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# VII. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FUNDING

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Federal funding for bicycle and pedestrian programs increase significantly with the passage of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991. ISTEA created the Transportation Enhancements Program, and also required that DOTs adopt a more collaborative, multimodal paradigm. Many of ISTEA's provisions have been carried forth in subsequent federal transportation laws, including SAFETEA-LU (2005). Reviews existing bicycle and pedestrian project and program funding, as well as innovative strategies and recommendations for improvement.

## Review of Current Funding Program

On August 10, 2005, SAFETEA-LU was signed into law, guaranteeing \$224.1 billion in funding nationally for highways, highway safety, and public transportation. SAFETEA-LU also includes several categories of federal transportation funding for bicycle, pedestrian, and streetscape projects. The following is a summary of the funding sources available and currently programmed in the STIP for bicycle and pedestrian projects throughout the state.

- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
  - The STP provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway, including the construction of bicycle facilities and pedestrian walkways on land adjacent to any highway on the National Highway System (NHS). Additionally, NHS funds can be spent on non-motorized projects within Interstate corridors.
- Congressional Earmark - Earmarks have specific applicability for bicycle-

pedestrian projects for which there is political and/or public support. They are generally more expensive projects that would burden typical funding sources. Projects most likely to be included are bridge projects with bicycle-pedestrian accommodations, bridges for paths, long distance rail trail projects, or high profile path projects.

- SRTS - Federal sponsorship and funding of the Safe Routes to School program began with SAFETEA-LU in 2005. This new program enables and encourages kindergarten through eighth grade school children to walk and bicycle to school. Both infrastructure-related and behavioral projects are geared toward providing a safe, appealing environment for walking and biking that will improve the quality of children's lives and support national health objectives by reducing traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. To be eligible for funding under this program, project infrastructure improvements must relate directly to a specific school and comprise a minimum of 70% to a maximum of 90% of project total. The remainder is available for the non-infrastructure components, including education, encouragement, and enforcement.
- Transportation, Community, and System Preservation - This is a comprehensive program designed to address the relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices. Bicycle- and pedestrian-related projects funded under this program include transit-oriented/compact development plans, traffic calming, increasing

access to jobs and services, minimizing adverse impacts on the environment while improving the overall efficiency of the transportation system.

- Transportation Enhancement – SAFETEA-LU requires that 10 percent of the funding made available to each state under the STP be utilized for activities defined as Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEAs). Of the twelve defined TEAs, the following are specifically bicycle and pedestrian related:
  - Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
  - Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists; and
  - Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use of the corridors for pedestrian or bicycle trails).
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) – Under SAFETEA-LU, funds may be used for bicycle and pedestrian activities, including
  - Constructing bicycle and pedestrian facilities (paths, bike racks, support facilities, etc.) that are not exclusively recreational and reduce vehicle trips
  - Non-construction outreach related to safe bicycle use
  - Funding State bicycle/pedestrian coordinator positions for promoting and facilitating nonmotorized transportation modes through public education, safety programs, etc. This is limited to one full-time position per state.

- Safety - The Highway Safety Improvement Program provides funding to States for projects that correct or improve a hazardous road location or feature or otherwise address a highway safety problem. The legislation lists as examples of many projects eligible for this funding, improvements for pedestrian and bicycle safety, and installation and maintenance of signs at pedestrian and bicycle crossings and school zones. Hazard elimination projects are 90 percent federally funded.
- High Priority Projects - The High Priority Projects program provides designated funding for specific projects identified in SAFETEA-LU. A total of 5,091 projects are identified as high-priority, approximately 40 of which are related to bicycle and pedestrian projects within the State of Connecticut. Additionally, High Priority Projects are often congressional designations of funding that occur during the six year authorization (e.g. ISTEA, SAFETEA-LU).

Table 18 displays the funding amounts that the State of Connecticut has programmed in each of these programs for bicycle- and pedestrian-related projects in the 2007-2010 STIP.

