IT IS A 9 MINUTE WALK TO FOWLER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Walkable Neighborhoods: A Community Toolkit

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Studio

Introduction

While working on the Tigard Walks project we uncovered a handful of ways that community members can take it upon themselves to make their neighborhoods more walkable. We've collected some of the best ones into this Community Toolkit to help provide Tigard residents with the resources and information they need to step up and be part of Tigard's walkable future. Specifically, this guide will help kickstart the following efforts:

- Creating a path on your street (p2)
- Supporting safe routes to school (p4)
- Growing a community garden (p5)
- Bringing SW Trails to Tigard (p6)
- Starting a Walk [Your City] signs campaign (p7)
- Sharing your walk (p8)

There are of course countless other steps that can be taken by community members. Above all else, if you are interested in having a more walkable neighborhood, talk to your friends and neighbors; get involved with the community; share your ideas and enthusiasm. And get outside on your feet!

How Walkable is Your Neighborhood?

There are a number of online resources for residents that are interested in making their neighborhoods more walkable.

IBPI Master Plan Handbook

pdx.edu/ibpi/sites/www.pdx.edu.ibpi/files/IBPI%20Master%20Plan%20Handbook%20FINAL%20(7.27.12).pdf

- The Institute for Bicycle and Pedestrian Innovation at Portland State University (pdx.edu/ibpi) worked with Alta Planning and Design to develop a handbook for planning walkable and bikable communities.

Resident's Guide for Creating Safe and Walkable Communities

safety.fhwa.dot.gov/PED_BIKE/ped_cmnity/ped_walkguide/index.cfm

- The Federal Highway Administration has a helpful guide specificially for residents, covering topics ranging from education and awareness campaigns to walkability audits. They also have 10 community success stories.

Walkability Checklist

katana.hsrc.unc.edu/cms/downloads/walkability_checklist.pdf

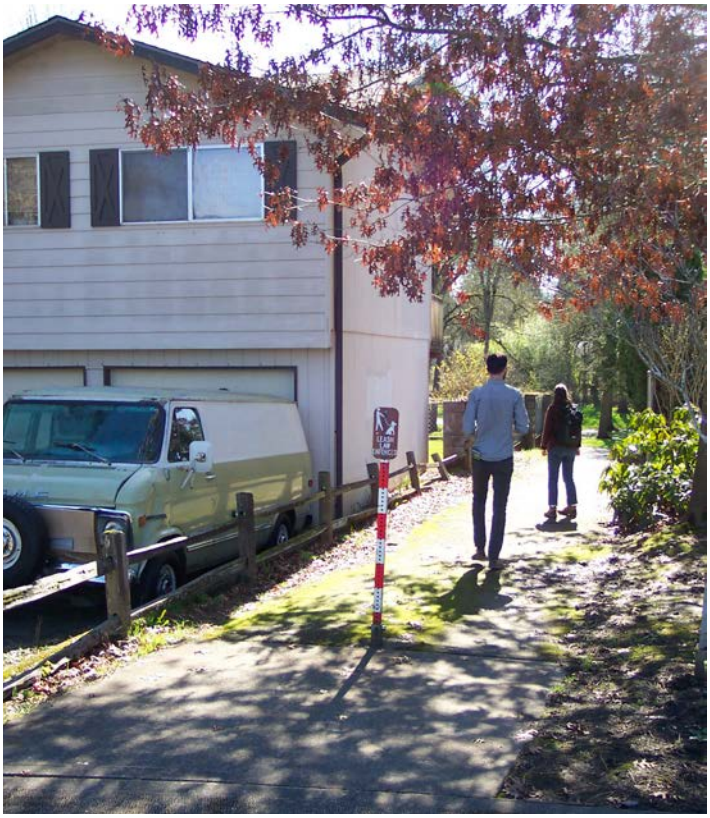
- The National Center for Safe Routes to School developed a walkability checklist to help get communities started in identifying specific challenges and possible solutions.

Creating a Path on Your Street

Path and trail building doesn't have to be left entirely to the planners and engineers. Do you wish there was a pedestrian cut-through on your street? Maybe a regional trail runs behind your neighborhood but you don't have a convenient way to access it. The following is a rough outline for a community-led path or trail planning process. Such efforts can result in alignments that are incorporated into the City's master plan or constructed in the community right away.

Getting Started

1. Contact the ***Department of Community Development*** at the City of Tigard and then begin to discuss key issues with them.
2. Reach out to any landowners of the path or trail alignment that you are interested in developing to discuss your project idea.
3. Identify if any permits are needed to develop a path or trail.
4. Estimate the costs (money, materials, labor) of path and trail development.
5. Explore different funding options to determine which source(s) to apply to.



