

# The Future of Active Transit in Belfast

**By Cara Harshman**

**Belfast Pedestrian, Biking & Hiking Committee**

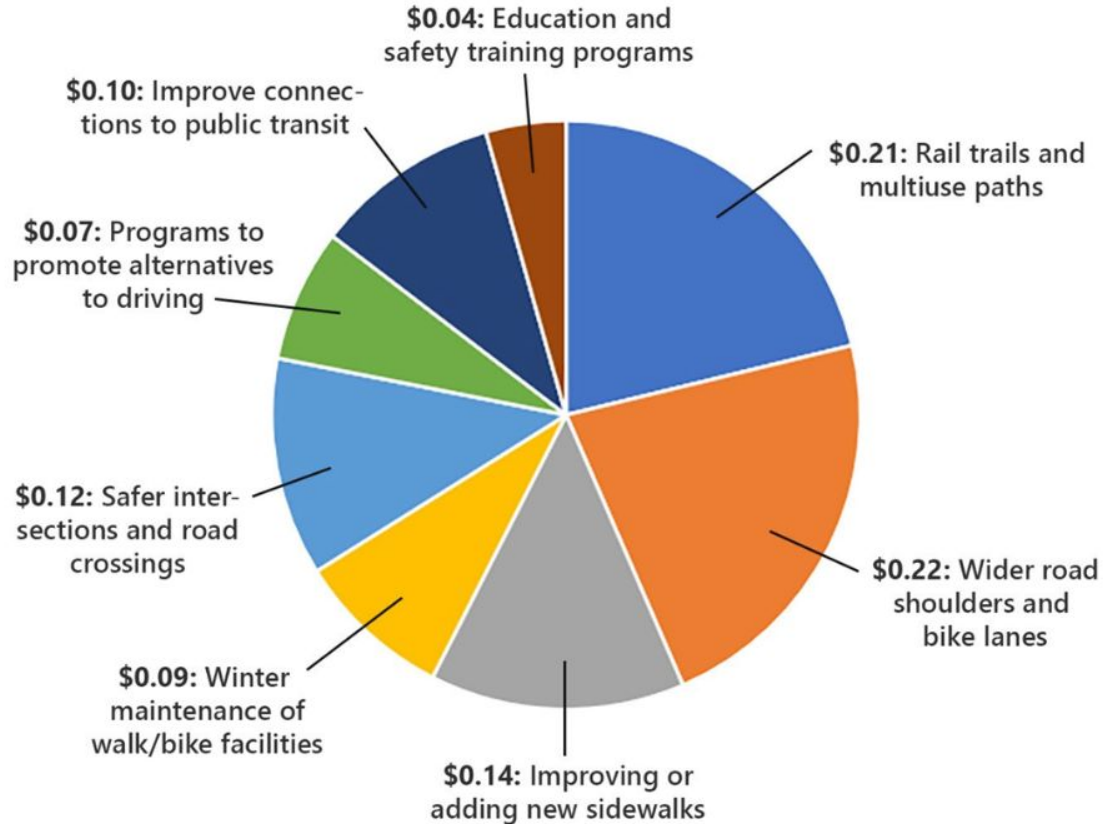
# What is Active Transit?

Active Transit (AT) is any human powered mode of transportation:

- Walking
- Biking
- Operating a wheelchair or other ability device
- Rollerblading
- Skateboarding
- Cross country skiing
- Snow shoeing



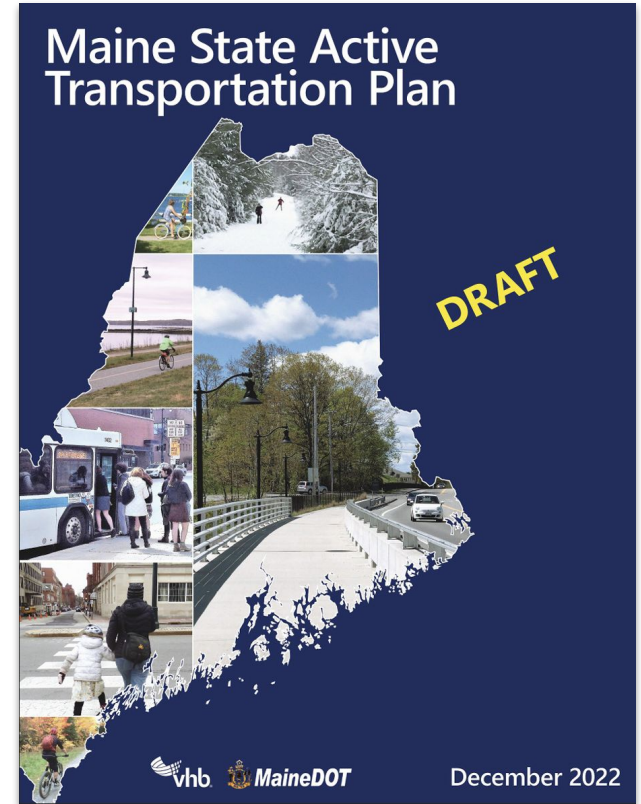
# How would you distribute \$1 in funding to improve AT in Maine?



