

Walkable Communities Workshop

NATIONAL CENTER
BICYCLING & WALKING

Pendleton, IN Final Report



June 16, 2005

Citizens, Professionals, and Government Officials Gather to Learn and Brainstorm Ideas



Workshop Purpose: To brainstorm ideas on how the concept of a walkable community can be incorporated into the existing town as well as any new developments.

On June 16, 2005, a group of citizens, government officials, professionals, and other interested people gathered in the Conservation Building in Pendleton Falls Park to discuss how walkability can and should be incorporated into the town. Pendleton already has an extensive network of sidewalks and trails; the workshop provided an opportunity to look towards the future of the town.

Two national walkability experts, Mark Fenton and Megan Hoyt, led the workshop. It was organized by the National Center for Bicycling and Walking and sponsored by the Madison County Council of Governments (MCCOG).

What is a Walkable Community?

A walkable community is, as the name implies, a community where people can comfortably and safely walk or ride a bicycle as a means of daily transportation. Making Pendleton truly walkable, however, implies more than just sidewalks and crosswalks. It also means:

- attending to detail, which ultimately determines a town's walkability.
- considering children, the elderly, and the handicapped (e.g., repairing sidewalks that might be more dangerous for the elderly and handicapped).
- creating a comfortable and inviting environment allowing people to be out on the street all day and on weekends, producing a safe environment through informal surveillance.
- ensuring that adjacent neighborhoods are connected to town and other parts of the city so that pedestrians can walk from place to place easily and safely.
- planting trees between the sidewalk and the street (where possible) to buffer pedestrians from cars as well as to provide shelter from rain and shade from the sun.
- establishing a mix of business, industry, residences and other uses, ensuring that the streets are not vacant after 5 p.m. on weekdays.



For a list of useful links, go to
<http://www.lawalks.org/links.htm>

For a copy of the PowerPoint presentation,
contact Madison County Council of Governments at
mccog@mccog.net

Note: Photos second from the top and at bottom by Mark Fenton

Why is a walkable community a worthy goal for Pendleton? There are many reasons; it would:

- make certain the town remains an enjoyable place to be.
- ensure that all members of the community can lead an independent lifestyle. A full 30% of the American public do not drive automobiles - whether because they are too young, are physically unable, cannot afford a vehicle, or simply choose not to drive - and therefore must rely on walking, bicycling, or transit to get around.
- positively influence residents' health. The current generation of Americans is the first expected to have a shorter lifespan than their parents. This is due in large part to an American obesity epidemic, which is related to a sedentary auto-related lifestyle. The sedentary lifestyle is difficult to avoid if neighborhoods do not enable people to walk or ride bicycles.

The Workshop Agenda

Fenton led Pendleton's workshop, which focused on determining what role walkability can play in the town's ongoing improvement and expansion and the issues related to it, including community and neighborhood connections, aesthetics, economic development, etc.

The workshop followed the following format:

- *Visions:* Each participant was asked to share their vision for Pendleton in the next 10 years.
- *Presentation:* Fenton gave an extensive presentation covering a number of rationales for improving walkability as well as tools to enact change.
- *Walking tour:* Fenton and Hoyt split the group into two smaller groups and went on walking routes around the town. Along the way, participants were asked to rate their experience at a number of points, as well as to compare their perceptions of different places, explain why they felt the way they did, and to generate ideas for how the spaces could be altered.
- *Group brainstorming:* Once the participants returned to the Conservation Building, they split into two groups. Each group was given aerial photos of the walking routes along with markers and was asked to brainstorm ideas for improving the town.

The Workshop Leaders



Mark Fenton is an established walking and walkability expert - he earned a B.A. and an M.S. in biomechanics from M.I.T. prior to participating in the U.S. Olympic speedwalking team, later becoming a coach for other prominent speedwalkers. He has also worked in research engineering for Reebok, edited and contributed columns to several walking magazines, and more recently become a prominent public health spokesperson and hosted the PBS series 'America Walks.'

Megan Hoyt, the City of Seattle's Department of Transportation Coordinator for Pedestrian and School Safety received her B.A. in civil engineering and has since been involved in a number of innovative transportation projects. She has also been actively involved in walkability advocacy and the national Safe Routes to School Program.

