



# 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?



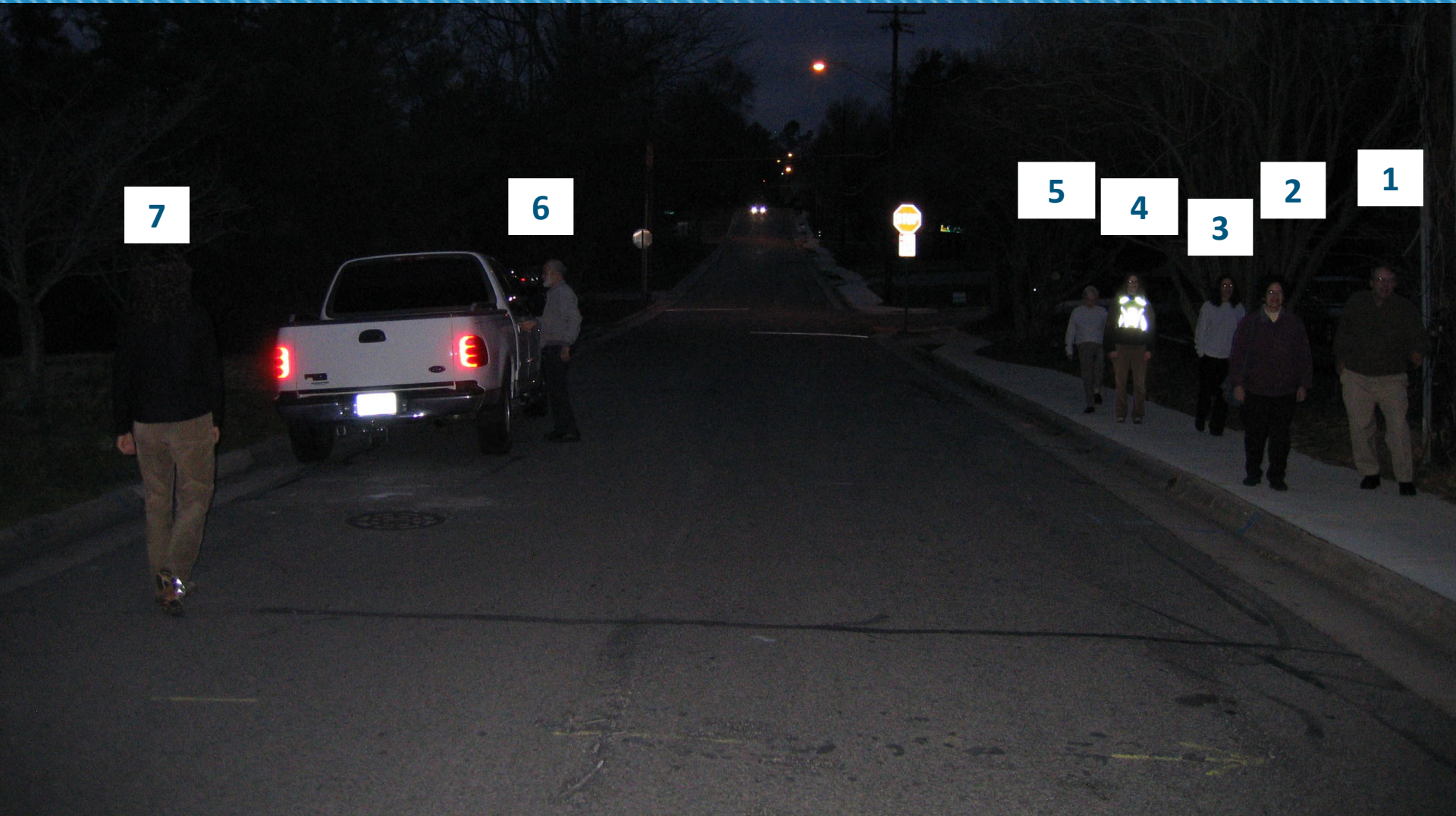


# How many pedestrians do you see?





