



Communities MOVING TOGETHER

A Guide to Facilitating Community-Led Walk Audits

Communities Moving Together was designed for organizations to train community members interested in improving safe, accessible physical activity opportunities in places where people live, work, learn, pray, and play. This guide helps communities to assess and enhance their physical environment by facilitating community-led walk audits.

Contents

Overview of Walk Audits	1
Six Key Steps to Facilitating Walk Audits	3
Other Resources	13
APPENDICES	15
Appendix A: Promotional Flyer Template	15
Appendix B: Sample Route Maps	16
Appendix C: Walk Audit Checklist	20
Appendix D: Action Planning Tool	21
Appendix E: Sample Walk Audit Report	22
Appendix F: Photograph and Media Release	23
Appendix G: Route Leader Training Slide Set and Notes	24



This guide was created by Steps to Health and Faithful Families Thriving Communities.

Steps to Health

Steps to Health is NC State University's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) program. The program offers a comprehensive approach to improving health and nutrition outcomes for limited resource people in North Carolina. First, in partnership with NC State Extension, it provides nutrition and physical activity education to youth and adults at qualifying locations. Second, the program works to improve policies, systems, and environments (PSE) around healthy eating and active living. PSE initiatives are based on the many factors that influence what people eat and how they choose to be active. From access to healthy food to the walkability of communities, people adopt certain health behaviors for a variety of reasons. The program works to positively influence the environments where people live, learn, work, shop, and play, so that the healthy choice becomes the easy choice.

Faithful Families Thriving Communities

Faithful Families Thriving Communities (Faithful Families) is a joint program of the NC Division of Public Health and NC State Extension that works in faith communities to promote healthy eating and active living for individuals, families, and local communities. This practice-tested health promotion program is open to all faith and religious traditions. Faithful Families trains and brings together health educators and Lay Leaders to co-teach a nine-session curriculum in faith-based settings. Over the course of the program, educators also work with faith communities to create new policies and make environmental changes that positively influence the choices that members make for their health. They may also participate in local health and active living initiatives that work to improve the quality of life for the broader community.





Overview of Walk Audits

What IS THE PROBLEM?

Maintaining an active lifestyle can reduce the risk for serious health problems such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. Unfortunately, many communities across the country have been designed primarily to support automobile transportation, rather than walking (Physical Activity Guidelines for American, 2nd Edition, 2018).

Why DO WALKABLE COMMUNITIES MATTER?

When the street environment provides crosswalks, sidewalks, designated bike lanes, streetlights, and easy connections to everyday destinations, it significantly increases the number of people that can safely walk, bike, and be active. In addition to improving people's quality of life, activity-friendly communities can also encourage more social interaction and economic development.

What IS A WALK AUDIT?

Walk audits are designed to bring people together to assess their neighborhood or town, and to brainstorm ways to make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to safely walk around their community. A walk audit is usually just one part of a bigger plan to improve the quality of life for people in that community.

Why DO A WALK AUDIT?

Conducting a walk audit can be a great start to making positive changes in the community. It gives community members an opportunity to intentionally experience how easy or difficult it may be to get around a particular area. Walk audits are often

done by using a checklist or rubric to consider street characteristics and conditions, and document barriers, positive features, and personal perceptions of the physical environment. The experience may encourage community leaders or policymakers to consider what improvements may be possible, and inspire the community to identify areas where changes are needed.

Who CAN PARTICIPATE IN A WALK AUDIT?

People of all ages and abilities in the community can and should take part in a walk audit. This approach helps to ensure that diverse perspectives are included in efforts to make improvements that benefit all residents.



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Six Key Steps to Facilitating Walk Audits

This guide outlines six key steps to consider when working with a community plan and leading a walk audit. Keep in mind that every community is unique, so the process may look a little different for everyone.





STEP 1: Gather community members and partners

The first step is to determine *who* will be part of these efforts. Whose voices should be present for discussions around community accessibility? Who are the leaders and decision-makers in the community? Are there local organizations or groups already advocating for changes to the physical environment?

Gather a team that includes:

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS. A community champion is someone who can navigate and build trust within a community. Champions are often trusted community members willing to take a visible advocacy role in the process. They will help lead these efforts by gathering support for the walk audit, recruiting participants, and advocating for positive changes once the walk audit is completed.

Partners may include, but are not limited to:

- Local health department
- Cooperative Extension
- Parks and recreation
- Local coalitions
- Health-related task force
- Transportation engineers
- Law enforcement
- Transportation Planners from Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations (MPO or RPO)
- Youth representation (e.g., Boys & Girls Club, 4-H)
- People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities
- Older adults

COMMUNITY LEADERS (OR OFFICIALS).

Support from community leaders is critical. Important community leaders may be faith leaders, members of a local organization or advocacy group, local school board representatives, or city council officials. They may help identify and connect with key community members, partners, and resources to support and sustain these efforts.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS. It is important to have participation from local residents. Participating community members should represent as many sectors as possible, including families with children, older adults, youth, persons with disabilities, and underserved populations. They may provide valuable insight into the conditions and experiences within and around their neighborhood.

