

NOVEMBER 2019

# Connecting light rail transit with active transportation

AN AUDIT BY ECOLOGY OTTAWA

Photo: Anthony Walsh

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Succession



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## Acknowledgements

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## 1. Executive summary

### 1.1 Overview

In spring 2019, as Ottawa's Light Rail Transit system readied for launch, Ecology Ottawa began an audit to assess the state of active transportation (i.e. walking and cycling) connection points to two stations (Blair and Baseline).

Blair station is the eastern terminus for the first stage of light rail. As the main transit access point from the east end of Ottawa, Blair is a major hub for a large number of commuters. When it is completed in 2025, Baseline station will stand as the southwestern terminus for light rail's second stage, making it the major transit connection to the rapidly-growing suburban community of Barrhaven.

Both stations are located outside of Ottawa's core, where there is already a relatively high level of pedestrian and cycling access. The stations allow for analysis of two types of light rail hub outside of downtown - each operating on a distinctive stage of the city's long-term transit plan. With this in mind, we hope that the findings from Blair station will influence the design of the future Baseline station.

This report provides recommendations on opportunities to build active transportation infrastructure, in order to make walking and cycling safer, more accessible and more convenient for all users. This project is a follow-up to Succession's project (also carried out by Ecology Ottawa and funded by the Ottawa Community Foundation), "Seizing the Moment for Safe and Healthy Streets." Completed in May 2018, the report led to important public conversations about various challenges and opportunities with Ottawa's transportation system.

One major finding stemming from Ecology Ottawa's analysis and public conversations around transit and active transportation is the critical role of the development of light rail transit in determining the way Ottawans choose to commute. This will also play a major role in shaping the future of our urban environment. By the time the second stage of the light rail is completed, 70% of Ottawans will live within a five-kilometre radius of a light rail station<sup>1</sup>. This provides a unique opportunity to ensure that active transportation connection points are built into the ever-evolving network. By identifying challenges and opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to access to light

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<sup>1</sup> Schepers, Nancy, Stage 2 Light Rail Transit (LRT) Environmental Assessment and Functional Design Report, June 22 2015, Online. <https://www.stage2lrt.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Environmental-Assessment-Report.pdf>, p. 11.



rail stations, Ottawa can be at the forefront of the global urban movement to make ambitious strides on climate action, public health and community well-being.

## 1.2 Key opportunities

- The City of Ottawa has stated that when the second stage of the light rail is active, more than 70% of the population of Ottawa will be within a five-kilometer range of transit hubs. Ecology Ottawa sees an opportunity with the City's Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) planning process. City TOD plans currently focus on a 400 to 800 metre radius from the stations. **A future opportunity would be to conduct the same analysis for the full five-kilometer radius, prioritizing sustainable transportation connections for all.**
- The City of Ottawa has not yet developed a Transit-Oriented Development plan for the area of Baseline station. This plan is essential to ensure a well thought out transit-supportive and active city. **A plan developed with community partners, residents and planners could respond to community needs while deepening links to the transit system.**
- **Roads with heavy traffic call for segregated bike lanes.** Segregated lanes on Blair Road, Ogilvie Road, City Park Drive, Woodroffe Avenue and Baseline Road would be great additions to Ottawa's cycling network. Volunteer auditors suggested that dividers between active commuters and vehicles be consistently present in order to always ensure safe passage for vulnerable road users.
- The presence of large parking lots around LRT stations result in low levels of green space and dangerous areas for pedestrians and cyclists. **By replacing parking with green infrastructure and active transportation infrastructure, residents will be encouraged to choose transit and active modes of transportation to move around the city.**
- The light rail allows the transportation of bikes by commuters on the train. Hopefully, this opportunity will encourage individuals to use their bikes to access light rail stations. **To address increased demand, the City should invest in additional bike parking and protected cycling infrastructure.**



## 2. Introduction and background

In Ottawa, 44% of city-wide greenhouse gas emissions are transport-related – they are generated by the cars, trucks, buses and other vehicles that make use of our network of roads, highways and bus stations. Addressing climate change means making our transportation system far less dependent upon fossil fuel-burning vehicles. Two major ways to reduce our emissions in this sector are to promote public transit as well as active transportation options over the use of motor vehicles. Active transportation includes all modes of transportation which are human-powered (e.g. walking, cycling), and are low-carbon or carbon-neutral.

If done well, light rail investments could make a meaningful contribution to a city-wide effort to tackle climate change. The City often states that investments in light rail reduce emissions from the bus network and displace car emissions as people opt to use light rail service. The drop in bus traffic along major streets such as Albert and Slater means more space for segregated bike lanes and walkways, which could then incentivize greater use of active transportation modes. Finally, with well-planned Transit Oriented Development projects, more and more Ottawans will live within close range to an LRT station and will incorporate travel by light rail into their daily commutes.

To get light rail right, we must ensure smooth connections between various types of non-motorized transportation. The tools for ensuring these connections come in many forms: protected bike lanes, wide sidewalks, good signage, lighting, bike parking, transit shelters, well-designed streets and well-planned communities, to name a few.

Beyond greenhouse gas reductions, active transportation has a major positive impact on human health. Activities such as walking and biking have beneficial consequences on pulmonary and heart health, help to reduce the likelihood of diabetes, and facilitate



the maintenance of healthy body weight<sup>2</sup>. By removing cars from the road, active transportation also improves air quality. Better air quality and a reduction in atmospheric pollution results in a decrease of pulmonary pathologies and premature deaths<sup>3</sup>. Active transportation also decongests a city, as active modes of transportation require less infrastructure and space than motor vehicles. This boosts street life and reduces the need for parking space, making Ottawa a better city in which to live, work and play.

For all the reasons mentioned above, promoting and protecting active transportation must be a major environmental priority in our city. The city has made welcome efforts over the last few years to improve safety and implement incentives for Ottawans to use active modes of transportation. Unfortunately, as statistics on pedestrian and cyclist fatalities show, we have more work to do to ensure that active transportation options are safe for all users.<sup>4</sup> Between 2013 and 2017, 37 cyclists and pedestrians were killed on our roads<sup>5</sup>. In 2017 alone, 561 cyclists and pedestrians have been injured due to road traffic<sup>6</sup>. Addressing these safety challenges is an essential step to boosting demand for transportation alternatives to the car.

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<sup>2</sup> The Chief Public Health Officer, Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2017 – Designing Healthy Living. July 20 2018, Online. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/chief-public-health-officer-reports-state-public-health-canada/2017-designing-healthy-living.html#a2>.

<sup>3</sup> Health Canada, Health Impacts of Air Pollution in Canada – An estimate of premature mortalities, November 2017, Online. [http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2018/sc-hc/H144-51-2017-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2018/sc-hc/H144-51-2017-eng.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Please refer to the Vision Zero Website: <https://visionzero.ca>.

<sup>5</sup> City of Ottawa, 2017 Ottawa Road Safety Report. Online. <https://ottawa.ca/en/residents/transportation-and-parking/road-safety/annual-safety-reports#2017-ottawa-road-safety-report>.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*



### 3. Methodology

This report aims to reflect the concerns of Ottawa residents about the active transportation networks that will enable safe and convenient access to light rail stations. In order to do so, Ecology Ottawa has encouraged the public engagement of communities around the city. The findings shared in this report are based on four different sources: two station-specific surveys; interviews with community associations; external sources (e.g. city reports); and four on-site audits (one audit by foot, and another by bike, at each station).