The total 2007-2010 STIP budget (highway projects only) is \$1.9 billion. Pedestrian- and bicycle-related projects represent a little more than three percent of the total STIP budget. It should also be noted, however, that Table 18 does not represent all bicycle and pedestrian projects programmed within the State. Additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities, not specifically identified within the STIP, are also constructed as part of highway and roadway projects.

## Innovative Funding Sources

In light of the current national economic situation and its affect on state and government revenues, there is a greater need than ever to develop innovative strategies to fund bicycle and pedestrian projects. With SAFETEA-LU set to expire at the end of 2009 and the Highway Trust Fund running dangerously low on funds, the debate has already begun on reauthorization of federal transportation legislation. Based on the amount of time it has historically taken to get new legislation passed and the amount of money designated for pedestrian- and bicycle-related projects, CTDOT and regional and local agencies may consider evaluating new and innovative funding sources and/or strategies for these projects. The following are examples of innovative funding strategies currently being used in other states:

### 1. Oregon Mandated 1% Law -

Oregon Revised Statute 366.514 requires Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), cities and counties to include "bikeways and walkways" on all road construction and reconstruction projects. The 1971 law also requires ODOT, cities, and counties to spend reasonable amounts of their share of the state highway fund (state gas tax and vehicle registration fees) on needed pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. A "reasonable amount" is open to interpretation, and the statute specifies that ODOT, cities, and counties must spend no less than one percent of their share of the state highway fund on such facilities. ODOT has to spend the one percent minimum each year, but cities and counties can carry the 1 per cent share over a ten-year period to allow it to accumulate (a small jurisdiction may not do a road project every year, and one percent may represent too small a sum to do anything with).

### 2. Dedicated Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects, New Jersey –

The State of New Jersey has dedicated approximately \$57.5 million of state funds towards pedestrian safety in an effort to reduce the growing pedestrian fatality rate within the state.

### 3. Local Improvement Districts:

**Portland, Oregon** - The Portland Office of Transportation has used Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) to fund numerous pedestrian-related streetscape improvements. Before an LID can be established, the City of Portland polls area property owners improvements needed. Once the consensus is established, the City works with property owners to develop an assessment method, which may include square footage, linear footage, equivalent dwelling unit or a combination of methods. The City then designs, engineers, and manages the construction of the project, but does not actually build the project. LID's can be used to improve streets, build sidewalks and install storm water management systems. LID's are typically business districts, but can also be residential.

### 4. Marchaselli Program Funds for

**Local Match: New York State** - In 2008, New York State Governor Patten signed a new law which includes bicycle and pedestrian paths within the types of construction and improvement projects (e.g., bridge, roadway, and highway projects) of the Department of Transportation which are eligible for Marchaselli funds. These funds can be used for the local 20 percent match for federal funding projects and the law specifies that such eligibility does not restrict the use of other funds for design, construction, or land acquisition for bicycle paths or pedestrian paths.

**Table 18: Pedestrian and Bicycle Allocation by Funding Source: 2007-2010 STIP**

Funding Program	Amount	% of Total
Surface Transportation Program	\$203,000	0%
Congressional Earmark	\$3,912,000	6%
Safe Routes to School	\$1,391,000	2%
Transportation, Community, and System Preservation	\$2,188,000	4%
Enhancement	\$17,653,499	29%
High Priority Projects	\$36,102,000	59%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$61,449,499</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: CTDOT, September 2008

**5. East Coast Greenway Adopt-a-Mile Program: Maine to Florida**

- As part of its effort to complete a 3,000-mile, off-road route from Maine to Florida, the East Coast Greenway Alliance offers sponsors the opportunity to adopt a mile of the trail. Every donor is recognized on kiosks in each state along the Greenway. This same strategy could be applied in Connecticut for local trail projects in need of funding. The sale of individual paving stones or the naming rights to a trail are other options with the same concept.

