



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: Aug. 6, 2024, 4-6 p.m.

Route: North Monroe Street Riverside Neighborhood Loop

Hosts: Spokane Regional Health District in partnership with Riverside Neighborhood Council and Downtown Spokane during the Downtown Spokane National Night Out Against Crime

Weather: sunny, temperatures ranging from 85-86 °F

Nearby Destinations

Nearby destinations include Riverfront Park, United States Postal Service, and Spokane Public Library – Central

Observations

Much of the route has sidewalks that are in good condition and look recently paved. The walk audit identified two major challenges: universal accessibility and long wait times.

Auditors found the route was not universally accessible based on three conditions. First, the crosswalk pedestrian signals were viewed as easy to operate but did not include an audible prompt for people with vision impairment. This is a safety and accessibility issue due to the high traffic on the route. Second, the route had curb cutouts at crosswalk crossings, but many of the tactile surfaces lead into the street where vehicles turn, leaving pedestrians to stand in the path of automobile travel. People with vision impairment may not be able to see a vehicle turning. Third, many auditors indicated that the crosswalks did not allow enough time to cross. This is a safety issue for people who are unable to read the timer that counts down the crossing time warning pedestrians. Overall, many people may struggle to safely navigate the route.

The timing of the pedestrian signal increases risk on the route. Many auditors commented on this element, saying pedestrians frequently had to wait through one or two traffic cycles before they were prompted to cross. Auditors witnessed risky motorist behavior, including running red lights and turning right at a red light onto West Main Avenue from North Monroe Street against signage. While risky motorist behaviors could be influenced by many factors, risky pedestrian behavior appeared to be a response to long wait times for signal changes.



1. West Main Avenue on the pedestrian island with the Lincoln Memorial Statue headed towards the Spokane Public Library – Central — the sidewalk leads to grass and no place to cross North Monroe Street in the direction of the library
2. West Spokane Falls Boulevard on the pedestrian island with the Lincoln Memorial Statue — pedestrian path is worn in the grass
3. West Spokane Falls Boulevard on pedestrian island without a statue at the North Monroe Street crosswalk — the pedestrian signal is at a different level than the sidewalk, the sidewalk narrows, debris on navigation strip, no clear corner to separate pedestrians and vehicles
4. Crossing North Monroe Street towards the pedestrian island on West Riverside Avenue — the navigation strip leads the pedestrian into a space that is used by turning vehicles and pedestrians
5. Car taking a right turn at the red light from North Monroe Street to West Main Avenue where there is a no turn on red sign
6. Crosswalk pedestrian buttons on the pedestrian island on North Monroe Street and West Spokane Falls Boulevard
7. Vehicle stopped at the red light blocking the marked crosswalk
8. Crack in the sidewalk on the southeast corner of North Monroe Street and West Main Street near the permanent bollards

*The pictures shown in this section were taken at the time of the audit.

Recommendations

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

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

Top Auditor Recommendations

- Update crosswalk signals at all intersections to include auditory prompts, decrease wait times to be signaled to walk, and increase the walk time specifically when crossing North Monroe Street
- Move navigation strips on corners away from traffic (turning vehicles)

Other Recommendations

- Increase the width of sidewalks that narrow at corners
- Add safety barriers between the sidewalk and street
- Improve infrastructure for bicycles and electric scooters

Walk Audit Participants

Special thanks to the volunteer auditors:

Brenda Clark

Jaea Ledgerwood

Carol Bryan

Kitty Klitzke

Rodney Moore

Mary Malone

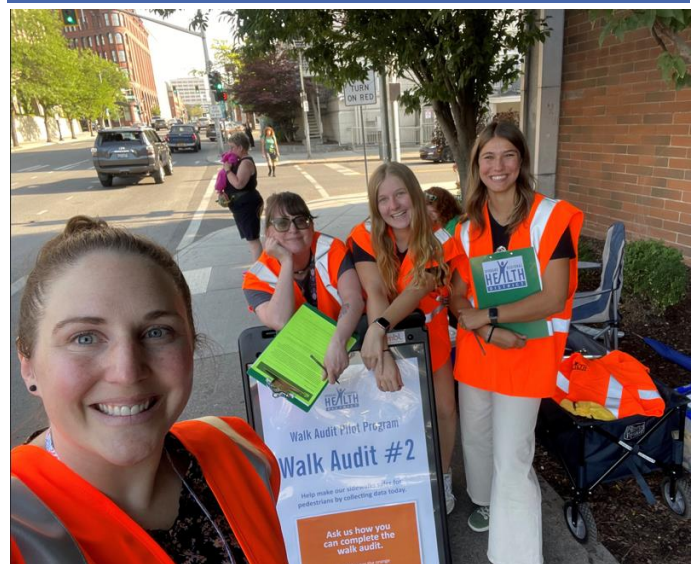
Savanna Carr

Maura Lammers



How pedestrian-friendly and safe is this section?

**This is an average of the participants' scores on this question*



Walk Audit Pilot Program
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