

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN

Improved bicycle and pedestrian travel options are an important part of the state's transportation strategy. Effective bicycle and pedestrian networks result in a reduction in vehicle trips. The reduction in vehicle trips then results in a reduction in emissions, need for roadway infrastructure and parking facilities.

There are three major roles the bicycle and pedestrian modes can fill:¹

- As a primary mode, directly accessing a job or other site.
- As a feeder mode, accessing transit services that will complete the trip.
- For circulation through an activity center.

Important factors that influence the choice of bicycle or pedestrian commuting include:

- Trip Distance
- Perceived Traffic Safety
- Travel Cost – surveys suggest that financial incentives could make a difference in the choice of this mode.²
- Physical environment, including terrain, climate, circulation within activity centers and availability of alternative modes.
- Demographics – bicycle commuting generally declines rapidly in the segment of the population over age 45.

The 2000 Census found, that compared to national averages, Connecticut has a lower percentage of bike commuters (0.2% vs. 0.4% nationally), and roughly the same percentage of pedestrian commuters (2.7% vs. 3% nationally).

The Department of Transportation has recently undertaken a new initiative to be more supportive of non-motorized travel modes. According to the Department, the initiative is intended to outline a significant shift in the Department's multi-modal strategy to one more supportive of bicycle and pedestrian needs. It is also intended to develop a more rational approach to identifying high priority state-level needs, and allocating scarce resources to meet those needs.

The changes are part of the Department's efforts to develop a more balanced multi-modal transportation system, and to support state goals of livable and sustainable communities. The Department believes that, as a result of the changes, it will become more proactive in planning, designing, and funding programs and projects that make it safer and more convenient for residents to walk and bicycle in Connecticut.

¹ Goldsmith, S. 1993. *Case Study No. 1: Reasons Why Bicycling and Walking Are and Are Not Being Used More Extensively as Travel Modes*, Report FHWA-PD-92-041, Federal Highway Administration, Washington D.C.

² Herman, M. 1993. *Bicycle Blueprint: A Plan to Bring Bicycling Into the Mainstream in New York City*, New York.

The new initiative includes the following elements:

- Quick Fix Program: This DOT program will quickly respond to relatively minor bicycle and pedestrian issues;
- DOT Sidewalk Policy: DOT policy will assure that sidewalks are considered as part of the normal roadway design process and that their funding is treated the same as any other element of a road construction project;
- Funding: DOT will reserve 50 percent (\$4 million) of State Transportation Plan-Enhancement funding each year for bicycle and pedestrian projects and allow the use of STP-Urban funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects;
- Project Design Manual: DOT will enhance the existing project design manual so bicycle and pedestrians needs are fully considered as part of the project design process;
- Inter-agency Collaboration: DOT and the state Department of Environmental Protection will collaborate more closely on issues related to bike and pedestrian needs.

The Department of Transportation has also worked to provide bike racks on buses; specifically the full equipping of CTTransit buses in the Stamford and New Haven areas has been accomplished. The equipping of CTTransit buses in the Hartford area is scheduled as part of the upcoming fleet replacement. In addition efforts to provided bike racks at train stations are being addressed on a continual basis.

The current State Plan of Conservation and Development recommends incorporation of Greenways into State Agency and municipal development plans, acknowledging the importance of Greenways as an alternative mode of transportation.

In recognition of the role that bicycle and pedestrian strategies can play in accomplishing the State's transportation strategy, the **Transportation Strategy Board** recommends:

- **Provide bike space on passenger trains at all times of the day.**
- **Identify and support bike routes to transportation centers.**
- **Identify and remedy existing bicycle storage and parking deficiencies, especially in urban centers and transportation centers.**
- **Encourage municipal and regional officials to work closely with DOT to include expanded bicycle and pedestrian facilities as a part of all roadway projects.**
- **Support the development and implementation of the Federal Safe Routes to School program.**

