



## Dieter Schwab

Austria is the first country in Europe, if not in the world, to have a National masterplan strategy to promote walking. This has come about in a remarkably short time. It is a little over 8 years since Vienna resident Dieter Schwab formed the **Austrian Pedestrian Organisation**, to rally supporters in every echelon of government, to plan how they could put the pedestrian first in their strategic plans and policies. Speaking to Andrew Stuck during the 2015 Walk21 conference, from the Rathaus in Vienna, Dieter begins the interview by explaining just how rewarding living in an inner city walkable neighbourhood can be.

Notes from the podcast interview by **Andrew Stuck**: Recorded in October 2015, at the Vienna Walk21 Conference. Published in December 2015 on <http://www.talkingwalking.net>

**Dieter Schwab's** background is city planning and went to the Zurich Walk21 in 2006 and was inspired by what he encountered there. The following year, in Melbourne at the conference, he was encouraged to set up a pedestrian organisation to promote walkability in Austria, that has become [www.walk-space.at](http://www.walk-space.at)

Walk-Space Awards: walk-space has been rewarding community initiatives at annual national walking conferences and has shared their achievements at subsequent Walk 21 conferences. <http://www.walk-space.at/index.php/projekte/walk-space-award> (German)

Involving politicians on a personal level - getting them involved on projects on the ground is key.

The masterplan strategy from the federal Government is a complete change from previous strategies which were only ever involved with infrastructure for other modes, with pedestrians and walking rarely making an appearance in the document. [https://www.bmvit.gv.at/service/publikationen/verkehr/fuss\\_radverkehr/downloads/masterplangehen.pdf](https://www.bmvit.gv.at/service/publikationen/verkehr/fuss_radverkehr/downloads/masterplangehen.pdf) (German)

Some parts of Vienna are still car dominated and there are now 10 new development hotspots, however, not all of them are pedestrian-friendly - developers maybe housing specialists but are rarely knowledgeable about creating walkable neighbourhoods.

One exception is the Seestadt Aspern project, a new quarter being developed around a man-made lake - a transit orientated development with all development within a 15 minute walk of a new metro stop. <http://www.aspern-seestadt.at/en>

## Dieter Schwab's recommendation for a walk is:

- Stonal Canalside waterfront walk - water from the Danube, passing through the city centre, with considerable historic importance, that includes intriguing modern interventions including floating swimming baths and bars
- Follow Tram 42 west to the Viennese woodlands - 20 minutes by tram - Villa Aurora <https://www.wien.info/en/locations/villa-aurora>