

TRANSPORTATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



WISCONSIN PEDESTRIAN POLICY PLAN 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





**Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Investment Management
Bureau of Planning**

Citizens Advisory Committee

Ms. Karen Perzentka
(Committee Chair),
WI Council of the Blind

Mr. Tim Roets, City of
Watertown Police Dept.

Mr. Todd Temperly,
City Council Member,
City of Lake Mills

Ms. Jacki Lawton, Federal
Highway Administration

Mr. Mark Gottlieb, Director of
Public Works, City of Grafton

Ms. Becky Huncosky, Student,
Madison Memorial
High School

Mr. Brian Amundson,
Director of Public Works, City
of Eau Claire

Mr. Arthur Ross, Bicycle and
Pedestrian Coordinator,
City of Madison

Mr. Randy Thiel,
WI Department of
Public Instruction

Mr. Andy McDonald, Duluth-
Superior Metropolitan
Interstate Committee

Mr. Christopher Hiebert,
Southeast WI Regional
Planning Commission

Mr. James Ito,
Traffic Engineer,
City of Milwaukee

Mr. Al Buss, Wisconsin Council
on Physical Disabilities

Mr. Cole Runge,
Brown County
Planning Commission

Mr. Ernie Vold, Coalition of WI
Aging Groups

Ms. Jennifer Ondrejka,
WI Council on
Developmental Disabilities

Ms. Jeanne Hoffman, Bike
Federation of Wisconsin

Ms. Kit Keller,
City of Cedarburg
Pedestrian Committee

Mr. Ken Cole, Wisconsin
School Board Association

Mr. Phil Scherer,
Transportation Development
Association of WI

Mr. Tom Walker,
WI Transportation
Builders Association

Mr. Kevin Pomeroy,
Main Street Program, WI
Department of Commerce

Mr. Mark Huddleston,
Director of Transportation,
City of Oshkosh

Mr. Rob Kennedy,
New Transportation
Alliance/Citizens for a
Better Environment

Sergeant Gordon Disch, Dane
County Sheriff's Department



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

www.dot.state.wi.us

Scott McCallum
Governor

Gene E. Kussart
Secretary

Office of the Secretary
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Rm 120B
P. O. Box 7901
Madison, WI 53707-7901

Telephone: 608-266-1113
FAX: 608-266-9912
E-mail: sec.exec@dot.state.wi.us

Dear Wisconsin Resident,

I am pleased to present to you the Executive Summary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's first comprehensive pedestrian plan – the *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020*. This plan will guide policies, programs and efforts on pedestrian transportation through the year 2020.

Work on the plan began in late 1999 and was completed in the fall of 2001. Our Department's work on this plan received excellent assistance from the Pedestrian Plan Citizens' Advisory Committee. Citizens around the state provided additional help by offering insights, suggestions and reactions during the complete development of this plan. At public listening sessions, in focus group meetings, at public hearings, and through written and e-mailed comments, we learned about your concerns. I think we have addressed those concerns in the plan, making it a better product because of your involvement.

Progress has already been made in putting this plan into action. Our district offices are using the plan in considering the needs of pedestrians on the state highway system. Many local officials have already contacted Department staff seeking insight and guidance to meet pedestrian needs on the local road system. Department guidelines and procedures on pedestrian planning and design will be updated this year to reflect the recommendations of the pedestrian plan. Later this year, the Department will issue a companion document, the *Pedestrian Best Practices Resource Guide*, that WisDOT and local officials can use to address pedestrian needs. Public meetings will be conducted around the state to promote and highlight information contained in the guide.

I encourage you to take a good look at this plan. This plan should be considered a work in progress. We have completed a very important first step in developing the first statewide pedestrian plan, but over the years we will be reviewing and amending it, as well as integrating it with other plans. The recently initiated update to Wisconsin's multimodal transportation plan, which has a planning horizon of 2030, will consider possible changes to this plan as well as consider pedestrian transportation needs through that longer time period.

I close this letter by asking you to do what you can to help pursue the three goals of this plan: more walking, safer walking, and better knowledge and resources to accomplish these goals.

Sincerely,

Gene E. Kussart
Secretary



Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

Executive Summary

MARCH 2002

Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Investment Management
Bureau of Planning

Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

The *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan* outlines statewide and local measures to increase walking and to promote pedestrian safety. The plan provides a vision and a policy framework for pedestrian travel, clarifying WisDOT's role in addressing pedestrian issues and meeting pedestrians' needs. It establishes actions and policies for better integrating pedestrian travel into the transportation system over the next 20 years.

Role of the Plan

This plan establishes goals, objectives, and actions regarding the provision of pedestrian accommodations that are realistic and can be implemented. The plan serves as a blueprint for improving awareness of pedestrian needs on State Trunk Highways, and identifies the specific actions necessary to attain this objective. The plan also provides recommendations to assist local officials in meeting their pedestrian transportation responsibilities.

The plan focuses on WisDOT's leadership role in pedestrian planning efforts. However, WisDOT recognizes that the success of any efforts undertaken by the Depart-

ment are dependent upon creating strong partnerships with local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, regional planning commissions, nonprofit organizations, and all citizens. WisDOT's efforts can serve as a catalyst to improve pedestrian transportation. However, because most sidewalks are located on local roads and streets, local government initiative becomes critically necessary. Without these local efforts toward pedestrian planning, the effectiveness of WisDOT's efforts will be limited.

