BIKE Decatur

REGIONAL BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

July 2021

DUATS
Metropolitan Planning Organization

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CORE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Greg Crowe, City of Decatur
Joselyn Stewart, DUATS & City of Decatur
Griffin Enyart, City of Decatur
Bill Clevenger, Decatur Park District
Clay Gerhard, Decatur Park District
Julie Miller, Village of Mt. Zion
Bruce Bird, Macon County Highway Department

STEERING COMMITTEE

Core Advisory Committee
Denise Swarthout, Decatur School District
Rick Scholl, Decatur Bicycle Club
Tom Caldwell, Illinois Department of Transportation
Scott Magruder, Decatur Bicycle Shop
Gene Fruit, Decatur Illinois Cycling Enthusiasts
Kyle May, Spin City Bicycle Shop
Jamie Galler, Decatur Park District
Tiffany Wilson, Village of Mt. Zion
John Williams, Decatur Public Transit System
Marisa Hosier, Macon County Health Department
Officer Matt Daniels, Decatur Police Bike Task Force
Frank Hubbard, Decatur Park District Police
Richie Wolf, Macon County Conservation District
Mike Landacre, Decatur Running Club
Jim Spaniol, SONA (Save Our Natural Area)
Nicole Bateman, Decatur Economic Development Corporation
Stacey Young, Decatur Park Board
Emily O'Connell & Adrienne Ranck, Macon County Health Dept. Alternates

FUNDING FOR PLAN PROVIDED BY:

DUATS
IDOT - Bike Grant
City of Decatur

PROJECT TEAM

Cheryl Sharp, Lochmueller Group
Katy Shackelford, Lochmueller Group
Peter Williams, Lochmueller Group
Sharif Ullah, Lochmueller Group
Tim Gustafson, Epstein
Robert Erbs, Epstein
Cody McChane, Epstein
Cynthia Hoyle, Hoyle Consulting

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1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces bicycle planning and the foundational information in which this plan is built. Benefits of bicycling and bike infrastructure are discussed along with a explanation for why cities and regions should invest in bicycling. The robust public participation process for this plan is summarized along with key transportation system conditions and demographics. Various long range plans were reviewed throughout this process to understand the previous goals of the community.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The Decatur Bicycle Plan, referred to as “Bike Decatur” or the “Plan”, is the next step for the Decatur, Illinois region to become a more bicycle friendly community. The Plan incorporates input from local experts and insights from community members. It is the first regional bicycle planning effort since 1996 and outlines the long-range vision, goals, policies, and recommendations for bikeways, encouragement programs, and safety education programs. The Plan clarifies, aligns, and fills gaps between the various community and agency initiatives in and around the Decatur region.

The purpose of Bike Decatur is to develop a unified areawide plan to make the Decatur region a model Bicycle Friendly Community* where bicycling is a safe, attractive, easy, and convenient form of transportation and recreation for people of all ages and bicycling abilities. The Plan provides regional municipal staff with a set of tools to begin this endeavor. The bikeway costs, prioritization criteria, and list of funding sources in the Plan aims to help area staff, elected officials, and the community determine where to focus energy and resources within the tremendous range of recommended bicycle projects and programs. The Decatur region will not become a model bicycling community overnight, but this Plan is a key step toward achieving that goal.

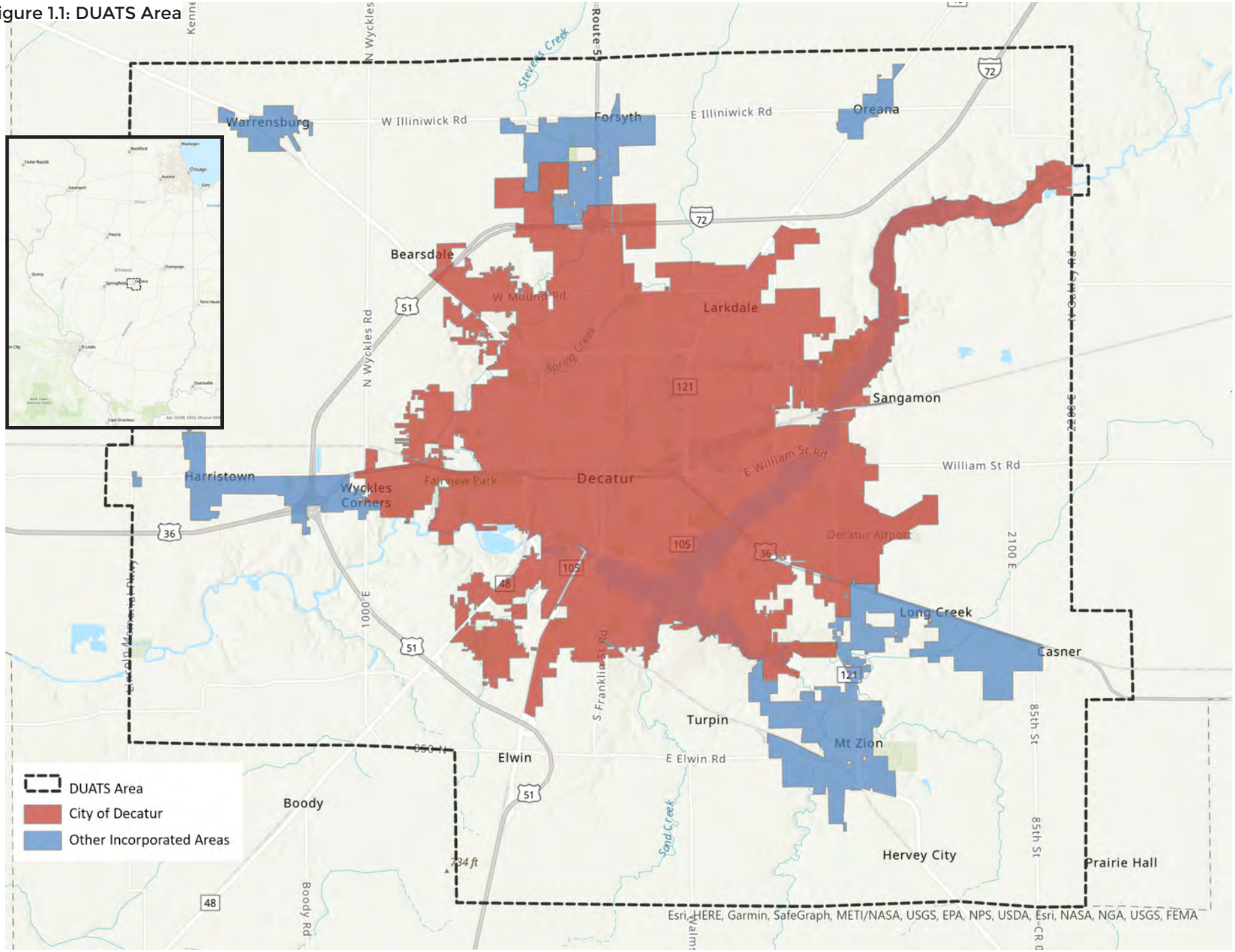
WHAT IS DUATS

The Decatur Urbanized Area Transportation Study (DUATS) serves as the regional transportation planning entity for the Decatur Urbanized Area and fulfills Federal and State requirements for transportation planning in urban areas with more than 50,000 persons. Today the entity fulfills the all-important role of coordinating regional efforts to ensure that transportation activities are undertaken in a coordinated and interrelated manner. DUATS, together with its Decatur Park District, City of Decatur, Macon County, and the Village of Mt. Zion partners, developed Bike Decatur, a regional bicycle plan.

One of the primary functions of DUATS is to develop and maintain the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) also known as the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The MTP has fiscal constraints, which means transportation projects are based on revenue from federal, state, and local governments. The LRTP is required to incorporate the goals, objectives, and performance measures of other relevant transportation plans in the metropolitan area, including any adopted Bike Plan; however, an updated Bike Plan has not been completed since 1996. Without a recent adopted plan, DUATS lacks an up-to-date unified vision or direction for bike infrastructure investments and therefore could be at a disadvantage for funding opportunities. The City of Decatur and DUATS see this plan as an opportunity to engage the community on how to improve the non-motorized transportation network and encourage more alternative transportation options. The Plan was funded by the City of Decatur and federal transportation funds through DUATS and an Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) grant. Figure 1.1 shows a map of the City of Decatur, DUATS, and other incorporated areas in the region.

*A Bicycle Friendly Community is a status award by the League of American Bicyclists in recognition of communities who are creating safer streets and better bicycling.

Figure 1.1: DUATS Area



WHY INVEST IN BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Bicycle infrastructure is a key component in any region's transportation network. A robust bicycle network increases recreational opportunities, creates more transportation choices, and promotes more active transportation. Cycling has many personal, financial, and environmental benefits and investing in bicycle infrastructure can help the Decatur region capture those benefits.

Proximity to a network of high-quality bike facilities such as protected bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and bike boulevards, is associated with an increase in property values.*

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Investing in bicycling can increase the vitality of downtowns and other commercial centers where shoppers and tourists spend their time and money. Bicycle and pedestrian friendly designs tend to promote safety, slow travel speeds through the district, and encourage people to browse and spend more money and allow tourists to feel more comfortable. A study in Northwest Arkansas demonstrated $137 million in annual economic benefits.* However, bicycling is not just good for local businesses, but commuters as well. Along with the environmental benefits of driving less, travelers may take less trips by car or eliminate their car use entirely. The reduced dependence on automobiles can result in lower household transportation cost, reduced time wasted in traffic, fuel savings, insurance costs, and maintenance costs.

*PeopleforBikes Foundation

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Bicycling as an alternative to motor vehicle use has many benefits. The main environmental benefit from cycling is the decrease of emissions from fewer trips by automobile. On a larger scale, reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has significant impacts on air quality and in the fight against climate change. Other environmental benefits include more efficient use of land as bicycling can encourage people to live closer to their basic needs and promote denser development. Bicycle infrastructure generally requires less space and can have significantly fewer impacts to the land and water during construction than a typical roadway.

The number of bike commuters in "Bike Friendly Communities" increased by 105% between 2000 and 2013.**

Increasing the mode share of all trips made by bicycling and walking from 12% to 15% could lead to fuel savings of 3.8 billion gallons a year and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 million tons per year. This is equivalent to replacing 19 million conventional cars with hybrids.*

*PeopleforBikes Foundation

**League of American Bicyclists

HEALTH BENEFITS

Cycling is one of the bests forms of low-impact exercise that is available for most age groups and abilities. And there are many health benefits for those who cycle on a regular basis. A healthier lifestyle that includes physical activity decreases healthcare and related costs, improves mental health, and improves performance at work and school.

Cities with high bicycling rates tend to have lower crash rates for all road users.*

Bicycling to school improves children's cardiorespiratory fitness.*

Bicycle commuting burns an average of 540 calories per hour.*

*PeopleforBikes Foundation

PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Public participation is an important component of any planning process. A planning process should both communicate information about the plan to the general public and enable residents to provide input and meaningful feedback. Effective public participation builds trust and buy-in from area residents, resulting in a better plan and a strategy that is more likely to be embraced by the region.

The public participation strategy for Bike Decatur included various methods for collaboration and public input/feedback including:

- Biweekly core team meetings with City of Decatur, DUATS, Decatur Park District, Macon County, and City of Mt. Zion staff
- Three steering committee meetings
- A dozen expert stakeholder interviews
- Two virtual public meetings
- Technical design training for regional planning and engineering staff in both the public and private sectors
- Informational website with interactive mapping tools
- Community survey

Throughout the various and lengthy public engagement process, common themes were illustrated. Overall, there is a high level of enthusiasm to be a bike friendly community and for bike infrastructure improvements. Public input directed recommendations to focus on a more connected bike network, prioritize off street and other low stress facilities, and to overcome road safety issues related to driver behavior. For more information on the public participation strategy, process, and outcomes, please see appendix A.

