

MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Public Transportation




Public transportation is integral to the overall multi-modal transportation network, providing an alternative to personal vehicles.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities



The City has pieces of a strong walking and biking network; however, there are still gaps in the network. These facilities are a desired amenity both for recreational benefits and as an alternative to using a motor vehicle. When asked about a list of 22 possible neighborhood recreation improvements, survey respondents identified “off-road walking/biking trails” as the highest priority. Additionally, the City’s biking network includes very little on-street infrastructure such as marked bike lanes, route signage or bike detection at signalized intersections.

MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION GOAL #1

Provide a comprehensive transportation network which allows people of all ages and abilities to safely access their daily needs throughout the community. 

Policies

#1 - Continue to support the City’s Complete Streets Policy, while recognizing that unprotected bike lanes are not compatible with wide, high speed streets.

What are complete streets?

Complete Streets are streets that provide safe, convenient, and comfortable routes for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. A network of complete streets makes the transportation network safer and more efficient for everyone, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. A “Complete Street” right-sizes infrastructure based on functional classification and traffic volumes and may include the following features: sidewalks, multi-use paths, bicycle lanes, automobile lanes, street trees, public transportation facilities, and traffic calming devices.

#2 - Continue to promote walkable neighborhoods by requiring sidewalks in new developments, expanding the existing sidewalk network, and providing additional linkages such as mid-block sidewalks and trail connections for interior streets/cul-de-sacs.

#3 - Discourage cul-de-sac streets in favor of connected streets, except where topography, environmental conditions, or lot configuration undermine this policy.

#4 - Continue to work pro-actively with agency partners, and adjacent units of government in planning for regional transportation improvements, including State Hwy 47, USH 10, and bicycle infrastructure linking Fox Cities communities.

#5 - Improve access and wayfinding from regional highway systems to the downtown and other business and employment districts within the City, especially maintaining access from Hwy 10/441 to the downtown.

#6 - Maintain the safety and efficiency of existing transportation corridors.

#7 - Connect gaps in multi-modal transportation networks that connect Menasha to neighboring communities, including to High Cliff State Park, downtown Neenah, downtown Appleton, and the Fox Cities Paper Trail.

#8 - Seek to minimize conflicts between motorized and non-motorized traffic.

#9 - Prioritize investments where they will serve the daily needs and interests of residents by improving access to daily destinations such as jobs, schools, grocers, medical services, etc.

#10 - Support full operation of the Fox Locks canal system to encourage water transit and pleasure boating.

#11 - Support implementation of the Lawson Canal Plan.

#12- Coordinate with Valley Transit to maximize the effectiveness of current routes and enhance ridership.

Actions

1. Continue to implement a program to identify and repair broken and substandard sidewalks throughout the City.
2. Track and share progress annually of achievements of the City's Complete Streets Policy. Provide annual update to Plan Commission on progress and tie the update to the City's yearly Capital Improvement Program
3. Develop a bicycle, pedestrian, and micro-mobility plan for the City that establishes a preferred network, policies, and programs to support sustainable transportation options for residents, workers, and visitors.
4. Annually plan for new connections that increase resident access to regional connections in the bike and trail network. Work with neighboring jurisdictions, WisDOT, the DNR, and other invested partners to continually expand and integrate the network.
5. Work with adjacent municipalities with which you share rights-of-way to develop plans for more efficient maintenance and service provision within those rights-of-way.
6. Collaborate with responsible jurisdictions to ensure roadway improvements (including County and State highways) have multi-modal aspects integrated into planning and development, or appropriate alternatives developed.
7. Prepare corridor plans for high priority neighborhood collector and arterial streets prior to reconstruction.
8. Develop a branding and wayfinding plan to better orient visitors, strengthen the community's identity, and support economic development.
9. Create a plan for enhanced water recreation amenities at Jefferson Park where the current intake reservoir is located.

MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION GOAL #2

Design streets and public places to strengthen neighborhoods, improve safety, and encourage commercial corridor revitalization.

Policies

- #13-** Design and construct streets to maintain safety, operational efficiency, neighborhood quality of life, and economic development.
- #14-** Consider improving deteriorating railroad crossings.
- #15-** Design, build and operate the City's transportation system to ensure adequate emergency service provision.
- #16-** Design and retrofit local streets with traffic calming features, where necessary and appropriate.

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Improved Biking

The 2019 Community Survey asked people how they would rate aspects of their section of the City - one of which was "bikeability". Of all respondents, only 50% rated the bikeability of the City as excellent or good - and some planning areas scored as low as 35%.



