

City of
Jackson
Active
Living
Plan

June

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Prepared by
the Southwest
Regional
Development
Commission

JACKSON ACTIVE LIVING PLAN

Why Active Living?

“When you are trying to build a street, you really have to look at the place you are designing and say: Is the function of this place to create wealth or is the function of this particular roadway to move cars quickly?...”

*The highest returning types of building form--are the kind that were built prior to WWII. It's where you've got the line of shops with a second story of apartment or living unit. The kind of stuff that you see on Main Streets all over this country. There's a reason our ancestors built that way. It's really, really financially productive. Some of the obstacles to doing that today: one of them includes the fact that we've just over-engineered and over-built our streets. A lot of that comes from national standards that have been established; a lot of it comes from the way that funding comes down through the Feds and the state and the mandates that come with that in terms of what the design capacities have to be. But one of the simplest solutions to getting these neighborhoods back is just to go out and narrow up the street lanes. When you narrow up the street lanes, cars drive slower, people feel more comfortable there. They walk across the streets, to a store across the street. And in a real subtle and cheap way you get a lot more pedestrian traffic, a lot more retail, a lot more people. And people spend money, and that's what makes a place wealthier. **When people are there, people invest more.**”¹*

Active Living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into your daily routine. It starts with choosing to walk or bike instead of taking the car. This choice is influenced by the built environment.

Goal: To enable the City of Mountain Lake to become a more walkable community through strategic pedestrian improvements outlined in the Mountain Lake Active Living Plan.

Objective: Identify destinations, gaps, areas of concern, and prioritize projects for addressing pedestrian infrastructure in the City of Mountain Lake.

A Proposal: Think about walkability and bikeability when considering decisions that influence the built environment.



¹ Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

I Introduction

Active Living Plans are community plans to promote an active lifestyle for all residents. The focus of this Active Living Plan was on identifying destinations, gaps in pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks and trails), areas of concern, and prioritizing projects to make the community more pedestrian friendly. Through the implementation of this plan, the City of Jackson will become more walkable and bikeable, and this will encourage the community to be more physically active. By promoting a more active lifestyle, there are a number of positive externalities that include: economic benefits, reduced traffic congestion, better air quality, and an overall healthier community.

“In 1969, approximately 50 percent of children in the US walked or bicycled to school, with approximately 87 percent of children living within one mile of school walking or bicycling. Today, fewer than 15 percent of schoolchildren walk or bicycle to school. As a result, kids today are less active, less independent and less healthy.”²

Benefits

There are a number of individual and community benefits of creating a more pedestrian friendly community.

Economic Development Benefits

Economic Development does not have one singular definition. Attracting businesses is only one strategy for economic development. Another strategy is to concentrate on attracting and retaining residents. Part of that strategy is planning for pedestrians and developing community facilities. Supporting walking and biking can have a positive impact on attracting and retaining residents, businesses, and workers. Compact, walkable developments provide economic development benefits through increased property values, enhanced marketability, and faster sales than conventional developments.³

Livability is a primary economic development strategy. A significant element of livability is creating a pedestrian friendly community. The City of Jackson does have a well-developed sidewalk and trail network, but there are gaps and connectivity issues.

The City of Jackson and Southwest Minnesota has had difficulties attracting workers to move to the region. Southwest Minnesota has some of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. Southwest MN has about as many people unemployed as there are jobs available; however, factors on both the supply side and the demand side come into play. On the supply side, hiring difficulties are generally caused by a mismatch between job requirements and the training, skills, and experience of the applicant. On the

² Safe Routes to School National Partnership. Accessed: 12/26/14. Available: <http://saferoutespartnership.org/about/history/what-is-safe-routes-to-school>

³ Transportation Policy Institute: Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: <http://www.vtpi.org/walkability.pdf>

demand side, hiring difficulties are generally caused by candidates' preferences such as work hours, compensation, geographic location, etc.

The City of Jackson Economic Development Office conducted a survey to research what percentage of workers in Jackson actually live in Jackson. Twenty of Jackson's major employers participated in the survey in the spring of 2015. Only 36 percent of workers live within the City of Jackson. Only 906 of the 2,504 workers who were surveyed live within the City of Jackson. How can the City of Jackson and other cities in southwest Minnesota attract people to not only work in their city, but live there as well?

Property values are one of the more significant variables impacting where people want to live. If you build or buy a house you want to have a return on your investment. Another element of the economic benefits of a more walkable community is their effect on property values. "Houses with the above-average levels of walkability command a premium of about \$4,000 to \$34,000."⁴ Higher property values can help to increase the tax base for your city. In the City of Jackson, higher property values could help to entice new housing construction. Currently, the cost of building a new home in some areas of Southwest Minnesota may not generate a positive net return when trying to sell the new house. The construction costs of a new home are higher than the market price of a house in the region. This is only one of the reasons why several cities in Southwest Minnesota are facing housing shortages.

The National Realtors Association points to the changing behavior of home buyers, "people prefer to live in communities that allow them to walk to shops, parks and other destinations and will pay more for a home that allows them to do just that."⁵ First time home buyers are looking for neighborhoods and cities that are more walkable. "Millennials, though, are just part of the picture. As baby boomers get older, many are opting to live in places where they don't have to drive as much to get to services and where they can age in place."⁶ This is a national trend and Southwest Minnesota needs to recognize livability, walkability, and bikeability as economic development tools.

Health Benefits

Walking and biking are two of the most popular ways to integrate regular physical activity into your daily routine. Physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Physical activity can help:

- ▶ Control your weight
- ▶ Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease

⁴ National Realtors Association. The Value of Walkability. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: <http://www.realtor.org/newsroom/real-estate-story-ideas/the-value-of-walkability> Source: Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>

⁵ National Realtors Association. The Value of Walkability. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: <http://www.realtor.org/newsroom/real-estate-story-ideas/the-value-of-walkability> Source: Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>

⁶ Builder Magazine. Why Smart Builders Care About Walkability. Accessed: 5/29/15. Available: http://www.builderonline.com/land/development/why-smart-builders-care-about-walkability_o

- ▶ Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- ▶ Reduce your risk of some cancers
- ▶ Strengthen your bones and muscles
- ▶ Improve your mental health and mood
- ▶ Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, if you're an older adult
- ▶ Increase your chances of living longer

Transportation Benefits

Communities that have pedestrian scale infrastructure and programs promoting walking and biking tend to be more physically active. “People who live by trails are 50 percent more likely to meet physical activity guidelines.”⁷ Adding pedestrian infrastructure and promoting walking and biking will help to reduce:

- ▶ Roadway congestion
- ▶ Time wasted stuck in traffic
- ▶ Driver frustration
- ▶ Pollution

“Roadway improvements to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists also can enhance safety for motorists. For example, adding paved shoulders on two-lane roads has been shown to reduce the frequency of run-off-road, head-on, and sideswipe motor vehicle crashes.”⁸

Environmental Benefits

Newer developments in cities have moved away from sidewalks on both sides of the street, having garages facing the alleyway behind the house, and having similar sized lots. This creates a disincentive to walk and bike and decreases the interconnectedness of the community. A study conducted by the University of British Columbia found that lowering neighborhoods’ walkability increases the use of motor vehicles and, therefore, raises the air pollution and body mass index per capita.⁹ Cul-de-Sacs were also found to decrease the walkability of a neighborhood.

Motor vehicle traffic generated by the travel to and from school adds 20 to 30 percent more traffic

⁷ Active Living Research. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available:

http://activelivingresearch.org/files/ALR_Brief_ActiveTransportation_0.pdf

⁸ University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available:

<http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/factsheet.cfm>

⁹ Environmental Health Perspectives. Healthy Neighborhoods: Walkability and Air Pollution. Accessed 1/22/15.

Available: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2801167/>

volume to the roads.¹⁰ Replacing short trips with walking or biking can help reduce air pollution and energy consumption. There are also a number health benefits (refer to health benefits above).

Geographic Location

City of Jackson

"The City of Jackson is located in southwestern Minnesota at the intersection of Interstate 90 and U.S. Hwy. 71, nestled in a valley of the West Fork of the Des Moines River. With a population of 3,299, Jackson is the largest city and the county seat of Jackson County. In 2010 the county was designated as "the healthiest county in Minnesota" and routinely ranks in the top ten. A beautiful and historic county courthouse is centrally located on a downtown hillside, and a historic downtown district features a variety of strong retail and service-based businesses, including a classic sidewalk movie theatre offering the latest releases in 2D and 3D formats. Jackson also boasts a 300 acre industrial park with strong and expanding industrial residents, such as AGCO, Pioneer Seed, Technical Services for Electronics, Accent, Ziegler, Last Deck, HitchDoc, and USF Holland; and 500 adjacent acres are ready for industrial development. Outdoor enthusiasts will find within the city a beautiful and expanding biking and walking trail system, a disc golf course, a skate park, baseball and softball complexes, numerous other parks, and fishing opportunities along the river...recently restored with riffles and pools. Beyond all that, Jackson's best feature is its warm and welcoming people...ordinary people doing extraordinary things."¹¹

Mission Statement

The City of Jackson, Minnesota, is a welcoming community that promotes a healthy, active lifestyle for all ages; that values its youth; that celebrates cultural diversity; that experiences and nurtures a learning environment; and that capitalizes on the Interstate to expand its manufacturing, Ag services and emerging technologies base and to its vibrant downtown and unique attractions.

Jackson County

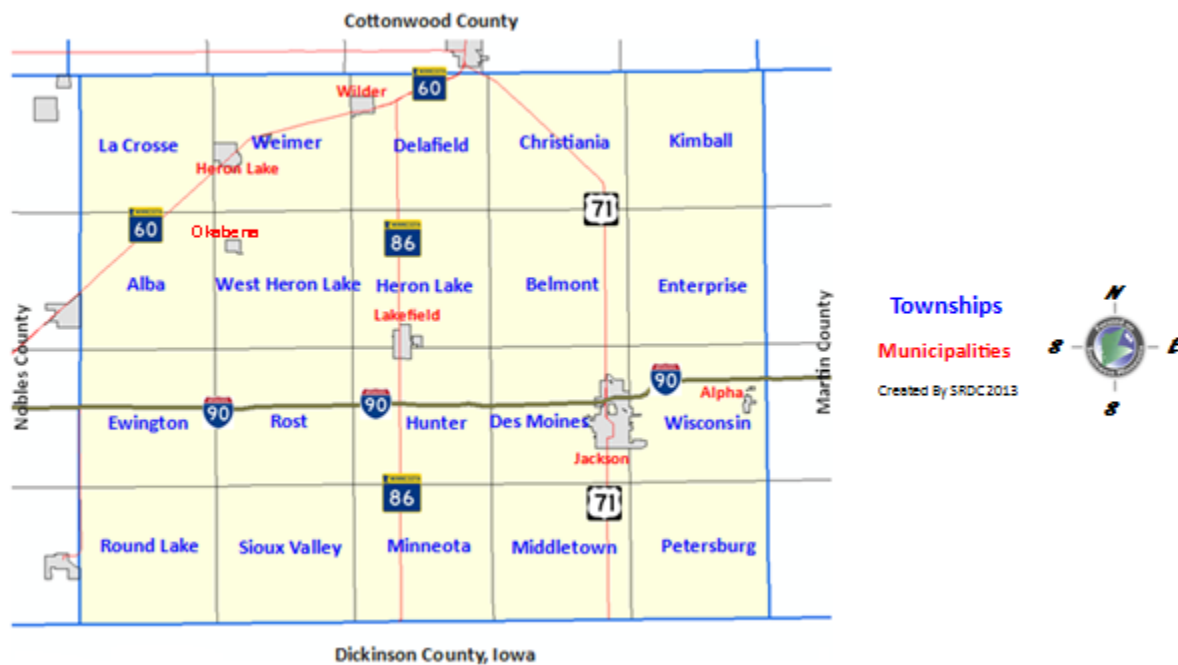
Jackson County is located in southwest Minnesota. The county is bordered on the north by Cottonwood County, on the south by the State of Iowa, on the east by Martin County, and on the west by Nobles County. Cities within Jackson County include: Alpha, Heron Lake, Lakefield, Jackson, Okabena, and Wilder. In addition, the county has four unincorporated communities— Bergen, Petersburg, Spafford, and Sioux Valley.

¹⁰ Safe Routes to School Guide. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide_Introduction.pdf

¹¹ City of Jackson. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: http://www.cityofjacksonmn.com/index.asp?SEC=423E110B-7F4C-468F-96D5-1E2FF1F7E013&Type=B_BASIC

Table #1

Jackson County Jurisdiction Map



II Planning Process

The City of Jackson Active Living Planning Process was an efficient planning process that was based on identifying destinations, gaps, areas of concern, and potential projects. The City of Jackson does have an organized trails committee, Friends of the Jackson County Trails. This is a countywide group that works towards making Jackson County more walkable and bikeable.

Planning Process

- Wikimapping (continuous...)
- Community Meeting #1
- Community Survey
- Community Meeting #2
- City Council will rank projects

Wikimapping

Wikimapping is an online public input tool community members can use to identify issues regarding walking and biking in the City of Jackson. Community members can provide input by adding a point or route on an interactive map or by commenting on existing posts. Wikimapping was an effective way of engaging community members who were not able to attend the two community meetings.

Community members could add points on an interactive map regarding: barriers to walking and biking, bus and transit stops, existing bike parking, lighting is poor, need bike parking, places I go, problem

intersection, school, driving issue, traffic and congestion, and trash is an issue. Community members could add a route on the interactive map regarding: existing on street bike route, high stress area (speed/ traffic), no sidewalk, on street bike route needed, recreational route, routes I'd like to use, route to and from after school activity, route to and from school, shortcut I use (not a trail or road), sidewalk in poor condition. When a community member clicks on a point the user can select one of these categories and a box will appear. The user can then write a description of the issue in the box. Other users can click on the point or route and agree, disagree, or abstain with the comment. Other users can also comment on the existing comment.

Community Meeting #1

The first community meeting was held at City Hall on January 9th, 2015, from 7:30am to 8:30am. The agenda for the meeting was to discuss the local issues and concerns that were identified via Wikimapping and conversations with community members.

Community members were also able to identify additional issues and concerns that were not identified before the meeting. The first meeting was an opportunity to discuss the existing conditions and voice opinions and concerns regarding walking and biking in Jackson.

