

Where Sidewalks | End

Laying the groundwork to build more walkable, more equitable, and healthier communities



**Project
Partners**



Project Purpose and Partners

The Purpose

Where Sidewalks End isn't an ordinary art show; it's a call to action. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports in 2017 **a pedestrian was killed every 88 minutes** (1) in traffic crashes. These numbers are going up year after year. The exhibition explored how neighborhoods and communities have become disconnected and even dangerous because of forgotten, neglected, or ignored investments in people-centered infrastructure.

When sidewalks are overgrown, not maintained, or simply do not exist in communities, residents can become isolated in their homes or risk their own safety by being forced to walk in dangerous situations like broken or obstructed sidewalks or even worse, in the shoulder of a busy roadway. *Where Sidewalks End* highlights **challenges and solutions** to creating and sustaining people-centered infrastructure and safety in our region. We hope to see new decision-making processes emerge with a focus on reconnecting people to each other and to resources to reinvigorate neighborhoods and lay the groundwork for creating more walkable, more equitable, and healthier communities.

Due to the unforeseen, unprecedented challenges brought to our communities because of COVID-19 pandemic, more people have been walking for recreation and for transportation. (2) In *Palaces for the People*, sociologist Eric Klinenberg carves out a designation for sidewalks as "social infrastructure," which are "the physical places and organizations that shape the way people interact." Kleinberg continues to advocate for the importance of social infrastructure, like libraries, churches, parks and public spaces, as assets that make communities more resilient in times of crisis: "With indoor spaces closed, sidewalks especially are playing that role now."

If it was not obvious before, sidewalks are critical for healthy, vibrant, active communities. So much so that Margaret Meade said, **"any town that doesn't have sidewalks, doesn't love its children."** And like children, sidewalks require us to pay attention to them, value them, and care for them so they—and all of us—can live into our full potentials.

1 Source: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/pedestrian-safety>

2 Source: <https://www.cleveland.com/metro/2020/03/coronavirus-pandemic-underscores-importance-of-sidewalks-as-accessible-public-space.html>

The Partners

Where Sidewalks End is a collaborative initiative that was made possible with the support from the regional arts community, community development and planning agencies, civic engagement organizations, academic programs, and local philanthropic partners. Each partner brought knowledge, passion, and insight to the table and shared these resources generously. It is this people-centered mission and approach that made this project such a success even after the last exhibit closed.

Funding Partners

Trumbull Memorial Health Foundation
Western Reserve Health Foundation

Community Partners

BOARDMAN TOWNSHIP
Planning &
ZONING



**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
— OF THE MAHONING VALLEY —



CITY CLUB OF THE
MAHONING VALLEY



**Healthy
Community
Partnership**
Mahoning Valley

LIT
YOUNGSTOWN
Read. Write. Tell Your Story.



the **SOAP**
Gallery



Trumbull Art Gallery



TRUMBULL
NEIGHBORHOOD
PARTNERSHIP



YSU Center for Working Class Studies

About The Healthy Community Partnership-Mahoning Valley



The Healthy Community Partnership-Mahoning Valley is a collaboration of organizations and individuals who share a commitment to a healthier Mahoning Valley.

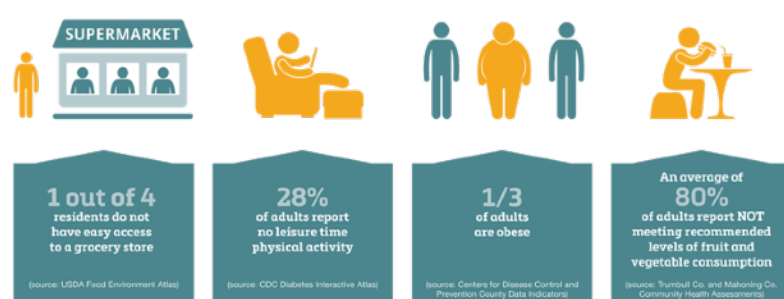


HCP-MV works to create equitable opportunities for residents to eat healthier and be more active as well as encourage and support residents to make those choices. The approach of HCP-MV is to work with residents and community leaders to identify strategies to address social and environmental factors that impact health.

At present, HCP-MV is focusing in three areas to improve health outcomes:



These focus areas were selected in response to the following concerning health outcomes faced by Valley residents:



HCP-MV is supported by the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley with a three-year \$1.5 million commitment from the Western Reserve Health Foundation, Trumbull Memorial Health Foundation, and Swanston Charitable Fund.

HCP-MV is made up of four teams of nearly 100 community leaders from Mahoning and Trumbull counties representing multiple sectors, municipalities, and neighborhoods.

HCP-MV is focused on developing and strengthening partnerships for long-term change and has adopted five guiding principles through which we measure the success of our collective efforts: Collective Action | Community Engagement | Health and Equity in All Policies | Systems Change | Influence and Inspire. Learn more about [HCP-MV at www.hcpmahoningvalley.com](http://www.hcpmahoningvalley.com).



Our Approach

Walking is the longest-standing, most basic, and most effective mode of transportation. A quick review of America Walks' Benefits of Walking shows us that walking provides individuals and communities a multitude of benefits (3):

Safety Benefits: Walkable neighborhoods have much lower rates of traffic fatalities – for both pedestrians and motorists – compared with automobile-oriented areas.

Health Benefits: Fewer than 50% of Americans meet the minimum guidelines for moderate physical activity – walking is the easiest and most affordable way to correct this problem.

Social Equity Benefits: Low-income families are more reliant on walking for essential journeys than the middle class, and yet low-cost housing is often located in the most car-dependent places.

Transportation Benefits: One quarter of all trips in the U.S. are 1 mile or less, and yet most of these trips are taken by car – increasing walking reduces traffic congestion and the cost of road maintenance.

