



# MINNEOTA

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Active Living Plan

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*City of  
Minneota*



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# 1

## 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, areas of concern, and prioritizing projects to make the community more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. Through the implementation of this plan, the City of Minneota 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, health, traffic, and environmental benefits.

### Benefits

#### *Economic Development Benefits*

Though economic development is often considered the attraction of new businesses to a community, another strategy is to attract and retain residents and encourage them to contribute to the local economy. Part of that strategy is planning for pedestrian traffic and developing community facilities. Supporting walking and biking can have a positive impact on attracting and retaining residents, business, and workers. Compact, walkable developments provide economic benefits through increased property values, enhanced marketability, and faster sales than conventional developments.

Livability is a primary economic development strategy. A significant element of livability is creating a pedestrian-friendly community. The City of Minneota does have a well-developed network of sidewalks in the core of the city; however, the network does not reach the outer blocks. There are connectivity issues in instances such as crossing US Highway 68 and connecting to the ends of the Minneota walking and biking path. Additional trail connections and sidewalks can be tools to attract and retain residents.

Property values are one of the more significant variables in impacting where people want to live. When you build or buy a house you want to have a return on your investment. Walkable communities can have a positive effect on property values.<sup>1</sup> Higher property values are an increased tax base as well as a draw for new housing construction. Currently, the cost of building a 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 homebuyers when they state, “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.” First-time homebuyers 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

<sup>1</sup> ALFONZO, MARIOLA, AND CHRISTOPHER B LEINBERGER. "WALK THIS WAY: THE ECONOMIC PROMISE OF WALKABLE PLACES IN..." THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION THE METROPOLITAN POLICY PROGRAM, 25 MAY 2012. WEB. 10 OCT. 2016. <[HTTPS://WWW.BROOKINGS.EDU/RESEARCH/WALK-THIS-WAY-THE-ECONOMIC-PROMISE-OF-WALKABLE-PLACES-IN-METROPOLITAN-WASHINGTON-D-C/](https://www.brookings.edu/research/walk-this-way-the-economic-promise-of-walkable-places-in-metropolitan-washington-d-c/)>

don't have to drive as much to get to services where they can age in place.”<sup>2</sup> This is a national trend and Southwest Minnesota stands to benefit from recognizing these economic development tools of livability, walkability, and bikeability.

Southwest Minnesota has had difficulties attracting workers to move to the region. Southwest Minnesota has some of the lowest unemployment rates in the state and 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 demand side, hiring difficulties are generally caused by candidates' preferences such as work hours, compensation, geographic location, etc.

How can the City of Minneota and other cities in Southwest Minnesota attract people to their city?

- Concentrate on livability as an economic development strategy.
- Make land use decisions that encourage compact, efficient developments that are pedestrian-friendly and increase connectivity.
- Promote regional activities to highlight everything Southwest Minnesota has to offer.

### *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 the risk of certain diseases such as diabetes, cancers, and cardiovascular disease
- Strengthen bones and muscles
- Improve health and mood
- Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls
- Increase 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% more likely to meet physical activity guidelines.”<sup>3</sup> Adding pedestrian infrastructure and promoting walking and biking will help to reduce:

- Roadway congestion and dangerous 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.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> ALBERT, AMY, AND JENNIFER GOODMAN. “WHY SMART BUILDERS CARE ABOUT WALKABILITY.” BUILDER ONLINE. NP, ND. WEB. 10 OCT. 2016. <HTTP://WWW.BUILDERONLINE.COM/LAND/DEVELOPMENT/WHY-SMART-BUILDERS-CARE-ABOUT-WALKABILITY\_0>

<sup>3</sup> CUTTER, CARMEN. “INFOGRAPHIC: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITIES IN PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.” ACTIVE LIVING RESEARCH. NP, 27 JUNE 2012. WEB. 10 OCT. 2016. <HTTP://ACTIVEVINGRESEARCH.ORG/BLOG/2012/06/INFOPGRAPHIC-ROLE-COMMUNITIES-PROMOTING-PHYSICAL-ACTIVITY>

<sup>4</sup> FACTS ABOUT WALKING & BICYCLING: PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFORMATION CENTER. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY SAFETY RESEARCH CENTER. ND. WEB. 10 OCT. 2016. <HTTP://WWW.PEDBIKEINFO.ORG/DATA/FACTSHEET.CFM>

## *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. Culs-de-sac were also found to decrease the walkability of a neighborhood.

Motor vehicle traffic generated by the travel to and from school adds 20-30% more traffic volume to the roads. Replacing short trips with walking or biking can help reduce air pollution and energy consumption.

## **Geographic Location**

### *City of Minneota*

The City of Minneota is located in Lyon County in Southwest Minnesota. With a population of 1,392, it is the third-largest city in the county. It is located along Minnesota Highway 68, about 12 miles northwest of Marshall, MN. Founded in 1881, Minneota is known for its Icelandic heritage and annual Boxelder Bug Days.

Minneota is home to Minneota Public School (K-12) and St. Edward Catholic School (K-8). It has multiple churches and a strong agriculture-based economy. One can also find numerous small businesses including automotive shops, hair salons, daycares, contractors, various health care services, retail, gas stations, insurance and legal services, photography, and other specialty stores. Community assets also include the post office, senior center, library, and aquatic center.

### *Lyon County*

Lyon County is located in Southwest Minnesota, bordered by Yellow Medicine County (north), Lincoln County (west), Murray County (south), and Redwood County (east). The largest city and county seat is Marshall followed in size by the cities of Tracy, Minneota, Cottonwood, Balaton, Lynd, Ghent, Russell, Taunton, Garvin, and Florence.



## PLANNING PROCESS

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The City of Minneota Active Living Planning process took place over 4 months and was based on identifying destinations, gaps, areas of concern, and potential projects. The Planning Team consisted of community members, city staff, and the SRDC planner, all of whom attended the two community meetings. The process timeline was:

- WikiMapping (Throughout)
- Community Survey (Throughout)
- Outreach (9/10/2016, Boxelder Bug Days)
- Community Meeting #1 (9/20/2016)
- Highway 68 Meeting with MnDOT and City Officials (10/5/2016)
- Bike Audit (10/8/2016)
- Community Meeting #2 (10/12/2016)
- City Council Meeting to Rank Projects (11/14/2016)

### *WikiMapping*

WikiMapping is an online public input tool that community members could use to identify issues regarding walking, biking, and recreation in the City of Minneota. Community members could provide input by adding points, routes, and comments on the interactive map. This tool was an effective way to engage community members who were not able to attend the community meetings.

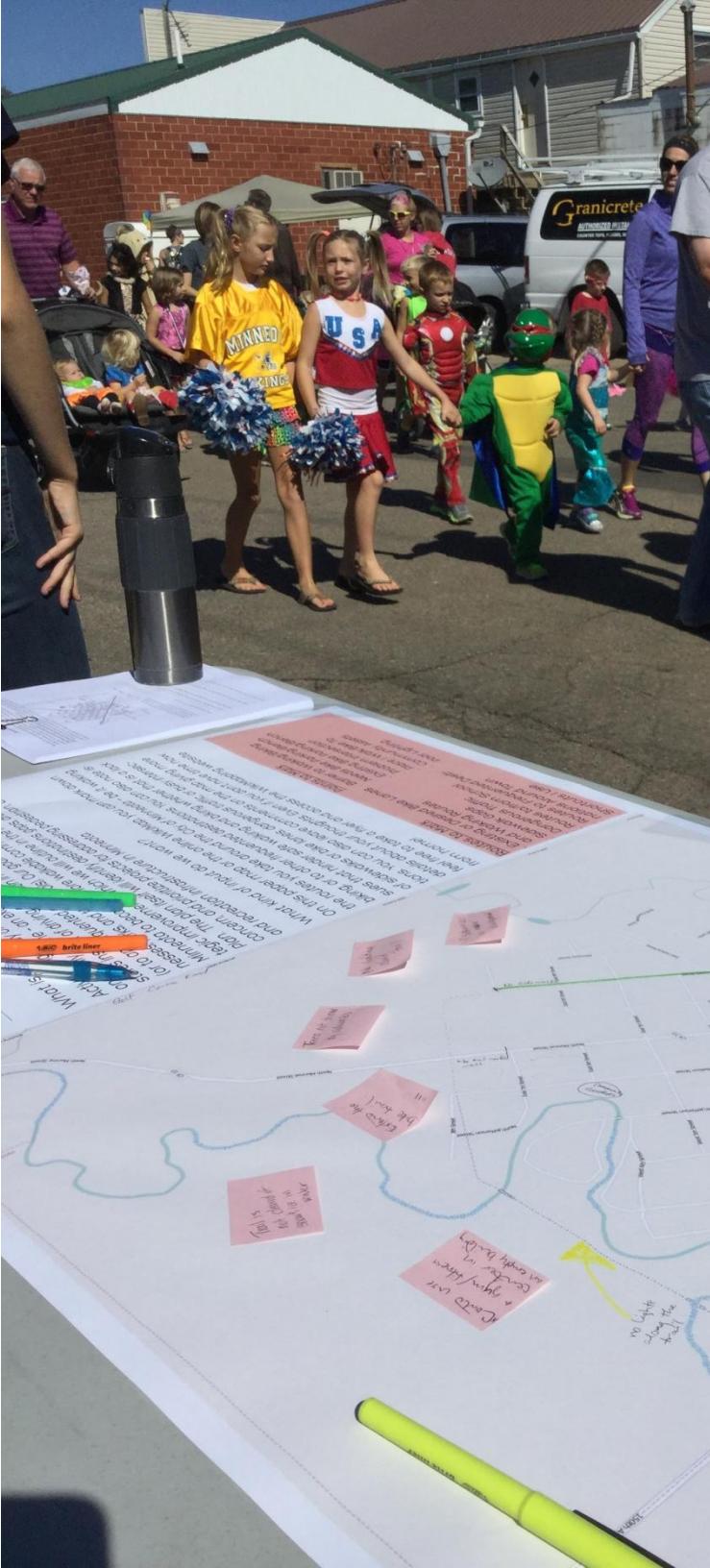
Community members could add points on an interactive map regarding walking and biking barriers, existing/needed benches and bike racks, transit stops, community assets, lighting issues, parks, destinations, problem intersections, traffic issues, and trash issues. Community members could add a route on the interactive map regarding: existing and desired bike lanes, high speed roads, their walking/biking routes, sidewalk issues, routes to/from school, and routes they would like to use. The users could leave comments on their points and routes as well as on other users' points and routes.

