

Walking Without Barriers in Budapest

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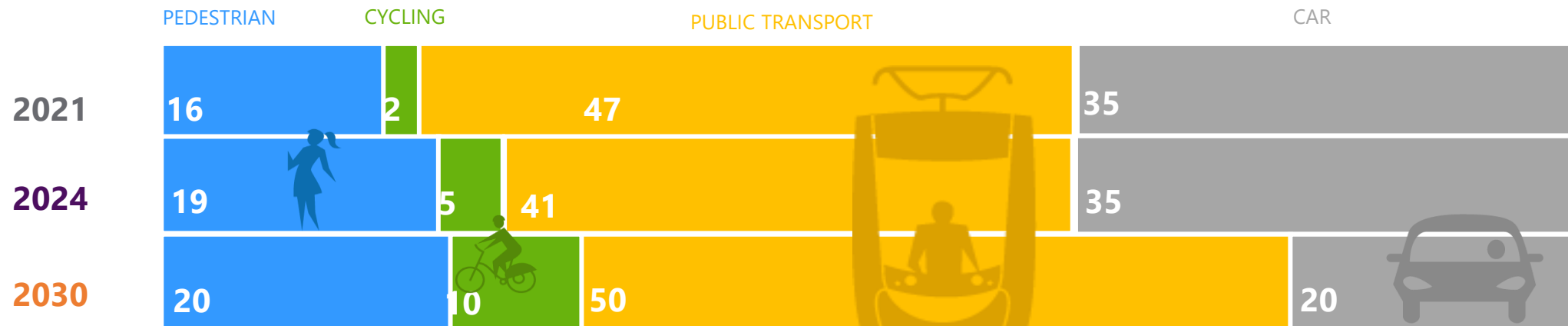
Strategic Foundation

Aligning **Budapest Mobility Plan (BMT)** sustainable mobility objectives with infrastructure development to achieve the 2030 modal split targets

- **Liveable Urban Environment**

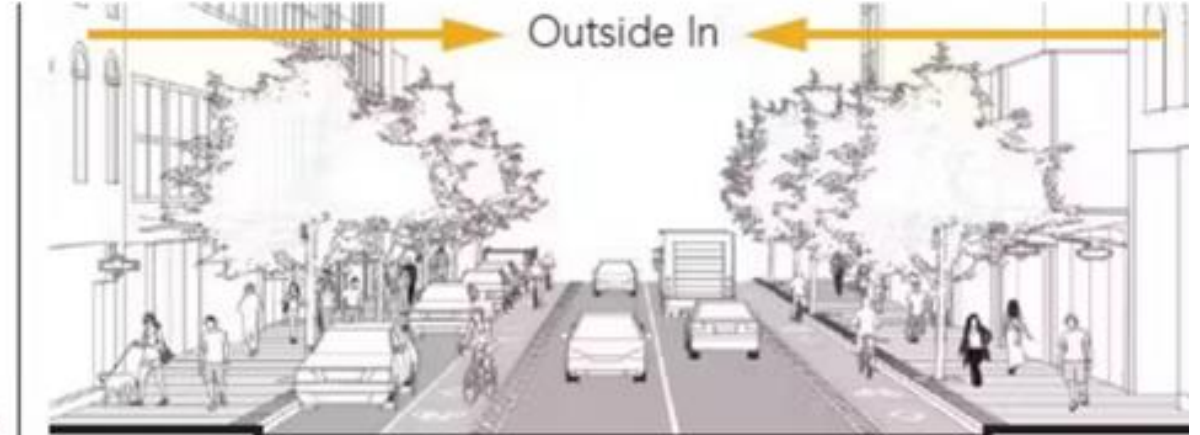
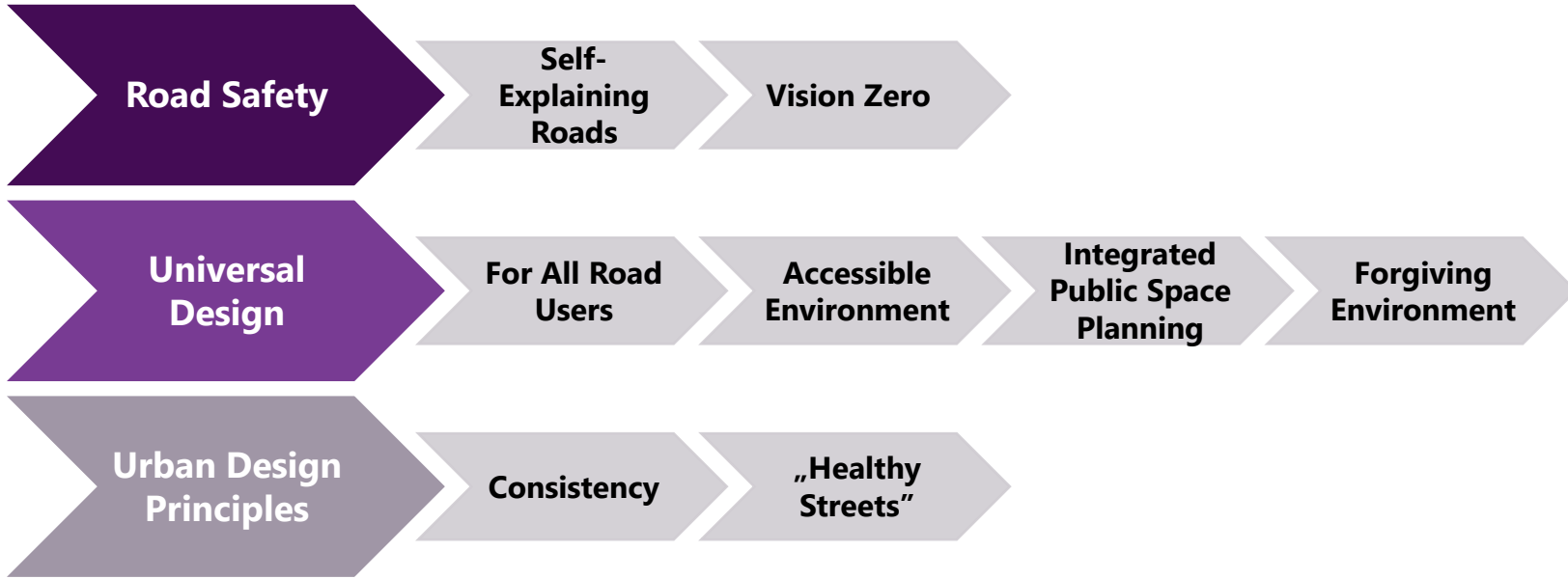
- transport development integrated into urban development,
- influencing travel demand and mode choice,
- reducing the environmental impacts of transport,
- promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion.

Every journey begins and ends with walking, or involves walking at some stage.



Walking is an integral part of every trip. Improving walking conditions therefore supports the performance, accessibility and sustainability of the entire transport system.

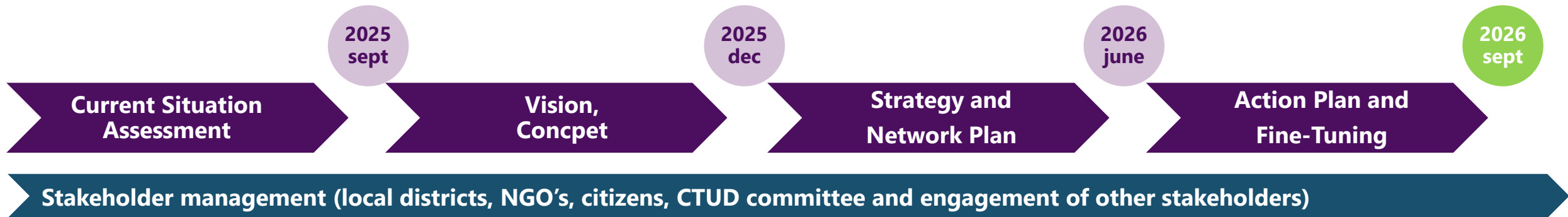
Planning Guidelines for Achieving Strategic Objectives



Policy Mandate



In November 2024, the **Budapest General Assembly** commissioned **BKK** with the **development of a comprehensive strategy for pedestrian mobility in Budapest**, aligned with the Budapest Mobility Plan and the Road Safety Strategy.



