



**Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center**

## **The Role of Law Enforcement in Supporting Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety: An Idea Book**



*DRAFT*

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### About the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center

Since its inception in 1999, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center's mission has been to improve the quality of life in communities through the increase of safe walking and bicycling as a viable means of transportation and physical activity. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center is maintained by the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

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### Front Cover Image

Image: Law enforcement officers participate in hands-on exercises about bicycle safety;  
Credit: Laura Sandt, PBIC

## INTRODUCTION

Having safe and secure places to walk and bike is vital in supporting active, vibrant communities. Planning, engineering, and public works departments commonly have the responsibility to design and maintain facilities to ensure the safety of road users. Depending on how roadways are designed, they can also encourage or discourage safe and correct use of facilities to support safety. Law enforcement agencies also have a role to play in supporting and reinforcing safety among all road users.

Law enforcement officers bring unique strengths to pedestrian and bicycle injury prevention programs. As first responders to a crash they often witness the safety problems experienced by pedestrians and bicyclists. On patrol, they learn from their community and fellow citizens and are valuable sources of information and contacts. Law enforcement officers can also be influential in shaping policies to support pedestrian and bicycle safety, comfort, and mobility. Several studies conducted to date have shown how law enforcement, coupled with public engagement and improvements to the built environment, can improve safety-related behaviors, which may lead to crash reductions.<sup>1</sup>

Given the above, more communities are looking for ways to leverage the strengths of law enforcement in plans to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety. This document is intended to serve as an “idea book” to share programs and practices developing in different communities and their outcomes or impacts. In this compilation, community profiles are predominantly pulled from a North Carolina initiative—the Watch for Me NC program—which is the only statewide pedestrian and bicycle enforcement and outreach program in the United States to reach beyond five years of continual operation and evaluation. As other comprehensive and well-documented programs emerge, we intend to expand this compilation to include other states and cities.

Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), North Carolina’s Department of Transportation (NCDOT), and NC’s Governors Highway Safety Program (GHSP), the Watch for Me NC program aims to reduce pedestrian and bicycle injuries and deaths through a comprehensive, targeted approach of public education and law enforcement in partnership with local communities across the state. The program has been in place since 2012 and currently includes more than 55 law enforcement agencies from 25 communities across North Carolina.



Photo: Bike to School Day;  
Credit: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Mike Cynecki](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Mike_Cynecki)

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<sup>1</sup> Sandt et al., 2015, Van Houten et al., 2013, Goodwin et al., 2013, Zegeer et al., 2008, Van Houten & Malenfant, 2004.

The following case studies document the efforts of eight diverse communities that have been particularly active in the Watch for Me NC program and evaluation efforts. The community profiles demonstrate that although each community responded to unique safety challenges and opportunities with a different approach, some unifying themes emerge as applicable to any law enforcement agency:

- **Establish or strengthen partnerships:** Officers need reinforcement and support from the advocacy community, other municipal or regional departments, and the courts that process the citations. This can be initiated by engaging and collaborating with a wide range of partners early in the process to develop goals and plans, recruit help, and involve the greater community, including bicycle advocates or enthusiasts, local businesses, the media, and the legal community.
- **Take a balanced approach:** All road users have a role in keeping pedestrians and bicyclists—among the most vulnerable road users—safe. Enforcement efforts should aim to engage everyone rather than simply target one group. Taking a balanced approach also means using more than one approach, rather than just relying on tickets. As these case studies show, community outreach efforts, helmet giveaways, bike rodeos, “Good Ticket” programs, progressive warnings, distributing bike lights in lieu of citations, ticketing to dangerous offenders, and other approaches can be used in an effective enforcement program.
- **Play the long game:** Law enforcement is a long term investment. As communities and roadway environments change, there is a need to regularly monitor safety behaviors and issues to see sustained safety improvements. Building pedestrian and bicycle safety goals, performance measures, and law enforcement activities into state plans, local agency strategic enforcement plans, and pedestrian, bicycle, or other transportation plans and policies can sustain momentum. This will also ensure coordination with other efforts as part of a comprehensive approach.



