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His message straightforward: Grove Hallers, walk like this

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While Grove Hall has bloomed over the past decade, Jorge Martinez sees lingering public safety concerns, along with obesity and other health problems in the neighborhood. These problems, he believes, can all be attacked with a single weapon: walking.

"The quality of life, health, safety -- it's all connected," said Martinez, executive director of Project Right, based in the neighborhood straddling Roxbury and Dorchester. Its promotion of walking recently scored a Golden Shoe award from WalkBoston, the pedestrian advocacy group.

Get people walking, Martinez says, and they'll be healthier, and get to know their neighbors, young and old.

"If you know most of the teens in the neighborhood, then you won't have problems with them and they'll have no problems with you, because if you know somebody, you don't mess with them," said Martinez.

Project Right, along with the Grove Hall Board of Trade and Grove Hall Main Streets, has worked with WalkBoston on traffic calming measures and creating a walking trail from the Franklin Park Zoo to Dudley Square.

"Getting people to walk in the business district increases its economic viability," he said. "So if we can increase its walkability and pedestrian safety, we can extend the business district to smaller businesses a few blocks away."

Another Golden Shoe winner was Boston Medical Center/Boston University Medical Center, which has several initiatives to get its 6,000 workers hoofing. Other winners were Shape Up Somerville, a citywide fitness program; Ken Krause, who edits WalkBoston's maps and writings; and Rob Tuchman, chairman of the Central Artery/Tunnel Completion Task Force.

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