



# GARRETT COUNTY WALKING PLAN ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Photo credit: Dan Burden

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## 1. Introduction

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) contracted with Toole Design Group, LLC (TDG) to develop this report for Garrett County. The report is intended to lay the foundation for a future Garrett County Walking Plan and to identify strategies to increase adult walking that could be implemented with funding from Garrett County's 1422 grant funding and other sources.

The contract specifies that TDG will:

- Conduct a scan of existing community walking plans in the designated Maryland jurisdictions.
- Identify opportunities for promoting walking and strategies to address disparities faced by high priority populations (e.g. low-income/Medicaid recipients, seniors) and the barriers in high need locations.
- Develop strategies to engage community members and partner organizations in the development of plans that promote walking.
- Create an action plan for communities to prioritize and implement strategies to increase capacity for aligning and sustaining community walking access.

The contract further specifies that the report will include:

- Identification of and assessment of the community walking plans which were reviewed.
- A report with recommendations including:
  - Recommendations for promoting walking and community engagement. Recommendations for partnership opportunities, promotional campaigns, specific trainings to offer, signage to promote walking routes, policies to implement, and avenues for stakeholder and leadership engagement.
  - Targeted strategies for high priority populations and high need areas.
  - Inventory of community groups that can serve as partners and champions (e.g., American Volksmarch Association and other walking clubs, community advocacy, health care providers and health maintenance organizations).

Finally, the contract requires that the report and recommendations should align with Maryland Department of Transportation's Twenty-Year Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.



## REPORT ORGANIZATION

The sections below are organized as follows.

- Section 2 covers the underlying rationale for developing a walking plan and focusing on the high priority population.
- Section 3 documents existing plans impacting walking in Garrett County, with an emphasis on visions, goals, and strategies that encourage walking.
- Section 4 covers the stakeholder engagement process that led to this report, including results from the stakeholder survey and feedback from the stakeholder meeting.
- Section 5 presents key takeaways from the review of plans and stakeholder engagement.
- Sections 6 includes a preliminary draft action plan identifying potential strategies to encourage walking in Garrett County along with potential funding sources and implementation partners.
- Section 7 provides a summary of next steps.

The preliminary draft action plan is intended as starting point for the County, which would be refined through a subsequent County walking plan planning process. It is supported by a Toolbox of strategies to encourage walking (Appendix A), which provides additional detail on each strategy in the action plan, as well as information on strategies not identified as high priority through the report stakeholder engagement process, but worth considering for the future. Each strategy cut sheet includes potential approaches, action steps, examples, and strategy-specific references. General references are provided in Appendix B.

## 2. Rationale for a Walking Plan

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) is one of 21 state and large city health departments awarded the State and Local Public Health Actions to Prevent Obesity, Diabetes, and Heart Disease and Stroke (1422) grant. The grant provides \$3.5 million per year from September 30, 2014, to September 29, 2018, for a total of \$14 million, and requires the work be done in no more than eight communities with significant disease burdens and combined populations.

DHMH selected Garrett County as one of the communities based on a variety of criteria, including:

- Rankings based on select health outcomes and health factors, as found in the 2014 Maryland County Health Rankings:  
<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/maryland/2014/overview>
- Rankings based on highest prevalence of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and obesity
- Inadequate access to care, as defined by Health Professional Shortage Areas, Medically Underserved Areas, and Medically Underserved Populations
- Expected reach and impact

In Garrett County and other selected communities, the long-term goals of the Maryland 1422 grant are to reduce death and disability due to diabetes, heart disease, and stroke by 3%, and to reduce the prevalence of obesity by 3 %. These goals are to be accomplished through a variety of strategies, including:

- Environmental strategies to promote health and reinforce healthful behaviors
- Strategies to build support for lifestyle change, particularly for those at high risk, to support diabetes and heart disease and stroke prevention efforts
- Health systems interventions to improve the quality of health care delivery to populations with the highest hypertension and prediabetes disparities
- Community clinical linkage strategies to support heart disease and stroke and diabetes prevention efforts

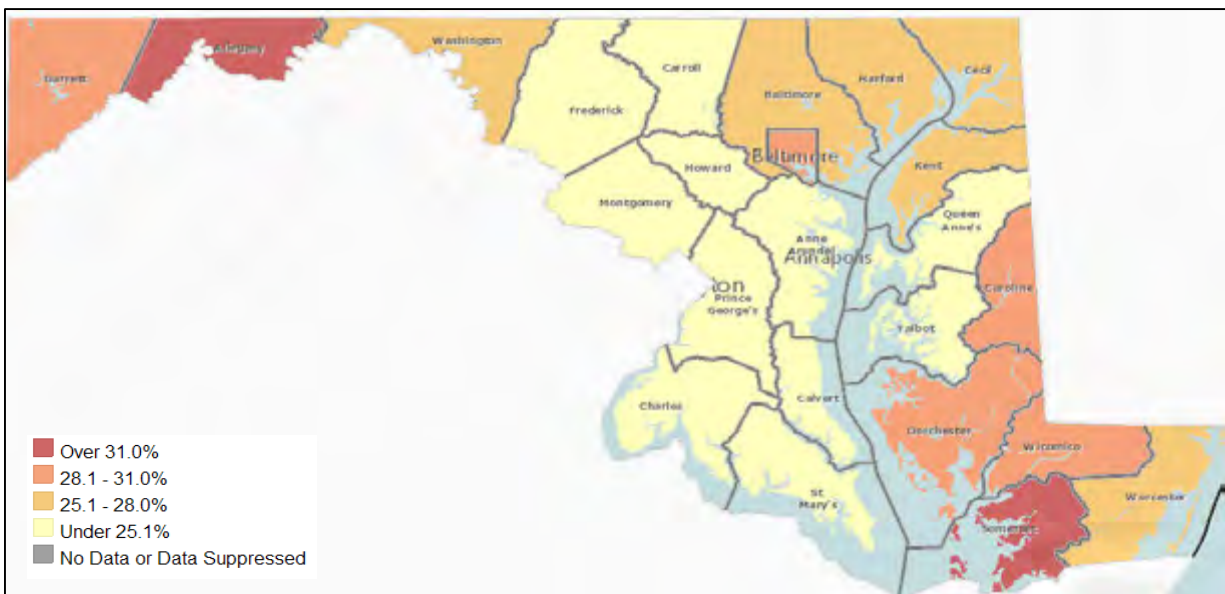
One of the recommended environmental strategies is to develop and/or implement a transportation or community plan that promotes walking as a way for people to increase their level of physical activity. The plan should reflect other community and regional plans to identify a vision, goals, and objectives for increasing walking rates by residents and employees. It should also lay out the role the Garrett County Health Department can play in making the case and securing funding in public health and transportation planning for walking facilities.

## BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

According to the CDC, chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity, are responsible for 7 of 10 deaths each year, and treating people with chronic diseases accounts for 86% of our nation's health care costs.<sup>1</sup> Research suggests that there is a strong link between the incidence of chronic diseases and physical inactivity. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings website<sup>2</sup>, Garrett County's rate of physical inactivity is 29% compared to an average of 23% for Maryland (see Figure 1 below).<sup>3</sup>

According to the CDC, physical activity reduces the risks of dying prematurely, heart disease, diabetes, high-blood pressure, colon cancer, depression and anxiety. Physical activity can also help control weight, reduce high blood pressure, build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints, and promote overall physical and psychological well-being. Physical activity also helps older adults as they age to become stronger and better able to move about without falling.

Figure 1: Rates of Inactivity throughout Maryland



<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/>

<sup>2</sup> County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Health Rankings. [www.countyhealthrankings.org/](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/)

<sup>3</sup> The County Health Rankings website defines physical inactivity as the percentage of adults aged 20 and over reporting no leisure-time physical activity.

## WHY WALKING

Walking is an easy way to start and maintain a physically active lifestyle, and is the most common form of physical activity for people across the country. Walking is possible for people of all ages and abilities, including people with disabilities using assistive devices, does not require any special skills or equipment, and can be done indoors or outdoors.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, the U.S. Surgeon General has issued a Call to Action on Walking and the CDC has decided to emphasize walking promotion as a way to increase physical activity and reduce the incidence of chronic diseases. The Maryland General Assembly designated walking the State Exercise of Maryland in October 2008 (Chapters 400 & 401, Acts of 2008; Code General Provisions Article, sec. 7-328).

## HIGH PRIORITY POPULATION

The recommendations in this report focus on promoting walking and community engagement among the high priority population. For the purposes of this report, the high priority population is defined as patients of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide primary care services to underserved urban and rural communities, including underserved, underinsured, and uninsured Americans, migrant workers, and non-U.S. citizens.

In Maryland, approximately 60% of FQHC patients have incomes below the federal poverty level.<sup>5</sup> Low-income people generally engage in less physical activity and have poorer health outcomes than the general population. According to a research summary provided by Active Living by Design:<sup>6</sup>

- Low-income people suffer disproportionately from health problems related to physical inactivity.
- Low-income people are three times more likely to live a sedentary lifestyle than people with higher incomes.
- Low-income people are much less likely to rate their health as good or better or to use physical activity or exercise to control or lose weight than people with higher incomes.
- Low-income people are more likely to be obese than higher income people, and obesity and overweight play a significant role in death and disability and are strongly influenced by physical inactivity.

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<sup>4</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2015). Step It Up! A Partners Guide to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/walking/call-to-action/pdf/partnerguid.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers, Health Center Fact Sheet: Demographics--Maryland 2010. Retrieved from: [https://www.machc.com/sites/default/files/documents/Fact%20SheetMaryland2010\\_0.pdf](https://www.machc.com/sites/default/files/documents/Fact%20SheetMaryland2010_0.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Active Living by Design. Low Income Populations and Physical Activity: An overview of issues related to active living. Retrieved from: [http://www.bms.com/documents/together\\_on\\_diabetes/2012-Summit-Atlanta/Physical-Activity-for-Low-Income-Populations-The-Health-Trust.pdf](http://www.bms.com/documents/together_on_diabetes/2012-Summit-Atlanta/Physical-Activity-for-Low-Income-Populations-The-Health-Trust.pdf).

- Socioeconomic conditions commonly confronted by low-income people such as polluted environments, inadequate housing, absence of public transportation, lack of educational and employment opportunities, and unsafe working conditions contribute to inequitable health outcomes.

Figure 2 shows the location of the Mountain Laurel Medical Center in Oakland, MD, which is Garrett County's sole FQHC. The map also shows the percentage of households below the poverty line by Census Tract. As noted in the map, there is a concentration of low-income residents in the general vicinity of the FQHC.

According to Active Living by Design, common barriers to physical activity among low-income people include:

- A lack of good transportation choices resulting from car-centric land use patterns, limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and inferior transit service.
  - Low-income respondents were more likely to identify lack of sidewalks as an obstacle to physical activity (17% versus 11%).
- Concerns about safety.
  - Low-income groups report 40% more exposure to crime.
  - Lower-income children, and especially children of lower-income minorities, are injured and killed more often while walking and bicycling than are middle-class and upper income children.
  - Those who perceive their neighborhood to be unsafe (defined as having a high crime rate) tend to be less physically active than those who feel they live in a safe neighborhood.
- Insufficient access to opportunities for physical activity, including recreation facilities and parks.
  - Affordability of recreational facilities was cited as an important obstacle by 50% of low-income respondents.
  - A higher poverty rate is significantly associated with reduced availability of sports areas, parks and green spaces, and bike paths. Moving from a high-poverty area (10% rate) to a low-poverty area (1% rate) is associated with a 50% increase in the overall availability of physical activity opportunities.
  - Perceptions of neighborhood physical activity opportunity in general are lower in neighborhoods with more poverty. Lower levels of perceived neighborhood physical activity opportunities are significantly related to physical activity levels.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Active Living by Design. Low Income Populations and Physical Activity: An overview of issues related to active living. Retrieved from: [http://www.bms.com/documents/together\\_on\\_diabetes/2012-Summit-Atlanta/Physical-Activity-for-Low-Income-Populations-The-Health-Trust.pdf](http://www.bms.com/documents/together_on_diabetes/2012-Summit-Atlanta/Physical-Activity-for-Low-Income-Populations-The-Health-Trust.pdf)





### 3. Existing Plans

TDG reviewed existing plans addressing walking in Garrett County to develop a baseline understanding of pedestrian needs and issues as well as planned improvements that will impact walking. The plans reviewed are summarized below.

#### MARYLAND TWENTY-YEAR BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

**URL:** <http://bit.ly/1WrW62t>

**Plan Adopted:** January 2014

**Summary of Plan:**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan establishes a 20-year vision to support cycling and walking as modes of transportation in Maryland. The Plan provides guidance and investment strategies to support cycling and walking, both on-road and off-road, as part of Maryland's multimodal transportation network. More specifically, the Plan calls for:

1. Expanding walking and bicycling networks, removing barriers, and enhancing connections with transit and travel destinations.
2. Enhancing pedestrian and bicycle safety to reduce injuries and fatalities and to make walking and biking comfortable and inviting by improving education and training of the public regarding safe driving, walking, and biking.
3. Effectively balancing the needs of all transportation users to promote travel choices, ensuring that bicyclist and pedestrian needs are prioritized in appropriate locations.
4. Partnering with local governments to support walkable and bikeable communities to achieve sustainability, livability, health, equity and economic benefits.
5. Supporting walking and biking as everyday modes of transportation and recreation and vital elements of a livable community through encouragement, marketing, and information.

This report and its recommendations align with the Maryland Department of Transportation's Twenty-Year Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

#### GARRETT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**URL:** <http://bit.ly/1PFXFVa>

**Plan Adopted:** October 2006

**Summary of Plan:**

This 2008 Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) serves as the policy guide and framework for future growth and development in Garrett County. The Plan looks at land use, water resources (including drinking water, wastewater, and storm water), transportation, public facilities (including police, fire and emergency services, schools, and libraries), economic

development, housing, environmentally sensitive areas, and mineral resources, and other natural resources. The walking-related goals contained in the plan include:

1. Plan and build a balanced, efficient transportation system to meet the mobility needs of residents and businesses and to support the County's growth as a vacation destination.
2. Provide accommodation for bicycling and walking as a means of local travel and for recreational purposes.
3. Enhance the pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the Deep Creek Influence Area

#### GARRETT COUNTY 2012 LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

**URL:** <http://bit.ly/1ku4TQE>

**Plan Adopted:** May 2012

**Summary of Plan:**

The Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) describes progress in the development/maintenance of parks and recreation, agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation since the 2005 LPPRP; addresses the recommendations for parks and recreation made in the 2009 State LPPRP; identifies needs and priorities of current and future County residents and visitors for parks and recreation through 2027; evaluates State and County land preservation goals and objectives for the three land resource elements and identifies where they are the same, complementary, or different. Regarding walking in the County, the Plan calls for:

1. Providing a wide range of recreation areas and facilities that is well distributed to serve the needs of residents and visitors, and that takes into account future residential growth patterns.
2. Working cooperatively with the County's incorporated towns to provide parks and recreation facilities.
3. Using public schools as focal points for community recreation, in addition to education, and maximizing the use of school facilities when they are not needed for school activities.
4. Supporting community and non-profit organizations to provide recreation programming for persons of all ages.
5. Cooperatively working with state and federal agencies and through private-public partnerships to expand recreational offerings that promote year-round tourism.
6. Developing an inter-connected countywide trails network to serve different uses including, but not limited to, walking, hiking, bicycling, skiing, snowmobiling, off-road vehicles, and horseback riding.

With regards to the last goal, Chapter 3 of the plan refers to three major initiatives:

1. Winter Trails Plan - recognizes existing trails and identifies potential interconnections primarily for snowmobiling and hiking.
2. Trails Plan Update 2003 - lays the groundwork for the development of the major arteries of the Garrett County Recreational Trail System, and identifies five potential major trail connections, as well as five secondary trail connections.
3. Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail - lays the foundation for the development of a trail loop throughout the County from the Allegheny Highlands Trail and back. The proposed loop trail would use existing trails with some interconnections yet to be identified.

#### GARRETT COUNTY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN: 2012-2015

**URL:** <http://bit.ly/1ymq1x4>

**Plan Adopted:** 2012

**Summary of Plan:**

The Garrett County Health Improvement Plan: 2012-2015 addresses state health objectives where Garrett County is below average. Obesity prevention is one of the priority areas identified and includes the following strategies related to walking:

- Encourage environmental improvements that support physical activity
- Bicycle and pedestrian paths
- Adequate sidewalks
- Community parks and playgrounds

#### COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**URL:** <http://bit.ly/1WXRqBG>

**Plan Adopted:** 2012

**Summary of Plan:**

This report summarizes responses from a needs assessment survey conducted by Garrett County Memorial Hospital. In response to a question about “risk behaviors” impacting the community, the top three responses were “being overweight,” “alcohol abuse,” and “lack of exercise.”

#### GARRETT TRAILS WEBSITE

**URL:** <http://garretttrails.org/>

**Plan Adopted:** N/A

**Summary of Plan:**

The Garrett Trails website provides an overview of plans and progress on the Eastern Continental Divide Loop trail, a 150 mile, multi-surface, multi-user trail connecting state parks and forests with population centers and the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP).



