proposed lighting zones that have not yet been established.

Outdoor Patio Design Guidelines

Produced in 2006, The *Outdoor Patio Design Guidelines* offer recommendations for the placing of patios within different contexts in the City of Ottawa based on relevant by-laws that have been passed. Section 4.3 specifically discusses patio guidelines within pedestrian malls. It indicates that the patios can be freestanding in front of buildings, or be oriented towards a building face. The patios must allow for 6 metres of width throughout the street for pedestrian and emergency vehicle traffic, and further, this should maintain a straight alignment. The document proceeds to provide guidance for the various features regarding the design of the patios themselves.

- Signs cannot obstruct the pedestrian right-of-way and should be consistent with the theme of the patio located at the entrance.
- Awnings should attach to the building and be a minimum of 2.13 metres off the ground, vertically
- Enclosures must have a continuous opening to the outside that is a minimum of 25% of the total perimeter of the patio walls.
- Fences are required to delineate patios where alcohol will be served, with a required height of 1.06m.
- Fences are to be temporary structures, designed so that any opening in the fence is no greater than 2.0m and no less than 1.0m.
- It is preferred to maintain the grade of the walkway rather than using elevated platforms.



A Sparks Street patio space found within the Outdoor Patio Design Guidelines.

Vocational Study

In 2004, a study was prepared for the National Capital Commission, City of Ottawa, Public Works and Government Services Canada, and the Sparks Street Mall Authority to provide direction and guide planning decisions for Sparks Street in the future. Based on significant stakeholder input, the study developed four themes for the future of Sparks Street: Shopping Centre; Linear Urban Park; Entertainment and Arts District; Transit Corridor. The Transit Corridor theme has become irrelevant since the development of this study, as the Confederation Line is now being developed along Queen Street.

The future vision of Sparks Street is to act as a spine of a larger downtown district, and is guided by the following major concepts:

- The heritage buildings would be enhanced as a backdrop for the district, including façade improvements, illumination, signage guidelines, and interpretive signs. This may also include the designation of Sparks Street as a National Historic Site.
- Signage, sidewalk design, gateway elements and potentially a heritage walk would be used to create strong linkages between Sparks Street and the surrounding downtown area.
- Improved on-site signage, design features and store directories would be added to generate better cross visitation between the individual blocks of Sparks Street
- The linear town square would be created through the addition of landscaping and street furniture. Unlike suburban parks, it would consist predominantly of hard surfaces, broken up by a series of green clusters.

- The pavilions, which are regarded as visual distractions for the storefronts and historic buildings, would be removed.
- As a transportation route, Sparks Street would continue as a pedestrian corridor during the day-time, but to enhance the market for evening entertainment and dining, the Street could be open to traffic after office hours.
- Sparks Street would expand its range of festivals to include more cultural events, such as music festivals, literary events, sidewalk art shows and ethnic festivals.
- As the predominant landlord on the Street, the federal government would develop a long term leasing plan to encourage a greater variety of upscale arts, cultural and entertainment uses.
- In the long term, opportunities for residential and mixed use/residential projects on or in proximity to Sparks Street would be identified and encouraged (Urban Metrics, 2004, p. 3-4).

Sparks Street is intended to contain elements from the four identified themes. Some of the key elements for each theme, with the “Transportation Corridor” idea exempted, include:

1. *Sparks Street as a Shopping Centre*

- Anchor tenants in a dumbbell layout to draw visitors between the core to the anchors;
- Gateways at the entrances in order to draw people in;
- Basic Mall services are needed such as washrooms, information kiosks, food courts, security, and Mall maps;
- Utilize wayfinding and signage to create a sense of place, help visitors find their way, and direct to major attractions; off site wayfinding important as well;
- Improved connectivity with downtown;
- Establishment and promotion of a theme

2. *Sparks Street as a Linear Urban Park*

- Greater prominence of heritage buildings, including illumination at night;
- Implement gateway elements to create a sense of place;
- Simple yet changing landscape, hard and not grass, maintaining sightlines;
- Increased animation through buskers, street vendors, and musicians;

3. *Sparks Street as an Arts, Culture, and Entertainment District*

- Events and activities that attract people after regular office hours, and will help to support the already existing shops, cafes and restaurants
- Create attractions that will draw tourists and regional visitors during evenings, weekends and non-tourist seasons
- Increased programming of on-street entertainment and cultural activities
- Accentuating heritage buildings in the area is key to this theme, including illumination at night, as well as gateway elements and distinct wayfinding
- Event and activity programming is most important with this theme

Accessibility Design Standards Second Edition

The City of Ottawa updated their Accessibility Design Standards in 2015. In detail, the document outlines best practices in the consideration of “universal abilities”, and it is mandatory to be followed by all new development and redevelopment projects on land that is owned, leased or operated by the City. The City’s

approach does not distinguish between those with and without disabilities, aiming to create spaces that are usable and safe for everyone. The document states the following:

