

2. Regional and Local Visions

a. Regional Vision

PedPlan2010 works to advance the goals of MetroFuture, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) and the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) regional plan for growth and preservation for the people who live and work in the Boston Region. MetroFuture seeks to expand travel choices for the region's workers and residents, to concentrate growth in areas where infrastructure already exists, and to link land use and transportation planning. Increased opportunities for walking play an integral role in achieving MetroFuture's goals. Even with MetroFuture, the Boston Region still faces the challenge of how to identify and implement pedestrian programs. In response to this challenge, PedPlan2010 has been developed.



The overarching goal of PedPlan2010 is to increase walking. It is ultimately up to individuals to make the choice to walk, but local governments, advocacy organizations, and citizen groups can change existing built environments, public policies, and practices to make walking a more attractive transportation and recreational option. Therefore, a key policy goal of PedPlan2010 is to ensure that all road and development projects accommodate pedestrians to the fullest extent. Roads should be designed and buildings sited to make pedestrian access and safety the first priority (over other modes).



The concepts below provide a broader perspective for both regional and local decision making.

Create Complete Streets

[Complete Streets](#) are roadways designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and users of public transportation - as well as users of all ages and abilities - should be able to safely and comfortably move along and across a Complete Street. Complete Streets create a sense of place, improve social interaction, and can improve land values of adjacent properties. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Highway Project Development and Design Guide is a nationally referenced best practice document that provides Complete Street design guidance. A few states (including Oregon, Florida, and South Carolina) and a number of regions and cities have adopted Complete Streets policies.³

³ The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is currently preparing a Complete Street Policy that will be consistent with the MassDOT Highway Project Development and Design Guide (2006).

The Boston Region's Pedestrian Transportation Plan

There is no exact formula for a Complete Street, but [MassDOT's Highway Project Development and Design Guide](#) should be used as a reference. Additionally, the following characteristics should be present:

- *Facilities for exclusive use by pedestrians on both sides of the street – includes sidewalks, paths, and other facilities physically separated from the roadway.*
- *Crosswalks at all intersections and traffic control devices where greater than two lanes of traffic are crossed.*
- *Traffic calming devices – includes raised crosswalks, raised intersections, and traffic circles.*
- *Audible pedestrian signals.*
- *Curb extensions at crosswalks where parallel parking exists.*
- *Separation of the pedestrian way from travel lanes by various means of landscaped strips, street trees, parallel parking, and bicycle lanes.*
- *Access Control – reduction in both the number and widths of driveways where possible.*

Close Gaps in the Pedestrian Network

Gaps, or areas without sidewalks and walkway systems, need to be closed throughout the region. The urban centers and densely developed communities throughout the region have generally good walkway coverage but numerous gaps remain. Formerly rural roads in the suburbs are now dotted with infill housing developments, but do not always have sidewalks. Communities need to work together to create interconnected and consistent sidewalks and paths.

Improve the Pedestrian Environment

Our transportation system should not only accommodate walking as a matter of right, but also create an environment that encourages walking. The design and siting of buildings, sidewalk placement, and design elements such as street trees, benches, and bicycle racks are all part of the quality of the pedestrian environment that encourages walking. Additionally, all pedestrian facilities in the Boston Region should be connected to an origin and a destination as well as mapped and signed where appropriate.



Prioritize Transit, Schools, Civic and Commercial Sites

Given limited transportation resources, focus should be on providing and improving pedestrian infrastructure at transit facilities, schools, civic and commercial sites. Pedestrian infrastructure includes walkways and crosswalks in areas that access transit services, are within walking distances to schools, locations used by the elderly and those with disabilities, and in retail and commercial centers throughout the region.

Implement Smart Growth Principles

The accommodation of automobiles has often created impediments to pedestrian travel. An overall approach to smart growth needs to be incorporated in future design. Implementing MAPC's [Smart Growth Principles](#), Massachusetts' [Sustainable Development Principles](#), and federal [Livability Principles](#) as they pertain to walking, will help to accomplish this goal.

MAPC's Smart Growth Principles as they Pertain to Pedestrian Planning

- Integrate people and place.
- Promote distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Encourage development in currently developed areas to take advantage of existing community assets.
- Take advantage of compact development design and create walkable neighborhoods.
- Promote more transportation choices through the appropriate development of land.

Massachusetts Sustainable Development Principles as they Pertain to Pedestrian Planning

- Refer to the [youMove Massachusetts Core Themes](#) that pertain to pedestrian planning.
- Refer to [MassDOT's Massachusetts Pedestrian Plan \(1998\)](#).
- Concentrate development and mix uses.
- Provide transportation choice.

b. Local Visions

PedPlan2010 recognizes that the region's 101 member communities have unique visions for their futures. Some communities support mature urban centers, sustained by a variety of transportation modes, such as commuter rail, subway, and bus service, all of which can be accessed by an existing network of walkways. Others are suburban communities with more limited access to mass transit and a less comprehensive pedestrian network. Finally, many of the region's municipalities are quasi-rural towns with no mass transit services, and little to no pedestrian facilities.

PedPlan2010 seeks to provide guidance for the variety of communities within the region, and to respect individual communities' sense of place by suggesting different approaches to accommodating pedestrians that are appropriate to the unique character of the city or town.

As a planning document, most of the recommendations in PedPlan2010 are for municipalities to implement. It is at the local level where many of the decisions regarding pedestrian infrastructure and programs are made. **Therefore, a set of key 'Action Items' are available at the end of PedPlan 2010 in Chapter 9 to serve as a guide for municipal officials to follow.** The 'Action Items' also summarize most of the recommendations made throughout PedPlan2010.' Comprising four categories, the 'Action Items' are depicted below:

