Executive Summary

Everyone walks, whether young or old, whether on foot or using a mobility device, whether as a walking trip alone or in conjunction with driving, taking transit, or bicycling. Walking is an essential mode of transportation for everyone in Minneapolis, and it contributes to the success of public transit, vibrant business districts, healthy citizens, and safe neighborhoods.

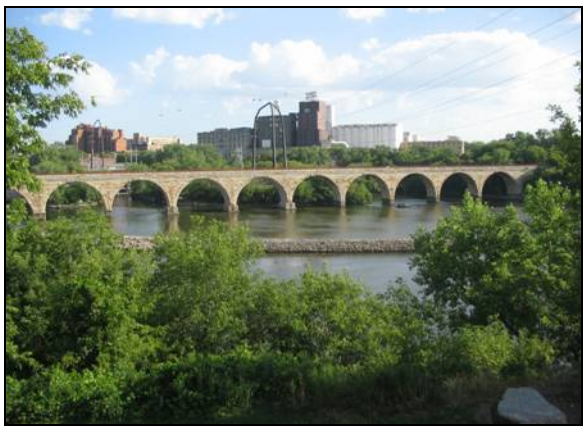
Minneapolis has an extensive sidewalk system, many great places to walk, and many programs and policies oriented to improving walking and the pedestrian environment. But there's room for improvement. Some of the most common barriers to walking identified by the public through the *Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan* process relate to conflicts between pedestrians and cars at intersections and along busy streets; streets that lack trees and have little buffer from traffic lanes; and maintenance issues related to snow, newspaper boxes, and construction zones.

The *Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan* is one of six components of *Access Minneapolis*, the City's transportation action plan to implement the transportation policies articulated in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the City's long-range comprehensive plan. The plan was developed under the guidance of the City's Pedestrian Advisory Committee and contains detailed implementation strategies focused upon 7 goals for making Minneapolis a great walking city where people choose to walk for transportation, recreation, and health:

- Goal 1: A Well-Connected Walkway System
- Goal 2: Accessibility for All Pedestrians
- Goal 3: Safe Streets and Crossings
- Goal 4: A Pedestrian Environment that Fosters Walking
- Goal 5: A Well-Maintained Pedestrian System
- Goal 6: A Culture of Walking
- Goal 7: Funding, Tools and Leadership for Implementing Pedestrian Improvements

GOAL 1: A WELL-CONNECTED WALKWAY SYSTEM

Pedestrians need a well-connected network of walkways to provide direct access to many origins and destinations and facilitate short walking trips. Minneapolis' historic street grid provides small block sizes that are appropriately sized for walking throughout most of the city and an extensive sidewalk system covering 92% of streets. The City also has a large bicycle/pedestrian trail system, over 100 pedestrian/bicycle bridges, and an 8 mile network of skyways in downtown. Maintaining and improving the connectivity of these walkway systems is essential to increasing walking in Minneapolis.



The landmark Stone Arch Bridge across the Mississippi River is an important connection in the pedestrian network.

This section of Osseo Road in North Minneapolis is an example of a street with no sidewalks.

Implementation Strategies

Objective 1.1: Complete the Sidewalk Network *(see also 5.2, 7.2)*

- 1.1.1 Establish sidewalks as standard infrastructure.
- 1.1.2 Investigate funding sources and legal mechanisms to fill sidewalk gaps.
- 1.1.3 Investigate and prioritize options to fill sidewalk gaps at parks, schools, cemeteries and railroad crossings.
- 1.1.4 Track sidewalk gaps.

Objective 1.2: Maintain and Improve Pedestrian Network Connectivity

- 1.2.1 Add new pedestrian connections where possible.
- 1.2.2 Maintain existing pedestrian connections.

Objective 1.3: Improve Skyway-Sidewalk Connectivity

- 1.3.1 Improve skyways consistent with the recommendations in the Access Minneapolis Downtown Transportation Action Plan.
- 1.3.2 Evaluate existing skyway-sidewalk connectivity.

Objective 1.4: Improve Pedestrian Wayfinding Information *(see also 6.3)*

- 1.4.1 Implement pedestrian wayfinding improvements where needed and where maintenance responsibilities are established.
- 1.4.2 Develop citywide wayfinding signage guidelines.

GOAL 2: ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL PEDESTRIANS

Pedestrians of all ages and ability levels need to be able to safely and conveniently travel on foot or with a mobility device. Accessible pedestrian facilities benefit a broad range of users, including people with temporary and permanent disabilities, senior citizens, children on bicycles, and adults with wheeled luggage, strollers/wagons or grocery carts.

