



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
PARKS BOARD
REGULAR AGENDA
of
September 19, 2024**

Notice is hereby given that the Parks Board of the City of La Marque, Texas will conduct a **Regular Meeting** on **September 19, 2024**, beginning at **6:00 PM** at **1109-B Bayou Road La Marque, Texas as well as via video-conference hosted through Zoom** (**bczoom.cityoflamarque.org**). In accordance with Section 551.127(b) of the Texas Local Government Code the presiding officer and a quorum of the La Marque Parks Board intend to be and will be physically present at 1109-B Bayou Road, La Marque, Texas. This location will be open to the public.

The Board will meet for the purpose of considering the following agenda:

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
4. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION
LIMITED TO THREE MINUTES PER PERSON

Comments from the public will be heard at this time. Any person with city-related business who has signed up may speak to the Parks Board (limited to three (3) minutes). If wishing to speak give the Chairperson or presiding officer your full legal name and the item you wish to speak about. In compliance with Texas Open Meeting Act, the Board may not deliberate on comments. Personal attacks will not be allowed, and personnel matters should be addressed to the City Manager during normal business hours. *Press *6 to mute or unmute if you are participating by telephone, press the unmute button if attending via zoom on a smartphone, tablet or computer, or stand if attending in person, and the Chairperson will call on you in turn.*

5. FINANCIAL REPORTS
 - 5.I. Parks Fund - July 2024 (81)
 - 5.II. Parks Board CIP Fund (66)

6. REPORTS

submitted reports to update the Parks Board and Community on the standard operations of the City, reports can be acknowledged as whole or discussed at the pleasure of the Parks Board.

6.I. City Manager Report

6.II. Parks Report

7. PUBLIC HEARING

Conduct Public Hearing to hear public input on:

7.I. AARP Community Challenge Grant - Bike Audit Project

8. OLD BUSINESS

Items presented to the Parks Board for discussion and possible action:

8.I. Considering Designing a Playset with GameTime Grant

9. NEW BUSINESS

Items presented to the Parks Board for discussion and possible action:

9.I. Assigning Duties for Bayou Fest Participation

9.II. Approving up to \$1100 for Bayou Fest activities

9.III. Approving Shirts for Bayou Fest in the amount of \$270

9.IV. Discussing the AARP Community Challenge Grant - Bike Audit Project

9.V. Considering the incorporation of ADA Accessories into Local Parks

9.VI. Considering the Installation of a GameTime Playtrail Bee at Walter Feigle Park

9.VII. Authorizing an Application Submission for Houston-Galveston Area Council Parks and Natural Area Certification

9.VIII. Applying to become a recognized Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation

9.IX. Applying to become a Certified Texas Bird City

9.X. Applying for Membership with the Native Plant Society of Clear Lake Chapter

9.XI. Authorizing the Purchase of Candy for Holiday Events

9.XII. Considering the Boards and Commission Ethics Policy

9.XIII. Rescheduling the Regular Parks Board meeting from October 17, 2024 to October 10, 2024

9.XIV. Considering the Wildlife Habitat Federation Conservation Assessment at Mac McGaffey Highland Bayou Park

10. REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Requests by Parks Board Members for items to be placed on future Parks Board agendas and announcements on city events/community interests TEX. GOV'T CODE §551.415. (b), "items of community interest" include: (1) expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence; (2) information regarding holiday schedules; (3) an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen, except that a discussion regarding a change in the status of a person's public office or public employment is not an honorary or salutary recognition for purposes of this subdivision; (4) a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body (5) information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the municipality or county; and (6) announcements involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the municipality or county that has arisen after the posting of the agenda

11. ADJOURNMENT

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the above notice of meeting was posted at 1109-B Bayou Road, La Marque, Texas on September 13, 2024 by 12:00 p.m.

Kasey Lott
Deputy City Clerk



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
PARKS DONATION FUND 81
July 2024**

	Donations			Parks	
	Total Donations Received	50% PARKS Donation Allocation	50% KLMB Donation Allocation	Interest	Expenses
October 2023	2,032.00	1,016.00	1,016.00	141.81	5,075.33
November 2023	1,220.00	610.00	610.00	79.39	2,120.70
December 2023	966.00	483.00	483.00	77.59	1,621.48
January 2024	1,500.00	750.00	750.00	62.11	7,732.45
February 2024	1,268.00	634.00	634.00	59.88	10,620.42
March 2024	1,258.00	629.00	629.00	83.74	-10,000.00
April 2024	1,272.00	636.00	636.00	91.91	2,500.00
May 2024	1,276.00	638.00	638.00	85.30	868.70
June 2024	422.00	211.00	211.00	87.38	12,248.30
July 2024	2,112.00	1,056.00	1,056.00	92.24	-5,592.71
August 2024		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
September 2024		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	\$ 13,326.00	\$ 6,663.00	\$ 6,663.00	\$ 861.35	\$ 27,194.67

BEGINNING CASH & INVESTMENT BALANCE 6/30/2024

\$16,233.48

REVENUES

Donations	1,056.00
Additional donations	0.00
Interest on Investments - July 2024	92.24
Total Revenues	\$1,148.24

EXPENSES

<u>Date/ Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	
7/23/2024- CORRECTION	RECLASS- Concrete picnic pads	-2,850.00
7/23/2024- CORRECTION	RECLASS- Bike racks	-2,776.00
7/25/2024 Mary Limones	Life and Liberty-Pet Costume items	33.29
Total Expenses		-\$5,592.71

ENDING CASH & INVESTMENT BALANCE 7/31/2024

\$22,974.43



CITY OF LA MARQUE
PARKS SURCHARGE FUND 66
July 2024

BEGINNING CASH & INVESTMENT BALANCE 6/30/2024		\$758,722.99
PARKS SURCHARGE RECEIVABLE		\$43,847.91
REVENUES		
Parks Surcharge		16,642.71
Total Revenues		\$16,642.71
EXPENSES		
<u>Date/ Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	
7/23/2024 NVB Playgrounds	Bike rack	2,776.00
7/23/2024 Cleaon Jolly	Picnic concrete pads	2,850.00
Total Expenses		\$5,626.00
ENDING CASH & INVESTMENT BALANCE 7/31/2024		\$813,587.61

Public Notice: City of La Marque Bike Audit Project - AARP Community Challenge Grant

PUBLIC NOTICE
CITY OF LA MARQUE
AARP COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT-BIKE AUDIT PROJECT

PUBLIC NOTICE

The City of La Marque hereby gives notice that it has been awarded an AARP Community Challenge Grant to conduct a comprehensive bike audit within the City of La Marque. This project aims to assess current biking infrastructure, promote safe biking practices, and identify necessary improvements to make La Marque a more bike-friendly city for residents of all ages and abilities.

Public comments on the proposed project are invited. A public meeting to discuss the bike audit project and solicit input will be held on **September 19, 2024**, during the Parks Board meeting at **6:00 PM** at **City Hall, Council Chambers, 1111 Bayou Road, La Marque, TX**. All interested parties are encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion.

The City of La Marque values public feedback and encourages community members to share their experiences, concerns, and suggestions regarding the proposed project.

This notice serves to inform the public that the City of La Marque is committed to ensuring full compliance with all applicable regulations and public participation requirements.

For comments or more information, please contact Tonia Griffin at trenegriffin01@gmail.com

Issued by the City of La Marque, Texas. 9/12/2024

List of Members Volunteering time at BayouFest

Parks Board Chairperson - Michael "Rock" Bock

Mark Cook-off spots (Oct. 12)

Setup Light plants (Oct. 17 & 18)

Oversee Cook teams and Vendor set-up (Oct.17 & Oct. 18)

Pickleball Tournament set-up by Tige Cornelius

Cornhole Tournament set-up by Chase Haulbrook

Kids Fish by Rusty Hook

Mutton Bussing by Lonesome Dove 4-H club

Opening Ceremony

Parks Board Vice-Chairperson - Tonia Griffin

Crafts (Oct.19) with Amy (Library)

Board Member - Mike Wev

BBQ Cookoff (Oct. 18 & 19)

BBQ Judging (Oct. 18)

Board Member - Tamara Smith

Mark Cook-off (Oct. 12) assisting Rock

Board Member - Mary Limones

Assist Backstage with Band and their needs (Oct. 18 & Oct. 19)

Parking-oversees her volunteer group-(Oct. 18 & 19)

Activities at BayouFest

Cornhole Tournament

Pickleball Tournament

Kids Que

Kids fish

AARP Bike / Walk Audit Toolkit and Examples

Bike Audit Toolkit <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-bike-audit-toolkit.html>- Attached

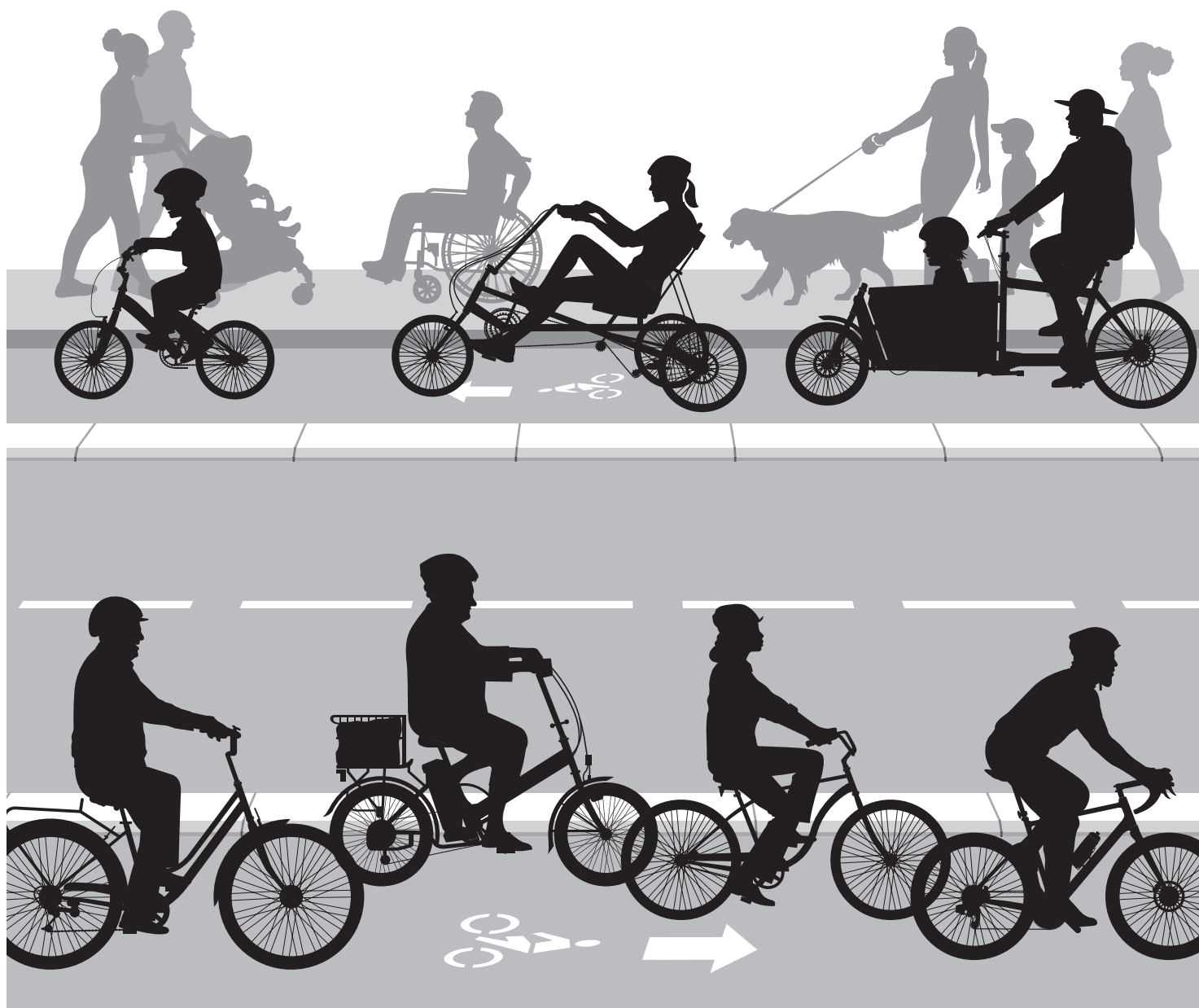
Example: The pleasure in leading an AARP Walk Audit – Bike Walk Greenville - Attached

A good YouTube directed at the AARP Bike Audit:
https://youtu.be/JIGZzHoAif0?si=Jx3xhYTJUed5iHm_d

Attached is a draft walking audit from another city so that you can see what they have going on. Attached

Bike Audit Tool Kit

A self-service guide for assessing
a community's bikeability



Worksheets available at
AARP.org/BikeAudit

By **AARP** and
The League of American Bicyclists





AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to the more than 100 million Americans 50-plus and their families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment.

601 E Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20049
Web: [AARP.org](https://www.aarp.org)
Toll-Free English: 1-888-OUR-AARP (1-888-687-2277)
Toll-Free Spanish: 1-877-342-2277
International: 1-202-434-3525
TTY Users, Dial 711: English: 1-877-434-7598
Spanish: 1-866-238-9488
X: @AARP | **Facebook:** /AARP

AARP Livable Communities

The AARP Livable Communities initiative supports the efforts of local leaders and residents throughout the nation to make their communities more livable and age-friendly.

Web: [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable)
Newsletter: [AARP.org/LivableSubscribe](https://www.aarp.org/LivableSubscribe)
Email: Livable@AARP.org
X: @AARPLivable | **Facebook:** /AARPLivableCommunities

The League of American Bicyclists



Since 1880, the League of American Bicyclists has been people-powered, with a goal to make bicycling safer and easier as a means of transportation and recreation. Today, the League continues to improve lives and strengthen communities through bicycling.

We are more than 200,000 members and supporters strong with more than 1,000 state and local advocacy groups and bike clubs, as well as thousands of businesses, universities and communities together leading the movement to create a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone.

1612 K Street NW, Suite 1102, Washington, DC 20006
Web: [BikeLeague.org](https://www.bikeleague.org)
Phone: 1-202-822-1333
Newsletter: [BikeLeague.org/Subscribe](https://www.bikeleague.org/Subscribe)
Email: BFA@BikeLeague.org
X: @BikeLeague | **Facebook:** /LeagueAmericanBicyclists
Instagram: @BikeLeague
YouTube: @BikeLeagueVideo
LinkedIn: [League-of-American-Bicyclists](https://www.linkedin.com/company/League-of-American-Bicyclists)

Many of the communities pictured in this publication have a connection to the following programs:
Learn more on pages 28 and 29.

AARP Community Challenge: [AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](https://www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge)
AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities: [AARP.org/AgeFriendly](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly)
The League of American Bicyclists' Bicycle Friendly America Awards: [BikeLeague.org/BFA](https://www.bikeleague.org/BFA)

Cover illustration by Colin Hayes

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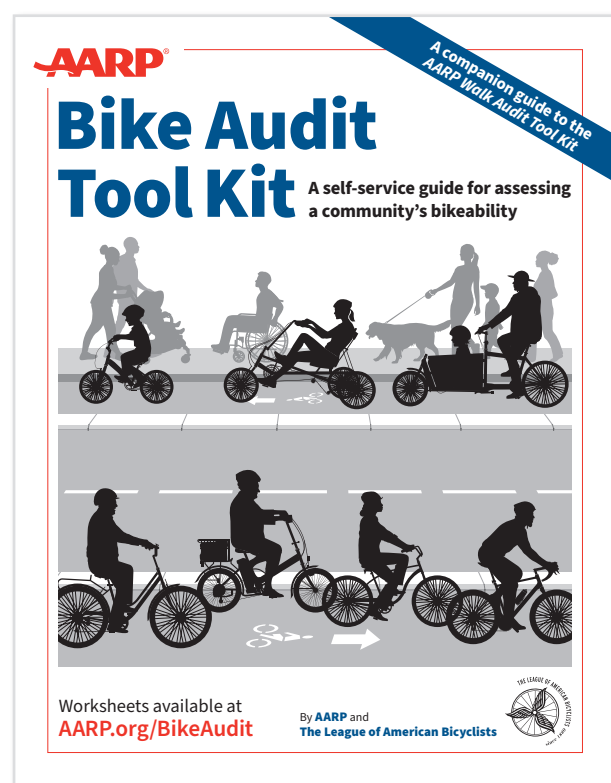
HOW TO USE THE **AARP** Bike Audit Tool Kit

The **AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit** is a companion guide to the popular **AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit**. The easy-to-use, image-filled guides inform and enable community members to assess the safety of their streets for all users.

Produced by **AARP** and the **League of American Bicyclists**, the bike audit publication can be used by individuals, local leaders, organizations and others concerned about the safety and bikeability of a street or neighborhood. The guide is organized into three parts, and the print edition contains a back cover pocket for storing the tool kit's worksheets. (Photocopying the worksheets for sharing is encouraged!)

Visit **AARP.org/BikeAudit** and **AARP.org/WalkAudit** to download or order the free publications, access the worksheet collections and find related content.

When new materials are created, we'll spread the news through the free, weekly **AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter**. Sign up at **AARP.org/LivableSubscribe**.



Introduction

THE PROBLEM: Bicycling is an activity and transportation option for people of all ages, ranging from toddlers on tricycles to older adults on a variety of bike types — including tricycles!

But too many streets in the United States are designed exclusively or almost exclusively for automobile travel, with little consideration given to the needs of people who walk, roll or ride a bike.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 8.3 percent of households do not own or have access to a motor vehicle and must rely on biking, walking and/or public transit to get around. As noted by Smart Growth America in its annual “Dangerous by Design” report, older adults and people in low-income neighborhoods are struck and killed by motor vehicles at much higher rates than other population groups.

Among the many factors that discourage or prevent people from biking is a lack of access to dedicated, connected bikeways or slow-speed streets.

A SOLUTION: Local leaders and residents can help make their communities safer for cycling by conducting “bike audits” to identify roadways that should be bikeable but aren’t. A bike audit can help inform local decision-making by prioritizing areas in need of improvement, by educating community members about street design, by creating secure and convenient bike parking, and by enabling bicyclist access to transit. Participating in a bike audit can encourage people to become champions for local change.

THE TIME COMMITMENT: A targeted, single-location bike audit can take less than an hour. Or an audit can become a multihour, mobile event. The time involved is entirely up to the “auditor” or audit team. ■

Contents

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- PART 2** Information and Instructions 10
- PART 3** Taking Action 18

Bicycle Friendly Communities Are Age-Friendly Communities

A BIKE AUDIT IS ... an activity in which participants observe and evaluate the bikeability of a location to identify and document if and how cyclists can safely travel along a street, navigate an intersection and get from point A to B and C and so on.

A BIKE AUDIT CAN ...

- Gather input about community infrastructure needs and investments
- Educate residents about design elements that support safety
- Empower community members and local leaders to become agents of change

A BIKE AUDIT CAN LEAD TO ...

- Better connected bike networks
- Healthier, more active lifestyles
- More options for people to get around
- Safer streets for people of all ages
- Economic growth
- Cleaner air and reduced carbon emissions

WHO CAN DO A BIKE AUDIT?

- *Everyone and anyone!* You don't need to ride a bike to help conduct a bike audit!

The vast majority of the nation's roadways were designed to move cars fast, making far too many streets uninviting or outright dangerous for cyclists. In a livable community, people of all ages and abilities can safely cycle to get where they need or want to go. To do so, communities are:

- Creating bikeway networks that are connected, welcoming and have cycling amenities, such as bike parking
- Installing dedicated and appropriate walk-bike infrastructure by adding sidewalks and dedicated bike lanes and implementing roadway changes to reduce motor vehicle speeds and discourage reckless driving
- Passing policies that promote the construction of bike infrastructure and other mobility solutions

Bikeability is an important issue to **AARP** and the **League of American Bicyclists** because bicycling is a way for people of all ages to be physically active and get where they need and want to go.

Of significant concern is the fact that older adults — along with people of color and residents of low-income areas — are disproportionately the victims of fatal motor vehicle crashes involving nondrivers such as pedestrians and cyclists.

The **AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit** provides community leaders and residents with a way to identify unsafe streets, gather and document needed information and observations, and then advocate for solutions to make streets safer for all users. ■

A Town Trail for All

The idea for the Stowe Recreation Path dates to 1964, when the traffic on Mountain Road — the main byway between the village of Stowe, Vermont, and the nearby resorts — became unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. It took two decades of fundraising, land acquisition (much of it by donation) and construction for the initial stretch of the now 5.3-mile paved trail to open. Restaurants, shops

and other businesses soon set up between the road and the "Rec Path," as it's locally known, serving drivers as well as the trail-using pedestrians, cyclists, runners, skaters, dog walkers and people who use wheelchairs or rolling walkers (pictured, far right). Autumn attracts visitors seeking the surround of changing leaves. Winter brings snowshoers and cross-country skiers.

Stowe, Vermont



Bicycle-Friendly Streets Are Good for People Who Don't Ride Bikes

Streets are busy spaces. And most streets have been designed for use only by cars. Drivers, cyclists, pedestrians and sometimes even public transit providers are all jockeying for access.

As a result, everyone on the street is at risk of injury or worse. The best solution (and key to reducing conflicts and injuries) is to provide a space for each type of roadway user.

That means safe, separated bike lanes for cyclists, sidewalks for pedestrians, travel lanes for motor vehicles and designated waiting and deboarding spots for transit users.

Other benefits for everyone:

- Creating safe, convenient ways for getting around by bike provides people with a reliable and needed transportation option.
- According to “Bicycling Benefits Business,” a 2021 report from the League of American Bicyclists, bicycling-related activities contribute \$133 billion to the national economy, support more than 1 million jobs and bring in nearly \$18 billion in tax revenue.
- Safe, multi-modal connections to recreational destinations help support local economies, especially in rural communities. In urban areas, moving people out of cars and onto bikes reduces congestion.
- Fume-free bike trips are good for the environment.

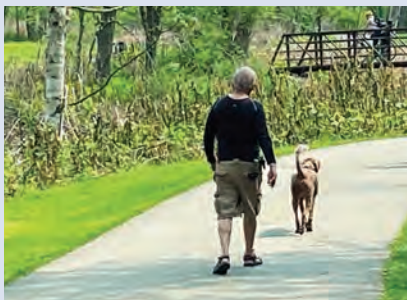
Streets that meet the needs of all users are often referred to as “Complete Streets.” Learn more on page 14.



▲▼ St. Joseph's Boulevard was a four-lane, one-way road linking South Bend, Indiana's downtown and riverfront. The addition of a median, landscaping and designated lanes for driving, cycling and walking have made the road safer and more welcoming for all users.



When a street is safe and accessible for a pedestrian and a cyclist, and someone with a disability or mobility difference, it is safe and accessible for everyone.



GETTING STARTED

Step 1: Get *READY***1 WHERE****IDENTIFY THE BIKE AUDIT LOCATION**

Visit and map an area where people need or want to bike. The audit location can cover a limited area — such as a single block — or it can take place along a route covering several streets and intersections.

Keep in mind:

- The smaller the area, the easier it is to conduct an audit, identify problems and advocate for solutions. The larger the audit area, the larger the potential impact — but it may be more difficult to bring about changes.
- An audit can have more impact if the location has local impact. Have there been crashes in the location? Is the community asking for changes to the area? Are people willing to share their experiences about cycling in the location? Would improvements link people to needed destinations and services?
- Do a bit of research to see if the location is scheduled for repaving or improvements. If it is, that can bode well for needed change.

2 WHAT**DECIDE ON THE TYPE OF BIKE AUDIT**

This tool kit contains worksheets for both an observational single-location, off-bike audit (at, for example, a specific intersection) and an on-bike, riding or mobile audit, in which the participants test an area's bikeability — or, likely, nonbikeability.

SINGLE-LOCATION AUDIT (OFF-BIKE)

- A single-location audit allows for observing a specific area at different times of the day. It's also a good activity for people who are unable to participate in a bike ride or remain on their feet for long stretches of time.
- A single-location audit is also a great way to include very young and much older participants, since the auditors can sit in a safe and comfortable spot (such as on a nearby patio or beneath a shade tree) while observing the location.

RIDING AUDIT (ON-BIKE)

- A riding, or mobile, audit allows auditors to experience the street as a cyclist. Such auditors will need to pull over to a safe spot when taking notes and/or record what they see by attaching a video camera to their helmet or bike.
- An on-bike audit can assess the ease of biking between destinations or along a corridor. It's a great activity for people who can and want to bike longer distances.
- Keep in mind that even if a cyclist or several can cover the full expanse of a community, the area might be too large for a single audit outing. Choosing a one-mile or 10-minute bike ride, give or take, will enable a more focused and effective audit.

3 WHO**INVITE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE**

This tool kit contains worksheets suitable for a solo auditor or a team made up of community members, ideally including elected officials, business owners, traffic engineers or others with influence. Having local leaders see the location and safety problems firsthand may help fast-track needed change.

Keep in mind:

- If the bike audit is conducted by one person, multiple visits might be needed in order to perform all of the desired observations (or to evaluate the street activity at various times of the day) and document them accordingly.
- If the audit is done by a team, how will auditors of different abilities, ages and life experiences be included?
- Train the auditors in advance so everyone understands how to stay safe and document their observations in the same way.
- If doing a team-based audit, individual assignments can be made. Consider the roles listed in the Tip box at right.

4 WHEN CHOOSE A DATE AND TIME

The volume and type of traffic (bikes, pedestrians, buses, cars) will likely vary, depending on the day of the week or time of day. If the bike audit is being done because of concerns about the safety of particular groups — such as bike commuters, schoolchildren, workers, shoppers or retirees — conduct the audit when those people will be present.

One hour, maybe two, is an appropriate amount of time for an audit. The shifts or counting tasks can be divided into 15-minute segments. If observations are needed throughout the day (including after dark), the auditors can be scheduled for varied times.

Keep in mind:

- Check the weather forecast! There's no need for auditors to endure extreme temperatures, wind or precipitation, unless those conditions are part of the audit. Seeing how biking infrastructure is impacted by snow, ice, heat or other weather hazards may be important for the audit to consider.
- For group audits, be sure to identify a starting and ending spot for meeting, debriefing and collecting the audit worksheets and notes.
- To be more comprehensive in the audit and confident about the results, repeat the audit in the same spot, in the same way, but at a different time.
- Once the audit is done, gather and tally the collective results and prepare the report. (See page 18.) ■

TIP: Riding Audit Team Tasks

Combine or add to these suggested roles and tasks:

Ride Leader: Organizes the audit, manages the ride

Safety Sentry: Alerts riders to road hazards. (“Pothole!”)

Spotter(s): Notes the route's problem spots

Recorder(s): Takes still images and video

Biking vs. Cycling

The words “bike,” “bicycle,” “biking,” “cycle” and “cycling” are inclusive terms.

“The terms ‘bicycle’ and ‘on two wheels’ are used as by-words for a cycle and the activity of cycling,” explains Wheels for Wellbeing, a United Kingdom-based advocacy organization in *A Guide to Inclusive Cycling*. “This immediately excludes anyone who doesn’t ride a two-wheeled cycle, but also reinforces the societal assumption that cycling can only be done on two wheels.”

The **AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit** uses the words “bicycling” and “cycling” interchangeably and regardless of whether someone is cycling on two wheels or three or more (or even one). Inclusivity is important to the bike audit process because streets should be usable by people of all ages, experiences, abilities and differences.

Bike audits are most effective when they include and acknowledge the range of people who ride (or want to ride) and how. For that reason, bike audits done by groups are best when they include riders who cycle at different speeds, use a variety of cycle types, or have differences that influence or impact them as cyclists.

The term “vulnerable road user” appears in many transportation documents. It refers to anyone on a road who is outside of a motorized vehicle, including pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users, scooter riders and so on.

TIP: Seek Allies, Join Forces

Invite local cyclists and noncyclists to get involved. Visit [BikeLeague.org/Map](https://bikeleague.org/Map) to find bike-minded people — such as staff at local bike shops and certified cycling instructors — who might want to participate. Encourage walkability advocates to do a walk audit in partnership with the bike audit. Find the guide and worksheets at [AARP.org/WalkAudit](https://aarp.org/WalkAudit).

GETTING STARTED

Step 2: Get SET ...

1 DOWNLOAD THE WORKSHEETS

The worksheets are available at AARP.org/BikeAudit for printing, sharing, adapting or even retyping into an online platform (such as Google Forms) if the auditor or team wants to use a smartphone or tablet to record the data. The worksheet titles are listed on page 17.

2 GATHER THE SUPPLIES

In addition to the selected worksheets, each auditor will need a:

- clipboard, notebook, pen or pencil, tape measure (or phone apps with those functions)
- digital or smartphone camera
- printed or online street map
- bike and safety gear, if doing an on-bike audit

(If any auditors don't have their own bikes, consider using bike-share bicycles or contact a local bike group or bike shop to see if there are bikes that can be borrowed or rented for the audit.)

It is also important to have:

- a first aid kit
- weather-suitable clothing
- a beverage and snack
- a hat (or helmet, if doing a riding audit), sunscreen and sunglasses
- a flashlight or headlamp (or bike lights, if doing a riding audit)
- brightly colored clothing (preferably with pockets for holding supplies)
- portable seating (if doing a single-location audit)

GET BIKE-READY!

Ensure that each bike audit rider has a properly fitted bicycle in condition, a helmet and an understanding of basic safety rules, especially if the audit will happen in areas that aren't ideal for biking. (Watch the video at BikeLeague.org/RideSmart for a safety summary.)

Do the 'ABC Quick Check'

- **AIR:** If the tires give a bit when pressed, they need air.
- **BRAKES:** When squeezing the brakes hard, you should still be able to fit your thumb between the levers and the handlebars. If the brake pads, which squeeze the tires, are worn out, replace them.
- **CHAIN AND CRANKS:** Spin the rear wheel backward a few turns to make sure the chain is moving smoothly. (The chain should be lightly oiled and free of rust and gunk.) Wiggle the pedal and crank arm. If loose, tighten as needed.)
- **QUICK RELEASE:** For bikes with wheels, handle bars and/or a seat that can be removed without tools, ensure that the quick release mechanisms are closed tightly.
- **CHECK:** Take a short, slow test ride.

If something isn't working, fix what you can and have other adjustments done at a bike repair shop.

Do a Helmet Fit Check

Wearing a helmet improperly can be the same as not wearing a bike helmet at all.



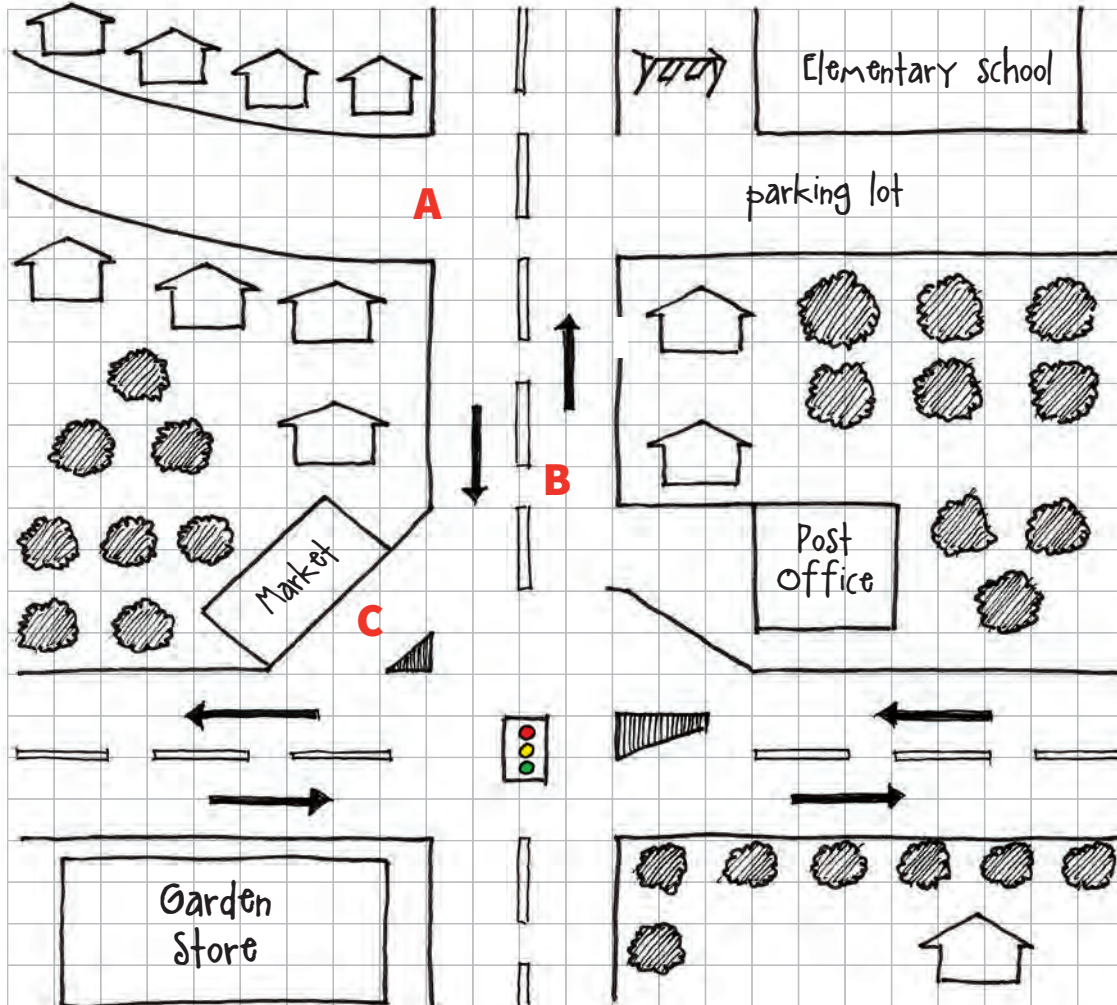
1. Put the helmet on without fastening the straps. There should be a two-fingers width between the eyebrows and helmet and minimal movement when shaking your head from side to side.
2. Fasten the chin strap. The side straps should come to a point just below the ears, forming a "Y" shape.
3. There should be about one half-inch of space between the chin strap and chin.