Community Survey

A community survey was distributed between the first and second community meeting. The survey was distributed along with the City's monthly utility bill. The survey was another tool to engage community members who were not able to attend the two community meetings. The survey asked community members eight questions. Five of these questions had community members quantify the category on a scale of one to 10. The Jackson Community Assessment Survey can be found in the Appendix to this plan.

The quantitative and qualitative questions include:

- Did you have room to walk?
- Was it is to cross the street?
- Did drivers behave well?
- Could you follow safety rules?
- Was your walk pleasant?
- General atmosphere (summary of all the categories)

The qualitative questions included:

- Are there any routes you would like to walk and currently cannot due to safety issues, existing gaps in the sidewalk network, or other pedestrian infrastructure that discourages you from walking or biking?
- Please highlight on the map the route you walked or biked in Jackson.

Community Meeting #2

The second community meeting was held at City Hall on March 16th, 2015, from 7:30am to 8:30am. The agenda for the meeting was to discuss potential goals and strategies regarding walking and biking in Jackson. There were a number of issues that were identified and discussed at the first community meeting on January 9th. At the second meeting, community members were still able to discuss existing conditions that were not identified at the first meeting.

City Council Meeting

A draft Jackson Active Living Plan was presented to the Jackson City Council on May 19th, 2015. The City Council was asked to rank the goals and strategies and provide feedback regarding the plan. A Complete Streets Policy was also presented to the City Council as a next step in ensuring pedestrians are considered in all land use decisions. The Complete Streets Policy can be found in the Appendix to this plan.

III Existing Conditions

Existing Health Issues

Research conducted by the USDA shows that one in three American children are overweight or obese, putting them at risk of preventable disease like diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.¹² In 2008, the obesity rate in Jackson County was 28.2 percent while the state average was 25.9 percent. The number of residents in Jackson County who were obese in 2008 was 2,342. In 2014, the obesity rate in Jackson County was 30 percent while the state average was 26 percent.¹³

According to the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey, on a typical day 19 percent of Jackson County 5th graders reported that they spend zero hours going outside, taking a walk, or going for a bike ride. Eighty-one percent of 5th graders reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day.¹⁴ In 2013, 61 percent of Jackson County 8th grade students reported being overweight or obese.¹⁵

¹² Kuphal Kyle and Fodness Mavis. New school meal standards target obesity. Accessed 12/26/14. Available at: <http://www.pipestonestar.com/Stories/Story.cfm?SID=38130>

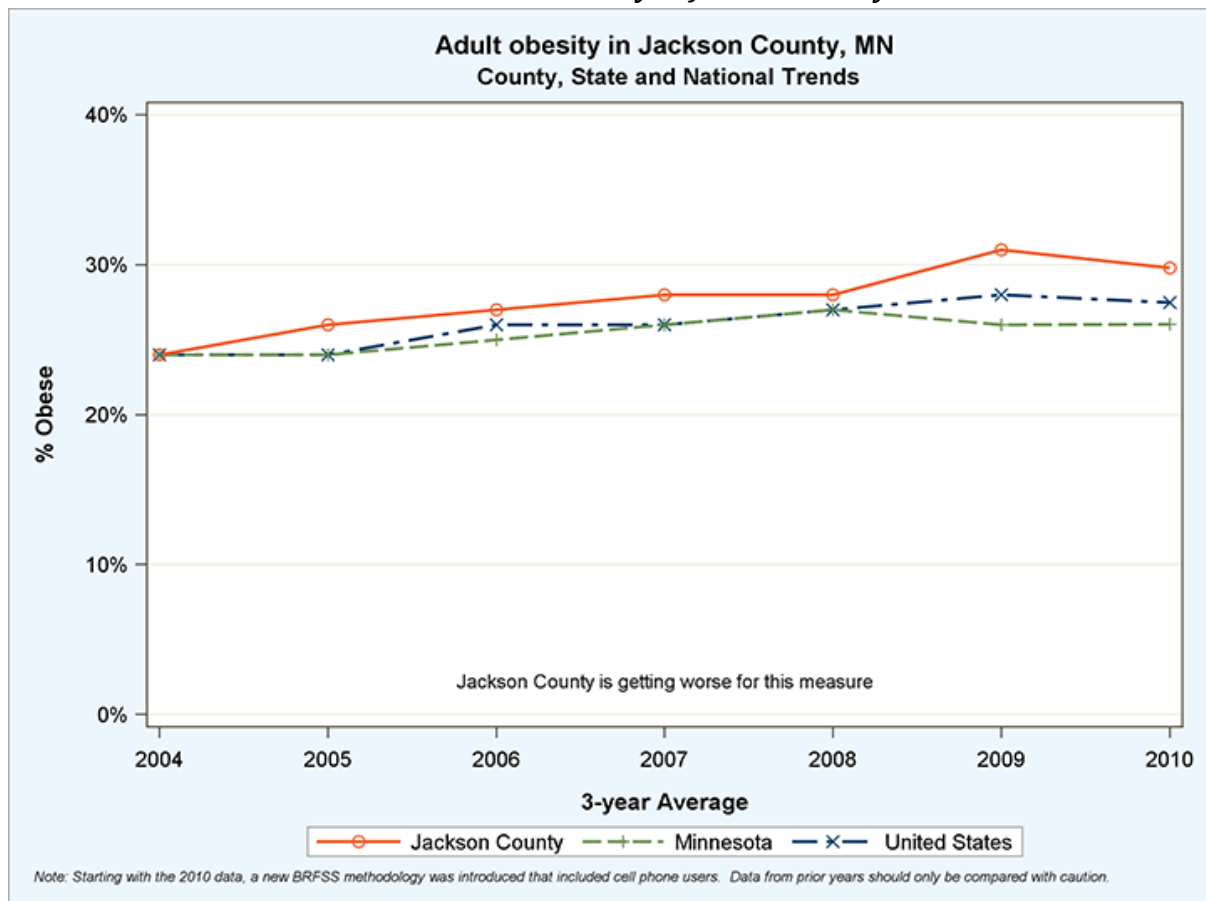
¹³ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. County Health Rankings. Accessed 12/26/14. Available: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/minnesota/2014/rankings/jackson/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

¹⁴ Minnesota Department of Health. Minnesota Student Survey. Accessed: 12/29/14. Available: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/countytables/jackson13.pdf>

¹⁵ Minnesota Department of Health. Minnesota Student Survey. Accessed: 12/29/14. Available: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/countytables/jackson13.pdf>

Table #2

Adult Obesity in Jackson County



16

Being overweight or obese not only increases the risk of premature death and many other diseases and health conditions, but there are substantial economic costs as well. There are both direct and indirect costs associated with being overweight or obese. Direct costs are the higher medical costs associated with diagnosing, treating, and trying to prevent conditions related to being overweight or obese.

Indirect costs of being overweight and obese include morbidity and mortality costs such as lost productivity, absenteeism, and premature death. “Based on national estimates, the overall financial burden of obesity in Minnesota in 2006 was estimated at \$2.8 billion.”¹⁷ The medical costs associated with obesity nationally were estimated at \$147 billion in 2008. This translates into a \$1,429 higher yearly medical cost for people who are obese over those of normal weight.¹⁷

Since the late 1960’s, there has been a dramatic decline in the percentage of students who walked or bicycled to school. Nationally, only 13 percent of students grades Kindergarten through 8th grade

¹⁶ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. County Health Rankings. Accessed: 12/30/14. Available: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/minnesota/2014/rankings/jackson/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

¹⁷ Minnesota Medicine. The Obesity Challenge. 12/26/14 Available at: <http://www.minnesotamedicine.com/PastIssues/December2012/theobesitychallenge.aspx>

reported usually walking or bicycling to school in 2009, while 48 percent of students' kindergarten through 8th grade reported usually walking or bicycling to school in 1969. Distance is a strong indicator associated with how children get to school, but only 35 percent of kindergarten through 8th grade students nationally, who lived within a mile of school, reported usually walking or bicycling to school once a week. In 1969, 89 percent of kindergarten through 8th grade students, who lived within a mile of school, reported usually walking or bicycling to school once a week.¹⁸

Table #3

Trends in Childhood Obesity & Overweight



CDC, Nation Center for Health Statistics

Just a decade or two ago, a large number of children were free-range children. These children walked or bicycled around the neighborhood and community being more independent. Increasingly children are dependent on their parents for transportation. Instead of walking or bicycling children are getting rides. Five to seven percent of vehicle miles traveled and 10 to 14 percent of all personal vehicle trips made in high traffic times in the morning are personal vehicles taking Kindergarten through 8th grade students to school.¹⁹

Reducing the number of vehicle trips would create a more efficient, safe, and connected community. Getting children walking and bicycling again is one way to combat inactivity and the dramatic rise in obesity. Addressing obesity through Safe Routes to School and promoting an active lifestyle has a number of positive externalities.

¹⁸ The National Center for Safe Routes to School. How Children Get to School: School Travel Patterns from 1969 to 2009. Accessed: 12/26/2012. Available:

http://saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/NHTS_school_travel_report_2011_0.pdf

¹⁹ The National Center for Safe Routes to School. How Children Get to School. Accessed 12/31/2014. Available:

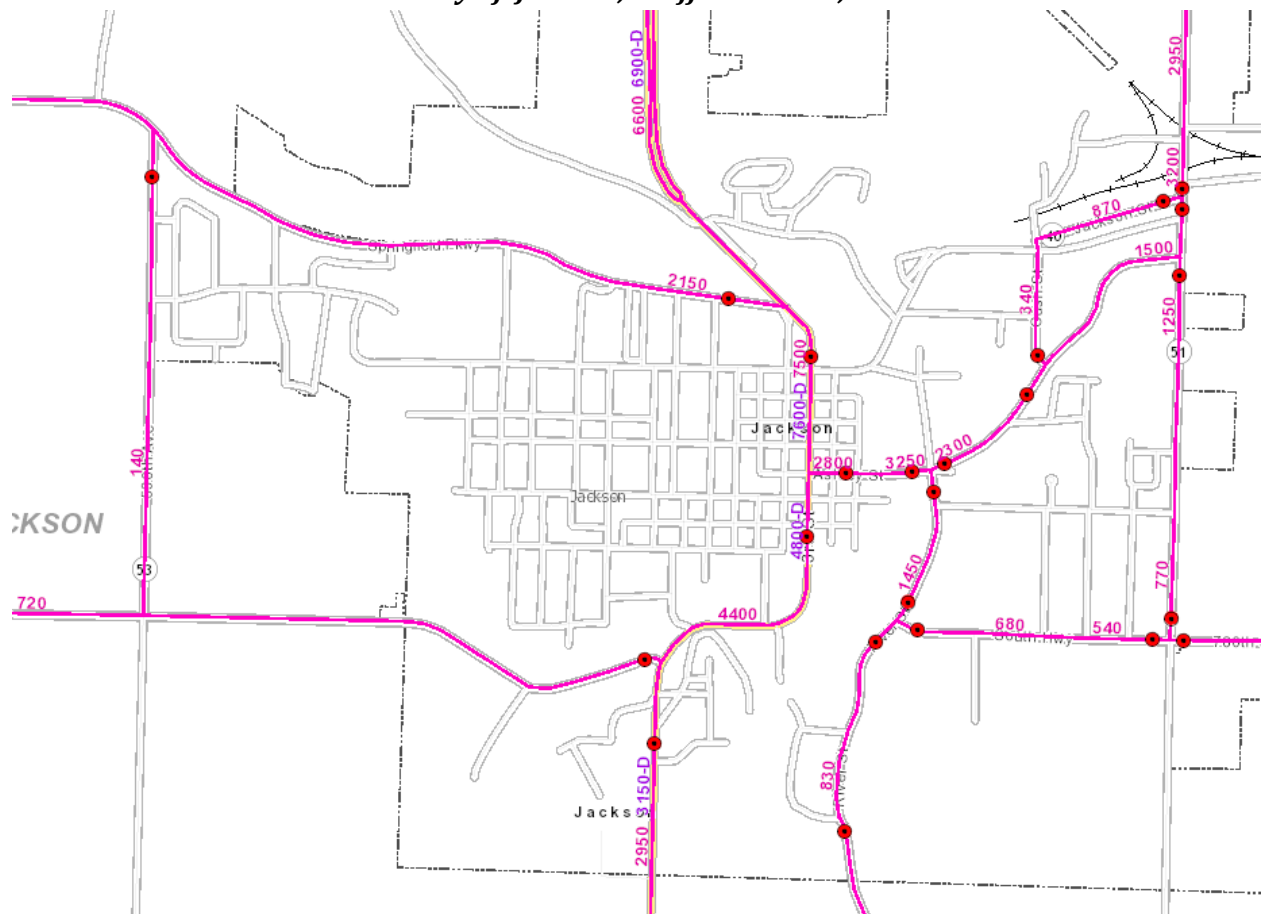
http://saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/NHTS_school_travel_report_2011_0.pdf

Traffic Volumes

The Jackson Active Living Planning Process analyzed traffic volumes from 2013.

Table #4

City of Jackson, Traffic Volumes, 2013



Crash Data

The Jackson Active living Planning Process analyzed crash data within the City of Jackson. Within the City of Jackson, there were 257 reported crash occurrences from 2004 through October 2014. Two of the outlined crashes involved a pedestrian (neither crash was fatal).

