

VISIONZERO



Montgomery Planning's Walk Audit Toolkit

PROVIDING TOOLS TO THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY TO WALK THE WALK

What is a Walk Audit?

Walk Audits are used to identify barriers to walking and bicycling. Neighbors walk the streets together and note what makes the streets feel comfortable for walking and what is missing. Walk Audits assess street infrastructure and conditions, documenting barriers, positive features, activities, and perceptions of the walking environment.

The results from a Walk Audit can be used to advocate for safer streets for all. Share the results with decision makers and the agency who is responsible for managing a particular roadway. The results can also help build community support to build a grassroots campaign to slow down traffic or attract media attention.

To organize a Walk Audit in your community, there are three phases: 1) Prep and Promote 2) Walk and Coverage and 3) Recap and Analyze.



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PREP AND PROMOTE

Plan your event

- **Choose an area to audit.** Set a route, date and time. Plan for about 30 minutes for every half mile of walking plus time before and after the walk. Think about the purpose of the audit and who the particular roads serve. Is there a school nearby? A community center, park, or recreation center? Is the area primarily residential? Are there commercial establishments that draw from beyond the immediate neighborhood? Does the route include transit stops?
- **Walk the route(s).** Make sure the routes are safe enough to walk in groups. Note any issues for possible participants.
- **Create maps of the area.** You can print google maps and draw routes by hand or draw routes in powerpoint or another software program. You will need copies for participants on the Walk.
- **Consider your audience.** Do you need translation of materials? Is the route ADA accessible?
- **Organize volunteers.** A ratio of approximately one volunteer for every six participants is ideal, although not required.
- **Gather materials.** Print maps, walk audit checklists, and waivers. Get pens, markers, clipboards/notebooks, nametags and safety gear (or ask participants to bring their own).

Collaborate with the community

- **Invite participants to the Walk Audit.** Invite friends and neighbors, PTA members, civic associations, elected officials, representatives from state or local agencies (Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration, Montgomery County Public Schools, Police Department) business owners and other interested community members.
- **Get a headcount.** The easiest way to get a headcount is by creating a rsvp link (through a platform like evite.com or free-rsvp.com). You can also ask people to respond to you directly and keep an excel.
- **Promote the Walk Audit.** Hang up flyers, post to social media, and to your local listserv.
- **Resources**
 - Walk Audit Flyer template
 - Walk Audit Invitation template

Attract Media coverage

- **Create and distribute a press release to local media outlets.**
- **Use the same graphics and messaging across print, web, social and video.**
- **Resources**
 - Press release template
 - Social Media template

WALK AND COVERAGE

Prepare

- **Distribute materials:** clipboards, name tags, maps, Walk Audit Checklist, safety gear. You can provide the clipboards and safety gear or ask participants to bring their own.
- **Ask people to sign waivers for legal liabilities.**
- **Review the route(s).** Go over the route(s), their lengths, and any points of concern.
- **Review the checklist.** Give a summary of the items on the checklist. Try to get people thinking about all types of road users, children, people in wheel chairs, people with visual or hearing impairments, and transit riders.
- **Assign someone in each group take photos or video of the audit.**
- **Resources**
 - Walk Audit Checklist

Walk the walk

- **Begin the walk.**
- **Make observations.** Write them down on the maps or checklists.
- **Take photographs of conditions.** Capture photos of participants as well as road conditions. Look for examples of barriers to safety and things you like.

RECAP AND ANALYSIS

Review

- **Reconvene as a group.** Discuss common observations and record findings on a map or one central location.
- **Interview participants.** Take video interviews of participants that you can share on social media and with participants.

Process

- **Analyze the data.** What common issues did you find? Are there improvements that you want to see?
- **Present the data in a user-friendly manner.** Create a short summary and include photos of the event. Think about including short personal stories or statistics about the roadway.
- **Create a video of the event.**
- **Report out to the community on what you learned.** Share your analysis and video with community members and media outlets.
- **Advocate for change.** Share your analysis and video with public agencies and elected officials. Consider a letter writing campaign.
- **Resources**
 - [Countystat – Vision Zero](#) provides information on high injury corridors.
 - [dataMontgomery](#) provides County crash data.