**6. Dedicated Sales Tax Revenue:**

**Mammoth, California** – Because of its recognition as a world-renowned year-round resort, the City of Mammoth, California introduced a half-cent sales tax measures that would raise and secure a stable funding source for development and maintenance of local trails, parks, and recreation. "Measure R" was placed on the ballot in June, 2008 and received the necessary two-thirds majority to pass. The measure increased the local sales tax by half a

percent. By law, this increased revenue can only be used for the planning, construction, operation, and maintenance of the recreational infrastructure of Mammoth Lakes. The City Council estimates that the tax will bring in close to \$1.1 million per year. The measure specifically forbids local representatives from cutting existing funding to local parks and recreation.

**7. Moving Violation Surcharge:**

**Portland, Oregon** - The City of Portland's pedestrian education and encouragement programs are housed in the Community and School Safety Traffic Partnership within the Office of Transportation. Partners in the effort include the Portland Police Bureau, neighborhoods, pedestrian and bicycle advocates, schools, courts, Portland State University, health professionals, and senior advocates. The program focuses on reducing driver error, and increasing the awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety and safe routes to school. It is funded through an annual increase in traffic fine revenues, which in Oregon are collected by the state

and transferred to each jurisdiction. Portland receives \$1 million in traffic fine revenues annually and dedicates a portion of those funds to bicycle and pedestrian safety campaigns.

## Recommendations

Based on the information presented above regarding potential transportation funding shortfalls and the limited funding at the state level for transportation initiatives, including pedestrian- and bicycle-related projects, it is prudent for CTDOT to seek to find alternative and more innovative ways to pay for the construction and maintenance of sidewalks, multi-use trails, bicycle paths, and other facilities used for non-motorized transportation.

The recommendations outlined below are selected implementation options from Chapter III. These implementation options are specific courses of action that CTDOT and others can take to achieve more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly policies and practices. Goals 1, 3, and 6 have the largest concentration of funded related implementation options. Any number and /or combination of the listed implementation options could be utilized. This list is not all inclusive, as other mechanisms not listed may be used to achieve more bicycle- and pedestrian funding, and thus move towards the overall vision of the Plan.

Recommended implementation options include:

1. Review current sidewalk policy and suggest improvements, including reducing local match requirements - The Steering Committee and regional and municipal governments have articulated that the biggest obstacle to bicycle and pedestrian improvements is the non-federal share (20 percent) match for the right of way and construction that local government must produce. This issue is often the reason needed facilities in town centers and other

commercial areas are not constructed. When available state funds are a viable resource that should be utilized to match funds on sidewalk construction as encouraged by the Complete Streets Policy to further the development of the bicycle and pedestrian network.

2. Establish a funding target for bicycle and pedestrian improvements – Similar to the state of Oregon, CTDOT may consider needs to identify a specific amount of money within annual budgets that would be used solely for the purposes of constructing new or upgrading existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This money may come from a variety of sources and could be applied to roadway, bridge, maintenance or construction projects including sidewalks, bicycle paths, and other facilities that could safely be used for non-motorized transportation. In terms of federal funding, it may also be appropriate for CTDOT to evaluate the use of STP and CMAQ funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects, especially in the more urban and populated areas of the state that are struggling to meet federal air quality standards.
3. Establish a funding target, to augment the Recreational Trails Program, for multi-use trails - A first step to achieving this goal would be to conduct a research study/evaluation of how other states across the country are paying for the development and construction of these facilities. There may be several additional sources of state and federal funding that could be applied to multi-use trail.
4. Continue to fund training initiatives for regional and municipal officials (e.g. training by UConn T<sup>2</sup>-Institute) – CTDOT should continue to offer appropri-

ate training sessions to its staff, consultants, advocacy groups, and other interested individuals on pedestrian and bicycle design and planning to enable these professionals to develop their skills to better accommodate these modes. An ongoing need for this training exists due to staff turnover and the need for education on updated planning and design concepts. Federal CMAQ funds could be used to promote education and encouragement projects that would shift short-distance motor vehicle trips to bicycle and walking trips.

