Take advantage of opportunities to create and complete pedestrian and bicycle networks

To address the fifth Mayors' Challenge Activity, communities focused on finding ways to create complete networks for non-motorized travel, including taking advantage of resurfacing and routine maintenance programs as a low-cost opportunity to expand and improve biking and walking networks and safety. Many also focused on improving accessibility and ensuring that all projects comply with requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

From Keene, NH, to Tuscon, AZ, more than 50 communities reported that they took on this challenge and widened sidewalks, installed new curb ramps, created new bike lanes, converted existing bike lanes to separated bike lanes, or made safety and access improvements to intersections, all in order to create safe and complete networks.

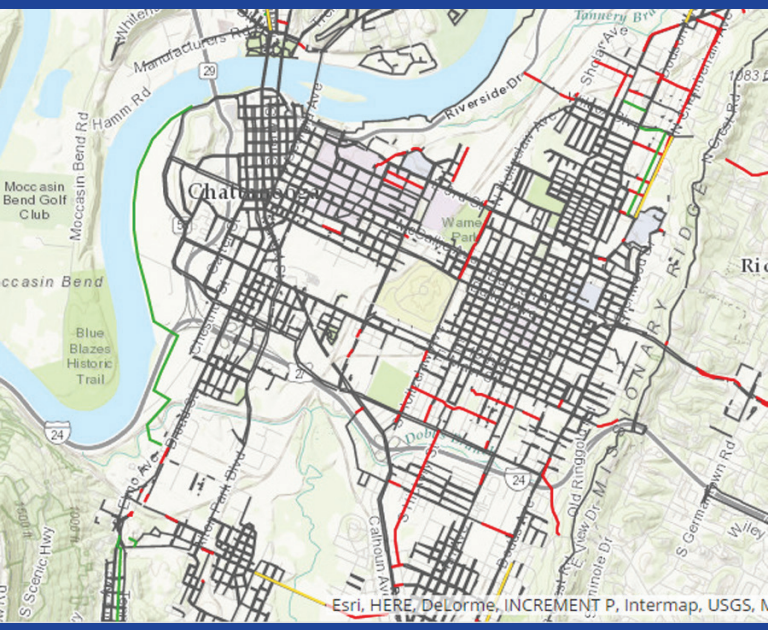
The winning communities for Challenge Activity 5 are Lexington, KY, (large city) and Norwalk, CT, (small city). Lexington developed a data-driven rating system for resurfacing, with $1.5 million annually dedicated to ADA and crosswalk improvements. It also developed a Sidewalk Improvement Program that is investing $750,000 to connect gaps in the sidewalk network and prioritize improvements to meet demand, connectivity, safety, and equity needs.

The Norwalk Bike/Walk Taskforce has directed the resurfacing program to establish clear bike routes through the town, with connections to key attractions. It also supported development of a Master Bike Plan that identified routes for improvements; the NorWALKer Routes program, which maps 40 walking routes through more than 16 neighborhoods; and overall better coordination with the Department of Public Works. More information on efforts in Lexington and Norwalk is available in the Award Winner fact sheets.

Highlight: Several communities responded to the Challenge by creating new types of network connections. For example, Chattanooga, TN, installed the city's first neighborhood greenway, and Boca Raton, FL, installed the city's first linear park/shared-use pathway. Multiple communities also took the opportunity to plan and build separated bike lanes, including Chapel Hill, NC, West Hollywood, CA, and Columbus, OH. Henderson, NV, built a raised, separated bike lane, and Asheville, NC, built its first separated uphill bicycle climbing lane.

Successful approaches to creating networks

Some communities focused on incorporating safe facilities for all users into all construction and reconstruction projects to build out their networks. Warsaw, MO, and Macon, GA, updated or adjusted their transportation plans to include greater consideration of bicycle and pedestrian networks, and Ann Arbor, MI, used an inventory to identify priority areas. Eugene, OR, reported regularly improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities as part of pavement preservation projects, including adding accessible pedestrian signals, separated bike lanes, pedestrian crossing islands, and treatments at unsignalized intersections and mid-block pedestrian crossings. Fairfax County, VA, reported that applying road diets and adding bike lanes as part of regular



Chattanooga Sidewalk Prioritization Tool. The existing sidewalk network is shown in gray, with red representing future sidewalks, yellow representing ADA fixes, and green representing 2015-16 sidewalk updates.

roadway resurfacing projects reduced crashes and furthered the completion of bicycle and pedestrian networks.

