



# Plan On It

A Dutchess County Planning Federation eNewsletter

February 2013

## NEW GREENWAY GUIDE: Building Bicycle Networks

By Emily Dozier, Senior Planner

[Greenway Connections](#), which initially included 18 Greenway Guides, was completed in 2000 and has been adopted as a voluntary program of land use policies and guidelines by the County and 29 of 30 Dutchess County communities. Designed as a three-ring binder, Greenway Connections was always intended to be a living document with additional guides adopted in response to changing circumstances and needs. The Greenway Compact is entirely voluntary, respects local home rule, and relies on incentives and guidelines rather than requirements.

This eNewsletter introduces a new draft Greenway Guide for public review, comment, and eventual adoption by local municipalities. [Building Bicycle Networks](#) offers design recommendations to encourage bicycling in a variety of contexts.

### Bicycle Networks: What Are They and Why Should We Build Them?

Bicycle networks include shared lanes, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, bicycle boulevards, and shared-use paths. Interest in bicycling is booming for many reasons, including:

#### *Create Jobs and Develop our Economy*

Recent research has documented that bicycling and walking projects create 11-14 jobs per \$1 million spent, compared to 7 jobs created per \$1 million spent on highway projects.<sup>[1]</sup> Bicycle networks also attract tourists: according to the Outdoor Industry Association, Americans spend more on bicycling gear and trips (\$81 billion) than they do on airplane tickets and fees (\$51 billion), and bicycle tourism is now the second most popular recreation activity in the U.S.

#### *Improve Health*

In Dutchess County, 30% of adults are overweight and almost 31% are obese; for children, 17% are overweight and 19% are obese.<sup>[2]</sup> Bicycling is a fun way to exercise, which is critical for our physical and mental health.

#### Bicycling in Dutchess

Successful local projects highlight the demand for investments in bicycling:

- [Dutchess Rail Trail](#)
- [Harlem Valley Rail Trail](#)
- [Walkway Over the Hudson](#)

### *Provide Travel Options*

Most people like to have choices. In terms of travel, bicycling is a great option for young people, those without a car, and increasing numbers of others who want an alternative to driving. Bicycling can be a fast, convenient way to get around, particularly for short trips. Nationwide, half of all trips are 3 miles or shorter, less than a 20 minute bike ride, and one out of four trips is less than one mile, a 5 minute bike ride. Building bicycle networks makes many of these short trips possible by bike.

### *Protect our Environment*

It is clear that our transportation choices affect our natural environment. We can help lessen those effects by creating resilient transportation systems that don't require fuel or power and can function even during major storms. Bicycling also helps to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

### *Avoid Escalating Fuel Prices and Shortages*

Across the country, gasoline prices have increased sharply in the last decade, from an average of about \$1.50 a gallon in 2000 to over \$3.50 a gallon in 2011.<sup>[4]</sup> Projections show prices will continue to rise. This increasing cost, as well as potential interruptions in the fuel supply, highlights the importance of non-motorized transportation such as bicycling.

### *Create Quality Communities*

In communities with connected bicycle networks, people can bike to school, work, shopping, visiting friends, and errands. Bicycling becomes integrated into daily life, rather than solely a recreational activity. Bicycling builds community — you're more likely to stop in at a local store or greet a neighbor on the street when you're on a bicycle instead of isolated in a car.

### **What's the Law?**

Under New York State's Vehicle and Traffic Law (Article 34, Section 1231), a bicycle is treated as a vehicle: "Every person riding a bicycle... upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle." This means riding on the right side of the road, obeying signs and signals, and using lights after dusk. Except where expressly prohibited, bicyclists may ride on all streets and should be accommodated. The law also states that bicyclists may use the full travel lane if needed to avoid debris, bad pavement, parked vehicles, other obstacles, or to make a left turn.

### **Did you know?**

Walkway Over the Hudson attracts 500,000 annual visitors and generates more than \$24 million in new economic impact each year in Dutchess and Ulster Counties.<sup>[3]</sup>



### **Take Our Survey**

We are gathering data on walking and bicycling patterns, needs, and priorities (responses accepted through April 15, 2013).

**Please share your thoughts!**

If you prefer, links to printable versions (English and Spanish) are posted on the [PDCTC's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan website](#). We can also provide hard copies by request.

## What Type of Cyclist are You?

First developed in Portland, Oregon in 2005 to describe attitudes towards bicycling for transportation, these categories are now commonly used to describe different types of cyclists:

**Strong and Fearless** (<0.5%)

**Enthusied and Confident** (7%)

**Interested but Concerned** (60%)

**No Way No How** (33%)

Bicycle planning is increasingly focused on the **Interested but Concerned** group in an effort to make bicycling accessible to more people.

## Designing for Bicycles

Bicycle planning is changing rapidly to serve a wider spectrum of bicyclists on different road types and for different types of trips. The [Building Bicycle Networks Greenway Guide](#) describes five types of bicycle facilities and provides guidance on where they are appropriate:

1. Shared Lanes, including Shared-Lane Markings or 'sharrows'
2. Paved Shoulders
3. Bicycle Lanes and Buffered Bike Lanes
4. Bicycle Boulevards
5. Shared-Use Paths

The guide also discusses the need for wayfinding signs and bicycle parking, and safety issues related to bicycling on sidewalks. Finally, it provides several resources to assist with bicycle planning and facility design.

## Need Help With Bicycle Planning?

Staff from Dutchess County Planning and the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council (PDCTC) are available to assist local municipalities with bike planning. Feel free to contact us at 845-486-3600 for more information.

Footnotes:

[1] *Bicycling and Walking in the United States: 2012 Benchmarking Report*, Alliance for Biking and Walking.

[2] Dutchess County Department of Health, *Community Health Assessment 2010-2013*.

[3] Walkway Over the Hudson, 2012.

[4] U.S. Energy Information Administration, <http://www.eia.gov/petroleum/qasdiesel/> (accessed 11/21/12)

## Share Your Feedback

The Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development is accepting public comments on the draft **Building Bicycle Networks Greenway Guide**.

[CLICK HERE](#) to email us your comments (by April 1, 2013).

*Thank You!*

## More Information

NEW Draft Greenway Guide: [Building Bicycle Networks](#)

*Public comments on this draft Greenway Guide accepted through April 1, 2013.*

[CLICK HERE to email your comments](#)

October 2012 eNewsletter: [Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update](#)

Other [Bicycle-Related DCPF eNewsletters](#)

PDCTC's [Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan website](#)

[Four Types of Cyclists](#), white paper by Roger Geller, Bicycle Coordinator  
for the Portland Office of Transportation

[PSU Research Delves Deeper Into "Four types of cyclists"](#), blog post on  
BikePortland.org

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This newsletter was developed by the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, in  
conjunction with the Dutchess County Planning Federation.

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