Depending upon the issue, pedestrians are addressed in many different ways, including:

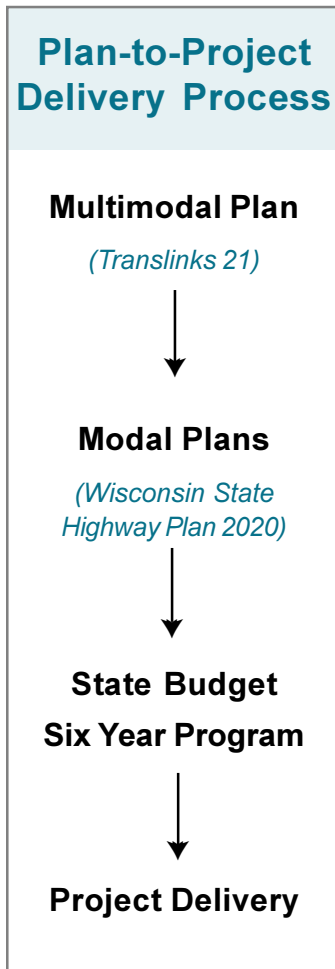
- ◆ *planning and design* of pedestrian facilities,
- ◆ *encouragement* of pedestrian travel by promoting it as an acceptable form of transportation,
- ◆ *education efforts* involving pedestrians, motorists, law enforcement officers and public officials, and,
- ◆ *enforcement* of pedestrian laws.

Role of the Plan

1. Provides statewide policy framework.
2. Identifies WisDOT as a partner.
3. Identifies local role.



University areas commonly experience high numbers of pedestrians



Public Involvement used to Develop this Plan

An extensive public involvement process was undertaken by WisDOT for the development of this plan. Issues and concerns included the provision of pedestrian facilities, pedestrian safety and the enforcement of pedestrian and motorist laws. The public involvement process included sixteen meetings. Meeting types included focus groups and meetings with the public that which included staff from local communities, local officials, law enforcement, students, and citizens. The *Pedestrian Plan Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC)* consisted of a group of citizens, transportation officials from the public and private sectors, and pedestrian advocates. Many of the visions, goals, objectives, and actions included within the plan were the direct result of public input solicited from these types of groups. A draft version of the Plan, released in February 2001, received significant public comment both at meetings around the state and through mail and e-mail correspondence. The Final Draft Plan addresses a number of these comments either through adoption or by comment.

Translinks 21

This plan must also be considered within the context provided by WisDOT's 1994 *Translinks 21 Multimodal Transportation Plan*. *Translinks 21* is a comprehensive multimodal transportation plan that was developed after analysis and consideration of the modal needs facing Wisconsin, and extensive public involvement. *Translinks 21* adopted a multimodal perspective of transportation (e.g., auto, bus, truck, passenger and freight rail, air passenger and cargo, waterborne, bicycle and pedestrian modes) as official WisDOT policy.

Best Practices Resource Guide

Detailed design, planning, and program information and guidelines are planned to be provided in the forthcoming pedestrian *Best Practices Resource Guide (BPRG)*, which serves as a companion document to assist in the implementation of the goals, objectives, and actions in this policy plan. By providing detailed, design information and guidelines, the *BPRG* will serve as a reference or guidebook for state and local officials to help achieve local pedestrian-oriented projects. WisDOT plans to release the *BPRG* in autumn 2002 and conduct meetings around the state to promote it.

Context and Vision

Vision Statement

To establish pedestrian travel as a viable, convenient, and safe transportation choice throughout Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's transportation network should be created with all users and modes in mind. For example, when a street or highway is being designed, consideration should be given to all users including motorists, public transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Pedestrian travel is an often-overlooked yet important mode of transportation in Wisconsin. All people are pedestrians at one time or another, even those who generally use other modes such as automobiles or transit. As we begin the 21st Century, we must look "back to the future" and recognize it is important to recognize the role of pedestrian travel, both in making intermodal connections and as a travel mode in and of itself.



Well-designed pedestrian infrastructure promotes walkers' feelings of safety, comfort

A convenient and safe travel network promotes other objectives such as improved health and fitness, decreased local vehicular traffic, and established community awareness and interaction. The street becomes a place of appeal to both tourists and permanent residents alike.

The following pages identify the goals, objectives, and actions that have been developed to make this vision a reality. Following this is a discussion of immediate tasks that will need to be taken in order to begin implementation of the plan .

Achieving the Vision would mean:

- ◆ An 8 year-old child, carrying a carton of milk, could walk safely to and from the local grocery store a few blocks away from his or her home.



Sidewalks are often used by children



Pedestrians need unobstructed paths

- ◆ An elderly person could walk safely and conveniently from his or her house to the bus stop.



Accessibility for all

- ◆ A disabled person could travel by wheelchair from one retail store to another within a large, outdoor shopping center or within a central business district without barriers that block access.



An accident waiting to happen?

- ◆ A tourist could walk along a State Trunk Highway (often the main street in many small communities or the commercial hub of suburbia) and safely cross it to get from his/her motel to a restaurant.

- ◆ A fifth grade child could escort his or her second grade sibling to school by themselves, confident that their trip will be safe.



Following safe pedestrian practices

Who is a pedestrian?

A *pedestrian* is any person walking or in a wheelchair on a sidewalk or along a roadway. Everyone is a pedestrian at some point during a trip, whether it is from home to a parking lot, to a work site, or for an entire trip.

It is not always easy to be a pedestrian. Because of obstacles posed by facilities designed primarily for the automobile; highways and other busy streets often act as barriers to walking. Such “barriers” can limit or prohibit pedestrian travel both along and across a highway. These “barriers” can severely limit the lives of those dependent on walking because they are cut off from large sections of their community.

All pedestrians are extremely vulnerable to vehicular traffic. Some pedestrians are at an especially dangerous disadvantage due to personal physical or mental limitations. The plan identifies those who most commonly face these limitations as, “pedestrians with special needs”: the elderly, children, and people with disabilities.

Elderly Pedestrians

By the year 2020, 17% of Wisconsin’s population will be 65 years of age or older. Attending to the pedestrian travel needs of elderly people will become even more necessary as the “baby boom” generation ages. This demographic group is expected to remain active as they age and this will

require a transportation system that includes good pedestrian facilities. If elderly workers and volunteers are limited in their travel choices due to an inadequate pedestrian transportation system, the state could suffer negative economic and social consequences.

