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A User Manual for Pedestrian Safety Programs	
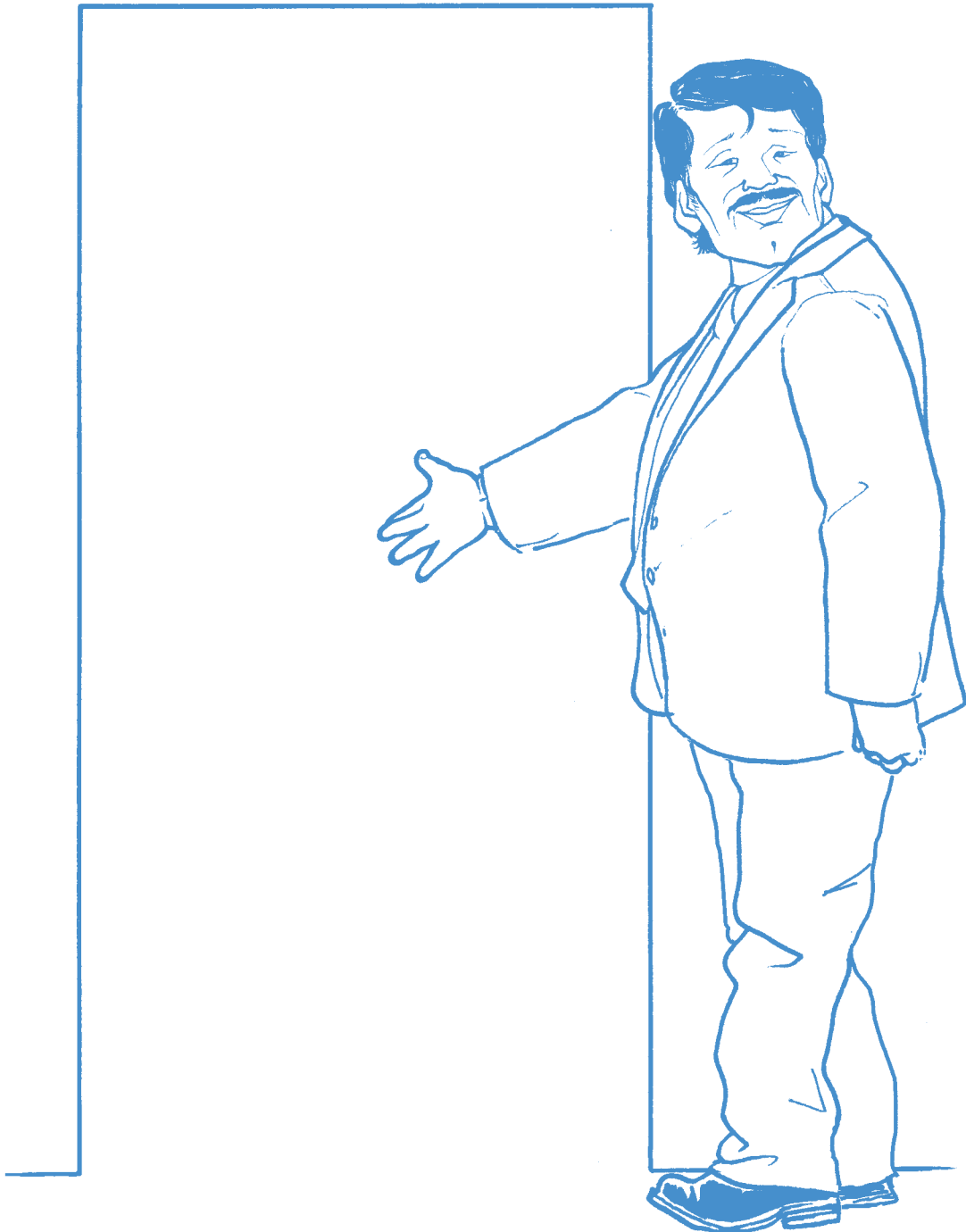
Welcome

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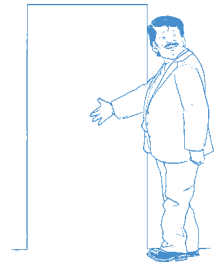
This User Manual is designed to guide you through the process of building a community-wide pedestrian safety program. It is an integral part of the Pedestrian Safety Toolkit, which contains additional information and resources to support your program from inception to evaluation.

You may be wondering who is the target audience for this User Manual. **You are!** This manual is written for anyone who believes that something should be done to make his or her community a better place for pedestrians. It does not matter if you work for the government agency that is responsible for sidewalk planning or if you are a concerned citizen who is interested in creating a pedestrian-friendly transportation environment. You may be a parent who wishes your children could walk to school or to the park, but you are worried about the cars that speed through your neighborhood. You might be a senior citizen who can't make it across a busy intersection before the "Don't Walk" light comes on. It doesn't matter who you are; what matters is that you care about pedestrians, and you want to make your community more pedestrian-friendly. This User Manual will guide your efforts from enlisting your first ally to evaluating your success.

You Are Not Alone

The prospect of tackling your community's pedestrian safety problem may seem overwhelming at first. There are so many things that need to be done and you are just one person. It is important to remember that you are not alone! You will find allies in a variety of private sector organizations, as well as concerned citizens who will share your concerns about pedestrian safety and can provide volunteer resources and, perhaps, even financial support. Some of these may include:

- **Youth and parent organizations**
- **Business groups, such as chambers of commerce**
- **Senior citizen organizations**
- **Civic groups, such as Kiwanis or Rotary**
- **Insurance companies**
- **Health care providers**
- **Media representatives**

There also are various local government agencies that are responsible for pedestrian safety and access. Staff in these agencies should work with you and your allies to identify the problems that your community is facing and to design programs to eliminate these problems. These agencies include, the Planning Department, for developing community transportation plans; Traffic Engineering Department, for building sidewalks and installing traffic signals; Police and Sheriff's Departments, for enforcing speeding and jaywalking laws; Public School System, for conducting traffic safety education programs; and Mayor's Office and City Council, for allocating resources to make your community more walkable.

Your community also may have a Safe Communities Coalition. A Safe Community promotes injury prevention activities at the local level to solve local highway and traffic safety and other injury problems. It uses a "bottom up" approach to involve citizens in addressing key injury problems in the community. Since pedestrian issues need to be solved at the community level, joining forces with a Safe Communities Coalition may enhance community attention to pedestrian safety. The characteristics of a Safe Community are similar to the processes discussed in this manual. These characteristics include: analysis of data from multiple data sources; expanded partnerships; citizen involvement and inputs; and an integrated and comprehensive injury control system. For more information about Safe Communities, contact The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by fax at (202) 493-2062.

We have tried to keep this manual simple and straightforward. It is written in an informal style and ample white space is provided for you to make notes. You may also want to insert this manual into a three-ring binder so that you can add references and other resource materials as you build your program.

How This Manual Relates to the Pedestrian Safety Toolkit

You probably found this User Manual when you opened your Pedestrian Safety Toolkit. This Toolkit is designed to guide you in establishing a community pedestrian safety program and provide some of the resources you will need to get started. The Toolkit contains:

- A compilation of a variety of pedestrian safety videos and public service announcements

- An interactive CD-ROM of pedestrian safety resources, with state-by-state cross referencing

- A selection of sample materials so you can start a community pedestrian safety program today

If you have found this User Manual but you do not have the Toolkit to go with it, you can request a Toolkit from the following address:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
Office of Communications and Outreach
NTS-21
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Fax: (202) 493-2062

Throughout this User Manual, there will be references to documents or materials that you might want to obtain for your program. All of the resources mentioned are listed in the Pedestrian Safety Toolkit Resource Catalog which is included in the Toolkit. If you don't have this catalog, NHTSA referenced materials can be ordered by writing to:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Communications and Outreach
NTS-21
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Fax: (202) 493-2062

The FHWA R&T referenced materials can be ordered by writing to:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) R&T Report Center
9701 Philadelphia Court, Unit Q
Lanham, MD 20706
Phone: (301) 577-0818
Fax: (301) 577-1421

Definition of Terms

Before we can proceed, we need to have a common understanding of terms. Some of these are very familiar while others may seem new. The terms that are defined here serve as the foundation on which this User Manual and any community pedestrian program should be built. As you involve others in your efforts, including the media, you will need to be able to define what your program covers and what your measures of success will be. Let's start with some definitions.

