Policy
These policies can create a broad-level framework for improving walking conditions and encouraging walking. Some of these tactics can be integrated into each other—for instance, measurable performance indicators can be incorporated into pedestrian master plans and complete streets policies—while others serve as catalysts for walk-friendly infrastructure improvements and programs.
More at: http://walksteps.org/tactic_category/policy/

1. Establish an Executive Directive
Executive orders or mayoral directives can create or modify policies that affect city operations. In the case of walking, mayoral directives can kick-start the creation of pedestrian action plans, pedestrian-oriented street design guidelines, and multiagency collaborations to meet safety goals set by mayors.

Benefits
- Faster and easier to institute than an ordinance to be adopted by the city council
- Unifies multiple goals, vision policies, and programs
- Helps institute regular public or multiagency hearings to increase agency accountability, educate the public and elected officials, and review existing practices for potential opportunities for improvement
- Encourages other jurisdictions and private companies to follow suit and support the initiatives
- Provides impetus for city council–crafted bills and resolutions to institutionalize efforts to meet the goals of the mayoral directive

Considerations
Potentially limits the initiative to the term of the mayor who issues the directive

Appropriate Contexts
Countries, states, counties, cities, and towns with strong mayoral or head managerial roles

Professional Consensus
In the absence of endorsements from national associations or governmental departments, cities are turning to best practices employed by other municipalities

Examples
- New York, NY: PlaNYC
- San Francisco, CA: Pedestrian Safety Executive Directive
- Seattle, WA: Mayor’s 10 Point Plan for Pedestrian Safety

Guidance
- Outline a strong policy vision
- Set clear, measurable goals to keep efforts focused
- Create a strong role for advocacy groups to promote agency accountability
- Provide bold leadership at the agency level to support reflection and reform
- Provide initial and ongoing mayoral support:
  - Reaffirm goals publicly
- Attend task force meetings
- Push agency heads to prioritize the directive’s goals

- Regularly evaluate progress toward the directive’s goals
- Publicly publish reports of those evaluations to foster transparency, keep the directive’s goals and progress in the media spotlight, and encourage agency accountability

2. Establish an Advisory Council or Safety Task Force—or Both

A pedestrian advisory council is typically a volunteer committee of informed residents who provide guidance on a city’s pedestrian policies, programs, and plans, and make recommendations for pedestrian improvements. A task force, often created through an executive directive, is convened to develop the framework for short- and long-term actions to create safe, pedestrian-oriented public space. The scopes of advisory councils or task forces can also expand from walking to “active living” in order to include public health and bicycle advocates.

Council or task force members should include representatives from city agencies responsible for public space and streets, and representatives from other agencies that influence walking safety and policies, such as fire and police departments, senior services, utility companies, housing authorities, public health departments, etc. Members should also include community representatives, whether they are members of pedestrian advisory councils; community groups; associations for seniors, the disabled, or the medical profession; or walking-advocacy organizations.

Benefits
- Facilitates interdepartmental and community coordination and communication
- Reinforces pedestrian concerns as a public and governmental priority
- Encourages and reinforces agency support
- Helps agencies reach short-term goals and understand local context to inform longer-range pedestrian safety plans

Considerations
- Potential communication and funding hurdles between multiple agencies
- Competing objectives of participating agencies or community organizations
- Potential lack of power if not supported by strong elected or agency leadership

Appropriate Contexts
Countries, states, counties, cities, and towns

Professional Consensus
- Task forces and advisory councils are established means of evaluating structural needs and proposing institutional reforms within federal, state, and municipal governments
- In the absence of official endorsements from national associations or governmental departments, cities are turning to best practices employed by other municipalities

Examples
Examples Many states and cities have convened pedestrian task forces, pedestrian advisory councils, pedestrian-bicycle councils/task forces, or active living councils/task forces, including:
- Chicago, IL: Mayor’s Pedestrian Advisory Council
- Los Angeles, CA: Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Milwaukee, WI: Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force
- Portland, OR: Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- San Francisco, CA: Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee
**Guidance**
- Name an agency to lead the task force, and hold it accountable to meeting its goals
- The committee convener should demonstrate initial and ongoing support by:
  - Attending meetings (where appropriate)
  - Publicly reaffirming goals
  - Applying continual pressure on city agencies to prioritize committee goals and recommendations
- Regularly report progress back to agencies and the general public
- Attend other meetings to advance efforts

**3. Prioritize Pedestrians in Street User Hierarchy**
A street user hierarchy provides the framework for transportation policies, directing which mode should be considered first from a design perspective. A street hierarchy that prioritizes pedestrians would rank street users in the following order: pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, freight transporters, taxi drivers, and private-vehicle drivers. This policy framework also charges each street user to show increased prudence toward more vulnerable street users. The street user-hierarchy framework can also specify and standardize expected travel behavior by clearly identified zones, such as 45 mph, 30 mph, and 20 mph zones.

**Benefits**
- Promotes safe mobility for street users regardless of age, physical ability, or mode
- Helps support livability, sustainability, public health; and economic, climate-change, social-equity, and congestion-management goals when integrated with public transit

**Considerations**
- Existing codes of funding structures that may conflict with a pedestrian-oriented street user hierarchy
- Existing legal statutes that may contradict a pedestrian-oriented street user hierarchy

**Appropriate Contexts**
Policy framework at national, state, and local departments of transportation

**Professional Consensus**
A 2009 study of five European countries, which was sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and National Cooperative Highway Research Program, assessed approaches to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and mobility. The resulting report recommended national, state, and local transportation policies that give nonmotorized modes the highest priority in the road user hierarchy.

**Examples**
- **Europe**
- Canada
- **Oregon, New York**, and Delaware have adopted related vulnerable-user legislation, which imposes harsher penalties on reckless drivers if they hurt “more vulnerable” street users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, or skateboarders

**Guidance**
The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals specifies near-term actions to implement this policy, including:
- Strengthening and publicizing the U.S. Department of Transportation policy statement
- Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach
- Surveying best-practice policies that encourage safety and increased walking and bicycling, including U.S. Complete Streets policies, the German national bicycling plan, the United Kingdom Cycling City program, and Swiss legislation on human-powered mobility
- Developing a national strategy to improve education for transportation professionals on walking and bicycling design and planning

4. **Develop a Pedestrian Master Plan**
A pedestrian master plan provides an overview of the walking transportation network and identifies improvements that will enhance and encourage walking throughout the community.

**Benefits**
- Encourages walking
- Increases pedestrian safety
- Provides mobility and access for all
- Offers alternatives to driving
- Reduces pollution
- Connects to transit
- Fosters economic growth
- Increases social interaction on streets
- Builds strong communities and livable neighborhoods
- Helps address obesity and health concerns

**Considerations**
- Potential communication and funding hurdles among multiple agencies
- Competing objectives of participating agencies or community organizations

**Appropriate Contexts**
Counties, cities, and towns; any jurisdiction with control of pedestrian infrastructure

**Professional Consensus**
In the absence of official endorsements from national associations or governments, cities are turning to best practices employed by other municipalities

**Examples**
Many U.S. cities have created and adopted pedestrian master plans, including:
- **Denver, CO**
- **Santa Barbara, CA**
- **Seattle, WA**
- **Washington, DC**

**Guidance**
- Create a public-outreach process to solicit and incorporate the perspectives of multiple stakeholders: walking and mobility-advocacy groups, residents, business owners and developers, elected officials, and media
- Create a technical outreach process to solicit and incorporate input from the fields of engineering, planning, landscape architecture, law enforcement, transit, education, and public health
- A pedestrian master plan should:
  - Present a vision, goals, and objectives
Examine existing pedestrian conditions and their use
Identify and prioritize locations that need improvement
Create pedestrian design guidelines
Identify potential capital investment projects to address those needs
Prioritize and identify funding sources, create a timeline for project completion
Review, revise, and recommend transportation and land use policies
Provide guidance to integrate accessibility and other modes of transportation into the pedestrian network
Include multidisciplinary approaches to improving the pedestrian environment through changes in enforcement, education, encouragement policies, and, if appropriate, legislation

5. Use Measurable Performance Indicators in Pedestrian Policies

Definition
Measurable performance indicators are crucial elements of evaluating the effectiveness of a policy. Policies should specify goals and objectives for each initiative and create a set of indicators, or performance measures, that can be tracked to assess the effectiveness of that initiative. A monitoring program should also set a regular schedule for data collection and assessment. Typical performance measures include pedestrian counts, crash data, retail vacancy rates or retail revenue, vehicle speeds along identified corridors, and the quantity and quality of walking infrastructure such as sidewalks and ramps.