COUNTY OR REGIONAL PARTNERS. Connect with partners at the county and regional level who may provide additional expertise, support, and resources.

For instance, it would be helpful to research and know

who oversees transportation plans, land-use policies, and school-site selection in the community or region. Municipal public works staff are also ideal participants, because they can speak to local regulations and best practices.



STEP 2: Identify route(s) and route leaders

With the team, identify which route(s) to assess and who will be trained as route leaders for the walk audit.

First, determine which area of the community the team would like to assess.

Consider a neighborhood or high-profile area that can demonstrate the types of changes that the group might like to see in their community. For instance, if the group is interested in making safer routes to schools, they might want to choose streets that students use to get to school.

The team may also consider an area where there is potential to:

- Reduce accidents between vehicles and pedestrians
- Make it easier for people to walk to shops, community centers, or libraries.
- Connect neighborhoods to open spaces or places for physical activity (such as parks or trails)
- Connect neighborhoods to places they might normally frequent (such as a faith community or department of human services)

Once the team has selected the area they would like to examine, identify the specific route(s) participants will assess during the walk audit.

Generally, walk audits should be used for routes that are less than a mile. Plan for participants to spend about 30 minutes per half mile surveying a route. Consider breaking participants up into several groups, which would allow the groups to audit two or more routes.

There are a number of tools available to visually map a route for route leaders and participants. Some of the most commonly used tools are Google Maps and Apple Maps (see sample route maps in Appendix B).

Then, determine who will serve as route leaders for the walk audit. While experience is always helpful in leading a walk audit, it is not necessary. Route leaders will receive training so that they have the information and tools needed to guide community members through an audit. They should join the team on pre-audit walk-throughs so that they become familiar with the route(s) that they will cover.

Each walk audit should have one route leader per group of five to ten people who will guide participants along the route.





STEP 3: Provide training for route leaders

Once the route leaders are identified, provide training to prepare them to conduct the walk audit. There are four key items to consider for a route leader training:

1. Create Route Map(s)

Creating a route map is a crucial step in preparing for a walk audit. This guide includes sample routes maps and instructions for creating routes in Google Maps (see Appendix B).

2. Identify the Walk Audit Tool

The Walk Audit Checklist (Appendix C) is just one of the many available resources for conducting walk audits. The checklist is a simple tool for examining the conditions of an identified route. Along with using this tool, encourage route leaders and participants to jot down notes and take photos throughout the route.

3. Deliver Route Leader Training

Use the training slide set and speaker notes (Appendix G) to provide an overview of the general purpose of walk audits and tips on how to use the walk audit tool. The slide set and notes are a helpful guide to leading this training, but make sure to include additional information specific to the community, such as outlines of the route(s) and other important planning and logistical details.

4. Preview Assigned Routes

After reviewing these slides, allow time for route leaders to preview their route before leading others on the day of the event. This way, route leaders can take pictures and notes of any specific aspects of the route they want to be sure to point out to the group. Encourage route leaders to identify at least four spots along the route that would be conducive for the group to stop for a brief group discussion about what they see and experience while walking the route. Try to look for shaded areas that are large enough for the group to comfortably stand and discuss existing problems.



STEP 4: Schedule and conduct walk audit

After the route leaders have been trained, it is time to schedule and hold the walk audit! The Route Leader Training Guide Slides and Notes (Appendix G) can be used to provide a brief training to walk audit participants on the day of the audit.

Think carefully about the time of year and time of day.

Try to choose a time that is convenient for the most participants. Remember that traffic likely varies throughout the day, so the team may want to consider how timing relates to the goals of the audit. For instance, if the team would like to assess routes that students take to school, then they should schedule the audit when children are most likely to be traveling between home and school. Walk audits generally take place during daylight, but it may be interesting for participants to consider how these routes would differ after dusk when working residents may be more likely to walk during weekdays (as it may reveal lighting and safety issues along the route).

Promote the walk audit widely.

This guide includes a promotional flyer template (see Appendix A). Promote the event on social media and in print media. Oftentimes, word-of-mouth is the most effective promotion strategy, so engage the team, route leaders, and community members in sharing the event.



Make efforts to engage community members with different ages and abilities.

The perspectives of all community members are valuable in a walk audit to ensure that it is representative of the whole community. This includes parents with young children, youth, older adults, or people who use a wheelchair or strollers.

