



Active Transportation Plan

September 2026

Draft



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT of TRANSPORTATION
Division of Transportation Investment Management

BUREAU of PLANNING and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

September 2026



DRAFT PLAN

Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1. What is the Active Transportation Plan?	1
1.2. A Vision for Active Transportation in Wisconsin.....	2
1.3. Why an Active Transportation Plan?	3
1.4. Who is this Plan for?	5
1.5. What is in this Plan?	5
2. Planning Process, Timeline, and Guiding Input	7
2.1. Process and Timeline.....	7
2.2. Stakeholder Input	8
2.3. Key Engagement Takeaways.....	10
3. Existing Active Transportation Conditions.....	13
3.1. Active Transportation Today.....	13
3.2. Planning and Policy Context.....	16
3.3. Safety	17
4. Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Policies.....	19
4.1. ATP Vision.....	19
4.2. Goals, Objectives, and Policies	20
4.3. Partners for Implementation.....	23
5. Funding	25
5.1. Federal Programs.....	25
5.2. State Programs.....	29
6. Next Steps and Conclusion	30
Definitions.....	31
Acronyms	34
References	36

DRAFT REPORT

1. Introduction

Wisconsin's transportation network is vital infrastructure that keeps people connected to important destinations, essential services, and each other. Every day, millions of Wisconsinites depend on this network to access work and school, food, healthcare, and more, and expect each trip to be safe, accessible, convenient. Likewise, visitors depend on this network to access sought-after recreational destinations that offer experiences unique to our state.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) recognizes a transportation network is more than just roads for motor vehicles. A complete transportation network includes facilities such as sidewalks, bikeways, multiuse trails, and intermodal connections that allow people of all ages and abilities to get where they need to go. This plan—the Wisconsin Active Transportation Plan 2050, or 'ATP' for short—demonstrates our commitment to improve and promote active transportation throughout the state as part of a complete transportation system.

1.1. What is the Active Transportation Plan?

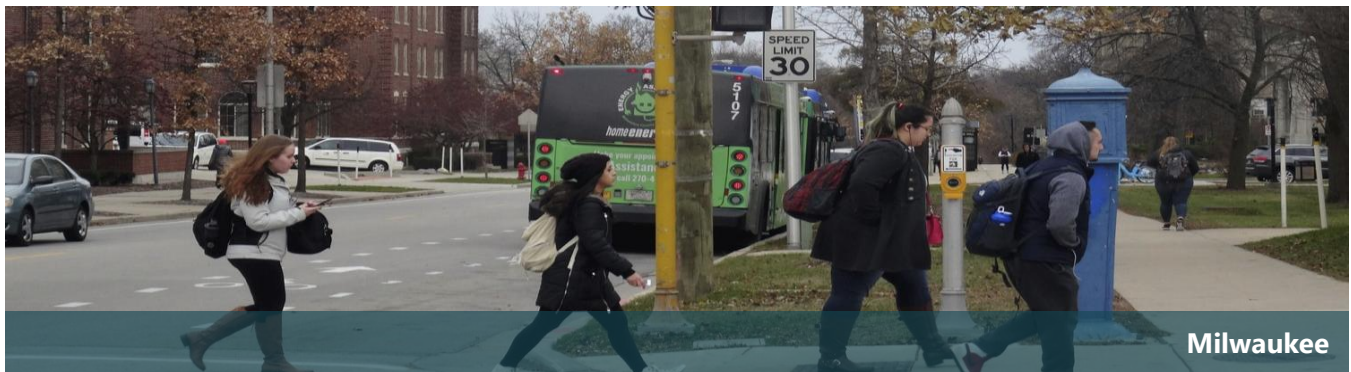
The ATP is a statewide long-range plan. It serves as an update to both the Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan (1998) and the Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan (2002) and combines both modes into one cohesive document. The ATP serves as a policy document with specific recommendations to guide WisDOT, other state agencies, and local communities as they plan for, design, and promote active transportation. The ATP also incorporates principles and guidelines from a variety of resources which are located on the '[Bicycle projects and studies](#)' and '[Pedestrian projects and studies](#)' pages of WisDOT's website.

What is Active Transportation?

According to the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Council on Active Transportation, “active transportation” is human-powered means of travel, which includes bicycling and walking, with or without the use of mobility aids, and may also include other human-scaled or micromobility devices that may be electric-powered or electric-assisted, such as e-bikes and e-scooters.

The term “active transportation” reinforces that these modes are valid forms of transportation, rather than just forms of recreation. For many people, these modes mean access to essential destinations like work, school, grocery stores, and medical services.

This plan uses the terms “walking, biking, and rolling” to mean active transportation and be inclusive of these varied human-powered and micromobility forms of transportation.



DRAFT REPORT

1.2. A Vision for Active Transportation in Wisconsin

This plan sets a clear vision for active transportation in Wisconsin.

WisDOT envisions that walking, bicycling, and other forms of active transportation will be safe, accessible, and convenient for people of all ages and abilities.

Six goals and objectives support this vision:

**Improve Safety**

Eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes involving all active transportation users and other vulnerable roadway users.

Improve Connectivity

Create safe, comfortable, and convenient active transportation networks that increase connections within and between communities throughout the state.

**Encourage Active Mobility**

Increase the number of people who walk, bike, and use active transportation for a variety of trip types throughout the year.

Collaborate and Coordinate

Offer comprehensive guidance and resources to help local communities design and implement active transportation projects that improve safety and comfort for all users.

**Educate and Raise Awareness**

Promote active transportation use to support healthy lifestyles, reduce environmental impacts, support local economies, and improve quality of life.

More detail about the vision, goals, objectives, and supporting policies is provided in Chapter 4.

**Invest Strategically and Sustainably**

Maximize available funding to support the development of an integrated active transportation network through strategic investments.

DRAFT REPORT

1.3. Why an Active Transportation Plan?

Achieving Connect 2050's Multimodal Vision

Active transportation has long been part of WisDOT's transportation strategy. Most recently, WisDOT adopted [Connect 2050](#), a long-range policy plan to guide transportation strategies and priorities—including those related to active transportation—throughout Wisconsin for the next 30 years. The policies within the plan are designed to support the state's economy, protect the environment, and facilitate safe, efficient travel for everyone, regardless of mode. Connect 2050's vision is:

WisDOT envisions an integrated, multimodal transportation system that maximizes the safe and efficient movement of people and products throughout the state, enhancing economic productivity and the quality of Wisconsin's communities while minimizing impacts to the natural environment.

This Active Transportation Plan is an integral part of supporting and implementing the strategies in Connect 2050, with a focus on policies that advance walking, biking, and rolling throughout the state.

Realizing the Benefits of Active Transportation

Connected active transportation infrastructure that enables walking and bicycling benefits individuals, communities, and our state at large. Walking and bicycling are simple, affordable, and efficient means of transportation. While not everyone walks or bikes on a regular basis, almost everyone is a pedestrian for at least a portion of some of their trips, whether that is walking to the bus stop, down the street to a neighbor's house, or crossing the street to get to a shop from their car. Active transportation investments benefit everybody.

Active transportation investments can also help everyone realize the following benefits:



Providing Affordable and Convenient Transportation Options: The costs associated with owning, operating, and maintaining a vehicle can be cost prohibitive for some households. In 2023, the average annual cost to own and operate one vehicle totaled \$12,182 (\$1,015 per month) in the United States.¹

For some people, this could mean spending a disproportionate amount of their income on vehicle transportation while others may be unable to afford a vehicle altogether. Investing in active transportation infrastructure can ease the financial burden for Wisconsinites by providing additional transportation options. For households with at least one vehicle, a safe, comfortable network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities can also encourage active transportation trips and tap into latent demand to access important destinations for both car-free and car-light households.



161,000 households
in Wisconsin do not have
a motor vehicle available
at home.

DRAFT REPORT



Enhancing Quality of Life and Economic Opportunity: Active transportation increases the number of interactions people have with each other and visits to community amenities and retail stores. People who walk, bike, and roll for transportation can easily visit a business or neighbor along their route. These types of unplanned, informal activities foster social belonging, enhance community cohesion, and improve public safety. In addition, investments in walking and biking projects can produce significant economic benefits for commercial and residential districts alike. On average, people who walk and bike take more trips to local retailers and spend similar amounts when compared with people who drive. Bicycling contributes greatly to the state's economy as well; In 2022, the total output of bicycle related industries in Wisconsin was over \$5.36 billion.²



\$5.36 billion spent by consumers on bicycle-related expenses in Wisconsin in 2022.



