



A New Vision for Sparks Street

A New Vision For Sparks Street

School of Urban and Regional
Planning
Department of Geography and
Planning
Queen's University
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Thank you.



Executive Summary

This report was commissioned by the City of Ottawa in September 2016. The scope of the project was to determine how the physical design and programming functions of Sparks Street's right-of-way will evolve in the years to come to fulfill the public realm policies of the City's Official Plan and other endorsed plans. The project team's purpose in undertaking this project is to revitalize Sparks Street's public realm through the enhancement of both the physical design and operational aspects of the space, while also incorporating a new theme - *The Capital Promenade* - throughout the street. We have selected this theme because of Sparks Street's prominence within downtown Ottawa, its proximity to Parliament, its distinctive and historically significant pedestrian environment, and how it exists as something of a border between the Parliamentary Precinct and the City's Central Business District.

There are three guiding principles that the project team developed to conceptualize the project. First, is to embrace Sparks Street's physical position and primary function as a gateway connecting the central capital landmarks to the other important capital destinations in the east and west. Second, is to re-envision Sparks Street as a themed street, with a mix of uses. Third, is that the historical, architectural, and cultural significance of Sparks Street in Canadian society, as well as Ottawa's civic memory should be embraced, promoted and protected by highlighting the heritage character that it possesses.

The report has been organized into 3 main sections:

1. *A New Vision for Sparks Street*
2. *Best Practices Catalogue*
3. *Background Report*

Background Research

Issues on Sparks Street were identified 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.

The following is a list of studies undertaken by the project team to assess the existing conditions on Sparks Street in Fall 2016:

- The Placemaking Concept
- Stakeholder Consultation
- Existing Physical Conditions
- Physical Amenities Analysis
- Public Space, Public Life Study
- Building Frontage Analysis
- Shadow Analysis
- Programming Analysis
- Relevant Policy Analysis
- Market Analysis
- Demographic Analysis

Using the information gathered from the aforementioned series of studies, 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.

Best Practices Catalogue

The project team undertook a research method throughout the study period that was based upon a comparative analysis of the existing conditions on Sparks Street and case studies that represented best practices from around the world.

The precedents highlighted the best elements of strategy, design, and implementation of successful streetscapes that were determined to be relevant to Sparks Street. These best practices are grouped into specific themes that were crucial in developing an ultimate vision to revitalize Sparks Street. Included among the themes are the following:

- Accessibility
- Greenery & Landscaping
- Lighting
- Paving
- Public Art
- Street Furniture
- Wayfinding & Signage
- Programming
- Patio Policy
- Circulation
- Policy

Relevant precedents from around the world were researched but preference was given to case studies from locations that experienced a comparable climate to the City of Ottawa. In addition, vehicle-free pedestrian malls were examined thoroughly but comparable and similar urban environments were also researched, including complete streets and general downtown areas. Places with remarkable and unique design characteristics were pursued with the end goal of identifying elements of these places that could inform potential solutions for Sparks Street.



Long-Term Vision

Recommendation #1: Incorporate Consistent Urban Design.

Recommendation #2: Encourage more temporary and pop-up businesses on Sparks Street to generate additional revenue streams.

Recommendation #3: Maintain and continue to develop stakeholder communication in the decision-making process.

Recommendation #4: Integrate design features with existing and enhanced programming efforts.

Recommendations

The culmination of research of both existing conditions on the Mall and case studies representing best practices from around the world, a set of recommendations was compiled that the project team believes can contribute to revitalization of Sparks Street. The recommendations have been thematically split into three categories:

Long Term Vision: The long-term time horizon for the Mall is the focus of these recommendations, factoring in their phasing and recognizing the importance of the street's maintenance and long-term feasibility.

Placemaking: Sparks Street has the potential to become a destination; while it is distinct in nature because it is a pedestrian mall, improvements can give both local residents and tourists a reason to visit.

Winterization Strategy: The Mall should aspire to be busy and exciting at all times of the year. Physical design elements can be more resilient and programming efforts can leverage the winter season, transforming it into an advantage.

These recommendations have considered the issues that have been identified with the street and aim to rectify them, and also ameliorate of successful portions of Sparks Street. The following is a complete list of recommendations that comprise *A New Vision for Sparks Street*:

Placemaking



Recommendation #5: Sparks Street should continue to exist as a pedestrian-oriented space while maintaining appropriate access to emergency vehicles.

Recommendation #6: Promote a continuous street theme – The Capital Promenade – that is consistent throughout Sparks Street and is not overwhelming to the user.

Recommendation #7: Update the paving throughout Sparks Street to be distinguishable from surrounding areas while ensuring a high level of accessibility.

Recommendation #8: Encourage cyclists to access Sparks Street with strategically located bicycle racks.

Recommendation #9: Public art should be celebrated and encouraged along Sparks Street, including a focus on Canadian talent and smaller, interchangeable installations.

Recommendation #10: Wayfinding throughout Sparks Street should be clearly identifiable from surrounding areas to create a sense of place and it should simplify the experience of navigating Sparks Street.

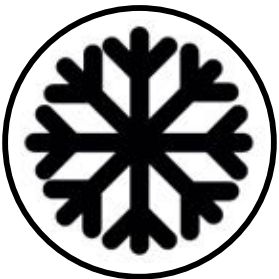
Recommendation #11: Protect heritage character and celebrate local and Canadian history.

Recommendation #12: Connect Sparks Street to the surrounding community and amenities by utilizing improved wayfinding and signage.

Recommendation #13: Bring retail activity onto the street front.

Recommendation #14: Enhance the lighting on Sparks Street to make it desirable and safe in the evening.

Recommendation #15: Integrate programming efforts on Sparks Street with local and regional events and festivals.



Winterization

Recommendation #16: Provide features that bring warmth to the Sparks Street right-of-way during periods of high pedestrian activity.

Recommendation #17: Implement festive lighting that is seasonally dynamic.

Recommendation #18: Implement more frequent, higher-quality winter programming.

Recommendation #19: Provide winter maintenance that is strategic and that promotes accessibility.

Recommendation #20: Utilize winter-resilient street furniture and greenery.

Demonstration Plan

While the recommendations apply to the entire Mall, it was recognized that among them, some applied to different locations on the mall more than to others. The following studies of the Mall's existing conditions were employed to inform the effort to take the project team's recommendations and apply them directly to Sparks Street as part of a demonstration plan:

Existing Physical Block Conditions. On each of the five blocks on Sparks Street, the physical conditions of the Right of Way (ROW) were analyzed. While the general character of each block was evaluated, an inventory of specific urban design elements was taken and these were mapped.

Public Space, Public Life (PSPL) Study. The project team visited Sparks Street on a weekday and on a day of a weekend in October 2016 to evaluate the Mall's pedestrian traffic. This study involved the counting of pedestrians on each block at various points and times of the day, a description of the age and gender of pedestrians, and observation of where pedestrian activity was occurring. The latter analysis was particularly relevant to the creation of this Demonstration Plan.

Frontage Analysis. Throughout Sparks Street, there are building frontages that foster pedestrian activity at the ground level while there are others where the only noteworthy pedestrian activity is people walking by to reach other destinations. A storefront or restaurant would be examples of the former while an office without entry to the street would be an example of the latter.

These analyses were considered to determine where "dead spots" were located on Sparks Street and further, where new urban design elements and programming efforts can be located to enhance these areas. The Demonstration Plan is organized by block and on each, several of the proposed recommendations have been identified as being the most critical to each of the five blocks.

Memorial Block (Elgin Street to Metcalfe Street)

- Protect heritage character and celebrate local history.
- Incorporate a gateway feature that is unique to Sparks Street.
- Enhance the lighting on Sparks Street to make it desirable and safe in the evening.
- Utilize winter-resilient street furniture.

Valour Block (Metcalfe Street to O'Connor Street)

- Bring more retail activity onto the street.
- Incorporate street signage that is unique to Sparks Street.
- Utilize winter-resilient greenery.
- Update and improve the paving to be distinguishable from surrounding areas.

MacDonald Block (O'Connor Street to Bank Street)

- Encourage more temporary and pop-up businesses to generate additional revenue streams.
- Provide features that bring warmth to the street and public spaces.
- Implement effective winter lighting.
- Implement more frequent and higher quality winter programming.

Museum Block (Bank Street to Kent Street)

- Maintain existing bike rack inventory and add more where necessary.
- Update and improve the paving to be distinguishable from surrounding areas.
- Utilize winter-resilient street furniture.
- Incorporate informational wayfinding that is unique to Sparks Street.

Justice Block (Kent Street to Lyon Street)

- Integrate design features with existing and enhanced programming efforts.
- Encourage public art and smaller interchangeable installations.
- Incorporate a gateway feature that is unique to Sparks Street.
- Utilize winter-resilient greenery.
- Bring more retail activity onto the street.



**Michael
Giallonardo**
Brampton, Canada

Editor
Best Practices



**Joanne
Lee**
Seoul, South Korea

Background Research
Production Assistant



**Robert
MacFarlane**
Toronto, Canada

Background Research
Recommendations



**Geoffrey
Sugar**
Toronto, Canada

Background Research
Best Practices



**David
Nanton**
Vancouver, Canada

Background Research
Best Practices



**Henry
Bloemen**
Toronto, Canada

Project Manager
Demonstration Plan



**Nicholas
Sutherland**
Cornwall, Canada

Production Manager
Best Practices



**Aileen
Keng**
Toronto, Canada

Background Research
Production Assistant



**Quadri
Adebayo**
Lagos, Nigeria

Background Research
Production Assistant



**Ian
Pinchin**
Kingston, Ontario

Best Practices
Recommendations

**School of Urban and
Regional Planning**
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**Scott
Alain**
Ottawa, Canada

Stakeholder Liaison
Demonstration Plan



**Austin
Norrie**
Vancouver, Canada

GIS Specialist



**Sarvdeep
Sangwan**
Chandigarh, India

Modelling Specialist

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iii	Acknowledgements
iv	Project Team
ivii	Executive Summary

xi	List of Maps
xi	List of Graphs
xi	List of Tables

1 Introduction

5 Existing Conditions

6	Placemaking
6	Stakeholder Consultation
8	Existing Physical Conditions
11	Physical Amenities Analysis
12	Public Space, Public Life Study
14	Building Frontage Analysis
15	Shadow Analysis
15	Programming
16	Policy
18	Market Analysis
18	Demographics
18	SWOC Analysis
20	Existing Conditions Analysis
20	Best Practices Analysis

23 Recommendations

28	A Long-Term Vision
32	Placemaking
43	Winterization Strategy

51 Demonstration Plan

54	Memorial Block
60	Valour Block
66	Macdonald Block
72	Museum Block
78	Justice Block

85 Conclusion

88 References

90 Best Practices Catalogue

165 Background Report

244 Glossary

LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1: <i>PSPL</i> Pedestrian Counts	9
Graph 2: <i>PSPL</i> Weekday Block Summary	9
Graph 3: <i>PSPL</i> Weekend Block Summary	8

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Stakeholder Consultation	7
Table 2: Policy Review	7
Table 3: Critical Recommendations by Block	7

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1: Property Context	6
Map 2: Area Context	9
Map 3: Frontage Analysis	6
Map 4: Memorial Block Streetscape Plan	8
Map 5: Valour Block Streetscape Plan	9
Map 6: Macdonald Block Streetscape Plan	6
Map 7: Museum Block Streetscape Plan	9
Map 8: Justice Block Streetscape Plan	4



1

Introduction

Overview

Project Scope

This report was commissioned by the City of Ottawa in September 2016. During that month, the Project Team was able to glean substantial information about Sparks Street from a meeting with the City of Ottawa and a number of other key stakeholders held at Ottawa City Hall. The task relayed to the Project Team was the following:

Determine how the physical design and programming functions of the Sparks Street Pedestrian Mall Right-of-Way will evolve in the years to come to fulfill the public realm policies of the City's Official Plan and other endorsed plans.

Purpose

The project team's purpose in undertaking this project is to revitalize Sparks Street's public realm through the enhancement of both the physical design and operational aspects of the space, while also incorporating a new theme – *The Capital Promenade* – throughout each of the five blocks that comprise the pedestrian mall. The theme was selected because of Sparks Street's location within downtown Ottawa, its proximity to the Parliamentary Precinct, its distinctive and historically significant pedestrian environment, and how it successfully unifies the Capital and the City. As *The Capital Promenade*, Sparks Street will serve as a premier destination for events, activities, leisure, as well as retail and shopping opportunities, creating an important community hub within the central city.

Vision

The project team's vision for Sparks Street is to strategically reposition the space by establishing it as *The Capital Promenade* to create a national and cultural hub in Ottawa's city centre. It will be a place where people of all ages can live, work, and play at all times throughout the day, and all year-round.

Guiding Principles

1. Embrace Sparks Street's physical position and primary function as a gateway connecting the central capital landmarks to other important capital in Ottawa's downtown area. Sparks Street also has the potential to serve as a linear urban park which would tie areas like the Rideau Canal in the East to The Garden of the Provinces and Territories in the West, providing green linkages in the downtown. The street also serves as an interface between Ottawa's Central Business District and the Parliamentary Precinct, areas that are oriented toward the City of Ottawa and Canada, respectively.
2. Re-envision Sparks Street as a themed street with a mix of uses. Sparks Street could be re-imagined as a Capital-themed space, and can serve as a space imbued with the symbolic nature of a national capital. The very essence of Canada's identity is that of a multicultural and accepting society. In this established context, it is important to provide spaces for all members of society.
3. The historical, architectural, and cultural significance of Sparks Street in Canadian society, as well as Ottawa's civic memory, should be embraced, promoted and protected by highlighting the heritage character that it possesses. The unique history and accompanying heritage buildings can be leveraged to transform the street into an arts and culture destination.

Report Organization

The report has been organized into five primary sections.

- **Existing Conditions:** A site analysis was performed to assess the existing conditions on Sparks Street. This section lays the foundation for the research of precedents found within the Best Practices Catalogue because it displays Sparks Street's strengths, and weaknesses, as well as its opportunities and challenges. In particular, this section contains a series of summaries for the various studies that were conducted. Complete analyses of the existing conditions on Sparks Street can be found in the Background Report.
- **Findings & Analysis:** This section analyzed the findings from both the Existing Conditions and the Best Practices Catalogue. Specifically, this section summarizes and collects the particular findings that informed the Recommendations and the Demonstration Plan.
- **Recommendations:** The primary objective of this report is to provide a set of recommendations that the Project Team believes will revitalize and rejuvenate the Sparks Street Mall if taken. They consider the issues that have been identified with the street along with its successes. The issues have been analyzed and the areas that can be improved have been compared to pedestrian malls and urban environments from around the world as part of a review of best practices. The recommendations that are found in this section emanate from this research.
- **Demonstration Plan:** This section is an implementation plan where the aforementioned Recommendations have been strategically placed at the appropriate locations along Sparks Street.
- **Conclusion:** The key takeaways from this report – A New Vision for Sparks Street – are identified and outlined.

In addition, two additional reports contain the majority of the project team's research can be found in this report.

Best Practices Catalogue: Research of pedestrian malls and urban environments from around the world was conducted to ascertain best practices in placemaking, including with physical urban design and programming efforts. The case studies and precedents identified as part of this research that were determined to be most relevant to Sparks Street were the primary influence on the effort to compile a set of recommendations for the rejuvenation of the Mall.

Background Report: Complete studies on the Existing Conditions of the Mall are found within this section.

Brief History

Sparks Street has a storied history as an essential component of Ottawa's built form and function for nearly 200 years. This begins with its initial purchase in 1826 by Nicholas Sparks when the land where the street is now located was the property of his estate, although he would eventually subdivide it into lots for sale. By the late 19th century, Sparks Street had become a key commercial street within the City of Ottawa and after the turn of the century, it had become the economic centre of the city characterized by a number of Beaux-Arts buildings.

Sparks Street's merchants and landowners were the first to suggest that the street be converted into a pedestrian promenade. This was considered a desirable approach given that the commercial vitality of the street had begun to decay with the introduction of new suburban malls in the greater area of Ottawa. Upon its experimental trial in the early 1960s, the effort was very successful and Sparks Street became a permanent pedestrian mall in 1967. Nonetheless, throughout the late 20th century, pedestrian traffic declined and piecemeal revitalization efforts diminished the coherence of the built form. The current point in time presents itself as an important opportunity to guide future improvements to the mall. This can be achieved through the development of a set of guidelines that can promote a unified, enjoyable, and profitable built form and in time, return a dignified reputation to Canada's original open-air pedestrian mall.



Early photographs of Sparks Street.