Pedestrian

The dictionary defines pedestrian as "one who journeys on foot." There are two important parts of this definition. The first is the concept of *journey*. This confirms that walking is a legitimate form of transportation, which, as a rule, should not be disrupted. However, the second part of this definition, *on foot,* needs to be broadened. For the purpose of this User Manual and for your community pedestrian program, "pedestrian" should also include anyone who is operating a wheelchair. The term is generally not used to refer to someone riding a bicycle, but it can be used to refer to a child operating a play vehicle such as a Big Wheel®. You might want to check your state and local vehicle codes, available at your local library, to see exactly what is covered by the term pedestrian in your community.

Walkability

This term will be used frequently in this User Manual and in many of the other resources that are provided in the Toolkit. *Walkability* refers to a combination of community characteristics that deal with pedestrian safety, security, and access. It also reflects the extent to which the needs and rights of pedestrians are taken into consideration by the relevant agencies of local government.

A *walkable community* is a community in which pedestrians have safe places to walk that take them to the places they want to travel to on foot (or via wheelchair). A *walkable community* has made a conscious effort to afford pedestrians an equal status with motorists and other road users and to encourage more people to walk. It is measured by public perceptions about the importance of walking in the community and about the feasibility of walking as a mode of transportation.
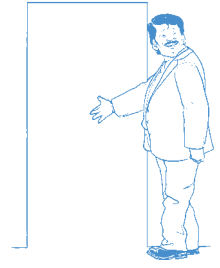
Pedestrian Safety

This aspect of *walkability* deals with the level of risk to pedestrians when attempting to walk along or across the network of roads in a community. It is measured by the number of pedestrians killed or injured in collisions with motor vehicles and by the public's perception of the risk of being hit by a motor vehicle. Pedestrian safety can be enhanced by a variety of facility improvements, traffic calming strategies, education programs, and enforcement efforts.

Some advocates believe safety is the only issue that should be of concern and limit their program efforts to protecting those people who are currently walking from the risk of motor vehicle collisions. Others believe that you cannot provide a safe environment for pedestrians without the political support for walking as a legitimate form of transportation and the policies needed to provide pedestrians with the same rights and consideration as all other road users. While everyone agrees that you can't have *walkability* without *safety,* there is some dispute as to whether you can have safety without walkability. Where do you stand on the issue? Be prepared to debate the topic in your community.

Pedestrian Security

Pedestrian security is different from *pedestrian safety.* While *pedestrian* safety addresses the risk of motor vehicle collision, *pedestrian security* refers to the risk of becoming a victim of violent crime. It is measured by the incidence of crimes such as assault, robbery, rape, and murder against pedestrians. Security can be enhanced by the provision of street lighting, increased police enforcement, and by efforts to bring more people into the downtown area in evening hours.

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access refers to the aspect of *walkability* that deals with a pedestrian's ability to "get there from here" by foot or wheelchair. It encompasses a wide range of community characteristics including sidewalks, pedestrian signals, special pedestrian treatments across complex intersections, and compact land use policies that put residential areas in closer proximity to business and shopping districts. It is measured by the existence of "must have" items such as sidewalks and bridge access and "nice to have" features such as landscaping and pedestrian furniture (e.g. benches, water fountains, etc.).

Community Pedestrian Program

This is a community-wide, comprehensive effort to address the needs of pedestrians of all ages. It needs to include, at a minimum, engineering improvements, such as sidewalks, curb cuts and pedestrian signals; education programs for children and for adult pedestrians and motorists; and traffic law enforcement efforts directed at both pedestrians and motorists. Many communities also include encouragement programs to make walking a more attractive transportation mode.

Traffic Calming

This is a term used to refer to a variety of strategies designed to reduce speed and congestion in residential and commercial areas. These strategies might include traffic roundabouts at neighborhood intersections and speed humps and tables to reinforce correct road user behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.

You may not agree with all of these definitions or even with some of the principles they suggest. However, this is how these terms are being used throughout this manual and how pedestrian advocates around the country are generally using them. If you don't agree with the definitions offered here, feel free to develop your own definitions and use them consistently as you develop your own program.

How This Manual Is Organized

The remainder of this User Manual is organized around the six steps involved in building a community pedestrian safety program. We begin in the next section with an overview of these six steps and a discussion of why it is useful to follow a procedure when developing a program. Following the overview, you will find six additional sections, one for each step of the process.

Overview of Process

If you asked 100 different community organizers how their program achieved its success, you would probably receive 100 different descriptions of how the program was organized and how the work was accomplished. After all, every community and program is unique, with its own characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses. If you analyze what you were being told by each of these 100 individuals, however, a pattern would emerge of a very fundamental process that each program followed from beginning to end. The terms used to describe the steps involved in this process would probably vary, but the concepts involved are universal.

It is this process that serves as the foundation of this User Manual. It involves six steps that are defined as follows.

Making a Commitment

When you move from one or two concerned voices to a small group that has the preliminary approval of key decision-makers

Getting Organized

Formalizing the commitment and recruiting members to your cause

Gathering Data

Learning more precisely what the problems are and gathering input on what people have done to solve them

Developing a Plan

Establishing priorities, goals, and objectives for your program, developing action plans and identifying resource requirements

Implementing Your Program

Doing what needs to be done and making sure everyone knows about it

Evaluating and Revising

Learning what worked and what didn't and using that information to revise your plans and programs

The process does not end with *Evaluating and Revising,* since these steps mark the beginning of a new cycle that repeats itself throughout the life of the program.

There is nothing magical about the steps shown here. A formula doesn't exist for how long or how many dollars you will spend at each stage of development. It is important to adopt a procedure and continually make progress through that procedure in order to achieve your goals.

In the pages that follow, we have provided some guidance on how this process works and some suggestions on how to make it work for you.
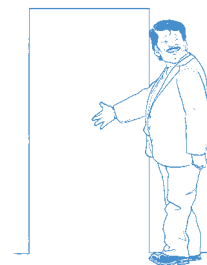
For each step, we have included:

An *Overview,* which provides:
• A description of the step
• A summary of the types of activities that should be conducted during the step

The *Details*, which provides:
• A more in-depth description of how the principal activities should be carried out

Key Resources for Success, which highlights:
• One or two resources that might really make a difference in your overall success. (The Pedestrian Safety Toolkit Resource Catalog provides information on how to obtain all of the *Key Resources* listed.)

You may want to quickly scan each of the steps to see how the process is organized. This will help you find where your community is in the process, and then you can place it at the proper step. You may find that you are farther along than you think, or you may discover that you need to backtrack a little and build a more solid foundation for an effective community-wide program. Once you know where you need to begin, you might want to review each step in greater detail and then build your own personal "To Do List."

Making a Commitment

Making a Commitment

Overview

Every great movement in history has begun with a first step. In the case of pedestrian safety and walkability, that first step involves *Making a Commitment* to do something. This includes your own personal commitment to pursue the matter and the community-wide commitment that is required to create a safe and walkable environment for all pedestrians.

Making a Commitment is the first and most difficult stage in the entire process. You have to convince local decision-makers to take whatever actions necessary to make your community safer and more walkable. During this step you should conduct the following activities:

• **Increase your personal understanding of pedestrian issues**

• **Determine the level of community interest in these issues**

• **Establish a steering committee Motivate key decision-makers**

• **Obtain a commitment to address pedestrian issues**

You know you have completed this stage when you have a small group of individuals who have informally agreed to work together and when you have convinced the mayor or city council to make a public commitment to addressing pedestrian issues.

Details

The best place to start this step is with you. How much do you know about pedestrian safety and walkability? You might be surprised to learn that although there may not appear to be any programs in place, there has been a considerable amount of research on the causes of pedestrian fatalities and injuries, and a variety of countermeasures have been developed and tested. The issue of walkability has also been the subject of research for such topics as what would make more people interested in walking. The Pedestrian Safety Toolkit Resource Catalog contains descriptions of many of these studies. You should at least become familiar with the national facts and figures and with the most common safety and walkability issues.