Reducing Single-Occupancy Vehicle Travel: Trips taken alone make up nearly 74 percent of all commute trips in the State of Wisconsin. By investing in active transportation infrastructure, Wisconsin communities can offer viable alternatives to short commute and non-commute trips taken alone. Approximately half of all vehicle trips in the United States could be made by bike in 20 minutes or less, and more than one-quarter of all vehicle trips could be made by foot in 20 minutes or less.³

There are many benefits to reducing the number of trips taken alone, including:

- reduced traffic congestion,
- reduced vehicle parking demand, and
- increased lifespan of transportation infrastructure.

Promoting Physical Health: Active lifestyles can have significant impacts on physical health for Wisconsinites. This physical activity can be easily achieved through active transportation and result in the following health benefits:

- A reduced risk of chronic diseases and conditions like obesity, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, many types of cancer, and dementia;⁴
- Lower rates of depression and anxiety;⁵
- Higher levels of health for older adults, including a lower risk of falling, enhanced bone health, and improved cognitive function.⁶



DRAFT REPORT



Improving air quality: Walking and biking are low-impact modes that generate zero emissions. Increasing active transportation trips in Wisconsin can improve air quality by reducing the amount of vehicle emissions released into the atmosphere. The majority of motor vehicles produce tailpipe emissions, evaporative emissions (e.g., fuel evaporating in the engine or fuel system), and wear-and-tear emissions (e.g., tire particles, brake dust). These emissions worsen air quality and adversely affect human health.

Exposure to traffic-related air pollution has been associated with childhood asthma, respiratory illnesses, and cardiovascular disease, which impacts communities adjacent to high volume highways.⁷



Traffic-related air pollution is associated with **childhood asthma, respiratory illnesses, and cardiovascular disease.**

1.4. Who is this Plan for?

A Plan for All Wisconsinites

This plan operates on the belief that everyone benefits from having a safe, accessible, and convenient active transportation network, one that is created for all ages and abilities. Three out of every ten Wisconsin residents do not drive, and access to active transportation is particularly important for these residents.⁸

Different individuals will use an active transportation system in different ways, for different lengths of time, and for different reasons depending on where they live, who they are (age, physical ability, etc.), and what they consider to be safe and convenient.

1.5. What is in this Plan?

The ATP is intended to be a reference for a wide range of people—WisDOT staff, regional and local planners, engineers, designers, and more—who are working to make Wisconsin a better place for active





DRAFT REPORT

transportation. The plan is organized in chapters that allow stakeholders to read about current and potential future components of our state's active transportation system that are most applicable to their interests.

Chapters 2 and 3 include background information to help readers better understand the state of active transportation in Wisconsin:

- ▶ **Chapter 2. Planning Process, Timeline, and Guiding Input:** This chapter provides an overview of how the plan was developed and the variety of ways that the project team listened to and learned from transportation planners, traffic engineers, and people who use active transportation across the state.
- ▶ **Chapter 3. Existing Active Transportation Conditions:** This section summarizes the state of active transportation in Wisconsin through a review of plans and policies, as well as trends and contributing factors of pedestrian and cyclist crashes that may inform safety recommendations and implementation actions.

The later chapters of the ATP focus on information that will help WisDOT and local communities create and sustain a safe, accessible, and convenient transportation network statewide, including:

- ▶ **Chapter 4. Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Policies:** This chapter includes aspirational goals that were developed to ensure the WisDOT ATP planning efforts accomplish a shared vision, and policies to help achieve each goal.
- ▶ **Chapter 5. Funding:** This chapter identifies potential state and federal funding sources that could be used to fund projects at the state and local level.
- ▶ **Chapter 6. Next Steps:** The report's final chapter summarizes key next steps to implement this plan.

Definitions and acronyms are included at the end of the plan.

DRAFT REPORT

2. Planning Process, Timeline, and Guiding Input

2.1. Process and Timeline

The ATP planning process was a multi-year effort that included information gathering, analysis, meetings with WisDOT staff and statewide stakeholders, and engagement with the public. These efforts centered around understanding the current state of active transportation in Wisconsin and where to focus for the greatest benefits. Figure 1 below summarizes the overall process and timeline.

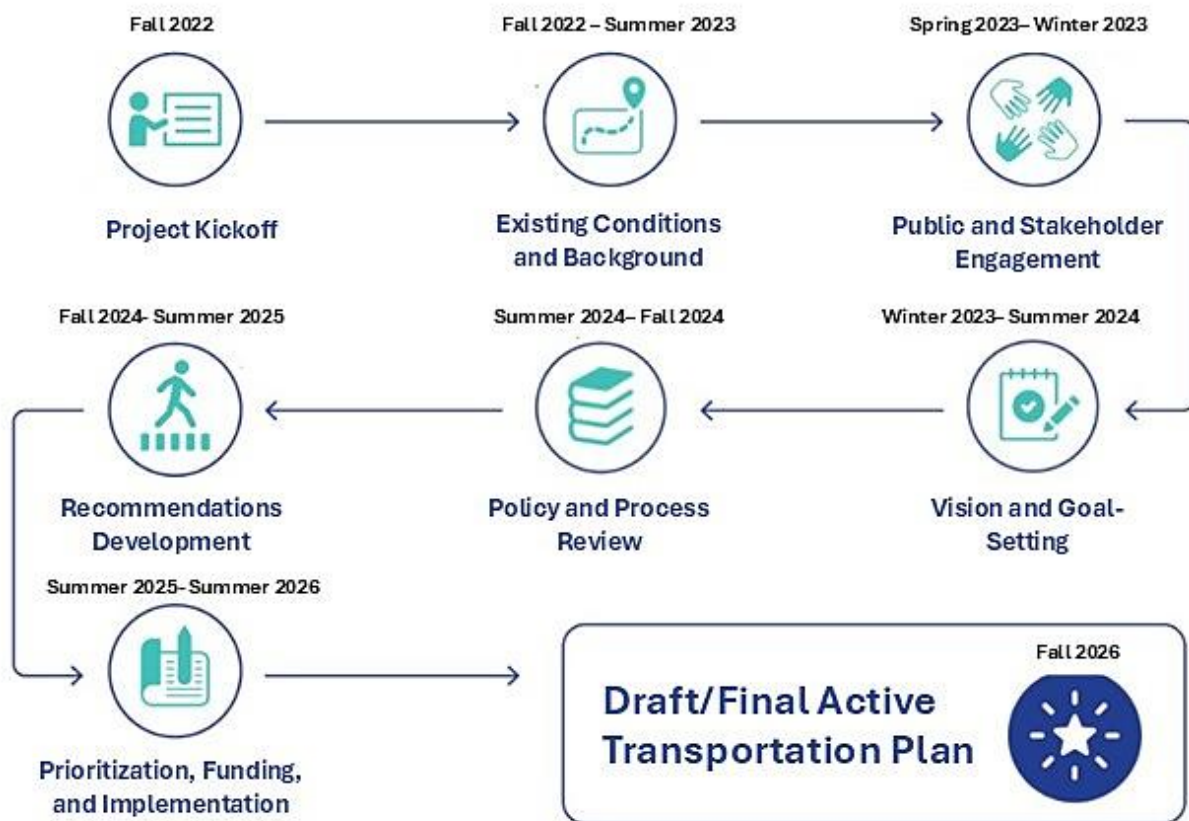


Figure 1. Wisconsin Active Transportation Plan project schedule



DRAFT REPORT

2.2. Stakeholder Input

A key goal for ATP outreach and engagement was to engage with as many people as possible from across the state who are current or potential users of the active transportation system. Advisory committee meetings, open houses, pop-up events, online surveys and polls, and focus groups were conducted both virtually and in-person from July 2023 through August 2024. Each of these engagement opportunities included an introduction to the planning effort in combination with a facilitated activity to generate input about the draft vision and goals for the ATP, improvement ideas, project types, and other issues related to improving walking, bicycling, and other modes of active transportation in Wisconsin.

Over 1,500 individuals from across the state provided feedback on the ATP through engagement events and advisory committee.

2.2.1. Committees

Two advisory committees were formed to guide development of the ATP: a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and a Steering Committee (SC).

