


Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans for Small Municipalities

Healthy Communities Active Transportation Conference
May, 2011


How to Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for a Smaller Ohio Municipality



Healthy Communities Active Transportation Conference
Monday, May 9, 2011
1:00 PM

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Ann Arbor, Michigan

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City of Athens, Ohio



Overview

- What makes a small community different
 - Specific challenges
 - Assets
- Planning approaches for key elements of a plan
 - Pre-planning
 - Public engagement
 - Inventory & Analysis




How to structure a non-motorized planning effort to fit a smaller mid-western community




How to Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for a Smaller Ohio Municipality

What Makes a Small Town Unique




- ❖ Size
- ❖ People
- ❖ Expectations
- ❖ Data
- ❖ Budget

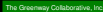


Community Size

- The entire geographic is familiar to most participants
- Easier to a consultant to get to know the town
- Can get to very specific recommendations on many streets



A smaller town allows / demands a level of detail that is rarely achieved for larger communities



The People

- Key people probably already know each other
- Limited but engaged and interested staff
- Generally good interdepartmental relationships
- Elected officials are more likely to participate in the process and are generally less formal
- Often citizen lead initiatives such as bike maps




Trying something new may be much easier than with a larger community

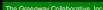


Expectations

- Not looking to be Portland - need to build upon what makes that community special
- Pragmatic
 - Why are you doing this?
 - What is the benefit?
 - What is the cost?
 - The 20 year plan is less important than the 5 year plan
- Economic quality of life impact important
- Less dogmatic



People are extremely familiar with the city and its neighborhoods – they know the specific problem areas. Broad brush plans will not cut it.




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Data

- Level of detail in available GIS data varies greatly for streets, parcels, planning, etc.
- Road based data may be in various unrelated forms
- Air photos may not be detailed enough to make measurements
- Probably do not have Google Streetview on all roads
- My need to do many field measurements



Good base information is critical - especially when making specific recommendations.
The amount of time spent compiling and organizing the necessary data comes at the expense of planning and design time.

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Budget


- Budgets allocated to non-motorized efforts seem to be proportional to a community's population
- There are though economies of scale that larger communities enjoy for some plan elements
 - Steering committee meetings
 - Public engagement
- My have an increase in travel costs for consultants



With limited resources and some elements that may actually cost more per capita, must be resourceful with other elements where the nature of a small town may make some

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How to Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for a Smaller Ohio Municipality
Developing a Process that Fits



- ❖ Preplanning
- ❖ RFQ's and Proposals
- ❖ Inventory and Analysis
- ❖ Final Plan

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Why Undertake a Non-motorized Plan?

- A means to build consensus on how to accommodate non-motorized Uses
- Improve safety for pedestrian and bicyclists
- Establish a logical framework for implementation
- Promote physical fitness through active transportation
- Improve quality of life for residents
- Economic

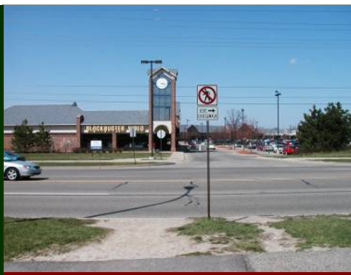


A non-motorized plan can provide direction on how best to capitalize on existing assets

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Before the Plan

- What is the driving force the project?
- Who are the key players?
 - Public
 - Private
 - Other agencies
- Is there political support?
- Is there staff support?
- How might a plan be funded?
- Alone or partnership



You may have some work to do before starting a non-motorized plan

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Why Engage the Services of a Consultant?

- Existing staff 's time is likely already committed
- Specific knowledge
 - Technical
 - Public engagement
- Experience with similar ventures
- A fresh set of ideas may bring new ideas
- Less baggage (sometimes)
- Outside "expert" opinion



One of the most important thing a consultant offers is perspective

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Before the Request for Proposals

- A consultant may be willing to make a presentation on non-motorized planning to generate interest
- Develop a scope of work
 - Identify key elements to address
 - Identify unique processes or issues
- Set a budget
- Set a realistic time frame
- Determine how you will evaluate potential consultants




Goal is to have an apples to apples comparison when the bids come in.