# 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



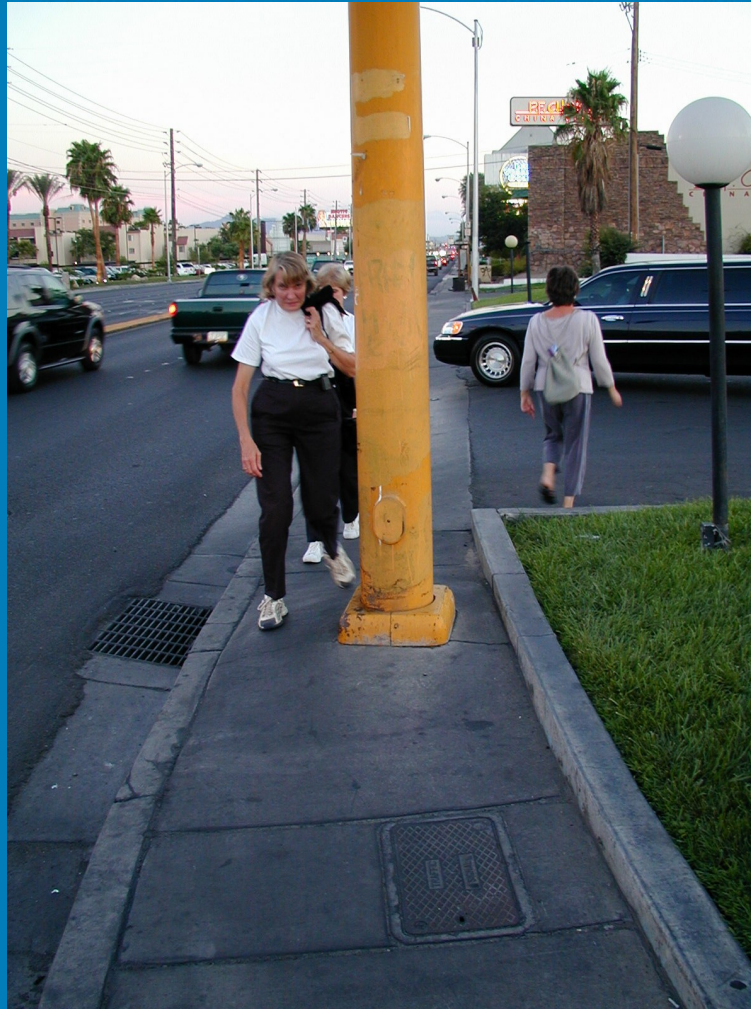
# Topic outline

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