Photo: Bike to School Day;

Credit: Credit: [www.pedbikeimages.org/](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/)Mike Cynecki

Read on to learn how these eight communities formed partnerships, implemented education and enforcement activities, and the outcomes and lessons they experienced. You can find additional resources at [www.pedbikeinfo.org/enforcement](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/enforcement). A webinar, presented in March 2017, also highlights many community enforcement best practices, from the Watch for Me NC program as well as efforts underway in New York and Florida. An archive and slide materials can be found here: [http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/training/webinars\\_PBIC\\_LC\\_031417.cfm](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/training/webinars_PBIC_LC_031417.cfm).

# A Coastal Community's Take on Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety



## Dare County, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2014
- Population: 35,000
- Lead agency: Kill Devil Hills Police Department
- Setting: Small Town

Photo: Dare County deputies ride bikes during education and enforcement campaign; Credit: Todd Corillo, WTKR

## Background

Dare County is located on North Carolina's Outer Banks and is the easternmost county in the state. Pedestrian and bicycle transportation is common among the individual towns, not only as a mode of commuting, but also as a way to explore the natural environment and enjoy the mild weather. Between 1997 and 2012, there were a total of 230 vehicle collisions involving bicycles in Dare County. Over 50 percent of these crashes resulted from a vehicle failing to yield. In the same time period, there were 195 traffic collisions involving pedestrians. Seventy percent of these occurred at midblock locations. These trends demonstrated a need for education and enforcement of both driver and nonmotorized road user behavior.

## Partnerships

Watch for Me NC activities are managed by the Kill Devil Hills Police Department, but several different agencies participated in various education and enforcement initiatives throughout the program. In addition to Dare County and the Dare County Sheriff's Office, several municipalities participated, including Duck, Kill Devil Hills, Kitty Hawk, Nags Head, and Southern Shores. Within these municipalities, the planning departments, sheriff's offices, fire departments, local schools, police departments, and area hospitals have all contributed to different Watch for Me NC activities.

## Education and Enforcement Activities

Watch for Me NC partners in Dare County participated in a number of education activities to engage local students, parents, and children. Partners provided crosswalk and bicycle safety presentations, distributed materials at various special events including school open houses, and conducted outreach

through activities for young children. Each activity engaged different residents within the greater community.

Dare County conducts enforcement operations a couple of times of year, usually in the summer tourist season. During enforcement operations, law enforcement focuses on educating all road users and giving warnings or citations to road users demonstrating dangerous behavior.

### **Key Outcomes**

The Watch for Me NC program has had a profound impact on Dare County's local police departments. Officer Sarah McDowell of Kill Devil Hills says there was an early assumption that all officers were very familiar with traffic regulations for bicyclists and pedestrians. This assumption was inaccurate. Now, as a result of Watch for Me NC, the officers are better educated and have more clarity on bicycle and pedestrian rules and regulations. Officer McDowell attributes the success of this program to encouragement and reinforcement from the municipal police chief, who is "100 percent supportive," as a key to sustaining the momentum of the initiative.

Watch for Me NC has also generated interest in safety among many local residents, especially those walking or bicycling for fitness or recreation. In the future, the Watch for Me NC program in Dare County hopes to better connect with organizations that align with these residents, such as the Outer Banks Pedestrian and Bike Safety Coalition.

### **Lessons Learned**

During the peak tourist season, many Dare County businesses hire seasonal international employees. To better address this community diversity, Dare County is building relationships with large local employers, such as grocery stores. Additionally, since the area experiences vastly different travel patterns throughout the year, plans have been made to implement specific activities for tourists while not disregarding the importance of engaging locals.

Moving forward, Dare County Watch for Me NC partners hope to implement an evaluation method for education and enforcement activities to track their efforts and progress toward achieving goals.

### **Credit**

Thank you to Officer Sarah McDowell with the Kill Devil Hills Police Department for providing leadership, time, and expertise that contributed to the Watch for Me NC Campaign in Kill Devil Hills and the information in this profile.

