



# Walk Friendly Communities

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PRESS RELEASE

## City of Ann Arbor Awarded a Gold Walk Friendly Communities Designation

ANN ARBOR, Mich., April 26, 2011 — The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center has designated the City of Ann Arbor as a GOLD level Walk Friendly Community for its walkability initiatives and programs. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and FedEx, Walk Friendly Communities is a national recognition program aimed at recognizing communities for their commitment to pedestrian safety.

Ann Arbor is among only eleven communities recognized nationwide in the inaugural round of Walk Friendly Communities announced today. The Walk Friendly Community designation, awarded from bronze to platinum, is given to applicant communities that have demonstrated a commitment to improving and sustaining workability and pedestrian safety through comprehensive programs, plans and policies.

According to city transportation manager Eli Cooper, “Over 15.6% of Ann Arbor residents walk to work, which is nearly six times the national average.” Ann Arbor’s non-motorized transportation system includes 400 miles of sidewalks, 26.2 center-lane miles of bike lanes, and 55 miles of shared-use paths—including 18 miles of paths within 158 public parks. Motorists must stop, by law, for pedestrians in marked cross walks. In 2006 Ann Arbor’s Downtown Development Authority installed pedestrian wayfinding signage. Each May the city’s getDowntown program sponsors a “Walking is Wonderful Week” during the annual Commuter Challenge month. The city partners with Washtenaw County’s Public Health Department to encourage Safe Routes to School programs in area schools. An Ann Arbor Safe Streets and Sidewalks (A2S3) task force helps guide the city in developing and implementing educational campaigns, as highlighted online at [www.a2gov.org/WalkBikeDrive](http://www.a2gov.org/WalkBikeDrive). In 2010 the city began operating Michigan’s first HAWK (High-intensity Activated crossWALK) on a state trunk line at W. Huron and Chapin. On a statewide level, Ann Arbor has gold designation in Michigan’s Promoting Active Communities program. In addition, Ann Arbor has been recognized by *Prevention* magazine and by the American Podiatric Medical Association as the third most walkable city in the country.

For more information on Walk Friendly Communities, please visit <http://www.walkfriendly.org>. # # #

### **Additional Resources:**

Walk Friendly Communities Website <http://www.walkfriendly.org>

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center Website <http://www.walkinginfo.org>

Federal Highway Administration Website [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/)

*Ann Arbor has 114,000 residents, spans 27.7 square miles, and is frequently recognized as a foremost place to live, learn, work, thrive and visit ([www.a2gov.org/news](http://www.a2gov.org/news)). To keep up with City of Ann Arbor information, subscribe for e-mail updates ([www.a2gov.org/subscribe](http://www.a2gov.org/subscribe)), follow us on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/a2gov>) or become a city fan on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/thecityofannarbor](http://www.facebook.com/thecityofannarbor)). The city’s mission statement reads: The city of Ann Arbor is committed to providing excellent municipal services that enhance the quality of life for all through the intelligent use of resources while valuing an open environment that fosters, fair, sensitive and respectful treatment of all employees and the community we serve.*