#### 3.1 Surveys

For each station studied, an online survey was sent out to all individuals in our mailing list, in addition to targeted emails for residents living within close range to the stations studied. The goal of these surveys was to learn more about the challenges users are facing when accessing stations by foot and by bike. The surveys included questions aimed at knowing whether or not new infrastructure would influence users to change their habits regarding public transit use (e.g. “Would a weather-protected bike parking space make you feel more inclined to bike to and from the station?”)<sup>7</sup>. These types of questions help us better understand the specific infrastructure that would have a positive impact on the use of public transit for residents of the two areas studied. We also asked local residents for their recommendations as to specific infrastructure they consider paramount. Please refer to section 7 and 8 for overviews of the results of the surveys and audits.

#### 3.2 Interviews with community associations

Benefiting from local knowledge from community associations near Baseline and Blair stations was crucial to our report. Community associations have deep access to information on local issues as they gather feedback from their respective neighbourhoods. Ecology Ottawa solicited interviews with representatives of as many community associations as possible in relevant areas. We were fortunate to proceed with interviews with the President of Pineview Community Association in the Blair area, Heather Scott, as well as the President of CentrepoinTE Community Association in the Baseline area, Ron Benn.

The questions discussed with the community association representatives related to challenges for pedestrians and cyclists to access the stations, as well as the opportunities to improve such access. The Community Associations also provided

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<sup>7</sup> If you would like to have access to all of the questions of the surveys, feel free to contact Ecology Ottawa.



relevant information on the areas around the stations, including population centres, demographic information and common land uses. The interview format enabled us to ask more details about the active transportation infrastructure in the station's area.

### 3.3 External sources

Ecology Ottawa also relied on external and secondary sources such as Google Maps and Bike Ottawa maps. Satellite and street views on Google Maps were quite practical for mapping the studied areas, as well as analyzing the streets' conditions in depth in order to plan our on-site audits. Bike Ottawa, a volunteer-run, non-profit local bike advocacy organization, publishes free street maps for cyclists, made available on their website. Ecology Ottawa chose to primarily use their "stress map" in order to assess which areas might present high levels of traffic around the stations studied for this report (based on OpenStreetMap and LTS Analyzer model)<sup>8</sup>.

Finally, Ecology Ottawa relied on city reports for statistics, past and current development plans, demographics, and the Transit-Oriented Development Plan for Blair station<sup>9</sup>.

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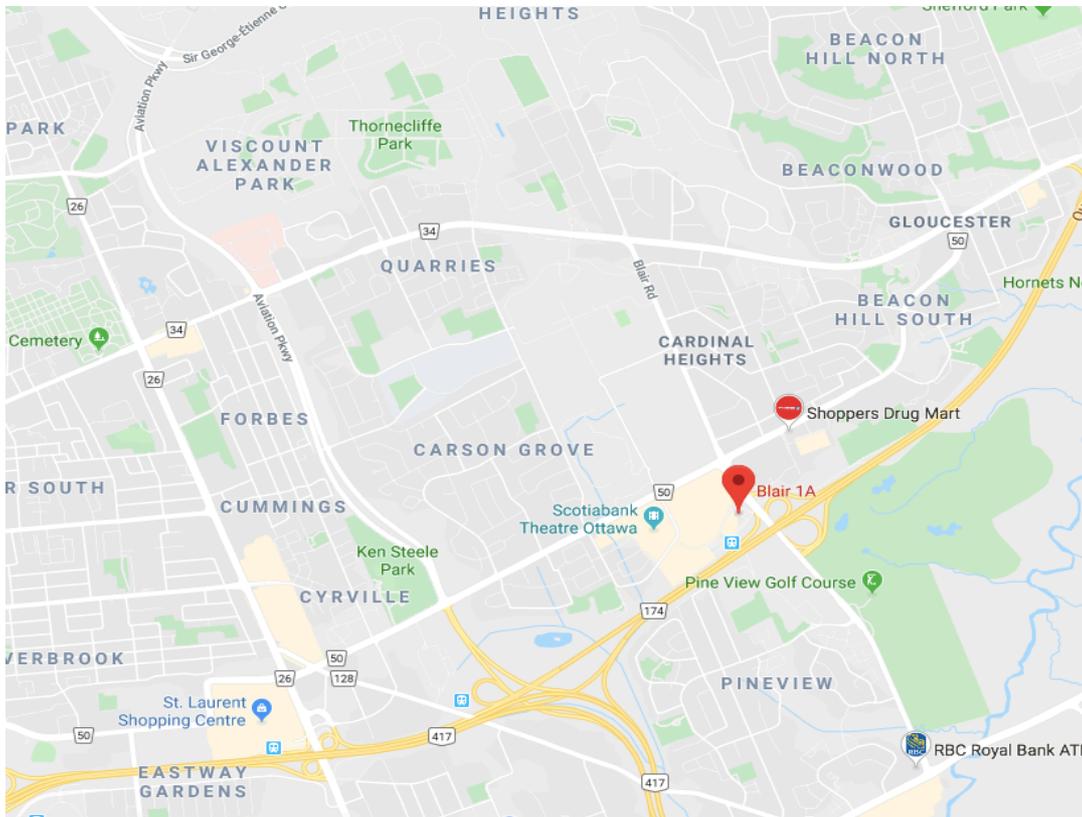
<sup>8</sup> Bike Ottawa, Stress Map, Online. <https://maps.BikeOttawa.ca/lts-map/>.

<sup>9</sup> City of Ottawa, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plans – Lees, Hurdman, Tremblay, St. Laurent, Cyrville and Blair, January 2014.



## 4. Blair station

### 4.1 Community profile



The Blair light rail station is located northwest of the intersection of Blair Road and Highway 417. It is surrounded by neighbourhoods on three sides: Pineview to the south; Cardinal Heights, Beaconwood and Beacon Hill South to the northeast; and Carson Grove, Forbes and Cummings to the northwest. The area near the station is dominated by the mall and parking lot area that make up the Gloucester Centre. There are also major thoroughfares around the station. As previously mentioned, the station is adjacent to Blair Road in the east and Highway 417 in the south. To the north lies Ogilvie Road, a major east-west artery used by cyclists and motorists.

The urban environment developed and planned around automobile access and infrastructure has made for a less convenient and appealing experience for pedestrians and cyclists<sup>10</sup>. Auto-oriented retail and office buildings are separated by wide streets and surface parking lots<sup>11</sup>, resulting in the fact that 66% of the Pineview community population drives to work, while 26% take public transit, 6% walk, and less

<sup>10</sup> City of Ottawa, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plans, *Ibid.*, p. 120-122.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

than 1% bike<sup>12</sup>. While referring to Pineview community specifically, these statistics demonstrate the obvious challenges of the area as a whole.

