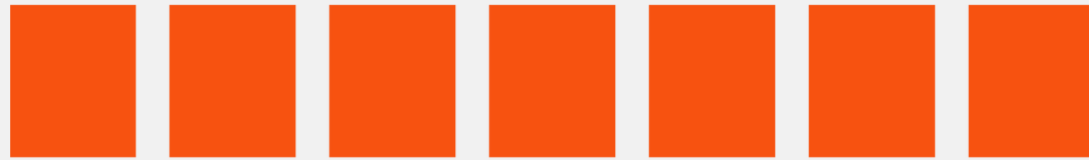




# Impact Report



# WEEK WITHOUT DRIVING

September 30 - October 6, 2024

America Walks is an organizational leader and recognizable voice for walkability across the United States. We equip people and communities with the resources to advance safe, equitable, accessible and enjoyable places to walk and move. We believe that walkable and accessible communities are a critical path towards advancing health, safety, climate, housing, economic opportunity and racial justice.

What sets us apart is our ability to unite diverse communities through a broad appeal for walkability. We also bring unique strengths to the transportation advocacy landscape, including a commitment to grassroots efforts that mobilize local action and a foundation in public health, with strong connections to broader movements beyond transportation. We work alongside local and national organizations to amplify our impact and achieve shared goals.

America Walks and Disability Rights Washington organized the second annual national Week Without Driving (WWD). This initiative was founded by Anna Zivarts, director of Disability Mobility Initiative and author of *When Driving is Not an Option*, in Washington State in 2021. It offers participants a unique opportunity to experience the daily barriers and challenges faced by nearly a third of Americans who cannot drive. Rooted in the principles of awareness, fair access, and justice, WWD aims to deepen understanding and spark action toward building more transportation options that serve diverse needs within communities.

The WWD brings together local organizations and decision-makers, such as elected officials, public sector leaders, and professionals. The week gives local organizations a platform to connect communities with those in positions of power. Throughout the week, the gap between lived experience policy is bridged, paving the way for thriving communities.

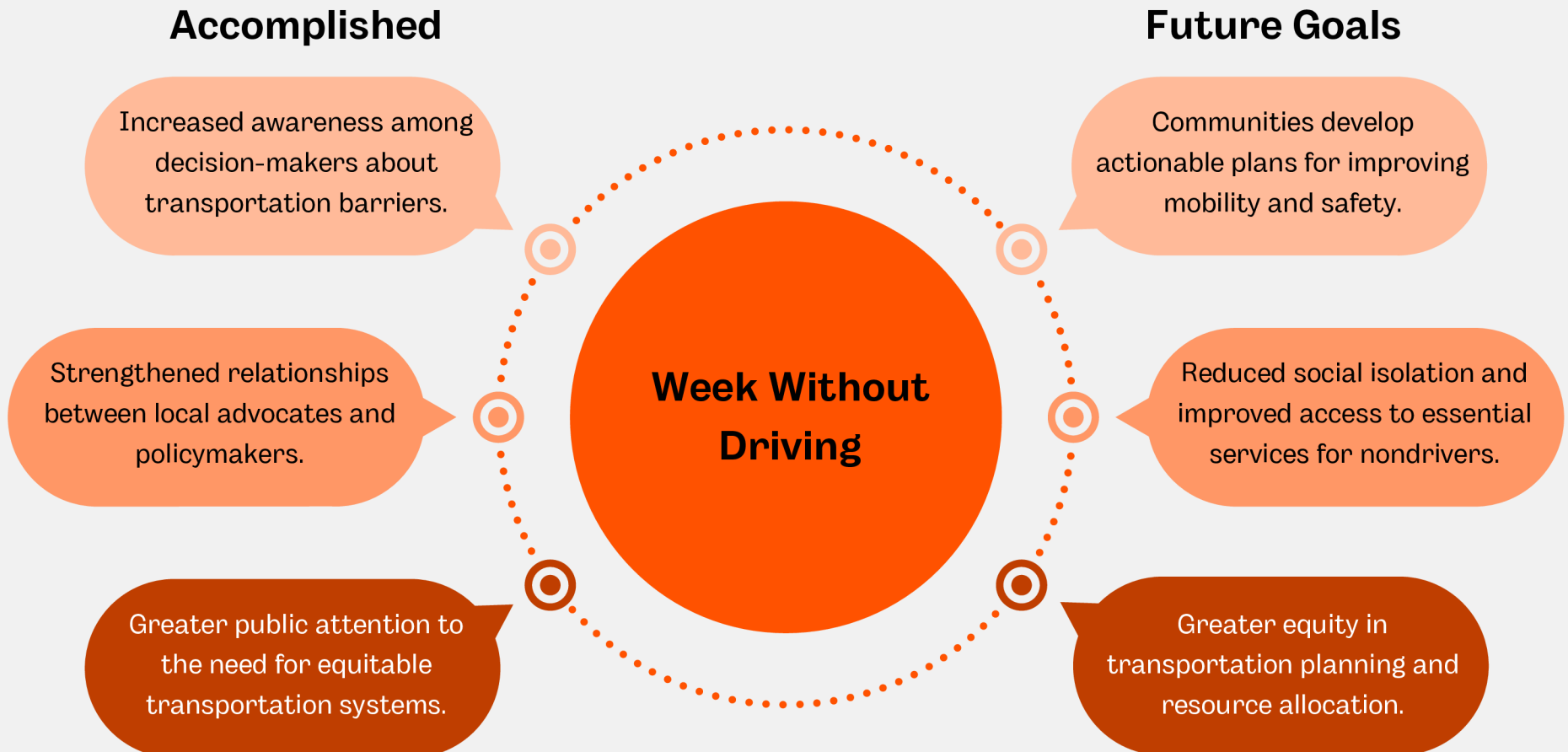
## Nearly a third of Americans cannot drive.