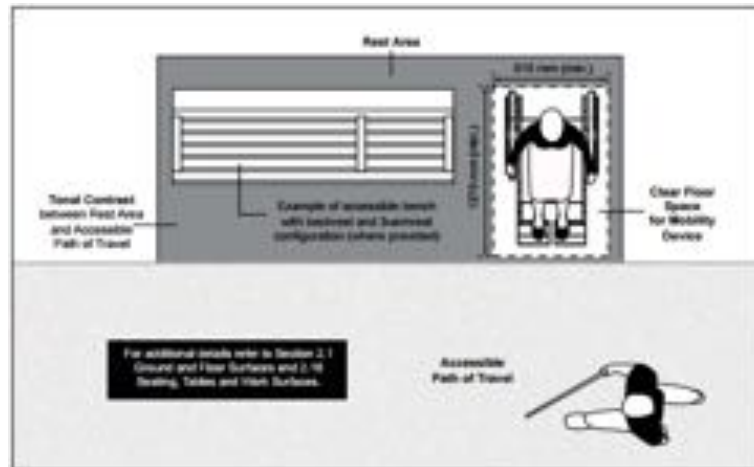
“The purpose of the City’s Accessibility Design Standards is to provide practical examples of solutions that optimize accessibility for new construction or for the redevelopment of existing spaces and facilities owned, leased or operated by the City of Ottawa.” (page 4)

Rest areas, tactile walking surface indicators (TWSI), seating, construction considerations, and exterior paths of travel are among the accessibility features that are found in the document. Recommendations within this report will conform to accessibility standards contained found within the *Guidelines* to ensure that Sparks Street is open and welcoming to all residents and visitors.

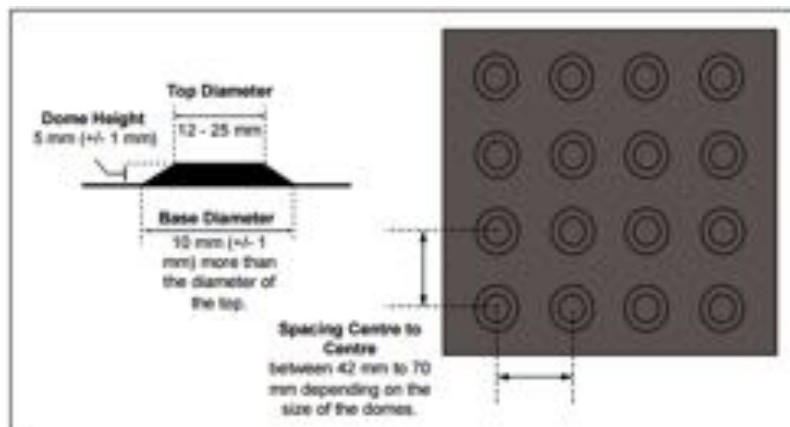
Rest Areas

The guidelines include a suggestion to provide rest areas spaced a maximum of 30 metres apart to accommodate pedestrians with reduced stamina. If rest areas are provided, they are to have the following characteristics:

- Ground surfaces are firm, slip-resistant, and stable.
- With ground surfaces, contrast between the rest area and the accessible path should be provided by utilizing any combination of different finish, texture or tone.
- A minimum floor space of 1370 mm in length and 915 mm in width should be allocated within the area for wheelchair placement or mobility device.
- Armrests and backrests should be provided on a bench within the area.



- Example of an acceptable City of Ottawa rest area (above) and TWSI dimensions (below).



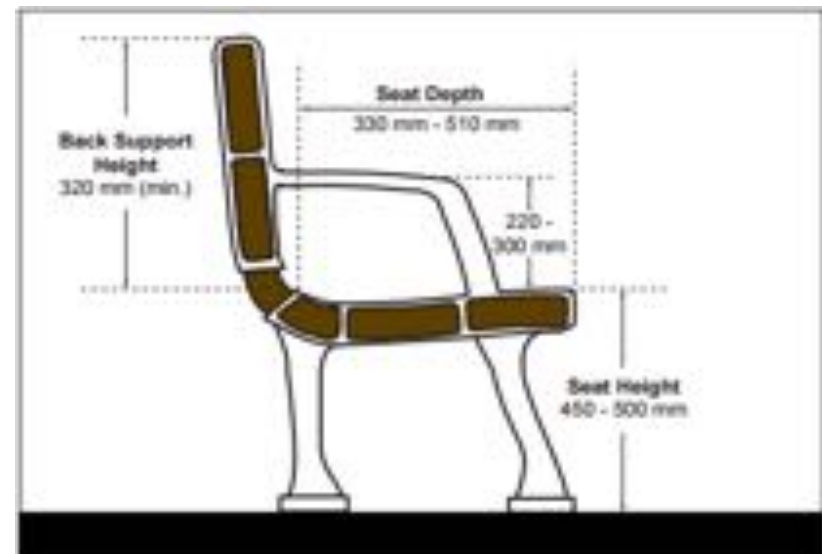
Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSI)

Otherwise referred to as “detectable warning surfaces,” TWSI’s are intended to be located at curbed ramps, depressed curbs, where pedestrian and vehicular areas are without curb separation, and at stairs.

