



Connecting People to Parks in Oregon Communities

May 20, 2021



MISSION

The mission of the Safe Routes Partnership is to advance safe walking and rolling to and from schools and in everyday life, improving the health and well-being of people of all races, income levels, and abilities, and building healthy, thriving communities for everyone.





VISION

We know that our bodies were designed to move, yet many of our communities were created with intentional inequities that limit mobility.

We believe change is necessary to achieve a vision of safe, active, equitable, and healthy communities – urban, suburban, and rural – for everyone.



**Safe
Routes**
PARTNERSHIP
Active Paths for Equity & Health

WHAT WE DO

We lock in change by **advancing policies and increasing funding** for active transportation and **healthy, equitable communities** at the federal, state, and local levels.

We provide **one-on-one consulting and coaching** to organizations and local agencies seeking to advance walking, biking, and **equitable, active communities**.

We support **Safe Routes to School** program development and implementation through partnerships with **local advocates, community leaders, neighborhood residents, and coalition partners**.

We **share our deep expertise and learn from the field** to provide solutions through webinars, reports, fact sheets, toolkits, and relevant resources that are **accessible to everyone**.



Introductions



Becky Gilliam
Program Support Manager
Safe Routes Partnership



Allison Harris
Walk With Ease Program Coordinator Oregon
State University Extension Service



Amanda Parsons
Marketing & Communications Manager
Oregon Recreation and Parks Association



Nicole Paulsen, CPRP
Park Planner
Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District



Agenda

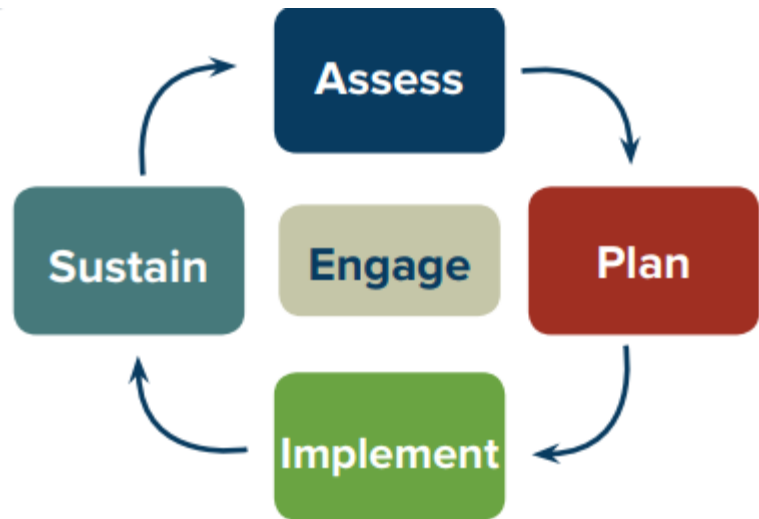
- Introductions
- Overview of Safe Routes to Parks and New Toolkit: [Connecting People to Parks: A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces](#)
- Intersection of Walk With Ease and Safe Routes to Parks
- Implementing Safe Routes to Parks in Oregon Communities
- Future Learning and Technical Assistance Opportunities
- Discussion, Q&A



What is Safe Routes to Parks?



