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# Government Street Pedestrian Safety & Access Report

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Prepared by the National Center for Bicycling & Walking

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January 12, 2009

## *Healthy Coastal Connections Project*





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## ***Healthy Coastal Connections***

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The Healthy Coastal Connections project is a partnership between Smart Coast and the National Center for Bicycling & Walking to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity in Baldwin and Mobile counties over a 5 year period by (primarily) removing barriers to everyday physical activity—bicycling and walking, for example—and also by improving children’s access to nutritious food. The HCC project will accomplish these goals by:

- Removing barriers to physical activity in the built environment.
- Eliminating gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network in the above-mentioned areas.
- Promoting programs like Safe Routes to School.
- Working to pass Complete Streets policies in the above-mentioned areas.
- Reforming local, regional, and state transportation planning practices to address the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Addressing safety concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists through a local social marketing campaign to educate motorists.

The Healthy Coastal Connections project team has formed strategic partnerships in the Mobile Bay area with organizations and individuals who share the common cause of improving walking and bicycling opportunities. For the Government Street walking audit we (the HCC project team) partnered with the Mobile Business Improvement District. Improving the walkability and bicycle-friendliness of downtown has economic development advantages: more and safer walking reduces traffic congestion, improves air quality, and creates a livable environment where people will want to spend time. Residents in neighborhoods adjacent to downtown Mobile will also realize health benefits from increased daily physical activity.

The report that follows identifies deficiencies in the built environment that compromise the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. In addition to documenting safety concerns, specific recommendations are offered to address these safety concerns, and system wide recommendations are offered at the conclusion of this report.

Research has (repeatedly) documented the positive correlation between people’s access to quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and their willingness to undertake walking and bicycling trips. Integrating physical activity into a person’s daily routine is an important strategy for combating obesity and reducing physical inactivity—especially in children. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that in 2007 nearly 30% of Mobile County residents were considered obese. Improving neighborhood walkability is a vital and proven strategy for improving public health.

## **Location 1: Government Street and North/South Broad Street**

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Wednesday, October 21, 2009 – 4 to 5 pm

### Key pedestrian attractors

Bus/transit stops, the only grocery store in downtown Mobile, pharmacy/convenience store, church, historic residential neighborhoods, and proximity to the downtown business district.

### Observations from the walking audit

This location was selected because it is the site of the only grocery store in downtown Mobile. During a previous visit to the site, the Healthy Coastal Connections (HCC) team interviewed the store manager who mentioned that access to his store—for all modes—was difficult and the most common complaint of his customers.

- Government Street and Broad Street are multilane, high capacity roads; we conducted the audit at/around peak travel period and both roads appeared to easily meet demand.
- Sidewalks are available along both sides of Government and Broad streets, as well as along the neighborhood streets.
- Bicycle facilities are non-existent in the audit area. There are no bicycle lanes or shared use lanes. Bicyclists were riding on the sidewalks or on neighborhood streets.
- The transit stop (WAVE) nearest the grocery store had been recently constructed. It features a shelter, a bench, space for a wheelchair, and truncated domes near the street, but it lacks a clear, level path for a wheelchair user to access the shelter from the sidewalk. Other bus stops in the vicinity were basic: most stops are signified by a WAVE sign on a single pole and feature no user accommodations.
- The intersection of Broad and Government streets is signalized with pedestrian signal heads and pedestrian signal call buttons. The pedestrian signal heads do not function consistently and at least one call button was broken.
- Several participants in the audit crossed the intersection. Their observations:
  - There is not sufficient time to cross the six lanes.
  - The free right lane for Government Street drivers turning north onto Broad Street is a hazard to pedestrians. Pedestrians use this crosswalk at their own peril.
  - The crosswalks are not well marked.
  - Drivers are not cognizant of pedestrians.
- We evaluated the intersection and adjacent streets from the perspective of a bicyclist. Three bicyclists attended our audit, however only one was confident enough to bicycle on Broad or Government. He was decidedly not an average bicyclist.

### Additional observations about the Government Street corridor

We observed many pedestrians crossing outside the marked crosswalks in this area. We suspect this is due to the lack of available marked and/or protected crosswalks. There is no median/refuge island on Government Street, so pedestrians were often observed standing in the middle of the road, on the double-yellow line, waiting to cross.