The most important issue that you will have to deal with when you take on pedestrian safety and walkability education is the basic conflict between motor vehicle traffic and pedestrians. The automobile has become an integral component of society. While the automobile has contributed greatly to personal mobility and freedom, this freedom has come at a relatively high cost. Automobiles have been blamed for clogging our streets, gobbling up green space for new highways, fouling the air, and creating a hostile environment for anyone on foot.

Measures to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment may be perceived as anti-motorist. Traffic engineers who perceive their job as moving cars and trucks as efficiently as possible may object to a measure to lengthen the walk signal at a busy intersection because it will create traffic congestion. Speed humps will draw criticism because they force motorists to slow down as they cut through residential neighborhoods on their commute to work. Before you begin the process of enlisting support for pedestrian issues, you need to examine your own position and try to anticipate the reactions of your potential allies.

The following are all proven benefits of creating a safer and more walkable community:

- **Health benefits individuals gain from walking**

- **Economic benefits a community can receive when downtown business areas are revitalized**

- **Environmental benefits achieved when the number of short-distance automobile trips is reduced**

Increasingly, citizens are supporting changes that will allow their community to become more walkable. But change is slow; be prepared that it will not happen overnight.

Once you have clarified how you feel about pedestrian safety and walkability, you need to start looking for allies who share your views. These may be your neighbors who share your concerns about speeding motorists or the lack of sidewalks. They might include parents and administrators at your neighborhood school, or some local business leaders who are looking for ways to revitalize the central business district. You should start by bringing up the topic informally to see what others think. If you find that

they are interested, ask them if they would be willing to assist you in starting a program in your community.

If you are a traffic engineer, city planner, law enforcement officer, or government official who is responsible for pedestrian issues, you probably already have the mandate to do something. Your focus should be on identifying private citizens and organizations who might want to partner with you and who will enlist the support of their colleagues.

You will be surprised how many people share your concerns about pedestrian issues. Every day, more and more people try to build exercise into their daily schedule. They are finding that walking makes a lot of sense—until they discover that their world looks very different from the side of the road than it does from behind the wheel of a car. They don't like what they see. This realization is mobilizing many people to take action. Make them your allies!

Once you have a small group together, which can serve as your steering committee, it is time to reach out to your local government to determine what level of support you might expect. This could be through a contact with the mayor's office, the city council, or an individual agency such as public works. You should look for any advisory committees already in place. They are usually designed to solicit citizen input and could provide a connection to some key decision-makers. Every community with a population of more than 50,000 is required by law to consider pedestrian needs as part of its transportation planning efforts. Your metropolitan planning organization is responsible for developing these transportation documents and should be open to hearing from a group of concerned citizens.

After you have someone's attention, think about what you are asking? At this stage,

you are just looking for some indication that local government will be responsive to citizen concerns about pedestrian issues. Indicate that you would like to form a formal group, such as a pedestrian advisory group, to work with your local government to identify what problems exist and to make recommendations on what needs to be done. This might involve working through an existing organization or committee or forming a brand new operation. In either case, you will want some representatives of local agencies to take part in the committee and to take your recommendations back to local government decision makers.

You may be wondering how three or four volunteers are going to convince the mayor that he or she should set up an entire program to deal with pedestrian safety just because you happen to think it is a good idea. You're right. It probably won't happen with your first phone call.

You will probably need to do some powerful persuading, and you might find it easier if you bring in an outside expert. The U.S. Department of Transportation has designed a 4-hour seminar to help you bring your message to the public and private sector organizations whose support you will need to make your community more walkable. You can request that a *Pedestrian Safety Road Show* and/or *Pedestrian Safety Road Show Train-the-Trainer* session (also referred to as a *Road Show*) be held in your community as a way to expand your group of allies to include representatives of law enforcement, traffic engineering, the medical community, the media, local businesses, youth and senior citizens groups, and anyone else who cares about pedestrian safety.

The purpose of the *Road Show* is to increase awareness about the problems pedestrians face and motivate the

participants to commit to take action. The *Road Show* provides a lot of opportunities to identify local concerns about pedestrian safety, and to begin the process of establishing priorities and planning for the future. The entire focus is to help the group decide to make a commitment and to determine what the next steps will be.

Your primary responsibility as community host will be to invite the right people and provide a facility. If the *Road Show* is successful, at its conclusion, your small group of volunteers will have grown to 20 or more individuals from local government and the private sector who have agreed to work with you to address pedestrian issues. Here is a list of the types of individuals and organizations that should be invited to your local *Road Show:*

- **City and/or county traffic engineers and planners**
- **Local safety coalitions such as a Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) chapter, an Operation Lifesaver representative, or a SAFEKIDS Coalition**
- **Law enforcement representatives**
- **Metropolitan planning organization staff**
- **Business leaders/organizations (e.g. chamber of commerce or downtown merchants association)**
- **Local activist groups (e.g. environmental groups, alternative transportation groups)**
- **Decision-makers (mayors and county executives)**
- **Health community representatives**
- **Fire/EMS organizations**
- **Local media outlets**
- **School officials and PTA representatives**
- **Youth groups/recreation organizations**
- **Senior citizen organizations/agencies**
- **Colleges and universities**
- **Builders and developers**
- **Religious leaders**
- **Neighborhood advisory groups**

You may not succeed in getting every one of these organizations represented at the *Road Show,* but it is a good list to keep in mind as you gradually expand your base of support.

At this stage, you are not looking for a commitment to spend a lot of money on sidewalks or to radically redesign your downtown business district to ban automobiles. You do not have enough information yet to specify what should be done. You are looking to your local decision makers for a commitment to invest time and resources to determine what the community wants for pedestrians. If you have done your homework so far, people should find it difficult to refuse such a reasonable request.

In the next step, *Getting Organized,* you will form your committee and expand its membership.

Key Resources for Success

The most important resource that you should consider during this step is the *Road Show*. Instructions on how to request a *Road Show* are provided in the Pedestrian Safety Resource Catalog. Here are some other resources that you should consider.

Walk! (FHWA R&T)
This 12-minute motivational video is designed to encourage individuals to become involved in pedestrian safety and walkability. A copy of the video is included in the Toolkit. Ordering information is provided in the Pedestrian Safety Toolkit Resource Catalog.

The National Bicycling and Walking Study Final Report: Transportation Choices for a Changing America (FHWA R&T)
This report synthesizes the 24 case-study research reports produced for the National Bicycling and Walking Study.

What Needs to be Done to Promote Bicycling and Walking? (FHWA R&T)
This study explores ways to promote walking and the factors that affect a person's willingness and ability to walk for transportation. Specific marketing strategies are discussed and a case study is provided.

Safe Communities: Getting Started (NHTSA)
This publication describes the first steps a group of concerned citizens should take to solve a traffic safety problem that affects the community.

Getting Organized

Getting Organized

Overview

Once you have obtained a preliminary commitment to address pedestrian issues you need to move quickly to expand your working group into a formal committee and to "go public" with a preliminary vision statement that describes what you want to accomplish for your community. During the *Getting Organized* step, you should conduct the following activities:

• **Establish a formal coordinating committee**

• **Recruit members and obtain letters of commitment**

• **Draft a community vision statement**

• **Hold a press event to announce the program to the public**

You will know you have completed this stage when you have defined the structure of your organization and announced your plans to the media and the public.

Details

Making a Commitment and *Getting Organized* are not completely separate procedures. At some point you will be able to form a formal committee to address pedestrian safety and walkability issues. This committee may be a subcommittee or task force created out of an existing group, or it could be a brand new organization. It could be affiliated with a government office, or it could be a private sector organization. There are advantages and disadvantages to all of these options which you should take into consideration, along with

several other organizational issues. Some of the issues you will need to resolve include the following:

Should your organization be sponsored by, or report to, a local government agency, or should it exist as a private sector group? Successful pedestrian groups have been structured both ways and so have unsuccessful ones. The advantage to having the official sanction of the mayor's office or the metropolitan planning organization is that you will have some access to local government staff resources and possibly a small budget. The official sanction also lends a measure of credibility to the group and to its members, especially when dealing with the media and some local businesses. You may find it much easier to secure the involvement of local agency personnel, such as planners, police officers, etc., if the committee is government-sponsored.

