

Photographer Guidance

Thank you for helping build America Walks' photo library!

This document outlines planning considerations for a shoot that will help further America Walks' mission to advance safe, equitable, accessible, and enjoyable places to walk and move.

This document is a starting point. After reviewing, reach out to finalize all aspects of the photography project with America Walks staff. (social@americawalks.org)

Overview

What is America Walks?

America Walks is a national voice on walking and walkable communities. We work to increase the visibility and demand for public places that allow all people to move and walk in ways that are safe and make the most sense for them. At the regional, statewide, and neighborhood level, America Walks provides critical strategic support, training, and technical assistance to partner organizations and individuals, convening a large network of grassroots advocates.

Values:

- Equity
- Grassroots community
- Mobility justice
- Respect and human dignity
- Connection

What is the goal of the photoshoot?

America Walks seeks an authentic, diverse library of high-quality images, particularly ones that showcase rural and suburban imagery to use in its promotional materials and outreach.

What is the focus and tone of the images?

Photos should center faces and people.

Through photo assets, the organization seeks to convey how it works collaboratively, with diverse stakeholders, across urban, suburban, and rural settings.

The tone of the photos should be friendly, modern, community-driven, respectful, and fun.

Who is America Walks trying to connect with?

- Community organizations

- Grassroots movements
- Public transportation users and advocates
- Everyone dedicated to active transportation
- Traditionally underserved and marginalized communities

Planning:

America Walks staff are available to help with the following tasks and logistics.

- Scheduling and logistics
- Review the goals and shot list together
- Coordinate with staff on budget. Include expenses such as location rentals, props, lunch (if needed), and any post-production.
- Identify a location and whether the shoot will be indoor or outdoors. Coordinate with staff if venues require consultation or payment.
- Location, parking, room numbers, etc.
- Timing, volunteer schedule, daytime lighting
- A plan B, if needed, due to weather or other circumstances
- Personnel (share relevant contact information)
- Props
- Volunteer recruitment

The photoshoot should center on real people. Work with our staff to identify volunteers willing to participate and coordinate day-of logistics. Diversity in volunteer selection (e.g. age, race, gender identity, ability) is important.

Work with staff to reach out to volunteers. Send them a note that outlines the purpose of the photoshoot including an overview of how the photos will be used. Provide them with logistical information (date, time, location).

Once they confirm, follow up again with:

- Key details (timing slot, parking, etc.)
- Notes on wardrobe and any props
 - No branded clothing
 - Bright colors, roughly matching the [brand color palette](#)
 - Recommend bringing multiple wardrobe or prop options
- Provide a staff cell phone number and request theirs

Ensure volunteers understand the scope and provide consent for their images to be used for promotional purposes. Send a [photo consent form](#) by email.

Day of the shoot

- Ensure the photographer and a staff member have a printed copy of the shot list
- Print and bring extra photo consent and release forms to the photoshoot
- Bring a list of volunteer cell phone numbers

Shot list & creative direction:

Create a shot list outlining the specific images or scenes needed to tell America Walks' story effectively. Below are starter ideas for shots.

General

- Blank space where logos or text may be added later
- Wide shots of the surroundings
- Close-up shots of beneficiaries or clients
- Action shots of staff members or volunteers engaged in activities or activism
- Shots of specific programs, projects, or events
- Shots highlighting partnerships or collaborations
- Both good examples and poor examples of current conditions

Urban

- Group walking down a pedestrian-only street
- Group walking across a pedestrian bridge
- Group walking across an exclusive pedestrian intersection
- Wheelchair user on an ADA ramp in a park or outdoor mall
- Group in an "above highway" park
- Crossing guard stopping traffic and guiding people across the street
- Street with restaurants that have maintained COVID-era patio extensions
- Group of runners sharing a running/cycling lane with cyclists
- Group using public transit
- Transit stop/bus shelter in an urban setting

Suburban

- Group walking down a pedestrian-only street
- Group walking through an outdoor mall
- Wheelchair users on ADA ramps outside of buildings
- Group of runners on a park trail that goes under a road (possibly a tunnel)
- Business park or strip mall with green space breaking up parking lot
- Family walking along a sidewalk with kids on bicycles

Rural

- Walking/cycling path alongside farm road

- Family crossing a crosswalk in a small town
- Group standing at a trailhead
- Community transit/shuttle in a rural setting
- Transit stop/bus shelter in a rural setting