



STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO THE

# TEN TOE EXPRESS

Citizens for Modern Transit  
in Partnership with the Missouri Foundation for Health





# Step By Step to the Ten Toe Express

Welcome to the Step By Step Guide to the Ten Toe Express. This guide explains how you can set up a Ten Toe Express program. This is a fun and unique walking program unlike anything you are currently offering.

Around the country, groups are hopping on public buses, subways, and light rail to travel to destinations around the city. They also use the oldest form of transportation known to man – their own two feet. With a combination of public transportation and walking, these groups visit places of historical importance or cultural interest, all for the price of a bus ticket!

## Will you lead the next Ten Toe Express?

### What are the Benefits?

- **Inexpensive:** For the price of a bus ticket, seniors can see a new place, learn the history of their own town, and get some exercise in the company of other seniors.
- **Travel in small bites:** There's no 5-hour car ride or long layover at the airport. These tours can take 2-4 hours. Out in the morning and back before lunch!
- **Learning and new experiences:** Seniors get to see and learn about parts of the city they have not visited before and can learn how to use public transportation in the process.
- **Get active in good company.** Ten Toers meet new friends and have fun taking a walk together. When you lead a Ten Toe Adventure, getting physically active is fun. Before you know it, you and your new friends have walked a mile or more!
- **Better air quality.** Hometown tourism using public transportation and walking is indisputably the most environmentally friendly form of low carbon tourism.



*Americans who use transit spend a median of 19 minutes daily walking to and from transit; 29% achieve 30 minutes of physical activity a day solely by walking to and from transit.*

*Rail users, minorities, people in households earning \$15,000 a year, and people in high-density urban areas were more likely to spend 30 minutes walking to and from transit daily.*

- Am J Prev Med 2005;29(4)

# Who Should Read This?

We created this for people who work with seniors or work for seniors, especially professionals who create programs for seniors. This guide is perfect for Directors at a YMCA or a Jewish Community Center. It's also ideal for Program Managers at a church, synagogue, senior center or independent living facility. This guide could also be useful for social workers, public health professionals, and social service agency employees. If you want to create a fun, successful program that improves the lives of seniors, keep reading!

## Who Are We?

Citizens for Modern Transit is a non-profit advocacy organization for public transportation. In addition to our advocacy work, we are helping organizations around the country replicate the Ten Toe Express. We started our Ten Toe Express to help seniors in the St. Louis area improve their health, become more familiar and comfortable with St. Louis area public transportation, and to help create a link between physical activity and the use of public transportation. This Step By Step Guide and our Ten Toe Express is possible through a partnership with the Missouri Foundation for Health.



## Benefits of Public Transportation

- **Public transportation is inexpensive.** This can be crucial for the budgets of seniors on a fixed income, or for seniors who are inundated with health care expenses. Often, senior fares are half-price.
- **Public transportation reduces social isolation.** It might be as simple as a smile from a fellow passenger or a short conversation with the bus driver. The simple act of interacting with other human beings on a daily basis makes us happy.
- **Public transportation adds 19 minutes of walking to your day.** When we walk to and from the bus stop, we build much needed exercise into our daily routine. For many, this might be their only regular exercise.

## Benefits of Walking

Walking is the most accessible form of exercise. For seniors with physical limitations, walking is often the best form of low impact exercise.

- Walking improves circulation and reduces blood pressure.
- Walking helps control weight and prevent obesity.
- Walking helps maintain healthy bones, joints, and muscles.
- Walking is free.
- Walking is simple and accessible. It doesn't require any special equipment or a gym membership. You don't have to take lessons. If you work with a population that is able to walk a mile, this is a program they will enjoy.

## Benefits of Socializing

Programs that target potentially isolated seniors may be the best opportunity to prevent health risks. Walking, the use of public transportation, and socialization each have their own benefits. When you bring together these three things in one program, the benefits are maximized.

Are senior fares half-price in your town?

50% of older adults report being socially isolated.



# Setting Up Your Own Ten Toe Express

## 1 Plan

- **Take stock.** What kind of public transportation is available in your area? Whether you have buses, light rail, subways, commuter rail, or a ferry, this program can be adapted easily to your home town. Even if you only have a couple of bus lines, you could showcase the destinations available on those lines with walking routes.
- **Budget.** Citizens for Modern Transit launched the Ten Toe Express with a grant, but a lack of funding shouldn't deter organizations from starting their own programs. When you figure out what your budget will be, you can decide whether to provide program participants with pedometers, a walking kit, printed maps and walking guides. A low registration fee can help defray some costs.

## 2 Get Help

- **Build partnerships in your local health community.** Financial contributions and sponsorships can make it possible for you to print walking maps and provide incentives to encourage more people to participate in the program. Your partner could be governmental agencies like the Health Department, health-related businesses like a hospital, or non-profits with a mission to serve seniors, increase physical activity, or support mass transit.

Volunteer Dan O'Connor says he began to volunteer when the Ten Toe Express was just getting started. "*because the combination of walking, city life, and people appealed to me. As I got into it, I enjoyed the variety of people I met and the places we get to see. I think a volunteer has to be a people person and realize that this is a very diverse group of people. They're not all power walkers.*"



*"A lack of social supports with senior citizens might be counterbalanced by services and programs that enhance physical and mental health. Such programs might help to reduce distress and contribute to the health and well-being of socially isolated people in later life."* - Kobayashi et al. / Social Isolation and Health

• **Enlist volunteers.** Volunteers can serve as walk leaders. The more volunteer walk leaders you have, the more walking groups you can have. "Our office staff is very small," says Kim Cella of Citizens for Modern Transit. "We have multiple walk groups. It would be impossible for us to do it without volunteers. They're critical to making the program successful."

• **Find another organization to collaborate with.** It would be easy to collaborate with existing groups to form walk groups – for example, a parish, the local YMCA, the Sierra Club, the Red Hat Society, or the area AARP chapter.

## 3 Develop Your Program

• **Prepare your volunteers.** Make sure your volunteers are experienced with your area's transit system. They should know how to buy tickets, read the transit schedule and maps, and change trains or buses. Help them prepare for potential problem situations. Most importantly, help volunteers lead a popular and successful Ten Toe Express by giving them a list of fun and interesting destinations.

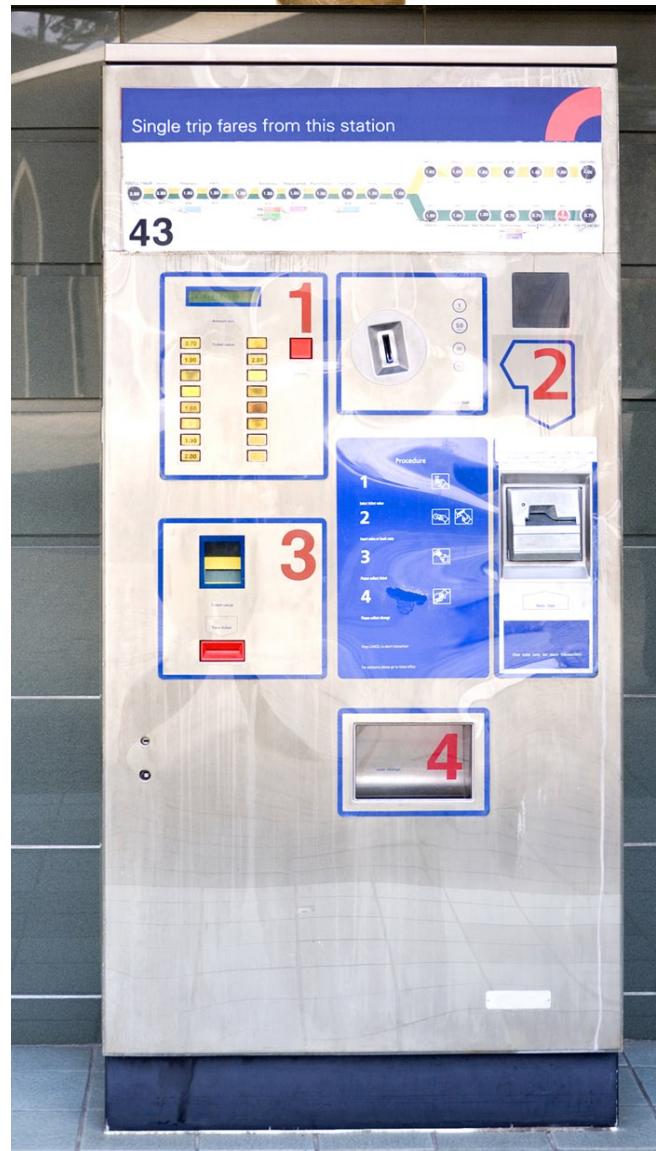
• **Use maps.** Create a list of different walk locations that walk leaders choose from. It's also helpful to let walkers know how far they will be walking. You can use an online map to look for good routes and to determine the distance of the walk. Google Maps, for example, allows you to map a walking route or a route using public transit. Visit [www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org](http://www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org) to see an example of the maps we created for our Ten Toe Express.

• **Offer an incentive.** Incentives are things you can give to people who sign up. The best incentives entice people to sign up for the program and also are useful for your Ten Toe Express. Many walking programs use pedometers because they get people to pay attention – often for the first time ever – to how active they are by getting them to count their steps.

# Low-Cost Alternatives

You can create a Ten Toe Express on a very limited budget. You may be able to fund your program through sponsorships, grants, or the support of your parent organization. If you need to reduce costs, here are some ways to reduce the cost of the program.

- **Offer free incentives or intangible incentives.** Incentives like pedometers are a nice way to entice people to participate in the program, but they are not necessary. You might be able to find free incentives, or tie in your Ten Toe Express with other programs that your organization offers. For example, a YMCA could offer a free exercise class to people who sign up for the Ten Toe Express. Your best bet is to motivate your target population to join by explaining how they could personally benefit from physical activity and socialization.
- **Start small.** You can always expand your program after you have shown it is a success. Until then, start with one walk leader and 5 or 6 planned routes.
- **Have participants purchase their own bus or rail tickets.** Citizens for Modern Transit gave four free Metro passes to people who signed up for the Ten Toe Express. This is another nice incentive, but asking participants to purchase these tickets helps defray the costs for your organization.



- **Provide maps and information online.** Printing costs can be eliminated by providing maps, walking and stretching tips, and nutrition information online instead of in printed booklets or paper handouts. (Keep in mind that many older adults don't have access to the internet.)
- **Reduce printing costs.** You can achieve this by printing maps from Google and placing them in a binder for walk leaders.
- **Use the resources that your community has already provided.** When you are creating walking routes, there is no need to recreate the wheel. Use existing walk or bike maps and trail maps for your area.



## Adapting the Ten Toe Express for Small Towns or Rural Areas

Small towns and rural areas typically have limited or no public transportation. Sometimes these communities provide a shuttle service for seniors. Often, the only transportation available is individual vehicles. If you serve seniors in a community like this, your services are even more important. The challenges of social isolation for seniors in rural environments are typically more severe. The inability to drive is more crippling to a person's social life, ability to go to the grocery store, church, and other places. If you serve these communities, here are a few ideas for how you can adapt the Ten Toe Express to benefit seniors.

- Use a shuttle or van owned by a senior center.
- Rent a van once a week to collect program participants and take them to an area good for walking.
- Use indoor tracks at local exercise facilities or outdoor tracks at nearby high schools, colleges, or universities.
- Take a bus to the closest mall for walks during bad weather.

# Possible Program Add-Ons

You can keep your Ten Toe Express very simple, or adopt some of these program add-ons. The Ten Toe Express at its core is a walking program – all you need are your own 10 toes.

- **Nutrition Information.** You might want to provide nutrition information to your Ten Toers. Help them think about their health in a holistic way. See our sample Walk Logs at [www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org](http://www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org) for how we help participants keep track of their intake of healthy fruits and vegetables.



- **Walk Logs.** You can use walk logs along with pedometers to encourage people to track the number of steps they take – not only during the Ten Toe walk but also throughout the week. Simply having to write it down helps raise the awareness of how active you are all week long. **2000 Steps = 1 Mile**



- **Pre- and Post-Surveys.** If your program budget allows, you can create a survey to give to participants before they take part in the Ten Toe Express and after they complete a session. The survey can help you understand real changes in participants' lives, including beliefs about public transportation, daily intake of fruits and vegetables, feelings about being socially engaged, and amount of weekly exercise. These evaluations can also be useful if you are trying to secure funding. Please feel free to visit our website at [www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org](http://www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org) to see a sample of the surveys we use.

- **Registration.** This can be as simple as gathering the names and phone numbers of people who want to participate. You can also collect email addresses, home addresses, ages, and any other information you find useful. Visit [www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org](http://www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org) to see a sample of the sign-up sheet we use.

- **Volunteer Recognition.** Help your volunteers feel like a valued member of the Ten Toe Team by recognizing their contributions. If you work for an organization that already relies on volunteers, simply include your Ten Toe Walk Leaders in your organization's volunteer recognition program. Transit tickets, t-shirts, or a nice lunch are all ways to show you appreciate their help.



# Case Study: St. Louis Community

Citizens for Modern Transit set up a Ten Toe Express in St. Louis in 2007. The program uses a two-pronged approach – targeting both older adults and employees for the work commute – to encourage individuals to walk more and use public transit. With almost no publicity and without a big, expensive kick-off event, we signed up 607 repeat registrants for our most recent 12-week session of the Ten Toe Express. That number doesn't even include new registrants.



**The response from “Ten Toers” has been overwhelmingly positive.**

*It has been so much fun making new friends on the Ten Toe adventures. Some of the same folks walk every week and I look forward to catching up on their news. Other folks are there for the first time and it's fun to make a new connection. We always have so much to talk about that you don't notice that you've had a great walk and gotten some good exercise. Sometimes I get to see parts of St Louis that are new to me. They are usually places I've wanted to visit but have never gotten around to seeing.*

- Carol Haneman

*The Ten Toes walking program is a great experience. It promotes enjoying walking and learning to navigate the entire metro area via MetroLink and MetroBus, even during times when there are no scheduled walks.*

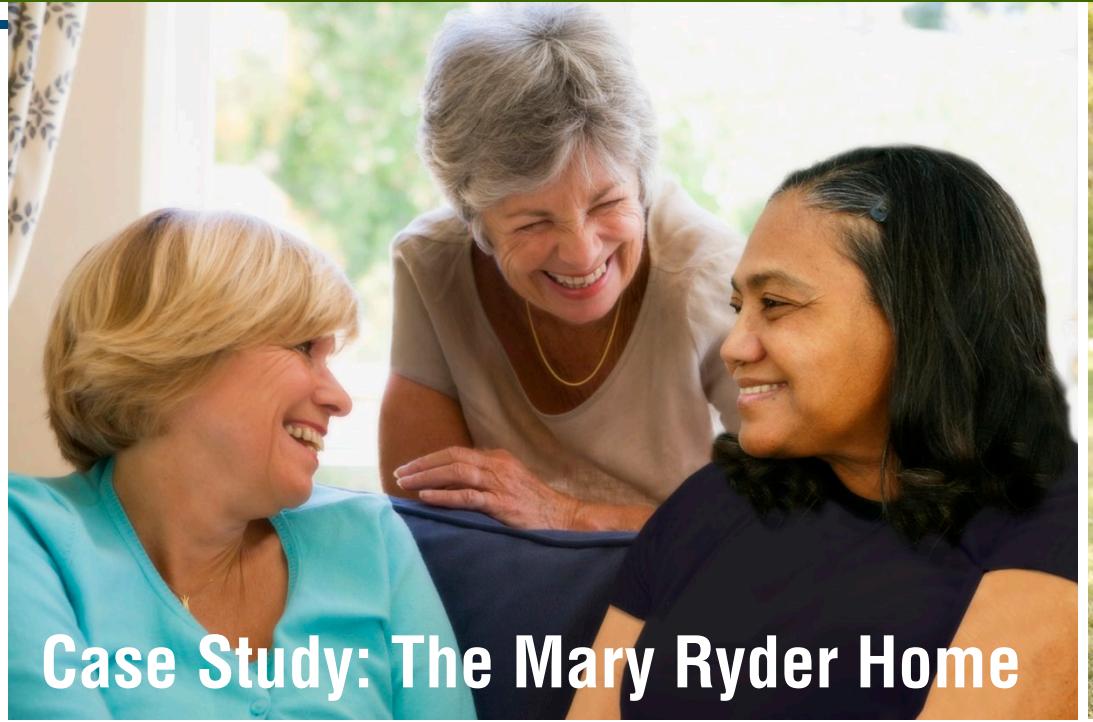
- Shirley Walz

*I have been participating in the Ten Toe Express for several years. Not only did I get exercise but I learned how to use public transportation. I had not used MetroLink prior to this and am now very comfortable with it and use it on my own. I have met many people in the walk groups and made new friends. We have even done walks on our own. I have lived in St. Louis my entire life but I have discovered places either I did not know about or had never taken the time to stop and visit. When you are walking you have the opportunity to see things you can't when you are driving by in a car. Some of the groups stop for lunch after the walks and this is another opportunity to socialize with new friends and to visit restaurants I may not have been familiar with. When I talk to people about the Ten Toes program, I always recommend that they try it.*

- Pat Killian

**More than 6,500 active area residents, many over the age of 60, are better realizing the benefits of our region’s public transit system thanks to our Ten Toe Express.**





## Case Study: The Mary Ryder Home

The Mary Ryder Home is a home for low income women ages 30 up to 90 and above in St. Louis. To make the Ten Toe Express a successful fit for these women, Activities Director Ruth Schejbal modified the program in several creative ways.

**Split the program based on ability.** *"First, we divided into our Outside Walkers and our Inside Walkers,"* Ruth says. Inside Walkers are women who use walkers or canes, or women who need to stay close to indoor facilities. Outside Walkers are those able to use public transportation and walk longer distances. They began with public bus outings to destinations like Forest Park and the airport. When local bus service got cut, they continued their walks around the neighborhood.

**Track progress using measurements that are meaningful to you.** *"We didn't have much luck with pedometers, so we kept track of minutes instead of steps."*

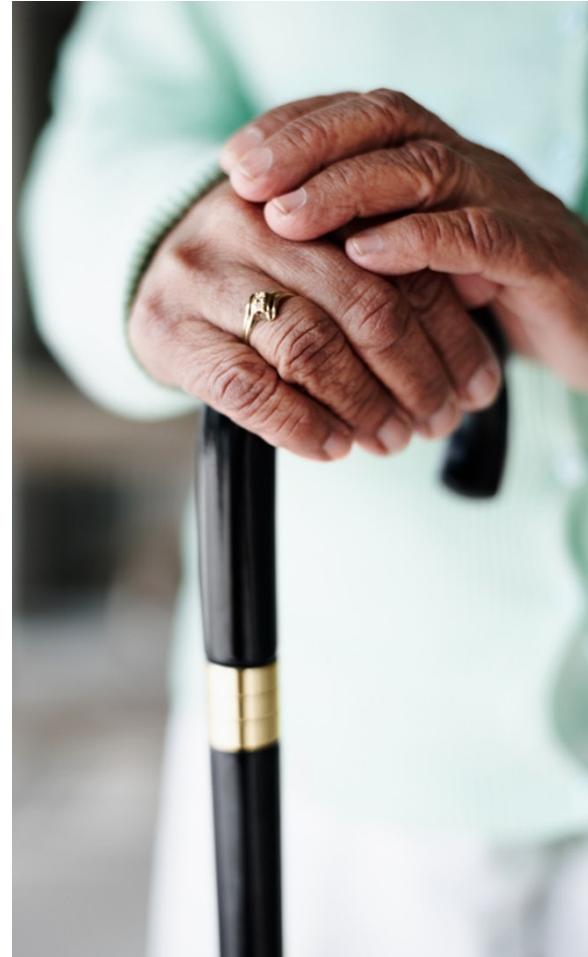
**Emphasize regularity over walk length.** *"The hardest thing is to do the walks with regularity. Keeping them interested in any form of exercise can be difficult. That's why I think having them participate and develop the habit is much more important than having them walk great distances."*

