

# Chicago Heights Active Transportation Plan



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# Chicago Heights Active Transportation Plan

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Presented by Active Transportation Alliance, March 2012

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## Acknowledgements

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### Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee

This plan represents the combined vision and goals of the steering committee that guided its development; as well as input from residents and other key stakeholders. Thank you to these residents and the members of the steering committee for donating their time to this project.

#### The City of Chicago Heights' Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee Members:

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Diane Banta, Trails and Conservation Assistance, Resident/ National Parks Service  
Cicely Barber, Community Relations Administrator, City of Chicago Heights  
Joshua Deabel, 4th Ward Alderman, City of Chicago Heights  
Michael DeButch, Assistant Superintendent, Chicago Heights Parks District  
Talia Fares, Outreach Specialist, Prevention Partnership  
Beth Koprowski, Sustainability Coordinator, Prairie State College  
Larry Mysz, Resident/Active Transportation Alliance Board Member and League of American Bicyclists  
Dr. Lenell Navarre, Superintendent, Bloom Township High School District #206  
Al Orsello, President and CEO, Prevention Partnership  
Michael Sabo, Director, Street and Sewer Department, City of Chicago Heights  
Bishop Ronnie White, Director of Juvenile Services/Chaplain, City of Chicago Heights Police Department

### About the Consultants

The mission of Active Transportation Alliance is to make bicycling, walking and public transit so safe, convenient and fun that we will achieve a significant shift from environmentally harmful, sedentary travel to clean, active travel. We advocate for transportation that encourages and promotes safety, physical activity, health, recreation, social interaction, equity, environmental stewardship and resource conservation.

We are both Chicagoland's voice for better biking, walking, and transit and a premier consultancy. Our staff includes planning, policy and education experts who developed many of the best practice programs and policies included in this plan. By partnering with us on this project, you not only get the best plan possible, you also support our mission to improve active transportation throughout the Chicagoland region.

#### The Active Transportation Alliance Project Team

Shafaq Choudry  
Marissa Dolin  
Patrick Knapp  
Leslie Phemister

### Model Communities Grant Credit

The Chicago Heights Active Transportation Plan was made possible through funding from the Department of Health and Human Services: Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant. CPPW is a joint project between the Cook County Department of Public Health and the Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago.

### Chicago Heights South Suburban Family Wellness Alliance/ Prevention Partnership

The Prevention Partnership bases its work on the conviction that community-based teams in possession of planning, communication and decision-making skills are the most effective agents for solving community problems. The Prevention Partnership partnered with the City of Chicago Heights and the Chicago Heights South Suburban Family Wellness Alliance to apply for the Model Communities Grant.

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# Executive Summary

*The City of Chicago Heights partnered with consultants from Active Transportation Alliance to produce this active transportation plan for the community. The plan is composed of improvements to the physical infrastructure, policies and programs that make it safer and more convenient for people to walk, bike and use transit in Chicago Heights. To develop these recommendations, the consultants turned to the experts—the users of the network. Guided by their insight, this plan will position Chicago Heights for a brighter, healthier and more active future as a regional destination for active transportation.*

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### Active Transportation Network

The active transportation network recommended in this plan provides door-to-door safe access to key places in Chicago Heights. Highlights of the network include:

- Filling gaps in the sidewalk network
- Creating safe places for pedestrians to cross major roads
- Connecting to regional trails
- Building direct connections to Downtown Chicago Heights, schools, parks and shopping

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### Policies

Increasing use of the active transportation network requires adoption and implementation of municipal and school policies that facilitate safe use of these facilities. This plan includes the following recommended policies that:

- Encourage transportation projects that consider all roadway users
- Ensure walkable and bikeable developments
- Policies and ordinances that increase safety through encouraging safe driving behaviors and year-round sidewalk maintenance

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### Programs

The plan provides guidance on the development of nationally recognized programs for education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation. These programs include:

- Education programs that create awareness for safe walking and biking behaviors
- Encouraging reporting of bike and pedestrian crashes
- Events led by Alderpeople, City, Park District and community leaders
- Enforcement of rules of the road and training for police officers on new laws meant to keep cyclists and pedestrians safe

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### Implementation

The planning process does not end with the adoption of this plan. It will require years of implementation and the dedication of key stakeholders. The plan includes a comprehensive timeline for implementation. The appendix includes resources for funding and implementing the plan's recommendations. Model policies and data used in developing this plan are also included to facilitate effective implementation.

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## 1.1 A Vision for Livability

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The vision for Chicago Heights:

*The City of Chicago Heights will become a vibrant and healthy community with the support of a safe and complete pedestrian and bicycle network that links all seven wards to major destinations in the area. Walking and biking will be a viable means of recreation and transportation for people of all ages.*

*Chicago Heights' residents will have multi-modal opportunities to walk or bike safely throughout the community. Prairie State College, Old Plank Road Trail, Chicago Heights Park District, Commissioners Park, McEldowney Park, St. James Hospital, Bloom Township and Marian Catholic High Schools, and many more destinations will be easy to access on foot or bike. Pedestrians and cyclists will feel safer crossing major streets, such as Lincoln Highway and Chicago Road.*

*The City will improve connections to existing forest preserve trails and roadways to foster safe travel between neighboring communities, such as Homewood, Flossmoor and Olympia Fields.*

The City of Chicago Heights is a thriving industrial and commercial center. Chicago Heights offers a small town atmosphere with all of the benefits of a metropolitan area. Nestled between Flossmoor, Homewood, South Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields, Chicago Heights is known as being the “Crossroads of the Nation” located 31 miles south of Chicago. The City is more than 120 years old and holds a rich history that valued industrial development, yet allowed for the construction of quiet residential neighborhoods. The City is renowned for its “Turn of the Century” architecture style. It’s economic and ethnic diversity is reflected in the variety of its residential neighborhoods.

The City of Chicago Heights Active Transportation Plan will guide improvements to residents’ quality of life through providing safe, healthy transportation options for its community. The plan will direct Chicago Heights towards improving its walking, biking and transit connections that will make Chicago Heights a more livable community.

The vision for active transportation in Chicago Heights reflects the community’s desire to increase transportation options by using walking and biking as forms of transportation and recreation. The community will have a complete, connected network of transportation options that will help them travel from their homes to their favorite places, engage residents and groups in Chicago Heights to help build momentum and excitement towards leading an active lifestyle. Chicago Heights’ Active Transportation Plan will guide programming focused around education, encouragement and enforcement, and support infrastructure and policies that improve the walking and biking environment. Together, programming, policy and infrastructure recommendations work in synergy to help Chicago Heights achieve their City’s goals and vision.

## 1.2 Goals of the Plan

The Chicago Heights Active Transportation Plan provides practical recommendations to support livability. These recommendations for active transportation will help focus the City's transportation investments on accessing key places that have been prioritized by the community; following best practices in "place-based planning." In addition, the plan communicates Chicago Heights' priorities to regional and state transportation jurisdictions including Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Metra, Pace and the Cook County Highway Department (CCHD).

The following goals guided the development of this plan.

### **Build a complete, connected active transportation network**

**Active Transportation Infrastructure:** Provide a comprehensive transportation network that prioritizes biking, walking and transit use. Emphasize the creation of dedicated routes and amenities to foster active transportation.

**Green Connections:** Provide a comprehensive network that connects residents to parks, open space and regional trails.

### **Create an institutional environment that encourages development and use of active transportation**

**Institutional Connections:** Adopt policies that encourage agency collaboration between schools, parks, the City, plus the private sector to make it safer and easier for residents to enjoy the Chicago Heights Active Transportation Network.

**Health and Safety:** Build a walking, biking and transit network that is accessible and safe for all ages and abilities to encourage a healthy and active lifestyle.

### **Engage residents and visitors in active transportation**

**People Connections:** Support biking and walking in the community through education and encouragement programs for residents.

**Economic Development:** Encourage residents to shop at local businesses by improving biking, walking and transit accessibility at important places in the community.

## 1.3 Planning Process

Local experts, representatives from community organizations, residents, and the City of Chicago Heights contributed their understanding of the community, while the consultants, Active Transportation Alliance, a team of active transportation experts, contributed their technical expertise. Both the locals and the consultants worked together to develop this Active Transportation Plan by identifying critical issues in the community and finding sustainable solutions that best meet Chicago Heights' needs. Physical designs of pedestrian and bikeway planning, as well as policies to support active transportation, programs on education, encouragement and enforcement in the community are the primary focuses of this plan.

The Chicago Heights Public Engagement Report (*see Appendix A*) describes each step that was taken to ensure public input and its importance in sustaining a successful plan. Chicago Heights' public engagement facilitated discussion between residents of Chicago Heights who best understand the challenges of getting around by foot and bike in their community. The consultants, provided expert advice on how to best address those challenges. The Public Engagement Report summarizes public input gathered throughout the planning process and how it influences Chicago Heights' Active Transportation Plan.

Existing conditions in the community were documented in a series of maps (*See Appendix B*) that illustrates Chicago Heights' transportation network in Fall 2011. The community was visited several times by Active Transportation Alliance, where they experienced Chicago Heights on foot, bicycle and automobile with a critical eye for potential improvements. Bicycle and pedestrian crash rates, vehicle traffic counts and speeds, land use, sidewalk presence, traffic signals, availability of right of way, were taken into account when developing this plan, which uses the most current standards (*see Appendix D, Facilities Guidance, Appendix E, Policy Resources, and Appendix F, Programming Resources*) for making recommendations.

*A full summary of information gathered through the planning process can be found in Appendix A, Public Engagement Summary, and Appendix B, Existing Conditions Maps.*

## 1.3 Planning Process (Continued)

### 1.3.1 Chicago Heights' Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee

The first step taken to develop a sustainable plan for the community was to work directly with the community in order to address the current needs in the City of Chicago Heights. A steering committee of key stakeholders representing City departments and organizations was formed to allow for a better assessment of options and opportunities for safe multi-modal transportation.

### 1.3.2 Community Workshops

Developing a plan for pedestrians and cyclists in Chicago Heights began with including the public in the process. This method for public engagement set the foundation for identifying key issues faced by pedestrians and cyclists in the community.

Residents and members of the Steering Committee gathered on Tuesday, November 1st, 2011 at the Chicago Heights Park District to share their experience and local expertise on walking and biking in the community as well as propose solutions for improvements.

Representatives from the community and Active Trans explained the origins of this plan, and spoke about the importance of active transportation. Talia Fares from the Prevention Partnership kicked off the event by sharing the exciting opportunity Chicago Heights has to develop an Active Transportation Plan. Shafaq Choudry, Active Trans' Community Planner discussed the connections between public health and transportation issues by raising awareness on the benefits that come from active transportation and how it increases opportunities to live an active lifestyle in the community. Marissa Dolin, Active Trans' Transportation Planner, presented an interactive educational piece on the elements of complete streets, which means including to all users types and ages in transportation planning, and how each element is used as a basis to form the Active Transportation Plan. Leslie Phemister, Active Trans South Suburban Coordinator, engaged participants with a polling exercise throughout the presentation; showing immediate visual results where the community stands on walking and biking issues in Chicago Heights.

After providing context on the importance and components of active transportation, participants broke into groups for the event's highlight- the mapping exercise. Participants identified key destinations in Chicago Heights which serve as the central nodes of the pedestrian and bicycle network. The next step for participants was to identify which crossings, intersections and streets are currently hazardous, and which are barriers to reaching their destinations conveniently and comfortably. Finally, existing and desired pedestrian and bicycle routes were identified and set the framework for updating the plan.



Representatives from the steering committee and the consultants explore some of the challenges faced by cyclists in Chicago Heights.

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## 1.3 Planning Process (Continued)

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### 1.3.3 Community Surveying

Surveys asking about current walking and biking perceptions and issues were distributed throughout the community through online and paper surveys. Surveys offered residents an opportunity to participate in the planning process. Fliers with a link to an online survey were distributed and hard copy surveys were available at the Chicago Heights Park District, Bloom Township High School and Prairie State College.

Over 70% of participants said that they would consider walking or biking in Chicago Heights if it was safer, easier and more accessible. See Chicago Heights' Public Engagement Report (*Appendix A*) for further detail on survey results.

### 1.3.4 Developing Recommendations

After gathering feedback from residents about the conditions of active transportation in Chicago Heights, Active Transportation Alliance identified the places that were reported to be the most important to Chicago Heights' active transportation network, and recommended strategies to include in this plan. These strategies include national best practices in engineering, design, policy, and programming. Strategies were reviewed and refined by the Chicago Heights' Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee.

## 1.4 Timeframe for Recommendations

Based on the input from residents and community groups, this plan sets forth a set of implementable strategies for achieving Chicago Heights' vision for livability. Strategies included in this plan have been successfully implemented in other communities throughout Illinois. The recommendations are divided into Near Term, Mid Term, Long Term, Ongoing and Opportunistic categories. These categories can help the City coordinate these efforts with staffing plans and work plans.

### 1.4.1 Near Term Recommendations

**Network:** Near Term network recommendations are generally corridors and intersections that are currently bikeable or walkable, but may be aided by some low-cost improvements. A minimal level of coordination between the City and other organizations is required to implement these recommendations.

**Policy and Programming:** These projects involve minimal start-up costs or Long Term organization. Many education and encouragement initiatives are proposed for Near Term implementation to build support for later projects.

### 1.4.2 Mid Term Recommendations

**Network:** Mid Term network recommendations are corridors and intersections where current conditions could be easily improved—with a moderate construction budget—to become more bikeable or walkable. These projects may require a moderate level of coordination between the City and other agencies.

**Policy and Programming:** Mid Term projects generally involve more planning or public support before they can begin. These projects often require dedicated staff or volunteer time to organize an event or educate the public about an upcoming policy change before it can be made. These projects may have initial start-up costs and coordination with community organizations.

### 1.4.3 Long Term Recommendations

**Network:** Long-term network recommendations are often complicated by jurisdictional issues or the balancing of regional network priorities. These recommendations may have other feasibility issues, such as high ADT or restricted road width or right-of-way.

**Policy and Programming:** These projects, expected to begin implementation after five years, frequently depend on the completion of earlier projects and local support.

*The Implementation section, Chapter 4 of this plan showcases a complete list of recommendations and suggested timing.*

### 1.4.4 Ongoing Recommendations

Although most of the recommendations can be implemented through a one-time project and continued maintenance, some recommendations, especially those related to programming, are most effective if repeated on a regular basis.

### 1.4.4 Opportunistic Implementation

While this plan offers a guide to prioritizing these recommendations as Near, Mid or Long Term priorities, the City should actively seek out opportunities to coordinate implementation with private development and public projects. Private development can often trigger the need to improve the corridor frontage areas, and state and county construction and maintenance priorities can overlap with this plan's recommendations. Implementing agencies should remain aware of these kinds of opportunities and seek to coordinate the implementation of this plan with parallel county and regional efforts. (*See Appendices D and F for funding and programmatic resources.*)

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## 2.1 Network Context

### 2.1.1 The Network Defined

The bicycle and pedestrian network in Chicago Heights begins at every resident's front door and ends at the places they visit, learn, play, shop and work.

The Chicago Heights active transportation network is designed to make biking and walking trips from residents' homes to schools, parks, offices, shopping, transit stops and everywhere else in the community safe, convenient and enjoyable. A full network connects all destinations, not just a few routes.

