

New Visions 2050 Bicycle & Pedestrian White Paper Summary

The Bicycle and Pedestrian White Paper is also referred to as the “Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan.” This document reviews the status of the New Visions 2040 performance measures and goals, outlines the region’s accomplishments and complete tasks that have contributed to those goals, and reviews local and national bicycle and pedestrian planning trends. Major themes throughout the paper include how technology has shaped and changed the transportation system, planning concepts for emerging technologies, how walking and bicycling play a role in climate policy and importance of equity and accessibility in the transportation system. Below are the action items recommended to implement the plan. A review of the draft white paper will also find a funding plan and evaluation of how four different future scenarios could impact performance measures, such as safety, health, and capital available for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects.

The New Visions planning and investment principle regarding bicycle and pedestrian transportation was amended as follows:

Encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel and recognize walking and bicycling as socially, economically, and environmentally responsible and healthy approaches to improving the performance of our transportation system. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements will be considered from the perspective of developing a system and not just based on whether a particular facility is currently used. A regional system of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and multi-use trails will encourage safe bicycle and pedestrian use.

Recommended Action Items:

1. **Develop a robust bicycle and pedestrian data collection program.** A comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian use database can provide accurate data for key stakeholders to communicate the value of walking and bicycling facilities to the public, pursue competitive funding opportunities, and promote walking and bicycling as viable modes of transportation. This data may also be used to identify vulnerable assets, develop ADA Transition Plans, locate gaps and barriers in the overall network, communicate relevant safety information, tailor public outreach efforts to communities, and create route maps and mapping tools.
2. **Measure the economic value of walking and bicycling infrastructure.** Information on infrastructure costs and the return on investment in bicycle and pedestrian facilities are also lacking. Collecting and compiling accurate and up-to-date cost data for specific design elements can help municipalities put together better project proposals and budgets.
3. **Plan to be Automated Vehicle (AV) Ready.** As AVs are the most anticipated transportation technology of the 21st century, Complete Streets and other bicycle and pedestrian design policies must adapt to include provisions for autonomous mobility that prioritize the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. An AV-Ready Capital Region is a human-focused autonomous future.
4. **Implement a regional trail network.** The Capital District Trails Plan proposes 200 miles of new trails to be built to achieve a regional, connected network. The Capital District Trails Plan provides the information and tools to any municipality or grassroots organization interested in taking responsibility for marketing and shepherding the plan

through implementation. CDTC should encourage the development of trail maintenance plans as part of any new trail construction project as well as existing regionally-significant trails.

5. **Explore integrating Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) into the metropolitan planning process.** HIAs are tools that can help communities, decision makers, and practitioners make choices that improve public health through community design and minimize adverse health impacts. The tool allows MPOs to advance transportation projects that address public health priorities, like obesity and other chronic illness.
6. **Leverage emerging technology to promote walking and bicycling as transportation.** As vehicle and other transportation technologies come to market, CDTC should evaluate their viability and applicability in the Capital District. Technologies like mobility services, smartphone applications, and automated counting tools, should be used strategically to achieve New Visions goals. Examples of how CDTC might use these technologies include developing app-based trail maps and/or delivering bike/ped traveling information in real-time to commuters (ex. 511NY).
7. **Cultivate partnerships in the Capital District.** CDTC should continue to support the BPAC and include more organizations in order to continue to pursue New Visions goals, particularly in terms of equity, accessibility, and safety.
8. **Provide training, educational opportunities, tools, and resources specifically on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure design to local planners and engineers.** Continued support for webinars and training that provide continuing education credits for planners and engineers will encourage municipalities and local practitioners to adopt New Visions principles. CDTC should also develop tools and resources that assist municipalities and local practitioners in developing transportation plans that are consistent with New Visions goals. Similarly, resources that promote bicycle and pedestrian safety and cultivate a culture of empathy for all road users must be disseminated and communicated to the public.

The primary indicator of a bicycle and pedestrian network that connects people to jobs and opportunities, is safe, and efficient, is the number of individuals who choose to walk or bike, especially for commuting. Mode share for walking and bicycling will be the primary indicator to evaluate the progress and condition of the network of walking and bicycling infrastructure in the Capital District. CDTC will supplement NHTS and Census data with local pedestrian and bicycling counts on trails, intersections, and other important routes.

New Visions 2050 Bicycle and Pedestrian Performance Measures:

Measure	Date Source
Crashes involving bicyclists & pedestrians	ALIS
*Mode share - rate of bicycling and walking	NHTS, Census, CDTC
Rates of cardiovascular disease, obesity & chronic illness related to inactivity	NYSDOH
Miles of trail constructed	CDTC GIS
Percent of TIP dollars for bike/ped projects	CDTC TIP
Miles of protected bike lanes	CDTC GIS

**Primary performance measure*