Photo Courtesy of Decatur Park District

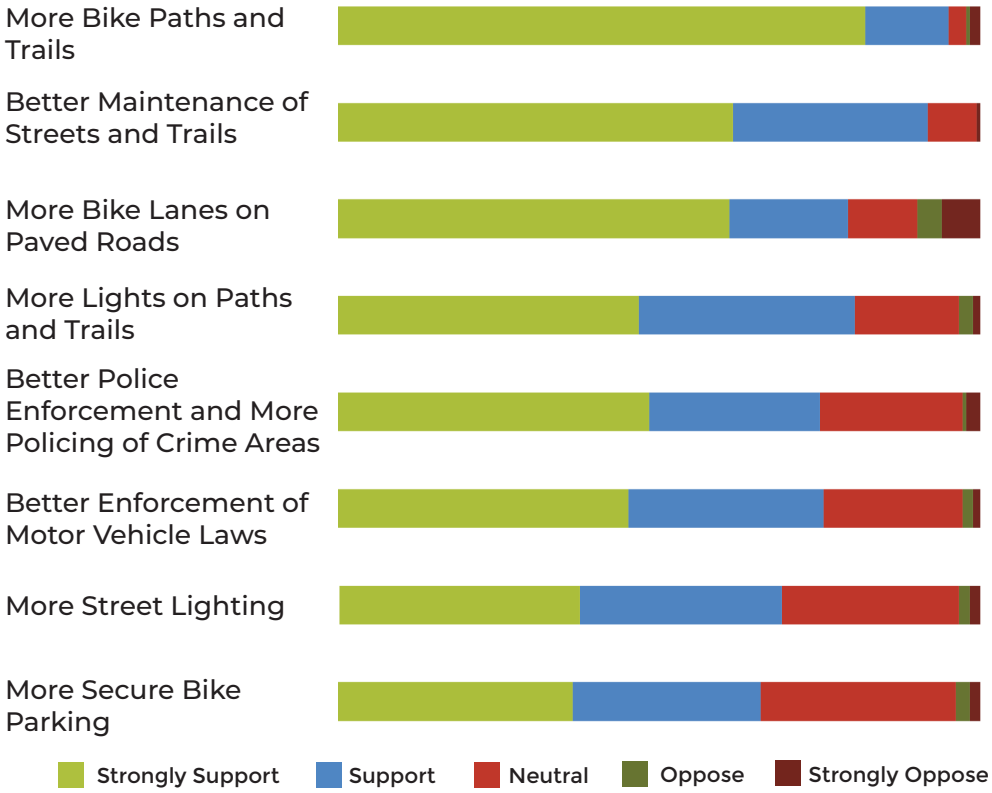
WHAT WE HEARD

Results from the engagement process revealed that almost all people use a car as their primary mode of transportation (92%). Though over 90% of residents reported having a bike at home, less than 5% use it as a means to travel for work or school. Over 90% of bicyclist reported they rode their bike at least once a month, with nearly half (47%) reporting they rode a few times a week or more. Many reported that road safety and driver behavior was their primary deterrent to using a bicycle on the road.

One consistent theme from all public engagement platforms was the desire to focus on increasing bicycle access to downtown Decatur and the numerous park amenities in the region.

The top regional priorities identified by the public were to build more bike paths and trails, improve the maintenance of existing streets and trails, and add more on road bicycle facilities like bike lanes. Throughout the planning process, the team reported strong support for improving biking conditions in the region and a willingness to collaborate across agencies and organizations.

Figure 1.2: Which Improvements Would You Support for Bicycling



96% bike for exercise, recreation or the enjoyment of biking

5% use a bike as their primary mode of transportation

90% have a bicycle at home

PLAN REVIEW

Bike Decatur builds upon, and exists within, an established ecosystem of long-range planning projects related to bicycle infrastructure. Bike Decatur is an extension of previous work dating back to 1996. Previous plans were thoroughly reviewed to ensure continuity with established visions and previously planned facilities. Ensuring Bike Decatur supports, and not impedes, other established plans and projects is key to successfully implementing the desired bike improvement recommendations. The previous plans that were reviewed as part of Bike Decatur include:

- DUATS 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (2019)
  The DUATS LRTP (2019) seeks to create a transportation system that promotes safety and alternative modes.
- Illinois Bike Transportation Plan (2014)
- Decatur Park District Master Plan Update (2013)
  The Park District Master Plan (2013) seeks to improve accessibility and connectivity in and within the parks in the region.
- Nelson Park Master Plan (2011)
  The Nelson Park Master Plan (2011) seeks to establish the park and Lake Decatur as a primary destination in the region by improve accessibility by creating a connected trail system that encircles the lake.
- Macon County & Decatur Comprehensive Plan (2009)
  The Comprehensive Plan (2009) seeks to provide residents the opportunity to move freely with expanded transportation choices and to encourage the planning and construction of bikeways as integral parts of the transportation system.
- Decatur Metro Area Greenway Plan (1998)
- The Decatur Urbanized Area Comprehensive Bicycle Plan (1996)

EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

In Decatur, there are no designated on-road bike facilities. While slower traffic speeds within neighborhoods are comfortable for most cyclists, traveling between neighborhoods, across town, or to Downtown is not as enjoyable or safe. Smaller towns and rural communities generally have different users of their roads than urban areas. It is important to recognize these differences and plan accordingly. In most small towns and rural areas, multi-modal facilities for bicycles and pedestrians are minimal. For this reason, it is imperative that any proposed facility attempts to accommodate the most concerned user.

The face of the United States of America is undergoing change, becoming more ethnically diverse and older. At the same time, telecommuting and alternative work arrangements are gaining adoption, and one-person households are increasing. These trends are forecasted to continue. With dynamic changes in national and global economic activity, uncertainty about the availability and cost of energy, and rapid advances in technology, a different picture emerges of the United States in 2050.

All of these factors have significant implications for the transportation system. The regional sociodemographic and economic characteristics of the population influence transportation demand for different modes. Age, income, gender, ethnicity, household size, and automobile availability are some of the variables that influence travel behavior. Providing safe mobility for the aging baby boom generation, for a more ethnically diverse population, and those living in poverty is critical for Decatur's economic vitality and quality of life.

Photo Courtesy of Decatur Parks District

The existing bike network consists of approximately 23 miles of physically separated facilities (as shown in Figure 1.2). The existing network is concentrated in the west portion of Decatur and in the neighboring communities of Forsyth and Mt. Zion. Figure 1.5 shows the lack of connectivity to schools and parks. Figures 1.6 and 1.7 show key demographics that lack access to the existing bike network. There are large numbers of people age 65 and over in the south and northeast portions of the region. Likewise, households in poverty are concentrated in the central and northeast portions of the region. To properly address concerns related to equity, it is crucial that these key groups, and others, are provided access to future bike improvements.

For more information on the existing conditions in the region, please see appendix B.

QUICK FACTS: DECATUR URBANIZED AREA

POPULATION

86,559
Residents

AREA

59.2
Square Miles

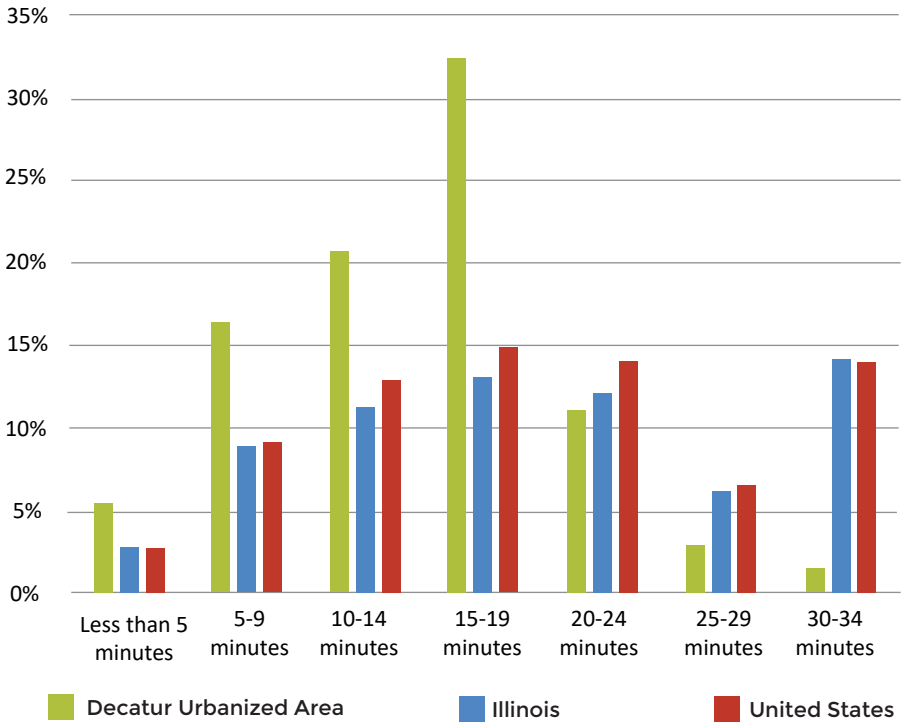
DENSITY

1,464
People Per Square Mile

Table 1.1. Total Population by Age

	Decatur Urbanized Area		Illinois	
	Population	Percent	Population	Percent
0-9	9,968	11.5%	1,495,260	12.0%
10-19	11,063	12.8%	1,652,774	13.2%
20-29	10,717	12.4%	1,720,707	13.8%
30-39	10,977	12.7%	1,517,576	12.2%
40-49	8,734	10.1%	1,601,549	12.8%
50-59	11,021	12.7%	1,639,886	13.1%
60-69	11,498	13.2%	1,484,999	11.9%
70-79	7,347	8.5%	882,656	7.1%
80+	5,274	6.1%	494,414	4.0%

