

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION & PLAN GOALS



Photo 1. Aerial map of Raleigh in 1872.

Transportation has been a central theme to the Raleigh community throughout its history. The City was founded as Wake Crossroads and served as a resting place for travelers on the main north-south route through central North Carolina. While Raleigh has grown into a diverse community of people and activities, transportation continues to be a fundamental element of the City. The City has 1,761 miles of roadways, 1,190 miles of sidewalk, 12 miles of bike lanes and over 60 miles of bikeable greenwaytrails. Forty-two bus routes on the Capital Area Transit system carry riders to and from their destinations, boarding and alighting at over 1000 bus stops.

Almost all Raleigh residents are pedestrians at some point in their day, regardless of their primary mode of travel. Raleigh has nationally recognized Parks, an award-winning Greenway System, as well as many notable tree-lined streets. Those that enjoy walking may do so

for recreation, exercise, commuting, to enjoy the mild climate, or simply because “It’s better for us and the environment to walk.” However, walking conditions are not uniform Citywide. Missing sidewalks and difficult intersections are some of the obstacles that make walking difficult in some parts of the City.

This Pedestrian Plan furthers the work of the City’s 1992 ADA Transition Plan, 1993 Sidewalk Priority Funding Program, 2030 Comprehensive Master Plan adopted in 2009, and the current Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) update; and serves as a companion plan to the City’s 2009 Bicycle Transportation Plan. This plan will help guide the City’s ongoing investments in sidewalks and crossings in order to improve the quality and safety of existing pedestrian network; and to identify ways to increase the awareness and benefits of walking.

Specific objectives for this plan are to:

- » Identify and prioritize new pedestrian infrastructure to enhance connectivity in Raleigh among home, work, schools, transit service, recreation, entertainment, and shopping destinations.
- » Develop technical standards for improving pedestrian access in the land-development process.
- » Determine the means to increase funding for pedestrian infrastructure from all sources, and make effective use of designated funds to complete the top 25 pedestrian network projects.
- » Quadruple pedestrian “journey to work” mode share by 2020.
- » Propose new programs that complement and support changes to the pedestrian network and promote walkability.
- » Receive “Walk-Friendly Community” designation by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC).

Implementation of the plan’s recommendations may result in public health benefits throughout the City of Raleigh. The plan calls for 200 miles of sidewalk to be added to the City’s pedestrian

infrastructure network. These improvements will increase opportunities for walking and will help create a sustainable multimodal transportation system that supports better health and well-being through physical activity and active transportation.

The City’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan lays out a blueprint for adequately and safely accommodating pedestrians on all streets. Adopted in October 2009, the Comprehensive Plan includes updated pedestrian goals, aiming for sidewalks on both sides of all streets.

The Comprehensive Plan’s land use strategy emphasizes pedestrian-oriented development rather than pedestrian-accessible development and includes the following vision for coordinating land use and transportation:

Raleigh will coordinate its transportation investments with desired land use patterns to plan more effectively for housing, employment and retail uses, and for public services. Higher density residential and mixed-use development will provide the land use pattern needed to support successful new local and regional public transit services. We will also have additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities and roadways that better serve us all.

This vision acknowledges that additional investments in the City’s pedestrian network will enhance mobility and safety as part of a broader strategy to accommodate

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street. Many cities across the United States have successfully implemented Complete Streets including: Charlotte, Chicago, Sacramento, and Seattle. These cities, and others, have made a commitment to provide a safe and efficient network for all users of the transportation system.

From 2030 Comprehensive Plan, Element B, Transportation

growth and mitigate traffic demands.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes several Complete Streets principles:

Policy T 3.1:

Complete Street Standards that provide mobility for all types of transportation modes (pedestrian, bicycle, auto, transit) and support mutually-reinforcing land use and transportation decisions.

Policy T 3.2:

Accommodating Multiple Users in all new roadway projects and major reconstruction projects. . . and manage the use of rights-of-way to best serve future travel demand (e.g., Multi-modal Streets—incorporate wider sidewalks where appropriate).

Policy T 3.3:

Redefining Level of Service to include bicycle (BLOS), pedestrian (PLOS), and transit (TLOS) levels of service.

Policy T 3.4:

Pedestrian-Friendly Road Design that includes amenities with the pedestrian in mind, avoiding the use of traffic control and safety devices that favor vehicles.

Policy T 3.5:

Use Medians, where feasible, to improve safety and vehicle throughput while providing opportunities for pedestrian refuges and landscaping.

The Transportation Element of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan also includes policies aimed at improving safety for all travelers. Specific policies address multi-modal safety improvements, traffic calming, and data collection. This Pedestrian Plan helps Raleigh begin implementing these Complete Streets elements today, as it moves forward with larger corridor projects and smaller projects that

improve a single intersection or segment of the pedestrian network.

