

Active Neighborhood Checklist: Protocol



Version 2.0 (February 2011)

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Audit Tool - Definition

- Systematic assessment of factors in the physical and social environment that hinder or facilitate physical activity



Goals of an Audit: The 3 A's

- **Advocacy**

- An audit can be used to identify needs in the community for advocacy initiatives (e.g., no safe routes to school).

- **Action Research**

- An audit can be used in the needs assessment phase of intervention research (e.g., the most accessible place to build a new walking trail).

- **Analytic Research**

- An audit can be used to determine the factors in the environment that influence physical activity behavior.

Audit Tool – Characteristics

- It can be detailed or simplistic.
- It can be comprehensive or focused.
- It can be subjective or objective.
- It can be costly or inexpensive.
- It can complement other sources of data.

Purpose of the “User-Friendly” Active Neighborhood Checklist

- To serve as a short, user-friendly audit tool that assesses the most important features of the street-scale environment for physical activity
- Designed for community members and public health practitioners for research and advocacy.

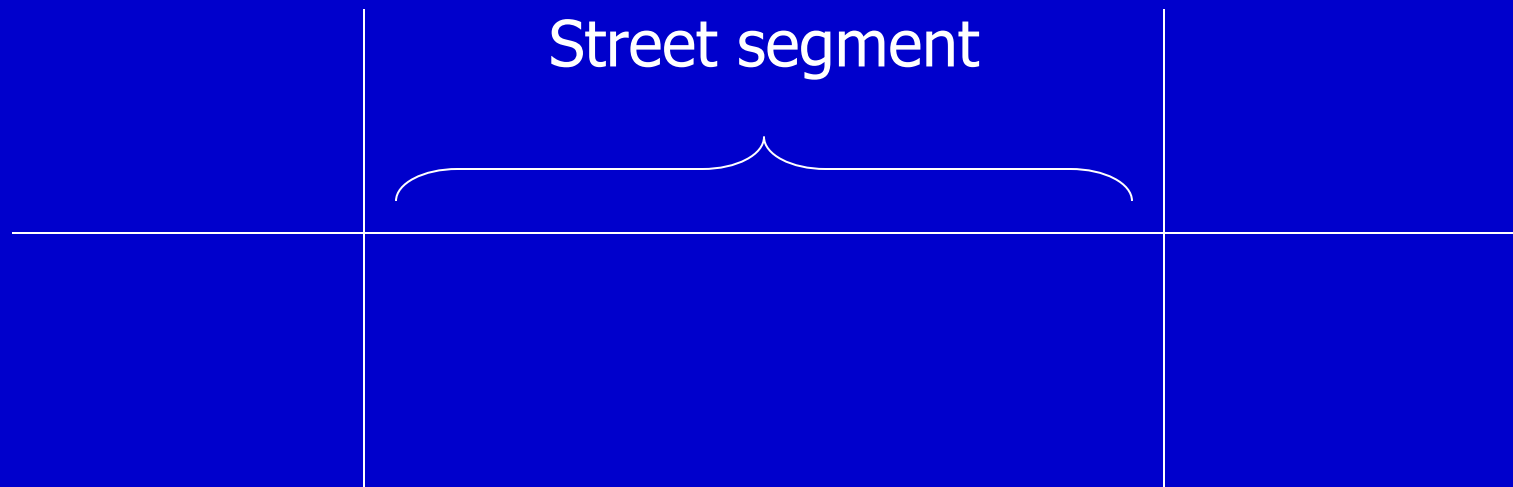
Other Resources

- Two-page protocol for the Active Neighborhood Checklist
- Hoehner CM et al. "Active Neighborhood Checklist: A User-Friendly and Reliable Tool for Assessing Activity Friendliness" *Am J Health Promot* 2007;21:534-537

Getting Started...

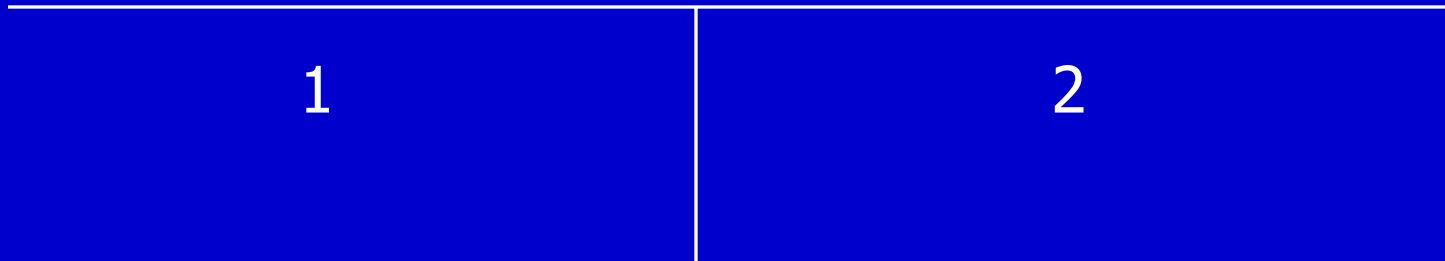
Street Segment - Definition

- A section of street or road (1/4 mile or less) between two adjacent intersections or between an intersection and cul-de-sac (dead end).