Figure 1.3: Travel Time to Work



20%
of the total population lives below the poverty line

24%
of children (under 18) live below the poverty line

12%
of older adults (over 65) live below the poverty line

Figure 1.4: Existing Bike Network

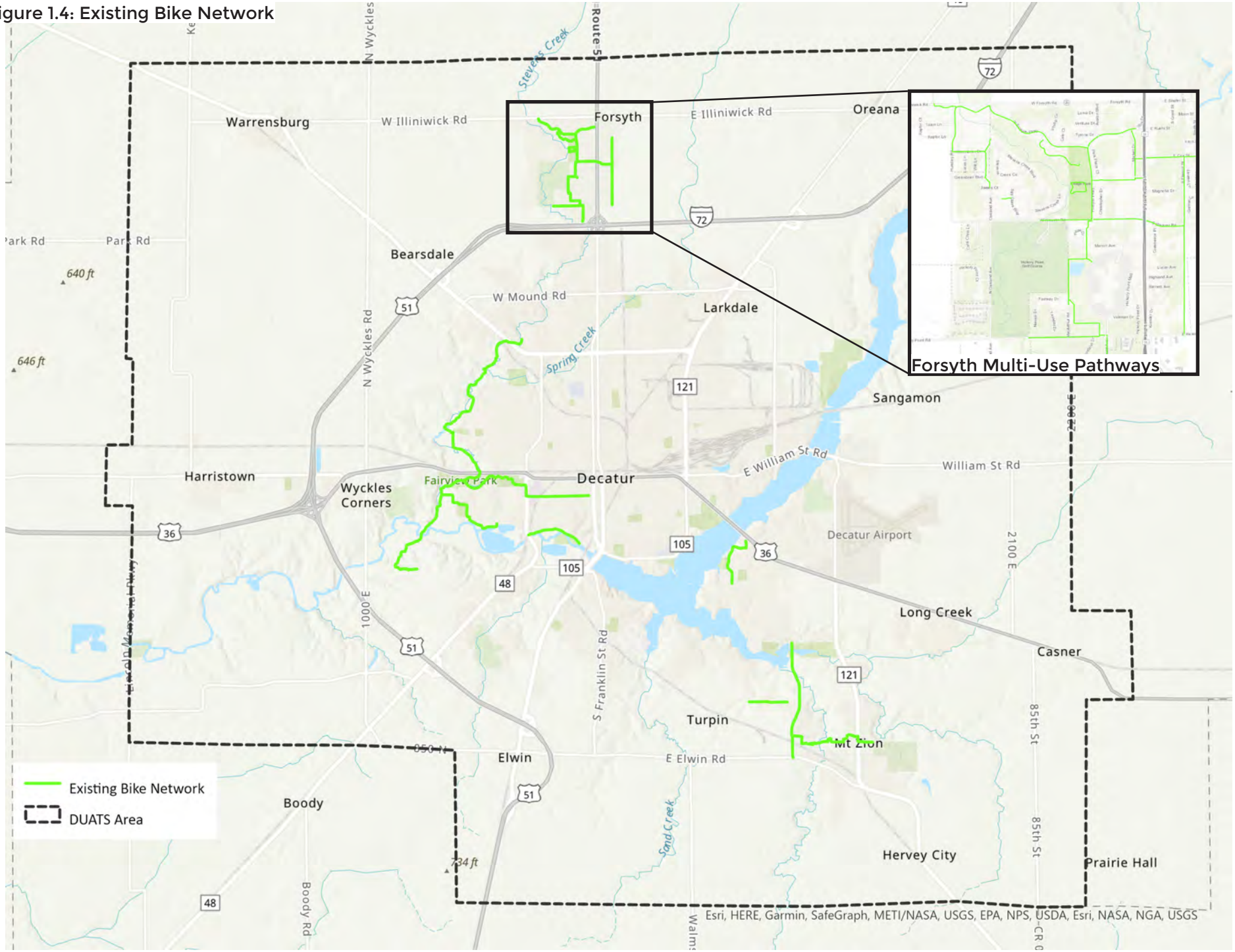


Figure 1.5: Parks and Schools

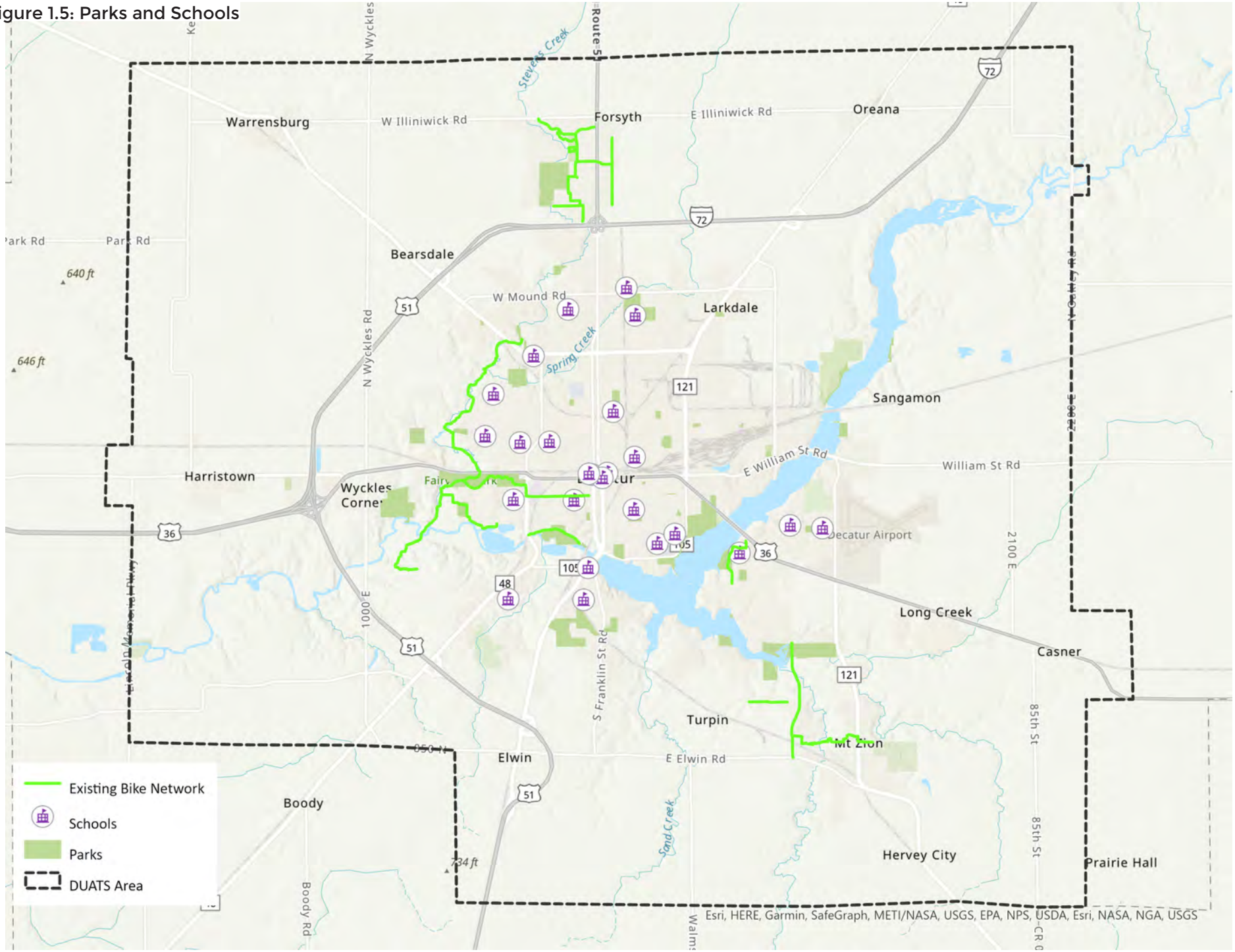


Figure 1.6: Population Over Age 65

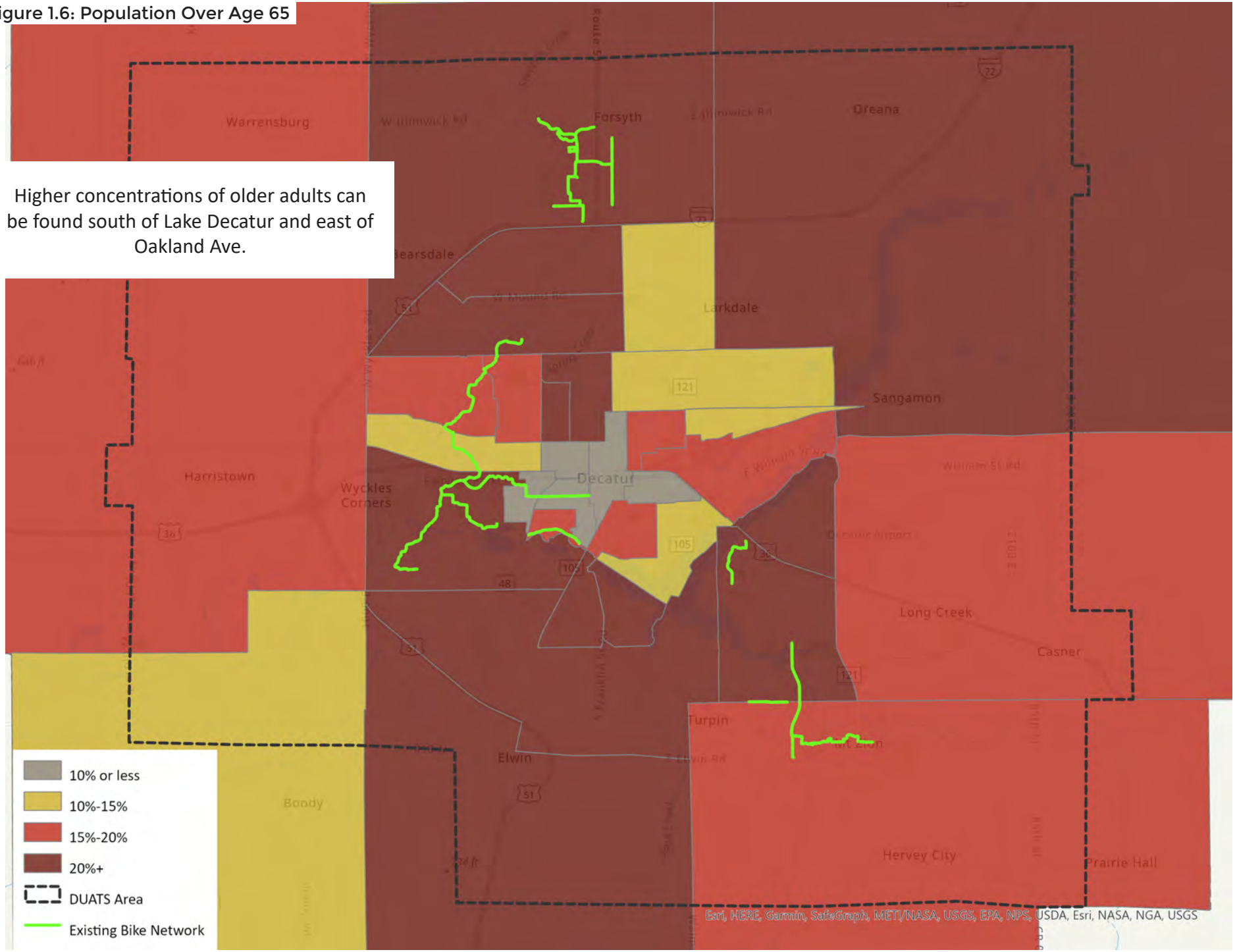
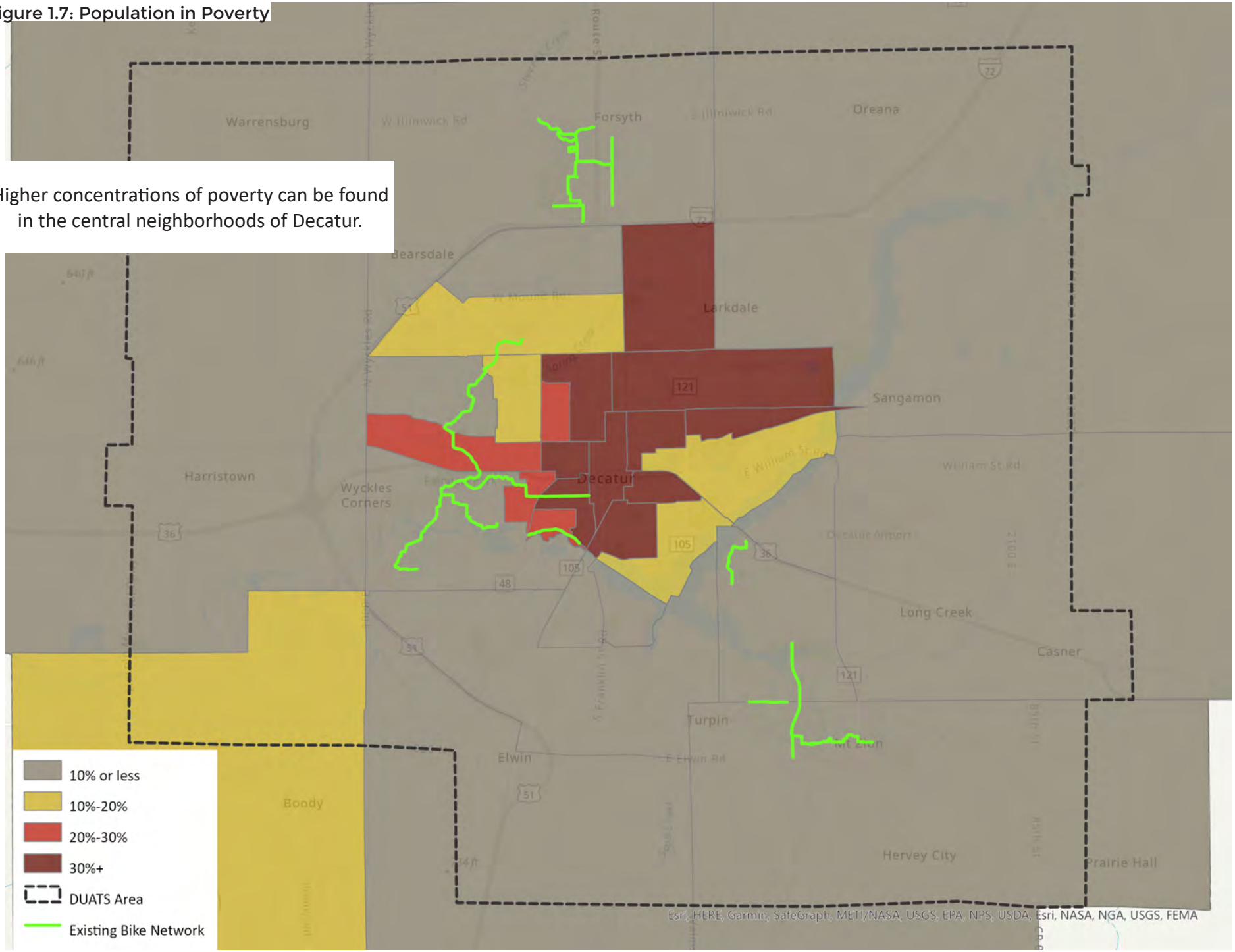