### Recommendations

- For the intersection of Broad and Government streets: At a minimum, the City of Mobile needs to perform routine maintenance on the pedestrian signals and call buttons, and apply new paint to the crosswalks. The City should also examine whether sufficient time is allotted for

pedestrians to cross, and to consider the varying levels of mobility when making this determination.<sup>1</sup>

- For the Government Street corridor: This street does not work well for bicyclists (motor vehicles travel fast and there are no bicycle facilities) or pedestrians (there are multiple lanes to cross, few protected crossings, and speeding traffic). We urge the City of Mobile to examine the corridor east of Broad Street to determine if existing traffic volume would support the inclusion of bicycle facilities and/or a center median that would serve as a pedestrian refuge. We urge the City of Mobile to consider the safety and traffic calming benefits that would be realized by such improvements.
- Assemble a working group of neighborhood residents and local business owners to focus on how to improve safety in the corridor/neighborhood, and improve access for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.
- All bus stops must be ADA compliant.<sup>2</sup>

## **Location 2: Government and North/South Joachim streets**

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Thursday, October 22, 2009 – 4 to 6 pm

### Key pedestrian attractors

Gulf Coast Exploreum, Spring Hill Medical Center, hotels, downtown businesses and restaurants, professional offices, government buildings, and the Mobile County Courthouse.

### Observations from the walking audit

- The intersection of Government and Joachim streets presents several challenges to the pedestrian:

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<sup>1</sup> Note: the 2009 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) has revised its recommendations on the length of the pedestrian clearance timing to allow for a more realistic foot speed. The 2009 MUTCD is available at: [http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/hlm/2009/html\\_index.htm](http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/hlm/2009/html_index.htm)

<sup>2</sup> The US Department of Justice provides guidance on how transit agencies should comply with the ADA. For specific standards please see: <http://www.ada.gov/reg3a.html#Anchor-Appendix-52467>. Specific guidance for transit stops is as follows:

#### **10 TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES**

**10.1 General.** Every station, bus stop, bus stop pad, terminal, building or other transportation facility, shall comply with the applicable provisions of 4.1 through 4.35, sections 5 through 9, and the applicable provisions of this section. The exceptions for elevators in 4.1.3(5) exception 1 and 4.1.6(1)(k) do not apply to a terminal, depot, or other station used for specified public transportation, or an airport passenger terminal, or facilities subject to Title II.

#### **10.2 Bus Stops and Terminals.**

##### **10.2.1 New Construction.**

(1) Where new bus stop pads are constructed at bus stops, bays or other areas where a lift or ramp is to be deployed, they shall have a firm, stable surface; a minimum clear length of 96 inches (measured from the curb or vehicle roadway edge) and a minimum clear width of 60 inches (measured parallel to the vehicle roadway) to the maximum extent allowed by legal or site constraints; and shall be connected to streets, sidewalks or pedestrian paths by an accessible route complying with 4.3 and 4.4. The slope of the pad parallel to the roadway shall, to the extent practicable, be the same as the roadway. For water drainage, a maximum slope of 1:50 (2%) perpendicular to the roadway is allowed.

(2) Where provided, new or replaced bus shelters shall be installed or positioned so as to permit a wheelchair or mobility aid user to enter from the public way and to reach a location, having a minimum clear floor area of 30 inches by 48 inches, entirely within the perimeter of the shelter. Such shelters shall be connected by an accessible route to the boarding area provided under paragraph (1) of this section.

(3) Where provided, all new bus route identification signs shall comply with 4.30.5. In addition, to the maximum extent practicable, all new bus route identification signs shall comply with 4.30.2 and 4.30.3. Signs that are sized to the maximum dimensions permitted under legitimate local, state or federal regulations or ordinances shall be considered in compliance with 4.30.2 and 4.30.3 for purposes of this section.

Source: <http://www.ada.gov/reg3a.html#Anchor-11861>

- Pedestrians must wait over 2 minutes for a WALK signal to cross Government Street.
  - Traffic turning onto eastbound Government Street is very aggressive towards pedestrians. The relatively short length of the green phase for these drivers does not help the safety of the pedestrian.
  - Crosswalks and curb ramps are not aligned at this intersection and are not ADA compliant. This is especially unfortunate as the Mobile County Government Center provides services to those persons who are either carless or transit-dependent.
  - The aggregate effect of these deficiencies is that the vast majority of pedestrians (able-bodied or otherwise) cross Government Street against the traffic signal. This behavior will continue until the signal timing is revised.
- The Mobile County Government Center serves as a *de facto* transit hub due to the (relatively) high number of persons accessing transit at this location. Accommodations for transit riders need to be improved:
    - The WAVE stop outside the Mobile County Government Center lacks basic accommodations for transit riders.
    - The WAVE stop on the north side of the street has a bench and a Next Bus variable message sign. However, these accommodations are still insufficient. The bench quickly fills and people were observed to be standing for long periods of time waiting for the bus. There is no shelter or shade.

### Recommendations

It is essential that more be done to accommodate pedestrians and transit users at this location. It should be expected that a large percentage of visitors to the Mobile County Government Center will arrive on foot, on bike, or by bus. The City of Mobile should prioritize this location for pedestrian improvements.