Table #5

City of Jackson Crash Data, 2004 through October 2014

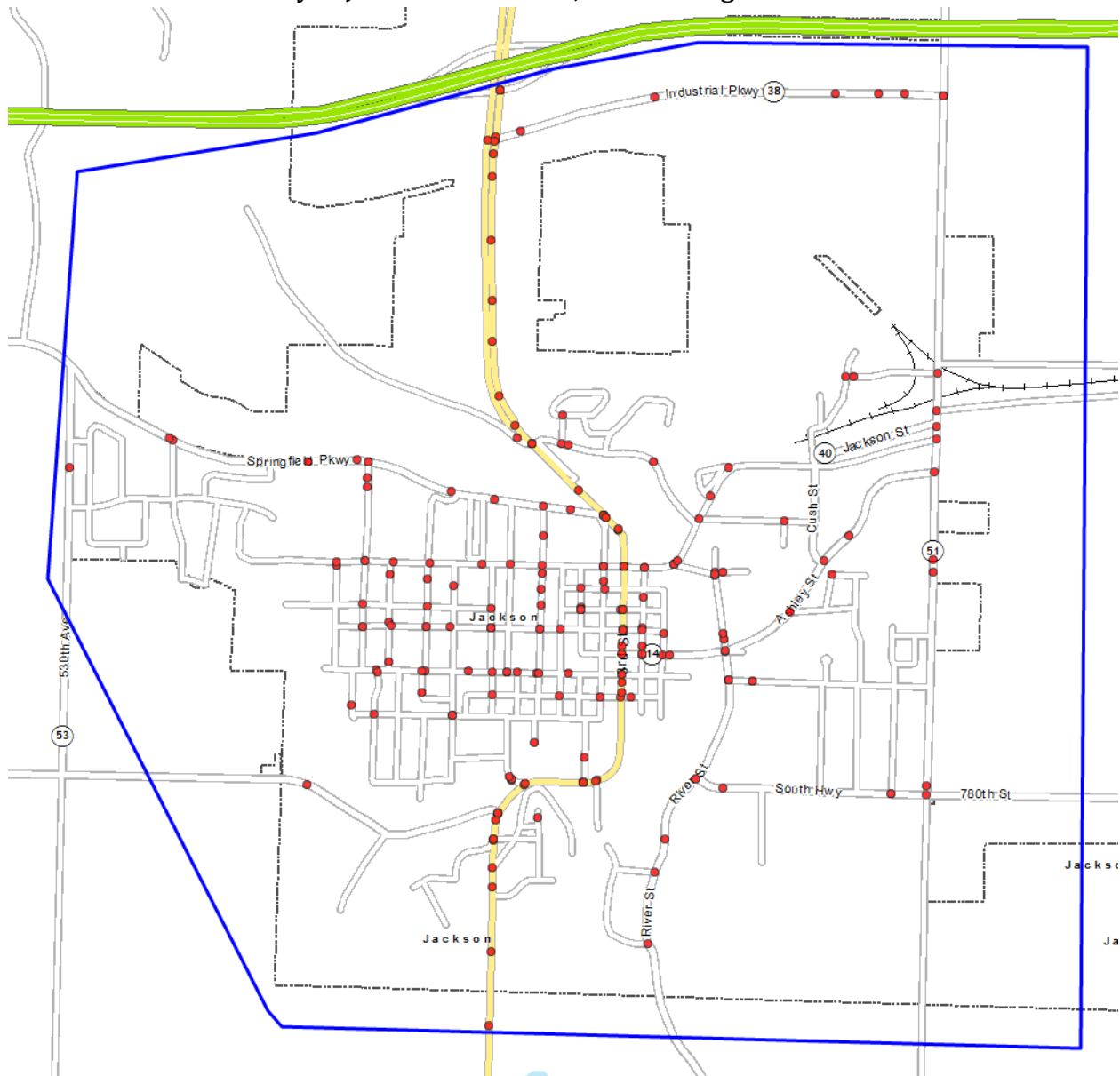


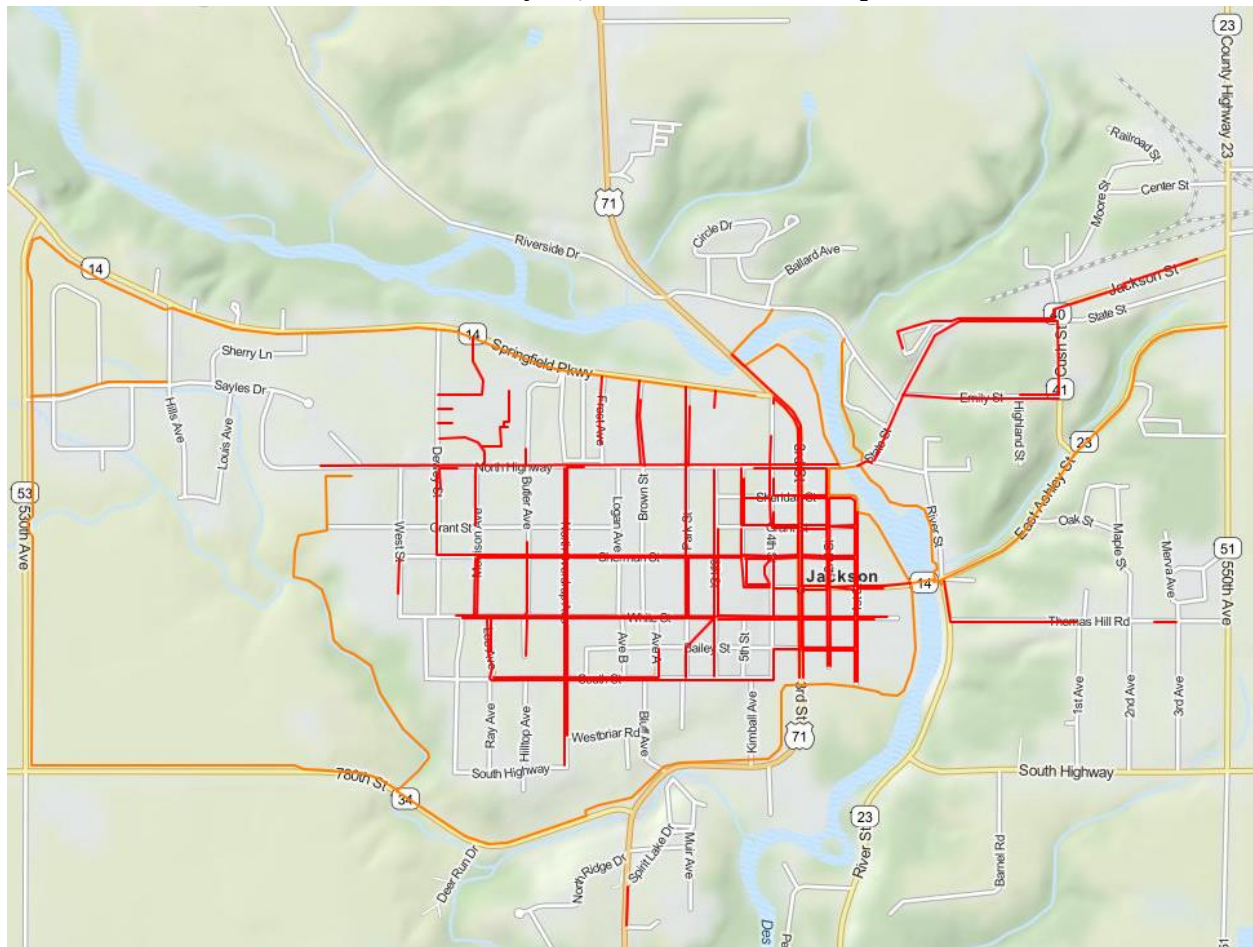
Table #6

Crash Data - PED / Bike



Table #7

City of Jackson Sidewalk Map



Walkability & Bikeability

Community members in the City of Jackson had an opportunity to rank the existing conditions in regards to walking and biking on a scale of one to 10 (10 being best and 1 being the worst). The categories that were ranked include: general atmosphere, did you have room to walk, was it easy to cross streets, did drivers behave well, could you follow safety rules, and was your walk pleasant. Refer to Appendix for the survey and the variables that impact each category. Below is a summary of the ranking for arrival and departure.

Table #8

Community Survey Summary

General Atmosphere	Room to Walk	Easy to Cross	Drivers Behave Well	Follow Safety Rules	Walk Pleasant
7	7	7	7	8	8

Main Themes

- Vehicles not stopping for pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Not a complete network of sidewalks – some areas of Jackson have no sidewalks.
- Trail and Sidewalk Maintenance – snow removal, gravel on the trail, etc.
- Bike parking needed to make it convenient to ride to stores and other key destinations.
- Crossing Highway 71 is difficult. Highway 71 is a barrier to walk from one side of Jackson to the other.
- Pedestrian scale lighting issues – there is limited lighting along the trail, which does not encourage walking and biking later in the evening.
- Connecting pedestrian infrastructure to new developments (the donut hole – area north of Ballard Ave and south of the industrial park. This development could be one of the neighborhoods in Jackson with the highest connectivity.
- Parking and visibility issues along Highway 71. Difficult to see oncoming traffic with buildings and parked car

Below is a summary of comments – this is not an exhaustive list of comments. The list of comments highlights issues and needs that were identified in the Community Survey.

General Atmosphere:

- Maybe more benches needed along full route.
- My address is Homedale. If I walked, it would be on US 71 which I feel is not safe to walk.
- No good place to walk and cross Highway 71
- Dis-continuous sidewalks, crumbled existing sidewalks.
- Wish you would clean the paths in winter months.
- Wish sidewalks had a better walking surface in some areas of town.
- There is a lot of room for improvement in our neighborhood. Mainly the lack of sidewalks.

Room to walk:

- Sidewalks start & stop forcing people to walk in the street.
- Sidewalk Network Non-Existent in spots.
- Some of the trails, especially by the schools/Springfield Pkwy should have snow removal.

- No snow removal in a lot of areas. Icy - no salt or gravel applied.
- Sidewalks are not shoveled; the walking trail is not plowed.
- Some homeowners need to replace their sidewalks.
- Too many people don't shovel their snow - issue some citations!
- New additions need sidewalks! Should be part of putting in curb!
- Incomplete sidewalk network.
- I walk to work at Ag Co – it's horrible
- Missing or damaged sidewalks make it a little annoying.
- Could always use more sidewalks - I usually walk in the street.

Easy to Cross Street:

- Need pedestrian right of way signs.
- Crossing Highway 71 by the flower market is difficult.
- Horrible to cross Highway 71 at Dann's Island
- Highway 71 can be difficult.
- Some crosswalks require veering towards street so you don't have to jump the curb hump directly to the sidewalk - strollers.
- Crossing the bridge on Highway 71 by Springfield Parkway is not safe – pedestrian safety is going to be part of the reconstruction bridge project.
- The intersection of Springfield Parkway and Highway 71 is not safe. A High intensity Activated crossWalk (HAWK) is going to be installed south of this intersection to improve pedestrian safety in this area.
- Highway 71 can be hard to cross sometimes.
- Walking along old Dairy Queen Hill is a blind stretch - both up and down - can't see around the corner & people are traveling fast in cars.
- Drivers don't yield for walk lights.
- Cross walks across Highway 71 and Main St need to be marked so drivers will slow down for pedestrians.

Drivers Behave Well:

- I have seen it all and if I don't watch carefully I would be hurt or dead.
- Drivers sometimes don't pay attention.
- Drivers look for PEDs some of the time but not all of the time.
- Have to look out for yourself when crossing the street.
- Cars are always speeding by & don't come to complete stop @ stop signs.
- Drivers drive too fast on N Hwy & don't stop for kids crossing.
- Drivers do not yield to pedestrians
- You can't count on drivers stopping for PEDs.
- Cars stop past the white line and block the crosswalk.
- Cars turning right do not stop for PEDs crossing the street.
- Drivers need to slow down.
- Depends on the day... When school (or a school event) has just ended.... BE CAREFUL
- Traffic speeds are an issue when entering town.
- Turning into walkers is most common problem.

Follow Safety Rules:

- Crosswalks should be identified better.
- Speeding on Springfield Parkway by the baseball diamonds.
- Some bikers do not follow traffic safety laws.
- Walk Pleasant
- Sidewalks & Streets are generally not well lit. Also, walking trail is not lit at all.
- Would be nice to have lighting along the trail from City Hall to Ashley Park for safety reasons.
- Grass could stand to be cut more frequently at Ashley Park.
- A lot of goose poop on trail near river. Not sure if that is something that should be cleaned more.
- A lot of garbage in the ditches along the trail.

- People need to clean up after their pets.

Other Comments:

- All of Emily St is horrible. Huge hole in the street for water drainage that has sharp metal exposed. Looks like a lawsuit waiting to happen. Marked on map where hole is. Would hate to see some kid get all tore up due to negligence.
- There is getting to be few people that take pride in their home. Exterior - yards not kept up, junked vehicles and other trash, Jackson's 'Boat graveyard,' and tire pile. A lot of eyesores –
- Sidewalk or paths from Coop to Ag Co - many people walk, ride bike - I walk to Ag Co to work from west side of town and tough w/no decent walking.
- Sidewalk Network Non-Existent in spots!

Gaps in the Sidewalk / Trail Network

A number of gaps in the sidewalk / trail network were discussed as part of the Jackson Active Living Planning Process.