Invite other key stakeholders to the walk audit, including:

- City manager, mayor or other civic leaders
- Staff from local or state transportation department
- School staff or parent-teacher organizations
- Advocacy or volunteer organizations
- Local health and wellness coalitions
- Business representatives
- City planners
- Emergency responders
- Parks and recreation staff

Gather necessary supplies for the walk audit, including:

- Copies of walking route maps and walk audit tool
- Attendance sign-in sheet (to track number of people who attended and to collect contact information)
- Name tags
- Clipboards
- Paper and pens
- Reflective vests
- Water bottles and healthy snacks
- Stroller or wheelchair (to consider if the route is accessible for all)
- Camera or smartphone
- Flip charts and markers
- Photo and media release (see Appendix F)

Think about safety on the day of the walk audit.

Encourage participants to wear comfortable clothes and walking shoes. If the route is particularly dangerous, consider using traffic safety cones to block off the walk audit area(s), or work with local law enforcement to assist with managing traffic.





Step 5: Plan next steps

Immediately following the walk audit is the ideal time to debrief with participants. The debrief can be a quick summary with a longer planning session scheduled in the future, or the team can build time during the walk audit to discuss ideas and potential solutions.

A member of the team or a route leader should facilitate the discussion. Assign a notetaker when engaging the group in dialogue.

During the debrief:

ASK participants to share their insights and observations from the audit. Make sure to allow time for the participants to reflect before sharing. If key decision-makers or stakeholders are present, make it a priority to note their feedback, as their opinions can potentially influence outcomes related to the audit.

Discussion topics may include:

- Identifying the highest priority areas for improvement (e.g., note any street names/intersections)
- Discussing observations related to:
 - **SIDEWALKS.** Were there missing sidewalks? Were the sidewalks too narrow; blocked or cluttered; poorly maintained; had missing streetlights?
 - **CROSSWALKS.** Were there missing or faded crosswalks? Did the crosswalks have a blocked view of oncoming traffic, or inadequate curb ramps or streetlights?
 - **SCHOOL ZONES.** Were there signs indicating crosswalks or school zone speed limits? Were there discolored, faded, or damaged signs?
 - **OTHER BARRIERS.** Were there speeding vehicles, high traffic volumes, wide roads, abandoned buildings, off-leash dogs, or dark corners? Were there limited destinations visible along the route?
- Identifying fixes ranging from “easy” or low-cost fixes (e.g., repainting a crosswalk) to “difficult” or expensive fixes (e.g., moving a telephone pole obstruction from a sidewalk).



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MAKE SURE to collect any completed surveys or walking audit assessments. Also consider asking participants to sign a “Photo and Media Release” (Appendix X) and request any photos that were taken during the walk audit.

COMPILE the feedback and develop an action plan with the team. This guide includes Action Planning Tool (Appendix D). Facilitating an action planning session is a great way to help communities identify clear steps, assign responsibilities, and outline a timeline for reaching goals.

After the debrief:

PREPARE a walk audit report that highlights the areas of concern, pictures and documentation, and suggestions for improvements that can be shared with elected officials, local government agencies, and the public. See a sample in Appendix E.

Consider including the following information in the report:



- **PURPOSE.** Why was the walk audit conducted?
- **LOCATION.** How was the area selected and why?
- **SPECIAL NEEDS** of community members (e.g., if there are a significant number of non-car households, non-drivers, children, older adults, and persons with disabilities)
- **DESCRIPTION** of outreach effort, including list of all participants
- **MAP** of the walk audit route
- **EXPLANATION** of issues to prioritize
- **IDEAS** and solutions for improvement
- **SUGGESTIONS** for next steps

THINK ABOUT who and where to share the report.

CONSIDER REACHING OUT TO:

Key local and state officials. Request to make a public presentation at the next planning commission meeting, town or city council meeting, county commissioner meeting, or relevant advisory board/committee meeting(s).

Agencies/entities/organizations that provide technical assistance, funding, and/or grant opportunities. Present to committees for state and/or regional metropolitan or rural planning organizations (MPO or RPO), local department of transportation staff, and/or division of parks and recreation.

Agencies concerned with public safety and health. Request time on meeting agendas to present findings to task forces, committees, school boards, public safety agencies, community healthcare systems, advocacy groups, and non-profit organizations to gain support. Present findings at school board or city council meetings. This can be a great opportunity to ask for support while ensuring that key decision makers have copies of the walk audit report to access for future opportunities or consideration.

Local foundations, healthcare foundations, and companies that can provide funding for walk audit fixes.

The findings and recommendations in the report could be used to:

- Engage local planning and transportation agencies to advocate for changes in the community.
- Provide data and recommendations that can be included in the local Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and/or the municipal Master Comprehensive Plan. For instance, recommendations, such as “paint a new crosswalk,” could be added to the next year’s budget when included in these types of plans.
- Advocate for a Complete Streets Policy in the community to ensure all future road projects consider the needs of all road users. Learn more about Complete Streets at CompleteStreetsNC.org.
- Create a Safe Routes to School or Safe Routes to Parks Plan. Learn more about these programs at SafeRoutesPartnership.org.
- Support grant applications for physical activity and walkable communities.
- Create a neighborhood action plan for walkable communities.
- Continue outreach efforts to the broader community and share ways for people to become involved in these efforts.
- Build and maintain support and momentum for community improvements.