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC was comprised of leadership from various WisDOT divisions and representatives of WisDOT Region Offices and Bureaus. The intent of each TAC meeting was to create space for open and direct internal conversations about issues and opportunities for active transportation in Wisconsin. TAC members provided technical expertise as well as insights from their respective bureaus, sections, and regions.

Steering Committee (SC)

The SC was comprised of WisDOT staff as well as representatives of other state agencies, MPOs, Regional Planning Commissions, foundations, advocacy organizations, and interest groups. This committee guided plan and policy development for the ATP and brought perspectives on active transportation from groups outside of WisDOT who regularly interact with the department on active transportation issues.

More information about both committees is provided in Appendix B.

2.2.2. Public Engagement

Virtual Open Houses

Six virtual open house events were held in August 2023. The open houses were organized by the five WisDOT regions, with the sixth being a catch-all for anyone who may have missed or could not attend a region meeting.

Pop-Up Events

Between August and October 2023, six pop-up events were hosted at locations strategically chosen based on WisDOT region, event type, and the potential to reach individuals who may not typically participate in active transportation conversations.

DRAFT REPORT

Each pop-up booth had engaging activities that aimed to do the following:

- ▶ Inform participants about the ATP
- ▶ Ask participants about their vision for walking and biking in Wisconsin
- ▶ Ask participants to share their favorite places to walk and bike in Wisconsin
- ▶ Identify barriers to and prioritize opportunities for walking and biking in Wisconsin



Online Survey and Polls

An online survey was conducted to better understand how people throughout Wisconsin use active transportation on WisDOT State Highways. The questions asked respondents to share their perspective as active transportation users in Wisconsin; their reasons for, frequency of, and barriers to active transportation; and their ideas on what would make State Highways safer for active transportation users. The survey was distributed over a six-week period from June-July 2023. Over 700 people completed the survey. A shorter online poll also asked people about their favorite place to walk, bike, or roll in the state; why it was their favorite; and what WisDOT should do to make more places like it. A total of 224 people responded to the poll.

Overall, respondents highlighted their enjoyment of trails throughout the state because of their scenic quality, the ability to walk or bike without interacting with vehicles, and their connections with communities. Recommendations for how WisDOT should continue to make more places such as these varied but focused on increasing separated facilities for people walking and biking, allocating more funding towards pedestrian and bicycle projects, and prioritizing active transportation. More details on the survey and poll responses can be found in Appendix B.

Virtual Focus Groups

Eight virtual focus groups were conducted between November 2023 and February 2024 to gather input and diverse perspectives on active transportation issues in Wisconsin. Representatives from the following agencies, organizations, and advocacy groups were invited to participate:

- ▶ Large city transportation agencies
- ▶ Small/medium city transportation agencies
- ▶ County transportation agencies
- ▶ Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs)
- ▶ Safe Routes to School (SRTS) staff
- ▶ People with disabilities

DRAFT REPORT

- ▶ Tribal representatives
- ▶ Transit agencies

Each focus group responded to questions which catered to the individuals in the group and the way(s) in which they work with WisDOT. While discussion varied, major themes on consistency, funding, and communications around including active transportation elements on WisDOT roadway projects emerged. More detail on high-level themes and specific focus group discussion points can be found in Appendix B.

2.3. Key Engagement Takeaways

2.3.1. Committee Feedback

A variety of key takeaways emerged from the engagement efforts.

The TAC and SC identified the following challenges related to crash and user data, which could help to better inform investments and prioritization.

- ▶ **Exposure data by mode:** Unlike motor vehicle trips, there is no consistent and reliable source of the distance traveled when people make trips on foot or by bike. This data gap limits the ability to measure crash exposure for these modes. The Descriptive Crash Analysis (Appendix C) further describes this limitation.
- ▶ **Non-motor vehicle crashes:** Many pedestrian and bicycle crashes do not directly involve contact with a motor vehicle. For example, a bicyclist falling to avoid a collision with a motor vehicle or colliding with infrastructure or other surface features can result in a serious injury. However, these types of crashes, while underreported, may still be roadway-related and are important to know about to prioritize projects.
- ▶ **User counts:** Unlike motor vehicle trips, walking and bicycling traffic counts are not regularly conducted in most Wisconsin communities. This could be due to the financial cost of purchasing and installing traffic counters as well as the time cost for city staff who must access, interpret, and track the data. WisDOT is developing models of pedestrian and bicycle usage based on a variety of factors such as demographic data, land use, and access to motor vehicles that in the future may be able to provide a measure of crash risk based on exposure. However, much like motor vehicle traffic counts, actual bicycle and pedestrian counts should be routinely conducted for accurate usage data as well as calibration of models.



DRAFT REPORT

2.3.2. Public Feedback

The more public-facing engagement efforts—the online survey, poll, pop-up events, etc. —centered on gathering feedback and thoughts on topics to guide and frame the ATP. The following themes stood out from these engagement activities:



Safety first.

Participants overwhelmingly stated that they wanted to **feel safer walking, biking, and rolling** and that safety is the main impediment to using active transportation more.

People want to walk, bike, and roll more.

Almost all participants wished to use active transportation more. In the survey, for example, 93 percent of respondents said that they wanted to walk, bike, or roll more than they currently do.



Lack of active transportation infrastructure,

motor vehicle speed and volumes, distance, and weather are the top four reasons people don't use active transportation, and came up in the survey, pop-up events, and general conversations. These reasons were consistently at the top in the survey, pop-up events, and general conversations about barriers to using active transportation. Additionally, maintenance of active transportation facilities, often related to weather (e.g., bike lanes/sidewalks/trails not cleared of snow or debris, leaves, or gravel in bike lanes, etc.) was routinely discussed as a barrier.

Separation is important.

When asked about their favorite places to walk, bike, or roll, **participants nearly always mentioned trails or paths.** In addition, when asked about what, generally, should happen on roadways to make them safer and more attractive for active transportation users, respondents repeatedly said that they wanted and needed more separation on roads and that the amount of separation should increase as vehicle speeds and volumes increase.



DRAFT REPORT



People mostly use active transportation for recreational purposes.

Further discussion revealed that for other types of travel—errands, work, school, etc.—people often lack access to safe and comfortable transportation facilities, or the distance is too far to walk, bike, or roll. Recreational active transportation **allows people to have more control** about choosing their route, when they travel, and the time that they dedicate. Numerous people stated that they would like to walk or bike for more utilitarian trips, but that they did not feel safe or comfortable doing so.

Respondents try not to walk, bike, or roll on State Highways.

Participants routinely said that they did not feel safe walking, biking, or rolling on State Highways (including lower speed urban highways) because of the **lack of dedicated facilities in many locations, speeding/aggressive drivers, long distances between signalized crossings, high motor vehicle volumes, and a general lack of multimodal connectivity.**

However, because State Highways often have amenities along them (e.g., schools, stores, restaurants, services) or serve as the main street in smaller cities, people are often forced to use them to reach specific destinations.



3. Existing Active Transportation Conditions

3.1. Active Transportation Today

Wisconsin's active transportation needs and planning efforts are influenced by trends in trip behavior, crash activity, and demographics. These trends highlight the importance of creating an ATP that details policies and programs that meet the needs of an ever-changing population.



Vernon County

Trip Types: Recreational and Utilitarian

Respondents who contributed feedback as part of ATP engagement efforts indicated that they currently walk, bike, or roll primarily for recreational purposes. The state's trail network is sought after by residents and visitors alike, and Wisconsin communities are in the process of building active transportation networks to connect people to recreation-oriented destinations such as local parks and county preserves.

However, for some residents across Wisconsin, active transportation serves a more functional purpose, allowing them to meet their essential needs by accessing important destinations such as work or school as well as connecting to transit and passenger rail. Over four percent of Wisconsin residents commute by walking, biking, or taking transit,⁹ and non-commute trips (e.g., doctor visits, daycare, errands) are also made with active transportation. Some of these active transportation trips are a matter of choice, while others are taken because a vehicle is not available or the person cannot drive.

People surveyed as part of the ATP's engagement efforts expressed a desire to walk or bike for more utilitarian trips, but stated that the lack of safe, comfortable active transportation facilities and the distance between destinations discouraged them from doing so.



