

## ***Areas Requiring Detailed Study – 9-1-17***

*In the update of this plan, there were a number of areas that were identified as having unique issues relative to the bicycle and pedestrian environment. Some of these areas are relatively small and involve a specific issue that the City should address, while other areas are quite large and involve a complex mix of issues that need to be resolved.*

*This section discusses the concerns identified within these areas and provides some direction as to how particular issues or deficiencies could be addressed. In a number of cases, a more detailed analysis of the conditions will be warranted to determine the best course of action.*

*To view the location of each study area, please refer to the draft bicycle route map that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee has prepared.*

### ***AREA #1 - Piedmont Road/Starr Avenue/Western Avenue***

This area is located in the vicinity of Piedmont Road, Starr Avenue and Western Avenue. It was noted that pedestrians and bicyclists desire to travel east/west to the east of Piedmont Road to cross Starr to Western Avenue. This route also includes access to the recreational trail and crossing of the railroad tracks. No improved pathway exists at this location, but a worn path is evident of frequent use.

Recommendations include: working with the railroad to develop an improved crossing of the railroad and then construct a paved pathway from Starr Avenue, east to Western Avenue, and installation of directional signage.

### ***Area #2 – Starr/Western/N. Hastings Way/STH 312 Area***

This study area poses issues for east-west pedestrian and bicycle traffic due to grade issues of the crossings of Starr Avenue, Western Avenue at North Hastings Way. A pathway/sidewalk system is in place, but not well marked or signed, the pathway is also not very direct, which can lead to confusion of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Recommendations include: installation of wayfinding signage in the vicinity of Riverview Drive – one block to the north of STH 312 and extending from Mercury Street to the east past the RR crossing, addition of pavement crossing markings across Starr Avenue at Mercury Street, and consider a yield or caution sign for vehicle traffic traveling southbound on Hastings Way turning right onto STH 312 where the pathway crosses the street. Two long-term recommendations should be evaluated: extending the pathway along the north side of STH 312 between Hastings Way and Mercury Street at street grade in addition to the existing pathway, which is at grade

with Starr Avenue; and constructing a pathway on the south side of STH 312 from Riverview Drive east to the north-south bicycle trail.

### ***Area #3 – Eau Claire River (east of Hastings Way)***

The City should coordinate with the City of Altoona to study the feasibility of extending the recreational trail along the south side of the Eau Claire River between Hastings Way and the River Prairie Development. This would be an important trail connection between the two cities. Eau Claire has developed concept plans to extend the trail east along the north side of the Waterford Development and Altoona has plans to develop their trail system under River Prairie Crossing extending to the west. Issues include crossing Otter Creek and negotiating an agreement with Eau Claire Country Club to extend the trail along the riverfront.

### ***Area #4 – Madison Street between North Farwell and Oxford Avenue***

This section of Madison Street is a four-lane facility, with a center turn lane. The street has high traffic volumes making it difficult for most bicyclists to navigate and for pedestrians to cross. Vehicle conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists are also a concern at the southwest corner of the intersection of Madison and Farwell with the free flow right turn lane onto Farwell Street. The sidewalks along both sides of the Madison Street Bridge are narrow and unprotected from vehicle traffic.

In addition, high pedestrian volumes are present at the intersection of Madison Street and Oxford Avenue with the Kwik Trip convenience store to the northwest and Lazy Monk Brew Pub to the southeast. We anticipate additional vehicle and pedestrian/bicycle traffic in this area as the Cannery development to the north progresses. The City will be constructing a trail along the west side of the Chippewa River that will extend under Madison Street. This will relieve some of the congestion at the Madison/Oxford intersection, but not eliminate the problems.

Recommendations include designating Galloway Street as a bicycle facility and encouraging bicycle traffic to use Galloway Street for east-west travel rather than using Madison Street. In addition, the consideration should be given to making improvements at the various intersections along Madison Street to allow pedestrians to cross Madison Street in a more safe manner. Finally, the Madison/Farwell and Madison/Oxford intersections need further study and possible redesign.

