

2019 Active Transportation Plan: Frequently Asked Questions

Several comments on the 2019 Active Transportation Plan were received by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) between December 2018 and the date it was issued on January 9, 2019. Many comments were incorporated into the Plan and Interactive Statewide Bicycle Planning Network Map. In order to address other comments and concerns, a “Frequently asked Questions” document has been developed. For the sake of clarity, comments of a similar nature were grouped together into general questions and answers.

It is important to emphasize that this plan was developed for state-maintained roadways/infrastructure, therefore, comments received on local roads are not addressed in this document.

Question/Comment:

1. CTDOT needs a full-time person dedicated to bike/ped issues (bike/ped coordinator).

The entire staff in the Intermodal Planning Unit is responsible for overseeing bicycle and pedestrian planning. This Unit has the expertise to address statewide bike/ped issues and concerns.

2. Why was there no additional public outreach/involvement period as the Plan was being redrafted?

The original bike/ped plan draft required an extensive overhaul. The purpose was to target what CTDOT could accomplish, and to condense the draft plan into a simplified, focused and action-oriented plan specific to the CTDOT and the facilities within its authority to maintain.

Now that the plan has been approved and released, CTDOT continued with public outreach by offering, and holding for those that requested, separate listening sessions for each Council of Government (COG) and their invitees to continue the very important conversation CTDOT started two years ago.

3. What will be CTDOT efforts on promoting Bike and Pedestrian Safety?

The CTDOT is committed to continuing its efforts to improve our network connectivity through various policies designed to enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety in the State of Connecticut. The Active Transportation Plan outlines CTDOT's near-term goals in the areas of programs and infrastructure investments. One way the plan addresses these goals is by identifying construction projects to be initiated over the next six years in the most critical locations in the State to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists. Furthermore, this plan not only incorporates new strategies and actions for policy implementation, programs, and infrastructure improvements but also showcases the first ever Interactive Statewide Bicycle Planning Network Map.

Additionally, CTDOT's vision to promote and enhance bicycle and pedestrian transportation in rural and urban areas is tangible through the many plans, policies, and programs CTDOT has adopted within the past decade:

1. Complete Streets Policy
2. Community Connectivity Grant Program
3. Multi-Use Trail Program
4. Trail Maintenance Program
5. Route 15/Merritt Parkway Trail Construction
6. FHWA STEP Program: Everyday Counts-4
7. Walk it Bike It: Connecticut Safe Routes to School Program
8. Road Safety Audits
9. Statewide Sidewalk Policy (Policy No. E&C-19)
10. New Signal Technology Adoption
11. Painted Bike Lane Installation
12. Crash Data Collection Initiative

4. The Implementation Tiers from Figure 6 in the Plan (p.24) should be added to the interactive online Statewide Bicycle Planning Network map.

The Implementation Tiers will be added to the interactive map.

5. Figure 6 needs an explicit explanation about implementation tiers. It is inconvenient to look through the appendix to understand what the map is presenting.

A concise description of the Tiers is located on page 22. In an effort to reduce the size of the document and improve readability, supporting information was moved to the plan Appendix L, and can be found here:

http://www.ctbikepedplan.org/documents/CTActiveTransPlan_Appendix2_01-08-2019.pdf

6. Why are only certain routes included in the Statewide Bicycle Planning Network?

The Statewide Bicycle Planning Network was developed with considerable input from the Steering Committee, COG's and the Public. New routes will be considered in the future when the plan gets updated. See Appendix K for more details on the route selection process. However, the condition (Tiers) of routes already in the Interactive Statewide Bicycle Planning Network Map will be updated more frequently as conditions change.

The trails shown are those that received Federal or State funding for Planning, Design or Construction since 2009. CTDOT made every effort to find information for trails but many records obtained are incomplete. Local knowledge would be appreciated. We encourage individuals to share this information with Anna Bergeron of the Intermodal Planning Unit at anna.bergeron@ct.gov or by phone 860-594-2140. CTDOT will continue to populate the Statewide Trail Dataset and update the interactive on-line Statewide Bicycle Planning Network map periodically. This interactive on-line map should be considered the most up-to-date map.

7. Why is the Route 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) the only one identified as being implemented?

The Community Connectivity Program has two major phases; The Road Safety Audit (RSA) Program and the Grant Program.

Historically, Route 1 has been perceived by the public as a high crash corridor. The reason **Route 1 was chosen** at the time is because CTDOT was performing the RSA concurrently with the CTDOT's **Vendor-In-Place (VIP) Pavement Resurfacing** project on Route 1. CTDOT had a wonderful opportunity to incorporate some of the safety improvements identified during the Route 1 RSA within the VIP project. **Recommendations from other RSAs will also be implemented during future VIP pavement resurfacing projects where practical.**

8. How can a municipality apply for an RSA?

CTDOT completed 88 RSA's over the past two years, though we are not accepting additional applications for Road Safety Audits at this time. While we may start a new phase in the future, CTDOT will first evaluate the prior RSA program to determine lessons learned, resource commitment and any changes that would be needed. If that does restart, CTDOT will contact your town.

An additional resource is UCONN's Safety Circuit Rider Program which may be able to assist your municipality in performing an RSA. UCONN's Connecticut's Safety Circuit Rider Program is designed to provide safety-related information (including bicycle and pedestrian), training, Road Safety Audits, direct technical assistance to agencies responsible for local roadway safety and may be able to assist with the implementation of the Plan of Conservation and Development. This service is free for the municipality. Please follow the link for further information.

<https://www.t2center.uconn.edu/circuitrider.php>

CTDOT has a website that you can review, www.ctconnectivity.com . Go to the "RSA reports" tab, which contains all of the RSA's performed. These give a great overview of what to expect during the RSA process.

9. Table 2 in the Plan indicated dollar amounts for pedestrian and bicycle funding for 2016-2020, please clarify if this was proposed or spent? The years 2016-2018 should be rectified to show the actual amount that was spent on Ped/Bike projects.

Generally, these are funds that were authorized for spending, though the actual process for spending (subsequent steps of Bond Commission approval of funds, then Office of Policy and Management approval of funds, and then DOT planning and engineering design prior to contract award and construction) means typically it can be a few years until funds are actually spent. The Department awarded 65 projects in SFY 2017 and 53 projects in SFY 2018 that included elements for pedestrians or bicyclists, such as sidewalks, ramps, pedestrian signals, push-buttons, signs, and pedestrian/bicycle trails. The total dollars expended for these items was approximately \$13.6 million in SFY 2017 and \$11.8 million in SFY 2018, which was about 2.9% of the SFY 2017 total funds and 1.4% of the SFY 2018 total funds awarded for the construction, restoration, rehabilitation, or relocation of roads in the state.

CTDOT's web site hosts a dashboard for Capital Spending, which is currently in the process of being updated. Please check the CTDOT web site in the next few weeks for further information. In the meantime please visit CTDOT webpage (link provided) for "DOT on the Move" – Performance Measures:

<https://www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?a=3815&q=448402>. A series of performance measures reports, which focus on results and accountability, are accessible for viewing.

10. With a new incoming administration, the future of Let's Go CT! is in question. Presenting the program as part of the state's path forward on active transportation may limit the longevity of the document.

Programs and projects obligated under Let's Go CT! have been incorporated into the Department's capital plan. Future phases and funding for all projects, including Let's GO CT!, and every other federal and state program is subject to state budget appropriations. The Department will continue to strategically plan for the future of Bicycle and Pedestrian amenities and facilities. It remains an important part of the transportation network, and has been incorporated into standard procedures at CTDOT, even as the names of larger transportation initiatives change over time.