Sample

3 MAKE A MAP

Use a mapping website to capture and print a bird's-eye-view image of the bike audit area or use our Make a Map worksheet (which can be downloaded and printed from [AARP.org/BikeAudit](https://www.aarp.org/BikeAudit)) to draw a simple map.

TIP: Some communities have cycling maps. It might be useful to do an online search for one.



- Label the streets and make note of any key features, such as stores, bike parking, schools and (if any exists) on-street bike infrastructure.
- Take photographs and/or videos of the area so others can see the challenges and strengths.
- Match and mark the photographs and/or video location(s) on the map.
- Indicate any other problem spots or areas of opportunity (e.g., a store with no bike parking, a bike lane that ends abruptly or that needs to be repaved or repainted).



A. People can't safely cross this street on foot or by bike to travel between their homes (in a development on the left) and the elementary school (on the right).



B. The street lacks sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes.



C. With such a large intersection and no crosswalks or bike lane markings, walking or riding to the country market is difficult and dangerous.

Step 3: GO Do the Bike Audit!

1 LOOK AND LEARN

With clipboards and worksheets in hand (or in a basket or backpack), go to the audit site. When a bike audit is staffed by many, the tasks can be divvied up.

Audit activities can include:

- Counting cars and cyclists passing the location
- Note points of interest in the audit area or what the road ultimately connects (e.g., schools, a community center or library, grocery store, etc.)
- Documenting whether cyclists are riding in the roadway, on sidewalks, along the street shoulder or (if one exists) a bike lane. (Sidewalk cycling, which puts pedestrians at risk, can be a sign that riding in the street is or feels unsafe.)
- Listing street features such as crosswalks, stop signs, intersection lane markings, curb cuts, trees for shade (or a lack thereof)
- Identifying obstructions and problems such as debris, gravel, potholes or faded lane markings
- Timing how long a traffic light stops vehicles — and noting if there is any dedicated time for only the pedestrians and cyclists to cross
- Assessing the direction and speed of the roadway's users. For instance, depending on the time of day, are more people traveling in one direction than another? Are people obeying the traffic signs and rules of the road?
- Indicate whether cyclists are riding with or against traffic. (Pedestrians are usually instructed to walk against traffic in order to see and avoid motor vehicles. Cyclists are generally advised to follow the same rules of the road as motorists.)



▲ Cycling signage in Portsmouth, New Hampshire

2 PRODUCE THE PROOF

Although a summary report will be created based on the information in the worksheets, taking photographs and videos of the audit location will help clarify what's working and what isn't.

Use the photographs and video (along with the audio if traffic noise is among the concerns) to document and show the overall area as well as the problem spots.

Since many bike audits reveal both bad features and good ones, be sure to photograph the location's positive attributes as well.

Details to focus on include:

- Bike lanes or other dedicated cycling spaces
- Cars, trucks or buses blocking the bike lanes
- The quality and maintenance of bikeways (e.g., potholes, uneven surfaces, faded signage, debris, excessive puddling, overgrown vegetation)
- Lane widths
- On-street motor vehicle parking and bike lane proximity to opening doors (aka the "door zone") of parked cars
- Signage and on-street markings
- Turning lanes
- Sidewalks and curb cuts
- Crosswalks and vehicle stop lines
- Midblock crossings
- Traffic lights and crossing signal timing, user controls and/or sensors that stop motorists so pedestrians and cyclist can cross
- Bike parking
- Public transit access
- Lighting

Photographs can be taken to show where such safety features *should* exist.

Types of Riders

According to research from Oregon's Portland State



University and its Transportation Research and Education Center, there are three types of cyclists:

- **STRONG AND FEARLESS RIDERS** are highly confident cyclists who are comfortable riding with vehicle traffic and little to no dedicated bike infrastructure.
- **ENTHUSED AND CONFIDENT RIDERS** prefer protected bike paths but are willing to ride in unprotected bike lanes or on paved shoulders if needed.
- **INTERESTED BUT CONCERNED RIDERS** want to ride a bike but only in areas that are calm and free of traffic and other stressors. If a community's goal is to increase ridership, this category — which *represents more than half of the adult population* in the United States — must be considered and prioritized in the design process.

Assessing the “level of traffic stress” — or comfort level that a person on a bike feels while using a road and interacting with other modes of transportation — is an important task for transportation planners.

The greater the distance and barrier that exists between cyclists and motor vehicles, the greater the level of comfort for the rider, which can encourage those “interested but concerned” riders to bike.

The three categories represent only about 70 percent of the total population. A fourth category — dubbed by researchers as the **NO WAY, NO HOW** group — represents people who have no interest whatsoever in riding a bike, no matter how bikeable their community is.

People who don't want to be cyclists can be helpful allies and partners in promoting safe bicycling. As noted throughout this guide, when roadways safely accommodate bicyclists, they are safer and more comfortable for all users.

SOURCES: Jennifer Dill, Ph.D., and Nathan McNeil, Portland State University, *Revisiting the Four Types of Cyclists: Findings From a National Survey*; *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* (2016); and U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration *Bikeway Selection Guide* (2019)

Understanding the Why

Although a bike audit needn't involve stopping people on bikes for interviews, it's important to have a sense of why they are cycling in a particular area and what their needs or wants may be. Gaining that can help pinpoint problems and solutions.

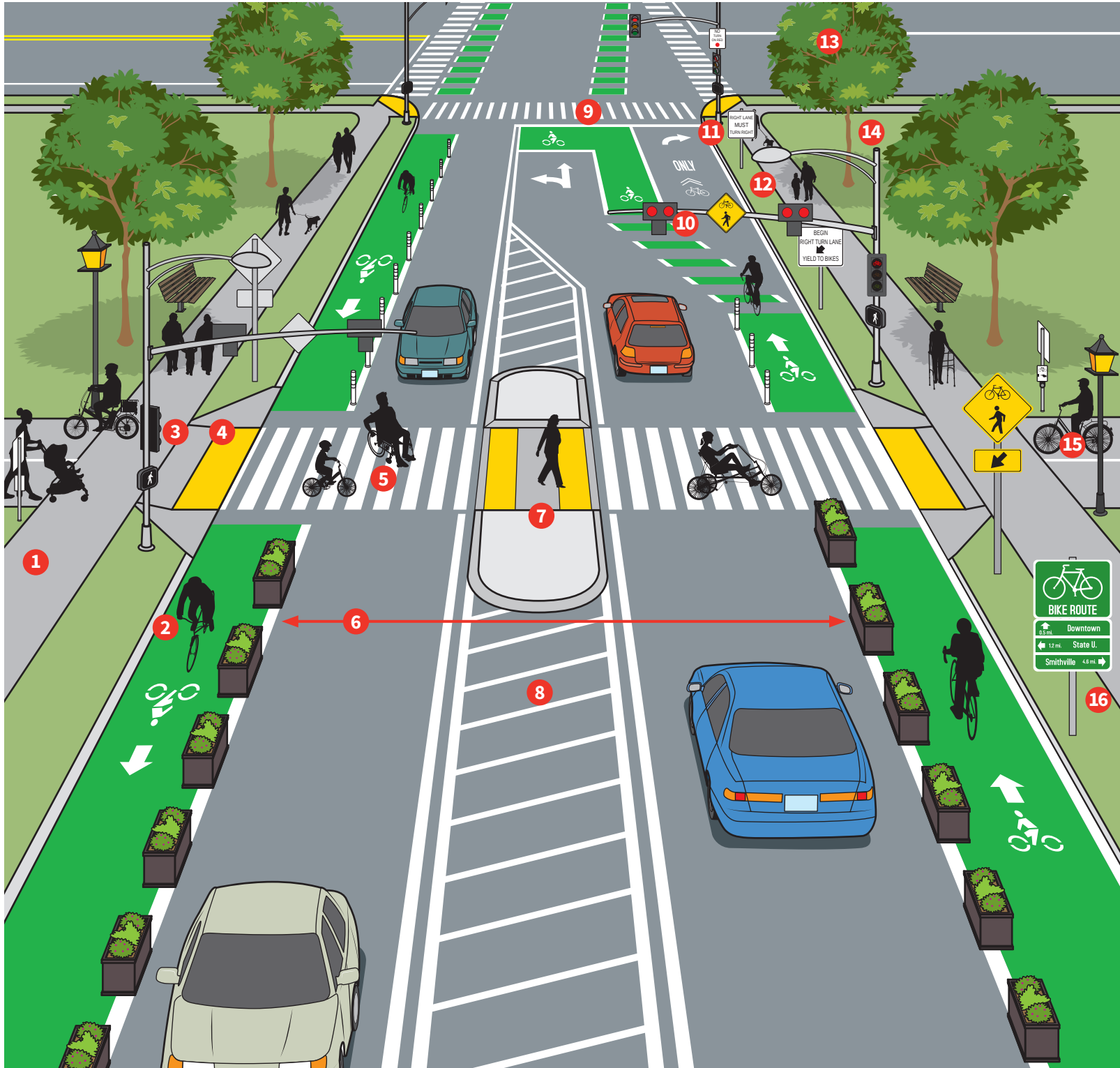
Look for clues:

- Are people biking on the sidewalks? If so, this can mean the cyclists feel unsafe riding on the roadway or, if present, the dedicated bike lane.
- Are bicyclists riding with or against the motor vehicle traffic? Riding against traffic is usually an indication that the roadway feels unsafe, uncomfortable or unintuitive for the cyclists.
- What types of bikes are people using?
- Do the riders appear to be cycling for exercise, recreation or transportation, such as to work or as part of their work? Are there cargo bikes carrying deliveries — or perhaps children?
- Do you see bikes locked to trees, ramps, benches or other places they shouldn't be? If so, that may indicate an unmet need for secure bike parking. Are there empty, unused bike racks nearby? That could mean the racks aren't placed in the right location or that riders have concerns about their bikes being damaged or stolen.
- A lack of cyclists can also provide clues. What could be done in the area or to the roadway to encourage more biking and walking and less driving?

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

A Cycling Streetscape Vocabulary List

Transportation planners, engineers and advocates speak in a language that is sometimes incomprehensible to the average person. (For instance, bike lanes, storage racks, signage and other cycling-related street features are often referred to as bicycling “facilities.”) Employing terminology used by these professionals in the bike audit report will show that the auditor or auditors have done the necessary homework. Herewith are some words and terms for talking the talk.



1 Sidewalk

When a sidewalk is separated from a street by landscaping, a strip of grass or a barrier, 5 feet is the minimum suitable width for two people to be able to walk together or for a wheelchair user to easily navigate the space. If the sidewalk directly abuts the street, a 6-foot width is safer. Having a smooth surface with elevation changes of less than an inch benefits pedestrian safety.

2 Bike Lane

Bike lanes can vary in width and in the level of protection they provide to cyclists, depending on the presence and type of barriers installed and the distance between motor vehicles and people on adjacent sidewalks. (See pages 12, 23 and 26 for more.)

3 Signalized Crossing

Properly timed Walk/Don't Walk signals allow pedestrians to complete a crossing before the light changes and vehicles start moving. (Some communities allow cyclists to follow these devices instead of waiting for the traffic signal.) Such leading pedestrian intervals, or LPIs, give pedestrians a head start of up to 7 seconds before cars get a green light, reducing conflicts between pedestrians crossing and drivers turning. Along with a "No Right on Red" law, LPIs can make intersections safer for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

4 Curb Cut (or Curb Ramp)

Having a sturdy ramp graded down from the top of a sidewalk to the street provides a passage for bicycles, wheelchairs, strollers and other wheeled devices.

5 Crosswalk

Marked crosswalks show pedestrians where to cross and signify to motorists that they must yield. Crosswalks are usually indicated by white or yellow painted lines that are about 12 inches wide and extend from curb to curb.

6 Vehicle Travel Lane

Streets in city and suburban areas usually range in width from 9 to 15 feet. Narrower lanes encourage slower — and safer — driving speeds.

7 Pedestrian Island

Also referred to as a crossing island or refuge island, a pedestrian island protects people who are crossing a multilane roadway. The island allows pedestrians to focus on one direction of traffic at a time as they cross, and it provides a place to wait for a gap in oncoming traffic. Another benefit: drivers typically slow down due to a narrowing of the vehicle lanes.

8 Median Strip

A portion of the roadway that separates opposing traffic, this area can be paved, planted, raised or painted.

9 Bike Box

As a designated area at the head of traffic lanes, the box provides bicyclists with a safe and visible way to move ahead of cars while waiting for a red light to turn green.

10 Mixing Zone

This is an area where motor vehicle traffic and bicyclists merge in a shared space right before an intersection.

11 Sharrow or Shared-Lane Marking

A painted road marking (usually showing a bike beneath two arrows — see page 12) indicating where a bicyclist can most safely ride in a lane shared with motor vehicles.

12 Bicycle Signal Head

Traffic signals (aka traffic lights) can include a specific light for people on bikes. It gives them a head start for proceeding before the rest of the traffic or directs them how to move through an intersection without mixing with cars and pedestrians.

13 Tree Canopy

Street trees provide shade and cooling — and safer streets! In a 2018 study, University of Colorado Denver researchers found that "increased tree canopy coverage was significantly associated with fewer crashes."

14 Street Lighting

When properly placed, light fixtures enhance the visibility of vulnerable road users as well as increase safety for all road users.

15 Shared-Use Path

Sometimes called mixed-use or multiuse paths, shared use paths are separated from motorized vehicle lanes so people can safely cycle, walk or (if, for example, using a wheelchair) roll.

16 Wayfinding Signage

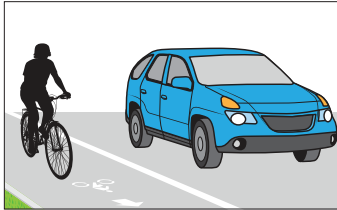
Signs placed along a route to identify points of interest or provide directions to business districts, essential services or bike-friendly routes, along with mileage. ■

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Bike Lanes and Infrastructure

At its most basic, a bike lane is, according to the National Association of City Transportation Officials (commonly known as NACTO), “A portion of the roadway that has been designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.”

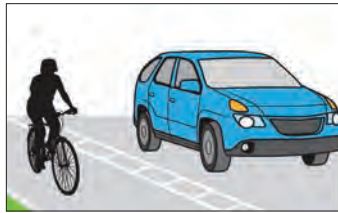
CONVENTIONAL BIKE LANE



Currently, the most common type of bike lane in the United States is defined by little more than a single strip of paint. But as the following examples show, how a bike lane is created and looks, and the protection it provides, differs depending on its design and the priority placed on cycling safety and the safety of streets for all users.

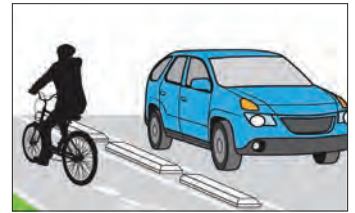
BUFFERED BIKE LANE

Unlike with a protected or separated bike lane (see opposite page) this buffer is a painted line or lines (i.e., no physical barriers) that help separate cyclists from parked cars and a motor vehicle travel lane.



CONTRAFLOW BIKE LANE

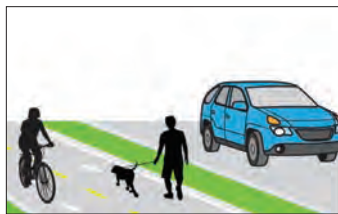
A contraflow bike lane converts a one-way traffic street into a two-way street — one direction for motor vehicles and bikes, the other for bikes only — to provide cyclists with a more direct connection between destinations.



SHARED-USE PATH OR TRAIL

Also referred to as a multiuse path

A path for nonmotorized users (pedestrians, cyclists and others) that is physically separated from motorized traffic by an open space or barrier.



BICYCLE BOULEVARD

Also referred to as a greenway or neighborway

By using signage, pavement markings and design changes that slow traffic, these roadways prioritize cycling and discourage the presence of fast-moving motor vehicles.



▲ Signage similar to the pictured road sign and sharrow marking are seen on many roads that lack a dedicated bike lane.



About Shared-Use Lanes

Painted shared-use lane markings (aka “sharrows”) and signage that says or shows “Bikes May Use Full Lane” tell motorists that bicyclists have a legal right to ride in the vehicle lane. It is important for planners, local decision-makers and

roadway users to understand that these markings and signs do *not* create any physical protection or reliable safety benefits for cyclists. When used without other safety features, shared-use indicators are not a safe cycling solution.

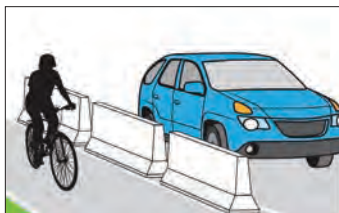
CREATING A PROTECTED BIKE LANE

Also referred to as a separated bike lane or cycle track

These lanes provide a physical barrier between cyclists and passing traffic. They can be one- or two-way, or flow with or against traffic. Following are a few ways a bike lane can be protected:

Jersey Barriers

Providing the most protection, these barriers are usually made of cement and are placed close together in order to separate the bike lane from vehicles as well as from any cross traffic by pedestrians or other cyclists.



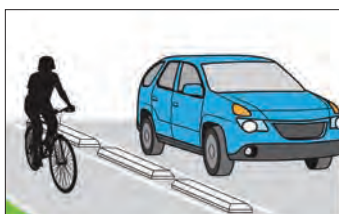
Bollards

Typically a series of rigid, semi-permanent poles, bollards are installed along a roadway to separate the motor vehicle lane from the bike lane or shared-use path.



Parking Stops

Cement bumpers (such as those found at the top of parking spots) can be used to line a bike lane and provide a low-rise barrier between cyclists and the motor vehicle lane.



Flex Posts

Although these lane delineators can be bent down or driven over, they are a low-cost way to provide a visual and physical barrier for guiding traffic and separating cyclists and motor vehicles.



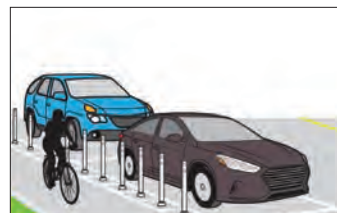
Planter Boxes

When used to designate and protect a bike lane, planters are typically filled with low-maintenance greenery or flowers. Communities considering this option as more than a temporary measure need to plan for the ongoing watering and maintenance needs of the plants and containers.

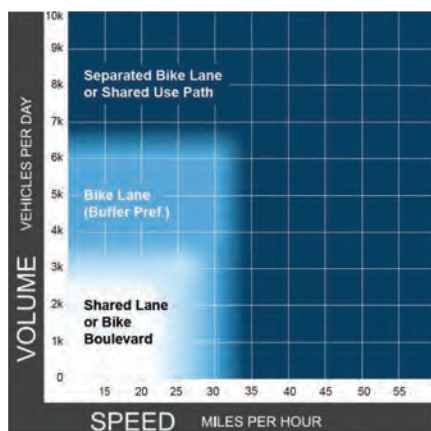


Parked Cars

Cars, trucks and other motor vehicles can actually protect cyclists and pedestrians. This is done by placing a parking lane between the bike and motor vehicle travel lanes. (See an example without flex posts on page 26.) Care must be taken to ensure that the bike lane is beyond the swing radius of an opening door.



LEARN MORE: Read the *Urban Bikeway Design Guide* by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO.org) and the *Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide* by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (Highways.dot.gov). ■



Volume x Speed = Bike Lane Type

On streets with slower-moving cars and less overall vehicle traffic (or volume), less separation between bicycles and cars is necessary.

On higher speed and higher traffic roads, more separation is required — either by adding more space between bikes and motor vehicles or adding physical barriers as protection.

Where bike traffic is desired but separation is not possible, driving speeds need to be reduced by both changing the speed limit *and* implementing other traffic calming measures, such as road narrowing, bulb-outs and curb extensions.

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Complete Streets and Traffic Calming

A “Complete Street” is a street designed for all roadway users, whether they’re driving, bicycling, riding public transit, strolling along the sidewalk, or rolling (e.g., pushing a baby stroller or using a wheelchair).

Complete Streets policies — also referred to as Safe Streets policies — are being implemented by city, county and state governments in urban, suburban and even rural areas. What such streets look like and the pace of the improvements depends upon the location. Complete Streets policies simply require that the needs of all users be considered and, when appropriate, met.

Designing streets for bicyclists and pedestrians isn’t a new concept. In fact, until the 20th century, people routinely walked and biked in the street. Once automobiles arrived en masse, speed and efficiency became the priority of street design and transportation planning.

In recent years, there has been a push to slow traffic speed and put priority back on vulnerable road users’ needs through traffic calming, which, as defined by the Institute of Traffic Engineers, “is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.”

The League of American Bicyclists and many other local and national organizations are advocating for states and communities to reduce motor vehicle speeds through design changes that incorporate traffic calming and Complete Streets alongside 20 mph limits on local roads.

Many transportation engineers and planners are working toward this goal by designing and building “self-enforcing streets,” which changes the physical design of a street in order to make safer behaviors more intuitive and, therefore, more common. For example, narrowing the width of driving lanes and adding traffic calming features such as curb bulb-outs, or even street trees, lead drivers to slow down, making the roadway safer for everyone. ■

A Complete Street Sampler ►

- 1 The sidewalk keeps pedestrians, wheelchair users and people pushing baby strollers safely away from the bicycle and vehicle lanes.
- 2 Landscaping serves as a “swale,” or pervious surface for capturing stormwater.
- 3 The paved, multiuse path provides dedicated lanes for cyclists. The lanes can also be used by runners and scooter riders.
- 4 Landscaping, trees and cement pads with bike racks separate the cycling lanes from the roadway.
- 5 On-street parking is available for drivers who know how to parallel park.
- 6 The lane of parked cars provides another protective barrier between pedestrians, cyclists and faster-moving cars and trucks on Maine Avenue SW.

Not shown: crosswalks at intersections with traffic lights; a walk-bike bridge across the main road; safe and accessible public transit pickup and drop-off locations.

Streets, Roads and ‘Stroads’

As explained by Charles L. Marohn, Jr., a transportation engineer and founder of the nonprofit Strong Towns: **Streets** support destinations — such as homes, businesses, shops and attractions. **Roads** provide “the fastest connection” between two places where people want to be.

Most communities, Marohn writes in *Confessions of a Recovering Engineer*, are now filled with **Stroads**, which are multilane roadways designed to move cars quickly despite being populated with businesses, shops, attractions and even homes.

“Stroads are the most dangerous environment we routinely build in our cities,” he says, because a stroad “contains the elements of both [a] road and street but fails to provide the benefits of either.”



Washington, D.C.

▲ Located in The Wharf, the Complete Street shown here came about as part of redevelopment efforts to make D.C.’s waterfront a more accessible and desirable destination for businesses, tourism, retail, residences, entertainment venues and various fun indoor and outdoor activities.



Miami Beach, Florida



New York, New York

▲ Portions of Ocean Drive in Miami Beach and the Hudson River waterfront on Manhattan’s West Side (One World Trade Center is visible in the distance) are Complete Streets with sidewalks for pedestrians and distinct lanes for vehicles, cyclists and joggers.



Charlotte, North Carolina



Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

▲ Cyclists along East 6th Street in downtown Charlotte and North Seventh Street in the Keystone State’s capital city have similar carfree corridors featuring separate — protected — spaces lanes for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Bike Parking

In addition to a safe, comfortable and convenient way to get from point A to point B, cyclists need a safe, secure and reliable place to lock their bike once they arrive at their destination.

This tool kit includes a worksheet to help auditors evaluate the quality, quantity and accessibility of bike parking. Keep in mind that the parking needs can vary based on the cyclist and the purpose of the trip.

Short-term bike parking is important for shoppers, diners and visitors. A shopper popping into a store for a few items or a client visiting an office will most likely look for the closest and most convenient parking outside of the business. Because of that, the visibility and proximity to the building entrance should be prioritized.

Long-term bike parking is crucial for employees, tenants and anyone spending two or more hours at a destination. Security from theft or vandalism as well as shelter from the weather all become increasingly important the longer a bike is left unattended. In both cases, the best bike racks:

- Support the bicycle in at least two spots to prevent tipping
- Allow for locking the frame and one wheel or both
- Are securely anchored to the ground
- Are resistant to cutting, rusting and bending or other damage
- Have slots sufficient so nonstandard bike types can fit



Nashville, Tennessee



Annapolis, Maryland



Sunrise, Florida



Bettendorf, Iowa



Brattleboro, Vermont

▲ An on-street parking space for cars is now a parking alcove (or parklet) for up to 10 bicycles.



Washington, D.C.

▲ The residents of this block worked with the local government to provide bike parking for visitors.



Cambridge, Massachusetts

▲ At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a secure “bike cage” is accessible to cyclists with a key card.

◀ Artistic bike racks can add local flare and fun.

LEARN MORE: Read the Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals’ *Bike Parking Guidelines* (APBP.org) and find more bike parking resources at BikeLeague.org.

The Worksheets

Bike auditors can use whichever worksheets, measurements, or rating system they want — so long as an explanation of the chosen method is provided. Letter grades, numerical rankings or words can be used to rate the audited places. It's not unusual for an audit location to have a mix of positive and negative features. For example, there might be a safe and comfortable bike lane along a block but the intersections are difficult or confusing to navigate.

If an overall rating is desired, one can be made to encompass the observations as a whole. Some examples:

Great: The area is very welcoming and safe for bicyclists

Acceptable: The area is mostly welcoming and safe for bicyclists

Mixed: The area is somewhat welcoming and safe for bicyclists

Poor: The area is absolutely not welcoming or safe for bicyclists

Worksheets available at [AARP.org/BikeAudit](https://www.aarp.org/BikeAudit)

1. Make a Map
2. Who's Bicycling — and Why?
3. Streets and Crossings: Single-Location Audit
4. Streets and Crossings: Riding Audit
5. Car-Free Paths and Trails: Riding Audit
6. Street, Path or Trail Safety and Appeal
7. Build a Better Block
8. Bicycle Parking
9. Cycling in the Heat, Rain, Wind or Snow

If new materials are added to the tool kit, we'll spread the news through the *AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter*. (Learn more on page 29.)

Cycling at Any Age

► The **Cycling Without Age** program connects volunteer cyclists (called “pilots”) with elderly adults and people with mobility limitations for trishaw rides. Nonprofits throughout the world train and certify the pilots, provide the trishaws, and partner with senior centers and assisted living residences, among other facilities, to help noncyclists go for a ride. (A pilot and temporarily unhelmeted riders from Friends of the Northern Rail Trail are pictured.) Said one of the group's passengers: “I have got to say, wow! It's incredibly enjoyable. Like a slow-moving amusement park ride through nature!”



Lebanon, New Hampshire



Cleveland, Ohio

◄ Hosted by cycling clubs, senior centers and nonprofits, the **Silver Spokes** curriculum teaches older adults to ride — and helps those who know how to ride a bike feel comfortable doing so at an older age. Participants are introduced to different bike types, including adult tricycles, e-bikes and recumbent bicycles, which, as explained by a program coordinator at Bike Cleveland, “don't require a rider to throw a leg high in the air to mount up.” During trainings she told attendees: “If you enjoy sitting on your couch at home, you will enjoy this!”

▼ When bike rental programs — commonly referred to as bike shares — offer a variety of bicycle types, more people can ride. The **AARP Community Challenge** (see page 28) has provided funding to several bike share programs (including those pictured here) for the purchase of older-adult-friendly tricycles and power-assist e-bikes. Said one rider: “We were very poor growing up and a bicycle was not something we could get. I never learned to ride a bike and was nervous to try to get on one at my age. After the first few times around I felt like I've been doing this all my life!”



Lincoln, Nebraska



Honolulu, Hawaii



McDonough, Georgia

LEARN MORE: Bicycles come in many shapes and sizes with all sorts of bells and whistles. Visit [AARP.org/BikeAudit](https://www.aarp.org/BikeAudit) for an illustrated article explaining the variety of bike types. Find other resources on page 28.

TAKING ACTION

Reporting Results, Proposing Solutions

It's not easy to persuade local leaders to make transportation and roadway improvements, but this tool kit is designed to help get the conversation started. Obstacles abound in politics, costs, past practices and, very often, overlapping jurisdictions, such as when a road is managed by the state rather than the county or municipality that it passes through. Individuals and community groups can get the ball rolling — and inspire and achieve needed change — by identifying and calling attention to problems. Some next steps:

1 PREPARE A REPORT

Summarize the bike audit's findings in a short, easy-to-read and easy-to-share report, handout, PowerPoint presentation and/or video.

As tempting as it may be to share every audit observation, elected officials, other local leaders and municipal staff might be put off and overwhelmed by a dense and lengthy document.

If the community has a 311 service or other way to propose needed fixes such as potholes, those channels are a great way to document observations in a timely way and to share details that might be too minute to include in a broader report to an elected official.

Share the most compelling highlights in the summary report. The deep details can be provided later if needed or requested.

A suggested outline of what to include:

1. Opener: This top sheet or introductory slide or video clip should attract the attention of the intended recipient(s), so include a photograph or other visuals that show the location; the name of the community, street(s), route and/or destinations; and a brief statement describing the auditing group or participants.

Other potential details to include, if applicable, are the community's AARP age-friendly network action plan, active transportation plan and/or Bicycle Friendly Community status and report card, as well as any plans or policies the local government has already committed to (but may need a reminder of) such as a Complete Streets policy or a cycling master plan.

2. Explanation of the Problem: Provide information about the location, such as why it was chosen. If crash data exists for the spot (from, perhaps, the local police, a government agency or an advocacy group), include those details, such as the time of day, speeds involved, likely causes and outcomes. Include the personal experiences of people who have used the street and/or personal observations taken during the bike audit.

3. Map: Download a map from the internet or use our map worksheet to draw one. Add labels and street names as needed.

4. Observations and Findings: Provide a list or short narrative detailing what was observed.

5. The Need: Be ready to answer the question, "Why does this street need to be bikeable?"

6. Proposed Solutions: Share ideas for how the observed problems can be solved.

7. Contact Information: The report recipients should know how to reach out and ask questions, collaborate or share the news that the problems are being addressed and how.

Engagement and Education Matters

In addition to informing local leaders about the need for better cycling infrastructure and policies — and convincing them to take action — cycling advocates often serve as community ambassadors and explainers. Social events, community meetings and other gatherings can be opportunities for educating drivers, pedestrians and even fellow cyclists. When people understand the reasons for and benefits of change, they're more likely to support change.

Sample Report

1

Community Bike Audit of Center Street



Between The Villas and The Towne Shopping Center

Conducted by residents of The Villas and several surrounding neighborhoods

5

Why the Street Should Be Walk-Bike-Friendly

- People of all ages are getting too little exercise and are spending too much time driving or being driven in cars
- Residents who don't drive or don't have access to a car should be able to safely walk or bicycle to the stores and businesses near their homes
- If residents can safely walk or bike to shop, the community will have fewer cars on the road, which will mean less vehicle traffic and less pollution
- If residents can safely and easily walk and bike to the shopping center, they will be more likely to frequent the local businesses

2

The Problem

In The Villas, a community for older adults, residents can't safely cycle to or from The Towne Shopping Center, located across Center Street.

- There's no traffic light or even a stop sign
- Pedestrians and cyclists need to cross four lanes of fast-moving traffic
- The street has two lanes of traffic moving in each direction but no median or bike lanes (even though there is room for both)
- There is no crossing island
- The painted crosswalk isn't readily visible to drivers

6

Possible Solutions

The crossing location on Center Street can and should be made safer by:

- Adding a pedestrian/cyclist-controlled traffic signal
- Adding a protected bike lane for each direction of traffic
- Painting a crosswalk that is more visible to drivers
- Narrowing the roadway to one lane in each direction at the crosswalk
- Placing a pedestrian island between the lanes of opposite-moving traffic

3

The Location Map



7

Contact Us

We want to work with the local government to make **Center Street** safer.



Reach us by:

- Email: walkbike@email
- Telephone: 555-555-5555

4

Our Observations

Residents of The Villas and several surrounding neighborhoods audited the street and crossing location.