Long term, when the replacement of the bridge is considered, improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations should be incorporated into the bridge similar to what was provided for the new Water Street Bridge.

### ***Area #5 - North Dewey Street/Galloway Street***

This area focuses on the intersection of North Dewey Street and Galloway Street and the off-street pathway extending along the north side of the Eau Claire River. This intersection experiences heavy vehicular traffic combined with the proximity a State recreational trail, which is extensively used by pedestrians and bicyclists. Due to the turning movements of the vehicles, vehicle speed, site distance restrictions, the intersection is very dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclist when attempting to cross North Dewey Street. In addition, the property located at the southeast corner of the intersection may soon be developed for commercial or residential development.

This area should be carefully studied to address the pedestrian/bicycle safety concerns at this intersection. Alternatives to consider separately or in combination should include: increasing the site distances along Galloway Street through additional parking restrictions, removal of vegetation along the south side of Galloway Street to the east of Dewey Street, constructing an underpass for the trail under Dewey Street while maintaining the street-grade trail connection along the west side of Dewey Street, making the intersection a 4-way stop, and closing Dewey Street between Galloway Street and the public library.

### ***Area #6 – SE of Confluence Eau Claire and Chippewa River***

This area is located at the southeast of the confluence of the Eau Claire and Chippewa Rivers and includes a pathway extending north along the east side of the Chippewa River that terminates at the former Haymarket Parking Lot. The pathway is in poor condition and poorly maintained.

The Comprehensive Plan shows the extension of the trail from the Haymarket Landing, east along the library and south side of the Eau Claire River, to connect with the existing trail on the east side of Dewey Street. The Plan also proposes a bicycle/pedestrian bridge crossing from the Haymarket Landing north to Phoenix Park.

Recommendations include the reconstruction of the existing trail along the east side of the Chippewa River. This area is very scenic and is popular for fisherman. The City should seek funding to make this improvement or include the project as part of the redevelopment plans for the area. Construction of the bridge extending north to Phoenix Park should also be completed to provide improved north/south bicycle/pedestrian circulation along the east side of the Chippewa River. Extension of the pathway east along the south side of the Eau Claire River should also be studied. However, construction of this trail would result in an at-grade crossing of Farwell Street, which would be problematic. In lieu of extending this trail, the reconstruction of Eau Claire Street between Graham Avenue and South Dewey Street should include improved bicycle/pedestrian facilities. This could be in conjunction with the planned town square/plaza open space being considered to the north of City Hall.

## *Area #7 – S. Farwell Street (Eau Claire River to Washington Avenue)*

This area includes the Downtown area focusing on South Farwell Street from the Eau Claire River to Washington Avenue. The plan designates Graham Avenue as the north-south bicycle route in this area, but a study should be undertaken to determine if Farwell Street could be redesigned to accommodate a 3-lane facility which would then provide the opportunity for bicycle lanes and wider sidewalks and address pedestrian safety issues. If this change were to occur, Farwell Street would then be designated as the north-south route. These changes would also allow for improved pedestrian safety and for those both attempting to cross the street and also walk along the street, particularly north of Lake Street and in the vicinity of Wilson Park and Park Towers Apartments.

Other changes along Farwell Street that could positively improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the area includes the development of the town square to the north of City Hall and the development of a bicycle/pedestrian boulevard along Grand Avenue.

If the changes noted above occur, then changes should also be considered at the intersection of Farwell and Washington Avenue to eliminate the free right turn lane on Washington Avenue turning north onto Farwell Street. This would address pedestrian safety issues at this location that experiences fairly heavy pedestrian traffic due to the proximity of the small commercial district, and the concentration of student and elderly housing.

