

SECTION 4

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS

4.1 OVERVIEW

To enhance the coordination of the bicycle and pedestrian system in the GF/EGF Metropolitan area. This document was developed to update and consolidate the Bikeway Plan of 2001, and the Pedestrian Plan of 2000. Both Plans need to be updated to reflect bicycle and pedestrian facilities improvements that have taken place since 2000, and to set standards that will allow both cities to adequately provide facilities, or access to facilities for non-motorized traffic in new development.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is one element of the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan. The intent of the Transportation Plan is to guide the decision-making processes regarding transportation system improvements that will be made over the next 25 years.

With the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), bicycle planning has come to the forefront. Under ISTEA, the federal government required states and urban areas to address the needs of alternative modes of transportation, as well as the more traditional needs of the automobile. In the summer of 1998, Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) was passed. This transportation bill continued the trend of promoting alternative forms of transportation.

In 2004, the Surface Transportation Extension Act (STEA) extends TEA 21 and instills pedestrian and bicycle planning as a point of emphasis. Accompanying STEA multi-modal planning requirement is legislation that allows states and local governments to make transportation funding available for these alternative modes.

4.2 COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The study area is composed of the urbanized portion of two counties: Grand Forks County, North Dakota; and Polk County, Minnesota. The two counties are separated by the Red River of the North, and combined, constitute a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The study includes the municipalities of Grand Forks in North Dakota, and East Grand Forks in Minnesota.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks metropolitan area had a population of 56,867 residing within the urbanized boundaries. Subsequent population estimates have been conducted by the MPO to monitor population trends between censuses. The metropolitan estimate for January 1, 2004 is 58,798, showing an annual population increase of 0.82 %.

The Grand Forks/East Grand Forks MSA is located in the center of the Red River Valley. The valley, which is quite flat, is nearly 80 miles wide. The mean elevation above sea level at Grand Forks is roughly 839 feet.

The average annual temperature for the region is 41.3 degrees (F), with an average January temperature of 4.2 degrees, and an average July temperature of 69.2 degrees. Precipitation averages about 20-inches per year, with an average of .53-inches in January, and an average of 3.47-inches in July. Owing to the flatness of the terrain, the wind figures prominently in the state's weather. Consequently, the mean daily wind velocity of 9-miles per hour is significant.

The Grand Forks/East Grand Forks MSA is an attractive metropolitan service center, which serves northeastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota. It is situated 75-miles north of Fargo, North Dakota, and 150-miles south of Winnipeg, Canada. The greater trade area includes eighteen counties in North Dakota and Minnesota, and the southern portion of the province of Manitoba, Canada.

The area is serviced by an excellent system of transportation facilities, as Interstate 29 and U.S. Highway 2 both pass through the community. Interstate 29 provides access to points south, while terminating at the United States-Canada border north on route to Winnipeg. U.S. Highway 2 provides an east-west highway connection between Duluth, Minnesota, to the east, and Spokane and Seattle to the west.

The fairly compact development, the flatness of topography, and the minimal precipitation all support bike and pedestrian travel. However, the cold temperatures, along with the snow and ice are a deterrent during the winter months. Taking these characteristics into account, the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks area generally suits the bicyclist and pedestrian.

4.3 DEFINITIONS

Bicycle Facility - A general term denoting improvements and provisions made by public agencies to accommodate or encourage bicycling; including parking and storage facilities, mapping of bikeways, and shared roadways not specifically designated for bicycle use.

Bicyclist, Advanced: Group A - Experienced riders, who can operate under most traffic conditions, they comprise the majority of cyclists on collector and arterial streets. The Bicycle Federation of America estimates that fewer than five percent (5%) of bicyclists qualify as this type.

Bicyclist, Basic: Group B - Casual or new adult and teenage riders who are less confident of their ability to operate in traffic without special provisions for bicycles. Some will develop greater skills and progress to the advanced level, but there will always be millions of basic bicyclists.

Bicyclist, Children: Group C - Pre-teen riders whose roadway is initially monitored by parents, eventually they are accorded independent access to the system.

Bike Lane – A portion of a roadway which has been designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.

Bike Path – (see shared use path)

Bike Route – A system of bikeway designated by the jurisdiction having authority with appropriate directional and informational route markers, with or without specific bicycle route numbers. Bike routes should establish a continuous routing, but may be a combination of any and all types of bikeways.

Bikeway – A generic term for any road, path, or way, which in some manner is designated, as being available for bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are to be shared with other transportation modes.

Classifications of Cyclists - The Federal Highway Administration has developed a classification system for cyclist groups. The groups are determined by skill level. Each group has different system needs.

Non-motorized Traffic – Any mode of transport that utilizes a power source other than a motor. The primary non-motorized modes addressed in this plan include, but are not limited to, bicycles and pedestrians.

Right-of-Way - A general term denoting lands, property, or interest therein, usually in a strip, acquired for or devoted to public uses.