A part of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), originally passed in 1990, required that infrastructure in the public right of way be made accessible to all users, which triggered significant changes to the design and construction of pedestrian facilities. As a result, pedestrian curb ramps were installed at nearly all intersections in Minneapolis. However, the pedestrian system is not yet fully accessible and barriers remain.

People of all ages and abilities need to safely and conveniently travel as pedestrians.

All pedestrians benefit from accessible facilities, including pedestrians with wheeled luggage.

Implementation Strategies

Objective 2.1: Identify & Remove Accessibility Barriers on Pedestrian Facilities *(see also 3.4, 5.1 – 5.4, 7.2)*

- 2.1.1 Prepare and maintain an updated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan.
- 2.1.2 Inventory and prioritize corrections to accessibility barriers at curbs.
- 2.1.3 Inventory and prioritize corrections to accessibility barriers on sidewalk corridors.
- 2.1.4 Inventory and prioritize corrections to accessibility barriers on pedestrian bridges.

Objective 2.2: Improve and Institutionalize Best Design Practices for Accessibility *(see also 5.4, 7.1)*

- 2.2.1 Improve the curb ramp standard template.
- 2.2.2 Review and update the standard specifications for best practices in accessible design.
- 2.2.3 Establish regular staff training programs and materials on accessible design.
- 2.2.4 Update design standards and guidance as accessibility standards are improved.

GOAL 3: SAFE STREETS AND CROSSINGS

Pedestrians need to be able to safely and conveniently cross streets and travel along streets. Concerns about the safety of crossing streets was a common concern reported through the pedestrian master planning process.

Curb extensions such as these crossing Lake Street shorten pedestrian crossings and improve visibility between pedestrians and drivers.

The intersection of Cedar Avenue and Washington Avenue ("Seven Corners") is a complex intersection with a high incidence of pedestrian crashes.

Implementation Strategies

Objective 3.1: Reduce Pedestrian-Related Crashes *(see also 7.2, 7.3)*

- 3.1.1 Investigate the cause of pedestrian-related crashes at high crash intersections and corridors.
- 3.1.2 Review pedestrian-related traffic crashes regularly.
- 3.1.3 Investigate improvements to pedestrian-related crash reporting.

Objective 3.2: Promote Safe Behavior for Drivers, Bicyclists and Pedestrians *(see also 6.2, 7.4)*

- 3.2.1 Educate pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists about rights and responsibilities.
- 3.2.2 Enforce traffic laws.

Objective 3.3: Improve Pedestrian Safety for the Most Vulnerable Users *(see also 6.1)*

- 3.3.1 Continue to implement the School Pedestrian Safety Program.
- 3.3.2 Investigate creation of new focused pedestrian safety improvement programs for other vulnerable users.

Objective 3.4: Improve Traffic Signals for Pedestrians *(see also 2.1)*

- 3.4.1 Inventory and prioritize corrections to accessibility barriers at traffic signals.
- 3.4.2 Develop a plan for installing pedestrian countdown signals citywide.
- 3.4.3 Evaluate signal timing for pedestrians in all signal retiming efforts.
- 3.4.4 Inventory and prioritize corrections to accessibility barriers at signal push buttons.
- 3.4.5 Explore new technologies for pedestrian signal actuation and push buttons.

Objective 3.5: Improve Crosswalk Markings

- 3.5.1 Improve the visibility of crosswalk pavement markings.
- 3.5.2 Investigate potential improvements to the current crosswalk marking practice.

GOAL 4: A PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT THAT FOSTERS WALKING

In addition to needing physical walkway connections, accessible pedestrian facilities and safe street crossings, pedestrians need a walking environment that feels safe and secure, that is interesting, that offers conveniences, and that attracts other people walking. Many of these elements are achieved through the land uses and walking destinations along the sidewalk. However, other elements within the public right-of-way also contribute to a pedestrian environment that fosters walking, including: a buffer from moving traffic, adequate sidewalk and boulevard space, trees, adequate sidewalk lighting, appropriately-designed pedestrian facilities on bridges, street furniture, public art, and places for people to socialize.

The weekly farmers market on Nicollet Mall one is one of the most popular pedestrian experiences in the City.

This section of Franklin Avenue is a high quality pedestrian environment, including benches, trees, pedestrian-level lighting, and comfortable sidewalk widths.