Seating

In Ottawa, the provision of furniture is reviewed on a case-by-case basis and some locations can be determined to require more exterior site furnishings if large amounts of public traffic are expected. The section makes the following recommendations for benches:

- Having multiple benches face each other to facilitate communication between those who may have difficulty due to hearing impairment or other disability.
- Vary the configurations of armrests and backrests to accommodate various body types and conditions
- If one bench is provided, have three arm rests; one on either end and one within the middle.



- Suggested dimensions for an accessible bench.

Accessibility During Construction

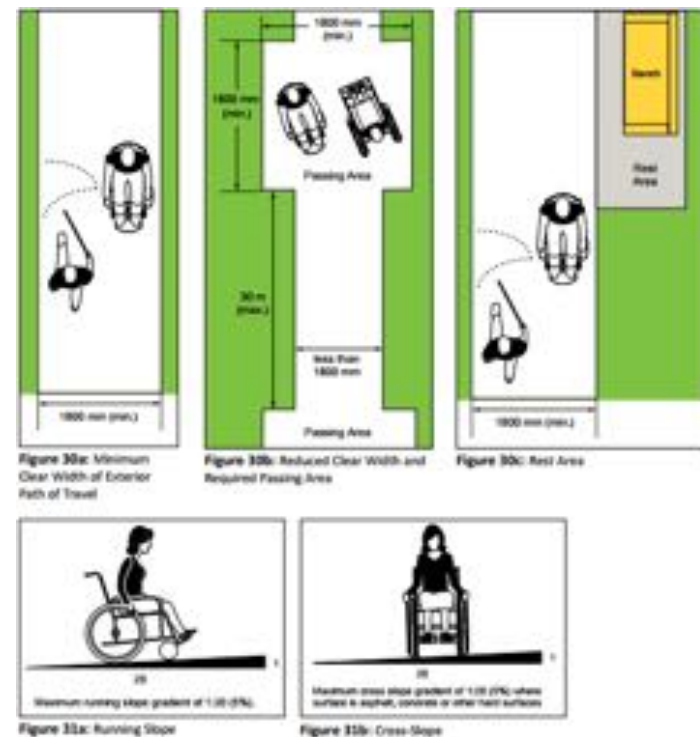
Guidelines are provided by the City of Ottawa to ensure accessibility for rights-of-way during periods when they are under construction. This includes a provision requiring the contractor to prepare a plan to ensure safe pedestrian travel for all people in the area affected. These plans ensure that anyone with increased mobility needs (e.g. parents with strollers, elderly pedestrians with canes) will have a path through or around a construction site.

Exterior Paths of Travel

Exterior paths of travel include pedestrian circulation routes, public ROWs, ramps, and curbs. Strict guidelines are provided to ensure accessibility:

- A minimum of 1,800 mm of clear width is required for all exterior paths of travel, although a 2,000 mm clearance is the suggested best practice.
- Bollards, gates, and other entrance designs are required to allow for entrance points at least 850 mm in width.
- Minimum headroom clearance is 2,100 mm.
- Ground surfaces are required to have high tonal textural contrast to help define primary accessible routes, assist with wayfinding, and separate these paths from landscaping features.
- The implementation of rest areas is encouraged, especially on sloped walkways to assist those with impaired mobility.
- Although adequate cross slope is required to allow for drainage, it is important to minimize because any pedestrian making use of a mobility aid could be challenged on a path with high slope. A best practice of 1:50 (2%) is suggested as cross slope gradients while 1:20 (5%) is the maximum allowable in most cases.

- If there is a drop-off of 200 – 600 mm immediately adjacent to an accessible path of travel, barrier protection (e.g. a colour-contrasted curb) is required a minimum of 75 mm above the accessible path.
- Guards that are a minimum of 1,070 mm tall are required if a change in level is more than 600 mm, and these guards are also required where an adjacent surface within 1,200 mm from the accessible path has a slope of at least 1:2 (50%).