## *Area #8 – State Street*

This section of State Street between East Lexington Boulevard and Graham Avenue has several bicycle and pedestrian-related concerns. These include: difficulty for users of the new pathway along the north side of Clairemont Avenue to get to State Street, State Street/Washington Avenue corner lacks adequate pedestrian facilities, a grade separation between Putnam Drive and State Street for bicyclists, the sidewalk on the east side of State Street near Putnam park has a sharp alignment change, and difficulty of pedestrians to cross State Street near the University (partially related to motorists not properly yielding to pedestrians and pedestrians not being assertive of their rights).

The City Plans to reconstruct State Street from Garfield Avenue to Lexington Boulevard in 2019. As planning for the reconstruction commences, the City should involve a multi-person taskforce representing groups such as: City, University, Third Ward Neighborhood, students, and representatives of bicycle and pedestrian interests. The goal of the reconstruction should be to accommodate all users and provide increased safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## ***Area #9 – Harding Street Area***

This area includes Harding Avenue from Washington Avenue southeast to Lee Street. Harding Avenue includes three lanes from Jefferson Street to Lee Street, one northbound and two southbound. A sidewalk is located along the east side of the street. In addition, a worn pedestrian path (desire line) exists on the west side of the street behind the guardrail between Jefferson Street and Lee Street. The primary concern noted within this area relates to pedestrian and bicycle conflicts on the sidewalk located on the east side of the street, due to the excessive speed of bicyclists traveling northbound, down the hill.

The City will be reconstructing Harding Avenue in 2018. As part of the planning for this project, the City plans to conduct a traffic analysis of the street to determine if the street can be changed to one lane of traffic in each direction and consider the possibility of closing access to Jefferson Street. Analysis of these potential changes will occur in the fall. Changes to be considered as part of the redesign is a wider sidewalk or trail, and either bicycle lanes or sharrows. The Committee noted that a pedestrian connection between the East Side Hill neighborhood and Harding Avenue should be considered to the west of the Flynn School property. In addition, if vehicle access to Jefferson Street is closed, efforts should be considered to maintain a pedestrian connection between the East Side Hill and the Third Ward Neighborhood.

## ***Area #10 – Brackett Avenue and Keith Street***

This area is in close proximity of Memorial High School and Regis High School, and provides access to the pathway along Clairemont Avenue and the tunnel underneath Clairemont to the south. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic is quite heavy going north and south on Keith Street and a two bicycle boxes were installed on Keith Street at the Brackett Avenue in 2016. At the time that Keith Street is reconstructed to the south of Brackett Avenue, the City should coordinate with the Eau Claire School District to seek a wider street for the two blocks south of Brackett Avenue to better accommodate bicycles.

## **Area #11 - London Road/East Clairemont Ave/Hastings Way**

This is a congested location at the intersection of London Road, East Clairemont Avenue and the on and off ramps for Hastings Way. The City's bicycle pathway extends along the north side of Clairemont Avenue and crosswalks are present where the pathway crosses the on/off ramps. In addition, a north-south sidewalk connects to the pathway along the west and east side of Hastings Way. Westbound traffic on Clairemont Avenue has a free-flow right turn lane to head north. No crosswalks exist at other locations within this area and no sidewalk extends along the south side of Clairemont Avenue. The area is difficult for pedestrians and bicycles to cross Clairemont Avenue at London Road and cross the northbound on-ramp due to the free flow turning lane. Future improvements for this area should address these pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues .

## ***Area #12 – East Hamilton Avenue/Highway 93***

The intersection of East Hamilton Avenue and Highway 93 connects commercial and residential areas to the west and east, but is difficult for pedestrians and bicycles to navigate. The area does have sidewalks and crosswalks are located on the west, north, and south sides of the intersection. Future reconstruction of this intersection should consider a pedestrian underpass along Hamilton Avenue.

## ***Area #13 – Highway 93 and Brian Street***

This is a signalized intersection; concerns include: the intersection is not pedestrian actuated, sidewalks are not present on the west side of Brian Street and the north side of Brian Street to the east of Highway 93, high traffic speed on Highway 93, and two jurisdictions involved with decision-making (City of Eau Claire on the east side of the street and Town of Washington on the west side).