The disadvantage to operating under the government umbrella is that you may be limited in what you do. The government's commitment to pedestrian safety may not go any further than forming the committee.

Forming a private sector coalition is not always the answer either. Some private sector organizations flounder because they can never capture the attention of the media or because they devote most of their resources to raising money rather than to improving conditions for pedestrians. In other cases, private coalitions that represent a broad cross-section of the community can be extremely effective in mobilizing grassroots support for an issue. This group can then challenge the government agencies that are

responsible for pedestrian transportation to do more.

Answering this question is not easy. It is an issue that you should discuss with your steering committee.

Should you form a totally new committee or should you create a spin-off or subcommittee from an existing group? It can be advantageous to start from scratch. Your issues will not be confused with, or be second to, the agenda of the parent organization. This can be an issue if your group is a spin-off from a very narrowly focused safety organization. This group may not accept walkability as a legitimate concern or may see a potential conflict between a safety objective and an access objective.

One advantage to linking your group to an existing one is that the structure is already in place. Many of the issues that you would have to address, such as charter and by-laws, voting procedures, meeting protocols, schedules, etc. have already been worked out. You can devote your attention to developing a pedestrian program rather than to dealing with administration. Your organization can also benefit from the good reputation and credibility of the parent organization: "If the XYZ Task Force thinks pedestrian safety is important enough to organize a special subcommittee, then maybe I should pay more attention." This might help in the recruitment of new members or in getting the media to turn out for a press conference.

Once you look at all of these factors, you will be able to select the structure that works best for your organization. (Recognize that this may be decided for you—if the mayor wants to appoint a special task force on pedestrian safety, you probably don't want to argue with him or her. Use that opportunity.) Once you select a structure, you will need to recruit members to join your organization.

This is a very critical stage in the development of your program. The make-up of your committee, task force, or blue ribbon panel will determine the success of your program. There are several "do's" and "don'ts" to keep in mind when recruiting members.

What You Should Do

Brainstorm with several people on whom to invite. You don't want to rely on your personal address book to fill all the available slots. Now is the time to bring in new people who might have a fresh idea or a good connection. The list of people who should be invited to the *Road Show/Road Show Train-the-Trainer* will serve as a good starting point for membership in your advisory group.

Draft a letter of invitation asking identified potential members to attend an organizational meeting. It is a good idea to have the letter signed by a prominent individual who is recognized in the community and who is willing to lend his or her prestige to your cause. An elected official, a judge, the head of a government agency, the police chief, a prominent business person, or a combination of these individuals would be excellent choices. Use the letter to invite people to attend a preliminary meeting to answer any questions they may have and to learn what everyone can bring to the table.

Be specific about the roles and responsibilities of coalition members. Your steering committee may also want to draft a "mission statement" to be included in the letter. In the letter also be sure to include the number of times the group will meet throughout the year, the times of the meetings, and what is expected of the group. Have some activity or activities already developed to include in the roles and responsibilities. For instance, the first activity might be a needs assessment that asks individuals

to distribute a market survey to people in their neighborhoods or in their organization. After your letter has been sent, make a follow-up phone call 2 days before the meeting to remind individuals to attend.

For each person being invited, you must be able to identify how they and their organization will benefit from improving conditions for pedestrians. While pedestrian safety is a very worthwhile cause, it will take more than altruism to convince busy men and women to devote their precious time to **your** cause. You need to convince them that it is **their** cause as well. This is crucial.

Each potential member will be looking for something different. The downtown businessperson needs to understand that programs and facilities that encourage walking will increase foot traffic into his or her store. The senior citizen representative wants to be assured that your group will be looking to improve mobility for seniors by providing safe places to walk and by making it easier to cross busy streets. Police officers will be concerned about educating the public about traffic laws that affect pedestrians. They will not want to hear, initially, that more enforcement of these laws is needed. The physician will be interested in what he or she can do to reduce the incidence of child pedestrian crashes. The health insurance manager might respond well to how improving pedestrian safety will reduce the number of costly visits to hospital emergency departments.

Once you have recruited your membership, follow these easy tips to help ensure the success of your operation:

- **Develop specific activities. The best way to keep people involved and motivated is to give them responsibilities. However, remember that you are dealing with volunteers who have other full-time responsibilities You don't want to overwhelm anyone with an enormous, long-term assignment in the beginning so make sure your tasks are brief. Allow your volunteers to enjoy some quick successes.**

- **Keep everyone involved. Avoid the temptation to keep an inner circle of your original steering committee members. People join an advisory committee because they want to make a contribution and make a difference. Make sure everyone feels that they are part of everything the group does. Ask everyone for suggestions and ideas. Take more of a listening role, and allow others lead discussions.**

Mission Statement Example

The **[insert your community name here]** Pedestrian Advisory Committee has been formed to identify what our community needs to provide for a safer and more walkable environment and to design the strategies and programs that will create this environment.

Vision Statement Example

The community of **[insert your community name here]** provides a balanced transportation system in which a variety of transportation choices, including walking, biking, and public transit, are available for trips to work, shops, school, and recreational areas, and in which all citizens, from children to senior citizens, can walk safely in our residential and commercial areas.

- **Take good notes. Make sure that everyone's opinions and views are recorded. You want everyone to believe in the goals and objectives of the organization. This will only happen if people see at least some of their ideas incorporated.**

- **Send reminders. Send meeting notices to remind people of upcoming meetings. Follow up with a phone call the day before the meeting. This not only reminds people again, but it also gives you an idea of who to expect at the meeting.**

- **Update your group regularly. Keep the lines of communication open. Inform people about recent meeting discussions and activities through meeting minutes and newsletters. These regular updates keep your group cohesive and enthusiastic.**

Now that you know what to do, you should also know what not to do:

- **Don't be demanding. Appreciate everyone's contribution.**

- **Don't be impatient. Democracy works, but it takes time.**

- **Don't be confusing. State plans clearly and concisely.**

- **Don't lecture. You are not in a classroom.**

- **Don't waste time. Remember that people have other full-time responsibilities.**

Even though you now have your group together, you are not finished with this step. In order to succeed in making pedestrian safety and walkability an important issue in the community, you must disseminate information about it. The first official action of your newly formed pedestrian advisory group should

be to meet with the media to announce your plans to make your community more walkable. In preparation for this event, you should make copies of your vision statement and mission statement. These two statements will help crystallize for the public what a walkable community would be like, and what your organization is going to do, with their help, to make the vision a reality.

Your next step is to plan a media event, which is different from a press conference. Press conferences tend to be staged and lack-luster and could only be covered on slow news days. Instead, stage a media event that will capture the attention of the media and provide many good visuals for the print and broadcast outlets in your community. Some ideas you might consider include:

- **A walking tour that illustrates the problems children face when they walk to school**

- **A walking tour of some hazardous intersections**

- **A "Walk to Work" celebration encouraging people to leave their cars at home**

- **A mini-rally to "Reclaim Our Streets"**

- **A "Walk a Child to School" day encouraging parents and children to walk to school and identify hazards along the route**

The common goal of all of these ideas is to open your neighborhood's streets to the media so they can experience what walking is like. You can then issue your vision statement of what a walkable community could be when everyone joins together to make it happen. Your event has now become a news story that is much more likely to be covered than a press release issued at a press conference. Local celebrities or prominent figures at

your media event can sometimes increase your media coverage. It is also helpful to make them available for media interviews, if possible.

When you reach the conclusion of this step, you will have come a long way. Your small group of allies will have grown in size and stature to a well-respected advisory group. And more important, you have now gone public with your commitment to make a difference for pedestrians.

Key Resources for Success

You should also review the following resources to aid your program development.

Analysis of Successful Grassroots Movements Relating to Pedestrians and Bicycles and a Guide on How to Initiate a Successful Program (FHWA R&T)

This manual describes a 15-step process for building a grassroots movement for pedestrian issues and provides some accepted measures of success.

