BMTS Article Digest
May – June 2018

BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee Members:

The following is a compilation of articles that may be of interest to BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee members. This and past digests can also be accessed in the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee page of www.bmtsonline.com.

Scott

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR BICYCLING & WALKING
bikewalk.org
a program of Project for Public Spaces

Take a look at the National Center for Bicycling & Walking's newsletter, **CenterLines**. You can also arrange to have it emailed directly to you.

See http://www.bikewalk.org/newsletter.php.

CenterLines is the bi-weekly electronic news bulletin of the National Center for Bicycling & Walking. ***CenterLines*** is our way of quickly delivering news and information you can use to create more walkable and bicycle-friendly communities.

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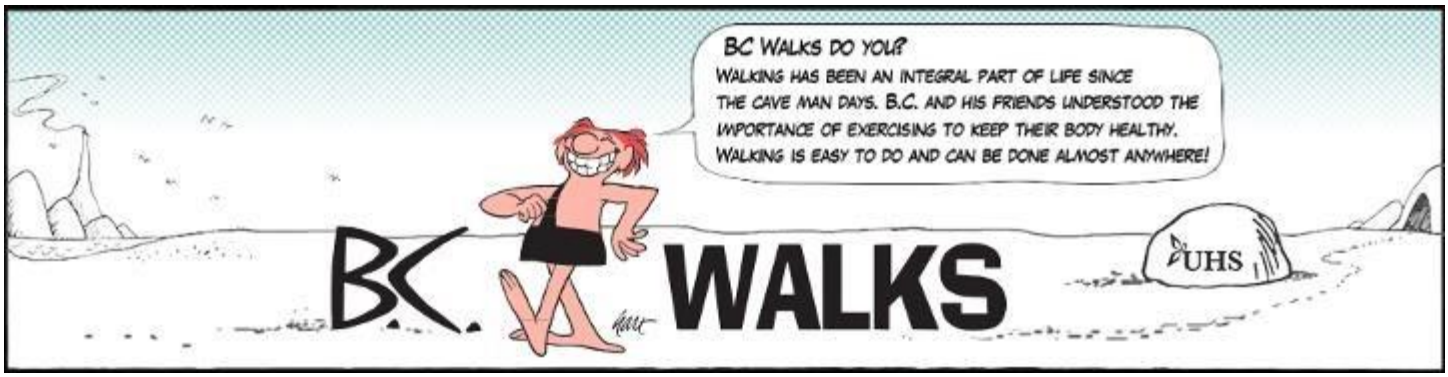


Go to www.BCWalks.com!

Check out these websites for Bike & Pedestrian Information!

coexist NYS

https://www.facebook.com/coexistnys/ and https://www.youtube.com/user/CoexistNYS or www.capitalcoexist.org

In particular, view the interactive educational video clips.

Press and Sun-Bulletin | Page A01

Saturday, 19 May 2018

Path to BU will follow Route 434

Jeff Platsky

Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin USA TODAY NETWORK

Bowing to community pressure, the New York Department of Transportation will build the Two Rivers Greenway extension entirely along the south side of Route 434.

A letter mailed by DOT this week to neighborhood residents confirmed the plan that was clearly preferred by residents during two public meetings held in December has been selected as the chosen route.

Two other options presented by the transportation department on Wednesday called for the Greenway to be built either largely along Vestal Avenue or using a portion of Vestal Avenue from Ivanhoe Road west.

The third option, the one selected, calls for construction of an entirely new pathway along the 434 East roadway either at grade level, 5 feet above grade or 17 feet above grade. Those speaking at the public sessions last December said building the elevated above-grade path on the south side of 434 would have the dual benefit of providing users a view of the Susquehanna River while shielding the neighborhoods along Vestal Avenue from road noise.

"We had to present all of the options," said David Hamburg, spokesman for the DOT region based in Binghamton.

Though the Route 434 option may be the most expensive alternative, Department of Transportation representatives said it was the clear favorite during their public comment sessions.

"Many residents expressed concerns with the potential impacts to residents' property and quality of life associated with" the options that took the path along Vestal Avenue, the one page letter to residents said.

The 12-foot wide path is designed to provide a pedestrian and bicycle path from downtown Binghamton to Binghamton University, a more than a 3-mile stretch.