Cities identified critical networks and priority areas

By identifying proposed networks, priority areas, and specific projects, city staff are able to leverage opportunities to build facilities that might otherwise not have been built for several years.

For example, staff in Asheville, NC, look at opportunities for sidewalk work to be coordinated with resurfacing projects and whether new crossings are needed to improve safety and connectivity for walking or bicycling. Resurfacing projects are expected to include bus stop/shelter pads and planned bicycle markings, and Asheville adopted a policy to prioritize neighborhood sidewalk investment where projects add to both pedestrian and transit network connectivity.

As a result of its response to the Challenge, it is now standard practice for staff in Longwood, FL, to consider pedestrian and bicycle needs when reviewing resurfacing projects as well as large land development projects. Several recent large development projects contributed to the bicycle and pedestrian network by incorporating wide sidewalks adjacent to the property, building new sidewalks to fill gaps, and providing bicycle parking.

Chattanooga developed a tool to prioritize, plan, and budget for sidewalk installation and improvements throughout the city. To create the tool, the city completed the inventory of sidewalks, created prioritization models based on pedestrian usage, demand, and public input, and launched an online comment map.

The city of Las Vegas now evaluates all streets scheduled for maintenance and resurfacing for bike lanes and ADA upgrades. In the last year, the city has taken advantage of this evaluation process to add approximately 10 centerline miles of separated bike lanes, in some cases reconfiguring an existing four-lane road to three lanes to provide enough width for the separated bike lane.

Breakthroughs with bike sharing systems and networks

In order to expand access and flexibility for residents looking for new transportation options, some communities initiated or expanded bicycle sharing systems and networks. In August 2016,

New separated bike lane and bike share bike in West Hollywood, CA.

Newly constructed crosswalk.

Bulb-out under construction in Lexington, KY.

West Hollywood, CA, launched its bike share system with 150 bikes and 20 stations. In 2015, the Juice Bike Share Program opened in Orlando, FL, which now has 200 bicycles and 34 stations throughout Downtown Orlando and beyond. The city has used data collected by the vendor and other user sources to identify needed improvements for roadways currently without bicycle infrastructure.

In spring 2016, Philadelphia, PA, added 30 stations to the Indego bike share system, bringing the proportion of stations in low-income census tracts to nearly 40 percent. Indego has been strategically developed to connect people to people, to green space and to economic centers. Indego was the first bike share system nationwide to launch with a cash-payable fare, allowing easy payment for residents without access to a bank account. Indego bikes have logged more than 640,000 trips in just the first 16 months of operations.

More miles of pedestrian and bicycle facilities

Many communities made great progress in building pedestrian and bicycle facilities during the Challenge. More than 370 miles of pedestrian and bicycle lane-miles were created across 11 cities during the Challenge. For example, during 2015 and 2016, Orlando, FL, installed green pavement markings, three marked bike routes, on-street bicycle guide signs, and five bike repair stations.

Austin, TX, completed over 28 miles of additional bicycle network facilities to its network, mostly during routine road maintenance. The city also added 16 miles of sidewalks, five miles of urban trails, and five pedestrian-oriented projects in the downtown area. The Pedernales bikeway was completed within a high-poverty area, and the bike share program now offers memberships to residents without established credit.

In Fair Haven, NJ, Mayor Ben Lucarelli worked with other government and local stakeholders to change a resolution related to funding pedestrian and bicycle facilities on county roads, leading to a first-of-its-kind cost share agreement between the municipalities and the county. This resolution makes it easier for towns to add infrastructure for walking and bicycling to county roads traversing their towns. In November 2015, four miles of bike lanes were implemented under this arrangement, connecting to a corridor where the New Jersey Department of Transportation has plans to add bike lanes. In recognition of this effort, New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition designated Mayor Lucarelli as one of the 2016 recipients of its Advocate of the Year Award.

For more information about the Mayors' Challenge results and award winners see:
www.transportation.gov/mayors-challenge/awards-and-results