

# Make a Place for People

O'KEEFE LANEWAY, TORONTO



**8-80  
Cities®**

Parks Streets Public Places for all





# Make a Place for People

## O'KEEFE LANEWAY, TORONTO

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*8-80 Cities is a non-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. We are dedicated to contributing to the transformation of cities into places where people can walk, bike, access public transit and visit vibrant parks and public places. Our approach is to engage communities at all levels and across multiple sectors to inspire the creation of cities that are easily accessible, safe and enjoyable for everyone. We have working experience in urban areas across Canada, the United States, Latin America, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.*

## Why 8-80?

We are convinced that if everything we did in our public spaces was great for everyone, from an 8-year-old to an 80-year-old, we would end up with healthy and vibrant communities for all.



## What is an 8-80 City?

- 8-80 cities reflect social equality in the public realm and promote people's happiness.
- 8-80 cities nurture our need to be physically active by providing safe, accessible and enjoyable places for everyone to walk and bike as part of their daily routine.
- 8-80 Cities recognize that people are social creatures and prioritize human interaction by fostering vibrant streets and great public places where people can rest, relax and play.
- 8-80 cities encourage sustainable and healthy lifestyles for people regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnicity or economic background.



## Our Partners

**GEHL ARCHITECTS**  
URBAN QUALITY CONSULTANTS

*Gehl Architects focus on the relationship between the built environment and people's quality of life.*

Gehl Architects is an urban research and design consultancy. We address global trends with a people-focussed approach, utilizing empirical analysis to understand how the built environment can promote human flourishing. We apply this analysis to strategic planning and human-centred design to empower citizens, decision makers, company leaders, and organizations.

**ING DIRECT**  
forward banking™



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This project is partially funded by the Ontario Government's Healthy Communities Fund.



The overall goal of the project is to inject new life into currently under performing public spaces in order to encourage physical activity and promote mental health while also contributing to creating more sustainable and people-friendly communities.



# CITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES



By working closely with local partners in identifying community stakeholders, 8-80 Cities has endeavored to tap into the imaginations of the diverse people who use or would like to use the space. This document is the culmination of those efforts.

We see this report as a tool for community members, elected officials and public sector staff alike to generate action and to help sustain community participation in the space.

### 01 INTRODUCTION

What is the Make a Place for People Project?  
Our Partner  
The Laneway Overview  
Project Timeline

### 11 PLACES FOR PEOPLE

Putting the Public Back in 'Public Space'  
Streets for People  
Active Places, Healthy People  
The 8-80 Rule  
Great Public Space and Streets

### 27 RECOMMENDATIONS & RESULTS

Results Overview  
Ideas and Recommendation  
Software (Programming & Management)  
Hardware (Design & Infrastructure)  
Key Recommendations

### 59 TOOLKIT

Place Survey  
Public Space Observation Table  
Action Planning  
Share an Idea  
Simple Site Evaluation Tool  
Software Program Calendar



# 1 INTRODUCTION

*This section of the report provides a description of the Make a Place for People project methodology, as well as an overview of The Laneway and its neighbourhood.*





**CAUTION**  
**PLEASE**  
**SLOW DOWN**

**STAGE**  
**DOOR**





### What is the Make a Place for People Project?

We know that parks and public spaces play an vital role in our communities—they create nodes where people meet, relax and play. But many parks and public spaces in Ontario are under performing with very few uses and activities, and lacking funding, management and community participation.

The goal of the Make a Place for People project is to educate and empower communities across the province with the tools to transform underperforming parks and public spaces into vibrant and active destinations that promote social interaction, mental health and well being for all.

8-8o Cities was thrilled to partner with the Danish architecture firm, Gehl Architects on two of the Make a Place for People project sites. In an effort to contribute to their goal of creating cities for people around the world, Gehl Architects volunteered to collaborate on this project, contributing their expertise in public space assessments, public realm strategies and concept design.

### Our Goal

To develop vibrant public spaces that encourage physical activity and promote mental health while contributing to more sustainable and people-friendly communities.





## Our Partners

### ING DIRECT

8-80 Cities issued a call for partners in December 2011, to communities across Ontario to nominate currently underperforming public spaces to participate in the project. We received over 30 applications from communities across Ontario and were delighted to receive an application from ING DIRECT for O’Keefe Laneway & St. Enoch’s Square (the Laneway) in downtown Toronto.

From January to August 2012, 8-80 Cities worked with ING DIRECT to develop a strategy for the design, programming and management of the Laneway through a process of community engagement.

### Gehl Architects Approach: LIFE - SPACE - BUILDINGS

Gehl Architects have developed a work process that ensures the highest standards for city development. The study of people’s well-being lays the foundation for the formation of strategic planning and design work. In our work we utilize the empirical survey and mapping methods that Professor Jan Gehl has developed, which explore the way urban areas are used. These empirical and analytical methods inform our work throughout the process.

*“Revitalizing the Laneway would be a major step to recreating a vibrant Yonge Street and a downtown core. This laneway has many logistical challenges, but being able to restore this area as a place for people, rather than just waste removal and deliveries, would be a huge step in creating an area that can be a part of an ‘8-80 city’.*

*The Laneway can be a key connection within the Theatre District and could help establish this area as a place to hang out before and after an event.”*

*- ING DIRECT*



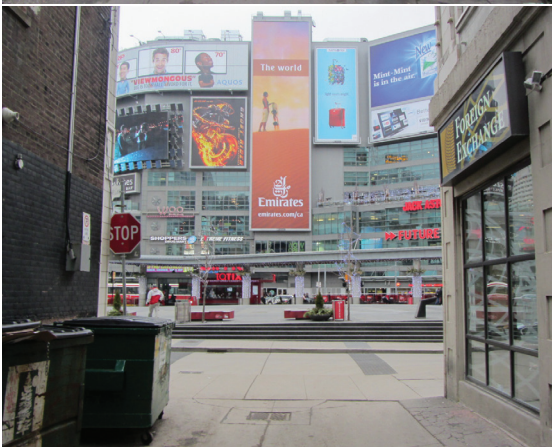
Nick Cluley, ING DIRECT’s Creator of Great Experiences, chats with local councilor, Kristyn WongTam about the future of the Laneway.



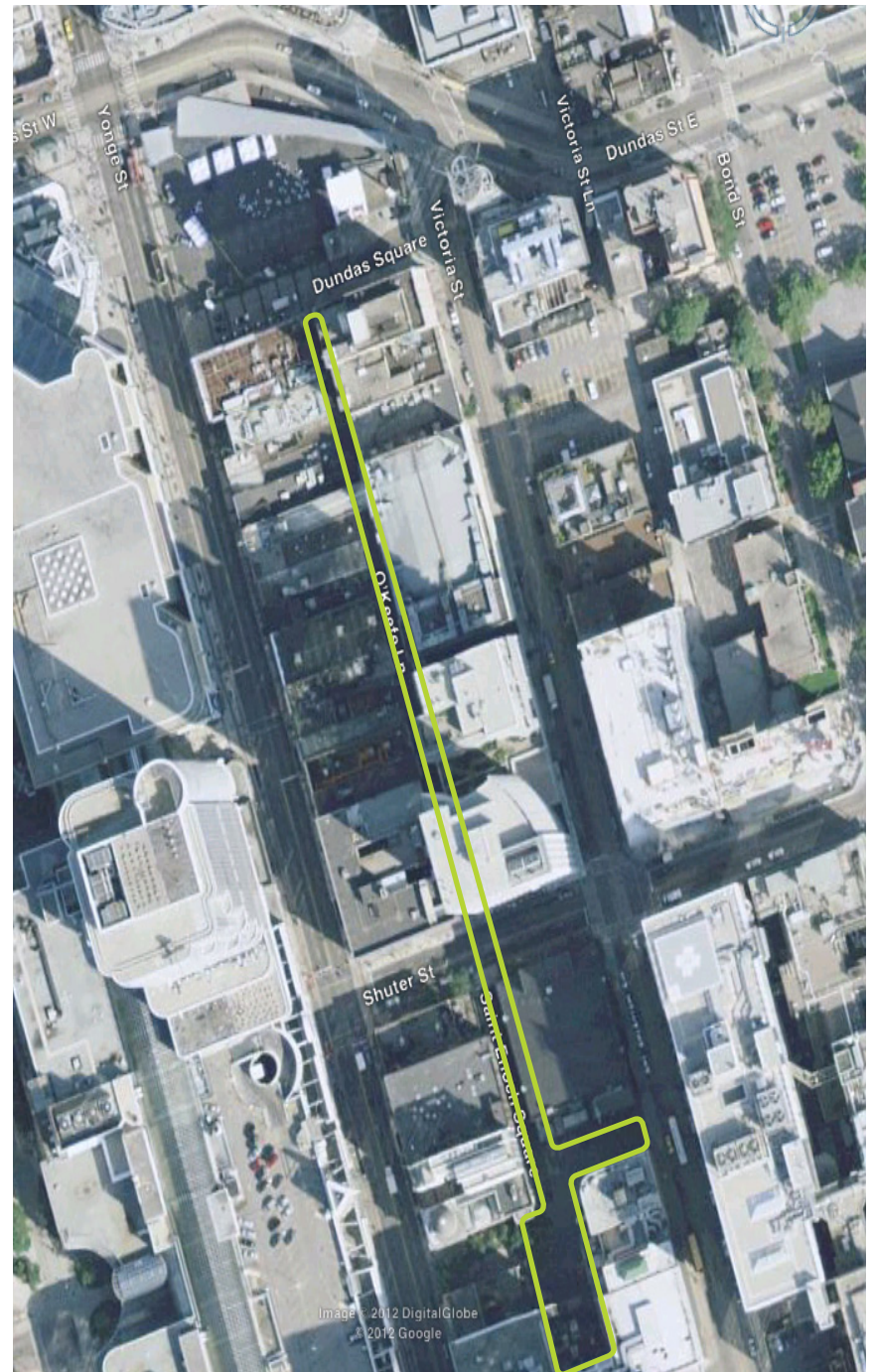
## The Laneway

Two public laneways, called O’Keefe Laneway and St. Enoch’s Square, make up what will be referred to in this report as “the Laneway”. It sits in the heart of downtown Toronto and runs parallel to the city’s most famous street, Yonge Street. Entrance points to the laneway include Shuter Street as well as the popular Yonge & Dundas Square.

Despite such close proximity to these bustling areas of the city, the laneway offers no amenities to people traffic and simply hosts waste receptacles, delivery trucks, and the occasional employee on a coffee break or local resident using it as a quiet cut-through.



*The Laneway is connected to many of Toronto’s most prominent destinations, including Yonge & Dundas Square, Mirvish Theatre, Massey Hall and the Elgin Winter Garden Theatre, as well as many popular bars, restaurants and retail stores.*





# HOW HEALTHY ARE TORONTONIANS?

26%  
feel  
stressed\*\*

15%  
have high  
blood  
pressure\*\*

43%  
are overweight  
or obese\*\*

58%  
are not  
physically  
active\*\*

## Church-Yonge Corridor Neighbourhood

The Laneway is located within the Church-Yonge Corridor Neighbourhood. The neighbourhood is one of the most prominent shopping destinations in the city and is home to some of Toronto's best-known destinations and institutions, such as Ryerson University, Massey Hall, the Eaton's Centre and St. Michael's Hospital.

While the neighbourhood is highly commercial, significant residential development is changing the character of the neighbourhood. Youth and children compose 29% of the population of this area, and this number has steadily increased over time. The number of youth and seniors in the neighbourhood has grown by approximately 62% and 34% respectively from 2001 to 2011\*. With these changes comes an increasing need for a variety of high quality, people-friendly public spaces.

\*The City of Toronto,  
Neighbourhood Profiles  
\*\*Statistics Canada, City of  
Toronto Health Profile, June 2012

Local employees use the Laneway  
as a quiet place to chat away from  
the hustle and bustle of Yonge St. &  
Dundas Square.





## UNLOCKING THE LANEWAY

Due to a growing residential community, the need for people-friendly public spaces is growing, yet in dense, built-up areas of the city such as the Church-Yonge Corridor Neighbourhood, there are few opportunities for new parks and public spaces. While public laneways serve an important function for deliveries, waste removal and other services, they tend to have low levels of vehicular traffic and are often underused and undeveloped. Public laneways offer an excellent opportunity for expanding the public space network in Toronto.

### A human scale experience

Juxtaposed against the highly commercial area of Yonge & Dundas Square, the Laneway is an opportunity to create a human scaled space that offers a unique identity and new experiences. With public laneways interwoven throughout the city, there is an opportunity to replicate laneway transformations across the city and create an entirely new layer of people-friendly public spaces in Toronto.

*"I would love to see the Laneway transformed! It has so much potential - it's a great location, it could offer something new and different. Toronto needs to take a chance and do something bold."*

*"I can totally imagine it as a place full of art, and food, and music and cool little details."*

*"You could give start-up incentives to have these little shops because the leases are going to be a lot less expensive than on Yonge St., and a lot more manageable for people to establish little businesses along the laneway."*



## BUILDING ON EXISTING STRENGTHS

*Creating a strong sense of community ownership and stewardship is vital for the success of any public space. The Make a Place for People Project: The Laneway has garnered a lot of interest from people in the local community and around the city. Encouraging increasing and sustained community participation through partnership development and programming will be key to the success of any project in the Laneway.*

### Community Organizations

Toronto has an active and engaged civil society. Community based organizations such as The Toronto Public Space Initiative, the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation, and the Downtown Yonge BIA have shown an interest in supporting and improving the Laneway. By developing partnerships between these groups and many others, the City of Toronto can begin to effectively animate and improve the Laneway.

### Community Members

8-80 Cities was encouraged by the enthusiasm and generosity of community members who participated in the Make a Place for People Project. Finding ways to harness this energy to build stewardship in the park will determine the long-term success of the Laneway.



Fig. 1. Workshop participants chat about possibilities during a walking tour of the laneway.  
Fig. 2. High School Students from the University of Toronto School brainstorm ideas for improving the laneway

## MELBOURNE'S LANEWAYS: A HUMAN SCALE EXPERIENCE

With large city blocks and wide streets, the City of Melbourne used service laneways to create intimate, pedestrian-friendly public spaces throughout the Central Business District. The laneway transformation initiatives were a significant factor in the incredible revitalization of Melbourne's downtown core.