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Step 6: Celebrate successes!

Don't forget to celebrate with the team, community, and partners! Share any progress that has been made so that the community can see the impact of the walk audit.

Here are a few ways to celebrate all of the work that went into the walk audit:

1. Send a personal thank you note to all the partners and stakeholders who were a part of the walk audit process, no matter their role—big or small.

2. Host a community event to raise awareness about the hard work of community members and stakeholders who worked to make sure the walk audit was successful, and get people out and moving in the new and improved space.

3. Continue to ensure there are safe, activity-friendly places for the community members by establishing Adopt-a-Street programs that help roads stay litter-free.

4. Use the result of the walking audit in grant applications to make route improvements or to offer more walk audit opportunities.

5. Host an “Open Street” event and show community residents what the route could look like with proposed changes by making temporary adjustments, such as setting up traffic cones to represent a potential sidewalk in the community.

6. Create events, activities, and ongoing programs to promote active transportation. These types of events can help to develop a stronger sense of community. Show residents that they can be part of creating walkable, livable places, and see the support for making these changes grow.

7. Continue working with stakeholders to ensure that progress is achieved and sustained. To continue raising awareness about the importance of walkability, consider writing an op-ed for the local news, or publishing a blog or social media post.



Other Resources



A Guide to Building Healthy Streets

Change Lab Solutions

changelabsolutions.org/product/guide-building-healthy-streets

Getting to Know Your Neighborhood with a Walk Audit [factsheet]

Safe Routes Partnership

saferoutespartnership.org/resources/fact-sheet/walk-audit-factsheet

A Guide to Wayfinding

Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina

eatsmartmovemorenc.com/resource/wayfinding-guide

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center

UNC Highway Safety Research Center

pedbikeinfo.org

walkinginfo.org

National Center for Safe Routes to School

saferoutesinfo.org

APPENDIX A. Promotional Flyer Template



Join [city, town, or neighborhood] for a Community Walk Audit

Date: [] Time: []
Place: Meet at []

A Walk Audit highlights parts of the community that need improvements to make it safer and easier for everyone to walk, bike and be active.

Take part and share your experiences, ideas, and recommendations!

You can help us understand the needs of [city, town, or neighborhood] and find the best solutions.

Light refreshments will be provided. Everyone is welcome!

Please wear comfortable clothing and walking shoes.

To sign up to participate, contact [contact's name] at [contact's phone number] or [contact's email address].

[social media handles, hashtag, and/or website information]



APPENDIX B. Sample Route Maps

Sample route maps for a walk audit in Weldon, North Carolina. Maps were created in Google Maps.

Route 1: Practice Route



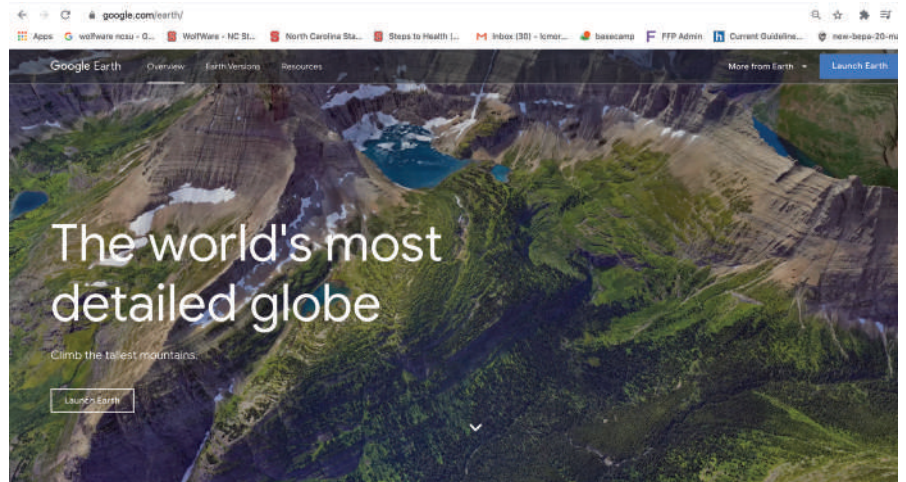
Route 2: Weldon Town Hall to Halifax Community College