## 4. Stakeholder Engagement

This section describes the stakeholder engagement process used to develop the Garrett County Walking Plan Assessment Report. The process included three elements:

1. A kick-off call with the Garrett County Health Department
2. An online stakeholder survey
3. A stakeholder meeting

### KICK-OFF CALL

TDG and representatives of the Garrett County Health Department participated in a kick-off call September 22, 2015. The purpose of the call was to communicate the project scope and background and to better understand, with respect to walking:

- The Garrett County Health Department's goals and efforts
- Existing plans and programs
- Key barriers
- Key stakeholders

### HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S GOALS AND EFFORTS

- Garrett County used to have a walking encouragement program whereby people would report laps on the track. This program had good participation but was discontinued due to lack of funds.
- Garrett County has added signage to parks with walking trails.
- The Health Department has a Steps to Better Health Committee, which aims to promote good health, prevent chronic diseases, and encourage wellbeing. The Steps Committee coordinated the Garrett County Health Fair at the CARC in 2015 and is in the process of planning the next Health Fair for April 2016.

### EXISTING PLANS

- Garrett County Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element.
- Garrett County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan.
- Garrett County Health Improvement Plan.
  - Currently in the early stages of updating.
  - Planning to use the behavioral change model.
- Garrett County Status of Health 5-28-15.

### KEY BARRIERS

- Rural, distance between destinations.
- Few safe places to walk (e.g., sidewalks and shoulders) and a lot of traffic in towns.
- Weather, particularly for elderly people in winter.

- Lack of street lights.
- Hilly topography.
- Not a lot of sidewalks and bike lanes.

#### KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Garrett Trails
- Garrett County Economic Development Office
- Garrett College
- Garrett County Memorial Hospital
- Steps to Better Health Committee
- Garrett County Community Action
- Area Agency on Aging
- Appalachian Crossroads

#### HIGH PRIORITY POPULATION

- Public housing is spread out across county. There are units in almost every town.
- High priority population comes to the Health Department.

#### OUTREACH

The Garrett County Health Department uses the following outreach methods to deliver public health messages:

- Radio
- Newspaper
- Signs at ball fields
- Ads posted at schools (developing)
- Steps Newsletter
- Advertisements on Garrett Transit buses
- Placemats in restaurants
- Flyers in laundromats
- Outreach workers
  - There are five outreach workers located in different areas of the county.

#### OTHER

- All towns have some type of walking trail.
- Garrett County does not have a Parks and Recreation Department.
- Garrett County includes an Amish population in the south and a Mennonite population in the north.

## ONLINE STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

A short online survey was distributed to potential walking plan stakeholders on October 29. The purpose of the survey was to collect initial feedback regarding barriers to walking in Garrett County along with existing and potential future efforts to encourage walking in Garrett County.

Thirteen of the survey respondents indicated that their organizations served Garrett County. The organizations included:

- Garrett College Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex (CARC)
- Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.
- Garrett County Economic Development Department
- Garrett County Health Department
- Garrett Trails
- Maryland Department of Planning
- Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities
- Savage River Lodge
- Town of Grantsville
- Town of Mountain Lake Park
- Town of Oakland
- Western Maryland Area Health Education Center

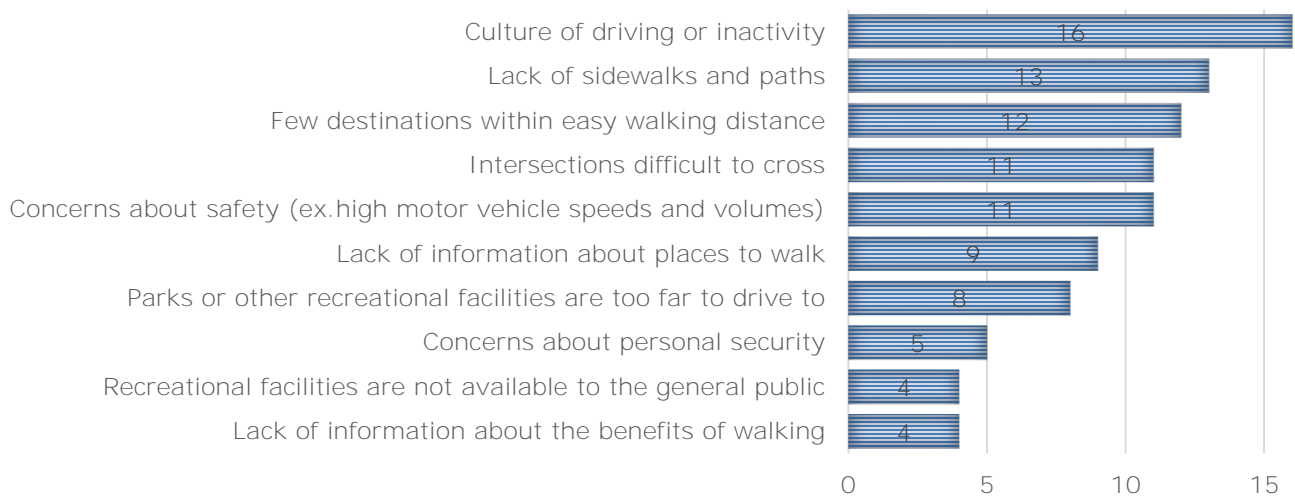
## BARRIERS TO WALKING

The survey asked respondents whether they had observed certain barriers to walking in Garrett County. Figure 3 provides a summary of their responses.

Respondents also identified other barriers to walking in Garrett County, including:

- Weather, specifically snowy winter weather, which creates difficult outdoor walking conditions and difficult travel to indoor walking locations
- Lack of time, busy schedule
- The spread out nature of where people live throughout the county

Figure 3: Percent of respondents responding “Yes, I have observed this barrier” to the question, “What are the barriers you have observed or have learned for people not walking more and generally being physically active?”



### EXISTING STRATEGIES THAT ENCOURAGE WALKING

The survey asked respondents what types of programs, activities or communications their organizations offered the high priority population and the population in general, whether these programs, activities or communications were intended to encourage walking, and how effective they were. Table 1 summarizes the responses for programs, activities and communications that included a walking encouragement component.

Table 1: Existing programs, activities, or communication to encourage walking.

Organization	Strategy	Effectiveness for High Priority Population
Garrett Trails	Facebook outreach	Not effective
	Newspaper articles	Somewhat effective
	Trail development near higher population areas	Very effective
	Publish website with maps	Somewhat effective
	Outreach to towns	Somewhat effective
	Creating easily accessible, sustainable trails for people powered activities such as hiking/biking/snowshoeing/xc skiing/running	Very effective
	Volunteering for trail maintenance and clean-up events	Very effective
American Heart Association	Implement the following programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower to Serve</li> <li>Fit-Friendly Worksites</li> </ul> Provide general information on CVD and stroke risk reduction	Somewhat effective
Garrett County Health Department	Nutritional education through Women, Infant and Children’s program (WIC)	Somewhat effective



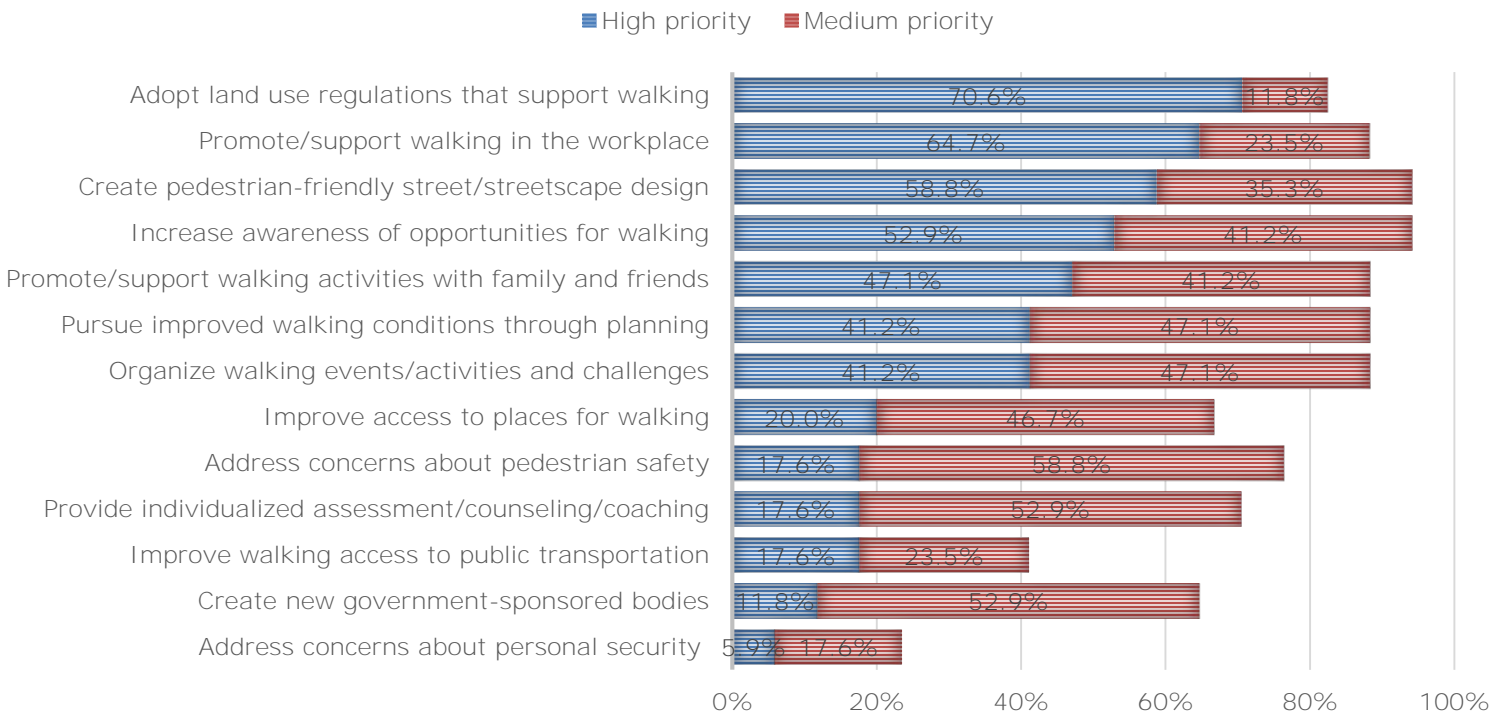
Organization	Strategy	Effectiveness for High Priority Population
	Early care services (home visiting for new parents)	Somewhat effective
	Health education through presentations, displays, advertisements, brochures, etc.	Somewhat effective
	Cardiovascular risk reduction	Very effective
	School wellness program	Somewhat effective
	Worksite wellness program	Somewhat effective
Savage River Lodge	Offer 15 miles of hiking, skiing and trails for tourists and residents	Very effective
Town of Oakland	Measured mile trails within a housing complex – income regulated and senior	Very effective
	Historic trail to a civil war site	Not effective
	Connecting paths between the housing complex noted above and the public parking lot and downtown businesses	Somewhat effective
	Maintain Broadford Lake Park with a lake for swimming and fishing and several play areas with equipment. Also ball fields leased to various teams (all ages).	Somewhat effective
Garrett College	GILL = Garrett Institute for Lifelong Learning (targeted towards seniors)	Very effective
	AY = Transition Age Youth program for Garrett County 8th graders and high school students involved with the Garrett County Health Department/Mental Health	Very effective
	Subsidized membership rates at the Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex	Somewhat effective
	After School Program for area elementary school children that emphasizes indoor/outdoor recreation activities	Very effective
Garrett College CARC	Membership sales to the CARC.	Somewhat effective
	Recreation programming	Somewhat effective
	Youth camps	Somewhat effective
	Senior water-based exercise	Somewhat effective
	Employee wellness program	Somewhat effective
Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.	Walk with Ease	Very effective
	Tai Chi for Balance	Very effective
Garrett County Economic Development	Garrett County Government sponsors organizations, such as Community Action, that directly communicates with high priority populations through its senior, rental housing, homelessness, home ownership, home repair, early education, and transportation programs.	Very effective

Organization	Strategy	Effectiveness for High Priority Population
Maryland Department of Planning	Technical Assistance in the writing of Comprehensive Plan, Zoning/Subdivision Ordinances, General Land Use Planning Documents	Somewhat effective

**POTENTIAL FUTURE STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE WALKING**

Finally, the survey asked respondents how they would prioritize potential future strategies to encourage walking. The strategies listed were general categories with example approaches, some of which had already been implemented in Garrett County. For example, one of the strategies listed was “increasing awareness of opportunities for walking,” which was represented by the approaches “develop maps of walking routes/locations” and “install wayfinding and distance signage.” Garrett County is already working to improve wayfinding and distance signage in parks as a way of encouraging walking. Responses are provided in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Potential strategies to encourage walking by priority



Other potential strategies suggested by respondents included:

- Programs that “de-stigmatize” walking as a form of transportation.
- Promote Community Health Workers to tell people about the various walking opportunities in the region.
- Provide Information about the type of available walking paths and trails, i.e. easy, flat or easy grade.
- Integrate/build sidewalks and/or bike lanes within city limits.
- Prohibit the use of motorized bikes and scooters.
- Require the inclusion of specific walking design plans in new development plans.
- Use Geocaching programs/activities to get people outside.
- Build sidewalks or walking trails in populated areas.
- Connect trails connected to towns.
- Identify routes for kids to walk to school.
- Provide public transportation utilizing vans and buses for daily routes from 5 to 7 p.m. to and from Garrett College's CARC, that includes a swimming pool and gym, for indoor recreational opportunities during inclement weather days experienced the majority of the year.

## **STAKEHOLDER MEETING**

A stakeholder meeting was held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at the Garrett College Continuing Education Building in McHenry, Maryland. The following organizations were represented:

- Garrett County Health Department
- Garrett County Economic Development
- Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.
- Town of Grantsville
- Garrett College Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex (CARC)
- Garrett Trails

## **MEETING GOALS**

The goals of the meeting were to:

- Bring key stakeholders together to create a networking opportunity for stakeholders that had not previously worked together.
- Familiarize stakeholders with the Garrett County Walking Plan Assessment Report project’s background and scope.
- Confirm and expand the list of walking plans identified for review

- Confirm and expand the list of stakeholders identified for further development and implementation of the walking plan in Garrett County
- Brainstorm and prioritize strategies to encourage walking in Garrett County
- Discuss next steps for the Garrett County Walking Plan Assessment Report
- Brainstorm potential stakeholder engagement strategies for developing and implementing a walking plan for Garrett County

#### INPUT ON PLANS

Meeting attendees confirmed the list of plans and identified the following additional plans:

- Garrett Trails website and plans contained within
  - Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail
- Garrett County Needs Assessment

#### INPUT ON STAKEHOLDERS

Meeting attendees confirmed the list of stakeholders presented and identified several additional stakeholders, including:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appalachian Crossroads</li> <li>• Beitzel Corporation</li> <li>• Blue Cross/Blue Shield</li> <li>• C-BIZ</li> <li>• County/City Civic Associations</li> <li>• Garrettland Inc.</li> <li>• Garrett County Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Greater Grantsville Business Association</li> <li>• Greater Oakland Business Association</li> <li>• Maryland Park Service</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maryland Physicians Care</li> <li>• Mountain Laurel Medical Center</li> <li>• Regional Medical Center</li> <li>• United Healthcare</li> <li>• Various municipalities in the county           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accident</li> <li>○ Deer Park</li> <li>○ Friendsville</li> <li>○ Grantsville</li> <li>○ Loch Lynn Heights</li> <li>○ Mountain Lake Park</li> <li>○ Oakland</li> <li>○ Kitzmiller</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|---|--|



## INPUT ON STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE WALKING

Attendees provided input on a variety of strategies to encourage walking in Garrett County, especially those identified as high-priority through the stakeholder survey; however, lower priority strategies did come up in conversation and are included in Table 2, which summarizes all of the strategies discussed along with related feedback.

*Table 2: Strategies to Encourage Walking Discussed by Stakeholder Meeting Attendees*

Strategy	Notes
Promote/support walking in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A potential approach might be to develop and train workplace walking champions to help promote walking in the workplace.</li> </ul>
Increase awareness of opportunities for walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Health Department collaborated with the county's Walmart superstore to mark out a walking path inside the store. The Walmart superstore is the largest retail space in the Garrett County, which does not have a mall. The path was discontinued due to a change in management at Walmart; however, the potential for a path either inside Walmart or around the perimeter of the Walmart property may be worth revisiting. An outdoor path might be challenging, since the only sidewalks on the Walmart property are at the front entrance.</li> <li>There is a walking/fitness track at Kitzmiller Elementary School.</li> </ul>
Promote/support walking with family and friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging parents to walk when their children are participating in sports practices and games is worth pursuing.</li> </ul>
Organize walking events, activities and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several walking events are currently held on Garrett County trails; however, these events could be better publicized.</li> <li>Other existing walking events include the Relay for Life, and Destination Walks and Walk With Ease, which target seniors.</li> </ul>
Creating pedestrian friendly street/streetscape design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adding sidewalks and improving lighting at existing walking facilities should be a pursued.</li> </ul>
Address concerns about pedestrian safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most roads in Garrett County have neither sidewalks nor shoulders.</li> <li>Bears are also a safety concern.</li> </ul>
Improve access to places for walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A potential approach is to provide fee subsidies to access regional parks and CARC.</li> </ul>
Improve access to public transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A potential approach is to provide a fee subsidy/reduction to low-income residents to access Garrett County Transit.</li> </ul>
Pursue improved walking conditions through planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although many Garrett towns have walking trails, these walking trails are not connected to each other.</li> <li>The County is currently conducting a community needs assessment with help from the University of Maryland. The needs assessment will include meetings with low-income residents.</li> </ul>

## 5. Key Takeaways from Plan Review and Stakeholder Engagement Process

Key takeaways from the plan review and stakeholder engagement processes include:

- The Garrett County Health Department is in the process of conducting targeted focus groups as part of an update to the County Health Assessment Report. The agency could leverage these meetings to collect feedback on walking in Garrett County.
- The planning process should engage the high-priority population directly to better understand barriers to walking for this population and potential strategies to encourage walking. These interactions could be facilitated through community meetings and through other approaches (e.g., focus groups).
- With the assistance of Garrett Trails, the County is pursuing development of the Eastern Continental Divide Loop trail. Once completed, this trail will be a major walking asset for the County and will link many of the County's towns and existing trails.
- Winter weather and the lack of a connecting sidewalk network are significant barriers to walking in Garrett County.
- In the past, the County Health department has collaborated with the County's WalMart Superstore to develop an indoor walking route. The County should consider reengaging WalMart on this route or pursuing similar projects at other large retail and employment sites.