Deliverables

- Assessment (working document)
- Walkability Index (methodology)

- Vision, concept (working document)
- Pedestrian Network Plan Concept (working document)

Strategy (working document)

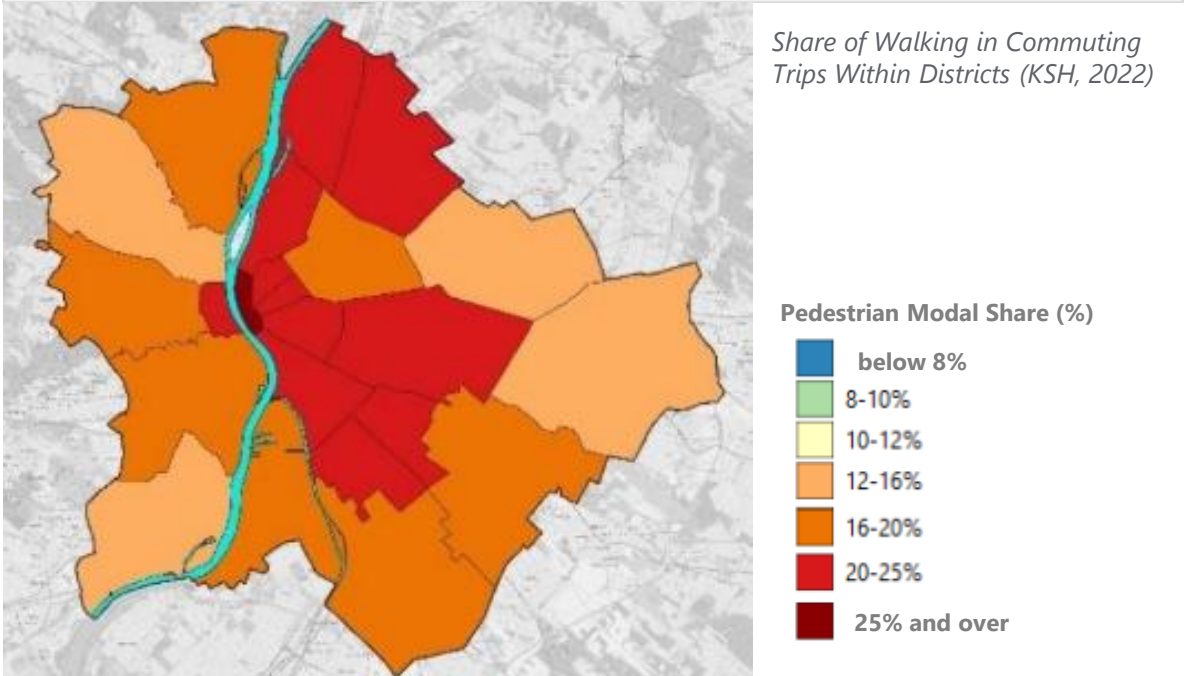
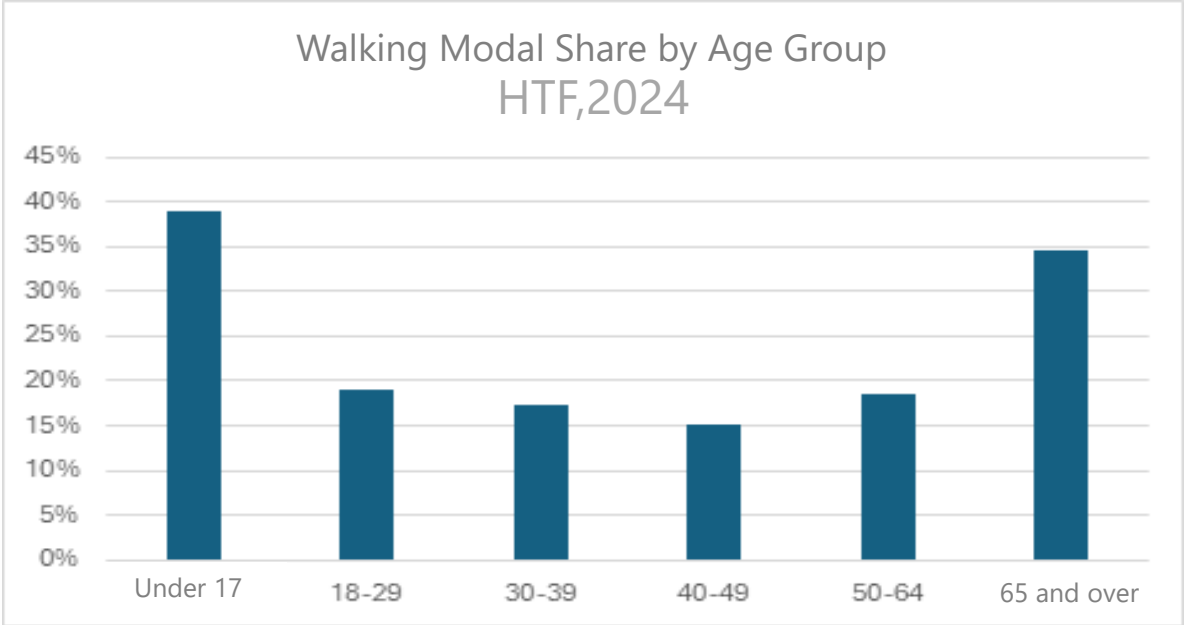
- Strategy (complete document, summary version)
- Pedestrian Network Plan
- Walkability Index (Assessment)

The State of Walking Based on Available Data

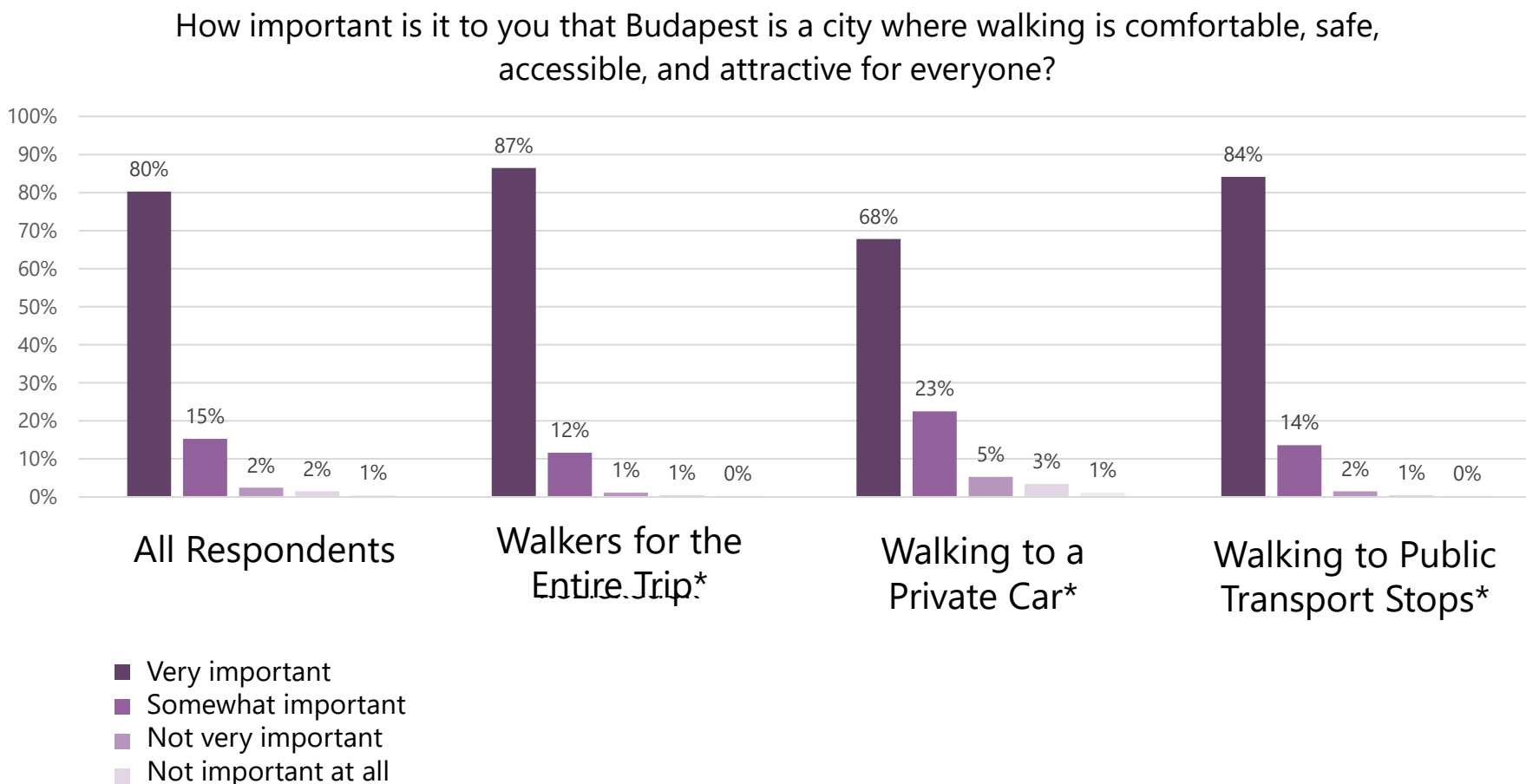
Walking represented 19% of all daily trips in 2024, with women, younger age groups, and older adults being more likely than average to walk regularly.

