

Monthly Newsletter - March 2015

Growing the National Walking Movement

From our Executive Director, Scott Bricker

I attended a recent policy meeting in Washington, DC where a diverse set of stakeholders from government, non-profit and corporate sectors came together to discuss their willingness to fight for increased investment in active transportation - with walking being a vital component. This discussion exemplifies what [America Walks](#) has seen in the recent years - **the continued and rapid growth of local and national organizations that want to build communities where all people can safely and comfortably walk for daily travel, exercise and the pure joy of the activity.**

So perhaps it shouldn't surprise me that we received over 130 proposals to present at the upcoming [National Walking Summit](#), surpassing the number submitted in 2013 and representing over 300 people from diverse interests and backgrounds. The enthusiasm, commitment and engagement is growing and the conversation taking place across America to make walkable communities a reality will come together in Washington in October. Stay tuned to the [Walking Summit website](#) to find out more about how you can become involved.



We want to mirror this excitement and diversity in our [new Walking College program](#). We have designed a program of self-study, mentored instruction and team problem solving that will prepare participants as walking advocates in their own communities. [Apply today](#) to empower yourself and your organization to grow campaigns,

actions and capacity to take the next step in the walking movement.

America Walks is excited to serve you and the walking movement...walk on!

America Walks Program Updates

America Walks is putting its best foot forward in 2015 with several new programs, webinars and publications to help you make America a great place to walk.

- **Take Action Webinar Series:** Our second webinar series of 2015 takes place in April and May. Focusing on those working to build walkable communities, each webinar will leave you with a Call to Action to help make change at the community level. The first webinar takes place April 13. [Register now!](#)
- **Getting Started Guide:** Ever wonder what first steps to take towards a walkable community? We partnered with the Every Body Walk! Collaborative and Mark Fenton to create the [Getting Started Guide](#) that offers guidance from a team of experts. Be sure to check out the [related webinar and additional resources](#) available.
- **What One Suburb Can Teach America:** America Walks is excited to be able to offer the latest article from Jay Walljasper. "[What America's Most Walkable Suburb Can Teach Towns Everywhere](#)" examines the lessons of the walkability found in Arlington County, VA. For further exploration, read the [Arlington County Case Study](#) produced by America Walks in November.

Event Spotlight- National Public Health Week

Despite what we often hear and read, Americans are not the healthiest people in the world. In the US, we spend more on health care but live shorter lives and suffer more health issues than our peers in other high-income countries. That's why the upcoming National Public Health Week, April 6–12, will focus on the goal of creating the healthiest nation. We need to move outside the domain of health care and address a complex web of social and environmental factors that affect everyone's health and limit the opportunity for many people to make healthy choices. Solutions include expanding options for active transportation, supporting safe and accessible spaces for play and exercise, offering more nutritious school meals, creating more high school graduates and placing more emphasis on preventing disease or injuries rather than treating them.

Visit www.nphw.org to learn more about National Public Health week activities and [sign the Healthiest Nation Pledge](#) to take a first step in improving both your health and the health of the nation.

Inspiring & Innovative-Local and State Highlights

Nationwide, we are seeing inspiring acts of advocacy and progress toward the creation of safe and accessible walking conditions for all.

- Boston, MA: Congratulations to [WalkBoston](#) on the hard work and commitment they have made to walking as they celebrate their 25th Anniversary this month. [WalkBoston](#) helped make walking a priority in transportation discussions across the city and state and, just in time for their anniversary, Boston is taking steps in the right direction by [joining the growing Vision Zero initiative](#).
- Portland, OR: Get an early look at [Portland's new car-free bridge](#) that is transit only with public transportation including rail and buses and special lanes for biking and walking. A great addition for daily commuters as well as those looking for a way to explore the scenic city.
- Princeton, NJ: Princeton, NJ found a way to combine art with community design and planning. The [Princeton Environmental Film Festival](#) provided residents a viewing of The Walking Revolution followed by a discussion on walkable communities. Miss the event? [The video can be found here](#).