DRAFT REPORT

Improving Safety

The need for improving safety for Wisconsinites who walk and bike is underscored by the trends in pedestrian and bicycle crash data. Pedestrian and bicyclist crashes in Wisconsin have generally trended downward. Since 2020, the percent of crashes resulting in a fatality or serious injury has also trended downward. Of the 14,812 pedestrian and bicycle crashes in the state from 2017-2023, 465 resulted in a fatality and 2,389 resulted in disabling injuries.

Survey respondents overwhelmingly stated that safety concerns are their main reason for not using active transportation, and many participants specifically mentioned that a lack of facilities and high motor vehicle speeds discouraged them from walking and biking. It takes a concerted effort by state and local agencies to proactively improve safety and work to eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes.

DRAFT REPORT



Over 161,000 households have no motor vehicle.

These households overwhelmingly rely on active transportation to get to work, school, and other important destinations like health care, the grocery store, and recreational opportunities.

U.S. Census Bureau. "Sex of Workers by Means of Transportation to Work." American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B08006, 2022, <https://data.census.gov/tables/ACSDT1Y2022/B08006?t=Commuting&g=040XX00US55>.



Over 4% of Wisconsin residents commute by walking, biking, or taking transit.

Having active transportation infrastructure available is essential to ensure these residents have safe ways to reach their workplaces.

U.S. Census Bureau. "Sex of Workers by Means of Transportation to Work." American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B08006, 2022, <https://data.census.gov/tables/ACSDT1Y2022/B08006?t=Commuting&g=040XX00US55>.



Over 1.2 million Wisconsin residents are aged 18 and younger (21.5% of the population).



Over 1 million Wisconsin residents are aged 65 and older (17.6% of the population).

Many of these residents cannot or do not drive. Active transportation infrastructure is important to make sure these residents can meet their daily needs safely and conveniently.

U.S. Census Bureau. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2022, <https://data.census.gov/tables/ACSST5Y2022.S0101?g=040XX00US55>.

U.S. Census Bureau. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2022, <https://data.census.gov/tables/ACSST5Y2022.S0101?g=040XX00US55>.



Nearly 4 million Wisconsin residents live in urban areas (67% of the population).

These are the areas of the state where destinations are most likely to be within reasonable walking or biking distances.

U.S. Census Bureau. "URBAN AND RURAL." Decennial Census, DEC 118th Congressional District Summary File, Table P2, 2020, [https://data.census.gov/tables/DECENNIALCD1182020/P2?q=urban%20population%20share&g=0100000US\\$050000_040XX-00US55](https://data.census.gov/tables/DECENNIALCD1182020/P2?q=urban%20population%20share&g=0100000US$050000_040XX-00US55). Trips in high-density urban areas could be made by walking and bicycling rather than driving.



DRAFT REPORT

3.2. Planning and Policy Context

The following section outlines a review of existing plans, state laws, and policies related to active transportation, as well as WisDOT's programming, funding, design guidance, and project delivery process. The full planning and policy review can be found in Appendix D.

Statewide Plan Review

The following plans and studies were reviewed for background information on how Wisconsin has included active transportation in planning efforts at the statewide level:

- ▶ **Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 (WisDOT, adopted 2002):** This plan is focused on guidance that WisDOT and local partners (e.g., local governments, MPOs, nonprofits, residents) can follow to cooperatively improve the pedestrian experience. The Pedestrian Policy Plan goes to great lengths to highlight how important adequate pedestrian accommodations are for children, older adults, and people with disabilities.
- ▶ **Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 (WisDOT, adopted 1998):** This plan was created to support and guide the development of a bicycle transportation network across the state. To help define roles and responsibilities, the plan defines three systems of roads—state-owned, state-supported, and state-interest—and provides recommendations or requirements for bicycle facilities along each respective system. The plan also details separate strategies for urban and rural areas of the state, acknowledging that the needs are often different between the two.
- ▶ **Wisconsin Guide to Pedestrian Best Practices (WisDOT, adopted 2010):** This guide provides detailed design, planning, and program information for improving all aspects of the pedestrian environment. The guide serves as a companion document to the Pedestrian Policy Plan to assist in the implementation of the goals, objectives and actions of the plan and serve as a reference or guidebook for state and local officials.
- ▶ **Connect 2050 (WisDOT, adopted 2022):** Connect 2050 is a long-range, statewide, multimodal plan designed to help guide the state's transportation network for decades to come. The plan includes an overarching vision with goals and objectives that apply to all means of transportation in Wisconsin. The plan includes a suite of modal plans, technical reports, and programs which can be updated as necessary.
- ▶ **Strategic Highway Safety Plan (WisDOT, adopted 2023):** The Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is a five-year plan that describes statewide goals and safety initiatives to help WisDOT and other state and local highway safety partners work together to improve safety, including for active transportation users, on Wisconsin roadways. The 2023 SHSP includes a Federally mandated Vulnerable Road User (VRU) Safety Assessment that specifically looked at the safety of people walking and bicycling in Wisconsin.

This ATP is a modal plan component of the Connect 2050 plan and replaces both the Pedestrian Policy Plan and the Bicycle Transportation Plan. However, this plan incorporates many of the recommendations of those plans that remain relevant.

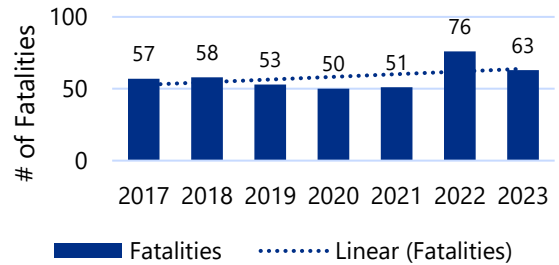
DRAFT REPORT

3.3. Safety

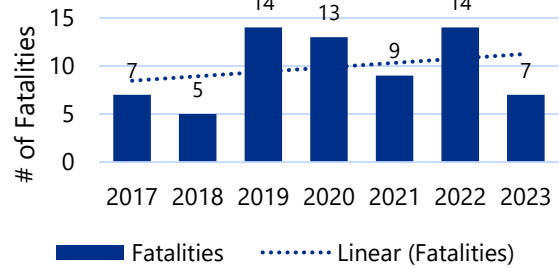
Pedestrian and bicyclist crashes have a substantial impact on society in Wisconsin. Every year, an average of about 65 people are killed, nearly 350 people are seriously injured, and over 1,700 more are injured less seriously while walking and bicycling along and across Wisconsin streets and roads. Annually this equates to nearly \$1.5 billion in costs to society in Wisconsin that include calculable expenses (e.g., medical expenses, wage and productivity losses, motor vehicle damage, and incalculable expenses) as well as intangible costs such as reduced quality of life. In 2022, there were 1,324 crashes involving pedestrians in Wisconsin. In 2023, pedestrian deaths decreased by 18% compared to the record high in 2022.

A full summary of the crash analysis conducted for this Plan is provided in Appendix C. In addition to this analysis, WisDOT's [2023-2027 Strategic Highway Safety Plan \(SHSP\)](#) includes a detailed Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment that provides more detail about safety trends for people walking and bicycling in Wisconsin.

Pedestrian Fatalities by Year



Bicyclist Fatalities by Year



Source:

<https://transportal.cee.wisc.edu/partners/community-maps>

DRAFT REPORT

In line with national trends, motor vehicle speed contributes to the severity of pedestrian and bicyclist crashes. For example, most pedestrian crashes in the state occur on roadways with posted speeds of 30 mph or less. However, the severity of crashes increases dramatically on roadways with higher posted speed limits, which leads to higher proportions of fatal and serious injury crashes. On roadways with posted speeds of 25 mph or less, 20 percent of crashes result in a serious injury or fatality; on roadways with posted speeds of 45 mph or greater, this rate jumps to 55 percent. Lighting conditions also have an impact, particularly for pedestrian-involved crashes. Fifty-six percent of fatal and serious injury pedestrian crashes happen at dusk, night, or dawn. Because the majority of pedestrians are not walking during these times, this is a disproportionate rate compared to daylight hours when more pedestrians may be present.¹⁰

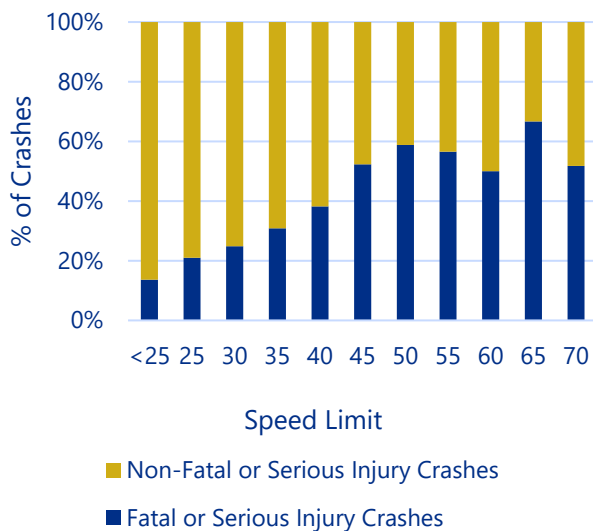
**25
MPH
OR LESS**

20%
of crashes result
in a serious
injury or fatality.