As an independent mode of transport, walking is primarily used for trips within individual districts. It also plays a significant role in travel between neighbouring inner-city districts.

To improve walking conditions in Budapest's public spaces, **particular attention should be given to the expectations and specific needs of the groups that walk most frequently, especially children, older adults, and women.**



Online Survey: 95% of respondents agree that Budapest should provide a comfortable, safe, accessible, and attractive environment for walking. (*n = 1,706 online respondents*)



The most important factors affecting the choice of respondents to walk rather than use another mode of transport are:

- **Trip distance**
- **Availability of dedicated pedestrian infrastructure**
- **A pleasant walking environment**

Scope of the Strategy

Walking in All Its Forms

Walking serves a wide range of purposes. Therefore, the strategy covers not only walking as a fundamental mode of transport, but also: **access and egress walking** as part of multimodal journeys, **recreational and leisure walking**, the movements associated with **social interaction and street life in public spaces**.

Who Is Considered a Pedestrian?

The strategy defines pedestrians as **all people travelling in public spaces on foot or using non-vehicle mobility aids and equipment** (wheelchairs, rollators, mobility scooters, prams and strollers, wheeled shopping trolleys, hand carts, children's ride-on toys, skateboards, roller skates, non-motorised scooters, etc)

Spatial Scope

The strategy primarily focuses on walking within **Budapest's public spaces**, including the assessment of current conditions and the development of proposals to improve the pedestrian environment.



Vision and Objectives

Everyone walks. The quality of the walking environment determines how often and how far people choose to walk.

Budapest aims to become a healthy, safe, walkable city that supports active mobility by 2030, accessible to everyone regardless of age, gender, physical ability, or health condition. The objective is to **encourage more people to choose walking more often as a mode of transport and to spend more time in high-quality public spaces.**

Achieving this vision requires accessibility and barrier-free design to be treated as an integral part of the strategy.



Guiding Principles of the „Walking Without Barriers in Budapest” Strategy

1. Principle of Human Scale and Natural Movement

Walking is the **most fundamental form of human mobility**. It is inherently linked to the functioning of the human body, mind, and nervous system. Therefore, in urban planning and design, walking should be the starting point rather than a residual mode of transport.

2. Principle of Physical and Mental Well-being

Regular **walking contributes to physical fitness, reduces stress, and supports mental well-being**. A healthy city is not only liveable but also encourages everyday physical activity.

3. Principle of Accessibility and Transport Equity

Everyone, regardless of age, gender, income level, or physical ability, should be able to access public spaces and pedestrian routes safely, independently, and comfortably, thereby gaining equal access to the city's services and opportunities.

4. Principle of Universal Accessibility

The pedestrian environment should be usable by everyone and free from unnecessary barriers. **Accessibility is not a special requirement for specific groups but a fundamental quality standard of the urban environment.**

5. Principle of Freedom and Flexibility

Walking is an **independent, flexible, and cost-free mode of transport** that requires no special equipment. The ability to move freely through urban spaces provides both personal independence and opportunities for social interaction and community life.

6. Principle of Safety and Comfort

Walking becomes an attractive travel option when **public spaces are both objectively safe and perceived as safe by users**. Reducing traffic conflicts, noise, and air pollution is a fundamental prerequisite for creating a pedestrian-friendly city.

7. Principle of High-Quality Public Spaces

High-quality public spaces are **clean, green, shaded, and aesthetically appealing**. They contribute to reducing urban heat stress and improving overall well-being. Public spaces should serve as places for social interaction and community life, not merely as transport corridors.

8. Principle of the Compact City

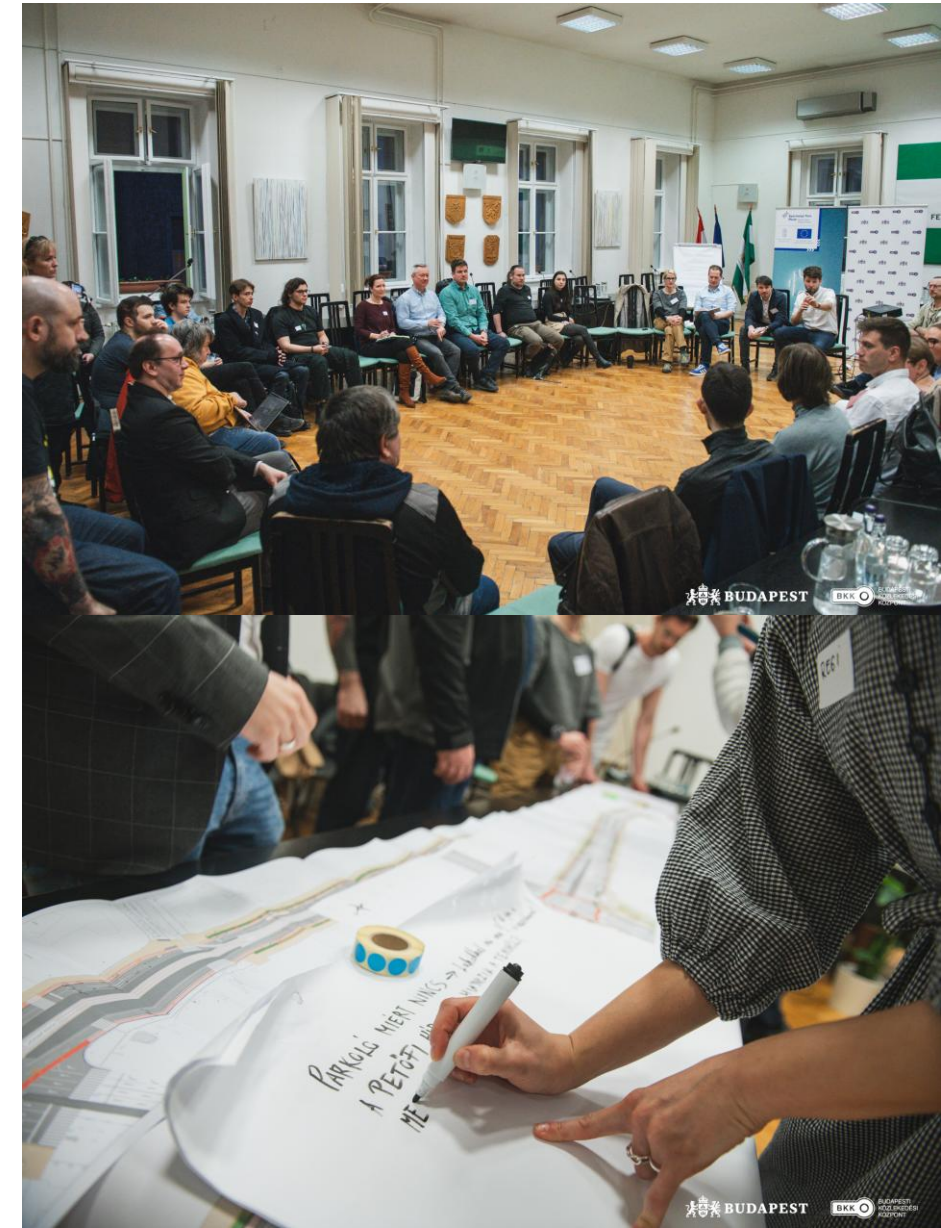
A well-designed network of public spaces and pedestrian connections supports the development of a compact city. Through its layout and design, it enables the efficient provision and operation of urban infrastructure, promotes the **sustainable spatial distribution of housing, jobs, services, and commerce**, and helps preserve non-urbanized and environmentally valuable areas while maintaining high technical and quality standards.