2

Existing Conditions

Placemaking

Placemaking is a concept that has influenced this project at all of its stages including the examination of the existing conditions on Sparks Street, the research into the elements of great urban places from around the world, and finally as part of the effort to create a set of recommendations that can imbue the Mall with a greater sense of place. It has become a commonly utilized term in the fields of urban planning, design, and architecture, and it is not a new concept. Historically, it is linked to the 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. It would eventually be popularized by Project for Public Spaces, a group that began using the term consistently during the mid 1990's.

The concept of placemaking reflects a process and philosophy. The philosophy 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. The process is recognized as inspiring people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces within their own communities. A great public space must serve people as a vital community resource in which function is more important than form, it is quite different than constructing a building. 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, genuine placemaking can be achieved.

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 following group can be counted as stakeholders; representatives from each were interviewed to adequately and appropriately gauge their roles in advancing the interests of the mall, and to assess their opinions on how to proceed with a rejuvenation project.

- City of Ottawa
- National Capital Commission (NCC)
- Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC)
- Sparks Street Business Improvement Association (BIA)

While there were some distinct differences in their feelings towards the mall, including its current conditions and its future, there were some overwhelming trends that the project team identified. Each interviewee was optimistic about the future of the mall, agreeing that a thoughtful revitalization project should result in a positive impact.

The topics that were discussed, including the prevailing sentiments communicated to the project team, include the following:

Topic	Prevailing Sentiment(s)
Inter-Agency Communication	There is inadequate communication among the interest groups.
Lighting	It is in need of improvement; currently there is an eclectic mix of light posts across the street that are different because they were installed at different times.
Maintenance	Previous rehabilitation efforts on the mall did not adequately plan for operational and long-term maintenance costs of the upgrades; this cannot happen again.
Pedestrian Presence	Ensuring the vitality of the street at all hours of the day is the primary goal; enhanced retail and reduced vacancies can help.
Programming	While programming is a positive aspect of the mall, it is not consistent throughout the year.
Retail Mix	Stores that front onto the mall are critical; more convenience uses and reputable retailers should be helpful.
Surfacing and Streetscape	Current surfacing is in poor condition and is not coherent throughout the mall; a “less is more” approach should be taken to streetscape treatments.
Theme	A cohesive atmosphere throughout the mall is lacking and should be established; an exact theme was not agreed upon but a variety of ideas were discussed.
Winterization	The winter months are the worst time to be on Sparks Street and better winter programming efforts can rectify this.

Existing Physical Conditions

Sparks Street is ideally located in the heart of downtown Ottawa, directly adjacent to the Federal Parliamentary Buildings. The Sparks Street pedestrian area extends from Elgin Street in the east to Lyon Street in the west. These five blocks act as a symbolic divisional line between town in the south, and crown immediately to the north. The three most easterly blocks comprise the Sparks Street Heritage Conservation District and in fact, many of the buildings are specifically identified for heritage conservation east of Bank Street.

Various physical features such as benches, light posts, planters, and bicycle racks populate the extent of the Sparks Street right-of-way. Much of the placement of these items occurs sporadically, eliminating any continuity in appearance. Light posts along Sparks Street have a glossy black finish, with four globe lights at the top. The light posts also feature a red illuminated 'S' above the four lights, bringing some colour to the street. A total of 54 benches provide a place for pedestrians to rest on Sparks Street, in combination with a variety of secondary seating areas.

Patio space often extends various restaurants onto the Mall in the summer months; patio seating is exclusively located to the southern half of the street, an area that experiences less sunlight than what is experienced on the north side of the street. Greenery along Sparks Street is often found in planters placed to the outside of the street. Some of these are permanent in nature while others are temporary. The greenery is varied throughout the street, for example, trees can only be found from between Bank Street and Lyon Street.



Examples of some of the existing street furniture and landscaping along Sparks Street.



Sparks Street - Property Context Map



City of Ottawa, Data Catalogue, Nov 5th, 2016

Legend

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Business Improvement Area | Pedestrian Promenade | National Capital Commission (NCC) Property | Canadian Broadcasting Corp. (CBC) Property |
| Sparks Street Study Area | Public Street Network | Public Services & Procurement Canada (PWGSC) Property | Private Property |



Map 1: Property Context



Map 2: Area Context

Sparks Street lacks a consistent pattern of pavement or pavers due to continuous repairs and renovation efforts, resulting in random patches of cement or asphalt. The majority of the street surface is an orange brick material, distinguished in colour from the surrounding streets and sidewalks. Wayfinding elements do not significantly contribute in the same regard that paving has to distinguishing Sparks Street from the surrounding area for users. Pillars act as gateway features to the mall at Elgin Street, Bank Street, and Lyon Street. These are the only real elements that distinguish the street in regards to wayfinding and little information exists to aid the user or direct them towards Sparks Street other than generic City of Ottawa signage.

During the study period, art found on Sparks Street was limited to two installations, both designed by Canadian sculptor Bruce Garner. The first of which is “Territorial Prerogative” located to the east of Metcalfe Street; it is a significant feature in its absolute size and bronze material, depicting a grizzly bear and its cub. The other feature is entitled “Joy” and it is a copper installation portraying a family in a moment of happiness located within the eastern section of the mall.

During the study period, the Canadian Council of the Arts announced a winner for a design competition for the “Lord Stanley’s Gift Monument,” which will be located at the intersection of Sparks Street and Elgin Street.

Physical Amenities Analysis

Each block segment along Sparks Street contains certain characteristics and amenities that differentiate them. The blocks were examined for their quantity and quality of their physical amenities; observations were made about unique design features, existing physical conditions, and the relationship between the different elements. Each contain particular characteristics and amenities that are unique and in many cases, this has lead to incoherency between the different blocks on the Mall.



► Damaged and repaired paving on Sparks Street.

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

Memorial Block

Currently home to two entranceway pillars, this block will also be the location of the Lord Stanley’s Gift Monument, which will be placed at the corner of Sparks Street and Elgin Street. Much of the public art that is currently found on the street is located on this block. Inconsistencies in lighting make this part of Sparks Street less enjoyable, especially during the evening hours.

Valour Block

The layout of light poles is more symmetrical and organized on this block although most of the physical amenities are grouped together towards the western portion of this block. This section relies on planters to provide greenspace and the street paving is in very poor condition; patched repairs are common.

Macdonald Block

This stretch of the Mall is one of its more well lit areas. Two entranceway pillars are located at the corner of Sparks Street and Bank Street and the block contains the largest variety of amenities and features in comparison to the other blocks to the east and west. During the summer months, temporary patio spaces take up a large portion of the Mall.

Museum Block

The entire northern portion of this block was under construction during the study period although the project team noted that secondary seating was heavily used and there was a high quality of light poles which were not in use. There is a significant amount of bike racks to support active transportation along this block segment and they are heavily utilized by cyclists.

Justice Block

This block has abundance of trees arranged in an orderly manner, on both sides of the right-of-way, which makes this portion of the street visually appealing. This block also has a significant number of benches and additional seating around landscaped areas. The block's light features are not uniform making certain areas of the street not well-lit. Also notable is the mid-block access route to Queen Street on the south side of the block.

Public Space, Public Life Study

A *Public Space, Public Life* (PSPL) study was conducted on Sparks Street that allowed the project team to gain a more intimate understanding of how the public space is currently being used, and to help inform revitalization efforts. The purpose of conducting a PSPL study 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. The PSPL study was inspired by Jan Gehl and Birgitte Svarre's 2013 book, *How to Study Public Life*.

Methodology

The study was conducted over two days: Saturday, October 7, 2016, and Monday, October 17, 2016. A day on the weekend and a weekday were chosen to ascertain the vibrancy of the mall in both scenarios. On each day, pedestrian (and cyclist) counts were taken at predetermined locations in 10 minute intervals during each hour. In addition, team members were stationed on each of the five blocks of the mall. The goals of the study included:

- Ascertain the difference in pedestrian volume at each of the day,
- Ascertain the difference in pedestrian volume on each of the five blocks of Sparks Street, and
- Identify the differences between the weekday and weekend.

In addition, on both study days, a stationary mapping analysis was conducted. The purpose of this activity was to observe the actions of the people patronizing the street and in particular, to mark down where these were happening.

Results

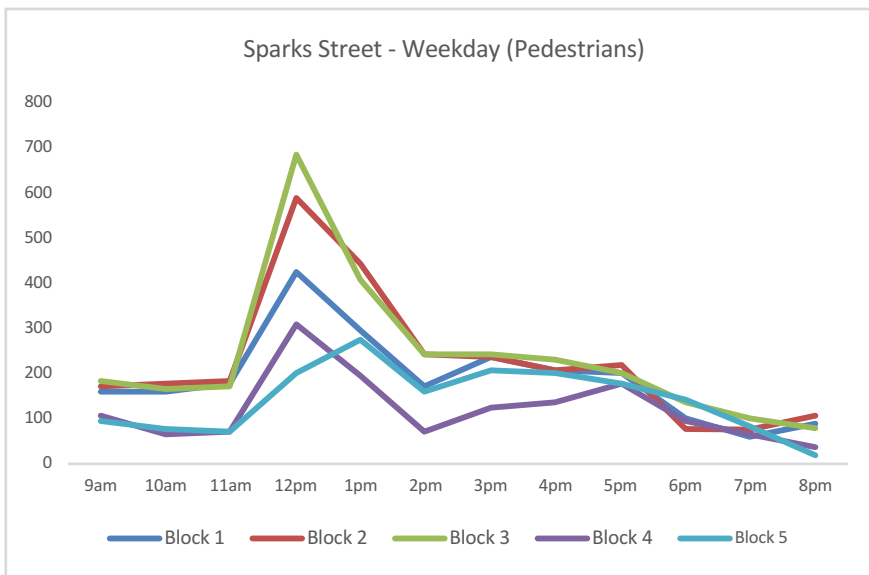
In general, there is a stark difference between the flow of pedestrians on a weekday versus a weekend. As expected, on the weekday there is a sharp peak in pedestrians during lunch hour. However, there is not a significant peak during the evening rush hour but rather a steady flow of people likely leaving work

beginning just after 2pm and ending at 5pm. There were more people on the street during the evening on a weekend in comparison to a Monday evening.

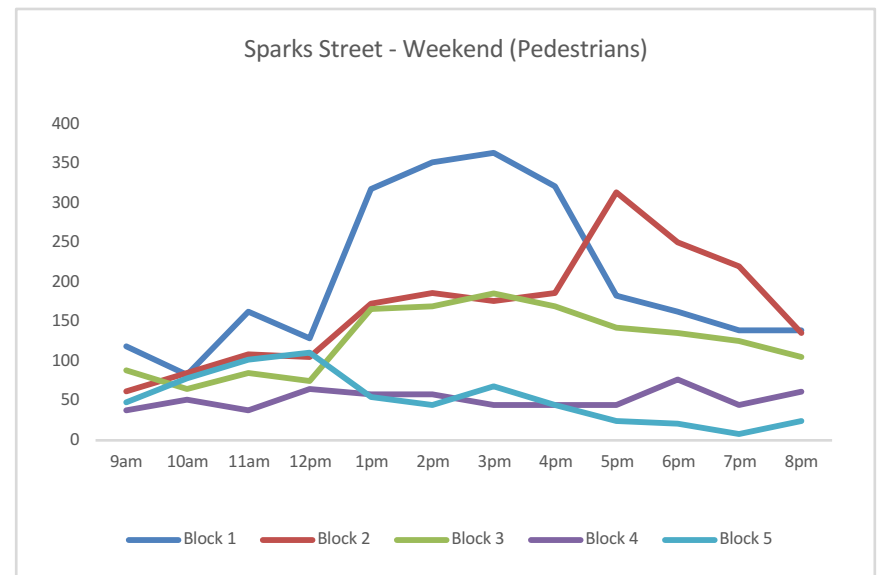
The McDonald and Valour Blocks (Blocks 2 and 3) were the busiest for the majority of the observed weekday. These two blocks recorded the highest amount of pedestrians during the lunch hour, an indication that office workers concentrate on these blocks at this time. Memorial Block (Block 1) is busy for a sustained period on Sparks Street during the weekend and the Valour Block (Block 2) is the second busiest on both weekdays and weekends. The Museum Block (Block 4) 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 during the study period.



► Graph 1: *PSPL* Pedestrian Counts



► Graph 2: *PSPL* Weekday Block Summary



► Graph 3: *PSPL* Weekend Block Summary

Building Frontage Analysis

Building frontages were analyzed to determine where ground floor conditions were fostering pedestrian activity and where they were not. An *active frontage* is considered to be the space located in front of a building that is able to support and promote pedestrian activity. An *inactive frontage* is a location of the streetscape that does not have amenities that support or foster pedestrian activity. The primary goal of the Building Frontage Analysis was to identify spaces on the Mall that are classified as the latter.

A series of research informed this analysis, including a stationary mapping activity performed as part of the PSPL Study, and considered together, this research allowed the project team to identify Spark Street's "dead spots", which the team refers to as *unsuccessful frontages*.

Memorial Block

Despite the considerable amount of *active frontage* located in front of the Blackburn Building, people were concentrated along the two ends of the block where public art was located. In addition, much of the ground level in front of the Royal Bank Centre was observed to be *unsuccessful frontage*.

Valour Block

Pedestrian activity coincided with *active frontages* on this block

while the area in front of the two bank branches (CIBC and Scotiabank) and the construction for the residential condominium project, all located mid-block, were inactive frontages and lacked pedestrian activity.

Macdonald Block

Despite its *inactive frontage*, pedestrians spent time in front of the CBC Ottawa Broadcast Centre. In addition, people were found to be using the secondary seating outside of the Wellington Building even though it was categorized as an *inactive frontage*.

Museum Block

Home to a considerable amount of *inactive frontage* due the lack of ground level retail on this block, pedestrians were concentrated at the entrance of the C.D. Howe Building. The construction that was occurring in the front of the Bank of Canada Building during the study period resulted in much of the space being categorized as *unsuccessful frontage*.

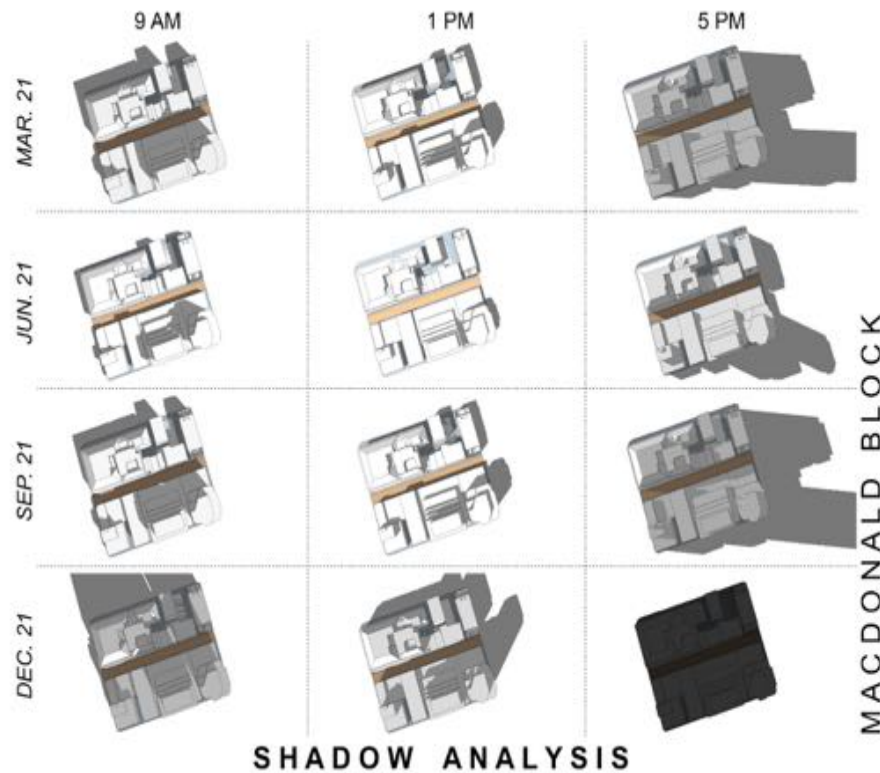
Justice Block

Pedestrians concentrated near the east side of the block at the intersection of Kent Street and Sparks Street despite this space being classified as an *inactive frontage* due to the presence of the ramp to the underground parking for the Marriot Hotel.



Map 3: Frontage Analysis

Shadow Analysis



► Shadow Analysis for Macdonald Block.

To understand when and where there is sunlight along Sparks Street, a Shadow Analysis was conducted. Rather than determining what the effect of particular buildings or developments will be, this analysis was undertaken to show the existing shadow conditions on the street to better understand which parts of the street are in need of better lighting. 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.

