



Pedestrian Forum

Safe Pedestrians and a Walkable America

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http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/ped_bike.htm

The goal of the FHWA is to continually improve highway safety by reducing highway fatalities and injuries by 20 percent in ten years. Ensuring safe travel on highways is the guiding principle throughout the FHWA. Pedestrian fatalities account for about 12 percent of all traffic fatalities and are one of the focus areas of the Safety Office. FHWA has taken the position that walking and bicycling are legitimate modes of transportation.

There is no question that conditions for bicycling and walking need to be improved in every community in the United States; it is no longer acceptable that over 5,000 pedestrians and bicyclists are killed in traffic every year, that people with disabilities cannot travel without encountering barriers, and that two desirable and efficient modes of travel have been made difficult and uncomfortable. Every transportation agency has the responsibility and the opportunity to make a difference in the bicycle-friendliness and walkability of our communities. The design information to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians is available, as is the funding. The United States Department of Transportation is committed to doing all it can to improve conditions for bicycling and walking and to make them safer ways to travel. (The Pedestrian Forum is also on the web at http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/ped_bike.htm)

New Enhancements for the Bicycle Safety Education Resource Center - Several improvements are being made to the Bicycle Safety Education Resource Center, which is a new website that provides bicycle safety education information for bicyclists of all ages, motorists, and those who teach children to ride. Currently, the site contains a searchable database of training materials, a guide to help you identify the training needs of your audience, and a *Good Practices Guide* to assist with the development of your own program. Modifications will be made to the Resource Center by September 2002 that will provide a manageable process for growing the resource database as well as keeping it current. This will be accomplished by developing an Internet based system that takes on-line program submission, allows program contacts to manage their own program information in the database and enables the resource center database to be controlled from a secure administration site. To access the Resource Center, visit <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/ee/fhwa.html>. Hard copies of the *Good Practices Guide* are available by contacting Tamara Broyhill at tamara.Broyhill@fhwa.dot.gov

FHWA Pennsylvania Division: Pedestrian/Bicycle Accommodations Review - The Pennsylvania Division and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) recently completed a review to assess how FHWA and PENNDOT are accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists on Federal-aid highway projects in Pennsylvania and to develop an approach to assure that future projects comply with FHWA policy. The review team met with representatives from PENNDOT Central Office and four engineering Districts across the Commonwealth. The District reviews included evaluations of environmental documents, design plans, and special provisions of Federal-aid projects, and on-going or completed construction. Recommendations of the review include:

- Update state environmental handbooks and design manuals to provide better guidance for addressing pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations on projects.
- Develop a specific definition of "to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists".

- Provide training regarding environmental, design, and construction procedures and policies for pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations.
- Develop a pedestrian and bicyclist maintenance and protection of traffic statewide special provision.

The Division Office is now working with PENNDOT to implement the recommendations.

Analysis of Pedestrian and Bicycle Expenditures - The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA) provided funding for pedestrian and bicycle projects. Annual tables, by State and by funding program, have been compiled for the past 10 years. For example, more than \$339 million of TEA -21 funds were obligated last year for pedestrian and bicycle projects. Contact Jim Smid for more information: jim.schmid@fhwa.dot.gov.

NPA Contains New Provisions for Pedestrians/Bicycles - The FHWA's Office of Operations issued a Notice of Proposed Amendments (NPA) for the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The NPA contains various new and innovative pedestrian and bicycle devices and provisions, including allowing the use of the "animated eyes display" and "countdown pedestrian devices" on pedestrian signal displays. To date, these devices have only been allowed under experimental status, but the new provision would make them standard devices that any locality could use without having to get permission from the FHWA. In addition, the NPA offers new guidance for accessible pedestrian signals, extending the pedestrian clearance time so that it is sufficient to allow pedestrians to clear the full width of the traveled portion of the roadway, new guidance for use of the "in pavement lights," use of colored pavement in certain circumstances, and much more. The NPA will be open for comment until August 19, 2002. Please review the NPA and comment on it. It can be accessed at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2002_register&docid=02-12269-filed.pdf