The Ten Toe Express at the Mary Ryder Home shows the flexibility of the program. The women there can benefit from the program because Ruth modified it to meet their needs. *"I could go on forever about the benefits,"* Ruth says. *"The fresh air and exercise is just part of it. They learn about the neighborhood and the names of flowers and trees. The neighbors are getting to know us. The psychological benefits are great. They interact socially and get to know each other better. Things like that are invaluable."*

## For Professionals Who Serve Seniors

**Think about the senior population you work with. Which of the following describes them?**

- Is comfortable and familiar with public transportation
- Has an active lifestyle
- Is socially connected and involved (despite living alone or being retired)
- Gets regular access to walking trails, parks, or running tracks
- Is mentally healthy and content
- Is able to get around town (even if unable to drive)
- Takes a mile-long walk once a week



**If this doesn't describe the seniors you serve, then help them step towards a better life today with your own Ten Toe Express.**

If you work with a senior population, then you are already familiar with many of the challenges seniors face. Many seniors, like many Americans of all ages, lead largely sedentary lives. Some are socially isolated and lack social support. Many can no longer drive, or no longer feel safe driving, or cannot afford the cost of a personal vehicle. This lack of access to transportation makes problems of social isolation worse.

In fact, the inability to drive is associated with depression, and it's easy to imagine why. Without public transportation, being unable to drive can result in being unable to meet up with friends, attend religious services, access health care or social services, or simply buy groceries. In addition to these social challenges, most seniors also have health challenges, from chronic diseases to simply being at greater risk of slips and falls.

# The Challenge

One of the many challenges of professionals who work with seniors is –

## How can you address all these problems with one program?

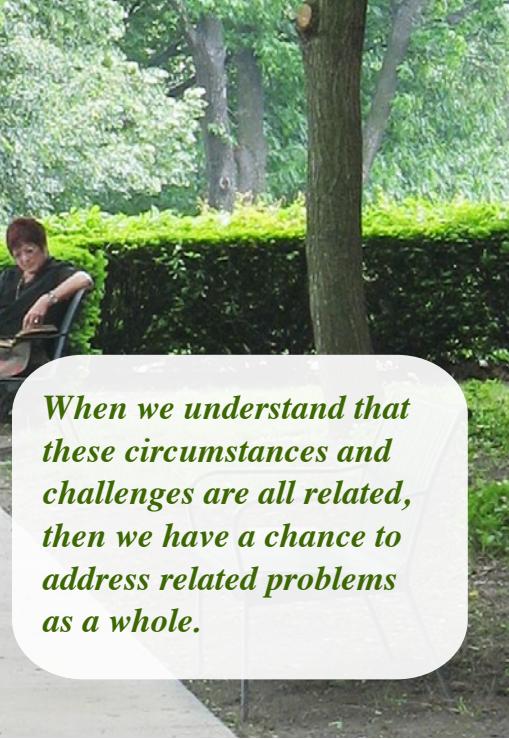
Many programs are designed to address one problem at a time. One program will encourage seniors to exercise. Another program will help seniors improve their daily intake of fresh fruits and vegetables. A third program helps seniors get the access to the health and social services they need.

When we understand that these circumstances and challenges are all related, then we have a chance to address related problems as a whole.

Research is showing us that programs that target seniors will be more effective if they address multiple issues at once. For example, a program to prevent slips and falls in the senior population is more effective if it looks at medication side effects, encourages regular exercise, and fixes slip and fall hazards in the home.

We developed the Ten Toe Express program in the understanding that physical activity, health, social isolation, and the use of public transportation are all inter-related.