Economic Benefits: The average household cost to own and operate one car in the U.S. is \$9,000 per year – walkable neighborhoods allow families to own fewer cars and save money.

After adding up all of these benefits to individual health and the health of our communities, the Healthy Community Partnership's Active Transportation Team noticed something was off balance. The team found themselves asking two important questions:

✱ Why aren't more people walking?

✱ Why don't communities spend more of their resources to make sure people who do walk can do so safely?

Take A Picture–It Will Last Longer

A long-standing, well-known strategy to draw attention to a social/environmental challenge is through the concept of "photovoice," which asks individuals to snap and share photos of an issue in real-life, real-time settings and situations to draw attention to the problem and identify solutions. Photovoice is an often used strategy in community-based participatory research to identify, prevent, and overcome complicated public health problems (4). Photovoice is a powerful tool, because it empowers people who are directly affected by an issue to shine a spot light on problems that are often overlooked, resulting in these issues being addressed since they can no longer be ignored.

The *Where Sidewalks End* project was created using this kind of public participatory photo-documentation as our inspiration. One of the Healthy Community Partnership Active Transportation Action Team members, Tricia D'Avignon, Assistant Director of Zoning and Development, began documenting where sidewalks ended abruptly, became impassable, or were absent altogether while conducting walk audits for Boardman Township's Connecting Boardman Active Transportation Plan.

3 Source: <https://americawalks.org/learning-center/benefits-of-walking-2>

4 Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4933584/>

She shared her findings on social media, which prompted several people to respond expressing their displeasure with the fact that so many of our sidewalks—or places where sidewalks should be—hindered people getting from place to place rather than helping them.

Photographic documentation was chosen as the method of delivering this powerful message about the need to reimagine and reinvest in our communities. Since almost everyone has access to a camera in their pockets or purses with the capacity to connect and share their photos with others, it was a way to engage a large, diverse group of people in a common conversation. We also wanted to make sure to show a variety of perspectives and representations how sidewalks end—or fail to begin—in our neighborhoods. Six professional photographers were invited to participate and shoot and display their pieces as part of the exhibition. *Where Sidewalks End* blended photographs taken by these six professional photographers, two from each county in the project area (Mahoning and Trumbull in Ohio and Mercer in Pennsylvania) as well as dozens of submissions from residents, which were pieced together to become one clear picture: we no longer want to side-step or push aside investment in sidewalks and our neighborhoods.

Really, Really Regional

Where Sidewalks End became a regional response to this frustration rooted in decades of disinvestment and disconnectedness experienced in our communities. Though each photo that Ms. D'Avignon documented was from a specific location, the familiarity from communities near and far was abundantly apparent. Unfortunately, any one of Ms. D'Avignon's photos could have been taken from almost anywhere in the Northeast Ohio/Western Pennsylvania area, which we later saw as public submissions came in.

During project planning, partners quickly decided the initiative would have more value and impact if we stretched the boundaries that we were used to working within. This allowed *Where Sidewalks End* not only to make connections between the barriers and benefits to walking, but also physical connections between communities. With the support of the Soap Gallery in Youngstown, the Trumbull Art Gallery in Warren, and Random Acts of Art in Sharon, *Where Sidewalks End* was able to take our message across state lines. This allowed us to reach a broader audience of people affected by the issue as well as those who can effect change.

Beginning in August 2019, the *Where Sidewalks End* art exhibition opened first in Youngstown, OH, traveled to Sharon, PA in September, and returned to Warren, OH in November. The photographs from professional photographers and community members were on display for viewing from August 2-December 22, 2019.



Opening Scenes | The Soap Gallery | August 2019



Opening Scenes | Random Acts of Artists | September 2019



Opening Scenes | Trumbull Art Gallery | November 2019



The Artists | Tim Cimperman



Tim Cimperman, currently resides in Sharon, PA. He is an experienced professional photographer and has been in practicing his craft since 1985.

Tim's photographic career has included working as a photojournalist for local and regional newspapers and magazines. He also is an active studio photographer. Working in the photographic industry for the past 34 years, he has become well versed in creating stories in pictures. Tim has gone from his beginnings as a free-lancer and journalist to owning his own photographic business.

Tim is a firm believer in community service and cherishes the wonderful people he has worked with in conjunction with charitable organizations and projects.

Tim has been active with the Random Acts of Artists, and F.L.O.P. (For the Love of Photography) where he exchanges ideas and collaborates with artists in the region.

Tim brings to this exhibition his commitment to photographic excellence and love of the challenge of working within a theme.

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SOAP



The Artists | Rachel Hathhorn



Rachel is a lifelong Warren native who began photographing eight years ago as a way to bring awareness to the beauty she found in an environment that appeared to most as no longer valued. The evolution of her work, while remaining true to her original objective, began to focus on scenes and textures, as well as the exploration of light and shadows. A constant throughout is her acute emphasis on detail.

A student of Kent State University, graduating in the spring of 2021, she has shown her work at DNA Independent Studios, Ashtabula Arts Center, Valley Arts Center, Trumbull Art Gallery, the Butler Institute of American Art, and is published in the Photographer's Forum Best in Photography 2018. She is also of a part of several private collections in the Mahoning Valley.

