Walk Friendly Communities

An Introduction to Walk Friendly Communities

Carl Sundstrom, PE, Program Specialist, PBIC
Vivian Coleman, RLA, AICP, Pedestrian Program Manager, Charlotte Department of Transportation

Tuesday, October 19, 2010 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT
Today’s Presentation

- Introduction and housekeeping
- **Audio issues?** Dial into the phone line instead of using “mic & speakers”
- **PBIC Trainings and Webinars**
  - http://www.walkinginfo.org
- **Registration and Archives at**
  - http://www.walkfriendly.org/webinar.cfm
- **Questions at the end**
Webinar outline

- About Walk Friendly Communities
- Community Assessment Tool
- Pilot testing
- Charlotte, NC experience
- Key dates
- Discussion
About WFC

- National program for towns and cities
- Similar to the Bicycle Friendly Community program
- www.WalkFriendly.org
About WFC

- Funding
  - FHWA
  - FedEx
  - CDC
  - Lots of valuable input from leading professionals
About WFC

- Goals and benefits:
  - Encourage walkable communities
  - Provide a framework for walkable communities
  - Recognize communities
    - Raising local and national awareness of livability and walk-friendliness
  - Educate communities
    - Through resources & applicant feedback
  - Increase visibility of pedestrian issues
About WFC

- Community recognition
Assessment tool development

- Designed to comprehensively assess applicant communities for walk-friendliness
- Provides information and resources to assist in improving walkability
- First step
  - Literature review
  - Evaluating the transferability of existing programs to WFC
Assessment tool development

- WFC includes two advisory panels
  - APBP technical advisory group
    - 10 members
    - Diverse panel of engineers, planners, & advocates
    - Community level
  - National advisory group
    - 18 organizations
    - Includes representation for public health, older pedestrians, accessibility, advocates, children, environment, engineers, and more
Assessment tool details

- Divided into eight sections:
  - Community Profile
  - Status of Walking
  - Planning
  - Education & Encouragement
  - Engineering
  - Enforcement
  - Evaluation
  - Additional Questions
Assessment tool details

- Each section includes an introduction about how it relates to walkability.
- Each question incorporates:
  - Definitions
  - A rationale as to why it was included
  - Relevant research, tools, guides, and case studies that give communities ideas for improving in this area.
Assessment tool details

- Several types of questions
  - Provide function for links and documents
  - Questions serve as prompts
- Encourage communities to think broadly
  - Statewide or national programs
Please describe any Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programming being implemented in your community in the space provided below…

- Walk to School Day/Week
  
  Definition: Walk to School Day is an international event that takes place annually in October. Schools from all over the country plan special activities to encourage students to walk to school. This special event can be a great way to start a Safe Routes to School program.

- Walking Wednesdays

  .
  .
  .
Assessment tool details

Rationale: The presence of sidewalks in a community is associated with higher levels of walking and physical activity (Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 2004; Fulton, Shisler, Yore & Casperson, 2005; Institute of Medicine, 2005; Saelens & Handy, 2008). Requiring developers to build sidewalks in conjunction with new construction is an effective and efficient way to create a comprehensive sidewalk network...
Assessment tool details

- **Resources:** Click [here](#) to learn more about planning for transit and walking or see how [Washington, D.C.](#), [New Jersey](#), and [New York City](#) are improving walking and bicycling conditions for transit users. This [case study](#) describes how Cleveland, Ohio prioritized bus shelter improvements.

See this [study](#) to learn more about factors affecting pedestrian route choices to transit.

This Federal Highway Administration’s [Pedestrian Safety Guide for Transit Agencies](#) provides information on identifying and improving pedestrian safety and access issues.
Pilot testing

2 rounds

– 1st round:
  • Looking for information on:
    – The balance of beneficial information and ease-of-use
    – Benefit to the applicant
  • Completed by APBP Advisory Group members

– 2nd round:
  • Online application testing
Pilot testing

1st round communities (APBP members)

Cedarburg, WI
Davidson, NC
Orlando, FL
Pilot testing

2nd round communities (national call)

Wilsonville, OR
Santa Barbara, CA
Ann Arbor, MI
Cambridge, MA
Charlotte, NC
St. Petersburg, FL
Pilot testing

- Lessons learned
  - Application completion time ~20 hours
  - Some questions are more applicable to larger communities
  - Interest in the program
Pilot testing

Charlotte, NC experience

Vivian Coleman, AICP, RLA

Pedestrian Program Manager
Charlotte Department of Transportation
vcoleman@charlottenc.gov
City’s philosophy changed!

Transportation investments can be used to move people and create better places…13% of all land is streets!
Key dates

- Call for applications: November 1, 2010
- Applications close: December 15, 2010

Community Assessment Tool available at www.WalkFriendly.org
Questions and discussion

Thank you for your time!

Carl Sundstrom
sundstrom@hsrc.unc.edu
919.843.4963

www.WalkFriendly.org
Thank You!

⇦ Archive at
http://www.walkfriendly.org/webinar.cfm

⇨ Downloadable and streaming recording, transcript, presentation slides

⇨ Questions?

⇨ E-mail Carl Sundstrom at sundstrom@hsrch.unc.edu

⇨ E-mail Vivian Coleman at vcoleman@ci.charlotte.nc.us