Analyses of Successful Provincial State and Local Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs in Canada and the United States (FHWA R&T)

This study examines what makes a pedestrian program successful and concludes that there are three essential ingredients: a full-time program manager, supportive elected officials, and an active citizen's advisory committee. Several detailed case studies are provided.

Safe Communities: Tips for Coalition Building (NHTSA)

This publication defines what a coalition is and briefly explains how to define goals and objectives; assess what is being done in the community; identify key players and other coalition members; and how to keep the coalition alive.

Gathering Data

Gathering Data

Overview

Sometimes community efforts begin with the *Gathering Data* step instead of the *Making a Commitment* step because the organizers believe they will not be able to convince decision-makers to act unless they have conducted exhaustive studies that produce data on pedestrian crashes. It is more important, however, to start with a solid group of committed individuals who are willing to work together to gather the important data. The willingness of these individuals to work on pedestrian issues, including gathering data, makes a convincing argument for implementing a pedestrian safety program.

Accurate information about pedestrian safety issues and how the public envisions a walkable community will help you build a program that addresses real problems and is responsive to community interests. The kinds of information you will be collecting during this stage include:

• **Safety and travel statistics**

• **Current program activity data**

• **Citizen input on the community vision**

You will be gathering the same types of information during Step 6, *Evaluating and Revising,* to determine if your programs have accomplished their objectives. You will need to document how you collect the data now so that you can replicate the process later.

During this step you will need to conduct the following activities:

• **Assess pedestrian crash problems**

• **Survey pedestrian facilities**

• **Gather data on how and how often people are using pedestrian facilities**

• **Review policies, ordinances, standards, and codes**

• **Inventory current education, enforcement, and encouragement programs**

• **Solicit citizen input on safety and walkability needs**

• **Identify new partners**

This is an ongoing stage because you should always be monitoring statistics and citizen feedback. You should move on to the *Planning* step, however, when you have prepared a concise statement of the pedestrian safety problems facing the community and the programs that currently exist.

Details

Instructions on how to gather data for your pedestrian program could be very extensive. Each type of data you are collecting appears in research studies, analyses, and guidelines on how to collect information and make sense of what you have gathered. Since we can't replicate all of that information here, we have, instead, provided a summary of the types of information you will need to collect and a few suggestions for getting started.

What Kinds of Pedestrian Crashes Are Occurring in Your Town?

The U.S. Department of Transportation is developing a new tool to help you determine the types of pedestrian collisions that are occurring in your community. With the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Typing Tool,* a Windows-based software package, the user reviews local police crash forms and enters data about each crash by clicking on buttons and check boxes.

The system identifies the type of pedestrian crash, based on the motorist and pedestrian actions that led up to the collision. The software can also be used to generate 2-way and 3-way tables of crash parameters (e.g., time of day, by age group, by type of roadway).

You can obtain information on the pedestrian accident typing system by contacting:

Carol Tan-Esse at the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), (703) 285-2071.

Pedestrian Crash Data

NHTSA publishes annual fact sheets on pedestrian safety (a copy of the most recent Pedestrian Safety Fact Sheet is included in the Toolkit). These fact sheets provide an extensive amount of information about the national pedestrian crash problem. You can infer, from these national data, the nature of your community's pedestrian safety problem. However, you will find that the media and local decision-makers are much more interested in local data. You should try to determine the number of people killed and injured in pedestrian crashes and the financial and emotional costs associated with these crashes. Sort this information by age of pedestrian, time of crash, location of crash (intersection and non-intersection), and weather conditions. This level of detail will tell you who your target population is and the locations that are the most hazardous. If you have a high number of nighttime collisions, you might want to investigate the alcohol involvement of the drivers and pedestrians involved. (National data show that pedestrians were impaired in almost 30 percent of all fatal pedestrian crashes.) Your local police department, public health department, and hospitals are sources for information on pedestrian injuries and crashes.

Some state databases can also provide information about your pedestrian injury problem. For more information on sources of injury data see *Getting Started: A Guide to Developing Safe Communities* (DOT HS 808 404; May 1996) and *A Look at the Data, part of the Safe Communities Technical Information* package (DOT HS 808 578; April 1997) available from NHTSA (address on page 6).

Pedestrian Facilities

Before you develop a plan for providing improved pedestrian facilities, you need to have an accurate picture of what pedestrian facilities currently exist and how they are maintained. You can start this process by meeting with the traffic engineering department (ideally, this group will have a representative on your advisory committee) and obtaining an inventory of facilities. You then need to solicit volunteers who will visit each facility and document its condition. Remember to check places that are inappropriate or deadly places to walk, like railroad tracks, trestles, and bridges. Steering pedestrians to safer, more appropriate walking spaces will create a safer community.

Pedestrian Use Data

While you or your volunteers are at each facility, they should also collect pedestrian counts to document the amount of walking that is taking place in your community. You can also collect travel data through citizen surveys.

Policies, Ordinances, and Standards

Policies, zoning ordinances, and design standards have a tremendous influence on the walkability of a community. It is a waste of time to try to make facilities safer for pedestrians if they are being designed according to standards that do not reflect the pedestrian's equal status in the transportation mix. During your survey of pedestrian facilities you will probably discover inadequate facilities. During this survey you will be determining if the underlying problem is that the facility needs to be upgraded to meet the community's design standard or if the standard itself needs to be upgraded. Enlist the help of the lawyers and traffic engineers on your committee to conduct this type of review. The results of your analysis of policies, ordinances, and standards will determine what will

require further attention during the planning and implementation steps.

Current Programs

Before you can initiate a new pedestrian program that is comprised of a variety of activities and projects, you need to know exactly what is currently being done for pedestrian safety and walkability. While it might appear that nothing is being done for pedestrian safety, you may discover that your local school district sponsors an annual safety education program or that your local police department conducts a seasonal enforcement campaign targeting speeding in school zones. These programs may be a good supplement to your own and involving their sponsors in your effort can help your program as well as theirs.

Citizen Input

Public participation is one of the hottest topics in transportation planning. As a result, you can find a great deal of documentation on how to obtain representative input and to apply this input appropriately during the planning process. Some of the techniques you might want to consider include:

Charette – A time-limited meeting designed to support cooperative efforts between citizens and agency officials to identify solutions to a particular problem. It can be useful to identify all sides of a difficult issue and to reach a consensus on recommended solutions.

Visioning – A series of public participation meetings designed to develop a long-range vision of a walkable community. Visioning provides citizens the opportunity to provide input on current problems and future directions.

Transportation Fairs – Public events designed to interest citizens in transportation and in specific programs. They provide visual exhibits that can generate enthusiasm about future possibilities.

Focus groups – A small group discussion facilitated by professional leadership and designed to gather opinions on a specific topic (such as the provision of sidewalks in residential areas).

Citizen surveys – Direct mail, telephone, or face-to-face interviews of a representative sample of the general public to document citizen preferences and perceptions on a wide range of topics.

Public Meetings and Hearings – Public forums for presenting information to the general public and for soliciting informal input on the information presented and on general programs and policies.

New Partners – Your data gathering efforts will be taking you and your colleagues on the advisory committee to all corners of your community. During your journey you will encounter many individuals who will be interested in your advisory group. While you should not expand the size of this group to an unworkable level, you can enlist the support of these individuals. They can participate in your data collection efforts, serve as liaisons to the constituency groups they represent, and lend their name to public statements of support.

While many community activists worry about having too little data, it is also possible to have too much. The process of gathering data can exhaust your volunteers and the analysis effort can be time consuming with large amounts of data. Look for individuals who understand data and can help you analyze and present it. You do not have to do it all yourself. Think about how you will present the information to decision-makers.

How long do you think you can hold their attention? Limit your presentation, and perhaps your data collection efforts, accordingly.

Key Resources for Success

NHTSA and FHWA have produced a variety of reports on various aspects of the pedestrian safety and walkability problem. Some of the most important include:

Traffic Safety Facts: Pedestrians (NHTSA)

Pedestrian Crash Types: A 1990's Informational Guide (NHTSA)
This guide provides details on specific pedestrian/motor vehicle crash types through 2-page layouts that contain a sketch, description, and summary of the crash type, various graphs, and information boxes.

