



# BATTLE CREEK

## 2023 NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Approved: December 19, 2023

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# 01

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The City of Battle Creek takes pride in its extensive network of trails, paths, sidewalks, water trails for its residents, workers, and tourists. This network provides bike lanes, sidewalks, shared use and hiking trails, and water routes that connect people to parks, schools, downtown amenities, transit, and recreational opportunities. The City continues to plan for public use of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Rivers, and the Goguac Lake for kayakers, canoer, and Stand Up Paddle boarders.



The City of Battle Creek not only provides extensive public parks and trails, it is well-connected to several regional trails. The Great Lakes-to-Lakes bike trail runs through downtown Battle Creek on its way from South Haven and Port Huron. The Iron Belle hiking trail also runs through downtown Battle Creek as it stretches from Detroit to Iron Wood in the Upper Peninsula. Further, the North Country hiking trail which stretches through many Midwestern states also passes through downtown Battle Creek.

Since 2006 with the adoption of the City's first community-wide non-motorized transportation plan, strides have been made in creating more healthy and safe choices for non-motorized



transportation users. Between 2006 and 2019, nearly 40 miles of new routes were established, consisting of new bike lanes, shared use trails, and wide street shoulders. This was accomplished through gaining local and state policy support, adopting new land use regulations, maintaining existing infrastructure, and adopting new local policies. These efforts have won the City of Battle Creek a Silver Bicycle Friendly Community award in 2017 by the League of American Bicyclists national organization.



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New planning efforts, community needs, and infrastructure designs need updating. The 2006 plan is still being used but new community needs have arisen. Also, new non-motorized infrastructure designs have become acceptable for use nation-wide and can be effective in Battle Creek. Further, City staff's capacity has increased to better address these changes through a new non-motorized transportation plan.

The 2023 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan gathered community's needs through various public engagement opportunities prior to the COVID pandemic. The

community continues to desire new routes and maintenance of existing routes. These have been mapped and provide areas of focus for future planning and investment efforts for the next 15 years.

Challenges and constraints will need to be overcome when accomplishing some goals of this plan. Over time, the community's priorities may change but ensuring the community and policymakers maintain support of the long-term vision of the plan will be key for its full implementation.

The plan wouldn't be possible without the community taking pride and strong interest in

ensuring safe and well-connected routes for non-motorized users. Staff especially extends particular gratitude to those who took the time to complete the public engagement survey, attend various workshops, join the advisory committee, and assist in the subject plan. Various city departments provided invaluable supporting gathering data, information, maps, etc.

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## Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Advisory Committee Members

Jacob Schacht, Manager's Office: Running/ Walking interests

Duska Brumm, Director of Parks & Rec.

Carl Fedders, City Assistant DPW Director

Mike Wood, Bicycle Advisory Committee

Diane Wichman, Community Member

Adam Jenks, Community Member

Simon Insley, Community Member

Mary Nelsen, Community Member

Randall Champlin, Community Member

Susan Anderson, Community Member

Sandy Bliesener, Community Member



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## 02



# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Introduction

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The Battle Creek non-motorized plan delves into the many benefits of establishing a city-network of routes, pathways, water-based amenities, etc. for daily, weekend, and seasonal use. The design and location of those elements greatly influence where people choose to go, or avoid, and ensure that where they want to go will be safe and meets their needs.

## ■ BACKGROUND

In the past +20 years, communities across the nation have been investing in and reaping the benefits of providing healthy and sustainable transportation choices for their community through planning, building, and adopting policies for non-motorized users (i.e. pedestrians, bicyclists, kayakers, etc.). During the same period, the nation continues to deal with an increase in avoidable health-related illnesses resulting from poor diets, sedentary lifestyles, and lack of exercise. Communities are improving their streets with sidewalks and bike lanes, adding river walks and bike trails, increasing education and programming around healthy outdoor activities, and partnering with local organizations such as schools,

bicycle and running stores, health clinics, etc.

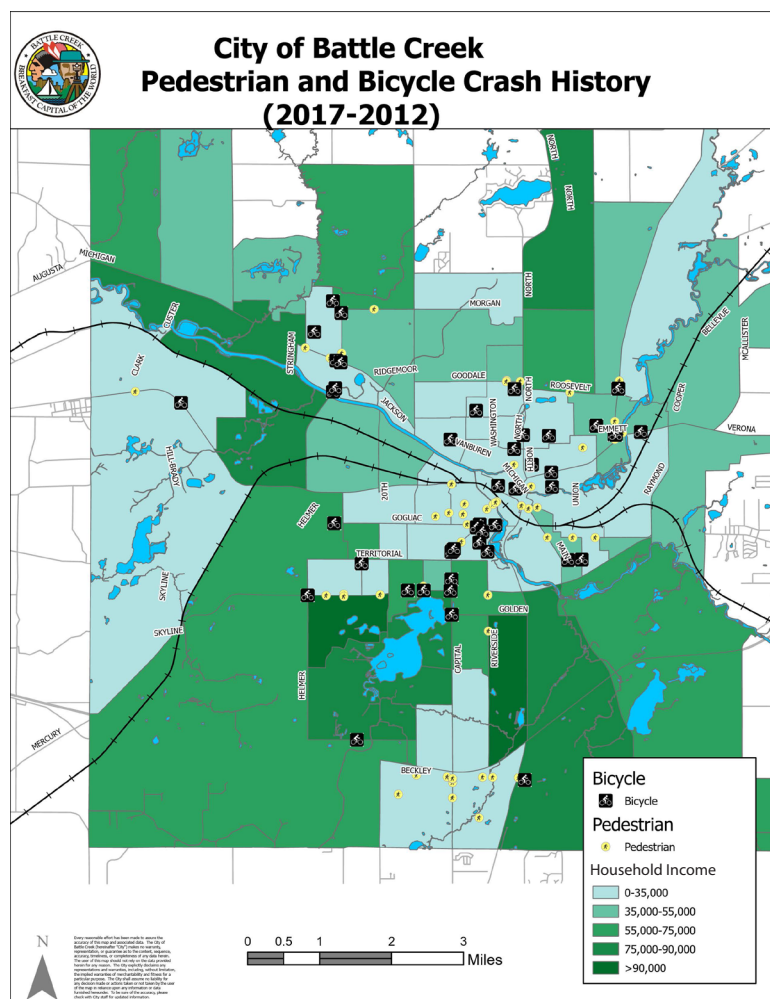
Michigan communities of all sizes are adopting and implementing non-motorized transportation plans to address the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and water-based users for not only recreational or tourists needs but also for daily neighborhood-scale use. This includes commuting to work, neighborhood pathways connections, dog walking, and walking/biking to school. This plan includes an emphasis on future transportation routes that connect areas where there is a concentration of people, lower income families, and people with fewer choices about how they move about the community, to regional trail networks, bus routes, and employment centers.



# WHY NON-MOTORIZED FACILITIES MATTER

Nationally, regionally and locally, incidents of crashes between pedestrians and bicyclists is increasing despite advances in vehicular technology and safety features. Additionally, miles traveled by vehicle has decreased as a result of fuel prices, work from home, and migration to urban areas where multi-modal transportation can be better than suburban contexts. According to a 2014 analysis in *Governing* magazine, census tracts with high poverty rates had twice as many pedestrian deaths. Studies also show that Black, Indigenous and People of Color experience higher rates of bicycle and pedestrian crashes at a disproportionately high rate than their white counterparts. See the crash map for the City of Battle Creek for additional insights into trends and locations over the last 5 years of data collection.

