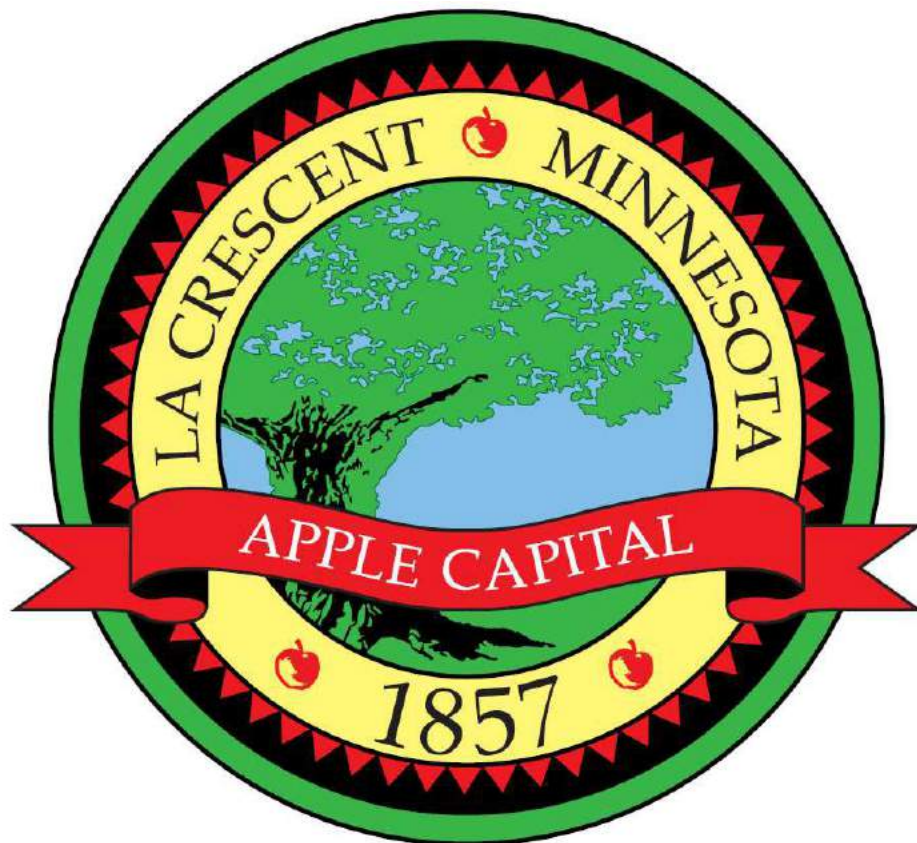


THE CITY OF **LA CRESCENT** MINNESOTA



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN UPDATE

FALL 2017

La Crescent, MN

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Executive Summary

Located in the southeast corner of Minnesota, La Crescent is nestled between the Mississippi River and picturesque bluffs overlooking the city. Rich in history and community pride, La Crescent, the "Apple Capital of Minnesota" is home to nearly 5,200 residents. Another 4,000 people live in and around La Crescent and identify the city as their community. Just across the river from La Crescent is La Crosse, Wisconsin. La Crosse is a major employment center for residents of La Crescent. La Crescent enjoys the benefit of this much larger city, yet retains a small-town atmosphere. The short four-mile trip between La Crescent and La Crosse is convenient for multiple forms of transportation.

It is the vision of La Crescent to be a vibrant community that encourages walking and bicycling for transportation and recreation. With this vision, La Crescent aspires to be recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Community and a Walk Friendly Community.

The process to document a bicycle and pedestrian plan began in 2010 and was led by the consulting firm of Alta Planning + Design under contract and with funding provided by Active Living La Crescent. In 2012 the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) received a Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) grant to complete the work and consider the implications of Complete Streets. On behalf of the City of La Crescent the LAPC and Active Living contracted with Alta Planning + Design to develop the pedestrian plan and complete the documentation of the bicycle plan, guiding the City over the next 5 to 10 years in completing its sidewalk and pedestrian network.

The 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was an important step in advancing the transportation network of La Crescent. It supported and encouraged transportation for all users, ages and abilities. It advocated for the creation of a transportation system that makes necessary and adequate accommodations to ensure that all bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, and transit riders are welcomed, protected, and respected.

The plan provided clear direction and commitment to focus transportation priorities on the network of streets, trails, and sidewalks which permit users of all transportation modes to move safely through the City. This commitment to a bicycle and pedestrian transportation network is essential to guiding infrastructure projects and supporting grant applications to assist with funding improvements.

The 2017 update to the Bicycling and Pedestrian Plan provides detailed analysis and recommendations for specific areas within La Crescent, including:

- A proposed trail over a utility corridor into annexed land on HWY 6
- Connections between La Crosse and La Crescent, with a focus on La Crescent's facilities
- Connections to the Central City via HWY 25 and HWY 6 to their connections to 7th St
- Network connectivity in the Central City

The City's transportation network was reviewed and analyzed to determine the current conditions with respect to bicycling and walking. The categories known as the "Six E's" (Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation and Equity) were used as the basis for analysis of current conditions and recommendations. Upon this thorough examination of La Crescent, a series of benchmarks were established that comprise the to-do list of this Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The sections that follow summarize the key recommendations that will guide La Crescent in diversifying, strengthening, and improving the City to encourage walking and bicycling for transportation and recreation.

Top Ten Recommendations:

The 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identified top ten recommendations that were popular among participants at public meetings, school leaders, City staff, County staff, and stakeholders interested in improving the bicycling and walking environment in and around La Crescent. The list below has been updated and prioritized based on the City's priorities that were explored during the 2017 plan update.

1. Identify critical pedestrian crossings and improve with pavement markings, signs, and traffic control devices.
2. Develop an improved crossing of 7th Street to provide safe access to the La Crescent Aquatic Center.
3. Implement bike lanes on 7th Street.
4. Improve bicyclist comfort on Elm Street by upgrading the existing bike lanes.
5. Make connections between on-street bike facilities and the parks and schools by establishing a signed neighborhood bikeway network.
6. Hwy 6: Reduce vehicle speeds, develop a bicycle and pedestrian shoulder in the short term, and develop an off-street trail as utilities are extended along Hwy 6.
7. Improve the 3rd Street/US 14/61 intersection to make it safer and more comfortable for people walking and bicycling.
8. Begin work on redesign of South 3rd street to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. Implement a 4-to-3 lane conversion, install bike lanes, and improve pedestrian crossings.
9. Implement Phase III of the Wagon Wheel trail, including a grade-separated bridge over US 14/61 and improved wayfinding along the trail.
10. Improve bicycle connections to La Crosse by adding a striped buffer along the US 14 shoulder and designating space for bicyclists at turn and bypass lanes.

These benchmarks are intended to be met through an expansion of the City's current practices with respect to the sidewalk repair program and improved coordination with private development, state, and regional agencies that will be implemented over several years. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan includes the following highlights:

Engineering:

- Increase the number of on-street bicycle facilities. Signed neighborhood bikeways, on-street bike lanes where traffic volumes warrant, buffered bike lanes, bikeable shoulders, buffered shoulders, and off-street trails are the recommended facility types included in this plan.
- Develop a network of neighborhood bikeways. These streets still allow automobile traffic, but include innovative treatments to reduce speeding, cut-through traffic, and encourage travel speeds that are comfortable for everyone.
- Increase the number of streets with sidewalks; this plan identifies where they are most necessary. In some areas, due to the steepness and topography sidewalks are not reasonable. Revisions to the design of the road to include wide shoulders can address the need to accommodate pedestrians while also improving winter snow maintenance and drainage concerns.
- Utilize traffic-calming strategies on specific roads with high pedestrian/bicycle usage, such as: North Elm, Highway 6 and 25 intersections, South 3rd Street, and South 7th Street.
- Install wayfinding signage with distance that correlates with area regional signage plan to enhance uniformity and increase comprehension.

Education and Encouragement:

- Promote Safe Routes to School encouragement and educational programming.
- Adopt a policy goal of zero deaths on La Crescent's streets and accompanying action plan. [Vision Zero](#) or similar campaigns may provide examples of potential approaches.
- Brand the city as a walk and bike friendly community in communications materials and through street pole banners, bike racks, benches, and wayfinding signs designed specifically for La Crescent.
- Conduct educational campaigns on bicycle and pedestrian safety and coordinate with nearby cities and counties to support education regionally.
- Educate residents when new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is installed, using the city website, temporary signs, and other communication tools to educate people walking, biking, and driving about how to use the new infrastructure.
- Continue training programs for school staff, public officials, law enforcement officials as well as the public providing information on best practices and behaviors that are shown to keep all roadway users safe.
- Promote intermodal travel between public transport and bicycles. Market and educate bike rack on buses option
- Continue programs to promote bicycling for all purposes, and to communicate the many benefits of bicycling to residents and businesses (e.g. bicycle maps, public relations campaigns, Walk and Bike to School Days, neighborhood rides, a ride with the Mayor, City Council members, etc.).

Enforcement:

- Enforce traffic laws to improve the safety and comfort of all road users, with a particular focus on behaviors and attitudes that cause motor vehicle/bicycle crashes.
- Develop a policy within the police department to educate, address, and uphold laws with respect to pedestrians and pedestrian safety.
- Continue targeted enforcement programs at intersections, roads and locations with abundant pedestrian and cyclist activity.
- Set up mobile speed feedback signs along La Crescent streets to reduce speeding and determine where enforcement measures would be most beneficial. Police resources are limited, so installing speed feedback signs help to collect data on where speeding may be a problem.

Evaluation and Planning:

- Develop a response tab on the City's webpage, or use smartphone applications to collect resident feedback on maintenance needs, safety concerns and ongoing improvements.
- Ensure all City policies, plans, codes, and programs are updated and implemented to take advantage of every opportunity to create a more bicycle/pedestrian-friendly community.
- Improve on the Honorable Mention Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Award through the League of American Bicyclists and apply for a Walk Friendly Community Award (WFC) to recognize and promote our walkable and bikeable community as well as provide a framework for improvement.
- Collectively pass a Joint Power Agreement between La Crescent, Hokah, and Houston to support the extension of the Root River Trail. Collaborate with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to acquire property for the trail extension.
- Ensure that the bicycle and pedestrian committee of the Planning Commission reviews all roadway project plans.

Equity:

- Commit to providing transportation for all users, ages and abilities.
- Ensure that initiatives benefit all demographic groups, with particular attention to ensuring safety, health and fair outcomes for all individuals, including those with disabilities, seniors, children, people with low-incomes, and residents who speak a language other than English.
- Prioritize funding to support initiatives that serve those with disabilities, seniors, children, people with low-incomes, and residents with low English proficiency.

Introduction

La Crescent is well suited for bicycling and walking. The City is fairly flat and compact, making distances between destinations manageable. The City already has a good base for the network with many sidewalks, some bike lanes and facilities, and existing green space ready for trail development.

Issues frequently identified as high priorities in surveys completed by the Minnesota Design Team (Fall 2008), Active Living La Crescent (Spring 2009), and the Safe Routes to School Parent Survey (Winter 2010) include trail expansion, increased sidewalks, and bike facilities (lanes, trail, racks).

Recent surveys conducted during the Comprehensive Plan process confirm that significant numbers of La Crescent residents support investment in transportation infrastructure, including improvements for walking and bicycling. Results of the 2015 and 2016 Comprehensive Plan surveys relevant to this plan include:

- 49% of respondents said more/better bike lanes or paths would make them more likely to ride a bike in La Crescent.
- 46% said more/better sidewalks would make them more likely to walk.
- 58% of respondents chose “maintenance of existing roads” as a high priority for transportation investments over the next 10 years.
- The most desired bike/pedestrian safety improvement is “crosswalks near the elementary school.”
- Additional safety improvements that respondents feel are needed to improve safety or convenience for drivers, bikers or pedestrians include:
 - Promoting awareness of bikers & pedestrians and etiquette on sharing the road
 - Adding a sidewalk on Oak Street near schools to improve safety
 - Adding bike and pedestrian facilities on Highway 6
 - Improving bike lane, crosswalk, and bicycle and pedestrian awareness on Elm Street.

The La Crescent Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is guided by the following general principles:

1. Fix broken infrastructure that needs repair
2. Improve intersections that appear challenging toward pedestrians and bicyclists
3. Fill in identified gaps in the network
4. Implement new policies to improve the way the City and other agencies accomplish objectives to provide opportunities for La Crescent residents to walk and bike as part of their daily lives
5. Grow the network to support movement throughout the City striving for a connected, integrated system that provide transportation options to a resident’s many potential destinations

The City recognizes that the health and well-being of its residents and economic success of the City depends on its transportation network. In light of this understanding, the City is taking the following actions:

- The City of La Crescent is committed to planning, designing, funding, constructing, operating, and maintaining all City streets to provide a comprehensive and integrated network of facilities that are safe and convenient for people of all ages and abilities traveling by foot, bicycle, automobile, public transportation, and commercial vehicle.
- To support implementation of this plan, the City has committed to an annual review of this plan each September. The Planning Commission conducts a review of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and ensures its priorities are reflected in the capital budget.

Benefits of a Walk and Bike Friendly Community



The physical exercise gained from walking and bicycling is linked with increased health and well-being. According to the World Health Organization, physical inactivity is second only to tobacco smoking as a health risk in developed countries and this is associated with many tens of billions of dollars of healthcare costs. Walking and bicycling helps to improve people's health and fitness, enhance environmental conditions, decrease traffic congestion, and contributes to a greater sense of community.

Scores of studies from experts in the fields of public health, urban planning, urban ecology, real estate, transportation, sociology, and economics have supported and have acknowledged the substantial value of supporting walking as it relates to active living and transportation options. Communities across the United States and throughout the world are implementing strategies for serving the walking and bicycling needs of their residents, and have been doing so for many years. They do this because of their obligations to promote health, safety, and welfare, and also because of the growing awareness of the many benefits of walking and bicycling.

Reduced Traffic, Congestion, Air Pollution, and Parking Demand

The National Household Travel Survey found that roughly 40% of all trips taken by car are less than two miles. By taking these short trips on foot or bicycle, rather than in a car, citizens can substantially impact local traffic, air pollution, and congestion. Bicycle users can help alleviate overall congestion because each cyclist is one less car on the road.

Parking is an issue in the Central Business District. The City's Comprehensive Plan and more specifically the Downtown Development Plan relay a desire for increased retail options and destinations. The City has a goal of increasing commercial and retail options within our community. Riding a bike to our developed retail area within our City would alleviate parking constraints and improve quality of life.

Improved Mobility and Access to Key Destinations

Additionally, many people do not have access to a vehicle or are not able to drive. According to the National Household Travel Survey (NHTS), one in 12 U.S. households do not own an automobile and approximately 12 percent of persons 15 or older do not drive. An improved bicycle network provides greater and safer mobility for these residents.

According to the Brookings Institution, the number of older Americans is expected to double over the next 25 years. All but the most fortunate seniors will confront an array of medical and other constraints on their mobility even as they continue to seek an active community life. Senior citizens deserve access to independent mobility, and providing safe places for them to walk is an essential factor in meeting this important need.

Children under the age of 16 also deserve access to safe mobility. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, fewer children walk or bike to school than did so a generation ago. In the past few decades, the percent of students between the ages of 5 and 15 who walked or biked to or from school has dropped from roughly 50% to about 15%, while one quarter of Minnesota's children are overweight or obese.

Increased Health and Physical Activity

A growing number of studies show that the design of our communities— including neighborhoods, towns, transportation systems, parks, trails, and other public recreational facilities—affects people’s ability to reach the recommended daily 30 minutes of moderately intense physical activity (60 minutes for youth). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “physical inactivity causes numerous physical and mental health problems, is responsible for an estimated 200,000 deaths per year, and contributes to the obesity epidemic.” The increased rate of disease associated with inactivity reduces quality of life for individuals and increases medical costs for families, companies, and local governments.