- At a minimum, the location should be made compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act: curb ramps and crosswalks must be aligned.<sup>3,4</sup> The crosswalk also needs to be repainted.
- WAVE stops should feature sufficient seating, a shelter, and a system map.
- The traffic signal timing needs to be adjusted to allow pedestrians to cross Government Street safely and conveniently. The City should consider the use of the Leading Pedestrian Interval to reduce conflict between turning vehicles and pedestrians.
- Convenient and secure bicycle parking should be provided at this location. Locating bicycle parking under the Government Center's overhang would have the additional benefit of sheltering parked bicycles from the weather.

### **Location 3: Government Street and Joachim Street to Water Street**

Thursday, October 22, 2009 – 4 to 6 pm

#### Key pedestrian attractors

<sup>3</sup> The US Department of Justice provides guidance on ADA accessible curb ramps. Specific guidance is as follows: 4.7.9 Location at Marked Crossings. Curb ramps at marked crossings shall be wholly contained within the markings, excluding any flared sides.

Source: <http://www.ada.gov/reg3a.html#Anchor-17383>

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that WAVE's policy on the ADA as expressed on its website is as follows:

"ALL Wave Transit vehicles are now ADA accessible since the addition of the new low-floor style buses. The Wave Transit System is striving to make every stop location within the system also ADA accessible. Please be patient during this process." (Source: <http://www.thewavetransit.com/RidingTheWave/wheelchairaccessiblelocations.htm>) Unfortunately, this statement dates to 2007 and the transit stop in question is recent construction.

Gulf Coast Exploreum (a family-friendly interactive science center), Spring Hill Medical Center, hotels, businesses and restaurants, professional offices, government buildings, Mobile County Courthouse, Mobile Convention Center, the waterfront, shipyard, cruise ship port, and the Mobile Transportation Center.

#### Observations from the walking audit

The walking experience on Government Street (north side) from South Conception to South Royal streets (100 block of Government Street) is very pleasant: buildings front the sidewalk, and streetscaping and lighting is pedestrian-scale. It is highly walkable. The walking experience and the neighborhood is marred by excessive traffic noise, due to the lack of a buffer between the travel lanes and the sidewalk.

#### Recommendations

- Create buffers between the sidewalk and the travel lanes on Government Street. A combination of on street parking and/or a bike lane would lower ambient noise, slow traffic, improve the value of the adjacent property, and improve access to adjacent businesses. If the City of Mobile determines that two thru lanes are necessary for peak volume, the curb lane could still be off peak parking.
- Create bicycle parking. We noted two bicycle racks during our tour of downtown Mobile: at the Exploreum and the BID office. Elsewhere, bicyclists must resort to locking their bikes to trash can, parking meters, and streetlights. The lack of bicycle parking serves as a barrier to increasing bike trips in downtown Mobile. We recommend that the City of Mobile establish a bicycle parking requirement for new commercial and residential construction.
- At the intersection of Government and South Conception streets we noted the new ADA compliant curb ramp still had a significant gap between the pavement and the bottom of the ramp. The gap was large enough to cause a wheelchair to tip over. This is new construction and should be fixed by the contractor.

### **Location 4: Water Street**

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Thursday, October 22, 2009 – 4 to 6 pm

#### Key pedestrian attractors

Gulf Coast Exploreum, hotels, businesses and restaurants, professional offices, government buildings, the waterfront, shipyard, cruise ship port, and the Mobile Transportation Center.

#### Observations from the walking audit

Access to Mobile's waterfront and Convention Center.

- The intersection of Water Street and Government Street forms Mobile's eastern gateway. There are many reasons to walk (the Exploreum, the waterfront, and the Convention Center) and many destinations for pedestrians concentrated in a ¼ mile radius; it is unfortunate that more accommodations have not been made for pedestrians. The Exploreum attracts young people, so a good connection between it and the waterfront park would enhance the area as a destination for families and students who might be eager for outdoor activity.<sup>5</sup>
- Water Street, between Government Street and Beauregard Street, has few opportunities for pedestrians to cross. There appears to be only three marked crosswalks in the Water Street corridor. Water Street is otherwise a high-speed six-lane arterial.

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<sup>5</sup> A participant in our walking audit, who works at the Exploreum, reported that she had never visited the water front park because she had no idea it was there.

Access to Mobile's Transportation Center.

- At the northern end of the corridor is the historic GM&O building, which is Mobile's transit hub. The GM&O building is all but inaccessible to pedestrians due to the massive intersection of Water Street/I-165 and Beauregard Street. No crosswalks are provided at this intersection and there are no pedestrian signals at this intersection. The Mobile Register, located at the southwest corner of the intersection, has employees who opt to drive to the Subway restaurant on the other side of Water Street, rather than risk crossing the street on foot.
- We did not have the opportunity to interview residents of the extensive housing development on the northwest corner of the intersection. However, it is plain for all to see that there is no pedestrian access between their neighborhood and the Mobile Transportation Center.