SOAP



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The Artists | Michael McAllister

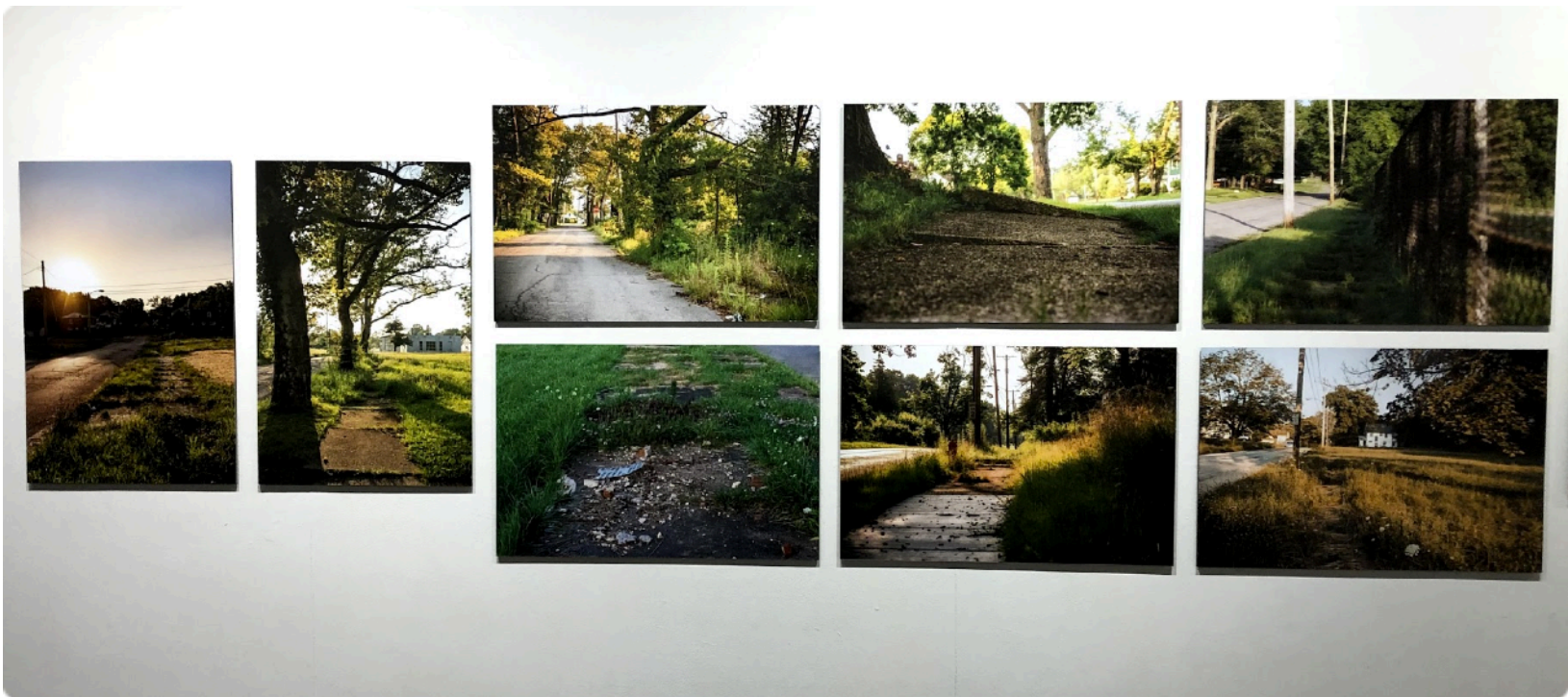


SOAP



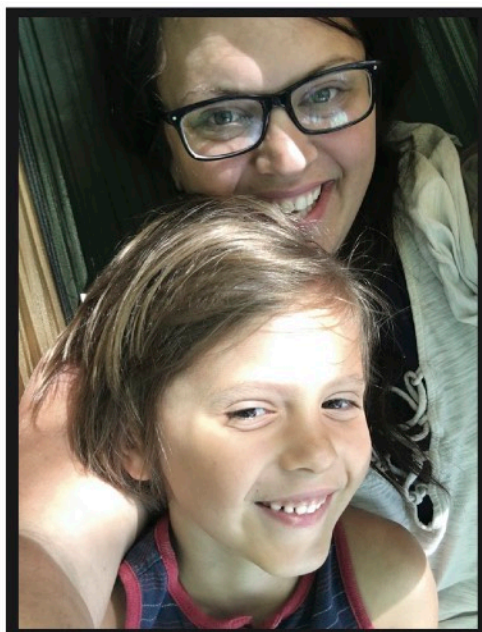
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The Artists | Mikenna McClurg & Charlie Morgan

TAG



Mikenna McClurg

Mikenna was born in Warren, Ohio in 1981. She has always been drawn to photography as a child and in her adult life. She remembers starting college right after graduating high school with the intentions of becoming a Radiologist. Her first year of college she took camping, bowling, history of music (failed), psychology (failed) and B&W photography. She dropped out. 2 years later when her sister brought home a textbook on photography and said she was minoring in photography Mikenna's mind was blown...she never knew photography major's existed. She would read her sister's text book to learn how to adjust her camera to blur backgrounds, study compositional layouts and how to do long exposure. Year's later, Mikenna went back to school and was able to further her passion by attending Youngstown State University to pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a focus in Photography. While studying at YSU she was able to create photographs and sculptural pieces with no boundaries which has led to her ability to adapt stylistically to a variety of techniques and subject matter.

Mikenna's photography has been published in Photographer's Forum's Best Of collection as well as being shown at galleries such as Silver Eye Center For Photography (Pittsburgh), the McDonough Museum of Art (Youngstown) and Trumbull Art Gallery (Warren). She has also helped conceptualize art exhibits such as Occupied Warren, which allowed her to combine her love of art with her career working for Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership, a Community Development Corporation focused on empowering residents through projects and programs that increase the quality of life in Warren. Other projects she has helped bring to life in the community have been Bookworms of Warren, a project which published a book of poetry, short stories and prose paired with photography from local writers and artists; Warren SOUP, a micro-funding event that allowed the community to come together, listen to proposals and vote to support local projects.