The CDC determined that creating and improving places to be active could result in a 25% increase in the number of people who exercise at least three times a week. This is significant considering that for people who are inactive, even small increases in physical activity can bring measurable health benefits. The establishment of a safe and reliable network of sidewalks in La Crescent will have a positive impact on the health of local residents.

Affordable Transportation

According to AAA’s 2017 *Your Driving Costs* study, the cost of operating a car for a year is approximately \$8,469, while walking is virtually free. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center explains, “When safe facilities are provided for pedestrians and bicyclists, more people are able to be productive, active members of society. Car ownership is expensive, and consumes a major portion of many Americans’ income.”

Walking and bicycling become even more attractive from an economic standpoint when the changing price of oil (and decreasing availability) is factored into the equation. The unstable cost of fuel reinforces the idea that local communities should be built to accommodate people-powered transportation, such as walking and biking.

Increased Housing Values

From a real estate standpoint, consider the positive impact of sidewalks and greenways, which are essential components of a complete pedestrian network. According to the recent CEOs for Cities report: 2009 Walk the Walk, “houses [in neighborhoods] with above-average levels of walkability command a premium of about \$4,000 to \$34,000 over houses with just average levels of walkability in the typical metropolitan areas studied.”

Healthier Environment

Environmental impacts of increased bicycling and walking include a reduction in overall neighborhood noise levels, and improvements in local water quality as fewer automobile-related pollutants wind up in the local wetlands, streams, rivers, and lakes. Furthermore, every car trip replaced with a pedestrian trip reduces U.S. dependency on fossil fuels.

Trails and greenways are also part of the pedestrian network, conveying their own unique environmental benefits. Greenways protect and link fragmented habitat and provide opportunities for protecting plant and animal species. Aside from connecting places without the use of air-polluting automobiles, trails and greenways also reduce air pollution by protecting large areas of plants that create oxygen and filter air pollutants such as ozone, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and airborne particles. Finally, greenways improve water quality by creating a natural buffer zone that protects wetlands, streams, rivers, and lakes, reducing soil erosion and filtering pollution caused by agricultural and roadway runoff.

Planning Process

2013 Process

Bicycle Planning Process

The preparation of the 2013 plan was led by the Steering Committee, which was comprised of the City Administrator, Planning Commissioners, Active Living La Crescent, Alta Planning + Design, as well as various other stakeholders interested in improving the bicycling and walking environment in and around La Crescent. Funding was provided by Active Living La Crescent, the City and a grant from the MnDOT made available through the La Crosse Metropolitan Planning Organization the La Crosse Area Planning Commission. All are acknowledged and thanked for their generous support of time and funding.

The planning process began in late 2010 and was led by the consulting firm of Alta Planning and Design. The consultants started by reviewing existing plans and listening to the expressed needs and desires via public meetings conducted by the Planning Commission. The first public meeting was held on February 24 at 5:30 PM in the Community Room and was billed as a “dream meeting.” Ideas and suggestions from the public

were captured and incorporated into this document. Additional meetings and site visits provided the information needed to produce this Plan. Two final meetings were convened by the Planning Commission to ensure public acceptance of the plan. Active Living and the La Crosse Area Planning Commission helped with the preparation of documents and led community and Planning Commission review.



Pedestrian Planning Process

In 2012 the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) received a Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) grant to provide a Complete Streets Planning Study (“CSPS”) report to document the process for the CSPS for the City of La Crescent. The study includes the implications of Complete Streets. As part of the CSPS, the LAPC and Active Living contracted with Alta Planning + Design to develop a pedestrian plan for La Crescent. This plan will guide the City over 5 to 10 years in completing its sidewalk and pedestrian facility network.

2017 Process

The City of La Crescent initiated an update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in Spring 2017, with support from the LAPC. The City contracted with Alta Planning + Design to update the plan to provide more detail in four focus areas, and provide recommendations that reflect rapid advancements in the field of bicycle and pedestrian design. The four focus areas are:

- A proposed trail over a utility corridor into annexed land on HWY 6
- Connections between La Crosse and La Crescent, with a focus on La Crescent’s facilities
- Connections to the Central City via HWY 25 and HWY 6 to their connections to 7th St
- Network connectivity in the Central City

A Bike & Pedestrian Committee was formed to review recommendations and help with the overall development of the Bike and Pedestrian Plan. The time and effort of the committee is appreciated. Committee members included Mike Cunningham, Deana Caron, Joe and Joan Francois, Jim and Carol Gehrig, Cherryl Jostad, Linda Larson (Chair), Jason Ludwigson, Kirsten Plummer, and Andrew Severn.

The La Crescent community was invited to review draft recommendations for the four focus areas in the plan at a meeting on August 17, 2017. 25 community members contributed feedback and ideas and the recommendations were revised based on their feedback. The draft plan was presented for public review in Fall 2017.

Existing Policies, Ordinances, Plans and Programs

City of La Crescent Policies and Ordinances

The City of La Crescent in section 70.07 of Chapter 70 Traffic Regulations prohibits bicycles on sidewalks in the business district, but also prohibits bicycles use of the roadway “when a useable path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to such roadway.” Because the ordinance is not enforceable on U.S. or state roads, the City is modifying its ordinance to reflect Minnesota requirements for differentiating among the classes of roads.

The City of La Crescent’s Restated Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 12 itemizes multiple provisions for sidewalks and pedestrian safety. The City of La Crescent requires the following:

- 12.22 Central Business District (CBD) Subd. 4L.2. Provides that drive -through lanes have adequate stacking distance, to prevent interference with sidewalks.
- 12.22 Central Business District Subd. Q1 provides that a sidewalk in the CBD shall be at least 6 feet wide and unencumbered by seating. Additional ordinances prevent service vehicles from blocking sidewalks.
- 12.10 General provisions Subd.6.I: states that no vehicle can be parked closer than one foot from a public sidewalk which provides improved safety of pedestrians on the sidewalk.
- 12.36 Requires that right of way widths be wide enough for public services including drainage, trails, sidewalks, utilities, and snow storage.
- 12.35 The sub development ordinance requires sidewalks on both sides of the streets of new residential sub divisions.
- City Ordinance Code Chapter 93:05 Subd. (I), states that an accumulation of snow, and/or ice on a public sidewalk is declared to be a public nuisance affecting the health and public safety which gives the City a right to achieve a remedy.

Improving the way the City and other agencies accomplish tasks to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in everyday activities is of greatest importance. Formal adoption of this Bicycle Pedestrian Plan by the Council is the first step to improving biking and walking in La Crescent. This Plan establishes priorities for future sidewalk infill projects. Funding from SRTS and other sources including general funds will be used. In 2009 the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program and the City installed 4,200 lineal feet of sidewalk where none previously existed. It is the City’s intention to continue filling in the gaps identified on the Bicycle Pedestrian Plan and to make the bicycle and pedestrian network larger and more intricate. As funding is scarce, it will be important to identify opportunities for dedicated bicycle and pedestrian funding early and diligently.

Adopting a Complete Streets policy is an important step towards building a transportation system that accommodates people of all ages and abilities. In the next year the City of La Crescent will update its Complete Streets Policy to reflect the City’s current commitment to all modes of transportation and to be consistent with the expectations of transportation funding sources. A draft for beginning the discussion is attached as an appendix to this plan.

State Regulations of Bicycles

General Rules of the Road: Chapter 169 Traffic Regulations of the Minnesota State Statutes establish the law defining how bicycles may operate. Minnesota defines a bicycle as a vehicle and require operation on the street in business districts unless operation on sidewalks is allowed by local ordinance. Bicycles have

the right to operate on any roadway except on the interstate and freeways. If bicycles are allowed to operate on sidewalks by local ordinance then bicyclists must obey the same rules and regulations established for pedestrians.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (DOT) summarize the rules of the road and providing other safety information for bicyclists on their Web sites. Both restate the State regulations that bicyclists operating as a vehicle on a roadway must:

- Obey all traffic control devices;
- Ride in the same direction as traffic;
- Use lights and reflectors when riding at night; and
- Signal turning intentions unless doing so severely restricts the ability to maintain control of the bicycle.

Bicyclists operating on a sidewalk are considered pedestrians and must:

- Obey pedestrian signs and signals;
- Give right-of-way to pedestrians;
- Give an audible warning when passing pedestrians; and
- Travel at a reasonable rate of speed.

Although not a law, Minnesota recommends bicyclists wear a helmet. The Minnesota Department of Transportation encourage bicyclists to ride predictably (i.e. do not weave between parked cars) so motorists can anticipate bicyclist behavior.

"3 Feet: It's the Law" signs may be used on city-owned streets to educate the public on Minnesota Law, which requires that vehicles leave a safe distance of no less than three feet when passing a person on a bicycle. These signs can contribute to the branding of La Crescent as a family friendly, active community in which to live and visit.



County and State Policies

MnDOT Complete Streets Rules

The Minnesota Department of Transportation Complete Streets goal is an integrated transportation system that:

- Includes all modes of transportation (transit, freight, automobile, bicycle and pedestrian)
- Serves users of all types, ages and abilities

Minnesota Complete Streets Law

The Complete Streets language was part of the transportation policy bill signed by Governor Pawlenty on May 15, 2010. "Complete streets" is the planning, scoping, design, implementation, operation, and maintenance of roads in order to reasonably address the safety and accessibility needs of users of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets considers the needs of motorists, pedestrians, transit users and vehicles, bicyclists, and commercial and emergency vehicles moving along and across roads, intersections, and crossings in a manner that is sensitive to the local context and recognizes that the needs vary in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) Complete Streets Policy

The LAPC shall work with the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation; the Counties of La Crosse, Houston, and Winona; the communities within the metropolitan planning area; and the LAPC's other planning partners in Minnesota and Wisconsin to ensure that the needs and safety of all modes are considered in all roadway projects planned and programmed within the planning area.

LAPC included an overview of Traffic Regulations pertaining to bicycling, based on State Statutes. The regulations pertaining to bicycles in Chapter 169 Traffic Regulations of the Minnesota Statutes are identical in intent to the regulations pertaining to bicycles in the Wisconsin Statutes (Chapter 346), with the exception that Minnesota requires motorists to pull into the bike lane when making a right turn. Wisconsin Statutes do not address motorists turning right in relation to a bike lane.

Plan Review

Several plans have been developed by outside agencies that will have an impact on the bicycle and pedestrian network/planning process in the City of La Crescent. These plans are summarized.

La Crescent Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2004)

In January 2004, the La Crescent Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was prepared by the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) as part of the long-range transportation plan and multi-modal transit plan for the La Crosse area. This plan was included for additional study and refinement and its intentions were to move specific projects out of the conceptual planning stage into implementation. The plan focused on three general projects, which are summarized as corridors A, B, and C.

- Corridor A: Elm Street, Seventh Street and Local connections.
- Corridor B: La Crescent to La Crosse.
- Corridor C: Root River Trail to Winona.

The plan identified objectives and principles intended to help La Crescent achieve these goals. In addition, the plan identified specific projects and components to budget into the City of La Crescent's Capital Improvements Program and the LAPC Transportation Improvement Program; many that are still in existence today. The proposed bikeway map in the plan provided a network of bike lanes and paths, some parts of which have been incorporated into more recent plans.

La Crescent Comprehensive Plan (2016)

The 2016 La Crescent Comprehensive Plan acknowledges there is competition among cities to attract and retain residents and businesses. The plan recognizes that investing in bicycle and pedestrian facilities is part of providing an attractive place for people. Indeed, *health and safety as a priority* is part of the plan's Seven Essential Themes:

Number 5: Health and safety as a priority - *attention to health and safety in all projects and decisions, including continued investments in bicycle and pedestrian facilities.*

In the Goals, Objectives, Strategies section of the plan, bicycling and walking are mentioned several times:

Number 15: *The City will work to improve walkability, lighting, streets and sidewalks...sidewalks should continue to be required on both sides of all new residential streets. Easements for walking and biking trails should be secured to link new housing and park developments. Unconnected residential development (i.e. no pedestrian or bicycle facility connections to the rest of the community) is strongly discouraged.*

Number 17: *Residential development, especially multi-family and senior living developments should be located in areas where there is safe pedestrian and bicycle access to park, retail and community facilities.*

The City hopes to achieve these goals through expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The 2012 Park and Recreation Plan was included in the Comprehensive Plan, showing future trails planned for La Crescent. (see Figure 1). Notice the trails proposed on 3rd, U.S. 14, and U.S. 14/61.

Zoning/ Ordinance Plan (2010)

The Zoning Ordinance was revised in 2010 and included encouragement for change, including: urban density around the urban core; traditional neighborhoods on smaller lots and alleys on future annexed lands; provisions for mixed use; and a mandate for connecting neighborhoods, providing sidewalks and bonuses for park land.



Figure 1: Existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as identified by the 2012 Parks and Recreation Plan

2035 Coulee Regional Bicycle Plan (2010)

The 2035 Coulee Regional Bicycle Plan (Regional Bike Plan) was developed by the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) in May 2010. The purview of the LAPC is the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), which includes the City of La Crescent, La Crosse and portions of La Crosse County in Wisconsin and portions of Houston and Winona Counties in Minnesota. The Regional Bike Plan makes recommendations in support of the following goals:

1. Improve the mobility of bicyclists
2. Promote bicycling as a sustainable transportation alternative to driving automobiles
3. Increase the safety of all bicyclists in the region
4. Promote bicycle-friendly land use policies
5. Make the La Crosse/MPA a bicycling destination

These recommendations cover the five E's: education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation. Recommendations for accommodating bicyclists on streets were developed considering a number of factors, including existing roadway width and number of lanes, traffic volumes and speeds, and land use. On-street bikeway recommendations consisted of bike lanes, shared bicycle/parking lanes, striped travel lanes, and signed routes. Trails were also recommended as off-road facilities. These facilities made up recommended local and recreational bike routes.

In total, more than 20 recommendations for facilities within the City of La Crescent were included in the Regional Bike Plan. These recommendations include general recommendations to be implemented by all communities with the MPA as well as specific, community-based improvements, such as facility recommendations. Some of the facilities that were recommended for La Crescent are listed in table 1 below.

Segment	Recommended Treatment Facility
I-90 Dresbach Bridge	Separated bike path.
CSAH 6 between the planning area boundary and Elm St	Install bike lanes between Pine Creek Rd and Elm St. Remove parking from one side of 7th St between Elm St and CSAH 25.
3rd St S between Elm St and TH 14/61	Convert 3rd St between Elm St and Walnut St to a 3-lane roadway with bike lanes.
14th St S between Skunk Hollow Rd and TH 14/61	Install bike lanes. Parking is currently restricted between La Crescent High School and TH 14/61. Remove parking from one side of the road west of the high school to Skunk Hollow.
Wagon Wheel Trail between S 1st St and Shore Acres Rd and between Shore Acres Rd and TH 14/61	This trail will be built in phases beginning with Phase I in 2013. The trail, with a trailhead at the existing brush dump, will be constructed between S Chestnut St and Shore Acres Rd in Phase I. Phase II involves Shore Acres Rd to TH 14/61; and Phase III involves trail crossings of TH 14/61 into La Crescent (bridge) and at the West Channel Bridge (over- or underpass). Two full-service trailheads are recommended: one at the old brush dump on the Wagon Wheel Trail and one to the east of Chestnut St near the old Commodore.

The LAPC included illustrations for the design of bike lanes and shared lane markings in Appendix E of the 2035 Coulee Regional Bicycle Plan, adopted on May 19, 2011. The recommended standards are based on American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), and other standards. The illustrations were selected to be specific to the recommendations in the 2035 Regional Bicycle Plan and do not represent the complete guidance offered by AASHTO.

La Crescent Parks and Recreation Plan (2013)

The Parks and Recreation Plan builds on the successes of the 1994 plan to achieve an economically sustainable park and open space system. The plan identifies multiple trail developments and connections. A few of these proposals are:

- Continue development of trail system in Eagle Bluff Park, Vetsch Park and Vollenwielder Park.
- Improve Highway 14/61/16 for bicyclists and pedestrian crossing which separates the community from the Mississippi River and its adjacent lowland areas.
- Promote the La Crescent Area Historical Society’s Historic Walking & Biking Trails.
- Create a trail connection from Vets Park to Eagles Bluff Park.