*Ewa Westermarck, Gehl Architects Associate Architect, delivers an inspiring presentation at a public visioning workshop held at the ING DIRECT Cafe.*

*The Make a Place for People process aims to tap into the imaginations of the diverse people who use a public space in order to create a vision and cultivate a culture of community participation in the space. The process involves 3 phases:*

## 1. Participatory Planning

Working with the local project partner to identify stakeholders to be involved in the project and develop a strategy for engagement.

## 2. Site Assessment & Community Engagement









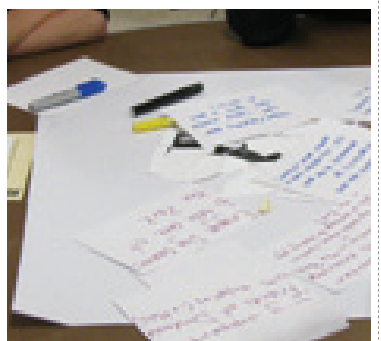
Assessments of the existing site including both “hardware” (physical infrastructure) and “software” (uses, activities, and management). Community engagement with diverse stakeholders through a variety of activities such as workshops, focus groups, interviews and on-site conversations.

### 3. Vision Development & Action Planning

Data collection and analysis to inform the creation of the Make a Place for People report. Reporting and action planning synthesizes the data collected into a user-friendly format that reflects the community's vision of the space.



# The Laneway Project Timeline

1 Planning	2 Site Assessment & Community Engagement					3 Vision & Action Plan	
JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Site selected through application process</li><li>- Identification of stakeholders</li><li>- Site research &amp; context assessment</li><li>- Development of schedule and coordination of events logistics for first on-site visit</li><li>- Outreach &amp; promotion of events &amp; activities for first on-site visit</li><li>- Development of content &amp; materials for community engagement sessions</li></ul>	<p><i>1st On-Site Visit</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Winter site assessment</li><li>- Community engagement sessions</li><li>- Media engagement</li><li>- Collection of data from community engagement sessions</li><li>- Debrief of 1st on-site visit &amp; planning for 2nd on-site visit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Analysis of data and documentation of initial findings</li><li>- Development of schedule and coordination of logistics for 2nd on-site visit</li><li>- Outreach &amp; promotion of events &amp; activities for 2nd on-site visit</li><li>- Development of content &amp; materials for 2nd on-site community engagement sessions, based on 1st on-site visit .</li></ul>			<p><i>2nd On-Site Visit</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Summer site assessment</li><li>- Community engagement sessions</li><li>- Media engagement</li><li>- Review findings from previous on-site sessions &amp; site assessment</li><li>- Collection of data from community engagement sessions</li><li>- Debrief of 2nd on-site visit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Analyze data and document findings from community engagement &amp; site assessments</li><li>- Develop initial vision and recommendations for site</li><li>-Draft Report issued to local partner</li><li>- Feedback incorporated into final report</li><li>- Launch of final report</li></ul>	
							
8-80 Cities assesses Make a Place for People applications. The Laneway is selected for the project.	Feb. 27: Site visit and public forum with author and public space champion, Jay Walljasper. 80 direct participants.		April 25, May 25, June 4 & 28: Various community engagement sessions. 95 direct participants.			Data analysis & report development 130 ideas collected 	
							
On-going communication and planning with ING DIRECT and other project stakeholders.	Feb 28 & March 6: Winter site assessment and tour with City of Toronto staff.		July 6: Public Visioning Workshop with Gehl Architects. 60 direct participants.			Development of project report.	



## 2. PLACES FOR PEOPLE

*This section includes international research, evidence and tools to support improving parks and public spaces in Ontario.*

*We hope that the people of the Church-Yonge Corridor Neighbourhood and beyond will be inspired to use this report to help “make the case” for improving parks, squares and streets so that we can create healthier, happier and more sustainable neighbourhoods across the province.*









## GREAT PLACES HEALTHY COMMUNITIES HAPPY PEOPLE, VIBRANT CITIES

*Parks and public spaces define our greatest cities and shape our most vibrant communities. Imagine Ottawa without the Rideau Canal, Montreal without the cobble stone streets of the Old Port, Toronto without the St. Lawrence Market, and Vancouver without the seawall at Stanley Park.*

### Putting the public back in public space

Public spaces are our community's most valuable assets, and they belong to all of us. We have a right and a responsibility, to be involved in decisions related to their use, management and design. But in many cases the public has been left out of this decision making process, and we've stopped asking to be involved.

Our experience shows that the best parks and public spaces have a high level of community involvement, foster a sense of stewardship and ownership, and are sensitive to the changing needs and desires of the community they serve.

1. The idea for NYC's renowned Highline Park was originally conceived by two community members who objected to the destruction of the elevated rail bed where the park now stands.
2. While not technically a park, Guadalajara's weekly open streets programme 'Via Recreativa' was spearheaded by three successful business leaders now known as Guadalajara 20/20. Every week the programme sees more than 300,000 people use the city streets to bike, run, walk and play.
3. Dufferine Grove Park in Toronto, is one of the city's most unique and successful public spaces, thanks the ongoing coordination and partnership between "Friends of Dufferin Grove" and the City of Toronto.





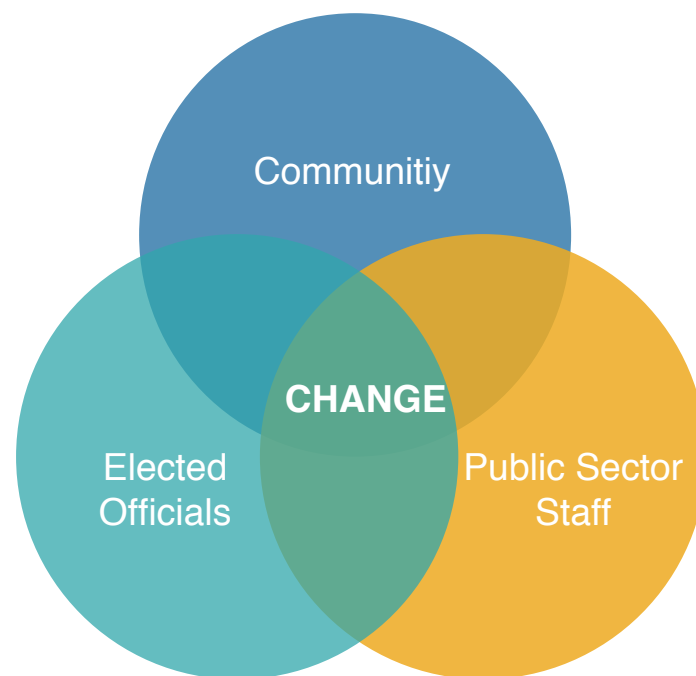
### Tapping the collective brain

Engaging people in decisions related to their parks and public spaces is what 8-80 Cities strives to do. We never cease to be impressed by the creativity, knowledge and know-how community members possess about their communities. The great diversity of people and perspectives is any community's greatest resource. Finding creative ways to "tap the collective brain" is the first step in creating public places that are people focused, and people friendly.

By understanding what the community wants and needs, decision makers can work together to offer appropriate programming, infrastructure and design.

### The Three Legged Stool

The most effective management of parks and public spaces involves what we call 'the three legged stool'---a balanced combination of elected officials, public sector staff and the local community (including residents, business, non-profit organizations and community groups).



*8-80 Cities works to bridge the gap between these actors to facilitate a process of meaningful and successful change. We use reports like this one to articulate the community's vision and work with decision makers to develop strategies for implementation.*



## FOCUS ON THE MOST VULNERABLE!

*Often it's the people who have the most to gain from parks and public spaces that are the most removed from the decision making process. Children, older adults, newcomers and people of low-income often need to be given special attention in the engagement process.*

While they may not have the loudest voices in the room, their opinions and ideas are no less valuable. We need to move beyond the idea that an evening public meeting hosted at the local city hall is sufficient public consultation – we need to be more creative!

## HOW CAN YOU ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY?

- Get kids to draw a picture of what they would like to do in the space.

- Meet with a small group of newcomers and find out what they think makes a successful place.

- Host an idea sharing session at the site. Free food always draws a crowd!

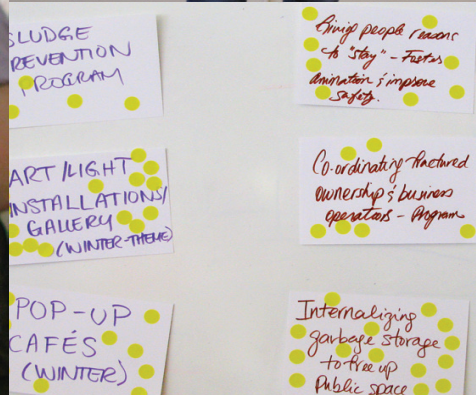
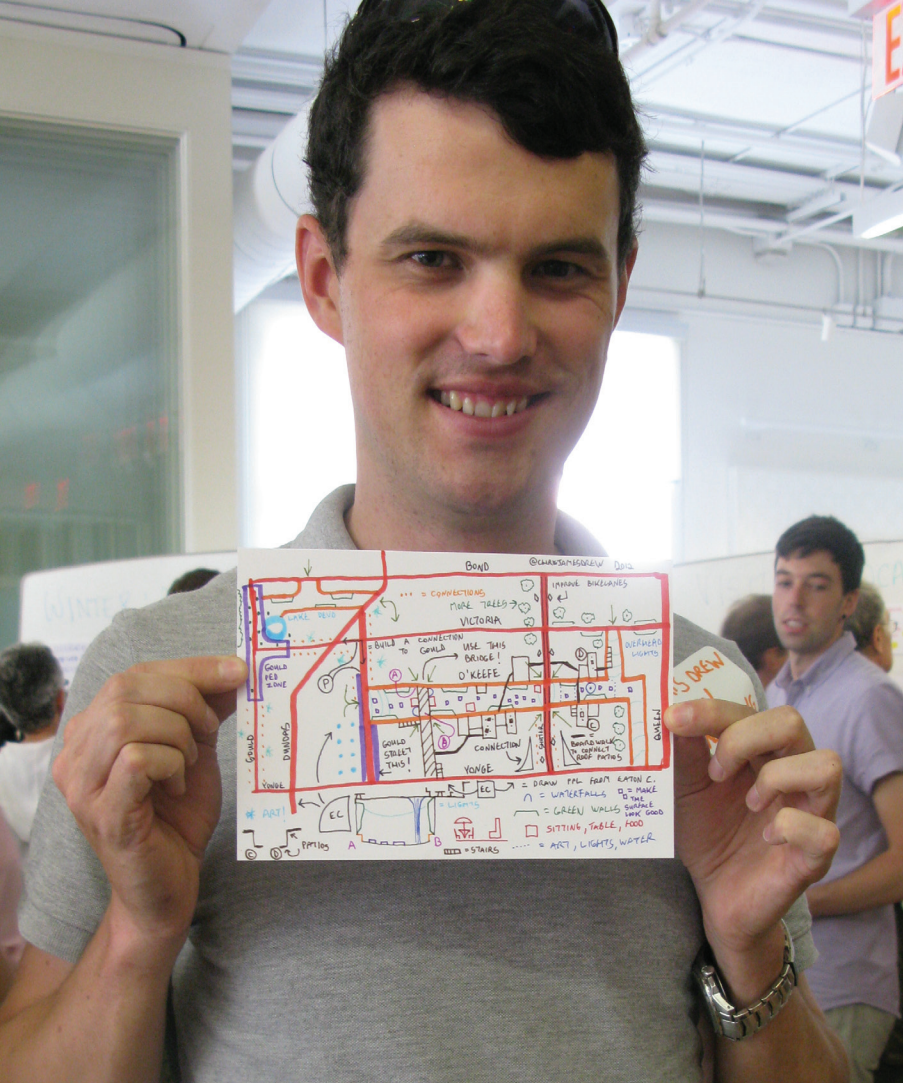
- Talk one-on-one with older adults about what they need in their public spaces.

- Use cameras to help youth show you what they like and don't like in the space.

- Use social media to connect with people in their living rooms.



# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY ABOUT THE LANEWAY





## Streets for people

*Streets are our cities largest public spaces. We need to re-think how these spaces can be used to create healthier, more sustainable and equitable cities.*

Streets can be places that not only facilitate mobility, but also provide space for community building, physical activity, forming neighbourhood identity and contributing to people's quality of life. Cities around the world have been taking back the streets! In an effort to create communities that encourage healthy lifestyles and sustainability, many cities have been transforming vehicular streets into people-friendly public spaces.

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

Cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam have invested heavily in bicycling infrastructure and have achieved significant results. In Copenhagen, bike mode share has gone from less than 10% in 1975 to 36% in 2004, superseding automobile mode share.\*\* With 329 km of cycling tracks in place, Copenhagen has continuously been improving its infrastructure.

1. A former parking lot and vehicular street, Nyhavn is now one of Copenhagen's most popular tourist destinations boasting thriving restaurants, bars and outdoor markets.
2. Only a few years ago, this stretch of Broadway Ave. in Times Square was a frantic street full of taxis and buses. Now it's a place where people rest, relax and steal kisses.
3. In the summer of 2012, "Celebrate Yonge" transformed Toronto's iconic Yonge St. into a place for people by turning traffic lanes into patios and pop-up parks.