Participants were asked to think in terms of three P's: projects, programs, and policies. For example, if the goal is to landscape local parking lots, a project might be planting trees in a particular parking lot. A program might be getting a group of town business owners together to encourage and assist people to install landscaping town. A policy might be to have a municipal landscape requirement for any new development town.

Results

The results from the workshop have been compiled and listed below. Concepts have been combined where two or more people or groups have expressed the same idea. The results have been separated by the sections of the workshop: Visions, Walking Tour and Group Brainstorming (for a copy of the presentation please contact Council of Governments). A map with the information gathered from the group brainstorming session is located at the end of the document.

Visions

At the outset, each participant was asked what his or her 10-year vision for town Pendleton was. Visions included:

- Inter-city walking and biking trails.
- An extensive network of connected trails.
- Safe pedestrian crosswalks.
- Improved sign systems.
- Recreation opportunities beyond the town's park.
- All new growth tied to downtown through trail systems
- Increased tourism through downtown and park.
- Protected historic character.
- Improve aesthetic requirements.
- Increase residential density.
- Higher density residential, brownstone architecture.

The Walking Tours

Participants split into two groups and went on a walking tour around the town, with one group led by Hoyt and the other by Fenton. At key points, the groups stopped and participants were asked to rate their surroundings, explain their ratings, and to generate ideas for how the spaces could be improved. Comments and ideas from each group are listed below, organized by location.

Route 1

Hoyt led the first walking route. Participants walked from the Falls Park Conservation Building south past the pool, east on Water St., south on Hayden Way, along an informal path leading to a gas station on SR 67, north on 67 to the shopping center, back through a residential neighborhood and then back to the Conservation Building.

Path south of Conservation Building

Observations:

- Generally positive remarks.

Potential improvements:

- Add lighting.

Water St. in front of apartments:

Observations:

- Unsafe for pedestrians.
 - Traffic speed.
 - Small setback.
- No shade.

Potential improvements:

- Traffic calming.
- Increase setbacks.
- Plant trees.

Marsh

Observations:

- Excessive setback.
- Poor access due to having to cross the highway and parking lot.

Informal path leading to gas station

Observations:

- Its existence shows that it's an important link for the adjacent neighborhood.

Potential improvements:

- Formalize connection (e.g., pave).

SR 67

Observations:

- Felt unsafe.
- Large right-of-way.

Potential improvements:

- Install lighting.
- Add bicycle/pedestrian accommodations such as a sidewalk and/or bike land.

Shopping Center on SR 67

Observations:

- Almost vacant.
- Huge amount of parking, few cars.
- No trees.
- No connections from anywhere else except to the neighborhood behind it (an informal path through a ditch).

Potential improvements:

- Install landscaping and pedestrian paths

Route 2

Fenton led the second walking route. Participants walked from the Falls Park Conservation Building west on Fall Creek Drive to Pendleton Ave., south to State St., east to the pool and north to the Conservation Building.

Between Conservation Building and Community Building

Observations:

- Elevation of sidewalk.
- No barrier between pedestrian and car.
- Vehicular speed – dangerous for pedestrians.

Potential improvements:

- One-way bridge.
- Traffic circle at entrance into parking lot.
- Plant trees in buffered grass strip.
- Use planters or bollards to separate pedestrians from driving space.

Parking near Falls Park entrance

Observations:

- Parking layout makes it unsafe for pedestrians.
- Crosswalk is angled, not perpendicular to traffic lane.

Potential improvements:

- Parallel parking.
- Perpendicular crossing - stripe it.

Intersection of Pendleton Ave. and State St.

Observation:

- Curb radius enables cars to turn at a high speed.

Potential Improvements

- Bump-outs.
- Smooth arches to maintain snow removal.
- Plant trees on bump-out.

Village Pantry on SR 38

Observations:

- Curb cuts are wide.
- More vehicle entrances than necessary.

Potential improvements:

- Shorten or eliminate some openings to V.P.
- Make (2) 10ft. lanes on SR38 and add a bike lane.