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Key Elements to a Non-Motorized Plan

- Public Engagement
- Inventory and analysis
- Network plan
- Policies and programs
- Implementation plan
- Design guidelines
- Field work



The degree to which each element is developed is dependent on the budget, needs of the community and the context

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Public Engagement

Typical Public Engagement Steps:

- Kick-off meeting/webinar
- Web survey
- Visioning Workshop
- Preliminary Plan workshop

Also Use:

- Website
- Facebook




For all but the smallest of villages, a robust public process is necessary to both create a plan that works for the community and to garner the support necessary for adoption

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Public Engagement Principals

- Transparent process
- Multiple touch points throughout a project
- Everyone's comments are recorded and documented
- Consensus building techniques
- No one person can hijack the process
- Use a variety of questions
 - Open ended response
 - Value assessment
 - Prioritization
- Educate then ask



We Have Never Used the Same Process for Two Projects

Each Process is Tailored to the Project

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Typical Non-Motorized Plan Process

Mt. Pleasant Micropolitan Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

Project Schedule

December 30, 2010

	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	
1. Inventory and Analysis											
2. Preliminary Network Plan											
3. Policies, Guidelines and Outreach Plan											
4. Implementation Plans											
5. Documentation and Plan Refinement											
6. Public Engagement											
Legend:											
■ Task Duration											
● Meetings with Steering Committee		Tuesday 12/7/2010 10:00 AM	Tuesday 1/18/2011 1:30 PM	Tuesday 2/22/2011 1:30 PM		Tuesday 4/19/2011 1:30 PM		Tuesday 6/14/2011 1:30 PM	Tuesday 7/26/2011 1:30 PM		
■ Web Survey											
■ Community Workshops					Tuesday 3/15/2011 7:00 PM CMU	Tuesday 4/26/2011 7:00 PM CMU					

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Volunteer Traffic Counts

- Great way to get core group invested in project
- Low cost, provided modicum of training, forms and scheduling
- Those doing counts became familiar with issues
- Let to better input – some people changed their perceptions based on their work
- Yielded some surprise areas



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Web Survey

- Has become an indispensable tool
- Can reach people who will never come to a public workshop
- Received 200 to 450 responses
- Allows detailed exploration of issues
- Can walk into a public workshop with an understanding of key issues and refine
- People can review the responses themselves
- Issues with equity
- <http://www.surveymonkey.com/Y57ZD6C>

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5. Please describe how frequently you walk and bicycle for the following types of trips:

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never	Response Count
Walk for fun and/or exercise	42.4% (87)	42.4% (87)	7.5% (16)	7.3% (15)	0.0% (0)	202
Walk for transportation	3.6% (7)	15.7% (31)	14.2% (28)	38.6% (78)	27.9% (56)	193
Bicycle for fun and/or exercise	19.9% (41)	46.6% (94)	18.4% (38)	11.7% (24)	3.4% (7)	206
Bicycle for transportation	5.1% (10)	16.6% (33)	8.2% (16)	48.3% (97)	21.6% (43)	194
answered question						200
skipped question						2

6. If a system of sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks, bike lanes, etc. is constructed, how do you think that would change your walking and bicycling habits?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never	Response Count
Walk for fun and/or exercise	48.4% (118)	25.4% (58)	6.1% (12)	3.0% (6)	1.0% (2)	197
Walk for transportation	18.0% (34)	28.1% (56)	22.2% (42)	19.6% (37)	11.1% (21)	189
Bicycle for fun and/or exercise	48.3% (94)	39.3% (77)	7.4% (15)	4.9% (10)	1.5% (3)	203
Bicycle for transportation	30.1% (59)	32.1% (63)	19.4% (38)	9.2% (18)	9.2% (18)	194
answered question						200
skipped question						2

Visioning Workshop

- Bring everyone up to speed
 - Best practices / Issues
 - Web survey findings
 - Inventory and analysis
- Series of small group exercises
 - Refine goals and objectives drawn from survey
 - Refinement of inventory and analysis maps
 - Feedback on opportunities

No longer than two hours. Generally held on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evening.