Results

Each of the five blocks 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, although there were some differences between the blocks. There is significant sun exposure on Valour and MacDonald blocks at lunch and due to the step back of the buildings on the south side of Macdonald block, this block receives more exposure than the rest of the Mall.

Overall the street receives little sunlight due to its narrow right-of-way framed by a collection of tall buildings with the exception of the lunch periods throughout the much of the Mall. As such, there is ample need to improve the lighting along Sparks Street with artificial lighting.

Programming

At the completion of 2016, Sparks Street will have hosted a total of 56 outdoor events along its right-of-way (ROW). In total, 80% of all events were featured from May to August.

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

Live Music and Performance

The largest live performance event was 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.

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. Toonie Tuesday's is a weekly performance event, which is organized through Sparks Street, that features local musicians and performers. 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. There were also three pop-up cinema nights in July and August.



► Buskerfest, Sparks Street.

Food and Beverage

Two of the top three events in total attendance on Sparks Street were food and beverage showcases. RibFest and PoutineFest 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. PoutineFest, which ran from April 28 through May 1, brought in about 75,000 visitors, finishing third in total attendance.

Policy

An extensive scan of the legislation that applies to the planning and design of Sparks Street was conducted to ascertain the parameters and limitations of a rejuvenation project on the mall. In general, the policy relevant to Sparks Street is not particularly prescriptive; future rehabilitation efforts are not constrained by strict policy direction.

- The Plan for Canada's Capital: 2017-2067 (NCC, unreleased);
- Plan for Canada's Capital: A Second Century of Vision, Planning, and Development (NCC, 1999);
- Transportation Master Plan (City of Ottawa, 2013);
- Ottawa Pedestrian Plan (City of Ottawa, 2013);
- Urban Design: A Reference Guide to Creating Great Places and Great Spaces (City of Ottawa, 2007);

Throughout the various plans and documents examined, clear themes emerged. Sparks Street has been strongly encouraged to become more of a destination at all times of the day and throughout the week, enhancing the city's livability. The lack of wayfinding was consistently cited as an issue and its potential for improvement has been noted for both tourists and residents. Developing a theme was something that was encouraged in most of the documents that directly addressed Sparks Street.

While it has a clear identity as a pedestrian space and has a heritage feel, it lacks continuity and a unique sense of space that a common theme could provide. Throughout any redevelopment or revitalization, it is clear in much of the relevant policy that maintaining Sparks Street as a pedestrian-oriented street is essential. General themes and ideas that permeated much of the examined policy included the following:

- Livability throughout the day, week, and year
- Bring more life to the Sparks Street pedestrian mall
- Improve Accessibility
- Improve wayfinding
- Maintain pedestrian focus
- Establish a theme
- Preservation of heritage

Document Title	Author	Year Published
The Plan for Canada's Capital: 2017-2067	NCC	Unreleased
Capital Core Area Illumination	NCC	Unreleased
Accessibility Design Standards, Second Edition	City of Ottawa	2015
Provincial Policy Statement	Province of Ontario	2014
Downtown Moves	City of Ottawa	2013
Ottawa Pedestrian Plan	City of Ottawa	2013
Transportation Master Plan	City of Ottawa	2013
Integrated Street Furniture Policy and Design Guidelines	City of Ottawa	2009
Zoning By-law 2008-250	City of Ottawa	2008
Urban Design: A Reference Guide to Creating Great Places and Great Spaces	City of Ottawa	2007
Outdoor Patio Design Guidelines	NCC	2006
Core Area Sector Plan	NCC	2005
Vocational Study	NCC	2004
Official Plan	City of Ottawa	2003
Central Area Secondary Plan		
By-law 174-2000 (Sparks Street Heritage Conservation District)	City of Ottawa	2000
Central Area West Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan	City of Ottawa	1999
Plan for Canada's Capital: A Second Century of Vision, Planning, and Development	NCC	1999



Table 2: Policy Review

One noteworthy discrepancy between the policies reviewed is the potential introduction of automobiles to the street. Most of the relevant policy takes the stance that Sparks Street should maintain a vehicle-free zone, for use by only pedestrians, but some of the examined documents propose that automobiles

could be introduced during certain periods. In fact, this contradiction was found within the most relevant policy document, the *Central Area Secondary Plan*.

Market Analysis

This component of the research delves into an analysis of the surrounding market context as it influences Sparks Street. Consideration is given to the office market, retail market, hotel market, and their associated trends. In particular, Sparks is situated within the principal office node of the city with many governmental and private office uses in the surrounding area. In particular, much of the office space is largely Class A and the market currently indicates that leasing interest is directed most dominantly towards this type of supply.

Concerning the retail market, Sparks Street is within the downtown core, which is considered the most expensive leasing area in Ottawa. The City is currently observing increased vacancy rates although there is still the existing trend of the creation of new leases, resulting in new businesses opening on and near Sparks Street. The actual distribution of uses on Sparks Street is largely restaurants, pubs and cafés (35.7%). There are also numerous service businesses along Sparks Street. The nearby CF Rideau Centre is dominant with regards to commercial retail leasing and its recent expansion puts pressure on the viability of commercial uses on Sparks Street.

Sparks Street also benefits from Ottawa's very strong flow of tourists. Most major hotels are located within the downtown core and visitation to the City remains steady. In summary, the overall market context for Sparks Street does not restrict the recommendations proposed later in this document – the conditions either act as an asset for the future of the mall, or are of a scale where they do not threaten to act as a serious constraint.

Demographic Analysis

Simply put, the majority of people who currently use Sparks Street are those who work on the street. Nevertheless, interesting patterns were observed among those who live in the area. Within a half-mile radius of Sparks Street almost 50% of residents are young adults (20-39 years old). There are very few families living in the surrounding Centretown neighbourhood; 68% of household are home to singles or couples without children. In addition, adults living in Centretown have high levels of post-secondary education attainment (82% compared to 75% for the entire City). Lastly, 46% of Centretown residents walk to work; the City of Ottawa average is 7%.

In sum, people living near Sparks Street are young, have not yet formed families, are well-educated, and nearly half of them walk to work. The implication is that there is a large cohort of people who seem like the ideal market to attempt to capture on Sparks Street, particularly in the evenings. Businesses should consider staying open longer into the evening and programming can also be organized to attempt to capitalize on the presence of these local residents. Thinking into the future, improvements on Sparks Street should also strive to be a part of the larger effort to give this cohort a reason to want to potentially raise a family in the City's downtown.

SWOC Analysis

The SWOC analysis is a structured planning method used to assess and evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and challenges involved in the assessment of a site. The strengths are the features of the site that give it an advantage over other projects. The weaknesses represent characteristics that place the site at a disadvantage, compared to others. The opportunities are elements which the project could take advantage of. The threats and challenges section focuses on elements of the project which could potentially cause issues in the future.

Strengths

- Proximity to Parliament, Rideau Centre, parking, office towers
- Peak hours (lunch hour during weekdays)
- Tourism
- Sightlines
- Local employment base
- Heritage aspect
- Transit access and alternative transportation infrastructure
- Invested BIA
- Events open to public
- Unique in Ottawa
- Minimal vehicular traffic

Weaknesses

- Weather – wind, cold, variable
- Limited green space
- Boom and bust visitation
- Limited visitation
- Not a true destination
- Proximity to competitive destinations
- Inactive store fronts
- Jurisdictional overlap
- Lack of anchor tenants
- Inconsistent urban design elements
- Lack of integration with surrounding urban fabric/grid
- Accessibility concerns
- Business hours and success
- Wayfinding elements lacking

Opportunities

- Queen Street LRT
- Not restricted by policy
- Expand on heritage qualities
- Produce a recognizable identity
- Increased programming
- Condo development
- Proximity to hotel and tourist hubs
- Vacancy in prime locations – anchor tenant, attraction and retention
- Vacancy in prime locations – anchor tenant, attraction and retention
- Involve tourism board
- Natural elevation change from east to west – sightlines
- Bank/Sparks public space (outdoor venue)
- Public Art
- Interactive displays for visitors
- All-age attractions
- Marketing/advertising
- Leverage art aspects of the area

Challenges

- Inconsistent ROW
- Inability to secure long-term leases
- On-going construction
- Communication between stakeholders and local actors/agencies
- Competition with Rideau Mall and Byward Market
- CBC and RBC – dead frontage in prime locations along street
- Lack of established identity as a true pedestrian focused space
- Financing – liability the responsibility from maintenance and operations
- Heritage Conservation District
- Design disconnect between all blocks
- Loading and servicing through vehicular means
- Emergency vehicles

Existing Conditions Analysis

There are successful implementations and components that are currently in place throughout Sparks Street but there are also a series of marked opportunities for improvement. From the project team's comprehensive analysis and assessment of the existing conditions, significant areas have been identified where improvement is necessary in order to rebrand the mall as a vibrant pedestrian destination.

The physical condition of Sparks Street is limiting it from reaching its potential. The pedestrian mall lacks visual consistency and generally, lacks a theme. In particular, the lighting and ground surface are in need of upgrades. A shadow analysis confirmed the need for lighting because it revealed that the majority of Sparks Street only receives strong sunlight in the middle of the day due to the narrow width of the right-of-way and the tall buildings that frame much of the street. Improvements to the built form would result in a significant and immediate improvement to the mall; the majority of the recommendations found within this report are related to elements of its physical design.

There are numerous successful programming events throughout the year, including *Buskerfest* and various food-related events. All of these events tend to be well-received; the issue is that there are numerous gaps throughout the year, especially during late fall and winter where there is little to no programming at all. In order to establish Sparks Street as a vibrant destination that attracts high visitations through the day and year, changes are required.

The *PSPL* study identified that the Mall does indeed experience considerable visitation during lunch hours on weekdays. However, the Mall fails to bring in people during evenings and on weekends. In addition, many people were determined to be using Sparks Street as a thoroughfare, a conclusion that was reached by analyzing how fast pedestrians were walking. Although this is not an issue in itself, it would be ideal if more people were walking slower on Sparks Street; this can happen if Sparks Street is their destination as opposed to a part of their route.

A building frontage analysis identified numerous areas throughout the mall that lacked retail or other engaging amenities. In essence, there are too many "dead spots" on Sparks Street. This study was combined with a stationary mapping analysis performed as part of the *PSPL* study and in particular, it revealed a large collection of *unsuccessful frontages*. In particular, many of these were identified west of Bank Street.

Best Practices Analysis

Pedestrian-oriented areas from around the world were examined to determine common elements that help create successful public places. In addition, these best practices were used to identify the weaknesses of the mall. The accompanying analysis was used to produce recommendations and implementation actions to complement Sparks Street's existing strengths while addressing recognized areas of opportunity. The full collection of research conducted by the project team as part of this effort can be found in the *Best Practices Catalogue*.

While most of the cases discussed physical features of the pedestrian environment, some provided examples of the ways spaces are successful beyond physical remodelling. First, the policy for an area can provide strong guidance for the success of an area, and help keep goals at the forefront of decisions. Successful policy documents did this by clearly outlining direction and goals. This also includes implementation and action items, and directions on how actions will be successfully implemented. The policy that currently guides Sparks Street provides significant freedom for the mall to evolve. While this is beneficial, the Mall could also benefit from guidelines that are more direct and strict to assist in successful change.

Successful programming is another way that areas become successful and attract significant amounts of users without altering the physical form. A common theme that emerged from the case studies in programming was to source locally and to celebrate local culture.

In addition, many events had low implementation barriers; temporary physical elements were easily implemented and removed. This allows for quick, impromptu events that generate discussion and excitement. These events and festivals also provide something for everyone (all interests and age categories) without significantly detracting from the local vendors and existing users.

The physical design of spaces is a clear determining factor in creating successful environments for pedestrians. One of the most significant contributors to the success of a space is the ability for all users to access the area without confusion or complication. High quality wayfinding elements were determined to produce downtowns that are more interconnected and user friendly, particularly when incorporated within a broader network of destinations. This can also help to create a unique identity at and around these particular destinations. Wayfinding that is currently found on Sparks Street does not adequately distinguish itself from the surrounding and intersecting downtown streets; this is significant opportunity to upgrade the Mall and to foster a greater sense of place.

Sparks Street has been identified as suffering from a lack of use in the evening, both through the comments of stakeholders and through the observations of the *PSPL* study. An analysis of the existing lighting conditions suggests that more could be done to promote the use of the street during evening hours. The examined case studies indicated that further illumination of the pedestrian realm can promote increased use in the evenings, and heighten safety through visibility. Lighting was shown to help provide texture to the pedestrian environment and was most effective when updated to reflect changing seasons or conditions. Further, existing features in the environment, such as buildings or greenery, were also shown to be complimented by lighting features. Sparks Street's lighting fixtures do not adequately illuminate the pedestrian environment or heritage buildings.

Case studies in public art suggest that low-cost and low-maintenance features can bring more life and vibrancy to an area while not demanding a significant detachment of pedestrian area. Larger art installations currently exist along Sparks Street at major intersections and they should not be discarded or diminished; they are attractive ways to draw in users and in some cases, can serve as gateway features. Still, smaller and subtler art installations are currently nonexistent along Sparks Street. Exhibitions that rotate can be successful in consistently developing buzz and interest in the Mall.

The ground on Sparks Street is a significant factor preventing it from meeting its potential. The paving consistently requires repair and has become discontinuous as a result. While the paving that exists is unique to Sparks Street and beneficial for this reason, analysis of ground elements in areas with similar climate conditions indicated that paving can be improved to become more durable while retaining its unique qualities. Retaining a unique and distinguishable surface that compliments the surrounding area is an essential component of all successful pedestrian-oriented environments.

Patio usage is clearly an important functional aspect of Sparks Street during warmer months. While patios are successful along Sparks Street, best practices indicate that improvements can be made to best utilize these assets. Clustered patios can create destinations within themselves if implemented successfully. The design of patios was shown to typically be as inviting as possible, and is intended to not detract from the surrounding features, such as heritage building façades that make sitting on patios so enjoyable. Minimizing the physical barriers for patios should also be considered; excessive fencing has been determined to be detrimental. Sparks Street can likely incorporate more stringent patio guidelines in regards to materials and advertising in order to be more visually appealing, inviting, and complementary to the built form.

Incorporating nature within the streetscape helps to promote aesthetically pleasing environments that are environmentally proactive. Not all greenery needs to be permanent, or real; artificial greenery can be beneficial to environments with harsh climates while reducing maintenance costs and potential vandalism. Artificial greenery is also beneficial in areas like Sparks Street where very little space exists to allocate to natural features. Research indicated that not all of these installations need to be permanent within Sparks Street and can change based on appropriateness of the season.

The City of Ottawa implemented design guidelines for street furniture in an effort to establish uniform street furniture elements around the city. However, Sparks Street has the opportunity to distinguish itself from the remainder of the city through unique street furniture; this can be a significant part of the effort to establish a unique theme for the mall.

Currently, the street furniture along Sparks Street does not contribute to a unique identity. Not only do best practices advocate for distinguishable street furnishings, but they also indicate that the placement of furnishings should be consistent and coordinated.







3

Recommendations

The primary objective of this report is to provide a set of recommendations that the project team believes can revitalize and rejuvenate Sparks Street. The recommendations consider the issues that have been identified with the Mall as well as its successful attributes. The issues were analyzed and the elements that can be improved have been compared to pedestrian malls and urban environments from around the world as part of a review of best practices. The recommendations that are found in this section emanate from this research and they apply to the right-of-way on each of the Mall's five blocks.

The recommendations are thematically split into three categories and each represents general aspirations about what Sparks Street can become.

Further, each of the 20 recommendations have been assessed based upon their general feasibility and the urgency of their need, and how long a project to implement them would take.



1. A Long-Term Vision. While recommendations for improvements on Sparks Street can be implemented in the coming years, their maintenance and long-term feasibility must be taken into consideration.



2. Placemaking. Sparks Street has the potential to become a destination; while it is distinct in nature because it is a pedestrian mall, improvements can give local residents and tourists a reason to visit.



3. Winterization Strategy. The Mall should aspire to be busy and exciting at all times of the year. Physical design elements can be more resilient and programming efforts can leverage the winter season, transforming it into an advantage rather than an off-period.

Priority

The recommendations have been prioritized and are described using one of the following:



High. Indicates that any revitalization effort on Sparks Street should include or consider the recommendation as part of its first phase.



Medium. The recommendation can be considered as part of the first phase of any rejuvenation effort.



Low. While the recommendation is important, there are others that can be considered or implemented prior to it.

Timeframe

The amount of time that the implementation of each recommendation is expected to take is described using one of the following:



Short-Term. The recommendation is expected to require 1 – 2 years for implementation.



