



Fall Prevention Coalition – Los Angeles (FPC-LA)
Walkability Workshop on Fairfax Avenue
National Council of Jewish Women
Wednesday, October 27, 2010

BACKGROUND

Falls are a leading cause of injury, loss of independence, and death among older adults. Falling and the fear of falling can lead to depression and isolation, especially when neighborhoods present unsafe conditions. The Fall Prevention Coalition – Los Angeles (FPC-LA) is funded by the Kaiser Foundation to reduce falls among older adults in the greater Los Angeles area by raising awareness, establishing a network of services, and advocating for policy change. FPC-LA includes representatives of government agencies (including the City and County Area Agencies on Aging, City and County Fire Departments, and Department of Public Health), health care and senior service providers, private and non-profit organizations.

WALKABILITY

Walkability is a measure of how friendly an area is for walking. A walkable community includes features that encourage walking, use of public transportation, and access to local businesses and services for people of all ages and abilities. Barriers to walking – such as uneven sidewalks, insufficient crosswalk times, and lack of curb cuts – can also pose safety and fall hazards. The Center for Physical Activity's nationally recognized Walkability Workshop is designed to mobilize the resources necessary to make neighborhoods safer and more pedestrian-friendly.

SUMMARY

On Wednesday, October 27, 2010, a four-hour Walkability Workshop was held in the Fairfax District at the National Council of Jewish Women on North Fairfax Avenue. The area was chosen for several reasons: many older adults frequent its shops and markets, there are two senior service organizations in the neighborhood, and its 90036 zip code ranks #5 among the zip codes with the highest fall-related hospitalization rates recently identified by the LA County Department of Public Health. FPC-LA hosted the event in collaboration with the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence at USC, the Center for Physical Activity and Prevention Institute; it was sponsored by the Fairfax Business Association and the National Council of Jewish Women.

The goals of the Workshop were to raise awareness of the issues of outdoor falls and walkability, to help improve community safety for residents of all ages, and to educate participants so they could promote walkability in their own communities. Participants included representatives of elected officials, Departments of City Planning, Transportation, Disability, and Public Health, the Fairfax Business Association, the Mid City West Community Council, non-profit organizations, individuals with vision and hearing impairments, and community advocates.

The workshop included an interactive presentation of walkable community concepts, an expert-led walk-through and analysis of Fairfax Avenue between Clinton Street and Beverly Boulevard, recommendations for improvement, and a discussion to establish priority issues.



Priority issues identified by the group include the following:

- Sidewalk – address buckling by Fairfax High School between Rosewood and Clinton
- Crosswalks – painting (advance stop bars, zebra stripes) and more involved improvements (e.g., flashing lights, audible warning, extend times, palm buttons)
- Public furniture – add benches, improve bus stations with bus shelters
- Seek community participation (including businesses and the nearby high school)
- Trees – plant trees for shade and noise reduction, improve maintenance of current trees
- Create a sense of place – install gateway, wayfinding signs, remove debris and trash

NEXT STEPS

FPC-LA will create a final report, which will be distributed to Workshop participants and posted online. An action plan for addressing priority issues will be developed by FPC-LA with input from community stakeholders and consideration for diverse groups' needs and interests. This plan will be brought to policy makers and those in a position to bring about change.

WALKABILITY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

- WORKSHOP FACILITATOR - Manal Abolata, Program Director, Prevention Institute
- Susan Alexman, Director of Senior Services, Jewish Family Service of LA
- Phyllis Amaral, Clinical Director, Center for the Partially Sighted
- Teresa Batson, Community Planner, Department of City Planning
- Bryan Dahlgren, Client, Center for the Partially Sighted
- Susan Eisenbarth, Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) Staff, Dept. of Transportation
- Daniel Evans, Community Liaison Public Health Nurse, Public Health Dept. SPA 8 - South Bay
- Laura Gazdziak, Community Liaison Public Health Nurse, Public Health Dept. SPA 5 & 6 - LA
- Carol Hahn, HELPS Program Director, OPICA Adult Day Services and Counseling Center
- Pamela Huntoon, Director of Educational Issues, Councilwoman Jan Perry – District 9
- Leslie Isenberg, Social Services Program Administrator, City of West Hollywood
- Angela Kaufman, ADA Coordinator, Department on Disability
- Joyce Kleifield, Chair, Fairfax Business Association
- Jessica Krantz, MoveWell Specialist, Beach Cities Health District
- Louise Lelah, Client, Freda Mohr Multipurpose Center
- Yudy Machado, Board Member & Senior Representative, Mid City West Community Council
- Rita Mozian, Health Educator, Public Health Dept. SPA 1 & 2 - North Hollywood
- Mike Murase, Director of Service Programs, Little Tokyo Service Center
- Emily Nabors, Program Coordinator and Evaluator, Fall Prevention Center of Excellence
- Chris Nelms, Director of Rehabilitation, Center for the Partially Sighted
- Chun Nickles, Graduate Student Intern, Fall Prevention Center of Excellence
- Anna Quyen Do Nguyen, Research Scientist, Fall Prevention Center of Excellence
- Denise Piastrelli, Injury Prevention Coordinator, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
- Jon Pynoos, Co-Director, Fall Prevention Center of Excellence
- Richard Ray, ADA Compliance Coordinator, Department on Disability
- Cristina Romero, Field Representative, Congressman Henry Waxman Staffperson
- Nicolla Ross, Senior Director of Community Health, American Heart Association
- Mike Stifel, Program Coordinator, Eichenbaum Health Center of Jewish Family Service of LA
- Way Wen, Community Liaison Public Health Nurse, Public Health Dept. SPA 3 – Monrovia