



The
DOABLE
 Neighbourhood Project



BRAMPTON,
 ONTARIO

do·a·ble
'dooəb(ə)l/

adj.

capable of being done or carried out

- Merriam-Webster Dictionary

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The Project

WHO IS 8-80 CITIES?

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 people and communities across multiple sectors to inspire the creation of cities that are easily accessible, safe and enjoyable for all. We achieve our mission through grant projects, advocacy work and our innovative services.

8-80 Philosophy

If you create a city that's good for an 8 year old and good for an 80 year old, you will create a successful city for everyone.
This is an 8-80 City.



Walk & Bike · Parks & Streets · For All

8-80 Cities®



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WHAT IS THE DOABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECT (DNP)?

Implementation of pilot projects to show, in the short-term, how communities can become great places for walking, cycling, animating park/public spaces and sociability.

The Doable Neighbourhood Project is a results-oriented initiative to create healthier communities in Ontario. Our approach is to build on community assets and empower local leaders to implement short-term, high impact pilot projects that enhance the neighbourhood’s walkability, bikeability, and access to parks and public spaces. Although temporary, pilot projects were used to demonstrate that grassroots efforts can lead to long-term cultural shifts towards healthier cities. The scale of Canada’s public health and transportation systems calls for immediate and urgent action.

Research has proven that the built environment and public health are intricately linked. The way we plan, design, and build our neighbourhoods has a direct impact on our ability to develop healthy lifestyles and habits. In Canada we have spent the last century building cities to accommodate the automobile. Our growing reliance on the automobile has led to a culture of inactivity. Today in Canada, seven out of ten adults and nine out of ten children do not get the daily recommended amounts of physical activity.¹ According to the Canadian Health Measures Survey, 17% of Canadian children and youth are overweight and an additional 9% are obese.² These sedentary lifestyles not only affect our health, but also our pocketbooks.

Everyone has the right to mobility. But, when you build cities for cars, you get more cars. The lack of safe walking or cycling networks and accessible public transit systems leaves 20% of Ontarians without reliable means

of transportation. In Ontario, 14% of the population is between 5-14 years old (ineligible for a driver’s license), and 5% is over the age of 74 (beginning to limit their driving). As a result, 2.4 million Ontarians are disadvantaged in terms of transportation choices, not counting those that choose not to drive or cannot afford an automobile.

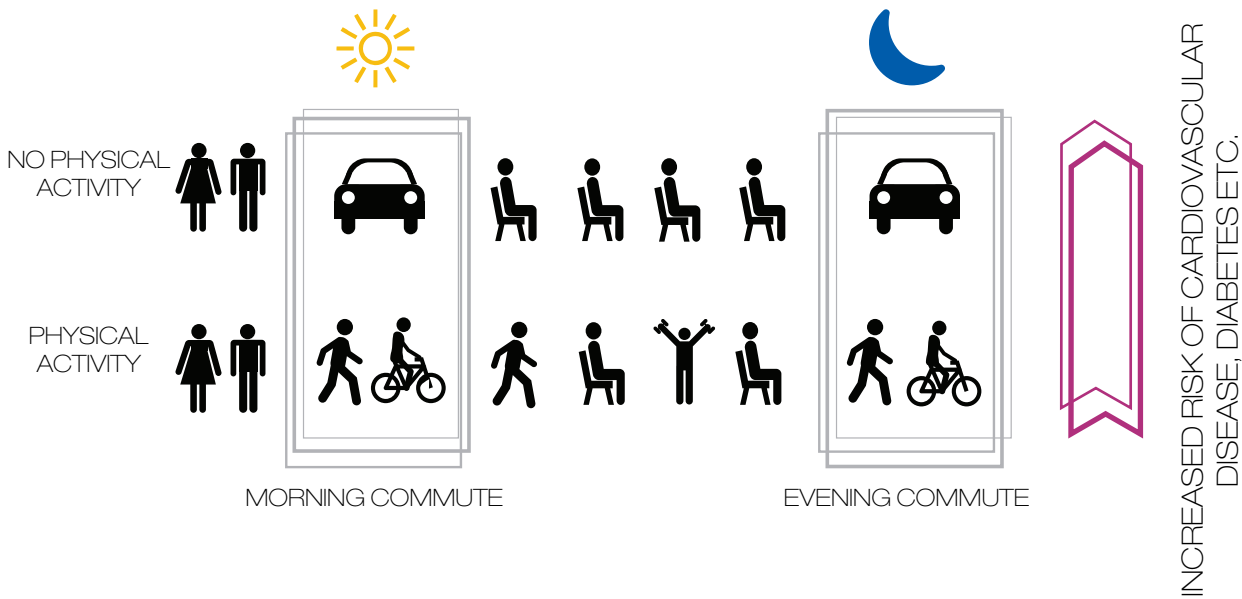
Finally, our reliance on automobiles and detachment from the public realm has led to unprecedented levels of social isolation. This decline of community cohesion has detrimental effects on our mental health, and overall wellbeing. Knowing and trusting your neighbours, or having a dependable social network has been proven to enhance our overall happiness and life satisfaction.⁴ Revitalizing neighbourhood parks and public spaces is a key strategy for improving social connectivity in our communities. Research shows that residents of neighbourhoods with greenery in common spaces are more likely to enjoy stronger social ties than those who live surrounded by barren concrete.⁵

There is so much that can be done to make our cities happier, healthier and more prosperous places. Some of those things will take years or decades to happen. But others can happen right now. They are happening. Every day in cities around the world citizens and city planners alike are showing us how small actions can scale up to have massive impact. The Doable Neighbourhood Project is designed to help people kickstart change in their communities on short timelines and modest budgets.

THE GOAL

The goal of the DNP is to create healthier communities by reshaping the physical environment in a way that supports active modes of transportation (walking and cycling), and promotes the use of existing parks and public spaces. Parks, public spaces, streets, and sidewalks are essential for fostering healthier cities. Designed properly, they can provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to be physically active, whether by walking on the sidewalk, cycling in a bike lane, hiking a trail, or playing soccer on a field. Having access to public social spaces also enhances a person’s emotional and spiritual well-being, partly by helping to mentally and physically relax.

10% of population health outcomes can be attributable to our physical or built environment, with an additional 50% being related to social and economic determinants, many of which are deeply interconnected with environments⁶



KEY COMPONENTS OF THE DNP

The DNP addressed the following 4 aspects of great community building:

1. Health and the Built Environment

Taking a built environment approach to better public health is driven by the fact that our current health care system is not meeting the needs of most Canadians. 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 program. In 2010-11, the province spent \$44.77 billion on health. This is equivalent to 40.3% of its total spending on programs, and health care costs are only projected to increase in the future.⁷ Nevertheless, even with massive investment in health care, Ontarians are only getting sicker. We are more overweight, less active, and more susceptible to chronic disease than ever before.⁸ It is clear we need a new approach to creating healthy communities that focuses on keeping people healthy, rather than fixing them after they are sick.

2. Parks and Public Spaces

Improving access to quality parks and public spaces drastically increases people's likelihood of physical activity and reduces air pollution. Many studies have also shown that parks and public space access have a drastic effect on mental health and community cohesion. Exposure to nature immediately reduces our stress, gives us energy and enhances our mental alertness, attention, and cognitive performance.

Too often our parks and public spaces are undervalued by decision makers and community members alike, and this is reflected in the state of many parks and public spaces across Ontario. Did you know that, according to a recent report by Parks and Recreation Ontario, more than 50% of public recreation facilities in municipalities of all sizes are more than 50 years old? This is indicative of the general state of parks and recreation services in Ontario – we have lost sight of the important role these public facilities play in our communities, and they seem to be sliding farther down the political priorities list year after year.

We need to talk about how great places do more than just provide a nice place to spend a sunny afternoon; they play a vital role in the health of our economy, environment, society, our bodies, and our minds. According to a study conducted by Parks and Recreation Ontario in 2009, 67% of Ontarians would be willing to pay more for improved local services.¹⁰



3. Walkability

The healthiest, wealthiest, and most vibrant communities around the world are unique in many ways. But there is one factor above all others that these communities have in common: they are, nearly without fail, highly walkable places.

There is good reason for this. Every day, every one of us is a pedestrian. No matter where we are going or how we choose to get there, every journey begins and ends with a walk. But by creating places that are built for walking, we flick a switch that unlocks the best our cities can offer us and creates communities that are healthier and richer in every way.

4. Cycling

A bicycle is a powerful tool that expands boundaries and connects people to neighbourhoods and essential services outside of their immediate community. In many cases, cycling is the fastest and most convenient way to travel, with many secondary benefits to health and happiness. This is particularly true for people who do not have access to cars due to age, physical ability, or economic reasons. Creating accessible, safe, and comfortable cycling networks requires infrastructure and maintenance. A great cycling network is one that connects all major community destinations to each other and with residential areas. Physical separation is also essential. Building bike lanes with physical buffers and barriers (ie. planters, bollards, etc.) is necessary to attract more cyclists. A truly bikeable community is one where it is safe, efficient, and comfortable to use bicycles for both recreational and daily commuting purposes.

Importance of Streets as Public Space

The road network is a vital, but often overlooked component of the public realm. Streets are our cities largest public spaces. It is estimated that approximately 80% of a city's public space is composed of streets and sidewalks.¹² We need to re-think how these spaces can be used to create healthier 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. 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 and 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 the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area over \$3.3 billion in lost GDP every year.¹³

WHY PILOT PROJECTS?

We know that major retrofits can bring positive community change. But big wins can take decades to pull off. With communities facing severe health and mobility challenges, change needs to happen sooner than that – and it can. By starting out with low cost, low risk, but high visibility initiatives, we can immediately begin to transform and improve our neighbourhoods within days or even hours.

The DNP integrated all four components: Health and the Built Environment, Parks & Public Spaces, Walkability and Cycling into each implemented pilot project.

A Doable pilot project is...

1. Implementable in the short term!
2. Contributes to walkability, bikeability and sociability!
3. Promotes health!
4. Sparks conversation!
5. Affordable (to both implement and for the community to participate)
6. Fun!!



HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

At 8-80 Cities, we organize pilot project ideas into two broad categories: hardware and software. Software refer to project ideas that involve events, programming and public space management. Hardware project ideas include investment in physical infrastructure in the public realm.

Software

We know that people bring more people to parks and public spaces. Activities that animate and activate the public realm are one of the greatest predictors of park use.¹⁴ That is why, when evaluating and planning for parks and public spaces it is important to not only focus on the physical qualities of the space, after all; a great park is so much more than the, grass, trees, benches and other features it may contain.

Making public spaces accessible is about more than providing safe infrastructure. It's also about creating an "invitation" that welcomes people into a space. This is where programming comes into play. Strong programming draws people into a space, which also adds to the site's visual attraction. In other words, activity and design are mutually dependent. Programming in the public realm can include everything from large-scale public events (ie. Pan Am Games) to small community festivals, a pick-up game of soccer at a community centre or a neighbourhood block party. The Town of Cochrane may host or fund some events, but its most important role is to enable residents to program the public realm through simple activities that build community and encourage physical activity.

Programming and animating the public realm must also consider the importance of seasonality. The goal is to activate the public realm so that people feel welcomed and drawn to these spaces 365 days of the year, during the day and night. The ways people use the public realm varies during the course of the day, week, season, and year. Diverse activities and programs such as skating rinks, outdoor markets, festival space, and public art can all be used to transition the public realm from one season to the next.

Hardware

Well maintained infrastructure, or "hardware", that supports a park's uses and activities is an important component of creating a successful and well used park.

Great parks offer a balance of natural "green infrastructure" that allow people to absorb natural beauty and tranquility, while also providing the infrastructure to support a variety of uses that serves the needs and desires of the community. Public realm infrastructure must support a wide variety of activities including walking, cycling, resting, socializing, gathering and playing. Important elements include benches, community information boards, public art installations, lighting, street trees, play structures, water fountains, electrical outlets (for events) and bicycle parking.

While each of these elements contribute to the overall success of the public realm, the most important piece of infrastructure is the presence of accessible and comfortable seating. Moveable chairs allow people to rearrange the furniture to suit their needs, customize the spaces, and ultimately take ownership over the space. Lighting is also essential to the activation of a park. Effective lighting increases safety, draws people into the public realm, extends seasonal and temporal use and contributes to a sense of place.

Where appropriate, public realm infrastructure should also include physical protection from rain, snow, and wind. Strategically positioned trees and other plantings in public spaces and along streets can provide areas of shade, filter out unwanted noise or views, and create a sense of safety and enclosure. By infusing a space with colour and pleasant scents, natural elements can also stimulate the senses and increase enjoyment.



OUR PROCESS

The first stage of the DNP was to select four community partners. The application process was launched in January 2014, and resulted in submissions from community organizations and municipalities across the province. Short-listed candidates were contacted for telephone interviews.

Each candidate was measured on a set of criteria, which were organized under two categories; organization, and community context. Under the first category, each candidate received a grade (0-5) based on the strength of their partnerships, their level of enthusiasm and perceived commitment, implementation experience, financial capacity, and the level of influence they have with local decision makers. The community context category considered the broader neighbourhood's level of marginalization (social, economic, etc.) and need for the potential benefits of the DNP.

As a result of this process, four unique neighbourhoods in Ontario were selected to participate in the DNP. The successful applicants represented: Downtown Brampton; the Town of Cochrane; New Toronto; and North St. Thomas. These communities vary in size and character, and each presented unique challenges and opportunities. The local partners were equally diverse, and include a business improvement association (Brampton), municipal government (Cochrane), community cycling advocates (New Toronto), and child and family health service providers (St. Thomas).



Phase 1: Engage the Community

8-80 Cities believes that all successful projects must be designed for the community, and by the community. This philosophy is embedded in the mandate of the DNP. Between March-September 2014, 8-80 Cities spoke to hundreds of residents and stakeholders in North St. Thomas about the assets and barriers in regards to walking, cycling, and visiting the parks and public spaces in their neighbourhood. The engagement process was designed to maximize inclusiveness, and included methods such as surveys, focus groups, structured workshops, interviews, and walking tours.

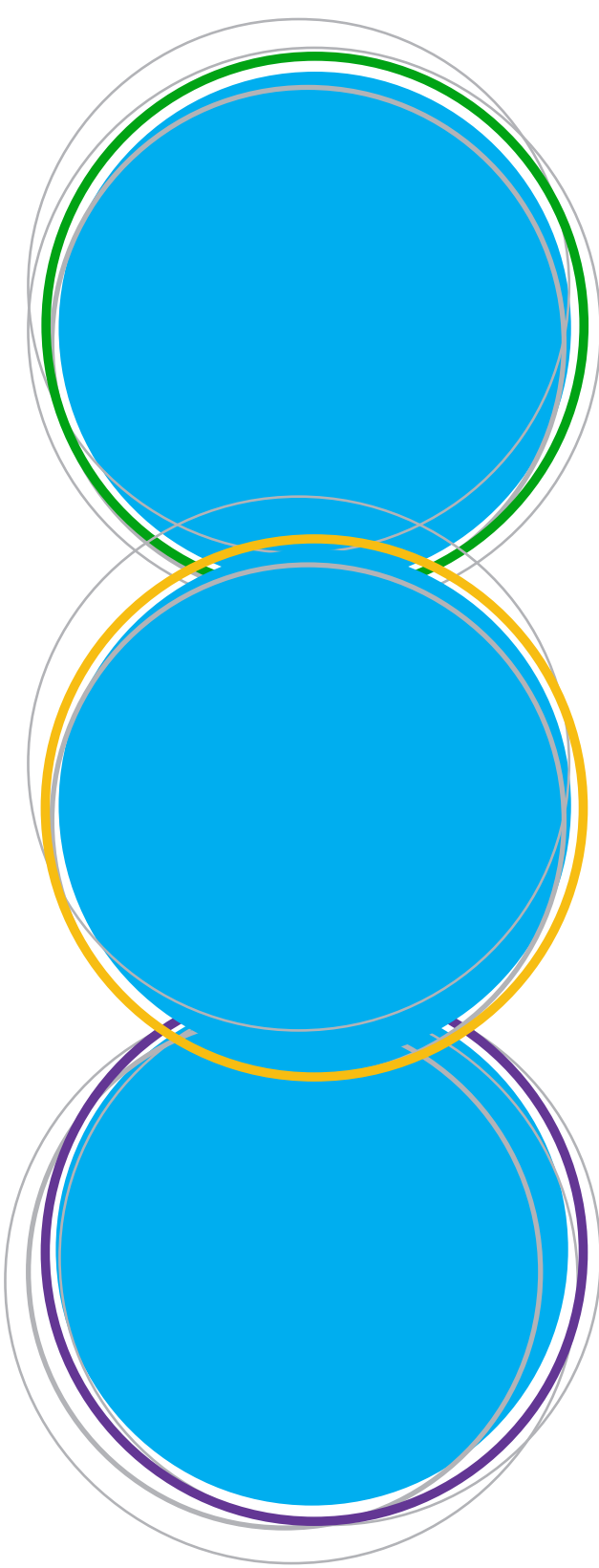
Phase 2: Community Engagement Analysis + Pilot Project Planning

After compiling and consolidating the data and ideas from local residents, 8-80 Cities worked with local partners to identify common themes and opportunities. These themes led to a timeline of prioritized pilot projects that could be implemented in the short, medium, and longer terms. Pilot projects were selected for their feasibility and ability to maximize community benefits.

