

Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan - 2021 Update City of Ypsilanti

Draft approved for distribution for comment on: **LATER DATE**

Adopted by the Planning Commission on: **LATER DATE**

CONTRIBUTORS

Anthony Bedogne
Martha Cleary
Bob Krzewinski
Gregg May
Jared Talaga
Sarah Walsh
Bonnie Wessler

PLAN PREPARATION

The plan was prepared by the Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee in collaboration with members of the City of Ypsilanti Planning & Development Department.

STAFF

Bonnie Wessler, City Project Manager, Public Services Department
Andrew Aamodt, City Planner, Planning & Development Department

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY COUNCIL

Lois Richardson, Mayor
Nicole Brown, Ward 1
, Ward 1
Steven Wilcoxon, Ward 2
Jennifer Symanns, Ward 2
Anthony Morgan, Ward 3
Annie Somerville, Ward 3

PLANNING COMMISSION

Matt Dunwoodie, Chair
Jared Talaga, Vice Chair
Eric Bettis
Mike Davis Jr.
Jessica Donnelly
Phil Hollifield
Heidi Jugenitz
Michael Simmons

NON-MOTORIZED ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Bob Krzewinski, Chair
Sarah Walsh, Vice Chair
Jenny Connoly
Mike Davis, Jr.
Renee Echols
Dylan Goings
Helen Schulte

STAKEHOLDERS

Ann Arbor Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority
Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living
Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Regional Chamber of Commerce
Bike Ypsi
City of Ann Arbor Transportation Department (Eli Cooper)
City of Ypsilanti Parks and Recreation Commission
Depot Town Merchants
Downtown Association of Ypsilanti
Eastern Michigan University Physical Plant (Dieter Otto)
Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative
Program to Educate All Cyclists (John Waterman)
Superior Township
Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (Ryan Buck)
Washtenaw Biking and Walking Coalition
Washtenaw County Health Department
Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission
Ypsi Bike Co-op
Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority
Ypsilanti Township
Ypsilanti Wolfpack Cruiserz Bicycle Club

Youth Groups

Preface:
Executive Summary

Chapter 1:
Introduction

Chapter 2:
Demographics

Chapter 3:
Process

Chapter 4:
Vision and Goals

Chapter 5:
Policies and Administration

Chapter 6:
Maintenance

Chapter 7:
Build

Chapter 8:
Promote

Chapter 9:
Funding

Chapter 10:
Implement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan is a policy document, identifying the means to establish a built and cultural environment that supports and encourages safe, accessible, comfortable, and convenient non-motorized and multimodal transportation options for both people and goods throughout the City and into the surrounding communities. A multimodal transportation system will result in a greater number of individuals choosing alternative transportation modes, including not only walking and bicycling, but also taking public transportation. This increase will lead to a safer and more equitable transportation system, a more environmentally sustainable City, an increased quality of life of residents and visitors, and neighborhoods and business districts that are more attractive.

DRAFT

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Role of Multi-Modal Transportation
Building Upon Past Work
Socio-Cultural Impetus

Multimodal: The availability of transportation options using different modes within a system or corridor. - SIDEBAR ITEM

This plan is a policy document to guide future policy and infrastructure decisions, and can be used to help Ypsilanti strategically apply for funding for projects it identifies. It identifies the means to establish a built and cultural environment that supports and encourages safe, accessible, equitable, comfortable, and convenient transportation options, focusing on non-motorized means such as biking and walking, for both people and goods throughout the City and into the surrounding communities. Such a multimodal transportation environment will result in a greater number of individuals choosing alternative transportation modes, including not only walking and bicycling, but also taking public transportation. This increase will lead to a safer transportation system, a more environmentally sustainable City, an increased quality of life of residents and visitors, and neighborhoods and business districts that are more attractive.

The Role of Multi-Modal Transportation

A comprehensive transportation system is vital to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Ypsilanti. Improvements to non-motorized facilities, such as those for bicyclists and pedestrians, and multimodal facilities (those points where two or more types of transportation interact), are improvements for not only the 9.1%1 of the U.S. population that does not have access to a personal vehicle and the 17.6%2 of Ypsilanti's households that do not own a vehicle, but all individuals, as almost all trips begin and end as a pedestrian. The benefits of a comprehensive transportation system extend beyond the users of the system to the public as a whole.

A well-implemented transportation system will:

INCREASE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Provide transportation alternatives for all individuals who are capable of independent travel.
- Improve access and mobility for not only the 10.7%3 of Ypsilanti residents who have a disability, but also Ypsilanti's aging population.

- Support public transportation, such as buses and trains.
- Provide transportation choices beyond the personal automobile.

IMPROVE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND EQUITY

- Create a more equitable transportation system for all.
- Create a stronger social fabric by fostering the social interaction that takes place outside of the car.
- Encourage healthy lifestyles and help to prevent chronic disease by promoting active transportation.
- Improve safety, especially for the very young and very old, who are often dependent on non-motorized facilities and connections between multiple modes of travel.
- Add “eyes on the street,” which not only foster community but also serve to deter crime.
- Reduce the number of traffic crashes and fatalities.

CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES

- Reduce the local air, water, and noise pollution from automobile use by providing excellent alternatives to automobile travel.
- Reduce congestion by reducing the overall number of automobile trips taken.
- Reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

STIMULATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY

- Reduce the costs associated with automobile parking, automobile maintenance, and fossil fuels, making this money available for other goods and services.
- Increase workers’ access to job sites, ability to reliably reach those jobs, and the employment pool from which potential employers may choose.
- Make Ypsilanti’s many commercial districts attractive and easy places to visit and do business through improvements to the whole transportation network.
- Sustain and increase property value throughout Ypsilanti.⁶

Mobility:

The time and costs required for travel. Mobility is higher when average travel times, variations in travel times, and travel costs are low. Indicators of mobility are indicators of travel times and costs and variability in travel times and costs. - SIDEBAR ITEM

AAA estimates the cost of owning the average automobile at \$8,698/year, which includes fuel,

*maintenance, tires, insurance, license and registration fees, taxes and depreciation for a sedan driving 15,000 miles annually.*⁷ - **SIDEBAR ITEM**

Building Upon Past Work

This project gathers the work of recent Ypsilanti transportation-related initiatives into one whole. Past work has included the 2006 Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for Washtenaw County, the recommendations of the Ypsilanti Downtown Blueprint 2008, the 2008 Transit Plan for Washtenaw County, Promoting Active Communities assessments, and the 2020-2025 Parks & Recreation Plan and to great extent, the Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan 2010-2015. This plan addresses, consolidates, and builds upon this work.

The 2006 WATS Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for Washtenaw County includes an inventory of existing sidewalk and bicycling facilities, provides a list of capital improvements needed to complete the networks, and notes several potential sources of funding, but does not prioritize these improvements or include recommendations for policy improvements.

The city of Ypsilanti's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) created the Ypsilanti Downtown Blueprint 2008 to develop an economic enhancement strategy for downtown Ypsilanti. This strategy, part of the Cool Cities initiative, was crafted to strengthen downtown Ypsilanti and guide its future development in keeping with the community's vision. This blueprint advocated for increased walkability downtown, as well as linkages to any future commuter rail project.