Safety was among the primary concerns expressed at a two-hour meeting at MacArthur School in December. Residents said the Vestal Avenue plan placed pedestrians at risk as they cross the driveways of about a half dozen residences on the north side of the street. The Ivanhoe Road alternative was criticized for potentially bringing more traffic hazards to a stretch of road where the 30-mile-per-hour speed limit is often ignored.

If the route was placed along the full length of Vestal Avenue from MacArthur Park to the Route 434 intersection, transportation department representatives acknowledged the plan would have necessitated buying some property from residential owners in order to accommodate the path.

Based on a timeline provided the DOT in December, design approval is expected for this fall, with construction star ting in 2020 and completion scheduled for 2022.

In the letter, the transportation department said it is conducting field work and "evaluating specific design elements" for the preferred alternative.

At just over $4 million, the initial phase of the Greenway construction is complete. It includes a pedestrian friendly crossing at Conklin Avenue and South Washington Street; construction that separates bikes and pedestrians on the Route 434 overpass; and a path leading to MacArthur Park.

The multi-use path stretches from Conklin Avenue to a trail across the Pennsylvania Avenue bridge and to Vestal Avenue.

Officials say they hope the project will prevent tragedies by making pedestrian access safer. The gateway is near where Binghamton University student Stefani Lineva died in a hit-and-run accident.

Three alternatives presented by the Department of Transportation for the Binghamton Greenway. PROVIDED PHOTO

Mountain bikers take a liking to sloppy Aqua Terra

Tom Wilber, twilber@gannett.com | @wilberwrites

Published 6:20 p.m. ET May 20, 2018 | **Updated 6:48 p.m. ET May 20, 2018**

The unrefined venue and the challenging trails were generally received with glowing reviews.

"This is definitely the spirit of Enduro racing," said Robbins, who has competed on the World Cup circuit. "Raw, natural — mountain biking at its purist level."

Many out-of-towners, some from as far away as Maine, Maryland and Virginia, had similar answers when asked why they made the trip.

Rachel Pageau tears up the course in the women's Pro race in the third round of the Eastern States Cup on Sunday, May 20, 2018 at Aqua Terra Park in the Town of Binghamton. *(Photo: Sean Murphy / Correspondent photo)*

"Everybody started talking about how rad the trails are," said Korey Hopkins, a network engineer who drove from Baltimore with several friends. "It was hard to pass up. It's a great chance to disconnect from regular life for a while."

The trails were "tight and technical" with the mud adding yet "another whole dimension of interestingness," said Thom Parks, also from Baltimore.

"Good old-school east coast riding," said Matthew Sullivan, who traveled from Montague Mass. with his children Whitney, 7 and Lana, 10; and his girlfriend Amber Orcutt.

Cyclist and spectators forded a creek, swollen after this weekend's downpours, to get from the parking lot to the race venue. Most skipped across on a log or simply waded on through. Some washed their bikes. A few took a dip.

"It's been the hit of the day," said Maxxis series race director Chris Gilbert, standing near a bright red awning that said "Feed Your Adventure."

Greg McCausland, race founder and organizer from Binghamton, took in the action on a steep section of trail where the last of the amateurs were finishing Sunday afternoon.

Matthew Sullivan negotiates a tricky descent in the Maxxis ESC Enduro on Sunday, May 20, 2018 at Aqua Terra Park in the Town of Binghamton. *(Photo: Sean Murphy / Correspondent photo)*

Spectators whooped and cheered and rang cowbells as they saw the riders approaching in the woods above on one of the most intimidating sections. The pros and top amateurs had long-since finished, but the crowd was fully behind those — many new to the sport — finishing near the end.

Local EMT personnel patrolled the hill on ATVs. They were kept busy with some cuts and bruises, but no series injuries.

"This thing is just beginning to build," said McCausland, noting the skyrocketing grass roots popularity of enduro racing. "It really has growth potential. Some of it depends on how much the county wants to get behind it," he added.

Back at the parking lot, Gilbert readied the award ceremonies and greeted many stoked riders coming off the hill after a grueling day.

Aqua Terra, is now on the map of the national mountain bike scene.

"There will be a lot of people who will be back," Gilbert said.

BICYCLE VS. TRUCK COLLISION IN CAMPVILLE SENDS MAN TO HOSPITAL

KATHY WHYTE

WNBF 1290AM – May 31, 2018

A 74 year old bicyclist is recovering from injuries suffered after being bumped by a truck while he was riding on Route 17C in Campville May 29.

