America Walks and the Walking Movement

Heidi Simon
America Walks

Today's Agenda

About America Walks

Building Momentum and Inclusion in the Walking Movement

What's On Our Radar

Critical Issues for the Future

Getting Involved

About America Walks

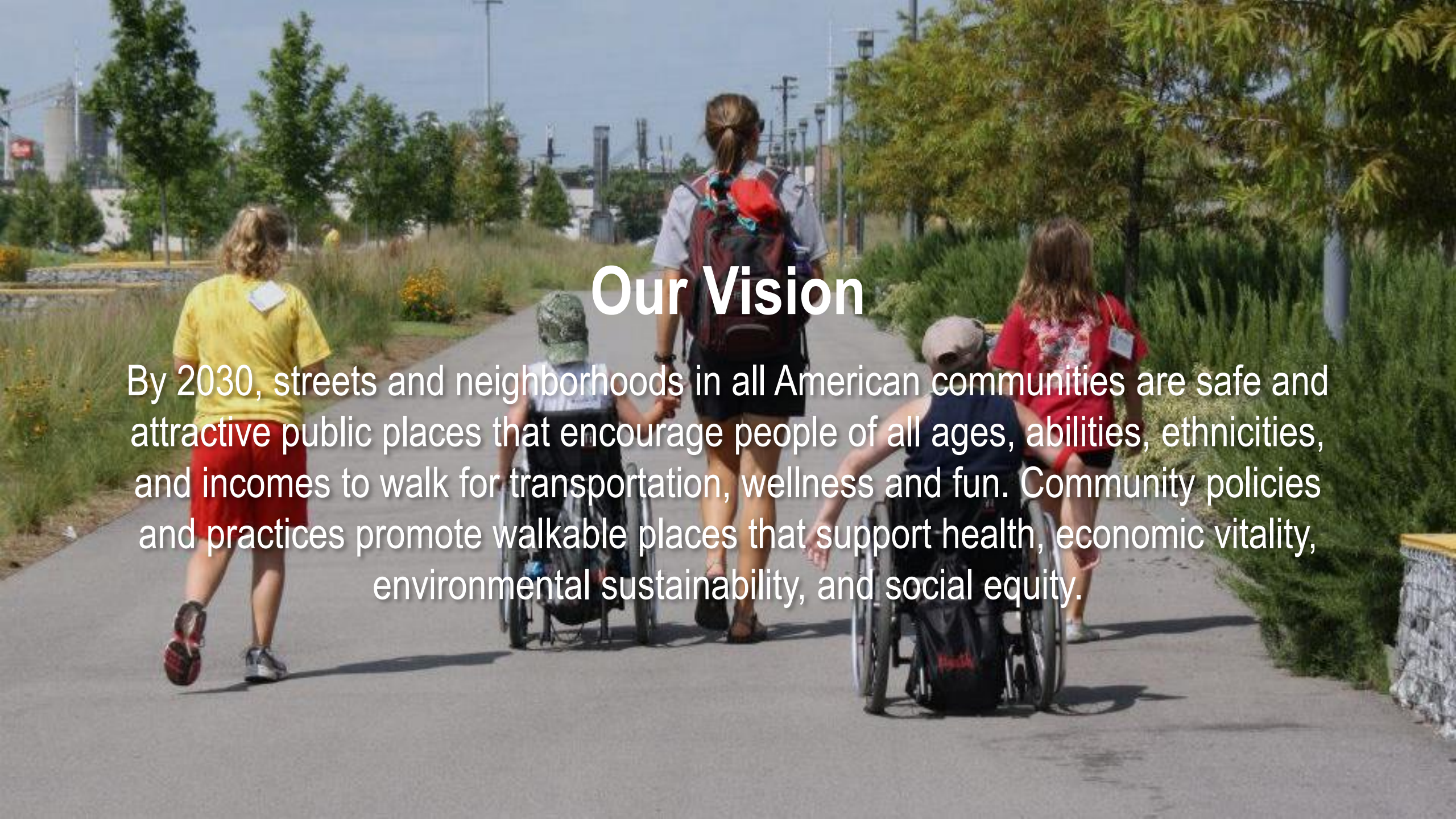
AMERICA *WALKS*

America Walks advances safe, equitable, accessible, and enjoyable places to walk and move by giving people and communities the resources to effectively advocate for change.

Photo Credit: Dan Burden, Blue Zones

About Our Organization

America Walks is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to creating more walkable and livable places. We work with a diverse coalition of partners by sharing resources, providing technical assistance, and acting as a national voice for the thousands of passionate local, state, and national advocates. Now celebrating over 20 years, we continue to expand our advocacy and programming to position walking as a national priority.



Our Vision

By 2030, streets and neighborhoods in all American communities are safe and attractive public places that encourage people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and incomes to walk for transportation, wellness and fun. Community policies and practices promote walkable places that support health, economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and social equity.

Our Reach

Electronic Mailing List:

32,000 Names

Twitter:

11,000 Followers

Facebook:

4,600 Followers

Webinars and Online Trainings in 2018:

16,000 Registrations

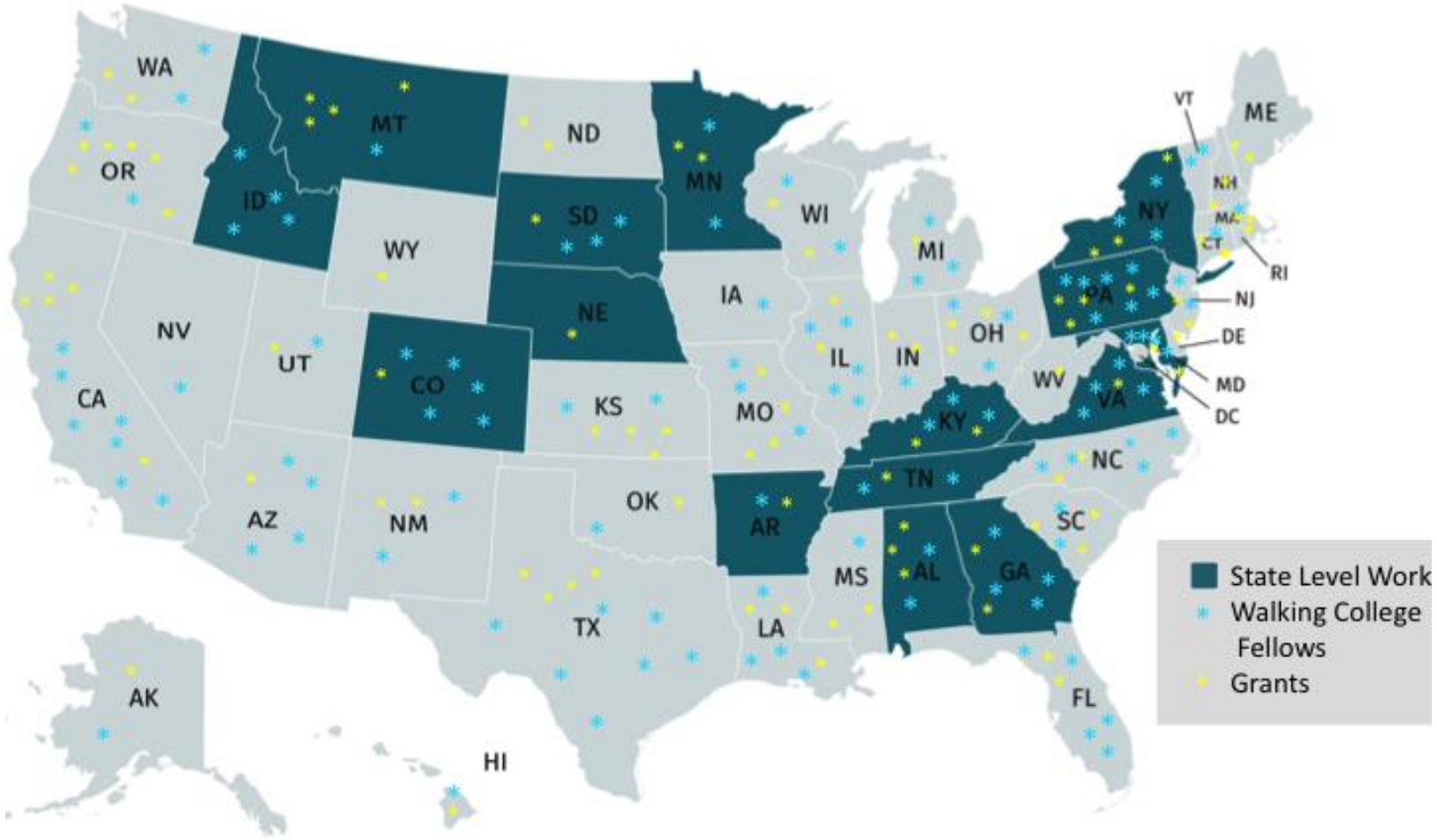
Not Your Mama's Walking Movement

- Intersections with housing, transit, real estate, and more
- Advocates from multiple sectors and industries
- Community change agents and national leaders

Our Work

- Webinars and Trainings
- National Walking Summit
- Walking College
- Advocacy
- Community Change Grants
- Mobility Independence

What That Looks Like



Building Momentum and Inclusion in the Walking Movement

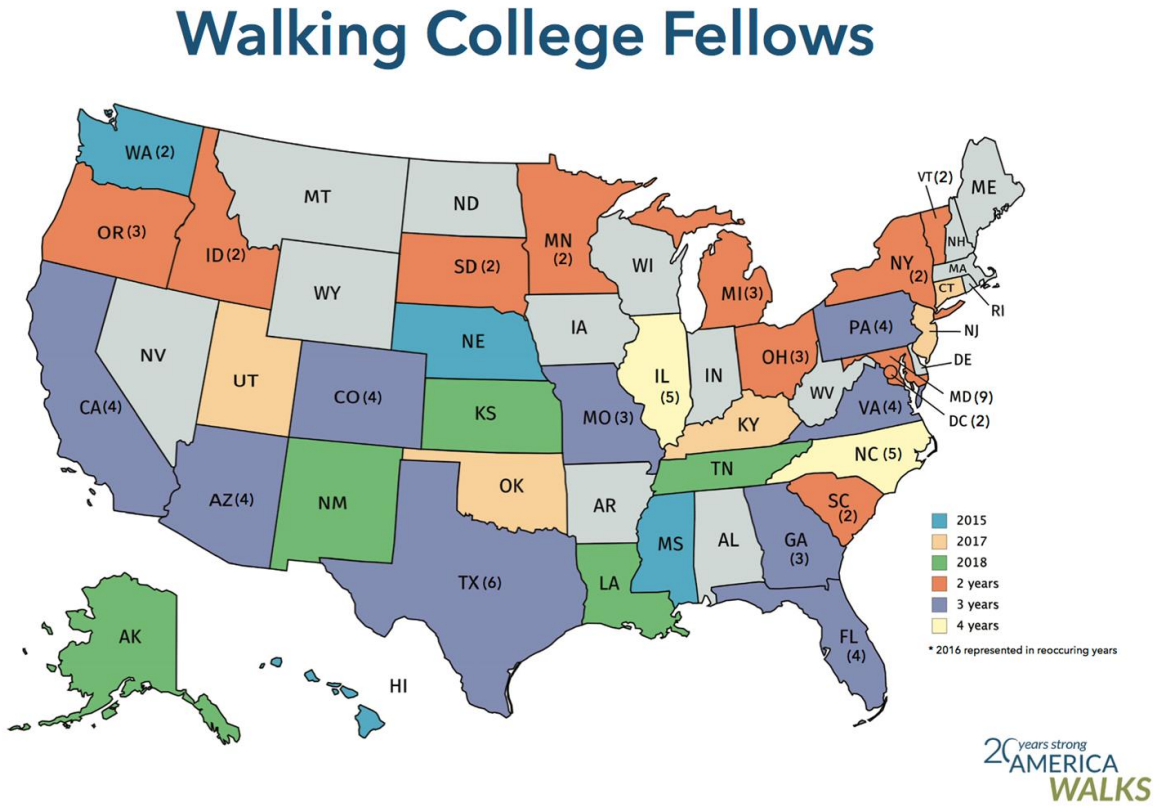
The Walking College

Interactive, online, educational program for walkable community advocates

Fellows come from professions such as public health, transportation, education, and advocacy

Four classes with almost 100 Fellows graduated since 2015

Fellow take their Walking Action Plans back to the community with the support of America Walks and their classmates



A Word from Amelia O'Hare
2019 Walking College Fellow

Community Change Grants

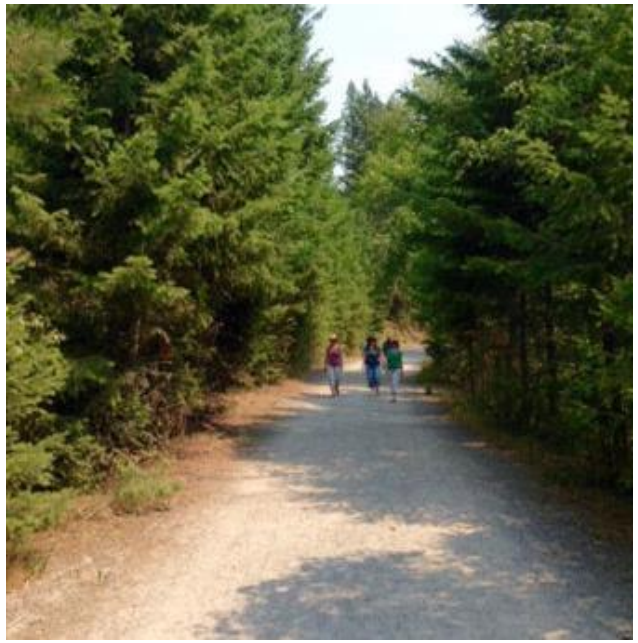
Launched in 2015 and awards just went out for its fourth year

Small catalytic grants between $1,500-$2,500

Funded projects walking and benefits of walkability in communities, work to grow the walking movement by engaging people and organizations new to the efforts, and take steps towards creating a culture of inclusive health.

19 grants awarded in 2019

Portland, OR Mural Painting



Access
PORTSMOUTH

Commit to Inclusion

- Every individual, regardless of regardless of age, ability, gender, sexual orientation or economic status has the right to walk and be physically active.

- Signed May 2017 in partnership with NCHPAD and other partners

Program Update

- Resulted in new resources, workshops, and trainings
- Has informed our imaging, messaging, and other program elements
- Inclusive Health Community Change Grants

Lessons and Observations

- Created opportunities to partner and work with new organizations and sectors
- Recognize your own privilege and be willing to learn
- Show up, even if it’s just to sit quietly.

What's On Our Radar

We Can Do More, Now

- Tactical Urbanism and Pop-up projects work
- We know what needs to change
- Increasing and improving communications

We Need More Help

- Funding and Leadership- from local elected officials, state leadership (including DOTs), and more
- Creating allies and partnerships
- Building connectivity within and between communities

Critical Issues for the Future

Changing the Narrative

- Transportation is changing, we need to too
- How do we measure an effective street or space?
- Who bears the responsibility for safety?
- People-focused vs. car-focused

What (and Who) Will Be On Our Streets

- Micro mobility brings opportunities and challenges
- Can’t be distracted from existing concerns and issues
- Communities and advocates need to be at the table from day one

Walking is the Future

- Economic stability and growth
- Addresses climate change and environmental concerns
- Creates a future that brings people and communities together

Get Involved

We Can’t Do it Alone

- Encourage walking and physical activity as part of all programming
- Challenge your networks and colleagues to help us expand who is at the table
- Turn participants into advocates
- Join us in St. Louis in March

And You Can't Either

- Present on a webinar, be part of the Walking College, or help us pilot our work
- Share resources, information, and communications
- Consider us a once and future partner

Contact Us

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