**Date: February 27, 2015 Contact: Neil Pade, neil.pade@gmail.com**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**New Report Shows State Progress, Challenges for People who Bicycle and Walk**

**Newington, CT, February 27, 2015 —** With the release of its 2014 Annual Report, the Connecticut Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board reports that with regard to Complete Streets, a culture change is under way in the state. Under the leadership of the Governor and the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation (DOT), among others, walking, biking, and transit have begun to be seen and treated as integral to Connecticut’s transportation system. The resulting and ongoing improvements in infrastructure and services for pedestrians, cyclists, and bus and train riders benefit all residents of the state. A copy of the full report can be found at:

<http://www.ct.gov/dot/lib/dot/plng_plans/cbpab/2014/cbpab_2014_annual_report_final.pdf>

The Advisory Board was established in 2009 as part of the adoption of the Complete Streets Law. Complete streets are roadways that meet the needs of all users – vehicle operators, people who bicycle, people who walk, and people who use transit. Creating a transportation network for all users has the potential to transform the state, increasing its attractiveness to visitors and residents alike. Further, complete streets have been demonstrated to be economic drivers in communities throughout the country.

The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Board is tasked with monitoring progress in implementing complete streets and reporting annually to the Governor, the Commissioner of DOT, and the Chairs of the General Assembly’s Transportation committee.

A major accomplishment over the past year has been the DOT adoption of a complete streets policy. The policy will build upon efforts that the Department has undertaken to date, will institutionalize that progress, and will provide further guidance to department staff as they seek to improve our transportation system for all users. This policy has already resulted in changes to requirements issued by the Office of State Traffic Administration and in a commitment to complete an overhaul of the highway design manual.

This progress is not yet fully reflected on the ground. The roadway system in the state reflects decades of motor vehicle focused planning and design and bicycle facilities are few and far between. In fact, state law does not permit construction of modern 2 way bicycle lanes as have been constructed to great success in New York City. Further, pedestrian and cyclist injuries and fatalities remain too high, at about 13% of total vehicle related injuries and fatalities.

To encourage further progress, the Board recommends that the state take several actions. All state agencies should support active transportation options and transit use for agency employees and customers. The DOT should redouble its efforts to complete a new highway design manual that reflects modern design ideas, should continue to consider the needs of people who bicycle and people who walk in all its public transportation and transit oriented development project; should make more safety improvement funding available for bicycle and pedestrian projects; and should launch a comprehensive share the road campaign, similar to the very successful “Slow down for work zones” campaign. Legislative action is needed to allow modern bicycle facilities to be built, to clarify when and where motor vehicles can safely pass bicycles, and to clarify where bicyclists should position themselves on the roadway.

The Board also notes that Towns and regions have a role to play in transforming the state and should adopt their own complete streets policies.

Neil Pade, chair of the Board notes “With respect to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and issues, the state of Connecticut has made great progress in the past five years. The Governors proposed 30 year transportation plan shows continued attention to the needs of people who walk and bicycle. Our recommendations are intended to further direct that progress so we can realize the benefits of a walkable and bikeable Connecticut.”

**About the Connecticut Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board**

Created in 2009, the CT Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board consists of 11 appointed citizens to advance the inclusion of non-motorized design elements in state and municipal road building projects as well as in both public and private development and redevelopment projects. The board supports and encourages pedestrian and bicycle connections between neighborhoods, commercial areas, employment centers, schools, state and municipals parks, and other designations serving the community, supports government policies and funding initiatives that favor transit and non-motorized transportation, and monitorsthe implementation of the Complete Streets Law. For more information, please visit:

[www.ct.gov/dot/bikeped](http://www.ct.gov/dot/bikeped)

<http://www.ctbikepedboard.org>

#     #     #