5. Review and utilize applicable innovative strategies and best practices – Through a detailed review of other state, as well as town, innovative strategies and best practices, CTDOT could model after other successful programs, and continue to benchmark themselves against other state processes and programs. Program administrators of those strategies should be contacted with questions on implementation. CTDOT should consider allowing the use of non-traditional sources of funding for the local or non-federal share of the project. Towns could design or construct sections of trails using town forces and use the value of the work as local match.
6. Develop a more formal funding tracking mechanism and provide announcements of funding opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian projects - CTDOT should develop an accessible database of all funding that has been allocated for bicycle and pedestrian projects so that staff can more easily track where the money was spent and on which projects. Additionally, CTDOT should send an email notification, letters, or post announcements on its website so that cities and town around

the state know what funds are available, what the funds can be spent on, and when they will be released.

7. Establish a funding target for bicycle and pedestrian improvements near schools – CTDOT should could base its annual target on existing infrastructure and planning/outreach programs that are on-going and those that may be needed near schools. CTDOT needs could evaluate to determine whether there has been sufficient funding in past years to meet program goals. Again, CTDOT should look at what other states are doing to incorporate Safe Routes to School into larger maintenance and construction projects. For example, in New Jersey and Vermont the Safe Routes to School Program is integrated with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs within those states.
8. Staffing funding – CTDOT should consider increasing its staff allocation to bicycle and pedestrian planning. If possible, a sufficient increase in funding would ensure that one full-time staff person is solely devoted to bicycle and pedestrian issues. This would also reinforce and support implementation of the recommendations contained within this plan.

**Public / Private Funding Partnership: Housatonic Railroad Trail (Pequonnock/Housatonic Railway Greenway), Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency, CT**

The Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency has been actively working with the city of Bridgeport and towns of Monroe and Trumbull to plan, design, and develop a multi-use trail that will extend from downtown Bridgeport to the Monroe-Newtown town line, a distance of over 16 miles. Three sections have been completed:

- **Bridgeport from the intersection of Stratford Avenue, Fairfield Avenue and Water Street near the Bridgeport train station to North Avenue (US Route 1).**
- **Monroe from Doc Silverstone Drive in Wolfe Park to the Newtown town line.**
- **Trumbull from Tait Road, through the Pequonnock Valley State Park and Old Mine Park to the Monroe town line.**

No trail currently exists from the Monroe-Trumbull town line to Wolfe Park in Monroe. The planned alignment passes through a large parcel owned by a developer of an office park. The developer – John Kimball – indicated a willingness to work with the town on creating a public-private partnership. This partnership extended beyond the office park development to include the entire “gap” section from the town line to the existing trail that starts in Wolfe Park.

The innovative funding efforts to complete the design and construction of this section included the following:

- **Design – A combination of state and private funds were used to pay for the design of this section. The town used a state grant provided by the legislature and through the DEP to fund the design of the section from the office park to and through Wolfe Park. The developer agreed to fund the design of the trail through his parcel.**
- **Right-of-Way – The developer donated a defined, permanent 25-foot easement to the town of Monroe with the right to build and maintain a multi-use trail through the Canterbury Square development. The value of the easement was appraised at \$62,000. No other private property was needed to be acquired for the trail. From the private development the planned alignment first passes through DEP-owned land and then through the Monroe’s public works facility. The DEP has agreed to allow the trail to enter and pass through its property.**
- **Construction – Kimball Land Holdings, LLC agreed to construct the trail through the Canterbury Square parcel at no cost to the town of Monroe. Subsequently, they also committed to**



**building the next section to Wolfe Park. Work includes excavating and grading, labor, material and equipment. The estimated value of the work is \$453,000.**

In January 2006, an Innovative Financing plan was developed and approved by FHWA that provided for the value of that work to be used as a credit for the local match of federal aid funds to be used for a different phase of the project. In this way, the private work was able to leverage federal dollars instead of merely reducing the cost of the project. In addition, the Innovative Financing plan regarded the entire trail as a larger, single project as opposed to several, smaller separate projects. This allowed the non-traditional credit to be applied to work to be completed in Trumbull and Bridgeport even though it was attributable to work completed in Monroe.

For more information on this project, please contact Mark Nielsen, Executive Director

Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency, 525 Water Street, Suite 1, Bridgeport, CT 06604.

