

The Roanoke Valley Area Pedestrian and Transit Vision Plans public survey was available for public input from late September through December 31, 2013. The following question related specifically to the Pedestrian Plan and allowed respondents to provide open ended feedback to decision-makers.

Survey Question #24

What is the most important message you would like to share with decision-makers about walking?

Responses:

1. Walking next to roadways is inherently dangerous and necessary--sidewalks are necessary!
2. It is a positive for individual health and community environments.
3. The more walkable a downtown, the more foot traffic businesses get.
4. To make sure it is safe for people on busy streets to get to the library safely.
5. Not sure, I usually take the bus.
6. It is good exercise, but not for people who cannot walk, or cannot walk very far.
7. It's not easy to walk where there are no sidewalks or crosswalks. This town is designed for auto traffic, not for people. Very people-unfriendly.
8. It should be safe and connect neighborhoods
9. More sidewalks are needed.
10. Sidewalks, greenways and walkability are routes to improved property values, better public health, public safety and a community more attractive for economic development.
11. Being more pedestrian friendly, especially at major intersections such as keep walk signs on longer - safe walking along streets with no sidewalks
12. I have traveled extensively throughout the eastern half of the USA for many years for work and enjoyed everywhere that had sidewalks to just exercise and getting out to site see new places I was visiting. With the increasing internet world, I think sidewalks will be the most important, beneficial infrastructure investment in analyzing the time value of money and general economic improve in our populations health and improve our civility and could improve face to face social interaction with the general well being of our dynamic society.
13. Look at other cities - hire some people with brains or who are truly professional - quit asking and start doing - you waste too much time and money. My biggest beef with Roanoke is it waits till things fall apart before it takes care of things - Victory stadium, Main Library, Raleigh Court Library - County seem to have a clueGET ONE
14. Passenger safety
15. It needs to be safe
16. Get out and walk and use the paths and transportation to see what you like or can think to improve.
17. Finish as you can linking the greenway.
18. Many benefits/ low-cost for infrastructure, and walking is free.

19. More greenways, wonderful to get young and old walking and people ARE using them.
20. Walking is natural, affordable, healthful and relaxing, adding to quality of life and broadening transportation choice, often raising property values by reducing isolation, boredom and by increasing interpersonal contact.
21. The area is too rural in order to do much other than in the city or commuters to Lynchburg/Christiansburg
22. must be safe, well lit and well publicized routes
23. More and more people are walking for pleasure and not just to get around.
24. They've done a great job promoting walking for fun and exercise ... it needs to be promoted for daily tasks. Sidewalks!! (We have them where I live and people use them!)
25. Walking is important and free to reduce obesity problem to encourage younger generation to appreciate the outdoor.
26. Walking is good for people as long as they are on sidewalks and not the roads.
27. provides a greater sense of community
28. there are people walking in the road to get to work and for exercise on Blue Hills Drive
29. it improves the idea of community. it also improves fitness which in turns improves economics due to lowered health care costs. People spend more money in the community instead of health care costs.
30. Walking to a restaurant, movie, shop, library, or other entity is a civilized and enjoyable way to be more active and enjoy living in the Roanoke Valley.
31. The towns are not for cars; they are for people. As we have improve our sidewalks and walkability, our businesses have prospered and our citizens have been happier and healthier overall.
32. It's good for us! The more we can walk, the healthier we are, the less pollution we produce.
33. SIDEWALKS
34. Health.
35. The walkability of our best Roanoke Co. neighborhoods is horrible. I love Cave Spring but after living here for 5 months I am sick of having to walk my dog (2-4 miles a day) on my own property and I rarely go out for drinks anymore because I can't walk or ride my bike home.
36. Nothing
37. it good for all for many reasons
38. If walking is more accessible it could effect the overall health, environmental-impact, and progressive-attitude of the Roanoke Valley.
39. It's great for your brain and body
40. Merriman and Buck Mountain are being used and it is dangerous not enough room runners are out in the road since there is not enough room
41. Sidewalks are certainly significant for pedestrian safety, but more cross walks and signs for drivers are also important to allow pedestrians to cross safely.
42. Support it!