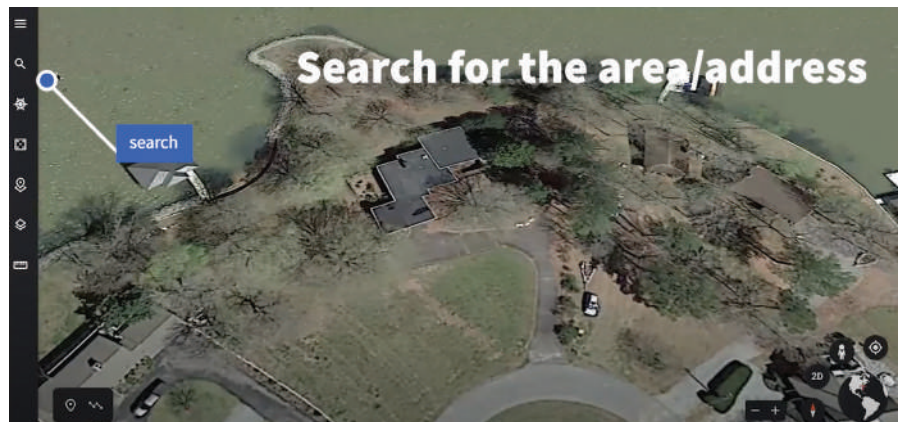
How to create a simple route map

A video of this process is available here: youtube.com/watch?v=5pLhYp8Zj9Y&feature=youtu.be

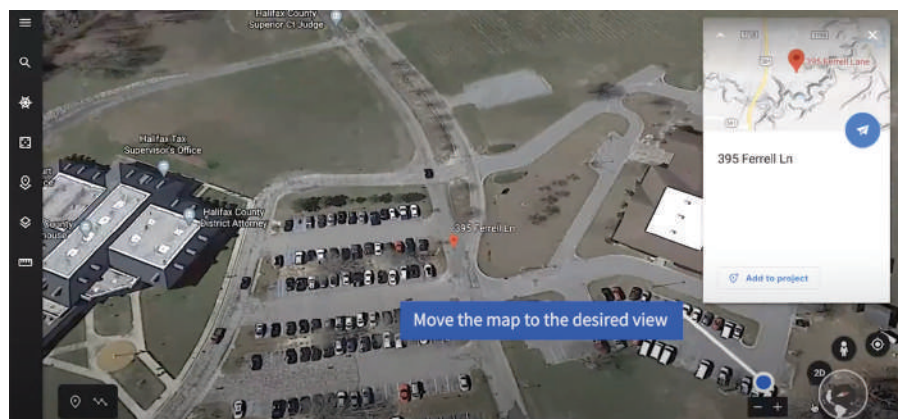
1. Go to Google Earth.
earth.google.com
2. Click "Launch Earth."



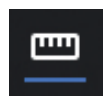
3. Search for the area/address.



4. Move the map to desired view using the zoom in/out and rotate functions.



5. Click on the ruler on the left sidebar.



- Click on starting point and continue to click along the route.



- Once you have completed the route, click the last stop twice.



- You can change the distance to miles (top right).
- Screen shot the desired area. (Using a Mac: hold "command", "shift", "4".)
- Open the screen shot wherever it saved and edit within the screenshot.



- Add stop sign shapes for places for discussion and star for starting point.

HINT: Copy/paste the first shapes so they will be the same size and color.

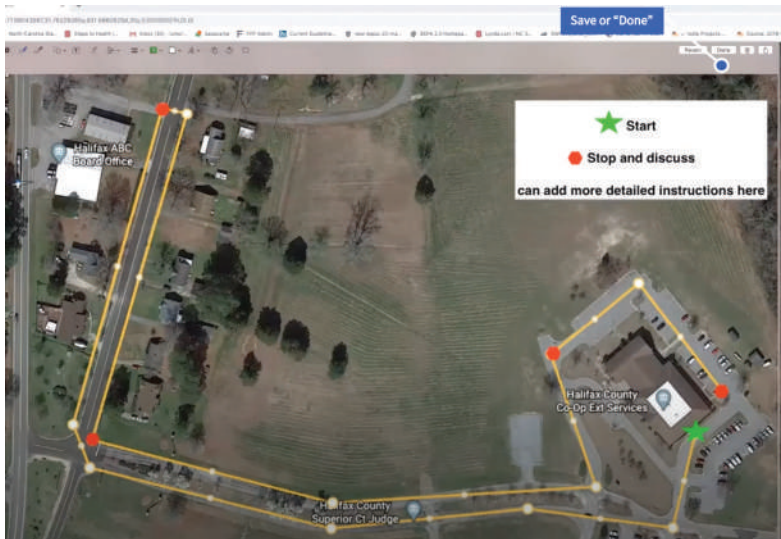
To copy/paste on a Mac: hold "command" "c" then hold "command" "v".



12. Add text box for map legend/directions



13. Save



EXAMPLE:



WALK AUDIT Checklist

LOCATION OF WALK AUDIT _____

DATE _____

Rating Scale

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5

many problems some problems good very good excellent

For each question listed below, please check the appropriate rating. At the end of the checklist, add up each of the ratings and see how walkable your community is.