### *Community Outreach*

The planning team set up a table at Minneota Boxelder Bug Days from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM on Saturday, September 10, 2016. In order to gather input, the team spoke with Minneota residents attending the festival about walking, biking, and recreation in the city and had a map for them to mark their thoughts on. The team also dispersed community surveys and information about the upcoming community meetings.

### *Community Survey*

A community survey was distributed throughout the planning process both online and on paper. The survey was distributed via social media and local businesses. The survey was another tool to engage community members who were not able to attend the community meetings. The survey asked a number of both qualitative and quantitative questions



regarding walking, biking, and recreation in Minneota. The full text of the Minneota Community Assessment Survey can be found in the Appendix to this plan.

### *Community Meeting #1*

The first community meeting was held at the Minneota Community Center on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 from 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM. The agenda was to discuss local issues and concerns as well as to discuss the issues that had already been identified via the WikiMap and outreach. This community meeting provided a space to voice opinions and concerns regarding active living in Minneota.

### *Bike Audit*

On Saturday, October 8, 2016, the SRDC Planner bicycled around the City of Minneota in order to gather more on-the-ground observations.

### *Community Meeting #2*

The second community meeting took place on Wednesday, October 12 from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM at the Minneota Community Center. The focus of this meeting was to discuss potential goals and strategies for addressing barriers to walking, biking, and recreation in Minneota. Attendees were still able to discuss existing conditions that were not identified at the first meeting.

### *City Council Meeting*

A draft of the Minneota Active Living Plan was presented to the Minneota City Council on Monday, November 14, 2016. The City Council was asked to rank the goals and strategies and to provide feedback regarding the plan. A Complete Streets Policy was also presented to the City Council as a next step to ensure pedestrians are being considered in future land use decisions. A sample Complete Streets policy can be found in the Appendix to this plan.

# 3

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

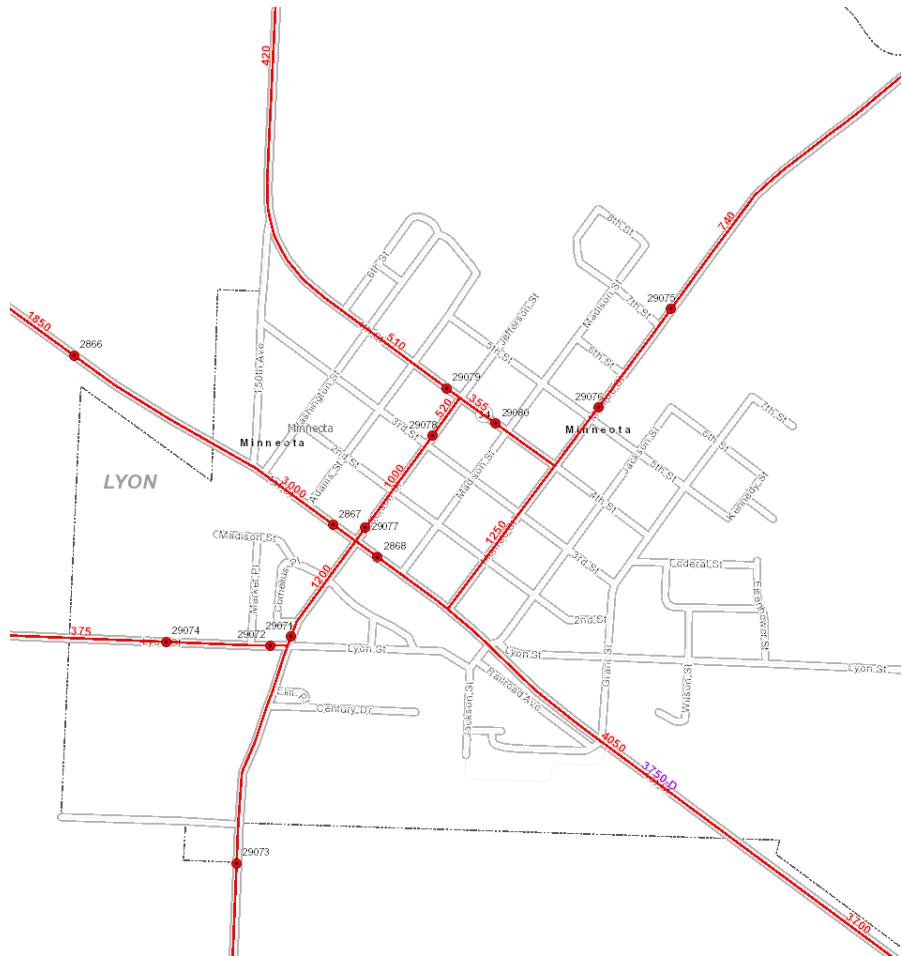
### Health Conditions

According to a 2016 health survey conducted by Wilder Research and Southwest Health and Human Services, 73% of adults in Lyon County are either overweight or obese (39% overweight and 34% obese). Only 38% of Lyon County adults met the recommendations for either at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise 5+ days/week or 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity 3+ days/week.

Data gathered about Lyon County students via the Minnesota Center for Health Statistics' 2013 Minnesota Student Survey showed that only about 21% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, 28.5% of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, 22% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and 17.5% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students get 60 minutes of physical activity per day. According to self-reported height and weight, about 25.5% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders, 26% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, and 31% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders were either overweight or obese.

Being overweight or obese not only increases the risk of premature death and many other 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. According to Minnesota Department of Health's Office of Health Improvement Initiatives, "based on national estimates, the overall financial burden of obesity in Minnesota in 2006 was estimated at \$2.8 billion." The medical costs associated with obesity nationally were estimated at \$147 billion in 2008. This translates into a \$1,429 additional yearly medical cost for people who are obese over those of normal weight.

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% of students grades K-8 reported usually walking or bicycling to school in 2009, while 48% of K-8 students reported usually walking or bicycling to school in 1969. Distance is a strong indicator associated with how children get to school, but currently only 35% 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% of K-8 students who lived within a mile of school, reported usually walking or bicycling to school once a week. Increasingly, children are dependent on their parents for transportation. Reducing the number of vehicle trips would create a more efficient, safe, and connected community as well as combat the rise in obesity.



## Main Themes

- Sidewalk Gaps
- Difficulty Crossing MN-68
- Speeding on Neighborhood Streets
- Poor Lighting

## Comments Summary

- Room to Walk
  - "There are no sidewalks in our neighborhood."
  - "Some of the streets going to the public school do not even have sidewalks, so kids need to walk on the street."
  - "There are no sidewalks along the highway to get to the "Bug Hut." I wish there were a sidewalk there."
  - "Lyon St. behind Cenex is a terrible spot. The sidewalk ends and the street seems to narrow around a small bend. There is a lot of traffic here and low visibility."
  - "Lighting is awful."
- Ease of Crossing
  - "Almost any intersection crossing MN-68 is problematic due to cars parked on the street and the amount of traffic. The intersection of Lyon St. and MN-68 is probably the worst. With traffic from Cenex, and how multiple roads intersect close to that intersection, it can sometimes get confusing, especially for kids when one car stops but they have several roads to look at and drivers might not be paying attention."
  - "They Highway intersection with Jefferson is always a tough place to cross."
  - "The only spot we have trouble with is going south over MN-68 on Jefferson – usually due to parked cars on that side of the street, making it hard to see if traffic is coming."
  - "The crosswalk at the school is not straight out of the new gym, so the existing crosswalk is not utilized."
- Driver Behavior
  - "Fast drivers to and from the apartments."
  - "Madison Street seems like a race track. I see more cars not stopping at stop signs than those actually stopping. This is not only the kids, but adults too."