43. If you make paths available they will get used.
44. Sidewalks are needed in high traffic areas for walkers and for runners.
45. Installing sidewalks is only one factor, if streets aren't, or do not feel safe to cross, pedestrian activity will be limited
46. Design a trail that is interesting, not just going from one shopping center to another. Then people will enjoy it for health AND for shopping/work/running errands. Look at the Greenways in Roanoke -they are awesome.
47. We all need to do more of it. I just saw a report that the rate of obesity increased again in 2013. Government policy should encourage physical fitness, not discourage it.
48. It helps create communities and neighborhoods
49. Safe Routes to School programs should encourage walking. Older citizens need to access services, many senior citizens no longer drive. Curb cuts should be flush with the street pavement. Users of wheelchairs and motorized scooters should enjoy curb cuts that provide street crossings at corners that do not throw the user into traffic at corner turning points. Sidewalks and driveways should have no or very letter slope. Sidewalks should be cleared when there is snow at the same requirements of walks in residential area.
50. I love all the hard work and energy that has gone into the Greenways. Keep it up. That is one of the reasons we CHOSE to move to the Valley.
51. Too often it is dangerous to be a pedestrian.
52. Making walking safe and easier not only benefits individuals who cannot otherwise afford transportation but could also improve the overall health of our very unhealthy region.
53. More sidewalks. It's dangerous to walk in my part of Roanoke county.
54. people that have no other options but walking will do so even regardless even if not safe to do so
55. Develop mixed use neighborhoods to encourage walking
56. Safety. We need more sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks.
57. Need to have more sidewalks and safer areas to walk
58. Accessibility to the city is a crucial factor in choosing a college, to continue attracting students at a stagnant or increased rate, improvements must be made to walking paths.
59. Make sure commercial districts are easily and safely accessible by foot from bus stops
60. People will walk much more if accommodated.
61. Focus on practical ways which will reduce car traffic and reduce the need for public transit, don't just connect two areas because they aren't connected.
62. Walking is an easy and affordable way to combat obesity as well as a way to promote strong neighborhoods. I think the Roanoke Valley should look at areas not serviced by sidewalks or bicycle lanes and consider adding a pedestrian/bike friendly lane - something multiuse for both functions.

63. We need to encourage parents and children to walk to school if they live near the school to fight childhood obesity trends. We need to keep the elderly active by having walking options in neighborhoods.
64. Walking is healthy/
65. Promote/promote/promote for health reasons = both physical and mental AND show how these sorts of connections will lead to safer neighborhoods.
66. Walking is a good way to be active and to help us live more healthy
67. The most practical walking opportunities are found in daily living activities and, while nice, the greenway and adventure walks are a destination specific walking event. make it easier for everyone to increase walking by providing daily-life opportunities to walk.
68. Walking is a Human right for freedom of transport as well as health wise. To assume that everyone has a car and doesn't need to walk is being ignorant.
69. The Roanoke Valley is getting more and more known as an outdoor recreation destination. We need to complete the greenways, install sidewalks and make all areas of the valley more pedestrian friendly.
70. Walking is great and important for many reasons! My neighborhood with sidewalks but many others don't. More people would walk (or walk more) if there were sidewalks.
71. Sidewalks, everywhere, are crucial.
72. It is part of the solution!
73. Piece-y sidewalks (those that come and go along a roadway) aren't good for much. To actually add benefit with a sidewalk installation, a full segment must be put in place. It would be good to do some work filling in the gaps on the older roads in the area that have incomplete sidewalks.
74. A proven need / desire for the Roanoke area
75. Make it safe and enticing for residents of the area so people are more likely to make use of the existing walkways outside of the Downtown Roanoke area.
76. Sidewalks in disrepair, no curb cuts and bad lighting do not promote walking.
77. People will not walk if there are no sidewalks and they fear being mowed down by traffic.
78. Greenways are wonderful and to add more walkable extensions off the main greenway would make our locality more attractive to relocating business and transplants.
79. great exercise
80. Try walking our sidewalks and not tripping on deep cracks and uneven surfaces
81. Evaluate locations where the most benefit could be realized for the investment.
82. More people will walk if they have sidewalks and safe locations to walk.
83. Many residents at Fairington Apartments walk near and across Route 419. It is a very unsafe condition.
84. Strengths of the area include walkability in certain sections of the city. It is apparent where those areas are and what the strengths are. The weaknesses are those areas that are not walkable and the weaknesses are obvious.