Implementation Strategies

Objective 4.1: Design Streets with Sufficient Space for Pedestrian Needs *(see also 7.1)*

4.1.1 Design streets with sufficient sidewalk and boulevard width for all required uses of the Pedestrian Zone.

Objective 4.2: Design Bridges and Underpasses for Pedestrian Needs *(see also 4.3, 7.1)*

4.2.1 Design bridges and underpasses for pedestrians.

Objective 4.3: Provide Appropriate Street Lighting for Pedestrian Needs *(see also 4.2)*

4.3.1 Implement the street lighting policy.

4.3.2 Encourage private property owner participation in night-time lighting efforts.

Objective 4.4: Provide Street Furniture Appropriate for Pedestrian Needs *(see also 5.3)*

4.4.1 Implement a coordinated street furniture program.

4.4.2 Continue to provide trash receptacles for pedestrian use.

4.4.3 Continue to implement the Art in Public Places program and other arts partnerships that enhance the pedestrian environment.

Objective 4.5: Foster Vibrant Public Spaces for Street Life *(see also 6.3, 7.5)*

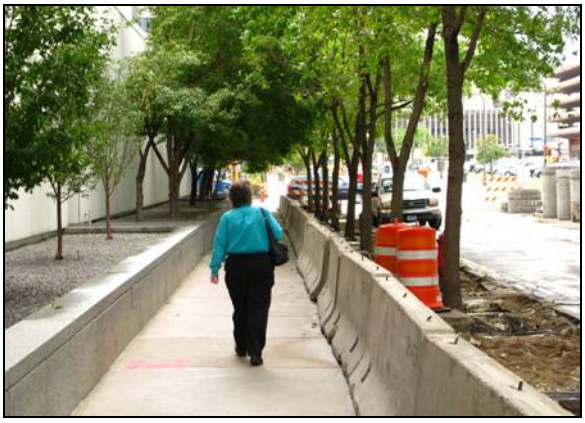
4.5.1 Investigate innovative and practical ways to create vibrant public spaces for pedestrians.

Objective 4.6: Foster Healthy Trees and Greening along Sidewalks *(see also 7.1)*

4.6.1 Develop tree and landscaping design guidelines.

GOAL 5: A WELL-MAINTAINED PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

Many of the concerns raised through the *Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan* process relate to the everyday operations and maintenance of the pedestrian system, including snow and ice clearance, sidewalk repair, regulation of newspaper boxes and sidewalk cafes, and sidewalk closures in work zones.



During construction, pedestrian safety and accessibility needs to be maintained.

Sidewalks that are not well cleared of snow can remain icy and slippery all winter.

Implementation Strategies

Objective 5.1: Ensure Effective Snow and Ice Clearance for Pedestrians *(see also 2.1, 7.4)*

- 5.1.1 Create a social norm of snow clearance through communications and education.
- 5.1.2 Establish priorities for sidewalk snow clearance, including high pedestrian traffic areas.
- 5.1.3 Improve enforcement and monitoring of private property owner responsibilities for snow clearance.
- 5.1.4 Support property owners with snow and ice clearance assistance options.
- 5.1.5 Explore reducing city snow clearance responsibilities on pedestrian facilities.

Objective 5.2: Maintain Sidewalks in Good Repair *(see also 1.1, 2.1)*

- 5.2.1 Inspect and repair sidewalks in an effective time frame.
- 5.2.2 Prioritize and implement improvements to sidewalks at railroad crossings.
- 5.2.3 Continue to coordinate the annual sidewalk repair program with repair of sidewalks adjacent to public property.

Objective 5.3: Manage Encroachments on Sidewalks *(see also 2.1, 4.4, 7.4)*

- 5.3.1 Enforce sidewalk café standards.
- 5.3.2 Review and consider updates to the City's existing sidewalk café standards.
- 5.3.3 Implement and enforce the newsrack ordinance.
- 5.3.4 Educate the public on requirements and best practices for maintaining the public right-of-way and reporting problems.