The City participated in the State of Michigan's Promoting Active Communities Self Assessment Program in 2006, 2007, and 2008, earning the silver award each time. Key areas in need of improvement include changes in zoning and parking standards to encourage more biking and walking, a lack of trails and shared use paths, few bike lanes, limited bicycle parking facilities, the need for more education and promotion regarding biking and walking safely, and the need for better connectivity to, from, and through neighborhoods and shopping areas.

Furthermore, the 2008-2012 Parks & Recreation Plan lists improving and expanding non-motorized transportation networks as one of the five primary goals to focus on in the next five years. This was the top priority identified in a survey of 450 Ypsilanti residents during the Parks and Recreation planning process.

Additionally, a 2007 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) survey of 250 downtown and Depot Town employees on commuting behavior found that a high percentage of these employees walk or bike to work, almost double the national average. Thirty-four percent of those surveyed live within five miles of their workplace, and therefore could, given the infrastructure, walk or bike to work. Some of the issues cited that prevented these respondents from biking or walking to work could be corrected in a relatively short period, including a lack of

routing information.

Socio-Cultural Impetus

Ypsilanti benefits from its early history as a commercial center in southeast Michigan. The development of the City's core before automobile use became common gave rise to a dense grid pattern that encourages biking and walking to key destinations like parks, schools, and the central commercial areas of Downtown and Depot Town. Later, as automobiles became more popular, major streets shifted away from this pedestrian focus. Street improvements increased road capacity, allowing for more and quicker motor vehicle access to, from, and through Ypsilanti – in some cases even removing sidewalks in the process. In particular, the four major streets cutting through the center of the city, Washtenaw Avenue (M-17), Michigan Avenue (Business Route US 12), Hamilton, and Huron, fail to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians. However, Ypsilanti's compact, historic form still provides the opportunity for people to live near work, shopping, and recreation – an option not available in many new- growth communities.

This dense grid pattern also gives Ypsilanti another advantage: such a system is not only historic and easily navigable, but also less resource-intensive. A dense downtown requires less infrastructure per business or residents, and thus less maintenance despite often more intense use, than does a less-dense area.⁸ Due to their smaller per capita demand on these municipal services, denser areas are often more environmentally friendly than their less dense counterparts, if well-designed. By capitalizing upon Ypsilanti's existing density, we can complete its already- extensive multimodal transportation network at a lower cost than newer cities with lower density. Furthermore, communities with robust multimodal transportation networks appeal to cost-conscious creative professionals. Creating an excellent multimodal transportation infrastructure that works with Ypsilanti's residential density can meet both the needs of the population that is unable to afford a personal vehicle as well as the population that chooses to live without one. Such a network would also appeal to young, creative talent from the area's universities, who may have initially come to the area without a personal motor vehicle. Although there are challenges to improving connectivity, creating more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly corridors, and improving accessibility for people with disabilities, the City's extant non-motorized infrastructure provides an excellent framework for future improvements.

Future Directions: Land Use Drives Transportation Choice

While this plan focuses on policies and infrastructure that are directly part of the transportation system, land use patterns determine whether non-motorized options are even available. Transportation impacts should be considered during any future Master Plan amendments, zoning map changes, or similar actions. Whether or not someone can walk to their destination depends not only on the presence and condition of sidewalks and crosswalks, but also on the distance. If the beginning and end of a trip are close together, non- motorized options become much more reasonable for that trip.

Zoning and land use decisions determine this critical distance factor. Neighborhoods with higher residential density place more households close to their schools, jobs, and other amenities, making non-motorized options possible (as well as transit options). Permitting office and retail uses to be combined with residential uses places these destinations close to the people who need to access them, again supporting non- motorized travel.⁹

Research is increasingly showing that households are willing to pay a premium to live in such compact, walkable, mixed- use areas, and sources ranging from the National Association of Realtors to the American Planning Association expect demand for small lot and multi-unit residential living to grow over the next few decades. The Center for Disease Control specifically addresses land use in their “Healthy Places” initiative, recommending, “Encourage mixed land use and greater land density ... so people can walk or bike more easily.”The most important land use decision, though, appears to be not “encouraging” but “permitting” – reviews of local zoning ordinances typically find that regulations push density downwards and restrict mixed use patterns.¹⁰

Ypsilanti already has the basic structure of “traditional” neighborhoods in place, due to its age. However, the last several decades of zoning amendments and enforcement have been generally in the direction of reduced residential density and increased separation of uses. Most of these actions have been in response to nuisance conditions perceived to be linked to dense, mixed-use patterns. This plan does not have space to thoroughly examine the goals and outcomes of those actions. However, any future zoning amendments should be carefully examined to ensure they do not reduce vital transportation options, and the zoning ordinance should be further examined to determine how appropriate infill development, neighborhood-scaled businesses, and other land use options can be used to support non-motorized transportation.¹¹

Endnotes

1. Gershgor, David. “After decades of decline, no-car households are becoming more common in the US.” Dec 2016. Web.
<<https://qz.com/873704/no-car-households-are-becoming-more-common-in-the-us-after-decades-of-decline/>>
2. United States Census Bureau. 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. 2015. Web. 3 Jun 2015
3. United States Census Bureau. 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Disability
4. Waldrop, Judith, and Sharon M. Stern. “Disability Status: 2000.” U.S. Census. 2003. U.S. Census, Web. 1 Sep 2009.

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-17.pdf> >

5. Liao, Yihua. "Vehicle Ownership Patterns of American Households." Urban Transportation Center at University of Illinois. 2002. University of Illinois, Web. 1 Sep 2009. <<http://www.utc.uic.edu/~fta/Information%20Briefs/vehicles3.pdf>>
6. Cortright, Jon. "Walking the Walk: How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities." CEOs for Cities. Aug 2009. CEOs for Cities, Web. 1 Sep 2009. <http://www.ceosforcities.org/files/WalkingTheWalk_CEOsforCities.pdf>.
7. "Annual Cost to Own and Operate a Vehicle Falls to \$8,698, finds AAA." AAA News Room. AAA, Web. 4 Jun 2015. <<http://newsroom.aaa.com/2015/04/annual-cost-operate-vehicle-falls-8698-finds-aaa/>>
8. Burchell, Robert, and Anthony Downs. Sprawl costs. Island Pr, 2005. Print
9. Littman, Todd. "Where We Want To Be: Home Location Preferences and Their Implication for Smart Growth." Victoria Transport Policy Institute 22 Nov 2009: n. pag. Web. 1 Sep 2009. <<http://www.vtpi.org/sgcp.pdf>>
10. "Healthy Community Design." Designing and Building Healthy Places. Jun 2008. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Web. 1 Sep 2009. <<http://www.cdc.gov/healthy-places>>
11. Levine, Jonathan. Zoned Out. Washington D.C.: RFF Press, 2006. Print