## 6. Preliminary Draft Action Plan

TDG developed a preliminary draft action plan (**Table 3**) based on feedback from the stakeholder survey, stakeholder meetings, best practices for encouraging walking focused on the high-priority population, and TDG's best judgment. The preliminary draft action plan is intended as starting point to be revised, updated, and expanded upon as part of the process to develop a walking plan for Garrett County. It identifies potential strategies for encouraging walking in Garrett County, and potential approaches for implementing those strategies. It also includes columns with key information for implementation, such as timeframe, immediate next steps, potential funding sources, and potential implementation partners.

The preliminary draft action plan is intended to be used in conjunction with the Toolbox (Appendix A), which provides additional detail regarding the strategies and approaches included below, as well as other strategies and approaches that might be considered. The Toolbox includes an expanded list of next steps, examples, and references.

For additional information on potential funding sources, see Appendix C: Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Programs in Maryland.

Table 3: Preliminary Draft Action Plan

Approach	Time frame	Immediate Next Steps <i>See Toolbox cut sheets for more details</i>	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Implementation Partners
<b>STRATEGY: Be part of the conversation with transportation system decision makers and funders</b>				
Make the case for improving walking conditions in Garrett County to decision makers and funders.	0-1 yr.	Establish a pedestrian advisory committee.  Develop an evaluation process to assess progress and highlight needs and accomplishments.	1422  <a href="#">Robert Wood Johnson Foundation</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GC Planning</li> <li>GC Transportation</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGY: Adopt land use regulations that support walking</b>				
Update existing land use regulations to better support walking	3+ yrs.	Conduct study to identify specific changes to the land use regulations for Garrett County, Oakland, Grantsville, Mountain Lake Park and other towns to better support walking.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GC Planning &amp; Land Development</li> <li>Town governments</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGY: Promote/support walking in the workplace</b>				
Develop a year-round, countywide workplace walking encouragement program	1-3 yrs.	Convene subcommittee of major employers, health insurance companies, and others to establish program elements, branding, implementation structure, and funding mechanism.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GC Public Schools, GC Memorial Hospital, Beitzel, WalMart, Garrett College</li> <li>CareFirst, United Healthcare, Maryland Physicians Care</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGY: Create pedestrian-friendly street/streetscape design</b>				
Adopt a county complete streets policy	1-3 yrs.	Coordinate with GC Planning & Land Development to host a complete streets workshop.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GC Planning &amp; Land Development</li> <li>GC Engineering</li> </ul>

Approach	Time frame	Immediate Next Steps <i>See Toolbox cut sheets for more details</i>	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Implementation Partners
<b>STRATEGY: Increase awareness of opportunities for walking</b>				
Install wayfinding and distance signage, e.g., at the Walmart Supercenter.	1-3 yrs.	Based on the inventory of available walking facilities and needs assessment (see below), determine where adding wayfinding signage and/or distance signage would make the most sense strategically, with particular consideration given to how this signage might benefit the high priority population.	1422  Transportation Alternatives Program (SHA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GC Planning &amp; Land Development</li> <li>• GC Health Department</li> <li>• Garrett Trails</li> </ul>
Advertise walking opportunities and benefits through a variety of channels, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio</li> <li>• Newspaper</li> <li>• Signs at ball fields</li> <li>• Ads at schools</li> <li>• Ads on Garrett Transit buses</li> <li>• Placemats in restaurants</li> <li>• Flyers in Laundromats</li> <li>• Flyers in public housing</li> <li>• Outreach workers</li> </ul>	0-1 yrs.	Use community meetings to understand approaches/messaging that might be most effective at encouraging the high-priority population to walk more.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GC Health Department</li> <li>• Garrett Trails</li> </ul>
Create a single web portal for Garrett County that consolidates information about the benefits of walking and walking opportunities.	1-3 yrs.	Review <i>WalkArlington</i> example to understand potential components of portal; then work with Health Department webmaster and Garrett Trails to implement.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GC Health Department</li> <li>• Garrett Trails</li> </ul>

Approach	Time frame	Immediate Next Steps <i>See Toolbox cut sheets for more details</i>	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Implementation Partners
<b>STRATEGY: Promote/support walking with family and friends</b>				
Encourage parents to walk their children to school	0-1 yrs.	Reach out to principals of schools with adequate pedestrian infrastructure to support walking and provide with marketing materials to encourage parents to walk with children to school. Also facilitate coordination of walking school buses.	Maryland Safe Routes to School Program  Federal Transportation Alternatives Program Funding (TAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GCPS</li> <li>• Individual schools and school PTAs</li> </ul>
Encourage parents to walk when children are participating in sports practices and games	0-1 yrs.	Reach out to GCPS and sports league coordinators to educate them regarding the opportunity for encouraging adult physical activity during sports practices and discuss potential methods for such encouragement (e.g., discounts on fees).	1422:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GCPS</li> <li>• Individual schools and school PTAs</li> <li>• Sports league coordinators and coaches</li> <li>• Garrett College Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex (CARC)</li> </ul>
Establish a walking partner (or buddy) program	1-3 yrs.	Facilitate walking groups based in low-income/public housing communities.  Devise a system for connecting people interested in walking with a buddy or group.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GC Health Department</li> <li>• Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.</li> <li>• Garrett College Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex (CARC)</li> </ul>



Approach	Time frame	Immediate Next Steps <i>See Toolbox cut sheets for more details</i>	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Implementation Partners
<b>STRATEGY: Pursue improved walking conditions through planning</b>				
Develop an inventory of available walking facilities in Garrett County. Identify needs and potential strategies on an area/neighborhood basis (e.g., through conducting walk audits)	1-3 yrs.	Map existing walking facilities, e.g., sidewalks, trails, paths, indoor and outdoor tracks.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GC Planning &amp; Land Development</li> </ul>
Update the Garrett County 2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan	3+ yrs.	Convene working group to determine which updates are needed. A potential focus could be connecting existing town trails.	1422	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GC Planning &amp; Land Development</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGY: Improve access to places for walking</b>				
Provide fee subsidies and better public transportation to access regional parks, gyms and CARC	1-3 yrs.	Conduct survey of low-income residents to determine the level of fee reduction/subsidy needed. Identify public transportation routes that could be added/improved to better facilitate access from low-income housing locations to CARC and other facilities for walking.	Local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garrett County Trails</li> <li>Garrett College Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex (CARC)</li> </ul>

## 7. Next Steps

The Garrett County Walking Plan Assessment Report is intended to lay the foundation for a future walking plan for Garrett County. Potential next steps include:

- Distribute this report to identified stakeholders for review and comment.
- Hold meeting with core stakeholders to confirm next steps. It is important that this core stakeholder group include diverse perspectives, including perspectives representing:
  - The low-income population
  - Public health
  - Law enforcement
  - Planning
  - Local media
  - Local business
  - Pedestrian advocacy
- Seek feedback from low-income residents on barriers to walking and potential strategies for encouraging walking through the Community Needs Assessment process.
- Develop an “equity atlas” for Garrett County to better understand the relationship between existing walking facilities and the high priority population.
- Conduct direct outreach to the high-priority population through community meetings, focus groups and other measures to better understand the barriers to walking among this population and potential strategies for increasing walking.
- Develop a draft Garrett County Walking Plan.
- Solicit stakeholder comment on the draft Garrett County Walking Plan through meetings and/or electronic outreach.
- Revise and finalize plan
- Adopt plan
- Use plan to guide 1422 funding decisions and pursue other funding opportunities
- Incorporate walking plan into other plan processes (e.g., County Comprehensive Plan, pedestrian master plan)

# Appendices

# APPENDIX A—WALKING STRATEGY TOOLBOX

## TOOLBOX OVERVIEW

The Walking Strategy Toolbox is a resource for Health Departments as they develop a walking plan that satisfies the objectives of their 1422 grant. Given the community-based nature of their work, walking plan implementation activities funded through the 1422 grant will be used to leverage partnerships with other stakeholders and community members, who can provide additional resources.

The strategies were developed from stakeholder feedback in Maryland counties with 1422 grants and from a review of strategies used across the country to encourage more walking.

The toolbox is organized by strategy in a series of “cut sheets” or short 2-3 page write-ups. Each cut sheet includes:

- Basic information about the strategy, including its costs and benefits, the role for County or City health departments, and some examples.
- Details for stakeholders on how they can implement the strategy
- Actions health departments can take

The cut sheets are designed so that different parts can be used together or independently of each other. Note that some information may appear to be repeated; however, the format differs based on the audience.

The strategies covered include:

- Address concerns about pedestrian safety
- Address concerns about personal security
- Adopt land use regulations that support walking
- Create pedestrian-friendly street and streetscape design
- Encourage walking through the workplace
- Improve access to places for walking
- Increase awareness of opportunities for walking
- Organize and promote walking events, activities, and challenges
- Promote and support walking with family and friends in non-work settings
- Pursue improved walking conditions through planning

Additional resources included at the end of each cut sheet are also included in **Appendix B, References.**

## STRATEGIC OUTREACH

Investing outreach resources in locations where they are likely to reach the target audience will increase success rates. Based on conversations with the health department and other stakeholders, Table 4 offers a way to approach outreach strategically by thinking about where the high priority populations can best be reached. Using this table as a guide, specific programs, activities, and messages can be combined to increase effectiveness. For example, information for Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) patients about the benefits of walking may be more powerful if it is conveyed at an FQHC with a walking loop and an existing practice of subscribing walking prescriptions.

Table 4: Strategic Outreach Matrix

Outreach location	Target Audience			
	Employees (high priority and general population)	General outreach to high priority population	Seniors (high priority and general)	Youth (as a way to reach high priority population)
At workplace	★	★	★	
At other public organization or agency locations or sponsored event, e.g., FQHC, senior center, library, outreach event		★	★	
At parks and recreation centers, along trails		★	★	★
Any other place people go, e.g., drug store, grocery store, theatre, Walmart		★	★	
At schools and sports fields		★	★	★



# Address Concerns About Pedestrian Safety



## WHAT IS IT?

People often cite safety concerns as a barrier to walking. This strategy cut sheet addresses safety concerns related to traffic, or pedestrian safety. For personal security concerns, such as the fear of being mugged, see Addressing Concerns about Personal Security.

Focusing on Pedestrian Safety is an investment in a community's most vulnerable roadway user, putting them on par with drivers. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration a pedestrian is killed or injured every seven minutes. This is why pedestrian safety is a vital part of a County's overall approach to its transportation system.

There are a variety of ways to enhance pedestrian safety. County health departments and their partners can work together to identify locations where crash data indicates a pedestrian safety concern or where pedestrians report feeling unsafe due to traffic conditions or a lack of adequate pedestrian infrastructure. Once these locations are identified, the health department can be part of a team to determine potential solutions. As improvements are implemented, the health department can also help quantify their impact.

**Benefits:** Since concerns about pedestrian safety are a major barrier for many potential walkers, addressing this barrier can help increase walking rates.

**Costs:** The costs associated with addressing pedestrian safety concerns range widely depending on the approaches pursued. Approaches may emphasize pedestrian and driver education, stepped up enforcement, or infrastructure improvements.

Efforts to improve pedestrian safety are most successful when a team of community members works together, including transportation engineers and public health officials. Those working to make improve pedestrian safety should consider the following:

**Develop an approach to understanding and addressing pedestrian safety.** Addressing pedestrian safety usually involves a combination of education, enforcement, and engineering approaches. Education approaches focus on communicating safe travel behavior and respect for all roadway users to drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Enforcement approaches involve enforcing laws that impact

pedestrian safety, such as speed limits and yielding at crosswalks. Engineering approaches involve making physical improvements that make walking safer, such as adding a sidewalk to redesigning an unsafe intersection.

*Example:* Pedestrian Safety Initiative, Montgomery County, MD. The Pedestrian Safety Initiative focuses resources from multiple departments on locations with a high number of crashes involving pedestrians. The program takes a multi-faceted approach to improving pedestrian safety at these locations, focusing not only on infrastructure improvements but also on modifying pedestrian and driver behavior through education and enforcement efforts, improving street lighting, and other measures. <http://bit.ly/1m8Zi2O>

**Develop a communication plan on pedestrian safety that targets specific issues.** Many safety issues can be addressed through education. For example, drivers are often unaware of the relationship between motor vehicle speed and the risk of pedestrian injury and death. Pedestrians sometimes are unaware how to most safely cross the street. An important first step in creating a safe walking environment is to determine the safety issues that are deterring people from walking and establishing a communications campaign to address those issues.

*Example:* Street Smart Campaign, MD, DC, VA. Street Smart is an annual media campaign focused on educating all users of the roadway on safe behaviors and the consequences of unsafe driving, walking, and bicycling (including when traveling to and from a transit stop). The media campaign is supported by a region-wide enforcement initiative. <http://bestreetsmart.net>

*Example:* Launched in spring 2014, East Baltimore's pedestrian safety campaign is an outgrowth of Johns Hopkins University's Road Scholar pedestrian safety communication program. The East Baltimore campaign uses several media outlets and formats to deliver information. The campaign is funded jointly by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office and Johns Hopkins University. <http://bit.ly/1YWWWSK>

*Example:* Howard County Community Speed Control Program. This program evaluates safety in neighborhoods that request it. Activities aimed at addressing safety include traffic safety education, vehicular law enforcement, and engineering retrofits. Speed cameras are eligible to be used in school zones. <http://bit.ly/1lsazv5>

# Address Concerns About Pedestrian Safety



## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Help create an awareness of the need.** Stakeholders with the expertise to do research can pull together current research (there's a lot of it). Stakeholders can also help identify location-specific safety concerns through a community survey.

**Serve on a county- or community-wide pedestrian safety advisory committee.** Make sure the committee is action-oriented and has the ear of decision-makers and funders. Set specific pedestrian safety goals and report on them annually.

**Don't take "No" for an answer.** Have a clear and consistent message about the safety need and back it up with facts.

**Work to have your community designated as a Walk-friendly community.** There are many examples, including [this one](#) from Sand Point, Idaho. Working towards this type of designation requires a comprehensive program that involves walkability and safety.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

Health departments can leverage relationships with other community stakeholders to lead efforts aimed at improving pedestrian safety.

**Approach: Develop a plan to address locations with pedestrian safety issues**

### Action Steps

- Collaborate with law enforcement and the county planning or transportation department to identify pedestrian crash hot spots using crash data.
- Survey residents and employees for feedback on pedestrian safety concerns.
- Lead walk audits in neighborhoods where pedestrian safety concerns are indicated, focusing on high-priority population neighborhoods.
- Push for and help complete a plan that addresses identified concerns.
- Use the plan to push for implementing projects identified in the plan.

**Approach: Develop a countywide public awareness campaign for roadway safety**

### Action Steps:

- Review roadway safety campaigns from other jurisdictions. Some examples are included in this cut sheet.
- Convene subcommittee to establish the program details such as branding, target audiences, messages, and funding mechanism.
- Identify opportunities to incorporate pedestrian safety messaging into existing walking, bicycling, and driving education and outreach. See the Share the Road Safety Class resource below.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Injury Prevention & Control: Motor Vehicle Safety.  
<http://1.usa.gov/100qcZ5>

FHWA: Safety Benefits of Walkways, Sidewalks, and Paved Shoulders.  
<http://1.usa.gov/1lfp16a>

Frederick County Traffic Calming Policy.  
<http://bit.ly/1NEynGw>

Street Smart Campaign  
<http://bestreetsmart.net>

Maryland State Highway, Pedestrian Safety Website  
<http://bit.ly/1QT6euD>

Montgomery Traffic Calming Policy  
<http://bit.ly/1XZOb0b>

Salisbury-Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization: U.S. Route 50 Pedestrian & Cyclist Safety and Connectivity Study (2013)  
<http://bit.ly/1NU4aoU>

Share the Road Safety Class (SRSC)  
<http://bit.ly/1RCJ666>

Street Score 2015, San Francisco  
<http://bit.ly/1DWWLti>

# Address Concerns about Personal Security



## WHAT IS IT?

People often cite safety concerns as a barrier to walking. This strategy cut sheet addresses concerns about personal security, such as the fear of gang activity or the fear of being mugged. While enforcement is essential, it should not be the only strategy used to address security concerns. For safety concerns related to traffic conditions, see Addressing Concerns about Pedestrian Safety.