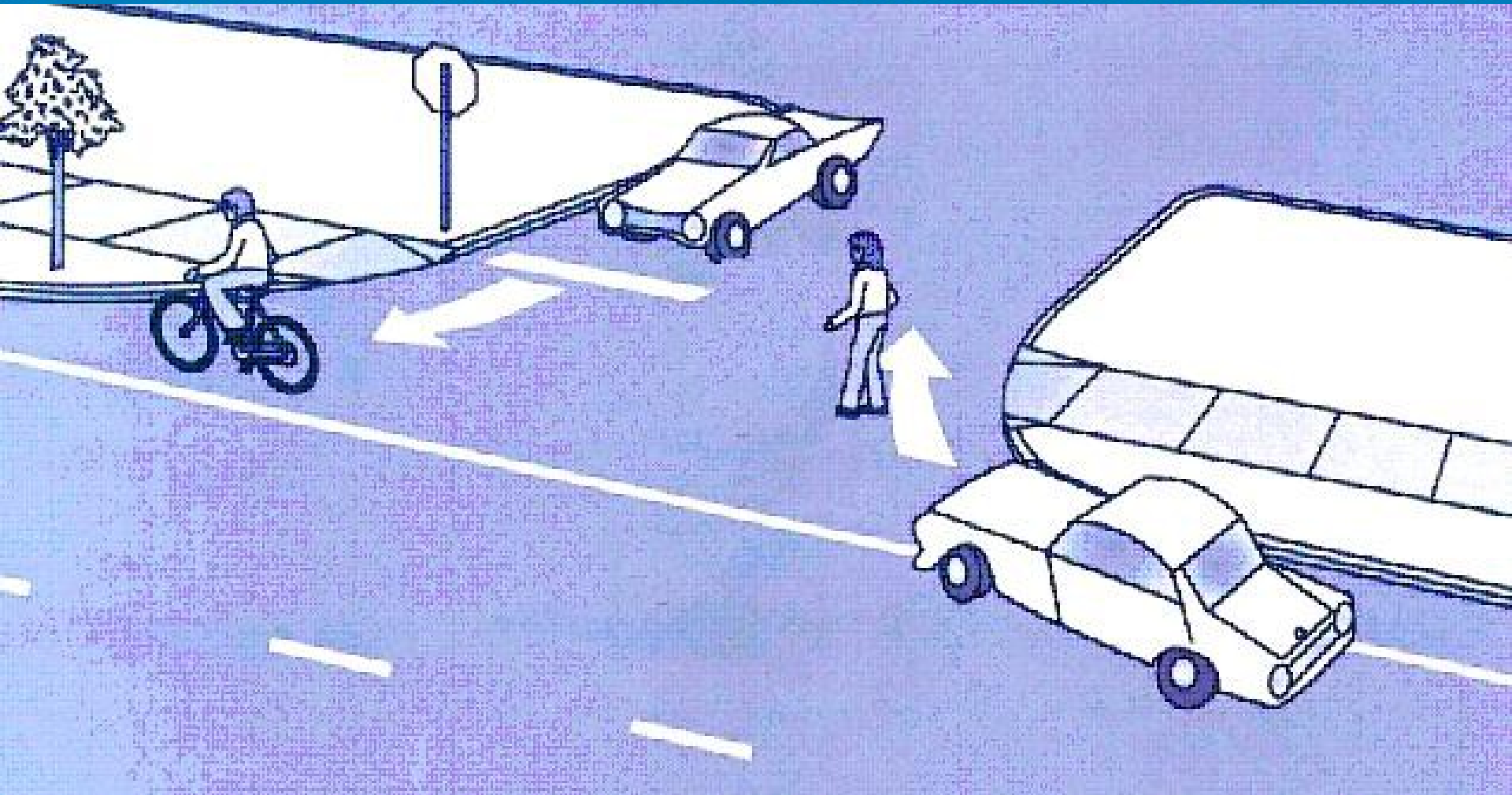




# Curb ramp design

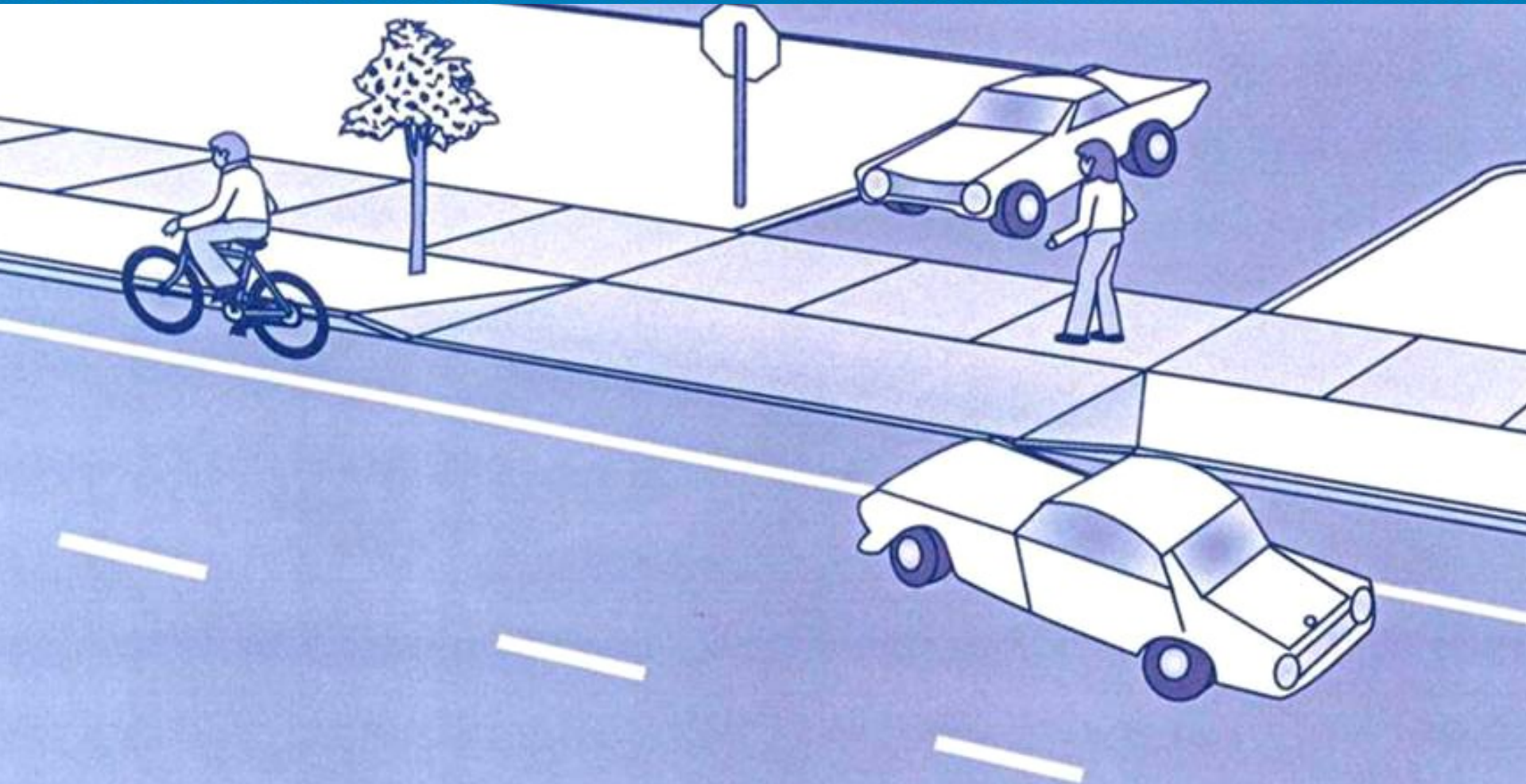


