



Let's Walk Downtown



Pedestrian and Bicycle
Information Center

Problem

Most Atlanta citizens don't consider walking, even when taking short trips.

Background

Atlanta's Downtown Transportation Management Association (TMA) began an education program in 2004 to increase walking for short trips, with the goals of promoting health and sustainability, decreasing the need for unnecessary trips, and thereby reducing congestion.

Solution

The primary component of the Let's Walk Downtown plan was the "Walk There!" challenge. This challenge encouraged members of the Georgia State Legislature, City Council, and the Mayor's office to pledge to walk instead of driving. Participants received a pedometer to track the number of steps they took each week, totaling them on the TMA website on a weekly basis. Weekly and monthly winners were recognized with prizes. The TMA has also developed walking maps, distributed in public places, which highlight the sites within easy walking distance.

The elected officials and staff participated in promotional events to help raise awareness of the health, environmental, and social benefits of walking. The project sponsors and participating organizations are many: the Clean Air Campaign, the Georgia State University Police, the Hyatt Hotel, the Georgia Coalition of Physical Activity and Nutrition, the Morehouse School of Medicine, and a variety of city agencies. Educational materials were distributed to the Morehouse School of Medicine and the Police Department.

Results

The Walk There! Challenge was quite successful with elected officials, as nearly 2000 pedometers were distributed. Additionally, the challenge was covered in several media publications. It is planned to expand the challenge to other groups, including Atlanta Public School employees.

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Image sources

Central Atlanta Progress Atlanta Downtown Improvement District.
http://www.centralatlantaprogress.org/TransParking_WalkThere.asp