

Multi-Modal Toolkit

A community guide to multi-modal transportation policies in Wisconsin



1 Identify roads (or segment of roadway) that could be multi-modal

Cities should review their local streets through a “complete streets” lens with the goal of reducing driving. This should encourage pedestrian and bicycle trips by making a safer, more comfortable roadway for those that use alternative modes

Policy: Assign a government employee or create a task force to review the network of public roads. Specific improvements may include: ADA curb ramps, marked crosswalks, countdown signal timers, curb extensions, speed bumps, raised crosswalks, raised intersections, median islands, planter strips with street

2 Reduce parking in residential and non-residential districts

Review your minimum parking requirements in residential and non-residential districts to see if these requirements are really supported by demand. Where feasible, reduce or eliminate parking minimums and increase bicycle parking.

Policy: Review your zoning code to find places where parking minimums may be too egregious or simply not necessary. The cities of Ashland, Fitchburg, Madison, Milwaukee, Steven’s Point, and Watertown have removed parking minimums for downtown areas and most, if not all, of their zoning districts.

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3 Promote transit-oriented development (TOD) projects

Promote new development adjacent to existing transit, walking, and biking infrastructure. Transit-oriented development centers around amenity rich areas, which can reduce travel distances, support existing transit networks, and promote alternative forms of travel.

Policy: Create a city or regional TOD strategic plan that reviews the zoning code (including parking minimums), the existing transit network and walking and biking hubs. The plan should prioritize infill development at TOD locations by rezoning areas to support higher density, mixed-use developments.

4 Encourage ridesharing/commuting services

Ride-sharing/carpooling is an effective way to reduce congestion, reduce emissions, and save individuals money. WisDOT runs a matchlist to help commuters meet potential carpooling partners. Local governments should encourage major employers to participate in ridesharing opportunities.

Policy: Create a taskforce of local employers and government employees to explore the potential for ridesharing. Educate local employers on the benefits of ridesharing and encourage the creation of new programs if none exist.

5 Encourage government employees to use other modes of transportation

City employees can lead the charge by commuting in other modes of transportation or working from home where appropriate. This could include subsidized bus passes, additional bicycle parking at government facilities, and organized carpooling.

Policy: Changing work policy about when and where government employees can work or implementing a remote working policy. Explore options to subsidize bus passes if transit is available. Build additional bike parking, preferably indoor bicycle parking if possible. Establish a government ride-sharing/carpooling service if none exists.

6 Improve transit ridership

Money for transit has been tight, but transit remains one of the best methods to reduce carbon emissions. Additionally, expanding transit can improve the quality of life for many historically marginalized communities while minimizing carbon emissions, reducing congestion, and improving air quality.

Policy: Where feasible, expand transit services through increased frequency, route expansions, and more regional connectivity. Consider building covered bus shelters at major locations. Also consider creating a wheel tax to support transit services.