New York State Police say the cyclist suffered shoulder and rib injuries and was taken to Wilson Memorial Regional Medical Center for treatment.

The driver of the truck was ticketed for unsafely moving from a lane and driving over hazard markings.

The collision happened in the area near Coventry Road.

Status Report, Vol. 53, No. 3 | May 8, 2018

ON FOOT, AT RISK
Study highlights rising pedestrian deaths, points toward solutions

The March crash of an Uber vehicle that killed a woman in Tempe, Arizona, was unusual for involving a self-driving vehicle. But in other ways, it was typical of fatal pedestrian crashes: an SUV traveling on an urban arterial road struck a person crossing midblock in the dark.

Pedestrian deaths have jumped 46 percent since reaching their lowest point in 2009, as pedestrian crashes have become both deadlier and more frequent. The increase has been mostly in urban or suburban areas, at nonintersections, on arterials — busy roads designed mainly to funnel vehicle traffic toward freeways — and in the dark, a new IIHS study shows. Crashes were increasingly likely to involve SUVs and high-horsepower vehicles.

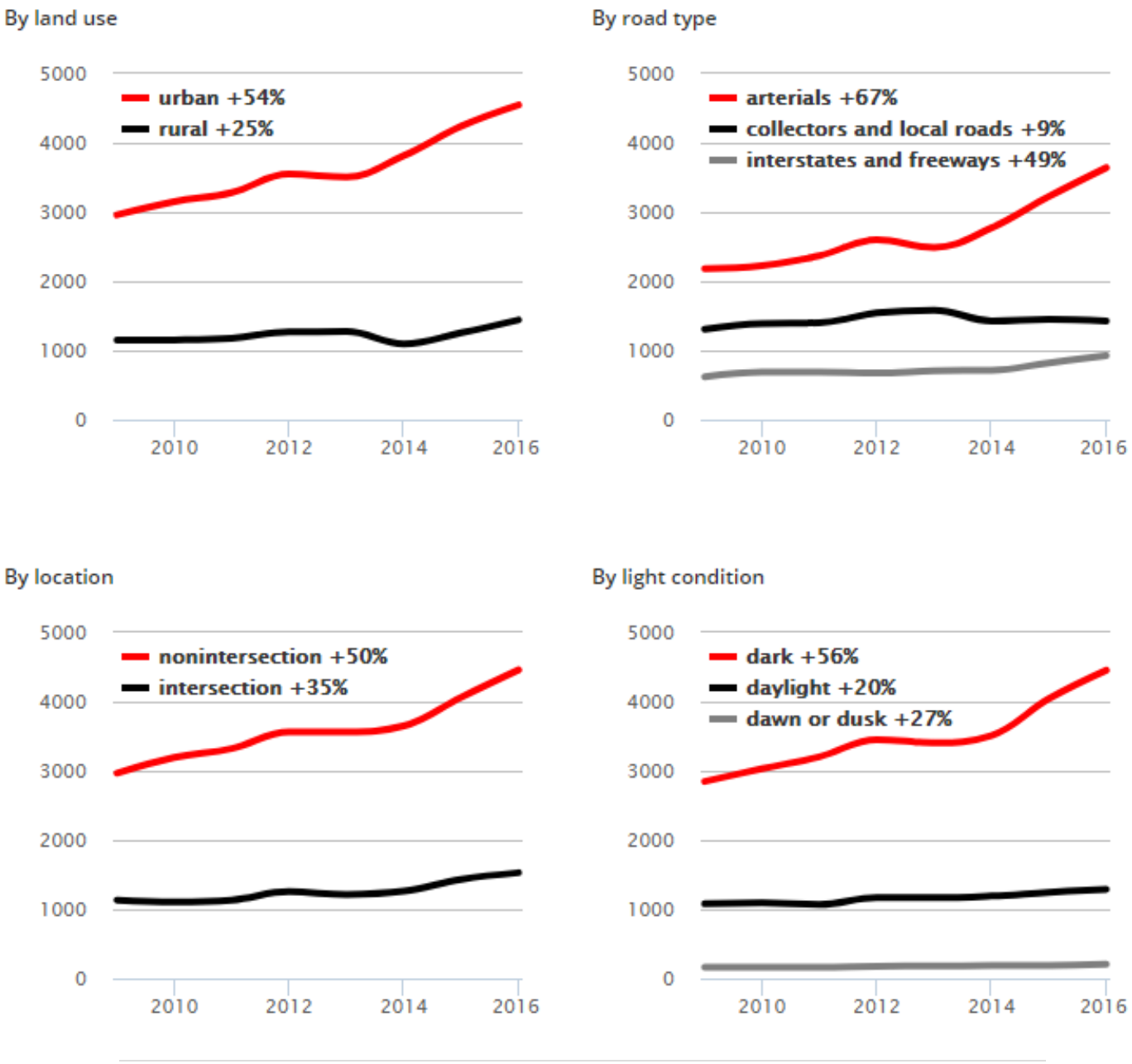
"Understanding where, when and how these additional pedestrian crashes are happening can point the way to solutions," says IIHS President David Harkey. "This analysis tells us that improvements in road design, vehicle design and lighting and speed limit enforcement all have a role to play in addressing the issue."

