



Pedestrian Safety Workshop

A Focus on Older Adults

The Pedestrian Safety Workshop: A Focus on Older Adults was developed by the Highway Safety Research Center at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill through funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



Today's Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- Walking and Older Adults: Safety, Health, and Transportation
- Watching Out for Us! Skills for Safe Walking
- Break
- The Walking Environment
- Completing the Picture: Education, Enforcement, and Encouragement
- Taking an Observational Walk
- Discussion and Next Steps

Walking and Older Adults

Safety, Health, and
Transportation

Why care about walking?

- Valuable form of **transportation**
- Provides **health benefits** of physical activity
- Opportunity to **socialize**
- Can contribute to higher **quality of life**

Health benefits of regular physical activity are many:

- Helps maintain mobility and independence
- Increases balance and muscle strength
- Helps prevent depression and has other mental health benefits

More...

Health benefits of regular physical activity are many:

- Associated with increased longevity and lower rate of disability
- Lowers risk of chronic illnesses including: high blood pressure, heart disease, colon cancer, obesity, diabetes, and osteoporosis

“I walk about **three and a half miles a day** in my neighborhood and the last time I had my check-up at the doctor’s office, the nurse said, ‘From what I can tell, you have **the heart of an athlete.**’”

- Resident of Dorada, NC

“I started walking for exercise when I quit work and I only knew maybe the next door neighbors or the neighbors across the street, but I’ve gotten to know everybody in the neighborhood now.”

-Resident of Dorada, NC

Why focus on older adults?

Older adults are:

- A growing part of the population
- Less likely to drive
- More likely to get hit by vehicles when walking

More...



Why focus on older adults?

- More likely to walk than do other types of physical activity
- Less likely to meet weekly physical activity recommendations

Addressing the realities of aging

- Vision
- Hearing
- Cognition
- Physical mobility
- Falls



Whether walking to the store,
a friend's house, or just around the block . . .

What makes a walk feel safe?

Safety Factors

- Pedestrian behavior
- Driver behavior
- Walking environment

Community conditions can make walking difficult



Great conditions, but where are the people?



Community partnership

- Pedestrians **taking control** of their safety
- Communities **understanding** unsafe behaviors and conditions and identifying strategies to improve them.
- Everyone **encouraging** more people to walk more



Watching Out for Us! Skills for Safe Walking



Developed by the University of North Carolina
Highway Safety Research Center through funding from
the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



Walkers need to know . . .

- **What** are the situations that increase the chances of being hit by a car
- **How** we can control those situations

What situations

1. Intersections
2. Backing vehicles
3. Drivers not seeing you
4. Too much trust in the system

INTERSECTIONS

What: Turning vehicles



INTERSECTIONS

What: When stepping off the curb



INTERSECTIONS

What: Visual screens



INTERSECTIONS

What: Crossing time at signals



BACKING VEHICLES

What: Parking lots



BACKING VEHICLES

What: Crossing behind parked cars



BACKING VEHICLES

What: Driveways



BACKING VEHICLES

What: Driveways



DRIVERS NOT SEEING YOU

What: Distraction, low lighting



TOO MUCH TRUST IN THE SYSTEM

What: Take control



What should the pedestrian do?

What should the pedestrian do?



What should the pedestrian do?



What should the pedestrian do?



What should the pedestrian do?



What should the pedestrians do?



What should the pedestrians do?



How many pedestrians do you see?



How many pedestrians do you see?



Recalling the basics

- Before crossing, look **left, right, left,** and **all around** for cars
- Walk on the sidewalk
- When there's no sidewalk, walk facing traffic

Selecting the best routes

- Places to walk
- Places to cross the street
- Conveniences
- Personal safety



Walking in groups

- Greater visibility
- Look out for each other
- Help overcome limitations
- Fun and friendships
- Encourages more walking



Notice things others can fix

Speeding drivers

Police

Drivers failing to yield

Police

Signal timing

Transportation
engineers

Sidewalk broken or blocked

Public works

Need for sidewalks

City council,
city manager

Summary

- Be alert at intersections
- Watch for backing vehicles
- Be seen
- Double-check the system
- Choose carefully where you walk
- Recognize how you're feeling
- Report issues you encounter

Spread the word





The Walking Environment



“I couldn’t handle the traffic anymore. It was impossible to cross on foot and there would be no way for an elderly person to make it.”

