

Project Summary and Description

Name and Description of Project: “Creating Walkable Communities” was a series of seven presentations by nationally recognized pedestrian expert Dan Burden held March 11-12, 2003. Events were held at seven different locations in four counties of Upstate South Carolina for a variety of audiences. Certain events were geared to specific “target” audiences (e.g., public officials, transportation engineers) while others were designed for the public at large. The project was conceived and planned by Upstate Forever, a non-profit organization committed to promoting sensible growth, sustainable development, and the protection of special places in the Upstate region of South Carolina.

Purpose: To focus attention on pedestrian issues in Upstate South Carolina.

Process: To generate support and enthusiasm for the project, Upstate Forever solicited partnerships with businesses, universities, public agencies, and other non-profit organizations. We identified two additional major sponsors as well as twenty-one other organizations who committed financial and other resources to help offset expenses and plan the events. A complete list of supporting organizations can be found on the following page.

Seven events were held at different locations:

- *Breakfast, Cleveland Park, Spartanburg
- Walking Audit and Lunch for Public Officials, Downtown Spartanburg
- Seminar for Transportation Engineers and Planners, Greenville County Square
- Public Presentation at Furman University, Greenville
- *Breakfast, Airport Marriott, Greenville
- *Lunch, Anderson County Library
- Public Presentation, Clemson University, Clemson

**For elected and appointed officials and community leaders*

Making arrangements for seven separate events to be held during a two-day period created significant challenges. Securing venues for each event; having invitations, announcements, brochures and posters designed, printed, distributed or addressed and mailed; publicizing the project across a 4,150-square-mile region; enlisting the support of the media; arranging for meals at certain events; providing the appropriate number of staff members and volunteers at seven different locations; sticking to a strict time schedule; and staffing each event with the appropriate number of workers were only some of the tasks that must be accomplished. With help from some of the supporting organizations, all events ran smoothly, were well-attended and received positive public reaction.

Results: We were delighted with the response to the “Creating Walkable Communities” project. More than 500 people attended the events and we received terrific coverage in several Upstate newspapers (some examples enclosed). Policymakers who attended reacted favorably and in some cases have already begun to explore ways their communities can improve pedestrian accessibility. For example, inspired by Dan Burden’s presentations, the City Council in the Upstate’s largest city has passed a resolution to “express City Council’s commitment to pedestrian oriented design concepts in sidewalks, streets, and streetscapes, and to provide for review of existing land development regulations and related procedures.” In addition, Upstate Forever has been contacted by a city planning commissioner soliciting our help in designing a pedestrian-oriented plan for his downtown’s redevelopment and by other groups requesting that we make a presentation about pedestrian-friendly community design. We achieved our purpose and are now planning our next steps.



Dan Burden speaks to a group of transportation engineers and planners at Greenville County Square.

COST OF PROJECT

Total costs were approximately \$10,000 to cover Mr. Burden's fees and expenses, all printing and mailing costs, expenses for meals and arrangements, and miscellaneous expenses associated with the events. No expenses for staff time are included in this total.

PROJECT SUPPORTERS

CO-PRESENTERS

Assumed responsibility for all costs not covered by endorsement and co-sponsor contributions

HeartWise Spartanburg

Made arrangements and provided meals associated with two Spartanburg events

Greenville Pedestrian Task Force

Helped with publicity

Upstate Forever

Project Coordinator – Originated project and made all arrangements with Dan Burden, planned and implemented four events in Greenville and Clemson, designed, printed and distributed all event materials, solicited co-sponsors and endorsers, was responsible for all correspondence and record-keeping

EVENT CO-SPONSORS

Provided assistance in planning events, in some cases waived room rental fees, and helped defray meal costs

County of Anderson

The Randolph Group

Richard W. Riley Institute of Government, Politics, and

Public Leadership at Furman University

Clemson University's Center for Community Growth and Change

The Strom Thurmond Institute of Government and Public Affairs at Clemson University

ENDORSERS

Each contributed \$100 to offset project expenses

City of Greenville
City of Spartanburg
Design Strategies LLC
Emerald Realty Services
Furman University's Environmental
Action Group
Johnston Design Group
McLeod Landscape Architects
Neal-Prince & Partners Architects
Overstreet Studio
Palmetto Conservation Foundation