The Parks and Recreation Plan also establishes the objective of upgrading signs and maps for outdoor recreational facilities.

Programs

Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS)

- The purpose of SRTS programming is to increase active travel behavior (biking and walking to school) for all students.
- Annually, all 3rd and 4th grade elementary students review Safe Cycling Skills and Rules of the Road as part of their physical education curriculum.
- The La Crescent Police Department makes annual visits to the elementary school to provide safe riding tips to students



The Bike Shoppe

- The Community Bike Shoppe is a partner program of Healthy Community Partnership, a local nonprofit, and the City of La Crescent. The Bike Shoppe’s goal is to provide the community an opportunity to grow through the use of bicycles. The shop and its volunteers provide bike repair and maintenance services. They collect donated bikes and recycle and upcycle all usable parts. The Bike Shoppe donates bikes to individuals, families and groups through an active volunteer base. The Community Bike Shoppe increases safe bicycles for everyday use and encourages safe bike riding and helmet use through community programs.

Walking School Bus

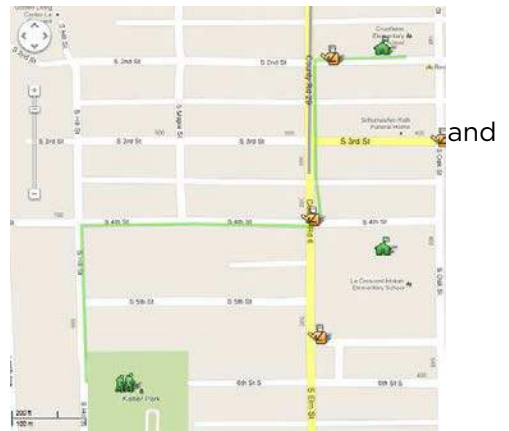
A Walking School Bus (WSB) is when one or more adults meet at certain designated locations and then walk a predetermined safe route to school. Students can either be dropped off at the meeting spot or picked up along the way. WSBs provide an opportunity for children to engage in physical activity and have fun while walking to school. Walking School Buses offer a supervised way for kids to walk to school and learn safe pedestrian skills.

- The senior high school leadership class has helped chaperoned weekly walking school buses since it was created in 2010.

There are three designated walking routes to school in La Crescent that are used regularly.

Route 1: Kistler Park (Green Route)

The Kistler Park Route is the most used and popular route. The students meet or get dropped off near the parking lot of Kistler Park and depart by 7:30 am. They walk down Hill St to S 4th St. continue until they cross Elm St. The route allows students to walk through our neighborhoods. The Kistler Walking Route encompasses students from both public and private schools.



Route 2: Old Hickory Park (Purple) and Route 3: Methodist Church (Green)

The Old Hickory Route is the longest of the routes to school. Students meet at the corner of Jonathan Lane and Honeygold Court. This route leads the WSB to the Methodist Church where they meet the next Walking School Bus and continue the rest of the way together. These routes pick up additional students along the way. The majority of this combined route is on Elm St. which is extremely busy and heavily traveled in the mornings. It is especially important that students and adults cross the street together as a group, utilizing crosswalks.



Existing Conditions Report

This report provides an overview of the existing conditions in the City of La Crescent with respect to its bicycle and pedestrian network.

Summary of Major Issues Impacting Biking and Walking in La Crescent

While the City is taking several actions to improve bicycling and walking in La Crescent, barriers remain that will limit the extent to which residents and visitors can comfortably walk and bicycle for recreation and transportation.

One of the most challenging circumstances that La Crescent faces is an overall lack of funding. This is due to several factors: a) limited governmental aid, b) geographic conditions, and c) limited economic base.

While the Mississippi River Valley provides a dramatic setting, the rugged slopes and their intricate maze of deep valleys create unique challenges to creating hiking trails and bikeways. These geographic conditions also bring about a variety of federal and state environmental constraints and requirements.

The older portion of the City is set up on a grid system and has a relatively good existing sidewalk network, which is an asset. The exception is newer developments, especially those on the bluffs and hillsides. One of the challenges the City faces is to fill in the gaps where sidewalks were not installed during development or where new development occurs. New developments are now required to install sidewalks when the property is developed. Another challenge the City faces is the steep terrain that would require large retaining walls and expensive engineering to construct a sidewalk.



In addition, La Crescent, in comparison to other communities of this size, has a small business-related tax base. Most people living in La Crescent work in La Crosse. This results in a challenge when it comes to resources for parks, trails and recreational facilities.

Concerns Noted in 2013 Plan

The primary concern raised for pedestrians was difficult street crossings. One of the significant challenges to creating better pedestrian and bicycle networks is that there are five exit/entrances into the Central City (North 4th Street, South 3rd Street, Main Street, North 2nd Street, and South 14th Street), with one major inner arterial running the North-South length of the community (Elm Street) and Highway 14/61 on the outer East side of the City. These thoroughfares are located by schools and are heavily traveled by vehicles, especially during the peak hours of the morning and evening. They are intimidating to many bicyclists and difficult to cross on foot or by bicycle. The residents located on the east side of Highway 14/61, most of who are economically challenged, are cut off from the City's business center and parks due to this highway.

Stakeholders agreed that the recent bicycle facilities and bike lanes have improved conditions for bicyclists and a dramatic increase in use has resulted. The facilities, however, are not part of a complete network. Two additional concerns were raised in that too many bicyclists are riding on the sidewalks, riding the wrong direction, and making improper turns.

Several specific locations were repeatedly noted in the 2013 planning process:

- South 3rd and Oak Street
- South 3rd and 14/61 (traffic light timing & right-hand turn)
- S. 14th and Spruce Drive
- S. 11th and Cedar
- S. 11th and Redwood
- S. 7th and Cedar
- Jonathan and Fireside
- N. 2nd and 14/61
- Shore Acres and 14/61

2017 Plan Update Focus Areas

With guidance from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, The City of La Crescent continues to identify needed improvements to biking and walking infrastructure. The following section discusses existing conditions along four Houston County-owned corridors:

- Highway 6
- Highway 25
- South 7th Street
- 3rd Street

Highway 6

As La Crescent continues to grow to the west, it will be critical to make safe and comfortable connections from this area of more rural land uses to the downtown, more urbanized city core. Highway 6, which becomes 7th Street east of Highway 25, connects La Crescent to the unincorporated portions of Houston County to the west. See Figure 2 below. Recently, the City of La Crescent annexed land west of Highway 25 along Highway 6 immediately south of Wieser Park. It is in the process of planning for the extension of sewer and water utilities to existing homes with the potential to support the development of a 100-home subdivision.

While the type of improvement has not yet been confirmed, the City has prioritized making safe connections from the subdivision to the City's core for people biking and walking. Highway 6 carries approximately 4,000 vehicles per day, which is higher than most other streets in La Crescent. Highway 6 carries some truck traffic, and potential improvements along the corridor should consider this when thinking about safety. Houston County and City staff have considered two options for this bike and walk connection: an on-street striped bike lane or a shared use path on the south side of the street.

A shared use path along Highway 6 would provide a more protected facility for people biking and walking than an on-street bike lane. However, there are some obstacles to constructing this off-road path. Residential driveways on the south side of Highway 6 become more frequent approaching town. Installing a shared use path would take coordination with residents in order to obtain right of way. In addition, just west of Highway 25, the right of way is limited on the south side of Highway 6 by Crucifixion Cemetery and a large electrical cable tower. Additional planning and engineering will be required to develop a path would fit in this narrow and restricted space.

An on-street striped bike lane would likely be easier to implement because of the width of the roadway. At roughly 40 feet wide, there is plenty of roadway space to maintain two vehicle travel lanes and two bicycle travel lanes. Furthermore, City and County staff have indicated that on street parking is not much of a factor along Highway 6 in this area. Even with enough right of way to accommodate both bikes and vehicles, there is a question of how an on-street bike lane would serve pedestrians like an off-street shared use path. Off-street shared use paths are generally more comfortable for people than on-street bike lanes.



Figure 2. Looking east towards La Crescent on Hwy 6, west of Hwy 25

Highway 25

For both an off street shared use path and an on-street bike lane on Highway 6, County and City engineers and planners have identified the need for improvements at the intersection with Highway 25. Highway 25 approaches Highway 6 at an angle from the south, causing difficult sightlines for drivers that aren't conducive to pedestrian and bicyclist safety. In the future, there may be an opportunity to square up the two roadways, so Highway 25 approaches at an angle that makes it easier for people walking, biking, and driving to see each other. The curb radii at the intersection is large, leading to observed wide and sweeping turns by vehicles turning onto and off of Highway 6. Tightening up the cross section and curb radii of this intersection would serve to reduce speeds of turning cars. See Figure 3.



Figure 3. Intersection of Hwy 6 and Hwy 25, looking east towards downtown La Crescent.

To improve this intersection for people biking and walking, County and City staff have considered a median on Highway 25, which would give users of a future shared use path along Highway 6 an improved crossing. Local staff have also considered using traffic calming at this intersection to create a “gateway” to La Crescent. This would not only increase safety, but also welcome people to the urbanized core of the city.

Further south of the intersection of Highway 25 and Highway 6 is Skunk Hollow Road. There are no sidewalks or bike facilities along this segment of Highway 25 (see Figure 4). La Crescent staff have identified this connection as important; it connects Highway 25 to two parks and a playground, the ice arena, La Crescent High School, and multifamily housing. The City's 2018 street improvement project includes the reconstruction of Skunk Hollow Road. The project will add bike lanes to each side of Skunk Hollow Road, and sidewalks on one side.

City staff have also identified the connection east of Highway 25 on Skunk Hollow Road to South 14th Street, to Lancer Boulevard, to 11th Street to Spruce Drive as a focus area for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Along this route east of Highway 25, sidewalks are missing on both or one side of streets. South 14th Street has bike lanes on both sides of the street and sidewalk on one side. Spruce Drive connects this area to 7th Street, where Kistler Park and the City Aquatic Center are located.



Figure 4. Hwy 25 south of Hwy 6, north of Skunk Hollow Road.

7th Street

East of Highway 25, Highway 6 becomes 7th Street as it approaches downtown La Crescent. The City Aquatic Center sits at the three-way intersection of 7th Street and Spruce Drive, where local planners and engineers have identified the crossing of 7th Street as a barrier. Currently, the crosswalk connecting the north and south sides of 7th Street terminates on the north side of 7th right at the driveway apron to the Aquatic Center parking lot. Because of this, conflicts exist between exiting traffic and pedestrians. Bicyclists coming to the pool from the east often ride on the sidewalk of 7th Street, and cross wherever gaps in traffic exist. There have been no documented crashes involving people walking or bicycling; however, improvements could be made to improve access to the park area. The City and County agree that crossing improvements are desired. This project will include recommendations for location and design for an improved crossing to the Aquatic Center.

Further east, 7th Street meets Elm Street. Elm Street currently has an on-street bike lane running north-south through town, from South 11th Street to the north past city limits on North Ridge Road.

South 3rd Street

Because of its connection to U.S. 14/61 across the Mississippi River and into Wisconsin, 3rd Street is a major connection for both motorized and non-motorized traffic. West of Elm Street, 3rd Street is more of a neighborhood street, with a right of way not exceeding 45 feet. On the segment of 3rd Street east of Elm Street, the right of way increases to 50 feet and traffic volumes are high. While there are sidewalks on both sides of the street, plus crosswalk signage and striping, traffic can often be fast moving on the four-lane road, making for an unpleasant walking environment. Because of its close proximity to Highway 14/61 and to the elementary school, in Fall 2017 the City installed an RRFB on the west crossing of 3rd Street, at Oak Street. There are no bicycle facilities on 3rd Street. See Figures 5 and 6.



Figure 5. Crossing of 3rd Street at Oak Street



Figure 6. A pedestrian crossing featuring a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). High intensity flashing lights are activated by a pedestrian needing to cross.

At the intersection of 3rd Street and U.S. 14/61, the roadway opens up even more, adding turn lanes and creating very long crossing distances for people biking and walking. While there are medians, they can be narrow and uncomfortable for people waiting to cross.

Existing Connections to La Crosse

In addition to the four areas above, the 2017 plan update also examined connections between La Crescent and La Crosse. Because of its proximity to La Crosse, Wisconsin, the Mississippi River is crossed frequently by residents of both cities throughout the day. Many La Crescent residents work in La Crosse. At a distance of 3 miles, biking from La Crescent to La Crosse would take about 15 minutes. Because of this, it is important to consider safe and comfortable crossings for people biking and walking.

I-90 Dresbach Bridge

Interstate 90 crosses the Mississippi River north of La Crescent, connecting Minnesota and Wisconsin. Planning for the replacement of the nearly three-mile bridge began in 2007 and included a feasibility study for the possibility of a bicycle and pedestrian facility. Although the facility was not included in the construction completed in October 2016, features of the bridge were added so as to not preclude a facility in the future. Continued planning will be required to allow a safe and comfortable connection to a future facility on the bridge, which lies over two miles north of downtown La Crescent.

U.S. 14 Connection to La Crosse

U.S. Highway 14 provides another crossing of the Mississippi River east of downtown La Crescent via the West Channel Bridge. For cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians, this is the most direct connection to La Crosse, Wisconsin. As a person walking or biking approaches the West Channel Bridge on U.S. 14, there is a shoulder alongside car traffic, with some segments of sidewalk. Often, this shoulder is interrupted by turn lanes (see Figures 7 and 8). On the bridge itself, there is a shoulder and a narrow sidewalk.



Figure 7. US 14 connection to West Channel Bridge (under construction Summer 2017)



Figure 8. Sidewalk along US 14, with shoulder interrupted by turn lane

Wagon Wheel Trail

The Wagon Wheel Trail is an alternate route that bypasses approximately 1.3 miles of U.S. 14. From the north side of downtown, people biking and walking can cross U.S. 14 at N 2nd Street and head south to Main St along Chestnut Street. However, this crossing is difficult; the intersection is unsignalized and traffic speeds are high. Main Street heads west paralleling U.S. 14 until it dead ends to car traffic. Here, people biking and walking can continue on the Wagon Wheel Trail that heads directly west to Shore Acres Road. Paralleling the River, Shore Acres Road heads south. Bicyclists and pedestrians can continue to DNR Landing Road and connect with U.S. 14 just west of the River, thereby avoiding a large part of U.S. 14 immediately out of La Crescent. See Figure 9. Though this route is likely more comfortable for people biking and walking, it adds mileage to the route, and is only accessible from the north side of downtown.

The City has a phased plan to complete and enhance the Wagon Wheel Trail. The phasing plan is included in the Appendix. Phase II includes improvements to Shore Acres Road. Phase III includes two grade separated crossings. One is a crossing of U.S. 61 connecting 1st Street and Chestnut Street. The other is a crossing of U.S. 14 near the West Channel Bridge.



Figure 9. Routes and bridges connecting La Crescent to La Crosse, WI.

Mississippi River Main Channel Bridges

Cameron Avenue Span

Immediately west of La Crosse, on the Wisconsin side of the River, the Cass Street and Cameron Avenue spans leave and enter downtown, as part of U.S. 14. Cameron Avenue serves eastbound traffic entering La Crosse. Between the fencing on the outside of the bridge and a jersey barrier, there is an eight-foot wide sidewalk, making the space feel narrower than it is for people walking and biking (see Figure 10). On the other side of the jersey barrier, alongside traffic, there is an eight-foot wide shoulder.