Main guiding principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED):

- ✓ Natural surveillance
- ✓ Natural access control
- ✓ Territorial reinforcement
- ✓ Maintenance
- ✓ Activity support

There are a variety of ways to create a walking environment that feels safe and comfortable from a personal security perspective. County health departments and its partners can work together to understand which neighborhoods and populations are most likely to view personal security concerns as a barrier to walking, conduct walk audits, and establish regular maintenance programs for walking facilities, including efforts such as adopt a sidewalk. County health departments can also support streetscapes and urban design based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

**Benefits:** Since concerns about personal security are a major barrier for many potential walkers, addressing this barrier can help increase walking rates.

**Costs:** Costs associated with this strategy can range from low-cost approaches such as distributing educational materials or planning a neighborhood cleanup to higher-cost approaches like installing street lights or working with adjacent property owners to install lights on their buildings.

**Other resources needed:** Programs are most successful when a team of community members champions the project. Coordination with other stakeholders such as police departments, city engineers, neighborhood associations, school communities, and public health officials are also important.

Communities interested in pursuing improved walking conditions through planning should consider the following:

**Establish a walking escort program.** Common on college campuses, these programs provide pedestrians with an escort at times when personal security is a concern. Escorts should be trained and should understand their rights and responsibilities.

**Promote or facilitate walking groups.** Based on the 'safety in numbers' concept, walking in groups may help alleviate personal security concerns.

**Develop a communication plan on personal security that targets specific issues.** Many safety issues can be addressed through education. People may not be aware of how their behavior contributes to personal security risks (e.g., walking down the street with headphones on), or may perceive greater risks than are indicated by the data.

*Example:* A Walk In The Park With CPTED - Case Studies: Recreation Centers; Undeveloped Areas; Trails  
<http://www.veilig-ontwerp-beheer.nl/publicaties/a-walk-in-the-park-with-cpted-case-studies-recreation-centers-undeveloped-areas-and-trails>

*Example:* First CPTED Town: Tumbler Ridge, BC <http://safe-growth.blogspot.com/2010/06/worlds-first-cpted-town-tumbler-ridge.html>

## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Promoting/facilitating walking groups.** Employers, churches, and community groups are natural locations for organizing these groups. Walking groups can be used for travel to work, school, or for regular walks around the neighborhood.

**Initiate regular playstreets or similar events to increase the level of community-based positive activity.** Play streets tend to build social connections among neighbors that act as a deterrent to crime. Communities with regular play streets programs find that those that want to do harm just go away.

**Host a CPTED Walk Audit.** Identifying specific things that contribute to the lack of personal security is the first step. Community stakeholders can organize and participate in these audits, then take the lead in implementing some of the recommended changes.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

**Approach: Establish partnerships with neighborhood associations and community-based organizations serving neighborhoods with high concentrations of the high-priority population to facilitate citizen policing and serve as walking escorts, particularly at night.**

### Action Steps:

- Establish a committee with representatives of neighborhood associations and community based organizations serving the high-priority population to discuss potential approaches.
- Work with the police department to develop and deliver a training program for walking escorts.
- Work with the police department to develop a neighborhood watch program.

**Approach: Work to improve safety conditions along walking routes through a comprehensive program**

### Action Steps:

- Suggest a CPTED audit of neighborhoods and walking routes, including high priority residents in the audit.
- Work collaboratively to develop a plan to implement recommendations of the audit.

- In conjunction with neighborhood associations and local government public works staff, develop a plan to:
  - Add pedestrian lighting and sidewalk maintenance, particularly in low-income areas; and
  - Add emergency call boxes and security cameras in only the most high risk areas
- Initiate and support 'adopt a block/street/sidewalk' program in neighborhoods with high priority residents to ensure on-going maintenance.

**Approach: Work with employers to address security concerns along walk routes around their businesses.**

### Action Steps:

- Develop a guide for auditing the security of walking conditions around businesses.
- Recognize businesses that address security concerns.
- Encourage businesses to offer walking escorts for employees that walk to work or from park and walk locations.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

About Health: Walking Excuse – Scared to Walk Alone  
<http://walking.about.com/od/beginners/a/excuses2.htm>

National Crime Prevention Council  
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design  
Guidebook  
<http://www.popcenter.org/tools/cpted/PDFs/NCPC.pdf>

Play Streets  
<http://www.playstreetsaustralia.com/#home>

PlayStreets, Chicago, IL  
<http://www.lisc-chicago.org/blog/73>

Richmond, Virginia  
Clean City Commission  
<http://www.richmondgov.com/CommissionCleanCity/index.aspx>

Safe Trails Forum, National Trails Training Partnership,  
Better Park Design Can Prevent Crime  
<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/safety/designcrime.html>



# Adopt Land Use Regulations that Support Walking



## WHAT IS IT?

Land use regulations complement and work in conjunction with those regulating the transportation network, so they can greatly affect our ability to walk. Such regulations determine whether developers are required to install sidewalks, neighborhoods can include non-residential uses such as parks and corner stores, and whether pedestrian routes are continuous and direct, along with many other aspects of the built environment that impact walking.

County health departments can help communities by educating residents and employees about how land use policies affect walkability. Health Departments can advocate at the county and local level for regulations that encourage a mix of land uses and a convenient, connected pedestrian network.

**Benefits:** The benefits of land use regulations that support walking are long term and will affect communities for decades into the future. Studies have consistently shown a connection between a community's walkability and its economic viability.

**Costs:** Costs are minor as regulations are designed to implement incremental changes over the long term. The pedestrian network will expand incrementally, as the community grows, thereby reducing costs to the municipality.

**Other resources needed:** County health department staff and communities should be educated on the importance of land use regulations and how they affect walking. Adopting new regulations is often a long term project that requires community support and advocacy.

Communities interested in adopting land use regulations that support walking should consider the following:

**Research best practices:** More and more communities are adopting better land use policies that support walking. At a minimum, new developments should include sidewalks that provide convenient pedestrian connections to existing developments. A single connection is not enough. Developments should connect to adjacent properties as often as possible with special consideration to destinations such as jobs, schools, commercial areas, parks and other neighborhoods. These connections need not be limited to a roadway with a sidewalk. Off-road pathways dedicated to pedestrians and bicyclists are also beneficial. Connections within a development are also important. Cul-de-sacs limit

through vehicular traffic, but should be built with pedestrian connections so as not to limit pedestrian movements. Zoning regulations that limit the mix of land uses in a neighborhood can also limit pedestrian activity. When jobs, schools, housing, shopping and parks are near each other, it is easier for people to walk to these destinations.

**Understand current regulations and practices:** Municipal staff are often happy to help community members better understand current regulations. Land use regulations can be complicated, since they are often expressed in multiple documents, including the zoning code and subdivision regulations.

Understanding existing regulations, including how they are being enforced and needed improvements, is an important step towards the adoption (and enforcement) of regulations that support walking. Regulations supporting walking may exist but allow exceptions. For example, a regulation might require a developer to install a sidewalk but allow the developer an exception to this requirement if an adjacent property does not have one.

**Consult with developers, the public and county and municipal officials:** An important first step in any regulation change is to consult with those affected. Listening to concerns and researching solutions goes a long way towards gaining support. Developers are often hesitant to support new regulations that change the predictability of their work. They are often concerned that the new regulations may make their projects unprofitable. Understanding their needs and communicating the needs of the walking public, helps with finding common ground. The public may not understand the importance of regulations, what is currently in place and how it affects their ability to walk. Similarly, municipal officials may not understand what is currently in place and how it affects the community. Consulting and communicating with the public and officials allows everyone to understand and become comfortable with the issue at hand.

**Draft new regulations:** Drafting new regulations can start with something simple, such as a Complete Streets Policy, which requires that streets be designed to accommodate all roadway users, including pedestrians. More complex regulations should be coordinated with appropriate local government staff.

# Adopt Land Use Regulations that Support Walking



**Advocate for the adoption of new regulations:** Policies are only enforceable once adopted. It is important to continue to monitor new policies until they are both adopted and enforced which may require additional meetings, policy revisions, and community advocacy.

*Example: Remington Neighborhood Revitalization, Baltimore:* This neighborhood was experiencing rapid growth, but outdated zoning laws were not enabling it to revitalize as the community desired. New ordinances allowed vacant buildings to be once again used as stores, providing shopping and jobs within walking distance of homes. <http://1.usa.gov/21N1pd9>

*Example: State of Maryland Smart Growth Legislation:* Over the years, the state of Maryland has continued to adopt legislation that focuses growth and funding on targeted areas where infrastructure already exists and destinations are nearer each other. <http://1.usa.gov/21N1pKi>

*Example: Port Towns Community Health Initiative:* Kaiser Permanente funded the Port Towns Community Health Partnership (PTCHP) in Maryland, a collaboration of youth and adult residents, schools, nonprofit and business organizations, congregations, local government leaders and funders. A "Place Matters" team was established to focus on policy changes and implementation. <http://bit.ly/11MRO5f>



# Adopt Land Use Regulations that Support Walking



## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Start or be part of the conversation.** Find examples of walkable communities. Then, ask to meet with the local health department, planning agencies and community organizations to discuss the impacts that land use regulations have on walking. Convene a community forum to continue the conversation. Include information on complete streets, pedestrian network connectivity, and the benefits of mixed-use development in the forum.

**Help get a Complete Streets policy.** Work with the local health department, other stakeholders, and neighborhood association leaders to work for small but significant changes such as a complete streets policy. Address other deficiencies in current land use regulations.

**Support development that results in walkable communities.** Land development practices that create walkable communities include those with more connected streets, mixed-use development, streets designed for all uses, and pedestrian trail connections. Many local comprehensive plans include a vision for a walkable community; but getting there takes time. Community support can help bring the vision to reality.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

### Approach: Educate Yourself and the Community

#### Action Steps:

- Study best practices.
- Set up meetings with planning officials to understand current land use regulations impacting walking.
- Coordinate meetings with local developers to understand the impacts policies may have on future development.
- Convene regular community forums to discuss the implications of land use regulations on walking.

### Approach: Draft and Adopt Policy and Regulation Changes

#### Action Steps:

- Work with planning staff to understand and recommend changes to the existing land use regulations that impact walking.
- Work with developers to gain support for the changes.
- Work with municipal officials to adopt policy and regulation changes.

### Approach: Support Complete Streets

#### Action Steps:

- Review best practices in Complete Streets policies and communities with land use policies that result in a high level of walkability.
- Discuss potential for implementation with municipal officials, developers and the community.
- Draft and adopt Complete Street policy.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Active Transportation Alliance, *Land Use and Zoning Regulations for Healthier Communities*:  
<http://bit.ly/1NJEVPE>

Environmental Protection Agency's, Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities  
<http://1.usa.gov/1IseYhw>

Environmental Protection Agency's, Smart Growth Guidelines for Sustainable Design and Development  
<http://1.usa.gov/1OgvBDF>

Land Use Impacts on Transport, Victoria Transport Policy Institute  
<http://bit.ly/1NJEXHm>

Maryland Department of Planning, Smart Growth Planning Topics  
<http://1.usa.gov/1NU6b4z>

National Complete Streets Coalition  
<http://bit.ly/1qj3SZc>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, focus on Zoning Regulations: Land Use and Policy  
<http://bit.ly/1ISttOy>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Community Health Advisor "Zoning laws to require places for physical activity"  
<http://bit.ly/1OS9I0e>

## What is it?

Every day we are pedestrians, whether we walk all the way to our final destination or walk to a car parked in our driveway. How far we walk is directly related to whether there are sidewalks and other designated pathways, and whether they offer a safe and attractive environment. Walking is a pleasant activity, or at least it can be. Encouraging people to walk the recommended 30-minutes a day is often as simple as creating safe and pleasant places for people to walk, whether it be to work, to school, to visit a friend, or for exercise.

County health departments can help communities establish pedestrian friendly streetscapes by coordinating trainings on best practices, convening community groups and liaising with health foundations to provide funding for pedestrian plans. Hospitals, health clinics and wellness organizations can work together to educate political leaders on the benefits of pedestrian oriented streetscapes and ensure that projects are funded and move forward.

**Benefits:** Pedestrian friendly street design and streetscapes not only increase walking rates but can yield positive economic dividends, especially in commercial areas.

**Costs:** A new streetscape can be expensive; however, coordinating a streetscape project with a planned roadway project reduces the cost substantially and typically costs only a small percentage more than the original roadway project. Low-cost fixes such as planters, small bushes, improved lighting or maintenance can go a long way.

**Other resources needed:** Street and streetscape design/redesign efforts require community support and a committed group of individuals to propel them to the finish line.

Communities interested in creating a pedestrian friendly streetscape design should consider the following:

**Research best practices:** Not all sidewalks are the same. To create a pleasant experience a sidewalk must be wide enough to comfortably accommodate at least one person walking in each direction. A more pleasant sidewalk will allow companions to walk together side by side. Similarly, a sidewalk near moving vehicles can feel unsafe and unpleasant. Creating a buffer between the sidewalk and vehicles, preferably landscaped and planted with trees for shade and lighting to enhance safety, greatly increases the

pleasure of walking, as does providing interesting things to see along the route. The location and design of pedestrian crossings also require careful consideration, as they are important for all travelers. Most importantly, well-designed pedestrian crossings are ADA-compliant, visible, and predictable.<sup>1</sup> They also offer clear sightlines between drivers and pedestrians, reasonable (short) pedestrian crossing distances, and sufficient time for pedestrians to cross.

**Hold an Open Streets event:** Property owned by the public for transportation purposes is known as the public right-of-way. This can include sidewalks, spaces for trees, and bicycle facilities. Often this right-of-way is allocated primarily for cars. An Open Streets event closes some or all of the roadway space allocated for cars and makes it available for people walking and bicycling, typically for an afternoon once a year, monthly or weekly. An Open Streets event shows people what their community could look like if more of the right-of-way was made available for people walking and bicycling.

**Create a plan:** Make sure your community's transportation plans include pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and street design, and/or create a pedestrian plan for your community. Begin by working with property owners including residents, employers/employees, and business owners, to learn what their concerns and needs are, since they are most immediately affected. Share information about how improved street and streetscape design can affect a community's overall wellbeing, including economic benefits. The plan should address a number of items, including places where sidewalks are missing or inadequate, ways to resolve uncomfortable roadway crossings, ways to make walking more enjoyable (e.g., street trees, benches, and drinking fountains), and existing design guidelines that do not meet best practices.

**Prioritize:** Develop an implementation plan that is affordable and takes advantage of opportunities to piggyback on planned roadway projects, such as a utility replacement. Potential street and streetscape improvement projects can be prioritized based on cost, safety impacts, proximity to walking destinations, and available funding. Flexibility is important as opportunities often arise to implement projects in unexpected ways.

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<sup>1</sup> Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990.

# Create Pedestrian-friendly Street and Streetscape Design



**Seek funding sources:** Funding specifically for pedestrian facilities is often available at the federal, state and local levels, and it is useful to understand funding sources when advocating for specific projects. It is also important to understand that almost all transportation funding sources can also be used to build sidewalks and address other pedestrian issues. Just because a funding source is called a “highway fund” does not mean a sidewalk project is necessarily excluded. And, pedestrian facilities are typically a fraction of the cost of a roadway project. In addition, it is often less costly to implement streetscape or street improvements as part of larger planned roadway projects than to tackle them independently. Funding to develop a pedestrian plan may be available through health-related and environmental agencies or foundations.

*Example: West North Avenue Streetscape Master Plan, Baltimore, MD:* Funded by the Baltimore Community Foundation and organized by the Neighborhood Design Center, the community engaged in a process to develop a streetscape plan for the North Avenue Corridor.  
<http://bit.ly/1NgPKJR>

*Example: Salisbury Complete Streets Policy:* The City of Salisbury adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2014. It focuses on providing pedestrian facilities in new developments and during reconstruction projects. It also establishes a mandate to review and amend existing policies as necessary. <http://bit.ly/1OdCpYE>

*Example: Main Street Improvements Project, Salisbury, MD.* During a water and sewer mains upgrade project, the City of Salisbury was able to redesign and upgrade their streetscape including enhanced facilities for pedestrians. <http://bit.ly/1SMN9Lw>

*Example: City of Frederick Golden Mile Multimodal Access Enhancement Plan:* Using funding from the Transportation/Land Use Connections Program, the City of Frederick built upon a small area plan to develop a transportation plan focused on the pedestrian and bicycle needs of the area. <http://bit.ly/1OSalHc>

*Example: Jefferson County Streetscape Project:* Working with the Maryland Department of Transportation, Jefferson County was able to improve sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and historical elements along the downtown Main Street through the Community Safety and Enhancement Program (SCEP). A task force made up of community members coordinated with the state and created a website to keep the larger community informed of the project. <http://jeffersonmd.net/Streetscape/>

# Create Pedestrian-friendly Street and Streetscape Design



## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Start or be part of the conversation about the benefits of a streetscape upgrade.** Find example streetscapes that offer a comfortable pedestrian environment and talk with other organizations and companies about the benefits. Then, work with the local health department, planning agencies and community organizations to conduct a walk-audit to better understand existing conditions and the need, or organize a workshop on best practices in good streetscape design.