# STREETS FOR PEOPLE: DON'T LET THEM TELL YOU IT CAN'T BE DONE

*Did you know?*

In a Montreal study, women 45 yrs and older living in neighbourhoods with a higher density of destinations, such as shops and services, were 53% more likely to walk at least 30 mins/day, five days/week.\*\*\*

Toronto residents surveyed from the least walkable neighbourhoods in the city, drive their cars four times as often and six times as far as residents in the most walkable neighbourhoods\*\*\*

In Atlanta, when vehicle traffic was kept artificially low during the Olympics in 1996, traffic counts dropped by 22.5%, peak daily ozone levels by 27.9%, and asthma emergency medical events by 41.6%.\*\*\*\*

In a Toronto study, 74 % of people said they preferred living in walkable neighbourhoods.\*\*\*

\* The Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Cost of Border Delays to Ontario

\*\* Centre for Public Spaces Research, Liveable Copenhagen: The Design of a Bicycle City

\*\*\* Toronto Public Health, Walkable City

\*\*\*\* Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Creating A Healthy Environment: The impact of environment on public health

*People in the public sector have to remember they are paid to find solutions to the problems, not problems to the solutions.*

We know we have to stop building cities for cars. We've seen it done in cities around the world, and we know it can be done successfully. We don't have time for excuses.

Gil Penalosa, Executive Director  
8-80 Cities





## Active Places, Healthy People

*According to the 2012 Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services known as the "Drummond Report", Ontario's health care system needs to be dramatically reformed.*

Health care is the Ontario government's single biggest spending programme. In 2010-11, the province spent \$44.77 billion on health. This is equivalent to 40.3 % of its total spending on programmes and health care costs are only projected to increase in the future.\* Nevertheless, even with massive investment in healthcare, Ontarians are only getting sicker. We are fatter, less active and more susceptible to chronic disease than ever before.\*

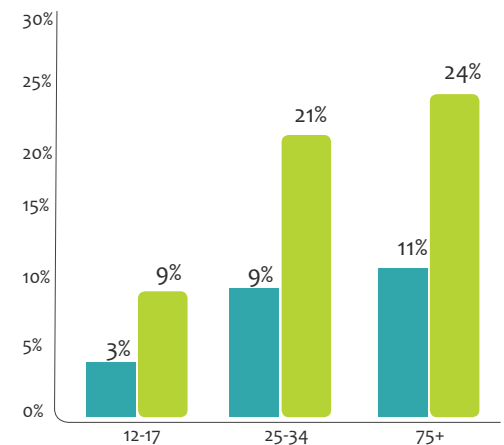
It is also important to note, that as a nation we don't seem to be spending our health care dollars very wisely. According to the Fraser Institute, Canada spends more on health care than any other industrialized country in the OECD, save Iceland and Switzerland but ranks seventeenth in the percentage of total life expectancy that will be lived in full health.\* It is clear that we need a new approach to creating healthy communities that focuses on keeping people healthy, rather than fixing them after they are sick.



**"HEALTH IS  
MUCH MORE  
THAN PATCHING  
UP PEOPLE ONCE  
SOMETHING HAS  
GONE WRONG."**

- The Drummond Report

**Canadian Obesity Rates on the Rise**



According to Statistics Canada, obesity rates have increased dramatically in the past 25 years. The chart above represents results from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), which directly measured the height and weight of respondents\*\*.

\* Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, 2012  
 \*\* Statistics Canada. The Canadian Health Measures Survey, 2009



# WALKABLE STREETS MAKE IT EASY AND AFFORDABLE FOR PEOPLE TO BE HEALTHY

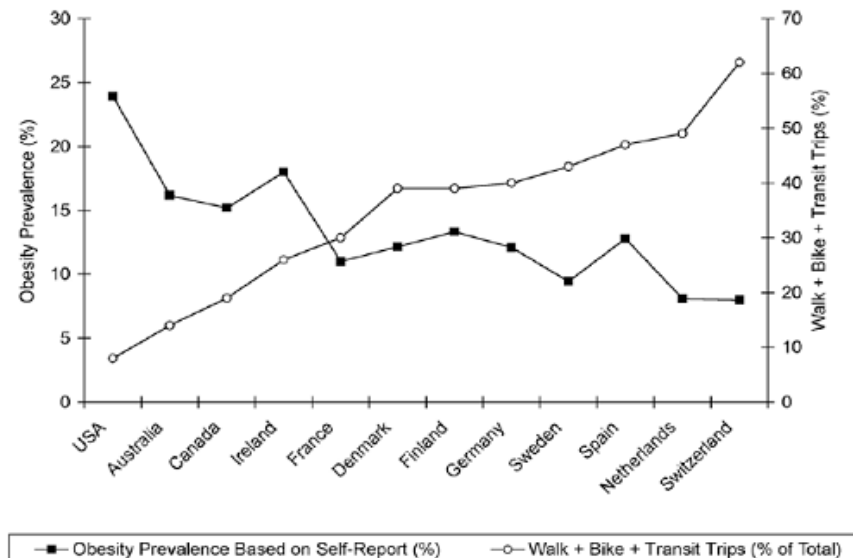


Today, health experts agree that 30 minutes of moderate physical exercise can cut vulnerability to heart disease in half, control blood pressure, and reduce cholesterol. Experts say that exercise also increases energy levels and improves mood, sleeping habits and digestion\*.

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

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

STUDIES SHOW THAT CITIES WITH HIGHER RATES OF WALKING AND BIKING HAVE LOWER RATES OF OBESITY



\*Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, Basic Principles of Physical Activity

\*\*Journal of Physical Activity and Health, 2008

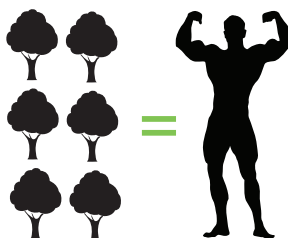


## ACTIVE PLACES & HEALTHY PEOPLE FACT SHEET



### ELDERLY & YOUTH

in large cities seem to benefit more from the presence of green areas in their living environment than any other group.\*



“Health inequalities” refers to the general trend that people living in poorer areas are more likely to be unhealthy, and die earlier. Researchers found that living near parks, woodland or other open spaces helps to reduce health inequalities.\*\*



Studies show that for every 10 minutes a person spends commuting by car, time spent participating in community activities falls by 10%\*\*\*



Studies have demonstrated that neighbourhood design is associated with increased levels of physical activity among residents because of its impact on their travel choices.\*\*\*\*



A study in Japan showed that seniors living in cities with access to walkable green spaces were positively influenced and lived longer regardless of socioeconomic status.\*



A Toronto based study showed the lower the walkability score of the neighbourhood, the higher the body mass index (BMI) of the residents.\*\*\*\*

\* CABE, *Using Community Green Spaces to Tackle Inequality and Improve Health*

\*\* Mitchel & Popham, *The Lancet. Effect of exposure to natural environment on health inequalities: an observational population study*

\*\*\* Cascadia Score Card 2006, *Focus on Sprawl & Health*

\*\*\*\* Toronto Public Health, *The Walkable City*



“HAVE DOCTORS  
ADDRESS DIET  
AND EXERCISE  
ISSUES BEFORE  
REACHING FOR  
THE PRESCRIPTION  
PAD WHEN  
DEALING WITH  
HEALTH ISSUES  
SUCH AS  
CARDIOVASCULAR  
DISEASE AND  
LATE-ONSET TYPE  
2 DIABETES.”

- A RECOMMENDATION FROM  
THE DRUMMOND REPORT

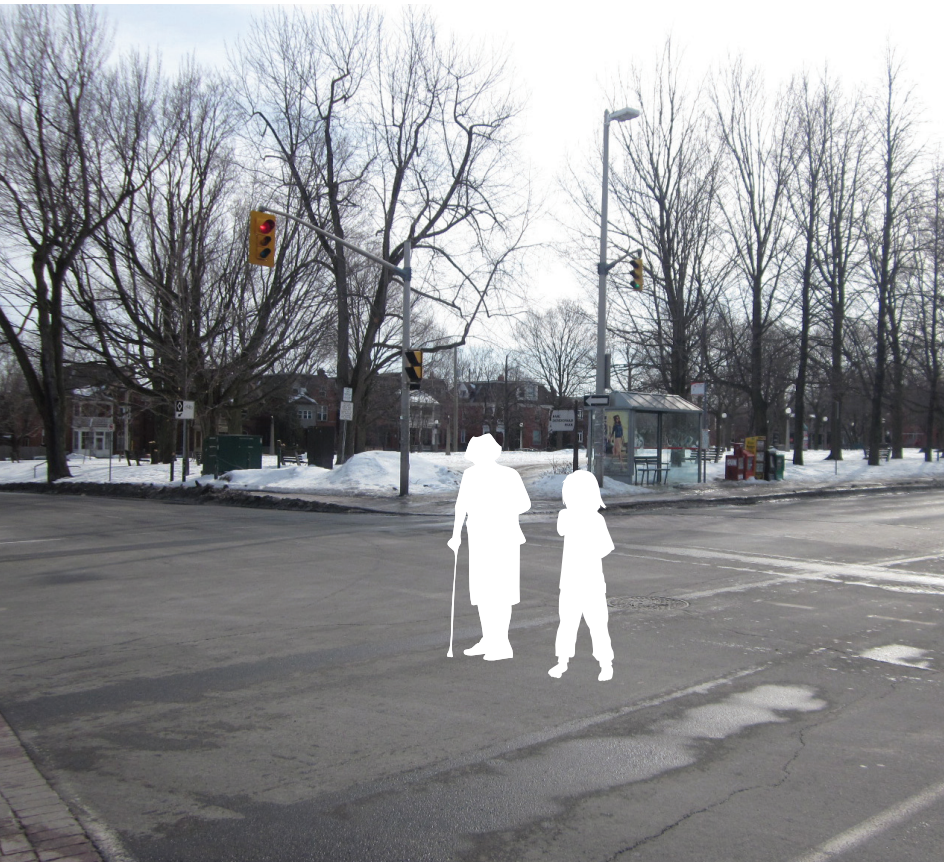




## 8-80 Rule

The most basic characteristic of any public space is that it is open and accessible to everyone regardless of their age, ability, background or social status. Public space design, management and programming should reflect this philosophy. To ensure these qualities, 8-80 Cities has come up with a simple rule to evaluate public spaces called the “8-80 Rule”

# PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES ARE SYMBOLS OF DEMOCRACY & EQUALITY





# THE BEST PUBLIC SPACES ARE ACTIVE 365 DAYS A YEAR

It's easy to get people outside on a sunny summer day, but creating active public spaces in the colder months requires more creativity and ingenuity. In terms of health, people tend to be less physically active in the winter and spend more time indoors. Vibrant public spaces can help to draw people out of their homes to exercise and interact with friends and neighbours.



*Create Excitement!*

**Create Energy !**

*Create Sparkle!*





## Quality of public spaces and streets

*Great public spaces don't have to be complicated. A fancy design cannot make up for a space that's unsafe, inaccessible, uncared for or inactive.*

When assessing the qualities of a street or public space, there is much more to it than the aesthetics. Gehl Architects has developed a simple 12 point check-list that can be used to evaluate the quality of a space and develop ideas for improvements and interventions.

The first thing to consider is if the space offers protection; is it safe to get to the space and to be in the space? Is there a good microclimate?

The next thing to look at is if the space is comfortable; what can you do in the space? Are there opportunities for activities during the daytime and in the evenings? In winter as well as in the summer? Are there possibilities for tranquility and rest as well as being physically active?

The last thing to look at is if the space offers an enjoyable environment; is it beautiful and well maintained? Does it have a strong identity?

Was it easy to get here?

Can I relax as well as be active?

Is it safe at night?

Who takes care of this place?

What's there to do?





# 12 KEY QUALITY CRITERIA

## PROTECTION

### Protection against traffic and accidents – feeling safe

- Protection for pedestrians
- Eliminating fear of traffic



### Protection against crime and violence – feeling secure

- Lively public realm
- Eyes on the street
- Overlapping functions day and night
- Good lighting



### Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences

- Wind
- Rain/snow
- Cold/heat
- Pollution
- Dust, noise, glare



## COMFORT

### Opportunities to walk

- Room for walking
- Interesting facades
- No obstacles
- Good surfaces
- Accessibility for everyone



### Opportunities to stand/stand

- Edge effect/attractive zones for standing/staying
- Supports for standing
- Facades with good details that invite staying



### Opportunities to sit

- Zones for sitting
- Utilizing advantages: view, sun, people
- Good places to sit
- Benches for resting



### Opportunities to see

- Reasonable viewing distances
- Unhindered views
- Interesting views
- Lighting (when dark)



### Opportunities to talk and listen

- Low noise levels
- Street furniture that provides 'talkscapes'



### Opportunities for play and exercise

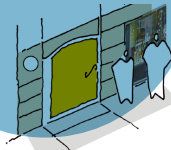
- Physical activity, exercise
- Play and street entertainment
- By day and night
- In summer and winter



## ENJOYMENT

### Scale

- Buildings and spaces designed to human scale



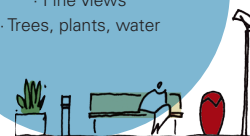
### Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate

- Sun/shade
- Heat/coolness
- Shelter from wind/breeze



### Positive sensory experience

- Good design and detailing
- Good materials
- Fine views
- Trees, plants, water





# 3. RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

*This section includes a summary of the results of the site assessment as well as the ideas and recommendations generated by the community about how to improve the Laneway. The visualizations in this section are used to help people re-imagine the Laneway and to highlight specific recommendations, programmes or improvements.*

*In addition to focus groups, meetings, interviews and casual conversations with community members, more than 130 specific recommendations and ideas were collected during the project. Trends, priorities, and compatible best practices are highlighted in this section. To find a complete list of results from the project, please visit:*

**[www.8-8ocities.org](http://www.8-8ocities.org) > Resources > 8-80 Tools > Community Reports**









## IF YOU DON'T COUNT, YOU DON'T COUNT!

### Results Overview

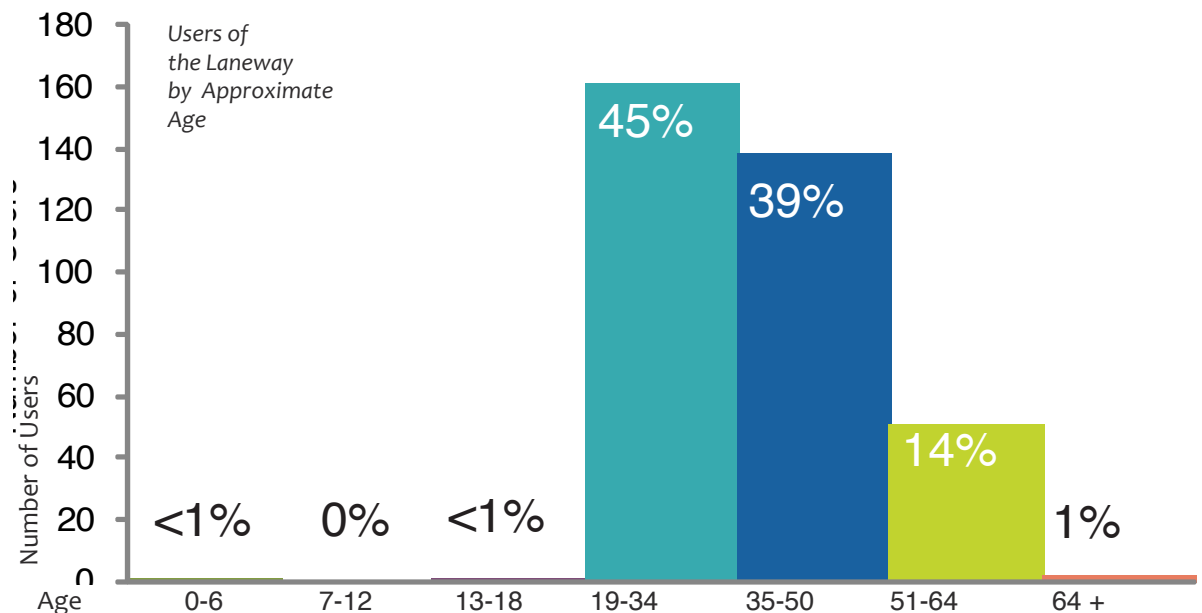
*Collecting information about how public spaces are used is critical to their improvement. Understanding who is using the space and often more importantly, who's not using the space, helps to shed light on what improvements need to be made. Data help to build the case for why investment and improvements need to be made and create a "baseline" of information from which you can measure your success.*

### The Laneway Site Observations

With the help of community volunteers, site observations were conducted at the Laneway in both the winter and summer, and more than 360 users were recorded. A simple social observation chart (which is available in the Toolbox section of this report) was used to record who uses the Laneway, how they use it and when.