Street Segment - Definition

- Roads with few intersections should be divided into two or more 1/4-mile segments. Short segments may be combined with adjacent segments.
- A street with a T-intersection may be audited as two separate segments (e.g., 1 and 2 below). A reference point should be noted on the continuous side so that the recorded information is not duplicated for the adjacent segments.



Maps

Materials

- ✓ Audit tool
- ✓ Map
- ✓ Clipboard
- ✓ Pencil/pen
- ✓ Comfortable shoes
- ✓ Watch
- ✓ Cell phone
- ✓ Sunscreen
- ✓ Umbrella
- ✓ Camera – take photos for illustrations and to make note of questionable features

Labeling

- **Date:** Enter today's date (4/8, 4/15, 4/22)
- **Segment ID:** Enter team ID + number (e.g. A1)
- **Auditor ID:** Enter your name
- **Neighborhood ID:** See map
- **Street Name:** Enter street and intersecting segments (e.g., Elm between 1st and 2nd Street)
- **Start time:** Enter time
- **Stop time (on 2nd page):** Don't forget!

Labeling -- Example

- **Date:** 4/8/05
- **Segment ID:** A2 (2nd segment audited by team A)
- **Auditor ID:** Christy
- **Neighborhood ID:** Kirkwood
- **Street Name:** Elm between 1st and 2nd Street
- **Start time:** 10:45 am
- **Stop time:** 10:55 am

Is any building or section of the sidewalk or roadway under construction or being repaired?

- For buildings → only note major renovation or construction (i.e., not repair of a roof on a single home)



What land uses are present?

1. Are residential and non-residential land uses present?

- All residential
- Both residential and non-residential
- All non-residential

1. Are residential and non-residential land uses present?

Example 1:

(red = non-residential, white=residential):

Single
family

Single
family

Single
family

Apartment complex

1. Are residential and non-residential land uses present?

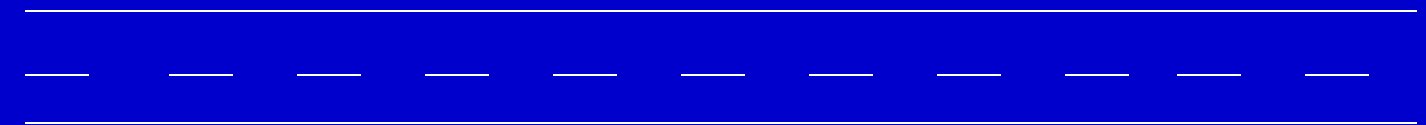
Example 2:

(red = non-residential, white=residential):