Loop the Little Lake Trail



Jefferson Park



Nature's Way Trail

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Shifting Transportation Technology




All communities are beginning to wrestle with the impacts of changes in technology that may change how people travel. One change that is already occurring is the growth of electric motor-assisted devices such as bikes, scooters and skateboards. These devices expand the range and speed of travel for users, but they also present a regulatory challenge – where can they be safely used? The other, more significant change on the way is the growth of autonomous vehicles. By some accounts we are on the cusp of a new era in which vehicles will gradually be able to drive themselves with limited input from riders. This could start to change things like parking needs (less), curbside pick-up/drop-off space (more), drive lane width (less), and acceptable commute distances (longer).



#17- Strongly encourage additional amenities (e.g., bike racks, bike repair stands, hydration stations, etc.) in developments, public parks and other public facilities where feasible/appropriate.

#18- Incorporate curb parking into neighborhood commercial and downtown districts to support retail, protect sidewalks, slow drivers, and decrease the need for off-street parking lots and expensive structured parking.


Actions


10. Prepare a set of street design guidelines which take into consideration functional street classifications as well as other factors including economic development, placemaking, micro-mobility, bicycle, and pedestrian accommodation objectives. These guidelines or “street typologies” would identify desired street amenities and design considerations for all street types within the City. 

11. Modify public works codes and standards to reflect desired street designs, including but not limited to minimum street widths, minimum sidewalk widths, and curb radii standards.


12. Update the City’s Capital Improvement Plan on an annual basis to plan for short-term transportation improvements, considering the actions and recommendations of this Plan.

13. Update the Official Map to illustrate desire for connected, pedestrian friendly, transportation improvements and development into new growth areas.

14. Identify and implement opportunities to enhance pedestrian safety through crosswalk improvement on higher traffic streets throughout the City. 

15. Identify and implement opportunities to improve street design prior to street reconstruction, including: 

- a. Opportunities to implement road diets on existing 4-lane streets.
- b. Narrow travel lanes with new striping.
- c. Install bicycle boulevards on lower speed residential streets.
- d. Adding bike lane buffers, striping with bright color paint, painting bike boxes at busy intersections.
- e. Consider replacing or updating sharrows.

16. Continue to proactively plant and maintain trees along existing and planned streets. 

17. Conduct a walkability audit downtown to identify short-term practical solutions to improve walking conditions and pedestrian access.

MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION GOAL #3

Promote equitable and sustainable transportation options. 

Policies

#19- Provide convenient, affordable transportation options that enable people of all ages and abilities to access jobs, services, and other destinations to meet their daily needs, including for people without access to a personal vehicle.

#20- Consider “green street” design features when designing new or reconstructing existing streets, trails, and bicycle routes.

What is a "green" street?

A green street is a stormwater management approach that incorporates vegetation (perennials, shrubs, trees), soil, and engineered systems (e.g., permeable pavements) to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., streets, sidewalks). Green streets are designed to capture rainwater at its source, where rain falls. Whereas, a traditional street is designed to direct stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces into storm sewer systems (gutters, drains, pipes) that discharge directly into surface waters, rivers, and streams. (epa.gov)

#21- Continue to monitor and explore use of new technologies that can more efficiently manage and improve transportation networks in the City.

#22- Promote alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle use, including ride sharing, walking, biking, scootering, and other micro-mobility options.

#23- Improve bicycle and pedestrian access to neighborhood destinations, commercial districts, and the downtown.

Actions

18. *In conjunction with Menasha Utilities, develop a strategy to incorporate new technologies into transportation projects, including but not limited to expanded electric vehicle (EV), ride hailing services, and autonomous vehicles.*

19. *Lower or eliminate the City’s off-street parking requirements.*

20. *Work with Menasha Utilities to construct EV charging stations on City owned lots, buildings, and parks where appropriate and economically feasible. The EV charging stations should be powered by renewable energy.*

21. *Collaborate with Menasha Joint School District and East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program on safe transportation for students, including walking, biking and busing, both in neighborhoods and near each school site.*

22. *Develop a high-quality branded initiative to support walking, biking, and other non-vehicular modes of travel throughout the community.*

23. *Pro-actively identify opportunities to implement micro-mobility solutions within the City, including but not limited to electric scooters, bicycles, and other lightweight utility vehicles.*

24. *Monitor opportunities for, and implement where feasible, shared-use mobility (SUM) transportation services. SUM can include ‘traditional SUM’ practices such as public transit, taxis, limousines, etc., or ‘technology enabled SUM’ (practices such as ridesourcing, carsharing, bikesharing, micortransit services, etc.).*

25. *Identify opportunities to reduce vehicular traffic speeds to improve pedestrian safety and encourage active transportation.*

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Road & Traffic Improvements

The Community Input Mapping Tool identified many sites of road & traffic improvements - with over 130 suggestions for each.

