

## *Step Two: Delaware's Walkability Checklist*

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### **Introduction**

Obesity is a prevalent condition and concern among Americans—one that can lead to other major health issues, such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, limited mobility, increased healthcare expenditures, and decreased overall quality of life. Walkable communities are one means for combating obesity, since they promote active living and lifestyles. In addition to improved health, walkable communities contribute to an area's economic well-being, foster social interaction, and promote cleaner and safer environments for residents of all ages and abilities.

The second step of the walkability-assessment process is to identify areas within the town or city that can promote healthier living through walkability. Delaware's Walkability Checklist (Step 2) is designed to help local officials determine an area's current walkability and identify any changes that might promote a "healthier community" within their jurisdiction. It is recommended that Delaware's Walkability Checklist (Step 2) be completed by an authorized individual or representative group of a Delaware municipality **before** moving on to the Post-Assessment (Step 3).

Delaware's Walkability Checklist (Step 2) is designed to be an "in the field" assessment using the checklist on pages 7-9). This means that the person(s) facilitating or coordinating the field assessment will schedule a walk of a designated area within the town or city and gather certain materials that will help in rating the area. If two or more people are scheduled to walk, it is recommended that specific assignments be clarified before the day of the walk. For example, one person might serve as photographer, while another takes notes or performs measurements. It might also help to invite people from diverse backgrounds to help test out the checklist items (e.g., someone who uses a wheel chair, a person who uses a stroller, an elderly resident).

## The Checklist

This checklist is the second step of **The Walkability Assessment Tool** and should be completed by an authorized individual or representative group of a Delaware municipality. The individuals or groups will vary depending on the size and composition of the municipalities they represent. Additional stakeholders who might be helpful in completing the checklist include people who use a wheelchair or stroller, or an elderly resident. Others who participate in the walk could take notes, or photographs and measurements. Before the day of the scheduled walk, it is important to confirm who will be participating, what time the walk will start and finish, where the walk will begin, and who is responsible for gathering materials.

### Who is participating in the walk and has the task of completing The Checklist (Step 2)?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Getting Started***

Select a location that you wish to assess, based on your responses to the **Pre-Assessment Questionnaire (Step 1)**. Once the location has been determined, it is important to review the Walkability Checklist questions (beginning on page 12), and determine the date and time of day when the walk will take place. **Be sure that participants are informed of the correct location, date, and time of the walk. Participants should also review the checklist prior to the walk (using the Glossary and determine whether a preliminary walk is necessary)\*.**

\*A preliminary walk may help determine the best time of day to conduct the walk and checklist, the best route to take, and whether additional materials or persons would be helpful in completing.

- **Select a location to assess.** Define a specific area or neighborhood within the town or city to assess. Examples include:

- Defined areas around a specific destination (e.g., school) or group of destinations (e.g., commercial center, downtown area)

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- Neighborhoods defined by administrative (e.g., census blocks) or other boundaries

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- Routes between destinations or groups of destinations (e.g., elementary school and a central location in a neighborhood)

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Determine** the day of the week and the time observations will take place.

Day(s) of the week: \_\_\_\_\_

Time observations began: \_\_\_\_\_  a.m.  p.m.

- **Gather** materials that will be helpful in answering checklist questions.

- Street maps and/or a map of the area to be assessed\*\*
- Glossary**
- Clipboards
- Note paper
- Pens, pencils, highlighters
- Camera
- Tape measure or ruler
- Comfortable walking shoes and clothing
- Information about regulations on sidewalk maintenance issues

### ***Read Carefully Before You Begin Your Walk!***

As you walk the designated area, complete the checklist items below by giving an overall rating to each item. Please use the 1-6 (high to low) **Walkability Rating Scale** below to rate the various elements of the checklist. In rating each checklist item, consider the overall condition of the area and note problems within the area being assessed. For several questions, you will be asked to check off items that apply. A sketch or map of the area might also be helpful in noting areas for improvement or problems (Google Maps is recommended: [maps.google.com](https://maps.google.com)).

If you have two or more people involved in the walk, consider assigning one person to serve as the photographer, as photos can help in documenting issues or problem areas. Please refer to the **Glossary** for clarification of any of the highlighted terms below. Happy walking!

<b>Walkability Rating Scale</b>					
1 = Excellent	2 = Very Good	3 = Good	4 = Some Problems	5 = Many Problems	6 = Awful

**Walking Facilities and Their Maintenance**

1. Are there sidewalks, multi-use paths, or paved trails present?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Is the sidewalk continuous, (i.e., without gaps)?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you feel safe using the sidewalk, multi-use path, or paved trail?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Are the sidewalks a minimum of five feet wide to accommodate at least two pedestrians to walk together and/or a wheelchair?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Does the sidewalk, multi-use path, or paved trail accommodate people who use strollers, wheelchairs, or other assistive mobility devices?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Is the sidewalk located on both sides of the street?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Are there curb cuts present that allow pedestrians and people with strollers, wheelchairs, or senior citizens to navigate the sidewalk, paved trail, or multi-use path safely and conveniently?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Is the sidewalk free from major misalignment, cracks, or other pavement condition issues?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Is the sidewalk free from obstructions, such as poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Pedestrian Amenities**

1. Are there crosswalks and/or pedestrian signals located at intersections?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Is it easy to cross streets?

Yes

No, some problems (check all that apply):

a.  Road was too wide

b.  Traffic signals did not provide adequate time to cross

c.  Lack of pedestrian signalization

d.  Traffic signals made us wait too long to cross

e.  Street needed striped crosswalks

f.  Blocked line of sight (e.g., parked cars, trees or plants blocked view of traffic)

g.  Curb ramps were needed or ramps needed repair

h.  Drivers seem to be speeding

i.  Other issues and observations:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Locations of problems (use letters above to indicate which problems):

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4. What destinations are present?

Check all that apply:

- Small grocery/convenience store
- Farmers market
- Food establishment (e.g., restaurant, bakery, café, coffee shop, bar)
- Supermarket
- Pharmacy
- Entertainment (e.g., movie theater, arcade)
- Church/temple/mosque
- Library
- Post office
- Bank
- Laundry/dry cleaner
- Indoor fitness facility
- Senior center
- Playground/park/trailhead
- School (elementary, middle, high)
- College/technical school/university
- Retail stores
- Employment centers
- Smoke-free public spaces
- Other, specify:

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5. How pleasant is your walk? Check all that apply:

- a.  Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
- b.  Lacked personal security
- c.  Not well lit
- d.  Dirty, lots of litter or trash
- e.  Lack of maintenance
- f.  No bench or place to rest
- g.  Too much high-speed traffic
- h.  Other, specify:

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Locations of problems (use letters above to indicate which problems):

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6. Is there grass or other buffer between the roadway and sidewalk? Check all that apply:

- Trees
- Landscaping
- Bike Lanes
- Parked Cars

7. Is the sidewalk part of a larger pedestrian network?

Rating (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems: \_\_\_\_\_

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