### Users

During the site assessments, 8-80 Cities estimated the age of the Laneway users. Compared with demographic data from the neighbourhood, seniors and people under the age of 18 are significantly underrepresented at the site. While these groups make up approximately 29% of the local population, only 4 individuals of the total 265 observed were within these age categories.

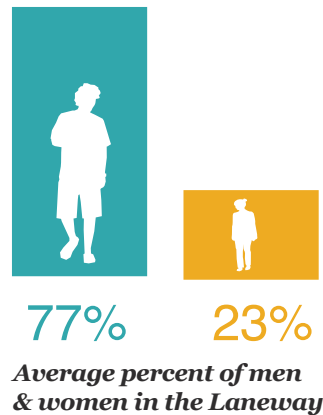


“In God we trust, all others bring data.”

- One of NYC Mayor Bloomberg's favorite phrases



## THE LACK OF WOMEN, OLDER ADULTS, YOUTH AND CHILDREN IN THE LANEWAY IS EVIDENCE THAT IT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED



### *Did you know...*

*In NYC's Bryant Park, staff takes a daily count of users the park. If they observe less than 50% females they take action. Some strategies used to attract women include offering immaculate public washrooms with fresh cut flowers, yoga classes and knitting classes.*



### Women are an “indicator species”

When it comes to assessing public spaces, women are an excellent indicator of how well a place is working. Women tend to be more discriminating and have a lower level of tolerance for spaces that are disorderly, dirty or unsafe.

Due to the unwelcoming atmosphere, it came as no surprise that there were fewer men than women in the Laneway. However, the difference in the proportion of men to women was even greater than we expected, with women making up only 23% of people observed.

Continued monitoring of the age and gender user share is an important tool for measuring the success of a space and any future changes to the site.





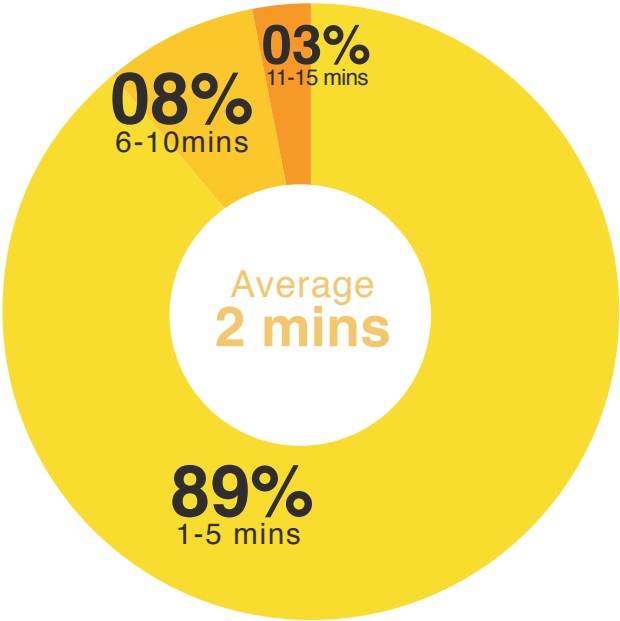
Time Spent in the Laneway

*Our observations showed that walking through and smoking were the most popular activities in both the summer and winter.*

While the pedestrian activity was low by comparison to neighbouring streets, there are still a number of employees, local residents and delivery people who currently use the Laneway as a resting place or a shortcut to nearby streets and services. Even given the poor conditions of the Laneway, we often observed staff who were looking for a short respite from the busy workday using the laneway as a quiet place away from the hustle and bustle of Yonge St.

Observed Activities

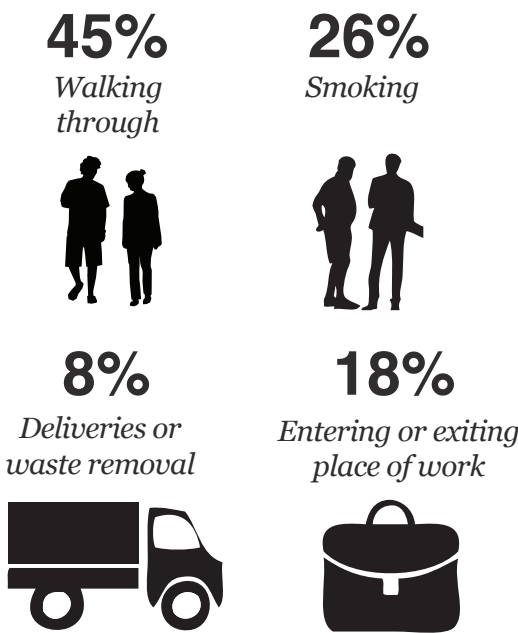
Not surprisingly, the people we observed in the Laneway didn't stay for long periods of time. Focusing on infrastructure and activities to invite staying activity will help to animate the space and make it a safe and inviting destination.



\* Percent of 96 people surveyed  
*Average time spent in the Laneway*

132 USERS / HOUR  
WERE OBSERVED  
DURING THE SUMMER

50 USERS / HOUR  
WERE OBSERVED  
DURING THE WINTER



*Activities observed in the Laneway*







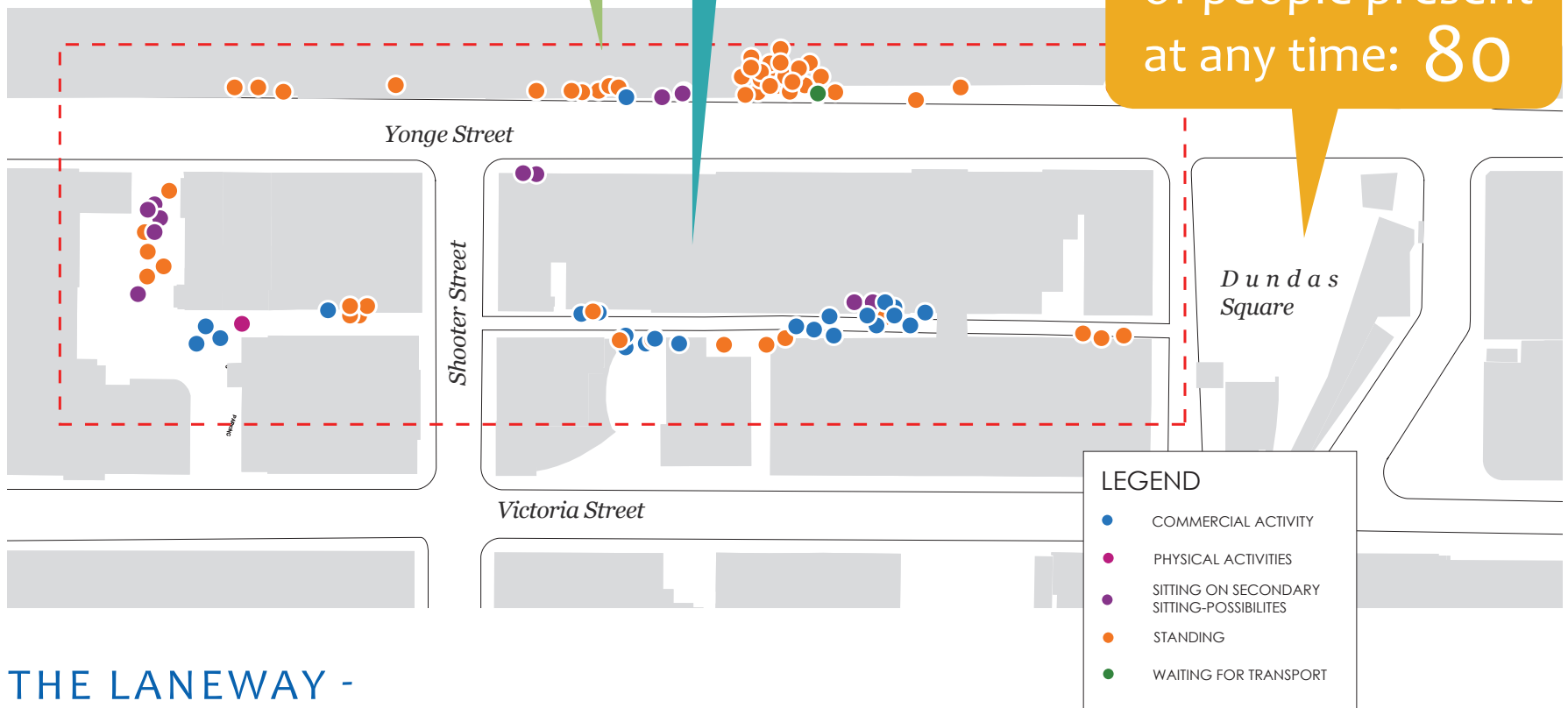




Average number  
of pedestrians on  
Yonge Street: 1080/hr

Average number of  
pedestrians in  
the Laneway: 11/hr

Average number  
of people present  
at any time: 80



## THE LANEWAY - CLOSE TO WHERE THE ACTION IS

*Even though the Laneway has low pedestrian numbers and little staying activity, there is great potential to draw on the great number of people on Yonge Street and at Dundas Square. The Laneway has the potential to offer a unique, human scaled atmosphere with different uses and activities that would complement the public spaces and streets in the neighbourhood.*

### Where does the activity take place?

The map to the left shows kinds of activity and where they occurred over the course of the day. Most standing activity occurred where there is an entrance or a setback in the building facades.



## Ideas & Recommendations

*Recommendations and ideas were collected from community members through mapping activities, facilitated group conversations, interviews and idea sharing activities. 8-80 Cities recorded and analyzed the data in order to create the summary of the findings which is presented below.*

### Recommendations by Themes

The chart below is based on over 130 specific ideas or recommendations collected by 8-80 Cities through the process of community engagement. The chart indicates trends in themes related to the recommendations in order to help identify and set community priorities.



#### Communication & Engagement

Ideas related specifically to improving communication and engagement with the public in relation to the Laneway (i.e., signage, on-line events calendar, website, etc.)



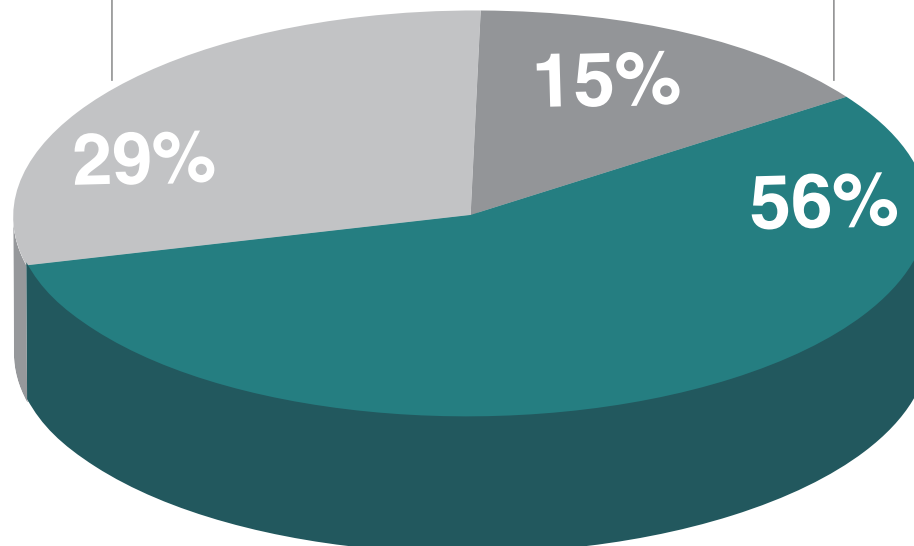
#### Community Events & Activities

Ideas related to the development of activities, programmes and events to engage community members in the Laneway.



#### Infrastructure & Facilities

Ideas related to the addition or improvement of physical infrastructure or facilities in the Laneway.





## 28% Beautification & Maintenance

Suggestions related to improving the aesthetics of the Laneway through improved maintenance, facade improvements, art and greenery.



## 11% Entertainment

Ideas related to bringing entertainment to the Laneway such as live music, temporary art installations or small theater performances.



