



Journeys

Working Towards A Better Nashville

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I encourage everyone to attend our annual meeting on October 7th. Not only will we discuss the outlook for sidewalks and bikeways, we will walk over to greet the Metro Council before their Council Meeting. This is a great way to let the council members know that Nashuillians want to live in a place where they can safely walk or ride a bike.

Senior citizens should be able to walk safely to the grocery, and parents should feel comfortable allowing their children to bike to school.

So much has happened since the last annual meeting. While we may have hit a few bumps in the road, Walk/Bike Nashville has brought bicycle and pedestrian issues to the front burner. We will recap our successes and talk about where we go from here.

The Sidewalk and Bikeway Implementation Program is well under way since the Mayor's Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways was formally adopted in January. Walk/Bike Nashville is meeting weekly with staff from the Planning Department and Public Works to discuss various projects. Public Works has taken steps to coordinate its repaving program with the sidewalk and bikeway projects. For example, our bicycle and pedestrian coordinator and Public Works engineers will carefully evaluate any road that is recommended in the plan for a bikeway before it is repaved. We are also able to discuss adding crosswalks and traffic calming possibilities. This is a major step in institutionalizing bicycle and pedestrian considerations into the transportation system. Sidewalks and bike facilities are not luxuries; they should be an integral part of the street. We hope to bring TDOF into this process in the near future.

This newsletter also contains information on Walk Nashville Week which promises to be the best ever with over 50 schools and up to 10,000 students, parents, and teachers participating.

Calender

- Walk to School Day-Oct. 8th.
- Walk for Active Aging-Oct. 9th.
- Walk to Lunch Day-Oct. 10th.
- Titans Fans Walk to the Game—Oct. 12th.

Glen Wanner, President
Walk/Bike Nashville

www.walkbikenashville.org

SHELBY PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE BRIDGE OPENING

By Bob Murphy

On Sunday, August 3, 2003 about 50 cyclists from Walk/Bike Nashville and the Harpeth Bike Club helped celebrate the long-awaited opening of the Shelby Street Pedestrian Bridge. The cyclists met at the Wild Oats store on Belmont Boulevard and rode en masse to the ceremony. The group, led by Walk/Bike member Leslie Thompson, followed a five-mile route to downtown Nashville that included travel along the recently completed bike lanes on Belmont Boulevard, Magnolia Boulevard, 16th Avenue South, and Demonbruen Street. The contingent, which included cyclists of all ages on all types of bikes, elicited many interested looks and comments from passing motorists and pedestrians. The group arrived together at the bridge just prior to the ceremony and joined an estimated crowd of 2,000 people for the celebration.



The celebration, which took place mid-span on the bridge, was a joyous occasion. The energetic Tennessee State University's marching band provided entertainment and along with the dancing crowd, tested the load limits of the bridge. The event was attended by a number of local politicians and dignitaries, including Mayor Bill Purcell. Prior to cutting the ribbon signifying the opening of the bridge, Mayor Purcell touched on the bridge's history, saying that the bridge had watched over Nashville during its 20th-century growth - a time that saw the automobile replace horses, boats and streetcars as modes of transportation.

"It is a reunion," Purcell said of the bridge's reopening. "And on a reunion day we can say, Welcome back, old friend."

Although it was a hot, humid day the skies were clear and the views from the bridge were magnificent. After the ribbon was cut, much of the crowd walked along the bridge, conversed with friends and enjoyed the beauty of the bridge and views of downtown Nashville.

Bridge Opening (Continued)

The Shelby Street Bridge has much historical significance for Nashvillians. The bridge, which spans the Cumberland River for a distance of about 3,100 feet, was initially constructed in 1909 and was the first bridge in North America to have concrete arched trusses. Because of this distinction, the bridge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. In the early 1990s, the construction of the new Gateway Bridge was planned as a replacement for the Shelby Street Bridge. As a result, the Shelby Bridge was slated for demolition. Many Nashvillians urged Metro officials to preserve the bridge as a pedestrian and bicycle connection, using Chattanooga's Walnut Street Bridge as an example. In 1995 then-mayor Phil Bredesen included the restoration of the bridge to provide pedestrian and bicycle access as part of the Titans NFL Stadium deal.

The remodeled Shelby Bridge features two 10-foot elevated boardwalk-style sidewalks, a 15-foot center lane designed to accommodate bicycles, and four observation platforms. The bridge provides a much needed bicycle and pedestrian connection between downtown and the Coliseum, East Nashville, and Shelby Bottoms Greenway. The Shelby Bridge is open to pedestrians and bicyclists every day from sunrise to sunset. Also, on Titans game days, the bridge serves as a major pedestrian route between downtown and the Stadium.