- Pedestrians and cyclists waited up to 7 minutes to cross all four lanes of traffic
- Pedestrians and cyclists needed up to 60 seconds to cross all four lanes
- Several individuals waited in the middle of the street to complete their crossing
- Nearly all the pedestrians and cyclists appeared to be in their 20s or 30s
- The older adults and parents with children we saw drove from the residential areas to the shopping center

A report can also include:

- Quotes from bike audit participants and area residents
- A brief history of the location, if known and if useful in explaining the problems
- A summary of the worksheet results
- Lots of photographs — of both the problems and examples of potential solutions (see page 22)

Visit [AARP.org/BikeAudit](https://www.aarp.org/BikeAudit) to download a presentation template.

TAKING ACTION

Reporting Results, Proposing Solutions

2 SHARE THE RESULTS

If no local leader with the power to pursue a solution participated in the audit, send the report to those who can implement the desired changes or advocate for them.

Also consider sharing the report with local media — and us! Email Livable@AARP.org and BFA@BikeLeague.org.

- Research the submission options before starting the report — or even better, before the bike audit. That way the information can be gathered and provided in a tailored format that will be the most useful for your audience.
- Keep a record of who the report is sent to, how and when. If there's no response, follow up.
- Talk about the results with people who have an interest in the issue. Encourage them to do their own bike audit or join the continuing advocacy work.
- Learn how your community's public budget works and write a letter to local leaders to get your project idea into its budget.

TIP: Many local governments and community groups have an email address, web form or telephone number for reporting street and sidewalk problems.

3 ASK FOR A MEETING, ASK QUESTIONS

If distributing the report doesn't result in the desired action, seek a meeting with local leaders, committees and organizations. In preparation, determine the preferred format for sharing the audit findings. Will the officials accept a PowerPoint presentation? Is it better to do a one-page handout? Should the materials be provided before or at the meeting?

Be ready to address the top priorities or most egregious problems first.

4 DO SOME HOMEWORK

- Visit [BikeLeague.org/Map](https://www.bikeleague.org/Map) to see if the community is certified as a **Bicycle Friendly Community** by the League of American Bicyclists. Or email BFA@BikeLeague.org to find out if the community applied in the past. Review its report card.
- Visit [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable) and do a search for "Complete Streets."
- Also search online for Smart Growth America's **Complete Streets Policy Atlas** to see if the community has a Complete Streets policy. If not, encourage local leaders to adopt one.

Closing Streets for People and Pedalers

Many communities temporarily close streets to vehicle traffic so people can walk, bike and safely exercise together and gather outside. Typically referred to as "Open Streets" or "Slow Streets," the concept originated in Bogotá, Colombia, in the 1970s with a weekly Ciclovía, the brainchild of Gil Penalosa, then the city's parks commissioner, later the founder of the nonprofit 880 Cities and a frequent partner of AARP. The practice gained popularity during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic as a safe way to social distance.



Washington, D.C.



Wilmington, Delaware



Austin, Texas

- Do the same for the Vision Zero Network’s **Vision Zero Communities Map**. If the community isn’t on the list, ask local leaders to set goals to eliminate fatalities and severe injuries among all road users.
- If the town, city or county is enrolled in the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities**, examine the jurisdiction’s age-friendly action plan via **LivableMap.AARP.org** to see if cycling is among its age-friendly goals.
- Find data about the community, or a street within it, from the interactive **AARP Livability Index** (**AARP.org/LivabilityIndex**).

5 TESTIFY!

Another way to pursue solutions — especially if distributing the report doesn’t result in the desired outcome or if local officials are unwilling to meet — is to testify at a public meeting or hearing.

City, town and county council meetings usually include time for community members to speak about a concern. Testimony rules vary greatly. Some meetings require speakers to register and submit materials in advance. Many have a time limit for remarks.

TIP: If more time is needed for explaining the audit findings, bring along others to testify. Each person can handle a portion of the report or presentation, so instead of a 2-minute airing, the bike audit can be discussed over 2, 4 or 6 minutes by several speakers.

6 PROPOSE SOLUTIONS

Elected officials constantly hear about problems. What isn’t as common is for them to hear about a problem *and* a solution.

Strategies, plans and proposals can come from the community. In fact, the chances of achieving positive change increase when knowledgeable community members inform, work with and assist the local leaders and transportation officials who will implement the solutions.

ONCE ALL THAT’S DONE, DO IT AGAIN!

- Choose a different location and invite local leaders and decision-makers. Download and print the needed worksheets (see page 29). ■

Seeking Solutions

Outreach should begin at the local level. State representatives can be contacted later if needed or if the roadway is within state jurisdiction.

ELECTED OFFICIALS WHO MAY BE OF HELP*

- **Local:** Mayor, county executive, city council members, county council members/commissioners, town council members, alderpeople, district or ward liaisons
- **State:** Governor, delegate, senator, assembly member

GOVERNMENT OFFICES THAT MIGHT HAVE JURISDICTION

- **Local:** Department of Public Works, Department of Streets and Sidewalks, Department of Transportation, Regional Planning Commission
- **State:** Department of Transportation
- **Federal:** Department of Transportation

ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN HELP ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

- **Area agencies on aging**
- **Businesses and business groups**
- **Civic associations**
- **Homeowners associations**
- **Public health agencies**
- **Local advocacy organizations** (e.g., AARP)
- **Local media** (newspapers, websites, TV)
- **Schools**
- **Houses of worship**
- **Nonprofits**
- **Walking and bicycling groups**

TIP: Visit **BikeLeague.org/Map** to find bike clubs, organizations, businesses, cycling instructors and other local people who can help advocate for change.

* The job titles and department names will vary by location.

TAKING ACTION

Strategies for Safer Streets and Cycling

Elected officials and other local leaders don't know everything about every aspect of managing or planning for a community's needs. After all, in many communities, local government is a part-time — and unpaid — job. The daily grind of immediate needs often prevents community leaders from addressing complicated or long-term problems, learning about new and improved best practices, or staying updated about innovative ideas and solutions. There are often so many issues to address that they also need to be reminded about policies, plans, and concerns.

Following are some traffic-calming methods and roadway design changes that make streets safer for all roadway users, especially bicyclists. Many local leaders aren't even aware of these terms, definitions and solutions. They could use your help coming up with answers.



Lancaster, Pennsylvania



Davis, California

◀▶ **PLACEMAKING** features such as painted intersections give the intersection higher visibility and call more attention to it to encourage drivers to look for other street users. They also create a more attractive place for all roadway users. Local artists are often involved in developing these areas. (See page 27 for more about placemaking.)

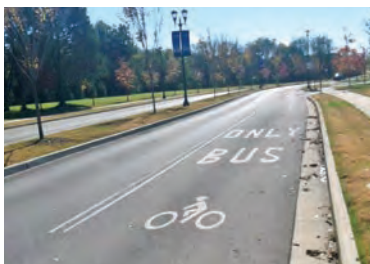


Des Moines, Iowa



Akron, Ohio

▼ A **LIMITED LANE** can be used by only cyclists and public transit buses.



Houston, Texas



Washington, D.C.

▲ A **RAISED BYPASS LANE** diverts cyclists to a safer spot and provides curb access for buses without blocking a bike lane. (Two styles and placement options are shown.)



Berkeley, California

◀ **A BICYCLE CUT-THROUGH** creates a narrow path for cyclists to connect from one road to another while limiting motor vehicle traffic.



Arlington, Virginia

◀ Adding a **BULB-OUT**, or **CURB EXTENSION**, will widen a sidewalk and narrow a roadway to reduce pedestrian crossing distances as well as driving speeds. Where funding or political will is limited for a permanent installation, a painted street mural, planters and flex posts placed before and after a midblock crossing can slow cars and increase visibility. (See page 27 for more about “pop-up” demonstrations.)



Bozeman, Montana



Washington, D.C.

▼ **RESTRIPING** and **LANE PAINTING** can help turn an existing roadway — such as Boston’s Huntington Avenue or Pennsylvania Avenue in D.C. (that’s the U.S. Capitol in the distance) — into a space that can more safely accommodate cyclists.



Boston, Massachusetts



Madison, Wisconsin

▲ When temperatures rise, the shade provided by a **TREE CANOPY** helps cool down streets, sidewalks and entire neighborhoods.



Wilmette, Illinois

▲ Visible **CROSSWALKS** tell pedestrians and cyclists (of all ages) where to cross — and alert drivers to keep an eye out for pedestrians and cyclists. Artistic crosswalks and raised crosswalks can make the crossings even more noticeable.



Enid, Oklahoma

Continued ▶

TAKING ACTION

► Tires lose air. Nuts and bolts get loose. This public library offers a **BICYCLE FIX-IT STATION** with an air pump, tools and a rack for lifting the bike off the ground during the repairs.

New Orleans, Louisiana



Las Vegas, Nevada

▲ **BUS BIKE RACKS** enable cyclists to hop onto public transit where the roads aren't bike-friendly, if a destination is far or when the weather turns bad.

Bridges, Tunnels, and Runnels

An overpass trail **(1)** helps riders avoid dangerous intersections completely by allowing them to travel above the roadway. An underpass tunnel **(2)** is another way to help cyclists and pedestrians avoid mixing with vehicle traffic on high-speed roads and dangerous intersections. Murals and public art helps make the spaces more welcoming and pleasant to use. A narrow ramp or “runnel” **(3)** helps people push bikes up stairs. The ramp often reduces the distance bicyclists need to ride and eliminates the need to carry a bike up a flight (or several) of stairs.



(1) Marshall, Minnesota



(2) Columbia, Missouri



(3) Kirkland, Washington (above),
Washington, D.C. (below)



► **AUTOMATED COUNTERS** (the tall red structure at right) record and display the number of people cycling, walking and rolling past. The resulting data is a great way to document the popularity and use of a walk-bike-friendly location.

Carmel, Indiana



Signage and Signals

Pavement markings **1** help keep sidewalks and streets safe for all users by telling cyclists where bikes are and aren't allowed. Crossings and shared paths are made safer by the presence of **2** user-controlled, lighted Walk or Bike buttons (officially “rectangular rapid flashing beacons”) and **3** **4** instructional walk-bike signage. The lights in a bike-only traffic signal **5** display a silhouette of a bicycle, shown here in green. Paired with a contraflow bike lane (defined on page 12), the signal enables cyclists to travel without crossing into the path of traffic. (Both safety measures were installed at the pictured location after a bicyclist was struck from behind and killed by a motorist. The white “ghost bike” in the foreground is a memorial in her honor.)



(4) New Paltz, New York



(1) Estes Park, Colorado



(2) Lincoln, Nebraska



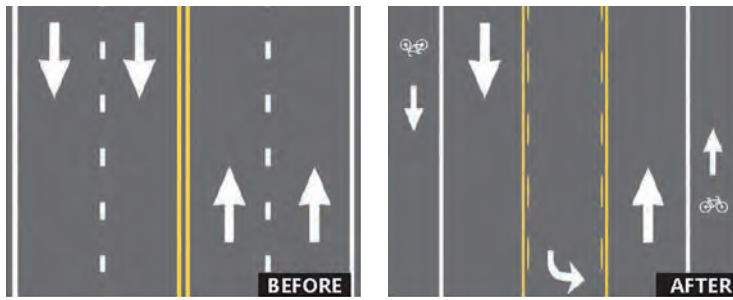
(3) New York City



(5) Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Continued ►

TAKING ACTION



▲▼ A **ROAD DIET** or **LANE REDISTRIBUTION** reduces or reassigns the vehicle lanes or the width of a street, or both, to help control traffic speeds and, in many cases, add bike lanes. In the image below, a bike lane was achieved by creating space between the sidewalk and where cars can be parked.



Phoenix, Arizona

▼ Painted **BIKE BOXES** (the solid green rectangles) provide cyclists with a safe and visible way to wait in front of motorists while all are stopped at a red light. This reduces right-turn conflicts between bikes and motor vehicles and keeps cyclists out of the pedestrian crosswalks (seen here in white). Continuing the green **PAINTED BIKE LANES** through the intersection also reduces conflicts and improves visibility.



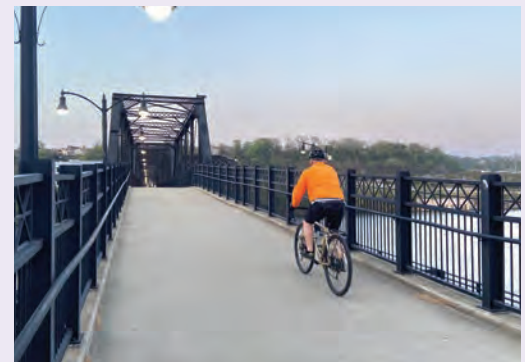
Decatur, Georgia

Waterfront Spaces, Connected Places

► Once home to steel mills, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania's waterfront now hosts multiuse trails that lead to and across several of the city's many bridges, greenways and multimodal connectors. Adventurous cyclists can even travel the 335 miles between Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C., along the Great Allegheny Passage (which is cared for entirely by volunteers) and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath (which is part of the National Park Service).



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



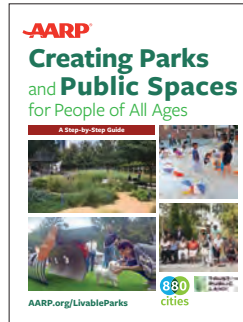
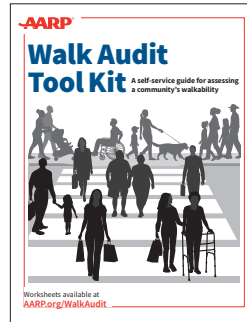
More Strategies

If a **TRAFFIC SIGNAL** already exists at the location, ask that its timing be adjusted to accommodate slower-moving road users such as cyclists and pedestrians, including children, older adults and people with disabilities.

A **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNITY GROUP** can advocate for change, keep an eye out for conditions or activities that prevent people from being able to safely bike, and meet regularly to discuss problems and solutions for safer streets.

Join your community's **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE** or start one if none exists. It can be a great way to make sure the bike advocate voice is included in official city or municipal decisions and has representation at the city/municipal level ■

Free Guides: Visit [AARP.org/LivableLibrary](https://www.aarp.org/LivableLibrary)



Combine the energy of pedestrians and cyclists by doing dual street safety audits, using this publication and worksheets as well as the **AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit**.

Need to better connect people (including cyclists) to local parks? Check out the guidance and worksheets found in **Creating Parks and Public Spaces for People of All Ages**.

The solutions in this section can be introduced to a community through a pop-up demonstration, which is a temporary installation (lasting for a few hours, days or weeks) that allows a tactic to be tested and tweaked before a permanent change is made. Learn more in **The Pop-Up Placemaking Tool Kit**.

Clean, Clear Lanes



Minneapolis, Minnesota

▲ Bike lanes need to be maintained just like any other transportation infrastructure. In places with winter snow and ice, it's essential to have the budget and equipment to properly maintain bikeways year-round. In Minneapolis, the bike lanes and paths are cleared by the city at the same time as the roads.

▼ Communities that install protected bike lanes need to keep those pathways clean. Many cities with protected bike infrastructure have invested in mini street sweepers like the one seen here.



Jersey City, New Jersey

TAKING ACTION

Learn More

- **AARP Community Challenge:** [AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](https://www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge) or [LivableMap.AARP.org](https://www.livablemap.aarp.org)
Founded in 2017, the annual AARP Community Challenge grant program helps communities make immediate improvements and jump-start long-term progress in support of residents of all ages.
- **AARP Livability Index:** [AARP.org/LivabilityIndex](https://www.aarp.org/LivabilityIndex)
Using more than 50 national sources of data, the AARP Livability Index scores every neighborhood and community in the United States for the services and amenities that affect people's lives in seven critical categories: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity.
- **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities:** [AARP.org/AgeFriendly](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly) or [LivableMap.AARP.org](https://www.livablemap.aarp.org)
Membership in the network means that the community's elected leadership has made the commitment to actively work toward making its town, city, county or state a great place for people of all ages.
- **Bicycle Friendly America:** [BikeLeague.org/BFA](https://www.bikeleague.org/BFA)
Used by states, communities, businesses and universities to make bicycling a real transportation and recreation option for all people, the League of American Bicyclists' Bicycle Friendly America program provides advocates and changemakers with a road map and hands-on assistance for building places and spaces that are more welcoming to people who bike. The Bicycle Friendly America awards recognize communities, businesses and universities for advancing cycling programs, infrastructure and safety.
- **E-Bike Smart:** [Ebikesmart.org](https://www.ebikesmart.org)
Electric bicycles (e-bikes) have many benefits and are becoming more common. This online guide from The League of American Bicyclists and People for Bikes provides safety guidance and technical information about using an e-bike.
- **Smart Cycling Resources:** [BikeLeague.org/RideSmart](https://www.bikeleague.org/RideSmart)
Find free and low-cost safety materials, including *The Smart Cycling Quick Guide*, *The Smart Cycling Video Collection* and a directory of cycling instructors certified by the League of American Bicyclists' Smart Cycling program.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Search online for these organizations and publications.

- **America Walks**
- **Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals**
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Active People, Healthy NationSM**
- **Mineta Institute: 50+ Cycling Survey**
- **National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)**
- **Safe Routes Partnership**
- **Smart Growth America**
- **Streetsblog**
- **U.S. Department of Transportation Safe System Approach**
- **Vision Zero Network**
- ***A Guide to Inclusive Cycling*** by Wheels for Wellbeing
- ***Getting to the Curb: A Guide to Building Protected Bike Lanes That Work for Pedestrians*** by Walk San Francisco
- ***Small Town and Rural Design Guide*** by Alta Planning + Design
- ***Tactical Urbanists Guide*** by Street Plans Collaborative
- ***Traffic Calming Measures*** by the Institute of Transportation Engineers

AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit

A SELF-SERVICE GUIDE FOR ASSESSING A COMMUNITY'S BIKEABILITY

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Several of the communities and projects pictured in this publication have a connection to programs sponsored by AARP and/or the League of American Bicyclists.*

Page 3: **South Bend, Indiana** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 8: **Portsmouth, New Hampshire** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 15: **Miami Beach, Florida** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 15: **Charlotte, North Carolina** — Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 15, 22: **New York, New York** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 15, 16, 20, 22, 23: **Washington, D.C.** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Gold Community Award

Page 16: **Cambridge, Massachusetts** — Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Bicycle Friendly America, Silver University Award

Page 16: **Nashville, Tennessee** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 16: **Annapolis, Maryland** — Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award | Annapolis Arts District, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 16: **Sunrise, Florida** — City of Sunrise, AARP Community Challenge grantee | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 17, 25: **Lincoln, Nebraska** — Heartland Bike Share and BikeLNK, AARP Community Challenge grantee | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 17: **Lebanon, New Hampshire** — Friends of the Northern Rail Trail, AARP Community Challenge grantee | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 17: **Cleveland, Ohio** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award | Bike Cleveland, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 17: **Honolulu, Hawaii** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award | Bikeshare Hawaii, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 17: **McDonough, Georgia** — Heritage Senior Activity Center, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 20: **Austin, Texas** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Gold Community Award | Walk Austin, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 20: **Wilmington, Delaware** — Urban Bike Project of Wilmington, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 22: **Lancaster, Pennsylvania** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 22: **Des Moines, Iowa** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 22: **Davis, California** — Bicycle Friendly America, Platinum Community Award

Page 22: **Akron, Ohio** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 22: **Houston, Texas** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 23: **Wilmette, Illinois** — Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 23: **Bozeman, Montana** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 23: **Boston, Massachusetts** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 23: **Madison, Wisconsin** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Platinum Community Award

Page 23: **Arlington, Virginia** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 23: **Enid, Oklahoma** | Main Street Enid, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 24: **New Orleans, Louisiana** — Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 24: **Las Vegas, Nevada** — Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 24: **Marshall, Minnesota** — Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 24: **Columbia, Missouri** — Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 24: **Kirkland, Washington** — Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 25: **Carmel, Indiana** — Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 25: **Augusta, Georgia** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Augusta Urban Ministries, AARP Community Challenge grantee

Page 25: **Portland, Oregon** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Platinum Community Award

Page 26: **Decatur, Georgia** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Silver Community Award

Page 26: **Phoenix, Arizona** — Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 26: **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Bronze Community Award

Page 27: **Minneapolis, Minnesota** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Gold Community Award

Page 27: **Jersey City, New Jersey** — Member, AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities | Bicycle Friendly America, Honorable Mention

* This list is current to September 2023.

Spread the Word

- Order extra copies of this free guide for sharing in your community
- Download the worksheets at [AARP.org/BikeAudit](https://aarp.org/BikeAudit) and store them in this pocket
- Subscribe for free to the [AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter](https://aarp.org/LivableCommunities) at [AARP.org/LivableSubscribe](https://aarp.org/LivableSubscribe)

Get in Touch!

- We want to hear about your bike audit. What worked? What didn't?
- If the [AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit](#) helped achieve needed change, please tell us about your success!

Email: Livable@AARP.org | Facebook: [/AARPLivableCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/AARPLivableCommunities) | X: [@AARPLivable](https://twitter.com/AARPLivable)

Email: BFA@BikeLeague.org | Facebook: [/LeagueAmericanBicyclists](https://www.facebook.com/LeagueAmericanBicyclists) | X: [@BikeLeague](https://twitter.com/BikeLeague) | Instagram: [@BikeLeague](https://www.instagram.com/BikeLeague)

Bike Audit Tool Kit

A self-service guide for assessing a community's bikeability

By **AARP** and **The League of American Bicyclists**

In too many communities, people can't safely cycle to where they need or want to go due to a lack of bike lanes, facilities and other safety features that make streets safe for cyclists *and* drivers.

A bike audit is a simple activity in which an individual or team assesses the bikeability of a location by documenting how and if people can safely travel along a community's streets, navigate an intersection and get from point A to B, C and so on.

Who can conduct a bike audit? Anyone!

The **AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit** can be used by local leaders, advocates, community organizations and residents to ...

- enable people of all ages to get around without having to depend on a car
- help reduce traffic congestion and pollution
- inspire the development of cycling-friendly streets
- increase fitness and exercise opportunities
- gather input about community infrastructure needs
- educate residents about street design elements that support safety
- encourage social interactions among neighbors
- boost property values
- empower community leaders and residents to be the agents of needed change

The **AARP Bike Audit Tool Kit** is free and available for download or order.

Visit **AARP.org/BikeAudit**.

Be among the first to hear when we publish other free publications.

Subscribe for free to the **AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter** at **AARP.org/LivableSubscribe**.

Find more cycling resources at **BikeLeague.org**.



PHOTO: AARP NEBRASKA

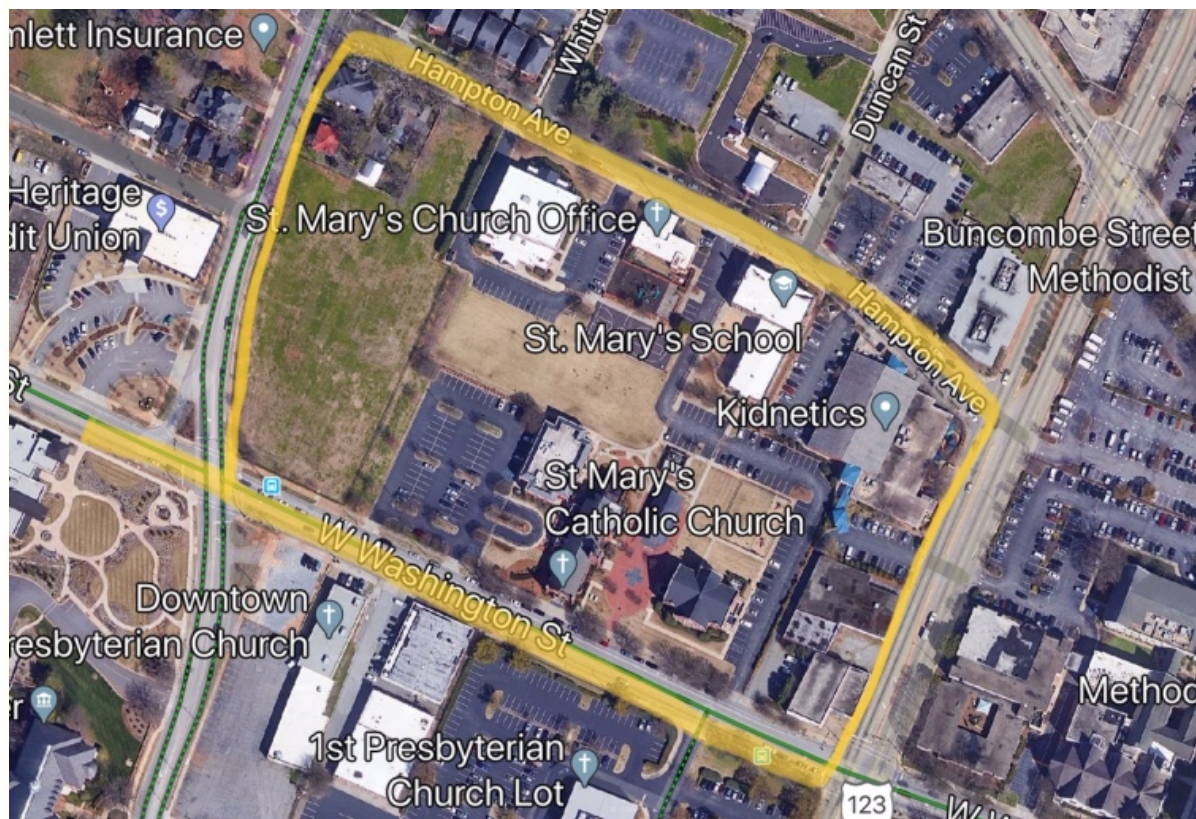
▲ A bike share event in Lincoln, Nebraska, funded in part by the AARP Community Challenge.

Bike Walk Greenville

Advocating for Active Transportation in Greenville, South Carolina since 2013

The pleasure in leading an AARP Walk Audit

Posted by [bikewalkgville](#) March 19, 2020 Posted in [Advocacy](#), [Featured](#) Tags: [walkability](#)



I recently had the privilege of leading a small group of leaders in a walkability audit of one large block in downtown Greenville. Upstate Forever was conducting their [Citizens Planning Academy](#), and walkability was just one tool they used to highlight planning issues for the participants.

As a former Greenville County Planning Commissioner, and as the volunteer executive director of Bike Walk Greenville, I was excited to lead the 45-minute walk. All participants were asked to read the [AARP Walk Audit](#) information in advance.

As we departed from the Greenville Water meeting room at the corner of West Washington Street and West Broad St/ Butler Avenue, I asked the group if they ever heard of a “slip lane.” They had not. Wikipedia defines this as follows:

“A slip lane is traffic lane provided at an intersection to allow vehicles to turn at the intersection without actually entering it and interfering with through traffic. It is therefore not controlled by any traffic signals at that intersection.”

The group observed traffic heading south on Butler Avenue that could easily turn right and head west on W. Washington St. with a yield rather than a stop. There is a new traffic signal at this intersection to allow pedestrians to safely cross, however there is little safety for those pedestrian using the marked cross-walk across the slip lane. I explained this is due to the long history of DOTs designing our communities to move motor vehicles as fast as possible with no regard for designing for the safety of people on foot. If slip lanes were eliminated on our city streets it would obviously be safer for pedestrians at the expense of motorists needing to stop at signals. What is our priority as a community?



We next walked on West Washington in front of St. Mary's Catholic Church and observed a very wide sidewalk separated from the traffic by a planting strip with large street trees, parked cars and a bike lane, a "Complete Street" This could be a great sidewalk ideal for pedestrians if it were properly maintained. We found the classic issue of sidewalk heave from the tree roots making this sidewalk dangerous in several ways. The sidewalk was raised in several places presenting a tripping hazard, particularly at night. In addition, the sidewalk is essentially impassable for people pushing strollers or in wheelchairs.

We also discussed that church goes routinely park in the bike lanes when there are services.





We then turned the corner onto Academy Street and found a sidewalk that nobody would want to use. Of minimal width it is adjacent to 45 mph motor vehicles with only a curb separating a pedestrian from death by a distracted or impaired driver. The sidewalk had several sloped driveways that made walking difficult, and it was impassible for those in a wheelchair or pushing a stroller due to the wide streetlights taking half the narrow sidewalk.

We also observed a cycle of the signal and pedestrian crossing of Academy and W. Washington and several participants stated that they would not feel comfortable about crossing at this intersection.





The walk then proceeded on Hampton Avenue that has little motor vehicle traffic and had speed bumps that slowed the motor vehicles to 15 mph, making the walk feel safe for pedestrians. We talked about the City's traffic calming program and the challenges in some neighborhoods that have fast moving motor vehicles on high volume roads that SCDOT will not permit to have speed bumps. We also discussed the idea that is becoming popular in some US cities and in the UK, "20 is plenty," where streets are designed and posted for 20 mph speed limits where people live and work.



We then turned onto Butler Avenue, which although it is a residential street, is a major artery connecting Buncombe to downtown and has 12,000 cars a day. Even though there is a planting strip buffer from the sidewalk to the curb, it is clearly not as a comfortable walk as Hampton Avenue because of the traffic volume.



When we finished our walk each participant provided feedback from what we observed, and the consensus was that if you only get around by driving a car because of where you live and where you work, you are oblivious to the needs of people on foot. They said that this exercise really opened their eyes about designing our cities for people and not just for cars.

We then discussed about how to affect the needed change, and of course that is the challenge.

For some issues it is appropriate to contact Greenville Cares that allows citizens to report a concern 864-232-2273 cares@greenvillesc.gov

The City is the leader in our County in offering this clearinghouse. We are unaware of the County or other cities to offer this service.

Greenville Cares will address tripping hazards of heaved sidewalks; however we know the backlog for this work can be lengthy.

Bigger issues such as no buffer between 45 mph vehicles and people on foot like on Academy Street are much harder to solve, and only through extensive advocacy with City Council members will solutions be found.

I was aware of the AARP Walk Audit, but until Upstate Forever reached out to me, I never has the opportunity to understand how effective this process is to grow the awareness for the need of walkable city streets.

As such, we at Bike Walk Greenville have decided that should your group desire to arrange for a walk audit in your Greenville community, please contact us at info@bikewalkgreenville.org.

We look forward to engaging with more concerned citizens in conducting these walks when the coronavirus and social distancing is behind us.

On April 13, 2020 we posted on our Facebook page:

During this time of the COVID-19 there has been a noticeable increase in people walking for exercise. With the closure of the SRT, Falls Park and Cleveland Park many city residents have been exploring our city sidewalks. We recently published a blog that highlights the AARP Walk Audit. You and your family may find it interesting to read the blog, and document your walks using the AARP methodology.

We included this photo from a recent walk.



Townes Street near W. Park Avenue has the narrowest sidewalk we have observed, due to overgrown shrubbery. Impossible for use by a person pushing a stroller or in a wheel chair. Fortunately there is an adjacent bike lane when needing social distancing.

Richmond Street and Sidewalk Audit



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Introduction

In 2019, the Richmond Transportation Committee was created and charged by the Selectboard with developing a town Transportation Implementation Plan and transportation projects that will support the Town Plan, the regional plan, and public health and safety while avoiding and minimizing environmental impacts.

The 2018 Richmond Town Plan encourages the creation and adaptation of town roads into Complete Streets—streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users—and the cultivation of community partnerships to improve the safety and welfare of individuals using Town roads. Complete Streets also improve the resilience of town transportation systems and support local economic vitality.

Prelude

To provide guidance on selecting priority projects for the town Transportation Implementation Plan, the Richmond Transportation Committee conducted a systematic evaluation of walkability of three areas of Richmond in Spring 2022:

- The Bridge St-Main St. intersection in Richmond Village,
- The Round Church, and
- The Jonesville Post Office.

The committee used the well-regarded [AARP Walk Audit Toolkit](#) to evaluate the walkability of the areas in town. Volunteers were recruited to assist the committee in assessing the walkability of areas. Walk Audits were conducted in small teams throughout late May and early June.

The Walk Audits revealed numerous deficiencies in Richmond’s road network. Transportation Committee members and volunteers devised numerous short-term and long-term recommendations to improve upon the existing road network. This report reviews the observations made during the Walk Audits, recommendations to issues with the Town-wide network, and the alignment of the recommendations with the AARP Walk Audit Toolkit.

Using these recommendations, the Richmond Transportation Committee aims to inform the Richmond Selectboard and the public about safety and accessibility on Richmond’s roads, and to garner support for investigating means and methods to strengthen the infrastructure.

Methods

Richmond Transportation Committee members and about 20 volunteers conducted Walk Audits late May and early June of 2022 following protocols detailed in the [AARP Walk Audit Toolkit](#). The walk audits focused on three areas (with a one-half mile radius for each): (1) the intersection of Bridge St./Main St. in Richmond Village, (2) the Round Church, and (3) the Jonesville Post Office.