Pedestrian facilities and streets will need to be designed to accommodate the unique characteristics of older people. Aging usually causes a deterioration of physical, perceptual and sensory abilities. Because the elderly become physically fragile, crashes and falls may have more serious consequences. Limitations commonly experienced by older adults can include:

- ◆ Vision limitations;
- ◆ Slower walking speeds;
- ◆ Reduced ability to detect, localize and differentiate sounds;

Children as Pedestrians

Children younger than 15 are another significant pedestrian group with special needs: 23% of the state’s population is age 14 or younger. Children travel by foot more than any other age group. Many walk to and from school daily. Due to their developmental immaturity and lack of experience, however, children have fewer capabilities than most adults in negotiating street crossings and other difficult pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Limitations of children pedestrians include:

- ◆ One-third less peripheral vision than adults;
- ◆ Less cognitive ability and traffic experience;
- ◆ Lower auditory development;
- ◆ Overconfidence;
- ◆ Cognitive impairments that can hinder a person's ability to think, learn and reason.

While each of these groups is unique in its characteristics, pedestrian facilities could be designed to incorporate, wherever possible, the various needs of all pedestrians. Understanding the different users and their capabilities can produce safe pedestrian designs.

Pedestrians with Disabilities

There are more than one million Wisconsin residents with one or more disabilities, representing 20% of the state's population. Persons with disabilities include anyone with a physical, sensory or mental impairment that affects their movements or decision-making.

People with disabilities can endure great hardship getting around; they rely on pedestrian and transit transportation to a greater extent than most of the population. A wheelchair user finds the absence of a curb ramp or an uneven sidewalk to be a barrier requiring them to retrace their movements in order to find an accessible route to their destination. Similarly, a visually impaired pedestrian may find a busy street impassable without regular crossings or sufficient signaling to regulate the traffic. The broad categories of disabilities include:

- ◆ Mobility impairments that require the use of wheelchairs, canes or crutches;
- ◆ Sensory impairments such as blindness or deafness.

The Concept of Universal Design

The idea of designing facilities for the majority of users - including the elderly, children and people who are disabled - has come to be known as "universal design". This concept holds that a good pedestrian system is designed for all users and not simply a "standard" user. It should be noted that designs that are more accessible to persons with pedestrian-related limitations can also benefit able-bodied users by reducing fatigue, increasing pedestrian speed and decreasing the potential for pedestrian judgment error.

A primary motivation of this *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020* is to promote the planning and design of transportation facilities that allow all members of our society to travel as they wish to the places they wish comfortably and safely.

Goals of the Plan

1. *Increase the number and improve the quality of walking trips in Wisconsin.*
2. *Reduce the number of pedestrian crashes and fatalities.*
3. *Increase the availability of pedestrian planning and design guidance and other general information for state, local officials and citizens.*

Statewide Goals to Achieve the Plan Vision

This section identifies the overall statewide goals for accomplishing the vision for the *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020*. These goals are quantifiable and tractable. If these three goals are achieved, people who choose to walk or who have no other transportation alternative will be able to get to where they need to go and do what they need to do. The objectives identified for each goal are discussed in more detail following this section.



The absence of pedestrian facilities can create dangerous conditions for walkers

GOAL 1: Increase the number and improve the quality of walking trips in Wisconsin.

Increasingly recognized as an important method of travel, walking and pedestrian issues received increased attention in the 1990s. This increased attention is partially the result of various federal laws

such as ISTEA, 1991; TEA-21, 1998; and the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990. WisDOT has followed the federal lead and has increased its attention to pedestrian issues. This includes planning guidance developed in 1993 (entitled *Wisconsin Pedestrian Planning Guidance: Guidelines for Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Communities in Planning and Developing Pedestrian Facilities*), the subsequent Metropolitan Planning Organization or MPO planning efforts funded by WisDOT, and WisDOT policy changes that pay for a share of sidewalk costs along State Trunk Highways. The heightened awareness of pedestrian issues, places more emphasis on developing policies and guidelines that raise the importance of pedestrian facilities closer to that of other modes, such as highways and rail.

Because of the increased visibility of pedestrian issues at the national level, many states are now examining their own laws and policies with respect to pedestrian issues and facilities. Wisconsin is helping to lead this change. State and local officials should take the lead in promoting pedestrian travel and developing and maintaining pedestrian-oriented facilities necessary for a well functioning and safe pedestrian transportation system. Officials planning pedestrian facilities should work toward complementing other transportation modes and facilities wherever possible. An integral part of the local transportation system infrastructure, pedestrian needs exist in the beginning of the planning process.

GOAL 2: Reduce the number of pedestrian crashes and fatalities.

As pedestrian travel grows, so must the commitment to reducing pedestrian crashes and fatalities. Government must address and meet the unique safety needs of all demographic groups including children, the elderly, and the disabled. The need for team efforts in roadway design, law enforcement, and public education exist. Protecting safety makes walking a more attractive and viable transportation option. Reducing pedestrian crashes cannot only provide an important measure of public health and safety, but can enhance the overall quality of life in local communities.

GOAL 3: Increase the availability of pedestrian planning and design guidance and other general information for state and local officials and citizens.

WisDOT has traditionally provided guidance to local communities on a variety of transportation-related topics. WisDOT's role should be expanded, to the extent practicable, to include the provision of information to both local communities and to WisDOT districts regarding pedestrian policy, local planning and design of pedestrian facilities, and project implementation. Information requests and public outreach efforts conducted by WisDOT indicate a strong demand for advice *and* information related to meeting local pedestrian needs.