Benefits
- Documents policy benefits and areas for improvement
- Justifies continued or altered funding levels
- Guides policy makers

Considerations
- Lack of standardized data-collection methods and insufficient data
- Lack of standardized evaluation methods and tools to measure performance indicators
- Finding appropriate and consistent evaluation and data-collections techniques

Appropriate Contexts
- Municipal pedestrian master plans
- Sustainable streets policies
- Environmental and climate-change policies

Professional Consensus
- Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- A 2011 ITE Informational Report recommends performance measures for policies that affect walkability beyond the field of transportation, such as:
  - Land use
  - Public health
  - Livability
  - Sustainability
  - Economics

Examples
Examples Plans incorporating monitoring systems and performance measures include:
- Seattle, WA: Pedestrian Master Plan
- New York, NY: NYCDOT Sustainable Streets
Guidance

- Performance measures should be:
  - Quantitative and objective
  - Supported by substantial evidence
  - Clearly linked to plans and priorities
  - Easy to collect data for, calculate, and interpret
  - Linked to mitigation
- Each performance measure needs:
  - A starting-point measurement with which to compare future data
  - A desired trend line, or direction of the desired outcome for each performance measure, to judge the amount of progress made towards meeting a stated goal
- Evaluations should be scheduled at continual, regular intervals

6. Incorporate PROWAG into Pedestrian Policies

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires ADA transition plans for jurisdictions. The Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right Of Way (proposed PROWAG) provide technical specifications required to make walking infrastructure accessible to people of all abilities. Once the Access Board issues its final rule, the Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation will adopt these proposed PROWAG guidelines as standards. While PROWAG is not yet finalized, all new and altered facilities have been required to be “accessible to and usable by” individuals with disabilities since the publication of the ADA implementing regulations in 1991. Accordingly, jurisdictions should incorporate PROWAG into pedestrian policies and plans.

Benefits

- Update the ADA transition plan as well as other relevant pedestrian policies to include proposed PROWAG
- Address all existing infrastructure, prioritizing transit access and corridors
- Require employees and contractors to demonstrate their knowledge of accessibility topics, and hold them accountable
- Partner with transit providers and require them to include accessible transportation infrastructure
- Consult with representatives from disability agencies and organizations throughout planning, design, and implementation of facilities
- Include a means for residents to suggest locations for accessibility improvements
- Ensure PROWAG are followed throughout planning, design, and implementation of transportation facilities

Considerations

- Liability for having inadequate accessibility policies or inadequate implementation of accessible infrastructure
- Funding for prioritizing and planning infrastructure improvements
- Funding for implementing infrastructure improvement

Appropriate Contexts

- Pedestrian master plans
- Street design guidelines
- Complete Streets policies
• ADA transition plans mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 for all public agencies with more than 50 employees
• All public rights-of-way as they are built or altered

Professional Consensus
• Once comments are reviewed and vetted, the Access Board will issue final PROWAG guidelines that will be adopted by the U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Transportation and become the new minimum design standards under the ADA for both new construction and alterations of pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way.
• The 2005 draft PROWAG has already been identified by USDOT as the current best practice in accessible pedestrian design under the Federal Highway Administration’s Federal-aid (504) regulation.

Examples
• Minnesota DOT
• Ohio Department of Transportation

Guidance
• Update the ADA transition plan as well as other relevant pedestrian policies to include proposed PROWAG
• Address all existing infrastructure, prioritizing transit access and corridors
• Require employees and contractors to demonstrate their knowledge of accessibility topics, and hold them accountable
• Partner with transit providers and require them to include accessible transportation infrastructure
• Consult with representatives from disability agencies and organizations throughout planning, design, and implementation of facilities
• Include a means for residents to suggest locations for accessibility improvements
• Ensure PROWAG are followed throughout planning, design, and implementation of transportation facilities

7. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy
While traditional traffic engineering designs streets primarily for vehicles, a Complete Streets policy directs transportation planners and engineers to design and operate rights-of-way for safe access for everyone on the street, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.

Benefits
• Creates a street network that is better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists
• Creates a cost-effective way to improve safety and accessibility for everyone using the roads
• Helps the vitality of town centers by allowing everyone, whether on foot, bike, or public transportation, to reach community hubs and businesses
• Creates safer routes for children to reach school and activities, giving them more opportunities to exercise and gain self-confidence
• Encourages walking and active lifestyles among residents of all ages and abilities
• Helps reduce congestion
• Helps reduce risk to pedestrians
• Helps reduce carbon emissions
Considerations
- Coordinating among the multiple jurisdictions responsible for the street network and streetscape design
- Ensuring the policy will be effectively implemented and enforced in practice
- Finding funding for the planning and implementation of the policy

Appropriate Contexts
Countries, states, counties, cities, towns, Metropolitan planning organizations and regional planning commissions

Professional Consensus
- Endorsed by the American Society of Civil Engineers
- Endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices guide evolved from collaboration between the American Planning Association, the National Complete Streets Coalition, and the National Policy and Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration, the National Association of Realtors, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, the Ruth Mott Foundation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Endorsed by AARP, with additional guidance in its Planning Complete Streets for an Aging America report