## 5-YEAR CRASH HISTORY COMPARED TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME



# CITY OF BATTLE CREEK VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

The provision of non-motorized facilities in a community supports and helps to accomplish its vision/mission and would be implemented in a manner that aligns with its values.

## Vision

The City of Battle Creek is an extraordinary community where people choose to live, work, and play.

## Mission

The City of Battle Creek is a safe, prosperous, and culturally enriched community.

## Values

- Healthy outdoor options for residents, workforce, and tourists.
- Transportation options for all users.
- City-wide transportation network integrating all neighborhoods.
- Community input when addressing transportation needs.
- Safe access to parks and schools.
- Commitment of planning for short- and long-term community needs of non-motorized transportation.
- Conserving river, lake, and wetland habitats and hydrology conditions when incorporating community amenities.



## PURPOSE

Alignment with the city values and the investment in non-motorized facilities is evident through the following (in no particular order):



### Improve Healthy Choices & Recreational Options

Active lifestyles, increase social interaction, and enhance physical and mental well-being.



### Increased Transportation Choices

Ability to select from options when moving about the city and community.



### Provide Safe Transportation Routes

Integration of transportation modes (walk, bus, bike, drive) and slow vehicle speeds.



### Environment & Preservation

Low impact and efficient transportation improves air quality and individual and environmental health.



### Increased Economic Benefit

Transportation costs are second to housing in a household budget. A single-occupancy vehicle is the most costly form of transportation.



### Increased Community Pride

People out and about, as well as awareness and awards are often found in communities that have non-motorized transportation.



### Reduce Downtown Parking Dependency, More Land for Taxable Purposes

Thirty-percent of traffic downtown are folks looking for parking. Biking, walking and transit reduce congestion. Less land devoted solely to cars frees it up for multi-use which generate more taxes and foot traffic for business.



## Public Engagement

Public engagement was led by the City of Battle Creek Planning Department staff and consisted of informal and formal meetings, workshops, user-group discussions, mapping exercises, and a community-wide survey. An advisory committee assisted in determining priorities of routes, projects, and initiatives. Hundreds of Battle Creek residents participated in the plan development, and even more will benefit from its implementation.



The inclusive and robust public engagement for this plan happened pre-COVID, meaning that public events, meetings, and gathering was occurring and an important component of plan development. With the onset of COVID, the plan development stalled, and staffing changes resulted in a pause with the plan finalization and adoption. The pause did not change the overarching goals, priorities, or implementation strategies. Instead, COVID has shown that non-motorized facilities are necessary at all levels of the community as they provide safe alternatives to move about outdoors and contribute to an active, healthy lifestyle.

### Engagement included:

- Neighborhood Planning Council meetings
- Public Service Announcements through City social media channels
- A new webpage devoted to the non-motorized transportation plan (NMTP) which included links to the survey, the 2006 plan, meeting announcements and project updates.
- Community-wide survey about non-motorized transportation needs and opportunities, completed by 226 people.
- Workshops and mapping to identify roadway condition issues, gaps in sidewalk network, bike lane routing, and water trail connections.
- Community event participation that included outreach at Spring into the Arts and materials at City Hall asking folks preferred routing for non-motorized modes of travel.
- Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) met several times and members participated in community events to help identify areas of improvement in terms of connections and safety improvements.
- Public walking and biking tours which enabled staff to visualize and experience issues such as missing sidewalks, lacking pedestrian safety measures such as marked crosswalks, signage, tight curve radii, or street trees which help to calm traffic and missing bicycle amenities, such as racks, repair stations, or protected bike lanes
- The NMTP Advisory Group was established and consisted of members of the public and city staff who collectively developed the priorities for non-motorized facilities and connections, as well as developed the decision-making methodology to prioritize future capital improvements, policies and ordinances and future programs.



## ■ Coordination

This plan addresses goals and policies that may impact various City departments. Here is a short list of City departments/divisions and entities and their listed corresponding realm of responsibilities impacted by this plan.

### Department of Public Works

- Right-of-way (ROW) Improvements and Maintenance: sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, Linear Path, etc.
- Implementing ROW Improvements: sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, Linear Path, etc.
- Ensuring Traffic Safety: new or re-routed sidewalks, bike lanes

### Parks & Recreation

- Infrastructure Improvements: Linear Park, pathway connections to existing/ future parks, boat launches

### Transit

- Infrastructure Improvements: pathway connections to bus stops/ station, ensure bicyclist & pedestrians have routes to reach bus stops/ station

### Police & Fire Departments; First Responders

- Provide safety and emergency response of non-motorized users
- Provide pre- and post-development analysis of a site or neighborhood through utilizing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to ensure or increase safety of the public

### Schools

- Awareness of kids', parents', teachers' routes and needs for walking/cycling to school
- Overall education of physical activity and exercise

### Planning Commission & City Commission

- Discuss and adopt a budget toward funding non-motorized transportation infrastructure (new builds and maintenance).
- Discuss and adopt any new resolutions/ ordinances requiring public and/or private construction of non-motorized transportation infrastructure

### Community Groups

- Neighbors and facility user groups who link the City with those most impacted by the facilities

# 03

## TERMS AND CURRENT CONDITIONS

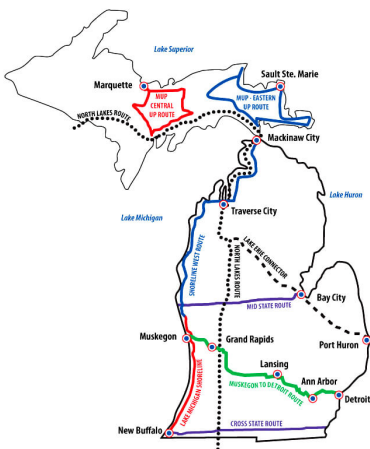
Consistency matters, not only in designing and building non-motorized facilities, but also in the language used to define them. Below are key terms commonly used within the plan, as well as images where relevant:



•Non-motorized Transportation  
(Walking, Biking, Riding Scooters/Boards)



•Facilities  
(General term for things in the street used by non-motorized travelers)



•Network  
(Term for how all non-motorized facilities work together in a connected, seamless, intuitive manner)



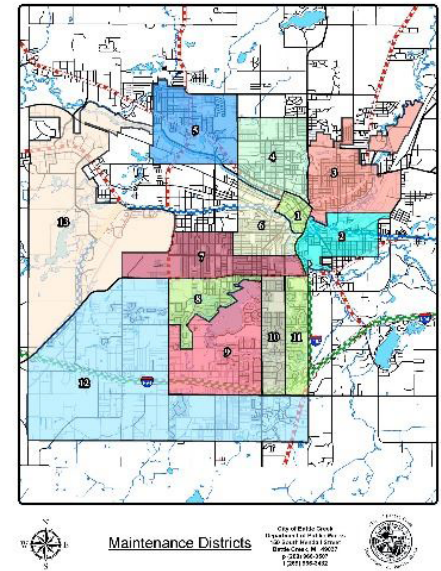
•Wayfinding  
(Term for signage and markings to assist with traveling various non-motorized routes)

## CURRENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

The City of Battle Creek consists of a mix of transportation networks of streets and highways, commercial and passenger trains, sidewalks, trails and bicycle routes, and the city-owned airport (Battle Creek Executive Airport).

