

## BUILDING AN INTERMODAL PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, & TRANSIT NETWORK

### What are the objectives of building an intermodal pedestrian, bicycle, and transit network?

To develop a regional network of pedestrian and bicycle trails linked with mass transit systems to provide residents with viable travel alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle.

### Why is this strategy important?

The region needs to provide attractive, accessible travel alternatives, such as bike trails, to get people out of their cars. The number of registered vehicles per resident in the Pioneer Valley has increased by nearly 22% in the 1990s and the number of daily miles driven per resident has risen 2% annually since 1993. However, only 0.3% of Pioneer Valley residents bike to work and only 6.1% walk to work. These statistics indicate that the region is succumbing to sprawling, auto-oriented development patterns. By increasing commuting options, we can decrease congestion and road maintenance costs while improving air quality and the health of our society. Offering residents safe pedestrian and bicycle transportation options linked with mass transit will also provide transportation options for those residents without cars.



*PVRTA service in Springfield*

### How can we accomplish this?

Key elements of this strategy include: 1) developing a high quality network of bicycle-pedestrian trails within 15 minutes of every Pioneer Valley resident; 2) developing bicycle amenities, such as safe and secure bicycle racks and lockers in key heavy use areas, such as downtowns, town centers and transit stops; 3) using zoning to require that new development incorporate bicycle and pedestrian-friendly features, such as linkages to bike paths, sidewalks and transit access features and mandatory bicycle parking; 4) working with existing landowners to develop linkages to pedestrian and bicycle paths; 5) creating bike lanes on key routes by striping outer lanes or building separate trails. Require new developments to set aside space for bike paths or lanes separate from auto traffic; 6) establishing pedestrian-friendly street design standards within subdivision regulations, including requirements such as narrower streets, medians, bike lanes and elimination of free right turn lanes; and 7) developing park and ride lots.

### DID YOU KNOW...

In 2003, traffic congestion in the United States caused 3.7 billion hours of travel delay and 2.3 billion gallons of wasted fuel to a total cost of \$63 billion. A reduction of traffic congestion can be addressed in a variety of ways, particularly through encouraging commuters to use public transit. Walking and biking can also reduce roadway congestion, and in addition provide health, environmental, economic, and quality of life benefits.

## How and where is this strategy working in Massachusetts?

### CASE STUDIES FROM THE PIONEER VALLEY



#### **Manhan Rail Trail, Easthampton**

The 4.2-mile Manhan Rail Trail, dedicated in June 2004, is a good example of an off-road pedestrian and bicycle trail that connects residents with employment and shopping centers, popular bicycle commuting road routes, and bicycle/pedestrian trails in other communities. The trail runs through downtown Easthampton and alongside schools, the public safety complex and the municipal buildings. The trail route extends from South Street in Easthampton to Route 5 adjacent to East Street, only about a mile south of Northampton.

The idea of converting dormant Pioneer Valley Railroad tracks into a linear park or rail trail began to take hold in 1996. A local grass roots organization—the Friends of the Manhan Rail Trail—was created to help fund raise for the community’s portion of the cost to construct the trail and the Town Meeting voted that year to support the acquisition from the PVRT. By 1999, the PVRT removed the track and town acquired the corridor. The Manhan Trail is the Easthampton portion of a planned regional trail. Ultimately, the trail will link with the Norwottuck Trail to UMass-Amherst and Belchertown and to the Northampton Rail Trail in Williamsburg.

#### **Westfield Multi-Modal Transportation Center**

In spring of 2002, preliminary design was completed for a multimodal center and mixed-use development in Westfield’s downtown. The City of Westfield, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA), and the O’Connell Development Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding to build both the transportation center and related private development, slated to be complete in 2004. Located at the corner of Elm and Arnold streets in the Central Business District, the multimodal transportation center will anchor efforts to revitalize the city’s downtown with a restaurant, hotel, and conference and community space. Planning goals for the City of Westfield include encouraging development of underutilized or vacant properties in the city center. Ideally, limited public investment within this area will encourage further private-sector development. Transportation goals would be a comfortable and safe indoor waiting area for downtown passengers and integration of private, regional and para-transit services. Connections will include shopping centers, Westfield State College, and industrial park areas.

### CASE STUDIES FROM OUTSIDE THE PIONEER VALLEY

For additional case studies on intermodal pedestrian, bike and transit projects, click on the following links:

[Rails to Trails](#)

[Smart Growth America -- Transportation](#)

### RELATED VALLEY VISION BUILDING BLOCKS

[Zoning for Bike and Pedestrian Features](#)

[Traffic Calming Measures](#)