Shared Use Path – A bikeway physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier, and either within the highway right-of-way, or within an independent right-of-way or easement. Shared use paths may also be used by pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers and other non-motorized users.

Sidewalk – The portion of a street or highway right-of-way designed for preferential or exclusive use by pedestrians.

Unpaved Trail – Paths not surfaced with asphalt or Portland cement concrete. Unpaved trails have an expanded user group and seasonal use when compared to paved paths.

4.4 VISION STATEMENT

The Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization strives to accommodate non-motorized traffic in the metropolitan area, and make every street environment safe for bicyclists and pedestrians.

4.5 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STANDARDS

Goal # 1 - Ensure a safe transportation system for the non-motorized movement of all people.

Obj. Reduce points of automobile conflicts with non-motorized traffic.

Std. Educate bicyclists, pedestrian and drivers of the rules of the road.

Std. Develop a bicycle and pedestrian friendly roadway environment.

Std. Implement for sidewalk locations per AASHTO standards in table below.

Std. Adopt guidelines for safe pedestrian crossings.

Std. Continue the use of easements as a means of providing a continuous network of pedestrian facilities.

The following information was taken from: *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Street* (AASHTO, 2001). It summarizes guidelines for where to install sidewalks based on land use, roadway functional classification and, as applicable, type of dwelling unit. These guidelines, if followed, will establish a safer, more walkable community.

Types of areas (land-use, or roadway functional classification.)	Where do you need sidewalks with urban and suburban streets?
Commercial and industrial - all streets.	On both sides of these streets.
Residential – arterials.	On both sides of these streets.
Residential – collectors.	Required on one side, but preferred on both sides.
Residential – local streets	Required on one side, but preferred on both sides.
Residential streets with access to schools, parks, shopping areas, and transit stops.	On both sides of these streets.

Notes:

- You may omit a sidewalk on one side of any new street when that side of the street clearly cannot be developed, and when there are no uses or planned uses for that side of the street that would encourage people to walk there.
- When a main road has a service road, you may eliminate the sidewalk next to the main road if you replace it with a sidewalk on the far side of the service road.

Obj. Reduce bike/pedestrian - auto accidents by 2%, and increase bike helmet use by 3% each year.

- Std. Seek repeal of state and local law which state that whenever a usable path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to a roadway, bicycle riders shall use such paths and shall not use the roadway.
- Std. Include bicycle and pedestrian accidents in the monitoring & surveillance report.
- Std. Annually identify and remove hazards to bicycle and pedestrian travel as part of maintenance program.
- Std. Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Traffic Safety Management.
- Std. Request police reports to include information on bicycle helmet use in accident reports.
- Std. Survey bicycle helmet use in the G.F./E.G.F. Metropolitan area.
- Std. Request support from health institutions in order to obtain information on bicycle and pedestrian accidents and injuries not reported to police.

Obj. Adopt uniform bicycle/pedestrian traffic control devices.

- Std. Utilize Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) Manual on traffic control devices.
- Std. Utilize uniform manual on traffic control devices.

Obj. Enforce existing laws relating to bicycles and pedestrians.

- Std. Develop local enforcement programs to target key violations and locations of bicyclists and drivers.
- Std. Encourage the use of bicycle patrols by local police departments in urban areas to provide a good example of bicycling conduct.
- Std. Develop specific procedures for dealing with young violators.
- Std. Monitor the number, location, and type of citations/warnings related to bicycles issued.
- Std. Promote local licensing/registration programs to assist in bicycle theft deterrent.
- Std. Emphasize enforcement of posted speed limits of vehicles on roadways with designated bike and pedestrian facilities.
- Std. Enforce ordinance on Parking Near Intersections and Crosswalks.

Obj. Adopt a manual for bicycle/pedestrian facility design standards.

- Std. Utilize Federal Highway Administration design standard guidelines.
- Std. Utilize MNDOT design standard guidelines.

Std. Utilize AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle and Pedestrian guidelines.

Obj. Implement bike and pedestrian safety education programs at the local level.

Std. Include a bike and pedestrian safety section in the driver education program.

Std. Teach basic bike and pedestrian safety to children in Kindergarten through grade 3.

Std. Implement school safety patrols program in Grand Forks.

Std. Participate in National Bike and Pedestrian Safety Weeks.

Goal # 2 – Provide an efficient transportation system for all non-motorized traffic within the GF/EGF area with consideration of aesthetic quality.

Obj. Maximize direct travel trips between major bicycle and pedestrian generators.

Std. Create a bikeway system using the most direct route by encouraging bicyclists to use on and off road facilities.

Std. Establish an inventory of existing and potential bicycle facilities.

Obj. Develop a bikeway and pedestrian system utilizing aesthetic areas.

Std. Encourage use in the most scenic routes by emphasizing on and off road facilities.

Std. Emphasize aesthetic areas when establishing an inventory of existing and potential facilities.

Obj. Establish a hierarchy of the bicycle network.

Std. Adopt a bicycle facility management system.