**Try a temporary change in front of your building.** Sometimes showing the benefits of a change can be persuasive. Work with your local government and chamber of commerce to make changes in the streetscape in front of your organization's place of business (and others on the block) for a day or two. This strategy – known as open streets, better blocks or pop-ups -- is used in many communities.

**Help move things along.** Identify funding sources for streetscape enhancements, including health foundations, and support budget requests for pedestrian planning or street and streetscape improvement projects with the local government.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

### Approach: Educate the Community

#### Action Steps

- Coordinate with the local planning department to conduct a walk audit in a high-priority population neighborhood.
- Coordinate with the local planning department to host a complete streets workshop.
- Organize an Open Streets or other pop-up event, perhaps in or near a high-priority population neighborhood, or at a nearby school or retail establishment.
- Convene a meeting of health foundations to fund a streetscape or pedestrian master plan.
- Continue community outreach via websites and listservs on the health benefits of good street and streetscape design.

### Approach: Create a Streetscape Plan

#### Action Steps:

- Convene community meeting to establish plan goals and process.

- Work with the local planning office or regional planning organization to identify funding and determine who will develop the plan.
- Stay involved in the process by helping to staff community meetings, offering to complete a health-impact assessment of the streetscape, and tracking implementation phasing.

### Approach: Support Complete Streets

#### Action Steps:

- Review best practices in Complete Streets policies and communities with land use policies that result in a high level of walkability.
- Discuss potential for implementation with municipal officials, developers and the community.
- Sponsor a Complete Streets workshop.
- Continue to support adoption of a Complete Streets policy.

### Approach: Identify Funding

#### Action Steps:

- Consult with local hospitals and health foundations.
- Research federal, state and local transportation, health and environmental funding sources.
- Identify funding for planning and implementation purposes.
- Review existing construction plans and determine ways to improve street or streetscape design elements.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Downtown Baltimore Streetscape Design Guidelines <http://bit.ly/1Svq8o>

Example Design Guidelines for Baltimore County Areas <http://bit.ly/1RCN1Qk>

Maryland State Highway Administration's Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines (New) <http://bit.ly/1RCN3Yq>

National Complete Streets Coalition, Workshops <http://bit.ly/1OSa14z>

The Open Streets Guide. <http://bit.ly/1RCN5j0>

See also better block examples: <http://bit.ly/1sh01m>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, focus on Streetscape and Design Improvements. <http://bit.ly/1OOz2G8>

The Safety Benefits of Walkways, Sidewalks, and Paved Shoulders <http://1.usa.gov/1IMUwaW>

# Encourage Walking through the Workplace



## WHAT IS IT?

While many people are physically active in their jobs, the workday for others can be sedentary. There are often overlooked opportunities to get exercise during the work day, such as walking to work, parking in the farthest parking spot, taking the stairs, or taking short walks during the work day. Management can encourage these activities at little cost but great benefit to staff and the company.

County health departments can be a resource for employers to establish a workplace walking program. A first step may be to convene representatives from local employers, health insurance companies, and others to develop a coordinated approach to workplace walking encouragement. The health department can also offer assistance in monitoring participating employees and building partnerships with other county agencies such as parks and recreation to be part of the overall program.

**Benefits:** A healthy workplace has been linked to improved morale, increased productivity, and a reduction in sick days and health care costs.

**Costs:** Employer costs to implement a workplace program are typically minimal. Pedometers, used for tracking steps, typically cost a few dollars each and prizes can be as simple as lunch with the company president.

**Other resources needed:** A sustainable workplace walking program will include staff oversight, goals and benchmarks, programs and tracking. Although capital costs are limited, a committed team of staff is paramount in importance.

Employers and employees considering developing opportunities for walking at work should consider the following:

**Create a place:** Establish a walking network on your worksite or campus. Even the best walking programs will fall short of their goals if there are not safe and attractive places to walk. Regardless of the safety and comfort of sidewalks along the roadway and pathways leading up to building entrances, a network of pathways around a business' property offers employees a place for walking during their time at work. Attractive pathways should be located in landscaped areas or places where there are interesting things to see. They should also be well-lit so that they are safe and usable during early morning or the evening. Where

possible, they should avoid crossing roadways or parking lots.

**Say it's OK:** Adopt a policy that supports walking during work. Employees often feel that they have minimum time during the workday to engage in anything but work and that any time not spent at their work space is regarded negatively. However, knowing that activity boosts productivity, improves morale and reduces sick days, creating a strong incentive for managers to support walking during working hours. A policy that provides a specific amount of time during the workday that can be dedicated to exercise can improve company productivity and reduce health care costs.

**Recognize those that participate:** Offer incentives and recognition to employees who achieve walking benchmarks. Providing incentives can boost the number of employees who walk and can increase the amount they walk dramatically. For the minimal cost of purchasing pedometers for staff and providing rewards for those who walk regularly, meet benchmarks, or win specific competitions, walking can become a regular activity that is satisfying for employees. The program is as simple as offering pedometers freely to staff that wish to participate. The number of steps each staff person takes is tracked and prizes are awarded accordingly. Additional iterations can include: prizes for anyone who regularly reaches a specific number of steps (encourages more staff to meet minimum levels of exercise); prizes for departments and teams (team members encourage each other); and prizes on a weekly, monthly and annual basis (encourages short and long-term activity).

**Support participants:** Offer on-site counseling and support to employees. Sometimes the best way to encourage walking is for staff to have someone to talk to. People often do not fully understand the benefits of walking nor do they know the minimum levels needed to stay healthy. Often they just need personal encouragement to help them reach their physical activity goals. Establishing a counseling or support program communicates to staff that the company is serious about their health and supportive of walking as part of company policy.

*Example: Just Walk Program, Worcester County Health Department:* This countywide program is marketing to employers, especially those that are Maryland Healthiest Businesses. Just Walk provides individuals with incentives such as clothing, bags, step counters and water bottles,



# Encourage Walking through the Workplace



based on the number of miles they walk. Mileage is individually reported on mileage logs and reported to the Worcester County Health Department, which sends out prizes. <http://bit.ly/1IMV6Ft>

*Example: Healthiest Maryland Businesses.* This program, organized by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, assists businesses that recognize that the health of their employees is good for society and good for business. The program includes resources for creating a workplace wellness program and peer exchanges between participating businesses. Its success relies on participation by businesses, government agencies, and other organizations. <http://1.usa.gov/1fdmszz>



# Encourage Walking through the Workplace



## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Creating/promoting safe places for walking at or near the workplace.** Encouraging walking during the workday only makes sense if there are safe and enjoyable places for employees to walk. Employers can promote existing walking routes or create new ones. These routes may be indoor or outdoor. Indoor routes offer employees a place to walk when the weather is bad or time short. Outdoor routes give employees a chance to get out for a breath of fresh air and a bit of sunshine. Signage can help support both route types. Wayfinding signage helps employees find and follow the routes, while distance and calories burned signage can help them keep track of what they've accomplished.

**Adopting workplace policies that encourage employees to take time out for walking during the workday.** In addition to creating places to walk, employers can offer employees a limited amount of time each day or week for walking. Policies could allow time to walk in addition to scheduled breaks or offer incentives for employees to walk during their scheduled breaks.

**Encouraging walking meetings and walking to meetings.** Combining walking with meetings takes a bit of forethought but gets easier with practice. Walking meetings are ideal for small groups of employees and when the meeting agenda focuses on discussion or brainstorming rather than handouts or presentations. For larger groups or where employees need to read meeting materials, hold the meeting in a location that requires a 5- or 10- minute walk. If the meeting runs longer than an hour, take a 5 minute break to do some fun walking exercises (see *Playworks Maryland* under Additional Resources below).

**Consider making treadmills available.** Some employees may prefer to walk indoors, especially during wet or extremely cold weather. Making treadmills available for their use may be a viable option.

**Encouraging walking to and from work.** Employees who live within a mile or so from work should consider walking. Walking conditions and the employee's work schedule can affect their ability to do so, but support from an employer can help. For example, employees can help employees who live close to each other form a walking group. For employees who live farther from work, employers can identify potential 'park and walk' locations.

**Workplace walking challenges.** For employees who are competitively-minded, a friendly workplace walking challenge might provide the extra motivation needed to start walking. Challenges can be for a day, a week, or a year. The key is to make the challenge fun and offer rewards or recognition for achieving goals.

**Workplace incentive and recognition programs for walking.** Employers can offer incentives or recognition to employees that walk. Incentives might include gift cards for miles walked or commute trips made walking. Recognition might include acknowledgement at a staff meeting or in the employee newsletter. Organizations with a wellness program may offer employees a walking icon to include in the email electronic signature designating them as regular walker.



**Integrating walking encouragement into a workplace wellness programs.** For employers that already have a workplace wellness program, encouraging walking makes perfect sense, since the wellness benefits are so well-established.

**Offering individualized on-site counseling and support for walking to employees.** Some employees may have trouble finding time or support at home to think about how to be more physically active. On-site support for employees can help, especially if it is in combination with other workplace strategies.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

**Approach: Develop a year-round, countywide walking encouragement program**

### Action Steps:

- Convene subcommittee of major employers, health insurance companies, and others to establish program elements, branding, implementation structure, and funding mechanism.
- Encourage employer participation through distribution of employer-oriented marketing materials and direct outreach.
- Develop resources to support the program, e.g.,
  - Employer-oriented menu of potential strategies for encouraging walking through the workplace and sample policy on breaks for physical activity during the workday.

# Encourage Walking through the Workplace



- Employee-oriented brochure/flyer describing the benefits of walking and ways to incorporate walking during the workday.
- Mechanism for tracking and reporting employee walking.
- Certificate templates employers can use to acknowledge employees who achieve certain walking goals.
- Provide branded incentive items, such as pedometers, water bottles, and t-shirts to participating employers/employees to demonstrate a certain level of commitment/participation to the workplace walking program.
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to employers implementing workplace walking encouragement programs.

## **Approach: Conduct annual workplace walking challenge competitions**

### **Action Steps:**

- Convene subcommittee to establish challenge structure, branding, and funding mechanism.
- Identify the challenge time period (e.g., September 1 through November 30).
- Develop mechanism for tracking and reporting employee walking mileage.
- Develop a system for determining contest winners.
- Procure and distribute prizes to contest winners.

## **Approach: Establish and market walking routes near employment centers**

### **Action Steps:**

- Develop maps showing employment centers and existing pedestrian infrastructure.
- Work with local jurisdictions and businesses to identify potential walking routes.
- Assess potential walking routes to determine needed infrastructure or streetscape improvements, e.g., by conducting a walk audit.
- Work with relevant agencies and jurisdictions to make needed infrastructure improvements and sign route.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Worksite Walking Campaign Tools  
<http://1.usa.gov/1nw5Fdn>

Every Body Walk! Toolkit for promoting walking in the workplace  
<http://bit.ly/1QdEfZE>

National Business Group on Health  
<http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/>

On Point with Tom Ashbrook, Standup. Right Now. October 1, 2015  
<http://wbur.fm/1QdEgwz>

Playworks Maryland  
<http://bit.ly/1uj56dc>

Wellness Councils of America's Seven Benchmarks for a Healthy Workplace  
<http://1.usa.gov/1R8w7cM>

## WHAT IS IT?

Leading an active lifestyle is predicated on having places to engage in physical activities like walking. Common barriers to walking include a lack of sidewalks and unsafe street crossings, but walking can be limited by other factors as well. For example, a person who does not have a car may be interested in walking in a park but may need transit or a bicycle to get there. In other cases, a park may be nearby but might be fenced off from easy access by some neighborhoods.

County health departments can help by convening stakeholders to discuss the routes and barriers to places for walking and to assist communities in creating an action plan to remove the barriers.

**Benefits:** Many communities have excellent places for walking, but they are not readily accessible. Focusing on making them available to the public is a wise use of an existing resource.

**Costs:** If new infrastructure is needed, costs can be high. However, creating access to places for walking can often be done through smaller actions such as installing signage, connecting pathways, or the simple unlocking of a gate.

**Other resources needed:** Maximizing existing resources requires knowing your community and how everyone and every agency can work together to get things done. Convening a task force to address barriers is an important aspect of improving access.

Communities interested in improving access to places for walking should consider the following:

**Focus on destinations:** Destinations come in all shapes and sizes, from large parks, to small circular tracks, to being able to walk to work or run errands. Start by focusing on a few key destinations such as a local school, a community park and a cluster of businesses. Conduct a walk audit reviewing access from nearby neighborhoods. Consider bus stop locations and their ability to connect residents to places to walk as well.

**Document barriers:** It is important to have a clear list of the barriers that are hindering people from being able to walk or keeping them from accessing a place to walk. A list of barriers can act as a checklist of action items that can be addressed one by one. Be sure to include crossings. Often we focus on missing sidewalks or inaccessible routes when

we think about access. However, crossing a facility – whether it be a roadway, waterway, rail corridor or large fenced area – can be just as difficult and may be the real reason a place is not accessible.

**Create partnerships:** Places may be inaccessible for walking for a variety of reasons. The agencies or individuals who control access or can help address barriers can vary widely. Addressing barriers to access will require coordination among a variety of stakeholders. Beginning the process by bringing everyone to the table to discuss the challenges and opportunities for expanding access is an excellent place to start.

*Example: Interagency Coordinating Board (ICB) of Montgomery County:* The ICB is responsible for setting policies for the community use of schools and other public facilities. By making over 10,000 buildings, rooms, and fields available to the public, the county has facilitated 6,000 groups and over 600,000 hours of use.

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cupf/info-cupf/icb.html>

*Example: Maryland Parks at a Glance:* The state of Maryland has created a resource of parks and recreational facilities listed by County including activities, contact information and links to the parks' website.

<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/parks.html#caro>

## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Find the 'if only' places.** Talk with others about places that could be used for walking 'if only' an existing barrier was removed. For example, high school tracks are a natural for walking, but may not be open for after school use because of a fence and gate. Similarly, a park with a good trail system may be near a neighborhood but residents may not have a safe way to cross the street to get there.

**Work with others to identify solutions.** Choose a handful of 'if only' barriers to champion and work with local government staff, school administrators, private property owners and the public to remove the barriers.

**Publicize and celebrate success.** Communicate to the public about existing places to walk and where action is being taken to improve community access. Sponsor an opening event to help people start using a now-accessible facility.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

### Approach: Locate Places to Walk

#### Action Steps:

- Gather data and create a database of places to walk such as parks, recreation facilities, schools and area destinations.
- Gather critical data such as public access, opening hours, activities, and contact information.

### Approach: Assess Accessibility of Places to Walk and Take Action

#### Action Steps:

- Review accessibility of places to walk:
  - Is the location public or could it become available for public use?
  - Conduct a walk audit to determine:
    - if safe routes to and through the facility exist
    - if frequent connections to adjacent communities exist
  - Are there bus stops that could better connect to the facility?
- Create a list of action items to enhance accessibility and work with the community, municipal leaders, and property owners to address barriers.

### Approach: Communicate Places to Walk

#### Action Steps:

- Create a clear database of information about places to walk.
- Review existing websites or create a new website to provide walking information to the public.
- Communicate walking information to all members of the community via newsletters, websites, social media, television and radio.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Centers for Disease Control, Mall Walking Resource Guide

<http://1.usa.gov/1AQdPXd>

Create the Good: Sidewalks and Streets Survey

<http://bit.ly/1KXxfvB>

Every Trail: Walks in Maryland

<http://www.everytrail.com/best/hiking-maryland>

National Geographic: All Trail Walks in Maryland

<https://alltrails.com/us/maryland>

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Trail Link [www.traillink.com](http://www.traillink.com)

Sidewalks and Streets Audit Toolkit

<http://bit.ly/1Na6iW7>

## WHAT IS IT?

Every day there are numerous opportunities to walk, if only we can see them. We can walk to work, walk our children to school, walk for errands, or walk to the park. And we can find subtler ways to incorporate more walking into our lifestyle. For example, we can park our car a bit further from building entrances, walk to our co-workers' desks instead of emailing, or take the stairs instead of the elevator. Many natural areas include walking trails, which are great for relaxation and exercise. Opportunity is everywhere, and you're much more likely to get out and walk once you see the possibilities.

The key for public health officials is to understand where these walking opportunities are, develop partnerships with stakeholders who can help making walking seem doable, and then promote walking opportunities to residents and employees in a way that helps them create a habit of walking.

**Benefits:** Opportunities to walk are all around us and increasing walking rates in our communities can be as simple as making people aware of these opportunities and getting people in the habit of taking advantage of them. One measure of success for this strategy is to hear someone say, "I never thought about walking there, but now I will!"

**Costs:** Costs are minimal and are predominately related to signs and communication materials such as flyers, postcards, prescription pads and other marketing and mapping materials. Remember, word of mouth is cost-free!

Communities interested in increasing awareness of opportunities for walking should consider the following:

**Promote walking for everyday trips:** Many of the trips we take every day are less than one mile. This is the perfect distance to walk, especially if the route is pleasant. Communities can work with residents to determine which trips might be converted to walking trips, find pleasant walking routes, and inculcate the habit of everyday walking.

