



Washington County Health Department

1302 Pennsylvania Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21742

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The Washington County Health Department in collaboration with several other community organizations including the City of Hagerstown, Washington County Recreation and Fitness, Washington County Commission on Aging, YMCA of Hagerstown, Fort Frederick State Park, and the Washington County Chamber of Commerce; conducted a walk audit in downtown Hagerstown on July 10th. A walk audit is where a group of people walk around an area and rate how walkable it is. Walkability refers to how easy and pleasant a place is to walk.

The walk audit was open to the community to participate in and several community members attended. The walk included sections of Washington Street and the Hagerstown Cultural Trail as well as Antietam Street and Summit Avenue. The Washington County Walking and Walkability team reviewed the suggestions that were made to improve walkability in that area. The City of Hagerstown already has plans to make most of the recommended walkability improvements.

Conducting walk audits in downtown areas of Washington County is one of the strategies in the Washington County Walking and Walkability Plan, which can be found at <https://bit.ly/2LKF8xF>

The plan was developed as part of an initiative from the Maryland Department of Health to promote walking and walkability. An important first step in the plan is to assess the current state of walking and walkability in Washington County. One method for this assessment is the Washington County Walking and Walkability Survey which can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/WashCoWalkingSurvey> and can be taken by Washington County residents until the end of August. The other method is conducting walk audits in downtown areas in the county. The walk audit in downtown Hagerstown was the first of what will be several throughout the county.

Another walk audit is currently planned in Hancock on August 15th at 3pm. The walk will begin at the Hancock Town Museum and Visitor Center at 42 W. Main Street and will be about 1.5 miles long. The walk will include parts of the Western Maryland Rail Trail, Main Street, and Widmyer Park. The mayor of Hancock will be participating in this walk audit. All community members are welcome to attend! For more information about this walk audit, go to <https://bit.ly/2KjqZ4U>

If you have any questions or if you would like to become involved in promoting walking and walkability in Washington County, you may contact the Washington County Health Department Health Planning and Strategic Initiatives Division at mary.mcpherson@maryland.gov or 240-313-3349.