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: Dec. 12, 2024, 2-2:30 p.m.

Route: East Indiana Avenue Crosswalk Spokane Valley Route

Hosts: staff from Spokane Regional Health District

Weather: partly cloudy, temperature 33 °F

Nearby Destinations

Nearby destinations include Humanix and CHAS Valley Pharmacy

Observations

- The route had many trees located in the safety barrier between pedestrians and traffic, increasing the strength of the barrier and providing shade to pedestrians.

- There was one Spokane Transit Authority bus stop on East Indiana Avenue in front of Residence Inn. The transit stop was clearly marked and shaded by a tree. There was no paved path from the sidewalk to the stop or to the road; this creates an obstacle for those using a wheelchair, stroller or walker.

- The route included one crosswalk, which had clear signage that lights up when a pedestrian uses the signal, allowing approximately 27 seconds to cross four lanes of traffic and a pedestrian island. The navigation strips on the pedestrian island collect debris. There is an audio prompt, but it could only be heard from one side of the street. The pedestrian island's paved path required navigating at a couple of tight angles that may be a challenge to some. Eastbound traffic did not stop for pedestrians on the pedestrian island or from the sidewalk when the crossing sign was flashing.

- Overall, the sidewalks were in good condition with a few major cracks, none of which lifted to two inches.

- There was litter throughout the route, and there were no trash receptacles.

- Bike lanes were filled with debris, which creates an unsafe riding space.

1. Spokane Transit Authority bus stop number 4296
2. Crosswalk with pedestrian island crossing East Indiana Avenue
3. Flashing pedestrian signal at crosswalk
4. Tactile navigation strip and eastbound traffic from the pedestrian island of the crosswalk
5. Two tactile navigation strips indicating a parking lot road assess location
6. Crack in the sidewalk that created a dip in the sidewalk of a half inch
7. Water grate in bike lane with debris near crosswalk
8. Landscaping that has grown over the sidewalk
9. Grafiti on electric box along sidewalk

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

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggestions to improve pedestrian access in the City of Spokane Valley.

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

Top Auditor Recommendations

- Increase the volume of the audio prompt for the crosswalk.
- Make improvements to the bus stop, such as adding a paved path from the sidewalk to the bus stop and the road. Add a trash can, bench and shelter for a more pleasant user experience.

Other Recommendations

- Add crosswalk safety flags for pedestrians crossing to get the attention of drivers in addition to the pedestrian crossing sign that is flashing
- Improve landscape maintenance along sidewalks
- Increase frequency of street cleaning to include the bicycle lane
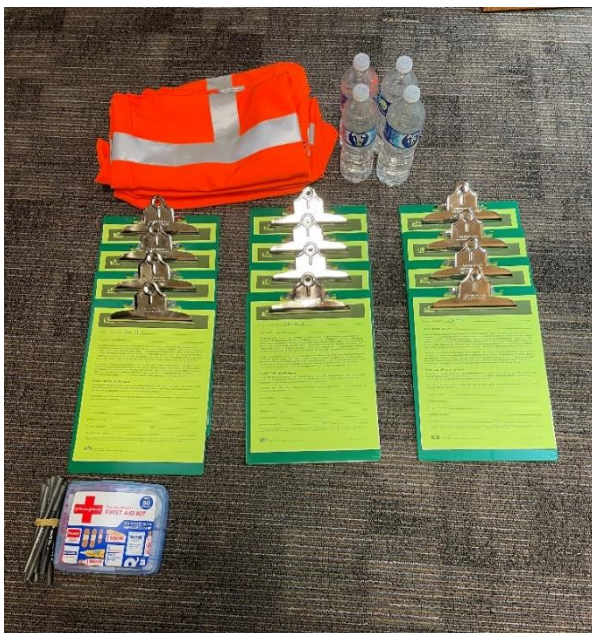
Walk Audit Participants

This audit was completed by SRHD staff and interns as a portion of a longer route requested by a community member.

How pedestrian-friendly and safe is this section?

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