Artist Statement:

As a mother, I have been able to watch my son Charlie, 6, create his own works of art through imaginary play. Sometimes that means drawing elaborate scenes that only he can dictate, other times it comes from him making up stories he tells me when he's going to bed but mostly it comes from the hours upon hours he creates his own sculptures and "inventions" using the buckets of lego's he has collected over the years. When I was approached about Where Sidewalk's End I immediately knew I wanted to do a collaboration with his imagination and my photography. Everyone knows of "that one sidewalk down the street" that needs some major attention but I wanted to take those sidewalks and create worlds that only a few would have the imagination to see. Charlie and I worked together to find locations and then created different scenes with the lego sculptures and people. When shooting, I chose to focus on the lego men and women and their adventures or mishaps while using very real day to day occurrences happening in our community.

Although the images are playful, what's happening on and around the sidewalks are real, in fact, while shooting the image of the gravel covered sidewalk, Charlie was riding his bike back and forth to capture the motion of the bike tires. During the last shot, he wiped out and ended up with a bloody knee, sitting next to his lego friend, in the gravel crying. We as a community need to start seriously look at the current conditions of our sidewalks and do what we can to make them safe, whether that means clearing debris ourselves or reaching out to our cities to make them aware of conditions beyond our capabilities.



Charlie Morgan

Charlie Morgan, age 6, is a first grader at John F. Kennedy in Warren. He wants to be an engineer and a scientist when he gets older. He has always been captivated by legos and spends every cent he gets on new lego sets. He spends hours building the sets to perfection but as soon as it's complete he quickly dismantles them to make new creations of his own.

Charlie helped build the lego sculptures and create most of the scenes for the photographs in this series. While his mom came up with the social issues and scouted sidewalks with hazardous conditions, Charlie helped create and set up the new worlds in which his lego friends would temporarily reside and even shot one of the photographs.

SOAP



The Artists | Joseph Napier



Joseph Napier Jr is a born & raised Youngstown native. He picked up photography three years ago in efforts of helping local residents share their stories after interning for the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation.

Now Joseph uses his craft to help local creatives of color build community through the Youngstown Creative Collective, an initiative which he founded in 2017. Joseph sits on the board of “Building Neighborhoods of Youngstown” and volunteers his photography skills for several local community events

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The Artists | Gil Thurman



Gil hails from Frankfort, Kentucky where he spent over 50 years as a director, designer, performer, musician, artist and photographer. Gil graduated from Frankfort High School and went on to attend Morehead State University working on a degree in Speech and Theatre.

It was no secret to anyone who knew Gil growing up, he would be involved in something creative and for the good of others. Even in grade school he developed an interest in photography and documenting historical events, people, and places.

Gil has had the opportunity to use his skills in all areas of his work. He taught Theatre at his former high school, worked in computers, edited books and scripts, was a model for several magazines, one of which he was on the cover.

Gil has worked as an advocate and program manager in the domestic violence field for many years, creating many brochures and publications using his photos and graphics. Following this position he worked at the county extension office where he was able to merge his love of nature and photography. Many of his photos are now currently in their archives of events they were involved in.

Gil spent a majority of his life creating opportunities for other photographers to document the shows he directed and designed. Some of his design and directing credits include: The Wizard of Oz, Little Shop of Horrors, The House of Blues Leaves, Lettice and Lovage, and Sorry Wrong Number.

In 2016, Gil married his wonderful husband, Bill and moved to Sharon, PA. Bill has been a major player in Gil being able to live his dream. Here he founded the rock painting group, PEACE ROCKS PA, and met members of the Random Acts of Artists, which he is now an active member. RAA has been a strong inspiration in Gil pursuing a career in photography and visual arts. He has had his work hanging at the Trumbull Art Gallery of Warren, Art on Park of Warren, Cravings RAA Gallery of Sharon, The SOAP Gallery of Youngstown and Firebean Espresso Gallery of Sharon.

This exhibition is his first professional photographic project and is a subject he strongly believes in. You see, Gil is disabled and uses a walker and electronic cart to do most of his daily travel. It is an important to be able to travel around the city and be a viral part of volunteering to help others.

Accessibility is a cause very close to his life. No one should be unable to move freely around their community, or be a prisoner of their environment. Sidewalks that are clear and able to accommodate the public are a necessity for the survival of a community. Having to push a baby carriage in the street or pushing a loved one in a wheelchair is dangerous. It must be corrected.

RAA

SOAP



Community Connections

City Club of the Mahoning Valley Forums

► Where Sidewalks End



Description: Sidewalks are one of the oldest modes of transportation. But, today, as density decreases and other modes of transportation increase, sidewalks have become neglected. When sidewalks are overgrown, not maintained, or simply do not exist in communities, residents can become isolated in their homes or risk their own safety by being forced to walk in dangerous situations like broken or obstructed sidewalks or even worse, in the shoulder of a busy roadway.

In 2016, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports a pedestrian was killed every 1.5 hours in traffic crashes. These numbers are increasing

year after year (5). How can we prevent our sidewalks from ending?

Join us for a panel discussion where we will highlight challenges and solutions to people-centered infrastructure and safety in the Mahoning Valley with a focus on reconnecting people to each other and to resources to reinvigorate neighborhoods and lay the groundwork for creating safer, healthier, and more walkable communities.

Moderator:

Karen Schubert, Lit Youngstown

Panelists:

Rebecca Banks,
Host of Love and Music/YSU Edition,
Rookery Radio

Krista Benniston, AICP
Director of Zoning and Development
Boardman Township

Doris Bullock, Coordinator
Stepping Out Mercy Health

Justin Mondok, Planner
Eastgate Regional Council of
Governments



Missed the event? You can listen to the discussion [HERE](#).

