

For Immediate Release:

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Advocates and Professionals Kick Off Ambitious Vision for Walkable America

Chattanooga, Tennessee, September 16, 2010 (3:00 pm – 7:00 pm EST) — Every person walks. It is the most fundamental form of physical activity and the most popular type of outdoor recreation. But poor walking access endangers and discourages pedestrians in communities across America.

While 11 percent of transportation trips are by foot, less than 1 percent of federal transportation funds are spent on walking projects. These inequities persist at the state and local levels, as well, because there is no coherent national walking campaign to reverse these trends. Today, that trend will begin to turn with the **first-ever** national plan to make America safe for pedestrians.

Nearly 200 people, representing diverse organizations across the nation, will attend [the Equal Footing Summit](#) in Chattanooga, Tennessee. For more than six months, [America Walks](#) and the [Association of Bicycle and Pedestrian Professionals](#) (APBP) have worked to convene partners and leaders for this inaugural effort. At the Summit attendees will help set clear steps to building a National Walking Strategy, ratifying the new Vision Statement for a Walkable America and preparing for the launch of a Washington D.C. based walking coalition.

Mindy Craig, President of America Walks, explains that the goal of Equal Footing is to “assemble a powerful network of supporters to adopt this compelling, inspiring, and cohesive Vision Statement for a Walkable America as a beginning step to mobilize individuals, organizations and businesses to increase walking in America.” When that vision becomes reality streets and neighborhoods will be safe and attractive public places that encourage people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and incomes to walk for exercise, recreation, and transportation. Individuals and organizations can [endorse the vision statement on the America Walks website](#).

Scott Bricker, Campaign Manager for America Walks, says that vision requires action at the federal level, where pedestrian interested are dramatically underrepresented. “I’ve asked hundreds of people the question ‘Is there any organization in D.C. protecting the interests of walking and walkable communities?’ and the answer is unanimously ‘No,’” Bricker says. “The [Equal Footing steering committee](#), comprised of national and local organizations, strongly recommends a new, powerful presence in D.C. A clear objective of this summit is to build the support for the creation of this presence.”

Summit participants will deliberate and choose campaigns that will define and jumpstart this national walking collaborative. Attendees will discuss ideas including a push for a national speed reduction and pedestrian and traffic safety campaign; the establishment of a Safe Routes to Transit initiative for senior citizens; and a national education and action campaign to highlight the enormous benefits of walking to the public and key policymakers.

About the Summit Conveners

America Walks is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to build a national coalition of organizations, businesses, and individuals to advance walking and walkability in America. APBP is a 501(c)(6) professional association whose members offer expertise for sustainable transportation to help make communities more walkable and bicycle friendly. As conveners, America Walks and APBP will engage other national and regional partners to maximize the Summit's scope and impact.

About the Summit Facilitator

Mr. Fenton is in high demand as a keynote speaker, consultant and leading authority on the activity of walking. Formerly editor-at-large of WALKING Magazine and host of the PBS series America's Walking, Mark is a vocal national proponent for public-policy initiatives that encourage active living and helped craft the U.S. Safe Routes to School strategy.

Equal Footing Logo



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