

On October 27, Bike Walk Knoxville staff and volunteers were joined by local elected officials, business owners, and other community members for a walking tour of the Tyson Park area. The tour was a fun and informative experience that highlighted the need for, and the challenges to, cyclist and pedestrian accessibility in that community.

The first stop on the tour was the intersection of Tyson McGhee Park Street and Cumberland Avenue. We discussed how the sidewalk in that area is the designated bike route, which creates a risk of collision with pedestrians. Furthermore, the signal lights for University Commons Way and Metron Center Way are on different timing cycles. This means that, for people walking and biking who cannot see the light, crossing this non-aligned intersection is incredibly difficult and dangerous. There is also not sufficient bike/pedestrian signage and signals to make crossing this intersection feel safe.

As we walked further up Cumberland Avenue towards 22nd Street, we pointed out that the sidewalk is only about 5 feet wide. This makes it difficult to use, especially when parts of the sidewalk are obstructed by nearby construction. Also, several buildings and parking garages have entrances only a few feet back from the sidewalk, which creates a bottleneck for conflict and increases the likelihood of a collision, especially if cars are not looking out for cyclists and pedestrians. In fact, [along Cumberland Avenue and Kingston Pike between 17th Street and Alcoa Highway, there were 11 collisions in which a cyclist riding on the sidewalk was struck by a car](#). This number only includes collisions that were documented by police reports, meaning that it is likely that other collisions occurred but were not recorded.

The last major stop on the tour considered the opportunities to connect Tyson Park to the Fort Sanders neighborhood. The city has looked into several options, including installing a bridge or building a tunnel, which would create convenient access to the park by foot and by bike. This is also important, because the Third Creek greenway that runs through Tyson Park is the most used greenway in the city, but is not necessarily well suited for commuting purposes. We also looked at White Avenue and discussed adding a 2 lane protected bike lane on that roadway.

Overall, the tour was a great opportunity to explore some of Knoxville on foot and engage with local elected officials and other community stakeholders. We are so grateful for everyone who joined us to see both the good and the bad of active transportation infrastructure in the Tyson Park area, and we look forward to our next tour!