



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY STRATEGIES IN NORTH CAROLINA: STATEWIDE INPUT AND PRIORITIES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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For:
Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation
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The Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation (DBPT) tasked the Institute of Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) with conducting a statewide public input process to inventory and prioritize specific strategies to key problems facing non-motorized safety in North Carolina. This report documents the public input process and the resultant strategies prioritized through this effort for further consideration for implementation by the NCDOT. It is also representative of statewide public input that should be used for planning purposes wherever bicycle and pedestrian safety is concerned.

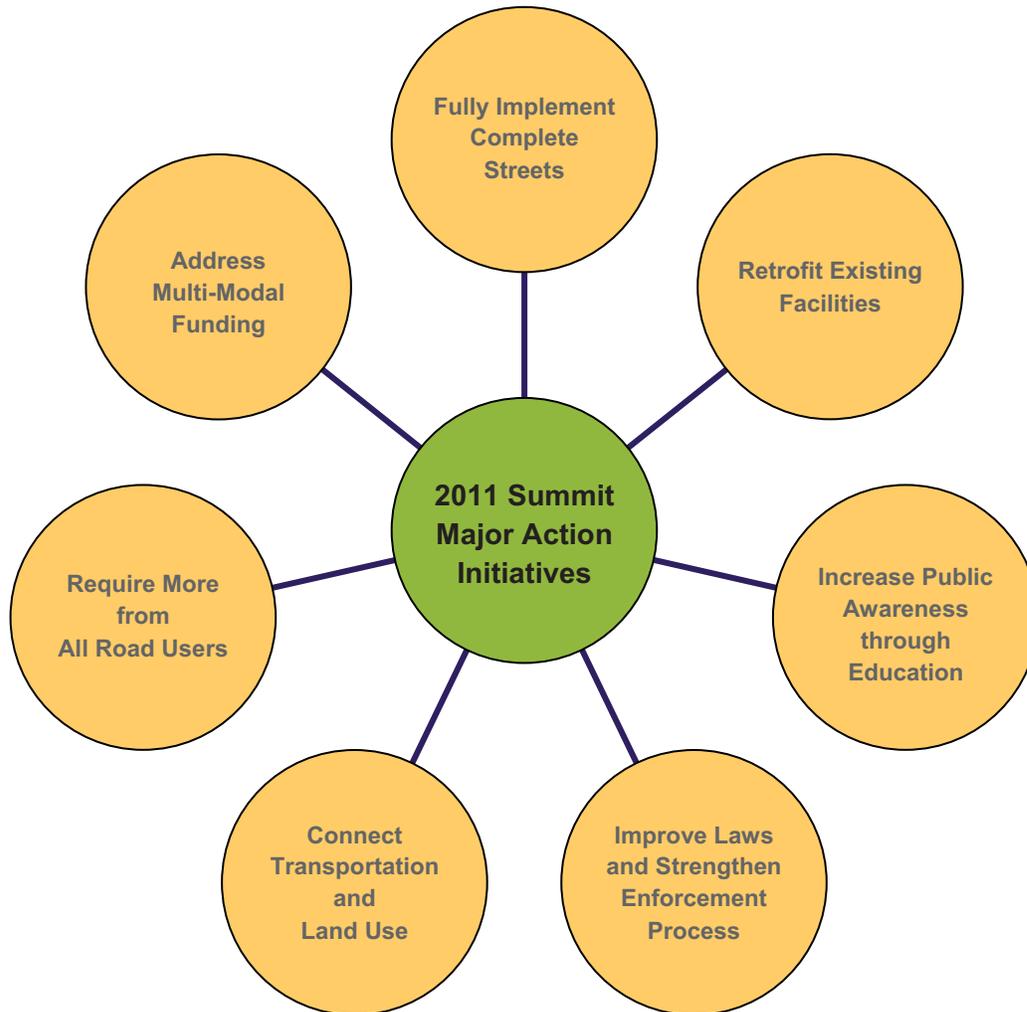
The timing for a statewide forum on bicycle and pedestrian safety is appropriate for several reasons:

- North Carolina's population is projected to increase by approximately 14% by 2020 primarily in urbanizing areas which means a likely increase in the amount of pedestrians and cyclists within these communities;
- Policies and partnerships at local, state and national levels are shifting transportation priorities to a more balanced and context-sensitive approach in meeting the needs of all users including bicycle and pedestrian modes;
- Rates of obesity are on the rise in North Carolina in both adults and children with a sedentary lifestyle cited as one of the main contributors. An increase in active transportation by making changes to the build environment can help curb the trend which has made nearly 2 in 3 adults in North Carolina overweight or obese.
- The NCDOT has not held a statewide public input process of this magnitude since 2000 and the results of this process are pertinent to informing future decision-making.
- Furthermore, based on the most recent data available from 2000 to 2008, while pedestrian crashes and fatalities per capita are trending down, bicycle crash rates are stagnant, and bicycle fatalities per capita are slowly rising.

The 2011 NC Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Summit consisted of two separate but interrelated public involvement processes conducted in the winter of 2011 which are the foundation of this synthesis report: (1) a widely distributed statewide public input questionnaire which informed a (2) series of five regional roundtables held across the state. Ultimately a consensus on the strategies to carry forward to NCDOT was reached by roundtable participants through a process of priority voting. Several themes clearly emerged through the regional roundtable process. Problems and corresponding solutions coalesced around making improvements or creating a new approach to facilities, funding, policies, laws, enforcement, intergovernmental cooperation, design, education, and public outreach. These themes are further reinforced based on the results from the statewide questionnaire responses.

Having a comprehensive implementation at both the state and local level for the Complete Streets Policy adopted by NCDOT in July of 2009 is undoubtedly the highest priority identified. Next in importance is a message for NCDOT to reallocate more funds toward multi-modal projects; focus on retrofitting existing facilities with bicycle and pedestrian accommodations; and require more from all users of the roadway through changes in licensing. Other priorities include a desire for NCDOT to increase public awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety issues through education; strengthen the

connection between transportation and land use through collaboration with local agencies; and work to improve existing laws and the enforcement process in North Carolina.



The diagram outlines the major action initiatives that will be presented to the BOT and should be considered by NCDOT for future implementation. It should be noted that implementation of the Complete Streets Policy is pertinent and synergistic to the other priority action initiatives.

The issues and concerns identified through the questionnaire are largely addressed by the action initiatives and corresponding strategies found within this report, reinforcing a broad public support to the following approaches. Ultimately, working to fulfill all seven major action initiatives recommended in this report will enhance the safety of all road users, improve the quality of life and health for the citizens and visitors, and ensure that North Carolina remains a desirable place in which to work, live, and play.