# Engaging an Active Mountain Community in Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Efforts



## Asheville, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2015
- Population: 87,000
- Lead agency: Asheville Department of Transportation (Asheville DOT)
- Setting: Urban

Photo: Pedestrians safely cross the street at a marked crosswalk;  
Credit: Asheville City Source, Ashevilleenc.gov

## Background

Asheville is a city nestled in the Appalachian Mountains with a growing population and a strong tourism industry. It is also home to the University of North Carolina at Asheville (UNC Asheville) and approximately 4,000 students. More than five percent of trips to work are made either on foot or by bicycle, which is well above the state average. This active commuting coupled with the large number of tourists who explore the city on foot or on two wheels make it easy to see why pedestrian and bicyclist safety are important issues for Asheville.

## Partnerships

Asheville's Department of Transportation is the lead agency in the city's Watch for Me NC campaign, but they have an array of local partners in the areas of law enforcement, education, local government, public health, and cycling advocacy. These partners include: the City of Asheville and UNC Asheville police departments; several schools, including Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College and Asheville City Schools; local Active Routes to Schools programs; the Buncombe County District Attorney; local healthcare provider Mountain Area Health Education Center; and several bicycle advocacy groups, including the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club, Asheville on Bikes, and Western NC Bicycle Dealer's Association.

## Education and Enforcement Activities

Asheville launched the Watch for Me NC campaign in conjunction with a popular "National Night Out" event. Asheville's Watch for Me NC partners issued press releases about the program through various social media channels, and distributed hundreds of campaign materials, including brochures, rack cards,

bumper stickers, and bike lights, and more at community events. Finally, to engage the public more broadly, the city created its own [educational video](#) about the program which can be found on [YouTube](#).<sup>2</sup>

More than 10 enforcement operations occur in Asheville each year, either conducted by UNC Asheville police or City of Asheville police. Operations focus on verbal warnings to drivers for dangerous driving and failure to yield to pedestrians or bicyclists. Verbal warnings are given to pedestrians for improper crossings. Asheville also extensively distributes educational brochures and safety materials such as bike lights during enforcement operations. Most operations occur between August and October, which coincides with the peak tourist season and the beginning of UNC Asheville classes.

### **Key Outcomes**

Asheville reported a substantial reduction in pedestrian crashes since the beginning of the Watch for Me NC campaign. Staff documented a citywide 27 percent reduction in pedestrian- and bicycle-related crashes relative to the same average time period from 2010 to 2014.<sup>3</sup> In Asheville, Watch for Me NC is part of a broader set of initiatives to improve safety for all road users. This may impact the observed safety improvements.

### **Lessons Learned**

A key lesson learned is the importance of proactively shaping the story before conducting enforcement by engaging the public and the media. Asheville faced some negative press coverage during the initial stages of the program due to a misunderstanding that police were targeting pedestrians for jaywalking. Thus, press releases before enforcement, and outreach to key stakeholders such as the advocacy community, may help Watch for Me NC partners avoid misconceptions about the aims of enforcement.

In the future, the city plans to communicate with pedestrian advocates to foster a better understanding of program objectives to address all road users, including motorists and cyclists, and not to solely target pedestrians. Additionally, Asheville intends to establish more partnerships before expanding the program.

### **Credit**

Thanks to Barb Mee, Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator for the Asheville DOT and Officer Meg Pigman of the Asheville Police Department for providing leadership, time, and expertise that contributed to the Watch for Me NC Campaign in Asheville and the information in this profile.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmWwzXYjlvk>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.asheville.com/news/2016/01/ashevilles-pedestrian-bicycle-crashes-lower-citys-watch-campaign/>

# Education and Enforcement in North Carolina's Largest Urban Center



## Charlotte, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2015
- Population: 792,000
- Lead agency: Charlotte Department of Transportation
- Setting: Urban

Photo: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department hold press conference about Watch for Me NC; Credit: Rachel Stone, Charlotte Observer

## Background

Charlotte is the largest city in North Carolina and a regional economic hub. Drivers from many neighboring communities commute into Charlotte where motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians interact. Since joining Watch for Me NC, the City of Charlotte and its partners have engaged in a variety of enforcement, public outreach, and education events to improve safety for all road users.