PITTSBURG, PA

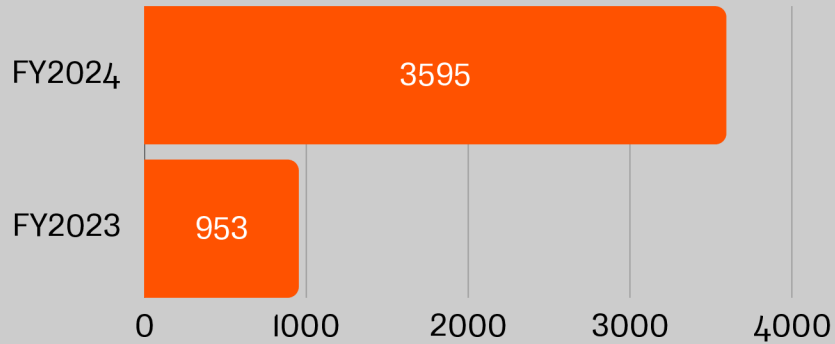
Nearly a third of Americans face daily mobility barriers like inadequate sidewalks, poor transit options, and unsafe roads. These challenges disproportionately affect seniors, children, people with disabilities and low-income communities, limiting their access to jobs, healthcare, education, and essential services. The barriers stem from decades of car-centered policies and an under-investment in pedestrian and transit infrastructure and result in poor health outcomes, social isolation, decline in small businesses, increased environmental impacts and compromised safety in our communities. Addressing these issues requires a clear understanding of their presence and impact within each community.

WWD gives decision makers the opportunity to reflect on the challenges faced by nondrivers in the communities they serve. By experiencing firsthand the challenges of not driving, decision makers gain valuable insights to champion comprehensive and balanced transportation systems that allows people to age in place, kids to safely walk to school and individuals of all abilities and economic backgrounds to fully participate.