Examples
More than 300 different types of Complete Streets policies have been adopted by states, counties, and cities, including:
- Louisiana Department of Transportation: Complete Streets Policy
- Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission: Complete Streets Policy
- Hennepin County, MN: Complete Streets Policy
- Lee County, FL: Resolution No. 09-11-13
- Salt Lake County, UT: Ordinance No. 1672
- Roanoke, VA: Complete Streets Policy
- New Haven, CT: Complete Streets Design Manual
- Tacoma, WA: Complete Streets Design Guidelines

Guidance
- Build a Complete Streets coalition with transportation planners and engineers, public health professionals, public officials, and walking and cycling advocates and experts
- The National Complete Streets Coalition specifies that a Complete Streets policy should include the following:
  - A vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets
  - The definition that “all users” refers to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses, and automobiles
  - The specification the policy applies to new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right-of-way
  - Clear procedures for any exceptions
  - The goal to create a connected network for all modes
  - Reference to progressive design guidelines
  - Context-sensitive design procedures and solutions
  - Performance standards with measurable outcomes
  - Next steps for policy implementation
8. Assess Pedestrian Projects, Plans or Policies with Health Impact Assessment

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a process that analyzes the potential health impacts of a proposed plan, project, or policy that is typically outside the public health realm, such as transportation or land use decisions. An HIA provides evidence to help health be considered in that decision-making process. An HIA usually suggests ways of mitigating, monitoring, and/or managing the health impacts of a project. It can also recommend project implementation or prioritization strategies to maximize the health benefits for a community.

Benefits
- Clarifies the health impacts of a proposed project
- Helps maximizes health benefits for community members
- Educates decision-makers to help them make informed decisions
- Assesses how projects will affect all community members, especially vulnerable populations
- Improves cross-sector collaboration in decision-making
- Supports transportation and land use decisions that reduce traffic-related injuries or accidents, and that improve air quality and/or promote physical activity
- Supports sustainable transportation and land use developments that encourage walking
- Helps engage stakeholders in the decision-making process

Considerations
- HIA is a relatively new practice that must be transparent and well-documented to help ensure its credibility with decision-makers and the general public
- HIA is a decision-support tool, not a decision-making tool; it should create an impartial evidence-based assessment, not an advocacy campaign

Appropriate Contexts
- Local and regional plans, policies, and developments, such as pedestrian master plans, comprehensive plans, waterfront redevelopments, and waste-transfer plans
- HIAs are typically completed by state or regional public-health departments, or nonprofit public-health organizations

Professional Consensus
- Endorsed by the CDC as a practical tool for analyzing health impacts of transportation policies, programs, or projects
- HIA is promoted by:
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Healthy Community Design Initiative
  - National Prevention, Health Promotion and Public Health Council Institute of Medicine committee of Public Health Strategies to Improve Health
  - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Action Plan on Disparities
  - White House Childhood Obesity Task Force Action Plan
  - The Health Impact Project, funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Pew Charitable Trusts
  - Human Impact Partners
  - National Association of City and County Health Officials

Examples
- Clark County, WA: Comprehensive HIA: Clark County Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan
- Duluth, MN: 6th Ave East Duluth HIA
- Aberdeen, NC: Aberdeen Pedestrian Transportation Plan HIA
- Spokane, WA: Spokane University District Pedestrian & Bicycle Bridge HIA
- Crook County/City of Prineville, OR: Rapid HIA Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Plan
Guidance

- Time an HIA carefully. HIAs must inform decision-makers before they make a decision. Schedule enough time for a full assessment, with flexibility to address community concerns.
- Conduct an HIA only if decision-makers are interested in the outcome.
- Tailor the approach and scope of an HIA to fit each identified project; HIAs can focus on broader health outcomes or the specific impacts of a project or plan.
- Incorporate relevant data, including literature reviews, primary-data collection, and stakeholder consultation.
- Human Impact Partners suggests an HIA should follow six steps:
  - Screening to identify projects or policies for which an HIA would be useful
  - Scoping to identify the health impacts to evaluate, methods for analysis, and which populations are affected.
  - Assessment to evaluate a community’s existing health conditions and its potential health impacts.
  - Recommendations to manage those health impacts, including ways to better distribute health burdens and benefits or maximize secondary health benefits of a policy.
  - Reporting to communicate findings and recommendations to decision-makers.
- Evaluation to track the HIA’s impact on the decision-making process, civic development, and the community’s overall health.