Chapter 2: DEMOGRAPHICS

Under Development

Transportation

The City of Ypsilanti benefits from a location convenient to a major north/south highway (US-23) and a major east/west expressway (I-94), providing residents with easy access to amenities around the region and carrying visitors to Ypsilanti's various special events, though posing challenges to non-motorized travel by creating walls of fast-moving vehicle traffic to cross. Washtenaw Avenue (Business Route US-23) and Michigan Avenue (Business Route US-12) also run east and west through the heart of downtown. The traditional, easily-understood grid pattern generally followed by Ypsilanti's streets lends itself to both motorized and pedestrian traffic, and the AAATA serves to connect downtown Ypsilanti with its neighbors. The city features approximately 98 miles of pedestrian infrastructure, 5.55 miles of off-road bike routes, 3.71 miles of bike lanes, and many bus transit stops. Those who work in the City of Ypsilanti get here through many means, but the majority drive alone. Carpooling and walking are in second and third place, with those who bring their work to them bringing up fourth. The number of those who walk to and from work is very high compared to national and state averages, indicating that Ypsilanti's pedestrian network is above-average as well. However, the fairly low percentage of people who take public transit show room for improvement in that area. Among those who commuted to work, it took them on average 20.0 minutes to get to work, less than the national average of 26.1 minutes.⁵

Non-Motorized Access

As much of Ypsilanti was platted and developed before widespread use of the automobile, the overall layout of the City is friendly to bicycle and pedestrian traffic. The grid layout of streets, the predominantly complete sidewalk network, the compactness of neighborhoods and business districts, and the distribution of parks throughout the community all contribute by putting people close to amenities and providing direct routes to essential destinations.

In pleasant conditions, biking and walking may be by itself a recreational activity, not merely a method of transport. The Border-to-Border Trail aims to build on and expand non-motorized access to parks, to serve the recreational needs of residents who walk and bike for recreation, and to connect communities throughout Washtenaw County.

Bicyclists and pedestrians still encounter barriers to reaching critical destinations, however. The major streets which provide motor vehicle access to, from, and through Ypsilanti are often hostile to bicyclists and pedestrians due to the quantity and speed of traffic, amongst other concerns. Many of these major routes are predominantly one-way streets, which both prioritizes motorized speed and volume over provision of a good environment for bicycling or walking. At

the southern end of Ypsilanti, Huron and Hamilton Streets cross over I-94, but this bridge has no pedestrian facilities, creating a barrier between Ypsilanti Township and the City of Ypsilanti that impedes non-motorized traffic both from the City and from the Township. The City and Township worked with WATS and the Michigan Department of Transportation in 2014 and are pursuing construction of preferred alternatives for a safe pedestrian crossing **before 2025**.

The perception of unsafe or unpleasant environmental factors can reduce willingness to walk or bike. Recently, local and regional efforts have assessed the environmental and psychological environment for non-motorized travel in Ypsilanti. The 2006 Non-Motorized Plan for Washtenaw County inventoried existing sidewalk and bicycling routes and provided a list of capital improvements needed to complete these networks. The goals of that plan are presented at left, and the infrastructure deficiencies are extensively referenced in later chapters. The plan encourages thinking of non-motorized transportation options not only on their own but also in the context of a “complete streets” view of roadways as multi-modal transportation systems.

Mass Transit

Historically, Ypsilanti has had a healthy public transportation option in commuter rail, the interurban transport, and lately, the AAATA bus system. The interurban service and commuter rail have long since been discontinued, but, commuter rail looks to be making a comeback in some form in the future.

The City of Ypsilanti currently has a purchase of service agreement with the Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority (AAATA) to provide bus service to and from Ann Arbor, to and from the surrounding townships, and within the City of Ypsilanti itself. Four routes connect the cities, many currently terminating at the transit center on Pearl Street. The bus system runs seven days a week, with voters approving a 2014 tax millage that increased routes, frequency and hours of service. Door-to-door on-demand services are available through AAATA’s A-Ride service for people with disabilities. There are several full-rate taxi services available as well.

These transit services provide access to crucial resources around the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti area, such as Eastern Michigan University, Saint Joseph Mercy Hospital, the Veterans’ Administration Ann Arbor Healthcare System, the University of Michigan, and Washtenaw Community College. The 2008 Transit Plan for Washtenaw County by WATS, the goals of which are presented above, looks to broaden support for and access to transit service through the County.

Endnotes

1. “Population and Household Estimates for Southeast Michigan.” Southeast Michigan Council of Governments 8 Jun 2015 < <http://semcog.org/Plans-for-the-Region/Regional-Forecast>>

2. Beck, Graham T. "Streets Safe for Walking: How cities are making their byways user-friendly." AARP Bulletin Today 23 Mar 2009: 3 Jun 2015.
<http://bulletin.aarp.org/yourworld/gettingaround/articles/streets_safe_for_walking.html>
3. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, "Unemployment rate in Washtenaw County, MI" Apr 2015: Web. 3 Jun 2015. <[https:// research.stlouisfed.org/fred2/series/MIWASH1URN](https://research.stlouisfed.org/fred2/series/MIWASH1URN)>
4. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Economic Releases" Apr 2015: Web. 3 Jun 2015
<<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm>>
5. United States Census. American Community Survey: 2009- 2013 5-year estimates. Web. 3 Jun 2015. <<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>>

Chapter 3: PROCESS

Initial Analysis

Stakeholder and Public Input
Public Review and Adoption

PROCESS

In 2010, Ypsilanti adopted its first Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan. This original plan was prepared by the City of Ypsilanti Planning & Development staff and stakeholders, including representatives from the City's Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission. Beginning in 2015 and 2018, City of Ypsilanti Planning & Development staff and members of the Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee worked to prepare this updated plan.

Initial Analysis

Staff and volunteers reviewed the 2010 Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan, noting both achievements and on-going priorities. Additionally, the team reviewed currently adopted and draft versions (where available) of the City of Ypsilanti Master Plan, City of Ypsilanti Capital Improvement Plan, Transit Plan for Washtenaw County, Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for Washtenaw County, and the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Based on this background information and input from stakeholders, a vision and four overarching goals were formulated for the plan, presented in Chapter 4: Vision & Goals. Recognizing the importance of maintaining and building upon the efforts of other entities, those goals place the City's role in the transportation system as providing an efficient, safe, and welcoming network in cooperation with non-profits, neighboring communities, and regional entities.

Stakeholder and Public Input

Stakeholder representatives from throughout the City and neighboring communities were invited to take part in the planning process, as were members of community and various advocacy organizations, named on page **viii**.

In September and October 2015, the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee conducted a survey of Ypsilanti community members. Paper copies of the survey were distributed at the Depot Town Farmers Market and at the First Friday Art & Culture Walk. The survey was also disseminated electronically to various Facebook groups related to Ypsilanti. In all, forty-four people completed the survey.

Survey respondents identified the most common barriers to walking, biking and using wheelchairs in Ypsilanti as the lack of bike lanes (66%); prevalence of broken concrete, potholes and crumbling sidewalks (48%); the lack of snow and ice removal (45%); the speed and volume of traffic through town (43%); and unsafe motorists (41%). Additionally, the respondents identified their top priorities for this plan as walking and biking routes along the Washtenaw corridor (1st); bike and pedestrian crossing at interstates – e.g. Huron/Whittaker and I-94 (2nd); and biking and walking routes in commercial corridors such as Depot Town and Downtown (3rd).