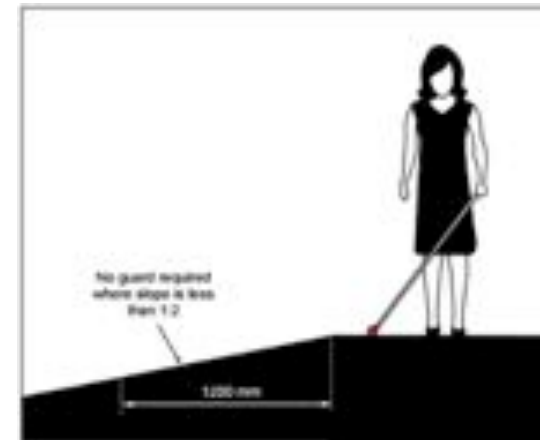
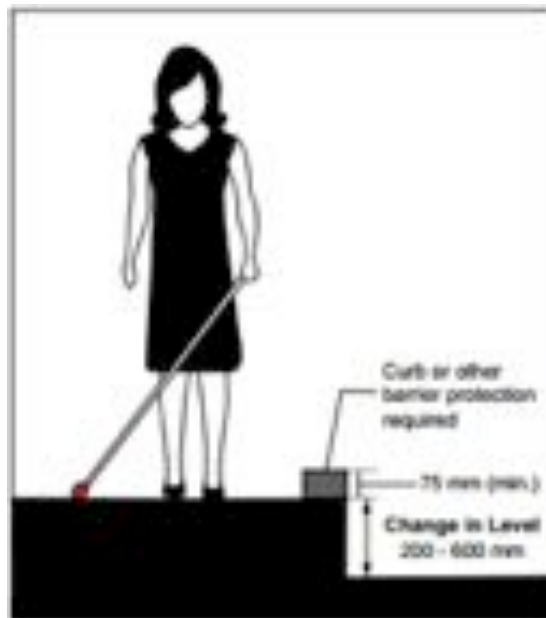


Dimensional requirements for clear paths of travel in Ottawa.

Winterization

Some consideration is included in the document about ensuring accessibility during all seasons. This is alluded to in several ways:

- Low-level lighting is to be mounted high enough to allow for normal snow pile accumulation.
- Ramps and landing surfaces being heated to prevent snow and ice accumulation during the winter season is identified as a best practice.



► City of Ottawa's curb and guard requirements for drop offs and slopes.

10 Market Analysis

Sparks Street's commercial real estate market is highlighted by a strong presence of retail and office space in contrast to a limited residential supply. Buildings fronting on the Mall are designed to accommodate ground floor retail store fronts, while upper level floor area is reserved for office and some residential uses.

Office

Sparks Street features a number of key office properties including several federal government offices and private sector facilities. The majority of the buildings along Sparks Street are formally recognized federal heritage buildings, while modern, higher quality office towers are clustered at the west end of Sparks Street.

The Memorial Block is home to offices for the National Capital Commission (NCC), the Canada Post, the Privy Council of Canada, and other federal government offices. Ottawa Postal Station B, often referred to as the Central Post Office, is a classified federal heritage building and the main centre for the delivery of all postal services for the downtown core. This Block has the Thomas D'Arcy McGee Building, a notable Class A office tower. This 12-storey, 32,000-SF building serves as the Ottawa headquarters of Royal Bank of Canada and several government offices (Altus Group Limited, 2016).

The Valour Building, a 12-storey federal office building, is a notable structure on the Valour Block. The tenants of this

building include the House of Commons, the Senate and the Public Services and Procurement Canada.

The Macdonald Block features the CBC Ottawa Broadcast Centre and federal office buildings, including the Sir John A. Macdonald Building, the Wellington Building, and the National Press Building.

Both the Museum and the Justice Blocks feature Class B office towers, including the C. D. Howe Building, the Place de Ville Tower C and Podium, and the St. Andrew's Tower, which have a smaller number of storefronts than the rest of the Mall. Located on the Justice Block, the St. Andrew's Tower houses the headquarters of the Department of Justice, while Place de Ville Tower C and the Podium serve as offices of Transport Canada and Human Resources Development Canada.

On the Museum Block, the C. B. Howe Building features eleven-storey office spaces and a shopping mall - 240 Sparks Street - covering three lower floors. This building is occupied by the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, the Auditor General, and other smaller tenants.

Market Overview

Downtown Ottawa has continued to be one of the most sought after office markets with its low vacancy rates and accompanying high rental rates, compared to the rest of the City.

A Flight-to-Quality trend has been a stabilizing influence in the downtown office market. The downtown Class A market continues to benefit at the expense of Class B and C buildings due to strong demand for its well-located, high quality office space. Tenants continue to show a preference for well-appointed Class A space with high-quality infrastructure over older Class B and C buildings. As a result, the downtown Class B and C buildings had higher vacancy rates, at 13.7% and 19.5%, respectively, compared to the 8.5% vacancy rate in the Class A market in Q2 2016 (Table 1).

This trend has also been identified in Sparks Street, as 16,950 SF of Class B office space came available at 100 Sparks Street with a net asking rental rate of \$17/SF in the spring of 2016 (Spacelist Commercial Listing Ltd, 2016). Compared to the average net rent of \$14.95/SF for downtown Class B buildings in the Q2 of 2016, these figures represent that demand for well-positioned, functional space with good quality building infrastructure, which likely cannot be found in other sub-markets, remains high.

