

**City of Bainbridge Island
Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee
2007 Annual Report**

History of the NMTAC

Members of the Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee, current and emeritus, have now been planning and implementing active transportation on Bainbridge Island since before the turn of the century.

The City obtained a state grant to develop a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, which subsequently received two different awards. A core group of citizens participated in work of the Council Land Use Committee to develop that plan, and then became members of the NMTAC when it was created by Council resolution #2002-49. A second resolution, #2005-13, strengthened the commission given to the NMTAC to provide information and recommendations to the Council.

What we have learned

Over that period the NMTAC has been working, there has been a huge shift in values related to transportation. Research and best practices in planning and design have grown considerably. The practice of designing roadways from the centerline out, for example, is no longer considered to provide the most efficient, nor safest transportation. We can't simply add width in concrete and asphalt for motor vehicles, and lanes for bicyclists, and traditional curb and gutter sidewalks for pedestrians. It is too expensive. We intuitively drive motor vehicles too fast for safety. The streetscape feels too wide, barren, unpleasant, and less safe to walk. And, increased impervious surface generates too much runoff headed for marine habitat as non-point pollution.

We have learned that best design results from taking a highly integrated approach to design.

The best integrated designs are developed through reaching out to, being available to, and cultivating neighborhood groups to shape what happens in their area. City staff talking to homeowners one by one simply doesn't allow the flexibility and creativity of neighbors agreeing among themselves and partnering with the City.

Thoughtfulness about what designs provide the best use for the dollar is critical in order to afford to build such an integrated system. Our experience on Bainbridge considering projects on roads where there is high motor vehicle use, is that people want a shoulder wide enough that cyclists can be separated from cars on uphill sections, and narrower on downhill sections where cyclists travel at about the same speed as motor vehicles. They like separated paths which can adapt better to terrain than traditional sidewalks. They would rather not have curb and gutter, nor bulkheads.

It is increasingly important to plan for transportation by all modes as a part of planning for land use. It has become particularly important to plan public connecting paths and trails as part of any development so people have the choice of walking to their destination or to public transportation.

For health, it is important that people have the ability to walk from the door of their home somewhere in a safe and pleasant environment. As documented by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 30 minutes of moderate activity most days is essential to basic health. For most people, being able to do this as part of the time they will spend in transportation makes the difference about whether they manage to do it at all.

Our demographics are changing. The population is aging. Notably, Bainbridge has an older population even than the state and the nation. People with disabilities, who are one fifth of the population, are living longer and are increasingly using public spaces.

Best practices in design for people with movement limitations is becoming more sophisticated. We are thinking more of the full range of needs, not just the much smaller number using manual wheelchairs--as has been the primary focus of ADA compliant (minimum) standards. The most creative designs are situation specific, and involve citizens with personal experience getting around with movement limitations--not simply trying to apply cookie-cutter design templates. "Universal Design" has become the goal, designing for all people regardless of ability. For example, people using walkers and strollers benefit from design accommodating wheeled devices.

Selected accomplishments in 2007

The **COBI Guide to Walking, Cycling, and Paddling** was developed and printed as a project of the NMTAC with cartography by Planning Department staff. This user's guide for residents has been very popular, and the initial printing of 20,000 copies is nearly exhausted despite targeted distribution by the NMTAC.

Bainbridge Shares the Road signs designed by the NMTAC put up late in 06' have been very well received by the community and there has been demand for additional signs.

The **Core 40 Program** (developed by the NMTAC to pave shoulders on heavily traveled roads at a fraction of the cost of traditional road improvements) was approved and funded by Council. Priorities for initial construction have been identified. A mechanism for contracting construction has been developed, and initial projects on Miller Road and Eagle Harbor Road are planned.

A proposal to fund **acquisition of connecting path/trail easements** (developed jointly by the Open Space Commission and the NMTAC) was funded by the Council. The OSC and NMTAC have worked together to complete much preparatory work with willing property owners, and an easement for a strategic segment connecting Ft. Ward, Blakely Harbor, and through to Pritchard Park has just been purchased.

A proposal (of the NMTAC in conjunction with the OSC) was approved and funded by Council to **contract with the Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Parks District to construct connecting paths/trails**. An Interlocal Agreement has been developed between COBI and BIMPRD, and two well constructed connections have been completed. Construction techniques have been developed, and working relationships increasing efficiency of the collaboration have been established.

