

VISION ZERO SUCCESS STORY — PARTNERSHIPS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Walking Audits — Broward County, Florida

Key Successes

The combined efforts of Broward MPO and its transportation partners to implement a Complete Streets Master Plan to move toward the County goal of zero fatalities resulted in actions such as walking audits that achieved these partnership successes:

-  Established a partnership with AARP to provide a unique perspective that is important in planning, designing, and operating streets for people of all ages and abilities.
-  Formed a partnership with FDOT to address more immediate needs (maintenance and operational) identified in the walking audits.
-  Engaged more technical staff, stakeholders, elected officials, and residents in walking audits serving as an educational tool to inform the community and partner agencies on Complete Streets principles, elements, and benefits.
-  Continued the walking audits program due to the acceptance and support from partnering agencies and elected officials.

Background

In 2012, the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) partnered with the Broward Regional Health Planning Council, Smart Growth Partnerships, the Health Foundation of South Florida, and municipal public works and traffic engineering departments to develop the Broward Complete Streets Guidelines. In 2018, the Broward MPO adopted a goal of zero traffic fatalities and developed a Complete Streets Master Plan. This Plan, which reflected the zero goal and stemmed from the previous guidelines, helps to guide future investment in Complete Streets improvements by developing a prioritized list of projects based on technical, data-driven analysis, applied criteria, partner input, and access to transit. The MPO identified projects based on Complete Streets principles that create safer streets.

The Master Plan identified corridors based on higher demand for walking, biking, and a higher concentration of vulnerable populations based on nationally-recognized, equity indicators selected to represent Broward's context. The MPO conducted walking audits on high-ranking corridors to increase public involvement in the planning process.

The walking audits engaged stakeholders, residents, technical staff, elected officials, and representatives of non-traditional transportation partners (i.e., YMCA, AARP). Walking audits provided a real-time practical opportunity and experience of current conditions, assessed challenges and opportunities, and proposed





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Figure 1. Graphic. Participants conducting a walking audit in Hallandale Beach.¹

recommendations that help determine the improvements that will be implemented. Walking audits also identified safety and maintenance issues that needed to be addressed immediately. The process included working with jurisdictional owners to address and correct the issues identified.

Implementation

The walking audits allowed stakeholders and community members the opportunity to identify potential improvements for the critical high-ranking corridors listed in the 2018 Complete Streets Master Plan. Broward MPO conducted six audits between 2018 and 2019 in the cities of Lauderhill, Deerfield Beach, Lauderdale Lakes, Pembroke Pines, Hallandale Beach, and North Lauderdale/Margate. The walking audits began at different locations (e.g., such as schools, parks, community centers, local businesses) depending on the urban context of the study area.

The walking audit program has four objectives:

1. Experience the surrounding area as a pedestrian.
2. Evaluate the safety and quality of the pedestrian and bicyclist experience including access, connectivity, comfort, and convenience.

3. Identify barriers to a multimodal-friendly environment and potential solutions including engineering treatments, policy changes, education, and/or enforcement.

4. Propose recommendations for improvements.

Each walking audit consisted of a presentation about the Complete Streets Initiative, a project specific overview of the audit location, an outline and purpose of the audits, and safety tips. It also included a workshop immediately after the walk to discuss and identify issues experienced during the walk. Broward MPO gathered feedback to inform the proposed project scope. Broward MPO also reviewed the information to identify feasible recommendations that do not have adverse impacts on safety. At the conclusion of each audit, Broward MPO develops and publishes a Walking Audit Report¹ summarizing findings along with specific recommendations. Results are also shared with the participants and jurisdictional owners.

¹ Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization. (2019). *Walking Audits*. Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization. <http://www.browardmpo.org/index.php/walking-audits>. Last accessed on February 12, 2020.



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Figure 2. Graphic. Participants noted findings during the workshop after conducting the walking audit.¹

Figure 3. Graphic. Participants conducting the walking audit at North Lauderdale and Margate.¹

Figure 4. Graphic. Participants evaluating conditions of the bus shelters.¹

Outcomes

Over 270 people participated in the audits. Participants recommended raised crosswalks, sidewalk installation or widening, ADA violation corrections, pedestrian lighting, buffered bike lanes, and maintenance for landscaping/greenery.


The auditing process was beneficial to the overall execution of the Complete Streets Master Plan and project development; more local governments are interested in following suit by initiating walking audits for their own local projects. They have reached out to Broward MPO staff for guidance and requested additional audits in collaboration with the MPO. The MPO also plans to bring more walking audits to the area after subsequent project prioritizations.