85. Making walking desirable to the upper class is a way to improve the overall feel of the city.
86. More and more people want to walk to amenities, school, jobs, etc., yet the sidewalk/greenway infrastructure is fragmented (if it exists in certain neighborhoods at all) or in serious disrepair. In order to continue to promote a safe, green community, better sidewalks and greenways are necessary.
87. Don't make people risk their lives to walk down a city road.
88. It is important to build an overall livable community but needs to be safe.
89. It's a free activity that stimulates social interaction and appeals to all age categories physically able to participate.
90. Require wide pedestrian corridors with shade trees in all development projects.
91. Greenways! Plan to facilitate neighborhood access, connectivity, pocket parks, signage, facilities.
92. Walking should also include Bicycles
93. Look at the success of the Greenway: this can be extended to other parts of our area. There is obviously strong interest.
94. Fund or continue to fund the planned greenway network and connect sidewalks to it.
95. The Greenways are very popular because they provide access to various parts of the city and don't have car traffic which makes them safer for families.
96. Vehicles have to be slowed down for walking to feel safe and pleasant.
97. Walking is important for social, cultural, health and economic welfare of individual citizens, as well as Roanoke Valley and beyond
98. safety and the appearance/feeling of safety
99. Driveways should remain level when crossing sidewalks. The slopes are difficult for wheelchairs, walking with a walker and just walking/running.
100. If you couldn't walk what would you do?
101. Every neighborhood needs maintained sidewalks and a nearby safe walking track/trails.
102. Safety and interesting, useful destinations
103. The general layout for walking is to sprawling, unless aided by either bus or trolley service.
104. Relocators look at outdoor family opportunities / facilities... Greenways are a very big part of making a community attractive and friendly. Every city that is growing has made pedestrian friendly centers part of their core plan; look at Greenville SC as an example of downtown improvement tied to a river greenway...
105. Extend the greenway along the river to Explore Park
106. Walking promotes many positive aspects beyond a commute to work: deeper connection to the communities, health benefits, etc.
107. I am ok with what exists. I live in the area that was hostilely annexed from the county so our area is still like the county so we know we must drive everywhere. If you are going to spend money, put it towards the storm water rain tax.
108. Everyone is starting to walk, even me which is a big change for me!

109. I would not feel safe walking along a street adjacent to motorized vehicles.
110. Walking is FREE, healthy, and low-tech. Many people won't choose to walk, but in the future many more won't have the option not to.
111. Sidewalks are missing from Prices Fork to Prices Fork Elementary School
112. Greater walking accessibility would benefit the community as a whole, by improving individual health and removing traffic from the roadways.
113. Better handicapped access to walkways.
114. There are ancillary values to walking and public transit that we need to realize. Though it may not be easily calculable, our overall economy improves when people have good walking facilities and public transportation.
115. n/a
116. Get out for a walk after every meal and breathe deep, smile for it is YOUR health!
117. It's dangerous....people take shortcuts through neighborhoods during rush hour and speed. There are no sidewalks in a lot of neighborhoods and kids are expected to walk on these roads, which is a hazard. On 24th street NE...there are lots of people walking down that big hill....they have to walk down there to catch the bus....there is a path by the building and when it is wet and muddy they have to walk on the narrow road....cars fly up and down that road and its dangerous....there is a place where there are drop offs on both sides of the road and another where there are elevated banks/dense trees, weeds on each side of the road.
118. It's healthy, free, good for the environment, and a positive example for children.
119. Educate pedestrians that crosswalks are not invisible shields that do require them to look for cars while texting as in Blacksburg
120. you can do better than you have in the past.
121. if walking areas were better protected from fast and dangerous traffic more people would walk in business/shopping areas. Downtown Roanoke needs more wayfinding signage and wider sidewalks to encourage visitors to walk
122. It's improves ones health.
123. Not all of us are ideal "walkers." When you think of a walker, think of CeCe. She's an elderly 75 year old woman who's ONLY way of getting out is the bus. She needs the lift and walks with a walker because she's had hip surgery. She has to CARRY/CART ON WHEELS her groceries to and from the bus stop and to her home. Ask yourself "Can my grandma do this?" "Can my three year old walk this?" That should be your tape measurer.
124. n/a
125. Pedestrians are given a "walk" light at some crosswalks when turning vehicles are given green lights to cross those crosswalks.
126. Walking is a healthy way to get around that reduces isolation and encourages interaction while reducing obesity and other health problems. It is the most wonderful addition to everyday quality of life.