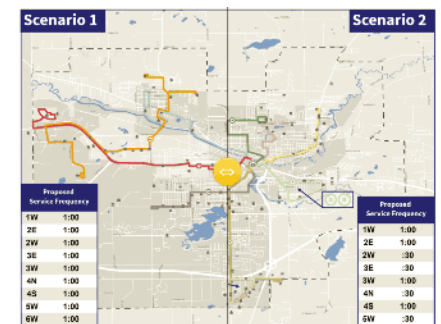
### Street Network

The I-94 highway is located along the southern area of the city and carries the most amount of traffic and provides a critical trucking route through the Midwestern states as it connects to major cities such as Chicago, Ann Arbor, and Detroit. Downtown Battle Creek is connected to I-94 via the M-66/ 194 highway, which is especially heavily used during the commuting hours. The City of Battle Creek controls its city streets, with the exception of M-66, M-37, M-89 and M-96, which are state trunk lines controlled by Michigan Department of Transportation. Within the City, these trunk lines are: Michigan, Dickman, Columbia, Capital and Bedford.



### Transit Network

The City of Battle Creek public transit system provides bus service routes throughout the community and into adjacent areas. There are over 600 bus stops throughout the area, with sheltered stops and service to the downtown Transportation Center where people can access regional bus and train services.



### Train Network

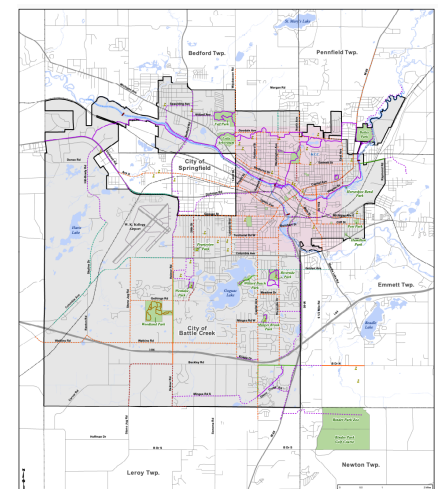
Train usage continues in Battle Creek with cargo service provided by CSX and passenger services through Amtrak.

### City of Battle Creek Parks

The parks and recreation system within the city provides over 1,100 acres of land and amenities such as waterparks, playgrounds and ball fields, and passive amenities such as wilderness hiking trails and river kayaking. Connecting places where people recreate by sidewalks and bike facilities, as well as transit helps increase usage by providing options for access to parks and recreation.

### Bike Lanes, Paved Paths, Hiking Trails, Sidewalks, Water Trails

The City boasts over 30 miles of bike lanes, approximately 30 miles of paved pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly paths, and several miles of hiking trails. Sidewalks are primarily found within the original city boundaries, including the many historic districts. Connecting the sidewalk system is a baseline goal of this non-motorized plan.





The locally famous Linear Park is a paved pathway that winds around the downtown area and beyond. This pathway runs through residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. This pathway is used for recreation, access to bus stops, commuting routes to work, and access to schools. This pathway is also part of regional trails such as the Iron Belle and the Great Lakes to Lakes systems.

Battle Creek also has water trails along two local rivers: Battle Creek River, and Kalamazoo River. Both have access points for kayakers and canoes.

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## Regional Transportation Plans

The City has a legacy of investing in non-motorized infrastructure. This plan is intended to help continue that legacy and propel the City into leading non-motorized planning and connecting as a hub serving the local system and larger regional network. Past plans from the community, region, and at the County level were reviewed to ensure that recommendations align with the goals and implementation steps that have been proposed. The following section summarizes some of the key goals and takeaways from these plans that were considered in the development of this plan.

### Battle Creek Area Transportation Study

The Battle Creek Area Transportation Study (BCATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater Battle Creek area and is responsible for maintaining a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning program for vehicular and non-vehicular modes. BCATS has adopted the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Battle Creek Area Transportation Study which contains a chapter for pedestrians and non-motorized users and recommends the following:

- Incorporating the Non-Motorized Transportation Network Master Plan into the City of Battle Creek's Comprehensive Master Plan
- Installing bike racks on Battle Creek Transit line-haul buses
- Development of a city-wide bike rack program targeting not just City of Battle Creek parks, schools and the library but also major employers, the downtown, hospitals, the industrial park, the retail mall, and Binder Park zoo
- Expanding opportunities for water travel on the area's rivers (an effort has been underway for several years to explore opportunities for white water rafting along sections of the rivers in downtown Battle Creek)
- Public education/media campaign to encourage safe and proper use of the non-motorized system
- Establish a maintenance program and financial support for the expanding non-motorized system
- Development of a coordinated signage and way-finding program for the non-motorized system





### Southwest Area Non-Motorized Investment Plan (MDOT)

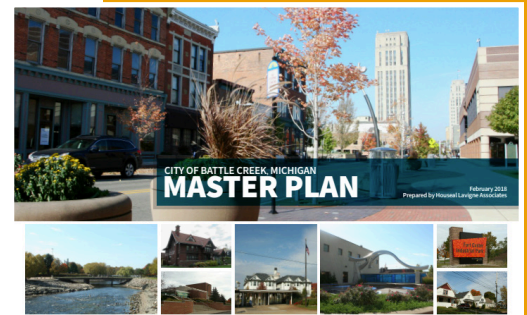
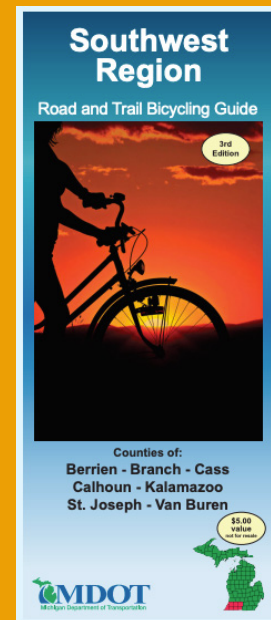
The MDOT Southwest Region provides a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to integrate non-motorized considerations into Southwest Michigan's planning and programming activities. The MDOT Non-Motorized Investment Plan Map for Calhoun County depicts proposed and existing non-motorized routes in Battle Creek and the surrounding area. A primary objective of the plan is to develop ingress and egress routes between Battle Creek and surrounding communities. These include routes along Michigan State Highways M-96, M-89, M-37, M-66, and the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek Rivers. The Plan also calls for a non-motorized route along the perimeter of the City of Battle Creek. The Plan complements local efforts to develop a non-motorized network in Battle Creek by ensuring safe and enjoyable access to and from the City's key destinations for people throughout the region.

### City of Battle Creek Master Plan

The City-wide Master Plan contains various goals, objectives and implementation steps to ensure measured, deliberate and planned development within the City. Goal 4, which addresses revitalization of corridors (streets) and business districts, includes short and medium-term priorities to enhance the sidewalk system and non-motorized network to connect housing to commercial areas. The plan also calls for reimagining the river in Goal 6, and the use of the Linear Path, as features that can become important and useful routes for moving about the community. Finally, Goal 9 recognizes the challenges associated with reliance on single-occupancy vehicles resulting in congestion. Instead, investment in transit and bike facilities is a tool to offer more choices to residents, whether they are making daily trips to school or work, or running errands.

