

Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition (WBWC) Comments on
Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Draft of May 13, 2021

Bicycle projects

The draft plan does not list or map bicycle projects, even though much work has been done to identify needs. The Ypsilanti's 2010 Non-Motorized Plan listed and prioritized street segments needing bicycle lanes, and subsequent work by the Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee has updated that list.

Recommendation:

Preferably, incorporate in the plan the bicycle project list from the 2010 plan (with any needed updates) as a starting point, and include a map showing the locations of those projects. If this is not possible, at least mention the existence of that list, and strengthen the weak recommendation on page 80 regarding a non-motorized inventory and analysis by including a near-term date for its completion.

Border-to-Border (B2B) Trail

Though the B2B Trail is mentioned multiple times in the draft plan, there appears to be little mention of the needs regarding this important facility. The trail currently lacks continuity, and connections between segments are not well marked.

Recommendations:

List, probably in "Chapter 10: Implementation," the following objectives with proposed completion dates:

- Identify and map the planned B2B route through Ypsilanti. If the long-term route will differ from the short-term route, identify both.
- Identify and sign interim connections among existing segments until the B2B route is completed.
- Identify and sign connections between major destinations (e.g., EMU, downtown, and Depot Town) and the B2B Trail.

Speed-reduction strategies

Though the draft plan discusses multiple times the concern with vehicle speed, there appears to be little discussion of strategies to address it. Strategies to reduce speeds can improve the comfort and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. The second paragraph on page 49 suggests that “enforcing pedestrian right-of-way” at crossings may reduce vehicle speeds. That may or may not be true, but it seems backward; experience suggests that lower speeds lead to greater yielding compliance and safety at crossings.

Recommendation:

On page 49 or elsewhere, give examples of design tools, such as narrower lanes, narrowed crossings, and raised crosswalks, as ways to reduce vehicle speeds and improve pedestrian safety. Also, consider adding a suggestion to work with state officials in cooperation with other communities to allow camera use for enforcing speed limits.

Column readability

The unconventional column formatting impairs readability. Normally, the first column on a page reads down to the bottom of the page before returning to the top of the page for the second column unless there is a visible delimiter. Throughout the draft (e.g., on pages 9, 31, and 68), headings kick the text to the second column without a clear indication that the reader is supposed to go there, so the reader doesn’t know whether to jump down or up to the right.

Recommendation:

Either use standard column formatting or delimit the beginning of a section with a horizontal line across the page before each heading.

Typos

Page 2 -- Bob Krzewinski is listed twice, but maybe that’s OK; he deserves it!

Page 54 -- In the first sentence, add “system” after “transportation.”