Medium-Term. The recommendation is expected to require 2 – 5 years for implementation.



Long-Term. The recommendation is expected to require over 5 years for implementation.

Cost

The cost to implement each recommendation has been estimated based upon the research conducted by the project team and for each, one of the following assessments is included:



High. Relative to the complete list of recommendations, it will be an expensive component.



Medium. Among the recommendations, it will be it will require an average expense.



Low. The recommendation will not be expensive to implement, in comparison to the complete list of recommendations.

N/A

N/A. A cost estimate is not applicable for this recommendation.

V

Variable. This cost estimate is determined by the quality, quantity, or other unknown variable.



Long-Term Vision

Recommendation #1: Incorporate Consistent Urban Design.

Recommendation #2: Encourage more temporary and pop-up businesses on Sparks Street to generate additional revenue streams.

Recommendation #3: Maintain and continue to develop stakeholder communication in the decision-making process.

Recommendation #4: Integrate design features with existing and enhanced programming efforts.

Placemaking



Recommendation #5: Sparks Street should continue to exist as a pedestrian-oriented space while maintaining appropriate access to emergency vehicles.

Recommendation #6: Promote a continuous street theme – The Capital Promenade – that is consistent throughout Sparks Street and is not overwhelming to the user.

Recommendation #7: Update the paving throughout Sparks Street to be distinguishable from surrounding areas while ensuring a high level of accessibility.

Recommendation #8: Encourage cyclists to access Sparks Street with strategically located bicycle racks.

Recommendation #9: Public art should be celebrated and encouraged along Sparks Street, including a focus on Canadian talent and smaller, interchangeable installations.



Placemaking

Recommendation #10: Wayfinding throughout Sparks Street should be clearly identifiable from surrounding areas to create a sense of place and it should simplify the experience of navigating Sparks Street.

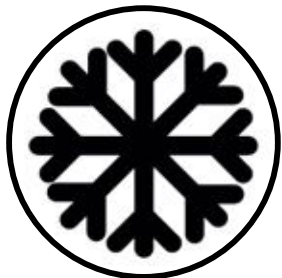
Recommendation #11: Protect heritage character and celebrate local and Canadian history.

Recommendation #12: Connect Sparks Street to the surrounding community and amenities by utilizing improved wayfinding and signage.

Recommendation #13: Bring retail activity onto the street front.

Recommendation #14: Enhance the lighting on Sparks Street to make it desirable and safe in the evening.

Recommendation #15: Integrate programming efforts on Sparks Street with local and regional events and festivals.



Winterization Strategy

Recommendation #16: Provide features that bring warmth to the Sparks Street right-of-way during periods of high pedestrian activity.

Recommendation #17: Implement festive lighting that is seasonally dynamic.

Recommendation #18: Implement more frequent, higher-quality winter programming.

Recommendation #19: Provide winter maintenance that is strategic and that promotes accessibility.

Recommendation #20: Utilize winter-resilient street furniture and greenery.

Long-Term Vision

Any additions, alterations, or updates to Sparks Street must be completed with a long-term vision, one that ensures the sustainability of the pedestrian promenade. Sparks Street contains elements from several previous efforts to upgrade the Mall that have left a disjointed and inconsistent design theme. Going forward, the new vision for the street should consider how the space will function and look decades into the future.

In addition to the design and functionality of the space, strong considerations need to be made to the financial sustainability of the improvements; up-front costs of upgrades should be considered alongside the costs to maintain the upgrades. The recommendations that part of this category draw on analysis of the current conditions of Sparks Street and the project team's research into relevant best practices with the goal of implementing a long-term vision for the space.



Avenue of the Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Recommendation #1: Incorporate Consistent Urban Design.

Priority: High



Cost: High



Timeframe: Short Term



The urban design elements of Sparks Street are currently disjointed, inconsistent, and reflect a number of different and sometimes conflicting themes. Sparks Street should incorporate a consistent design theme that can be expressed, and can tie together various elements including street furniture, lighting, and wayfinding. The design should be recognizable to Sparks Street, and should signify that the mall is a unique and distinct area within Ottawa. Street elements should be placed consistently, parallel with other elements of the right-of-way such as: curb, frontage, street, amongst others, to ensure that there is a recognizable pattern of placement throughout the Mall. This direction emanates from the City of Ottawa's *Central Area Secondary Plan*, where the concept of identifying a consistent theme for the mall is prevalent.

Recommendation #2: Encourage more temporary and pop-up businesses on Sparks Street to generate additional revenue streams.

Priority: Low



Cost: N/A

N/A

Timeframe: Long Term



Supplementary sources of income for the mall should include temporary (and pop-up) businesses. Temporary business licenses can be applied to food carts, buskers, and many other temporary pop-ups. Proceeds from temporary business licenses can establish a new and steady revenue stream to contribute to the ongoing maintenance of the project area.



Church Street Marketplace; Burlington, Vermont



Main Street; San Francisco, California

Recommendation #3: Maintain and continue to develop stakeholder communication in the decision-making process.

Priority: High



Cost: N/A

N/A

Timeframe: Short Term



Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada



The location of Sparks Street is distinct and unique in that it essentially forms an imaginary boundary between the Parliamentary Precinct and City's downtown. Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) occupy much of the office space on the north side of several of the blocks of the mall and the National Capital Commission (NCC) holds influence on the future direction of the Mall. In addition, the Sparks Street Business Improvement Area (BIA) exists to advance the interests of the businesses located on the Mall. It is clear through both the physical location of Sparks Street, and the number of parties that can influence it, that effective communication among the relevant stakeholders is critical to its success. This is not a new recommendation; this communication has been occurring for years and it is of high importance that all stakeholders continue to collaborate to enhance and improve the Mall.



Sparks Street; Ottawa, Ontario.

Recommendation #4: Integrate design features with existing and enhanced programming efforts.

Priority: Medium



Cost: Low



Timeframe: Short Term



An important consideration for Sparks Street is to ensure that current uses and users are not interfered with, and that new design schemes and programming help develop the street as a featured destination throughout the day and evening in downtown Ottawa. A key recommendation is to integrate new physical design features with the existing events along the street, and to enhance the user experience through this tactic.

As mentioned above, tactical urbanism is a way to successfully position street furniture because it is flexible in that it can be quickly added, maintained, removed or re-positioned. By increasing the amount of street furniture for events such as Toonie Tuesday's and pop-up cinema nights, Sparks Street could create temporary viewing stages for the events that are more effective than what is currently offered. Further, by integrating design features to enhance existing programming, Sparks Street would increase the value of the investment for new streetscape features.



► Zucotti Park; New York City, New York



► Downtown; Calgary, Alberta

Placemaking

Sparks Street has benefitted from its locational advantage, acquiring most of its user base from the surrounding office buildings. Nevertheless, it has yet to establish itself as a destination to the remainder of the city outside of the major events held on the street. An enhanced Sparks Street can become a true downtown destination alongside its more notable downtown neighbours through strategic physical design improvements to the right-of-way.

To become a destination, Sparks Street has to become a *place* that people want to visit; the Mall must be distinct in positive ways. This is already true to an extent, given the street's role in the history of the City of Ottawa and also because it is the only vehicle-free outdoor pedestrian mall in the city. Nevertheless, improvements to the street's physical design, including to its lighting features, paving, wayfinding and signage elements, gateway features, public art features, and landscaping, are essential to fostering a greater sense of place. The presence of variable and exciting programming throughout the year is essential to this goal, both in its ability to attract new visitors to the street and to create buzz in the City about Sparks Street.



► Sparks Street; Ottawa, Ontario

It is recommended that Sparks Street remain a vehicle-free pedestrian mall at all times of day and throughout the year. It is unique within the City of Ottawa and the City's residents prefer that it remains a pedestrian-oriented space. In addition, the three blocks located east of Bank Street are simply too narrow to implement a "Complete Street" that successfully accommodates all modes of transportation. Nevertheless, Sparks Street should provide for adequate access for emergency vehicles; approximately 6.0 metres of road width. Obstructions within the pedestrian realm should be minimized and a continuous, straight pathway through the middle of the street should be maintained as pedestrian thoroughfare that doubles as an emergency route. Any physical installations on the street should be arranged to not disrupt this thoroughfare. Sparks Street should continue to operate as a significant east-west thoroughfare for significant pedestrian traffic in Downtown Ottawa.

Recommendation #5: Sparks Street should continue to exist as a pedestrian-oriented space while maintaining appropriate access to emergency vehicles.

Priority: High



Cost: N/A

N/A

Timeframe: Short Term



Recommendation #6: Promote a continuous street theme – The Capital Promenade – that is consistent throughout Sparks Street and is not overwhelming to the user.

Priority: Medium



Cost: Medium



Timeframe: Short Term



Numerous stakeholders advocated for Sparks Street to have an identity unique to itself beyond its pedestrian status. A theme for the street should be established but should not overwhelm the user. *The Capital Promenade* is the recommended theme and it should be established and promoted throughout the five blocks along Sparks Street. It should be subtle and incorporated within the various features and installations of the street. Themed paving found on Denver's 16th Street Mall provides a strong influence for subtle design elements that create a unique identity for the space. The combination of the various installations will help to create an identity that makes Sparks Street distinct. Users will recognize the design elements that are unique to the mall and it will become familiar to locals as they walk through the various blocks.

The design of *The Capital Promenade* should be continuous from Elgin Street to Lyon Street, the extent of the pedestrian mall. Any street elements introduced such as benches, lighting, or disposal units, should be uniform in their design and placement. New physical elements should foster a greater sense of place for the user. Therefore, the continuity of design elements should permeate through the entirety of the Street. The paving features should not be interrupted by the intersecting streets; they should continue through these intersections to link the five blocks of the Mall to create a greater physical link between them. Physical installations on the street should be placed in a way that provides a continuous central walkway to the pedestrian throughout the blocks.



Stephen Avenue; Calgary, Alberta

Recommendation #7: Update the paving throughout Sparks Street to be distinguishable from surrounding areas while ensuring a high level of accessibility.

Priority: High



Cost: High



Timeframe: Short Term



► 16th Street Mall; Denver, Colorado

Unique pavers throughout the street will help to distinguish it from the remainder of the downtown and help to promote its distinct identity. Pavers should promote accessibility to all users, and any curbs or steep inclines should be minimized where possible. Cobblestone is a great way to distinguish the street and to provide texture to the pedestrian realm, but it can be difficult for some users to navigate, particularly when maintenance is required. Therefore, the installation of pre-cast granite pavers is recommended throughout Sparks Street. The pavers can be designed in a way to enhance *The Capital Promenade* theme of the street; utilizing paving to celebrate culture is a technique utilized in Denver's 16th Street Mall where local Aboriginal identity is designed on the granite pavers. Further, the paving should have the capability for visual and tactile differentiation between distinct areas on the street to increase the area's accessibility. Another significant accessibility feature is the consistent application of slip and skid resistance measures to pavers which is often done with granite paving. Lastly, pre-cast winter pavers are hardy and resilient, a characteristic that is necessary due to harsh conditions of the winter in the City of Ottawa.

Recommendation #8: Encourage cyclists to access Sparks Street with strategically located bicycle racks.

Priority: Medium



Cost: Low



Timeframe: Short Term



Cycling should also be continually encouraged along Sparks Street, but is not recommended to be given priority over the circulation of pedestrians; bike lanes are not recommended by the project team for Sparks Street. The intent is for cyclists to travel at speeds similar to pedestrians and this should be encouraged through the continued use of bike racks along the street which are currently abundant. Storefronts will benefit from increased user access and office buildings can have concentrations of bicycle parking to encourage users to access the buildings from entrances on Sparks Street. Bike racks can be permanently installed in areas determined essential for high concentrations of cycling racks, including in close proximity to major office buildings. Temporary cycling racks can also be installed but should be of the same high quality as permanent installations.



► Downtown; Waterloo, Ontario



► Sparks Street; Ottawa, Ontario

Recommendation #9: Public art should be celebrated and encouraged along Sparks Street, including a focus on Canadian talent and smaller, interchangeable installations.

Priority: Low



Cost: Variable



Timeframe: Long Term



The Brain Project; Toronto, Ontario.

On its own, public art can create a sense of place; it could also add character to an area in a subtler manner. Small, high quality, installations should be considered throughout the street that are easily removed and interchangeable. These changing installations can create interest in an area and keep people coming back as new installations are launched. An example of this is *The Brain Project* in Toronto – the installations are subtle and require very little space, but are attractive for users to admire and appreciate. These installations could celebrate *The Capital Promenade* theme and the street could also host art competitions for local or Canadian talent to participate in as a way to bring life to the street. Smaller installations can also be combined with larger staples of the street, such as the future Lord Stanley's Gift, that will act as the more widely-known destinations and landmarks on Sparks Street.

Art can be more than standalone features within the street; it can and should be incorporated in all essential street features and furnishings. This includes the benches and seating areas, garbage disposal units, paving, lighting, and any other feature that exists within the pedestrian realm. Strong consideration should be given to getting local and Canadian artists to design furnishings throughout the street.



People Waiting; Saint John, New Brunswick.

Recommendation #10: Wayfinding throughout Sparks Street should be clearly identifiable from surrounding areas to create a sense of place and it should simplify the experience of navigating Sparks Street.

Priority: High



Cost: Low



Timeframe: Short Term



Sparks Street should implement signage throughout the street that is uniquely designed for the Mall, much like could be seen in the signs signifying Confederation Boulevard in Ottawa. This will foster a clear identity for the street and distinguish it from surrounding areas. This can help promote a sense of place for the user and facilitate further use by bringing more attention to the area. Street signs should be unique to Sparks Street and reflect the identity of the street: *The Capital Promenade*.

Wayfinding within the Mall should also be enhanced, incorporating directories to the stores found along the street, similar to what exists in an indoor mall. This will further promote shopping upon the street, and help the street become more user-friendly. Directories can include information that enhances *The Capital Promenade* theme and direct users to important destinations that are not just the stores, and can provide brief textual and visual histories of the Mall.

Enhanced entrance features at the various intersections on Sparks Street, particularly at Elgin Street and Lyon Street on either end of the Mall, can further add to the identity of the street and draw more users to the space. Features that welcome users to the space, such as a large entrance sign, will further promote the use of the street and create a unique environment – gateway features should be able to communicate to the pedestrian that they have arrived at Sparks Street without needing to physically read ‘Sparks Street’. Physical art installations are a potential substitute for large entrance signs and can also supplement them. Wayfinding elements should also be concentrated at all intersections as a priority, to attract users that are travelling from the north or south.



Chinatown; Ottawa, Ontario

Recommendation #11: Protect heritage character and celebrate local and Canadian history.

Priority: High



Cost: Low



Timeframe: Long Term



The three blocks on Sparks Street east of Bank Street are a Heritage Conservation District; this should be maintained. All efforts should be made to maintain and enhance the essential features that make Sparks Street such a unique destination. The heritage elements, and the views of these elements, should be protected through careful design consideration. Any installations made on and to the street, including greenery, should not block views of these important buildings and elements, and should only serve to further enhance existing heritage character. As such, landscaping design should be considerate to existing physical form, and restricted planting areas determined as appropriate, as to ensure sightlines and views are not obstructed.

More can be done to celebrate the history of Sparks Street and Canada on the Mall, further adding to *The Capital Promenade* character of the street; the history of the street and the City of Ottawa should be primary influences to the theme. Elements of the street's history can be incorporated onto the street through plaques that can be positioned onto benches, light posts, buildings, or on the pavers. It is important to note that these elements should not detract from the existing sights and should not be overwhelming; rather they can add an extra layer of depth to interested guests. Additionally, the history of Sparks Street could also be incorporated within wayfinding elements on the street, specifically within the directories, which can take the form of different short history facts or stories about the area.

More interactive and artistic ways to celebrate the history of the street should be explored. An example of this could be projections of various historical stories onto the buildings themselves, similar to the Cité Mémoire project in Montréal. This can be an additional draw for people to seek out the space in the evening, as projections would exclusively be an evening feature. Sparks Street could tell a story from one end of the street to the other through these various heritage design elements, and this can act as a significant draw in itself.



Cité Mémoire; Montréal, Québec

Recommendation #12: Connect Sparks Street to the surrounding community and amenities by utilizing improved wayfinding and signage.

Priority: Medium



Cost: Low



Timeframe: Long Term



Sparks Street will see increased use if it is part of a larger downtown wayfinding system. Signage that directs users to key areas, such as Sparks Street or Parliament Hill, will make navigating the downtown seamless. In this way, wayfinding helps promote destinations for tourism, as it does in New Orleans, and it will undoubtedly increase use of Sparks Street.