### City of Battle Creek Consolidated Plan and Strategic Priorities

The City's 2020-2024 Strategic Priorities speak to improving quality of life, livability, access and wellbeing for community members. An essential tool for each of these areas of focus can be found in expanding choices for how people move about the community, whether to access recreation, business districts, or employment or neighborhoods. Non-motorized transportation, being human powered, can be a safe, reliable and affordable option. When there is a cost effective way to access all parts of the City, people find that their household disposable income increases, their health and wellness is improved, and more broadly, there is an increased sense of belonging to their community. Investing in non-motorized facilities helps implement many of the strategic priorities of the City.



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## 04



# FACILITY TYPES AND BEST PRACTICES

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This chapter discusses specific types of transportation infrastructure for non-motorized users (pedestrians, bicyclists, ADA use, canoers/ kayakers, etc.). Further, this chapter provides recommended infrastructures such as bikelanes or multi-use paths, bus support facilities and water trails. This is intended to assist policymakers and various City departments in establishing appropriate infrastructure based on the user, land use, and street design.

Simply, this chapter recommends what to build and best practices for various facilities. Variations in design may be necessary as additional information or development changes may arise. This chapter does not serve as a construction guide or discuss details of pavement material, compaction standards, or similar items. Some physical dimensions are noted to help describe infrastructure designs.

# ■ NON-MOTORIZED FACILITY TYPES

This section describes non-motorized transportation infrastructure, its design, general purpose, and appropriate location. Not providing any infrastructure or the wrong type can place the non-motorized user in an unsafe situation. These design types are categorized as 'on-street' and 'off-street' areas. On-street designs are those typically within the travel way or between curbs or shoulders of the street, such as bike lane. Off-street designs are those outside of the travel way or beyond the curbs, such as multi-use paths.

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## ON-STREET FACILITIES

### Wide Paved Shoulders



#### Function.

A wide paved shoulder is designed to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, typically provided along low traffic volume streets without curbs.

#### Dimensions.

4' wide min.; 5' wide adjacent to railing, bridge, or signs.

#### Benefits.

Provides space for emergency/temporary vehicular use, enforcement activity use, snow storage space, areas for non-motorized users (pedestrians and bicyclist), a buffer between the driving lane and edge of pavement.

#### Recommended places.

Roads without curbs; suburban-neighborhoods; rural/country roads.

Example: Wide paved shoulder is along W. Columbia Avenue, north of I-94.

#### Recommended items.

Apply bicycle pavement marking and signage when along a bike/ hiking route.

#### Considerations.

When speeds are more than 30 mph or if additional travel lanes are present, relying on a wide paved shoulder may not provide safe enough accommodations for non-motorized users and the shoulder should either be widened or replaced by a buffered bike lane.



## Traditional Bike Lane



### Function.

Bike lanes designate space specifically for bicyclists within the roadway. These are often located to the right side of the road between the car travel lane and curb or parked car. These often contain bike symbol pavement marking and sign.

### Dimensions.

4' wide min.; 5' wide preferred (including gutter)

### Benefit.

Improved sense of safety and comfort, results in fewer bike-to-car accidents, creates predictability between cars and bicyclists, and increases bicycle ridership.

### Recommended Places.

Along streets having slightly higher travel speeds and/or volume in residential and commercial neighborhoods. Posted speeds  $\geq 25$  mph.

Examples: Riverside Drive, Capital Avenue SW, Territorial Road, etc.

### Recommended Items.

Use signage to inform all users of usage of the road or the presence of the bike lane.

### Considerations.

Since bike lanes are typically at the same grade elevation as adjacent cars, some bicyclists feel uncomfortable due to the fear of collision with cars. At intersections, the solid striped bike line may become dashed to indicate appropriate area for a car to drive across the bike lane.

## Buffered or Separated Bike Lanes

A buffered bike lane is a traditional bike lane with an added outside buffer space at least 18 inches (1.5' feet) wide to provide greater distances to faster moving traffic and/or when high bicyclists volume is present.

Buffers can be created with paint, bollards, or barricades and separate the lane from the travel lane to reduce the instance of "dooring" or lane departures by vehicles into a bicycle space.



# OFF-STREET FACILITIES

## Sidewalks, Intersections and Crossings

Pedestrians are the main users of sidewalks, and are often the most extensive non-motorized transportation feature in a community. Sidewalks can be found in downtowns, within residential neighborhoods, throughout parks, along commercial streets, between buildings and parking lots, etc. According to Ch. 1022 Sidewalks, of the City's Code of Ordinances, the City of Battle Creek requires sidewalks to be built to a minimum of five feet wide, and that same width shall be free of obstructions for pedestrian travel. Pursuant to Section 1281.04 (d), of the City's Zoning Ordinance the City requires sidewalks to be provided internal and external of a proposed residential or commercial subdivision by the developer.

### Dimensions.

- Min. 5' wide per City ordinance
- Min. 6' wide adjacent to curb
- Min. 12' wide in downtowns, shopping districts, schools, sport complexes, etc. minimum. 4' buffer separation between curb and sidewalk to accommodate street trees.

### Considerations.

Ensure sidewalks are well maintained to reduce uneven surfaces leading to tripping hazards. Avoid clearing large trees when installing new sidewalks. Be aware of drainage issues where sidewalks cross driveways. Where outdoor dining, landscaping, outside sales, etc. is provided, ensure adequate pedestrian sidewalk width to allow for barrier free unobstructed continuous access of 4'.





### Sidewalks at Intersections

should be marked with high visibility ladder, zebra or continental pavement crossing instead of the standard parallel or dashed lines for greater visibility. High visibility crossings for ladder painting would include areas near schools, hospitals, and business districts.



The crosswalk should be aligned as close as possible to the direction of pedestrian travel. A stop bar for vehicles should be placed several feet in advance of the crosswalk; 8 feet preferred. The width of striping should be wider than the walkway it connects to comfortably accommodate people passing by each other. Ensure sidewalks provide ADA accommodations at intersections such as ramps, detectable warning surfaces.



**Mid-block Crossings** are areas between intersections where pedestrians wish to cross. Crossings may be at a bus stop, park, plaza, building entrance, etc. Creating a curb extension or bulb out will bring the pedestrian more in line with and visible with traffic.



**Pedestrian Islands** are another option for mid-block crossing often used at multi-lane roads or intersections. This provides a curbed area (island) that encloses and protects pedestrians from cars (see image) and also offers a resting spot for pedestrians waiting for the next gap in traffic so they do not have to cross the entire road at once.





**Rapid Flashing Beacon** are signs that enhance pedestrian conspicuity and increase driver awareness at uncontrolled, marked crosswalks. A pedestrian actuated rapid flashing beacon accompanies a pedestrian warning sign and is placed on both sides of a crosswalk below the pedestrian crossing sign and above the diagonal downward arrow plaque pointing at the crossing. The flashing pattern can be activated with push buttons or passive (e.g., video or infrared) pedestrian detection, and should be unlit when not activated.



**High Intensity Activated Crosswalk Signals (HAWK)** are used to assist people with safely crossing busy streets. HAWKs work the same as other button-activated traffic signals, either by pushing a button or an automatic sensor, which directs the person walking or biking to wait for the signal to change and traffic to stop allowing them to cross safely. For a driver, the HAWK signal appears differently than other traffic lights. At rest, HAWKs remain dark. Once triggered, it will then go through a series of yellow and red sequences requiring motorists to slow down and stop. After the people walking and biking cross, the HAWK will go dark again, allowing motorists to continue through the intersection.



**In-street Crossing Signs** are highly-reflective and either drilled into the street or on rubber bases and helpful in alerting distracted drivers of pedestrian crossing zones. They provide enhanced conspicuity at non-signalized intersections and mid-street crossings in order to alert motorists to local laws concerning yielding to, or stopping for, pedestrians in crosswalks. Their innovative component design makes maintenance easy and cost efficient.