### Recommendations

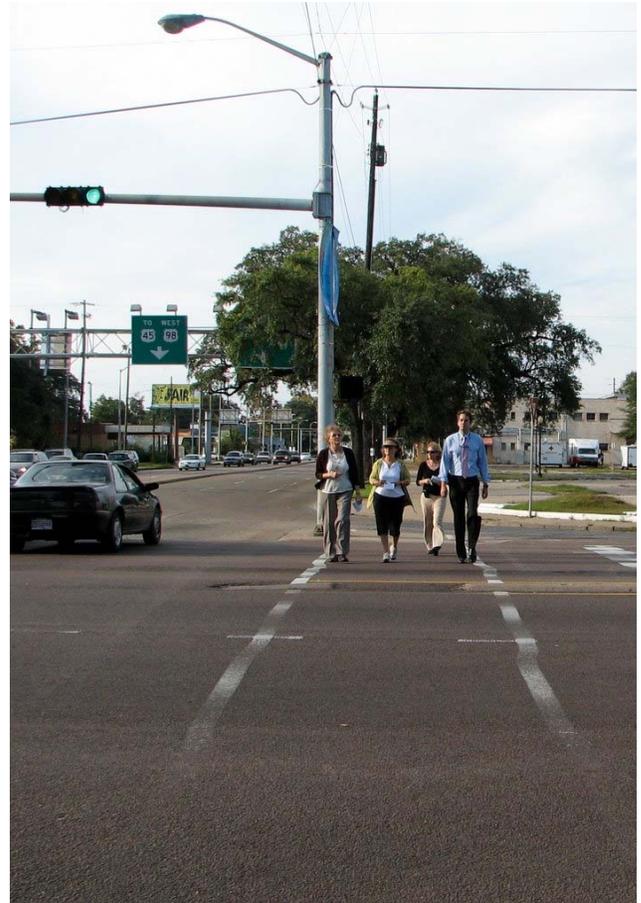
- The City of Mobile must provide pedestrian facilities (crosswalks, pedestrian countdown signals, and a refuge median) at the intersection of Water and Beauregard streets. The Mobile Transportation Center needs bicycle and pedestrian access. The intersection's pedestrian facilities should, at a minimum, be on par with those found at the intersection of Water and Government streets.
- Traffic entering/exiting Mobile via Interstates 10 and 165 needs to be slowed to the posted speed limit of 35 mph and pedestrian access throughout the corridor needs to be improved. There are very few opportunities for pedestrians to cross Water Street between Government and Beauregard streets.
- The City of Mobile needs to study how to improve pedestrian access to the City's waterfront. The waterfront is an asset that is under utilized because access is limited. Water Street acts as a barrier to the water. It has a highway-like design; a boulevard design is more appropriate.

### **General Recommendations**

1. We urge the City of Mobile to reexamine how it is serving the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users with its current approach to transportation planning.
  - a. The development of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian master plan is a necessity.
  - b. In the interim, the City should assemble a working group composed of residents, the Mobile Business Improvement District, WAVE representatives, City of Mobile Planning and Public Works departments, local bicyclists, law enforcement, the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, and Mobile County Public Health to develop a list of locations where priority pedestrian safety improvements are needed.
  - c. Construction of an integrated bicycle/pedestrian/transit network requires the engagement of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission/MPO, WAVE, ALDOT and the City of Mobile (Departments of Planning, and Public Works). Where applicable, bicycle/pedestrian advisory bodies should be created to ensure that said agencies are taking seriously their responsibility to plan for all modes of transportation.
2. We urge the adoption of a Complete Streets policy in Mobile. Throughout Mobile we searched for evidence that the needs of bicyclists were considered when designing or reconstructing roads. This concept of designing streets for all users is known as Complete Streets (see Appendix C). The City of Mobile should adopt a Complete Streets policy for construction of new streets and reconstruction of existing roadways. Complete Streets are context sensitive, but in an urban area the following needs are common:
  - a. Pedestrians require: 1) sidewalks or multiuse trails on both sides of the street (where appropriate); 2) safe and convenient crosswalks; 3) pedestrian countdown signals at

- intersections; 4) enforcement of laws that protect pedestrians; and 5) sidewalks and curb ramps that comply with the ADA Act.
- b. Bicyclists require: 1) bike lanes, shared lanes, and/or multiuse trails; 2) bicycle education classes; 3) secure and convenient bicycle parking; and 4) enforcement of laws that protect bicyclists.
  - c. Transit users require: 1) bus stops that feature a shelter, a bench, a schedule, and a transit system map; 2) ADA accessible transit stops; and 3) land use that compliments public transportation.
  - d. Complete Streets policies can also address areas around schools and safe routes to schools.
3. Social marketing to increase the public's acceptance of walking and bicycling as healthy and fun forms of transportation. Included in this campaign should be educational outreach to drivers regarding the rules/rights of the road for pedestrians and bicyclist; and for motorists to be particularly careful in areas where children are present like schools and parks
  4. Planning grants should be made available to neighborhoods and business districts to draft circulation plans that will address walking, bicycling, traffic calming, school zone planning and other local transportation challenges. Cities that undertake neighborhood planning find that it engages residents, generates more public involvement overall in local government, helps to restore civic pride and neighborhood identity, and creates a sense of ownership of the public realm.