Plan Development

This plan is the result of a number of related, but separate tasks culminating in a set of new tools for building, maintaining, and assessing the pedestrian network; and a set of programs and activities that will encourage and support the network's use. The City of Raleigh's Office of Transportation Planning led the planning process. A consulting team completed several tasks including community engagement, existing conditions assessment, and a demand and needs analysis based on demographic and pedestrian-safety data. Specific plan recommendations and products are described in the next section, "Plan Summary and Outline."

Background Data Collection and Field Analysis

Background information was an important resource for establishing existing conditions and developing plan recommendations. This information was gathered by reviewing previous plans and studies, and program information; mapping and analyzing existing GIS data and maps; technical team meetings with City staff; and field work. For example, the demand and needs analysis was developed from existing GIS data (see Table X in Chapter 2, Existing Conditions).

City and consulting staff also mapped missing sidewalks to be used in developing the new sidewalk prioritization system (see Chapter 3, Best Practices). Several windshield tours of Raleigh and site-specific field visits were conducted to document existing conditions for walking and to identify improvement opportunities.

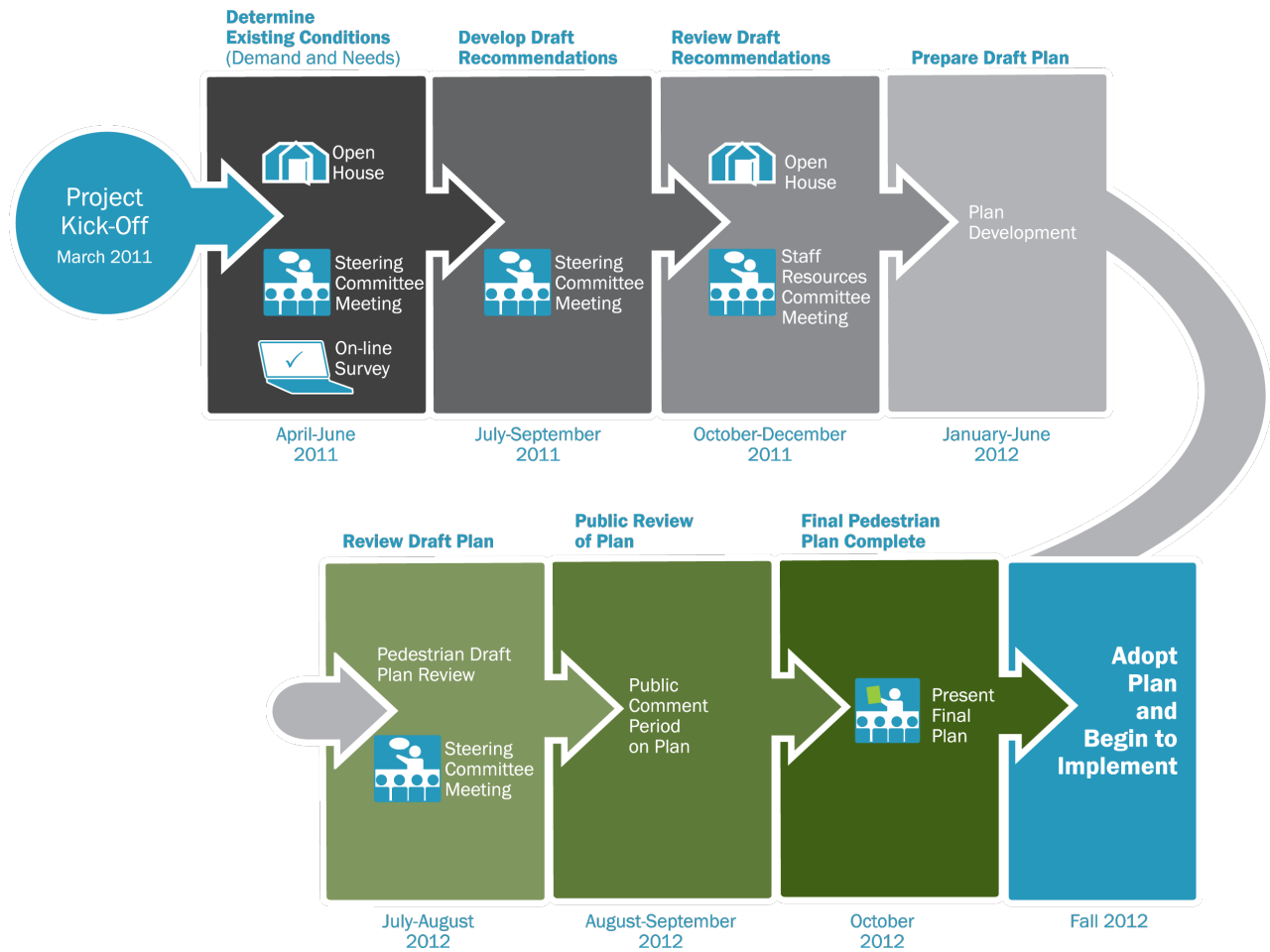


Figure 1. Graphic of plan development.