-Resident of Ocean City, MD

Situations where the physical environment can help

- Intersections
- Backing vehicles
- Traffic speeds



Topic outline

Walking along the street

Crossing the street

Speed of traffic

Topic outline

Walking along the street

Crossing the street

Speed of traffic

What's wrong with this picture?



What's wrong with this picture?



Good sidewalks encourage walking



What's wrong with this picture?



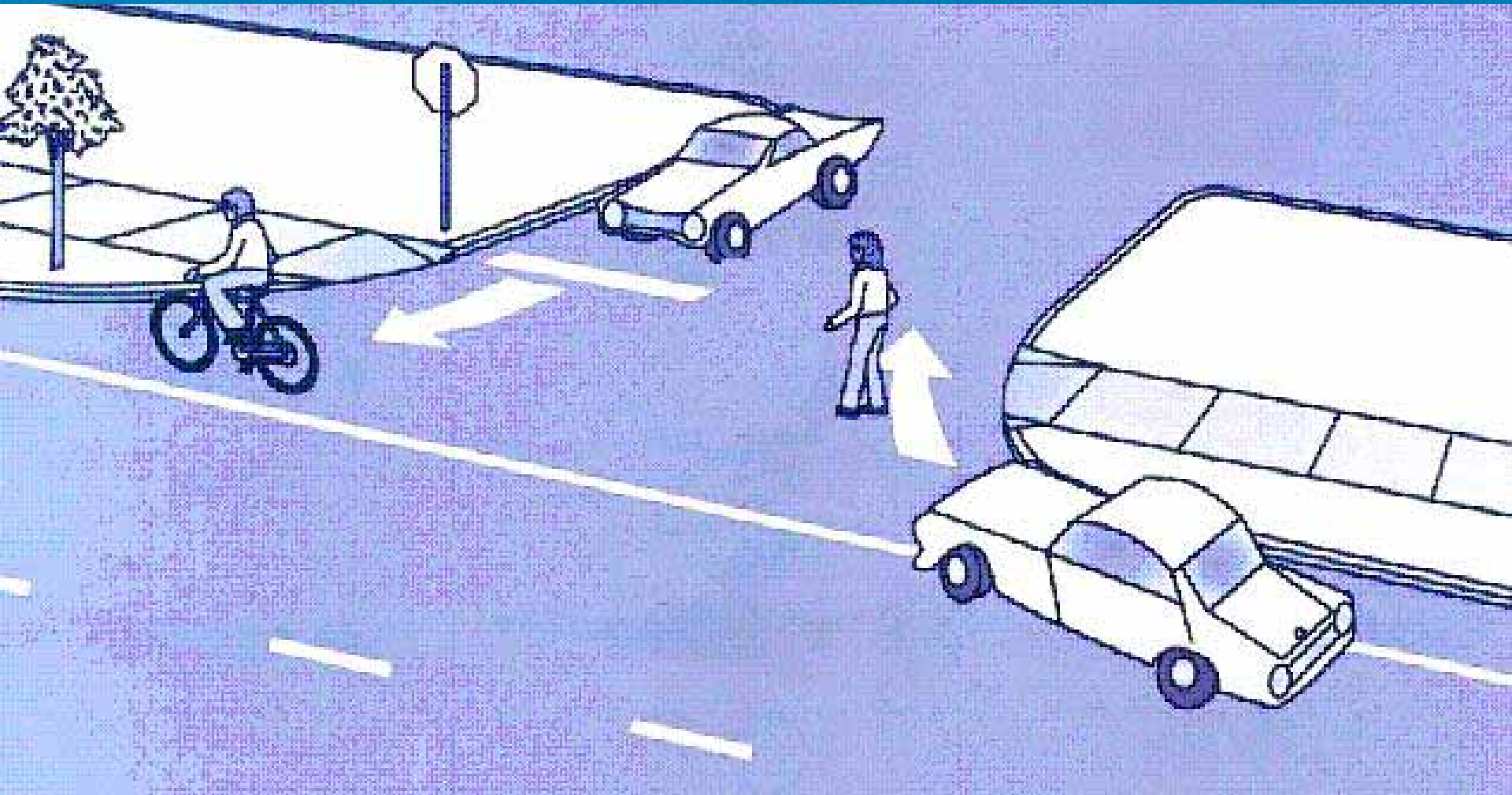
ADA requirements



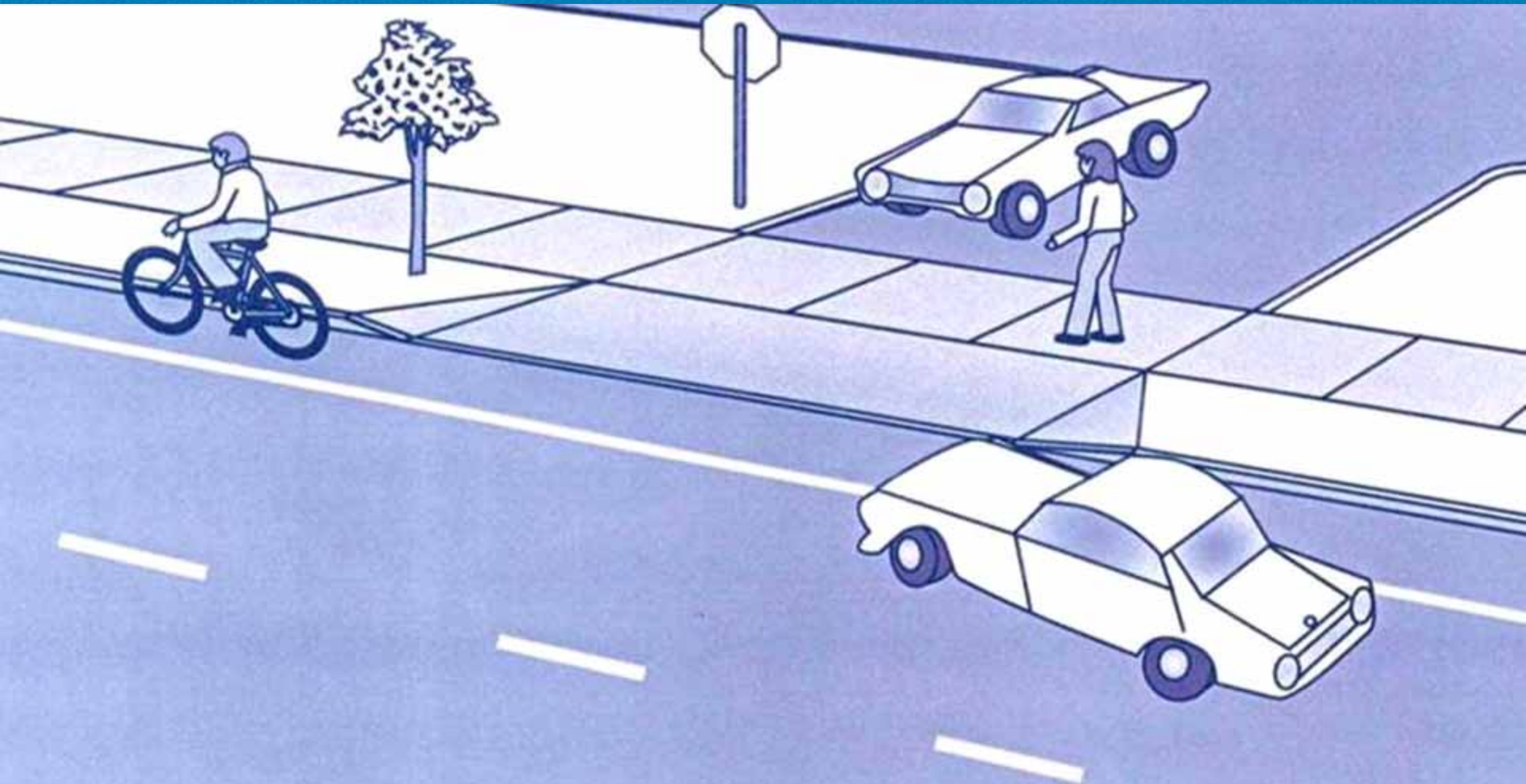
Curb ramp design



What happens when driveways are built like intersections?