Std. Adopt a level of importance of bicycle maintenance into the cities' maintenance program.

Std. Fund maintenance of selected facilities that contribute to safe, year-round bicycle transportation.

Std. Annually update bikeway maintenance and construction map.

Std. Create an Adopt-a-Bikeway program.

Obj. Develop 50 additional miles of bikeway network by the year 2030.

Std. Provide bicycle facilities on arterial and collector streets.

Std. Provide bicycle facilities along all scenic routes.

Std. Coordinate with other agencies, authorities, and groups to

complete the bicycle network.

Goal # 3 - Provide mobility and accessibility to all people in the GF/EGF community through the use of a bikeway and pedestrian system.

Obj. Increase uses of non-motorized modes of transportation 10% by the year 2030.

Std. Recognize that biking and walking are legitimate modes of transportation.

Std. Recognize that all streets are open to bicyclists; yet, also recognize that certain streets need additional treatment to better accommodate bicyclists and their various trip purposes (i.e., work commute, recreational, utilitarian, etc.).

Std. Monitor usage of bike facilities as part of the MPO monitor and surveillance program.

Std. All roadways should be designed to safely accommodate pedestrian traffic.

Obj. Develop a continuous bikeway network by the year 2030.

Std. Make connections in current gaps by the year 2020.

Std. Include all parts of each city into the development of the bikeway system.

Obj. Provide system of non-motorized transportation facilities that conforms with or exceeds ADA accessibility standards.

Std. Grand Forks and East Grand Forks have developed plans to conform with the ADA standards for accessibility. The cities will continue to follow these plans for the installation of curb cuts on existing sidewalks.

Std. [City staff shall review all plans for new bicycle and pedestrian facilities to ensure they are ADA compliant.](#)

Goal #4 – Compatible Transportation and Land Use Systems.

Obj. Future trail corridors shall reflect current and future growth trends.

Std. Prioritize trail development in those areas experiencing residential growth or designated for future residential growth by the Land Use Plans.

Obj. Review all development proposals for continuity of this bike and pedestrian plan.

- Std. Coordinate our local bicycle and pedestrian plan with the MN & ND plans.
- Std. Require new development and redevelopment to follow the current bike and pedestrian plan by adding bike and pedestrian facilities in their design.
- Std. Review each city's land use regulations for consistency with this plan.
- Std. Encourage bike and pedestrian travel be a consideration on all major reconstruction projects.

Goal #5 – Minimize adverse impacts from transportation.

- Obj. Make public participation and education an integral part of the bike and pedestrian plan.
 - Std. Annually update and publish a bicycle informational brochure of the Grand Forks and East Grand Forks bikeway system.
 - Std. Develop a bicycling/walking awareness campaign with the support of local media, local and national clubs to promote the environmental, social, and health benefits of bicycling and walking.
 - Std. Organize a "Bike to Work Day" in conjunction with the "National Bike to Work Day".
 - Std. Annually perform at least two public presentations for further awareness on bicycle and pedestrian issues.
 - Std. Submit at least four articles per year to local media promoting all aspects of bicycling or walking.
 - Std. Develop or acquire at least one radio or television Public Service Announcement (PSA) per year.

Goal #6 - Finance the Transportation System in a fiscally responsible manner.

- Obj. Develop a life cycle cost analysis of pavement type done for all projects.
 - Std. Require a cost analysis of all bicycle projects by pavement type.
- Obj. Utilize the platting process to implement a cost-effective bikeway system.
 - Std. Commit the necessary right-of-way for trail development during the platting process.
 - Std. Installation of trail facilities is the responsibility of the developer when associated with new development.

- Std. Placement of new trail facilities shall be in accordance with the Grand Forks – East Grand Forks Bikeway Map.
- Obj. Minimize developer’s construction costs of new trails when possible.
 - Std. Allow developers to use park dedication fees toward costs of trail construction when associated with new developments.
- Obj. Incorporate bikeway facility costs into each community's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
 - Std. Solicit each city's bike committee for projects to be included into the CIP’s.
 - Std. Solicit as part of MPO TIP project selection process to be included in the cities’ CIP.
- Obj. Increase funding for both construction and maintenance of bicycle facilities in the annual transportation budget.
 - Std. Develop a bicycle plan which is based on the cost-effectiveness of recommended improvements in each of the three stages-- short, middle, and long term.
 - Std. Involve bicycle facilities in transportation budgetary decisions.

Goal #7 – Promote a balanced, compact land use growth pattern.

- Obj. Place bicycle facilities at major destination points.
 - Std. Establish appropriate bikeway facilities and have governmental agencies take a leadership role by providing facilities (i.e. bike racks, lockers, showers, employee incentive programs) to promote biking to work.
 - Std. Increase the reduction of the off-street parking requirement for new development and redevelopment when they provide bicycle parking facilities.
 - Std. Require all new development and redevelopment to provide appropriate bicycle parking facilities at all commercial and business establishments.
 - Std. Review the land development code for consistency with this plan.