Chapter 6. Project Prioritization

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is a tool that allows Normal to focus and prioritize implementation efforts where they will provide the greatest community benefit. To further that aim, the infrastructure and programmatic recommendations are broken into short-term (five years or fewer), medium-term (five to ten years), and long-term projects (ten to 20 years) based on the need for a particular facility and Normal’s ability to implement the planned improvement within the adopted Five-Year Work Plan that governs Normal roadway improvements.

This chapter describes the methodology used for prioritizing Normal’s recommended walkway and bikeway projects and programs. The Project Team evaluated over 80 project ideas originating from previous local and regional planning efforts, the Steering Committee, resident input at community workshops, and other sources. The Project Team also considered walkway and bikeway improvements identified in the Needs Analysis discussed in Chapter 3 of this Plan.

Infrastructure Project Evaluation

The Project Team developed several evaluation criteria to identify and prioritize the proposed pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects. This approach was used to gauge the relative importance of each proposed walkway and bikeway project and helped inform potential funding allocation for pedestrian and bicycle system improvements. The criteria were applied in two ways:

- To lay out the best possible future pedestrian and bicycle network by identifying the features of a network most important to Normal residents
- To rank projects against each other as an indication of their relative importance

Table 16 lists the evaluation criteria used to prioritize potential projects. These ratings were considered together to prioritize projects. Projects fulfilling the greatest number of evaluation criteria received higher scores, correspondingly leading to higher rankings within the overall list. A detailed infrastructure project evaluation matrix is provided in Appendix D.
### Table 16. Infrastructure Project Evaluation Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overcomes Barriers</strong></td>
<td>How well does the project overcome a barrier in the current bicycle and pedestrian network?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>System Connectivity</strong></td>
<td>To what degree does the project fill a missing gap in the bicycle and/or pedestrian system?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Support</strong></td>
<td>To what degree do Normal residents desire the proposed project? This criterion takes into account oral and written feedback received at the community workshops and through workshop questionnaires as well as previously-proposed bike/ped projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>User Generator</strong></td>
<td>To what degree will the project likely generate transportation or recreational usage based on population, corridor aesthetics, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land Uses</strong></td>
<td>How many user generators does the project connect to within reasonable walking or bicycling distance, such as schools, parks, Uptown, ISU, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety and Comfort</strong></td>
<td>Can the project potentially improve bicycling and walking at locations with perceived or documented safety issues? This criterion takes into account available crash data as well as feedback from the Steering Committee and Normal residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Benefit</strong></td>
<td>To what degree does the project offer potential benefits to the wider, regional community by offering opportunities for increased connectivity to surrounding communities, other regional walkways/bikeways etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost</strong></td>
<td>What financial resources are needed to implement the project? Is the project cost prohibitive, or can it be implemented through grant funding or other opportunities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ease of Implementation</strong></td>
<td>How difficult will it be to implement the project? This criterion takes into account constraints like topography, existing development, presence or lack of available right-of-way, and environmental and political issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The short-, medium-, and long-term priorities may change according to available funds, changing priorities, new roadway projects that coincide, new development and redevelopment opportunities, or other factors. It should be noted that the purpose of this exercise was to understand the relative priority of projects so that the Town may apportion available funding to the highest priority projects. Medium- and long-term projects are also important and may be implemented at any point in time as part of a development or public works project. The ranked lists should be considered a “living document” and should be frequently reviewed to ensure they reflect current Normal priorities.

Working closely with Town of Normal staff and the Steering Committee, the Project Team identified six specific projects for more-detailed consideration. These Top-Priority projects were repeatedly suggested throughout the planning process and are consistent with the goals developed for this Plan. This Top-Priority list also includes some projects already in the planning stages that could receive funding in the near future. In developing this list, the Project Team also considered the need for geographic distribution of walkway and bikeway improvements.

Table 17 lists the Top-Priority projects. It is important to remember that the bicycle/pedestrian system and the recommended Top-Priority projects serve as guidelines to those responsible for implementation. The system and segments themselves may change over time as a result of changing bicycling patterns, funding availability, and implementation constraints and opportunities. Top-Priority projects are discussed in greater detail later in
this chapter. Chapter 7 provides planning-level cost opinions for all projects and programs as well as funding and implementation strategies.