SPECIFIC TYPES OF RECOMMENDATIONS STOOD OUT IN THE DATA, SUCH AS THOSE RELATED TO IMPROVING THE AESTHETICS OF THE LANEWAY, AND ANIMATING THE SPACE WITH FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT.

## 7% Food & Drink

Ideas related to providing a gastronomic experience in the Laneway through initiatives such as food kiosks, cafe stands, or new patios for existing restaurants.





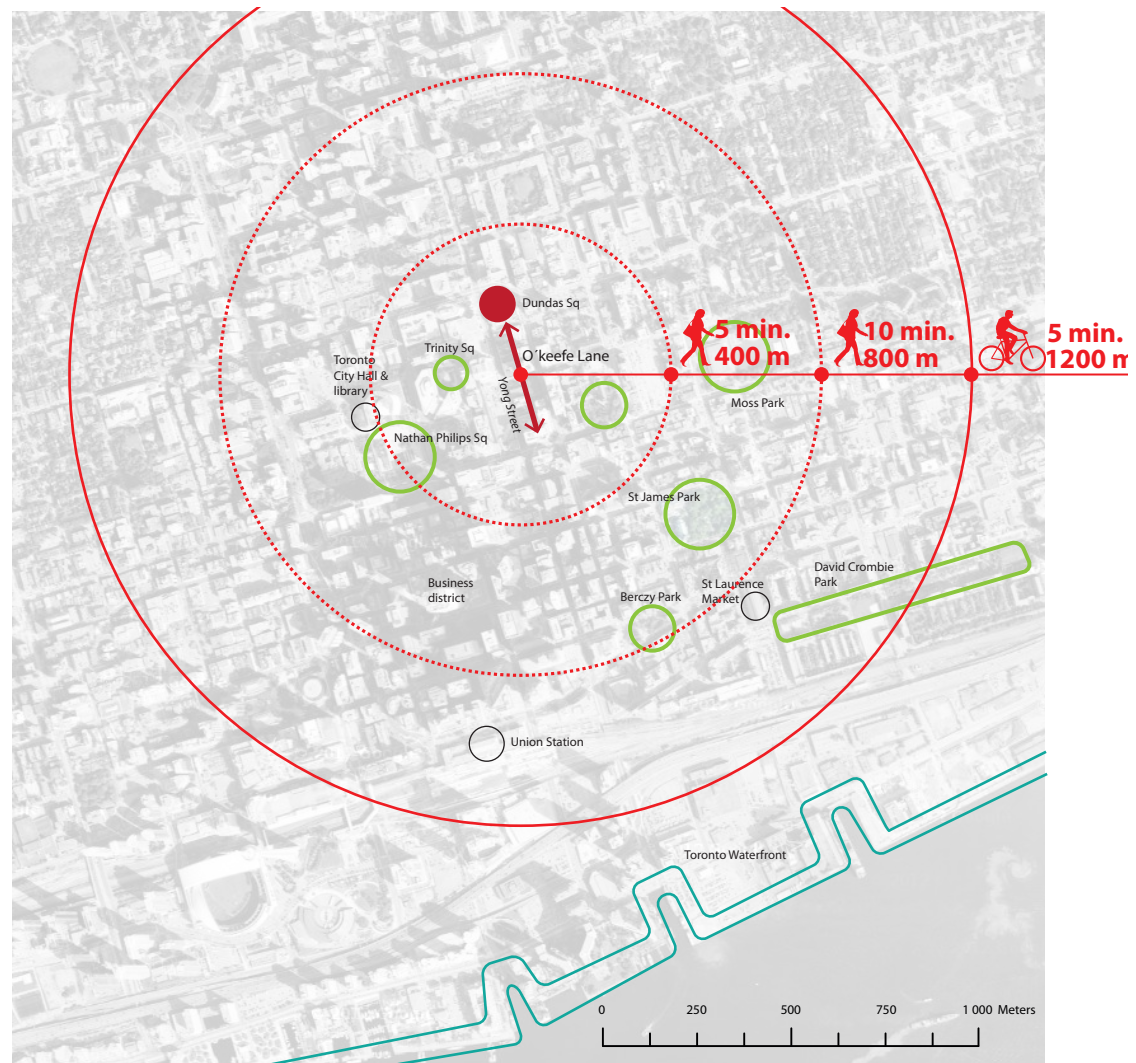
## A PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK.....

*A street or public space does not exist as an island. It is set within the context of the connecting streets, the local neighbourhood and the city. Streets and public places should be thought of as part of a network of spaces related to the greater picture. How streets and public spaces are linked to surrounding destinations is part of the experienced quality of the space. When connections are improved, everything that is linked will benefit from the improvement. Upgrading laneways in a grid system of streets, like in Toronto, improves connectivity and adds an extra layer of human scale street environment where new activities and experiences can be explored.*

The more attractive and safe the connections, the farther people will choose to walk or bike.

### The Laneway - A Prime Location

The Laneway is in a prime location. It's very close to a series of major destinations in the city. There is great potential for the Laneway to become a vibrant active space, drawing on the surrounding activity. Many people would benefit from the space, including visitors, students, and people working and living in the area.





**The Laneway - Strengthening the Public Space Network**

By upgrading key local connections and adding the Laneway to the street network, destinations in the area can be linked together with a strong network of attractive streets. Public spaces and destinations can be formed. “Celebrate Yonge”, the 2012 summer pilot project that pedestrianized a portion of Yonge Street, is a great example of creating a more people friendly street network in the city. Transforming the Laneway into a people-friendly destination could be used as a best practice that could be replicated across the city.



Dundas Square



Yonge Street



Massey Hall



St. Michael's Hospital

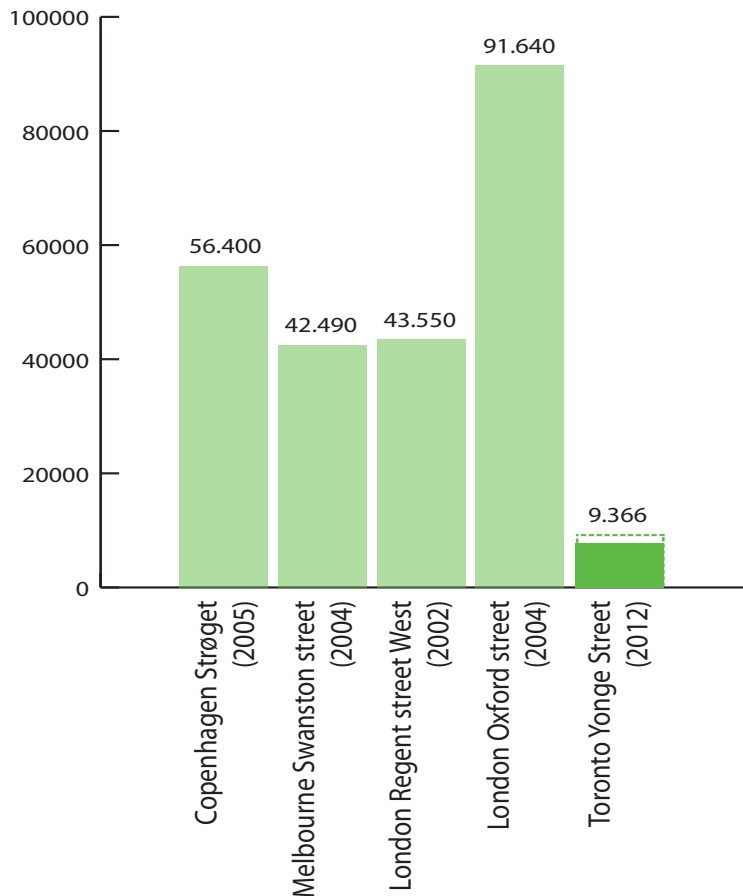


## TORONTO STREETS ARE UNDERPERFORMING

By comparing Yonge Street to other main streets in the world, it is evident that there is a significant lack of staying activity in the street. Yonge Street is mainly used for moving from A to B, with very few opportunities to sit and stop. By providing more opportunities to sit, rest and stay, the streets of Toronto could be greatly improved and would accommodate a wider variety of uses, activities and opportunities for enjoyment!

Streets: They're not only for driving and walking!

*Streets and laneways are not only for transportation but also great public spaces for staying, meeting, shopping, relaxing and enjoying the city.*



## TOTAL PEDESTRIANS ON A WEEKDAY FROM 10AM-6PM

Surveys conducted in Toronto are based on a smaller amount of data than the other examples. In order to get a more accurate picture of how the streets of Toronto are performing, more data should be collected. The pedestrian survey for Yonge Street was made between 10:00-16:00, in order to be able to compare data, the last two hours of pedestrian activity for Yonge Street has been extrapolated.

Surveys of Yonge street are made Wednesday 4 July 2012 between 9-16; 23 degrees, sunny with a light breeze. Surveys of other streets shown in the graph were made on summer weekdays in good weather conditions.



Strøget, Copenhagen



Lots of opportunities to sit and stay, and a high quality environment creates a street where many people choose to spend time.

**30%**  
Staying activity;  
standing, sitting on  
benches and café chairs,  
commercial activity and  
physical activity



**70%**  
Walking



3 times more  
staying activities in  
Strøget, Copenhagen  
than on Yonge Street,  
Toronto

**STRØGET, COPENHAGEN**  
\*7,984 pedestrians/hr; 13:00-14:00 on a  
weekday. 200 pedestrians present at 13.30 in  
100 yd. \*188 activities at 13.30 on a weekday.  
  
Based on surveys made 2008

Yonge Street , Toronto



Few staying opportunities and poor pedestrian quality and comfort are part of the reason that staying and pedestrian activity are low.

**11%**  
Staying activity;  
standing, sitting on  
benches and café chairs,  
commercial activity and  
physical activity



**89 %**  
Walking



2% WAITING for TRANSPORT  
2% COMMERCIALLY ACTIVE  
9% SITTING ON SECONDARY  
SEATING OPPORTUNITIES  
  
87% STANDING

**YONGE STREET, TORONTO**  
\* 1,560 Pedestrians/hr 13:00-14:00 on a weekday.  
39 pedestrians present at 13.30 in 100 yd.  
\*15 activities at 13.30 on a weekday.

## Software Uses, Activities & Identity

*Streets can be so much more than just spaces that facilitate movement; they can actually help individuals and communities be healthier and happier. Unfortunately, many of our streets are unfunctional and not living up to their potential as hubs of social interaction. How can we do better?*

When evaluating and planning for streets and other public spaces, it is important to not only focus on the physical qualities of the space; after all a great street is so much more than the pavement, traffic signals and sidewalks. Looking beyond the “hardware” and focusing also on the “software” of the place—the uses, activities, and unique character is equally and in some cases even more important for creating a vibrant and healthy street.

\* Cohen, Marsh, Williamson, Derose, Martinez, Setodji & Thom McKenzie. Parks and physical activity: Why are some parks used more than others?

## WHEN IT COMES TO SOFTWARE, ASK YOURSELF...

What makes this street unique?

Are there events & activities that will attract people of different ages? Ethnicities? Income levels?

What do people want to do here?

What kind of local cultural activities could be supported in the space?

What kind of social capital is or could be harnessed here?

Are there different things to do throughout the day? Week? Year?

*By answering and understanding the types of activities that people would like to do in the space, you can then start to think of the specific infrastructure that can support those functions, and not the other way around. This is the difference between creating a great public space versus a great design.*







The Laneway Software Programme Calendar

Based on ideas from the community, this conceptual calendar uses images from around the world to exemplify the different layers of activity that can take place in the Laneway throughout the year.

Entertainment



Winter  
festival

Movie in the Park  
Autograph signings



Live Music  
Theater Performance



Community  
Building



LANEWAY  
CLEAN UP  
SUGAR FEST



COMMUNITY  
Gardening



Spontaneous  
Activities



Lunch outside



Public art  
Exercising!



TAI-CHI



Formal  
Activities



Light festival



agriculture  
lessons



Craft market

Yoga lessons



January

February

March

April

May

June





## Poetry in the park!

All ages and abilities  
feel welcomed at the  
Laneway and it reflects  
who they are. This  
should be done through  
activities, events, and  
visual aspect.  
- Workshop Participant



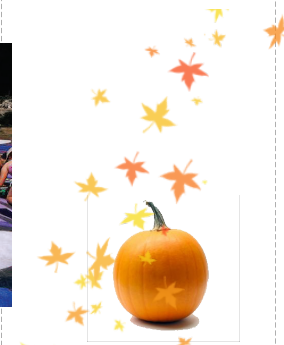
## Christmas Celebration



## Community Garage Sale Youth festival



## COMMUNITY Painting Walking tours Greening activities



## 5@7 DRINKS



## FRUIT CART



## Fire pit



## Farmers market



## Road Hockey



## Ice sculpture festival

July

August

September

October

November

December

## Community Action Planning

*Creating a doable plan is the key to turning an idea into reality. 8-80 Cities uses a simple community action planning framework to help community members focus on one idea and brainstorm a plan for implementation. The idea highlighted below was developed as a way to improve waste management in the Laneway. Other ideas from the action planning process have been incorporated directly into the report, such as greening the Laneway, introducing art and performance, and building connections with other destinations.*

### THE IDEA:

Internalize garbage storage to free up public space and improve the public's experience in the Laneway.

#### Step 1.

Contact a capable waste management company to conduct feasibility study and provide advice for an attractive & consolidated waste management strategy.

#### Step 2.

Develop a step-by-step stakeholder engagement strategy (i.e. businesses, staff, landlords, residents).

#### Step 3.

Hold a stakeholder meeting run by waste management company, the City of Toronto, 8-80 Cities etc.

#### Step 4.

Complete feasibility study, develop pilot project for a section of the Laneway, or move directly into full implementation.

#### Step 5.

Implement and begin transforming the Laneway!

SLUDGE  
PREVENTI  
PROGRAM

ART / LIG  
INSTALL  
GALLERY  
(WIN

POP -  
CAFÉS  
(WINTER



ON  
M

Bring people reasons  
to "stay" - Foster  
animation & improve  
safety.

Interact

e.g. seasonal,  
child-focused  
e.g. lighting compete  
water play, ice

HT  
ATIONS/  
Y  
TER-THEME)

Co-ordinating fractured  
ownership's business  
operators - Program

Beautifying

e.g. garbage bins  
• wiring  
• pipes  
• fire escapes

UP  
ER)

Internalizing  
garbage storage  
to free up  
public space

Event

- music  
- theatre  
- film  
- dance

- a  
- g  
- n  
- s



## Hardware Design & Physical Infrastructure

*Well-maintained infrastructure or “hardware” that supports a street’s uses and activities is an important component of creating a successful and well-used public space.*

Great streets offer a balance of functionality—helping people get from A to B, while also providing an enjoyable experience through infrastructure to support a variety of uses that serves the needs and desires of the community.



### SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN THINKING OF HARDWARE...

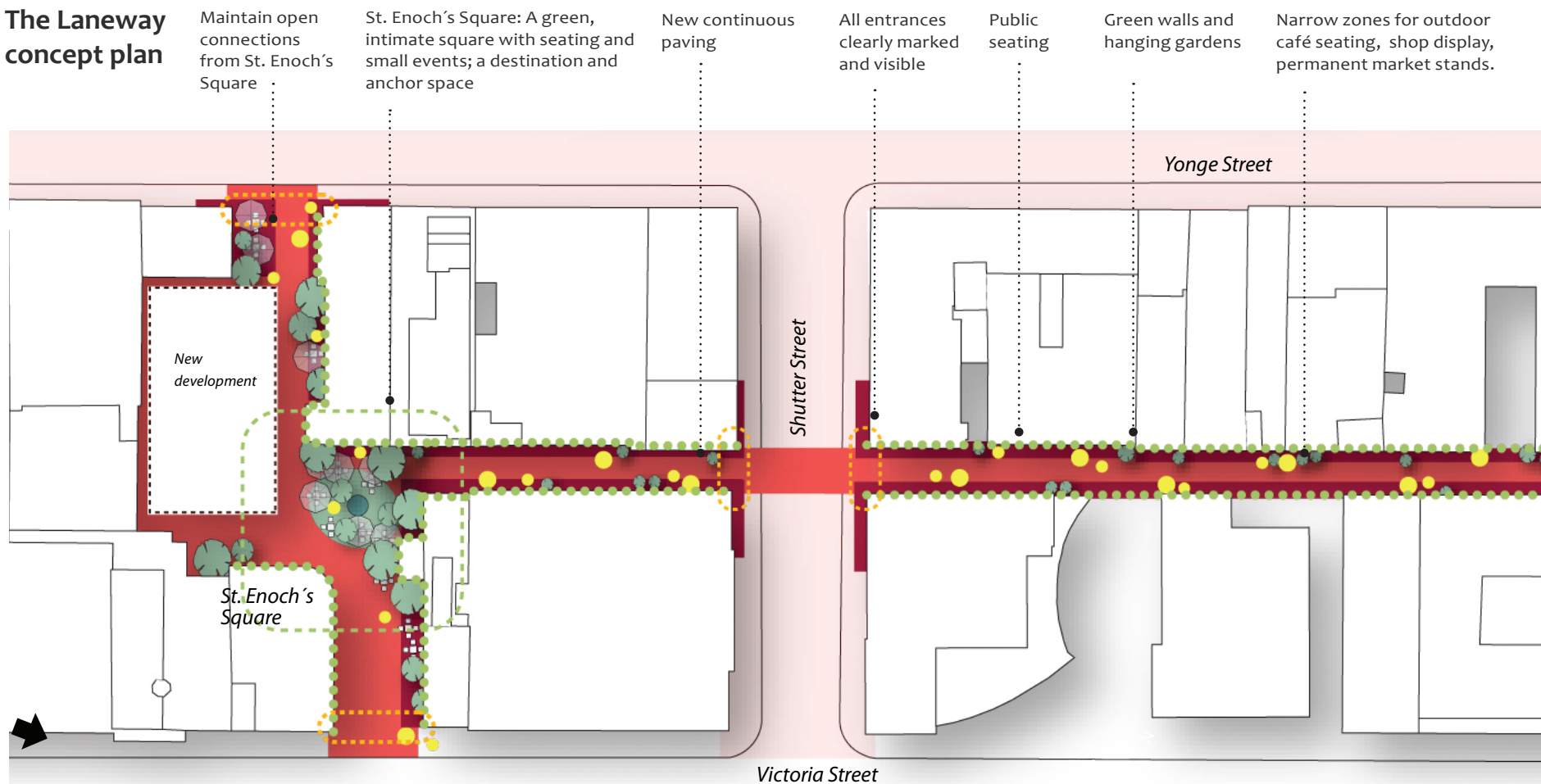
- Are there facilities for a variety of modes of transport. i.e. bike parking & transit shelters
- Is there infrastructure to support activities by all ages?
- Are there attractive places to sit & stay?
- Is there good lighting?
- Are there flexible and adaptable spaces and features that can support a variety of activities throughout the day/seasons?







## The Laneway concept plan



### 1 THE INTEGRATED LANEWAY

#### SHORT TERM

- Add interesting wayfinding and information signage.
- Hold events in the Laneway and encourage media coverage to establish a presence in people's minds.
- Paint the existing pavement to create a highly visible, cost effective temporary installation.

#### LONGER TERM

- Make entrances visible and intriguing from Dundas Square Shutter St., Yonge St., Victoria St.
- Create an anchor, a destination at St. Enoch's Square. Create a small, green intimate node as an alternative to Dundas Square.
- Create strong linkages from St. Enoch's Square to Yonge St. and Victoria St.
- Upgrade the paving to increase visibility and create a continuous space across Shutter St.
- Create a seamless and direct connection to Dundas Square by pedestrianising Dundas Square St between Yonge St. and Victoria St.

### 2 THE THEATRE LANEWAY

#### SHORT TERM

- Capitalize on the proximity to theatres and develop a theatre atmosphere with posters, information about plays, a place for actors to sign autographs, glimpses of current plays and shows, readings, projections, still photographs, poetry and music. Hold opening night & red carpet events, independent theatre performances.
- Outdoor film screenings

#### LONGER TERM

- Theme markets for literature, poetry, music, theatre.
- Create high-quality spaces for people working in the theatres to relax, and take a break.

### 3 ART & ENTERTAINMENT LANEWAY

#### SHORT TERM

- Get local artists to beautify the existing infrastructure, keeping the back laneway atmosphere.
- Arts and crafts markets.
- Temporary art exhibitions and events.
- Capitalize on the proximity to Massey Hall and programme small music performances in the Laneway and at St. Enoch's Square.

#### LONGER TERM

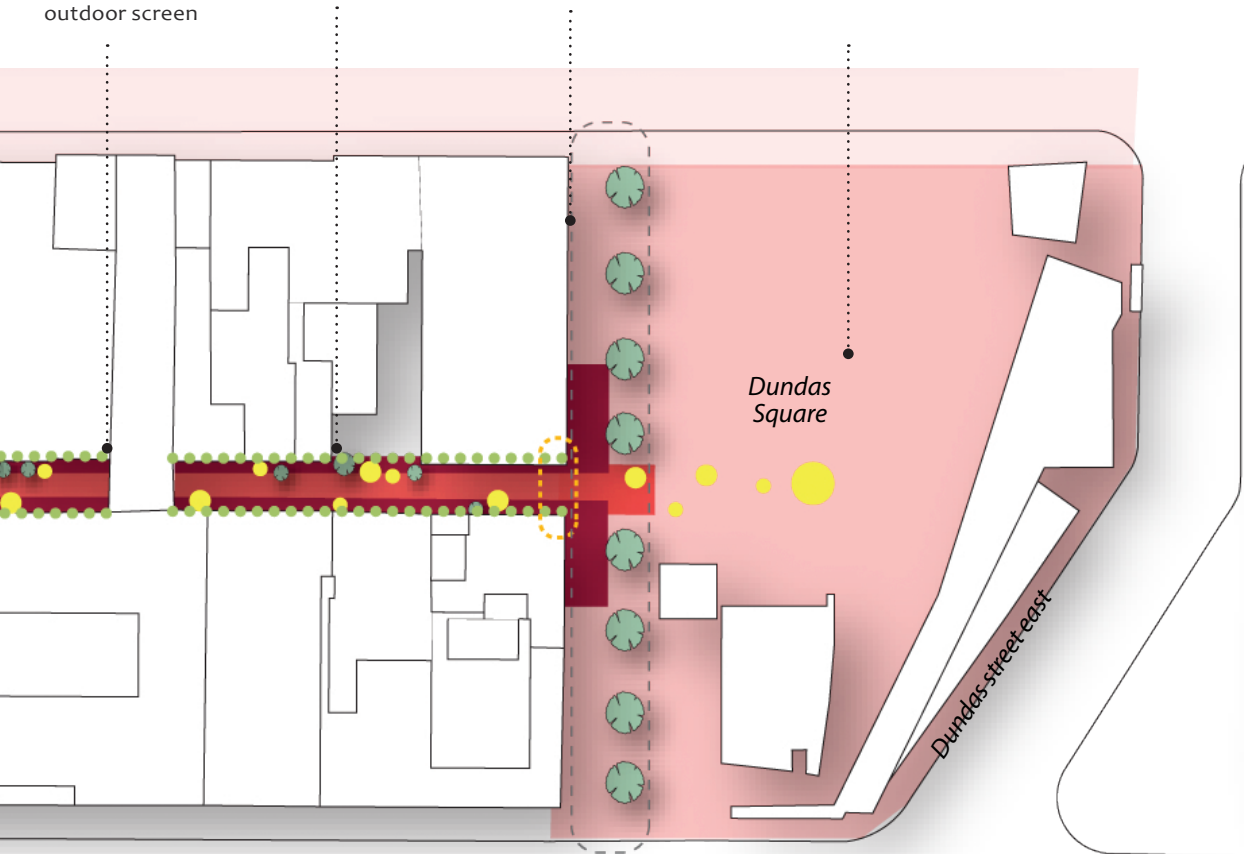
- Install lighting that contributes to the unique character and ambiance; artistic, interactive lighting that creates movement and entices people to walk through; changing over seasons.

Open up elevated walkway or use for film projections, outdoor screen

Temporary installations; art, markets, food kiosks, etc.

Dundas Square St. closed to traffic, outdoor cafe seating and greening.

Make the Laneway visible and attractive from Dundas Square



great food and tables where you can eat and picnic

shipping container cafes and restaurants



## 4 THE HEALTHY LANEWAY

### SHORT TERM

- Work with the city and local businesses to establish a plan to clean up the Laneway.
- Consolidate waste storage & pick-up; establish underground garbage collection.
- Temporary greening with planters, small scale vertical gardens and micro gardens.
- Create small spaces to sit and relax along the whole stretch of the Laneway.
- Healthy food carts/stand with fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Amenities, events and activities to encourage physical activity (i.e., pick-up basketball, road hockey event, dancing lessons)

### LONGER TERM

- Permanent laneway greening – large vertical gardens/green walls, street trees, storm water mitigation, rain water collection.
- Create a green hub at St. Enoch's Square; an intimate green and relaxing space with public outdoor cafe seating.
- Green Dundas Square. and adjacent streets with street trees, green walls and planters.
- Formalize public and commercial seating areas; improved pavement surface treatments, benches, cafe seating, patio heaters.

## 5 THE OPEN LANEWAY

### SHORT TERM

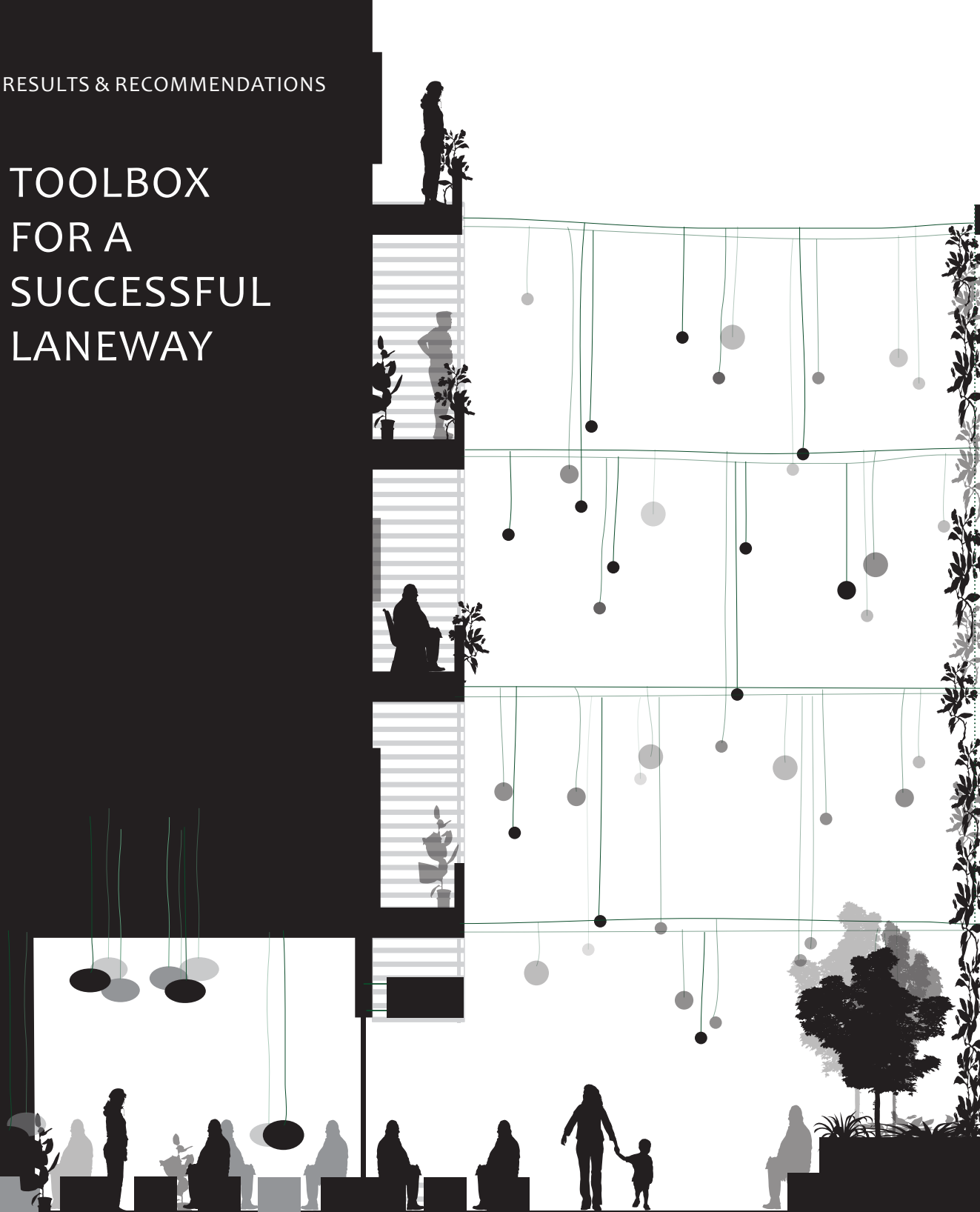
- New, human-scaled back entrances to existing shops; facade improvement grants should be considered as a way to facilitate improvements.
- Outdoor markets with rolling themes. Small scale and independent alternative to activities at Dundas Square.
- Temporary shipping container cafés and shops based on the example of Scadding Court Market in Toronto.