Walk Nashville Week

Once more Walk/Bike Nashville will be assisting the Community Health & Wellness Team and Team Green carry out the various events of Walk Nashville Week, which encourages everyone to get outside and walk this special week! These are the most visible pedestrian events of the year, so please plan to participate in at least one of the events.

10/8 WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

The purpose of the day is to encourage children and families to walk for exercise, to emphasize safety for pedestrians, and to draw attention to areas that are not walker friendly. Over 50 metro schools in the area will participate

This is the biggest event of Walk Nashville Week. Over 8,000 walkers participated last year. Because of Walk to School Day 2000 Mayor Purcell announced a plan to designate 15 million dollars to build new and repair sidewalks in Nashville, with the priority being sidewalks within one mile of neighborhood schools. We hope to continue this success to make the areas around Nashville schools more walkable, safe, and environmentally friendly routes.

Additional volunteers are always needed to help at various schools, so please contact Nancy Nace at nancy_nace@mhd.nashville.org.

10/9 WALK FOR ACTIVE AGING

This fifth annual walk event encourages senior adults to walk and exercise around Nashville. Locally, we will be gathering at different locations around Nashville including Green Hills Mall, Hadley Park, Elizabeth Center, and Lea Rose for walks around the area. Walkers will receive giveaways and a healthy walk for the day!

10/10 WALK TO LUNCH DAY

Join us in two areas to walk to lunch: The Downtown District's Fit for Health organization, the Downtown Partnership and the YMCA are sponsoring a downtown walk for all those in the downtown district. Meet in front of the Suntrust Building off 5th & Church at 11:30. We will walk to a local restaurant, enjoy a healthy discounted lunch, then walk back to work. You will receive a certificate in case the lunch hour runs long. The Green Hills Action Partners (TGHAP) are partnering with the Green Hills Family YMCA for their walk. The Corner Market is offering a discount for their walking customers.

10/11 WALK SOMEWHERE DAY

Walk your own distance somewhere today, whether its in your neighborhood, to work, to lunch, or even parking further away- just walk somewhere!

10/12 TITANS FANS WALK TO THE GAME DAY

All Titans Fans are encouraged to park further away than usual and walk from their cars to the game. Participants receive a wearable sticker for their walking over the Woodland or Shelby Street bridge.

Walk/Bike Nashville Annual Meeting

Come by foot, pedal a bike, roll on skates, ride a bus, or even drive a car to our Annual Meeting on Tuesday October 7th. The meeting will start at 5:00 at the Nashville Civic Design Center which is located at 700 Church Street across the corner from the downtown library. We will present our 2nd Annual Friendly Street Award to a recipient that has shown leadership and initiative to make our streets safer and more enjoyable for all who use them.

Adetokunbo Omishakin, Metro's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, will give a short presentation on Active Living through Community Design. Walk/Bike Nashville has teamed up with Metro Planning, Metro Health, and the Community Health and Wellness Team in applying for a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This \$200,000 grant, which it appears we are likely to receive, is aimed at establishing policies and programs to encourage people to walk and bike as part of their daily lives.

Mark Schimmenti, director of the Civic Design Center, will give us a brief overview of the Plan for Nashville. We might even hear how they are considering replacing some downtown interstate segments with urban boulevards. It may sound pretty far fetched, but so did bike lanes in Nashville only a few years ago.

Around 6:15 we will walk two blocks to the old Ben West Library where the council meets. We will distribute Walk/Bike Nashville t-shirts and show our general support for bicycling and walking in Nashville.

Membership Form

Name(s) _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____
Zip _____
Phone(H) _____
Phone(W) _____

E-mail _____
(Walk/Bike Nashville will not sell or share your e-mail address)

MEMBER LEVEL

- \$20 - Individual
- \$30 - Family
- \$50 - Urban Adventurer
- \$100 - Trailblazer
- \$250 - Pace Setter
- I would like to volunteer
(time, talent and/or resources)

Walk/Bike Nashville is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.
Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

*By working together, we can reclaim
the streets and make Nashville
a better place to live.*



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**You'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over with care.
About some you will say, "I don't choose to go there."
With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet,
you're too smart to go down any not-so-good street.
And you may not find any you'll want to go down.
In that case, of course, you'll head straight out of town.**

**But if the town is your home, then you'll have to stay there.
So tell the town leaders that this isn't fair.
Streets are for people, not cars that we see,
which seem to be speeding as fast as they please.
Build us nice sidewalks and shade them with trees.**

**It will help clean the air which everyone breathes.
More bike lanes, more greenways, that should be the rule,
then children can walk and ride bikes to their school.**



adapted from
"Oh, the Places You'll Go."
-- Theodore Geisel (aka Dr. Seuss)

Morgan McClellan
2nd Grade, Ensworth School