



# Let's Go for a Walk!

**Walking is** a great way to get around your neighborhood and be healthy at the same time! Walking allows you to meet your neighbors and gives you an opportunity to see the area at a comfortable pace,

Some neighborhoods are better for walking than others. If you want to walk, or if you want to walk more, but you are not comfortable doing it in your neighborhood, this planning guide will help you improve conditions for walking.

One person or a small group with a mission can accomplish great things, so take steps to make your neighborhood more walkable and more livable.

## PLANNING GUIDE FOR A WALKABLE COMMUNITY

DEVELOPED BY

Minnesota Council on  
Physical Activity and Sports



MINNEAPOLIS  
HEART INSTITUTE  
FOUNDATION

## Getting Started

1

Review this planning guide for tips that make a walkable community.

2

Go for a walk in your neighborhood and fill out the "Walking Route Form." Use the sample form for ideas.

3

Take the action steps to make your community a walkable community.



# Walking Route Form:

Group Name Anytown USA Neighborhood Watch Group Date October, 2000

Walking Route Location Downtown Main Street to High School  
and Back along Lake Front

## Concerns

### Short Term Action Steps

### Long Term Action Steps

#### 1 Do you have room to walk?

- \* Sidewalks broken, cracked or blocked
- \* No sidewalks, paths or shoulders
- \* Snow or leaves cover the walking route

- \* pick another route for now
- \* tell city/county traffic engineers or public works department about specific problems
- \* ask neighbors to clear sidewalk or path

- \* write/petition city for walkways
- \* alert media to problem
- \* organize a community group to help rake or shovel

#### 2 Is it easy to cross streets?

- \* Traffic signals do not allow enough time to cross
- \* Crosswalks/traffic signals needed
- \* View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, plants, or snowbanks

- \* pick another route for now
- \* tell city/county traffic engineers or public works department about specific problems
- \* trim your trees or bushes that block the street and ask you neighbors to do the same

- \* request crosswalks/signals/parking changes at city meetings
- \* report illegally parked cars to the police
- \* request the public works department trim trees or plants, and clear snow

#### 3 Do drivers behave safely?

- \* Back-up without looking
- \* Drive too fast
- \* Speed up to make traffic lights, or drive through red lights

- \* pick another route for now
- \* set an example: slow down and yield to pedestrians
- \* report unsafe driving to police

- \* petition for more law enforcement
- \* organize a neighborhood speed watch program
- \* write letters to the editor or articles for your community paper

#### 4 Do walkers behave safely?

- \* Do not cross at cross walks or with traffic signal
- \* Do not look both ways before crossing
- \* Do not walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic

- \* educate yourself about safe walking
- \* report unsafe walking to police
- \* tell city/county traffic engineers or public works department about specific problems

- \* request signs promoting crosswalk use
- \* work with community groups to promote pedestrian safety
- \* organize community to identify safe walking routes

#### 5 Is the route pleasant?

- \* Needs grass, flowers, trees
- \* Scary dogs
- \* Not well lit
- \* Littered or dirty

- \* ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced
- \* report scary dogs to the police
- \* take a walk with a trash bag and pick up litter

- \* promote planting of trees, flowers, and bushes in your community
- \* work with the neighborhood crime watch group to increase lighting
- \* organize a community clean-up day

# Walking Route Form:

Group Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Walking Route Location \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Concerns

### Short Term Action Steps

### Long Term Action Steps

**1** Do you have room to walk?

**2** Is it easy to cross streets?

**3** Do drivers behave safely?

**4** Do walkers behave safely?

**5** Is the route pleasant?



## Tips to Encourage Walking in Your Neighborhood

Make sure the walking route is well lit and safe.

Walk with friends.

Know where the public phones are  
or bring a cellular phone.

If you walk after dark, bring a flashlight.

Wear clothing that makes you visible to drivers.

Be a friendly neighbor and  
acknowledge others along the route.

If people along the route have difficulty shoveling  
because of age or physical condition,  
take turns with neighbors to keep  
that portion of the sidewalk clear.

Consider a neighborhood cleanup day  
if the walking route has litter.

Mark walking routes with signs to give visibility to  
both the neighborhood and the walking routes.

Encourage neighborhood groups like  
senior or youth organizations and day care centers  
to use the walking routes.

Promote walking routes with the community crime  
watch association. More people walking in a  
neighborhood makes the area safer for everyone.

## Resource Guide

**National** Federal Highway Administration  
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Research Program  
HSR-20, 6300 Georgetown Pike  
McLean, VA 22101  
[www.tfhrc.gov](http://www.tfhrc.gov)

Partnership for a Walkable America  
National Safety Council  
1121 Spring Lake Drive  
Itasca, IL 60143-3201  
630/285-1121 or [www.nsc.org/walkable.htm](http://www.nsc.org/walkable.htm)

US Department of Transportation  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
NTS-21, 400 Seventh Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20590  
202/366-9832 or  
[www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/ped/](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/ped/)

Walkable Communities, Inc.  
320 South Main Street  
High Springs, Florida 32643  
904/454-3304 or [www.walkable.org](http://www.walkable.org)

**State** Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Pedestrian Coordinator, Kristie Billiar  
651/296-5269  
[kristie.billiar@dot.state.mn.us](mailto:kristie.billiar@dot.state.mn.us)

Minnesota Safety Council  
800/444-9150 or  
[www.mnsafetycouncil.org/crosswalk](http://www.mnsafetycouncil.org/crosswalk)

Minnesota Council on Physical Activity and Sports  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)  
Click on Health by Topic. Click on Physical Activity.

**Local** Local City Engineer and County Public Works  
Department (Check your local phone book)

County Health Department  
(Check your local phone book)