Figure 1.7: Population in Poverty

Higher concentrations of poverty can be found in the central neighborhoods of Decatur.



2 DEFINING THE VISION

Photo credit: Curt Knapp

Bike Decatur begins by envisioning a future where all residents have access to a safe, comfortable, and connected bicycle network. Crafted by community leaders and stakeholders, the vision statement reflects the aspirations of becoming a bicycle friendly community. The vision serves as the foundation for the Bicycle Master Plan and guides the development of goals and objectives.

Refining a vision for the Bike Decatur does not simply help to establish community goals. It also serves as the foundation for monitoring progress to achieve those goals by forming a targets and metrics. Commonly referred to as performance management, these targets and metrics support the implementation of the plan by providing an ongoing assessment of how effective the Decatur region is in meeting the plan's goals and objectives over time. Performance management ensures that the components of the Bike Decatur's vision are clear and measurable.

The **vision** statement paints a clear picture of what the plan is intended to achieve. It is further explained through goals that identify the conditions needed to achieve the vision statement.

Goals are broad conditions that must be met to achieve the plan's vision. They are general and brief, and can always be improved. Goals do not prejudge a solution, but rather articulate he conditions that might lead to a particular solution. Each goal is described by one or more objectives that indicate the steps that need to be taken to advance that goal. Goals are only as effective as the objectives that shape them. Objectives are specific conditions that must be met to advance a goal. They are achievable, measurable and time-specific.

Objectives are the specific and detailed actions that achieve a goal. They articulate the conditions that might lead to a particular solution. Objectives are more likely to be assessed when they are carefully defined, avoid subjective interpretation and do not require substantial new data collection. Objectives are the specific and detailed actions that achieve a goal. Objectives are SMART:

- Specific - State the specific action.
- Measurable - Identify metrics to evaluate action.
- Achievable - The action is possible.
- Relevant - The action makes sense to achieve the goal.
- Time-Based - Identify specific time-frame or deadline for evaluation.

Performance Metrics are the standards of measurement applied to objectives. They determine the data needed to assess how well the objectives are being met.

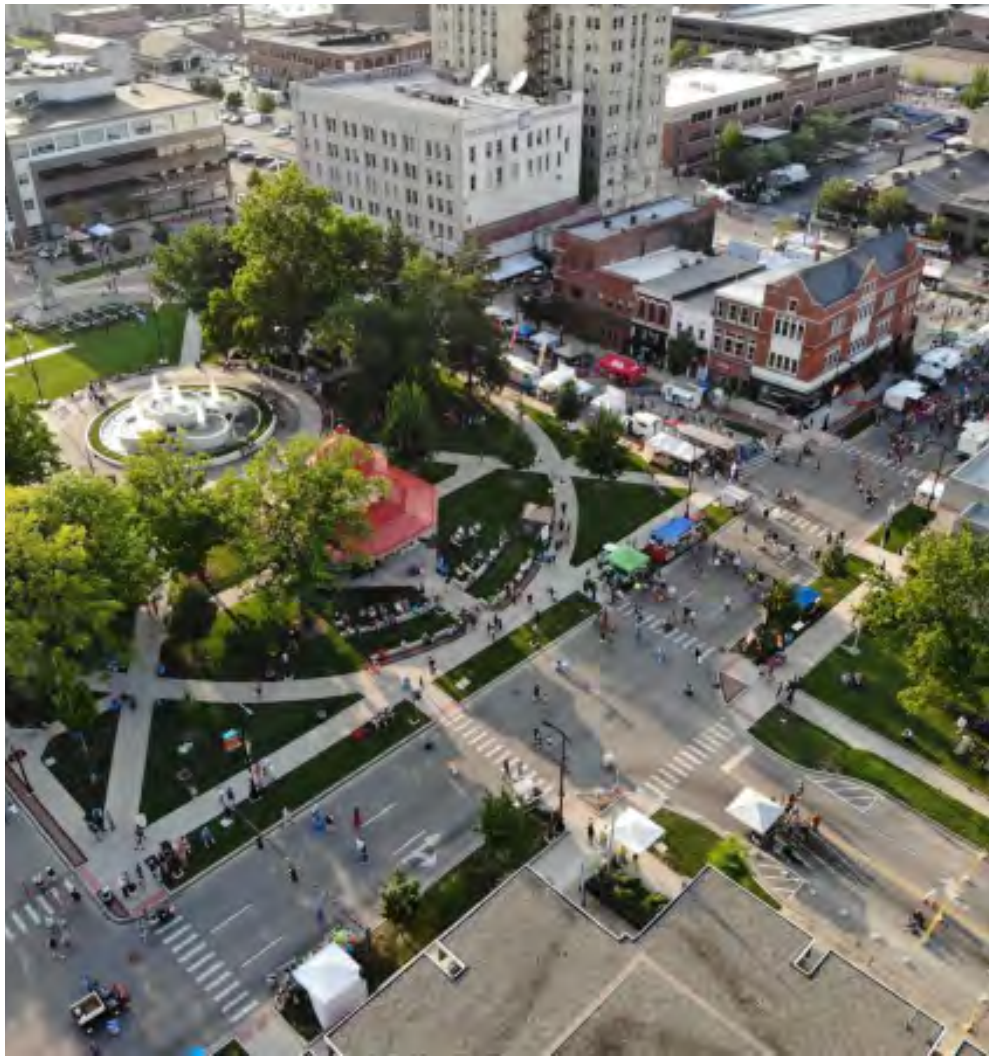
VISION

Creating a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system is crucial to fostering a bike friendly culture in the Decatur region. A well-connected, high quality multimodal network encourages active living and is important for developing healthy neighborhoods, improving equity, increasing access to affordable transportation options, and enhancing recreational opportunities.

The following Vision statement was created through core team and steering committee input, and provides the basis for the goals and objectives:

"Bike Decatur will help guide investments in expanding and connecting our existing trail systems, together with complete streets improvements, to increase access to outdoor recreation, business investment and growth, and provide the Decatur Region with the excellent quality of life we deserve.

By connecting our neighborhoods, our nationally recognized park system, and other destinations for outdoor recreation, DUATS and its member agencies will improve opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages, incomes, and abilities, affording increased transportation choice and freedom."



GOAL DEVELOPMENT

Goals are the desired results that make the vision for the community a reality. Goals are ambitious and intangible. If the vision is the aspirational future, goals are the intentions that result in a general outcome.

Alignment with Previous Planning

The Bike Decatur bike plan is an interrelated document along with the DUATS 2045 LRTP. Therefore, it is important to identify the relationship between the goals of the bike plan and the goals of the LRTP. Table 2.1 describes the goals and objectives of the LRTP that are supported by the goals and objectives of Bike Decatur.

Table 2.1: Interrelated Goals and Objectives

DUATS LRTP Goals and Objectives	
Goal 1: Create a safe transportation system that balances the travel needs of all users including the general public and area businesses.	• Objective A: Enhance travel safety by reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries. • Objective C: Improve travel safety by reducing the total number of bicycle- and pedestrian-related serious injuries and fatalities.
Goal 5: Promote alternative modes of transportation and develop transportation facilities to accommodate alternative modes.	• Objective A: Plan, develop, and promote bicycle and pedestrian facilities as viable and efficient forms of transportation. • Objective B: Comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the State of Illinois requirements by providing clearly marked and maintained walkways, sidewalks, crosswalks, ramps, and curb cuts.

The 5 "E's" Approach

The goals and objectives found in the Bike Decatur regional bike plan follow the guidelines of the "Five E's" of bicycle planning as defined by the League of American Bicyclists:

1. Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion: Bicycle friendly for everyone
2. Engineering: Safe and convenient places to ride and park
3. Education: Skills and confidence to ride
4. Encouragement: Bike culture that welcomes and celebrates bicycling
5. Evaluation & Planning: Planning for bicycling as a safe and viable option

With the Five E's as the guiding principles, the project team drafted specific objectives and targets based on industry best practices, the existing conditions analysis, and input from the core team and steering committee. The goals, objectives, and their respective recommend targets are detailed in the remainder of this chapter.

GOALS

The goals identified and established as part of the planning process that included input from the public, local experts, and local public agencies.

Connectivity

Connectivity is vital for any great transportation system. Because cyclists must contend with a transportation system built primarily for cars, it is imperative that the bike network be well connected to serve users of all abilities while also attracting new users.

Safety

Bicycling is a generally safe activity. However, conflicts between cyclists and motorists can be deadly and bicycle fatalities are increasing in the U.S. To improve the safety of bicycling requires not only high quality bike facilities, which reduce crash rates for all modes, but programming and safety training as well.

Ridership

In order for fully realize all the benefits of bicycle infrastructure, bicycling must become a more common form of transportation. The Decatur region is an automobile dependent community so special attention must be paid to encourage and/or incentivize people to ride their bicycle.

Equity

Equity, diversity, and inclusion is one of the Five E's of bicycle planning and is recognized by the community as fundamental to realize the vision as set is this plan. Biking is for everyone, so special attention must be paid to people of color, households in poverty, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

Community

Being a Bike Friendly Community is a concept that incorporates not just high quality bike infrastructure, but cultural elements and a community-wide understanding of bicycling as a normal mode of transportation. Bike Friendly Communities include municipalities, advocates, developers, and citizens all working together to improve bikeability.

GOAL 1: CONNECTIVITY

Create a highly connected, convenient, and low stress bicycling network.

Connectivity is vital for any great transportation system. Because cyclists must contend with a transportation system built primarily for cars, it is imperative that the bike network be well connected to serve users of all abilities while also attracting new users.

The objectives to achieve this goal target the construction of additional on-road and off-road facilities, look to increase total network coverage, and view community amenities as destinations within the bike network. Additionally, since many residents in the Decatur region expressed a preference for facilities that separate cyclists and motorists, the objectives underscore the importance of low-stress bike facilities.