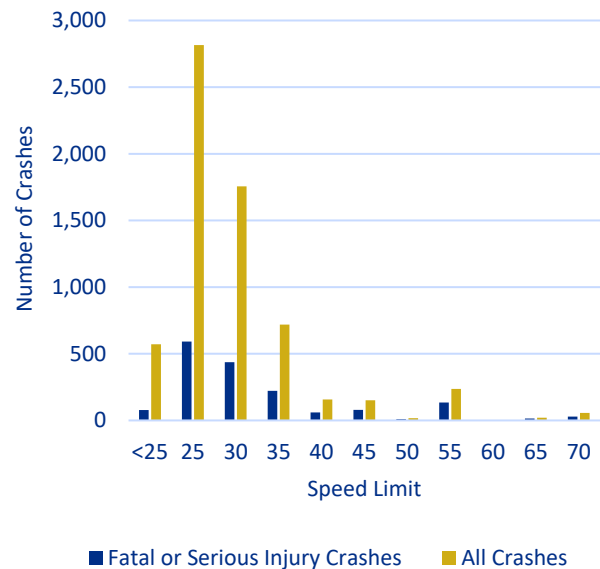
**45
MPH
OR LESS**

55%
of crashes result
in a serious
injury or fatality.

% of Pedestrian Crashes by Severity and Speed Limit



Pedestrian Crashes by Speed Limit



DRAFT REPORT

4. Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The vision, goals, objectives, and policies of the Active Transportation Plan were developed through extensive input from the public and stakeholders. The TAC provided significant input throughout the planning process; the WisDOT section and bureau leaders and other transportation practitioners on this committee played a significant role in guiding the development of objectives and policies that can be put into action.

The vision and goals of the ATP align with the following guiding principles found in Connect 2050:

- ▶ Implement and maintain a safe and efficient statewide multimodal transportation system that provides safe, affordable, accessible, and convenient transportation choices for all people.
- ▶ Embrace a continuing, cooperative, comprehensive planning process.

4.1. ATP Vision

The vision statement below describes the fundamental purpose of this plan. The goals, policies, and all recommendations of this ATP were designed to help WisDOT achieve this vision.

WisDOT envisions that walking, bicycling, and other forms of active transportation will be safe, accessible, and convenient for people of all ages and abilities.



DRAFT REPORT

4.2. Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Six broad goals and objectives were developed to support WisDOT's vision for active transportation in Wisconsin. Each of these goals and objectives is supported by a series of policies to be carried out by WisDOT, other state agencies, and key partners and stakeholders in the coming years.



Goal 1: Improve Safety

Objective 1: Eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes involving all active transportation users and other vulnerable roadway users.

Policy 1a: Improve data collection and use a Systemic Safety Analysis Approach to identify and prioritize sites for safety countermeasures based on crash risk factors for active transportation users.

Policy 1b: Use a data-driven and research-based approach to design roadways that are safe for all active transportation users and vulnerable roadway users.

Policy 1c: Implement recommendations from the State of Wisconsin Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Program Technical Assessment, Wisconsin Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Wisconsin Bicycle and Pedestrian Railroad Crossing State Action Plan, and WisDOT's Vulnerable Road User (VRU) Safety Assessment to improve the safety of active transportation users.

Policy 1d: Educate the public on and improve the enforcement of laws to prevent dangerous and illegal behavior by motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and micromobility users.

Policy 1e: Design, build, and plan for the maintenance of facilities that prioritize active transportation user safety.



Goal 2: Encourage Active Transportation

Objective 2: Increase the number of people who walk, bike, and use active transportation for a variety of trip types throughout the year.

Policy 2a: Design, build, and plan for the maintenance of transportation facilities that safely accommodate and encourage use by active transportation users.

Policy 2b: Accommodate micromobility options throughout the state to increase last-mile active transportation opportunities.

Policy 2c: Work with partners to promote the comprehensive benefits of active transportation such as physical and mental health benefits, the environment, quality of life, economic development, and others.

Policy 2d: Improve data collection and analysis related to active transportation, including a facility inventory, use, and crash/safety data to support data driven decisions to enhance the state's active transportation network.

Policy 2e: Design, build, and plan for the maintenance of active transportation facilities that are accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

DRAFT REPORT



Goal 3: Improve Connectivity

Objective 3: Create safe, comfortable, and convenient active transportation networks that increase connections within and between communities throughout the state.

Policy 3a: Expand and improve a statewide network of safe and convenient routes for bicycle transportation, where appropriate.

Policy 3b: Provide active transportation design and planning resources, technical assistance, and training for WisDOT and local agency staff that emphasizes the importance of and methods to increase active transportation connectivity in a variety of contexts.

Policy 3c: Proactively work with communities to address major needs and barriers to active transportation as identified in local planning documents.

Policy 3d: Support expansion of active transportation networks in both urban and rural areas.

Policy 3e: Ensure the consideration of active transportation users from planning and design, through scoping and project delivery, to ongoing maintenance.

Policy 3f: Use a data-driven approach to proactively evaluate all resurfacing and higher order projects for roadway reconfiguration to provide active transportation facilities where appropriate.

Policy 3g: Fund active transportation facilities as part of roadway projects.

Policy 3h: Ensure adequate procedures exist to accommodate active transportation users during construction and maintenance activities, and that procedures are followed during construction projects.



Goal 4: Educate and Raise Awareness

Objective 4: Promote active transportation use to support healthy lifestyles, reduce environmental impacts, support local economies, and improve quality of life.

Policy 4a: Support education about the importance of safe speeds, safe behaviors by all modes, and safe interactions with people using active transportation through WisDOT communications materials and driver licensing and training programs.

Policy 4b: Evaluate and report on mode split data, user demographics, and trip purposes, to better understand and document emerging active transportation trends.

Policy 4c: Provide training for law enforcement on laws and best practices related to active transportation.

Policy 4d: Review, update, and educate the public and local government entities on current laws for e-bike and other electric micromobility devices to conform with national best practices.

Policy 4e: Document the economic impacts of walking and biking and work with partner agencies or groups to promote the results.

Policy 4f: Continue to fund the Transportation Alternatives Program to support Safe Routes to School projects and programs.

DRAFT REPORT



Goal 5: Collaborate and Coordinate

Objective 5: Offer comprehensive resources to help local communities design and implement active transportation projects that improve safety and comfort for all users.

Policy 5a: Partner with local governments and other interested stakeholders to consider accommodations for active transportation along and across state highways.

Policy 5b: Coordinate with other state agencies, local units of government, counties, and other stakeholders to promote and enhance active transportation opportunities in Wisconsin.

Policy 5c: Develop and host an online active transportation plan registry and geospatial database of existing and planned active transportation facilities in coordination with WisDNR, MPOs and RPCs, counties, Wisconsin Department of Tourism, rail transit commissions, and local agencies.

Policy 5d: Work with WisDOT legislative liaisons to consider changes to state law to improve active transportation user access and safety.

Policy 5e: Provide technical assistance and support for the development of local and regional active transportation plans, programs, and policies throughout the state.

Policy 5f: Continue to work with the Office of the Commissioner of Railroads, local officials, rail transit commissions, and private railroad companies to identify potential rail crossing safety improvements such as signals, gates, and grade separations. *This policy is contained in the State Rail Plan.*

Policy 5g: Work with the Department of Natural Resources, rail transit commissions, and Surface Transportation Board to support the Rails to Trails program to preserve rail corridors for potential reactivation of rail service. *This policy is contained in the State Rail Plan.*

Policy 5h: Continue to coordinate active transportation activities across the Department.