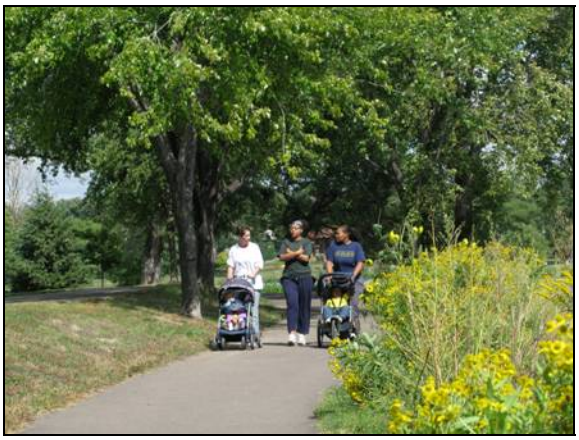
Objective 5.4: Maintain Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility in Construction Zones*(see also 2.1, 2.2)*

- 5.4.1 Develop guidelines for safety and accessibility in work zones.
- 5.4.2 Establish regular staff training programs and materials on the City's practices for safety and accessibility in work zones.
- 5.4.3 Re-examine the City's existing policy and rate structure for sidewalk closures.

GOAL 6: A CULTURE OF WALKING

In order to get more people to walk in Minneapolis, physical infrastructure improvements are very important, but equally important are efforts to change people's personal habits, cultural norms, and perceptions about walking. A lot of people rely on automobiles for travel to destinations that are walkable in Minneapolis. In order to change people's habits and perceptions, the City needs help to foster a culture of walking.

One of the ways that the City is promoting walking is through the Bike Walk Ambassador Program. The program is currently staffed by four ambassadors and several summer youth ambassadors who provide give presentations, lead walks, and host events within Minneapolis and 13 adjacent communities.



Integrating walking into one's daily routine depends not only on the physical environment and proximity of walkable destinations, but also on individual habits and cultural norms.

Implementation Strategies

Objective 6.1: Promote Walking for Youth *(see also 3.3)*

6.1.1 Implement the Minneapolis Safe Routes to Schools Plan.

6.1.2 Promote walking to youth events.

Objective 6.2: Promote Walking for Adults *(see also 3.2)*

6.2.1 Promote walking for health purposes.

6.2.2 Promote walking to work.

Objective 6.3: Showcase and Celebrate Great Walking Experiences *(see also 1.4, 4.5)*

6.3.1 Develop walking maps.

6.3.2 Develop walking tours

6.3.3 Promote/develop public walking celebrations.

6.3.4 Foster positive public messaging about walking.

GOAL 7: FUNDING, TOOLS AND LEADERSHIP FOR IMPLEMENTING PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Although Minneapolis has a lot of great places to walk and good pedestrian facilities in many areas of the City, there are a lot of potential pedestrian facility improvements. To implement improvements, the City needs to proactively prioritize pedestrian needs alongside other transportation needs, while also ensuring that ongoing opportunities to improve pedestrian facilities through infrastructure improvements and new development are maximized.

The *Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan* includes a prioritized list of over 150 potential pedestrian improvement projects which may be used as the basis for an ongoing pedestrian improvement program. Pedestrian design guidelines that illustrate best practices in designing pedestrian facilities were also developed in conjunction with the plan and are published as Chapter 10 of the City's *Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks*.

Implementation Strategies

Objective 7.1: Implement Best Practices for Pedestrian Facility Design *(see also 2.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.6)*

7.1.1 Utilize and improve the City's Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks.

Objective 7.2: Integrate Pedestrian Improvements into Capital Improvement Programs *(see also 1.1, 2.1, 3.1)*

7.2.1 Develop a pedestrian improvement program.

7.2.2 Evaluate all infrastructure projects for potential pedestrian improvement opportunities.

7.2.3 Coordinate the pedestrian improvement program with other improvement opportunities.

Objective 7.3: Improve Tools to Identify, Plan, Design, & Evaluate Pedestrian Improvements *(see also 3.1)*

7.3.1 Improve how Travel Demand Management Plans address pedestrian needs.

7.3.2 Evaluate methods to quantify pedestrian needs.

7.3.3 Measure pedestrian demand.

7.3.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of pedestrian improvements.

Objective 7.4: Foster Effective Pedestrian Advocacy and Stewardship *(see also 3.2, 5.1, 5.3)*

7.4.1 Continue and improve the Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

7.4.2 Encourage public reporting of pedestrian issues to 311.

7.4.3 Support neighborhood advocacy for pedestrian improvements.

Objective 7.5: Pursue New Funding Tools for Pedestrian Facilities *(see also 6.3)*

7.5.1 Investigate increased use of public-private partnerships.

7.5.2 Investigate cost-sharing programs.

7.5.3 Investigate creation of broader improvement districts.