An example of where this can and should be implemented is in close proximity to the new Confederation Line stations that are projected to open in 2018. Directions to and from the stations should be implemented to take advantage of the increased pedestrian activity that the project will foster. Mid-block connections should also be more clearly indicated through wayfinding elements to encourage use of these underutilized networks (especially the mid-block connection east of Lyon Street). Wayfinding elements should be strongly considered at all intersections along Sparks Street, as a way to draw attention to the area from users travelling in a north-south direction.



▶ Little Italy; Ottawa, Ontario

Recommendation #13: Bring retail activity onto the street front.

Priority: Low



Cost: Low



Timeframe: Short Term



An opportunity to enhance street activity and create excitement along the street is to create pop-up store fronts particularly for retailers on Sparks Street to position their merchandise along the Mall. Similar to street-based retail events like those held at the Church Street Marketplace in Burlington, Vermont, Sparks Street would be actively promoting local businesses and would feature the street as a connection to the community. This type of event planning could also be integrated with ongoing events along Sparks Street including the pop-up entertainment events and street festivals.



► Faneuil Hall Marketplace; Boston, Massachusetts



► Church Street Marketplace; Burlington, Vermont

Recommendation #14: Enhance the lighting on Sparks Street to make it desirable and safe in the evening.

Priority: High



Cost: High



Timeframe: Short Term



Lighting along Sparks Street must be improved to create a greater sense of place and security during the evenings. The lighting along the street should be unique to Sparks Street and it should help to promote the mall as an attractive destination after dark. Lighting features should be of high quality and illuminate the pedestrian realm without overwhelming the user. It should increase safety for the user through increased visibility, and should add texture and a unique quality to the space. Consideration must also be made to utilize lighting that illuminates the mall's store fronts. Lighting installations can help to accentuate *The Capital Promenade* theme, and can provide further colour to the street during the evening that resembles this theme.

In particular, the globe lighting on Sparks Street should be converted to LED fixtures that are more energy-efficient. A digital control system should be utilized which can adjust lighting for different times of the day to maximize efficiency. New lamp posts should fit with the historical character of the Mall and their height should be increased to benefit from more broad light distribution, a move that will allow the Mall to have less lamp posts.

Lighting should be implemented to illuminate the heritage buildings on the street in addition to the right-of-way. This further accentuates the character that makes Sparks Street unique, and strongly defines the borders of the Mall. The borders of the Mall can also be defined through catenary lighting where appropriate.



Strøget Street; Copenhagen, Denmark

Recommendation #15: Integrate programming efforts on Sparks Street with local and regional events and festivals.

Priority: Medium



Cost: Medium



Timeframe: Short Term



The process for creating a 24/7 street destination requires connectivity with the surrounding area, and having drawing power to a wide audience base. While Sparks Street has a series of community-based events worth celebrating, to experience new growth and influence, it is vital that planning efforts seek to further market Sparks Street to the local community. Events that reflect Canadian identity are one way to further promote *The Capital Promenade* theme of the street through non-physical elements.

One recommendation to accomplish this goal is to build relationships that allow for surrounding events to be integrated within Sparks Street. An example of integrating activities on a pedestrian mall with events happening throughout a downtown can be found in Burlington, Vermont, which features jazz festival performances along the Church Street Marketplace, as well as throughout the downtown core.



Lawn on D; Boston, Massachusetts

Winterization Strategy

Located within the heart of the City of Ottawa, Sparks Street is greatly affected by the winter season. The location of the City within the Ottawa Valley ensures the familiar weather conditions, and the close proximity of the mall to the Ottawa River exacerbates the issue due to the cold winds that reach the street. As a result, Sparks Street is not popular during the winter, a characteristic that is noticeable with the lack of pedestrian traffic that can be observed on the average day during this season. This is also noticeable through the lack of programming to mitigate the issue during these months.

The project team has identified this challenge as one that is critical in the effort to bring vibrancy and life to Sparks Street. In particular, it is to be revitalized at all times during the year; it should be as much of a destination during the winter as it is during the summer months.



► Snow clearance along Pearl Street Mall; Boulder, Colorado.



► Strøget Street; Copenhagen, Denmark

Recommendation #16: Provide features that bring warmth to the Sparks Street right-of-way during periods of high pedestrian activity.

Priority: Medium



Cost: Medium



Timeframe: Short Term



Investment into heating and shelter from the elements can have a large effect on creating a winter-friendly space. Whether it is portable outdoor heating systems or gas-fed fire installations, in a similar vein to the Centennial Flame on Parliament Hill, such measures can psychologically and physically warm a place. Further, a brief break from the elements may increase dwelling time and the pedestrian presence in the Mall. Such installations should be coordinated with major programming events because permanent heating features can be an unsustainable and unfeasible feature. They can also be considered in the weeks leading up to and following Christmas, perhaps in coordination with “retail on the street” events, to create a comfortable winter market feel along Sparks Street.

Nevertheless, there are heating features that can be implemented that are less costly and that are beneficial in other ways. It is worthwhile to consider the role of trees or larger shrubbery; these elements moderate temperature by blocking the influence of wind, reducing heating requirements. In addition, they serve a dual purpose in that they provide greenery throughout the year. Lastly, in conjunction with strategic heating, winter patios offer an excellent opportunity to sit outside and relax with a warm beverage. These can be associated with particular cafes or restaurants, but could also be implemented in a more general manner for the passing public.



Centennial Flame and Outdoor Lamp Heaters; Ottawa, Ontario and (Trendir)

Recommendation #17: Implement festive lighting that is seasonally dynamic.

Priority: High



Cost: Medium (variable)



Timeframe: Short Term



► Distillery District; Toronto, Ontario.

Adequate lighting is essential to transforming Sparks Street into an inviting public space in the winter time. Due to the decreased amount of sunlight accessing Sparks Street during the winter, as is outlined as part of this report's Shadow Analysis, lighting is especially important during winter months. A combination of improved overall quality and design of light fixtures, greater strength of light emitted, and attention to detail in lighting type, considering colour, bulb type, and direction of projection will make the area feel safer and more welcoming to a wide range of users. Importantly, it can give people a reason to visit Sparks Street in the extended evenings in the winter.

The majority of the lighting should be oriented higher from the ground to ensure that it does not become obscured by piled snow. While lighting is essential year-round, the winter months provide an opportunity for attractive seasonal lighting; catenary lighting arrangements have become very popular in other outdoor pedestrian areas, such as the Toronto Christmas Market located in the City's Distillery District. While specific guidelines are not offered for winter lighting, the case studies examined by the project team determined that seasonal public lighting leads to increased pedestrian activity, resulting in economic benefits for local businesses and the surrounding area. Simply put, effective lighting can turn Sparks Street into a destination during the winter.

Recommendation #18: Implement more frequent, higher-quality winter programming.

Priority: High



Cost: Low



Timeframe: Short Term



Rideau Canal; Ottawa, Ontario.

Sparks Street is not well-utilized for the majority of the winter due to winter conditions but also because people are not given many reasons to visit. Effective programming can mitigate this issue; it can stimulate the patronization of the local retail and as a result, animate the street. Current programming on Sparks Street is focused on events, particularly in the spring and summer months but to enhance Sparks Street during all months, events that are well-suited to cold weather conditions should be offered. In addition, temporary physical installations are a way for Sparks Street to animate the space and provide shelter from winter weather.

Already a successful annual festival in the City of Ottawa, *Winterlude* should extend festivities to Sparks Street. The mall's proximity to Confederation Park, the War Memorial, and the Rideau Canal, in addition to it being a large space within the Downtown, make it a natural extension to take advantage of this iconic annual event.

Winter Beer Markets. Beer markets are consistently successful and the Ottawa region is home to several prominent craft breweries. The large, pedestrian nature of Sparks Street make it a great candidate for these events, particularly if the street becomes equipped with better outdoor heating.

Winter Artisan Festivals. Much of Canada's artisan community is connected to the cold months of the year. A festival which celebrates the snow sculptors, street performers, craft-makers, and visual artists which draw inspiration from the winter months would celebrate Canada in a unique and meaningful way.



▶ Winter Market; Melbourne, Australia.



▶ Winter Market; Dundee, Scotland.

Warming Hut Design Competitions. As demonstrated at The Forks in Winnipeg, annual design competitions for warming huts and design elements to be featured in the public realm help attract attention to the area during the winter season. By promoting a similar event competition, Sparks Street could attract additional attention to the street, increase the excitement of the streetscape, and add an additional winter event with a community-building focus. The *Warming Huts*, by nature, also provide warmth and bring people together while augmenting the aesthetic of the streetscape.

Photos with Santa on Sparks. Malls all over the City have promotions to take photos with Santa. Sparks Street can also host such an event. Sparks Street has numerous advantages in this vein, including the scenic backdrop of Sparks Street buildings and the outdoor atmosphere.



▶ The Forks; Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Recommendation #19: Provide winter maintenance that is strategic and that promotes accessibility.

Priority: High



Cost: N/A

N/A

Timeframe: Short Term



Canada's winter months present numerous complications for the everyday maintenance of Sparks Street. Snow and ice are ongoing obstacles requiring constant clearing and if this is not done effectively, pedestrians will be deterred from walking outside for leisure. Through close consideration to strategies for snow removal and street furniture, winter maintenance can be improved and ensure that this does not affect the pedestrian experience on Sparks Street.

This can be achieved by updating guidelines for snow removal and storage; a great example can be found in the City of Mississauga's *2015 Facility Accessibility Design Standards*. The location of snow piles must be strategic; pedestrian wayfinding cannot become obstructed by piles of snow, resulting in blind spots. Directing the piling of snow to the interior of each block allows for lower snowbanks at the corners and in the process, maintains sightlines to ensure that the Mall remains welcoming and easy to navigate. The snow clearance should create paths wide enough for those with accessibility challenges to still navigate the streets safely. Additionally, where possible, the City should encourage the piling of snow in areas where it can mitigate the force of wind on the street.



Sparks Street; Ottawa, Ontario.

Recommendation #20: Utilize winter-resilient street furniture and greenery.

Priority: Medium



Cost: Medium



Timeframe: Short Term



► Artificial Pine Installation; Quebec City, Quebec.

Two factors apply to the viability of year-round street furniture for the Mall. First, street furniture should not be bolted in place; benches and seats should be able to be moved to allow for snow clearance and other winter maintenance. Nonetheless, this characteristic should not detract from the quality and design of the street furniture. Second, the City should consider investing in street furniture that is specifically suited to the winter season. Street furniture is available which is made of high-grade recycled plastic; making it easily moveable, protected from rusting, and cost-effective. Its grated structuring mitigates the build-up of snow.

Greenery softens a space by contrasting the hard texture of cement and pavers and it also provides a visual contrast from the typical grey and white winter landscape. The block from Kent Street to Lyon Street is particularly abundant with trees and greenspace that should be preserved throughout the winter season. Planters should be movable without damaging the foliage inside. The implementation of industrial-grade, artificial foliage should be considered given the overall savings possible through a reduced need for replacement, a reduced need for regular care, and the opportunity for these planters to remain present on the street for the majority of the year. Artificial pine is seasonally appropriate for the winter and adds great contrast, as demonstrated in Québec City.



► Moveable Winter Furniture.



4

Demonstration Plan

Overview

While best practices from relevant case studies were utilized to assemble a set of recommendations to be considered for the length of Sparks Street, the unique characteristics of different locations on the mall require some improvements more than others. Potential solutions are not identical on each of the mall's five blocks and as a result, the project team has conducted extensive analyses to ascertain where to apply the proposed recommendations. This section of the report contains a Demonstration Plan for each of the Mall's five blocks that conceptualizes where various elements of physical urban design and programming can be improved based upon some of the identified best practices. It takes the recommendations outlined in the previous section and applies them to specific locations on Sparks Street.

The following studies were employed to inform the effort to take the project team's recommendations and apply them to the ground on Sparks Street:

- *Existing Physical Block Conditions.* On each of the five blocks on Sparks Street, the physical conditions of the ROW were analyzed. While the general character of each block was evaluated, an inventory of specific urban design elements was taken and these were mapped.
- *Public Space, Public Life (PSPL) Study.* The project team visited Sparks Street on a weekday and on a day on a weekend in the Fall of 2016 to evaluate the mall's pedestrian traffic. This study involved the counting of pedestrians on each block at various points and times of the day, a description of the age and gender of pedestrians, and observation of where pedestrian activity was occurring. The latter analysis was particularly relevant to the creation of this Demonstration Plan.

- *Frontage Analysis.* Throughout Sparks Street, there are building frontages that foster pedestrian activity at the ground level while there are others where the only noteworthy pedestrian activity is people walking by to reach other destinations. A storefront or restaurant would be examples of the former while an office without entry to the street would be an example of the latter.

These analyses were considered in tandem to determine where "dead spots" were located on Sparks Street and further, where new urban design elements and programming efforts can be located to enhance these areas.

The Demonstration Plan is organized by block and for each, a Streetscape Plan is presented outlining where physical design elements and programming installations should be placed on the Mall. In some cases, physical elements have been placed on the intersecting streets for reference but the focus of these conceptualizations is the right-of-way of Sparks Street. Further, several of the proposed solutions have been identified as being the most critical to each of the five blocks. These recommendations are highlighted in conceptual renderings that display how they could look if they are implemented at various locations of the mall.

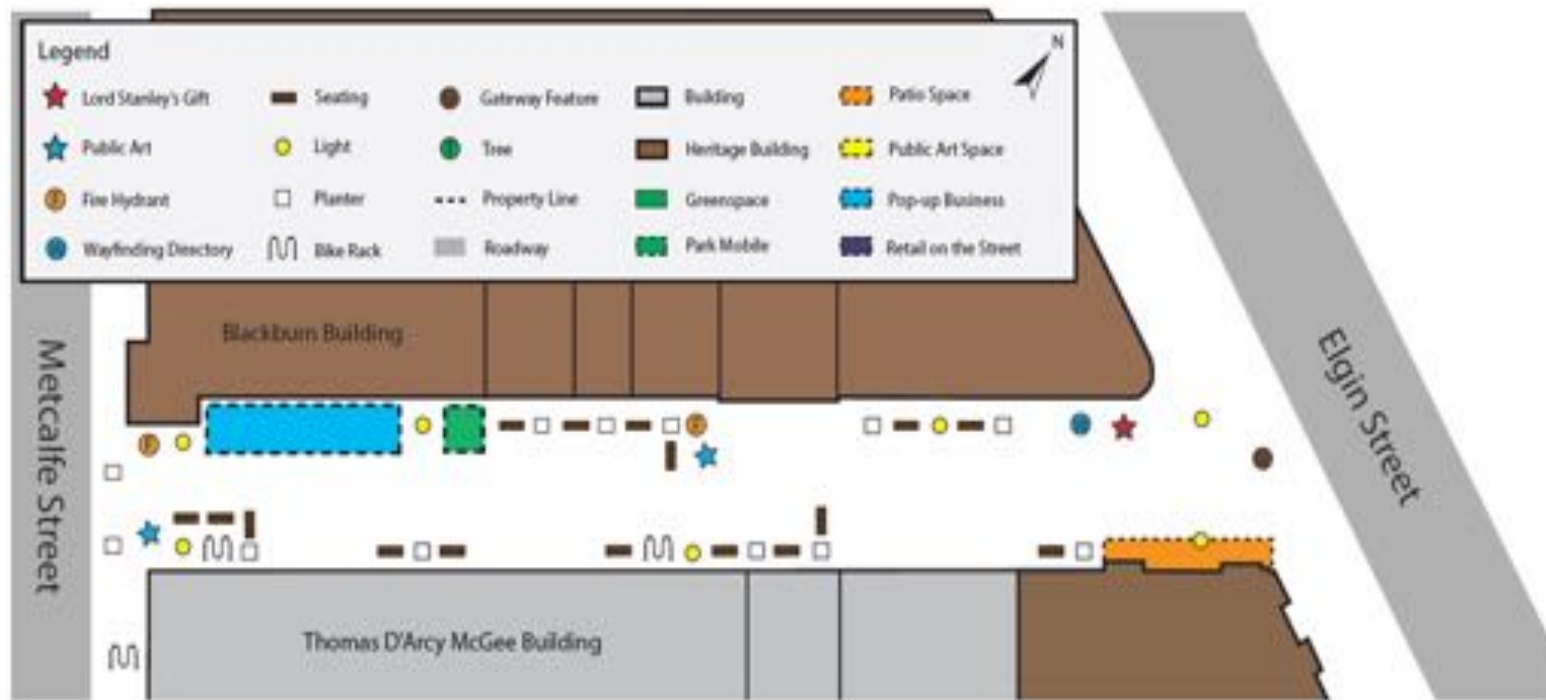
Block Name	Highlighted Critical Recommendations
Memorial Block Elgin St. → Metcalfe St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect heritage character and celebrate local history. • Incorporate wayfinding that is unique to Sparks Street. • Enhance the lighting on Sparks Street to make it desirable and safe in the evening. • Utilize winter-resilient street furniture and greenery.
Valour Block Metcalfe St. → O'Connor St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring more retail activity onto the street. • Incorporate wayfinding that is unique to Sparks Street. • Utilize winter-resilient street furniture and greenery. • Update and improve the paving to be distinguishable from surrounding areas.
Macdonald Block O'Connor St. → Bank St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage more temporary and pop-up businesses to generate additional revenue streams. • Provide features that bring warmth to the street and public spaces. • Implement effective winter lighting. • Implement more frequent and higher quality winter programming.
Museum Block Bank St. → Kent St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain existing bike rack inventory and add more where necessary. • Update and improve the paving to be distinguishable from surrounding areas. • Utilize winter-resilient street furniture and greenery. • Incorporate wayfinding that is unique to Sparks Street.
Macdonald Block Kent St. → Lyon St.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate design features with existing and enhanced programming efforts. • Celebrate and encourage public art and smaller interchangeable installations. • Incorporate wayfinding that is unique to Sparks Street. • Utilize winter-resilient street furniture and greenery. • Bring more retail activity onto the street.