## MULTI-USE OR SEPARATED PATHWAYS

A multi-use/separated pathway is a wide sidewalk that is physically separated from a street curb or shoulder that accommodates walkers, bicyclists, rollerbladers, skateboarders, and others. Hence the terms 'multi-use' and 'separated' pathway. The extra width is needed to provide two-way traffic flow.

### Function.

Multi-use pathways are often found near recreational amenities, in suburban or low density areas, and along one side of a roadway.

### Dimensions.

Min. 10' wide; 14' wide for multiple designated users

### Benefits.

Multi-use pathways often provide a smooth surface for the comfort of bicyclists, rollerbladers, skaters, skateboarders, wheelchair users, or other roll/ wheel users. Since these pathways are located away from a street curb and moving vehicles, they are often used by all ages and abilities and often serve a recreational versus commuter purpose.

### Recommended Places.

Multi-use pathway spurs should connect to the Linear Trail and other regional pathways such as the Iron Belle Trail, North Country Trail, and the Great Lakes to Lakes Trail.

### Recommended Items.

Multi-use pathways should be designed to link neighborhoods, help guide users to reach major destinations, ensure wayfinding signage is used often enough to guide users where the pathway intersects streets, bus routes, and other on-street facilities.

### Considerations.

These pathways often bear significant costs to construct and repair; therefore, strategic route planning should be applied.



## Bus Facilities

Bus riders are pedestrians first and foremost. Whether embarking on the ride or departing their trip, walking or biking is how riders begin or end their trip. Best practice includes a sidewalk connecting the bus stop with a paved pad where a bus stop sign, route information and ideally, bench and shelter are located within a clean, safe and well-lit accessible environment.



## Water Trail Facilities

A water trail is a stretch of a river, lake, or ocean that has a mapped route to create an educational, scenic, or challenging experience for canoers, kayakers, Stand Up Paddle (SUP) boarders, or other water-based non-motorized user. Communities across the country are seeing the value of creating water trails for their residents, businesses, and tourists. Currently, the City of Battle Creek has not adopted standards or requirements for establishing a water trail along the local rivers or lakes (Battle Creek River and Kalamazoo River, and Goguac Lake).

Water trails largely consist of two main aspects: 1) waterbody route (river section, lake, shoreline, etc.); and 2) the boat launch site (need image). The route is largely determined by the natural shoreline and/or destination for the trail user.

1)



2)



The launch site, as its name implies, is the place where the user puts in/ takes out the canoe, kayak, SUP, etc. The launch site is the first and last experience for the water trail user, and therefore, maintenance and overall design of the site should be considered in that context. Some basic amenities to be aware of are: restrooms, trash receptacles, access and parking (vehicular or hike-in), physical launch type (dock, ramp, natural shoreline, etc.), and signage (maps and information).

The National Water Trails and Michigan Water Trails Manual are recommended resources to guide policy decisions for designating and improving water trails in the Battle Creek area.

# FACILITY SUPPORT FEATURES

## Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking facilities include bike racks, lockers, and lock-ups. These are needed to extend bicycle use from an opportunity for recreation to a feasible mode of transportation. Providing adequate, secure bicycle parking ensures that the bicyclists are accommodated and encourages bicycling as a non-motorized transportation mode. Parking should be conveniently located, well lit, and easily visible for bicyclists arriving at their destination.

Recommended rack include the “inverted U”, “A”, and “post and loop”. Bike racks should also be properly spaced to allow easy, independent access to each bike. This includes providing sufficient space between racks and buildings, wall, and parking cars, as well as between other bikes.



A bike corral is a row of bike racks installed at street-grade instead of on the sidewalk. Bike corrals help provide ample bike parking without occupying sidewalk space and should be placed where there are high concentrations of users.



Long-term bicycle parking facilities are preferred to occur inside a building or covered, such as in a private residence, parking structure or commercial building for security purposes or under a shelter from weather conditions.





## Signage

Signage for non-motorized transportation is used in many ways such as wayfinding signs which guide or inform travelers about biking or walking route or identification signage used for trail maps. Signage located along streets are typically regulated by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to ensure all signs comply with federal transportation standards. Outside of streets, signage may be regulated by the local community, but should be consistent with commonly used color-coding, logos, and symbology such as when used to signify a park or regional trail.

## Seating, Shade and Lighting

Other comforts for the traveling public include seating, whether within a furnishing zone in a sidewalk space or along a multi-use path, shade, and lighting. Feeling safe and comfortable help users to make the choice to use modes other than the vehicle to move about. Well lit spaces to wait for a bus, lock a bike, or take rest help with visibility and increase a sense of safety. During site plan review for new development, placing bus stops, bike racks and benches where street, parking lot or building light is planned is best practice.



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## 05



# RECOMMENDED BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN AND WATER TRAIL FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

## Recommended Improvements

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Recommended improvements to the City's bicycle, pedestrian and non-motorized facilities are included in several maps as well as in the City's GIS database for reference. These improvements represent an analysis of several qualitative and measures, including:

- Unfinished improvements from the 2006 NMTP (still desired)
- New community needs received from the public engagement data
- Gaps in network or linkage needed
- Land use mix and neighborhood character

## ■ TOP PRIORITY ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

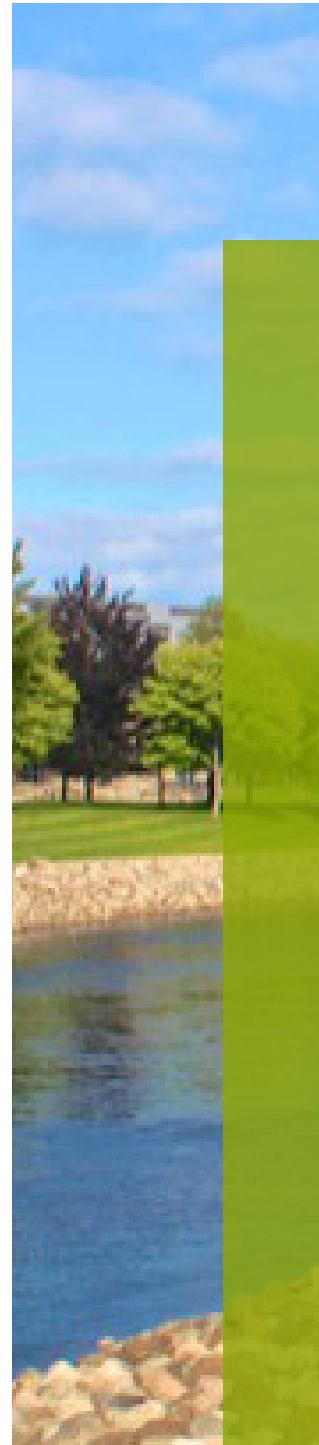
Based on all improvements shown on the map, some routes garnered higher priority than others and warrant greater funding priority. These top improvements were determined by:

- Proximity to schools, parks, employment centers, dense residential areas
- Existing conditions of street and adjacent land uses
- Traffic patterns
- Jurisdictional ownership of right-of-way