# Impact by the Numbers

## Total Participation

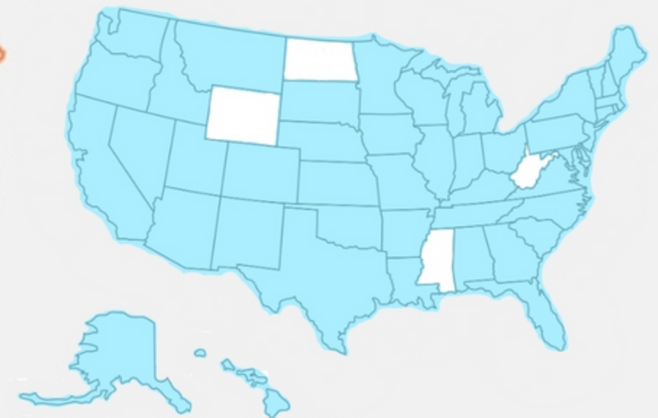
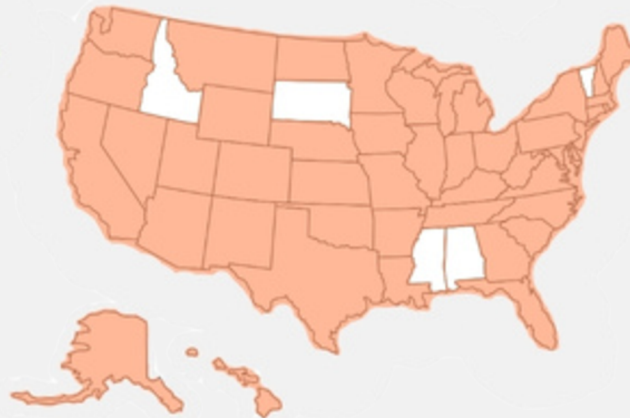


CHARLOTTE, NC

**523** local organizers in all **50** states and Washington, D.C.

**769** local and state decision makers from **45** states and Washington, D.C.

**2,277** individuals from **46** states and Washington, D.C.



In 2023, WWD gained support from 953 organizations and individuals across 41 states and local decision-makers across 35 states. Focused efforts to boost engagement in 2024 resulted in a 277% increase, with 3,595 participants, including organizations in all 50 states, state and local decision-makers in 45 states, and individuals in 46 states.

We were also able to engage organizers in Canada and Australia to join the movement, expanding its reach and fostering a growing international impact.

Updates in 2024:

- Launched a dedicated website to centralize resources and information.
- Distributed flyers and stickers to local organizations, increasing visibility and engagement.

- Enhanced messaging and expanded access to open-source tools.
- Leveraged statistics and compelling key phrases to strengthen advocacy efforts.
- Engaged state and federal elected officials and public leaders, encouraging their participation.
- Supported the formation of statewide coalitions through collaboration with local organizations.
- Partnered with national organizations to amplify participation and reach.
- Provided funding to support initiatives led by three local organizations.
- Delivered presentations at conferences to share insights and promote the campaign.
- Offered personalized, 1-on-1 technical assistance to stakeholders.
- Created actionable opportunities for advocacy and long-term change.



TOLEDO, OHIO

FAYETTE COUNTY  
**Lexington motorists encouraged to use other transportation during a Week Without Driving**

BY CHRISTOPHER LEACH  
 SEPTEMBER 27, 2024 5:00 AM | 2











Howard Florence rides his bicycle along the Town Branch Commons trail near Midland Avenue in Lexington, Ky., following a ribbon cutting ceremony Thursday, Oct. 13, 2022, for the completion of the more than two-mile trail through downtown. RYAN C. HERMENS [rhermens@herald-leader.com](mailto:rhermens@herald-leader.com)

WWD achieved significant visibility and sparked meaningful conversations across a majority of social media platforms. In many of the posts and videos shared, participants showed their challenges, thoughts on rethinking how communities are designed and navigated, but also the joys they experienced.

Local media also played a critical role in reinforcing the campaign's reach. By highlighting the challenges faced by nondrivers and the need for transportation options, local media brought community stories that resonated with their audiences. Many brought policymakers and community leaders into the conversation through interviews and discussions, sharing the impact that WWD was creating in their communities.

**Social Media**

-  **1,803 POSTS**  **568 POSTS**
-  **4,440 TWEETS**  **260 POSTS**
-  **100+ VIDEOS**  **200+ POSTS**
-  **18 VIDEOS**  **50+ POSTS**

**Local Media**

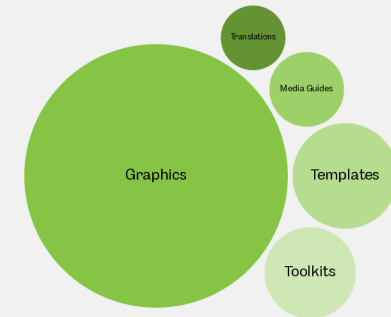
- 80 BROADCAST**
- 131 FEATURED NEWS ARTICLES**
- 16 BLOGS**
- 8 PODCASTS**
- 32 MENTIONED ARTICLES**

# Efforts to Results

WWD demonstrates how local organizations can lead grassroots movements to connect with decision makers, local media and begin to shift the conversation on transportation choices.