Ecology Ottawa met the President of Pineview Community Association in the Blair area, Heather Scott. The community association had previously conducted a walking audit around the light rail station, as well as some door-to-door canvassing around the neighbourhood, to develop an understanding of residents' opinions on the new transit station. The lack of sidewalks or bike lanes along Blair Road was one of the most important issues mentioned, as well as the fact that bike lanes on surrounding streets were not complete or connected.

#### 4.2 Future of Blair area

New potential safe routes for active commuters have been identified by the City of Ottawa, as seen in the TOD Plan. In fact, the plan presents an analysis of the surrounding environment of the station in order to achieve “transit supportive communities.” With an emphasis on guiding pedestrians and cyclists to and from the light rail station, new sections will be added to the existing network to improve sidewalks and bike paths. Of the entire area studied, an estimated 60 hectares is available for the new development of transit-supportive infrastructure<sup>13</sup>. Curvilinear streets as well as dead-ends and buildings mean that new connections will need to be developed to create safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists. While the community association welcomes further connections and segregated bike and walk ways identified in the TOD plan, they encouraged the acceleration of timelines provided by the city.

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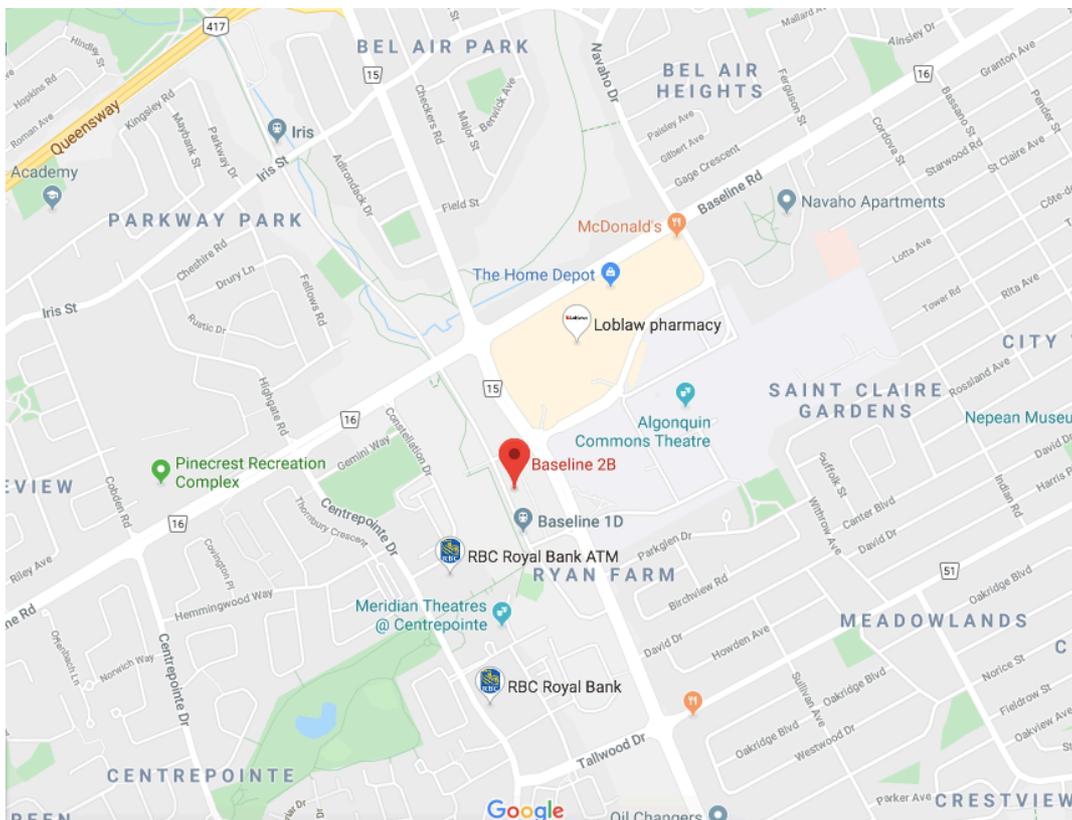
<sup>12</sup> Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, Pineview, Online.  
<https://www.neighbourhoodstudy.ca/86pineview/#Environment%20&%20Sustainability/Mode%20of%20transportation/>.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.



## 5. Baseline station

### 5.1 Community profile



The Bayview light rail station lies within the boundary of Baseline Road to the north, south of Pineview, Mapleview and Wycliffe Crescents, Woodroffe to the east, and west of Marble Arch Crescent. The station is located near the Centrepointe, Ryan Farm, Ken-son Park, Iris, Ridgeview and Bel Air Heights neighbourhoods.

Rather than being a neighbourhood centered around auto-oriented retail like the area near Blair station, Baseline station area developed in the late 1980s as a residential district. Wide streets still cater to vehicle transportation, which implies that the percentages of individuals using public or active transit is very low in comparison to vehicle users. For reference, 69,6% of Centrepointe neighborhood residents drive to work, 24,3% take public transit, 3,8% walk and 1,8% bike.

The area is significantly affected by both Algonquin College and the Mary Pitt Centre of the City of Ottawa. Large open-air parking lots make commuting by car quite a bit easier and more accessible to individuals learning and working in the area. As a direct result, Woodroffe Avenue, Baseline Road and the College Square Mall are car-dominated and are not amenable to cyclists or pedestrians, much like the Gloucester



Centre in the Blair area. This being said, the area does offer some decent cycling and pedestrian connections.

Ecology Ottawa met with the president of the Centrepointe Community Association, Ron Benn. Multiple questions concerning the state of the station and the safety of active commuters were discussed. The lack of an adequate number of bike racks for active commuters, the dimly lit staircases, the ice-covered paths and the impractical underpass were the most salient issues. Furthermore, cycling access on Highgate Road, Hemmingwood Way and Pinecrest Road are areas of concern due to traffic and blind spots.