1. Did you have room to walk?

- Yes No, please check all problems you saw:
- Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
 - Sidewalks were broken or cracked
 - Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
 - No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
 - Too much traffic
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____
- _____

Rating: (check one) 1 2 3 4 5

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

- Yes No, please check all problems you saw:
- Road was too wide
 - Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
 - Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
 - Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
 - Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
 - Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____
- _____

Rating: (check one) 1 2 3 4 5

3. Did drivers behave well?

- Yes No, please check all problems you saw:
- Backed out of driveways without looking
 - Did not yield to people crossing the street
 - Turned into people crossing the street
 - Drove too fast
 - Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through traffic lights
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____
- _____

Rating: (check one) 1 2 3 4 5

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules? Could you...

- Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers? Yes No
- Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets? Yes No
- Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks? Yes No
- Cross with the light? Yes No
- Locations of problems: _____
- _____

Rating: (check one) 1 2 3 4 5

5. Was your walk pleasant?

- Yes No, please check all problems you saw:
- Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
 - Scary dogs
 - Scary people
 - Not well lit
 - Dirty, lots of litter or trash
 - Dirty air due to automobile exhaust
 - Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____
- _____

Rating: (check one) 1 2 3 4 5

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

1. _____	21-25	Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.
2. _____	16-20	Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.
3. _____	11-15	Okay, but it needs work.
4. _____	6-10	It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.
5. _____	1-5	It's a disaster for walking!
Total _____		



Action PLANNING TOOL

Community: _____

NEED/OPPORTUNITY you are trying to address:

GOAL (or outcome)—the result you are trying to achieve to address the need/opportunity

Actions to Reach Above Goal	Person(s) Involved	Resources/Support Needed	Target Date for Completion

Action Planning Reminders

1. Involve a variety of stakeholders in the process, such as site leadership, staff, residents, or other site participants.
2. Create goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely (SMART).
3. Start with 1–2 goals. You can always create more once those are accomplished.
4. Use your action plan to keep on target to achieve established goals. Follow-up on your plan regularly to evaluate progress and maintain momentum.



APPENDIX E. Sample Walk Audit Report

Sample Walk Audit Report from Weldon, North Carolina. Report recreated in PowerPoint.

Weldon Walk Audit | June 2019



Background

In 2018, Weldon was 1 of 6 communities across the United States selected to participate in the Healthy Places for Healthy People program. As a result, the Town of Weldon worked with several partners to create an action plan that includes creating walkable, safe, and a vibrant downtown to improve health, protect the environment, and support economic growth.

To work towards their goal, NC State's SNAP-Education program, *Steps to Health*, organized a walk audit to assess the walkability of downtown Weldon in June 2019.

Over 30 individuals including community residents, business owners, and representatives from the Department of Public Health, Halifax Community College, the Town of Weldon, Partners in Faith, Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency participated in the walk audit.

Participants took 1 of 3 routes in the downtown area from Weldon Town Hall:

1. River Falls Park
2. Halifax Community College
3. Weldon Elementary Global Academy

Routes for Downtown Weldon Walk Audit



Results



The average walk audit scores given by 33 individuals indicate that the routes around downtown Weldon "need a lot of work" to create safe walking conditions for Weldon residents and visitors.

Audit Area	Issues Identified
Sidewalks: 88% of auditors found problems with the sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cracked/broken sidewalks Blocked by signs, poles, and overgrown vegetation No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
Road Crossings: 91% of auditors noted problems with road crossings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No marked crosswalks and faded crosswalks No curb ramps and ramps in need of repair
Walking Conditions: 91% of auditors noted unpleasant walking conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not well lit or no lighting Visually unappealing – dirty, lots of trash

Mapping Website: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1y0gC9ONGuYqqrzs88K8FNsKQkYJupNg&ll=35.993657674591674%2C-77.86250000000001&z=10>



To River Falls Park

- Start/stop sidewalks
- No curb
- No safe way to cross the street to the park if unable to use steps for the tunnel
- Accessibility issues
- Uneven walkways
- High traffic area
- Limited to no lighting



Issues and Barriers

- Manholes full of debris and trash
- Overgrown trees and bushes
- Cracked sidewalks
- Lack of adequate street lighting
- Fall/trip hazards
- Confusing and hard to read signage, dark signage
- Lack of sidewalks in places where people are walking (manmade walking trails)

To Halifax Community College

- No sidewalks
- No crosswalks
- No curb
- No signs
- Heavy traffic at high speeds
- Visual obstacles
- Limited to no lighting at night
- Lack of signage
- Not enough time to cross the street when using crosswalk



Potential Solutions

- Meeting with business owners
- Letter to business owners
- Inform residents of speed limit, PR campaign
- Bike and pedestrian plan
- Crosswalks and signals (repaint crosswalks) – involve children, youth, and adults
- Meet with Dept. of Transportation
- Monthly Community Beautification Committee

To Weldon Elementary Global Academy

- Broken and/or uneven sidewalks
- School light signals are not correct
- Overgrown vegetation blocking sidewalk
- Limited or no trashcans
- Lack of signage
- Faded crosswalks
- Accessibility issues
- Speeding drivers



Ideas & Opportunities

- Peanut Belt RPO support
- Data collection (surveys, traffic webcams, interviews)
- River Falls Park area beautification underway
- Host "Community Clean Up" days
- Students and community members paint crosswalks
- Consistent fish themed crosswalks
- Town of Weldon Quarterly Newsletter to include water bill
- Neighborhood canvassing – door to door engagement
- Identify community champions to increase communication

Contact: Lauren Morris, RD, LDN
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Halifax and Northampton County Centers
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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Photograph and Media RELEASE

I give permission to [Name of Organization] to take and publish photographs, video, audio or other impressions of my image or voice (collectively “photographs”). I understand that I will not be compensated for any photographs or other likeness that may be used in this capacity.

