ICT4S, Towards Thriving Communities
A Sustainable Transportation Matter
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Problem Statement

Why, when sidewalks are the basic unit of urban mobility infrastructure, make streets safer and are relatively inexpensive, do we have such a hard time installing them and such resistance from the public about their installation?
My “Lens”

• Landscape architect and urban designer.
• Motivated to achieve a great city through good, sustainable, urban design (micro to macro levels) and through a social justice lens.
• Have been spending the last 10 years managing a city-wide street furniture contract – 20,000 pieces, creating neighbourhood improvement projects city-wide, developing new geometric standards for streets, managing graffiti removal and the City’s street art program, AODA implementation, leading the development of Complete Streets Guidelines for Toronto. Currently overseeing the public realm aspect of the King Street pilot project installations.
• Also implement a “missing sidewalk program” – which is one of the hardest things we do. Going to talk about that today.
Toronto Walking Strategy 2009
Complete Streets Challenges
A changing approach to our streets
What is a missing sidewalk location?

• A street with no continuous dedicated space for pedestrians (i.e. a sidewalk), or no sidewalk at all.
Missing Links/Essential Sidewalks
Before & After Sidewalk Installations

Chine Drive

Midland Road
What about shared streets?
– A red herring
Toronto’s Sidewalk Statistics

KM of Streets with No Sidewalks

- Minor Arterial: 12
- Major Arterial: 35
- Collector: 64
- Local: 785
- Total: 896

Of Toronto’s 5,200 km of streets do not have sidewalks.

That’s approximately 17% of City streets.

The City’s Missing Sidewalk Links program builds approximately 10-12 km of new sidewalks per year.
What data do we have on sustainable transportation?
Prioritization Approaches

Vulnerable Pedestrians Heat Map
Prioritization Approaches

Latent Pedestrian Demand Heat Map
Why people don’t want sidewalks

- It has always been like this
- It will lower my property values
- Nobody walks on this street
- Outsiders will walk on our streets
- It will spoil the country feel of my (urban) street
- If people need a sidewalk, they should move
- It will be dangerous because it will encourage people to walk
- It will shorten my driveway
- It will make the street unsafe because drivers will need to watch for pedestrians
How data works against us

What are your pedestrian volumes?

There aren't enough pedestrians to warrant a sidewalk.

Our Duty to Accommodate as per disability legislation throws the decision to the one, NOT the many.
How do we address this challenge?

How do we change this mindset?