WASHINGTON STREET
WALK AUDIT
Transport Hartford Academy at the Center for Latino Progress
August 18th, 2020
WALK AUDIT BACKGROUND

Several months before the walk audit was conducted, Logan Singerman, the Director of Community Partnerships & Communications at the Southend Institutions and Neighborhoods Alliance (SINA), reached out to us on behalf of the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center with concerns about speeding cars down Washington Street.

The hospital staff were concerned about the safety of their patients and their families and asked if there was anything to be done to control traffic.

The audit was scheduled to invite members of community organizations, Transport Hartford interns, and the CCMC to come together to assess safety along the street. It was conducted from Hartford Magnet Trinity to the Hartford Superior Court.

Tuesday, Aug 18th – 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Walk and Bike Audit of Washington St
Meet at the intersection of Washington and Lincoln Streets near CCMC
Wear a mask and bring a clipboard or notebook
Attendees

- Transport Hartford - Tony Cherolis, Sahar Amjad, and teen Transport Hartford Ambassadors
- City of Hartford - Sandra Fry
- CT DOT - William Champagne
- SINA- Logan Singerman, Melvyn Colon
- Hartford Parking Authority - Mingo Gomes
- CRCOG - Tim Malone (regional planning org)
- Hartford residents - Andrew May, Bill Veronesi
Upon arriving at CCMC, we paused for introductions, group assignments, and then split in four different directions to cross the street and double back to observe the opposite side of the street on the return trip.
Hartford Crashes on Washington St

This is a heatmap of car crashes in Hartford. Use the slider to change the time frame. Zoom in to hotspots to see individual crash location data.

From Jan 1, 2015 to Jun 30, 2020, there were 38,110 car crashes in Hartford. Of those, 821 involved a pedestrian, and 236 involved a cyclist. 8,200 crashes satisfy your filtering criteria.

Crash Participants
- ✔ Vehicles only
- ✔ Pedestrians
- ✔ Cyclists

Injuries
- □ Property damage
- ✔ Injury
- ✔ Fatal

Roads
- ✔ Local
- □ Highways

Map Appearance
- ✔ Street labels
- Intensity

5.5 years of crash data w/ injuries and fatalities

CLICK HERE FOR INTERACTIVE MAP
Group Assignments

Group assignments were conducted beforehand for the interns and on-site for those joining the audit.

Each group was focusing on one category of a walk audit as laid out by the AARP Walk Audit Toolkit:

- **Group 1**: Crossing Streets and Intersections
- **Group 2**: Sidewalks
- **Group 3**: Driver Behavior and Safety
- **Group 4**: Comfort and Appeal
Group 1 Findings and Recommendations [Crossing Streets and Intersections]

- The area of highest concern was the intersection of Park and Washington – 
  **this is a known high crash intersection**
  - Drivers would pull up past the lights, blocking crosswalks
  - The timing between the walk signal ending and the signal turning is too quick and does not leave ample time for those who are crossing more slowly to make it safely across the street

- Recommendations:
  - Delineate the crosswalk more clearly with street art to deter drivers from pulling past the crosswalk
  - Extend buffer time between walk signal ending and lights changing
Intersection of Park and Washington observed for one light and pedestrian cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who is using the crosswalk? (Park &amp; Washington)</th>
<th>Number of individuals observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>People walking at average speed</em></td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>People walking slowly</em></td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>People with children or baby strollers</em></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>People crossing against the signal</em></td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The crosswalk between the Superior Court and CT Bar Examining building presents its own set of challenges

- There is no street signage warning drivers of a crosswalk
- Parked cars across from the Superior Court blocked pedestrian view as they stepped out onto a street where cars did not slow for crosswalks

Recommendations

- Set down a centerline crosswalk sign to make drivers more alert and aware of the potential of pedestrians crossing at that point
- Add flashing crossing lights on either end of the crosswalk to notify drivers of pedestrians
- Remove on street parking space close to the crosswalk so pedestrians can safely gauge whether or not they may cross the street
The entrance to the children’s hospital is considered to be a driveway, but is functionally used as busy, signalized road crossing.

There are no cross signals, and the pedestrians must wait until the walk signal from across the street allows those pedestrians to cross.

There is a similar issue on the other side of this signal at the busy drive through for Dunkin’ Donuts.

Recommendations
- Add pedestrian crossing signal
- Mark the crosswalk clearly
Group 2 & 3 Findings and Recommendations [Sidewalks & Driver Behavior and Safety]

• The sidewalks in front of CCMC were wide and well paved
• The further the group walked from CCMC, the worse the conditions of the sidewalks grew
  • Entire segments of sidewalk were missing which was odd considering that those without cars often need to access the hospital as well
  • Electronic wheelchair users were seen driving along the street as opposed to the sidewalks for fear of their chairs getting stuck
  • Several sidewalk ramps at crosswalks did not have ADA pads, for blind pedestrians – even newly reconstructed sidewalks
Group 2 & 3 (cont.)

- As the groups walked along Washington street, they noticed that the metal grates covering tree pits were often broken, bent, or missing, presenting possible fall hazards for anyone using the sidewalks.
  - Alongside the broken grates there were large swaths of sidewalk with loose or broken pavement that

- Recommendations:
  - Installation of bioswales to collect rainwater and add greenery to street
GROUP 3 (CONT.)

NEAR MISS!

- As the groups were making their way back to CCMC they were very nearly struck by a car that drove up onto the dirt to avoid hitting another car.
- The dirt tire marks in the right most photo show where we were almost struck by a car while walking on the sidewalk. A car was driving in the lane closest to the sidewalk when an SUV went to change lanes. The car sped up, honked and then drove into the grass, a few feet away from us to avoid a collision.
- Recommendations
  - Post speed limit signs up and down Washington (25 MPH)
    - Will be a reminder to drivers to keep a better eye on their speed
    - Will give police officers a clear speed limit to point out when enforcing speeding violations
  - Raise the low curb, to reduce using the grass as a drivable shoulder
GROUP 4 FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS [COMFORT AND APPEAL]

• As pedestrians approach the courthouse and Russ street, the entire demeanor of the street changes
  • Shade trees are few and far between
  • Greenery between the roads and sidewalks is limited or paved over
• There are NO sheltered bus stops along the entire street
• Recommendations
  • Add more shade trees as buffer between road and sidewalk and for beatification
  • Add sheltered bus stops and/or benches to assure safety and comfort of riders
BICYCLE FACILITIES
AND SAFETY NOTES

THERE ARE NO FACILITIES

- It was noted by several attendees that arrived on bikes that **CCMC does not have bike parking racks** to lock up, and they walked with their bicycles during the audit.
- No bike parking along Washington Street, although there is plenty of room for sidewalk bike parking loops adjacent to the sidewalk and set back buildings.
- On the walk, most bicycle riders were on the sidewalk. One rider was in the traffic lane, taking the lane.
- **Recommendation** – Road diet with bike lanes or a separated bi-directional cycle track on the CCMC (east side).
Resources and Important Dates

- Transport Harford Discussion Group
- Sandra Fry, Bike/Ped Coordinator at the City of Hartford: Sandra.fry@Hartford.gov
- November 17th Walk/Bike Audit how-to Training 10:30 am - 12 pm – RSVP HERE
- 2020 Multimodal Transit Summit: November 23rd, 11 am - 7 pm
- Interactive Hartford Crash Map – You can zoom in to Washington Street
- Bike/Walk Book Club TBD: RSVP HERE
- November Walk Audit: Nov 23rd, 8:30am – 10:30am in Hartford. Location TBD