## 5.2 Future of Baseline area

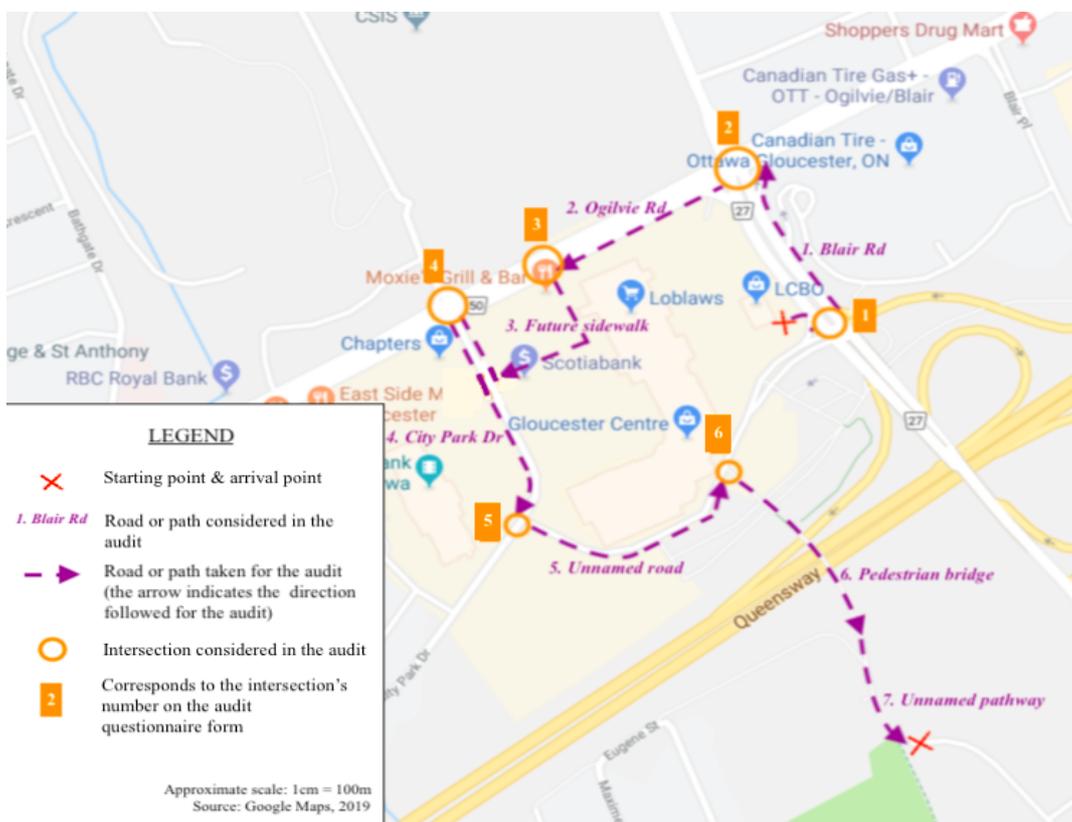
Unlike the Blair station, the Baseline area was not provided with a TOD plan by the City of Ottawa. The future of the area and the connections that will be made available to commuters are currently unknown. As such, our walkability and cyclability audits are even more relevant as a guideline for future development of this area.



## 6. Audits

Ecology Ottawa organized two on-site audits – one by foot and one by bike – at each of the two stations. The four audits consisted of pre-determined itineraries around each station, considering accessibility issues on roads, active transportation routes and intersections that would be used to access the light rail station. Ecology Ottawa volunteers – especially those in the areas of the stations – were invited to go on-site and evaluate the accessibility level for pedestrians and cyclists. Eight to ten volunteers were present at each event to rate the active commuting experience. Itineraries were selected to be completed in under an hour, with stops at major intersections and key routes identified through prior research (see subsections below for more information).

### 6.1 Blair walk audit

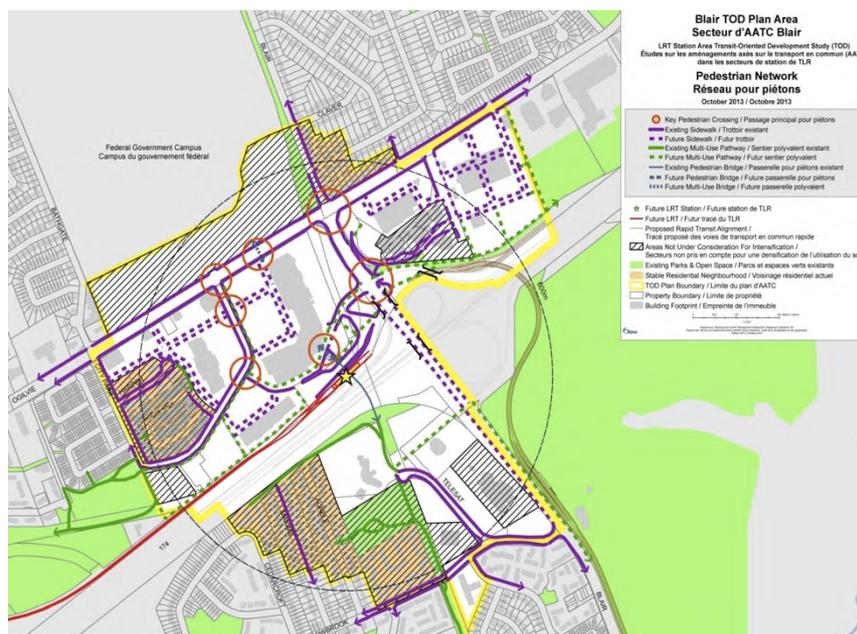


Ecology Ottawa designed the itinerary for the Blair station walk audit mainly based on the 2014 TOD Plan for this area. The TOD Plan contains current and future infrastructure developed near Blair station. The Blair Pedestrian Network map<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> City of Ottawa, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), *Ibid.*



presents the key inter-sections, the existing and future sidewalks, pathways, as well as pedestrian bridges.



Ecology Ottawa contacted the councillor for Blair area (Beacon Hill—Cyrville ward), Tim Tierney, who helped our efforts by communicating plans and concerns regarding the area. Tim Tierney's staff members also joined the audits and answered auditor questions.

### 6.1.1 Findings and recommendations

- Lack of signage was reported by all those present on Blair Road, Ogilvie Road, City Park Drive and on the pedestrian bridge. There was little or no signage directing cyclists and pedestrians to the bus station shelters, the pedestrian bridge and the light rail station itself. **While roads are well-marked, the City could do more to identify bike lanes, pathways and links to transit hubs.**
- There is a challenge with road infrastructure that is integrated with privately-owned parking lot networks. Besides a lack of signage, it is unclear where responsibility lies for making tangible safety improvements on these streets for pedestrians and cyclists. The auditors noticed that these networks were well-used by people in the area. **We recommend that the City of Ottawa take greater ownership of these spaces and incorporate complete streets practices into their operations and maintenance.**



- Along roads surrounding the station (Blair, Ogilvie and City Park), the traffic flow was characterized as “fast and aggressive” or “moderate to fast” by most volunteers. **We recommend additional separations (e.g., segregated bike lanes, raised sidewalks) between commuters and vehicles to ensure safe passage for active commuters. This includes the installation of segregated bike lanes on major roads.**
- Volunteers identified the main streets as sufficiently lit, due to street lights for vehicles, while the pathways and the pedestrian bridge were more often than not identified as unsatisfactorily lit. **We recommend additional lighting on pedestrian and cycling pathways.**
- As Blair station is adjacent to the Gloucester Centre, auditors were confident that the restrooms present in the mall would be accessible to commuters. Yet, there are challenges with public accessibility. Purchases may be required in order for a member of the public to access a restroom, and the restrooms may not be open when needed. Future changes in business composition in Gloucester Centre may also make restroom access more challenging (i.e., we could see fewer stores with accessible restrooms). **While Blair station has already been built, we recommend the addition of public washrooms to future light rail stations.**
- Little to no street furniture (e.g. benches, garbage cans, water fountains, etc.) or visually appealing elements (e.g. colours, public art, attractive buildings, design, natural elements, etc.) were present on the roads and pathways chosen by the auditors. **We recommend that the city invest in street furniture close to light rail hubs to create a more inviting, accessible space.**
- The access to Blair station for individuals using walkers, scooters, wheelchairs or strollers was unanimously characterized as impossible on City Park Drive and oftentimes difficult due to insignificant signage or lack of auditory signals on other streets and sidewalks. The pedestrian signals at intersections connecting to City Park Drive do not allow enough time for individuals with impaired mobility or children to cross. **We recommend that pedestrian signals are extended with mobility-impaired users in mind, and that additional investments be made into signage and auditory signals.**

