



October 16, 2009

## Neighborhood Walk Audits

The last post talked about how a walkable neighborhood increases home values. Now let's talk about the actions we can take!

### Addressing the Problems Through Walk Studies

The Columbus Public Health Healthy Places program works with neighborhoods to address built environment issues through walk studies. Walk studies are simply what they say, a time to take a walk and study the environment you are walking. Walk studies have been made popular by Dan Burden of [Walkable Communities](#). I have had the privilege to attend some of his walk studies through the [City of Columbus Division of Mobility Options](#) community mobility planning processes. Dan talks a lot about how to make a street one in which drivers, walkers and cyclists all use the street together SAFELY. In my walk studies, I focus more on finding safe routes through the existing neighborhood.

### Columbus Neighborhood Walk Studies

This summer, the four [Neighborhood Pride](#) neighborhoods all participated in walk studies which resulted in neighborhood walking maps (link to CPH map website). Thanks to the residents of Tussing, Arlington Park, Deshler Park and Clinton Estates for walking with me. You can see the neighborhood [walking maps here](#). These four neighborhoods make the 21 walk study completed and 26 neighborhood walking map since Healthy Place started doing walk studies in 2007.

Check back in two weeks so find out more about walk studies and how your neighborhood can complete its own walk study or [click here](#) for information right now.

Check out the pictures of these walk studies on the following pages!





Tussing neighborhood street with great trees that shade the sidewalk and close in the street. Sidewalks, houses facing the street, shade and slower cars make for a great walking environment!



Tussing neighborhood, the sidewalk stops! This lot has yet to be developed and therefore does not have a sidewalk. Walkers are forced into the street. I walked this route and the street traffic was minimal but how would a person in a wheelchair, child on a bike or elder person with a cane get into the street safely?

Arlington Park neighborhood, sidewalks that are crumbling are common in all neighborhoods and are the responsibility of the property owner. However, the repairs are expensive and come cannot afford the fixes. There is not good solution to this problem, we just have to be careful when walking!



The new elementary school, East Linden, in the Arlington Park neighborhood.



I learned a very interesting thing in Deshler Park. Sometimes in neighborhoods, there are sidewalks in front of only a few houses and I could never figure out why. The residents of Deshler let me know that, at least in this case, the houses were originally built with federal funds which required sidewalks!



This is Deshler Ave. If you were standing on this street and looked behind you, you would see Deshler Elementary School, to the left, you can see the parking lot for Deshler Park and straight ahead is Fairwood Park. This is an example of a location where sidewalks would do triple duty connecting neighbors to two parks and an elementary school! For more information on the City of Columbus Safe Walks program, [click here](#).



The Clinton Estates neighbors call these type of raised sidewalks “toe trippers.” It is a common problem in older neighborhoods and again, there is no easy answer since sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owner.



This is a great feature I find in neighborhoods that have been built around the 1970s. The school is in the middle of the neighborhood or at the edge of the neighborhood and there are pedestrian paths through the houses to the school! This is a great neighborhood features for Clinton Estates.

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