

Issue Areas: Enhanced Public Health, Safety, and Security

Palo Alto BikeStation, California

The Palo Alto BikeStation combines the healthy activity of bicycling with the convenience of transit. BikeStation Palo Alto was established in 1999 at the CalTrain depot, a central hub for the CalTrain commuter train line, SamTrans bus lines, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) bus lines, Dumbarton Express, as well as Stanford University's Marguerite shuttle. The conversion of an abandoned 1,500 sq. ft. luggage room provides a secure area for multi-modal commuters to leave their bicycles while taking the train to or from their final destinations. Bicyclists have access to a range of services at the station, including repairs, rentals, air for their tires, and lockers. CalTrains also allows bikes on every train, and bike commuting has proven so popular that special cars are now dedicated to transporting bikes. This provides additional options for bicyclists, serving to enhance this healthy alternative to commuting by car.

More Info: www.bikestation.org

Safe Routes to School, California

One of the most important transportation needs for children is a safe route for walking or biking to school. Being hit by a car while walking or biking is one of the leading causes of injury and deaths for California children aged 5 to 12. But fewer kids are walking or biking to school than ever before: about 10 percent of children now walk to school, compared to about 75 percent a generation ago. Public health officials believe this is one of the reasons that children in the U.S. are facing an epidemic of obesity. In California, transportation advocates have joined forces with public health officials to address this problem. They worked to pass state-level legislation aimed at securing TEA-21 federal safety money for a new "Safe Routes to School" program. The program uses one-third of the state's federal safety set-aside to fund grants to local communities to install crosswalks, sidewalks, traffic control devices, traffic-calming in neighborhoods and around schools, and bike lanes and off-street trails. Stakeholders are now working to secure education and promotional funding to complement each capital construction project.

The first Safe Routes to School bill, signed into law in October 1999, authorized about \$20 million a year for two years. The program proved so popular that it was reauthorized in 2001 for another three years, at \$25 million per year. Nine other states around the country are now pursuing similar programs following California's lead.

More Info: www.dhs.ca.gov/routes2school/ and www.saferoutestoschools.org and www.transact.org/Ca/saferoutes.htm

Harmony Road Traffic-Calming, Delaware

In Newark, Delaware, residents and state officials worked together to find sensible solutions to dangerous, high-speed traffic along Harmony Road. The effort is one of the first applications of traffic-calming measures to a major road; Harmony Road carries 18,000 vehicles per day. After an initial closing of the road failed, officials and citizens worked out an alternative traffic-calming plan using chokers and center islands. The plan helps keep traffic within the speed limit and gives pedestrians more priority as cars move through this residential neighborhood that includes an elementary school and a hospital. The success of this effort has led to the creation of a statewide traffic-calming manual for use by other communities seeking to slow traffic and increase safety along major roads.

More Info: www.deldot.net/static/reports/manuals/traffic_calming/DelDotFinal.pdf

Capital Crescent Trail, District of Columbia

Built on the corridor of the old Georgetown Branch railroad, the Capital Crescent Trail provides pedestrian and bicycle access between Bethesda, Maryland, and downtown Washington DC to both commuters and recreational users. The trail climbs from the level of the Potomac River in Georgetown to downtown Bethesda (elevation 300 feet) at an imperceptible grade. The trail connects the Maryland residential, commercial, and employment centers of Chevy Chase, Bethesda, Silver Spring, to Washington D.C. Bicycle commuters enjoy easy access to two Metro stations in the area, as well as a nearly intersection-free bicycle "highway" to jobs in downtown Washington. On the weekends, hundreds of people and dogs use the trail for exercise.

The effort to create the trail required ten years of collaboration between the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail, the National Park Service, Montgomery County, the Maryland Department of Transportation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Land acquisition and trail construction cost more than \$25 million.

More Info: www.waba.org and www.cctrail.org

Metro Security System, District of Columbia

Since 1999, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) has partnered in an ongoing program for chemical and biological protection with three Federal government agencies - the U.S. Departments of Energy (DOE), Justice (DOJ) and Transportation (DOT) - to improve the safety and security of the Metrorail system against chemical or biological terrorism, so-called weapons of mass destruction. WMATA is one of the few transit agencies in the U.S. with a multi-year strategic test and implementation program of this nature with the Federal government. The intent is to share the results of this program with the transit industry in this country and around the world. WMATA has installed test systems designed to detect a biological or chemical attack in several Metrorail stations, and it plans to expand the program to additional stations within the next few months.