The Strategy Was Developed Through Extensive Expert Engagement

Achieving a more walkable Budapest requires **long-term cooperation** among transport planners, urban designers, architects, landscape architects, public health professionals, accessibility experts, public authorities, and civil society organisations.

The strategy measures were developed and reviewed through expert focus groups, bringing together diverse professional perspectives and expertise.

- Climate Adaptation and Green Infrastructure
- Urban Design and Transport Planning
- Sociology,
- Environmental Psychology and Child-Friendly Urban Design
- Equity, Accessibility and Universal Access
- Tourism, Services and Culture
- Road Safety



Objectives and Action Plan

Objectives

„More People Walking More Often and for Longer in Budapest”

It Is Possible to Walk Anywhere in the City

- a continuous network of sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and connections within urban neighbourhoods
- consistent wayfinding and information systems
- public transport that is easily accessible on foot

The Barriers, Risks, and Disadvantages of Walking Are Eliminated

- accessible infrastructure for everyone
- self-explaining and easily understandable public spaces
- physical comfort, passive surveillance, and a strong sense of safety in public spaces

Public Space Becomes the City's Living Room

- designed not only for movement, but also for staying, meeting, and social interaction
- visible and easily accessible retail and service functions
- strengthening local identity and enhancing built and natural heritage
- supporting more sustainable urban development and tourism

People Can Walk Safely in Public Spaces

People Feel Safe in Public Spaces and
Transport Hubs

Accessibility of Public Spaces Is Improved

More People Choose Active and Public Transport

Public Spaces Become More Comfortable and
Attractive

Walking Becomes an Experience, Not Just a
Means of Travel

A Support and Governance Framework for
Walking Is Established

Action Plan

Infrastructure		Regulation/Organisation
Operation and maintenance	IE_1.1 Sidewalk Improvement and Accessibility Programme	SZ_1.1 Embedding the Principle of Pedestrian Priority in Relevant Regulations
	IE_1.2 Safe and Accessible Pedestrian Crossings Programme	SZ_1.2 Updating Knowledge Resources and Design Guidelines to Integrate Pedestrian Considerations
	IE_1.3 Public Transport Stop Accessibility Programme	SZ_2.1 Establishing Clear Responsibility and Institutional Coordination for Pedestrian Mobility (Agency / Working Group)
	IE_1.4 High-Risk Intersection Improvement Programme	SZ_2.2 Establishing a Walking Monitoring and Regular Evaluation System
Development	IE_2.1 Safe Institutional Environments Programme	
	IE_2.2 Improving Safe Pedestrian Access to Recreational Green Spaces	
	IK_1.1 Healthy Streets Programme	
	IK_1.2 Comprehensive Main Road Development Programme	
Communication/ Awareness		
K_1.1 Promoting Walking as a Mode of Transport and a Daily Activity		
K_1.2 Establishing a Unified Pedestrian Information System (GYERE)		

Indicators for Measuring the Effectiveness of Strategy Implementation

The proposed indicators cover all key dimensions of walking and pedestrian mobility.

Special emphasis is placed on accessibility, as **barrier-free walking is essential to increasing the number, frequency, and length of walking trips in Budapest.**

Outcome Indicators

Share of Accessible Sidewalks	2050 100%
Share of Fully Accessible Pedestrian Crossings	2050 100%
Share of Accessible Public Transport Stops	2050 100%
Reduction in the Share of Arterial and Collector Roads Affected by Missing Sidewalks	2050 0%

Impact Indicators

Vision Zero	2050
Walking Modal Share (Based on Number of Trips)	2050 25 %
Increase in Healthy Life Expectancy	2050 +3(?) year

Pedestrian Network Plan

Framework and Objectives of Sectoral Network Plan

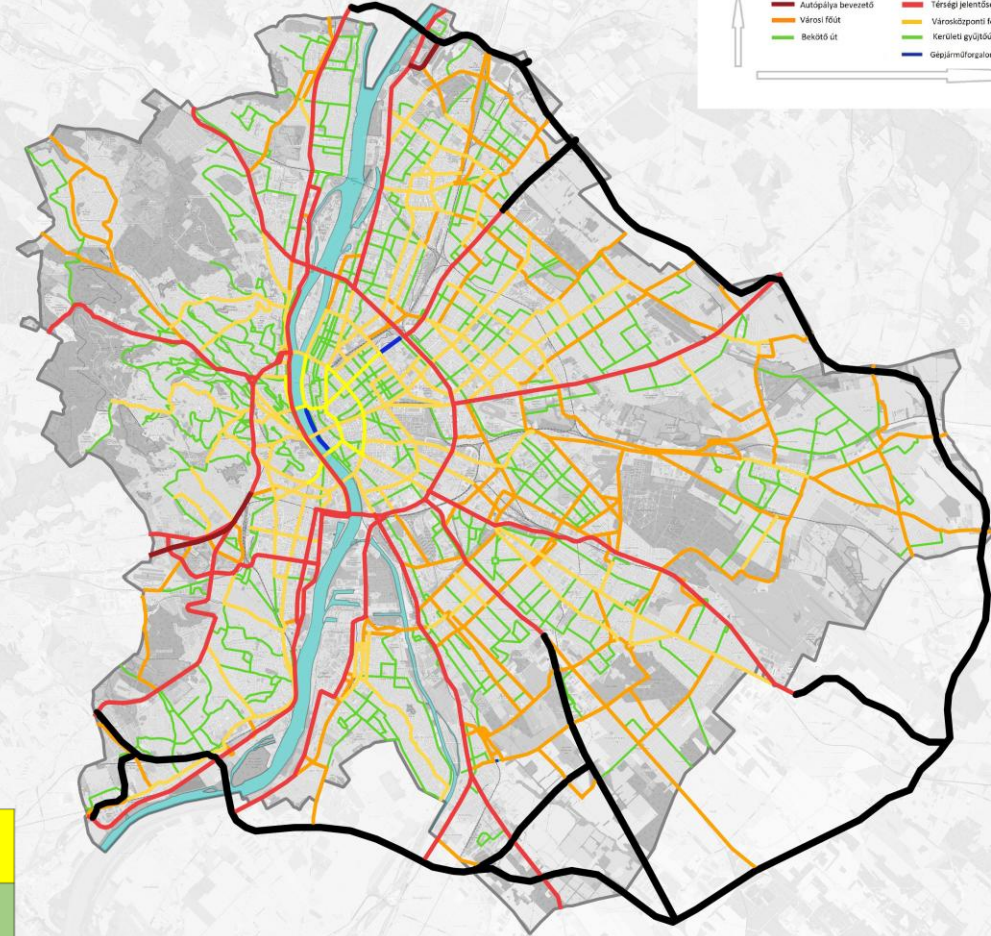
As the strategic road authority for Budapest, BKK prepares sectoral network plans that help to

- **manage the transport-related aspects of public space developments as an integrated system**, regardless of the implementing organisation or timeframe
- define the **key technical parameters and design principles** for the planning of public spaces and road infrastructure

Similar plans have previously been developed for the **road network, cycling network, urban logistics, and public transport system**.

