

CHAPTER 4:

Transportation

The future transportation system described in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on the following key themes emanating from the vision and guiding principles:

As a **FRIENDLY COMMUNITY**, Ironwood streets and roads need to present a lasting image and character that is inviting, pleasant, and welcoming. Street trees, wayfinding, lighting, and traffic management all contribute to the character of a street and the character of the community as a whole. Many Ironwood streets are extended beyond their useful life and need repair and in many cases replacement. A key challenge is maintaining, repairing, and replacing aging street infrastructure. Budgeting for street maintenance, street replacement and snow removal is an important policy initiative and design consideration for the City of Ironwood.

An **ACTIVE COMMUNITY** is dependent on a great mobility system. Strong connectivity within a well-designed grid street system with ample trail and sidewalk connections helps encourage walking and biking not only for recreation purposes but for trip purposes too.

A **CONNECTED/COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY** requires the ability to move people and goods not only locally, but regionally. Regional highways, airports, and transit systems are key connectors. Collaboration with regional agencies to deliver an effective transportation network is an important part of providing regional connectivity.

A quality, efficient, and affordable transportation system is also key to maintaining a **THRIVING COMMUNITY**, being known as a great destination, and being able to sustain economic status.

In a community where people are just as apt to hop in a **CAR** as hop on a **SNOWMOBILE**, strap on a **BIKE** helmet or pair of **SKIS**, a well-planned **MULTI-MODAL** transportation system provides balanced mobility options for **ALL USERS** and ensures that you can get where you're going **SAFELY** and **EFFICIENTLY**- or just **ENJOY THE RIDE!**

OVERVIEW

A city's transportation system provides for the movement of people and goods throughout the community and to the broader region. Street and trail right-of-way comprises nearly 20% of the land area of the Ironwood community, and as such, transportation infrastructure plays a critical role in shaping the public realm and image of the community. The transportation system in Ironwood consists of three key components.

1. A roadway network that supports mobility within and through the community for all modes of transport.
2. A trail and sidewalk network that supports the transportation and recreational needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and recreational vehicles (snowmobiles/ATVs).
3. Regional-serving transportation assets such as the Gogebic-Iron County Airport and the Gogebic County Transit Authority.

Connections & Barriers

The city of Ironwood maintains over 60 miles of public streets and one regional state highway, US Highway 2.

Highway 2 is a significant regional corridor that (along with downtown) serves as one of Ironwood's two destinations for commercial businesses. Many business enterprises that serve the Gogebic and Iron County community are located along Highway 2. Several key streets connect the Highway 2 corridor to downtown Ironwood, including Broadway Street, Lowell Street, Douglas Boulevard (Old US Highway 2), and Lake Street.

Ayer Street is the primary east west corridor south of Highway 2 that brings people into downtown Ironwood. Ayer Street connects to the golf course and Industrial Park to the east and terminates at Silver Street near the Hurley/Wisconsin border to the west. Extending east beyond Ironwood, Ayer Street becomes Old County Road and connects Ironwood to the city of Bessemer.

Topographic and physical barriers south of downtown have resulted in somewhat **fragmented routes and corridors**. In Ironwood, key "through" routes or corridors are often comprised of a combination of streets. For example, South Lowell Street, Alfred Wright Boulevard, and Norrie Park Road could be considered one "corridor"- albeit fragmented.

The **Montreal River** runs north-south along Ironwood's western edge defining the boundary between Ironwood and Hurley. There are only two roadway crossings of the Montreal-one at Silver Street and one at West Norrie/Poplar Street-and one trail bridge.

Miners Park, once a place of significant mining activity and now transformed into a tremendous park asset, is a physical barrier to north and south street and trail connections. Additionally, the park presents a policy challenge of how to balance transportation and mobility needs with the desire to maintain a pristine park area. Around Miners Park and the former mining areas, the traditional grid becomes more organic, creating navigational challenges.

Destinations

In addition to connecting travelers to downtown and neighborhood destinations, the transportation system enables access to the Ironwood community's rich outdoor recreational amenities, as well as regional job centers along Highway 2 and within the Ironwood Business Park. Currently, wayfinding/gateway signage, maps, and other directional cues are limited and inconsistently applied.

Balancing Modes

As key connectors between Ironwood's commercial districts, these major corridors are logical multi-modal routes that need to accommodate automobile, bike, and pedestrian mobility-as well as ATVs and snowmobiles. ATVs and snowmobiles are used by Ironwood residents for both recreational and transportation purposes.

Regional Connections

Regional connectivity is of critical importance to Ironwood and the Upper Peninsula. Support for the Gogebic Iron County Airport and the potential increased demand for rail transport (Canadian National Railroad north of Ironwood) elevates regional connectivity.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Management and maintenance of aging street infrastructure is a clear priority for Ironwood. While there are economic challenges associated with maintenance and upgrading infrastructure, these are investments that should be prioritized.

Strengthening mobility for non-car modes through sidewalk and trail improvements is also a priority investment for the community. Many residents and businesses in the community see these kinds of "quality of life" improvements as supporting the community's economic development, as well as transportation goals, by making the community a more attractive and livable destination.

Within the trail and sidewalk system, there is a need to balance between the sometimes divergent needs of various users: "silent sports" (walking, jogging, snow shoeing, skiing), biking, snowmobiles, and ATVs. Mobility systems for all modes need to be carefully planned and clearly communicated to all user groups through wayfinding signage, maps, and infrastructure design.

Ironwood is known as "Big Snow Country," but with "Big Snow" come big responsibility for snow removal and infrastructure maintenance. As such, the operation and maintenance associated with snow removal and four-season usage of trails and sidewalks, needs to be carefully considered in the design and planning for transportation infrastructure.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD:

67% of survey respondents rated "street improvements" as one of their top 3 funding priorities

GOALS & POLICIES

GOAL 4.1 PRESERVATION

Invest in existing transportation infrastructure to effectively provide safety, mobility, access, connectivity, and support of community development initiatives.

Policy 4.1.1 Invest in street maintenance and replacement on an annual basis through the capital improvement planning process.

Policy 4.1.2 Invest in sidewalk and trail maintenance on an annual basis through the capital improvement planning process.

Policy 4.1.3 Prioritize investment in projects that fill gaps in the existing transportation networks.

Policy 4.1.4 When reconstructing streets, consider street design that optimizes pavement width (no more than what is necessary) while being cognizant of “Big Snow Country” context.

Policy 4.1.5 Coordinate public investments where sharing ROW and upgrading systems simultaneously can realize efficiencies.

GOAL 4.2 ACCESS, MOBILITY & SAFETY

Provide safe, effective, efficient, and economical access to housing, jobs, arts and cultural attractions, educational opportunities, and essential services.

Policy 4.2.1 Provide a network of complete streets that balance safety needs for all modes of travel – make room for pedestrians.

Policy 4.2.2 Design streets that account for 4 season use by all modes of travel, including strategies for snow storage and removal.

Policy 4.2.3 Keep street widths appropriate relative to adjacent land uses and street function and snow removal/management needs.

Policy 4.2.4 Manage individual vehicle access points from private property onto key arterial and collector streets to minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and to maintain safe and efficient traffic flow.

Policy 4.2.5 Ensure routes for various modes of travel are aligned with land use and street design limitations.

Policy 4.2.6 Provide good wayfinding and signage.

Policy 4.2.7 Provide lighting that is sensitive to the context of the street (residential, commercial, function.)