Additionally, some of older buildings, notably the Sir John A. Macdonald Building and the Wellington Building, had significant upgrades to secure functional office spaces for parliamentary functions and meetings. Rehabilitation projects for the Sir John A. Macdonald and the Wellington Buildings were completed in 2015 and 2016, respectively, and have been re-occupied by the federal government (Public Works and Government Service Canada, n.d.).

Market Outlook

The completion of the Confederation Line on Queen Street in 2018 will redefine Sparks Street as a more convenient and easily accessible business hub. The new LRT project is expected to increase demand for office space in Sparks Street, as well as retail and residential space, boosting property values and rental rates. According to the 2011 LRT Economic Impact Study, commercial properties in Sparks Street, which are all within a 600m radius of the two stations at Lyon and O'Connor Streets, are anticipated to experience a 10-50% increase in value.

Market Indicators	Ottawa			Downtown Ottawa		
	Market Q2 2015	Market Q2 2016	Yearly Trend	Market Q2 2015	Market Q2 2016	Yearly Trend
Vacancy Rate	12.4%	12.4%	↔	9.9%	10.9%	↑
Net Absorption (SF)	-436,815	-87,081	↑	-24,128	-25,993	↓
Rental Rate *	\$17.19	\$17.06	↓	\$17.78	\$18.95	↑



Table 1. Summary Statistics of the City Ottawa and Downtown Ottawa

Office Concentration	Class	Buildings Surveyed	Office Inventory (SF)	Vacancy Rate Q2 2016	Vacancy Rate Q2 2015	Net Absorption Q2 2016 (SF)	Asking Net Rental Rates
Downtown	A	34	10,389,281	8.5%	6.7%	-39,516	\$24.04
	B	32	4,483,316	13.7%	11.6%	5,782	\$14.95
	C	21	1,479,143	19.5%	24.5%	7,741	\$11.91
		87	16,351,740	10.9%	9.9%	-25,993	\$18.95
Suburban Total	A	139	11,930,101	13.6%	15.7%	-28,229	\$15.77
	B	156	9,329,569	12.5%	12.4%	20,572	\$13.74
	C	55	1,727,833	17.6%	10.5%	-53,431	\$12.41
		350	22,987,503	13.6%	14.2%	-61,088	\$14.75
Ottawa Total	A	173	22,319,382	11.2%	11.8%	-67,745	\$19.91
	B	188	13,812,885	13.0%	12.1%	26,354	\$14.35
	C	76	3,206,976	18.5%	17.7%	-45,690	\$12.16
		437	39,339,243	12.4%	12.4%	-87,081	\$17.06



Ottawa commercial office markets in 2016.

Retail

Sparks Street has a large concentration of ground-floor, locally owned and operated retail stores, offering shopping, dining, and service options. A variety of restaurants, pubs, and cafés make up the majority (35.7%) of overall retail spaces in Sparks Street. The food and beverage category is comprised of restaurants, pubs, and cafes and coffee shops. The Mall, as a dining destination, offers a combination of independent brands

(Parliament Pub, the Cock & Lion Free House, and Deli Kat Cafe), restaurant chains (Freshii, Sushi Shop, and D'Arcy McGee's), and coffee chains (Tim Hortons and Starbucks) (Sparks Street Ottawa, 2016). During the summer, some restaurants offer outdoor patios, bringing vibrant life in the daytime.

In terms of services offered, the Mall offers a mixture of daytime services, ranging from health care and beauty services to financial and postal services. There is a mix of small health and beauty specialist retailers (hair and beauty salons, fitness clubs, dental clinics, and optical stores) with a few larger chains, such as GoodLife Fitness, which provide personal care services.

Four branches from the National “Big Five” banks are concentrated along the Street, which include the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD), Bank of Nova Scotia (Scotiabank), and Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC).

As a shopping destination, Sparks Street is not likely to pose any real competition against the CF Rideau Centre. Located one block east of Sparks Street, the Rideau Centre occupies approximately 923,500 SF with more than 200 retailers, positioning itself as one of Ottawa’s prominent regional malls. The recent four-storey, 230,000-SF space of the expansion helped to attract new anchor tenants, such as Simon’s, Steve Madden, and Massimo Dutti, and opened to the public in August 2016 (McLean, 2016).

Sparks Street is also less likely to attract customers with smaller, independent tenants despite the presence of a department store at 240 Sparks Street. The Mall limits its hours of use as many stores close at 5:30pm or 6pm, while some shops close on weekends. It also lacks evening and late night entertainment facilities, although some restaurants and pubs remain open until 11pm or midnight. The Mall likely requires a marketing strategy that will promote a strong retail mix on Sparks Street, encouraging pedestrian-oriented activity during the evenings and on weekends.