1. Road diet on M-89 from Washington to City Limits or Jackson St
2. Golden Ave: Between I-194 and Capital Ave. SW
  - Add Bike Lanes or wide paved shoulder on both sides of street
3. 28th Street S.: Between Columbia Ave. and Hupp Rd
  - Add multi-use path on west side of street
  - Add Wide paved shoulder on both sides of street
4. A) Blackhawk Dr.: Between Chalmers and 24th St. S.
  - Add sidewalk (one side does not have sidewalk)B) 24th Street S.: Between Hupp Rd and Gethings
  - Add sidewalk along 24th as a priority
  - Add Bike Lanes or wide paved shoulder on both sides of street
5. A) Glenn Cross Rd: Between M-66 and Capital Ave. SW
  - Re-balance street by reducing vehicle travel lanes to accommodate bicycle infrastructureB) Minges Creek PL: Between Glenn Cross St. and Beckley Rd.
  - Add bike lanes on both sides of street by re-balancing street space and reducing vehicle lane
6. Highland Blvd W.: short section between end of road and Helmer Rd N.
  - Add multi-use path to connect side along Helmer Rd N. to end of Highland Blvd W.
7. 26th St. S.: Between Iroquois St. and Columbia Ave.; and School Street
  - Add sidewalk along west side of 26th St.; and sidewalk along north side of School Street
8. Intersections
  - Linear Park & Capital Ave.: Add refuge island
  - Linear Park & McCamly: Add refuge island
  - Linear Park & N. Division: Add refuge island
  - Capital Ave @ George B - Willard Beach: Add refuge island
9. Parkway Drive between Washington Ave. N and Helen M Montgomery Ave.
  - Add sidewalk along the north side (Claude Evans Park) that will connect the sidewalk along N. Washington to the Linear Park
10. Hamblin Ave. between S. Washington Ave. and E. Michigan Ave. Add buffered bike lane on both sides and/or road diet with bike infrastructure
11. Willard Ave. E. between Eldredge St. and Fell Park
  - Missing gap; add new sidewalks on both sides street
12. Add wayfinding signs along select Linear Park street intersections

# WATER TRAILS IMPROVEMENTS

- Kayak, Canoe, and SUP water access points with on-site amenities, including: trash receptacles, seating, lighting, appropriately-sized vehicular loading/unloading areas, route and information signage
- Connect boat launch to existing streets' sidewalks/Linear Park
- Wayfinding signage to local destinations/businesses/parks/parking





## Decision-Making Ranking

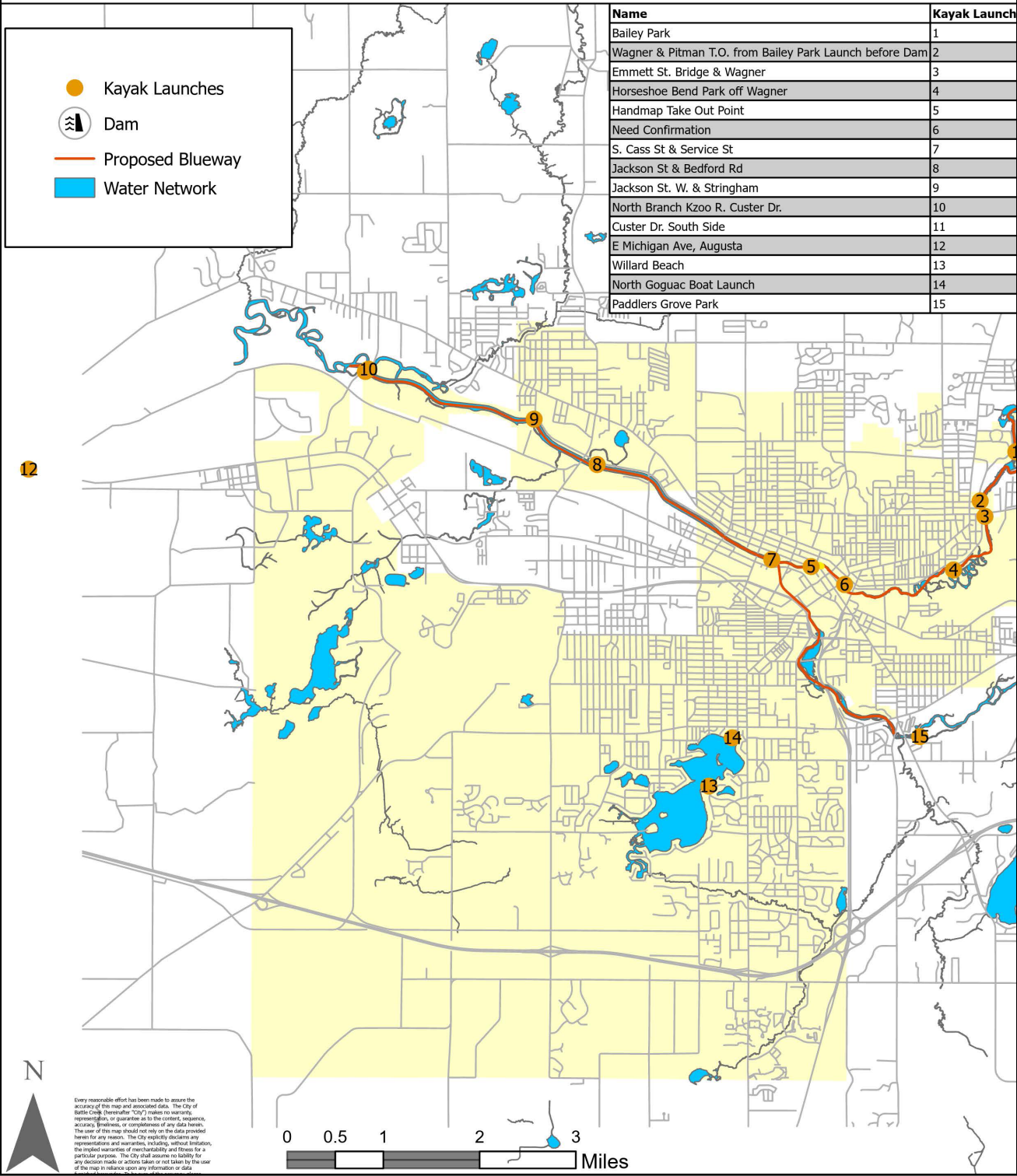
As funding becomes available, and the City must prioritize non-motorized projects for implementation, the questions number 1-11 below may be used to rank projects and make decisions about future non-motorized investments. This ranking was developed as part of the community engagement process. As a project is elevated through the budgeting, planning or design process, staff may consider evaluating projects and asking how the following are achieved:

1. Will improve and/or enhance non-motorized safety
2. Frequency of estimated daily usage
3. Coincides with other project schedules (i.e. road reconstruction, park development, etc.)
4. Ease of implementation (few design conflicts and associated construction costs)
5. Includes school-related usage
6. Provides connections to existing non-motorized facilities
7. Serves multiple destinations (convenient)
8. Degree of impact on vehicular traffic capacity
9. Part of a planned non-motorized network
10. Connects to other transportation modes
11. Meets/creates new localized high demand for a specific user group, such as kayaker





# City of Battle Creek Water Network







# City of Battle Creek Proposed+Existing Bike and Trail Network



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## 06



## IMPLEMENTATION

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This plan is intended to be used and implemented over time by City policymakers, local residents, and local government officials and offices such as engineering, planning and community development, and Battle Creek Transit. Implementation will occur through building new infrastructure, maintaining and renovating existing assets, creating new local education/awareness campaigns, and establishing new policies that increase the City's non-motorized transportation network, users, and overall experience. Implementation will also require continued coordination with partners such as MDOT and Calhoun County Road Department, as well as neighborhoods, businesses, and user groups.