GOAL 4.3 STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY

Provide environmentally responsible and aesthetically pleasing transportation infrastructure and services in coordination with land use planning and development that strengthen the local, community, regional, and state economies and competitive position.

Policy 4.3.1 Ensure street designs respond to the types of land use that are being served.

Policy 4.3.2 Invest in behind the curb improvements along key streets and gateways (landscaping, trails/sidewalks, gateway signage, wayfinding, street furniture, corridor appropriate lighting.)

Policy 4.3.3 Accommodate parking based on the land use and corridor function - off street versus on street; parcel or business by business versus a district approach to parking such as in downtown.

Policy 4.3.4 Plant street trees appropriate to the street function and land use pattern.

GOAL 4.4 COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

Maximize collaboration between public officials, private interests, and transportation agencies at a local, community, regional and statewide level to improve safety, enhance or consolidate services, strengthen intermodal connectivity, and maximize the effectiveness of investment for all transportation modes.

Policy 4.4.1 Collaborate with MDOT on improvements to regional highways.

Policy 4.4.2 Collaborate with the Gogebic Transit Authority to ensure efficient and effective access to transit services within Ironwood and the Ironwood Community.

Policy 4.4.3 Support investments in the Gogebic Iron County Airport and transit connections between the airport and Ironwood.

Policy 4.4.4 Participate in the regional discussions regarding the resurgence of freight and passenger rail.

Policy 4.4.5 Facilitate on-going dialogues between various modal user groups (snowmobiles, ATVs, cross country skiers or silent sport enthusiasts, bikers, etc.)

KEY TERMINOLOGY

The goals and policies on this page support the vision and guiding principles of the plan and should be used to inform future decision-making and action.

Goals: are broad statements that describe a desired outcome or end-state. Goals are often long-term in scope.

Policies: describe the general course of action or way in which programs and activities are conducted to achieve a stated goal or objective. Policies speak to underlying values, context, or principles and are often place-specific.

FRAMING CONCEPTS

ROADWAYS

FUNCTIONAL CLASS

Traditional definitions for roadways in a city refer to arterials (principal and minor), collectors, and local roads. These terms come from National Functional Classification (NFC), a transportation planning tool. All public roads are classified according to the function they serve within the overall roadway network.

Arterials

Arterials are the busiest roads carrying the greatest level of traffic, and serving a more regional connecting role (for example US Highway 2 – also identified by MDOT as a [Regional Corridor of Significance](#)).

Collector Roads

Collector roads serve key community origins and destinations and provide a way for community traffic to access the regional roadway system (for example N Lowell Street, Douglas Blvd or N Lake Street). These roads provide a greater level of access to individual property and will carry more moderate levels of traffic.

Local Streets

Local streets provide the greatest degree of access to private property and generally carry the lowest traffic volume. Because they provide the greatest level of access, local streets make up the most street mileage in the system.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

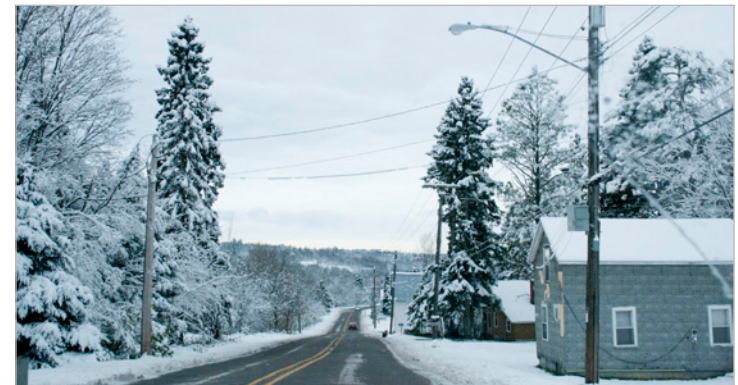
Stormwater management is an important aspect of street systems and street design. Streets are hard surfaces that generally increase stormwater volume and rates of run off. Integrating stormwater management strategies into the design and reconstruction of streets can help minimize flooding impacts, protect surface water resources, and beautify the public realm.

PUBLIC REALM

Roadways do more than support mobility and transportation purposes; they also contribute to the community image and character and are a dominant component of the overall public realm. The City should invest in the long-term management and maintenance of its public street system, including streetscape quality and durability.



Principal Arterial Road: US Highway 2



Minor Arterial Street: Ayer Street



Collector Street: West Broadway Street

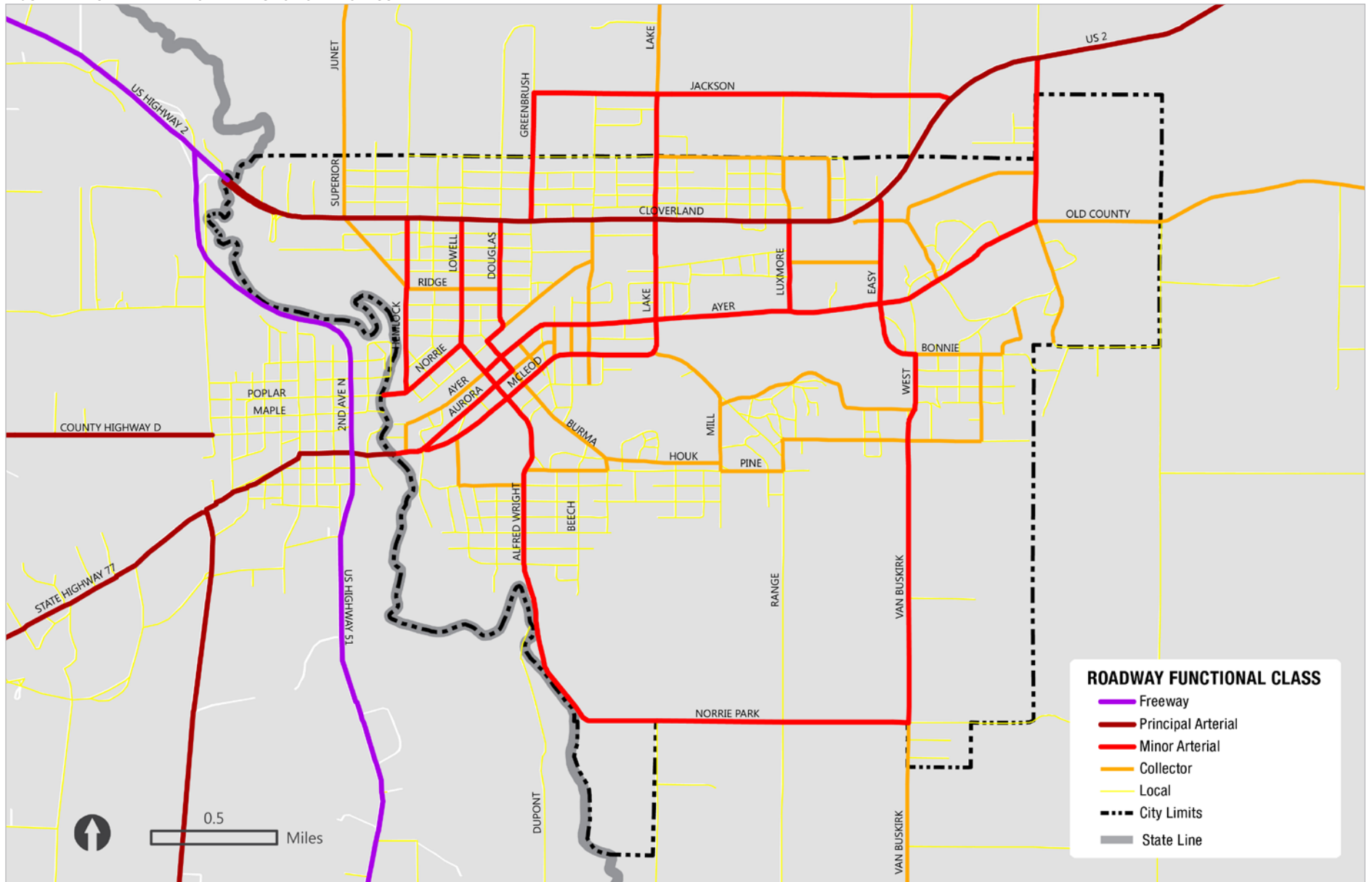
RELATED STRATEGIES:

Strategy 4.1: Implement a Complete Streets Pilot Program

Strategy 4.3: Prepare a Street Maintenance & Reconstruction Plan

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

FIGURE 4-1. STREET NETWORK BY FUNCTIONAL CLASS



FRAMING CONCEPTS

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are streets that are designed to be safe for people of all ages. This includes pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders.

