

Executive Summary

The City of Waukesha is in an excellent position to capitalize on its existing bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly attributes. The Fox River, Lake Country and Glacial Drumlin Trails, and walkable and bikeable downtown provide a solid foundation on which to improve the bicycle and pedestrian networks and resulting number of residents and visitors who walk and bicycle for transportation and recreational purposes.

The City of Waukesha Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan builds on efforts by the community to improve transportation options and the quality of life in the City of Waukesha. The Facilities Plan guides the development of a network of bicycle and pedestrian routes linking activity centers and destinations within the City as well as to the larger regional network of trails and destinations. The improved network will not only make bicycling and walking more viable modes of transportation, but will contribute to economic development opportunities and enhanced quality of life for the community.

Why Walking and Bicycling?

Bicycling and walking are low-cost means of transportation that are non-polluting, energy-efficient, versatile, healthy and fun. Both modes can help build physical activity into our daily lives while reducing traffic congestion and air pollution and saving money. The many advantages to walking and bicycling include:

- Bicycling and walking are good for the economy. Bicycling makes up \$133 billion of the US economy, funding 1.1 million jobs.¹
- A recent study estimates the economic impact of bicycle recreation and tourism in Wisconsin to be over \$9 million, and the total potential value of health benefits from reducing short car trip and increasing bicycle trips to total over \$4 million.²
- Walkable and bikeable neighborhoods are more livable and attractive, increasing home values property tax revenue.³
- Walking and bicycling can save families money. By replacing short car trips, bicycling and walking can help lessen personal transportation costs.⁴
- Walking and bicycling are good for public health. Bicycling for exercise can reduce the cost of spending on health care by as much as \$514 per person every year.⁵
- More people walking and bicycling increase safety for others. In a community where twice as many people walk, a person walking has a 66 percent reduced risk of being injured by a motorist.⁶

¹ Flusche, Darren for the League of American Bicyclists. (2009). *The Economic Benefits of Bicycle Infrastructure Investments*.

² Maggie Grabow, Micah Hahn, Melissa Whited, for The Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2010) *Valuing Bicycling's Economic and Health Impacts on Wisconsin*.

³ Cortright, Joe for CEOs for Cities. (2009). *Walking the Walk: How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities*.

⁴ Center for Neighborhood Technology. (2005). *Driven to Spend: Pumping Dollars out of Our Households and Communities*.

⁵ Feifei, W., McDonald, T., Champagne, L.J., and Edington, D.W. (2004). *Relationship of Body Mass Index and Physical Activity to Health Care Costs Among Employees*. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 46(5):428-436.

Existing Conditions

The City of Waukesha is home to a network of existing trails managed by various agencies including the Glacial Drumlin Trail, the Lake Country Trail, the Meadowbrook Trail, the Fox River Trail and more. It also boasts a relatively complete sidewalk system. This Plan seeks to overcome barriers to accommodating and encouraging bicycle and pedestrian trips.

Opportunities include:

- A pedestrian- and bicycle- friendly downtown;
- Existing walk- and bicycle-friendly streets in some parts of the community;
- The Fox River Trail, a “spine trail” providing excellent north/south connections; and
- Space on many local streets to provide low-cost bicycle improvements.

Constraints include:

- Major streets including I-94 and the Les Paul Parkway, the Fox River and railroads impede local street connectivity;
- Lack of wayfinding tools along existing walkway and bikeway networks;
- User conflicts on the area trails; and
- Uncomfortable walking and bicycling environments along high-volume roadways.

Public Involvement

City of Waukesha residents, community stakeholder groups and public agency staff helped guide the development of this Plan. Public input about the opportunities and challenges to better bicycling and walking in the City of Waukesha was obtained in several ways, including two public input workshops (May and October 2011), an input venue hosted on the Waukesha Bicycle Alliance web site and through project steering committee meetings.



⁶ Jacobsen, P.L. (2003). *Safety in numbers: more walkers and bicyclists, safer walking and bicycling*. *Injury Prevention* 9:205-209.

