



Conducting Walk Audits

A walk audit is a simple exercise that identifies and records sidewalk conditions, barriers and assets to walking, and the perceptions of people walking. It is used to improve walking conditions on a pre-planned route. Additionally, walk audits can help to understand the environment from an all-ability inclusive perspective. Walk audits can be used to build awareness of the importance of walkable design, identify specific pedestrian safety issues, advance policy and community development goals, inform planning decisions, and improve health and quality of life for residents.

To suggest a walk audit route in the Spokane region, please email Samantha Hennessy at shennessy@srhd.org.

Walk Audit Details

Date and time: July 16, 2024, 8-9 a.m.

Route: Northeast Community Center Bemiss Neighborhood Loop

Hosts: staff from Spokane Regional Health District

Weather: sunny, temperatures ranging from 73-80 °F

Nearby Destinations

Nearby destinations include Hays Park, Shaw Middle School, and Spokane Public Library – Hillyard.

Observations

- The sidewalk on North Cook Street near the Heritage Heights Apartments was in great condition and had a barrier between pedestrians and drivers. Much of the route did not have a separation or buffer.
- At the North Cook Street and East Empire Avenue intersection, there were button-activated flashing signs.
- Most of the route had curb cut ramps where the sidewalk was interrupted by a street. The direction of the curb-cut ramps was frequently unsafe along North Crestline Street as it directed pedestrians into traffic or the bicycle lane.
- Much of the route had poor sidewalk conditions, including raised sections from tree roots and cracks. This makes sidewalks difficult for pedestrians to navigate.
- Many obstacles blocked the route, including utility poles, overgrown landscaping, and a Lime Scooter. Like sidewalk conditions, obstacles make sidewalks difficult to navigate.
- Bike lanes, when present, were filled with debris which creates an unsafe riding space.
- There was one Spokane Transit Authority bus stop on North Crestline Street between East Empire Avenue and Providence Avenue close to the alley.
 - The transit stop does not protect waiting passengers.
 - The auditors would not feel safe waiting in this location.



1. North Cook Street near the Heritage Heights Apartments with barrier for pedestrians
2. Crosswalk on East Empire Avenue with button activated flashing light and small post
3. Curb cutout on North Crestline Street heading into the bike lane and traffic
4. Sidewalk section on East Providence Avenue with crumbling material
5. Raised sidewalk sections of up to two inches on East Providence Avenue due to tree root
6. Landscaping obstacle on North Crestline that was 20 feet long down the sidewalk
7. Debris in bike lane (garbage and rocks up to two inches in diameter)
8. Close up of bike lane debris
9. Bus stop on North Crestline

*The pictures provided in this section were taken after the walk audit.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggestions to improve pedestrian access in the Bemiss neighborhood.

Recommendations were identified through auditor forms and notes, auditor discussion, and the AARP Build a Better Neighborhood tool.

Top Auditor Recommendations

- Repair sidewalks
- Improve landscape maintenance

Other Recommendations

- Add pedestrian-friendly lighting to pedestrian walkways
- Add safety barriers between the sidewalk and street
- Add outdoor seating for public use at the bus stop
- Create a four-way stop at the East Empire Avenue and North Cook Street intersection

Walk Audit Participants

Special thanks to the volunteer auditors:

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