Does your community or advocacy group have a success story you would like to share? Email [Heidi Simon](#) to be featured in future newsletters.

Recent News

America Walks is encouraged by the recent attention walking and walkability is receiving.

- Department of Transportation Recruits Over 150 Communities: As part of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx's "[Mayor's Challenge for Safer People and Safer Street](#)," the US Department of Transportation hosted representatives from the over [150 communities](#) committed to the Challenge for a [kick-off Summit in Washington](#). America Walks was pleased to attend and looks forward to working with the mayors on the challenge.
- Vision Zero Act Introduced: Representatives Earl Blumenauer and Vern Buchanan, have introduced H.R. 1274, the [Vision Zero Act of 2015](#) a bill that would, if passed, create two grant programs within the Department of Transportation to award money to communities to develop and implement Vision Zero.
- Walkable and Affordable Communities: America Walks Executive Director Scott Bricker published an article at the

Federal Reserve Bank of Boston on Walkable and Affordable Communities. The article discusses the costs and benefits that can come with the increasingly popular walkable urban centers.



Other Events and Resources

What Caught Our Eye in March	Resources and Events Available	We Need Your Stories
<p>As a new section for the America Walks Newsletters, we want to share with our network some of the interesting things that cross our desk. This series will highlight books, films and other media that adds color to the walking movement and could be interesting to readers.</p> <p>Google released plans for its new offices which incorporate outdoor space and encourage physical activity like walking. The designs are gorgeous but we think the thought put into active design is its own beauty!</p>	<p>America Walks Webinar Series</p> <p>Guide for Creating Safer Communities</p> <p>Advocacy Advance Rapid Response Grants</p> <p>NHTSA 2013 Pedestrian Fact Sheet</p> <p>Smart Growth Community Workshops</p> <p>America Walks Walking College Applications</p> <p>ASCE Call for Proposals</p>	<p>America Walks wants to hear from our great network to find stories, testimonials and pictures that show examples of the great work you have done.</p> <p>We want to highlight the hard work and successful changes communities and local advocates have accomplished on our website and can't do it without your contributions.</p> <p>Those interested in contributing should contact Susan Lyon or visit the Share Your Stories page on our new website.</p>

America Walks would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support of this publication and all of the work being done by America Walks to promote the Walkable movement. Thanks for helping to make America a great place to Walk!

8-80 Cities, AARP, Accessible Design for the Blind, Active Living By Design, Active Transportation Alliance, Alliance for Biking & Walking, APBP, APHA, BluePoint Planning, Boulder Valley School District, BungyPump, Carmanah, CDC, CHEKPEDS, Circulate San Diego, Daniel Rose Law, Eco-Counter, Estey & Bomberger, LLP, Every Body Walk!, Federal Highway Administration, Feet First, Health by Design, Hoosier Rails to Trails Council, Idaho Bike Walk Alliance, Jurewitz Law Group, Kaiser Permanente, Landman Family Charitable Trust, Law Offices of Jay S. Knispel, MIG, Inc., Muscle Powered: Citizens for a Bikable and Walkable Carson City, National Physical Activity Society, Nelson Nygaard, Nemours, Orthotic Shop, Partners for Health, PedNet Coalition, PEDS, PhillyWalks, Rails to Trails Conservancy, re:Streets, S&G Endeavors, Safe Routes to School National Partnership, Sally Flocks Charitable Fund, Sam Schwartz Engineering, Shaping New Jersey, ShoreWalkers, Inc., Swanson, Thomas, Coon and Newton, Synergy, LLC, Tennessee Department of Transportation, The Franklin Law Firm, The Reeves Law Group, TVA Architects, Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition, W-Trans, Walk Boston, WalkSacramento, Wallace Consulting & Training, Inc., Weissman-Landman Family Trust

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America Walks

[\(503\)757-8342](tel:5037578342)

PO Box 10581

Portland, Oregon 97296

www.americawalks.org

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