## Resource Development and Distribution

By creating and sharing tools such as social media toolkits, templates, and media guides, we empowered organizations to tailor the WWD to their communities. These resources broadened the initiative's reach across all 50 states.



## Learning Opportunities

Through 9 webinars attended by 155 unique participants, including local organizations and transit professionals, we fostered the exchange of best practices and collaborative learning. As a result, participants reported greater confidence in organizing local initiatives.



## Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

We provided tailored support to 35 organizations across 30 states and Washington, D.C., equipping them with tools and guidance to successfully implement campaigns. This support directly enhanced efforts with over locals events and actions across 25 states.



## Elected Official Engagement

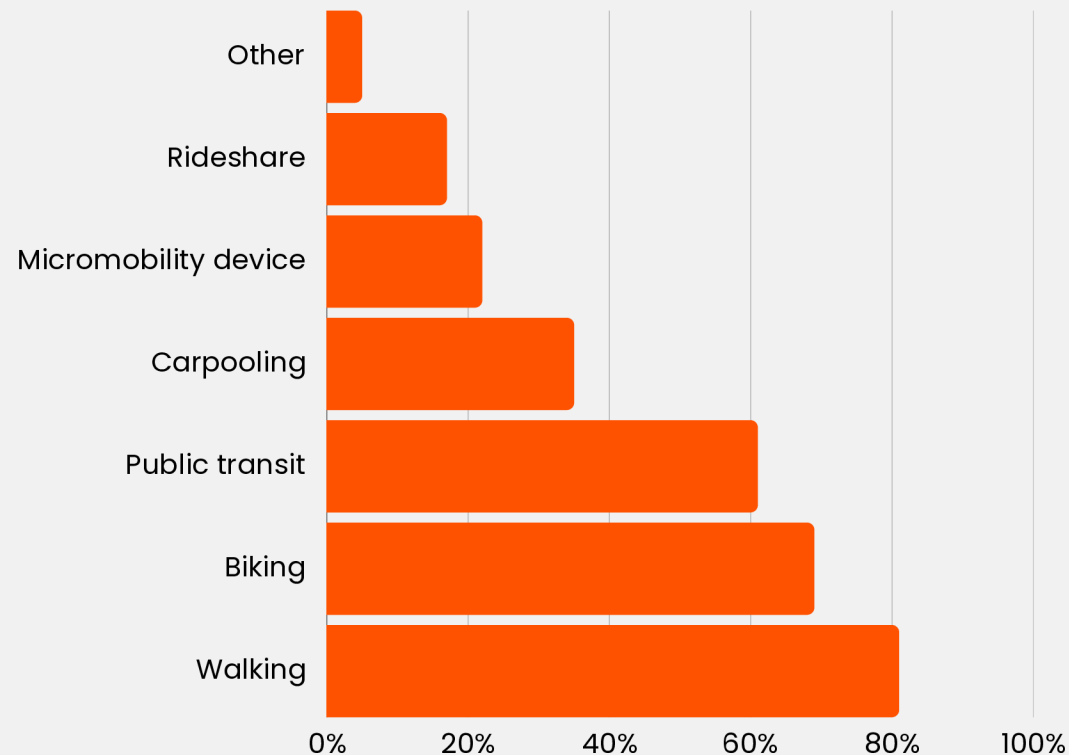
Interviews with participating elected officials revealed the challenges nondrivers face and how the initiative is helping their understanding of transportation in their community. Notably, 75% of elected officials expressed interest in participating again.



# Stories of Impact

As part of WWD, we surveyed with participants to better understand their experiences and the alternative modes of transportation they relied on during the week. A significant majority of respondents highlighted walking as a key mode of transportation, shedding light on the vital role pedestrian mobility plays in fostering accessible and equitable communities.

Participants also shared personal stories and reflections from the week, offering a insight into their challenges, joys, and newly gained perspectives on navigating their environments without driving.