Goal 6: Invest Strategically and Sustainably

Objective 6: Maximize available funding to support the development of an integrated active transportation network through strategic investments.

Policy 6a: Work with local communities, WisDNR, counties, and rail transit commissions to identify and pursue active transportation funding opportunities.

Policy 6b: Ensure a systematic and predictable funding process to allocate available funds to support local jurisdictions' active transportation projects.

Policy 6c: Provide technical assistance and best practice resources related to innovative financing mechanisms for local communities for building, operating, and maintaining active transportation infrastructure.

Policy 6d: Prioritize active transportation funding for projects that provide safe and convenient connections for users of all ages and abilities to schools, parks, recreational facilities, transit, employment centers and essential services.

Policy 6e: Evaluate the cost share requirements for safety countermeasures proven to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist crash risk on the state network.

Policy 6f: Maximize the use of federal funds for active transportation.

DRAFT REPORT

4.3. Partners for Implementation

While WisDOT plays the lead role in designing, building, and operating active transportation infrastructure on state roadways, the Department cannot do it alone; local streets make up the majority of the roadways in the state, and local communities should have input on what state roadways in their jurisdictions look like. The actions in this plan can only be implemented with intentional collaboration between federal, state, and local governments. WisDOT will need to build new relationships, enhance current relationships, and work strategically to roll out the policies and programs outlined in this plan to improve active transportation for Wisconsinites into the future.

This section highlights key agencies and groups that are essential for plan implementation. This list is not exhaustive and other organizations may be needed to implement pieces of this plan.

4.3.1. Internal WisDOT Coordination

WisDOT is a large organization where multiple units and individuals need to work together to implement projects. The following is a list of WisDOT departments that should be targeted for relationship building or, at minimum, be aware of active transportation efforts highlighted in this plan:



Division of Transportation Investment Management (DTIM)

- ▶ Bureau of Planning and Economic Development (BPED)
- ▶ Bureau of State Highway Programs (BSHP)
- ▶ Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors (BTLRRH)
- ▶ Office of Asset and Performance Management (OAPM)
- ▶ State Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

Division of Transportation System Development (DTSD)

- ▶ Bureau of Highway Maintenance (BHM)
- ▶ Bureau of Project Development (BPD)
- ▶ Bureau of Structures (BOS)

- ▶ Bureau of Technical Services (BTS)
- ▶ Bureau of Traffic Operations (BTO)
- ▶ Regional office representation (Regional Bike/Ped/Multimodal Coordinator or representation of the Regional Director's Office)

Division of State Patrol (DSP)

- ▶ Bureau of Transportation Safety (BOTS)

Division of Budget and Strategic Initiatives (DBSI)

- ▶ Bureau of Performance Improvement and Strategic Initiatives

Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

- ▶ Driver Services Bureau

4.3.2. State Agencies

Outside of WisDOT, there are a variety of state agencies and organizations that have a vested interest in encouraging Wisconsin residents and visitors to walk, bike, and roll. These partners serve an important cross-disciplinary role as advocates and implementers of this plan, and include:



DRAFT REPORT

- ▶ Governor's Bicycle Coordinating Council
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Tourism
- ▶ Wisconsin State Trails Council
- ▶ WisDOT Non-Driver Advisory Committee
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

4.3.3. Regional and Local Governments

Regional and local governments and associations serve important roles in improving the safety of and access to active transportation for Wisconsin residents. These partners often gather feedback on the needs and issues within a community and develop projects to address them, which could include active transportation planning efforts.



Given that WisDOT roads serve as main streets and important connectors in many communities, building strong partnerships with these regional and local governments is essential to making improvements within those areas.

Examples of regional and local government organizations include:

- ▶ City and County transportation agencies
- ▶ League of Wisconsin Municipalities
- ▶ Local School Boards
- ▶ County Health Departments
- ▶ Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs)
- ▶ Regional Transit Commissions
- ▶ Tribal Governments
- ▶ Wisconsin County Highway Association
- ▶ Wisconsin Counties Association
- ▶ Wisconsin Towns Association

4.3.4. Other Groups

Advocates and private organizations play an important role in identifying needs, projects, and funding for projects, as well as supporting and advocating for implementation. Some of these organizations work at a state-wide or regional scale, whereas others focus on a specific jurisdiction. The organizations listed below also provide important topic-specific knowledge and information, and can have member lists and communications channels that could be used to spread information about active transportation efforts to existing and potential users:



- ▶ Amish and Mennonite Communities
- ▶ Disability Rights Wisconsin
- ▶ Ice Age Trail Alliance
- ▶ Local healthcare providers and advocates
- ▶ Local Safe Routes to School advocates
- ▶ Local/regional bicycling, walking, and trail advocacy groups
- ▶ Mountain Bike Clubs
- ▶ Wisconsin Bike Federation
- ▶ Wisconsin Council of Blind and Visually Impaired
- ▶ Wisconsin Non-Motorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council
- ▶ Wisconsin State Trails Council



DRAFT REPORT

5. Funding

Implementing successful active transportation projects and programs requires robust, sustainable funding sources. Like other transportation modes, funding for active transportation comes from federal, state, local, and private funding sources, all of which have their own funding schedules, availability, flexibility, and eligibility requirements. This section provides an overview of key federal and state programs that can help fund active transportation projects in Wisconsin.

Specific federal and state dollar amounts are not listed for individual programs, as the available funding totals must be established through Congressional and Wisconsin State Legislative actions on an annual or biannual basis.

5.1. Federal Programs

The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), which was passed in November of that year, serves as the federal surface transportation program reauthorization legislation through Federal Fiscal Year 2026. This legislation provided, on average, a 25 percent increase in funding levels for existing programs that support the planning, implementation, maintenance, and programming of active transportation initiatives. The IIJA also created new programs and expanded funding eligibility within existing programs to promote enhanced consideration of active transportation planning and projects.

As a result, there are currently many federal funding programs available through the U.S. Department of Transportation for pedestrian and bicycle activities and projects. The federal programs that are most critical to funding active transportation projects include:

- ▶ Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)
- ▶ Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- ▶ Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- ▶ Recreational Trails Program TAP set-aside (RTP)
- ▶ Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD)
- ▶ Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- ▶ Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program
- ▶ Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program (SS4A)

A more comprehensive list of funding opportunities for various activities and projects is available [here](#) from the Federal Highway Administration.



DRAFT REPORT

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)

According to the Federal Highway Administration, the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) is a component of federal-aid highway funding that promotes flexibility in transportation decisions and provides flexible funding to best address state and local transportation needs.

The list of activities that can be funded through STBG is extensive and was expanded with the passage of the BIL. While the primary focus of STBG involves projects that preserve and improve conditions on public highways, roadways, and bridges, facilities that accommodate non-motorized transportation, as well as transit capital improvement projects, are also federally eligible for funding. Additional information on the STBG program is available on the FHWA website.

Surface Transportation Program

Utilizing federal apportionments from the Surface Transportation Block Grant program, Wisconsin's Surface Transportation Program (STP) is broken into three general categories: Urban, Rural, and Local.

- ▶ **STP-Urban** allocates federal funds to complete a variety of improvements to federal-aid-eligible roads and streets in urban areas.
- ▶ **STP-Rural** allocates federal funds to complete a variety of improvements to rural highways, primarily county highways.
- ▶ **STP-Local** allocates federal funds to complete a variety of improvements to off-system roadways functionally classified as a rural minor collector or local road.

The primary objective of STP in Wisconsin is to improve federal-aid eligible highways within urban areas, highways outside of urban areas, and non-federal aid roadways outside of urbanized areas. STP projects are generally funded with an 80 percent federal share of costs, with the local government paying the remaining 20 percent.

Transportation Alternatives Program

The Wisconsin Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitively awarded program funded with federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside apportionments from the STBG program. TAP encompasses a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and vulnerable road user safety assessments.

In Wisconsin, the TAP program applications are solicited in odd years and awarded in even years. Funding for this program is sub-allocated into four census-designated population categories: Rural (<5K), TAP Urban (5K-50K), TAP Urban (50K-200K), and Transportation Management Area (TMA) (200K+). Applications received in the rural and urban categories are scored and ranked by a Statewide Selection Committee comprised of various Wisconsin state agencies, external stakeholders, and various bureaus within Wisconsin DOT. Applications submitted for consideration under the TMA category are selected by the respective TMA's policy board.