Single
family

Single
family

Single
family

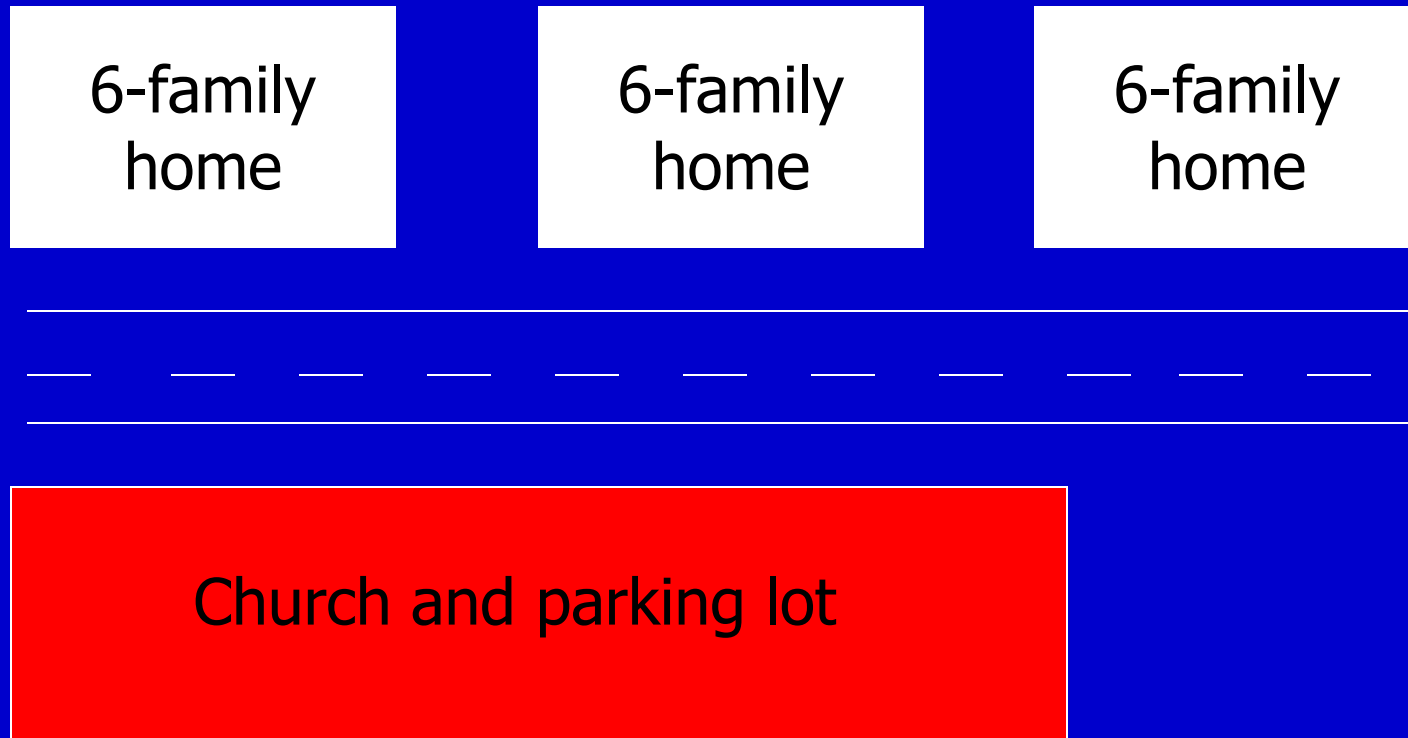


Strip mall with 4 stores

1. Are commercial and residential land uses mixed?

Example 4:

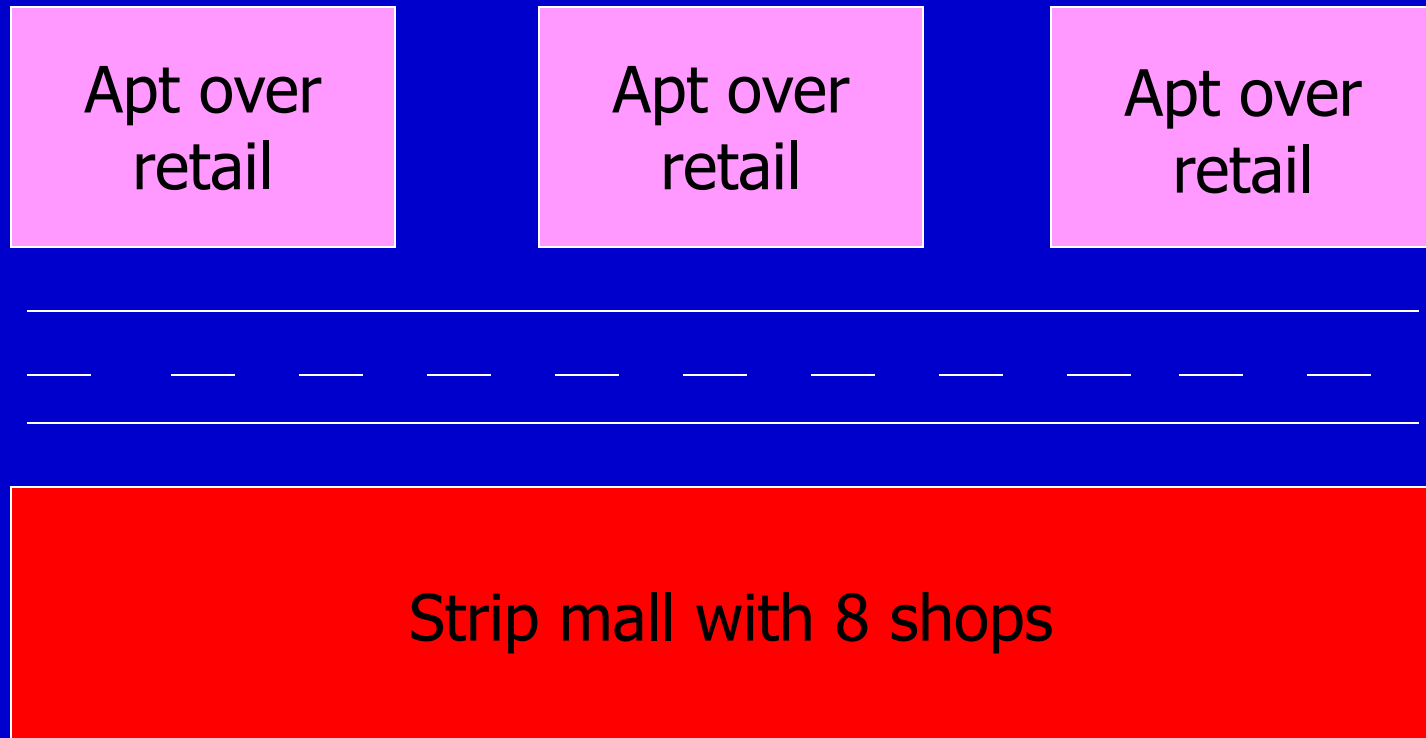
(red = non-residential, white=residential):



