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## Planning is Underway to Improve Conditions for Walking in Pittsboro, NC

The Town of Pittsboro received funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)'s Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative to develop a Pedestrian Transportation Plan.

Planning began with a Steering Committee Meeting in March 2008. Project consultants, *Greenways Incorporated*, will be conducting fieldwork, evaluating the current conditions and gathering public input for the plan during the months of April and May. The draft plan will be developed over the summer and will be ready for review in early September, 2008. Public input (through the online comment form, public workshops, and communication with the Steering Committee) is encouraged throughout the planning process.

The project Steering Committee is made up of the following individuals:

Ruben Blakely  
*NCDOT, Division 8*

Megan Bolejack  
*Chatham Co. Health Dept./Active Chatham*

Phil Bors  
*Town of Pittsboro Parks & Rec Board*

Chris Bouton  
*Town of Pittsboro Parks & Rec Board*

Justin Bullock  
*NCDOT, Division 8*

Bill Bussey  
*Pittsboro Citizen/Trails Advocate*

Kelly Evenson  
*UNC School of Public Health*

Ether Farrell  
*Town of Pittsboro Planning Board*

David Monroe  
*Town of Pittsboro Planning Director*

Robert F. Mosher  
*NCDOT, Bike & Ped Division*

Kim Royal  
*Pittsboro Citizen*

Pat Strong  
*TJCOG/Triangle Area MPO*



Top: Image from the March 2008 Steering Committee Meeting; participants identified areas in Town that are of particular concern for pedestrians.

Bottom: Some areas in Downtown Pittsboro are already ideal for pedestrians.

*“Walking gets the feet moving, the blood moving, the mind moving. And movement is life.”*

*~ Carrie Latet*



### Page 2: Get Involved !

1. Fill out the Comment Form.
2. Attend a planning workshop.
3. Talk directly with project staff, committee, and consultants.

Walking improves health and wellness, builds social capital, and is the world's cleanest form of transportation. However, the design of our streets, intersections, and land use patterns affects our ability to include walking as part of our daily routine.

According to Frank Hu, epidemiologist at the Harvard School of Public Health, *"The single thing that comes close to a magic bullet, in terms of its strong and universal benefits, is exercise."* (Harvard Magazine, 2004)

Even though the benefits are clear, exercising on a regular basis is difficult for many people. They can't find the time. They lose their motivation. They become discouraged.

What if exercise was simply part of daily life? After all, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per day (such as brisk walking) most days of the week. The key to good health is a walk in the park. It could mean walking to lunch instead of driving, or walking downtown for a small errand. It could also mean walking to work, or combining a bus trip with walking.

The choice of walking instead of driving can be much easier when the community you live and work in is designed to accommodate pedestrians. This is where the Pittsboro Pedestrian Transportation Plan comes into play. The Plan aims to make walking in Pittsboro a safe and accessible alternative to the automobile. By studying what is on the ground today and asking for public input, the Town will identify key opportunities for improving conditions for pedestrians. For example, improvements could include new sidewalks and crosswalks, more trails and greenways, and even new programs and policy changes that encourage pedestrian activity.



Public input will be especially helpful in identifying key locations in need of improvements. At left is a family safely crossing on Salisbury, just west of downtown (a good example of an existing pedestrian facility).



Here is an example opportunity for improvement, further west on Salisbury, where no sidewalks are available for pedestrians.

High levels of public participation will make this plan more effective for implementation and more relevant for the particular needs of local residents. Here is how you can get involved:

1. Fill out the online comment form (address below). The questions are designed to get a better understanding of how often residents currently walk; the barriers to walking in Pittsboro; and priorities for future improvements. Paper comment forms are available upon request.
2. Attend the next planning workshop in mid-summer 2008. The draft plan will be reviewed and input will be gathered on project priorities. For details, check in at [www.greenways.com/upcomingworkshops.html](http://www.greenways.com/upcomingworkshops.html), in early July.
3. Talk directly with project staff, committee, and consultants. Contact Town Planner, David Monroe (919-542-4621), or project consultant, Jason Reyes (919-484-8448; [jason.reyes@greenways.com](mailto:jason.reyes@greenways.com)), to share your ideas and/or learn more about the plan.

Project info and comment form:  
[www.greenways.com/pittsboro.html](http://www.greenways.com/pittsboro.html)