DRAFT REPORT

In 2021, WisDOT introduced the Safe Transportation Alternatives for Rural Schools (STARS) initiative to applicants in the rural (<5K population) funding category. This initiative, now automatically encompassed in a traditional TAP cycle, focuses on SRTS programming, planning studies, and small infrastructure improvements in rural communities.

As a result of the IJA and corresponding budget actions by the Wisconsin State Legislature, TAP funding levels in the 2023-2025 biennial budget increased by approximately 130 percent over previous levels. Future funding levels will be dependent upon Congressional actions and available Wisconsin state budget authority.

Additional information on the TAP is available on both the WisDOT [website](#) and the FHWA [website](#).

Recreational Trails Program TAP Set-Aside

In Wisconsin, the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) utilizes federal apportionments from the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside to develop, rehabilitate, and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and nonmotorized recreational uses. Eligible projects in order of priority are:

- ▶ Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails;
- ▶ Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails;
- ▶ Construction of new recreational trails (with specific requirements when federal land is involved); and
- ▶ Acquisition of easements and fee simple title for recreational trail corridors.

Additional information on the RTP is available on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources [website](#).

Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development Program

The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program provides competitive grants that fund a wide variety of transportation projects at the state and local level that improve safety, environmental sustainability, community connectivity, and economic development. Previously known as the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Transportation Discretionary Grant program and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER), the program was first created in the 2009 Recovery Act.

Planning grants have no minimum award, while capital grants have a minimum award amount for urban and rural projects. Competitive grants were awarded in the 2024 BUILD grant cycle, including two Wisconsin projects focused on active transportation.

Additional information about the BUILD grant program is available on the US DOT [website](#).

Highway Safety Improvement Program

The purpose of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The IJA emphasizes the importance of vulnerable road user safety in the HSIP by adding a definition for vulnerable road users, creating a vulnerable road user special rule, and requiring states to develop a vulnerable road user safety assessment and incorporate its



DRAFT REPORT

findings in updates to their Strategic Highway Safety Plan. All these provisions are intended to address the increase in the number of fatalities and serious injuries involving vulnerable road users on roads nationwide.

HSIP funds can be used for a variety of spot projects and corridor-level projects on publicly owned roads, bicycle or pedestrian pathways, and trails, such as:

- ▶ Adding crashworthy barriers that discourage drivers of motor vehicles from entering pedestrian-oriented facilities
- ▶ Installing signs, pavement markings, and delineators
- ▶ Protecting intersections for vulnerable road users, with features such as pedestrian and bicycle crossing setbacks, corner safety islands, curb bump outs, and more.

Infrastructure improvements are identified and selected through a data-driven, crash-based approach, and lower-cost treatments that can be implemented in less than three years are given first consideration. At the national level, IIJA provides a 26 percent funding increase to the entire HSIP program over five years

Additional information on the HSIP program is available on both the WisDOT [website](#) and the FHWA [website](#).

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program provides a flexible funding source to local sponsors for transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act. Funding is available to reduce congestion and improve air quality for areas that do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, or particulate matter (nonattainment areas) and for former nonattainment areas that are now in compliance (maintenance areas). In Wisconsin, CMAQ funds are only available in the northeastern and southeastern non-attainment and maintenance counties along or adjacent to the Lake Michigan shoreline: Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, Waukesha, Washington, Ozaukee, Walworth, Sheboygan, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, and Door. Transportation projects that fit into one of the three categories are eligible for CMAQ funding:

- ▶ Projects that reduce the number of vehicle trips and/or vehicle miles traveled (VMT),
- ▶ Projects that reduce emissions related to traffic congestion, and/or
- ▶ Projects that reduce the per-mile rate of vehicle emissions through improved vehicle and fuel technologies.

In addition to continuing to fund activities that were previously allowed under CMAQ, under IIJA, these funds are also eligible for spending on shared micromobility, including bikeshare and shared scooter systems.

The solicitation for CMAQ funding in Wisconsin takes place in odd numbered years, with awards announced in the even numbered years. Interested local sponsors in the eligible Metropolitan Planning Organization areas should connect with either Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission or the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) in advance of applying. Applications are scored based on guidelines provided by WisDOT, priorities provided by MPOs, and emission reductions by project.

Additional information on the CMAQ program is available on the WisDOT [website](#).



DRAFT REPORT

Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through federal discretionary grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The SS4A program supports USDOT's goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on the nation's roadways through the development of comprehensive safety action plans that identify the most significant roadway safety concerns in a community and the implementation of projects and strategies to address roadway safety issues.

The SS4A program provides funding for two types of competitive discretionary grants:

- ▶ **Planning and Demonstration Grants:** Provide federal funds to develop, complete, or supplement an Action Plan, including through the development or update of active transportation plans.
- ▶ **Implementation Grants:** Provide federal funds to implement projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan to address a roadway safety problem. Eligible projects can be infrastructural, behavioral, or operational.

Additional information on the SS4A program is available on the USDOT [website](#).

5.2. State Programs

General Transportation Aids

The State of Wisconsin administers the General Transportation Aids (GTA) program, which provides annual aid payments to local governments to offset the costs of road construction, maintenance, and traffic operations within their jurisdictions. Alongside road construction activities, GTA can be used to pay for snow plowing, shoulder grading, pavement marking and curb and gutter repairs, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Funded by state-collected fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees, GTA is one of WisDOT's largest aid programs. GTA funds are distributed to all Wisconsin counties, cities, villages and towns based on either a six-year cost average or a statutorily set rate-per-mile. The calculation process relies on transportation-related expenditures and revenues incurred by local governments, as reported in the Municipal Financial Report Form filed annually with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

To determine a local government's cost figure, total eligible expenditures are netted against total deductible revenues for a calendar year. The calculation methods differ slightly for municipalities and counties:

- ▶ **Municipalities:** The most recent three years and six years of costs are used in the GTA calculation.
- ▶ **Counties:** The most recent six years of costs are used in the GTA calculation.

6. Next Steps and Conclusion

Wisconsin's active transportation network is an integral component of the state's multimodal transportation system, giving residents and visitors alike the opportunity to walk, bike, and roll to essential destinations across the state. By providing active transportation infrastructure, Wisconsin communities can undergo an increase in quality of life from improved mental and physical health, better air quality, and much more.

The ATP will serve as a resource for a wide range of stakeholders—regional and local planners, engineers, designers, health and safety professionals, advocacy groups, and more—who are working to make Wisconsin a better place for active transportation.



DRAFT REPORT

Definitions

There are many terms used to describe different components of the transportation system, treatments, and bikeway types. To promote consistency and ease of understanding, the following terms are used throughout this Active Transportation Plan.

- ▶ **Accessible:** Able to be reached or used by people of all abilities. Often used to describe a facility that is, at a minimum, compliant with the Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).
- ▶ **Active Transportation:** Using human-powered means of travel, which includes bicycling and walking, with or without the use of mobility aids, and may also include using other human-scaled or micromobility devices that may be electric-powered or electric-assisted, such as e-bikes and e-scooters.
- ▶ **Americans with Disabilities Act:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a comprehensive federal statute that prevents discrimination and requires equal opportunity in the areas of employment, transportation, state and local services, programs and activities, public accommodations and communications. Federal standards provide guidance on accessible routes, curb ramps, transit shelters, and other elements of the built environment. For more information, visit www.ada.gov.
- ▶ **Barrier:** In the context of this plan, a barrier is an obstacle that prevents movement or access via active transportation.
- ▶ **Bikeway:** Any type of bicycle facility, including paths in separate rights-of-way and on-street bikeways. Includes bike lanes, paved shoulders, and side paths.
- ▶ **Bikeshare:** A service made available by public or private entities where individuals may access shared bicycles on a short-term basis for a fee or for free.
- ▶ **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA):** A federal infrastructure package including a five-year (FY22-26) reauthorization of surface transportation programs and direct advanced appropriations. The bill was passed by Congress on November 6, 2021, and signed into law on November 15, 2021.
- ▶ **Capital Improvement:** An expenditure related to the construction or improvement of a city's public infrastructure. Oftentimes included in a Capital Improvement Program (CIP), a short-range plan that details multiple capital projects and their associated timing, funding, and financing information.
- ▶ **Comfortable:** Conditions do not deter bicycling due to stress, anxiety or concerns over safety.
- ▶ **Complete Streets:** Streets that are designed to provide safe and convenient travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, riders and drivers of public transportation, as well as drivers of other motor vehicles, and people of all ages and abilities, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.