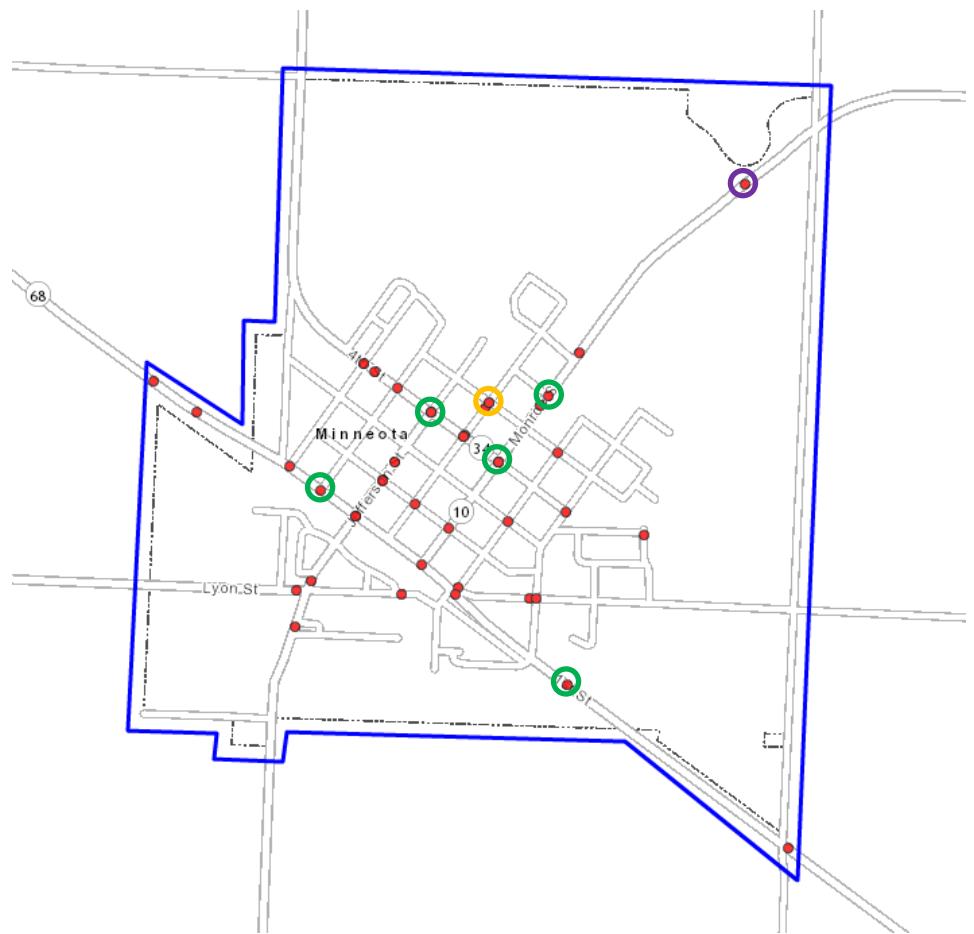


FIGURE 2: MINNEOTA CRASH DATA (2006-2015)

●	INCAPACITATING INJURY
●	POSSIBLE INJURY
●	NON-INCAPACITATING INJURY
●	OTHER CRASHES

- “My daughter almost got hit by a car crossing the street. Monroe St. is notorious for drivers speeding and rolling through the stop sign at E 5<sup>th</sup> Street.”
- “The intersections at 5<sup>th</sup> Street & Grant and 4<sup>th</sup> Street & Grant – especially the 5<sup>th</sup> Street crossing. I see kids fly through it all the time driving. It is a main crossing for people to go to school, the bike trail, the park, and the pool.”
- “By the school, cars on the side street do not watch closely for pedestrians, but pull out making a dangerous situation.”
- Follow Safety Rules
  - “No sidewalks.”
- Walk Pleasant
  - “Lighting is very poor in most areas of town except Main Street or Highway 68.”
  - “Lighting can be better.”
  - “Need more street lights.”
  - “Not well lit.”
  - “Scary dogs”

### Gaps in the Sidewalk and Trail Network

There are a number of gaps in the sidewalk and trail network that were discussed at the community meetings. Figure 3 shows a map of Minneota with sidewalks highlighted in red and the walking/biking trail highlighted in green. The survey also asked whether there were routes that pedestrians and bicyclists would like to use, but cannot due to safety concerns, sidewalk gaps, or other issues. A summary of those comments is below.

- “We avoid Grant Street close to the Lyon Street intersection due to the (narrow) size of the road, and cars are often parked on Lyon Street so cars coming on to Grant can’t see as easily.”
- “I have a daycare, so it would be beneficial to have sidewalks. We go on walks every day (weather permitting) and have to go down blocks that have sidewalks.”
- “Cut overgrown trees.”
- “There are some issues that make running difficult in parts of town. Damaged roads, poor lighting, narrow streets, traffic on Highway 68.”
- “There are missing sidewalks leading up to the trail behind the ball fields.”
- “There is a sidewalk on Jackson Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> that is not usable.”

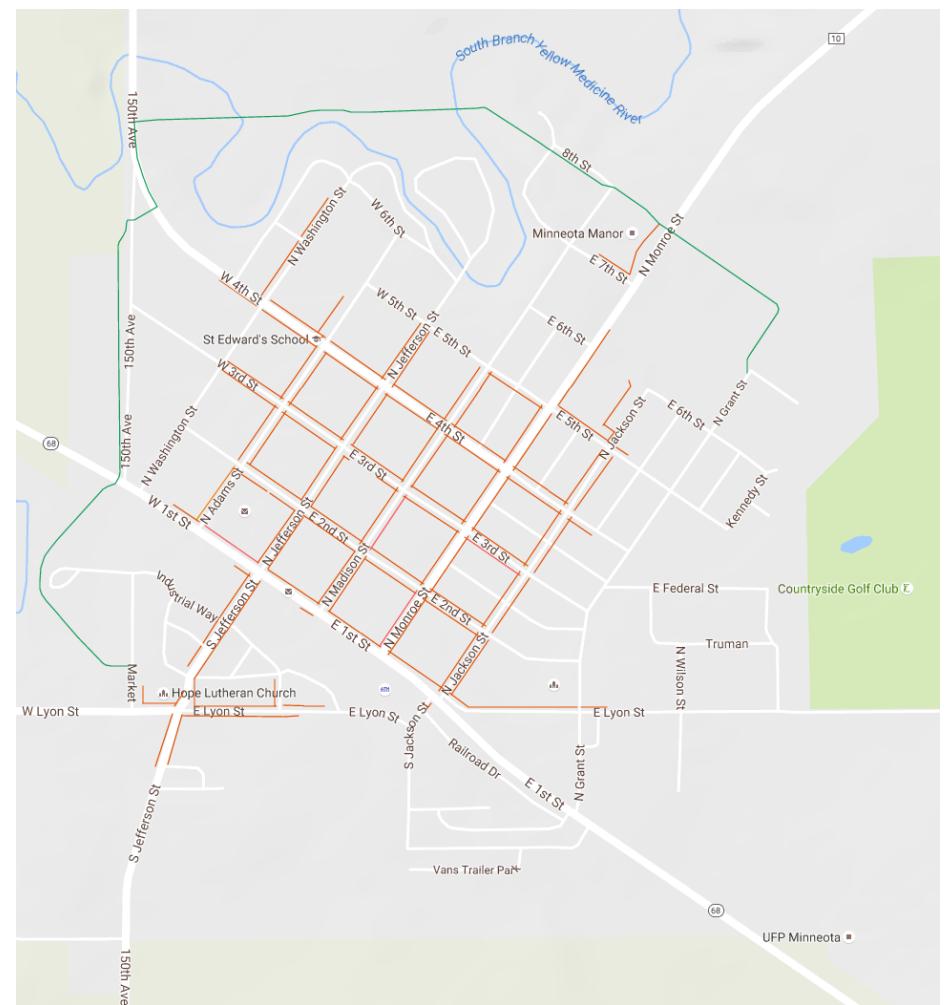


FIGURE 3: MINNEOTA SIDEWALK MAP

- “I would like to walk/run on the road past the golf course, but the gravel and narrow road make that tough, especially if I have kids with me. It would also make me feel safer with a separate path on CR-10 back into town to use.”
  - “Traveling down 2<sup>nd</sup> Street is very difficult because the road is so rough.”
  - “The pavement on Grant Street has been so bad you can’t even push a stroller. It was repaired this summer, but it’s only temporary. It’s hard to walk, run, or bike on. Maybe a long-term repair can be done instead of just patching.”
  - “More lights needed and crosswalks painted on main streets.”
  - “It would be nice to have a sidewalk along Highway 68 on the north side all the way to the bike path.”
  - “Around Madison at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.”

# WikiMapping Input + Survey Results

Input from the public WikiMapping process is summarized below. The map can be found at <http://www.wikimapping.com/wiki/Minneota-Active-Living-Plan.html> and is represented in Figure 5.

