



Pedestrian Facilities²



Type³: Sidewalks

Definition

The sidewalk is an accessible pathway that runs parallel to the street. The sidewalk should have a minimum cross-section of 5 feet, exclusive of other amenities, to be large enough for two people walking and/or rolling side by side. Sidewalk Zones have four components:

1. Frontage Zone
2. Pedestrian Through Zone
3. Street Furniture/Curb Zone
4. Enhancement/Buffer Zone

Purpose

The sidewalk ensures that pedestrians (including walkers and people using wheelchairs) have a safe and adequate place to walk and/or roll. As conduits for pedestrian movement and access, they enhance connectivity and promote walking and/or rolling. Safe, accessible, and well-maintained sidewalks are a fundamental and necessary investment for urban areas and have been found to enhance general public health and maximize social capital.

Additional Guidance

- ▶ Reference: [NACTO's Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#).
- ▶ Sidewalks should be 5–7 feet wide in residential settings and 8–12 feet in downtown or commercial areas.
- ▶ Sidewalk design should go beyond the bare minimum in width and amenities. Pedestrians and businesses thrive where sidewalks have been designed at an appropriate scale, with sufficient lighting, shade, and street-level activity.
- ▶ Sidewalks should be delineated by a vertical and horizontal separation from moving traffic to provide adequate buffer space and a sense of safety for pedestrians.
- ▶ On more rural or suburban roads, a walkway or shared-use path adjacent to the main roadway can serve as a substitute for a sidewalk.
- ▶ In Washington State, bicyclists are allowed to ride on sidewalks despite these facilities being designed for exclusive pedestrian use. Bicyclists must yield to pedestrians when using a sidewalk or crosswalk. ([RCW 46.61.261](#))

Local Examples

- ▶ Colby Ave north of Pacific Ave in Everett, WA.
- ▶ Greenwood Ave N, between NE 117th and NE 125th St, in Seattle.
- ▶ 5th Ave in Downtown Seattle.

² PSRC's regional inventory only includes information for sidewalks on minor and principal arterials. Data for sidewalk facilities on local and collector roads may be collected at the local level.

³ All referenced definitions from the "Bicycle Facilities" and "Pedestrian Facilities" sections can be found in NACTO's Urban Bikeway Design Guide or Urban Street Design Guide.