Safe Communities: A Look at the Data (NHTSA)
Explains how a coalition should begin its data search by focussing on the answers that identify the major traffic safety problems and their significance in the community.

Developing a Plan

Developing a Plan

Overview

In order for your community pedestrian program to be successful, you should have a plan. An approved plan gives your community a clear statement of what needs to be accomplished, along with an honest appraisal of what it will take to reach your goal. Without such a plan, you will find it very difficult to obtain the resources required to implement any actions. You also run the risk of losing momentum as your coordinating committee struggles to decide what to do next.

A successful plan will be based on the information you obtained on current conditions and the vision you established for the future. It will include a clear statement of the community priorities, along with specific goals and objectives that need to be accomplished. It will also identify the individual actions that need to be taken in order to achieve these goals. Finally, it will identify the resources that will be required and where they will come from.

It is likely that your plan will include a phased approach to implementation. Phase I projects will include some quick successes which can generate some positive media coverage for the program and for its sponsors. Phase II will include the bulk of the more extensive facility improvements since these must be built into longer term funding cycles.

In *Developing a Plan* you will need to conduct the following activities:

- **Establish program priorities for safety and walkability**

- **Set goals and objectives for short term and long term accomplishments**

- **Establish committees or teams for developing action plans**

- **Provide training, as needed, for team members**

- **Develop action plans for Phase I and Phase II projects**

- **Determine resource requirements**

- **Secure approval for your plan**

- **Secure necessary resources**

While it is very important to plan carefully, you should avoid the temptation to create the "perfect plan." Your focus should be on "creating change" not just "planning for change." No matter how visionary and well written your plan may be, it will never take the place of a new sidewalk. You are ready to move on to implementation when you have identified and acquired the resources needed to implement your action plan.

Details

Having completed the *Gathering Data* step, you probably now know more about pedestrian safety and walkability in your community than you ever thought possible. But what do you do with all of that information? You use it to build a community pedestrian plan. Before we delve into some tips for making the process work for you, it is important to discuss what should be incorporated in your plan.

When most transportation officials hear the term pedestrian plan, they assume that it describes a network of pedestrian facilities. Very few pedestrian plans address safety programs or efforts to encourage more people to walk. An exclusive focus on pedestrian facilities, however, is much too narrow in scope. Research indicates that an individual's decision to walk is influenced by a variety of factors, just one of which is the availability of pedestrian facilities. Therefore, a plan that only addresses pedestrian facilities will probably not have a long-term impact on walking levels in the community. Pedestrian crashes are also influenced by more than one factor. While the provision of safe facilities is important, pedestrian and motorist behavior is a major contributing factor. Behavioral problems are more effectively addressed through education and enforcement programs than through engineering solutions only. The planning process described in this User Manual assumes that the resulting plan will address education, enforcement, and encouragement efforts in addition to engineering solutions.

If a plan is a "road map" for reaching a mutually agreed upon destination, the first step in the planning process must be determining what that destination is. In other words, you have to start by setting your goals and objectives. Your goal statement should reflect the vision statement that emerged from your citizen input in the planning process. The goal and vision will probably be broad but brief. It should, however, illustrate what the community will be like when the vision has been realized. It's primary purpose is to serve as a call for public and political support.

Objectives, on the other hand, are practical tools. They specify what needs to be done, by whom, in what timeframe, and to what standard of performance. They can, and will, be used to measure success throughout the implementation phase. You should have objectives for each element of your program including education, enforcement, engineering, and encouragement.

Objectives need to be **SMART**

S traightforward – simple statements that everyone can understand

M easurable – an item or situation you can count or observe (such as crashes)

A ction-oriented – the stronger the action verb, the stronger the objective

R ealistic – only commit to what you have a reasonable chance of accomplishing

T ime-specific – every objective should have a deadline, and it should be no farther than 1 to 2 years away

Once you begin brainstorming, it is easy to draft a long list of objectives. Also realize that you cannot accomplish all of these very worthwhile objectives immediately. That is why you should establish some priorities for these

Sample Objectives

To install speed humps in 60 percent of all neighborhood sub-divisions within 18 months. *Traffic Engineering Department*

To conduct pedestrian safety awareness parent presentations at 30 PTA meetings during the first 2 months of school. *Community Liaison Officer of Police Department*

To sponsor monthly walking events in the downtown area from May to September. *Chamber of Commerce*

objectives, again based on citizen input and practical considerations such as the availability of resources and the level of political support.

Once you have reached a consensus on what needs to be accomplished and the order in which it should be accomplished, you are ready for the next step. For each objective, you will be identifying a range of actions that need to be implemented, assigning responsibility for implementing these actions, and estimating the resources that they will require. This task can quickly overwhelm a group that is trying to deal with an entire plan as a single entity. Many communities find that this is the time to form task forces and subcommittees, each of which is assigned one or more program objectives. Each of these task forces should include some individuals with professional background in the disciplines involved. You should have a traffic engineer on the facilities task force, a police officer on the enforcement task force, etc.

These task forces are responsible for identifying a range of actions for each objective. At the start of this effort, they should brainstorm as many strategies as they can, without regard to practicality. This list can then be scaled down for practical considerations such as funding, citizen reactions, and time constraints. It is then necessary to do a reality check. Who is the individual or group that will likely assume responsibility for carrying out the action item? How long does it take to implement a project of this magnitude? This is where your representatives of government agencies come in very handy. They can check with their organization on the likelihood that an action item could be carried out and how it can fit into the on-going activities of the organization. Timing is also a major factor. Large-scale traffic engineering projects must be inserted into a lengthy funding cycle that might delay implementation of a top priority facility project for several years.

Be prepared for this and be sure to balance these long-term improvements with many quick turnaround projects that will bring some visibility and support to your overall program.

You may find that some bureaucracies resist any effort to expand their responsibilities or change the way they do business. Depending on how your advisory group is structured, rejection of an action item may or may not permanently eliminate the strategy. If your advisory group operates under a government umbrella, then you may not be able to include in your plan any items that are opposed by any government agency. If your organization operates completely outside of the government, with only representation of these agencies, you can continue to include an item that has been rejected by an agency, and take your appeal directly to the city council or mayor's office. Remember that in the future, however, you need the support of every involved agency in order to achieve your overall goal of a more walkable community.

Once responsibility has been assigned (and accepted) for each of the action items, the task forces must also identify the funding requirements for each action and some potential sources of these funds. This should involve working with the responsible agency or organization to develop reasonable cost estimates and to learn how these types of projects are funded. You will need to be sensitive to the other programs that are supported by these organizations. Pedestrian safety may not be that agency's top priority, and they may not be eager to divert funds from priority programs to fund your advisory group's project. It will be important for you to become familiar with the various funding sources that can be used to support pedestrian projects. These funding sources are described in the Pedestrian Safety Toolkit Resource Catalog.

In order for your task forces to carry out these functions, it may be necessary, and desirable, to provide training to your task force members so that they are familiar with the state of the art practices in pedestrian safety and walkability, and so that they can tap into the network of pedestrian specialists working at all levels of government and in the private sector. A variety of courses have been developed to address these. Some of them are listed in the resources section that follows.

It is important to remember to keep the general public involved in the planning process. Many decisions can be made during this stage. The public is more likely to support the decisions that are made if they are included in the decision-making process. You will want to continue the some of the techniques discussed in *Gathering Data,* such as public hearings, focus groups, and charettes, to test ideas that emerge from your planning efforts and to generate new options for consideration.

The final two activities that are conducted during this step are securing approval for the plan and obtaining the necessary resources. The nature of the approval process will depend on the structure of your advisory committee and how it relates to your local government. The more public the approval process, the better. While approval does not guarantee that you will actually implement everything in the plan, lack of approval will make it difficult to accomplish anything.

Who actually seeks funding will also depend on the structure of your local government. Much of the financial resources that will be used will include federal funding, which has restrictions on who can apply for it and how the money is spent. While your advisory committee may not be in a position to actually secure funding, it should have an in-depth understanding of the restrictions and requirements associated with each funding source, and should develop strategies for securing the maximum funding possible. Because government funding has limits, the advisory group can also seek other funding for education and encouragement initiatives.