5 Source: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812493>

► Complete Streets and the Transit Paradox

Description: It is well understood that access to reliable and affordable transportation is essential to addressing poverty, unemployment, obesity, and a variety of other social ills. Unfortunately, in many Midwestern cities, priority is often given to those who can afford transportation, leaving those on limited income without reliable transportation to jobs, school, medical appointments, and other resources.

Compounding the problem is an absence of safe multi-modal alternatives. A lack of bike lanes and neglected sidewalks and roads cause safety issues for pedestrians and bikers by forcing them into potentially dangerous situations. These issues are present in Warren which

has seen turmoil at the Trumbull County Transit Board, slow installation of sidewalks in busy areas, and lack of protected bike lines.



What happens now? Can Warren establish a transportation system that provides equal, meaningful modal choices, enabling access to jobs, healthcare, education, and opportunity? What efforts have proven successful and what challenges remain?

Moderator

Renee Fox

Reporter, The Tribune Chronicle

Panelists

Jenna Amerine, MPH, CHES

Health Educator/Creating Healthy Communities Program Coordinator,
Trumbull County Combined Health District

Christian A. Bennett

Food Access Coordinator Fellow, Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership

John R. Brown, Jr.

Councilman, 3rd Ward, Warren City Council

Dean Harris

Executive Director, Western Reserve Transit Authority

Mike Salamone

Transit Administrator, Trumbull County Transit

Bike Cleveland Visits the Valley

Special Where Sidewalks End Event
Co-Sponsor Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership

*You are Invited to a special
presentation by:*
Jacob Van Sickle

Executive Director of Bike Cleveland

Monday, November 18, 2019

5:00 -7:00 pm

Trumbull Art Gallery



Bike Cleveland is a member supported bicycle advocacy organization serving Greater Cleveland. They advocate for safe streets and make sure that any time the conversation turns to transportation — that people on bikes are being considered. They work to improve policy, infrastructure, and host education and outreach programs to help make roads places that serve people and communities



Community Impact of Bike Cleveland



Since 2012, when Bike Cleveland started, **trail & bike lane mileage increased by 90%.**



Bicycle ridership grew 86% since 2012.



Our influence in the region continues to grow! In 2018, our membership surpassed 1,000, and the number of regional chapters grew to 5.



Our **education programs and events reached over 9,000 people** in 2018.



Cleveland has been recognized nationally. *Bicycling Magazine ranked our city 29th out of 50 in their Best Bike Cities rankings.*



Volunteers distributed **700 light sets** in 2018. In total, we've given out over 2,000 since Bike Cleveland started.



Bike Cleveland installed over **90 bike parking spaces and 2 Bike Fix-it Stands** in 2018.



Trained 35 police officers on how to prevent bike and pedestrian crashes through enforcement. Since 2013 we've trained over 110 police officers.

Sidewalk Success Stories

Since *Where Sidewalks End* walked onto the scene, there have been some notable steps taken around the Mahoning and Shenango Valley Region to improve pedestrian safety and advocate for more welcoming, walkable communities. Here are a few examples.

Walk Youngstown | Walk the Valley

In August, 2019, Lisa Resnick and the Walk Youngstown planning committee, which is made up of volunteers from multiple sectors and organizations, installed 60 temporary signs in 30 locations that direct pedestrians to destinations throughout Downtown and Near-Downtown Youngstown. The signs contain Quick Response (QR) Codes with walking directions and information about time between locations to encourage residents and visitors to walk from place to place. After the signs were installed, the group began to organize Walk Wednesday 30 minute walking sessions every Wednesday at noon using the destinations included in the project as beginning and ending points to demonstrate walkability. The group has about 8-10 walkers on average and even continued walking into the winter, though the pace was a little quicker.

Walk Youngstown is transitioning to become Walk the Valley and expand the concept to other cities, townships, or villages in the region. More information about Walk the Valley activities can be found on Facebook at [facebook.com/walk-the-valley](https://www.facebook.com/walk-the-valley).

Safe Routes to School

Many Mahoning Valley communities have connected with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)'s Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. As described by ODOT, "The purpose of Safe Routes to School is to encourage and enable students in grades k-8 to walk or ride their bicycle to school. Projects can be either engineering (improved crossings, sidewalks, etc.) or non-engineering (education and encouragement programs). Since the program began in 2008, walking and bicycling to school has increased in Ohio communities with active Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs." To date, the following communities in the Mahoning Valley have participated in the program.

Mahoning Valley Safe Routes to School Communities		Status	Activities
Boardman	Completed SRTS Travel Plan		
Canfield	Completed SRTS Travel Plan		
Howland	Completed SRTS Travel Plan . Received \$400,000 in 2013	Sidewalk and crossing—including signals—improvements	
Girard	Completed SRTS Travel Plan		
Liberty	Completed SRTS Travel Plan . Received \$490,000 in 2013	Installation of sidewalks, bike racks, pedestrian signals.	
Lowellville	Completed SRTS Travel Plan		
McDonald	Completed SRTS Travel Plan		
Poland	Completed SRTS Travel Plan . Received \$500,000 for infrastructure improvements in 2016	Sidewalk project linking Poland Village to Poland High School	
Struthers	Completed SRTS Travel Plan . Grant received in 2017	Held fitness fair promoting active transportation	
Warren	Completed SRTS Travel Plan . Received \$400,000 for infrastructure improvements in 2018	Sidewalk improvement projects scheduled for May 2020	
Youngstown	Completed SRTS Travel Plan . Received \$400,000 in 2018 and an additional \$399,000 in 2020 for infrastructure improvements	Sidewalk, curb ramps, lighting, crossing improvements completed in 2019 and new improvements scheduled for 2021	

Mahoning Valley Walk & Bike to School Days

“The first National Walk to School Day - called Walk Our Children to School Day - was held in 1997. Since then, it’s come a long way. In May 2012, the first-ever National Bike to School Day was celebrated across the USA.