Road Network Function - 2030

Jelmagyarázat



Traffic Function

Motorways/Regional Arterials

50-70 km/h

Arterial Roads

30-70 km/h

Collector Roads

30-50 km/h

Local Roads/Streets

20-40 km/h

Car-Free Streets

Autópálya bevezető 70-100 km/h	Térségi jelentőségű út 50-70 km/h	
Városi főút 50-(70) km/h	Városközponti főút 40-50 km/h	Emblematikus főút 30-40 km/h
Bekötő út 40-50 km/h	Kerületi gyűjtőút 30-(50) km/h	Kerületközponti utca 30-(40) km/h
Ipari utca 40 km/h	Lakó/Helyi utca 20-30 km/h	Kiemelt közterület csak célforgalommal 20 km/h
	Gyalogos- és kerékpáros övezet	Sétálóutca

Weak

Medium

Strong

Public Space Function

Role of the Pedestrian Network Plan

Defining the Design Parameters of Walking as a Primary Mode of Transport – normative framework based on road network function, public space function, urban location, and the characteristics of the built environment.

Defining the Desired Level of Comfort for Walking as a Human Activity – by taking into account the needs of people of all ages and abilities, and ensuring an inclusive pedestrian experience.

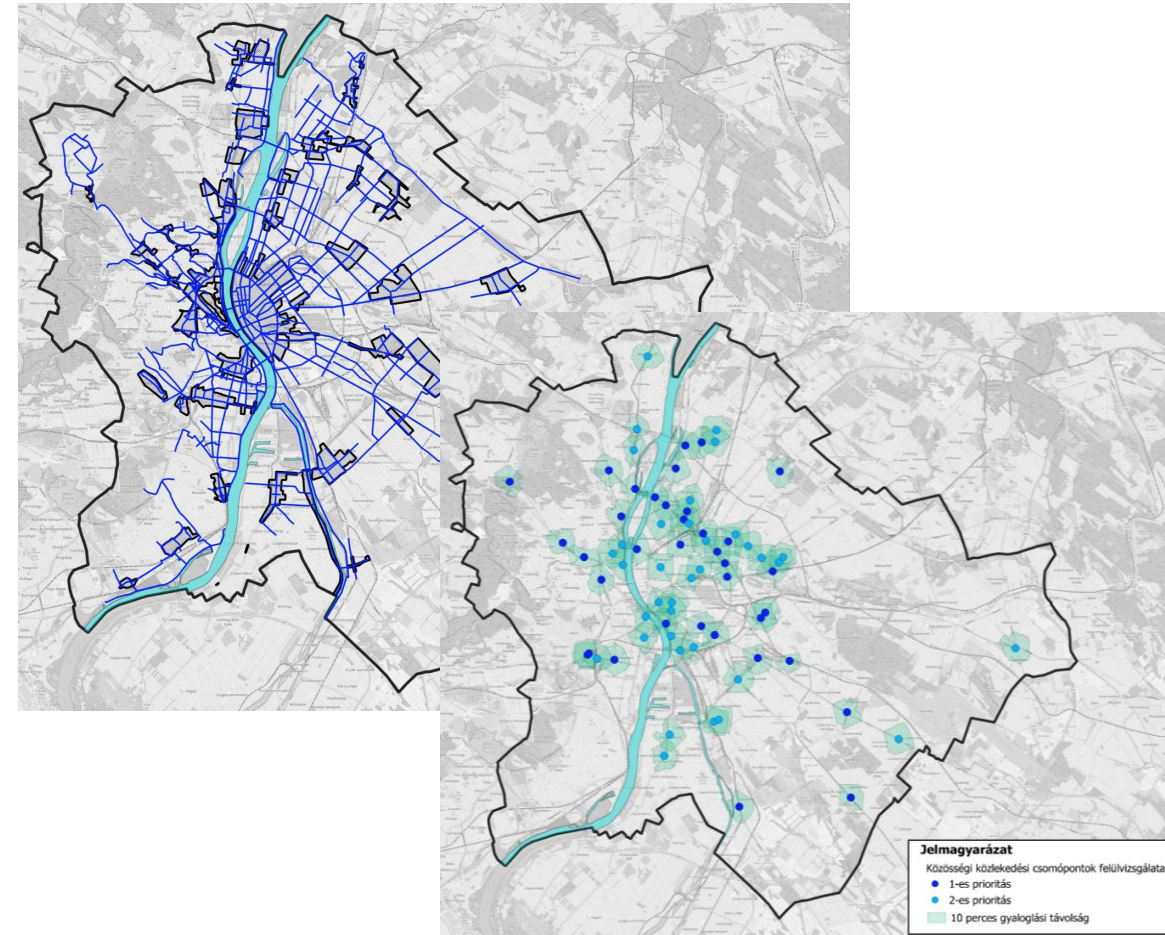
Ensuring the Connectivity of Walking as a City-Shaping Network

- by creating a coherent and continuous pedestrian network that supports mobility, accessibility, and the spatial structure of the city.

Areas of Key Public Institutions where Public Space Design has Important Social Function

- zones and street segments around schools, educational facilities, healthcare facilities, and other community institutions, where interventions such as School Streets and School Zones may be implemented to improve safety, accessibility, and the quality of the public realm.

Where walking is a priority, public space should be designed accordingly. The Pedestrian Network Plan defines these priority corridors and areas, junctions and important transport hubs across the city.



Pedestrian Primary Network and Key District Centres

Primary Pedestrian Corridors

The city's most important pedestrian corridors, serving as the **primary axes for walking as a mode of transport within Budapest**.

These corridors are of **district-wide or city-wide significance**, based on pedestrian volumes and the concentration of destinations.