## *Problem Intersections*

- 150<sup>th</sup> Ave & MN-68: “Need pedestrian signs.”
  - Jackson Street & MN-68: “This intersection is difficult for pedestrians and bikers due to speeding traffic and because North and South Jackson do not line up.”
  - Grant Street & MN-68: “No crosswalk.”
  - Lyon Street & Jefferson Street: “No painted crosswalk.”

## *Barriers to Walking and Biking & Sidewalk Comments*

- “Even where there are sidewalks, the trees are not trimmed so the branches hang too low to walk comfortably.”
  - No sidewalk on: Market Street, the new development near the golf course, E 5<sup>th</sup> Street near the public school, the west side of Monroe across from the public school, on Washington Street leading to St. Edward’s School.

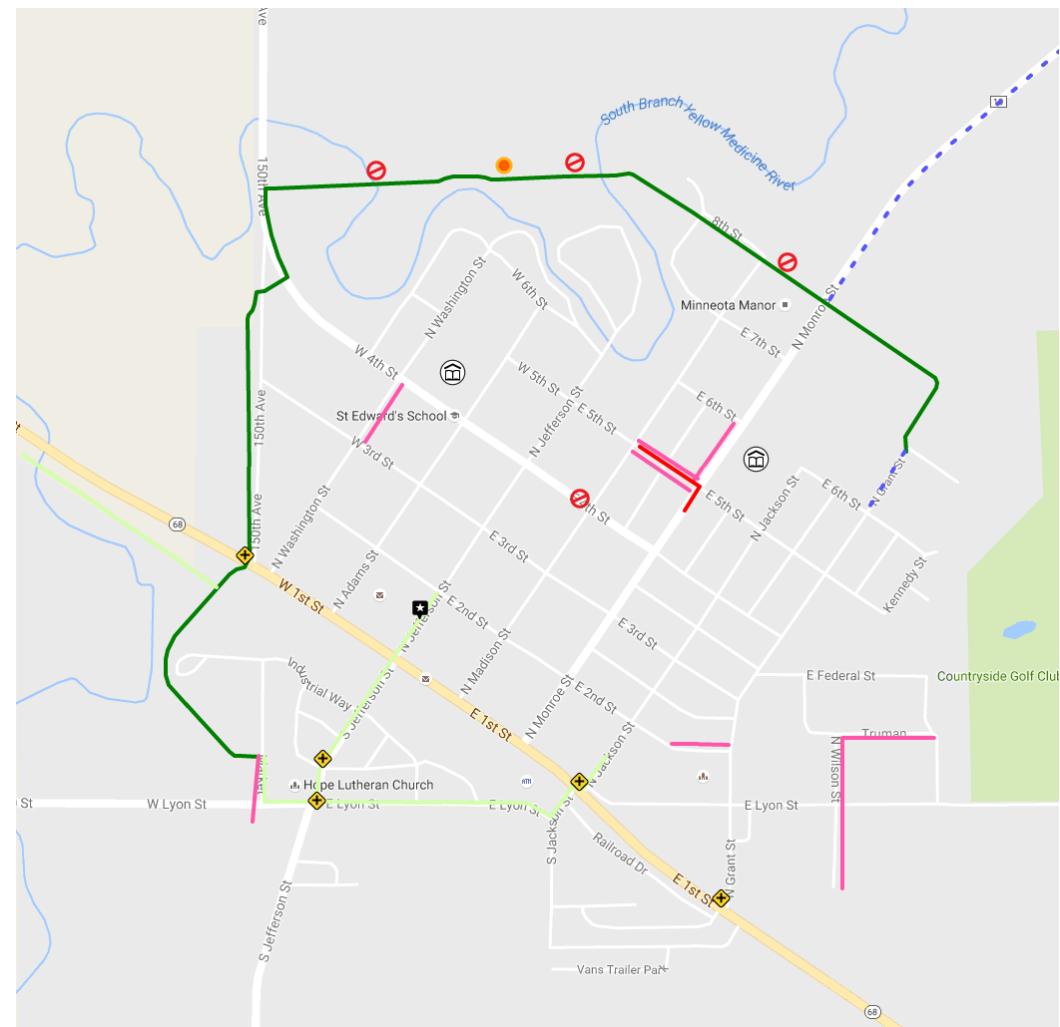


FIGURE 4: WIKIMAPPING INPUT

#### *Walking & Biking Path Comments*

- Walking & Biking Path between Monroe and Madison: “The trail is poorly defined here. Are we meant to go behind the Manor or around on E 7th Street? There are people doing both. There are also smokers behind the Manor.”
- Walking & Biking Path: “Snow and ice are not cleaned off of the trail in the winter.”
- Walking & Biking Path, Western Bridge: “The bridge here is unsafe for children and is in need of updating.”
- “Lighting along the trail is an issue.”
- “We could use an on-street bike route (painted bike lane) that connects the two ends of the trail.”

#### *Traffic Comments*

- E 5<sup>th</sup> Street & N Monroe Street: “Drivers at the stop sign turn left and speed down the road.”

#### *Other Comments*

- “Bike lane/shoulder on CR10 should be wider for running and biking.”
- “Why don't we utilize one of the empty downtown buildings as a gym/fitness center?”

# 4

## GOALS & STRATEGIES

Goals are general guidelines that explain what the City of Minneota wants to achieve. Strategies narrow the general guidelines and define in more detail how the goal will be achieved. Actions are the actual steps to be taken to achieve the goals. An action 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 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 projects. This 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 Minneota Active Living Plan are recommendations, so that during implementation modifications can take place.

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

Overall Strategy: Identify destinations, gaps, areas of concern, and prioritize projects for addressing pedestrian, biking, and recreational infrastructure and programming in the City of Minneota.

## GOAL I: ENSURE ALL STREETS IN MINNEOTA ARE COMPLETE STREETS

**Strategy 1: Adopt and Implement a Complete Streets Policy**

**Strategy 2: Maintain and implement the Pedestrian Functional Classification System that classifies all streets in Minneota in regards to their pedestrian infrastructure needs.**

Currently the City of Minneota has a well-connected network of sidewalks within the core of the city. This network becomes sparse to non-existent further from the city center, however. There is not currently a policy requiring sidewalks in certain areas, so as developments take place in Minneota, this will become an issue.

A Complete Streets policy addresses this disconnect. A “complete street” is any street you feel safe walking or bicycling on – thus some complete streets might look different from others. For example, on a busy downtown road, a street might require sidewalks on both sides of the street along with a separated bike lane on the road in order to accommodate all users, whereas a less-traveled rural road might only need a wide shoulder on one side of the road to meet the same goal. The idea is to consider all types of users when deciding whether a street is safe and complete for all users.

Why are complete streets important? Some community members may not have access to a motor vehicle, so walking and biking are their primary transit modes. Sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes thus have a community benefit not only for those users for whom walking and biking are the only choice, but also for all residents who would benefit from increased physical activity. Significant gaps in the sidewalk and trail network limit the convenience of walking and biking.

A Complete Streets Policy can specify which types of streets require what level of pedestrian infrastructure. Figure 4 shows a map with *suggested* levels of pedestrian functionality are appropriate for the streets of Minneota. This will also assist in ensuring that any new residential developments are built with complete streets and are connected to Minneota’s existing pedestrian infrastructure. Minneota is currently considering options for future housing development on the north end of town. However, no matter the location that any developments take place, it is important to consider how to connect the development to the existing sidewalk network.

