

WALKING PATHS

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AT UC DAVIS

PARTNERS

The Walking Path project could not have been made possible without the cooperation of the following campus partners:

- Transportation and Parking Advisory Committee
- Campus Planning
- Student Disability Center
- Finance, Operations and Administrations



OVERVIEW

In early 2018, marked walking paths and a corresponding map were created at UC Davis and UC Davis Health campuses. Five paths were installed at UC Davis and two paths were installed at UC Davis Health for a total of 118 markers installed. This initiative was accompanied with an educational campaign to educate the students, staff, and faculty about the importance of walking using various social media platforms. This program also attempted to expand the reach of the Stride for Aggie Pride, a philanthropic run promoting wellness for staff, students, and faculty. Use of the paths have also been, and will continue to be, embedded in other Healthy UC Davis wellness events.

PROJECT DETAILS

Campus Planning, Transportation Services and Grounds all needed to approve the proposed walking loops prior to installation. The Transportation and Parking Advisory Committee were required to approve the loops. While ADA accessibility of the loops was highly considered, the campus needed too many changes to create an ADA accessible route. Rather, the Student Disability Center Director recommended that “areas of concern” for ADA accessibility were denoted on the map, so individuals can make their own choices about whether or not to attempt sections of the loop. Since the UC Davis campus is split into four districts, it was determined that there would be one 1-mile walking loop in each district. This strategy makes it more feasible for individuals across campus to access a conveniently placed walking loop and also encourages exploration of other campus districts.

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DATA SNAPSHOT

- Four 1-mile and one 5K marked walking/running loops on the Davis campus and a 1-mile loop and a .5 mile out and back route on the UC Davis Health campus were built.
- An electronic map was developed by the campus GIS expert to allow easy access to information about the walking loops. The map is embedded into the Healthy UC Davis website and, as of December 2018, there have been 2,761 page views.
- Five of the Healthy UC Davis loops were used for the annual UC Walks event on both campuses.
- During the 2018 Stride for Aggie Pride, there were 1900 participants, of which 6.3% were UC Davis staff.
- Survey data indicates that 50% of users use the loops more than 5 times a week. Furthermore, 96% of respondents said they enjoy using the marked paths and 58% indicated that they engage in more movement because of the loops. Most respondents (80%) identified that the loops were easy to find and 86% said that the markers were easy to follow. Finally, 63% indicated that they found the electronic map useful for finding a local and accessible walking loop.

RESOURCES

The UCD Arboretum:
<https://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/visit>

UCD Walking Paths:
<https://healthy.ucdavis.edu/physical-activity/walk>

UC Walks:
<https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/working-at-uc/livingwell/wellbeing/uc-walks.html>

PROJECT DETAILS CONTINUED

The project team opted to install one 1-mile loop and a .5 mile out-and-back route between the two most popular buildings on the UC Davis Health campus. It was determined that as few markers as possible would be installed to reduce visual noise on campus.



PROCESS CHALLENGES

This project had been in progress for over a year before it became a Healthy UC Davis sponsored project. Prior to that, installation of walking loops experienced multiple delays due to lack of funding and support from leadership. Other obstacles include:

- Difficulty in promoting the walking loops to campus. Once the markers were installed, spring quarter was nearly over.
- Social media has been identified as one of the most strategic ways to market and evaluate the walking loops, but Healthy UC Davis doesn't currently have any social media accounts.
- By not having dedicated staff for marketing and communications, specifically the design aspect, it is difficult to fulfill the necessary promotion deliverables in a timely manner.
- Lawn signs and promotional cards were used to promote the loops after they were installed. This was not ideal as marketing and design materials are integral to project impact.
- At UC Davis Health, campus size and its placement within the City of Sacramento presented limitations.
- Campus guidelines focus on limiting signage and visual noise on campus. This is a barrier as adequate signage is integral to success.
- Evaluation was a major challenge for this project. It would be nearly impossible to distinguish people that are intentionally walking the loop from those just walking in that area.

PROCESS INSIGHT

- Prior to defining areas for the walking loops, it is important to consider the likelihood of future construction in that area, the amount of shade along the loop, accessibility and safety.
- Lawn signs can help promote and mark the walking paths, while minimizing visual noise.
- Although using epoxy to install walking paths is ideal, if there are issues with epoxy, adhesive can be a temporary solution.
- As using Campus grounds to install markers is very costly, they can be installed by volunteers if there are budgetary concerns.
- Plan budget, staffing and time for effective marketing strategies, including a social media strategy.
- Integrate the walking loops into campus-wide health and wellness events to increase awareness.