

HOW MPOs CAN PLAN FOR WALKING & BICYCLING

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FHWA' S HANDBOOK ON PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE PLANNING BY MPOS:

To be released in Winter

- *Follows the Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning Handbook (September 2014)*
- *Encourages MPOs to play a leadership role in nonmotorized transportation planning*
- *Includes an approach to planning and programming using examples from several MPOs nationwide*

Requirements of MPOs to Conduct Pedestrian & Bicycle Planning

- 23 USC 217 (g): Bicyclists and pedestrians shall be given due consideration in the comprehensive transportation plans developed by MPOs
- 23 USC 134: Plans and TIPs...shall provide for the development and integrated management and operation of transportation systems and facilities (**including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities**)
- ADA and Section 504

MPOs Play an Important and Unique Role

- MPOs are coordinators of regional decision-making
- MPOs can establish a comprehensive vision, goals, and objectives to guide regional investments
- MPOs can use Federal funding for planning
- MPOs must consider appropriate regional investments in bicycling and walking

What does it mean to give due consideration to nonmotorized modes?

- Collect data on bicycle and pedestrian travel
- Collect safety data specific to walking and bicycling
- Identify and evaluate pedestrian networks and bicycle networks
- Develop an investment strategy that ties future funding to identified needs

Collecting data

- Where do people currently walk?
- What routes do bicyclists use today?
- Where are the important common destinations people need to access in the region?
- Identify pedestrian or bicycle crash “hot spots”
- Identify unsafe road and trail conditions

Identify and Evaluate Pedestrian Networks

- Are there sidewalks and other facilities where people currently walk?
- Are important identified destinations walkable?
- Can public transit users make the “last mile” connection by walking?
- What is the condition of the existing sidewalk network? Where are there gaps and barriers?
- Identify gaps and barriers near public transit stops and stations
- Compare information with ADA transition plans

Identify and Evaluate the Bicycle Network

- Are there bicycle facilities on the routes that bicyclists use?
- Are important destinations served by bicycle facilities?
- Identify planned new bicycle trail connections
- What is the condition of bicycle facilities on the network?
- Identify the segments of the routes bicyclists use that lack dedicated facilities
- Evaluate the degree to which planned trails connect important destinations

Develop an investment strategy

- Identify pedestrian focus areas that emerge from the network analysis
- Establish a regional bicycle network that connects important regional destinations and is rooted in the current preferences of bicyclists
- Develop project funding criteria that prioritize projects that complete networks by improving connectivity, safety, and convenience of pedestrians and bicyclists

How do MPOs do this?

- Where can MPOs get the information they need?
- How do MPOs analyze bicycling and walking and set regional policy?
- How can MPOs choose the right investments and pay for them?
- How can MPOs track how well they are doing in achieving their goals?

Collecting information: Engage your stakeholders

- Involve the public
 - Bicycles and pedestrians can tell you how they travel and the dangers they face
 - Use stakeholders to guide data collection efforts and verify results
 - There are many methods of public engagement
 - Advisory committees are useful tools throughout the planning and programming process

Documents and activities

- The Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Regional pedestrian or bicycle plans and studies
- Corridor or activity center studies
- Roadway safety audits

Choosing the right investments

- Establish clear eligibility policies and guidelines
- Establish project selection criteria that further the regional strategy
 - Network importance
 - Priority areas
 - Safety
- Identify funding sources and leverage them to achieve the highest impact

Measuring performance

- Develop clear measurable objectives for the plan and programming activities
- Identify reasonable performance measures and set a commitment for regular reporting on them
- Identify benchmarks or targets against which progress can be evaluated

EXAMPLES

- Health: Nashville MPO
- Safety: New Orleans Regional Planning Commission
- Pedestrian Networks: Santa Fe MPO

Planning for Health: Nashville MPO

- Established health as region's #1 priority
 - Established funding policies (All projects must improve health)
 - Developed scoring criteria related to health
 - Identified bike/ped priority areas based on 1)demand, 2)BLOS and PLOS, 3)Health, 4)Congestion, and 5)Safety
- Used Integrated Transportation and Health Impact Modeling (ITHIM) Tool for evaluation:
 - ITHIM advances health impact modeling beyond the benefits of increased physical activity by accounting for changes in bike/ped crash risk that may accompany changes in mode share, and accounting for the effects of reduced air pollution on respiratory conditions, and it does many of these calculations across sex and age strata.

Planning for Safety: New Orleans Regional Planning Commission

- 2006 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan includes safety as its first goal area and includes this extensive safety analysis
 - Received crash data from LDOTD since 1999
 - Has worked with police departments to educate them about traffic laws related to bicycling and walking and collecting data on incidents
 - Compiles data that police report using mobile technology submitted to LDOTD to conduct safety analysis
 - Project selection criteria include points for addressing crash hotspots

Planning Pedestrian Networks: Santa Fe MPO

- *Pedestrian Master Plan*
 - Focuses on walksheds around transit stops and schools
 - Includes a comprehensive sidewalk inventory detecting the presence of facilities using aerial photography
 - Connected to City of Santa Fe Comprehensive Plan and development ordinances
- **Coordination with the City of Santa Fe ADA Transition Plan**
 - Recommendations from Pedestrian Master Plan coordinated with the update of the ADA Transition Plan
 - Sidewalk inventory used when updating the ADA Transition Plan

Questions??

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