Table #9

Thomas Hill Sidewalk Gap

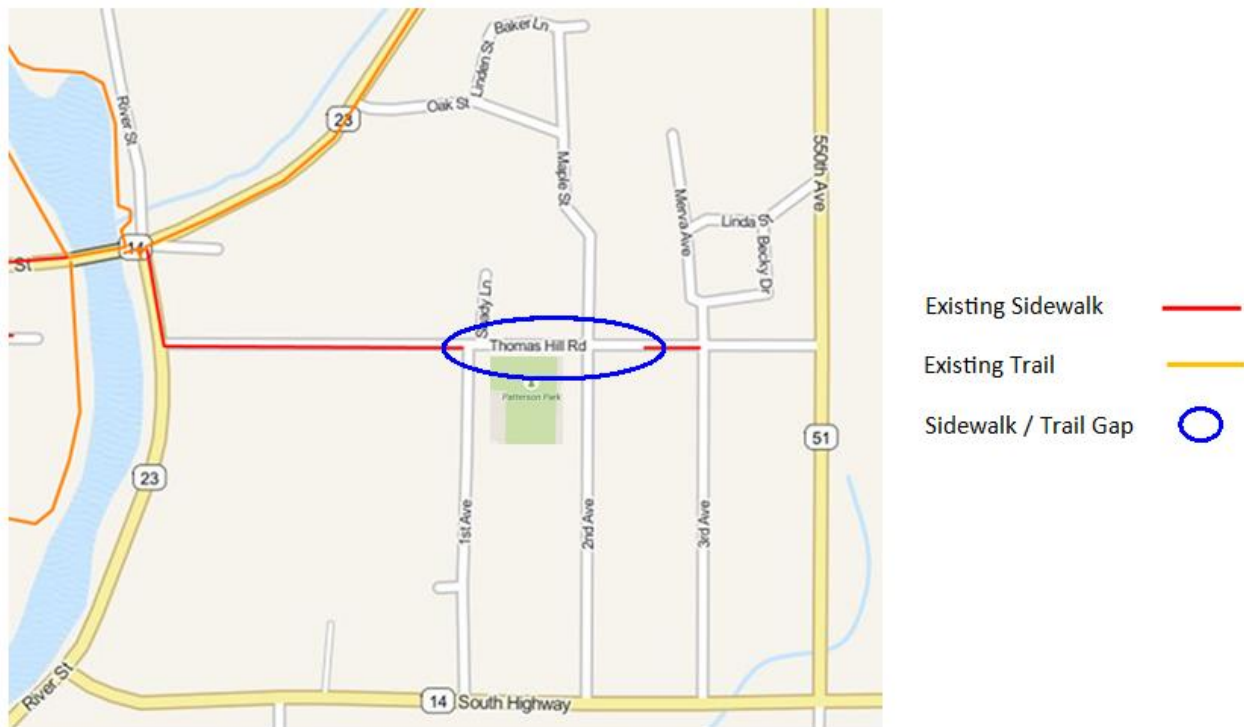


Table #10

North Highway (west side) Gap



Table #11

Jackson County Central High School Southeast Sidewalk Gap

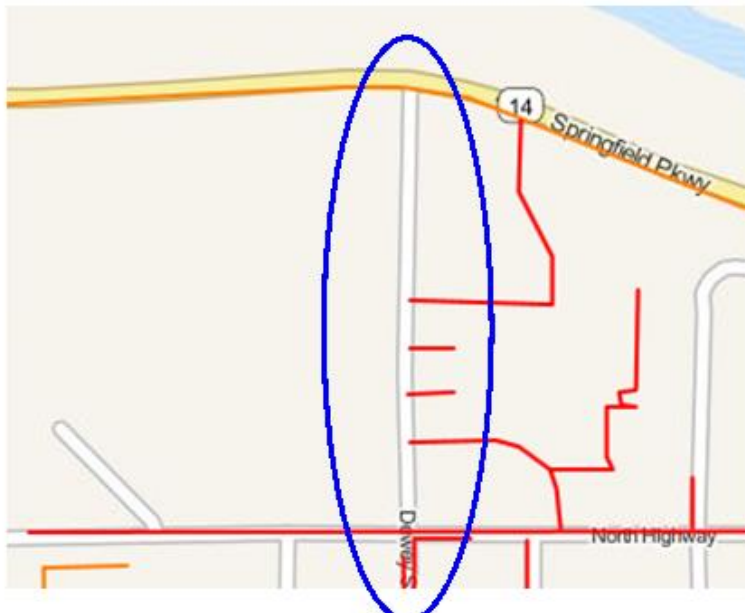


Sidewalk / Trail Gap



Table #12

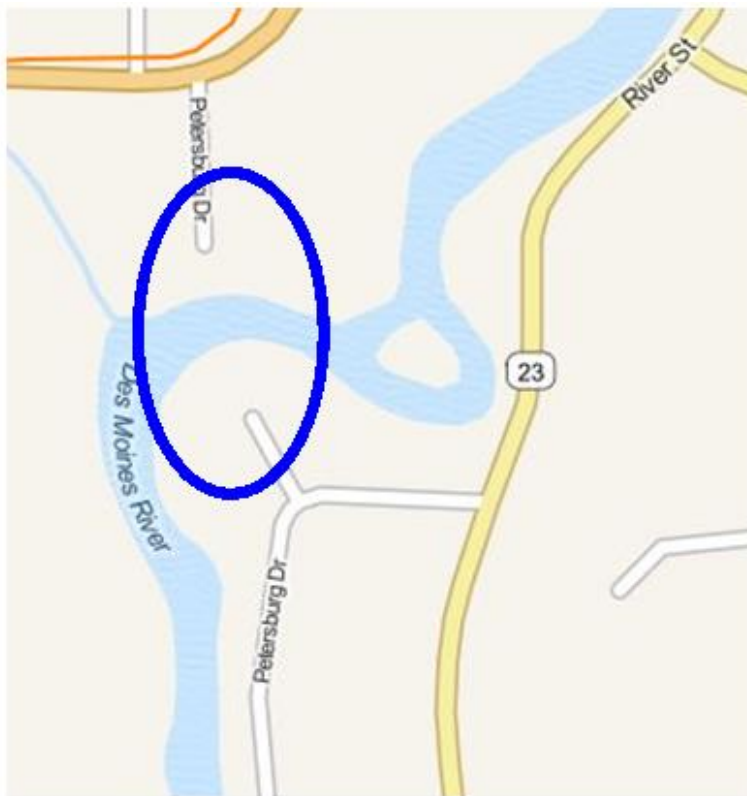
Dewey Street Gap



- Existing Sidewalk ———
- Existing Trail ———
- Sidewalk / Trail Gap ○

Table #13

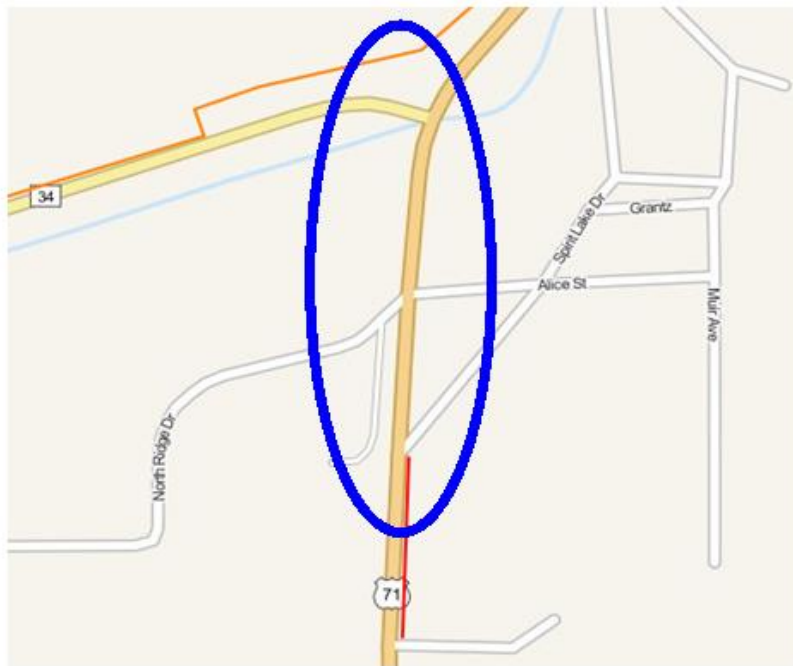
River Street / Disc Golf Course Gap



- Existing Sidewalk ———
- Existing Trail ———
- Sidewalk / Trail Gap ○

Table #14

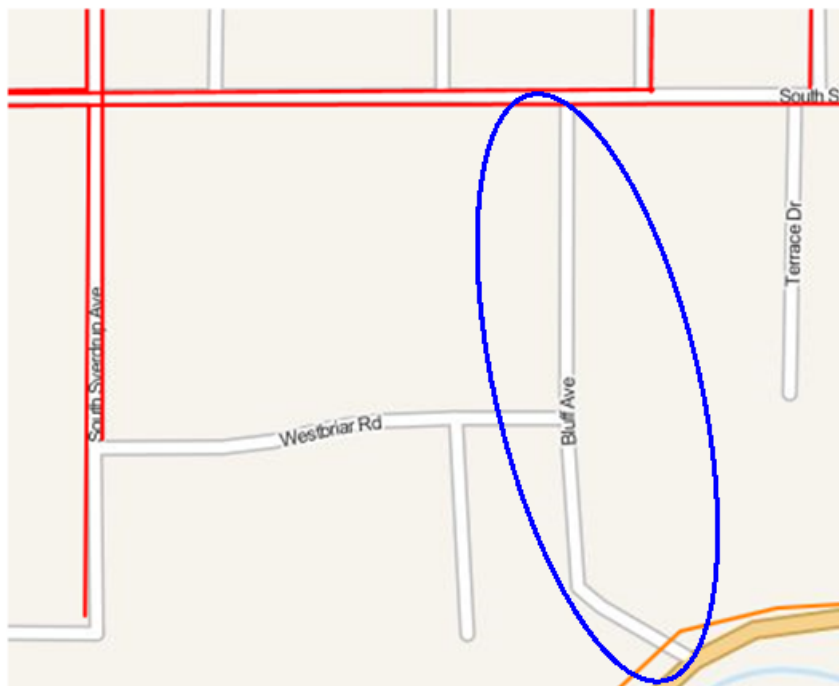
Sunrise Estate Gap



- Existing Sidewalk —
- Existing Trail —
- Sidewalk / Trail Gap ○

Table #15

Bluff Avenue Gap



- Existing Sidewalk —
- Existing Trail —
- Sidewalk / Trail Gap ○

IV Goals and Strategies

Goals are general guidelines that explain what the City of Jackson wants to achieve. Strategies narrow the general guidelines and define in more detail how the goal will be achieved. Strategies are the actual steps to be taken to achieve the goals. A strategy may just be the first step, but the general need for the project is outlined.

The identified Goals and Strategies were created throughout the planning process with input from the community residents. It should be noted that not every existing issue identified within the Existing Conditions Chapter has a goal outlined below. Goals were only developed for certain existing conditions and some issues did not have a definite solution. Identifying the existing condition is the first step in working towards a solution.

The city council ranked the infrastructure projects and the non-infrastructure. This ranking or prioritization will help with directing time and money. Prioritization does not mean that the first goal has to be accomplished before moving onto another goal.

The purpose of the prioritization is to show that there was a discussion about the possible options and with unlimited resources this is what they would choose to accomplish first. Due to scarce resources, it may be necessary to start with a goal that has less upfront costs and is relatively easier to implement. The goals and action steps being outlined in the Jackson Active Living Plan are recommendations, so during implementation modifications can take place. Additional engineering work may also be needed before implementation can take place.

Goal

To enable the City of Jackson to become a more walkable community through strategic pedestrian improvements outlined in the Jackson Active Living Plan.

Objective

Identify destinations, gaps, areas of concern, and prioritize projects for addressing pedestrian infrastructure in the City of Jackson.

Proposal

Think about walkability and bikeability when considering decisions that influence the built environment.



Jackson Infrastructure Goals & Strategies

Pedestrian Functional Classification - Streets

Goal: Ensure all streets in Jackson are Complete Streets.

Strategy:

Implement a Complete Streets Policy.

When constructing a new street or resurfacing an existing street, consider and discuss the function of that street and the pedestrian amenities needed to make that street safe for pedestrians.

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Some community members may not have access to a motor vehicle, so walking, biking, and transit are their primary transportation modes. Sidewalks and trails have a community benefit and help to increase connectivity within the community. If there are gaps in the sidewalk and trail network it is not convenient to walk and bike.

Different streets require different pedestrian amenities. A Complete Street does not have a singular definition. A Complete Street is any street you feel safe walking or biking on. A Complete Street does not have to have a sidewalk on both sides of the street, but you have to consider all users when deciding if is safe for pedestrians.

Younger children may need a sidewalk to separate them from vehicle traffic. Younger children may be learning how to ride a bike, so it is not safe for them to share the road with vehicle traffic. When making a decision whether a street needs sidewalks or not, the function of the street needs to be considered.

The Jackson City Council should classify streets in Jackson, so a discussion will occur around the function of the street. Below are three classifications that can be used to identify the pedestrian amenities a street needs.

► Connector Streets

- Connects primary destinations
- Highest traffic volumes streets
- Require the highest level of pedestrian amenities - Sidewalks on both sides of the street or a trail conveniently located along the corridor that connects key locations.

► Neighborhood Connector Streets

- Connects Residential Streets to Connector Streets
- Medium level traffic volume streets

- Require some pedestrian amenities – A sidewalk on one side of the street or the other is required or a trail conveniently located that connects the neighborhood to key locations. The sidewalk needs to have continuity throughout, so the route is not jumping back and forth from one side of the street to the other.

► Residential Streets

- All other streets
- Lower traffic speeds
- Lower traffic volumes
- Sidewalks are encouraged but there is no sidewalk requirement

New Developments

For new developments the developer should have to get an exemption from the Jackson City Council for why a sidewalk is not needed (street is wide, low traffic volumes, it is reasonable to walk on the street...).

Existing Sidewalks

To remove an existing section of sidewalk the landowner should be required to get approval from the Jackson City Council. This will help to prevent gaps in the sidewalk and trail network.

North Highway West Sidewalk Gap

Goal: Increase the connectivity of the Sayles Drive neighborhoods to the Jackson County Central High School.

Strategy:

Connect the trail along Sayles Drive with the sidewalk along North Highway that connects to the Jackson County Central High School.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

The neighborhoods along Sayles Drive on the west side of the City of Jackson are within a half mile of the Jackson County Central (JCC) High School and surrounding athletic fields and track. These neighborhoods are walkable, but students are not walking to and from school from these neighborhoods. The main obstacle is the gap in the sidewalk network along North Highway.