Sidewalks and Walking Paths, Florida

Walking is an important and healthful transportation option especially for older adults. Naples, Florida, with a median age of 65, installed a network of sidewalks to make it quicker and safer to walk downtown. The city, which was designed in the late 1800s, has a grid street system, which did not originally include sidewalks. ISTEA Transportation Enhancements Program funds paid for the design and construction of walking paths to link neighborhoods with recreational opportunities, the town center and other destinations.

Bike Accessibility, Illinois

In 1991, Chicago's Mayor Richard M. Daley, the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, and citizens joined forces to create the Bicycle Advisory Council in order to develop strategies to make Chicago more "bicycle-friendly." Their goal is to encourage bicycling as a safe, healthy alternative for commuters as well as to enhance the experiences and opportunities for recreational riders. Since then much has been achieved. A big part of the effort has been the installation of more than 7,000 bike racks, with space to park thousands of bicycles, at businesses, libraries, shopping areas and many other locations. Chicago also boasts over 40 miles of new or improved bikeways and more plans are underway to expand and improve the network of bike lanes and bike routes. In addition, city-sponsored "Bicycling Ambassadors" debuted this year, appearing at events and festivals throughout the city to offer bicycle education and safety tips. Recent events like Bike Chicago 2001 included more than 100 bike activities throughout the city during May.

More info: www.biketraffic.org and www.cityofchicago.org/Transportation/BikeInfo/

Advanced Operating System (AOS), Michigan

Ann Arbor, Michigan's transit system has taken many of the most significant innovations in bus travel of the last few years and has merged them into the first integrated advanced operating transit system. The heart of the system is a computer on each bus that simultaneously monitors location via GPS, passenger count, and engine and transmission status. The system automatically changes destination signs, makes announcements to passengers, monitors safety through audio and visual displays and surveillance cameras, and coordinates all of this information with a transportation control center. This development has created a very efficient urban transit system that is able to respond quickly to emergencies. The reliability of the system has helped contribute to a 15 percent surge in ridership in Ann Arbor.

More info: www.theride.org/aos.htm

Bicycling in Missoula, Montana

Missoula, Montana uses a variety of innovative means to make bicycling and walking a friendly, safe experience. Over the past few years, Missoula has extended its trail system and created an inter-connected bike lane network, and is working on a master sidewalk plan. The most notable improvements are two pedestrian and bicycle bridges that make it easy to cross the Clark Fork River. The graceful span of the California Street Bridge reconnects the North and West-Side neighborhoods with the south Riverfront. The bridge, designed by local firms Carter and Burgess and O'Neill and Zimet, is built with cable-stay truss construction, giving a light appearance to the structure. The original California Street Bridge served motorized and non-motorized uses, and was removed from use in the 1980s because of its age and condition. The restored crossing for travelers on foot and bicycle is about 400 feet long and 13 feet wide, with one pier located on the island in the river.

These facilities make it easier for the members of Missoula's 20% Club who pledge to bike, walk, carpool or ride transit at least once each work or school week. The club newsletter Walk 'n Roll celebrates Club members' accomplishments and provides transportation information. Missoula also offers bike racks for free to non-profit organizations, at a 50 percent discount for others, and has installed a number of bicycle-friendly traffic-calming measures in neighborhoods around the city. All of these efforts are part of Missoula's "non-motorized transportation" plan, aimed at making Missoula a safe place for bicyclists and walkers.

More Info: www.ci.missoula.mt.us

Bike and Pedestrian Access, New Jersey

Stemming from former Governor Christine Todd Whitman's vision to build 2,000 miles of bike paths by 2010, New Jersey has developed an extensive program for providing bike and pedestrian funding in the state. The state has set aside over \$9 million for local bikeways out of its transportation trust fund. In 2000, over 18 counties received grants for a range of bicycle friendly projects, from paths and bikeways to making roads and bridges more accessible by bike. New Jersey has also pioneered the Centers of Place program, designed to fund development and redevelopment of town centers. Pedestrian links and sidewalks in Cape May and Freehold are successful examples of projects from this program.

