

the louisville neighborhood walkability assessment tool



Everyone is a pedestrian.

Everyone is a pedestrian for one reason or another. Some people have to walk because they don't have a car, they have a disability, or they prefer not to spend money at the gas pump. Other people walk for pleasure, they walk for recreation or they walk to work, school, church, or the store nearby. Even as you walk from your parked car to your front door, you are a pedestrian. Almost everyone is a pedestrian at some point every day.



The purpose of the **louisville neighborhood walkability assessment** is to analyze neighborhood streets and sidewalks for walking. This survey enables your neighborhood to determine and prioritize its greatest walking needs. Metro Council and Metro Public Works will use the list of prioritized issues and wishes to improve walking conditions in your neighborhood.

If your neighborhood is currently working with Metro Planning and Design Services to create a neighborhood plan, the results of the assessment will be integral to the mobility chapter which becomes a part of Louisville Metro's official long-range plan, Cornerstone 2020. Together, members of your community will create a neighborhood walkability map and list of priorities to guide future streetscape, sidewalk, and intersection improvements. In other words, a complete assessment can and will lead to real concrete (literally!) change in your neighborhood's pedestrian environment.

Community Workshop Agenda

Step 1: What is walkability?

- A. Discussion about walking in your neighborhood.

Step 2: Prepare for the walk.

- A. Define the assessment area boundary.
- B. Identify priority destinations.
- C. Divide into assessment teams.
- D. Plan your walking route.

Step 3: Go for a walk.

- A. What are the walking conditions along the route?

Step 4: Prioritize walking improvements.

- A. What did you find?

How does the assessment work?

After your group has gotten together, the group facilitator will explain the survey process to you. The whole process should only take between one and two hours to complete, depending on the size of your group and your survey area.

STEP 1: What is Walkability?

How would you define walkability? The Survey Facilitator will lead a short presentation and discussion about walkable communities. Think about opportunities and barriers to walking in your neighborhood. Are the routes direct and safe? Are there gaps in the sidewalk or dangerous intersections with fast-moving traffic?

All these things affect our ability to walk comfortably and safely to and from places in the neighborhood. The examples given in the presentation will help you complete the assessment form you will carry with you on your walk.

STEP 2: Prepare as a Group for the Walk

First, your facilitator will lead a discussion about “where you want to go,” in the neighborhood. The group will identify major destinations (schools, parks, shopping centers, bus stops, etc.). The group will decide together what the most important destinations are, and the facilitator will label them in order of priority (1, 2, 3...).

Your facilitator will then assist you in dividing the larger group into teams of two or three. Then the group will determine the main streets and intersections it wishes to analyze, based on the destinations it has identified. Each team will then choose a specific route to walk. Each team’s route will be marked on the neighborhood map in a different color, with an open circle showing the beginning of the walk, and a closed circle showing the end. Mark the route your team will survey on your small, individual map with a black pen or marker.

STEP 3: Go for a Walk

As you set out on your route, you will have extra copies of the Walkability Assessment Tool to assess each block. The block will be labelled by its “Road Segment ID#” on the map provided. In addition, posted speeds and traffic count numbers (AADT) will be given to you just before you leave for the walk. Most streets will be less than 8,000 average daily traffic unless noted on the map or indicated by the facilitator prior to going out. During the walk, complete the form, make note of any isolated problem spots, intersection details, and general comments you have during your route.

STEP 4: Prioritize Walking Improvements

After you’ve finished your walk, return to the meeting facility. Individually, take a moment to reflect on your walk by completing the “Take a walk and decide for yourself.” Following this, work with your team members and turn to the page labeled “What did you find?” in this guide. Take 5 to 10 minutes to complete this worksheet. As a team, identify 2 or 3 outstanding issues and discuss possible solutions for overcoming these barriers to walking. Each team will then share their experience and tell the facilitator what the top three or four things they noticed were. Once every group has shared, the group will have a list of the neighborhood’s main concerns. The facilitator will then help the group prioritize the problems on a neighborhood-wide level. Once the whole list is prioritized, the facilitator will mark each priority on the map with its priority number. Then your group will have produced a map and list of its priorities for making the neighborhood more walkable!

louie's walkability CHECKLIST

Sidewalk Problems...

- Cracks
- Missing segments
- Rough pavement
- Street Crossings
- Curb ramps should be in good repair
- Pedestrian signals with countdown timers
- Adequate time allowed for crossing

Barriers...

- Telephone pole
- Ditches
- Parked cars

Amenities...

- Benches
- Shade trees
- Well-maintained and planted streetscape

Safety Issues...