A final note on the planning process— the action plan document that you create should always be viewed as a working document. It is a tool to guide implementation; it is not an end in itself. Therefore, you should not resist making changes as more information becomes available or as new priorities emerge. Instead, you should view these changes as opportunities to keep the plan relevant and alive.

Key Resources for Success

Training is an essential element of the planning process. Here are several courses that you might want take advantage of.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act **(FHWA R&T)**

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety and Accommodation Training **(FHWA R&T)**

The Training Needs of Transportation Professionals Regarding the Pedestrian and Bicyclist **(FHWA R&T)**

Implementing Your Program

Implementing Your Program

Overview

This is the stage which you have been working towards all along. During implementation, your community program will be improving pedestrian facilities, teaching children how to cross the street, enforcing traffic safety laws, and encouraging the public to walk more frequently. However, it will not be enough to merely improve the walking environment. You will also need to make sure that the media and the public know about all the improvements that you are making. This will mean holding a kick-off media event to announce your plans, and regular press conferences and media events to keep everyone informed about the progress you are making.

During this stage you and your committee will be conducting a wide range of activities, depending on your approved plan. These activities will probably include:

- **Conducting program kick-off media event**

- **Coordinating with engineering to implement a facilities improvement program**

- **Implementing a public information program**

- **Coordinating with the local schools to implement a traffic safety education program**

- **Coordinating with the police to implement a pedestrian safety enforcement program**

- **Implementing walking encouragement program**

- **Coordinating with the planning office to update policies, ordinances, and standards**

- **Monitoring citizen reactions**

The implementation stage will probably never end. As you complete the items included in your Phase I action plans, they will likely be replaced by longer-term strategies scheduled for Phase II. During the next stage, *Evaluating and Revising,* you will identify which strategies were more effective than others and which need to be modified and re-initiated.

Details

It is true that not every action plan is able to be implemented in its entirety. Some plans were too optimistic in their projections. Others failed to include input from critical players. Many underestimated the costs involved. Several plans failed to plan for implementation. Don't let your plan fail to reach implementation. If you followed some of the guidelines presented earlier, your plan's success rate will be much higher.

As the objectives begin to be implemented by the designated agencies and organizations, your advisory group will begin to take on a different role. This role might involve media liaison, public information, or special events. Whatever the role, it is important that your organization have a legitimate reason to stay in touch with all of the organizations involved and to encourage them to follow the plan.

You will probably find that the individual implementing agencies make some minor, and possibly major, adjustments to the projects being implemented. This is to be expected and is not a problem, as long as they keep the objectives in mind. Tailoring a project increases the agency's buy-in of what is being done, which increases the likelihood that they will continue to stay involved in pedestrian issues. You need to speak up, however, if they radically change the target audience, the message or program being delivered, or the schedule for completion. You will also need to encourage the implementing agencies to collect and maintain the type of data you will need to measure success. This means keeping good records of the number of presentations delivered, citations issued, and traffic signals modified. It is very difficult to go back and try to reconstruct this information after the work is completed.

A recurring theme throughout the implementation phase, and throughout this User Manual, is keeping the media informed. Active support by the media can almost guarantee success for even modest efforts. On the other hand, media apathy or opposition can defeat even the most well-designed and managed project. This is why it is so important to include media representatives on your advisory committee, and to use them to design strategies to keep pedestrian issues in the public eye.

A critical element of the implementation phase will be a kick-off media event. It should involve all of the agencies and organizations involved in the advisory committee, as well as other organizations that can be brought in as partners. And, as has been discussed earlier, it should involve walking. While most of your media efforts up to now have involved making the public and the media aware of all of the problems that face pedestrians, your kick-off event should take a more positive tone with the focus on how things will be improving. You

might bring the media out to the site of a proposed new pedestrian facility, or stage a demonstration of a traffic safety education program that you plan to put into the schools or initiate a "Walk a Child to School" event to encourage walking in the community. The event is marking the beginning of a "new day for pedestrians" and should be geared toward this bright vision for the future. You should supply the media with a broad schedule of what types of things will be happening in the community over the ensuing months to make a safer, pedestrian-friendly environment.

After the kick-off event you will want to stay in close contact with the media and invite them to a variety of activities that are newsworthy. Since your plan should encourage walking as part of its overall goal, you should have identified a variety of strategies, such as street festivals and community walks, that will be implemented on a regular basis to encourage people to walk. These are ideal events for involving the media over the course of your program. Other good events for media involvement include school-based education programs, pedestrian enforcement activities, public hearings on changes to ordinances and policies (as long as you can ensure that there is strong citizen turn-out), and ribbon-cutting type events for new facilities or traffic calming measures.

You will also want to work with the editorial staff at your local media outlets to gain their commitment to speak out in support of your program initiatives. Many citizens do not pay attention to talk about future plans. They only take notice when something happens that affects them directly. This might occur when they receive a ticket for speeding through a school zone or when speed humps are installed on their favorite commuter route. If they start speaking out, you want the media on your side during these debates.

It is important to recognize that even though you involved the public throughout your planning process, and believed your plan reflects what the community wants, once you start taking action, opposition may arise. Be prepared to lose some battles. If an outraged citizen can influence some of your elected officials, those officials may retract support from some of your programs. Opposition does not signal a complete rejection of pedestrian issues. It is important, however, to negotiate when opposing views arise.

Be careful when entering negotiations. If the issue in dispute is so fundamental that it jeopardizes the success of your entire program, then you must mobilize your support and fight to defend the principles at stake. In many cases, however, it will be better to isolate the object of controversy, negotiate a compromise, and move on with the rest of your program. Don't give up on the concept, though. You probably just need to wait for a better time, possibly after you have had the chance to do more education about the benefits of these program initiatives or strategies.

For each action included in your plan, there is a correct way and an incorrect way to implement it. This User Manual cannot address all of the "do's" and "don'ts" of program implementation. It is important, therefore, that you provide key players with as much training as you can on how to design and implement their programs. You should also connect them to the network of professionals dealing with pedestrian programs, so that they can share ideas and find solutions to the problems that arise. Remember to use resource materials, newsletters, conferences, and workshops in your training and problem solving sessions.

Key Resources for Success

The Pedestrian Safety Toolkit Resource Catalog includes a wide range of materials that can be used to support the elements of your action plans. You should borrow and adapt whatever you can before you invest valuable resources in designing materials and programs from scratch.