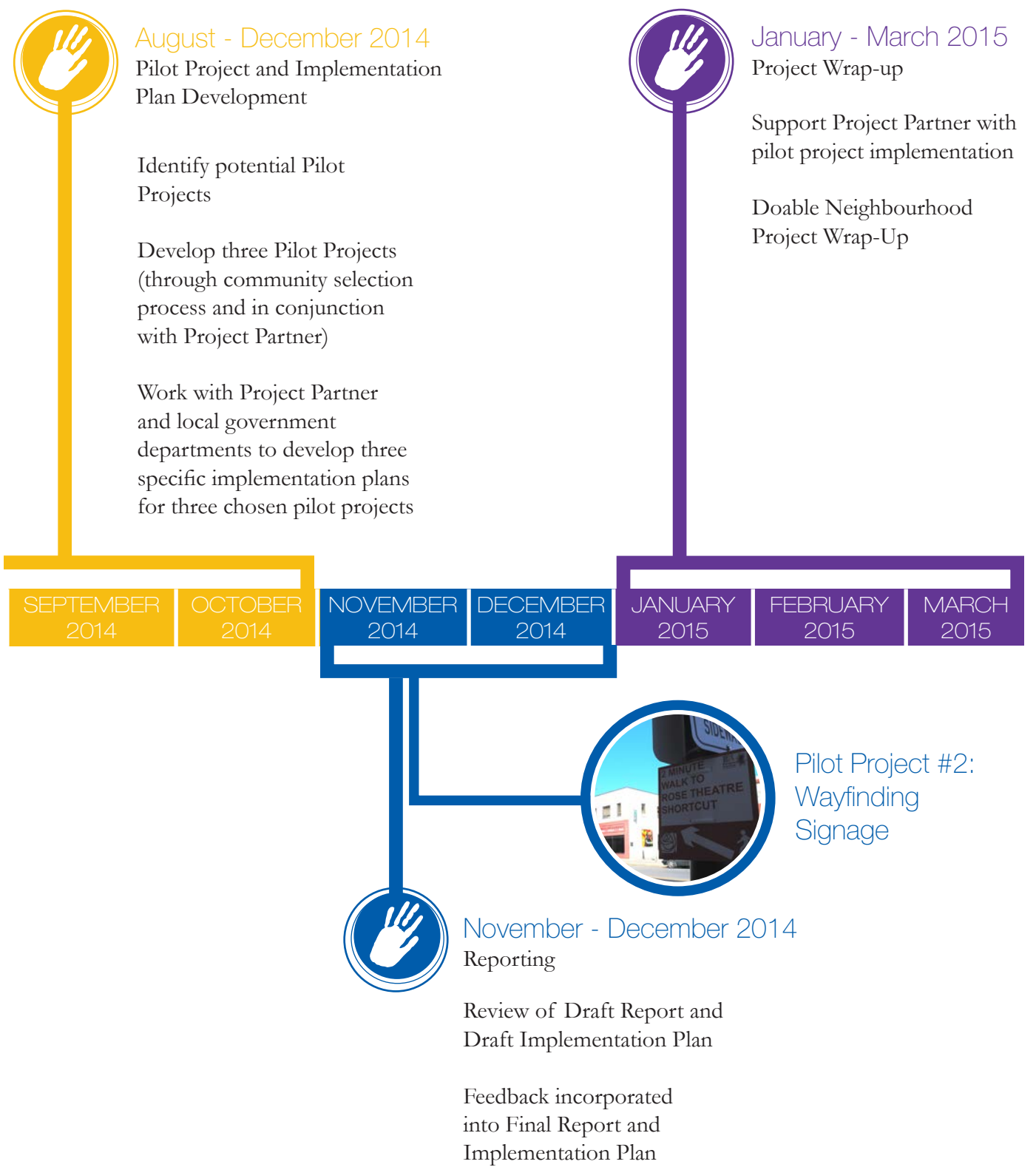
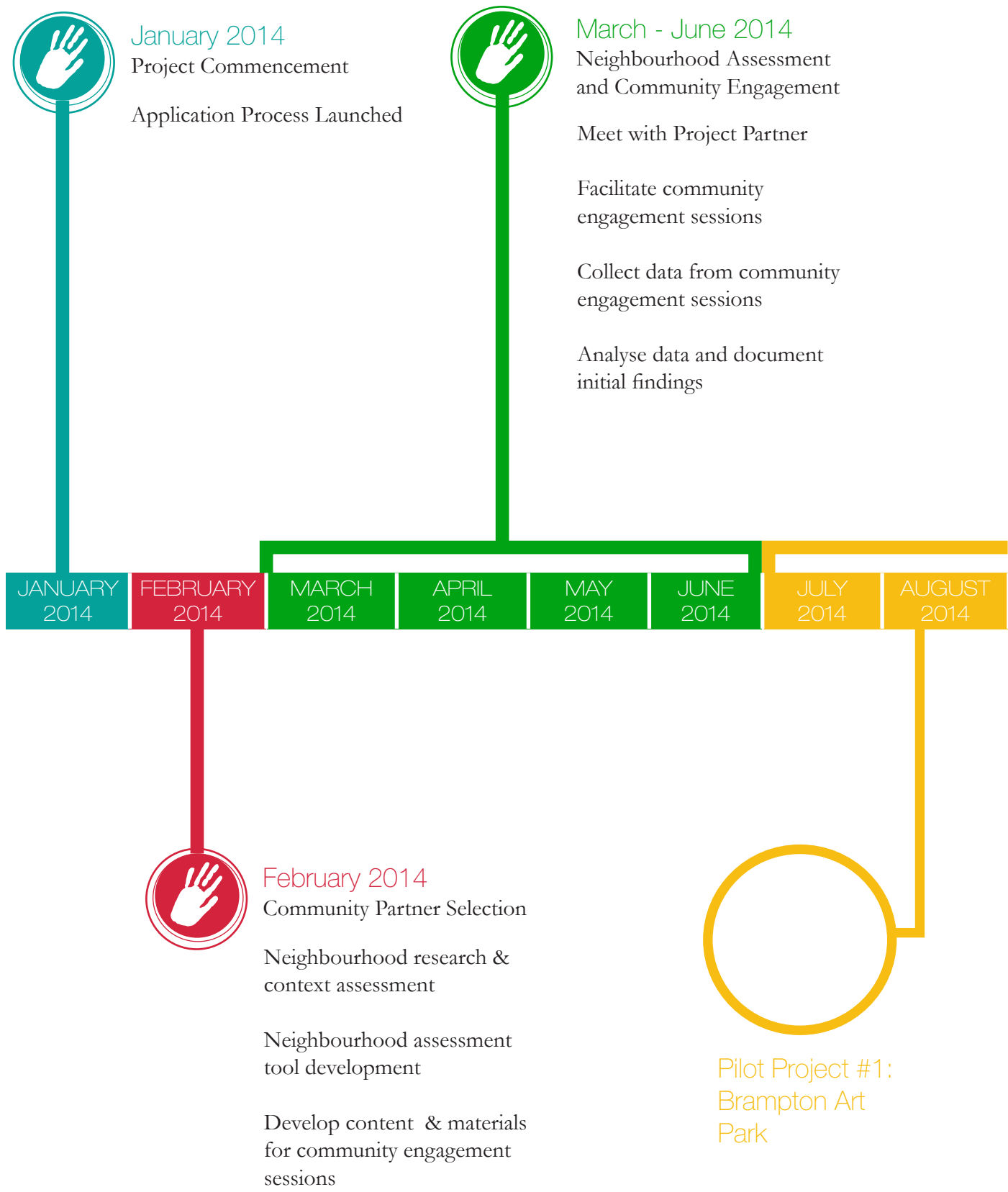
Phase 3: Pilot Project Implementation

8-80 Cities supported community partners to navigate the municipal permissions system, engage and recruit local community champions and volunteers who would be integral to getting each project off the ground.

OUR PROCESS



PROJECT TIMELINE



BRAMPTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Brampton Downtown Development Corporation (BDDC) is a public-private partnership responsible for the development, management and promotion of properties in Downtown Brampton. The BDDC's is also mandated to support and foster local businesses, while promoting Downtown Brampton as a place to live, shop, play and do business. In its eight-year history, the BDDC has implemented successful marketing and promotions campaigns, public realm beautification programs, and launched several events that contribute to Downtown Brampton's vibrancy and growth.



DOWNTOWN BRAMPTON

Downtown Brampton is the commercial, financial, and cultural core of Canada's 9th largest municipality. The area is home to a residential population of 50,000 within two-kilometres of the Four Corners at Queen and Main St. More than 150,000 people live within a five-kilometre radius of Downtown Brampton. The area has experienced a 22.1% population growth since 2006, owing largely to the completion of six new residential developments completed in that timeframe.¹⁵ Downtown Brampton supports 1,700 businesses and services, and has approximately 6,000 daytime employees. By 2031, the City of Brampton is projected to increase its population by 68% (307,000 new) residents to reach 758,310.



DOWNTOWN BRAMPTON

Similar to cities across North America, Downtown Brampton has struggled to maintain a vibrancy and sense of place that draw people to live, shop, and recreate. Despite these challenges, the area is experiencing a renewed energy and optimism, supported by an engaged and growing residential population, as well as committed community organizations. Recent investment in local parks and cultural institutions are also contributing to a renaissance in Downtown Brampton.

Parks:

The three primary parks that serve residents in Downtown Brampton include Gage Park, Rosalea Park, and Centennial Park

- Gage Park is a major draw for both visitors and residents in Downtown Brampton. Used and programmed year-round, the Park hosts a variety of community events in the summer, while its pathways turn into skating trails during winter. A strong tree canopy and accessible benches create an excellent environment for passive activities in Gage Park.
- Rosalea Park is home to a baseball diamond and the local YMCA. The Park's pathways are part of the Etobicoke Creek Trail, so many visitors pass through this space while enjoying the larger trail system.
- Centennial Park also connected to the Etobicoke Creek Trail, and includes both open spaces and wooded areas. With fewer physical amenities and infrastructure than Gage and Rosalea, Centennial Park is popular among dog owners, recreational pedestrians, and cyclists.

Pedestrian Realm:

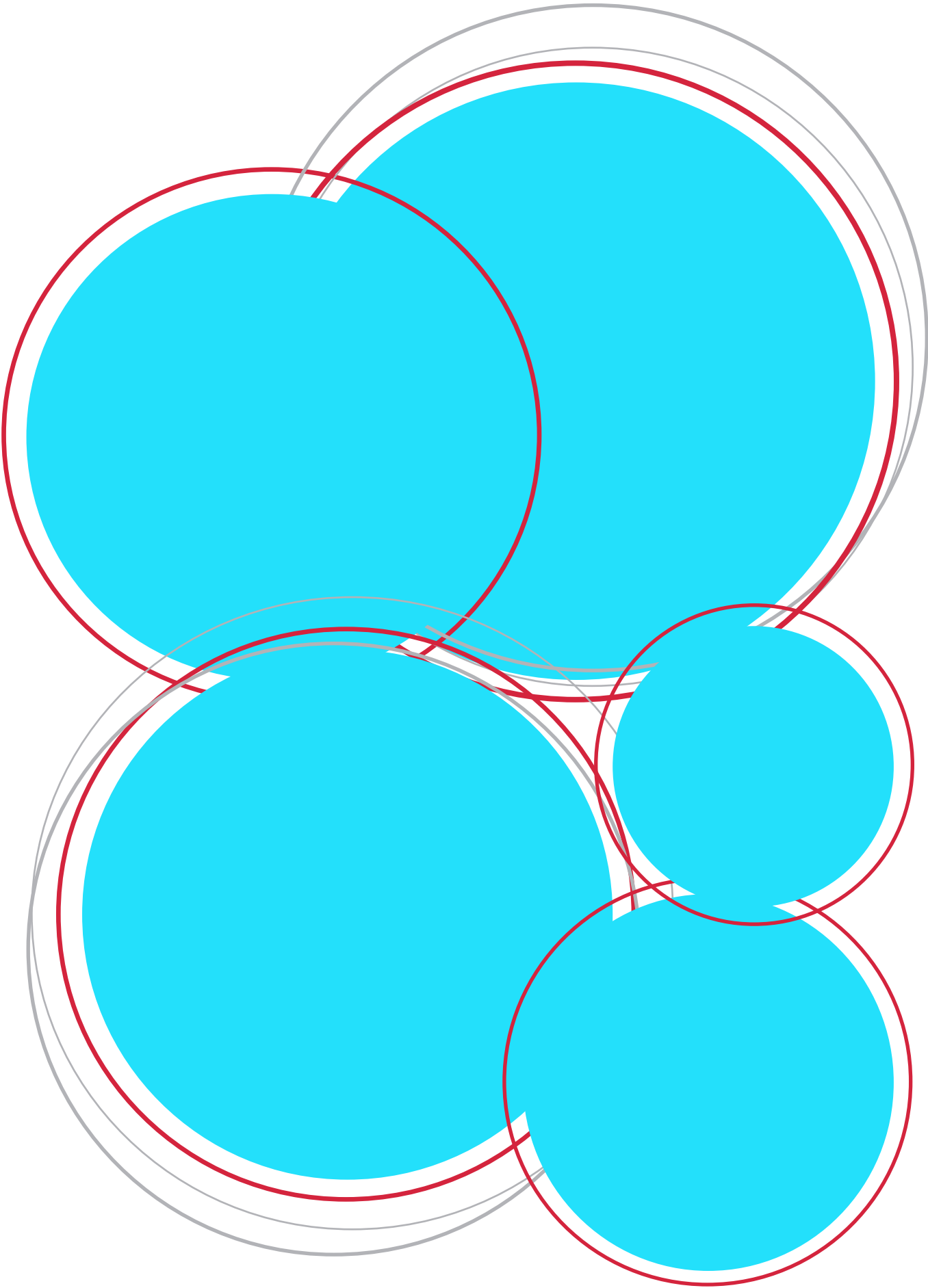
Downtown Brampton is a highly walkable community. All major destinations, including restaurants, cultural institutions, and parks are located within a 10-15 minute walk for most residents. The laneway network in Downtown Brampton provide a unique experience, and improve pedestrian connectivity. Public seating and street beautification efforts create a relatively pleasant pedestrian experience in the core areas, while proximity to the Etobicoke Creek Trail provides a safe walking network in a natural environment. Traffic safety and lack of pedestrian crossings at key nodes are primary barriers to Downtown Brampton reaching its walkability potential.

Cycling:

Cycling remains a primarily recreational activity in Downtown Brampton. Small signs in Downtown Brampton warn cyclists to stay off the sidewalk – an important rule – but the roadways are inhospitable to bicycles. Safe and accessible bike parking is difficult to find. The best and largest bicycle rack in the area is located behind the local bike shop in a rarely populated laneway.

Public Transportation:

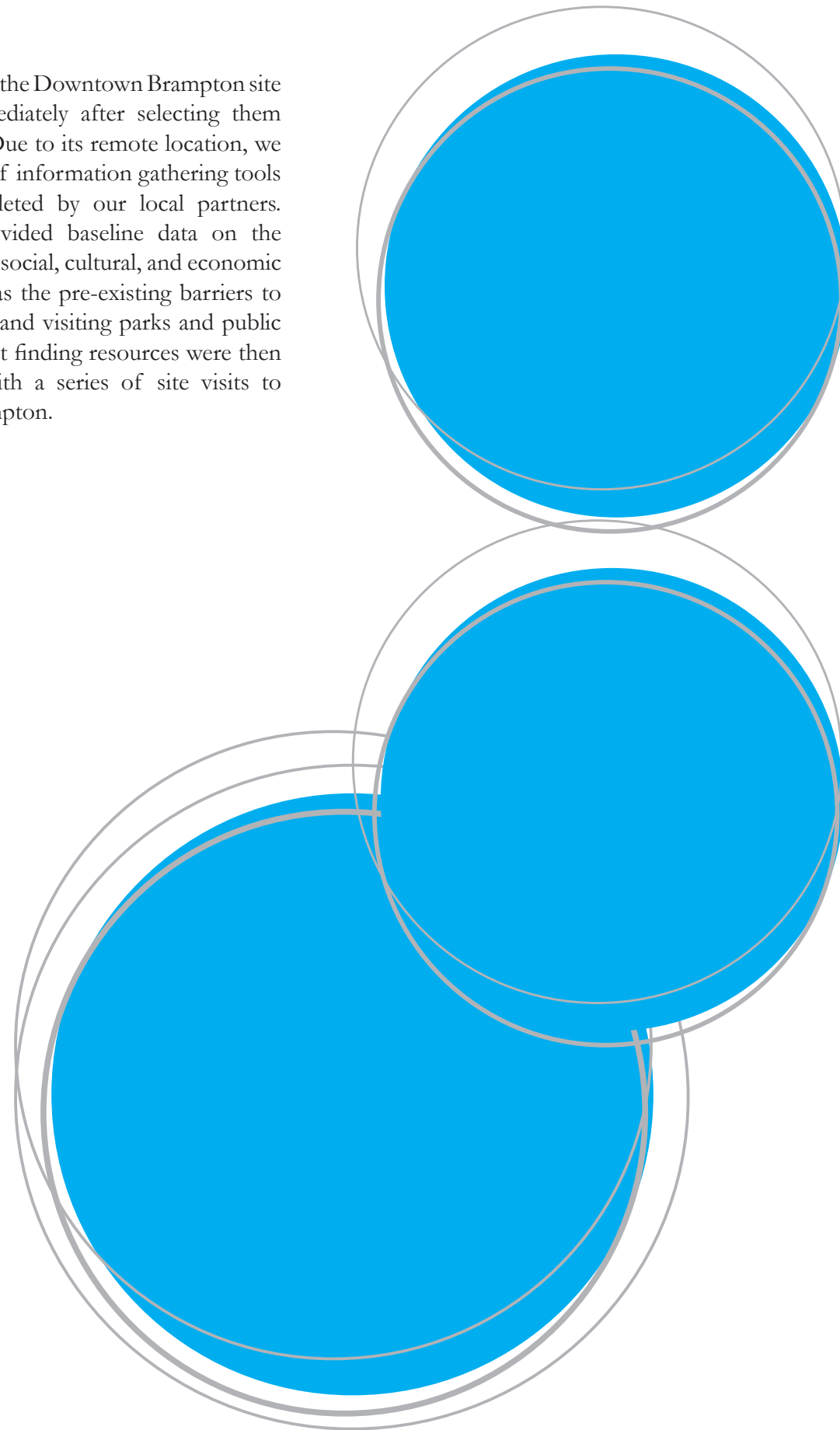
Downtown Brampton is a regional transit hub for Brampton Transit, VIA Rail, GO Rail, and GO Bus. The City of Brampton transportation system includes 42 regular routes, with three bus rapid transit (BRT) lines, one GO shuttle route, and 36 accessible routes. The busiest route in the city, 501/501A Züm Queen, passes through Downtown Brampton. Transit ridership in Brampton increased by 18% from 2010 to 2011. In 2011, 16.3 million riders used the service. Between 2006-2011 ridership grew by 61% - nearly three times the rate of population growth.¹⁶





02 Site Assessment

8-80 Cities began the Downtown Brampton site assessment immediately after selecting them for the project. Due to its remote location, we developed a set of information gathering tools that were completed by our local partners. These tools provided baseline data on the neighbourhood's social, cultural, and economic context, as well as the pre-existing barriers to walking, cycling, and visiting parks and public spaces. These fact finding resources were then supplemented with a series of site visits to Downtown Brampton.



Community Asset Maps

These maps highlight the locations of various community assets including parks, public spaces, community centres, trails, restaurants/cafes, healthcare facilities, social services, and schools. By identifying key destinations, DNP partners and staff were able to identify existing strengths and develop projects that would help increase access to local hubs.

Doable Neighbourhood Assessment Tool

The Doable Neighbourhood Assessment tool was distributed to local project partners, who then passed it on through their networks. These detailed surveys provided baseline data on resident's perceptions of the walkability and bikeability of their neighbourhood. As a precursor to 8-80 City staff site visits, the Assessment tool helped frame the discussion on how to improve the health and safety of the community.

Online Surveys

The Doable Neighbourhood Project Survey was a quick and accessible way to identify potential projects and existing challenges in Downtown Brampton. The surveys also helped 8-80 Cities staff gauge how people are currently parks, public spaces, streets, and sidewalks. Survey questions included: How often do you bike in your neighbourhood? What would make you walk more? What do you like most about living in your community? See the full survey: www.surveymonkey.com/s/K6WQLGN

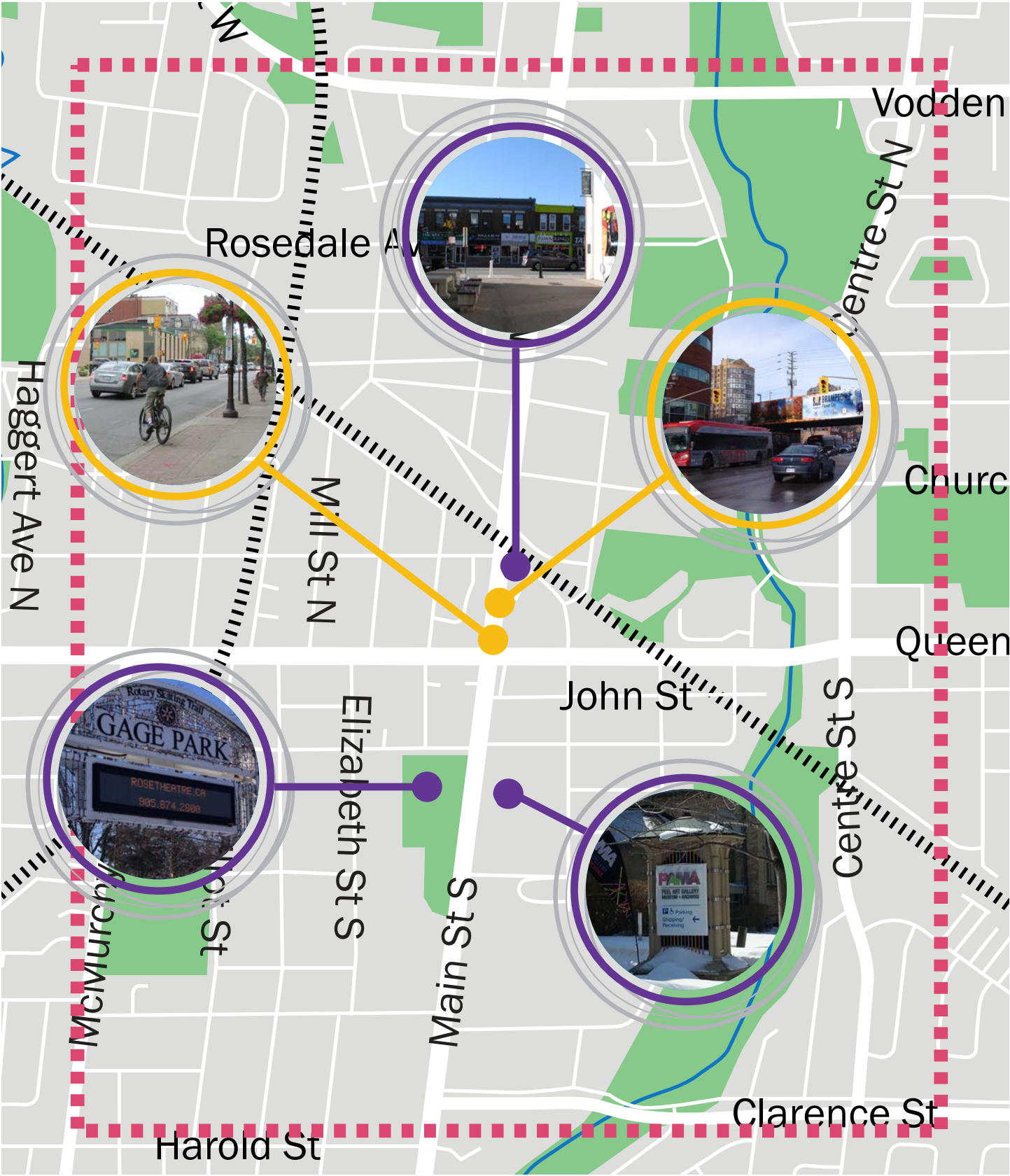
8-80 Cities Site Visit

8-80 Cities first DNP site visit to Downtown Brampton took place April 8-10, 2014. During two full days of meetings, we held focus groups with various stakeholders including, cyclist advocates, city council candidates, the Brampton Board of Trade, Brampton Downtown Development Corporation board, Rotary Club, Brampton Safe City, Citizens for a Better Brampton, Brampton Safe Commute, and the City of Brampton Planning Department. 8-80 Cities also hosted a drop-in events at the BDDC storefront office, the Chegoggin Housing Co-operative, and Regeneration Outreach breakfast at Grace Place. This first site visit produced valuable feedback and dozens of ideas to move forward with. In between focus groups and interviews, 8-80 Cities staff toured the neighbourhood to survey key parks and public spaces, and identify existing assets and challenges in the walking and cycling networks.