Public Open Houses and Input

Opportunities for public input included two open houses; a City-wide survey of walking habits, preferences and experiences; an interactive online mapping forum to identify locations where walking conditions are good or in need of improvements; and Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) meetings. Chapter 2, Existing Conditions, provides a summary of the online survey and mapping forum.

Over fifty people attended the first Plan open house on June 8, 2011. The “drop in” format included display boards with draft materials such as existing conditions, sidewalk ranking criteria, and ancillary programs for participants



Photo 2. Open House, June 8, 2011

to provide comments. A short presentation summarizing the plan goals and process was offered twice. Several participants also completed a paper copy of the questionnaire and provided comments for the mapping forum.

A second open house on November 8, 2011 presented all draft materials. Organized roughly by the Pedestrian Plan's expected chapter sequence, participants gained an understanding of the process used to develop recommendations and were able to review all draft recommendations. A presentation on the Plan cycled continuously for participants to view at their own pace.

The final opportunity for public input was in the summer 2012. The complete draft plan was available on the City's Pedestrian Program landing page for public review and comment.

Plan Steering Committee

A Steering Committee comprised of a variety of stakeholders met four times and participated in two open houses.

In addition, the Steering Committee reviewed plan materials and helped guide recommendations. Steering Committee members are listed in the table below.

Plan Summary and Outline

The Raleigh Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan includes recommendations for a combination of infrastructure improvements, maintenance and monitoring, and complementary programs and activities.

- » **Chapter 2: Existing Conditions**, describes the current walking environment and provides the context in which recommendations are made and prioritized. Information in this chapter includes a pedestrian demand and needs

City of Raleigh Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee

<i>Wake Med/Advocates for Health in Action</i>	<i>Triangle Transit</i>	<i>Raleigh Transit Authority</i>
Laura Aiken	Michelle Epps	Les Seitz
<i>Mayors Committee for Persons with Disabilities</i>	<i>CAMPO Bicycle & Pedestrian Stakeholder Group</i>	<i>Raleigh Parks, Recreation & Greenway Advisory Board</i>
James Benton	Will Hartye	Kimberly Siran
<i>NC State University</i>	<i>Raleigh Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission</i>	<i>Fair Housing and Hearing Board/ Southeast Raleigh</i>
Alison Carpenter	Sig Hutchinson	Kristi Tally
<i>North Carolina Department of Transportation</i>	<i>Pedestrian Advocacy</i>	<i>Raleigh Citizen Advisory Council</i>
Helen Chaney	Joe Johnston	Mark Turner
<i>Alliance of Disability Advocates</i>	<i>Downtown Raleigh Alliance</i>	<i>Raleigh Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission</i>
Karen Clark	Hallie Mittleman	Aaron Peeler
<i>Wake Med</i>	<i>Institute for Transportation, Research & Education</i>	<i>RonMace Center</i>
Siobhan Davis	Bastian Schroeder	Joy Weeber

analysis, summary information on crashes between 2004 and 2010, and the location of missing sidewalks along major streets (missing links) in the City-wide pedestrian network. The chapter also provides a summary of the public involvement process, and describes relevant policies, plans and projects, such as the Capital Boulevard Corridor Study and Hillsborough Street Renaissance that guide or may impact the plan.

- » **Chapter 3: Best Practices, Design Standards and Sidewalk Program**, identifies best practices in pedestrian design for “along the roadway” (generally sidewalks) and “across the roadway” (crossings) needs. The chapter also includes 12 design templates for intersection and mid-block crossing treatments to help guide improvements in these areas. This chapter also details a new needs-based system to score and prioritize the installation of new sidewalks.
- » Infrastructure improvement recommendations are presented in **Chapter 4, Pedestrian Facility Recommendations**. This chapter identifies priorities for installing missing sidewalk links and presents design concepts for six “Example Locations.” The Example Locations are representative of pedestrian network needs in many areas of the City.
- » **Chapter 5: Programs and Initiatives for Walkable Raleigh**, identifies programs and activities that support pedestrian infrastructure recommendations. Recommended Programs and Initiatives are categorized as either “administrative” – developed and managed primarily by the local government or MPO; or “participatory” -- on-going public involvement in pedestrian issues in Raleigh. Descriptions of several

high value programs are included.

- » **Chapter 6: Summary of Recommendations**, collates the pedestrian network recommendations found in previous chapters, and introduces complementary programmatic and policy recommendations necessary to enhance walkability in the City of Raleigh.
- » **Chapter 7: Implementing the Plan**, provides a timeframe for implementing the recommendations provided in Chapter 6, beginning with the most important and time-sensitive, such as installing new sidewalks.
- » **Chapter 8: A Longer Term Vision for Walkable Raleigh**, describes approaches to creating attractive, high quality pedestrian places: one that incorporates pedestrians (and bicyclists) within the roadway through “reallocating or adding to”; the other separates non-motorized and motorized modes, drawing on examples from other U.S. cities.