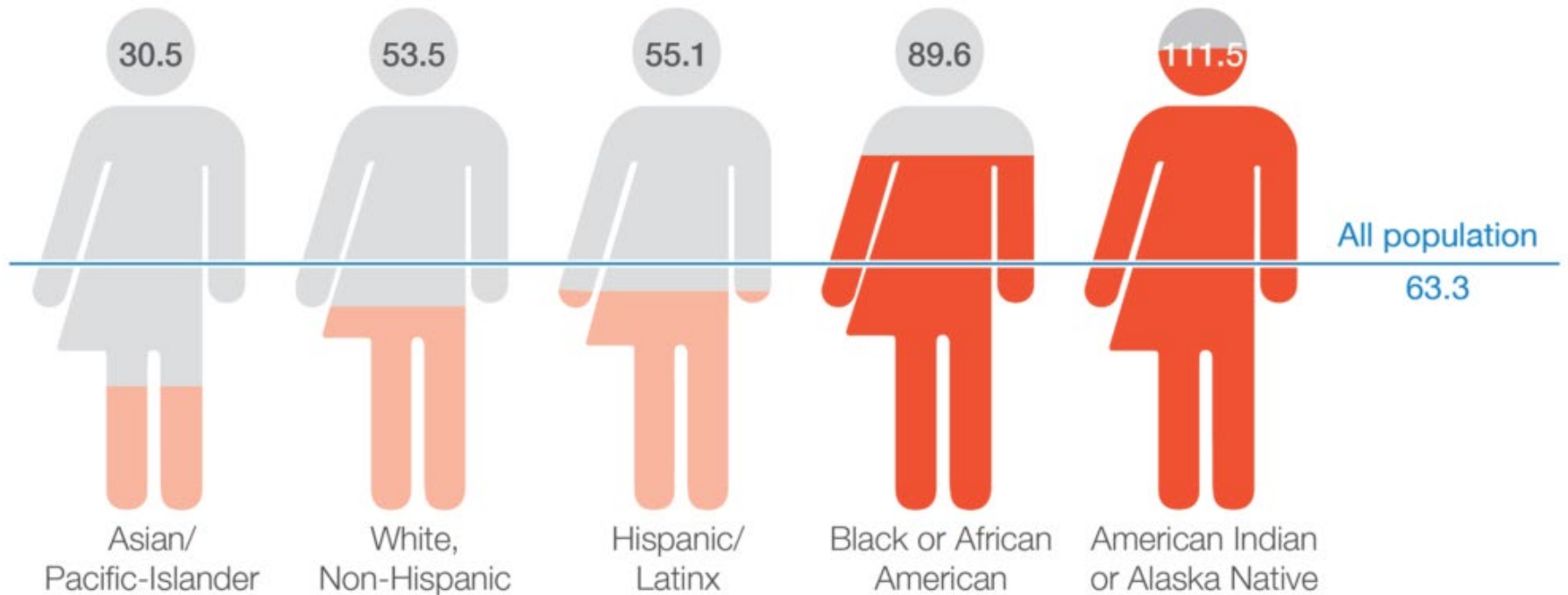
Safe Routes to Parks Background





The burden is not shared equally

Relative pedestrian danger by race and ethnicity
(2010-2019)



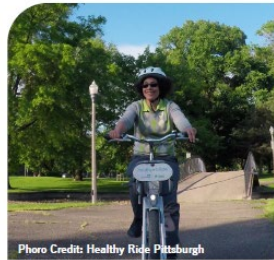
Why Safe Routes to Parks?



- Increase equitable access for people regardless of race, ethnicity, age, or ability
- Increase opportunities for physical activity
- Improve safety from traffic and personal violence
- Decrease the environmental impact of daily travel
- Strengthen community connections



CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PARKS:
A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable
Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces



New Oregon-Specific Toolkit: *Connecting People to Parks: A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces*

Safe Routes Partnership PLAN

This part of the framework focuses on identifying goals and action steps based on the information that comes from engagement and assessment. Use all of the information you have to help community members to identify clear, actionable goals, and work with the broader coalition to break down those goals into action steps.

Steps to take in this phase:

1. Use "Moving from Shelf to Shovel - Creating Action Plans that Actually Get Implemented" to plan and host a community action planning session that will help synthesize all of the information you have gathered from assessment into big goals and have identified next steps. Summarize the community-identified goals to improve future park access, why potential members prioritized this goal, and the supporting smaller steps to reach this goal, and the supporting plans, policies, or efforts that may help in the [Goals for Improving Safe Routes to Parks Table](#).
2. Break down the big, community-identified goals into smaller, actionable steps. Think about the following categories:
 - a. Engineering and design on the way to the park and within it.
 - b. Programming that draws people to the park and encourages physical activity, and is relevant to the needs and preferences of the surrounding community.
 - c. Policies and practices that make the park easier and safer to access and be in.
3. Identify partners that can be responsible for each action step and a timeframe for moving each action step forward. Use the [Implementation Planning Table](#) to break down each community-identified goal into specific action steps with a clear timeframe, the specific lead party responsible for implementation, and ideas for measuring success.
4. Conduct a policy scan to identify the plans and practices that can support community-identified goals. Use "Creating Alignment Between Safe Routes to Parks Goals and Existing Community Policies: A Primer on Conducting a Policy Scan" to identify plans and policies and how to review them. Organize your findings in the [Policy Scan Table](#).

PLANNING TOOLBOX: Planning Safe Routes to Parks

Community Action Planning Sample Agenda: Use this agenda [template](#) to organize your community action planning session. Customize it with your logo and specific details.

Safe Routes to Parks in Complete Streets Policies: Read this [factbook](#) for ideas to incorporate Safe Routes to Parks priorities into Complete Streets policies and implementation.

Connecting People to Parks: A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces | 2021 31

Contents

Introduction 2

[What is Safe Routes to Parks?](#)

[What to Expect and How to Use This Toolkit](#)

Engage

[Defining Roles and Partnerships for Safe Routes to Parks](#)

[Government Agencies](#)

[Decision-makers](#)

[Community-based Organizations, Non-profits, and Advocates](#)

[Making the Connection: How Park Access Advances Community Goals](#)

[Strategies for Working with Unhoused Communities in Parks](#)

Assess

[Finding and Using Data to Support Safe Routes to Parks](#)

[How Data Supports Safe Routes to Parks](#)

[Where to Find Existing Data](#)

[How to Collect New Data](#)

[How to Share Data, Frame the Story, and Choose Messengers Effectively](#)

Plan 31

[Moving from Shelf to Shovel - Creating Action Plans that Actually Get Implemented](#) 33

