

# Promoting Dialogue

IN CHANGING TIMES

# WALKING TOURS

*"Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody." ~Jane Jacobs*

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## Plan your walk

Be creative! Think about the stories, places and people you want to discover during the walking conversation. Map out key stops where you might highlight and share stories. Think about the different perspectives when it comes to, e.g., cannabis and how it affects, or might affect, your community. Leave time for ample conversation along the way.

▶ A walking tour does not have to be a walk at all. It could involve bicycles, wheelchairs, or even transit. The important thing is that we bring people together in order to slow down, observe and engage.

Think about the people in your community that might contribute to a wider understanding of an issue for the participants. This could include community organizations, schools, local elected officials, those in business, even your neighbour!

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## Meet the neighbours

A walking tour is a great way to meet and speak with those that work and live in the community. Think about key stops along the way where participants could engage with diverse members of the community. Local stakeholders often share great insights into the neighbourhood and have important perspectives to share.

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## Continue the conversation

Think about ways to continue the conversation after the tour has finished. Ending at a coffee shop or community centre could provide ways for participants to continue the dialogue and engage in reflection. Invite the participants to describe the various perspectives they encountered throughout their walk. For example, if you decided to highlight a cannabis dispensary, you might continue the conversation by inviting the participants to describe the place in the following ways:

- from their own perspective
- from the perspective of a dispensary employee
- from the perspective of a person buying cannabis for the first time
- from the perspective of someone walking by (e.g., teacher, doctor, nearby business owner)

**WALKING TOURS ARE CREATIVE WAYS FOR PARTICIPANTS TO ENGAGE WITH DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES WHILE TOURING A PARTICULAR SETTING.** As a way to encourage understanding, tour guides provide stories and context as participants walk and experience together. By physically walking the path of others, tours are geared towards greater understanding between diverse individuals who happen to live differently within the same community. In order for this method to be dialogic, ensure that it is more than a narrated excursion. This means creating ample opportunities for participants and guides to exchange, reflect and share different perspectives. It can be helpful for the guide to adopt the role of "explorer" rather than "expert."

Exploring these different vantage points of description can enhance the way we see, interpret and understand each other and our neighbourhood or community. It helps us see that there are multiple ways to experience or interpret any idea or phenomenon. Each of these ways may have something to teach us.

## Helpful Resources

[janejacobswalk.squarespace.com/get-involved/host-a-walk](https://janejacobswalk.squarespace.com/get-involved/host-a-walk)

**A Guide to Nurturing Community Dialogue**, <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/ltc-guide-to-dialogue.pdf>