Statewide Pedestrian Crashes, 1994-1998						
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Average
Statewide Crashes	2059	1939	1842	1807	1778	1885
Fatal Crashes	49	61	54	61	63	58
% of Crashes that are Fatal	2.4%	3.1%	2.9%	3.4%	3.5%	3.1%

Objectives and Actions to Accomplish the Three Goals

The plan's three goals will be achieved by means of numerous objectives and recommended implementation actions. The first objective is the State Trunk Highways Objective, which identifies WisDOT's direct responsibility in providing for pedestrian needs along State Trunk Highways. The State Trunk Highway Objective is followed by four additional objectives that have been structured using the "4-E's" of transportation safety-engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement.¹

The *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020* acknowledges that WisDOT must partner with local governments to provide for pedestrian needs along State Trunk Highways. The plan also identifies problems that accompany State Trunk Highways, including acknowledging highways as barriers to the movement of pedestrians along local road systems. The develop-

ment of policy and/or criteria minimizing the "barrier effect" becomes one of many steps toward action on this issue.

The most significant pedestrian needs in Wisconsin, however, are not on State Trunk Highways, but are located on local roads and streets. WisDOT's policies and standards influence local government decisions because local governments often adopt them as their own. However, state government cannot act alone in addressing the entire spectrum of pedestrian concerns and issues. Even as WisDOT acts as an important conduit for technical and financial assistance, pedestrian transportation needs will continue to be a problem in Wisconsin without the commitment of local governments to address the needs in their communities.

WisDOT can help local governments both in the immediate and long-term futures. The *BPRG* will provide specific guidance on pedestrian project design at the local level and further assistance remains available from WisDOT on a continual basis.

¹ This mirrors the approach used to organize the goals and objectives in the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*. The 4-E's approach has been widely accepted by government bodies, agencies and advocacy groups in addressing safety concerns and planning for transportation system needs.

Objective 1.0: State Trunk Highways

Working in partnership with local governments and other interested stakeholders, WisDOT will increase accommodations for pedestrian travel to the extent practicable along and across State Trunk Highways (STHs).

Action 1.1

WisDOT recognizes its responsibilities for pedestrians on STHs

WisDOT reaffirms its shared responsibility with local governments for constructing pedestrian facilities along STHs, including funding for new facilities and retrofits.

WisDOT is responsible for construction, improvements and long-term maintenance of STH rights-of-way. WisDOT provides services and facilities accommodating appropriate and necessary modes within STH rights-of-way (for motor vehicles, trucks, bicycles, transit, and pedestrians). Municipalities have the option to pay for treatments beyond what WisDOT deems as appropriate and necessary facilities.

As part of the project scoping process, WisDOT staff will identify barriers to the flow of pedestrian traffic across a highway caused by an existing or planned State Trunk Highway design.

Action 1.2

WisDOT will evaluate pedestrian needs on STH Projects

As part of its standard project communications with municipal governments, WisDOT staff recommendations for sidewalks on STH projects will be provided in writing along with the reasons for the recommendation. WisDOT staff will evaluate STH projects for pedestrian needs, both along and across the STH. To facilitate this review, the Department will develop criteria for use in the project scoping process.

WisDOT will request a written response from the municipality if it rejects the recommendation. WisDOT will review current project planning and design

procedures to ensure pedestrian consideration in every project. This review will consider pedestrian needs both along and across STHs. When projects are first proposed, a set of criteria will be used to determine whether and what type of pedestrian facilities need to be considered for the project.

WisDOT will specifically work with the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation (a state organization representing a thousand-mile national and state scenic hiking trail located entirely in Wisconsin) in identifying Ice Age Trail needs along and across state highways. Even though relatively few locations exist where the trail runs along state highways, WisDOT will strongly consider shoulder enhancements (additional shoulder width or pavement) to better accommodate hikers when state highways are reconstructed. In some exceptional situations, especially for short segments with extensive trail use and high motor vehicle traffic on the highway, a separate path exclusively for walking may be considered. Ice Age Trail crossings will be assessed using WisDOT's newly developed guidelines and cost share provisions for crossings.

Action 1.3

WisDOT will minimize the barrier effect in STH designs



Pedestrian overpasses can help ease the “barrier effect”

To the extent practicable, WisDOT will promote highway designs for STHs that do not adversely impact or disrupt local sidewalk continuity or create a “barrier” to the free-flow of pedestrian traffic. WisDOT will seek designs that join existing local sidewalk systems to sidewalks along the STH and provide increased attention to pedestrian travel needs near certain identified pedestrian generators (e.g., schools, retirement facilities, hospitals and shopping districts).

The forthcoming *BPRG* includes discussion and examples of how to develop pedestrian facilities to make connections with sidewalks and pedestrian generators. As part of the project scoping process, WisDOT staff will identify barriers to the cross-flow of pedestrian traffic caused by an existing or planned STH design. Alleviating the “barrier effect” can be achieved through multiple efforts, including constructing median refuges and extending pedestrian signal duration.

Action 1.4

WisDOT will promote state-of-the-art design practices

WisDOT will review and make changes to best design practices for pedestrian accommodations for use in staff training, highway project design work, other transportation projects, and for inclusion in the Department's Facilities Development Manual (FDM), which guides the design of transportation facilities.

Extensive discussion, drawings, and photographs related to project design and/or implementation will be included in the *BPRG*; topics will include:

- ◆ design details of pedestrian treatments within highway and street corridors;
- ◆ examples of standard and state-of-the-art pedestrian facilities;
- ◆ a discussion of pedestrian travel concepts and the benefits of livable communities;
- ◆ examples of traffic calming devices on the local system;
- ◆ a discussion of local policies and practices regarding sidewalks; and
- ◆ a *best practices* review of education and enforcement efforts.

WisDOT will provide training to district staff to keep them informed of trends and best practices in pedestrian system design (*Action 3.1: WisDOT will provide broad-based professional training opportunities*).

WisDOT
Transportation
Districts will be
advised that stand-
alone sidewalk retrofit
projects may be
funded under the
regular 3R program.