1. Are commercial and residential land uses mixed?

Example 6:

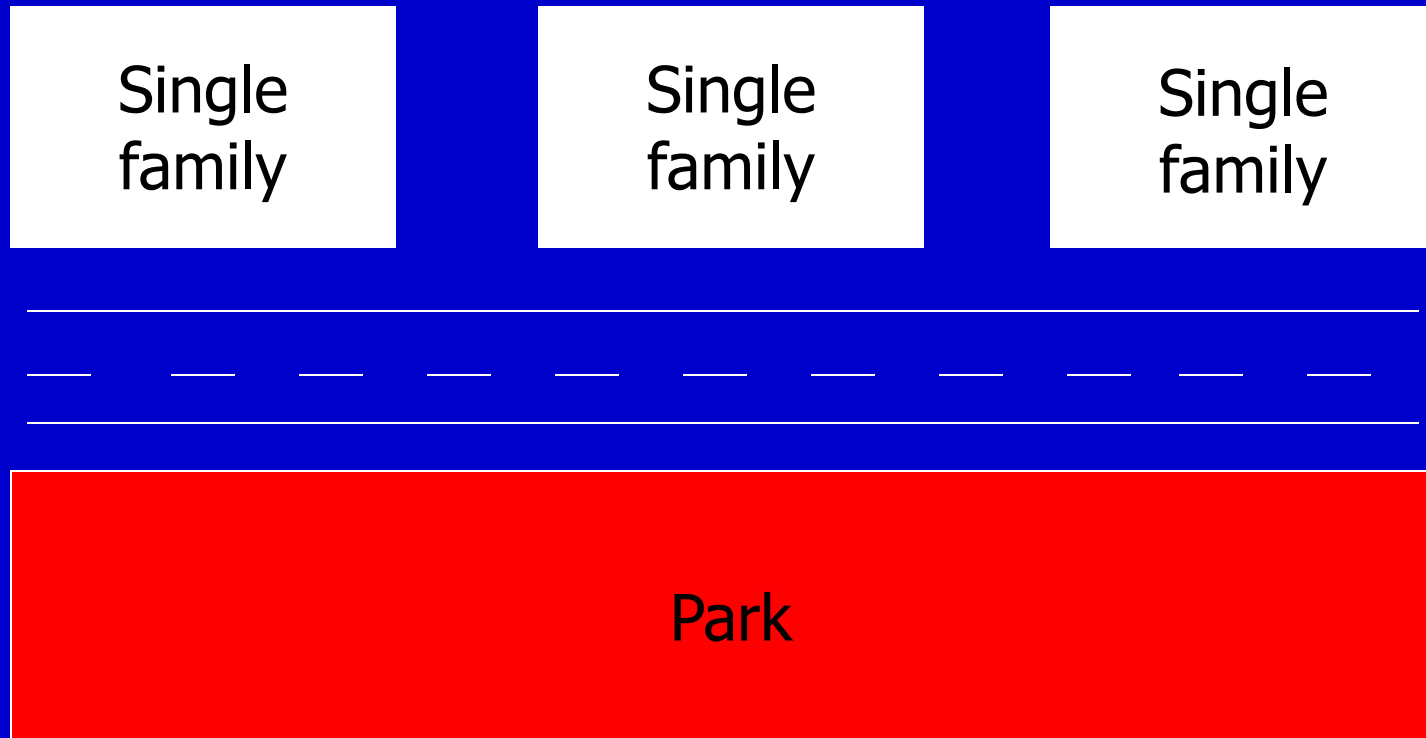
(red = non-residential, white=residential):



1. Are commercial and residential land uses mixed?

Example 7:

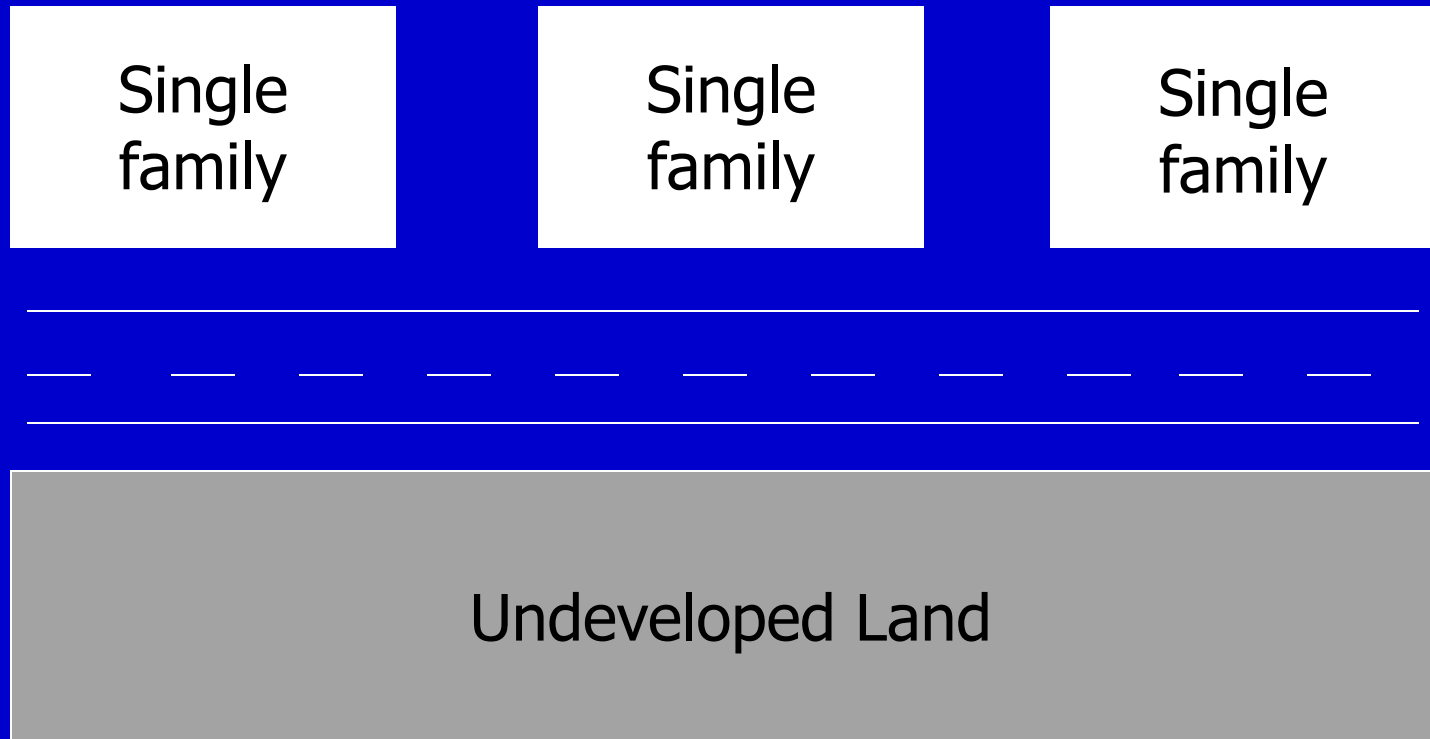
(red = non-residential, white=residential):



1. Are commercial and residential land uses mixed?

Example 7:

(red = non-residential, white=residential):



2. What is the predominant land use?

- Residential buildings/yards
- Commercial or public/government buildings
- School/school yards
- Parking lots or garages
- Park with exercise/sport facilities or playground equipment
- Vacant lot/abandoned building
- Undeveloped land
- Designated green space (includes park with no exercise/play facilities)
- Other non-residential, specify: _____

Park with facilities



Vacant lot / abandoned building



Vacant lots: A lot about the same size as buildings on the segment or nearby segments with visible signs of neglect.

Abandoned building: Uninhabited building that shows visible signs of neglect.

Undeveloped land



Large area of natural space that is not maintained by public or private entities.

Designated green space



Large area of natural space that is maintained by public or private entities and open to the public but lacks designated places to play or exercise (e.g., trail, playground).



Where to “count” specific types of land uses for items in section A3-A6

- Users that intend to aggregate the data may want to avoid double-counting destinations when they are located on the corner of 2 segments.
 - Double-counting is acceptable if the land uses are used to characterize the type of street (e.g., commercial or residential).
 - Double-counting should be avoided if the land uses are used to calculate densities of segments with a specific type(s) of destination(s) (e.g., % of segments with a grocery store).