International Walk to School Day is a global event that involves communities from more than 40 countries walking and biking to school on the same day. It began in 1997 as a one-day event. Over time, this event has become part of a movement for year-round safe routes to school and a celebration - with record breaking participation - each October. Today, thousands of schools across America - from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico - participate every October. ”

To learn more and to participate in future events, visit <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>.

In 2019, three communities in the Mahoning Valley participated in these events.

Boardman









Warren



Youngstown







Eastgate Regional Council of Governments Transportation Programs

Active Transportation Planning

Boardman Township

In 2019, Boardman Township's Department of Planning and Zoning completed the Connecting Boardman Active Transportation Plan.

Boardman Township received \$9000 from Eastgate Regional Council of Governments from their Planning Grant program. Boardman also completed a multimodal feasibility study for Market Street. Lastly, Boardman Township updated their Zoning Code, Building a Better Boardman, which includes active transportation considerations.



Howland Township

In 2010, Howland Township completed their multi-year comprehensive plan, which includes recommended actions to promote multi-modal connectivity and improve street design to increase pedestrian safety. The plan can be accessed here. Howland Township successfully applied to Eastgate for a planning grant to implement complete streets sidewalk improvement project on SR 46 (Niles-Cortland Rd.).



City of Youngstown

In 2018, the City of Youngstown received \$10.85 million from the US Department of Transportation's BUILD Grant Program for the SMART2 Network. The project seeks to enhance mobility, improve safety, and integrate technology into a modern and efficient multi modal transportation system in Downtown Youngstown. SMART2 will incorporate improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, autonomous transit shuttles, transit waiting environments, green infrastructure, streetscaping, and wayfinding connecting major regional destinations. In June 2020, the project partners broke ground on the First Phase of the project.



City of Warren

In 2018, the City of Warren and community partners began to explore planning and implementation of a Complete Streets ordinance in the city. Warren would be the first community in the Mahoning Valley to develop, adopt, and implement such a policy. Currently, The Trumbull County Combined Health District is leading community engagement efforts to identify opportunities for continued investment in active transportation and pedestrian safety improvements in the City of Warren.



Liberty Township

In 2019, Eastgate began the Belmont Corridor Plan, which was completed in July 2020. Belmont Avenue is a significant corridor and connector between Mahoning and Trumbull Counties and to critical destinations like health care and shopping. This study hopes to "increase accessibility to the existing transportation network and emphasizing multi-modal transportation options, supporting ongoing and future economic development that will contribute to a vibrant community, and finding solutions for transportation issues along the corridor."



Sidewalks Stories Timeline

Over the last three years, there has been a noticeable uptick in conversation, activity, and investment in sidewalk and pedestrian-centered projects. Below are some headline highlights to show steps taken towards becoming a healthier, more welcoming, walkable community.

Sidewalk Story Guide



Where Sidewalks End



Walk Youngstown



Sidewalk Talk

Pedestrian Planning

Safe Routes to School

2017



Safe Routes to School

May 2017

Warren Applies for Safe Routes to Schools Funding



Leaders from the City of Youngstown, Youngstown City School District, and the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation celebrate new sidewalks at Taft Elementary installed with support from the Safe Routes to School program.



Safe Routes to School

August 2017 Project at Taft Aims to create Safer Routes for Kids

2018



Pedestrian Planning

January 2018 Boardman Residents Consider Future

"In many ways, Beniston said, Boardman is a community built for the late 20th century. 'A lot of our growth in development was in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s,' and was built around the country's enthusiasm for driving automobiles.

As a result, Boardman is home to many amenities that can only be accessed with a car. She noted that only 25% of the townships roads have sidewalks, and many of these aren't connected to one another.

'Market Street and 224 for example, we have these massive corridors that people can't cross,' said Beniston. 'If you live directly across the street from Handel's, you're not going to take your three-year-old across the street to get ice cream.'"





Safe Routes to School

September 2018 City of Youngstown Receives ODOT Safe Routes to School Funding



Pedestrian Planning

December 2018 Youngstown Secures \$10.85 Million Grant for SMART2 Network



Sidewalk Talk

January 2019 Warren to Obtain New Sidewalks



Pedestrian Planning

February 2019 Liberty Seeks Assistance in Belmont Ave. Corridor Plan



Pedestrian Planning

March 2019 Businesses Wanted to Revitalize Youngstown Road

2019

"We need quality businesses that will encourage people to get out of their cars, walk the neighborhood and discover other businesses in the area." –Patty Iacozili Abbey, third-generation owner of the shop at 2216 Youngstown Road



Pedestrian Planning

May 2019 Belmont Corridor Study to Aid Development in Youngstown, Liberty



Walk Youngstown

July 2019 Walk Youngstown Ready to Launch

August 2019 Walk Youngstown uses Signs to Encourage People to Walk the City

August 2019 Walk Youngstown Sign Installation

August 2019 Signs Urge Pedestrians to Discover the City

"People walking around and supporting local businesses they didn't know existed," the councilman continued. "I think it will also bring more of a community feel having more people walking around, getting to know each other." –Julius Oliver, First Ward Councilperson, Youngstown, Ohio

"It's important to have vision of many people rather than one organization or small group. We think it's important for people to understand all the treasures that are here in our downtown, and how walkable and beautiful our city is." –Sharon Letson, Executive Director of Youngstown CityScape