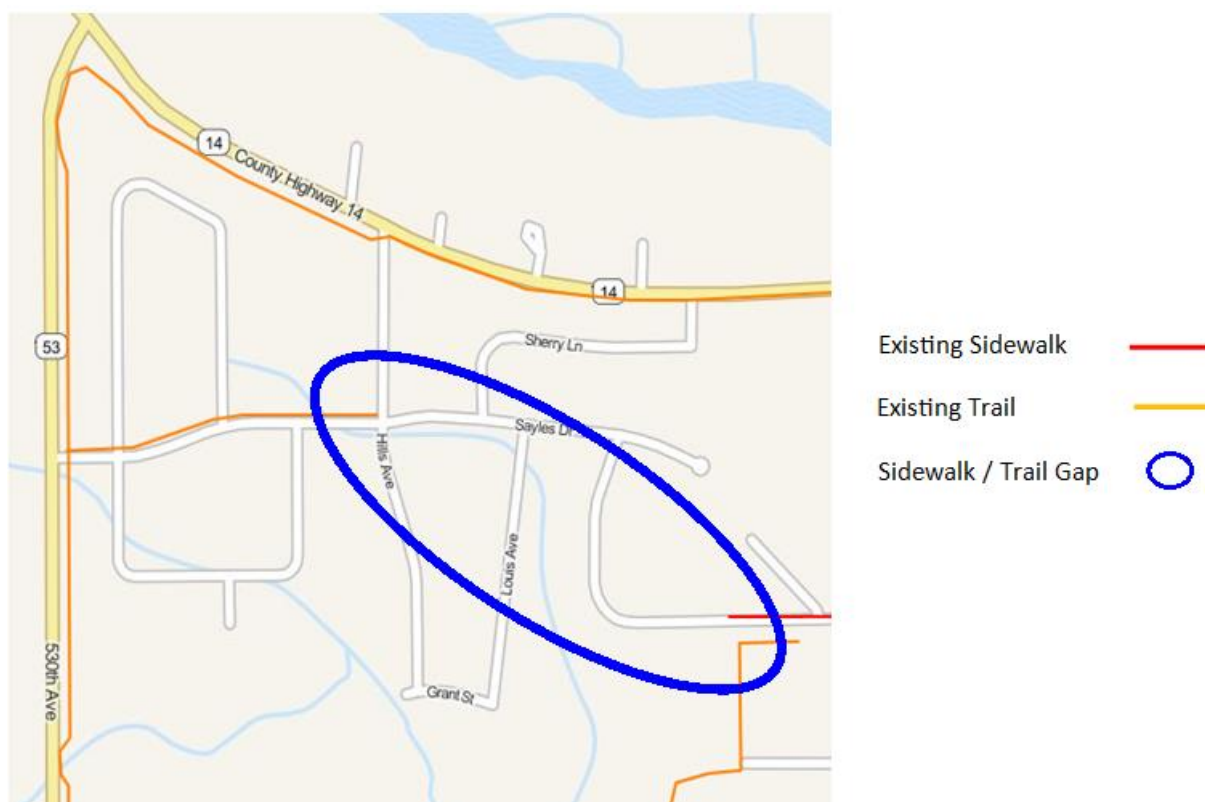
Middle School buses are loaded and unloaded at the JCC High School. Connecting the Sayles Drive neighborhood would provide a safe route to school for students in 7th – 12th grade. There is also a community benefit, since you are increasing the connectivity of the city to the athletic field, track, and other neighborhoods.

North Highway is a residential connector within the City of Jackson. North Highway is also a main artery within the City of Jackson. North Highway has been identified in the Jackson SRTS Plan as a high risk area for children walking and bicycling to school. Traffic volumes increase on North Highway during arrival and departure, not only from parents dropping off students at Riverside Elementary and JCC High School, but also with the addition of high school students driving to and from school. Higher traffic volumes make walking and biking to school on North Highway a safety issue.

North Highway is also a narrow roadway. As you head west on North Highway, the road turns to the north. Along this curve is the most dangerous area for pedestrians. There are no sidewalks in this area and the curve decreases driver visibility.

Due to high traffic volumes on North Highway, the lack of sidewalks, and the narrow road along the curve, it is not safe to walk and bike to school from the Sayles Drive Neighborhoods to the JCC High School and surrounding athletic fields and track. North Highway in this area functions as a Residential Collector, so a sidewalk is needed on one side of the street or the other. Adding a sidewalk to connect neighborhoods along Sayles Drive to the high school and surrounding athletic fields and track will encourage walking and biking by increasing pedestrian safety.

Table #16 **North Highway (west side) Gap**



Jackson County Central High School Gap - Southeast

Goal: Increase pedestrian safety by the southeast parking lot of the Jackson County Central High School.

Strategy:

Connect the sidewalk along Butler Avenue with the school sidewalk along the east side of the Jackson County Central High School.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

The southeast entrance to the Jackson County Central (JCC) High School is the main entrance to the gyms and weight room. This entrance is a very busy entrance during sporting events and other school and community events in the gyms. There is a gap in the sidewalk between the school sidewalks that runs around the school with the sidewalk along Butler Avenue.

Currently, pedestrians have to walk on the side of the parking lot, which is not safe. During arrival and departure, the southeast parking lot is filled with high school drivers. During school and community events in the gym, the southeast parking lot is one of the first parking lots to fill up.

It is not safe for pedestrians to walk along the side of the parking lot during arrival and departure and events in the gyms. Filling in this sidewalk gap will make it safer for students to walk to school. This safer environment will help to encourage students to walk to school.

Table #17 Jackson County Central High School Sidewalk Gap (southeast)



Sidewalk / Trail Gap



Thomas Hill Sidewalk Gap

Goal: Increasing walkability in the Thomas Hill neighborhood.

Strategy:

Connect the two sections of sidewalk on Thomas Hill Road.

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

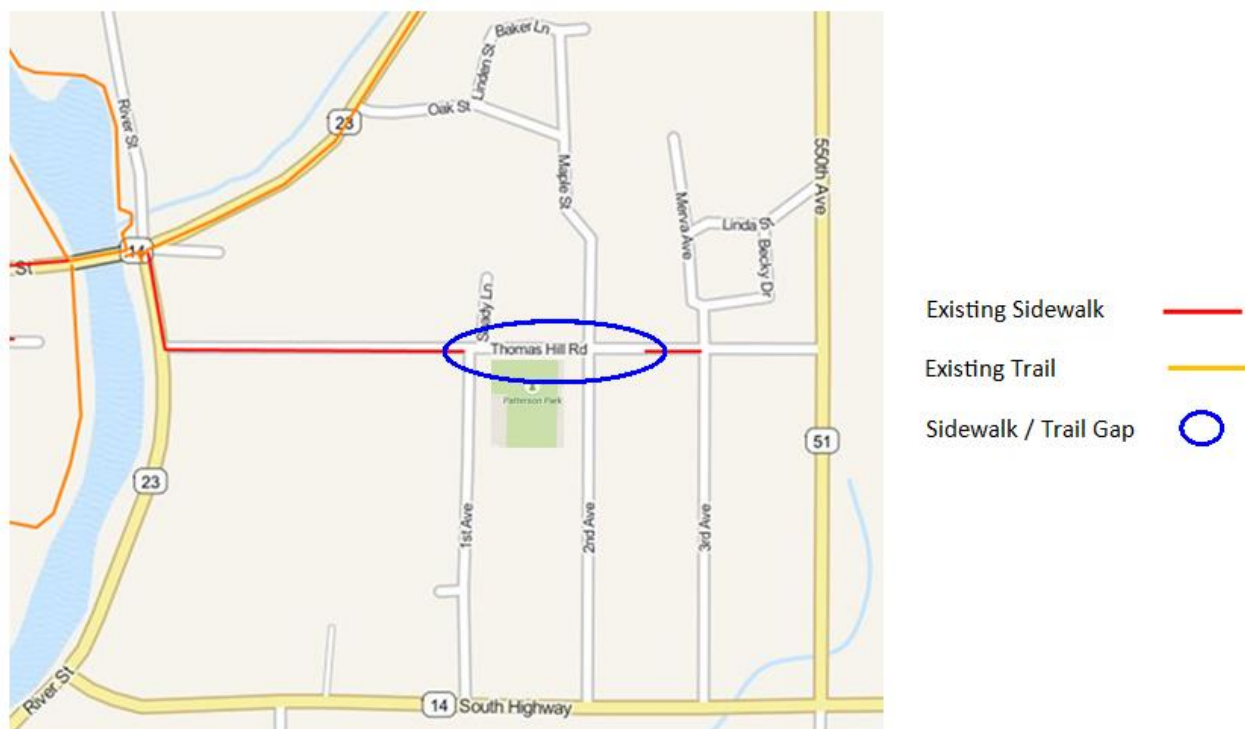
Thomas Hill Road serves as a Residential Collector in the Thomas Hill Neighborhood. Thomas Hill Road is the main artery in this area. A continuous sidewalk on one side of the street or the other is needed.

Traffic volumes and the width of the road are the two main safety issues along Thomas Hill Road. Thomas Hill Road has high traffic volumes, since it serves as a residential collector. The neighboring residential streets have lower traffic volumes, so it is safer to walk on the shoulder. The narrower road width combined with higher traffic volumes on Thomas Hill Road does not allow for safe walking along the shoulder of the road.

There are higher volumes of pedestrian traffic in this area due to Petterson Park. Petterson Park is a neighborhood park along Thomas Hill Road between 1st and 2nd Avenue. Filling in this sidewalk gap will provide a safe, continuous, off road walking route for residents to use to access Petterson Park and the trail and sidewalk network on and by Ashley Street.

Table #18

Thomas Hill Sidewalk Gap



Dewey Street Sidewalk Gap

Goal: Increase pedestrian safety along Dewey Street by the Jackson County Central High School.

Strategy:

Connect the sidewalk along North Highway and the Trail along Springfield Parkway with the sidewalks leading into the Jackson County Central High School.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

Dewey Street is adjacent to the High School and athletic fields. The proposed Dewey Street Trail is a connection trail along Dewey Street that has been identified by the Jackson Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Team. The Jackson SRTS Plan for Jackson County Central (JCC) could not cover the High School, since plans only cover Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Since the Jackson SRTS Plan was finalized in June of 2013, the SRTS Team has met and has worked towards implementing the goals outlined in the SRTS Plan. The first goal to be implemented was to implement a new busing policy based on safety, efficiency, equity, and promoting an active lifestyle. Implementing this goal helped the JCC School District decrease the number of bus stops in the City of Jackson, which helped to encourage students to walk more throughout the community. Through the planning stages and implementation of this goal, members of the Jackson SRTS Team met independently and with the school board.

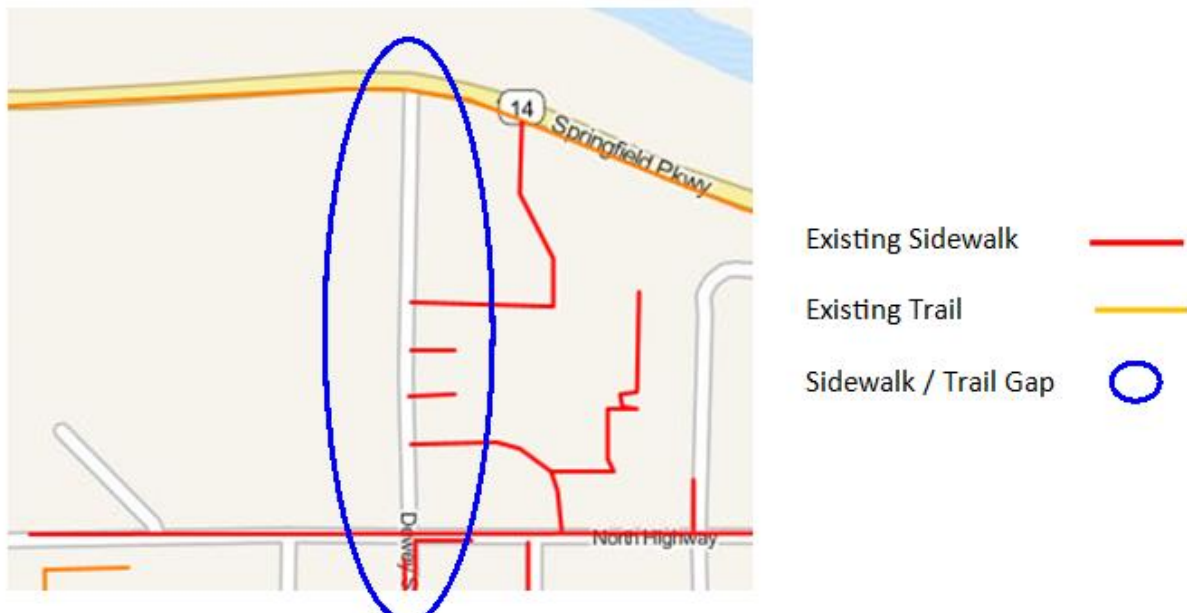
Through these meetings and other SRTS meetings, the Dewey Street Trail emerged as a project. The school board, City of Jackson, County of Jackson, and the Jackson SRTS Team support this project. The Regional Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) Coordinator has also helped with the development of the project. The project could have not progressed without community participation and support from the entities listed above.

The Dewey Street Trail will alleviate the pedestrian safety concerns on Dewey Street from Springfield Parkway to North Highway. The path will separate pedestrians from vehicle traffic making it safer to pedestrians to walk and bicycle along Dewey Street. The path will also connect the High School to the athletic fields and the tennis courts.

The Jackson SRTS Team and the county trail committee, Friends of the Jackson County Trails, have submitted a Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) grant to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) during the planning process for the Jackson Active Living Plan. If the Dewey Street Trail is not select for funding, the application should be resubmitted in the following year and highlight that the Dewey Street Trail is outlined in the Jackson Active Living Plan.

Table #19

Dewey Street Gap



Ravine Trail North

Goal: Increase the scenic nature of the trail system in the City of Jackson.

Strategy:

Engineer a trail along the ravine heading north from the Des Moines River Loop Trail to the new housing addition by the industrial park.

Engineer a trail or sidewalk from the proposed off-road trail along Highway 71 to the new housing addition by the industrial park.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

The City of Jackson is working with a developer to create a new housing development in the donut hole area between the Jackson Industrial Park, existing developments around Circle Drive and Ballard Avenue, and Riverside Drive. This development could be one of the neighborhoods in Jackson with the highest connectivity. This development along with a trail or sidewalk connection could help to increase connectivity to the industrial park.

Currently, the best route to bike to the industrial park is along County Road 23. County Road 23 has wider paved shoulders, so this helps to increase safety for bikers. Industrial Parkway does not have paved shoulders, so biking to businesses in this area of the industrial park is not safe.

Adding a trail or sidewalk connection from the Des Moines River Valley Trail to new developments in the donut hole area and onto the industrial park would increase the connectivity to the industrial park and

safety for pedestrians. The housing development would be ideally situated to provide walking access to jobs in the industrial park, the only grocery store in Jackson, the trail network, the Jackson Golf Course, etc.

The National Realtors Association point to the changing behavior of home buyers, “people prefer to live in communities that allow them to walk to shops, parks and other destinations and will pay more for a home that allows them to do just that.”²⁰ This is a national trend and Southwest Minnesota needs to recognize livability, walkability, bikeability as an economic development tool.

Any developments in the donut hole will have the opportunity to be one of the most desirable places to live in the City of Jackson. If a trail or sidewalks are part of the development, connectivity will be extremely high to destinations that home buyers want. Creating a pedestrian friendly development will help to attract builders and people who work in Jackson but live in another community.

²⁰ National Realtors Association. The Value of Walkability. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: <http://www.realtor.org/newsroom/real-estate-story-ideas/the-value-of-walkability> Source: Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>

Table #20

Ravine Trail North



Des Moines River Trail Crossing – Dann’s Island Wayside Park

Goal: Increase safety at the Des Moines River Trail crossing on Highway 71 by Dann’s Island Wayside Park.