MDOT data from:  
4 public meetings, 12 stakeholder meetings, >1,600 survey responses, >300 online comments

# Maine's Statewide Active Transit Plan

**Vision:** MaineDOT will maintain, improve, and expand safe AT options statewide by leveraging investments in infrastructure to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety; expand mobility; support economic development; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and enhance community vibrancy, quality of life, and public health for Maine people and visitors alike.

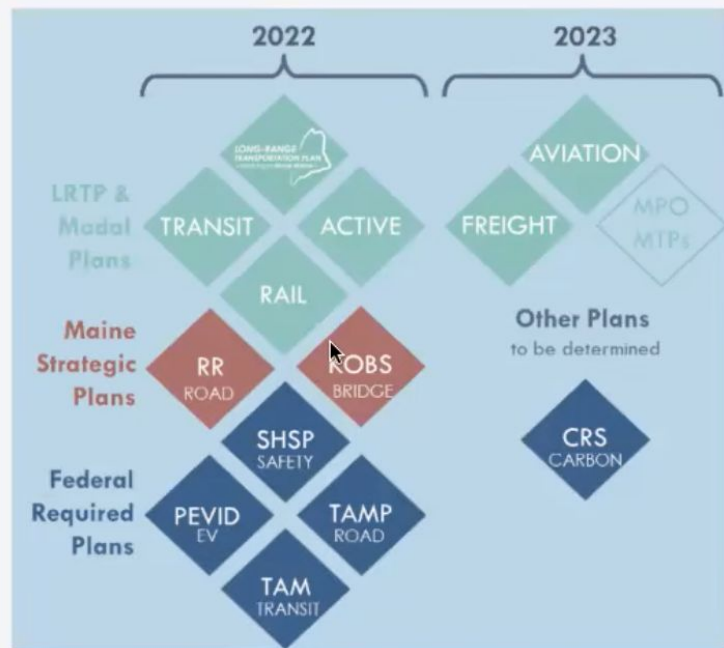


# Maine's Statewide Active Transportation Plan

## What the SATP is: Part of the MaineDOT Family of Plans

One of several plans worked on in 2022, which included

- Transit, Rail, and Active Transportation Plans
- Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- Transportation Asset Management Plan
- Keeping our Bridges Safe
- The Roads Report
- Carbon Reduction Strategy Plan





# Maine's Statewide Active Transportation Plan

## What the SATP is: A Report that includes info on

(From the Table of Contents)

- Benefits of AT
- Public Engagement
- Existing Conditions Assessment, including safety, policies, programs, trends
- Needs Assessment, On-Road and Off-Road
- Vision and Goals
- Implementation Plan
- Appendices (not yet available)



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# Where does MDOT go from here?

» Jan 30, 2023: public comments on the plan closed

» Winter/Spring '23: revisions and DOT meetings with stakeholders such as:



*bikemaine.org*

## **Goal 1: Make prioritized, cost-effective improvements to the on-road AT network**

- Strategy 1A: Improve AT in villages and downtowns.
- Strategy 1B: Improve AT on rural roads by paving shoulders along High-Priority AT corridors.
- Strategy 1C: Assess speed limits and identify opportunities to adjust road design.

## **Goal 2: Make prioritized expansions to the off-road AT network, given available resources**

- Strategy 2A: Develop a list of High-Priority AT trails and begin building out the network.
- Strategy 2B: Pending community feedback and legislative approval, develop HPAT trails along some state-owned, inactive rail corridors.

*Read the plan to see goals 3-5*

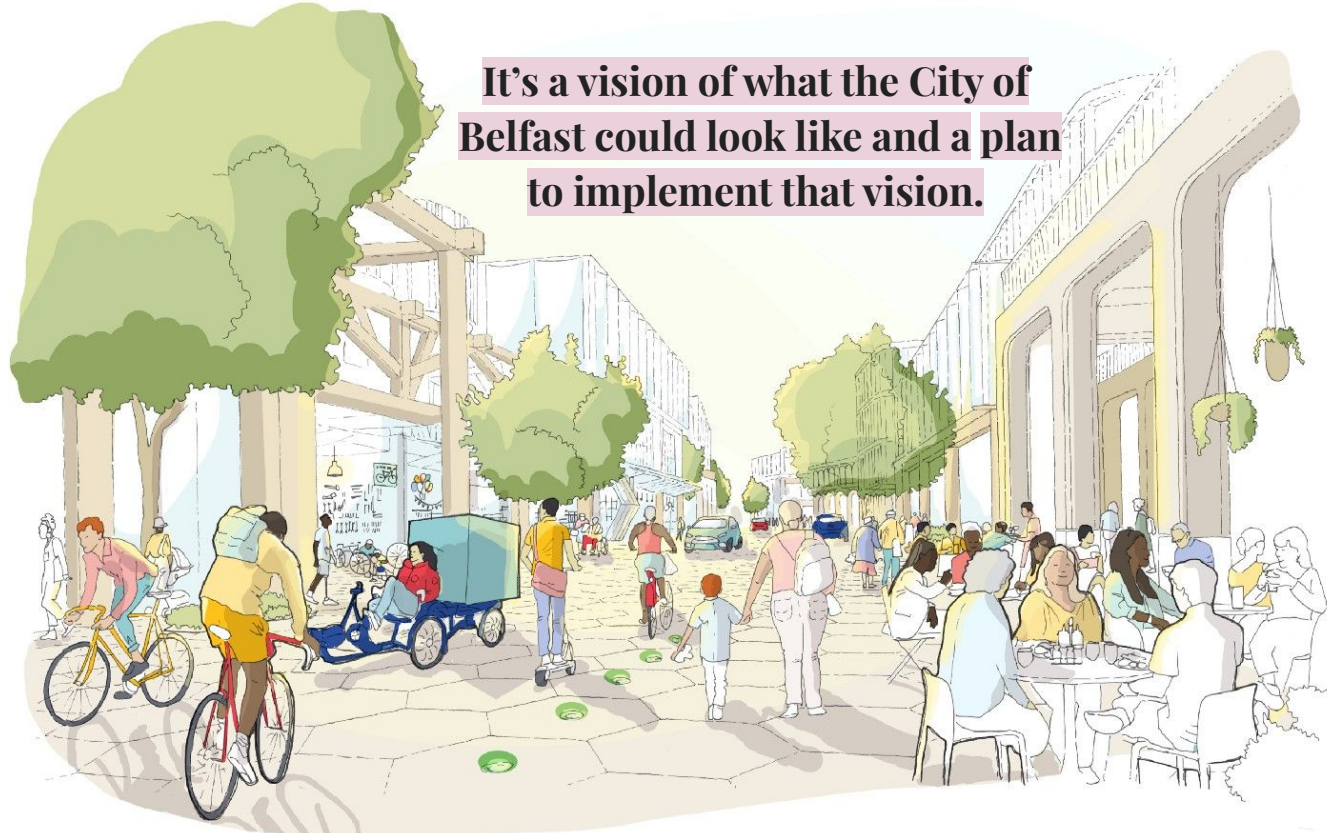
**Q: How does Belfast benefit from the Statewide Active Transit Plan?**

**A: We create our own Pedestrian & Bicycle (Active Transit) Master Plan.**



# What's a Active Transit aka Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plan?

It's a vision of what the City of Belfast could look like and a plan to implement that vision.

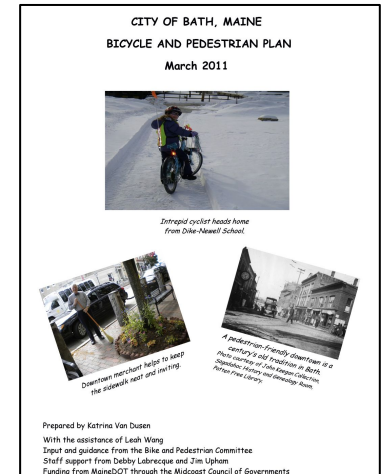


# Pedestrian Biking & Hiking Committee 2023 recommendations to the City Council

1. Retain a professional planner to assist in drafting an official comprehensive bike/ped transportation plan (see attached letter).
2. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy for Belfast. Building on extensive studies and reports produced by this committee in prior years, we recommend that the Council adopt a Complete Streets policy for all renovation, maintenance, and new construction (see attached Draft Complete Streets Policy).
3. Address critical accessibility and safety concerns at the following intersections (feasible on a very low budget, using curb bulb treatment (see Exhibit D)...
4. Continue to work with MDOT to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety at priority Rt. 1 crossings at Rt. 52, Rt. 3, Waldo Ave., and Congress St.