### LONGER TERM

- Stimulate conversion of garages and smaller units facing the lane with new commercial activity – cafés, independent shops, galleries, second hand stores, etc.
- Initiatives for cafés on adjacent streets to wrap around the corner in to the Laneway with patios and outdoor seating.



TOOLBOX  
FOR A  
SUCCESSFUL  
LANEWAY

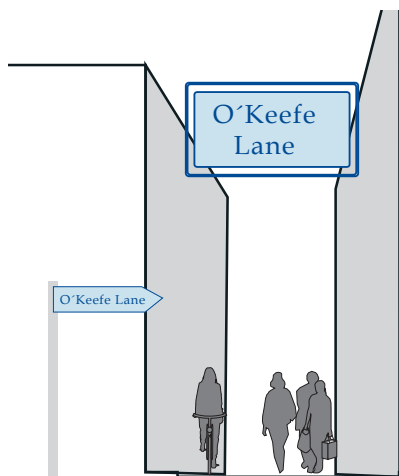


New active frontages with visible, attractive entrances and transparency into shops and restaurants

Zone for outdoor seating, shop displays and market stands

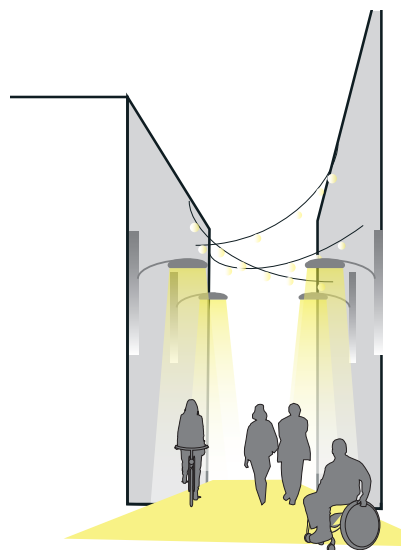
Zone for walking, cycling, emergency vehicles and coordinated deliveries

Zone for public seating, greenery



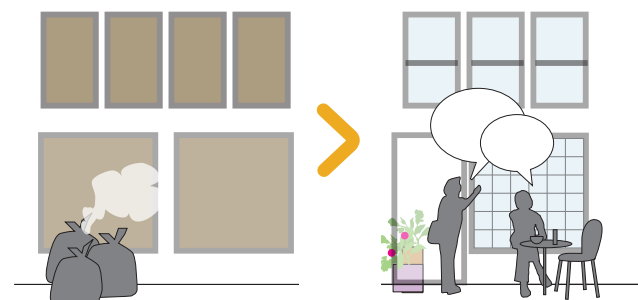
### SIGNAGE AND VISIBILITY

By naming alleys, we give them identity. From forgotten spaces, they become places in the community.



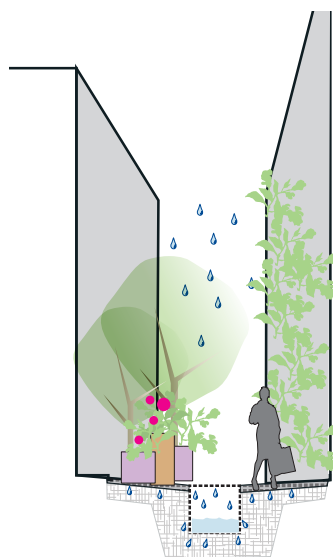
### LIGHTING & PAVING

Lighting and paving create ambience and identity, and at the same time making it safer and more accessible for everyone.



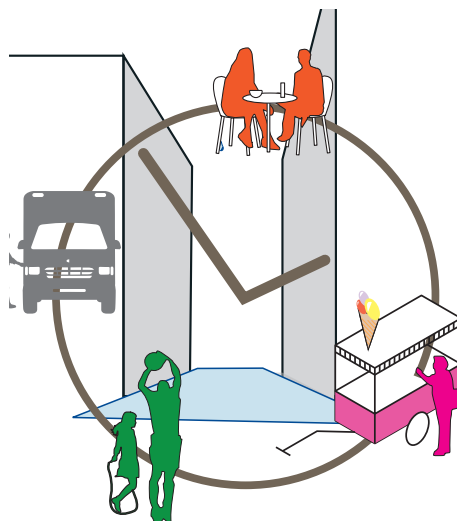
### OPEN FACADES

Doors and windows opening onto alleys are signs of use and safety for pedestrians. Stores and businesses bordering alleys become places of interest, drawing more pedestrians in.



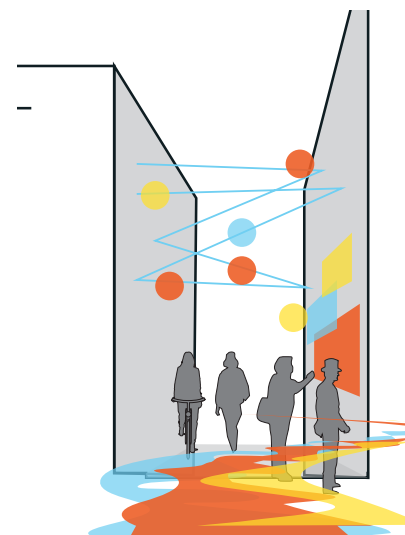
### GREEN CITY INITIATIVES

Adding plants and using alleys as part of the water management system makes the city more sustainable and creates a healthier and more pleasant environment in which to live.



### TIME MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAMMING

Laneways play an important role for business in terms of deliveries and waste removal. Efficient time management and coordination of services is a key to make room for more uses. Efficient management and programming not only open new possibilities but also makes the space ever-changing and exciting to come back to.



### ART AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES

Art, theatre, music and other community programmes activate, engage, educate and show that alleys are a cared-for and safe part of the community.



# RE-IMAGINE THE LANEWAY...

## ① THE INTEGRATED LANEWAY

The lane becomes visible both physically and mentally in people's minds as a small human-scale alternative to Yonge St. and Dundas Sq. A unique experience and a destination to explore! Human-scaled signs and entrances and new continuous paving visible to surrounding streets and spaces.

## ② THE THEATRE LANEWAY

The lane becomes the backbone, the backstage, the poster, and the window for the theatre district. Theatre atmosphere is brought in through posters, red carpet events and theatre performances. This is where you get the autograph from your favorite actor and get a peek view of the upcoming plays through projections and screening.

## ③ THE ART & ENTERTAINMENT LANEWAY

The Laneway becomes the platform for local and international artists. Existing inventory and infrastructure is transformed into ever-changing art exhibitions. In the evenings, artistic lighting and music creates a unique ambience. Every time you come here, there is something new to experience.

## ④ THE HEALTH LANEWAY

The Laneway becomes a retreat, a get away from the busy down-town pulse, giving visitors, residents, workers, hospital interns a place to relax and enjoy themselves. Green hanging gardens along the brick walls, spaces to sit and have a break or play chess. There is healthy food to buy and even possibilities to do some exercise at lunchtime! The Laneway adds to the walkability of the neighborhood, inviting more people into the streets to use active transportation and to take leisurely walks.

## ⑤ THE OPEN LANEWAY

Initiatives for new independent commercial activity, and for the buildings to open up with new entrances and windows, activating the Laneway and making it safe both in the day and evening. A garage is turned into a small coffee shop and permanent food stands appear. New back entrances to the shops on Yonge St. makes it easy to filter through.







## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1 Working Group

Establish a formal Laneway Working Group that has representation from the City of Toronto, local businesses, community based organizations and other interested groups with the purpose of working collaboratively to implement the community-led recommendations, actions and visions of this report.

### 2 Innovative Service Management

Developing an effective management system for deliveries and waste storage & removal is the first step in transforming the Laneway. The City, in collaboration with local business, service providers and local residents, will need to embrace a new and creative approach to service delivery in the Laneway that focuses on creating a people-friendly public laneway while maintaining necessary functionality.

### 3 A Pilot for People-Oriented Streets

Streets play an important role in our cities as meeting places, spaces for enjoyment and recreation; they are not only for walking or driving from A-B. Building on the success of “Celebrate Yonge”, the Laneway is an ideal opportunity to pilot a bold and transformative project, which can be replicated in public laneways across the city in an effort to create a healthier, more people-friendly and sustainable Toronto.

### 4 Embrace Green

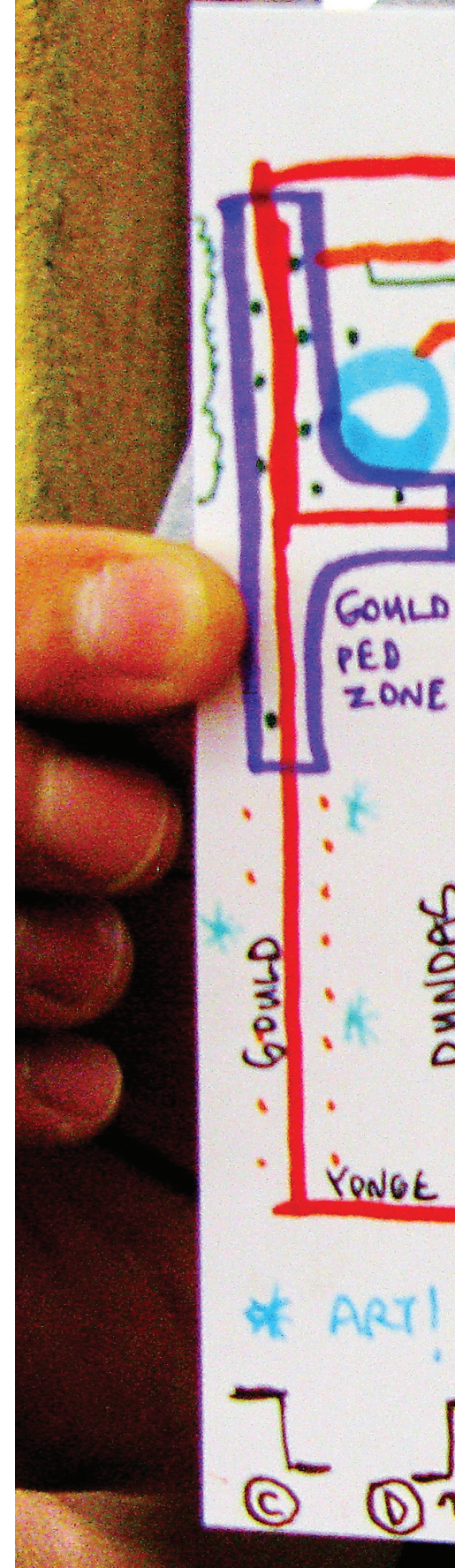
According to City of Toronto staff, the Laneway may offer an excellent opportunity for greening due to more soil availability than on conventional streets. This opportunity should be capitalized on through the introduction of native plant species, vertical gardens and other innovative greening programmes.

### 5 Create Something Unique

Transformations in the Laneway should strive to create a unique identity, one that is an expression of the artistic and cultural flavour of the area. The Laneway should offer a new experience for visitors and people living in the area—one that is human-scaled, and focused on sustainable and healthy lifestyles, that is complimentary to the experience on Yonge St. & Dundas Square.

