Our intention is to have in-person meetings going forward. For the time being, we will hold the City Committee Meetings, Plan Commission, Council and most others at the Community Room at 933 Michigan Avenue. This in-person location will meet the legal requirement for our open meetings.

We will have a virtual option available, but the technology for the hybrid style meeting may not be reliable all of the time.

Members

- Chair Nena Fisher
- Ald. Jacqui Guthrie
- Tom Baldischwiler
- Karalyn Peterson

AGENDA

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN STREET SAFETY COMMISSION (BPSSC)

Date and Time:	January 21, 2026 5:00 PM	**Location:**	Community Room 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI OR Zoom Teleconferencing Meeting ID: 883 0375 3503 Passcode: 476627 Computer: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88303753503?pwd=HfvkbaAdMq46k0Dnsa Phone: +1-312-626-6799 (US Chicago)

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Report of the May 6, 2025 meeting of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Street Safety Commission.
3. Presentation and discussion on the draft Portage County Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.
4. Adjourn

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that any person who has special needs while attending these meetings or needs agenda materials for these meetings should contact the City Clerk as soon as possible to ensure that a reasonable accommodation can be made. The City Clerk can be reached by telephone at (715) 346-1569 or by mail at 1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

Maps further defining the above area(s) may be obtained from the City of Stevens Point Department of Community Development, 1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481, or by calling (715) 346-1567, during normal business hours.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that a quorum of the Common Council may be in attendance at this meeting.

REPORT OF THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN STREET SAFETY COMMISSION

May 06, 2025 – 6:00 PM
933 Michigan Ave, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Chair Fisher, Alderperson Guthrie, Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Peterson

EXCUSED: Commissioner Baldischwiler

ALSO PRESENT: Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn

INDEX:

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Report of the January 28, 2025 meeting of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Street Safety Commission.
3. Discussion on a planned walk/roll audit to assist with the 2026 street reconstruction
4. Review of Stevens Point's 2024 report card offered by the League of American Bicyclists.
5. Discussion on downtown bicycle parking accommodations.
6. Updates on the Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan rewrite:
   - Walk audits planned for May.
   - Draft plan.
   - Demonstration activities.

   Closing Section:

7. Adjourn

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call

   Present: Fisher, Guthrie, Johnson & Peterson
   Excused: Baldischwiler

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Report of the January 28, 2025 meeting of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Street Safety Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Peterson to approve the January 28, 2025 meeting of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Street Safety Commission; seconded by Chair Fischer.

Motion carried 4-0.

3. Discussion on a planned walk/roll audit to assist with the 2026 street reconstruction

Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn provided an overview of the planned walk/roll audits in correspondence with the 2026 street reconstruction projects, outlining the shift in approach to conduct audits prior to design work and street reconstruction. Key street sections identified for new audits include the North and South portions of Business 51, with the addition of Center Street and Wilshire Boulevard/North Point Drive contingent upon capital budget approval. The Commission debated the further addition of audits to adjacent areas such as Texas Avenue, Jefferson Street, and Pinecrest Avenue and weighed the benefits of early feedback and long-term planning value against feasibility and relevancy concerns.

Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn specified that audits for key sections are tentatively scheduled for June 2026 and will be coordinated with Commission members in the coming weeks.

No action was taken.

4. Review of Stevens Point's 2024 report card offered by the League of American Bicyclists.

Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn summarized the 2024 League of American Bicyclists Report Card, noting Stevens Point's silver status and identifying areas of improvement such as equity and accessibility, education, and plan implementation. The Commission discussed strategies to address these gaps, emphasizing the importance of reviewing the Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Plan and exploring low-cost improvements like increasing downtown bike parking and public education.

No action was taken.

5. Discussion on downtown bicycle parking accommodations.

Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn discussed downtown bike parking, noting opportunities and gaps to improve infrastructure using available grant funding. The Commission identified priority locations for new or improved bike racks with strong interest in covered parking.

No action was taken.

6. Updates on the Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan rewrite:
   - Walk audits planned for May.
   - Draft plan.
   - Demonstration activities.

   Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator Kuhn provided an overview on the above topics.

   No action was taken.

Closing Section:

7. Adjourn

   Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

   A recording of this meeting can be viewed/heard at: https://stevenspoint.com/365/AgendasMinutesVideos

City of Stevens Point
1515 Strongs Avenue
Stevens Point, WI 54481-3594

Department of Community Development
Adam Kuhn
Associate Planner
Zoning Administrator
Ph: (715) 346-1567
Fax: (715) 346-1498

MEMORANDUM

To: Bicycle & Pedestrian Street Safety Commission

From: Adam Kuhn, AICP
Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator

Date: January 21, 2026

RE: First Review of Draft Portage County Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

---

Background: For the last year, City staff have been working with other local officials to aid the contracted consultant, Vandewalle & Associates, in the development of the Portage County Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan. Funded by a planning grant through the Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, it sought to update the 2015 Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan to address new planning strategies, new engineering best practices, and ensure that public opinion is consistent with the recommended policies of the Plan.

For the last half-year or so, municipal and County staff have been reviewing and providing edits of the attached Plan. The attached Plan represents the third draft that is created, and the first that will be released to the public for feedback.

The draft Plan is broken into the following sections:

- Identifying short-term actions that should be prioritized to promote and enhance the County bicycle and sidewalk network.
- An overview of the planning process, aiding in the development of this Plan.
- Presenting existing bicycling and walking conditions across Portage County.
- A description of the different bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Establish a vision for what bicycling and walking in Portage County should look like in 2045.
- Infrastructure and non-infrastructure recommendations in the Urban Area (defined as the City of Stevens Point, Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge, and the Towns of Hull and Plover) and the Rural Area.
- Steps and strategies to implement the Plan.

Open Records Rider: The City of Stevens Point is subject to Wisconsin Statutes relating to public records. Communication, such as this document, sent or received by City employees are subject to these laws. Unless otherwise exempted from the public records law, senders and receivers of City communication should presume that the communications are subject to release upon request, and to state record retention requirements.

During this January 21st meeting, the Bicycle & Pedestrian Street Safety Commission will have an opportunity to review the draft Plan and provide feedback. To aid in your review, the following are a few areas that I would prioritize:

- Recommended short-term actions (pg. 1-10): Are these recommendations reasonable and realistic to achieve in the next 1-5 years? Are there any short-term actions that are not identified that should be?
- Bicycle & pedestrian facility types (pg. 35-46): Is a better explanation needed for any of these facility types?
- Vision for 2045 (pg. 47-54): Does this vision for bicycle and pedestrian conditions match your expectations for the year 2045? Does the goals and strategies identified to achieve this vision make sense? Are these goals and strategies measurable and attainable?
- Non-infrastructure recommendations (pg. 55-66): Please review and provide general feedback. Note that some of these recommendations will apply to areas outside of the City.
- Urban area facility recommendations (pg. 81-102): For this section, please prioritize reviewing:
    - Map 9.1 (pg. 87): Urban area existing and proposed bike facilities.
    - Map 9.2 (pg. 98): Urban area sidewalk inventory and recommendations.
        - For the two above maps, focus solely on areas within City limits.

Please be prepared to provide feedback during our meeting on the 21st. In addition to this Commission reviewing the Plan, the City Plan Commission will be reviewing the Plan during their special meeting scheduled for January 26th.

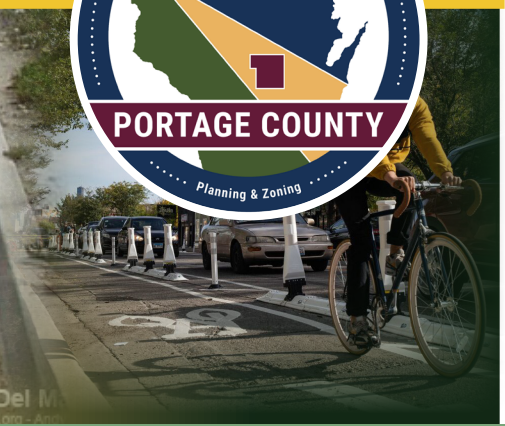
If you have any questions, please let me know.



PORTAGE COUNTY
COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN







THE HEART OF WISCONSIN
PORTAGE COUNTY
Planning & Zoning

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.
Shaping places, shaping change

DRAFT: DECEMBER 29, 2025

ADOPTION RESOLUTION

Placeholder for Adoption Resolution(s)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Portage County Board

Vincent Miresse
Chris Doubek
Janell Wehr
David Medin
Julie Morrow
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Dave Ladick
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Neil Prendergast, Stevens Point
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Katie Livernash, Community Development Educator, UW-Extension Portage County
Adam Kuhn, Associate Planner, City of Stevens Point
Scott Beduhn, Director of Public Works, City of Stevens Point
Trevor Roark, 1000 Friends of WI - Stevens Point

This project was funded by a Planning & Demonstration Grant from the US Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program.

This plan update was prepared through a collaborative public input process led by Vandewalle & Associates, 2025. Original plan prepared by Toole Design Group and SAA Design Group, 2014.

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VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.

CHAPTER 1: SHORT-TERM ACTION PLAN

Short-Term Action Plan

BUILD THE NETWORK
Expand and enhance the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure by working with municipalities, prioritizing projects, and funding top recommendations.

GROW THE CULTURE
Promote walking and biking through community engagement and outreach to build public and financial support.

This Short-Term Action Plan is designed to advance two primary goals. One, the **County seeks to grow and enhance the existing bicycle and pedestrian network**. The County can lead in this effort by working with municipalities to prioritize recommendations regularly, encouraging and supporting efforts by local communities in implementing top priority infrastructure projects, and funding priority projects within its jurisdiction. Equally important is the need to **grow the culture of walking and biking in Portage County** to generate community and financial support to fund bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The County can grow the culture through promotional efforts and community engagement that bring attention to walking and biking and its benefits. The following are achievable, short-term action steps that the County and its partners should undertake in the next three to five years.

After these recommendations are completed or underway, this Plan contains many more recommendations that should be pursued. Additional non-infrastructure recommendations intended to grow the culture are found in Chapter 7. Additional infrastructure recommendations aimed at building the bicycle and pedestrian network are found in Chapter 8 and 9. If the next steps are not immediately apparent, this Plan recommends initiating a process to prioritize the recommendations. A method for prioritizing pedestrian improvements in the Urban Area is found in Section 9.3, and a suggested method for prioritizing bicycle improvements (Rural and Urban) is found in Chapter 10, Implementation.

Build the Network

Expand and enhance the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure by working with municipalities, prioritizing projects, and funding top recommendations.

Support the incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities into street projects using the same funding as the rest of the project.

It is important to make the most of the County's internal funding resources. Often, the most cost-effective way to implement bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements is by adding them to the scope of other capital projects. Building sidewalks while replacing or upgrading utilities or marking on-street bicycle accommodations (bike lanes, urban shoulders, or shared lane markings) as part of street resurfacing projects provide economies of scale that will help funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects go farther.

Responsibility: *County and Municipal Governments, County Highway Department, City and Village Public Works departments*

Apply for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grants in Each Cycle.

One of the most significant grant programs for bicycle and pedestrian projects is the Transportation Alternatives Program or TAP, which is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). During the last grant period, more than $32 million was awarded for 55 bicycle and pedestrian projects across the state. Because it is the largest grant program dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects, it is highly recommended that Portage County apply for project-specific funding for at least one County project during each TAP grant cycle (typically every two years). The County should also encourage municipalities, particularly in the Urban Area, to apply for project-specific funding in each cycle. The City of Stevens Point has received multiple TAP grant awards to implement various recommendations from the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Multijurisdictional grant applications are encouraged, as they are viewed favorably when being considered for funding. These applications could be coordinated through the existing Stevens Point Area Surface Transportation Project Committee. Applications are generally due in October on an annual basis.[1]

Responsibility: *County Board with input from City of Stevens Point and the Villages and Towns in the Urban Area; local municipalities are responsible for grants targeting projects in their jurisdictions.*

Implement Priority Rural Area Bikeway Recommendations

In order to determine priorities for the rural bikeway system several steps were followed. First, the recommended bikeway system was "overlaid" on Wisconsin Department of Transportation Bicycle Suitability/Level of Service Map. This provided an indication of how poor or good performing the current roadways were for bicycling. Recommended bikeways connections within four miles of the Urban Area were then reviewed since these routes were most likely to receive the most bicycle use. Finally, the 5 Year Construction and Maintenance Plans for the County which identified upcoming

[1] TAP is the State of Wisconsin's program for federal Transportation Alternatives set-aside program, and WisDOT will adjust the program budget and scheduling according to future changes in federal or state funding. More information regarding the TAP Is available from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation: https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/aid/tap.aspx

County road projects were reviewed. Just three paved shoulder projects were identified as short term priorities:

TABLE 1.1: SHORT-TERM PRIORITY BIKEWAY PROJECTS FOR THE RURAL AREA

Project	Miles
Install paved shoulders on County Highway HH from Burbank Road to Custer Road	2.57

The other bikeway recommendations include paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, and a small segment of path can be integrated into larger roadway projects as the roadway projects themselves are built in the mid-term and long-term.

Implement Priority Urban Area Recommendations

The projects listed below are the ten priority recommendations for the Urban Area bikeway system. The priority recommendations were developed based on cost, project complexity, and project need which included latent bicycle demand in the area, crash history, connectivity, and public comments. Some of these projects will take substantial planning and funding, and work should begin on them as soon as possible.

TABLE 1.2: PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR THE URBAN AREA

Project	Miles
Sign the bike route network recommended for the entire Urban Area	25.97
Install protected bike lanes on Division Street between Fourth Avenue and North Point Drive in Stevens Point (in progress)	0.83
Install the shared use path recommended along Park Ridge Drive in Park Ridge	0.11
Install the shared use path recommended along Main Street in Stevens Point	0.36
Install protected bike lanes on Fourth Avenue from Second Street to Illinois Avenue in Stevens Point, working with UW-Stevens Point	0.76
Install raised shared use path on Michigan Avenue under the railroad overpass (Patch Street to Dixon Street)	0.25
Install shared use path on Okray Avenue in Plover	1.68
Install bike lanes on McDill Avenue in Whiting and Plover	1.05
Install paved shoulders on Old Highway 18 from Highway 10 to Brilowski Road	0.95
Install sidewalk from Post Street to Hoover Road on Plover Springs Drive	

Grow the Culture

Promote walking and biking through community engagement and outreach to build public and financial support.

Proactive Plan Monitoring and Implementation by Portage County Departments

The Portage County Planning and Zoning Department and the Highway Department should regularly report to their respective committees and the Traffic Safety Committee on the implementation of this Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Regular monitoring of the Plan and reporting to County Committees emphasizes the County's commitment to making biking and walking safer and more appealing to residents and visitors. Regular updates to County Committees brings the Plan right to County decision makers.

Proactive updates should occur three or four times per year: at least a month before capital projects are due, once in October, and once in spring to plan for the next year. These reports could include the following elements:

- Monitor and advance implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Identify potential priority projects for implementation
- Provide status updates on ongoing projects
- Regularly review and provide input on County capital project planning as it affects bicycling and walking
- Monitor police reports to determine if additional safety education or modified enforcement is needed

In the future, the County may wish to explore a permanent staff person to proactively advance the recommendations of this Plan.

Responsibility: *Portage County Planning and Zoning Department, Portage County Highway Department*

Develop County Bike Maps

Develop a bicycle user map that displays bicycle facilities, key destinations, and recommended routes for biking. The map should be available online and hardcopy format. Distributing these maps widely will encourage Portage County residents to bicycle more and to raise awareness about bicycle facilities. The maps will also make Portage County visitors more aware of recreational bicycling opportunities.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department*

Increase Knowledge of Elected Officials and Other Decision Makers on the Benefits of Well Connected, Walkable, and Bikeable Communities.

- Provide regular updates to county and local government officials on the many benefits of walking and biking (see Figure 3.1, the Case for Walking and Biking) and share relevant case studies regularly.
- Help elected officials gain perspective into opportunities and existing challenges for walking and biking by coordinating events for them to walk and bicycle in their community with residents. Walk & Roll audits, as described in this Plan, is one possible model.
- Invite elected officials and the public to “grand opening” or similar events for new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Encourage members of the public to speak at public meetings in support of bicycle and pedestrian projects and well connected, walkable, and bikeable communities in general.

Responsibility: *Portage County Planning and Zoning Department staff, Portage County Highway Department staff, local advocacy groups*

Promote Portage County as a Destination for Recreational Bicycling

Before taking on an extensive marketing effort, the County should start by meeting with local tourism and economic development entities who can add recreational bicycling as another reason to visit Portage County as a part of their messaging. The County could establish a partnership with one or more of these entities to spread the message that Portage County is a great place for recreational biking, with an initial focus on the Green Circle Trail and the Tomorrow River Trail. The County should develop simple marketing materials that can be shared by partner tourism entities with a deeper marketing reach than the County. Materials could also highlight the County Bike Maps described above, promote bike-related events, and emphasize local businesses who offer bike-related services. The County should meet with the Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation and Travel Wisconsin to learn about other simple marketing opportunities that would promote Portage County without placing an undue burden on County staff. After the initial efforts are completed, the County could take steps to add new recreational bikeways and partner with tourism entities to expand bicycle tourism marketing efforts. These ideas are described further in Chapter 5.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department and tourism and business related entities such as, Downtown Alliance, Plover Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, North Central Wisconsin Tourism Partnership, and Portage County Business Council*

Sponsor Bike to Work Week and Bike & Walk to School Day, Working with Local Municipalities, Employers, and Advocates to Host Events and Provide Support.

Bicycling to work or to other destinations is a great way to get exercise, save money, reduce pollution, and have some fun. Bike to Work Week and Bike & Walk to School Day are national activities and are easily organized with help from the League of American Bicyclists website. Information on the website includes national and local events, promotional materials, and a handbook. The Wisconsin Bike Fed also provides support for Wisconsin communities participating in Bike to Work Week. Bike & Walk to School Day is an important component of Safe Routes to School as it both encourages and educates students on how to get to school via bike or on foot.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, County Health and Human Services Department, other County departments, various municipalities, all Portage County school districts, and other organizations like Portage County CAN Coalition*

Boost Bicycle and Pedestrian Education Efforts through the Internet and Social Media

Including bicycle and pedestrian related educational pieces on the County website and on social media is an easy way to reach a large group of people. Simple communications can cover a seasonal topic such as rules of the road, local bicycling ordinances, back-to-school safety information, and using lights as fall approaches. The County should coordinate with municipalities to include at least four pieces of bicycle and pedestrian education annually in municipal and County digital communications to residents (newsletters, websites, social media).

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, Any public agencies that communicate with Portage County residents*

Create a Landing Page for Bicycle and Pedestrian Education on the County Website

Providing bicycle and pedestrian safety and education materials to residents via the County's website is an excellent way to reach potential and current users. Information should include:

- Maps and other resources
- Links to rules and responsibilities related to walking and biking
- Information about local biking and walking events
- List of and links to local bike shops
- List of and links to all walking and biking groups, including clubs, racing teams, and advocacy groups

The County should encourage local municipalities to provide information on their websites or provide a link to the County's site.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, Any public agencies that directly mail to Portage County residents*

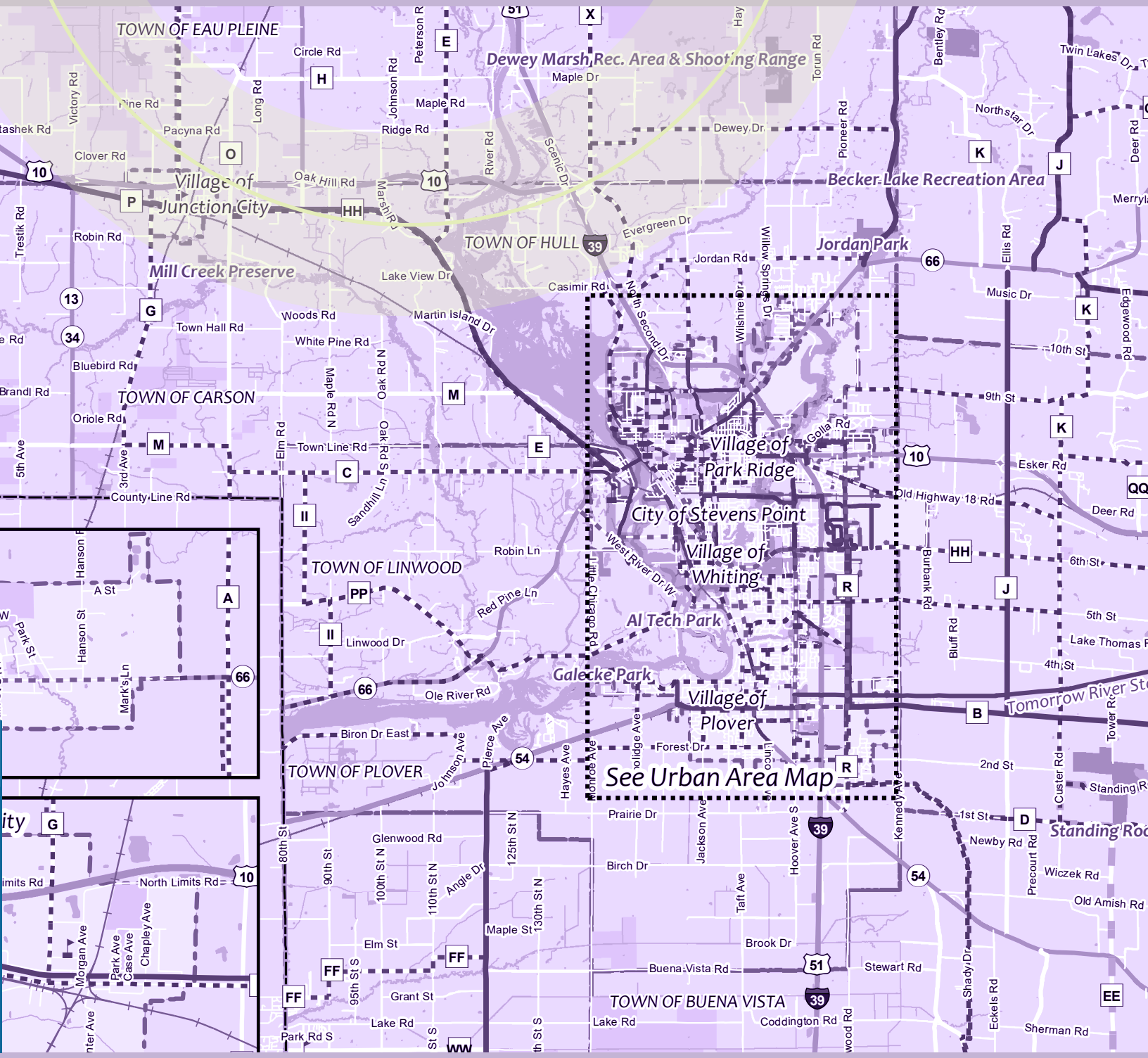
Ensure municipalities in the Urban Area adopt this Plan and work to implement the facility recommendations contained in the Plan

Responsibility: *Stevens Point, Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge*

CHAPTER 2:

PLAN OVERVIEW

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.



2 | PLAN

2.1 | Introduction

Portage County takes pride in being a great place to live, work, and play. Providing opportunities for citizens to integrate bicycling and walking into their everyday lives is essential to maintaining the vibrancy of the community and enhancing quality of life. Better public health, increased economic activity, and cleaner air are a few of the benefits that can be realized by improving conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians. Whether for recreation or transportation, the demand for safe, comfortable, and convenient places to walk and bike is increasing.



A bicyclist on a shared use path in Portage County.

In many ways, Portage County is already a great place to bike and walk. The County has extensive natural beauty afforded by the Wisconsin River, extensive woodlands, and vital marshlands. The Green Circle Trail consists of 26 miles of shared-use paths and streets that connect many destinations within and around Stevens Point. In addition, new bike lanes have been added in recent years and the City of Stevens Point has an excellent system of wayfinding signs for bicyclists. In the rural parts of the County, there are many Town roads with low levels of motor vehicle traffic that are ideal for recreational rides.

However, there are also areas for improving bicycling and walking conditions in Portage County. There are many instances where comfortable and convenient routes connecting Villages, Towns, and the City are lacking. In some cases, this is due to physical barriers, such as the Wisconsin River or I-39, while in other cases it is due to a lack of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along existing roads and streets. In the urbanized portion of the County, there are streets that are challenging for cyclists and pedestrians due to high traffic volumes, lack of adequate infrastructure, and difficult intersections.

This Plan provides recommendations to improve conditions for bicycling and walking in Portage County and to coordinate the efforts of the County, the City of Stevens Point, and the numerous Villages and Towns. Key elements of this Plan include:

- A near-term action plan focused on building the culture of walking and bicycling and prioritizing near-term implementation efforts to build momentum
- An assessment of existing bicycling and walking conditions, plans, and policies in Portage County
- An overview of bicycle and pedestrian facility types
- A Vision, Goals, and Strategies for improving bicycling and walking in the County
- Non-infrastructure recommendations designed to improve bicycling and walking conditions in Portage County through Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation efforts
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure recommendations for the rural portion of Portage County and the outlying Villages
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure recommendations for the Portage County Urban Area
- Funding and implementation recommendations to aid the County and its municipalities in prioritizing projects and programs

This Plan is an update of the Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, prepared by Toole Design Group and SAA Design Group, and adopted in 2014. The 2014 plan was the first of its kind in Portage County and paved the way for improved walking and biking throughout the County. Many of the elements and recommendations from that plan have been carried forward into this Plan.

A Countywide Plan with Rural and Urban Elements

This Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan is intended to be used by individual municipalities and the County itself. Like motor vehicle travel, bicycle and pedestrian trips often cross jurisdictional boundaries; therefore, it is important for this Plan to ensure connectivity across municipal boundaries and between incorporated and unincorporated areas. This Plan consists of two complementary elements – a Rural Area element that addresses the unincorporated portions of the County and the outlying Villages, and an Urban Area element that includes the City of Stevens Point, the Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge, and portions of adjacent towns. While developed concurrently, these two elements are represented separately in this Plan because their contrasting contexts require different solutions in some cases.

Impetus for the Plan Update

In December of 2023, Portage County, the City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Whiting and Park Ridge were awarded a $200,000 Multi-Jurisdictional Planning and Demonstration Grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Administered through the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program, this grant funds local and regional initiatives to prevent deaths and serious injuries on roadways within Portage County. Funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, Portage County joins 11 Wisconsin communities and tribal nations who were awarded funds in the 2023 application cycle. As a part of the SS4A planning effort, an updated Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was desired. Through a competitive process, Portage County selected a team of consultants consisting of Traffic Analysis and Design Inc. (TADI), Vandewalle & Associates, raSmith, and Revelation. TADI led the development of the SS4A Safety Action Plan, and Vandewalle & Associates led the update of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

2.2 | A Countywide Plan

The continued need for bicycle and pedestrian planning for the Rural Area, the Urban Area, and surrounding schools in Portage County points to the need for a countywide plan. The need for bicycle and pedestrian facilities does not start and stop at municipal borders. Bicycling and walking improvements made to benefit a specific school can also benefit bicyclists and pedestrians who happen to be passing through the neighborhood.

This Plan addresses bicycling and pedestrian issues for all of Portage County. Because of the unique planning and facility needs of the Rural Area versus the Urban Area, bicycle and pedestrian facility recommendations for each area are provided in separate chapters. However, the Project Team designed the recommendations in this Plan to result in a single unified network that serves the needs of all County residents, regardless of in which specific municipality they may live. These areas – the Rural Area, the Urban Areas, and the School Areas – are described below.

The Rural Area

The Portage County Rural Area includes all 17 Towns in Portage County and the six outlying Villages of Almond, Amherst, Amherst Junction, Nelsonville, Junction City, and Rosholt. The Rural Area of Portage County had never had a formal bicycle or pedestrian Plan until the approval of the 2014 plan. Although pedestrian planning that had occurred at a small scale in some of the Villages, and

municipalities typically identified existing trails, etc. when completing their Comprehensive Plans prior to the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Bicycle and pedestrian planning in rural areas has several unique aspects. Although most Town Roads, and some County Roads, carry very little motor vehicle traffic, the traffic that is present often travels at a high speed. While bike lanes may be warranted in Villages, rural bicycle accommodations typically take the form of paved shoulders, shared roads, and shared-use paths. From a pedestrian perspective, providing sidewalks along rural roads in unincorporated areas is rarely cost-effective. In these areas, pedestrians will often use paved shoulders or shared-use paths.

The Urban Area

The Portage County Urban Area consists of the City of Stevens Point and Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge. Some recommendations for the Urban Area include small portions of the adjacent Towns of Hull, Plover, Linwood, and Carson.

The Village of Plover and City of Stevens Point – which constitute the majority of the Urban Area – created a Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan in the late 1990s and implemented some, but not all, of the Plan's recommendations. Some progress was achieved following the 2014 plan. However, considerable changes have occurred in the Urban Area since the completion of the last Plan, and the Urban Area is in need of an updated Plan to guide bicycling and walking improvements. There are several unique aspects of urban bicycle and pedestrian planning compared to planning for the Rural Area. For example, streets in the Urban Area tend to be wider and carry more traffic, but speed limits also tend to be lower. Bike lanes are often good solutions in cities and villages, and sidewalks for pedestrian use are essential in areas with urban levels of density.

School Areas

Fewer children walk and bicycle to school today than ever before in the United States.[2] Increasing walking and biking to schools in Portage County can positively contribute to the well-being of children at the local scale.



A full bike rack indicates lots of interest in bicycling to James Madison Elementary School in Stevens Point.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs are sustained efforts to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school. Safe Routes to School programs assess conditions around the school and conduct surveys to determine existing attitudes about bicycling and walking and bicycle and pedestrian facilities near the school. SRTS programs then identify opportunities to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation choice.

The SRTS program was adopted in 2014 and implementation should continue. The new bicycle and pedestrian plan will provide recommendations that may be congruent with the goals of the SRTS

[2] Safe Routes to School and Childhood Obesity Facts Sheet (2015), Accessed November 2024. https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/resources/fact-sheet/srts-childhood-obesity-review-research

program. The North Central Regional Planning Commission has recently reached out to the County to begin the process for updates to the SRTS plan.

Need for a Plan Update

Despite the comprehensive nature and thorough analysis conducted in the 2014 plan, there has been only a modest level of implementation of that plan since it was adopted. A few impediments to implementation included changes in staffing at Portage County, a focus on other priorities, a lack of funding allocated to implementation efforts, and skepticism about the value of bicycle and pedestrian improvements by some residents and elected officials. For this reason, this plan update focuses on building the culture of bicycling and prioritizing near-term implementation efforts to build momentum.

Additionally, since 2014, there have been breakthroughs and trends in active transportation technology with the advent and ever-growing popularity of E-bicycles and other forms of E-transportation devices such as electric scooters. There have also been changes in thought and advances in bicycle and pedestrian planning to accommodate these changes in technology in the past 10 years. Keeping up with these innovations and trends will result in connected and safe routes for all.

2.3 | Upfront Public Involvement

The public should be closely involved in the development of any plan to ensure that it meets the needs of residents, has local support, and is implementable by government officials. The Project Team used a multi-pronged approach to ensure that the public was centrally involved in the development of the Plan and its recommendations.

Community Workshops

On January 15 and 16, 2025, two in-person community workshops were hosted in Portage County. The project team selected workshop locations in both the urban and rural areas of Portage County. One workshop was held in Stevens Point at Mid-State Technical College, and the other workshop was hosted in Amherst at the Jensen Community Center. About 26 people signed in at the urban area workshop and 12 people signed in the rural area workshop, but actual attendance numbers were a bit higher.



The community workshops began with a short introductory presentation, followed by open-house style activities consisting of marking up large paper maps and providing sticky note comments and sticky dots on question boards. Participants were also encouraged to fill out comment forms to turn in when they were finished for the evening. Summaries of input received at the two workshops are included in Appendix B.

Online Survey and Mapping

Between December 20, 2024, and January 31, 2025, an online survey and an online mapping survey was made available for the general public and promoted through a wide range of county channels. During the course of this survey and mapping, over 900 respondents gave their input on bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as thoughts on safety and attitudes towards active transportation in Portage County. A summary of survey results is included in Appendix B.

Walk and Roll Audits

A walk and roll audit is a guided walk in which participants gather data about the barriers to safely walking and rolling (bike, wheelchair, scooter, stroller, etc.) along a given route. A primary objective is to identify challenges and find solutions for observed conditions. Consultants from Vandewalle and Associates and members of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Subcommittee led three walk and roll audits in May of 2025. On May 19, a group walked a route in Downtown Amherst, beginning at Village Hall. On May 22, a group walked a route near Stevens Point Area High School and Madison Elementary School. On May 28, a group walked a route in Downtown Stevens Point, along Clark Street. Participants recorded their findings on worksheets and on their smartphones using a website which allowed them to upload photos and comments tied to a specific location. A summary of results from the three walk and roll audits is included in Appendix B.



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CHAPTER 3:
THE CASE FOR BICYCLING AND WALKING

3 | THE CASE FOR BICYCLING AND WALKING

Communities across the country are embracing bicycling and walking as viable transportation modes and great forms of recreation. Bicycling and walking also provide a means to support multiple objectives including economic development, maximizing transportation investments, improving public health, addressing transportation equity, and reducing environmental impacts. In addition, many households are growing more interested in leading car-free or "car-light" lifestyles, especially as fuel costs continue to rise and appreciation increases for the health benefits of active transportation. There is great interest among citizens and stakeholders in pursuing development and transportation solutions that are more sustainable – meaning less costly to maintain over time, less polluting, and more equitable.



Bicycling is a low-cost transportation option that also provides other benefits.

Communities increasingly see the bicycle as a key component of sustainable transportation systems. Bicycling is by far one of the most cost-effective transportation modes for municipalities and other government agencies to support. In many cases, bicycle facilities utilize existing roadway space and only require relatively low-cost pavement markings and/or signage. Often touted as the world's most efficient machine, the bicycle also has a much smaller impact on household transportation costs compared to automobiles and transit.

Similarly, improving walkability is a high priority in many communities across the nation, especially those that are undergoing periods of redevelopment and revitalization. Walkable neighborhoods and districts typically boast lower crime rates, improved public health, increased economic activity, higher property values, and higher levels of community interaction.

These trends, described in more detail in the following pages, support implementation of this Plan.

3.1 | Health

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends two and a half hours of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week, which is equivalent to 10 minutes of brisk walking, three times per day, five days per week.[3] Adults who are physically active are healthier and less likely to develop many chronic diseases that are more common amongst inactive adults. In the United States, the percentage of children and adolescents affected by obesity has more than tripled since the 1970s.[4] Expanded and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities and support programs enable children, adolescents, and adults to get exercise as a part of their daily transportation routines. The health

[3] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Adult Activity: An Overview, https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics/guidelines/adults.html

[4] Managing Obesity in Schools. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed December 3, 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/school-health-conditions/chronic/obesity.html

benefits of active transportation have also been shown to include increased labor productivity amongst adults and improved academic performance for youth.