With the ever-increasing cost of car travel, with youth seeking independence and with older adults choosing to age in place, a complete active transportation network is designed to accommodate the many residents of Chicago Heights and their trips to destinations in the community.

The consultants from Active Transportation Alliance performed the necessary fieldwork, data gathering and analysis. The steering committee and City staff guided their work. The foundation for the network and its recommendations was laid by true local biking and walking experts: the residents of Chicago Heights.

Recommendations in this section support the use of walking and biking in Chicago Heights through infrastructure improvements. These recommendations provide a framework for the City to make active transportation a safe and viable choice for many daily trips.

Chicago Heights may implement many of the recommendations at the local level. Some, however, may require coordination with the Cook County Highway Department (CCHD) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), as well as with neighboring jurisdictions. For these projects, this plan communicates the priorities of the City to those agencies and the region.

A full network map for all the recommendations demonstrating how the walking, biking and transit networks in Chicago Heights fit together to form a complete non-motorized network is included in this section. The following sections then break down the complete network into its five components:

- 1 Active Transportation Network and Destinations
- 2 Intersections
- 3 Pedestrian Network
- 4 Bicycle Network
- 5 Transit Network

## 2.2 Place Connections

The active transportation network and recommendations will help residents reach their favorite places and explore new ones on foot, bike and transit. Putting places first in the consideration of biking, walking and transit improvements will help integrate sustainable, efficient, healthy living into community life.

The recommendations are organized by likely timelines for implementation—Near Term, Mid Term, and Long Term. The timeline is based on level of coordination needed, number of agencies involved and the need to seek additional grants prior to implementation for each project. If a timeline is difficult to estimate, often because of the need for stakeholder buy-in or complicated coordination, it is listed as simply a “recommendation.” For many places, access is improved by focusing on a corridor, such as Lincoln Highway or Chicago Road. Some places have distinct transportation needs, which are addressed separately of their associated corridor or as part of a zone.

### 2.2.1 Chicago Heights Schools

**OBJECTIVE:** Facilitate safe, easy, convenient travel by foot or bike to schools in Chicago Heights through school travel planning and partnerships with schools.

**DESCRIPTION:** Encouraging students to walk or bike builds healthy habits and exercise into their daily routine, and reduces traffic congestion around schools. Many students live near their school. This short distance makes walking or biking an easy choice for students. Improvements around each school will help make students and parents feel safer on their walk or ride to school.

*The following recommendations should be considered for all schools. Specific recommendations for additional recommendations can be found in Section 3.2, School Policy.*

*Timeframe:* Near Term

**WALKING ROUTES:** Develop recommended school walking routes for students at each school so students and parents are aware of recommended safe routes and crossings. Walking routes should guide students to school by crossing busy streets at intersections with stop signs, stop lights or crossing guards. Prioritize sidewalk connectivity along these routes.

## 2.2 Place Connections

**SIDEWALKS:** Evaluate the sidewalk condition within ½ mile of each school. Work with property owners to maintain existing sidewalk, upgrade where sidewalk is narrow, or fill in gaps where sidewalk is missing.

**CROSSWALKS:** Stripe crosswalks at all intersections on recommended walking routes.

**BIKE PARKING:** Provide bicycle parking at each school. Review use of racks on an annual basis and install more, if necessary.

**TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT:** Although not an infrastructure recommendation, the schools could work with students to encourage, educate and reward its students for walking or biking to school.

*See programming section 3.3 for additional recommendations for students and schools.*

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

**BUMP OUTS:** Install bump outs at all intersections adjacent to schools and on recommended walking routes.



Many students walk or bike to school every day. Installing sidewalk on popular routes to school, such as Chicago Road and Dixie Highway, will make it safer for kids to get to school each day.

### Bloom Township High School

Bloom Township High School is centrally located and many students walk to school every day, rain or shine. Students will often walk along Chicago Road or Dixie Highway to get to school despite the lack of sidewalk on these streets and intersections that are unfriendly to pedestrians. To better accommodate students going to school on foot or bike, the following improvements can be made:

**CHICAGO ROAD SIDEWALK:** Complete the sidewalk network along Chicago Road between Lincoln Highway and 10th Street. Consider using a wider sidewalk or multi-use path to accommodate a large number of students at arrival and dismissal.

**INTERSECTIONS AT 10TH STREET AND CHICAGO ROAD AND 10TH STREET AND DIXIE HIGHWAY:** Upgrade these intersections to meet current pedestrian accommodation standards including longer walk times when the pedestrian signal is activated, restripe crosswalks, and consider changes to the turning radius at corners to ensure slower turns onto and off of 10th Street.

### Marian Catholic High School

Many students from Chicago Heights attend this school and live within walking or biking distance of campus. However, there are few sidewalk connections to the school that would allow students to safely walk or bike to school. To better accommodate students going to school on foot or bike, the following improvements can be made:

**SIDE PATH OR MULTI-USE TRAIL ON JOE ORR ROAD:** Joe Orr Road from Western Avenue to Dixie Highway currently lacks pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Construct a sidepath or multi-use trail on the south side of the street plus continue the sidewalk on the north side of the street. This will help students living near the school get there safely on foot or bike. Students and staff at Prairie State College will also benefit from this project.

**SIDEWALK ON ASHLAND AVENUE:** Complete any gaps in the sidewalk network along Ashland Avenue on both sides of the street.

**INTERSECTION AT JOE ORR ROAD AND ASHLAND AVENUE:** Upgrade the intersections to meet current pedestrian accommodation standards including longer walk times when the pedestrian signal is activated, restripe crosswalks, and consider changes to the turning radius at corners to ensure slower turns onto and off of Ashland.

## 2.2 Place Connections (Continued)

### Prairie State College

Prairie State College, located at the intersection of Halsted Street and Vollmer Road draws students from across the Southland. Both Vollmer and Halsted currently lack accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians. To better accommodate students going to school on foot or bike, the following improvements can be made:

**SIDEPATH OR MULTI-USE TRAIL ON VOLLMER ROAD AND HALSTED STREET:** The perimeter of campus currently lacks pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Construct a sidepath or multi-use trail on the south side of the street plus continue the sidewalk on the north side of the street. This will help students living near the school get there safely on foot or bike.

**CONSOLIDATE DRIVEWAYS ON VOLLMER ROAD:** Intersections are the most likely places for crashes to occur. Each driveway is an intersection. If driveways are consolidated, that means there will be less places for crashes to occur.

**INTERSECTION AT VOLLMER ROAD AND HALSTED STREET:** After a sidepath has been installed, upgrade the intersections to meet current pedestrian accommodation standards including longer walk times when the pedestrian signal is activated, restripe crosswalks, and consider changes to the turning radius at corners to ensure slower turns onto and off of Vollmer. Adding pedestrian accommodations here will also help businesses by bringing students to shop or eat there between classes.

**SIDE PATH OR MULTI-USE TRAIL ON JOE ORR ROAD:** Partner with Marian Catholic High School and the City to construct a sidepath or multi-use trail on Joe Orr Road. See additional description on previous page.



Adding paths around Prairie State College will help students access campus by foot and bike.

### 2.2.2 Parks, Recreational Facilities and other Community Facilities

**OBJECTIVE:** Build safer and more convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to Chicago Heights' parks, recreational facilities, and community centers.

**DESCRIPTION:** Chicago Heights' many neighborhood parks and recreational facilities bring together members of the community to play and socialize. These facilities are designed for use by people living near-by. In order to facilitate safe, more convenient access to Chicago Heights' parks and community facilities, the following improvements are recommended at all facilities.

*Timeframe:* Near Term

**CROSSWALKS:** Stripe crosswalks at all intersections adjacent to parks and community facilities.

**ROUTE SIGNAGE:** Create awareness for safe routes to the parks and community facilities by signing recommended bike routes to these destinations.

**BIKE PARKING:** Provide bicycle parking at each park or recreational facility.

*See section 2.5.2 for additional bike rack recommendations.*

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

**BUMP OUTS:** Use bump outs at controlled intersections to slow traffic and reduce intersection crossing distance. Consider curb extensions at mid-block entrances to parks to shorten crossing distance.

**CUT THROUGHS:** Where right of way is available or may be obtained through an easement, parks should include paved pedestrian connections to adjacent streets and intersections.

## 2.2 Place Connections (Continued)

### Priority Parks and Community Facilities

Although all parks and recreational facilities are important, the following should be prioritized for improvements:

- Old Plank Trail (to be developed)
- Thorn Creek Trail (to be developed)
- Chicago Heights Park District West Golf Course
- Commissioners Park
- McEldowney Park
- Chicago Heights Park District
- Chicago Heights Public Library

### Trails and Trail Connections

Trails are like bicycle and pedestrian highways, and should be given special considerations. Good trails are well used and bring people to the places they want to go. Two trails, the Thorn Creek Trail and the Old Plank Road Trail are currently under development. The City should support and encourage the continued development of these trails, ensure that residents can easily access the trails, and feel safe while using them. When trails cross major streets, crosswalks should be striped, and signage should be installed per the unsignalized intersection description in *section 2.4.1*.



Chicago Heights has many trails that cross busy roads. Enhancing crossings with crosswalk striping and signs will help people cross the street safely.

### 2.2.3 Commercial Destinations

**OBJECTIVE:** Encourage residents to shop locally by increasing access to businesses by foot and bike by building safer and more convenient bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in and around businesses in Chicago Heights.

**DESCRIPTION:** Chicago Heights has many thriving businesses that serve residents and draw customers from beyond their municipal boundary. Providing bicycle and pedestrian access to businesses encourages residents to shop locally, and keep money within the community.

#### Shopping Centers

Business clusters in Chicago Heights are typically convenience, service oriented or food related. These businesses are often separated from the sidewalk by large parking lots, which can be intimidating for pedestrians and cyclists. The City may consider partnering with shopping centers clustered around the following locations to implement the recommendations listed below.

- Dixie Highway and Vollmer Road
- Lincoln Highway between Ashland and Western
- Joe Orr Road between Dixie Highway and Chicago Road
- Halsted Street north of Holbrook (in Glenwood and Homewood)
- “Downtown” Chicago Heights-area bounded by Chicago Road, Lincoln Highway, East End Avenue, Independence Drive/Hickory Street, including Halsted Street, Washington School, City Hall, Library, St. James Hospital, Park District, bus station, police station, St. Agnes School and future Metra station area.

*In order to better accommodate cyclists and pedestrians, the following recommendations may be considered at all business clusters.*

*Timeframe:* Near Term

**STRIPE CROSSWALKS AT DRIVEWAYS:** To create awareness for pedestrians crossing driveways, stripe crosswalks to alert drivers to pedestrians.

**BIKE PARKING:** Work with businesses to install bike racks for customers and employees wishing to bike to businesses.

## 2.2 Place Connections (Continued)

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

**SHARED DRIVEWAYS:** Each driveway represents a potential conflict point for automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists. Limiting the number of new driveways and consolidating existing driveways will reduce potential conflict points.

**PARKING LOT DESIGN:** When parking lots are resurfaced or restriped, add crosswalks connecting to business entrances and at other key locations in the parking lot to better accommodate pedestrians.

*Timeframe:* Long Term

**COMPLETE SIDEWALK NETWORK:** Complete the sidewalk network connecting businesses to the existing sidewalk network.

**ACCOMMODATE PEDESTRIANS AT INTERSECTIONS:** To encourage pedestrian access from all directions, pedestrians should be accommodated at all signalized intersections. Basic pedestrian accommodation includes crosswalks, ADA accessible curb cuts and pedestrian walk/don't walk countdown signals.



Driveways, like intersections, are potential places for crashes to occur. Striping crosswalks and adding stop signs will remind drivers to check for pedestrians before exiting a shopping center.

### Downtown Chicago Heights

“Downtown” Chicago Heights, the area bounded by Chicago Road, Lincoln Highway, East End Avenue, Independence Drive/Hickory Street, including Halsted Street-McKinley School, City Hall, Library, St. James Hospital, Park District, bus station, police station, St. Agnes School and future Metra station area has many destinations that could be visited by foot or bike. Because of the high crash rates in this area and large number of important destinations, the City should prioritize this area for improvements such as completing or upgrading the sidewalk network to include sidewalks with a minimum 5’ width and 5’ buffer from traffic, stripe crosswalks and other amenities that are describes in *Pedestrian Zones, Section 2.4.1*.

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

**STRIPE PARKING:** Clearly mark locations where parking is allowed by striping parking spaces or a parking lane. The painted parking spaces encourage more cautious driving and discourage passing in the parking lane.

**HALSTED/15th/PARK/EMERALD INTERSECTION:** This intersection is confusing for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike, and with the proposed Metra station, foot, bike and automobile traffic is likely to increase. In the near term, use paint to clearly delineate through traffic, turning patterns, and islands. In the long term, reconstruct the intersection as a roundabout.



Pedestrians in “Downtown” Chicago Heights would feel safer if there were a buffer separating them from traffic.

## 2.2 Place Connections (Continued)

### 2.2.4 Corridors

**OBJECTIVE:** To accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians along main corridors in Chicago Heights.

**DESCRIPTION:** The arterial streets in Chicago Heights are the most direct and best connected roads in the City. For cyclists and pedestrians, direct routes mean shorter, faster and more convenient trips. Most of the retail destinations and many parks and schools are also located either on or close to one of these streets. In order to provide access to these important destinations, the arterial streets connecting the destinations must also be accommodating to cyclists and pedestrians.

Most of the corridors listed below are owned by IDOT or the Cook County Highway Department and any improvements will need to be made in partnership with IDOT or Cook County.