**Table 17. Top-Priority Infrastructure Projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern Normal Corridor (Bryan/Dale/University/Virginia/Jersey)</td>
<td>On-street bikeway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fell Avenue/School Street Corridor</td>
<td>On-street bikeway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Corridor (Clay/Lincoln/Chippewa)</td>
<td>On/-off-street bikeway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Avenue/Mulberry Street Corridor</td>
<td>On-street bikeway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Parkway Crossings</td>
<td>Intersection improvements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top-Priority Infrastructure Project Description Sheets**

The following pages provide project description sheets with specific recommendations and maps for the Top-Priority projects, which represent the first stage of Master Plan implementation. Specific recommendations were based on extensive field visits, high-resolution aerial photos, and discussions with local and regional planning staff and system users. Each map depicts the recommended walkway/bikeway under focus, as well as selected other nearby connections. Please refer to the larger system maps for the project’s context within the overall surrounding walkway/bikeway network.
Southern Normal Corridor

[Map showing the Southern Normal Corridor with various markers and pathways]
### Southern Normal Corridor (continued)

#### Description

This project would develop an east-west on-street bikeway across southern Normal following Bryan Street, Dale Street, University Street, Virginia Avenue, Jersey Avenue, and other local streets. Improvements would include Bicycle Boulevards, shared lane markings, and roadway re-striping to provide dedicated bike lanes. Development of the Southern Normal Bikeway Corridor would substantially improve east-west connectivity for cyclists. The corridor passes within close proximity of numerous schools, parks, and Uptown Normal. The corridor also connects with other existing and planned bikeways, including the Constitution Trail.

#### Proposed Improvements

- Bicycle Boulevard on Bryan St. (Parkside Rd. to Adelaide St.)
- Shared lane markings on Adelaide St. (Bryan St. to Dale St., separate project), Virginia Ave. (University St. to Linden St.)
- Bicycle Boulevard on portions of Dale St., University St., and Belt Dr.
- Bike lanes (roadway re-striping) on Jersey Ave. (Linden St. to Towanda Ave.)

#### Potential Issues

- Intersection improvements on Dale St. at Kingsley St., and Dale St. at Main St. subject to IDOT approval
- Jersey Ave. bike lane retrofit would require parking removal on one side of street

#### Lead Agency(ies)

Town of Normal

#### Planning-Level Cost Opinion

- $147,000 (Bryan St., Dale St., Belt Dr. Bicycle Boulevards)
- $3,500 (Virginia Ave. shared lane markings)
- $5,000 (Jersey Ave. bike lanes)
CHAPTER 6

Fell Avenue/School Street Corridor
**Fell Avenue/School Street Corridor (continued)**

### Description

School Street and Fell Avenue combine to form a popular north-south bicycle route connecting Uptown Normal, ISU, elementary schools, and several neighborhoods in central Normal. The corridor also serves as an on-street alternative to the Constitution Trail. Although physical constraints preclude the addition of dedicated bike lanes, shared lane markings and supplemental signage could effectively serve bicyclists while enhancing motorists' awareness of bicyclists on this corridor.

In addition to connecting schools, neighborhoods and Uptown, an improved Fell Avenue/School Street corridor would link bicyclists with several other existing and planned bikeways, including eight proposed east-west corridors.

### Proposed Improvements

- Shared lane markings on Fell Ave. (Normal southern town limits to North St.)
- Signed connection on North St. (School St. to Fell Ave.)
- Shared lane markings on School St. (North St. to Raab Rd.)

### Potential Issues

- Shared lane markings may require additional maintenance, given their placement within the wheelpaths of vehicles on the roadway
- The corridor may attract fewer novice and recreational riders given its proximity to the parallel Constitution Trail

### Lead Agency(ies)

Town of Normal

### Planning-Level Cost Opinion

- $6,000 (Fell Ave. shared lane markings)
- $3,500 (North St. signed connection)
- $9,500 (School St. shared lane markings)
**Lincoln Corridor (continued)**

**Description**

This project would utilize several bikeway facility types to develop an east-west bikeway following Fairview Park access road, Clay Street, Lincoln Street, Chippewa Street, and other local streets. Improvements would include signed connections, Bicycle Boulevard treatments, and a short shared use path segment to overcome limited street connectivity.

