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Issue 43



What We Heard at the Walk.Bike.Ohio Meetings

This summer, ODOT held six stakeholder meetings across the state to inform the development of *Walk.Bike.Ohio*, ODOT's first plan to focus on walking and biking policies and programs around the state.

6

MEETINGS

200+

STAKEHOLDERS

7

COMMON THEMES

Themes

This is what we heard...Stakeholders brainstormed the major barriers to walking and biking in their communities and made recommendations for ways to address those barriers and who should be involved. Across the state, although many unique challenges were discussed, several major themes emerged:



Funding

We need additional funding sources, cross-jurisdictional cooperation and more streamlined application processes in order to implement projects.



Infrastructure

Dedicated infrastructure for walking and biking is often lacking, discontinuous and/or poorly maintained. Locals want more information and guidance for designing projects.



Connectivity

First- and last-mile connections are a key gap. Land use policies must be used to reshape development patterns and jurisdictions need to work together to achieve regional connectivity.



Safety

Improving real and perceived safety for all road users will require new tools and funding mechanisms, along with cultural shifts from auto-centric mindsets.



Cultural Shifts

An auto-centric mindset is the prevailing norm when it comes to funding and decision-making. We need continued education and incentives to shift the mindsets of decision-makers and residents.



Leadership

Political will and leadership make the difference in advancing walking and biking. There is a continuing need to educate and incentivize leaders and identify local champions to help move the needle.



Policy

Local communities desire more technical assistance to help develop plans, policies and priorities. A regional approach to planning could help ensure continuity over time.

Urban and Rural Differences

The stakeholder meetings were held in a variety of rural and urban locations to help us understand the difference in needs and priorities across Ohio. While many challenges rang true across all regions, there were also a few key differences between urban and rural priorities.



Rural Areas

- Rural areas largely lack walking and biking facilities, often due to topography and low-density development.
- Local economies call for linkages between bicycle and pedestrian facilities and economic development activities. They also make finding local match dollars more difficult.
- Many rural communities face political challenges due to mistrust of big government, a lack of zoning and difficulties in acquiring land.

Urban Areas

- In urban areas, limited space and right of way (ROW) present their own challenges for planning and defining networks.
- The mix of jurisdictions in urbanized areas can complicate planning and implementation.
- There are many competing priorities for transportation projects and limited resources.

Our Vision for the Future

Based upon all the stakeholder input we received, the plan's vision and goals are:

VISION:



**WALKING AND BIKING IN OHIO
WILL BE A SAFE, CONVENIENT
AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION
OPTION FOR EVERYONE.**

GOALS:



● SAFETY

Reduce bicyclist and pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

● EQUITY

Ensure the system accommodates users of all ages, abilities and incomes.

● NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

Promote comfortable and continuous bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect people to destinations.

● NETWORK UTILIZATION

Increase walking and biking usage.

● LIVABILITY

Improve the quality of life for all Ohioans.

● PRESERVATION

Ensure critical existing infrastructure is in a state of good repair.

What's Next?

The Walk.Bike.Ohio project team is beginning the process of developing plan recommendations to address the common themes identified by stakeholders. In the summer of 2020, we will hold another series of stakeholder meetings and have another public survey to review and comment on the draft recommendations. Stay tuned to *Groundwork* and to the Walk.Bike.Ohio project [website](#) for more information on how to get involved in the next round of engagement.

Announcements

- **Groundwork Year-End Survey** – We want to recognize Ohio's top active transportation accomplishments of 2019. Do you know of a project or program that deserves recognition? ***Nominate an AT project you have participated in, been impressed with or one that you have seen benefit others.*** Nominations are due at 5 PM on Friday, December 20.
- ***Register and tune in*** for an **Active Transportation Network Call** on Tuesday, February 25 at 10 AM. ODOT will provide updates on statewide planning efforts around active transportation, how to get involved, as well as highlight available AT tools and resources.
- It's almost time to ***apply for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funding.*** Review the ***application guidance*** and visit the ***SRTS Apply For Funds page***. The online applications are open from Monday, January 6–Friday, March 6 at 5 PM.
- ***Ohio's Active Transportation Map Viewer*** is now live on ODOT's Transportation Information Mapping System. Check out existing bicycle-

and pedestrian-related data layers. Stay tuned for more data in the future to be housed here.

- The [Ohio Trail Connections Summit](#) is scheduled for Saturday, March 28 in Mount Vernon. Join trail organizations spanning the Ohio to Erie Trail for a day of knowledge sharing and networking related to economic growth and tourism through trail connectivity. [Register and get details](#). Space is limited.
- [Learn more and register](#) for the [NHI Bicycle Facility Design Course](#) on February 26–27 in Garfield Heights. This course is a requirement for [ODOT's Bicycle Facilities and Enhancement Design prequalification](#).
- ODOT's Safety and Active Transportation Team is on the search for a student intern! Check out the opportunity [here](#).

Questions? Feedback?

Drop us a line, bikeohio@dot.ohio.gov



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