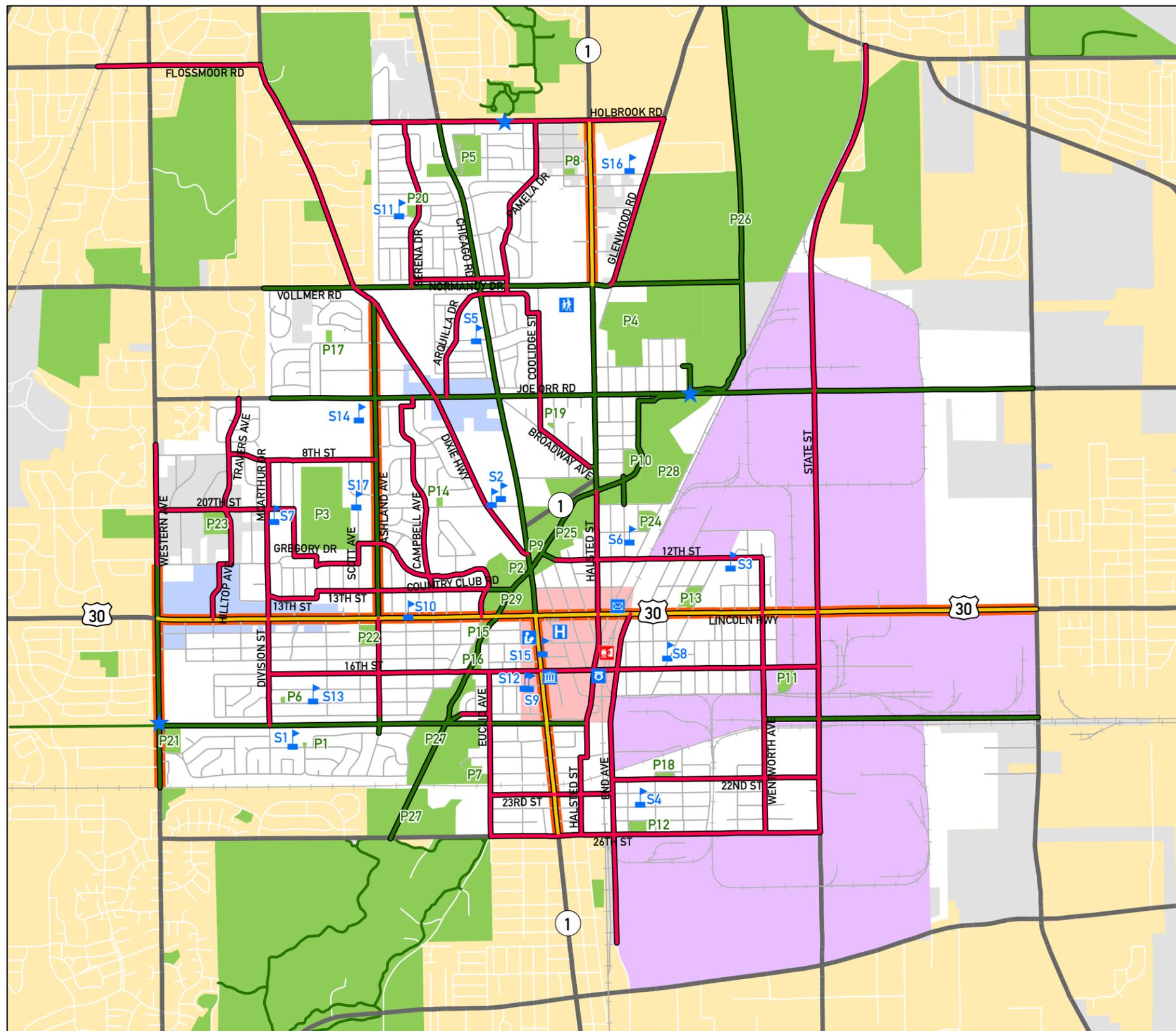
- **Lincoln Highway**  
Jurisdiction: IDOT  
Facility Recommendation: Sidewalk Improvements
- **Chicago Road**  
Jurisdiction: IDOT  
Facility Recommendation: Multiuse path north of Lincoln Highway, Sidewalk improvements south of Lincoln Highway.
- **Joe Orr Road**  
Jurisdiction: IDOT/Cook County  
Facility Recommendation: Multiuse path
- **Vollmer Road**  
Jurisdiction: Cook County/Chicago Heights  
Facility Recommendation: Multiuse path west of Halsted, path connecting to Thorn Creek Trail east of Halsted.
- **State Street**  
Jurisdiction: Cook County  
Facility Recommendation: Road diet with bike lanes
- **Western Avenue**  
Jurisdiction: IDOT  
Facility Recommendation: Bike lane north of 12th Street, multiuse path south of 12th on west side of street, sidewalk improvements on east side of the street.

- **Holbrook Road**  
Jurisdiction: Cook County  
Facility Recommendation: Paved shoulder
- **Halsted Street**  
Jurisdiction: IDOT  
Facility Recommendation: Multiuse path south of Vollmer, sidewalk improvements north of Vollmer
- **Dixie Highway**  
Jurisdiction: IDOT  
Facility Recommendation: Road diet with bike lanes
- **Ashland Avenue**  
Jurisdiction: Chicago Heights  
Facility Recommendation: Road diet with bike lanes and sidewalk improvements north of Lincoln Highway, designated bike route south of Lincoln Highway.



This "desire line" worn in by pedestrians indicates the need for a sidewalk along the street. Chicago Heights can work with Cook County and IDOT to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists parallel to major roadways.

2.2.5. Place Connections



## -Chicago Heights- Network

**Network Type**

- Pedestrian
- Bicycle
- Pedestrian & Bicycle
- Sidewalk Improvements
- Existing Trail

**Existing Infrastructure**

- Arterial
- Local Road
- Railroad

**Points of Interest**

- City Hall
- Police Station
- Post Office
- Hospital
- School
- Future Metra Stop
- Prairie State
- Library
- Trailhead

**Land Use**

- Downtown
- Industrial Area
- Commercial Area

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

- S1. Beacon Hill Primary Center
- S2. Bloom Township High
- S3. Gavin Elementary
- S4. Garfield Elementary
- S5. Greenbriar Elementary
- S6. Jefferson Elementary
- S7. Kennedy Elementary
- S8. Lincoln Elementary
- S9. McKinley Elementary
- S10. Roosevelt Elementary
- S11. Serena Hills Elementary
- S12. Washington Junior High
- S13. Wilson Elementary

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

- S14. Marian Catholic High School
- S15. St. Agnes School
- S16. St. Kieran School
- S17. St Pauls Lutheran School

**CHICAGO HEIGHTS PARKS**

- P1. Beacon Hill Play Area
- P2. Bob Lueder Ball Field
- P3. Chicago Heights Country Club
- P4. Chicago Heights Park District Golf Course
- P5. Commissioners Park
- P6. Cornet Park
- P7. Euclid Park
- P8. Fireman's Park
- P9. Hap Bruno Baseball Park
- P10. Hillcrest Park
- P11. Hodges Park
- P12. Jirtle Park
- P13. King Park
- P14. Landeen Park
- P15. McEldowney North
- P16. McEldowney South
- P17. Meidell Park
- P18. Petrarca Park
- P19. Sangamon Park
- P20. Serena Hills Play Area
- P21. Sesto Park
- P22. Smith Park
- P23. Swanson Park
- P24. Wacker Park

**COOK COUNTY PARKS**

- P25. Halsted Woods
- P26. Glenwood Woods
- P27. Indian Hill Woods
- P28. Joe Orr Woods
- P29. Wilson Woods

0 0.4 0.8 1.2 1.6 Miles

Prepared By: Active Transportation Alliance 2/2/2012  
Data Source: Active Transportation Alliance, IDOT & Navteq.

## 2.3 Intersection Improvements

### 2.3.1 Network Connections

**OBJECTIVE:** Create a safe environment for cyclists and pedestrians at intersections and street crossings.

**DESCRIPTION:** Intersections and crossings without bicycle and pedestrian accommodations can be the end of an active transportation trip either because someone has reached their destination or because the intersection is too large of a barrier to cross.

This plan recommends improvements to signalized and unsignalized intersections, and designates a specific set of intersections as gateways and hubs based on land use and context.

*This section describes the types of intersections illustrated on map 2.3.3 and section 2.3.2, Crossing Improvements is a glossary of terms explaining some of the terms used in this section.*

#### Intersection Types

**GATEWAYS:** Gateways identify an intersection as an entrance to a community and sometimes to key districts. Gateways should be prioritized for network wayfinding signs and identity features, such as public art installations and banners. Typical gateway treatments include:

- Rows of street trees along parkway to define entryway
- Gateway signage enhanced with landscaping, including multi-stemmed and closely spaced trees providing a background
- Decorative paving at crosswalk visually connecting both sides of roadway
- Large planting beds to address vehicular scale
- Lighting hidden within landscaping within the entire gateway area providing night time effect
- Landscaping to be arranged in masses to divert attention to gateway signage

Gateway and Hub intersections are an opportunity to connect with residents and community organizations in the planning and up keep of these sites. Resident groups could plant rain gardens, and use signage and brochures to show Chicago Heights history. These and other quality of life amenities will enhance the desirability of Chicago Heights as a great place to live.

**HUBS:** Hubs offer nearby access to businesses, schools, parks and hospitals. Hubs should be prioritized intersections for the placement of network amenities, such as transit shelters, bike parking, benches and human-scale lighting. These are places along bike or pedestrian-friendly routes that could be connection points between modes of travel, such as bicycle and pedestrian connections to transit, a trail or center of activity. Hubs can also be the center of a pedestrian oriented district. Typical Hub treatments include the following elements at or near the intersection:

- Ornamental lighting with banners
- Special paving at crosswalks
- Accommodation of cafes and/or sidewalk activities
- Street trees
- Decorative paving
- Seasonal planting
- Planters



Hub intersections (top) are centers of activity for cyclists, pedestrians, transit riders and motorists. Gateway intersections (bottom) signalize an entrance to the community. Photo Credit: Suzanne Nathan

## 2.3 Intersection Improvements (Continued)

**SIGNALIZED:** Signalized intersections refer to all intersections controlled by traffic signals. Each of these intersections should have at a minimum basic pedestrian accommodation such as:

- Striped crosswalks on all sides of the intersection
- Pedestrian countdown signals
- Sidewalk connecting to the intersection
- ADA accessible curb ramps

Additional accommodations may include:

- “Pork chop” style pedestrian island
- Curb Extension or bump out

**UNSIGNALIZED:** Unsignalized intersections are controlled by a stop sign or not currently controlled. Each of the intersections designated on map 2.3.3 may be considered for basic pedestrian accommodations appropriate for unsignalized intersections such as:

- Striped crosswalks at all sides of the intersection
- Sidewalk connecting to the intersection
- ADA accessible curb ramps

Additional accommodations may include:

- Must Stop for Pedestrian Signs
- Pedestrian refuge islands
- Curb extensions or bump outs
- HAWK signals or other pedestrian activated beacons

*The improvements listed above should be applied to all intersections designated on Map 2.2.3, Intersection Improvements.*



Intersections with traffic signals, crosswalks, ADA accessible curb ramps and pedestrian countdown clocks make it safer for pedestrians to cross the street.



Even if an intersection doesn't have a traffic signal, there are ways to make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the street.

## 2.3 Intersection Improvements(Continued)

### 2.3.2 Crossing Improvements

Installing the following types of improvements at signalized and unsignalized intersections will improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations in Chicago Heights.

**CROSSWALKS:** Install and restripe visible crosswalks. All crosswalks in high-use areas should be upgraded to “zebra stripe” or “ladder style” per the current Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), and install where missing. These crosswalk styles are significantly more visible to drivers than the traditional parallel line crosswalks. Crosswalks should be installed at all legs of controlled intersections where a stop sign or traffic signal exist, and across all commercial driveways. Crosswalks may also be installed across streets where sidewalk exists on at least one side.



Ladder style crosswalks and bump outs make it safer for pedestrians to cross the street.

**CURB CUTS/CURB RAMPS:** Bi-directional curb cuts guide the visually impaired, children on bicycles, and strollers easily across the street. Install bi-directional curb cuts and truncated domes at all intersections where sidewalk exists. All new intersection crossings should be equipped with bi-directional curb cuts and truncated domes to ensure the intersection complies with ADA standards.



Curb cuts that meet ADA standards help people cross the street by building a ramp from the street to the sidewalk.

**PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS WITH COUNTDOWN TIMERS:** Install countdown pedestrian signals at all signalized intersections. These signals show pedestrians how much time they have to cross the street and prevent pedestrians from running across the street when there is not enough time. The City may also consider modifying the signal timing to allow pedestrian to lead, using a type of signal called a leading pedestrian indicator.



Pedestrian signals with countdown timers tell pedestrians how much time is left to cross the street.

## 2.3 Intersection Improvements (Continued)

**CURB EXTENSIONS AND BUMP OUTS:** At signalized intersections, mid-block crossings and intersections along school walking routes, consider installing curb extensions or bump outs. A curb extension or bump out reduces in the roadway width to create a shorter crossing for pedestrians. The curb extension or bump out can also improve driver and pedestrian visibility, all while encouraging vehicular traffic to proceed with caution.



Bump outs and curb extensions shorten the distance a pedestrian has to cross the street.

**PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLAND OR MEDIAN:** At Key mid-block crossings and select unsignalized intersections, consider installing pedestrian islands and refuges. Islands or medians of sufficient width that are placed in the center area of a street or highway can serve as a place of refuge for pedestrians who are attempting to cross at a midblock or intersection location. Center islands or medians allow pedestrians to find an adequate gap in one direction of traffic at a time, as the pedestrians are able to stop, if necessary, in the center lane or median area and wait for an adequate gap in the other direction of traffic before crossing the second half of the street or highway.



Medians and refuge islands allow people to cross only one side of the street at a time.



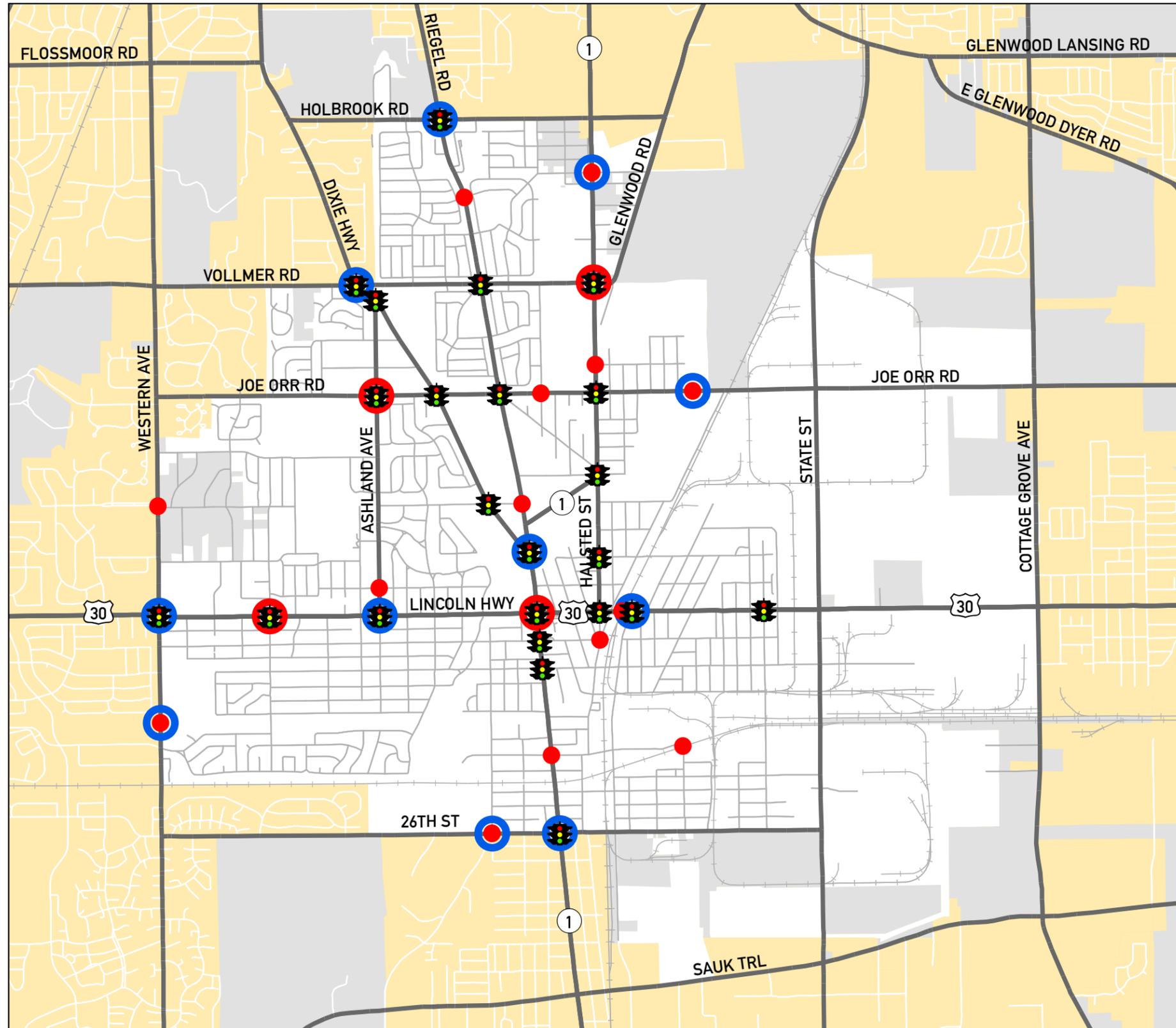
Must Stop for Pedestrians signs remind drivers that they are required, by law to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks.

