

BY KEN KRAUSE

Increased walking, biking & transit drive MassDOT goals

Could you triple the total distance that you walk for transportation each year? Could everyone in Massachusetts? That is one of the goals established by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation in its GreenDOT Implementation Plan, a road map of strategies and policies for creating “healthier, greener and cleaner mobility” that officials hope will help the state achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets, improve public health outcomes and create stronger communities.

Sound familiar? Those are essentially the goals that have guided WalkBoston, the nation’s first pedestrian advocacy organization, in developing its own innovative approach over the last two decades.

“WalkBoston is pleased to see MassDOT stepping up to set an ambitious goal for tripling walking, biking and transit trips by 2030,” said WalkBoston Executive Director Wendy Landman, who last fall was a featured panelist discussing “Mode Shift to a Healthier State” at Moving Together 2012, the Commonwealth’s annual statewide walking and bicycling conference. “With the goal in place, now the hard work begins. To accomplish this very significant change in travel patterns, MassDOT must undertake effective investments, programs and marketing.”

How much do people walk today to work, shop and eat out? MassDOT set the baseline figure at 101 million “Personal Miles Traveled” on foot across the state in 2010. Its goals are to increase that total to 233 million miles by 2020 and to 333 million miles by 2030. MassDOT also established goals for tripling the amount of travel

by bicycle and on public transit. If these modes absorb some of anticipated future travel demand, MassDOT envisions a leveling off of automobile usage, easing highway congestion and reducing emissions.

Of course, the devil is in the details, but that is where WalkBoston comes in — especially since MassDOT built its goals around the idea of providing more access to walking, biking and transit.

WalkBoston has a track record of working with communities across Massachusetts to improve walkability. We frequently offer guidance on how to best design shared use paths for both walkers and bicyclists, and produce sound data and share successfully implemented best practices on how to improve pedestrian access to transit.

Finding creative and cost-effective solutions to make walking and bicycling safer is a goal everyone can support, wherever they live. For more information on GreenDOT, visit www.massdot.state.ma.us/Green/DOT.aspx.



Why don't people take transit? Unsafe and uninviting: Mystic Ave. Somerville bus stop without sidewalk, crosswalk, shelter or lighting.

BY CHRISTINE GIRAUD

Why walk to work?

My commute to work from lower Allston to Back Bay requires a two-mile walk and two stops on the T. While the transit part of the commute is passive, the walking part is empowering and the physical activity releases tension. While walking, I feel connected to the city.

According to a 2012 benchmark report by the Alliance for Biking and Walking, of all US cities, Boston has the greatest percentage of people who walk to work—13.9%. That’s a significant difference from the national average of 2.5%.

Why do Bostonians walk to work? Richard Florida, senior editor at the Atlantic and director of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the University of Toronto, researched this question for a July 2011 study in the magazine. Based on 2005 data from the American Community Survey, he found that weather alone was not predictive. Walking was more common in cities with colder January temperatures [Minneapolis and New York] and less common in warmer cities [Phoenix, Houston, and Oklahoma City]. Also, population density doesn’t correlate with walking to work, though use of public transportation is higher in dense cities.

Florida found that the way we get to work is associated with our occupation. “Working in the creative sector—scientists, engineers, techies, innovators, researchers, as well as artists, designers, writers, musicians, healthcare professionals, business, finance, the legal sector and education—is positively associated with the percentages of people who take public transit or walk or bike to work. This creative class variable was the largest factor of all.”

BY HILLARY BORCHERDING

Rural Walking Toolkit

You don’t have to live in Boston to want safe ways to walk to school, the library, or the park. In Bolton, a semi-rural town, WalkBoston found that a large majority of residents [89%] favored more walkways. Walking is the most basic and fundamental form of movement for all people, in every neighborhood across the state.

Many smaller communities already have sidewalks in town centers, with rugged recreation trails in conservation areas. Yet residents often have to drive to a place where they can walk.

With support from the State Department of Public Health, WalkBoston recently released a Rural Walking Toolkit, which explores how to improve walking conditions for residents of rural and suburban areas. Case studies in the Toolkit focus on pedestrian plans and facilities from 13 Massachusetts towns including Lincoln in metro Boston, Salisbury in the north, Lenox in the west, Dudley in the south and Barnstable on the Cape. The Toolkit is designed to help residents and municipal staff across the state compare notes and learn how to increase walkability in their towns.

The Rural Walking Toolkit and other resources are available on our website, www.walkboston.org.

Boston

WALKBOSTON BOARD

Joe Beggan
David Black
Betsy Boveroux
Amy Branger
Joyce DiBona
Diana Doty
Mark Favermann
Nina Garfinkle
Richard Garver
Ann Hershfang
Karla Karash
Matt Lawlor/vice president
Erik Lund/counsel
Jerry Pucillo
Bill Reyelt
Greg Rogers/treasurer
Emma Rothfeld Yashar/secretary
Jessica Sawyer/president
Linda Sharpe
Karen Cord Taylor

CONTACTS/COMMITTEES

executive director
Wendy Landman

staff
Hillary Borcharding
Stacey Beuttell
Julie DeMauro
Dorothea Hass
Barbara Maratos
Robert Sloane

interns
Ed Meng
Lizzy Briskin

communications
Nina Garfinkle

fundraising
Diana Doty

legislation
Matt Lawlor

membership
Kathryn Henderson

newsletter editors
Christine Giraud & Nina Cohen

nominations
Karen Cord Taylor

programs & events
Mark Favermann

walks
Robert Sloane

Favorite walks from some of our local [and favorite] walkers

Where do you like to walk?