The Walk Audits were conducted on the following dates and times:

- Saturday, May 21, 2022 at 3 pm - Walk audit of Richmond Village area
- Sunday, May 22, 2022 at 8 am - Walk audit of Round Church area
- Saturday, May 28, 2022 at 12 pm - Walk audit of Richmond Village area
- Saturday, May 28, 2022 at 1 pm - Walk audit of Jonesville Post Office area
- Sunday, May 29, 2022 at 3 pm - Walk audit of Jonesville Post Office area
- Saturday, June 4, 2022 at 12 pm - Walk audit of Round Church area

Committee members and volunteers used AARP's Walk Audit Toolkit worksheets to conduct the audit. These worksheets guided participants in assessing multiple factors that influence the usage of roads and associated sidewalks, including the design of the roads, the condition of infrastructure, the behavior of drivers and pedestrians, and the location of crosswalks and crossing signals.

Additional observations were also made of vehicular speeds and safety of roadways within the focus areas outside of the scheduled Walk Audits, as well as areas adjacent to the focus areas. These observations are also included in this report.

Richmond Village: Bridge St to Main St

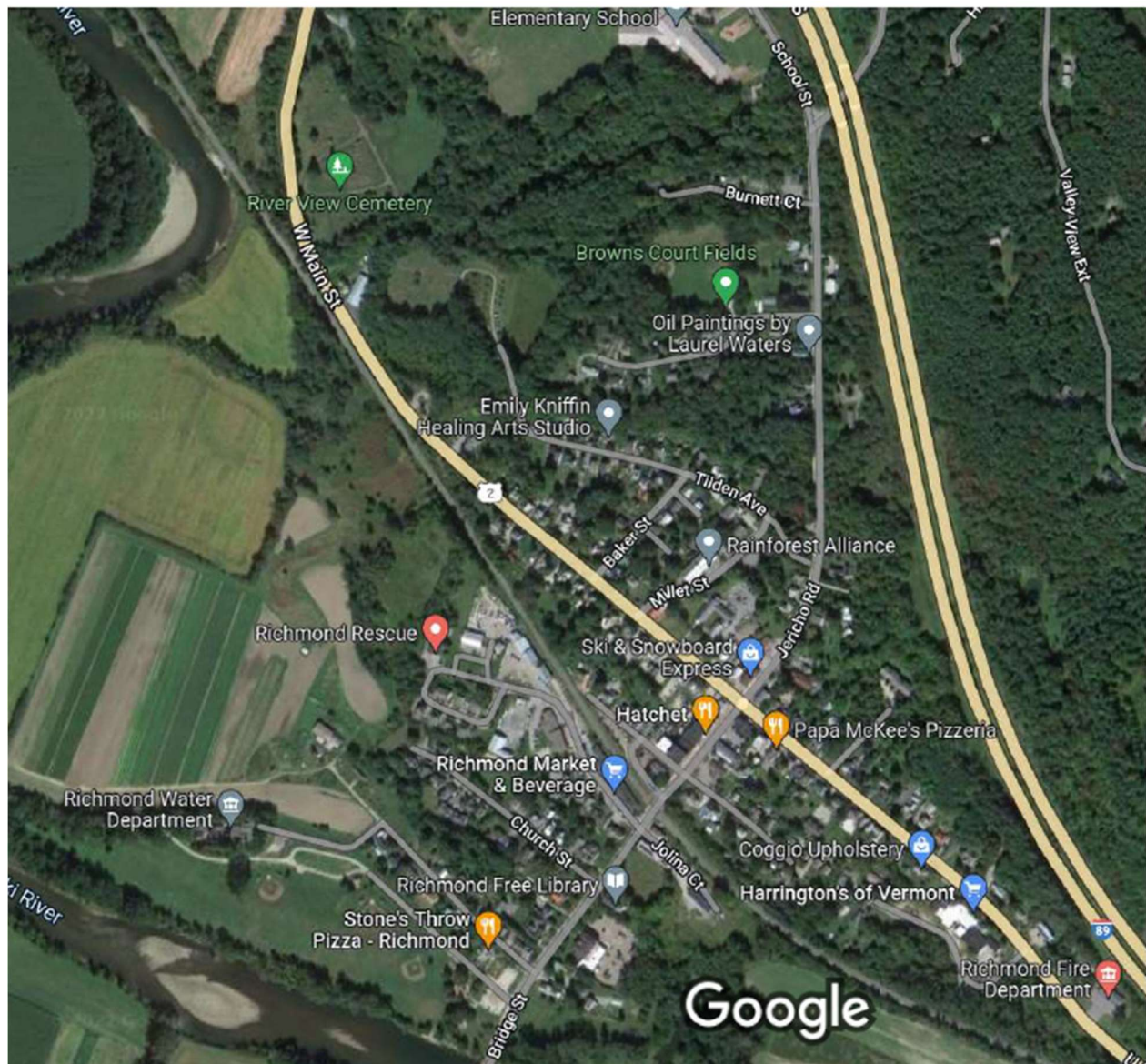


Figure 1: Map of Richmond Village Study Area

Background

The Richmond Village area centered on the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets is the primary commercial business area for the town and the most densely populated area in town. The Richmond Village study area encompassed the Bridge St.-Main St. intersection and a half-mile radius surrounding this intersection. The area included the Bridge Street corridor between Main Street and the Winooski River, Tilden/Baker/Millet neighborhood, Railroad Street, Depot Street, East Main Street from the Bridge St.-Main

St. intersection to the Richmond Fire Station, West Main Street from the Bridge St.-Main St. intersection to the end of the sidewalk, and Jericho Road from the Bridge St.-Main St. intersection to School Street.

Findings

The Bridge Street Commercial Corridor is the commercial heart of the town. The corridor starts from the Bridge Street bridge and ends at the Main Street intersection. Major landmarks include Volunteers Green, the Richmond Town Offices, the Richmond Library, Richmond Market, the Creamery (a forthcoming medium-sized mixed-use development), and the Masonic Block. The speed limit on Bridge Street is 25 miles per hour.

The corridor has a sidewalk on the west side of Bridge Street from the bridge to the Richmond Market, a sidewalk on the west side of Bridge Street from Depot Street Extension to the Cumberland Farms gas station, and a sidewalk on the east side of Bridge Street from the mid-block crossing in front of the Big Spruce restaurant to the Bridge Street-Main Street intersection. The sidewalk gap on Bridge Street between Richmond Market and Depot Street Extension is covered by a crosswalk at-grade with the vehicle travel lanes. The corridor has non-intersection crossings in front of the Richmond Town Offices, the Richmond Library, and in the middle of the Masonic Block.

In this section, volunteers observed a range of issues that inhibit pedestrian mobility. Sections of sidewalks along Bridge Street are either too steep or too narrow for wheelchairs and strollers. The curb cuts at the crosswalk on Bridge Street in front of the Town Library are not flush with the road. The sidewalk and roadway in front of the Masonic Block and between Railroad Street and Volunteers Green have many obstructions– including signage, planters, tables, chairs and bicycles in the sidewalks, and utility poles in the Bridge Street roadway and/or sidewalks (as shown in Figure 2). Sidewalk and curbing on Bridge Street are degraded. The midblock placement of the rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) at the Masonic Block is not adequately visible to drivers. Signage is inadequate on Bridge Street in front of the Town Center and at the Railroad Street intersection.

There is no sidewalk on the east side of Bridge Street. The Town Offices, the police station, the post office, and the public library are all located on that side of the street. People who live or work on the east side of Bridge Street have to cross the street twice to gain access to these public services. For children and residents who are mobility impaired, this presents a challenge



Figure 2: Bridge Street Commercial Corridor



Figure 3: Gap in Sidewalk near Cumberland Farms

The gap in the sidewalk along Bridge Street in front of the Cumberland Farms gas station, as shown in Figure 3 creates a dangerous situation for pedestrians. This section is a large curb cut in which cars enter and exit the gas station, and park between the convenience store and Bridge Street. This segment has no pedestrian facilities and no clear guidance for pedestrians on how to cross the curb cut. Bollards and trash cans keep parked vehicles about two feet from the exterior building wall, leaving a distance of about 20 feet to the edge of the roadway. Parked Vehicles force pedestrians out into the roadway.

In addition, no sidewalks or paths exist along Railroad Street between the Richmond Market and the residential area on Borden Street. The present condition is a crosswalk on the west side of the roadway, with portions demarcated with temporary bollards.

East Main St

The East Main Street section within the study area starts from the Main Street-Bridge Street intersection and ends at Harrington's, a food manufacturing and sales establishment approximately 0.2 miles to the east. This section is primarily residential with a range of dwelling types, and has some small-scale businesses, such as the Richmond Veterinary Hospital. The speed limit on East Main Street is 30 miles per hour.

This section has asphalt sidewalks on both sides of the street for the most part. The sidewalks on the south side of the roadway are level with the roadway. The sidewalks on the north side are level with the roadway, and at some points are level with the roadway. The roadway does not have curbing at this time. The sidewalks on both sides of the roadway end at Harrington's; no non-intersection pedestrian crossings across the roadway exist currently.

The sidewalks are deteriorating (as shown in Figure 4), thus rendering them inaccessible for some abilities. Speeding issues and drainage issues are also evident and there is a lack of demarcation between the roadway and the sidewalk. At certain points, the sidewalk looks like a shoulder and is used by cars to park (as shown in Figure 5), thereby obstructing pedestrians.



Figure 4: Sidewalk on East Main Street



Figure 5: Car parked on the sidewalk on East Main Street

West Main Street

The West Main Street section within the study area starts from the Main Street-Bridge Street intersection and ends 0.2 miles to the west at the end of the sidewalk (approximately 212 West Main Street). The beginning part of the section has commercial uses and the Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church, but the majority of the section has residential, single-family dwellings. The speed limit on East Main Street is 30 miles per hour.

This section has concrete sidewalks on both the north and south sides of Main St. The north side of the street has concrete curbs, and the south side of the street has granite curbs. The south side of the street has a green strip between the roadway and the sidewalk. The north side of the street does lack a buffer between the roadway and the sidewalk. Volunteers observed the degradation of the sidewalks, and the lack of tactile pads for certain wider curb cuts.

Bridge Street-Main Street Intersection

The Bridge Street-Main Street intersection is one of three signalized intersections in town. Bridge Street (southbound), West Main Street/Route 2 (westbound), East Main Street/Route 2 (eastbound), and Jericho Road (northbound) converge at this intersection. All vehicles turning left must yield to oncoming traffic. The signal does not control vehicular right turns.

Volunteers observed that the walk signal gives pedestrians a five-second advance before the green light signal for traffic going straight. However, the intersection lacks a "no right turn" signal for vehicles when the walk sign is activated. Volunteers also noted the placement of the crosswalk on East Main Street and the lack of a clear sight line from Bridge Street northbound to East Main Street eastbound.



Baker-Tilden-Millet Residential
Neighborhood

Figure 6: Bridge St.-Main St. Intersection, from the south side of the intersection and Bridge Street

The Baker-Tilden-Millet neighborhood primarily has single-family and two-family houses. However, the neighborhood has two outliers: (1) the Goodwin-Baker Building, a former underwear factory turned office building, and (2) a 16-unit apartment building near the end of Tilden Avenue commonly referred to as "the Beehive".

The roadways in the neighborhood are narrow. The speed limit is 25 miles per hour. Baker Street has a raised sidewalk; Tilden Avenue and Millet Street do not have sidewalks.

Volunteers observed the relative safety of the neighborhood for bicyclists and pedestrians because of the lack of traffic and low speeds. Volunteers also noted that because roads are narrow, the possibility of installing sidewalks is slim. During the Walk Audit, volunteers solicited comments from neighborhood residents about the speeds of vehicles.

Jericho Road to the Schools

This Jericho Road segment begins at the Bridge Street-Main Street intersection and ends at School Street approximately 0.5 miles north. This entire segment is sloped. The speed limit is 25 miles per hour. This section has a sidewalk on the west side of the street with a two-foot green buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway.

Volunteers highlighted the excellent quality of the sidewalk. They also noted vehicle speeds. The observed average vehicle speed southbound was 29 miles per hour, with a peak of 31 miles per hour. The observed average vehicle speed northbound was 31 miles per hour, with a peak of 40 miles per hour.

Jericho Road North of the Schools to Valley View Road

This Jericho Road segment begins at School Street and ends at Valley View Road approximately 0.4 miles north. This area is adjacent to and outside of the intended study area, and a couple volunteers studied this area. This entire segment is sloped. The speed limit is 25 miles per hour from School Street to Southview Drive, and 35 miles per hour from Southview Drive to Valley View Road. The vehicle travel lanes are 11-12 feet. This segment does not have a sidewalk or a paved shoulder. The shoulders in general in this location are narrow, as shown in Figure 6. The roadway has no fog lines, bike lanes or sharrows.



Figure 7: Edge of Jericho Road southbound

Measurements showed that most vehicles were traveling above the posted speed limit. The average speed of the observed traffic traveling northbound and southbound was 39 miles per hour. The maximum speed measured of the observed traffic traveling northbound was 54 miles per hour and the maximum speed measured of the observed traffic traveling southbound was 55 miles per hour.

Location	Short-Term Recommendations	Long-Term Recommendations
<i>Bridge St Commercial Corridor</i>	• Make clearer delineations between the vehicle travel portion and the pedestrian facility - Delineations are needed in areas where no sidewalk is visibly present, including along Bridge Street between the entrance of Volunteers Green and the bridge, and in front of the Cumberland Farms gas station. Delineations can be in the form of paint—for crosswalks, fog lines, or boxes—or something more substantially physical—like bollards or jersey barriers. • Education - Business owners should be reminded to maintain a minimum five-foot path clear of obstructions on the sidewalk. • Pop-up pilot projects - The Town could organize a pop-up project using paint to show how facility improvements could improve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety if installed, similar to a project organized by the town and Local Motion in June 2017. • Placemaking - Benches could be installed along Bridge Street corridor to improve walkability and placemaking.	• Modify curb cuts - Level curb cuts flush with the surface of the vehicle travel portion of the roadway to improve the accessibility of crossings. Mountable curbs or curb extensions would shorten crossings, improve the visibility of pedestrians to drivers, and force drivers to drive slower under the illusion that the travel lane is narrower. • Repair and maintenance of existing sidewalks • Implement the recommendations of the Bridge Street Complete Streets Corridor Study and Richmond Sidewalk Scoping Study, including buildout of adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities with signage and recommended crossings • Plan and buildout of pedestrian facilities on Railroad Street - Adding adequate pedestrian facilities to connect Bridge Street to the future location of the Richmond Market at the end of Railroad Street would improve the walkability of the area. • Install traffic calming measures to slow vehicle speeds.

<i>Bridge Street-Main Street Intersection</i>	Installation or movement of signage reminding drivers of crossing pedestrians - This includes placing pedestrian crossing signs along Bridge Street that are within the line of sight of drivers, "Right turn yield to pedestrians" signs at the Bridge Street and Main Street intersection, and a "No Right Turn" signal when the walk sign is on to drivers going northbound on Bridge Street at the Bridge Street-Main Street intersection.	- Modify curb cuts - Level curb cuts flush with the surface of the vehicle travel portion of the roadway to improve the accessibility of crossings. Mountable curbs or curb extensions would shorten crossings, improve the visibility of pedestrians to drivers, and force drivers to drive slower under the illusion that the travel lane is narrower. - Shift the crossing signal at the Bridge Street and Main Street intersection to improve the sight lines of cars turning from Bridge Street east onto Main Street.
Location	Short-Term	Long-Term
<i>Baker-Tilden-Millet Residential Neighborhood</i>	Traffic Calming - Initiate the Traffic Calming Policy process for the Baker-Tilden-Millet Residential Neighborhood.	Install traffic calming measures to slow vehicle speeds.
<i>East Main Street</i>		Repair and maintain existing sidewalks.
<i>West Main Street</i>		Repair and maintain of existing sidewalks.
<i>Jericho Road from School Street to Valley View Road</i>		Install traffic calming measures to slow vehicle speeds

Issues

The following issues within the study area were identified:

- Connectivity Gaps
- Obstructions
- Speed
- Deteriorated and/or inadequate facilities
- Obstructed sight lines

- Inadequate notification of pedestrian crossings to vehicles
- Accessibility issues

Conclusions

Ratings for this section are ("Great", "Acceptable", "Mixed", or "Poor"):

- Bridge Street Commercial Corridor - **Mixed**
- East Main Street - **Mixed**
- West Main Street - **Acceptable**
- Bridge Street-Main Street Intersection - **Poor**
- Baker-Tilden-Millet Residential Neighborhood - **Acceptable**
- Jericho Road to the Schools - **Great**
- Jericho Road from School Street to Valley View Road – **Poor**

Round Church



Figure 8: Map of Round Church study area

Background

The Round Church is situated southeast of the Bridge Street bridge, and northeast of the Bridge Street-Huntington Road intersection. The church was built in 1812-13. Originally intended to be a town meeting hall and place of worship, the Round Church is now a tourist attraction, and serves as a venue for weddings and community events.

The Round Church study area includes a half-mile radius of the Round Church. Notable landmarks are the Round Church Corners commercial area (Stone Corral Brewery, Mann & Machine, Long Trail Physical Therapy, among other businesses), Little Tots Academy—a day care center—Sterling House—an assisted living facility—and Richmond Terrace—an income-restricted senior housing development. Residential neighborhoods are also in the study area.

Findings

Bridge Street from the bridge to the Bridge Street-Huntington Road Intersection

Bridge Street south of the bridge has relatively narrow travel lanes and a sidewalk along the west side of the roadway. The road has some streetlights. Along a portion of the sidewalk is an approximately five-foot stone retaining wall. The quality of the sidewalk is deteriorating in several locations. There is no buffer between the travel lane and the sidewalk.

A crosswalk across Bridge Street leads pedestrians to the Round Church exists. The west end of this crosswalk is located in the middle of a curb cut; sediment washes off the road and into this curb cut. The east side of the crosswalk has no pedestrian landing and leads directly to a boulder. No speed limit signs are posted on this segment of Bridge Street.

Bridge Street-Huntington Road-Cochran Road-Thompson Road Intersection

The Bridge Street-Huntington Road intersection is a near-perpendicular intersection of four roads:(1) Bridge Street, (2) Huntington Road, (3) Thompson Road, and (4) Cochran Road. Currently, the intersection has stop signs on Thompson Road and Cochran Road, giving the impression that Bridge Street and Huntington Road are contiguous. Bridge Street has a sidewalk along the western side of the road, and Huntington Road has a sidewalk for a portion of the northern side of the road. The intersection only has a crosswalk across Huntington Road. The roadways at this intersection do not have bicycle lanes or any indication for bicycle users.

Drivers were observed using left-turn signals when driving straight from Bridge Street to Thompson Road, and drivers stalled at the stop signs at Thompson Road and Cochran Road. It appears that drivers are confused about how to drive through the intersection. Drivers were observed not stopping for pedestrians at the crosswalk on Huntington Road.

Vehicles move quickly through the intersection from Bridge Street to Huntington Road, and vice versa. In addition, drivers were observed driving through the stop sign from Cochran Road onto Bridge Street without stopping.

Cochran Road

Cochran Road is a major east-west thoroughfare for the town, connecting the Round Church area to Jonesville. Along Cochran Road are the Cochran Road Ski Area and several areas to access the Winooski River. The road is actively used by drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The roadway is a narrow two-lane road with little to no shoulders. A speed detection sign is within the study area, oriented towards drivers approaching the Huntington Road-Bridge Street intersection.

Thompson Road

Thompson Road is primarily a residential side street but has the Little Tots Daycare (at the corner of Thompson Road and Farr Road), and the town highway garage (at the end of the road). Thompson Road lacks sidewalks and indications to drivers of bicyclists and pedestrians using the vehicle travel portion of the road.

Huntington Road

Huntington Road is an arterial road, connecting the town to Huntington and to other arterials leading to Hinesburg and Williston. Within the study area, Huntington Road has a short sidewalk connecting the Huntington Road-Bridge Street intersection to the Round Church Corners commercial area. The road has a crosswalk from the sidewalk on the north side of Huntington Road to the parking lot in front of the Round Church Corners commercial area. No pedestrian facility exists at the intersection of Huntington Road and Farr Road. There is a steep slope from the raised sidewalk to the street-level crossing. There are no streetlights.

Location	Short-Term Recommendations	Long-Term Recommendations
<i>Bridge St</i>	• Install speed limit signs. • Maintain and upgrade existing sidewalks and streetlights.	• Create adequate buffers between the sidewalk and the roadway.
<i>Bridge Street-Huntington Road Intersection</i>	• Add additional crossings - Add crosswalks to the Bridge Street-Huntington Road intersection.	• Install controls to the Bridge Street-Huntington Road Intersection - This could involve implementing the recommendations in the Bridge Street Corridor Scoping Study (2021), installing four-way stop signs, or a roundabout.
<i>Cochran Road</i>	• Add additional crossings - Add crosswalks to Cochran Road at the entrance of Preston Forest. • Install RRFB indicators at the non-intersection pedestrian crossings. • Install speed limit signs. • Implement recommendations from the 2022 Bike-Walk-Pedestrian Plan.	• Install pedestrian facilities. • Install streetlights. • Implement recommendations from the 2022 Bike-Walk-Pedestrian Plan.
<i>Thompson Road</i>		• Install pedestrian facilities.
<i>Huntington Road</i>		• Create adequate buffers between the sidewalk and the roadway. • Install pedestrian facilities. • Install streetlights.

Issues

- Disorientation at the Bridge Street-Huntington Road-Cochran-Thompson intersection - In addition to non-local drivers unable to understand how to navigate through the intersection, and speeding issues, the lack of crosswalks, crosswalk landings, and traffic controls at Huntington Road and Bridge Street makes the intersection dangerous for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers.
- Inadequate pedestrian facilities - Cochran Road, Thompson Road, and most of Huntington Road have no sidewalks. This inhibits pedestrians from safely accessing trailheads along Cochran Road and Huntington Road. On Thompson Road, the lack of a sidewalk may be a barrier to access for patrons of the daycare and residents of Richmond Terrace. Furthermore, the existing pedestrian facilities are deteriorating, and have accessibility gaps.
- Lack of bicycle facility markers - None of the roadways in the study area have paint or markings to inform drivers of bicyclists on the road.
- Poor placement and design of pedestrian crossings - The pedestrian crossings at non-intersection locations have accessibility issues for pedestrians, and visibility issues for drivers. The crosswalk across Huntington Road at the Huntington Road-Bridge Street intersection is long and not enough notice of possible pedestrians in the roadway is given to drivers turning from Bridge Street to Huntington Road.
- Lack of buffer between sidewalks and travel lanes - The lack of separation between the sidewalk and the travel lane makes pedestrians feel less safe on the sidewalk. Plus, without a grass strip, the sidewalk is not kept clear of snow in the winter.
- High traffic volumes with a significant number of motor vehicles speeding.
- Inadequate street lighting.

Conclusions

Ratings for this section are ("Great", "Acceptable", "Mixed", or "Poor"):

- Bridge Street - **Mixed**
- Bridge Street-Huntington Road-Cochran Road-Thompson Road intersection - **Poor**
- Cochran Road - **Poor**
- Thompson Road - **Poor**
- Huntington Road - **Mixed**

Jonesville

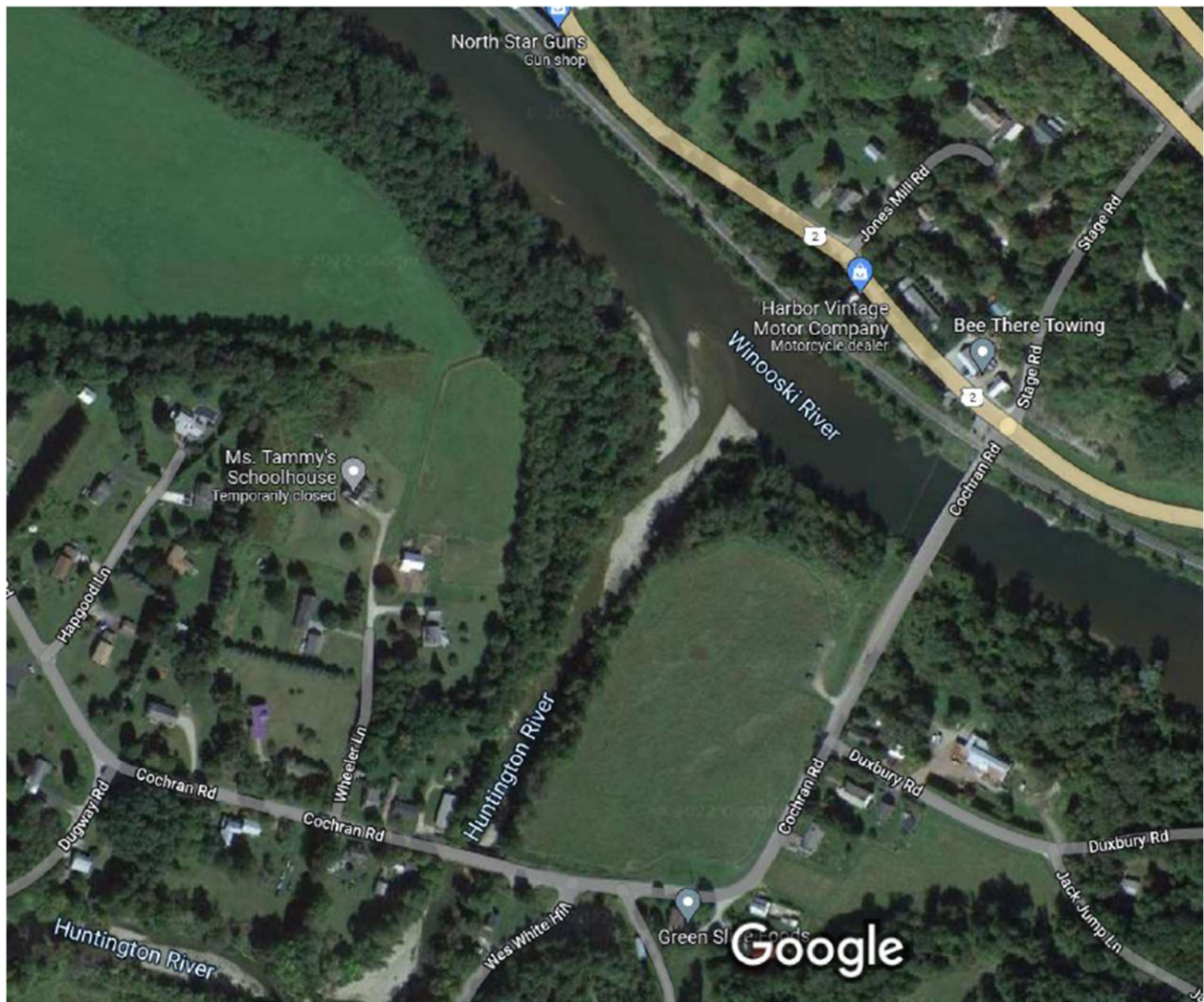


Figure 9: Map of Jonesville study area

Background

Jonesville is a part of Richmond located east of Richmond Village near the Bolton town line. Jonesville has a post office with limited hours and a handful of shops and businesses, but the area is primarily residential.

The study area was a half-mile radius from the Jonesville Post Office. The area included US Route 2, the eastern end of Cochran Road, and lower parts of Wes White Hill Road.

Findings

US Route 2

US Route 2 within the study area is a two-lane road with narrow shoulders. The speed limit is 40 miles per hour. The road has neither bicycle nor pedestrian facilities. The roadway lacks signage or markings indicating to drivers of bicycle and pedestrian users. US Route 2 does not have any pedestrian crossings.

Cochran Road

Cochran Road within the study area is a two-lane road with narrow to no shoulders. The section of the road in the study area includes the bridges over the Winooski River and Huntington River. Only the centerlines are striped on this roadway. The roadway does not have bicycle or pedestrian facilities.

Cochran Road, and the roads stemming from it—Duxbury Road, Wes White Hill Road, and Dugway Road—are used by walkers, runners, bicyclists, and those looking to access the Huntington and Winooski Rivers.



Figure 10: Wes White Hill Road

Wes White Hill Road

Wes White Hill Road within the study area is a two-lane road. The road has no striping, and therefore no indication of a centerline or shoulders. The speed limit is 35 miles per hour.

With the slope and turns in the road, the segments of Wes White Hill Road in the study area have poor sight distances.

Location	Short-Term Recommendations	Long-Term Recommendations
<i>US Route 2</i>	• Install a crosswalk and warning signs on US Route 2 in front of the Jonesville Post Office and at the US Route 2 and Stage Road intersection.	• Reduce speed limits
<i>Cochran Road</i>	• Paint Cochran Road with fog lines, centerlines, and a bicycle and pedestrian lane on both sides of the road.	• Install traffic calming elements to Cochran Road, per the recommendations in the Walk, Bike, and Trails Plan (2022)
<i>Wes White Hill Rd</i>		• Reduce speed limits

Issues

- No bicycle and pedestrian facilities - This includes no sidewalks, and also no striping or markings on the road indicating shared usage to drivers.
- Speeding
- Inadequate sight distances

Conclusions

The rating for this area is **poor**.

Appendix A

AARP Bridge St Sidewalks, Streets, and Crossings Audit Worksheet

Make a Map

- Use a mapping website to capture and print a bird's-eye-view image of the walk audit area or draw a simple map of the location in the space below.
- Label the streets and make note of any key features, such as stores, schools and (if they exist) sidewalks.
- Take photographs and/or video of the area so others can see the challenges and strengths of the audit location. Match and mark the images on the map.
- Indicate any other problem spots or areas of opportunity (e.g., a bus stop with no seating or shelter).



Who's Using the Street — and Why?

Community Name: _____

Location/Street Name(s): _____

Audit date: _____ Start time: _____ AM | PM End time: _____ AM | PM

Use hash marks (///) for counting the number of people observed. (Yes, some will likely be counted more than once.)

Use your best guess to determine each person's age range and reason for walking.

WHO'S WALKING?	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
Young children (e.g. elementary school students)	
Teens	
Adults	
Older Adults	
HOW:	
While pushing a baby stroller and/or walking with a child or children	
While using a mobility aid (i.e., a wheelchair, cane, walker)	
While riding a bicycle, scooter, skateboard or other mobility device	
POSSIBLE REASONS:	
Traveling to/from school	
Waiting for and/or heading to public transit	
Commuting to/from work	
Shopping and/or getting something to eat	
Walking/running for fitness	
Walking a dog	
Walking to a park or outdoor public space	
Just out for a walk	
Other/unknown	

ALSO, WHO'S NOT WALKING? Do the observed pedestrians represent the demographic composition of the neighborhood? If not, which segments of the population appear to be missing? Why might that be the case? (Use a notebook or the back of this worksheet to record these answers and observations.)

Sidewalks, Streets and Crossings

**SINGLE-LOCATION
AUDIT**
Community Name: _____

Location/Street Name(s): _____

Audit date: _____ **Start time:** _____ **AM | PM** **End time:** _____ **AM | PM**
Posted speed limit(s): _____ **Do the motorists appear to be obeying the speed limit(s)?** _____

Total number of vehicle lanes: _____ **The street is:** ☐ one-way | ☐ two-way

If more than one lane: Does the roadway have ☐ a median and/or ☐ a pedestrian island?

The street has: ☐ no sidewalk ☐ no sidewalk but needs one ☐ no sidewalk but needs two
☐ partial sidewalks ☐ a sidewalk on one side of the street ☐ sidewalks on both sides of the street

YES | NO | OTHER Skip any statements that don't apply

THE SIDEWALK:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Is separated from the street by a barrier or buffer (a curb, grass, landscaping)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Is surfaced with a material that is smooth and consistent (e.g., or asphalt rather than bricks)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Is in good condition, without cracks or raised sections
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. Is free of obstacles (hydrants, utility poles, overgrown landscaping, trash receptacles)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Is free of interruptions from driveways (such as to/from homes, parking lots, etc.)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Is continuous (no segments are missing) and complete (it doesn't randomly end)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 7. Is wide enough (at least 5 feet) for two people to walk side by side or pass one another
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 8. Has tactile ground surface indicators so pedestrians with vision impairment will know when the path is ending
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 9. Has a curb cut ramp (for use by wheelchairs, baby strollers, etc.) wherever it is interrupted by a street

THE STREET:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Has traffic lights and/or stop signs at intersections and crossings
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. The traffic lights and/or stop signs are clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Has crosswalks
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. The crosswalks are well marked and clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Has signage alerting drivers to the presence of pedestrians
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Has a designated bicycle lane
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 7. Has a pedestrian crossing signal, also called a beacon (if yes, complete the next section)

THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNALS:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Are working
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Have a "push-to-walk" mechanism, meaning pedestrians can stop vehicle traffic
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Have audible prompts for people with vision impairment
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. Are placed in appropriate locations (if not, make note of where more are needed)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Provide enough time to cross (indicate the amount of time: _____ minutes _____ seconds)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Provide suitable opportunities to cross (indicate the amount of time pedestrians must wait for a traffic light change in order to cross: _____ minutes _____ seconds)

Consider using the "Build a Better Block" worksheet as well.