## Partnerships

Charlotte attributes much of its success with the Watch for Me NC program to the strong and supportive partnerships it has built. Included among its numerous partners are the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, the Charlotte Area Transit System, the city's two major hospitals, AARP, Charlotte City Center Partners, and the Mecklenburg County Health Department, which operates the Safe Routes to School program. The city has used the network of its partners to expand community outreach. Partners have also taken an active role in a variety of ways, such as making their own media appearances.

## Education and Enforcement Activities

The city and its partners try to reach as many community members as possible through a wide range of outreach and education efforts. The city has held several press conferences, aired public service announcements (PSAs) on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government TV channel, placed informational inserts in utility bills, and provided radio and TV interviews in both English and Spanish. Charlotte also maintains an active social media presence on Facebook and Twitter in addition to its [website](http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/PedBike/Pages/Watch-for-Me-NC.aspx).<sup>4</sup>

Education activities include safety demonstrations with media coverage and providing Watch for Me NC campaign materials at special events and other activity hubs such as schools, libraries, apartment

<sup>4</sup> <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/PedBike/Pages/Watch-for-Me-NC.aspx>

complexes, and parks. A number of street festivals take place in Charlotte each year. Charlotte uses these opportunities to distribute Watch for Me NC information to large crowds. Diverse segments of the public are also targeted via neighborhood meetings, parent classes at child care centers, Boy Scouts events at the Police & Fire Training Academy, and Learn to Ride classes. Charlotte has reached out to residents at the Levine Senior Center, multiple apartment complexes, the YMCA, and sporting events.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department typically conducts crosswalk enforcement operations involving several officers every few months. Enforcement events entail written warnings and citations to drivers for unsafe driving, such as failure to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department also gives written warnings to pedestrians for improper crossings.

### **Key Outcomes**

Due to the outreach efforts of Watch for Me NC partners throughout Charlotte, numerous residents from a wide range of backgrounds and age groups received safety messages in a variety of ways. These community engagement strategies have contributed to the sense that Charlotte residents have a greater awareness of road user safety issues than they did before the city's participation with Watch for Me NC. Further, the Charlotte Department of Transportation has installed "turning vehicles yield to pedestrians" street signs in places with high turning crash rates to augment program messaging and increase safety. Charlotte plans to grow the program by building on its existing framework and adding Watch for Me NC language into policy documents.

### **Lessons Learned**

Partnerships are critical to effectively implementing the Watch for Me NC program in Charlotte. It has been especially helpful to partner with organizations whose missions are related to injury prevention, such as Safe Routes to School, Safe Kids/Safe Communities, and area hospitals.

### **Credit**

Thanks to Joe Mangum for providing leadership, time, and expertise that contributed to the Watch for Me NC Campaign in Charlotte and the information in this profile.

# Town-Gown Partnerships for Safety in North Carolina's Piedmont Region



## Greenville, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2014
- Population: 90,000
- Lead agency: Greenville Police Department
- Setting: Urban

Photo: Example of Greenville Police Department's 'ticket' for good crosswalk behavior; Credit: Mackenzie Roberts, WITN

## Background

Greenville is home to about 90,000 residents, and is the 10th largest city in North Carolina.

The city recently experienced significant growth as the population increased by 23,000 over the last 10 years. Greenville is home to several pedestrian and bicyclist attractions, most notably East Carolina University (ECU). ECU enrolls about 27,000 students and employs about 5,600 academic and professional staff.

Greenville's most heavily trafficked roads are near ECU. As home to the city's largest bicyclist and pedestrian population, the university has been the location of many traffic conflicts. Greenville also experienced a recent increase in crashes with a large portion of victims aged 20-24. Through Watch for Me NC, Greenville seeks to improve safety and accessibility around ECU and near the second largest employer, Vidant Medical Center.

