

Chapter 7. Education, Encouragement and Enforcement

Achieving the goal of creating a coordinated and safe walking environment can not be obtained without informing and enforcing pedestrian activities. The “Three E’s” of pedestrian activity – Education, Encouragement, and Enforcement – are important supports to capital improvements. Educating people about safe walking habits, enforcing laws for both pedestrian and driver, and encouraging walking as a mode of transportation are important in the Winston-Salem Urban Area MPO. The implementation and phasing of all programs and policy changes in this chapter are based on a tentative five-year schedule, gauged on existing and anticipated revenue.

7.1 Education

Education needs to be targeted at particular age groups and audiences: school-age children, teens, college students, adults, senior adults; government staff for pedestrian transportation issues; and motorists for awareness of pedestrian issues.

Many do not understand what “*walk*” and blinking or steady “*don’t walk*” signals mean. Many motorists do not know that the law requires that they yield to pedestrians in marked crosswalks whether traveling in a straight line or turning at a corner. Many parents do not know how to effectively teach their children street and sidewalk safety. Substantial numbers of people who know the laws fail to follow them consistently.

Different education programs have been tried throughout the United States with varying degrees of success. School-based programs have the most impact on pedestrian education. This can include things from walk zones and walkability audits to instructional modules for the classrooms. Another successful program is geared

toward seniors. This program includes information regarding crossing precautions and pedestrian safety.

Recommendations

- ❖ Disseminate information about the rules of the road for drivers and safety tips for pedestrians through: school, school crossing guards, parent education programs, police, elder services, driver education classes, taxi companies, transportation centers, and public service announcements
- ❖ Encourage people to report unsafe conditions for walkers through a website and telephone number. The response to callers should include information about whether or not the problem can be fixed immediately.
- ❖ Work with the Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure that motor vehicle laws regarding bicyclists and pedestrians are emphasized in driver education materials and driver tests.

7.2 Encouragement

Encouragement programs can take many different forms and can be directed to varied audiences such as walkers, motorists, employers and developers. It is in the interests of the people who live and work in Winston-Salem Urban Area MPO that more people walk. There are many things the MPO can do to promote walking.

Throughout the MPO there are already many programs in place that encourage walking, both as a mode of transportation and as a source of exercise. One example: Forsyth County offers a six-week walking program, *Step up Forsyth!*, during the fall each year that encourages walking for exercise and offers incentives for the most miles walked. Other facilities that offer walk-for-health programs include the YMCA, the City of Winston-Salem and Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, just to name a few.

Recommendations

- ❖ Publish and distribute a Winston-Salem walking guide, covering a variety of pedestrian issues. Include suggested walking routes, walking safety tips, and pedestrian rights and responsibilities.
- ❖ Find and publicize prominent Winston-Salem Urban Area MPO walkers.
- ❖ Promote neighborhood walks, neighborhood cleanups, historical walks, nature walks, arts walks, and greenway walks.
- ❖ Create a special marked pedestrian route for tourists.
- ❖ Make walking promotion a more prominent part of the City's exercise program for City staff.
- ❖ Promote the idea that walking is pleasant in almost all weather conditions if you are dressed for it.
- ❖ Organize a walk to work week.
- ❖ Continue to work with local schools and the Department of Public Works to promote walking to school.

Education and encouragement are essential to the success of a pedestrian system. Building trails, sidewalks and other facilities is important, but the bottom line is getting the public to safely use the facilities by demonstrating that pedestrian transportation provides real benefits and by teaching safe user skills. Strong efforts aimed at encouraging changes in travel behavior, and educating system users about basic safety and traffic laws, need to be made regularly to have an effect and create mutual respect among all roadway users. Successfully raising public and government awareness about the importance of pedestrian transportation, as well as how to best implement regional and local networks and safely use them, will rely upon ongoing collaboration between citizen interest groups and government agencies.



Figure 29: Forsyth County
BeHealthy Coalition

7.3 Enforcement

The engineering staff and police department are charged with many responsibilities for keeping citizens in the MPO safe, as well as participating in various community-based programs like the local CRIMESTOPPERS and Neighborhood Watch groups.

When motorists break traffic laws, they endanger pedestrians and add to an atmosphere that inhibits people from walking and allowing their children the freedom to explore their neighborhoods. Among the most dangerous motorist infractions are failing to yield for pedestrians in crosswalks, speeding, going through red traffic signals, speeding up rather than slowing down at intersections, failing to stop at stop signs, and parking too close to corners.

Errant bicyclists, especially unlighted bicyclists and those who ride in the wrong direction or go through red traffic signals or stop signs, also present a danger to pedestrians as well as to themselves.

Another difficult issue for pedestrians is bicycles on sidewalks. The sidewalk is an appropriate place for children to ride; adults are generally safer on the street. Bicycle riding is banned on sidewalks in the Central Business District. If they ride on sidewalk elsewhere, cyclists must proceed at no faster than a normal walking speed, always yield to pedestrians, and give an audible warning when passing.

Long waits at some intersections may encourage pedestrians to jaywalk. The very short times for walk signals in the MPO (at most intersections, 7 seconds or less out of an 85 to 90 second signal cycle), may foster a tendency to disregard the signals there.

There are many opportunities for enforcement throughout the MPO. Enforcement can be passive with more of an educational emphasis, such as passing out informational

flyers to pedestrians who are caught jaywalking or disobeying traffic laws. Or enforcement can be active such as with sting enforcement, a rotating program of targeting intersections or crossings for intensive enforcement for one or more days.

Recommendations

- ❖ Increase enforcement of traffic laws to discourage speeding-especially in school zones, running red lights and stop signs, and parking too close to an intersection.
- ❖ Investigate devices that could assist in law enforcement, e.g., the use of cameras at intersections to film cars disobeying traffic signals.
- ❖ Continue the MPO's bicycle facilities program to make the streets safer for bicyclists by incorporating bicycle lanes and other improvements into street reconstruction projects.
- ❖ Work to change traffic laws that now require motorists and cyclists to yield to pedestrians to instead require that motorists and vehicles stop for pedestrians.
- ❖ Conduct a campaign to inform pedestrians that obeying the law is important for their own safety.

Greater enforcement of existing traffic laws is necessary to improve the mutual respect between motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Such stepped up enforcement is needed to change the behavior of bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists who sometimes flagrantly and dangerously ignore traffic regulations, creating unsafe conditions for all parties. Implementation of all these efforts will require highly collaborative participation among many diverse interests including transportation agencies, public health districts, law enforcement agencies, non-profit advocacy groups, schools, tourist and visitor bureaus, regional employers, public healthcare providers and others.



Figure 30: Blocking sidewalk