[Creating Alignment Between Safe Routes to Parks Goals and Existing Community Priorities: A Primer on Conducting a Policy Scan](#) 39

Implement 43

[Paying for Safe Routes to Parks Implementation](#) 45

[Local Funds for Safe Routes to Parks](#) 45

[Other Government Financing Strategies](#) 46

[Federal Funding](#) 49

[Alternatives to New Funding](#)

Sustain

Conclusion

Appendix

Endnotes

Connecting People to Parks: A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces | 2021

Safe Routes Partnership | Implement

Paying for Safe Routes to Parks Implementation

Safe Routes to Parks lies at the intersection of active transportation and parks and recreation. Allocating funding to the connections that get people to their local park or greenspace allows residents to benefit from the multitude of health and safety benefits that come with safe and equitable access to nature. This factsheet focuses on public funds that can go toward Safe Routes to Parks work, the strategies to move existing funding toward improving safe and equitable park access, and the partnerships that can help facilitate both. Resources and examples primarily focus on walking and rolling, however, transit is included within the opportunities for collaboration at the end.

Parks are typically funded through budget appropriations, taxes, bonds, fees, and service charges. They are also supported by a variety of other funding streams such as grants (federal, state, and philanthropic), public-private partnerships, and other creative support like civic groups and friends of the park groups.⁴⁰ Active transportation is funded through a combination of federal, state, regional, and local sources at varying amounts depending on the location. The most common local funding sources, beyond what may be included in capital budgets, are bonds, taxes, fees, and fines.⁴¹

Local Funds for Safe Routes to Parks

General funds, capital improvement budgets, and departmental budgets come from the taxes and fees collected by a jurisdiction.

- General Funds are the common pot of funding that pay for a wide range of city services. The sources

Implementation Planning Table

Break down each community identified goal into specific action steps with a clear timeframe, the specific lead party responsible for implementation, and ideas for measuring success.

Goal #:						
Action	Why is this important?	Time frame	Lead role	Supporting roles	Costs (money, time, and resources)	How will we measure success?

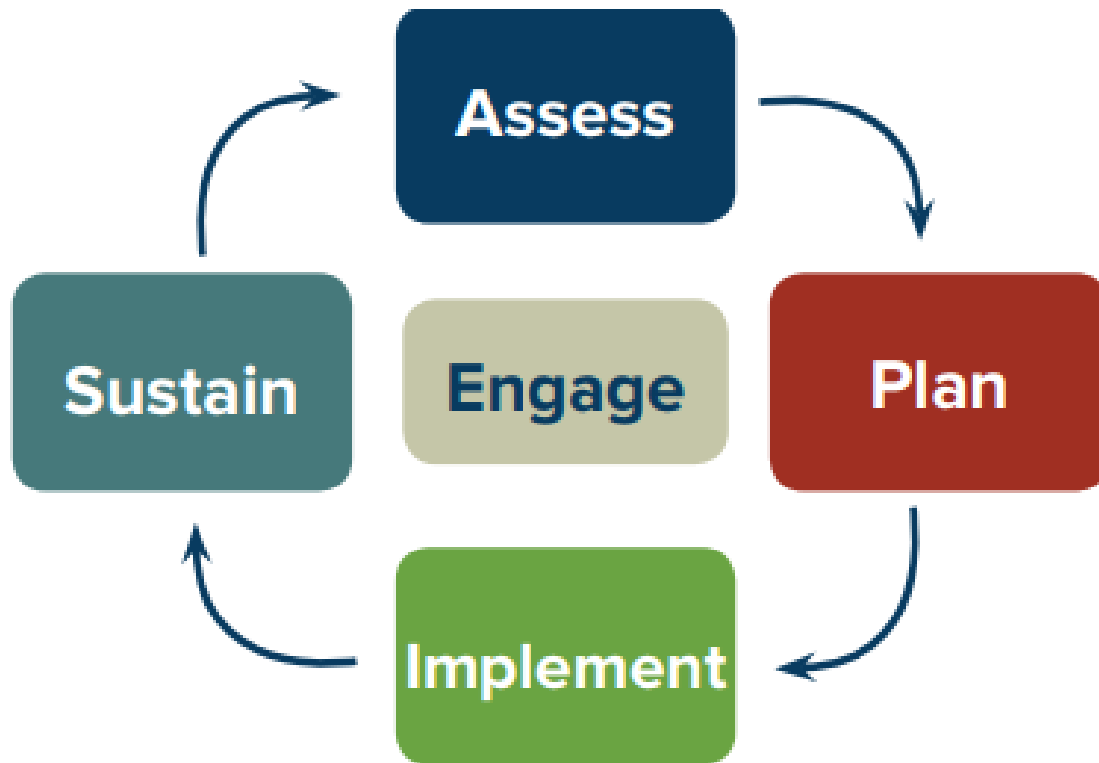


How the Toolkit Was Developed



- Support from the Oregon Health Authority
- Lived and professional experiences informed the development of this toolkit
- Met with 21 partners from 15 different organizations to ask what tools would be most helpful
- Additional stakeholder review period