# What happens when driveways are built like intersections?





# 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

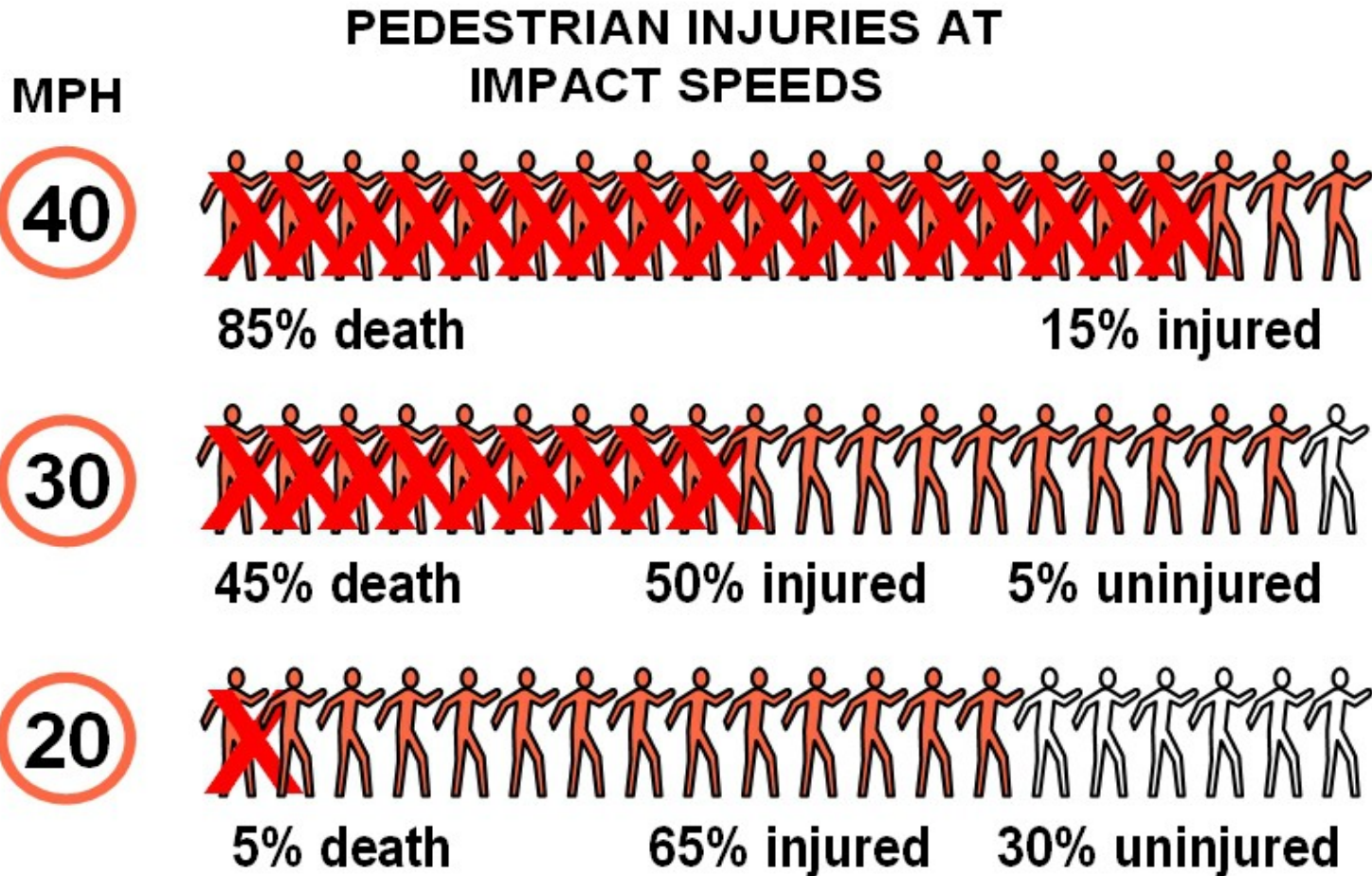
Walking along the street

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](http://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.