3.2 | Transportation Choice



Eastern Portage County's geography draws cyclists from around the Midwest to the Ice Age Bicycle Trail.

Improving bicycling and walking conditions will expand transportation choices for the entire community. For those on low or fixed incomes, biking and walking may provide a supplement to public transit. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 31% of the Wisconsin population is classified as a "non-driver" with an estimated 20-30% of Portage County residents also being classified as non-drivers[5]. Many non-drivers do not drive because they are too young or too old, have a physical disability, do not have the economic resources to own and operate a car, or simply do not want to drive. However, most of these people can bicycle or walk if safe and convenient bikeways and sidewalks are present. Biking and walking may also be options for the elderly who reach an age where driving is no longer an option. Older adults still need to travel to the grocery store, to medical appointments, to bus stops, and to access recreational opportunities. Improvements to bicycling and walking conditions make it easier for Portage County's residents to age-in-place, while also lowering transportation costs.

Providing safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian facilities also benefits people who rarely or never take advantage of them: for each person who does walk or bike to the grocery store or other destination, there is one less car on the street and one more parking space available for people who drive to the same destination.

Transit access is also important for people of all ages. Well-developed bicycle and pedestrian systems expand the reach of transit systems. Providing safe and convenient facilities such as bike lanes, sidewalks, and shared use paths increase the service radius of a transit stop or station, particularly where distances between stops are great.

3.3 | Economic Impacts

Bicycle recreation and tourism is a big economic sector in Wisconsin. **According to a 2024 report by WisDOT, it is estimated that bicycle recreation and bicycle tourism brought in $5.36 billion in spending to Wisconsin communities in 2022**.[6] These dollars are spent at local restaurants and bars, shops, hotels, and other establishments. The small community of Sparta, Wisconsin, sees over 60,000 visiting bicyclists every year thanks to the presence of the Elroy-Sparta Trail.[7] With attractions such as the Green Circle Trail, the Tomorrow River State Trail, beautiful countryside traversed by low-volume roads, and dining and other attractions in its many communities, Portage County is well placed to greatly expand bicycle tourism in the region.

[5] "Improving Transportation for Non-Drivers". Wisconsin DOT. https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/multimodal/nd.aspx
[6] "Economic Impact of Bicycling in Wisconsin". 2019. Wisconsin DOT. https://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/multimodal/bike/econ-impact.pdf
[7] "Bicycling Capital of America" Sparta Chamber of Commerce. https://www.bikesparta.com/bicycling-capital-of-america/

3.4 | Recreation

Creating a countywide network of bikeways with connectivity between municipalities and neighboring communities increases the opportunities for close-to-home, affordable recreation for people of all ages. Bicycle and pedestrian networks are valuable ways to enhance access to the County's many public parks and other recreational venues, and to provide links into neighboring counties. On their own, shared-use paths (such as the Green Circle Trail and the Tomorrow River State Trail) provide excellent recreation opportunities for cyclists and pedestrians. Biking, walking, and jogging along paths are great ways to de-stress, exercise, and experience nature.

3.5 | Building Community & Public Safety

It cannot be underestimated what bicycling and walking contributes to building community and promoting public safety. Building a strong sense of community is dependent on knowing your neighbors and meeting the people who live on the next block or in the next neighborhood. A community that bicycles and walks will significantly increase the social interactions that create these bonds. More bicycling and walking also means more eyes on the streets and on the paths. The best deterrent to crime is the active presence of people in the public realm who are engaged in constructive activities.

3.6 | Traffic Congestion & Safety

Bicycling can have an impact on local traffic congestion. According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, around 52% of all daily trips in 2021 were less than three miles in length [8], a distance covered by bicycle in 15 to 20 minutes. Most of these trips are made by automobile, in part due to a lack of walking and bicycling facilities that are perceived to be safe. Improved bicycling conditions can reduce congestion by providing the option to travel by bicycle for shopping, running errands, visiting friends, and commuting to work or school. At certain times of day, there may be little difference in the time it takes to make a short trip by bicycle or by car, and bicycling may save time and money.



A well-connected sidewalk network allows people to walk to nearby destinations if they choose to.

Safe, clear, and consistent accommodations for cyclists enhance safety for all street users. Interestingly, more people bicycling and walking will likely increase traffic safety for these groups. For example, bicycle lanes provide cyclists clear guidance and more confidence about bicycling in the street, and also provide motorists with information about where to expect bikes. When entering a street with bike lanes from a side street or driveway, bike lanes provide better sight distance for motorists watching for oncoming traffic. Research undertaken by the Alliance for Biking and Walking shows that areas with more bicycling trips per capita have a lower frequency of bicycle/motor vehicle crashes than areas with lower numbers of bicycling trips per capita; when

[8] *Trips by Distance,* Bureau of Transportation Statistics, https://data.bts.gov/Research-and-Statistics/Trips-by-Distance/w96p-f2qv/about_data

bicyclists are encountered more frequently on streets, motorists become more accustomed to sharing the road with them.[9]

It is also significantly less expensive to create good bicycling, walking, and transit facilities to attempt to reduce congestion than it is to increase street capacity by building new streets or expanding existing streets.

3.7 | Environment

Bicycling and walking are not the only solutions to environmental issues like air pollution and climate change, but they can make meaningful contributions to solving these problems. Increased levels of bicycling and walking reduce fossil fuel consumption, air pollution, and carbon emissions. While every car trip cannot be replaced with a non-motorized trip, every trip made by bike or on foot does reduce pollution, especially when the trip covers a short distance. Based upon research conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, it is estimated that up to 80% of the pollution created by automobiles is emitted in the first few minutes of operation, before pollution control devices begin to work effectively.[10] Replacing very short motor vehicle trips with bicycle or walking trips can have an outsized environmental impact.

3.8 | Quality of Life

All of the factors noted above contribute to an increased quality of life for Portage County residents. A well-connected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the County provides transportation and recreation options for residents, can lead to improved health for the community as a whole as more people walk and bike, and can provide economic benefits through increased tourism and spending in local shops. These benefits do not only accrue to Portage County residents who use the bicycle and pedestrian networks – all residents benefit from decreased congestion on local streets, improved air quality, and robust local economies. Providing well-connected bicycle and pedestrian networks can help address many issues facing Portage County and other communities across the country, while also providing opportunities for increased recreation.

3.9 | Economic & Community Vitality

Active transportation – biking and walking – positively impacts economic vitality on three scales: the community, the neighborhood, and the household.

The Community

In many industries the competition for workers is place-based; people are choosing employers not just on salary and traditional benefits, but on external criteria such as lifestyle and quality of life. According to a 2023 survey by the National Association of Realtors, 79% of Americans said they want to live in communities within an easy walk of other places such as shops and parks. Of those, more than 78% also said they would be willing to pay more to live in a walkable community.[11]

In today's global economy, the ability to attract business – and business's ability to attract employees – depends on the livability index of the community, which is composed of five factors:

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[9] *Bicycling and Walking in the United Sates: 2012 Benchmarking Report*, Alliance for Biking and Walking, 2012

[10] Catalysts for the Control of Automotive Cold Start Emissions, United States Environmental Protection Agency, http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncer_abstracts/index.cfm/fuseaction/display.abstractDetail/abstract/1450/report/0 Accessed 8/8/13

[11] "New NAR Survey Finds Americans Prefer Walkable Communities," National Association of Realters, June 27, 2023, https://www.nar.realtor/newsroom/new-nar-survey-finds-americans-prefer-walkable-communities . Accessed June 2025.

1. Low crime
2. Good schools
3. Easy commutes
4. Close-to-home recreation
5. A friendly and open social environment

A bicycle-friendly street system and extensive path system are central to items 3, 4, and 5 on this list. The "knowledge workers" of today and tomorrow's businesses want healthy and sustainable lifestyles, of which daily bicycling and walking is a part. A survey by the commercial real estate development association NAOIP found that office workers would prefer to work in walkable locations four-to-one over isolated suburban office parks.[12]

Communities that are making investments to become more walkable and bikeable are seeing dividends in the form of attracting new residents and employers.

The Neighborhood

Investing in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is a key strategy for revitalizing and improving neighborhoods. These investments improve access to businesses, make streets more attractive to a broader range of users, increase neighborhood livability by increasing social interaction and perceptions of personal safety, and reduce vehicle congestion. Improving bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to established neighborhoods also supports the redevelopment and creation of mixed-use districts and provides safe routes to schools.

The Household

A motor vehicle is the second-highest household expense in the United States after housing, according to the League of American Bicyclists. In Portage County, approximately 4% of households report not owning a car while approximately 65% report owning two or more cars.[13] The American Automobile Association estimates that Americans spend on average $12,297 each year to own and operate a car.[14] A large amount of this cost leaves the local economy (through fuel purchases, insurance fees, etc.) while the remainder stays in the community (through taxes, maintenance, registration, etc.). In a period of high-variability in the cost of fuel, bicycling and walking offer lower-cost transportation options. Bicycling has an annual operating cost of approximately $300 to $400 – less than 4% of average annual car operating costs.[15] Providing transportation choices can give households the option of owning fewer cars, thus freeing up more household money that can be spent in the local economy.

[12] Emil Malizia, "Preferred Office Locations," NAIOP Research Foundation, October 2014, https://www.naiop.org/globalassets/research-and-publications/report/preferred-office-locations-comparing-location-preferences-and-performance-of-office-space-in-cbds-suburban-vibrant-centers-and-suburban-areas/researchreportexecutive-summary.pdf . Accessed June 2025.
[13] U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2023 American Community Survey, 1-year Estimates. Table B08201.
[14] The American Automobile Association https://newsroom.aaa.com/2024/09/aaa-your-driving-costs-the-price-of-new-car-ownership-continues-to-climb/
[15] "Bicycle Maintenance Costs" Upcycle Bikes. https://upcyclebikes.co/blogs/bicycle-maintenance-costs/

THE CASE FOR BICYCLING AND WALKING

DESIRABLE COMMUNITY

79% of Americans said they **want to live in communities within an easy walk of destinations** such as shops and parks. Of those, more than **78%** also said they **would be willing to pay more to live in a walkable community.**[1]

LOWER-COST TRANSPORTATION

Americans spend on average **$12,297 each year to won and operate a car**. Bicycling has an annual operating cost of approximately $300 to $400. Walking has virtually no transportation cost.[2]

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bicycle recreation and tourism brought in **$5.36 billion in spending to Wisconsin communities** in 2022. These dollars are spent at local restaurants and bars, shops, hotels, and businesses.[3]

ACTIVE & HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Expanded and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities and support programs allow residents to get **exercise as a part of their daily transportation routines** and provide **great options for active recreation**.

SAFER STREETS

Areas with more bicycling trips per capita have a **lower frequency of bicycle/motor vehicle crashes than other areas**; when there are more bicyclists, drivers become more accustomed to sharing the road with them.[4]

SUPPORTS NON-DRIVERS

Non-drivers need transportation options too! **20-30% of Portage County residents are non-drivers**, meaning they do not have a drivers license, have a physical disability, cannot afford a car, or simply do not want to drive.[5]

REGIONAL RECREATIONAL ASSET

Bicycle and pedestrian networks are valuable ways to enhance access to the County's many parks and recreational assets. Renowned shared-use paths such as the **Green Circle Trail and the Tomorrow River State Trail** provide excellent recreation opportunities and **attract visitors to Portage County.**

REDUCES CO_2 EMISSIONS

Walking or biking for one short trip a day can **reduce a person's annual CO_2 emissions by approximately 0.5 tons per year.**[6]

...AND IT'S FUN!

Walking is the most popular form of exercise in the United States. Biking, walking, and jogging along paths are great ways to **de-stress, exercise, and experience nature.**

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1. "New NAR Survey Finds Americans Prefer Walkable Communities." National Association of Realters. June 27, 2023. https://www.nar.realtor/newsroom/new-nar-survey-finds-americans-prefer-walkable-communities. Accessed June 2025.

2. "AAA Your Driving Costs: The Price of New Car Ownership Continues to Climb." The American Automobile Association, Sept 24, 2024. https://newsroom.aaa.com/2024/09/aaa-your-driving-costs-the-price-of-new-car-ownership-continues-to-climb/. Accessed June 2025.

3. "Economic Impact of Bicycling in Wisconsin". Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 2024, https://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/multimodal/bike/econ-impact.pdf. Accessed June 2025.

4. "Bicycling and Walking in the United Sates: 2012 Benchmarking Report," Alliance for Biking and Walking, 2012, https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/2012BenchmarkingReport.pdf. Accessed June 2025.

5. "Improving Transportation for Non-Drivers," Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 2022, https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/multimodal/nd.aspx. Accessed June 2025.

6. C. Brand, et al. "The climate change mitigation effects of daily active travel in cities," Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment, Volume 93, 2021, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1361920921000687. Accessed June 2025.

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CHAPTER 4:
EXISTING CONDITIONS

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4 | EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.1 | Overview

In the transportation world, bicycling and walking have received much attention over the past 20 years. Portage County has taken steps to bring together the municipalities and school districts to do planning for these modes. As part of that process, it is important to take stock of what currently exists in the County, assess conditions facing people who are bicycling or walking or who want to bike or walk more often, and what the infrastructure is like to make bicycling, walking, and hiking attractive options in the County.

4.2 | Regional Context, Urban Area, Villages & Rural Areas

Portage County is centrally located in Wisconsin. The County is approximately 115 miles north of Madison, the state capital, and 200 miles east of Minneapolis. The County covers approximately 823 square miles and has a 2023 estimated population of 71,024 people.

The Portage County Urban Area is centrally located in relation to the rest of the County. It is by far the most populated area of the County. The Villages outside of the Urban Area range in population from approximately 150 people (Nelsonville) to 1,100 people (Amherst). The next closest city with a population as large as Stevens Point is Wisconsin Rapids. Wisconsin Rapids borders the western side of the County. It is approximately 20 miles from downtown Wisconsin Rapids to downtown Stevens Point. The Urban Area is comprised of four municipalities: the City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge.

Stevens Point is the largest municipality in Portage County; it is the County's only incorporated City, and it is the County Seat. With a population of 25,549 and an area of 17.2 square miles, Stevens Point contains the majority of the population and land area in the Urban Area. The Village of Whiting is adjacent to Stevens Point on the south side of the City. Whiting had an estimated 2022 population of 1,538 people and covers an area of 2.16 square miles. The Village is bound by Stevens Point to the north, the Village of Plover to the south and east, and the Wisconsin River to the west. The Village of Plover is adjacent to Whiting and Stevens Point, and is the southernmost municipality in the Urban Area. The Village had an estimated 2022 population of 13,549 people and covers an area of 10.79 square miles. Plover is bound by Whiting and Stevens Point to the north, and unincorporated Towns of Plover and Stockton to the west, south, and east. The Village of Park Ridge is completely surrounded by Stevens Point and lies in the eastern portion of that City. Park Ridge had an estimated 2022 population of 479 people and covers an area of 0.22 square miles. Combined, the four municipalities have an estimated population of 41,115 and cover an area of approximately 31 square miles.

The Urban Area is the cultural and employment hub of the County. Several larger employers including University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Aspirus Stevens Point, Sentry Insurance, and many smaller and mid-size employers in downtown Stevens Point are all located within a mile and half of each other – a manageable bicycle or walking trip.

4.3 | Bicycling and Walking Conditions

Portage County is as varied in landscapes as is the state of Wisconsin. While the western part of the County is relatively flat, the eastern third of the County is hilly. These topographic differences are due to Portage County being impacted by a terminal moraine – the area where glaciers stopped advancing during a previous ice age. As the glaciers melted and retreated, they left large deposits of debris and rock that now form the hilly eastern portion of Portage County. The Urban Area is flat, making bicycling and walking a bit easier from a physical exertion standpoint. Alternatively, bicyclists and hikers can select hilly or flat terrain for their recreational trips by traveling to a different part of the County. In addition to the varied terrain, the County possesses interesting topographic features, forest land, lakes, and a major river running right through the northwest part of the County. These features enhance the popularity of bicycling in the County – a point often made by Portage County bicyclists responding to the Esri survey map and attending the public meetings.

Bicycling and Walking in Portage County

In many parts of the world, walking and bicycling are major modes of travel and relied on for utilitarian purposes. Even in many western countries walking and bicycling constitute a major portion of all transportation trips and connections between these modes and transit are well developed. In the U.S and Wisconsin, however, the opposite is true because cities have evolved around the automobile, making destinations and land uses so spread out that only driving can overcome such distances for many trip purposes.

In Wisconsin, a relatively small percentage of people walk or bike to work or for work-related purposes. This is primarily because so few people live within walking or bicycling distance of where they work. When other trip purposes are considered, walking and bicycling face the same challenges. Often trips to the store, school, or even a favorite restaurant are just too far for there to be much potential for bicycling or walking. Or if they are close-by, they are not served well with bikeways and/or sidewalks.

Conditions in the Urban Area in particular stand out as a bit of an exception to the national and statewide situation. As seen in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2, bicycling and walking are far more common in the Urban Area than the state as a whole. The close proximity of destinations to each other and to where people live has a big impact on the potential for bicycling and walking. This is especially apparent when considering the proximity of major generators of walking traffic in Stevens Point, such as downtown businesses, UW-Stevens Point, and major employers.

Although there may be other more populous places in Wisconsin that have higher numbers of people walking and bicycling to work, the Urban Area has higher rates of bicycling and walking to work as compared to the rest of the state. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey for a five-year average from 2018 to 2023, 1.36% of all residents in the Urban Area commuted to work by bicycle. In Stevens Point, the percentage was 1.76%, and in Park Ridge the percentage was 1.2%, figures which are considerably higher than the rate for Wisconsin (see Figure 1). Walking to work rates were considerably higher with 5.52% of Urban Area residents



Paved shoulders serve both pedestrians and bicyclists in the Rural Area of Portage County.

walking to work. Remarkably, in Stevens Point, the rate was over 8%, but less than 1% in other parts of the County, including Villages within the Urban Area. With such high rates for the Urban Area, the County's rate of bicycling and walking is consequently high with 0.94% of the resident population bicycling to work and 3.97% walking to work. By comparison, just 0.5% of the Wisconsin population bicycled to work and 2.73% walked. While it is encouraging that people are using alternate forms of transportation to the automobile, these rates are significantly lower than the those found in the 2007-2011 ACS data, so there is a need to recover to previous rates and to expand beyond them.

Unfortunately, bicycle and walking data is rather limited. The work trip information is the only reliable community-level data available. There are many other purposes for bicycling and walking including shopping, visiting and social, education, and recreation.

FIGURE 4.1: BICYCLE COMMUTE MODE SHARE (2019 - 2023)

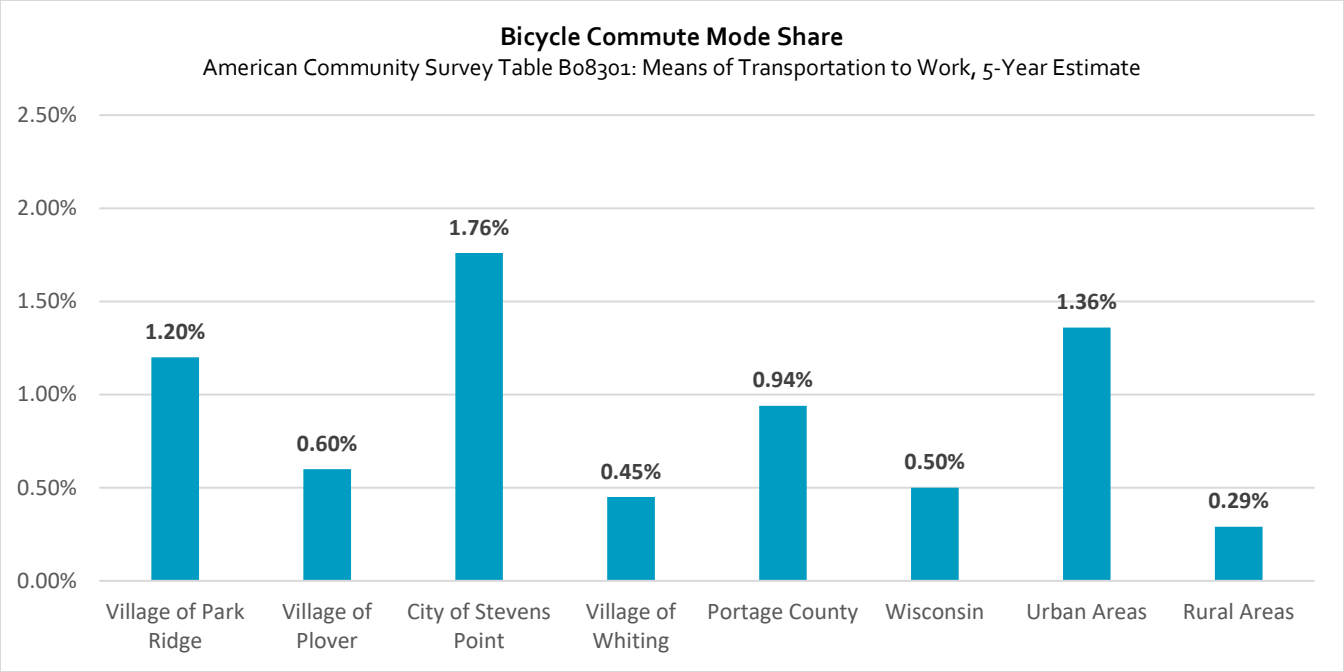
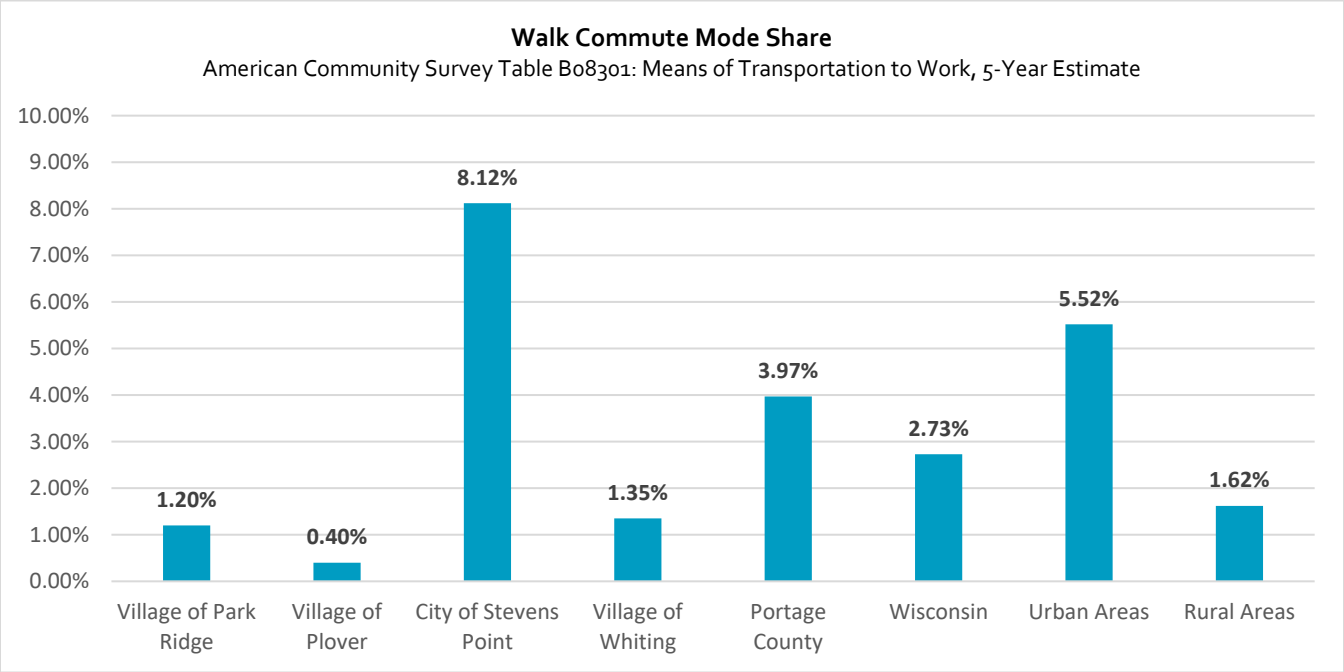


FIGURE 4.2: WALK COMMUTE MODE SHARE (2019 - 2023)

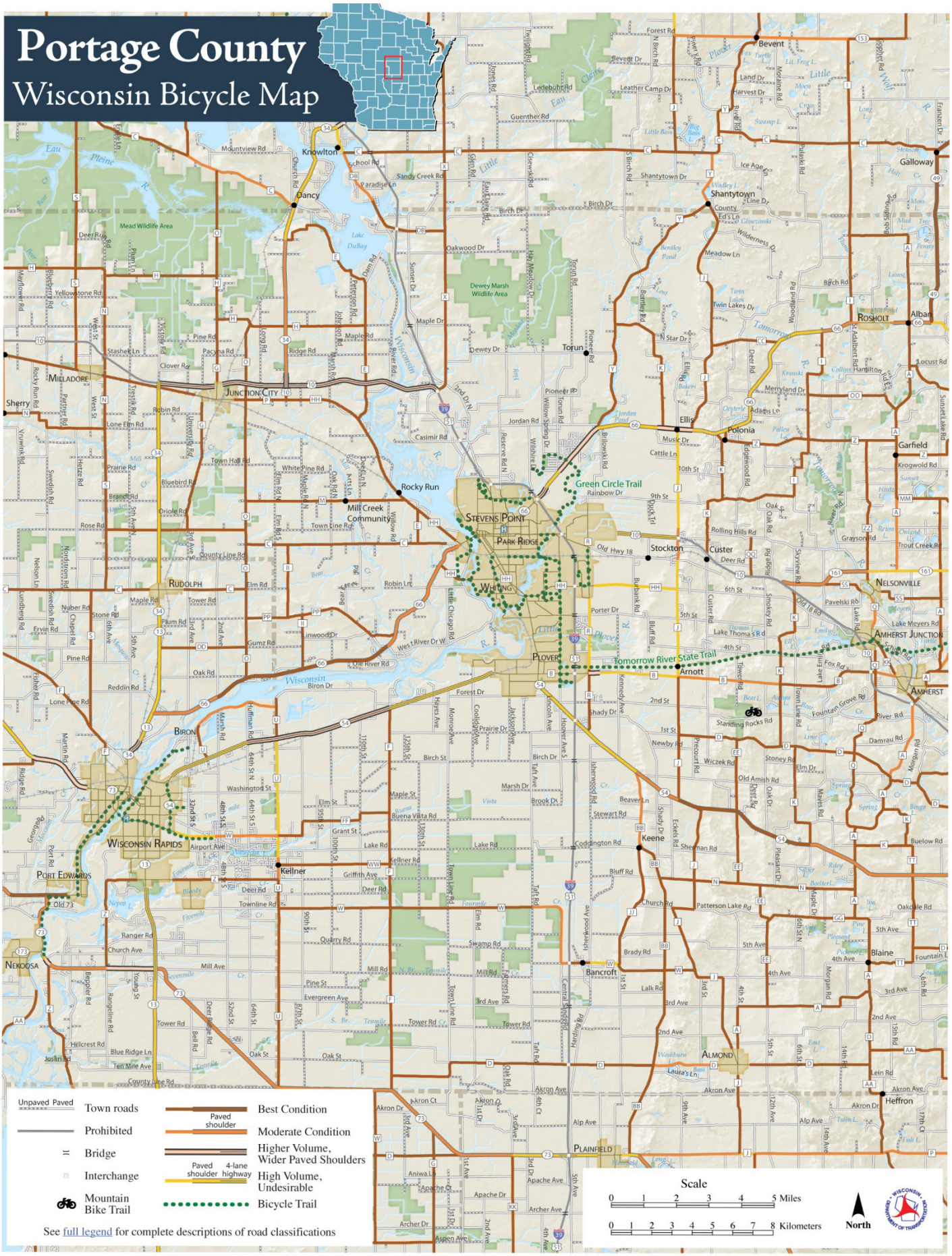


Existing Conditions Data Map

Existing conditions data relevant to walking and bicycling is found on an interactive web map, which is a digital component of this Plan. The map includes existing bicycle facilities, suitability of roads for biking ratings (described below), locations of bicycle and pedestrian crashes from 2010-2024 (described above), the Portage County High Injury Network (described below), and average daily traffic counts collected by WisDOT. The map also includes future bicycle facilities as recommended by this Plan. The interactive map allows the user to zoom into specific geographic locations, turn data layers on and off, and see how existing conditions data interacts with the Plan's recommendations. This map is located at the following address: https://tinyurl.com/PoCoBikePed

Suitability of Roads for Biking – Rural Areas

Map 4.1: Portage County Bicycle Map is prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). It highlights the most favorable bicycling conditions while presenting the full continuum of roadways—from narrow town roads to U.S. Highways. This approach enables bicyclists of all abilities to select their own routes to meet their individual transportation and recreational needs. The methodology used with this map is applicable to rural roadways, but not urban streets. Increased traffic volumes, lower speeds, and changing road design affect bicycle travel in urban areas in ways that cannot be accurately depicted on the map. Thus, the bicycling condition ratings for roadways stop at urban fringes; however, the major streets are still depicted. This map was referenced when developing the recommendations for this Plan.


Portage County
Wisconsin Bicycle Map
Unpaved Paved
Town roads
Prohibited
Bridge
Interchange
Mountain Bike Trail
Best Condition
Paved shoulder
Moderate Condition
Higher Volume, Wider Paved Shoulders
Paved shoulder 4-lane highway
High Volume, Undesirable
Bicycle Trail
See full legend for complete descriptions of road classifications
Scale
0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Kilometers
North
Green Circle Trail
Tomorrow River State Trail
Stevens Point
Park Ridge
Wausau
Rocky Run
Mill Creek Community
Junction City
Milladore
Sherry
Rudolph
Biron
Wisconsin Rapids
Port Edwards
Nekoosa
Kellner
Dancy
Knowlton
Mead Wildlife Area
Dewey Marsh Wildlife Area
Torun
Ellis
Polonia
Rosholt
Galloway
Shantytown
Bevent
Stockton
Custer
Nelsonville
Amherst Junction
Amherst
Plover
Arnott
Keene
Bancroft
Almond
Blaine
Heffron
Plainfield

Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Data

Looking at bicycle and pedestrian crash data is a way to identify problematic intersections, corridors, and areas where crashes occur the most. Once identified, these crash spots can be targeted for strategic improvements to make safer travel possible for all residents. Based on vehicle crashes in Portage County that police crash reports were filed for from 2010 through October 2024, a few patterns can be observed. These patterns can be organized by the rural areas of the County and the urban areas of the County as they tend to differ in nature.

Crashes in the rural areas of Portage County tend to be evenly spread out with slight concentrations in or near rural villages and cities. For the most part, these crashes tend to be on or near intersections between state highways and local roads or county highways and local roads. The majority of crashes reported in rural areas are between automobiles and pedestrians. The overall pattern for crashes in the urban areas of Portage County is opposite of the rural pattern. Crashes tend to be concentrated in specific areas and main transportation corridors. This is likely due to the higher population density and traffic in the urban areas leading to more interactions between pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles on busy streets or places with a lot of foot and bicycle traffic.

Key areas of concern include:

- Downtown Stevens Point
- The bordering streets surrounding UW-Stevens Point
  - Heavily concentrated on Division Street between Fourth Avenue and Clark Street
- The area by Goerke Park, the Stevens Point Police Department and Parks and Recreation Department, Boys and Girls Club, and PJ Jacobs Junior High School
  - Heavily concentrated on Michigan Avenue between Clark Street and Prais Street

Key corridors of concern include:

- US 51 (including Division Street/Post Road/Church Street)
  - Spread throughout the corridor with a heavy concentration at the intersection of Post Road and McDill Avenue
- Highway 10/I-39 ALT (including Main Street/Clark Street)
  - Spread throughout the corridor with a heavy concentration between Wildwood Drive and Ridge Road

Portage County High Injury Network

As part of the County's Safety Action Plan, TADI prepared a High Injury Network using crash data from 2020-2024. This analysis identifies the roadways that experience the most fatal and injury crashes in Portage County. Those corridors and intersections identified on Portage County's roadway network are categorized as High Injury Networks (HIN). These crashes would be expected to continue into the future if the infrastructure on these corridors are not changed. The development of a HIN can help prioritize safety investments and other strategies on the corridors in Portage County that see the highest density of fatalities and injuries.

Within the High Injury Network, there were nine fatal injuries, 65 serious injuries, and 201 minor/moderate injuries. Six pedestrians and 17 bicyclists were hit in these crashes. The analysis found that 28% of crashes in Portage County occurred on only 1.3% of the roadway network. The High Injury Network will be a focus for intervention in this Plan as well as the Safety Action Plan.

Summary of Bicycle Infrastructure

Maps 6 and 7 depict existing bicycle infrastructure in the Rural Area and the Urban Area. In summary, most of the bicycle facilities that have been built over the past 20 years have been built in the Urban Area and tend to be shared use paths. The Green Circle Trail is a series of paths and is a signature facility for the region. Other paths include the Hoover Road path, the Heartland Trail (including the I-39 underpass), the Tomorrow River State Trail, Brilowski Road/County Road R, and a handful of short connecting paths. Bicycle lanes or urban shoulders currently exist on portions of the following streets in Stevens Point:



Stevens Point has a growing number of bike lanes.

- Second Street North
- Michigan Avenue North
- North Point Drive
- Michigan Avenue
- Minnesota Avenue
- Streets in the Portage County Business Park
- Patch Street
- Prentice Street North
- Maria Drive
- Stanley Street
- Franklin Street
- First Street
- Centerpoint Drive
- Main Street
- Clark Street
- West Clark Street
- Jefferson Street
- Water Street
- West River Drive
- Whiting Avenue
- Hoover Road
- E.M. Copps Drive
- Clem's Way
- Business Park Drive
- John Joanis Drive
- Vern Holmes Drive
- Venture Drive
- Badger Avenue
- Brilowski Road

There are bicycle lanes in Plover and Whiting on Post Road, however there are no bicycle lanes in Park Ridge.

Stevens Point has an extensive bike route network that extends minimally beyond the City borders. The bike route network is well signed, with signs including wayfinding information to guide users to specific destinations or routes. In response to the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Stevens Point has added 26 miles of bicycle infrastructure. The bike route network typically uses lower-volume streets and avoids busy streets. However, some moderate volume streets are designated as bicycle routes. Some comments were received during the development of this Plan that some of these streets are not comfortable for less confident bicyclists. The Stevens Point bike route network provides a strong starting point for a wayfinding network for the Urban Area.

