

Presentation to City Council

City of Cambridge

October 12, 2021

Feedback from the Community Consultation about the suitability of the identified candidate sites for Consumption and Treatment Service with wraparound services

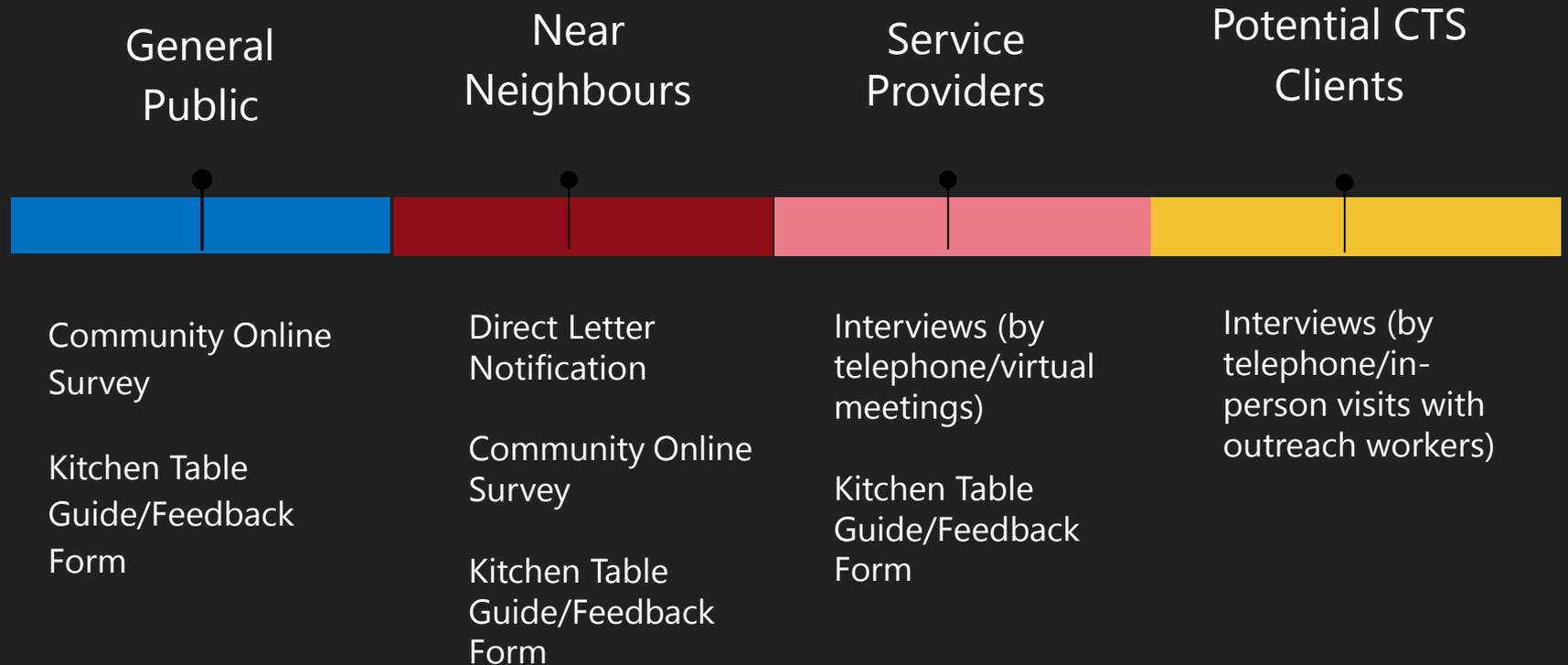
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Key Consideration for the Consultation

- It is important to inform the public that the community consultation process is about getting input on two specific candidate sites: Site #1 – 15 Easton Street and Site 2 – 8 Oxford Avenue.
- The consultation is not to recommend a specific site but to collect input from participants across the community on their views on the suitability of the two sites identified.
- The community consultation process is designed to enable all audiences to be comfortable to provide input.
- Participating does not mean that an individual agrees or disagrees with the proposal to consider a CTS Site for Cambridge.

Audiences consulted and how consultation occurred



Consultation Activities were simultaneously undertaken between May and September, 2021

How the community was notified

News Release, June 29, 2021 - *City of Cambridge seeks community input on potential CTS site locations*. Resulted in media coverage in the Record, Kitchener Today, Cambridge Times, 570 News, CBC and CTV.