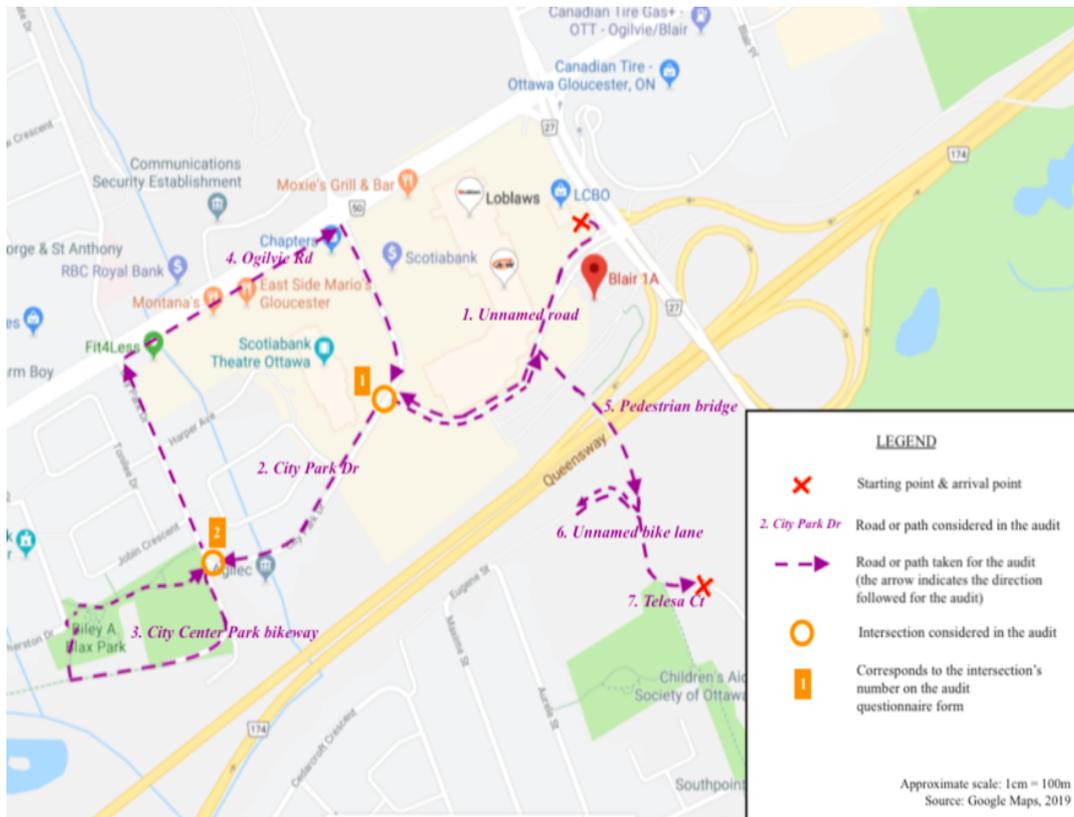


- Although tactile pedestrian crossings (detectable warning surfaces) were sometimes present on sidewalks, these were not always consistent throughout intersections. **We recommend that the City review its tactile crossings and make investments to ensure safe passage for visually-impaired users.**
- On multiple intersections (Ogilvie Road and City Park Drive, City Park Drive and Blair Road, etc.) there were no auditory crossing signals available. Where they were available, users had to press the button longer in order to activate the sound signal. **We recommend that auditory crossing signals be made available at all key intersections.**
- The elevator to access the pedestrian bridge over the Queensway is very unreliable. This represents a big deterrent to LRT use for individuals using walkers, scooters, wheelchairs or strollers. Currently, the only other access point over the Queensway would be on Blair road, where there are no sidewalks or bike lanes. **We recommend improvements to the reliability of the Blair station elevator.**



## 6.2 Blair bike audit

The route for the Blair station bike audit was determined in a manner similar to that of the pedestrian audit. We also considered the Bicycle Network map available in the TOD plan<sup>15</sup>, the stress map from Bike Ottawa<sup>16</sup>, the Blair Bicycle Network map, as well as the existing and future infrastructure present near the station.

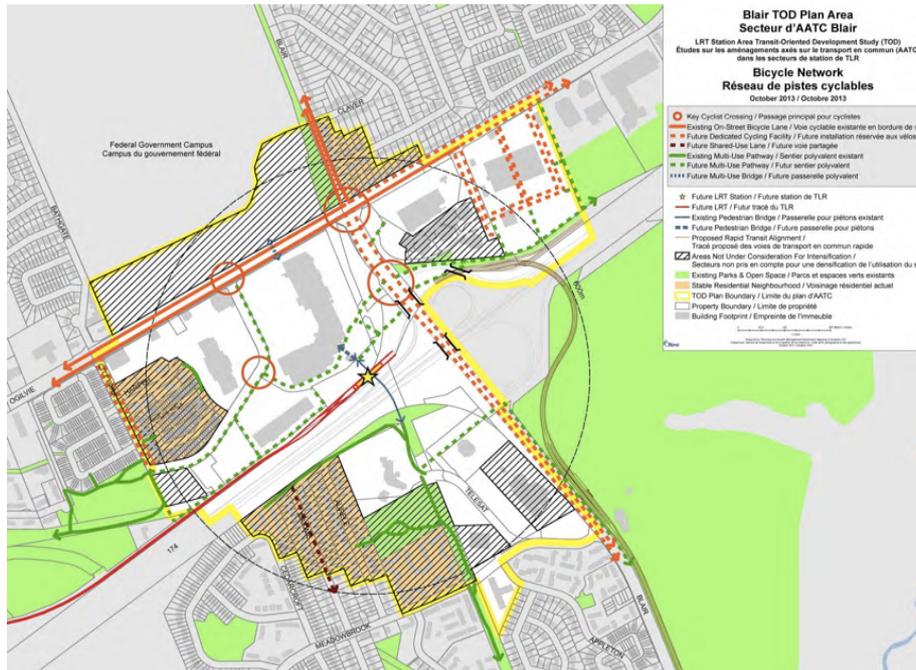


<sup>15</sup> City of Ottawa, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plans, *Ibid.*