**MUST STOP FOR PEDESTRIAN SIGNS:** Illinois enacted a law requiring drivers to come to a full stop for pedestrians crossing in a crosswalk. To remind and reinforce this law, the City may install signs reminding drivers to stop for pedestrians. These signs are most appropriate at midblock or other unsignalized intersections, and lead to a decrease in amount of time a pedestrian must wait before crossing the street.

**PEDESTRIAN ACTIVATED SIGNALS:** At unsignalized intersections and key mid-block crossings, consider installing high-intensity activated crosswalk (HAWK) pedestrian or pedestrian activated beacons. These types of signals remain dark for traffic until a pedestrian activates the signal. When the signal is activated, it will signal cars to stop while the pedestrian crosses the street. Crossings with these types of signals could also be coupled with pedestrian refuges at wider intersections.

**NO TURN ON RED SIGNS:** Install 'no turn on red' at traffic signals in to prevent car/pedestrian crashes when the pedestrian has the right of way.

**TRAFFIC SIGNAL TIMING:** Timing for traffic signals can be re-timed to better accommodate pedestrians. At intersections where there are high crash rates or high usage by pedestrians, signal timing can be changed to allow more time for pedestrians to cross the street, give pedestrians a head start when crossing the street or an "all red" phase where pedestrians can cross the street in any direction.



## -Chicago Heights- Intersection Improvements

### Intersection Improvements

-  Gateway
-  Hub
-  Unsignalized
-  Signalized

### Existing Infrastructure

-  Arterial
-  Local Road
-  Railroad



Prepared By: Active Transportation Alliance 1/18/2012  
 Data Source: Active Transportation Alliance, IDOT & Navteq.

## 2.4. Pedestrian Improvements

### 2.4.1 Pedestrian Ways

**OBJECTIVE:** Build a complete, connected pedestrian network where residents of Chicago Heights can reach any destination from their front door on foot.

**DESCRIPTION:** The pedestrian network functions best when it is well connected and complete. Completing a network can easily be accomplished through elimination of sidewalk gaps, providing buffers for walkways along busy roads, wider sidewalks in areas with heavy pedestrian traffic and signage to aid pedestrians in getting around.

*The following recommendations and map illustrate the location and type of pedestrian improvements that could be made.*

**RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS:** Chicago Heights has many low-traffic residential streets where people feel comfortable walking and biking. These streets could be enhanced by working with residents to maintain and replace broken sidewalk, completing gaps in the sidewalk network, and installing traffic calming measures where conditions and resident support are available.

To complete Chicago Heights' residential sidewalk network, the City may work with residents to upgrade and maintain sidewalks in front of their homes and install sidewalks where it is missing. Sidewalks should be a minimum 5' wide paved surface and separated by a minimum 5' landscape buffer from vehicular traffic.



Many streets in residential neighborhoods are already welcoming to pedestrians, but there are still some gaps in the sidewalk network.



Multi-use paths create a separated place for pedestrians and cyclists away from fast moving traffic. This facility is most appropriate when there are few driveways crossing the path.

**MULTI-USE PATHS:** When right of way is available, a multiuse path could be constructed to provide additional connectivity for the active transportation network. Both pedestrians and cyclists can be accommodated on this type of path. These paths are separated from roadways and may either parallel a roadway, or cut through a park or recreation area. Ideally, multi-use paths are located in areas where there are few intersections or driveways, to avoid potential conflicts. A minimum 8' is recommended for a path, but 10'-12' is best.

**ARTERIAL SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS:** Complete or update sidewalks along arterial streets with sidewalks crosswalks, ADA accessible curb ramps and pedestrian countdown timers at signalized intersections. Sidewalks should be a minimum 5' wide and a minimum 5' buffer from traffic. Buffers could be paved or landscaped. Encourage installation of street trees, bump outs, mid-block crossings, and streetscaping elements in the buffer. Tighten turning radii in these areas to encourage slower, more cautious turning by motorized traffic.



Adding or upgrading pedestrian accommodations along arterial streets will make it safer for residents to access businesses on foot.

## 2.4. Pedestrian Improvements (Continued)

### 2.4.2 Pedestrian Amenities

**OBJECTIVE:** Install amenities to make walking a more inviting, attractive option in Chicago Heights.

**DESCRIPTION:** Pedestrians are sensitive to character and convenience features, which can encourage more people to walk further as well as more often.

*Install the following “best practice” pedestrian amenities to create a more welcoming and safe pedestrian environment*

**BUFFER ZONES:** Create a buffer zone between the sidewalk and motorized traffic (5’ minimum). Use landscaping and trees to create feeling of separation.

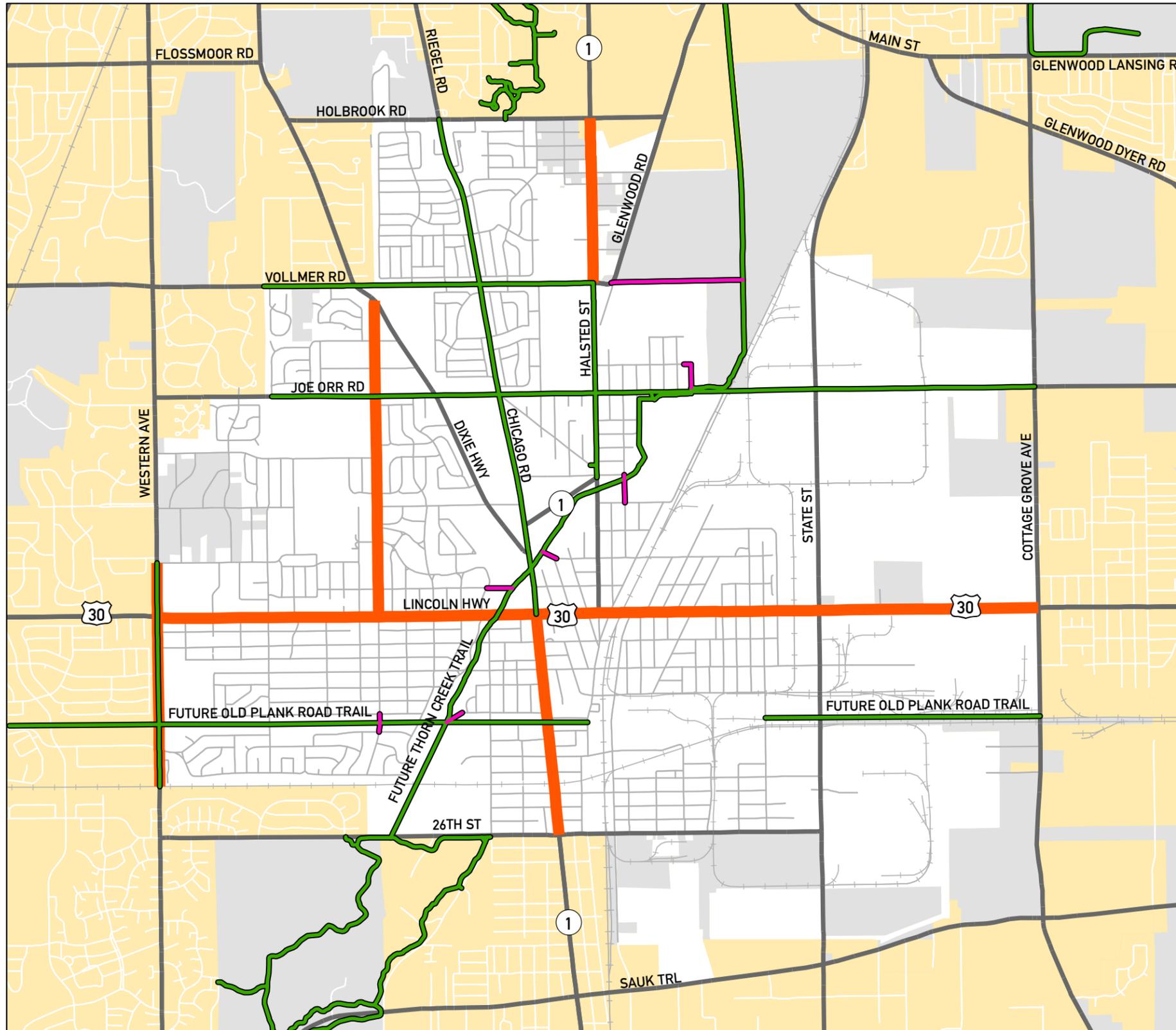
**STREETSCAPING:** On arterial streets, use pedestrian scale lighting, use benches, trash cans, sit walls, planters, bike racks, trees, plantings and public art to buffer pedestrians from traffic. These amenities are most effectively used in areas with higher pedestrian traffic such as the areas designated in Chicago Heights as Pedestrian Corridors or Pedestrian Zones.



Walking next to traffic can be dangerous. All sidewalks should be at least 5’ wide and have at least a 5’ buffer zone separating pedestrians from traffic.



Streetscaping elements such as benches, planter boxes, and pedestrian scale lighting make streets more inviting for pedestrians.



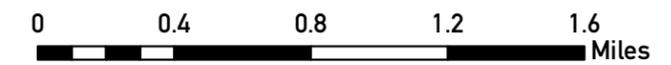
## -Chicago Heights- Recommended Pedestrian Routes

### Recommended Network

-  Multiuse Path
-  Trail Connection
-  Sidewalk Improvements

### Existing Infrastructure

-  Arterial
-  Local Road
-  Railroad



Prepared By: Active Transportation Alliance 2/2/2012  
Data Source: Active Transportation Alliance, CMAP & Navteq.

## 2.5. Bicycle Improvements

### 2.5.1 Bicycle Ways

**OBJECTIVE:** Build a complete, connected bicycle network where residents of Chicago Heights can reach any destination from their front door.

**DESCRIPTION:** The bicycle network functions best when it is well connected and complete. The bicycle network in Chicago Heights can be made of many different types of bicycle facilities. Constructing a complete and connected network will encourage biking in a safe and efficient manner throughout Chicago Heights.

Completing a network can easily be accomplished by first creating a series of local routes and trails connecting to schools, parks, trails and retail areas. These local routes should be safe for people of all skill levels to ride. At the same time, the City should be looking for ways to include safe bicycle facilities on arterial routes, providing quick, direct connections to the places along those routes both in and around Chicago Heights.

*The following is a glossary of various types of bicycle facilities that are appropriate for Chicago Heights. The map, 5.5.3, Bicycle Facilities illustrates the appropriate location for each type of facility listed below.*

#### Local routes

Create a near-term bike network for Chicago Heights by signing routes identified by local cyclists as being comfortable and having good connections by using signage and pavement markings.

**SIGNED ROUTES:** Many Chicago Heights streets are comfortable for cyclists who possess a moderate tolerance for traffic. These routes mostly include residential streets with low-traffic. Many residents and most visitors are unaware of the City's bike-friendly routes. Signing the network early on provides immediate value and encouragement to cyclists while raising all users' awareness and acceptance of cycling within the City. The bikeway signs also do double duty, appreciated by drivers and pedestrians looking for specific destinations within the City.

Signed bike routes point cyclists to their destination



**MARKED SHARED LANE:** Install shared lane markings on bike network routes without sufficient width for 5' bicycle lanes and posted speed limits of 35 mph or less. Marked shared lanes help drivers expect and accept cyclists in the street. The markings encourage drivers to pass bicyclists with caution at an acceptable distance. For bicyclists, marked shared lanes encourage legal behavior, such as riding on the street with traffic, and raise cyclists' comfort levels, helping them ride more predictably and safely.



Shared lane markings create awareness for cyclists and alert drivers to the potential presence of cyclists.

## 2.5. Bicycle Improvements

### Arterial Routes

Create a complete, connected bicycle network that connects to destinations along arterial routes in and near Chicago Heights.

**PAVED SHOULDER:** Install a paved shoulder on low-traffic roads without curbs and gutters to allow room for cyclists. On roads with a rural character and low traffic volumes, a paved shoulder allows a motorist to safely pass a cyclist while remaining in the same lane. This can be a significant benefit and improvement for cyclists, especially more experienced riders.



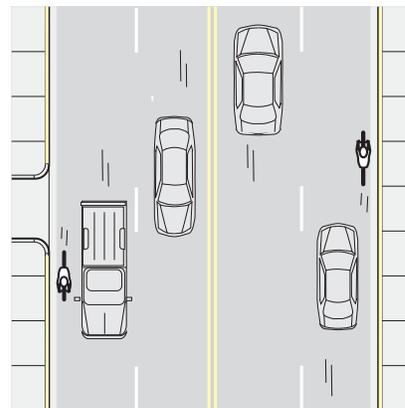
Paved shoulders offer a paved surface for traffic tolerant cyclists to ride on, separated from traffic.

**BICYCLE LANES:** On collector and arterial streets with sufficient width and speeds less than 40 mph, establish 5' travel lanes exclusive for bicyclists' use. Motorized vehicle travel lanes may be narrowed to a minimum of 10' where appropriate to allow bike lanes. Bike lanes offer the highest level of comfort for drivers and cyclists on streets with heavy traffic. Bike lanes reinforce proper roadway etiquette, raise the visibility of cyclists, and help bicyclists and drivers behave predictably when sharing road space. Bike lanes have also been found to lower motor vehicle speeds, which results in fewer crashes and lower crash severity for all users. Bicycle lanes require regular sweeping to clear road debris.

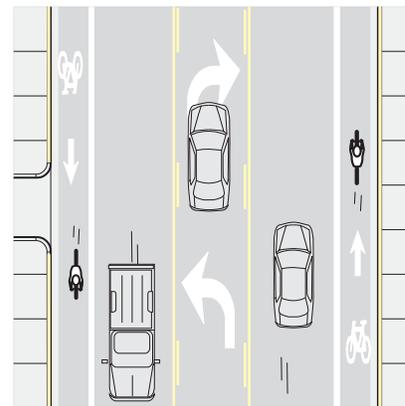


Bike lanes designate space on the roadway exclusively for use by cyclists.

**ROAD DIET WITH BIKE LANES:** Road Diets accommodate additional types of roadway users by putting the road on a “diet.” They are often conversions of four-lane undivided roads into three lanes (two through lanes and a center two-way left turn lane), but a road can be considered “dieted” any time travel lanes are narrowed or the number of lanes are reduced. Narrowing a roadway by reducing the number of lanes or lane width is a traffic calming strategy used to decrease congestion caused by left turning vehicles, making space for other roadway user types. The former right of way of the fourth lane could be used for bicycle lanes, sidewalks and/or on-street parking. Pedestrian refuge islands, bump-outs and flare-outs can easily be coupled with road diets.