Additionally, a Community Forum was held at the Ypsilanti Freight House in June 2017.

Approximately thirty people were in attendance. This forum included a brief presentation on the draft Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan and opportunities for the public to provide feedback on priorities and identify additional areas of concern. Participants rated the following bike lane projects as the most important: installation of an east-west bike route in southern Ypsilanti along Harriet/Spring/Factory/Maus between First and Emerick (1st), installation of an east-west bike route along Washtenaw between Hewitt and Hamilton (2nd - tie), installation of a north-south bike route along Hamilton from Washtenaw to I-94 (2nd - tie). Participants rated the following sidewalk projects as the most important: a north-south pedestrian route along Huron from I-94 to Spring (1st), an east-west pedestrian route along Washtenaw from Bellevue to Cornell (2nd).

Public Review and Adoption

The draft plan was made available for public comment on **(date)**. Within the city, copies of the draft were placed at City Hall. The plan was available as a PDF for download from the City's website, and a notice of the downloadable copy was shared with community groups via email and social media. Copies of the plan were provided to City Council members and the Planning Commission.

On **(date)**, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the draft plan. Comments were heard from community members, and a summary of written comments received was provided to the Commission and the community members in attendance. As a result of comments received on the draft plan, the Commission recommended adoption. **[Insert discussion of revisions made as a result of this process as applicable]**

The City Council adopted the plan on (date).

Chapter 4: VISION & GOALS

Vision

We envision a healthy, vibrant, sustainable future for Ypsilanti. Ypsilanti will have a built and cultural environment that supports and encourages safe, accessible, comfortable and convenient transportation options for people and goods throughout the city and into surrounding communities. Ypsilanti residents and visitors will enthusiastically choose to walk, bicycle, and take public transit over using a personal automobile. Ypsilanti will be an environmentally sustainable city with a safe transportation system, attractive neighborhoods and business districts, and a fantastic quality of life for residents.

We recognize that the infrastructure improvements outlined in this plan are necessary – but not sufficient – to achieve a safe, accessible community that supports the physical activity and transportation needs of all residents.

Goals

The four primary goals for this non-motorized plan are: Vision Zero, Safety, Equity, and Mode-Shift. A fifth goal is to perform an inventory analysis. These goals reflect the Guiding Values identified by the 2013 City Master Plan for a Safe, Diverse, Sustainable City. Objectives and strategies identified in the plan seek to achieve the four primary goals but may overlap with multiple goals and should be seen as beginning steps to implement this plan. Furthermore, specific projects detailed in the subsequent chapters of this plan were selected to advance the goals of this plan.

VISION ZERO (Goal 1) AND SAFETY (Goal 2)

What is Vision Zero? It is the goal to reduce the number of traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries to zero. At its core, this goal is inspired by the belief that traffic collisions are preventable, and even one fatality is too many (City of Boulder, n.d.).

Why?

As stated in the City of Ann Arbor's forthcoming *Comprehensive Transportation Plan*, "Vision Zero puts forward a new vision for safety that differs significantly from traditional approaches and recognizes that: 1. safe mobility is a basic right, 2. traffic crashes are preventable, 2. humans make mistakes, and 4. safety is a shared responsibility" (City of Ann Arbor, Final Draft, October 2020, 14). This plan asserts that Ypsilanti should strive to be a community that has a safe transportation system for all users regardless of their mode of transportation.

Objectives:

1. Eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries in Ypsilanti by 2025.

- Benchmark:
 - 2 total fatalities between 2015 and 2019, and 54 suspected serious injuries crashes between 2015 and 2019.
 - 1 bicyclist fatality between 2015 and 2019, and 3 bicyclist and 12 pedestrian suspected serious injury crashes between 2015 and 2019 (note this is a subset of total crashes).
- Source: Michigan Traffic Crash Facts(<https://bit.ly/2XVJPZz>)

Safety Sidebar:

According to the Federal Highway Administration, safety Countermeasures are defined as: “An action taken to counteract a danger or threat. In the context of safety – a safety countermeasure is an action designed to counteract a threat to safety.

Example: after examining traffic crash history, roadway geometry, and other factors, the construction of a modern roundabout was selected as the appropriate countermeasure to address identified safety issues.”

Strategies:

- Pass a City Council resolution that confirms Ypsilanti’s official goal to have zero traffic-related fatalities by 2025.
 - Develop a “quick-build” safety program that will quickly implement safety changes similar to the recently developed program in Ann Arbor.
 - Identify and review high-crash or reported near-miss locations to develop safety improvement measures.
 - Implement safety countermeasures at locations with crash trends.
 - Coordinate safety improvements with other planned projects and construction work in the City.
 - Incorporate multimodal planning in all new capital improvement projects.
 - Promote residents to participate in identifying recurring excessive speeding areas using Ypsilanti Connect of future tools and connect this promotion to the newly created Responsive Traffic Safety Improvement Policy (ReTSIP).
 - Monitor the transportation system using crash and speed data, Ypsilanti Connect complaints, as well as other tools which may become available, to identify and mitigate safety problems.
 - Review best practices literature to develop staffing expertise on bicycle and pedestrian safety planning and countermeasures.
2. Develop and implement a pedestrian safe crosswalk stop law.

Strategies:

- Grant pedestrians the right-of-way when using street crossings without a stop sign or traffic light for oncoming traffic, known as unsignalized crossings.

3. Construct robust unsignalized pedestrian crossings at key locations throughout the City.

Strategies:

- Connect Non-Motorized Advisory Committee (NMAC) and the Capital Improvements Plan process and the appropriate yearly budgets to ensure goals and objectives of this plan are implemented in consultation with community members.
 - Explore creating new and improving existing unsignalized crossings at areas with high pedestrian volume (e.g. Ferris Street and Hamilton St), link senior housing to downtown amenities, or where high density residential developments sit across the street from neighborhood retail (e.g. Courtland St and Washtenaw Ave).
4. Increase the proportion of residents who feel safe walking in their neighborhood to 90% by 2025.
- Benchmark: 85.4% of residents reported feeling safe walking in 2015
 - Source: Washtenaw County Health Improvement Plan Survey

Strategies:

- Review current ordinances regarding landscaping and fencing to ensure that pedestrians and wheelchair users are visible to vehicles at potential points of conflict, such as crosswalks, alleys, and driveways.
- Ensure the planned non-motorized pathway on Huron Street at I-94 is completed.
- Improve the existing non-motorized crossing on Huron and Grove/Ecorse.
- Create ongoing partnership and dialogue with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to review state-owned routes within the City limits and align vision zero framework with MDOT projects and maintenance. Furthermore, important items such as signal timings, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, speed limits, left-turns, turning radii, and the Master Plan goal of one-way streets realignment should be part of ongoing discussions.