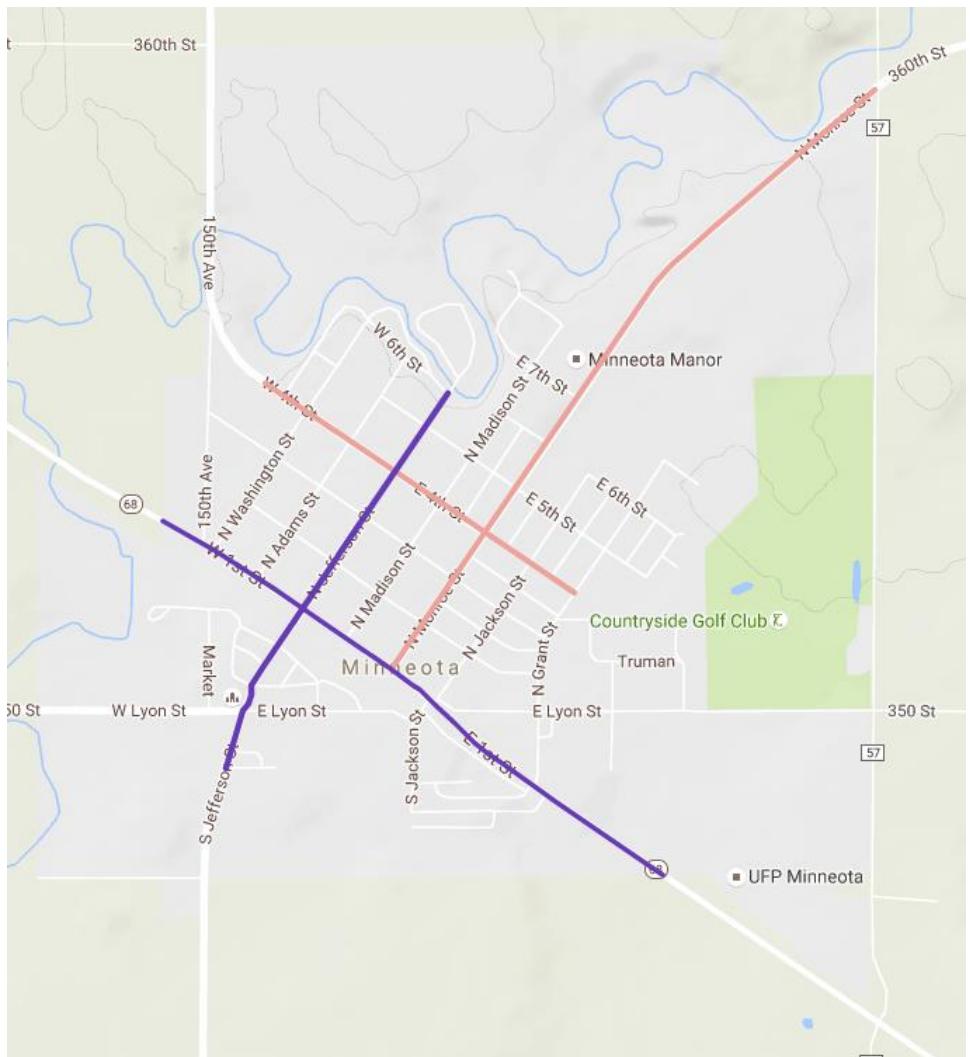


FIGURE 5: MINNEOTA SUGGESTED FUNCTIONAL PEDESTRIAN CLASSIFICATION

— CONNECTOR STREET  
— NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR STREET

*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 it is safe for pedestrians.*

Different streets require different pedestrian amenities. 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 on whether a street needs sidewalks or not, the function of the street needs to be considered.

Below are the three classifications that were used to describing the need for sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure on streets in Minneota. The classification system was based on traffic volumes and reported usage. The *suggested* functional pedestrian classification of Minneota's streets is shown in Figure 4, traffic speeds, perceived safety, and usage. The classification system helped to provide guidance when making transportation decisions.

#### Connector Streets

- Connects primary destinations
- Highest traffic volumes streets
- Typically 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
- Typically 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
- Typically have no sidewalk requirement, though they are encouraged.

## GOAL II: INCREASE WALKING AND BICYCLING TO SCHOOL

**Strategy: Update policies and programs to encourage active transportation to and from school.**

- Action 1: Implement adult crossing guards near the school.
- Action 2: Host an annual “Walk/Bike to School Day” event.
- Action 3: Create a “Walking School Bus” and/or a “Bicycle Train” to ensure safe walking and bicycling to school.
- Action 4: Position the City of Minneota to be eligible for Safe Routes to School funding through the adoption of subdivision regulations as identified in Minnesota Statute 174.40, subd. 4a.

(1) Minneota previously had student crossing guards near the school; however, once it was determined that the road was too dangerous, the students were no longer allowed to patrol as crossing guards. Currently, Minneota still has no crossing guards. In order to increase walking and biking to school, both parents and students must feel that the benefits of walking outweigh the risks. Thus, Minneota should implement adult crossing guards. Having adult crossing guards patrol during arrival and/or dismissal will ensure that students are not tasked with patrolling a dangerous road, nor are they walking unattended. Placing guards at strategic locations such as the intersection East 5<sup>th</sup> Street & North Monroe Street along with any other dangerous or frequented routes will address this need such as Madison Street and Grant Street.

(2+3) “Walk to School Day” and “Bike to School Day” are annual, nation-wide events held in October and May, respectively. These days function as both awareness and encouragement events and can be coupled with programming such as a “walking school bus” or a “bicycle train.” A walking school bus is a program where an adult stops at pre-determined “walking bus stops,” gradually picking up more students in the walking group as they go. Not only do children get the security of having an adult walk with them to school, but also the added bonus of having their friends

walk with them. Similarly, a bicycle train is simply a group of students who bicycle with an adult. These programs can and should be utilized throughout the year in collaboration with the school to continue encouraging walking and bicycling.

(4) The Minnesota Department of Transportation has introduced new subdivision regulation requirements in order to be eligible for Safe Routes to School state funds. According to Minnesota Statute 174.40, subd. 4a, “A statutory or home rule charter city, county, or town is eligible to receive funding under this section only if it has adopted regulations that require safe routes to school infrastructure in developments authorized on or after June 1, 2016.” Since there is no singular definition of “safe routes to school infrastructure,” this can be considered improvements for non-motorized modes of transportation. A copy of the eligibility changes and a sample subdivision regulation from the City of Rushford, Minnesota can be found in the Appendix to this plan.

FIGURE 6: MINNEOTA PUBLIC SCHOOL – LOCATED ALONG BUSY COUNTY ROAD 10



## GOAL III: INCREASE WALKING AND BICYCLING AROUND THE CITY OF MINNEOTA

### Strategy 1: Address gaps in the sidewalk network.

- Action 1: Complete the sidewalk along Monroe Street.
- Action 2: Complete the sidewalk connection along East Lyon Street.
- Action 3: Maintain existing sidewalks, especially along main arterial and connector routes.
- Action 4: Review and prioritize sidewalk infrastructure for ADA compliance, and construct it as such.

(1) Looking forward to the future, Minneota plans to build housing developments to continue its growth. The discussions around housing have focused on building at the north end of town along North Monroe Street. Due to the proximity to areas like the public school, the aquatic center, and the football field, this development should be very walkable. However, in order to ensure its walkability the sidewalk connection along North Monroe Street must be completed. Connecting the sidewalk along (preferably both sides of) Monroe in tandem with a complete streets policy for the new development will ensure that these new residents stay walkable and connected to the existing sidewalk network. It should be noted that if new developments are built elsewhere, steps should be taken to connect them to the existing sidewalk network. For example, if new developments were planned for north of Grant Street (near the northwest side of the Golf Club), then the sidewalk network would benefit from being connected at Grant Street as well.

(2) When pedestrians and bicyclists exit the walking and biking path's southern end at Market Street, they reported they often walk along East Lyon Street to continue their walking loop where they later cross MN-68. In order to complete this frequented path that runs adjacent to a busy gas station and convenience store route. Completing this sidewalk route ensures a safe and tangible physical connection between the ends of the walking and biking path.

(3) In order for sidewalks to be utilized, they must be in a condition for residents to do so. Steps should be taken to ensure that existing sidewalks are maintained – especially along frequented walking routes such as East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Jefferson Street, and East Lyon Street. Giving specific consideration to these routes will ensure the connectivity of residents to frequented destinations. Refer back to Figure 3 on Page 12 for a map of Minneota's sidewalks.

(4) Accessibility is important for building inclusive community infrastructure. The Active Living Committee should research sidewalks that are not ADA compliant, prioritize those locations, and build them to comply with ADA standards.



FIGURE 7: RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACON

### **Strategy 2: Improve pedestrian safety and crossings.**

- Action 1: Work with MnDOT to develop various solutions to calm traffic along MN-68.
- Action 2: Calm traffic by painting bumpouts at:
  - MN-68 at Jackson Street.
  - Jefferson at MN-68.

(1) Minnesota Highway 68 was consistently identified as one of the most difficult crossings in Minneota throughout the planning process. Through consultation with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the City of Minneota received the suggestion to install a rectangular rapid flashing beacon at the intersection of Jackson Street and MN-68 rather than to paint additional crosswalks along Highway 68. There is currently a painted crosswalk along with “School Crossing” sign. Adding this RRFB to the crossing will enhance the visibility of pedestrians attempting to cross the highway. This crosswalk will also serve as a connection for the two ends of the walking and biking path. See Figure 7 for an example of a rectangular rapid flashing beacon. In order to further slow incoming traffic from the south, trees could be planted, which has the visual effect of “narrowing” the roadway. This is a long-term solution that the committee and City can work on over time.

(2) Painted bumpouts serve to calm traffic by narrowing the lanes and also by clearing the drivers’ line of sight at intersections. Figure 8 is an illustration of how painted bumpouts work. Painted bumpouts have the added benefit of not hindering snow removal. On Highway 68 the highway can be narrowed at its intersection with Jackson. This will not only slow traffic near the intersection which also functions as a school bus stop, but will also create an “extension” of the sidewalk that shortens the length pedestrians must walk to avoid traffic. Residents cited the intersection of Jefferson and Highway 68 as an area that is difficult for cars to enter due to low visibility, creating a dangerous intersection. Painting bumpouts on the north side of Jefferson would clear up one parking space and create better visibility for motorists and would ensure better safety for pedestrians.



FIGURE 8: PAINTED BUMPOUT EXAMPLE (PHOTO SOURCE: STREETS.MN)

### **Strategy 3: Improve safety through lighting enhancements.**

- Action 1: Install lighting along the walking and biking path.
- Action 2: Ensure adequate pedestrian lighting by researching areas within the City of Minneota that are in need and address them appropriately.