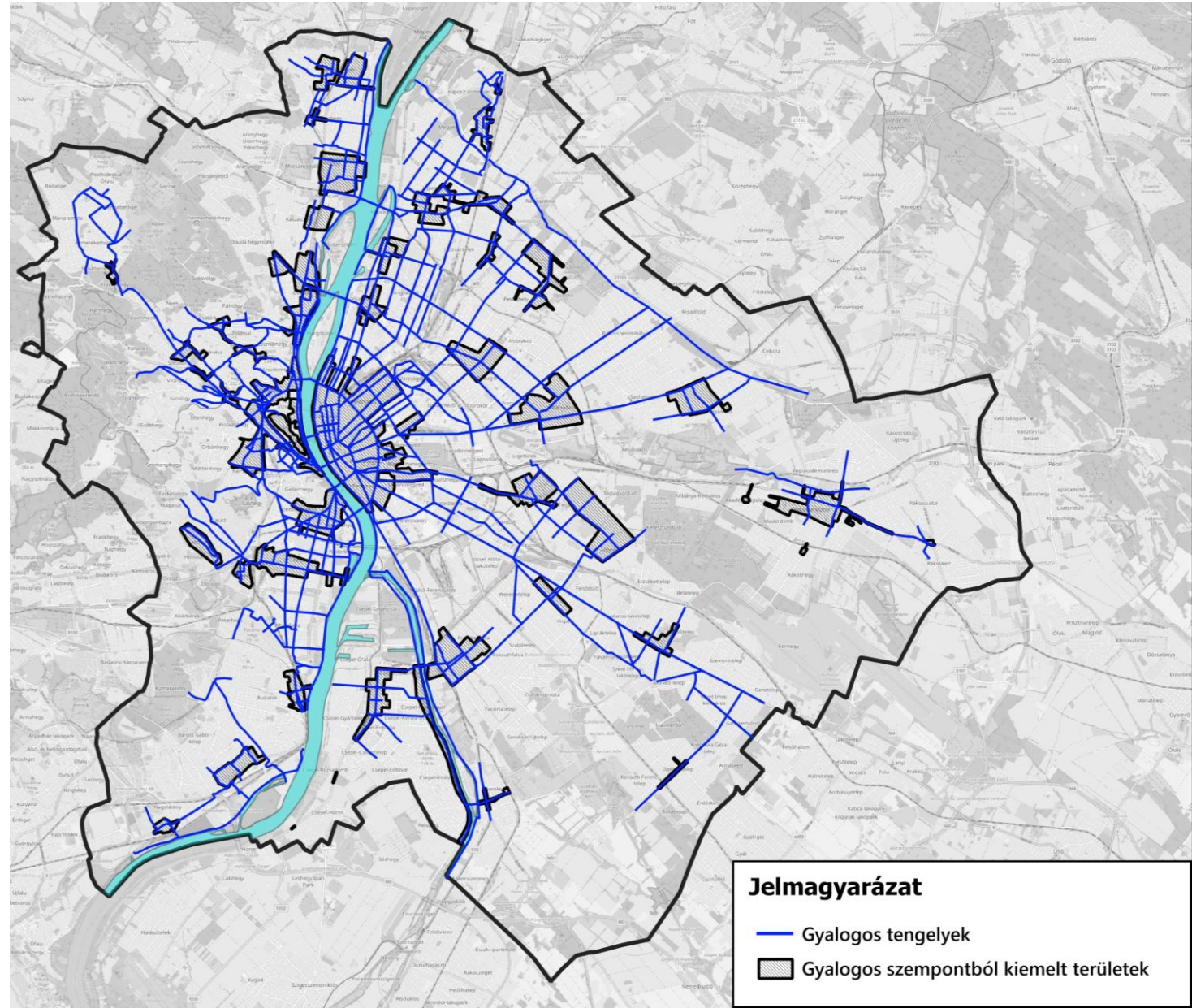
Their **planning and development require a comprehensive, integrated approach that balances mobility, public space quality, accessibility, safety, and urban design considerations.**

City and District Centres

Key city and district-level centres where walking and public space use should be prioritised.

Any development project within these centres should ensure the highest possible level of pedestrian comfort, accessibility, and public space quality.

These areas function as focal points for everyday urban life, social interaction, commerce, and community activities.



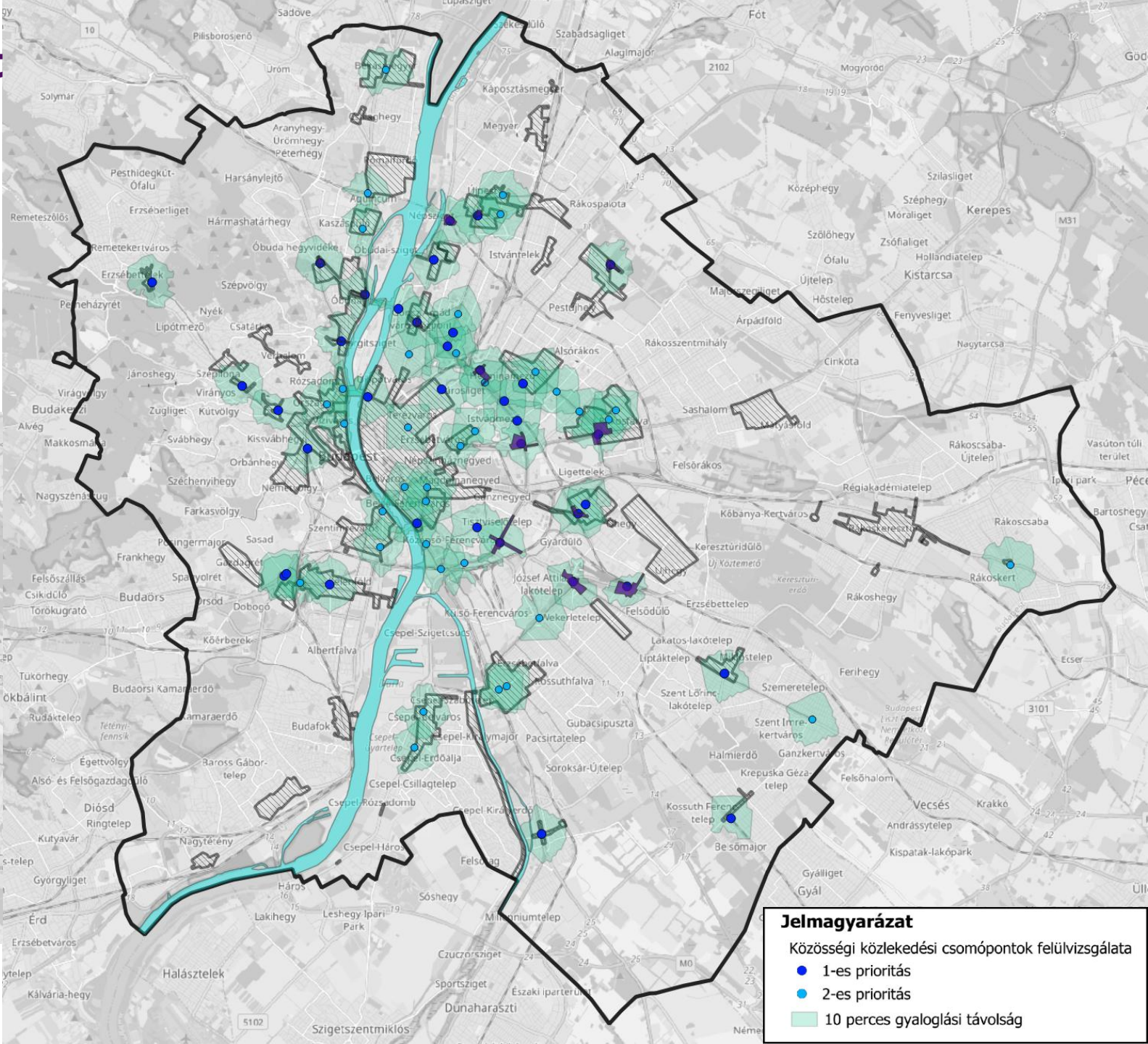
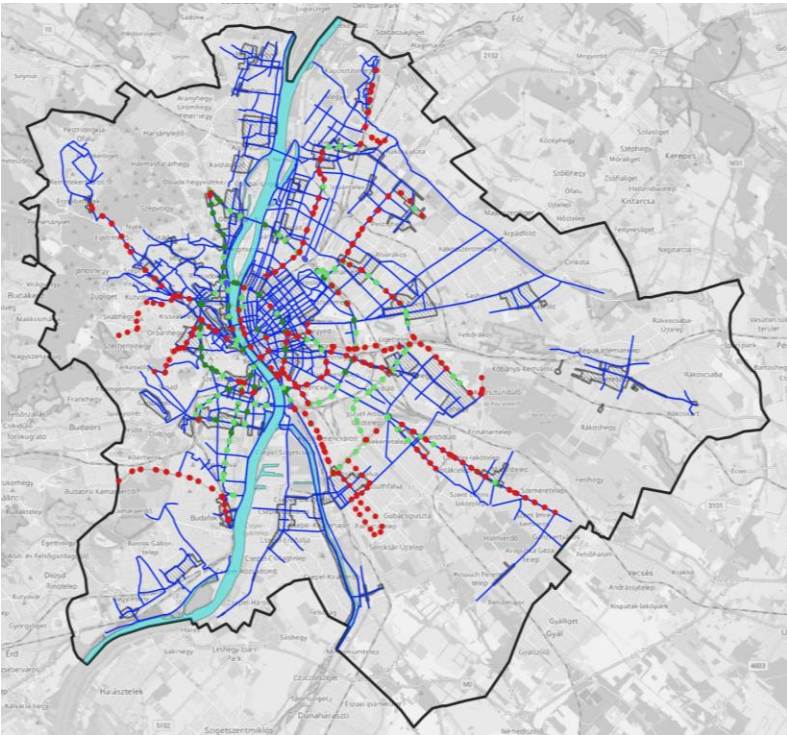
Jelmagyarázat

- Gyalogos tengelyek
- Gyalogos szempontból kiemelt területek

Connection to Public Transport

Identification and delimitation of pedestrian priority areas around major public transport interchanges in order to improve the overall pedestrian experience.