Common themes include:

- Need for Increased Bike Connections, including on-street facilities downtown and connecting trails
- Sidewalk additions are still needed in many areas
- General need for increased pedestrian crossings
- Need for general road repairs in several areas

Community survey respondents indicated support for public investment in the following transportation improvements:

- Road pavement repair (90% support)
- Intersection improvements to address congestion (77%)
- Sidewalk, trail and pedestrian crossing improvements to enable safe walking (76%)
- Bike lane and trail improvements to enable safe biking (68%)

2021 SNAPSHOT: Mobility & Transportation

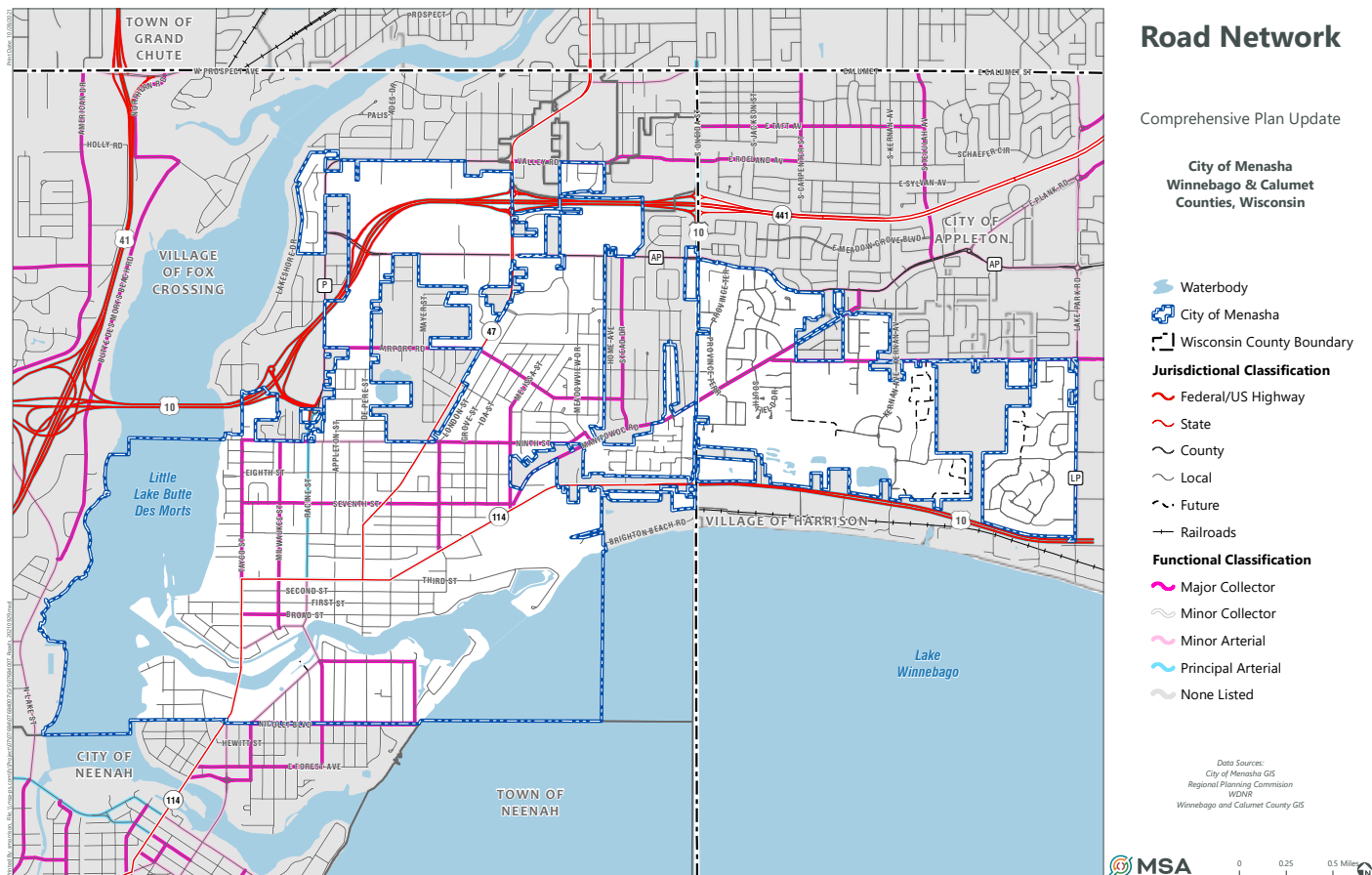
Road Network

Regional Highway System: Major highways located in Menasha include US Highway 10, USH 41/Interstate 41, two state trunk highways (WIS 114 and WIS 47), and seven county trunk highways (CTH P, CTH AP, CTH LP).

