



*NHDOT Bicycle and  
Pedestrian Transportation  
Advisory Committee*

## NHDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee

Victoria Sheehan, Commissioner  
New Hampshire Department of Transportation  
7 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03301

March 1, 2016

Dear Commissioner Sheehan,

I am writing on behalf of the NHDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (BPTAC) to request your support for funding for the NHDOT to update the New Hampshire State Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan during the current biennium. The current plan was adopted in 1977 and last revised in 2000. It is a very limited document, and while it was adequate for its time, it is in need of a major update to reflect current practices in pedestrian and bicycle planning in New Hampshire and nationwide, as well as broader federal requirements around performance based planning.

The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee ([BPTAC](#)) was re-established by former Commissioner Clement to advise the NHDOT on policies, programs and recommendations that support walking and bicycling and to ensure that these activities are viable, safe forms of transportation and recreation. Among its many activities, the BPTAC has worked in the past year to:

- establish a coordinated system for pedestrian and bicycle data collection among the regional planning commissions;
- secure Strava Metro GIS data on pedestrian and bicycle usage to assist RPC and municipalities in their bicycle and pedestrian planning;
- provide input to the Bureau of Traffic on improving practices for lane striping to enhance safety for people on bicycles; and
- develop a guide for citizens on how to engage effectively in the project development process.

Last September the BPTAC revived the biennial New Hampshire Bicycle & Pedestrian Planning Conference, and held a day-long event that brought together over 100 municipal and regional transportation planners, NHDOT staff, state and local elected officials and business community leaders interested in improving pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility.

A statewide pedestrian and bicycle plan would set the stage for a safe, accessible, and connected pedestrian and bicycle network. Implementation of the plan will improve walking and biking conditions throughout the State with an emphasis on connecting neighborhoods, schools, transit, business districts, and recreational facilities. By making walking and bicycling safer and more convenient, there will be greater incentive to walk and ride bikes for transportation, which has the collateral effect of improving health, reducing traffic and congestion, and improving air quality. The U.S. Department of Transportation's 2010 "Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations" states:

"The DOT policy is to incorporate safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities into transportation projects. Every transportation agency, including DOT, has the responsibility to

improve conditions and opportunities for walking and bicycling and to integrate walking and bicycling into their transportation systems. Because of the numerous individual and community benefits that walking and bicycling provide - including health, safety, environmental, transportation, and quality of life - transportation agencies are encouraged to go beyond minimum standards to provide safe and convenient facilities for these modes."<sup>1</sup>

The BPTAC believes that a current, robust statewide pedestrian and bicycle plan will go a long way in supporting NHDOT's goals of ensuring safety for all road users while responding to federal guidance and strengthening how we address requirements related to performance based planning.

The existing Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, last updated in 2000, recognized that increased walking and bicycling were creating a demand for more infrastructure to support it, but much has changed in the ensuing 15 years. On the regulatory side, the 2010 USDOT guidance cited above clarified the role of state departments of transportation in planning for safe accommodation of all road users. New USDOT requirements around performance based planning point to the need to extend NHDOT initiatives like the Balanced Scorecard to include metrics for walking and bicycling. From a design standpoint, planning and engineering practice for pedestrian and bicycle accommodation has advanced considerably in the last decade and a half. Finally, on the demand side, there is broad evidence of public support for improved walking and bicycling accommodation. This support was evident locally when the nine regional planning commissions gathered extensive public input as part of the [Granite State Future](#) project. Nationally, there is extensive data identifying demand for more walkable communities among the growing senior population as well as the Millennial generation.<sup>2, 3</sup> Going forward, our state must adapt to these changing demographics in the interest of sustaining our workforce and tax base.

We understand the pressure on the Department to maintain and repair existing transportation systems with a shrinking pool of transportation funding. At the same time we believe that investment in updating and implementing a statewide pedestrian and bicycle plan will reap safety, economic and quality of life benefits that surpass the cost. We respectfully request that NHDOT makes initiating an update to the State Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan a priority in the coming year.

We would welcome an opportunity to meet with you to discuss the proposed plan update and other aspects of NHDOT's pedestrian and bicycle program.

Sincerely Yours,



Felice Janelle, BPTAC Chair  
Representative of the NH Department of  
Environmental Services

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/guidance/policy\\_accom.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/policy_accom.cfm)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.transportation.gov/safer-people-safer-streets>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/>

BPTAC Steering Committee Members:

Craig Tufts – Central NH Regional Planning Commission

Dave Topham – Granite State Wheelmen

Eric Feldbaum – Department of Resources and Economic Development

Gretchen Gandini – WOW Trail

Jeff Latimer – Gus' Bike Shop

Mary Poesse – North Country Council

Erik Paddleford – NHDOT – Rail and Transit

Terry Johnson – Healthy Eating Active Living

William Schoefmann – City of Keene

Scott Bogle – Rockingham Planning Commission

Scott Bourcier – Dubois and King

Tim Blagden – Bike Walk Alliance NH

Albert Willis – Department of Health and Human Services