

WALKABILITY FOR OLDER ADULTS WITH AGE-RELATED VISION LOSS IN LONDON, ONTARIO

Emily Laliberte and Dr. Colleen McGrath

WHAT IS WALKABILITY?

Walkability is a **multidimensional concept** that includes aspects of both the **built and social environment**. It intends to measure "how friendly an area is to walking" and has important **population level impacts**.

(Tobin et al., 2022)

- Neighbourhoods that are not walkable can lead to experiences of occupational injustice and **restrict social participation**
- This project arose from a critical participatory action research (CPAR) study
- The research collective for this project completed a scoping review to look at solutions and strategies to support community mobility for older adults
- Walkability was a concept **underrepresented** in the literature and the collective wanted to explore this further through **audits in our local community**



THE AUDITS

- Conducted in **4 London neighbourhoods** with perceived high populations of older adults (60+)
- Utilized **The Road Safety Audit Tool for Pedestrians who are Visually Impaired**, which was developed in Australia
- Focused on **signalised intersections, non-signalised intersections, and path infrastructure**
- Identified key **barriers to walkability** and ways to improve the built environment

NEIGHBOURHOODS

1 **Fanshawe-Richmond**

2 **Cherryhill**

3 **Huron-Highbury**

4 **Wharncliffe- Commissioners**



BARRIERS TO WALKABILITY IDENTIFIED...



Lack of Accessible Pedestrian Signals

Lack of Tactile Ground Surface Indicators



Uneven sidewalks and medians



Difficult to navigate transit areas



NEXT STEPS

- Create a detailed report with findings from the audit for the City of London's Transportation and Design Committee
- The report will include recommendations/guidelines to improve walkability for older adults with ARVL set out by the City of London, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and the Canada National Institute for the Blind
- Interview older adults residing in these neighbourhoods to understand their lived experience and perceived barriers to walkability in the community



SPECIAL THANKS TO THE CPAR RESEARCH COLLECTIVE.

References

Tobin, M., Hajna, S., Orychock, K. et al. Rethinking walkability and developing a conceptual definition of active living environments to guide research and practice. BMC Public Health 22, 450 (2022)