



Safety Benefits:

Sidewalks

65-89%

reduction in crashes involving pedestrians walking along roadways.³

Paved Shoulders

71%

reduction in crashes involving pedestrians walking along roadways.³

For more information on this and other FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures, please visit <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures> and http://www.pedbikesafe.org/PEDSAFE/countermeasures_detail.cfm?CM_NUM=1.

Walkways

A walkway is any type of defined space or pathway for use by a person traveling by foot or using a wheelchair. These may be pedestrian walkways, shared use paths, sidewalks, or roadway shoulders.

With more than 6,200 pedestrian fatalities and 75,000 pedestrian injuries occurring in roadway crashes annually,¹ it is important for transportation agencies to improve conditions and safety for pedestrians and to integrate walkways more fully into the transportation system. Research shows people living in low-income communities are less likely to encounter walkways and other pedestrian-friendly features.²

Well-designed pedestrian walkways, shared use paths, and sidewalks improve the safety and mobility of pedestrians. Pedestrians should have direct and connected network of walking routes to desired destinations without gaps or abrupt changes. In some rural or suburban areas, where these types of walkways are not feasible, roadway shoulders provide an area for pedestrians to walk next to the roadway, although these are not preferable.

Transportation agencies should work towards incorporating pedestrian facilities into all roadway projects

unless exceptional circumstances exist. It is important to provide and maintain accessible walkways along both sides of the road in urban areas, particularly near school zones and transit locations, and where there is a large amount of pedestrian activity. Walkable shoulders should also be considered along both sides of rural highways when routinely used by pedestrians.



Example of a sidewalk in a residential area. Source: pedbikeimages.org / Burden



Paved shoulder used as a walkway. Source: pedbikeimages.org / Burden

1 National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2020, March). Pedestrians: 2018 data (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 812 850). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

2 Gibbs, et al. Income Disparities in Street Features that Encourage Walking. Bridging the Gap, (2012, March).

3 Gan et al. Update of Florida Crash Reduction Factors and Countermeasures to Improve the Development of District Safety Improvement Projects. Florida DOT, (2005).