



Providence 2010

New England Bike-Walk Summit

DRAFT agenda
Thursday, October 7, 2010
Providence, RI

9 to 10 am **Blackstone River Bikeway forum**

10:30 am **Welcome:** featured speaker, Providence official, RI official

11 am – 12:15 pm **Breakout sessions, round 1**

Option 1: Multi-jurisdictional trails: challenges, strategies & successes. The six states that comprise New England represent some of the most diverse political entities in America. Practical experience has proven that building multi-use trails in New England requires an approach that is both local and regional in varying degrees depending on jurisdiction. This session will focus on the main challenges in multi-jurisdictional trail building: the clear definition of the project and goals; shaping local and public perceptions of greenways and insuring stakeholder involvement; working groups and partnerships necessary to advance projects given a lack of regional governance; and interaction with public agencies and NGOs.

Option 2: Legislation roundtable. Despite the ties that bind the New England states – cultural, historic, political – advocacy awareness seems to obey political boundaries. Each state has vital statewide bicycle and pedestrian advocacy efforts, yet the organizations behind those efforts rarely communicate with each other. In this session, representatives from each of the New England states will present information on recent and pending state legislation affecting walking and bicycling. Strategies employed to get new laws passed (or block bad ones) will be shared, and thoughts on future legislation will be discussed. Beyond the expected rollicking discussion, enhanced relationships between advocacy groups will be forged.

Option 3: Funding bike-ped infrastructure: pricing, sources, process, and expectations. All aspects of bicycle & pedestrian facility planning and

implementation require varying amounts of financial and human resources. The ultimate cost of building and maintaining bicycle facilities can vary tremendously depending on many factors including the type of facility and the complexity of the project. Apart from the planning, design, construction, and maintenance components, there are also costs associated with programs aimed at promoting bicycling and ensuring a safe bicycling experience: bicycle education, encouragement, and enforcement programs. This session will address some of the factors that affect the cost of bicycle facility planning and implementation. It will also highlight potential sources of funding that are available for a variety of activities from planning through design, construction and operation.

12:30 pm

Keynote luncheon: Tim Blumenthal, President, Bikes Belong Coalition (confirmed)

2 – 3:15 pm

Breakout sessions, round 2

Option 1: Economic development potential of biking and walking. Bicycling and walking clearly have economic, health, and environmental benefits; this session will provide an overview of how, with specific details on certain areas, proving the positive cost-benefit ratio of greater walking and bicycling. Direct, secondary, and spin-off benefits affect tourism, environmental health, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, real estate values, individual health and public health, reduction in demand on existing transportation systems, and more.

Option 2: Advocates and agency personnel: maximizing effectiveness through collaboration. The relationship between advocates and public agency personnel can be beneficial to both. Good communication between the two is a key factor to this relationship working well. Advocacy organizations that simply criticize public agencies are missing an opportunity to work together on important issues. Advocacy organizations can be a big help in pushing issues or doing things like lobbying that are not possible for public employees. Public agencies can provide important information to advocates about the best way to pursue an issue to get it resolved. This session, featuring leaders from advocacy organizations and public agencies, will provide real-world examples of successful collaboration.

Option 3: Connecting underserved communities with bike/walk advocacy. Economically underserved communities can significantly benefit from bike- and pedestrian-friendly environments. Biking and walking can reduce household transportation expenses. Pedestrian and bike friendly communities also increase opportunities for recreation and physical fitness, issues of particular concern in poorer areas. However, bike and pedestrian advocacy organizations tend to be less economically and

ethnically diverse than the public at large, which may lead to less funding being allocated to neighborhoods which arguably need it the most. This session will explore ways that agencies or organizations have expanded the traditional support base of bike and pedestrian advocacy.

3:30 – 4:45 pm

Breakout sessions, round 3

Option 1: What can be done to foster more bicyclists and walkers?

Childhood obesity rates are double what they were in the 1960s. The incidence of diabetes is approaching 1 in 12 people. Clearly we need to come up with more ways to get people of all ages walking and biking more. In addition to these pressing public health issues, the increasing evidence of man-made climate change and increasing stress on existing transportation infrastructure makes the need to get people out of their cars more acute, especially for short distances. We need to come up with ways to enhance opportunities for walking and cycling and make it easier for a greater percentage of the population to make lifestyle changes that make cycling and walking a more viable option. In this session, speakers will give examples of novel techniques and strategies that are creating more walkers and bicyclists.

Option 2: Rail with Trail: opportunity, process and successes. The purpose of this session is to demonstrate the rapid growth of rails-with-trails (RWT) across the country; describe how to make RWTs happen; and discuss innovative statewide legislation encouraging shared use on active rail/transit corridors. The session will establish the necessity and practicality of including shared-use corridors in the planning and implementation of active transportation systems.

Option 3: FHWA training (course TBD)

4 - 5 pm

National Bicycle Dealers Association seminar: site & topic TBD

5 pm

Wrap: how do we follow up? To be followed by a walking tour of historic downtown Providence

6 pm

Reception, site TBD

Thanks to: The Charlotte Foundation, John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, East Coast Greenway Alliance, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Fay Spofford & Thorndike, SRAM Corp., Bikes Belong Coalition, Farmington Valley Trails Council, Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire, Fitzgerald & Halliday, VT Agency of Transportation, & NH Dept. of Transportation.