127. Wide/user-friendly and well-lit expansions of walking paths are critical for long-term planning and redevelopment, increase property values and civic pride and are well-worth the money and effort.
128. It's dangerous because of condition of sidewalks and danger in crosswalks
129. Walkers should not be threatened (or feel threatened) by traffic
130. Walking is very dangerous in my neighborhood. Drivers will run you down rather than slow down and yield.
131. It is difficult now because of lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, walk lights, and other pedestrian amenities that are routine in most urban settings
132. Any paths should provide good lighting and safety as well as pleasant a route as possible. Walking will more likely accommodate people already in an area (e.g. downtown) to exercise and enjoy the area while providing access to restaurants and shops. It should also improve business customer flow if shops can be more easily accessed.
133. If the walk is pleasant, more people will stay out of their cars.
134. People won't walk unless it is pleasant and safe. So sidewalks should have a buffer between them and the road if possible. Future developments should have this in them
135. It helps keep the population healthy
136. Maybe benches sometimes at reg. spots.
137. More funds for sidewalks
138. Well-to-do folks think of walking as exercise generally. Folks who rely on public transport think of walking as the inconvenience associated with bus routes not getting them close to where they need to go. All of us need to think of walking as a way to reduce pollution and traffic congestion, not as an inconvenience or just for exercise.
139. Wide sidewalks with well marked pedestrian cross-walks is important
140. Overall do NOT think a walking grid would be worth the monies needed. Would not be utilized by enough pedestrians to justify the cost.
141. Don't give up on pedestrians, they're the ones who need your advocacy the most.
142. If you build the sidewalks people will use them
143. Walking is important for any community. It is low impact, it gets people out and away from their tvs and computers. It assists in overall good health.
144. We all need to do more!
145. I would walk/bike more to work if I didn't have to walk on Garden City Blvd. Sidewalks are needed. Also I wish there was a way to get from Garden City Blvd to the Greenway. After the roundabout it is difficult with the removal of the cut out to Piggly Wiggly.
146. Cooperate and listen
147. Better lighting, even if on motion detectors or timers
148. To become a great mid-sized city we need to promote exercise and bicycling which can be equated to bike commuting. With fairly easy access to downtown, significant ridership of busses will not increase unless it is free (Chapel Hill). Promotion of bikes, when combined with busses might provide a solid combination.

149. I would like to do more of it in Roanoke County
150. Help make our region more walkable by supporting greenway network of trails
151. Need sidewalks that connect neighborhoods to parks and schools so kids can get outside and can be more independent.
152. I'm not sure walking is as an important issue in Roanoke as biking. We need to work on connecting the greenway with adjacent neighborhoods via bike paths.
153. Should be encouraged for fitness and car use-reduction
154. Important from both a Commuting and Public Health Standpoint
155. Walking is good for your health.
156. It is extremely dangerous and difficult in this area; drivers have no respect for pedestrians and the police do not enforce right-of-way laws.
157. Good health, more outdoors, vibrant community.
158. Please make this a top priority as it is affecting our finances & health. Help us save on gas prices, car maintenance, health costs by giving us an option to walk, instead of driving to work, shopping, grocery stores, pharmacy, restaurants, etc. It will boost small local businesses too, who cannot invest much in parking spaces for their customers. As a result they lose business when customer walks away just because they can't find a parking spot. Childhood obesity is an epidemic because our kids are always indoors eating greasy food & not exercising enough. By encouraging them to walk on a daily basis we can promote a healthy lifestyle choice. Sure, our current habits are great for hospital business, pharmacy & oil companies. Please help us change our bad habits by giving us a healthier alternative. For full time working parents its not possible to squeeze away extra money or time on a daily basis for gyms or driving to a park or greenways for walking. Exercise works best when we include it as a part of daily routine, not setting aside a separate time of day to exercise at once. I want to exercise (walk) while I am running errands. That way I can accomplish two things at once.
159. Walking is healthy. I have to do an extra hour of exercise every day because I don't (can't) walk anywhere around where I work/live.
160. Safety, sidewalk and crosswalk conditions are very very important. Most people are scared to walk on Tazewell Ave from SE to get downtown because they have to walk or wheelchair past the Rescue Mission where some residence are convicted sex offenders, alcoholics and they beg them for money as they pass. So, many people use Jamison and Bullitt instead. However some wheelchairs get stuck on the crumbling sidewalks. This area should be considered in the downtown plan because it IS part of the main corridor to downtown
161. I live out in Roanoke County, so walking isn't a viable option most of the time. Places are just too far away to walk to.
162. If walking is made safer (sidewalks to get to bus stops on 460), people can incorporate it into their daily lives instead of having to drive somewhere to walk for exercise.
163. Walking on the street is dangerous. More sidewalks are needed.