Action 1.5

WisDOT will report on its level of effort of pedestrian investment

WisDOT will develop tools to report on its level of effort for addressing pedestrian needs, including the amount and cost of facilities provided during any year.

This assessment will be dependent upon the scoping work sheet development outlined in *Action 1.2*. Once developed, the scoping work sheet criteria will include entries identifying the amount of constructed sidewalk including spot replacement, replacement required by construction needs, and new sidewalk installation. This assessment will be done both retrospectively and prospectively (what did we do during the last five years and how much are we planning to do during the next five years?). The *BPRG* will review general project progression and needs in relationship to assessment criteria.

Action 1.6

WisDOT will promote stand-alone sidewalk projects on STHs

WisDOT transportation districts will be advised that stand-alone sidewalk retrofit projects may be funded under the regular 3R program. Additionally, the WisDOT committee that selects State Highway Enhancement projects should consider methods assigning some priority to critical sidewalk retrofit projects along STHs to fill sidewalk system “gaps.”

Year to year changes in highway project types argue against a formal commitment to a specific funding amount. Nevertheless, sidewalk retrofits on critical STH segments that did not include sidewalk installation as part of the original construction project remain. Because the next construction project (after initial construction may not occur for 20 years, stand-alone retrofits can be used to install sidewalks without waiting for a construction project. In this way, districts will be able to build sidewalk retrofit projects viewed as critically necessary to pedestrian safety, even if they are rejected as a State Enhancement Project. Sidewalks built as stand-alone retrofits could insure upgrades to existing infrastructure.

Objective 2.0: Engineering and Planning

Working in partnership with local governments and other interested stakeholders, WisDOT will plan, design and promote new transportation facilities, where appropriate, and retrofit existing facilities, where appropriate, to accommodate and encourage pedestrian use.

Action 2.1

Locals should consider pedestrian transportation in their land use plans

Local governments should address pedestrian needs in their comprehensive land use plans. Local land use decisions, such as subdivision approvals, should consider and provide for the needs of pedestrian transportation. WisDOT will provide advice and guidance to local governments, to the best of our capabilities, to help with these considerations. Local community planning criteria include:

- ◆ encouraging compact and mixed use development that facilitates walking;
- ◆ promoting school and residential siting so as to accommodate walking as the primary mode; and
- ◆ providing for continuous sidewalk connectivity.

On a community-wide basis, local officials should strive to develop a pedestrian-friendly transportation system in their community. WisDOT will provide information and guidance to local officials for this purpose. WisDOT resources include:

- ◆ successful examples of pedestrian design efforts in Wisconsin and around the country;
- ◆ model practices from other communities (e.g., sidewalk inventories, model ordinances);

Public outreach conducted for the *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020* highlighted a perceived lack of public knowledge and understanding related to pedestrian rights and responsibilities.

- ◆ techniques to identify pedestrian generators (i.e. schools, elderly housing, shopping areas); and
- ◆ strategies that seek to promote stronger ties between transit and pedestrians, pedestrian sidewalk financing techniques, the availability of financial assistance, and recent developments in pedestrian planning.

WisDOT, working in partnership with local communities and planning agencies, can identify deficiencies in existing pedestrian facilities. These assessments can include the identification of financial resources, if available, which can be used by local communities to develop and maintain pedestrian facilities in these areas.

As outlined earlier, the primary method of providing this guidance will be the *BPRG*. Examples of communities that have completed creative and successful pedestrian plans will be included in the resource guide.

The recently released WisDOT *Transportation Planning Resource Guide*, (issued to help communities complete the transportation element of their state required local comprehensive plans), cites the resource guide to help local governments, RPCs, and MPOs.

Action 2.2

In addition to relying on the *FDM*, local officials regularly consult with WisDOT planners and engineers when addressing difficult design issues.

WisDOT will include local road pedestrian facility designs in the *FDM*

Recognizing that local officials rely on the Facilities Development Manual when designing local road projects, WisDOT will include design information for pedestrian facilities on local roads and streets.

The *BPRG* will outline and propose language for the *FDM* addressing such design measures as traffic calming, travel lane width, corner radii, pedestrian friendly intersection treatments and designs, median refuges to allow two-stage pedestrian crossings of busy streets, and sidewalk system design.

Action 2.3

WisDOT will develop the *Pedestrian Best Practices Resource Guide (BPRG)* to help locals meet pedestrian needs

Local governments should consider the needs of pedestrians when selecting and designing projects on their own streets and roads. WisDOT will encourage this consideration by providing information and guidance in the *BPRG*, providing ongoing and regular advice and guidance as requested by local officials, and by opening WisDOT staff training opportunities to local officials.

In addition to relying on the *FDM*, local officials regularly consult with WisDOT planners and engineers when addressing difficult design issues. In addition to the *BPRG*, WisDOT advice (within staff time constraints in the various district offices) and training opportunities, will continue to help meet local officials' community pedestrian transportation needs.



A sidewalk "gap". The development of a sidewalk inventory helps to identify problem areas and to set priorities

Action 2.4

WisDOT will encourage MPO and RPCs to consider pedestrian needs in their planning processes

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) should include pedestrian transportation and other multimodal needs in their transportation studies, transportation project selections, and advice in plans and studies.

WisDOT relies on MPOs for transportation planning and project selection in urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000. Therefore, MPOs have significant control and responsibility for meeting the needs of all transportation modes within their boundaries. WisDOT will encourage MPOs to address pedestrian needs in their area's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). For example, an MPO could employ the use of a weighting factor in project prioritization that takes into account pedestrian concerns. MPOs and RPCs also assist local communities with transportation

planning needs including the transportation element of local comprehensive land use plans. WisDOT will contribute through the *BPRG* that will seek to provide guidance to assist MPOs and RPCs.