The first trip was supplemented with a second site visit on May 8-9, 2014. During this second trip, 8-80 Cities held focus groups with representatives from the Brampton Arts Council, Peel Art, Museum, and Archives, Brampton Farmers Market, City of Brampton Community Development and Economic Development departments, Rose Theatre, Brampton Public Library, and the Youth Rotaract Club.



EXISTING STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES MAP



Gage Park: The vast majority of consultation participants stated that Gage Park is Downtown Brampton's greatest asset. Surveys indicate that 78% of residents visit local parks (primarily Gage Park) on a weekly basis. Gage Park is a year-round destination that provides a safe place for residents and families to gather in the heart of the city.

Public Events: All Bramptonians 8-80 Cities spoke with had visited at least one event in Downtown Brampton in the past year. People value the opportunity to come together, enjoy free entertainment, and celebrate their community at events like the Santa Clause Parade, and Rib 'n Roll. The summertime Farmers Market was commonly cited as a strong event, although many felt that the market could improve as a catalyst for encouraging people to stay and shop at local downtown businesses.

Laneways: The laneways are unique assets that can help improve pedestrian connectivity in Downtown Brampton. Respondents recognized the potential to use these spaces to both draw people into the area by adding public art and seating, while also circulating people through downtown.

Cultural Amenities: Downtown Brampton is designated as a HACE (Heritage, Arts, Culture, Entertainment) district. The cultural heart of Downtown Brampton is anchored by the Rose Theatre which hosts nearly 1,000 events and draws 200,000 people each year. In addition to the Rose Theatre, Downtown Brampton is also home of the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA), YMCA, Brampton Public Library, Tennis Club, Heritage Theatre, the Beaux Arts and the Theatre School.¹⁷

Public Perception: Although most respondents report feeling safe, Downtown Brampton suffers from widespread perception that it is a dangerous place. This perceived

lack of safety combines with the sense that Downtown lacks a coherent identity or attraction.

Public Space Activation: While many people enjoy existing parks, residents noted that visits to public spaces would likely increase if more events and interactive programming were provided. Events catering to young people and the Southeast Asian community were identified as priorities.

Traffic Safety: This is an important issue for everyone, but was a major theme among families with young children and older adults living in the neighbourhood. The lack of safe crossing points for pedestrians and the speed of traffic on Queen and Main Street were identified as key problems. High traffic volumes are a significant contributor to safety concerns in Downtown Brampton. Each day, over 100,000 vehicles travel through the area along major routes, with more than 50,000 vehicles passing through the intersection at Queen Street and Main Street.¹⁸

Cycling Infrastructure: Downtown Brampton is not viewed as a cycle-friendly neighbourhood. The lack of physical infrastructure (bike lanes, bike parking, 'Share the Road' signage), coupled with traffic speed and lack of road safety awareness make cycling an unwelcoming activity.

Retail Vacancies: Closed and vacant storefronts contribute to inhospitable sidewalk environments. The lack of casual surveillance created by open windows and shops can lead to greater levels of insecurity and perceived levels of safety in the area. Despite more than 450,000 square feet of retail and commercial space in the area, Downtown Brampton lacks a vibrant retail sector that can compete with nearby shopping malls and box store centres.¹⁹

ONGOING INITIATIVES

There are many positive signs that a more walkable, bikeable, people-friendly Downtown Brampton is within reach. Recent development projects, including the City Hall expansion, and a resurgence of residential construction, have brought more people downtown to live, work, and play. Since 2006, the residential population of Downtown Brampton has increased by 22.1%.²⁰ The area continues to draw thousands of visitors each year through a steady roster of popular summer and winter community events, including: Farmers' Market, Gage Park Skating Trail, Classic Cars and Legendary Stars, Rib 'n' Roll, Concerts in Gage Park, Shakespeare in the Garden Square, Flower City Parade, Art of Jazz Festival, Santa Claus Parade, New Year's Eve Festivities, and much more.

Representing 265 businesses, commercial property owners, and the City of Brampton, the BDDC has been a positive catalyst for change and investment in the area. Through promotion and policy advocacy, the organization has taken a placemaking approach to their objective, and has made strides to attracting more people to work, live, play, and invest in Downtown Brampton. The BDDC has supported several successful programs, including the Downtown Facade and Building Improvement Programs, and amendments to the Display of Wares By-Laws. These initiatives have encouraged the beautification of Downtown Brampton, while enabling existing businesses and landowners to invest in the area's physical infrastructure.²¹

“

I was surprised by the vibrancy when I first discovered Downtown Brampton.

”

“

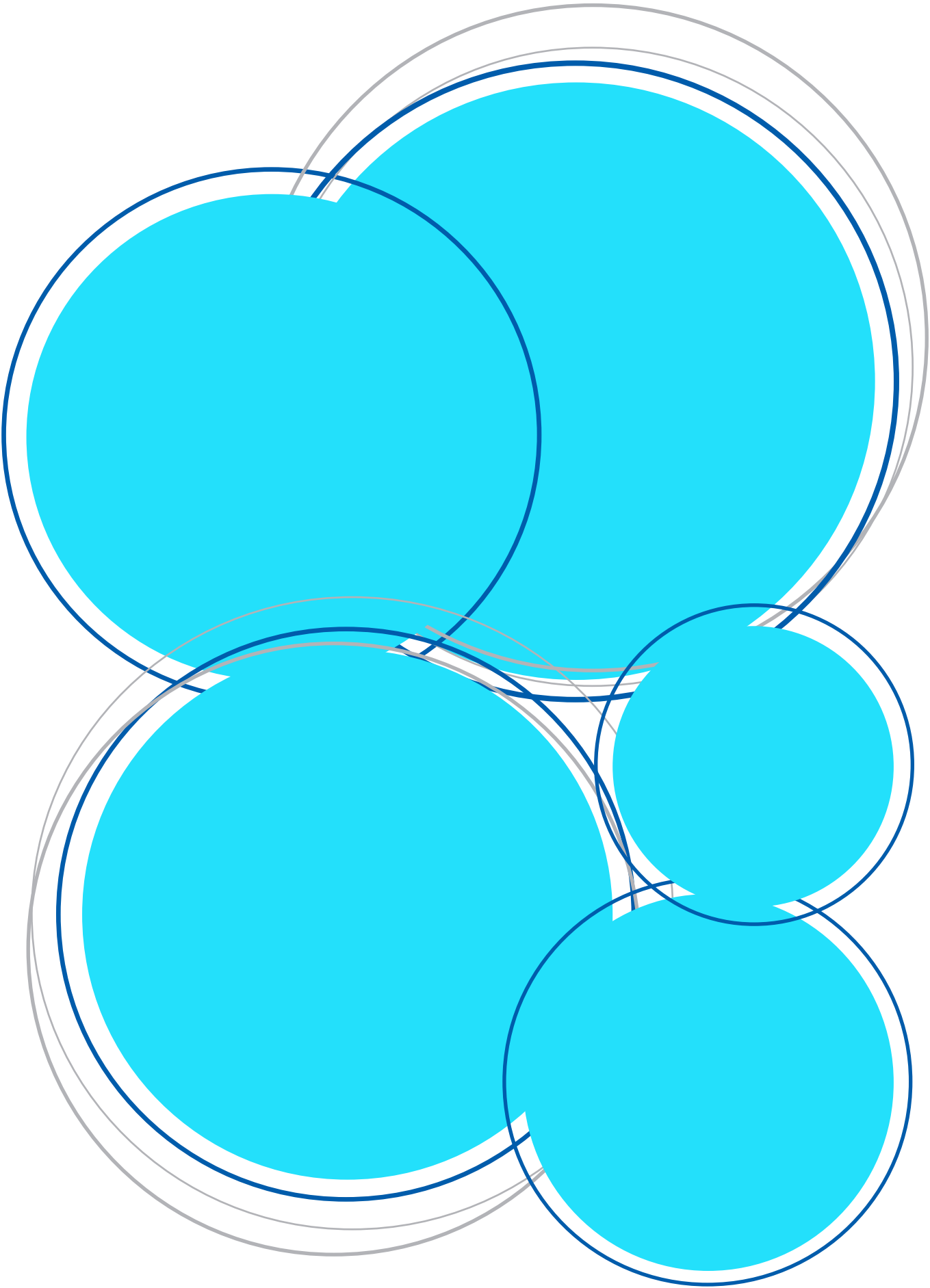
People don't come downtown to shop. They come for experiences. That's what we need.

”

“

Garden Square is open, bright, and people feel safe there.

”



SURVEY FINDINGS

In addition to public events and stakeholder interviews, 8-80 Cities distributed short surveys to dozens of people who live, work, or own businesses in Downtown Brampton. Surveys were also available online. 8-80 Cities and the Brampton Downtown Development Corporation collected more than 50 surveys from Brampton residents between March-May, 2014. The first half of the surveys were designed to determine residents' current behaviour in regards to walking, cycling, and visiting local parks and public spaces. The surveys concluded by asking participants to identify key variables that would encourage them to walk, bike, and visit local parks more often. The key findings of these surveys are summarized below.

Walking

The surveys demonstrate that Downtown Brampton is a walking community. Nearly 50% of residents surveyed already walk at least 45 minutes per week, while over 70% walk a minimum of 30 minutes per week.

Parks & Public Spaces

Brampton residents also value the green spaces and public amenities in Downtown Brampton, as demonstrated by the fact that 78% of residents visit local parks at least once per week. Nearly half of all respondents stated that regularly programming the parks with public events, music, and food would make these spaces more of a destination.

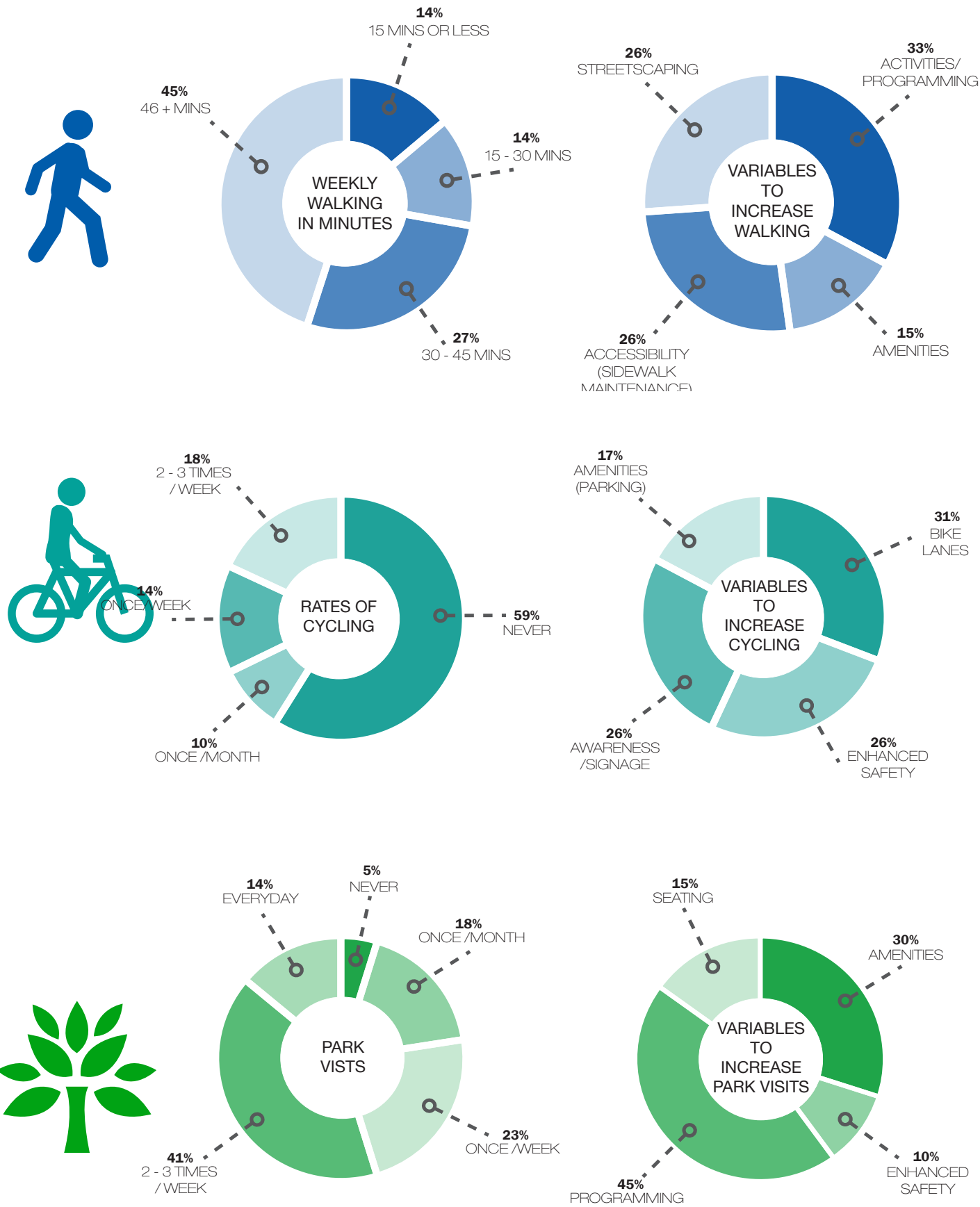
Cycling

Cycling demonstrates an excellent opportunity to increase healthier lifestyles in Brampton. Nearly half of all respondents (47%) stated that cycling infrastructure (bike lanes, bike parking, etc.) is needed, while the other half (52%) emphasized the need for enhanced traffic safety and increased awareness of cycling.

“Mainly slower and less traffic and a designated bike lane would be nice, however bikers need to be separate from those who are walking.”

“Queen and Main Street aren't conducive to cycling. I would never bike there.”

“Vodden is also not a good street for walking-could be made more pedestrian friendly also!”



BEHAVIOURAL OBSERVATIONS

This information was collected through a Behavioural Mapping exercise. This exercise was conducted by volunteers and coordinated by Brampton Safe City. Volunteers spent one hour in three public places throughout Downtown Brampton to observe and recorded information about demographics and behaviours of residents visiting the public spaces and using the laneways. Variables that were collected include the sex, age, ethnicity, activity, and time spent in that space. The exercises were conducted on three separate occasions (morning, afternoon, evening) over the course of two weekdays in July.

McArter Lane

McArter Lane provides pedestrian connection between the central shopping district on Main St. and the ample parking on Diplock Lane. The 50m-long laneway has undergone beautification efforts, which include well maintained trees and a planter, a colour bench, and modest lighting at night. McArter Lane also provides alternative entrances to an adjacent dress store and jewellery store.

RESULTS ANALYSIS:

- Gender Disparity: 36% more men than women. Due to the small sample size, this data can only be considered a snapshot of the area.
- Age Disparity: People under the age of 12 and over the age of 65 represented just 6% of all pedestrians observed.
- Lack of Staying Power: 96% of all people observed in McArter Lane were using the space to pass through, either on foot (91%) or bike (5%). No one was seen socializing and/or sitting in McArter Lane.

Vivian Lane

Vivian Lane provides a pedestrianized route between Main St. and Downtown Brampton's largest public plaza and theatre. Nearby office workers flood to Garden Square for its tables and chairs at lunch on summer days, and the adjacent Rose Theatre draws in crowds in the evening. In between these events, Vivian Lane is a useful shortcut for pedestrians travelling northeast onto Queen St., or in the opposite direction to Main St. Investments have been made to encourage passive use of the roughly 50m by 10m space by installing stone tables and chairs with chess boards and umbrellas. Several pieces of public art adorn the east-facing exterior wall of Beaux Arts Brampton, which helps enliven Vivian Lane with a sense of comfort and creativity.

RESULTS ANALYSIS:

- Gender Disparity: 27% more men than women. The greatest disparity was seen in the morning, when men outnumbered women by 122%. Due to the small sample size, this data can only be considered a snapshot of the area.
- Age Disparity: People under the age of 12 and over the age of 65 represented just 9% of all pedestrians observed.
- Lack of Staying Power: 83% of all people observed in Vivian Lane were using the space to pass through, either on foot (73%) or bike (6%). Only 13% of people were seen socializing and/or sitting in Vivian Lane.

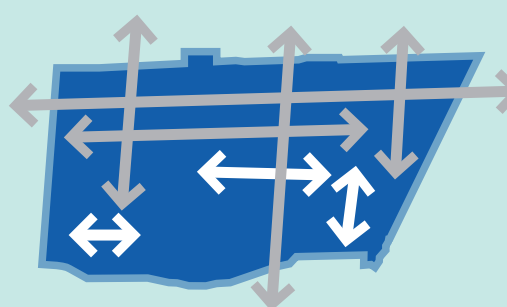
Garden Square

Garden Square is Downtown Brampton's largest public plaza. This baseball diamond-shaped space sits at the northwest corner of the prominent Four Corners intersection at Main St. and Queen St. Garden Square is perhaps best known as the site of the Rose Theatre performance space. Smaller retail and food-based shops also face inwards on the Square to provide a consistent commercial presence. Garden Square is used primarily as pedestrian thoroughfare that provides a diagonal shortcut between Main St. and Queen St. During the summer, Garden Square functions as a passive, social space, when approximately twenty tables with umbrellas and moveable chairs are placed near the Four Corners entrance to the plaza. Colourful metal benches and small trees are positioned on the edges of the square on a permanent basis.

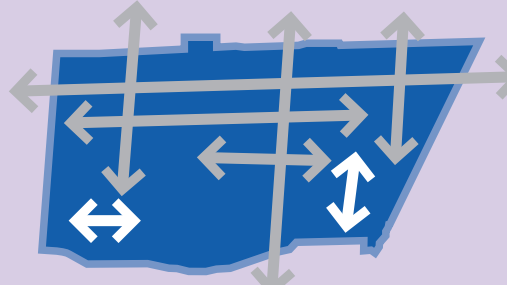
RESULTS ANALYSIS:

- Age Disparity: People under the age of 12 and over the age of 65 represented just 9% of all pedestrians observed.
- Lack of Staying Power: 72% of all people observed in Garden Square were using the space to pass through, either on foot (71%) or bike (1%). Only 19% of people were seen socializing and/or sitting in Garden Square.

DID YOU KNOW ?



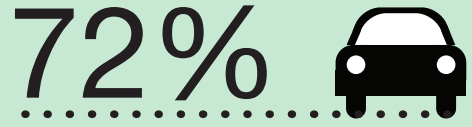
48% OF ALL TRIPS IN BRAMPTON ARE UNDER 5 KM



23% OF ALL TRIPS IN BRAMPTON ARE UNDER 2 KM



88% OF SHORT TRIPS ARE MADE BY VEHICLE

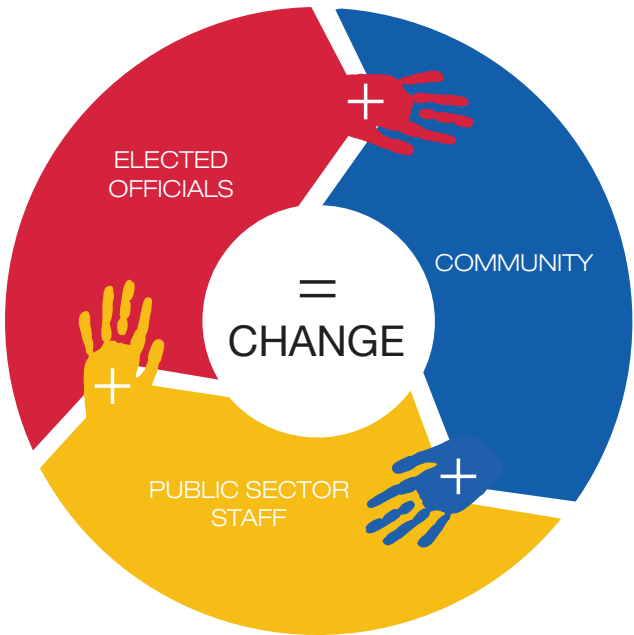


72% OF TRIPS UNDER 2KM ARE MADE BY VEHICLE



WHY BOTHER WITH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Community engagement is time consuming and sometimes challenging. However, engaging people in the early stages of a project will always result in better public spaces and neighbourhoods. The community can help to define priorities, talk through challenges, brainstorm solutions, and negotiate with each other about specific ideas. But community engagement is about much more than coming up with a good design. The simple act of being engaged---having someone ask your opinion, or discussing a community issue with your neighbours---helps to raise people’s level of interest in community projects and builds a sense of neighbourhood pride and belonging.²³



COLLECTIVELY BUILDING A SENSE OF PLACE

The benefits of creating a vibrant and accessible public realm help highlight the reasons why all residents should be encouraged to participate in shaping these spaces. Parks and open spaces should be the heart of a city. They can be gathering places for friends and family, destinations for a variety of activities, and can inspire a sense of mutual ownership and responsibility for them. They can be used by community members for diverse reasons. Most importantly, they can be supported by cooperation between a city and a community. The public realm contributes to both the physical and cultural beauty of Downtown Brampton.