Here are some walks of prominent Massachusetts residents.

Marlborough Street on the weekend

Marlborough Street has been called one of the prettiest streets in America. I usually ride the T to work, but weekends I walk down Marlborough Street for pleasure. I walk under the gas lamps [now solar powered] and look at the intricate architecture and mini gardens of Back Bay. From end to end the walk is no more than half an hour. If you are lucky enough to be there in May, the trees and flowers in full bloom are especially spectacular.

— Richard Davey/Secretary and CEO, MA Dept. of Transportation

Allens Pond Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary, Westport, MA

About 1.5 hours south of Boston off I-195. One trail runs along a beach on Buzzards Bay, where you have to do a bit of climbing over large rocks. Kids will love finding hermit crabs and other inhabitants of the littoral zone. On your return, you can follow the edge of a salt pond and hope to see the ospreys. There's a trail by a freshwater pond, another in open fields, yet another in deep woods. You'll see piping plover and great blue heron, red-winged blackbirds and woodcocks. You'll come home renewed.

— Sue Miller/Professor at Smith College in Northampton and author of 10 novels and a memoir

Fall River waterfront

Near my home this walk is, for me, a physical and spiritual renewal. We begin at the Iwo Jima Memorial in Bicentennial Park and follow the mile-long boardwalk along the Taunton River, running into neighbors and acquaintances and watching some of the best sunsets anywhere. The path runs through DCR's Heritage State Park, bringing walkers into Battleship Cove and ultimately to the "Portas da Cidade," a replica of the beautiful Gates of the City whose original is in our sister city, Ponta Delgada in Portugal. This walk offers beauty, history and a cultural bridge across the ocean.

— Edward Lambert/Commissioner, MA Dept. of Conservation & Rec.

East Boston & Food

Between Maverick and Wood Island T stations, you can sample some of the best Hispanic food in Boston. Colombians, Salvadoreans, Mexicans, Venezuelans and Peruvians shop and dine along this stretch. Stop at La Sultana Bakery for sweet and savory treats, get a bag of alfaros at Lolly's or some frozen goodies at the Heladeria on Central. Don't miss Karen Groceries on Bennington. Tempted by fresh tamales? Have lunch at Rincon Limeno in Day Square and taste ceviche, chicken, and potatoes. In your shopping bag? Dulce-de-leche, chocobananas, arepas, pupusas.

— Dr. Merry White/BU Anthropology professor, teaches Foods of Boston

6.13 more walking

WalkBoston makes walking safer and easier in Massachusetts to encourage better health, a cleaner environment and vibrant communities.

WalkBoston
45 School Street
Boston, MA 02108
T: 617.367.9255
F: 617.367.9285
info@walkboston.org
www.walkboston.org

mission

thank you!

RACEWALKER



2013
NON-PROFIT
MARATHON
PROGRAM



STRIDERS

Eaton Vance
Massport
Robinson & Cole
Trinity Financial

STROLLERS

Boston Society of Architects
DLA Piper
Eastern Bank
Fay, Spofford & Thorndike
Goody, Clancy
HMFH Architects
HNTB
HYM Investment
MassDevelopment
Microsoft NERD Center
Millennium Partners

New Balance

NStar
Partners HealthCare
Plymouth Rock
Sasaki
Stantec
TEC Engineering
The Collaborative
TranSystems
Tufts Medical Center
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin
Zipcar

AMBLERS

A Better City
Alta Planning & Design
Architectural Heritage Foundation
BETA Group
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
BEVCO Assoc.
BSC Group
Cabot, Cabot & Forbes
Carol R. Johnson
Cecil Group
Cetrulo LLP
CommuterChoice
Copley Wolff Design

Crosby, Schlessinger,

Smallridge
Edelstein & Company
Environmental Business Council of NE
Friends of PO Square
Gilbane
Goulston & Storrs
Halvorson Design
Harpoon Brewery
Howard/Stein-Hudson
Jacobs Engineering Group
LifePlans
McMahon Assoc.
Nitsch Engineering
Parsons Brinkerhoff
STV
Toole Design
Transit Realty Assoc.
URS

CONTRIBUTORS

AAA
ADD
BR Alexander
Cambridge Traffic, Parking & Transportation
Leers Weinzapfel Assoc.

Safe walking

Don't leave for vacation this summer before showing your support for safe walking. Walking is the most fundamental form of transportation, for people of every age, income or [dis]ability. We know that walking:

- improves your health
- boosts your mood
- reduces our carbon footprint [if chosen over driving]
- strengthens local businesses

Despite walking's central role in keeping our communities active and healthy, it is often overlooked. We need your help to build statewide support for pedestrian-friendly communities.

Become a member today.
Donate online, or by mail.

Step on it

Saturday, July 27
Sidewalk Scavenger Hunt
Location & time: TBD

Q: What do you get when you combine pedestrians, puzzles and prizes?

A: A Sidewalk Scavenger Hunt.

Head down to the Seaport District and test just how well you know Boston's waterfront. Discover new restaurants and recently renewed buildings as you and your team race to find 10 secret objects. Find the most objects and your team will win big!

For registration details, visit the WalkBoston calendar at walkboston.org