I give permission for my photographs or other likeness to be used by to [Name of Organization] and its affiliates without compensation for noncommercial news, advertising, publications, editorial, promotions and/or any other purpose in print and electronic media (including the World Wide Web) and to copyright the same. I hereby waive any right to inspect or approve the finished photographs or printed or electronic matter that may be used in conjunction with them now or in the future, whether that use is known to me or unknown, and I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising from or related to the use of the photograph.

I expressly release to [Name of Organization], its agents, officers, licensees and assigns from any and all claims which I may have for invasion of privacy, right of publicity, defamation, copyright infringement or any other causes of action arising out of the use, adaptation, reproduction, distribution, broadcast or exhibition of such photographs.

I have read the foregoing, and I fully understand the contents, meaning and impact of this release.

If the participant is under the age of 18, a parent or legal guardian must sign.

FULL NAME

PARENT FULL NAME

SIGNATURE

PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE

DATE



APPENDIX G. Route Leader Training Slide Set and Notes

Slide 1



Welcome! Thank you for being willing to serve as route leaders for our walk audit. Today, we will give a brief overview of walk audits and talk about how they can play a role in creating a more walkability community for people of all ages and abilities. We'll also review the walk audit tool that we'll be using and give you an opportunity to preview the route you'll be leading.

Slide 2



Research shows that regular physical activity leads to lower rates of Type II diabetes, heart disease, and other health problems. Unfortunately, many communities across the country have been designed for cars, rather than for people. When the street environment provides crosswalks, designated bike lanes, streetlights, easily accessible building entrances, and sidewalks that connect to recreational facilities, public transportation, and everyday destinations, it significantly increases the number of people that can safely walk, bike, and be active.

Slide 3



Think of a time when you've gone for a pleasant walk. What characteristics made you feel comfortable getting around?

When thinking about walkable communities, most characteristics relate back to these three key principles:

1. **Safety.** Are people protected from moving vehicles? Is crime a concern?
2. **Convenience.** Is there an easy, direct way to walk to a destination? Are there desirable destinations nearby?
3. **Comfort.** Do people who walk, bike, use strollers or assisted devices (such as wheelchairs or walkers) have a pleasant experience? Are there features like shade, convenient seating, lighting, or water fountains?

Conducting a walk audit is a useful way to examine the streets for these aspects.

Slide 4



A walk audit can bring people together to examine their neighborhood or town, and to brainstorm ways to make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to safely get around their community. They are often done by a group of people using a checklist or a simple rubric to consider street characteristics and conditions, and to document barriers, positive features, and personal perceptions of the physical environment. A walk audit is usually just one piece of a bigger plan to improve the quality of life for people in your community.

Slide 5



Conducting a walk audit can be a great start to making positive changes in the community. It gives people an opportunity to intentionally experience how easy or difficult it may be to get around a particular area. Walk audits serve as an opportunity for practical planning. By encouraging wide community input, it gives everyone the opportunity to actively participate in making changes that benefit people of all ages and abilities. Our hope is that this experience can inspire leaders or policy makers to consider what improvements might be possible, while also bringing the community together to brainstorm solutions and advocate for change.

Slide 6



Let's watch a short video to see what a walk audit looks like in action.

NOTE TO TRAINER: After watching the video, it's a good time to pause and ask if anyone has any questions. Also point out key points from the video, such as:

- It's helpful to scout routes ahead of time to look for teachable moments and any safety issues. Let route leaders know that they will have an opportunity to preview the route that they will be leading.
- It can take about an hour for one mile since the group will stop along the way to discuss and rate the experience.
- Everyone's participation and insights are valuable.
- It's important to come together after the walk audit is completed to talk about the experience and brainstorm ways the community can advocate for positive changes to their environment.

Slide 7



What is your role?

- Engage the community in creating safer and more active communities
- Lead and facilitate discussions during the walk audit
 - Encourage people to take photos
 - Encourage everyone to share their thoughts
- Share community concerns and suggested solutions
 - Take notes as people discuss their observations

Communities MOVING TOGETHER

A greater measure of success is achieved if community members participate in the process of creating safer and more active communities. Including community members in a walk audit gives them the opportunity to participate in efforts to improve their community, and provides an outlet to address concerns about community safety and walkability that previously they may not have been able to express.