Common Permits Needed for Developing a Path or Trail

- ***Rights-of-way clearance***—Approval from all appropriate public and private landowners to use or obtain land for a trail.
- ***Construction certificate***—Approval from a designated construction inspector to move forward with groundbreaking or the next phase of construction. The project sponsor may recommend a construction inspector, or state TE and RTP contacts may have a list of locally qualified construction firms that are eligible for construction and inspection of federally funded projects.
- ***Environmental clearance***—Approval from a state natural resources agency (e.g., fish and wildlife divisions) to ensure that the physical environment will not be harmed by your trail, such as by risking endangered species or impacting wetlands or geologic formations.
- ***Historic preservation***—Approval from the state historic preservation office to ensure that cultural landmarks (e.g., American Indian sacred sites) will not be harmed by your trail.
- ***Utility clearance***—Approval from a designated construction inspector to ensure that various utility lines (e.g., electric, cable, fiber optic, sewer, water) will not be damaged during the construction of your trail.

Moving Forward

1. Apply for path or trail funding, continue to build community support, and wait for funding approval before proceeding with further trail development.
2. Once funding is approved and land use easements have been secured or properties have been acquired, ensure that all preparations for groundbreaking are complete before construction begins.

Looking Beyond

1. Stay connected with those responsible for path or trail construction throughout the construction process.
2. Conduct promotional activities within your community during path or trail construction to keep residents engaged and to encourage future path or trail use.
3. Once construction is complete, organize a kick-off event and ongoing promotional activities to further encourage trail use.

Right of Way Acquisition

Right-of-way (ROW) acquisitions may be needed for pathway alignment. If an ROW is needed, it must be acquired through deed or easement. If actual purchase or change of ownership is needed, this can be a lengthy process and should begin at the earliest possible time.

Easements, allowing for access or use of the land without change of ownership, are much quicker to obtain normally, but may have drawbacks of being potentially withdrawn at a future time (they can be permanent if sufficiently contracted as such and recorded with the land deed).

Common Concerns About Paths (and Trails and How to Address Them)

- ***Liability***—Landowners may want to know who will be held liable if someone is injured while using the trail. Have your project's legal counsel discuss various land use agreements and how each may protect landowners from liability.

- ***Safety***—Landowners may want to know whether a trail will be safe to use and whether it will draw criminal activity. Describe the various physical characteristics (e.g., signage, lighting) that will be incorporated to enhance trail safety.

- ***Privacy and trespassing***—Landowners may be concerned that trails near residential properties will draw strangers to these properties. Discuss the physical trail characteristics (e.g., signage) that will help users differentiate between public trail property and private "off limits" property.

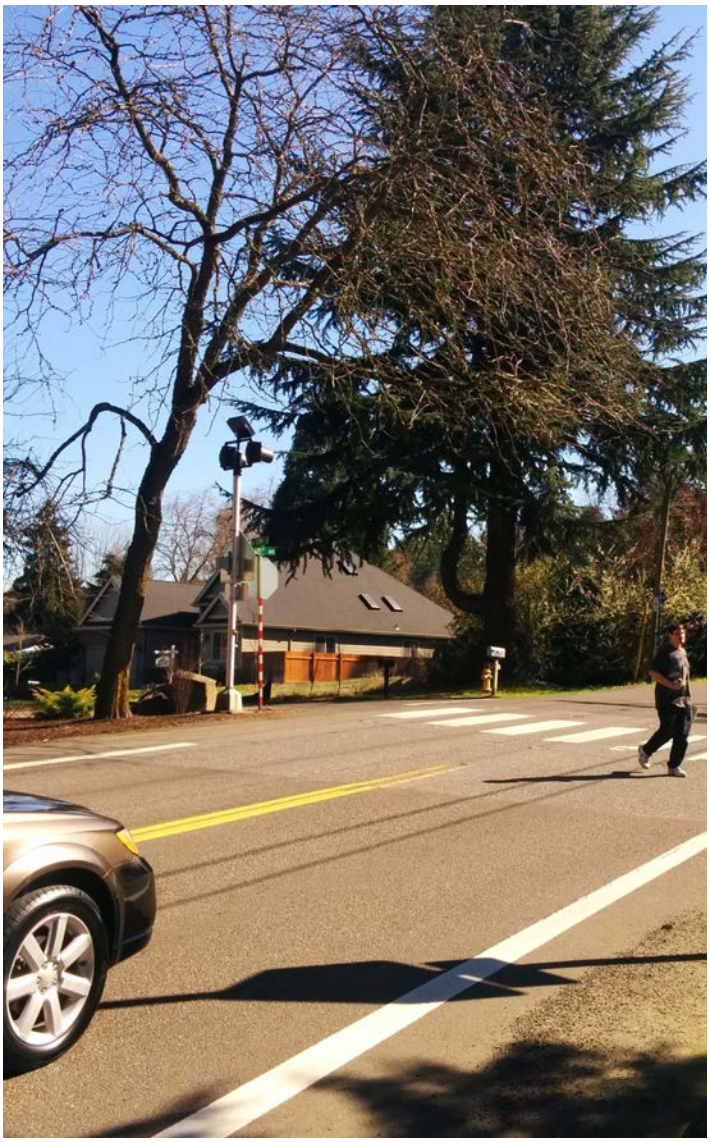
- ***Litter and vandalism***—Landowners may be concerned that trail use will increase litter and vandalism. Explain that signage will emphasize trail etiquette. In addition, maintenance plans will be in place to ensure trail upkeep; these plans include cleaning up litter, mowing, and touching up or repairing the trail and trail accessories (e.g., benches, lights) that typically experience wear-and-tear.