## Partnerships

The Greenville Police Department is the lead agency for Watch for Me NC. The police department has partnered extensively with other organizations including the sheriff, district attorney, local schools and universities, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission, Safe Kids, emergency medical services, and Safe Communities. ECU has been one of the most important partners. ECU's involvement has allowed the Watch for Me NC program to use home football games as opportunities to reach large crowds. Sergeant Michael Montanye notes, "Without them on board, [Watch for Me NC] wouldn't have been nearly as successful."

## Education and Enforcement Activities

Greenville sees Watch for Me NC as an important component of their community outreach and views it as ongoing programming. Community support for Watch for Me NC efforts are growing and the Greenville Police Department believes that there have been positive effects in the targeted areas. Greenville's Watch

for Me NC program recently transitioned to a data-driven approach in which the police department collaborates with traffic engineers to review crash incidents and make built environment changes in higher-risk areas.

Greenville's Watch for Me NC partners have worked hard to distribute campaign materials at a variety of community events such as Safe Routes to School and Safe Communities events, National Walk to School Day, Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission meetings, local bike rides, bike rodeos, and National Family Volunteer Day. At the National Family Volunteer Day, 50 gently used bikes were distributed and police were on hand to teach the rules of the road and to distribute bike lights.

These education and outreach events are complemented by about ten enforcement events each year. Greenville's enforcement operations are focused on intersections and roadways with both high numbers of crashes and high bicyclist and pedestrian volumes. During operations, police issue written warnings and distribute informational brochures. Greenville also has a "Good Ticket" initiative, where the police department distributes 'tickets' to pedestrians who properly use the crosswalks. The tickets include information about Watch for Me NC with Twitter and Facebook links, the local business sponsor's logo, and a coupon. Officers embossed the tickets so they could not be duplicated.

### **Key Outcomes**

The Greenville community, at large, has responded positively to the Watch for Me NC campaign. Greenville Police Department Lieutenant Michael Montanye stated, "This is something we have needed for a long time." Greenville's Watch for Me NC partners recognize the importance of these activities, and plan to continue working on bicycle and pedestrian safety. Montanye adds, "We can't take a year off, because we always have bike/ped safety issues to address."

### **Lessons Learned**

Greenville used many strategies to engage a wider cross-section of their population. In addition to its enforcement and education activities, the city aired radio announcements, created videos and circulated them using social media, developed more tailored posters to distribute with local businesses, and hung banners throughout the area, using all available resources and marketing options to reach the community.

The Greenville Police Department received greater support and encouragement from the community when they conducted education activities prior to enforcement actions. These education events preceded enforcement actions and instructed residents about proper behavior prior to penalizing them for infractions.

### **Credit**

Thank you to Lieutenant Michael Montanye with the Greenville Police Department for providing leadership, time, and expertise that contributed to the Watch for Me NC Campaign in Greenville and the information in this profile.

# A Long-term Commitment to Enforcement and Community Outreach in a Bicycle- and Pedestrian-Friendly Town



Carrboro, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2012
- Population: 20,000
- Lead agency: Carrboro Planning Department
- Setting: Small Town

Photo: Carrboro Police Department talks with school children; Credit: Carrboro Police Department

## Background

Carrboro is a town of 20,000 and is directly adjacent to Chapel Hill. Many University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill) students, faculty, and staff live in Carrboro and travel to the university by bike, transit, or on foot. The town has the highest bicycle mode share in the state at approximately 4 percent and is, to date, the only League of American Bicyclists Bike-Friendly Community in North Carolina with a silver designation. These accolades demonstrate Carrboro's commitment to the safety and accessibility of nonmotorized transportation. Regardless, the town acknowledges that ensuring bicycle and pedestrian safety continues to be a challenge.

## Partnerships

The Carrboro Planning Department works closely with several partners to implement the Watch for Me NC program. The Carrboro Police Department is very active in implementing the program through enforcement and education activities. Other partners include local nonprofits such as the Carrboro Bicycle Coalition and the ReCYCLery. These partners contribute volunteers to events and incorporate Watch for Me NC materials in their independent initiatives.