Figure 10. Sidewalk and shoulder on Cameron Avenue Span

Cass Street Span

The Cass Street span serves westbound traffic leaving La Crosse. This bridge has five-foot wide sidewalks on both sides. This width makes biking uncomfortable, and passing between oncoming people difficult. Outside the jersey barrier, there is a five-foot wide shoulder alongside the two travel lanes (see Figure 11)



Figure 11. Narrow sidewalk and shoulder on Cass Street Span

Bicycle and Pedestrian Volumes

With more attention planned for bicycling and walking facilities, the City hopes to improve the mode share of people walking and bicycling to work. Current census estimates show that zero percent of residents bike to work, while 1.8 percent walk. It should be noted that Census figures are estimates based on a sample of the population, and the sample size is small in La Crescent. The City is aware that La Crescent residents do bike to work, though the numbers are low. Improvements to the bicycling and walking environment would encourage more people to try these non-motorized modes. In fact, 47 percent of respondents to a community survey as part of the 2013 planning process said that more/better bike and walking facilities would make them more likely to bike and walk. Respondents to the survey also said that additional bike and walk improvements are needed to improve safety for and promote awareness of people biking and walking.

Active Living La Crescent conducted a survey in the spring of 2009 of La Crescent residents to measure knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to active living and community design. The survey revealed that 39% of the respondents walked or biked for functional purposes and 3% walked or biked to work (they did not break out “walk” and “bike”). More than half of the respondents stated they would be more active if bike facilities were available.

Volunteers from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and Active Living La Crescent conducted bicycle counts at major intersections during the afternoon traffic peak in mid-September of 2009. The counts were conducted for a 2 hr to 4 hr time period on one weekday. They are not factored to be representative of every day of the year. The point of the exercise was to show that bicyclists are out there in rather significant numbers.

Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking is an important element of the bicycle network. In 2010, the City of La Crescent in partnership with Active Living La Crescent and funds from the Statewide Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) purchased and installed over 30 bike racks adding to the community’s 16 existing bike racks. As of 2013, La Crescent had a total of 46 bike racks with capacity for 212 bicycles throughout the City, with a concentration at the schools, parks and central business district.

Bicycles and Transit

The Municipal Transit Utility (MTU) installed bike racks on its bus fleet in 1999 to expand transit choices for residents in La Crescent and La Crosse. According to MTU, the bus bike racks were popular soon after their implementation and continue to rise in popularity and use. Biking and busing helps curb traffic congestion and preserve air quality.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Recommendations

Bikeway Network Tools and Best Design Practices

The following sections summarize different types of bicycle facility design best practices. For further information and details, consult the following resources:

- [American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials \(AASHTO\) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#)
- [National Association of City Transportation Officials \(NACTO\) Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)
- [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\) Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks \(STAR\) guide](#)
- [Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MUTCD\)](#)

Bicycle Parking

Where space allows, bicycle parking should be provided to promote bicycling into La Crescent. Bike racks should only be located where a minimum 5-foot clear walkway width can still be provided and when there is a business or office building within 50 feet of the sidewalk. Bike racks isolated from the adjacent land use by an open space or parking lot will not be used. As the City renovates or constructs new public buildings, bicycle parking should be integrated into the design of public buildings.

Facility Definitions for the City of La Crescent Bikeway Network

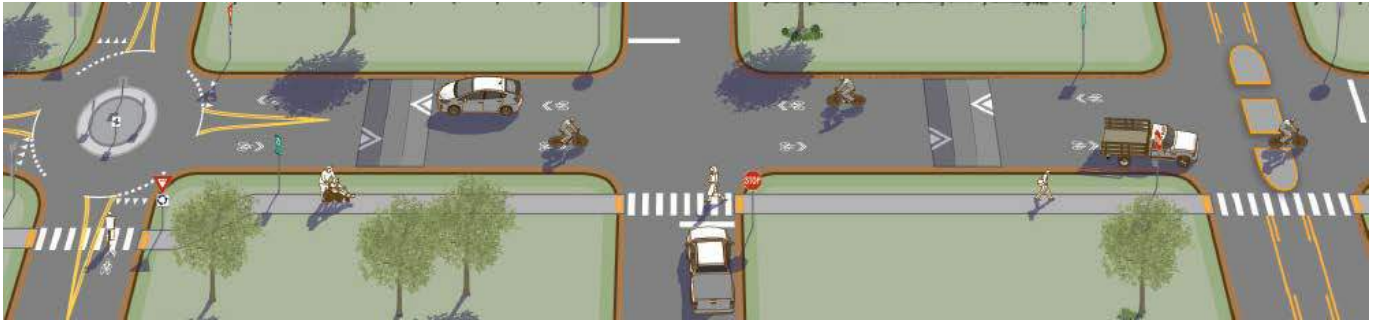
Many on-street bicycle facilities can be developed inexpensively with paint and signs. The Proposed Bikeway Network for La Crescent has recommendations for five facility types: signed bike routes, paved shoulders, protected bike lanes, on-street bike lanes, and shared-use paths. Each facility type is described below.

Signed Neighborhood Bikeway

This facility is a local road that is identified as a bicycle route by signs. These routes are located on low-traffic roads (less than 2,000 vehicles per day) where bicyclists and motor vehicles can share the same space. All bicycle routes should include wayfinding signage that clearly identifies direction and distance to nearby attractions.

Neighborhood bike routes can be upgraded to bicycle boulevards through a combination of traffic calming measures, access management, and crossing treatments. Speed bumps, traffic circles, restricted vehicle turning movements, changes in stop sign orientation to favor the bicycle boulevard, curb extensions, and crosswalk warning signs are all options to increase bicyclist safety and comfort on bike boulevards.





Paved Shoulders

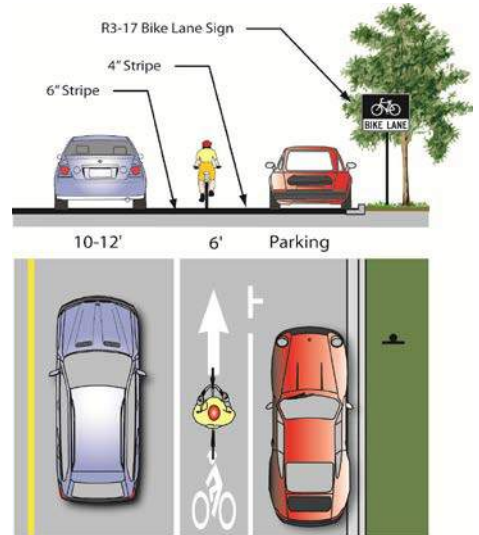
In rural areas, the addition of paved shoulders is often the best way to accommodate people bicycling and walking. The shoulder refers to the part of the highway that is adjacent to the right-most travel lane and is on the same level as the highway. Paved shoulders provide motorists the following benefits: room to maneuver, a break-down space clear of the travel lane, additional travel space for farm machinery, and an increased overall lifecycle for the pavement. In rural areas, paved shoulders are generally clear of moving or parked vehicles, so they can be a reliable space for people to walk and bike.

Recommendations for the actual paved shoulder width may vary according to the width of the adjacent travel lane, traffic volumes, posted speed limit, and the presence of heavy truck traffic. Generally, however, to accommodate bicycles, a width of 5 feet from the face of a guardrail, curb, or barrier, and free of rumble strips or other obstructions should be provided at minimum. Roads with higher speeds and heavier volumes should have a wider shoulder. The slope of the roadway should continue across the shoulder to maintain adequate drainage. Paved shoulders may be combined with bike route wayfinding and signage to direct people along routes to major destinations.

Several enhancements can improve safety and comfort for people bicycling and walking. A striped buffer of 1.5 to 4 feet or more increases bicyclist comfort when traveling in the shoulder. Using colored or contrasting pavement helps to distinguish the shoulder from the roadway. Rumble strips have a safety benefit for people driving as well as people walking and bicycling on the shoulder. Rumble strips should be installed with a bicycle friendly design, with gaps for bicyclists to maneuver in and out of the shoulder. Rumble strips should be installed to be as close to the vehicle travel lane as possible so that shoulder space is maximized for bicycling.

Bike Lanes

Designated exclusively for bicycle travel, bike lanes are separated from vehicle travel lanes with striping and also include pavement stencils. In most cases, bike lanes should be provided in both travel directions. Optional bike lane signs may be used to clarify lane use to road users. Bike lanes are most appropriate in urban areas on arterial and collector streets, where higher traffic volumes and/or speeds warrant greater separation of bicyclists and motor vehicles. On some streets, bike lanes will fit within the current street width. On others, bike lanes will require parking removal or the street to be widened to accommodate the lane.



The La Crescent recommendations include three types of bike lanes:

- Buffered Bike Lane: a 5- to 6-foot bike lane with a 1.5 to 4-foot striped buffer between the bike lane and traffic
- Bike Lane with Parking on One Side: 5- or 6-foot-wide bike lane with parking allowed on one side
- Bike Lane with No Parking: 5- or 6-foot-wide bike lane with no parking allowed on either side

Shared-Use Path

Shared-use paths (minimum width of 10 feet or 12 to 14 feet if heavy traffic is expected) can accommodate a variety of non-motorized traffic such as pedestrians, bicyclists, in-line skaters, and runners. Shared-use paths are paved off-street facilities; sometimes they have their own right-of-way, as in the case of the Wagon Wheel Trail and sometimes they are within the right-of-way of street or highway. A shared-use path that shares right-of-way with a street or highway has special issues with crossing traffic and careful design is necessary to provide a safe facility. Even when the shared-use path has its own right-of-way, careful design at each street or railroad crossing is necessary to increase user safety.

Pedestrian Network Tools and Best Design Practices

The following sections summarize different types of pedestrian facility design best practices. For further information and details, consult the following resources:

- [American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials \(AASHTO\) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets](#)
- [American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials \(AASHTO\) Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities](#)
- [National Association of City Transportation Officials \(NACTO\) Urban Street Design Guide](#)
- [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\) Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks \(STAR\) guide](#)
- [Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MUTCD\)](#)
- [Institute of Transportation Engineers \(ITE\) Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach](#)

Pedestrian-Friendly Street Design Characteristics

Sidewalks and Crossings

Sidewalks are the most fundamental element of the walking network, as they provide an area for pedestrian travel that is separated from vehicle traffic. Sidewalks are typically constructed out of concrete and are separated from the roadway by a curb or gutter and sometimes a landscaped planting area. Sidewalks are a common application in both urban and suburban environments.

Installing entirely new sidewalks can be costly, particularly if drainage improvements such as stormwater sewers and installation of curb/gutter are part of the design. However, fixing short gaps in an existing sidewalk network are important to maximize system continuity, and can be a relatively low-cost fix to improve the network.

Attributes of well-designed sidewalks include the following:

- **Accessibility:** A network of sidewalks should be accessible to all users, including those who are blind, or use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.
- **Adequate width:** Adequate width varies depending on how much pedestrian traffic is expected. Sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet wide, with widths of 6-10 feet preferred in business districts or other areas with higher rates of walking. Ideally, two people should be able to walk side-by-side and pass a third person comfortably. Different walking speeds should also be possible.
- **Safety:** Design features of the sidewalk should allow pedestrians to have a sense of security and predictability. Sidewalk users should not feel they are at risk due to the presence of adjacent traffic.
- **Continuity:** Walking routes should be obvious and should not require pedestrians to travel out of their way unnecessarily.
- **Landscaping:** Plantings and street trees should contribute to the overall psychological and visual comfort of sidewalk users, and be designed in a manner that contributes to the safety of people.
- **Drainage:** Sidewalks should be well graded to minimize standing water.
- **Social space:** There should be places for standing, visiting, and sitting. The sidewalk area should be a place where adults and children can safely participate in public life.
- **Quality of place:** Sidewalks should contribute to the character of neighborhoods and business districts.
- **Maintenance:** A proper budget needs to be sustained to keep sidewalks clean, cleared of snow, and in good condition.

In principle, every intersection is a legal crosswalk, regardless of markings or signs, unless crossing is expressly forbidden. Marked crosswalks are used to alert motor traffic to expect pedestrian crossings at higher volume walking routes, near schools, in retail districts, at signalized intersections, and other locations where



When no sidewalks are provided, people are forced to walk in the street.

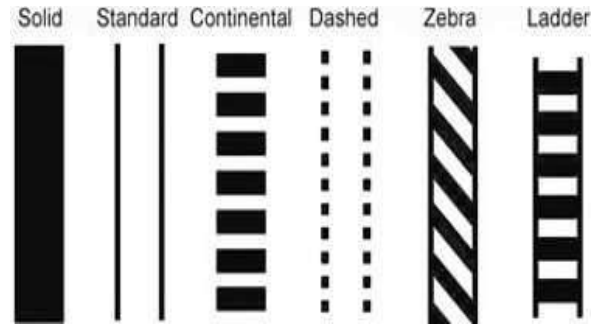


Raised crosswalks are an effective means to calm traffic on lower-volume streets.

pedestrian right-of-way needs emphasis. Crosswalk markings indicate to pedestrians the appropriate route for higher volume crossings of motor traffic. They facilitate crossing by the visually impaired, and remind turning drivers of potential conflicts with pedestrians.

High visibility continental or ladder crosswalk markings should be used at crossings with high pedestrian use or where vulnerable pedestrians are expected, including:

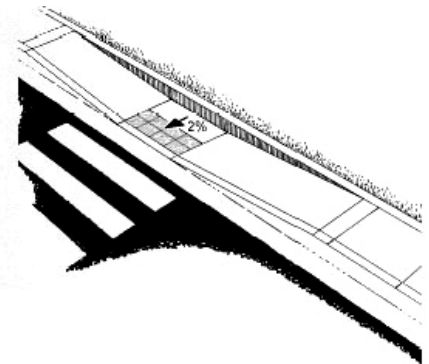
- School crossings
- Across arterial streets for pedestrian-only signals
- At mid-block crosswalks, where applicable
- At intersections where there is expected high pedestrian use and the crossing is not controlled by signals or stop signs



ADA-Compliant Curb Ramps

Curb ramps are the design elements that allow all users to make the transition from the street to the sidewalk without encountering a vertical step. There are a number of factors to be considered in the design and placement of curb ramps at corners.

The 2010 ADA standards define two types of curb ramp systems: “perpendicular ramps” and “parallel ramps.” The first provides a ramp into a crosswalk, while the second provides a ramp into a landing that is flush with the street surface, sometimes called a “dropped landing.”



When sidewalks are too narrow to provide a typical perpendicular ramp, a dropped landing should be used (source: FHWA website).

Pedestrian Facilities at Intersections with Traffic Signals

Pedestrians benefit from information provided by signal head indications, push buttons, countdown signals, and audible signals.

Traffic signal timing should assume a pedestrian walking speed, meaning that the length of a signal phase with parallel pedestrian movements should provide sufficient time for a pedestrian to safely cross the adjacent street. According to the 2009 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards, this amounts to 3.5 ft/second. At crossings where older pedestrians or pedestrians with disabilities are expected, lower crossing speeds could be considered for those more-vulnerable users.

No Right on Red

When motorists are accustomed to being able to turn right on red at all times, there is a tendency to roll through a red light when there is no cross traffic. This can lead to collisions with pedestrians who have the right-of-way but are less visible to the motorist wishing to turn right. Restricting “right on red” turning at key intersections can be an effective means to improve pedestrian safety.

Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)

At intersections where there are conflicts between turning vehicles and pedestrians, pedestrians are given a “walk” designation a few seconds before the associated green phase for the intersection, allowing them to enter the roadway and be more visible to traffic. This can be an especially effective technique where there is heavy right-turning movement.

Pedestrian Push Buttons

Pedestrians can be accommodated by an automatic pedestrian phase or by using a push button (demand-actuated signal). Pedestrian push buttons detect pedestrians desiring to cross at an actuated or semi-actuated traffic signal, at intersections with low pedestrian volumes, and at mid-block crossings. Pedestrian push buttons need to be very visible from the adjacent sidewalk.

Audible Pedestrian Traffic Signals

Audible pedestrian traffic signals at signalized intersections provide crossing assistance to pedestrians with vision impairment. Audible signals should be activated by a pedestrian push-button.



Pedestrian push buttons must be in a location accessible to people walking and using mobility devices.

Pedestrian Signal Indication (“Ped Head”) and Countdowns

Pedestrian signal indicators use a symbol to indicate when to cross at a signalized crosswalk. All traffic signals should be equipped with pedestrian signal indications except where pedestrian crossing is prohibited by signage. Countdown pedestrian signals are particularly beneficial, as they indicate—based on the MUTCD walking speed standards—whether a pedestrian has time to cross the street before the signal phase ends.

RRFB and HAWK Signals

Where greater visibility or traffic control is desired, a rectangular rapid flash beacon (RRFB) or High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) signal may be used.

The HAWK signal remains dark until activated by pressing the crossing button. Once activated, the signal responds immediately with a flashing yellow pattern which transitions to a solid red light, providing unequivocal ‘stop’ guidance to motorists. HAWK signals have been shown to elicit high rates of motorist compliance. They are particularly useful on undivided roadways with multiple lanes in any one direction.

An RRFB uses an irregular stutter flash pattern with bright amber lights (similar to those on emergency vehicles) to alert drivers to yield to people waiting to cross. The RRFB offers a higher level of driver compliance than other flashing yellow beacons, but lower than the HAWK signal. They may be configured with solar power.



RRFB Signal

Signs and Road Markings



MUTCD-compliant W11-2 pedestrian crossing sign.

Signage can serve both wayfinding and safety purposes including:

- Helping to familiarize users with the pedestrian network
- Helping users identify effective routes and walking times to destinations
- Helping to address misperceptions about time and distance
- Helping overcome a “barrier to entry” for infrequent pedestrians

Signs are typically placed at key locations leading to and along routes, including the intersection of multiple routes. Too many signs tend to clutter the right-of-way, and it is recommended that these signs be posted at a level most visible to pedestrians, rather than per vehicle signage standards.

Shared-use Paths

Shared-use paths serve bicyclists and pedestrians and provide additional width over a standard sidewalk. Facilities may be constructed adjacent to roads or through parks and wooded areas. Regardless of the type, paths constructed next to the road should have some type of vertical (e.g., curb or barrier) or horizontal (e.g., landscaped strip) buffer separating the path area from adjacent vehicle travel lanes.

Shared-use paths should be constructed according to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and be designed according to ADA standards.

Most shared-use paths are located on publicly-owned, publicly-managed, or publicly-accessed land (e.g., street rights-of-way or parks.) As such, existing on-site conditions, master plans, land use permits, easements, natural resource protection plans, significant tree locations, and other current and planned-for uses must be taken into account when determining path alignment, width, and location of any associated path amenities. In La Crescent, it is possible to develop shared-use paths within an easement on private property, based on negotiations with the land owner.

Traffic Calming Facilities

Curb Extensions

A curb extension (sometimes referred to as a “bump out” or “bulb out”), is a place where the sidewalk extends into the parking lane or wide shoulder of a roadway. Because curb extensions physically narrow the roadway, a pedestrian’s crossing distance—and consequently the time spent in the street—is reduced. They provide an additional safety benefit of improving the visibility of pedestrians – both to see and be seen. Curb extensions can also assist with ADA compliance. Additionally, curb extensions can be an opportunity for plantings, other aesthetic components, and stormwater treatment.

Curb extensions can be placed either at mid-block crossings or at intersections and can help reduce roadway travel speeds because they create a visual pinch point for motorists. Curb extensions always need to be carefully considered so as not to impede bicycle movement along the edge of the travel lane or in the shoulder.

Refuge Islands

Median refuge islands help improve safety by providing a crossing refuge, allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to gauge safe crossing of one direction of traffic at a time, and slowing motor vehicle traffic. This treatment is especially appropriate when helping to connect to a school, or where the roadway to be crossed is greater than 50 feet wide or more than four travel lanes. A median refuge island can also be used at shorter crossing distances to take advantage of available safe gaps in traffic. Like curb extensions described above, they also create visual pinch points for motorists, helping to reduce speeds.

Median refuge islands can be used at signalized or unsignalized crosswalks. The refuge island should be accessible, preferably with an at-grade passage through the island rather than ramps and landings.



Medians improve pedestrian safety, comfort and visibility when crossing roads.

A median refuge island should be at least five feet wide between travel lanes and at least 20 feet long. If a refuge island is landscaped, the landscaping should not compromise the visibility of pedestrians crossing in the crosswalk.

Lighting

Pedestrian-scale lighting improves visibility and can provide a vertical buffer between the sidewalk and the street, defining pedestrian areas. Pedestrian-scale lighting should be used in areas of high pedestrian activity and where feasible based on available right-of-way, utilities, and cost. Pedestrian-scale lighting is a significant capital improvement and should be provided only where it will have a maximum benefit, such as public safety. Lighting can also be considered on shared-use paths that are located away from the right-of-way or in areas that are not otherwise lit. In locations where vehicle-scaled lighting is desired, decorative streetlights in a variety of styles should be considered over cobra-head or other highway-style lights.

Pedestrian Amenities and Gateways

Providing benches at key rest areas encourages people of all ages to walk by providing a place to rest along the way or at bus stops. Benches can be simple (e.g., wood slates) or more ornate (e.g., stone, wrought iron, concrete). Benches and all other site furniture must always be selected and placed in accordance with ADA clearance requirements.

Detailed Recommendations for Focus Areas

Bicycle Facility Location Recommendations in the Central City

Figure 12 shows the bicycle facility location recommendations for Central La Crescent. The bikeway network is intended to provide a complete network to access La Crescent's parks, schools, trails, commercial areas and connect to surrounding communities. The term 'networks' implies the priority for projects to permit users of all transportation mode to move safely through the City. The networks offer choice of transportation options and complement local assets.

Bike Connections in the Central City

Mississippi River Trail (MRT) route

Planned for 2018

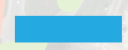
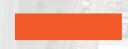






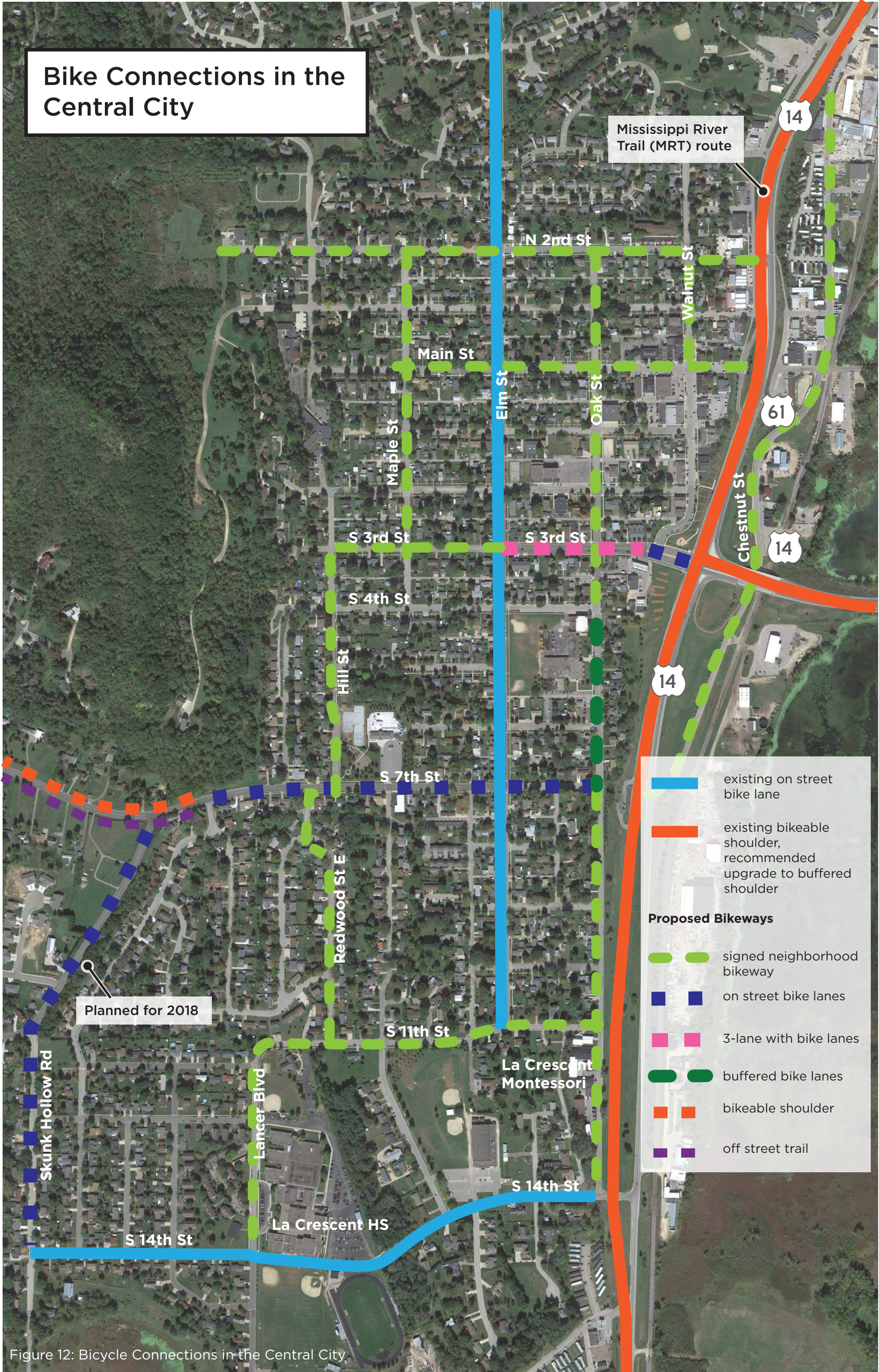
	existing on street bike lane
	existing bikeable shoulder, recommended upgrade to buffered shoulder
Proposed Bikeways	
	signed neighborhood bikeway
	on street bike lanes
	3-lane with bike lanes
	buffered bike lanes
	bikeable shoulder
	off street trail

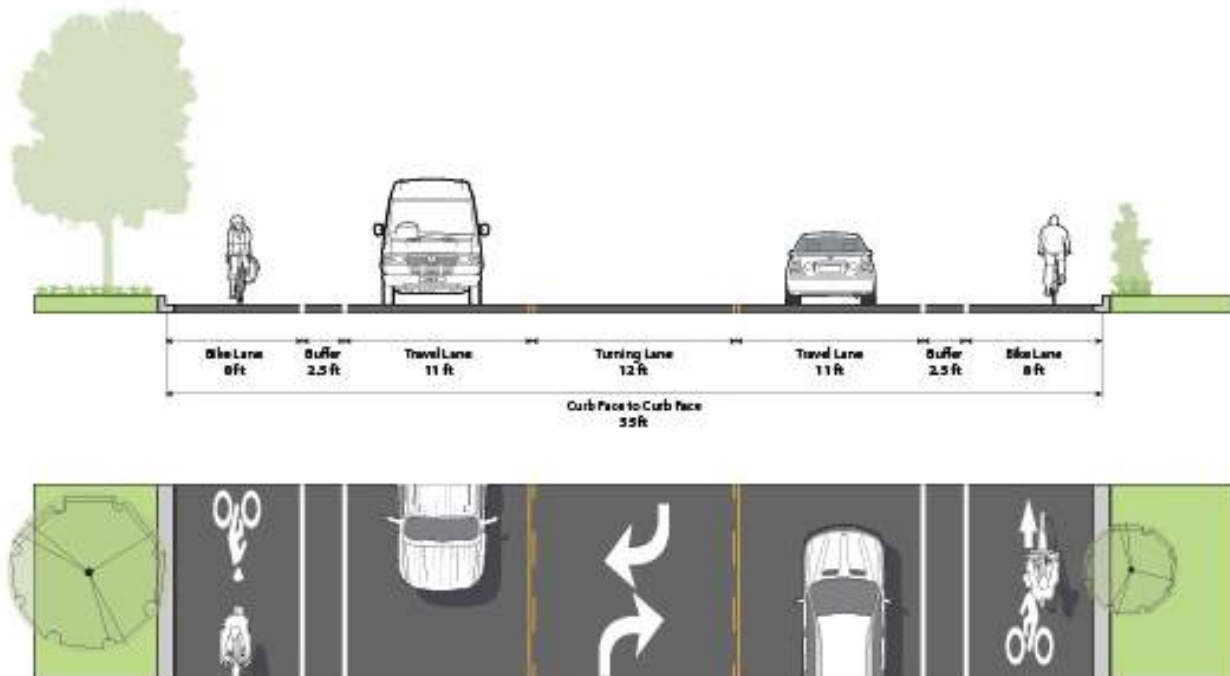
Figure 12: Bicycle Connections in the Central City



South 3rd Street:

La Crescent should consider a “road diet,” otherwise known as a “4 to 3 Lane Conversion” for S 3rd Street from the Highway 14/61 intersection to S Elm Street. The three-lane recommendation is a feasible and common application and is not expected to cause noticeable traffic delay based on existing traffic volumes on S 3rd Street (approximately 7,900 vehicles per day). There are significant safety benefits to reducing to three lanes, for vehicle drivers as well as people walking and bicycling along and across S 3rd Street. The recommended configuration on S 3rd Street would also improve connectivity to La Crosse via Highway 14/61.

The following lane widths: two 11-foot through lanes, one center 12-foot turn lane, and two 8-foot bike lanes with 2.5 foot buffers (See Figure 13). If parking is desired on one side of S 3rd Street, then 5-foot bike lanes are recommended in both directions. Other recommended improvements at the intersection of 3rd Street and Highway 14/61 are shown in Figure 21.



3rd St between Elm St and Oak St looking E

Figure 13: Diagram of Recommended Design on 3rd Street between Elm St and Oak St looking East

Roadway Lane Widths

11-foot lanes are a widely accepted lane width that can safely accommodate freight vehicles in urban settings. 11-foot lanes meet MnDOT State Aid Standards. In addition to providing additional roadway space that can be reallocated to other roadway users (such as bicyclists), narrower lanes reinforce the lower urban speed limit and generally encourage drivers to drive more slowly

Elm Street

It is recommended to upgrade the existing Elm Street bike lanes to buffered bike lanes. The existing travel lanes and parking lanes could be narrowed, to provide space for two 5.5-foot-wide bike lanes with 1-foot wide buffers separating the bike lanes from the travel lanes.

At intersections without a dedicated right turn lane, the buffered bike lane should transition to a dashed line, as shown in the graphic below from the [NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#). The dashed line indicates that people driving can merge into the bike lane to make right turns.



Buffered bike lane intersection recommendatiosn from the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide

Combined bike lane/turn lane markings are recommended to provide guidance to bicyclists on where to position themselves at intersections where there is not adequate roadway space for a dedicated bike lane and a right turn lane. Bicycle stencils with a dashed line are recommended, as shown in the example image and graphics below. Further guidance is available in the [NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#).



Combined bike lane/turn lane in Bend, OR (Image credit: NACTO).



