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METRO TALKS CONVERSATIONS WITH LEADERS

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT GURU JANETTE SADIK-KHAN

BOOSTING BUSINESS

'Cars don't shop, people do. We saw retail sales soar when we pedestrianized Times Square.'

CHANGE IS CHEAP

'The good news is, it's possible to move very, very quickly to change your streets and it doesn't take a lot of money.'

CAR-FREE BYWARD MARKET?

'You can't argue that its working perfectly now, so why not try it?'

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CHINA JACKSON/METRO

Time to take cars out of the market

metro TALKS

Janette Sadik-Khan

William Street a natural space for pedestrians, says expert



Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

Give William Street back to pedestrians, a New York transit guru suggested Wednesday.

Janette Sadik-Khan, former transportation commissioner for New York City, was in Ottawa promoting her book *Streetfight*, which chronicles her years transforming the Big Apple's city streets.

She's credited with creating thriving pedestrian spaces where there once were cars, while improving gridlock and the bottom lines of local businesses — including, most famously, at Times Square.

As she wandered around the ByWard Market, she wondered aloud why William Street — a main gateway to the market — couldn't be pedestrianized right away.

"You look at a corridor like this, and think about what you could do," Sadik-Khan said to Coun. Mathieu Fleury, who represents the area. "It's obvious."

William Street is already pedestrian-only from Rideau to George, and opens into a pedestrian plaza in front of Tucker's Marketplace.

Buskers and artists make good use of it in the summer, and come 2018 a new light rail station will serve the street, as well.

Sadik-Khan suggested it would create a natural walkway into the heart of the market.



Above: Former New York City transportation commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan, middle, biked through Ottawa with Heather Shearer of Citizens for Safe Cycling and Seth Solomonow, her co-author on *Streetfight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution*.

Below: Touring ByWard Market. EMMA JACKSON/METRO



In fact, Sadik-Khan argued the entire ByWard Market could easily pilot a pedestrian-only summer this year.

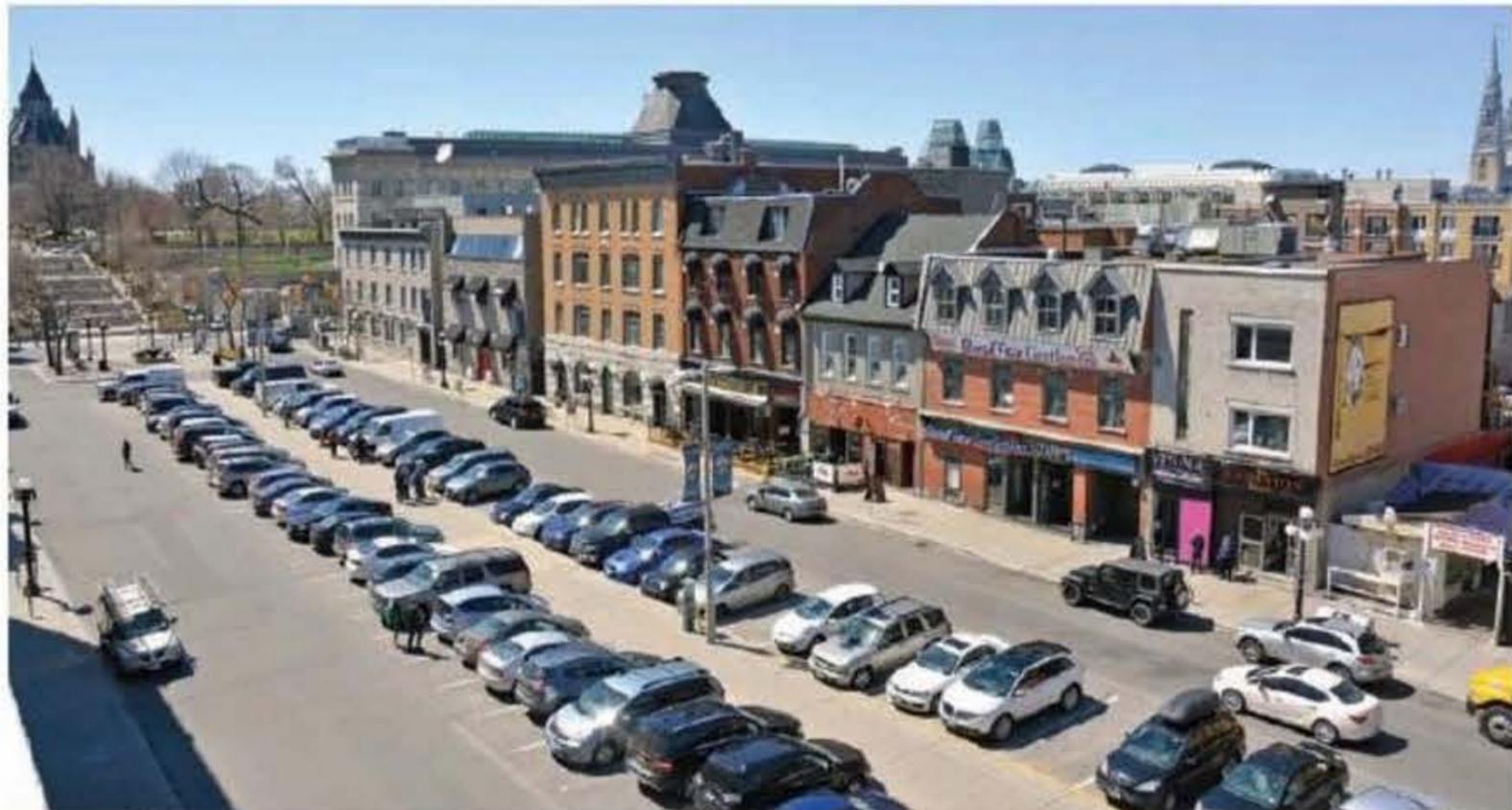
"You can't argue that it's working perfectly now, so why not try it?" she said. "If it works you keep it, and if it doesn't you can put it back."

Mayor Jim Watson was hesitant to jump in quite that fast, saying he would have to consult with residents and busi-

ness leaders.

He also said fewer people will drive to the market once LRT opens in two years.

The city does have plans to revitalize the market, starting with the George Street plaza in front of the market building. The million dollar first phase is a far cry from the \$10 million Fleury hoped for, but he said it's a start to making the market more inviting.



Janette Sadik-Khan says the Byward Market needs to be pedestrianized. EMMA JACKSON / METRO