



City of Tigard Press Release

13125 SW Hall Boulevard | Tigard, Oregon 97223 | www.tigard-or.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | May 11, 2016

Contact:

Kenny Asher
Director, Community Development Department
City of Tigard
503-718-2443
KennyA@tigard-or.gov

Tigard's Walkability Efforts Gain National Notice

A nationally recognized center that encourages towns and cities across the United States to promote safer walking environments and walking has given Tigard an Honorable Mention for the city's progress in 2015. Tigard's vision is to become the most walkable community in the Pacific Northwest where people of all ages and abilities enjoy healthy and interconnected lives.

The Chapel Hill, North Carolina-based Walk Friendly Communities (WFC) made its announcement in early May. Tigard earned the accolade due to its Safe Routes to School program, capital improvements like the new Tigard Street Trail and sustained support from the City Council on walking-related initiatives.

"Residents and the city should take pride in this achievement, starting where we are as suburb designed primarily for auto travel," said Kenny Asher, Community Development director. "We know that achieving our vision will take years, but we also understand that it won't happen without on-the-ground change, momentum and support from others. We're getting that support now from residents, citizen volunteers and particularly from our partners at Tigard-Tualatin schools."

Tigard's commitment to Safe Routes to School, the program that promotes active transportation choices for school children and their families, earned high marks from the reviewers. The assessment credited the program coordinator for leading walking audits and developing action plans at every Tigard elementary and middle school. The organization called Tigard's strategic vision an "ambitious goal" and praised Mayor John Cook's participation in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets. WFC also acknowledged the city's improved connections in the downtown and efforts to create connections among its 17.5 miles of greenways.

Tigard's application was its second to the WFC. Communities compete from around the country for the center's recognition in bronze, silver or gold rankings for municipal efforts to boost conditions for walking, including safety, mobility, access and comfort. The organization issues detailed report cards to applicants that touch on everything from sidewalk inventory to traffic enforcement to access to parks and trails. Tigard becomes the sixth Oregon city to receive recognition from the WFC organization, second in the metro region.

"The assessment is not only a round of applause for our efforts, it also shows us exactly where we are falling short. We will need support from Tigard voters in future elections to improve walkability together," said Asher. "I'm hopeful that this will fire people up to go for the gold."

For details on the recent report visit, visit: www.walkfriendly.org/communities/community.cfm?ID=293.

-###-