- Adequate lighting
- Fast moving traffic

Walkability Assessment Tool

The next step of the walkability assessment is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your neighborhood through completing this assessment form. You may want to walk the entire route first to be familiar with the conditions and observe some of the barriers to a safe walking environment. Then, on your way back, record your observation in the sheet below.

Data Collector Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Road Segment ID#** _____
Road Name: _____
Bounding Streets: _____
AADT: _____

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)	Posted Speed (mph)	# of Thru Lanes per direction	Sidewalk/path	Material	Surface condition
<8,000 = 0 8,000 – 14,999 = 1 15,000 – 24,999 = 2 25,000 or more = 3	<30 = 0 30-44 = 1 45 or more = 2	1 = 0 2 = 1 3 or more = 2	Both sides continuous = 0 One side continuous and one side partial = 1 One side continuous = 2 Both sides partial = 3 One side partial = 4 None = 99 (stop here)	Asphalt = 0 Concrete = 0 Brick = 1 Sand/Dirt = 2 Gravel = 3 Woodchip = 3	Good = 0 Fair = 1 Poor = 4
Sidewalk Width	Buffer width	Curb Ramps	Attractiveness and maintenance of block	Adequate lighting	Total Score
8' or more = -1 5' – 7' 11" = 0 4' – 4' 11" = 1 >4' = 2	4' or more = 0 <4' = 0.25 None = 0.50	All = 0 Some = 2 None = 4	> 75% well maintained = 0 50-74% well maintained = 1 < 50% well maintained = 3	Plenty = 0 Some = 0.50 None = 1	Very Good (< 3.0) Good (3.0 - 6.9) Fair (6.0 - 9.9) Poor (10.0 - 26.0)

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	NOTE
- Are there any permanent sidewalk or path obstructions (such as poles, signs, tables and chairs, trees)? If so, mark on map with an asterisk (*).	
- Do any busy intersections need marked crosswalks? If yes, Mark on the map an exclamation (!) mark.	
- Do any busy intersections need traffic signal lights or stop signs? Mark on the map a check (√) mark.	
- Do any busy intersections need pedestrian "Walk" signals? Mark with a "W" on map	
- Do any wide intersections need a refuge island for safer crossing? Mark with an oval marking (0)	

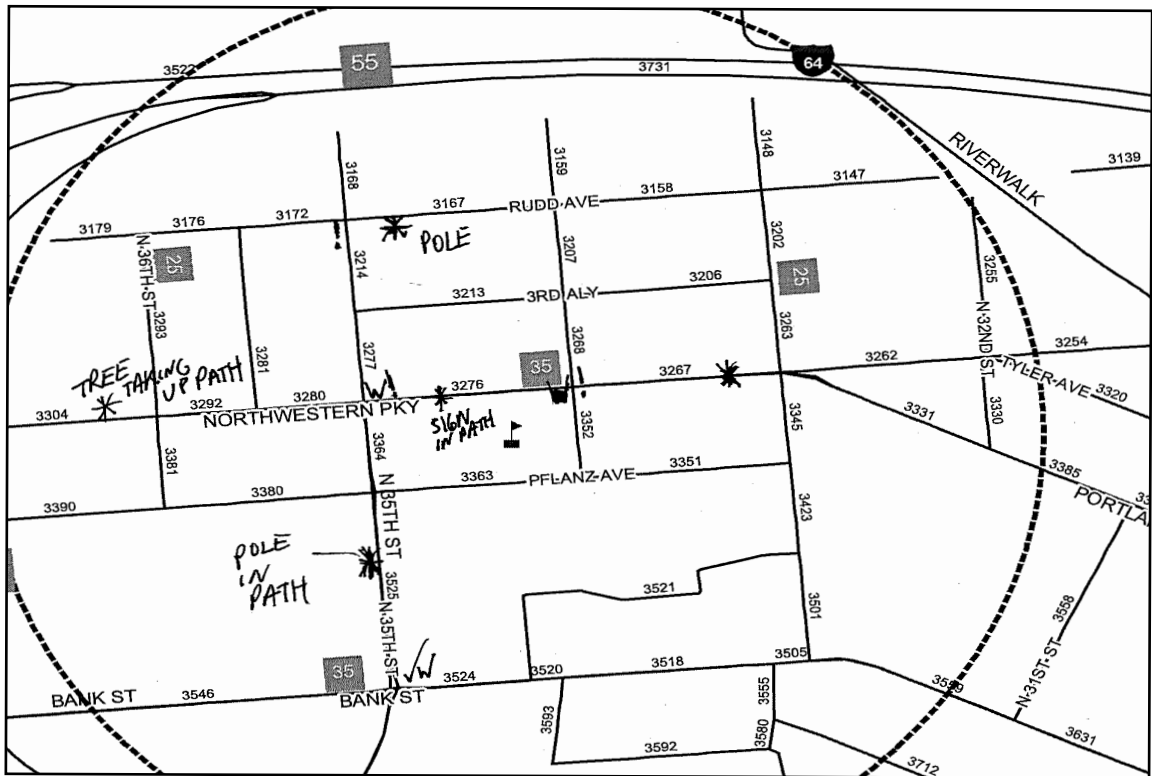
Legend for map markings

<p>* Permanent sidewalk obstruction</p> <p>! Crosswalk needed</p> <p>0 Refuge island needed</p>	<p>√ Traffic signal or stop signs needed</p> <p>W Pedestrian "Walk" signal needed</p>
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Walkability Assessment Tool

