

Falmouth Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee 2021 Annual Report

The mission of the Falmouth Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, as established by Town Meeting in 1975, is to develop, maintain, and improve bikeways in Falmouth, including the promotion of safe and healthy transportation by bicycle on our road network. Pedestrians were added to the Committee's definition in 2019 to more fully represent non-vehicle transportation.

Our goals are to live up to this vision:

Falmouth is a great place to both live and to visit because its bicycle and pedestrian friendly culture and infrastructure yield calm roads, clean air, and a healthy populace in a vibrant, sustainable economy.

The complete Town of Falmouth Plan for an Improved Transportation Network for Bicycling, which includes 25 recommendations for improvements, their budgetary requirements, and an implementation plan, is available on the Town website:

<http://www.falmouthmass.us/DocumentCenter/View/1546/2015-Falmouth-Bike-Plan-PDF?bidId=>

Highlights of the year:

The Town of Falmouth Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, prepared by the Cape Cod Commission (CCC) in collaboration with our Committee and the Department of Public Works, was approved by MassDOT in April of 2022. "A complete street is one that provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes – walking, biking, transit and vehicles – for people of all ages and abilities." The Town is now eligible to apply for construction grant funding up to \$400,000 from MassDOT for any of the projects listed on the Prioritization Plan. The Plan is available on the CCC website: <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/falmouth-complete-streets/>

Number 2 on the Bike Plan, the ADA compliant signalized HAWK crossing at Goodwill Park across Palmer Avenue/Rt.28, has a targeted completion date of October, 2022. This important project will connect Goodwill Park to the Shining Sea Bikeway and provides a safe option for a portion of the longer term goal of providing safe east/west travel in Falmouth. The next step is Number 4 on the Bike Plan and 5 on the Complete Streets Plan, an ADA compliant crossing at Goodwill Park across Gifford Street to help connect to Trotting Park.

Number 3 on the Bike Plan and 1 on the Complete Streets Plan, the improvements to Katherine Lee Bates Road are underway. Town DPW has divided the project into 2 parts, the first of which, the engineering phase, will kick off shortly. The construction phase of the of the project includes widening the sidewalk to make it a multi-use path, plus a signaled crossing and connection to the Shining Sea Bikeway from KLB Road. This project is critical for a Safe Routes to School path for Mullen Hall and Lawrence schools and will help drive visitors and revenue to downtown with the proper wayfinding signs.

The sidewalks along Palmer Avenue are due to be improved by the removal of nearly 20 telephone poles that currently obstruct safe passage in a wheelchair or bicycle. This progress is due to negotiations by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and Selectboard Chair with Eversource as a part of their planned cable deployment alongside the bike path in 2023.

The Town DPW applied for and was awarded a Shared Streets grant for a road diet on Curley Blvd. Number 13 on the Complete Streets Plan, this project would re-stripe roadway and allocate space for 10-foot wide on-road buffered bicycle lanes. In addition, it would install a flashing beacon at the existing mid-block crosswalk.

The Friends of Falmouth Bikeways purchased a second bike/ped counter which the DPW Highway Department graciously helped install near the Trunk River section of the SSBW. Committee members download the monthly numbers and record usage on the path at two locations now.

Opportunities:

The Bicycle Pedestrian Committee and Falmouth DPW have the opportunity to improve our collaboration to deliver safer, healthier transportation options for our community. We are beginning this partnership by working together on a potential Safe Routes to School grant to complete the funding for the Katherine Lee Bates improvements.

There is a persistent root lift problem on the Shining Sea Bikeway, making some sections unsafe for the 250,000 trips per year on the path. This problem is shared by other bikeways on the Cape as well as further abroad in the Commonwealth. While we research longer term fixes, the town needs to focus on, near term, keeping the path safe by targeting specific areas for grinding down the asphalt and patching. Town DPW understands the need and must juggle competing work requests in order to complete this project.