Appendix A: Photo gallery  
*Intersection of Government Street and North/South Broad Street*



Top left: Participants study the ALRC's walking audit checklist for intersections and streets. The ALRC's tool allows citizens to make objective observations about barriers to walking in their communities.

Lower left: Local media joined us for the walking audit of Government Street and Broad Street.

Right: Several participants tested the intersection to determine whether the WALK phase allowed sufficient crossing time, and whether turning drivers yielded to pedestrians. The crosswalk paint is faded badly, and the pedestrian signal heads were not functioning properly.

Appendix A: Photo gallery



Left: Sharon interviews the manager of the grocery store—the only grocery store in downtown Mobile. The manager said that access to his store is problematic for everyone (drivers, walkers, transit, bikers).



Left: While on location we observed many pedestrians crossing mid block. This behavior is most likely due to the lack of designated, protected crosswalks in this corridor. Unfortunately, there is no median, so pedestrians are often observed standing in the middle of Government Street waiting for traffic to pass.

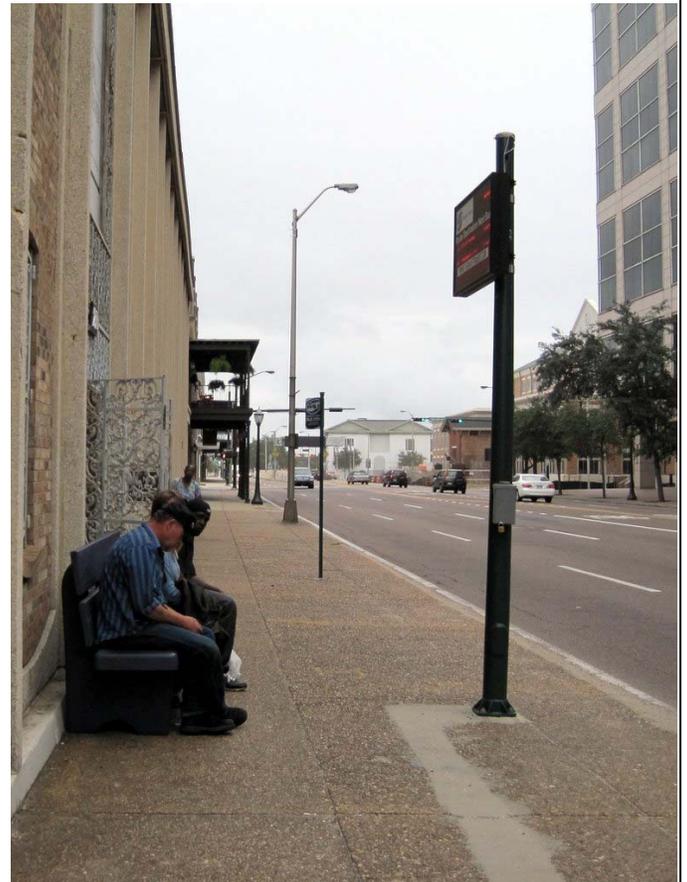
Right: A newly-constructed WAVE stop near the grocery store. There is no access to the shelter from the sidewalk for a wheelchair user.



Far right: Most WAVE transit stops look like this. At a minimum, a transit stop should include a shelter, a bench, and a system map/schedule.



Appendix A: Photo gallery  
 Government Street from North/South Joachim to Water Street



Top left: Curb ramps and crosswalks are not aligned, presenting challenges to some pedestrians.

Middle left: The crosswalk across Government Street at Joachim. There is a long wait for the WALK signal. Pedestrians face threats from turning vehicles.

Lower left: The plaza outside the Mobile County Government Center. There is a designated WAVE stop at this location, but there are no accommodations for waiting riders.

Above: Across the street from the Government Center is a WAVE stop with a Next Bus variable message sign. A shelter and more seating is needed, as this is a busy stop.

Appendix A: Photo gallery



Government Street, east of the entrance to the Bankhead Tunnel. The addition of on street parking would improve the walkability of this corridor by buffering pedestrians from traffic.



Shops and restaurants along South Royal Street. Lighting is pedestrian-scale, and the corridor is attractive. Bicycle parking is unavailable.



Bike Route signs are posted throughout Mobile. We did not observe bicycle facilities along these routes.



The Mobile Convention Center is separated from downtown by Water Street, which is six lanes wide at this location.