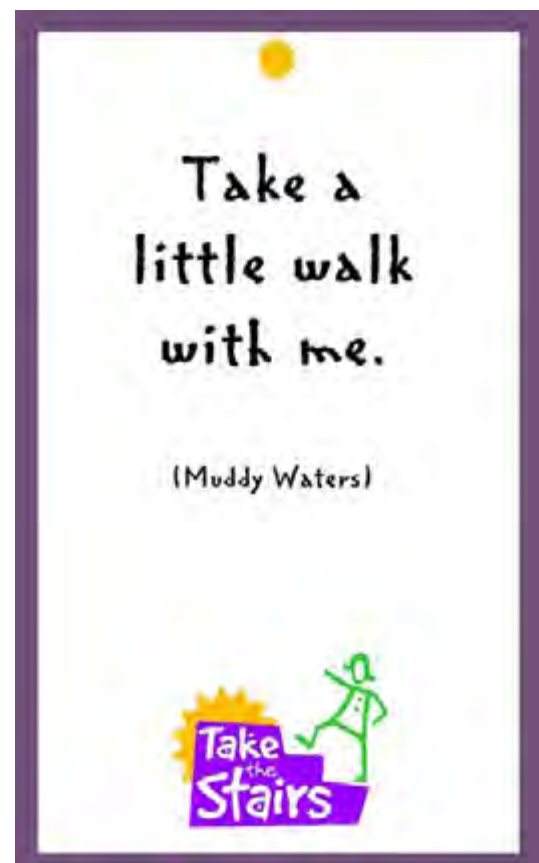
**Locate walking loops:** Many people prefer to walk along loops in parks, at recreation centers, or where they are provided elsewhere. Providing information on the locations of such walking loops can lead to increased walking.

**Develop maps of walking routes:** Communities often have a number of walking loops and sidewalk networks in attractive locations. Knowing where the most comfortable

and pleasant places to walk are located, and communicating that information via walking maps, can help increase walking rates.

**Install signs with distances along walking routes:** Many people do not realize that it only takes 15-20 minutes to walk a mile. On routes to popular destinations – such as downtown or school – adding signs that provide information such as "15 minutes to downtown by foot" communicates to people the amount of time needed to reach their final destinations. Combining signs with a campaign recommending 30 minutes of walking a day makes it easy to understand the relationship between exercise and walking as part of everyday trips. You may even want to add information about calories burned by the average person per mile to some walking routes to motivate more walking.

**Encourage walking inside:** Organizations, businesses, schools, and health clinics can re-envision the inside of the buildings as places to walk. An indoor walking route can include hallways, U-turns, going up and down stairs, and walking around large rooms such as auditoriums and exhibit halls. Signage can be used to define the route and to remind people of opportunities for walking hiding in plain sight, such using the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.





# Increase Awareness of Opportunities for Walking



**"Heaven's Gate," by Robert Morgan (from *Dark Energy*. © Penguin, 2015), is a moving portrait of determined older woman finds opportunities for "strolling" indoors.**

*In her nineties and afraid  
of weather and of falling if  
she wandered far outside her door,  
my mother took to strolling in  
the house. Around and round she'd go,  
stalking into corners, backtrack,  
then tum and speed down hallway, stop  
almost at doorways, skirt a table,  
march up to the kitchen sink and  
wheel to left, then swing into  
the bathroom, almost stumble on  
a carpet there. She must have walked  
a hundred miles or more among  
her furniture and family pics,  
mementos of her late husband.  
Exercising heart and limb,  
outwalking stroke, attack, she strode,  
not restless like a lion in zoo,  
but with a purpose and a gait,  
and kept her eyes on heaven's gate.*

*Example:* Walk [Your City]. This organization provides templates for communities to sign walking routes and distances to common destinations. Did you know the market was only a 10 min walk? The park only 15 minutes? Now you do with Walk [Your City]. <https://walkyourcity.org>

*Example:* Walking time and distance signs at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson Airport. Distances between the concourses at this airport are long, but many people walk instead of taking the internal train. It's a great way to get in some exercise during a trip. The airport provides information on walking times, and to keep the walk interesting, there are sculptures from African artists and a multi-media history of Atlanta. <http://www.atlanta-airport.com/HJN/2007/01/dev2.htm>

*Example:* WalkArlington, single source of County walking programs and opportunities. The County initiative offers partnering with citizens, businesses, and County departments to promote the health, environmental, commuter, financial, and community-building benefits of walking, WalkArlington strives to "get more people walking more of the time." WalkArlington was created in response to the community -- parents advocating for safe routes to neighborhood schools, developers and County staff building safer intersections, and business owners, public artists, urban designers, park planners, and event planners working to create destinations of special character that serve as magnets for walkers. <http://www.walkarlington.com/>

## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Agree to serve on or convene a pedestrian walking advisory/advocacy group.** These types of groups are common in many communities and can serve a variety of roles, including assisting with pedestrian planning, prioritizing funding for pedestrian projects, and developing walking programs. To be most effective, the group should include residents and businesses representing all parts of the county.

**Create maps of places to walk.** These visual promotion pieces can be printed and distributed, made into posters, and made available online. Places to walk can include local parks, routes to schools and libraries, and walking routes near senior centers. Maps should include information about walking distances and times, from common starting locations or between certain locations.

**Promote indoor walking at your place of business.** Print and distribute indoor walking prompt signage at local businesses, healthcare providers, and public buildings, such as libraries. This type of signage typically encourages people to use the stairs rather than the elevator or escalator.

**Help get the word out.** Distribute materials advertising opportunities for walking to FQHCs, Medicaid MCOs, public housing units, and other locations frequented by the high-priority population.

**Offer to set up a walking resource center.** Consolidate information about walking opportunities in the county on a single website or web portal.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

**Approach: Convene a walking advisory/advocacy group**  
**Action Steps**

- Create a long list of potential participants; invite them all and see who comes. Recruit members through churches, the FQHC, schools, and at community-wide events.
- Set a regular time to meet and stick to it.
- Use the group to generate and implement ways to create awareness of walking opportunities.

**Approach: Map Trail Loops and Walking Routes**

**Action Steps:**

- Convene community stakeholders who are knowledgeable about walking routes and loops and have mapping/graphic skills.

- Document existing locations for enjoyable walking (and note missing links, maintenance needs, etc.).
- Create maps (and/or a website) that highlight locations.
- Add distance signage for common destinations.

**Approach: Promote Walking at Community Events and Fairs**  
**Action Steps:**

- Learn about upcoming community events and fairs; determine which ones to target for outreach.
- Create a flyer describing ways to incorporate walking in everyday activities.
- Create or acquire maps that show attractive walking routes.
- At events, work with individuals to communicate options for walking.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The Active Network

<http://www.activenetwork.com/?cmp=260&memberId=148047220&dart=F&dma=Baltimore>

Centers for Disease Control, StairWELL to Better Health

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/index.htm>

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Point-of-decision prompts

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/point-decision-prompts-physical-activity>

Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, Development Program II

<http://www.atlanta-airport.com/HJN/2007/01/dev2.htm>

Walk with a Doc Program

<http://walkwithadoc.org>

Move it Monday! Time to Move!

<http://www.moveitmonday.org>

University of Michigan, Walking Maps

<https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health/mhealthy/physical-well-being/physical-activity/physical-activity-resources/walking-maps>

WalkArlington

<http://www.walkarlington.com/>

Walk [Your City]

<https://walkyourcity.org>



## WHAT IS IT?

One of the best ways to get people walking is to organize events that show how physical activity can be fun. Whether it is a one-time event at a new park, a monthly event that showcases existing destinations, or challenges that create a bit of competition, the most important messages are that walking is easy, enjoyable and good for you.

Public health professionals can lead the way by organizing activities and challenges as well providing a central repository for existing community events focused on walking.

**Benefits:** Walking events, activities, and challenges leverage people's desire for fun, adventure, and friendly competition to encourage more walking.

**Costs:** Costs depend on the nature of the activity or event. Major events or activities may require significant lead time for planning. Recurring events become easier to coordinate as you go.

Communities interested in organizing and promoting walking events, activities and challenges should consider the following:

**Establish a county-wide or community-based walking challenge:** Walking challenges create an atmosphere of fun competition. Individuals report their number of steps (using pedometers) or miles walked and win prizes for increasing their physical activity.

**Coordinate group walking trips to destinations:** Walking in groups is often more fun and individuals help motivate each other. Destinations such as parks or historic sites can attract a wide range of attendees.

**Organize walks with city officials:** The lives of city officials are dominated by meetings. Rather than meeting in the office, try a walking meeting. Officials, including mayors and governors have been organizing morning walks in their communities and inviting community members to walk and talk with them.

**Create a dog walking route:** Taking a dog out for a walk is a great reason to get some exercise. Dog walking routes can be created with water bowls and special treats for pets and people. Changing the routes regularly introduces people to new neighborhoods and encourages people from diverse neighborhoods to walk more.

**Plan an Open Streets event:** Open Streets events close a section of roadway for part of a day to allow people to walk, ride their bike, and generally enjoy being active – using the existing roadway. These events are a lot of fun and they bring the community together around being active.

*Example:* Walk with a Doc, Silver Spring: Dr. Judy Wang led a walking tour in Sligo Creek Park to encourage people to get walking as part of the Walk with a Doc program.

<http://walkwithadoc.org/our-locations/silver-springs>

*Example:* Walk with the Mayor, Mount Airy: The Mayor of Mount Airy participated in a walk to highlight the opening of a new Rails-to-Trails project. Community members were invited to walk and talk with the mayor while learning about the new trail. <http://www.mountairymd.org/walk-with-the-mayor-on-september-19th-at-1000-a-m>

*Example:* Just Walk in Worcester County: The Worcester County Health Department created an incentive-based program whereby residents receive rewards for tracking their miles of physical activity.

<http://www.worcesterhealth.org/news/70-wchd-news-flash/692-commit-to-get-fit-in-2013-and-just-walk-in-worcester-county>

*Example:* Walk with Ease: This Arthritis Foundation program allows users to download an app that will count your steps while also providing resources and recommendations.

<http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/tools-resources/walk-with-ease/>



## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Establish a frequent walker program.** Frequent walker programs are relatively easy to start and maintain. Community stakeholders can organize or sponsor a frequent walker program for the community.

**Help promote existing walking programs.** Joint promotions increase the likelihood that people will learn about walking programs. For example, walking groups led by a parks and recreation department may not be on the radar of some high priority population residents through regular outreach, but they may through a joint promotion between the department and the local health center.

**Create new walking programs for seniors, young families, etc.** People often feel more comfortable engaging in physical activities with others who have similar life circumstances. For example, young African American women (including new mothers) may respond to a walking program developed with them in mind, such as GirlTrek.

**Plan and help host an open streets event.** These events are most successful when community members help plan and host them. An open streets event also offers an opportunity to promote walking programs and resources offered by other community members.

**Make it affordable.** Fitness runs and walking events, recreation department classes, etc. often have an entrance fee that can make them unaffordable for the high priority population. Offer no- or low-cost entry fees when possible.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

**Approach: Re-establish a Frequent Walker or Walking Challenge Program**

### Action Steps:

- Convene a meeting with health officials to determine action steps
- Create a database/website for participants to upload information
- Promote the program
- Acquire prizes from local businesses

**Approach: Promote Existing Walking Programs and Tours**

### Action Steps:

- Create a list of existing walks and tours
- Create a database/website of walking activities
- Disseminate information about activities
- Identify stakeholders to develop and lead new tours

**Approach: Create a New Walking Program**

### Action Steps:

- Determine the type of walking program to establish: dog walking, destination-based trips, etc.
- Identify stakeholders to lead new programs
- Create a schedule for new the new program
- Promote the program through a variety of media

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

GirlTrek

<http://www.girltrek.org/>

Maryland Volkssport Association

<http://www.mdvolks.org/>

Montgomery County Senior Walking Program

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/thingstodo/senior/indoor.html>

Open Streets Project

<http://openstreetsproject.org/>

Walk Maryland

<https://extension.umd.edu/walkmd>

Worcester County Parks and Recreation Department, Stroller Fitness Program

<http://www.worcesterrecandparks.org/docs/recreation-guide.pdf>

# Promote and Support Walking with Friends and Family



## WHAT IS IT?

There are few things that provide more encouragement than when we engage in activities with friends and family. Family and friends can motivate us to exercise more and make walking fun. Children especially appreciate spending quality time with their parents when that time is spent involved in an activity.

New or existing social networks can foster behavior change. Walking with others builds, strengthens, and maintains social networks that can support physical activity behavior change. --Adapted from *Strategies to prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases*, CDC

Health departments can help by educating people on the myriad ways we can walk with family and friends on a regular basis. Health departments can work with other community partners such as schools and neighborhood associates to help set up and support on-going walking programs.

**Benefits:** Walking with your family teaches healthy behavior, which can be sustained throughout a child's or partner's life. Walking with friends is fun and offers great motivation for staying active. Walking with family and friends can also help address safety concerns, which may be more acute in high-priority population neighborhoods.

**Costs:** The cost of planning and promoting walking in non-work settings varies with the complexity of the effort. For example, a formal walking buddies program may be more costly if program organizers offer matching or tracking assistance. The cost of walking loops at youth sports practices and events may be absorbed by volunteers who set-up and take down the loop. Over time and as funding becomes available, these temporary walking loops may be made permanent, requiring a one-time cost to construct and a modest amount for on-going maintenance.

Communities interested in promoting and supporting walking activities with friends and family should consider the following:

**Start a walking buddies program:** Walking with someone helps people start and maintain a regular walking program. A walking buddies program can be small and informal (just two people who decide to walk together) or larger more formal program (a program organized by a third party such

as a neighborhood association or local recreation department). A walking buddies program can also be extemporaneous, with people teaming up with others visiting the same location, such as walking while waiting for a doctor at an FQHC or immediately following a doctor's appointment.

**Encourage parents to walk with their children to school:** What's good exercise for a child is also good exercise for a parent or guardian! Walking a child to school not only helps parents stay physically active, it also helps address safety concerns and provides parents and children with valuable one-on-one time. If other parent responsibilities make daily walking difficult, then a walking school can be arranged, where parents share responsibility for walking children to school on a rotating schedule. Families that can't walk to school together because of distance or safety concerns may still be able to walk together from a location near the school, such as a park or church.

**Create walking loops and walking programs at sports practices and events:** Many parents not only drive their children to sports activities, they stay to watch until the program is over. This time can be used for the adults to get some physical activity. Recreation departments and schools can lay out and promote walking loops.

**Organize regular scavenger hunts or Geocaching events:** Scavenger hunts are a low-cost and easy-to-do option for encouraging walking. Nearly anyone or any organization can organize a scavenger hunt, including neighborhood associations, local recreation departments, and local businesses. A techie-oriented scavenger hunt option is geocaching, which uses electronic navigation devices to hide and seek containers. Many trails in various areas of Maryland have geocaching options, which can be found on the Trail Link website. (<http://www.trailink.com/stateactivity/md-geocaching-trails.aspx>)

**Create a Parks Passport program:** How many parks are in your community? How many have you visited? Take a cue for the National Park Service's Parks Passport program and create a "passport" booklet for each park in your community, making a record of each time a park is visited.

# Promote and Support Walking with Friends and Family







## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Find out what types of walking activities are likely to be successful.** Stakeholders should talk with residents, community members, parents, customers, etc., to find out what appeals to them.

**Identify community members who can be 'early adopters' to help promote the walking program.** Every community has its natural leaders, so find these people and have them be part of the program's promotion. It's important to recognize their efforts in some way, e.g., a thank you gift or letter.

**Establish programs within communities that encourage family and friends to walk together, and create social connections.** There are many types of walking programs, many of which are a variation of the walking buddies concept. Here's how potential community stakeholders might relate to potential walking programs:

Community Stakeholder		Walking Program
Health centers (especially FQHC)		Walk while you wait for the doctor OR walk when you're done
Recreation department		Scavenger hunts or geocaching Walking loops at youth sports venues
Schools or neighborhood associations		Walking school buses Walking program for young mothers
Senior centers		Walking programs in senior communities or at senior centers

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

**Approach: Facilitate creation of a walking buddies program**

### Action Steps:

- Reach out to churches, public housing developments, FQHCs, neighborhood associations and others to discuss the potential for creating a walking groups and/or walking buddies program and what support might be needed from the County or City in order to facilitate it.
- Develop and distribute materials explaining key considerations for neighborhood walking groups and walking buddies.
- Devise and promote a system for connecting people interested in walking with each other.

**Approach: Encourage parents to walk with their children to school**

### Action Steps:

- If there is a Safe Routes to School program in your community, reach out to the people responsible for coordinating it to understand existing conditions and programs, especially for schools serving high priority population neighborhoods. For example, it would be helpful to know if there is an existing walking school bus program, how the program operates, and what materials have been developed to market it to parents.
- Develop new marketing materials (or modify existing marketing materials) to encourage parents to walk children to school, emphasizing the physical activity benefits for adults along with the benefits for children.
- Reach out school district administrators, principals, and PTAs encourage distribution of the materials to parents.
- Provide a way for parents and students to record each time the way walk to school and provide age-appropriate incentives for reaching pre-established milestones.