Strategy:

Install a push button activated Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at the intersection of the Des Moines River Trail crossing on Highway 71 by Dann’s Island Wayside Park.

Install a radar speed sign on Highway 71 by the Des Moines River Trail crossing on US Highway 71 by Dann’s Island Wayside Park.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Traffic volumes and speeds are the main issue why crossing Highway 71 has been identified as a barrier to walking and biking to school. There are two controlled intersections along Highway 71 where pedestrians should be directed to cross. The trail network does have a crossing that is not close to the two controlled crossings. The City of Jackson recognizes the importance of directing pedestrians to cross at designated locations. The trail crossing on Highway 71 is a primary crossing, so additional improvements need to be made to make the crossing safer.

Installing a push button activated RRFB would help to alert drivers that a pedestrian is crossing Highway 71 on the trail. The visibility of the crossing is increased with the RRFB. Drivers will be able to see the flashing beacon easier than a small child. The RRFB is also more effective than a static sign, since it will only be flashing when pedestrians are crossing the road.

Traffic speeds are also an issue in this area. The environment around Highway 71 changes as you approach the trail crossing. You go from a more open area that encourages faster speeds to a more dense area with buildings that helps to calm traffic. The trail crossing is just to the south of where the natural traffic calming occurs, so traffic speeds are still higher by the trail crossing.

A radar speed sign in this area will help to alert drivers when they are driving too fast. The radar speed will blink when the vehicle is traveling faster than the posted speed limit. This will help to calm traffic before the trail crossing.

The results of a U.S. Roads study revealed, " both speed display boards and photo-radar effectively reduce vehicle speeds while deployed" and are "particularly effective in reducing the number of vehicles traveling ten or more miles over the speed limit." However, "only the display boards demonstrated carry-over effects," particularly in the long term. Already the most cost-effective of the speed control

devices, the speed reduction capabilities of display boards can be greatly enhanced with "intermittent police enforcement."²¹

Table #21

Radar Speed Sign / RRFB



Radar Speed Sign ●



The RRFB is a rectangular shaped, high intensity signal head, which flashes in a wig-wag, rapid flickering pattern. The alternating signals provide direct, ultra-bright concentration as well as wide-angle intensity. The beacons are pedestrian activated, push button or passive detection

²¹ TransSafety Inc. Road Injury Prevention & Litigation Journal. Accessed: 6/10/15. Available: <http://www.usroads.com/journals/p/rilj/9805/ri980504.htm>

Bluff Avenue Gap

Goal: Increase access to the Jackson trail network

Strategy:

Connect the sidewalks along South Street with the Jackson Trail Network.

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

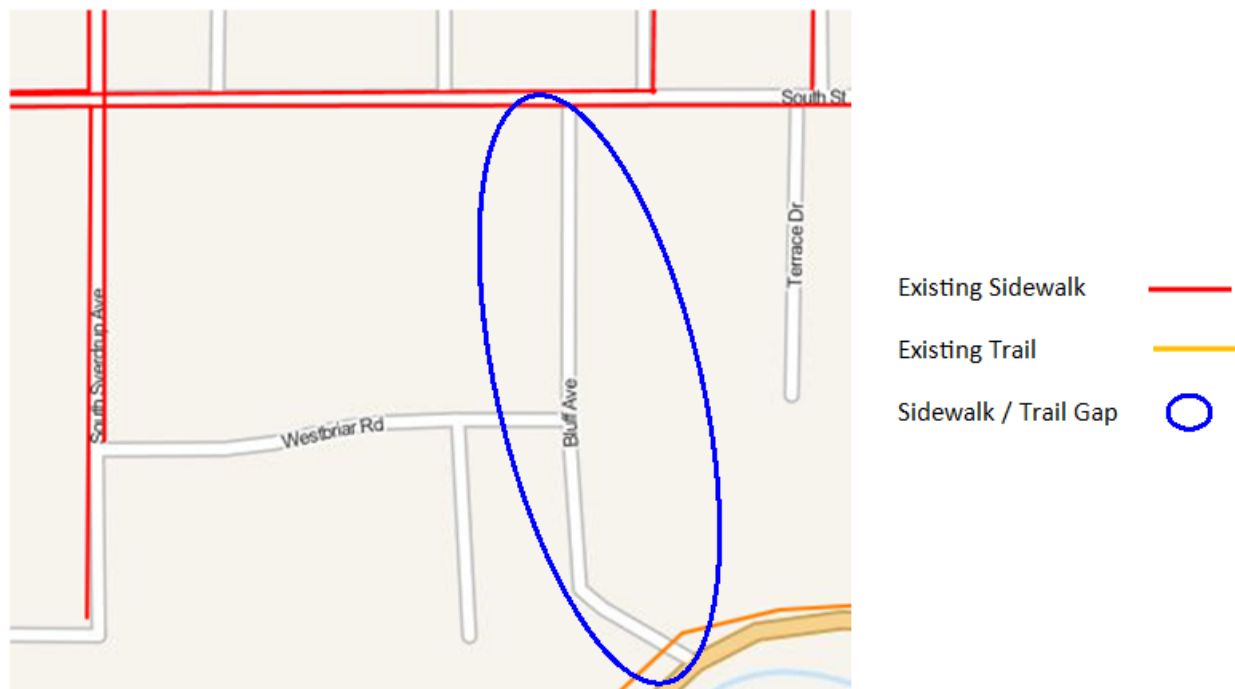
There is a well-developed sidewalk network around the South Street neighborhoods. There is good connectivity, but one key connection is missing. There is no connection to the Jackson trail network.

Bluff Avenue functions as a Residential Collector. Bluff Avenue connects the neighborhoods around South Street with Highway 71, so traffic volumes are a barrier to walking in this area. Bluff Avenue is narrow, so walking on Bluff Avenue is not safe.

Adding a connection to the trail will increase connectivity. A sidewalk is needed to make this connection safe. This connection will also provide access to the farmers market that is in this area during summer months.

Table #22

Bluff Avenue Gap



Disk Golf Course Connection

Goal: Increase walking and bike to the Jackson Disk Golf Course.

Strategy:

Engineer a pedestrian trail over the Des Moines River where the old bridge used to be.

Engineer a trail or sidewalk from the sidewalk along River Street that ends by Thomas Hill Road to the Jackson Disk Golf Course.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

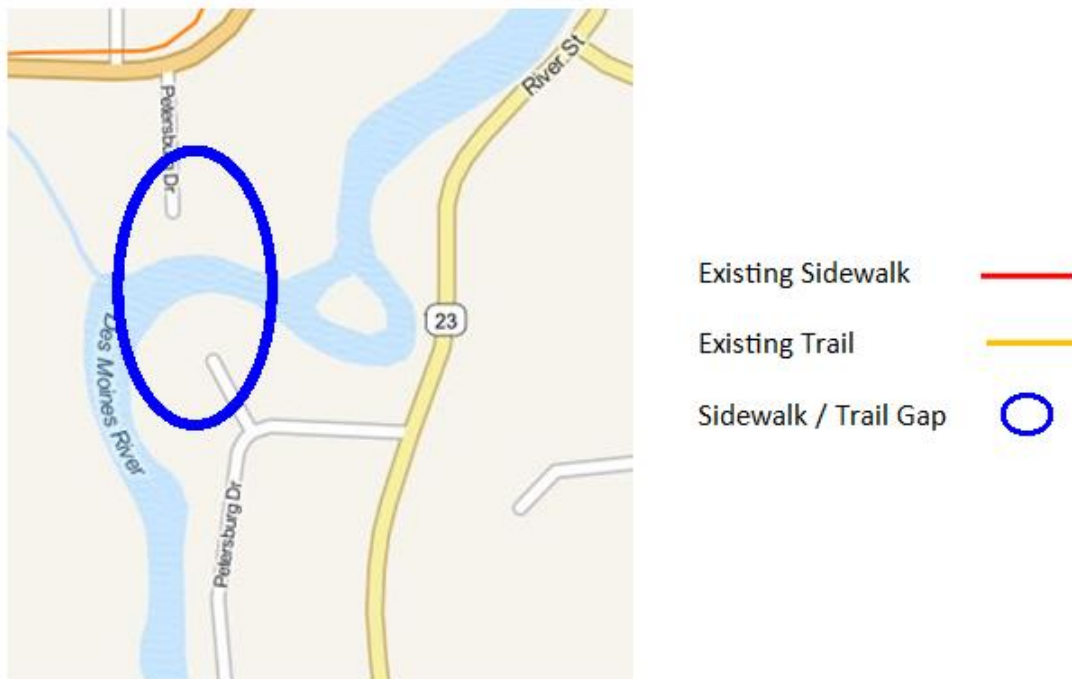
The Jackson Disk Golf Course is becoming a key destination in Jackson County. Residents from neighboring communities are driving to Jackson to play disk golf. The disc golf course could be a tool to increase use of the trail network for residents of Jackson and neighboring communities.

A connection from the disc golf course to the trail network would also help to increase walking and biking. There are a number of existing destinations around the trail network. Adding the disc golf course to the list of destinations will help to attract users.

Currently, River Street is the only access to the disc golf course. River Street is a narrow street that has an extremely small shoulder that is not paved. It is not safe to walk to the disc golf course. Some people do bike to the disc golf course, but River Street is a windy road. Visibility around corners is not great and drivers are often speeding out of town. The combination of narrow unpaved shoulders, visibility around corners, and speeding out of town make this area not safe for pedestrians.

Table #23

River Street / Disc Golf Course Gap



Sunrise Estates Connection

Goal: Increase walking and biking from Sunrise Estates Townhomes to the Jackson Trail Network.

Strategy:

Connect Sunrise Estates Townhome Sidewalk Network to the sidewalk along Highway.

Connect the sidewalk along Highway 71 by Sunset Estate Townhomes to the Jackson Trail Network.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

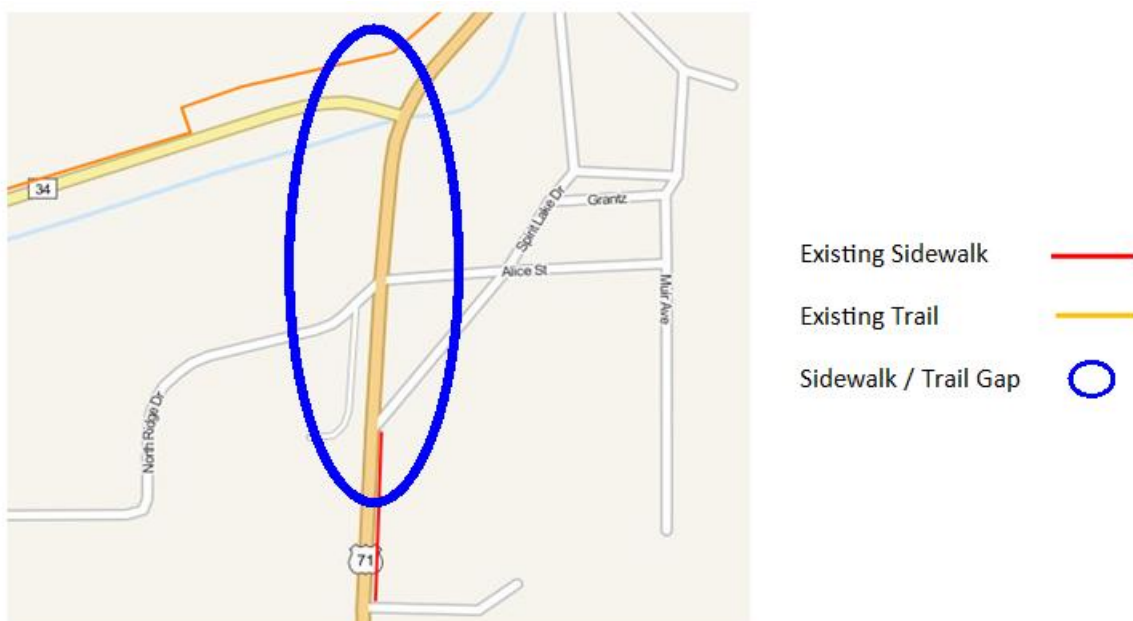
Sunrise Estates has a high housing density. There are a number of younger children that also live in this area. There are no connections from Sunrise Estates to the trail network and other destinations in the City of Jackson.

A connection from Sunrise Estates to the trail network will help to increase access for residents in this area. There is a paved shoulder along Highway 71, but the paved shoulder does not encourage walking. It is not safe to walk and bike along Highway 71 in this area. Drivers are transitioning into a 30 mph speed limit area and the environment still feels like a highway. Highway 71 functions as a Connector, so a sidewalk or trail is needed.

An off road trail or sidewalk connecting to the trail network is needed. A connection will make walking or biking to destinations in Jackson a realistic option. Currently, the Sunrise Estates neighborhood is a car dependent neighborhood.

Table #24

Sunrise Estate Gap



Jackson Non-infrastructure Goals & Strategies

Trash Receptacles along Trails

Goal: Decrease littering along the trail network.

Strategy:

Install trash receptacles along the trail network.

5 E(s): Enforcement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

Trash receptacles encourage trail use. It is not appealing to have to carry trash or a dog's waste in a bag your entire walk. Since it is not convenient, some people are littering and not picking up their dog's waste. Installing trash receptacles along the trail network will make it more convenient to throw your waste away and to have picnics along the trail, which may encourage physical activity.

Comments from Community Survey:

"Parts of the trail need garbage cans - behind Good Sam/MN West are most obvious places where trash is seen."

Dumont Park

Goal: Make the environment at Dumont Park more inviting and convenient for pedestrians.

Strategy:

Install a pedestrian bench by the basketball court at Dumont Park.

Install a trash can by the basketball court at Dumont Park.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Currently, there are no benches by the basketball court at Dumont Park. This discourages parents from walking to the park with their children and watching them play basketball. Not having benches also discourages older adults from visiting the Dumont Park. Older adults may want to rest in the park before continuing their walk.

Pedestrian amenities help to encourage use. Installing a bench by the basketball court will make it more convenient to visit the park. Parents will have a convenient place to watch their children play basketball and older adults will have a place to rest in the middle of their walk.

Trash receptacles also encourage park use. Parents may be reluctant to picnic in the Dumont Park, since there is no trash receptacle. Installing a trash receptacle will make it more convenient to have picnics and events at the park, which may encourage physical activity.

School Zone Speed Limit – Riverside Elementary

Goal: Decrease traffic speeds on Springfield Parkway by Riverside Elementary.