How to Use the Toolkit



How to Use the Toolkit

Steps to take in this phase:

1. Use the "[Defining Roles and Partnerships for Safe Routes to Parks](#)" resource as a roadmap to join or build a coalition of partners to work with on Safe Routes to Parks. This resource will help you build a supportive team that is representative of the community where your project is located. Prioritize historically under-invested communities, Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities, people with disabilities, and older adults.
2. Use the [Safe Routes to Parks Coalition Table](#) to organize your ideas for partnerships and building your Safe Routes to Parks team. Peruse the tools in the engagement toolbox at the end of this section, and plan opportunities and activities for ongoing connection with the broader community to discuss accessibility to parks and green spaces.
3. As you identify a wide range of partners whose work overlaps with Safe Routes to Parks, explore the resource, "[Making the Connection: How Park Access Advances Community Goals](#)" to connect priorities with partners and communicate how Safe Routes to Parks can help achieve shared goals.
4. For a deeper dive on working with unhoused communities, consult the "[Strategies for Working with Unhoused Communities in Parks](#)." If homelessness is a particular challenge in your community, use this resource to think about homelessness from multiple perspectives, consider different approaches to talking about and working with unhoused communities, and gather ideas for educating the broader community about the complexities of homelessness.



ENGAGE

Meaningful, authentic engagement is an essential piece of each step in the process of creating Safe Routes to Parks. It can be the source of ideas and solutions, the process for synthesizing and prioritizing those ideas, a mechanism to implement next steps, and ultimately, an avenue for understanding whether the work was successful.

This section of the toolkit will guide you through how Safe Routes to Parks centers on connecting people to parks and green spaces and how it connects a variety of topic areas. Identifying the aligned work that is already underway in your community enables your team to share resources with other groups and accomplish more than either one group could on their own. The resources included in this section of the toolkit can be useful to parks and recreation professionals to identify partnerships, forge relationships, and collectively advance Safe Routes to Parks efforts to achieve shared goals.

Steps to take in this phase:

1. Use the "[Defining Roles and Partnerships for Safe Routes to Parks](#)" resource as a roadmap to join or build a coalition of partners to work with on Safe Routes to Parks. This resource will help you build a supportive team that is representative of the community where your project is located. Prioritize historically under-invested communities, Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities, people with disabilities, and older adults.
2. Use the [Safe Routes to Parks Coalition Table](#) to organize your ideas for partnerships and building your Safe Routes to Parks team. Peruse the tools in the engagement toolbox at the end of this section, and plan opportunities and activities for ongoing connection with the broader community to discuss accessibility to parks and green spaces.
3. As you identify a wide range of partners whose work overlaps with Safe Routes to Parks, explore the resource, "[Making the Connection: How Park Access Advances Community Goals](#)" to connect priorities with partners and communicate how Safe Routes to Parks can help achieve shared goals.
4. For a deeper dive on working with unhoused communities, consult the "[Strategies for Working with Unhoused Communities in Parks](#)." If homelessness is a particular challenge in your community, use this resource to think about homelessness from multiple perspectives, consider different approaches to talking about and working with unhoused communities, and gather ideas for educating the broader community about the complexities of homelessness.



Photo Credit: Caitlynn Johnson

How to Use the Toolkit

Guiding Questions

Questions to ask in this phase of the framework:

- What are the current efforts in your community that align with Safe Routes to Parks?
- Who are the community partners and leaders that I/we can work with? How can I/we show up and support their work?
- Who could be affected by this work and the changes that come from it? How can I/we build authentic relationships with these community residents/organizations and center their priorities?
- Who has historically been excluded from this work?
- Who stands to benefit the most from this work? Who needs it the most?
- How can I/we support community residents/organizations to lead this effort?

Guiding Questions

Questions to ask in this phase of the framework:

- What are the current efforts in your community that align with Safe Routes to Parks?
- Who are the community partners and leaders that I/we can work with? How can I/we show up and support their work?
- Who could be affected by this work and the changes that come from it? How can I/we build authentic relationships with these community residents/organizations and center their priorities?
- Who has historically been excluded from this work?
- Who stands to benefit the most from this work? Who needs it the most?
- How can I/we support community residents/organizations to lead this effort?

Safe Routes Partnership | Engage

Walk With Ease Connection

Use Walk With Ease groups to connect with neighborhood residents. As you walk or roll together, discuss their perceptions of accessibility and safety.

If you are working on a virtual Walk With Ease program:

- Include opportunities for people to get involved with local initiatives to improve walkability and access.
- Incorporate information in your communications to get people thinking and talking about park access.
- Make space for people to virtually share stories about their life experiences with walking and rolling as well as the stories and experiences they collect during the program.



Photo Credit: Healthy Ride Pittsburgh

ENGAGEMENT TOOLBOX:

More Ideas for Engaging Community in Safe Routes to Parks

Community Engagement Cards: Try this collection of [arts-based activities](#) that foster community building through creativity. Each activity is designed to spark curiosity, encourage free expression, and engage diverse people in a variety of settings.