Workforce Commuting Data: Based on 2018 Census Bureau data, the City of Menasha has roughly 9,236 residents commuting out of the city for work (92% of employed residents) and about 7,503 people commuting into Menasha for work (i.e., 91% of city jobs filled by non-Menasha residents). Approximately 50% of residents are employed in the Fox Cities, while the other half work at job sites farther away or remotely. The same pattern holds for those working in Menasha; approximately half live in the Fox Cities area, with another 50% commuting in from other areas throughout the State.

Truck Routes: The Menasha Municipal Code includes a list of the streets and highways that are designated as heavy traffic (truck) routes. State and county highways are established truck routes by the nature of their intended use and street design. However, any public street or alley may be used by heavy vehicles for the purpose of delivering or moving commodities provided they travel the shortest possible route from designated heavy traffic route to residence or place of business.

Existing Transportation Infrastructure (see Appendix E)



Bicycle & Pedestrian Network

Regional Trails: There are several existing regional routes connecting Menasha to surrounding areas:

- » **Loop the Little Lake Trail:** Loop the Little Lake, often referred to as the “Loop,” is a 3.5 mile route that links three (3) communities (Village of Fox Crossing, City of Menasha and City of Neenah) while creating connections for bicycle commuting/recreation and pedestrian recreation with scenic vistas and access to Little Lake Butte des Morts. The route combines off-road bike/pedestrian trails, four (4) trestles of various lengths and on-road bike lanes / sidewalk sections.
- » **Friendship State Trail:** The Western trailhead is located at CTH-M in the town of Winchester about 1.5 miles (2.4 km) east of the US-45/US-10 interchange. The trail then continues along US Highway 10 for 8.6 miles (13.8 km). The trail continues through the Fox Cities for the remaining length; this is the busiest section of the trail. A trestle bridge crosses Little Lake Butte des Morts - this is also part of the Loop the Little Lake Trail and one of two rail trail sections of the trail. The final part of the trail travels along Wisconsin Highway 114 in Menasha. The Eastern trailhead is the intersection of US-10 and WIS-114.
- » **Fox Cities Paper Trail:** The purpose of the Paper Trail is to link parks in the area to create an “emerald necklace” of our special green spaces, circle the Fox Cities and provide communities with a frame in which to construct and link trails. The trail includes several on-street facilities and is approximately 50 miles in length, passing through 20 city parks.

City Bike System: The City has both on- and off-street bike facilities, with the majority of the network consisting of on-road bike routes. These facilities provide strong connections east-west and are located along some arterial and collector streets. The primary connecting path in Menasha is the Loop the Lake Trail and Friendship State Trail.

- » **High Cliff State Park Connection:** The City is currently working with municipal partners and non-profits to finalize a trail connection to High Cliff State Park. The trail will utilize and connect existing segments including the Loop the Lake Trail, Province Terrace Trail and Friendship State Trail.

Sidewalks: The City requires sidewalks in new residential and commercial development, including developed land annexed to the City. There are exceptions to the ordinance, depending on land use and future schedule of road reconstruction. The Subdivision Ordinance requires sidewalks on both sides of all new public streets. As streets are reconstructed or significantly improved within the City, sidewalks are typically installed if they are not already present, with exceptions for high-volume roads that typically are used solely for vehicle traffic. The City has the authority to grant waivers, generally in response to unusual site conditions.

In addition to new sidewalk installations, other pedestrian facility improvements such as sidewalk ramps, crosswalks, signage, etc are being upgraded when new development occurs adjacent to the facility, as part of road reconstruction, or as part of other improvement projects outlined in the City Capital Improvement Program

Transit Service

Fox Valley Transit: The Valley Transit agency operates 2 transit (bus) routes throughout the City, primarily designed for typical work week travel. Route 30 links Menasha to Neenah and Appleton. Route 1 serves Midway Road on the north side of the City.

Paratransit: Paratransit services are offered to qualifying riders.

Shared Ride Taxi: This service provides reduced fare transportation for residents of the Cities of Neenah and Menasha, aged 60 years and older.

Regional Transit Service

Intercity Bus: Private intercity bus services stop in Menasha, though there is no permanent bus station.

Air Service: Appleton International Airport provides recreational, charter and commercial flights, located West of Highway 41.

Freight Rail: Canadian National is the parent company of Wisconsin Central Limited, which may also use these lines. There are freight transfers and switching operations that take place in the City of Menasha. While a local line connects Menasha directly with the Manitowoc Area and Lake Michigan, it is relatively easy to connect from Menasha to points all over the state as well as lines that lead to Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul.