

The Ballard Greenways Guide to Leading Tours of Future Greenways

Jennifer Litowski August 2012

Planning the route:

- General public outreach tours - try to make a loop, since one-way tours are logistically awkward. It's better to sample parts of different routes, hitting key intersections and features (good and bad) than to exhaustively travel every single block. About 1 mile will probably be good for a 1-hour walking tour, perhaps 2-3 miles when biking. You probably don't want to go much over 1 hour, or people will start to drift away. Ending at a good location or event is a plus.
- Detailed route scouting is different, as you will probably want to explore block-by-block and try different variations. These tours are more for people who are already on board with the concept of greenways and looking at details, rather than just curious about where you are going. For detailed route scouting, check out the Route Scouting Guide www.bit.ly/NWAeW6

Publicize

- We've mostly relied on our email list, our Facebook page and local blogs (i.e. MyBallard and the Ballard News Tribune), but if you can get paper notices out too, that would probably reach an entirely different segment of the population. Post on the Citywide greenways network which keeps a complete events calendar <http://seattlegreenways.org/events/calendar/> & www.facebook.com/SEAGreenways

Preparation

- what are the key locations or features that you want to point out? Try to include both good and bad features - i.e. what makes this a good candidate for a greenway and where does it still need help?
- ask someone to be the photographer. It's great to have these photos for your Facebook page and to start building a collection of photos for presentations or route analysis. Try to send the photographer ahead of the group a few times, so that you get photos of people approaching. My first set of photos were all of the back of people's heads!
- bring a sign up sheet to collect emails from interested people. Also bring flyers with your group's contact info (i.e. Facebook, your website, www.SeattleGreenways.org, etc).

Gathering point

- Be specific about the location. You don't want people to miss you because they're waiting on a different side of the building.
- Allow time for chatting and late-comers. I.e plan to meet at 2:00 and leave at 2:15.
- A nice way to start is with a round of introductions - first name, what part of the neighborhood you live on, and how you like to get around the neighborhood.
- Talk for a few minutes about why you care about safe walking and biking routes in your neighborhood. What is the need that is not being filled right now? Personal anecdotes are great to include. Describe the general concept of neighborhood greenways, as some folks may never have heard of it before. Keep it pretty simple - you

can always go into more detail about specific features when you stop along the way.

Starting out

- I don't give an elaborate safety talk (compared to Spokespeople bike rides), but it is a good idea to remind people that they should only cross streets when they feel it's safe and that you'll always wait for people to catch up if the group gets separated.
- Assign one of your members to be the "sweep" for the tour, to be sure no one gets left behind.

The tour

- alternate walking/riding with stops for discussion. If you're riding, make sure people pull over to the side of the road so that others can pass. Stops will be closer together if you are walking.
- Potential points of interest - narrow vs. wide streets. On street parking, sight lines at intersections. Difficult intersections & potential solutions. Schools, parks & other important destinations. Trees & bioswales. If you have any traffic signals with loop detectors marked for bikes, point them out! Lots of people don't know about them.
- You don't need to discuss every one of these points - let the needs and features of your specific routes and neighborhood needs set the agenda.

The end of the tour

- quick wrap up and thank people for coming. Offer sign up sheet to join email list.
- You may want to end at a coffee shop or park for more detailed discussions.



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<http://ballardgreenways.org>
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