Action 2.5

Locals should utilize federal funding programs to meet local pedestrian needs

Local officials should identify and propose high priority pedestrian projects that qualify for grants under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, the local Transportation Enhancement programs, and the Surface Transportation Project Discretionary (STP-D) programs.

Local communities select projects for funding under these programs. WisDOT will provide information on financial assistance, such as urban planning grants, and financing techniques for assessing sidewalk improvements. WisDOT will provide guidance to local communities about qualities of project proposals in “good” applications for Enhancement and CMAQ awards. Finally, WisDOT will work with local communities to determine how multimodalism can potentially be used as a weighting factor in project selections.

Objective 3.0: Education

Working in partnership with local governments and other interested stakeholders, WisDOT will expand the range of education activities, such as driver licensing and training, technical workshops on planning and design of facilities, pedestrian safety education, and provision of public service information to provide consistent safety measures and training to all roadway users.

Action 3.1

WisDOT will provide broad-based professional training opportunities

WisDOT will provide regular training on pedestrian needs to department planning, design and construction staff as well as to staff of MPOs and RPCs, local municipalities, counties, and project consultants.

This training can include advice from local, regional and national, pedestrian experts and will be open to local, MPO and RPC officials whenever possible. In order for a training program to be effective, it must be continuously providing for both current and future training needs. Professional training relates to resource-based learning outlined under *Action 1.4: Promoting State-of-the-Art Pedestrian Treatments in WisDOT Projects*.



When a sidewalk is under construction, alternative facilities marked appropriately become critical for blind pedestrians who are unable to read signs by sight

Action 3.2

Locals should provide training for planning and design staff

In conjunction with *Action 3.1 and Action 3.5*, local governments should commit to provide for the training needs of their project planning and design staff. In this way, recent developments in pedestrian transportation planning can remain effective.

Action 3.3

WisDOT will review programs and manuals

WisDOT will review its manuals and programs to ensure pedestrian rights and responsibilities are addressed.

Public outreach conducted for the *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020*; highlighted a perceived lack of public knowledge and understanding related to pedestrian rights and responsibilities. WisDOT staff in the Bureau of Planning and the State Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Program Manager will coordinate with Division of Motor Vehicles staff to identify initiatives toward improving driver awareness of their responsibilities when they come upon pedestrians. This effort will especially focus on the “white cane law” and the “pedestrian’s right-of-way.”

Action 3.4

WisDOT will continue assistance for pedestrian safety education

WisDOT will continue to build on its partnerships with local governments and law enforcement agencies in promotion of a comprehensive approach to pedestrian safety that includes education, enforcement, and design. WisDOT reaffirms present efforts by its Bureau of Transportation Safety to promote these efforts. WisDOT will continue to identify, assess, and fund new and innovative education and enforcement programs for both motorists and pedestrians to improve pedestrian safety in Wisconsin.

WisDOT will review state statute for opportunities to enhance the authority of and respect for crossing guards.

Action 3.5

Locals should continue to provide pedestrian education efforts

In conjunction with *Action 3.4*, local officials should commit to providing the necessary levels of effort by schools, public works departments, law enforcement

agencies, and other local groups to increase pedestrian comfort and safety through improved public education efforts.

Promoting safe pedestrian travel through a variety of education and encouragement activities revitalize communities. Examples include: team walking, special needs pedestrian escort, the allowance of early arrival for school children, and the provision of areas within employment sites to allow workers who walk to clean up and change their clothes if necessary.

Action 3.6

WisDOT will conduct pedestrian related research

WisDOT will conduct long-term research, such as surveys to better understand pedestrian issues and problems. Research should include:

- ◆ Analysis of why people *don't* walk more often, in order to better address the goal of encouraging walking;
- ◆ Determination of the number and causes of pedestrian crashes to address the unique safety needs of the elderly, disabled and children; and
- ◆ Data review by WisDOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety and conduct research to determine the number and causes of pedestrian crashes (see *Action 3.6: WisDOT will Conduct Pedestrian-Related Research*). Existing pedestrian safety approaches in the Bureau of Transportation Safety will be reviewed and new measures will be developed linking crash type and age data to pedestrian crash occurrences. The role of alcohol in pedestrian injuries and fatalities will also be assessed, as well as data involving crashes among "incidental pedestrians" such as stranded motorists walking along highways.

This relates to *Action 5.5(a)*.

Objective 4.0: Enforcement

Working in partnership with local governments and other interested stakeholders, WisDOT will work to improve the enforcement of laws to prevent dangerous and illegal behavior by motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Action 4.1

WisDOT will continue partnerships with local law enforcement

WisDOT will continue to build on its partnership with local law enforcement agencies to promote pedestrian and motorist law enforcement efforts in Wisconsin.

WisDOT reaffirms present efforts by the Bureau of Transportation Safety to provide staffing resource assistance and financial assistance for pedestrian and motorist law enforcement programs to law enforcement agencies. WisDOT will continue to identify, assess, and fund new and innovative enforcement programs to improve and promote pedestrian safety in Wisconsin. WisDOT will review current funding programs and assess enforcement and pedestrian safety measures with the objective of increasing their overall effectiveness.

Action 4.2

Locals should increase enforcement efforts

In conjunction with *Action 4.1: WisDOT will Continue Partnerships with Local Law Enforcement*; local governments and law enforcement agencies should commit to improve pedestrian safety and comfort through increased enforcement of pedestrian and motorist laws and consider innovative enforcement.

The *BPRG* will include a review of innovative enforcement programs around the country that have improved walking as a transportation choice. WisDOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety will continue to seek out innovative techniques and programs to promote their use to local law enforcement agencies. WisDOT will provide information and examples in the *BPRG* to local governments on coordination of engineering, education, and safety awareness efforts with enforcement wherever possible.

