



Pedestrian Forum



Safe Pedestrians and a Walkable America

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<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/fourthlevel/pedforum.htm>

Each year pedestrian fatalities comprise about 11 percent of all traffic fatalities and there are approximately 4,800 pedestrian deaths. Another 70,000 pedestrians are injured in roadway crashes annually. Safety is important for all roadway users, and FHWA has established a goal of reducing pedestrian fatalities and injuries by 10 percent by the year 2008. Pedestrian safety improvements depend on an integrated approach that involves the 5 E's: Engineering, Enforcement, Encouragement, Education, and Evaluation. The *Pedestrian Forum* highlights recent pedestrian safety activities related to the 5 E's that will help reach FHWA's safety goals and save lives.

Evaluation of Safety, Design, and Operation of Shared-Use Paths: Final Report

The above document is now available. Shared-use paths or trails are paved, off-street travel ways designed to serve non-motorized travelers. Across the U.S. shared-use paths are gaining popularity: the mileage of built trails is steadily increasing as are numbers of trail users. In fact, some urban trails attract thousands of users per hour during peak periods and many are experiencing evening rush hours on weekdays and traffic jams on weekend afternoons.

During the planning and design of a shared use path, project managers and designers typically ask, "How wide should this pathway be?" This question inevitably raises more questions: "What types of users can we reasonably expect? What will the volume of traffic be? Do we need to separate different types of users on multiple treadways?" In the past, trail designers have had few tools other than their own instincts to determine how much width is too much, and how much is too little. Overbuilding is a waste of resources; however, under-building increases user conflicts, compromises user safety and may ultimately require the managing agency to widen the trail at additional cost.

The purpose of this project was to develop a service model that professionals can use to assist with the planning, design, and management of shared-use paths and to answer the key questions posed above. In particular, the project was to produce a tool that would overcome the limitations in the current LOS procedure. The new service model:

- Is calibrated and validated.

- Is based on U.S. data.
- Has LOS criteria based on user input for a typical mix of trip purposes.
- Includes more modes than just pedestrians and bicycles.
- Includes the ability to change key parameters, such as mean speeds.
- Accounts for delayed passing.
- Analyzes the full range of existing and possible path widths.
- Is in a form ready for use by path designers.

For more information or to obtain copies of the document "Evaluation of Safety, Design, and Operation of Shared-Use Paths: Final Report, FHWA-HRT-05-137", contact:

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U.S. Department of Transportation Formally Adopts Latest Accessibility Guidelines

In November 2006, the USDOT formally adopted the Access Board's Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) as regulatory standards for transportation facilities. The standards address sidewalk slope and dimensions, connections to and clearance at bus stops, physical and audible signage, and many other features that provide full access to all modes of public transportation. Read USDOT's *Federal Register* notice at

<http://www.tinyurl.com/y7urw7>, or go directly to the guidelines at <http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/final.htm>.

National Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee Holds Inaugural Meeting

The National Safe Routes to School Task Force, a federally chartered advisory committee, held its inaugural meeting in Washington DC on January 11th, 2007. Congressman Oberstar, Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Richard Capka, Federal Highway Administrator, gave opening remarks. The Chairman told the committee members that “this will be the most important work that you will ever do. How many people have the opportunity to change the habits of an entire generation of school children?”

For those that would like to know more about the Task Force, members selected, how to submit comments, etc, on-line information can be found on the National Center for Safe Routes to School web site. Click on http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task_force/

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Record Number of Communities Participate in Walk to School Day

A record number of U.S. communities from all 50 states participated in Walk to School Day on October 4, 2006. Over 2,200 events were registered on the USA Walk to School Web site (www.walktoschool.org). Of these registered events, 48 percent reported that their Walk to School event was a part of an ongoing walking and/or biking program and 47 percent reported that their event was part of a Safe Routes to School program. On a global scale, this year's event saw a record 40 participating countries and also marks the establishment of the first International Walk to School Month. To find out who walked in your community, please visit <http://www.walktoschool.org/who/index.cfm>. For photos of the 2006 event, please visit <http://www.iwalktoschool.org/quotes/index.htm>.

Highway Safety and Trees: The Delicate Balance

There has always been a debate about whether it is better to have roadside trees or not. Pedestrian advocates (and others) are generally in favor of trees because they create a nice streetscape and also provide needed shade to pedestrians and other road users. Highway safety advocates are generally in favor of removing trees at critical locations, primarily because they are a hazard to motorists accidentally leaving the roadway.

FHWA has a new DVD titled "Highway Safety and Trees - The Delicate Balance." It is designed to educate the public on the real hazards caused by trees located adjacent to the roadway, and on the variety of options available to reduce this toll. It stresses the importance of communication between highway agencies and the public, and the involvement of Context Sensitive Design/Solutions in developing highway projects that fully and objectively consider safety as well as other community concerns. In short, it is intended to help gain public acceptance of highway projects that include reducing tree crashes as an element of the project goals.

For more information contact: Matt Lupes at matt.lupes@dot.gov, or Nick Artimovich at nick.artimovich@dot.gov.

The DVD is ready for distribution and is available FREE of charge by contacting report.center@fhwa.dot.gov. Ask for product number FHWA-SA-06-13

Pedestrian Safety at Midblock Locations

The Florida Department of Transportation has released a report that examines the role of crossing locations and light conditions in pedestrian injury severity. The report also includes a set of proposed guidelines for marking midblock crosswalks at uncontrolled locations along Florida's state highway system. http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=7047

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