OBJECTIVES + TARGETS

1.1 Increase the number of households within ¼ mile of a high quality, low stress bicycle facility to 6,900 households by 2040

1.2 Increase the miles of on-road bicycle facilities to 20 miles by 2040

1.3 Ensure all parks, schools, hospitals, and municipal buildings are connected to the bicycle network by 2040

1.4 Increase the miles of off-road bicycle facilities to 32 miles by 2040

1.5 Decrease the overall rate of high stress facilities in the network to 35% by 2040

GOAL 2: Safety

Improve the safety of bicycling for all users regardless of age or ability.

Bicycling is a generally safe activity. However, conflicts between cyclists and motorists can be deadly and bicycle fatalities are increasing in the U.S. To improve the safety of bicycling requires not only high quality bike facilities, which reduce crash rates for all modes, but programming and safety training as well.

The objectives to achieve this goal target programming for children and education for adults. Safe Routes to School is a program that makes it safer for children to bike to school. Adults must be aware not just of bicycle safety, but of motorist responsibilities as well.

OBJECTIVES + TARGETS

2.1 Reduce the rate of bicycle crashes by 50% by 2040

2.2 Ensure all schools have a Safe Routes to School Program in place by 2040

2.3 Increase bicycle safety information campaign releases to 4 times a year for adults and children by 2040.

2.4 Increase public information campaigns to 1 time annually by 2025

2.5 Eliminate bicycle deaths by 2040

GOAL 3: RIDERSHIP

Increase the rate of bicycling in the Decatur region.

In order to fully realize all the benefits of bicycle infrastructure, bicycling must become a more common form of transportation. The Decatur region is an automobile dependent community so special attention must be paid to encourage and/or incentivize people to ride their bicycle.

The objectives to achieve this goal focus on increasing bicycle ridership for non-recreational purposes. Long-term, stable ridership is generated by users who ride regularly such as commuters to work, students to school, and transit riders to bus stops. Additionally, while bicycles are generally inexpensive, the initial investment can be a financial challenge for some.

OBJECTIVES + TARGETS

3.1 Increase the number of bicycle commuters in the region to 10% of commuters by 2040

3.2 Increase the rate of non-college age students in the region who travel to school by bicycle to 10% of students by 2030

3.3 Increase the rate of transit riders who access transit stops by bicycle to 10% of transit riders by 2030

3.4 Increase the number of people who have access to a bicycle at home to 95% by 2030 and 100% by 2040

3.5 Increase the rate of residents in the region who bike once or more a month to 85% by 2040

GOAL 4: EQUITY

Provide equal opportunity for low-stress bicycling for all members of the community.

‘Equity, diversity, and inclusion’ is one of the Five E’s of bicycle planning and is recognized by the community as fundamental to realize the vision as set is this plan. Biking is for everyone, so special attention must be paid to people of color, households in poverty, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

The objectives to achieve this goal pay special focus to ensure that future bicycle improvements benefit all members of the community. Targeting the needs of the elderly, those in poverty, and minorities will provide equal opportunity for everyone.

OBJECTIVES + TARGETS

4.1 **Ensure the percent of residents in census tracts where the median income is below 60% of the county average are located within ¼ mile of a high quality, low stress bicycle facility at a rate that is equal to or greater than the regional average.**

4.2 **Increase the overall mileage of low stress bicycle network in low-income neighborhoods**

4.3 **Increase the share of older adults (age 55+) who bicycle one or more times a month to 25% by 2030.**

4.4 **Increase access to a bicycle in low income and minority census tracts by 2030 at a rate that is equal to or greater than the regional average**

4.4 **Increase the share of minority residents who bicycle one or more times a month to 35% by 2040**

GOAL 5: COMMUNITY

Become a League of American Bicyclist recognized bike friendly community.

OBJECTIVES + TARGETS

5.1 **Increase the number of bicycle events and activities in the region by 25% by 2030 and 50% by 2040**

5.2 **Ensure dedicated municipal resources to promote bicycling (e.g., staff, budget) by 2025**

5.3 **Increase the number of individuals and organizations that advocate for bicycling by 2025**

5.4 **Survey the business community through the Chamber of Commerce to establish a baseline of end-of-trip facilities (bike racks, showers, comfort stations, etc.), then increase those facilities by 25% by 2040**

Being a Bike Friendly Community is a concept that incorporates not just high quality bike infrastructure, but cultural elements and an community-wide understanding of bicycling as a normal mode of transportation. Bike Friendly Communities include municipalities, advocates, developers, and citizens all working together to improve bikeability.

The objectives to achieve this goal look to bring more people to the table during the decision making process. For the Bike Decatur vision to be a reality, it will take focus, dedication, and input from all members throughout the community.

3 BUILDING THE NETWORK

Photo credit: Decatur Parks Staff

The proposed bicycle infrastructure improvements were identified based on public feedback, regional priorities, and national best practices. Infrastructure improvements are aligned with the goals and objectives established in Chapter 2 and, once complete, will help the Decatur region be a bicycle friendly community. The proposed network is based on a philosophy that everyone in the community should have access to a high-quality, well-connected bicycle facility within an accessible distance from their home utilizing low-stress facilities.

PROPOSED NETWORK

When considering the range of potential bicycle facilities for the Decatur region, it is important to utilize the latest design guidance available and understand the best practices for their application. Drawing on nationally recognized best publications for bicycle, pedestrian, and multimodal facility design, the proposed infrastructure recommendations are context sensitive and, once built, will significantly increase access, mode choice, and safety.

As categorized by the FHWA, bicycle facilities generally fall into four categories:

- **Shared Roadway Environments:** Cyclists and drivers operate in the same space. This environment is appropriate for low speed, low volume roadways.
- **Visually Separated Facilities:** Cyclists are separated by pavement markings and lateral spacing. This facility type is appropriate for roadways that have higher speeds and higher volumes than shared roadway environments.
- **Physically Separated Facilities:** Cyclists are separated by physical elements such as curbs, parkways, median, or other barriers.
- **Intersection and Crossing Treatments:** Attempt to reduce conflict between cyclists and drivers by facilitating awareness and increasing visibility.

First, the entire proposed network is presented in **Figure 3.1**. Then, each category is detailed with specific facility types and design prescriptions.

CONNECTIVITY METHODOLOGY

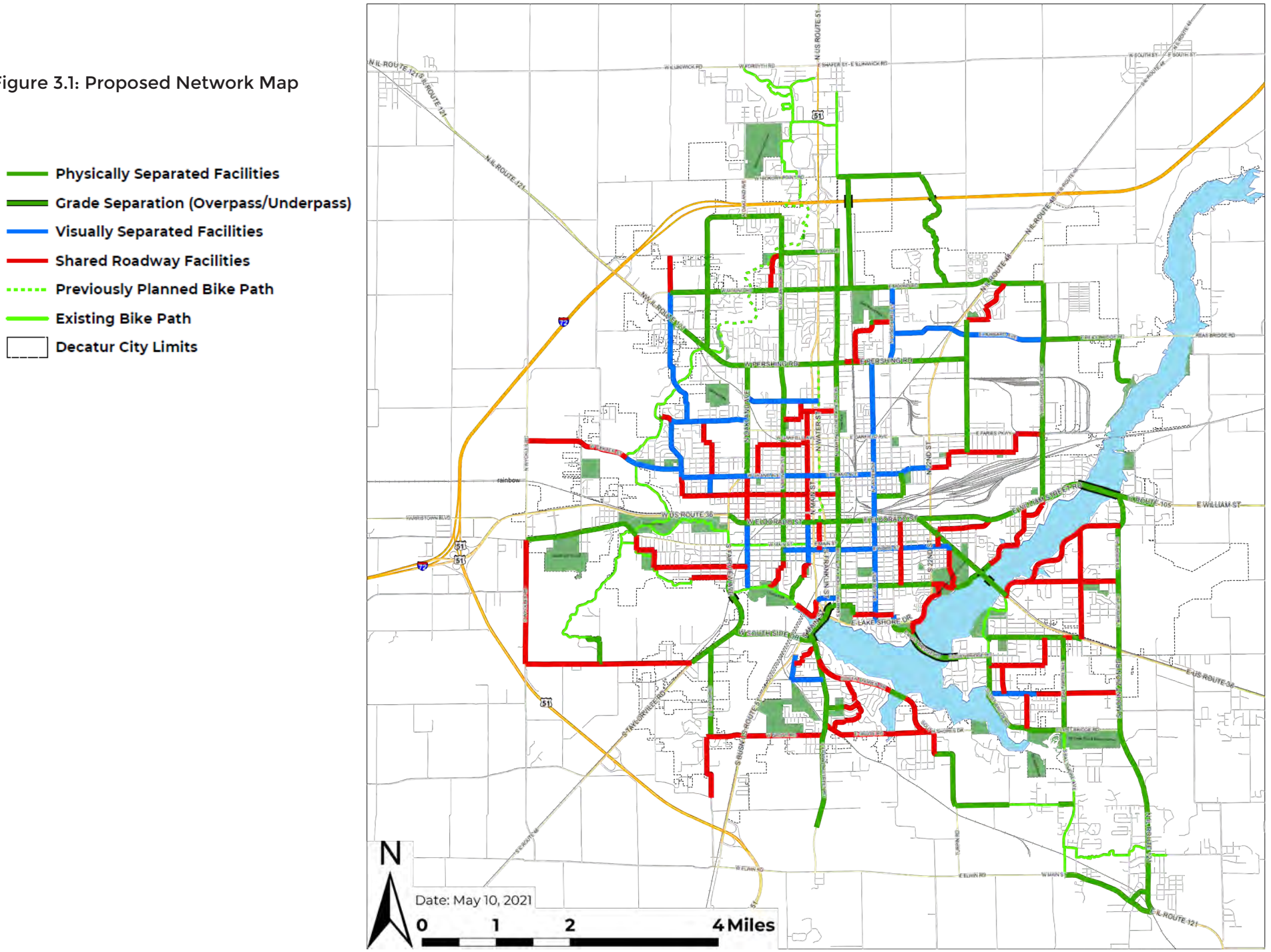
A best practice on a well-connected network is for each household to be within:

- 0.5 miles of any bicycle facility
- within 1 mile of a good facility (visually separated facility)
- within 1.5 miles of a great facility (physically separated facility)

Abiding by this general guidance results in a low-stress network that should be appropriate for all ages and abilities and encourages bicycle ridership throughout the region.

Within each category, there are more specific facility types. Guidance from the IDOT BDE Manual, BLRS Manual, AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, and FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks and NACTO was used to determine appropriate traffic speeds and volumes for each facility type.

Figure 3.1: Proposed Network Map



SHARED ROADWAY

Signed Bike Route – A signed bike route is a low volume, low speed roadway that is likely already suitable for cycling but is enhanced with signage (wayfinding and/or warning signs). This treatment is a low-cost strategy to formalize the presence of cyclists in the street and guide cyclists on the best route to popular destinations but may not be comfortable enough for all users.

Marked Shared Lane – Shared lane pavement markings, commonly called "sharrows," show the preferred location and path of bicyclists to make them more visible and predictable to drivers. Sharrows typically are placed on the right side of the travel lane but can be placed in the center of the lane if it is necessary to prioritize the movement of bicyclists for short distances or discourage passing on narrow roadways.

Bike Boulevard – Bike boulevards are a combination of different design treatments to calm traffic and prioritize comfortable travel by bicyclists. Successful bike boulevards combine speed management and volume management to keep traffic speeds below 25 mph and discourage cut-through vehicle traffic. The goal of a bike boulevard is to create a more casual bicycling environment that is comfortable for families and groups of bicyclists. Well-designed bike boulevards can form the backbone of an entire bike network.