## Education and Enforcement Activities

Since the program first began as a pilot project, the Town of Carrboro has been actively engaged with Watch for Me NC in a variety of ways. The Carrboro Police Department hosts a handful of events, such as Coffee with a Cop, Neighborhood Night Out, and Pizza with the Police, where Watch for Me NC materials are on hand and officers engage with the community in discussions about pedestrian and bicycle safety issues. The police department also hosts multiple Neighborhood Forums, a Citizen's Police Academy, and provides Watch for Me NC resources to the local branch of Safe Kids, which uses the materials when interacting with schools, parents, and injury prevention groups. Carrboro uses its website and social media, such as Facebook, to conduct outreach about events and share safe road behavior practices.

Carrboro's social media messaging often includes #WatchforMeNC, which helps highlight the connection between singular enforcement operations and the statewide Watch for Me NC program. Additional outreach initiatives include distributing materials at special events, crossing guard training sessions, and several targeted bike light giveaways where bike lights are distributed and installed in lieu of citations for violation of the state statute requiring lighting equipment when bicycling at night. The Carrboro Bicycle Coalition has also worked to distribute bike lights through their Lighten Up campaign.

As part of the Watch for Me NC program, Carrboro typically conducts about a dozen enforcement operations annually. Carrboro focuses its enforcement and education efforts on all road users through crosswalk yielding enforcement and outreach to bicyclists about the importance of riding with lights at night.

### **Key Outcomes**

The key to Carrboro's success with Watch for Me NC is the institutionalization of enforcement. Since 2009, the town has conducted enforcement regularly each month, year-round, and has been involved in community outreach and engagement. This consistent enforcement holds drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians accountable for their behavior on a regular basis, and integrates safe road use as the cultural norm.

Since launching the Watch for Me NC program, Carrboro has also improved its municipal ordinances related to bicycling. In 2014, amendments to the Town Code<sup>5</sup> endorsed by bicycling advocates were passed that relate to riding abreast and rider spacing on roadways.

### **Lessons Learned**

In addition to enforcement actions, Carrboro uses the Watch for Me NC program to identify safe cycling behavior and acknowledge good behavior. For example, bicyclists riding safely have received "good cyclist vouchers" to a local ice cream shop.

The Carrboro Police Department conducts enforcement activities at several different sites and rotates locations. The diversity of sites helps raise awareness about safe driving and nonmotorized behavior across the entire community and avoids the criticism that specific places are targeted excessively.

### **Credit**

Thank you to Sergeant Billy Austin with the Carrboro Police Department, Bergen Waterson and Tina Moon with the Carrboro Planning Department, for providing leadership, time, and expertise that contributed to the Watch for Me NC Campaign in Carrboro and the information in this profile.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.townofcarrboro.org/DocumentCenter/View/102>

## A Population-Level Approach in the Bull City



Durham, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2012
- Population: 245,000
- Lead agency: Durham Transportation Department
- Setting: Urban

Photo: Sergeant Brian Massengill helps an event attendee choose a bike helmet; Credit: Durham Police Department

### Background

As part of the North Carolina Research Triangle region, Durham is home to 9,500 students and employees at North Carolina Central University (NCCU) and 50,000 students and employees at Duke University and Duke University Health System. The Durham Comprehensive Plan includes a statement on Complete Streets, and the Watch for Me NC program's efforts complement this commitment to infrastructure for nonmotorized travel modes.

### Partnerships

The Durham Transportation Department has developed meaningful partnerships with a variety of local agencies. Watch for Me NC works with NCCU, Duke University, Durham Police Department (DPD), Bike Durham, Durham Bicycle Coop, and the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC-MPO). The Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission and Duke University have been particularly beneficial partners. Active in the Partnership for a Healthy Durham, staff from Duke liaises with Safe Routes to School programs and worked to involve health organizations in the initiative.

### Education and Enforcement Activities Conducted

Durham has been able to take advantage of several opportunities to share the Watch for Me NC message. Materials were distributed at Bike-a-Bull City, Bull City Play Streets and Tour de Fat events, to name a few. The city ensured that Watch for Me NC had visibility in number of places including neighborhood meetings, schools, libraries, local bicycle shops, and City Hall. Watch for Me NC also partnered with Bike Durham to conduct safety training for taxi, bus, and paratransit drivers. Three foot by eight foot banners were set up along several corridors where there have been pedestrian and bicycle collisions.

