

ADDISON WALK-BIKE ADVISORY COUNCIL

GOAL ONE:

IMPROVE ON-THE-GROUND CONDITIONS FOR WALKING AND BIKING

Issue

While Addison County possesses some of the most desirable locations and landscapes for biking and walking in Vermont, many Addison County roads, sidewalks, and trails are severely lacking with regard to infrastructure, safety and access for those walking and biking.

Goal

The goal of this subcommittee is to identify and prioritize those roads, intersections, and pathways (or gaps therein) that present the greatest risk or impediment to the walking and biking public; develop strategies for advancing targeted improvements in those locations; and at the same time, ensure that *all* transportation projects county-wide take advantage of every opportunity to improve physical conditions for walking and biking.

Specific Areas of Work

- **Regional transportation project technical review.** Review all transportation planning and construction projects that fall under the purview of the ACRPC at a sufficiently early stage in the process to allow for substantive changes. Provide specific suggestions for improvements to project design that will enhance walk-bike access and safety. Follow through on suggestions to ensure full consideration, and implementation wherever feasible.
- **Regional walk-bike planning guidance.** Support the ACRPC in periodic revision of walk-bike elements of the regional plan as well as related documents. Provide feedback on priorities and goals.
- **Gap analysis and goal identification.** Work with ACRPC, towns, and others to proactively identify and prioritize key gaps in walk and bike infrastructure. Work with Local Motion to create goal-specific pages on Local Motion's website for key gaps ([see this example from Shelburne](#)) so as to clarify for the public what improvements the Council feels are the highest priority and document community support for those improvements.
- **Municipal project technical assistance.** Provide on-demand review of local transportation projects and policy documents at the request of local officials or residents. Identify project improvements that enhance walk-bike access and safety. Document community support for municipal projects and ensure that residents have an opportunity to weigh in on them.

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GOAL TWO:

INCREASE PUBLIC OFFICIALS' KNOWLEDGE OF AND ENGAGEMENT IN WALK-BIKE ISSUES

Issue

While most local officials and municipal staff in Addison County are supportive of walking and biking, many need additional practical knowledge or technical expertise in order to effectively address walk-bike safety issues in a rural and village context.

Goal

The goal of this subcommittee is to integrate education and outreach resources and experiences into local decisionmaking and municipal practices. Committee members will provide outreach, networking and resources to municipal staff and working committees, road foremen and maintenance crews, law enforcement personnel, and others to support a shared understanding of the opportunities and constraints for improving walk-bike safety across Addison County.

Specific Areas of Work

- **Relationship Building with Law Enforcement and Local Road Foremen.** Meet with road foremen and law enforcement to better understand their responsibilities and the opportunities and constraints they face in the context of supporting walking and biking. Collaborate with them to identify best practices for Addison County towns that both improve conditions for vulnerable users and are practical to implement.
- **Town plan and local ordinance review.** Work with town planners, selectboards, and the ACRPC to review sections of town plans that have bearing on walking and biking and provide feedback on desired updates. Identify commonly needed updates to local ordinances (such as the provisions that were recently updated in Middlebury) and propose changes to selectboards.
- **Pop-up demonstration projects.** Identify opportunities to do short-term demonstrations of innovative walk-bike infrastructure. Work with towns, ACRPC, and Local Motion to design and build support for projects. Draw on Local Motion's pop-up demo project trailer for supplies and equipment. Learn lessons of successes and failures of other past demonstration projects that have occurred throughout the state.
- **Bike rides and tours for public officials.** Organize bike rides and tours designed to give public officials personal experience with the challenges (as well as the joys) of bike transportation. Focus on selectboard members, public works/highway staff, and law enforcement officers. Use tours to highlight both issues that need attention and existing high-quality walk-bike infrastructure.
- **Presentations to local decisionmakers.** Work with Local Motion and ACRPC to develop presentations on specific walk-bike topics of interest (for example, "how to make rural roads safer for biking"). Schedule and lead presentations for selectboards, planning commissions, and other entities with policy and leadership roles.
- **Trainings for local law enforcement.** Collaborate with police chiefs, the Vermont State Police, the Addison County state's attorney, Middlebury College public safety, and others to identify and pursue opportunities to offer training opportunities for the law enforcement community regarding walk-bike safety.