Advisory Bike Lane – In a manner similar to shared lanes, advisory bike lanes define a shared space for bicyclists, and use pavement markings to encourage motorists to operate in a low-speed, shared environment. This facility uses a dashed line to delineate a bike lane separate from the travel lane but uses a dashed line to communicate that motorists may enter this space when necessary. Two-way motor vehicle traffic is accommodated in a single-lane residential street. Drivers are permitted to use the space intended for cyclists when conditions require, such as when encountering an oncoming vehicle, but must yield to bicyclists when present. This yield-based navigation slows down traffic speeds and maintains a comfortable environment for bicyclists at low volumes.

The shared roadway category, as divided into these subcategories, is presented in Figure **3.3**.

Figure 3.2(a): Shared Roadway Example

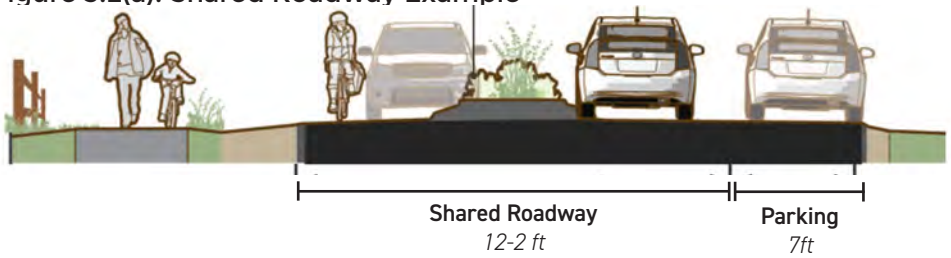
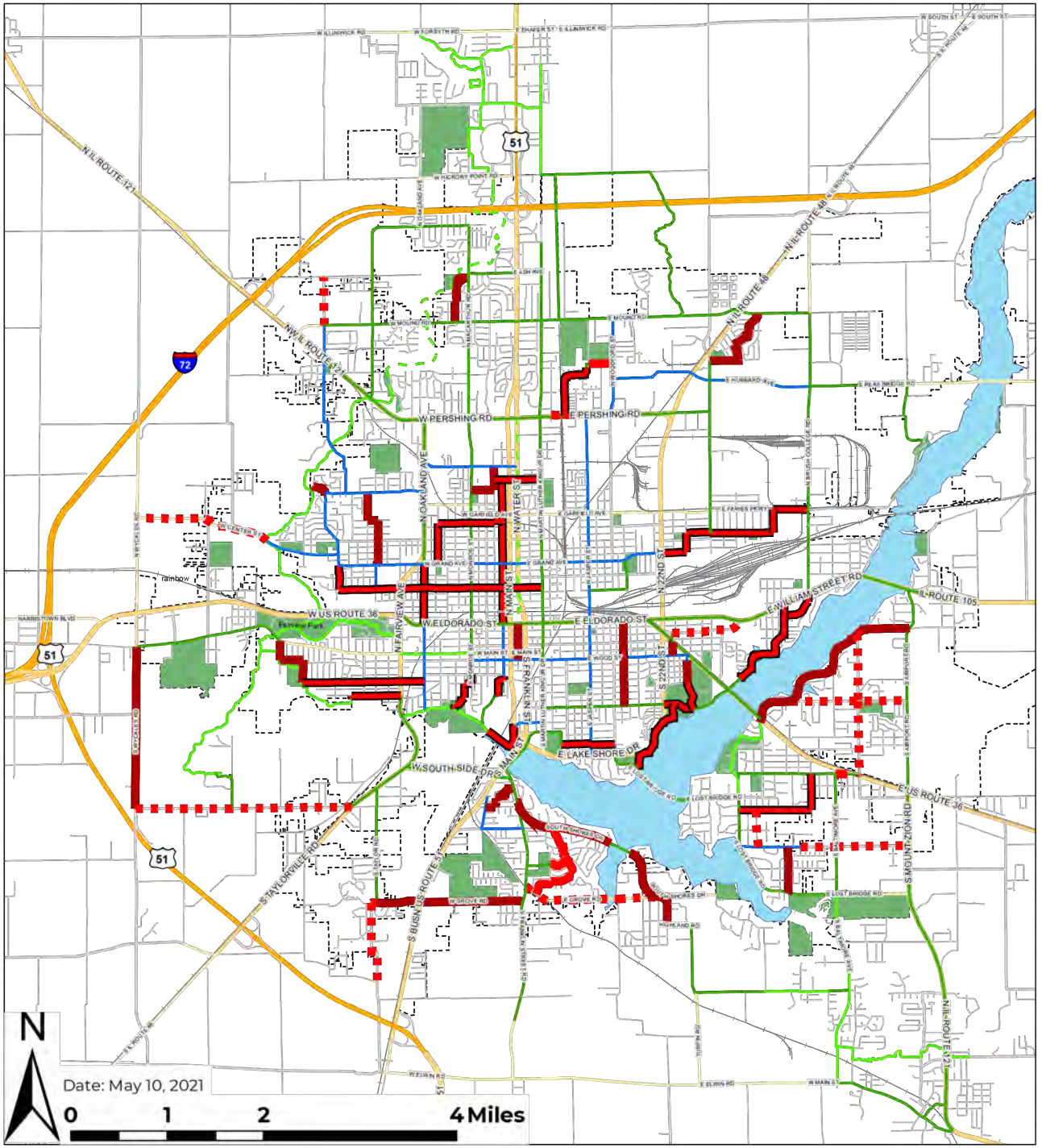


Figure 3.2(b): Advisory Bike Lane Example

Figure 3.3: Shared Roadway Facilities



VISUALLY SEPARATED

Conventional Bike Lane – Conventional bike lanes are one of the more common treatments that create space for exclusive use by bicyclists. Conventional bike lanes are used on collector and minor arterial roads with higher traffic speeds and volumes where visually separating modes is necessary. Bike lanes must be at least 5' wide, and 6' is recommended when adjacent to on-street parking or on streets with more than 10,000 vehicles a day.

Buffered Bike Lane – Similar to a conventional bike lane, this treatment includes a buffer between the travel lane, parking lane, or both. Whenever there is available roadway space, it is more desirable to install buffers as opposed to wider bike lanes as buffers help calm traffic, encourage proper lateral positioning of bicyclists where they are more visible, and provide added separation for the more vulnerable users of the roadway. Buffers may be placed adjacent to on-street parking and/or travel lanes, depending on which presents a larger hazard. Buffers help keep car doors from opening into the bike lane and discourage speeding by narrowing wide travel lanes.

The visually separated facilities category, as divided into these subcategories, is presented in Figure **3.5**.

Figure 3.4(a): Conventional Bike Lane Example

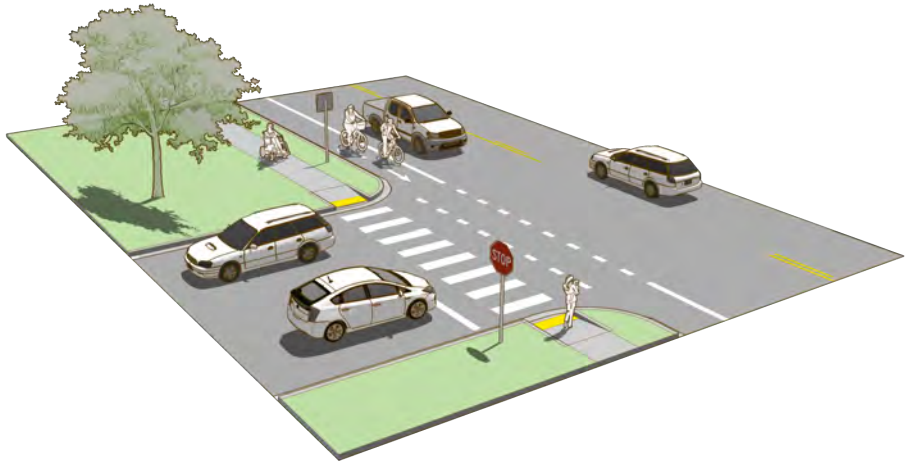


Figure 3.4(b): Buffered Bike Lane Example

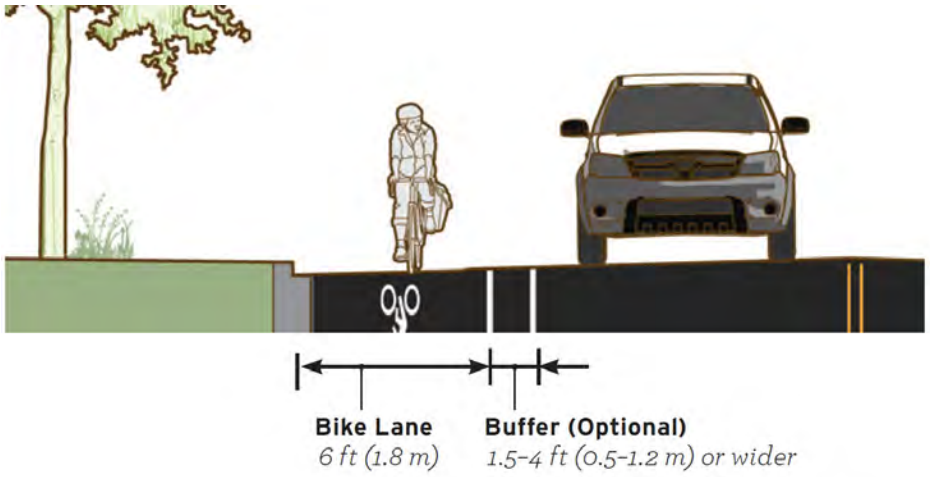
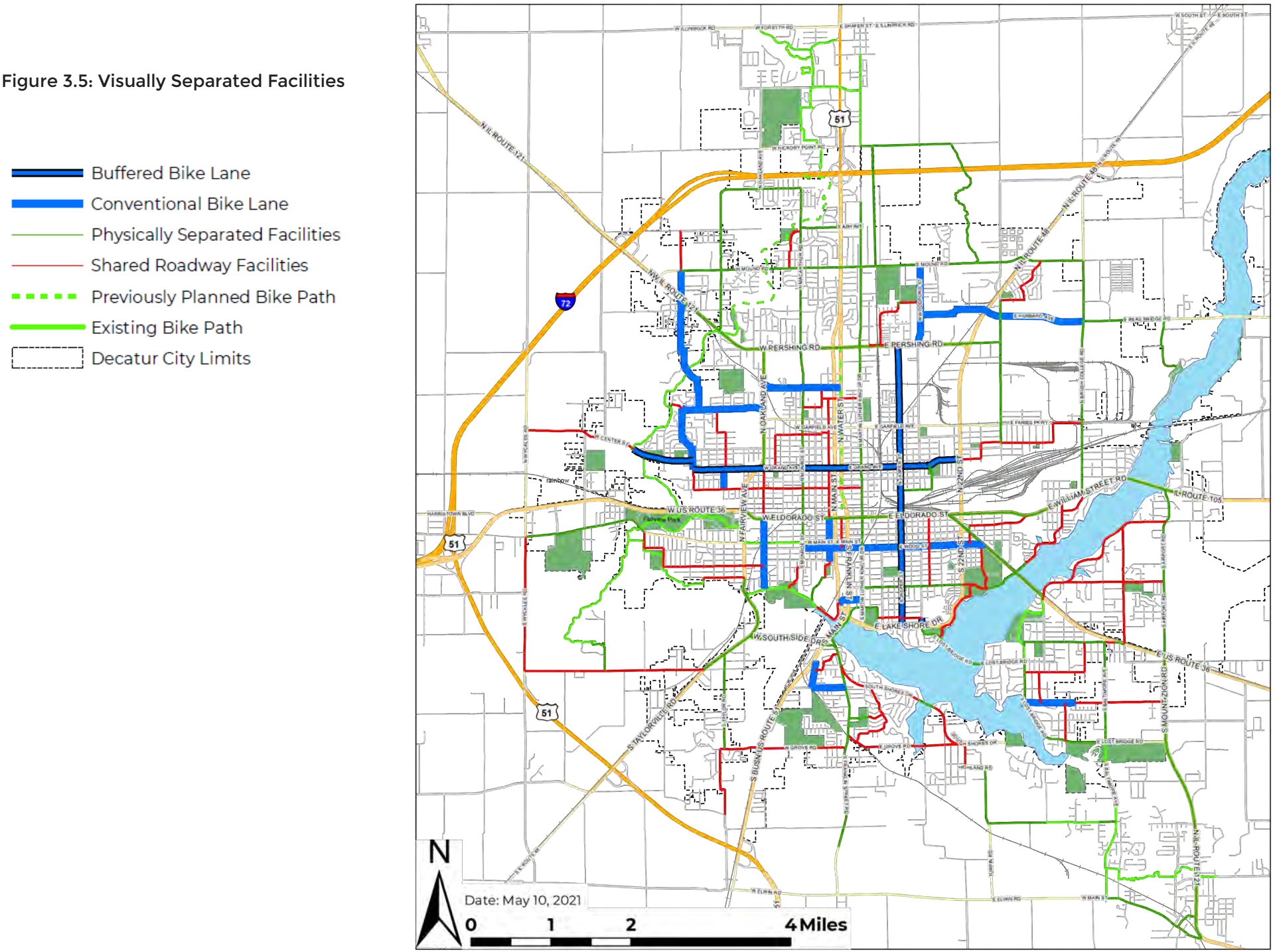