EQUITY IN NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION (Goal 3)

According to the report *At The Intersection of Active Transportation and Equity* published by the Safe Routes to School Partnership, “transportation is the linchpin that allows us to function in our daily lives. Whether we move by foot, bicycle, car, bus, skateboard, or wheelchair, we all need to travel to meet everyday needs. But our society suffers from considerable inequity, and transportation is no exception.” Low-income people, people of color, and people with disabilities “face transportation hurdles that can mean that just accessing basic needs is time consuming, dangerous, and sometimes almost impossible. Instead of travel time allowing people to safely and conveniently get the physical activity they need while accomplishing daily objectives, travel is instead a source of stress that undermines health” (Safe Routes to School Partnership et al., n.d.).

Despite the challenges that exist for some in our City and Country there is work communities can do to increase equity and this plan seeks to nudge our City to do just that. Investing in alternative forms of transportation and establishing policies and activities that support equitable solutions help create a more equitable city accomplishing multiple goals of this plan. As the Safe Routes to School Partnership report goes on to say “Our transportation system can be one that supports our local economies, prioritizes our local streets as a community resource, lets children breathe clean air, and allows neighbors to meet and chat without the menace of nearby high speed traffic – but we will need to work together to achieve that vision” (Safe Routes to School Partnership et al., n.d.).

EQUITY SIDEBAR STATEMENT

FROM THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

“What do we mean by equity? Equity addresses the effects of power imbalances and the social, economic, and political differences that generate disparate outcomes for people in arenas like health, education, and employment. Equity recognizes that different people have different barriers to living healthy, fulfilled lives. In order to allow people to get to the same outcome, we need to understand the different barriers and opportunities that affect different groups, and craft our approaches, policies, and programs with those various challenges and needs in mind.”

Objectives:

OBJECTIVES SIDEBAR STATEMENT

Achieving equity will not be a one-time accomplishment. Instead, achieving an equitable transportation system should be considered in a 3C approach: continuing, comprehensive, and collaborative analysis of the plan objectives and strategies.

1. Make Ypsilanti Accessible to All.

Strategies:

- Review and/or develop an Americans with Disability Act Transition Plan.
- Assess the existing pedestrian network, especially intersections, for ADA compliance.
 - Benchmark: NMAC should work with City staff following inventory analysis completion to determine a benchmark.
- Ensure current Ypsilanti Connect software allows appropriate responses to complaints of inaccessible bicycle, pedestrian, and wheelchair user routes.
- Implement proactive measures to eliminate barriers in accessibility to key public destinations within the city.
 - Benchmark: 1. NMAC and/or City staff should work with local disability advocates to identify key public destinations. 2. Develop a list of measures that achieve strategy.
- Ensure that pedestrian crossings in high-traffic areas, such as those within the central business district and within one-half mile radius of transit centers, are handicap-accessible.

- Review and revise the current sidewalk occupancy standards and permit process to ensure successful balance between accessibility and business space.

2. Invest transportation dollars in neighborhoods equitably.

Strategies:

- Develop and institute new neighborhood-based transportation planning processes to coordinate transportation investments with community members to provide socially desired and meaningful transportation, both motorized and non-motorized, investments.
 - Benchmark: Develop neighborhood-based implementation/action plans that serve to inform transportation investment decisions.
- Prioritize Capital Improvement projects, both new and maintenance, that improve or create equity in the transportation system.
- Strengthen connection of Non-Motorized Advisory Committee (NMAC) and the Department of Public Services to ensure goals and objectives of this plan are implemented in consultation with community members.

3. Make Ypsilanti a physically active community.

Strategies:

- Create a Neighborhood Connector system composed of low-stress streets and pathways that connect residents to jobs, entertainment opportunities, and our park system.
- Review and seek to improve connections between Ypsilanti parks and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Link the Border-to-Border Trail with Ypsilanti's parks system.
 - Benchmark: Increase the proportion of residents who engage in any leisure time physical activity to 85% by 2025. 71.7% of residents participated in physical activity in 2015.
 - Source: Washtenaw County Health Improvement Plan Survey

4. Make code and maintenance enforcement equitable in Ypsilanti.

Strategies:

- Enforce snow removal standards on public non-motorized facilities, such as bike lanes and sidewalks, in order to maintain accessibility during winter.
- Work with Ypsilanti Police Department to enforce traffic ordinances at identified high-crash locations (See Vision Zero objectives) in a manner that improves safety for all users and is equitable to Ypsilanti residents.
 - Benchmark: Develop a list of traffic violations that serve to increase driver awareness of bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users.

- Promote citizen-action to maintain snow removal standards on non-motorized facilities, such as driveways, sidewalks, and curbs in order to maintain accessibility during winter.
- Promote residents to participate in the snow removal code enforcement process using Ypsilanti Connect or future tools.
- Promote residents to participate in the sidewalk pavement maintenance code enforcement process using Ypsilanti Connect or future tools.
- Promote resources available to residents that assist sidewalk maintenance and replacement.
- Promote residents to participate in the public right-of-way vegetation maintenance code enforcement process using available tools
- Support efforts by the Ypsi Bike Co-Op on its work to offer free or low cost bicycle repairs as well as teaching bicyclists how to perform simple repairs themselves.

MODE SHIFT (Goal 4)

Mode-shift is a change between one mode (type) of transportation to another. In the context of this plan, mode-shift is a change from a motor vehicle mode to transit, walking, or bicycling mode. This plan asserts that the City of Ypsilanti will pursue and align transportation investments that provide complete networks for each mode based upon a complete streets framework. Furthermore, these networks will provide safe and convenient connections between modes and provide connections between the city, county, and state systems (City of Boulder, n.d.).

Why?

Creating a transportation network that allows people to shift between modes will benefit all Ypsilanti residents in a multitude of ways. Some examples include reductions in air pollution and carbon emissions, reduced traffic congestion, increased foot-traffic for local businesses, and increased positive health outcomes for local residents (C40 Knowledge Hub, n.d.).

Objectives:

1. Increase the proportion of residents who take public transit to work to 11% by 2025.
 - Benchmark: 8.6% public transportation in 2012-2016
 - Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates

Strategies:

- Monitor the transportation system using partner transit ridership and mode-split data to assist in new capital project identification within the City or AAATA jurisdictions.
- Coordinate site plan review with the AAATA on sites that are adjacent to a major bus route.
- Engage with AAATA, local community organizations, and local businesses to improve the accessibility, usability, and attractiveness of bus stops.

- Work with current property owners, current business, and prospective property owners and businesses to bridge gaps and complete the “last mile” of non-motorized network-building.
2. Increase the proportion of residents who walk or bike to work to 15% and/or increase the proportion of residents who walk or bike for transportation to 33% by 2023 by 2023.
 - Benchmark: 11.9% walk and 1.2% bike in 2012-2016
 - Benchmark: 27.2% reported walking or biking for transportation in past week in 2015
 - Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates
 - Source: Washtenaw County Health Improvement Plan Survey

Strategies:

- Create a Neighborhood Connector system composed of low-stress streets and pathways that connect residents to jobs, entertainment opportunities, and our park system.
 - Install additional permanent and seasonal bicycle parking in Downtown and Depot Town.
 - Support efforts by the City Non-Motorized Advisory Committee, Bike Ypsi, and other organizations to offer bicycle safety educational efforts.
 - Support efforts by the City Non-Motorized Advisory Committee to maintain the City’s Bike Friendly Community award status by the League of American Bicyclists and also apply to become a Walk Friendly Community through America Walks.
3. Prioritize maintenance projects that improve and maintain critical links between the non-motorized network in order to further mode-shift.
 4. Prioritize maintenance projects that bridge service or infrastructure gaps

Strategies:

- Strengthen connection of Non-Motorized Advisory Committee (NMAC) and the Department of Public Services to ensure goals and objectives of this plan are implemented in consultation with community members.