Market Overview

Still, there is a lot of positive momentum in the Ottawa retail market, as a number of new stores have opened across the City. The Rideau Centre’s expansion has added 25 new high-end retailers, while a new 70,000-SF store (Cabela’s) is slated to open in the fall of 2016 at the new Kanata West Centre (Cushman & Wakefield, 2016). These transactions have resulted in 116,072-SF of positive net absorption in the City, while downtown market recorded 21,457-SF of positive net absorption.

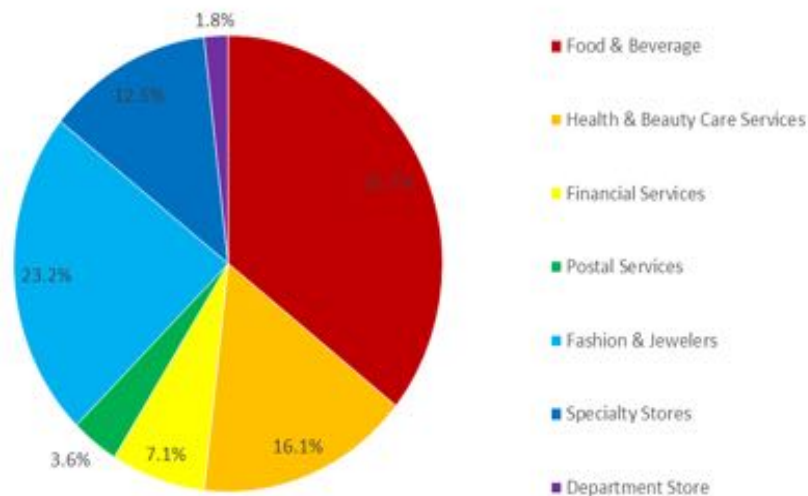
Sparks Street Market Overview

Sparks Street has seen significant retail closures over the past 18 months. Holt Renfrew, previously an anchor retailer on Sparks Street, left at the end of January 2015 (Cushman & Wakefield, 2016). Sparks Street currently has significant retail spaces for lease: A 2,560-SF space at 79 Sparks Street, and a 3,302-SF space at 56 Sparks Street (which was previously occupied by Expedition Shoppe until March 31, 2016).

A 23,000-SF store at 156 Sparks Street was anchored by discount retailer Winners in the fall of 2015 (Sali, 2015). Additionally, a new restaurant – Riviera – opened at 62 Sparks Street in the spring of 2016, resulting in 21,457 SF of positive net absorption in the downtown (Cushman & Wakefield, 2016 Q2; Robin, 2016).

Future Retail Spaces

The Ashcroft Homes' re-Residences project is set to offer 6,000 SF of new space for retail uses in 2018 as an opportunity to enhance the Mall's retail mix (BuzzBuzzNews, 2016; Lord, 2016). The project features two buildings, one six-storey building at 106-116 Sparks Street and a 16-storey tower on Queen Street. The ground floor spaces on Sparks Street will feature retail spaces, as well as an entrance to residential units. The second floor will feature retail spaces and the second level of a restaurant. Upper floors of these buildings will offer residential rental units and condominium suites.



► Distribution of occupied retail space on Sparks Street.



► Ashcroft Homes' re-Residences project's proposed new retail spaces on Sparks Street

Hotels

Located only one block south of Parliament Hill, Sparks Street is within a short walking distance to well-known tourist destinations such as the Bank of Canada Museum and the National Art Centre. Given this, many hotel operators, including Sheraton, Lord Elgin, and Fairmont Chateau Laurier, are strategically clustered near Sparks Street, while the Marriott Ottawa hotel is located on the Justice Block. Due to the proximity advantage, downtown hotels, including these hotels, have outperformed hotels outside of the downtown market. The hotels had higher occupancy rates than the rest of the City over the past two years 74.5% in 2014 and 76.6% in 2015).

In addition, the hotels had the average daily rate of \$156.82 for the first three-quarters of 2015, which was 22% higher than the average daily rate of hotels outside of the downtown market (\$128.27). As a result, room revenues in the hotels averaged \$120.73 in the first three quarters of 2015, compared to \$100.18 for hotels in Ottawa West and \$63.97 for hotels in Ottawa East.

Hotel Market Outlook for 2017

Ottawa is preparing for Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, and its celebration is expected to attract an additional 1.75 million visitors to the City by offering a variety of cultural, sporting, social, and business events (City of Ottawa, 2015). New hotels in the downtown, including ALT Hotel and Andaz Ottawa ByWard Market, recently opened in the summer of 2016. Along with adjacent downtown attractions and amenities, these hotels are expected to attract visitors to the downtown core (Sali, 2016). The influx of tourists expected to come with the celebration in 2017 will add to the healthy outlook for Ottawa's economy, particularly in the downtown area.

