

Recommendations from the Salem Street Walk Audit, Medford
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The participants met near the corner of Salem and Vine Streets and spent about two hours walking along Salem Street to observe existing pedestrian conditions and discuss some of the opportunities to improve the safety and attractiveness of the street for people walking.

Overall, Salem Street presents good opportunities for walking. The street has a relatively lively set of local businesses and fully occupied residential buildings. With the nearby

school, new residential development underway, and the upcoming pedestrian improvements to Haines Square the stage is set for an improved walking environment. With its reasonably narrow roadway cross section, and busy but not overwhelming traffic volumes or speeds there are a number of effective low to moderate cost improvements available.

The following recommendations and ideas are based on the conversation and observations. It is important to note that Salem Street can be significantly improved with relatively low cost, incremental improvements until such time that it is scheduled for major reconstruction.

Short-term, low cost improvements

- Add in-street vertical “Yield to Pedestrian” signs.
 - Consider asking local businesses or residents to sponsor or adopt the signs – to set them up if they are knocked over, bring them inside if it snows, and let the City know if the sign needs to be replaced.
- Repaint cross walks with reflective paint to add visibility.
- Add shark’s teeth markings at mid-block crossings (if any are added in the future).
- Provide signage and pavement marking to pull parking back at least 20 feet from all crosswalks (from the approaching direction of vehicles) to increase visibility of pedestrians who are crossing the street – important for walkers to see vehicles and for drivers to see people crossing. Because this will result in the loss of some parking spaces, it will require a community outreach and engagement process. Consider beginning with the school community and Walk Medford to enlist local supporters.
- Add “fog lines” or parking space lines to perceptually narrow the travel lanes and thus slow traffic.



In-street sign

- Use paint and flex posts to tighten curb radii to shorten crossing distances and slow vehicles as they are turning.



Photos of paint and flex posts used to tighten corners

- Where construction projects are underway (e.g. Everett Street) work immediately with City staff and developers to tighten curb radii as part of the development process.
- Straighten angled crosswalks where possible to reduce crossing distances.
- Mill the edges of slightly uneven sidewalk pavers to reduce tripping hazards (this cannot provide adequate repairs where the pavers are significantly uneven or broken, but can deal with smaller uneven spots).
- Add speed feedback signs in locations where vehicle speeds are the highest/problematic. Research suggests that these signs provide the most significant benefits shortly after they are installed and that they should be used on a temporary basis.
- Plant new trees where possible without narrowing the sidewalk – consider working with adjacent property owners to plant trees on private property adjacent to the sidewalk.
- Maintain and install benches, and consider working with adjacent property owners to place benches on private property adjacent to the sidewalk. Install benches with armrests to ensure that they serve people of all ages and physical abilities.
- Consider implementing a pilot intersection improvement at Hadley Place/Salem Street to demonstrate many of the short term improvements such as temporary bulb outs, signage and pavement markings, and use of flex posts to create tight turning radii.
- To ensure that busy pedestrian routes remain accessible after snow storms – for examples on walk-to-school routes or along bus corridors – the City might take responsibility for ensuring that curb ramps and bus stops are well cleared. This can be implemented along the same streets and sidewalks where property owners remain responsible for sidewalk snow shoveling.

Short to mid-term, moderate cost

- Repair Sidewalks:
 - Fix uneven and broken sidewalks to create a level walking path
 - Clear or provide smooth, graded asphalt path over tree roots
 - Add bump-arounds to add accessible sidewalks where there are large trees blocking the sidewalk
 - Re-grade driveways to make a level sidewalk
- Re-build intersections and crosswalks to enhance walking:
 - Add bumpouts to reduce crossing distances and enhance visibility
 - Tighten curb radii at all corners to shorten crossing distances and slow turning vehicles
 - Wherever possible, construct curb ramps at right angles into crosswalks, not angled on corners (apex ramps)
- Work with business owners to narrow curb cuts into parking or service areas and thus slow turning vehicles and reduce pedestrian exposure to turning vehicles.

- Create site plan regulations requiring minimal and narrow curb cuts across the sidewalk.
- Install pedestrian friendly street lighting.

Other opportunities to consider

- Set most traffic signals with concurrent WALK lights (with pedestrians walking while traffic moves in the same direction) that include Leading Pedestrian Indicators (LPis) which give walkers a head start across the intersection. Intersections where this may not be appropriate include locations with heavy turning movements (250+/hour) or near schools or senior housing.
- Work with Target to provide a safe and attractive walking route across the parking lot to the front door of the store. We observed many pedestrians crossing the lot without a clear path or any protections from traffic.