Memorial Block

The rich heritage character of the Memorial Block is the focal point of its identity. A number of heritage buildings are located on this stretch of Sparks Street and it features a key sightline towards the National War Memorial, the pre-eminent memorial of its kind in Canada. A gateway feature that will be added to the east entrance of the block, at Elgin Street, is the Lord Stanley's Gift Monument which has been designed as a tribute to the legacy of the National Hockey League and its iconic trophy. Together, each of these elements contribute to a rich narrative, both local and national in nature, that makes the Memorial Block an ideal location to introduce *The Capital Promenade* theme on Sparks Street.

The block is ideal for a grand wayfinding element, particularly at Elgin Street. It is a major entry point to Sparks Street due to the pedestrian traffic deriving from downtown destinations located

east of the Mall and for this reason, effective wayfinding at this location can help draw users into the Mall. For similar reasons, this block can be a showcase for improved lighting on Sparks Street. Welcoming and attractive lighting achieved from new light poles can foster a greater sense of place during the evening and can draw in traffic from the aforementioned destinations. Further, the numerous heritage buildings can benefit from lighting that can be directed towards them at angles that accentuate their façades; such an arrangement would imbue the area with prestige. Lastly, this block offers an opportunity to demonstrate the potential impact and benefit of winter-resilient street furniture. Seating and other elements that are usable during the winter can allow for users to sit down with a warm drink and enjoy Sparks Street; the presence of pedestrians is always the most effective way for a street to become animated.



► Map 4: Memorial Block Streetscape Plan

Recommendation: Protect heritage character and celebrate local & Canadian history.



► Sparks Street heritage facade; Ottawa, Ontario.

The three blocks of the mall located east of Bank Street, including the Memorial Block, are a part of the Sparks Street Heritage Conservation District. Many of the heritage buildings that currently exist on Sparks Street were built at the turn of the 20th century, a time period when Sparks Street was a key commercial area in Ottawa. To protect Sparks Streets unique heritage character and considerable heritage value, it is recommended that the views from the street of these heritage assets are not obscured; careful consideration of the placement and dimensions of physical installations, including greenery, is necessary. Additionally, the overall urban design of the streetscape should consider the architectural style and design of the surrounding buildings as part of the effort to maintain a consistent design theme throughout the street.

On the Memorial Block, the project team recommends that important elements of Sparks Street's heritage values be incorporated onto the street through the installation of plaques that could be positioned upon pavers, light posts, benches, and standalone signs. Further, the heritage aspect of Sparks Street should be paired with wayfinding elements upon the street. Information directories and other signage should highlight important or interesting facts about the street and the country.

Recommendation: Enhance the lighting on Sparks Street to make it safe and desirable in the evening.



► Light posts in Old Montreal; Montreal, Quebec.

It is recommended that the quality of lighting on Sparks Street be improved to create a greater sense of place and to ensure that all patrons of the street are made to feel safe during the evenings and at night. This is particularly important on the Memorial Block because it is a major access point to Sparks

Street; there is a considerable amount of pedestrian traffic that can be captured from Elgin Street because beyond it, Confederation Park, the National Arts Centre, the Shaw Convention Centre, the Rideau Centre, and the National War Memorial are located in close proximity. New light poles should be installed throughout the street; the existing inefficient globes should be replaced with full cut off LED fixtures bolstered by a digital control system that can adjust the emission of light level according to the time of day. This type of lighting would be considerably more energy efficient than the current lights that line the Mall. The design of these new light poles should also fit within the historic character and theme that is present throughout Sparks Street.

The height of the new fixtures should be increased to achieve a broader distribution of light; taller light poles also have the added benefit of lowering the amount of them that are required, further improving overall efficiency of the Street. By limiting the number of lamp posts, there will be more usable space throughout the right-of-way, which would allow for a wider distribution of physical design amenities. Taller light poles also have the ability allow for more opportunity for architectural lighting on adjacent building façades. Consideration should be given to ensuring that the heritage character of the building façades surrounding Sparks Street is enhanced by these lights.

Recommendation: Connect Sparks Street to the surrounding community and amenities through improved gateway features.



Proposed Lord Stanley's Gift Monument.

The intersection of Sparks Street and Elgin Street is a natural location for a large gateway feature that signifies to the pedestrian that they have entered Sparks Street. Confederation Park, the National Arts Centre, the Shaw Convention Centre, the Rideau Centre, and the National War Memorial, all of which are located east of Elgin Street and in close proximity to the Mall are places where people congregate and if they can see a large and possibly iconic gateway to Sparks Street, they will likely be more inclined to visit. The theme of the Mall – *The Capital Promenade* – could be included in this gateway feature and it should be designed to attract attention without detracting from important views and the overall sense of place.

The winner of a widely publicized design competition – the Lord Stanley's Gift Monument will be located at this space and on its own, it may be sufficient as a gateway feature on this end of the Mall. It could also be combined with a larger feature, such as a gateway arch similar in scale to what is found at the entrance to Ottawa's Chinatown, but such a combination would have to be carefully designed so to not disrupt important views outwards from Sparks Street.

Recommendation: Utilize winter-resilient street furniture.

The benches and seating areas along Sparks Street could use considerable and thoughtful upgrading and a physical rearrangement to foster a more user-friendly pedestrian space. The materials of suggested seating areas include high quality plastics or wood; metal should be avoided in seat construction because it becomes unbearably cold in the winter months. Benches can be permanently fixed to the street surface, or left as temporary seating to facilitate easier winter maintenance. The placing of benches throughout Sparks Street should be as uniform as possible in order to ensure continuity throughout the Mall. Benches should be placed to the outside of the right-of-way, aside from the primary flow of pedestrian traffic. Areas that experience comparably less traffic can be areas to encourage benches that face each other to promote interaction.



▶ Rounded wooden benches; Bilbao, Spain.



▶ Curvilinear benches for easy snow removal.



▶ Slatted wooden benches allow snow to fall through; Vancouver, British Columbia.



Before



1. Physical design elements are minimal to preserve views of building façades and important views.
2. Comfortable street furniture is included on Sparks Street.
3. New paving with a minimalist pattern is consistent throughout the Mall.



After

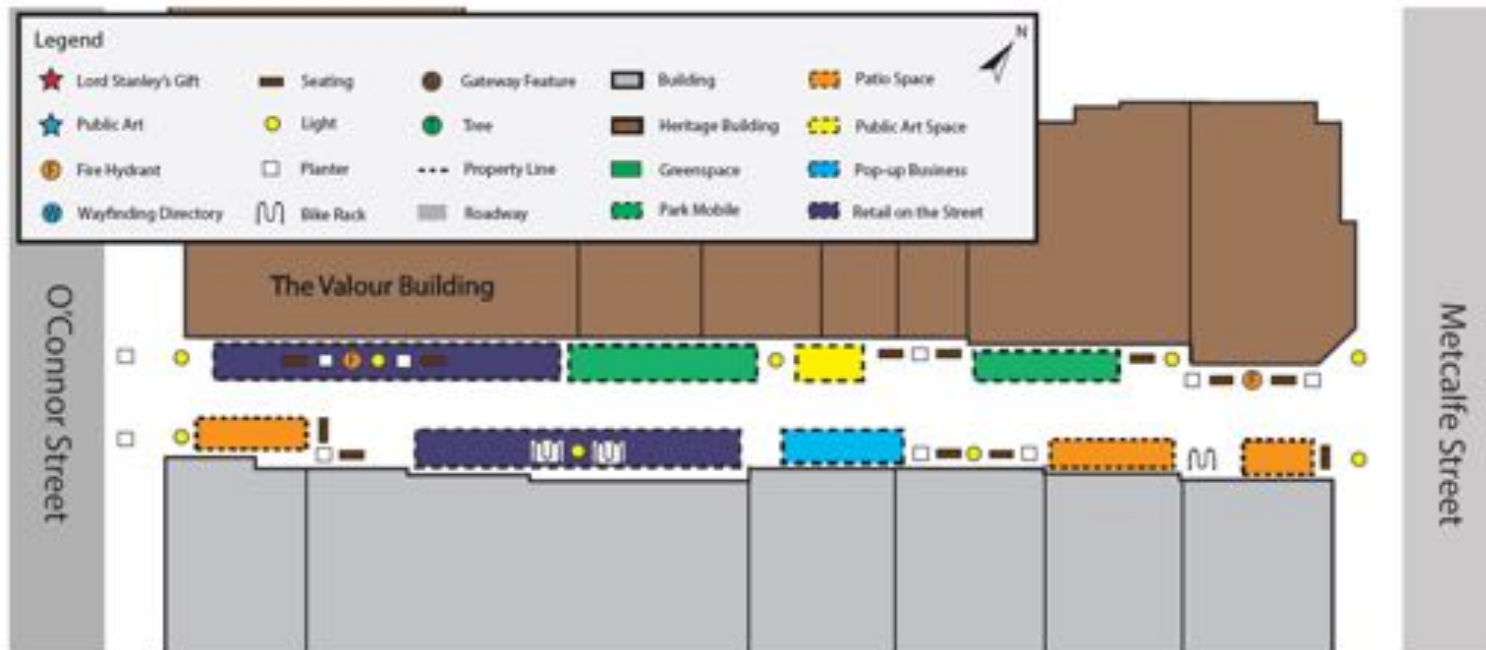
1. Lord Stanley's Gift Monument is placed onto Sparks Street to give an idea how it can function as a gateway element.
2. Patio space with comfortable seating is expanded to facilitate more interaction between people and *The Capital Promenade*.
3. New paving with a unique pattern is consistent throughout the Mall.



Valour Block

The middle of three blocks that comprise the Sparks Street Heritage Conservation district, the Valour Block has many successful restaurant establishments and retail options currently operating along the street. As such, this section of Sparks Street is an ideal location to feature these established businesses by temporarily allowing them to sell their merchandise outdoors on the Mall at different times throughout the year. With merchandise and food interacting with the consumer in the street, larger events can also be featured on Valour block, perhaps in a “Shopping Saturday” format. Critical to the success of this type of event is the implementation of new paving on the ground.

This block can be used to highlight modern greening elements that can be introduced to Sparks Street. It is currently one of the more disjointed stretches of the Mall in design and layout, and can benefit from the thoughtful introduction of greening elements that do not detract from the heritage character of the right-of-way. Further, greening elements that can be easily moved around, perhaps prior to and after a “retail on the street” event, would be more complimentary than elements that are permanently planted in the ground. This block also highlights a key wayfinding recommendation which is to replace or augment existing City of Ottawa signage with signage uniquely designed for Sparks Street, resembling *The Capital Promenade* theme.



Map 5: Valour Block Streetscape Plan

Recommendation: Update the paving throughout Sparks Street to be distinguishable from surrounding areas while ensuring a high level of accessibility.

It is suggested that the paving have the capability for visual and tactile differentiation between distinct areas on the street so as to increase the area's accessibility. The consistent application of slip and skid resistance measures to pavers is recommended, as is ensuring that there is has a limited number of curbs and steep inclines or declines; these efforts are necessary to alleviate barriers for those with concerns related to the accessibility of street surface. Throughout the street, the material should be durable and maintainable, backed by a reliable product supply to ensure that the projection of the street to its patrons is of the highest quality. Finally, paving on Sparks Street must be able to be well-drained of rain and snow to avoid standing water. This ensures accessibility and comfort in the long-term, and it ensures the sustainability of the material because it will not wear out as quickly.

Although the implementation of new paving and ground features is recommended for the entire Mall, this suggestion is highlighted on the Valour Block because the project team observed that the existing paving was in the worst condition on this stretch of Sparks Street. The installation of pre-cast granite pavers can strengthen the visual character and texture of the pedestrian realm. It is important that these pavers are visually attractive and are effectively able to convey a distinct character, perhaps related to *The Capital Promenade* theme, as was observed with Denver's 16th Street Mall and at Strøget in Copenhagen, Denmark, one of the most successful pedestrian malls in the world.



► Strøget; Copenhagen, Denmark.

Recommendation: Connect Sparks Street to the surrounding community and amenities through improved street signage.



► Preston Street; Ottawa, Ontario.

The Valour Block is ideal to highlight new signage at intersections due to the influx of pedestrian traffic that is expected to result from the introduction of the Confederation Line Station at O'Connor Street in 2018, one block south of Sparks Street. New street signage is recommended to replace or augment the existing and standard City of Ottawa street signs at the intersections along the Mall. These signs should have a consistent and unique design throughout Sparks Street and can resemble the established theme -*The Capital Promenade*. By replacing the existing signage, signs should be of comparable shape and size, and placed at a similar height. Further, they should be easily legible to users. The City of Ottawa has adopted this practice in numerous locations throughout the downtown, including on Preston Street in the Little Italy neighbourhood and adjacent to Sparks Street with Confederation Boulevard.

Recommendation: Bring retail activity onto the street front.

Retail activity is encouraged to extend onto Sparks Streets to positively market the Mall and promote the increased use of existing businesses, and the Valour Block is the ideal location to host events of this nature due to the presence of many successful businesses at its ground level. Requirements to set up a retail on the street event will vary based on need and the time of year, but can include signage for the business, the goods to sell, and objects to display the goods. Retail activity should not significantly obstruct views to the adjacent heritage buildings or street signage, and should be at a maximum allowable height of 2.0 metres off of the ground. Such an event can be set up in any number of formats, including as part of a "Shopping Saturday" arrangement, and must be openly accessible; no fencing is permitted anywhere along the right-of-way.

Businesses should adhere to similar size and placement guidelines as patios currently do, primarily to not disrupt efficient pedestrian flow or infringe on the required 6.0 metre clear path for pedestrians in the right-of-way. Therefore, retail activity that extends to the street front should typically be framed by the frontage that the store front occupies, and where possible, should not spill over to the frontage of adjacent properties. However, areas designated as inactive frontages (from the Building Frontage Analysis) can support this spill over if the area in front of a business that wants to participate in this type of event is not an adequate location due to an inadequate amount of frontage space and/or an infringement on the required 6.0 metre clear path in the right-of-way. This space can also occupy businesses from the surrounding area, based on desire and need. Consideration should be given to the time of day that this type of event occurs at, so as not to disrupt pedestrian flow during peak periods (identified as part of the PSPL Study), and should mainly be encouraged to occur during weekends.



High end retail on the street; New York, New York.

Recommendation: Utilize winter-resilient street furniture

Generally, Sparks Street may be welcoming in the fair-weather seasons but during the colder seasons, it can be similar in appearance to a dark alley. Winter greenery, whether artificial or otherwise, can help add colour to the streetscape during these periods of year. Items such as wreaths and holly can adorn heritage façades and light posts. Nevertheless, trees are not recommended for inclusion on the Valour Block, or on any part of Sparks Street east of Bank Street, because their presence would detract from the classic building façades. Because the right-of-way of this stretch of Sparks Street is narrow, the planting of a tree that would grow taller than the average person would become a defining element. The project team recommends that the heritage character of the Valour Block be its defining characteristic and for this reason, shrubs and planters are recommended in this space rather than trees.



Examples of combined landscaping and seating in San Francisco, California (right) and in Copenhagen, Denmark (above).