Residential

Market Overview

The downtown core has remained a sought-after area for renters, especially to those seeking single- and two-person households. According to the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) Fall 2015 Rental Market Report, vacancy rate in the downtown core averaged 2.3%, a figure that is lower than the city-wide average of 3.4% in 2015. Vacancies for rental condominium apartments in the downtown core declined to 2.4% in 2015 from 3.3% in 2014, while the rental apartment vacancy rate remained at 2.7%. Rental apartment units in the downtown core totalled 8,875 in 2015, accounting for 14% of total city-wide units. The majority (56.6%) of downtown apartment units were one-bedroom units, while 23.6% were two-bedroom units.

Likewise, 56% of the total dwellings in Sparks Street are renters, while the rest live in owner-occupied homes (RE/MAX, 2016). Furthermore, Sparks Street largely accommodates

Location	2014			2015 Q1-Q3		
	Occupancy Rate	Average Daily Rate	Revenue per Available Room	Occupancy Rate	Average Daily Rate	Revenue per Available Room
Downtown Ottawa	73.7%	\$151.49	\$112.19	76.6%	\$156.82	\$120.73
Ottawa West	69.8%	\$135.85	\$94.80	72.1%	\$138.80	\$100.18
Ottawa East	54.7%	\$113.65	\$62.37	54.3%	\$117.74	\$63.97
Ottawa	69.8%	\$143.45	\$100.45	71.6%	\$147.36	\$105.87



Ottawa Hotel Market in 2014 and 2015.

single-person (57%) and two-person (33%) households. 126 Sparks Street offers 35 furnished one-bedroom flats and lofts. A monthly rent for these units ranges from \$2,225 to \$2,800, which is far higher than the downtown's average of \$1,071 for the same condition in 2015 (CMHC, 2015; Morguard Home, 2016).

Due to convenient access to shops, workplace, and amenities, residential properties in Sparks Street have averaged a higher sale price than those in the surrounding areas. The average residential price on Sparks Street is \$390,000, compared to the city-wide average of \$369,477 in 2015 (CMHC, 2016). Following the introduction of the Confederation Line in 2018, residential properties in Sparks Street are expected to rise in value by 15 to 30% (CPCS Transcom Limited, 2011).

Residential Market Outlook

The Ashcroft Homes' re-Residences condominium project is slated to offer a combination of 91 condominium suites and 110 rental suites, which consist of one and two bedrooms. As of October 2016, more than 70% of the condominium suites have been pre-sold (Lord, 2016). As for the rental market, the units are expected to target a niche, high-end market on flexible terms, ranging from a week to a year.



Ashcroft Homes' re-Residences condominium project at Queen Street.



11 Demographic Analysis

	Sparks Street Neighbourhood (Half-mile Radius)	Centretown	Ottawa
Total Population	9,571	27,708	961,921
Male	50.7%	50.2%	48.9%
Female	49.3%	49.8%	51.1%
Under 15 Years	5.9%	5.9%	16.0%
15 - 19 Years	1.9%	2.0%	5.6%
20 - 29 Years	23.8%	27.2%	15.7%
30 - 39 Years	23.9%	24.8%	13.9%
40 - 49 Years	12.7%	12.4%	13.5%
50 - 59 Years	12.5%	11.3%	14.6%
60 - 69 Years	10.2%	8.7%	10.8%
Above 69 Years	9.0%	7.7%	9.9%
Non-Visible Minority Household	68.4%	74.0%	74.3%
Visible Minority Household	29.9%	23.9%	23.8%



General Demographic Overview.

Research was conducted to assess the demographic character of Sparks Street and the people most likely to patronize it. There is a large population of individuals between 20-39 years of age living in the downtown area. The group is comprised of undergraduate and graduate students, in addition to entry-

level and intermediate-level professionals. However, there are very few local residents in the area younger than the age of 20, indicating an absence of families. Population growth appears to be fuelled by young adults moving into the City's downtown as they embark on their professional careers.

Neighborhood Size & Density

	Centretown	Ottawa Average
Area of Neighbourhood (km ²)	3.3	27.1
Population density (# of people per km ²)	7,668	2,350.8
Area (m ²) per person	130	7,498

► Centretown Neighborhood Study.

Centretown has a significantly higher concentration of people per square kilometre than the Ottawa average.

Families & Households

	Centretown	Ottawa Average
Couples without children (%)	68.2	38.2
Couples with children (%)	17.9	45.7
Lone-parent families (%)	13.9	16.1

► Families in Centretown neighborhood.

The table above shows that most couples that reside downtown are without children, in stark contrast to demographic patterns noticed across the City. If and when these couples decide to have children, the majority are currently moving out of downtown.