Brainstorming Session

The brainstorming session provided participants with an opportunity to put down their ideas for Pendleton's town on paper. Once the participants returned to the Conservation Building, they split into four groups. Each group was given aerial photos of the walking routes along with markers and was asked to brainstorm ideas for improving town. The results below have been combined from all groups and divided into projects,

programs, and policies. Please note that, since this is a compilation, some concepts may overlap. For example two different projects may be suggested for the same site.

Projects

- Install crosswalks on Water St. (into parking lots) and on S.R. 67/9 to Marsh.
- Establish white water rafting along Falls Creek.
- Pedestrian bump-out on Falls Park Drive, along outskirts of park: to ensure safer crossing into and out of the park.
- Install bicycle lanes along: to connect bicyclists and pedestrians to opportunities throughout the town.
 - along S.R. 67/9, parallel to Falls Creek
 - on both sides of State Street.
- Install traffic circles along Falls Parks Dr. (intersection of John St. and Falls Parks Dr., and entrance of Falls Park near baseball fields): to slow traffic and create a safer environment for pedestrians.
- Develop the land at East St. and Water St. into mixed density residential, maintain grid system.
- Maintain Falls Park tennis courts.
- Provide an additional recreational area in Falls Park.
- Widen sidewalks and plant trees along Water Street to improve pedestrian safety.
- Add lighting along the trail between Falls Park Conservation Building and the swimming pool.
- Install a trail or walking route between:
 - the pool, the library, and the adjacent subdivision.
 - Water St. and the entrance of the subdivision.
- Add “Trump” casino along Falls Creek: crazy idea, provide financial security to Pendleton.
- Construct observatory in park to attract tourists.
- Construct high density residential on Water St. near commercial properties.
- Construct a sidewalk from Water St. to proposed bike lane, located parallel to Falls Creek to enable citizens to walk to commercial and recreational areas.
- Improve retail area on S.R. 67/9:
 - Create long-term plan for redevelopment/improvements.
 - Make incremental changes.
 - Install landscaped medians.

Programs

- Create a comprehensive system of wayfinding signs.
- Promote Pendleton’s attractions and amenities.

Policies

- Establish a landscaping ordinance that states all parking lots should be landscaped – a landscape ordinance could remedy some of the negative effects of development, especially for surface parking lots. Trees reduce surface runoff, cool the environment by providing shade, and improve aesthetics and property values.
- Reduce/limit the number of curb cuts.
- Revise zoning including maximum setbacks.
- Adopt architectural standards.

