

Walking Action Plan
3-5 Year Plan
City of Flint, Michigan
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BACKGROUND

The City of Flint is no stranger to disinvestment, racism and disenfranchisement. Historical decisions in the City of Flint have designed our neighborhoods into poor health. With a nickname like “Vehicle City” and much of its economy fueled by the auto industry, it is no surprise that highways separate communities and force families to drive, rather than take a walk or bicycling. In addition, streets are designed for high volumes of automobile traffic that was created by workers commuting to factories that are no longer operating. The wide roads have resulted in motorists driving above the speed limit, injuring pedestrians along the way. In 2016, Genesee County reported 1,236 drivers involved in crashes related to high speeds. In addition, the county reported 202 pedestrians involved in crashes and 75 bicyclists (Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning - Michigan Traffic Crash Facts). Genesee County ranks among the lowest in the state of Michigan for its overall quality of life and health (County Health Rankings, 2016).

Low income individuals, minorities and children suffer the brunt of these challenges. And like so many low income and minority communities, Flint residents often feel unheard in a system that appears to not have never been designed to help them succeed in the first place. Thankfully, some progress has been seen over the last 5 years. The City of Flint's two year Master Plan process honed in on the issues and what policy, systems and environment changes could be taken to create a safe, walkable, vibrant, prosperous and thriving Flint.

The Crim Fitness Foundation seeks to make Flint a more walkable community by advocating for and supporting policy, systems and environment changes that provide equitable access to safe, healthy and vibrant communities.

ORGANIZATION VISION

The Crim Fitness Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, cultivates accessible, vibrant communities in Flint and Genesee County that encourage people to lead healthy lifestyles by integrating physical activity, healthy eating, and mindfulness into their daily lives and mentors other communities to do the same. The Crim uses events, programs, and policy, systems, and environmental changes to transform the community. Year-round programs include races and events, training programs, mindfulness training for youth and adults, community gardens, nutrition education and advocacy. In addition, the Crim serves as the lead agency of Flint's Community Education Initiative. For more information, visit www.crim.org.

GOAL

The goal of this Walking Action Plan is to increase pedestrian and bicyclist traffic safety within the City of Flint.

STRATEGIES

To improve Flint residents' perception of safety while walking and/or bicycling, the following steps must be taken:

- Establish a citizen driven Traffic Calming Task Force.
- Survey residents about safety while biking and walking, speeding traffic in residential areas, dangerous intersections and arterials.
- Work with the City of Flint and the Michigan State Police to gather traffic crash data that can be measured against resident feedback.
- Conduct observation data collection to further support survey results and traffic crash data
- Work with neighborhood groups and City of Flint planners to determine potential interventions that can be implemented.
- Implement demonstration projects to try out the potential interventions.
- Repeat survey and traffic crash data research to determine the impact the demonstration interventions have had on the neighborhoods.
- If interventions are successful, present to City Council, planners and staff and recommend permanent installation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Traffic Taming Task Force will be responsible for distributing surveys, assisting with research, connecting with residents and implementing interventions.
- Neighborhood Engagement Hub and Crim Fitness Foundation will be responsible for providing meeting facilitation assistance, aggregating survey data, researching best practices of demonstration projects and interventions and assisting in creating presentation for city council at the end of the project.
- Michigan State Police is responsible for providing traffic crash data.
- City of Flint is responsible for informing traffic taming group of appropriate permissions and permits needed, advising on best strategy to implement demonstrations.
- Neighborhood groups that will be responsible for assisting in demonstrations projects are - Glendale Hills, Ballenger Highway and Potter Longway.

TIMELINE

Year One

- September - Establish Traffic Taming Task Force. Have that group identify at least one potential neighborhood with traffic concerns.
- Survey residents of the neighborhood, research traffic crash data and conduct observations of location identified by residents
- October - Work with neighborhood groups and city of Flint to identify solutions and implement demonstration projects in the areas with the highest traffic safety concerns.
- November - Repeat survey and observation process to determine the effectiveness of the potential interventions.
- December - Create a presentation featuring recommended infrastructure, policies and other interventions that can be delivered to city council.
- December - Contact City Council secretary to be placed on agenda in the next 3 months.
- January - March 2019 - Make presentation(s) to City Council

- April - July 2019 - Assist city in finding funding to implement permanent interventions
- August/September 2019 - Celebrate interventions, collect post intervention data

Year Two

- September - Identify 3 potential neighborhoods with traffic concerns.
- Repeat data collection process as in year one.
- Implement temporary traffic calming projects.
- Measure impact of temporary projects
- Use data from temporary project and from previously completed project to advocate for permanent infrastructure and interventions.
- Collect resident feedback and stories about the temporary and permanent changes that have taken place.
- Assist city in seeking funding for improvements
- Celebrate improvements
- Start process again with new neighborhood

Year Three

- Continue process with new neighborhoods each year
- Draft a case study on the prior successes and present findings to city council, at conferences and to other communities.
- Convene group of neighborhood involved in the demonstration projects and begin a collaborative safe driving campaign.

Year Four

- Measure effectiveness of safe driving campaign in collaboration with physical environment changes.
- Study the results over the last 3 years and compare with crash data from the past 5 to 10 years.
- Create a case study to present to City of Flint staff.
- Seek opportunities to share results with other walkability advocacy groups

RESOURCES

- Meeting locations
- Assistance with research
- Assistance with surveys
- Funding to print surveys
- Staff time (Crim and Neighborhood Engagement Hub)
- Funding for demonstration projects
- Local foundations

KEY PARTNERS

- Crim Fitness Foundation
- City of Flint planning staff
- City of Flint police officers
- Neighborhood Engagement Hub (NEH)

- University of Michigan Flint
- Glendale Hills Neighborhood Association
- Ballenger Highway Neighborhood Association
- Potter Longway Neighborhood Association
- Eastside Franklin Park Neighborhood Association
- New outlets
- City Council members
- America Walks Road to Zero program/cohort

Potential Challenges:

- May have some difficulty finding consensus between residents
- City council moves slowly
- Flint water crisis