**Approach: Encourage adults to walk during children's sports practices**

### Action Steps:

- Reach out to school district and sports league coordinators to educate them regarding the opportunity for encouraging adult physical activity during sports practices and discuss potential methods for such encouragement (e.g., messaging through coaches to parents).
- Post signage at sports fields with walking paths to encourage parents to use them and/or to announce organized walks.
- Hire/task a coordinator with leading walks for adults during sports practices.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Centers for Disease Control, Transportation Planning Health Impact Assessment Toolkit

<http://bit.ly/1Ogxosq>

Federal Highway Administration, How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

<http://1.usa.gov/1XZVdtJ>

Federal Highway Administration, The Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book

<http://1.usa.gov/1sgVe6>

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, How Much Does a Plan Cost?

<http://bit.ly/1NJH65R>

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, Sample Plans

[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/sample\\_plans.cfm](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/sample_plans.cfm)

Project for Public Spaces, Great Corridors, Great Communities: The Quiet Revolution in Transportation Planning

<http://bit.ly/1Hr4lmv>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, "Bicycle and pedestrian master plans"

<http://bit.ly/1OOz9S7>



# Pursue Improved Walking Conditions through Planning



## WHAT IS IT?

Every day there are numerous opportunities to walk, if only we can see them. We can walk to work, walk our children to school, walk for errands, or walk to the park. And we can find subtler ways to incorporate more walking into our lifestyle. For example, we can park our car a bit further from building entrances, walk to our co-workers' desks instead of emailing, or take the stairs instead of the elevator. Many natural areas include walking trails, which are great for relaxation and exercise. Opportunity is everywhere, and you're much more likely to get out and walk once you see the possibilities.

The key for public health officials is to understand where these walking opportunities are, develop partnerships with stakeholders who can help making walking seem doable, and then promote walking opportunities to residents and employees in a way that helps them create a habit of walking. Creating safe and comfortable places for people to walk begins with a plan. Plans can be created for the entire community or focus on specific areas, such walking routes to or within parks, between a neighborhood and nearby shops, or walking to school as in a Safe Routes to School Plan. Plans covering larger areas, such as county comprehensive plans, pedestrian master plans, and trail master plans, can influence funding choices and conditions for future development, offering a guide for developers to incorporate trails in their projects or address specific issues such as locations where there are pedestrian crashes.

County health departments can play an active role in helping communities pursue improved walking conditions by being part of the plan-development process. Health departments can help by educating and engaging the public, proposing focus areas, providing information on the health impacts of recommended walking facilities, and following-up on plan implementation.

**Benefits:** Plans provide a strategy for meeting a community's future needs and/or achieving its vision for the future. Identified needs can be incorporated into existing or future projects such as a roadway project that incorporates sidewalks or a development plan that includes trails. Planning processes that include community input help ensure that the most important projects or those most supported by the community first.

**Costs:** Plan costs vary based on the level of effort and the research that goes into a plan. A plan can be as simple as a community embarking on a sidewalk audit and creating a

plan that prioritizes missing pieces of the sidewalk network. Or, it can be more complex requiring an analysis to determine if motor vehicle travel lanes can be reduced to provide space for people to walk.

Communities interested in pursuing improved walking conditions through planning should consider the following:

**What's the goal?** Start with a clear understanding of what walking need the plan will address. This will help determine the scale and specifics of the plan, such as whether it will be a plan that covers an entire county, a neighborhood, or a specific location such as an intersection. The best plans are those that zero in on the most important needs of the community. For example, residents might be able to walk to a nearby senior center, if only a cut-through path were created. Or, residents may want to walk to the Walmart, but there are no sidewalks or safe roadway crossings.

**What are existing conditions?** The first step in the planning process is to understand existing conditions by answering specific questions such as: Are there currently a lot of people walking? Where are they going? Do sidewalks exist and create a network? Does it feel safe to cross the road? Where are crashes and fatalities taking place? Where are there high levels of obesity-related illnesses? Knowing the answers to these questions can help guide plan recommendations and next steps.

**How to engage the public.** Finding out what concerns and needs the public has is an important part of any planning process. There are many ways to offer public input opportunities ranging from using online resources to in-person conversations. Engaging the high-priority population may require working with churches and other community organizations, as well as reaching out at health centers, libraries, and schools.

*Example:* Howard County Pedestrian Plan: Howard County Maryland is developing an update to their Pedestrian Plan. The Plan sets forth the agenda for implementing a connected, comfortable, and safe pedestrian network. It identifies pedestrian network improvements needed beyond those identified and completed in the 2007 plan. It also provides recommendations for changes in policies, guidelines, and practices that affect the pedestrian network, and programmatic recommendations to ensure its use.

[www.walkhoward.gov](http://www.walkhoward.gov)

## Pursue Improved Walking Conditions through Planning



*Example:* Frederick County Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning: Frederick County regularly updates its planning documents. The County has created trails standards and plans, and completed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan update in 2011.

<http://frederickcountymd.gov/3090/Bicycle-Pedestrian-Planning>

*Example:* Walkable Bikeable Berlin: A Master Plan for a Walkable, Bikeable Berlin, Maryland: Developed by the Lower Shore Land Trust in early 2013, this plan lays out a path for implementing community trails throughout the Town of Berlin and surrounding area, linking parks, residential communities and shopping amenities with a network of bike and pedestrian-friendly routes. The plan was used to apply for and receive a \$30,000 grant from the Maryland Bikeways Program to complete preliminary engineering for trails identified in the Plan.

<http://036d600.netsolhost.com/landwp/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/CONCEPT-PLAN.pdf>

*Example:* Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan: The Maryland Department of Transportation released their Master Plan in 2014 focusing on a twenty year horizon. The plan will continue to be updated every five years.

<http://www.mdot.maryland.gov/bikewalkplan>



# Pursue Improved Walking Conditions through Planning



## POTENTIAL ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

**Help identify the need.** Community stakeholders can find out what walking needs exist for their constituents by listening, observing, and asking questions. Depending on the need, the local health department and transportation planners/engineers can provide additional information that helps with understanding the conditions that created the need.

**Convene or join a community group that can lay the foundation for a plan by developing a goal or vision for it.** The group can include local health department and transportation professionals as well as neighborhood and community leaders, including those representing the high priority population.

**Keep the process going.** Stay involved throughout the planning process and as the plan is implemented. You can be part of the public education process during all phases of planning and implementation.

## POTENTIAL APPROACHES AND ACTION STEPS FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

**Approach: Help Establish and Articulate the Need for a Plan**

### Action Steps:

- Review existing planning documents to understand goals, gaps, and needed updates.
- Develop maps showing how rates of chronic disease and obesity relate to existing walking, infrastructure and access to places for walking. This may require collaboration with the planning and/or transportation departments.
- Reach out to the high-priority population to gain a better understanding of the barriers to walking for this population.
- Reach out to planning and transportation department officials and political leader to make the case for a plan, using mapped health data and feedback from the high priority population to build a compelling case.

**Approach: Determining Plan Focus**

### Action Steps:

- Work with the community to determine planning focus areas based on mapped data and feedback from high-priority population.

- Identify plan objectives to use in identifying and ranking recommendations.
- Approach: Participate in Plan Development and Project Implementation
- Action Steps:
- Help establish a scope of work for the plan.
- Work with the planning team and provide data and analysis as needed.
- Ensure that the plan includes implementable tasks and work to begin implementation quickly.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Centers for Disease Control, Transportation Planning Health Impact Assessment Toolkit

[http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/transportation/hia\\_toolkit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/transportation/hia_toolkit.htm)

Federal Highway Administration, How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/ped\\_focus/docs/fhwa\\_asa0512.pdf](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/ped_focus/docs/fhwa_asa0512.pdf)

Federal Highway Administration, The Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/briefing\\_book](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/briefing_book)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, How Much Does a Plan Cost?

[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/faq\\_details.cfm?id=20](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/faq_details.cfm?id=20)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, Sample Plans

[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/sample\\_plans.cfm](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/sample_plans.cfm)

Project for Public Spaces, Great Corridors, Great Communities: The Quiet Revolution in Transportation Planning

[http://www.pps.org/pdf/bookstore/Great\\_Corridors\\_Great\\_Communities.pdf](http://www.pps.org/pdf/bookstore/Great_Corridors_Great_Communities.pdf)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, "Bicycle and pedestrian master plans"

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/bicycle-and-pedestrian-master-plans>

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Injury Prevention & Control: Motor Vehicle Safety [http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/pedestrian\\_safety/](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/pedestrian_safety/)

FHWA: Safety Benefits of Walkways, Sidewalks, and Paved Shoulders

[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/tools\\_solve/walkways\\_trifold/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/walkways_trifold/)

Frederick County Traffic Calming Policy

<http://frederickcountymd.gov/268/Neighborhood-Traffic-Calming-Policy>

Street Smart Campaign

<http://bestreetsmart.net>

Maryland State Highway, Pedestrian Safety Website

<http://www.sha.state.md.us/Index.aspx?PagelD=376>

Montgomery Traffic Calming Policy

[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-traffic/traffic\\_calming.html](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-traffic/traffic_calming.html)

Salisbury-Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization: U.S. Route 50 Pedestrian & Cyclist Safety and Connectivity Study (2013)

[Route 50 Pedestrian & Cyclist Safety and Connectivity Study prepared](#)

Share the Road Safety Class (SRSC)

<http://www.legacyhealth.org/health-services-and-information/health-services/for-adults-a-z/trauma/trauma-nurses-talk-tough/court-ordered-classes/share-the-road-safety-class.aspx>

Street Score 2015, San Francisco

<http://walksf.org/walksf/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Street-Score-2015.pdf>

#### ADDRESS CONCERNS ABOUT PERSONAL SECURITY

About Health: Walking Excuse – Scared to Walk Alone

<http://walking.about.com/od/beginners/a/excuses2.htm>

National Crime Prevention Council

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Guidebook

<http://www.popcenter.org/tools/cpted/PDFs/NCPC.pdf>

Play Streets

<http://www.playstreetsaustralia.com/#home>

PlayStreets, Chicago, IL

<http://www.lisc-chicago.org/blog/73>

Richmond, Virginia Clean City Commission

<http://www.richmondgov.com/CommissionCleanCity/index.aspx>

Safe Trails Forum, National Trails Training Partnership, Better Park Design Can Prevent Crime

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/safety/designcrime.html>

#### ADOPT LAND USE REGULATIONS THAT SUPPORT WALKING

Active Transportation Alliance, Land Use and Zoning Regulations for Healthier Communities:

[http://www.atpolicy.org/sites/default/files/Land%20Use%20and%20Zoning%20Regulations%20for%20Healthier%20Communities%20-%20Active%20Transportation%20Alliance\\_0.pdf](http://www.atpolicy.org/sites/default/files/Land%20Use%20and%20Zoning%20Regulations%20for%20Healthier%20Communities%20-%20Active%20Transportation%20Alliance_0.pdf)

Environmental Protection Agency's, Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

<http://www2.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-self-assessment-rural-communities>

Environmental Protection Agency's, Smart Growth Guidelines for Sustainable Design and Development

<http://www2.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-guidelines-sustainable-design-and-development>

Land Use Impacts on Transport, Victoria Transport Policy Institute

<http://www.vtpi.org/landtravel.pdf>

Maryland Department of Planning, Smart Growth Planning Topics

<http://planning.maryland.gov/ourwork/smartgrowth.shtml>

National Complete Streets Coalition

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, focus on Zoning Regulations: Land Use and Policy

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/zoning-regulations-land-use-policy>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Community Health Advisor "Zoning laws to require places for physical activity"

<http://www.communityhealthadvisor.org/drupal/cha/ZoningLawsPA>

#### CREATE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY STREET AND STREETScape DESIGN

Downtown Baltimore Streetscape Design Guidelines

<http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/docs/streetscapedesignguidelines.pdf>

Example Design Guidelines for Baltimore County Areas

[http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/devrevandlanduse/DRP/drpa\\_reas.html](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/devrevandlanduse/DRP/drpa_reas.html)

Maryland State Highway Administration's Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines (New)

<http://www.marylandroads.com/OOTS/Chapter%209%20-%20Sidewalk%20Design.pdf>

National Complete Streets Coalition, Workshops

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/get-help/workshops>

The Open Streets Guide

[http://nacto.org/docs/usdg/smaller\\_open\\_streets\\_guide\\_final\\_print\\_alliance\\_biking\\_walking.pdf](http://nacto.org/docs/usdg/smaller_open_streets_guide_final_print_alliance_biking_walking.pdf)

See also better block examples:

<http://betterblock.org/better-block-minneapolis-transforms-a-corner-with-a-parklet/>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, focus on Streetscape and Design Improvements  
<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/streetscape-design-improvements>

The Safety Benefits of Walkways, Sidewalks, and Paved Shoulders  
[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/tools\\_solve/walkways\\_brochure/walkways\\_brochure.pdf](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/walkways_brochure/walkways_brochure.pdf)

#### ENCOURAGE WALKING THROUGH THE WORKPLACE

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Worksite Walking Campaign Tools  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nationalhealthworksites/join/walkingtools.html>

Every Body Walk! Toolkit for promoting walking in the workplace  
<http://everybodywalk.org/collaborative/toolkits>

National Business Group on Health  
<http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/>

On Point with Tom Ashbrook, Standup. Right Now. October 1, 2015  
<http://onpoint.wbur.org/2015/11/27/sitting-desk-standing-desk>

Playworks Maryland  
<http://www.playworks.org/communities/maryland>

Wellness Councils of America's Seven Benchmarks for a Healthy Workplace  
<http://dhmh.maryland.gov/healthiest/Documents/WELCOA7Cs-executivesummary.pdf>

#### IMPROVE ACCESS TO PLACES FOR WALKING

Centers for Disease Control, Mall Walking Resource Guide  
<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/downloads/mallwalking-guide.pdf>

Create the Good: Sidewalks and Streets Survey  
<http://createthegood.org/toolkit/sidewalks-and-streets-survey-1>

Every Trail: Walks in Maryland  
<http://www.everytrail.com/best/hiking-maryland>

National Geographic: All Trail Walks in Maryland  
<https://alltrails.com/us/maryland>

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Trail Link  
[www.traillink.com](http://www.traillink.com)



## Sidewalks and Streets Audit Toolkit

<http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/documents-2014/AARP-Livable-Communities-Sidewalks-and-Streets-Survey.pdf>

## INCREASE AWARENESS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR WALKING

### The Active Network

<http://www.activenetwork.com/?cmp=260&memberId=148047220&dart=F&dma=Baltimore>

### Centers for Disease Control, StairWELL to Better Health

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/index.htm>

### County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Point-of-decision prompts

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/point-decision-prompts-physical-activity>

### Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, Development Program II

<http://www.atlanta-airport.com/HJN/2007/01/dev2.htm>

### Walk with a Doc Program

<http://walkwithadoc.org>

### Move it Monday! Time to Move!

<http://www.moveitmonday.org>

### University of Michigan, Walking Maps

<https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health/mhealthy/physical-well-being/physical-activity/physical-activity-resources/walking-maps>

### WalkArlington

<http://www.walkarlington.com/>

### Walk [Your City]

<https://walkyourcity.org>

## ORGANIZE AND PROMOTE WALKING EVENTS, ACTIVITIES AND CHALLENGES

### Girl Trek

<http://www.girltrek.org/>

### Maryland Volkssport Association

<http://www.mdvolks.org/>

### Montgomery County Senior Walking Program

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/thingstodo/senior/indoor.html>

Open Streets Project

<http://openstreetsproject.org/>

Walk Maryland

<https://extension.umd.edu/walkmd>

Worcester County Parks and Recreation Department, Stroller Fitness Program

<http://www.worcesterrecandparks.org/docs/recreation-guide.pdf>

PROMOTE AND SUPPORT WALKING WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN NON-WORK SETTINGS

About Health, Walking Clubs, Walking Partners, Walking Programs

<http://walking.about.com/od/clubs/>

AARP, Create the Good: How to Start a Walking Group

<http://createthegood.org/toolkit/start-walking-group>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Strategies to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Disease: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase Physical Activity in the Community. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Service; 2011.

[www.cdc.gov/obesity](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity)

How to Create a Scavenger Hunt

<http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Scavenger-Hunt>

Meetup, Walking Meetups

<http://walkers.meetup.com/>

National Park Service, Passport Stamp

<http://www.nps.gov/glec/playourvisit/passport-stamp-locations.htm>

Safe Routes to School National Partnership, Maryland

<http://saferoutespartnership.org/state/srts-in-your-state/maryland>

Starting a Walking School Bus

<http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/>

Trail Link, list and map of Maryland Trails with geocaching options

<http://www.trailink.com/stateactivity/md-geocaching-trails.aspx>

PURSUE IMPROVED WALKING CONDITIONS THROUGH PLANNING

Centers for Disease Control, Transportation Planning Health Impact Assessment Toolkit

[http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/transportation/hia\\_toolkit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/transportation/hia_toolkit.htm)

Federal Highway Administration, How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/ped\\_focus/docs/fhwasa0512.pdf](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/ped_focus/docs/fhwasa0512.pdf)

Federal Highway Administration, The Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book  
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/briefing\\_book](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/briefing_book)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, How Much Does a Plan Cost?  
[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/faq\\_details.cfm?id=20](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/faq_details.cfm?id=20)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, Sample Plans  
[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/sample\\_plans.cfm](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/sample_plans.cfm)

Project for Public Spaces, Great Corridors, Great Communities: The Quiet Revolution in Transportation Planning  
[http://www.pps.org/pdf/bookstore/Great\\_Corridors\\_Great\\_Communities.pdf](http://www.pps.org/pdf/bookstore/Great_Corridors_Great_Communities.pdf)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, "Bicycle and pedestrian master plans"  
<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/bicycle-and-pedestrian-master-plans>

# APPENDIX C—BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FUNDING PROGRAMS IN MARYLAND

## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (NOVEMBER 20, 2014)

Maryland offers a wide variety of federal and state funded programs to help plan, design, and build projects throughout the state. This list outlines key grant criteria and requirements as well as helpful information for potential applicants. Contact and online information is listed for each program.