Partners for a Healthy Community
Pazdan-Smith Group, Inc. Architects
Safe Kids Greenville County
Safe Kids Spartanburg
Seamon, Whiteside and Associates, Inc.
of Greenville
Sierra Club, William Bartram Group
Spartanburg Area Transportation
Study/Spartanburg County Planning
and Development Department

Host Co-Sponsors

County of Anderson

Randolph Group

Richard W. Riley Institute of Government,
Politics, and Public Leadership,
Furman University

Strom Thurmond Institute/Center for
Community Growth and Change,
Clemson University

Event Endorsers

City of Greenville

City of Spartanburg

Emerald Realty Services

Furman University Environmental Action Group

Greenville Safe Kids Coalition

Johnston Design Group

McLeod Landscape Architects

Neal-Prince and Partners Architects

Overstreet Studio

Palmetto Conservation Foundation

Partners for a Healthy Community

Pazdan-Smith Group, Inc. Architects

Spartanburg Safe Kids Coalition

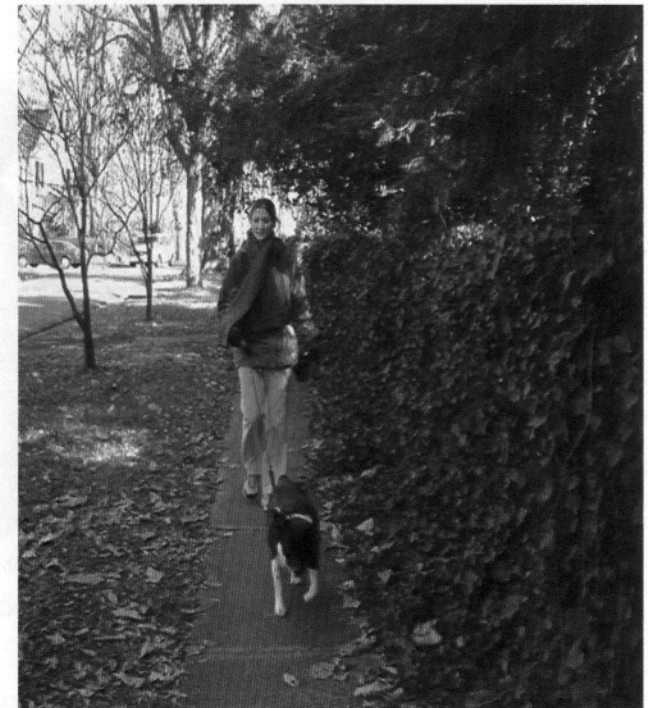
Seamon, Whiteside and Associates, Inc. of Greenville

Sierra Club, William Bartram Group

Spartanburg Area Transportation Study/Spartanburg
County Planning and Development Department



Creating Walkable Communities



Featured Speaker

Dan Burden

**Executive Director of
Walkable Communities, Inc.**

GCPT
Greenville County Pedestrian Task Force

HeartWise
A Community Partnership

Upstate Forever

Promoting Sensible Growth and
Protecting Special Places in the Upstate

Upstate Forever

P.O. Box 2308
Greenville, SC 29602
Phone: 864-250-0500
Fax: 864-250-0788
www.upstateforever.org

RESERVE YOUR PLACE AT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING UPSTATE PRESENTATIONS

FREE ADMISSION*

March 11

Greenville

Furman University

Watkins Center

7:30 pm

March 12

Clemson

Clemson University

Strom Thurmond Institute

4:00 pm

These highly visual, information rich seminars will explain how to design and create walkable and livable communities that incorporate common sense solutions to transportation, traffic and sustainability issues. Featured speaker Dan Burden is a nationally recognized authority on bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs. He has personally photographed and examined walking and bicycling conditions in over 200 cities in the US and abroad. The presentations are enriched with his celebrated photographs of case studies from towns and cities around the world. The seminar is free to all registered participants and will provide information and strategies that can revitalize communities and improve the quality of life for all citizens. From professionals in city planning, urban design and civil engineering to responsible citizens who seek to improve their communities, these seminars will give participants the tools they need to direct their own town planning initiatives through proactive, not reactive, principles.