All bus and tram stops accessible for everyone



BUDAPESTI
KÖZLEKEDÉSI
KÖZPONT

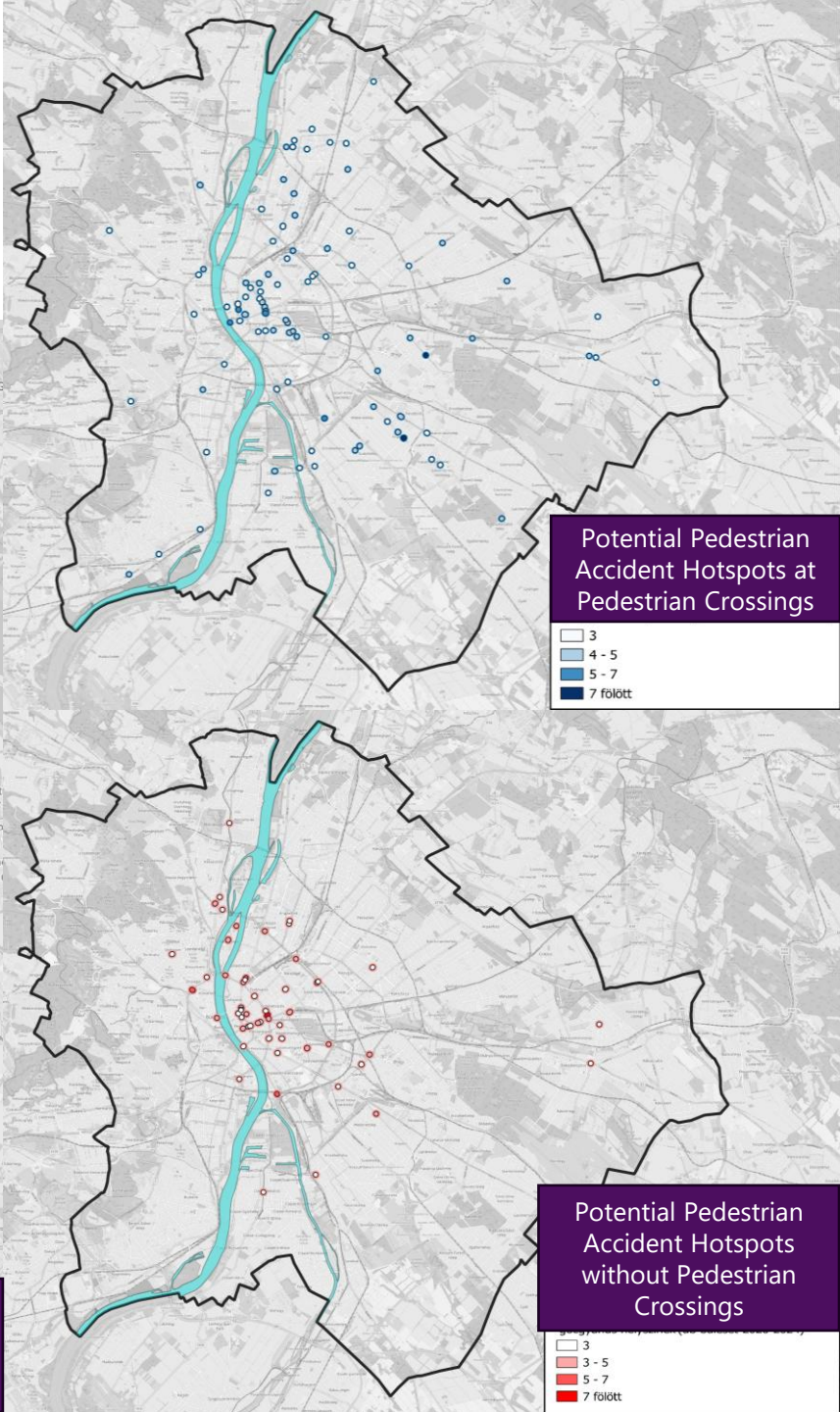
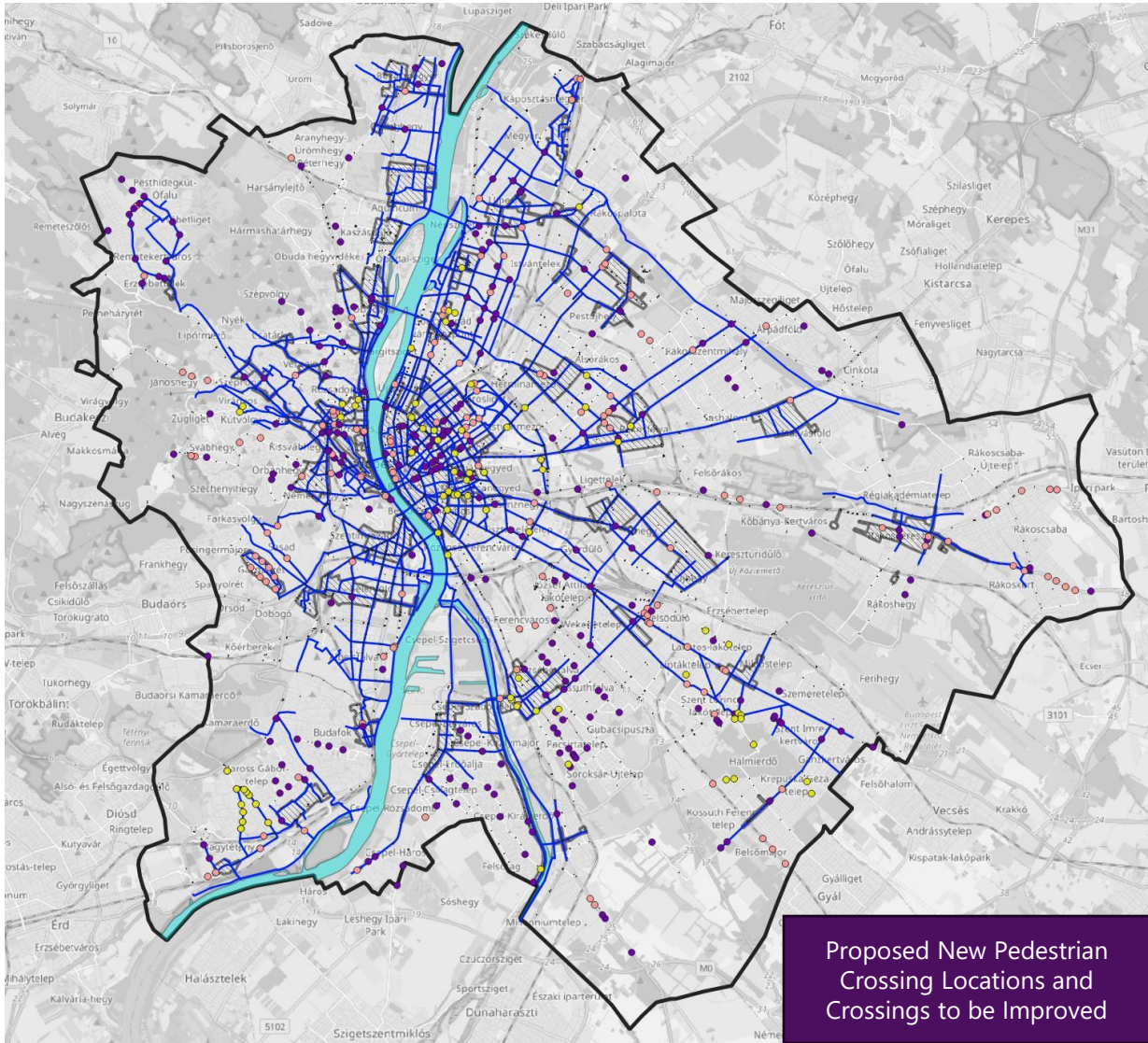
Jelmagyarázat