	Centretown	Ottawa Average
One-family households (%)	27.4	61
Two or more - family households (%)	0.2	1.4
Non-family households (%)	71.3	33.6

► Families in Centretown neighborhood.

	Centretown	Ottawa Average
1 person households (%)	61.8	28.2
2 person households (%)	29.4	33
3 person households (%)	5.5	15.8
4 person households (%)	2.3	15
5 person households (%)	0.7	5.4
6 or more person households (%)	0.3	2.6

► Household size in Centretown.

The household statistics indicate that most Centretown dwellings are not shared, and that the majority of residents live alone. This could mean that it is home to a transient population, with people moving in and out rapidly in comparison to a neighbourhood that is home to larger families. This is likely a result of the neighbourhood's close proximity to Parliament Hill and its location within the downtown core, with large numbers of government employees who live in Ottawa part-time as well as young (and perhaps single) professionals who live and work in the downtown core.

Education & Income

	Centretown	Ottawa Average
Without high school (%)	4.9	6.7
High school (%)	12.6	18.7
Post-secondary (%)	82.6	74.6

► 2015 Education Attainment Level (ages 25 – 64)

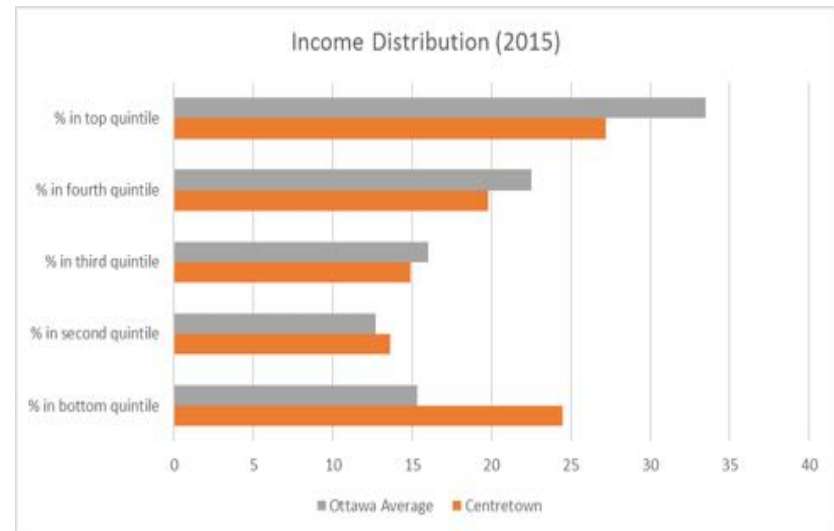
High levels of educational attainment are clear in Ottawa, and rates are higher than the City's average in the downtown area due to the high proportion of young professionals who live there. There are a greater proportion of individuals living in Centretown with lower levels of income than the City of Ottawa's average.

Transportation

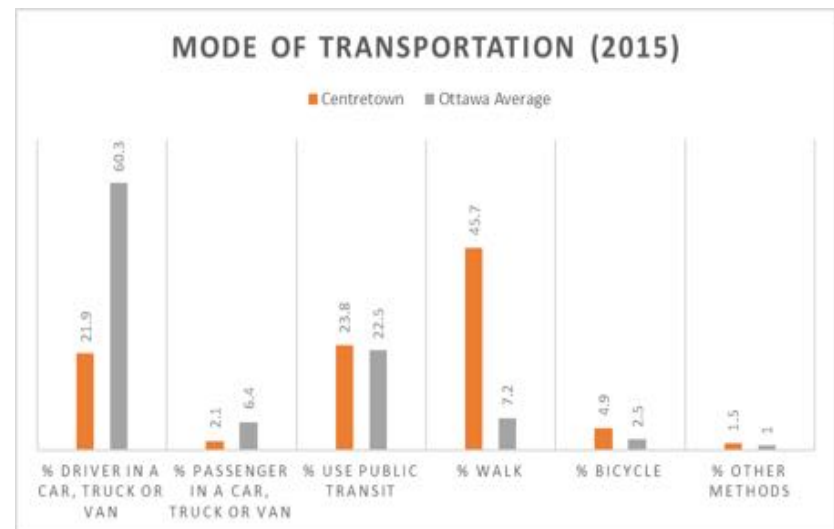
Variable	Centretown	Ottawa Average
Driver in a car, truck or van (%)	21.9	60.3
Passenger in a car, truck or van (%)	2.1	6.4
Use public transit (%)	23.8	22.5
Walk (%)	45.7	7.2
Bicycle (%)	4.9	2.5
Other methods (%)	1.5	1

► 2015 Education Attainment Level (ages 25 – 64)

There are already a large number of people that walk and take public transit in Downtown Ottawa. The addition of the Confederation Line to the area should bring about more pedestrian traffic.



► 2015 Income Distribution.



► 2015 Transportation breakdown.

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