(1+2) Throughout the data gathering phase of the planning process, residents expressed a need for lighting throughout the city and along walking and biking path. Though residents stated there are various places in Minneota's neighborhoods are not well-lit, those places remained vaguely identified. The Active Living Committee should take the following steps to address lighting in Minneota. First, install lighting along the walking and biking path in order to keep the trail accessible and safe for early and late users. Second, research areas in Minneota that have poor lighting and work with the utility to address them.

**Strategy 4: Increase walking and bicycling and programming for each as well as other recreation options.**

- Action 1: Work with Lyon County to install a wide shoulder/bike lane if and when CR-10 is rerouted along Golf Course Road as well as potentially along East Lyon Street and North Monroe.
- Action 2: Place bike racks at key locations (golf course, place school's old rack behind main street businesses).
- Action 3: Continue to support bicycle education efforts (e.g. Bike Rodeos, WalkBikeFun curriculum, etc.).
- Action 4: Partner with Minneota Boxelder Bug Days and Frosty 5K to introduce and expand trail programming.
- Action 5: Consider installing a lower-cost recreation option such as sand volleyball.

(1) A number of residents stated that they walk, run, and bike along the gravel shoulder of Golf Course Road (160<sup>th</sup> Avenue). At the time of this writing, the City of Minneota is having a conversation with Lyon County about rerouting County Road 10 onto the route that 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue currently sits. This gives the opportunity for Lyon County and the City of Minneota to work together to ensure a wide shoulder or bike lane along the newly rerouted County Road 10 in order to better accommodate the existing pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Should Minneota be successful in advocating for a paved wide shoulder or bike lane, then a bike lane or sidewalk along the portions of East Lyon Street and North Monroe leading to the new County Road 10 may be beneficial.

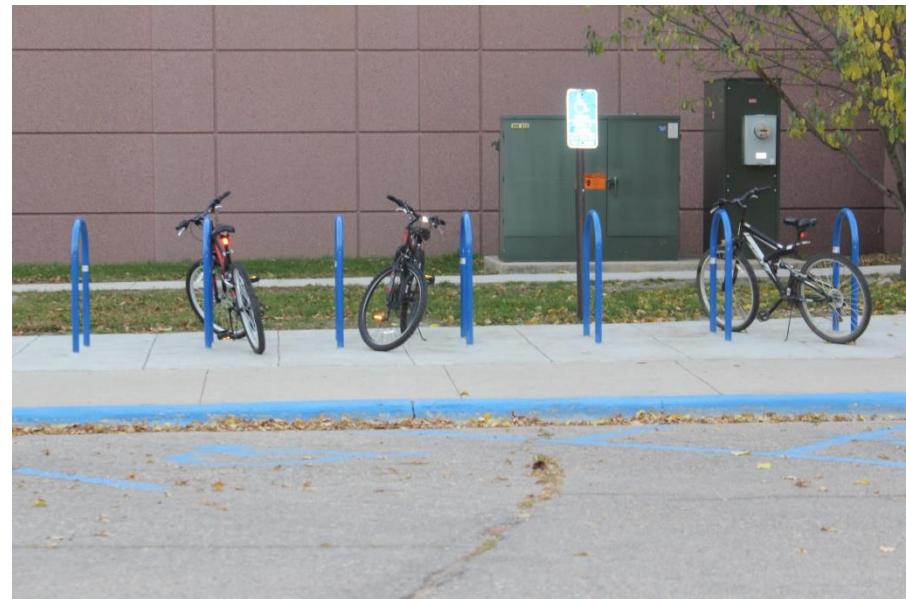


FIGURE 9: BIKE RACKS AT MINNEOTA PUBLIC SCHOOL



FIGURE 10: DETACHED FENCING ALONG THE WESTERN BRIDGE OF THE WALKING PATH

These extensions of bike lanes to Golf Course Road would act not only as a safeguard for pedestrians and bicyclists, but also as an extension of Minneota's biking path network.

(2) Minneota has bike racks currently placed at the schools, library, and a church. To continue enhancing visibility of bicycling throughout the city, bike racks can be placed at the golf course and behind main street businesses. The school currently has older, unused bike racks that could be relocated to meet this need.

(3+4) Encouragement of walking and biking is essential, especially among younger residents. The Minneota Active Living Committee should consider supporting walking and biking with education efforts such as Bike Rodeos or the "Walk! Bike! Fun!" curriculum from the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota. These efforts can be implemented in partnership with law enforcement and/or the schools. Additionally, programming can be introduced as a component of Minneota Boxelder Bug Days and the Frosty 5K in order to engage the maximum amount of residents and visitors possible. Through these engagement efforts, children can begin biking at an early age – setting them up for a lifetime of active living – and adults can become involved in walking, running, and bicycling in an environment of friendly competition.

(5) Many survey respondents specified they would like to see more recreation options around Minneota. A lower-cost, low-maintenance option such as a sand volleyball court could be easily placed in an existing open area and can also be utilized in partnership with the aforementioned community events such as Boxelder Bug Days. The committee could consider partnering with the school on this as well. Other recreation options mentioned were sledding/ice skating areas, basketball court updates, and pool improvements.

#### **Strategy 5: Enforce existing laws and policies.**

- Action 1: Enforce tree trimming along sidewalk areas (including behind the Manor along the trail) and keep sidewalks clear.
- Action 2: Enforce speed at identified problem areas (Madison, Highway 68, Monroe, 5<sup>th</sup> Street).



FIGURE 11: 8<sup>TH</sup> STREET AND NORTH JEFFERSON



FIGURE 12: GREEN BIKE LANES (PHOTO SOURCE: MINNPOST/TYLER SCHOW)

(1) During the data gathering phase, residents mentioned that tree branches and vehicles extending into the sidewalk area make walking on the sidewalk more inconvenient than simply walking elsewhere. Enacting and enforcing tree trimming guidelines as well as sidewalk clearance rules will help in ensuring that the sidewalk stays accessible for all users.

(2) Many survey respondents and community meeting attendees specified that speeding in town is a pressing issue. Specifically residents mentioned Madison Street as the biggest problem area in addition to Monroe, 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and Highway 68. The Minneota Police have increased enforcement in the recent past, which has had a positive effect on slowing traffic. The Minneota Active Living Committee can work with law enforcement to increase strategic enforcement in order to create a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

#### **Strategy 6: Lengthen the walking and biking path and improve its safety and connectivity.**

- Action 1: Repair the western bridge on the trail.
- Action 2: Smooth the trail in trouble spots.
- Action 3: Connect the trail to the main road/sidewalk system at its Market Street terminus.
- Action 4: Complete the walking and biking path loop with bike lanes along Grant Street.
- Action 5: Educate residents on the bike lanes.
- Action 6: “Extend” the trail by marketing the existing “nature trail” along the former railroad route.
- Action 7: Utilize the space at the end of the “nature trail.”

Minneota’s walking and biking path is an immense active living asset to the community. Thus, it is important to continue increasing its usage and to consider options for improving and extending the path.

(1) The walking and biking trail crosses over the Yellow Medicine River twice. Two covered bridges cross the width of the river, the westernmost of which has gaps in its safety fencing. As shown in Figure 10, there are gaps near the bottom of the fencing along the westernmost bridge creating an unsafe environment for young pedestrians and bicyclists. Trusses are also ready and should be placed on the western bridge. The safety and upkeep of these bridges is integral to maintaining a safe environment for users of all ages.

(2) Some residents pointed to an uneven path in certain places, which makes for difficult bicycling. As shown in Figure 11, the path at 8<sup>th</sup> Street & North Jefferson is uneven and could use maintenance to ensure safe and convenient bicycling. This is not only a safety issue, but also an

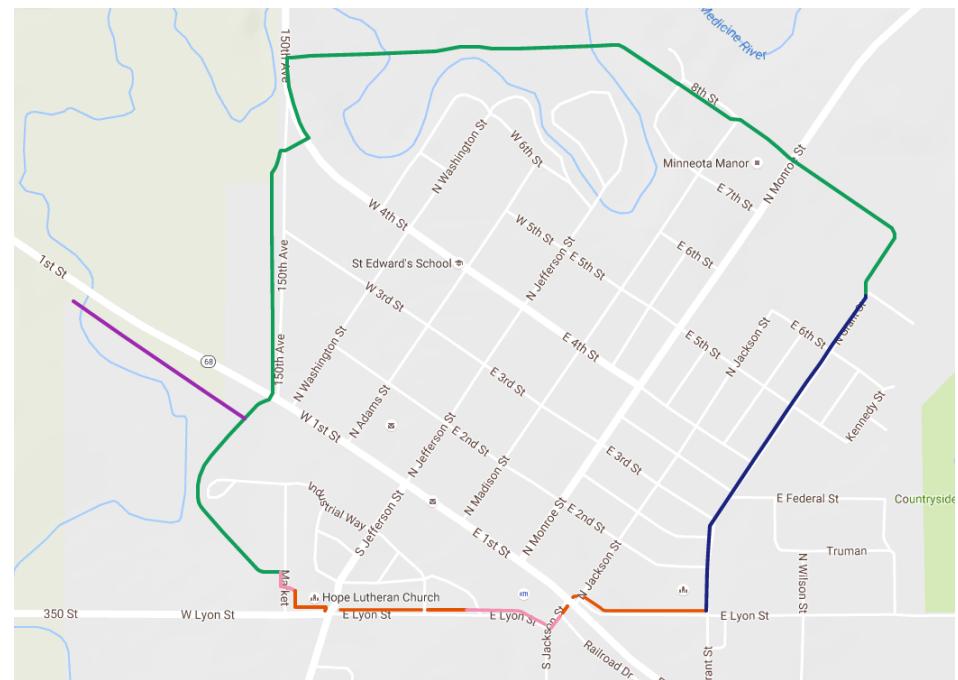


FIGURE 13: A COMPLETE WALKING/BIKING PATH

- |                                       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <span style="color: green;">—</span>  | EXISTING WALKING/BIKING PATH |
| <span style="color: red;">—</span>    | EXISTING SIDEWALK            |
| <span style="color: purple;">—</span> | RAILROAD/NATURE TRAIL        |
| <span style="color: blue;">—</span>   | BIKE LANE NEEDED             |
| <span style="color: pink;">—</span>   | SIDEWALK NEEDED              |

ADA compliance issue. Addressing this issue would ensure the path stays accessible for all users.