Figure 3.5: Visually Separated Facilities



PHYSICALLY SEPARATED

One-Way Separated Cycle Track – Separated bike lanes are a type of bike facility that is separated from other traffic with a physical vertical element. This can be a curb, vertical delineators, parked cars, or planters. The cycle track can be placed at roadway or sidewalk-level depending on the amount of separation from traffic desired. These lanes are more comfortable for bicyclists since drivers are much less likely to encroach or stop in the bike lane. Ensuring bicyclists are visible to drivers at intersections and driveways requires additional consideration, like adding green pavement markings or pulling parking back from the intersection to improve sight lines.

Sidepath – A two-way bike facility that travels parallel to another roadway is called a "sidepath." Sidepaths provide a comfortable riding experience with less impacts than a shared-use path. Sidepaths can be retrofitted onto an existing street or can be built at curb level, further increasing the safety and comfort of the facility. Sidepaths require special consideration at intersections like bike signals to coordinate vehicle turning movements and two-way bike traffic.

Shared-Use Path – Shared-use paths are similar to sidepaths but are generally not part of a roadway. Many shared-use paths have been constructed through the Decatur Greenway Plan. Shared-use paths are open to cyclists as well as pedestrians. Shared-use paths are the most comfortable facility for cyclists since there is very little interaction with vehicle traffic.

The physically separated facilities category, as divided into these subcategories, is presented in **Figure 3.7**.

Figure 3.6(a): Shared-Use Path Example

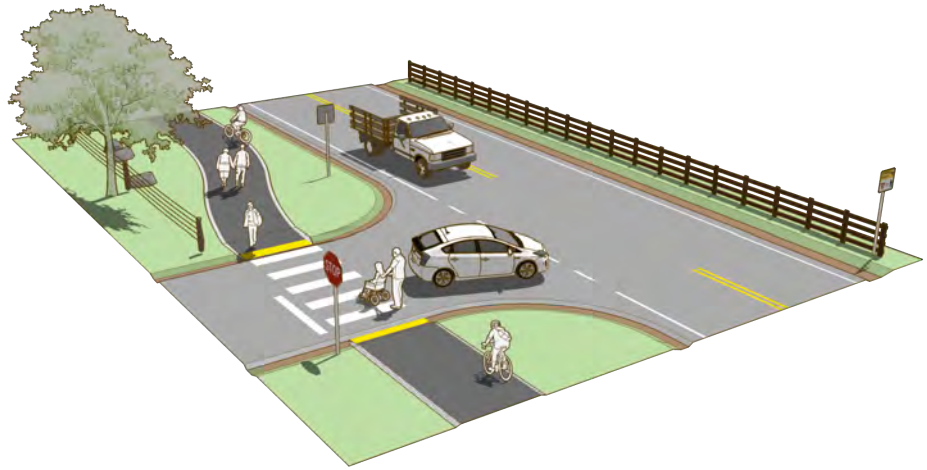


Figure 3.6(b): Sidepath Example

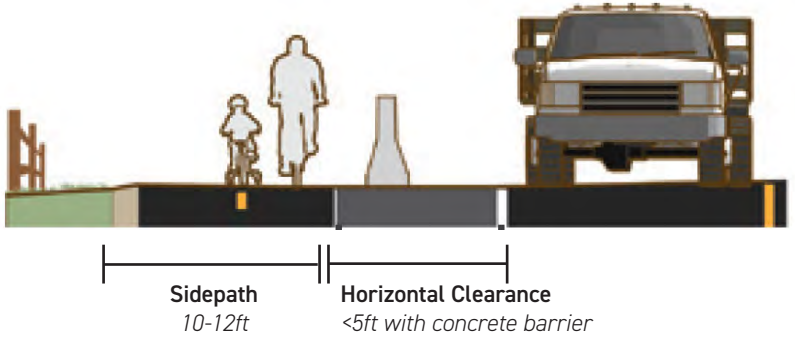
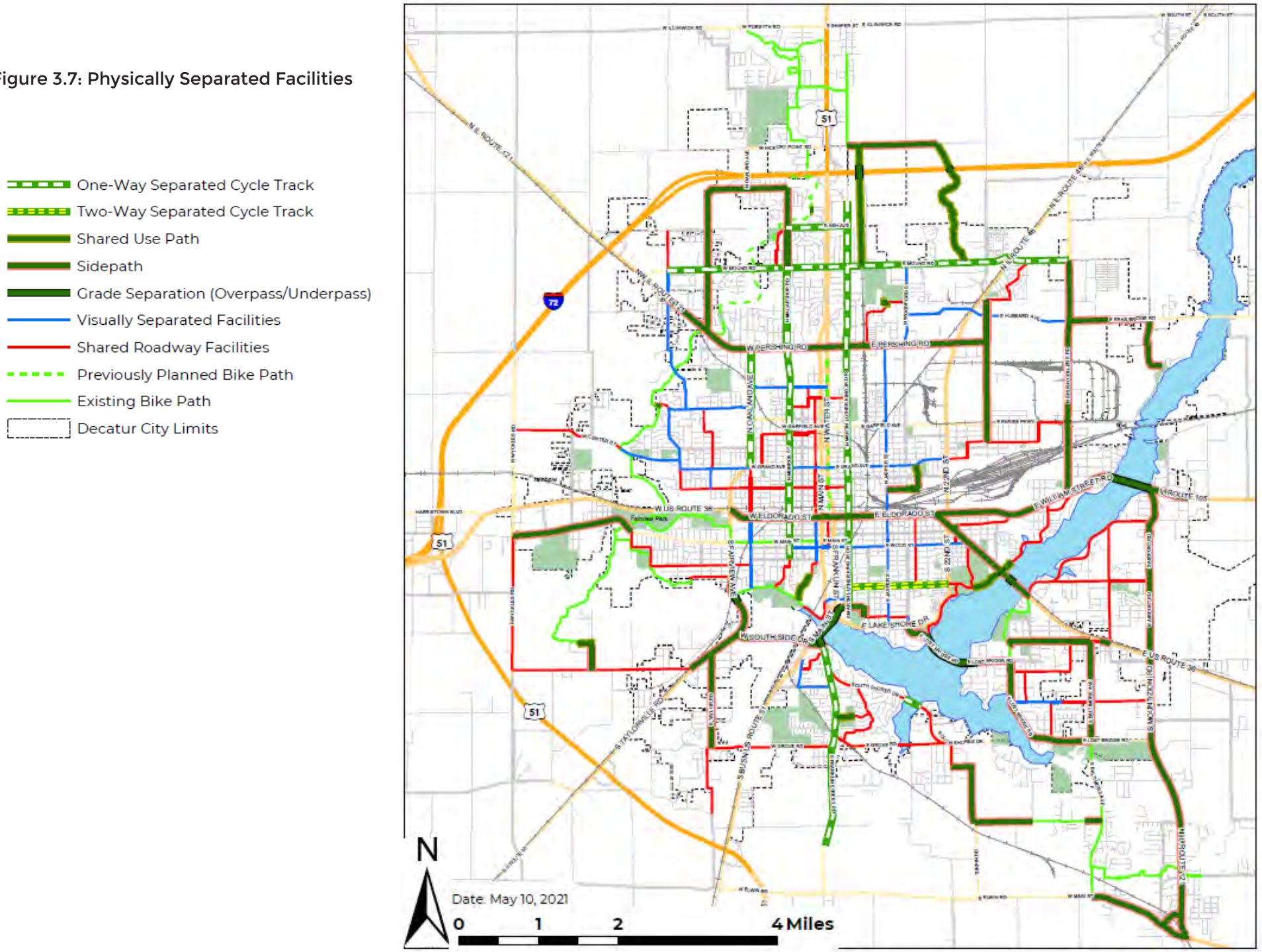


Figure 3.7: Physically Separated Facilities



INTERSECTION & CROSSING TREATMENTS

Midblock Crossing – When signalized intersections are spaced far apart (more than 1/4 mile), midblock crossings provide a preferred location for pedestrians to cross streets. Midblock crossings can be constructed with a pedestrian refuge in the center to increase pedestrian comfort. Midblock crossings are frequently paired with beacons or other traffic control devices to increase the visibility of the crossing and encourage drivers to yield to pedestrians using the crosswalk. Midblock crossings are most effective in areas with high pedestrian activity and near transit stops with no nearby crosswalks.

Beacons (Hybrid and RRFB) – Beacons increase the visibility of pedestrians in uncontrolled crosswalks, for example at midblock crossings and at intersections of arterial and local streets. These beacons increase the visibility of the crossing to encourage drivers to yield to people in crosswalks.

Bicycle Facility Extensions Through Intersections – Most vehicle-bike conflicts occur at intersections due to conflicts posed by turning vehicles in the presence of bicyclists traveling through an intersection. Bike lanes frequently terminate prior to intersections to create room for turn lanes, requiring people bicycling to mix with automobile traffic, which negatively impact bicyclist comfort. By providing a bike lane up to and through the intersection, bicyclist comfort is increased and the movement of turning vehicles and people bicycling is more predictable.

Bike Signals – Bike signals provide an additional layer of comfort to mitigate conflicts posed by turning vehicles. By assigning separate signal phases for turning vehicles and bicyclists, conflict between the two is reduced. Bike signal guidance is still evolving, but typically signals are required whenever a bicycle facility is traveling in a manner that requires a separate signal phase to mitigate conflicts posed by left or right turning motorists, such as in contraflow conditions when traffic signals are present.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ACCESS

A coverage analysis was performed to assess the current and future levels of accessibility and connectivity. For the purpose of analysis, any bicycle facility is a shared roadway, a good facility is visually separated, and a great facility is physically separated from vehicle traffic. The existing network coverage exposes a lack of connectivity in the center of Decatur and to/from parks, as well as gaps in coverage in the northwest portions of the region along N 22nd St/N SR 48 and the southern portions of the region along S Franklin St Rd.