DRAFT REPORT

- ▶ **Disability:** According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a history of such an impairment, or is perceived by others as having such an impairment. If a person falls into any of these categories, the ADA protects them. The ADA prohibits discrimination and requires equal opportunity in the areas of employment, transportation, state and local services, programs and activities, public accommodations, and communications. Federal standards provide guidance on accessible routes, curb ramps, transit shelters, and other elements of the built environment. For more information, visit www.ada.gov.
- ▶ **Dooring:** Refers to when an occupant of a parked motor vehicle opens their door into the path of a person bicycling and either strikes the bicyclists with the door or forces them into traffic, resulting in a crash. Wisconsin currently has a law (Wis. Stat. §, 346.94 (20)(a)) that states “No person may open any door of a motor vehicle located on a highway without first taking due precaution to ensure that his or her act will not interfere with the movement of traffic or endanger any other person or vehicle.”
- ▶ **Gap:** In the context of this plan, a gap is a break in continuity of infrastructure. An example could be a section of sidewalk that is missing between two other segments of sidewalks.
- ▶ **Network:** In the context of this plan, “network” refers to a system of active transportation infrastructure that is connected to enable access to a wide variety of destinations.
- ▶ **Infrastructure:** In the context of this plan, infrastructure refers to any type of physical treatment or facility designed to be used by active transportation modes (e.g., biking, walking, skateboarding, using a wheelchair, riding a scooter). Infrastructure examples could be linear, such as sidewalks, paths, or on-street bikeways, or they could be at specific locations, such as curb extensions or pedestrian crossing islands.
- ▶ **Latent Demand:** In the context of this plan, latent demand refers to active transportation trips that are desired but not realized because of a constraint, such as a lack of separated facilities.
- ▶ **Maintenance:** In the context of this plan, maintenance can include surface repairs, sign and signal repairs, replacing or refreshing pavement markings, maintaining lighting and other amenities, vegetation management, sweeping, and seasonal maintenance.
- ▶ **Micromobility:** Transportation over short distances provided by lightweight, usually single-person vehicles (such as bicycles and scooters).
- ▶ **Mobility:** The potential for movement and the ability to get from one place to another using one or more modes of transport to meet daily needs. As such, it differs from accessibility, which refers to the ability to access or reach a desired service or activity.
- ▶ **Modal Shift:** A change from one mode of transportation to another, typically sustained over a longer period of time. In the context of this plan, modal shift refers to programs, projects, and policies that encourage people to use active transportation for a given trip instead of driving.
- ▶ **Multimodal Planning:** Transportation and land use planning that considers diverse transportation options, typically including walking, bicycling, public transit, automobile, and passenger rail, and accounts for land use factors that affect accessibility.



DRAFT REPORT

- ▶ **Pavement Markings:** Pavement markings are used to convey messages to roadway (or shared use path) users. They indicate which part of the road to use, provide information about conditions ahead, and indicate where passing is allowed.
- ▶ **Performance Measure:** A metric used to determine progress or setbacks toward achieving a specific goal or objective. Performance measures are usually tracked at set intervals (e.g., annually) to understand trends.
- ▶ **Right of Way:** In the context of this plan, area that is reserved for transportation purposes, such as sidewalks, roads, railways, bikeways, or paths that enable access to another property or destination
- ▶ **Rolling:** Rolling is an inclusive term that refers to people using other wheeled mobility devices such as wheelchairs, scooters, skateboards, and other mobility aids. Typically used with the phrase 'walking, biking, and rolling,' and included in active transportation.
- ▶ **Separated Facilities:** A shared use path, side path, or sidewalk that is physically separated with a vertical barrier from motor vehicle traffic.
- ▶ **Systemic Safety Analysis Approach:** The guiding methodology for agencies to determine proactive and cost-effective approaches to improve safety throughout their transportation system.
- ▶ **Shared Use Path:** Shared use paths, also commonly referred to as trails or greenways, are paths designed for and generally used by bicyclists, pedestrians, and other non-motorized users. A side path is a type of shared use path that follows the alignment of the roadway.
- ▶ **Vulnerable (Road Users and/or Modes):** Non-motorists including pedestrians, bicyclists, other cyclists, and persons on personal conveyances.



DRAFT REPORT

Acronyms

- ▶ **ACS:** American Community Survey
- ▶ **ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act
- ▶ **AASHTO:** American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials
- ▶ **ATP:** Active Transportation Plan
- ▶ **BHM:** Bureau of Highway Maintenance
- ▶ **BPED:** Bureau of Planning and Economic Development
- ▶ **BPD:** Bureau of Project Development
- ▶ **BSHP:** Bureau of State Highway Programs
- ▶ **BOS:** Bureau of Structures
- ▶ **BTS:** Bureau of Technical Services
- ▶ **BTLLRH:** Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors
- ▶ **BOTS:** Bureau of Transportation Safety and Technical Services
- ▶ **BTO:** Bureau of Traffic Operations
- ▶ **BUILD:** Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development Program
- ▶ **CDC:** Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- ▶ **CIP:** Capital Improvement Program
- ▶ **CMAQ:** Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
- ▶ **DNR:** Department of Natural Resources
- ▶ **FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration
- ▶ **HSIP:** Highway Safety Improvement Program
- ▶ **IJA:** Infrastructure Investment and Jobs
- ▶ **OAPM:** Office of Asset and Performance Management
- ▶ **OBOEC:** Office of Business Opportunities and Equity Compliance
- ▶ **MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization
- ▶ **PROWAG:** Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines
- ▶ **RPC:** Regional Planning Commission
- ▶ **RTP:** Recreational Trails Program
- ▶ **SC:** Steering Committee



DRAFT REPORT

- ▶ **SHSP:** Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- ▶ **SRTS:** Safe Routes to School
- ▶ **SS4A:** Safe Streets and Roads for All
- ▶ **STBG:** Surface Transportation Block Grant
- ▶ **TAC:** Technical Advisory Committee
- ▶ **TAP:** Transportation Alternatives Program
- ▶ **TIGER:** Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery
- ▶ **VRU:** Vulnerable Road User
- ▶ **USDOT:** United States Department of Transportation
- ▶ **WISDOT:** Wisconsin Department of Transportation



DRAFT REPORT

References

- ¹ American Automobile Association. *Annual New Car Ownership Costs Boil over \$12k*. Accessed April 10, 2024. <https://newsroom.aaa.com/2023/08/annual-new-car-ownership-costs-boil-over-12k/>
- ² Outdoor Industry Association. *Outdoor Recreation Economic Report, Wisconsin Profile*. Accessed April 10, 2024. https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OIA_RecEcoState_WI.pdf
- ³ Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. *Active Transportation Transforms America: the Case for Increased Public Investment in Walking and Biking Connectivity*. October 2019.
- ⁴ Healthy Planning. *The Planning Perspective on Health: Community Health as a Goal of Good Design*. Access June 6, 2025. http://changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/documents/Factsheet_PlanningPerspective.pdf
- ⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition*. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2018. Accessed April 10, 2024. https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf
- ⁶ Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee. *Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee Report, 2008*.
- ⁷ HEI Panel. *Traffic-Related Air Pollution: A Critical Review of the Literature on Emissions, Exposure, and Health Effects*. HEI Special Report, 17. Boston, MA: Health Effects Institute, 2010. Accessed April 10, 2024. <https://www.healtheffects.org/system/files/SR17TrafficReview.pdf>
- ⁸ Wisconsin Department of Transportation. *Improving transportation for non-drivers*. Accessed 2 June 2024. <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/multimodal/nd.aspx>
- ⁹ United States Census Bureau. *Means of Transportation to Work by Selected Characteristics*. American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0802, 2022, Accessed on April 10, 2024. <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2022.S0802?t=Commuting&g=040XX00US55>
- ¹⁰ Wisconsin Department of Transportation. *Pedestrian Exposure Data for the Wisconsin State Highway System: WisDOT Southeast Region Pilot Study*. June 2021. <https://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/safety/education/pedestrian/wistudy-pedcount.pdf>