Preliminary Estimates of 2001 Fatalities – The NHTSA announced its preliminary analysis of highway traffic fatalities in 2001. The number of pedestrians killed, 4,698, remained virtually unchanged. NHTSA annually collects crash statistics from 50 States and the District of Columbia to produce the annual report on traffic fatality trends. The final 2001 report will be available in August. Summaries of the preliminary report are on the NHTSA website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

Draft Guidelines on Accessible Public Rights-of-Way – The U.S. Access Board has released for public comment draft guidelines that cover pedestrian access to sidewalks and streets, including crosswalks, curb ramps, street furnishings, parking, and other components of public rights-of-way. The guidelines are being developed under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which covers access to a wide range of facilities in the public and private sectors, and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), which requires access to certain federally funded facilities. Local jurisdictions and other entities covered by these laws must ensure that the facilities they build or alter are accessible to people with disabilities. The new provisions would supplement the Access Board's ADA and ABA accessibility guidelines, which address many types of facilities but do not currently provide guidance specifically tailored to public rights-of-way. The draft guidelines are available for public comment until October 28. The Access Board will hold a public meeting on the guidelines in Portland, Oregon on October 8. For additional information, go to the Access Board's website at www.access-board.gov/news/prow-release.htm.

Pro Bike/Pro Walk 2002 – This biennial conference will be held on September 3-6 in St. Paul, Minnesota. The program will reflect the growing interest in and support for walking and bicycling as key elements of livable communities. There will be seminars on bicycle and pedestrian facility planning, design and engineering, promotion and encouragement programs, public health and physical activity, education and safety research and programs, effective advocacy techniques, and trails and greenway development. Conference participants include Federal, State and local personnel, engineers, planners, transportation officials, educators, public health specialists, park and recreation managers, and advocates. The U.S. Department is a sponsor of this conference. For more information, go to www.bikewalk.org.

Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day – The second annual Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day will be held on October 10. Public and private organizations have joined together to increase safety on America's roadways. Events will be held around the country to solicit everyone to focus on their own individual behavior when using the roadways as pedestrians, bicycle and motorcycle operators, motor vehicle operators and passengers. For more information, visit www.brakesonfatalities.org.

Detectable Warnings – Detectable warnings are an ADA requirement in the current Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for the use of detecting the boundary between the sidewalk and the street. The original requirement in ADAAG was suspended for a time to conduct further research. Research was conducted, and the suspension of the requirement was lifted on July 26, 2001. Detectable warnings are now required when constructing and altering curb ramps. Truncated domes are the only detectable warnings allowed by ADAAG. They are a unique design and have proven to be the most detectable surface. The original ADA design standard for truncated domes is found in ADAAG (4.29.2). After the research was conducted, a new design recommendation was made for the dimension and placement of the domes on curb ramps. Both the FHWA and the U.S. Access Board are encouraging the use of the new design pattern and application over the original ADAAG design. Publications of the FHWA and the U.S. Access Board contain comparable information. However, at the time the FHWA's publication, *Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access, Part II, Best Practices Design Guide*, went to print, the suspension had not been lifted, so the text in Chapter 6 does not mention that detectable warnings are required. For information on the recommended design and other useful information, visit www.accessboard.gov.

International Walk to School Day – The 2002 event is scheduled for October 2. The goal of the walk varies from community to community. Some walks rally for safer and improved streets, some to promote healthier habits and some to conserve the environment. Whatever the reason, the events encourage a more walkable world. More information can be found on two websites, www.walktoschool-usa.org and www.iwalktoschool.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

- 1) August 4-7, ITE Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, www.ite.org
- 2) September 3-6, Pro Bike/Pro Walk, St. Paul, Minnesota, www.bikewalk.org
- 4) September 8-11, NAGHSR Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, www.naghsr.org
- 5) October 2, International Walk to School Day, www.walktoschool-usa.org and www.iwalktoschool.org
- 6) October 10, Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day, www.brakesonfatalities.org
- 7) October 23-24, Worcester, Massachusetts, Caroline Hymoff, 617-973-8908

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