Parks, public spaces, streets, and sidewalks are the verandas of city life. They are where we live amongst each other. They are where we experience our cities. It is our public spaces that make our cities more than just a collection of buildings and spaces in between them — they make them places. Even if one lives in the tiniest apartment or the most dilapidated house, everyone’s quality of life is impacted when a city has great parks to serve as front yards and public spaces as living rooms. The public realm must be built to address the needs of Downtown Brampton residents, so the process of designing and programming parks, public spaces, streets, and sidewalks must be done collectively. This is why an inclusive community engagement process is so important.

GROUPS ENGAGED

“ People don't come downtown to shop. They come for experiences. That's what we need. ”

“ It isn't scary at night, but it isn't a place you want to be. ”

“ You can't develop a downtown without people...There's still not enough to draw a lot of people down here and you need things to make that happen ”

- Regional Councillor Paul Palleschi

- City Council Candidates
- Mayoral Candidate
- Brampton Board of Trade
- BDDC board members
- Rotary Club
- Brampton Safe City
- Citizens for a Better Brampton
- Brampton Safe Commute
- City of Brampton Planning Department
- City of Brampton Economic Development Department
- City of Brampton Community Development Department
- Cheggoggin Housing Co-operative residents
- Regeneration Outreach breakfast participants
- Cyclist advocates
- Rotaract Youth Group
- Brampton Arts Council
- Peel, Art, Museum, and Archives
- Brampton Farmers Market
- Rose Theatre
- Brampton Public Library

ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

During the period between February to May, 2014, 8-80 Cities staff hosted a series of public engagement sessions, including stakeholder interviews, surveys, focus groups, and open house meetings. During these sessions, over 200 individuals who live, work, study, and/or play in Downtown Brampton participated in the Doable Neighbourhood Project process. The engagement sessions were supplemented with site visits, during which 8-80 Cities staff carried out observational exercises and analysis to gauge the level of safety, activity, and vibrancy of Brampton’s streets, sidewalks, parks, and public spaces.

Site Visits

The 8-80 Cities team conducted extensive site visits and photo research in Downtown Brampton. This stage of the project occurred over the course of two site visits, which were two days in duration. Each visit included trips to important neighbourhood landmarks, walking and/or cycling tours of the neighbourhood. The purpose of these visits was to increase our understanding of the community context, strengths, weaknesses and challenges. As a result, we were better equipped to relate to, communicate with, and understand community members during engagement stage.

Focus Groups

8-80 Cities uses focus groups as a form of qualitative research in order to gain an understanding of people’s perceptions, opinions and attitudes towards the neighbourhood and more generally, how they travel around their community. Focus groups tend to be the most effective way to engage vulnerable or difficult to engage groups. Focus groups can be conducted almost anywhere that makes the participants feel comfortable, and that is conducive to group conversation. Whenever possible 8-80 Cities will conduct a portion of

the focus group in the neighbourhood (i.e. neighbourhood walkabouts, in parks and open spaces etc). Trained in group facilitation, we will develop an interactive group session where participants are encouraged to talk openly and with other participants. 8-80 Cities will use a range of engagement activities (i.e. semi-structured questions, videos, surveys, mapping activities) to draw out ideas and options from the group.

Semi-Structured Interviews

8-80 Cities uses semi-structured interviews as a form of qualitative research in order to gain insight on people’s perceptions, opinions and attitude towards specific issues in their community. Semi-structured interviews are usually used to engage key-stakeholders (i.e. community leaders, elected officials, business leaders and potential pilot project “champions”). 8-80 Cities will develop a framework for the interview around themes to be explored and provide a flexible framework for the interview which allows new questions and topics to be brought up during the session.



Presentations & Community Workshops

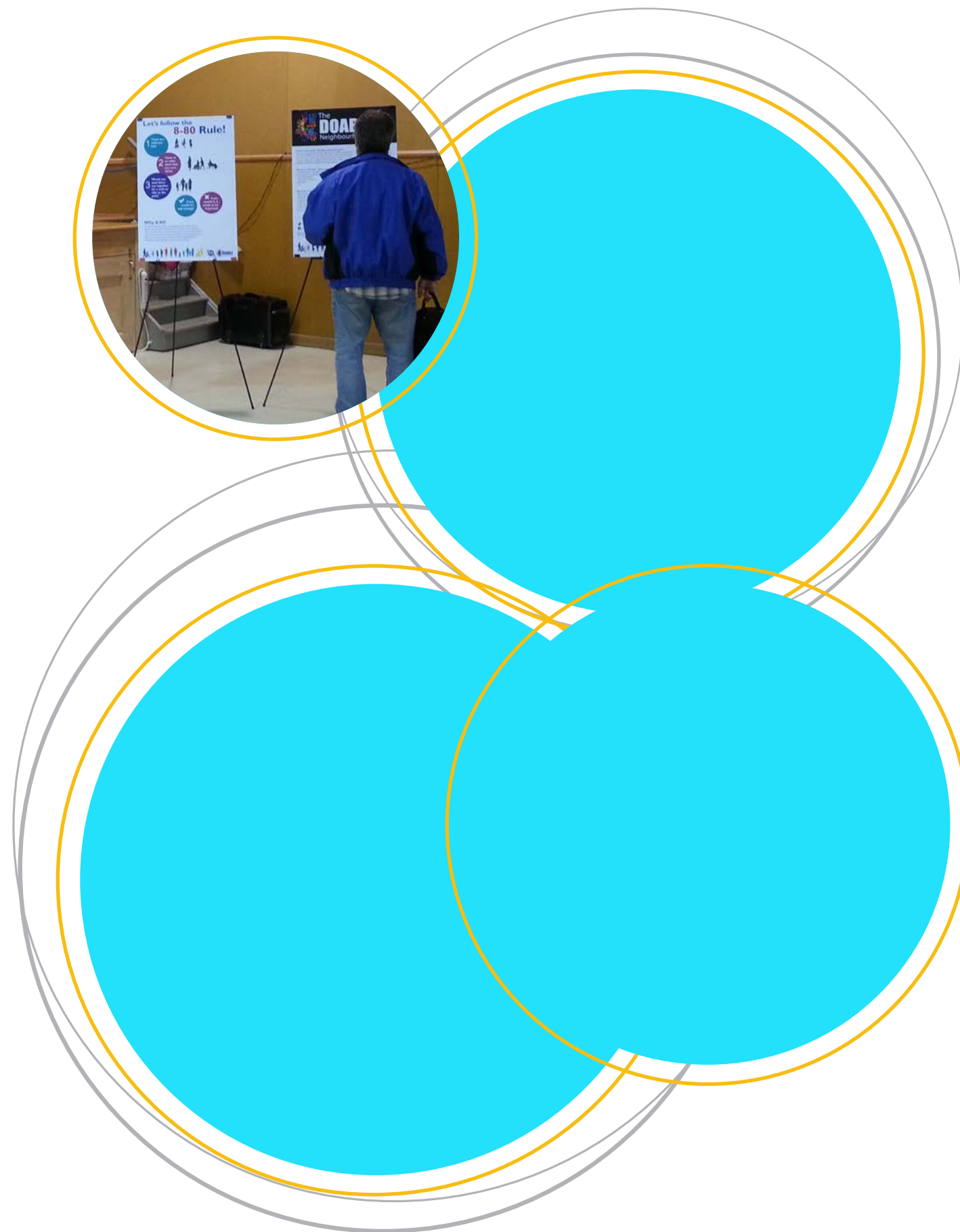
At 8-80 Cities we know that citizens hold the greatest expertise when it comes to the communities where they live, work and play. We use an interactive and hands-on approach to educate people on the key elements of healthy neighbourhood design, people-oriented cities and public space. Our aim is to equip participants with knowledge essential to understanding the elements of healthy communities, quality public space, international best practices, and specific programs and initiatives that can be adapted to their own community. We will use educational presentations, inspiring images and videos, and interactive activities to encourage creative approaches to community building. We will also discuss the varied challenges cities face when implementing new programs and policies and offer solutions on how to overcome them.

Capacity Building Workshops

Capacity Building Workshops serve to educate residents about the importance of creating walkable, bikeable, and park-friendly communities. Using inspiring case studies and engaging presentations these workshops build knowledge and capacity on the benefits and importance of the public realm. Through interactive exercises, residents are able to identify barriers and opportunities for walking, cycling, and accessing public space in the community. The workshops also serve as a forum for open debate and dialogue among the different stakeholders.



Doable Neighbourhood Project - Brampton, ON



Doable Neighbourhood Project - Brampton, ON

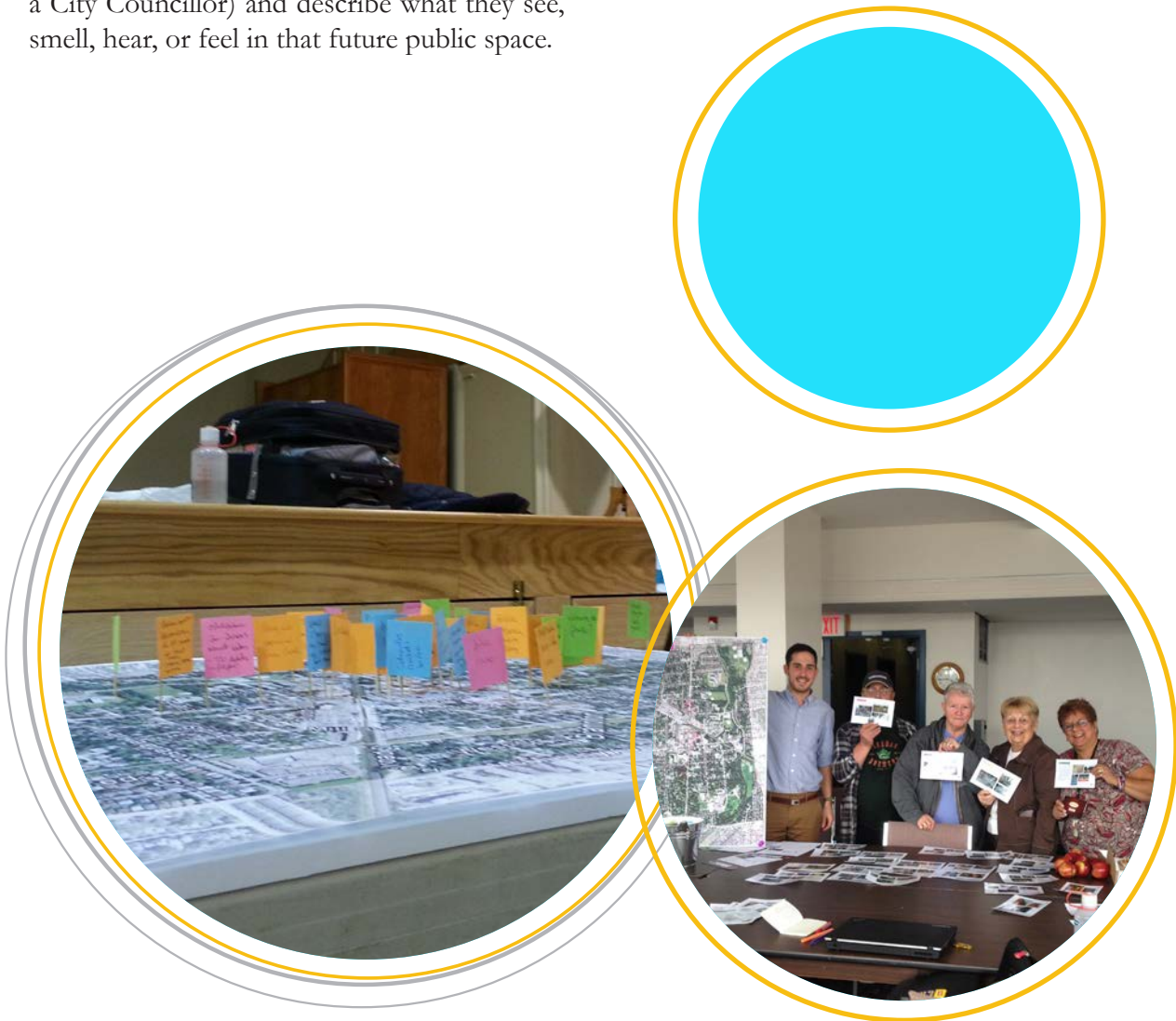


ACTIVITIES

The most productive community engagement processes are fun and accessible. During all consultation sessions, 8-80 Cities uses a series of interactive and engaging activities to solicit valuable information in an inclusive and inviting atmosphere. Some of the activities used in Downtown Brampton include the following:

Postcard from the Future
This simple activity can be used to help people dream big. By asking people to imagine the space 10 years in future, they can free themselves from concerns related to budget, politics, and logistics and get to the essence of what they want the place to become. Participants write a postcard to someone (a friend, the Mayor, a City Councillor) and describe what they see, smell, hear, or feel in that future public space.

Surveys
8-80 Cities distributed short surveys to Brampton residents, employees, business owners, and stakeholders, in both a printed copy and an online survey. Nearly 50 completed surveys were collected between April-July, 2014. The first half of the surveys are designed to determine residents' current behaviour in regards to walking, cycling, and visiting local parks and public spaces. The surveys conclude by asking participants to identify key variables that would encourage them to walk, bike, and visit local parks more often.



Doable Neighbourhood Project - Brampton, ON

Community Mapping
Together in groups of 3-5, workshop participants plot community assets and areas for improvement with coloured sticker dots on a large area map. Participants are also asked to write their comments on walking, cycling, and public spaces directly onto the map (ie. "The trees on this block make it a great street to walk along"). This activity was used as an introduction to the interactive portion of the DNP workshops. By identifying specific strengths and weaknesses, Community Mapping inspires participants to imagine what assets (parks, community centres, streets, trails, etc.) can be built on, and which areas need special attention and improvement.



Doable Neighbourhood Project - Brampton, ON

Pilot Project Brainstorming
The rules of this activity are limited only by a participant's imagination. This is a brainstorming exercise that helps workshop participants imagine which pilot projects could build on the existing strengths and weaknesses identified in the Community Mapping activity. Participants sift through dozens of inspirational images of best walking, cycling, and public space practices from the around the world. Ideas that emerged as a result of this activity included both hardware and software pilot projects such as, chair bombing, interactive public art, bike rodeos, and neighbourhood walking tours.

Dotmocracy
All workshop participants vote for their favourite pilot projects that each team developed through the Pilot Project Brainstorming exercise. The winning project from each team will be used in the next activity.

Action Planning
Participants develop an action and implementation plan for bringing their pilot project ideas into reality. Large worksheets provided in this exercise help guide teams through the essential elements of their pilot project, including the what, when, who, where, why, and most importantly, how.





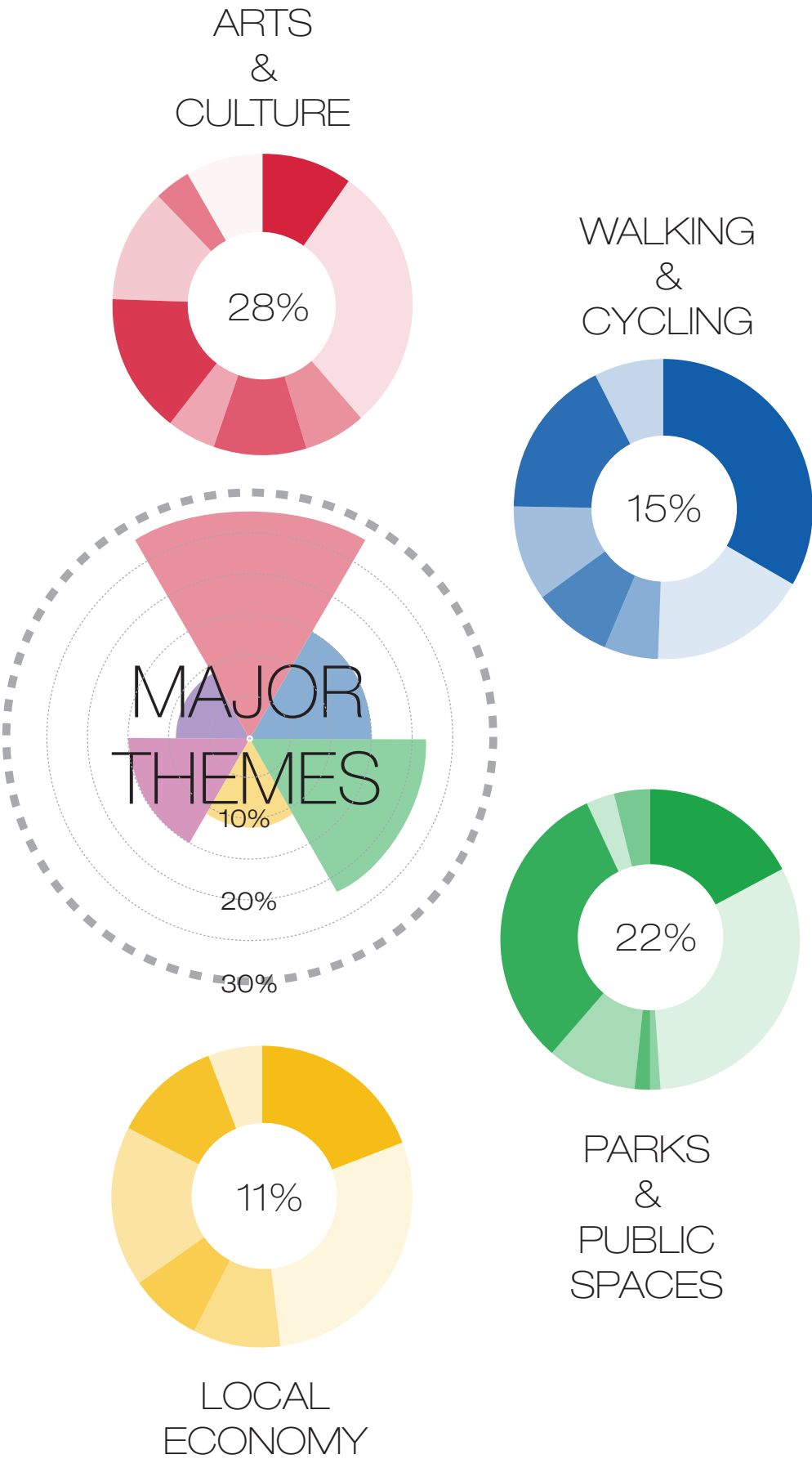
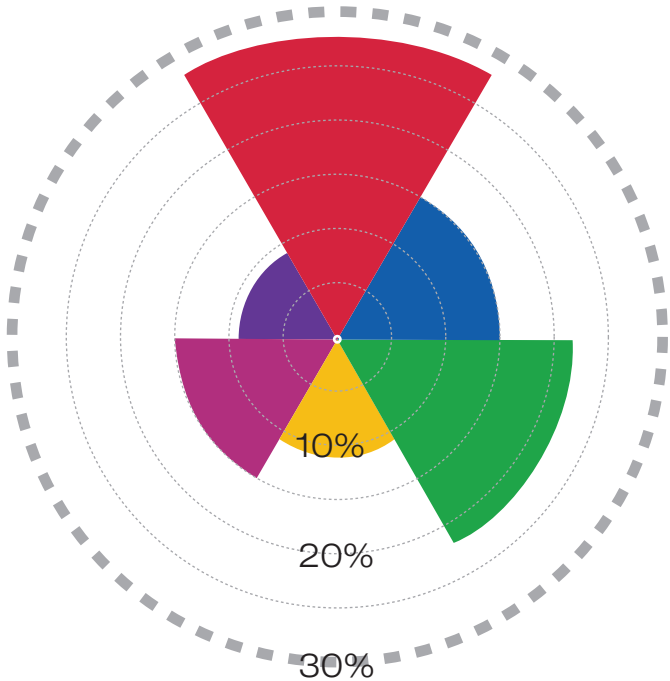
04 Outcomes and Analysis