A total of 5,987 pedestrians were killed in crashes in 2016, accounting for 16 percent of all crash fatalities. The number of pedestrians killed each year has declined 20 percent since 1975, but the 2016 toll was the highest since 1990.

For the new study, IIHS researchers looked at pedestrian crash trends during 2009–16 to pinpoint the circumstances under which the largest increases occurred. Using federal fatality data and crash numbers, the researchers looked at roadway, environmental, personal and vehicle factors to see how they changed over the study period. They also looked at changes in the number of pedestrian deaths relative to the number of pedestrians involved in crashes.

Pedestrian crashes have become both deadlier and more frequent. The increase has been mostly in urban or suburban areas, away from intersections, on busy main roads and in the dark. Crashes are increasingly likely to involve SUVs and high-horsepower vehicles.

PEDESTRIAN DEATHS, 2009-16



The researchers found that not only did pedestrian crashes increase, they also became deadlier. Deaths per 100 crash involvements increased 29 percent from 2010, when they reached their lowest point, to 2015, the most recent year that data on all crashes, including nonfatal ones, were available.

From 2009 to 2016, the largest increases in pedestrian deaths occurred under the circumstances that historically have seen the highest numbers of pedestrian fatalities. Pedestrian deaths increased 54 percent in urban areas, which include both cities and what most people consider suburbs. They also increased 67 percent on arterials, 50 percent at nonintersections and 56 percent in the dark.

Although pedestrian crashes most frequently involved cars, fatal single-vehicle crashes involving SUVs increased 81 percent, more than any other type of vehicle. The power of passenger vehicles involved in fatal single-vehicle pedestrian crashes, as measured by the ratio of horsepower to weight, also increased, with larger increases at the top of the scale.

Among age groups, the largest increase in pedestrian fatalities per population was for people ages 20–69.

Designing roads for pedestrians

The large increase in pedestrian deaths on arterials isn't surprising. These roads often have a shortage of convenient and safe crossing locations.

"When people are forced to walk long distances to the nearest signalized intersection, they are more likely to choose the riskier option of sprinting across multiple lanes of traffic," Harkey says. "Communities can improve safety by providing more options to safely cross."

But, Harkey warns, it's not enough to simply paint more crosswalks on the pavement. Midblock crossings need features that alert drivers to stop, such as pedestrian-activated beacons.

One example is the pedestrian hybrid beacon, which stays dark until a pedestrian pushes a button, at which point it flashes yellow, and then moves to solid yellow before activating two solid red lights. This type of beacon, formerly known as a HAWK, has been shown to reduce crashes (see "Double-red signal reduces crashes at crosswalks," Sept. 28, 2010).
Other improvements, such as curb extensions or median crossing islands, can shorten the distance people must walk across or allow them to traverse just a couple of lanes and a single direction of traffic at a time.

Adding sidewalks is an obvious way to reduce the risk to pedestrians walking along a road.

These elements can be part of broader reconfigurations known as road diets, in which the number of travel lanes for vehicle traffic is reduced. In addition to reducing the number of lanes for pedestrians to cross and sometimes providing room for bike lanes, road diets have been shown to lower vehicle speeds.

"Good design should prioritize the safety of all road users," Harkey says. "It's possible to improve streets for pedestrians while still allowing vehicle traffic to get where it needs to go."

