

City of Richmond Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Richmond, Indiana

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City of Richmond

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

Richmond, Indiana

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PROJECT HISTORY

The City of Richmond has a rich history which can be seen throughout the community. With its stock of historical architecture, cultural and environmental assets, Richmond is a beautiful place to call home and has attracted many residents and businesses with its small-town charms. Recent initiatives have strived to capitalize on the unique character of Richmond while growing the community by providing quality of life amenities. One such initiative includes the continuing development of the bicycle and pedestrian systems. The Cardinal Greenway has demonstrated the success such facilities can bring to a city. Providing a complete system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to offer a variety of options for modes of travel and recreation for the residents of the City will add to the attractiveness of the community as a place to live and work.

With this overall goal in mind, the City of Richmond, with assistance from the Indiana State Department of Health, commissioned Rundell Ernstberger Associates to provide a Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. This plan will serve as the roadmap for the city when planning new bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This document includes documentation of the process used to develop recommendations for the City to take Richmond to the next level with implementation of new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Many areas of Richmond are walkable and bikeable. However, there are many gaps in the system creating challenges for residents trying to travel to key destinations and between neighborhoods by bicycle and on foot. While the existing facilities have increased the number of people biking and walking in the City, a more comprehensive and complete system will provide more direct, convenient and safe travel for all modes of transportation.

PLAN AREA

The planning area for the Richmond Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan includes the incorporated city limits for Richmond. Richmond is the County seat for Wayne County and had a population of 36,812 according to the 2010 census. Richmond is located at the Crossroads of America within 100 miles of three major cities including Indianapolis, Columbus, and Cincinnati, Ohio.

This study area includes a variety of community character types including the older, urbanized areas of downtown to suburban neighborhoods along US Route 40 to the open rural areas on the outskirts of town. In the downtown area, residents have greater opportunities to walk and bike to schools, recreation, employment and commercial districts. There are more facilities provided within the downtown area, although they are not always up to code or in ideal condition. Most of the suburban neighborhoods do not have existing sidewalks or paths. These neighborhoods were built in a time where planning only allowed for the accommodation of the automobile. Some of the streets in residential areas have lower speeds allowing for somewhat comfortable riding or walking along the edge of the roadway but several of these roadways have become cut-through routes and are not safe in any form of travel other than in a car. The rural areas of Wayne County support biking and walking but only on low-traffic county roads which come with their own challenges and dangers. Many of these roadways are narrow and have hills with blind spots and little room to accommodate bicycling and walking. Awareness on these roadways is low in terms of looking for users that are not in motor vehicles.

Although the study area includes only the areas shown in Figure 1, regional connections should still be made with the larger regional area. This includes connections to routes within Ohio, connections extending the Cardinal Greenway north and south from the community and area connections to the Cope Environmental Center to the west.



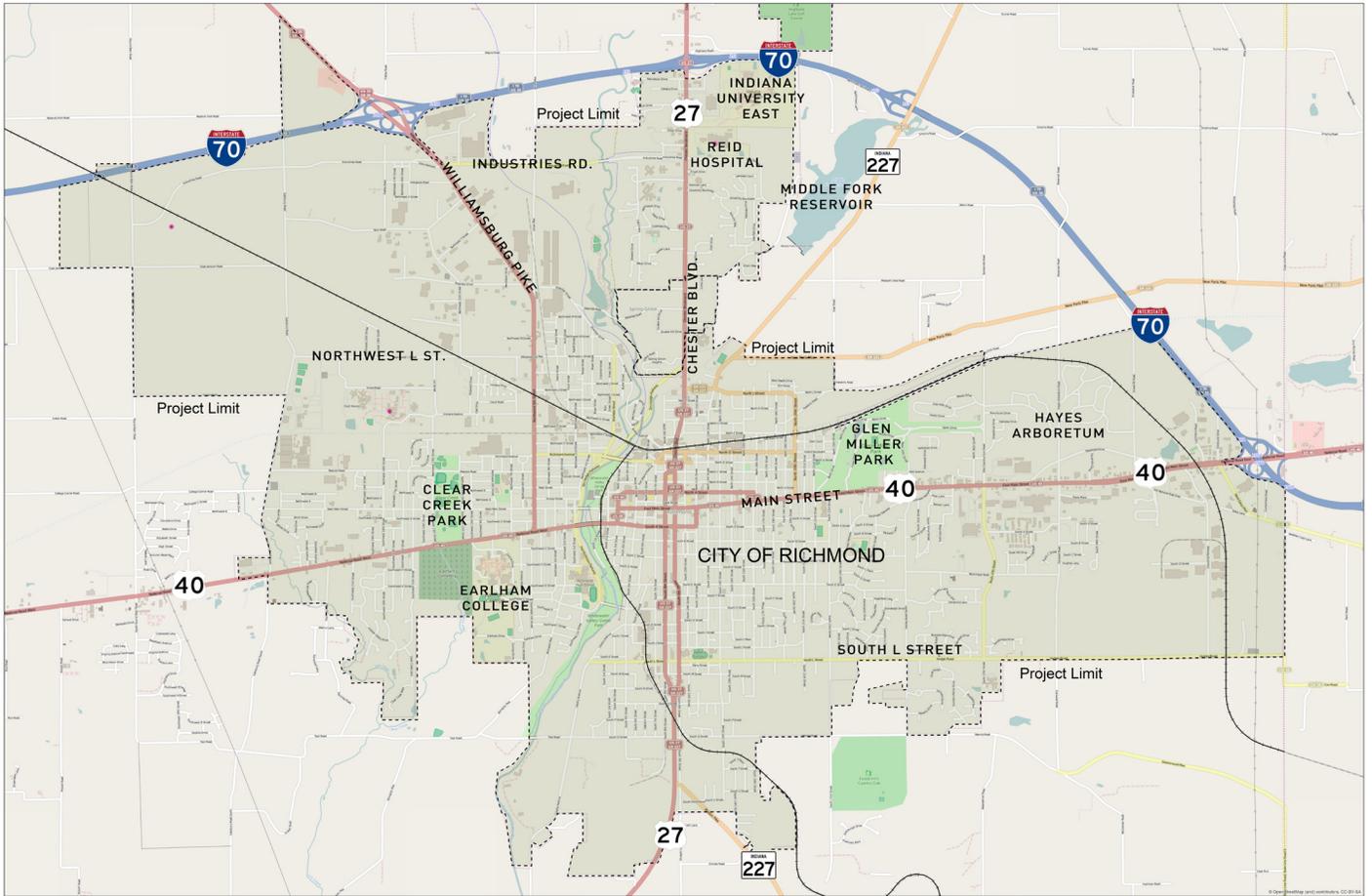


Figure 1 - Study Area



Glen Miller Park



South 18th Street



INTRODUCTION

Implementing the recommendations of this Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has the potential to greatly improve bicycle and pedestrian safety in Richmond and catalyze many associated benefits.

Benefits of Bicycling and Walking

Alternative transportation modes, including biking and walking, play important but often overlooked roles in an efficient, equitable, and healthy transportation system. Improved alternative transportation conditions and increased use of these modes provide a multitude of benefits, particularly when substituted for automobile travel. Some of these benefits are obvious and widely recognized; others are less well known. This section describes various categories of the benefits. This information is useful for evaluating policies, programs, and infrastructure projects that support alternative transportation.

Increased bicycling and walking activity is the catalyst that could enable these widespread benefits for the Richmond area. Many communities nationwide have found that the best way to increase non-motorized travel activity is by improving the bicycling and walking conditions in their transportation corridors through the provision of facilities such as those recommended in this plan.

Quality of Life

There are many amenities that can add to the quality of place for a community. One of the highest indicators is being recognized as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community. A high quality of life can influence young people to stay in Richmond to raise their families, and it can also convince businesses to locate in Richmond. These amenities help businesses attract and retain a talented workforce. Numerous quality of place indicators are enhanced by the ability to safely and comfortably bicycle and walk. Bicycle and pedestrian accommodation provides a greater

variety of transportation choices, enables lifelong communities to be created in which resident of a particular place can comfortably progress through all stages of life, enhances and reserves the character of communities, helps maintain property values, and offers abundant recreation opportunities.

Public Health

Providing options for alternative transportation by creating a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is an ideal way for Richmond's residents to build recreation and daily exercise into their daily routines. The state of Indiana ranks as one of the highest in the nation for adult obesity. The state's rates of diabetes, hypertension, and physical inactivity also rank among the highest in the United States. Thirty minutes of moderate exercise 5 days a week can significantly reduce risks for many illnesses including heart disease, high blood pressure, arthritis, depression and obesity. Providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are convenient with easy access can increase the number of residents who are able to incorporate these types of activities increasing the overall health of the community. Beyond the physical benefits, bicycling and walking activity can also improve mental health. These health improvements can lead to lower health care costs in Richmond. Various studies indicate a median average health care cost saving of \$128 per person per year compared to individuals who report a lack of recommended physical activity.

Environmental Benefits

Air quality for the community can be improved with more people bicycling and walking instead of driving their cars, leading to lower greenhouse gas emissions. The importance of this benefit is underscored by the fact that the short auto trips that bicycling and walking would replace are those that produce the highest level of emissions. Furthermore, shifting to active transportation modes helps reduce economic dependence on fossil fuels.

Transportation Alternatives



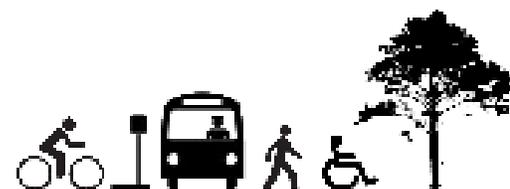
For many residents of Richmond, bicycling and walking are key elements of transportation mobility. This mobility can be realized by providing safe non-motorized access to schools and learning centers for the area's youth, and by constructing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities in locations with significant senior and low-income populations. Improved biking and walking facilities provide basic mobility for people who do not have personal automobiles and provide access to public transportation for longer trips.

Economic Benefits

Promoting and accommodating bicycling and walking can lead to significant local economic benefits. For example, new facilities (both on-road and off-road) can lead to bicycling related tourism bringing visitors into town for shopping and restaurants. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can attract certain types of business which employ a creative and highly educated working class who are looking for these types of facilities, in particular bicycling facilities. Biking and walking infrastructure are explicitly cited by civic leaders from across the country as attributes they use to attract business investment and to help their existing businesses to attract and retain workers.

Safety

Well-designed bicycle and pedestrian facilities promote safe bicycling and walking habits. This, in turn, reduces bicycling and pedestrian crashes. Crashes occur when an individual violates traffic law, and or the expectation of other roadway users. Good design encourages legal and predictable behaviors. Designs that reduce motor vehicles speeds, or speeds of conflict points, are correlated with reduced crash rates and reduced crash severity.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Richmond Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan sets forth a roadmap for construction of a complete system of facilities to connect people to neighborhoods, schools, shopping centers and parks. This network will provide people with the opportunity to reach these destinations by foot or by bicycle rather than utilizing their motor vehicles. Such a complete system will provide many benefits to the City including:

- Increased health through active travel
- Increased environmental sustainability through preservation of naturalized areas and reduction in carbon dioxide from fewer vehicular trips
- Increased amenities for recreation and exercise
- Increased economic growth through increased property values near amenities
- Enhancing community pride and identity by becoming a bike and pedestrian focused community

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan contains goals and policies for developing and implementing a system that will create safe, attractive and convenient options for bicycling and walking for all types of users. This will include trips for work, school, and recreation. The goals provide the long-range vision to the plan and determine the desired direction of bicycle and pedestrian planning. The objectives supporting the goals are more specific statements of how to accomplish the goals and identify means of measuring the fulfillment of the goals.

The goals and objectives reflect the current planning efforts of the City of Richmond and will help the City to determine priorities for continuing to develop the bicycle and pedestrian system.



GOAL 1: IMPROVE SAFETY FOR BICYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS.

Objectives:

- Plan, design and construct bicycle and pedestrian improvements to meet or exceed guidelines for bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- Monitor bicycle and pedestrian related accidents to determine areas in need of improvements.
- Work with law enforcement departments to develop education and enforcement programs to increase the awareness of all road users for rules and regulations concerning bicyclists and pedestrians utilizing the roadways.
- Develop and distribute information materials informing all roadway users of their rights and responsibilities concerning bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists.
- Develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities to provide safe and convenient routes between neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, and recreational opportunities.
- Design roadway crossings to maximize bicyclists and pedestrians safety.

GOAL 2: IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY FOR THE NETWORK OF FACILITIES.

Objectives:

- Design and develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities to link major activity centers including schools, parks, shopping centers, and employment centers to encourage bicycling and walking as alternative modes of transportation.
- Provide safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for every type of trip and user.
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian amenities on routes linking schools with libraries, trails, parks, and recreational sites that encourage the mobility of school age children.
- Eliminate gaps in the existing system and improve sub-standard conditions of facilities within the network.
- Provide safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian connections where natural or man-made barriers restrict access.



GOAL 3: INCREASE RECREATIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIVING.

Objectives:

- Provide access to bicycle and pedestrian facilities for a variety of users including walkers, runners, bicyclists, wheelchair users, strollers, and other non-motorized recreationalists and commuters.
- Establish bicycle and pedestrian connections between parks to allow travel back and forth between the parks without the use of an automobile.
- Provide off-road and on-road facilities to provide opportunities for different levels of recreation and commuting for various user levels.
- Install bicycle parking at public buildings, retail areas, employment centers and recreational areas.

GOAL 4: INCREASE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS IN RICHMOND.

Objectives:

- Maintain the network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to create a safe, convenient and effective bicycle and pedestrian network.
- Design and implement a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to create an amenity to attract new businesses and residents to the area.
- Foster opportunities for economic growth through the creation of bicycle and pedestrian related businesses.
- Promote the efficient use of existing resources by developing bicycle and pedestrian facilities within publicly held lands.
- Pursue public and private funding sources to facilitate faster growth of the system. Funding sources might include multi-jurisdictional, private entities, and other potential partners such as health agencies, and school districts.

GOAL 5: ENCOURAGE BICYCLING AND WALKING THROUGH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.

Objectives:

- Encourage bicycling and walking as an alternative to the automobile and as a means to reduce pollution and congestion while increasing mobility choices in the community.
- Provide programs utilizing the network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities such as fun runs, festival events, and group rides to increase awareness.
- Promote the benefits of recreational use of the bicycle and pedestrian improvements through school programs and informational materials.
- Encourage strategies to increase activity levels of residents through promotion of bicycling and walking activities.
- Design and install signage and mapping to encourage bicycling and walking activities.