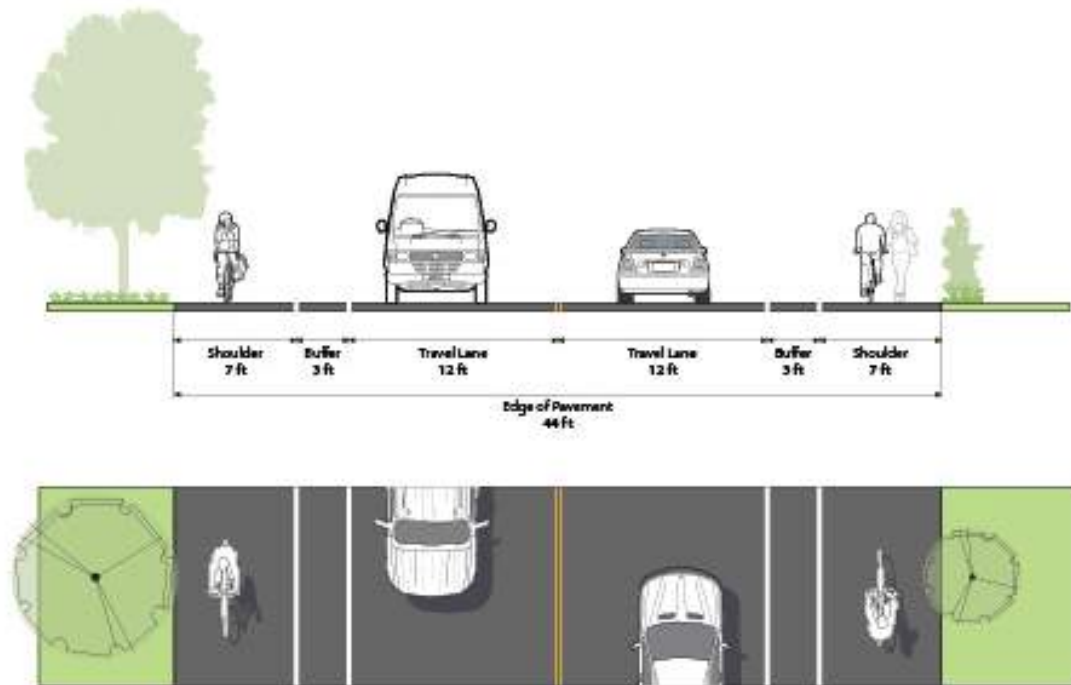
Combined bike lane/turn lane recommendations from the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide

Highway 6 and Highway 25:

As an interim option, paint a bike/walk shoulder on both sides of Highway 6 (See Figure 14). In the long-term, install a trail on the south side of Highway 6 when sewer and water are extended to the Weiser Park area (See Figure 15). The painted shoulder could remain in place when the trail is constructed, to provide an option for people who prefer to bike on the street.

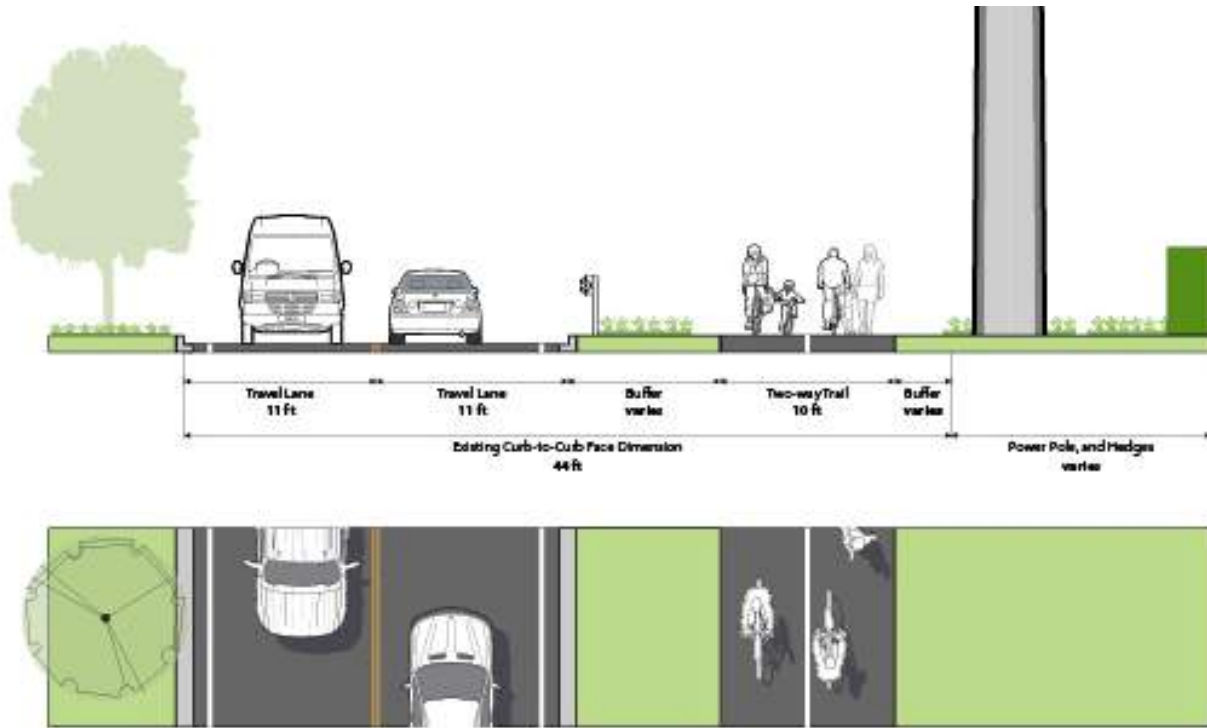
Consideration was given to locating the trail on the north side of Highway 6. It is not recommended since the utilities are being installed on the south side of the road, which presents the opportunity of constructing a trail on the utility easement. Little space is available on the north side of Highway 6 due to frequent large utility poles and other obstructions.

Consider installing a median with a raised crossing at the intersection of Highway 6 and Highway 25. (See Figure 16). There are design details for the median that would need to be addressed with Houston County to address turning movements for large vehicles. Large vehicles might occasionally hit the median curb; however, a median would have a continuous daily benefit for traffic calming and bicycle and pedestrian safety and comfort.



Hwy 6 - W of T-314 looking E

Figure 14: Diagram of Recommended Design for Highway 6 West of T-314 looking East

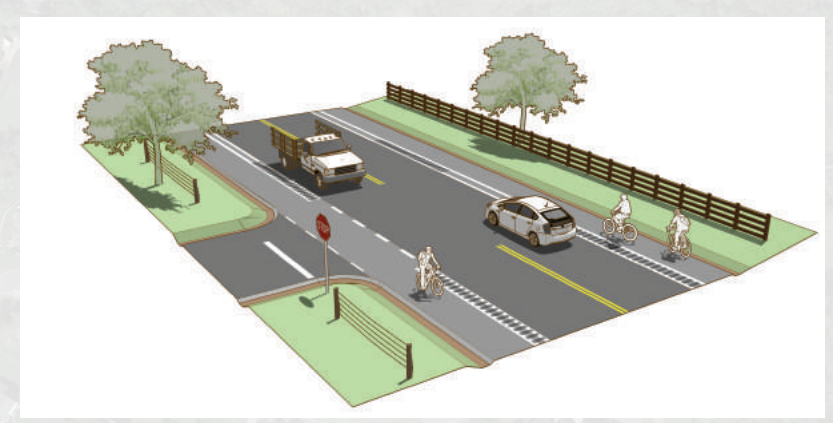


Hwy 6 - at cemetery looking E

Figure 15: Recommended Street Design on Highway 6 at Cemetery looking East

Figure 16: Highway 6 and Highway 25 Recommendations

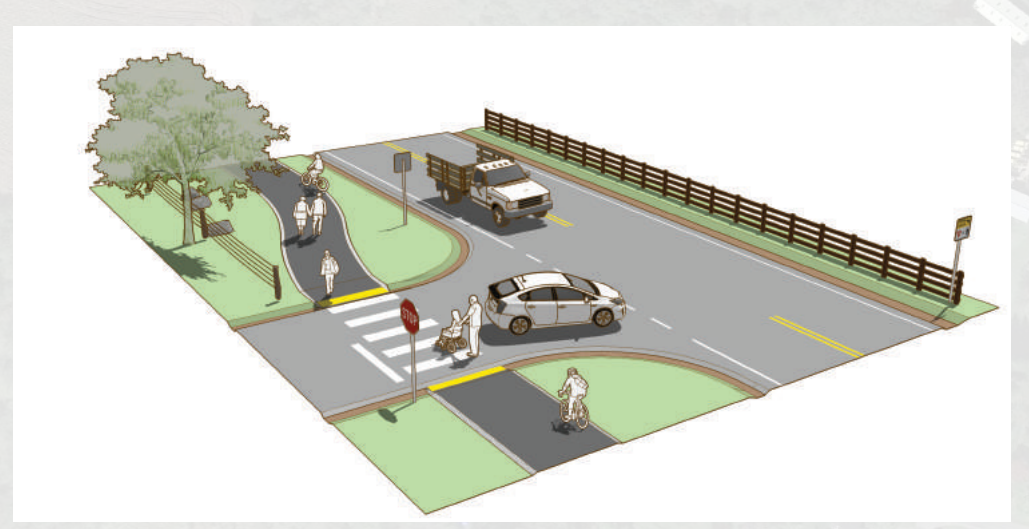
Highway 6 and Highway 25






Interim Recommendation: painted bike/walk shoulder on both sides of Highway 6. A painted shoulder could remain in place long-term and provide an option for people who prefer to bicycle on street, rather than on an off-street trail.

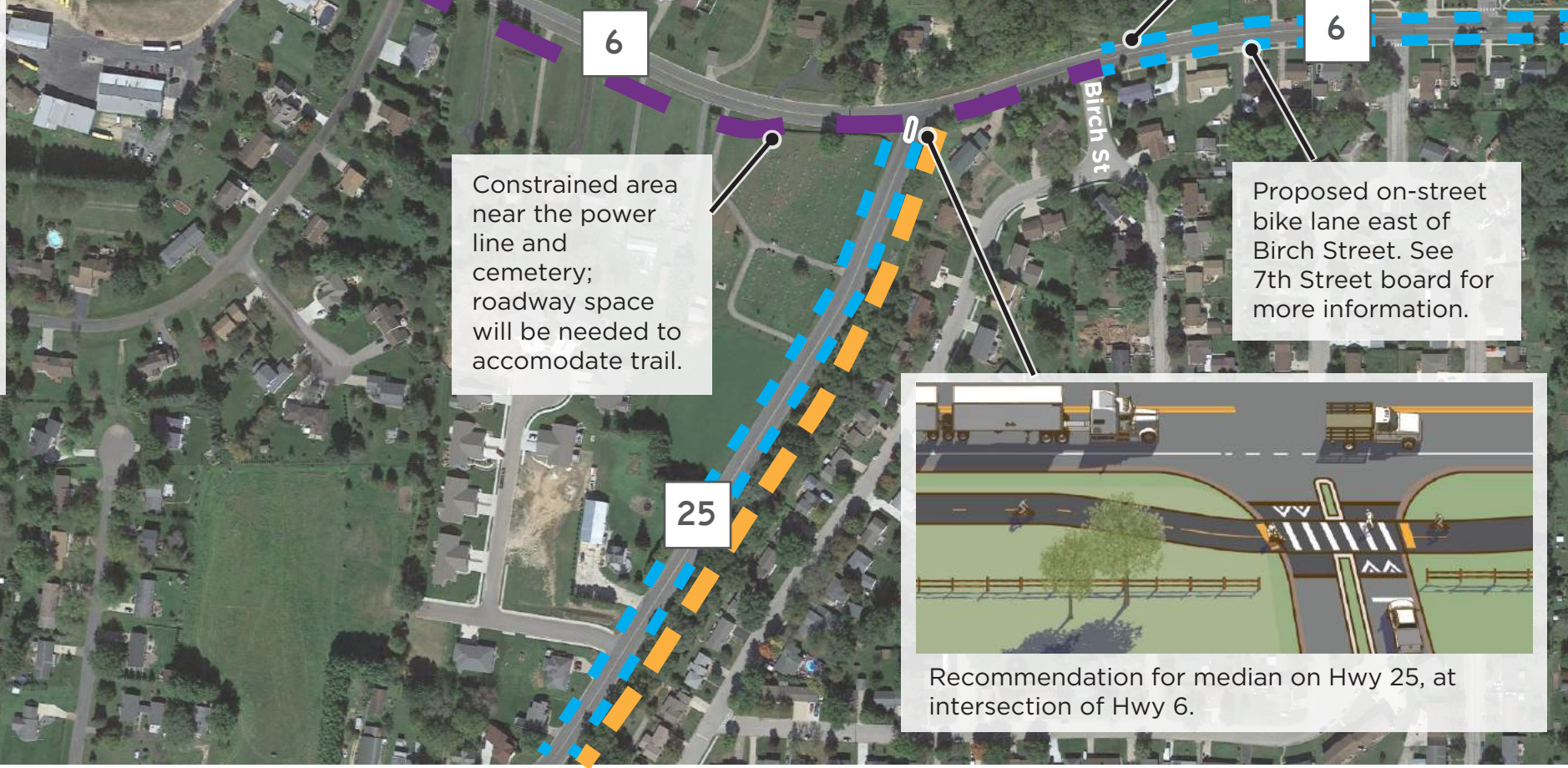


Recommendation for transition from off-street trail to on-street bike lane west of Larch Ave.



Long-term recommendation for off-street trail along Hwy 6, when sewer and water are extended to Wieser Park area.

-  proposed off-street trail
-  proposed on-street bike lane
-  proposed sidewalk



Constrained area near the power line and cemetery; roadway space will be needed to accommodate trail.

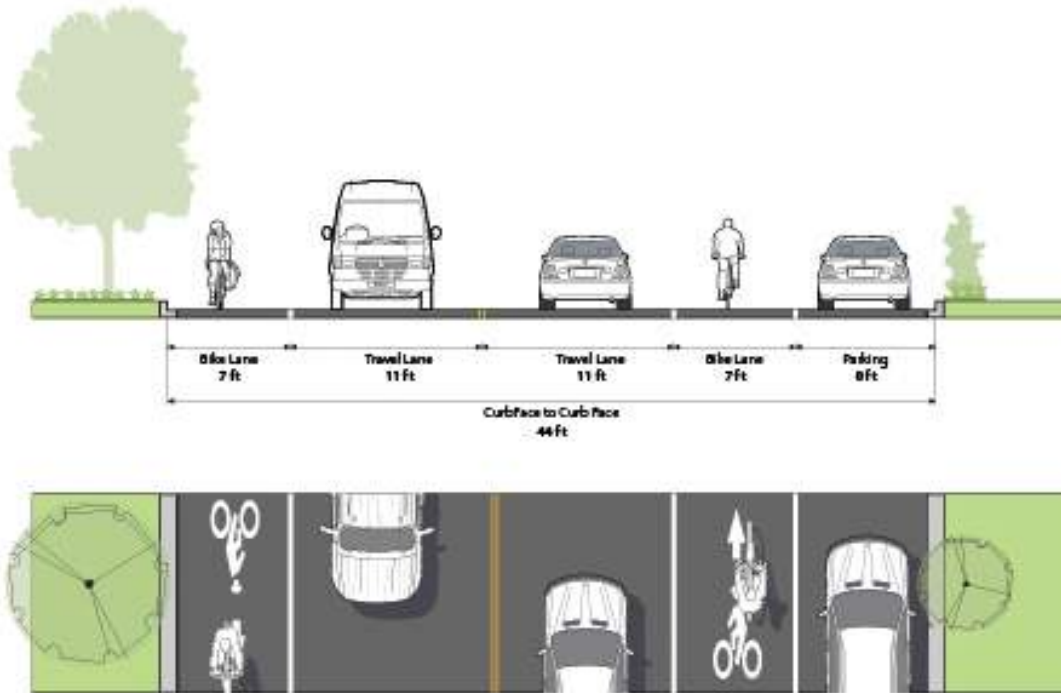
Proposed on-street bike lane east of Birch Street. See 7th Street board for more information.



Recommendation for median on Hwy 25, at intersection of Hwy 6.