INVENTORY ANALYSIS (Goal 5)

A local analysis that identifies the existing infrastructure within the City limits should be undertaken and include components that make up the bicycle, pedestrian, and regional trail networks. Although some analysis currently exists like a partial sidewalk inventory and ADA compliant curb-ramps, a full analysis should be undertaken. Preferably this analysis should focus on connectivity and accessibility as well as examine gaps in infrastructure and obstacles that prevent residents from undertaking non-motorized travel.

Objectives:

1. Complete a non-motorized inventory analysis of the current non-motorized environment that will include, but not be limited to the bicycle, pedestrian, and transit networks and associated accessibility needs and gaps.

Strategies:

- Hire consultant or student group to perform inventory analysis.

CHAPTER 5: POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATION

During the public process, changes to City policies, regulations, and ordinances that would foster a robust multimodal transportation network were identified. In this chapter are recommendations borne of that process that will help ensure that future development minimizes adverse impacts on accessibility, instead promoting design that reduces the need for and use of single-occupant automobiles by removing barriers to the use of alternate means of transportation.

Grant pedestrians the right-of-way

Grant pedestrians the right-of-way when using street crossings without a stop sign or traffic light for oncoming traffic, known as unsignalized crossings. An example would be those at Cross between Oakwood and Summit, or at Pearl and North Huron. The high speed and volume of traffic at many existing unsignalized crossings is dangerous and generally discourages would-be pedestrians from using them. By granting, signing, and enforcing pedestrian right-of-way, these crossings may become safer and more commonly used, as well as bringing average speeds on these streets back in line with posted speed limits.

Additionally, the City might explore creation of more unsignalized crossings at areas with high pedestrian volume, such as Ferris Street and Hamilton, linking senior housing to downtown amenities, or at Courtland and Washtenaw, where two multifamily developments sit directly across the street from neighborhood retail.

Invest transportation dollars equitably

Under Development

New Project Prioritization

As more competition for limited funding continues to limit new transformational projects a greater proportion of local transportation projects will be maintenance projects. As these projects are identified and selected ,projects that improve and maintain critical links between the non-motorized network, bridge service or infrastructure gaps, that improve or create equity in the transportation system should be prioritized.

Enforce traffic laws and ordinances equitably

Enforcing traffic laws and ordinance while ensuring equity in the transportation system is a difficult task that many communities are attempting to solve. This plan envisions an Ypsilanti where all users of the transportation system receive equitable treatment. Rather than simply suggesting increased police enforcement this plan recommends city staff, council, and residents work with the Ypsilanti Police Department to enforce traffic ordinances in a manner that improves safety for all users and is equitable to Ypsilanti residents.

Chapter 6: MAINTENANCE

Even the best-built sidewalk, bench, bike rack, or curb cut needs to be maintained for it to remain useful. By ensuring that maintenance responsibilities are clear, consistent, and enforced, we can ensure that Ypsilanti's infrastructure contributes to a welcoming atmosphere and has a long, useful life. This chapter aims to help clarify maintenance responsibilities, suggest methods to ensure maintenance is performed, and standards by which infrastructure conditions can be judged.

Condition Maintenance Audits

Detailed examinations of the area immediately around key non-motorized facilities and transit hubs can identify and address issues from sidewalk condition to motor vehicle traffic, providing a basis for improving the safety and enjoyment of biking or walking. Walkability audits would be most appropriate within a one to two-block radius, while a bikeability audit could be community-wide. These audits could be performed as neighborhood groups, schools, or other partners were interested in participating. Although scattered non-motorized evaluations have been made in recent years, including 2004 and 2008 walking audits of downtown and a 2009 walkability audit of Depot Town, a more coordinated and widespread evaluation program would help identify future projects.

Ensure that each intersection has visible and consistent street signs to aid navigability. Residents and visitors to Ypsilanti frequently mention the difficulty of navigating Ypsilanti as a barrier to visiting its commercial areas by any means of transportation. By adequately signing Ypsilanti's streets and central business district, we can reduce this barrier.

Winter and Snow Maintenance

Continue to coordinate and enforce snow removal standards on non-motorized facilities such as bike lanes and sidewalks. There exist no provisions to ensure that on-street bicycle lanes or non-motorized pathways are kept clear of snow and ice. Motor vehicle snow routes are generally limited to the state trunklines, many of which have significant non-motorized deficiencies, thus rendering snow removal there of little use to those who do not drive a personal automobile. These trunklines include part or all of Michigan Avenue, South Hamilton, South Huron, West Cross, North Huron, Ecorse, Washtenaw, and North Hamilton. High-priority routes that should be included in snow removal enforcement include those linking residential areas to Eastern Michigan University; grade schools; the central business district; lifeline resources such as pharmacies, doctors' offices, and City services; and roads with bus stops.

Transit Hubs

Provide special attention to the area within a half-mile radius of the potential Amtrak rail stop in Depot Town. The Federal Highway Administration identifies one half-mile as a reasonable outer bound for walking trips to access commuter rail. All of Depot Town, as well as parts of downtown and Eastern Michigan University, are within this distance. Thus, this area has a high potential to become an entry point and locus of activity for non-motorized users. Ensuring that maintenance, signage, and facilities are consistent and excellent throughout this area will help facilitate their movement.

Provide special attention to the area within a three-block radius of the Ypsilanti Transit Center. The bus system is crucial in the transportation of many Ypsilanti residents and visitors and has the potential to become more heavily-utilized with the construction of the commuter rail stop. Maintaining facilities and signage in this area will help to ensure that using this service is a positive experience for all who use it.

Chapter 7: BUILD

Survey respondents and public participants overwhelmingly indicated that they wanted a safe route over I-94 at Huron, as well as a safer crossing over I-94 at Grove. SIDEBAR STATEMENT

Components of Ypsilanti’s transportation are currently incomplete. Several of these deficiencies have been called out in the Washtenaw Area Traffic Study (WATS) Non-Motorized Plan for Washtenaw County and in other studies. This chapter calls particular attention to several critical disjunctions and prioritized the remedying of deficiencies. Approximate costs are given, but as these are only rough approximations, it is not recommended that these be included in a budgeting process or as an indication of final cost.

Safe Pedestrian Crossings

Construct robust unsignalized pedestrian crossings at key locations throughout the City. Several crossings identified by stakeholders as unsafe or currently popular “jaywalking” locations include Hamilton at Ferris, Hamilton at Pearl, Huron at Pearl, Leforge at Huron River Drive and Washtenaw at Courtland. These crossings would require the cooperation of MDOT. At these and existing unsignalized pedestrian crossings, pedestrian refuges should be upgraded or built, signage should be upgraded or installed, and traffic light installation should be considered in the long-term.