Existing conditions before a road diet



Proposed conditions after a road diet

Road diets are used to realign the roadway to accommodate different types of roadway users.

**MULTI-USE PATH:** Multi-use Paths are paths designed for exclusive use of bicyclists and pedestrians. See section 2.4.2, pedestrian ways for further description.

## 2.5. Bicycle Improvements

### 2.5.2 Bicycle Amenities

**OBJECTIVE:** Use bicycle amenities to make bicycling a more convenient, attractive option in Chicago Heights.

**DESCRIPTION:** Bicycle amenities allow for complete trips and create awareness for the entire bicycle network in Chicago Heights.

*The following is a glossary of various types of bicycle facilities that are appropriate for Chicago Heights.*

**BIKE ROUTE SIGNS:** Signage indicating the Chicago Heights bicycle network will display destination, direction, and distance. The current MUTCD includes specifications for wayfinding signs. In the near term, the city should use the Bike Network map (section 2.5.3) to guide which streets and major destinations to sign, focusing on existing routes that local cyclists identified as most comfortable for cycling. Sign the longer-term portions of the active transportation network as it develops.



Signs with distance, destination and direction show cyclists and visitors how to get to important destinations.

**BICYCLE DETECTORS AT TRAFFIC SIGNALS:** Place consistent markings at signalized intersections using vehicle detector loops to show cyclists where to place their bike for detection by demand-actuated signals. Unless properly positioned over an in-pavement detector loop, most bikes will not activate demand-actuated traffic signals. The MUTCD placement marking shows cyclists where to position their bicycle. Bicycle detector loops should be placed in the right lane for right turning and through bicycle traffic as well as in the left turn lane for left turning bicycle traffic so cyclists can activate a green left turn arrow. Some traffic signal loop detectors will not detect a bicyclist regardless of the bike's position. A near-term priority is to adjust these loop detectors so they will detect most cyclists.



Bicycle detectors at traffic signals show cyclists where to place their bike for detection by demand-actuated traffic signals.

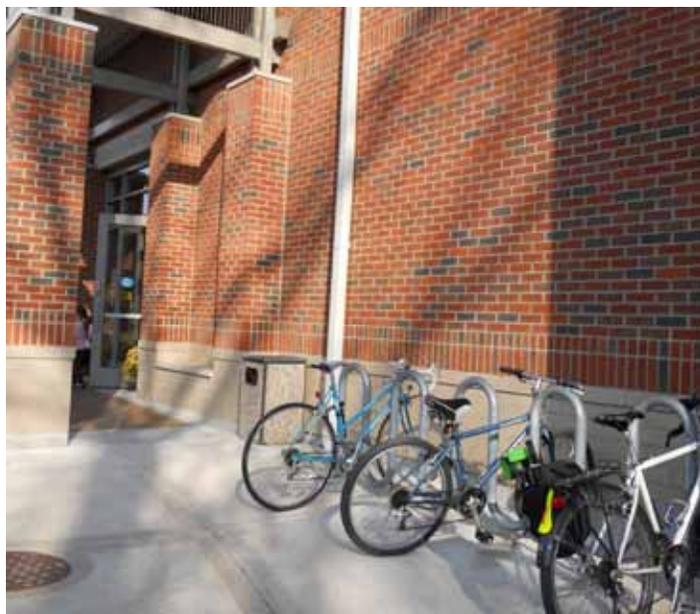
## 2.5. Bicycle Improvements (Continued)

**BICYCLE PARKING:** Having a safe, secure place to leave a bike is an important part of traveling by bicycle. Throughout Chicago Heights, install inverted-U or functionally similar bike parking racks at commercial retail areas, public buildings and parks, and on public property near businesses and multi-unit residences.

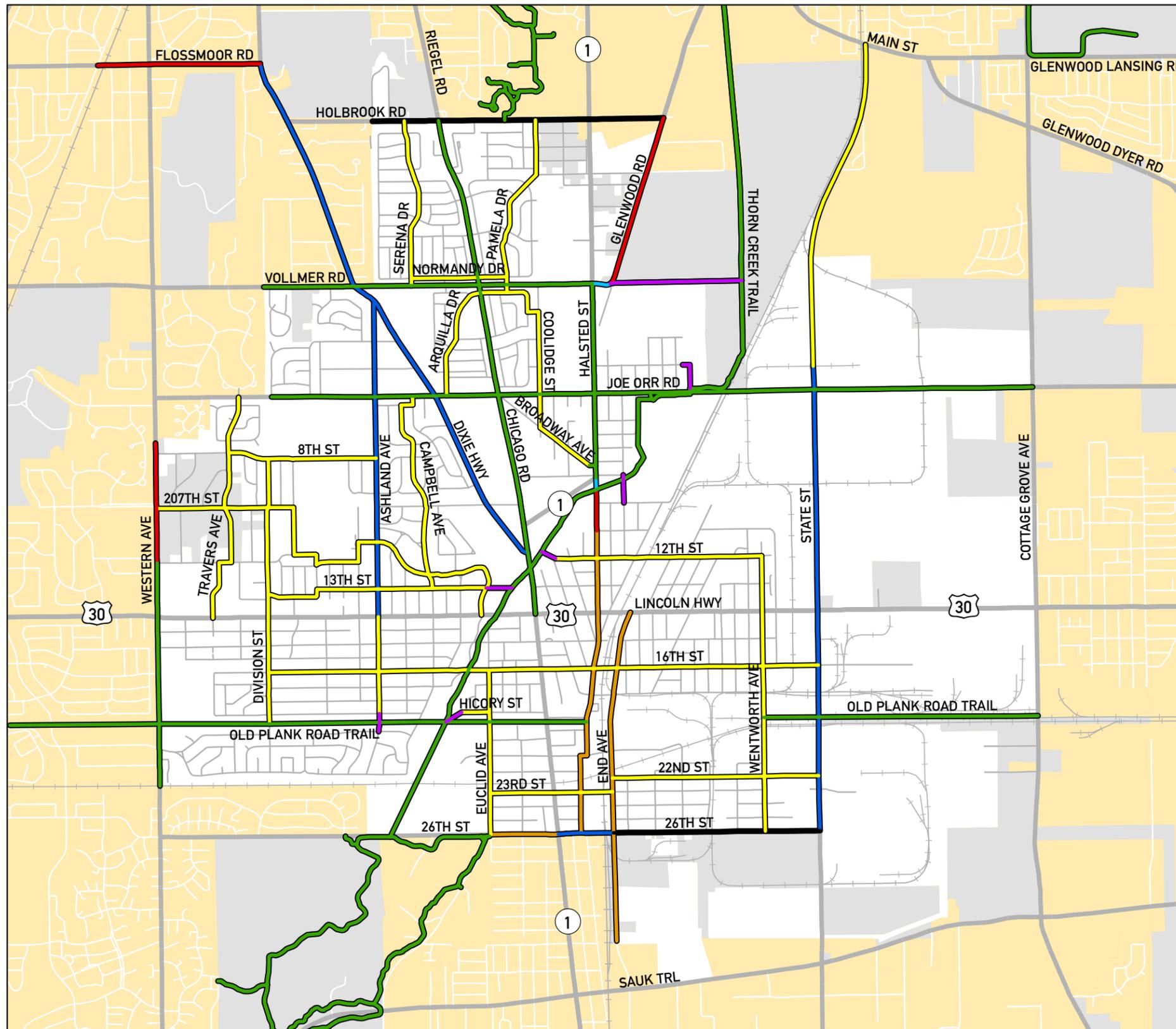
Racks should be located within clear view of the destination's entranceway, preferably as close as the closest motor vehicle parking space, and no more than 50 feet away from the entrance. If multiple racks are clustered in a visible and signed location, they can be sited up to 100' away from the entrance. If racks are placed further away than this, cyclists are likely to ignore the racks and look for a closer place to lock up.

Bicycle parking should be located throughout the community on every block with stores or restaurants, at every school, park and recreational facility and at every place of employment. For destinations frequently visited by cyclists or where bicycles will be parked for a longer period of time, such as at a Metra station, covered bicycle parking should be considered in addition to racks.

By choosing racks with a unique color or shape at high-visibility locations, the racks can add character to a community. The City may also use a cost sharing program with businesses where businesses or the chamber of commerce purchase racks, and the City installs them.



Bike racks at businesses and community centers provide a secure place for visitors to leave their bike.



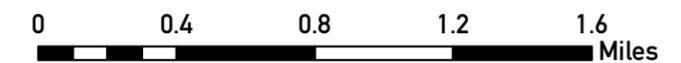
## -Chicago Heights- Recommended Bicycle Routes

### Recommended Network

- Bike Lane
- Bike Lane & Side Path
- Bike Route
- Paved Shoulder
- Road Diet With Bike Lane
- Shared Lane
- Multiuse Path
- Trail Connection

### Existing Infrastructure

- Arterial
- Local Road
- Railroad



Prepared By: Active Transportation Alliance 2/2/2012  
 Data Source: Active Transportation Alliance, CMAP & Navteq.

## 2.6. Transit Improvements

Connections to transit are one of the functions of the Chicago Heights active transportation network. Transit service helps residents choose active transportation for many of their longer trips.

People are generally willing to walk or bike to a dependable and direct transit access. Connecting the active transportation network to Chicago Heights' transit station will help residents access regional destinations.

### 2.6.1 Current Routes

Chicago Heights is currently served by seven PACE bus routes connecting people to destinations in and around the Southland. One half mile is considered a reasonable walking distance to catch a reliable and frequently running bus. However, many residents live more than a mile from a bus route. There is currently no Metra service in Chicago Heights.

### 2.6.2 Underserved Areas

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase available transit service within Chicago Heights and support connections to regional destinations.

**DESCRIPTION:** Chicago Heights's transit connections serve a limited number of destinations and often require transferring buses. To accommodate additional users and encourage use of the active transportation network, Chicago Heights will need to work with PACE and Metra to increase service in the City.



Transit signs provide delay, detour, and other important messages

### Metra Southeast Service

Plans for a new Metra, Southeast Service Line are underway. A study was completed in 2009 to plan for the new station. The City should continue working with Metra towards the new development and work with other communities along the proposed line to ensure that the line is built.

### Bus Routes and Stations

To better serve residents wishing to use the bus, the City should work with PACE to explore opportunities for increasing bus frequency and increase the number of routes that serve Chicago Heights. The City should use the PACE Development Guidelines to guide future bus stop development.

*Timeframe:* Near Term

**SIGNS AND TRIP TRACKING:** Sign all bus stops with route number, route map, timetable and information on how to use PACE's Travel Tracker to check arrival times for buses. At shelters, also post instructions for how to put a bike on the bus. At the bus terminal, use an electronic reader board to show the next arrival times for each bus route.

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

**SHELTERS:** Install bus shelters and benches at all high-use bus stops.

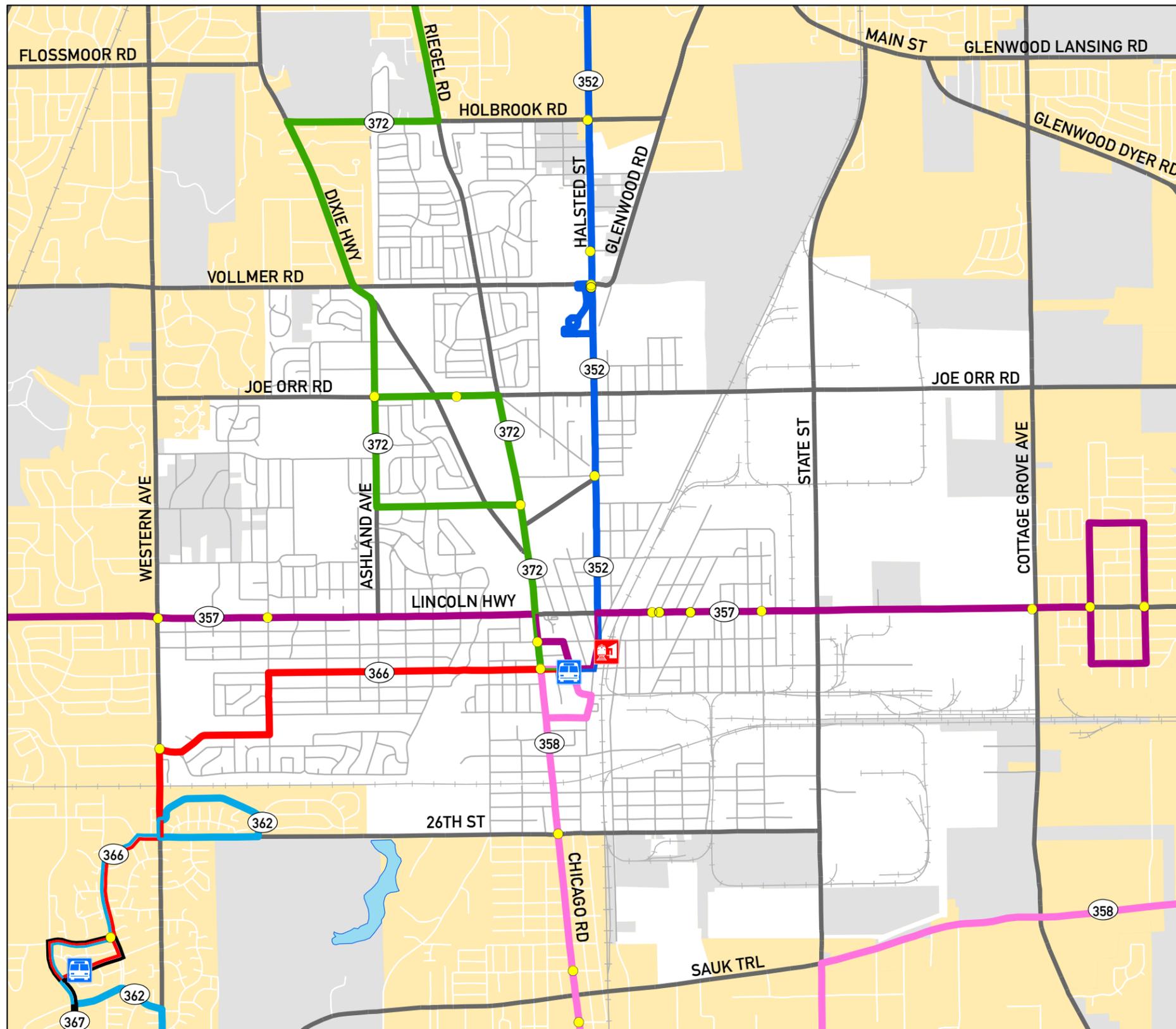
**SIDEWALK:** Complete sidewalk gaps adjacent to bus stops to improve pedestrian access to buses.

**WAITING AREA:** Upgrade all bus stops to include a paved waiting area adjacent to, but not on, the sidewalk.

**INTERSECTIONS:** For stops at signalized intersections, ensure there is pedestrian accommodations (striped crosswalks, curb cuts and pedestrian countdown signals) at the intersection.