What happens when sidewalks continue across driveways?



What's wrong with this picture?



Which street looks more inviting for walking?



Additional features

- Street lighting
- Places to sit
- Access to restrooms
- Water fountains
- Public art



Topic outline

Walking along the street

Crossing the street

Speed of traffic

What's wrong with this picture?



Shortening the crossing



Curb extensions
at crossings

Parking restrictions at corners

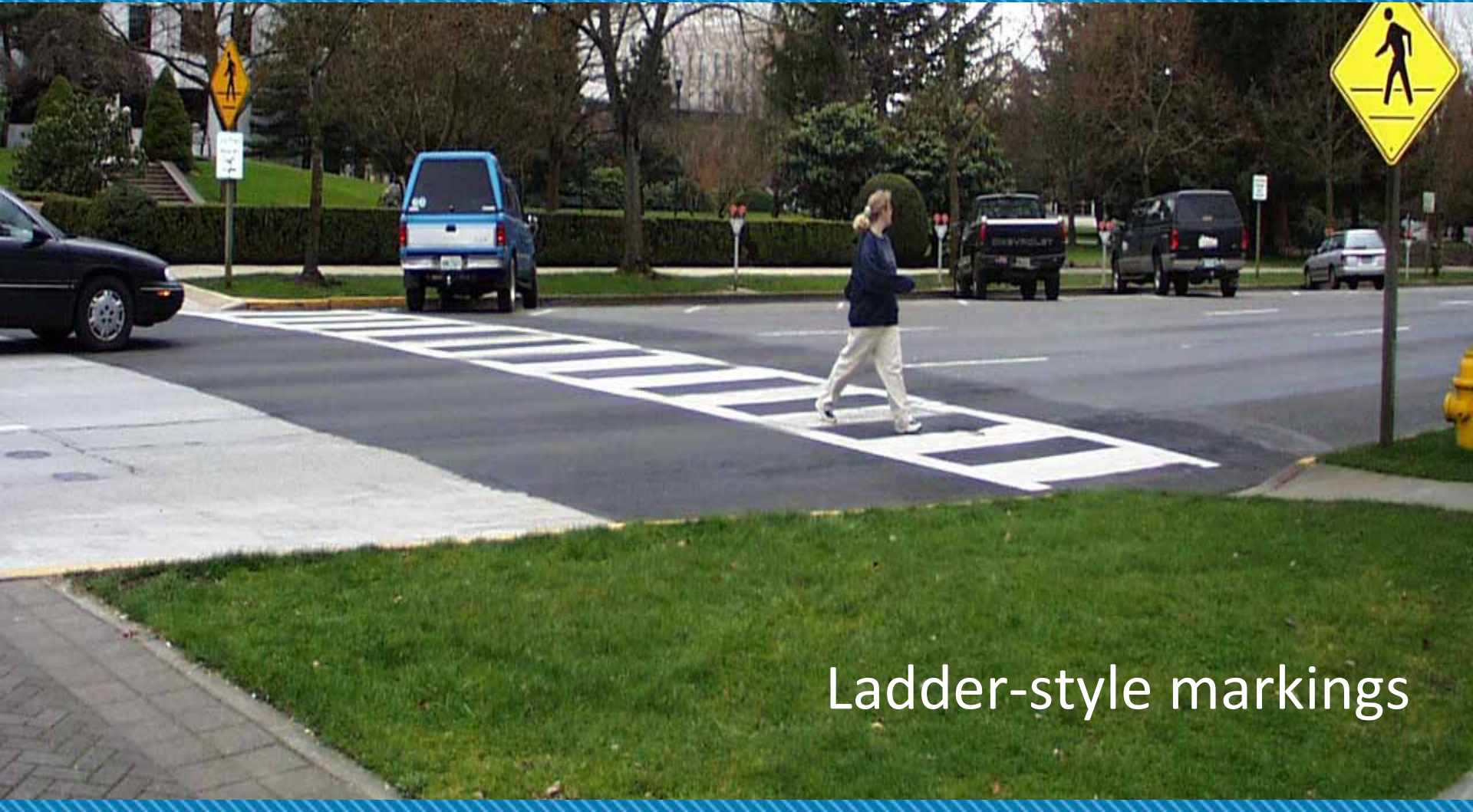
Restricting parking close to crosswalks provides **better visibility** for both drivers and pedestrians



Crossing islands



High-visibility crosswalks



Ladder-style markings

Pedestrian pushbuttons



Countdown signals



No-turn-on-red may increase pedestrian safety



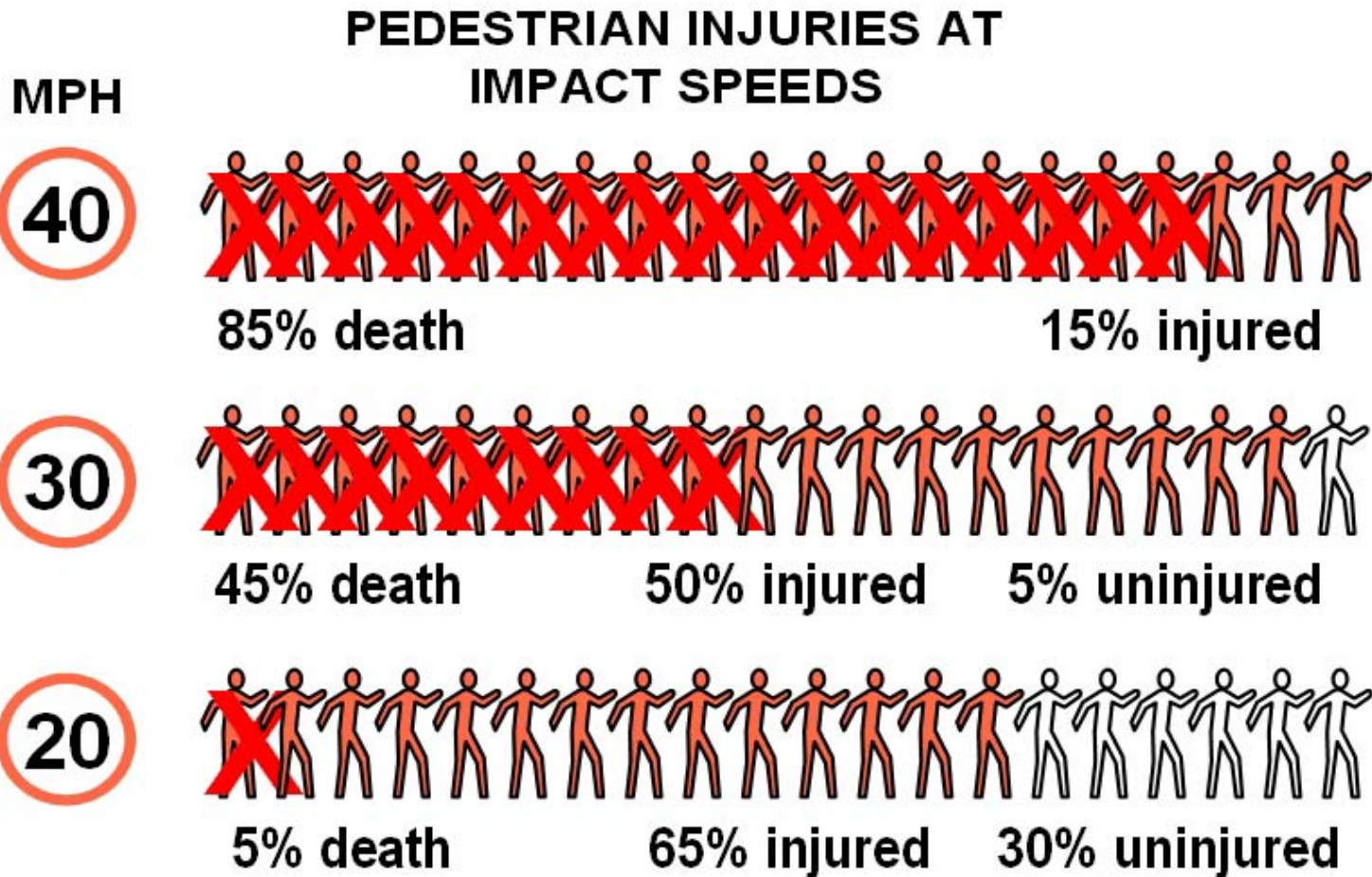
