

BICYCLING & WALKING in the United States



Alliance
for
Biking & Walking

2016



BENCHMARKING REPORT



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Cover photo: Seattle, Washington. Second Avenue.

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Bicycling and Walking Priorities within State Health Improvement Plans

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Background & Purpose

What is a SHIP? A state health improvement plan (SHIP) is a long-term, systematic effort to address public health problems based on the results of State Health Assessment (SHA) activities and the state health improvement process. States work collaboratively with community stakeholders to create a SHA which describes the health of their citizens and the state of their public health infrastructure. These collaborative coalitions then use this information to develop a State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) which helps set priorities and coordinate and target resources. The connection between assessment and improvement planning provides opportunities for intervention. The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Standards and Measures emphasize the importance of collaboration on these activities, as follows:

*While the state health department is responsible for protecting and promoting the health of the population, it cannot be effective acting unilaterally. The health department must partner with other agencies and organizations to plan and share responsibility for health improvement. Other sectors of the state and stakeholders have access to additional data and bring different perspectives that will enhance planning. A collaborative planning process fosters shared ownership and responsibility for the plan's implementation. The state health improvement process is a vehicle for developing partnerships and for understanding roles and responsibilities.*¹

Linkage to Accreditation

Along with a SHA and a Strategic Plan, a SHIP is one of three prerequisites required for PHAB health department accreditation. The resulting documents may be used to help SHA coalitions identify a public health issue and quickly develop a plan of action. For more information about developing a SHIP, CDC has worked with the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) to create guidance and resources for states and territories seeking public health accreditation.²

Excerpts from Three SHIP Examples Which Support Bicycling and Walking

Michigan's State Health Improvement Plan

SHIP Excerpt from: *Michigan's State Health Improvement Plan 2012-2017* (Published August 2012)³

Strategies and Goals 2012-2017

d. The Department of Transportation:

1. Continue to promote the Michigan "Safe Routes to School" Program, an effort designed to increase safety and encourage more students to walk and bike to school daily.
2. Work with the Complete Streets Advisory Council and the State Transportation Commission to develop and communicate a "Complete Streets" policy for Michigan.

Appendix A: Suggested Coalition Strategies to Increase the Availability of Healthy Foods and to Improve Access to Physical Activity Opportunities

2. Encourage coalitions to implement strategies to increase access to physical activity opportunity:

- a. Work with transportation projects to implement non-motorized infrastructure to support residents to walk, bike and use public transportation where appropriate.
- b. Facilitate safe neighborhoods that encourage physical activity where appropriate (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, adequate lighting, multi-use trails, walkways, parks, and playgrounds).

Outcome: The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) developed a SHA that identified obesity as one of its leading health issues. The SHIP advisory group prioritized the state's health issues based on the SHA and other supporting documents, and identified obesity as its priority health issue in their 2012-2017 SHIP. To date, MDCH has worked with local health departments, community coalitions and partners in local government, schools, colleges and

universities, hospitals, parks and recreation, zoning and planning boards, local businesses, law enforcement, and local non-profit organizations to build healthy communities that increase access to physical activity opportunities through trail development and enhancements, park improvements, bike lanes, worksite wellness policies and environmental changes. In collaboration with partner organizations, Michigan passed Complete Streets state legislation in 2010⁴ and has adopted nearly 100 local Complete Streets local policies. MDCH has also assisted in contributing to 190 new Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs through mini-grant funding and technical assistance and the registration of 556 schools as program participants in SRTS events. Through the efforts and funding support of the Michigan Department of Transportation, nearly 100 communities have conducted trainings on walkability and how enhancing walkability leads to more vibrant places. For more information, visit www.michigan.gov/preventobesity.

New York State's Health Improvement Plan

SHIP Excerpt from: *Prevention Agenda 2013-2017: New York State's Health Improvement Plan* (Published June 2013)⁵

Goal #1 – Improve the design and maintenance of the built environment to promote healthy lifestyles, sustainability, and adaption to climate change

Other Governmental Sectors

Promote healthy lifestyles, sustainability and adaptation to climate change

- Support climate change, complete streets, waterfront revitalization programs.
- Offer school, workplace and community-based physical education programs.
- Construct and maintain safe sidewalks, bike lanes, recreational facilities, parks and other amenities, especially in low-income communities.
- Increase public lands designated for public recreation, particularly in low-income communities.
- Provide on-going inspection, maintenance and upgrade of surface transit.
- Issue penalties for promoting carbon, unsustainable building.
- Offer subsidies and other incentives to increase availability of healthy food in low-income communities.

Outcome: The New York State Department of Health, through its Division of Chronic Disease Prevention (DCDP) and Center for Environmental Health (CEH), works closely with academic partners and local health departments to promote a safe and healthy built environment. The DCDP collaborates with the University at Albany School of Public Health to provide technical assistance to counties working on Complete Street policies and initiatives. For more information, visit http://www.albany.edu/sph/cphce/prevention_agenda_cs.shtml. Training offered by the Clinton County Health Department allowed a community group called P.A.S.S. (Plattsburgh Acquiring Safe Streets) to change a long-standing, but unsafe roadway to become a Complete Street; now bike lanes run along each side of the road giving cyclists a safe place to ride and freeing sidewalks up for pedestrians.

Florida's State Health Improvement Plan

SHIP Excerpt from: *Florida's State Health Improvement Plan, 2012-2015* (Published April 2012)⁶

Efforts to achieve objectives in Florida's State Health Improvement Plan, 2012-2015, were largely organized through the Florida Department of Health's mission to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Coordinated efforts with partners such as the Florida Department of Transportation resulted in their adoption of the Complete Streets Policy. The State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong congratulated the Department of Transportation for putting in place a policy: "A physical environment that supports healthy activities is an essential requirement for healthy communities. Safer and more accessible walkways and bicycle lanes give Floridians and visitors the opportunity to incorporate healthy activities into their daily lives." Innovative collaborations like this policy will continue to move health forward in Florida.

Footnotes:

¹ <http://www.phaboard.org/wp-content/uploads/SM-Version-1.5-Board-adopted-FINAL-01-24-2014.docx.pdf>

² <http://www.astho.org/Programs/Accreditation-and-Performance/Accreditation/>

³ http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/MDCH_SHIP_FINAL_8-16-12_400674_7.pdf

⁴ http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9623_31969_57564---,00.html

⁵ https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2013-2017/plan/healthy_environment/focus_area_3.htm

⁶ http://www.floridahealth.gov/about-the-department-of-health/_documents/state-health-improvement-plan.pdf

The Alliance for Biking & Walking creates, strengthens, and unites state and local bicycling and walking advocacy organizations. We give advocates tools to win campaigns that transform communities into great places to bike and walk.

The Benchmarking Project tracks bicycling and walking trends across the United States and publishes an updated report every two years. It is produced as a resource for bicycle and pedestrian advocates, elected officials, agency staff, researchers, media, and anyone searching for a means to measure bicycling and walking progress.

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