



The American Planning Association's
Professional Institute
**American Institute
of Certified Planners**

WALKING TOURS

Celebrate 100 Years of Planning on Foot

Take a look at how your community developed or how it is evolving by hosting a planning walking tour. The tour can be a way to celebrate 100 years of planning or to look at how planning has impacted your community.

Anyone can develop and host a walking tour. Consider doing the tour as part of a chapter activity or for your student planning organization. Tour subjects could include a historic master planned community such as Radburn, New Jersey; Greenbelt, Maryland; Morgan Park, Minnesota; The Woodlands, Texas; Greendale, Wisconsin; or Greenhills, Ohio.

Offer AICP Certification Maintenance (CM) Credit

Tours could qualify for CM credits. If you'd like to offer CM credit for your tour, please work with your chapter Professional Development Officer or President. The tour could even be offered as part of your chapter's overall CM offerings.

Please provide your chapter officer with the following information if your tour qualifies for CM credit:

- A detailed itinerary describing the significance of the tour site.
- Names of tour leaders or content experts with short biographical information.

The chapter will manage the CM application and the AICP member evaluation. Tour registration must include the ID numbers of AICP members. The registration report should be kept by the chapter.

GETTING STARTED

Partner with a Host Organization

This organization will assist with the development and implementation of the tour.

Tour Sites:

Tours should be one to two hours long. If you plan a longer tour, be sure to include a rest stop. Walking tours more than two hours long can be fatiguing.

Itinerary

Begin by creating an itinerary. Decide what you would like to cover during your tour—one main planning theme or several themes. Some ideas may include:

- Historic preservation
- Original design v. adaptations
- Public spaces

- Landscaping and greening
- Universal design
- Multi-modal transportation
- Parks or green space

Decide where your tour will go and if it will include visits inside some buildings. Be sure to have permission to enter the property with your group.

Mark your sites on a draft tour map. Now, take a practice walk of the tour. Make certain that the sites you selected are:

- Accessible within your time constraints
 - Remember groups walk more slowly than individuals
- Close enough together to see a site at least every 10 minutes
- Accessible to the public
 - If sites require permission (such as entering private buildings) make sure you have permission from the owner and inform the tenants
- Clearly illustrate the point you want to emphasize.
 - If the subject is mixed use development, make certain the tour group can see the housing, retail, and other uses easily.
- Have variety
 - Point out features in between your main destinations, such as artist-designed manhole covers, wayfinding signs, nonconforming buildings, dog parks, or any other relevant planning “quick topic.”

Once you have done your practice walk to check the times and locations of the stops or sites, prepare a written itinerary. Number the stops or sites and mark them on the final tour map (see below).

Transportation

Keep your logistics simple by having the attendees get themselves to the tour site. You may wish to provide instructions on how to get the start location and provide transit and parking information.

If you use a tour bus, work with your host organization on booking the bus and arranging all the necessary details.

Map

Everyone taking the tour needs a map. The map should show enough detail so people can find their way in case they get separated from the group. The map will help attendees locate the key stops on the tour and orient themselves to the community.

Number the sites or stops on the tour map and delineate the direction of the tour route on the map.

Some tours will use red flags to indicate which buildings are on the tour. For self-guided portions of the tour this can be especially convenient.

On the reverse side of the map, copy the itinerary for the tour. List street addresses or locations so people can orient themselves easily.

The map and itinerary should show the start and end times and the exact locations of the beginning and end of the tour.

Other Graphic Materials

You may wish to add to your handouts such things as:

- Historic photographs of key buildings or locations
- Historic plan of the community
- In-progress photographs of key buildings or locations.

Speakers at Sites/Stops

You may wish to have some people conduct presentations at one or more stops. Be sure to budget time for questions and answers. Make certain that the presenters:

- Know the length of time available for a presentation
- Know the time you expect to arrive and depart
- Know the purpose of the tour
- Arrange for any special needs, such as keys to unlock the doors, etc.

Call your presenters 48 hours prior to the tour to confirm their participation. Confirm they have taken care of keys or other special needs.

Be certain to thank your presenters after the tour.

Recruit Tour Leaders

If you expect a turnout of more than 15 people, you will need more than one tour leader. Recruit people who are good speakers, responsible, and knowledgeable about the area of the tour.

Meet with your tour leaders prior to the tour to orient them to the route, the tour materials, and your expectations of them as leaders.

Each tour leader will have a copy of the tour book (see below).

Be certain to thank your leaders once the event is over.

Tour Book

Use a 3-ring binder to organize all critical information for your tour and the tour leaders. The book should contain:

- Pertinent information for each stop; the points the leader should cover
- A photo of the site in case it might be difficult to identify
- Contact information for building owners
- Contact information for the tour director
- Maps
- Emergency instructions (in case someone needs help).

Registration for Tours

You may wish to have attendees register for the tours so you know how many people to expect. Registration is mandatory if you will offer CM credit. Your chapter also will need a record of the AICP members who participated.

Facilities

If your tour is more than one hour, you may wish to include a stop at a nearby public restroom. Budget time for a break, if appropriate.

Enjoy!