

Pedestrian and Bicycle Travel Policy



Problem

The roadway design process in Kentucky was focused only on automobile travel and rarely accommodated nonmotorized travel.

Background

Kentucky created the Pedestrian and Bicycle Design Guidance Task Force in response to the then new USDOT publication “Design Guidance Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach.” The task force was headed by the Multimodal Programs division. Its goal was to develop policies to guide the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet on when, where, and how to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The Task Force included representatives from a variety of state departments, including the University of Kentucky Department of Civil Engineering, FHWA, the Kentucky Planning Commission, Kentucky Heritage Council, Bicycle Coalition of Kentucky, and more.

Solution

After a year of tri-weekly meetings, the Task Force’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Design Guidance was reviewed and signed in as an official order. The policy requires the Transportation Cabinet to plan and build all new and reconstructed roadways with pedestrians and bicyclists in mind. The policy guidelines give roadway planners and designers specific criteria to consider for accommodating pedestrian travel, including adjacent land use, existing pedestrian traffic, local pedestrian and bike plans, transit stops, and public interest and demand. The policy also encompasses several other objectives. Through providing alternative transportation options to the car, it is hoped to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and improve air quality in the state. More partnerships with local communities are to be formed to aid in maintenance of newly built shared use paths.

Results

Public acceptance of nonmotorized travel is growing. In Louisville, for example, there were over 3,000 bicycle boardings on city buses in January 2003, which is six times as many as reported in January 2000. In the year following the enactment of the Policy in 2002, there were several highway reconstruction projects that incorporated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These included an 8-mile bicycle trail, bike lanes, a waterfront park with a pedestrian/bicycle greenbelt connector, and several other shared use paths.

Bikes-On-Board Year-to-Year Comparison chart, 2001-2003.

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