Where to “count” specific types of land uses for items in section A3-A6

- When users prefer not to double-count destinations, they should count destinations based on:
 - Address
 - Front of building

Only count this school on the Elm segment



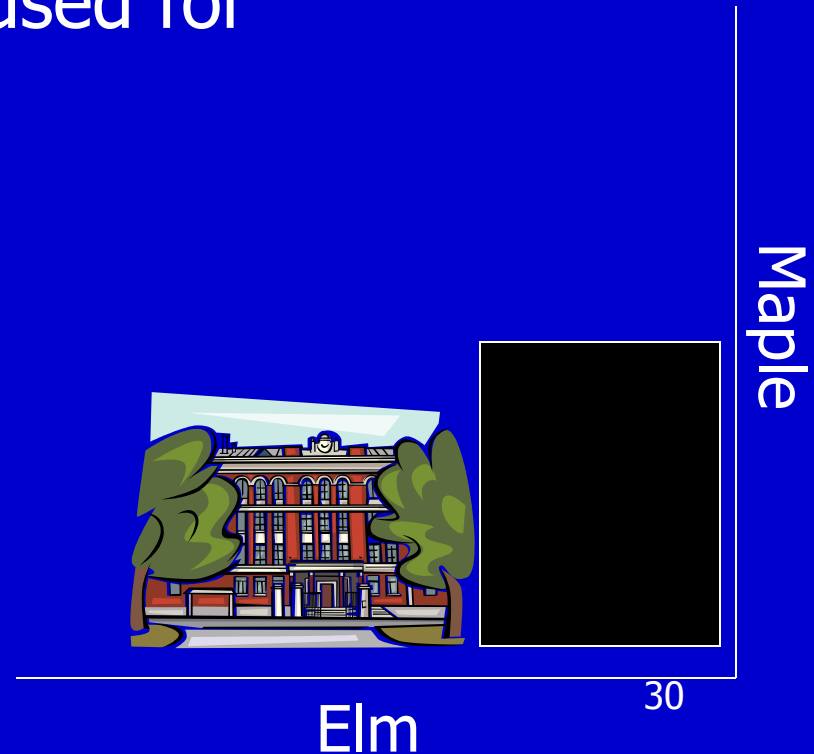
Elm

29

Maple

Where to “count” specific land uses for Section A4

- Count parking lots based on:
 - The segment which contains the building that the parking lot is used for
 - Entrance
 - Size



3. What types of residential uses are present?

- None
- Abandoned homes
- Single family homes
- Multi-unit homes (2-4 units)
- Apartments or condominiums (>4 units, 1-4 stories)
- Apartments or condominiums (>4 units, >4 stories)
- Apartment over retail
- Other (retirement home, mobile home, dorms)

Note: to distinguish between single and multi-unit homes, look for multiple mailboxes or doorbells.

4. What parking facilities are present?

- None
- On-street, including angled parking
- Small lot or garage (<30 spaces)
- Medium to large lot
- Garage

Note: If pavement is unmarked, code as On-street (angled or parallel) parking only if there are cars parked within the segment or if parking signs are present. For streets that permit on-street parking on weekends or evenings *only*, mark as None and document varying parking rules in notes.

5. What *public* recreational facilities and equipment are present (including in the schoolyard if publicly accessible)?

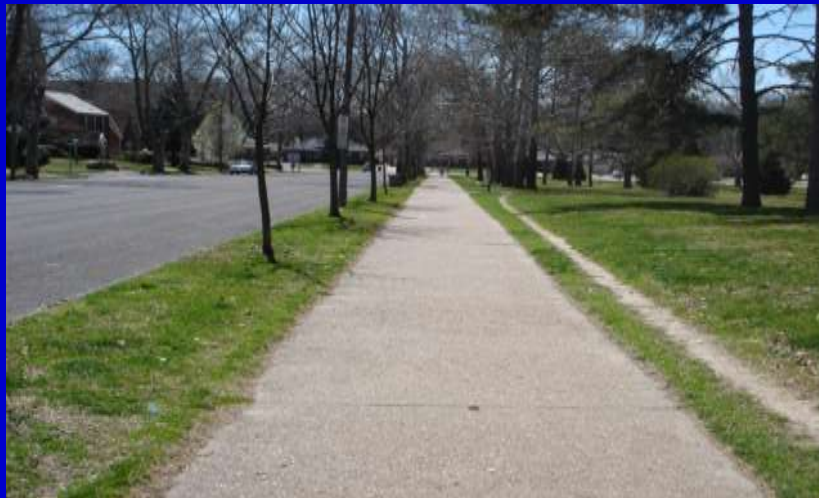
- None
- Park with exercise/sport facilities or playground equipment
- Off-road walking/biking trail
- Sports / playing field
- Basketball / tennis / volleyball court
- Playground
- Outdoor pool
- Other: _____



Public parks or schoolyards

- Do not include:
 - Church playgrounds
 - Daycare playgrounds
 - Apartment playgrounds
 - Gated and locked schoolyards
 - Note the above in the “Land use notes”

Off-Road Walking, Bicycling, or Multi-Use Trail?