Broward MPO is working on the next round of the walking audit program 2020/2021 and is also working with FDOT to incorporate the walking audit recommendations into existing project scopes and contracts through the departments of Design, Maintenance, and Traffic Operations on State roads.

Funding

To date, Broward MPO's Transportation Improvement Program has programmed funding for four out of six projects that included a walking audit. Programmed funds for the design and construction of these projects include MPO attributable Federal funds as well as State and local funding.

Complete Streets Initiative

 **Walking Audit Complete Streets**
 **Project Programmed on Transportation Improvement Program**

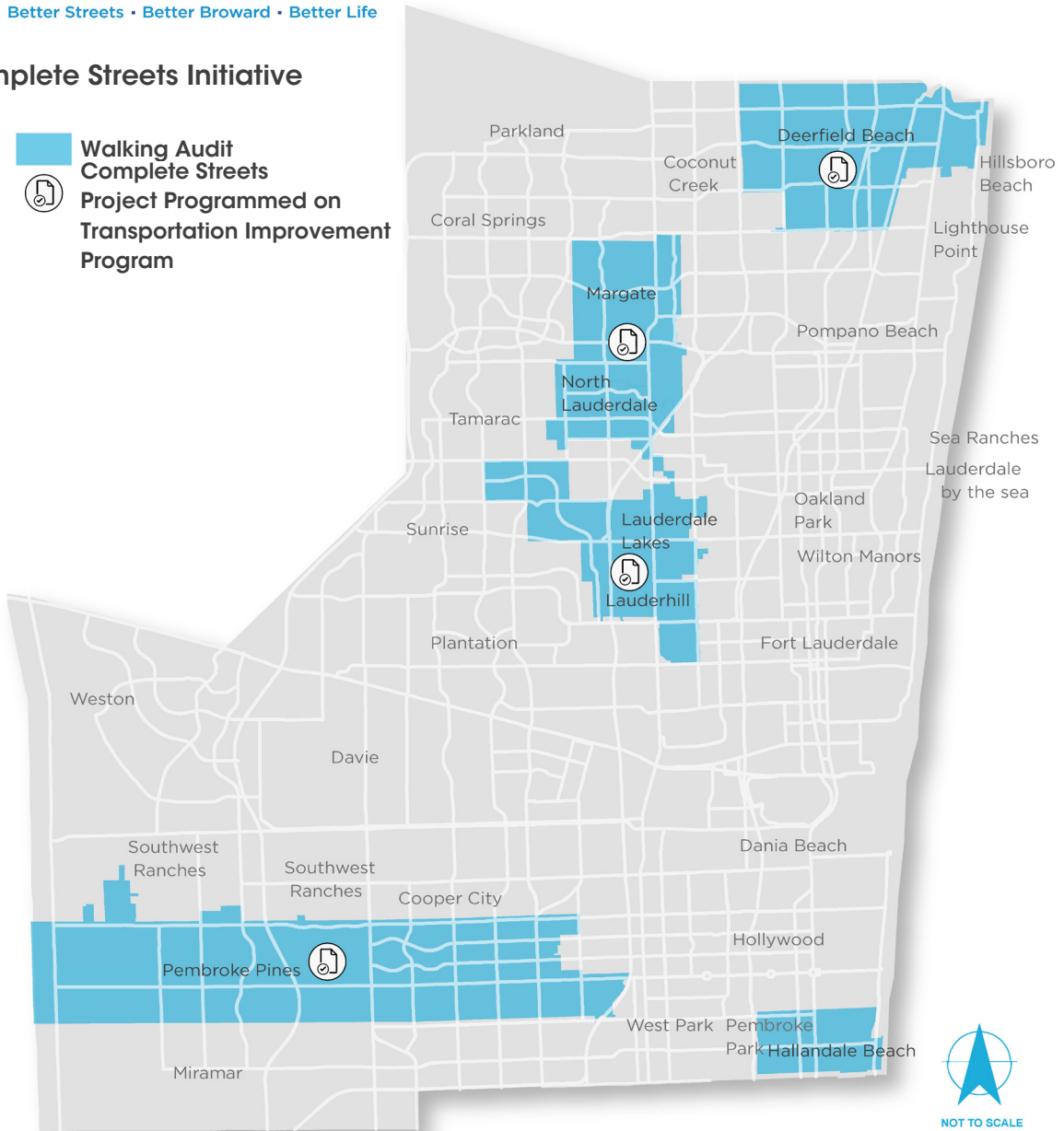


Figure 5. Graphic. Map of walking audits and TIP-programmed projects in Broward County.¹

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