

Crossroads

Fall 1998



TRANSPORTATION Information Center — LTAP

University of Wisconsin—Madison

New programs promote pedestrian safety and convenience

Walking, the oldest but often the least visible form of transportation, is getting some well-deserved attention from state agencies, private groups and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Safety is a key issue. Each year in the US about 6000 pedestrians are killed in motor vehicle crashes. Last year 62 Wisconsin pedestrians were killed and 1,825 were injured. More than two-thirds of the crashes happened on neighborhood streets with the elderly being almost twice as likely as working-age adults or children to be the victim.

A new FHWA-supported statewide program, **The Pedestrian Road Show**, helps communities make walking safer, easier and more pleasant. In Wisconsin 12 facilitators are available to offer half-day Pedestrian Road Show seminars for local leaders. The program gives participants concrete information about elements that make a community safe and accessible to pedestrians, encourages them to further explore ways to make their community more walkable, and helps them begin to formulate a plan of action for their community. Facilitators are based in Eau Claire, Green Bay, Madison, and other cities around Wisconsin.

The FHWA's year 2000 goals are to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities occurring to pedestrians and bicyclists by 10% and to double the national percentage (from 7.9% to 15.8%) of transportation trips made by walking and bicycling.

To help achieve this, the state will soon begin developing a Statewide Pedestrian Plan under the guidance of Tom Huber, statewide bicycle/pedestrian coordinator. "We don't know yet what the plan will include," he says, "but the process is a serious commitment to meeting the goal of doubling the number of pedestrian and bicycle trips. Much of the work has to take place in local communities where most people walk. We can offer encouragement, technical support and guidance," says Huber. He is also a Pedestrian Road Show facilitator.

Walking benefits communities

Walking offers numerous benefits. Increased walking helps reduce traffic and parking congestion. It also promotes a sense of community, reduces crime, cuts pollution, congestion and noise, and helps stimulate the local economy.



Pedestrian/vehicle crashes cause 6000 deaths and 90,000 injuries annually.

Beyond that, walkers get health benefits from the exercise.

In cities from Florida to Oregon, making streets attractive and safe for walkers has helped increase property values and business growth. This summer the Milwaukee suburb of Wauwatosa rebuilt 16 blocks of its North Avenue East Town business district. The primary purpose is to cut traffic congestion and ease parking problems by encouraging neighbors to walk to shop.

Continued on page 4

Inside

Idea Exchange: Dolly moves blades easily; Pulling device eases post removal; Salt-tolerant grasses	2
New policy on utility installations	2
Local safety Rodeo gets drivers winter-ready	3
Budgeting—a balancing act	3
Calendar	4
Resources	6
Participants applaud chain saw tips	6
What you don't know CAN hurt you—safety code seminars	7
T.I.C. marks 15th year	8

New programs promote pedestrian safety and convenience

continued from page 1

"We found from a study that the North Avenue businesses tended to be patronized very heavily by people in the neighborhood. We wanted to encourage that," says Howard Young, engineering and operations administrator for the City of Wauwatosa. They are constructing bulges at intersection corners to slow vehicle traffic and make it easier for pedestrians to cross the street. They are also adding benches, bike poles, flowers, and new streetlights to make the area more attractive to shoppers. "It's the largest set of projects the city has undertaken in 15 years," says Young.

Walking has good support around the state. Hundreds of projects which combined pedestrian and bike facilities with new road construction or rebuilding were approved for state and federal funding last year. In addition, there were dozens of stand-alone pedestrian projects including: a sidewalk retrofit through the Beltline interchange on Madison's Gammon Road, sidewalks for shopping and employment access to Brookfield Square on Moorland Road in Brookfield, Eclipse Avenue and Portland Bridge improvements in Beloit, Milwaukee's Riverwalk development, Catlin Avenue

continued on next page

Calendar

T.I.C. workshops

Details and locations for workshops are mailed in announcements to all Crossroads recipients. For additional copies, or more information, call the T.I.C. at 800/442-4615.

Winter Road Maintenance Time to prepare for winter operations. This workshop covers equipment preparation, winter driving skills, the latest on ice-control materials, operations planning, and an opportunity to share experiences and tips. Past participants report that they improved their operations using what they learned in this workshop.

Sept 21	Tomah	Sept 28	Green Bay
Sept 22	Eau Claire	Sept 29	Brookfield
Sept 23	Cable	Sept 30	Barneveld
Sept 24	Rhineland		

Chainsaw Safety, Maintenance, and Operation Learn about personal protective equipment, proper maintenance procedures and the most effective techniques for using chainsaws. Taught by expert trainers from the Forest Industry Safety & Training Alliance, Inc., this workshop will include a classroom session in the morning and outdoor demonstrations in the afternoon.

Nov 2	Rhineland	Nov 9	Green Bay
Nov 3	Cable	Nov 10	Brookfield
Nov 4	Eau Claire	Nov 11	Barneveld
Nov 5	Tomah		

Basic Work Zone Safety This workshop is for road supervisors and maintenance personnel who plan, set up and inspect work zones. It covers temporary traffic control devices, the parts of a work zone, how to set up a work zone, mobile operations, and pedestrian, worker, and flagger safety.

Jan 20	Green Bay	Jan 27	Cable
Jan 21	Brookfield	Jan 28	Eau Claire
Jan 22	Barneveld	Jan 29	Tomah
Jan 26	Rhineland		

Local Transportation Issues on ETN

The following programs are offered jointly with the UW-Extension Local Government Center over the Educational Teleconference Network (ETN). There are ETN locations in every county. Register early to receive information packets before the session. If you haven't received a series brochure contact your local CNRED Extension agent for registration materials which must be sent to Madison, or call 608/262-9660.