164. Need to require/ encourage better land use decisions to ensure that amenities are available to permit walking. If I can't reasonably walk to a grocery store, walkability is a non-starter.
165. I would like to see all of your bike paths connected and perhaps make a giant circle. Right now, they don't really go anywhere and a lot of bike routes begin & end out of nowhere like on Colonial in front of Virginia Western Community College.
166. This town is definitely pedestrian-unfriendly. People like and need to walk, and we're prevented from doing it. Get on it!
167. It is nearly impossible outside of downtown/Grandin.
168. Better sidewalks near crossroads
169. Plenty of sidewalks and Greenways
170. It's healthy, a good way to get some exercise, and lose weight.
171. If you want people to be able to walk to stops, provide sidewalks on one side of the street to allow for safe access.
172. It's the best solution to so many of our problems
173. Clearly visible signage for protection from motorists
174. Stay fit
175. Walking can improve our general health and greenways should be located throughout the valley
176. The fact that our cities and towns have become so car-dependent means that we are more technology-focused than human-focused. That seems out of balance, and should change.
177. Increase developments that are more pedestrian friendly. It would encourage not only energy conservation, but community building.
178. From what I've read, a community that has convenient and safe walking/biking options enjoys much improved public health amongst its citizen. Given the critical and growing problem of obesity in our communities, particularly among children, and the dramatic increases in public health expenditures related to obesity-related health issues, it seems like a very wise public investment to make our communities more walkable and bike-able.
179. Obesity is a disease and a serious issue in our country. More sidewalks and walking areas are needed to encourage activity.
180. Walk, walk, walk!
181. Safer areas would encourage more walking
182. Help people help themselves get healthy!
183. Walking benefits the whole community.
184. It creates a sense of community that is severely lacking in most regions of the MSA. It would allow teenagers to get to work, people to exercise more, got out and be neighborly. Make this a priority please.
185. great form of exercise and a great way to get around this beautiful city
186. Need more trails/pathways. They will be used if provided. Look at the Roanoke Greenway for justification.