Use this table to record Intersection Details, Isolated Problem Spots, and General Comments about needed design improvements

Describe Intersection Details	Describe Isolated Problem Spots	General Comments (For example: How are transit stops? Is the walk pleasant? Etc.)



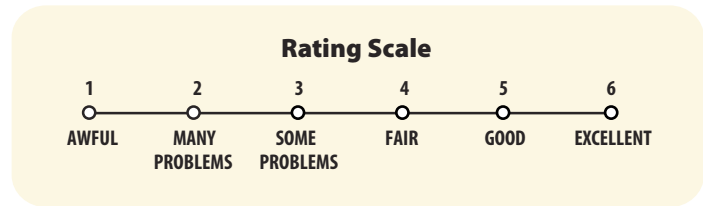
Sample markup map from walk

Take a walk and decide for yourself.

Walking should be safe, easy and pleasant for everyone. Read over this checklist before you go and as you walk, take in everything about your experience and surrounding environment. At the end of your walk, pause to fill out the survey below. Give an overall rating to each question. How did you rate your walk?

Information about your walk:

ORIGIN _____
 DESTINATION _____
 START TIME _____
 WEATHER _____



1. Did you have room to walk?

- There were sidewalks, paths, or shoulders Yes No
- Sections of the sidewalk were missing Yes No
- Sidewalks were broken or cracked Yes No
- Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc. Yes No
- Moving vehicles were too close Yes No
- Something else? _____

Overall Rating : 1 2 3 4 5 6

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

- Cross at crosswalks where you could see and be seen by drivers Yes No
- Easily see both directions before crossing streets Yes No
- Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks Yes No
- Cross with the light Yes No
- Something else? _____

Overall Rating : 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Was it easy to cross the street?

- There were crosswalks and walk signals Yes No
- Road was too wide Yes No
- Timing on walk signal was long enough Yes No
- Parked cars blocked our view of traffic Yes No
- Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic Yes No
- There were curb ramps in good repair Yes No
- Something else? _____

Overall Rating : 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Was your walk pleasant?

- Were there unpleasant things Yes No
- Needed more grass, flowers, trees or interesting sights Yes No
- Plenty of shade and protection from rain Yes No
- There was good lighting Yes No
- Clean, little litter Yes No
- Something else? _____

Overall Rating : 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Did drivers behave well?

- Looked before backing out Yes No
- Yielded to people crossing the street Yes No
- Turned into crosswalk when people were crossing Yes No
- Drove slowly Yes No
- Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through red lights Yes No
- Something else? _____

Overall Rating : 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Was it easy to access public transit?

- Was there a bus shelter Yes No
- Bus shelter was clean Yes No
- Transit schedule was posted Yes No
- Shelter was well lit Yes No
- There was a place to sit Yes No
- Something else? _____

Overall Rating : 1 2 3 4 5 6

What did you find?

After you've completed your walk, return to the meeting facility . Look back at the *Walkability Assessment Tool* map and the *Take a walk and decide for yourself rating* sheet you just completed. Think about how these activities describe where you would like to go in your neighborhood and how you feel when walking to and from these places. In a few minutes, each survey team will be called upon to share their issues and walking wishes with the entire group.



Identify Main Issues

As a team, discuss your observations and categorize the things you marked on your map. Which two of these issues are most pressing in your neighborhood?

- Enhancing interest and amenities
- Better access to public transit
- Completing sidewalks
- Establishing more direct routes
- Increasing safety
- Improving street crossings
- Changing land-use patterns
- Something else? _____



Walking Wishes

Now that you have reviewed your findings, think about 2 or 3 of the most important changes you would like to see along your route. Write these specific "walking wishes" in the space provided below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Please return your completed survey to the Facilitator

Be sure to return the *Walkability Assessment Tool*, *Take a walk and decide for yourself*, and *What did you Find?* worksheet to the Facilitator. Thank you for letting Metro know how it may improve walkability in Louisville!

louie needs to know

Name of Neighborhood

Team Route Color

May we contact you if we have questions about your assessment?

Yes No

Your Name

Mailing Address

Daytime Phone

E-mail