Conclusions

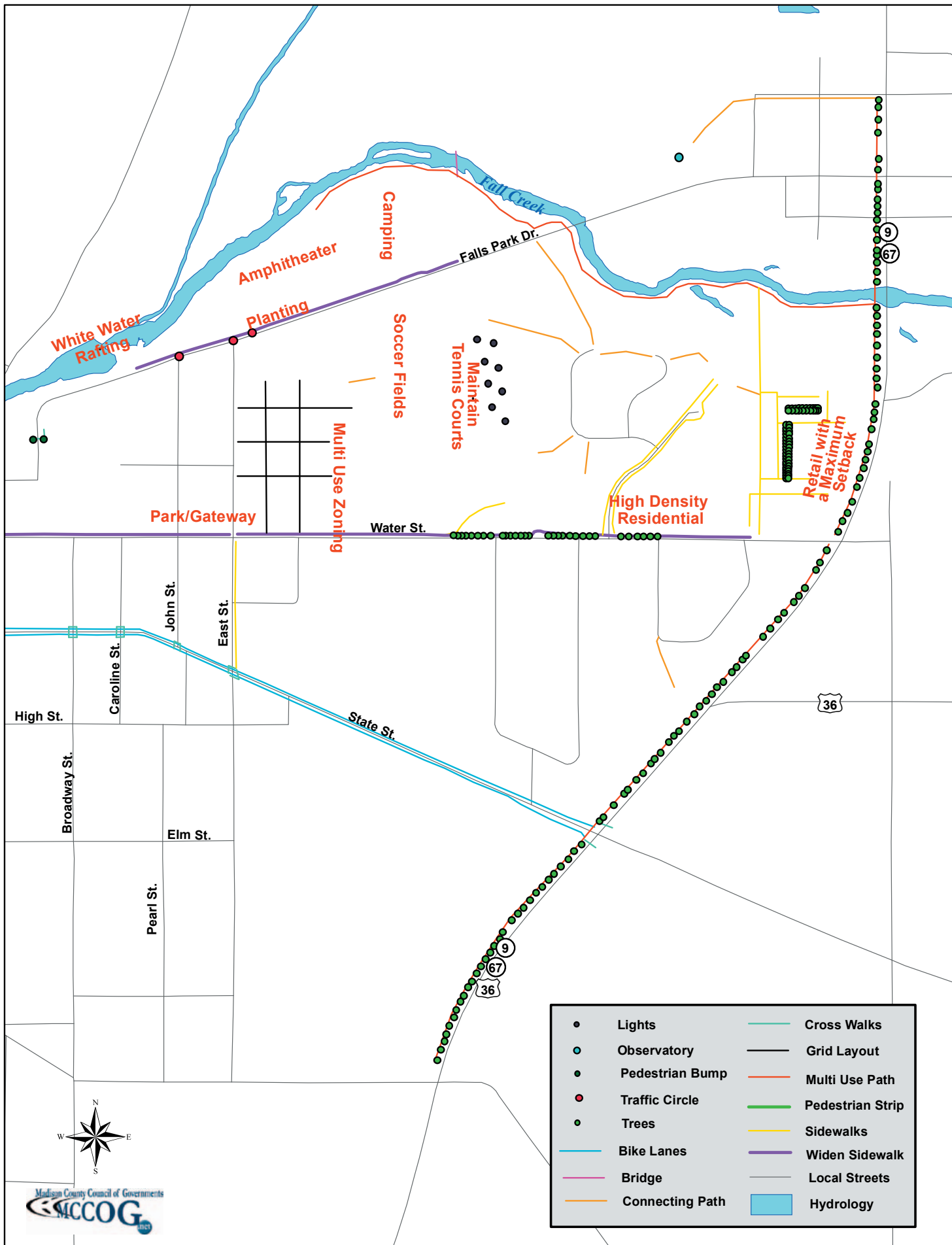
The workshop provided an important forum for information sharing and brainstorming. Some important points to consider in walkability include:

- *Users.* When planning for walkability, it is important to keep in mind all potential users. That includes everyone in the community – not just able-bodied adults but also young children to the elderly and people using wheelchairs. In fact, it is especially important to consider the youth and the elderly because they often are unable to drive, so walking is their primary means of transportation.
- *Land use.* Land use is the activity that occurs in a given place. In terms of walkability, you have to make sure that there is a place to begin and a place to end – for example, for people to walk to work, there must be residences and jobs connected by a path that is short enough to walk.
- *Continuity.* It's important to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian paths are continuous. One small barrier – a rough patch, lack of a ramp, a utility pole – can make the entire path unusable for its intended users.

There are many possible routes to implementing walkability into town. As Hoyt and Fenton emphasized, getting local people involved in small inexpensive projects they are personally interested in is just as important as having large-scale, expensive projects. Additionally, improvements can come piece by piece – by maintaining interest and a watchful eye as the town develops over time, walkability can be used as an effective support tool in the ongoing town revitalization.

Attendees

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Bob Campbell | Resident |
| Janelle Collins | Storrow and Kinsella |
| Mike Guard | Town of Pendleton |
| Carrie Huisingh | IUPUI |
| Jeff Maydak | Resident/Rundell Ernstberger Associates |
| Andrew McGee | Central Indiana Commuter Services |
| Anthony Noble | Student |
| Bill Savage | City of Elwood Director of Economic Development |
| Katherine Tanner | Town of Edgewood |



White Water Rafting

Amphitheater

Camping

Planting

Soccer Fields

Maintain Tennis Courts

Park/Gateway

Multi Use Zoning

Water St.

High Density Residential

Retail with a Maximum Setback

High St.

Caroline St.

John St.

East St.

State St.

36

Broadway St.

Elm St.

Pearl St.

9
67
36

- Lights
- Observatory
- Pedestrian Bump
- Traffic Circle
- Trees
- Bike Lanes
- Bridge
- Connecting Path
- Cross Walks
- Grid Layout
- Multi Use Path
- Pedestrian Strip
- Sidewalks
- Widen Sidewalk
- Local Streets
- Hydrology