Supporting Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs are one of the most effective ways to create a healthy and more walkable community. There are many ways to help bring SRTS programs to Tigard. SRTS programs often gain their initial momentum through support from the local Parent Teacher Association (PTA). If the PTA is not active in your neighborhood, collaborate with other parents to start a chapter, making SRTS a priority.

More direct action to initiate a SRTS program would involve contacting the Principal of the local school or the Superintendent of the Tigard-Tualitan School District (***503-431-4000***) and requesting assistance rallying parents, teachers and staff around safe pedestrian access to schools. SRTS programs can be further pursued by contacting Tigard City Council members about the status of citywide SRTS policies.

Finally, individual action can be taken to activate SRTS programs by contacting the regional policy manager. Visit the Pacific Northwest SRTS regional network website (***saferoutespacificnorthwest.org***) or check them out on Facebook (***facebook.com/SafeRoutesPNW***).



Resources for Safe Routes to School

SRTS Policy Workbook

changelabsolutions.org/safe-routes/welcome

- The SRTS Policy Workbook is a remarkable tool designed to help Schools and city's build a successful SRTS policy. Users are walked step-by-step through the different components of SRTS and given guidance on how large or comprehensive of a policy to create.

Safe Routes to School National Partnership - Pacific Northwest

saferoutespacificnorthwest.org

- The Pacific Northwest chapter of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership can provide guidence for establishing a new SRTS policy.

National Center for Safe Routes to School

saferoutesinfo.org

- Program tools, funding information, training resources, and data for SRTS.

Growing a Community Garden

Community Gardens are great examples of walkable neighborhood destinations that frequently draw people together outdoors. These community gardens can be organized by community groups looking for space to garden. Apartment complexes and condo associations are perfect candidates to find people interested in forming nascent non-profit organization to run a local community gardens program.

Hosting community gardens in Tigard's parks would create daily foot traffic by neighbors wanting to cultivate their own fruits, vegetables and flowers. One example with twelve plots at ***Greenfield Drive and 132nd Avenue*** has been tilled since 2009. Parks are evenly dispersed throughout western Tigard and offer ready access via neighborhood trails to pedestrian traffic.

There are several steps community members can take to help bring community gardens to Tigard's parks:

Permits and Water Service

- Contact the Parks Supervisor at the City of Tigard (***503-718-2598 or parks@tigard-or.gov***) to permit the community garden plot and arrange for water service.

Building a Plot

- Work with the Boy Scouts of America to build community garden raised beds and deer fencing. Try contacting ***Troop 419 at 503-929-3486***.

Classes and Certifications

- Coordinate with the OSU Master Gardeners to offer classes and certifications. They can be reached at ***503-821-1150*** or at ***mastergardener.wc@oregonstste.edu***.

Nearby Gardens

- Join the nearby Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District (THPRD) and use community gardens in parks adjacent to Tigard. Residents who have purchased an assessment, can rent community garden plots for a full year with a first option to renew the plot (Lisa Novak at ***503.645.6433*** or ***Lnovak@thprd.org***).