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Typical Small Group Exercise

- Open ended questions can help define project goals and objectives
- After filled out individually, then typically shared via a small group process and then prioritized

Mr. Pleasant Metropolitan Non-motorized Transportation Plan Kick-off Meeting
Friday, December 7, 2010 from 10:00 AM to Noon at Town Meeting Hall

Project Expectations Worksheet

Desired Project Outcomes: Describe the impact of this plan. Think of an issue that the plan will resolve and make your comments on how you would like to be. Be specific in terms of what you would like to be changed? How do you see your neighborhood or the government being differently?

Tell us your priorities: Please identify for your neighborhood desired outcomes of the Non-motorized Plan relative to your section of the town. Be as specific as possible.


Places of Concern:
Neighborhoods: Briefly describe the area and state the use request. Now think of three places or places that you would like to see. Be specific in terms of what you would like to be changed. Please list at least three specific areas that this project should address. There may be areas that are difficult to address or that require more information. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact the project manager. Please write the location and priority in the space provided.

Location: _____
Issue: _____

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Top Three Desired Project Outcomes

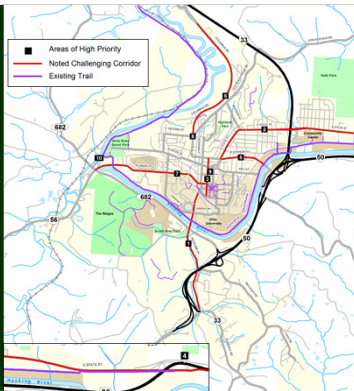
- More bike lanes, especially on major roads
- Better education efforts to create cooperation between drivers and bikers with consideration for both parties
- Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the City.



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Top Places of Concern

- Richland Ave is difficult to navigate on and across for both bikes and peds.
- E State Street is not very bicycle or pedestrian friendly and is difficult to navigate for both bikes and peds.
- Court Street is difficult to navigate on by bicycle, heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and needs bike lanes.
- Desire to safely get to and access the parks and recreation areas by bicycle
- Stimson Ave is difficult to navigate on and across for both bikes and peds.
- Columbus Road is difficult to navigate by bicycle and needs bike lanes.
- Union Street is difficult to navigate by bicycle and needs bike lanes.
- The Intersection at the South End of Columbus Road is noted to be very dangerous making it difficult for bikes and peds to cross the street.
- Uptown is difficult to navigate around by bicycle, there are crowded streets and limited bike parking.
- Desire to utilize the old railroad bridges over the river to extend the bike path and create more access points between both sides of the river.



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Places of Concern – E. State Street

- Not Very Bicycle or Pedestrian Friendly
- Difficult to Navigate By Bicycle and as A Pedestrian
- Potential Bike Lanes in Two Lane Section But Not in Five Lane Section



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Project Web Page

- Central source of information on project
- Client web-pages can be link to project web page
- Links to surveys
- Can download:
 - Project schedules
 - Workshop presentations
 - Public input documentation
 - Draft plans
 - Final document
- Can provide links from facebook
- Maintain information after project is completed

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Preliminary Plan Workshop

- Review the results of the visioning workshop
- Provide feedback on the draft Plan
- Prioritize improvements
- Series of small group exercises or open house format

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Preliminary Plan Workshop

- Prioritization may include mock budgets
- In all workshops we have a comment card for items not covered in exercises

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Four Key Elements of a Non-Motorized Plan

- All four elements work in concert
- The elements may be implemented concurrently
- The effectiveness of any single elements is limited
- To truly implement noticeable change, all four elements need to be addressed

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Overview

Population: Approximately 22,000
Size: Approximately 8 Square Miles

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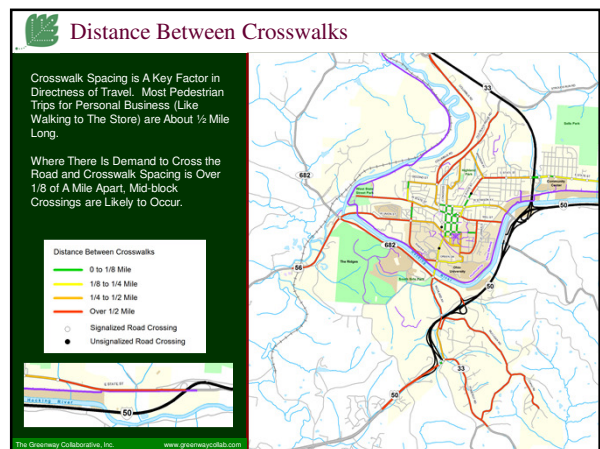
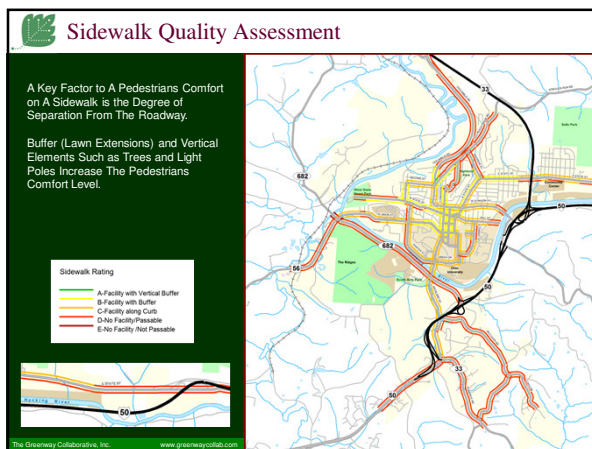
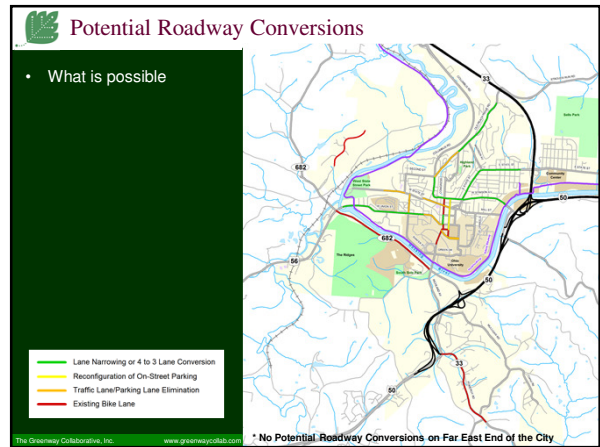
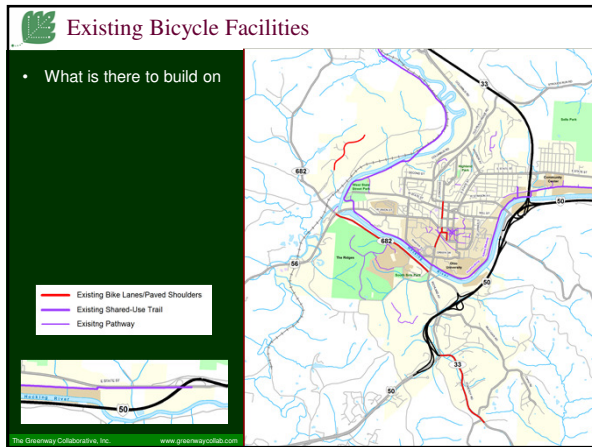
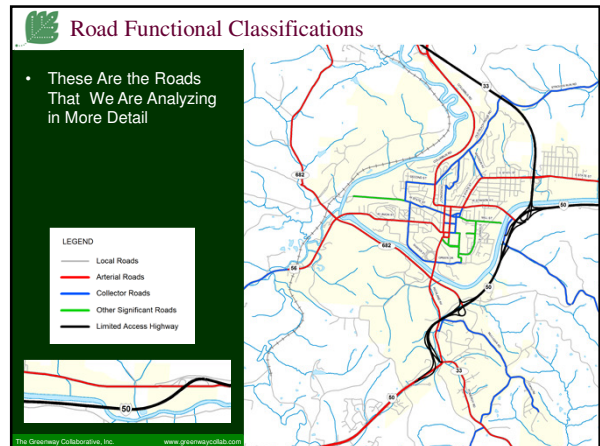
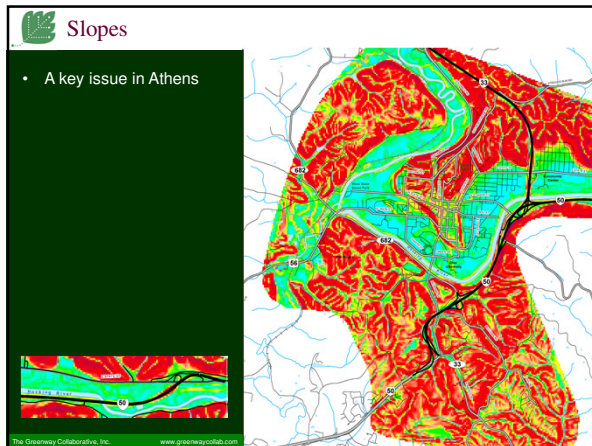
Neighborhoods

- A way to look at context and connectivity

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Non-Motorized Network Plan

- Overall proposed network
 - Bike lanes and sidewalks
 - Neighborhood Connectors
- Focus on near-term, mid-term and long-term improvements for top corridors of concern
- Provided guidelines for how to implement the proposed improvements

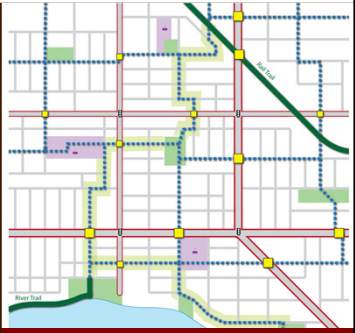


It is challenging to plan and design for the variety of non-motorized user types

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Schematic Non-Motorized Network

- Improvements to the primary roads
- Neighborhood Connectors
- Road Crossing Improvements



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Neighborhood Connectors

- Signs provide wayfinding to key destinations using routes appropriate for most bicyclists
- Often provide a low traffic alternate route to a major road
- Help to identify routes that may not be obvious




Geir Community Center 1.5
Lansing River Trail 3.5

NORTH
Code 100
TO Riverside Park

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Neighborhood Connectors

- AKA Bicycle & Pedestrian Boulevards
- Primarily on low speed, low traffic volume local roads with connecting pathways
- Provide traffic calming
- Often provide alternate route to a major road
- May have sustainable design elements, such as porous pavement and rain gardens

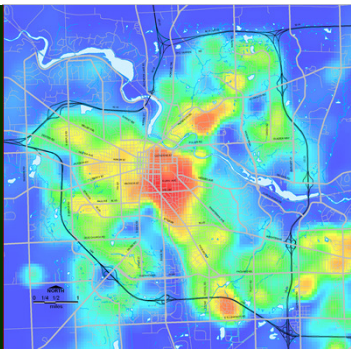


Target audience: "Interested but Concerned" bicyclists

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Things that May Not Necessary

- Latent demand models
- Cost estimates
- Design guidelines



Relative Demand
Lowest Demand
Moderate Demand
Highest Demand

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Questions or Comments



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