Some bus stops may be more inviting than others. Adding sidewalk, shelters, routing information and crosswalks nearby will be more inviting to pedestrians.



## -Chicago Heights- Transit

### Existing Infrastructure

- Arterial
- Local Road
- Railroad

### Future Metra Stop

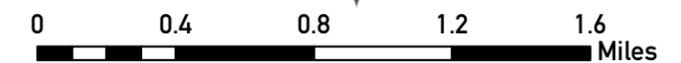


### Pace

- Shelter
- 🚌 Terminal

### Pace Route

- 352/890 - Halsted/UPS Hodgkins
- 357 - Lincoln Highway
- 358 - Torrence
- 362 - South Park Forest
- 366 - Park Forest/Chicago Heights
- 367 - University Park
- 372 - Dixie Highway



Prepared By: Active Transportation Alliance 2/8/2012  
 Data Source: Active Transportation Alliance, Pace & Navteq.



# Policy and Programming

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## 3.1 Municipal Policy Recommendations

Because improving the walking/biking/transit environment goes beyond infrastructure to address behaviors and organizational barriers to implementing a network of Complete Streets, our active transportation plans typically include a section on municipal policy recommendations.

This section lays out policy recommendations that will help sustain Chicago Heights' vision for active transportation. In addition to design and planning guidance, policy strategies can improve the transportation environment in ways that infrastructure cannot, by prioritizing safety through legislation and law enforcement.

### 3.1.1 Adopt a Complete Streets Policy

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Following accepted best practices, the design recommendations throughout this plan are based on a Complete Streets philosophy. Complete Streets are designed to enable safe access for all users of the transportation network regardless of age, ability or travel mode. A complete street has no predefined facilities requirements, but is optimized within its surrounding context to promote safe, convenient active transportation options for the community.

To ensure that these principles play a lasting role in the development of the local transportation network, Chicago Heights should adopt a Complete Streets policy. This means committing to the accommodation of bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users as well as motor vehicles in all new transportation construction and maintenance projects whenever appropriate.

Both the State of Illinois and Cook County have adopted Complete Streets policies. It is recommended that the City develop the policy based on national best practices, and that the City Council adopts the policy into its municipal code.

*See Appendix E for a list of resources on Complete Streets policy development.*



Complete Streets are designed to accommodate all users of the roadway. Image Credit: National Complete Streets Coalition

## 3.1 Municipal Policy Recommendations (Continued)

### 3.1.2 Update the Subdivision Ordinance to Ensure Walkable and Bikeable Developments

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

Facilities within private developments play a significant role in whether they can be accessed by active transportation. Chicago Heights should consider updating the requirements in the Subdivision Ordinance-Appendix B in the municipal code, to ensure connectivity and access for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users in all new developments. Examples for requirements include:

- Inclusion of bike and pedestrian cut throughs for new developments to decrease trip length for bicyclists and pedestrians (per section Appendix B-Subdivisions-Sec. VII.A).
- Inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian connections from the public right of way through new developments, to building entrances.
- Include sidewalk with a minimum 5' buffer between sidewalk and paved roadway to increase comfort and safety for pedestrians (per section Appendix B-Subdivisions-Sec. VIII.E).
- Include minimum and maximum car parking requirements for new multifamily and commercial developments.
- Include minimum bike parking requirements at new commercial, multifamily and workplaces.

*See Appendix E for sample language and a list of target issues.*

### 3.1.3 Ensure Pedestrian Friendly Housing Developments

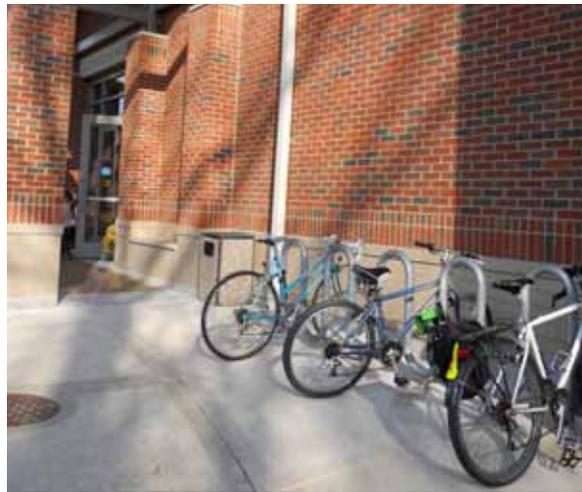
*Timeframe:* Near Term

Chicago Heights reviews the conditions of rental housing on a regular basis and issues rental housing licenses. As part of the inspection checklist, the City could review existing and planned sidewalks to ensure that sidewalks are well maintained, at least 5' in width, are at least 5' back from the curb, and meet current ADA accessibility guidelines. Sidewalk condition and connectivity should be added as a component of the rental license renewal process.

### 3.1.4 Distracted Driver Ordinance

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

Traffic safety is a major barrier to active transportation, especially for children and seniors. Nationwide trends show that distracted driving is a major contributor to roadway tragedies, and many communities are targeting this behavior with tough penalties and targeted enforcement. The Chicago Heights City Council should consider adopting and publicizing a distracted driver ordinance restricting the use of mobile phones while driving on local roadways. Safety goals could be further bolstered by a partnership with South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) to pass similar polices throughout the region. *See Appendix E for sample ordinance language.*



Providing bike racks at businesses and workplaces ensure that workers and shoppers have a safe place to park their bike.



Nationwide trends show that distracted driving is a major contributor to roadway tragedies. Image credit: autoguide.com

## 3.1 Municipal Policy Recommendations

### 3.1.5 Snow Clearance Ordinance

*Timeframe:* Near Term

The accumulation of snow and ice on sidewalks creates a major barrier to pedestrians, especially seniors and children. To ensure the safety of the transportation network, the Chicago Heights City Council should consider the establishment of an ordinance requiring residents to clear snow and ice from the sidewalks adjacent to their properties. In addition, Chicago Heights should consider developing a program to help people with disabilities and others who need assistance with snow clearance.



### 3.1.6 Bike Lane Parking Ordinance

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

As Chicago Heights develops its active transportation network, bikeways will be installed on local streets (see section 2.5.1 for a description of on-street bikeways). In order for these facilities to be safe for bicyclists, they must be kept clear of motor vehicle traffic. Chicago Heights should consider the establishment and enforcement of meaningful penalties for motorists driving or parking in bike lanes, or blocking marked shared lanes with their vehicles. *See Appendix E for sample ordinance language.*

Icy and snowy sidewalks often force pedestrians to walk on the roadway with cars, a very dangerous scenario. Image Credit: Silive.com

### 3.1.7 Sidewalk Repair Matching Program

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Most of Chicago Heights' residential neighborhoods have a complete, connected sidewalk network. However, after years of wear and tear, sidewalks sometimes need repair. The City currently has a sidewalk repair matching funds program to cover half of all repair and replacement costs. The City should widely publicize this program and encourage a high level of participation by residents.

## 3.2. School Policy Recommendations

### 3.2.1 Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School is a federally funded program that helps communities identify social and physical barriers to walking and bicycling to school. The program provides funding for education, encouragement, enforcement and engineering projects aimed at making the trip to school safe, fun and convenient for students in elementary and middle school. Safe Routes to School requires no local matching funds from communities.

The Chicago Heights Pedestrian and Bike Task Force should organize a Safe Routes to School Committee with School District 170 to develop a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan, a pre-requisite for federal Safe Routes to School funding. The committee may include representatives from each school, administrators, parents and City staff.



Students walk and bike to school as part of a Safe Routes to School event.

## 3.3 Education

Education is a powerful tool for promoting healthy and safe behaviors. Users of an active transportation network need to be aware of how to protect themselves and others. As more people walk and bike for transportation and health, education should come in a variety of forms to reach all network users. Youth, teens and adults alike benefit from education programs focusing on pedestrian and bicycle safety and the rules of the road. The following recommendations are meant to reach all community members and include messages tailored to each specific audience.

It is important for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to understand the rules of the road; however many are unaware of the rights and responsibilities of non-motorized users. A variety of educational opportunities are necessary to promote safer interactions by all road users. Chicago Heights should partner with bicycle and pedestrian education instructors, such as League of Illinois Bicyclists or Active Transportation Alliance, to provide education and outreach on bicycle and pedestrian safety and sharing the road at community events and/or recreation programs.

### 3.3.1 Local Media Campaign

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Regularly educate residents through newsletters, ward meetings and local media outlets. Topics can include walking & biking rules of the road, tricks and tips, and educate drivers about sharing the road with non-motorized users. Additionally, topics can include promoting local cycling and walking events and issues for discussion or action.

### 3.3.2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Ambassadors Program

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

Chicago Heights should create a bicycle and pedestrian ambassador program with Bloom Township High School to promote walking and bicycling safety at city events, schools, day camps, after school programs and other community affairs. Bicycle and pedestrian ambassadors are safety specialists who educate the public through direct outreach, presentations and distribution of educational materials approved by the City. The ambassadors should have a continued focus on crossing safety, crash reporting and bicycle maintenance.

## 3.3 Education

### 3.3.3 Park District Classes

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Chicago Heights should offer bicycle and pedestrian training for adults, teens and youth at the Chicago Heights Park District. Youth will benefit from classes on bicycle and pedestrian safety and skills building. Bicycle mechanics classes, education related to the variety of transportation options and on-bike education classes (such as Traffic Safety Skills 101) can be made available for middle and high school students and adults. Partner with local League of American Bicyclist instructors to provide classes twice a year.

### 3.3.4 Crash Reporting

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Educate community members on the importance of reporting pedestrian and bicycle crashes. Reporting bicycle and pedestrian crashes to the Police Department provides police with this critical information on where crashes occur. Police will then be able to target their enforcement efforts to high crash locations. Use ward meetings and local media publications to get the word out.

### 3.3.5 Vehicle Sticker Evaluation

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Add a short quiz on bicycle and pedestrian safety to the vehicle sticker renewal. To comprehensively raise awareness about cycling and walking rules of the road, the City can ask drivers to complete a 5-question bicycle and pedestrian safety quiz as a requirement or an incentivized option to obtain a city vehicle sticker. Questions should educate drivers, most of which are also cyclists and/or pedestrians, about basic road etiquette and state vehicle laws concerning biking and walking. Drivers should be allowed to “cheat” by being provided with the Secretary of State’s Bicycle Rules of the Road publication for use on the quiz. Going forward, the City could compare quiz results with past performance to measure change in driver awareness about safe walking, biking, and sharing the road.



Bicycling ambassadors can teach children how to maintain their bicycles

## 3.4 Encouragement Programs and Events

### 3.4.1 Bike Racks

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Work with Bloom Township High School and Prairie State College's welding classes to produce bike racks for the City. The city of Chicago Heights can provide welding classes at Bloom Township and Prairie State with materials to produce bike racks. The City's Public Works Department can install the bike racks throughout the City. Work with City and Park District officials to prioritize locations in each ward.



Bloom Township's welding class assembled a bike rack in 2009.

### 3.4.2 Open Streets

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

Open Streets events occur anytime the local streets are closed to vehicles and open for walking, biking and informal play. Chicago Heights can adopt Open Streets as an annual event to complement local events, festivals, farmers markets or other road closing events; or Chicago Heights can designate special times or days for stand-alone Open Streets events on Ashland Avenue. Utilizing Prairie State, the Chicago Heights Park District, and St. James to offer exercise classes during an Open Streets event.



Opening streets provides space for residents enjoy the City like never before

### 3.4.3 Bike Rodeo

*Timeframe:* Near Term

The City of Chicago Heights, the Chicago Heights Police Department, and the Chicago Heights Park District should work with local League of American Bicyclists staff to conduct an annual bike rodeo. Bike rodeos teach essential cycling skills to children. Chicago Heights Pedestrian and Bike Task Force should contact local businesses, including St. James Hospital and Family Dollar, to donate helmets for attendees.

### 3.4.4 Walk to School Day

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Participation in International Walk to School Day will show residents how easy and fun it is to walk to school on a regular basis. Involving City, Park District and School District officials and staff, will bring a sense of community to this event. Schools or classes can compete against each other to see which group has the highest rate of participation.

### 3.4.5 Community Cycling Center

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

For low-income adults, riding a bicycle is an easy way to reach a job site that is too far to walk to and not served by transit. Chicago Heights can partner with organizations that offer employment training to also provide low-income adults with bicycles and train them on bike safety and maintenance.

## 3.4 Encouragement (Continued)

### Walk and Biking Celebrations

*Chicago Heights City and Park District officials can lead walking and biking celebrations throughout the City. Walking and biking groups meet on a regular basis, often weekly for rides or walks. People can enjoy the active transportation network more while engaged in group physical activity – walking and riding. Bike & Dine, House Hunting by Bike, and Shop by Foot & Bike are just a few examples of events that could take place.*

#### 3.4.6 Bike & Dine Events

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Bike & Dine events invite cyclists to enjoy a progressive dinner by bike at Chicago Heights' restaurants. A select bicycle tour of these establishments for groups of 30 or less can garner media attention for local businesses and raise the profile of cycling as a way to encourage and enjoy local patronage. The route can also highlight new or potential community improvements to the bike route network.

#### 3.4.7 Housing Hunting by Bike

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

House Hunting by Bike is a way for prospective residents to get to know the people and places in the community. Work with local real estate agents to hold a bike tour of homes for sale throughout Chicago Heights. The tour should include homes currently for sale in a variety of price ranges, as well as highlight community parks, schools and other key destinations. Real estate agents host showings along the tour, with attendees receiving a map that lists information for each home.

#### 3.4.8 Shop by Foot & Bike

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

Shop by Foot and Bike programs encourage residents to walk or bike when making short errands to local shops. Benefits include adding physical activity to residents' daily routines, relieving parking issues and supporting local businesses. Participating retailers in the Shop by Foot & Bike campaign offer discounts and/or promotions for shoppers who use active transportation to travel to the businesses. The Active Transportation Task Force should pursue partnerships with the retailers and restaurants to encourage shopping by foot and bike in Chicago Heights.

#### 3.4.9 Transit Information

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

Chicago Heights can increase use of public transit by distributing transit service information. Chicago Heights can partner with the transit providers to equip transit centers with electronic signs that provide real time data, install transit vending machines in key places, as well as promote the Regional Transportation Authority's existing transit mapping service ([www.goroo.com](http://www.goroo.com)).



Community bike rides are fun and showcase the active transportation network

## 3.4 Encouragement (Continued)

### 3.4.10 Active Transportation Network Map

*Timeframe:* Near Term

A user-friendly active transportation network map would encourage use of the improved pedestrian and bicycle network and patronage of the key places, transit stops and trails identified in this plan. Chicago Heights should work with local volunteers or a contractor to produce and distribute a free active transportation network map that includes safe bicycling and walking routes to key places and safety tips. Large employers and local businesses could be approached for sponsorship of the map.

### 3.4.11 Walk and Bike Friendly Community Awards

*Timeframe:* Long Term

Improving Chicago Heights' active transportation network will make the city an even better place to live, work, shop and play. National recognition of these efforts can generate commerce and increase property values. The Bicycle Friendly Community Program (BFC) led by League of American Bicyclists provides incentives, hands-on assistance and award recognition for communities that actively support bicycling. To apply for recognition, a step-by-step guide is available through the League of American Bicyclists website. Walk Friendly Communities is a similar program the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center uses to honor pedestrian-friendly cities.