### 6 Public Space Network

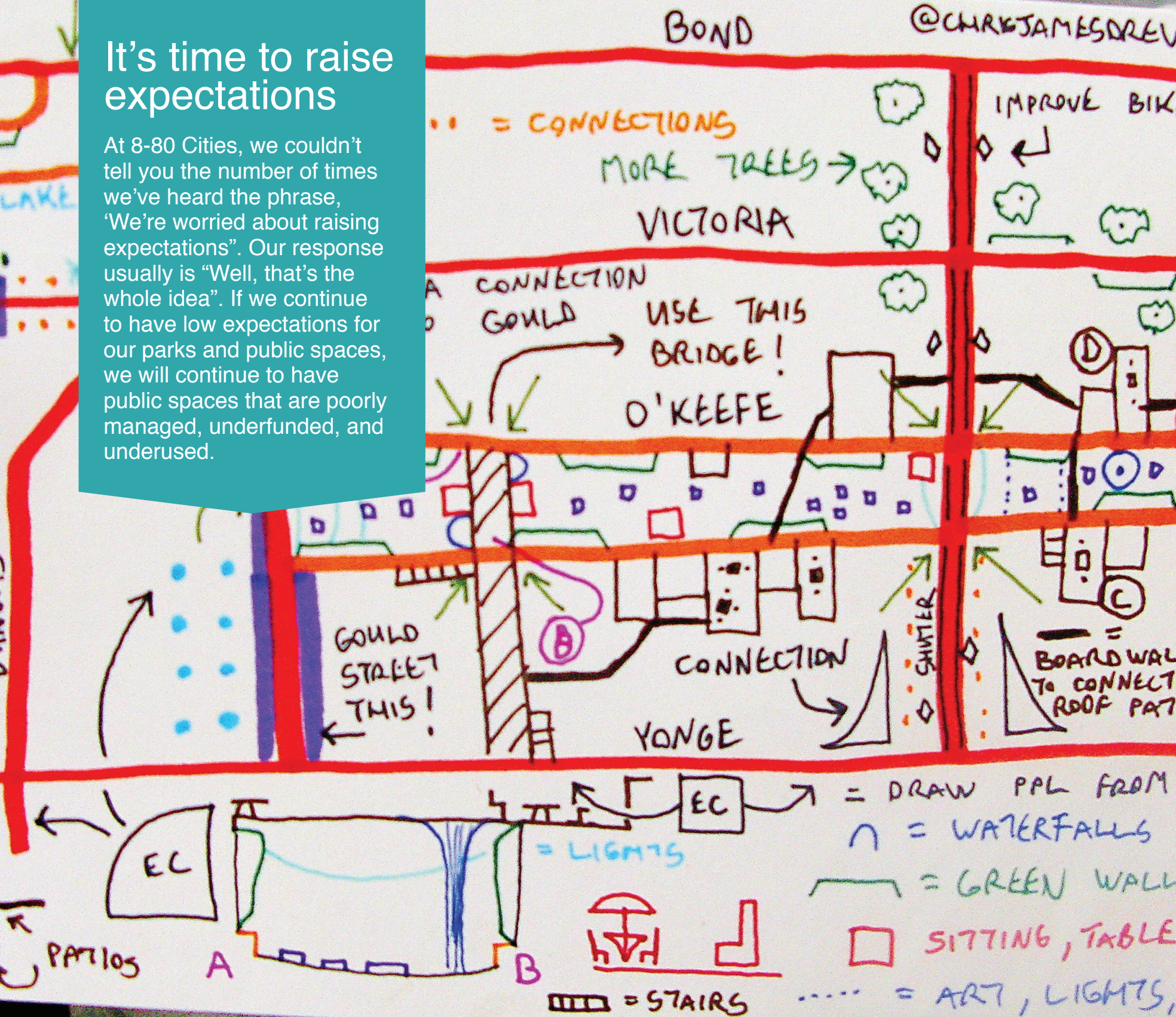
As an extension of the Laneway project, in collaboration with city departments, a public space network plan should be developed in order to create a more accessible, enjoyable and safe city. The plan would help to link destinations and key public spaces, while improving the pedestrian, transit user and bike rider experience. A strategic public space plan will help to identify characteristics, priorities and potential uses and improvements of the streets and public spaces in Toronto, creating a holistic and complimentary public space network.





# It's time to raise expectations

At 8-80 Cities, we couldn't tell you the number of times we've heard the phrase, "We're worried about raising expectations". Our response usually is "Well, that's the whole idea". If we continue to have low expectations for our parks and public spaces, we will continue to have public spaces that are poorly managed, underfunded, and underused.





## IT'S BEEN DONE BEFORE! EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

*By looking at different examples of laneway transformations from around the world, we can learn from their strategies, build on their successes and gain inspiration to create a world-class Laneway project unique for Toronto.*

Vibrant, people-friendly laneways and alleys around the world provide excellent examples of the exciting atmosphere alleys can help create in an urban environment. These special spaces encourage tourists and locals to explore the city, to engage in finding out what a city has to offer. Laneways can easily be part of a green city network, a bicycle network, or a city-wide art programme. Alleys offer very different urban space experiences compared to the primary street network, providing intriguing opportunities to explore. The intimate lanes can create a secondary network in the city, with their own separate identities. Much of the character of these international laneway examples is derived from their origins as service lanes providing access to industrial and commercial buildings. Laneways can take on many different identities, bringing the artistic and playful together with the pragmatic.

Toronto's Laneway has a fantastic potential to develop in to a vibrant public space for walking, cycling, engaging in art and culture, enjoying a gastronomic experience, and meeting with friends and neighbours. With its central location and fine scale it would be an excellent compliment to the downtown street and public space network.



### MELBOURNE

#### **Interconnected Laneway Network**

Alleys in Melbourne have been transformed from forgotten laneways full of debris to a vital part of the Melbourne city plan. Breaking up the large grid, the alleys give pedestrians shelter from the streets, allowing additional opportunities for cafes and shops, and downsizing the urban scale of the city. The alleys give the city a feel of excitement and discovery, allowing for shortcuts.

The City of Melbourne has developed a series of Laneway programmes;

1. Arts programme – commissions for the laneway
2. Traffic calming and footpath/street upgrades
3. Designated graffiti zones – areas where graffiti is encouraged, greatly lifting its quality.







## ➤ SEATTLE, POST ALLEY

### Market Alley

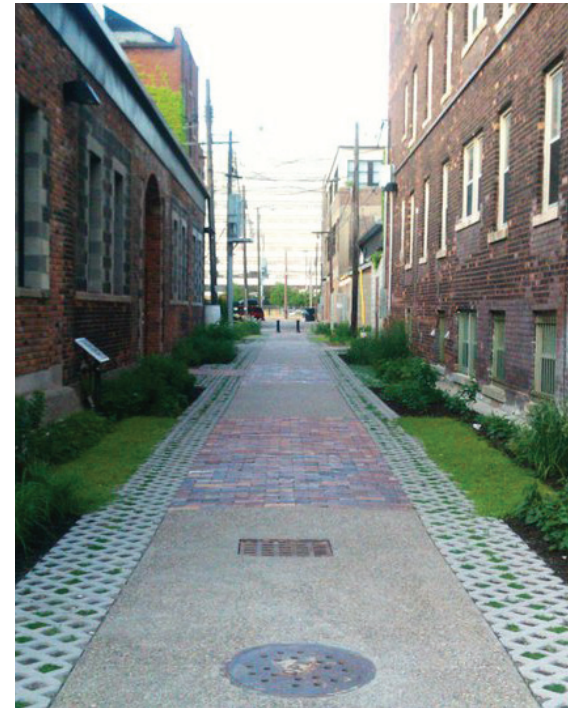
Pike Place Market is a publicly owned market in the heart of Downtown Seattle, operating booths for local farmers, fishermen, merchants, and craftsmen. Post Alley crosses through the market, and is the most famous alley in Seattle, thriving on the rich culture of the market. Post Alley is lined with shops, restaurants, cafes, and market stands. It's narrow lanes are perfect for pedestrians, and its texture and color make it one of the most beloved sites in Seattle for both tourists and locals.



## ➤ SEATTLE, NORD ALLEY

### Public Space Alley

Led by the International Sustainability Institute, a group of neighbours has come together to make a normal alley into a special community space. Adjacent to Occidental Park, Nord Alley has furniture and plants to warm it up, while still leaving the service corridors open. During the World Cup, the Tour de France, and other events, a large screen is set up for the public and vehicular access is restricted. Nord Alley also lights up on the nights of Seattle Art walks, hosting parties and events, making this one of the best kept secrets in Seattle.



## ➤ DETROIT, GREEN ALLEY

### Public Space Alley

After renovating Detroit's former Model T show-room into the "Green Garage" an off-shoot project was undertaken by the City and community organizations to transform the adjacent alley into an inviting place for people

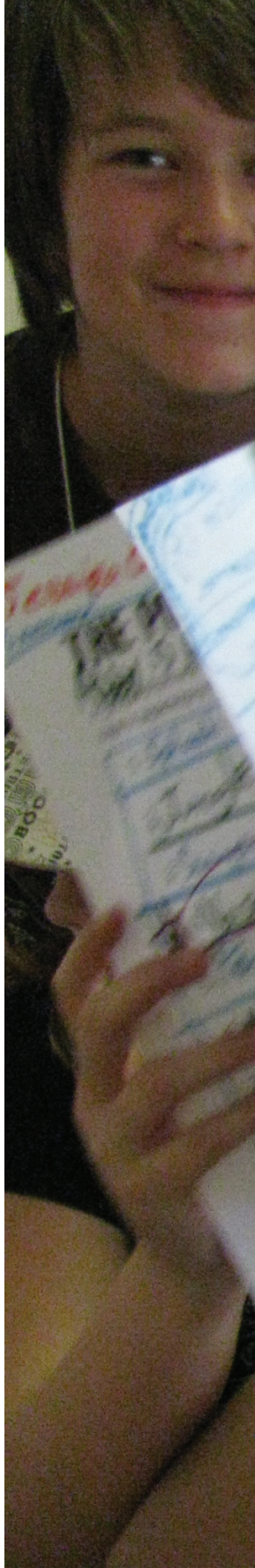
Now known as the "Green Alley", the space was transformed from an unloved service alley with overflowing dumpsters to a place for community dinners, public art installations and an example of green infrastructure. Green Alley features native plant species and permeable pavement to absorb storm water run-off, re-used glazed brick pavers from the early 1900's, and low energy induction lighting to contribute to safety and ambiance. It is also a "safe pedestrian zone" with carefully managed service and vehicular access.



# 4. PLACE MAKING TOOLS

*This section contains a variety of simple tools that can be used by the community to continue assessing and improving the Laneway.*

*We also hope the Make a Place for People Project at the Laneway will inspire other communities to use these tools to undertake developing community-led improvement strategies at other parks and public spaces across the province.*







1. Jungle Gym  
2. Water Park/Skating Park  
★ 3. Food Stand  
★ 4. Stage for Entertainment  
5. Picnic benches  
★ 6. Comfy and bigger benches  
7. More flowers! ☀  
8. birdhouses! 🏠  
9. Gardener!  
★ 10. Elderly Helper 🧓

- THE POWER OF 10**
- In groups of five, write down 10 NEW things you would like to see in the park. Make an equation to describe it.
1. Whose wheels? ⚙
  2. slides
  3. slides
  4. fod (small) ⚙
  5. Palm tree ⚙
  6. dried grass ⚙
  7. the



Place Survey

Please circle the answer that best describes you. Site: \_\_\_\_\_



1. Parks and public spaces contribute to my overall

Physical health	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Mental health	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

2. I visit this place...

Never	Once a year	2-5 times a year	More than 5 times a year	On a weekly basis	Every day
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If you answered "never" skip to question 4.

3. This place is...

Safe	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Comfortable	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Well used	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Accessible	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Well programmed (with events/activities)	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Active in the winter	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

4. Gender: Male Female

5. Age: 0-12 13-18 19-34 35-50 51-65 65+



# Public Space Observation Table

This tool can be used to assess the people and activities at any park or public space. By analyzing the data, you can begin to identify trends and build a picture of how the space is working.

	Site									Target Area/Sub Unit												
	Name																					
	Date		Time of Arrival								Time of Departure											
	Weather																					
	<b>Directions:</b> Each observation recording session should be no less than 1hr long. Sessions should be conducted in the morning, afternoon, evening and night on both a weekday(s) or weekend. If the site is too large or too busy to observe effectively, the site should be broken into smaller sub-units. If people are in groups, fill in the user information individually then circle the members of the group. Feel free to add new codes in the 'other codes' section if you feel it is important.																					
	<b>Ethnicity Codes:</b> B = black, W = White, A=Asian, SA = South Asian, L=Latino U= undetermined																					
	<b>Other Codes:</b> Homeless = H, Disabled = D																					
	Gender		Age							Codes		Activity										
	Male	Fem	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-34	35-50	51-65	65+	Ethni city	Other codes											time spent at public space
1																						
2																						
3																						
4																						
5																						
6																						
7																						
8																						
9																						
10																						





## Action Planning Instructions

Creating a doable plan is the key to turning an idea into reality . In your group, come up with a plan for how your idea can be implemented within the next year or two.

The majority of your planning time should be spent on the HOW? question.

### 1. What?

In the space below, briefly explain what your idea is.

### 2. Why?

Briefly explain why your idea is important.

### 3. Who?

Who needs to be involved in the project? What partnerships need to be established for it to be successful?

### 4. When?

When will it be implemented? When will it be used?  
How frequently? What season? What day of the week? What hours?

### 5. Where?

On the map provided, indicate where your idea will take place/be located.

### 6. How?

Without writing anything down, take a few minutes to discuss as a group what needs to be done to implement your idea. After you have discussed your plan, try to break it down into manageable steps. It might be easiest to think in chunks of time, but it is up to you. You can add more steps if necessary, but try to limit yourselves to no more than 6 steps.

## STEP 1

## STEP 2

## STEP 3







# Share an Idea

One of the simplest ways to collect information about a park or public space is to ask community members to “share an idea”. Provide small sheets of paper and a bunch of colourful markers and let the ideas flow!

Share an Idea 

Share an Idea 

Share an Idea 

Share an Idea 



## Simple Site Evaluation Tool

When thinking about any park or public space, from a small neighbourhood square to a large urban park, ask yourself the questions below. By thinking carefully about how people will get to the place, what they'll do when they will get there, what kind of infrastructure is, and who manages or takes care of the space, you can start to assess what's working, what's not, and what could be improved.

### WHO TAKES CARE OF THIS PLACE?

Is there evidence of volunteerism?

Do you see any maintenance workers or staff?

Is there contact information posted so you can reach someone in charge of the space?

Is there an active or passive security presence?

### WHAT'S THERE TO DO?

Is there a mix of stores and services nearby?

Are there opportunities for people to be physically active?

Are there inviting places for people to rest or relax?

Is there a diversity of people?

Are there activities for people of all ages?

### HOW DID I GET HERE?

Is the place visible from a distance?

Is it accessible to wheelchairs and strollers?

Can you easily walk or bike to the place?

Is there a paved path?

Is the path clear of snow, debris, or water?

Are there "desire lines" or beaten paths?

### WHAT'S HERE?

Are there comfortable places to sit?

What kind of lighting is there?

Is there a paved or gravel path?

Are there public washrooms? Are they clean and inviting?

Is there somewhere to get a snack or drink?





## Software Programme Calendar

Use this template to plan an effective range of activities, events and programming for your public space throughout the year.

Entertainment

Community  
building

Spontaneous  
activities

Formal  
activities



8-80 Cities is a non-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. We are dedicated to contributing to the transformation of cities into places where people can walk, bike, access public transit and visit vibrant parks and public places.

Our approach is to engage communities at all levels and across multiple sectors to inspire the creation of cities that are easily accessible, safe and enjoyable for all.



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