

2019 WALK AUDIT REPORT: VILLAGE OF ASHLEY



Wednesday, September 11



2:15 PM



Sunny, Clear



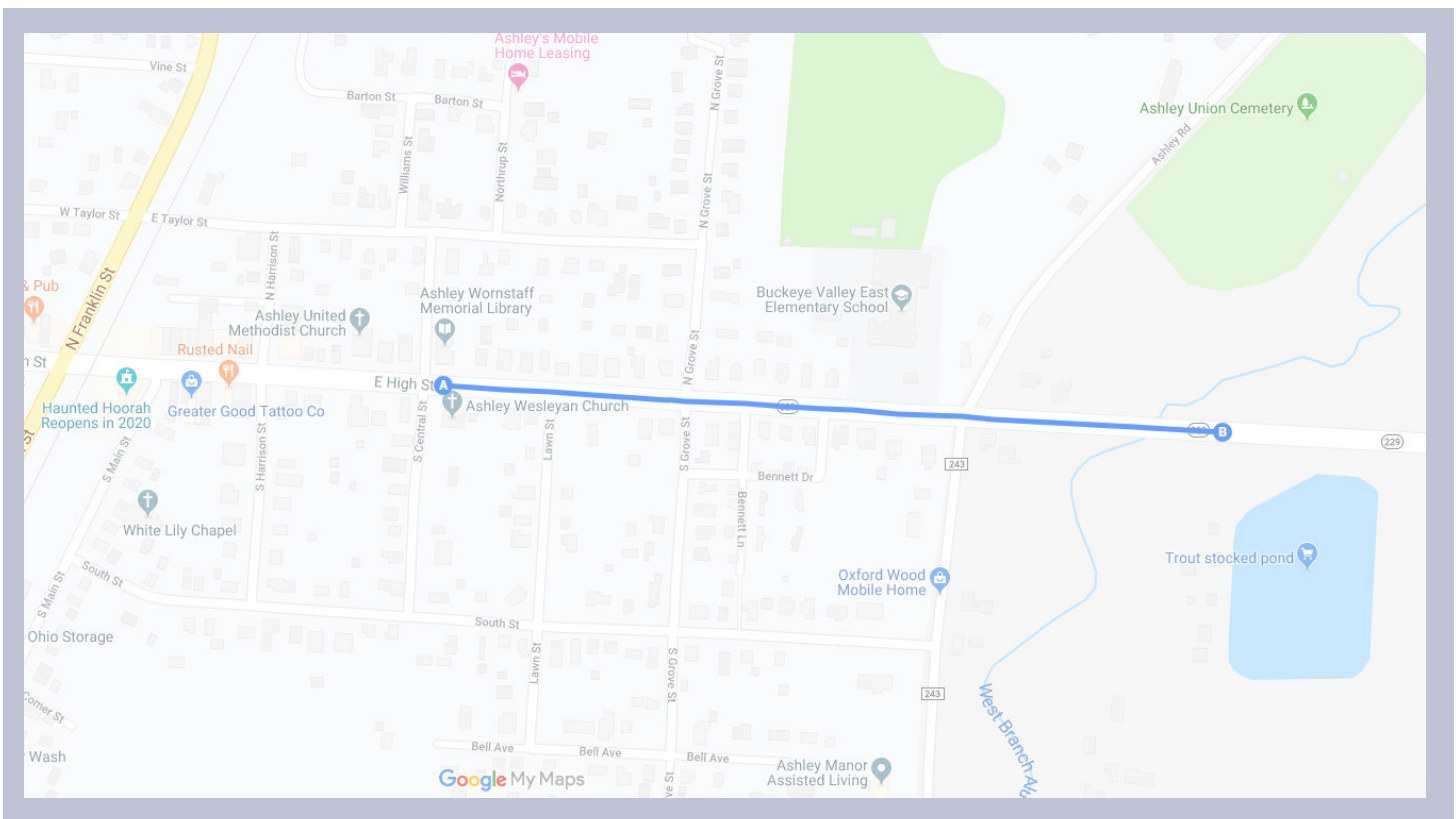
1/2 Hour



1 Mile



90°F



Background

The Ashley-Oxford Creating Healthy Communities (CHC) Coalition and the Village of Ashley have been working over the past 5 years to improve and promote the use of Newman Park. The partnership has been successful at implementing projects such as building a new outdoor shelter house, installing new accessible sidewalks, implementing solar lighting, and adding wheelchair accessible picnic tables.

However, despite the many upgrades and existing park amenities such as the pool and playground, the park remains underutilized. Community surveys and feedback received indicate the largest barrier for the community is the lack of a safe way to get to the park.

In Fall 2019, CHC Coalition conducted a 1-mile walk audit starting at the Ashley Wornstaff Memorial Library to Newman Park, and back. Walk audits are one tool communities can use to gather information about street conditions, engage community residents, and inform planning and traffic safety projects.

Conducting Walk Audits

A walk audit is a simple way that can help assess and provide information on how supportive the street and surrounding environment is for walking. Walk audits can be done informally with a small group of individuals, or conducted more formally with a large group of stakeholders and decision makers.