Plan Organization

The Plan is organized as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Existing Bicycling and Walking Conditions

Chapter 3: User Types, Demand and Assessment of Needs

Chapter 4: Recommended Walkway and Bikeway Network Improvements and Encouragement Programs

Chapter 5: Implementation Plan

Implementation

The City of Waukesha Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Plan provides the long-term vision for the development of a community-wide bikeway and walkway network usable by residents and visitors for transportation and recreation. Implementation of the plan will take place over many years. The implementation strategy presents a targeted methodology for how the City of Waukesha can institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian improvements into the local planning processes and projects.

The following strategies and action items are provided to guide Waukesha toward the vision identified in the plan:

- Strategically pursue infrastructure projects by obtaining capital improvement and grant funding as well as incorporating projects into upcoming public works projects, especially the short-term bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- Regularly revisit project priorities in the plan as projects are completed, conditions change and new projects are needed.
- Integrate bicycle and pedestrian planning into Waukesha's planning processes by incorporating the recommendations into the day-to-day activities of planning, design, funding, construction, and maintenance.
- Encourage private donors to support the bicycle and pedestrian system through volunteer projects like trail construction and maintenance services as well as funding projects like wayfinding signage and other encouragement programs.
- Implement education, encouragement and enforcement activities to encourage more walking and bicycling in the City of Waukesha.



Prioritizing Bikeway Projects

Effective implementation of bikeway networks are implemented rationally and efficiently while meeting the needs of bicyclists. This Plan’s bikeway prioritization strategy scores bikeways against criteria that respond to the goals, objectives and benchmarks of this Plan. Steering Committee input was an integral part in determining the importance of bikeway projects and individual importance of each criterion.

Steering Committee members assigned a score to the following criteria based on importance so that the total cumulative score equaled 100. The average Steering Committee score for each criterion, noted in parentheses below, was used as the total possible score each bikeway could receive. Steering Committee members valued “access to community destinations” the most. Appendix D presents detailed criteria definitions.

- Access to Community Destinations (39):** High scoring bikeways directly access schools and parks.
- Link to Existing Trail System (26):** High scoring bikeways are within 50 feet of an existing trail.
- Institutional Support (21):** High scoring bikeways received the most Steering Committee member votes.
- Ease of Construction (14):** High scoring bikeways require minimal engineering, i.e. bike routes require only sign installation.

After each bikeway was scored, short, mid and long term tiers were established. Tier 1 (short term) projects are the highest priority for implementation and should be considered for implementation by 2017. While Tier 2 and 3 projects should be considered for implementation by 2022 and 2032, respectively. Table ES - 1 presents the top scoring bikeway projects. Appendix D presents the complete prioritized list of bikeways and assumptions used to estimate project costs.⁷

Table ES - 1: Top Scoring Priority Bikeways

Name	Type	Miles	To	From	Cost	Score
New Berlin Trail To Carroll College	Off-Road Paved	1.47	Carroll College	Highway 59	\$293,300	86
W College Ave	Shared Lane	0.86	S East Ave	S Prairie Ave	\$5,100	84
W Main St	Shared Lane	0.54	N East Ave	N West Ave	\$3,200	84
Lake Country Trail To Summit Avenue	Off-Road Paved	2.13	South end of Lake Country Trail	N Moreland Blvd/Summit Ave	\$426,100	81
Dunbar Ave	Shared Lane	0.57	Maple Ave	W College Ave	\$3,400	79
N Barstow St	Shared Lane	0.69	Fox River	College Ave	\$4,200	79
Summit Ave	Bike Lane	2.42	Delafield St	Meadowbrook Rd	\$21,300	75

⁷ The City is not held to constructing the recommended bikeways in the prioritized order presented. The City may use discretion when selecting bikeways to construct so that the bikeway network is completed in a rational and efficient manner. The City will consider each bikeway project on its merits during the City budgeting process as are all public works projects.