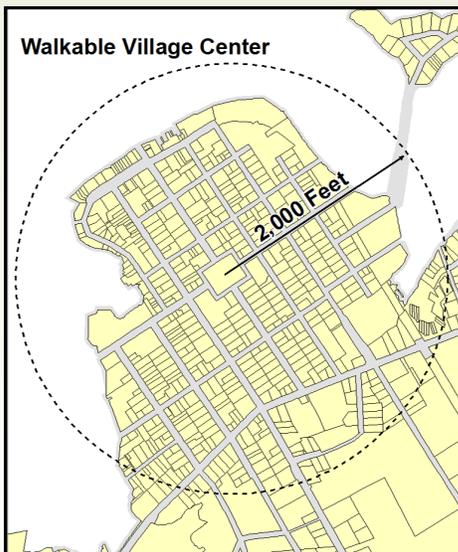


WALKABILITY FOR COMMUNITIES

One of the basic traits of a successful community is that people feel comfortable walking around. People use sidewalks to exercise, walk or roll with children, push strollers, etc. They often walk to school, trails, and parks. Pedestrians are also shoppers. Except for drug store, bank and fast food drive-up windows, in large part people get out of their cars to become customers. Attractive sidewalks become the lifeblood of retail centers and plazas, good for business by enticing people to browse store to store, rather than making only one quick stop. Shopping malls are the extreme in this concept, window shopping along a pedestrian walk experience in the absence of vehicles and any potential conflict. Open-air connected plazas have traits of malls while each store maintains closer access with vehicles.

A convenient and maintained sidewalk system helps provide access to services and shopping to those who may not own a vehicle or prefer a healthier lifestyle by driving less. This link insures a proper balance between walking and vehicle use, helping to restore the street as a social space. Too often pedestrians are only considered obstructions to the flow of faster traffic, even though slower speeds are essential in central areas. In fact, over 80% of pedestrians are killed in accidents 40 mph and faster, while only 15% die at 20 mph and slower. Nationwide, one out of every seven traffic fatalities are pedestrians (1 of 4 in New York State), so we need to place a higher priority on safe sidewalks and crosswalks.

Planning for pedestrians should be a priority within and among site projects, throughout villages and town centers, thus creating a safe\attractive network of sidewalks and crossings, especially within a 5 to 10 minute walk to and from residential areas, destinations and central areas.



A compact mix of residential and community uses and a continuous pedestrian network within 1/4 mile to 2,000 foot radius of the village central green encourages walking for short trips, to nearby schools, churches, to the downtown, and among stores within business areas.

FIRST STEPS FOR A WALKABILITY STUDY

- **STEP 1 - Observe, take photos or videotape your streets.** If the main sidewalks are not fairly full in the afternoons and friends are not stopping for long conversations at the corners, go to Step 2.
- **STEP 2 - Observe and talk to seniors and kids.** Over 30% of people cannot drive because of age, income or disability. If a 12 year-old and her grandpa cannot easily walk from their homes to the library, store, or farmers' market, find a nice place to sit and interesting things to do, go to Step 3.
- **STEP 3. - Map all pedestrian features.** Complete an inventory of sidewalks, crosswalks, benches, bus stops, bike racks, and high pedestrian generators (post offices, schools, public parking, etc.). Also note obstacles to walking, such as 30+ mph zones, overly wide roads, lack of sidewalks or crosswalks, lack of buffer from traffic, gaps between storefronts, or stores behind large parking lots.
- **STEP 4. - Agree on a list of priority projects.** Work with business owners, public officials, and other key groups to fill in the gaps to a continuous walking network, beginning with easier tasks like striping new crosswalks, mapping sidewalk extensions, and getting local boards to include pedestrian enhancements in every site plan.

Pedestrian access through parking lot example:

This photo illustrates pedestrian access through a shopping plaza, includes crosswalks and is separated from parking spaces and the main travel aisles for safety.



PEDESTRIAN- FRIENDLY GUIDELINES

Sidewalk Design:

- 4-foot minimum width in residential areas; 8 to 15 feet in main street commercial areas.
- 7 foot minimum height clearance.
- Durable materials (concrete or brick pavers).
- Separate at least 5 feet back (preferably 6 feet) from curb to separate pedestrians from traffic and road spray, allow room for street trees and snow storage, and prevent side slopes at each driveway.
- Meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements.

Sidewalk Locations:

- Both sides along central circulation streets, in commercial districts, near schools, and in residential areas with more than 3 units per acre.
- At least on one side in residential areas with 1 to 2 units per acre.
- Optional one side or wide shoulder in areas with less than 1 unit per acre.

Crosswalks:

- As short as possible with small corner radii.
- About 10 feet wide, well lit, boldly marked with bar stripes or textured surface, and at every major intersection and a selected higher volume mid-block crossings.
- Extend curbs/sidewalks into parking lanes to shorten crosswalks and increase visibility.
- Handicapped ramps at all intersections.

Traffic:

- Slow speeds to under 30 mph in central locations, especially in higher level pedestrian traffic areas.
- Provide pedestrian signals and eliminate right turn on red at major crossing locations.
- Make pedestrian areas obvious to drivers to indicate where walkers can be expected and slowing down is advisable.

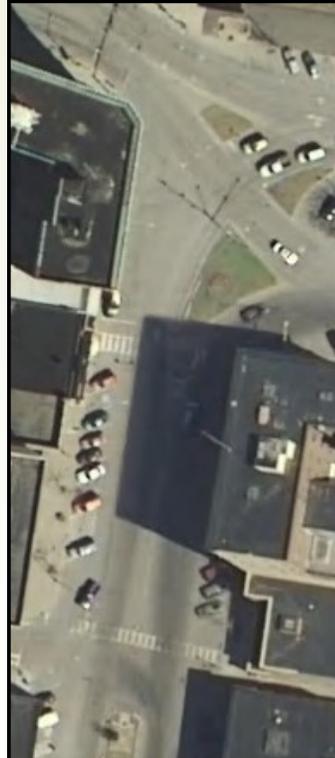
Residential sidewalk example :

A recent single-family residential project which included sidewalks to connect to the sidewalk network. Project is located within walking distance of a primary school.



Downtown pedestrian crosswalk example:

Examples from a downtown area before and after crosswalks were redesigned as part of the reconstruction.



Before redesign: 2006



After reconstruction: 2009