Your role as the route leader is to engage the community. You can educate residents and walk audit participants on the benefits of active communities and how a walk audit supports them.

Each walk audit should have one route leader per group of five to ten people who will guide participants along the route. You will be in charge of stopping at certain points throughout the route to invite discussion on their experience. Participants should focus on the experience and be ready to share their observations. Encourage them to take photos, and invite everyone to share their thoughts and insights.

You can also play a supporting role in listening to the community's concerns and ideas for potential solutions, and helping bring those to light. It would be helpful to take notes as people discuss their observations and potential solutions from the walk audit.

Slide 8



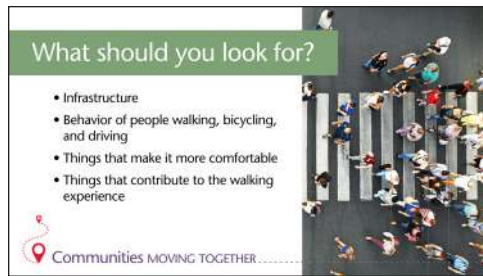
Using the Walk Audit Checklist

Communities MOVING TOGETHER

Let's look together at the tool we'll be using for our walk audit. Does anyone have any questions about how to use this tool?

NOTE TO TRAINER: This is where we suggest walking through the questions on the Walk Audit Checklist.

Slide 9



So what are some things you should look for when you're out on the walk?

One thing you should pay attention to is the infrastructure. Take a look at the physical environment and note any strengths or weaknesses.

Things to consider:

- **Are there sidewalks? How wide or narrow are they? Are their bumps or cracks?**
- **Are there crosswalks? Would it be easy for people of different ages and abilities to safely cross the street?**
- **Are there wayfinding signs? Are they easy to spot and read?**
- **Are there lights for when it gets dark out?**

Pay attention to the behavior of people walking, bicycling, and driving. Take note of the traffic flow, vehicle speed, and whether drivers are obeying traffic laws.

Things to consider:

- **How many people are walking or biking?**
- **Are people using strollers, carrying heavy bags, or using supportive mobility devices?**
- **Are bikers and drivers following traffic laws?**

Look for things that contribute to a comfortable walking experience. Understanding what feels comfortable and uncomfortable to people walking can help guide improvements and actions.

Things to consider:

- **Do people feel too exposed to traffic?**
- **Does the area feel desolate and unwelcoming?**
- **Are there street trees providing shade and the cozy feeling of a ceiling?**

Slide 10


The Routes and Details

[insert images of the routes]

[may also insert important details, such as:]

- Date and time of walk audit
- What time leaders should arrive
- How long they will have to lead participants on route
- Any materials or supplies they should bring


How to promote event throughout the community]




Communities MOVING TOGETHER

NOTE TO TRAINER: This is where we suggest spending time to review the route or route(s) selected with the route leaders. Pass out copies of the route maps and discuss any logistics relevant to the walk audit. This may include the date and time of the walk audit; what time leaders should arrive; how long they will have to lead participants on their route; any materials or supplies leaders should bring; and how leaders can help promote the event throughout the community.

Slide 11

 Tips and Reminders

- Identify at least 4 locations along route to stop for discussion with the group.
- Take pictures.
- Think about the perspectives of different people in your community.
- Not everyone will have the same opinion and that is OKAY.
- Be aware of surroundings and stay alert.



Communities MOVING TOGETHER

In a few minutes, we'll give you an opportunity to preview your route. We encourage you to take time today to identify at least four locations throughout the route, ideally where there's some shade, where you will stop for discussion with your group. On the day of our walk audit, you can use these stops as a space to answer the questions on the walk audit tool together, or just discuss general observations.

Be sure to take pictures during your preview today, and remind your participants to do the same during our walk audit. We also encourage you to try to think about the perspectives of all types of people who might go on this walk in your community—children, older adults, people with disabilities, and more. Bringing along a stroller or wheelchair during the walk audit is a good way to make sure you are mindful of how accessible the route is for the full community.

Remember that not everyone in your group will have the same feelings or opinions, and that is okay. The point of the walk audit is to hear the perspectives of the community, and then to brainstorm solutions that can accommodate most people.

And finally, make sure to stay alert and be aware of your surroundings. Keep an eye on traffic and the weather, and never feel like you need to continue the walk audit if things become unsafe for you and your group.

Slide 12



On the day of the walk audit, we'll come back together to debrief as a full group after walking our assigned routes. We'll spend a little time discussing everyone's experiences and work on identifying our next steps. This will be a very important part of the walk audit so that we can maintain momentum and start taking action towards creating a more walkable community. Please encourage everyone to share ideas during this time. Working together as a community is key to making improvements happen.

Slide 13



Does everyone understand their role as a route leader? Are there any other questions about the walk audit?

Thank you so much for being a leader! We look forward to hearing about everyone's walk audit experiences!