Further, the areas that have been identified as inactive frontages are ideal locations for artificial grass to create softer spaces where people can interact. A great location for this type of intervention could be in front of the CBC Ottawa Broadcasting Centre. Artificial grass should only be introduced sporadically during the summer months, but can be implemented for longer periods of time if it is experiencing success. Further, the Valour Block is the ideal location to introduce a series of ParkMobile arrangements; these have been observed in Copenhagen, London, and San Francisco. They combine landscaping and greenery with seating on the street and can easily be moved around. They are complimentary to the idea of bringing retail onto the street because they can be moved around much more easily than permanent planters. If an event is to occur on a Saturday, the ParkMobile can be moved to a quieter location on Friday evening and moved back to its original location on the Sunday.





Before



After

Sparks Street looking west between Metcalfe Street and O'Connor Street:

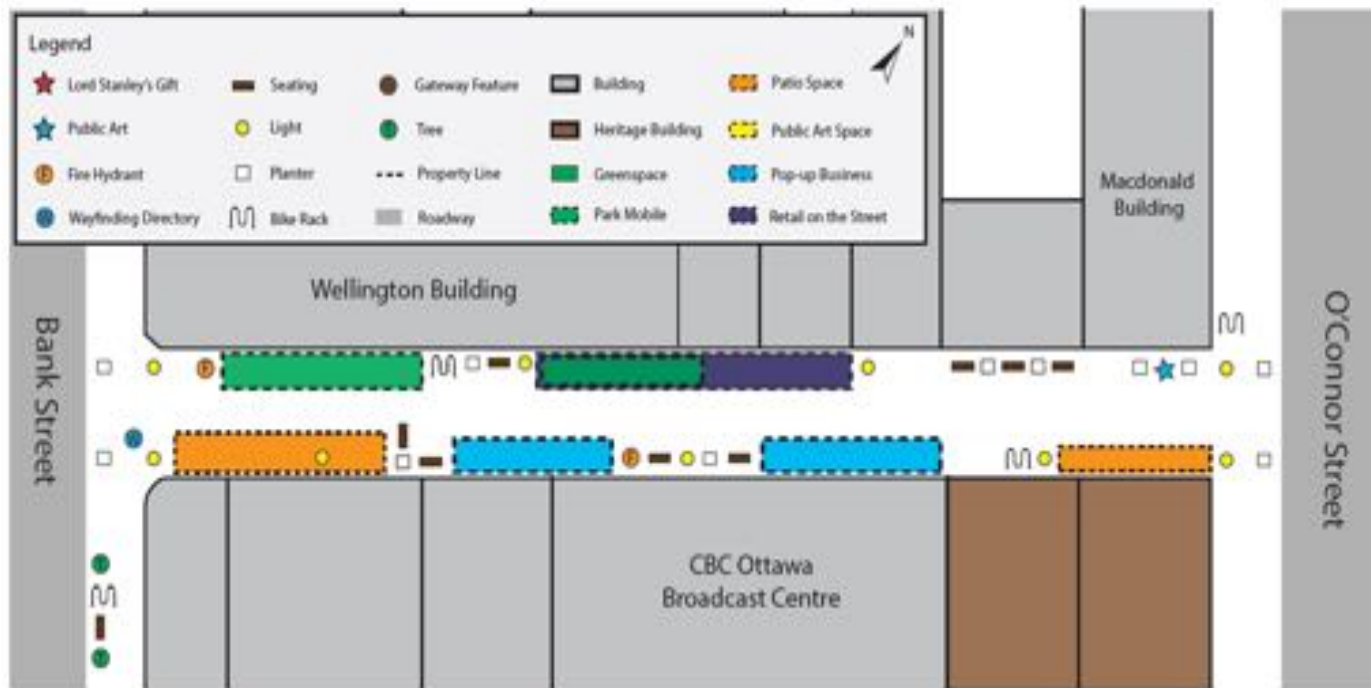
1. Retail businesses located on Sparks Street selling merchandise outdoors on the Mall.
2. New paving that looks like cobblestone, but is not, is consistent throughout the Mall.

Macdonald Block

The location of the Macdonald Block is notable for several reasons. It is the centre of the Mall's five blocks and of the three that are a part of the Sparks Street Heritage Conservation District, it is the most westerly. Further, this stretch of Sparks Street borders on Bank Street at its west side which is a preeminent arterial road in the city; notably, Bank Street is recognized as a successful "main street" in Downtown Ottawa with a combination of high vehicular traffic, urban retail, and high pedestrian traffic that can potentially be lured onto Sparks Street.

The project team has identified this block as the stretch of Sparks Street to showcase recommendations related to fostering a greater sense of place at all times of the year and in particular, during the winter months. There is significant opportunity for Sparks Street to use the winter to its advantage as opposed to being hindered by it; it can be transformed into a destination with effective

enhancements. Improved lighting tailored to winter conditions, like catenary lighting, is a fantastic example of how to accomplish this and this type of implementation can be individually responsible for turning a place into a destination. Pop-up businesses that are catered to the cold weather, like hot chocolate stands and whiskey vendors, can be placed on the street to provide warmth to pedestrians. Further warmth can be provided by heating features during popular events. Another element that can foster the creation of a comfortable outdoor market is the presence of artistically designed temporary physical installations that allow for temporary shelters on Sparks Street. The final recommendation determined to be critical to the Macdonald Block is the inclusion of effective, winter-resilient street furniture; this will provide relatively comfortable places for patrons to rest on the mall throughout the cold months of the year regardless of whether an outdoor market is active or not.



Map 6: Macdonald Block Streetscape Plan

Recommendation: Implement effective winter lighting.

There is significant opportunity for Sparks Street to use the winter to its benefit; it can be transformed into a destination with effective enhancements. Improved lighting tailored to winter conditions, like catenary lighting, is a fantastic example of how to accomplish this. At a basic level, sunlight is limited for the majority of the day during these months, as was displayed in the Shadow Analysis, and improved lighting will simply make patrons more comfortable on Sparks Street. An effective catenary lighting arrangement can turn Sparks Street into an attraction. A tasteful arrangement of lights hanging above the street will not block views of the considerable heritage buildings on the Macdonald Block; rather, the lighting will augment these views at all times of the day.

In fact, catenary lighting has the potential to augment the building façades throughout the Sparks Street Heritage Conservation District but on the Memorial Block, an overhead lighting arrangement can frame an outdoor market during the winter months, similar to what is found at the Toronto Christmas Market in the Distillery District. Catenary lighting is particularly adept at casting artistic shadows onto the ground, a successful tactic in street animation that can give people more reasons to visit the space. This recommendation is also conscious of security, because catenary lighting systems improve not only lighting but also the overall atmosphere of a space. This works to foster a safer environment because it brings more people to the space, specifically towards well-lit spaces illuminated accurately from above. These catenary lighting features add texture and a unique quality to the space, while also illuminating both the public realm and the buildings along the pedestrian mall.



▶ Distillery District; Toronto, Ontario



▶ Broken Light Project; Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Recommendation: Provide features that bring warmth to the Sparks Street right-of-way during periods of high pedestrian activity.

Heating features are intended to be periodically implemented along the Mall's right-of-way during winter months. These heating elements are not intended to be permanent fixtures within the street because the required fuel consumption would be an unsustainable use. Nevertheless, they should be high quality and can use various fuel sources. The heating features should be implemented to coincide with major events and festivals, or on major winter holidays and weekends. In particular, with the creation of a temporary outdoor market during the winter on the Macdonald Block, the combination of catenary lighting and heating features would significantly enhance the comfort of the right-of-way. The heating elements should be located in areas that have been identified as inactive frontages throughout the five blocks and should not interrupt pedestrian movement or the required 6.0 metre clear path on Sparks Street.

The design of heating features are variable, and can be the subject of design competitions. However, standardized heating elements can be obtained and utilized during other major events or peak periods to provide warmth to users. These heating elements should be uniform in design throughout the street; their maximum height should be 2.25 metres so as not to interrupt the desired viewscales. The heating elements should not be permanently secured in place given their temporary nature. Still, the units should be large and heavy enough to avoid significant damage and to prevent potential theft. Temporary seating would be complimented by temporary heating features and for this reason, the location of both physical elements should be considered in tandem.



Heating features.

Recommendation: Implement more frequent, higher-quality winter programming.

Winter programming should not be overlooked as a component of the Mall's vitality and vibrancy. In particular, it is critical to the creation of an effective outdoor winter market on the Macdonald Block; giving people things to do and reasons to linger on Sparks Street is important to fostering a successful market. In addition, due to the intensity of the wind experienced on Sparks Street during the colder months, it is recommended that temporary installations, similar to the Warming Huts found at The Forks in Winnipeg, Manitoba, be strategically placed to mitigate this negative factor.

Recommendation: Encourage more temporary and pop-up businesses on Sparks Street to generate additional revenue streams.

Temporary Businesses offer an excellent opportunity to build additional streams of revenue to support the Sparks Street BIA and future implementations on the street. These include, but are not limited to, 'pop-up' retail businesses, food carts, and buskers. On the Macdonald Block, the intention of the project team is for 'pop-up' retail businesses to be featured and for vendors selling appropriate food and drink for the winter periods, like hot chocolate, to compliment them.

These additions should be directed primarily towards the inactive frontages identified in the Building Frontage Analysis. Doing so will promote animation for these otherwise unengaging components of the Mall while also not effectively blocking any existing retail entrances. There may also be opportunities for these implementations to occupy the centre of the right-of-way where they provide a prominent temporary focal point for the Mall, or if they are of a scale where such placement is necessary. If this option is chosen, it is key that there is still adequate circulation space on either side of the installations.



▶ Pop up retail installations; New York, New York.



Before



1. Unique catenary lighting arrangement frames the market but does not interrupt views of heritage buildings.
2. Temporary heaters included to make Mall comfortable and to allow people to stay for longer periods of time.
3. Temporary pop-up businesses located on Sparks Street.



After

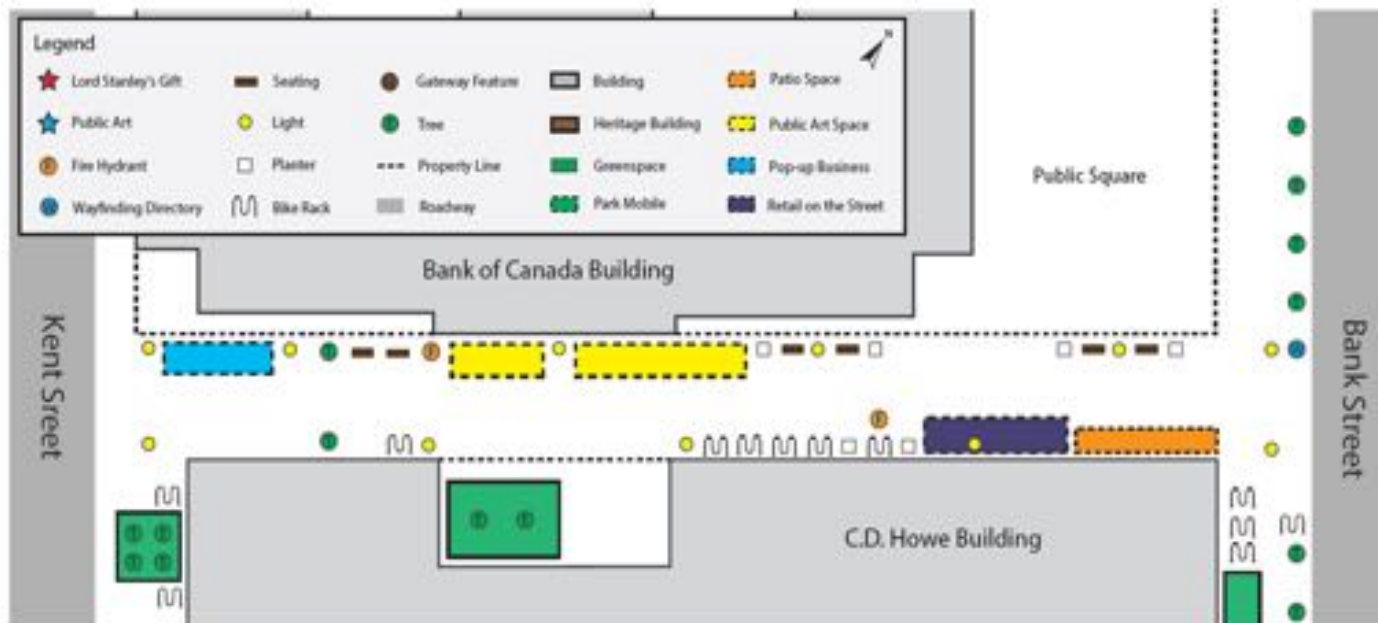
1. Alternative catenary lighting arrangement frames the market but does not interrupt views of heritage buildings.
2. Temporary pop-up businesses located on Sparks Street.



Museum Block

The Museum Block represents an opportunity to encourage prospective patrons to visit the two blocks to the west of Bank Street. Previously, there has been a lack of continuity along the mall between the west and east sides of Bank Street; essentially, it has cut off Sparks Street. The architecture on these two blocks, most noticeable with the C.D. Howe Building and the Bank of Canada Museum on this block, is considerably different than what is found in the Sparks Street Heritage Conservation District and there is a lack of retail at grade on this block, in stark contrast to the Mall east of Bank Street. These are challenges that must be overcome in order to allow Sparks Street to be consistent and successful throughout each of its five blocks. Nevertheless, the fact that the Museum Block is bordered by Bank Street, the preeminent street in the City's downtown, should be an advantage. There is great potential for pedestrians that frequent Bank Street to be lured onto Sparks Street on this block, just as there is on the Macdonald Block.

For this reason, wayfinding directories should be located on this block at the intersection of Bank Street and Sparks Street. Wayfinding is an important tool for users of a space to orient themselves, especially in what may be unfamiliar territory, and is therefore critical to the success of this block. Bicycle racks are already a prominent feature on this block and as a result, they represent an important theme on this block. The project team believes that the current inventory of bicycle parking should be maintained and that more should be added. While new paving is recommended to be implemented throughout Sparks Street, it is especially important on the Museum Block because it can compliment the public square that will open in 2017, adjacent to the Bank of Canada Museum. Lastly, this block is utilized to highlight improvements to street furniture on Sparks Street. The overall goal on the Museum Block is to improve its comfort level; pedestrians walking from Lyon Street to Elgin Street, or vice versa, should enjoy walking along this stretch of the Mall and enhanced street furniture can help with this aspiration.



► Map 7: Museum Block Streetscape Plan

Recommendation: Update the paving throughout Sparks Street to be distinguishable from surrounding areas while ensuring a high level of accessibility.



▶ 16th Street Mall; Denver Colorado.

Although the implementation of new paving and ground features is recommended for the entire Mall, this suggestion is highlighted on the Museum Block because it has the potential to compliment the public square that will open in 2017 adjacent to the Bank of Canada Museum. The installation of pre-cast granite pavers can strengthen the visual character and texture of the pedestrian realm. It is important that these pavers are visually attractive and are effectively able to convey a distinct character, perhaps related to The Capital Promenade theme, as was observed with Denver's 16th Street Mall and at Strøget in Copenhagen, Denmark, one of the most successful pedestrian malls in the world.

It is suggested that the paving have the capability for visual and tactile differentiation between distinct areas on the street so as to increase the area's accessibility. The consistent application of slip and skid resistance measures to pavers is recommendation, as is ensuring that there is a limited number of curbs and steep inclines or declines; these efforts are necessary to alleviate barriers for those with concerns related to the accessibility of street surface. Throughout the street, the material should be durable and maintainable, backed by a reliable product supply to ensure that the projection of the street to its patrons is of the highest quality. Finally, paving on Sparks Street must be able to be well-drained of rain and snow to avoid standing water. This ensures accessibility and comfort and in long-term, it ensures the sustainability of the material because it will not wear out as quickly.



▶ Accessibility paths; Hamilton, Ontario.

Recommendation: Encourage cyclists to access Sparks Street with strategically located bicycle racks.



► Bike rack embedded in paving; Washington, D.C.

Bicycle parking is encouraged to continue along Sparks Street. New bike racks can be constructed in a creative manner but should facilitate ease and efficiency of use, and should be uniform in design throughout the Mall. The recommended design of standard bicycle racks is to resemble a 'U Shaped' frame (above), with an approximate height of 88 centimetres, width of 61 centimetres, and pole diameter of 5 centimetres. Racks should be constructed out of durable materials, such as stainless steel, and are intended to be secured to the street in some fashion, particularly in high traffic areas. In contrast, areas determined to be *inactive frontages* can include bicycle racks of similar design that are temporary and not fixed to the ground.