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GOAL THREE:

BUILD COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE OF AND RESPECT FOR EVERYDAY WALKING AND BIKING

Issue

While walking and biking for everyday transportation and recreation are regular activities for a substantial number of Addison County residents and visitors, there does not yet exist a consensus across the County that walking and bicycling are fully appropriate uses of public roads.

Goal

The goal of this subcommittee is to prompt a culture shift among Addison County residents towards mutual respect and trust among all users of Addison County's roads; acceptance of walking and biking as normal, everyday activities; and a fundamental concern for safety, particularly with regard to road users who are disproportionately likely to be hurt or killed in a crash.

Specific Areas of Work

- **Development of a walk-bike “identity” for Addison County.** Work with a wide range of partners—businesses, nonprofits, local governments, and community leaders—to create a campaign to shift Addison County's self-perception to that of a community where walking and biking are a normal part of everyday life and a core element of the community's identity. Consider modeling on and learning from successful efforts that made Addison County into a place that identifies with local food, renewable energy, and so on.
- **Local and regional messaging campaigns.** Develop new or adapt existing on-the-ground campaigns to promote safe walking, biking, and driving and normalize walking and biking as regular, everyday activities. Consider using Local Motion's various campaigns—sidewalk safety messages, “rides a bike” lawn signs, and others—as a starting point. Work with local leaders on a town-by-town basis to ensure community ownership of campaigns.
- **Outreach to “opinion-shaping” groups.** Engage directly with populations that—by virtue of their behavior or their stature in the community—shape public dialogue about walking and biking. These could include Middlebury College students, bike tour companies and their customers, commercial drivers, people dropping off kids at school, staff at retirement communities and senior centers, staff at career centers, high school coaches and physical education teachers, and driver educators, among others. Consider using Local Motion's brochure or adapted Addison County version thereof to provide clear and consistent information about rules of the road for all modes.

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GOAL FOUR:

INCREASE RATES OF WALKING AND BIKING ACROSS ALL AGES, ABILITIES, AND COMMUNITIES

Issue

While walking and biking are broadly recognized as healthful, enjoyable, and environmentally sustainable activities, not all Addison County residents are taking full advantage of the many opportunities to walk or bike that the region offers.

Goal

The goal of this subcommittee is to expand the population of people who walk or bike regularly through targeted education and encouragement; to promote the joy of walking and biking in communities across Addison County; to address concerns about walk-bike safety and gaps in knowledge about opportunities to walk and bike; and to identify and monitor performance measures that track progress towards a greater quantity and diversity of people walking and biking in Addison County.

Specific Areas of Work

- **Everyday Bicycling Project workshops.** Work with Local Motion to identify partners and opportunities for offering workshops in community centers (i.e., libraries), schools, and workplaces across Addison County, with a focus on three types of workshops: Getting Into Bicycling, Building Street Skills, and Basic Bike Mechanics.
- **Safe Routes.** Support the development of Safe Routes programs in communities throughout Addison County. Promote bike trains, walking school buses, and other strategies that get more people walking and biking.
- **Walking and Biking incentives.** Identify opportunities for collaboration with local businesses and organizations to organize promotions that highlight and incentivize walking and biking, such as a “bike passport” program where people visit sites by (foot or) bike, get a card stamped, and win prizes.
- **Bike racks.** Identify locations where bike racks are needed to support bike transportation and encourage their installation. Advise businesses, municipalities, and other entities on selection, siting, and installation of bike racks.
- **Maps and related resources.** Distribute existing maps of preferred walking and biking routes. Identify needs for new maps and work with Local Motion, ACRPC, MALT, and Municipal Conservation and Recreation Departments and/or Committees to develop them.