Action 4.3

WisDOT will review pedestrian related laws

WisDOT will form an ad hoc internal working group to review the National Uniform Vehicle Code and the state laws that have an impact on pedestrians in order to ensure that the laws are clear, current, and address pedestrian concerns and issues. Stakeholders and users of pedestrian facilities will be consulted as part of this review process. WisDOT will form this working group after the development of the *BPRG*.

Successful implementation of this plan will require a partnership between WisDOT, local governments, MPOs, RPCs, nonprofit organizations, and all citizens.



Children travel by foot more than any other group

Action 4.4

WisDOT will look for opportunities to enhance crossing guard programs

WisDOT will review state statute for opportunities to enhance the authority of and respect for crossing guards. WisDOT will also encourage communities to improve their crossing guard programs by utilizing different, innovative approaches such as privatization efforts.

WisDOT will support changes to state statutes applying stricter penalties for failure to obey pedestrian crossing guards and nonobservance of pedestrian crossings. WisDOT will also promote innovative staffing, procedural, and funding techniques in the *BPRG* to help municipalities manage problems with crossing guard programs.

Action 4.5

WisDOT will promote education and enforcement of the 25 m.p.h. speed zones

WisDOT will focus state education efforts on local enforcement of the 25 m.p.h. speed limit in lower speed areas (e.g., residential and commercial areas). As indicated in the plan, more than one half of Wisconsin's pedestrian crashes occur where the posted speed is 25 m.p.h. or less. Therefore, if education improves and driver awareness and law enforcement measures improve driver behavior, a decrease in fatalities and serious injuries could occur.

Objective 5.0: Encouragement

Working in partnership with local governments and other stakeholders, WisDOT will encourage more trips that are pedestrian by promoting the acceptance and usefulness of walking and through the promotion of pedestrian safety efforts.

Action 5.1

To the extent practical, WisDOT will share its expertise with the locals

To implement the recommendations of this plan, WisDOT will provide advice and guidance, to the extent practicable, both in its eight transportation districts as well as in its central office. Municipal and county officials will have many questions as a result of the challenges posed in this plan to address pedestrian needs on their local roads, streets and highways. WisDOT staff received many calls for advice and assistance from local officials after release of the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*. A similar response is expected after the release of this plan. It is hoped however that The BPRG will answer many municipal officials' pedestrian-related questions arising from the release of this plan. WisDOT will answer questions and concerns that remain. WisDOT will try to devote the necessary staff time to help local planning and design staff, as well as, education and enforcement staff, to meet pedestrian needs in their communities.

Action 5.2

WisDOT will promote walking as part of
a multimodal transportation system

WisDOT will promote connections between pedestrian travel and other transportation modes through planning and design efforts. The State Trunk Highways Objective (*Objective 1.0*) commits WisDOT to providing intermodal connections for pedestrians along its

STH system. These connections will also be important on local road systems. The *BPRG* will discuss and provide examples of how to develop pedestrian facilities in an intermodal context. WisDOT training opportunities and consultation will also be available to local officials to help develop their understanding of these critical connections and safety considerations.



Appropriate sidewalk treatments can accommodate all pedestrians

Action 5.3

WisDOT reaffirms efforts to address pedestrians with special needs

WisDOT reaffirms its commitment to accommodate and support all pedestrians including those with special needs such as the elderly, children and people with disabilities. Specific activities include:

- ◆ WisDOT will also continue research into how to better accommodate and increase pedestrian travel for the elderly, children and people with disabilities.
- ◆ In conjunction with (a) and (b), WisDOT will conduct regular pedestrian workshops. The workshops will be open to a broad audience including educators, law enforcement personnel, local staff including engineers and planners, local officials, WisDOT staff, and special group representatives. The workshops will invite national, state and local experts and will seek to concentrate on education, enforcement and design strategies with special emphasis placed on how these strategies work together in addressing pedestrian

needs. The goal of these workshops will be twofold: (1) to encourage and promote pedestrian safety and enforcement; and (2) to facilitate mobility among all pedestrians and provide access among people who are disabled, the elderly and children.

- ◆ WisDOT will encourage local planning departments to identify areas where elderly and those who have special needs for pedestrian facilities are known to reside and walk. For example, residences of those age 65 and older can be tracked using U.S. Census data with Geographic Information Systems. Locations frequented by seniors, such as grocery stores or senior centers, could also be plotted with the corresponding sidewalk needs identified. Information can be added to the analysis on an ad hoc basis.
- ◆ WisDOT will encourage local school districts to include pedestrian concerns in school siting decisions and in existing neighborhoods as demographic conditions change. A broad comprehensive approach can include: long-term solutions i.e., incorporating pedestrian needs into the platting process and developing attendance projection maps; and short-term solutions (providing crossing guards, engineering solutions, and identifying unusual hazards).



People in wheelchairs are pedestrians too

Estimated Fiscal Costs to Implement this Plan

In general, the impacts of the recommendations in this plan are directly related to work that continues in the area of pedestrian planning, design, enforcement and education efforts. However, the department anticipates an increased focus on the needs of pedestrians as a result of this plan that will increase the funding and efforts devoted to meeting pedestrian needs along STHs and on local roads. Increased local government attention to pedestrian needs is expected to have a significant impact on additional staff time demands, both in the Districts and in the Central Office, and as local officials request advice or assistance.

As noted earlier, WisDOT is presently meeting current sidewalk needs along STHs. Therefore, any significant impact on WisDOT's construction budget is not expected. Due to increased awareness and demand for sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities on the local road system however, significant impacts on local municipal budgets are possible. For example, sidewalk construction currently costs approximately \$12.50 per running foot of five-foot width (2001). Therefore, constructing sidewalk on a residential block of 15 houses per side and 75 feet of street frontage per house would cost approximately \$35,000. Initial developer costs can be passed on to the homebuyer or to the municipality. The municipality may fund the project through special assessment or through regular municipal operations.