Counts as a sidewalk AND an off-road walking trail

5. What types of non-residential uses are present?

Abandoned/vacant blg

Specific types of destinations

- Small grocery, convenience store or pharmacy
- Supermarket
- Food establishments (restaurant, bakery, café, coffee shop, bar)
- Entertainment (e.g., movie theater, arcade)
- Library or post office
- Bank
- Laundry/dry cleaner
- Indoor fitness facility

Educational facilities

- School (elementary, middle, high school)
- College, technical school, or university

Large blgs housing 1+ businesses/services

- High-rise building (>5 stories)
- Big box store (e.g., Walmart, Office Depot, Best Buy)
- Mall
- Strip mall
- Large office building, warehouse, factory or industrial building

Abandoned building

- Uninhabited building that shows visible signs of neglect. Does not include homes or commercial buildings that are “for sale” unless there are obvious signs of neglect.
- If a large number of houses or commercial buildings are “for sale,” note this in the “Land use notes.”



Indoor fitness facility

- Examples
 - Health club
 - Yoga/pilates
 - Dance studios
 - Public recreation centers
 - YMCA
 - Indoor tennis club

Big Box Store

- Examples include:
 - Walmart
 - Borders
 - Home Depot



- Does not include destinations counted elsewhere:
 - Supermarkets
 - Factories
 - Office building

Strip Mall

- A strip mall typically has a name (e.g., Clock Tower Center)
- Generally used to depict auto-oriented design
- Count strip mall as well as specific destinations in them.



Land use notes

- Include:
 - Major natural landscape features (e.g., lakes, rivers)
 - Major barriers (e.g., railroad tracks, highway)
 - Other distinct characteristics
 - Questions you have regarding classifying types of destinations

Is Public Transportation Available?

Transit Stop (Bus, Train, or Other)



Bench or Covered Shelter at Transit Stop?



What Street Characteristics are Visible?

Posted Speed Limit or Special Speed Zone



Posted speed limit



Special speed zone

One-Lane Street



Two-Lane Street



Three-Lane Street



Four-Lane Street



Marked Lanes?



Marked



Unmarked

Median or Pedestrian Island



Turn Lane?



A turn lane should be a special lane designated for turning

Stop sign or traffic light for crossing this segment?



Any stop light missing pedestrian signal?



Crosswalk for Crossing This Segment?



Traffic Calming Devices (Roundabout, Curb Extension, Speed Bump)



Cul-de-sac Present (dead end street)? Sidewalk Cut-Through in Cul-de-Sac?



Yes, cul-de-sac

Yes, sidewalk cut-through



Yes, cul-de-sac

No, sidewalk cut-through

Street Characteristic Notes:

- Description of:
 - Traffic volume or speed
 - Condition of crossing aids
 - Lots of cars pulling in and out of drive ways

What is the quality of the environment?

Any Commercial Building Adjacent to Sidewalk?



No



Yes

Enter 99 if not applicable (e.g., no sidewalk or no commercial buildings)

Bench?



Excluding benches at bus stop and benches in parks

Drinking Fountain?



Public Art?



Pedestrian-Scale Lighting



Yes



No

Graffiti or Broken/Boarded Windows?



Try to limit boarded windows to those that reflect physical disorder

Litter or Broken Glass?

A lot



None or a little



Tree Shade on the Walking Area




No/little shade

A lot


Some

Slope Along the Walking Area

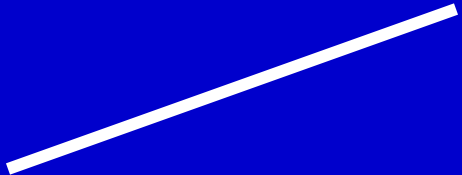
- This item is somewhat subjective
- Compare your street to a flat street and a street with a steep slope.



A flat or gentle slope would hardly be noticeable to most individuals



Walking on a moderate slope may increase someone's heart rate, but would not act as a barrier for most individuals



A steep slope would act as a barrier to someone who is not active or who has physical limitations

Pedestrian Environment Notes:

- Description of:
 - Cross-slopes
 - Distinct or attractive features that make this segment especially pleasing to a pedestrian (e.g., street furniture, lots of flower boxes, awnings)



Do you have a place to walk
or bicycle?

