

8. Marketing and Education Programming

Objective: *Support programs for bicycle, pedestrian and driver education.*

A. EDUCATION

Each year approximately 800 bicyclists are killed and as many as 500,000 require emergency room care for injuries. Approximately one third of all bicyclist deaths occur among youth ages five to 20, and 41% of non-fatal injuries occur to children under the age of 15 years (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1997). Nationally, cyclist errors contributed to almost 65 percent of the bicycle-motor vehicle fatalities in 1991. This shows that there is a strong need for education of bicyclists in using the roadway, but it also builds a strong case for educating drivers of the rights and needs of cyclists on the roadway.

There were 77,000 pedestrians injured in traffic crashes in 1997 (NHTSA, 1997); of these 5307 were killed. This is a decrease of 21 percent from the 6,745 pedestrians killed in 1987. Similar to the bicycle statistics, pedestrian accidents are overwhelmingly due to human error, rather than facility engineering or environment. The decrease in fatalities is encouraging, but there is a need to provide better education of pedestrians and drivers in order to increase the safety for this under-served mode.

There are several strategies that can increase the safety of walking and cycling. One of the best places to start is in the school system. School-age children generally walk and bike to school, and safety should be part of the curriculum. Education needs to target automobile drivers, as well as cyclists and pedestrians. However, bicyclists need to know the “rules of the road” as much as drivers. It would be ideal to see a pedestrian/bicycle education curriculum be presented as part of a continuum of traffic safety education that begins in elementary school and ends in high school.

Education does not apply to just the cyclist, pedestrian or driver. It also applies to the need to educate city engineers, public works departments and planning and zoning commissions to the needs that cyclists and pedestrians have. Educating these groups will facilitate the design and inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle friendly facilities. Encouraging these groups to think about alternative modes during their normal course of work will help to promote and advance these modes.

B. MARKETING

Raising the citizens’ awareness of bicycling and pedestrian issues is a challenge. Marketing the alternate modes of walking and cycling is a key element to the long-term success of the plan and all of the recommendations and will ultimately increase the number of people who chose these modes of transportation.

An effective way to promote non-motorized transportation is the designation of an employee or volunteer representative in a local government to coordinate and promote these activities. The CMPO may not have the resources to hire full-time staff to do this job, but can explore the use of volunteer programs and university interns to accomplish this task. Full or part time promotion of the non-motorized modes of transportation and the organization of local advocacy groups would be valuable.

Developing a uniform signing program with the cooperation of all the local jurisdictions and UDOT should be pursued immediately. The signing should have a theme that reflects the uniqueness of Cache Valley and be easily identified. Brochures with a route map similar to the “Biking Bridgerland” should also be developed and distributed at the tourist information centers around the State, local government buildings, libraries, local bike stores, schools, the transit center, and to major employers.

Similarly, the local governments should encourage and work with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce within their community to develop walkable business districts. This could have the affect of increasing not only the market of the businesses, but also increasing the attractiveness of these areas for all pedestrians.

Continued participation in organized bicycle events, like the Multiple Sclerosis 150 and other local biking events in Cache Valley, should be encouraged. Encouraging trail development, the rights of cyclists to use the roadway and other such advocacies should be done to help foster the development of cycling as a useful mode of travel.

The following is a list of recommendations for education and marketing:

- ◆ Promotion of “Effective Cycling Programs”, sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists, This program could be done as a curriculum item in schools or could be sponsored by other groups such as the Boy Scouts or in city recreation programs
- ◆ Bicycle Rodeos, usually run by local police departments, that use games to teach school age children cycling rules
- ◆ Encouragement of programs like the Rally for Safe Biking, sponsored by the local Safe Kids Coalition
- ◆ Drivers Education classes incorporating bicycle and pedestrian issues
- ◆ Public Service Announcements promoting safety for bicyclists and motorists
- ◆ Public Service Announcements explaining how biking and walking can help reduce congestion, improve air quality, and create a more friendly environment
- ◆ Bumper stickers similar to the ones now in circulation about motorcycle awareness
- ◆ Helmet usage and/or subsidy program
- ◆ Regular newspaper and news outlet pieces on pedestrian and bicycle safety and education
- ◆ Educate city engineers, planning and zoning boards and public works departments on the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists
- ◆ Explore the use of VISTA , AmeriCorps or Utah State University internship programs to promote and advance parts of this plan