Notification in the Cambridge Times on July 1, 2021.

Direct mail to Near Neighbours (within 250 metres of each candidate site).

Posts on the City's social media channel between June 29 – July 30 (five posts with a total reach of 25,088 people). Paid social media ad ran between July 28-30.

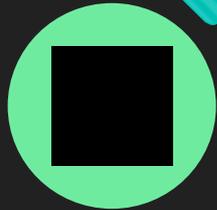
Updated information on City's corporate website.

Dedicated webpage created on Engage Cambridge.

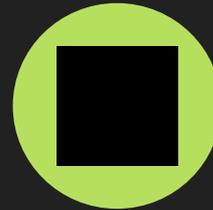
City Clerk notified members of Council.

Phone calls and emails to Service Providers and Outreach Workers.

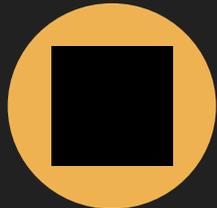
About the Public Feedback Report



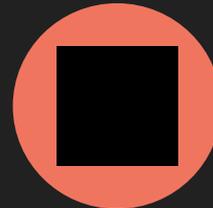
Online Community
Survey



Input from Kitchen Table
guide



Feedback from telephone
and virtual interviews
with Service Providers



Input from interviews
with Potential CTS Clients
(through outreach
workers)

The detailed public feedback report should be read in its entirety and includes verbatim responses and comments from all consultation activities, a high-level summary of what was heard, and verbatim public comments in Appendices 1 to 4

Outline of presentation on community consultation feedback

- Input from Community Survey
- Pros and Cons for each site from:
 - General Public and Near Neighbours
 - Service Providers
 - Potential CTS Clients
- Key Themes about Site Selection

Input from Community Survey

Available through Engage
Cambridge (July 1 to 30,
2021)

1014 respondents

94% are residents of
Cambridge

13% are business owners

.05% are potential CTS
Clients

7% are other

Ranking of factors that are important for a CTS site.

Top 3 responses

- Mental health supports (40%)
- Security on site (35%)
- Access to social services, primary care and treatment support by referral (35%)

Input on site suitability based on site selection criteria identified

Responses for **Site #1 at 15 Easton Street**

- None of the above are suitable (67%),
- Is large enough for wrap around services for treatment and counselling (27%)
- Has public transit nearby (27%)

687 Comments – included in Report Appendix 1

Responses for **Site #2 at 8 Oxford Avenue**

- None of the above are suitable (71%)
- Is within 10–15-minute walking distance between site and area of need (25%)
- Has public transit nearby (20%)

699 Comments – included in Report Appendix 2

**Input from
Community Survey**

Responses to which of the two sites do you think would be a better candidate for a CTS location

1000 individuals responded to this question

744 Comments – included in Report Appendix 3

Which of the two sites do you think would be a better candidate site? Response choices	Percent of respondents
a. Site #1 – 15 Easton Street	16.3%
b. Site #2 – 8 Oxford Avenue	13.6%
c. Neither site is suitable	70.1%
	100.0%

Pros and Cons by Audience

Feedback of General Public and Near Neighbours Site 1 - 15 Easton Street Verbatim comments noted

Pros Reasons given why this site may be suitable	Cons Reasons given why this site is not suitable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily accessible and more central to Preston, Galt and Hespeler. • More removed from downtown Galt. • On a major bus route for access for more people to use this facility from all over town, not just downtown and Bridges. • Is convenient to other essential goods and services. • Better lit, around more people, more foot traffic, can blend in more (offers more confidentiality for people going there). Is less visible than 8 Oxford Street. • Larger space: potentially more space for wrap around services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is at the Delta, a high traffic intersection with so many lights and crosswalks. Is seen as a dangerous and unsuitable location as potential clients will leave the CTS site in an altered state at one of the busiest intersections in the region. • Too far away from the highest need area (downtown). • Too far from where services are located. • Too close to homes. • Within close proximity and short walk to at least three schools and day cares (i.e. Manchester School, Avenue Road School and St. Peter School) as well as Chaplin Park and Soper Park. • Too close to Galt Collegiate School. • Kids come from further away to the plaza than the distance listed. • Right beside a popular and busy shopping plaza which will be impacted. • Concerns about property theft and security for homes and businesses. • Businesses around the Delta area already struggling as is evident with some underutilized buildings there. • A site here will exacerbate the problems that are associated at the Delta already including increase in drug activity, harassment of citizens, vandalism, loitering, and threats to personal security. View that having a site here will further contribute to decline in the area.