A woman crosses at a pedestrian hybrid beacon in Arlington, Virginia. The beacon remains dark until a pedestrian activates it. First, it flashes yellow before moving to solid yellow and then to solid double red.

Reining in speed increases

Of course, allowing vehicles to get where they need to go doesn't mean they need to go quite as fast as people are used to.

Faster speeds make for more frequent and deadlier crashes. The faster a car is moving, the less time the driver has to see a pedestrian and slow or stop. Higher impact speeds also result in more injurious crashes.

Reliable information on vehicle speeds is not available in fatality data, but IIHS researchers did find that the vehicles involved in fatal pedestrian crashes, like the overall vehicle fleet, are increasingly powerful. Previous IIHS research has shown that vehicles with higher horsepower-to-weight ratios tend to be driven faster and are more likely to violate posted speed limits (see "Vehicles are packing more horsepower, and that pushes up travel speeds," May 24, 2016).
Despite the dangers of high speeds, the story of speed limits in recent decades has been one of continual increases.

In addition to lower speed limits, broader use of speed cameras to enforce existing limits is a proven solution. Institute research has shown that automated speed enforcement reduces speed limit violations and injury crashes (see "Speed cameras reduce injury crashes in Maryland county, IIHS study shows," Oct. 1, 2015).

Improving vehicles

Some risks to pedestrians could be lessened by making changes to vehicles.

A large majority of pedestrian fatalities occur in the dark, and that number increased much faster than the number of pedestrians killed in other light conditions. In 2016, 4,453 pedestrians were killed in the dark, compared with 1,290 in daylight and 205 at dawn or dusk.

Although better street lighting may be needed in some locations, another obvious solution is better headlights. IIHS has been working to encourage improvements in this area through its headlight rating program, launched in 2016. Headlights have been gradually improving. In the 2016 model year, there were just two models with available good-rated headlights. So far for the 2018 model year, there are 26 good headlight packages.

Vehicles with front crash prevention systems that recognize pedestrians also would help — particularly if they are designed to work in low light. A recent HLDI analysis found that Subaru vehicles equipped with pedestrian detection had claim rates for pedestrian injuries that were 35 percent lower than the same vehicles without the system.
Finally, vehicle design changes could help lessen the severity of crashes, especially when it comes to SUVs. These make up an increasingly large percentage of registered vehicles, and previous studies have found that SUVs, pickups and vans are associated with a higher risk of death or severe injury to pedestrians. Such vehicles have higher and often more vertical front ends than cars and are more likely to strike a pedestrian in the head or chest. Changes in the front-end design of these vehicles could help lessen the severity of injuries when they strike pedestrians (see "Softer vehicle fronts and pedestrian detection systems could reduce pedestrian deaths, injuries," Dec. 30, 2013).

Press and Sun-Bulletin | Page A07

Tuesday, 29 May 2018

STATE BRIEFS

Cities around the world seek to emulate NYC's elevated park

ALBANY – The success of New York City's elevated park, the High Line, has inspired a slew of projects across the United States and internationally that repurpose unneeded rail and road structures as green space.

Philadelphia, Chicago, Miami, Washington, D.C. and London are among the cities with High Line-style projects completed or planned. All seek to capture some of the popularity of the 23block-long railroad viaduct in lower Manhattan planted with trees and flowers that attracts more than five million visitors a year.

Now New York's capital city of Albany is planning its own linear park on an unneeded highway ramp. Construction of the Albany Skyway is slated to begin next year.

Besides being a linear park, the Skyway will connect the city's downtown with the Hudson River waterfront across a busy interstate.

Hit-and-run crash kills 3-year-old boy in Rochester

Associated Press, AP

Published 3:14 p.m. ET June 3, 2018 | **Updated 9:38 p.m. ET June 3, 2018**

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – A 3-year-old boy has been killed in a hit-and-run crash in Rochester.

Police tell the Democrat and Chronicle that the child was one of two pedestrians who were hit by a car at about 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

The 3-year-old was pronounced dead at a hospital. His name was not immediately released. A 23-year-old woman was hospitalized for injuries that were not considered life-threatening.

Police say the injured woman was not the child's mother.

Police say the car that killed the child may have been one of two vehicles that collided moments later a short distance away.

Four people in the two cars were injured in the second crash. They were taken to hospitals with injuries that were not life-threatening.