Local Authority to Manage Roads Learn the authority and techniques local governments can use to manage roads through ordinances, permits, and processes on speed limits, weight limits, parking regulations, driveways, and utility cuts.

Oct 7 10:00 to 11:50 am

Local Transportation Aids and Other Grants Learn about funds availability, procedures, and requirements for general transportation aids and local road improvement aid programs.

Nov 5 10:30 to 12:20 pm

Bidding for Local Road Construction Projects Learn what specifications, processes, documents, management, and quality control to use to get the best value for local road projects.

Jan 14 10:30 to 12:20 pm

UW-Madison Seminars

Local government officials are eligible for a limited number of scholarships for the following engineering courses in Madison. For details, use the form on page 7, call 800/442-4615, or e-mail ranum@engr.wisc.edu

Managing Snow and Ice Control Operations, Oct 5-6

Implementing a Sidewalk Management System, Oct 7-8

Stormwater Detention Basin Design, Oct 26-29

Municipal Engineering for Non-Engineers, Nov 2-3

Evaluation and Rehabilitation of Pavements, Nov 4-6

Managing Urban Forestry Programs, Nov 5-6

Highway Bridge Design and Rating, Dec 7-9

GIS for Public Works Operations, Feb 8-10

Effective Bridge Rehabilitation, Feb 15-17

Maintaining Asphalt Pavements, Feb 22-23

Improving Public Works Construction Inspection Skills, Feb 24-25

Other Training Opportunities

The Wisconsin Chapter American Public Works Snow Plow Rodeo is an opportunity for your best crews to challenge the best crews from other communities in friendly competition. It's also a great way to get everyone tuned up and ready for winter. Held Wednesday, October 7, at the Waukesha County fairgrounds. Call Bill Kappel at 414/286-2369 for more details.

improvements in Superior, and walkways at Algoma Lakeshore, Marinette Bayshore, and Boulder Junction.

"Sidewalk placement is especially economical and cost-effective for municipalities if they agree to their construction when the street is done," Huber notes. Many sidewalk and bicycle projects fall under the federal "Enhancements" funding category.

Sidewalks and walkable communities

Inspecting and repairing existing sidewalks is basic to making walking safer. Pedestrians face many inconvenient and unsafe walking conditions including: broken, uneven surfaces and missing curb ramps; narrow, blocked or poorly maintained sidewalks; "uncrossable" street intersections; inadequate separation from vehicle traffic; and sidewalks that end abruptly or have sections missing.

The "Walker's Dirty Dozen" illustrated in the sidebar gives you a quick summary of pedestrians' top complaints about roadway safety and sidewalk design. Beyond the inconvenience and discouragement these conditions produce, they also put the municipality at risk of liability lawsuits for injuries.

One community with an excellent sidewalk maintenance program is Wauwatosa. "We inspect all sidewalks every year to identify 'trippers.' We take immediate action on them with temporary asphalt wedges," says Engineering and Operations Administrator Howard Young. They also respond immediately to complaints from neighbors and walkers. Their routine maintenance programs include a city-wide, 10-year cycle for permanent repairs and making sidewalk repairs part of street reconstruction projects.

"Our mission, of course, is to avoid hurting people not just to avoid lawsuits," says Young, "but the two go together. It's been a long time since we paid any claims at all on sidewalk liability." Young will be

one of the speakers at a two-day sidewalk management seminar in October.

Implementing a Sidewalk Management System, a UW-Madison Engineering Professional Development workshop, will offer practical techniques and tools for sidewalk planning, design, construction, and inspection. It includes a demonstration of WALKER, a new sidewalk maintenance software program similar to the PAVER pavement maintenance program for streets.

WALKER will include point and click images of common types of distress in concrete sidewalks and can be used in the field on a laptop. It will run on a PC under Windows 95/98 or NT. The program is being developed by Army Corps of Engineers Project Director M.Y. Shahin with funding from FHWA. It should be available early next year.

Videotapes on walkable communities are listed in Resources, page 6. More resources are listed below.



The Walker's "Dirty Dozen"

Pedestrians' top complaints about roadway safety and sidewalk design:

1. Missing sections of sidewalk, especially on key walking routes.
2. Bad sidewalk surfaces (uneven or broken concrete, uplifted slabs over tree roots).
3. Misuse of sidewalks (e.g. vehicles parked on sidewalk).
4. Bad sidewalk maintenance (overhanging bushes or trees, unshoveled snow on sidewalks).
5. Narrow sidewalks (no room for wheelchairs, or two people walking side by side; utility poles in the middle of sidewalk).
6. Missing curb ramps.
7. Poorly designed crossings of major streets, especially near schools or shops.
8. Motorists not stopping for people in crosswalks.
9. Barriers on potential walking routes.
10. High traffic levels and/or high speeds, especially near schools or parks.
11. Motorists cutting through neighborhoods to avoid busy arterial streets.
12. Locations with a documented history of crashes or near misses.

Source: The Campaign to Make America Walkable



For information on Wisconsin Pedestrian Road Shows, contact WisDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Program Manager JoAnne Pruitt Thunder at 608/267-3154. Also see the FHWA web page at <http://www.ota.fhwa.dot.gov/walk>. See the Calendar on opposite page for details on Implementing a Sidewalk Management System.