

Knox and Hubbard Community Walkaround Report



**Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian
for Underserved Communities**

KNOX AND HUBBARD COMMUNITY WALKAROUND REPORT

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Troy, Alabama

Report presented by:

The STEP-UC Team

Report prepared by:

Rod E. Turochy, Ph.D., P.E.

BACKGROUND

This report documents the findings of a recent walkaround focused on pedestrian and traffic safety in the Knox and Hubbard communities of Troy, Alabama. This walkaround was conducted as part of the STEP-UC (Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian for Underserved Communities) program administered through the Alabama Transportation Assistance Program at Auburn University, in conjunction with The Fifty Fund, a local non-profit organization whose mission includes promoting safer communities. The Knox and Hubbard communities are anchored by properties of the same names managed by the Troy Housing Authority. The demographics of the larger neighborhoods within which these properties are located allow them to be classified as historically underserved communities. In and proximate to these neighborhoods are many pedestrian trip generators, such as Troy Elementary School, Knox Street Park, corner stores, and other destinations. Based on information gathered during the initial review, this combination of land uses, of course, generates substantial pedestrian trips, particularly by young people. A review of the pedestrian facility networks in these communities was in order.

The walkarounds were organized to review the pedestrian facilities and associated traffic control devices within each area. After conversations with several people active in the communities, the purpose and scope of each walkaround was defined. A team with familiarity with each community and its associated travel patterns, background in civic engagement and public relations, traffic engineering and safety, and videography, came together to conduct the walkarounds. The team established the following objectives:

- Identify locations of concern
- Observe pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns and behavior
- Note maintenance needs and ADA-compliance needs pertaining to existing pedestrian facilities
- Identify opportunities to improve existing facilities and add new ones that can be expected to improve safety

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the STEP-UC program is to help communities learn to identify their pedestrian facility needs and advocate for them. Specifically for this report, the purpose is to document the walkarounds conducted in the Knox and Hubbard communities and the resulting pedestrian facility improvement recommendations. These recommendations range from relatively simple, low-cost items, such as restriping existing crosswalks where most of the existing marking has worn away, to more substantial work such as replacing existing sidewalks that are not compliant with ADA accessibility guidelines and proposing new sidewalks in areas of substantial pedestrian activity.

The study area was defined by the group assembled for the walkaround, as shown in Figure 1 for the Knox community and Figure 2 for the Hubbard community. The geographic scope was based on capturing key pedestrian trip generators and patterns identified above and the streets adjoining them. In the Knox community, the focus was primarily on Knox St from 3 Notch St (US 29) to the entrance to the Autumn Ridge apartment complex. In the Hubbard community, the walkarounds addressed Aster Ave from Hubbard St to Gibbs St, and Hubbard St from Aster Ave to a point approximately 300 ft west.

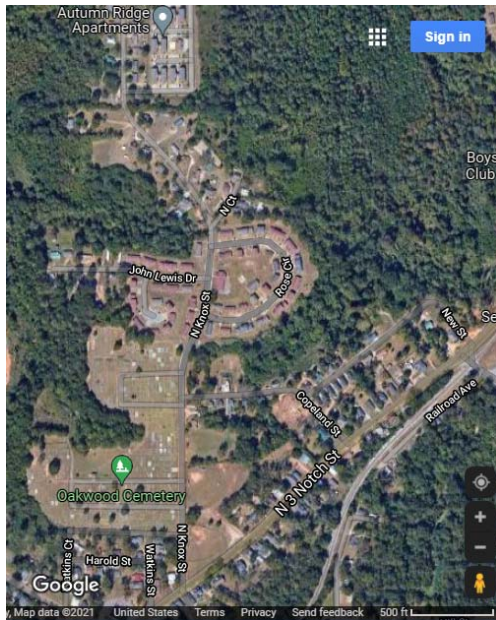


Figure 1. Knox Community Study Area (Image from *Google Maps*)

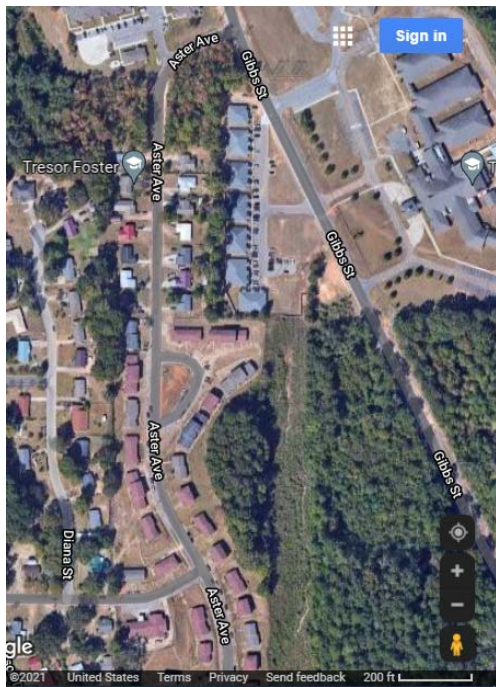


Figure 2. Hubbard Community Study Area (Image from *Google Maps*)

SITE VISITS

Two site visits were conducted; the first was on Friday, March 12, 2021, and the second was on Saturday, May 22, 2021. The walkaround team on the first visit included Donta Frazier (Pike Area Transit System/City of Troy), Wiley Brooks (ALDOT), Stuart Manson (ALDOT), Kathy Gregory (The Fifty Fund), Rod Turochy (ATAP at Auburn University and The Fifty Fund), and several community members. The team on the second site visit was the same except for the absence of Stuart Manson and the addition of Sharon McSwain-Holland (Troy City Councilperson, District 1). On each day, the team walked the entire study corridors described previously.

Existing pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks and crosswalks, were noted, along with their current condition. During the approximately 90-minute effort at each site on each visit, much pedestrian activity was observed throughout the study area. The behavior of motor vehicle traffic was observed anecdotally. Opportunities for improvements, in terms of additional facilities, as well as better maintenance of existing facilities, were identified. The team spoke with several residents along the way to hear their concerns.

IDENTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

As noted previously, an objective of this effort was to identify potential improvements to pedestrian facilities in the Knox and Hubbard communities. Some of these improvements are simply better maintenance of existing facilities, while others involve the installation of either new crosswalks, signage, or new sidewalk infrastructure and curb ramps. As the walkaround proceeded, ideas for improvements were discussed and noted. These items were organized by location and then prioritized. The recommended improvements fall into three general categories:

- Upgrading existing sidewalks to bring them into compliance with ADA Accessibility Guidelines. These upgrades include replacing existing sidewalks less than 5 ft in width, correcting adverse driveway cross slopes, removing existing obstructions such as utility poles and non-compliant grate drop inlets, and adding curb ramps with detectable warning surfaces.
- Constructing new sidewalks to complete gaps between existing sidewalk segments and to serve substantial pedestrian trip generators
- Adding marked crosswalks and associated signage at selected locations

Knox Community

In the Knox community, the focus was on North Knox Street from 3 Notch St north to the entrance to Autumn Ridge apartments, which has 35 units. From Autumn Ridge northward there are only a small number of residences before the street itself ends. The study segment, approximately 3,200 ft long, also passes through the Knox Community of the Troy Housing Authority, consisting of 100 units. Fronting the east side of Knox Street for the first 900 ft north of 3 Notch St is the city's Knox Street Park, for which the City is developing plans to add amenities. Given observed pedestrian patterns, the condition of existing facilities, and known trip generators of noteworthy size, the following improvements are recommended:

- Add a sidewalk on the east side of Knox St from 3 Notch St to the south Rose Cir intersection
- Add a sidewalk on the east side of Knox St from the north Rose Cir intersection to the entrance to Autumn Ridge Apartments
- Replace existing sidewalk on the west side of Knox St from 3 Notch St to the southern boundary of the Troy Housing Authority property
- Add a sidewalk on the west side of Knox St from the southern boundary of the Troy Housing Authority property to the John Lewis Dr intersection
- Add a crosswalk across Knox St at Watkins Ct and associated pedestrian crossing signage
- Add a crosswalk across Watkins Ct
- Add curb ramps at the northwest, northeast, and southeast corners of the intersection of Knox St and Watkins Ct (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the east side of Knox St and replacement of existing sidewalk on the west side of Knox St, as noted earlier)
- Add a crosswalk across Knox St at Copeland St and associated pedestrian crossing signage
- Add a crosswalk across Copeland St
- Add curb ramps at the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the intersection of Knox St and Copeland St (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the east side of Knox St and replacement of existing sidewalk on the west side of Knox St, as noted earlier)
- Add a crosswalk across Knox St at South Rose Cir and associated pedestrian crossing signage
- Add a crosswalk across South Rose Cir
- Add curb ramps at the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the intersection of Knox St and South Rose Cir (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the east side of Knox St and adding of existing sidewalk on the west side of Knox St, as noted earlier)
- Add a crosswalk across Knox St at John Lewis Dr and associated pedestrian crossing signage
- Add curb ramps at the southwest and southeast corners of the intersection of Knox St and John Lewis Dr (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the west side of Knox St, as noted earlier)
- Add a crosswalk across North Rose Cir
- Add curb ramps at the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Knox St and South Rose Cir

An overview of these improvements is shown in Figure 3. Appendix A contains a series of graphics that show these improvements more specifically by location.

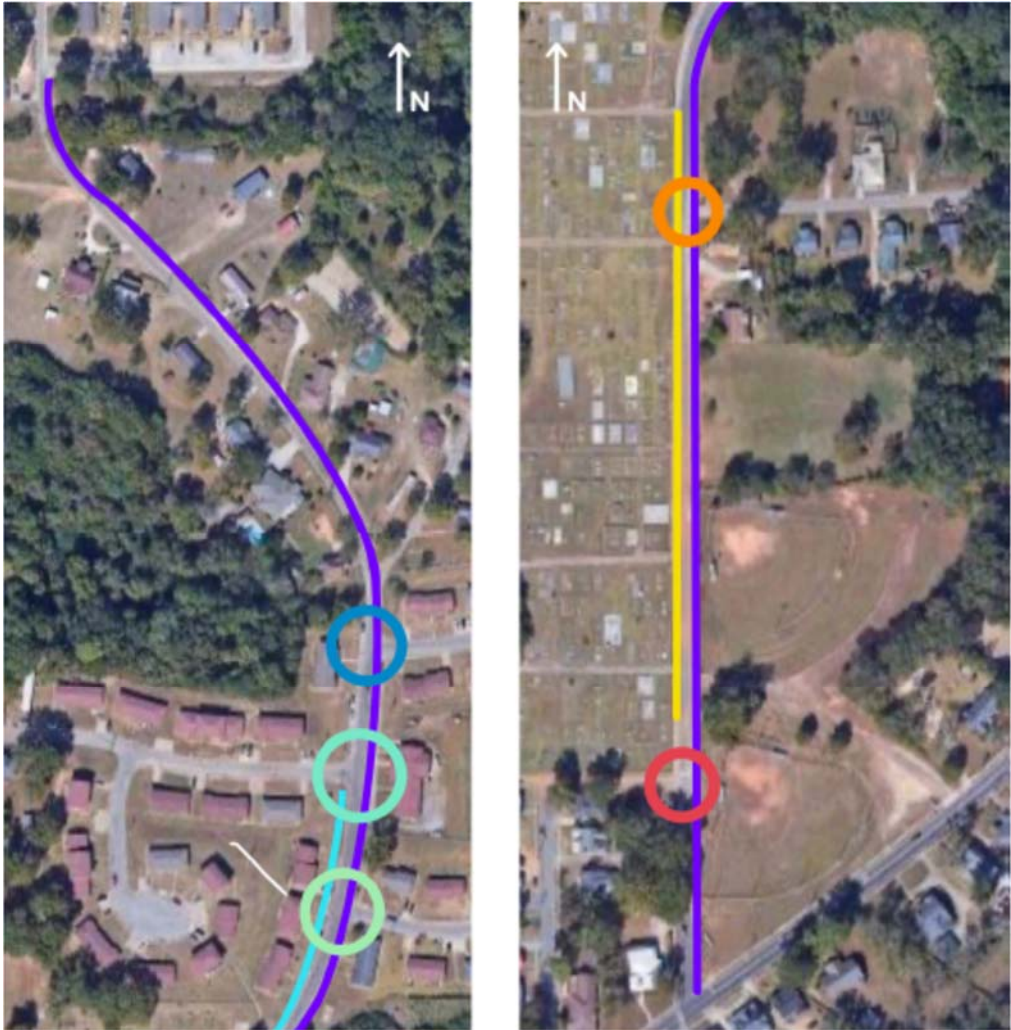


Figure 3. Potential Improvement Locations along North Knox St (Image from *Google Maps*)

Hubbard Community

In the Hubbard community, Improvement needs were identified on Aster Ave from Hubbard St to Gibbs St. The study segment, approximately 1,700 ft long, also passes through the Hubbard Community of the Troy Housing Authority, consisting of 94 units. A portion of Aster Ave north of the Hubbard housing property to Gibbs St is included in this study, as Troy Elementary School is across Gibbs St from the Aster Ave intersection. Given observed pedestrian patterns, the condition of existing facilities, and known trip generators of noteworthy size, the following improvements are recommended:

- Add a sidewalk on the east side of Aster Ave from Hubbard St to the northern boundary of the Troy Housing Authority property
- Replace existing sidewalk on the east side of Aster Ave from the northern boundary of the Troy Housing Authority property to approximately Gibbs St
- Add a crosswalk across Aster Ave just north of Aster Cir and associated pedestrian crossing signage
- Add curb ramps on the west and east sides of Aster Ave (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the east side of Aster Ave and replacement of existing sidewalk on the west side of Aster Ave, as noted earlier)
- Add a crosswalk across North Aster Cir
- Add curb ramps at the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Aster Ave and North Aster Cir (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the east side of Aster Ave, as noted earlier)
- Add a crosswalk across South Aster Cir
- Add curb ramps at the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Aster Ave and South Aster Cir (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the east side of Aster Ave, as noted earlier)
- Add a crosswalk across Aster Ave at Hubbard St and associated pedestrian crossing signage
- Add a crosswalk across Hubbard St
- Add curb ramps at the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the intersection of Hubbard St and Aster Ave (this should be done with the adding of sidewalk on the east side of Aster Ave, as noted earlier)

An overview of these improvements is shown in Figure 4. Appendix B contains a series of graphics that show these improvements more specifically by location.



Figure 4. Potential Improvement Locations along Hubbard St and Aster Ave (Image from *Google Maps*)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report documents a study of pedestrian infrastructure and safety in the Knox and Hubbard communities of Troy, Alabama. Several trip generators in close proximity, such as public housing, parks, schools, and corner stores, and the known concentration of young, elderly, and disabled pedestrians, warrant a close examination of existing facilities and identification of improvement needs. The community was engaged through a walkaround and subsequent identification of potential improvements. These improvements were then organized by specific locations, graphics created showing current and proposed conditions, and a list of these improvements was developed.

In addition to the recommended pedestrian facility improvements, the team heard about and observed vehicular traffic that appeared to be traveling above the posted speed limit on both North Knox St and Aster Ave. A speed study and a traffic calming study are recommended along both streets. Those studies, which would include traffic counts and speed data collection, could identify the feasibility of treatments such as speed humps and raised crosswalks to reduce speed and ultimately improve pedestrian safety. The findings of the speed study may provide further support for some of the recommendations included in the report or may yield additional recommendations.

APPENDIX A: Knox Community Recommendations Report

Watkins Ct at North Knox St

Copeland St at North Knox St

Cemetery entrances on North Knox St (west side from 3 Notch St to end)

South Rose Cir at North Knox St

John Lewis Dr at North Knox St

North Knox St between end of existing sidewalk and John Lewis Dr

North Rose Cir at North Knox St

North Knox St (east side from 3 Notch St to Autumn Ridge entrance)

APPENDIX B: Hubbard Community Recommendations Report

Hubbard St at Aster Ave

Aster Ave at South Aster Cir

Aster Ave at North Aster Cir

Aster Ave north of Aster Cir (east side)

Aster Ave north of Aster Cir (crosswalk location)

Aster Ave (west side from North Aster Cir to Gibbs St, and east side from Hubbard St to North Aster Cir)