Complete streets;

- Are easy to cross and travel along
- Increase opportunities for physical activity
- Safely accommodate multiple modes of transportation
- Result in increased walkability, a characteristic of a livable, desirable community

Overtime, Ironwood should develop a system or network of complete streets, recognizing that not every street must be a “complete street”. Where appropriate and feasible, the reconstruction of aging streets and future streets should incorporate components of complete streets.

Resources

The State of Michigan passed [Complete Streets legislation](#) in 2010, giving planning and coordination responsibilities to city, county, and state transportation agencies.

The [Michigan Complete Streets Coalition](#), formed in 2009 to organize various Complete Streets movements across the state, works to promote statewide policy and support local initiatives across the state.

The Michigan Healthy Communities Program partners with local health departments and state organizations to change policy, environment, and systems throughout the state, and offers local [policy resources](#) to communities seeking assistance with Complete Streets implementation.

The Michigan Municipal league has identified Complete Streets as complimentary to their Prosperity Agenda, and as a core asset of community design by their Center for 21st Century Communities. They provide [resources and publications](#) for use by local communities to encourage the inclusion of complete streets into community planning.



Complete streets consider off-street sidewalks or multi-use paths.



Bike lanes are an option for bicycle infrastructure in a Complete Street



A wide, paved shoulder is an option on a more rural street section.

RELATED STRATEGIES:

Strategy 4.1: Implement a Complete Streets Pilot Program

Strategy 4.3: Prepare a Street Maintenance & Reconstruction Plan

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

Complete Street Pilot Routes

To expand on current efforts and build a network of Complete Streets, the City should begin by testing two or more pilot routes that traverse the city. Figure 4-2 shows potential complete street pilot routes, including major east-west and north-south connections through the city. Further study is necessary to identify the best routes for the complete streets pilot.

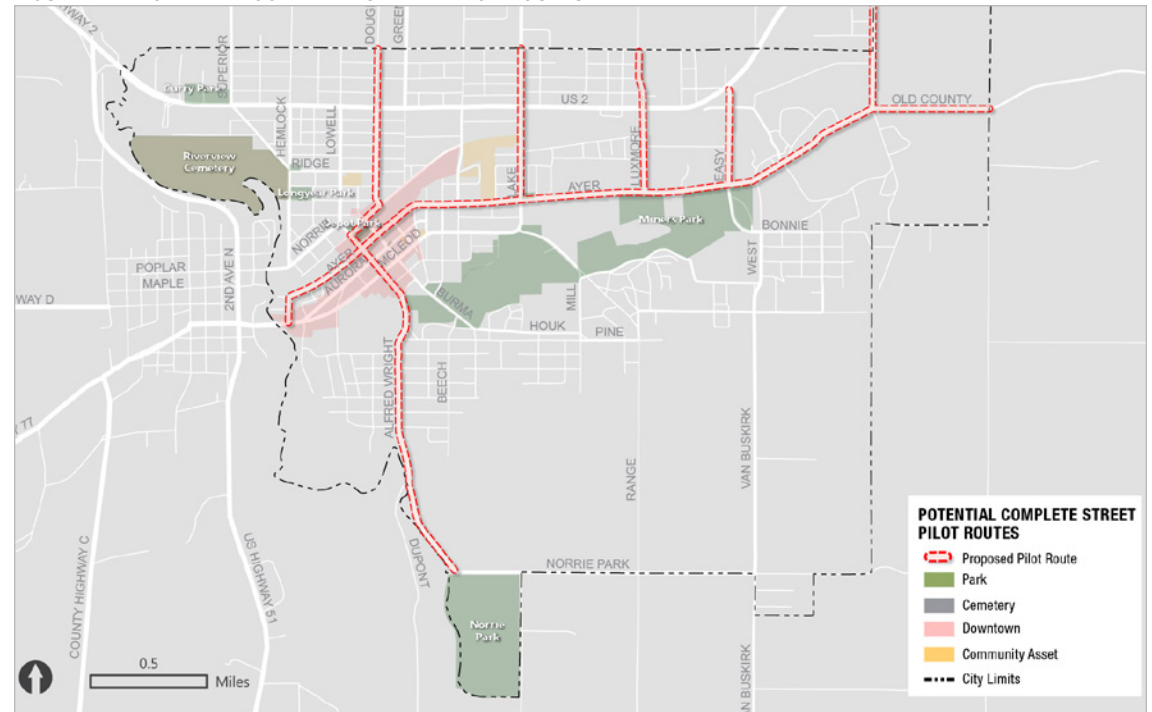
The north/south route along Douglas/Alfred Wright is a candidate for a pilot street because it provides a direct connection from the north end of town all the way to Norrie Park, passing through downtown and by Slight Elementary. Douglas (also known as Business Route 2) is a primary auto access route into downtown and may be a safer, more visible option for complete street design than some of the adjacent streets in the area. This route also builds on the off-street, multi-use path that currently exists along Alfred Wright from West Lime Street to Oak Street.

The potential east/west route along Ayer connects downtown, the industrial park, and the golf course on the east side of town, flanking the north side of Miners Memorial Heritage Park along a portion of its eastern half, and connects to one of five Montreal River crossings into Wisconsin. Portions of this corridor have been included within the City's five year Capital Improvement Planning for reconstruction.

Key elements to consider in the design of the complete street include:

- Wayfinding systems directing users to key civic destinations along the route: parks, schools, trail heads, historic sites/buildings
- On-street bike lanes or off-street multi-use trails, depending on roadway configuration and property impacts
- Landscape and streetscape amenities that are sensitive to adjacent land uses and climate sensitive (i.e. accommodate snow removal)
- Aesthetically designed and functional stormwater systems
- Intersection improvements to facilitate safe traffic turning and safe pedestrian crossings
- Traffic calming strategies that direct through traffic to primary streets and manage neighborhood traffic
- A maintenance and operations plan to account for upkeep of the street

FIGURE 4-2. POTENTIAL COMPLETE STREET PILOT ROUTES



FRAMING CONCEPTS

PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Many of Ironwood's traditional older streets have sidewalks on both sides of the street. Where gaps in the sidewalk system exist, priority should be placed on completing sidewalks. Priority should be further placed on projects that:

- Are proximate to Ironwood Schools, particularly elementary and middle schools.
- Are more prominently travelled sidewalks that connect popular pedestrian destinations: parks, outdoor recreation places, commercial services
- Provide separation between pedestrian and heavier vehicular traffic operations

Figure 4-3 illustrates priority routes and zones for pedestrian connectivity based on the above principles. The city is organized into three priority zones and primary pedestrian routes, and priority in completing and filling existing gaps the sidewalk system should be given in the following order:

- Primary Pedestrian Routes: should have sidewalks on both sides of the street, with the exception of streets with adjacent multi-use paved trails, such as the proposed River Walk Trail near Norrie Park Road and the existing multi-use trail along Alfred Wright
- Primary Pedestrian Zone: streets should have sidewalks on both sides
- Secondary Pedestrian Zone: streets should have sidewalks on both sides
- Tertiary Pedestrian Zone: streets should have sidewalks on at least one side

The City of Ironwood has successfully pursued funding for improvements to the pedestrian system near and around schools through the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Routes to School Program, and should continue with these efforts.