This is a placard awarded by the League of American Bicyclists to communities who receive Bicycle Friendly Community designation.

## 3.5 Enforcement

Successful implementation of this plan will result in an increase in active transportation users. This can also create new law enforcement challenges. To promote the safety of all people using the active transportation network, Chicago Heights should prioritize enforcement of traffic laws that deter reckless behavior by road users.

### 3.5.1 Training for Police

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Police in Illinois are required to participate in annual professional development opportunities. Chicago Heights Police Department should ensure that all officers engaged in traffic safety enforcement receive introductory training on bicycle and pedestrian safety, followed by semi-annual refresher sessions. Information can be provided in live sessions, online or by video.

The officers should receive practical training focused on:

- Rules of the road for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Illegal motorist behaviors that endanger bicyclists and pedestrians
- Most dangerous types of bicycling behaviors
- Most common causes of bicycle and pedestrian crashes
- Importance of reporting bicycle and pedestrian crashes
- Importance of investigating serious bicycle and pedestrian crash sites
- Best ways to prevent bicycle theft
- Best practices for policing by bicycle
- Transportation, health and environmental benefits of bicycling

## 3.5 Enforcement (Continued)

In addition, special consideration should be given to new and existing laws that impact bicycle and pedestrian safety, particularly in the school zone.

These laws include:

- Must stop for pedestrians in crosswalks
- Handheld device ban in school zones
- School zone fines
- Safe Park Zone fines

### 3.5.2 Targeted Enforcement Efforts

*Timeframe:* Near Term

No police department can aggressively enforce all laws in all locations at all times. Chicago Heights can use existing crash data to identify the most dangerous locations and target enforcement at those sites. Stings focused on reckless behavior by motorists have proven particularly successful in other communities. Lincoln Highway and Chicago Road are two crash prone arterials. Targeted enforcement should be conducted at crossing around Bloom Township, St. James Hospital, and City Hall. The Chicago Heights Police Department should review these efforts on an annual basis to ensure appropriate allocation of enforcement resources.

### 3.5.3 Sidewalk Clearing

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Implement a “Thank you for clearing” campaign. Create a door card campaign that allows residents to thank their neighbors for keeping sidewalks clear by hanging a thank you message on their neighbor's door. Sidewalk clearing includes vegetation encroaching the sidewalks and snow removal. A “Thank you for clearing” card will raise awareness about clearing sidewalks, peer pressure to keep walks clear and enhance community pride. A clearing campaign will provide residents with clear walkways throughout the winter and allow residents to utilize the connectivity of the city in every season.

### 3.5.4 Caught Being Good

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Chicago Heights Police should reward children for good walking and biking behaviors. When officers observe these behaviors they should reward children by “pulling them over” and giving them a reward “ticket”. Working with local businesses to donate rewards provides sustainability to this program and encourage children to walk and bike safely around Chicago Heights.



Officers can award children's good cycling behaviors or assist them with minor repairs.

## 3.6 High School Program Recommendations

### 3.6.1 High School Bike Ambassadors

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Recruit young adults and teens to give bicycle education and maintenance classes to the community at summer camps, schools and community events.

Bloom Township and Marian Catholic High Schools should create a bicycle and pedestrian ambassador program to promote walking and bicycling safety, with an emphasis on crossing safety and bike maintenance. The bicycle and pedestrian ambassador program is a peer to peer program getting the youth to speak to other youth in the city. Bicycle and pedestrian ambassadors are safety specialists who educate the public through direct outreach, presentations and distribution of educational materials approved by the city and schools.

### 3.6.2 Teen Bicycle and Pedestrian Education

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Once students reach high school, the educational focus should shift from safety and skills to independence, physical activity and making appropriate transportation choices. Contests and student-led initiatives can help inspire creative approaches to walking and bicycling. Strategies include:

#### Transportation Choices Education

Adopt a curriculum module for teens about transportation choices, including how to safely navigate the bicycle network and access public transportation. Teaching teens about mobility options will boost awareness and likely increase their use of active transportation.

#### Driver Education

Include a module on how to safely share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians in current driver education programs. Educating new motorists on the traffic rights and responsibilities of cyclists and pedestrians will create a safer environment for everyone. Information about other modes of travel should also be included in driver education.

#### High School Volunteer Hours

High school students are required to complete a minimum number of volunteer hours before graduation. The Chicago Heights Park District should partner with Bloom Township and Marian Catholic to create a volunteer program to promote

walking and biking. These older students can lead elementary school walking and biking groups and assist with youth bicycle education.

### 3.6.3 High School Walking, Running, and Biking Maps

*Timeframe:* Mid Term

The City of Chicago Heights should partner with Bloom Township and Marian Catholic High Schools to produce preferred walking, biking and running route maps; as well as safety tips. Chicago Heights, Bloom Township and Marian Catholic can further promote walking and biking by hosting events, such as a 5K, that encourage the use of active transportation.

### 3.6.4 Work with Existing Student Organizations

*Timeframe:* Near Term

Incorporate walking, biking, and transit education into existing student clubs and organizations. Teen walking, bicycling, and transit education will provide a basis for a lifetime of active transportation habits. Health, physical education and nutrition students should receive age appropriate education about transportation choices, including how to safely navigate the bicycle network and access public transportation. Police, Chicago Heights Park District staff, Active Trans, League of Illinois Bicyclists and the Chicago Heights Pedestrian and Bicycle Ambassadors can assist with training.



Peer to peer instruction is a great way to educate children



# Implementation

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## 4.1 Evaluation and Oversight

*A plan as comprehensive as this one requires vigorous oversight to ensure its effective implementation.*

### 4.1.1 Continue the Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee as a Standing Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

The heart and soul of this plan came from residents and steering committee members that are invested in their community. The vision and goals of the committee are expressed throughout the recommendations of this plan. Chicago Heights can continue to benefit from focusing on bicycle and pedestrian issues by forming a standing Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force.

The Task Force will monitor implementation of the plan, seek out and apply for grants to support implementation of this plan through construction of the bicycle and pedestrian network, promote events celebrating active transportation and encourage residents and visitors to use the improved active transportation network. The council would benefit from membership derived from the key stakeholders who served on the steering committee for this plan.

The Task Force should meet every other month or quarterly to ensure that this plan moves forward.

### 4.1.2 Setting Goals

To continue moving forward with improving bicycling and walking conditions in Chicago Heights, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force should set goals for realizing their vision. Examples of goals include:

- Miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities built per year
- Reduction in number of crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians
- Increasing transit ridership and use of walking and biking to access transit
- Offering a minimum number of education or encouragement events every year

### 4.1.3 Involving Residents

The real beneficiaries of this plan are residents of Chicago Heights. They are out walking, biking and catching the bus every day. In order to keep residents informed about changes to the City's bicycle and pedestrian network, and to get them involved in programs, updates on the plans' activities should be a part of each ward's regular meetings.

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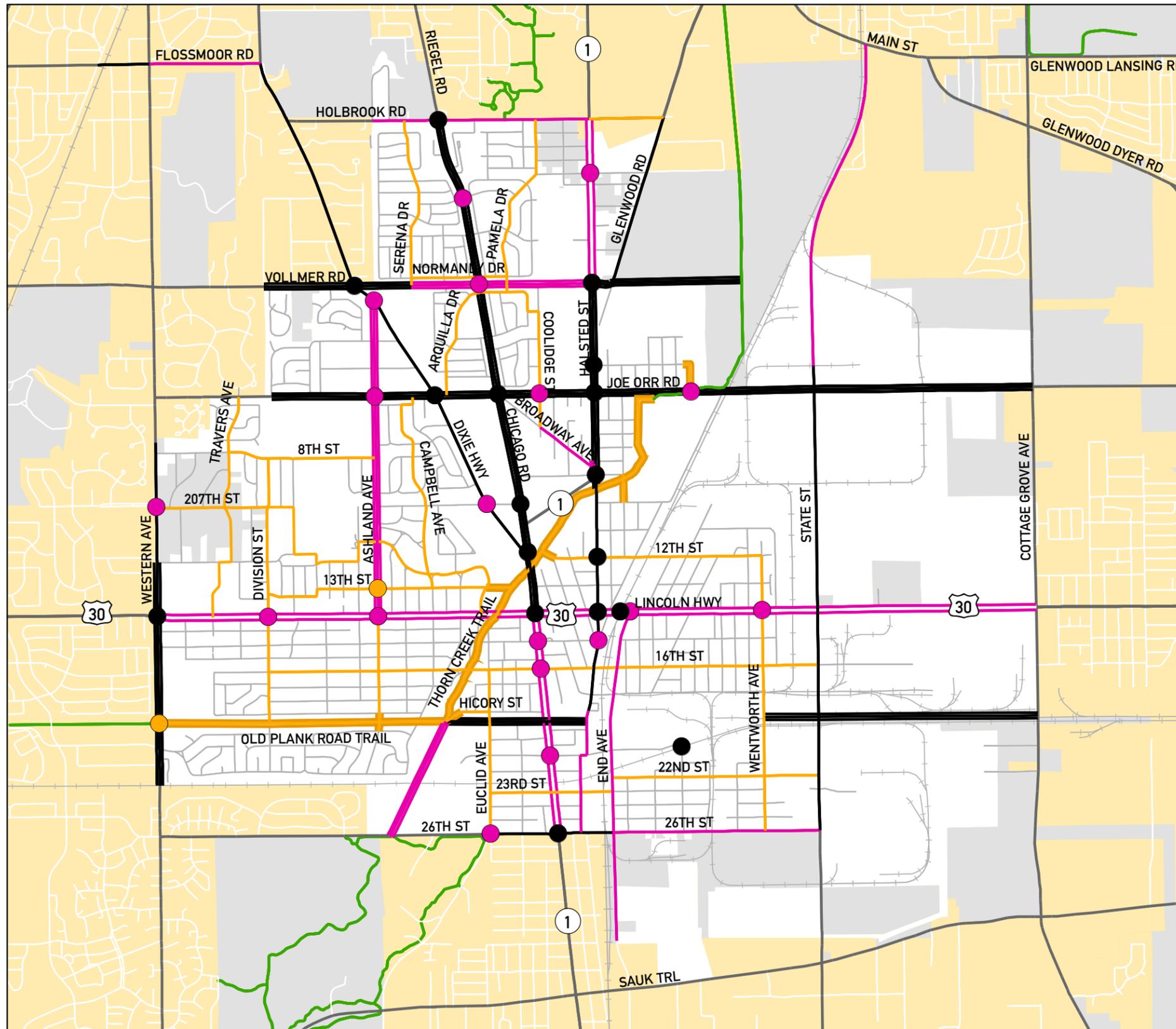
## 4.2 Implementation

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### 4.2 Implementation

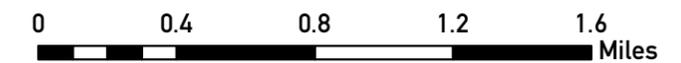
Throughout this plan, the consultants have provided recommendations for implementation. The plan advocates for a comprehensive set of network, policy, program, enforcement and evaluation improvements staggered over several years. The effective implementation of this plan will require leadership by Chicago Heights staff and residents. It will also require cooperation with neighboring municipalities, Cook County and the Illinois Department of Transportation.

The use of the active transportation network will only increase if the plan's recommendations for education, encouragement and enforcement are implemented in a timely manner in conjunction with the improvements to the network. On the following pages are a map showing recommended implementation priorities for the network and a timeline for policy and programming implementation.



## -Chicago Heights- Implementation

- |                       |                                |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Implementation</b> | <b>Implementation</b>          |
| Existing Trail        | <b>Intersections</b>           |
| Bicycle Near-term     | Near-term                      |
| Bicycle Mid-term      | Mid-term                       |
| Bicycle Long-term     | Long-term                      |
| Pedestrian Arterial   | <b>Existing Infrastructure</b> |
| Pedestrian Near-term  | Local Road                     |
| Pedestrian Mid-term   | Railroad                       |
| Pedestrian Long-term  |                                |



Prepared By: Active Transportation Alliance 2/2/2012  
 Data Source: Active Transportation Alliance, CMAP & Navteq.

## 4.2 Implementation (Continued)

### 4.2.2 Policy and Programming Implementation Table

Based on level of difficulty, number of stakeholders needed to implement, the following policies and programs have been recommended for Near, Mid or Long Term implementation.

Chapter	Municipal Policy Recommendations	Near Term	Mid Term	Long Term
3.1.1	Adopt a Complete Streets Policy	X		
3.1.2	Update the Subdivision Ordinance to Ensure Walkable and Bikeable Developments		X	
3.1.3	Ensure Pedestrian Friendly Housing Developments		X	
3.1.4	Distracted Driver Ordinance	X		
3.1.5	Snow Clearance Ordinance	X		
3.1.6	Bike Lane Parking Ordinance		X	
3.1.7	Sidewalk Repair Matching Program	X		
Chapter	School Policy Recommendations	Near Term	Mid Term	Long Term
3.2.1	Organize District 170 Safe Routes to School Committee	X		
Chapter	Education Programs	Near Term	Mid Term	Long Term
3.3.1	Local Media Campaign	X		
3.3.2	Bicycle and Pedestrian Ambassadors Program		X	
3.3.3	Park District Classes	X		
3.3.4	Crash Reporting	X		
3.3.5	Vehicle Sticker Evaluation	X		
Chapter	Encouragement Programs	Near Term	Mid Term	Long Term
3.4.1	Bike Racks	X		
3.4.2	Open Streets		X	
3.4.3	Bike Rodeo	X		
3.4.4	Walk to School Day	X		
3.4.5	Community Cycling Center		X	
3.4.6	Bike & Dine Events	X		
3.4.7	House Hunting by Bike		X	
3.4.8	Shop by Foot & Bike		X	
3.4.9	Transit Information		X	
3.4.10	Active Transportation Network Map	X		
3.4.11	Awards			X
Chapter	Enforcement Recommendations	Near Term	Mid Term	Long Term
3.5.1	Training for Police	X		
3.5.2	Targeted Enforcement Events	X		
3.5.3	Sidewalk Clearing	X		
3.5.4	Caught Being Good	X		
Chapter	High School Program Recommendations	Near Term	Mid Term	Long Term
3.6.1	High School Ambassadors		X	
3.6.2	Teen Bicycle and Pedestrian Education	X		
3.6.3	High School Walking, Running and Biking Maps		X	
3.6.4	Work with Existing Student Organizations	X		



# Appendices

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## 5.1 Appendix A: Public Engagement Summary

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The digital version of the Chicago Heights Active Transportation Plan includes a summary and results of community wide surveys and events held to gather feedback on the state of Chicago Heights current active transportation conditions.

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## 5.2 Appendix B: Existing Conditions Maps

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The electronic version of this document includes the following maps that were created based on research conducted in Chicago Heights.

