

# Walkability Assessment and Walking Tour of Land Use

## Walkability Assessment

### **The Overview**

Walkability matters. Every citizen trip begins and ends with a mode of simple pedestrian transportation. Studies suggest that a community with sufficient walkability derives benefits to the health of its citizens, the community, the environment, and the economy. Walking can provide an effective, affordable, and efficient mode of exercise and transportation, which can benefit the health and activity levels of the community's citizens. It can also offer opportunities for community engagement, gathering, and interaction. Higher walkability tend to be associated with better planned recreation, transportation, and community development, which tend to provide a high level of pedestrian oriented networks of trails, sidewalks, and walkable features. This type of planning can increase economic benefits by revitalizing downtowns, increasing private investment, increasing property values, promoting tourism, and encouraging capital growth of businesses. Walkability and proximity to essential destinations are often correlated with economically sound communities and higher property values. Proper sidewalks can lead to better environments for businesses due to ease of access and promotion of perusing and window-shopping. Decrease in short car trips (the most inefficient and highest polluting trips per mile) can lead to decreased harmful auto emissions. In addition, other socio-environmental benefits of having a higher level of citizens active on the street and in their neighborhoods can include a heightened awareness of community issues and local land use, and may offer deterrents to crime.

### **Walkability Assessment**

The assessment will be a three-step process that will be used to stimulate citizen discussion, exploration of issues, and prioritization of areas of concern related to walkability. Step 1 will provide a basic introduction and general questions to initiate exploration and critical thinking related to walkability in the community. Step 2 involves two parts: a 12 question survey and also a ranking of the "7 C's." Step 3 wraps up the assessment.

Step 1: Who, When, Where, How, and Why

When? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Who completed this assessment?

\*Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you assess walkability (e.g. street, area, specific destination, neighborhood, subdivision, or route between specific areas)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should the City and Borough of Sitka use the assessment results to develop a healthy community, or initiate a specific project in a specific area?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the “walkscore” of the area you assessed? (see [www.walkscore.com](http://www.walkscore.com)) Note: on scale of 1-100, **ANB Hall area received 60**, City Hall received 53, 200 Lincoln St. area received 65, Halibut Point Rec area received 0, Seamart area received 27, and Totem Park area received 34. These scores are to help give some overview, but to also show that walking assessments are not always as objective as one might think. Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Did your walkscore seem correct as compared to other scores given?

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Are there specific areas that should be a priority for the City to assess? (e.g. Katlian, Downtown, Harbor access, Raptor Center area along Sawmill Creek, etc.)

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What groups or type of users should be included in assessment? (e.g. Adults, elders, children, impaired pedestrians, etc.)

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Do you think priorities and assessment criteria are different for these different groups? And if so, why?

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Why is walkability important to you and/or the community?

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Anything else you would like to share or recommend?

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## STEP 2: Assess the area you selected in Step 1.

In the next questions, you will first answer and score some questions about walkability. Next, you will rate and prioritize some concerns (The 7 “C”s) related to walkability.

This can be done by an individual or a group. The more people you have, the more you can share, discuss, and delegate different duties or even expand the assessment to include taking photos, notes, or measurements. Often, the first assessment can lead you to determine that more time, resources, materials, or even a review would be beneficial. Feel free to revisit any steps and questions as you proceed. Knowledge is power.

Note: Be careful and mindful of your surroundings, vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, heavy machinery, and unsafe conditions. Obey all traffic laws and proceed cautiously and safely.

Gather the following materials that may aid you in completing the walkability assessment.

- ☐ Street Map or Aerial Map of area to be assessed.
- ☐ Clipboards.
- ☐ Note Paper.
- ☐ Pens, pencils, highlighters.
- ☐ Camera.
- ☐ Tape measurer or ruler.
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes and proper clothing for the weather.
- ☐ Anything else you think you need? \_\_\_\_\_

Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood's walkability.