Snow removal is a major challenge for the sidewalk system. Property owners should be responsible for keeping sidewalks clear. In times of major snow fall, storage of snow can be challenging to nearly impossible. Snow removal from sidewalks should be explored in key areas around schools where walking most likely occurs year-round.



SIDEWALK: Traditional paved off-street pedestrian paths within the public right-of-way



MULTI-USE TRAIL: Wider off-street paved paths designed to be shared by pedestrians and bicycles. These trails can also be utilized as cross country ski and snowshoe trails during winter months.

RELATED STRATEGIES:

Strategy 4.4: Pedestrian System Improvements

Strategy 4.5: Prioritize & Plan for Trail System Improvements

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

FRAMING CONCEPTS

TRAIL NETWORKS

Trails function as part of both the recreation and transportation systems of a city, facilitating sustainable and active modes of transportation for commuters, shoppers, students, and outdoor enthusiasts. This chapter focuses on the function of Ironwood's trail networks as part of the broader transportation system, getting people to destinations across the community by various non-car modes. [Chapter 5: Parks & Recreation](#) focuses more on recreational function of trails and the recreational trail network.

NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL NETWORK

The non-motorized trail network accommodates a number of user types, including:

- Pedestrians
- Bicyclists
- Skiers
- In-line skaters

Trail systems should be designed with specific user groups in mind, as well as shared, multi-use capacities. The proposed non-motorized trail system can be seen in Figure 4-4. Proposed trail alignments are suggested starting points, and largely follow and align with:

- Existing informal footpaths and trails
- Utility/infrastructure corridor right-of-ways
- City-owned parcels
- Vacant parcels (where easements are granted)
- Stream corridor buffer areas

These proposed routes aim to provide connections to commercial areas, job centers, a grade-separated crossing of Highway 2, community assets and parks, and other existing and proposed trails, including bicycle routes, the proposed Montreal River Walk Trail and Michigan's Western Gateway Trail.



NON-MOTORIZED UNPAVED TRAILS: Trails dedicated for biking, walking, skiing, snowshoeing, etc. where the use of motorized vehicles is prohibited. Trail surfaces may include gravel, compacted soil, and mowed grass. These trails may be utilized as cross-country ski or snowshoe trails during winter months.



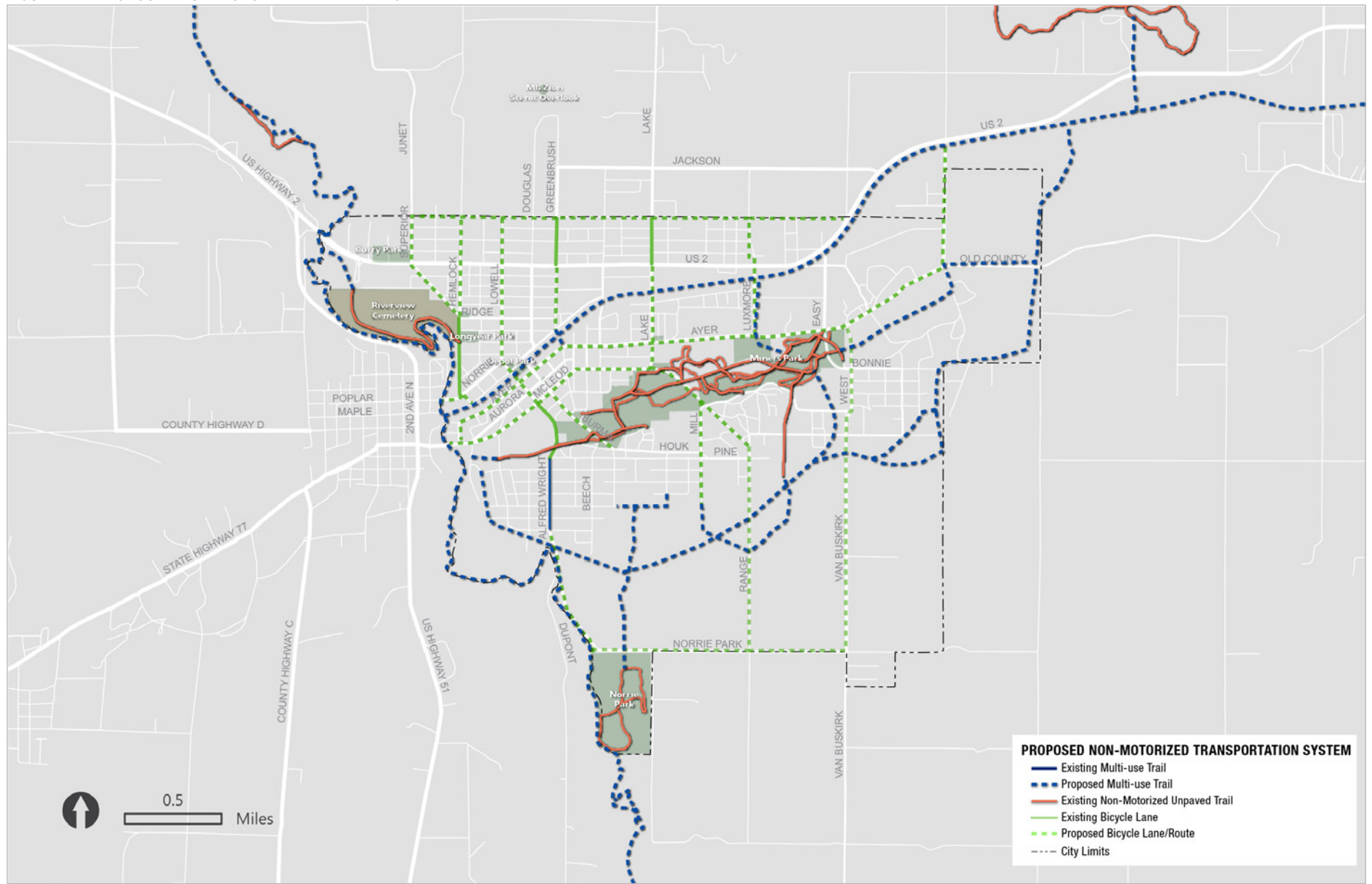
MULTI-USE TRAILS: Wider off-street paved paths designed to be shared by pedestrians and bicycles. These trails can also be utilized as cross country ski and snowshoe trails during winter months.

RELATED STRATEGIES:

*Strategy 4.5:
Prioritize & Plan for Trail
System Improvements*

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON
THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

FIGURE 4-4. PROPOSED NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL NETWORK



FRAMING CONCEPTS

BICYCLE NETWORK

Ironwood currently has a limited system of on-street bike lanes and off-street multi-use trails, with plans to add bicycle infrastructure concurrently with street reconstruction projects as funding becomes available. Figure 4-5 shows how proposed bicycle lanes, routes, and multi-use trails can be integrated with the existing bicycle facilities, and existing and proposed trails.

Proposed bicycle facilities can be accommodated in different ways. Bicycle lanes, which are dedicated, on-street, marked lanes for one-way travel going in the same direction (usually) as vehicles in the adjacent traffic lane, and must be a minimum of 4' wide within a lane that is at least 14' wide to the curb. Ideal bike lanes are 5' wide.

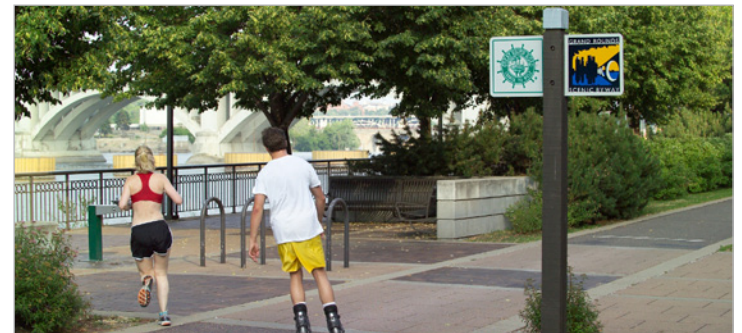
Where bicycle lanes are not feasible due to right-of-way constrictions, alternative bicycle facilities, such as Bicycle Routes, should be considered. Bicycle Routes are road segments identified by directional and informational markers including pavement markings, but do not include delineated lanes for bikes only. This may include Shared Lane Marking or "Sharrow", or wide shoulders that can accommodate bicyclists. For a more complete overview of bicycle and pedestrian facilities refer to the MDOT document on [Bicycle and Pedestrian Terminology](#).



BIKE LANE: A dedicated, marked on-street lane for bicycles.



BIKE ROUTE: On-street routes where bicycles share the road with cars. Routes may be marked by pavement paint or other signage.



MULTI-USE TRAIL: Wider off-street paved paths designed to be shared by pedestrians and bicycles.

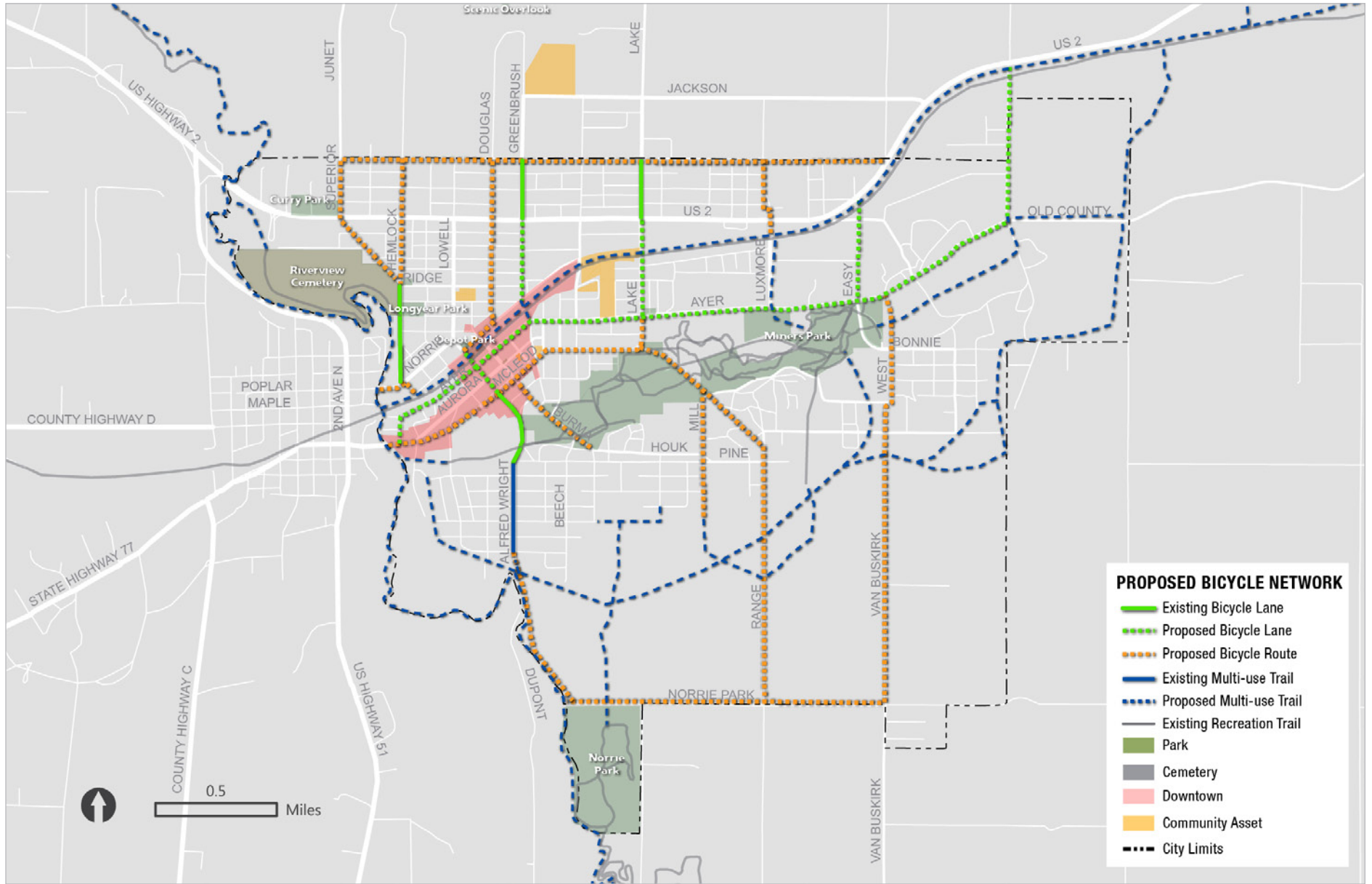
RELATED STRATEGIES:

*Strategy 4.1:
Implement a Complete
Streets Pilot Program*

*Strategy 4.5:
Prioritize & Plan for Trail
System Improvements*

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON
THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

FIGURE 4-5. PROPOSED BICYCLE NETWORK



FRAMING CONCEPTS

MOTORIZED TRAIL NETWORK

Snowmobiling and the use of ATVs is a beloved pastime for many Ironwood residents, and a large component of local tourism. Via the Trail 2 snowmobile route, which is the southern railway grade running through Ironwood, riders have access to hundreds of miles of trail in Gogebic County and beyond, as well as designated parking facilities within the downtown core. The City has also authorized the use of this railbed within city limits for ATV use.

Dirtbike riders also have access to the Stateline Motocross Park, a commercial, privately-owned track within the Gogebic County Fairgrounds.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has established [snowmobile](#) and [ATV regulations](#) for the operation of motorized vehicles on public right-of-ways, and these work in tandem with City Ordinances that restrict the use of snowmobiles and ATVs on designated streets within city limits.

Figure 4-6 illustrates the existing and proposed system of designated snowmobile/ATV access streets and restricted streets. The addition of proposed designated access streets and restricted streets aims to clarify the motorized policy, and reduce the occurrence of motorized activity in Miners Memorial Heritage Park and other areas of the city, while simultaneously embracing motorized culture as part of Ironwood's transportation and recreation systems.



MOTORIZED TRAIL: Off-street routes dedicated for use by snowmobiles and ATVs



RECOMMENDED TRAIL ACCESS STREET: Preferred, signed streets for use by snowmobiles and ATVs to get to and from Trail 2 and the ATV trail.

RESTRICTED STREET: Streets where Snowmobiles and ATV use is prohibited.

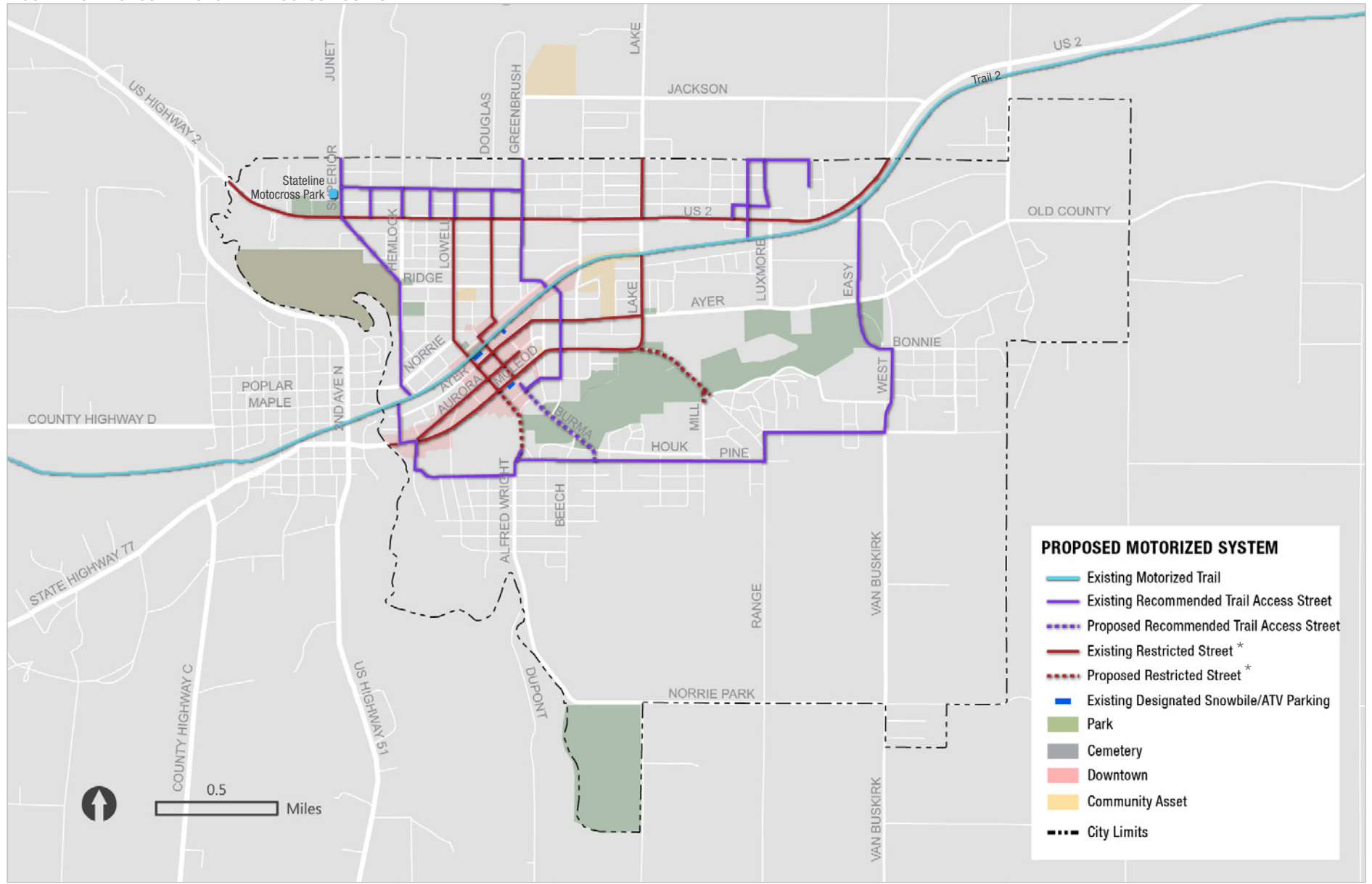
RELATED STRATEGIES:

*Strategy 4.2:
Prepare a Wayfinding
Master Plan*

*Strategy 4.5:
Prioritize & Plan for Trail
System Improvements*

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON
THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

FIGURE 4-6. PROPOSED MOTORIZED ACCESS ROUTES



* All other streets are open for motorized use

FRAMING CONCEPTS

WAYFINDING

Wayfinding can be defined as spatial problem solving; it is knowing where you are in the environment, where your desired location is, and how to get there. A good wayfinding system is a critical component of all cities and towns. Principles of wayfinding include:

- Using landmarks to provide orientation cues and memorable locations
- Providing well-structured paths
- Creating individual identities at each location
- Limiting users choices in navigation
- Using survey views (give navigators a vista or map)
- Providing signs at decision points to help wayfinding decisions
- Using sight lines to show what's ahead

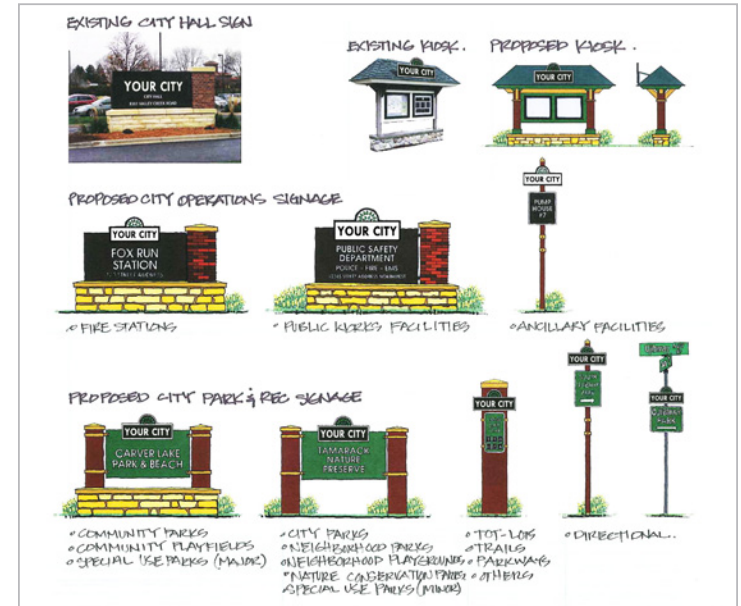
Ironwood currently lacks a comprehensive and effective wayfinding system to guide residents and visitors to community assets, including parks, trails, schools, downtown, historical assets, or businesses.

Steps should be taken to improve the overall wayfinding system, including the following priorities;

- Gateway signage at the City's main entrances
 - › US Highway 2 and Business Highway 2
- Cues to the downtown core for
 - › motorists
 - › Motorized and non-motorized trail users
 - › Bicyclists
- A comprehensive park and trail wayfiding system;
 - › For Michigan's Western Gateway/Trail 2 users
 - › As part of a Miners Memorial Park Master Plan
 - › To direct motorists to Ironwood Parks and trail heads
- Wayfinding for regional destinations
 - › Downhill, cross-country, and ski-jumping facilities
 - › County, state, and national parks and forests
 - › Waterfalls
- A story-telling, historic wayfinding system
- Wayfinding that incorporates public art



Introduce wayfinding aimed at improving the bicycle system



Wayfinding signage size, height, and content should be appropriate for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, trail riders, etc.



Artful signage should be integrated into a wayfinding system.



Historical wayfinding may include interpretation kiosks.

RELATED STRATEGIES:

Strategy 4.2:
Prepare a Wayfinding Master Plan

Strategy 4.5:
Prioritize & Plan for Trail System Improvements

SEE P. 4-18 FOR MORE ON THE STRATEGIES LISTED ABOVE

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

GOGEBIC COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Gogebic County Transit Authority, also known as the little blue bus, provides demand response and flex route service to areas within Gogebic County. Demand-Response is a point-to-point pickup and drop-off service provided in response to a phone call, with or without notice (typically 24 hours). Flex Route service operates generally with a regular route and schedule but will depart some distance from the route as needed to pick up and drop off passengers.

The City should collaborate with the transit authority to support the continued operations and infrastructure needs of the Transit Authority.

GOGEBIC IRON COUNTY AIRPORT

The Gogebic Iron County Airport provides limited services to small planes and jets. Over the years, the airport has been able to sustain daily flights to a few key metropolitan areas with major airport hubs. This connection is of value to the City of Ironwood from an economic development and tourism perspective. Corporate businesses looking to locate the region may see an airport as an added incentive. Access to the western Upper Peninsula and the outdoor tourism and recreation assets is greatly enhanced by airport service.

The City should collaborate with the airport and regional governing agencies to ensure the long term sustainability of airport services.

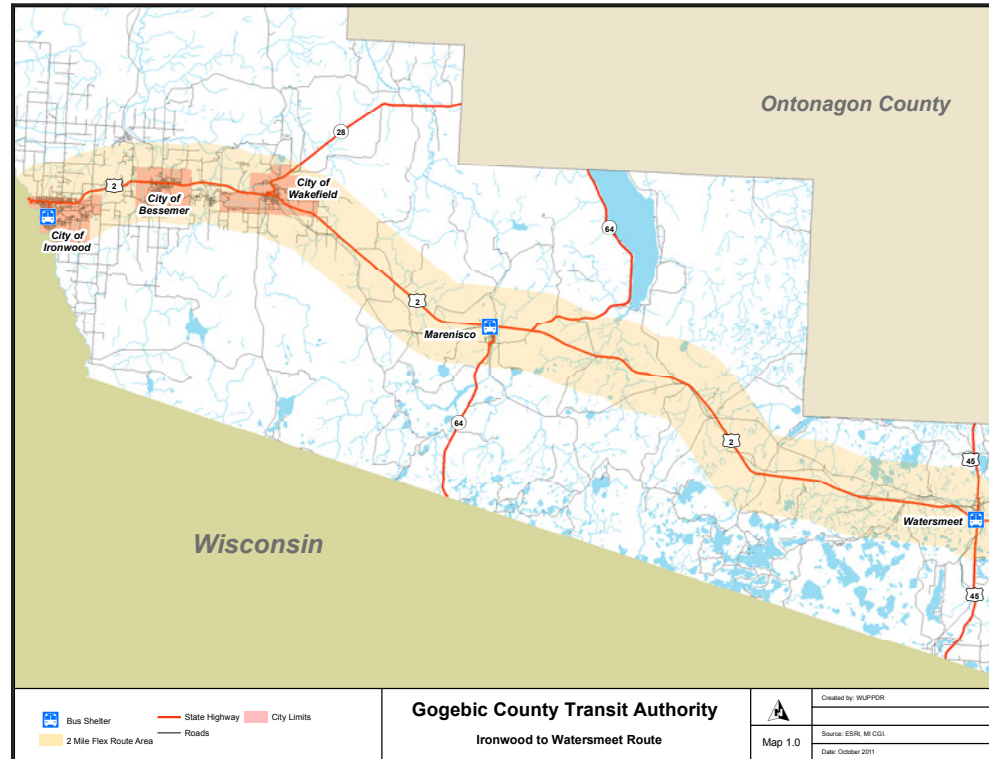


FIGURE 4-7. TRANSIT SERVICE AREA TO WATERSMEET FROM THE GOGEBIC COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY.

STRATEGIES

KEY TERMINOLOGY

“Strategies” are actions, programs, and practices that support one or more of the plan’s goals and policies. Strategies address at a high level, the “who, what, when, where, and how” of reaching a goal, and may involve multiple sub-strategies.

The following strategies support the goals and policies of the Transportation Chapter:

STRATEGY 4.1: IMPLEMENT A COMPLETE STREETS PILOT PROGRAM

To introduce the Complete Streets concept in Ironwood, two pilot routes should be implemented and tested. This strategy would include

- Developing a better understanding of the physical constraints of the corridor (existing right of way limits, road widths, traffic volumes and intersection features) through mapping, observation, and survey work.
- Community workshops to explore and understand what complete streets mean and how they might apply to a particular corridor.
- Prepare a conceptual and detailed design program for the corridor including graphic representation at a corridor level and more detailed design of key segments with associated cost estimates.
- Securing funding and include the project in the five year Capital Improvement Program.

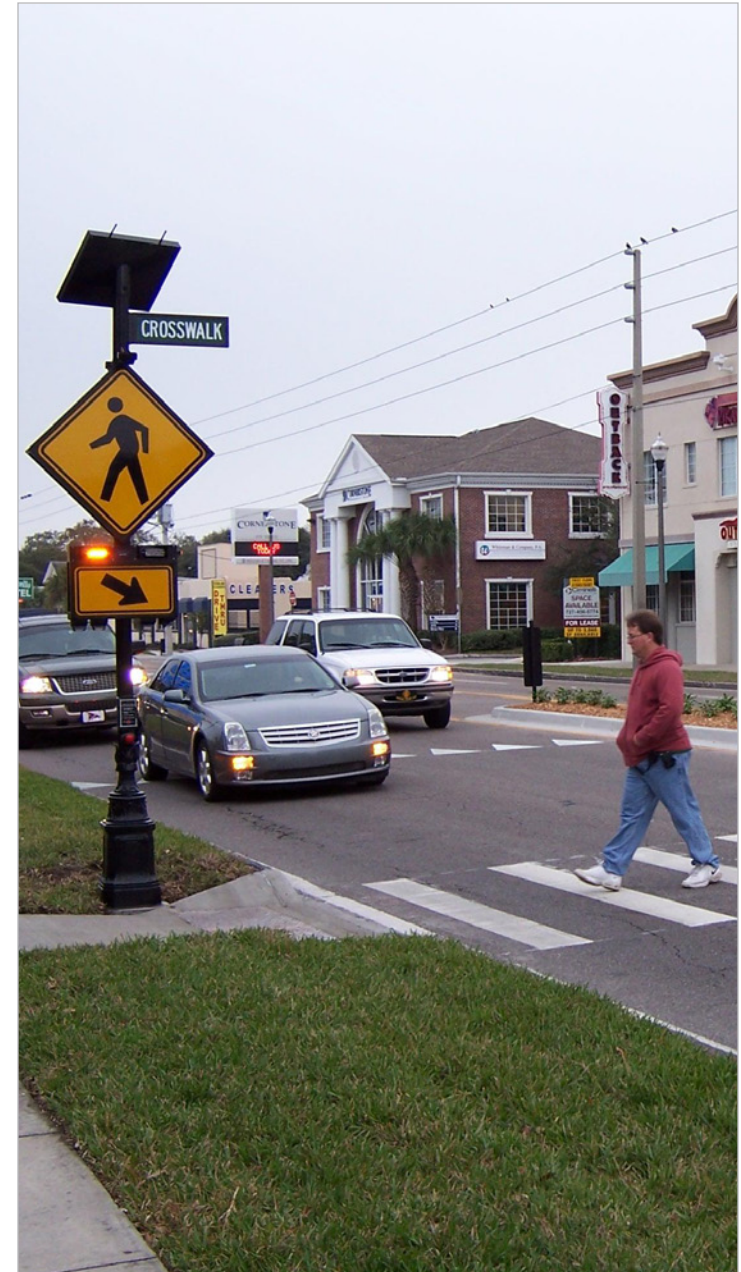
STRATEGY 4.2: PREPARE A WAYFINDING MASTER PLAN

The City currently has some signage throughout the community providing very limited wayfinding. A comprehensive master plan that provides key guidance on the types of wayfinding, geographic location of signs, a preferred design theme, and funding resources should be considered.

STRATEGY 4.3: PREPARE A STREET MAINTENANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION PLAN

The City has completed reconstruction of streets in certain neighborhoods where infrastructure and street improvement project needs aligned. A street maintenance and reconstruction plan would allow the City to assess the condition of existing streets and prioritize and budget for future improvements. The plan should:

- Include an asset inventory of all local streets and a condition analysis utilizing a GIS based mapping and database system. The inventory should document the age, quality, and condition of streets throughout the community. This information should be used to help identify, budget, and plan for future street reconstruction projects.
- Develop a preventative maintenance strategy for streets that



are approaching useful life expectancy so that street life can be extended and value maximized before the street deteriorates to an unsafe or detrimental condition.

- Identify streets for reconstruction with priority for streets in the poorest condition. Street reconstruction projects should include full curb and gutter and sidewalk, not only mill and overlay.

STRATEGY 4.4: PRIORITIZE, PLAN FOR, AND CONSTRUCT PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Sidewalk improvements should be included in the Capital Improvement Plan. Gaps within the sidewalk and trail network should be prioritized. In addition, sidewalks in poor condition should also be prioritized for replacement. Continue pursuit and implementation of Safe Routes to School funding and projects. Focus on pedestrian system improvements that are located within the Primary Pedestrian Route and Zone first, with improvements in the Secondary Pedestrian Zone as funding becomes available.

STRATEGY 4.5: PRIORITIZE, PLAN FOR, AND CONSTRUCT TRAIL SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Trail improvements should be included in the Capital Improvement Plan. Make trail improvements to round out and enhance Ironwood's existing trail system, resulting in a system that is a more integral part of the community's transportation and recreation system. This strategy should include:

- Maps that define desired and appropriate trail alignments by user mode (snowmobile, silent users, bike, ATV) see Figures 4-4 through 4-6.
- Trail segment designs and cost estimates
- Prioritization and alignment of funding sources

See [p. 5-8](#) in the Parks & Recreation chapter for more on trail planning.



MAKING IT HAPPEN!

Priority Actions for the City

Priority action steps are identified in the matrix on the following page. This matrix focuses on immediate (0-1 year) and short-term (1-5 year) action steps, as well as ongoing actions and practices. A complete matrix including longer term actions has been prepared and is maintained by the City as part of the on-going comprehensive planning process. Once these immediate and short term actions have been substantially completed, the city should initiate a comprehensive plan update process to revisit the vision, guiding principles, goals, policies and strategies and renew the list of action steps. The matrix identifies the key strategy, related sub-strategy, responsible implementing entity (most often the City), partnership resources, general costs, and possible funding sources.

The Wayfinding Master Plan recommended in this chapter requires a planning process in order to identify, budget for, and prioritize capital improvements. These master plans should be considered as a capital investment in the community.

The Comp Plan and YOU!

The Comprehensive Plan serves not only as a guiding document for city government, but as a collective expression of community values, desires, and visions. Just as the creation of this plan was fueled by the input and ideas of community members like you, its successful implementation requires your continued engagement, advocacy, and action.

So, what can you do to support the vision, goals, and policies expressed in this chapter? Here a just a few ideas to get you thinking, talking- and hopefully, taking action!

- Be an advocate for transportation system improvements; show up at community meetings to express your views and support street, sidewalk, and trail improvement projects.
- Share the road with bikers, walkers, joggers, skiers, snowmobilers, ATV riders, and autos. Be cognizant of all users and be safe. Obey rules and laws.
- Be a user of the facilities and based on your experiences, contribute to making them better.
- Support community wide efforts to maintain and reconstruct street, sidewalk, and trail infrastructure.
- Work with public works crews to help manage snow removal during heavy snow falls in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

KEY TERMINOLOGY

The City has developed a number of **Spark Plans**, or “mini action plans,” to support implementation of select strategies in the comprehensive plan. Spark Plans focus on strategies that: (1) are high-priority actions, (2) may require additional explanation and planning, and (3) may be implemented by groups other than City agencies (community groups, civic organizations, individuals, etc.). Strategies for which a Spark Plan has been developed are noted in the priority action matrix with the following symbol: ★

See [Appendix C: Spark Plans](#) for the complete set of Spark Plans.

Performance Measures

To ensure accountability around the Plan, the community needs to measure and report on accomplishments. Performance measures provide a way to measure progress and success in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Some performance measures are quantifiable, concrete figures; others are more qualitative in nature. The following are the key performance measures for the transportation-related action steps recommended in this chapter:

- Linear feet of streets reconstructed (budgeted for or completed).
- Linear feet of new sidewalks or new trails installed.
- Bike or pedestrian surveys measuring usage of key trails.
- Number of new wayfinding signs installed.
- Traffic, pedestrian, bicycle, snowmobile, or ATV accidents.

TABLE 4-1. PRIORITY ACTIONS - TRANSPORTATION

IMMEDIATE ACTION (0-1 YEARS)						
Strategy	Sub-Strategy	Implementing Entity	City Role	Potential Partners	Associated Cost	Possible Funding Sources
4.3 Prepare a street maintenance and reconstruction plan	-	City (Public Works)	Lead	DOT	\$\$\$ (\$50,000-\$200,000)	Streets Fund - General Fund - DOT - Grant Funds
4.5 Define priority trail improvements *	-	City (Community Development)	Lead	User Groups	\$ (0-\$10,000)	General Fund
SHORT-TERM (1-5 YEARS)						
Strategy	Sub-Strategy	Implementing Entity	City Role	Potential Partners	Associated Cost	Possible Funding Sources
4.1 Identify and implement pilot routes for a Complete Streets program	-	City (Public Works)	Lead	Michigan Complete Streets Coalition, DOT	\$\$\$ (\$50,000-\$200,000)	Streets Fund - General Fund - DOT - Grant Funds
4.2 Prepare a wayfinding master plan *	-	City (Community Development)	Partnership	Chamber of Commerce	\$\$ (\$10,000-\$50,000)	General Fund - Grant Resources - Philanthropic
ONGOING						
Strategy	Sub-Strategy	Implementing Entity	City Role	Potential Partners	Associated Cost	Possible Funding Sources
4.4 Define priority improvements to the pedestrian network *	-	City (Public Works)	Lead	Safe Routes To School Committee - Neighborhoods	\$ (0-\$10,000)	General Fund

* Strategy for which a Spark Plan has been developed. See [Appendix C: Spark Plans](#) for the complete set of Spark Plans.



Photo Credit: Sam Davey



Photo Credit: Heather Brown