More Info: www.state.nj.us/njcommuter/html/bikewalk.htm and www.state.nj.us/transportation/lgs/programs/stateaid/centers/centers.htm

Tribal Roads Management, North Dakota

In an effort to enhance safety and improve the infrastructure of the tribal roads system, the Standing Rock Reservation has developed a new, state of the art traffic management system with assistance from TEA-21's Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP). Using GPS and a computer mapping program, they have successfully catalogued and mapped the entire reservation, from the largest road to the smallest house and driveway. With this system complete, they are now in the process of linking up all aspects of their government in order to create a single source of local information. So, for example, whenever the police report an automobile accident, the time, location, and details of the incident are geographically recorded in the system. Also, reservation officials have been using the new system to closely monitor congestion and road conditions on Sioux Village streets in order to create an accurate and detailed action plan for the region's transportation future. As each piece of information is recorded, the system processes and updates its statistical analysis, providing an instantaneous update of the state of the region's transportation infrastructure.

More info: www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp/00/nd1.htm

Portland Traffic-Calming, Oregon

Portland is committed to traffic calming in order to ensure the health and safety of its citizens. Traffic-calming slows down automobile traffic and makes the road safer for other users of the right of way, such as people walking or bicycling. Numerous studies have demonstrated the value of traffic-calming for reducing fatalities. A recent international study showed that roundabouts at intersections reduce collisions by an average of 82 percent. Portland takes these lessons to heart through an extensive traffic-calming system involving speed humps, roundabouts, stop signs, street narrowing, speed limit signs, and police enforcement. The speed hump program, for example, is designed for neighborhoods with low volume/high speed traffic problems. Neighborhoods that can demonstrate these types of problems may qualify for the "streamlined" speed hump placement program, or may even decide to purchase speed humps from the city. The City also re-engineers local service streets and neighborhood collector streets, using many of the techniques named above to calm traffic. In addition to city-based solutions, residents are encouraged to find creative solutions for slowing traffic, such as planting trees, lawn signs, and community enforcement campaigns.

More Info: www.ite.org/traffic/index.htm

Bike and Pedestrian Planning, Vermont

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan seeks to create a safe environment for two forms of transportation that improve human health: walking and bicycling. The planning process includes extensive involvement from a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee made up of bicycle users, pedestrian and bicycle advocates, professional transportation planners, engineers, and bicycle tour operators. The plan provides overall guidance for improving access and mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians.

One good example of Vermont's pro-bicycle approach is the work of the Lake Champlain Bikeways program. This program was initiated in 1993 by a group of bicycle enthusiasts, public and private agencies, and individuals from Vermont, New York, and the Province of Quebec. They developed a mission to promote bicycling throughout the Lake Champlain Region. With funding from the National Park Service and the active involvement of local cyclists, the Bikeways Initiative aims to create and promote a network of international, inter-connected bicycle routes around Lake Champlain in New York, Vermont and Quebec.

More Info: www.aot.state.vt.us/planning/BIKEPED.htm and www.champlainbikeways.org/

TRAAK, Alaska

Transportation projects can help preserve environmental treasures while making them more accessible for public use. In 1996, Alaska Governor Tony Knowles established a "Trails and Recreational Access for Alaskans" (TRAAK) Board. The purpose of TRAAK is to encourage the development of new trails and recreational resources within Alaska. TRAAK projects focus on trails that safely tie neighborhoods, parks, and commercial areas together, as well as highway projects that incorporate bike and pedestrian trails, trail heads, pullouts, picnic areas, and other facilities. An important part of this effort was the establishment of the Alaska Trails System, a network of forty-one trails throughout the state that deserve special recognition for their recreational, scenic, and historic value. The group of preeminent trails includes such well-known trails as the Iditarod Trail from Seward to Nome, as well as water-based trails such as the Yukon River Water Trail. The program is funded through a dedication of 10 percent of all federal highway funds.

More Info: www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/aktrails/trailsys.htm

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