Goals Served: Safety, Equity, Mode-Shift

Create a Neighborhood Connector System

Neighborhood Connectors are streets with low volumes and speeds that are designated and, over time, designed to prioritize bicycle travel. A Neighborhood Connector system in Ypsilanti should provide a connected network of safe and low-stress streets and pathways that connect residents to jobs, entertainment opportunities, Ypsilanti’s park system, and the Border to Border system. Although the Neighborhood Connector system should prioritize bicycle travel and relevant infrastructure investments, the system should also work for residents that choose to walk as well and a well-balanced system should be developed. The wider goal of the Neighborhood Connector system is to attract a broad population of people (ages 8 to 80) as confident and comfortable pedestrians and cyclists. **An initial map has been developed with a small stakeholder group and can be found in figure X**

Goals Served: Safety, Equity, Mode-Shift

Connect Freeway Bridges

Provide a non-motorized crossing on Huron Street at I-94. A study completed in 2014 provides background for this recommendation, as well as several options and recommendations for such a non-motorized crossing. The final preferred option includes the connection to the existing sidewalk systems, modifications to vehicle travel lanes, revised intersection configurations, and potential signage and signalization configurations. This connection is a currently programmed project in detailed design and scheduled for 2022 construction.

Improve the existing non-motorized crossing over I-94 at Grove. Completing the sidewalk network at the crossing over I-94 at Grove Road would complement the pedestrian route to the east in the residential area, and enable employees, residents, and visitors in these areas to move more freely between these concentrations of assets. Construction was completed in 2020 extending the Border-to-Border Trail south to the freeway bridge. A current project to widen the minimal sidewalk on the bridge is programmed for construction in 2021.

Tables

Complete the pedestrian network in Ypsilanti. Table 8.1, below, is based on the 2006 Non-Motorized Plan for Washtenaw County list of pedestrian deficiencies in Ypsilanti. Cost is estimated at \$200,000 per mile for new installation of a five-foot wide concrete sidewalk. Curb cuts were not inventoried as part of this process. Priorities were determined based on location and severity of deficiency, as determined by conversations with stakeholders, but should be reviewed periodically by the Planning Department and the Non-Motorized Committee. Length is noted in feet, and price is shown in thousands of dollars.

(tables omitted from this document - edit on [Google Sheets](#))

Complete the bicycle transportation network in Ypsilanti. **Table 8.2, below, is based on the WATS Non-motorized Plan for Washtenaw County** list of bicycle deficiencies in Ypsilanti. Cost is estimated at \$25,000 per mile for a standard bicycle lane. Priorities were determined based on location and severity of deficiency, as determined by conversations with stakeholders. Pavement markings indicating that motor vehicle operators should share the road with bicyclists, or sharrows, should be considered in areas too narrow to accommodate a full bike lane, as a temporary measure in areas where cost is prohibitive, or on roads where good visibility, low motor vehicle traffic speed, low motor vehicle traffic volume, or excellent motor vehicle driver habits do not implicate a need for a separate bike lane.

Sharrows are relatively inexpensive, and for the purposes of this plan, are estimated at approximately \$100 per marking.¹ Likewise, "Share the Road" signage, approximately \$200 per unit, should be placed at the beginning and ending of any bike lane and at all major entrances to

the City.2 Length is noted in feet, and price is shown in thousands of dollars.

(tables omitted from this document - edit on [Google Sheets](#))

Endnotes

1. Sallaberry, Michael. "Shared Lane Markings." Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center. Web. 21 Aug 2015. <[http:// www.bicyclinginfo.org/bikesafe/case_studies/casestudy.cfm?CS_NUM=711](http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/bikesafe/case_studies/casestudy.cfm?CS_NUM=711)>

2. Meletiou, Mary Paul. "Share the Road Sign Initiative." Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center. Web. 21 Aug 2015. <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/bikesafe/case_studies/casestudy.cfm?CS_NUM=708>.

Chapter 8: PROMOTE

The most common issue cited by drivers, bikers, and pedestrians on surveys, at the Farmers' Market, and at the public meeting was that parties involved in traffic conflicts seemed to be unaware of the law. These participants repeatedly recommended further education about traffic laws. - SIDEBAR STATEMENT

A built-out and well-maintained fully multimodal transportation network will likely be under-utilized if residents and visitors are unaware of it, and experienced users may become frustrated by an influx of new users unfamiliar with the norms and laws regarding its use. By educating current and potential users about Ypsilanti's transportation network, non-motorized traffic can be increased while minimizing potential conflicts between users and motorized traffic or new and continuing users. Many of these promotion strategies should be launched or re-intensified at the change of the seasons, as people often see these as opportunities to change habits.

Promotion to Future Residents and Employers

Work with Ypsi Real (Convention & Visitors Bureau), the Downtown Development Authority, Depot Town Association, Downtown Association of Ypsilanti, First Fridays, local businesses and Eastern Michigan University to encourage and promote safe non-motorized transportation and recreation for residents and visitors.

Create wayfinding signage for non-motorized users.

Promote and support such programs as Safe Routes to School, a 'getDowntown" program similar to that of Ann Arbor, a "guaranteed ride home", and car-sharing.

Obtain, continue and improve national certifications such as the League of American Bicyclist's "Bike-Friendly City" award (Ypsilanti received in 2017 at a bronze level) and America Walks Bike Friendly Community award (Ypsilanti received an honorable mention in 2017).

Promotion to Current Residents

Promote citizen-action to maintain snow removal standards on non-motorized facilities, such as driveways, sidewalks, and curbs in order to maintain accessibility during winter.

Promote residents to participate in the snow removal code enforcement process using Ypsilanti Connect or future tools.

Promote residents to participate in the sidewalk pavement maintenance code enforcement process using Ypsilanti Connect or future tools.

Promote resources available to residents that assist sidewalk maintenance and replacement.

Promote residents to participate in the public right-of-way vegetation maintenance code enforcement process using available tools

Promote residents to participate in identifying recurring excessive speeding areas using Ypsilanti Connect or future tools and connect this promotion to the newly created Responsive Traffic Safety Improvement Policy (ReTSIP).

General Public Education Strategies

Partner with WEMU, Bike Ypsi, the Washtenaw Bicycling & Walking Coalition and the Ypsilanti District Library to provide periodic non-motorized education sessions and public service bulletins.

Create educational posters for display at high-traffic areas such as Ypsilanti District Library branches and local grocery and convenience stores.

Work with local organizations, such as Bike Ypsi and Program to Educate All Cyclists (PEAC), to offer courses on how to operate and maintain a bicycle safely.

Work with local landlords to distribute information to residents each fall and spring. Due to the high number of students who rent, fall is a common move-in time in Ypsilanti.

Work with the AAATA on outreach to bus system users, including providing area maps and directional signage at bus stops.

Partner with EMU to distribute information about opportunities for walking, biking, and taking transit within Ypsilanti as part of welcome events, student orientations, and other special events.

Work with the Ypsilanti High School and drivers' education providers to educate new drivers about interactions with bicyclists and pedestrians.