Pros and Cons by Audience

Feedback of General Public and Near Neighbours

Site 2 – 8 Oxford Avenue

Verbatim comments noted

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to Bridges without being located in the core area (many noted that the city omitted the core area from consideration for potential site locations). • May be closer to area of need and other supporting services located in other buildings i.e., food banks. • Not as busy an intersection than Easton Site. • Ample staff parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is in the middle of a residential area • Is too close to homes – adjacent to and across the street from homes in houses and apartments. Families with children of all ages and seniors live nearby. Doesn't meet the province's 200 metres distance criterion. • Where will they go after they use at a CTS site – This site has backyards and laneways around it where children play, and potential clients would go to a site in this location and then leave after a short while high with the likelihood of wandering into these areas adjacent to the property. • Too close to schools and childcare facilities with short walking distances to Pluto Daycare, to the Montessori School of Cambridge to Manchester Public and the Galt Collegiate Institute which lie directly in the walking path between downtown and the site. • Families and children walk by this location daily. • There are current problems with theft, break ins, disturbances, threats to personal safety, people hanging out in residents' backyards, in parks, and along the street and the homeless wandering the area at all hours. The location of the CTS site here would exacerbate an already untenable situation. • Assumes that clients come from the area near Bridges and doesn't take into account potential clients throughout the city. • Less accessible. Not close enough to public transit. • Highly visible site for those going there. Offers no anonymity with so many people walking around that everyone would see who is going there. • Close to major roadways which is worrisome for when they leave the site. • Further away from area of need than what is shown on the maps. The maps do not factor in the steep incline that spans from Parkhill Ave to Roseview Ave. The walk up the hill is not accessible for those with mobility issues. • Less ability due to smaller size of building and property to have all recovery and rehabilitation services in one location.

Pros and Cons by Audience

Feedback of Service Providers

CTS Service Providers	15 Easton Street	8 Oxford Avenue
Pros Reasons given why this site may be suitable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers more anonymity to potential clients due to the commercial location and lots of activity around the site. • More accessible being at the Delta and better served by public transit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be closer to area of need for people to walk to from the downtown where they frequent.
Cons Reasons given why this site is not suitable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further away from area of need where people are frequenting. • Safety concerns given the busy intersections, lots of traffic and how people would be able to cross the roads to get to the site. • No plan for how wrap around services could be offered or supported at the site (for either site). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is isolated from other services. • More eyes on Oxford with more homes and apartments nearby. Clients would be more visible, less comfortable and therefore less likely to go there. • Closer to existing residential which may create conflicts between neighbours and people who would go to the CTS location. • It is close to the shelter and clients may come out at the back of the shelter and up the hill which would create concerns for neighbouring properties. • No plan for how wrap around services could be offered or supported at this site (for either site).

Pros and Cons by Audience

Feedback of Potential CTS Clients

CTS Potential Clients	15 Easton Street	8 Oxford Avenue
<p>Pros</p> <p>Reasons given why this site may be suitable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower barrier site than 8 Oxford Avenue. Clients may feel more comfortable going there. Beside a grocery store in a busy plaza which makes the site somewhat anonymous as there are lots of people walking around there. • Delta has lots of buses and connections to the rest of the city. • Site could have outdoor space should smoking be allowed/included in a CTS in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer to downtown and closer to other services.
<p>Cons</p> <p>Reasons given why this site is not suitable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much traffic at this site and too near the train tracks. The intersection is really busy with big roads which raises concerns about being able to safely cross the roads to get to/from the site. • It is not accessible to everyone, as there are potential clients in the downtown with mobility issues who would not be able to get to the site (i.e. too far to walk from encampments). It was noted that Public transit for the unhoused population is not viable. Most walk and many have bikes to get around. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They see 8 Oxford as a high barrier site as they would not feel comfortable going to this site in the middle of a neighbourhood here because of the visibility. • This site is highly visible and a single destination such that everyone would know why they are going to the site. • This site is too close to people's homes. • Don't want to be near where there are playgrounds or near schools. • Not as accessible as 15 Easton Street by public transit. • Site would not be suitable for having an outdoor space.