# How walkable is your community?

Location of walk \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Rating Scale:



## STEP 2.1 – Questions on Walkability

1. Did you have room or a designated place to walk?

☐ Yes or ☐ Some problems

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Sidewalk problems included:

☐ No sidewalks

☐ Sidewalks or paths started and stopped and were not continuous

☐ Sidewalks were broken, cracked, misalignment, steep slope, uneven, or otherwise presented walking hazards

☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Was it easy and safe to cross any streets?

☐ Yes or ☐ Some problems

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Problems included:

☐ Road was too wide

☐ Traffic Signals made the wait too long

☐ Traffic Signals did not give us enough time to cross

☐ Crossing needed better crosswalk identification (striping, sign, etc.) and/or traffic signal

☐ There were obstructions (e.g. cars, bushes, fences, signs, homes, etc.) that blocked view of crossing, cars, or other traffic

☐ Needs curb ramps or repair/maintenance of curbs or curb ramps

☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Did drivers and traffic follow traffic rules and drive safely?

☐ Yes or ☐ Some problems

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Problems included drivers that:

- ☐ Backed out without looking
- ☐ Did not yield to pedestrians
- ☐ Turned into people crossing street
- ☐ Drove too fast
- ☐ Accelerated through traffic lights or ran red lights
- ☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1   2   3   4   5   6

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules (could a child or other user follow these safety rules)? ☐

Yes or ☐ Some problems

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

It was problematic to follow safety rules when:

- ☐ Crossing traffic or needing to cross across streets
- ☐ Walk, bike, or run, in proper direction in regards to flow of traffic. (e.g. walk on path, bike with traffic, etc.)
- ☐ Stay in proper pedestrian path or bike lane
- ☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1   2   3   4   5   6

5. Was your walk pleasant and safe?

☐ Yes or ☐ Some problems

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Problems related to safety or level of pleasantness included:

- ☐ Needed more landscaping (flowers, bushes, trees, grass, etc).
- ☐ Needed more benches or facilities to cater to pedestrians (restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.)
- ☐ Scary dogs
- ☐ Scary people
- ☐ Not well lighted
- ☐ Dirty, smelly, lots of trash.
- ☐ Lack of traffic calming features (speed bumps, trees, speed limit or warning of pedestrian signs).

- ☐ Sidewalks were broken, cracked, misalignment, steep slope, uneven, or otherwise presented walking hazards
- ☐ Sidewalks lacked curb cuts/ramps to allow use by strollers, wheel chairs, and senior citizens, or others that would benefit from such features.
- ☐ There were visual obstructions (e.g. poles, signs, fences, cars, structures, trashcans, etc.) that impaired safe crossing or use of path.
- ☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Are paved sidewalks, multi-use paths, or paved trails present?

- ☐ Yes or ☐ No
- ☐ Additional Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. Does the area you walked accommodate different users (adults, youth, elders, impaired pedestrians, etc.), including but not limited to people who use strollers, wheelchairs, need assistance, or need parental supervision, or have special needs?

- ☐ Yes or ☐ No
- ☐ Additional Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. Is the sidewalk continuous? (i.e. without gaps in path or lack of sidewalk)

- ☐ Yes or ☐ No
- ☐ Additional Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. Are sidewalks a minimum of five feet wide to accommodate at least two pedestrians to walk together or use a wheel chair or mobility scooter?

- ☐ Yes or ☐ No
- ☐ Additional Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

10. Is there a sidewalk on both sides of the street?

- ☐ Yes or ☐ No
- ☐ Additional Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

11. The following destinations were present along route:

- ☐ Grocery store
- ☐ Convenience store
- ☐ Food establishment
- ☐ Farmers market
- ☐ Pharmacy
- ☐ Entertainment
- ☐ Religious facility
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Government office
- ☐ Post office
- ☐ Bank
- ☐ Laundry
- ☐ Retail shop
- ☐ Professional services
- ☐ Fitness or recreational facility
- ☐ Park/playground
- ☐ Educational facility (School, College, tutoring, etc.)
- ☐ Employment center
- ☐ Social services
- ☐ Hospital, medical, or dental office.
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Additional Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

12. Was the path a part of a larger pedestrian network?

- ☐ Yes or ☐ No
- ☐ Additional Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

13. Final Tally – How does your area measure up? (add up your score)

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ 62-72 Excellent area for walking. No improvement needed.
- ☐ 50-61 Pretty good. Overall safe and walkable for most users, only a little improvement needed.
- ☐ 38-49 Okay, but needs some major attention and improvement to be safe and highly useable.
- ☐ 26-37 Poor quality. Needs a lot of work. It is unsafe and not very user friendly.
- ☐ 11-25 Very poor quality. Needs a complete overhaul to be useable and safe.
- ☐ 0-10 Absolutely nonexistent or so unsafe it is a major hazard to life. Wouldn't risk walking it.