Topic outline

Walking along the street

Crossing the street

Speed of traffic

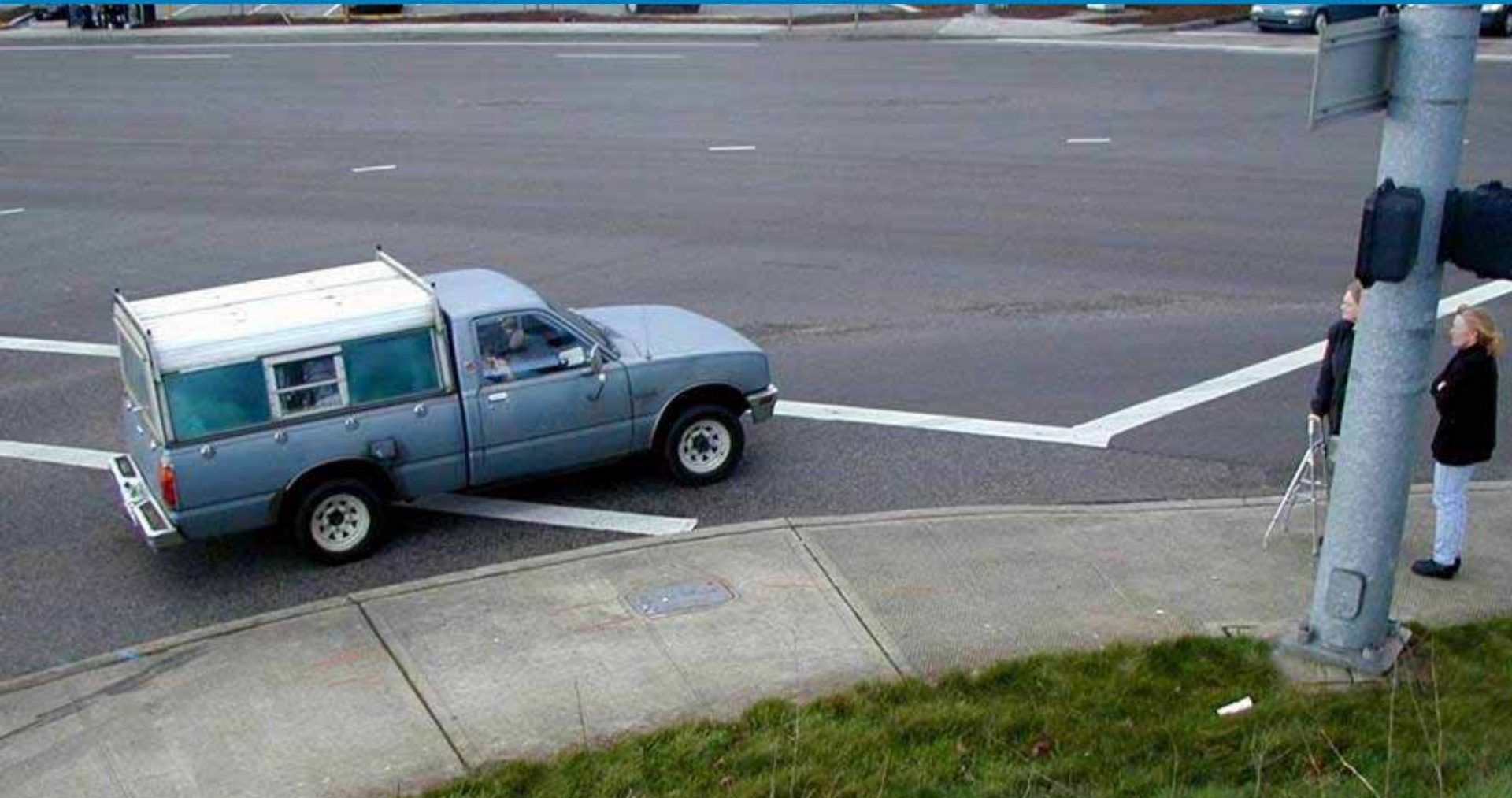
Why are we concerned with slowing down traffic?



