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Issue 51



Policy Impacts on Active Transportation

This is the second in a series of GroundWork issues that highlight the findings of the ongoing Walk.Bike.Ohio (WBO) Plan. This issue focuses on the impacts that policy has on active transportation.

To learn more, visit the [WBO website](#).



[Existing Conditions Report](#)



[Maintenance Review](#)

What is Home Rule?

Ohio's home rule status lets local governments adopt independent regulations, as long as they do not conflict with state laws. Home rule status applies across sectors, including transportation. It means that municipalities in Ohio have the authority to develop and implement their own transportation plans and policies, and that they are responsible for the planning, construction, reconstruction, maintenance, repair and regulation of all roadways within their boundaries, including sidewalks and bikeways.

Implications of Home Rule for Active Transportation

The advantage of home rule is that municipalities maintain a great deal of autonomy over the planning and design of their communities. Local governments have an opportunity to adopt design guidance beyond minimum requirements, enact supportive policies, choose how they spend locally allocated funds and set their own local priorities.

However, it can also lead to inconsistent planning and implementation due to varying local priorities and/or amount of resources that are dedicated to active transportation. This can result in disconnected walking and biking networks between municipalities and across regions.

To address this, coordination between local jurisdictions, regional organizations and ODOT is essential. When final, Walk.Bike.Ohio will outline activities that ODOT will advance over the next five years to support collaboration and encourage coordination across the state for bicycle and pedestrian planning and implementation.



Understanding Maintenance Responsibilities

Home rule also has implications when it comes to maintenance due to the

emphasis or local control. In 2015, ODOT published the [Roadway Infrastructure Maintenance Responsibility \(RIMR\) Manual](#) to clarify who is responsible for maintenance based on infrastructure type, location and roadway type. Takeaways for active transportation include:

- ODOT is responsible for maintaining active transportation facilities on two types of highways outside of city or village corporate limits:
 - US or State Routes
 - County or township roads over limited access highways
- All other sidewalk and bikeway maintenance falls to local governments (e.g., city, county) or other entities (e.g., parks, toll road) unless they have a consent decree with ODOT.

See the [Walk.Bike.Ohio Maintenance Overview](#) for a chart on page 7 that can help clarify roles responsibilities when it comes to maintenance. In addition, there are case studies from communities in Ohio and across the country that address the challenges of routine maintenance, repair and reconstruction of sidewalks and winter maintenance of active transportation facilities.



Announcements

- October has been designated as **National Pedestrian Safety Month** *by the USDOT*. Check out the [Your Move Ohio Campaign Toolkit](#) for a variety of materials to promote safety for people walking in your community.
- Letters of Interest for ODOT's **Transportation Alternatives Program** will be accepted until Monday, November 2. [Learn more here](#).
- The **Safe Routes to School** application window will open in January. [Register](#) and join an informational webinar on the 2021 SRTS application on Thursday, November 5.
- Working on a **school travel plan** or getting started? [New documents are located here](#). Minor updates add flexibility in school travel planning. Notably, communities can use other methods for student travel information and parent feedback other than the [ODOT surveys](#). The ODOT Parent Survey has been updated considering COVID-19. In addition, a recommended non-infrastructure action plan has replaced the 12-month activity calendar.
- The **Ohio Department of Natural Resources' (ODNR) Clean Ohio Trails Fund** applications will be due on February 1, 2021. Watch for guidance coming in December or, in the meantime, [check out the 2020 guidance](#).



Questions? Feedback?

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



2020 YEAR TO DATE DEATHS IN OHIO



9
BICYCLIST



111
PEDESTRIAN

2019 YEAR TO DATE DEATHS IN OHIO

23 BICYCLIST

86 PEDESTRIAN

*As of October 13, 2020

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