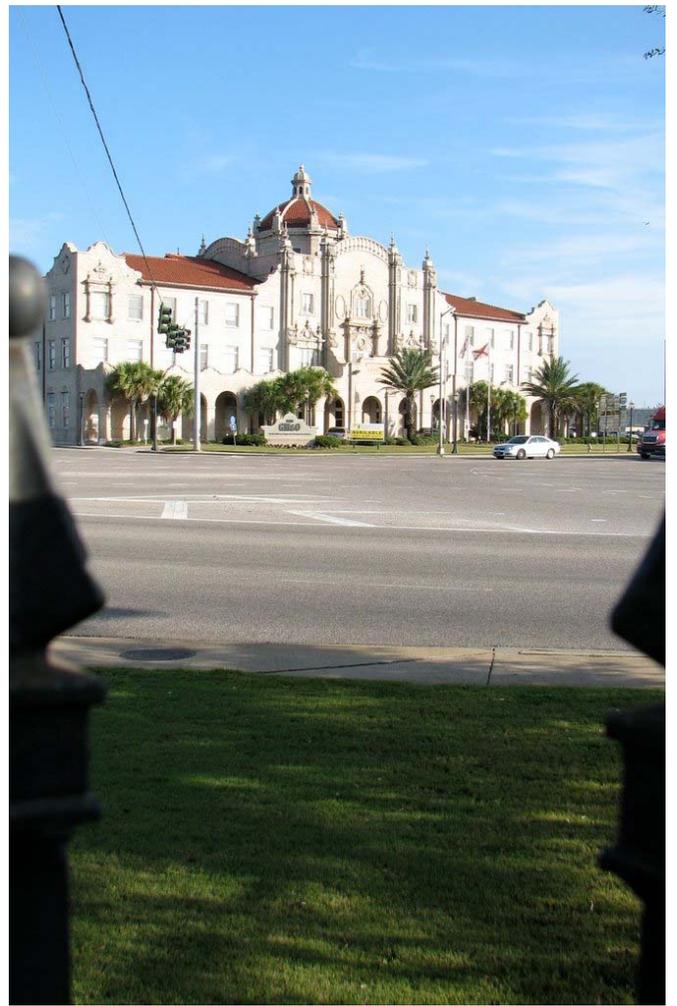
Looking south towards Interstate 10, which empties high-speed traffic onto Water Street. The intersection is very wide, which generates high speeds for left-turning traffic—particularly for vehicles on Government Streets turning onto northbound Water Street. The high speeds can create problems for pedestrians.



The Exploreum is one of many walkable destinations in this area. A new hotel is under construction nearby.

*Water Street and Beauregard Street*

## Appendix A: Photo gallery



Top left: The GM&O building is at the northeast corner of the intersection. The WAVE Transportation Center is also located here.

Lower left: The intersection is massive and it facilitates high speed turning movements. There are no crosswalks, and no pedestrian signals. There is no link for pedestrians to get to the WAVE Transportation Center.

Right: This photo was taken from the vantage of the Mobile Press Register's campus. A wrought iron fence surrounds the Press Register's building, limiting access for pedestrians.



## Appendix B: Walking audit checklist

Active Living Resource Center /National Center for Bicycling & Walking



### Walking Audit Checklist: Intersections and mid block crossings

Location: Intersection of \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ Mid block crossing of: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Day: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM Number of lanes: \_\_\_\_\_ Multiple left/right turn lanes: YES/NO

I am: 0-12 years old | 13-19 | 20-50 | 51 - 70 | 71+ Mobility: excellent | average | use a wheelchair or walking aide

I am Visually Impaired: Yes | No I am Hearing Impaired: Yes | No

#### Traffic Signals and Intersection Geometry

1. Are there pedestrian signals? No | Standard | Countdown | Signal does not work.
2. How long do you have to wait before a WALK signal? \_\_\_\_\_ seconds.
3. That is: Too long to wait | The right amount of time
4. Is there a PUSH TO CROSS button at the signal? No | No, but WALK starts automatically | Yes, but it does not work or is in poor condition | Yes
5. Is enough time allowed to cross safely? No, I felt rushed | Yes, but a person walking slowly would have difficulty | Yes, everyone should have plenty of time.
6. Length of Walk cycle: \_\_\_\_\_ seconds.
7. For large intersections: Is there a median to allow a slow moving person to cross in stages?  
No | Yes, but it feels unsafe | Yes, a median with a good pedestrian refuge.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Driver Behavior

1. Do drivers have a good view of pedestrians waiting to cross?  
Yes | No, utility boxes, poles, or vegetation obstructs their view.
2. Did you experience problems with left or right turning traffic while crossing?  
No | Left turning traffic was traveling too fast or wasn't looking for pedestrians | Right turning traffic was traveling too fast or wasn't looking for pedestrians.
3. Do drivers obey the traffic signals? Yes | Most | Few
4. Do drivers obey the speed limit? Yes | Most | Few
5. Does the intersection have stop bars so drivers do not encroach into the crosswalk? Yes | Yes, needs to be repainted | No
6. Are there any Red Light Cameras at the intersection? Yes | No
7. How many legs of the intersection are signed for No Turn on Red? \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Crosswalks and Access