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above: ☐ Great ☐ Acceptable ☐ Mixed ☐ Poor

Sidewalks, Streets and Crossings WALKING AUDIT

Community Name: _____

Starting location: _____ Ending location: _____

Route: _____

Audit date: _____ Start time: _____ AM | PM End time: _____ AM | PM

Posted speed limit(s): _____ Do the motorists appear to be obeying the speed limit(s)? _____

Total number of vehicle lanes: _____ The street is: ☐ one-way | ☐ two-wayIf more than one lane: Does the roadway have ☐ a median and/or ☐ a pedestrian island?

The street has: ☐ no sidewalk ☐ no sidewalk but needs one ☐ no sidewalk but needs two
☐ partial sidewalks ☐ a sidewalk on one side of the street ☐ sidewalks on both sides of the street

YES | NO | OTHER Skip any statements that don't apply

THE SIDEWALK:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Is separated from the street by a barrier or buffer (a curb, grass, landscaping)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Is surfaced with a material that is smooth and consistent (e.g., concrete or asphalt rather than bricks)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Is in good condition, without cracks or raised sections
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. Is free of obstacles (hydrants, utility poles, overgrown landscaping, trash receptacles)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Is free of interruptions from driveways (such as to/from homes, parking lots, etc.)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Is continuous (no segments are missing) and complete (it doesn't randomly end)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 7. Is wide enough (at least 5 feet) for two people to walk side by side or pass one another
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 8. Has tactile ground surface indicators so pedestrians with vision impairment will know when the path is ending
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 9. Has a curb cut ramp (for use by wheelchairs, baby strollers, etc.) wherever it is interrupted by a street

THE STREET:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Has traffic lights and/or stop signs at intersections and crossings
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. The traffic lights and/or stop signs are clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Has crosswalks
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. The crosswalks are well marked and clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Has signage alerting drivers to the presence of pedestrians
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Has a designated bicycle lane
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 7. Has a pedestrian crossing signal, also called a beacon (if yes, complete the next section)

THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNALS:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Are working
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Have a "push-to-walk" mechanism, meaning pedestrians can stop the vehicle traffic
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Have audible prompts for people with vision impairment
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. Are placed in appropriate locations (if not, make note of where more are needed)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Provide enough time to cross (indicate the amount of time provided: _____ minutes _____ seconds)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Provide suitable opportunities to cross (indicate the amount of time pedestrians must wait for a traffic light change in order to cross: _____ minutes _____ seconds)

Consider using the "Build a Better Block" worksheet as well.

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above: ☐ Great ☐ Acceptable ☐ Mixed ☐ Poor

Sidewalks

Community Name: _____

Location/Street Name(s): _____

Audit date: _____ **Start time:** _____ AM | PM **End time:** _____ AM | PM

If more than one lane: Does the roadway have ☐ a median and/or ☐ pedestrian island?

The street has: ☐ no sidewalk ☐ no sidewalk but needs one ☐ no sidewalk but needs two
☐ partial sidewalks ☐ a sidewalk on one side of the street ☐ sidewalks on both sides of the street

YES | NO | OTHER Skip any statements that don't apply

THE SIDEWALK:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 1. Is separated from the street by a barrier or buffer (a curb, grass, landscaping) |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 2. Is surfaced with a material that is smooth and consistent (concrete or asphalt rather than bricks) |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 3. Is in good condition, without cracks or raised blocks |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 4. Is free of obstacles (hydrants, utility poles, overgrown landscaping, trash receptacles) |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 5. Is free of interruptions from driveways (such as to/from homes, parking lots, etc.) |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 6. Is continuous (no segments are missing) and complete (it doesn't randomly end) |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 7. Is wide enough (at least 5 feet) for two people to walk side by side or pass one another |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 8. Has tactile ground surface indicators so pedestrians with vision impairment will know when the path is ending |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 9. Has a curb cut ramp (for use by wheelchairs, baby strollers, etc.) wherever the sidewalk is interrupted by a street |

NOTES OR OTHER OBSERVATIONS:

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above: ☐ Great ☐ Acceptable ☐ Mixed ☐ Poor

Community Name: _____

Location/Street Name(s): _____

Audit date: _____ **Start time:** _____ AM | PM **End time:** _____ AM | PM

YES | NO | OTHER Skip any statements that don't apply

THE STREET:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Has traffic lights and/or stop signs at intersections and crossings
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. The traffic lights and/or stop signs are clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Has crosswalks
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. The crosswalks are well marked and clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Has signage alerting drivers to the presence of pedestrians
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Has a designated bicycle lane
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 7. Has a pedestrian crossing signal, also called a beacon. (If yes, complete the next section.)

THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNALS:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Are working
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Have a push-to-walk functionality, meaning pedestrians can stop vehicle traffic
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Have audible prompts for people with vision impairment
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. Are placed in appropriate locations (if not, make note of where more are needed)
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Provide enough time to cross (indicate the amount of time provided: _____ minutes _____ seconds)
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Provide suitable opportunities to cross (indicate the amount of time pedestrians must wait for a traffic light change in order to cross: _____ minutes _____ seconds)

NOTES OR OTHER OBSERVATIONS:

[illegible]

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above: ☐ Great ☐ Acceptable ☐ Mixed ☐ Poor

Street Safety and Appeal

Community Name: _____

Location/Street Name(s): _____

Audit date: _____ Start time: _____ AM | PM End time: _____ AM | PM

YES | NO | OTHER Skip any statements that don't apply

THE LOCATION HAS:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Places to sit
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. Shade trees
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. Grass, flowers and landscaping (if yes, is the greenery well maintained? _____)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. Awnings, outdoor umbrellas or other shelter from rain and other weather conditions
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Drinking fountains (if yes, are they working and clean? _____)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Public restrooms (if yes, are they clean and safe? _____)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 7. A transit or bus shelter (if yes, is there seating? _____)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 8. Trash receptacles (if yes, so they appear to be regularly emptied?)
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 9. Buildings and/or homes that are well-maintained
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 10. Informative signage
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 11. Well-placed signage
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 12. Streetscape features (art, signage, etc.) that are representative of/suitable for the community
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 13. Pedestrian-scaled lighting
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 14. A posted speed limit that seems suitable (if yes, does it appear that drivers are obeying the limit? _____)

IMPRESSIONS:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. The location/street is a safe and appealing destination
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. The location/street is a safe and appealing travel route
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. The location/street appears to be safe for users of all ages, abilities, races, income levels, etc.
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. The location/street appears to be safe for pedestrians during both the day and night
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. Pedestrians appear to be safe from moving vehicles
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Pedestrians appear to be safe from crime, harassment or similar threats

For "No" or "Other" answers, use the space below or on the back of this worksheet to briefly explain the response.

NOTES OR OTHER OBSERVATIONS:

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above: ☐ Great ☐ Acceptable ☐ Mixed ☐ Poor

Community Name: _____

Location/Street Name(s): _____

Audit date: _____ **Start time:** _____ AM | PM **End time:** _____ AM | PM

IMPRESSIONS:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ 1. Pedestrians can safely access and depart from the transit stop or station
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 2. The transit stop or station is in a useful location
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 3. The transit stop or station protects waiting passengers from moving vehicles
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 4. The transit stop or station has suitable seating for waiting passengers
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 5. The transit stop or station features shelter from (check all that apply) ☐ rain ☐ sun ☐ heat ☐ cold ☐ wind
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. The transit stop or station is clean and well-maintained
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 7. The transit stop or station is well lighted
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 8. The transit stop or station has useful amenities (if yes, describe what they are)
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 9. The transit stop or station feels safe from crime
 - ☐ ☐ ☐ 10. I would feel safe and comfortable waiting in this location

[illegible]

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above: ☐ Great ☐ Acceptable ☐ Mixed ☐ Poor

Build a Better Block

Would the safe walkability and appeal of the walk audit location or route be improved by any of the following features? Select those you think could help:

- ☐ 1. Sidewalks (because there aren't any at all)
- ☐ 2. Sidewalk repairs
- ☐ 3. Wider sidewalks
- ☐ 4. Safety barriers between the sidewalk and street (landscaping, low walls, fencing, etc.)
- ☐ 5. Decorative sidewalk features (hanging flower baskets, planters)
- ☐ 6. Crosswalks (because there aren't any at all)
- ☐ 7. Raised crosswalks
- ☐ 8. Artistic crosswalks
- ☐ 9. Pedestrian "bulb-outs" at intersections or crossings
- ☐ 10. Pedestrian island(s)
- ☐ 11. Pedestrian-friendly lighting
- ☐ 12. One-way rather than two-way traffic
- ☐ 13. Outdoor seating and furnishings for public use (benches, tables, parklets, etc.)
- ☐ 14. Decorative and/or directional (also called "wayfinding") signage
- ☐ 15. Public art (sculpture, wall murals, banners)
- ☐ 16. More street-level/street-facing shops and businesses
- ☐ 17. Shelter from the elements (awnings, outdoor umbrellas, etc.)
- ☐ 18. Green space (such as a small park or "pocket park")
- ☐ 19. Street trees and landscaping
- ☐ 20. Improved landscape maintenance
- ☐ 21. Drinking fountains
- ☐ 22. Public restrooms (or, if already present, better maintenance)
- ☐ 23. Litter removal
- ☐ 24. Graffiti removal
- ☐ 25. Trash receptacles
- ☐ 26. Security features (cameras, call-boxes, etc.)
- ☐ 27. Management of off-leash dogs
- ☐ 28. Repair or removal of vacant or rundown buildings
- ☐ 29. On-street parking
- ☐ 30. Parking garage or structure

OTHER FEATURES:

Summary

Record the score totals for each observation type

- Record the total number of yes responses for the category
- Record the total number of no responses for the category
- Record the one-word rating for the category

This information — as well as all notes, photographs, videos and observation discussions — will be helpful for writing a short report and/or preparing a PowerPoint presentation.

Community Name: _____

Street/Intersection Observed: _____ **and** _____

Audit Date: _____

WORKSHEET	YES RESPONSES	NO RESPONSES	RATING Great Acceptable Mixed Poor
Sidewalks, Streets and Crossings (Single-Location Audit)			
Sidewalks, Streets and Crossings (Walking Audit)			
Sidewalks			
Streets and Crossings			
Street Safety and Appeal			
Public Transit Access			

NOTES OR OTHER OBSERVATIONS:

Appendix B

Walk Audit Worksheets and Notes of Richmond Village Area

Community Walk Audit:

Background:

What: A systematic evaluation of the walkability of several areas of Richmond: Bridge St., Main St. within the village, Tilden/Baker/Millet area, Jericho Rd. to School St. and to Valley View Rd., the US2/Bridge/Jericho intersection, and the Jonesville area.

Why: Problems with walkability were identified in public comment meetings during Richmond Town projects involving the CCRPC/UPWP process. Information obtained through the Walk Audit process can be used to guide expenditures of Town transportation dollars and as supporting data in grant applications.

How: Using the AARP Walk Audit Toolkit and worksheets.

When: Late May and early June of 2022

Who: Approximately 18 community volunteers, including 4 members of the Richmond Transportation Committee, and the Town Planner.

N.B. For descriptive purposes, US2 is regarded as running east/west, and Bridge St. and Jericho Rd. as running north/south.

Bridge Street North of the Winooski River

Overall walkability of the area: Mixed (options are: Great; Acceptable; Mixed; and Poor)

The Problems:

- 1) The Bridge St. side of the Cumberland Farms lot is a dangerous and problematic spot on a route used by schoolchildren. The 2021 Bridge Street Corridor Study seems to have ignored this spot.
 - a) There is no sidewalk and no curb cuts, just an expanse of flat asphalt leading to the gas pumps and the 2 parking spaces on the east side of the Cumberland Farms building. One of these spaces is “handicap”, and a third vehicle frequently occupies the space designated for handicap access.
 - b) Vehicles in these parking spaces, especially large pickup trucks and SUV’s, block the walkable path and force pedestrians out into the roadway. Bollards and trash cans keep parked vehicles about two feet from the exterior building wall, leaving a distance of about 20 feet to the edge of roadway. A standard sedan, at about 15 ft. long, leaves about 5 ft. for pedestrians, albeit with no protection from the roadway. A full size pickup truck or large SUV, at about 19 ft. long, leaves no sidewalk and pedestrians are forced into the roadway.
 - c) Parked vehicles back out across the pedestrian traverse. The tailgate of a full size pickup is about 5 ft. high; pedestrians shorter than this are invisible to a backing pickup driver unless they go even further out into the roadway. (insert pictures #1 & #2)

Recommendations:

Short term: At a minimum, a painted, highly visible sidewalk or crosswalk should be put down traversing this expanse, along with signs prohibiting truck and large vehicle parking and “yield to

pedestrians” signage. Another option would be using bollards or jersey barriers to move the portion of sidewalk crossing the parking spaces next to the building, along with painted sidewalk or crosswalk on the rest traverse.

Long term: Curbs and curb cuts would channel vehicles entering and exiting into predictable paths and give pedestrians safe spaces between shorter crossings. A “mountable curb” type elevation to an actual sidewalk where it traverses curb cuts would calm the traffic pulling across it. The sidewalk in the area of the parking spaces should be routed inside the parking spaces.

- 2) The concrete sidewalks going south from the bike shop to Depot St. Ext. are in good condition, however:
 - a) On the west side they have many obstructions: signs, planters, tables and chairs and bicycles. Auditors note that this adds vibrancy to the area, but is a challenge to traverse for all but the sighted and nimble.
 - b) On the east side the sidewalk ends abruptly and requires crossing Bridge St. The placement of the pedestrian signals (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons; RRFB’s) makes them awkward to access, decreases their visibility to drivers, and increases how long it takes to cross while the signal duration is only 10 seconds. Large vehicles in the angled parking block the sight line for the crosswalk both for southbound drivers and for pedestrians who, having activated the RRFB, then have to walk out and peer around the parked vehicle. (insert pictures #3, #4, #5 & #6)

Recommendations:

Short term: Business owners should be reminded to maintain a minimum 5 ft. path clear of obstructions on the sidewalk. A temporary “bump out” on the west side of the mid-block crosswalk should be constructed to give pedestrians protected space to get out to the end of parked cars, and the RRFB’s should be moved to the end of the “bumpout” space on the west side, and to the near the edge of the sidewalk on the right side. Traffic calming is needed to prevent vehicles turning right from US2 from accelerating into the crosswalk.

Long term: Institute the measures in the Bridge Street Complete Streets Corridor Study (August 2021, VHB) and the Bridge Street East Sidewalk portion of the Sidewalk Scoping Study (June 2022, Stantec). A complete sidewalk on the east side of Bridge St. will reduce congestion on the west side in the business block (for example, dog walkers will not have to traverse restaurant sidewalk tables). A crosswalk with bumpout at Pleasant St. will have better site lines than the mid-block crosswalk.

- 3) West sidewalk between Depot St. Ext. and the Winooski River Bridge:
 - a) Sidewalks and curbs are deteriorated asphalt.
 - b) Crossings have worn paint.
 - c) Crossings to the Library and The Town Center lack curb cut ramps and tactile pads on the west side, and lack tactile pads on the east side.
 - d) The crossing of the uncontrolled intersection at Railroad St. is quite long and traffic is often heavy there. Tactile pads are lacking on the west side and on the southwest corner of RR and

Bridge there is no safe place for pedestrians to launch and land as the sidewalk is not delineated from the street. (insert pictures #7, #8, #9, #10 & #11)

Recommendations:

Short and long term: Current plans to rebuild this sidewalk in 2022 address these issues and should go forward.

4. Posted speed limit is 25 mph, or 37 ft/sec, which some drivers take as a suggestion rather than a limit.

- a) On a weekend mid-morning, at the Bridge/Railroad St intersection, average speed of 186 consecutive cars on Bridge St was about 18 mph, with a maximum speed of 30 mph.
- b) In the business block at the north end sight lines are short and busy with diagonal parking, pedestrians, bicycles and crosswalks. Traffic turning right from US2 can be confronted with a complex situation in a short distance.
- c) At times eastbound traffic backs up on US2, such that drivers turning right are impatient and accelerate quickly into the mid-block crosswalk.
- d) Traffic exiting Railroad St also backs up at times and drivers accelerate quickly into the Jolina Ct. and Library crosswalks. Drivers tend to have been looking left for oncoming traffic, not right for pedestrians in the crosswalks.

Recommendations:

Short and long term: Traffic calming measure are needed for the length of Bridge St, so that 25 mph is a limit, not a suggestion. The only way to achieve this is to engineer the street so that drivers are not comfortable traveling faster than 25 mph. Methods from paint and signage to chicanes to speed tables are available. Temporary installations are possible to evaluate effectiveness.

East Main St (US2)

Overall walkability of the area: Mixed

The Problems:

- 1. Sidewalks are deteriorated asphalt. (insert pictures #12 & #13)
- 2. There are no curbs, and thus no curb cuts. Cars pull in and back out along the entire frontage of the pizza restaurant property. Cars use the shoulder and sidewalk as parking. (insert pictures #14 & #15)
- 3. Poor drainage causes ponding and dousing of sidewalks from passing vehicles. (insert picture #16)
- 4. Posted speed limit is 30 mph, which many drivers take as a suggestion. The traffic light slows vehicle speeds, with speeds increasing as you travel away from it. At 112 E Main, average speed of 13 consecutive vehicles late afternoon on 5-25-22 was 32 mph, with a maximum of 39 mph. Although zoned "residential commercial", this is in fact primarily a residential street.

Recommendations:

Short and long term: The long planned VTRANS repaving project is starting, and the Town has concurrent plans to rebuild the curbs and sidewalks. These projects will solve all of the problems except speeding. Traffic calming measures are needed. What is possible on a state controlled roadway?

West Main St (US2)

Overall walkability of the area: Acceptable

The Problems:

1. Concrete sidewalks and curbs on both sides of the street have some areas that need repairs. Driveways at the church and medical offices have no tactile pads. (Insert picture #17)
2. Sidewalk in front of Ski and Snowboard Express is in very poor condition. (Insert picture #18)

Recommendations:

Short and long term: The Town plans to repair these sidewalks in 2022, and those plans should go forward.

Baker St, Millet St, and Tilden Ave

Overall walkability of the area: Acceptable

The Problems:

1. Baker St has a sidewalk in excellent condition on one side of the street. Tilden Ave and Millet St lack sidewalks and my understanding from public comment meetings is that the residents do not want them, as there is not much room. These are low traffic residential streets that pedestrians walk on and children play on. Residents complain of occasional vehicles that travel too fast for conditions and safety.

Recommendations:

The residents of the area should talk with Town staff to discuss preferred traffic calming measures. Advisory bike/ped lanes, chicanes, and speed tables are options for this area.

Jericho Rd from Main St to School St

Overall walkability: Great

The Problem:

1. The sidewalk along the west side of Jericho Rd from Main St to School St is in excellent condition. The only problem is vehicle speed on Jericho Rd. On the afternoon of 5-25-22, while there were 43 children and 6 adults on the sidewalk 2 ft from the vehicle traffic, downhill traffic averaged 29 mph with a maximum of 35 mph, and uphill traffic averaged 31 mph with a maximum of 40 mph. There are no traffic calming measure such as fog lines, sharrows, etc.

Recommendations:

Traffic calming measures are needed for this section of Jericho Rd, so that 25 mph is a limit, not a suggestion. The only way to achieve this is to engineer the street so that drivers are not comfortable traveling faster than 25 mph. Methods from paint and signage to chicanes to speed tables are available. Temporary installations are possible to evaluate effectiveness. Phase one of the Bike/Ped Master Plan (June 2021, Toole) suggested advisory bike lanes for this section.

Jericho Rd from School St to Valley View Rd

Overall walkability of the area: Poor

The Problems:

1. There are two travel lanes of 11 ft. to 12 ft. wide. There is no sidewalk and there is no paved shoulder. The shoulder is generally quite narrow, bordered in many places by a guardrail and at other spots by a drop off. In places the shoulder is quite rough and eroded. Vegetation is not cut back and sight lines are poor. There are no fog lines, bike lanes or sharrows. (Insert pictures #19 & #20)
2. Posted speed limits drop from 45 mph to 35 mph at Valley View Rd and 35 mph to 25 mph at Southview Rd. Speeds of 68 vehicles were recorded on 5-27-22 starting at 7:30 AM. Most traffic was traveling to or from School St. In the 35 mph zone, average northbound speed was 39 mph with a maximum of 54 mph; average southbound speed was 39 mph with a maximum of 55 mph. In the 25 mph zone, average northbound speed was 32 mph with a maximum of 39 mph; average southbound speed was 27 mph with a maximum of 32 mph.

Recommendations:

Short term: Phase one of the Bike/Ped Master Plan (June 2021, Toole) recommended reducing the speed limit to 25 mph for the entire length of this section. The only way to achieve this is to engineer the street so that drivers are not comfortable traveling faster than 25 mph. Toole also recommended installing mirrors at blind turns. Advisory bike lanes where feasible and narrowing travel lanes to 10 ft. elsewhere would give pedestrians and cyclists space and help calm traffic.

Long term: A sidewalk on the west side has been scoped (June 2022, Stantec). Funding should be sought to construct it. In addition, the Bike/Ped Master plan recommends narrowing the travel lanes to 10 ft. on a long term basis.

US2/Bridge St./Jericho Rd. Intersection

Overall Walkability: Poor

The Problems:

1. There is no control of right turns, which are frequent both on green and on red. The walk signals give a head start of 5 seconds on the green light signal for traffic going straight, however, there is nothing to tell the drivers turning right on red that a pedestrian now has a walk signal, unless they happen to be looking at the walk signal. Most are looking left to see if they are clear of oncoming cars. At busy times when eastbound traffic backs up on US2 and many are turning right onto Bridge St., traffic feels pressured and aggressive.

2. The crosswalk across US2 on the east side of the intersection has an obstructed sight line for traffic on Bridge St. northbound that wants to turn right onto US2. This is a problem at all times, but especially in the “right turn on red” scenario, when the driver tends to be looking left. (Insert pictures #21 & #22)

Recommendations:

Short term: On the southeast corner, the landscaping on the Greensea property needs to be changed so that it does not obstruct the sight line to the crosswalk. Signage “Right Turn Yield to Pedestrians” needs to be installed for all 4 corners.

Long term: When US2 is repaved the crosswalk across US2 on the east side of the intersection and the crossing signal should be moved westerly to be nearer the intersection, so that northbound drivers on Bridge St. have a sight line to it. The new traffic signals should have a signal that says “no right turn” when the pedestrian “walk” signal is lit up.

Sidewalks, Streets and Crossings WALKING AUDIT

Community Name: Richmond, VTStarting location: Bridge St at Winooski River Bridge Ending location: Bridge St at US 2Route: West sidewalk, crossings, and East Sidewalk in front of Big Spruce and GreenseaAudit date: 05/21/22 Start time: 3 PM AM | PM End time: 5 PM AM | PMPosted speed limit(s): 25 mph Do the motorists appear to be obeying the speed limit(s)? SomeTotal number of vehicle lanes: 2 The street is: ☐ one-way | ☒ two-wayIf more than one lane: Does the roadway have ☐ a median and/or ☐ a pedestrian island? No

The street has: ☐ no sidewalk ☐ no sidewalk but needs one ☐ no sidewalk but needs two
☒ partial sidewalks ☐ a sidewalk on one side of the street ☐ sidewalks on both sides of the street

West sidewalk complete except at Cumberland Farms. East sidewalk only from US 2 to Big Spruce

YES | NO | OTHER Skip any statements that don't apply

THE SIDEWALK:

- ☐ ☐ ☒ 1. Is separated from the street by a barrier or buffer (a curb, grass, landscaping) Some parts
- ☒ ☐ ☐ 2. Is surfaced with a material that is smooth and consistent (e.g., concrete or asphalt rather than bricks)
- ☐ ☐ ☒ 3. Is in good condition, without cracks or raised sections Concrete sections in good condition. Asphalt sections
- ☐ ☒ ☐ 4. Is free of obstacles (hydrants, utility poles, overgrown landscaping, trash receptacles) are in poor condition
- ☐ ☒ ☐ 5. Is free of interruptions from driveways (such as to/from homes, parking lots, etc.) West side between Depot St and Cumberland Farms has signs, planters, tables, chairs, etc.
- ☐ ☒ ☐ 6. Is continuous (no segments are missing) and complete (it doesn't randomly end) East side ends at Cumberland Farms parking spaces; West side after Big Spruce
- ☐ ☐ ☒ 7. Is wide enough (at least 5 feet) for two people to walk side by side or pass one another Widths vary
- ☐ ☐ ☒ 8. Has tactile ground surface indicators so pedestrians with vision impairment will know when the path is ending Some but not all
- ☐ ☐ ☒ 9. Has a curb cut ramp (for use by wheelchairs, baby strollers, etc.) wherever it is interrupted by a street Some but not all. Crossings at Town Center and Library lack curb cut ramps on west side.

THE STREET:

- ☒ ☐ ☐ 1. Has traffic lights and/or stop signs at intersections and crossings
- ☒ ☐ ☐ 2. The traffic lights and/or stop signs are clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians
- ☒ ☐ ☐ 3. Has crosswalks
- ☐ ☒ ☐ 4. The crosswalks are well marked and clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians Paint worn off
- ☒ ☐ ☐ 5. Has signage alerting drivers to the presence of pedestrians
- ☐ ☒ ☐ 6. Has a designated bicycle lane
- ☒ ☐ ☐ 7. Has a pedestrian crossing signal, also called a beacon (if yes, complete the next section) Two RRFB's: at library and at Big Spruce/Sweet Simone's

THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNALS:

- ☒ ☐ ☐ 1. Are working
- ☒ ☐ ☐ 2. Have a "push-to-walk" mechanism, meaning pedestrians can stop the vehicle traffic
- ☐ ☒ ☐ 3. Have audible prompts for people with vision impairment
- ☐ ☐ ☒ 4. Are placed in appropriate locations (if not, make note of where more are needed) Railroad St and Jojina Ct 10
- ☐ ☒ ☐ 5. Provide enough time to cross (indicate the amount of time provided: _____ minutes _____ seconds) N/A
- ☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Provide suitable opportunities to cross (indicate the amount of time pedestrians must wait for a traffic light change in order to cross: _____ minutes _____ seconds)

Consider using the "Build a Better Block" worksheet as well.

Walkability of the area, based on the findings above: ☐ Great ☐ Acceptable ☒ Mixed ☐ Poor

AARP Walk Audit
Richmond Crosswalks

Saturday 5/21/2022
3:00-5:00 PM & 90-degree day
Diane Mariano & John Cohn

Crosswalks & Impressions

1. Crossing Bridge Street in front of Town Center
 - ... No crossing signal
 - ... No “push to walk”
 - ... No sound
 - ... Paint is worn and barely visible
 - ... No curb cut on western side, across from Town Center
 - ... Most cars appear to be traveling greater than speed limit
 - ... Sidewalk uneven at crosswalk
 - ... No pedestrians observed
2. Crossing Bridge Street in front of Library
 - ... Push to walk works
 - ... Light partially out on western side (across from library)
 - ... Inadequate curb cut
 - ... Observed 10 pedestrians
 - ... Out of state car went through crosswalk while blinking
- 2.5. Church Street crossing
 - ... all looks good!
3. Crossing Bridge Street Jolina Court
 - ... No crosswalk sign on East side
 - ... No push to walk
 - ... Curb cut on east side steep and uneven
 - ... West side – no safe place to wait to cross
 - ... Driver’s exiting Railroad St focus is on turning...not people
 - ... Driver’s – rolling stop...creeping out
4. Front of Market crossing railroad
 - ... good ADA access – stomp pad
 - ... crossing bars for Railroad need to extent into pedestrian walkway

4.5. Crossing Depot Street

- ... ADA access steep
- ... ADA stomp pad good
- ... needs painting

5. Crossing Bridge Street between Sweet Simone's and Big Spruce

- ... needs painting
- ...hard to see around parked cars
- ... quick light to cross

5.5. Cross walk across parking lot between Big Spruce and Green Seed

- ... good ADA
- ... needs painting

6, 7, 8, & 9 Crossings around the Main Street intersection

- ... paint needed
- ... short crossing time
- ... ADA audible...works well

Overall Impressions of Richmond – what is needed to feel like a town

- ... Richmond has a busy (fast cars) feel as a through town.
- ... From a pedestrian perspective there are no rest rooms, a water source nor a place to rest like benches.
- ... Bristol is a good example of a walking village. Richmond lacks a uniformity...like similar lighting, plantings and even perhaps awnings.
- ...While we love our town...it could be spruced up a bit.

A suggestion...it might be nice to have this audit done through an app and/or perhaps on a tablet.

Glad Richmond has decided to get a pedestrian look at our town. Thank you all for making this happen.

Bridge Street - Starting at the bridge and heading North to Railroad Street

1. We might want to get input from parents about the railing on the bridge, but otherwise the bridge crossing seems fine.
 2. Immediately coming off the bridge, it is steep for wheelchairs.
 3. The blacktop on the sidewalk is degrading on the edges. It is very uneven. There are washout materials on the sidewalk.
 4. We understand this sidewalk will be rebuilt and recommend moving the sidewalk slightly to the West and adding green space between the sidewalk and street.
 5. The entrance to the park is dangerous to cross when there is a lot of park activity.
 6. Esplanade might also benefit from a sidewalk due to walkers and kids on bikes there. Also people can more easily take advantage of a walking path at the end of Esplanade that goes up to Railroad or Borden St.
 7. Esplanade seems to be missing the different material at the edge of the crosswalk.
 8. Continuing on Bridge St, it is dangerous for bikes, considering utility poles are in the road. When this part of the sidewalk is rebuilt, having a curb and green space between the sidewalk and street might be good.
 9. Can we sign Bridge St so that bikes can use the regular traffic lanes, instead of being squeezed on the edge?
 10. There are no flashers at crosswalk in front of Town Hall. Also no flashers at either crosswalk at the market. Consider that people have reported that flashers do not always work if there is no solar power.
 11. Curb cuts at crosswalk to library are not flush with road.
 12. Curbs all through this section are very degraded.
 13. There is a question as to where the new sidewalk will go at the market. As described by the painted red lines on the road, it is unclear how walkers will continue straight across Railroad Street heading South.
 14. Near the RR tracks, the sidewalk could be moved West, away from the road.
 15. This area has strollers with parents bring kids to childcare on Thompson Rd. Also throughout this part of Bridge St. there are school children coming from RES, CHMS and Mansfield (can't remember the full name of that school).

Railroad St. Only

1. Due to market items on the sidewalk, a wheelchair could not get through.
2. The sidewalk ends at the end of the market. There is no safe way for people to walk between market and hardware store. Also no safe way to walk from Borden St. area out to Bridge Street.

Bridge St from Railroad Street continuing North:

1. Lighting is required at the market / creamery area, and near the Food Shelf.
2. It would be nice to have a couple of benches near the RR tracks to enjoy the spectacular view of Camels Hump while enjoying Sweet Simones coffee and treats.
3. There is no crosswalk from Pleasant St. to the West side of Bridge St. If people don't walk through former bank parking lot, they have to walk in the road.

4. In front of Sweet Simone's, sidewalk slants towards the street.
5. In front of Hatchet when people are gathered around the tables there is little room to walk.
6. At the gas station, multiple cars will line up, crossing walking area. This section is dangerous with cars pulling in and out, without marked pedestrian paths.
7. At the intersection it is still dangerous to cross. This will be a subject of more intense study.

Special Report: Melissa Wolaver – May 28, 2022

Bridge Street Business Block (*see photo and drawing CG BS 1 Bus Block*)

1. Sidewalk in front of Sweet Simone's and Hatchet was narrowed to almost being impassable. Tables, people sitting, waiting in line, dogs with people sitting and standing at Hatchet tables and cars pulled over curb in front of Sweet Simone's.
2. Drink/beverage truck unloading at Cumberland Farms is parked in walkway. Car in Cumberland Farms parking space on Bridge Street on Bridge Street is blocking walkway so that pedestrians must go out into street.
3. People in cars trying to turn left from Bridge Street onto Route 2 even though pedestrians have walk signal.
4. Street Safety and Appeal – Drivers disregarded pedestrian walk signal, cars waiting for gas forced pedestrians at Cumberland Farms into street, and poorly parked cars at Cumberland Farms forced pedestrians into road.

East on Main St:

1. Uneven sidewalk with multiple materials.
2. At Papa McKees it is unknown where the sidewalk is, where the parking lot is and where the tables and chairs should end.
3. Cars sometimes park on sidewalk.
4. Curbs are rotting,
5. Drainage is across sidewalks and there is runoff from driveways onto sidewalks. Lots of large puddles.
6. The sidewalk ends at Harringtons. It should be extended to Lemroy on the South and the fire station on the North side. There should also be a crosswalk near the end of the sidewalks.
7. On the North side, there is water pipe access in the middle of the sidewalk so there is no way it can be level for a walker or wheelchair.
8. There are overhanging bushes in sections.

E Main 4:15-4:30 PM 5-25-22 at 112 E Main

28

29

32

30

29

39

34

30

32

34

34

34

35

Average 32 mph

Bridge St at Railroad St

	NB	SB	NB Average	SB Average
10:00am	24	15	18.51136	17.04255
	24	24		
	21	12		
	18	26		
	12	19		
	18	19		
	18	19		
	13	19		
	12	17		
	24	17		
	14	13		
	20	23		
	17	19		
	12	22		
	18	22		
	23	21		
	11	16		
	23	15		
	15	17		
	17	17		
	15	25		
	21	13		
	21	19		
	13	20		
	16	25		
	23	20		
	22	15		
	30	20		
	15	20		
	21	16		
	21	16		
10:30am	16	18		
	20	20		
	20	15		
	16	15		
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	16	19		
	16	18		
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	18	17
	19	16
	22	14
	23	13
	22	25
	25	23
	25	20
	19	18
	22	25
	22	20
	30	20
	15	18
	19	17
10:45	15	15
	12	15
	17	15
	15	15
	15	17
	15	13
	24	11
	17	12
	18	11
	18	16
	17	16
	16	18
	15	17
	19	18
	26	17
	25	15
	16	15
	18	19
	17	22
	11	14
	15	20
	11	10
	20	17
	20	18
11:00am	19	13
	22	10
	22	10
	23	10

	17	10
	14	22
11:12am	12	13
18.51136	14	
	14	
	16	
	10	
	22	
	18	

Jericho Rd Speed Study: Main St to School St 5-26-22 0700-0800

Northbound Southbound

28	31
29	27
28	34
34	41
17	29
24	30
32	31
29	25
29	27
37	28
28	30
32	26
28	29
26	31
32	31
28.86667	29
	29.9375

Walkability Audit - Speed and Person Count - Jericho Road - May 25 - 2:30 PM- 3:00 PM

Speed Uphill	Speed Downhill	Adults	Children
28	30	1	1 school
28	30	1	2 school
26	30	0	2 school
31	28	1	1 school
30	25	1	3 school
28	28	0	1 school
26	28	0	2 school
30	33	0	11 school
23 bus	28	0	2 school
28	34	0	5 school
27	34	0	4 school
27	30	0	1 school
34	29	0	6 school
27	25	1	2 school
32	28	1	0 going to softball
35	28	6	43 Total counts
31	28		
28	27		
33	28		
35	29		
35	29		
35	35		
32 bus	29		
29	30		
28	32		
34	27		
26	23		
42	28		
40	26		
34	30		
28	33		
30.64516 uphill	24		
	27		
	27		
	35		
	33		
	33		
	30	29.87143	Total average (up and down)
	30		
	29.25641		Avg. downhill speed

Upper Jericho Rd. School St to Valley View 25-May-22

35 zone northbound	25 zone northbound	35 zone southbound	25 zone northbound
40	36	55	29
38	28	38	25
34	34	39	21
36	36	38	32
34	33	45	26.75
40	33	36	
34	29	36	
41	29	37	
36	31	40	
44	29	33	
36	39	39	
36	32	35	
40	37	35	
37	32	35	
39	29	37	
34	33	38	
36	31	36	
43	26	37	
38	34	43	
35	27	38.526316	
49	31.9		
47			
54			
44			
39.375			

Appendix C

Walk Audit Worksheets and Notes of Round Church Area

Richmond Walkability Audit

Date/Time: Saturday June 4th, noon-1:30pm, beautiful sunny day with temps in the 70s

Area: Round Church district

Observed: Many vehicles including at least 1 motorcycle & 1 dump truck, ~20 bicyclists (teen to adults, ~75% mountain bike, a few small groups of 2-3, mostly single riders), 2 runners

Biggest challenge: 4-way intersection between Bridge St., Huntington Rd., Thompson Rd., and Cochran Rd.

Current setup = stop signs on Thompson and Cochran Roads while Bridge St. / Huntington St. is considered to be a continuous road.

Pro: Keeps vehicle delays / backups to a minimum

Con: Confusing intersection for drivers (use of left turn signal when going straight on Thompson Rd. from Bridge St., which car goes 1st when cars are waiting at both the Cochran and Thompson Rd. stop signs for a while)? This intersection is notorious for vehicle close-calls.

Especially difficult for non-local drivers who are not familiar with it (and we observed many out of state plates - OR, NY, CT, DE, MA).

The pedestrian crosswalk from Bridge St. to Thompson Rd. is key for people in the neighborhood and for families traveling to/from the Little Tots daycare at the intersection of Thompson and Farr Roads, but the crosswalk is somewhat hidden being located after Bridge St. starts curving into Huntington Rd.

- this crosswalk is very risky to pedestrians between drivers being distracted by the unusual intersection and not seeing the crosswalk due to the curve in the road

No pedestrian crosswalk from Huntington Rd. to Cochran Rd. There is a crosswalk at the Farr Complex but not at the south end of Round Church park accessing Cochran Road, without jaywalking or crossing all the way down by the Round Church.

Short-term improvement options:

- Add crosswalk ahead signs to both Bridge St. and Huntington Rd. (none between intersection and crosswalks at Round Church and Farr plaza (Stone Corral))

- Upgrade crosswalk to flashing light signs

- Add crosswalks in front of stop signs on Thompson and Cochran Roads

Longer-term options (no clear best answer here):

- 4 way stop sign: concern = increased traffic backups, pro = drivers & pedestrians very familiar with this type of intersection

- Round-about: good for vehicle flow, but concerns about pedestrian/bike friendliness (VT drivers not super comfortable with rotaries) and larger footprint

- Block off end of Thompson Rd. forcing vehicle traffic to use Farr Rd. to make a T intersection instead (husband's idea when we were discussing). concerns = increases Farr Rd. traffic (forces daycare traffic parking on roadsides to turn around instead of looping), delays to town garage and for ambulances to nursing home

- Increased cross-walk visibility beyond simple flashing lights - perhaps overhead blinking red light when crosswalk button pressed? elevated cross-walks?

Other observations:

Bridge St.:

strengths - street lights (although no working street light near bridge), awesome pedestrian lane on bridge, nice stone walls next to sidewalk, Round Church crosswalk.

weaknesses - no green strip between road and sidewalk so sidewalk plow unable to keep clear due to high frequency of road snowplows, no speed limit signs in either direction between Huntington Rd. intersection and bridge (observed speeds all 27-30mph with dip in road here), concerns about cars attempting to pass bicycles on the bridge, very low drain on shoulder coming off bridge forces bicycles to take the full lane right when cars want to pass after the bridge, we observed an out of state vehicle not stopping for one of us in the Round Church crosswalk

short-term improvements: Add speed limit signs in both directions, add sign about no passing on bridge (maybe even explicitly no passing bicycles on bridge or a share the road style sign), fix 1st drain after bridge so it is more inline with the road

longer term - protect sidewalk with greens strip?

Cochran Rd.:

strengths - awesome trails for biking & hiking/running close to down, speed detection sign for cars coming into the village, nice bicycle share the road sign

weaknesses - no streetlights (may want to add if add sidewalks), small shoulder makes access to trails less inviting to pedestrians, vehicles start increasing speed soon after starting on road, wild parsnip on south side of road near 1st Preston Forest entry, sand & gravel from driveway at 142 Cochran Rd. eroding onto road making it tricky for road bikes who need to bike through sand or take the lane.

short-term improvements: Add pedestrian cross-walk connecting River Trail to Preston Forest entry by cemetery right when speed limit drops to 25mph (we observed a bicyclist crossing the road here), and additional 25mph sign on Cochran Rd. a little farther away from Round Church as drivers are relaxing and starting to speed up (we clocked one car accelerating to 34mph), address dirt/rocks on road from driveway at 142 Cochran Rd.

mid-range improvement: Add sidewalk to one side of road to 1st entry to Preston Forest to improve access to pedestrians (may need crosswalk at trailhead if crosswalk on other side of road)

long range improvement: Add sidewalk to one side of road all the way to the River Trail (this is ambitious)

Huntington Rd.:

strengths - sidewalk to business plaza and crosswalk

weaknesses - sidewalk ends at start of plaza and plaza parking lot is unfriendly to pedestrians, no way to get even to Farr farm pumpkin patch / sunflower stroll just past Farr Rd.

mid-term improvement - extend sidewalk to Farr Rd. or just beyond to their initial field entry with 2nd crosswalk at Farr Rd. (makes Stone Corral and Mann & Machine more accessible to pedestrians and opens up the Farr Rd. loops as a nice walk option)

long range improvement: extend sidewalk all the way to the cross VT trail? (ambitious)

Thompson Rd:

OK with no sidewalks at current traffic levels (but would need them with additional development), sidewalks might also be nice to enable residents of senior center to venture outside more easily

Concerns with Farr Road stop sign visibility and placement at end Thompson Rd. and with vegetation growth on other side of Farr Rd. limiting driver visibility of oncoming traffic (note: vegetation was mowed down by 4:30pm on Monday 6/6!)

Vehicle Speeds:

Huntington Rd. near intersection: 27, 13, 27, 26, 20, 20, 23, 20 23, 30

Bridge St.: 30, 29, 30, 28, 29, 30, 30, 27

Cochran Rd.: did note 1 vehicle accelerating to 34 by the 1st Preston Forest trail entry

Appendix D

Walk Audit Worksheets and Notes of Jonesville Area

Jonesville Area

Overall walkability of the area: Poor

The Problems:

1. US2 in this area has narrow, broken shoulders, no sidewalks, no crosswalks, and stretches with poor sight lines. This includes no crosswalk at the post office. The speed limit is 40 mph at the post office.
2. Cochran Rd. has no sidewalks and narrow, unpaved shoulders. This area, and adjacent stretches of Duxbury Rd., Wes White Hill Rd., and Dugway Rd., are used by walkers, runners, bicyclists and people accessing the Huntington and Winooski Rivers. (Insert picture #23)
3. The bridge over Huntington R. on Cochran Rd. has no shoulders at all and is narrow. (Insert picture #24)
4. The bridge over Winooski R. on Cochran Rd. is 31 ft. wide, but has no raised sidewalks, no painted sidewalks, no painted bike lanes, or any delineation of space for non-motor vehicle traffic.
5. Wes White Hill Rd. has little to no shoulder and poor sight lines for stretches of its lower section. The speed limit is 35 mph. (Insert picture #25)
6. The speed limit on Cochran Rd. in this area is 25 mph. A radar speed sign when approaching eastbound slows traffic into the area. Traffic turning off US2 and proceeding westbound seems to move noticeably faster.

Recommendations:

US2: The speed limit on US2 should be reduced to 35 mph at the post office and Stage/Cochran intersections, and for an appropriate distance to either side. A crosswalk and warning signs should be installed at the post office or at the Stage/Cochran intersection. 5 ft. shoulders on US2 are needed, as planned for the upcoming VTRANS repaving project.

Cochran Rd: The entire stretch needs traffic calming engineering to bring vehicle speed into compliance with the posted 25 mph speed limit. Advisory bike/ped lanes, chicanes and speed tables are all suggestions in the draft phase 2 bike/ped master plan (current draft version, D&K, June 2022). The bridge over the Winooski River is wide enough for painted bike/ped lanes on each side and this should be done. The bridge over the Huntington River is narrower. Advisory bike/ped lanes with a single center lane for motor vehicles would allow safe sharing of the space. On Wes White Hill Rd. the speed limit in the lower portion should be reduced to 25 mph.



Laura Silverstein <laura.schutz@gmail.com>

May 28,
2022, 4:17
PM

to me, timschon

Allen & Tim -

Here's the file with the observed car speeds and my notes from today... Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything from me here. One other thought is that it might be helpful to find out from the school district where the school bus stops are in the neighborhood and maybe check out the area in the morning or afternoon on a school day...

Laura

Saturday, 5/28/22, 1-2pm or so

note: Jonesville zip code is 05466, google defines as narrow neighborhood between Winooski River and I89:

Non motorized traffic: 1 runner (middle aged male), 1 road bicyclist (middle aged male), 1 pedestrian with a child in a stroller (older female, child unknown), and 1 dog walker (dog on leash, female ~30yo), all on Cochran Rd.

(Cochran Rd. is a popular area for bicycles, runners & swimming hole access. It was relatively quiet today, but had just rained heavily 11am-12:30pm and Vermont City Marathon race is tomorrow)

Pros:

Railroad x-ing at end of Cochran rd. has flashing lights & gates

Plowed Bombardier meadow parking with mowed paths allows river (Winooski & Huntington) access without walking on roads

Overall cars on Cochran Rd. were quite responsive to pedestrian traffic (us)

90 degree turn on Cochran Rd. naturally slows traffic.

Little wild parsnip observed on this section of Cochran Rd.

Decent amount of public parking available between plowed meadow, spots next to Huntington River Bridge on Cochran Rd., and next to train tracks on rte 2.

All intersections have stop signs for smaller crossing road that are clearly visible.

Signage inviting people to park in Bombardier meadow and to access River from north side of Huntington River Bridge on Cochran Rd.

Overall homes along Cochran Rd. area are well maintained.

Cons / areas for improvement:

- Cochran Rd. bridge over Winooski River doesn't have white lane lines on the side, might help slow traffic, separate pedestrians from vehicles (bridge is plenty wide)
- Cochran Rd. bridge over Huntington River is quite narrow - no room for pedestrians with vehicles
- Access to Huntington River from East side of bridge over river on Cochran Rd. is steep, muddy, eroding - stairs or some other solution needed
- Wild Parsnip observed on rte 2 near Cochran Rd.
- Significant poison ivy on Bombardier meadow shoulder and along mowed paths
- 35mph speed limit on Wes White Hill Rd. where it meets Cochran Rd. - popular swimming hole here, recommend decreasing speed limit to 25mi for approx 1/2mi closest to Cochran Rd.
- No Parking sign on east shoulder of Wes White Hill Rd. at intersection of Cochran Rd. is hard to read for cars approaching on Wes White Hill Rd., might be good to add a 2nd angled to approaching cars
- No sidewalks, crosswalks, or bike lanes. Dirt shoulders along road vary in width from 0-18inches. They are flat & good for walking in some places and angled so that walking on them is difficult in others.
- Rte 2 is simply not pedestrian friendly in Jonesville - even with speed reduced to 40mph, the road is curvy and the shoulders aren't great. Even walking from the post office to the self storage business isn't really appropriate.
- Additional signage about sharing the road and/or Speed Limit with radar signs might help calm traffic on Cochran Rd., not sure what/if anything will help on rte 2...
- Buildings / businesses along rte 2 in Jonesville are older and showing signs of age (esp. North Star Guns) making it intimidating to outsiders

Measured Speed**Speed LIMIT = 25mph**

28 42 vehicles observed & monitored with radar gone
23 note: may be influenced by group of 5 pedestrians doing the audit
24 (someone even stopped to ask if there was a race or parade in progress)

22

18

17

23

JONESVILLE CAR SPEEDS - MAY 28, 2022

19

21

19

16

24 *motorcycle*

18

14

30

25

31

25

27

24

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25

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28

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39



Bee with Legs

Your play environment will be abuzz with this educational play sculpture! Realistic and tactile design make it a kid and family favorite, and its steel infrastructure makes it a durable piece for any trail or play space.

FEATURES AND BENEFITS:

- ❑ Visually appealing hand sculpted and hand painted GFRC
- ❑ Tactile bee body creates easy-to-climb surface
- ❑ Lifelike bee features provide endless possibilities for imaginative play
- ❑ Steel infrastructure makes it a durable piece for any trail or playground

SPECIFICATIONS

Model Number:	38215
Fall Height:	4' (1.22 m)
Use Zone:	16'-1" x 14'-11" (4.9m x 4.55m)
Age Group:	2 to 5 Years, 5 to 12 Years, 2 to 5 or 5 to 12 Years

GameTime offers a limited lifetime warranty on uprights, hardware, and connections. Visit gametime.com/warranty for full warranty information.

From: [Tonia Rene Griffin](#)
To: [ParkTamara](#)
Cc: [Shirley Trahan](#); [Cesar Garcia](#); [Amanda Hobby](#)
Subject: Fwd: Bee with Legs
Date: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 3:22:40 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

[External Email] This message originated from outside your organization.

Tamara, FYI

Tonia

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tim Duckworth <tduckworth@cunninghamrec.com>
Date: September 11, 2024 at 2:35:27 PM CDT
To: Tonia Rene Griffin <trenegriffin01@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Bee with Legs

Hi Tonia,

This piece runs for approximately \$5,000 before any shipping or installation.

However, our freestanding items are not considered qualifying pieces for our Grant matching Funds. The grant covers UP TO 100% of matching funds on play systems only. This does not include any surfacing, shipping, or installation costs. I will be able to explain this better when we talk tomorrow and can answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,
Tim

Tim Duckworth
South East Texas Sales Manager
Phone: 281-300-8583
Email: tduckworth@cunninghamrec.com



[Check out some of our park and playground projects here.](#)



From: Tonia Rene Griffin <trenegriffin01@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 12:08 PM
To: Tim Duckworth <TDuckworth@cunninghamrec.com>
Subject: Bee with Legs

Hey Tim
Do you know the price of this unit??

This email has been scanned for spam and viruses by Proofpoint Essentials. Click [here](#) to report this email as spam.

Tonia R. Griffin
Vice-Chairperson

La Marque Parks Board

409.457.6647

Sent from my iPhone

“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing” ~ Walt Disney



Parks and Natural Areas 2024 Awards

APPLY NOW!

Winning projects serve as models for the H-GAC region on how parks can improve water quality, habitat, and quality of life.

Apply at h-gac.com/parks

Applications Due 9/1/24-9/30/24

HOW TO APPLY FOR THE 2024 AWARDS

WHERE TO APPLY?

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Projects in Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Harris, Galveston, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton counties are eligible.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Any public, private, or nonprofit organization may apply. There is no entry fee. Submittals in any category must be for activities completed between September 1, 2020, and August 31, 2024.

By submitting a project, the applicant agrees all materials may be used in presentations and publications developed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council without further acknowledgment. Selected projects may be featured on the H-GAC website.

WHEN ARE APPLICATIONS DUE?

Applications must be received by 5 p.m., Monday, September 30, 2024. Applicants will receive e-mail confirmation of receipt.

Winners will be notified in December 2024 and honored in February 2025.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

Examples of types of activities include:

Planning Process

- Plans: Comprehensive and Policy Tools, Regional, Visioning, Master
- Natural Areas Studies
- Environmental Studies
- Planning and Design
- Public Involvement
- Land Use Policies
- Resolving Multi-use Conflicts
- Conservation Easements
- Protective Codes
- Deed Restrictions
- Acquisition
- Operations/Maintenances

On-the-Ground Projects (Over and Under \$500K)

- Preservation of Natural Areas
- Restoration of Natural Areas
- Bayous, Rivers, Streams, Waterways
- Forests, Prairies, Coasts, Wetlands
- Pocket Parks, Greenways, Hike and Bike Trails
- Interpretive Signage and Environmental Graphics
- Information and Educational Centers
- Multi-use of Detention Facilities

Programming

- Education and Training
- Tree Plantings
- Demonstration Gardens
- Special Environmental Education Events



Houston-Galveston
Area Council

About the Houston-Galveston Area Council

H-GAC is a voluntary association of local governments and local elected officials from the 13-county Gulf Coast planning region, which includes an area of 12,500 square miles and more than 7 million people. H-GAC works to promote efficient and accountable use of local, state, and federal tax dollars; serves as a problem-solving and information forum for local governments; and helps analyze trends and conditions affecting the region. For more information, visit h-gac.com.

Tree City USA®

Creating greener communities nationwide



TREE CITY USA®
An Arbor Day Foundation Program

Cooler temperatures. Cleaner air. Healthier residents.

The benefits trees bring to urban environments are endless — and by meeting the four Tree City USA standards, your community can experience them firsthand.



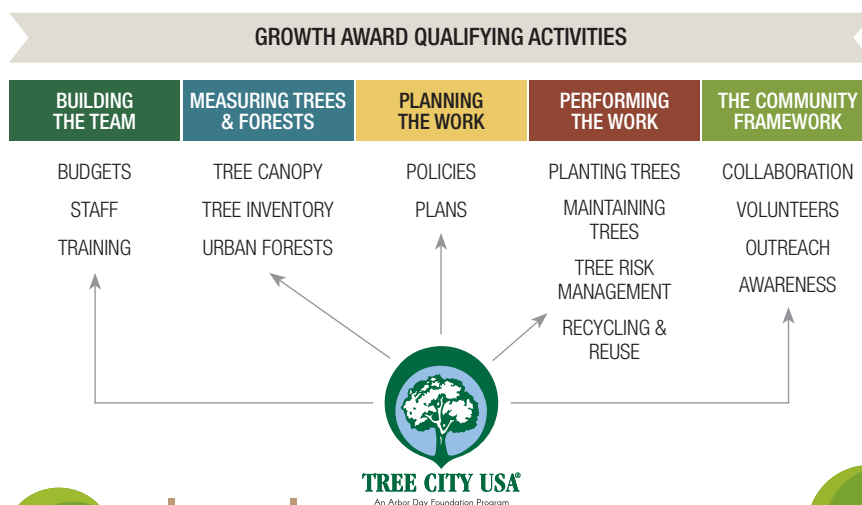
PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Tree City USA program was founded in 1976 to celebrate towns and cities committed to growing their urban canopy. Led by the Arbor Day Foundation, with partners at USDA Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters, it provides the foundational framework necessary for communities to manage and expand their tree cover.

Program applications are completely free. Many cities renew their Tree City USA status every year, making them eligible for a Growth Award and other urban forestry opportunities.

THE FOUNDATION OF URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The Tree City USA program has helped more than 3,600 communities across the country build out their urban forests. Recognition forms the base layer for five different areas of growth, including expansion of personnel, financial investment, defined policies and plans, and engagement with residents.



STANDARDS FOR RECOGNITION

To receive recognition, a community must meet four core standards for its public trees:

✓ Standard 1: Form A Tree Board Or Department

Delegating responsibility for city- or town-owned trees is the first official step to becoming a Tree City. By forming a tree board or department, cities can create a more organized and effective urban forestry plan.

✓ Standard 2: Establish A Tree Care Ordinance

A public tree care ordinance assigns clear authority over public trees and provides clear guidance for planting, maintaining, and/or removing trees from streets, parks, and other public spaces.

✓ Standard 3: Maintain A Community Forestry Program With An Annual Budget Of At Least \$2 Per Capita

Your community most likely already spends at least \$2 per capita on the planting, care, and removal of trees. This is intended to demonstrate an ongoing investment into your public trees.

✓ Standard 4: Proclaim and Observe Arbor Day

Celebrating Arbor Day and passing an official holiday proclamation helps create pride for your city's entire urban forestry program.



BENEFITS OF RECOGNITION

By becoming a Tree City, your community will:

- Receive flags, signs, and other materials to proudly display your award
- Educate residents about the value of trees and green space
- Gain national recognition for your commitment to environmental stewardship
- Create a cleaner, healthier, and more beautiful urban landscape

GETTING STARTED

Interested in joining, but not quite sure where to begin? It's as simple as following these five steps!

1. Make the case to friends and leaders in your community
2. Contact your state's urban and community forestry coordinator
3. Work together to fulfill the four Tree City USA standards
4. Celebrate Arbor Day
5. Submit your free application!



Learn and apply today at arborday.org/treecityusa





Tree City USA:

Growing Strong Communities



Introduction

- Value
- Program
- Benefits
- Standards



VALUE

VALUE

Trees...

- Infrastructure
- Health
- Legacy
- Wise Investment

Worth Our Time.
Worth Our Resources.



TREE CITY USA®



Arbor Day Foundation®



VALUE

Humans instinctively prefer natural settings

- Increases employee productivity
- Reduces symptoms of ADHD
- Decreases crime
- Eases stress and anxiety



VALUE

- Increased property value
- Treed streets = more frequent and longer shopping
- Shoppers spend more for goods and parking



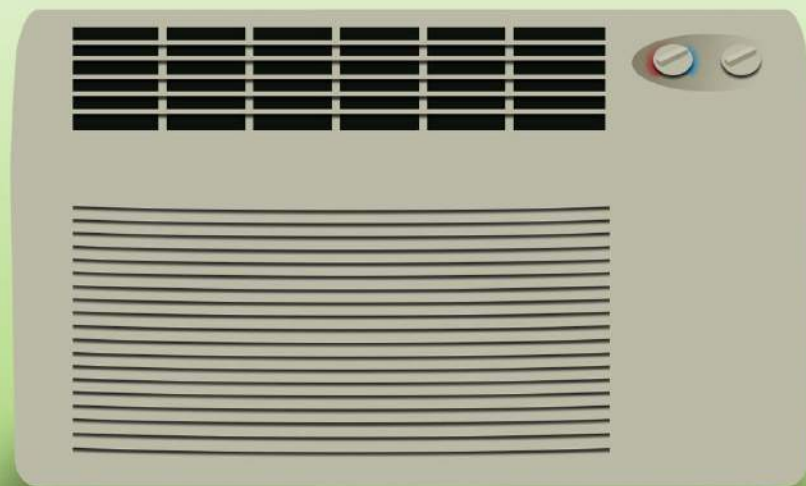
TREE CITY USA



Arbor Day Foundation

VALUE

100 = 1,000





VALUE

100

mature trees
catch

200,000

gallons of
rainwater/year



Arbor Day Foundation®



VALUE

100 Trees Over 40 Years:

Benefits = \$161,000

Energy
Air Quality
Runoff
Real Estate

Costs = \$89,000

Planting/Pruning
Removal/Disposal
Irrigation
Sidewalk Repair
Litter
Legal/Administration

Pay Off: \$72,000

PROGRAM

PROGRAM

Tree City USA Provides Community Forestry Program:

- Direction
- Technical assistance
- Public attention
- National recognition



TREE CITY USA®



Arbor Day Foundation

PROGRAM

Longevity – Launched in 1976

Impact – Over 135 million people live in/near a Tree City

Network – Support from over 3,400 recognized communities



TREE CITY USA®



Arbor Day Foundation®



BENEFITS

BENEFITS

Framework for Action

- Provides direction
- Systematic management of tree resources



BENEFITS

Education

- Assistance through the application process
- Online resources
- Technical advice



BENEFITS

Public Image

- Quality of life
- Influence
- Desirability



BENEFITS

Citizen Pride



TREE CITY USA



Arbor Day Foundation



BENEFITS

Publicity

- Presentation of the Tree City USA award
- Arbor Day celebration
- Public education



STANDARDS

STANDARDS

1. Tree Board or Department
2. Tree Care Ordinance
3. Community Forestry Program
With Annual Budget of at Least
\$2 Per Capita
4. Arbor Day Observance
and Proclamation



TREE CITY USA



Arbor Day Foundation

STANDARDS

1. Tree Board or Department

- May be a professional forester/arborist, an entire forestry department or a tree board
- Group of volunteer citizens charged by ordinance with developing and administering a tree management program
- Legally responsible for the management of the community's trees



STANDARDS

2. Tree Care Ordinance

- Establishes a tree board and gives it responsibilities
- Guidance for planting, maintaining and removing trees on public property
- Provides an opportunity to set good policy that is legally enforceable



TREE CITY USA®



Arbor Day Foundation®



STANDARDS

3. Community Forestry Program With Annual Budget of at Least \$2 Per Capita

- Percentage of city workers' salaries spent on tree care
- Tree planting/watering/fertilizing
- Equipment rental/purchase/maintenance
- Arbor Day expenses
- Tree care conferences, workshops, memberships
- Value of volunteer labor



STANDARDS

4. Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation

Opportunity to inform and engage the broader community through:

- Tree Planting
- Awards Ceremony
- Education



STANDARDS

Steps to become a Tree City USA

- Meet the Four Standards
- Complete and upload application documents each year by December 31 - *No Fee!*
- Apply at **arborday.org/TreeCityUSA**



TREE CITY USA®



Arbor Day Foundation®



Summary

- Value
- Program
- Benefits
- Standards



TREE CITY USA®



Arbor Day Foundation®

Purpose through Process

Trees...

Worth Our Time. Worth Our Resources.

“A town is saved, not more by the righteous men in it
than by the woods...that surround it.”

-Henry David Thoreau



Thank You

Learn more at
arborday.org/treecityusa





Bird City Texas Criteria

Bird City Texas recognizes 2 levels of commitment to improving native bird populations and their habitats: Basic certification and High Flyer status. High Flyer certification is a second tier recognition, and includes all the requirements of Basic Certification “plus” fulfilling the requirements of High Flyer.

Required Actions for All Communities:

Your community must complete all of the following requirements:

- R1. Community forms/maintains a collaborative body that supports the application development and management of their Bird City enrollment[†]
- R2. Community creates one resolution (proclamations are not accepted) that recognizes World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) on a reoccurring basis. Community holds an event each year to celebrate WMBD[†]
- R3. Create and maintain a demonstration bird-friendly native landscape on at least one highly visible community property^{**†}
- R4. Include noticeable information on municipal tourism and/or Chamber of Commerce website about local birding sites, lists of native birds, tips for landscaping for birds, local educational resources, birding events, bird-related citizen science projects, and bird clubs
- R5. Promote the American Bird Conservancy’s *Cats Indoors* program through education/ outreach to residents
- R6. Provide businesses and residents with education/outreach and/or a communications campaign about dark sky lighting solutions
- R7. Provide businesses and residents with education/outreach and/or a communications campaign about reducing bird collisions with buildings
- R8. Promote the use of native plants in landscaping through community website, newsletters, public events, and through use of the National Audubon Society’s *Plants for Birds* program^{**}
- R9. Provide and promote information on the importance of controlling invasive species (both plant and animal)



Bird City Texas Basic Certification Options:

Category 1: Community Engagement

Your community must meet at least 5 criteria from this category:

- 1a. Initiate community participation in at least one community science program annually: Audubon Climate Watch, Christmas Bird Count, D-Bird, Globe at Night, Great Backyard Bird Count, Hummingbirds at Home, Invaders of Texas, Swifts Night Out, Texas Nature Trackers**
- 1b. Engage community and partners in long-term (greater than 5 years) local bird monitoring programs that incorporate eBird and/or iNaturalist
- 1c. Implement an annual communications campaign about issues and actions related to Bird City Texas, creating Bird Friendly Communities, and the criteria that the community adopts
- 1d. Create and install demonstration displays in public areas that educate the public about the benefits of dark sky compliant lighting, window modifications that improve glass visibility and reduce glass reflectivity†
- 1e. Install bird watching amenities in public parks, such as bird blinds, observation decks, interpretive signs, binocular loan out programs, and birding/trail guides†
- 1f. Host at least one native plant sale with high emphasis on native plants (at least 75% native plants available)**
- 1g. Host 3 community volunteer planting events per year featuring native plants on public properties, community centers, libraries, or other sites where the plantings would be labeled and visible to the public**
- 1h. Engage the public park system and/or local museums to offer environmental education opportunities for the public that support the objectives of the Bird City program
- 1i. Public park system has interpretive/educational signage in natural areas that are open to the public that prioritizes bird identification and native bird ecology in their message
- 1j. Include a recurring (at minimum quarterly) native bird education themed section in a community newsletter, social media platform (i.e., Facebook, NextDoor, etc.)
- 1k. Conduct a speaker or workshop series (minimum 3 events per year) with topics focusing on issues relating to birds, wildlife, habitat, environmental stewardship, etc.
- 1l. Sponsor an annual bird festival that promotes community stewardship and appreciation of native birds and their habitats
- 1m. Work with traditionally underserved communities to increase engagement with parks, ecological education, and birding resources
- 1n. Educate the public about the responsibilities and best practices of providing food and water for birds and discern the benefits of natural food sources from supplemental feeding



Category 2: Habitat Enhancement and Protection

Your community must meet at least 8 criteria from this category:

- 2a. Develop and implement a bird-centric wildlife or habitat management plan for all lands owned or managed by the community**
- 2b. Acquire, through purchase or easement, long-term habitat for birds, wildlife, and native plant communities representative of the local ecosystem (wildscapes and demonstration gardens will not qualify)** †
- 2c. On existing protected properties, actively manage or improve existing habitat for birds, wildlife, and native plant communities representative of the local ecosystem**
- 2d. Create and conserve corridors and connectivity between habitat areas to promote movement and migration of birds, wildlife, and native plant communities†
- 2e. Incentivize residents, businesses, and community group participation in local habitat enhancement/restoration programs**
- 2f. Implement wetland habitat restorations or installations to mitigate flooding rather than stream channelization**†
- 2g. Where public safety allows, implement a policy and training that ensures dead trees are left standing in parks/natural areas to provide foraging and nesting habitat
- 2h. Develop and adopt a community approved list of only native tree and shrub species recommended for use by all new developments (business and sub-division developers) †
- 2i. Reduce municipal water use for landscaping by implementing permanent once/week landscape watering with irrigation system/sprinkler schedules citywide and/or native landscape incentive programs
- 2j. Implement an active invasive plant species removal program on public lands
- 2k. Under the guidance of a Wildlife Management Plan, community actively uses prescribed fire that benefits birds and native ecosystems
- 2l. Create overlays and other zoning and land use restrictions so that nature preserves are buffered against negative impacts of development†
- 2m. Enact and enforce more stringent city ordinances protecting existing bird habitat
- 2n. Implement seasonal management practices (such as mowing, pruning) that protect nesting birds,
- 2o. Manage natural areas in public parks to encourage the growth of native plants that provide important wildlife habitat including managed “No Mow” areas for native grasses and plants
- 2p. Sponsor at least 5 habitat restoration projects of at least 1 acre in size in the community to improve bird habitat over the 3 year period**
- 2q. Manage a municipal or public golf course for the benefit of native birds
- 2r. Community conducts an inventory of city lands (using iNaturalist or comparable platform) to document plant and animal species present and assesses habitat quality
- 2s. Review all properties slated for municipal development to avoid impacting quality bird habitat where possible, including adjusting siting of buildings to avoid habitat



Category 3: Creating Safer Spaces for Birds

Your community must meet at least 4 criteria from this category:

- 3a. Educate building owners/architecture community about Bird-Friendly Buildings best design practices and the conservation value of reducing collisions
- 3b. Provide best design guidelines about reducing bird collisions and impacts to businesses applying for new building permits
- 3c. Participate in National Lights Out Program during spring and fall migration periods
- 3d. Conduct a sustained educational campaign focused on the impacts of pesticides and herbicides on bird populations and include practical information on proven Integrated Pest Management options
- 3e. Implement Integrated Pest Management strategies to minimize use of pesticides and herbicides on city-managed property
- 3f. At least one municipal or major public building receives LEED certification that includes the Credit for Bird Collision Deterrence (during review period)†
- 3g. Provide alternative transportation throughout the community (e.g. hike and bike trails, rideshare programs, bike lanes)†
- 3h. Reduce light pollution by using dark-skies compliant shielded lighting throughout community and does not install or use blue wavelength lights (4000 Kelvin) in all outdoor publicly owned fixtures with a target of approximately 2700 Kelvin†
- 3i. Prohibit feeding of ducks on community-managed properties to decrease domestic disease transfer to migrating waterfowl
- 3j. Community stormwater management plan implements actions from the National Menus of Best Management Practices for Stormwater
- 3k. Active program to remove invasive or harmful animal species, including harmful or invasive bird species, deer, and/or wild pigs
- 3l. Actively prohibits the formation, maintenance, or support of outdoor cat colonies inside or adjacent to parks/natural areas. Removal of cat colonies within or adjacent to parks/natural areas will also suffice
- 3m. Monitor and limit the release of native wildlife and prohibit the release of domestic animals within parks/natural areas to prevent unhealthy over-concentration of native species or introduction of non-native species that would be destructive to birds



Bird City Texas High Flyer Certification

Bird City Texas anticipates that in the years ahead its communities will want to strengthen their commitment to bird conservation. These additional criteria demonstrate that higher level of commitment. To earn a High Flyer designation, a community will need to document that it still meets Bird City's basic qualifications and meets the additional requirements outlined below.

Required Action for all High Flyer Communities

All communities must meet all the following criteria to be eligible for High Flyer status:

- HF R1. Prohibit Trap, Neuter and Release programs for feral or free roaming cats. Does not actively subsidize or condone outdoor cat colonies, and prohibits the formation, feeding, and support of outdoor cat colonies
- HF R2. Create and/or maintain a demonstration bird-friendly native landscape on at least two highly visible community properties that would be visited by socioeconomically diverse groups in your community**

Bird City Texas High Flyer Certification Options

Category HF1: Community Engagement Certification Options

Your community must meet at least 1 criterion from this category.

- HF1a. Local school district(s) uses native Texas ecosystem/conservation programs in curriculum for all K-12 students in either science, social studies, or language arts
- HF1b. Sponsor a community planning charrette that brings in major municipal, industry, and community partners to improve bird conservation within the community that results in a draft/preliminary community conservation plan
- HF1c. Enact an annual series of highly-visible community planting events that engage a dedicated corps of volunteers to restore native habitat on city-owned properties**

Category HF2: Habitat Enhancement and Protection Certification Options

Your community must meet at least 3 criteria from this category.

- HF2a. Community requires the use of native plants for landscaping in all new landscapes in publicly owned or managed spaces, buildings, and properties**
- HF2b. Designate a new nature park primarily managed for the benefit of native plants, wildlife, and ecosystems[†]
- HF2c. Community has enacted a \$2 per capita dedicated fund for habitat conservation, enhancement, or restoration**
- HF2d. Manage all recreational areas (including sports areas) in public park system to include at least 5% contiguous area designated as natural habitat



- HF2e. Community designates, manages, and maintains at minimum 2% of parks as preserves where resource protection is prioritized over human use and enforce policies such as: no pets allowed, noise management, limited number of visitors, pedestrian use only, and closing to allow for land management practices
- HF2f. Community has at least 1 golf course within its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) certified as an Audubon Certified Cooperative Sanctuary
- HF2g. Community has created and implements a Smart Growth development plan to protect and manage watersheds, open space, and habitat areas
- HF2h. Community has conducted overview of all community parks and natural areas within the community, owned by all entities, to develop a greenbelt/corridor master plan using creation of more natural areas and trails to connect all green space throughout the community. Include land acquisition plans and detailed timeline for implementation.

Category HF3: Creating Safer Spaces for Birds Certification Options

Your community must meet at least 2 criteria from this category.

- HF3a. Enact and enforce a city-wide ordinance requiring domestic cats to be kept indoors or in an enclosure
- HF3b. Construction ordinance requires that new public buildings seek LEED certification (silver or higher) that includes meeting the requirement for the LEED Credit for Bird Collision Deterrence
- HF3c. Design or retrofit public buildings to reduce bird collisions using Bird Friendly Buildings guidelines by American Bird Conservancy and Audubon
- HF3d. Participate in Bird-Friendly Buildings: Lights Out program in all city-owned buildings
- HF3e. Community actively and intensively traps brown-headed cowbirds on several community-owned lands
- HF3f. Implement adaptive feral hog population control plan that encompasses several community-owned lands
- HF3g. Community prohibits distribution of single-use plastic through regulatory action (straws, shopping bags, balloons, etc) and provides clean-up containers for microfilaments, when applicable

** Evaluative metrics are required for all future commitments. Communities should identify their own metrics that can help evaluate the success of each activity. Criteria marked with ** are special reporting categories. For these activities, evaluative metrics must include one or more of the following: number of acres affected, number of people engaged, number of native plants sold, and/or put in/taken out of the ground (when appropriate).

[†] Criteria will be given even if accomplished, or first implemented, before the application year. Credit for this criteria is only applied to the application year, not future certification years.



Native Plant Society of Texas

Benefits of Membership

Texas Native Plants Magazine

Members receive a free subscription to our [quarterly full color magazine](#), with in depth articles about using Texas native plants in your garden. Get exclusive information you cannot find anywhere else.

Exclusive Access and Discounts

Members enjoy early access and reduced registration fees for [classes](#), and other events. Join us at our spring or fall [symposia](#) around the state. Discounts are available at local nurseries in some chapters.

Be Part of a Community

Be part of a statewide community with thousands of members. At [local chapters](#) across the state you can join other members on field trips, garden tours, plant sales, classes, social events, and much more.

Membership Levels

Individual

Enjoy all our member benefits as an individual, joining up to four chapters. You may also join as an “at-large” member if you do not have a home chapter. All membership dues are annual.

Home Chapter

\$45

Two Chapters

\$51

Three Chapters

\$57

Four Chapters

\$63

[Join](#)

[Gift](#)

[Renew](#)

Family

Your entire household can enjoy all our member benefits in up to four chapters. You may also join as an “at-large” member if you do not have a home chapter. All membership dues are annual.

Home Chapter

\$60

Two Chapters

\$66

Three Chapters

\$72

Four Chapters

\$78

[Join](#)

[Renew](#)

Senior - Student - Limited Income

Seniors, students, and people with limited income can enjoy all our household member benefits, joining up to four chapters at a reduced cost. All membership dues are annual.

Home Chapter

\$35

Two Chapters

\$41

Three Chapters

\$47

Four Chapters

\$53

[Join](#)

[Renew](#)

Supporter

Help support our efforts even more with our Supporter memberships, while your entire household enjoys all our member benefits. All membership dues are annual except Lifetime.

Patron

\$100

Benefactor

\$250

Sustaining

\$500

[Join](#)

[Renew](#)

Membership Help

Renew Membership

If you are a current member, or a former member who has been active since 2018, you already have a NPSOT account in our membership database. Please do not create a new account! [Click here](#) to log in to the member portal for renewal, or to rejoin.

If you forgot your login name or email, or have not set up a login and password, just click "[Help with my account](#)" to receive instructions to reset your password or create a login and password.

If your membership has not been active since 2018, [click here](#) to rejoin.

Join By Mail

If you would prefer to renew by mail, you can access that form [here](#).

Members at Large

Depending on your membership level you may join one or more additional chapters. If you do not wish to be join a chapter you can designate yourself a "member-at-large."

Membership Coordinator

If you have any questions about your membership, including your membership dates, please reach out to our [Membership Coordinator](#).



Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials

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Policy Purpose

The La Marque City Council has adopted this Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials for members of the City Council and the City's boards and commissions, to include the La Marque Economic Development Corporation to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation.

A. ETHICS

The citizens and businesses of La Marque are entitled to have a fair, ethical and accountable local government that has earned the public's full confidence for integrity. In keeping with the City of La Marque's Commitment to Excellence, the effective functioning of democratic government therefore requires that:

- public officials, both elected and appointed, comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government;
- public officials be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions;
- public office be used for the public good, not for personal gain; and
- public deliberations and processes be conducted openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the La Marque City Council has adopted this Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials ("Code of Ethics and Conduct") for members of the City Council and of the City's boards and commissions to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation. The City's Code of Ethics and Conduct provides guidance on ethical issues and questions of right and wrong.

Act in the Public Interest. Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, EAO will work for the common good of the people of La Marque and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions coming before the La Marque City Council, boards and commissions.

Comply with both the spirit and the letter of the Law and City Policy. Members of the City Council and the City's boards and commissions shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of Texas and the City of La Marque in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and Texas Constitutions; State laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and City Charter, ordinances and policies.

Conduct of Elected and Appointed Officials ("EAO"). EAO shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of Council, boards and commissions, the staff, or public.

Respect for Process. EAO shall perform their duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Council and board and commissions governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the City Council by City staff.

Conduct of Public Meetings. EAO shall prepare themselves for public issues; listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the body; and focus on the business at hand. They shall refrain from interrupting other speakers; making personal comments not germane to the business of the body; attempting to monopolize the discussion at public meetings; or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.

Decisions Based on Merit. EAO shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand, rather than on unrelated considerations.

Communication. EAO shall publicly disclose substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by the Council or boards and commissions, which they may have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process.

Conflict of Interest. No officer of the City or a relative thereof shall:

- a) Have a financial interest in any contract, job, work, or service of or to the city, or the sale to the city of any supplies, equipment, material, or real or personal property.
- b) Participate in a vote or decision on any matter in which the officer has a substantial interest.
- c) Accept any gift from any person that might reasonably tend to influence such officer in the discharge of such person's official duties. The prohibition against gifts shall not apply to:
 - (i) A lawful campaign contribution;
 - (ii) An honorarium in consideration for services unless the officer would not have been asked to provide the services but for the officer's position;
 - (iii) Meals, lodging, transportation in connection with services rendered by the officer at a conference, seminar or similar event that is more than merely perfunctory;
 - (iv) Complimentary copies of trade publications and other related materials;
 - (v) Attendance at hospitality functions at local, regional, state or national association meetings and/or conferences;
 - (vi) Any gift, which would have been offered or given to the person if such person was not an officer or employee of the City;
 - (vii) An occasional item with a value less than two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00);
 - (viii) Tee shirts, caps and other similar promotional material;

- (ix) Meals, transportation and lodging in connection with a seminar or conference at which the officer is providing services;
- (x) Gifts on account of kinship or a personal, or professional, or business relationship independent of the officer's status; and,
- (xi) Complimentary attendance at political or charitable fund-raising events.

Confidential Information. EAO shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel, or affairs of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial, political or other private interests.

Use of Public Resources. EAO shall not use public resources not available to the public in general, such as City staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal, political purposes. Councilmembers desiring use of such city resources for public meetings shall first obtain permission from a majority of the Council at a duly called, posted Council meeting.

Representation of Private Interests. In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, members of Council shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the Council or any board, commission or proceeding of the City, nor shall members of boards and commissions appear before their own bodies or before the Council on behalf of the private interests of third parties on matters related to the areas of service of their bodies, nor voluntarily participate on behalf of others in any litigation to which the City is, or might be, an adverse party.

Advocacy. EAO shall represent the official policies or positions of the City Council, board or commission to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, EAO shall explicitly state they do not represent their body or the City of La Marque, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

Policy Role of EAO. EAO shall respect and adhere to the council-manager structure of La Marque City government as outlined by the La Marque City Charter. In this structure, the City Council determines the policies of the City with the advice, information and analysis provided by the public, boards and commissions, and City staff. Except as provided by the City Charter, EAO shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the City or the professional duties of City staff; nor shall they impair the ability of staff to implement Council policy decisions.

Independence of boards and commissions. Because of the value of the independent advice of boards and commissions to the public decision-making process, members of Council shall refrain from using their position to unduly influence the deliberations or outcomes of board and commission proceedings.

EAO shall not intervene in Civil Service or Municipal Court matters.

EAO shall not direct city staff to take actions that are not in keeping with advice and guidance from the City Attorney.

Councilmembers. shall adhere to the same city procurement card policy as utilized by city staff.

Positive Workplace Environment. EAO shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive workplace environment for City employees and for citizens and businesses dealing with the City. EAO shall recognize their special role in dealings with City employees so in no way do they create the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.

B. CONDUCT

The City Charter provides detailed information on the roles and responsibilities of members of the La Marque City Council, the Mayor Pro Tem, and the Mayor. The City's Code of Ethics and Conduct provides guidance on ethical issues and questions of right and wrong.

This Code of Ethics and Conduct is designed to describe the manner in which Councilmembers and board and commission members should treat one another, City staff, citizens, and others they come into contact with in representing the City of La Marque.

The constant and consistent theme through all of the conduct guidelines is "respect." Councilmembers experience huge workloads and tremendous stress in making decisions that could impact thousands of lives. Despite these pressures, elected and appointed officials are called upon to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. Demonstrating respect for each individual through words and actions is the touchstone that can help guide Councilmembers and board and commission members to do the right thing in even the most difficult situations.

1. Overview of Councilmember Roles and Responsibilities

Mayor

- Acts as the official head of the City for all ceremonial purposes.
- Chairs Council meetings.
- Calls for special meetings.
- Serves as spokesperson for the City Council on City positions.
- Selects substitute for City representation when Mayor cannot attend.
- Makes judgment calls on proclamations, Special Orders of the Day, etc.
- Recommends subcommittees as appropriate for Council approval.
- Leads the Council into an effective, cohesive working team.
- Signs documents on behalf of the City.
- Reviews mail addressed to Mayor.

- Other duties as set forth in other laws, ordinances, or the City Charter.

Mayor Pro Tem

- Performs the duties of the Mayor if the Mayor is absent or disabled.
- Chairs Council meetings at the request of the Mayor.
- Represents the City at ceremonial functions at the request of the Mayor.
- Signs documents on behalf of the City, in absence of Mayor.
- All duties as assigned by Mayor.

All Councilmembers

All members of the City Council, including those serving as Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, have equal votes. No Councilmember has more power than any other Councilmember, and all should be treated with equal respect. Therefore, no ranking or pecking order shall be established for predetermining the order of roll call votes or public introductions, except that the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem shall be introduced first at public meetings and events. All Councilmembers should:

- Fully participate in City Council meetings and other public forums while demonstrating respect, kindness, consideration, and courtesy to others;
- Prepare in advance of Council meetings and be familiar with issues on the agenda;
- Represent the City at ceremonial functions at the request of the Mayor;
- Be respectful of other people's time. Stay focused and act efficiently during public meetings.
- Serve as a model of leadership and civility to the community;
- Inspire public confidence in La Marque government;
- Provide contact information with the City Clerk in case an emergency or urgent situation arises while the Councilmember is out of town;
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in every action and statement; and,
- Participate in scheduled activities to increase team effectiveness and review Council procedures, such as this Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials.

Meeting Chair

The Mayor will chair official meetings of the City Council, unless the Mayor Pro Tem or another Councilmember is designated as chair of a specific meeting.

- Maintains order, decorum, and the fair and equitable treatment of all speakers.
- Keeps discussion and questions focused on specific agenda item under consideration.
- Makes parliamentary rulings with advice, if requested, from the City Clerk who acts as advisory parliamentarian, and in her absence, the city attorney shall act as advisory parliamentarian.

2. General Policies and Protocol

Ceremonial Events.

The City Clerk's Office will handle requests for a City representative at ceremonial events. The Mayor will serve as the designated City representative. If the Mayor is unavailable, then City staff will determine if event organizers would like another representative from the Council. If yes, then the Mayor can recommend which Councilmember should be asked to serve as a substitute. Invitations received at City Hall are presumed to be for official City representation. Invitations addressed to Councilmembers shall be shared with the City Clerk's Office in order to assure posting for compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, if applicable.

Travel Expenses.

The policies and procedures related to the reimbursement of travel expenses for official City business by Councilmembers are outlined in Council Travel Policy and related Resolutions. All Council travel which the Councilmember expects to officially represent the City and/or be reimbursed by the City for travel costs, must be approved in accordance with the Council Travel Policy. The travel policy and budget for Council should be reviewed at each annual budget cycle.

Rules of Order for Meetings.

The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall serve as the parliamentary authority for Council and boards, committees and commission. Standing rules that vary from Robert's Rules may be adopted by the Council.

Non-agenda Items (Citizens Participation).

During a designated period of the agenda, referred to as "Citizen's Participation," citizens may bring forth issues or questions that are not on the meeting's agenda. Each citizen will be limited to three minutes unless otherwise directed by the Mayor (Council meetings) or Chair (board/commission meetings). The Mayor or Chair shall use the presentation monitor displaying green, yellow, and red lights to give a 30 second allowance to conclude citizen comments.

State law does not require the City Council to have an agenda item for "Citizens Participation". Citizens Participation may not be used as a forum to make personal attacks against individual citizens, city employees or Councilmembers. Such remarks will result in the speaker being asked to step back from the podium and a forfeiture of the remaining time to speak.

Public hearings.

Councilmembers (Council meetings) and board/commission members (board/commission meetings) will not express opinions during the public hearing portion of the meeting except to ask pertinent questions of the speaker or staff. "I think" and "I feel" comments by EAO are not appropriate until after the close of the public hearing. EAO should refrain from arguing or debating with the public during a public hearing and shall always show respect for different points of view.

Appeal Protocol.

The applicant or appellant shall have the right to speak first. The Mayor or Chair will determine the length of time allowed for this presentation. Speakers representing either pro or con points of view will be allowed to follow. The Mayor or Chair will determine how much time will be allowed for

each speaker, with 3 minutes the standard time granted. The applicant or appellant will be allowed to make closing comments. The Mayor or Chair has the responsibility to run an efficient public meeting and has the discretion to modify the public hearing process in order to make the meeting run smoothly.

3. EAO Conduct with One Another

EAO are composed of individuals with various backgrounds, personalities, values, opinions, and goals. All have chosen to serve in public office in order to preserve and protect the present and the future of the community. In all cases, this common goal should be acknowledged even though individuals may "agree to disagree" on contentious issues.

3(a). In Public Meetings

Use formal titles.

EAO should refer to one another formally during public meetings, such as Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, Chair, Commissioner or Councilmember followed by the individual's last name.

Practice civility and decorum in discussions and debate.

Difficult questions, tough challenges to a particular point of view, and criticism of ideas and information are legitimate elements of a free democracy in action. This does not allow, however, public officials to make belligerent, personal, impertinent, slanderous, threatening, abusive, or disparaging comments. No shouting or physical actions that could be construed as threatening will be tolerated.

Honor the role of the Chair in maintaining order.

It is the responsibility of the Chair to keep the comments of EAO on track during public meetings. EAO should honor efforts by the Chair to focus discussion on current agenda items. If there is disagreement about the agenda or the Chair's actions, those objections should be voiced politely and with reason, following procedures outlined in parliamentary procedure.

Avoid personal comments that could offend other EAO.

If a member is personally offended by the remarks of another member, the offended member should make notes of the actual words used and call for a "point of personal privilege" that challenges the other member to justify or apologize for the language used. The Chair will maintain control of this discussion.

Demonstrate effective problem-solving approaches.

EAO have a public stage to show how individuals with disparate points of view can find common ground and seek a compromise that benefits the community as a whole.

Outside of official board or commission meetings, individual board and commission members are not authorized to represent the City or their board or commission unless specifically designated by

the Council or the board or commission to do so for a particular purpose. In public, however, all EAO shall represent the official policies or positions. Only the chair or his/her designee shall speak during a Council public hearing on any item that has been addressed by the board or commission, and for which detailed minutes have been provided to the Council. The chair shall represent the majority view of the board or commission, but shall report on any minority views as well. When an official board or commission position differs from staff's recommendation on a particular policy issue, then at the Mayor's discretion additional time may be provided to the chair of the board or commission (or his/her designee) to explain the position of the board/commission. If new information is brought to light during a public hearing that was not shared previously with the board or commission, the Mayor may allow the board or commission chair to respond. If the Council deems the new information sufficient to warrant additional study, then by majority vote Council may refer the issue back to the board or commission for further study prior to taking other action itself.

Individual opinions and positions may be expressed by board and commission members regarding items that have not come before the particular board/commission to which they belong. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, Councilmembers and board/committee/commission members shall explicitly state they do not represent their body or the City of La Marque, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

Although a board or commission may disagree with the final decision the Council makes, the board or commission shall not act in any manner contrary to the established policy adopted by the Council.

3(b). In Private Encounters

Continue respectful behavior in private.

The same level of respect and consideration of differing points of view that is deemed appropriate for public discussions should be maintained in private conversations.

Be aware of the insecurity of written notes, voicemail messages, and E-mail.

Technology allows words written or said without much forethought to be distributed wide and far. Would you feel comfortable to have this note faxed to others? How would you feel if this voicemail message were played on a speaker phone in a full office? What would happen if this E-mail message were forwarded to others? Written notes, voicemail messages and e-mail should be treated as potentially "public" communication.

Even private conversations can have a public presence

Elected and appointed officials are always on display — their actions, mannerisms, and language are monitored by people around them that they may not know. Lunch table conversations will be eavesdropped upon, parking lot debates will be watched, and casual comments between individuals before and after public meetings noted and may be subject to the Open Meetings Act.

4. Conduct with City Staff

Governance of a City relies on the cooperative efforts of elected officials, who set policy; appointed officials who advise the elected, and City staff, who implements and administers the Council's policies. Therefore, every effort should be made to be cooperative and show mutual respect for the contributions made by each individual for the good of the community.

Treat all staff as professionals.

Clear, honest communication that respects the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual is expected. Poor behavior towards staff is not acceptable.

Member questions/inquiries to City staff

1. **General.** Member communications with City staff should be limited to normal City business hours unless the circumstances warrant otherwise. Responses to Council questions posed outside of normal business hours should be expected no earlier than the next business day.
2. **Routine Requests for Information and Inquiries.** EAO may contact staff directly for information made readily available to the general public on a regular basis (e.g., "What are the library's hours of operation?" or "How does one reserve a tee time at the golf course?"). Under these circumstances staff shall treat the member no differently than they would the general public, and the member shall not use their elected status to secure preferential treatment. The city manager does not need to be advised of such contacts.
3. **Non-Routine Requests for Readily Available Information.** EAO may also contact staff directly for easily retrievable information not routinely requested by the general public so long as it does not require staff to discuss the issue or express an opinion (e.g., "How many traffic lights are there in the City?" or "Under what circumstances does the City lower its flags to half-mast?").
4. **Non-Routine Requests Requiring Special Effort.** Any member request or inquiry that requires staff to compile information that is not readily available or easily retrievable and/or that requests staff to express an opinion (legal or otherwise) must be directed to the city manager, city clerk, or to the city attorney, as appropriate (e.g., "How many Study Issues completed over the past five years have required 500 or more hours of staff time?" or "What is the logic behind the City's sign ordinances affecting businesses along Cedar Dr?"). The city manager (or council appointee as appropriate) shall be responsible for distributing such requests to his/her staff for follow-up. Responses to such requests shall be copied to all Councilmembers (if originating from a Councilmember), relevant board or commission members (if originating from a board or commission member), the city manager, the city attorney as appropriate, and affected department directors.
5. **Meeting Requests.** Any member request for a meeting with staff must be directed to the city manager or council appointee, as appropriate.

Do not disrupt City staff from their jobs.

Elected and appointed officials should not disrupt City staff while they are in meetings, on the phone, or engrossed in performing their job functions in order to have their individual needs met. City Council may attend staff meetings with advance notice to the City Manager; however, it should be considered that even if the elected or appointed official does not say anything, his or her presence could imply support or show partiality.

Never publicly criticize an individual employee.

Elected and appointed officials should never express concerns about the performance of a City employee in public, to the employee directly, or to the employee's manager. Comments about staff performance should only be made to the city manager or council appointee through private correspondence or conversation.

Do not get involved in administrative functions.

Elected and appointed officials must not attempt to influence City staff on the making of appointments, awarding of contracts, selecting of consultants, processing of development applications, the payment of claims against the City or granting of City licenses and permits.

Check with City staff on correspondence before taking action.

Before sending correspondence, Councilmembers should check with City staff to see if an official City response has already been sent or is in progress. Board and commission members shall not send correspondence except as authorized under the City's policies governing volunteers.

Limit requests for staff support.

Routine secretarial support will be provided to all Councilmembers. The City Clerk (or designee) opens mail addressed to Mayor and forwards information as appropriate. The City Clerk also opens mail for other Councilmembers, unless a Councilmember requests other arrangements.

Requests for additional staff support. — even in high priority or emergency situations, should be made to the city manager who is responsible for allocating City resources in order to maintain a professional, well-run City government.

Do not solicit political support from staff

Elected and appointed officials should not solicit any type of political support (financial contributions, display of posters or lawn signs, name on support list, etc.) from City staff. City staff may, as private citizens with constitutional rights, support political candidates, but all such activities must be done away from the workplace. The use of the City's email system for political purposes or communications is not allowed.

5. Conduct with the Public

5(a). In Public Meetings

Making the public feel welcome is an important part of the democratic process. No signs of partiality, prejudice or disrespect should be evident on the part of individual EAO toward an individual participating in a public forum. Every effort should be made to be fair and impartial in listening to public testimony.

Be welcoming to speakers and treat them with care and gentleness.

Be fair and equitable in allocating public hearing time to individual speakers.

The Mayor or Chair will determine and announce limits on speakers at the start of the public hearing process. Generally, each speaker will be allocated three minutes with applicants and appellants or their designated representatives allowed time as allocated by the Mayor. If many speakers are anticipated, the Mayor or Chair may shorten the time limit and/or ask speakers to limit themselves to new information and points of view not already covered by previous speakers.

No speaker will be turned away unless he or she exhibits inappropriate behavior. Each speaker may only speak once during the public hearing unless the Mayor or Chair requests additional clarification later in the process.

Give the appearance of active listening.

It is disconcerting to speakers to have EAO not look at them when they are speaking. Be aware of facial expressions, especially those that could be interpreted as "smirking," disbelief, anger or boredom.

Ask for clarification, but avoid debate and argument with the public.

Only the chair — not individual EAO — can interrupt a speaker during a presentation. However, a member can ask the chair for a point of order if the speaker is off the topic or exhibiting behavior or language the member finds disturbing.

If speakers become flustered or defensive by questions, it is the responsibility of the chair to calm and focus the speaker and to maintain the order and decorum of the meeting. Questions by EAO to the public testifying should seek to clarify or expand information. It is never appropriate to belligerently challenge or belittle the speaker. EAO's personal opinions or inclinations about upcoming votes should not be revealed until after the public hearing is closed.

No personal attacks of any kind, under any circumstance.

EAO should be aware that their body language and tone of voice, as well as the words they use, can appear to be intimidating or aggressive.

Follow parliamentary procedure in conducting public meetings.

The City Clerk serves as advisory parliamentarian for the Council and City and is available to answer questions or interpret situations according to parliamentary procedures. In her absence, the city attorney serves as advisory parliamentarian. The Chair, subject to the appeal of the full Council or board/commission, makes final rulings on parliamentary procedure per the procedure outlined in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

5(b). In Unofficial Settings

Make no promises on behalf of the Council, board/commission or City.

EAO will frequently be asked to explain a Council or board/commission action or to give their opinion about an issue as they meet and talk with constituents in the community. It is appropriate to give a brief overview of City policy and to refer to City staff for further information. It is inappropriate to overtly or implicitly promise Council or board/commission action, or to promise City staff will do something specific (fix a pothole, remove a library book, plant new flowers in the median, etc.).

Make no personal comments about other EAO.

It is acceptable to publicly disagree about an issue, but it is unacceptable to make derogatory comments about other EAO, and their opinions and actions.

Remember that La Marque is a small town at heart.

EAO are constantly being observed by the community every day that they serve in office. Their behaviors and comments serve as models for proper deportment in the City of La Marque. Honesty and respect for the dignity of each individual should be reflected in every word and action taken by EAO, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a serious and continuous responsibility.

6. Council Conduct with Other Public Agencies

Be clear about representing the City or personal interests.

When representing the City, the Councilmember must support and advocate the official City position on an issue, not a personal viewpoint. Outside of official board or commission meetings, board and commission members are not authorized to represent the City or their board or commission unless specifically designated by the Council or the board or commission to do so for a particular purpose and with staff's knowledge.

When representing another organization whose position is different from the City, the Councilmember should withdraw from voting on the issue if it significantly impacts or is detrimental to the City's interest. Councilmembers should be clear about which organizations they represent and inform the Mayor and Council of their involvement.

Be equally clear in correspondence about representation.

City letterhead may be used when the Councilmember is representing the City and the City's official position. A copy of official correspondence should be given to the City Clerk's Office to be filed in the Council Office as part of the permanent public record. Official City letterhead not pursuant to district letterhead.

City letterhead should not be used for non-City business or for correspondence representing a dissenting point of view from an official Council position.

7. Council Conduct with Boards and Commissions

The City has established several boards and commissions as a means of gathering more community input. Citizens who serve on boards and commissions become more involved in government and serve as advisors to the City Council. They are a valuable resource to the City's leadership and should be treated with appreciation and respect.

If attending a board or commission meeting, be careful personal opinions.

Councilmembers may attend any board or commission meeting, which are always open to any member of the public. However, they should be sensitive to the way their participation, especially if it is on behalf of an individual, business or developer, could be viewed as unfairly affecting the process. Any public comments by a Councilmember at a board or commission meeting should be clearly made as individual opinion and not as a representation of the feelings of the entire City Council.

Limit contact with board and commission members to questions of clarification.

It is inappropriate for a Councilmember to contact a board or commission member to lobby on behalf of an individual, business, or developer, and vice versa. It is acceptable for Councilmembers to contact board or commission members in order to clarify a position taken by the board or commission.

Remember that boards and commissions serve the community, not individual Councilmembers.

The City Council appoints individuals to serve on boards and commissions, and it is the responsibility of boards and commissions to follow policy established by the Council; but board and commission members do not report to individual Councilmembers, nor should Councilmembers feel they have the power or right to threaten board and commission members with removal if they disagree about an issue. Appointment and re-appointment to a board or commission should be based on such criteria as expertise, ability to work with staff and the public, and commitment to fulfilling official duties. A board or commission appointment should not be used as a political "reward."

Be respectful of diverse opinions.

A primary role of boards and commissions is to represent many points of view in the community and to provide the Council with advice based on a full spectrum of concerns and perspectives. Councilmembers may have a closer working relationship with some individuals serving on boards and commissions but must be fair and respectful of all citizens serving on boards and commissions.

Keep political support away from public forums.

Board and commission members may offer political support to a Councilmember, but not in a public forum while conducting official duties. Conversely, Councilmembers may support board and commission members who are running for office but not in an official forum in their capacity as a Councilmember.

8. Conduct with the Media

Board and commission members are not authorized to represent the City outside of official board/commission meetings unless specifically authorized to do so.

Councilmembers are frequently contacted by the media for background and quotes.

The best advice for dealing with the media is to never go "off the record".

Most members of the media represent the highest levels of journalistic integrity and ethics and can be trusted to keep their word. But one bad experience can be catastrophic. Words that are not said cannot be quoted.

The Mayor is the official spokesperson for the City-on-City positions.

The Mayor is the designated representative of the Council to present and speak on the official City position. If an individual Councilmember is contacted by the media, the Councilmember should be clear about whether their comments represent the official City position or a personal viewpoint.

Choose words carefully and cautiously.

Comments taken out of context can cause problems. Be especially cautious about humor, sardonic asides, sarcasm, or word play. It is never appropriate to use personal slurs or swear words when talking with the media.