Possible improvements include making the signals pedestrian actuated and constructing the off-road pathway/trail on the west side of Highway 93 from Brian Street, south to Damon Street. (Note: Wisconsin DOT policy is to not install pedestrian actuated signals if no sidewalks exist.)

## ***Area #14 – Oakwood Mall Area***

The Oakwood Mall area encompasses both the mall itself and the outlying businesses surrounding the mall. An extensive sidewalk system extends to the perimeter areas of the mall development, but no pedestrian facilities extend to the mall complex itself. This makes pedestrian and bicycle circulation to the mall quite difficult and inconvenient. In addition, connectivity between the mall and the outlying business locations and between businesses is difficult. The City constructed sidewalk along both sides of Golf Road from the Olive Garden parcel east to Gateway Drive in 2017. Finally, there is a need for bicycle racks at several of the major mall entrances and at the outlying business locations.

This area is privately owned which means improvements will have to be undertaken by the owners of the mall and outlying businesses. The City could assist in recommending facility improvements to address deficiencies in the area. Possible improvements include: the extension of sidewalk along the entrance roads from the public sidewalk system to the perimeter road, extension of sidewalk along portions the perimeter road, sidewalk or pathway connections between outlying businesses, installation of additional bicycle racks, and the addition of signage to better direct pedestrians and bicyclists. Finally, the City should study the possibility of constructing a pathway as an extension of Oakwood Mall Drive to the south along the City's outlot located to the east of the Lasker Jewelry parcel. This pathway would extend southeasterly and connect with the mall property to the south of the Aspen Dental parcel.

## ***Area #15 – Golf Road/Highway 53***

The Golf Road Bridge extending over Highway 53 provides a linkage to major commercial areas on both sides of Highway 53. In 2017, the City and WIDOT constructed sidewalk connections across Highway 53 on both sides of Golf Road. However, bicycle access across the bridge remains problematic. At such time when the replacement of the bridge is considered, improved bicycle accommodations should be incorporated into the bridge similar to what was provided for the new Water Street Bridge.

## ***Area #16 – Lorch Avenue***

This area located in the vicinity of Lorch Avenue and Highway 93. Discussion on this area noted that several destination points are located in the vicinity such as: the County Expo Center, Action City, access to the Lowes Creek off-road trails within Lowes Creek County Park, Mills Fleet Farm, Gold's Gym, and the Old Town Road connection to the east to Highway 53. Issues noted include: no pedestrian actuation at the Lorch/Highway 93 signalized intersection, no sidewalk along Lorch Avenue, and no pedestrian connection from Old Town Road to the pathway extending along the east side of Highway 93.

Recommendations include the installation of pedestrian actuation for the traffic signals to cross Highway 93, providing a pathway connection from Old Town Road to the existing pathway located on the east side of Highway 93, installing an edge line along Lorch Avenue, and at the time the street is reconstructed, construct either sidewalks or an off-street pathway.

## ***Area #17 – University Area***

This is a large area, which includes the intersection of Clairemont Avenue (USH 12) and Stein Boulevard, as well as Sacred Heart Hospital, the Chippewa Valley Technical College, and a portion of the UWEC campus. The pathway extends along the north side of Clairemont Avenue. Pedestrian traffic is quite heavy at the intersection of Clairemont and Stein, as well as at other locations along Clairemont Avenue in the Shopko Plaza area. The intersection at Stein and Clairemont is pedestrian actuated and other improvements were completed as part of the Clairemont Avenue reconstruction project.

Issues noted by the Committee include: Stein Boulevard is a narrow four-lane roadway without any bicycle facilities; mid-block pedestrian crossings are occurring across from Shopko Plaza; parcels to the north, including Sacred Heart Hospital have chain link fencing along the side and rear property lines which restrict pedestrian circulation; bicycle and pedestrian circulation is restricted due to the configuration of the street network to the north of the hospital; and the frontage roads along Clairemont Avenue at Stein Boulevard are very close to the intersection.