Közösségi közlekedési csomópontok felülvizsgálata

- 1-es prioritás
- 2-es prioritás
- 10 perces gyaloglási távolság

Hotspots Identified Based on Pedestrian Accidents

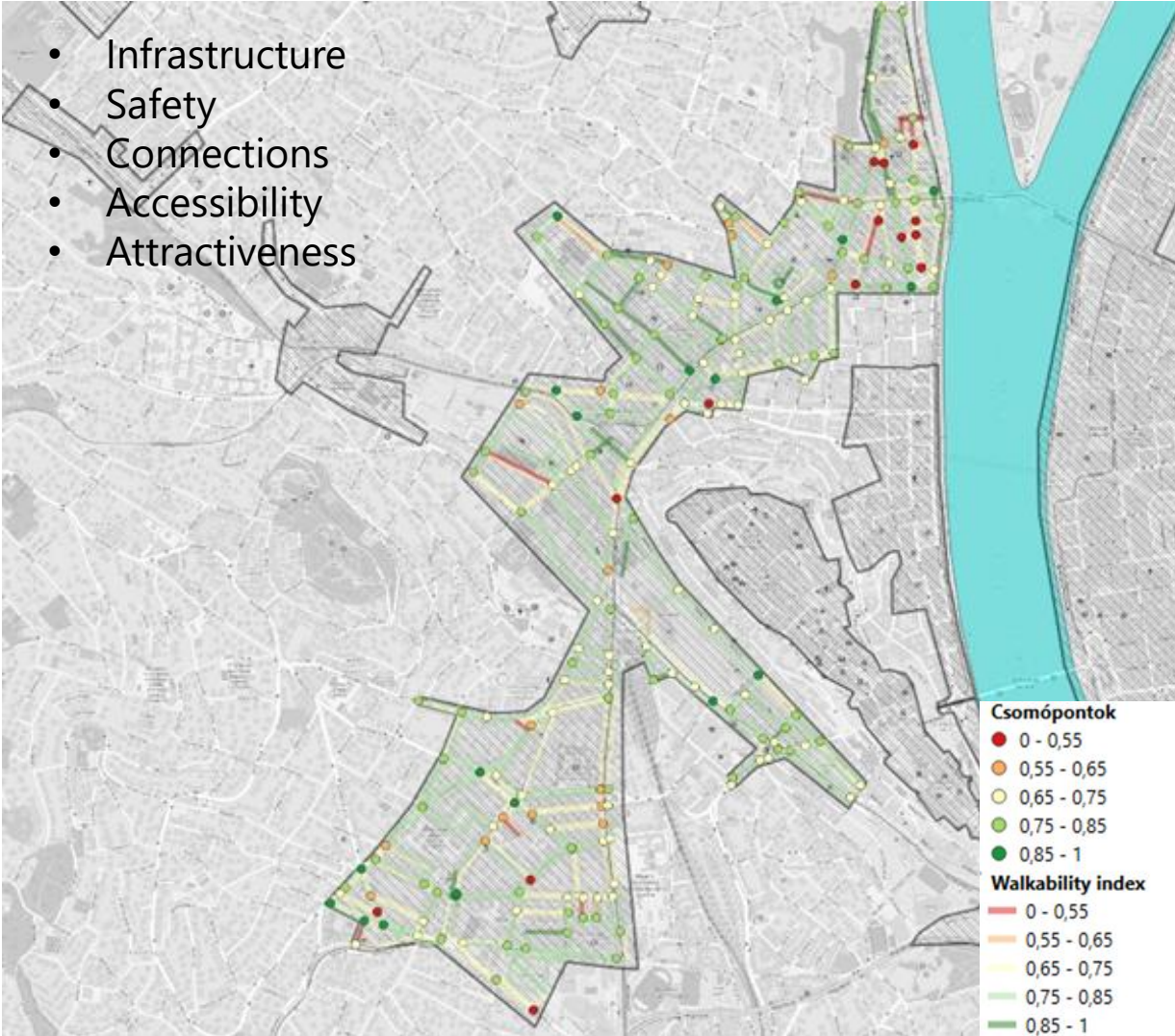
Maps highlighting **key deficiencies in the core pedestrian network**, including missing crossings, sidewalk gaps, and high-risk intersections requiring improvement.



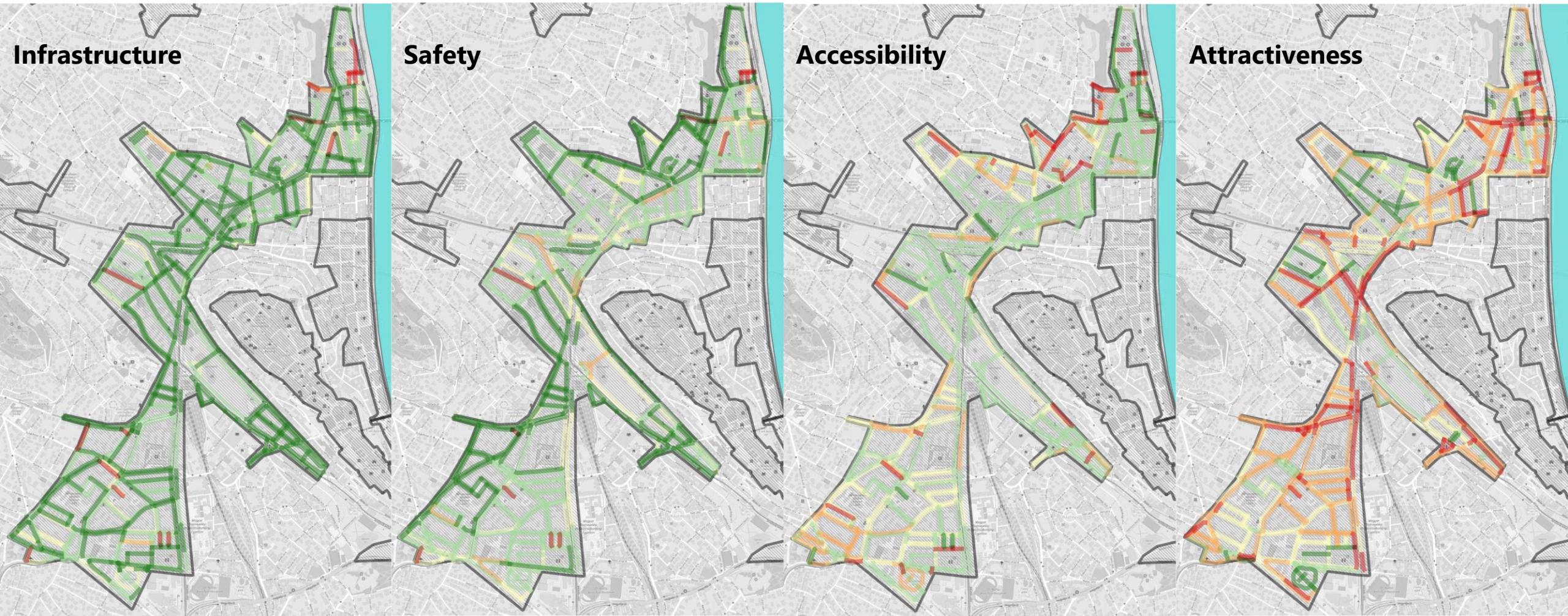
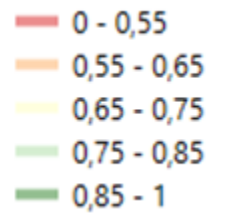
Walking Network Plan – Walkability index assessment

Walkability Assessment of Streets and Intersections in Priority Areas

- Infrastructure
- Safety
- Connections
- Accessibility
- Attractiveness



Walking Network Plan – Walkability index



Thank you for your attention!

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