1. Are there crosswalks at this intersection? Yes | Yes, but not at all crossings | No
2. Are the crosswalks visible? Yes, lines are bright and visible | No, lines need to be repainted | There are no lines
3. Crosswalk style: Two lines | Large blocks | Ladder-style | Other
4. Are the crosswalks wide enough? Yes | No
5. Is the pavement in good condition? Yes, it is smooth | No, there are some tripping hazards for wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers | The pavement is dangerous.
6. Are there curb ramps? No | One per corner | Two per corner.
7. Are the curb ramps in good condition? Yes | No
8. If the intersection is under construction: N/A | A good path is provided for pedestrians | A poor path is provided for pedestrians.

#### User Experience

1. Did you feel comfortable crossing at this intersection?  
Yes | No | Comments \_\_\_\_\_
2. Would you allow an unescorted child to cross here?  
Yes | No | Comments \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would you be comfortable with a senior citizen or a person who is mobility-impaired crossing here?  
Yes | No | Comments \_\_\_\_\_
4. What destinations are nearby that would attract pedestrians?  
School | Shopping | Library | Transit | Recreational Trail | Healthcare | Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are other pedestrians present? Yes | No |  
Why not? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Can you see debris on the roadway from car crashes? Yes | No
7. Cleanliness of the area around the intersection:  
Very clean | Somewhat clean with visible litter | Unclean: there is no pride of place.

## Appendix B: Walking audit checklist

Active Living Resource Center/National Center for Bicycling & Walking

### Walking Audit Checklist: Sidewalks and Streets

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time of day \_\_\_\_\_ Lighting conditions: Sunny | Rainy | Dawn/Dusk | Dark You are: Male | Female  
Name of street and walking area studied \_\_\_\_\_ Length of study area \_\_\_\_\_ blocks or from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
Neighborhood type: urban | suburban | small town | rural  
Description: residential | commercial | industrial | mixed use | suburban office park/big box retail/shopping node

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#### Walking Space and Safety

1. Is there a sidewalk? Yes | No
2. If you answered 'No' where are people walking?  
Street | Grass | Parking lots
3. Is the sidewalk continuous? Yes | No
4. Is there a sidewalk on both sides of the street? Yes | No
5. Estimate the sidewalk width \_\_\_\_\_ feet
6. Is this wide enough? Yes | No
7. Condition of sidewalk: Smooth | uneven, but alright for walking | heaved with tripping hazards | bare ground
8. Is the surface ok for a person in a wheelchair, with a walker, or pushing a stroller? Yes | No
9. Sidewalk obstructions: Sidewalk is clear | overgrown trees/vegetation | construction | vehicles parked on the sidewalk | utility poles | restaurant furniture | newspaper boxes | other \_\_\_\_\_
10. Driveways and alleys: None | Few cross the sidewalk | Frequent
11. Are drivers aware of pedestrians when entering/exiting driveways?  
No | Few | Yes, they are courteous
12. Do you notice other pedestrians? None | Few | Many

#### User Comfort and Security

1. How far away is traffic? The sidewalk is next to the road | there is some separation | the sidewalk is far from traffic
2. How are pedestrians separated from traffic? Street parking | bike lanes | grass and trees | a shoulder on the street
3. Noise level: Low, conversation is easy | Tolerable, conversation is difficult | Too noisy to talk to another person
4. Are there places to sit? No | Few | Many
5. Is the sidewalk shaded? Yes | No | Does not apply
6. Is the sidewalk lighted? Yes, fully | Yes, partially | No, only the street is lit | No, there is no lighting

7. What personal safety concerns do you have in this area? People are loitering | evidence of illicit behavior | vacant properties | seedy businesses | stray or vicious dogs | Comments \_\_\_\_\_
8. I would allow an unescorted child to walk in this neighborhood? Yes | No  
Comments \_\_\_\_\_

#### Destinations and Connectivity

1. How frequent are crosswalks? Close, < 1 minute walk | Nearby, < 2 minute walk | Far
2. Are there midblock crossings? None | Yes, with a marked crosswalk/curb extensions/in street warning signs/drivers yield
3. Is bicycle parking provided? No | Infrequent/unsecure/low quality | Yes, high quality
4. Are there transit stops? No | Hard to find/infrequent/no shelters/no benches | Yes, high quality
5. Wayfinding? None | Information Kiosks/Maps
6. Is this a walkable neighborhood? Yes | No  
Comments \_\_\_\_\_

#### Aesthetics

1. Cleanliness: Area is clean and well maintained | some trash/graffiti, but generally clean | area is neglected, lots of trash/graffiti | area has been abandoned
2. Maintenance of properties: All/most buildings are well maintained | a few neglected properties | most properties are neglected
3. Buildings are mostly: Next to the sidewalk | fronted by parking lots /setback far front the street
4. Green space and nature: none | some green/parks nearby | lots of green
5. Visual texture and character: boring | looks like everywhere else | I saw something new | I saw many interesting things
6. Would you walk here again? Yes | No | Comments \_\_\_\_\_



