



About the City of Columbia Walk/Bike Ambassador Program

The City of Columbia Walk/Bike Ambassador Program is a network for community leadership in walking and biking that begins with a brief training series on promoting and planning safe active transportation for all ages and abilities throughout Columbia. The training series, held over three two-hour sessions, will build skills around walking and biking promotion and introduce participants to local resources to get involved in planning processes in the community.

This program was created out of recognition that community transformation for walking and biking takes not just physical street infrastructure but also a human network of informed and engaged citizens. It builds on models from similar programs like the COMET Academy and Upstate Forever's Citizen Planning Academy.

The purpose of the Walk/Bike Ambassador Program is to equip citizens to empower, train, and lead members of their neighborhood and/or community in walking and biking initiatives in partnership with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

The class curriculum is as follows:

- Session 1: How to Take Part in Plans for Walking and Biking in Columbia
- Session 2: Making the Case for a Safe, Supported Walking and Biking Culture
- Session 3: How to Be a Leader in Walking/Biking Initiatives in Your Community

Each session is structured with training content, tips for what YOU can do, and Q&A. In addition to the class sessions, you will participate in group activities with your fellow Walk Bike Ambassadors in-training. Throughout the course of the training, participants will identify and work toward a specific goal to make change in the community to support walking and biking.

Apply online for the Spring 2022 Walk Bike Ambassador program [HERE](#) through Mar. 21. Spaces are limited! For questions, contact bpac@columbia.sc@gmail.com.



Apr. 4 - Session 1: How to Be Take Part in Plans for Walking and Biking in Columbia (2 hours)

Objectives:

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Navigate Columbia's guiding planning documents for walking and biking
- Understand major steps in development and implementation of walk/bike projects
- Identify upcoming infrastructure projects and community walk/bike initiatives in Columbia
- Identify at least one way that you can – and plan to – participate in walk/bike decision-making and events

Guest speaker: Leigh DeForth, Comprehensive Planner, City of Columbia

Topics

1. Overview of the Walk Bike Columbia and Public Space Public Life Plans
2. Stages of planning and public meetings for project implementation
3. Upcoming projects
4. Community walk/bike initiatives: Park(ing) Day and Open Streets Columbia
5. How to participate in walk/bike decision-making and events
6. Q&A

Group Experience – Organized Bike Ride OR Walk and Learn (Apr. 10)

Go for a ride OR walk--whichever speaks to your interests the most!

- 1) Bike ride: Participate in a group ride using routes on Sprocket, a local app with routes around Columbia for any skill level. You can bring your own bike or rent a BlueBike for an hour at any of the 14 Blue Bike SC bike stations.
- 2) Walk: Walk around your neighborhood, workplace, or another street of your choosing. Use the AARP Walk Audit Worksheet to document the walking infrastructure you see. Bring the completed worksheet to the next class!



Apr. 18 - Session 2 – Making the Case for a Safe, Supported Walking and Biking Culture (2 hours)

Objectives:

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Identify the value of walking and biking for health, business, and the community
- Explain why safe active transportation and place-making is important
- Identify ways for all road users – foot, bike, or car – can improve safety for themselves and other users

Guest speaker: Sheree Muse, AARP Associate State Director, Outreach

Topics

1. Health, economic, and community benefits of walking and biking
2. The need for safe active transportation and place-making
3. Safety for all road users – foot, bike, car
4. Q&A

Group Experience – Organized Bike Ride OR Walk and Learn (Apr. 24)

Go for a ride OR walk--whichever speaks to your interests the most!

- 3) Bike ride: Participate in a group ride using routes on Sprocket, a local app with routes around Columbia for any skill level. You can bring your own bike or rent a BlueBike for an hour at any of the 14 Blue Bike SC bike stations.
- 4) Walk: Walk around your neighborhood, workplace, or another street of your choosing. Use the AARP Walk Audit Worksheet to document the walking infrastructure you see. Bring the completed worksheet to the next class!

Group Experience – Open Streets (May 1)

Participate in [Open Streets Columbia!](#)

As a group, you will plan an activity to put on for Open Streets.

Open Streets is a City-led project that closes a stretch of our streets to vehicle traffic on a selected day and time and opens it up for people. The purpose of the project is to give our residents the opportunity to see streets as places where they can gather for physical activity and community building. Open Streets is a global project. You can read more about it [here](#).



May 2 - Session 3: How to Be a Leader in Walking/Biking Initiatives in Your Community (2 hours)

Objectives:

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Describe guiding principles for walking and biking
- Identify ways to create a culture of walking and biking in businesses, schools, and the community
- Identify resources to support collaborative events or projects for walking and biking in your neighborhood/community

Guest speaker: Amy Ely, Executive Director, Palmetto Cycling Coalition/SC Livable Communities Alliance

Topics

1. Examples of community-led projects in Columbia and other places
2. Tips for planning/ implementation projects with community groups
3. Low-budget options and ideas for small funding sources
4. Q&A

Take the program evaluation survey to receive a certificate of completion!

“Graduation” ceremony: BPAC Meeting May 9 at 4:30 p.m.