"My lecture focuses on the early steps of returning towns and people to sensible, smart growth, sustainable, people-focused transportation and land use practices."

-Dan Burden

Presented By



GCPT's mission is to generate an increased level of awareness regarding pedestrian safety, develop and recommend a plan of action to increase and improve pedestrian accessibility and safety, and develop and recommend a pedestrian outreach program for Greenville County.



HeartWise
A Community Partnership

HeartWise is a community partnership between residents, businesses, and agencies in Spartanburg, SC. Their mission is to create healthier community environments in Spartanburg County that support physical activity and reduce the burden of disease related to inactive lifestyles.

Upstate Forever
Promoting Sensible Growth and
Protecting Special Places in the Upstate

Upstate Forever is a nonprofit membership based organization that promotes sensible growth, advocates for sustainable development practices, and protects special places in Upstate South Carolina. For more information on their programs or activities, please visit www.upstateforever.org.

Dan Burden is a nationally recognized expert in the planning and design of better streets, town centers, and neighborhoods. He served for 16 years as Florida DOT's State Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator before founding Walkable Communities, Inc., a non-profit consulting firm that he serves as Executive Director. His philosophy is to create community for people, not just cars. He shares his knowledge through course instruction for the National Highway Institute, ongoing national research and analysis of traffic calming and innovative pedestrian facilities, traffic calming standards development, and facilitating public involvement. His presentations provide participants with an understanding of the hidden assets and potential of public streets in community development.

Directions to Furman University's Watkins Center:

From Poinsett Highway, enter Main Gate to Furman University. Follow traffic circle approx. 3/4 around and turn right onto the most prominent roadway (the Mall). Continue to traffic circle in front of the Herman Lay Physical Activity Center and turn right. At road's end, turn right. Turn left at the next street. This will take you to the University Center. Park and go to the University Center's Watkins Room.

Directions to Clemson University's Strom Thurmond Institute:

From US-123 South, take the SC-93 exit. Turn left on SC Highway 93. Continue through several stoplights and cross bridge over US-76. Take an immediate left onto Newman Rd. Turn left into the large commuter lot before the intersection of Newman Rd. and McMillan Rd. Take the CAT shuttle to the Strom Thurmond Institute. Buses will arrive approximately every ten minutes from 3:15 pm until 6:15 pm.

*Space is limited- please contact Upstate Forever to reserve your place
Phone: (864) 250-0500 E-mail: info@upstateforever.org

Dan Burden Rocks the Upstate!

When world-renowned “walkable communities” expert Dan Burden agreed to visit the Upstate for two days, he said we could work him as hard as we wanted. And did we ever! We scheduled seven separate events for him on March 11 and 12 in Greenville, Spartanburg and Anderson and at Furman and Clemson Universities. We did allow

him a few hours sleep. Each event was a great success—the total attendance exceeded 500, and we received terrific coverage in several Upstate newspapers.

There is no more knowledgeable and passionate advocate for better community design than Dan Burden.

He spends 350 days a year on the road, traveling across the world and making his case with a Power Point presentation that takes your breath away and leaves you saying, “Yes! Yes!”

Dan gives you a candid assessment of what you’re doing right and what you’re doing wrong in your community. He had high praise for the downtown revitalization efforts taking place in Greenville, Spartanburg and Anderson, but he was quick to criticize the

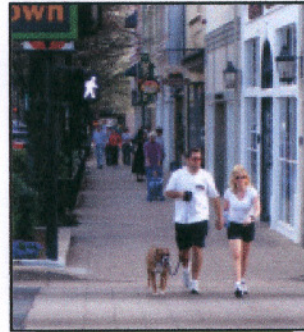
many overbuilt highways and woefully inadequate road crossings that we have in our region. There’s nothing like hearing Dan live, but the next best thing is his website:

www.walkable.org.

So please check it out if you were not able to hear him.

Also, we are pleased to announce

that Dan has agreed to serve on our Advisory Council. We are very honored to have him in the *Upstate Forever* family. ☀



A key element of downtown Greenville’s revitalization has been making Main Street safe and inviting for pedestrians.