Strategy:

Have a school zone speed limit established on Springfield Parkway by Riverside Elementary.

5 E(s): Education and Enforcement

Existing Conditions:

Springfield Parkway has been identified by multiple parents as a barrier to walking and biking to school, especially for younger children. Traffic speeds and the inexperienced nature of younger children are the main reasons for why a reduced speed zone is needed. The existing speed limit along Springfield Parkway is 30 mph.

It is recommended that a school zone speed limit be established around Riverside Elementary on Springfield Parkway. As part of the Highway 71 project, a High intensity Activated crossWalk (HAWK) is going to be installed south of the Springfield Parkway and Highway 71 intersection. The HAWK will increase pedestrian safety and encourage more students to walk and bike to Riverside Elementary.

Due to the existing pedestrian traffic and the anticipated increase, a school zone speed should be established. A school zone speed limit will help to increase pedestrian safety around Riverside Elementary. Establishing a school zone speed limit on Springfield Parkway would create a more consistent policy around the Riverside Elementary.

There is a 20 mph school zone speed limit on North Highway by Riverside Elementary and the Jackson County Central High School. This reduced speed zone is when children are present. Having a school zone speed limit around Riverside Elementary will help to make the school zone safer and will create a more consistent policy.

Vehicle Speed	Odds of Pedestrian Death, (Source 1)	Odds of Pedestrian Death, (Source 2)
20 mph	5%	5%
30 mph	45%	37%
40 mph	85%	83%

NHMRC Road Accident Research Unit²²

²² NHMRC Road Accident Research Unit. Effects of Vehicle Speed on Pedestrian Fatalities. Accessed: 1/5/15.
Available: <http://humantransport.org/sidewalks/SpeedKills.htm>



Crosswalk Painting

Goal: Make crossing streets in the City of Jackson safer for pedestrians.

Strategy:

Maintain and paint crosswalks at intersections around schools, in the downtown area, and where higher volumes of pedestrians cross.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Education

Existing Conditions:

The City of Jackson annually stripes crosswalks. It is important to identify crosswalks at intersections that have high volumes of pedestrian traffic. A striped crosswalk is more visible, and it helps to direct pedestrians to certain intersections.

Streets that have higher traffic volumes and traffic speeds divide communities and are an obstacle to walking and biking. Striping of crosswalks helps to direct pedestrians to identified crosswalks. This helps to increase visibility at certain intersections. As the number of pedestrians increase at these identified crossings increase, the safety at these intersections also increase. Drivers become more aware of pedestrians and begin to look for pedestrians at those busier crossings.

Crosswalks – issues that were identified

- The crosswalk at the intersection of North Highway and Dewey is very faded. The crosswalks are only two painted white parallel lines. During the winter months it is often difficult to see the crosswalks.
- Please maintain the crosswalks in downtown.
- Improve the trail crossings

Stop for PED Signs

Goal: Increase awareness of driver's responsibility to stop for pedestrians.

Strategy:

Purchase 5 'Stop for PED Signs' that the city can rotate around the city at high pedestrian traffic intersections.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

Drivers in Minnesota are supposed to stop for pedestrians in a crosswalk, but the majority of drivers do not stop for pedestrians. 'Stop for Pedestrian' signs will help to educate drivers on their responsibility to stop for pedestrians. Seeing more of these signs will help to make all crosswalks safer for pedestrians.

The Active Living Planning Team identified a need for 'Stop for PED' signs. These signs help to make drivers aware of their responsibility to stop for pedestrians. The City of Jackson will rotate these signs between high pedestrian traffic intersections. These signs will also be used during community events.

The Minnesota Crosswalk Law

- ▶ Drivers MUST stop for crossing pedestrians at marked crosswalks and at all intersections without crosswalks or stop lights.
- ▶ Pedestrians MUST obey traffic signs and signals at all intersections that have them.
- ▶ Vehicles stopped for pedestrians can proceed once the pedestrian has completely crossed the lane in front of the stopped vehicle.
- ▶ Pedestrians MUST NOT enter a crosswalk if a vehicle is approaching and it is impossible for the driver to stop. There is no defined distance that a pedestrian must abide by before entering the crosswalk; use common sense.
- ▶ When a vehicle is stopped at an intersection to allow pedestrians to cross the roadway, drivers of other vehicles approaching from the rear MUST NOT pass the stopped vehicle.



Failure to obey the law is a misdemeanor. A second violation within one year is a gross misdemeanor.²³

Sidewalk Snow Removal

Goal: Make walking convenient during winter months.

Strategy:

Enforce the City of Jackson's snow removal policy for sidewalks.

Implement a new snow removal policy.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

During winter months snow is piled along the sides of streets, tall snow banks create a visual obstruction for small children to see oncoming traffic and makes crossing the street more difficult. It is recommended that on higher pedestrian traffic intersections that snow be completely removed. Higher pedestrian traffic intersections include the downtown area and around schools and daycares. This strategy will help ensure that snow does not impede small children from seeing oncoming traffic.

Enforcement of the City of Jackson's snow removal policy for sidewalks is also critical. In winter months walkers are often forced to walk on the street, since sidewalks are not cleared. This often results in lower walking rates during winter months.

Cities enforce their snow removal policies different ways. Some cities recognize the need for key connections to be cleared, and the city clears these sidewalks. These connections may be around schools and in the downtown area. Businesses may hire a company to clear snow in the downtown or business district. It is recommended that City of Jackson work with homeowners and businesses to ensure primary connections are cleared.

There may be different enforcement for sidewalks that are designated as primary connections. Warnings can be issued first to help to educate homeowners of their responsibility to keep sidewalks cleared. A ticket may have to be issued to garner compliance. Education and communication is a part of this strategy. Often snow removal policies have not been enforced, so this change in enforcement needs to be part of an educational campaign.

Comments from Community Survey:

"Any trails around, near, or between schools should have the snow removed from them, so that kids don't have to walk in the street."

"Some of the trails, especially by the schools/Springfield Pkwy should have snow removal."

²³ Minnesota Safety Council. Accessed: 4/17/15. Available:
<http://www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/facts/factsheet.cfm?qs=BD3BE1A6DFA3335E>

Oak Street and East Ashley Street Intersection

Goal: Increase visibility at the intersection of Oak Street and East Ashley Street.

Strategy:

Remove brush from the public right-of-way on the north side of Oak Street at the intersection with East Ashley Street.

5 E(s): Enforcement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

Visibility at the intersection of Oak Street and East Ashley Street is a safety issue. It is difficult for drivers to see vehicles traveling west on East Ashley Street, while at the stop sign on Oak Street. Brush has grown up onto the public right-of-way.

This brush needs to be trimmed back or removed to increase visibility at the intersection of Oak Street and East Ashley Street. Currently, vehicles have to inch out to see past the brush. This is not safe.

Table #25 Intersection of Oak Street and East Ashley Street



Bike Parking

Goal: Increase biking within the City of Jackson.

Strategy:

Make biking more convenient within the City of Jackson by installing bike racks at key locations.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

Bike racks make it convenient and safe to ride, store, and lock your bike. Not having bike racks in convenient locations discourages biking and leads potential bikers to not ride their bikes.

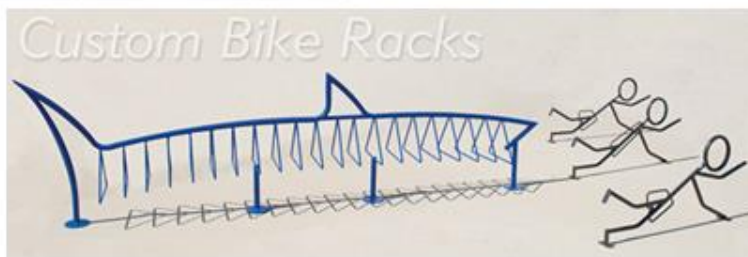
During the Jackson Active Living Plan Planning process a number of locations were identified that need bike parking. These locations are major destinations in the community. The Active Living Plan Planning Team and Jackson City Council ranked these locations.

1. High School
2. Dumont Park
3. Prairie Rehab
4. Post Office
5. Ashley Estates Apartments
6. Historic State Theater
7. Subway
8. Ashley's Hallmark
9. City Hall
10. Bank Midwest
11. Off the Hanger
12. Lewis Chiropractic

The bike racks could be unique and double as art in the community. Having unique bike racks will increase the community feel and promote biking. Bike rack use may increase, since children may be more likely to use a bike rack shaped like a fish than a plain metal bike rack. The Planning Team did not choose a specific bike rack. Below are a few examples.

Table #26

Example Bike Racks – Public Art



Trail Adoption Program

Goal: Ensure trail maintenance during warm weather months.

Strategy:

Implement a trail adoption program.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

To help ensure a clean and attractive looking trail network in and around the City of Jackson, you can adopt a section of the trail. Adopting a section of the trail provides an opportunity for you to be actively involved in helping to maintain and enhance existing trails for all to enjoy.

When you adopt a trail, you are making sure trail users will always have a well-maintained trail to walk or bike. Managing the trail entails: keeping the trail surface clear of sticks, rocks, and other debris;

picking up litter; reporting vandalism, large debris, and safety issues to the City. You are asked to visit the adopted trail section at least twice a month. You can visit the section of trail at your convenience, choosing the days and times you would like to visit the trail.

Who can adopt a trail?

1. Schools
2. Youth Groups
3. Church, Community and Service Organizations
4. Businesses
5. Families, Individuals or Groups of Individuals

Table #27

Adopt a Trail Signage



Jackson Bike Loop

Goal: Increasing biking within the City of Jackson

Strategy:

Add bike route signage to the Jackson Bike Loop.

Market the Jackson Bike Loop via maps.

5 E(s): Education, Encouragement, and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

There is an outlined bike loop within the City of Jackson, but the route is not widely known. The bike route needs to be signed, promoted, and maintained. Signing, promoting, and maintaining the loop as a bike route will help to increase visibility and usage. As usage increases, visibility will also increase making the loop safer.

The bike loop should be signed at intersections where a change in course is required with the bike route sign and arrow sign. A bike route sign should also be placed after turning onto a new street or trail and periodically along the route. Signing the course will not only help to direct bikers along the loop, but will increase drivers responsibility to expect higher volumes of bike traffic. This increase in visibility will increase safety along the loop and will help to promote the loop.



Promoting the bike loop is not only for local residents, but for visitors as well. Some local residents are using this route, but visitors and new residents may be unaware of the route. The Jackson Bike Loop has been outlined as a preferred route due to wide paved shoulders. Promoting a route has been shown to increase use, so bikers can be directed to a specific route and safety improvements can be made along the route. Outlining the route will also show users and potential users how long the route is, so they know what to expect.

Table #28

Street View Images of Bike Loop

East Ashley Street



Wide Paved Shoulder or Recreational Trail

East Ashley Street—Des Moines River Trail



Recreational Trail

Des Moines River Trail—Highway 71



Shared Use Trail

Highway 71



Wide Paved Shoulder

County Road 34



Gravel Shoulder—lower traffic volume road

County Road 23



Wide Paved Shoulder

Outlining a route and promoting the route can help to direct maintenance to the route. Current bikers on the Jackson Bike Loop have expressed concerns regarding gravel on the shoulders of the road. As part of regular road maintenance, the shoulders of the road should be swept monthly during summer months. Having the street sweeper clear debris from the bike loop will help to increase safety. Promoting a paved and clear shoulder will also help to market the route and increase use.

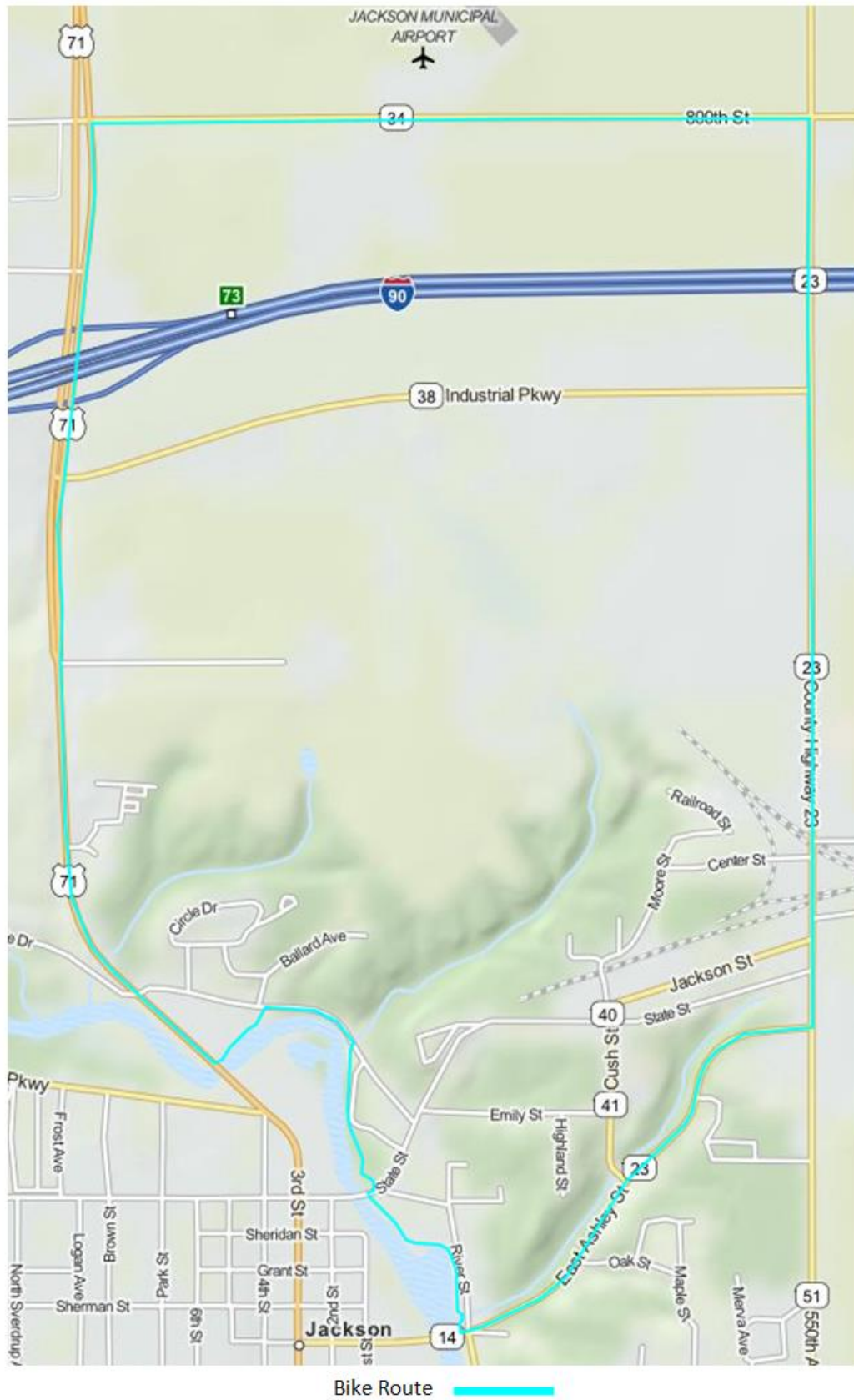
The Jackson Bike Loop serves a transportation and recreation purpose. A portion of the bike loop is used by AGCO employees as a route to and from work. As the bike loop is signed and promoted, other residents who work in the Jackson Industrial Park may choose to bike to work.