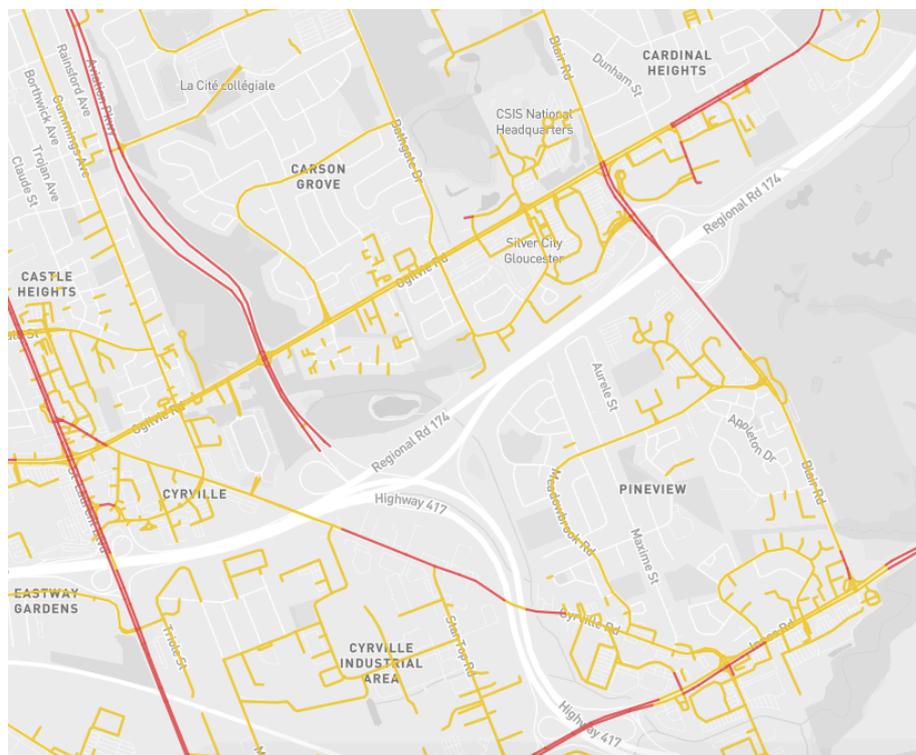
<sup>16</sup> Bike Ottawa, Stress Map, Online. <https://maps.Bike Ottawa.ca/lts-map/>.



Bicycle Network for the Blair TOD area<sup>17</sup>



Bike Ottawa Stress Map<sup>18,19</sup>



<sup>17</sup> City of Ottawa, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plans, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Bike Ottawa, *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Yellow lines represent cycling areas of « medium stress », while red lines represent cycling areas of « high stress ».



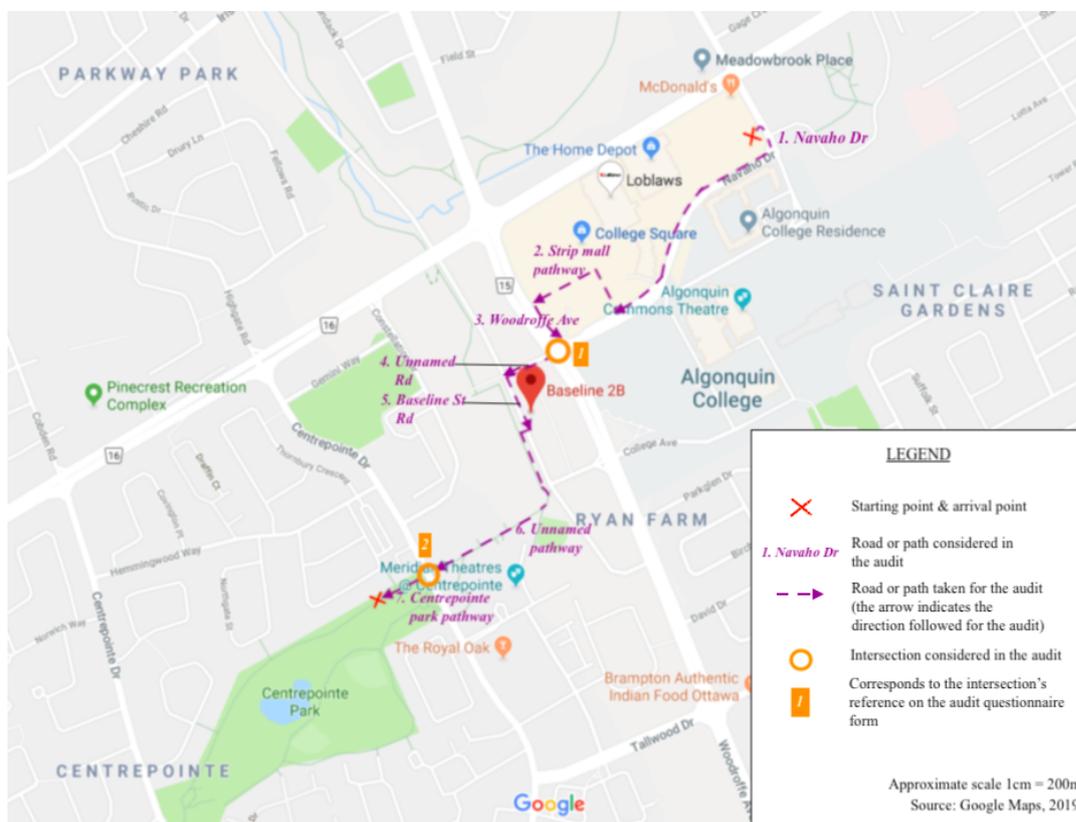
### 6.2.1 Findings and recommendations

- While auditors felt safe on bike lanes, on the pedestrian bridge, and on some roads, most auditors identified the need for segregated bike lanes, on every road with vehicle access. The children participating in the audit were often caught in unsafe situations with fast-moving vehicles. **We recommend the addition of segregated bike lanes on Blair Road and Ogilvie Road.**
- The presence of signage for cyclists (identifying recreational trails, public transit locations and other community facilities) was insufficient according to most auditors. **We recommend the addition of signage for cyclists, especially along commonly used bike routes and in close proximity to the station.**



### 6.3 Baseline walk audit

Unlike Blair station, **there is currently no transit-oriented development plan for Baseline station**. It was therefore challenging to find an optimal itinerary to assess mobility issues around Baseline, since detailed infrastructure plans have not yet been developed. Using Google Maps' street view function, we were able to establish a route for our audit. We chose to take a path that included several commonly-used roads, pathways and intersections.



### 6.3.1 Findings and recommendations

- Around the future Baseline light rail station, there was little to no signage identifying recreational trails, public transit locations, hospitals, health clinics, libraries and other community facilities. Most importantly, many roads and paths



are not named, making them more difficult to locate. This is particularly important for non-residents. **We recommend additional investment in signage for pedestrians and cyclists.**

- Some of the traffic on surrounding roads was characterized as “fast and aggressive” by auditors. It was suggested that **traffic calming measures be added – lower speed limits and speed bumps – in order to make the main thoroughfares less hostile to non-car modes of travel.**
- Generally speaking, the volunteers identified most pedestrian paths as safe and well-separated from incoming traffic.
- As with the area around Gloucester Centre near Blair station, the College Square complex near Baseline station consists of parking lots and a series of roads that are often unnamed. As with the parking lot roads near Blair station, **there are serious challenges with signage and safety for these roads, as well as broader questions around accountability for improving operations and maintenance for vulnerable road users. Again, we recommend that the City of Ottawa take increased ownership of these roads (i.e., convert them from privately-held to public roads), and then improve them in line with the standards and policies found in places like the Complete Streets Policy and Complete Streets Implementation Plan.**