Durham Bicycle Co-op and the DPD collaborated to hand out Watch for Me NC bike lights. Additional regular enforcement activities have focused on areas around schools and crosswalks, with the aid of Watch for Me NC handouts. Officers have participated in Walk to School Days at several schools.

### **Key Outcomes**

An improved relationship between area planners and the DPD has been one of the most valuable outcomes of Watch for Me NC in Durham. The relationship between the Transportation Department and DPD has been open and communicative, and the police department has been receiving positive feedback from its enforcement actions. DPD has incorporated the Watch for Me NC program into practice and places a new emphasis on traffic enforcement to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. The city is hoping to implement a Vision Zero program and they view Watch for Me NC as an important tool in their safety toolbox.

### **Lessons Learned**

One of the key lessons learned was the need to develop to tailor enforcement and education activities to meet the needs of the specific site. In addition to the need for a context-sensitive approach, the scale of events was also considered. The Durham Watch for Me NC partners participated in several large, well-attended events as well as small, targeted events so as to increase awareness for different audiences.

### **Credit**

Thank you to Dale McKeel, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator with the Durham Transportation Department and the DCHC-MPO for providing leadership, time, and expertise that contributed to the Watch for Me NC Campaign in Durham and the information in this profile.

# Student and Community Engagement in a College Town



## Chapel Hill, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2014
- Population: 60,000
- Lead agency: Chapel Hill Police Department
- Setting: Small Town

Photo: UNC-Chapel Hill officers give away bike locks and safety equipment during a Christmas in July Watch for Me NC event;  
Credit: Celisa Lehew, Chapel Hill PD

## Background

Chapel Hill is part of the North Carolina Research Triangle region and a close neighbor to the Town of Carrboro. The town is home to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill), which enrolls over 30,000 students and employs 12,000 staff. UNC-Chapel Hill's large student population results in high volumes of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit commuter traffic, and safety is an ongoing concern. The Watch for Me NC program squares perfectly with the community's commitment to enhancing road safety through education, outreach, and enforcement activities.

## Partnerships

The Chapel Hill Police Department works closely with the Town of Chapel Hill staff, the University, and citizen advocacy groups such as the Bicycle Alliance of Chapel Hill.

## Education and Enforcement Activities

Marketing materials and public engagement has been central to the town's strategy. Advertisements were placed on buses, and materials were distributed at schools, senior centers, driver's education classes, libraries, Town Hall, community centers, hotels, and local businesses. Press releases were issued through town and law enforcement websites and social media.

As part of the UNC-Chapel Hill effort to improve safety, University officials targeted education not only to students but also to UNC-Chapel Hill staff. A public policy student group created and implemented a curriculum to educate elementary and middle school students on bicycle and pedestrian safety. Watch for Me NC's UNC-Chapel Hill partners distributed materials at campus events and conducted educational awareness activities at busy intersections.

Further Watch for Me NC messaging took place at Back to School Nights and Parent Teacher Association open houses in Chapel Hill. Partners presented at crossing guard trainings and at several driver's

education courses. In collaboration with Safe Kids, the Watch for Me NC program led a pedestrian safety video contest for middle school students.

Greater community engagement was bolstered via the Good Neighbor Initiative and direct contact with local businesses. The Bicycle Alliance gave out bicycle locks and helmets as part of a “Christmas in July” event and participated in "Lighten Up, Chapel Hill.”<sup>6</sup>

Monthly enforcement activities were conducted in Chapel Hill, combining education and awareness with warnings and citations. The Watch for Me NC program provided additional training to police officers.

### **Key Outcomes**

Police Sergeant Celisa Lehew was excited to see new collaboration between town planning, communications, and town engineering motivated by work on Watch for Me NC. These departments now meet biweekly to talk about pedestrian and bicycle issues, including needs for enforcement, training, education, and improved infrastructure. In addition, data collected through Watch for Me NC has been used by town departments in discussions on policies and ordinances related to safer bicycling and walking.