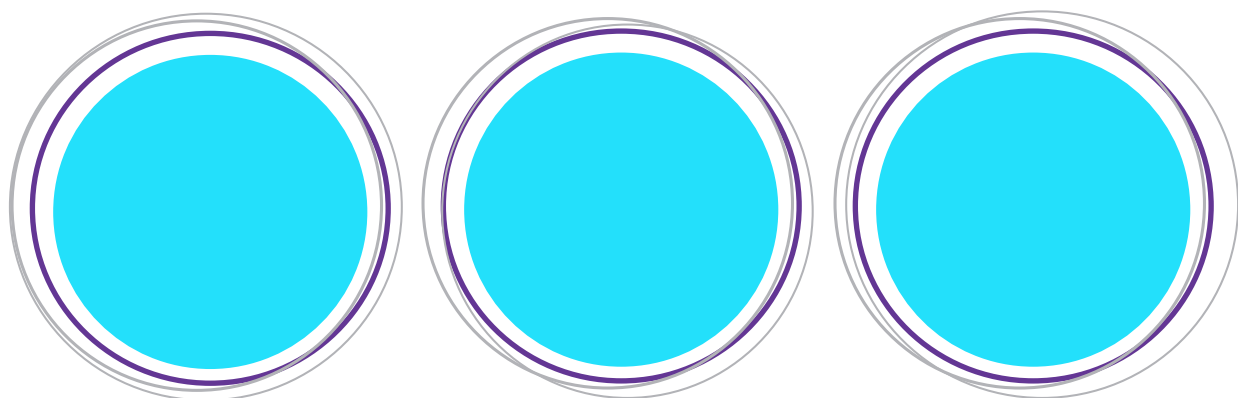
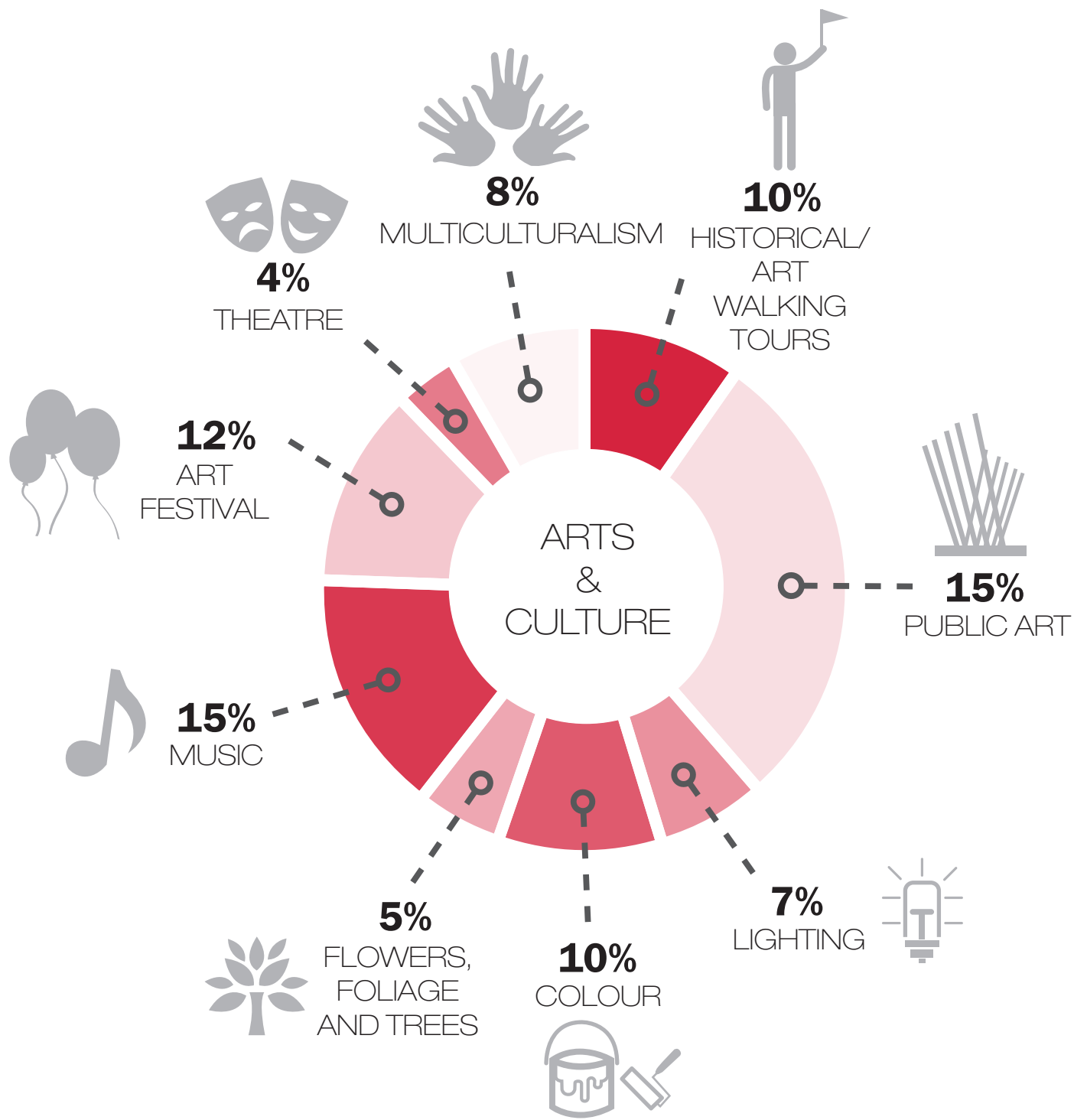
Using a public engagement feedback matrix, 8-80 Cities staff compiled, categorized, and ranked every idea collected during the public consultation phase. The ideas were gathered over the course of four months, during which more than 200 residents participated in an engagement session. In total, 277 ideas for making Downtown Brampton a more walkable, bikeable, and people-based place, were collected. The ideas were first divided into two broad categories: Software and Hardware (Figure 1). Software refers to project ideas that involve events, programming and public space management. Hardware project ideas include investment in physical infrastructure in the public realm.

Project ideas were then categorized into six major Doable Project Themes. The number of occurrences in which each theme was discussed by residents at an 8-80 Cities consultation meeting is represented in Figure 2. Arts & Culture is the top ranked project theme using this analysis, followed by Parks & Public Spaces and Walking & Cycling.

- Arts & Culture (28%)
- Walking & Cycling (15%)
- Parks & Public Spaces (22%)
- Local Economy (11%)
- Streets & Roadways (15%)
- Public Education & Awareness (9%)

8-80 Cities staff divided each individual idea under the six major Doable Project Themes. The following section will highlight the most common Doable Project ideas that were discussed during public engagement and consultation meetings.





ARTS & CULTURE

Rather than competing with Bramalea City Centre mall or other municipalities in the GTA, residents frequently addressed the need to establish a sense of place and identity in Downtown Brampton. The most common strategy among those consulted was to build off of Downtown Brampton’s Heritage Arts Culture Entertainment (HACE) designation. While many celebrated Rose Theatre and PAMA, residents stated that these institutions should be leveraged to create an immersive and interactive experience for all visitors and residents of the area.

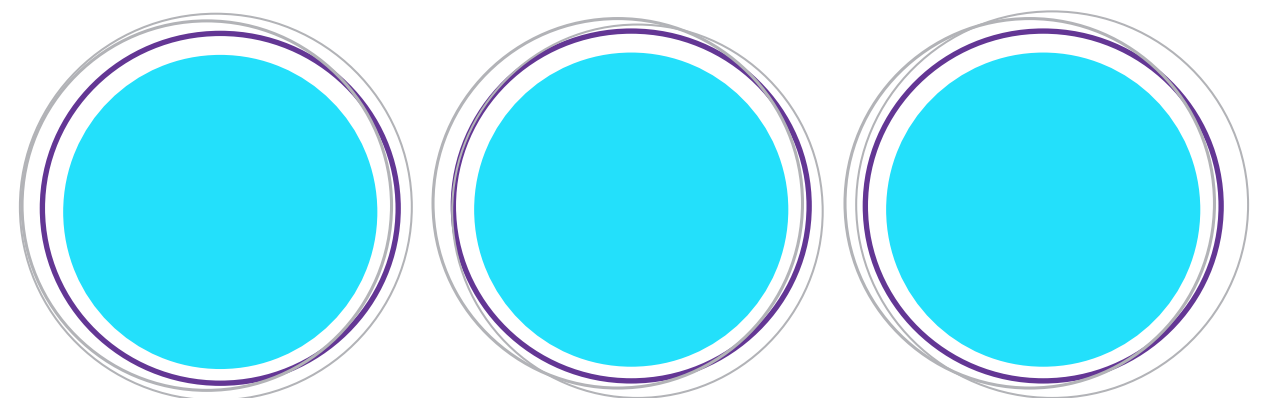
The most common Doable Project Ideas under the Arts & Culture category include:

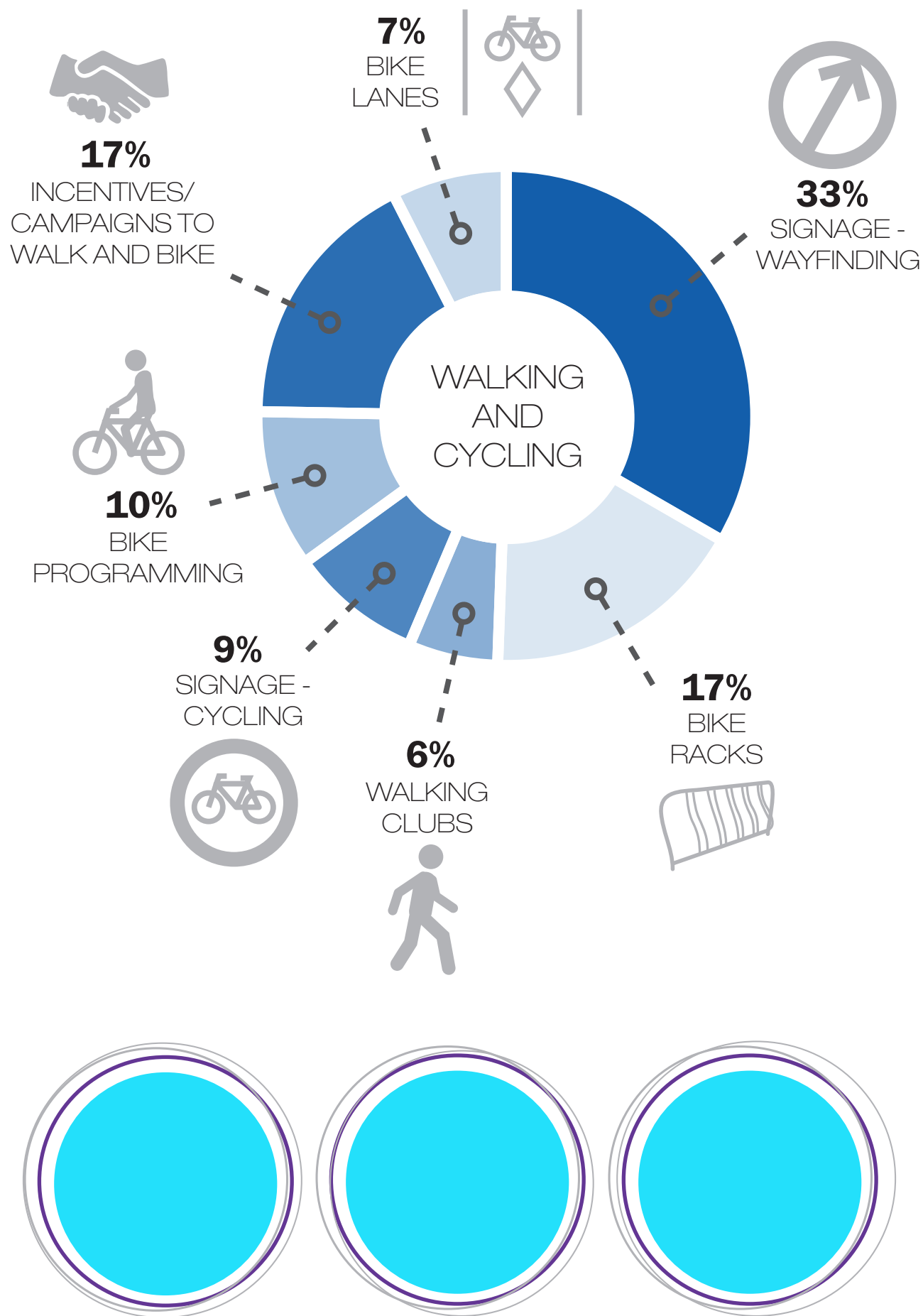
Public Art, Colour & Lighting (32% of ideas)

Public art was deemed the best method for increasing foot traffic and evening destinations in Downtown Brampton. Ice sculptures, interactive art installations, and sidewalk murals were all listed as potential strategies.

Music & Theatre (19%)

Build on the Rose Theatre’s success by bringing live music and theatre to streets of Downtown Brampton. Lunchtime musical performances in Garden Square and more live entertainment in the laneways will help animate these spaces during non-peak hours.





WALKING & CYCLING

The overall objective of the Doable Neighbourhood Project is to create communities where walking and cycling is a fun and safe means of physical activity and transportation. Therefore, this was a key theme addressed in each meeting and engagement activity undertaken. Downtown Brampton is a highly walkable and bikeable community due to its consistent grid pattern and the relative proximity of major destinations such as Gage Park and Rose Theatre. Building on this foundation will be vital to creating a truly walk and bike friendly downtown area. 8-80 Cities staff learned that many people already walk in Downtown Brampton, but there remains room for improvement. Cycling, on the other hand, is not perceived to be a safe or viable option for many reasons, including safety and lack of infrastructure.

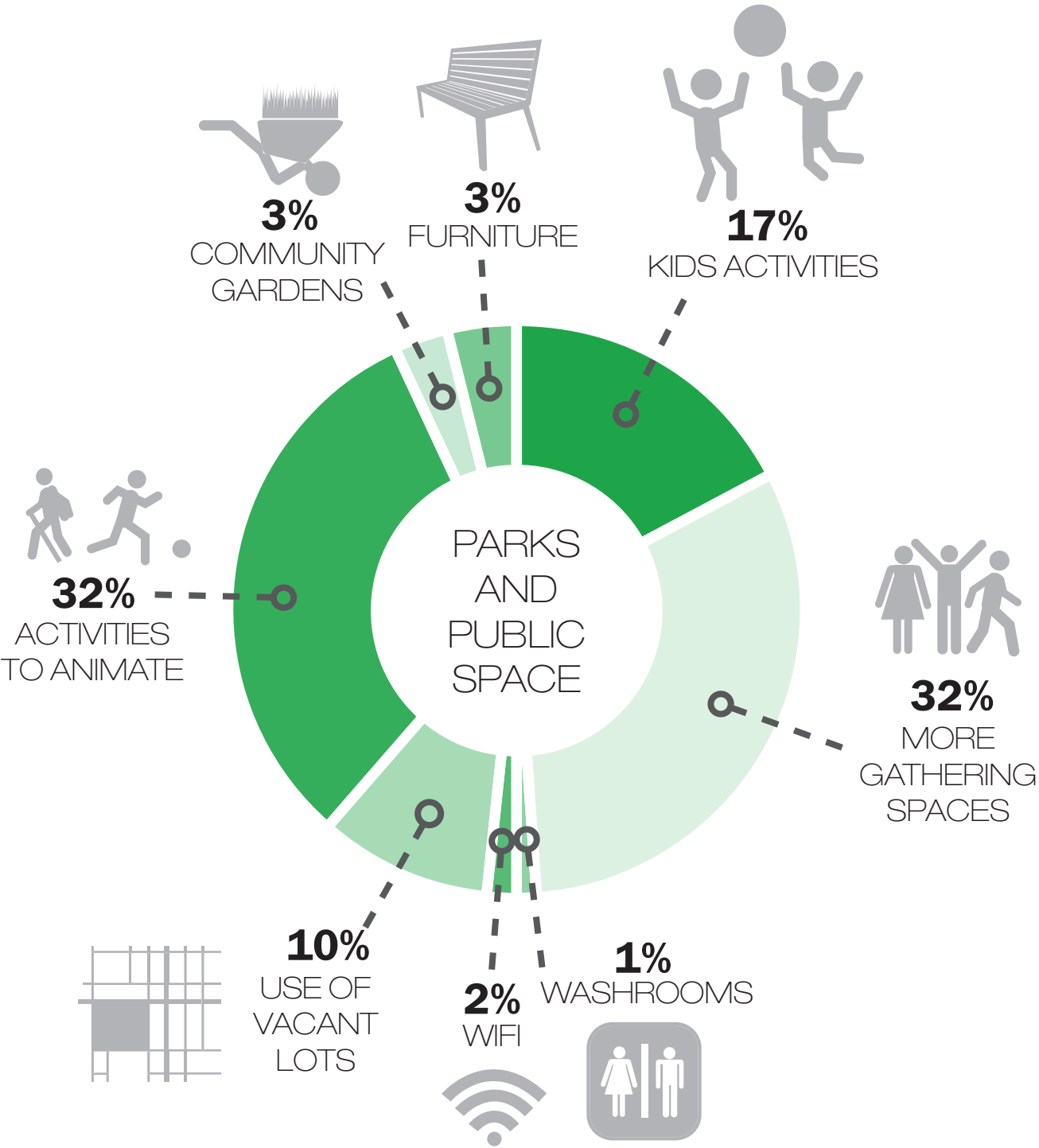
The top two Doable Project categories under this theme help address these key issues:

Signage & Wayfinding (33% of ideas):

Increase awareness of local events and businesses through interactive, creative, and strategically-positioned signage. Wayfinding should be positioned to direct people from the Etobicoke Creek Trail into Downtown Brampton. Signage that includes distance by walking minutes will help direct people to major destinations, while encouraging people that it's really not that far! Increased bicycle signage was frequently cited as a way to boost awareness of existing cycling routes and infrastructure such as bicycle racks. In addition, many felt that Downtown Brampton needed 'Share the Road' signage to inform motorists that the streets are meant for all road users.

Walk & Bike Incentive Programs (17%):

Each year, thousands of people discover the many joys and benefits of daily walking and cycling through promotional events and campaigns. Walk or Bike to Work Days are effective ways to increase active transportation for utilitarian purposes. Walking Clubs were also mentioned in several conversations as a way to enhance the safety and sociability of navigating Downtown Brampton on your own two feet. Finally, bicycle programs and events, such as Bike Rodeos where children complete cycling obstacle courses and learn about cycling safety, were identified as ways to normalize cycling behaviour, raise awareness, and enhance the safety of all cyclists.