- Parks and Open Space
- Transit Routes and Stops
- Land Use
- Roadway Jurisdiction
- Pedestrian Crashes
- Bicycle Crashes
- Traffic Volume

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## 5.3 Appendix C: Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Guidance

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### Pedestrian Facilities

#### **Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities**

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 2004  
<http://www.transportation.org>

#### **Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAC)**

United States Access Board  
<http://www.access-board.gov/prowac/>

### Bicycle Facilities

#### **Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities**, 3rd Edition

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 1999  
<http://www.transportation.org>

#### **Urban Bikeway Design Guide**

National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)  
<http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/>

#### **Bike Lane Design Guide**

City of Chicago and the Active Transportation Alliance, 2002  
[http://www.chicagobikes.org/pdf/bike\\_lane\\_design\\_guide.pdf](http://www.chicagobikes.org/pdf/bike_lane_design_guide.pdf)

### Bike Parking

#### **Bicycle Parking Design Guidelines**

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals  
<http://www.apbp.org/?page=Publications>

#### **Bike Parking for Your Business**

Active Transportation Alliance, 2003  
[http://www.chicagobikes.org/pdf/bike\\_parking\\_business.pdf](http://www.chicagobikes.org/pdf/bike_parking_business.pdf)

### Other Resources

#### **National Complete Streets Coalition**

<http://www.completestreets.org>

#### **Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)**

Federal Highway Administration, 2009  
<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>

#### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center**

<http://www.pedbikeinfo.org>

#### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations**

##### **Bureau of Design & Environment Manual (BDE)**

Illinois Department of Transportation, 2011  
<http://www.dot.state.il.us/desenv/BDE%20Manual/BDE/pdf/Chapter%2017%20Bicycle%20and%20Pedestrian.pdf>

## 5.4 Appendix D: Funding Resources

**Primary Funding Sources for Local Transportation Projects**

	Transportation Enhancements	High-Priority Projects	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement	Surface Transportation Program	Safe Routes to School	Recreational Trails Program	Highway Safety Improvement Program	Section 402-State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program	Motor Fuel Tax
Program Purpose	To foster cultural, historic, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure	To fund key transportation projects deemed important by elected officials ( earmarks)	To improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion in areas that do not meet air quality standards	To fund state and local road and transit projects	To enable and encourage children to walk and cycle to school through education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, and evaluation strategies	To develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses	To fund highway infrastructure safety projects aimed at reducing highway fatalities and serious injuries	To create safety programs aimed at reducing traffic crashes	To fund state and local road and transit projects
Eligible Infrastructure	All bike/ped infrastructure that has a relationship to surface transportation (as opposed to recreation alone)	All bike/ped infrastructure or as dictated in the authorizing legislation	Most bike/ped infrastructure, including bike paths, lanes, racks, lockers, and bike sharing programs	All bike/ped infrastructure	All bike/ped infrastructure within a two-mile radius of a K-8 school	Bike trails, trailside, and trailhead facilities, both development and maintenance	Bike lanes, bike parking, crosswalks, and signage	None	Most bike/ped infrastructure
Eligible Non-Infrastructure	Safety and educational programs for pedestrians and cyclists	As dictated in the authorizing legislation	Most bike/ped safety and education programs	None	Encouragement, enforcement, and education activities, for children in grades K-8	Safety and environmental education; assessment of trail conditions; state program administration	States can spend 10% of their HSIP funds on public awareness campaigns, education programs, and enforcement activities	Safety programs such as bike or pedestrian safety education, helmet distribution, or distribution of safety information	None
Key Project Requirements	Must relate to surface transportation	No official requirements	1) Must be spent in non-attainment and maintenance areas; 2) Will be evaluated on air quality	N/A	Requires a state-approved school travel plan	30% of state's funding must be used for nonmotorized trail projects; 30% for motorized; 40% for projects that encourage diversity of use of trail corridor, trailhead, etc.; projects encouraged to have environmental benefit and use youth conservation and service corps	Project must address goals written in State Highway Safety Plan	Project must address goals written in State Highway Safety Plan	Minor distinctions between allowable uses for counties, townships, and municipalities specified in statute
Application Process	Irregular schedule at call of Illinois Department of Transportation	Specified in federal surface transportation bill (may be change in annual appropriations)	Timing under review. Generally, an annual call for proposals by Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning	Varies at call of local council of governments	Irregular schedule at call of Illinois Department of Transportation	Irregular schedule at call of Illinois Department of Natural Resources	Annual updates to plan and calls for proposals by IDOT Division of Traffic Safety	Generally each spring at call of IDOT Division of Traffic Safety	Funds distributed by IDOT on monthly basis to counties and certain local governments on a formula basis
Local Match Required	Typically 20%	None	Typically 20%	20%	None	Typically 20%; some 50%	10%	Typically 20%	No match required but local government is required to have certain minimum tax rate
Who Can Apply?	Local government	Anyone	State or local government agency	Local government (some funds retained by IDOT)	Any government agency or non-profit entity	Any state or local government agency or non-profit entity	Any state or local government agency or non-profit entity	Any state or local government agency or non-profit entity	N/A

## 5.4 Appendix D: Funding Resources

### What Program Is My Project Eligible For?



	Transportation Enhancements	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ)	Surface Transportation Program	Safe Routes to Schools	Recreational Trails Program	Highway Safety Program (HSIP)	State and Community Improvement Safety Grant Program	National Highway Scenic Byways	Federal Lands Highway Program	Trans. and Community Program	State Metropolitan Planning Funds	Access to Jobs/ Reverse Commute (JARC)	Federal Transit Capital	Transit Enhanc
Bicycle and pedestrian plan	*	*							*	*				
Bicycle lanes on roadway	*	*	*	*		*		*	*			*	*	
Paved shoulders	*	*	*	*				*	*					
Signed bike route	*	*	*	*				*	*					
Shared use path/trail	*	*	*	*	*			*	*					
Single track hike/bike trail					*									
Spot improvement program	*	*	*	*		*								
Maps		*	*	*			*							
Bike racks on buses	*	*	*	*								*	*	
Bicycle parking facilities	*	*	*	*				*				*	*	
Trail/highway intersection	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*					
Bicycle storage/service center	*	*	*	*					*		*	*	*	
Sidewalks, new or retrofit	*	*	*	*		*		*	*			*	*	
Crosswalks, new or retrofit	*	*	*	*		*		*	*			*	*	
Signal improvements	*	*	*	*		*		*						
Curb cuts and ramps	*	*	*	*		*		*						
Traffic calming			*	*		*			*					
Coordinator position		*	*	*					*					
Safety/education position		*	*	*										*
Police patrol			*	*										*
Helmet promotion	*		*	*										*
Safety brochure/book	*	*	*	*	*	*								*
Training	*	*	*	*	*	*								*

Source: "FHWA Guidance: Bicycle and Pedestrian Provisions of Federal Transportation Legislation," <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ENVIRONMENT/bikeped/bp-guid.html#bp4> (Last Accessed 9/3/2010)

## 5.5 Appendix E: Municipal Policy Resources

The following series of appendices are resources and sample language for the policy recommendations listed in Chapter 3. The City may modify and adapt this language for its own use.

### Resources for 3.1.1 Adopt a Complete Streets Policy

#### COMPLETE STREETS POLICY RESOURCE GUIDE

##### PURPOSE

This document serves as a resource for municipal officials, planners and engineers who are interested in adopting a Complete Streets policy in their community. The materials referenced below can assist with formulating policy, supporting initiatives with facts about complete streets. Resources are divided into two categories: policy and opinion/research.

##### POLICY

**McCann, Barbara, and Suzanne Rynne. Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices. (Chicago: American Planning Association, 2010).**

This publication of the American Planning Association's Planning Advisory Service includes case studies, model policies and development strategies revolving around Complete Streets.

**National Complete Streets Coalition.**

**[www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org)**

NCSC has a very informative website. Among others, the following NCSC documents can be considered a good "jumping off" point for those unfamiliar with Complete Streets policy and design.

**"Complete Streets Policy Elements." National Complete Streets Coalition. <<http://www.completestreets.org/changing-policy/policy-elements/>>.** Provides a framework by which Complete Streets policy can be designed and a basic outline of the elements of robust Complete Streets policy.

**"Federal Policy Resources." National Complete Streets Coalition. <<http://www.completestreets.org/federal-policy/federal-policy-resources/>>.** Knowing the trends in national policy concerning Complete Streets can help reinforce local policy initiatives. The NCSC website details past federal activity concerning Complete Streets, features legislative language and has tips for getting the attention of lawmakers at the federal level.

##### RESEARCH

**"Complete Streets Fact Sheets." National Complete Streets Coalition.**

**<<http://www.completestreets.org/complete-streets-fundamentals/factsheets/>>.**

There are several topical fact sheets maintained by the NCSC on this site. The web version of each fact sheet contains several relevant statistics and principles along with links to supporting information. This is a great resource to help counter objections to Complete Streets on many different topics, including cost, safety and transportation efficiency.

**Gotschi, Thomas. "Costs and Benefits of Bicycling Investments in Portland, Oregon." Journal of Physical Activity and Health 8 (2011): S49-S58.**

This research article by Thomas Gotschi from the University of Zurich details the health, safety and overall cost benefits associated with different levels of non-motorized transportation funding using Portland, OR as a study area. Though most of the report is highly technical, special attention should be paid to the abstract and conclusion for solid information on the benefits of funding non-motorized transportation systems.

### Resources for 3.1.2 Enact a Bicycle Parking Ordinance

The following sample bicycle parking ordinance is modeled after that found in the Code of Ordinances for the City of Durango, Colorado. This model was selected because Durango's automobile parking requirements are structured similarly to those of Chicago Heights.

**[Insert Municipal Code Chapter and Section]** Bicycle parking spaces.

(A) At least two (2) bicycle parking spaces or one (1) bicycle parking space for each ten (10) of the required off-street automobile parking spaces, whichever is greater, must be provided in all districts[, except districts...].

(B) No more than thirty (30) bicycle parking spaces shall be required on any one (1) property.

## 5.5 Appendix E: Municipal Policy Resources (Continued)

### Recourses for 3.1.4 Distracted Driver Ordinance

#### Sample Distracted Driving Ordinance

##### [Municipal Code Chapter and Title] Use of electronic communication devices

(A) Definitions:

(1) For the purposes of this section, “electronic communication device” shall include, but not be limited to, mobile, cellular, analog wireless or digital telephones, personal digital assistants, or portable or mobile computers.

(2) For the purposes of this section, “using an electronic communication device” shall include, but not be limited to, the following activities: (a) talking or listening to another person on the telephone; (b) composing, sending, reading or listening to a text message or other electronic message; or (c) browsing the Internet via mobile, cellular, analog wireless, or digital telephone.

(3) For the purposes of this section, “a hands-free device” is an internal software application, or an external device that allows the user to engage in a telephone call without touching the user’s electronic communication device.

(B) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (C) of this section, no person shall operate a motor vehicle while using an electronic communication device.

(C) The provisions of this section shall not apply to:

(1) Law enforcement officers and operators of emergency vehicles, when on duty and acting in their official capacities.

(2) Persons using an electronic communication device with a hands-free device activated.

(3) Persons using a telephone to call 911 or other emergency telephone numbers.

(4) Persons using a telephone while maintaining a motor vehicle in a stationary parked position and not in gear.

(D) Any person who violates the requirements of this section shall be subject to a fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) provided, however, that if a violation occurs at the time of a traffic crash, the driver shall be subject to an additional fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00).

### Recourses for 3.1.6 Blocking Bike Lanes

The following sample is modeled after that found in the Municipal Code of Chicago. It includes provisions for marked shared lanes, as well as exclusive bike lanes.

[Insert Municipal Code Chapter and Section] Driving, standing or parking on bicycle paths or lanes prohibited.

The driver of a vehicle shall not drive, unless entering or exiting a legal parking space, or stand, or park the vehicle upon any on-street path or lane designated by official signs or markings for the use of bicycles, or otherwise drive or place the vehicle in such a manner as to impede bicycle traffic on such path or lane. The driver of a vehicle shall not stand or park the vehicle upon any lane designated by pavement markings for the shared use of motor vehicles and bicycles, or place the vehicle in such a manner as to impede bicycle traffic on such lane, except for drivers of buses stopping for the purpose of loading or unloading passengers at a designated bus stop. In addition to the penalty provided in [Section X] of this Code, any vehicle parked in violation of this section shall be subject to an immediate tow and removal to a city vehicle pound or authorized garage.

## 5.5 Appendix F: Programming Resources

### **Safe Routes to School**

National Center for Safe Routes to School: [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)

The National Center for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) assists communities in enabling and encouraging children in grades K–8 to walk and bike safely to school. The National Center has an informative website about the five E's of SRTS (Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation), including case studies, resources, data collection and trainings.

SRTS Guide: <http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/index.cfm>

The Safe Routes to School Online Guide is a comprehensive manual designed to support the development of an SRTS program.

Illinois SRTS:

<http://www.dot.il.gov/saferoutes/SafeRoutesHome.aspx>

The Illinois SRTS program is run by the Illinois Department of Transportation. Illinois has awarded \$11 million in federal funding for the program.

### **Walk to School Day**

International Walk to School Day in the USA:

<http://www.walktoschool.org/>

The first Wednesday of October is International Walk to School Day. Children in over 40 countries participate. The website provides ideas and resources for planning an event.

### **Bike and Dine**

Celebrate the fun and ease of getting around by bike while sampling from local eateries.

### **Shop by Foot or Bike**

Shopping by foot or bike makes everything along your route more accessible. It encourages local shopping and fosters a sense of community. Local businesses can provide incentives for customers who arrive on foot or by bike.

### **Open Streets**

This event takes a large, continuous public space—your community's streets—and opens it up to joggers and cyclists, adults and kids, residents and visitors to enjoy. Open Streets provides more space for healthy recreation.

### **Community Cycling Center**

The Create a Commuter program provides basic bicycle safety education and fully outfitted commuter bicycles to low income adults striving to connect to work or workforce development by bicycle. More info can be found at <http://www.communitycyclingcenter.org/index.php/programs-for-adults/create-a-commuter/>

### **Municipal Staff Cycle Training**

Municipal staff using bicycles for community travel is often cheaper and more effective than automobile transportation. Staff gets up close to areas that cannot be viewed by a vehicle. The municipality should provide annual training for all staff.

### **Bicycle Ambassadors**

Bicycle Ambassadors educate and encourage the public to use their bicycles more and to do so safely. The ambassadors' focus is to reach new groups, educate riders and show how easy cycling can be in their community.

### **Walk and Bike Friendly Recognition**

Walk and bike friendly communities have shown a commitment to improving walkability, bikeability, and pedestrian and cyclist safety through comprehensive programs, plans, and policies.

Walk Friendly Communities: <http://www.walkfriendly.org/>

Walk Friendly Communities receive national recognition for their efforts to improve safety, mobility, access and comfort. This site includes the application, resources and information about how to get started.

Bicycle Friendly Community: [http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/communities/getting\\_started.php](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/communities/getting_started.php)

This site provides a step-by-step guide to turning your town into a Bicycle Friendly Community. The League of American Bicyclists provides resources, a bike friendly blueprint and an explanation of how to apply for national Bicycle Friendly Community recognition.

### **Targeted Enforcement**

Police inform motorists of Illinois laws with warnings and educational materials, ensuring drivers uphold their duties as motorists. Targeted enforcement improves awareness of traffic laws, increasing compliance, safety and awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists on the road.





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