

# FACILITATION GUIDE: EMPATHY WALK

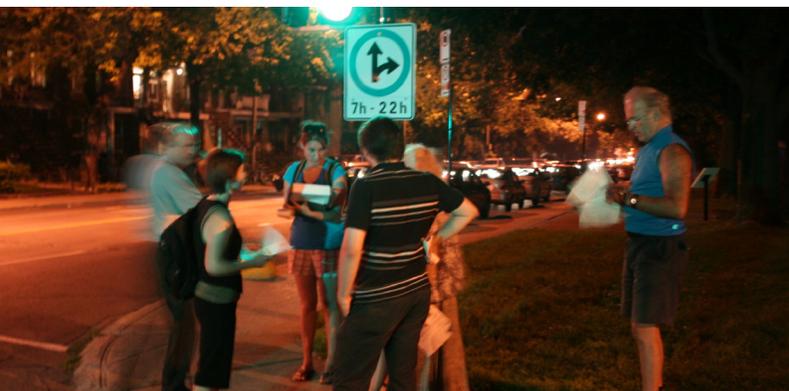
EXPERIENCE THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FROM OTHER POINTS OF VIEW

**Activity Type:** Understand

**Participant Audience:** Residents

## Objectives

Different people have differing experiences of mobility and safety as they travel through their neighbourhoods. Understanding these different experiences can build equity and empathy. It can also help identify accessibility concerns and infrastructure gaps. This is an important tool that creates awareness about challenges to mobility and activity. It also shows that when a community is built with different people in mind, everyone can use it.



## Using the Tool

### Materials needed

1. Role cards
2. Basemaps of the neighbourhood. To create your own basemaps, refer to 'How to Create a Basemap' guide on [participatoryplanning.ca](http://participatoryplanning.ca).
3. Clipboards
4. Paper & pens to record feedback

### Facilitation Process

1. Give participants roles that you have written out in advance, or support participants to develop their own character (see the participant handout in the sample materials section if you're taking this approach) Examples of a few predetermined roles include:
  - Jean-Luc is 40 years old and needs to use an electric wheelchair to travel. His wheelchair is 32 in. (81.28 cm.) wide.
  - Sue is 70 years old and she uses a walker since she had her hip surgery.
  - Roberts is 12 years old and he bikes to school.
  - Amira is 35 years old and is nearly blind. She uses a walking stick.
2. Allow the participants a minute or two to read the role they have been given.
3. Walk around the neighbourhood and ask participants to think about the issues the person they are role-playing would have with the infrastructure. The participant handout in the sample section provides some guiding questions for participants to reflect on.
  - Invite participants to take notes on base maps of the neighbourhood.
4. Bring the participants together afterwards to discuss their experiences. Take notes from the discussion, and collect participants' maps and handouts.



**Tip:** Lived experience is valuable. Invite people with differing experiences of mobility to share their perspectives.



**Tip:** Think about the weather. Facilitating this activity in icy or rainy weather can augment mobility constraints, and provide valuable perspective.

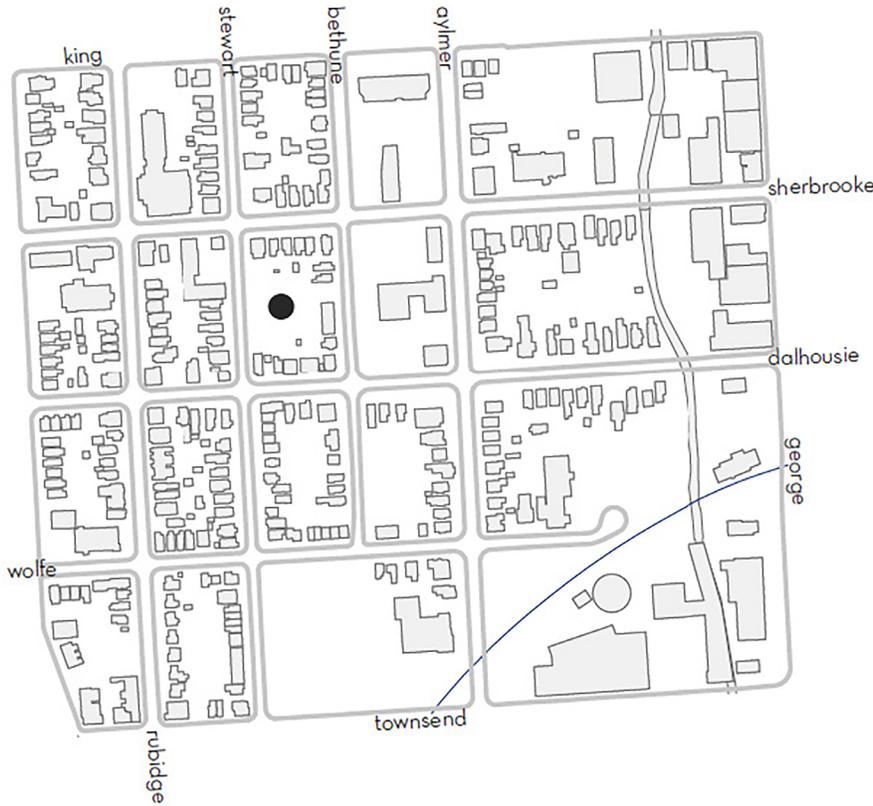


**Tip:** Consider planning the walk in the evening. This can highlight the experience of travelling through the neighbourhood in the dark, which may pose additional mobility or safety concerns.



### Sample Materials

1. Base map and handout (via TCAT and GreenUP)



# Stewart Street Neighbourhood Empathy Walk

- Non-Drivers:
- + Youth
  - + Children
  - + Seniors
  - + Persons with mobility limitations
  - + Trent & Fleming students
  - + Persons who have lost their license

## Directions:

this walk is a tool aimed at developing a more robust understanding of various ways that people experience and interact with the built environment. It relies on your imagination to develop a persona and then to consider what challenges or opportunities this person may see while taking a walk. For the purposes of the Stewart Street ANC project we will focus on the group 'Non-Drivers' laid out in the stakeholder grid.

1. Choose one of the groups of people listed in the non-drivers group

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2. Develop an idea of who this person is in your mind and answer some of these questions as if you were them:

- What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_
  - How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Where are you from? \_\_\_\_\_
  - How long have you lived in the neighbourhood? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What is your annual income? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Who are the most important people in your life (close friends, relatives, etc) \_\_\_\_\_
  - What do you spend most of your free time doing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - How do you earn a living, where do you work? \_\_\_\_\_
  - feel free to add any other interesting details \_\_\_\_\_
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3. Starting from the park, choose a destination that makes sense for your persona. Mark your route on the map and make notes about things you notice along the way. Below are some things to think about.

- Where is eye level for your persona? if it is different than your own be sure to stop sometimes and adjust your view
- Think about what could be potential obstacles to people who have different mobility
- Think about resting places- formal and informal
- Consider what your person may be carrying to the destination
- Consider if your person is in a hurry for some reason and why
- Think about personal safety issues from your person's perspective
- Think about different weather conditions, how would they change the walk for this person?

\*write down other questions that you think may be helpful so we can further develop this tool!



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