The arterial streets throughout the Urban Area are generally undesirable and challenging for bicyclists to use. The neighborhood streets throughout Stevens Point, Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge are generally acceptable for bicycling. These streets have low volumes of motor vehicle traffic and lower speed limits than are on many of the arterial and collector streets in the Urban Area. The design of many neighborhood streets encourages speeding which contributes to unsafe cycling conditions.

The County has excellent roads. Like the remainder of the state, most Town roads are paved, a testament to the importance of farm-to-market roadways in the dairy state. Most of the state highways have paved shoulders; however, the shoulders are somewhat narrow at three feet of width. The County Road system provides excellent coverage in the County and is well maintained. Traffic volumes on most County Roads are low or moderately low. Very few County Roads have paved shoulders.

There are no official bikeways in the Rural Area, although some signed bicycle routes exist in the far eastern part of the County as an Ice Age Trail effort. These exist on low volume roadways.

Summary of Pedestrian Infrastructure Conditions

There are two main components to a pedestrian system – facilities that enable people to walk along a street or within a separate corridor and facilities that will help a person cross a street. As volumes and speeds of traffic increase, so does the need for both types of facilities. Sidewalks and paths are the main facilities for providing pedestrian accommodations along roadways, while marked crosswalks, pedestrian signals, pedestrian beacons, and median crossing islands are the main accommodations to improve the safety and function of crossings for pedestrians (and often bicyclists). In some settings, overpasses and underpasses are put in place to create a totally grade-separated crossing for pedestrians, but these are rare and expensive improvements.



Well-designed curb ramps that provide access to sidewalks for people with disabilities are a critical part of the pedestrian network.

Map 9.2 presents the current sidewalk system in the Urban Area. Stevens Point has by far the most sidewalks while few streets within the Villages in the Urban Area have sidewalks. There are gaps in the sidewalk system, which seem most pronounced in Stevens Point due to the high concentration of sidewalks in other areas of the City. Almost all streets functionally classified as local streets in Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge have no sidewalks, and even most of the collector streets do not have sidewalks.

Pedestrian crossing problems manifest themselves in two ways: long wait times for gaps in traffic and crashes when pedestrians are struck while crossing. The location of pedestrian crashes can provide some insights into these problem intersections and stretches of street. There are seven primary streets along which most pedestrian crashes in the County occur: Fourth, Illinois, Michigan, Division, Main, Clark, and Church Streets.

As one countermeasure to pedestrian crashes, there are a number of existing pedestrian signals that can assist pedestrians in crossing busy streets at intersections. Most of these are located along current and former state highways. There are few or no medians providing space for pedestrians to make a two-stage crossing. Rapid flash beacons, which are described in Chapter 5, are used in limited cases in municipalities across Portage County. These flash beacons are located at Franklin Street and Division Street, Water Street and 3rd Street, and Hoover Avenue and Airline Road.

Pedestrian facilities were evaluated through three Walk, Bike, and Roll Audits conducted in May of 2025. These events were held in two locations in Stevens Point and one location in Amherst. These audits revealed a range of sidewalk network gaps, pedestrian crossing issues, and ADA accessibility issues. Detailed findings are included in Appendix B. Pedestrian facilities within the County's smaller Villages were also examined when doing the 2014 Safe Routes to School planning for Almond, Amherst, Junction City, and Rosholt. Sidewalks in Nelsonville and Amherst Junction were examined at the same time. Sidewalks are located along the main streets within these Villages, although there were a few locations where a sidewalk is located only on one side. With a few exceptions, the sidewalks are generally in good condition.

4.4 | Review and Summary Existing Plans & Policies

The wide range of plans and policies related to walking and bicycling in Portage County were reviewed for this Plan. A brief summary of each plan that was reviewed is provided in Appendix C.



VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.

CHAPTER 5:
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITY TYPES

5 | BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITY TYPES

All facilities that are specifically recommended in this Plan are identified with a green box. However, all facilities listed in this chapter are suitable for implementation, depending on location and context.

5.1 | On-Street Bicycle Facility Types

The tables below provide brief descriptions of different types of on-street bicycle facilities. The Plan recommendations do not include all of the facilities described below; those not included in the recommendations may be useful for future bicycle planning or when specific street segments are more closely examined for bikeway implementation.

Bikeway

A bikeway is any facility that is open for the use of bicyclists. Bikeways include on-street facilities such as bike lanes and shared lane markings, as well as off-street facilities such as shared use paths. All of the on- and off-street bicycle facilities described in this section are considered bikeways.

Bike Lane

A bike lane is a pavement marking that designates a portion of a street for the preferential or exclusive use of bicycles. Bike lane markings are typically dashed where vehicles are allowed to cross the bike lane, such as for right turns or at bus stops. Bike lanes are best suited for two-way arterial and collector streets where there is enough width to accommodate a bike lane in both directions, and on one-way streets where there is enough width for a single bike lane.



Buffered Bike Lane

Buffered bike lanes are created by striping a buffer zone between a bike lane and the adjacent travel lane. Some buffered bike lanes also offer a painted buffer between the bike lane and an adjacent parking lane. Buffered bike lanes should be considered at locations where there is excess pavement width or where adjacent traffic speeds are at or above 35 mph.



Protected Bike Lane

A protected bike lane, sometimes called a protected bike lane or separated bike lane, is a bicycle facility that is physically separated from both the street and the sidewalk. A protected bike lane may be constructed at street level using street space, or at the sidewalk level using space adjacent to the street. Protected bike lanes separate bicyclists from motor vehicle traffic using a variety of methods, including curbs, raised concrete medians, bollards, on-street parking, large planting pots/boxes, landscaped buffers (trees and lawn), or other methods. Protected bike lanes designed to be level with the sidewalk should provide a vertical separation between bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as a different surface treatment to delineate the bicycle from the pedestrian space (such as asphalt vs. concrete). Protected bike lanes can be one way for bicycles on each side of a two-way road, or two-way and installed on one or both sides of the road. Protected bike lanes provide cyclists with a higher level of comfort compared to bike lanes, and are typically used on large multi-lane arterials where higher vehicle speeds exist. They may also be appropriate on high-volume but lower-speed streets.



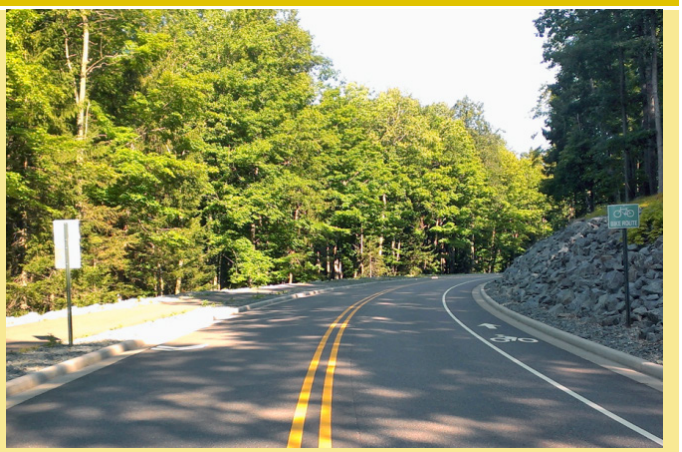
Contraflow Bike Lane

Contraflow bike lanes run in the opposite direction of other traffic on a one-way street. Contraflow bike lanes provide legal bike access on one-way streets where bicyclists may otherwise ride against traffic or on the sidewalk. Contraflow bike lanes may be separated from other traffic by painted lines, a painted buffer, or a physical barrier.



Climbing Bike Lane

A climbing lane is a bikeway design for a two-way street that has a steep slope and insufficient width to permit bike lanes in both directions. A bike lane (the climbing lane) is provided in the uphill direction to accommodate slow moving bicyclists in the uphill direction and a shared lane marking is provided in the downhill direction, where bicyclists can typically travel at speeds close to motor vehicles.



Colored Bike Lane

All of the above bike lanes may have green color applied to them to highlight the presence of the bike lane. Colored lanes are typically used in high-conflict areas such as through complicated intersections, in areas where traffic is merging across the bike lane, or in areas where traffic frequently turns across the bike lane.



Neighborhood Greenway / Bicycle Boulevard

A neighborhood greenway, sometimes also called a bicycle boulevard, is a street with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds designated to provide priority to bicyclists and neighborhood motor vehicle traffic. Neighborhood greenways may simply have signs and shared lane markings, or may include traffic calming elements including speed humps, traffic circles, chicanes, or traffic diverters. Neighborhood greenways benefit neighborhoods by reducing cut-through traffic and speeding without limiting access by residents.



Shared Lane Marking – Neighborhood Street

Shared lane markings (sharrows) may also be used on residential streets to designate bicycle facilities where there is not sufficient width for bike lanes. Studies have shown that sharrows direct bicyclists away from the "door zone" of parked cars, alert motorists of appropriate bicyclist positioning and encourage safe passing of bicyclists by motorists. The "Bicycles May Use Full Lane" sign (R4-11 in the MUTCD) is commonly used in conjunction with shared lane markings.



Shared Lane Marking – Collector or Arterial Street

Shared lane markings (sharrows) are used on streets where bicyclists and motor vehicles share the same travel lane. The sharrow helps position bicyclists in the most appropriate location to ride. It also provides a visual cue to motorists that bicyclists have a right to use the street. On a four lane street, sharrows should be placed in the outside lane. If the outside travel lane is too narrow for a motorist to comfortably pass a cyclists while staying within the travel lane (generally less than 14 feet) the sharrow marking may be centered in the lane. This encourages cyclists to "take the lane," and encourages motorists to use the left lane to pass. In a 12-14 foot lane, the marking may be offset from the curb by 4 feet. For 10-12 foot lanes, the BIKES MAY USE FULL LANE sign is recommended, because drivers are not used to sharing the road with cyclists and may not provide comfortable clearance when passing. Sharrows are not appropriate on streets with speed limits greater than 35 mph. The "Bicycles May Use Full Lane" sign (R4-11 in the MUTCD) is commonly used in conjunction with shared lane markings.



A Note on Sharrows and Shared Lane Markings

While they are a cost-effective form of bicycle infrastructure, sharrows should be used as a last resort or to complement already existing (and more robust) infrastructure. Sharrows tend to lead to confusion amongst cyclists and motorists, decreasing feelings of safety. Shoulders, bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and protected bike lanes should be sought out before the use of a sharrow.

Urban Shoulder (Paved)

An urban shoulder is a paved section of a street outside the travel lanes. Urban shoulders are separated from the travel lanes by a solid white line and may include the street's gutter section. Urban shoulders can serve as a bicycle accommodation if they have at least three feet of pavement, exclusive of the gutter area. Bicycle lanes that are not designated as such with pavement markings and/or signage are technically an urban shoulder.



Rural Shoulder (Paved)

The shoulder is the section of the roadway outside of the travel lanes. When paved and of sufficient width, paved shoulders can serve as a bicycle accommodation. Additionally, paved shoulders provide safety and maintenance benefits. Paved shoulders should typically be 4' or wider to serve as a bicycle accommodation, although 3' may be acceptable on lower volume roads.



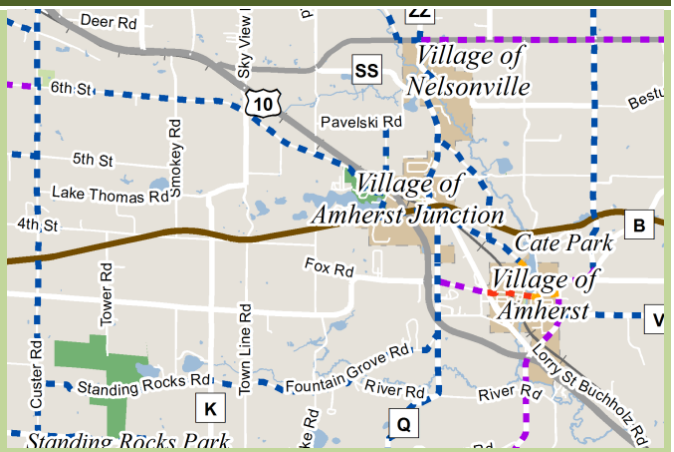
Signed Bike Route

Signed bike routes provide distance and directional information as a wayfinding aid for bicyclists. Signed routes may be established on streets, paths, or any combination of facility types that offer a continuous bicycling environment. Signs should offer cyclists information about alternative routes and accessible destinations from their current location. They also can be used to suggest the conditions cyclists can expect on a route by referencing trails or roadways by name. Signed routes provide cyclists greater confidence when they are exploring new routes or when they are in unfamiliar territory. Signed routes can also prevent cyclists from getting lost in residential areas with curvilinear street layouts and few through streets.



Bike Route (mapped)

A mapped bike route is only designated as a bike route on maps – there are no signs placed along the route to designate the route. Mapped bike routes indicate to users roads that are better for bicycling on and for connecting to specific destinations. Mapped bike routes are only recommended for the Rural Area in Portage County where signs may be cost prohibitive for many miles of rural road. Mapped bike routes should be supplemented with signed bike routes or other bicycle facilities to guide users to popular destinations such as Lake Emily.



Bike Box (Advanced Stop Line)

Bike boxes are street markings at signalized intersections that allow bicyclists to move to the front of a traffic queue during the red signal phase. Allowing bicyclists to move to the front of the queue can increase their visibility to motorists and can reduce "right-hook" crashes with motorists at the beginning of the green signal phase. Bike boxes can also aid cyclists in position for left turns. They should be considered on streets with bike lanes as the proposed bicycle network is more fully implemented.



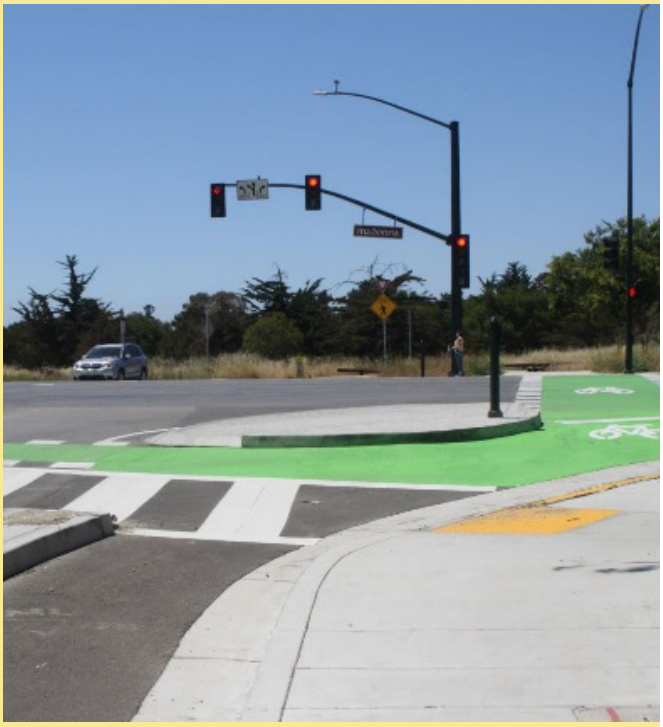
Intersection Treatments

Protected intersections keep bicycles physically separate from vehicles up until the intersection by greatly reducing crossing distances and improving sightlines, resulting in dramatically safer streets.

Dedicated intersections give people on bikes a dedicated path through intersections with corner wedges, pedestrian safety islands, and bike signal phasing.

At minor street crossings, compact corners, raised crossings, and clear approach sightlines can be used to encourage drivers to yield to people in the bikeway or the crosswalk.

Raised crosswalks are a traffic calming measure that elevates a crosswalk to the level of the sidewalk to slow down vehicles, improve pedestrian visibility, and make it more accessible for people using wheelchairs or strollers. Unlike a speed bump, it has a wider, gentler slope to reduce noise and allow larger vehicles to cross more smoothly.



5.2 | Off-Street Bicycle Facility Types

The tables below provide descriptions of types of off-street bicycle facilities included in this Plan.

Shared-Use Path	
A shared use path is an off -street bicycle and pedestrian facility that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Typically, shared use paths are located in an independent right-of-way such as in a park, stream valley greenway, along a utility corridor, or an abandoned railroad corridor. Shared-use paths are used by other non-motorized users including pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers, and sometimes equestrians.	

Sidepath	
A sidepath is a shared use path located adjacent to a roadway. It is designed for two-way use by bicyclists and pedestrians. Sidepaths are sometimes created by designating a wide sidewalk for shared use, or they may be a segment of a longer trail. Sidepaths sometimes facilitate connections to on- and off -street bicycle facilities. A sidepath is not generally a substitute for on-street bicycle facilities, but may be considered in constrained conditions, or as a supplement to on-street facilities. Sidepaths may not be appropriate in areas of high pedestrian activity unless there is space to successfully manage conflicts. The use of sidepaths should be limited to roadways with limited points of conflict at intersections and driveways.	

5.3 | Bicycle Facility Design Guidance

Design details for these facility types are available from the following resources:

- The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 5th Edition (2024)* https://store.transportation.org/item/publicationdetail/5371
- The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (2023) http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook* (2004) https://wisconsindot.gov/documents/projects/multimodal/bike/facility.pdf
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Facilities Development Manual 11-46-1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements Affecting Complete Streets* (2025) https://wisconsindot.gov/rdwy/fdm/fd-11-46.pdf
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) *Urban Bikeway Design Guide* (2025) and *Designing Streets for Kids* (2020) https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/ and https://islandpress.org/books/designing-streets-kids#desc

5.4 | Pedestrian Facility Types

"Pedestrian facilities" is a general term to include a number of accommodations for pedestrians. These include sidewalks, paths, pedestrian signals, crosswalk markings, and median islands.

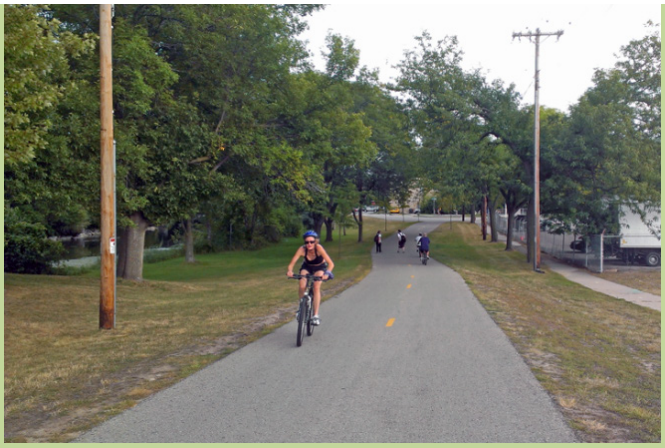
Sidewalks

Sidewalks are generally constructed of concrete, are typically five feet wide and are located immediately adjacent to streets, preferably on both sides. Sidewalks are used to separate foot traffic from vehicle traffic, to reduce conflicts, and to increase comfort of pedestrians. Recent research has supported sidewalks as being very effective in reducing crashes.



Shared Use Path

A shared use path is an off -street bicycle and pedestrian facility that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Typically, shared use paths are located in an independent right-of-way such as in a park, stream valley greenway, along a utility corridor, or an abandoned railroad corridor. Shared-use paths are used by other non-motorized users including bicyclists, skaters, wheelchair users, and joggers.



Sidepath

A sidepath is a shared use path located adjacent to roadway. It is designed for use by bicyclists and pedestrians and each may travel in either direction. Sidepaths are sometimes created by designating a wide sidewalk for shared use, or they may be a segment of a longer trail or network of trails. Sidepaths are sometimes provided to facilitate connections to on- and off -street bicycle facilities. A sidepath is not generally a substitute for on-street bicycle facilities, but may be considered in constrained conditions, or as a supplement to on-street facilities. Sidepaths may not be appropriate in areas of high pedestrian activity unless there is space to successfully manage conflicts.



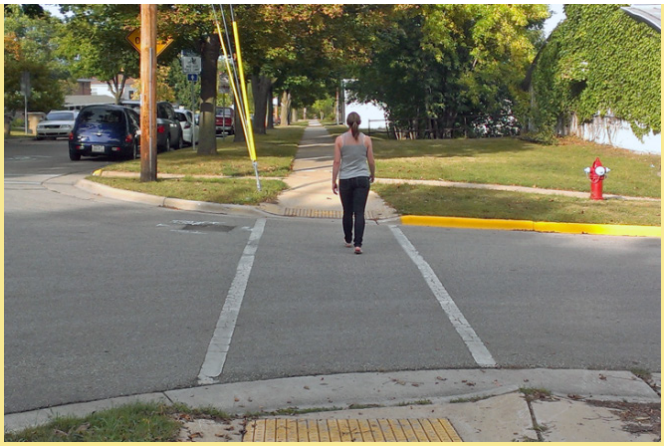
Pedestrian Signals

When traffic signals are used at intersections, pedestrian signals are added to provide separate indications for pedestrians. In the absence of pedestrian signals, pedestrians are directed by state law to use the traffic signals intended for motorists. This is rarely desirable except in remote areas.



Crosswalk

Extensions of sidewalks through intersections are legal crosswalks under state and local laws, regardless of if they are painted on the street. At busier intersections, signalized intersections, and at mid-block crossings, crosswalks are marked for additional visibility for motorists and to direct pedestrians to the appropriate crossing area. Standard crosswalks are comprised of two parallel lines across a street.



Crosswalk – Continental or Ladder

Continental crosswalks provide greater visibility than standard crosswalks. Continental markings consist of 12 inch or wider bars that run in the direction of traffic; if perpendicular edge lines are included (as shown), the crosswalk may be referred to as a "ladder" style. Continental crosswalks should be considered at busier street crossings, at unsignalized crossings, in school zones, and any locations where pedestrian crossings are difficult.



Crosswalk – Colored or Textured

Colored or textured crosswalks are often used to increase the visibility of a crosswalk while establishing a "character" for a neighborhood. For example, red textured crosswalks may evoke older brick streets and may be used in a historic district. In general, colored crosswalks are less visible than continental crosswalks. While colored crosswalks may have appropriate uses, heavily textured crosswalks, such as stamped bricks, should be avoided as they present a rough surface to those most sensitive to it: pedestrians and people using wheelchairs, walkers, or canes.



Median Island

Medians provide space in the middle of intersections or at right-turn locations for pedestrians to stage crossings in multiple steps. These facilities make crossings easier and safer for pedestrians. They should be a minimum of six feet in width and length.



Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (HAWK Signal)

A pedestrian hybrid beacon, sometimes known as a High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) Signal, is a traffic control device designed stop motor vehicle traffic to allow pedestrians to cross a street. Pedestrian hybrid beacons are typically triggered by a pedestrian pushing a button which causes the signal to flash yellow and then with alternating red lights (much like at a railroad crossing); when the red lights are flashing, a pedestrian signal indicates to the pedestrian that they may cross the street. Pedestrian hybrid signals are typically used at mid-block street crossings and are only active when triggered by a pedestrian.



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

RRFBs are user-actuated amber LEDs that supplement warning signs at unsignalized intersections. When a pedestrian triggers the system, the lights flash rapidly, drawing attention to the warning sign and the presence of a pedestrian. RRFBs are typically used at mid-block street crossings and are only active when triggered by a pedestrian. RRFBs are lower cost than full signals or pedestrian hybrid beacons and have been shown to increase driver yielding behavior. RFFBs are most effective on two-lane roadways and where actual vehicle speeds are less than 40 miles per hour.



Curb Extensions / Bump-outs / Bulb-outs

Curb extensions extend the sidewalk into the parking lane of a street to narrow the roadway, provide additional pedestrian space, and reduce the distance of the street crossing for pedestrians. Curb extensions can be used at intersections or at mid-block crossings. Care should be taken to ensure that curb extensions to not extend into bike lanes. Curb extensions also function as a traffic calming device as the narrowing of the roadway tends to slow traffic speeds.



5.5 | Pedestrian Facility Design Guidance

Design details for these facility types are available from the following resources:

- The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities* (2021) https://store.transportation.org/item/collectiondetail/224
- The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (2023) http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Guide to Pedestrian Best Practices* (2010) http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/ped-guide.htm
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Facilities Development Manual 11-46-1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements Affecting Complete Streets* (2025) https://wisconsindot.gov/rdwy/fdm/fd-11-46.pdf
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) *Urban Street Design Guide* (2013) https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide

CHAPTER 6:
VISION, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

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6 | VISION, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

6.1 | Overview

This chapter presents a Vision, Goals, and Strategies for the Portage County Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.

- The **Vision** provides an overarching vision for what is hoped to be achieved through this Plan.
- **Goals** are broad statements that express general priorities. Goals are based on the identification of key issues and opportunities and constraints for bicycling and walking in Portage County.
- **Strategies** are more specific than goals and are specific actions that can be taken by a specific group, agency, or organization to achieve this Plan's goals.

The Vision, Goals, and Strategies for both the Urban and Rural areas have been combined in this section. When a goal or strategy applies specifically to the Urban or Rural area, it is noted.

6.2 | Vision for 2045

2045: Welcome to Portage County, where we strive for safe and connected routes to get residents and visitors to key destinations and which highlight our beautiful scenery and landmarks; we strive to become nationally recognized as a destination for biking/walking; and we our municipalities work together across municipal boundaries for economic, social and quality of life benefits. Where our residents and visitors travel safely and comfortably on well-connected routes, from our sparkling rivers and lakes to vibrant downtown streets and charming rural villages and hamlets.

6.3 | Goals and Strategies:

Goals and Strategies were developed with input from the Safe Streets For All Task Force, Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee, County staff, and the Project Team.

1. Goal A: Strengthen connections between neighborhoods, schools, parks, employment, and commercial centers for bicyclists and pedestrians.
2. Goal B: Maintain and enhance bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
3. Goal C: Enhance intergovernmental cooperation and coordination of transportation facilities across Portage County.
4. Goal D: Provide adequate bicycle and pedestrian education, encouragement, and enforcement efforts targeted at high risk activities by all road users
5. Goal E: Develop branded looped bicycling routes and trails to raise Portage County's profile as a destination for bicycle tourism
6. Goal F: Evaluate and assess bicycling and walking in Portage County and monitor the implementation of this Plan.

A	Strengthen connections between neighborhoods, schools, parks, employment, and commercial centers for bicyclists and pedestrians	
STRATEGIES	Add bicycle facilities in Urban and Rural Areas based on road classification	• Provide paved shoulders on prioritized County Roads in the Rural Area where space is currently available or when they are reconstructed. • Designate select collectors and local roads as bicycle routes. • If a community is deciding which roads to reconstruct, prioritize those that include bicycle and pedestrian recommendations, as they will deliver a greater impact than reconstruction of a road without such enhancements.
	Add on-street bicycle facilities in the Urban Area	• Within the Urban Area, provide bicycle accommodations on or along all collector and arterial streets where space is currently available or when they are reconstructed. • Create a network of bicycle boulevards parallel to major street corridors and connecting locations such as schools and parks. • Provide protected bike lanes over traditional bike lanes where feasible.
	Increase pedestrian connectivity throughout the Urban Area	• Provide pedestrian accommodations on all new streets and along all existing collector and arterial streets, when feasible . • Ensure that new and existing pedestrian facilities meet or exceed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. • Provide for the completion of gaps within the sidewalk system.
	Increase the off-street bikeways and pedestrian connections throughout the Urban Area	• Identify and close key gaps in off-street bicycle and pedestrian corridors. • Provide high visibility crossing treatments where off-street bikeways cross arterial and collector streets. • Pave prioritized unpaved bikeways in the Urban Area to allow for year-round use. • Make connections between existing routes and trails (Green Circle, Tomorrow River State Trail, etc.).
	Promote connections to transit throughout the Urban Area	• Provide bicycle parking at major transit stops. • Encourage and continue bicycle storage on buses. • Provide education and locations where people can practice using bicycle racks on buses
	Promote Safe Routes to Schools	• Implement the recommendations of the 2014 Portage County Safe Routes to School Plan to encourage and promote safe walking and biking to school • Update the 2014 Portage County Safe Routes to School Plan to reflect recent accomplishments, current conditions, school district enrollment, and district facility planning

B	Maintain and enhance bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure	
STRATEGIES	Maintain bicycle and pedestrian facilities to a level that provides year-round safe, comfortable, and convenient usage for all users	• Sweep all on-street and paved off-street bikeways regularly. • Provide prompt maintenance of potholes and other pavement damage on bikeways. • Repaint bikeway markings before they fade. • Clear snow from on-street and off-street bikeways in a timely manner. • Work to increase compliance for the removal of snow and ice on sidewalks.
	Design roads to be compatible with surrounding uses and include bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in roadway designs	• Encourage local municipalities to adopt their Complete Streets policies by resolution. • Update the Portage County and local municipal zoning codes to require the installation of sidewalks that meets or exceed WisDOT guidance on sidewalk provision in all new urban and suburban development.
	Provide supporting infrastructure to make it easy for people to bike	• Expand the Stevens Point bicycle wayfinding system throughout the Urban Area. • Expand a wayfinding system throughout the County, providing connections from communities to recreational facilities and other similar places of interest. • Provide ample and appropriate bicycle parking throughout the Urban Area, particularly in commercial districts, government buildings, parks, and schools. • Provide ample and appropriate bicycle parking throughout areas in the Rural Villages and recreational facilities.

C	Enhance intergovernmental cooperation and coordination of transportation facilities across Portage County
STRATEGIES	Work cooperatively in developing maintenance agreements, memorandums of understanding, applications for grants or funding, and implementation of facilities
	Increase knowledge on the benefits of well connected, multi-modal communities to policy and decision makers
	Provide design guidelines based on ***The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide (2025)*** to all municipalities and request that they formally adopt them for future bicycle and pedestrian projects

D	Provide adequate bicycle and pedestrian education, encouragement, and enforcement efforts targeted at high-risk activities by all road users	
STRATEGIES	Educate pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists about the rights and responsibilities of the road	• Work with partners to provide and promote bicycle education events such as bicycle rodeos • Provide bicycle and pedestrian educational materials on the County webpage. • Investigate offering a bicycle and pedestrian course as an alternative for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists who are first time offenders of bicycle and pedestrian related rules of the road.
	Provide and promote bicycle and pedestrian encouragement activities throughout the County	• Provide and promote events and incentives to encourage people to bicycle and walk more. • Work towards marketing of County's bicycle and pedestrian facilities and education about the benefits of having walking/bicycling options.
	Increase enforcement of existing traffic laws for all street users, particularly those that pose the greatest risks to bicyclists and pedestrians.	• Increase enforcement of the state law requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, particularly in downtown Stevens Point, near UW-Stevens Point, and near schools. • Enforce posted speed limits, particularly in school speed zones. • Utilize automated speed-tracking equipment to provide feedback to motorists when they are exceeding the speed limit. • Increase enforcement of illegal vehicle modifications that reduce eye contact between street users and/or pose safety risks to people walking and biking (tinted windows, extra wide tires, etc.)
	Involve a variety of different groups and viewpoints in the development of educational materials and outreach.	• Create educational programming that is appropriate by seeking input from diverse community members on how existing and new programming can best work for them and tailor programs as needed in response. • Increase diverse community involvement by recruiting diverse community members and partnering with community organizations to deliver active transportation educational programming.

E	Develop branded looped bicycling routes and trails to raise Portage County's profile as a destination for bicycle tourism	
STRATEGIES	Build on existing assets such as the Green Circle Trail and Tomorrow River Trail	• Develop additional looped bicycling routes and other recreational bikeways throughout the County • Give each route or trail a memorable name so that it is easily identifiable to both visitors and locals.
	Plan for a branded urban-to-rural and rural area bicycling network	• Connect rural communities with one another and to the central urban hub of Portage County. • This route would not only provide connectivity throughout the County, but would also be an excellent branding opportunity for bicycle infrastructure.
	Decide when to begin marketing the recreational bikeway system	• Begin advertising the route only once it is well established, and local, county, and state officials have coordinated on how to share information about the route, local amenities, and nearby attractions.
	Promote recreational bikeways and market attractions near the bicycle routes	• Work with tourism entities such as the Downtown Alliance, Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, North Central Wisconsin Tourism Partnership, and Portage County Business Council to promote recreational bikeways • Market attractions near the bicycle routes to make the trail more appealing to prospective visitors planning bike tours
	Use attractive, distinctive, and memorable branding	• Use attractive, distinctive, and memorable branding in signage, maps, and other marketing materials for the recreational bikeways
	Market recreational bikeways	• Market recreational bikeways online through multiple outlets, including Travel Wisconsin, local government websites, and bike-oriented nonprofit organizations

F	Evaluate and assess bicycling and walking in Portage County and monitor the implementation of this Plan	
STRATEGIES	Portage County should lead implementation and evaluation efforts	• Monitor and advance implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. • Encourage adoption of a Portage County Complete Street Policy • Monitor police reports to determine if additional safety education and or increased enforcement is needed. • Accumulate expertise on planning issues specific to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. • Encourage widespread, safe, and responsible use of walking and bicycling as forms of transportation. • Have an ongoing working relationship with municipal departments of all communities. • Act as a liaison for bicycle and pedestrian issues with outside agencies and government bodies. • Pursue funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities from federal, state and local sources.
	Encourage Portage County municipalities to achieve national bicycle and pedestrian ratings and recognitions	• Encourage at least one additional Portage County municipality to apply for and receive Bicycle Friendly Community status from the League of American Bicyclists by 2027; at least one Portage County municipality should be rated “silver” by 2031. • Encourage at least one Portage County municipality to apply for and receive Walk Friendly Community status by 2027.
	Regularly evaluate and assess levels of bicycling and walking in Portage County	• Conduct annual bicycle and pedestrian counts throughout Portage County. • Work to provide automatic bicycle and pedestrian counts in areas of high volume intersections. • Track rate of bicycle and walking commuting in the Rural Area and Urban Area (American Community Survey through the US Census Bureau).

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CHAPTER 7: NON-INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

NEXT STEPS FOR BUILDING A CULTURE OF WALKING AND BIKING

7 | NON-INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

NEXT STEPS FOR BUILDING A CULTURE OF WALKING AND BIKING

Fostering a culture of biking and walking is essential to building community support and shared enthusiasm for infrastructure development. The Short-Term Action Plan at the beginning of this document highlights several first steps for growing support of walking and biking within the community. After these steps are completed, there are plenty of other ways to continue to grow the culture of walking and biking, as detailed in this chapter. Recommendations are organized by the "five E's" – elements of bicycle friendly communities as established by the American League of Bicyclists. When combined with Engineering solutions (discussed in later chapters), the five E's provide a well-rounded and complete bicycle and pedestrian network and plan. When pursued together, the five E's form a holistic and sustainable approach to active transportation that goes beyond just building infrastructure – it also builds culture, safety, and long-term success.