In addition to the facility improvements included in Chapter 5, new policies and programs to improve the overall user experience, safety, awareness, and education are needed. Some policies are one-time action steps, such as creating a new sidewalk survey; while others are on-going, such as supporting an annual 'Bike Week' event. Many, if not all, of these policies/programs will likely be initiated and/or completed by City staff or committees. However, staff may need to rely on local residents, volunteers, business owners, etc. to build sustaining support and gain local knowledge. Local and neighborhood champions/leaders will be sought to carry out certain long-term endeavors.



# 1) Policies.

The below policies are designed to implement various goals of this plan, address elements of equality and equity among transportation users, and become effective at time of plan adoption.

- Prioritize rebalancing streets to create space equity for modes other than the single occupancy vehicle.
- Utilize urban street standards for non-motorized facilities including the National Association of City Transportation Officials guidelines.
- Ensure that all bus stops and bus stations are designed with appropriate access points, crosswalks, non-motorized connections, and additional measures for people with disabilities such as ADA ramps with tactile strips.
- Establish adequate wayfinding signage for non-motorized users at critical intersection points or streets.
- Ensure sidewalks remain clear of debris, weather-related elements, signage, and other items for year-round pedestrian use.
- Establish a dedicated downtown sidewalk and pathway funding source for maintenance and repair.
- Connect adjacent neighborhoods via a non-motorized pathway such as a multi-use path. The connections should be between public rights-of-way or parks.
- Bicycle racks/ storage should be located within close distance to and conspicuous from transit stops.
- Continue inter-agency stakeholders coordination and discussions with MDOT, Calhoun County Road Department and user groups.

## 2) Implementing Actions.

The following are action-oriented elements that when initiated or accomplished will implement various goals of the plan over time. These elements may be accomplished by the City and/or general public.

### Short-Term Accomplishments (By 2025)



#### Annual Data Review

Review pedestrian and bicyclist crash data with the City's planning, GIS, transit, and public safety, to discuss measures for improvements. This review can inform budget priorities and capital improvement planning.



#### Publish Non-Motorized Transportation Network Map

Provide a map on the City of Battle Creek website that shows existing and proposed non-motorized transportation routes such as sidewalks, Linear Park, boat launches, etc. to assist the public in navigation, inform them of future routes, shows various connections, and other uses. The map should be updated annually at minimum. The map should also be shared with various entities that may benefit from route planning efforts and local connectivity.



#### Install Sidewalks and Pedestrian Safety Features

Install sidewalks where system gaps are evident, especially near high density housing, and commercial areas, HAWK signals, and convert traffic lights to have leading pedestrian intervals to allow people to cross prior to the vehicle to allow people to cross the streets safely throughout the City.



#### Attain Gold Rating through the League of American Bicyclists

Obtaining Gold rating will result in efforts which increase local ridership, increase bicycle education/awareness, make Battle Creek more bicycle-friendly, and add more value to the bicycle community. Gold rating requires various policies, advocacy and facilities be in place for biking.



#### Establish Wayfinding Signage for the Linear Park and Regional Trails

Provide wayfinding signage for all trails at all major street crossings. Signage should contain name routes, map, and interactive QR code for smart phone usage. Continue using kiosks with paper maps at major crossings, parks, and schools.



#### Establish Community Outreach Policy for Non-Motorized Transportation Improvements

Create a list of City staff or committee assigned to assess, respond to, research, and, possibly implement the non-motorized transportation items voiced by the community. Create a public response notification.



#### Determine schedule of infrastructure maintenance and replacement

Establish a schedule of maintenance and period of full replacement (i.e. lifespan) of existing sidewalks, streets, pathways, and other non-motorized infrastructure to determine necessary funding levels for keeping the non-motorized infrastructure network in proper condition.



#### Develop a City-wide Bike Rack Program

Focus on providing bike racks at all public parks, schools, and public facilities such as City Hall, Willard libraries, Transit Center, etc. With the assistance of local private/ public partnerships provide installation of bike racks in the downtown area, at major employers and destinations throughout the City.



#### Seek National & Michigan Water Trails Designation.

Have the Kalamazoo River & Battle Creek Rivers become designated Water Trails through the US National Park Service & Michigan Water Trails organization to increase outdoor use of local rivers, create more tourism in the downtown and greater Battle Creek area, and increase pride for local rivers and lakes.



#### Establish safe, proper bicycle-riding media campaigns.

Develop a safety and education media campaign to raise awareness of Battle Creek's non-motorized transportation network. The education campaign should be targeted at non-motorized users as well as vehicular drivers. The campaign should encourage alternatives to automobile travel and should also include strategies to increase helmet and light usage, rider conspicuity, and safe bicycle and pedestrian behavior.



#### Explore Safe Routes to School Program

Discuss safe routes to school programming with local schools to support and encourage safe and healthier options for parents and/ or children to walk, bike to their local schools.



#### Establish a dedicated funding stream for non-motorized transportation improvements

Seeking new or existing funding streams to ensure high cost improvements (new or major renovations) are implemented. Funding streams could be continuous grant acquisitions, new local millage, new or existing tax increment monies, etc..



#### Route Placemaking Elements

Support placemaking features such as cultural, historical, or environmental elements along non-motorized pathways using educational signage, art, interactive learning items, etc..



#### Support local bike share program

Support the local Battle Creek BCycle bike share program through increased marketing, incentives to users, provide educational material, etc. Discuss and coordinate efforts with BCycle organization when installing new BCycle stations.



#### Bike, Walk, Kayak Maps

Create and distribute maps for local major employers, schools, housing committees, realtor to inform and encourage the community to enjoy the outdoors and active lifestyles. Use QR codes and digital maps for ease of updating and access.



#### Seek land acquisitions for route planning

Continuously monitor and investigate land acquisition opportunities that would enable the extension and/or continuous connection of the non-motorized system.



#### Trail/Pathways Education & Enforcement

Have the Battle Creek Police Department inform and educate the community about safe and proper use of the non-motorized network, including bicycle and pedestrian laws. Also seek to increase Officer bicycle patrol.



#### Update various relevant community committees/groups

Provide progress updates to the City Commission, neighborhood/user groups, Planning Commission, Bicycle Advisory Committee, Sustainable BC, etc.



#### Revisit Plan Annually



### 3) Ordinance Amendments.

The following items seek the necessary change for the City of Battle Creek to enact regulations to further implement the goals of this plan.

1. **Complete Streets and Vision Zero.**  
Create and adopt a Complete Streets Policy and Adopt Regulatory Ordinance to create accountability for all street users, as well as a Vision Zero policy that aims to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities to zero.
2. **Internal Connections.**  
A development's internal sidewalk or pathway shall connect to an abutting public right-of-way, and park property where applicable.
3. **Bike Racks.**  
Require all public buildings to install bike racks within a short walking distance from the main building's entrance. The bike rack should be located in a conspicuous location from the site entrance, nearest public right-of-way, or within the building's associated on-site parking lot.
4. **Transit Connections.**  
Bus stops and bus stations shall have ADA accessible connections to the nearest sidewalk or ADA pathway.
5. **Development Incentive.**  
Reduce parking requirements when a continuous sidewalk, paved pathway, or marked paved area is provided between a building's main entrance and a bus stop, or when the use is within a walking distance to a transit stop or along an established bike route.