The placing of bicycle racks should be to the outside of the street where possible. Concentrations of bike racks should be focused at main entrances to office buildings and can also be placed outside of commercial establishments. An example of an area recommended for high concentration is in front of Les 3 Brasseurs, where there is a large *inactive frontage* with ample room for permanent bicycle racks. In general, bicycle racks should be arranged perpendicular to walls, a minimum of 71 centimetres from walls, placed side by side at an approximate distance of 76 centimetres apart. Bicycle racks should be placed a minimum of 1 metre from any major art installation, and their relationship to surrounding features should be considered.

Recommendation: Connect Sparks Street to the surrounding community and amenities through improved wayfinding directories.



► Example of wayfinding signage; Thunder Bay, Ontario.

A permanent wayfinding directory (or kiosk) should be placed at the intersection of Bank Street and Sparks Street. It should function in a similar manner to wayfinding directories that are often found at the entrance of indoor shopping malls; it should contain information about the shops, restaurants, and major destinations. This wayfinding element is essential for the user to identify key locations within the street, especially with the lack of anchor tenants to draw people through the street. Further, the kiosk should be no larger than 2.0 metres tall, and can be double or triple sided (triangular design). They should be easily identifiable and should be high quality in design and construction. Updated directories can replace existing directories as new retail is introduced. These installations can also serve the additional purpose of providing additional information about local history or promotional events to help tell the story of *The Capital Promenade*.



► Gateway feature; Hamilton, Ontario.

Recommendation: Utilize winter-resilient street furniture.

The benches and seating areas along Sparks Street could use considerable and thoughtful upgrading and a physical rearrangement to foster a more user-friendly pedestrian space. The materials of suggested seating areas include high quality plastics or wood; metal should be avoided in seat construction because it becomes unbearably cold in the winter months. Benches can be permanently fixed to the street surface, or left as temporary seating to facilitate easier winter maintenance. The placing of benches throughout Sparks Street should be as uniform as possible in order to ensure continuity throughout the Mall. Benches should be placed to the outside of the right-of-way, aside from the primary flow of pedestrian traffic. Areas that experience comparably less traffic can be areas to encourage benches that face each other to promote interaction.



► Winter resilient street furniture; London, England.



Before



1. Rendering of the open space that will be located adjacent to the Bank of Canada Museum.
2. Versatile street furniture that faces both the new open space and Sparks Street.
3. Wayfinding kiosk communicating the location of restaurants, stores, and destination on the Mall.
4. New paving that extends through the intersection of Bank Street and Sparks Street.



After

1. Addition of a new bike rack.
2. Wayfinding kiosk that primarily communicates promotional information.
3. Addition of modern street furniture.
4. Unique paving that extends through the intersection of Bank Street and Sparks Street.
5. New light pole that contains space for branding or advertising.

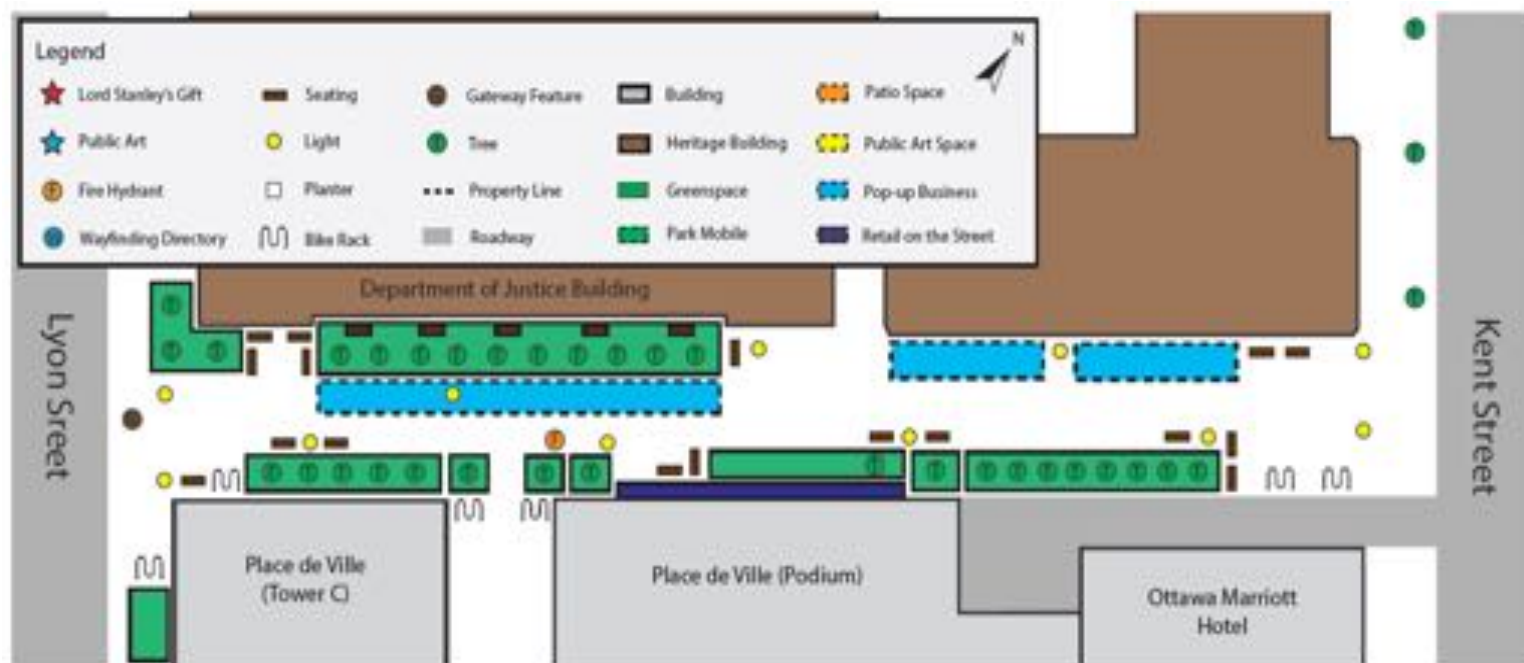


Justice Block

Because the Justice Block lacks retail amenities at the ground level, effective programming is an important way to animate this space. Its wide open design and favourable streetscape orientation, compared to other spaces on the street, provides an opportunity for programming installations of a much larger scale. However, specific programming would need to be scheduled so as to attract people who would not usually travel to the west end of Sparks Street. In summary, the space has a great deal of potential if both operational and design elements coalesce in an effective way to promote the streetscape and connect it to the other blocks of the Mall.

Public art is a crucial way to add aesthetic appeal to the street, and can help to frame this space as a destination within Sparks Street. The Justice Block has a large amount of space that was categorized as *inactive frontage* as part of the

Building Frontage Analysis and this allows for a strategic opportunity for the installation of public art. Rotating public art exhibitions are particularly appropriate on this block for these reasons and in fact, the Justice Block can be established as a space where public art can flourish. As the location of the western terminus of the Mall, a prominent gateway feature should be located at the intersection of Lyon Street and Sparks Street, similar in scale to the Lord Stanley's Gift Monument which will grace the eastern terminus of the Mall at Elgin Street. Currently, there is a collection of trees on this block; this can be expanded upon. Due to the large width of the right-of-way on this block, it has a distinctive ability to uniformly accommodate trees on either side of the street. Lastly, pop-up businesses currently make use of the Justice Block at times (i.e. food trucks, in particular); this feature remains appropriate for this space and a wider variety of pop-up businesses can make use of this space.



Recommendation: Protect heritage character and celebrate local history.

Although the Justice Block is not located in the Sparks Street Heritage Conservation District, utilizing it to shed light on local culture and history is a logical way to connect the block with the rest of the Mall. In fact, it is ideal for rotating public art exhibitions because the right-of-way is larger on this block than the rest of Sparks Street. Projecting a movie or series of images onto the trees and buildings on the block during the evening, as is done as part of Montréal's Cité Mémoire exhibit, would be a unique way of attracting people to the street.

On Sparks Street, the content of this type of exhibit can allude to The Capital Promenade theme and in general, it can present a range of milestones in both the City of Ottawa's and Canada's history. Specific exhibit topics could include stories about how Ottawa became the nation's capital, the biography of Nicholas Sparks or other well-known characters, or even snapshots of what everyday life was like on Sparks Street when it was the commercial hub of the city. The most important characteristic of this type of public art installation is that it changes frequently. The story that it tells must rotate after a defined period of time to give patrons a reason to return. The hope with this type of installation is that while the pedestrian is on Sparks Street, they will shop in the stores, eat in the restaurants, and engage with physical amenities located throughout the Mall.

Recommendation: Utilize winter-resilient greenery.

In contrast with the three blocks of the Mall located east of Bank Street where maintaining views of the heritage building façades is a critical concern, the street is wide on the Justice Block, the buildings that line it are tall and for the most part, they are not quite as interesting to look at. For these reasons, trees are appropriate on this stretch of Sparks Street and in fact, they are desirable. It has a distinctive ability to uniformly accommodate trees on either side of the street, a pattern that would be pleasant and distinctive. In addition, if the recommendation to replace the paving across the entire Mall is taken, that period of time would represent an excellent opportunity to permanently install trees on the Justice Block.



Conifers and artificial greenery withstand harsh winter conditions; London, England.

Recommendation: Encourage more temporary and pop-up businesses on Sparks Street to generate additional revenue streams.

During the project team's visit to Sparks Street, food trucks were featured on the Justice Block. This is an example of what has been categorized as a pop-up business; these have been determined to be appropriate on Sparks Street, particularly on this block, due to the great amount of lunchtime traffic that can be drawn to it. In the future, the type of pop-up businesses that make use of this space can evolve to include temporary retail installations for high-end retailers, a type of pop-up business that may be more complimentary to the rotating public art exhibitions that will be the primary feature of the block. Nevertheless, in the coming years, it is most important for pedestrian traffic to be drawn towards this block; more attention should be paid towards the specific types of businesses once the space matures.



Tesla automotive pop up; London, England.

Recommendation: Public art should be celebrated and encouraged along Sparks Street, including a focus on Canadian talent and smaller, interchangeable installations.

Contrary to existing public art installations, new public art should be of a smaller scale, and the Justice Block is the ideal location for smaller installations. Regardless of whether they are of a permanent or temporary tenure, public art installations should be complementary to the streetscape opposed to dominant upon it. A key example of this are the fifteen granite columns along Preston Street in Ottawa's Little Italy; these features punctuate the street with aesthetic and narrative while blending in with the built form. Like these features, public art along Sparks street should frame the right-of-way rather than interrupt it.

Public art should continue along every block throughout the entirety of the street and it should cohere to the *Capital Promenade* theme, but it should culminate on the Justice Block in greater focus. There are large spaces of *inactive frontage* on this stretch of Sparks Street which owe to it being an ideal location for these installations. Given these characteristics and in general, its calmer atmosphere compared to the rest of the Mall, the primary identity of the Justice Block could be nurtured as a continuous public art domain.



► Artistic bollards located in Little Italy; Ottawa, Ontario.

Recommendation: Connect Sparks Street to the surrounding community and amenities through improved gateway features.

While the introduction of the Lord Stanley's Gift Monument will provide an appropriately scaled gateway feature to the eastern terminus of the Mall, the western end, at Lyon Street, is lacking such a feature. Currently, there are more relevant destinations, and therefore more pedestrian traffic, located east of the mall in comparison to what is found west of Lyon Street but in keeping with the idea of maintaining a long-term vision for Sparks Street, a future influx of pedestrian traffic is expected from this area with the development of LeBreton Flats, among other projects. Therefore, a grand gateway feature should be placed at Lyon Street indicating that the pedestrian is entering the pedestrian mall. In particular, there are fewer views to preserve looking west from Sparks Street, meaning that a grand gateway feature, similar in scale to the Northern-royal-style Chinese arch found in Ottawa's Chinatown neighbourhood (Somerset Street West), would be more appropriate at this block than at Elgin Street.



► Chinatown; Ottawa, Ontario.



Before

1. Inclusion of food trucks along the Justice Block.
2. Additional greenery included in orderly manner.



After

1. Artistic projection of the building façade of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church where it was formerly located.



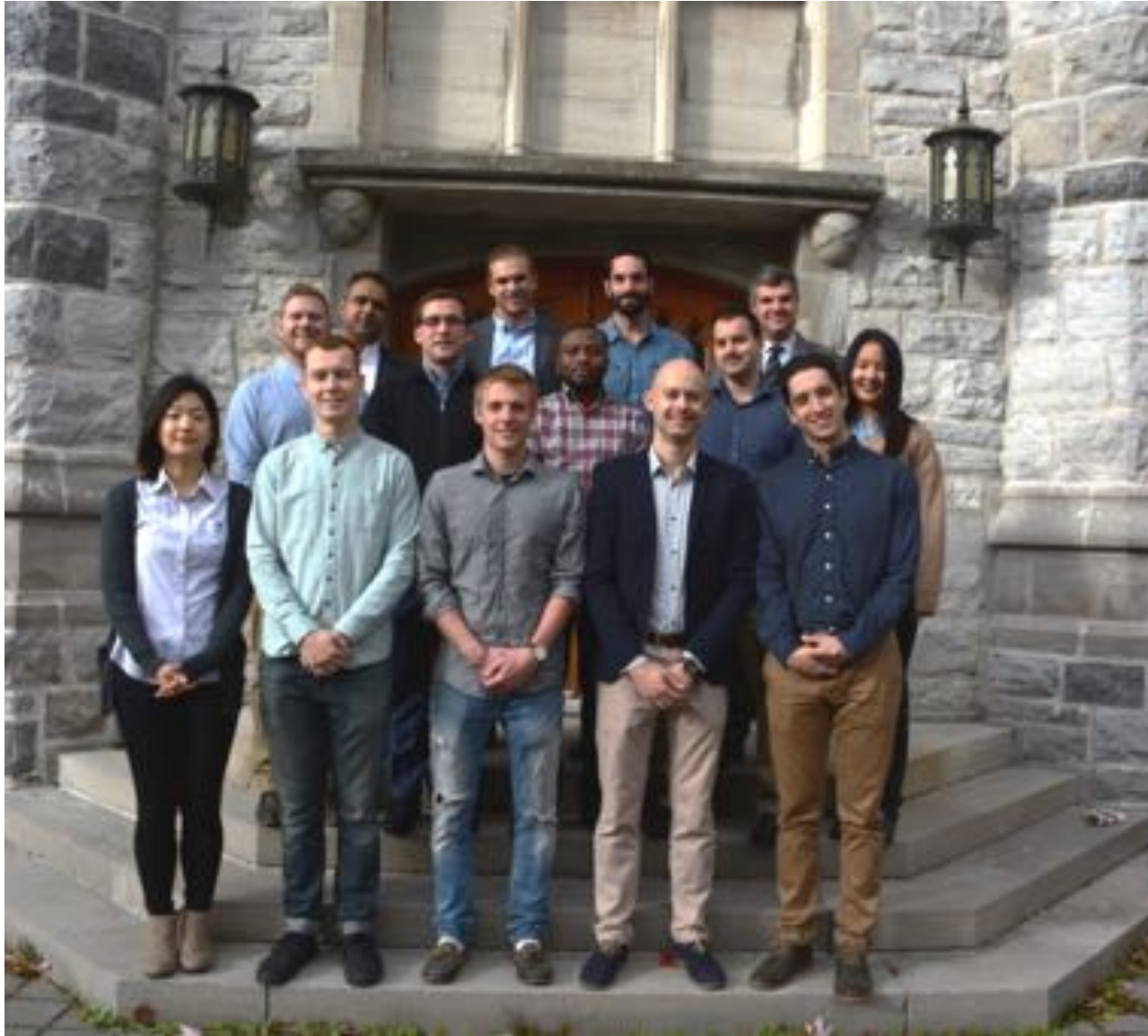


5

Conclusion

Conclusion

This project has presented *A New Vision for Sparks Street*, and in doing so, has determined how the physical design and programming functions of the Mall's right-of-way will evolve in the years to come to fulfill the public realm policies of the City's Official Plan and other endorsed plans. A revitalized Spark Street is one that can capture the spirit of Canada's national capital and enhance Ottawa's downtown through the creation of a national and civic community hub. As *The Capital Promenade*, Sparks Street is a place that welcomes and connects both Canadians and visitors to the Nation's Capital. Additionally, the Mall will also serve as a premier destination for events and activities, leisure, as well as retail and shopping opportunities, creating an important community hub within the central city. A place rich in heritage, but also a living space with present-day cultural significance for people of all ages to live, work, and play, at different times during the day and year-round.



Thank You

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NOTE:
Complete sets of references utilized in the research portion of this project are found at the end of the Best Practice Catalogue and the Background Report.