- **Encouragement** combines many initiatives and the strategies of the other E's to build enthusiasm and culture around cycling, walking and rolling within a community. Programs include ciclovías, National Bike Month activities, launch parties for new bike/ped facilities, and employer driven incentive strategies such as mileage reimbursements.
- **Engineering** is the link that ties the non-infrastructure recommendations to the infrastructure recommendations. Well-designed facilities are crucial to supporting the other E's on the list. Within the context of the five E's, engineering is included to advocate for a physical landscape that welcomes and supports the presence and needs of cyclists and pedestrians.
- Equity and Accessibility
  - The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations, and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups. All Wisconsinites should have access to safe and high-quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities, education, and equipment.
  - Accessibility refers to improving and increasing access and mobility options for everyone, including, and in particular, for people with disabilities. Allowing for and designing routes that are accessible to a wide range of mobility needs to open recreational and transportation options for all Wisconsinites.
- **Education** is a broad category that ranges from identifying and promoting safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to promoting how-to strategies, such as how to ride safely or adjust a helmet. Education policies and programs are instrumental to the success of networks as they empower users to get out and use the facilities.
- **Evaluation** includes monitoring the outcomes and documenting the results of the implementation of the other E's. Data collection before and after infrastructure improvements are implemented, such as user surveys and bicycle and pedestrian counts, are critical to measuring the overall effectiveness of the network.

As the sponsor of this Plan, the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department should guide and lead the implementation of each recommendation, although actual implementation will be delegated to other departments, agencies, or organizations in nearly all cases.

7.1 | Encouragement Recommendations

Small incentives or events can encourage people to walk or bike more. Often a simple challenge or perk – like commute stations that provide coffee and bagels during Bike to Work Week – provides the nudge people need to walk or bike for a trip for which they normally would have driven.

Bike and Walk Events

Promote the Wisconsin Bike Challenge to local employers to encourage bicycling to work and for other transportation and recreation trips.

The Wisconsin Bike Challenge is an annual event geared towards encouraging people to replace car trips with bicycle trips. Part of a larger national challenge, the Wisconsin program targets workplaces, hoping to increase the number of people who choose to commute via bicycle. Employees can form teams based on their location or their workplace and prizes are awarded in the transportation category.

Responsibility: *County Health and Human Services Department, Plover & Stevens Point Health Departments and service organizations like Portage County CAN Coalition, and organizations that promote worksite wellness*

Sponsor and/or support local family-friendly events that promote bicycling or walking.

Family friendly events can be a great way to capture the *Interested but Concerned* portion of the cycling population, as well as a great way to introduce kids to bicycling as part of everyday life. These events are often community oriented and can be as simple as a group ride organized on a Sunday afternoon. Other events include ciclovías, themed rides, and rides organized around existing neighborhood festivals, parks, or cultural destinations.

Responsibility: *County Parks Department, County Health and Human Services Department, Private businesses, service organizations, various municipalities*

Promote bicycling and walking at local health and wellness events by hosting a table with bicycle maps, ride information, and other promotional materials.

Health and wellness events are regularly held by public agencies as well as private businesses to promote healthy activities. Promoting bicycling and walking as healthy forms of transportation and recreation at these events is a natural fit.

Responsibility: *County Parks Department, County Planning and Zoning Department, bicycle and pedestrian groups*

7.2 | Education Recommendations

Education is critical to the success of a bicycle and pedestrian network within a community. There is often a mentality that "if you build it, they will come" when considering bicycle facilities. However, this is not always the case; people should be educated about new bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Most Americans do not receive any formal training on how to ride their bikes on a street, how bicycles work, or the rules of the road. Educational activities and strategies attempt to fill that knowledge gap.

On-Bike Education

Provide bicycle education events such as bicycle rodeos and other activities oriented to children.

Bicycle Rodeos are clinics to teach children skills and precautions about riding a bicycle and are a great way to direct and deliver bicycle related curricula to children. Topics discussed typically include the parts of a bicycle, how a bike works, how to fix a flat tire, proper helmet fitting, rules of the road, road positioning, and on-bike skills. These rodeos are often facilitated by local police department or cycling clubs and model programs are available through the League of American Bicyclists website.



Signs such as this one posted in the Town of Hull seek to educate road users about proper use of the roadway.

Responsibility: *Portage County schools, Portage County Sheriff, Stevens Point Police Department, Plover Police Department, County Parks Department, service organizations such as the Kiwanis club*

Provide bicycle education events such as bicycle rodeos and other activities targeted at adults. Courses may be offered through Learning Is ForEver (LIFE) or another organization.

Most adults can also benefit from a brief bicycle riding education course. Such courses can educate participants about the rules of the road as they apply to bicyclists, common hazards and safety issues to be aware of when bicycling, and how to interact safely with motor vehicle traffic.

Responsibility: *Portage County schools, Portage County Sheriff, Stevens Point Police Department, Plover Police Department, County Parks, service organizations such as the Kiwanis club*

Supplementary Education Through Driver's Education

Develop bicycle safety and etiquette education materials in partnership with driver's education professionals across the County.

Coordinating with local driver's education professionals can be a great way to reach a wider audience in regard to bicycle safety education. Educators can provide supplementary lessons on bicycle safety and road etiquette for both cyclists and motorists. This can help to ensure that newly licensed motorists know how to interact with cyclists and have more agency when they are cyclists themselves.

Responsibility: *Portage County Schools, Portage County DMV, County Planning and Zoning Department, various municipalities.*

Web-Based Education

Provide bicycle and pedestrian safety and education materials on the County website and encourage local municipalities to provide information on their websites or provide a link to the County's site.

Providing bicycle and pedestrian safety and education materials to residents via the County's website and Facebook Page is an excellent way to reach potential and current users. Information should include:

- Maps and other resources.
- Links to laws, statutes, and ordinances related to walking and biking – both local and state.
- Information about local biking and walking events.
- List of and links to local bike shops; and
- List of and links to all walking and biking groups, including clubs, racing teams, and advocacy groups.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department*

Education In Lieu of Punishment

Investigate offering a bicycle and pedestrian education course as an alternative for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists who are first-time minor offenders of bicycle and pedestrian-related rules of the road.

Offering a bicycle and pedestrian education course as an alternative for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists who are first-time minor offenders of bicycle- and pedestrian-related rules of the road is an efficient and cost effective way to deal with infractions. The County should explore this option for educating rather than punishing some rules of the road violators. In other Wisconsin municipalities, this program needs to be supported by the local municipal court.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point, Village of Plover*

7.3 | Equity & Accessibility Recommendations

Active transportation is something that should be enjoyed by all people, regardless of identity or ability. By including equity and accessibility within bicycle and pedestrian planning, more people are able to be included in and gain access to a wider variety of transportation and recreational opportunities. From a more practical perspective, this allows for greater utilization of existing infrastructure and allows for new infrastructure that can best serve the needs of all County residents.

Identify Infrastructure Gaps and Needs

One crucial aspect of promoting equity and accessibility within bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is knowing where gaps in these networks exist. Historically, marginalized and low-income communities have not been considered or included in the planning of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Because of this, gaps in infrastructure may exist along with a lack of proximity to high quality and accessible bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Strategies to identify gaps and needs include:

- Collaborating with marginalized and low-income communities to discuss concerns with the current infrastructure and to compile needs that those communities identify.
- Working with local municipalities to identify and remove barriers, and improve access to major destinations, schools, parks, and employment opportunities, particularly for low-income residents.

- Mapping the proximity of existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities in relation to marginalized and low-income communities.
- Working with local landlords to provide bicycle parking facilities for tenants, especially in low-income areas.
- Identifying facilities such as curb ramps and sidewalks that are not ADA compliant.

Plan with Equity and Accessibility in Mind

As gaps in infrastructure are identified, it is important to plan with equity and accessibility in mind. Planning through this lens is important in making sure that the creation of future gaps in infrastructure are minimized. Equity and accessibility also ensures that facilities both new and old are easy to use and navigate, encouraging higher rates of use. Some ways to plan with equity and accessibility include:

- Working with municipalities and local planning agencies to make sure that staff members are familiar with principles of equity and inclusion as well as principles of universal design. See sidebar.
- Planning sidewalks, bicycle, and multi-use trail facilities to accommodate a variety of users, abilities, and comfort/confidence levels.
- Prioritize improvements for underserved and marginalized neighborhoods.
- Working with municipalities to plan a network of bicycle routes that are suitable for all ages and abilities that connect to key destinations across the County.
- Using clear, unambiguous signage for bicycle and pedestrian routes.

Principles of Universal Design

Universal Design (also known as inclusive design) is an approach to urban design that seeks to create spaces that are accessible, usable, and enjoyable for people of all abilities. Rather than adding accessibility features after the fact, universal design is inherently accessible and thus works for everyone regardless of age, ability, or background. Examples could include:

- Wide sidewalks and curb cuts
- Tactile paving and audible crosswalk signals
- Public seating with armrests and back support
- Clear signage with symbols and multiple languages
- Step-free entrances and elevators

Apply Equity and Accessibility to Non-Infrastructure Improvements

As with the rest of the 5Es, infrastructure improvements are only one way to look at bicycle and pedestrian planning. Applying equity and accessibility to non-infrastructure improvements can identify and address barriers to active transportation that are not found in the built environment. Community programming that includes a diverse array of lived experiences encourages participation and a sense of belonging for people who may have historically been excluded or discouraged from walking and biking in Portage County. Some recommendations to apply equity and accessibility include:

- Creating transportation programming that is appropriate by seeking input from diverse community members on how existing and new programming can best work for them and tailor programs as needed in response.
- Increasing diverse community involvement by recruiting diverse community members and partnering with community organizations to deliver active transportation programming.
- Working with local businesses to provide low or no cost safety equipment and locks for bicycles for low-income residents.
- Gathering input from and collaborating with marginalized communities to identify and address non-infrastructure barriers to active transportation such as racism, street harassment, or lack of affordable active transportation equipment.

7.4 | Evaluation Recommendations

By evaluating and assessing the levels of cycling and walking within Portage County, community leaders and County and municipal staff will be able to more effectively direct their efforts to improve cycling and walking conditions for residents and visitors. County staff will also be able to justify proposed capital improvements with hard statistics.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Create an official Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to monitor and assist in the implementation of this Plan and other bicycle and pedestrian issues throughout the County.

This is a long-term recommendation, as further County-level support is needed for an advisory committee. Creating a permanent Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee within the County structure emphasizes the County's commitment to making biking and walking safer and more appealing to residents and visitors. Creating an official committee could be as simple as formalizing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Steering Committee from this Plan and incorporating key staff members from County Highways and Planning and Zoning. Potential committee responsibilities include:

- Encourage widespread, safe, and responsible use of walking and bicycling as forms of transportation
- Monitor and advance implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Encourage local municipalities to adopt their Complete Streets policies by resolution.
- Regularly review and provide input on County capital project planning as it affects bicycling and walking
- Communicate with local governments to encourage the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian projects in local capital improvement plans prioritizing high impact projects included in this Plan.
- Advise on bicycle and pedestrian facility standards
- Accumulate expertise on planning issues specific to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- Provide regular updates to the County Board, local governments, and the school district
- Serve as a formal liaison between local government, staff, school district, and the public, and business community
- Maintain a working relationship with municipal departments of all communities and outside agencies
- Monitor police reports to determine if additional safety education or increased enforcement is needed
- Pursue funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities from federal, state and local sources.
- Review and comment on changes to zoning, development code, comprehensive plans, and other long-term planning and policy documents

In the future, the County may wish to explore a permanent staff person to lead the committee and proactively advance the recommendations of this Plan.

Responsibility: *County Board with input from communities in the Urban Area*

Bicyclist and Pedestrian Counts

Conduct annual bicycle and walking counts throughout the County to measure the usage of facilities and growth in these modes of travel.

Annual bicycle counts provide a direct mechanism for tracking bicycling trends over time and for determining the impact of projects, policies, and programs that have been implemented. The National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project provides a recommended methodology, survey and count forms, and reporting forms available for free online. Local trainers for the program are also available. Counts are conducted using volunteer labor and therefore put little financial burden on local budgets. This program has been in place in Portage County for several years.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, County Highway Department, City and Village Public Works Departments*

Track Facilities

Track the bicycle facilities that have been installed in the County.

Keeping track of the facilities installed throughout Portage County will allow staff to plan appropriately for future improvements. Using the prioritization criteria outlined in this Plan and having a good understanding of existing conditions will enable planners to make the best use of capital dollars when implementing new facilities.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department*

Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly Recognition

Pursue designation for Portage County as a Bicycle Friendly Community/County from the League of American Bicyclists.

The League of American Bicyclists ranks applicant communities on their level of "bicycle friendliness" on a scale from "Honorable Mention" through "Diamond." The Bicycle Friendly Community program provides a roadmap to improve conditions for bicycling and the guidance to make Portage County a more bikeable community. The application process will help the County and its municipalities recognize its strengths and weaknesses regarding bicycling, and the response from the League of American Bicyclists will help guide bicycle improvements. A bicycle friendly ranking can drive tourism and events to communities and can represent health savings for the community. Finally, a bicycle friendly ranking is something the County and its municipalities can be proud of. The City of Stevens Point was awarded the Silver Bicycle Friendly Community designation from 2020 to 2024. UW-Stevens Point was awarded the Silver Bicycle Friendly University designation in 2024.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department*

Encourage Portage County municipalities to apply for and receive Bicycle Friendly Community Status; at least one additional community should be ranked by 2030, and one community should receive a silver rating.

Encourage at least one Portage County municipality to apply for and receive Walk Friendly Community status.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) awards communities that improve and prioritize pedestrian safety, access, mobility, and comfort with either a bronze, silver or gold designation. PBIC, which is a partnership between the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the University of North Carolina, provides a community assessment tool to evaluate existing pedestrian conditions and programs largely based on engineering, encouragement, education, enforcement, and evaluation. This tool can be used in planning for future improvements and filling in the gaps in the other E's.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, Various municipalities*

Encourage local businesses to apply for Bicycle Friendly Business status from the League of American Bicyclists

The League of American Bicyclists honors businesses that have made an effort to be bicycle friendly. Offering secure bicycle parking, private fleets of shared bicycles, shower facilities, and other amenities can help businesses earn a bicycle friendly ranking while also helping those businesses attract and retain employees. (http://www.bikeleague.org/content/businesses).

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department*

7.5 | Other Program and Policy Recommendations

This section contains program and policy recommendations that do not neatly fit into one of the above categories, but are important considerations for bicycling and walking.

Connections to Transit

Provide sidewalks on streets that have transit stops.

Transit can be a great complement to bicycling and walking. Buses allow bicyclists and pedestrians to extend their trips and provide alternate transportation if the weather changes. By providing bicycle facilities and improving pedestrian access to the bus network, Portage County can ensure that its transit systems are best serving its users.

Sidewalks and transit stops work together to create complete non-motorized networks within a community. Transit stops that are not accessible via sidewalk are likely to be underutilized, and if they happen to be heavily used, the lack of sidewalk connections can create dangerous conditions for users.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point, Village of Plover, Village of Whiting*

Provide bicycle parking at popular transit stops.

Providing bicycle parking at transit stops may enable residents and visitors to use non-motorized transportation options for longer trips, ones they might have completed via car. It also provides more transportation options to residents who choose not to drive or are unable to drive to their destinations.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point, Village of Plover, Village of Whiting, Stevens Point Transit*

Continue providing bicycle racks on all transit buses operating in Portage County.

Providing accessible shelters and benches at transit stops allows for the comfort of those using the transit system and can protect riders from the elements. Having shelters and benches at transit stops also encourages more use of public transit and makes transit stops easily identifiable from a distance.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point Transit*

Funding

Support the incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities into street projects using the same funding as the rest of the project.

Funding is arguably the greatest limitation to expanding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The landscape of federal grant funding for bicycle and pedestrian initiatives is currently marked by uncertainty, in part shaped by the evolving priorities of the current presidential administration. Recent changes to federal funding priorities will affect state and local budgets down the line, including the capital budgets of Portage County and its municipalities. As federal agencies realign their priorities, certain funding streams have been reduced or eliminated, while new opportunities are still taking shape. This fluid environment requires the County to remain agile, closely monitor policy developments, explore alternative funding sources, and modify projects as needed to align with new funding priorities.

It is important to make the most of the County's internal funding resources. Often, the most cost-effective way to implement bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements is by adding them to the scope of other capital projects. Building sidewalks while replacing or upgrading utilities, or marking on-street bicycle accommodations (bike lanes, urban shoulders, or shared lane markings) as part of street resurfacing projects provide economies of scale that will help funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects go farther.

Responsibility: *County Highway Department, City and Village Public Works departments*

Grant Writing

Investigate hiring a grant writer or add these responsibilities to a current position in order to pursue funding opportunities for all Portage County municipalities.

Hiring a grant writer or grant coordinator is a very effective way to increase the amount of grant funding available for projects within the community. Rather than pulling existing staff away from their other duties in order to fill out an application, a dedicated grant writer will fulfill this responsibility in a more efficient manner. He or she will also be able to find more grant opportunities

and submit more applications than departmental staff. This position can be full- or part-time, in-house or contracted, and need not focus solely on bicycle/pedestrian grants, though experience and knowledge in this area is beneficial. Usually, a skilled grant writer will "pay for themselves" each year, as the funding they are able to secure often exceeds their salary.

Responsibility: *County Board*

Bike Share

Conduct a bike share feasibility study to determine the potential for a small-scale bike share system in Stevens Point.

Pioneered in Europe in the 1970s, bike sharing systems have existed in the United States since Portland's Yellow Bike Project began in 1994. In recent years, new programs have been rapidly expanding across the country. These systems are recognized as effective tools for introducing people to cycling, supporting tourism, and increasing pedestrian activity in walkable retail areas as bike share systems help to connect walkable districts.

This Plan does not specifically examine the feasibility of a bike share system in Portage County. However, from the field work that was conducted, it is likely that a small system could be supported in the downtown Stevens Point and University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point area. A full bike share feasibility analysis should be conducted to determine if such a system could work and how it would be funded. This analysis would validate and adjust the preliminary station locations identified in the previous step. It would also estimate the level of demand at each station, develop a schedule for station implementation, and forecast costs and revenues. Finally, along with the feasibility analysis, recommendations will be made regarding the specific bike share system equipment and technology to acquire, as well as suggestions for station-area security and amenities.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, City of Stevens Point*

Municipal Codes and Zoning Ordinances

A number of items in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Codes of various Portage County municipalities should be updated to provide for more bicycle and pedestrian friendly accommodations or to comply with state law. More detail is provided about the following recommendations in Appendix C.

Update all zoning codes or municipal codes in Portage County to include the following sidewalk and bicycle requirements:

- Specify a minimum sidewalk width of 60 inches; no maximum width should be specified
- Sidewalks should be required to meet all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Sidewalks should be installed based on WisDOT's Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement, which is summarized in Table 8.26 in this document
- Sidewalks should be required in all new residential, commercial and industrial development in the Urban Area and commercial districts in the Rural Area.
- Abutting property owners or municipalities should be required to remove snow and ice from sidewalks within 24 hours after any snowfall.
- Include a required amount of bicycle parking as a part of overall parking requirements.

Responsibility: *County Board, Various municipalities*

Update Section 6.1.12 of the Portage County Code of Ordinances (Parks Ordinance) to clarify that motorized wheelchairs and electric personal assistive mobility devices do not violate the ban on "mechanized equipment" on park property.

Responsibility: *County Board*

In the City of Stevens Point Code of Ordinances, consideration should be given to revising the section on "Bicycle Ways" to not list every designated bicycle way in the City. This practice is cumbersome and requires revision of the Code of Ordinances every time a new bicycle way is added to the network.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point Common Council*

The following updates should be made to the Village of Park Ridge Zoning Code/Code of Ordinances – Bicycle, Registration and Operation:

- Ordinance 7.11 should be updated to require bicycle registration only for bicycles belonging to people residing within the Village, in compliance with state law;
- Registrations should be valid for a minimum of four years, if not longer;
- The ordinance limiting the times at which children can operate a bicycle should be eliminated; and

The ordinance limiting two-abreast riding should be brought into compliance with state law, which allows such riding as long as it does not impede traffic.

Responsibility: *Park Ridge Village Board*

CHAPTER 8:

RURAL AREA FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.



8 | RURAL AREA FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 | Overview

This Chapter presents the bicycle and pedestrian facility recommendations for the Rural Area of Portage County which includes the 17 unincorporated Towns and outlying Villages of Almond, Amherst, Amherst Junction, Nelsonville, Junction City, and Rosholt. The bikeway network is designed to connect the Villages, provide connections into and out of the Urban Area, connect to County Parks and other recreational areas, and provide connections into neighboring counties. The recommended network will serve both recreational bicyclists and those cycling for transportation purposes. The network in the Rural Area is primarily comprised of the following facility types, which are described in more detail in Chapter 4:

- **Paved Shoulders**: Paved shoulders ranging in width from three feet to five feet, or wider, provide space for bicyclists on rural roads. The width of the paved shoulder should be based on traffic volumes, site lines, and anticipated bicycle use.
- **Bike Routes/Shared Roadways:** Lower volume roadways where potential motor vehicle conflicts are at a minimum, especially where motorists are passing in opposing directions with a bicyclist in the same section of the roadway. Generally, where motor vehicle counts are less than 750, conflicts are significantly reduced, although there are other factors that need to be considered
- **Paths (or trails):** Separated from streets and roads. They are often built in rural areas where railroads are abandoned or rail-banked, along rivers, in parks, and occasionally along roadways.

The pedestrian recommendations for the rural area are primarily focused on providing sidewalks in some of the Villages, providing paved shoulders, and focusing on pedestrian issues near Rural Area schools.

8.2 | General Rural Area Bikeway Recommendations

The following represent the broad recommendations for the rural areas in Portage County. The Plan identifies potential routes throughout the county. When it was clear that paved shoulders would be necessary to bring the conditions of the roadway up to a good bicycle rating, the plan map reflected those recommendations as “paved shoulders.” The remaining bicycle routes without paved shoulder recommendations are currently rated in the good or best category for bicycling. These roadway conditions for bicycling can change if conditions change, especially traffic volumes. When these roadways enter the design phase, the suitability methodology should still be used when evaluating conditions to see if paved shoulders are now warranted.

Provide a Combination of Facilities

Provide a range of bikeway types including paved shoulders, paths, and routes, as well as informational tools such as level of service maps to allow users to view conditions of roadways. In addition to bikeways, a selective use of wayfinding signs should be used especially on rural roadways where there are many turns that occur and users can easily lose their bearings.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, County Highway Department, County Parks Department, various Towns and Villages*

Promote Safety for All Users

Provide more space for bicyclists and motorists to share space by implementing the bikeway recommendations in this Plan, prioritizing safe design. In select areas where there may be a higher crash incidence, provide signage and markings which will draw the attention of motorists that bicyclists are using or crossing the road.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, County Highway Department, various Towns and Villages*

Improve Urban/Rural Transitions

Bicyclists in Portage County have a difficult time transitioning between the Urban and the Rural Areas. In addition to increased vehicle speeds, there are a limited number of roads that bridge barriers and connect the Urban and Rural Areas. All major streets that cross the Urban Area boundary should ultimately be built as bikeways that bridge these two environments and include traffic calming measures for a smoother transition.



Urban shoulders, like these in Amherst, can greatly improve Village bicycling conditions.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department; City, Towns, and Villages in the Urban Area*

Implement Bikeway Recommendations in Villages

Implement the Village bikeways recommended in this Chapter.

Responsibility: *Villages in Portage County*

Consider Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities in all State and County Highway Projects

All County Road and State Highway projects should include provisions for bicycle and pedestrian travel consistent with this Plan depending on the type of improvement project being pursued. The implementation for most of the recommendations for the rural areas of this Plan will be based on the scheduling of highway improvement projects. Costs for incorporating shared use paths, paved shoulders, and bike lanes are significantly lower when included in reconstruction and some pavement replacement projects where gravel shoulders exist or will be added as part of the project, rather than paving shoulders as stand-alone projects.

Responsibility: *Wisconsin DOT, County Planning and Zoning Department, County Highway Department*

Implement Bikeway Recommendations on Local Roads

Portage County has an excellent system of County and Town roads. Most of these roadways are already suitable for cycling simply because of the low volume of traffic. However, there are segments of this collective system that are less ideal for bicycling. Adding paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, and small sections of path and signed bicycle routes will connect this system into a network of bikeways and roadways well-suited for bicyclists. Portage County should take the lead in ensuring local governments endorse and implement this Plan where bikeways are recommended for local roads.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, City Common Council, Village and Town Boards*

Develop Looped Bicycling Routes and Other Recreational Bikeways

For many, bicycling in Portage County is a recreational pursuit. This will mean that many residents will want to take looped routes in rural areas. Implement the recreational bikeways recommended in this Plan and use this Plan to develop and promote recreational loops and routes.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, County Highway Department, various Town and Village Boards, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee*

Bicycle Parking

In order for people to choose to bicycle to a location, they need to know that a secure area to lock their bicycle is available at their destination. Install bicycle parking that adheres to the APBP *Bicycle Parking Guidelines* at all Town and Village halls, libraries in the Rural Area, and County and municipal parks.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, County Parks Department, various Town and Village Boards*

8.3 | Specific Rural Area Bicycle Facility Recommendations

In addition to and in combination with the above overall recommendations for the Rural Area, a series of specific bikeways are identified for implementation. The bikeway type is also identified for each of these projects.

Recommendation: Implement the bikeway recommendations included in this Plan. As indicated above, many of these recommendations may be short term priorities, but many others will wait until the bikeway can be included in a larger highway project.

Responsibility: County Planning and Zoning Department, County Highway Department, County Parks Department, various Towns and Villages

The tables below detail the recommended Rural Area bikeways which include all facilities in any of the outlying Villages as well as in unincorporated Towns. Table 8.1 presents an overview of the total miles of each recommended bikeway type, while Tables 8.2 – 8.24 detail the recommended bikeways for each Village and Town. Facility tables are listed alphabetically, first by Villages and then by Towns. Within each table facilities are presented alphabetically by facility type. While on-street facilities are generally assumed to be on both sides of the road, the mileage estimates included in this chapter refer to length of the road segment only. The recommended Countywide bicycle facility network is displayed on Map 7.1.

TABLE 8.1: MILES OF RECOMMENDED RURAL AREA BIKEWAYS BY FACILITY TYPE

Facility Type	Miles
Bike Lanes	5.97
Paved Shoulders	64.69
Shared Lane Markings	0.91
Bike Routes (mapped)	285.32
Shared Use Paths	1.67
Total	358.56

Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

Map 8.1: Countywide Existing & Proposed Bicycle Facilities

Legend

- Municipal Border
- County Park
- State or Municipal Park
- Water
- School
- Railroad

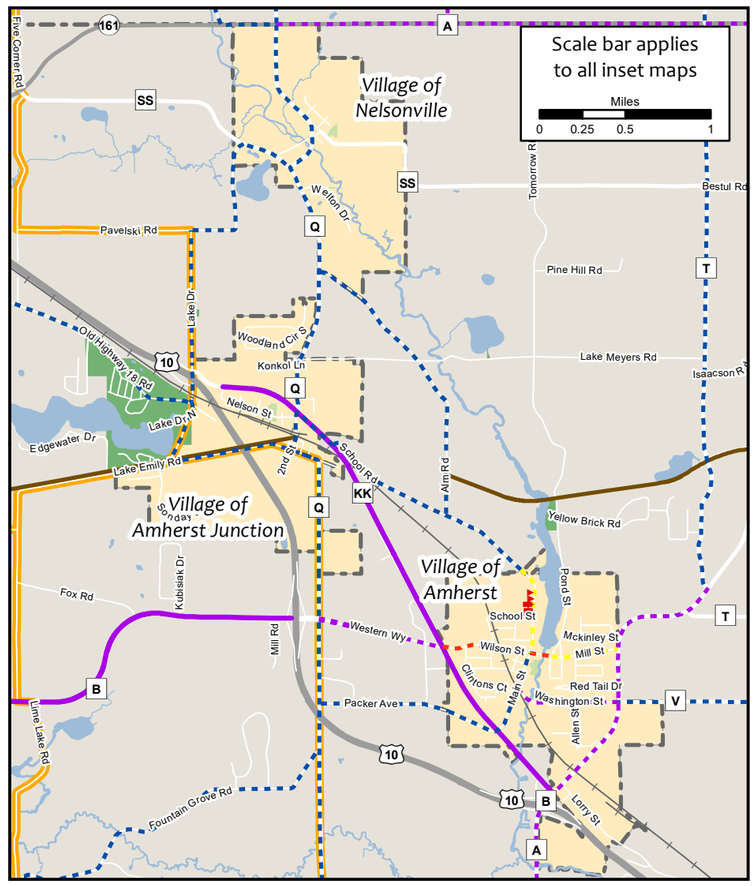
Existing Bicycle Facilities

- Shared-Use Path
- Bike Lane/Urban Shoulder
- Shared Lane Marking
- Signed Bike Route
- Green Circle Trail
- Green Circle Trail (On-Road)
- Rural Paved Shoulder

Proposed Bicycle Facilities

- Shared-Use Path
- Bike Lane/Urban Shoulder
- Shared Lane Marking
- Signed Bike Route
- Rural Paved Shoulder
- Protected Bike Lane
- Ice Age Trail Bike Route

Map data provided by Portage County and the U.S Census Bureau. | Plot date: 12/30/2025



Recommended Village Bikeways

The bikeways recommended for Villages in the Portage County Rural Area are noted in the tables below.

TABLE 8.2: VILLAGE OF ALMOND BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road D	Bike Route	West Village Border	East Village Border	1.00
County Road J	Paved Shoulder	2nd Ave	County Road D	0.80

TABLE 8.3: VILLAGE OF AMHERST BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road B	Paved Shoulder	County Road KK	Mill St	0.99
Main St	Bike Route	County Road KK	Mill St	0.49
Main St	Shared Lane Marking	Village Border	Wilson St	0.52
Mill St	Shared Lane Marking	South St	County Road B	0.39
Mill St	Bike Lane	Main St	South St	0.12
Packer Ave	Bike Route	Town of Amherst	County Road KK	0.31
Wilson St	Bike Lane	County Road KK	Main St	0.52
Washington Street	Paved Shoulder	Main St	East Village Border	0.63

TABLE 8.4: VILLAGE OF AMHERST JUNCTION BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road KK	Bike Route	County Road Q	School Rd	0.28
County Road Q	Bike Route	Lake Meyers Rd	Town of Amherst	1.37
Lake Dr	Bike Route	Town of Amherst	Lake Emily Rd	0.58
Lake Emily Rd	Bike Route	Lake Dr	Main St	0.60
Main St	Bike Route	Lake Emily Rd	County Road Q	0.28

TABLE 8.5: VILLAGE OF JUNCTION CITY BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road G	Bike Route	Town of Eau Pleine	Third St W	0.45
County Road G	Paved Shoulder	Third St W	Main St	0.31
County Road G	Bike Route	County Road P	Robin Rd	0.60
County Road P	Bike Route	County Road G	Town of Carson	1.25

TABLE 8.6: VILLAGE OF NELSONVILLE BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road Q	Bike Route	State Highway 161	Welton Dr	1.09
County Road SS	Bike Route	Pavelski Rd	County Road R	0.32

TABLE 8.7: VILLAGE OF ROSHOLT BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
Forrest St W	Bike Route	Maple St	Main St N	0.07
Main St N	Bike Route	Forrest St W	Grand Ave	0.32
Maple Rd	Bike Route	Town of Alban	Forrest St W	0.19
State Highway 66	Bike Lane	Village West Border	Village East Border	1.49

Recommended Town Bikeways

The bikeways recommended for Towns in the Portage County Rural Area are noted in the tables below.