The Lincoln Corridor would formalize a much needed east-west bikeway connecting ISU with residential neighborhoods in central and eastern Normal. The bikeway would also connect with several parks, and existing and planned walkways and bikeways including the Constitution Trail.

Opportunities also exist to establish this route as part of the designated Route 66 Bikeway in Normal (connecting the Constitution Trail with the planned Route 66 Trail in Northeast Normal). This designation could also include educational and interpretive features celebrating the history of Route 66.

**Proposed Improvements**

- Signed connection on Fairview Park service road (ISU Golf Course to Main St.)
- Bicycle Boulevard on McKinley St. /Clay St. (Main St. to School St.)
- Shared lane markings on School St. (Clay St. to Lincoln St., as part of separate project)
- Bicycle Boulevard on Lincoln St. /Lincoln Ave. (School St. to Oglesby Ave.)
- Shared use path through One Normal Plaza (Lincoln Ave. to Chippewa St.)
- Bicycle Boulevard on Chippewa St. (Normal Fields to Henry St.)

**Potential Issues**

Easement or property acquisition may be necessary to develop a shared use path connection between Lincoln Ave. and Chippewa St. near Normal Fields (further property ownership analysis needed)

**Lead Agency(ies)**

- Town of Normal

**Planning-Level Cost Opinion**

- $10,000 (Fairview Park service road signed connection)
- $77,000 (McKinley St., Clay St., Lincoln St., Lincoln Ave. Bicycle Boulevards)
- $10,500 (One Normal Plaza shared use path)
- $17,000 (Chippewa St. Bicycle Boulevard)

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Bicycle Boulevards include a variety of improvements, including signage, pavement markings, intersection treatments, traffic calming, and in some cases, traffic diversion. Appropriate treatments depend on the specific corridor targeted for improvements.
This project would add shared lane markings and bike lanes to the College Avenue/Mulberry Street corridor between Parkside Road and Linden Street. Shared lane markings would be added to College Avenue in western Normal between Parkside Road and School Street, except for the segment between Kingsley and University streets (where bicyclists would use the existing Constitution Trail segment near ISU). Sufficient curb-to-curb width exists on the College/Mulberry couplet in Uptown Normal to provide dedicated bike lanes through roadway re-stripping.

Improvements to the College Avenue/Mulberry Street corridor would vastly improve east-west connectivity for Normal cyclists. The corridor passes within close proximity to several schools, ISU, and provides a direct link between western Normal and Uptown Normal. The corridor would also connect with several existing and proposed bikeways including the Constitution Trail.

**Proposed Improvements**

- Shared lane markings on College Ave. (Parkside Rd. to School St.)
- Bike lane (roadway re-stripping) on College Ave. (School St. to Linden St.)
- Bike lane (roadway re-stripping) on Mulberry St. (Linden Ave. to School St.)

**Potential Issues**

- One eastbound vehicle lane on College Ave. (between School St. and Broadway) would be converted to a 6.5-ft. wide bike lane and a 5-ft. wide striped buffer
- Potentially difficult eastbound bicyclist transitions between College Ave. and the Constitution Trail (ISU segment, as riders would need to cross vehicle traffic on College Ave.)

**Lead Agency(ies)**

Town of Normal

**Planning-Level Cost Opinion**

- $10,000 (College Ave. shared lane markings)
- $1,500 (College Ave./Mulberry St. couplet bike lanes)
Veterans Parkway Crossings

- Reconstruct channelized islands to provide pedestrian refuges
- Complete sidewalks on Parkway Plaza Dr.
- Install "right turn on red" sign and "walks teeth" pavement markings
- Install high-visibility crosswalks
- Install ADA-compliant curb ramps with detectable warning strips
- 100 ft. scale
### Veterans Parkway Crossings (continued)

**Description**

Veterans Parkway represents a major barrier limiting east-west bicycle/pedestrian travel in Normal. Non-motorized users currently face a variety of challenges in this area, including prohibited crossing movements on most or all intersection legs, high vehicle turning speeds at channelized right turns, absence of sidewalks and other bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure in the intersections’ vicinity, and motorists’ occasional disregard of traffic control devices (e.g., running red lights).

Improved Veterans Parkway crossings would substantially enhance bicycle/pedestrian system connectivity, especially for east-west travelers. Upgraded crossings would also link several proposed east-west bikeways, including an on-street bikeway on Parkway Plaza Drive.