## Identifying and Ranking Potential Indicators, Concerns, and Priorities for Walkability – The 7 C's

C1: Connectivity	Indicator/Concern/Priority	Rank: 6 is most important & 1 is least important. Rank top 6 indicators, concerns, or priorities. (use 6,5,4, 3, 2, & 1, once each)
	Street Density (alternate routes)	
	Direct Path/Routes	
	Dedicated Pedestrian Infrastructure	
	Pedestrian Network integrated into community network and rural & urban fabric	
	Accessible by all user groups	
	Other:	
	Other:	

C2: Convenience	Indicator/Concern/Priority	Rank: 6 is most important & 1 is least important. Rank top 6 indicators, concerns, or priorities. (use 6,5,4, 3, 2, & 1, once each)
	Land Use Diversity	
	Sidewalk usability (available, width, condition)	
	Absence of obstacles	
	Density and mix of daily uses/users	
	Facilities/infrastructure for accessing steep areas	
	Other:	
	Other:	

C3: Comfort	Indicator/Concern/Priority	Rank: 6 is most important & 1 is least important. Rank top 6 indicators, concerns, or priorities (use 6,5,4, 3, 2, & 1, once each
	Eyes on Path – windows facing path, visibility	
	Pavement surface quality and condition	
	Amenities (benches, water, restrooms, landscaping)	
	Climate Protection (from rain, snow, sun, wind)	
	Aesthetic and Sensory quality of environment	
	Other:	
	Other:	

C4: Conviviality (Lively, friendly)	Indicator/Concern/Priority	Rank: 6 is most important & 1 is least important. Rank top 6 indicators, concerns, or priorities (use 6,5,4, 3, 2, & 1, once each
	Opportunity for meeting, sojourning (benches, tables, terraces, nooks)	
	Existence of Anchor Sites (squares, open-air markets, park etc.)	
	Mixed uses and mixed working hours	
	Active edges – absence of dull facades, blank walls, & empty space	
	Population Density	
	Other:	
	Other:	

C5: Conspicuousness	Indicator/Concern/Priority	Rank: 6 is most important & 1 is least important. Rank top 6
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		indicators, concerns, or priorities (use 6,5,4, 3, 2, & 1, once each
	Navigational landmarks	
	Clear sightlines – lack of visual obstructions	
	Street signs, wayfinding, signage	
	Architectural and façade complexity	
	Sense of Place	
	Other:	
	Other:	

C6: Coexistence	Indicator/Concern/Priority	Rank: 6 is most important & 1 is least important. Rank top 6 indicators, concerns, or priorities (use 6,5,4, 3, 2, & 1, once each
	Traffic Safety at Paths	
	Proper and safe ped crossings	
	Appropriate Separation of peds, bike, and vehicles	
	Proportion of ped friendly streets	
	Lack of intrusion into ped areas (parked cars, bikes)	
	Other:	
	Other:	

C7: Commitment	Indicator/Concern/Priority	Rank: 6 is most important & 1 is least important. Rank top 6 indicators, concerns, or priorities (use 6,5,4, 3, 2, & 1, once each
	Enforcement of regulations protecting peds (ADA, sidewalks, snow removal, trash cans, etc)	
	Street cleanliness	
	Means for public participation	

	Walking initiatives (walk to work, senior walks, walk programs)	
	Existence of design and development standards that support development of walkable sidewalks, public space interventions, and walkable community initiatives.	

Step 3: Now that we know the problems and the priorities, what can we learn from it to improve the walkability of the community?

1. From Step 1, did the walkscore make sense or seem inaccurate compared to other scores for areas you know about?

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2. What two questions received the best ratings from Step 2.1?

