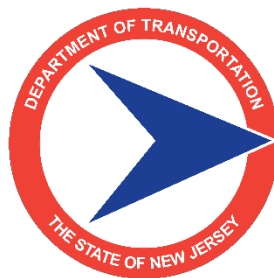


NJDOT
Bicycle and Pedestrian
Planning Assistance
PROGRAM GUIDELINES



NJDOT BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Background

The New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has established a vision for New Jersey as a place where people choose to walk or bicycle with confidence and a sense of security, where both activities are a routine part of the transportation and recreation systems. NJDOT has taken steps to fulfill this vision through the adoption of a Complete Streets policy through which the Department has committed to the planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of facilities that provide safe access and mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users of all ages and abilities.

In order to implement this policy and make New Jersey a better place to bike and walk, it is important to build infrastructure that addresses the safety, mobility and access needs of cyclists and pedestrians. The benefits of such improvements are maximized when they evolve from a rational planning process, in fulfillment of a local vision that complements the one expressed in the NJ Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; a process that reflects a conscious and concerted effort to create livable communities and complete streets where the needs of vulnerable roadway users, such as pedestrians and bicyclists, are central.

To facilitate this process, the Department offers the **Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Assistance program (BPPA)**. Under this program, the Department has retained the services, of several consultants with expertise in local bicycle and pedestrian planning. The services of these consultants are provided at no cost to counties and municipalities that demonstrate a need and desire to undertake planning activities that will lead to infrastructure projects that will improve travel for people who walk and bike or use scooters, wheelchairs, or transit.

The BPPA program is administered by the Bureau of Safety, Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs with federal funding through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program. Applications are submitted on a rolling basis and those from underserved communities are prioritized. The main requirements include a description of the issues, a commitment to in-kind support, a focus on transportation equity and a resolution of support. All planning studies must include significant public involvement.

Municipalities or counties that are interested in participating in this program should develop an application in accordance with the information provided below and submit the package to:

New Jersey Department of Transportation
Bureau of Safety, Bicycle & Pedestrian Programs
1035 Parkway Avenue
P.O. Box 600
Trenton, NJ 08625-0600

Application Package Checklist

Local governments that wish to be considered for this program must submit an application package. Applications will be accepted at any time throughout the year. The application should demonstrate a strong interest in and/or need to provide improved or enhanced accommodations for pedestrian or bicycle travel in the community and evidence of a sincere commitment to implement the recommendations that evolve from the planning effort.

The application package for the BPPA program must include:

- A cover letter on the letterhead of the applicant county or municipality, expressing interest in the program and signed by an appropriate representative of the county or municipality.
- A description of the proposed planning effort to be undertaken, prioritizing the efforts. This should include justification in terms of the needs, problems, populations served or opportunities being addressed.
- Supporting data, statistics and/or mapping demonstrating the safety, access or mobility issues for bicyclists and/or pedestrians that may be addressed in the study.
- Additional information, if available, including photos, sketches, and/or maps which define the proposed study area, etc.
- A description of how the county or municipality intends to participate in the study. This can include financial participation, though financial participation is not required.
- A **resolution of support** from the governing body (if available at the time of the submittal) or an indication that a resolution of support will be forthcoming. The resolution must include a commitment to make a good faith effort to implement the recommendations (actual or implied) of the planning study. *Note: A task order with the Department's consultant, commissioning the work, will not be issued without receipt of a resolution of support from the local governing body.*
- The identity of the contact person and/or staff person who will participate in the study on behalf of the county or municipality.
- The identity of any local citizen groups, task forces or other entities with an interest in bicycling or walking who support the planning effort and may be available to participate in the study.
- An agreement to follow up with NJDOT one year after study completion in order to document the status of improvements based on study recommendations.

Evaluation Process/Selection Criteria

Applications are accepted at any time. If there are more applications than the resources available to accommodate them, underserved or overburdened communities or those with severe bicycle and pedestrian safety issues will be considered first. We cannot guarantee that planning assistance will be available at any particular time, but we intend to accommodate as many applicants as possible. The evaluation process will determine whether an application is accepted into the program.

Applications will be evaluated in terms of the following selection criteria:

- Clarity of the presentation of the planning issues to be addressed
- Inclusion of supporting data, statistics and mapping to back up the narrative provided
- Evidence of commitment of local staff/resources (supplying data and/or mapping, setting up meetings, providing meeting space, etc.)
- Evidence that a significant pedestrian or bicycle safety issue will be addressed
- Evidence that the planning effort will include consideration of improving non-motorized access to transit stops and stations
- Evidence that the planning effort will be directed towards the needs of special populations such as senior citizens, children, or people who live with a disability
- Evidence that the planning effort will be directed towards the enhancement, vitality, or economic viability of downtown or central business district (CBD) areas through the improvement of bicycle and pedestrian access and safety
- Documentation that the applicant municipality or county has an existing Complete Streets policy or a commitment to adopt one
- Documentation of local support, such as a resolution of support from the governing body (required) and letters of support from public safety officials, the school board, etc.
- Documentation of county support and/or involvement (if a municipal application)
- Documentation of support by the regional Transportation Management Association (TMA) and/or Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Documentation that other activities or projects have been undertaken in the past to support bicycling, walking or transit use in the county or municipality, including Safe Routes to School programs
- Documentation that the community is an Urban Aid Community as determined by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs or an Overburdened Community as determined by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Other Considerations

Planning efforts to be undertaken through this program are to be locally driven. It is essential that applicants understand that this assistance is to be provided under a partnership arrangement, and that applicants must commit staff and/or financial resources to these efforts.

All studies must have a strong public outreach aspect, including continued involvement by official representatives of the county or municipality as well as participation by local citizens.

It is anticipated that study recommendations will be consistent with state of the practice guidelines for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. Any proposed recommendations that include or impact state roadways must be vetted through NJDOT before the study is completed.

An important part of the process will be the identification of the contact person within the local government who will sign the approval form for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Assistance study's scope of work. This person will not only agree to the goals and objectives of the study but will also consent to serve as our liaison for progress reporting.

Communities participating in the program will be contacted periodically after the completion of the planning effort to provide information on progress made toward implementing study recommendations and resulting outcomes. Specifically, we will be asking if the community has seen an increase in bicycling, walking and/or transit use, if there has been an increase in bicycle and pedestrian safety, if a Complete Streets policy has been adopted, as well as whether or not there has been progress made in implementing physical improvements, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, traffic calming, etc.

In addition, we will assist in determining whether the community may be eligible for recognition as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists.

Eligible Planning Activities

Examples of planning activities that may be eligible for this program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Evaluation of bicycle and/or pedestrian safety issues and the development of potential solutions
- Comprehensive bicycle and/or pedestrian plans or circulation elements
- Bicycle and/or pedestrian circulation studies focusing on key corridors or activity centers in the county or municipality (schools, parks and other community facilities, shopping, transit stations, employment centers, etc.)
- Planning location or feasibility assessments for shared-use paths, including rail-trails and rail with trails
- Complete Streets policy development and implementation plans
- Sidewalk inventories
- Walkability audits
- Inventories or audits of bicycle compatible roadways and designated bicycle facilities
- Bicycle suitability mapping
- Deficiency analyses, in terms of bicycle and/or pedestrian travel along selected routes to schools, transit facilities, downtown areas, etc., along with recommendations for mitigating those deficiencies
- Residential neighborhood or downtown traffic calming
- Safe Routes to School travel plans