7th Street

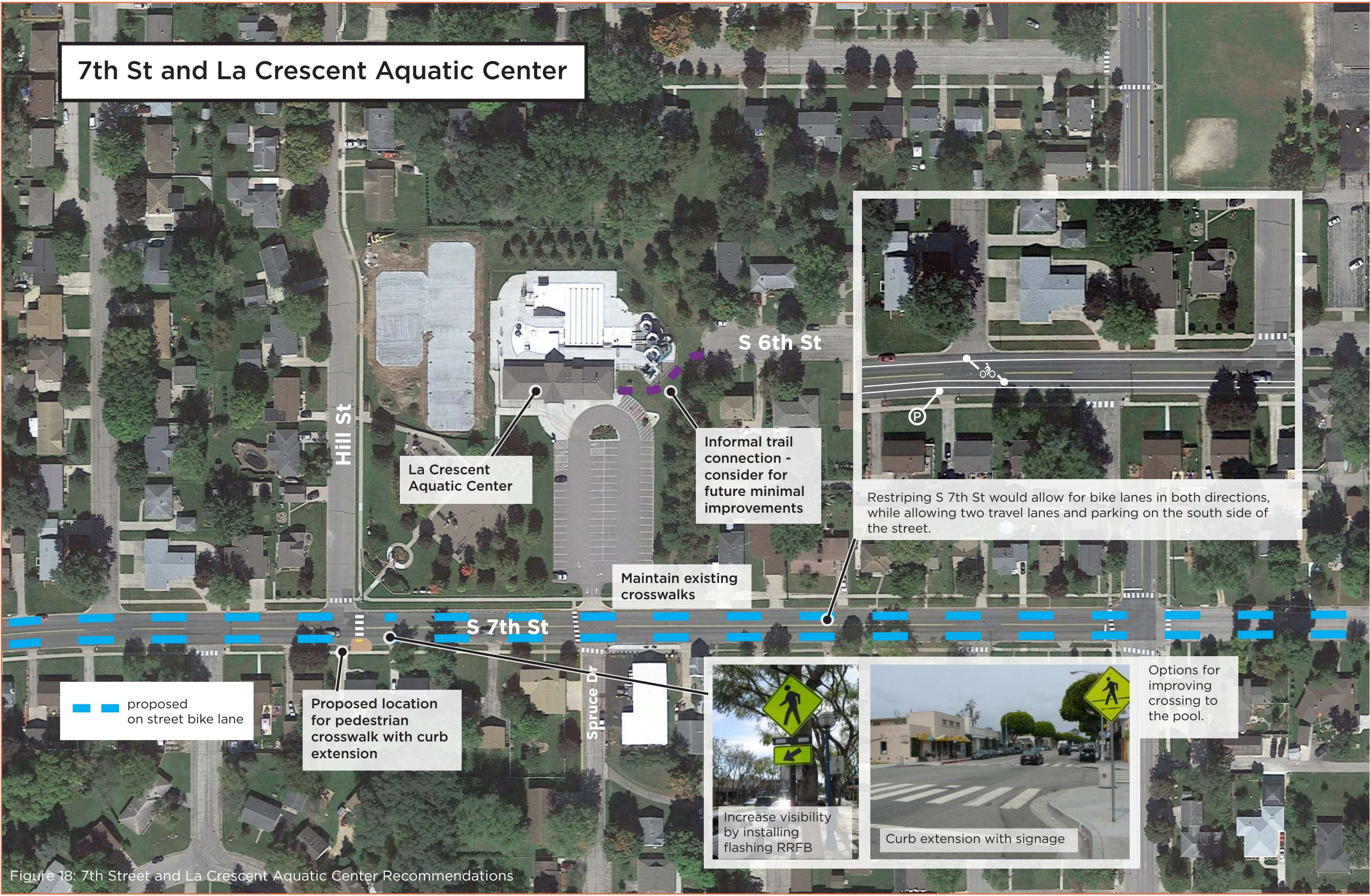
Restripe 7th Street to allow room for a bike lane and a travel lane in each direction and a parking lane on the south side of the street. Improve access to the Aquatic Center by installing curb extensions and an RRFB signal across 7th Street. Consider creating an informal trail connection to 6th Street as a future improvement. (See Figures 17 and 18)



7th St looking E

Figure 17: Recommended Street Design on 7th St looking East

7th St and La Crescent Aquatic Center



La Crescent Aquatic Center

Informal trail connection - consider for future minimal improvements

Maintain existing crosswalks

S 7th St

S 6th St

Hill St

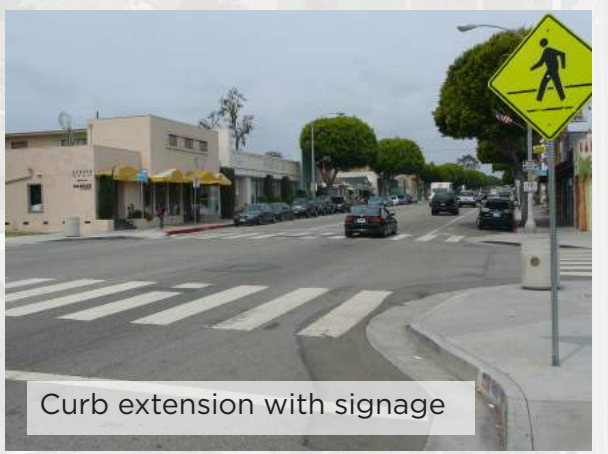
Spruce Dr

proposed on street bike lane

Proposed location for pedestrian crosswalk with curb extension



Increase visibility by installing flashing RRFB



Curb extension with signage

Options for improving crossing to the pool.



Restriping S 7th St would allow for bike lanes in both directions, while allowing two travel lanes and parking on the south side of the street.

Figure 18: 7th Street and La Crescent Aquatic Center Recommendations

Wagon Wheel Trail: Connection to La Crosse

Add informational kiosks along the trail. Add a marked crosswalk with crosswalk warning signage at Highway 14 to allow trail users to access shoulders along Highway 14. (See Figure 19)

Wagon Wheel Trail: Connections to La Crosse

Partial funding has been awarded for a pedestrian and bicycle bridge over Hwy 14. The bridge is planned to be built in 2021 and will connect 1st Street and Chestnut Street as part of the Wagon Wheel Trail Phase 3.

Add wayfinding signage to help people find the Wagon Wheel Trail. See image to the right for example.



- proposed wayfinding
- proposed informational kiosk
- Wagon Wheel Trail (low stress)
- existing bikeable shoulder

Improve crossing at Hwy 14 to help people bicycling connect with shoulders along Hwy 14. Add a marked crosswalk with crosswalk warning signage.

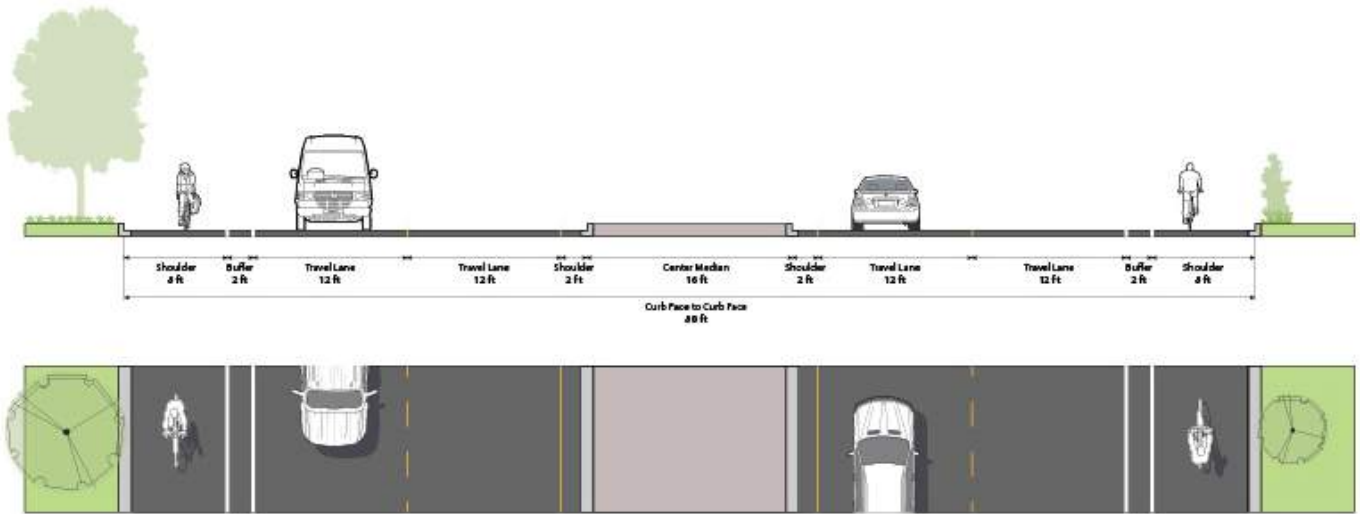
Widen sidewalk on north side of bridge to improve access to Pettibone Park

Pettibone Park

Figure 19: Wagon Wheel Trail: Connections to La Crosse

Highway 14: Connection to La Crosse

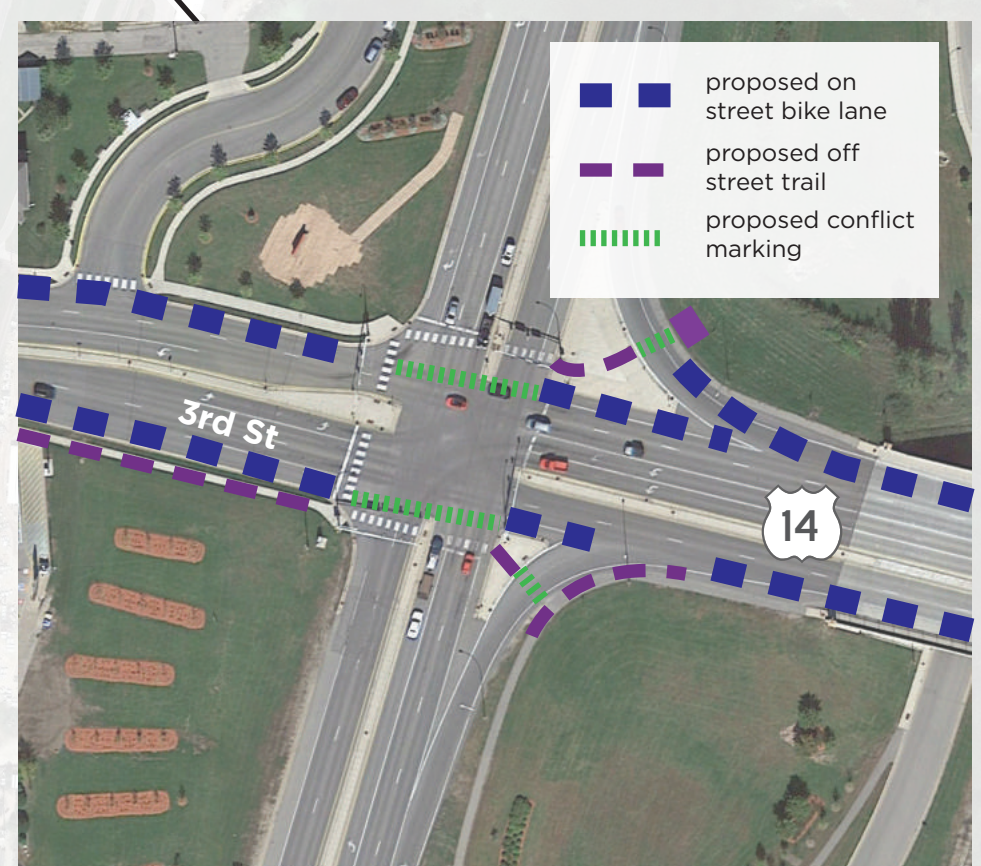
Widen the sidewalk on the north side of the bridge to improve pedestrian access to Pettibone Park. Consider adding a painted buffer to the bikeable shoulder on Highway 14 to improve comfort for people bicycling. (See Figures 20 and 21)



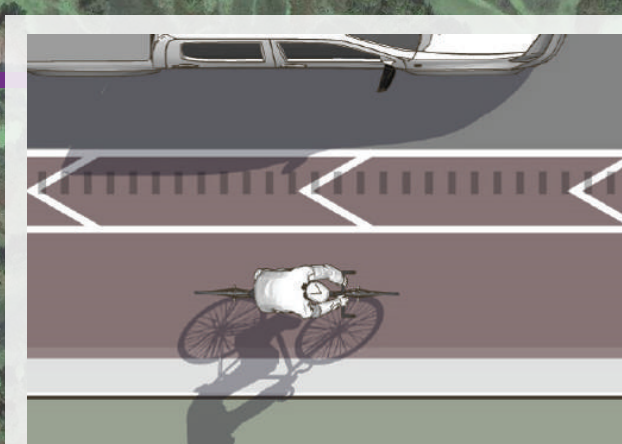
Hwy 14
looking E

Figure 20 : Recommended Street Design on Highway 14 looking East.

Highway 14: Connections to La Crosse



The Hwy 14/61 and 3rd Street intersection is challenging for people walking and bicycling. Above are recommendations to improve the intersection for walking and bicycling.



A striped buffer is an option to increase comfort for people bicycling on the shoulder.



Top image: Recommendation for shoulder at driveways and bypass lanes. Bottom image: Recommendation for shoulder at right turn lanes.



Green markings are recommended and show potential conflicts between people biking and driving, like at driveways, intersections or at turn lanes.

Pettibone Park

Widen sidewalk on north side of bridge to improve access to Pettibone Park

- proposed wayfinding
- Wagon Wheel Trail (low stress)
- existing bikeable shoulder

Figure 21: Highway 14: Connections to La Crosse

Sidewalk Network Connectivity in the Central City

This plan recommends installation of sidewalks throughout the Central City to improve pedestrian network connectivity (See Figure 22).

Downtown Neighborhoods (Generally from Hill Street to Hwy 16 and from N 3rd Street to S 4th Street)

This area of La Crescent has a fairly complete grid system of streets and an almost complete sidewalk network. There are a few areas where the topography of the area will not allow sidewalks to be built without extensive retaining walls and other infrastructure. This includes parts of the west side of N 2nd Street and N 3rd Street.

This plan recommends that the sidewalk network in this area be completed with the priority focus on filling in the gaps on Maple Street from N 2nd Street to S 4th Street. This will provide an option of walking down the street with less traffic than Elm or Oak Street.

Lower priority projects in this area include filling in the sidewalk gaps on the east/west streets such as S 3rd Street, S Hill Street, and Main Street.

South Neighborhoods (Generally from S 4th Street to S 14th Street)

The sidewalk network in this area of La Crescent is less complete and due to short distances between the front of homes and the curb (especially in the neighborhood between S 7th Street and S 11th Street) adding sidewalks would be difficult. However this plan does recommend a sidewalk along Skunk Hollow Road between S 14th St and S 7th Street and along County Road 25 from the western border of La Crescent to Skunk Hollow Road as well as sidewalks on both sides of S 7th St between S Elm St and S Oak St.

Important pedestrian connections are located in this area – a connection from Cornforth to Skunk Hollow. This will be difficult under current conditions but should be considered if the opportunity arises in the future due to redevelopment.

When the intersection of S 11th Street and Cedar Street is reconstructed, the City should consider purchasing right-of-way on the southeast corner and work to align the intersection at a 90-degree angle. Sidewalks along the south side of S 11th Street are feasible if the alignment of the intersection is improved.

North Neighborhoods (Generally from N 3rd Street to the north boundary of La Crescent)

The sidewalk network in this area of La Crescent is less complete than the central area of La Crescent.

However, sidewalks do exist on the main streets in this neighborhood. This report recommends the addition of sidewalks along Jonathan Lane.

In addition to the two crossing improvements mentioned above, this report recommends the following crossing improvements:

- Fireside Drive and Elm Street – Ladder crosswalk pavement markings, install W11-2 signs
- Eagles Bluff Road and McIntosh Road – Ladder crosswalk pavement markings, install W11-2 signs
- S 14th Street and Spruce Drive – Ladder crosswalk pavement markings, install W11-2 signs
- S 11th Street and Redwood – Ladder crosswalk pavement markings, install W11-2 signs
- S 11th Street and Cedar Drive – Ladder crosswalk pavement markings, and a rectangular rapid flashing beacon on the S 11th Street leg
- Hwy 14/61 and N 2nd Street – Ladder crosswalk pavement markings, and a rectangular rapid flashing beacon
- Hwy 14/61 and N 4th Street – Ladder crosswalk pavement markings, install W11-2 signs

Intersection Improvements

Chestnut and Hwy 16:

This intersection is important for MRT users as they head south to Hwy 14/61 coming from Chestnut and possibly either La Crosse or the Wagon Wheel Trail. At a minimum, add signage to warn drivers of the possible presence of bicycles. Also consider a crosswalk and a pedestrian refuge island in the median.