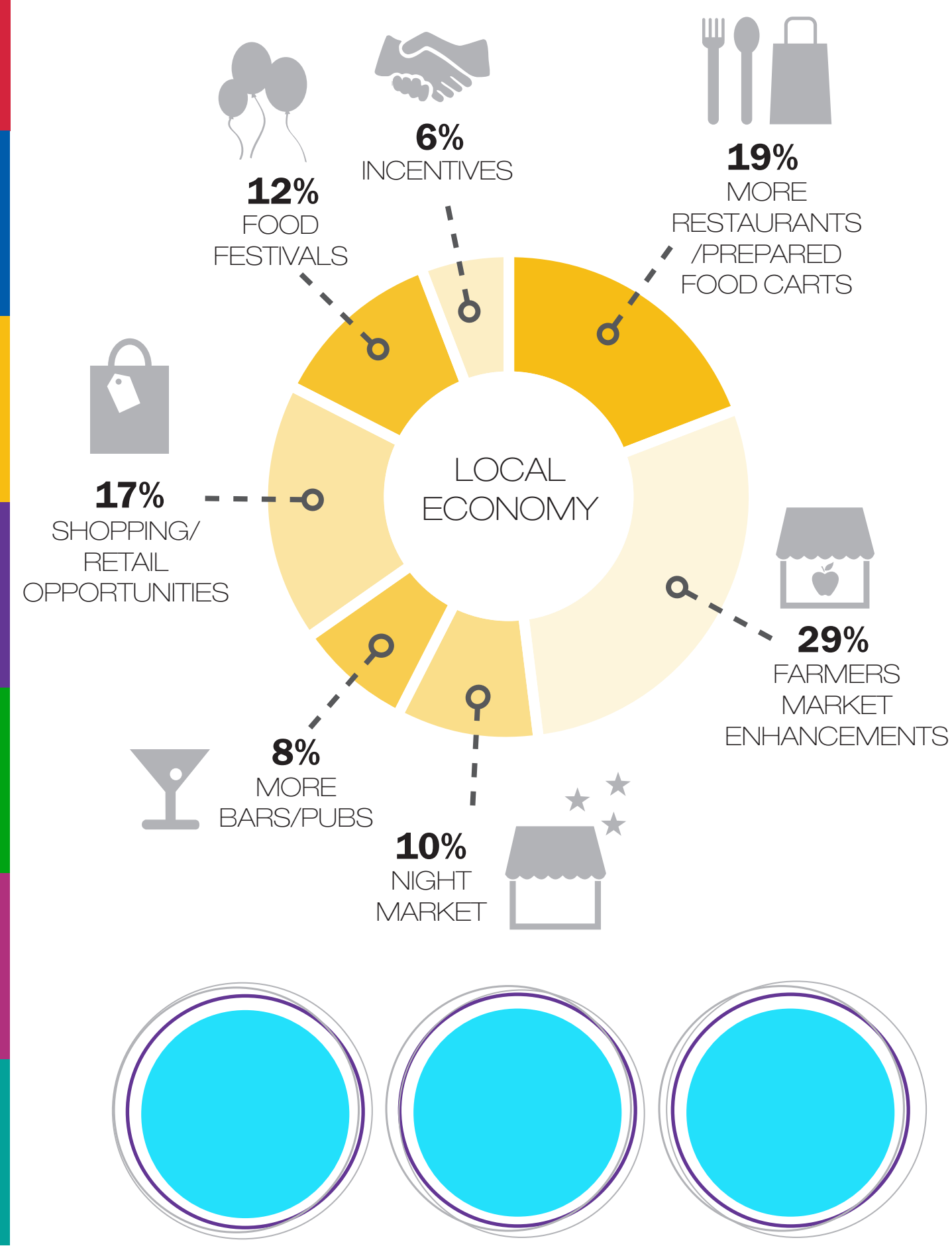
Parks and public spaces are vital to the social and cultural life of downtown areas. Downtown Brampton has several public space assets, including both parks and hardscaped plazas. With the infrastructure already in place, the primary challenge lies in programming these spaces with events and activities that will draw people in, and encourage them to stay. The existing parks and plazas, however, should be bolstered and supported by a smaller network of impromptu and creative spaces. Providing adequate amenities such as washrooms, furniture, and WiFi are also important to ensure that these places are accessible and welcoming for all potential users.

The top two Doable Project ideas under the Parks & Public Spaces theme are:

Gathering Spaces (51%):
Creating a gathering space does not need to be a resource intensive project. Chair bombing is an effective way to create a social space by leaving chairs in public for anyone to use. Parklets and Park(ing) Days, which convert road space into temporary pedestrians plazas are other methods to achieve this. Community Gardens came up in conversations with several residents who felt that green spaces reserved for gardening would help bring people together to socialize, enjoy nature, and learn about the benefits of healthy food choices.

Programming & Activation (25%):
When people speak about making Downtown Brampton more of a destination, they often suggest specific events, programs, and activities that would draw people in from across the entire city. Public consultation participants celebrated existing events in Downtown Brampton, but many felt more could be done to attract larger, more diverse crowds into the area. Residents aged 0-19, for example, comprise 31% of Brampton’s total population. Drawing young people and families into Downtown Brampton requires programming and events that cater to people of all ages, ethnicities, and income levels. Music and arts were noted as themes to pursue.





LOCAL ECONOMY - FOOD & RETAIL

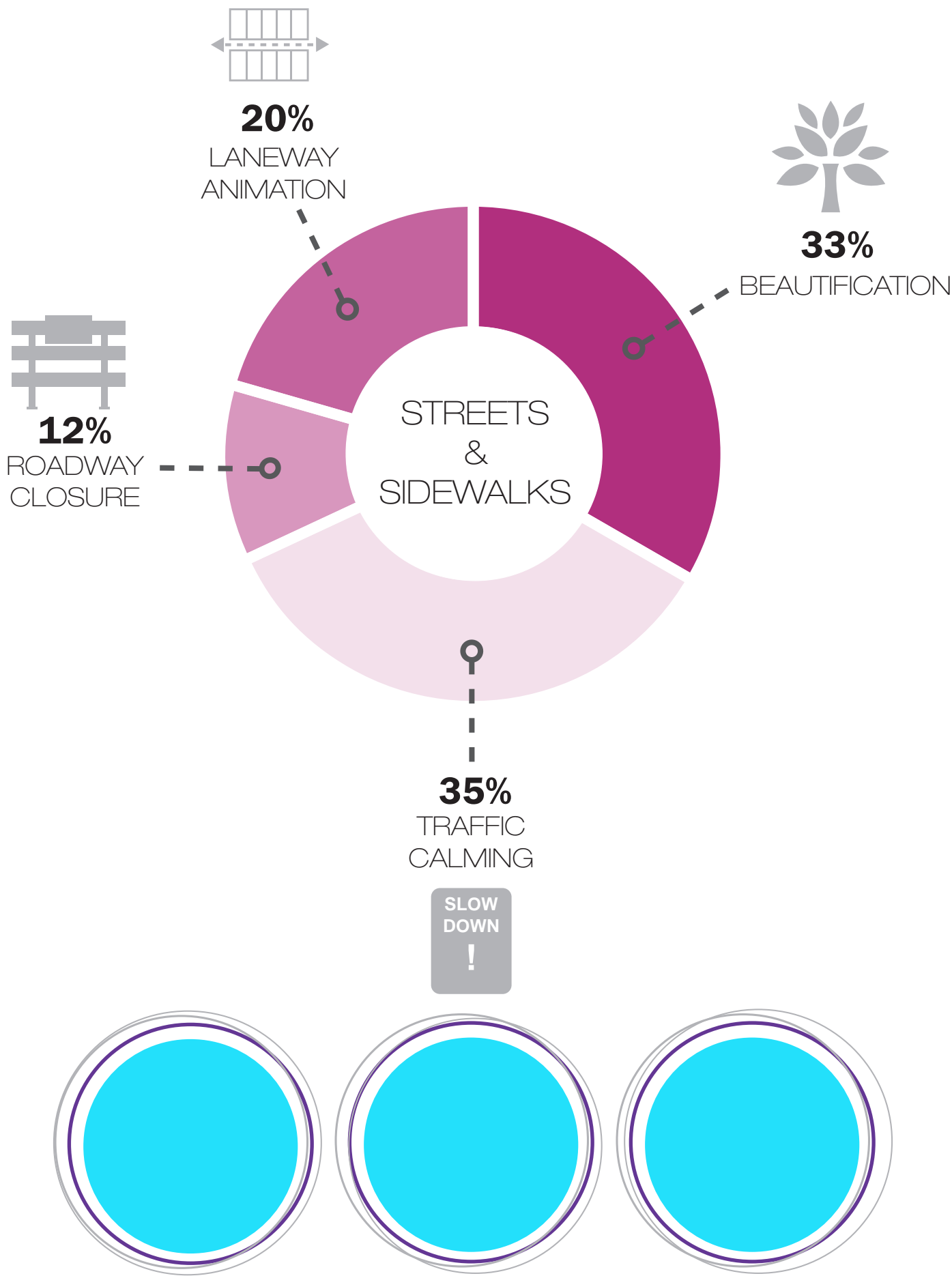
Downtowns are economic hubs that drive innovation. They are places where people come to work, shop, and dine. Creating a strong local economy is vital to establishing a vibrant downtown core. Many participants felt that Downtown Brampton lacks the destination retailers that attract people to shopping malls in suburban areas. Therefore, the core area must capitalize on its central location to offer experiences that shopping malls cannot offer. A key theme that emerged among residents was the need to create more night life in Downtown Brampton. For the local business community, a key concern was the need for existing downtown events such as the Farmers Market to bolster bricks and mortar businesses, rather than compete with them.

Farmers Market Enhancements (29%):

Many participants identified the Downtown Brampton Farmers Market as one of their favourite public events that takes place in Downtown Brampton. Many community members, however, addressed the fact that the Farmers Market does not have enough ‘staying power.’ In other words, people come to do their weekly shopping, and then leave the area. This concern was particularly salient among the local business community. Ideas such as multicultural food days and street hockey or basketball tournaments were suggested to help broaden the Market’s audience, while encouraging people to stay downtown after they have visited the Farmers Market.

Restaurants, Bars & Prepared Food (19%):

There is a common feeling that Downtown Brampton lacks commercial anchors and/or destinations. Many participants agreed that additional restaurants and bars are needed for people to want to visit Downtown Brampton in the evening. Bars and restaurants were identified for their opportunity to add excitement vibrancy, particularly among younger Bramptonians. Doable Projects that would address this demand could include a food truck festival, and temporary beer gardens.

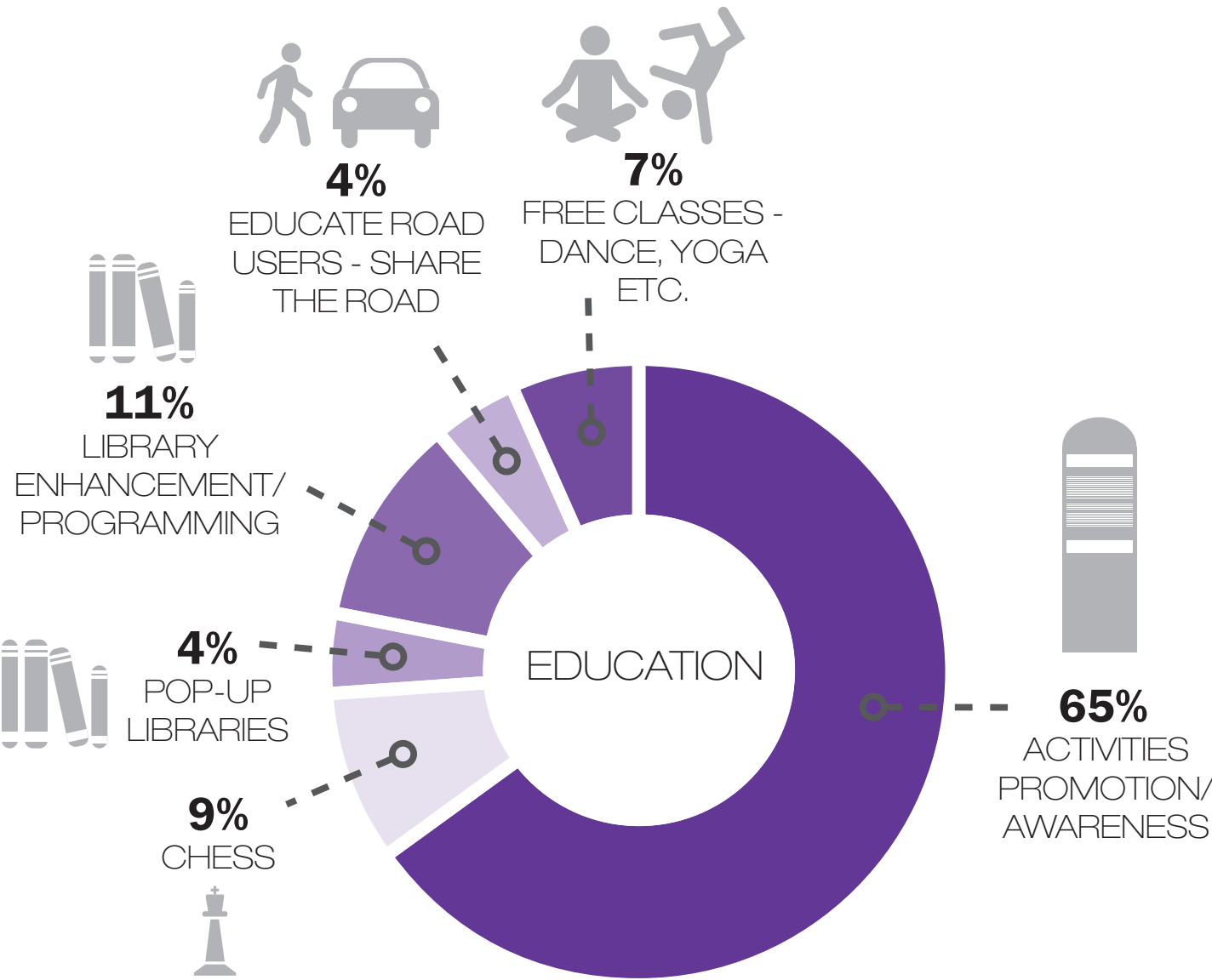


Streets and roads represent the largest public space in every city. They are often designed, however, with one user in mind; the motorist. Creating better streets and roads that accommodate all transportation modes is essential to building a safer and healthier community for everyone. The noise, pollution, and speed of traffic on Main and Queen Streets detract from the sidewalk experience of Downtown Brampton. Participants acknowledged the need to reclaim the streets, laneways, parking spaces, and sidewalks for people of all ages and mobility levels. A variety of ideas emerged that could help enhance the cyclist and pedestrian experience without the expense associated with major infrastructure projects.

The two key Doable Project categories that came out of discussions regarding streets and roadways are:

Traffic Calming (35%): One of the strongest factors that prevent more people from walking and cycling in Downtown Brampton is the speed and perceived lack of safety of traffic on Main and Queen Streets. Participants suggested a wide range of ideas to slow traffic and create a safer environment for all road users. Proposed Doable Projects to address this concern included new road signage to reduce speed limits, adding mid-block crosswalks, and experimenting with more temporary road closures.

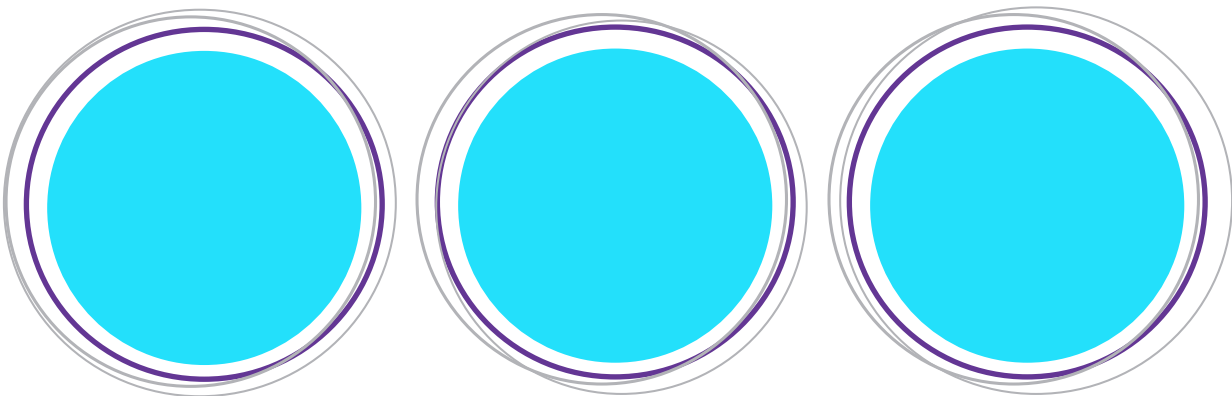
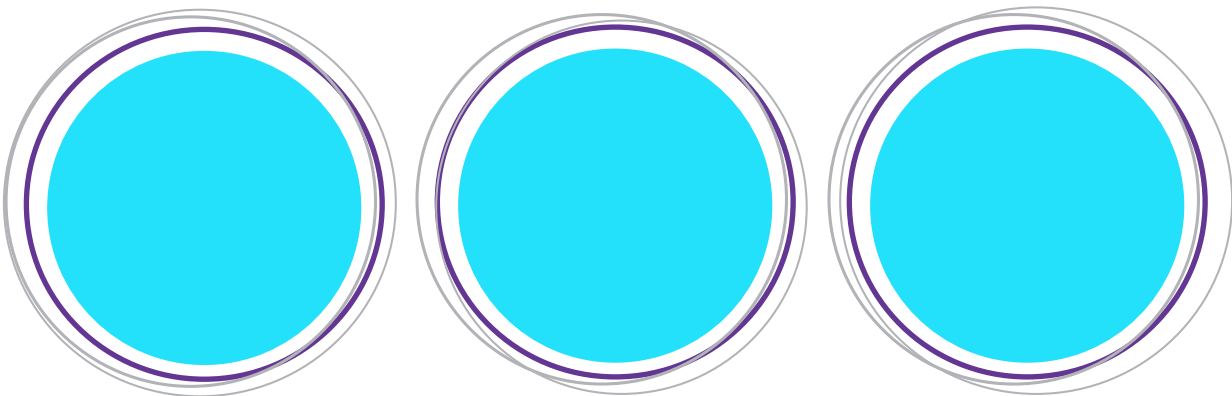
Beautification (33%): Improving the streetscape through beautification efforts can go a long way in enhancing the pedestrian experience. Small but important physical changes can be an important advertising and promotional opportunity to motorists that might otherwise drive right through the neighbourhood. Refreshing the lamppost banners, adding natural elements and street trees, and installing more public art were all suggested as opportunities to make Downtown Brampton a more attractive place to walk, cycle, and visit. Street beautification measures also have a “natural” traffic calming effect because they bring more life and activity into the street, thus compelling motorists to be more aware of their surroundings.



It is widely acknowledged that Downtown Brampton suffers from negative perceptions regarding safety and liveliness. One way to change mindsets is to improve the level of public education and awareness about the events and activities occurring in the area. Many participants in public engagement sessions noted that Downtown Brampton hosts many events, but there is a sense that these celebrations (Rib 'n Roll, Santa Clause Parade, Garden Square concerts) generally attract a similar crowd year after year. Implementing a comprehensive advertising and public education campaign about downtown events and activities could help draw visitors to the area. Other participants emphasized the need to make Downtown Brampton itself a place of learning and health education. Enhancing the community outreach efforts of the local library, having outdoor chess sets readily available for 24-hour access, and offering free outdoor exercise classes were all suggested not only as ways to alter people's perceptions of downtown, but also to change their behaviours towards healthier lifestyles. The two most popular categories under the Public Education and Awareness theme are:

Event Promotions (65%): Downtown Brampton hosts dozens of public events each year, but there is a lack of awareness among many residents about what activities are occurring. Many participants felt that awareness and promotions is greatly needed, especially to draw people into Downtown Brampton from suburban communities. Online events calendars, community message boards, and more targeted advertising through educational institutions were all recommended to enhance the awareness of what is happening in Downtown Brampton.

Library Enhancements (11%): Downtown Brampton's public library is a valuable asset in the community. Improvements could be made to the programming and physical space at the library to make it more of a draw for people who live, work, and visit the downtown area. A creative wall mural, colourful bike racks, and more community-oriented programming were suggested to enhance the library as a downtown destination.





05

Implementation

SELECTING THE PILOT PROJECTS

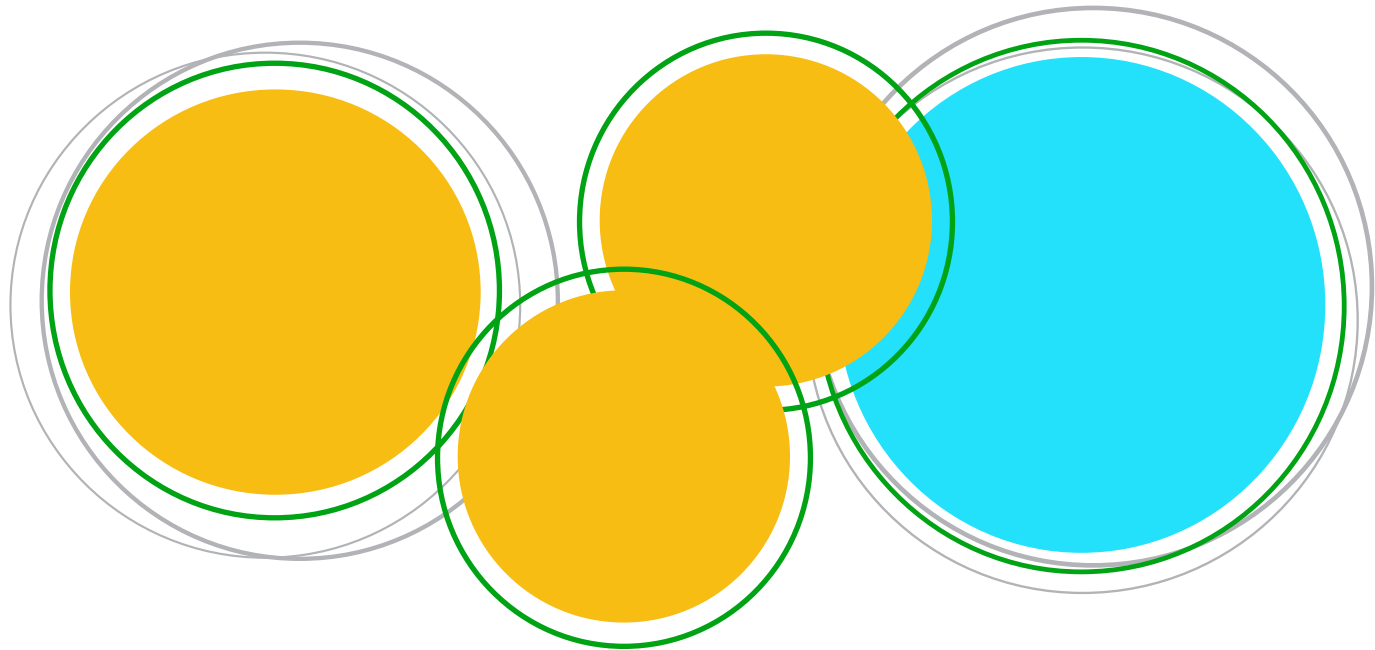
Downtown Brampton stakeholders shared dozens of inspiring and innovative ideas during the DNP community engagement process. The ideas ranged from the practical and implementable (ie. promotional packages for new downtown employees) to the creative and aspirational (ie. art installations along the Etobicoke Creek Trail). 8-80 Cities distilled these ideas into major categories and themes (as seen in the previous section), but the BDDC is responsible for selecting which concepts and pilot projects to move forward with. To support this selection process, 8-80 Cities developed a tool that ranked each pilot project idea based its popularity during public engagement, and also placed each idea on a timeline and spectrum of doability. This process helped the BDDC identify which projects could be implemented as quick-wins, and which ideas would have the greatest impact over a longer period of time. Through a series of meetings, 8-80 Cities also identified which residents had volunteered to help implement specific projects during the public engagement sessions. As a result of this rigorous process, two pilot projects were rolled out in the summer of 2014. Several more projects are in various planning stages, and are scheduled to be unveiled in 2015.