C. SANCTIONS

Public Disruption.

Members of the public who do not follow proper conduct after a warning in a public meeting may be barred from further testimony at that meeting or removed from the Council Chambers.

Inappropriate Staff Behavior.

Councilmembers should refer to the city manager any City staff or to the council appointee any appointee's staff who do not follow proper conduct in their dealings with Councilmembers; other City staff, or the public. These employees may be disciplined in accordance with standard City procedures for such action; if it is determined such action did occur. (Please refer to the section on Council Conduct with City Staff for more details on interaction with Staff.)

Councilmembers Behavior and Conduct.

Compliance and Enforcement. The Code of Ethics and Conduct expresses standards of ethical conduct expected for members of the La Marque City Council, boards and commissions. EAO themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of government. The chairs of boards and commissions and the Mayor and Council have the additional responsibility to intervene when actions of EAO that appears to be in violation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct are brought to their attention.

City Councilmembers who intentionally and repeatedly do not follow proper conduct may be reprimanded or formally censured by the Council, be removed from committee assignments (both within the City of La Marque or with inter-governmental agencies) by the Council.

Councilmembers should point out to the offending Councilmember infractions of the Ethics Policy. If the offenses continue, then the matter should be placed on a council agenda in closed session under the provisions of Section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code.

The affected Councilmember may request that the complaint be considered in a public meeting. The affected Councilmember shall be provided by the City Attorney shall present in detail to the City Council the nature of the complaint and the City Attorney or City Clerk's findings and conclusions as to a possible violation of this Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials.

The affected Councilmember shall have the right to a full and complete hearing before the City Council with the opportunity to call witnesses and present evidence in such person's behalf. The non-implicated City Councilmembers in attendance shall conduct a hearing in open session and review the complaint. The City Council may reject the complaint and take no action or take action to formally reprimand or censure the offending Councilmember.

Board and Commission Members Behavior and Conduct.

Counseling and verbal reprimands may be administered by board and commission chairs (or their designee) to board and commission members failing to comply with City policy. These lower levels of sanctions shall be kept private to the degree allowed by law. Verbal or written reprimands may be administered by the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem at the direction of the Council. Copies of all written reprimands administered by the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem shall be distributed in memo format to the respective board or commission member, the board or commission chairperson, the City Clerk, the city manager, and the City Council. Written reprimands administered by the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem shall not be publicized except as required under the Public Information Act.

The City Council may impose sanctions on board and commission members whose conduct does not comply with the City's policies, up to and including removal from office. Any form of discipline imposed by Council shall be determined by a majority vote of at least a quorum of the Council at a noticed public meeting and such action shall be preceded by a Report to Council with supporting documentation. The Report to Council shall be distributed in accordance with normal procedures.

Any Report to Council addressing alleged misconduct by a board or commission member shall be routed through the Office of the City Attorney for review of whether any information is exempt from disclosure (subject to redaction) based on privacy interests authorized under the Public Information Act.

When deemed warranted, the Council may call for an investigation of board or commission member conduct. Should the City Manager, City Attorney, or City Clerk believe an investigation is warranted, they shall confer with the Council. The Council shall ask for an investigation of the allegation and a report of the findings.

The results of any investigation conducted by the City Manager, City Attorney and or City Clerk shall be reported to the full Council in a closed session. It may be reported in a verbal or written report. Any written report to Council addressing the investigation of board and commission members shall be routed through the Office of the City Attorney for review of whether any information is exempt from disclosure (subject to redaction) based on privacy interests authorized under the Public Information Act. The affected Member may request that the complaint be considered in a public meeting. The Member shall be provided a copy of the complaint in writing. At such meeting, the City Attorney or City Clerk shall present a report to the City Council describing in detail the nature of the complaint and the City Attorney or City Clerk's findings and conclusions as to a possible violation of this Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials. The affected member shall have the right to a full and complete hearing before the City Council with the opportunity to call witnesses and present evidence in such person's behalf. The non-implicated City Councilmembers in attendance shall conduct a hearing and review the complaint. The City Council may reject the complaint or take action.

It shall be the Council's responsibility to determine the next appropriate action. Any such action taken by Council (with the exception of "take no further action") shall be conducted at a noticed meeting. These actions include, but are not limited to discussing and counseling the individual on the violations; placing the matter on a future public hearing agenda to consider sanctions; forming a Council ad hoc subcommittee to review the allegation, the investigation and its findings, as well as to recommend sanction options for Council consideration.

A violation of this Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials, alone, shall not constitute a basis for challenging the validity of a Council, board or commission decision.

D. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Confidential information means any information to which an official has access in such person's official capacity, which may not be disclosed to the public except pursuant to state and/or federal law and which is not otherwise a matter of public record or public knowledge. Confidential information includes the following information, however transmitted: (i) any information from a meeting closed to the public pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act or other law regardless of whether disclosure violates the Texas Open Meetings Act or Texas Public Information Act; (ii) any

information protected by attorney client, attorney work product, or other applicable legal privilege; and (iii) any information deemed confidential by law.

Gift means anything of value, regardless of form, offered or given in the absence of adequate and lawful consideration. It does not include the receipt or acceptance of campaign contributions, which are regulated by federal, state, and/or local laws or ordinance.

Relative means any person related to an officer within the second degree by Consanguinity or affinity. This relationship includes the spouse, parents, children, stepchildren, father and mother-in-law, or son and daughter-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, sisters and brothers of the officer.

Substantial interest means (i) the ownership of ten (10) percent or more of the voting stock or shares of a business entity; (ii) the ownership of ten (10) percent or more, or fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000.00) or more of the fair market value of a business entity; or (iii) funds received from the business entity exceed ten (10) percent of the person's income for the previous year, and action on the matter involving the business entity will have a special economic effect on the business entity that is distinguishable from the effect on the public. It is expressly provided herein that an investment or ownership in a publicly held company, in an amount less than fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000.00) does not constitute a substantial interest. Substantial interest in real property means the person has an interest in the real property that is equitable or legal ownership with a fair market value of two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) or more; and it is reasonably foreseeable that an action on a matter involving the real property will have a special economic effect on the value of the real property distinguishable from its effect on the public. (Ownership includes any partnership, joint or corporate ownership or any equitable or beneficial interest as a beneficiary of a trust.) A Member is considered to have a substantial interest under this Ethics Policy if a person related to the Member in the second degree of consanguinity or affinity has a substantial interest under this Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials.

E. IMPLEMENTATION

As an expression of the standards of conduct for EAO expected by the City, the Code of Ethics and Conduct is intended to be self-enforcing. It therefore becomes most effective when EAO are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions. For this reason, this document shall be included in the regular orientations for candidates for City Council, applicants to board and commissions, and newly elected and appointed officials. EAO entering office shall sign a statement affirming they read and understood the City of La Marque Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials. In addition, the Code of Ethics and Conduct shall be annually reviewed by the City Council, boards and commissions, and the City Council shall consider recommendations from boards and commissions and update it as necessary.



WHF meets you where
you are on your
conservation journey.



Personal consultation and on-site
evaluations result in conservation plans that
work with nature, rather than against it.



Protect your investment
with conservation.

Work with WHF to create a conservation
plan crafted specific to your location,
soil type, and wildlife habitats.



From small to large acreages, we work with
you to manage your lands to their highest
function, and improve your bottom line.



*Wildlife Habitat Federation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
creating resilient grasslands and healthy watersheds statewide.*



Services

Site Evaluations

Landowners receive on-site natural resource evaluations by trained conservation professionals, providing information about existing soil and vegetation conditions.

Habitat Management Planning

Landowners are provided with a conservation management plan, including timelines indicating when to implement specific practices to improve soil quality and the variety of wildlife present.

Implementation Guidance

Landowners are guided through implementation of conservation practices, including the use of prescribed burning, to restore native grasslands and improve the bottom lines of managed and working lands.



Monitoring and Evaluation

Landowners benefit from observation of progress and additional guidance to monitor improved lands and make adjustments as needed.



Mission

WHF provides on-the-ground restoration, management and generational sustainability of prairie habitat for the conservation of soil, water, air and wildlife.

Vision

Resilient prairies and healthy watersheds provide benefits to our land and water resources as well as the communities that depend on them.



Contact WHF today to conserve
your habitats for tomorrow.



PO Box 75
Cat Spring, Texas 78933
whf-info@whf-texas.org
<https://whf-texas.org>

Regional Conservation Framework

March 16, 2021

Photo: Justin Bower





From the mixed pine-hardwood forests of the Sam Houston National Forest to the coastal plains of Matagorda Bay, the Houston-Galveston region has an unparalleled natural heritage. Visitors to natural areas and open spaces like these are the tourism industry's fastest growing sector.¹ Hikers, anglers, hunters, and birders flock to our abundant forests, native prairies, and over 16,000 miles of bayous, rivers, and coastline to appreciate the beauty and bounty within the region.

Conserving these resources as we add an expected 4 million more residents over the next 25 years will be a challenge.² We anticipate this growth will add over 120 square miles of development to our landscape. Without a strategy to deal with the impacts of this growth, the Houston-Galveston region could experience increased flooding, worsening air quality, and a loss of open space, fundamentally altering the character of our region.

The good news is that by working together now, we can expand the impact of voluntary local conservation efforts, big and small, to realize significant regional benefits.



Photo: Justin Bower

¹Galveston Bay Estuary Program. (2018). The Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition. Retrieved from https://gbep.texas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/CCMP_2ndEdition_FINAL-TCEQ-Approved-DRAFT.pdf.

²Houston-Galveston Area Council. (2018). Regional Growth Forecast - Current Release: 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.h-gac.com/regional-growth-forecast>.

SECTION 1: BENEFITS OF A REGIONAL CONSERVATION FRAMEWORK

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) worked with local governments to develop this Regional Conservation Framework. Its aim is to support regional conservation projects and identify ways H-GAC can support local governments in their own conservation efforts.

WHAT IS CONSERVATION?

For the purpose of this framework, H-GAC defines conservation as: the protection of natural areas where human and environmental needs are considered and balanced. Within this broad definition, there are three main types of conservation practices:

PRESERVATION – Protecting areas in their natural state.

RESTORATION – Returning natural ecological elements to an area.

ENHANCEMENT – Creating or expanding natural elements within a developed area.

Natural areas and open spaces in the Houston-Galveston region include public and private land in urban, suburban, and rural settings. They may be specific places like parks, nature preserves, and working lands – such as farms and ranches or broader natural systems like the region's tree canopy or the vegetated areas adjacent to waterways. Natural features and systems are also increasingly being incorporated into the built environment. One of these design techniques, known as "low impact development," can be a cost-effective alternative to traditional infrastructure that also creates community amenities.

With such a broad spectrum of conservation opportunities, there is no "one size fits all" conservation solution for our region. Instead, the Regional Conservation Framework focuses on common needs shared by communities across the

Photo: Justin Bowyer

WHAT ARE ECOSYSTEM SERVICES?

Ecosystem services are community benefits supplied by nature. These services include cleaning the air, filtering water, storing nutrients, conserving and generating soils, pollinating crops and other plants, regulating climate, sequestering carbon, protecting areas against storm and flood damage, and maintaining water supplies.³ Learn more about specific ecosystem services and associated benefits on page 14.

region to magnify the impacts of the many local conservation efforts and produce benefits that can be reaped by all. These include:

FLOOD MITIGATION – Strategically conserving natural areas and open spaces can be a significant tool for mitigating the impact of flood events.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS – Natural areas and open spaces provide tangible economic benefits, such as tourism dollars, productive fisheries, and reduced air and water pollution. Learn more about these benefits on page 14.

QUALITY OF LIFE – Natural areas and open spaces make our communities more desirable places to live. These amenities are important assets in attracting residents and businesses to our region. In addition, time spent in natural areas and open spaces can help individuals fight against mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and stress.⁴

³The Conservation Fund. (2013). Houston-Galveston Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services Assessment. Retrieved from https://www.conservationfund.org/images/projects/files/Houston_Galveston_Report.pdf.

⁴National Recreation and Park Association. (2020). Parks and Improved Mental Health and Quality of Life. Retrieved from <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/health-wellness/ParksandHealth/fact-sheets/parks-improved-mental-health-quality-life/>.



Photo: Cheryl Mergo

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: PALACIOS PRAIRIE WETLANDS

LOCATION: City of Palacios

SIZE: 27 acres

FUNDING: Funded in part by the Trull Foundation and Matagorda County, with grant support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Impact Assistance Program.

NOTABLE FEATURES: Ecotourism; Community-driven



Photo: Cheryl Mergo

For several years, community members in Palacios talked about a parcel of property on the edge of town that held the potential to serve as a visual gateway to the city along Highway 35. In 2009, a group of citizens formed the Palacios Prairie Wetlands, Inc., a nonprofit organization, and negotiated with the owners to acquire the property. Using Coastal Impact Assistance Program funds provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Matagorda County, and with support from the Trull Foundation, Palacios Prairie Wetlands, Inc., was able to clean up the site. Today, the Palacios Prairie Wetlands is a 27-acre upland prairie and coastal marsh area with around 700 feet of trails, a pier with a kayak launch, and a bird watching tower just north of Trull Marsh. Palacios Prairie Wetlands, Inc., owns the property and manages all maintenance. Community members serving on the Palacios Prairie Wetlands Board work together on weekends to trim trees, record birds, identify plants, and otherwise care for the conserved area.

According to Erwin Janszen, chairman of the board, relationships with governmental entities at the city and county level have made this project a success. The Matagorda County Commissioners Court has been supportive of the project, and the County has stepped in to help haul away junk and tree limbs, as well as lend equipment, when necessary.

SECTION 2: LOCAL NEEDS, REGIONAL BENEFITS

UNDERSTANDING LOCAL NEEDS

H-GAC engaged local governments, decision-makers, and resource agencies in a series of discussions on the topic of conservation. H-GAC also met with representatives from a wide spectrum of regional and local non-governmental conservation organizations, who provided valuable input and supporting information. Between June and September 2020, H-GAC conducted 11 listening sessions, where more than 100 participants detailed their conservation opportunities, needs, and challenges, as well as the public's views on conservation in their communities.

One key thing we learned was that, following the widespread flooding and economic impacts resulting from the Memorial Day Flood in 2015, the Tax Day Flood in 2016, and Hurricane Harvey in 2017, there has been heightened interest in strategically using natural areas and open spaces to reduce the impacts of severe weather events. This interest, coupled with the increased public use of these spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic, presents a major opportunity to scale up our region's conservation efforts.

Additionally, several other common themes emerged:

- The public places a higher value on conservation projects where additional benefits – including flood mitigation, recreation opportunities, maintaining rural character, beautification, increased values for adjacent properties, or other direct financial factors – can be demonstrated.
- Partnerships between public and nongovernmental organizations are one of the most efficient conservation vehicles for communities in our region.
- In addition to initial project costs, long-term maintenance and the potential loss of property tax revenue must be considered.
- Conservation investments should be coordinated with economic development opportunities to ensure local businesses and local governments benefit from increased visitation.
- Maintaining private property rights is a key priority in our region, so voluntary, “win-win” conservation efforts will be the most successful.
- Equitable access to natural areas and open spaces is also a guiding principle so that public investments in conservation can benefit all residents in the region.

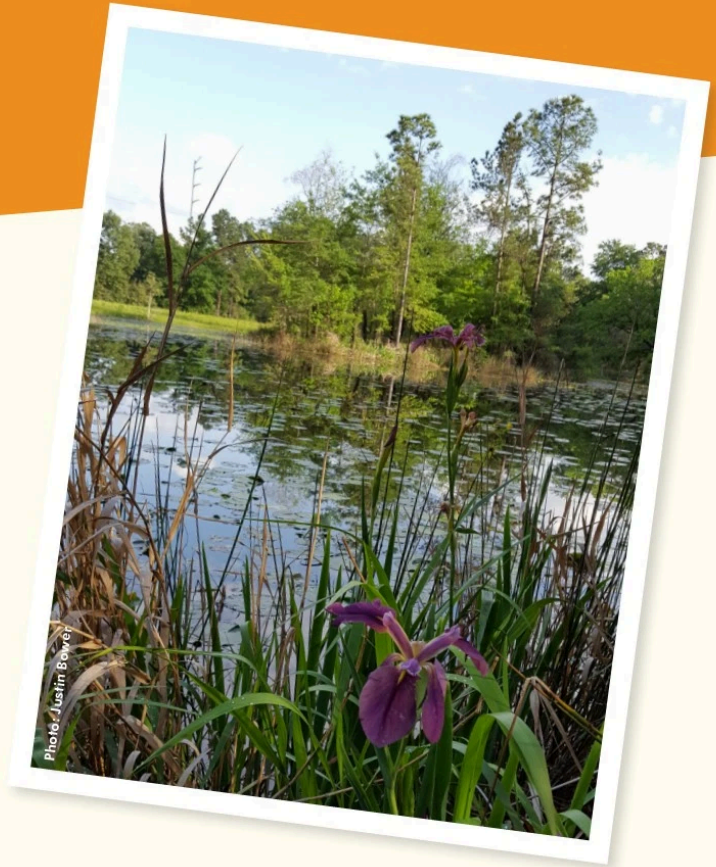


Photo: Justin Bowyer



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: TURTLE BAYOU NATURE PRESERVE

LOCATION: Chambers County

SIZE: 514 acres

FUNDING: Original land acquisition funded through Coastal Impact Assistance Program. Remediation work funded through the Texas Railroad Commission's Oil and Gas Regulation & Cleanup Fund and federal Brownfield Response Program. Additional enhancements funded through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department National Recreational Trails Fund.

NOTABLE FEATURES: Remediation; Layered funding approach

The Turtle Bayou Nature Preserve, formerly the Turtle Bayou Oil Field, demonstrates how to convert a formerly contaminated site into a safe recreational amenity. In 2012, the Chambers-Liberty County Navigation District and Chambers County used Coastal Impact Assistance Program funding to acquire the Turtle Bayou Nature Preserve. The Galveston Bay Foundation holds a conservation easement on the property to ensure the preserve remains undeveloped. The conservation easement restricts the land use to activities beneficial to natural plant communities and wildlife, such as low-impact, public access infrastructure. The site was rehabilitated with funding from the Texas Railroad Commission Oil & Gas Regulation and Cleanup Fund and technical support for cleanup was provided by the Texas Railroad Commission Brownfield Response Program. In 2016, the preserve was opened to the public and has since become a popular birdwatching destination with the addition of a 2.2-mile trail, boardwalk, signage, and a trailhead kiosk, all funded by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's National Recreational Trails Fund.



SECTION 3: VISION, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

In addition to the numerous types of local conservation opportunities, listening session participants voiced support for several large-scale initiatives that could provide a long-range vision to unite the Houston-Galveston region. These initiatives include:

A FLOURISHING TREESCAPE

Whether in a forest, park, or as shading for our streets and neighborhoods, trees are essential to our region's quality of life. Trees generate \$109 worth of environmental benefits per person every year, including \$90 in annual household energy cost savings. Our region's trees remove more than 60,000 tons of air pollutants per year, as well as capturing carbon and absorbing stormwater.⁵

There is already significant momentum building toward large-scale tree plantings in the Houston urbanized area through a partnership of local government, industry, and nongovernmental organizations. H-GAC will seek to leverage these efforts by forging new and supporting existing connections between partners throughout the region, connecting local governments and professionals working in conservation with new tools and resources, and raising public awareness on the benefits provided by trees beyond the Houston urbanized area.

REGIONAL GREENWAY SYSTEM

The Houston-Galveston region is traversed by 16,000 miles of rivers, bayous, creeks, and streams. Mitigating flood risks and enhancing water quality in these waterways is a major priority in the region. The strategy for achieving these objectives – preserving natural, vegetated buffers along these waterways – provides us with an opportunity to develop a regional recreation system that is unparalleled in the United States.



This effort can be modeled on successful local initiatives, such as Harris County's *Bayou Greenways 2020* initiative. Once completed, *Bayou Greenways 2020* will establish 150 miles of trails that connect major bayous in and around the greater Houston area, improving access and safety between communities.⁶ Waller County also envisions creating parks and trails connections with its *Waller County Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan*.

H-GAC will seek to build on these projects and expand them regionally by integrating greenway planning into existing and future project plans, conducting comprehensive project mapping and data sharing, and raising public awareness about the need for and benefits of a regional greenways system.

⁵Houston-Galveston Area Council. (2020). Urban Forestry – Benefits of Trees. Retrieved from <https://www.h-gac.com/urban-forestry#:~:text=Urban%20Forestry%20in%20the%20H,trees%20in%20the%20urban%20setting>.



Photo: Baytown Nature Center

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: BAYTOWN NATURE CENTER

LOCATION: Harris County

SIZE: 500 acres

FUNDING: The City of Baytown originally acquired the land with FEMA disaster relief funding in 1983. Funding from the French Limited Superfund Site, the Natural Resources Trustee Grant Program, and private donors, including Exxon Mobil and Chevron Phillips Chemical, has enabled subsequent restoration and enhanced amenities.

NOTABLE FEATURES: Remediation; Public-private partnership

The Baytown Nature Center consists of 500 acres of mixed hardwood forest, wetlands, and high-quality tidal marsh ecosystems, surrounded by Burnet, Crystal, and Scott bays. Previously a residential neighborhood built in the 1940s, a combination of land subsidence and the impacts of Hurricane Alicia led FEMA to condemn the land for human habitation in 1983. The City of Baytown and FEMA purchased the homes and land, which had been set aside for a nature preserve. The nature center was funded initially through the French Limited Superfund Site mitigation funds. An original master plan was written in 1997, and in 2002, the area was reopened to the public. In the past decade, the Baytown Nature Center has facilitated several wetland remediation projects. With grant funding from the Natural Resource Trustee Grant Program, the nature center created 20 acres of salt marsh and enhanced 15 existing acres. The City of Baytown has also worked with several private entities on wetlands conservation projects, including 3.4 acres of salt marsh in partnership with the Port of Houston and 11 acres of shoreline and internal marsh with the GB Biosciences Corporation. The Baytown Nature Center is operated and maintained by the City of Baytown and supported by the Friends of the Baytown Nature Center.

According to Tracey Prothro, superintendent of natural resources at the City of Baytown, the nature center has not been afraid to forge partnerships and think of new, creative ways to use the center, which has been key to their success.



Photo: Baytown Nature Center

SIGNATURE PROJECTS

The natural heritage of the Houston-Galveston region attracts visitors from all walks of life. From birding in coastal areas, to camping opportunities in our state parks and national lands, the range of recreational options in our region's natural areas and open spaces is vast. These spaces help define our region as a great place to live and visit and help put local communities on the map.

In addition to recreation and quality of life, signature projects can provide significant environmental and community benefits, as well as opportunities for local economic development and marketing of the region as a whole. There are numerous examples of such projects throughout our region, several of which are highlighted in the Project Spotlights provided throughout this document. H-GAC will work with local governments, state and federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations to realize the vision of each of the 13 counties in the region having at least one such signature project.

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

Achieving the vision of the Regional Conservation Framework will require focused, consistent coordination and engagement with a variety of stakeholders, including local governments, developers, nongovernmental organizations, and private landowners.

H-GAC has developed three strategies to support conservation by local governments and other partners in our region. For a detailed list of recommended implementation actions, see Appendix A - Recommended Strategies and Actions on page 12.

STRATEGY 1: LEVERAGE

GOAL: Use existing H-GAC programs to integrate conservation more fully into planning and implementation activities.

H-GAC programs like Economic Development, Resiliency, Transportation, and Water Quality can have both direct and indirect impacts on natural areas and open spaces. H-GAC will identify opportunities to strengthen the conservation components of all these programs.

STRATEGY 2: SUPPORT

GOAL: Support and expand existing efforts in our region through partnerships and communication, data access, and unified messaging.

H-GAC is uniquely positioned to complement local conservation initiatives from a regional perspective – connecting people and organizations, sharing data and best practices, and amplifying success stories.

STRATEGY 3: FUND

GOAL: Aid local governments or regional partners in receiving new funding or finding projects to fit existing funding sources.

Funding initial project costs and long-term maintenance for conservation efforts are primary concerns for local governments. To execute both large-scale projects and smaller-scale conservation efforts, local governments can use a variety of funding tools. As a starting point, H-GAC's interactive, online Conservation Funding Guide⁷ catalogs federal and state or state-administered funding programs available to local entities in Texas.



Photo: Cheryl Mergo

⁶Houston Parks Board. (2020). Bayou Greenways 2020. Retrieved from <https://houstonparksboard.org/about/bayou-greenways-2020>.

⁷<https://www.h-gac.com/regional-conservation/funding-guide>



Photo: Spring Creek Greenway

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: SPRING CREEK GREENWAY

LOCATION: Harris and Montgomery counties (along Spring Creek)

SIZE: Approximately 7,000 acres

FUNDING: Initial land acquisition funded through Land and Water Conservation Fund; Continued land acquisition funded through county general funds, bonds, flood control bonds as available.

NOTABLE FEATURES: Multi-county cooperation; Flood protection; Recreational opportunities



Photo: Spring Creek Greenway

The Spring Creek Greenway connects and protects approximately 7,000 acres of forest in Harris and Montgomery counties along both sides of Spring Creek. In the late 1970s, Harris County began purchasing flood-prone property along Cypress Creek and then along Spring Creek using federal money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. For the next 30 years, Harris and Montgomery counties continued the work, acquiring and protecting land along Spring Creek. Dennis Johnston, parks director for Harris County Precinct 4, sees this shared vision for a large-scale, conserved natural space and the foresight of elected leaders as the key to the greenway's continued success. Today, trails in the greenway stretch for nearly 20 miles, connecting small area preserves from State Highway 249 all the way to Interstate Highway 69. The Spring Creek Greenway Nature Center in Spring, Texas, is a hub for an array of educational and outdoor activities for all ages and levels of ability – from walking and biking along paved trails to kayaking and canoeing along stretches of Spring Creek. This conserved corridor of land along the creek also offers the dual benefits of flood protection and wildlife protection.

SECTION 4: NEXT STEPS

As the growing region seeks to accommodate residents and businesses, conservation can be difficult to balance.

Fortunately, we now have an opportunity to work together to expand voluntary local conservation efforts, big and small, to realize significant regional benefits.

We look forward to continuing to work with local governments and other conservation partners, encouraging collaborative, timely conservation to ensure the region becomes an even better place to live, work, and prosper than it is today.

To keep up to date on H-GAC's regional conservation efforts, email us at conservation@h-gac.com or visit h-gac.com/regional-conservation and learn how you can get involved.



Photo: Justin Bower



Photo: Justin Bower



Photo: Exploration Green

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: EXPLORATION GREEN

LOCATION: Harris County

SIZE: 178 acres

FUNDING: Original land acquisition was funded through county bond election funds. Subsequent phases of work were funded through Texas Parks and Wildlife grants, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension - Community Watershed Program grants, Texas Coastal Management Program grants, and donations from Trees for Houston, Harris County - Precinct 2 Commissioners and private individuals.

NOTABLE FEATURES: Flood protection; Recreational opportunities; Site reuse

According to Exploration Green Conservancy Chair Frank Weary, it all started with the Clear Lake City Water Authority's vision for a stormwater detention site that was more than a hole in the ground. In 2011, the Clear Lake City Water Authority (CLCWA) purchased the old Clear Lake Golf Course using Harris County bond funds and hosted a series of town halls to collect community members' input on a multi-use stormwater detention project. A vision for a greenspace with trees, trails, and athletic fields emerged. The CLCWA hired a landscape architecture firm to prepare a master plan and set the project in motion. When fully built, Exploration Green's detention ponds will hold a combined 500 million gallons of stormwater, protecting an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 homes from flooding in 12 to 15 inches of rain. Exploration Green also serves as a nature preserve, with 6 miles of walking and biking trails, athletic fields available for local sports teams, and dedicated wetlands and native grassland areas. The Exploration Green Conservancy – a nonprofit organization formed by dedicated community members – coordinates volunteers and raises funds for all non-stormwater detention elements of the project. For many years, the conservancy has nurtured a group of volunteers to assist with planting and propagating trees and wetlands, applying for grant funding for new amenities, and coordinating events. Communication between the conservancy, the CLCWA, and the community has been critical to the project's success. After nearly 20 years of visioning, fundraising, and construction, the final phase of Exploration Green will be completed by 2023.

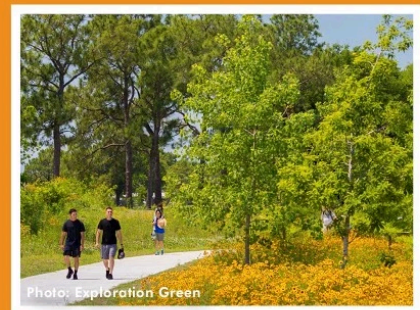


Photo: Exploration Green

SECTION 5: APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The text below details the goal of and recommended actions for the three strategies detailed in the Regional Conservation Framework.

STRATEGY 1: LEVERAGE

GOAL: Use existing H-GAC programs, projects, and funding to integrate conservation more fully into planning and implementation activities.

ACTION 1: Working with community and economic development organizations to broaden access to natural areas and open space throughout the region and create opportunities for local businesses.

ACTION 2: Convening a Regional Forestry Work Group composed of local government stakeholders to coordinate with other organizations on large-scale initiatives to enhance the region's treescape.

ACTION 3: Expanding and updating H-GAC's online Forestry Tool,⁸ which enables users to take a detailed look at the tree canopy, down to the street tree level.

ACTION 4: Integrating conservation planning metrics into the following H-GAC-led planning initiatives:

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Regional Transportation Plan
- H-GAC-led Watershed Protection Plans
- H-GAC-led regional and watershed-level flood mitigation projects

ACTION 5: Working with local partners, including nurseries, to increase the supply of native tree species available for tree planting initiatives.

⁸<https://datalab.h-gac.com/urbanforestry>



STRATEGY 2: SUPPORT

GOAL: Support and expand existing efforts in the region through partnerships and communication, data access, and unified messaging.

ACTION 1: Compiling data on existing best practices and policy options, including relevant ordinances, and sharing with local governments.

ACTION 2: Developing and maintaining customizable public awareness materials for communities to use on social media and in press releases, posters, and flyers to build support for conservation initiatives.

ACTION 3: Engaging with decision-makers in the region to discuss the economic benefits of specific conservation strategies.

ACTION 4: Establishing and convening a conservation peer exchange forum, composed of local governments and professionals working on conservation issues across the region.

ACTION 5: Expanding and updating the economic valuation data presented in The Conservation Fund's Houston-Galveston Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services Assessment,⁹ exploring the benefit-relevant indicators for specific conservation practices and sharing those data with local governments and professionals.

ACTION 6: Working with local governments and private sector organizations to encourage conservation strategies – such as tree protection, low impact development, and connecting to existing greenways – being incorporated in community design early on.

ACTION 7: Providing support to local governments on data analysis and mapping, integrating factors such as existing land type and socio-economic data.

STRATEGY 3: FUND

GOAL: Aid local governments or regional partners in receiving new funding or finding projects to fit existing funding sources.

ACTION 1: Connecting local governments with nongovernmental organizations working toward similar goals or project outcomes.

ACTION 2: Developing funding partnerships that support land acquisition, development, management, and promotion.

ACTION 3: Establishing and maintaining a list of priority conservation projects for the region.

ACTION 4: Maintaining and expanding the online Conservation Funding Guide and promoting the tool with local governments.

ACTION 5: Providing support to requesting local governments in accessing grant funding to support conservation initiatives.

ACTION 6: Researching and distributing information on non-grant finance tools, such as bonds, donations from landowners, property tax dedications, and the establishment of a Regional Conservation District.

⁹https://www.conservationfund.org/images/projects/files/Houston_Galveston_Report.pdf



Photo: Justin Bower

APPENDIX B

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES - BENEFIT BY ECOLOGICAL ASSET TYPE

The chart below details potential benefits supported by specific ecological asset types.

ECOSYSTEM SERVICE BENEFITS (P = Primary Benefit, S= Secondary Benefit)							
Ecological Assets	Flood and Disaster Mitigation	Economy	Carbon, Energy or Heat	Quality of Life/ Health	Environmental Quality	Recreation	Habitat
Undeveloped Forests	P		P	S	P	S	P
Urban Tree Canopy	P	S	P	P	P	S	S
Wetlands	P	S	S	S	P	S	P
Prairie and Grasslands	P	S	S	S	P	S	P
Working Lands	S	P		S	S		
Urban Open Space	S	S	S	P	S	P	S
Healthy Waterways	S	S		S	P	S	P
Clean Air		S	P	P	P		





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WHAT IS H-GAC? H-GAC is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area wide problems. Through H-GAC, local governments also initiate efforts in anticipating and preventing problems, saving public funds. The 13-county H-GAC service region is growing, becoming more diverse, and constantly changing. In order to address the needs of citizens and businesses, local governments are providing leadership to guide regional development wisely and manage change constructively.

CE0321



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management

18,370+
acres benefitting
from financial
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36,105+
acres of
grazing plans
implemented

Conservation will ultimately boil down to rewarding the private landowner who conserves the public interest. – Aldo Leopold

