

powered by feet first



feet first policy

taking a stance to advance walkability

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Feet First policies

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Statewide Funding for Walkability

Policy

where we stand

Advocacy is a major component of the work Feet First does. These policy papers, prepared by our Policy Committee, convey Feet First's position on key issues of interest to increase safe and easy ways for people to choose to go by foot.



background

Walkability is the degree to which an environment welcomes and entices pedestrian activity. Walkability provides a variety of benefits, including basic mobility, consumer cost savings, reduced external costs, efficient land use, community livability, improved fitness and public health, economic development, and support for equity objectives. The state of Washington has a pedestrian plan as part of its Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan written in 2008. The plan identifies \$1.6 billion worth of unfunded bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure needs around the state. The plan calls for further quantifying the needs, decreasing collisions between cars, bikes, and pedestrians, and doubling the amount of biking and walking in the state. However, it doesn't comprehensively break out walking needs from biking needs and it doesn't have a plan for meeting this shortfall.

Mission

who we are - what we do

Feet First promotes walkable communities and envisions people walking every day for their health, transportation, environment, community, and pleasure.



feet first
promoting walkable communities



Statewide Funding for Walkability

why it matters to walking

Pedestrian needs are entitled to identified separate funding and accommodations. To provide a bike lane and forget about pedestrian accommodations will doom that bike lane to be used by both, thus endangering both. This also goes for providing only for pedestrians. If bicyclists have no safe place to ride they may choose to ride on the sidewalk because colliding with people walking is much less threatening than colliding with cars.

Decisions at the state level such as the completed pedestrian plan can have a significant impact on local government and the decisions they make affecting pedestrians and resources they allocate. The Washington State Legislature and Washington State Department of Transportation can make a positive or negative difference for pedestrians based on the policies they set and the funding they allocate.

feet first position

Feet First believes that the existing Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan should more clearly separate pedestrian and bike needs and develop a plan to fund those needs. The purpose of the plan—improving connections, increasing coordination, and reducing congestion—should be reviewed to include increasing local funding options for local governments and articulating more clearly policy measures that could achieve the same impacts for pedestrians in lieu of direct funding.

Photo courtesy of the Seattle Department of Transportation

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resources

Washington State Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan:

http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/bike_plan.htm

Economic Value of Walkability:

<http://www.vtppi.org/walkability.pdf>

2014 rankings for America's most walkable cities:

<http://www.geekwire.com/2013/walk-score-2014/>

On walkability: An interview with Jeff Speck:

<http://parksify.com/post/56508222584/on-walkability-an-interview-with-jeff-speck>

Jeff Speck describes why it is important to invest in walkable communities in this video lecture given at the Institute for Quality Communities Placemaking Conference:

<http://iqc.ou.edu/2013/06/03/jeffspeck/>



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