Brampton Art Park

A new public space popped up in Downtown Brampton in August 2014 in an unlikely place. Art Park was a one-day parklette event (in the tradition of Parking Day), which brought trees, greenery, seating, and play into a parking space on bustling Main Street. The project was hosted by the Brampton Downtown Development Corporation, and unveiled as the city's first official Doable Neighbourhood Project. This parklette created a new space where pedestrians could grab a seat, play in the sand, and enjoy the live music being played in an adjacent laneway. Although the installation was temporary, Art Park helped Brampton residents reconsider their streets and public realm as places for people, not cars.

Next Steps:

- 1) Work with the City to create new public spaces.
- 2) Identify permanent opportunities to calm traffic along Main Street.
- 3) Foster relationships developed with the arts community during this project.



Doable Neighbourhood Project - Brampton, ON

Brampton Wayfinding Signage

The Brampton Wayfinding Signage project is a colourful reminder that Downtown Brampton is a highly walkable community that's best explored by foot, rather than by car. The signs help 'humanise' distances by showing walking times (rather than distance) to local destinations such as the Etobicoke Creek Trail, library, art gallery, public art, and local parks. Volunteers from the Brampton Bicycle Advisory Committee helped install more than 30 wayfinding signs throughout the downtown area on a sunny Sunday afternoon in early November 2014. The Wayfinding Signs offer a constant reminder that most community assets located in Downtown Brampton are within walking distance.

Next Steps:

- 1) Talk to business owners and residents to gauge their impressions about the signs.
- 2) Collect suggestions for new locations and destinations.
- 3) Monitor the signs for damage and vandalism and remove as needed.
- 4) Explore possibility of re-installing the signs in Spring 2015.



Doable Neighbourhood Project - Brampton, ON

UPCOMING PROJECTS

The DNP was designed to help communities implement projects in the short-term that would have long-term impacts. While several community-identified pilot projects that were immediately implementable, many comments that arose suggested larger-scale improvements were in order. The following pilot projects were selected by the BDDC to respond to community needs and ideas. These projects are in various stages of planning, but the objectives are to have each initiative on the ground within the next year.

Brampton Bike Barn

The Bike Barn will provide accessible and secure parking and basic maintenance tools for cyclists in Downtown Brampton. The lack of bicycle parking was commonly cited as a barrier to cycling during the community engagement process. The desired location for the Barn is on Nelson St., directly adjacent to the Brampton GO Station to provide easy access for daily commuters. The project will use a recycled shipping container to reduce costs, increase visibility, and allow the communities to trial various sites.

Brampton Night Market

The Brampton Night Market will provide a fun and social environment in the Downtown area after the daytime rush hours. Residents and stakeholders frequently stated that there are not enough reasons to visit Downtown Brampton after 5pm. This lack of nightlife was particularly concerning for youth who are seeking alternatives to the nearby shopping malls to hang out with their friends. The Brampton Night Market concept builds off of the popular Farmers Market, which operates on weekends during the summer. The Night Market would feature food vendors (fresh and prepared), and street entertainers.



Insert Label Here



Insert Label Here



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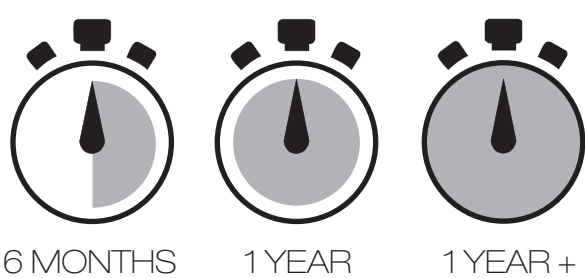
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06

Recommendations

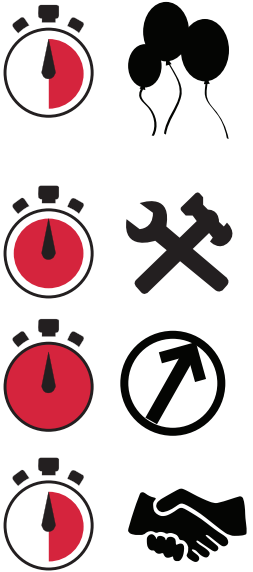
A successful park, public space, neighbourhood, and town is defined by three key elements; excellent management, consistent programming, and appropriate infrastructure. This section provides a list of recommendations that will make Downtown Brampton a healthier and happier place to live, walk, bike, and cycle.



MANAGEMENT

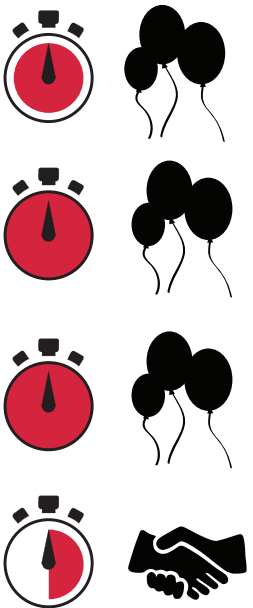
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- Continue working with the BDDC board and community partners to create an annual implementation strategy for temporary projects such as events and activities to animate public spaces throughout the neighbourhood
- Develop a separate implementation strategy for longer-term projects such as design and infrastructure upgrades
- Continue to collect user data to monitor and measure success of pilot projects and public spaces such as the laneways and Garden Square.
- Identify opportunities for ongoing funding mechanisms for programming and management.



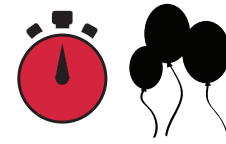
GAGE PARK

- Continue supporting and promoting the successful community-based events that already take place in Gage Park.
- Work with new organizations and stakeholders who expressed interest in bringing new programming to Downtown Brampton – particularly events and activities that cater to youth and various ethnic communities.
- Make the process easier and more accessible for community groups to get a permit for small-scale community events and activities.
- Establish a visible daily presence of management and maintenance at Gage Park. Raise the level of service to respond quickly to resident concerns related to safety, accessibility, and maintenance.



BROADER PUBLIC REALM

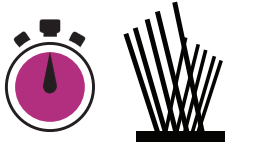
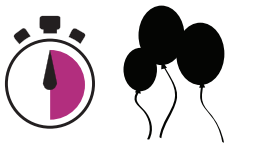
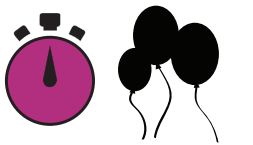
- Develop a longer-term retail and commercial development plan for Main Street and Queen Street.
- Continue to work with existing businesses and property owners to identify opportunities and projects that can help promote economic development, while improving the overall 'Downtown Experience.'
- Create a public space network improvement strategy for the town. Focus on improving linkages between important areas such as Gage Park, Rosalea Park, Garden Square, and City Hall.
- Communicate with the public. Set up a website (or create a dedicated page on the BDDC website), use traditional and social media to promote events and activities throughout the downtown area.
- Work with the City to shift priorities to ensure that pedestrian pathways are cleared of snow, ice, and debris in all seasons before roadways.
- Collaborate with owners of vacant or underused buildings to address barriers and identify opportunities to find commercial tenants that will contribute to the vibrancy of Downtown Brampton.



PROGRAMMING

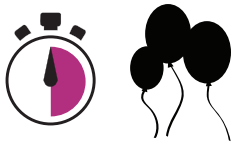
EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Maintain and build on the existing calendar of community events. Use these gatherings as an opportunity to talk to residents and collect new ideas.
- Implement low hanging fruit by using existing resources and public gathering spaces. Identify events that can be held outdoors in summer and moved indoors (YMCA, City Hall, etc.) during the winter months. Begin hosting movie nights, exercise classes, participatory gardening, and children's activities within the short term. Ensure activities and events appeal to a wide range of ages and users.
- Have a small-scale community based event or activity at least once a week (ie. yoga classes, children's crafts, live music).
- Approach new potential partners to generate event and activity ideas that can enliven underused spaces. For example, the YMCA and minor league baseball teams may be drawing more people into Rosalea Park.
- Use temporary 'pop-up' projects, like colorful art installations, to transform underperforming or vacant spaces in the short-term.
- Develop a long-term funding strategy for programming and activities.
- Continue to promote the walkability of Downtown Brampton. Pursue opportunities to provide more programming and activation in the laneways. Implement a 'Park the Car and Get Moving' educational campaign to encourage people to walk after arriving by car in Downtown Brampton.



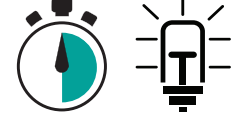
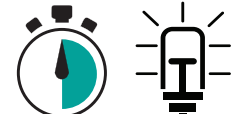
PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT

- Involve the community in all local improvement projects. Leverage fun events such as community BBQs or monthly clean-up days as opportunities to collect feedback from residents.
- Use attractive signage and communication to inform the public about events and activities. Explore the possibility of installing a permanent community notice board in a central and accessible location.
- Work with the City and other major employers to develop the Downtown Brampton orientation package to provide information and special offers for new employees.



GAGE PARK

- Improve sitting and gathering spaces at Gage Park. Add more tables, benches, and diversify seating options (ie. moveable chairs).
- Build a public fire pit and/or BBQ at Gage Park to encourage impromptu community and improve winter usage
- Improve the lighting throughout the park. Create a lighting strategy that adds to the ambiance and enhances safety.
- Provide water and electricity supply to encourage nighttime uses and to diversify the types of events that can occur in the park
- Add public washrooms and drinking fountains within or next to the park.



BROADER PUBLIC
REALM

- Make all public spaces in Downtown Brampton universally accessible.
- Install more benches along primary commercial streets and important pedestrian routes
- Enhance the streets and sidewalks with trees and greenery. Focus on native plantings.
- Incorporate public art that reflects the history and culture of the community. Build on the Rose City imagery.
- Add a community events and information board.
- Improve the pedestrian experience on Queen Street and Main Street by extending sidewalks, adding benches, greenery, and lighting.
- Work with the City to create visible gateways for each laneway as a method of improving the connectivity of each path.
- Foster partnerships with the local arts community and work with local property owners to identify areas for public art installations.





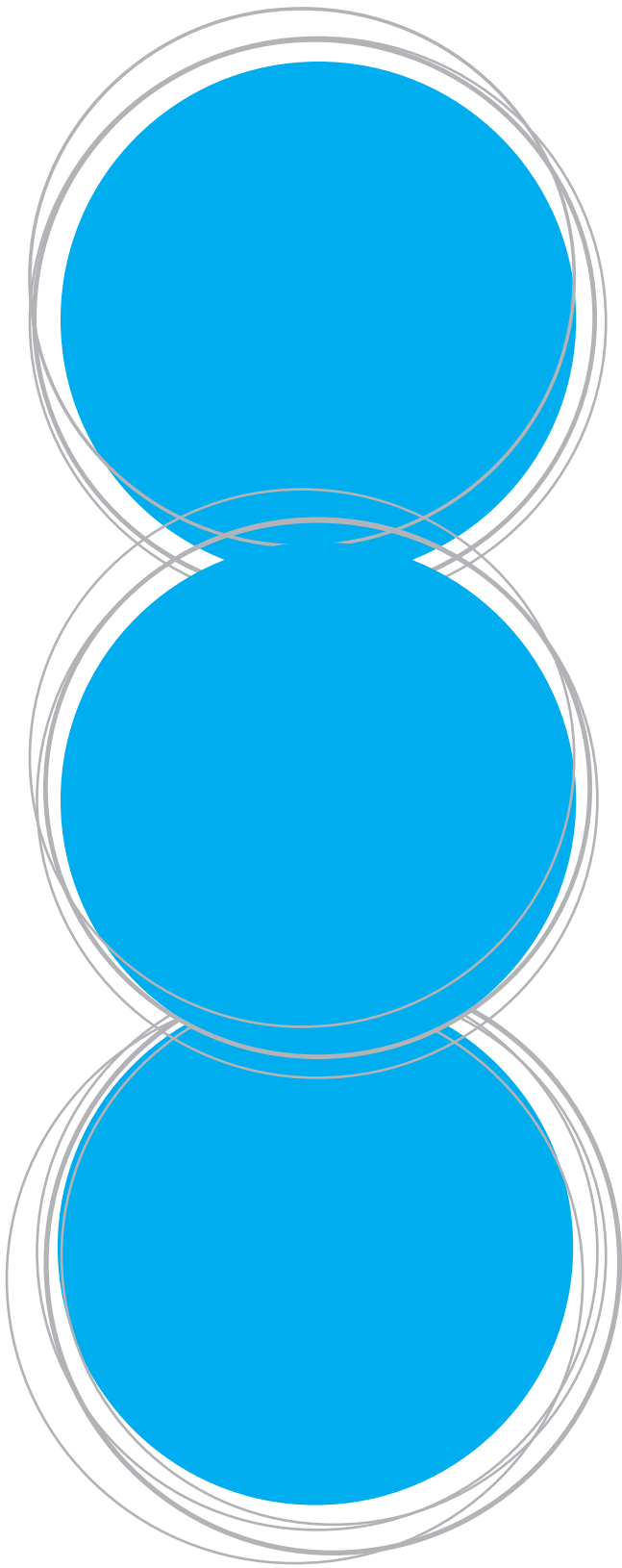
Appendix

PROJECT CASE STUDIES

Bike Barn

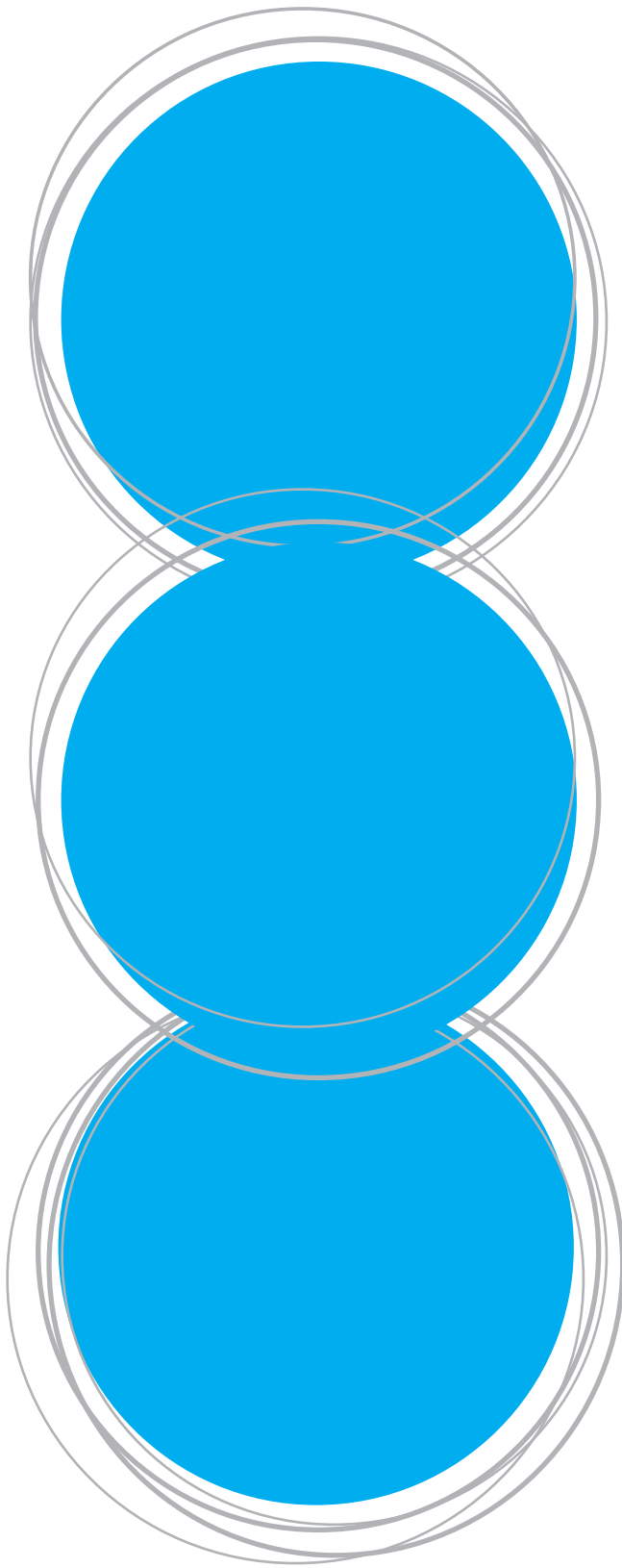
The BDDC and local residents want to support cycling as a viable means of transportation in Downtown Brampton. To achieve this goal, separated bike lanes must be constructed in a connected grid throughout the entire area. Dedicating road space to cycling is the only way to attract to shift cycling mode share beyond the dedicated minority of the population already commuting by bicycle. The BDDC, residents, community stakeholders, and city council must work towards this goal in the long-term.

In the meantime, local residents expressed the need to build basic infrastructure to raise the visibility and viability of cycling for utilitarian purposes. Bicycle parking in Downtown Brampton is sparse, and difficult to find. The absence of visible and accessible bicycle parking is particularly conspicuous around the GO Station at Nelson and Main St. The BDDC proposes building a sheltered bicycle parking structure on a vacant lot directly adjacent the GO Station on Nelson St. This Bike Barn would provide secure parking for commuters that cycle the short-to-medium distance between their homes and the GO Station. Inspired by similar projects in Pittsburgh and Winnipeg, the Bike Barn would be constructed of recycled shipping containers.



Pittsburgh Bicycle Commuter Center
Indoor secure parking is available by calling the management office. 26 spots. The cost will be \$100/year (payable in 2 \$50 installments) plus a \$10 deposit for their key fob. Leases will run April 1 to March 31. There are 21 FREE wall-racks and Bike Pittsburgh Three Rivers Racks outside to accommodate short term cultural district parking. Led by BikePGH, this project was made possible thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Mayor's Project Pop Up: Downtown program, \$7,200 from the Pittsburgh Parking Authority, and the donation of parts and labor by the PSX Group, one of the Parking Authority's systems contractors, worth \$4,200.²⁴ The city's first bicycle commuter center - a prominent fluorescent green facility with a black-and-white bicycle painted above it on the north side of the Century Building, opened in 2010. The center is made of recycled metal shipping containers sanded, painted and installed by Guardian Construction; it was designed by Moshier Studio and Koning Eizenberg Architecture.

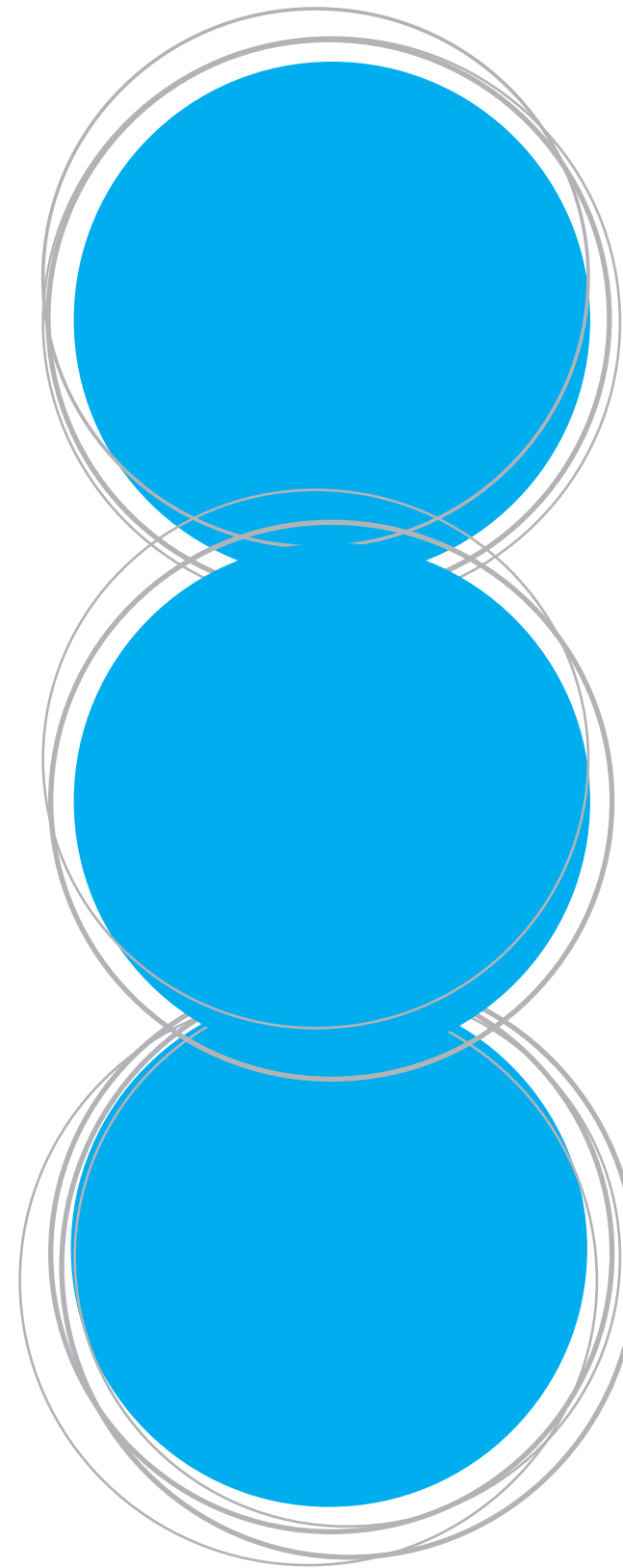
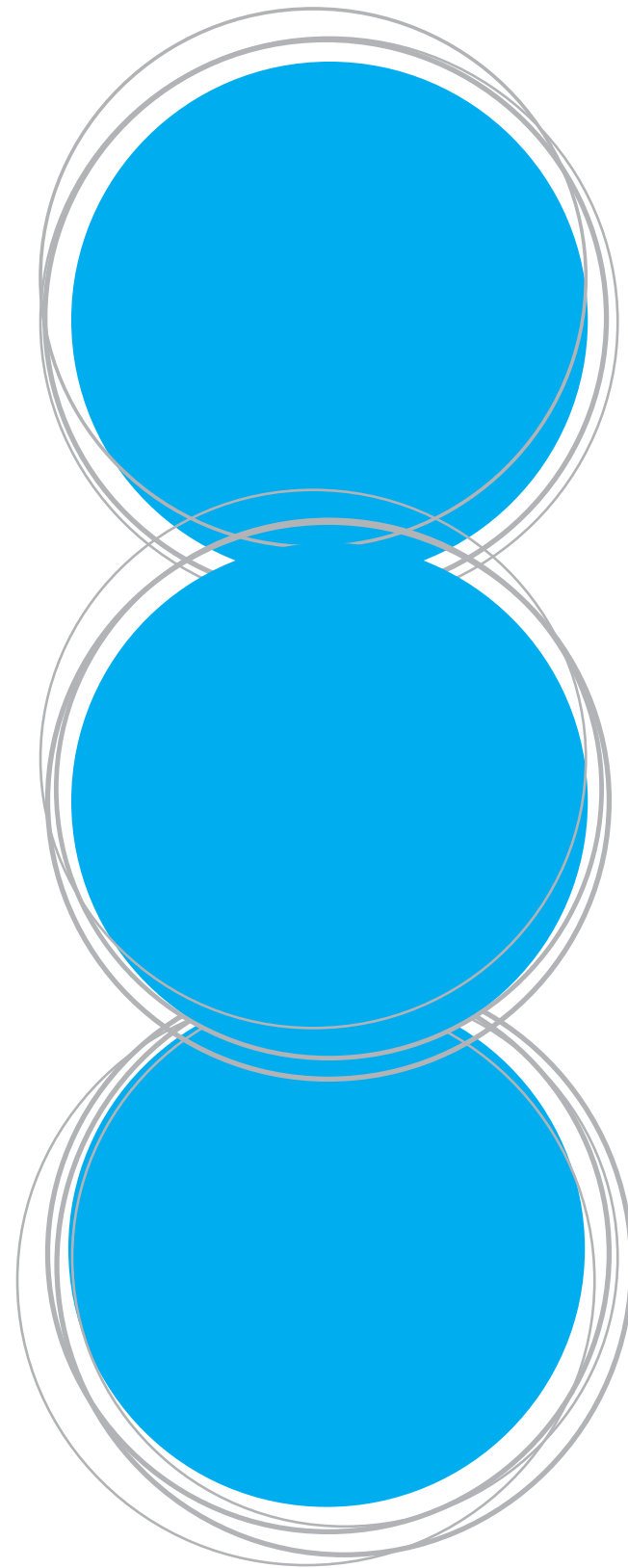
Bill Gatti on the importance of the project:
The vitality of downtown is contingent upon the creation of 24-hour residential traffic. Critical mass will only be attained through development of living options for a variety of income levels and life-styles. Trek Development Group recognized a need for moderately priced rental housing and worked with the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust to make the Century Building a realty. The Bicycle Commuter Center was a natural extension of our goals to create an environmentally healthy and sustainable community.



University of Winnipeg Bike Lab

In 2009, the student association won a referendum to begin collecting an annual student levy of two dollars to pay for a cycling facility on-campus. A private capital donation of \$100,000 from an alumnus sealed the deal. The UWSA Bike Lab was opened in October 2011 and has since become a major hub of campus activity. Users can drop in during set hours to fix their bike under the guidance of on-site volunteers. The Bike Lab also organizes numerous community outreach activities and advocates for better cycling infrastructure at the municipal level. The Bike Lab also organizes numerous community outreach activities, including “build a bike” workshops, a bike mechanics training program, cycling safety sessions and special group rides. The Bike Lab also accepts donor bicycles, which are then restored and offered to those without bikes. The lab’s physical space is also a showcase. Designed by Peter Sampson Architecture Studio using donated shipping containers, the Bike Lab won a 2014 National Urban Design Award. Shipping containers are often used as makeshift buildings in warmer climes, but these needed to be adapted for Winnipeg winters. It is a four-season facility.

“We’ve seen an overwhelming response to what we’re trying to do. So much so that we’re looking at expanding the facility to accommodate more users,” says Rorie McLeod Arnould, UWSA president for 2014-15.



Wayfinding Signage:

Pedestrian Wayfinding signs are strategically placed throughout Downtown Brampton, which denote walking distances, in minutes, to various destinations. The purpose of this project is to humanize distances for pedestrians by illustrating that destinations aren’t as far as they may think. The goal is to increase walking trips and increase public health.

As the most accessible form of mobility, making Downtown Brampton a more walkable community was identified as a top priority during the consultation phase. Surveys indicated that many residents make local trips by walking on a daily basis, but the pedestrian environment could be improved. The wayfinding project is one way to achieve that goal.

The project was inspired by the popular Walk [Your] City initiative, which has been implemented in cities around the world. Many people have become so accustomed to motorized transportation that they often overestimate how far it is to walk or bike to destinations. Walk [Your] City debunks the myth that a ‘trip is a too far’ to walk or bike by showing the distance and amount of time (in minutes) that it takes to ride or stroll to a certain destination. This online platform allows anyone to create wayfinding signage using colour-coded templates in minutes. The signs are then shipped to the creator, who must organize volunteers to help zip-tie the directional signage to street and light posts in their community. The result is a quick and affordable way to promote healthy lifestyles, public safety, and human-centered transit.



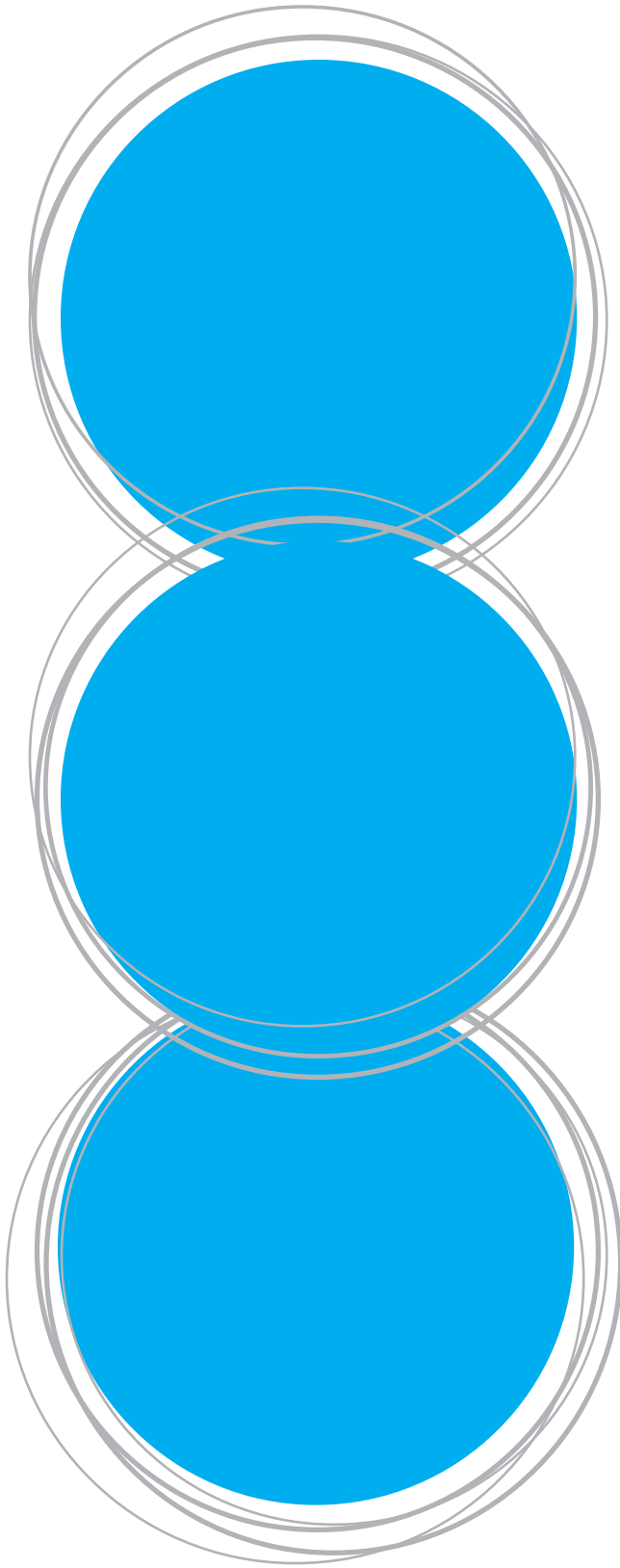
This project addresses the following objectives, as identified by residents through community consultations:

- Encourage physical activity and improve public health by increasing number of pedestrian trips
- Enhance the safety of walking in Downtown Brampton by directing pedestrians to safe routes to destinations
- Increase residents’ sense of belonging and reduce social isolation by demonstrating that seemingly separate communities are in close proximity and truly part of the same neighbourhood.

Colourful Crosswalks

Crosswalks perform a vital role in city life. They protect people from cars by designating a small sliver of road that is dedicated for pedestrians. Over time, however, all crosswalks become damaged and fade to a point where they no longer serve their purpose as a visible alert to motorists that they are nearing a pedestrian space. Even when brand new, shiny white crosswalks are painted at major intersections, their mundane appearance often contributes to their misuse, which contributes to traffic and pedestrian safety issues. Colourful crosswalks help alleviate these problems, while contributing a splash of creativity and fun in unexpected places. Their visibility and artistic expression encourages alertness among motorists and promotes responsible behaviour among pedestrians.

Anecdotal and observational evidence suggested that Main Street between Queen and Nelson is a common jaywalking site for pedestrians. An observational survey confirmed this evidence. The presence

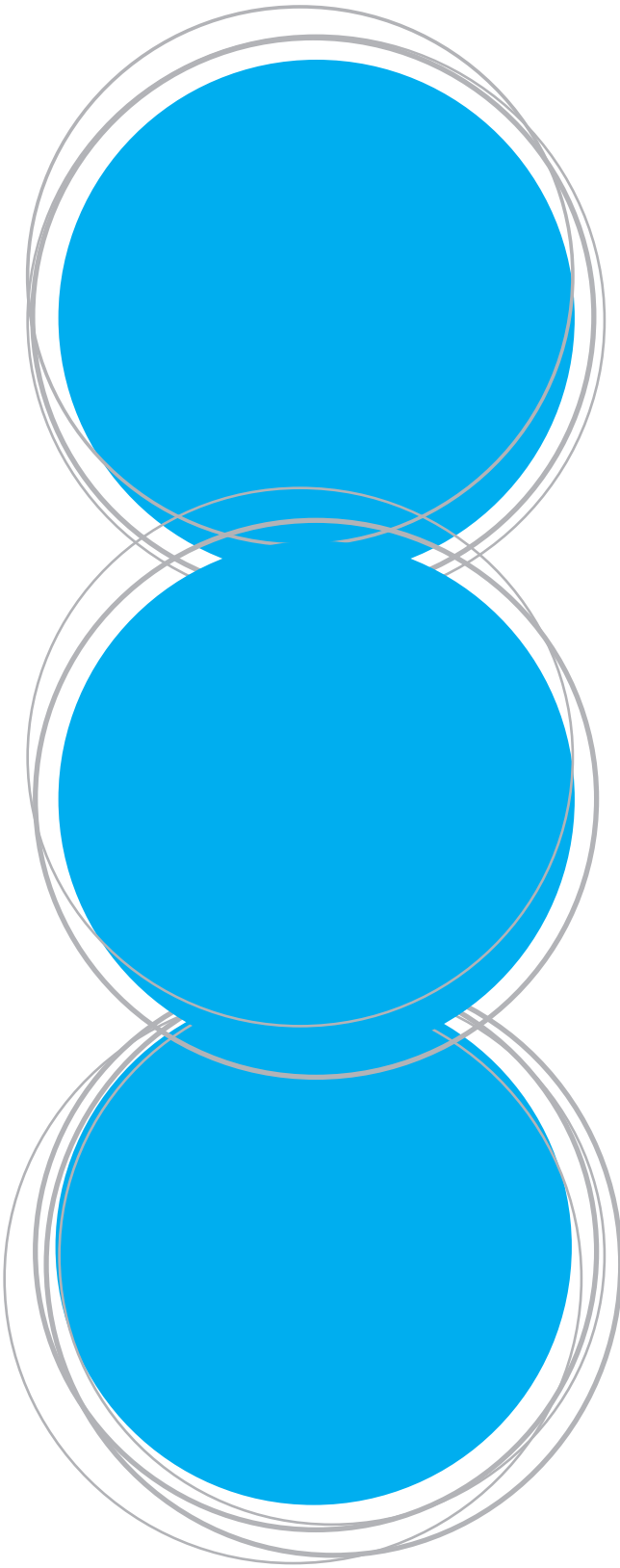


of laneways on opposite sides of Main Street contribute to this roadway’s candidacy for a colourful crosswalk. Vivian and McCarter Laneway are nearly parallel to one another, but dissected by busy Main Street. These laneways provide shortcuts for pedestrians accessing Rose Theatre and Garden Square on the east side of Main Street, and the parking garage and shops on the west side. A colourful crosswalk would highlight these pedestrian connections, slow traffic on Main Street, and contribute a splash of colour onto the mundane roadway.

Brampton’s Pedestrian Safety Plan includes provisions that would lend support for a colourful crosswalk in the Downtown area:

Mississauga Crosswalk

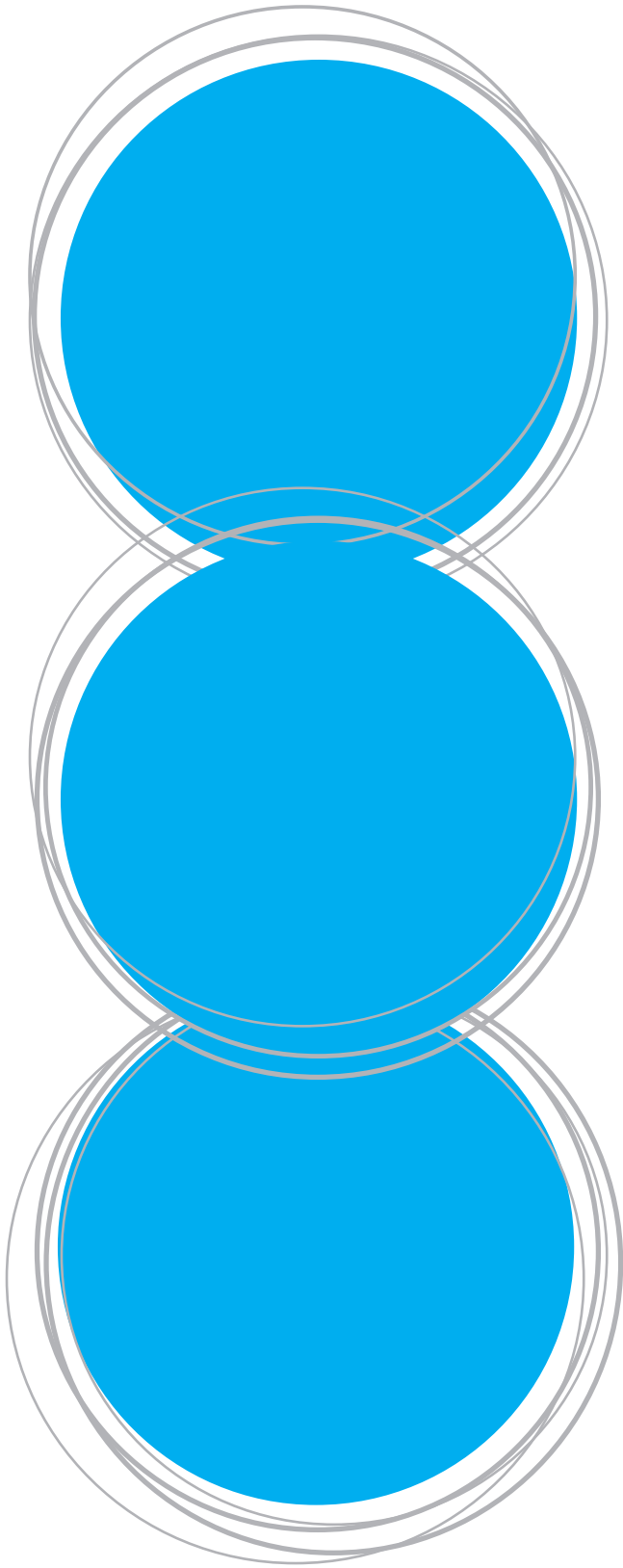
Mississauga commissioned an artist to design a crosswalk that doubled as public art. The crossing is located at the intersection of City Centre Dr. and Duke of York Blvd. City officials worked closely with the artist to ensure that the design respected local road safety and marking guidelines. The project was aligned with the recently approved “Framework for a Public Art Program.” Peter Gibson (Roadsworth) is the Montreal-based artist who created the crossing. <http://roadsworth.com/>



Vancouver Crosswalk

Following the rainbow on Davie Street will get you safely across the road in Downtown Vancouver. The permanent rainbow crosswalks at Davie St. and Bute St. send a bright visual reminder to watch for pedestrians, but also provide a symbolic tribute to the LGBTQ community that lives in the neighbourhood. The crosswalks were installed in summer 2013 in conjunction with a pilot plaza project, which closed a 30 metre portion of road on But St. to cars.

Rediscovering Laneways: Melbourne
A unique planning history left the Downtown Melbourne with two distinct grids: one of major streets and one of narrow laneways that run between the buildings. While other cities with similar laneway systems use the laneways mostly for garbage disposal, Melbourne has allowed the back-end rooms of the buildings facing the main street to be converted into tiny bars, restaurants and shops that front onto the laneways, transforming the tiny thoroughfares into a richly woven network of pedestrian-only spaces. As a result, downtown Melbourne now boasts twice the number of evening pedestrians as it did in 1990, twelve times more outdoor cafes (in 1990 it had less than 50, now it has more than 600) and even, correspondingly, the highest ratio of street furniture per person in the world.
<http://www.8-80cities.org/doablecity/hidden-assets/#close>



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