The Jackson Bike Loop is also used by recreational bikers. The route is a manageable distance and has a paved shoulder. Recreational use along the loop may also increase when the loop is signed and promoted.

The Jackson Bike Route runs along East Ashely Street, the Des Moines River Trail, Highway 71, County High 34, and County Road 23. The bike loop is a one-way loop to increase safety. The bike loop is designed, so the biker only makes right-hand turns. This also reduces the maintenance of the bike loop, since the street sweeper only has to sweep one side of the road.

Table #29

Jackson Bike Loop Map



V Plan Maintenance

The Jackson Active Living Plan is a working document. The City of Jackson will maintain the plan along with the county trail committee, Friends of the Jackson County Trails. The City of Jackson will continue to make updates to the plan with assistance and recommendations from the Friends of the Jackson County Trails.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Updating the Plan

As community planning occurs, additional goals and strategies will be added in Chapter VI, Additional Goals and Strategies. It is critical to allow for public input regarding additional goals and strategies. Community residents and the Jackson City Council should be asked to provide input regarding infrastructure projects.

Continued Public Involvement

The trail committee, Friends of the Jackson County Trails, meets as needed to discuss potential goals and strategies. Community members are welcome to participate in these Friends of the Jackson County Trails meeting. The City of Jackson has a City Park Board also discusses issues regarding walkability and bikeability in the City of Jackson. The City Park Board is another way for the community members to become involved.

VI Additional Goals and Strategies

The Jackson Active Living Plan is a working document. The City of Jackson and the county trail committee, Friends of the Jackson County Trails, will continue to make updates to the plan. As planning continues, additional recommendations should be made to the Additional Goals and Strategies Chapter.

Conclusion

When making a land use decision and an investment in the future, it is critical to consider all the costs, not just the construction costs. There are costs associated with sprawl, inactivity and negative health outcomes, and the loss of community. Decision makers need to consider the function of every street, road, and plot of land. Is the function of this place to create wealth or is the function of this particular roadway to move cars quickly. If it is to move cars quickly, do not try and generate developments that will decrease walkability and connectivity in the community.

When you are rebuilding a street, ask yourself if this street can be narrow. The cost savings of narrowing the street could be used to install sidewalks and create a more livable community. On existing streets consider other higher return investments, like painting crosswalks or putting in striping on the streets to narrow the lanes and slow down traffic.

“When you narrow up the street lanes, cars drive slower, people feel more comfortable there. They walk across the streets, to a store across the street. And in a real subtle and cheap way you get a lot more

*pedestrian traffic, a lot more retail, a lot more people. And people spend money, and that's what makes a place wealthier. **When people are there, people invest more.**"*²⁴

Table #30 Decision Makers Checklist: Built Environment

Ask Yourself and the Decision Making Group

- How will my decision impact health?
- How will my decision impact connectivity?
 - Compact efficient development vs. sprawl (which decreases connectivity)
- Will my decision make the community more inviting (more walkable and bikeable)?
- Were all users considered when making the decision?

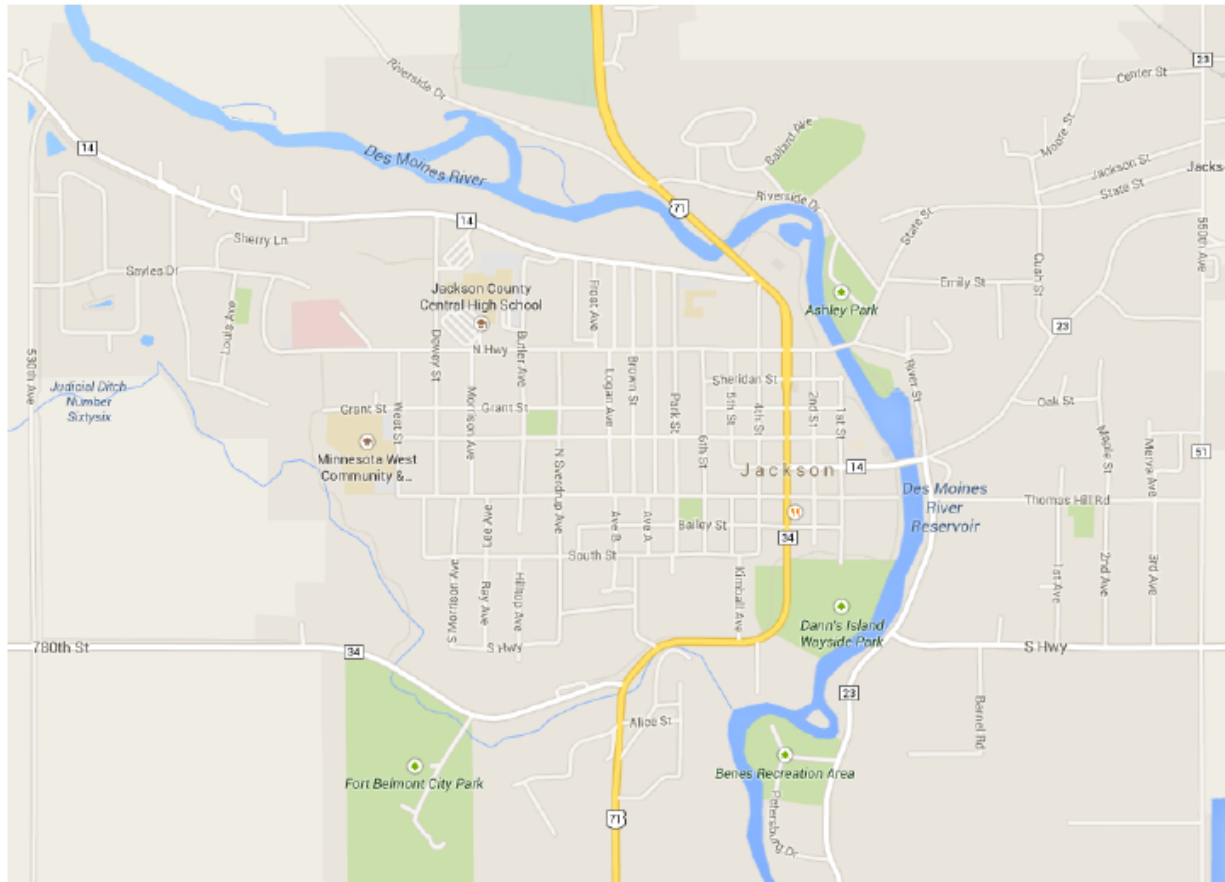
²⁴ Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html

Appendix

Jackson Community Survey

Jackson Community Assessment Survey:

Please help the City of Jackson prioritize funding for pedestrian projects, by documenting factors that help or hinder safe walking and biking within your community.



Instructions:

1. Please highlight on the map the route you walked or biked in Jackson.
2. On your average walk in your community, score each category on a scale of 1 to 10 on the criteria outlined within each category.
3. Add comments regarding specific issues you would like to address.
4. Please complete by April 6th and return to City Hall. You can also complete the survey online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/S960CFA99D>
5. Comments can also be added at <http://wikimapping.com/wikimap/Jackson-Active-Living-Plan.html> regarding citywide pedestrian issues.

General atmosphere (Summary of all categories) (10 being the best...1 being the worst)



Comments....

1. Did you have room to walk?

Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
Sidewalks broken or cracked
Sidewalks blocked
No sidewalks, paths or shoulders
Too much traffic



Comments....

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

Road too wide
Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
Crosswalks/traffic signals needed
View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants
Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair



Comments....

3. Did drivers behave well?

Backed without looking
Did not yield
Turned into walkers (at intersections)
Drove too fast
Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through red lights



Comments....

4. Could you follow safety rules?

Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen
Stop and look left, right, left before crossing
Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic
Cross with the light



Comments....

5. Was your walk pleasant?

Needs grass, flowers, trees
Scary dogs
Scary people
Not well lit
Dirty, litter
Lots of traffic



Comments....

6. Are there any routes you would like to walk and currently can not due to safety issues, existing gaps in the sidewalk network, or other pedestrian infrastructure that discourages you from walking or biking?

Example Complete Streets Policy

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY.

WHEREAS, it is the purpose of complete streets to create transportation corridors that are safe, functional and aesthetically attractive for all users;

AND WHEREAS, the mobility of freight and passengers and the safety, convenience, and comfort of motorists, cyclists, pedestrians - including people requiring mobility aids, transit riders, and neighborhood residents of all ages and abilities should all be considered when planning and designing Jackson's streets;

AND WHEREAS, integrating sidewalks, bike facilities, and safe crossings into the initial design of street projects avoids the expense of retrofits later;

AND WHEREAS, streets are a critical component of public space and play a major role in establishing the image and identity of a city, providing a key framework for current and future development;

AND WHEREAS, active living integrates physical activity into daily routines and active living communities encourage individuals of all ages and abilities to be more physically active;

AND WHEREAS, communities that support active living strive to create amenities that will enhance the quality of life of its residents, improve the physical and social environment in ways that attract businesses and workers, and contribute to economic development;

AND WHEREAS, the goal of complete streets is to improve the access and mobility for all users of streets in the community by improving safety through reducing conflict and encouraging non-motorized transportation;

AND WHEREAS, it is recognized that there are some streets or corridors in the City which would not fully satisfy a complete streets environment;

NOW THEREFORE, Be It Resolved that the City Council of the City of Jackson, Minnesota establish a Complete Streets Policy that provides as follows:

1. The City of Jackson will, whenever it is economically feasible, seek to enhance the safety, access, convenience and comfort of all users of all ages and abilities, including bicyclists, pedestrians (including people requiring mobility aids), motorists and freight drivers, through the design, operation and maintenance of the transportation network so as to create a connected network of facilities accommodating each mode of travel that is consistent with and supportive of the local community, recognizing that all streets are different and that the needs of various users will need to be balanced in a flexible manner.

2. Unless one or more of the conditions set forth in Section 4 exist, transportation improvements will include appropriate facilities and amenities that are recognized as contributing to complete streets, which may include street and sidewalk lighting; sidewalks and pedestrian safety improvements such as median refuges or crosswalk improvements; improvements that provide ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant accessibility; bicycle accommodations including bicycle parking, bicycle routes, shared-use lanes, wide travel lanes or bike lanes as appropriate; and street trees, boulevard landscaping, street furniture and adequate drainage facilities.
3. Early consideration of all modes for all users will be important to the success of this Policy. Those planning and designing street projects will give due consideration to bicycle, pedestrian, from the very start of planning and design work. This will apply to all roadway projects, including those involving new construction, full reconstruction, or changes in the allocation of pavement space on an existing roadway such as the reduction in the number of travel lanes or removal of on-street parking.
4. Bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities will be considered when developing street construction, reconstruction, re-paving, and re-habilitation projects, except under one or more of the following conditions:
 - A. Reconstruction or re-paving of a street, excluding collector and arterial streets, which does not involve substantial curb removal.
 - B. A project involves only ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition, such as mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair, concrete joint repair, or pothole filling, or when interim measures are implemented on temporary detour or haul routes.
 - C. The County Engineer, with Council consultation, determines there are relatively high safety risks.
 - D. The City Council exempts a project due to excessive and disproportionate cost of establishing a bikeway or walkway as part of a project.
 - E. It is determined that the construction is not practically feasible or cost effective for reasons including, but not limited to: significant or adverse environmental impacts to streams, flood plains, remnants of native vegetation, wetlands, steep slopes or other critical areas; or due to impacts on neighboring land uses, including impact from right-of-way acquisition.

5. It will be important to the success of the Complete Streets policy to ensure that the project development process includes early consideration of the land use and transportation context of the project, the identification of gaps or deficiencies in the network for various user groups that could be addressed by the project, and an assessment of the tradeoffs to balance the needs of all users. The context factors that should be given high priority include the following:
 - A. Whether the corridor provides a primary access to a significant destination such as a community or regional park or recreational area, a school, a shopping/commercial area, or an employment center;
 - B. Whether the corridor provides access to across a natural or man-made barrier such as a river or freeway;
 - C. Whether the corridor is in an area where a relatively high number of users of non-motorized transportation modes can be anticipated;
 - D. Whether a road corridor provides important continuity or connectivity links for an existing trail or path network; or
 - E. Whether nearby routes that provide a similar level of convenience and connectivity already exists
6. The design of new or reconstructed facilities should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling, walking and transit facilities and should not preclude the provision of future improvements. (For example, under most circumstances, bridges, which last for 75 years or more, should be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation of a future need for such facilities.)
7. The City will maintain a comprehensive inventory of the pedestrian and bicycling facility infrastructure integrated with City streets and utility maps and will carry out projects to reduce gaps in the sidewalk and trail networks.
8. Complete streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.
9. The City will generally follow accepted or adopted design standards when implementing improvements intended to fulfill this Complete Streets Policy but will consider innovative or non-traditional design options where a comparable level of safety for users is present.

10. The City will develop implementation strategies that may include evaluating and revising manuals and practices, developing and adopting network plans, identifying goals and targets, and developing methods to evaluate success.
11. This policy will provide notification to Parks Board for review of impacts to street trees and incorporate recommendations into design consideration.
12. The Public Works Department shall be responsible for developing and implementing the Complete Streets Policy through the recommendations of project to the City Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the feasibility report prepared for a street project shall address this policy.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Minnesota.

Mayor

City Administrator

Date

Date