To address some of these issues, the City installed bicycle lanes along Craig Road from Highway 37 north to Oakridge Drive and the State DOT plans to reconstruct Highway 37 in 2018. This

project will include an off-street pathway on the east side of the highway extending from Short Street north to Clairemont Avenue. Stein Boulevard was recently reconstructed, but no design changes were included.

In addition, the University has adopted a master plan for their campus which included changes in policies relating to bicycle use within the campus, adopting a “dismount” zone in the core area of the campus where bicyclists would be required to walk their bicycles during certain hours of the day. In addition, bicycle parking will be shifted to the periphery of the campus area. The University’s pedestrian/bicycle bridge also underwent improvements in 2017 to improve bicycle and pedestrian circulation and separate the two uses.

Recommendations include: working with the University on the implementation of their pedestrian and bicycle master plan and continuing to study options to improve pedestrian, bicycle and motorist circulation and safety at the intersection of Stein Boulevard and Clairemont Avenue.

One final note, the City’s Comprehensive Plan shows an existing and proposed multi-purpose pathway on the south side of the Chippewa River extending from Clairemont Avenue east to Garfield Avenue. Maps 6 and 8 show this multi-purpose designation. However, discussions with the Putnam Park Commission and other individuals indicate that this pathway should not be paved, rather surfaced with a more natural material such as wood chips or crushed limestone with a primary use for pedestrians. Therefore, the City needs to further evaluate the appropriate future utilization of this pathway.

### ***Area #18 – Craig Road/West Clairemont Avenue***

This area extends along West Clairemont Avenue (USH 12) from Highway 37, west to the Chippewa River. A pathway extends along the north side of Clairemont Avenue. Pedestrian traffic is quite heavy at the intersections of Clairemont/Highway 37 and Clairemont/Craig Road. These two intersections are now pedestrian actuated and other improvements were completed as part of the Clairemont Avenue reconstruction project. Bicycle and pedestrian traffic is also heavy along Craig Road and Hamilton Avenue when events are scheduled at the soccer park. Bicycle lanes have been added along Craig Road and Hamilton Avenue. As noted above, the State DOT plans to reconstruct Highway 37 in 2018 and plans call for an off-street pathway on the east side of the highway extending from Short Street north to Clairemont Avenue. The frontage road along the north side of Clairemont was also reconstructed in 2017.

Issues noted within the area include: no sidewalk exists on the south side of Clairemont Avenue from Highway 37 west to the Chippewa River; and bicycles must be carried down the stairway at the north end of the frontage road providing access to the Chippewa River Trail.

Recommendations for the area include the construction of a sidewalk on the south side of Clairemont Avenue from Highway 37 west to American Boulevard, need for directional signage

for those using the pathway to direct users to the Chippewa River State Trail, painting a white line on the pathway “fog line” or the installation of reflectors on the pathway from Craig Road west to the Chippewa River to improve the visibility after dusk, and installing a bicycle track system on the stairway providing access to the trail.

### ***Area #19 – Grover Road/Sky Park***

The bicycle route map shows the need to study the possibility of providing an improved bicycle connection for the southwest portion of the City in area of Grover Road. This would provide a connection for the neighborhoods located to the south of Sky Park and west of Stein Boulevard. The plan shows a route along Grover Road that would consist of either an on-street facility or an off-street path along the north side of the street. Completion of a north-south connection at the west of Grover Road would connect with the bicycle lanes on Hamilton Avenue, the Chippewa River State Trail and the trail along Highway 37 to be completed in 2018. To facilitate this north-south connection, the City should investigate the possibility of a providing an easement connecting Grover Road and Continental Drive.