TABLE 8.8: TOWN OF ALBAN BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
Birch Rd	Bike Route	Town of Sharon	County Road I	1.00
County Road A	Bike Route	County Road I	Flume Rd	7.50
County Road I	Bike Route	Marathon County	W Maple Rd	2.69
County Road T	Bike Route	Town of New Hope	County Road A	2.14
Maple Rd	Bike Route	Maple Rd W	Village of Rosholt	0.50
Maple Rd W	Bike Route	County Road I	Maple Rd	0.74
State Highway 66	Paved Shoulder, 5'	St Adalbert Rd	Village of Rosholt	0.26
State Highway 66	Paved Shoulder, 5'	Village of Rosholt	County Road A	0.25

TABLE 8.9: TOWN OF ALMOND BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road D	Bike Route	Town of Pine Grove	Village of Almond	3.54
County Road D	Bike Route	Village of Almond	Town of Belmont	2.51
County Road J	Paved Shoulder	Patterson Lake Rd	2nd Ave	5.74
County Road W	Bike Route	1st St	County Road J	2.65

TABLE 8.10: TOWN OF AMHERST BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
Alm Rd	Bike Route	County Road Q	School Rd	1.75
County Road A	Paved Shoulder	Town of Lanark	U.S. Highway 10	1.52
County Road B	Paved Shoulder	Mill St	County Road T	0.71
County Road B	Paved Shoulder	U.S. Highway 10	County Road KK	0.05
County Road Q	Bike Route	Welton Dr	Lake Meyers Rd	1.05
County Road Q	Bike Route	Village of Amherst Jnct.	Damrau Rd	3.18
County Road T	Bike Route	Town of New Hope	County Road B	3.33
County Road T	Bike Route	County Road V	County Road V	0.27
County Road V	Bike Route	County Road B	County Road T	2.09
County Road V	Bike Route	County Road T	Waupaca County	0.40
Fountain Grove Rd	Bike Route	Town Line Rd	County Road Q	3.16
Lake Dr	Bike Route	Pavelski Rd	Village of Amherst	0.80
Old Highway 18 Rd	Bike Route	Town of Stockton	Lake Dr	2.39
Packer Ave	Bike Route	County Road Q	Village of Amherst	0.76
Pavelski Rd	Bike Route	Lake Dr	County Road SS	0.78
School Rd	Bike Route	County Road KK	Village of Amherst	1.36
State Highway 161	Paved Shoulder	County Road ZZ	Waupaca County	4.52
Western Wy	Paved Shoulder	County Road Q	County Road KK	0.74

Table 8.11: Town of Belmont bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road A	Bike Route	County Road GG	3rd Ave	2.98
County Road D	Bike Route	Town of Almond	County Road AA	1.54
County Road D	Bike Route	County Road A	County Road D	1.53
County Road D	Bike Route	County Road A	County Road AA	2.51
County Road D	Bike Route	Town of Lanark	Stratton Lake Rd	1.04
Emmons Creek Rd	Bike Route	Stratton Lake Rd	Waupaca County	1.09
Fountain Lake Ave	Bike Route	County Road D	Stratton Lake Rd	2.24
Stratton Lake Rd	Bike Route	County Road D	Waupaca County	1.96

Table 8.12: Town of Buena Vista bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
Church Rd	Bike Route	County Road BB	County Road J	0.26
County Road BB	Paved Shoulder	Guth Rd	Church Rd	1.84
County Road D	Bike Route	Oak Dr	Lake View Ln	2.04
County Road EE	Bike Route	County Road EE	County Road GG	0.40
County Road GG	Bike Route	County Road EE	County Road A	3.02
County Road J	Paved Shoulder	County Road J	County Road J	0.75
Guth Rd	Bike Route	County Road BB	Shady Dr	0.14
Patterson Lake Rd	Bike Route	County Road J	County Road EE	2.32
Shady Dr	Bike Route	1st St	Guth Rd	4.32

Table 8.13: Town of Carson bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
3rd Ave	Bike Route	County Road M	County Line Rd	1.01
County Road C	Paved Shoulder	County Road O	Elm Rd.	0.99
County Road E	Bike Route	U.S. Highway 10	County Road HH	1.35
County Road G	Bike Route	Robin Rd	County Road M	4.08
County Road HH W	Bike Route	Franks Ln	Town of Linwood	7.53
County Road M	Bike Route	County Road G	County Road O	2.01
County Road O	Bike Route	County Road M	County Line Rd	1.00
County Road P	Bike Route	Village of Junction City	County Road HH	1.64

Table 8.14: Town of Dewey bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road X	Bike Route	Marathon County	North Second Dr	6.01
Dewey Dr	Bike Route	County Road X	County Road Y	6.09

Table 8.15: Town of Eau Pleine bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road E	Bike Route	State Highway 34	U.S. Highway 10	7.77
County Road G	Bike Route	County Road H	Village of Junction City	1.99
County Road O	Paved Shoulder	Marathon County	County Road H	3.73

TABLE 8.16: TOWN OF GRANT BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road D	Bike Route	County Road F	Town of Pine Grove	2.00
County Road F	Bike Route	County Road W	State Highway 73	6.29
County Road FF	Paved Shoulder	80th St S	County Road F	4.54
County Road W	Paved Shoulder	County Road U	Town Line Road	5.82
State Highway 73	Bike Route	80th St S	County Road F	3.89

TABLE 8.17: TOWN OF HULL BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
Brilowski Rd	Bike Lane	Jurgella Ln	Walter St	0.55
Brilowski Rd N	Bike Lane	Rainbow Dr	Jurgella Ln	0.47
Brilowski Rd N	Bike Route	Northpoint Dr	Rainbow Dr	0.22
Casimir Rd	Bike Route	Old Wausau Rd	North Second Dr	0.53
Country Club Dr	Bike Lane	Carol's Ln	City of Stevens Point	0.25
Golla Road Connector	Shared Use Path	Plover River Crossing	Shady Lane	0.40
Jordan Rd	Paved Shoulder	North Second Dr	County Road Y	4.78
North Second Dr	Bike Route	County Road X	Casimir Rd	2.26
North Second Dr	Paved Shoulder	Casimir Rd	Du Bay Ave	1.23
Old Highway 18 Rd	Paved Shoulder	Hwy 10 in City of Stevens Point	Town of Stockton/Brilowski Rd	0.94
Old Wausau Rd	Bike Route	Casimir Rd	Rachick Rd	2.54
Rainbow Dr	Bike Route	Brilowski Rd N	9th St	0.76
Reserve Dr N	Paved Shoulder	Jordan Rd	Du Bay Ave	1.76
Wilshire Dr	Paved Shoulder	Jordan Rd	Northpoint Dr	2.53

TABLE 8.18: TOWN OF LANARK BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road A	Bike Route	County Road D	County Road GG	2.53
County Road A	Bike Route	Town of Amherst	County Road GG	3.20
County Road A	Paved Shoulder	Town of Amherst	County Road D	1.30
County Road D	Bike Route	Town of Buena Vista	County Road A	2.53
County Road D	Bike Route	County Road A	Town of Belmont	6.86
County Road Q	Bike Route	Damrau Rd	County Road A	3.21

TABLE 8.19: TOWN OF LINWOOD BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road C	Paved Shoulder	Elm Rd.	City of Stevens Point	5.91
County Road HH W	Bike Route	Town of Carson	City of Stevens Point	0.24
County Road II	Bike Route	County Road C	County Road PP	2.51
County Road II	Bike Route	County Road PP	State Highway 66	1.85
County Road PP	Bike Route	County Road II	Mill Creek Dr	3.26
Mill Creek Dr	Bike Route	County Road PP	State Highway 66	0.69
River View Ave	Bike Lane	State Highway 66	City of Stevens Point	0.32
State Highway 66 W	Bike Route	Wood County	Mill Creek Dr	4.04
West River Dr W	Bike Route	State Highway 66	Rocky Run Rd	5.72

Table 8.20: Town of New Hope bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road A	Bike Route	County Road Z	Flume Rd	1.73
County Road MM	Bike Route	County Road T	County Road T	1.57
County Road T	Bike Route	Town of Amherst	County Road MM	2.50
County Road T	Bike Route	County Road MM	Town of Alban	4.10
County Road Z	Bike Route	Town of Sharon	County Road A	2.53
County Road ZZ	Bike Route	County Road Z	State Highway 161	4.56
Rolling Hills Rd	Bike Route	Five Corners Rd	State Highway 161	1.64
State Highway 161	Bike Route	Rolling Hills Rd	County Road ZZ	0.32
Trout Creek Rd	Bike Route	County Road T	Waupaca County	2.29

Table 8.21: Town of Pine Grove bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
County Road A	Bike Route	County Road Z	Flume Rd	1.73
County Road MM	Bike Route	County Road T	County Road T	1.57

Table 8.22: Town of Plover bikeways

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
Biron Dr East	Bike Route	80th St	Johnson Ave	3.52
Bluebird Dr	Bike Route	Planned path	County Road R	0.60
Bluebird Drive Connector	Overpass/Underpass	Airline Rd	Bluebird Dr	0.06
Club Forest Dr	Bike Route	Johnson Ave	Meehan Dr	0.95
Coolidge Ave	Bike Route	Village of Plover	Forest Dr	1.09
County Road R	Bike Lane	Commons Cir	Roosevelt Dr	1.84
Forest Dr	Bike Route	Monroe Ave	Village of Plover	1.85
Johnson Ave	Bike Route	E Biron Dr	Club Forest Dr	0.42
Meehan Dr	Bike Route	Club Forest Dr	Monroe Ave	1.66
Meehan Dr	Bike Route	County Road F	Meehan Dr	0.51
Monroe Ave	Bike Route	Forest Dr	Meehan Dr	0.25
Park Dr	Bike Route	West end	River Dr	0.50
Porter Dr	Bike Route	County Road R	Kennedy Ave	0.97
Porter Rd	Bike Route	Village of Plover	County Road R	0.49
River Dr	Bike Route	Park Dr	Coolidge Ave	0.45
Shady Dr	Bike Route	Ben's Ln	Kennedy Ave	1.00

TABLE 8.23: TOWN OF SHARON BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
Birch Rd	Bike Route	Woodland Rd	Town of Alban	0.79
County Road J	Bike Route	Marathon County Line	Merryland Dr	7.00
County Road K	Bike Route	County Road Z	10th St	1.25
County Road Z	Bike Route	State Highway 66	Town of New Hope	3.83
Merryland Dr	Bike Route	County Road I	Polonia Rd	0.54
Polonia Rd	Bike Route	Merryland Dr	State Highway 66	0.95
State Highway 66	Paved Shoulder, 5'+	County Road K	Polonia Rd	0.18
Twin Lakes Dr	Bike Route	County Road J	Twin Lakes Rd S	1.37
Twin Lakes Dr	Bike Route	Twin Lakes Rd S	Woodland Rd	2.06
Woodland Rd	Bike Route	Birch Rd	Twin Lakes Dr	0.59

TABLE 8.24: TOWN OF STOCKTON BIKEWAYS

Street	Bike Facility	From	To	Miles
1st St	Bike Route	Shady Dr	County Road J	1.11
5th St	Bike Route	Kennedy Ave	Custer Rd	3.09
6th St	Bike Route	Custer Rd	County Road K	3.05
9th St	Bike Route	Town of Hull	County Road K	3.18
County Road D	Bike Route	County Road J	Oak Dr	3.12
County Road HH	Paved Shoulder	Burbank Rd	Custer Rd	2.57
County Road K	Bike Route	10th St	U.S. Highway 10	3.12
Custer Rd	Bike Route	U.S. Highway 10	County Road D	6.32
Old Highway 18 Rd	Bike Route	Town of Hull	Custer Rd	3.17
Rolling Hills Rd	Bike Route	Custer Rd	Five Corners Rd	4.10
Shady Dr	Bike Route	Kennedy Ave	1st St	1.17
Standing Rocks Rd	Bike Route	Custer Rd	Town Line Rd	3.08

8.4 | Rural Area Pedestrian Facility Recommendations

Pedestrian travel in rural Portage County is the second most common way for people to travel. Most of this travel occurs within the Villages. Most travel occurrences include walking trips to libraries, churches, downtowns, friends' homes, schools, and places of employment. The following recommendations are made to support current walking levels and to increase safety and improve access.



Paved shoulders provide space for pedestrians where sidewalks do not exist.

Construct Sidewalks within Villages and Incorporate Sidewalks in Upcoming Street Projects

Village should plan to incorporate sidewalks in upcoming street projects, particularly where sidewalks are not currently located along major streets (arterial and collector streets). Sidewalk location criteria as provided in Table 8.26 should be followed. All new streets within Villages should have sidewalks as supported by the sidewalk location criteria. Subdivision ordinances should be updated to include the requirement of sidewalks when new streets are constructed.

Responsibility: *Villages in Portage County*

TABLE 8.25: WISDOT GUIDELINES FOR SIDEWALK PLACEMENT

Land-Use / Dwelling Unit / Functional Classification	New Urban & Suburban Streets	Existing Urban & Suburban Streets
Commercial & Industrial (All Streets)	Both Sides	Both sides. Every effort should be made to add sidewalks where they do not exist and to complete missing links
Residential (Arterials)	Both Sides	Both Sides
Residential (Collectors)	Both Sides	Multifamily: Both sides Single family: Prefer both sides, require at least one side
Residential (Local Road) More than 4 units/acre	Both sides	Prefer both sides; Require at least one side
Residential (Local Road) 1 – 4 units/acre	Prefer both sides; At least one side required	One side preferred, at least 4 feet
Residential (Local Road) Fewer than 1 unit/acre	One side preferred; Shoulder on both sides	At least 4 feet shoulder on both sides required

Notes for additional consideration:

- A sidewalk should be provided on at least one side of the street on any local street within two blocks of a school site, which would be on a walking route to school.
- Sidewalks may be omitted on one side of new streets where that side clearly cannot be developed and there are no existing or anticipated uses that would generate pedestrian trips on that side.
- Where there are service roads, the sidewalk adjacent to the main road may be eliminated and replaced by a sidewalk adjacent to the service road on the side away from the main road.

Improve Crossings

The most common pedestrian crash types involve street crossings. On busier streets, pedestrians may have difficulty finding gaps to cross streets which becomes an access as well as a safety issue. This Plan recommends improving crossings for safety and ease of use for pedestrians as arterial streets are reconstructed within the Villages. Two such devices that improve crossings are curb bump-outs and median crossing islands. Median crossing islands have recently been added as a proven crash reduction factor and allow pedestrians to focus on one direction of traffic at a time when making a crossing. An example of where these crossing enhancements should be considered is along State Highway 66 in the Village of Rosholt and in the Village of Amherst at the intersection of Main and Wilson Streets. A third effective street crossing treatment is the raised crosswalk. Becoming more popular in larger cities around the U.S., these treatments prioritize people crossing the street and require vehicles to slow down.

Responsibility: *Wisconsin DOT, County Highway Department, various Villages*

Construct Rural Paths and Trails

Consider new opportunities for rural paths in addition to the small number of path segments recommended by this Plan. This would include rail grades moving into an abandonment stage, paths considered as part of park master plans, and paths to connect to any new significant developments at the edges of the County's Villages.

Responsibility: *County Planning and Zoning Department, County Parks Department, various Towns and Villages*

Implement the Portage County Safe Routes to School Plan

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plans examine motivations for or against walking and biking to school and look for interventions and strategies that encourage and promote safe active transportation. The Portage County SRTS Plan includes specific recommendations involving facilities that serve school sites and routes leading to schools. This Plan further recommends updating the SRTS plan, which was last updated in 2014.

Responsibility: *All Towns and Villages with schools; all school districts*

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CHAPTER 9:
URBAN AREA FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

9 | URBAN AREA FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

This Chapter presents the bicycle and pedestrian facility recommendations for the Urban Area, which includes the City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge.

9.1 | Overview

The Urban Area presents the best opportunity to bring about the biggest change in bicycling and walking in Portage County. By far, this is where the greatest concentration of population and employment exists within the County. Additionally, the Urban Area offers a large number of short distance trips that are perfect for converting to bicycling or walking. A comprehensive network of bicycle facilities is recommended for the Urban Area to capitalize on these opportunities. This Plan recommends an interconnected network of bicycle lanes, shared use paths, bicycle routes with wayfinding signs, and shared lane markings; these facility types are described in more detail in Chapter 4. This network of bicycle facilities is designed to reach destinations throughout the Urban Area, provide connections into the Rural Area, connect recreation facilities and areas, and serve a wide range of bicyclists. General bicycle facility recommendations are provided below followed with specific facility recommendations.

9.2 | General Urban Area Bikeway Recommendations

The following represent the broad bikeway recommendations for the Portage County Urban Area.

Transportation Connectivity and the Network

Communities in the Urban Area made many achievements over the past 20 years and have an excellent off-street bicycle and pedestrian system to show for it. Recently, the City of Stevens Point has successfully turned its attention to on-street accommodations for bicyclists. However, there are still problems throughout the Urban Area that present difficulties for cycling, including major street corridors that do not serve bicyclists well and challenging crossings of Interstate 39. Additional bicycle lanes, sections of path, shared lane markings, and more signed bicycle routes will connect this system into a network for bicyclists.



Connections across major barriers, like this path underpass of the Interstate, are critical for providing a well-connected bicycle network.

The proposed bicycle network is a major element of this Plan. A combination of agencies will be responsible for implementation of the network. It is strongly recommended that the Plan be endorsed and implemented by all of the local governments. Unlike rural areas, Portage County has jurisdiction over fewer roads within the Urban Area, thus the County's direct responsibilities will be different in the Urban Area. The County will still have an advisory role and will evaluate how well the Plan is being implemented by local agencies.

Provide a Combination of Facilities

An effective network Plan combines a series of bicycle facilities for the diverse group of bicyclists that exist in that area. While busier streets with no bikeways may be comfortable or at least tolerable for more confident bicyclists, bicycle lanes, paths, and low volume streets will be the prime facilities that children and less confident adults will use. Much of the Urban Area has relatively quiet neighborhood streets, but the longest of these streets is about a mile long. To encourage the range of potential bicyclists to make basic transportation trips by bicycle, often a combination of facilities is essential. Bicyclists might be able to use paths and low volume residential streets for part or most of their journey, but at some point, they will need to use busier streets to connect to destinations located on those streets or to bridge over barriers. This Plan recommends the provision of bicycle lanes, paths, routes with wayfinding, and shared lane markings consistent with the specific recommendations of this Plan.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point; Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge; Wisconsin DOT; County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department, Towns within the Urban Area*

Promote Safety for All Users



Sidewalk bicycling is common in the Urban Area where bicyclists often do not feel safe on the street.

A primary goal of this Plan is to increase the safety of users. Several recent studies have indicated that as more and more bicyclists are seen using streets and bikeways, crashes drop because of the increased motorist awareness. It is possible and likely that increased safety and increased use can be mutually supportive outcomes. The recommended bikeways for the Urban Area will provide more separation for users and in many cases provide additional safety benefits for motorists. Many of the motor vehicle/bicycle crashes in the Urban Area, particularly in Stevens Point, are associated with sidewalk riding and the where bicyclists transition into intersections. Improving the condition of the streets for bicycling will encourage bicyclists to travel on the street, creating a net positive effect on safety. It is important to note that railroad crossings can be a point of conflict as well, however improvements to these crossings can be cost prohibitive for many communities. In addition to implementing the bikeway recommendations in this Chapter, this Plan recommends promoting other efforts in education and enforcement which will maximize the return on engineering recommendations.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point; Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge; Wisconsin DOT; County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department, Towns within the Urban Area*

Where Bike Lanes Are Proposed, Provide Protected Bike Lanes Whenever Possible

Table 9.3 identifies specific locations that are recommended for protected bike lanes in the Urban Areas. In addition, this Plan further recommends that local municipalities consider pursuing protected bike lanes wherever on-street facilities are recommended or implemented.

Protected bike lanes are bike lanes with an additional horizontal buffer (typically 1.5 to 3 feet in width), combined with a vertical element within the buffered space further separating vehicle traffic from the bike lane. Vehicle elements could include delineator posts, parking stops, vehicle parking lane, concrete barriers, raised curbs, and raised bike lanes. (Protected bike lanes, sometimes called separated bike lanes – are also described in Chapter 5 of this Plan.)

It is well established that roads with higher vehicle speeds are a risk factor for crashes and injuries. Protected bicycle lanes influence driver behavior by signaling that drivers should slow down and expect to see bicycles. Protected bicycle lanes have been found to improve safety for all modes – including people driving, biking, or walking[16]. According to data from the Federal Highway Administration, converting a traditional bike lane to a separate lane with low-cost flexible delineators can reduce bicycle-vehicle crashes by up to 53%.

Additional study will be needed to determine if a protected bike is feasible and to determine the specific design of that facility. According to the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, roads with actual vehicle speeds of 25 mph or higher and traffic volumes of 6,000 vehicles per day or more should be considered for protected bike lanes, and roads identified as key bicycle throughfares should be prioritized. In locations where protected bike lanes are not feasible, a buffered bike lane (horizontal separation but no vertical protection) should be explored as the next best option.

Improve Urban/Rural Transitions

Bicyclists in Portage County have a difficult time transitioning between the Urban Area and the Rural Area of the County. In addition to increased vehicle speeds, there are a limited number of roads that make the connection between the Urban Area and rural countryside. Many of these transitions do not have suitable bicycle accommodations. All major streets that cross the Urban Area boundary should ultimately be built as bikeways that bridge these two environments.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point; Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge; Towns adjacent to Urban Area; Wisconsin DOT; County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department*

Implement Bikeway Recommendations in the Urban Area

Implement the Urban Area bikeways recommended in this Chapter.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point; Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge; Wisconsin DOT; County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department, Towns within the Urban Area*

Include Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities in all Urban Area Street Projects

Include provisions for bicycle and pedestrian travel consistent with this Plan for all Urban Area street projects, depending on the type of roadway improvement project being pursued. Many of the most significant changes, especially those that call for bicycle lanes on roadways lacking space for them, will rely on the scheduling of street improvement projects. Road reconstructions are an opportune time to add facilities to roadways and reduce costs. Costs for incorporating bike lanes and even paths are relatively low when added to reconstruction and some pavement replacement projects. Because of their relatively low cost when added to much more expensive projects, these represent major opportunities to implement the Plan.

An identified corridor for upgrades during a redesign and reconstruction is the “Concrete Moat” (Centerpoint Drive/First Street, Water Street. Clark Street, Division Street, and a portion of Main Street) that surrounds Downtown Stevens Point. Any redesign or reconstruction of this corridor should include protected bike lanes and bike parking facilities as a part of the streetscape.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point; Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge; Wisconsin DOT; County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department, Towns within the Urban Area*

[16] National Transportation Safety Board, 2019; Federal Highway Administration Crash Modification Factor Study, 2023

Collaborate to Identify Short-Term Projects for Implementation

After the infrastructure recommendations in the Short-Term Action Plan have been accomplished, the County planning staff should continue to collaborate with Urban Area communities to identify the next round of Short-Term projects. A suggested prioritization system is described in Chapter 10 of this Plan.

Many of the recommendations contained within the Urban Area are free-standing projects and are not tied to other street improvement projects. In contrast, other bikeway projects will have to wait until they can be incorporated into larger street projects. Most of these free-standing projects are relatively low-cost and relatively easy to implement. To set the Plan in action it is important to select some short-horizon projects as "low-hanging fruit" to seize upon the current momentum the Plan's development has created and to brand the Plan as an immediate success. The implementation of more difficult projects should also be started with the understanding that a longer timeframe will be necessary to bring these projects to fruition.



Adding bicycle lanes to streets that already have ample space is a project that can be completed in the short term.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point; Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge; Wisconsin DOT; County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department, Towns within the Urban Area*

9.3 | Specific Urban Area Bicycle Facility Recommendations

This section identifies a series of specific bikeways for implementation. The bikeway type is also identified for each of these projects. As indicated above, most of these recommendations may be short term priorities, but many others will wait until the bikeway can be included in a street reconstruction project.

Recommendation: Implement the Urban Area bicycle network by mileage and facility type below.

Responsibility: Stevens Point; Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge; Wisconsin DOT; County Planning and Zoning Department; County Highway Department, Towns within the Urban Area.

The tables below detail the recommended Urban Area bikeways which include all facilities in Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge. Table 9.1 presents an overview of the total miles of each recommended bikeway type, while Tables 9.1 – 9.15 detail the recommended bikeways. Facility tables are provided alphabetically by municipality, and specific facility types are provided in separate tables for the City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover and Whiting; A single table is provided for the Village of Park Ridge, which has relatively few recommendations. Within each table facilities are presented alphabetically by facility type. While on-street facilities are generally assumed to be on both sides of the road, the mileage estimates included in this chapter refer to length of the road segment only.

Although bike lanes are recommended in the tables for the Village of Plover, residents have also indicated more support for off-street facilities. Off street facilities should be prioritized over bike lanes in Plover.

The recommended Urban Area bicycle facility network is displayed on Map 9.1.

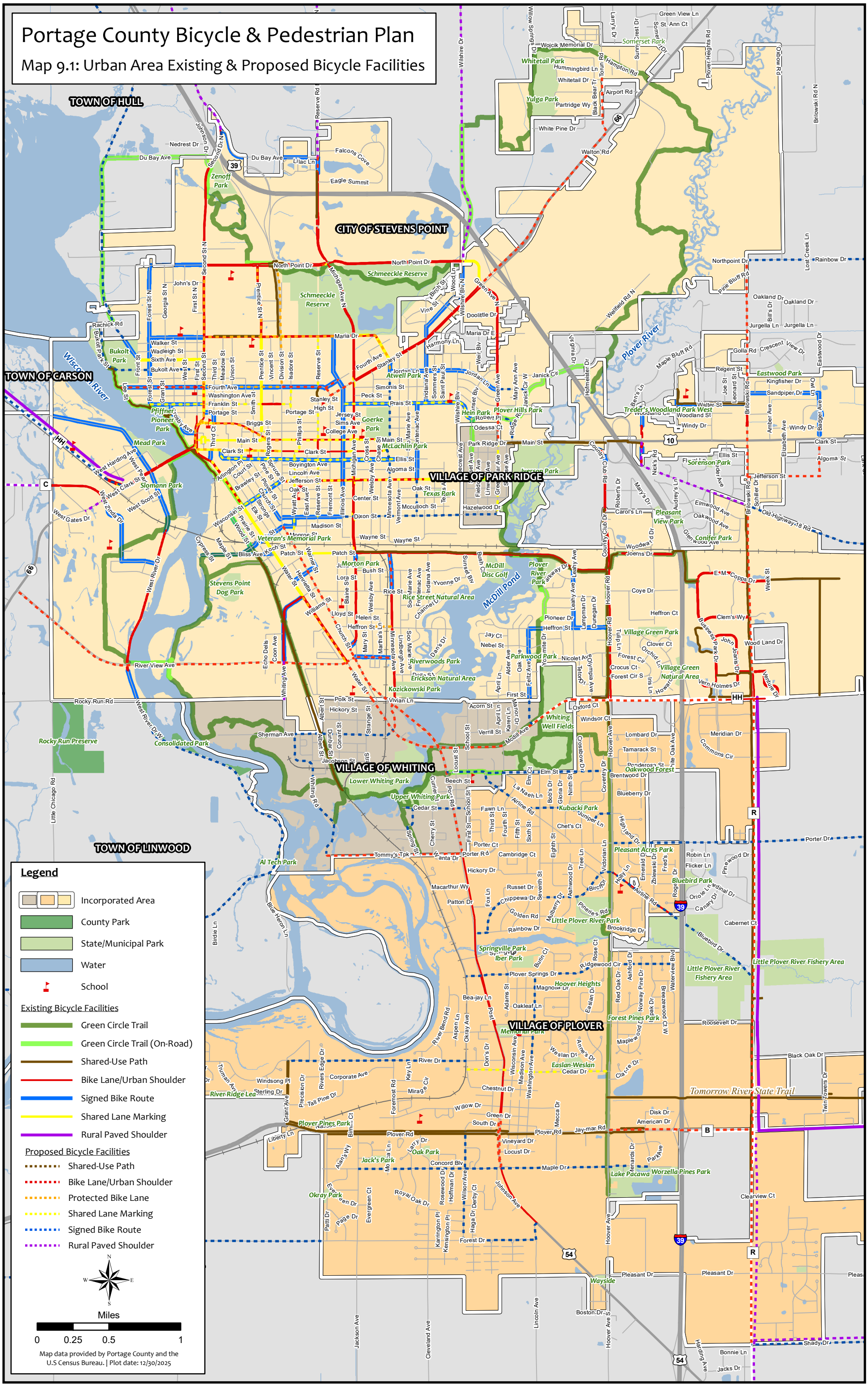
TABLE 9.1: MILES OF PORTAGE COUNTY URBAN AREA BIKEWAYS BY FACILITY TYPE

Facility Type	Miles
Bike Lanes/Urban Shoulder	45.30
Paved Shoulders	1.61
Shared Lane Markings	14.95
Signed Bike Route	23.93
Shared Use Paths	8.15
Future Bike Accommodation[17]	2.99
Total	96.93

[17] These routes will require further investigation than this planning process was able to provide to determine the appropriate bicycle facility. It is critical that these streets include a bicycle accommodation of some sort when they are next reconstructed.

Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

Map 9.1: Urban Area Existing & Proposed Bicycle Facilities



City of Stevens Point Bikeways

TABLE 9.2: STEVENS POINT BICYCLE LANES/URBAN SHOULDERS

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Brilowski Rd	Walter St	County Road HH	2.04	CTH R south of USH 10
Church St	Madison St	Post Rd	1.23	Urban Shoulder
Country Club Dr	Main St	Town of Hull	0.12	Restripe to include bike lanes
Fourth Ave	West end	Second St	0.56	Remove parking on one side of street
Fourth Ave	Division St	Illinois Ave	0.40	Remove parking on one side of street
Fremont St	Fourth Ave	Stanley St	0.06	
Green Ave	Stanley St	Main St	1.14	Restripe from 3/12/12/3 to 5/10/10/5 in 2026
Maria Dr	Division St	Minnesota Ave	0.84	Remove parking on the north side of street, potential for buffered or protected bike lane with road redesign
Minnesota Ave	Maria Dr	Stanley St	0.20	Upgrade shared lane to protected bike lane when reconstructed
Minnesota Ave	Patch St	Rice St	0.27	Paint SLM in the interim, however ultimate will be an urban shoulder
Nebel St	Water St	Church St	0.06	
Nebel St	Church St	Minnesota Ave	0.27	
North Reserve St	Du Bay Ave	Merge	0.11	
Post Rd	Village of Whiting	Church St	0.19	Urban Shoulder
River View Ave	Town of Linwood	Water St	2.17	Remove one travel lane in each direction (County)
Second St	Portage St	Fifth Ave	0.24	
Stanley St	Fremont St	Michigan Ave	0.19	
Stanley St	Northpoint Dr	Town of Hull	0.46	
Stanley St	Michigan Ave	Town of Hull	1.48	Convert to three lane east of Green Ave
State Highway 66	I-39	Torun Rd	1.02	Bike lanes or maintain wide paved shoulders. Note: if travel lanes are removed from a state highway, the amount of state highway aid is reduced accordingly
Torun Rd	Green Circle Trail	State Highway 66	0.54	
Water St	River View Ave	Polk St	0.32	Restripe to 5/11/10/M/10/11/5 (Coordinate with County and consider school pickup/drop off needs)
West Clark St	County Road C	W Jackson St	0.16	Stripe 6' bike lanes

*mileage refers to segment length; double mileage for bike lanes on both sides

TABLE 9.3: STEVENS POINT PROTECTED OR BUFFERED BICYCLE LANES

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Centerpoint Dr	Water St	Division St	0. 60	Remove one travel lane, when reconstructed
Clark St	Water St	Division St	0.60	When reconstructed
Division St	Northpoint Dr	Fourth Ave	0.85	Add 6' bike lane with reconstruction
Fourth Ave	Second St	Division St		Parking/terrace/sidewalks impacts
Maria Dr	Second St	Minnesota	1.20	Would require road redesign
Prentice St N	Northpoint Dr	Maria Dr	0.50	Remove parking on east side of street
Second St	Water St	Portage St	0.09	Remove one travel lane
Water St	Centerpoint Dr	Main St	0.18	When reconstructed
Water St	Whiting Ave	River View Ave	0.55	Existing bike lane with potential for protected bike lane

Note: In most cases, protected or buffered bicycle lanes will not fit within existing roadway would require road redesign.

TABLE 9.4: STEVENS POINT PAVED SHOULDERS

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Second Dr N	Johnson Dr	Du Bay Ave	0.26	
West Clark St	West Gates Dr	County Road C	0.16	
Whiting Ave	River View	Village of Whiting	0.25	

TABLE 9.5: STEVENS POINT SHARED LANE MARKINGS

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Church St	Main St	Ellis St	0.13	
College Ave	Prentice St	Rogers St	0.04	
Ellis St	Clark St	Frontenac Ave	1.42	
Franklin St	Forest St	Isadore St	0.98	SLM for westbound bikes from Division to Prentice
Jefferson St	Division St	Village of Park Ridge	1.25	Currently urban shoulder; shared lane marking would improve legibility for school traffic
Main St	Rogers St	Minnesota Ave	0.85	Eastbound only; existing westbound bike lane
Minnesota Ave	Patch St	Rice St	0.28	Add urban shoulder when reconstructed
Prais St	Illinois St	Sunset Blvd	0.97	
Reserve St	Maria Dr	Fourth Ave	0.35	Possible pedestrian mall
Reserve St	Stanley St	Main St	0.28	
Reserve St	Clark St	Dixon St	0.46	
Rogers St	College Ave	Ellis St	0.19	
Water St	Third St	Wisconsin St	0.40	
Wisconsin St	Wood St	Division St	0.43	

Table 9.6: Stevens Point Signed Bike Routes

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Bukolt Ave	Front St	Second St	0.46	
Bukolt Park St	Rachick Rd	Front St	0.52	
County Road HH W	Town of Linwood	W Clark St	0.62	
Dixon St	Illinois Ave	Village of Park Ridge	0.83	
Frontenac Ave	Jefferson St	Dixon St	0.25	
Janick Cir W	Jordan Ln	Ridge Rd	0.04	
Jordan Ln	Green Ave	W Janick Cir	0.20	
Minnesota Ave	Clark St	Dixon St	0.47	
Minnesota Ave	Stanley St	Clark St	0.58	
Old Highway 18 Rd	Brilowski Rd	Town of Hull	0.11	
Rachick Rd	Bukolt Park St	Old Wausau Rd	0.09	
Ridge Rd	Sunset Fork	Main St	0.11	
Sunset Fork	Green Ave	Ridge Rd	0.13	

Table 9.7: Stevens Point Off-Street Facilities

Name	Facility Type	From	To	Miles
County Road HH	Shared Use Path	Village of Plover	Venture Dr	0.82
County Road HH	Shared Use Path	Village of Plover	Burbank Rd	2.02
Green Circle Connector	Shared Use Path, Tunnel, Bridge	Hofmeister-Golla Connector	Main St Sidepath	0.35
Golla Road Connector	Shared Use Path	Golla Road	Main Street Sidepath	0.19
Hofmeister-Golla Connector	Shared Use Path & Bridge	Hofmeister Dr	Golla Rd	0.33
Main Street Sidepath	Sidepath	Country Club Rd	Maple Bluff Rd	0.36
Mc Dill Ave Sidepath	Sidepath	Village of Whiting	Olympia Ave	0.11
Michigan Ave	Shared Use Path	Dixon St	Patch St	0.25
Minnesota Street Sidepath	Shared Use Path	Main St	Clark St	0.07
Stanley St Path – N	Sidepath	Wilshire Blvd N	Marshfield Clinic	0.48
Stanley St Path – S	Sidepath	South of Green Ave N	Airport Entrance	0.61

Village of Park Ridge Bikeways

Table 9.8: Village of Park Ridge bikeways (all types)

Street	Facility Type	From	To	Miles
Greenbriar Ave	Shared Lane Marking	Park Ridge Dr	Ridgewood Dr	0.49
Hillcrest Dr	Shared Lane Marking	City of Stevens Point	East end	0.34
Park Ridge Drive Sidepath	Shared Use Path	Greenbriar Ave	Existing Path	0.11
Ridgewood Dr	Signed Bike Route	City of Stevens Point	Greenbriar Ave	0.24

Village of Plover Bikeways

Table 9.9: Village of Plover Bicycle Lanes/Urban Shoulders

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
County Road HH	Village of Whiting	Stevens Point	0.74	
County Road R	County Road HH	Commons Cir	0.42	
County Road R	Roosevelt Dr	Shady Dr	2.26	
Plover Rd	Hoover Ave	County Road R	1.00	
Post Rd	Porter Rd	Lincoln Ave	2.68	Add 6' bike lane with reconstruction

Table 9.10: Village of Plover Shared Lane Markings

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Cedar Dr	Okray Ave	Hoover Ave	0.99	

Table 9.11: Village of Plover Signed Bike Routes

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Airline Rd	Hoover Ave	East end	0.56	Sign when path to Bluebird Dr completed
Airline Rd	Elm St	Juniper Ln	0.39	
Chippewa Dr	Rainbow Dr	Hoover Ave	1.09	
Elm St	Crossbow Dr	Hoover Ave	0.20	
Forest Dr	Wilson Ave	Lincoln Ave	0.51	
Juniper Ln	Airline Road	Ramble Ln	0.50	
Lincoln Ave	Post Rd	Forest Dr	0.12	
Maple Dr	Jackson Ave	Hoover Ave	2.03	
Plover Springs Dr	Okray Ave	Hoover Ave	1.03	
Plover Springs Dr	Hoover Ave	Waterview Blvd	0.43	Sign when path to Airport Dr completed
Porter Rd	Hoover Ave	Town of Plover	0.49	
Rainbow Dr	Post Rd	Chippewa Dr	0.10	
Ramble Ln	Juniper Ln	Hoover Ave	0.15	
River Dr	Grant Ave	Okray Ave	1.24	
Washington Ave	Plover Springs Dr	Cedar Dr	0.68	
Wilson Ave	Plover Rd	Forest Dr	0.76	

Table 9.12: Village of Plover Off-Street Facilities

Name	Facility Type	From	To	Miles
Cedar Dr Sidepath	Sidepath	Woyak Sports Complex	Hoover Ave	0.34
Okray Rd	Shared Use Path	Tommy's Tpk	River Dr	1.6
Pacawa Lake Trail (via Hoover Ave & Pleasant Dr)	Shared Use Path	Lake Pacawa Park	Village limits	2.00
Pacawa Lake Trail (to Food + Farm Exploration Center)	Shared Use Path	Hoover Ave	East to Food + Farm Exploration Center and south to Pleasant Dr	0.65
Plover Rd Sidepath	Sidepath	Wisconsin Ave	Hoover Ave	0.98
Village Park Drive Connector	Shared Use Path	Tomorrow River State Trail	Village Park Dr	0.09

Village of Whiting Bikeways

Table 9.13: Village of Whiting Bicycle Lanes/Urban Shoulders

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
McDill Ave / CR HH	Post Rd	Village of Plover	1.05	Evaluate three-lane conversion with bike lanes; traffic study needed
Minnesota Ave	Water St	Post Rd	0.19	
Post Rd	Stevens Point	Tommy's Tpk	1.26	Add minimum 6' bike lane
Tommy's Tpk	Whiting Rd	Post Rd	0.95	Restripe to 5/10/10/5
Water St / CR HH	Polk St	Post Rd	0.61	Restripe to 5/11/10/M/10/11/5

Table 9.14: Village of Whiting Signed Bike Routes

Street	From	To	Miles	Comment
Birch St	Cedar St	Wallace Pl	0.18	
Cedar St	West end	First St	0.46	
Elm St	Post Rd	Crossbow Dr	0.95	
Sherman Ave	Whiting Rd	Water St	0.70	
Spring St	Wallace Pl	Tommy's Tpk	0.18	
Whiting Rd	Sherman Ave	Tommy's Tpk	0.99	

Table 9.15: Village of Whiting Off-Street Facilities

Name	Facility Type	From	To	Miles
Mc Dill Ave Sidepath	Sidepath	Green Circle Trail	City of Stevens Point	0.29

9.4 | Pedestrian Network & Facility Recommendations



Sidewalks should be constructed along many streets in the Urban Area that currently do not have them.