"When I moved back here, I realized that a lot of people don't walk around their city as much as I've become accustomed to. [Walk Youngstown] is a creative, fun way to be able to get people to understand there are different areas here that are walkable." –Lisa Resnick, Borgan Real Estate & Walk Youngstown Coordinator



Photo credit: Marah Morrison, Youngstown Business Journal



Where Sidewalks End

SOAP

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"We are very excited to be the first gallery to display this work that uses art as a tool to promote community awareness of a prevalent issue that exists in all three communities." – Stephen Poullas, Soap Gallery Co-Founder and President

"[Where Sidewalks End is] designed to bring light to the fact that there's a need for good sidewalks. We're fortunate in downtown Sharon that the sidewalks have all been really done nicely, but you go one block out of there, like Irvine Avenue, and you cannot understand how people are able to walk on the sidewalks, let alone push a cart or something like that." – Terry Polonsky, President, Random Acts of Artists.

"[Where Sidewalks End] is bringing together people working on an issue and finding ways to intersect. It's three counties, three galleries, three presenting organizations. We're forming community partnerships, bringing together different perspectives and laying out what are the solutions and how do you get involved with them ... It's giving artists and activists the opportunity to know each other and learn from each other, which often doesn't happen." – William Mullane, Trumbull Art Gallery

August 2019 New Soap Gallery Exhibit Highlights Importance of Sidewalks

August 2019 Where Sidewalks End: Art Show Launches Call to Action for More Walkable Communities

October 2019 Connecting People with Sidewalks: Touring Photography Exhibit Uses Art as Advocacy

November 2019 Sidewalks, Minimal Living Exhibits Open at TAG



Sidewalk Talk

August 2019 Youngstown Community Share Concerns of Dangerous Sidewalks

August 2019 Councilwoman Issues Call for New Sidewalks

August 2019 Councilwoman Pushes for Sidewalks along Busy and Dangerous Warren Road

August 2019 HCP Hosts ODOT Active Transportation Academy Courses: Advocating for Active Transportation & Complete Streets Policy Implementation

September 2019 Sharon Considers Options for Impassable Sidewalks



Youngstown community shares concerns of dangerous sidewalks

Oliver said there just is not enough money to fix them





Pedestrian Planning

September 2019 Sharon Spending to Fix Streets

September 2019 Eastgate Completes Multimodal Network Connectivity Study

September 2019 New Phelps Walkway to be Welcomed

October 2019 Community makes recommendations for future of Belmont Avenue corridor

October 2019 Vision Being Created for Belmont Avenue

October 2019 Sidewalks Sought on Tod

"[Warren Township] Trustees said youngsters attending [Jefferson PK-8 School] have to walk on the side of the road because there are no sidewalks, and it's a concern – especially during winter months. [Trustees Ed] Anthony and [Kay] Anderson said the sidewalks will help alleviate any dangers. Anthony, a retired township police officer, said there have been several pedestrian accidents, including some involving bicyclists on Tod."



Safe Routes to School

October 2019 Vienna Seeks Grants for Sidewalks

"We want to make this area safe for the school children and also for anyone walking to the stores or bank." – Phil Pegg, Vienna Township Trustee



View of Tod Ave. SW looking North towards Jefferson PK-8 School where the installation of sidewalks is to take place. Photo by R. Michael Semple



Pedestrian Planning

December 2019 A Walkable Downtown Is a Thriving Downtown



"[Pedestrian improvements] ultimately make it more attractive to development because you create a space people are more comfortable being in. Businesses really respond to that when they're looking for site locations. [...] Everyone's a pedestrian. At some point in your transportation, you're walking from your house to your car or from your parking spot to your destination. It changes the framing of how we talk about how we travel. " –Justin Mondok, Planner, Eastgate Regional Council of Governments



Pedestrian Planning

January 2020 Howland Township Receives Grant for Sidewalk Improvements

January 2020 Sidewalk Replacement Slated for Kinsman this Summer

February 2020 EGCC Prepares for Campus Renovations

May 2020 Warren Preps for Sidewalks Repair Work

June 2020 Groundbreaking Ceremony Today for Youngstown SMART2 Network

2020



Safe Routes to School

June 2020 Sidewalk Replacement Project Planned Near Youngstown Schools



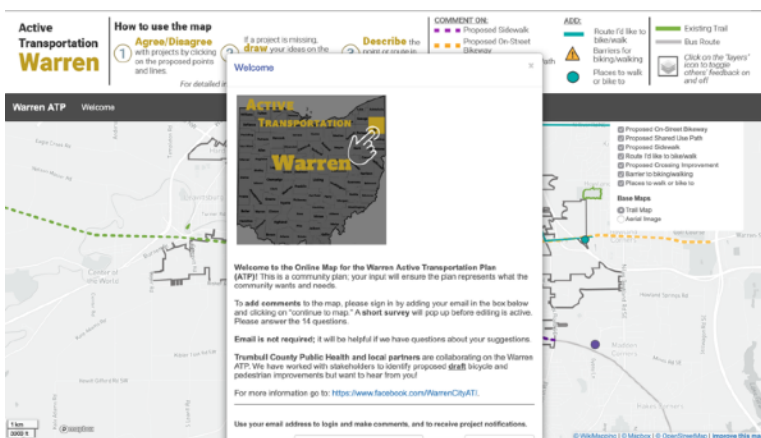
Pedestrian Planning

June 2020 Transit Looks at Sidewalk Projects



"Improving the sidewalks would be doing something that would last for years, and improve accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities." – Michael Salamone, Trumbull County Transit Administrator

July 2020 Warren Asking for Your Help with Survey on Walking/Biking in the City



July 2020 Girard School Sidewalk Construction Project



Safe Routes to School

"We want to get new sidewalks there for the students who walk to and from school." – Mayor James Melfi, City of Girard