# FUNDING

A list of common funding sources for non-motorized facilities is provided below.

## City of Battle Creek Funding Sources

### City of Battle Creek General Fund

The City's general fund is funded through local income taxes, property taxes, local licenses/ permits, fines/ forfeitures, interest, and state shared revenues (i.e. sale tax). Much of this fund covers payroll expenses, debt obligations, police/ fire departments, etc. Little of this finances City improvements of street, sidewalk, or pathways. Those items are typically financed through 'Act 51' funds or the City's Capital Improvements Program.

### City of Battle Creek Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The program assigns funds to specific City improvements, such as road repairs, building construction, land acquisition, studies/ analysis, and equipment for a six-year period. A new CIP is created every six years. Cities across the nation have a CIP to plan and prioritize certain public improvements.

### Streets Mileage

1.5 Miles dedicated to streets capital improvement.

## Local Funding Sources

### W. K. Kellogg Foundation

This foundation provides grants to various non-profits, schools, and government entities that improve the health and wellness of communities locally and abroad. Grants from the foundation are made in four areas: 1) Health, 2) Food Systems and Rural Development, 3) Youth and Education, and 4) Philanthropy and Volunteerism. The foundation has supported numerous programs, activities, projects, and events in the Greater Battle Creek



area, such as improvements within downtown Battle Creek and the Battle Creek Public School. More information can be found at [www.wkkf.org/](http://www.wkkf.org/).

### Battle Creek Community Foundation

This foundation seeks to promote giving, build endowment, and provide leadership to improve quality of life in Battle Creek. The Foundation serves as an umbrella agency for several funds and grant programs including the Guido A. and Elizabeth H. Binda Educational Fund. The Foundation makes grants to non-profit organizations located in or directly affecting residents in Battle Creek and the surrounding Calhoun County. Average grant awards are between \$5,000 and \$10,000. More information can be found at [www.bccfoundation.org/](http://www.bccfoundation.org/).

### Miller Foundation

This foundation seeks to support and sustain growth and change for the future of the greater Battle Creek community while enhancing quality of life. The foundation focuses on assisting local non-profit, charitable organizations, and governmental agencies with projects that provide for economic development, neighborhood improvement, improving educational outcomes for youth, and eliminating barriers to employment for all in Battle Creek and the surrounding area. More information can be found at [www.themillerfoundation.com/](http://www.themillerfoundation.com/).

### Various Tax Increment Financing Authorities (TIFA)

There are various TIFAs within the City of Battle Creek area that might assist in funding or provide resources in helping to fund non-motorized transportation improvements. Some of these are directly administered by the City of Battle Creek while others are through other organizations. TIFAs include: Downtown Development Authority TIFA, Columbia Avenue TIFA, Fort Custer Industrial Park TIFA, and Battle Creek TIFA.



## Government Funding Programs

### Act 51 of 1951 ('Act 51 Funds')

The City of Battle Creek receives money through the Michigan Transportation Fund 'Act-51' which funds local transportation projects. At least 1% is spent on non-motorized assets such as bike lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian traffic infrastructure, pavement markings, ADA ramps, etc. The amount the City receives on an annual basis fluctuates based on fuel pump tax and car registry fees paid to the State. Previous years' amounts for non-motorize use have been around \$80,000. In FY 21 the City reported over \$240,000 in non-motorized expenditures. More information about the Michigan Transportation Fund can be found at [https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-68212\\_64050\\_64074\\_64091---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-68212_64050_64074_64091---,00.html)

### Michigan Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

This competitive grant program awards federal dollars to specific transportation projects such as bike paths, pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, and preservation of historic transportation facilities that enhance Michigan's intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability, and improving quality of life. Grant applicants include: cities, transit agencies, county road commissions, etc. A local match of 20% of construction costs is required. More information can be found at [www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9621\\_17216\\_18231---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9621_17216_18231---,00.html)

### Michigan Department Natural Resources (MDNR) Trust Fund

This trust fund provides funding for projects which provide for natural resource protection and outdoor recreation. Applications are evaluated on criteria such as natural resource access and conservation, proximity to population clusters, applicant's committed matching funds, applicant's financial need, and priority projects of



the Trust Fund Board (e.g., trails, regional significance, public access to lakes and rivers, wildlife habitat, hunting access). Any individual, group, organization, or unit of government may submit a land acquisition proposal. However, only state and local units of government can submit development proposals. A 25% local match is required. No minimum or maximum amount for land acquisition projects. For development projects, there is a \$15,000 minimum and \$500,000 maximum. More information can be found at [www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79134\\_81684\\_79209\\_81657---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79134_81684_79209_81657---,00.html)

### Transportation Equity Act – 21st Century (TEA-21)

This program provides federal funds to improve the Nation's transportation infrastructure, enhance economic growth and protect the environment. TEA-21 creates new opportunities to improve air and water quality, restore wetlands and natural habitat, and rejuvenate urban areas through transportation redevelopment, increased transit and sustainable alternatives to urban sprawl. More information can be found at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/)



### Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

This program was created to reduce congestion on local streets and improve air quality. Funds are available to urban communities designated as "non-attainment" areas for air quality. Pedestrian and bicycle projects are eligible for funding. More information can be found at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cmaqpgs/index.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cmaqpgs/index.htm)





## Non-Government/ Non-Profit Funding Organizations

### DALMAC Fund

This Fund was established in 1975 to improve and expand bicycling, promote good will towards bicycling, and increase bicycle safety in Michigan. The DALMAC Fund awards applications for construction/design of bicycle facilities, bicycle educational/promotion programs, purchase of bicycles and related equipment, and developing bicycle routes and maps. This fund is expected to grant a minimum of \$50,000 in 2020. The DALMAC Fund supports safety and education programs, bicycle trail development, state-wide bicycle organizations, and route mapping projects. More information can be found at [www.biketcba.org](http://www.biketcba.org).



### Land and Water Conservation Fund

The National Park Service distributes money through this Fund to the MDNR for land acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities. Due to limited funds within this program, the MDNR has focused funding outdoor development projects. Applications require a 50% local match. More information can be found at [www.lwcfcoalition.com](http://www.lwcfcoalition.com).



### Kodak American Greenways Awards

Kodak, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society provide small grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways. The annual grants program was instituted in response to the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors recommendation to establish a national network of greenways. The application period typically runs from March 1st through June 1st. Program goals are to: develop new, action-oriented greenways projects; assist grassroots greenway organizations; leverage additional money for conservation and greenway development; and, recognize and encourage greenway proponents and organizations. Maximum grant is \$2,500. More information can be found at [www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org).



### Bikes Belong

The Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. Their mission is to put more people on bikes more often. The program funds bicycle-related facilities, education, and capacity building. Requests for funding can be up to \$10,000 for projects such as bike paths, trails, lanes, parking, and transit, and safe routes to school. Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis. More information can be found at [www.bikesbelong.org](http://www.bikesbelong.org).



peopleforbikes

### Safe Routes to School Program

This national program seeks to improve the safety of children walking and biking to school and encourage healthy physical activities through planning, building, and programming efforts around schools. This program offers small and large grants for schools providing at least one K-8 grade level range. Small grants provide approximately \$5,000/ school for non-infrastructure related projects such as planning programs, training, etc.; and approximately \$200,000/ school for large grants address infrastructure needs such as sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. Small grants are administered by the Michigan Fitness Foundation, large grants are administered by MDOT. More information can be found at <https://saferoutesmichigan.org/>.





