



2018 Walking College

Walking Action Plan: Project Guidance

Your final Walking College assignment is to develop a Walking Action Plan. This is intended to be a practical, real-world application of what you learned during the course, combined with current conditions in your community and your personal interests and aspirations in the area of increasing walking and walkability.

In addition to giving you hands-on experience in the process of developing a strategic plan, this project will provide you with a valuable tool. Your Walking Action Plan (WAP) will be a guiding document for your work over the next few years. If your organization already has a strategic plan for your walkable community work, take this opportunity to update it with new ideas that have come to you during the Walking College, or write your own personal strategic plan as a more specific description of the role(s) you will perform. In all cases, your WAP will involve partners and you should seek their input on your draft plan.

We are looking for a final product that's 3-4 pages long, although you may develop more detailed plans for certain components of your WAP. The deadline for this assignment is October 15th, 2018.

Structure of your Walking Action Plan

We suggest you design your WAP in two parts: a long-term (2-3 years) "goal-oriented" strategic plan and a short-term (6-12 months) more "task-oriented" plan. As time goes by, you will need to develop new short-term plans for the next step(s) in your long-term plan. Periodically, you should also update and extend your long-term plan.

Long-term (2-3 years) "goal-oriented" strategic plan

Many strategic plans are structured in terms of the answers to five fundamental questions: *What?*, *Why?*, *Who?*, *How?*, and *When?* This is just one approach and you are welcome to use a different format if it makes sense to you.

Goal: *What* precisely will be accomplished? In what way will your community be changed as a result of your work? What new policy will be adopted or existing policy improved? What board will be established or process will be instituted? What physical changes will

occur? To be of value, your goal must be a specific and measurable outcome that can be achieved within 2-3 years. We recommend you select a single goal, but you may identify a maximum of three.

Background: *Why* is this goal (or these goals) important and valuable? In this section, provide a detailed explanation of the purpose of your project. This may include relevant data about your community (such as traffic counts or public health information), a specific environmental issue (dangerous intersection near a school, maybe), as well as the local political context, community plans, concerns of residents, recent/current advocacy efforts (or failures), and funding opportunities (or challenges).

Partnership: *Who* will take the lead on this project? *Who* will provide support and in what ways? If your walkability work is part of your job or volunteer position with a community group or government agency, etc. that organization will normally serve the role of project lead. Provide an overview of its vision, mission, values, and activities - what has it accomplished in the past and how does that history set the stage for the current project? For each partner organization or key stakeholder, summarize its work and what resources it will bring to the partnership.

Timeline: *How* will this project be broken down into a series of manageable steps, and *when* will each component be carried out? For a goal that may take 2-3 years to accomplish, we suggest you identify 5-10 major steps that will get you there - think about them as stepping stones along the path to completion. If your goal is to adopt a "Complete Streets" policy, your major steps might include forming a steering committee, researching other cities' policies, hosting a public workshop on the topic, and conducting a communication campaign.

Short-term (6-12 months) "task-oriented" strategic plan

For each component or major step of your long-term plan that you expect to complete in the next 6-12 months, develop a more detailed short-term plan. There's nothing wrong with drafting short-term plans for all your major steps, but you will probably want to make revisions/updates as you get ready to start work on each one.

Write an overview of what you hope to accomplish with your short-term plan and how it fits into the bigger picture. Then list a series of specific strategies or tasks, along with a time frame for each to be completed. Include references to which partner or organization is responsible for each step.

Finally, take some time to think through "worst-case scenarios." What might go wrong? What challenges could present themselves? And how will you overcome them?