Pedestrian travel in the Urban Area is the second most common way for people to travel after automobile use, and greatly exceeds the number of trips made by transit or by bike. Much of this travel occurs where destinations are close together such as the downtown area of Stevens Point and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point campus. Trips of under a mile have a higher probability of being converted to a walking trip than trips of over one mile. These trips may include walking to libraries, churches, downtown Stevens Point, shopping centers, the UW-Stevens Point campus, neighbors' and friends' homes, schools, and places of employment. The recommendations below are designed to increase walking as a safe and viable travel option in the Urban Area.

Most of the recommendations for the pedestrian network are very straightforward. The key to successful use of these recommendations is implementation. Recommended implementation actions follow this section of the Chapter and are important for how sidewalks are added and intersections treated with improved pedestrian crossing solutions.

Sidewalks

Include Sidewalks in All Upcoming Street Projects

Include sidewalks in all upcoming street projects within the Urban Area with sidewalks as supported by the sidewalk location criteria found later in this chapter. Subdivision ordinances should be updated to include the requirement of sidewalks when new streets are constructed.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Park Ridge, and Whiting; Portage County; and Wisconsin DOT*

Establish a Program to Identify and Close Small Sidewalk Gaps

Communities within the Urban Area should consider establishing a small sidewalk gap construction program. Projects would be drawn from the identified sidewalk gap map and criteria established in this Plan. Preferably, the projects should be relatively short to conserve the funding. Longer stretches of identified sidewalk should be incorporated into projects when they are reconstructed or their surfaces are replaced.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge*

Build Wide and Accessible Sidewalks

A clear, unobstructed path for pedestrian movement should be wide enough to accommodate several people walking side by side, including children, people in wheelchairs, and people with strollers. Although the standard sidewalk minimum width is five feet, wider sidewalks should be considered where space permits. In downtown areas, the university campus, school zones, or commercial areas with heavy pedestrian volumes, a sidewalk should be 8-14 feet wide and in residential settings, a sidewalk should be 6-8 feet wide, as space permits.

Responsibility: *Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge*

Prepare and Follow Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plans

The Village of Plover and City of Stevens Point need to prepare and follow an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan. Based on observations made when fieldwork for this Plan was conducted, communities in the Urban Area have responded well to including curb ramps at intersections. However, work still needs to be done to improve accessibility, as documented in the Walk and Roll Audits. An ADA accessibility plan is intended to address project identification, staging, and prioritization. Transition plans were not found for Village of Plover and Stevens Point although ADA requires their adoption in communities having more than 50 employees. The Village and City should prepare these plans to address accessibility issues.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point, Village of Plover*

Crossing and Intersection Improvements

The analysis of crash data revealed problems with intersections crossings along a few corridors in the Urban Area. Those are identified below in the recommendations.



Streets with multiple lanes can be difficult or intimidating for pedestrians to cross.

Incorporate Crossing Improvements in Upcoming Arterial Street Projects

Incorporate crossing improvements and intersection improvements into arterial street reconstruction projects within the Urban Area in order to make crossings easier and safer for pedestrians. Crossing enhancements should be considered along Division Street, Stanley Street, Clark Street, US 10, Church Street, Post Road, Plover Road, and County Road HH/McDill Avenue. Public input identified the intersection of River View Avenue and Whiting Avenue, the intersection of Brilowski Road and Old Highway 18, and the intersection of Minnesota Avenue and Post Road as areas in need of crossing improvements. Division Street and US 10 have the largest concentration of pedestrian crashes of any two streets in the Urban Area. These identified roads and crossings are not an exhaustive list of priority crossings; this topic should be investigated further. Additionally, Accessible Pedestrian Signal (ACS) devices should be installed at key identified crossings. ACSs are signalized pedestrian crossings that provide tactile and auditory input for pedestrians that are blind or have low-vision. ACSs commonly have features such as the use of braille and auditory indicators of when it is safe to cross.

TABLE 9.16: PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS NEEDING ENHANCEMENTS

Street	Cross Street
Brilowski Rd	Old Hwy 18
River View Ave	Whiting Ave
Minnesota Ave	Post Rd
Division St	
Stanley St	
Clark St	
US 10	
Church St	
Post Rd	
Plover Rd	
Couty Road HH/ McDill Ave	

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Park Ridge, and Whiting; Portage County; and WisDOT*

Utilize Best Practice Crossing Treatments such as Bump-outs and Crossing Islands

Two devices which improve crossings are curb bump-outs and median crossing islands. Median crossing islands have recently been added as a proven crash reduction factor and allow pedestrians to focus on one direction of traffic at a time when making a crossing.

For the streets identified above as key streets to improve crossings, adding bump outs and crossing islands is a standard recommendation for nearly every intersection. Other crossing treatments, like the use of pedestrian signals, pedestrian hybrid beacons, and rapid flash beacons, require consideration on an intersection-by-intersection basis. The pedestrian facility guidelines provided as part of this Plan will help guide the communities on when to best employ these crossing devices.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Park Ridge, and Whiting; Portage County; and WisDOT*

Analyze Crashes and Identify Countermeasures

Communities within the Urban Area should continue to analyze crashes and search for countermeasures. This Plan and the Portage County Safety Action Plan have identified crash locations and street segments with high crash numbers and/or reported crossing problems. However, pedestrian conflict and crash locations will change and so will the crash types. PEDSAFE (http://www.pedbikesafe.org/PEDSAFE/) is a tool designed to assist transportation professionals analyze crash types and consider appropriate countermeasures given the characteristics of the crashes.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Park Ridge, and Whiting; WisDOT; Portage County to coordinate.*

Implement the Portage County Safe Routes to School Plan

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plans examine motivations for or against walking and biking to school and look for interventions and strategies that encourage and promote safe active transportation. This Plan recommends implemented the specific recommendations involving facilities that serve school sites and routes leading to schools as described in the 2014 SRTS Plan. This Plan further recommends that the 2014 SRTS Plan be updated.

Responsibility: *All municipalities with schools; all school districts*

Utilize Best Practice Traffic Calming Measures to Reduce Traffic Speeds

Traffic-calming strategies such as speed bumps, speed tables, and raised crossings should be applied to reduce speeds of approaching vehicles near unsignalized crossings and in areas with high volumes of pedestrians, particularly near schools.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Park Ridge, and Whiting; Portage County; and WisDOT*

Minimize Visual Obstructions Near Intersections to Increase Visibility of Pedestrians

In addition to traffic calming measures, minimizing visual obstructions near intersections can ensure that kids can both see and be seen by people driving or cycling. To achieve this, limit parking within 20 feet of intersections, add curb extensions where possible, place stop bars near crossings, and minimize visual obstructions within 10-15 feet of crossings. A low cost way to combine traffic calming measures with a reduction in visual obstructions is to mark no parking areas with bright paint and bollards. This ensures that no vehicles will be able to park in those zones, and they will also double as curb extensions.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point and the Villages of Plover, Park Ridge, and Whiting; Portage County; and WisDOT*

9.5 | Urban Area Pedestrian Facility Implementation and Costs

Pedestrian Facility Implementation

An important step in a pedestrian plan is to identify how improvements will be made. This requires commitment from the partners involved in the plan's development. Portage County itself will have a very small role in the actual implementation of most of the pedestrian facility recommendations, but the communities within the County will have a much bigger stake in fulfillment of specific pedestrian recommendations. Phasing, timing, budgeting will all factor in implementation. The strategies below should be employed to implement the pedestrian recommendations:



Crosswalk markings should be maintained to be highly visible.

- **Immediate Progress:** Critical to implementing an action plan is maintaining ongoing, continuous progress. Small, immediate changes that are highly visible create the momentum and support needed to make the more costly and substantive changes that require more time.
- **Timing and Phasing:** Typically, the more complex measures may require more time, money, and coordination among different departments and with the public. The improvements requiring the least amount of time and resources will likely be completed first, and those that require the most will be completed later as resources allow. A secondary benefit to this approach is that it addresses liability and ADA concerns. This approach shows that an agency is using a systematic and thoughtful process in implementing projects. One of the key strategies for implementing sidewalks is how they can be phased. There will be opportunities for sidewalks and intersection crossing improvements to be incorporated into larger roadway projects.
- **Budgeting:** Timing and phasing of projects can help with spreading the costs of projects over a period of time. Incorporating pedestrian improvements into larger projects is also an excellent strategy and one that has been used by communities within the urban area. However, it is important that a set-aside of funds be established and appropriated annually for the construction of free-standing projects.

Priority Recommendations

Map 9.2 contains recommendations for new sidewalks and sidewalk gap closures consistent with the sidewalk guidelines provided by WisDOT and included as part of Table 8.26 in this report. Not all of these sidewalks can be constructed even in the long term, so the following criteria were used to prioritize key sidewalk segments:

- **Crash data:** Where there are pedestrian-motorist crashes.
- **Roadway characteristics:** Generally, it is more important to prioritize sidewalk on arterial streets than on collector streets and on collector streets more so than on local through streets.
- **Pedestrian Usage:** The pedestrian heat map prepared for the 2014 plan helped to identify high pedestrian usage areas; the higher the usage (including latent demand) the greater the need and urgency for sidewalks.
- **School Access:** Recommendations of the safe routes to school plans were reviewed for sidewalk gaps. In addition, the neighborhood streets were reviewed once again after the draft plan was prepared to further consider sidewalks segments providing direct access to schools.
- **Comments:** Comments and recommendations made by subcommittee members or comments received through public input were considered.

Table 9.17 lists key streets needing sidewalks based on the criteria above. Priorities rankings were established based on the criteria as well. Higher usage and/or higher volumes of traffic indicated a safety issue; hence those streets rated as priorities.

There are also numerous streets in Stevens Point where sidewalks are not uniformly provided. Often sidewalks are provided for half of a block and then not for the other half. Many of these gaps in the sidewalk system are identified as priorities in Table 9.17 and on Map 9.2. Other small gaps in the sidewalk system still exist but are not considered priorities largely because they are not on or connect directly to arterial or collector streets. The streets with these sidewalk gaps are still identifiable on Map 9.2 but are considered lower priorities. After the draft plan was developed, the consultant team reviewed the areas around the schools along with the safe routes to school plans. About 10 small segments of sidewalks were added as secondary and tertiary priorities on Map 9.2.

Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

Map 9.2: Urban Area Sidewalk Inventory & Recommendations

TOWN OF HULL

CITY OF STEVENS POINT

VILLAGE OF PARK RIDGE

VILLAGE OF WHITING

TOWN OF LINWOOD

VILLAGE OF PLOVER

Tomorrow River State Trail

Legend

- Incorporated Area
- County Park
- State/Municipal Park
- Water
- School
- Shared Use Path - Existing
- Shared Use Path - Planned
- Sidewalk - Existing

Sidewalk Recommendations

- High Priority
- Medium Priority
- Low Priority

N W E S

Miles

0 0.25 0.5 1

Map data provided by Portage County and the U.S Census Bureau. | 12/30/25

TABLE 9.17: PRIMARY STREETS NEEDING SIDEWALKS

Street	Arterial	Collector	Use	Comments	Priority
Brilowski Road (Highway 10 – Northpoint) *Stevens Point, Town of Hull*	Yes	No	Low	Has paved shoulders now	Medium/ High priority
Country Club Drive (Highway 10 – Hoover) *Town of Hull*	Yes	No	Low	Shared use path constructed in 2025	Low Priority
Division Street (Maria – Academy) (Northpoint south 800') *Stevens Point*	Yes	No	High	Add sidewalk from Maria to Academy on east side and at intersection of Northpoint and Division	High Priority, slated for 2026-2027
Elm Street (Post to Hoover) *Whiting, Plover*	Yes	No	Low to moderate		High Priority (Post to Willard) to Low Priority (east of Willard)
Feltz Avenue (McDill – Heffron) *Stevens Point, Whiting*	No	Yes	Low		Medium Priority
Foremost Road (Plover Road – River Drive) *Plover*	No	Yes	Low to moderate		High Priority
Frontenac Avenue (Algoma – Jefferson) *Stevens Point*	No	Yes	Moderate	Very short gaps exist	High Priority
Green Avenue (Stanley St – Park Ridge Drive) *Stevens Point*	No	Yes	Moderate Jordan to Park Ridge		Low Priority, High Priority (from Jordan south)
Greenbriar Avenue (Park Ridge – Jefferson) *Park Ridge*	No	Yes	Moderate		Low Priority
Heffron Street (Feltz Ave – Hoover Rd *Stevens Point*	No	Yes	Moderate	Connection between Green Circle and Hoover Ave path	High Priority, Both sides
Jackson Avenue (Plover Road – Maple Dr) *Plover*	No	Yes	Low to moderate		Medium Priority
Jefferson Street (Frontenac – Greenbriar *Park Ridge*	No	Yes	Low to Moderate		High Priority, (Jefferson to Sunset)
Leahy Avenue (Heffron – Industrial Park) *Stevens Point*	No	Yes	Moderate		Medium Priority

Street	Arterial	Collector	Use	Comments	Priority
Main Street (Frontenac – I-39) *Stevens Point, Park Ridge*	Yes	No	Moderate	Sidewalk needed on north side	High Priority (Wilshire to Lynwood Ave)
Maple Bluff Road/Golla Road (Highway 10 – Brilowski) *Town of Hull*	No	Yes	Low to moderate	Near school	Medium to Low Priority
McDill Avenue (Feltz – Brilowski) *Stevens Point, Whiting, Plover*	Yes	No	Low to moderate		Low Priority (West of Olympia)
Minnesota Avenue (Railroad – Church Street) *Stevens Point*	No	Yes	Low to moderate	Has an urban shoulder	Low Priority
North Point Drive (Michigan – Green Circle Trail) (Michigan – Wilshire) *Stevens Point*	Yes	No	Moderate	Connect 200' from North Point/Michigan intersection to Green Circle Trail – either side of North Point	High Priority
Pinecrest Avenue (Jefferson – Wilshire) *Stevens Point*	Yes	No	Moderate	On the west side of Pinecrest Ave up to the existing sidewalk on the east side of Wilshire Blvd	High Priority
Plover Springs Drive (Post – Hoover) *Plover*	No	Yes	Low		High Priority
Porter Road (Hoover – Brilowski) *Plover*	Yes	No	Low to moderate		High Priority
Rice Street (Church – Michigan) *Stevens Point*	No	Yes	Moderate	North side of Rice St	Medium Priority
Songbird Lane (Windy – Badger) *Stevens Point*	No	No	Moderate		Low Priority
Stanley Street (Minnesota – I-39) *Stevens Point*	Yes	No	High	Add sidewalk to north side	High Priority (Lindberg to Wilshire on north side)
U.S. Highway 10 (I-39 – Brilowski) *Stevens Point*	Yes	No	Low to moderate	Add wide sidewalk to north side of Hwy 10	High Priority

All sidewalks are for both sides of the recommended segment unless noted otherwise.

Several sources of information were used to prioritize key intersections. Crash data was used in identifying problem locations. Additionally, members of the public identified problem intersections and suggested changes to improve them. Other than improved crosswalk markings, there are few quick fixes to improve these intersections for pedestrians, but there may be other engineering solutions for some of these intersections which will be more costly and more difficult to implement.

Cost and Funding

Fund a sidewalk retrofit program to install sidewalks along corridors annually in Stevens Point and in Plover.

The most palatable and equitable way for new sidewalks to be retrofitted into street rights-of-ways is for the community to fund them. Adjacent property owner opposition to sidewalk construction is most heightened when adjacent property owners are required to pay for sidewalks. A sidewalk retrofit budget is recommended for Stevens Point and the Village of Plover.

There are three funding strategies for crossings.

1. Intersections can undergo changes beneficial to pedestrians when the streets are reconstructed (and sometimes when the pavement is replaced) and the costs can be covered by the overall project.
2. Since there are reported crash problems at these intersections, Highway Safety Improvement Program funds administered through WisDOT can be applied for if valid countermeasures are identified.
3. If small cost solutions are proposed, local funding is recommended.

Responsibility: *City of Stevens Point, Village of Plover*

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CHAPTER 10:
PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.



10 | PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Short-Term Action Plan in Chapter 1 outlines immediate steps that the County and its partners should undertake in the next three to five years. After these priority items have been advanced, a quantitative and qualitative prioritization process could be used to determine which projects would be most important to fund and implement next.

Quantitative Analysis

The first step in the quantitative prioritization process is to identify a set of prioritization factors. Some potential prioritization factors are provided below.

- Would the project connect to an existing bicycle facility?
- Would the project connect to schools, parks, or other key destinations (employment center, hospital, grocery store, commercial area)?
- Would the project overcome a significant transportation barrier (highway, railroad, river)?
- Was the project prioritized by the public through public input?
- Would the project serve underrepresented populations or advance equity in the network?
- Would the project serve populations without access to a car?
- Is the project on the High Injury Network map?

After determining the criteria, the Project Team would develop a scoring system to score and rank projects. Once the highest-scoring projects have been identified, the team should complete the qualitative analysis to determine the final priorities and ranking.

Qualitative Analysis

The Project Team completed a qualitative analysis to identify the Priority Projects. The analysis focused on the following questions:

- Does the corridor rank highly in the quantitative analysis?
- Is the project feasible?
- Does the project have the support of the underlying municipality or municipalities?
- Does the project respond to community desires as expressed through the public input process? (e.g., preference for protected bicycle facilities, off-street trails, and urban-to-rural connections)
- Is this the right time for this project? (timing related to planned resurfacing or other capital projects, etc.)
- Are there outside funding opportunities available that could offset the cost?
- Is this a highly complex project that would take 4+ years to coordinate with various stakeholders, or would it be relatively simple to construct within 1-3 years?

10.1 | Steps for Implementing Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

This section provides a generalized overview of the steps involved in implementing infrastructure based on the location.

State or Federal Roads

Coordinate with state and federal agencies as needed. Review road reconstruction and other road project plans and schedules and identify roads and projects relevant to Portage County. Advocate for bicycle and pedestrian facilities early in the process.

County Roads

Coordination with WisDOT may be necessary if the road intersects with State highways or is part of a state-funded project.



Include paved shoulders in roadway design if funds are budgeted.

On-Street Paved Shoulders

Jurisdiction: Portage County

The Portage County Highway Department and County Board's current process of implementing paved shoulders on County roads is generally as follows.

1. Update Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) based on roadway conditions or new construction
2. Review CIP against the recommendations of the Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and consider implementation of paved shoulders
   a. Feasibility analysis and cost benefit analysis
   b. Consider for opportunities to implement Plan recommendations while supporting other County objectives such as maintenance shoulder needs, curves, or agricultural equipment needs
   c. Consider opportunities to connect critical facilities such as parks
3. If funds are budgeted for paved shoulders, include in paved shoulders in roadway design
4. Intergovernmental coordination as needed
5. Construction

On-Street Signed Routes

Jurisdiction: Portage County

A recommended process to implementing signed routes is as follows:

1. Identify looped bicycling routes to promote recreational biking. Give each route a memorable name so that it is easily identifiable to both visitors and locals. (Refer to Goal E in Chapter 6 for details about establishing recreational biking routes.)
2. As time and resources are limited, prioritize routes and develop a signage installation plan.
3. Design Bike Route Signage using signage best practices and emphasizing clarity, visibility, durability, and context-sensitive placement.

4. Install Bike Route Signage as resources allow, adding additional signs as more funds become available.
    a. Explore Bike Route Signage sponsorship by local businesses or organizations seeking a high-visibility, low-cost advertising opportunity that supports their brand.
    b. Identify partners and/or establish a shared funding arrangement to implement the Bike Route Signage and Wayfinding program. Partners could include local chambers of commerce, municipalities, businesses, Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, North Central Wisconsin Tourism Partnership, Portage County Business Council, etc.
5. Add Signed Routes to the County Bicycle Maps and distribute updated maps regularly. (Refer to the Short-Term Action Plan for detailed recommendations for County Bicycle Maps.)

Local Roads in Cities and Villages

On-Street Buffered or Traditional Bike Lanes

Jurisdiction: City of Stevens Point or Villages

A recommended process to implementing bike lanes is as follows. Certain steps of the process may be repeated multiple times, as more information is gathered and as designs are refined.



Traditional Bike Lane.

1. Review recommended bike lanes in this Plan. Prioritize or confirm priority at least once a year.
2. Scope the bike lane project and prepare the conceptual design. (E.g., what is the extent of the project? Is this a good time to incorporate related improvements such as pedestrian crossings, sidewalk, and repairs?)
3. Conduct initial stakeholder outreach and craft communications plan for future outreach. Conduct initial intergovernmental coordination if needed.
4. Collect, analyze, and share data communicating the need for the bike lane to the public and officials
5. Prepare initial budget estimates and align funding for the project. A few options for funding include:
    a. Put the project in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.
    b. Request funds for the project in the annual budget as roads are resurfaced/reconstructed.
    c. Include the project in design when new development or infill occurs.
    d. Seek outside funding through grants.
6. Conduct predevelopment steps such as acquiring additional right-of-way (when needed)
7. Review constraints on the ground, refining and adjusting the design as needed
    a. Conduct property owner coordination and continue public engagement and communication. Continue intergovernmental coordination if needed.
    b. Refine the budget estimates.
    c. Finalize and share project design.
8. Construction
    a. Conduct property owner coordination and continue public engagement and communications during the construction phase.
    b. Celebrate the competed project with the community.

Shared Lane Markings

Jurisdiction: City of Stevens Point or Villages

The process for implementing shared land markings is similar to the process for implementing bike lanes described above. Since shared lane markings are generally lower-impact projects, as compared to the bike lane projects, the process may be streamlined. A suggested process to implement shared lane markings is as follows.

1. Review recommended shared lane markings in this Plan. Prioritize or confirm priority at least once a year.
2. Scope the shared lane marking project and prepare the conceptual design. (E.g., what is the extent of the project? What signage is needed? Are other traffic calming measures needed?)
3. Conduct initial stakeholder outreach and craft communications plan for future outreach. Conduct intergovernmental coordination if needed.
4. Collect, analyze, and share data communicating the need for the shared lane marking to the public and officials
5. Prepare initial budget estimates and align funding for the project.
6. Review constraints on the ground, refining and adjusting the design as needed
    a. Conduct property owner coordination and continue public engagement and communication.
    b. Refine the budget estimates.
    c. Finalize and share project design.
7. Install the shared lane markings:
    a. Integrate wayfinding signage and traffic calming measures if needed
    b. Conduct property owner coordination and continue public engagement and communications during the construction phase.
    c. Celebrate the competed project with the community.

Sidewalks

Jurisdiction: City of Stevens Point or Villages

The process for implementing new sidewalks is similar to the process for implementing bike lanes described above. Critical missing links in the sidewalk network should be prioritized. Property owner communication is paramount.

Off-Street Shared Use Paths

Jurisdiction: City of Stevens Point, Villages, Towns, Portage County

Shared use paths may be constructed on private property, public property, or within road rights-of-way in the Rural and Urban Areas. A recommended process to implement shared used paths is as follows. Several steps of the process may be repeated as needed, as more information is gathered and as designs are refined.

1. Review recommended shared use paths in this Plan. Prioritize or confirm priority at least once a year.
2. Scope the path project and prepare the conceptual design. (E.g., what is the extent of the project?)

3. Conduct initial property owner and stakeholder outreach and craft communications plan for future outreach. Conduct initial intergovernmental coordination if needed.
4. Collect, analyze, and share data communicating the need for the path to the public and officials
5. Prepare initial budget estimates and align funding for the project. A few options for funding include:
    a. Put the project in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.
    b. Include the project in design when new development or infill occurs.
    c. Seek outside funding through grants, sponsorships, or philanthropic gifts.
6. Conduct predevelopment steps such as acquiring land, easements, or right-of-way for the path alignment
7. Review constraints on the ground, refining and adjusting the design as needed
    a. Conduct property owner coordination and continue public engagement and communications. Continue intergovernmental coordination if needed.
    b. Refine the budget estimates.
    c. Finalize and share project design.
8. Construction
    a. Conduct property owner coordination and continue public engagement and communications during the construction phase.
    b. Install amenities or other features (trailheads, wayfinding signage, etc.)
    c. Celebrate the competed project with the community.

10.2 | Funding Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

There are many outside funding sources, including grants, available at the federal, state, regional, and local levels that can support the implementation of this Plan. A detailed list of such funding sources is provided in Appendix F. Multijurisdictional grant applications are encouraged, as they are viewed favorably when being considered for funding.

If grant funding is not available, bicycle and pedestrian projects may be funded by a local municipality's General Fund or through Tax Incremental Finance (TIF), where available. Larger projects may be best funded by General Obligation Debt, in the same manner that other street or other infrastructure projects are financed.

If public or grant funds are not available, the County and municipalities could also seek private funding for especially desirable bike and pedestrian projects. Private fundraising could include funds secreted from philanthropic foundations or direct contributions by individuals. A "friends" organization or local nonprofit may be able to assist in the fundraising effort. Additionally, businesses and organizations could be invited to sponsor segments of a trail or on-road bikeway to help fund construction or ongoing maintenance.



PORTAGE COUNTY
COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN
APPENDIX





VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.
Shaping places, shaping change

DRAFT: DECEMBER 29, 2025

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Appendix A | Planning Structure

Task Force and Subcommittees

The Safe Street For All (SS4A) planning structure consisted of a Task Force, Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Subcommittee, Demonstration Activity Subcommittee, and the consultant team. Together, all entities collaborated to guide the development of the Portage County Safety Action Plan and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

SS4A Task Force

The Task Force was comprised of County residents and County/municipal staff charged with overseeing the development, implementation, and monitoring of the SS4A Safety Action Plan. One Task Force member was a liaison to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Subcommittee , and one member was a liaison to the Demonstration Activity Subcommittee.

TABLE 1: SS4A TASK FORCE

Name	Representing
Sarah Agena	Stevens Point
Allison Birr	Stevens Point
Dan Brugman	Stevens Point
Gracia Day	Town of Hull
Gina DeLisle	Whiting
Mike Helmrick	Plover
Gary Garske	Portage County
Tori Jennings	Park Ridge
Katie Livernash	Portage County
Mary Maller	Stevens Point
Megan Mapes-Martins	Stevens Point
Brent Matthews	Stevens Point
Anna Menominee	Stevens Point
Ismaila Odogba	Stevens Point
Karalyn Peterson	Stevens Point
Trevor Roark	Stevens Point
Bryant Scharenbroch	Rosholt
Jackie Schimke	Stevens Point
Amberle Schwartz	Portage County
David Shorr	Stevens Point

Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Subcommittee

This subcommittee was made up of County residents and County/municipal staff charged with overseeing the development of the supplemental Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan to complement the Safety Acton Plan.

TABLE 2: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Representing
Steve McKay	Stevens Point
Jack Orlando	Stevens Point
Karalyn Peterson	Stevens Point
Neil Prendergast	Stevens Point
Rebecca Roberts	Amherst
Janet Way	Town of Hull

Demonstration Activity Subcommittee

This subcommittee was comprised of County residents and County/municipal staff charged with overseeing the development implementation, and monitoring of all Demonstration Activities (DA's) to inform the Safety Action Plan. DA's are defined as temporary roadway safety improvements that test approaches to determine future benefits.

TABLE 3: DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Representing
Chris Johnson	Stevens Point
Sarah Manasreh-Decker	Stevens Point
Trevor Roark	Stevens Point
Jackie Schimke	Stevens Point
Amie Tolbert	Stevens Point
Jake Wilcox	Whiting

The Task Force and Subcommittees met numerous times during the development of the Plan. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Subcommittee used these meetings to set a vision and goals for bicycling and walking in Portage County, to recommend bicycle and pedestrian facility locations, to discuss bicycle and pedestrian issues in their respective areas, and to review draft recommendations and materials prepared for the Plan, as well as the final Plan itself.

Appendix B | Public Comments

The following is a summary of upfront public participation efforts conducted in December 2024 and January 2025 by Vandewalle and Associates. These efforts included an online Community Survey and Map, Community Workshops, and Stakeholder Focus Groups. Detailed public input results are found in the Appendix of this Plan.

Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

Map 11.1: Countywide Public Input Comments

Legend

- Municipal Border
- County Park
- State or Municipal Park
- Water
- School
- Railroad

Existing Bicycle Facilities

- Shared-Use Path
- Bike Lane/Urban Shoulder
- Shared Lane
- Signed Bike Route
- Green Circle Trail
- Green Circle Trail (On-Road)
- Ice Age Trail Bicycle Route
- Rural Paved Shoulder

Public Input Comments/Suggestions*

- Dangerous Area for Biking
- Dangerous Area for Walking
- Dangerous Intersection
- I Want to Walk/Bike Here
- New Trail Access Point
- Other General Comment
- New Off-Street Bike Trail
- New On-Street Bike Lane
- New Pedestrian Sidewalk

*Numeric labels correspond to comments with same ID# in Appendix Table

Scale bar applies to all inset maps

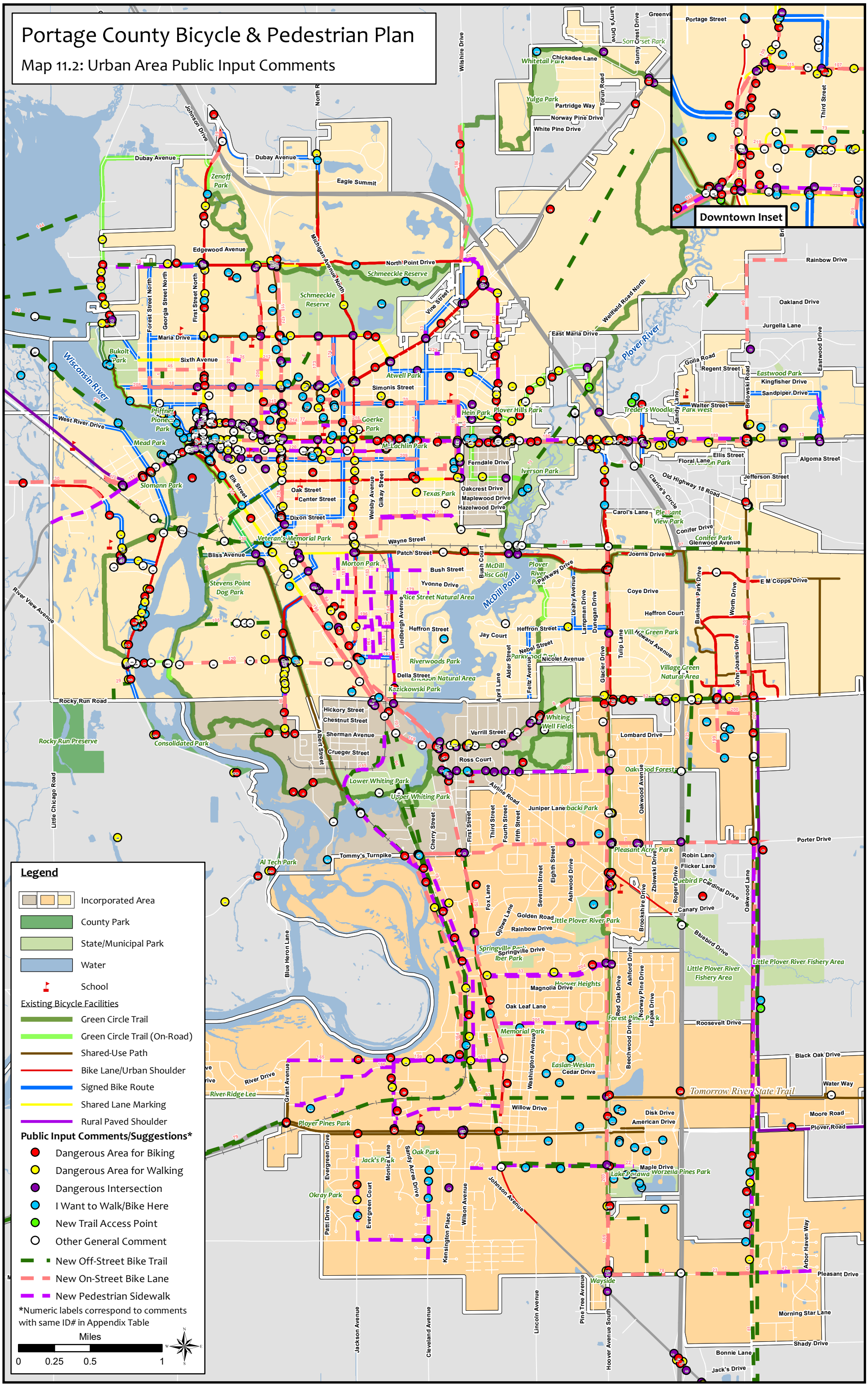
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See Urban Area Map

Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

Map 11.2: Urban Area Public Input Comments



Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

Map 11.3: Walk and Roll Audit Comment Locations

Park

School

Existing Sidewalk

Rail

Walk Audit Comment Recorded*

*Numeric labels correspond to comments with same ID# in Appendix Table

Feet

0 62.5 125 250

N W E S

Amherst Elementary School

School Street

George Street

Main Street North

Amherst Millpond

John Street

Depot Street

Wilson Street

Laconia Street

Main Street South

Pond Street

Mill Street

South Street

Jungers Street

Nelson Park

Downtown Amherst

Downtown Stevens Point

Union St

Briggs Court

Briggs Street

Prentice Street

Division Street

College Avenue

Centerpoint Drive

College Court

Smith Street

Main Street

Clark Street

Pacelli Catholic Elementary School - St Stephen

Rogers Street

Ellis Street

Strongs Ave

Church Street

Plover Street

Pine Street

Brawley Street

Spruce Street

Boyington Avenue

Feet

0 75 150 300

N W E S

Online Survey and Mapping

Between December 20, 2024, and January 31, 2025, an online survey and an online mapping survey was made available for the general public and promoted through a wide range of county channels. During the course of this survey and mapping, over 900 respondents gave their input on bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as thoughts on safety and attitudes towards active transportation in Portage County.