### *PRIMARY GRANTS*

These federal and state grants are the primary funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian projects. State staff can help local communities identify ways to combine the grants to successfully implement projects. All grant funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.

**Transportation Alternatives Program (SHA):** The program provides funding for projects that enhance the cultural, aesthetic, historic, and environmental aspects of the intermodal transportation system.

#### Eligible Grantees:

- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (select projects for 50% of available funding)
- Local/County Jurisdictions
- Transit Agencies
- Federal Public Land Agencies
- Local/County School Districts

#### Eligible Bike/Pedestrian Projects:

- Planning and Design of Bike/Pedestrian Facilities and Safe Routes for Non-Drivers (\$25,000 maximum)
- Construction of Bike/Pedestrian Facilities
- Construction of Safe Routes for Non-Drivers
- Conversion of Abandoned Rail to Bike/Pedestrian Trails

#### Requirements:

- Funding Source: Federal. All TAP projects must comply with ADA, NEPA, Davis-Bacon wage rates, Buy America, and other applicable state and federal regulations.
- Local match: 20 percent of total eligible project costs as a cash match. A TAP grant can cover up to 80 percent of the construction costs. Prior project work, right-of-way acquisition and in-kind services may not be counted toward the 20 percent match requirement.
- All TAP projects must meet the following criteria:
  - Open to the public and benefit all Marylanders, not a specific group or individual.
  - Serve a transportation purpose, connecting two destinations (TAP projects cannot be solely recreational in purpose, but may be phased as long as each phase continues to serve transportation destinations.)

- Unrelated to planned or existing highway projects, routine highway improvements, or required mitigation for a planned or existing highway project. TAP projects may be enhancements to larger federal-aid highway projects.
- Located on publicly-owned right-of-way or on right-of-way encumbered with a permanent easement held by a state agency or the government agency sponsoring or co-sponsoring the project.

**Program Contact:**

Jessica Silwick, SHA Regional and Intermodal Planning, 410-545-5653,

Email: [jsilwick@sha.state.md.us](mailto:jsilwick@sha.state.md.us)

Website: <http://www.sha.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PagelD=144>

**Maryland Bikeways Program (MDOT):** The program supports projects that maximize bicycle access and fill missing links in the state’s bicycle system, focusing on connecting shared-use paths and roads and enhancing last-mile connections to work, school, shopping and transit.

**Eligible Grantees:**

- State Agencies
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Local/County Jurisdictions
- Transit Agencies
- Federal Public Land Agencies

**Eligible Bike/Pedestrian Projects:**

- Feasibility Assessments, Design and Engineering
- Construction of Shared Use Paths, Cycletracks and Bicycle Lanes
- Shared Lane and other pavement markings
- Bicycle Route Signage and Wayfinding
- Bicycle Capital Equipment (e.g. parking)
- Other Minor Retrofits to Support Bicycle Routes
- Education Materials to Support Bikeway Projects

**Requirements:**

- Funding Source: State
- Local Match: Zero percent for Priority Minor Retrofit projects, 20 percent for other Priority Projects, 50 percent for non-priority projects. Match may include cash or in-kind services contributing to the project, including expenditures up to 24 months prior to a Bikeways project award.
- All Bikeways Projects must meet at least one of the following criteria:
  - Located substantially within a Priority Funding Area, within 3 miles of a rail transit station or major bus transit hub;

- Provide or enhance bicycle access along any gap identified in the Statewide Trails Plan;
- Identified as a transportation priority in the County’s most recent annual priority letter submitted to MDOT.
- Priority Projects are defined as any of the following:
  - Enhance bicycle access within 3 miles of a rail transit station
  - Provide or enhance bicycle access along a missing link identified in the Statewide Trails Plan
  - Enhance bicycle circulation within or access to a Sustainable Community, Designated Maryland Main Street, census tract at or below 60% of area median income, major university, central business district, or important tourist or heritage attraction.

**Program Contact:**

Kate Sylvester, MDOT Planning and Capital Programming, 410-865-1304,

Email: [ksylvester@mdot.state.md.us](mailto:ksylvester@mdot.state.md.us)

Website:

[http://www.mdot.maryland.gov/Office\\_of\\_Planning\\_and\\_Capital\\_Programming/Bike/Bikeways.html](http://www.mdot.maryland.gov/Office_of_Planning_and_Capital_Programming/Bike/Bikeways.html)

**Recreational Trails Program (SHA):** A federally-funded program assisting development and maintenance of smaller scale motorized and non-motorized trail, trailhead and restoration projects. Examples of trail uses include hiking, bicycling, inline skating, equestrian use, canoeing, kayaking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles. Recreational Trails is now a part of the larger Transportation Alternatives Program due to the latest federal transportation law, MAP-21, but has retained dedicated funding.

**Eligible Grantees:**

- State Agencies (DNR projects receive 50% of funding)
- Local/County Jurisdictions
- Private Groups/Individuals (with government agency co-sponsor)

- Development/Rehabilitation of Trailside
- Facilities and Linkages
- Purchase/Lease of Trail Construction Equipment
- Trail/Corridor Easement and Property Acquisition
- Interpretive/Educational Programs, Signage and
- Maps Related to Recreational Trails Use

**Eligible Bike/Pedestrian Projects:**

- Construction of New Trails
- Maintenance and Restoration of Existing Trails



## Requirements:

- Funding Source: Federal. Grant awards cannot exceed \$40,000 for new construction and \$30,000 for other projects.
- Local match: 20 percent of total project cost as a cash match.
- Recreational Trails projects with the following criteria are preferred:
  - Connect communities with natural/cultural areas or tourism areas (ie. Scenic Byways, Heritage Areas, Canal Towns, etc.)
  - Broad-based community support
  - Complete a missing link in the State Trails Plan
  - Link or complete existing trails
  - Mitigate trail impacts on the natural environment
  - Construction or maintenance accomplished with youth conservation corps or service groups
  - Loop trails that do not connect to a broader network and sidewalk projects are not generally awarded funds.

## Contact:

Terry Maxwell, SHA Landscape Architecture, 410-545-8637

Email: [tmaxwell@sha.state.md.us](mailto:tmaxwell@sha.state.md.us)

Website: <http://www.sha.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=98>

**Safe Routes to Schools (SHA):** A program providing funding for education and infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of state-funded K-8 institutions that promote students walking and cycling to school. Safe Routes to School projects must be requested through the larger Transportation Alternatives Program due to the latest federal transportation law, MAP-21.

## Eligible Grantees:

- Local/County Jurisdictions
- Local/County School District

## Eligible Bike/Pedestrian Projects:

- Bike/Pedestrian safety classes for students
- Traffic education and enforcement near schools
- Public awareness campaigns for press and community leaders
- Sidewalk Improvements (within 1.5 miles of school)
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
- Bike/Pedestrian Crossing Improvements
- On- and Off-Street Bike/Pedestrian Improvements

- Bicycle Parking
- Traffic diversion, education and enforcement

#### Requirements:

- Funding Source: Federal (part of Transportation Alternatives)
- Local match: 20 percent of total project cost as a cash match.
- Safe Routes to School projects with the following criteria are preferred:
  - The project and its outcomes are viable
  - Addresses an infrastructure or programmatic gap

#### Contact:

Jessica Silwick, SHA Regional and Intermodal Planning, 410-545-5653,

Email: [jsilwick@sha.state.md.us](mailto:jsilwick@sha.state.md.us)

Website: <http://www.sha.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PagelD=144>

**Maryland Highway Safety Office Grant (MVA):** This grant aims to reduce the number of motor vehicle-related crashes, deaths, and injuries on Maryland highways. The State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan is a data-driven plan that identifies the top safety priorities that are eligible for funding. As of 2014, pedestrian safety is a top safety priority.

#### Eligible Grantees:

- State Agencies
- Local/County Jurisdictions
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Higher Education Institutions

#### Eligible Bike/Pedestrian Projects:

- Pedestrian Safety Projects Consistent with SHSP Strategies (see below)

## Requirements:

- Funding Source: Federal (Highway Safety Improvement Program funds)
- Local match: 20 percent of total project cost as a cash match.
- Projects must match one of the top safety priorities and implement the strategies identified in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan:
  - Develop model processes to identify and prioritize high-incident locations and system-wide pedestrian safety issues;
  - Develop and evaluate model approaches to engineering built environments that accommodate safe pedestrian travel;
  - Develop and evaluate model approaches to improving pedestrian and motorist awareness and behavior, including education and enforcement efforts; and
  - Create partnerships among state, regional, and local stakeholders to develop action plans that address high-priority locations and system wide issues using comprehensive approaches to pedestrian safety.

## Contact:

MHSO Regional Traffic Safety Program contacts can be found at [http://mhso.mva.maryland.gov/SafetyPrograms/program\\_regional\\_traffic\\_program.htm](http://mhso.mva.maryland.gov/SafetyPrograms/program_regional_traffic_program.htm)

## *STATE FUNDING PROGRAMS*

These are State Highway Administration dedicated funding programs that support bicycle and pedestrian improvements on state roads. SHA internally identifies, designs and constructs many of the projects. Local communities can identify and request projects for SHA evaluation.

**ADA Retrofit (SHA Fund 33):** A fund to upgrade existing sidewalks, curb ramps, intersections and driveway entrances along state roadways to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

## Requirements:

- Fund 33's purpose is to retrofit existing, non-compliant sidewalks up to the latest ADA standards.
- Projects are not limited to Priority Funding Areas.

## Contact:

John Gover, SHA Innovative Contracting, 410-545-8766,  
Email: [wgover@sha.state.md.us](mailto:wgover@sha.state.md.us)

**Sidewalk Retrofit (SHA Fund 79):** A fund to construct missing sidewalk segments along State roadways to fill gaps within the pedestrian network. The missing segment must be located in an Urban Area (as defined by the Census). Local matching fund contributions may be reduced or eliminated for projects located in Designated Sustainable Communities, in a Priority Funding Area, or where SHA determines that there is a substantial public safety risk or significant impediment to pedestrian access.

Requirements:

- Local jurisdiction must provide public notice of the sidewalk project and citizens an opportunity to provide input; help secure right-of-way, easements, or right-of-entry agreements; and agree to maintain or repair the sidewalks after completion.
- The cost to construct or reconstruct a sidewalk shall be shared equally between the State and local government, except as provided below. If a sidewalk is located in a “Sustainable Community” per Housing and Community Development Article §§6-301 and 6-305, construction may be funded entirely by the state.
  - If a sidewalk is located in a Priority Funding Area and SHA determines that a substantial public safety risk or significant impediment to pedestrian access exists and the adjoining roadway is under neither construction nor reconstruction, sidewalk construction shall be identified as a system preservation project and may be funded 100 percent by the state.
  - If a sidewalk is located in a Priority Funding Area and requested by the local government, the construction costs may be split between the state (75 percent) and local jurisdiction (25 percent).

Contact:

Sanjay Kumar, SHA Highway Design, 410-545-8826,  
Email: [skumar@sha.state.md.us](mailto:skumar@sha.state.md.us)

**Community Safety and Enhancement Program (SHA Fund 84):** A fund for highway reconstruction and improvements along SHA roadways within urban centers that promote safety and economic development. Projects are generally requested by local jurisdictions in the annual transportation priority letter sent to MDOT.

Requirements:

- Local jurisdiction must agree to maintain sidewalks and other improvements after completion.
- Project limits must be located within a Priority Funding Area.

Contact:

Teri Soos, SHA Community Design, 410-545-8845,

Email: [tsoos@sha.state.md.us](mailto:tsoos@sha.state.md.us)

**Bicycle Retrofit (SHA Fund 88):** This is a fund to provide bicycle improvements along state roadways.

Requirements:

- Local jurisdiction must provide public opportunity to provide input and must help secure right-of-way, easements, or right-of-entry agreements.
- In cases of off-road improvements, such as a parallel or shared-use path, the local jurisdiction must agree to maintain improvements after completion.
- The parallel/shared-use path must be within 100 feet of a SHA roadway.
- If a shared-use path requested by a local jurisdiction is within a Priority Funding Area, the cost to construct shall be shared between the state (75 percent) and local government (25 percent).
  - If SHA determines that a substantial public safety risk or significant impediment to pedestrian access exists and the adjacent roadway is not under concurrent construction or reconstruction, SHA may opt to fund 100 percent of the construction, provided funding is available.
- If a shared-use path requested by a local jurisdiction is not within a Priority Funding Area, the construction cost shall be shared between the state (50 percent) and local government (50 percent).

Contact:

Luis Gonzalez, SHA Innovative Contracting, 410-545-8826,

Email: [lgonzalez@sha.state.md.us](mailto:lgonzalez@sha.state.md.us)

*ADDITIONAL STATE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES*

**Community Legacy Program (DHCD):** The program provides local governments and community development organizations with funding for essential projects aimed at strengthening communities through activities such as business retention and attraction, encouraging homeownership and commercial revitalization. Projects must be located within an approved Sustainable Community to be eligible for funding. Bicycle and pedestrian opportunities include streetscape improvements and as part of mixed-use developments.

Contact:

Kevin Baynes, DHCD Community Programs, 410-209-5823

Email: [baynes@mdhousing.org](mailto:baynes@mdhousing.org)

**Program Open Space (DNR):** The program consists of two components, a local grant component often called Localside POS and a component that funds acquisition and recreation facility development by the State. The local side component provides financial and technical assistance to local subdivisions for the planning, acquisition, and/or development of recreation land or open space areas.

Contact:

Program Open Space Local Support Staff contacts can be found at

<http://dnr2.maryland.gov/land/Pages/LocalSupport/Local-Support-Contacts.aspx>

**Community Parks and Playgrounds (DNR):** The program provides funding to restore existing parks and create new park and green space systems in Maryland's cities and towns. Flexible grants are provided to local governments which help them rehabilitate, expand or improve existing parks. Funding can help develop environmentally oriented parks and recreation projects, create new parks, or purchase and install playground equipment in older neighborhoods and intensely developed areas throughout the state.

Contact:

Community Parks and Playgroups Local Support Staff contacts can be found at

<http://dnr2.maryland.gov/land/Pages/LocalSupport/Local-Support-Contacts.aspx>

**Maryland Heritage Areas Financial Assistance Programs (MHT):** Designated Maryland Heritage Areas are eligible for various tax credits, grants and loans. These financial assistance programs support for a wide variety of historic preservation related activities. Bicycle and pedestrian opportunities involve inclusion in heritage tourism development and educational programs.

Contact:

Richard Hughes, Heritage Areas Program Administrator, 410-514-7685,

Email: [richard.hughes@maryland.gov](mailto:richard.hughes@maryland.gov)

## ADDITIONAL FEDERAL GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

**Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recover (TIGER) Grants (USDOT):** The TIGER Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the DOT to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve critical national objectives. The TIGER program enables DOT to examine a broad array of projects on their merits, to help ensure that taxpayers are getting the highest value for every dollar invested. In each round of TIGER, DOT receives many applications to build and repair critical pieces of our freight and passenger transportation networks. Applicants must detail the benefits their project would deliver for five long-term outcomes: safety, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, livability and environmental sustainability.

### Contact:

FHWA Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation, 202-366-0301,

Email: [TIGERgrants@dot.gov](mailto:TIGERgrants@dot.gov)

Website: <http://www.dot.gov/tiger>

**Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS):** The program extends and expands the benefits of the National Park Service by helping connect all Americans to their parks, trails, rivers, and other special places. When a community asks for assistance with a project, NPS staff provides free, on-location facilitation and planning expertise from conception to completion. Assistance can include visioning and planning, developing concept plans for trails, parks and natural areas, setting priorities and identifying funding sources.

### Contact:

RTCAP Maryland Support Staff can be found at

<http://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/contactus.htm> or

<http://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

**Federal Lands Access Program (FHWA):** The program is intended to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands. The program supplements State and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators. Bicycle and pedestrian opportunities include planning, design and engineering, construction, rehabilitation, and preventative maintenance of facilities accessing public lands.



Contact:

Frances Ramirez, Federal Lands Highways Program Coordinator, 202-493-0271,

Email: [frances.ramirez@dot.gov](mailto:frances.ramirez@dot.gov)

Website: <http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>

*ADDITIONAL PRIVATE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES*

There are a variety of other public and private grant opportunities available to fund bicycle and pedestrian projects. The specific project type is the first step to determining funding eligibility. Several examples are included below.

- **The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** (<http://www.rwjf.org/>) invests in grantees (e.g., public agencies, universities, and public charities) that are working to improve the health of all Americans. Current or past projects in the topic area “walking and biking” include greenway plans, trail projects, advocacy initiatives, and policy development.
- **The PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program** (<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/community-grants>) provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives.
- **The National Center for Safe Routes to School** (<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/funding/private-funding>) identifies ways for communities to solicit non-government funding for Safe Routes to School activities. The multiple benefits of SRTS programs, including the safety, health, environment and community impacts, often align with the interests of the local community.