

Neighborhood Walkability Checklist



Take this checklist on a typical walk (to school, a friend's house, work, school, the corner store) and share copies with friends. Note things that might discourage people from walking regularly and their locations. Score each with a 1 to 6.

1. Did you have room to walk? (6-room for 2 or 3 people; 1-barely enough for 1) Score: _____

Yes

No Common problems: No sidewalks or broken ones; sidewalks blocked with poles, signs, dumpsters; no paths or trails; no shoulders; ice or snow.

Comments, locations: _____

2. Was it easy to cross streets? (6-no problem; 1-it took forever and was scary) Score: _____

Yes

No Common problems: Roads too wide to get across; signals made us wait too long, or didn't give enough crossing time; needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals; parked cars, trees or other things blocked our view of traffic; needed curb ramps.

Comments, locations: _____

3. Was traffic a problem? (6-didn't notice it; 1-lots of cars, too fast, too close) Score: _____

No

Yes Common problems: There were too many cars, or traffic was too fast. Drivers backed out of driveways without looking; did not yield to pedestrians, turned toward people crossing side streets; drove too fast, sped up to get through traffic lights; stopped in or blocked crosswalks.

Comments, locations: _____

4. Did you feel safe? (6-I'd walk alone, anytime; 1-scary, even with others, daylight) Score: _____

Yes

No Common problems: Saw suspicious activity or people; no apparent houses, stores or other places to go in case of trouble; no public telephones; aggressive dogs; too dark; too few other pedestrians—too little activity on the street.

Comments, locations: _____

5. Was it a pleasant place to walk? (6-I'd love to go back; 1-no reason to be there) Score: _____

Yes

No Common problems: Needs more grass, flowers, or trees, water fountains, shade, benches; too dark, dirty; no art, natural, architectural, or historic features. Few desirable destinations (stores, restaurants, a library, post office, schools, bus or subway stops).

Comments, locations: _____

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re: activity
inspiring more physically active families
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TOTAL: _____

Check your score:

- 26 – 30:** Terrific. You live in a great walking community.
- 21 – 25:** Good. But focus on trouble spots.
- 16 – 20:** Fair. Get your neighbors and elected officials involved.
- 15 or less:** You need help—it's no fun walking there, and it needs work.

Making the world more walkable

If your walking route scored poorly think about taking action. Share your findings with elected officials (for example, the mayor's office or city council) and public services. Start with the department of public works, transportation and police departments. Let them—and the media—know about specific trouble spots. Also, get out and fix what you can. Here are some simple things you can do; urge family and friends to join your efforts:

Do it yourself.

- **Select better, safer routes to walk if necessary.** But that's not enough!
- **Trim hedges or trees** that block sidewalks or the view at a crosswalk.
- **Plant beautifying trees and flowers** if you have property abutting sidewalks or trails.
- **Organize a neighborhood clean-up day**, or just take a bag and pick up trash on your normal walking routes. Always clear your sidewalk of snow or debris.

- **Be a considerate driver.** Set an example: drive at safe speeds in neighborhoods, let pedestrians cross at intersections, don't stop in crosswalks.
- **Notify the animal control officer of problem animals**, and the police of suspicious activity. Report street or signal lights which are out to the department of public works.

Change your community.

- **Speak up at governance and planning meetings.** Demand bicycle and pedestrian friendly planning, engineering, and policies.
- **Talk to your School Community Council, principal or community association.** Ask about starting a committee for active and safe routes.

*Be a role model: walk somewhere every day.
Encourage others with your actions.*

(Adapted from the checklist of the Partnership for a Walkable America; www.walkinginfo.org)

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