

Bicycle and Pedestrian Supportive Code Language

Fact Sheet #3

August 2007

Bicycle Parking

Background

Bicyclists need places to park and secure their bicycles upon reaching their destination. Lacking designated facilities, bicyclists will use trees, utility poles, parking meters, railings, and street furniture to secure their bicycles.

Doing so may cause damage to the bike or to the ad-hoc bike racks and may also result in inconvenience and potential danger (such as tripping hazards) to non-cyclists. Lack of bicycle parking facilities discourages bicycling by cyclists who may feel uncomfortable locking bicycles to non-designated facilities.

In order to avoid the undesirable effects associated with ad-hoc bike racks, bicycle parking facilities can be provided at activity centers that are accessible by bike. Bicycling parking facilities should be convenient, safe, secure, and protected from inclement weather.

At a minimum, well-designed racks should be provided and, depending on the need, enclosed bike lockers located within covered parking structures may be considered.

Benefits of Providing Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking provides an assurance that convenient, safe, and secure parking will be available to cyclists at their preferred destination. In addition, bicycle parking reduces the

potential that damage will occur to the bicycle and/or the trees, poles, or other fixtures that the bicycle would otherwise be locked to. Finally, providing bicycle parking can improve safety by reducing the likelihood that bicycles will be locked in such a way that they impede pedestrians creating tripping hazards.

How It's Done

Communities can provide adequate bicycle parking in the following ways:

- Allocate an identified percentage of off-street parking for bicycle parking;
- Incorporate general bicycle parking provisions in the off-street parking regulations; and
- Implement flexible bicycle parking requirements via the Planning Board.

Examples

Allocate an identified percentage of off-street parking for bicycle parking

The City of Rochester, New York requires that bicycle parking equal to 10 percent of the vehicle parking requirements for the property (for a minimum of two bicycles) be provided at all multifamily housing (over 10 units), commercial, and industrial uses.

An additional requirement is that bicycle parking be located and clearly designated in a safe and convenient location, at least as convenient as the majority of auto spaces provided and that facilities are designed to accommodate U-shaped locking devices and support bicycles in a stable position without damage to wheels, frame, or other components.

The facilities are required to be securely anchored and of sufficient strength to resist vandalism and theft.

Incorporate general bicycle parking provisions in the off-street parking regulations

The Town of Warwick, New York requires that pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as benches, shade, human-scale lighting, and bicycle racks be provided for parking lots meeting specified requirements.

Implement flexible bicycle parking requirements via the Planning Board

The Town of Red Hook, New York includes a provision in its site plan design criteria that facilities be provided, where deemed applicable by the Planning Board, for the short-term parking of bicycles.

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Summary

In communities with ongoing commercial, multi-family, and industrial development, a percentage-based approach could be considered to ensure that bicycle accommodations are provided for new development.

Those communities that prefer additional flexibility or to defer the decision to the Planning Board and/or site plan review process may wish to consider more general code language that would allow but not require the provision of bicycle facilities on a case-by-case basis.

Resources:

Federal Highway Administration, Pedestrian Facilities Users Guide, FHWA-RD-01-102, March 2002.

New York State Department of State, Creating the Community You Want: Municipal Options for Land Use Control, June 1998.

Office of the New York State Comptroller, Division of Local Government Services & Economic Development, Smart Growth in New York State: A Discussion Paper, May 2004.

The Rockefeller Institute of Government, Local Governments in New York State, May 2003.

State of New York, Local Government Handbook, 5th Edition, January 2000.

Codes and Policies as cited.

About the Project:

The objective of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Supportive Code Language project was to develop information on and identify examples of noteworthy zoning code and site planning language

Five Steps toward a Walkable and Bikeable Community:

- Provide sidewalks adjacent to new residential developments (Fact Sheet #1)
- Provide sidewalks adjacent to existing development (Fact Sheet #2)
- Provide bicycle parking facilities adjacent to new commercial and high density development (Fact Sheet #3)
- Design parking lots to incorporate pedestrian-friendly features that provide identifiable separation between vehicles and pedestrians on the site (Fact Sheet #4)
- Locate parking lots to the rear of commercial development sites and the storefront toward the front of the site (Fact Sheet #5)

and guidance that enhances access and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The project is a joint effort between the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) and the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FLRPC).

Project Methodology

GTC staff surveyed county planning departments in the nine-county GTC region to identify those topics related to supporting bicyclists and pedestrians that could be addressed within the scope of the project. The survey identified the following key areas: 1) sidewalk requirements adjacent to new and existing development, 2) bicycle parking requirements,

and 3) automobile parking design.

Within the identified key areas, research was conducted and relevant codes obtained through the G/FLRPC library and internet-based resources. Fact sheets and presentation materials were developed to provide examples that may be considered by jurisdictions that seek to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety, access, and attractiveness within the community.

For further information please contact the Genesee Transportation Council, or visit our web site at <http://www.gtcmpo.org>