Social Media Messaging: Adapt these [social media messages](#) to recruit new partners and build your supportive team, educate the public on how improved park access benefits the community, and generate interest in parks and recreation initiatives.

Messaging for Unhoused Communities: [Download this poster](#) with adapted messaging for making unhoused people feel welcome in parks and engaging your community around the issue of homelessness. You can also [customize the template in Canva](#) with your own messaging and logo!

How to Use the Toolkit

Guiding Questions

Questions to ask in this phase of the framework:

- What are the current efforts in your community that align with Safe Routes to Parks?
- Who are the community partners and leaders that I/we can work with? How can I/we show up and support their work?
- Who could be affected by this work and the changes that come from it? How can I/we build authentic relationships with these community residents/ organizations and center their priorities?
- Who has historically been excluded from this work?
- Who stands to benefit the most from this work? Who needs it the most?
- How can I/we support community residents/ organizations to lead this effort?

Guiding Questions

Questions to ask in this phase of the framework:

- What are the current efforts in your community that align with Safe Routes to Parks?
- Who are the community partners and leaders that I/we can work with? How can I/we show up and support their work?
- Who could be affected by this work and the changes that come from it? How can I/we build authentic relationships with these community residents/ organizations and center their priorities?
- Who has historically been excluded from this work?
- Who stands to benefit the most from this work? Who needs it the most?
- How can I/we support community residents/ organizations to lead this effort?

Walk With Ease Connection

Use Walk With Ease groups to connect with neighborhood residents. As you walk or roll together, discuss their perceptions of accessibility and safety.

If you are working on a virtual Walk With Ease program:

- Include opportunities for people to get involved with local initiatives to improve walkability and access.
- Incorporate information in your communications to get people thinking and talking about park access.
- Make space for people to virtually share stories about their life experiences with walking and rolling as well as the stories and experiences they collect during the program.




Photo Credit: Healthy Ride Pittsburgh

ENGAGEMENT TOOLBOX:
More Ideas for Engaging Community in Safe Routes to Parks

Community Engagement Cards: Try this collection of [arts-based activities](#) that foster community building through creativity. Each activity is designed to spark curiosity, encourage free expression, and engage diverse people in a variety of settings.

Social Media Messaging: Adapt these [social media messages](#) to recruit new partners and build your supportive team, educate the public on how improved park access benefits the community, and generate interest in parks and recreation initiatives.

Messaging for Unhoused Communities: [Download this poster](#) with adapted messaging for making unhoused people feel welcome in parks and engaging your community around the issue of homelessness. You can also [customize the template in Canva](#) with your own messaging and logo!

Connecting People to Parks: A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces | 2021 8

Walk With Ease Connection

Use Walk With Ease groups to connect with neighborhood residents. As you walk or roll together, discuss their perceptions of accessibility and safety.

If you are working on a virtual Walk With Ease program:

- Include opportunities for people to get involved with local initiatives to improve walkability and access.
- Incorporate information in your communications to get people thinking and talking about park access.
- Make space for people to virtually share stories about their life experiences with walking and rolling as well as the stories and experiences they collect during the program.

How to Use the Toolkit

Guiding Questions

Questions to ask in this phase of the framework:

- What are the current efforts in your community that align with Safe Routes to Parks?
- Who are the community partners and leaders that I/we can work with? How can I/we show up and support their work?
- Who could be affected by this work and the changes that come from it? How can I/we build authentic relationships with these community residents/ organizations and center their priorities?
- Who has historically been excluded from this work?
- Who stands to benefit the most from this work? Who needs it the most?
- How can I/we support community residents/ organizations to lead this effort?

Guiding Questions

Questions to ask in this phase of the framework:

- What are the current efforts in your community that align with Safe Routes to Parks?
- Who are the community partners and leaders that I/we can work with? How can I/we show up and support their work?
- Who could be affected by this work and the changes that come from it? How can I/we build authentic relationships with these community residents/ organizations and center their priorities?
- Who has historically been excluded from this work?
- Who stands to benefit the most from this work? Who needs it the most?
- How can I/we support community residents/ organizations to lead this effort?

Walk With Ease Connection

Use Walk With Ease groups to connect with neighborhood residents. As you walk or roll together, discuss their perceptions of accessibility and safety.

If you are working on a virtual Walk With Ease program:

- Include opportunities for people to get involved with local initiatives to improve walkability and access.
- Incorporate information in your communications to get people thinking and talking about park access.
- Make space for people to virtually share stories about their life experiences with walking and rolling as well as the stories and experiences they collect during the program.



ENGAGEMENT TOOLBOX:

More Ideas for Engaging Community in Safe Routes to Parks

Use [arts-based activities](#) that foster community building through creativity. Each activity is designed to spark curiosity, encourage free expression, and engage diverse people in a variety of settings.