187. Education needs to be provided that walking to destinations will be safe with enforced traffic laws and clear signage of pedestrians.
188. none
189. It is too limited as to how many people can walk to work or shopping. The area is too spread out for walking to be effective.
190. Walking is the best overall exercise for older people and good for ALL ages. We have created a society where people general DO NOT WALK for transportation, and we need to reverse that trend.
191. Design for pedestrians, not vehicles.
192. Cities that make it pleasant and accessible to walk are generally considered pleasant places to live and work. For instance, my daughter lives in Atlanta; I frequently hear that it's a driving city. However, she lives next to a greenway and rides her bike to work; that was a major in her decision as to where to live.
193. Disability of Spinal problems
194. Important alternative to the auto AND a positive for a healthy lifestyle.
195. IT IS HEATHFUL
196. I walk from the Wasena area to 2 Riverside. The shortest path is along Brandon Avenue to Franklin. However, it is not a safe path. The longest path is the safest and most pleasant: on the Greenway. However, the Greenway would be more convenient if it was extended to the south side of the Roanoke river along the old railroad tracks, as the rail-road and path ends at the foot of the Towers on Brandon Ave. However, it is currently neither safe (homeless population, damaged bridges) nor always passable (weed growth). Also, the Greenway on the other side is frequently flooded.
197. Even small ornamental trees encourage me to walk streets. One needs to look at the overall environment to select those that people will actually use.
198. It improves health, gets people connected, and keeps cars off the road. How can anyone not think these are all huge advantages!!!
199. Make it SAFE.
200. People who have no transportation need to be able to walk on sidewalks in areas that are well-lighted.
201. People with disabilities have the same rights as people without disabilities
202. Trying to walk in Downtown Roanoke is extremely dangerous. A lot of drivers have no respect for pedestrians or bikers.
203. It builds health and community and is worth the investment
204. Look at the EUROPEANS!
205. Re-purpose some unused railways to be commutable for cyclists or walkers/runners. Since all the railways are only for a hub, yet there's no AMTRAK, etc... let's do the math.
206. Need to connect local community facilities and shopping areas with neighborhoods.
207. Change the culture to respect pedestrians. Mark crosswalks more clearly. (Wells Avenue, for example) Even the police cruisers ignore pedestrians.

208. Consider the majority of the public before putting any taxpayer money towards a project. How many will this truly benefit.
209. Making it easy and convenient for residents to walk encourages them to do so. When one must drive out of one's neighborhood to find a good place to walk, folks walk less often.
210. Expand the greenway, it's wonderful!
211. Roanoke City sidewalks are in terrible condition. Maintenance has been long deferred and there are many safety issues. Roanoke County is almost, if not completely, without sidewalks. Pedestrian safety is in jeopardy. There are not safe places to walk and pedestrians are mixed with cars. In many cases people have no other alternative to get essential services other than walking - BUT, they cannot get there without taking their life in their hands. It needs attention!
212. Use no taxpayers \$.
213. It encourages fitness and provides safety from traffic if adequately provided.
214. It's not just sidewalks- trees, shops, etc all play a part. see Grandin Village
215. Every neighborhood should have sidewalks.
216. Require sidewalks as part of development.
217. Greenways offer a fantastic pedestrian service for exercise and travel
218. Sidewalks in the county
219. Require sidewalks in new dense developments
220. Remove bearers i.e. no sidewalks and poor pedestrian street crossing
221. If you are going to allocate millions of dollars, you should use it somewhere that people are already walking, such as Brambleton Avenue or in the city. No one is walking on Plantation Road.
222. Not all people are "reduced" to walking/biking to work. Many would do it if it were safer or easier in general
223. Handicap access
224. Exercise benefit
225. Increased walking benefits the whole community
226. Walking should be made safe and convenient.
227. A walking friendly community provides opportunity and improves community health.
228. It needs to be safe.
229. Has to be cost effective.
230. Making walking the most convenient and accessible way to get places and people will be encouraged to make good health choices by being more active.
231. Wider sidewalks, more street trees
232. Too dangerous to walk in many areas of the Valley - no sidewalks.
233. Older citizens will need frequent transportation and sidewalks to avoid accidents.
234. Safe sidewalks.
235. I live "close in" and would walk to businesses but without walking lanes or sidewalks, it is not always safe.
236. Safety.

237. Safe walking trails and sidewalks.
238. There is a need for safe areas where the elderly can walk.
239. Not everyone is able to walk long distances due to a disability.
240. Accessibility and curb cuts. Green lights staying green long enough to cross safely.
241. The health benefits of walking.
242. Walking is good for your heart and waistline.
243. Need sidewalks so people don't walk in the street.
244. Walking is the most healthful exercise the average person can do - walk a lot - get in better health.
245. Poor walking conditions keep people from walking, which is healthier than driving.
246. Need ramps to street at all corners.
247. Safety, lighting.
248. Society is out of shape, people need to be encouraged to get out and walk.
249. Enforce cross walks. We have infrastructure, but drivers ignore them.
250. Good for community, good for health, good for business corridors, good for attracting development/people from outside the area
251. Many times walking is the most convenient and cost effective for of transportation for daily trips