A walk audit surveys a pre-planned route, and documents ways that the environment supports and prohibits walking. Additionally, walk audits can help to understand the environment from an all-ability inclusive perspective. Walk audits can be conducted as part of a bigger plan to assess overall walkability of a neighborhood, or can be a one-time event to better understand or express concerns about a specific area.

Pictured Right: Speed limit change from 55 MPH to 35 MPH at the start of village limit on E. High Street/ OH-229 in front of the Buckeye Valley East Elementary School
Below: Google Street View on E. High Street facing east



Nearby Destinations

The following destinations are along the walk audit route, or are located nearby within walking distance.

Ashley Wornstaff Memorial Library

Buckeye Valley East Elementary School

United States Post Office, Ashley Location

First Commonwealth Bank, Ashley Branch

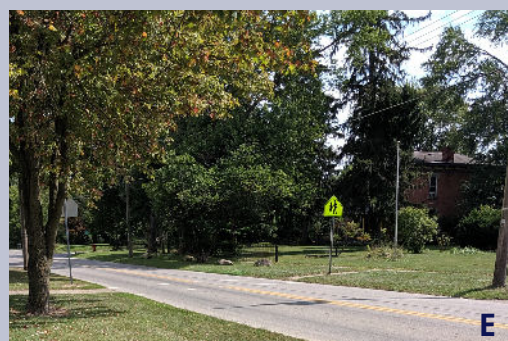
Newman Park

Ashley Administration Office & Police Department

Observations

The following observations document current sidewalk and street infrastructure along E. High Street/ OH-229.

- **Mature trees along road on North Side of High Street provide shade and pedestrian safety barrier**
- **Residential homes and overall surrounding landscaping is clean and well maintained**
- **Sidewalks are not continuous; many observed areas of missing, uneven, and cracked concrete**
- **Sidewalks pose trip-and-fall-hazard; increased risk for individuals utilizing wheelchairs, canes, or walkers**
- **Poor sidewalk conditions; gaps of missing sidewalk and breaks in sidewalk over 5 inches tall**
- **No North/South crosswalks or approaches in sidewalks at Central Street, Grove Street, or Ashley Road**
- **North/South crosswalk striping in front of elementary school is worn and mostly not visible**
- **School remodel included replacing sidewalks directly in front of building**
- **Newman Park amenities: pool, outdoor shelter house, indoor shelter house, water fountain, wheelchair accessible picnic tables, charcoal grills, community garden, playground equipment, bike rack, and fishing pond**
- **Access to park is unsafe for pedestrians and bicycles; no sidewalks and speed limit is 55 MPH at park entrance**
- **Steady traffic along route, including commercial vehicle traffic, some automobiles fail to yield/slow down for pedestrians; environment does not support pedestrian or bicycle riders, so traffic is not used to their presence**



A- Tree roots have caused cracked and uneven sidewalk along the north side of High Street

B- OH-229 at the entrance to Newman Park speed limit at this location is 55 MPH

C- Intersection at Ashley Rd. and E. High Street at east village limit; here the speed limit changes from 35 MPH to 55 MPH at the school property line

D- Intersection at N. Grove Street and E. High Street, sidewalk approach over 5 inches tall, also missing detectable warning pavers for visually impaired

E- Worn crosswalk striping in front of Buckeye Valley East Elementary.

F- Newman Park: playground & outdoor shelter house installed 2018, sidewalks within the park replaced in summer 2019, pool re-opened 2019

Reccomendations

The following are suggestions to improve pedestrian access to Newman Park and to encourage more people to walk in the Village of Ashley. These were determined by reviewing the walking audit field notes, participant discussion, and an internal review of previous CHC meetings and planning discussions. The following recommendations rose to the top as priorities for the Village of Ashley to review:

- **Develop a Safe Routes to Parks (SRTP) Action Plan; apply for future SRTP funding opportunities**
- **Partner with BV East Elementary to assess the need for a Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Travel Plan**
- **Work with BV East Elementary and ODOT to expand the current school zone to 300' beyond school property, alerting motorists earlier to reduce speeds during restricted hours**
- **Work with ODOT to conduct a speed study and identity possible street improvements to increase pedestrian safety**
- **Adopt a complete streets policy or resolution to ensure that street and sidewalk upgrades are accessible and safe for all users**
- **Develop/ promote programs to encourage residents to walk more; raise awareness about speeding and pedestrian safety**
- **Empower community residents to assist with park access and pedestrian improvement projects and discussions**
- **Continue to explore opportunities to gain access to the park through neighborhood connections, such as a pedestrian-only bridge**
- **Enforce speed limits and other traffic laws; ask local law enforcement to plan pedestrian safety sting during high travel times**
- **Identify new funding streams and develop a sustainable financing plan to implement projects**
- **Ensure any implemented changes are measured to determine impact on the community**



September 2019 Walk Audit Participants

Amee Sword - Ashley Wornstaff Memorial Library
Alyssa Burcher - Delaware General Health District/
Community Resident
Chase Waits - Delaware County Board of
Developmental Disabilities
Elizabeth Barker - Community Resident
Joe Goney - First Commonwealth Bank
Josie Bonnette - Delaware General Health District
Jym Lonstreth - Ashley Village Council



Find Out More

If you are interested in conducting your own walk audit or exploring the other ways in which you community an encourage the development of more health, safe and accessible neighborhoods, please contact:

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