“

This experience has made me increasingly sympathetic with people who have no other option than to walk, especially those with disabilities. It's difficult to organize transportation with others, and nearly impossible to do things like grocery shop if it involves carrying 30 pounds of groceries two miles. I think it's important to provide services that meet the needs of disabled people and also make transportation easier for everyone. - Community member

”



TACOMA, WASHINGTON



Below, decision makers share how this experience reshaped their perspectives and reinforced the urgency of creating equitable, accessible, and sustainable transportation networks. These reflections emphasize the critical role of local and state leaders in driving change and prioritizing the needs of all community members.

“ It makes me really think about the amount of space and money we dedicate to cars/car drivers, and how little space, infrastructure, and money we spend helping people. It also makes me think about how the design of our roadways prioritizes the speed of vehicles, rather than the safety of people walking, rolling, biking, and using transit. - Kiana Otsuka from OahuMPO ”

“ Public transportation/transit needs to be increased and publicly funded. Buses in a city that only run every hour is not enough for people relying on it. Also, buses, both local and those between communities, need to operate later into the evening. - Gerard Bedard from NH Department of Transportation ”

“ The experience opened my eyes to how disabling the sidewalks here are. - Councilmember from North Carolina ”

“ Made me more conscious of intercity travel and needs in rural areas. I assumed there must be some option. - Jordi Comas from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection ”

“ I think a WWD foregrounds the access issues we are aware of but perhaps don't prioritize. I hope that we can use the focus of a WWD to commit to change in the near term. - Jennie Chamberlain from Haover Selectboard Member ”

“ This experience has inspired me to engage my fellow local officials like the state lawmakers about accessible and available transit. Proper funding starts at the states when the federal funds expire or not accepted. I can do my best as a local councilwoman by thinking of transportation riders while we think of traffic calming and open space planning. - Joi Washington from Media Borough Council ”

# Building Momentum for Change

As we plan for the future, America Walks will continue to provide resources and tools for engagement, capacity building, and technical assistance to all organizers. Our focus is on fostering meaningful engagement, collaboration, and action at every level. Changes in 2025 will aim to strengthen participation and advocacy and enhance organizational capacity.

- Emphasize the experience and reflection of WWD, showcasing the opportunity to gain insight and build knowledge.
- Encourage participants to invite their elected officials to join the initiative, amplifying its reach and influence.
- Broaden outreach to public agencies, work with transit agencies, transportation departments, and community organizers to use WWD as a tool for collaboration and education.
- Engage more local organizations, particularly in states that decision makers and individuals have yet to be connected to the movement.
- Build partnerships with groups outside traditional transportation spaces to highlight the interconnectedness of mobility with health, housing, environment and economic opportunity.
- Establish an advisory group to guide the national coalition, fostering collective decision-making and strategic alignment.
- Provide funding assistance to local organizations, empowering them to host impactful campaigns with local events and action.

## Why Partner With Us

America Walks excels at mobilizing communities. We demonstrate how a focus on grassroots actions, investments, partnerships, coalition building, and the development of free and accessible resources yield tangible results.

By partnering with us, you join a national effort to address systemic transportation barriers impacting millions of people across the United States. Your support enables us to continue to equip local organizations with essential resources, data and training. With your support next year, we can take these efforts further by providing funding assistance to local organizations, establishing an equitable and paid advisory group to guide a national coalition, and introducing innovative initiatives to enhance participation. These resources include creating toolkits for small businesses, offering incentives for hosting “Walk with a Decision Maker” events, and expanding technical assistance for public agencies.

Our work reflects our commitment to transparent storytelling, demonstrating how strategic activities lead to measurable outcomes. We will continue to serve as a resource for organizations looking to amplify their initiatives while inspiring collaboration and secure funding for broader change at the local level.

# Thank You

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, partners, and advocates who joined us in walking, rolling, biking, riding transit, carpooling, and more during this WWD. Your dedication, collaboration and passion have been instrumental in this year's success. Whether you contributed your time, expertise, or resources, your impact is immeasurable. From local organizations to national partners, and from individual advocates to elected officials, each of you has played a vital role in driving this movement forward.



## Special Thanks To All WWD 2024 Organizers