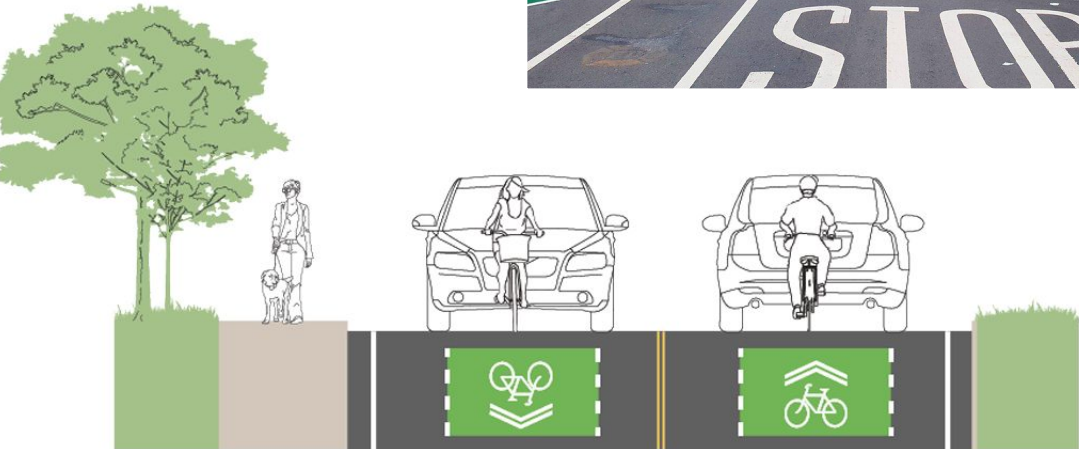
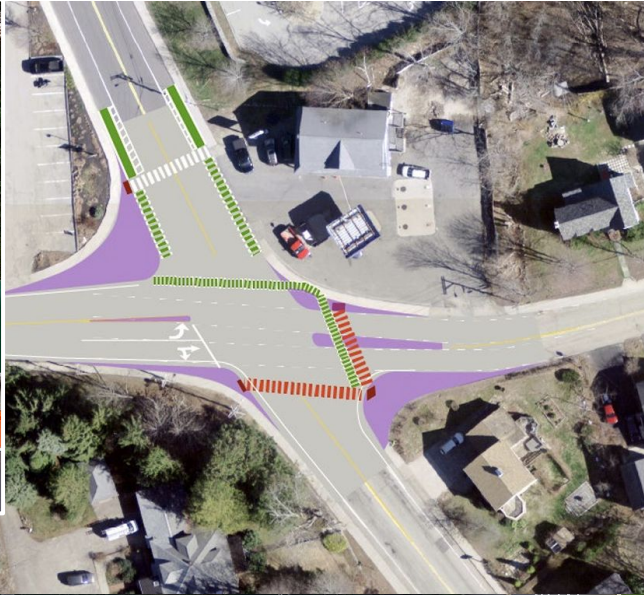
# Other towns in Maine with a Ped/Bike Master Plan

- Bangor Area Plan – 2019
- Brunswick Plan – 2020
- Portland
- Kittery -2022
- Gray – 2018
- Gorham – 2017
- Bath – 2011
- Bristol – 2009
- Wiscasset – 2010
- Newcastle-Damariscotta – 2015
- Boothbay – 2012
- Waldoboro – 2011





# Examples of what we'd see in a plan



Sidewalk 5'    Shoulder 1'    Travel Lane 11'    Travel Lane 11'    Shoulder 1'



# “Belfast is ready!” -Dakota, Active Transit Planner for MDOT

We need your participation!

- Sign up for Walk & Roll Belfast, a new community group of AT enthusiasts
- Advocate for Active Transit infrastructure at City Council meetings (1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 7pm)
- Bike, walk and roll together!
- What else?

**Thank You!!**

Email me:  
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# The Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plan will accomplish the following:

1. Assess existing infrastructure assets and shortcomings.
2. Identify likely areas of future development (in coordination with the city's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance) and plan multimodal and transportation to serve those areas.
3. Identify potential sites for recreational trails and active transportation links between population centers and outdoor recreation.
4. Coordinate events to engage residents, city officials, and city staff, gauge public opinion, and develop a vision for the future of walking, running, and riding in Belfast.
5. Produce a citywide map and prioritized list of recommended improvements and new facilities.
6. Produce an implementation plan, including sources of potential implementation funding.