S 3rd Street and Hwy 14/61:

Bicycle traffic from all directions uses this complex and busy intersection. Consider the installing a bicycle detector on the traffic signal as well as an on-street bike lane along Hwy 61, with green painted conflict markings across the intersection. Provide a short off-street trail at the intersection to improve safety for people bicycling, as shown in Figure 21.

N 2nd Street and Hwy 14/61:

This crossing connects the neighborhood located east of Hwy 61 along Sycamore Street to the downtown area. Consider a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) at this location to assist pedestrians across this busy street.

Hillview Boulevard and Hwy 14/61:

This intersection is the first option for south-bound bicyclists to exit Hwy 14/61 and access La Crescent destinations. Wayfinding signs should be placed at this intersection.

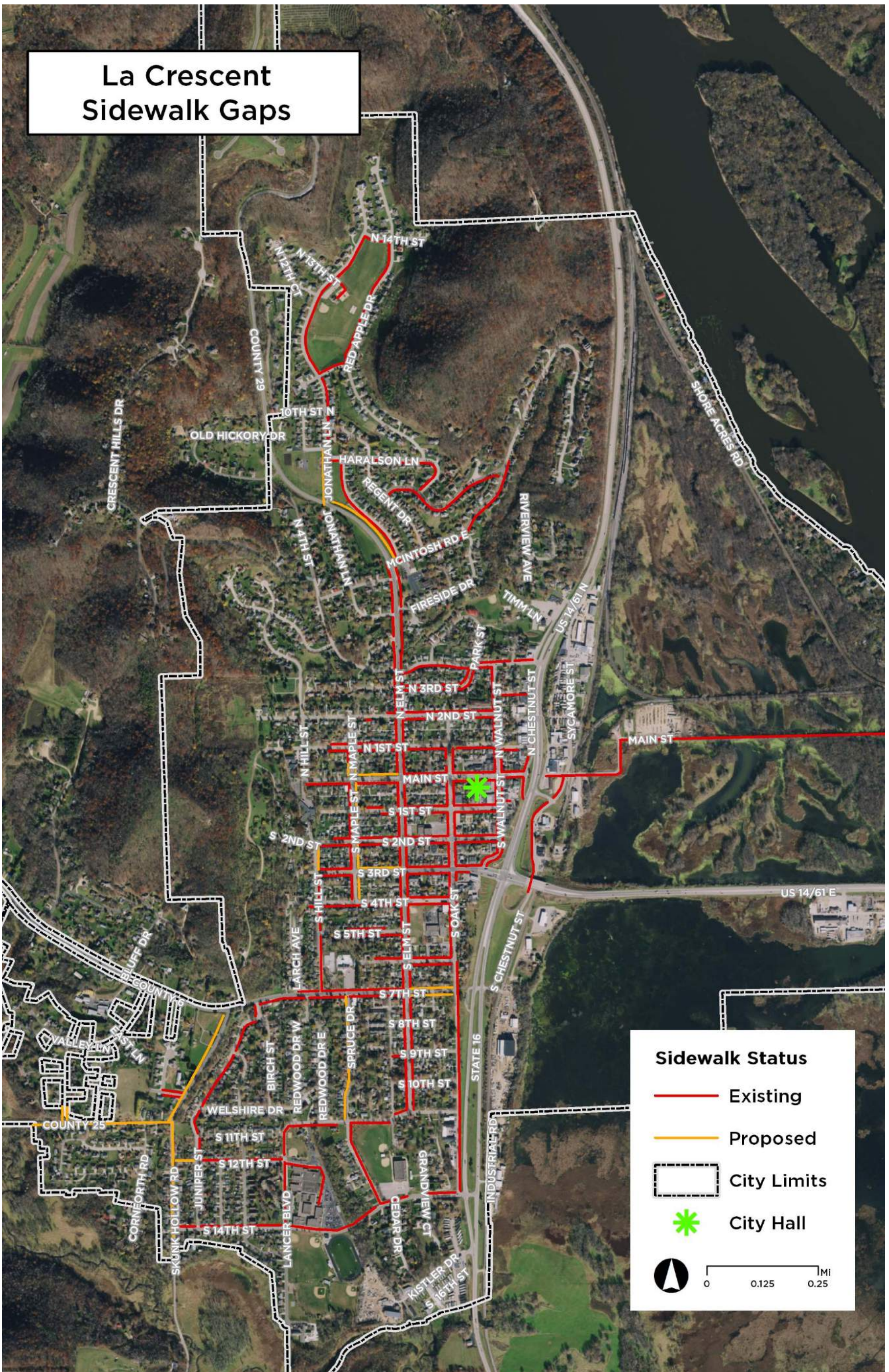
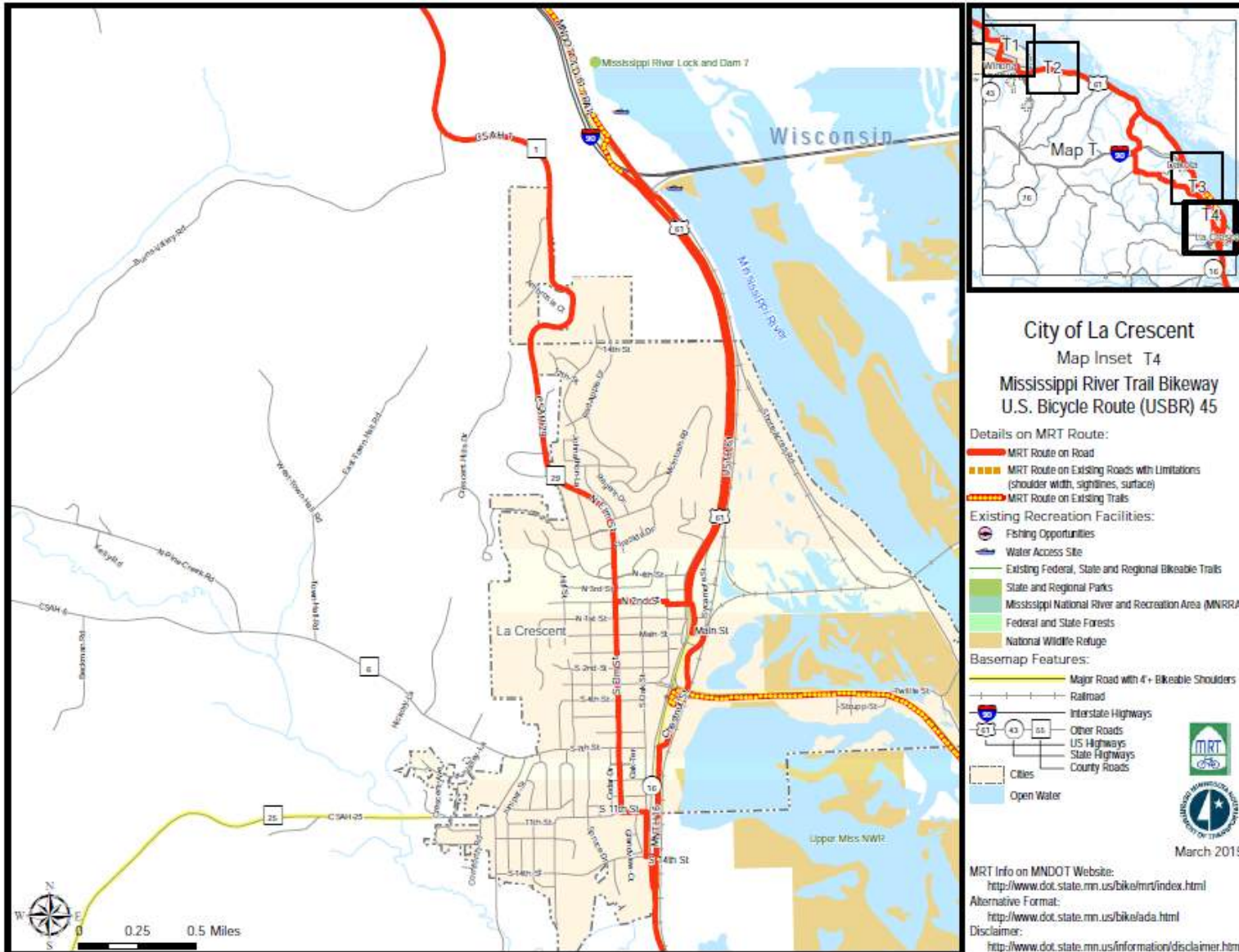


Figure 22: Recommended Central City Pedestrian Network

Mississippi River Trail (MRT) Route Recommendations for La Crescent

The fact that the MRT route passes through La Crescent presents an economic development opportunity for La Crescent. The key to converting the opportunity into reality is doing everything possible to make sure bicyclists on the trail know how to find La Crescent’s downtown and commercial districts and feel welcome. The MRT route branches into two routes in La Crescent: a through route on Hwy 14/61, and a route through Downtown La Crescent. The table below provides recommendations to assist MRT users in finding their way to and through La Crescent regardless of the direction from which they came. Whether they approach from County Road 1/North Ridge Road/North Elm Street from the north, south or La Crosse, the recommendations below will allow them to either by pass La Crescent or easily find the downtown and take advantage of the services offered there.

Travel Direction	Going To	Recommended Route	Recommended Improvements
South Bound	Through/No Stops	Hwy 14/61/16	Install wayfinding signs along route
South Bound	To La Crescent	Hwy 14/61 to Chestnut St to N 2 nd Street	Install wayfinding signs along route
South Bound	To La Crosse	Hwy 14/61 to Chestnut St to trail connection to eastbound Hwy 14/61	Install wayfinding signs along route. Consider installing shoulder improvements to Hwy 14/61 as detailed in this plan. Improve bicycle accommodations on steel bridge.
North Bound	Through/No Stops	Hwy 14/61/16	Install wayfinding signs along route.
North Bound	To La Crescent	Use 14 th Street to enter La Crescent	Install wayfinding signs along route to highlight MRT route through downtown.
North Bound	To La Crosse	Use signal at S 3rd St to turn east on to Hwy 14/61 to La Crosse	Install wayfinding signs along route. Consider installing shoulder improvements to Hwy 14/61 as detailed in this plan. Improve bicycle accommodations on steel bridge.
From La Crosse	To either North Bound or South Bound MRT	Hwy 14/61 use S 3rd St signal	Consider improvements to the Hwy 14/61/3 rd Street intersection as detailed in this plan.



Mississippi River Trail Route in La Crescent

Priorities for Implementation

The City recognizes that the health and well-being of its residents and economic success of the City depends on its transportation network. The La Crescent Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan serves as a guide in determining the direction and planning that will need to occur to provide a comprehensive and integrated network of facilities that are safe and convenient for people of all ages and abilities traveling by foot, bicycle, automobile, public transportation, and commercial vehicle.

The immediate next steps will be to address critical areas outlined in the plan. Meetings should begin with the Houston County Engineer and City Administrator on the identified county segments: Highway 6, Highway 25, and South 3rd Street. Meetings with the Minnesota Department of Transportation could be held to include the following: intersection at Highway 14/61 and South 3rd Street, Shore Acres and Hwy 14/61 intersection, and North 2nd street and Hwy 14/61. Meetings should also begin with the US Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife on the Twilight Redevelopment Plan walking path, kayak/canoe launch, fishing pier, Wagon Wheel trail interpretive signage and programming and walking path at the Root River Refuge.

Action steps:

Hwy 14/61:

- Add a striped buffer to the existing shoulder.
- Improve crossing at Hwy 14/61 to help people bicycling connect with shoulders along Hwy 14/61. Add a marked crosswalk with crosswalk warning signage.
- Assess existing turn lanes and by-pass lanes to improve bicycle access, including at Twilite St.
- Improve and clarify MRT signage in La Crescent.
- Add wayfinding signage along the Wagon Wheel trail.
- Construct bridge over Hwy 14 to connect 1st St and Chestnut St.
- Widen sidewalk on north side of Hwy 14 bridge over the river to improve access to Pettibone Park.
- Add off street trail near through the intersection of Hwy 14/61 and 3rd St. Alert drivers to bike crossing at the intersection using stripes of green paint.

Hwy 25/6

- Add a sidewalk on the east side of Hwy 25 south of Hwy 6.
- Add bike lanes on both sides of Hwy 25 south of Hwy 6.
- In the short term, paint a bike/walk shoulder on both sides of Hwy 6.
- In the long term, add an off-street trail along Hwy 6 with sewer and water extensions to the area. Add a raised trail crossing at Hwy 25.

S 7th St

- Allow parking only on south side of the street.
- Paint bike lanes on both sides of the street.
- Add curb extension at Hill Street and consider installing an RRFB.
- Consider improvements to the informal trail connection to the Aquatic Center from S 6th St.

Elm St.

- Upgrade the existing bike lanes to buffered bike lanes.

S 3rd St

- Convert street from four to three lanes with buffered bike lanes on both sides.

Appendix

FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION: A PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF AN UPDATED COMPLETE STREET POLICY FOR THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT. 10/20/2017

AN ORDINANCE relating to the City of La Crescent's Complete Streets policy, stating guiding principles and practices so that transportation improvements are planned, designed and constructed to encourage walking, bicycling and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users.

WHEREAS, City policy, as referred to in the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, *other transportation planning and in the City's Comprehensive Plan*, is to encourage walking, bicycling and transit as safe, convenient and widely available modes of transportation for all people; and

WHEREAS, The City's Bicycle Pedestrian Plan is to design, operate and maintain city streets to promote safe and convenient access and travel for all users --pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and people of all abilities, as well as freight and motor vehicle drivers; and

WHEREAS, The City desires to brand the city as an active, vibrant, healthy community in order to attract families to support area schools; and,

WHEREAS, Other jurisdictions and agencies state and nationwide have adopted Complete Streets and they have become the expectation for bike friendly and funding organizations; and

WHEREAS, transportation improvements will include an array of facilities and amenities that are recognized as contributing to Complete Streets, including: street and sidewalk lighting; pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements; access improvements for freight; access improvements, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; public transit facilities accommodation including, but not limited, to pedestrian access improvement to transit stops and stations; street trees and landscaping; drainage; and street amenities; and

WHEREAS, It creates an expectation that MNDOT projects within the city will implement policies and procedures with the construction, reconstruction or other changes of transportation facilities on arterial streets to support the creation of Complete Streets including capital improvements, re-channelization projects and major maintenance, recognizing that all streets are different and in each case user needs must be balanced; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF La Crescent AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. La Crescent will plan for, design and construct all new City transportation improvement projects to provide appropriate accommodation for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and persons of all abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users, as provided for below.

Section 2. La Crescent will incorporate Complete Streets principles into: Transportation Strategic Plan; Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans; and other city plans, manuals, rules, regulations and programs as appropriate.

Section 3. Because freight is important to the basic economy of the City and has unique right-of-way needs to support that role, freight will be the major priority on streets classified as Major Truck Streets. Complete Street improvements that are consistent with freight mobility but also support other modes may be considered on these streets.

Section 4. The Planning Commission, working through the Bike and Pedestrian Committee, shall have the opportunity to review and comment on the Capital Transportation Plan and preliminary designs for specific transportation projects. The Bicycle Pedestrian Committee of the Planning Commission shall annually review the plan and offer written comment to the City Administrator and Council.

Section 5. Except in unusual or extraordinary circumstances, Complete Streets principles will not apply:

- * to repairs made pursuant to limited term projects and repairs;
- * to ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g., mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair and surface treatments such as chip seal, or interim measures on detour or haul routes);
- * where the City Administrator issues a documented exception to the City Council concluding that application of Complete Street principles is unnecessary or inappropriate because it would be contrary to public safety; or
- * where other available means or factors indicate an absence of need, including future need.

Section 5. Complete Streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time. It is the Council's intent that all sources of transportation funding be drawn upon to implement Complete Streets. The City believes that maximum financial flexibility is important to implement Complete Streets principles.