

Congressman Bill Pascrell's Livable Communities Newsletter – Solutions for Cleaner, Safer Living

September, 2002

Issue VI

Dear Colleagues:

Fall is traditionally "harvest time" and a time to reflect on the abundance of life. Abundance can only be realized with sustainment of resources. Local communities often lead the way in this endeavor.

This issue of our livable communities newsletter highlights two such pathways to sustainment: bicycling and recycling. It also gives me an opportunity to highlight some success stories for New Jersey.

A recent "journey to work" census survey has shown positive changes in bicycle commuting nationwide between 1990 and 2000. Twenty-nine states and D.C. showed an increase.

Bicycle commuting is clean and healthy, and is an essential aspect of any intermodal transportation framework. These issues will continue to be addressed this fall as we gear up for the TEA-21 reauthorization.

Innovative recycling programs are often more appropriately addressed at the local level. Yet, EPA has established a program that encourages local municipalities to recycle solid waste. A win-win situation for all. This issue provides details on EPA's WasteWise program.

As always, if you have any questions about any of these innovative programs, please feel free to contact my office at 225-5751.

Sincerely,



New Jersey a Leader In The National Bike Commute Boom



Traffic congestion costs Americans billions a year in wasted fuel and lost time. More and more state and local measures on ballots are dealing with transportation and growth issues. Over 85% of those initiatives that called for more mass transit and alternative types of transportation passed.

I join my colleague, Congressman Blumenauer, in recognizing that the TEA-21 reauthorization presents an opportunity to appropriately acknowledge this sentiment and fund alternative and intermodal transportation choices.

Bicycling is a perfect example of an alternative transport mode. It can be used for relatively short commute trips or it can be used as one leg of an intermodal commute, especially if your workplace is farther away than you want to- or are able to- ride.

Nationally, bicycle commuting grew by 9% over the decade. We have seen this trend in my state of New Jersey, where bicycle commuting nearly doubled during the 1990s, according to "journey to work" data from the 2000 Census.

"New Jerseyans are finding bicycle commuting an increasingly attractive option. Cyclists can beat gridlock and boost personal fitness at the same time," said Jon Orcutt, Associate Director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, a transportation policy group. "The small amounts the state has invested in cycling infrastructure during the 1990s is clearly paying off. Imagine the growth in bicycle commuting and other cycling trips that could occur if the state redoubled its efforts to

promote and accommodate bicycling.”

“Communities have realized for years that bicycling is an increasingly popular and effective way to travel,” Orcutt said. “Every year, local demand for bicycle improvement projects far outstrips the amount of funding made available by the state.” Cyclists should expect and demand safe accommodations on public roads, as does every other user.

“Bicycling is a healthy way to start the workday,” said Lisa Kasabach, Director of the Trenton Cycling Revolution, a western New Jersey education and advocacy organization. “Greater cycling access to public infrastructure, including roads, bridges and mass transit, will pay off in greater gains in cycling – the most efficient, ecologically friendly method of commuting.”

If you are interested in learning more about reversing automobile dependence and sprawl development, I recommend you go to: <http://tstc.org> to find out more about the Tri-State

Transportation Campaign, a transportation policy group working on these issues in the New Jersey, New York and Connecticut metropolitan region.

**EPA WasteWise Program:
An Opportunity For All
Communities**



Another program that has the potential for a huge impact for your district at minimal cost is called WasteWise. This is a free, voluntary program through which organizations eliminate costly municipal solid waste, benefiting their bottom line and the environment. WasteWise is a flexible program that allows partners to design their own solid waste reduction

programs tailored to their needs.

Large and small businesses from any industry sector are welcome to participate. Institutions, such as hospitals and universities, non-profits, and other organizations, as well as state, local, and tribal governments, are also eligible to participate in WasteWise.

Waste reduction makes good business sense because it can save companies and organizations money through reduced purchasing and waste disposal costs. WasteWise provides free technical assistance to help develop, implement, and measure waste reduction activities. It also offers publicity to participants that are successful in reducing waste through EPA case studies, and national and regional events. These events also provide networking opportunities for participants to share waste reduction ideas and success stories.

There is no fee for membership in WasteWise. EPA designed the program to be free, voluntary and flexible. The

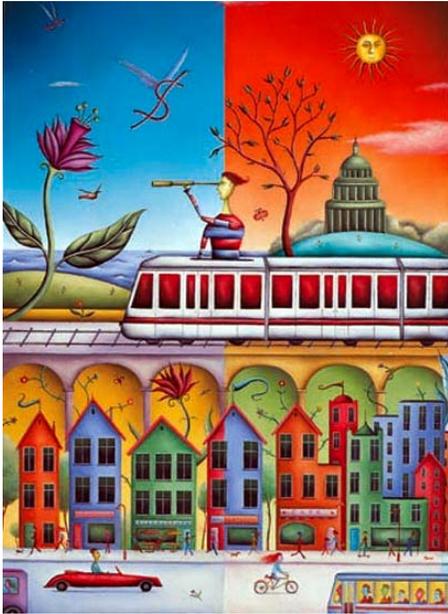
amount of time and money an organization invests is up to them. They are free to set goals that are the most feasible and cost-effective for their organization. In the long run, waste reduction can save companies and organizations money.

A city in my district- Clifton, New Jersey- will be honored by EPA for a successful WasteWise recycling program. Clifton gained recognition in part because of its outreach in trying to reduce waste, and for the work it does to publicize the program. In the past year, the city has worked with 15 companies to adopt the WasteWise Program. They have also taken the message to Clifton schools, educating students about recycling.

If you would like to find out more about this innovative program, I invite you to visit the EPA web site:

<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/reduce/wstewise/index.htm>

**Rail~Volution 2002 Will
Focus on Building Livable
Communities with Transit**



I want to draw attention to an exciting event happening this fall. On October 3-6, the Washington DC area will host the Rail~Volution Conference.

Rail~Volution is an opportunity to immerse yourself in livable communities issues and the crucial role transit plays. This conference will bring together a unique cross-section of citizen activists, developers, financiers, transit operators, local elected and federal

officials, planners, health advocates and nonprofit organizations.

Rail~Volution is a great way to gather the information needed to make innovative and informed decisions in the remainder of the 107th Congress and beyond.

This has grown into the definitive national conference on building livable communities with transit. It has evolved into the preeminent gathering place to showcase a bounty of the best ideas from across the country, the processes used to realize them, and the tangible results achieved so far.

To find out more about what this October's Rail~Volution Conference has to offer your district, please check out their web site for details on this event:

<http://www.railvolution.com>