Favored improvements to encourage walking: adding and improving crossing signals to make crossing busy roads easier, adding connections between existing sidewalks and paths, better snow and ice removal, and adding lighting to existing sidewalks and paths.

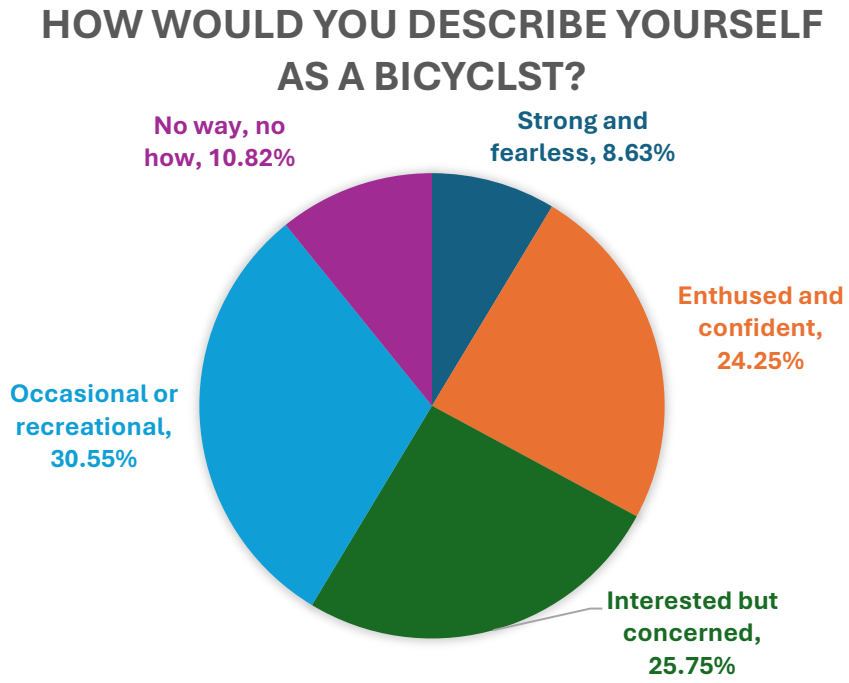
Online Survey Results

Portage County conducted an online questionnaire via Survey Monkey from December 20, 2024, to January 31, 2025. Physical copies of the survey were also available upon request. In total, 929 people provided feedback. Overall, the survey focused on obtaining public opinion and feedback on the needs and perceptions of safety regarding the bicycle and pedestrian system of Portage County.

Of the 929 respondents, 68% were residents of the central urban core of Portage County (Stevens Point, Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge) and the rest were mainly from rural towns and villages in Portage County. Additionally, the majority of respondents were between the ages of 35-74, with an even spread among the span of ages. However, only 14% of the respondents were 34 years old or younger and only 6% were over the age of 75. This indicates that the survey reached a wide-ranging age demographic for most segments of the population, but that feedback from the youth and the elderly – especially those 18 years of age and younger and those 75 and older – were underrepresented in the survey. About 62% of respondents had lived in Portage County for over 25 years and about 25% had lived in the county for 10 to 24 years. Most respondents identified as White (95%).

When it comes to motivation for walking, about 77% of respondents noted that exercise and/or recreation was their primary purpose for walking. As for locations that respondents wanted to walk to, the top five choices were places for exercise and recreation, community destinations such as parks and libraries, restaurants and bars, shopping, and visiting friends and family. When asked about deterrents to walking in Portage County, the top reasons for not walking were bad weather, not wanting to walk on snow and ice, far distances, lack of connectivity for paths and sidewalks, and safety concerns when dealing with motor traffic and crossing streets. Regarding changes or upgrades that would improve walking experiences in the county, the top choices included adding and improving crossing signals to make crossing busy roads easier, adding connections between existing sidewalks and paths, better snow and ice removal, and adding lighting to existing sidewalks and paths.

About 73% of respondents noted that exercise and/or recreation was their primary purpose for biking in Portage County. When asked to describe themselves as a bicyclist, about 56% of respondents also identified themselves as comfortable cycling on off-street paths but had no desire or felt uncomfortable using on-street facilities, with 26% of respondents noting that they would bike on streets if there were safer facilities. 25% of respondents were comfortable riding on off- and on-street facilities and calm residential streets. These responses are summarized in the chart below.



Favored improvements to encourage bicycling: more off-street trails, more separated/ protected bike lanes on busy streets, more paved shoulders on rural roads, and better on-street connectivity.

When it comes to places that respondents wanted to bike to, the most popular answers were places for exercise and recreation, community destinations such as parks and libraries, homes of friends and family, restaurants and bars, and places for shopping. When asked why someone chooses biking over other forms of transportation, the top three answers were exercise, biking as a fun way to experience community, and reducing carbon emissions/footprint. The main reasons that kept respondents from cycling were safety concerns with traffic and crossing streets, bad weather, and lack of connectivity between biking facilities. The type of bike facilities that respondents felt the most comfortable using was separated/protected bike lanes and respondents felt the least comfortable using shared lanes and bike boulevards. Respondents noted that the main improvements to encourage bicycling in Portage County would be adding more off-street trails, more separated/protected bike lanes on busy streets, more paved shoulders on rural roads, and better on-street connectivity. Similarly, when asked about what would improve the biking experience, respondents indicated that roadway condition improvements (such as filling potholes), improving connectivity, and adding traffic lights would improve the overall biking experience.

The survey also included a section for open responses and comments, which received 359 responses. Many praised the Green Circle Trail as a valuable asset to the community and suggested expanding the trail and improving maintenance. Many comments also expressed the need for better walking and biking infrastructure in general. These comments expressed the need for wider sidewalks as well as dedicated bike paths away from busy roads, and improved crosswalks to enhance safety for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

Regarding safety concerns, there were a large number of comments that expressed concerns about a lack of safety. There were a few comments from pedestrians and bicyclists detailing harassment from motorists while using facilities. This ranged from being yelled at to even being run off the road by a motorist in one instance. Likewise, many motorists felt uncomfortable sharing the road with bicyclists. They felt that bicyclists could be unpredictable and sometimes did not follow traffic laws, preferring that bicyclists use sidewalks instead of riding on the road. Many respondents also noted that they did not see the need for more bike lanes because they never saw them being used, however; many respondents cited not feeling safe enough to use the bike lanes. While sidewalks may not be the best option for bicyclists, this sentiment reflects the popularity of off-street and separated bike facilities in the multiple-choice survey questions. Many respondents also noted the importance of educating both bicyclists and drivers about road rules and safety to foster a more respectful and safer environment for all road users.

Many respondents noted that they did not see the need for more bike lanes because they never saw them being used, however; many cited not feeling safe enough to use the bike lanes.

Online Mapping Results

In addition to the online survey, the County also hosted an online map to gather public input on specific places in the County. This map allowed respondents to place markers on the map indicating places they wanted to bike or walk to, desired locations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and areas they see as dangerous for walking and biking.

Places People Want to Walk or Bike

The top destinations respondents wished to walk or bike to included retail areas, schools, restaurants, municipal and county parks and natural areas, and rural communities (specifically Polonia and Amherst). Given that many of the additions of the map are in Stevens Point, and a majority of survey respondents came from Stevens Point, the inference to be made from this is that there is a great desire for urban to rural connections.

Dangerous Areas and Intersections

The US 10 Corridor and the Division Street/US 51 Corridor going through Stevens Point and the urban area were noted as two particularly dangerous corridors on the online mapping survey. Many respondents noted that it is dangerous to walk or bike along US 10/Clark Street, along Water Street and where these two streets converge in downtown Stevens Point. Given that these are the two main corridors in the urban area, it makes sense that there are a lot of interactions between pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

Other areas noted as dangerous include the intersection of Wilson Street and Main Street in the Village of Amherst, County Road C, County Road O, as well as the intersection of River View Avenue and Whiting Avenue, and the intersection of Hoover Ave and Porter Road in the Village of Whiting.

New Trails and Bike Lanes

Respondents made many suggestions for new bike lanes and sidewalks along major corridors within the urban area (Division Street/US 51, US 10/Hwy 66) while some identified the Green Circle Trail either as areas for improvements or as extensions to the already existing system. Notably for US 10, respondents recommended off-street paths, which may correlate with low feelings of safety along

this corridor. Some suggestions for bike lanes correlated with parallel roads with less traffic on them as well as with areas where there were no east to west linkages in the bicycle infrastructure.

Community Workshops

On January 15 and 16, 2025, two in-person community workshops were hosted in Portage County. The project team selected workshop locations in both the urban and rural areas of Portage County. One workshop was held in Stevens Point at Mid-State Technical College, and the other workshop was hosted in Amherst at the Jensen Community Center. Twenty-six people signed in at the urban area workshop and 12 people signed in the rural area workshop, but actual attendance numbers were a bit higher.

The community workshops began with a short introductory presentation, followed by open-house style activities consisting of marking up large paper maps and providing sticky note comments and sticky dots on question boards. Participants were also encouraged to fill out comment forms to turn in when they were finished for the evening.

Comment Boards

Comment boards provided attendees with the opportunity to share their impressions of biking and walking in Portage County, share their favorite places to bike or walk, and describe places they would like to bike or walk to.

Public input result revealed a strong desire for urban-to-rural

The comments highlighted a growing recognition of the importance of connecting urban and rural areas within the county. This theme was prevalent across multiple conversations had at the workshops with residents, emphasizing the need for infrastructure improvements to bridge these regions. Many respondents from the urban area noted that they wanted to be able to bike to rural communities in the northeast portion of the county such as Polonia and Amherst. Rural respondents wished for connections between neighboring rural communities and nearby natural areas and parks.

A significant focus was on the frequency and nature of hostile drivers, with one respondent noting instances where high school students threw trash at bicyclists from vehicles. Reckless driving behavior was seen as detrimental to both urban and rural communities, highlighting issues of safety and respect. In both the comments and in the mapping activity, Highway 10, Highway 66, and County Road B were identified as dangerous corridors.

The urban population's desire for more facilities and connections was also a theme that arose in the comments. The Green Circle Trail was identified as a welcome asset to the community. However, there was also a desire to expand the trail with more off-street path options. There was also a desire for the general expansion of protected bike lanes, off-street multi-use paths, and sidewalks.

Sticky Dots Activity

The workshops included several boards that posed questions about walking and biking. Attendees expressed their preferences for the various options using sticky dots.

Urban Walking and Biking Improvements:

In the urban walking and biking context, improvements that allow for connectivity and maintenance are the focus. The most-selected options included adding crossings for easier navigation of busy

intersections, improving snow/ice removal efficiency, and enhancing connections between existing sidewalks and paths.

Rural Walking and Biking Improvements:

In the rural walking and biking context, the focus is on enhancing access to trails and pathways. Respondents noted that options such as adding curb cuts for accessible surfaces, improving maps/signage with directions, and removing leaves from the surface were crucial.

Non-Infrastructure Rankings

Participants at the community workshops were asked to give their top three choices for a series of non-infrastructure interventions that would help to improve the walking and biking experience in Portage County. The top three interventions that were chosen in the urban area were a bike safety course for motorists, themed community tours, and bike repair or tune-up clinics. The top three interventions that were chosen in the rural area were local business partnerships, themed community tours, and group rides to recreation destinations.

Mapping Activity

The workshops also included a mapping activity where participants used markers and stickers to locate places they wanted to bike or walk to, new trail and bicycle facility additions, and to identify areas that were dangerous.

People identified desired destinations to walk or bike to included places of employment (such as factories), restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores, schools, and retail areas (including strip malls and shopping plazas). Participants also wished to go to parks, natural features, and county parks. Some parks that were specified included Standing Rocks County Park, Sunset Lake Park, and Schmeeckle Reserve.

The most dangerous intersections were identified along main thoroughfares. Urban thoroughfares included Hwy 66, Hwy 10, Hwy 54, and the Division/Post/Church/Hwy 51 corridor. Rural corridors that were identified were County Road B (with conflicts when it becomes Wilson in Amherst), County Road J, Hwy 161, and Hwy 10.

In rural areas, many of the bike lane and trail suggestions often align with or complement designated Ice Age bike routes. Many parts of the Rural Green Circle Trail and the Ice Age bike routes do not offer off-road facilities in rural areas and are instead mapped routes for travel.

Stakeholder Focus Groups

Focus groups were convened around specific topics or with specific stakeholder groups. Focus groups included Active Transport and Recreation, Civic and Nonprofit Organizations, Schools, Students, and Youth, and the University. These virtual meetings took place in December of 2024.

Active Transport and Recreation

Advocacy groups in Portage County have made effort towards community outreach, especially the Stevens Point Child Safety Center. The Child Safety Center has programs such as bike rodeos and bike helmet supplying. Their clientele is encouraged towards bike safety after coming in for car seats. Many stakeholders in the group note that Portage County has great recreational opportunities for walking and cycling, however basic everyday commutes and transportation could be improved in

terms of connectivity and accessibility, especially during the winter. In general, residents of Stevens Point and surrounding communities bike on the sidewalks as roads feel unsafe.

Overall, the advocacy groups would like to see more people feeling comfortable walking and biking to reduce car trips around Portage County. They would especially like to see more kids walking and biking to school. Education was noted as a component that is necessary towards reaching that goal. Creating safer connections between facilities was also noted as a necessary component to increasing biking and walking in Portage County.

Civic and Nonprofit Organizations

This focus group focused on the connectivity and availability of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Portage County, especially within the more urbanized areas. The group noted that as one gets to the edges of the urban core, the more sparse walking and biking infrastructure becomes, including winter maintenance for those facilities. The urban area is also where jobs and social services are located, making it difficult for clients from outlying areas to make it to jobs and services. Providing route maps for common walking and bicycling destinations and bicycle education in multiple languages was identified as a priority for most stakeholders.

Providing route maps for common walking and bicycling destinations and bicycle education in multiple languages was identified as a priority.

There was also a focus on tourism and walking and biking in Portage County. The Green Circle Trail and the Tomorrow River Trail were seen as valuable assets for tourism and some stakeholders saw expanding trails and biking infrastructure as a great way to expand economic development in Portage County.

Schools, Students, and Youth

This group expressed a desire for connectivity between rural and urban areas. Students in rural areas do not cycle as much to school, because the infrastructure is not there to help them feel safe. This group noted that Portage County is great for recreation but not for commuting. Many felt that if there were more infrastructure in rural areas, a lot more people would cycle for errands and commuting.

There was also a wish for clearer signage and wayfinding to help people navigate trail systems. There was also a desire for more education and educational opportunities around cycling both for bicyclists and motorists alike. Some people have organized walking and cycling routes for students to get to school in Stevens Point. Many students rely on their parents to get from place to place. The group noted that more cycling organizations and events used to exist; however, lack of funds and staff capacity have ended many of these programs. While they were running, the programs were quite successful.

University

Although only one person attended this focus group, they reflected many of the sentiments as other groups that were interviewed. There is a need for signage and wayfinding that is clear and legible for both bicyclists and motorists, letting everyone know where they are going and who will be sharing the road. There is also a need for connectivity as well as consistency of facility types. This individual also thought discouraging car use could help drive demand for cycling and transit. Education and route resources for first-year students was also recommended.

Another theme that emerged was the fact that several organizations, programing, and events to promote safe cycling no longer exist due to lack of funding and staff capacity. In addition, this individual emphasized the need for a biking culture to return to Stevens Point and Portage County through the use of cycling events. These events would help both bicyclists and motorists better coexist.

Local Government

Stakeholders from local government were interviewed in two separate sessions and reflected many of the same sentiments. Many recommendations from the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan were not implemented due to economic and political pressures. The stakeholders echoed that there is a lot of vitriol on behalf of residents associated with bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that highlights an urban versus rural attitude throughout the county. This is mirrored physically in the lack of urban to rural connections in infrastructure. Many stakeholders suggested that off-street, multi-use paths are more favorable among both rural and urban populations. Education was also recommended for rules of the road for both motorists and bicyclists to reduce confusion on what is allowed on the roads.

Local government stakeholders also highlighted difficulty in communication between the different levels of government and between municipalities throughout the county. Between various communities, emails and calls go unanswered, which results in less cooperation between Portage County communities.

Public Safety

Overall, the conversation with the Portage County Sheriff's Department highlighted a theme that occurred throughout most of the focus groups: the need for better bicycle education across age levels. Middle schoolers and college students were noted as targets for additional educational efforts. In general, motorists and bicyclists are not familiar with bicycling rules of the road. Bicyclists not following road rules can lead to confusion and crashes between vehicles and bicyclists.

Bicyclists and pedestrians are not heavily monitored by the Sheriff's Department, but there are moments of education if an infraction occurs.

Another theme of interest in this conversation was that law enforcement does not have any unified guidance on how to handle the influx of e-bikes and scooters. Even if these devices are not standard and travel at higher speeds, law enforcement is unsure how to proceed in fear of overstepping.

Appendix C | Existing Plans & Policies

This appendix summarizes the existing plans, policies and ordinances in Portage County that relate to bicycling and walking. The review is organized by municipality, with summary information provided about relevant plans, policies and ordinances. Some commentary is included in the memo, and recommendations are included at the end of each section, if appropriate.

Portage County

Code of Ordinances

The Portage County Ordinances include the following items that are relevant to bicycling and/or walking in the County.

Parks Ordinances (Chapter 6)

Section 6.1.9 states that "no person shall bike within any County Park in a matter that is reckless or at a speed greater that what is reasonable or prudent." This section also states that special rules and regulations related to bicycling may be posted at individual parks.

Section 6.1.12 states that no person shall operate or possess any "mechanized equipment" on park property, except on trails designated for such use. "Mechanized equipment" is not defined, and it is unclear if this applies to motorized wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

Green Circle Ordinance (Chapter 6.2)

The Green Circle Trail is defined as:

A linear corridor 18' more or less in width and about 30 miles in length running through the City of Stevens Point, the Village of Whiting, the Town of Hull, the Town of Plover, Village of Plover, and Village of Park Ridge, posted with trail head signs named River Pines trail; Riverfront trail, Stage Coach trail; the Holiday trail; University trail; Moses Creek trail; Plover River trail; Iverson Park trail; McDill trail; Hoover Road trail; Whiting Park trail; and Paper Mill trail, Mainland Meadows, and the Westside Loop.

And includes public property and private property where Portage County and/or the City of Stevens Point has been granted the right of public use for the "Green Circle Trail."

The inclusion of "private property" in the statement above is an important precedent.

The trail is limited to nonmotorized activities including walking, bicycling, hiking, running, jogging, and cross-country skiing. However, bicycling is not allowed where alternate bicycle routes are posted. Motorized vehicles are prohibited on the trail, except for wheelchairs and maintenance, enforcement and emergency vehicles.

Section 6.2.12 provides specific regulations for the use of bicycles on the trail:

- Ride only on trails designated for bicyclists' use.
- Yield to all other trail users. Slow down and pass with care.
- When encountering walkers on narrow trails, stop and wait for them to pass or signal you through.
- Use your bell or horn to announce your presence to walkers well in advance, particularly when approaching from behind.

- Never exceed the 15 m.p.h. speed limit. Slowly approach blind turns in anticipation of other trail users and obstacles that are beyond your view.
- Yield to other bicyclists traveling uphill.
- Racing or reckless riding is prohibited.
- Walk bicycles on boardwalks, steep hills, and narrow bridges.

The bicycle regulations are reasonable, although it should be noted that portions of the trail are on-street, in which case the posted speed limit on the street would apply to bicyclists.

Zoning Ordinances (Chapter 7)

The Portage County Zoning Ordinances cover all unincorporated areas of the county. The only specific discussion of sidewalks in the ordinances is that "Sidewalks may be allowed within the 100 foot setback for access to buildings meeting the setback but shall not exceed sixty (60) inches in width." (§7.7.4.2.3(F))

Requirements for a minimum width of sidewalks are common and desirable, but requirements for a maximum width are unusual. The code should require that sidewalks comply with applicable ADA regulations.

Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2014)

In 2014, Portage County adopted a Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (PCBPP) that updated a similar 1997 Plan for the urban core of the County, and for the first time ever included the rural areas of the County as well as Safe Routes to School planning for all schools within the County. This plan was created to be used by all municipalities within the County and breaks down recommendations by each municipality. One of the recommendations of PCBPP is for it to be adopted and incorporated into individual Comprehensive Plans throughout the County.

Key elements of this Plan include:

- An assessment of existing bicycling and walking conditions, plans, and policies in Portage County;
- An overview of bicycle and pedestrian facility types;
- A Vision and Mission, along with Goals, Objectives, and Policies for improving bicycling and walking in the County;
- Non-infrastructure recommendations designed to improve bicycling and walking conditions in Portage County through Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation efforts;
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure recommendations for the rural portion of Portage County and the outlying Villages;
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure recommendations for the municipalities in the Portage County Urban Area;
- Safe Routes to School recommendations for nearly all public and private schools in the County;
- Funding and implementation recommendations to aid the County and its municipalities in prioritizing projects and programs.

Nearly 60% of Portage County residents live within the Urban Area. Accordingly, the County's percentage of residents bicycling and walking tends to be higher, with 2.0% of the population bicycling to work and 5.8% walking to work. The Village of Plover's commute mode share is 0.86% by bicycling and 1.40% by walking. By comparison, just 0.7% of the Wisconsin population bicycled to work and 3.4% walked.

Portage County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2025-2029

The Portage County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan was developed to provide a database and recommendations that can be utilized by community officials, staff and residents of Portage County to understand and promote comprehensive outdoor recreation planning. The plan includes a detailed inventory of existing park facilities and analysis of how local conditions affect recreational needs throughout the County.

One of the plan's three goals directly relates to bicycling and walking: Goal 2: Continue developing Portage County as a bicycle friendly community and destination.

This goal is supported by six objectives:

1. Support walking and biking trail development countywide.
2. Continue existing partnerships that support the Green Circle State Trail.
3. Support creation of a Friends Group for the Tomorrow River State Trail.
4. Consider how to provide hike or bike campsites for people who either walk in or pedal into a campsite.
5. Provide bike parking wherever motor vehicle parking is provided.
6. Support establishing a permanent advisory committee for evaluating how to implement the Portage County

Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.

In the appendix, the plan also addresses and provides guidance for bicycle camping and makes policy recommendations for campgrounds in the county. Notably, there is a recommendation for guaranteed camping spots for hikers and cyclists in the event of a full campground. The inclusion of bicycle camping further supports the second goal of the overall plan.

The plan also addresses bicycle and pedestrian uses indirectly: by providing parks, trails and open space, the County is promoting active recreation uses and some corridors that can also serve a transportation purpose. The goals and objectives described in the plan will help Portage County build upon its robust natural resources and existing park system. The park system should be easily accessible by people arriving on foot or on bike and should provide recreational opportunities for both groups as well.

Tomorrow River Trail Master Plan – 1997

In 1997, the Portage County Park Commission prepared a Master Plan to develop the segment of the Tomorrow River Trail within the county. The plan described the planned development of the trail, permitted activities, and the Memorandum of Agreement between the County and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources calling for the county to develop, operate and maintain the trail. At this point, the majority of the goals and objectives of the plan have been completed. A full update to the plan is likely not needed, although recommendations should be made to provide an off-street connection in Amherst Junction where there is currently a one-mile gap in the trail.

Ice Age Trail Trailway Protection Strategy, Portage and Waupaca Counties – 2005

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail (IAT) is a footpath in Wisconsin that is approximately 1,000 miles in length. The trail is one of only eleven National Scenic Trails in the country. The trail is designed for pedestrian use, although cross country skiing is allowed in some areas, and bicycle use is allowed where the trail occasionally shares a segment with a state multi-use trail. The Portage County Ice

Age Trail Chapter (http://www.portagecoiat.org/) provides information about the trail segment in Portage County.

The Trailway Protection Strategy was prepared to address the following topics for the non-public lands along the preferred route of the Ice Age Trail in Portage and Waupaca Counties:

- Determine what means of protection are available to achieve the purposes for which the IAT was established.
- Recommend the use of protection alternatives, including the acquisition of land or interests in land and other non-acquisition alternatives.
- Inform landowners of the specific alternative(s) recommended for protection of land along the IAT.
- Identify priorities for land protection and acquisition so as to meet the protection needs of the trail and to make it possible to formulate budget requests for funds necessary for protection of acquisition.

The plan is described as a working document that will be reviewed "at least every 2 years and updated as necessary." The plan includes a list of all property owners whose land the trail crosses with a description of the need for acquisition, rights to be acquired and other notes. The plan offers recommendations for the IAT in Portage County but does not significantly impact bicycling and walking in the county.

Green Circle Trail Plan – 1990

Last updated in 1990, the Green Circle Trail Plan laid out the goal of "construction of a multi-purpose trail network accessible to all area residents and visitors providing new recreational opportunities consistent with local needs as defined within the *Stevens Point Outdoor Recreational Plan.*" The plan laid the groundwork for what has become the Green Circle Trail –24 miles of pedestrian and bicycle trails encircling Stevens Point. Many of the plan's original goals have been met and the Green Circle Trail committee is currently developing a revised and updated plan.

Recommendations

Code of Ordinances

Section 6.1.12 of the Parks Ordinance should clarify that motorized wheelchairs do not violate the ban on "mechanized equipment" on park property.

The Zoning ordinance should be revised to include the following:

- Specify a minimum sidewalk width of 60 inches; no maximum width should be specified.
- Sidewalks should be required to meet all aspects of ADA.
- Sidewalks should be required in unincorporated areas based on WisDOT's Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement outlined in Table 1.

City of Stevens Point

Numerous plans, policies and ordinances for the City of Stevens Point directly address, or indirectly refer to, bicycling and walking in the city. A brief overview of these plans, policies, and ordinances is provided below.

Code of Ordinances

Section 9.12 of the Stevens Point Code of Ordinances governs bicycle and motor bicycle usage in the City. Generally, the section adopts the chapters of the Wisconsin State Statutes governing bicycle use. Section 9.12 also covers two other primary issues: bicycle registration and the establishment of Bicycle Ways.

Bicycle Registration

The City of Stevens Point requires that all bicycles owned by residents of the city be registered with the city. Registration costs $6, and registrations do not expire as long as the bicycle is owned by the same person. The justification for registration is to aid in the recovery of stolen bicycles, although it is difficult to assess if the registrations actually result in many stolen bikes being returned to their owners.

Bicycle Ways

Section 9.12 of the ordinances identifies specific “Bicycle Ways” in the city. While the term “Bicycle Way” is not defined, it appears to include shared-use paths and bicycle lanes. Somewhat confusingly, the ordinance authorizes two-way bicycle traffic and pedestrian use on all Bicycle Ways “unless otherwise provided.” Since two-way bicycle operation and pedestrian use of bicycle lanes is not recommended, this provision should be clarified to apply to off-street facilities and not on-street facilities. The ordinance gives the Director of Public Works the power to close any Bicycle Way between November 1 and April 1. The ordinance designates all of the on-street bicycle ways in the city, something that is relatively unique in Wisconsin ordinances; the final plan will make a recommendation on whether this practice should continue.

Sidewalks

Chapter 16 of the ordinances deals with sidewalks. The ordinances assign the cost of construction and repair for sidewalks to the property owner and states that the City may perform sidewalk construction and repair and assess the property owner. The ordinances provide sidewalk construction specifications and require compulsory repair by the owner.

Specifications are provided for new and replacement sidewalks and include the requirements of being laid 4 inches deep and 6 inches deep where vehicles pass over them. Sidewalks are expected to be “standard width,” which is not defined. The current federal standard is 5 feet (60 inches).

Section 16.06 requires adjacent property owners to clear snow and ice from their sidewalks within 48 hours of snowfall. The ordinance allows the city to clear snow and ice and bill property owners if they have not cleared snow and ice themselves.

Section 19.09 designates four areas of the city as pedestrian malls and limits the use of motor vehicles in these areas.

Sidewalks are not required in the City of Stevens Point Subdivision Control Ordinance (Chapter 20) or the Zoning Code (Chapter 23). The Building Code (Chapter 30) states “No main building shall be erected without, prior to occupancy, having a sidewalk installed along that part of any public street that fronts the lot boundaries required for the development. Such sidewalk installation requirement

may be waived by the Building Inspector where there is no City plan for sidewalk installation." Currently, there are no formal City plans for sidewalk installation.

The lack of sidewalk requirements is not unique to Stevens Point in Wisconsin. However, it is problematic for pedestrian access and mobility that sidewalks are not required with new development, at a minimum. The City is currently updating its zoning code, but it is unknown when the new code will be completed or if it will require sidewalks in any areas.

City of Stevens Point Comprehensive Plan – 2006

The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive plan notes that there are 117.5 miles of sidewalk within the City. The plan also highlights the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan that the City developed with adjacent municipalities that recommended the creation of bike routes on existing city streets. The plan generally did not recommend bike lanes due to the potential need to widen streets, although bike lanes were recommended for portions of Green Avenue and Torun Road. The plan also recommended that sidewalks be installed along arterial routes and to serve schools and other areas where youth are likely to gather.

The Comprehensive plan includes the following specific bicycle and pedestrian goals:

- Goal E: Improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility.
- Objective E1: Provide off-road alternative pedestrian and bicycle routes for recreation and transportation.
    - Policy E1.1: Publicly identify the most and least suitable routes for biking based on traffic volume and road cross-section.
    - Policy E1.2: Provide sidewalks along arterial streets serving concentrations of youth such as schools.
    - Policy E1.3: Provide safe alternatives for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross I-39.
    - Policy E1.4: Preserve safe corridors for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel between the urban and rural areas.
    - Policy E1.5: Draft and adopt a sidewalk plan.

The Plan also includes recommendations for increased traffic calming, shorter block lengths, limited cul-de-sacs and other treatments that generally improve conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Division Street Targeted Area Master Plan - 2019

The Division Street Targeted Area Master Plan identifies Division Street as an important corridor as well as the northern gateway to the City of Stevens Point. As such, transportation is a major focus of the plan. Although the plan does not recommend dedicated bike lanes on Division Street for a variety of reasons, the plan instead focuses on creating bicycle connections to facilities in adjacent neighborhoods and to existing bike routes. Enhancing pedestrian facilities is another goal of the plan with the hope to make the corridor more pedestrian friendly.

In accordance with the Targeted Area Master Plan, the City of Stevens Point began the initial designs of a road diet for Division Street in 2024. The designs include the removal of excess access points and providing buffered bike lanes at roundabout intersections. The designs also include the shortening of pedestrian crossings at intersections. In terms of bicycle facilities, buffered bicycle lanes are included in the designs, starting at the proposed roundabout at 4th Ave. and continuing north up to the Green Circle Trail.

"People are the Point" Stevens Point Strategic Plan - 2021

Although it is not an official comprehensive plan update for Stevens Point, the Strategic Plan serves as an extension of the goals of the 2006 plan and as a way to compile various master plans that have been created in recent years. The main outcome of the strategic plan is to group the planning of Stevens Point into focused "Hubs" of activity centers and corridors with a focus on placemaking, housing, entrepreneurial and innovation capacity, and diversity and inclusion.

The plan also expresses the need for these Hubs to be walkable and bikeable, even expressing the Fifteen Minute City idea. Although not fully specific, there are recommendations for road diets, bike/ped improvements, and connectivity between Hubs. For Division Street and the Downtown areas, the plan reiterates recommendations from the Division Street Targeted Area Master Plan (2019) and the Downtown Targeted Area Master Plan (2024).

2023 – 2028 Stevens Point Comprehensive Outdoor Recreational Plan

The City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan highlights a number of things relevant to bicycling and pedestrians in the area. The Plan identifies all of the parks and open space areas within Stevens Point. While these areas may not offer specific bicycle or pedestrian activities, they should all be easily accessible by bicycle or on foot, especially for youth. The Plan has a few minor recommendations for providing bicycle and pedestrian access to parks and connections to trails with cooperation between neighboring communities, and to update the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan.

A Path to a Sustainable Stevens Point: Report from the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality Task Force –2008

This report was developed by the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality Task Force to develop a sustainable framework for the community. The vision statement for the transportation section of the report includes the statement "Stevens Point residents will be able to ride a bicycle, walk, or take public transit throughout the community and there will be a community culture that supports and encourages these activities." The plan includes the following goals related to bicycling and walking:

- Goal 2: Stevens Point will continually increase the use of bicycles for transportation and recreation.
- Goal 4: Stevens Point residents will continually increase walking in the community.

Each of these goals is supported by specific objectives and actions to achieve the goal. The action items presented in the report are detailed and provide a strong basis for improving bicycling and walking in the city. This document provides much stronger support for bicycling and walking than most planning documents in the state and ties bicycling and walking to other activities to promote a more sustainable future for Stevens Point.

Recommendations

Code of Ordinances – Bicycle Ways

Consideration should be given to revising the section on "Bicycle Ways" to not list every designated bicycle way in the city. This practice is cumbersome and requires revision of the Code of Ordinances every time a new bicycle way is added to the network.

Code of Ordinances – Sidewalks

The following changes should be made to the Sidewalk ordinance:

- Specify a minimum width of 60 inches for all new sidewalks and compliance with ADA regulations.
- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement.
- Reduce the amount of time allowed to clear snow and ice from sidewalks by adjacent property owners to 24 hours after any snowfall (§16.06).