**MPO** For more information contact the Miami-Dade MPO at (305) 275-8441.  
Sponsored by the Miami-Dade MPO and DOT.



# Law enforcement

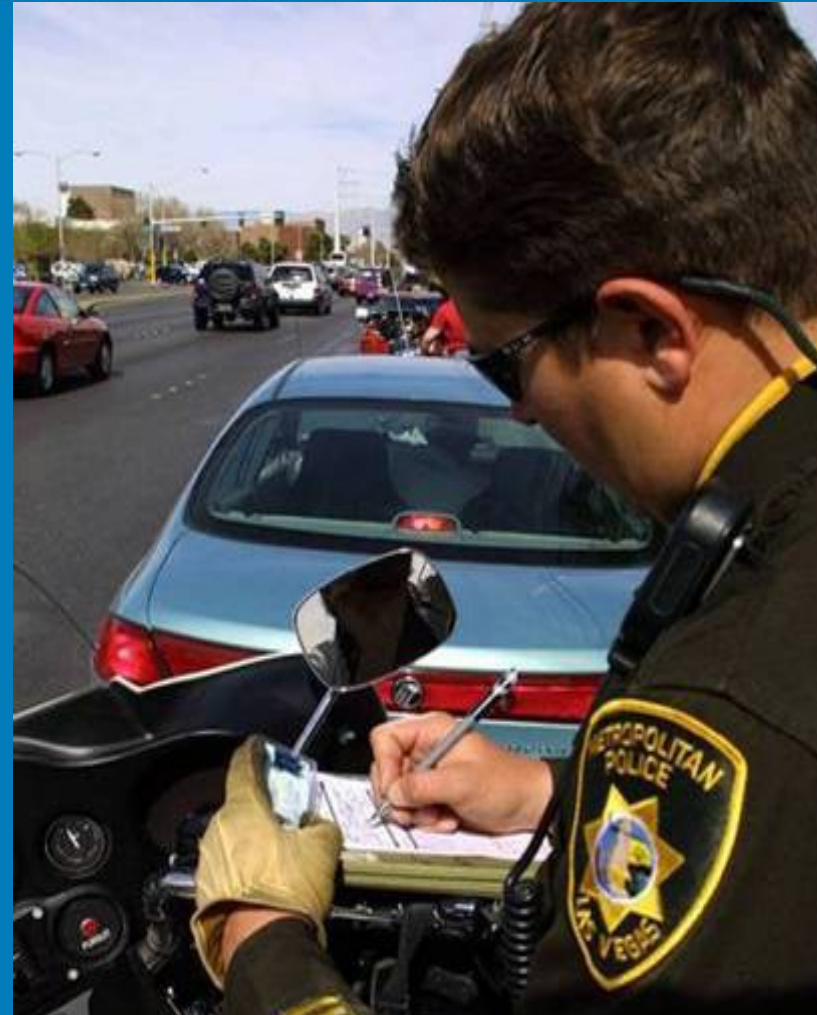
Officers are valuable partners who can play **many roles**

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



### Length:

One and one half miles

### Terrain:

Hilly in places

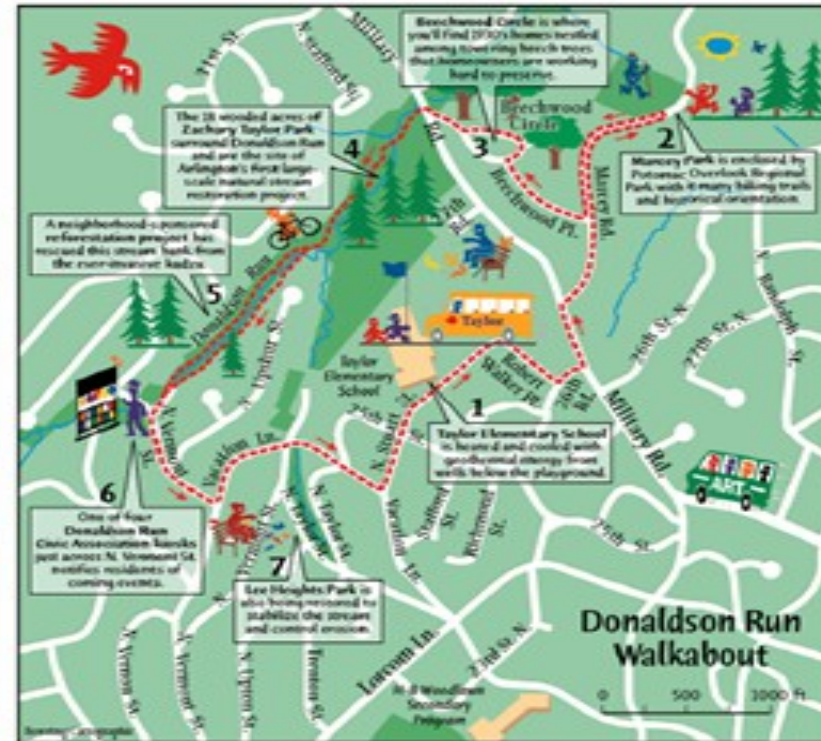
### Ambience:

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



WALKArlington Walkabouts:

## Donaldson Run



# 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](http://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

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Phone Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

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

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# 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