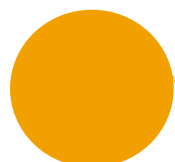
Pedestrian Planning

July 2020 Enhancing Belmont Avenue: Study Calls for Changes to Youngtown-Liberty Corridor

"[The Belmont Corridor Plan] is a great first step. The recommendations in terms of transportation are very sound. Getting to the main corridors are hard because there aren't a lot of sidewalks. Getting the sidewalks from the neighborhoods to the shopping areas is vital to the growth of the corridor. We need to make it safe and secure for people to walk down the street or ride their bicycles." – Samantha Turner, 3rd Ward Councilperson, City of Youngstown



Photo by David Skolnick | Youngstown Councilwoman Samantha Turner, D-3rd Ward, stands on the corner of Belmont Avenue and Gypsy Lane. A new study makes several recommendations for the Belmont Avenue corridor, including installing sidewalks on Gypsy Lane and removing the Madison Avenue Expressway.



Next Steps | Connecting the Dots

The Healthy Community Partnership–Mahoning Valley’s (HCP-MV) mission is to improve health, wellbeing, and health equity for all residents in the Mahoning Valley. This is a large and lofty goal, but residents have seen for too long large problems take a toll on their lives. In December 2019, a [report by the Center for Community Solutions](#) revealed an 18 year difference in life expectancy between a person living in the northside of Youngstown versus a person living 13 miles away in Canfield. The most recent [Mahoning](#) and [Trumbull](#) **Community Health Needs Assessments**, conducted in 2018, and corresponding [Mahoning](#) and [Trumbull](#) **Community Health Improvement Plans**, implemented for 2020-2022, also revealed troubling results about current physical and mental health status and health disparities connected to race and income throughout the region.

So, what can we do about it? And, what do sidewalks have to do with all of this?

As we highlighted in the overview of HCP-MV’s approach to *Where Sidewalks End*, we started our journey to find answers to two questions. Given all of the many benefits that walking provides us,

- *Why aren’t more people walking?

- * Why don’t communities spend more of their resources to make sure people who do walk can do so safely?

The answers are at once obvious and obscure. More people aren't walking because our communities were not intentionally designed for or to encourage walking. They were intentionally designed for and funded to encourage driving. Funding formulas and grant programs continue to prioritize personal vehicles over other means of transportation, making it difficult if not impossible to compete for resources. The playing field looks as disjointed as some of the jagged sidewalks captured on camera for the exhibit.

Good news is many of our communities have taken a lot of important steps to recognize the problem and identify possible solutions. There are dozens of stories and millions of dollars spent over the last three years that demonstrate communities are beginning to think differently and shift infrastructure investment priorities to put people first. We’re seeing leaders and engineers recognize that our communities need to be developed, designed, and supported differently to improve the health status of the economy, the environment, and most importantly, ourselves

This good news is not without bad news, which is that we still have a long way to go. Much of these improvements are happening in the hearts of cities and not yet traveling outward along our asphalt arteries and into our neighborhoods. However, it is important to lay examples of progress side by side to see how far we’ve come and use this as motivation to keep going and bring others along with us. Below are some steps you can take right away to keep pushing forward and bringing us closer to becoming a Mahoning Valley that is healthier, more active, and more walkable for everyone, everywhere.

How to Stay a Step Ahead

- ▶ Document and share sidewalk stories and photographs with your neighbors and local leaders (mayors, council members, trustees, planning and zoning departments, etc.).
- ▶ Organize neighborhood walks and walk audits to document current sidewalk and street conditions and recommendations for improvements.

▶ [Safe Routes Partnership Walk Audit Tool Kit](#)

▶ [AARP Walk Audit Worksheets](#)

- ▶ Attend public meetings about infrastructure investment and/or neighborhood safety improvements.
- ▶ Information about Ohio Department of Transportation District 4 Meetings and Projects can be found [here](#).



In 2019, YWCA Mahoning Valley Summer Camp Girls completed a Walk Audit to Central City Community Garden, Lots to Love Pollinator Gardens and Art Installs. A big thanks to the girls for their input, recommendations and helping clean up the neighborhood.

Community makes recommendations for future of Belmont Avenue corridor

Some suggested improvements were better lighting, recycle bins, pedestrian oases and ways to relieve the traffic congestion



- ▶ Join [Healthy Community Partnership-Mahoning Valley's Active Transportation Action Team](#)
- ▶ Join [Eastgate Regional Council of Governments Citizens Advisory Board](#).

- ▶ Encourage your local decision makers (mayors, council members, trustees, planning and zoning departments, etc.) to submit pedestrian improvement projects to Eastgate.



With a snip of the scissors, the ribbon was cut on Friday, ending a more than year-long wait for the completion of a major improvement project along Wick Avenue in Youngstown. –Matt Gaunter, WFMJ

- ▶ Information about Eastgate grants for pedestrian improvement projects can be found [here](#).
 - ▶ Transpiration Alternative Program (TAP)
 - ▶ Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG)
 - ▶ Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)
 - ▶ Safe Routes to School (SRTS)
 - ▶ Planning Grants

- ▶ Encourage your local, state, and federal representatives to support active transportation (walking, bicycling, public transit) projects and policies.

▶ Look up your representatives [here](#). | Track federal legislation [here](#).



Walk On, Mahoning Valley!



2019 Boardman Township Walk and Bike to School Day

“**Walking is a person’s best medicine.**”

—Hippocrates

Thank you for helping us take the next step toward making the Mahoning Valley a healthier, more active, walkable community for everyone.



2019 Warren City Walk and Bike to School Day

**Healthy
Community
Partnership**
Mahoning Valley