



PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

June 12, 2018

Abstract

This document provides a summary and key findings of outreach activities conducted during the preparation of the Middle Susquehanna Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

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Public Outreach Summary

Objectives

1. Raise awareness and support for bike/ped projects
2. Involve users, such as low income, non-motorized communities (Amish), transit-dependent individuals, and recently released individuals, in estimating current bike-ped use and identifying barriers/gaps
3. Recruit advocates as partners for improving bike-ped mobility

Priority Information Needs

1. Public value for bicycle and pedestrian options; public support/concerns for improving bicycle and pedestrian options
2. User and non-user (public) data: Bicycle use, use barriers (safety, comfort, connections), desired improvements; pedestrian use, use barriers, desired improvements
3. Municipal knowledge of bicycle-pedestrian policy topics and resources
4. Identify advocates

Multi-part Outreach Strategy and Results

1. **BIKE-PED PLANNING WEBPAGE** – The SEDA-COG MPO launched a webpage for bicycle and pedestrian planning in April 2018. The webpage hosts information about the Middle Susquehanna Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Regional Advisory Committee.
2. **FACTSHEET** – One-way communication to inform state policy makers of the bicycle and pedestrian planning effort. See attached Factsheet.
3. **PUBLIC SURVEY** – An online survey for the public asking about their walking and bicycling behaviors and about the safety, connectivity, and comfort conditions and needs along walking and bicycling routes in their communities. The survey was advertised via the SEDA-COG MPO's bicycle and pedestrian planning webpage and its social media account and shared with the Williamsport MPO and the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership for distribution at their discretion.

Outcome: 101 responses

Top Findings:

1. Citizens predominantly walk and/or bike as a specific activity or exercise because it's healthy.
2. Bike lanes on roads and wider shoulders were ranked above other potential improvements as most helpful.
3. About half of respondents shared an email address for future notices or information

4. **INTERVIEWS** – Prepared questions asked by committee members of trip generators, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, and policy makers on safety, connectivity, and comfort conditions and needs

Outcome: 6 completed interviews with First Quality, GAF Roofing, Larson Design Group, Lock Haven University, Lycoming College, and Weis Markets

Top Findings:

1. Interviewees are aware of and support planned bicycle and pedestrian projects in Williamsport.

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2. Improvements, such as trails separate from roadways, wider shoulders, and bike lanes, were suggested or agreed as means to improve safe access to destinations.
 3. Larson and GAF are willing to consider support or partnership on any projects in the region; Lycoming College is willing to support local or county projects.

5. **MUNICIPAL SURVEY** – An online survey of municipalities in the Middle Susquehanna planning region to gather data on current and potential policies, awareness of technical and funding assistance programs, and other barriers and concerns. The survey distributed by the SEDA-COG MPO and the Williamsport MPO to their member municipalities.
Outcome: Responses from 48 municipalities or 25 percent of 191 municipalities notified
Top Findings:
 1. Municipalities in each of the seven counties have some awareness for bicycling and pedestrian use and conditions in their communities.
 2. There is municipal interest in developing bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the next 10 years, but few municipalities have written plans that specifically address bicycle and pedestrian needs.
 3. Municipalities may not fully understand the tools available to support the development and maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

6. **OPEN HOUSES** – Conducted as three open public listening sessions for bicycle and pedestrian groups and individuals. The open houses were advertised by flyer shared with the Advisory Committee for distribution. See attached flyer and map of public comments.
Outcome: 3 open houses; 12 attendees
Top Findings:
 1. Scenery plays a significant role in where people like to walk and bike.
 2. Busy highways are an impediment to safe crossing between otherwise low traffic volume neighborhoods or off-road trails.
 3. Planned extensions of existing trails are enthusiastically supported.

7. **SUSQUEHANNA GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT** – When attending local events, including the Selinsgrove River Fest and the Lewisburg Arts Festival, SGP help raise awareness for the bicycle and pedestrian plan by distributing copies of factsheet and the open house flyer from its vendor booth.