The good and the bad: Clemson Boulevard’s busy retail district in Anderson (above) is unappealing and dangerous to pedestrians. Highway 93 in Clemson (below) has been retrofitted to add a landscaped median, shaded sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides.



Dan Burden leads a walking tour in Spartanburg.

Photos courtesy of Dan Burden

Thank You To The Wonderful Supporters Who Made Dan’s Visit To The Upstate Possible!

CO-PRESENTERS

**HeartWise Spartanburg
Greenville County Pedestrian Task Force
Upstate Forever**

EVENT CO-SPONSORS

**County of Anderson
The Randolph Group
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Spartanburg Area Transportation Study/Spartanburg County Planning and Development Department





From left, Laura Weber and her daughter Madeline, and Melissa Janse and her son Carter take a walk on Belmont Avenue near Augusta Road. John Crawford/Staff

Walk this way

Greenville County seeks improved pedestrian planning

Creating more "walkable" communities is a key trend in municipal planning nationwide. Experts say that while Greenville County is doing several things right, there is much more to be done if the area is to enjoy the improved health, better quality of life, and reduced environmental impact that pedestrian-friendly communities can provide.

BY LEIGH SAVAGE
community editor

To educate local leaders and citizens, Upstate Forever, HeartWise Spartanburg and the Greenville County Pedestrian Task Force have joined forces to bring Dan Burden, a leader in the walkability movement, to See **WALKABLE**, **A22**

WALKABLE

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the Upstate March 11-12.

As executive director of Walkable Communities Inc., Burden is a nationally recognized pedestrian expert who has developed pedestrian strategies for communities such as Asheville, Charlotte, Nashville, Honolulu and Seattle.

"Towns built for people work. Towns built for cars fail," Burden says, summing up the main point he makes in presentations across the country.

"It's basically fundamental that towns be walkable," he adds. "People think of it as a frill, and that's wrong."

While the Augusta Road and North Main areas are cited as ideal examples of pedestrian-friendly communities, walking in other areas in Greenville County is not just difficult, but dangerous, according to John Brumley, chairman of the Greenville County Pedestrian Task Force.

Greenville County currently has the third-highest number of pedestrian accidents in the state, and ranks second among the state's 46 counties for pedestrian fatalities. Overall, South Carolina has the third-highest death rate for pedestrians among all 50 states.

"We just don't have good places to walk," Brumley says. "There are ways that neighborhoods in the city and the county can be laid out that are more pedestrian-friendly."

Diane Eldridge, associate director of Upstate Forever, agrees. "There has just been so much emphasis on accommodating the automobile," she says. "Wider streets are built so traffic can move better. A lot of neighborhoods

don't have sidewalks."

Burden says communities have become increasingly isolated for the past 50 years, with housing further from stores, schools and churches.

"Every time we make anything bigger, we move it farther away," he says. "It's absolute, and cumulative. It means we're spending huge amounts on parking lots and roadways, and after a while, we've changed our emphasis."

So how can a community get back on track? Burden says there are numerous ways.

"The good news is that we can fix what's broken. It's not easy, but it can be done," he says.

Greenville is already well on its way to accomplishing the first step, he adds — revitalizing the downtown area and infusing it with residential and retail offerings.

The next step is creating "town centers" near outlying residential areas.

"What we are learning is that in a walkable-scale community, you need to have a town center about every half-mile, with lots of housing close in," Burden says.

Charlotte is a prime example of a city that is getting it right, he adds.

"They have a much larger population, but they are going through some of the same issues as Greenville," Burden says. "They are revitalizing neighborhoods and putting in villages" with mixed-use zoning that allows residential areas to share space with retail and commercial businesses.

These mixed-use "villages" have been an obstacle for Greenville builders, Eldridge says.

"Right now, we can't mix uses," she says. "So number one, we need to make the regulations loose enough. We have

to look at new ways to develop new communities."

Greenville County does offer the planned development designation, Eldridge says, but it is so difficult to achieve that few developers have attempted it.