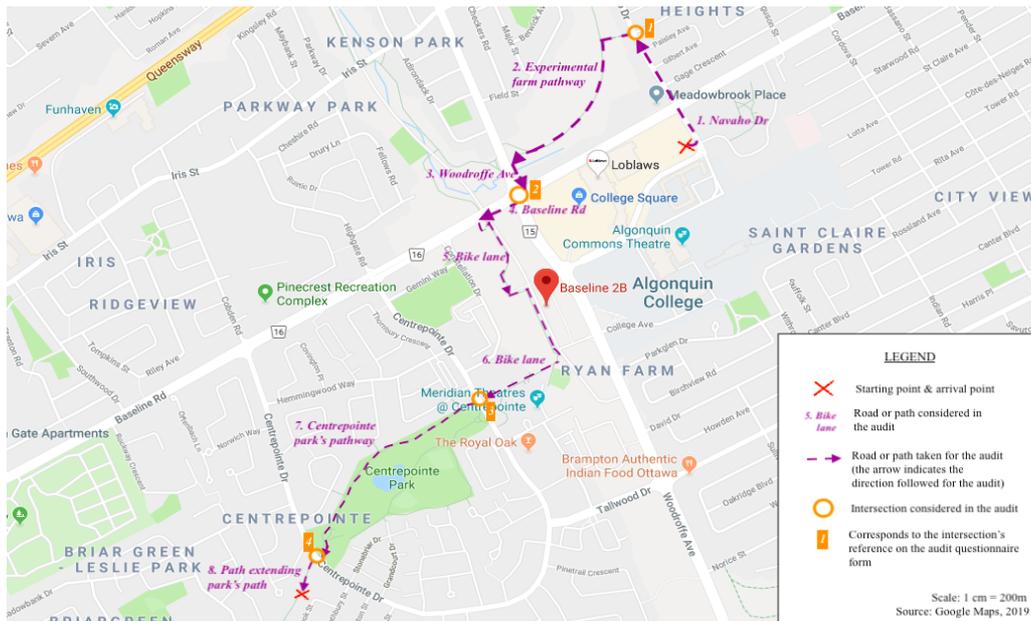
- Public restrooms were not available around the station. We recommend incorporating public washrooms into the soon-to-be-constructed Baseline LRT station.
- Water fountains, benches, garbage cans and streetscape (public art, natural elements, attractive architecture) were seen as either insufficient, degraded and poorly designed in all pathways and streets, except for the benches near the bus stops. **We recommend that the city prioritize the construction of quality street furniture and streetscape improvements along with the development of the new LRT station.**
- As for accessibility issues, the main problem identified by auditors was the fact that **the crossing signal was solely visual, not auditory, and too short to allow for people with impaired mobility and children to cross intersections safely.** We recommend a signal safety review of the major intersections around Baseline and other stations, in order to ensure that signals respond to the needs of all street users.



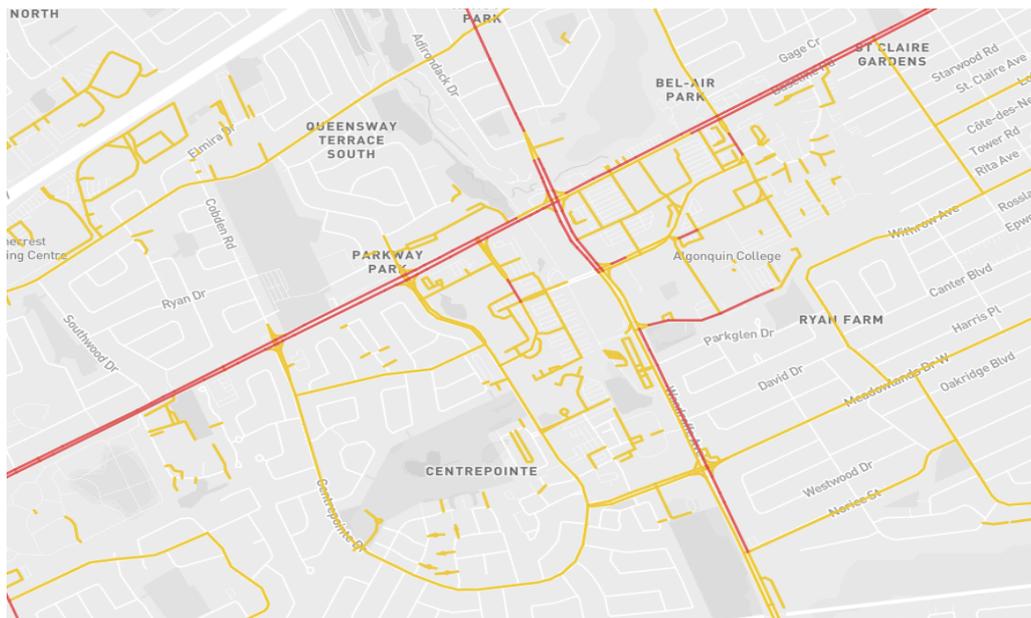
### 6.4 Baseline bike audit

The bike audit path around Baseline station was difficult to determine because, in addition to the absence of a TOD plan, **the roads in the surrounding areas are highlighted as being quite dangerous for cyclists.** As with the Blair bike audit, we carefully assessed the stress factor on Bike Ottawa’s map to determine which roads should not be taken.

#### Bike audit route chosen by Ecology Ottawa



#### Bike Ottawa Stress Map<sup>20</sup>



<sup>20</sup> Bike Ottawa, *Ibid.*



### 6.4.1 Findings and recommendations

- **The traffic flow in the area seemed fast and aggressive on major streets**, where the cyclists were meant to commute – Navaho Drive, Baseline Road and Woodroffe Avenue. The audit team considered Woodroffe Avenue as the most problematic aspect of the cycling commute in the area, labelling it a “**no-go-zone for cyclists**”. As a highly congested arterial road without a bike lane (the lane disappears between the Experimental Farm pathway and Woodroffe Avenue), all volunteers chose to walk alongside their bike on the sidewalk, rather than ride on the street. **Given Woodroffe’s large width, auditors suggested that a segregated bike lane be added onto the current road. Moreover, traffic calming measures could be integrated, such as speed bumps, solid barriers creating segregated bike lanes, and better signage.**
- **Bike lanes were not present on most streets** (except on Navaho Drive, where one side of the street has an unsegregated lane). **Many volunteers stated they would feel safer if lane delineators were present on more streets.**
- All participants stated there was little to no signage for cyclists identifying recreational trails, public transit, and community facilities. **We recommend a comprehensive signage review as part of the construction of the new Baseline station, and additional investments in signage infrastructure as part of City funding for cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.**



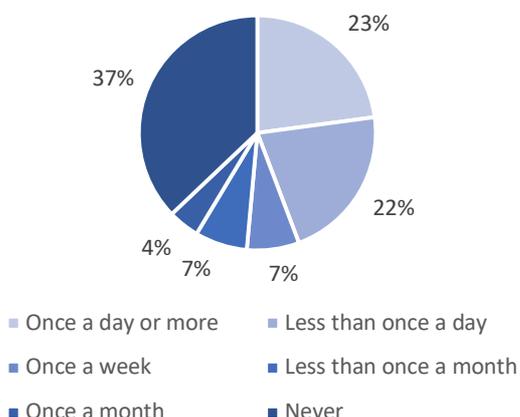
## 7. Survey results

After reaching out to the totality of our mailing list (over 33,000 individuals), as well as tailoring a specific email to individuals living within five kilometres of the stations studied for this report, we received 63 responses to our survey of the Baseline station, and 70 responses for our Blair survey.

