Walkability Checklist

How walkable is your community?

Take a walk with a child and decide for yourselves.

Everyone benefits from walking. These benefits include: improved fitness, cleaner air, reduced risks of certain health problems, and a greater sense of community. But walking needs to be safe and easy. Take a walk with your child and use this checklist to decide if your neighborhood is a friendly place to walk. Take heart if you find problems, there are ways you can make things better.

Getting started:

First, you'll need to pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house or just somewhere fun to go. The second step involves the checklist. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk, note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give each question a rating. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk overall. After you've rated your walk and identified any problem areas, the next step is to figure out what you can do to improve your community's score. You'll find both immediate answers and long-term solutions under "Improving Your Community's Score..." on the third page.









U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration







Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood's walkability.

How walkable is your community?

Location of walk **Rating Scale:** 4 awful many some good very good excellent problems problems 1. Did you have room to walk? 4. Was it easy to follow safety rules? Could you and your child... Yes Some problems: Sidewalks or paths started and stopped 🗌 No Yes Cross at crosswalks or where you could see Sidewalks were broken or cracked and be seen by drivers? Sidewalks were blocked with poles, Stop and look left, right and then left T Yes □ No signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc. again before crossing streets? No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders Yes No No Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing Too much traffic traffic where there were no sidewalks? Something else Cross with the light? Yes No No Rating: (circle one) Locations of problems: Rating: (circle one) Locations of problems: 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 2. Was it easy to cross streets? 5. Was your walk pleasant? or trees

Yes Some problems:	🗌 Yes 🔲 Se	ome problems:	
Road was too wide		Needed more grass, flowers, or trees	
Traffic signals made us wait too long or did		Scary dogs	
not give us enough time to cross	Scary people		
Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals	Not well lighted		
Parked cars blocked our view of traffic	Dirty, lots of litter or trash		
Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic		Dirty air due to automobile exhaust	
Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair	Something else		
Something else		6	
Rating: (circle one) Locations of problems:	Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6	Locations of problems:	
1 2 3 4 5 6			

3. Did drivers behave well?

1 2 3 4 5 6

How does your neighborhood stack up? Add up your ratings and decide.

1 2.	26-30	Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.	
3	21–25	Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.	
4	16-20	Okay, but it needs work.	
5 Total:	11-15	It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.	
	5-10	It's a disaster for walking!	

Now that you've identified the problems, go to the next page to find out how to fix them. Now that you know the problems, you can find the answers.

Improving your community's score

What you and your child What you and your community 1. Did you have room to walk? can do immediately can do with more time Sidewalks or paths started and stopped pick another route for now speak up at board meetings Sidewalks broken or cracked tell local traffic engineering or public works write or petition city for walkways and gather neighborhood signatures department about specific problems and Sidewalks blocked provide a copy of the checklist make media aware of problem No sidewalks, paths or shoulders work with a local transportation engineer to Too much traffic develop a plan for a safe walking route 2. Was it easy to cross streets? Road too wide pick another route for now push for crosswalks/signals/ parking changes/curb ramps at city meetings share problems and checklist with local Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not report to traffic engineer where parked cars give us enough time to cross traffic engineering or public works department are safety hazards Crosswalks/traffic signals needed trim your trees or bushes that block the street report illegally parked cars to the police View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, ٠ and ask your neighbors to do the same request that the public works department or plants leave nice notes on problem cars asking trim trees or plants Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair owners not to park there make media aware of problem 3. Did drivers behave well? Backed without looking pick another route for now petition for more enforcement Did not yield set an example: slow down and be request protected turns considerate of others Turned into walkers ask city planners and traffic engineers for encourage your neighbors to do the same traffic calming ideas Drove too fast ask schools about getting crossing guards at report unsafe driving to the police Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through key locations red lights organize a neighborhood speed watch program 4. Could you follow safety rules?

Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen

- Stop and look left, right, left before crossing Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic Cross with the light
- educate yourself and your child about safe walking
- organize parents in your neighborhood to walk children to school
- encourage schools to teach walking safely
- help schools start safe walking programs
- encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school

5. Was your walk pleasant?

Needs grass, flowers, trees point out areas to avoid to your child; agree on request increased police enforcement safe routes Scary dogs start a crime watch program in your ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced neighborhood Scary people · report scary dogs to the animal control department organize a community clean-up day Not well lit report scary people to the police sponsor a neighborhood beautification or tree-Dirty, litter planting day report lighting needs to the police or appropriate • Lots of traffic public works department begin an adopt-a-street program take a walk wih a trash bag initiate support to provide routes with less traffic to schools in your community (reduced traffic plant trees, flowers in your yard

A Quick Health Check

Could not go as far or as fast as we wanted Were tired, short of breath or had sore feet or muscles Was the sun really hot? Was it hot and hazy?

- start with short walks and work up to 30 minutes of walking most days
- invite a friend or child along
- walk along shaded routes where possible

select alternative route with less traffic

- use sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher, wear a hat and sunglasses
- try not to walk during the hottest time of day
- get media to do a story about the health benefits of walking
- call parks and recreation department about community walks

during am and pm school commute times)

- encourage corporate support for employee walking programs
- plant shade trees along routes
- have a sun safety seminar for kids
- have kids learn about unhealthy ozone days and the Air Quality Index (AQI)

Need some guidance? These resources might help...

Great Resources

WALKING INFORMATION

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC)

UNC Highway Safety Research Center Chapel Hill, NC www.pedbikeinfo.org www.walkinginfo.org

National Center for Safe Routes to School Chapel Hill, NC www.saferoutesinfo.org

For More Information about Who Can Help Address Community Problems www.walkinginfo.org/problems/help.cfm

State Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinators http://www.walkinginfo.org/assistance/contacts.cfm

FEDERAL POLICY, GUIDANCE AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR WALKING FACILITIES

Federal Highway Administration

Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Office of Natural and Human Environment Washington, DC www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Federal Highway Administration

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Team Office Of Safety Washington, DC http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Traffic Safety Programs Washington, DC www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/pedSAFE

SIDEWALK ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

US Access Board Washington, DC Phone: (800) 872-2253; (800) 993-2822 (TTY) www.access-board.gov





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