Speed is a central issue for pedestrians



Wide turns mean traffic can move faster



Tight turns slow down motor vehicles



Speed humps



Speed tables



Speed humps and speed tables slow down traffic

Raised pedestrian crosswalks



Thoughts?

Summary

Older adults:

Pick walking routes with features that have safety benefits.

Work with transportation professionals to improve places that don't feel safe.

More...

Summary

Transportation professionals:

Get to know the issues that put older pedestrians at risk.

Use engineering tools to build environments that encourage safe driver and pedestrian behavior.



Completing the Picture

Education, Enforcement,
and Encouragement



Education: Who needs pedestrian safety education?

1. Pedestrians
2. Drivers
3. Neighborhood residents
4. Elected officials and decision-makers



Safety messages for drivers

- Pedestrians are an important part of the transportation system
- Speed matters: 5 mph difference can be deadly
- Driver mistakes are costly for pedestrians
 - Make complete stops
 - Avoid distractions
 - Expect pedestrians



Safety messages for neighborhood residents

- Keep sidewalks clear
- Prune bushes and trees
- Drive the speed limit



Safety messages for decision-makers

- Walking is a critical part of the transportation system
- Pedestrians are a good indication of a healthy community
- Designing a walkable environment requires careful attention
- Physical improvements must go hand in hand with policy support



Community efforts

- Neighborhood meetings
- Neighborhood signs and materials
- Pruning parties



Community efforts

- Neighborhood speed watch programs
- Neighborhood pace cars to remind drivers of speed limit




Media campaigns



LET PEDESTRIANS CROSS, THEN
TAKE YOUR TURN



Street Smarts www.GetStreetSmarts.org City of San José



Walk Safe Miami

How to read pedestrian signals

- WALK**
Look left, right left for traffic. Watch for turning cars as you cross.
- A flashing DON'T WALK** means don't start crossing. If you're already crossing, keep going to the other side.
- DON'T WALK**
Do not cross. Push button if there is one. Wait for the walk display or green light.

For more information contact the Miami-Dade MPO at (305) 275-5441.
Sponsored by the Miami-Dade MPO and DOT.

Law enforcement

Officers are valuable partners who can play **many roles**

Enforcement includes an array of methods to improve unsafe behavior



Unsafe driver behavior

- Speeding
- Failure to yield
- Running red lights or stop signs
- Distracted driving
- Not anticipating pedestrians
- Blocking the crosswalk



Unsafe pedestrian behavior



Law enforcement methods

- Speed trailers/driver feedback signs
- Pedestrian decoys
- Progressive ticketing
- Photo enforcement



Speed trailers and active speed monitors

- Increase awareness of local speed limits
- Reduce speeding
- Trailers:
 - Can be moved from place to place
- Monitors:
 - More permanent



Photo enforcement

- Movable units can provide citywide coverage
- Permanent units supplement police efforts



Pedestrian “decoy” enforcement actions



Progressive ticketing

First: educate

Second: warn

Third: ticket



Media coverage

Maintain good public relations by informing and preparing the community



Success story: Heed the speed

- Education about speeding
- Yard signs/speed trailers
- Citations and tickets
- Repeat if speeds increase



Encouragement programs



How are communities promoting walking?

