



Winner! Norwalk, Connecticut

Norwalk, CT, used the Mayors' Challenge to infuse energy into its Bike/Walk Taskforce of local residents, business owners, and city staff. The Task Force, charged by Mayor Harry Rilling with making Norwalk's streets and sidewalks safer for all users, took on the "Create Networks" challenge and in collaboration with the Norwalk Health Department worked to improve the connectivity and accessibility of the city's bicycle and pedestrian network.

Demonstrated Successes

Bicycle Master Plan Paves the Way for a Comprehensive Bicycle Route Network

The Bike/Walk Taskforce created a bicycle master plan for the city that shows:

- Roads that currently have dedicated bike lanes or shared-lane markings (i.e., sharrows);
- Existing and proposed regional routes and trails; and
- Recommendations for new facilities, including north-south and east-west bike routes through Norwalk that will connect cyclists to the local community college, transit, beaches, downtown, and three neighboring towns.

An immediate outcome of the plan is a new commitment to integrate improvements with scheduled maintenance projects, as recommended in the 2015 guide from the Federal Highway Administration, [Incorporating On-Road Bicycle Networks into Resurfacing Projects](#). The Taskforce holds monthly meetings with the



Norwalk's bicycle network includes bike lanes on Strawberry Hill Avenue, which were the first bike lanes to be installed in the city.

Department of Public Works to review the city's paving schedule and identify opportunities to use existing repaving contracts to narrow travel lanes and incorporate dedicated bike lanes or shared lane markings on streets identified in the bicycle master plan.

NorWALKer Program Maps Encourage Residents to be Physically Active

To encourage residents to engage in physical activity, the Norwalk Health Department, whose staff are also part of the Bike/Walk Taskforce, have developed NorWALKer maps, which include over 40 walking routes through 17 city neighborhoods. The routes, which are available on the city's website or in print, were assessed using the U.S.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Walkability Audit Tool and are deemed safe and accessible walking routes for recreation and to reach destinations.

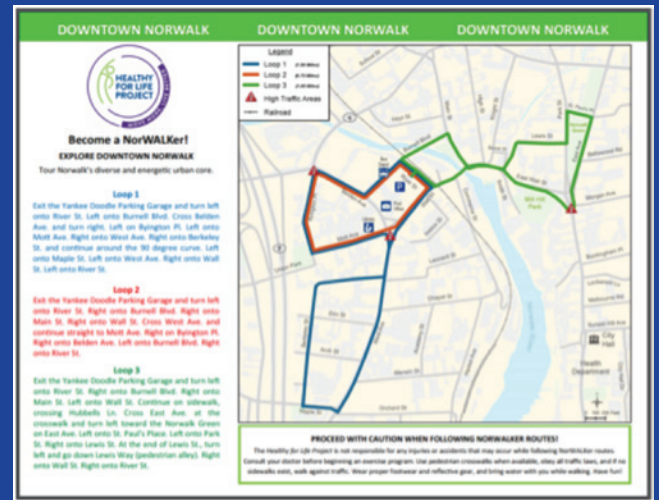
The NorWALKer program has evolved to become a centerpiece of the Healthy for Life Project, a coalition of organizations, agencies, and community members from the Greater Norwalk area that works to make communities healthier places to live, work, learn, and play. Mayor Harry Rilling promotes physical activity in Norwalk through his "Walk With Us" program, in which he and his wife invite the public to walk a NorWALKer route with them every Saturday morning.

Next Steps

Moving forward, the Taskforce and the Health Department plan to develop additional NorWALKer routes and use them to create a master walking and bicycling map that shows a network of active transportation routes throughout the city.

KEY OUTCOMES:

- Developed a bicycle master plan that identified routes for improvements
- The Department of Public Works has used the plan to stripe eight streets with bike lanes and/or shared lane markings
- NorWALKer Routes program has mapped walking routes around town, including 40+ routes through 17 neighborhoods



NorWALKer map for downtown Norwalk shows three routes through the urban core.

"My Bike/Walk Task Force was formed with a mission of improving the bicycling and pedestrian experience throughout the community. Safe streets that all can share improve the quality of life in a community and provide safety for all modes of transportation. We are proud to be the leader of this endeavor and hopefully serve as model for others to emulate."

– Norwalk Mayor Harry Rilling

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