Bringing SW Trails to Tigard

SW Trails is an all volunteer, 501(c)3 community group engaged in all things trails and walking right next door in SW Portland. They work with local governments to build and maintain trails and related facilities, relying on the local knowledge of residents about cut-through passages in parks and the unbuilt rights-of-way that neighbors already use. By organizing large volunteer groups, SW Trails has completed 30-40 trail projects.

What does SW Trails do?

- Organized neighborhoods
- Partnered with Portland Parks and Recreation Department
- Built trails
- Made maps
- Fostered community
- Organized monthly walking tours
- Designed walking routes, and
- Installed trail and way finding signs

What can you do?

Go on a walking tour with ***Don Baack, SW Trails Executive Director***, to learn about neighborhood trails, non-profit organizations that build trails and neighborhood participation around trails. Visit ***swtrails.org*** or call ***503.246.2088*** for more information about this dynamic trails organization.

Starting a Walk [Your City] Signs Campaign

Walk[Your City] lets anyone from citizens to non-profits to corporations quickly and affordably promote healthy lifestyles, public safety, and human-centered transit by providing tools and resources to build a professional looking DIY network of pedestrian wayfinding signs.

1. Identify neighborhood destinations for signs to point the way to; parks, schools, and stores are all good ideas.
2. Identify intersections along the way to place signs; Major cross roads, places with a lot of walkers already, and places where walkers would have to change direction (e.g. turn left) to reach the destination are good candidates.
3. Build your signs online at ***walkyourcity.org*** using the easy online tool.
4. Order your signs from Walk Your City or from a local sign-maker.
5. Install your signs with easily removable plastic zip-ties (For extra fun, wear a superhero costume and declare yourself "Captain PedStrong, savior of the Pedestrian").
6. Create a social media campaign to build community support for neighborhood walking

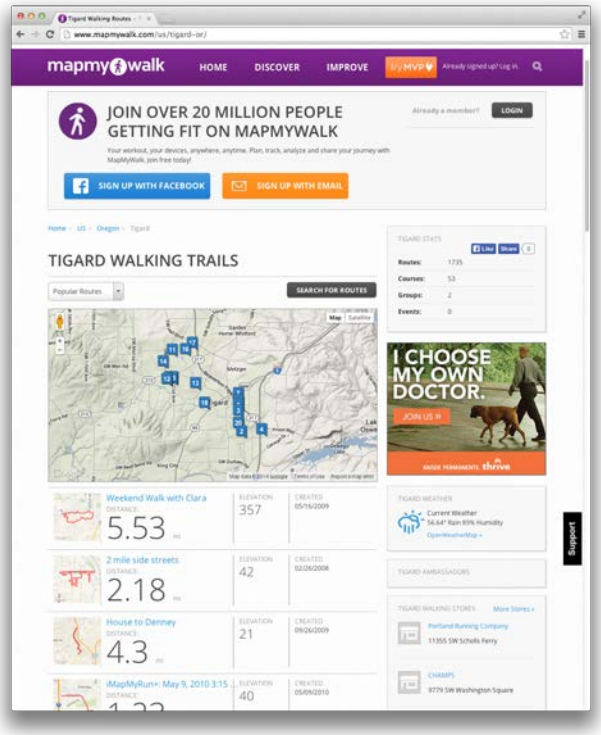
Sample wayfinding signs for Tigard created at walkyourcity.org

Sharing Your Walk

Do you like to walk the Fanno Creek Trail for exercise? Maybe you have a favorite loop through the neighborhood or know a great shortcut to the park. Sharing how and where you walk with your friends and neighbors helps spread the word about walkable routes and destinations in Tigard and promotes Tigard's overall walkability and "ped culture" to residents and visitors alike. Sites like mapmywalk.com and meetup.com can play a helpful role in establishing a community around walking, through events and shared routes.

mapmywalk.com

- mapmywalk (mapmywalk.com) allows users to plan, track, study, and share their walking routes using a website (mapmywalk.com) and a mobile app for iphone, Android, or Blackberry. Visit mapmywalk.com/us/tigard-or to see popular routes in Tigard created by users.



Walking Oregon and SW Washington Group

- The Walking Oregon and SW Washington group on meetup.com (***meetup.com/Walking-Oregon-and-SW-Washington/***) is an active walking group that organizes walks across region. This is a great way to meet other walkers, share your favorite routes, and experience sides of Tigard (and the greater region) that you might not have seen.

Social Media

- Sharing your walks with friends and family on facebook and other social media, or simply through word of mouth can itself go a long way towards building support and enthusiasm for walking in Tigard. Talk to your friends and neighbors and organize a walk around the neighborhood on a nice weekend.

Walk on, Tigard.