Where Redfearn grows

One developer that received the designation is Jeff Randolph, owner and manager of The Randolph Group. He built the 15-acre Redfearn development, a popular community in Simpsonville designed to offer enhanced walkability.

"It was a more frustrating type of development to work on," Randolph says. He has developed a variety of neighborhoods throughout North and South Carolina. "It was difficult having it approved, following regulations. A lot of this stuff doesn't fit into the regulations on the books."

For example, Redfearn has 47 lots, each built 20 feet from the street — closer than a typical neighborhood. Each street has sidewalks on both sides, and there are alleyways parallel to the streets that offer rear access to homes. Alleys are typically narrow to slow traffic and increase safety for walkers.

The lots were purposefully kept small so that the extra space in the neighborhood could be devoted to creating a common area, Randolph says.

"Out of 47 lots, I believe 25 or 28 of them face a park. There's a grass area where people can throw a baseball or have a picnic. It forces people out of their back yards into the park area and creates a more attractive neighborhood because there is more interaction."

The lots have sold briskly, so despite

his difficulty in achieving the planned development designation, Randolph plans to break ground on a similar neighborhood in Simpsonville within the next few months.

"There were no municipalities that were set up to accommodate it, but things are already changing," he says.

Brumley's Pedestrian Task Force is rewarding Randolph for his efforts with a residential development award of merit. The task force presents awards to businesses and individuals that contribute to the pedestrian-friendliness of the county.

"If you build it, will they come? Jeff took the chance that they wouldn't come," Brumley says. "And he got the engineering staff and the planning commission on his side to create Redfearn, so he really opened the door to that kind of project. It's much easier now than when he first did it."

The next step, according to Eldridge and Burden, is creating walkable communities with destinations such as shops and restaurants nearby.

"People don't just want to walk in circles in their neighborhood," Eldridge says. "They want to walk to a coffee shop or a bookstore. When you start connecting destinations, people get out there and walk."

Burden's two-day visit in the Upstate will include six presentations to policymakers, planners, transportation engineers, community leaders and the general public. The public presentations will be held at Furman University on Tuesday, March 11, at 7:30 p.m., and at Clemson University on Wednesday, March 12, at 4 p.m. Admission is free, though space is limited and reservations are required. For more information or to reserve a seat, call Upstate Forever at 250-0500.

Proponent of 'walkable' communities walking through the Upstate

By Kelly Davis
Independent-Mail

It's a good thing Dan Burden isn't in the business of making friends of traffic engineers because the pedestrian advocate doesn't pull his punches when describing what he sees as projects offensive to our natural mode of getting around.

"Clemson probably has the most poorly constructed intersection in America," the nationally renowned founder of Walkable Communities Inc., said Monday from Spartanburg, where he was to give a presentation on a neighborhood in the city. "It's too big, too wide. I've got a super-wide-angle lens and I needed four frames to put that together."

He said he plans to showcase the intersection during a free public presentation on Clemson's pedestrian friendliness Wednesday at 4 p.m. at Clemson University's Strom

Thurmond Institute.

He will present a similar program tonight at 7:30 p.m. at Furman University to discuss the city of Greenville, and he plans to meet privately with Anderson city and county policymakers Wednesday at noon. He conducted cursory "walkability audits" of the cities early this week.

Anderson County and Clemson University are among co-sponsors of Mr. Burden's visit, organized by Upstate Forever, an anti-sprawl group.

Anderson, Clemson and Greenville have pursued growth in this Atlanta-like fashion, but all is not lost, he said.

"Anderson, Greenville, and Clemson are all going to succeed to the extent that they can get good quality villages on the ground, in closed, compact locations with mixed uses," he said.

Walkable Communities, Inc.

320 South Main Street

High Springs, FL 32643

May 21, 2003

Pedestrian Project Award
c/o Institute of Transportation Engineers
1099 14th Street, NW, Suite 300 West
Washington, D.C. 20005

To Whom It May Concern:

Many of you reading this letter of endorsement know me personally, and you know that I speak frankly, and from the depths of my heart. I take award giving seriously. Only the best deserve your highest honor. I have worked in many of the best 1300 communities throughout the nation on walkability and community development issues in the past six years. The work Upstate Forever folks did to assemble, organize and get great turnouts in a full week of events this spring is unequaled in all of my travels. Seriously.

I am writing to recommend Upstate Forever for the 2003 ITE Pedestrian Project Award. In March of this year, they sponsored a series of events entitled "Creating Walkable Communities" at which I was the featured speaker and that I believe fit the criteria you have set for the award. The events were designed to bring pedestrian issues to the forefront through education and to begin a dialogue with policymakers, designers, engineers, planners and the general public about ways to improve pedestrian facilities and safety in the Upstate region.

As background I need to explain that walkability achievements in South Carolina, outside of historic Charleston, are miniscule. I had very little hope before I arrived. Even after I arrived, one middle age engineer, from the back of the room I presented to, shouted in a disparaging voice, in front of her ITE peers ... her disbelief that living in any place other than a cul-de-sac community was stupid. She wanted big, fat, fast roads ... any concept, especially a road diet, to help save the thousands of people and homes toward the interior of a town, was not for her and would not work for her people.

Meanwhile, daily, en-route to our presentations in most communities I drove down miles of seven lane strips carrying as little as 10,000 cars daily. In one community, a newly completed intersection was 296 feet across. I labeled it the most unfriendly intersection in America. These roads were ugly and brutal enough to win a national award for stupidity. With that to set a stage, let me share with you my total delight with the Upstate Forever people.

The six-county region served by Upstate Forever is one of the country's most rapidly-growing areas in terms of population growth and land development. Development has predominantly followed a typical sprawl pattern with "cookie-cutter" subdivisions, wide streets, few sidewalks, and segregated land uses. Countless roads and intersections are unfriendly to pedestrians. Strip development is the norm and no public transit to speak of is available anywhere in the region. Obesity rates and the incidence of respiratory disease are high in this region where the more than one million residents have few choices other than to drive their cars everywhere they go. These issues were the focus of the Upstate Forever events.

They got both high numbers of people and quality of people to come to each event. This performance is testimony to their believability, skills at networking and level of trust they have established in towns of all sizes. I have no other region of the nation or group to compare them with. They are like tiny butterfly bodies carrying wings so massive, beautiful and believable that everyone turns out to marvel their achievements. And when they flap their wings, a wind is set in motion and their world responds.



Details follow. I made presentations to city and county council members, mayors, public and private planners and engineers, architects, landscape architects, college students and everyday citizens. I spoke in a variety of locations that included Clemson and Furman Universities, a public park complex, a county office building, a hotel, a public library, and I conducted a walking tour of a downtown. To say they kept me running would be an understatement!

Upstate Forever enlisted the support of an impressive list of more than 20 endorsers that included local government bodies and agencies, universities, businesses and non-profit organizations. Brochures, press releases and invitations went out in advance, and several newspapers provided coverage both before and after the events. I was introduced by someone different at all seven events, including a university provost, the chairman of a pedestrian task force, and a public planning director. Every detail was planned in advance and everything went off without a hitch.

Upstate Forever's outreach efforts paid off - more than 500 people attended the events, including members of the state chapter of ITE, which rearranged its meeting date and location so its members could attend a presentation designed for transportation engineers and planners.

I, along with Upstate Forever and the supporting organizations, was delighted with the excellent response to these presentations. Together we raised some important questions about pedestrian safety and accessibility and started a discussion we hope will continue.

More than anything, what this tiny but bold group of Upstate Forever people did, if it were replicated and served as a model throughout the nation ... it would put ITE in the minds and hearts of every politician, town leader, media person and other affection ado for a foot powered future forever. Learn and copy everything they did here ... get out a manual, a video, or anything ... and let the nation rise to this great, great level of hope, promise and achievement. I have shared with Kate Kraft, Richard Killingsworth and Sarah Strunk and others that they need to replicate these fine, fine Southern folks ... their starry, but experienced eyes... as an inspiration to all.

I heartily recommend that you award Upstate Forever the 2003 ITE Pedestrian Project award, and make this group the benchmark, the test for all future awards.

*Dan Burden / signed with
his permission*

Dan Burden
Executive Director