During the period of public comment on the draft plan, some citizens urged WisDOT to establish a program to fund critically necessary pedestrian facilities along local roads and streets. These citizens advised WisDOT that the Hazard Elimination Safety (HES) Program would be the best vehicle through which to fund such projects. WisDOT staff and management reviewed this proposal and eventually decided that it was not necessary. Staff identified three reasons for rejecting the proposal:

1. There is no need for special set-aside funding because of the many programs already in place that can assist local governments in meeting local pedestrian needs, such as the Enhancements Program, the many Surface Transportation Programs (STP), the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ), and reimbursement under the General Transportation Assistance Program (GTA).
2. Local officials and WisDOT district staff expressed concern that such a program could actually cause municipalities to delay needed pedestrian facility projects as they wait for funding to become available. These officials felt the program could be used to pay for projects that a municipality would be doing anyway.
3. The *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020* is not the appropriate venue to consider potential additional WisDOT programs to help local governments pay for necessary

pedestrian transportation facilities. The purpose of this plan is to identify what WisDOT will do along its own STHs and how WisDOT can help local governments meet their own pedestrian needs. The department will address local sidewalk needs and funding options as part of its multimodal plan update, scheduled to begin in 2002.

WisDOT Initial Tasks for 2002-2003

Successful implementation of this plan will require a partnership between WisDOT, local governments, MPOs, nonprofit organizations, and all citizens. WisDOT will act as the catalyst to begin the process of developing this partnership. The initial and critical steps over the next two years include:

WisDOT will develop a *Pedestrian Best Practices Resource Guide (BPRG)*. Detailed design, planning, and program information and guidelines will be provided in the forthcoming *BPRG* that serves

as a companion document to assist in implementation of its goals, objectives, and actions. The resource guide is scheduled for completion by summer, 2002.

WisDOT will review current project planning and design procedures to ensure pedestrians are appropriately considered in every project. This review will consider pedestrian needs both along and across the STHs. When projects are first proposed, a set of criteria will be used to determine whether and what type of facilities need to be considered for the project. WisDOT will begin developing the scoping criteria in 2002.

WisDOT will establish a working group to review laws potentially affecting pedestrians. In 2002, WisDOT will form an ad hoc, internal working group to perform a comprehensive review of the National Uniform Vehicle Code and the state laws that have had an impact on pedestrians to ensure that the laws are clear, current and address pedestrian issues. Other stakeholders and users of



Figure IV.2: Pedestrian medians calm traffic and make crossings safer

pedestrian facilities will be consulted as part of this review process. The review is expected for completion within one year.

WisDOT will pursue research on pedestrian safety. WisDOT will conduct further research to determine the number and causes of pedestrian crashes to address safety needs of all pedestrians. A review of the MV 4000 crash data will take place in 2002 and will focus on motorists and pedestrians impaired by alcohol, the role of speed in pedestrian crashes and on the elderly and children. The WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety will review its existing pedestrian safety approaches and identify any new measures that can be developed linking crash type and age data to pedestrian crash occurrences.

WisDOT will further survey pedestrian use. Survey research, currently underway, will provide an

analysis of walkers and non-walkers and the purpose and frequency of their walks. The research will also focus on how to better accommodate and increase pedestrian travel for the elderly, children, and people with disabilities. WisDOT is spending \$2.5 million to increase the size of the Wisconsin sample of the National Household Transportation Survey from approximately 500 individuals to approximately 16,500 individuals. This survey is expected to be completed in 2002.

WisDOT will sponsor a pedestrian workshop. WisDOT will sponsor a pedestrian conference that will focus on three areas: (1) planning and design of pedestrian facilities; (2) safety and enforcement; and (3) pedestrian mobility and access. The workshop, in conjunction with research by WisDOT on pedestrian safety, will review pedestrian laws and measure pedestrian use. This workshop is scheduled for 2003.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Project Contributors

Ruben L. Anthony, Jr., Administrator,
Division of Transportation Investment Management

Sandra Beaupre, Deputy Administrator,
Division of Transportation Investment Management

Ken Leonard, Director, Bureau of Planning

Douglas Dalton, Chief, Urban Planning Section

Tom Huber, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

John Swisler, Program and Planning Analyst/Team Leader

Joanne Lazarz, Program and Planning Analyst

Jennifer Murray, Program and Planning Analyst

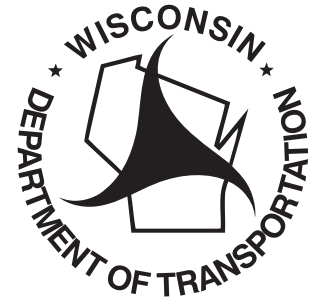
Tim McClain, Program and Planning Analyst

Diane Paoni, Program and Planning Analyst

Bobbi Retzlaff, Program and Planning Analyst

Aileen Switzer, Program and Planning Analyst

Dan Thyes, Program and Planning Analyst



Acknowledgments:

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation extends its appreciation to the many citizens of Wisconsin who contributed their time and effort to the successful development of the *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020*. The overall quality and content of the plan has been greatly enhanced by the diligent and dedicated participation of these citizens in public meetings, focus groups and in participation of surveys conducted by WisDOT.

We extend special thanks to the individuals who guided the development of the plan through their service on the Citizens Advisory Committee. These citizens included local officials, the general public and representatives of organizations with many different

interests in state and local pedestrian issues. The Citizens Advisory Committee was not only instrumental in identifying key pedestrian issues and concerns but also provided important assistance to WisDOT in the development and review of recommendations included within this plan.

Special thanks also goes to WisDOT's Mary Nowakowski for designing the plan's cover and layout, to Kurt Miller for all the photos (unless indicated otherwise) included in this plan, Mary McFarlane for providing the pedestrian crash statistics, and to the members of the internal WisDOT advisory committee: Pat Fleming, Marv Laspa, Mike Maierle, Mike O'Meara, and Joanne Pruitt-Thunder.

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