**The Ten Toe Express program is a unique solution to a wide range of challenges.**



*When we understand that these circumstances and challenges are all related, then we have a chance to address related problems as a whole.*



# Conclusion

The Ten Toe Express is easily adapted to a range of communities, organizations, target populations, and budgets. How might you use a Ten Toe Express to benefit the seniors you serve?

## Is the Ten Toe Express Right for Your Area?

- What kind of mass transit is available in your city?
- What kinds of exercise programs are currently available to seniors in your area?
- What access do they have to walking trails, parks, or running tracks?
- Is there a shuttle that services seniors, independent living facilities, or senior centers?
- Does your area have a van service that delivers seniors to shopping centers, stores, or other centralized area?
- Does a local senior center have a vehicle available for use?
- Could you adapt this program on-site using a walking trail or track at a gym, independent living facility, or nursing home?
- What nearby neighborhoods would be good for walking? Do you have neighborhoods with sidewalks nearby?
- Does your area have large indoor malls you could walk in during bad weather?
- What destinations does your town have that would be fun to walk to from a transit stop?



# What Is Your Next Step?

- 1]** Take stock of the public transportation available in your area.
- 2]** Determine what your budget is.
- 3]** Build partnerships.
- 4]** Enlist volunteers.
- 5]** Collaborate with another organization.
- 6]** Develop your program using maps and incentives.
- 7]** Contact Citizens for Modern Transit to learn more.



## Is the Ten Toe Express Right for Your Organization?

### Do you work with older adults who:

- Want to meet new people?
- Want to discover new places without having to drive?
- Want to explore their community using mass transit and their own two feet?
- Want to be more physically active?

### Is it your job to help seniors:

- Improve their health?
- Become physically active?
- Prevent slips and falls at home?
- Stay socially engaged?
- Use mass transit effectively?



## About Citizens for Modern Transit

CMT, a 501(c) 3 (non-for-profit) leads advocacy efforts to expand light rail as the critical component of an integrated, affordable and convenient public transportation system that will enable economic growth to improve quality of life in the St. Louis region.

Several St. Louis organizations have recognized CMT for its leadership in being the driving force in bringing MetroLink to St. Louis and in helping clean the air.

- “**Sold On St. Louis Award**” from St. Louis Real Estate Board
- “**Silver Anvil Award**” from Public Relations Society of America
- “**Lamplighter**” from St. Louis PRSA
- “**Clean Air Award**” from American Lung Association
- “**Way to Go Award**” from Environmental Protection Agency
- “**Clean Air Award**” from RideFinders, 1997, 1998
- “**Choose Environmental Excellence Award**”, 2000
- “**Environmental Protection Agency Certificate of Award**”, 2002, for marketing program surrounding Commuter Choice Program
- “**Commuter Choice Leadership Initiative Award**”, 2002, from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Transportation in Washington, D.C.
- “**Pollution Prevention Award**”, September 2002, from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region VII.
- **Environmental Protection Agency Best Workplaces for Commuters Award**, 2004
- **Environmental Protection Agency Race to Excellence Gold Medal Award**, 2005
- **Environmental Protection Agency Race to Excellence Silver Medal Award**, 2006



## Ready to Step into the Ten Toes Express?

Contact Citizens for Modern Transit at [www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org](http://www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org) or call **314.231.7272** for sample collateral materials including: walking kits, pedometers, walk logs, surveys, registration forms, maps, and more.

# STEP BY



## SPECIAL THANKS

The development of the Ten Toe Express and this Step by Step Guide were both made possible through the support of The Missouri Foundation for Health.

Citizens for Modern Transit welcomes the chance to help you develop your own Ten Toe Express. It's our goal to see Ten Toe Express Programs pop up all over the country.

*Please contact us for more information:*

**CITIZENS FOR MODERN TRANSIT**  
911 WASHINGTON AVE. STE. 200, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63101  
314.231.72727   [www.cmt-stl.org](http://www.cmt-stl.org)   [www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org](http://www.tentoes.cmt-stl.org)