Key Themes about Site Selection

From individuals that think that either of these two sites is suitable

A small number of individuals provided input that they think that either 15 Easton Street or 8 Oxford Avenue would be a suitable site for a CTS.

A few individuals indicated their direct personal or professional role with potential CTS clients.

Reasons cited include:

(Comments are verbatim)

- The need for this service and/or accompanying services for those visiting a site.
- Support a site for a CTS in Cambridge due to significant need for harm reduction and addictions/mental health treatment services.
- Too much time of inaction on this front has passed already.
- Importance of trying to help those in need and to reduce drug overdoses in the community.

Key Themes about Site Selection

From individuals that do not support a CTS site at either of these two sites

It was observed that a significant number of individuals who provided comments in the survey and who participated in the kitchen table guide live or work in proximity to one or both sites and are very concerned about the impact of a potential location of a CTS site.

Reasons cited include: (comments are verbatim)

- Concerns about declining personal safety with close proximity of the sites to homes, schools, daycares, and businesses.
- Concerns about significant impacts to the safe enjoyment of their homes, streets and neighbourhoods.
- Lack of acknowledgement that these sites are located where there is a high level of walking activity by families and children (particularly for 8 Oxford Avenue) and for families and teenagers (particularly for 15 Easton Street).
- Concern over heightened crime and drug related break-ins and theft.
- Untenable situation of having individuals who go to a CTS site in one of these locations, getting high and then leaving in this state to wander the nearby streets where there are many families, children and seniors.
- Concerns about neighbourhood impacts that are being experienced in areas near the downtown which are already being impacted by drug activity, homelessness and other issues. Anger that these issues are occurring without any apparent solutions being addressed by the municipality and that a CTS location would even be considered for either area given the concerns that exist already.
- View that Cambridge needs to address the root cause(s) of such addiction issues and deal with the homeless situation and lack of detox and rehabilitation and there is too much emphasis here on looking for a CTS site instead of working to assist in really affecting change which is better for drug addicts and our community.

Key Themes about Site Selection

From those individuals that think that another site should be considered

Many others commented that they disapprove of the two sites mentioned and that another site would be better away from these two neighbourhoods closer to people in need and where other services are already located.

Other site locations mentioned in order or how frequently these were noted include: 150 Main Street, the Cambridge Memorial Hospital, at the Bridges Shelter, City Hall, Hespeler Road and other locations

Reasons cited include:

(comments are verbatim)

- Why aren't there sites that are closer to downtown where wrap around services already exist.
- Identifying sites without a fulsome plan of what services are going to be offered is backwards. People with substance use problems need to have easy access to a full complement of services, on site.
- For 150 Main Street, some respondents commented that they are either wondering what happened to this option or believing that city council was against the location.
- Some specifically noted issues of concern with the Bridges Shelter and that both of the candidate sites seem focused on being near this location. Others question what will happen to a CTS site if one were set up at either location and then Bridges moves away from its current location.

Key Themes about Site Selection

From those individuals that think that no site should be considered

It was observed that many individuals think that no site should be located anywhere in Cambridge

Reasons cited include:

(comments are verbatim)

- CTS sites don't combat the drug problem and can normalize illegal substance use.
- CTS sites could worsen the drug problem and don't offer real help to addicts.
- View that too much focus is being placed on what is perceived as this one type of harm reduction strategy (creating a CTS location) without government attention be given to addressing housing needs, mental health, and other strategies that could make a difference in the growing drug crisis.
- View that more resources should be allocated to treatment methods including rehabilitation, detox, social supports and, affordable housing which should be prioritized over establishing a CTS site.
- Concern over safety within Cambridge now, without a CTS site. Most of these sentiments are coupled with concern over Cambridge becoming less safe with a CTS site present.
- Concerns about activity at the Bridges location.
- Concerns about safety downtown.

In summary

Extensive feedback has been garnered about the suitability of the two candidate sites

All audiences participated and provided input

Perceived benefits (pros) and concerns or risks (cons) about the proposed locations are documented in the Public Feedback Report

Key themes and observations noted include perspectives from:

- Individuals who think that either of these two sites is suitable
- Individuals that do not support a CTS on either of these two sites
- Individuals that think another site should be considered
- Individuals that think that no site should be considered

Anonymity of input was essential in collecting input and responses.