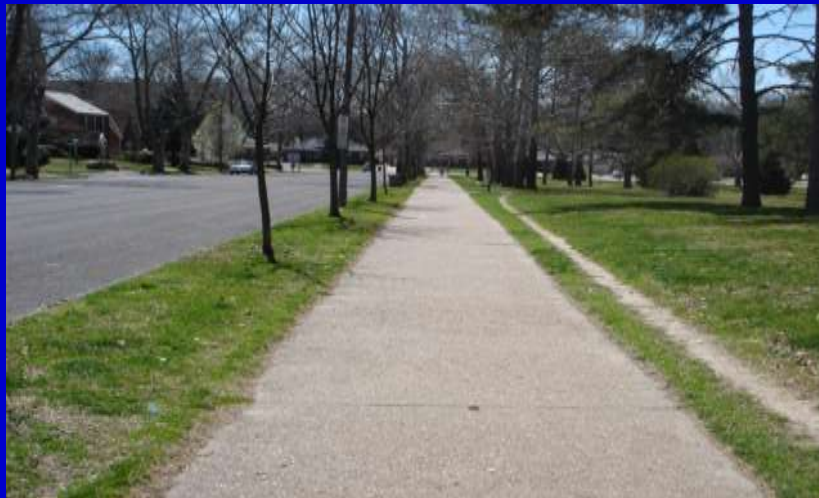
Response choices

- No
- Yes, one side
- Yes, both sides

Sidewalk Present?

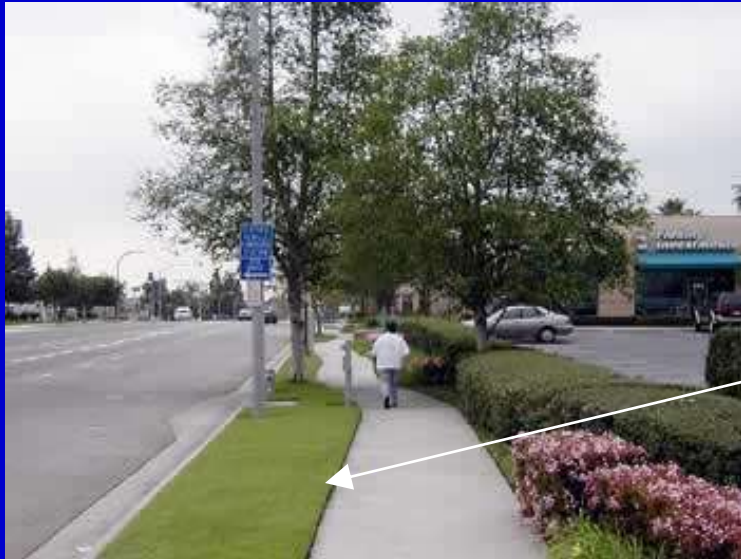


Off-Road Walking, Bicycling, or Multi-Use Trail?



Counts as a sidewalk AND an off-road walking trail

Any Grassy or Other Buffer Between Curb and Sidewalk *along most of the segment?*



Buffer



No Buffer

Any Grassy or Other Buffer Between Curb and Sidewalk *along most of the segment?*



Buffer? Yes, but make note
of material

Tree(s) in Buffer?



Sidewalk Continuous Within Segment



Not continuous



Continuous

Sidewalk Continuous Between Segments at Both Ends?



NOT continuous



Continuous

Width > 3 ft for Most of Sidewalk?



← Yes, but make note of sidewalk merging with parking lot

Width <math>< 3\text{ft}</math> for Any Part of Sidewalk



No



Yes



Any Missing Curb Cuts or Ramps at Intersections or Driveways?



Yes



No

Any Major Bumps, Cracks, Holes or Weeds in the Sidewalk?



Yes



Any Major Bumps, Cracks, Holes or Weeds in the Sidewalk?



No



Any Permanent Obstructions (e.g., Trees, Signs, Tables) Blocking the 3-ft Walk Area?



Only an obstruction if it blocks the 3-foot walking area



If A Sidewalk is Not Present on Any Part of the Segment, Do You Have Another Safe Place to Walk?



Sidewalk Notes

- Description of
 - Curb cuts
 - Misalignments
 - Obstructions
 - Sidewalk width



Designated Bike Route Sign or Marking "Share the Road" Sign?



On Street, Paved, and Marked Shoulder? Width of Marked Shoulder ≥ 4 ft?



Shoulder

(Use measured foot or tape measure for width if safe)

Not a shoulder

Shoulder Continuous Between Segments at Both Ends?



Permanent Obstruction in the Shoulder (including drainage grates, parked cars?)



Leaves or branches should not be considered a *permanent* obstruction

Drainage grates are only an obstruction when the holes are aligned with bicycle path



This is *not* an obstruction⁹¹

If Paved, Marked Shoulder is Not Present on Any part of the Segment, Do You Have Another Safe Place to Bicycle?



Street, if little traffic



Wide outside lane

Shoulder Notes:

- Description of:
 - Traffic volume or speed
 - Condition of bike lane
 - Obstructions

Sample Street



Sample Street