During May, promote "National Bike Month", "Commuter Challenge Month", "Bike-Bus-Walk Week", and "Bike to Work Day." Provide special information and news of alternative transportation events via press releases, social media, and the City's website on transit,

carpooling, biking, and walking options.

Chapter 10: FUNDING

As the City of Ypsilanti's budget has tightened over general fund expenditures on transportation system improvements and operations have been significantly reduced. Sustainable financing mechanisms for multimodal transportation policy development, policy implementation, construction and maintenance of facilities, education, and other needs are listed below. Although many of these have been used by the City at some point in the past, some would require action by voters, in cooperation with another agency, or by a higher level of government.

Ongoing

Local, Regional, or County Dedicated Millage

As the majority of Ypsilanti's budget is drawn from property taxes, the amount of land area occupied by public, semipublic institutional uses, and other non-profit, non-property-taxpaying uses has a significant impact upon Ypsilanti's financial wellbeing. Although EMU accounts for a significant share of this area, Ypsilanti also hosts long-established institutional uses such as schools, cemeteries, non-profits, and churches that serve both residents of Ypsilanti and residents of surrounding areas. Such service is not only in terms of literal service, but also in terms of employment. As such, capturing regional monies to support regional access to these services makes sense. This option is available to the County and to extant regional authorities. A new regional authority could be formed with neighboring communities, or an existing regional authority could expand to seek a regional transportation revenue. This option would not likely provide a massive influx of money into Ypsilanti's transportation system, however, as the authority's spending would also be regional in scope. Such an authority would have greater benefits in terms of coordination of programming, construction, and maintenance than in direct spending.

Michigan Transportation Fund (Act 51)

Revenues from the Michigan Transportation fund are generated from state gas and value taxes. The funding is divided among the Michigan Department of Transportation, road commissions, cities and villages. Each Act 51 agency is required by law to spend a minimum average of 1% of their Act 51 dollars on non-motorized improvements during a rolling ten-year period. A change in State policy eliminated the ability to use this money on maintenance projects, such as street sweeping, in an effort to increase the number of improvements constructed. This funding may

be used to provide the match for federal funds. WATS encourages agencies to spend more than this minimum allotment wherever possible. Ann Arbor has recently increased their set-aside to 5%. Ypsilanti's spending on non-motorized projects from Act 51 funds has fluctuated over the past decade, as shown in Figure 10.1, however, over the last five years the City has spent approximately 9.5% of Act 51 dollars received on non-motorized transportation projects. This suggests that Ypsilanti is well-able to set 5% aside or more a year. It is also possible that by creating an internal mandate to spend 5% of these funds on non-motorized transport, spending on these projects may stabilize, guaranteeing future funding.

Traffic Bureau & Parking Bureau

Establishing a police traffic bureau would normalize funding for traffic enforcement and education. Having a dedicated force for traffic enforcement would also enable Ypsilanti to attract additional future grant funding.

Project Based

Transportation Enhancement Funds Enhancement funding is awarded to local road agencies through a competitive process managed by MDOT. The State of Michigan receives approximately \$20-25 million annually to be spent on enhancement projects. A rolling application period allows agencies to submit projects at any time, and awards are made up to three times per year. This funding requires a minimum twenty percent match, with over-matching given additional consideration. Enhancement awards can be used for: provision of non-motorized facilities; provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists; preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use for non-motorized trails); streetscape and landscape improvements; and environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat continuity.

Surface Transportation Program – Urban Funds (STP-U)

Washtenaw County is allocated approximately \$4 million in STP-U each year. This money must be spent each year, does not carry over, and requires a twenty percent match. WATS has a policy of spending ten percent of the County's STP-U funds to non-motorized projects over time. This amounts to \$400,000 per year. In recent years, few non-motorized improvements have been submitted for by agencies during the call for improvements. This plan will serve as a resource of possible improvements that can be submitted for STP-U funding consideration.

Congestion Mitigation / Air Quality (CMAQ)

CMAQ funding is provided to areas that are not in compliance or are in a maintenance area for

air quality standards; as Washtenaw County is a designated non-compliance area, the City of Ypsilanti is eligible, and has been able to use these funds in the past for signal upgrades on Michigan Avenue. CMAQ funds are awarded on a competitive basis by MDOT and SEMCOG and must demonstrate that they reduce emissions to be eligible. Washtenaw County CMAQ projects are prioritized by WATS Committees. This funding requires a minimum twenty percent match. Approximately \$8 million is available in the Southeast Michigan region for CMAQ non-transit improvements.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Ypsilanti is part of the Washtenaw Urban County Partnership, and thus considered an entitlement community. The Urban County, a partnership between the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners and the elected officials of Ypsilanti and other area jurisdictions, receives direct federal allocations together, rather than applying for competitive funds separately, in order to meet their individual community and economic development goals. The Office of Community Development (OCD) administers CDBG and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) funds collectively for member jurisdictions. The annual allocation to jurisdictions takes into account the total population, low- income population, and housing issues for each jurisdiction. Portions of this funding are often used for transportation and accessibility projects, such as curb cuts and bike lanes, and could be used for future infrastructure development.

Downtown Development Authority

In recent years, the Ypsilanti DDA has taken the initiative in helping create bicycle and pedestrian amenities, including bicycle parking, medians, and pedestrian refuges. The DDA may be willing to engage in future efforts to complete the non- motorized network, such as cost-sharing for bicycle parking, cost-sharing for bus passes, or partnerships with car-sharing organizations, such as ZipCar.

Donations and Foundation Grants

Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations, and individuals will often contribute to programs to benefit the communities in which they are located. Private sector contributions may be in the form of monetary contributions, the donation of land, the provision of volunteer services, or the contribution of equipment or facilities. Four such grantors that may be interested in funding Ypsilanti's transportation system improvements due to their strong interest in promoting public health and the health of the environment, are the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, the Bikes Belong Coalition, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Special assessments

A special assessment is a special kind of tax on a subset of a community. Special assessments are placed on those adjacent landowners who will receive the greatest benefit from a project to be funded using a special assessment. In areas with significant non-motorized deficiencies, special assessments may be used to pay for the improvements. As sidewalks and are currently the maintenance responsibility of the adjacent property owner, in cases of deficiency, the City may elect to remedy the deficiency and assess the property owner for the work performed.

Leverage Private Development

As development occurs near critical transportation elements, such as planned right-of-ways for the Border-to-Border Trail, stretches with un-built or under-built sidewalks and crossings, and catchments with no bicycle parking, work with the developers and private landowners to help provide for these public good

Chapter 11: IMPLEMENTATION

1

The goal of implementation is to introduce changes, upgrades, and new facilities into the network with the least amount of disruption and the highest level of interoperability. The table below presents the recommended improvements, relative cost, relative impact, and an approximate timeframe for implementation or completion of the projects presented by this plan. Of course, projects may take more or less time depending on funding availability and coordination with other capital improvement projects. This table, as with all other elements of this plan, should be reviewed after five years for progress and updated as necessary.

(tables omitted from this document - edit on Google Sheets)