### ***Area #20 – Southwest Concert/Festival Facility.***

Pedestrian and bicycle access to the Country Jam concert/festival facility is limited. The City should work cooperatively with officials from the Town of Union and Country Jam to explore the feasibility of providing a pathway connection to the facility that would be located to the north of the City’s wastewater treatment facility and then extend under Interstate 94.

### ***Area #21 – N. Clairemont Avenue/Menomonie Street***

This is a signalized intersection, which is pedestrian actuated only for pedestrians crossing North Clairemont Avenue on the north side of the intersection. The other three crossings at the intersection do not have pedestrian signals. Menomonie Street to the east of Clairemont Avenue was reconstructed in 2014 and bicycle lanes were added from 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Carson Park Drive. The section between Carson Park Drive and Clairemont widens to five lanes without the bicycle lanes. A HAWK pedestrian warning system was installed for the trail crossing located to the east of Carson Park Drive and sidewalk was upgraded as part of the reconstruction.

Concerns include the wide crossing of Clairemont Avenue, driving lanes on Menomonie Street narrow as a bicyclist travels east towards North Clairemont Avenue, sidewalk located along curb, end of the bicycle lanes heading west at Carson Park Drive and traffic speed on the right-turn slip lane for traffic heading north on Clairemont Avenue and turning right onto Menomonie Street. In addition, the south side of Menomonie Street will soon be developed with a new YMCA and the University Sonnetag athletic center. This increase will result in additional vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic in the area.

Possible improvements that should be discussed include the installation of pedestrian actuated buttons for the south, east, and west sides of the Menomonie Street/North Clairemont Ave intersection, include additional bike lane markings on Menomonie Street consider grade separated pedestrian/bicycle crossings for Menomonie Street at both Carson Park Drive and North Clairemont Avenue, add an off-street pathway along Menomonie Street and extension of a pathway along North Clairemont Avenue to the north.

### ***Area #22 – Kane Road (County TT) and STH 312***

There is a signalized intersection at this location, but it is not pedestrian actuated. Concerns include: high traffic speed, two jurisdictions involved with decision-making (City of Eau Claire and the Town of Union), a gap in the proposed pathway system along STH 312 between Kane Road and the CVTC West Campus, and a narrow shoulder width particularly in the vicinity of Sherman Creek flowing underneath STH 312 to the east of Kane Road.

Recommendations include: construction of an off-road pathway along STH 312 preferably on the south side of the highway from Kane Road (County TT) east to the CVTC Campus, pedestrian actuation of the traffic signal, and developing bicycle facilities along Kane Road extending north of STH 312.

### ***Area #23 – North Clairemont Avenue/Alpine Road Area***

Area #22 is in the vicinity of North Clairemont Avenue/County Road T and Alpine Road.

Bicycling and pedestrian issues within the area include: an at-grade railroad crossing north of Alpine Road on North Clairemont Avenue, difficult east-west movement for bicyclists and pedestrians traversing east-west between Alpine Road to the west and Prairie Lane to the east, North Crossing/Highway 312 interchange is not bicycle or pedestrian friendly, and no bicycle facilities (bicycle lanes or off-street pathway) extend north along County Road T.

Recommendations include: the North Clairemont Avenue/County Road T corridor should include provisions for bicycle and pedestrian facilities extending north along County T from the south side of the Highway 312 interchange, a grade separation with the railroad should be considered, the signal at the intersection of Alpine Road and North Clairemont Avenue should be bicycle and pedestrian actuated, and install sidewalks along Alpine Road and Prairie Lane.

### ***Area #24 – Jeffers Road (County F)***

The portion of Jeffers Road considered within this study area extends from the North Crossing, north to County Line Road. The road is currently of rural design with no curb and gutter and no sidewalk. Reconstruction of the street is planned for 2020. The street provides access to a variety of residential developments, the Jeffers Road athletic complex, the City's brush side, the Northwest Community Park, and the May's Greenhouse commercial development. Design of the new street should accommodate all users and include a pathway and possible bicycle lanes.