Adapt these [social media messages](#) to recruit new partners and build your supportive team, educate the public on how improved park access benefits the community, and generate interest in parks and recreation initiatives.

Download [this poster](#) with adapted messaging for making unhoused people feel welcome in parks and engaging your community around the issue of homelessness. You can also [customize the template in Canva](#) with your own messaging and logo!

Walk With Ease Connection

Use Walk With Ease groups to connect with neighborhood residents. As you walk or roll together, discuss their perceptions of accessibility and safety.

If you are working on a virtual Walk With Ease program:

- Include opportunities for people to get involved with local initiatives to improve walkability and access.
- Incorporate information in your communications to get people thinking and talking about park access.
- Make space for people to virtually share stories about their life experiences with walking and rolling as well as the stories and experiences they collect during the program.

ENGAGEMENT TOOLBOX:

More Ideas for Engaging Community in Safe Routes to Parks

Community Engagement Cards: Try this collection of [arts-based activities](#) that foster community building through creativity. Each activity is designed to spark curiosity, encourage free expression, and engage diverse people in a variety of settings.

Social Media Messaging: Adapt these [social media messages](#) to recruit new partners and build your supportive team, educate the public on how improved park access benefits the community, and generate interest in parks and recreation initiatives.

Messaging for Unhoused Communities: Download [this poster](#) with adapted messaging for making unhoused people feel welcome in parks and engaging your community around the issue of homelessness. You can also [customize the template in Canva](#) with your own messaging and logo!

Toolkit Highlights: Strategies for Working with Unhoused Communities in Parks

- Think about homelessness from multiple perspectives
- Consider different approaches to talking about and working with unhoused communities
- Gather ideas for educating the broader community about homelessness complexities

Talking About Unhoused Individuals

It is important to approach the complexities of homelessness and related camping, resting, and living in public spaces from a solution-driven and compassionate place. The way people talk about issues influences their perception of them, which means parks and recreation professionals and partners working on Safe Routes to Parks can model the solution-oriented mindset by being deliberate about word choice and how to communicate about unhoused people. When talking about individuals who are experiencing homelessness, be sure to emphasize personhood over housing status. Use terms like “unhoused people” or “unsheltered individuals,” instead of referring to groups of individuals as “the homeless.” For example, you wouldn’t want to say “they’re a diabetic,” but “that person who has diabetes,” and instead of “juvenile delinquent,” you might say “young adult impacted by the justice system.” In these examples, having diabetes or involvement with the justice system may be one condition of a person’s life, but is not the defining attribute. Similarly, a person is not defined by their lack of permanent address. When discussing public safety or park appearance concerns, specifically call out the issues that need to be addressed, such as drug paraphernalia or litter, instead of referring to an activity or person as “unwanted” or “undesirable.” And as parks professionals and advocates consider actions they can take to preserve public safety and quality of parks, they must also be taking actions that preserve the dignity of all park users, including alternatives to sweeps, providing harm-reduction services, and fostering connection between



Photo Credit: Nick Fewings on Unsplash

unhoused and housed individuals.

Alternatives to Sweeps and Removal

Removing people and campsites from parks can be detrimental to individuals experiencing homelessness, causing them to disperse, and potentially lose access to their personal belongings and essential services. It can also be harsh on cities’ budgets. A 2019 audit of the City of Portland’s camping sweep and cleaning efforts revealed that it cost the city nearly \$3.6 million a year.⁴⁰ Instead of costly camp sweeps and forceful removal of individuals from parks, consider alternatives that connect people with services, and promote safe park usage by all community members.

In Modesto, California, a 12-acre city park was selected to serve as a designated space where individuals experiencing homelessness could congregate and sleep without penalty.⁴¹ The designated camping park was equipped with portable restrooms, handwashing stations, and dumpsters for trash. Although it was a short-term solution, the community saw an immediate improvement in its other park facilities. In the meantime, the city was able to enforce no sleeping rules in all other public spaces under their stewardship and worked with partners at the county, faith-based organizations, and homelessness advocates to prepare the Modesto Outdoor Emergency Shelter (MOES), which is more suitable for helping individuals on a path to housing security.

In Eugene, Oregon, the city partners with local community-based organizations to offer coordinated mental health response services, as well as designated rest areas. CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) is a community-based public safety system to provide mental health first response to those in need. It is an effective non-policing strategy for working with individuals experiencing crises involving mental health, homelessness, and addiction that has been built into the city’s emergency call system.⁴² The city also offers a rest stop program, which provides a temporary option for a limited number of people experiencing homelessness to legally camp overnight in

Toolkit Highlights: Finding and Using Data to Support Safe Routes to Parks

Safe Routes Partnership | Assess

[Oregon Transportation Safety Data Explorer](#):

This GIS map shows a host of different kinds of data such as crash data from 2014 to 2018, transportation projects, Safe Routes to School funded infrastructure projects, Oregon Schools, and traffic data. Public health departments at the city, county, and state-level collect information on a wide variety of health indicators like obesity, air quality, rates of physical activity, road safety, and more.