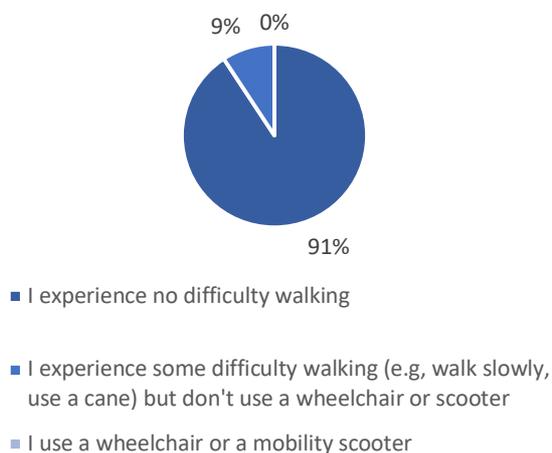
Multiple issues arose concerning the use of the active transportation infrastructure. Below are a few graphs relating to the most salient issues that arose.

### Blair station

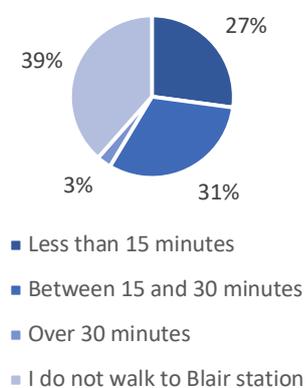
How often do you access Blair station by foot?



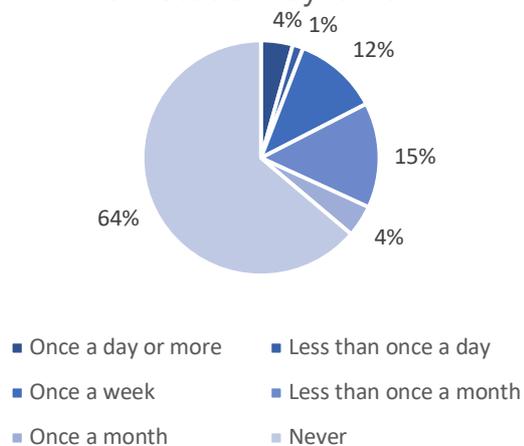
Do any of the following apply to you?



Thinking of your average walk to or from Blair station, how long does it usually take?

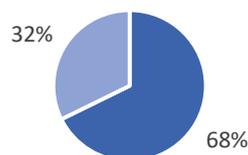


How often do you access Blair station by bike?



Although most of the respondents experience no difficulty walking or biking, they mostly do not access Blair station with active modes of transportation. In fact, only 3 out of 70 respondents (4.3%) answered that they regularly access the station by bike, while only 22.9% said they walk to the station once a day or more. 38.6% state they never walk to the station, and 72.9% of people never bike to the station. When asked what could motivate the commuters to access the station by foot, they mentioned better bus connections (19.7%), more lighting (10.6%) and sidewalks (10.6%). As for improved cycling infrastructure, respondents either didn't have an opinion, or thought nothing would further encourage them to access the station by bike. Ploughed and wider bike lanes were the next most popular answers selected.

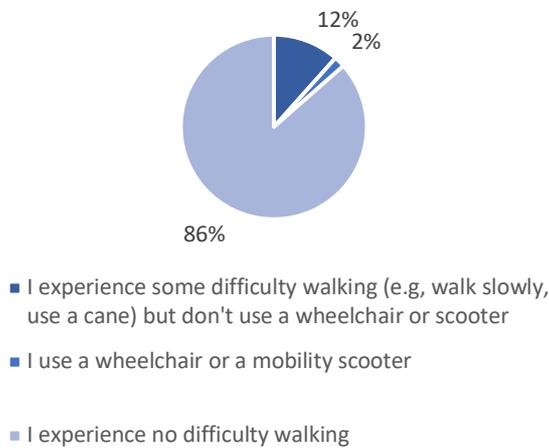
The City allows bikes on the LRT. Does this change the frequency of your commuting by bike to access Blair station?



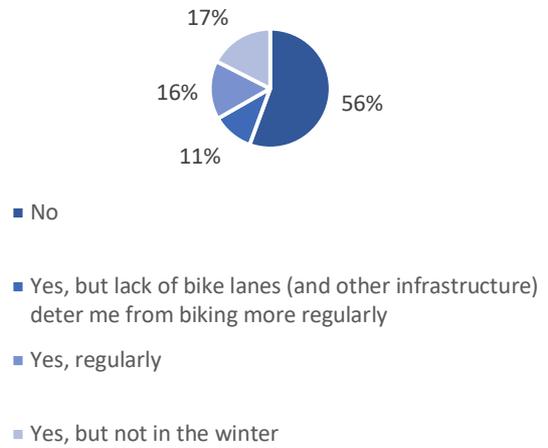
- It does not make me more inclined to bike to access the station
- It increases my use of a bike to access the station

**Baseline station**

Do any of the following apply to you?

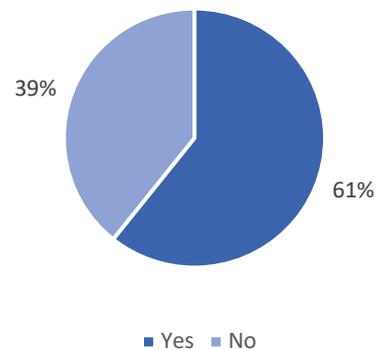


Do you bike to Baseline station?



The results from the Baseline survey were quite similar to those received from the Blair area respondents. In fact, only 1.6% of respondents access Baseline station by foot once a day or more, 22.6% never do – while 86.5% of respondents experience no difficulty walking. An overwhelming 55.6% of respondents never bike to the station, but 60.7% of respondents would be more inclined to commute by bike with weather-protected bike parking space. With regards to cycling infrastructure, respondents identified wider bike lanes, new dedicated bike parking areas and ploughed bike lanes to be the most relevant changes that were required at the future light rail station.

Would a weather-protected bike parking space (i.e. where you can safely lock up the bike, shelter it from rain and snow) make you feel more inclined to bike to and from the station?



## 8. Conclusion

Ottawa has great potential to become a leader in sustainable and active transportation infrastructure. The conclusions reached by the auditors and shared throughout this report will hopefully encourage the City to prioritize safe, delineated, ploughed, lit, and accessible pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Ecology Ottawa hopes that the fact that the City allows bikes on the light rail trains will encourage the use of bikes to reach the station. As seen above, survey respondents demonstrated a low percentage of bike usage due to restricted bicycle infrastructure, among other reasons. The path forward requires investments in time and effort from city officials, grassroots organizations, community associations, and commuters. It also involves more priority for cycling and pedestrian infrastructure through the budgeting process. Ultimately, spending priorities are a political statement of priorities. We encourage the City of Ottawa to follow through on its ambitious vision for LRT by ensuring that each station is a safe, accessible and efficient access point for pedestrians and cyclists. It is by consciously choosing to make these changes a priority that we will have a significant and lasting change on urban infrastructure, and the city's transport-related greenhouse gas emissions.



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