Village of Plover

Village of Plover Comprehensive Plan – 2025

The Comprehensive Plan's top objective for transportation is to "Provide a transportation system that allows for safe, economical and efficient movement of motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic within the Village of Plover and its extraterritorial area." The plan specifically points to the Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Village of Plover Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan as primary sources of guidance for issues and opportunities related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities as a listed policy in the transportation section.

Two additional policies within the transportation section of the plan specifically relate to bicycle and pedestrian issues and opportunities:

- Require new developments to consider designating infrastructure improvements (where appropriate) to existing or proposed pedestrian transportation facilities (trails, sidewalks, etc.) to provide increased connectivity.
- Incorporate the following items, regarding sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure, within the Village's Code of Ordinances:
    - Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement (where applicable).
    - Specify minimum design standards for all new sidewalks, trails, curb-cuts, etc. to be in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations, while considering additional inclusive design standards to accommodate for all user groups.

Sidewalks & Bicycle Lanes

The Village of Plover has a limited sidewalk network in favor of off-street and multiuse paths and trails. However, during the reconstruction of US 51, both sidewalks and bicycle lanes were constructed in both directions to allow for greater bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the village.

Zoning Code

The Village of Plover Zoning Code contains limited discussion of sidewalks. The subdivision code (Chapter 545) does not require sidewalks. Chapter 467 of the municipal code pertaining to Street and Sidewalks states that sidewalks shall be located in such places and at such grades as designated by the Village Board.

Bicycle Licenses

Bicycles that are "customarily kept within the Village" must be registered with the Village and display an identification sticker. The registration fee is $3.00 and is good for the life of the bicycle.

Village of Plover Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan 2023-2028

The Village of Plover Parks and Recreation Plan was recently updated in 2023 and includes goals, policies, and objectives to better recreational opportunities and facilities within the Village. One of the seven goals of the plan specifically focuses on bicycle and pedestrian topics:

- Goal 7: Improve and expand the Village's trails, paths, and pedestrian focused infrastructure to provide improved interconnectivity between its parks, schools, and businesses.

The objectives of Goal 7 of the plan include establishing and improving two miles of trails and pedestrian infrastructure, designation of an area dedicated to bicycle and mountain bike training, incorporating safety measures and signaling for trail and sidewalk interactions with busy corridors to improve pedestrian safety, and completing roadway safety audits.

Section 9.5 of the Parks and Recreation Plan includes a history of the 2014 Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and mentions involvement in the 2025 Plan Update as well as the 2025 Portage County Safety Action Plan. This section also lists Priority Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects in 9.5A:

- Establishing new pedestrian connections with the Green Circle Trail and Tomorrow River State Trail.
- Prioritize the establishment of "off-street" trails, paths, and sidewalks over bike lanes along busy corridors, while expanding trails within parks.
- Improve existing trails and paths to become compliant with ADA standards and requirements (Prioritize the Hoover Avenue spur of the Green Circle Trail).
- Identify, design, and establish multi-use trails and paths to allow for a variety of recreational users year-round (mountain biking, walking, hiking, snowshoeing, cross-county skiing, etc.)
- Establish a pedestrian bridge or other form of infrastructure to connect residents on the east side of Highway 39 to the rest of the Village, prioritizing the connection over Highway 39 along Pleasant Drive where the majority of recent residential growth has taken place.

Recommendations

Zoning Code/Code or Ordinances

The following items regarding sidewalks should be included in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Code:

- Require that snow and ice be cleared from sidewalks by adjacent property owners within 24 hours after any snowfall.

Village of Park Ridge

Code of Ordinances

Bicycle, Registration and Operation

Ordinance 7.11: Bicycle, Registration and Operation (R46.10) describes rules and regulations concerning bicycles for the Village of Park Ridge. The majority of the ordinance is in concurrence with state law regarding bicycle operation. There are the following notable items in the ordinance:

- Registration
- All bicycles operated in the Village of Park Ridge must be registered with the Village. (§I-1). This provision is inconsistent with state law: registration may be required for bicycles belonging to people residing in the Village, but not of any bicycle being ridden in the Village.

- Bicycles must be registered between January 1 and March 1 of each year, and the registration is valid through the end of that year. (§I-3)
- Operation
- No person under the age of 12 may operate a bicycle on any street, highway, boulevard or alley between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise. (§II-8). This provision is problematic in that very few sidewalks exist in the Village, making this an effective ban on youth cycling during hours of darkness.
- No person shall operate a bicycle upon any public street highway, boulevard or alley abreast of or to the left of another person operating a bicycle except while passing such vehicle. (§II-9) This provision is inconsistent with state law which allows side-by-side riding as long as the cyclists are not impeding traffic.
- Bicyclists are permitted to ride on the sidewalk in the Village. (§II-11)

Snow and Ice Removal

Ordinance 8.05: Snow and Ice Removal (R68.12) mandates that property owners are responsible for clearing snow and ice on abutting sidewalks within 24 hours after a snow or ice event (§I), however, no enforcement mechanism is provided. Section II of the ordinance bans the deposit of snow or ice on sidewalks, streets and public places by property owners; Section III allows the Village to remove snow deposited on public ways and charge abutting property owners for the removal.

Sidewalks

Ordinance 8.08: Public Improvements and Assessments (Sidewalks) (R38.4.2) provides construction requirements for sidewalks that are installed, but does not require sidewalks in any areas of the Village. Sidewalks are required to be four feet wide (48 inches); the current federal standard is 5 feet (60 inches).

Recommendations

Zoning Code/Code or Ordinances – Bicycle, Registration and Operation

- Ordinance 7.11 should be updated to require bicycle registration only for bicycles belonging to people residing within the Village, in compliance with state law (as opposed to operated within the Village).
- Registrations should be valid for a minimum of four years, if not longer, rather than having to be renewed annually.
- The ordinance limiting the times at which children can operate a bicycle should be eliminated.
- The ordinance limiting two-abreast riding should be brought into compliance with state law, which allows such riding as long as it does not impede traffic.

Zoning Code/Code or Ordinances – Sidewalks

The following items regarding sidewalks should be included in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Code:

- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement in Table 1.
- Specify a minimum width of 60 inches for all new sidewalks and compliance with ADA regulations.

Village of Whiting

Village of Whiting Comprehensive Plan – 2004

Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan is the Transportation Element. Section 3.1-B discusses Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities and provides information about the Green Circle Trail. No other bicycle or pedestrian facilities are described. Section 3.2-C briefly describes the 1997 Plover and Stevens Point Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan (described under Stevens Point in this document) and notes the following recommendations for Whiting:

- Bike Lanes: Cty Rd HH, Elm Street, Minnesota Avenue, Sherman Avenue, Tommy's Turnpike
- Paved Shoulders: Airline Drive, Whiting Avenue, Whiting Road
- Route Signs: Birch Street, Cedar Street West, School Street, Spring Street, Strange Street

Section 3.3, Transportation Issues includes the following items related to bicycles and pedestrians:

- Long-term pedestrian and bicycle access east to Hoover Avenue, along Cty Rd HH
  - One side, maybe two sides (trail, not sidewalk)
  - Maintenance issue; would need to decide whether or not to plow in the winter.
- Space should be provided for bicycle and pedestrian traffic on Willard Street in the form of a paved shoulder or bike path.
- Sidewalk should be considered on School Street from Cedar Street East to Cty Rd HH.

Section 3.4 includes the following policy recommendations related to bicycles and pedestrians:

- C2. Consider recommendations within the 1997 Plover and Stevens Point Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan when making decisions regarding the pedestrian and bicycle network.
- C3. Pedestrian / bicycle access should be provided along Cty Rd HH to Hoover Avenue.
- C4. Space should be provided for bicycle and pedestrian traffic on Willard Street in the form of a paved shoulder or bike path.
- C5. Sidewalk should be considered on School Street from Cedar Street East to Cty Rd HH.

Zoning Ordinance

Sidewalks are only mentioned in the Zoning Ordinance in the context of ensuring that clear lines of vision are "maintained adjacent to street intersections, rights-of way, alleys, sidewalks and/or access point (public or private driveways)." There is brief discussion about hedge and other plant heights near sidewalks as they relate to maintaining clear lines of vision. There is also brief discussion that site plan submittals should show the location of any sidewalks or pedestrian walkways, although neither appears to be required by the ordinance.

Recommendations

Zoning Ordinance

The following sidewalk items should be included in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Code:

- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement in Table 1.
- Specify a minimum width of 60 inches for all new sidewalks and compliance with ADA regulations.
- Require that snow and ice be cleared from sidewalks by adjacent property owners within 24 hours after any snowfall.

Village of Almond

Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 3 of the Plan discusses transportation in the Village. The only specific mention of bicycles is to highlight the Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020, the State's bicycle plan, and its goal of increasing the level of bicycling in Wisconsin while reducing the number of crashes between bicycles and motor vehicles. The plan notes that heavy truck traffic can negatively impact pedestrian safety. The plan highlights that there are sidewalks on at least one side of nearly every Village street with Main and Elm having sidewalks on both sides. The Village generally evaluates the need for repair of existing sidewalks and the construction of new sidewalks every year. The sidewalks on Main Street are noted as being "handicapped accessible" and it is noted that when sidewalks within five feet of a crosswalk are installed or repaired, they should include ramps.

Section 3.4 of the plan includes an objective to "encourage and accommodate human-powered transportation." The section also includes a policy to "encourage the maintenance and development of sidewalks."

Almond-Bancroft Safe Routes to School Plan 2012 - 2017 – April 2012

The plan identifies the "best" existing roadway for biking as CTH D through the Village of Almond, while High School Street and part of Church Street as having undesirable biking/walking conditions due to having a bike/ped lane on only one side of the road. Plan Recommendations follow the 5 e's and cover the entire scope and breadth of providing students with a greater opportunity to walk and/or bike to school in the school district. Engineering recommendations include:

- Place 4 traffic cones in the mid-block crosswalk on Elm Street
- Make intersection of Elm and Church Streets a four-way stop
- Create curb extensions for the pedestrian crossing on Elm Street at Church Street
- Install new bicycle racks on paved surfaces near selected school entrances
- Install sidewalk and intersection curb extensions on Division Street
- Grind off white line on Church Street, install sidewalk and lights on west side of Church Street from Elm Street south to CTH D
- Grind off white line on High School Street
- "Ladder" style crosswalks at CTH J and A at Division St; Mid-block Elm St in front of Almond; CTHs A, J, & D

Sidewalk Ordinance

The Village of Almond sidewalk ordinance requires new sidewalks to have a width of 40 inches, or to be consistent with abutting sidewalks. The current federal standard is 5 feet (60 inches).

Sidewalk Construction and Repair

The Almond Municipal Code [§ 4-2-2 Sidewalk Construction and Repair.] states that whenever the Village Board determines by resolution that a sidewalk be laid, rebuilt, repaired, then the landowner is responsible to pay for the initial sidewalk and its ongoing maintenance.

Snow and Ice removal

The Almond Municipal Code [§ 4-5-1 Snow and Ice Removal.] states that it is the property owner's responsibility to clear their sidewalks within 24 hours of a snow event. Currently, however, the Village plows all sidewalks in the Village.

Bicycle ordinances – July 3, 2010

Section 7-2-1 (A) of the village code prohibits bicycle operation on sidewalks except for small bikes (20" diameter wheels or unless learning), and on bridge sidewalks, where right-of-way is to be yielded to pedestrians. 7-2-3 requires all bicycles operating between ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise to be equipped with a light on the front and a light or reflector on the rear.

Recommendations

Sidewalk Ordinance

The following sidewalk items should be included in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Code:

- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement in Table 1.
- Specify a minimum width of 60 inches for all new sidewalks and compliance with ADA regulations.

Village of Amherst

Village of Amherst 2016 Comprehensive Plan

The Transportation Element of the *Village of Amherst 2005 Comprehensive Plan* includes a section devoted to existing and planned sidewalk and a section devoted towards bicycle infrastructure. These sections rely heavily upon the 2014 Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, providing a synopsis of recommendations from the 2014 Plan.

Some major improvements have occurred since the 2014 plan; Wilson Street was reconstructed to the west of Main Street. Appropriate width and markings were provided that provide paved shoulders which are useful for bicyclists. The reconstruction project also included a walkway across the Amherst Mill Pond impoundment creating a useful and attractive way for students from the east side of the Village to connect on an angle to Main Street, the library and the school grounds. School Street was also reconstructed and provided a sidewalk on the north side of the road (the south side previously had sidewalks). The streets that lack sidewalks are relatively short neighborhood streets.

Sidewalk Ordinance – August 21, 1984

Design standards are provided for "Pedestrian Ways" on urban cross-sections at a minimum ROW width of 10' and a minimum paved width of 5'. Pedestrian Ways is not defined in the ordinance. Section 10.5 (B)(7) requires sidewalks on at least one side of all new streets, unless waived by the Village Board or Plan Commission if so delegated by the Village Board. Section 10.6 (F) again requires sidewalks on one side of all streets within subdivisions, and gives the Village Board authority to require wider than standard sidewalks in the vicinity of schools, commercial areas, and other places of public assemblage.

Public Works Ordinance

Section 15.02 details village standards for sidewalk construction and repair. The sidewalk ordinance requires residential walks to be five feet in width (min. 4" thick), and sidewalks in front of commercial or industrial establishments to be not less than 8 feet in width (5" thick). Property owners are responsible for all physical maintenance to sidewalks adjoining their property. Section 15.07 (B) requires abutting owners to cause all sidewalks to be made and kept free from snow and ice.

Village of Amherst Junction

2005 Comprehensive Plan – April 11, 2005

The Transportation Element of the *Village of Amherst Junction 2005 Comprehensive Plan* is almost entirely silent on recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian transportation. The 2005 plan identifies existing sidewalk on CTH Q between Main Street and USH 10 and acknowledges the existing Tomorrow River State Trail - which breaks in the village at CTH Q and starts again at the Village's eastern boundary. However, the plan provides no recommendation for filling this gap but does "encourage the use of the Tomorrow River State Trail". Finally, the 2005 plan mentions (but is ambivalent about) plans for a bridge across CTH 10 for the uninterrupted continuation of the Tomorrow River State Trail.

Zoning Ordinance

Besides establishing a vision triangle (fences, accessory structures or planting shall rise no more than 2 feet above level of sidewalk within 20 feet of any corner) sidewalks are not mentioned in the zoning ordinance, except in the definitions section. The Village's B-2 District (§8) is purposed to serve as a "pedestrian-oriented" shopping and community center.

Recommendations

Zoning Code/Code or Ordinances

The following sidewalk items should be included in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Code:

- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement in Table 1.
- Specify a minimum width of 60 inches for all new sidewalks and compliance with ADA regulations.
- Require that snow and ice be cleared from sidewalks by adjacent property owners within 24 hours after any snowfall.

Village of Junction City

2005 Comprehensive Plan, Village of Junction City – 2005

The plan reveals that "Village residents have expressed a desire to create a walking/bicycle path throughout the Village, which includes a way to safely cross the railroad grades that divide the community into four sections" and that the only existing sidewalks are along Main Street (former USH 10). However, the plan goes on to state that "No other sidewalks are desired by Village residents, but they would consider dirt or gravel trails alongside roads for bikes and pedestrians to get around." Additionally, village residents acknowledge that CTH G – which is fitted with shoulders to accommodate bike and ped traffic – is unsafe due to heavy large truck traffic, and that "most" of the

village streets are used by bicycles and pedestrians even though residents feel that these are not safe at times.

Among the plan's goals are to encourage/accommodate human-powered transportation and to have a safe road network for both drivers and pedestrians. An objective is to work with Portage County to create a bike/walking trail throughout the Village that safely crosses the railroad grades.

Zoning Ordinance

Besides establishing a vision triangle (fences, accessory structures or planting shall rise no more than 2 feet above level of sidewalk within 20 feet of any corner) sidewalks are not mentioned in the zoning ordinance. The Village's B-2 District (Article 7.8) is purposed to serve as a "pedestrian-oriented" shopping and community center. Planned Development District (PDD) is intended to provide (among other things) "a safe and efficient system for pedestrian and vehicular traffic".

Recommendations

Zoning Code/Code or Ordinances

The following sidewalk items should be included in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Code:

- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement in Table 1.
- Specify a minimum width of 60 inches for all new sidewalks and compliance with ADA regulations.
- Require that snow and ice be cleared from sidewalks by adjacent property owners within 24 hours after any snowfall.

Village of Nelsonville

2017 Comprehensive Plan, Village of Nelsonville

The plan notes that "only a few streets in the Village have sidewalks" and repair and construction is handled by the village as needed. The plan states that "most streets in the Village have little traffic thereby not requiring sidewalks". The plan does, however, recommend the placement of bike lanes "on major roads such as State Highway 161 and Cty Rd SS and Cty Rd Q."

Among the plan's objectives is to encourage bicycle and pedestrian transportation options, while an identified policy is to pursue opportunities with Portage County for construction of bike lanes on high traffic roads and connections to countywide bike trails.

Sidewalk Ordinance – May 11, 1993

Nelsonville's sidewalk ordinance requires residential walks to be five feet in width (4" thick), and sidewalks in front of commercial or industrial establishments to be not less than 8 feet in width (5" thick). Property owners are responsible for all physical maintenance to sidewalks adjoining their property.

Subdivision Ordinance – June 12, 1979

Design standards are provided for "Pedestrian Ways" on urban cross-sections at a minimum ROW width of 10' and a minimum paved width of 5'. Pedestrian Ways is not defined in the ordinance. Section VII (B)(6) requires sidewalks on at least one side of all new streets, unless waived by the Village Board or Plan Commission if so delegated by the VB.

Recommendations

Subdivision Ordinance

- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement in Table 1.

Village of Rosholt

Village of Rosholt Comprehensive Plan – 2008

According to the Transportation Element of the Plan, "all the streets in the Village are open for bicycles" and "about half of the streets have sidewalks." The plan also acknowledges an existing trail system in Benn Conservancy connecting to recreational areas and other community destinations, as well as the Ice Age Bicycle Trail just east of the village. An objective of the 2008 plan is to promote the development of multi-use trails, trail linkages, wide shoulders, or sidewalks as part of new development proposals, where appropriate.

Traffic Regulations Ordinance, April 2012 (most recent amendment)

This ordinance includes a couple of provisions loosely related to bicycle and pedestrian travel within the city, highlighted below:

- When installing new traffic control devices, Village is required to erect per MUTCD
- School Zone speed limits are 15 mph; impacted roads are State Street (SW corner of Lot 3.15 to Randolph) and Randolph Street (State to Main)

Zoning Ordinance, June 8, 2009

Besides establishing a vision triangle (fences, accessory structures or planting shall rise no more than 2 feet above level of sidewalk within 20 feet of any corner) sidewalks are not mentioned in the zoning ordinance. The Village's B-2 District (Article 7.8) is purposed to serve as a "pedestrian-oriented" shopping and community center. Planned Development District (PDD) is intended to provide (among other things) "a safe and efficient system for pedestrian and vehicular traffic".

Recommendations

Zoning Code/Code or Ordinances

The following sidewalk items should be included in the Code of Ordinances or Zoning Code:

- Require the installation of sidewalks in compliance with the WisDOT Guidelines for Sidewalk Placement in Table 1.
- Specify a minimum width of 60 inches for all new sidewalks and compliance with ADA regulations.
- Require that snow and ice be cleared from sidewalks by adjacent property owners within 24 hours after any snowfall.

Appendix D | Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design

Overview

This Appendix provides guidance to be used by County staff, City and Village engineers, facility designers, and planners in the design and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Portage County.

The primary sources of bicycle design guidance in Wisconsin include the NACTO, the AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* and the Wisconsin DOT *Bicycle Facilities Design Handbook*. Used together, these resources enable communities to balance local practicality with national innovation, ensuring that bicycle and pedestrian networks are both feasible and forward-looking.

The NACTO *Urban Bikeway Design Guide* is particularly well-suited for urban and suburban environments. Developed by city transportation officials, NACTO's guidance reflects real-world conditions and innovative practices that prioritize multimodal access, equity, and livability. The AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* provides a comprehensive framework applicable across a wide range of contexts, including rural roads, highways, and regional trail systems. It is widely recognized by state departments of transportation and is often required for projects involving federal funding. For county-level planning, AASHTO is especially valuable when coordinating with state agencies or designing facilities that span multiple municipalities or rural corridors.

Tailored specifically for Wisconsin communities, the Wisconsin DOT *Bicycle Facilities Design Handbook* provides practical, context-sensitive guidance for bicycle facility design across urban, suburban, and rural settings. It reflects Wisconsin's climate, roadway conditions, and local planning needs. Additionally, Wisconsin DOT has an important section (11-46) in their *Facilities Development Manual* (FDM) that discusses the State's "Complete Streets" bicycle and pedestrian accommodation law that applies when state or federal funds are being used on projects. Although this section of the FDM focuses more on steps to be followed, it does include some bicycle and pedestrian accommodation standards in how the law can be met. The FDM also includes numerous street and highway cross-sections showing various means of bicycle accommodation.

Plan and the Provision of Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

This plan supports the provision of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations as a routine practice. Bicyclists and pedestrians will be using the streets and highways in Portage County, which they are legally allowed to use regardless of the presence of specific facilities. Wisconsin state law requires bicycle and pedestrian facilities when state or federal funds are used on a project, unless there is a compelling reason not to include them. For example, on many low volume, low speed neighborhood streets and low volume town and county roads where motorists can easily navigate around bicyclists, bicycle lanes or paved shoulders may not be necessary.

Including bicycle and pedestrian facilities in street and highway projects is typically opportunity-driven – incorporating these facilities may have to wait until an appropriate improvement project can include them. The plan does not call for the immediate retrofit of bicycle and pedestrian facilities on all roadways. Many of the facilities will be incorporated on roadway improvement projects. This

means that some bicycle and pedestrian facilities should generally be provided even for short sections of an overall corridor (e.g., as part of a bridge project or a five block segment of an arterial street). In these cases, it will be acceptable to delay the bike lane marking until a longer stretch of bicycle lanes can be pieced together.

To aid in the consideration of how and when these design guidelines should be used, the following factors should be considered:

- Is a specific treatment called out in this plan or in another community or state plan for a specific street, highway, intersection, sidewalk etc.? For instance, this plan identifies specific segments of urban area streets and county highways for bicycle lanes.
- Is a street or highway recommended as a bicycle route in this plan or a state or community plan? Most of the routes in this plan are recommended without any further design treatments, but conditions do change based on changes in land uses and volume of traffic. These routes should be reviewed for consideration of paved shoulders or bicycle lanes when projects are initially scoped.
- Are bicycle and pedestrian accommodations a feasible part of a basic improvement project? Simple maintenance and resurfacing projects will provide fewer opportunities for incorporating bicycle and pedestrian facilities than reconstruction and new construction projects.

Design Guideline Basics

There are several fundamental concepts that steer the design of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Basic features

There are many street and highway features that require attention – sometimes through maintenance – that are often overlooked. These include bicycle-safe drainage grates, railroad crossings, signing, striping, and maintenance. When roadways are designed, these basic safety-related features need to be included in projects.

Separation

Bicyclists and pedestrians typically gauge their level of comfort by how safe they feel on facilities. For higher volume roadways, bicyclists and pedestrians feel safer and more comfortable as they have more space separating them from motorists. This equates to one of the most important design principles: providing adequate width within the roadway for bicycle travel on moderate and high-volume roadways. Most bicyclists will feel most comfortable and safe when separation is reinforced through markings and physical separation rather than wide travel lanes that are shared with motor vehicle traffic. Avoid using minimum bikeway widths unless cost and/or land constraints prevent additional width.

Sharing

Although bicyclists prefer separation, there are many types of streets and highways where people – especially adults – feel adequately comfortable traveling with motorists. Neighborhood streets (not functionally classified as collectors or arterials) with low traffic volumes and traffic speeds safely can accommodate most bicyclists (except young children) without any special bicycle treatment. These shared roadways with narrow cross-sections and parking on one or both sides are generally acceptable for bicycle traffic with traffic volumes of less than 1,000 to 2,000 vehicles per day.

In the rural areas of Portage County, the suitability of a shared roadway decreases as volumes begin to exceed 500 vehicles per day based on the width of the road and other factors such as sight lines

and the amount of truck traffic. According to the level-of-service model used for this plan, most rural roads (not functionally classified as collector or arterials) are considered to be in good condition for shared use, even with traffic volumes reaching the **750 to 1,000 range.** As with the rest of Wisconsin, it is assumed that a significant percentage of bicycling takes place on these shared roadways with no dedicated space for bicyclists.

Standard and Minimum Design Values

Standard design values (sometimes referred to as desirable values) should be used to design facilities. In constrained environments, minimum widths may be necessary in order to fit a bicycle accommodation. There is often a misguided tendency to always use minimum values when designing bicycle and pedestrian facilities instead of using standard design values. Standard design values included in Facility Design Guidance should be used unless there are reasons not to use them. And there are situations where using a minimum is appropriate and reasonable such as reducing the overall width of a facility or through a curve in a tight environment – with appropriate signage – for a short distance and then returning it to the standard width or radius when past the constraint. For example, a 10-foot-wide path may be narrowed to eight feet for 100 feet as it approaches an intersection or a sidewalk may be narrowed from five feet to four feet as it passes a mature tree.

A complication that can arise when using minimum values results from combining a series of minimums. This practice should be used with caution. For instance, providing a minimum-width parking lane, next to a minimum-width bicycle lane, next to a 10-foot travel lane is not advised, particularly on moderate and higher volume streets. Similarly, when designing paths using the minimum curve radii with a maximum grade and a minimum stopping sight distance is not recommended.

Multimodal roadway designs require a flexible approach; there is no one-size-fits-all design solution, and each roadway design should reflect the character, context, and constraints of the roadway.

Bicycle Facility Design Guidance

- The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 5th Edition (2024)* https://store.transportation.org/item/publicationdetail/5371
- The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (2023) http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook* (2004) https://wisconsindot.gov/documents/projects/multimodal/bike/facility.pdf
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Facilities Development Manual 11-46-1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements Affecting Complete Streets* (2025) https://wisconsindot.gov/rdwy/fdm/fd-11-46.pdf
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) *Urban Bikeway Design Guide* (2025) and *Designing Streets for Kids* (2020) https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/ and https://islandpress.org/books/designing-streets-kids#desc

Pedestrian Facility Design Guidance

- The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities* (2021) https://store.transportation.org/item/collectiondetail/224
- The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (2023) http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Guide to Pedestrian Best Practices* (2010) http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/ped-guide.htm
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Facilities Development Manual 11-46-1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements Affecting Complete Streets* (2025) https://wisconsindot.gov/rdwy/fdm/fd-11-46.pdf
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) *Urban Street Design Guide* (2013) https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide

Appendix E | Relative Cost Assumptions

It is difficult to provide reliable cost estimates for bicycle and pedestrian projects, or any infrastructure project, until the actual project is scoped and designed. However, this section provides relative cost assumptions to provide an order of magnitude for the potential costs involved. These are conveyed as dollar signs, with one dollar sign identifying the more economical projects and five dollar signs indicating the highest capital costs. Actual budgets should be developed based on specific project scopes, engineering plans, and competitive bids. Appendix F should be consulted to determine what other funded sources may be available to support a given project.

These relative cost assumptions assume the facility is built as a standalone project. If on-street bicycle facilities or sidewalks are built in conjunction with road reconstruction projects, the marginal cost to add these facilities will be considerably lower as compared to a standalone project. Portage County communities should plan to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in capital planning to maximize their limited transportation planning dollars.

TABLE 4: RELATIVE COST ASSUMPTIONS

Facility Type	Relative Cost Per Mile
Shared Use Paths	$$$$$
Bike Lane/Urban Shoulder	$$
Protected Bike Lane	$$$$
Shared Lane Marking	$
Signed Bike Route	$
Rural Paved Shoulder	$$$$$
Sidewalk	$$$

Appendix F | Funding Opportunities

Determining how to fund various bikeway and pedestrian improvements is a key strategic issue that communities face when implementing bicycle and pedestrian plans. While there are many funding options, each source may have limitations making it more or less appropriate for certain types of projects. Some funding sources are targeted to infrastructure while others target education and encouragement efforts. Some sources are not directly bicycle or pedestrian related but can be applied to bikeway and pedestrian projects that may have a nexus with another public priority such as historic preservation or public health. Some sources may support grants of hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars; others may be targeted to smaller amounts and require citizen volunteers or community involvement, as a part of the required local match.

TABLE 5: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)	To acquire or develop public, nature-based outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	• $4 million avail. per yr. • 50% local match per project	• A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required • Priority for land acquisition • Projects must comply with ADA	Wisconsin DNR – Stewardship Program	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG
Urban Greenspace Program (UGS)	To acquire land to provide natural space within or near urban areas or to protect scenic or ecological features.	• $1.6 million avail. per yr. • 50% local match per project	• A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required • Projects must comply with ADA	Wisconsin DNR – Stewardship Program	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG
Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR)	To acquire development rights for nature-based outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	• $1.6 million avail. per yr. • 50% local match per project	• Funds available to acquire development rights in areas where restrictions on residential, industrial, or commercial developments are in place. • May include enhancements of outdoor recreation.	Wisconsin DNR – Stewardship Program	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Urban Rivers Grant Program (UR)	To acquire lands or rights in lands adjacent to urban rivers for the purpose of preserving or restoring them for economic revitalization or nature-based outdoor recreation activities.	• $800,000 avail. per yr. • 50% local match per project	• A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required • Projects must comply with ADA	Wisconsin DNR – Stewardship Program	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	To acquire or develop public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	• 50% local match per project • Land acquisition • Development of recreational facilities	A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan in required.	Wisconsin DNR – Stewardship Program	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	To maintain, develop, rehabilitate, and acquire land for motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails.	• Grant assistance to develop or maintain trails up to 80%. • Awards up to $100,000. • Rehabilitation and maintenance of existing trails and trailhead facilities • Development of new trails, trail linkages, and trailhead facilities with some restrictions on • federal lands • Acquisition of property for trails in areas with limited trail opportunities	• Funds may only be used on trails which have been identified in, or which further a specific goal of a local, county, or state trail plan. • Funds may be used on trails that are referenced in a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan • Projects must comply with ADA.	Wisconsin DNR – Stewardship Program	https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Stewardship/ApplyLUG

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)	To fund facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, including rehabilitating and operating historic transportation buildings and structures, restoring railway depots, and landscaping near transportation facilities.	20% required match	• Construction projects must be over $100,000. • Non-construction projects must be over $50,000.	WisDOT	https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/aid/tap.aspx
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)	To encourage transportation projects that improve air quality, including efforts to enhance public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and rideshare programs.	Minimum project costs: Construction - $200,000 Planning - $50,000	Construction and planning for bicycle and pedestrian facilities	WisDOT	https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/aid/cmaq.aspx
Surface Transportation Program – Urban (STP-U)	To fund a range of transportation-related activities, including projects on higher function local roads and local safety improvements.	WisDOT recommends federal funding be approved at the 80% maximum but allows Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Committees to provide as low as 50% federal funding at approval.	For 2022-2027 program development, total funds available are $92.5 million.	WisDOT	https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/stp-urban.aspx
Surface Transportation Program – Rural (STP-R)	To fund a wide range of transportation-related activities, including projects on higher function local roads and local safety improvements.	WisDOT recommends federal funding be approved at the 80% maximum but allows Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Committees to provide as low as 50% federal funding at approval.	For 2022-2027 program development, total funds available are $43.3 million.	WisDOT	https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/stp-rural.aspx

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	To develop and implement on a continuing basis stand-alone safety projects designed to reduce the number and severity of crashes on all streets and highways.	Federal funding ratio usually 90%, requiring a 10% match of state and/or local funds.	Funds highway safety projects at sites that have experienced a high crash history. Emphasis is on low-cost options that can be implemented quickly.	WisDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program	https://wisconsindot.gov/pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/hsip.aspx
WEDC Vibrant Spaces Grant	To create robust community gathering spaces with multiple uses, usually in tandem with a commercial area.	$25,000-$50,000 with a 1:1 required match.	Public space enhancements, public signage and wayfinding, public infrastructure (bathrooms, lighting, electrical), seasonal equipment with the intent to use annually (tables, heathers, umbrellas, etc.)	Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation	https://wedc.org/programs/vibrant-spaces-grant/
Hazard Elimination Program	To improve railway-highway crossings	10% local match per project	Communities are encouraged to start working with the District Office.	WisDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	https://wisconsindot.gov/pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/highway/hsip.aspx
PeopleForBikes	To improve bicycling in the U.S.			People For Bikes	https://www.peopleforbikes.org/
Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)	To support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users.	$200,000-$50 million	Eligible projects: • This plan was funded by the SS4A Planning Grant and would be eligible for an implementation grant	US DOT	https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
AARP Community Challenge	Small grants to fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages.	• Average grant amount $11,500. • 76% of grants less than $15,000.	• Improve public spaces, housing, transportation, and civic engagement. • Support diversity, equity, and inclusion. • Build engagement for programs under new federal laws. • Pursue innovative ideas that support people age 50 or older.	AARP	https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/
Wisconsin Main Street Community Program	To revitalize comprehensive downtown programs, including streetscapes.	Technical Assistance	• General downtown program. • May benefit trail enhancements through streetscaping.	National Main Street Center	https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/main-street/
Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin	To fund many different kinds of projects that benefit wildlife.	Grants vary by type, some open to annual applications, and some by invitation only.	Types of grants include: • Bird Protection Fund • C.D. Besadny Conservation Fund • Norma and Stanley DeBoer Quiet Trails Fund	Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin	https://www.wisconservation.org/grant-programs/
Waste Management Charitable Giving	For nonprofits to provide renewal resources to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and to conserve and maintain wetlands, wildlife habitats, and green spaces.	Not listed		Waste Management	https://www.wm.com/us/en/inside-wm/social-impact/community-impact

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Notes	Admin Agency	Resource
Walmart Foundation National Giving Program Grant	For non-profits that operate on a national scope through affiliates in many states around the country or through programs that operate regionally/locally but seek funding to replicate program activities nationally.	$250,000 and above	Areas of focus: • Hunger Relief & Healthy Eating • Sustainability • Women's Economic Empowerment • Career Opportunity	Walmart Foundation	https://walmart.org/how-we-give
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program	To provide professional services to help achieve conservation and outdoor recreation project vision.	Does not provide financial assistance or monetary grants.	Contact the state program manager to discuss the proposed project and current application process.	National Park Service	https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/apply.htm
Sparks Grant	Provide people with disabilities more social connections by participating in inclusive, meaningful community activities.	$500-$5,000	Planning and implementation of inclusive and accessible playgrounds and other spaces	Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities	https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/sparks-grants/