[Oregon Health Authority](#): The Public Health Division collects and analyzes data on a variety of health behaviors, diseases, and injuries.

Safe Routes to School practitioners are doing very similar work to actively influence programs, infrastructure, policies and investments in Oregon communities. Ask if your local Safe Routes to School program has conducted walkability assessments at or near parks. Safe Routes to School practitioners may have data on how community members are using parks as part of their route to school, or they may have assessed reasons why some residents use parks less or not at all.



Photo Credit: Verde, Cully Walks

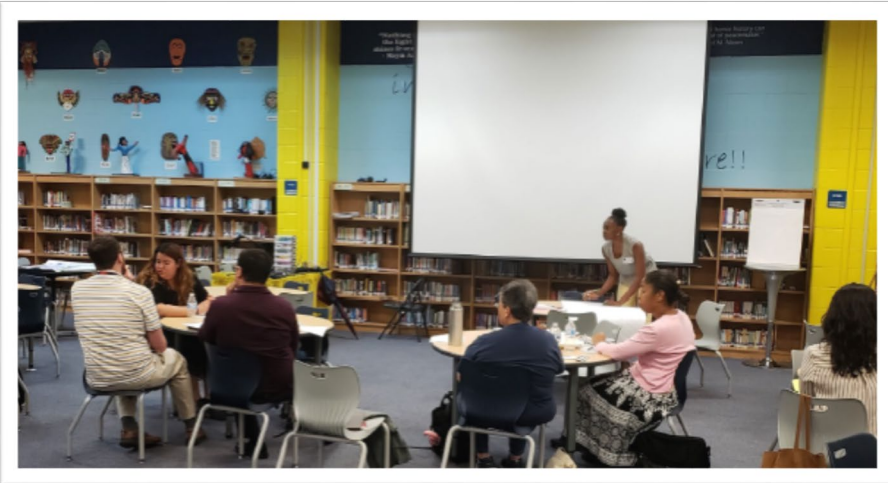
National quantitative data sources

There are many resources for national data on public health and transportation, and we encourage you to check out [this factsheet](#) for those broader resources. Below are some more specific data sources and reports relevant to Safe Routes to Parks:

- [Benchmarking Report on Bicycling and Walking in the United States](#): This report from The League of American Bicyclists highlights national data on walking and biking in the context of public health and equity. It also includes a collection of state and city-specific data.
- [Dangerous by Design](#): This report from Smart Growth America puts pedestrian fatality data in the context of how much people are walking and ranks states, metropolitan areas, and congressional districts by how dangerous it is to walk.
- [National Equity Atlas](#): This database provides information on demographic change, racial inclusion, and economic benefits of equity nationally as well as for the 100 largest cities, 150 largest regions, and

- Ideas for accessing and collecting data
- Effectively sharing information to improve safe, equitable access
- Curated lists of linked resources for national, state, and local data
- Quantitative and qualitative data collection tools
- Platforms to present data

Toolkit Highlights: Creating Action Plans that Actually Get Implemented



Safe Routes Partnership | Plan

Sample Agenda (Two hours total)

Below is a sample agenda in the left column and notes with suggestions for facilitators in the right column. Use this [template](#) to create an agenda that you can share with participants.

This agenda can be split into two one-hour sessions. The first day can end after "Prioritize," when each of the groups has finished brainstorming and prioritized their top three to five goals to address community-identified challenges. Day two can then begin with a recap of the top ideas followed by the plan portion of the agenda.



Photo Credit: Cultiva la Salud

Agenda Items

- Welcome (10 min)**
- Official welcome and introductions
 - Project introduction and purpose of this event

Facilitator Notes and Suggestions

- Introduce the project, the purpose of the event, and what you hope to accomplish in the allotted time.
- Clearly outline the purpose and the parameters of the goals and action items. Explain who will be using the plan and how. For example, this action plan may be developed with the city for the



Toolkit Highlights: Paying for Safe Routes to Parks Implementation

- Local, state, and federal public funding that can go towards Safe Routes to Parks work
- Strategies to move existing funding toward improving safe, equitable park access
- Over 20 ideas for creatively using existing funding!

Safe Routes Partnership | Implement

Paying for Safe Routes to Parks Implementation

Safe Routes to Parks lies at the intersection of active transportation and parks and recreation. Allocating funding to the connections that get people to their local park or greenspace allows residents to benefit from the multitude of health and safety benefits that come with safe and equitable access to nature. This factsheet focuses on public funds that can go toward Safe Routes to Parks work, the strategies to move existing funding toward improving safe and equitable park access, and the partnerships that can help facilitate both. Resources and examples primarily focus on walking and rolling, however, transit is included within the opportunities for collaboration at the end.

Parks are typically funded through budget appropriations, taxes, bonds, fees, and service charges. They are also supported by a variety of other funding streams such as grants (federal, state, and philanthropic), public-private partnerships, and other creative support like civic groups and friends of the park groups.⁶⁰ Active transportation is funded through a combination of federal, state, regional, and local sources at varying amounts depending on the location. The most common local funding sources, beyond what may be included in capital budgets, are bonds, taxes, fees, and fines.⁶¹

Local Funds for Safe Routes to Parks

General funds, capital improvement budgets, and departmental budgets come from the taxes and fees collected by a jurisdiction.

- **General Funds** are the common pot of funding that pay for a wide range of city services. The sources of revenue that generate the General Fund are varied. For example, in the City of Portland, OR, taxpayer dollars are deposited in the General Fund, along with utility license fees, business license fees, transient lodging taxes, state shared revenues (from cigarette and liquor taxes), interest income, and miscellaneous revenues and beginning cash balances. General funds can pay for a range of things including police, fire, engineering, planning, parks, community development, and administration. This portion of the budget consists largely of discretionary funds, since the Mayor and City Council can allocate the funds to programs and services in any area.⁶²



Toolkit Highlights: Oregon Case Studies

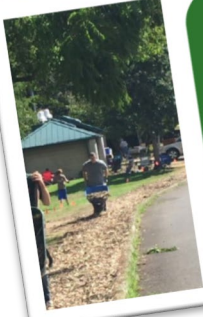
Safe Routes Partnership | Sustain



Ship Foundation

Sustaining Park Access with Community Connections and Sponsorships

Salem Leadership Foundation in Salem, Oregon, was working to improve access to and the experience within Woodmansee Park, especially for older adults using the many care homes and senior centers in the area. They were able to make several physical improvements such as trail repair and adding sidewalks with curb-cuts to improve access for wheelchairs. To sustain the improvements, they knew they would have to find ways to fund them. The team identified several ways to make it easy and low-



Using Urban Renewal Funds to Improve Open Space

Redmond, Oregon used Urban Renewal funds to transform a city park into an open-space corridor that connects the city hall and the downtown commercial core. Centennial Park was originally constructed in 2010 and then doubled in size only nine years later. Now, the park offers mid-block bump-outs for pedestrian crossings, bike racks, and a "fix-it station," and other amenities to improve walking and rolling access. Centennial Park is a gathering place year-round and features a water feature during warmer months and a skating rink during the winter.

Safe Routes Partnership | Impressions

Beaverton Builds in Coordination Between Parks and Schools

In Beaverton, Oregon, the Safe Routes to School coordination team includes a representative from Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation as well as other city and county departments. The team meets monthly to discuss projects and events as well as update each other on programming that may be of interest to the group. This allows for easier coordination and support for projects and programming. For example, when the parks and recreation department applies for grants to support infrastructure improvements that align with the school district's goals, the school district writes a letter of support to strengthen the application. The coordination committee has also allowed members to strengthen working relationships across departments, setting the stage for future collaborative work. They worked together to install a temporary, "pop-up" traffic safety playground (also known as a "traffic garden") on a basketball play pad that is currently unused. Leah Biado-Luis, the Safe Routes to School Coordinator, presented the idea to the coordination team at their June 2020 meeting. She shared photos of a similar concept in Portland, explained the rationale and benefits, and explained that they were seeking a location for installation. The parks and recreation department followed up the next week to offer potential locations. They are now coordinating to plan for a permanent installation in 2021. Implement a Traffic Playground to engage students and families, and support educational programming at your park using Oregon Metro's Safe Routes to School step-by-step guide.⁸³



Biado-Luis





Explore the Toolkit!

[Connecting People to Parks: A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces](#)





Next Up!

- ✓ Introductions
- ✓ Overview of Safe Routes to Parks and New Toolkit: Connecting People to Parks: A Toolkit to Increase Safe and Equitable Access to Local Parks and Green Spaces
- **Intersection of Walk With Ease and Safe Routes to Parks**
- **Implementing Safe Routes to Parks in Oregon Communities**
- **Future Learning and Technical Assistance Opportunities**
- **Discussion, Q&A**



Future Learning and Technical Assistance Opportunities



Safe Routes to Parks Tactical Session

Tuesday

July 20, 2021

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

<https://www.orpa.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1523702&group=>

What To Expect:

- See real-life examples of others using the toolkit.
- Have an opportunity to ask questions of your peers.
- Get in-depth knowledge about the technical aspects of implementation.
- Receive additional resources.



Future Learning and Technical Assistance Opportunities

Technical Assistance

- Take advantage of TA Office Hours with the Safe Routes Partnership!
- Learn more about Safe Routes to Parks and put the toolkit into action in your community!
- Open to anyone interested in advancing Safe Routes to Parks
- All interested organizations should contact Becky Gilliam - becky@saferoutespartnership.org



Q&A

What questions do you have?

Ask our panel about the new Toolkit, ideas for aligning with Walk With Ease, questions about implementing Safe Routes to Parks in Oregon – anything!





Thank you!

Questions? Contact Becky Gilliam
becky@saferoutespartnership.org