Date: November 30, 2009

To: Healthy Coastal Connections Project Stakeholders

From: National Center for Bicycling & Walking / Active Living Resource Center

Subject: Complete Streets Policy Examples

For the past fifty years America has been planning for one transportation mode, the automobile. Recently though, communities across the country have begun taking steps to shift from planning for automobiles to planning for all modes of transportation (examples: pedestrians, bicyclists, and mass transit). While this concept was not out of the ordinary during the pre World War II era, it is significant today given our predisposition to rely on and design around the automobile. The concept is called Complete Streets and it's literally sweeping the nation. To date, 114 government jurisdictions have adopted Complete Streets policies or have made written commitment to do so.

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Fairhope became the first municipality in Alabama to adopt a complete streets policy. Daphne followed suit on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 passing a complete streets resolution that is similar to Fairhope's. The resolution states, "Whereas the City of Fairhope supports construction of streets to enable safe access for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation, the City of Fairhope will consider these practices when undertaking construction, reconstruction and repair of our roadways." The resolution now creates an opportunity for the planning department and the planning and zoning board to consider complete streets treatments that otherwise would have been overlooked.

Listed below are several examples of states, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), counties, and cities throughout the southern United States that have made similar commitments to a transportation policy that accommodates multiple modes of travel. To learn more about Complete Streets policy, visit the National Complete Streets Coalition website at [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org).

### **Complete Streets Policy Examples**

#### **State**

- North Carolina: DOT Complete Streets Policy

#### **Metropolitan Planning Organization**

- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (Austin, TX Area): Texas Mobility Plan 2030

#### **County**

- Arlington, VA: Master Transportation Policy
- Cobb, GA: Complete Streets Policy

- [Richland, SC: Complete Streets Resolution](#)
- [Spartanburg, SC: Complete Streets Resolution](#)

### City

- [Anderson, SC: Complete Streets Resolution](#)
- [Charlotte, NC: Urban Street Design Guidelines and Transportation Action Plan](#)
- [Decatur, GA: Community Transportation Plan](#)
- [Greenville, SC: Complete Streets Policy](#)
- [Knoxville, TN: Complete Streets Resolution](#)
- [Louisville, KY: Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan: Complete Streets Ordinance; Complete Streets Manual](#)
- [Miami, FL: Complete Streets Resolution](#)
- [North Little Rock, AR: Complete Streets Policy](#)
- [Roanoke, VA: Complete Streets Policy](#)
- [Spartanburg, SC: Complete Streets Resolution](#)
- [West Palm Beach, FL: Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan](#)

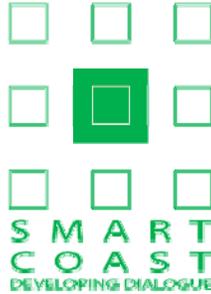
### Sample Resolutions

- [Roanoke, VA Complete Streets Policy \(2008\)](#): “[A]ll transportation agencies within the city shall routinely plan, fund, design, construct, operate, and maintain their streets according to the Complete Street principles of the City’s ‘Street Design Guidelines’ with the goal of creating an attractive connected multimodal network that balances the needs of all users, except where there are demonstrated exceptional circumstances.”
- [Decatur, GA Community Transportation Plan \(2008\)](#): “Complete Streets are defined as streets with safe travel facilities for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders – of all ages and ability levels...As the focus is...on increasing opportunities for non-motorized transportation alternatives, it provides safe and reliable options for everyone to become active participants, both physically and socially, in the community. It is especially beneficial to the City’s most vulnerable populations such as low income households, children and older adults, all of who experience differing physical, mental and financial challenges to mobility.”
- [Arlington County, VA Master Transportation Plan \(2006\)](#): “Ensure all streets are ‘complete streets,’ safe and comfortable for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, and other users.”

## ***About the National Center for Bicycling & Walking***

The National Center for Bicycling & Walking is national nonprofit with offices in Washington DC and New Jersey. NCBW developed the award winning Walkable Community Workshop program, which brings together planners, engineers, public health professionals, citizen advocates, youth, and other to develop community transportation systems that work for all users. We have facilitated hundreds of community workshops and walking audits, and we count numerous state departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, and local governments are our clients. Sharon Roerty, AICP/PP and Mark Plotz, MPA of the NCBW/ALRC performed the walking audits of the Government Street corridor.

The Active Living Resource Center is a program of the National Center for Bicycling & Walking. The ALRC is dedicated to reducing health disparities by helping communities remove barriers to everyday physical activity—like walking and bicycling. Our specific interest is in reducing childhood obesity by increasing the number of children who can regularly and safely walk and bicycle. The Active Living Resource Center operates with the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



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