- Group walks
- Events
- Walking maps
- Media campaign
- Mileage tracking
- Contests
- Park and walk



Group walks and walking clubs

- Regularly scheduled walk on a designated route
- Chance to socialize
- Sense of safety in group



Special events

- A chance to “try out” walking
- Build enthusiasm
- Opportunity for media coverage



Walking maps

Identify

- Sidewalks
- Walking routes
- Crossings
- Destinations
- Benches
- Restrooms
- Water fountains



WALKArLington Walkabouts:

Donaldson Run

Length:

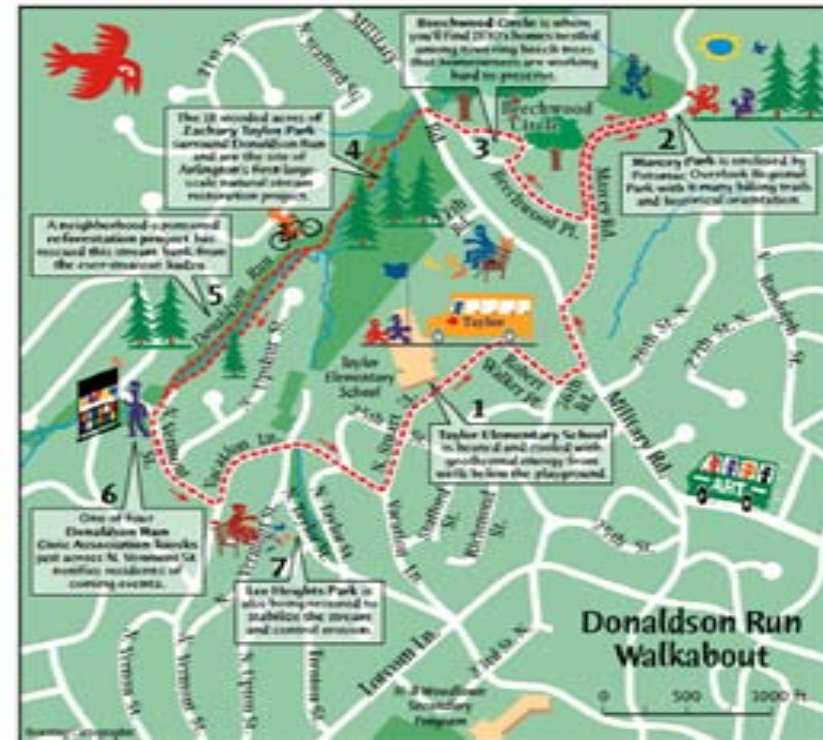
One and one half miles

Terrain:

Hilly in places

Ambience:

Quiet residential streets; stream-valley park; neighborhood schools and university.



Media campaigns

“You’re just **two feet** from some of the best places in town.”



You're just two feet from some of the best places in town.

Got some place to go? Try the method of transportation you learned long ago: walking. You'll do more than get from point A to point B, you'll also help clean up our air and unclog our streets. And if you have too far to go, fear not. You're just two feet from a bus stop.

Valley Metro Regional Bus Route and Schedule Information:
(602) 253-5000

Tempe In Motion Transit Office:
(480) 350-2739

www.tempe.gov/tim

b u s b i k e w a l k



Ride the bus for free!

If you've never ridden the bus before, we'll give you a chance to try it. Just complete this coupon and mail it to us for a free Valleywide,* one-day pass:

City of Tempe Transit, P.O. Box 5002, Tempe, AZ 85280

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ Tempe _____ State _____ AZ _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ Age _____

*Excludes express routes. Must be a Tempe resident to redeem coupon.

NT

Walk Wise Drive Smart

Hendersonville, NC

- Focus on pedestrian-friendly environments for seniors
- Includes: educational workshops, changes to the physical environment, neighborhood walks



Live Long, Live Well

New Jersey

- Logbook to track mileage
- 356K miles in 3 years
- Average age: 72
- **88% report** increased levels of physical activity



Wheeling Walks

Wheeling, WV

- Focused on health benefits of walking
- Used TV, radio, newspaper
- Walking “prescriptions”
- Results: **30%** of inactive residents **increased** walking versus 16% in community without the program.



Summary

- Education and enforcement both work to change unsafe behaviors
- Encouraging more people to walk can provide many benefits



Taking an Observational Walk



Questions to ask when walking

- Is there room to walk?
- Is crossing the street easy?
- What is the condition of the walking surface—are there tripping risks?

Questions to ask when walking

- How are drivers and pedestrians behaving?
- Do the surroundings feel safe?
- Do the surroundings feel comfortable?



Discussion and Next Steps