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3. What two questions received the worst ratings from Step 2.1?

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4. What was your total score for Step 2.1? Score: \_\_\_\_\_

5. From Step 2, the 7 C's, what are the most important factors (one from each category: e.g. one from C1, one from C2, etc.)

C1: \_\_\_\_\_

C2: \_\_\_\_\_

C3: \_\_\_\_\_

C4: \_\_\_\_\_

C5: \_\_\_\_\_

C6: \_\_\_\_\_

C7: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Did you learn anything about your community from this exercise?

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7. What steps could the city and community take together to make walkability and neighborhoods better?

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## Things to Improve Your Community Score and Increase the Walkability of Your Community

What you can do now:

- Pick another route for now
- Tell local traffic engineering officials or public works department about specific problems or provide copy of this assessment
- Trim trees or bushes that block vision or ask neighbors to do the same
- Leave nice notes on cars, asking them to not park there due to safety issue
- Set an example: practice safe walking behaviors, drive slow, look both ways, wear bright clothing, and encourage others to do the same.
- Report unsafe driving to police or law enforcement
- Educate yourself and your child about safe walking practices
- Organize a walking initiative (parents walking kids to school or walk to work)
- Identify and point out unsafe areas or conditions to family/friends/others
- Asked neighbors to keep dogs fenced or leashed
- Report scary dogs or people to police
- Report lighting needs to police or Public Works Department
- Take a walk with a trash bag

- Plant trees and flowers in your yard
- Select safest routes for your walk
- Walk with a friend

What you can do over time:

- Speak up at Board meetings
- Write or petition for more walkways or walkability initiative
- Make media aware of the problem
- Work with others to develop a plan to develop a safe walking route or walkable community
- Push for crosswalks and safe walking infrastructure at public meetings
- Become part of the solutions (form groups, fundraise, raise awareness)
- Encourage School Boards to provide education for safe walking and walk to school programs
- Encourage School Boards to provide crossing guards
- Contact state government to support local walking programs along state highways and schools.
- Contact local businesses and seek funding, support, and execution of safe walking initiatives (what can they do in the short term and long term)
- Start a crime watch program in your area
- Begin an adopt-a-street program
- Find out about community walks that are planned in the future
- Develop a local initiative and seek grants for a project that improves walkability

## **Land Use Interactive Mapping Exercise**

While walking your neighborhood, be mindful of the following types of land uses that you might encounter: community assets, development priority sites, problematic intersections, public safety concerns, undesirable land uses, desired uses/development, poor appearance, and other issues/points you would like to add. You can label the attached maps with 1-8 (see attached Legend for Maps). In addition, you can use the social mapping applications found at [www.sitkacomprehensiveplan.com](http://www.sitkacomprehensiveplan.com) under Public Participation. You can sign up and transfer your personal map to the online map. This will help planners, the Planning Commission, City Assembly, and the community at large to assess community land use issues, problems, and solutions. The online map has additional tools you can use, such as leaving a title, detailed description, and even uploading a URL or photo to further explain your point of interest.

This exercise can be used to add additional information to your walkability assessment, add another layer of depth to the previous municipal land management mapping exercise completed at the June 2016 meeting at the Fire Hall, and to give more detailed input regarding community land use for developing the Comprehensive Plan.




# Legend for Maps

## The SMAP

1 = 

**Community Asset:** Assets to the community that should be maintained or enhanced.

2 = 

**Development Priority Site:** Sites you feel should be developed or redeveloped in the short term.

3 = 

**Problematic Intersection:** Intersections that you feel are a safety concern or impact the smooth flow of traffic.

4 = 

**Public Safety Concern:** areas that you feel pose a concern to public safety and pedestrians.

5 = 

**Undesirable Use:** An existing use in the community that you feel is undesirable.

6 = 

**Desired Use/Development:** Identifies an area and a use that you would like to see developed.

7 = 

**Poor Appearance:** Areas that you feel are unsightly or could benefit from additional landscaping or aesthetic improvements.

8 = 

**Other:** All other points/issues you would like to add.