### **Lessons Learned**

Chapel Hill found more local support when discussing Watch for Me NC activities as part of an ongoing safety effort motivated by the new student enrollment at the University. The Watch for Me NC program repeats messaging and programs annually to engage this changing population.

Enforcement sites were strategically selected based not only on crash data, but by leveraging town employee information and community input. Site suggestions were provided by the Bicycle Alliance of Chapel Hill, local walking groups, and transit drivers.

### **Credit**

Thank you to Sergeant Celisa Lehew with the Chapel Hill Police Department for providing leadership, time, and expertise that contributed to the Watch for Me NC Campaign in Chapel Hill and the information in this profile.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.gosmartnc.org/lightenup>

# Education and Enforcement in a Small Mountain Community



## Boone, North Carolina Facts:

- Watch for Me NC participant since: 2014
- Population: 17,000
- Lead agency: Boone Public Works Department
- Setting: Small town

Photo: Boone and Appalachian police officers attend Watch for Me NC training in Boone; Credit: Anna Oakes

## Background

Boone is a small town in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the county seat of Watauga County, and home to Appalachian State University (Appalachian). Appalachian enrolls 18,000 students, but only 5,000 students reside on campus. The remaining students drive, bike, walk, or take transit to commute to the university. There has been a higher number of pedestrian crashes in recent years, particularly among the student population. The Watch for Me NC program in Boone aims to decrease the number of pedestrian collisions for both the general and student population. In addition, Watch for Me NC has focused on improving the safety of intersection and midblock crossings, as 43 percent of pedestrian crashes in recent years occurred at crossings.

## Partnerships

The Watch for Me NC lead agency, the Boone Public Works Department, and the Planning and Inspections Department have developed several important partnerships for implementing education and enforcement activities within the town. The agency collaborated with the health department, Appalachian, the Boone Police Department, the Watauga County Board of Education, and local transit agency, AppalCart. Additional support came from the local bike club, the Boone Area Cyclists. In 2016, the number of partnerships grew to include Active Routes to School Region 3, Appalachian's Recreation Coordinator, High County Recreation, Safe Kids Watauga County, and Watauga Medics.

## Education and Enforcement Activities

Since 2014, Hardin Park School's Walk to School Day has provided the backdrop for the Watch for Me NC's Campaign Kick Off. The annual Bike Rodeo is also held at the school. Local officials noted, "It's all about the early education, because, really, what we're changing is the culture." Watch for Me NC has been present at the Appalachian safety fest on the university's campus, and a collaboration with the League of American Bicyclists featured a Watch for Me NC presentation followed by a group ride. Beyond the school

events, Watch for Me NC campaign bilingual material in English and Spanish has been distributed at the town's Halloween Festival, Downtown Boo, and to downtown merchants for store display year-round.

Police officers have adopted the habit of talking to the public about the rules of the road as they pertain to cyclist and pedestrian safety. Through these efforts, officials feel that the community is becoming more aware of the safety issues. Operations have been complemented by public service announcements and sandwich board signage to increase awareness of safety rules and regulations. Enforcement operations at Appalachian led to the distribution of over 200 brochures and contact with over 250 road users.

### **Key Outcomes**

Watch for Me NC activities generated significant support from the Boone community and elected officials. In the second year, the town reported increased awareness of the campaign, highlighting the importance of a sustained commitment to the program's goals. In anticipation of 2016 Walk to School Day at Hardin Park School, Boone staff completed a sidewalk around the school, connecting it to the town and housing developments. Boone is also looking into installing a sidewalk along a major roadway, Route 194, through the town.

### **Lessons Learned**

The Watch for Me NC outreach materials in Boone were published in both English and Spanish and considered the town's cultural diversity. Site selection was given careful consideration—enforcement locations were based on density and level of pedestrian traffic. This allowed for the most efficient use of resources and reached the greatest number of people possible in a short period of time. Boone also initiated relationships with schools to partner early in the process. This not only helped identify potential challenges, but also provided the location for outreach activities.

### **Credit**

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