A **project to restore native vegetation along the walkway off New Brooklyn Road** through collaboration of the NMTAC, Watershed Council, Forestry Commission, Kitsap Conservation District, Weed Warriors, neighbors, and student service groups from Bainbridge High School and Woodward Middle School has had additional volunteer planting and maintenance. Cultivation of these working relationships is important to the ongoing preservation and restoration of our green infrastructure along our public rights-of-way.

The NMTAC, working closely with the Planning Department & collaborating with Public Works staff, developed **revised planning maps and text for the Comprehensive Plan showing existing connecting paths/trails, and desired connecting corridors**. These revisions, adopted by the Council, assist planners and neighbors in taking advantage of opportunities to make path/trail connections as developments are permitted, and provide an agreed reference for the NMTAC, OSC, and Council to determine priorities for acquisition and construction.

Also through these collaborations, the Council has adopted a **Comprehensive Plan amendment incorporating language calling for the City to use principles of Universal Design** to improve accessibility for people of all abilities--better designed facilities than simply using ADA templates to meet minimum standards.

COBI

Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee

2008 Workplan

Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Propose amendments.

Accessibility/universal design

Specify that the default preferred design will be that walkways remain at the walking surface plane, rather than dipping when crossing driveways.

Trip, slip, fall hazards

Specify strong preference will be given to placing utility grates outside the clear pedestrian zone, and utility companies retrofit existing non-conforming grates with ones which are slip-resistant.

Bicycle parking

NMTAC will develop best design and siting guidelines for bicycle parking.

ADA Compliance

NMTAC will make recommendations a Transition Plan (mandated by the ADA), as it relates to non-motorized facilities.

Partnering w/ neighborhood/community groups to protect island character and unique sense of community

NMTAC with staff will develop public involvement guidelines for use in projects which have non-motorized elements.

Low impact development (natural drainage) in streetscape

The City and developers will use design for low impact development (natural drainage) as the default preference.

Update NMTP facility maps and tables

Community Outreach/Education

COBI Guide to Walking, Cycling, and Paddling 2008 Edition

Revise, print and distribute.

Develop printer friendly on-line version.

Prepare featured connecting path/trail maps jointly with BIMPRD.

Bainbridge Shares the Road signs

Produce and install additional signs.

Educational safety videos and other media

Produce one bicycle safety video and one pedestrian safety video.

Produce BITV and other publicity celebrating successfully completed projects.

NMTAC web pages on COBI website

Update & keep current.

Education/training

Use local and outside speakers re. best practices for bicycle parking.

Attend national Pro Bike/Pro Walk Conference September, 2008 in Seattle.

Other emerging opportunities.

NMTAC Community Meeting

Report activities and solicit input on community needs.

Bicycle Friendly City application

Collaborate with City application led by Squeaky Wheels to obtain Bicycle Friendly City certification from the League of American Cities.

Active Transportation Facilities

Core 40 Program

Recommend priorities and assist with public involvement for implementation.

Connecting path/trail acquisition and construction

Work jointly with the Open Space Commission to identify opportunities and recommend purchases to acquire easements or purchase land to improve our network of connecting paths/trails with attention both to the Winslow core, and the entire island.

Review of road projects for active transportation design & implementation

Assist public process with neighborhood groups and COBI entities including the Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Forestry Commission, and Watershed Council to support integrated design.

Safe Routes to School

Continue to plan for Safe Routes to School in collaboration with the Bainbridge Island School District.

Identification of active transportation funding

Identify grant funding opportunities and write grant application in coordination with staff.

Universal design advisory group

Convene a Universal Design advisory group of citizens to assist with reviewing and recommend general design options, as well as assist in considering adaptations to specific sites, such as Waterfront Park.

Winslow Way Streetscape

Coordinate and comment on Winslow Way Streetscape project, with particular attention to design for accessibility.

City Hall Trail demonstration project

Facilitate development of planning for the path/trail between City Hall and Madrona Lane for an integrated design and construction process.

SR 305 active transportation corridor

Develop a plan for completion of a shared use facility from the WSF terminal to across the Agate Pass bridge.

Coordination of Government

Liaison w/ Council Committees

Maintain active coordination w/ City Council Committees.

Liaison w/ City advisory committees and commissions

Facilitate Watershed Council & Forestry Commission involvement in active transportation/road edge projects.

Partnership w/ neighborhood & community groups

Explore and recommend possible mechanisms, including Context Sensitive Solutions through the Project for Public Spaces.

Coordinate w/ BIMPRD

Collaborate on maps and trail construction.