(3) The walking trail's southern end terminates along Market Street – an unpaved road without any sidewalks. Many residents stated that this southern end is an issue for pedestrians and bicyclists that needs to be addressed. Connecting the end of the path via sidewalk may be the least costly route considering a dedicated bike lane would require paving all of Market Street.

(4) With the aforementioned sidewalks along East Lyon Street and enhanced crosswalk at Jackson Street and MN-68, the walking and biking path needs a dedicated route to connect its two ends. Through conversations with the MN Department of Transportation, the City of Minneota, and Minneota Law Enforcement, the consensus to continue funneling walking/biking path traffic down Grant Street via the Jackson Street crossing was made. Bike lanes can also be painted a distinct shade of green to enhance their visibility and safety. See Figure 12 for an example of green bike lanes as well as Figure 13 for an illustration of the completed path (listing the path, existing sidewalks, sidewalks needed, and bike lanes needed).

(5) Once bike lanes are implemented along Grant Street, residents and bicyclists will require education on how to properly use them. Various curricula and local programming can be used in partnership with groups like Community Education.

(6+7) Just south of its crossing with MN-68, the walking and biking path intersects with an unpaved trail that heads northwest, parallel with the highway. This path runs along the former route of the railroad and is surrounded by trees and crosses over the Yellow Medicine River. This "nature trail" was cited by a few residents as a path they already take when they walk. This beautiful asset to the trail can be marketed as something like a "nature trail" or "railroad trail" that is a peaceful and natural escape. Just over the bridge at the west end of the trail is a large open space where a municipal well building is located. This area can also be accessed by vehicle from Highway 68 and it is just beside the "Welcome to Minneota" sign. This space (and the nature trail leading to it) is already owned and maintained by the City of Minneota. What better way to turn this underutilized space into a community asset than to repurpose it into a park area? One idea for a low maintenance park would be a dog park, requiring little more than a bench, a dog waste station, and a trash bin. Other ideas can be explored and considered by the Active Living Committee. The natural trail is featured on the cover of this plan and the photo below shows the open space near the welcome sign that connects to the trail.



## **GOAL IV: ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH ACTIVE LIVING.**

Strategy 1: Work with Minneota EDA to implement a “Walk Local, Shop Local” campaign.

Strategy 2: Work with Minneota EDA to utilize empty downtown space as a gym/fitness center.

In the past year, Minneota has been gaining an increasing amount of support for economic development. As detailed in the introduction, active living can and should be utilized as an economic development strategy. This is because where there are people, there is economic activity. While the Active Living Committee can become involved in many initiatives moving forward, two were identified in particular during the planning process.

(1) The Active Living Committee should work with the Minneota Economic Development Authority and local businesses to promote a “Walk Local, Shop Local” campaign. Not only will this get residents walking to multiple local businesses, but it will also showcase the goods and services available in Minneota. Whether this is utilized during the holiday shopping season, or year round, it is one way to spur economic development at existing Minneota businesses.

(2) During the planning process, residents stated that although the Minneota public school has a space for community members to exercise, they would like to see another space available to the public. This goal can be reached through working with the Minneota EDA to utilize currently empty downtown space as a gym/fitness center. Other small communities in Minnesota have successfully opened fitness centers that are open 24/7 via a keycard entry. A small fitness center need not be staffed full-time, but can be a space where a personal trainer can conduct business. Creating this space downtown will ensure more foot traffic and will also be a source of revenue for the business owner(s) and/or personal trainer(s).



# 5

## PLAN MAINTENANCE

The Minneota Active Living Plan is a living document, meant to reflect the ever changing needs of the community while also planning for the future with pedestrians and bicyclists in mind. In order to implement the strategies contained within it, an Active Living Committee made up of key partners should be formed. This can and should include diverse stakeholders and representatives from city government, walking/bicycling groups, schools, law enforcement, community education, parents, students, and other active and involved residents, among others. They can meet quarterly to continue planning and moving projects forward. It would be advantageous for at least one of the committee members to regularly update the Minneota City Council on new Active Living developments and to collaborate with the council when needed.

The Minneota Active Living Committee should treat the Active Living Plan as a living and malleable document that can be updated and added to when necessary to suit the community's needs. The Goals & Strategies as well as the work plan can be updated when new goals are identified by the Active Living Committee. The public should continue to be involved in the planning process and evaluation should occur periodically after implementation of goals take place.

# 6

## CONCLUSION

When making land use decisions and investments for the future, it is critical to consider all costs, not just the construction costs. There are costs associated with sprawl, inactivity, negative health, and loss of community. Decision makers need to consider the functions and utility of every street and parcel of land.

Ask yourself the following questions when making these decisions:

- How will my decision impact health?
- How will my decision impact connectivity?
- Will my decision make the community more inviting to pedestrians and bicyclists?
- Were all users considered when making this decision?
- Is there any way to make this development encourage physical activity?

# 7

## WORK PLAN

On the following pages, you will find the Active Living Plan Goals and Strategies laid out into a "Work Plan" style for the purposes of easily assigning responsibilities, monitoring progress, and evaluating outcomes.

GOAL	STRATEGY	ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	OUTCOME
1) Ensure all streets in Minneota are Complete Streets	Strategy 1: Adopt and Implement a Complete Streets Policy (pg. 16)  Strategy 2: Maintain and implement the Pedestrian Functional Classification System that classifies all streets in Minneota in regards to their pedestrian infrastructure needs. (pg. 16)	→  →			
2) Increase walking and bicycling to school.	Strategy: Update policies and programs to encourage active transportation to and from school. (pg. 18)	Action 1: Implement adult crossing guards near the school.  Action 2: Host an annual “Walk/Bike to School Day” event.  Action 3: Create a “Walking School Bus” and/or a “Bicycle Train” to ensure safe walking and bicycling to school.  Action 4: Position the City of Minneota to be eligible for Safe Routes to School funding through the adoption of subdivision regulations as			

		identified in Minnesota Statute 174.40, subd. 4a.			
3) Increase walking and biking around the City of Minneota.	Strategy 1: Address gaps in the sidewalk network. (pg. 19)	Action 1: Complete the sidewalk along Monroe Street.  Action 2: Complete the sidewalk connection along East Lyon Street.  Action 3: Maintain existing sidewalks, especially along main arterial and connector routes.  Action 4: Review and prioritize sidewalk infrastructure for ADA compliance, and construct it as such.			
	Strategy 2: Improve pedestrian safety and crossings. (pg. 20)	Action 1: Install a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) as the crossing of Highway 68 and Jackson Street.  Action 2: Action 2: Calm traffic by painting bumpouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On MN-68 at Jackson Street.</li><li>• On Jefferson at MN-68.</li></ul>			
	Strategy 3: Improve safety through lighting	Action 1: Install lighting along the			

	<p>enhancements. (pg. 20)</p>	<p>walking and biking path.</p>			
		<p>Action 2: Ensure adequate pedestrian lighting by researching areas within the City of Minneota that are in need and address them appropriately.</p>			
	<p>Strategy 4: Increase walking and bicycling and programming for each as well as other recreation options. (pg. 21)</p>	<p>Action 1: Work with Lyon County to install a wide shoulder/bike lane if and when CR-10 is rerouted along Golf Course Road as well as potentially along East Lyon Street and North Monroe.</p>			
		<p>Action 2: Place bike racks at key locations (golf course, place school's old rack behind main street businesses).</p>			
		<p>Action 3: Continue to support bicycle education efforts (e.g. Bike Rodeos, WalkBikeFun curriculum, etc.)</p>			
		<p>Action 4: Partner with Minneota Boxelder Bug Days and Frosty 5K to introduce and</p>			

		expand trail programming.			
		Action 5: Consider installing a lower-cost recreation option such as sand volleyball.			
	Strategy 5: Enforce existing laws and policies. (pg. 22)	Action 1: Enforce tree trimming along sidewalk areas (including behind the Manor along the trail) and keep sidewalks clear.			
		Action 2: Enforce speed at identified problem areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Madison</li> <li>• Highway 68</li> <li>• Monroe</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Street</li> </ul>			
	Strategy 6: Lengthen the walking and biking path and improve its safety and connectivity. (pg. 23)	Action 1: Repair the western bridge on the trail.			
		Action 2: Smooth the trail in trouble spots.			
		Action 3: Connect the trail to the main road/sidewalk system at its Market Street terminus.			
		Action 4: Complete the walking and biking			

		<p>path loop with bike lanes along Grant Street.</p> <p>Action 5: Educate residents on the bike lanes.</p> <p>Action 6: “Extend” the trail by marketing the existing “nature trail” along the former railroad route.</p> <p>Action 7: Utilize the space at the end of the “nature trail.”</p>			
Goal 4: Encourage economic growth through active living.	<p>Strategy 1: Work with Minneota EDA to implement a “Walk Local, Shop Local” campaign. (pg. 25)</p> <p>Strategy 2: Work with Minneota EDA to utilize empty downtown space as a gym/fitness center. (pg. 25)</p>	 			

## **APPENDIX**

- (1) Minneota Community Active Living Survey
- (2) Sample Complete Streets Policy
- (3) Safe Routes to School funding eligibility under Minnesota Statute 174.40, subd. 4a
- (4) Sample Subdivision Regulation from Rushford, MN

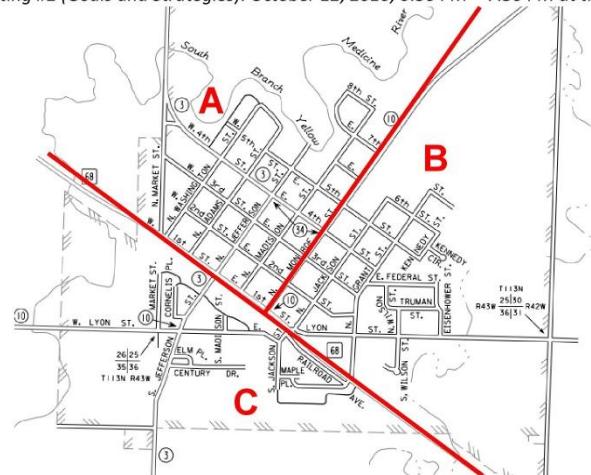
8

## Minneota Community Active Living Survey

Please help the City of Minneota prioritize pedestrian and recreation projects by documenting factors that help or hinder safe walking, biking, and recreation within your community. Complete this survey by Friday, September 30, 2016 and return it to City Hall. Alternatively, you can complete the survey online at <http://www.surveytotool.com/s/S885B69C37>. We would also like you to add your comments to our WikiMap at <http://www.wikimapping.com/wikimap/Minneota-Active-Living-Plan.html>.

Join us for our series of two community meetings! We will be discussing barriers, goals, and solutions.

Community Meeting #1 (Issues and Concerns): September 20, 2016, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM at the Community Center  
Community Meeting #2 (Goals and Strategies): October 12, 2016, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM at the Community Center



1. What section of the city do you live in? (Circle one)      A      B      C
2. What is your age group? (Circle one)      17 or Under      18-24      25-44      45-64      65+
3. Please highlight on the map the route you walk or bike.
4. List which Minneota parks you go to:

5. How frequently do you go to those parks?

6. Do you utilize the City of Minneota's walking and bike path? If so, how often?

7. What might influence you to use the parks and walking/biking path more often?

8. What other recreational amenities would you like to see in Minneota?

9. Do you have any other comments about parks, trails, walking, biking, or recreation in Minneota?

## Minneota Community Active Living Survey

On your average walk in your community, score each category on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the worst, 10 being the best).

### **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



### **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



### **3. Did drivers behave well?**

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



### **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



### **5. Was your walk pleasant?**

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



6. 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/biking?

## **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 Minneota'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 Minneota, Minnesota establish a Complete Streets Policy that provides as follows:

1. The City of Minneota 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, floor 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 our 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 Minneota, Minnesota.

Mayor

City Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Safe Routes to School Eligibility Changes for State Funds

### 2015 Eligibility Changes

In 2015, the following eligibility requirement was added to the state SRTS program:

[Minnesota Statutes 174.40, subd. 4a](#)

Subd. 4a. Eligibility. A statutory or home rule charter city, county, or town is eligible to receive funding under this section only if it has adopted subdivision regulations that **require safe routes to school infrastructure in** developments authorized on or after June 1, 2016.

### How does the change affect eligibility for non-infrastructure grants?

This eligibility requirement does not apply to non-infrastructure funds. There is no change to eligibility for mini-grants, bicycle fleets, or planning assistance grants.

### How does the change affect eligibility for infrastructure grants?

The eligibility requirement will be added to statewide SRTS infrastructure solicitations when state funds are available. To prepare for future solicitations, MnDOT recommends communities review their subdivision regulations with their SRTS team, local planners, attorneys and elected officials to see if they meet the requirements or should adopt new subdivision regulations.

### What is SRTS infrastructure?

A definition for SRTS infrastructure was not provided under [Minnesota Statutes 174.40](#). Since the program is modeled after the federal program, eligible SRTS infrastructure –related projects and improvements for non-motorized transportation under the [federal SRTS program](#) may be considered SRTS infrastructure. For examples of typical SRTS infrastructure projects in Minnesota funded through the SRTS program, check out projects previously awarded projects under the grant history section on the [grants page](#).

### What will a city or town need to include in an application?

The city or town applying for infrastructure funds will be asked to provide a signed resolution by their governing board acknowledging and confirming compliance with the requirements under [Minnesota Statutes 174.40, subd. 4a](#).

### What will a county sponsor need to include in an application?

The county sponsor is acting on behalf of the city or town and will be asked to certify that the city or town receiving the funding assistance has met the statute requirements.

Note: This does not have any impact on the 2015 statewide SRTS solicitation with federal funds.

Visit the [MnDOT SRTS website](#) for more information.



**WHEREAS**, the City of Rushford currently has a Subdivision Regulations Ordinance regulating the subdivision and platting of land within the corporate limits of the City of Rushford, MN, providing for the installation or guarantee of installation of utilities, street pavements and other essential development by the subdivider; and

**WHEREAS**, this Subdivision Ordinance also establishes minimum requirements to protect the public health, safety, morals, comfort, convenience and general welfare of the people; and

**WHEREAS**, the City wishes to include pedestrian safety into transportation infrastructure planning to encourage and ensure the safety of the growing pedestrian and cyclist population; and

**WHEREAS**, the City wishes to take advantage of any federal or state grant funding which may become available for infrastructure improvements;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the following amendment to the Subdivision Regulations Ordinance will further clarify definitions and establish standards for the City to be eligible to participate in Safe Routes to School Programs and funding opportunities:

#### **THE CITY OF RUSHFORD ORDAINS:**

**SECTION 1.** The following sections of that certain ordinance dated August 11, 1997, and amended in November 1997, February 2000, May 2000, June 2001, July 2006, August 2010, and September 2015 entitled City of Rushford Zoning Ordinance, **Subdivision Regulations Ordinance** is hereby amended:

#### **CITY OF RUSHFORD, MINNESOTA SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

#### **CHAPTER 3. DEFINITIONS**

A. The following definitions shall pertain to works used in this ordinance.

**31. Safe Routes to School Program:** A federal program under Title 1, Section 1404 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005, Public Law 109-59

**32. Safe Routes to School Program Funding:** The State of Minnesota has established an account consisting of state bond proceeds and other funds as appropriated to the Commissioner to be expended on eligible costs of a project receiving financial assistance. Assistance may be offered for acquisition of land or permanent easements, predesign, design, preliminary and final engineering, environmental analysis, construction and reconstruction of publicly owned infrastructure with a useful life of at least ten years that provides for nonmotorized transportation to and from a school; preparation of land for which a route to school is established, including demolition of structures and remediation of any hazardous conditions on the land; and the unpaid principal on debt issued by a political subdivision for a safe route to school project.

**33. Safe Routes to School Program Administration:** The Commissioner has established program requirements and a competitive process for financial assistance following MN Statutes 174.40; establishing criteria to evaluate capital improvements of transportation infrastructure that improves safety and encourages nonmotorized transportation to and from a school.

**34. Safe Routes to School Infrastructure:** A safe and appealing nonmotorized means of transportation to and from a school.

#### **CHAPTER 7. REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS**

##### **7.60 STREETS:**

H. In order to insure eligibility for Safe Routes to School Program Funding, it is required that any subdivision development authorized in the City of Rushford on or after June 1, 2016, will incorporate safe routes to school infrastructure in the subdivision development plans.

#### **SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE**

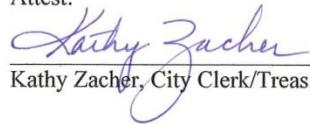
This ordinance amendment becomes effective upon its passage and publication according to law.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Rushford this 13<sup>th</sup> day of Oct., 2015.



Chris Hallum, Mayor

Attest:



Kathy Zacher  
Kathy Zacher, City Clerk/Treas.

Publication Date: 10-22-15



*City of  
Minnesota*