**Proposed Improvements**

- **Signal timing modifications**: Includes “leading pedestrian interval” (signal releases pedestrian 3-4 seconds before adjacent vehicle traffic), sufficient “green time” to cross the roadway in a single crossing movement, eliminate “free right turn” signal phase
- **Accessible bicycle/pedestrian signals**: Includes in-street bicycle loop detectors, pedestrian push buttons, pedestrian countdown signals, audible pedestrian signals
- **Modified/enhanced pavement markings and signage**: Includes high-visibility crosswalks, relocated vehicle stop bars to accommodate new crosswalks, supplemental “yield” signs and markings near crosswalks at right turn areas
- **Sidewalks and curb ramps**: Includes sidewalk infill in vicinity of intersections, ADA-compliant curb ramps with detectable warning strips
- **Channelized island reconstruction**: To provide pedestrian refuges between through vehicle lanes and right-turn lanes

Note: A long-term measure could include removing channelized right turns, and tightening curb radii to facilitate slower vehicle right turn movements.

**Potential Issues**

- Potential right-of-way constraints near intersection corners
- “Leading pedestrian intervals” could impact vehicle traffic operations
- Additional crosswalk markings could require more-frequent maintenance
- All improvements along Veterans Parkway are subject to IDOT approval

**Lead Agency(ies)**

IDOT, Town of Normal

**Planning-Level Cost Opinion**

$25,000-$60,000 for each major intersection (cost does not include sidewalks near intersection)
Constitution Trail/Vernon Avenue Crossing

- Construct bridge over South Branch and accessway to Orr Dr. (separate project)
- Install HAWK, high-visibility crosswalk, advanced warning signage, and advance stop lines
- Planned Vernon Avenue bridge widening (separate project)
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path

125 ft.
250 ft.
Constitution Trail/Vernon Avenue Crossing (continued)

Description

Normal residents cited the Constitution Trail/Vernon Avenue crossing (in eastern Normal) as a major challenge facing bicyclists and pedestrians. Non-motorized users must share a narrow sidewalk on Vernon Avenue’s south side to cross Sugar Creek, while the existing trail/roadway crossing provides minimal treatments.

This project would close a major trail gap by improving a critical trail/roadway crossing on the Constitution Trail. Specific improvements include upgrading the existing trail/roadway crossing with an innovative bicyclist/pedestrian-activated signal, a high-visibility crosswalk, advanced stop lines for motorists, and supplemental warning signage. These improvements will streamline bicycle/pedestrian connections to and across Vernon Avenue, while enhancing Constitution Trail access to/from surrounding neighborhoods.

Proposed Improvements

- High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) signal (see description at right at the current trail/roadway crossing location)
- Advance warning signs and pavement markings approaching trail/roadway crossing location

Potential Issues

The HAWK signal is not yet an adopted standard treatment in the MUTCD.

Lead Agency(ies)

Town of Normal

Planning-Level Cost Opinion

- $58,000 (HAWK signal and supplemental signage/pavement markings)
Supporting Programs Evaluation

Due to the differing nature and goals of education, enforcement, encouragement and evaluation strategies, recommended programs were evaluated with a different set of criteria than the infrastructure projects. Table 18 lists evaluation criteria used for prioritizing recommended programs.

Table 18. Supporting Programs Evaluation Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost</strong></td>
<td>What resources are required to implement the program? This criterion accounts for existing resources that can be used and the level of professional expertise required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range of Influence</strong></td>
<td>How many people are likely to be reached by the initiative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Needs</strong></td>
<td>What level of coordination with different municipal departments or community organization is needed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Likely Impact</strong></td>
<td>How significant is the program likely to be on influencing behavior change among participants?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D includes a detailed evaluation matrix of the recommended supporting bicycle and pedestrian programs.

Similarly to the infrastructure project evaluation, the Project Team used the evaluation process to determine the Top-Priority supporting programs. The three Top-Priority programs are shown in Table 19 and include crosswalk enforcement actions, development of a Complete Streets Policy, and updating the Bloomington-Normal Trail Map. All of these programs are low-cost strategies for supplementing the walkway and bikeway system that will reach a large number of residents.

Table 19. Top-Priority Program Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crosswalk Enforcement Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a Complete Streets Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update Bloomington-Normal Trail Map</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>