Evaluating & Revising
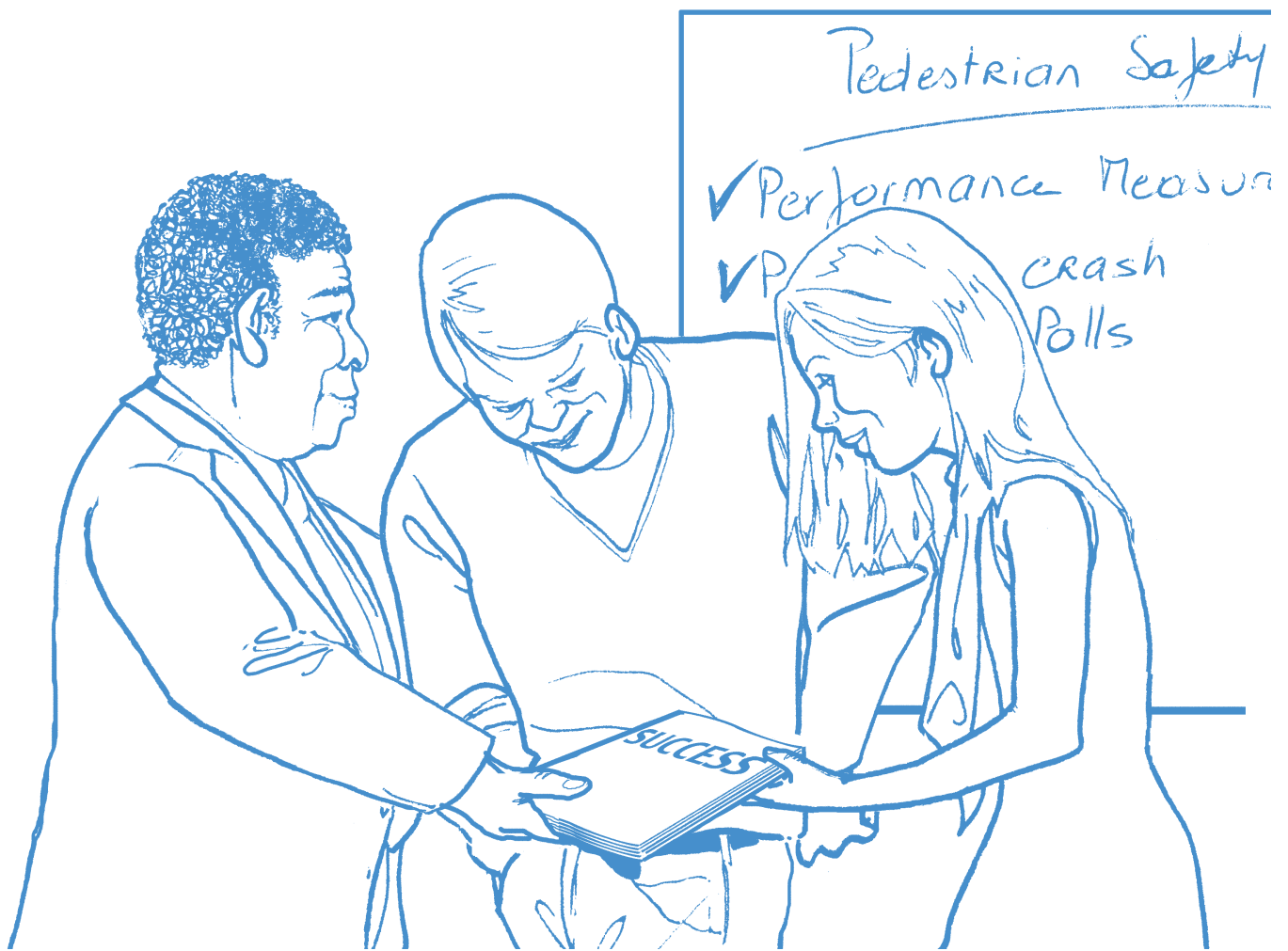
Evaluating & Revising

Overview

While evaluation frequently is shown as the last stage of the program development, it must be considered from the very beginning. As you establish your goals and objectives during the planning stage, you should also determine the measures you will use to assess your success. While you are implementing your program, you must put in place mechanisms for obtaining feedback from the public on how the individual elements of your program are working. And finally, you must do something with the information you gather. This might include dropping or revising certain strategies, and adding new ones. This means you will be revising your plan and implementing new program strategies.

The specific activities you should be conducting during this step will depend on the programs that you are evaluating. They are likely to include the following:

- **Determining performance measures**

- **Monitoring pedestrian crash data**

- **Conducting opinion polls**

- **Soliciting citizen feedback at public meetings**

- **Documenting what has been done and what it accomplished**

- **Conducting pedestrian counts and mode choice surveys**

- **Reporting results to the media**

- **Making adjustments to Phase I and Phase II implementation plans**

Details

The essence of evaluation is determining if you accomplished the goals you established. To do this, you will have to document what happened, and then you can relate that to the specific goals and objectives you established during the planning phase. Many program planners undermine their evaluation efforts before they even begin because they fail to establish clearly defined measures of success during their planning process. If you have followed the process as described in this User Manual, however, you will have already developed your performance measures.

Before we begin a discussion of how to evaluate your program, we would like to recommend that you consider seeking assistance from evaluation specialists as you design and implement your evaluation effort. You could try to solicit evaluation assistance from a local college or university or others in the community who may have evaluation expertise.

The evaluation process essentially involves continuing many of the data collection efforts you initiated during *Gathering Data.* During this step, you will be gathering crash data, soliciting citizen input, and conducting pedestrian counts. Whatever procedures you used during *Gathering Data.* you need to replicate them precisely. This is necessary to guarantee that you can compare before and after data and draw conclusions about the effectiveness of your programs.

If your program includes efforts to reduce the incidence of pedestrian crashes, you will need to establish procedures for monitoring crash data. This will entail coordinating with your local police department to get copies of police crash reports or your local public health office or hospitals to get information on pedestrian injuries on a regular basis. You should track the same crash and injury details (e.g., time of day, age of pedestrian, etc.) you collected during your original data collection effort so that you can monitor progress across multiple dimensions. The community's crash trends should be plotted against the timeframes during which you implemented any countermeasure programs to help you determine if the countermeasures had any impact on the crash statistics.

If you recall, you used citizen input to create a vision of a more walkable community. You will need to monitor citizen perceptions of how that vision is evolving as you implement your programs. You will also need to gather citizen reactions to the specific programs you implement, including public information campaigns, enforcement successes, and traffic calming measures. You can accomplish this by conducting public opinion polls and focus groups, and by continuing to hold public hearings to solicit citizen reaction to what has been implemented. You should be diligent about the design of the data collection instruments you use to monitor public opinion to ensure that they are giving you an accurate picture of citizen reactions.

Another measure of public reaction to what you have implemented will be counts of pedestrians using new and old facilities to determine if more people are walking. You can also gather these data through the use of travel diaries and mode choice surveys. Travel diaries ask people to keep track of all the trips they make over a short period of time, and the mode

of transportation they choose for each trip. If you have gathered similar data at the beginning of the your campaign, you might notice an increase in pedestrian trips. These types of data help you determine if people are reacting to your program by actually changing their transportation behavior.

A final data collection effort of this stage is the documentation of what has been done. This might sound easier than it really is. If you have designed a truly comprehensive program, many activities will be supervised or controlled by a variety of organizations. One of the challenges facing your advisory group will be staying in touch with each of these organizations and monitoring what they are doing for pedestrian safety and walkability. This information needs to be summarized and consolidated to present a concise overview of the scope and depth of your program.

There are two things that you will be doing with the information gathered during this step. First, you must continue in your efforts to keep the media informed about the results of your effort. If your data indicate that more people are walking, bring the media out so they can see for themselves. If your plans include the installation of improved facilities for pedestrians, bring the media out to a ribbon-cutting ceremony. If the schools are conducting a "Walk Our Children to School Day," invite the media to follow a group of parents and school children on their walk. The objective of all this nurturing of the media is to keep pedestrian issues as a priority in the news.

The second use of the information you gather during *Evaluating and Revising* is to provide a foundation for fine-tuning your program activities to increase effectiveness and to enhance public support. You will likely need to make several mid-stream adjustments to programs that are in progress. You will also be identifying new activities that will need to be added during Phase II implementation. In this way, *Evaluating and Revising* marks the beginning of a new cycle rather than the end of the original effort.

Key Resources for Success

There are a few resources available to you to guide your progress through the evaluation process.

***Walk Alert – A National Pedestrian Safety Guide* (NHTSA)**

***The Art of Appropriate Evaluation: A Guide for Traffic Safety Program Managers* (NHTSA)**

Wrap-Up

If you have just finished reading this User Manual, you may be wondering if getting involved in a community pedestrian safety program is such a good idea. You may be thinking that you have much to accomplish, and that you are just one person. The most important message that you need to take from this User Manual is that "You are not alone!"

You are the catalyst to mobilize a large group of elected officials and private citizens who want to make your community a safer,

Margaret Mead

"**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.**"

more pedestrian-friendly place to live and work. Public opinion polls increasingly are showing that people are concerned about the quality of life in their communities. They want safe places to walk and they want a balanced transportation system that gives them real choices among different modes of travel.

This manual has laid out a game plan for creating that safe walking environment with real transportation choices. It has identified a wide range of individuals and organizations that, with just a little encouragement from you, will devote their wisdom, time, and energy, to building the community of your dreams. It has directed you to the technical resources that you will need along the way, and offered some suggestions to avoid the pitfalls that other community organizations have encountered.

The road to a more walkable community is clear. Are you ready to take the first step and Make A Commitment? Your community is counting on you.