After expanding the analysis to the proposed network, a real contrast in coverage and connectivity is seen. The primary parks are connected to each other and to downtown Decatur, and the existing gaps are covered, often with multiple facility types. Figure 3.8 illustrates the existing and proposed network coverage. To perform the coverage analysis, buffers were created by facility type and then aggregated to show a complete.

- Shared Roadway: 0.5 mile buffer
- Visually Separated: 1 mile buffer
- Physically Separated: 1.5 mile buffer

It is hard to overstate the potential impacts that the infrastructure recommendations will have on neighborhoods throughout the region. Not only does the number of households with access to the bicycle network increase, but key populations are also better served. For example, large groups of people over age 65 and households in poverty live in the northeast and southern portions of the regions. These key groups, and others, will greatly benefit from the expanded network. For more information on who lives within the gaps of the existing network, see Appendix B.

Table 3.1: Coverage Analysis Results

	Households	Square Miles
Macon County	43,912	585.9
Existing Coverage	29,026	68.9
Proposed Coverage	36,470	111
Improvement	**7,444 (+26%)**	**42.1 (+61%)**

2018 Census ACS 5-year average

Table 3.2: Coverage for Key Groups in Poverty

	Population in Poverty	Children in poverty
Existing Coverage	11,780	4,319
Proposed Coverage	14,806	5,355
Improvement	**3,026 (+26%)**	**1,036 (+24%)**

2018 Census ACS 5-year average

Figure 3.8: Existing and Proposed Network Coverage

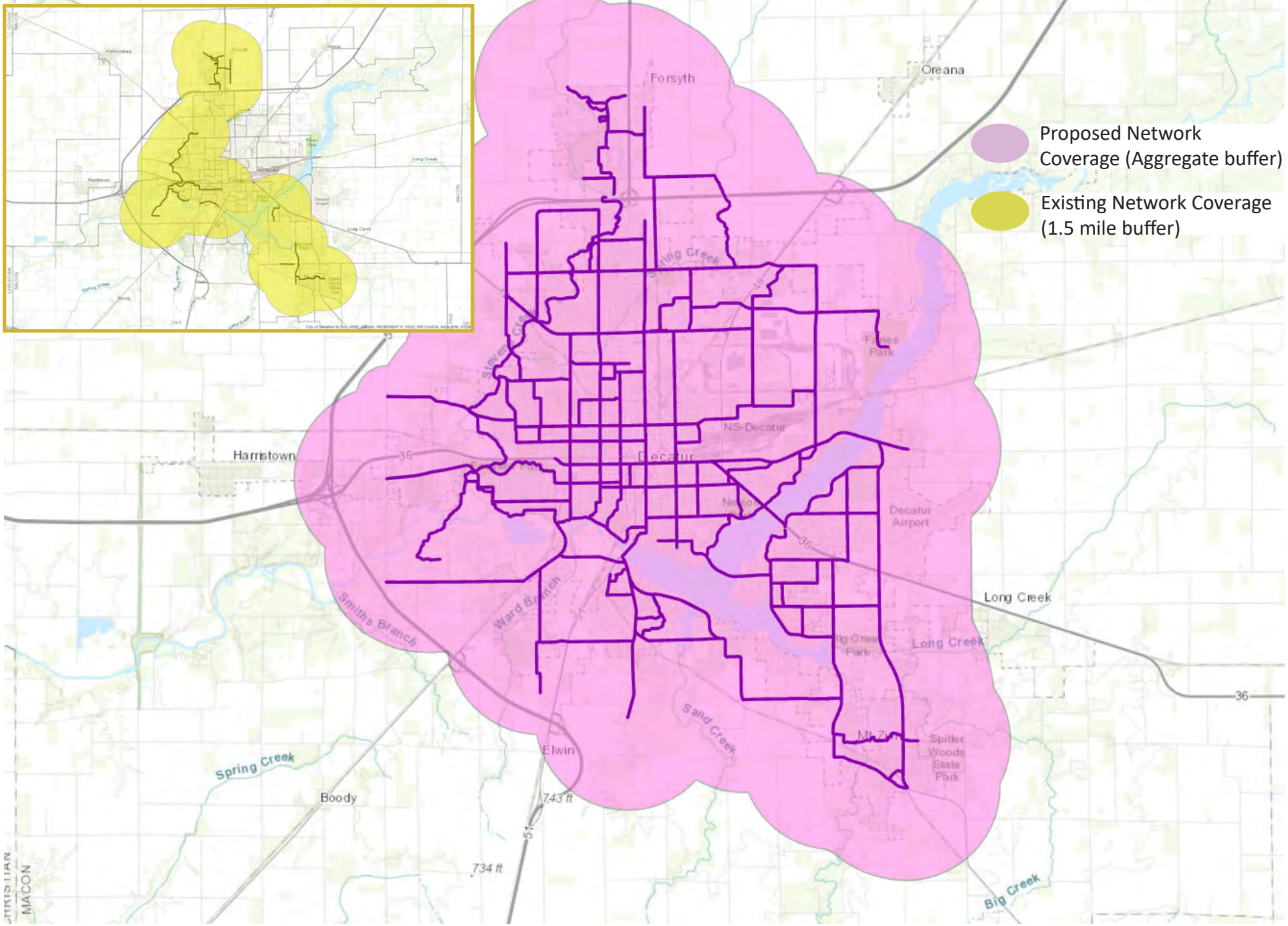
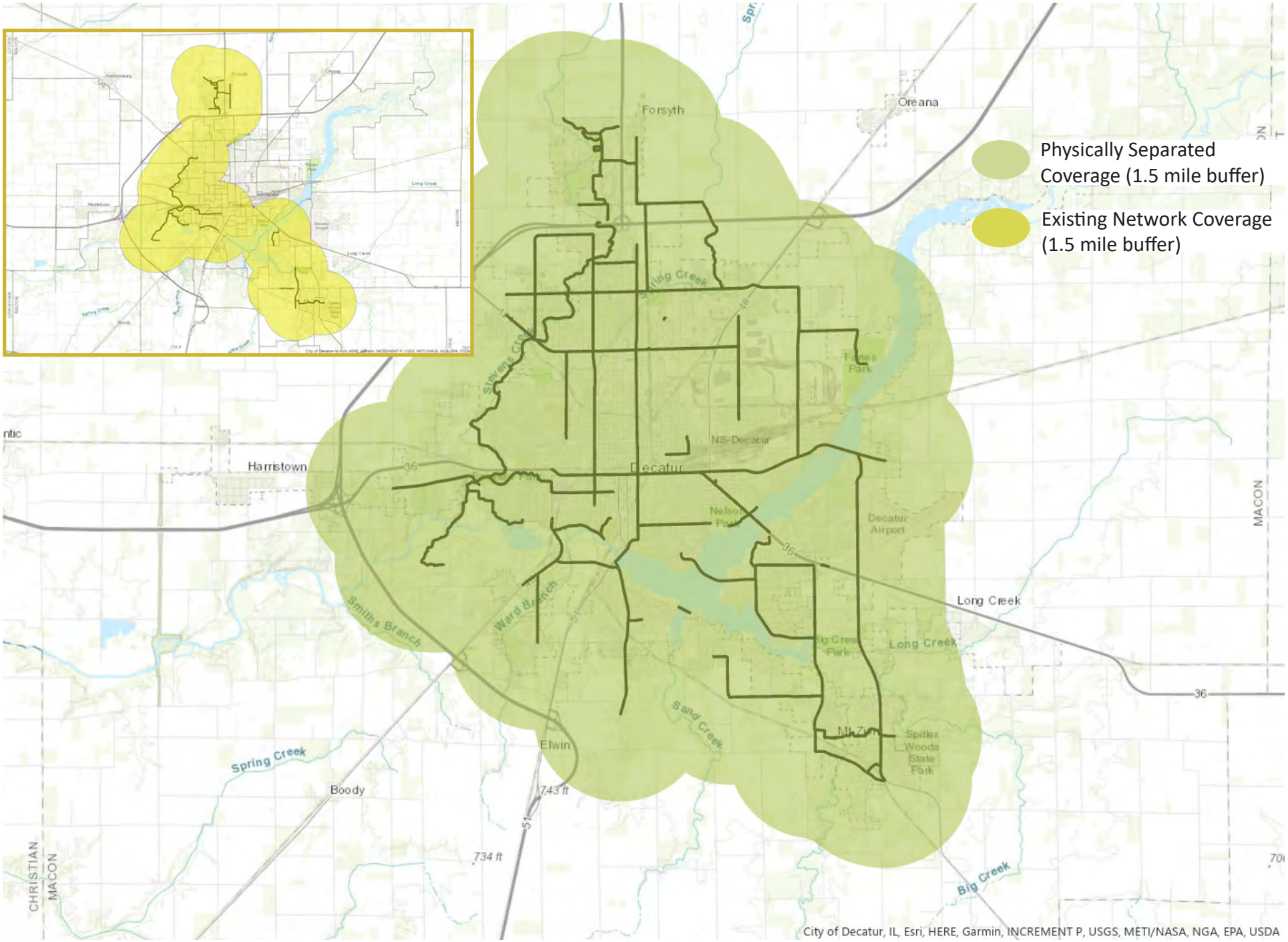


Figure 3.9: Physically Separated Coverage



4 ACHIEVING THE VISION

Photo credit: Maris Mednis

Improving bicycle infrastructure is a significant component to building a safe, reliable, and connected bicycle network. However, becoming a Bike Friendly Community requires more than adding bike lanes and extending trails. The strategies found in this section follow the guidelines of the "Five E's" of bicycle planning as defined by the League of American Bicyclists:

1. Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion: Bicycle friendly for everyone
2. Engineering: Safe and convenient places to ride and park
3. Education: Skills and confidence to ride
4. Encouragement: Bike culture that welcomes and celebrates bicycling
5. Evaluation & Planning: Planning for bicycling as a safe and viable option

Using the Five E's framework, the project team developed a comprehensive and holistic approach that not only ensures biking is a comfortable, safe, and convenient transportation choice for people of all ages and abilities, but one that is supported and encouraged through social networks and public policy. The policies and programs presented in the following pages will serve as the foundation for lasting change and are vital building a culture that values and supports bicycling.

The policies and programs recommended in this chapter were informed by:

- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Public Engagement
- Stakeholder Input
- Technical Analysis
- Industry Best Practices

The recommendations presented aligned with the goals and objectives established in Chapter 2 and, once established, will provide the region with a programming framework and policies that support bicycle improvements.

Photo credit: Safe Routes to School Marin County

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) is a federal initiative that promotes walking and bicycling to school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement, tools, safety education, and incentives. With Bike Decatur, the region has an opportunity to create and successfully implement an effective Safe Routes to School program. Not only do SRTS programs improve biking and walking for students, but they also improve safety for all members of the community.

As a result of the encouraging feedback and response received during the engagement process, the project team's recommendations have a strong emphasis on (SRTS). Additional details regarding SRTS can be found in Appendix C.

Recommendations in the following pages that support SRTS are indicated with a school crossing symbol.

EDUCATION

Education programs enable bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists to understand how to travel safely in the roadway environment and be aware of the laws that govern these modes of transportation. Education programs are available in an array of mediums, from long-term courses with detailed instruction to single sessions focusing on a specific topic. Curriculums should be tailored to the target audience and to the format of instruction. The education programs described in the remainder of this section are recommended for implementation in the Decatur region:

- Community Bicycle Education Materials
- Adult Bicycle Education Classes
- Youth Bicycle Safety Education
- Bike Rodeos
- League Certified Instructors/Youth Instructors
- Public Awareness Campaigns
- Walking and Biking Routes to School
- SRTS Website/Webpage
- Bike Co-Op

Community Bicycle Education Materials

In order to share the roads safely, pedestrians, cyclists and drivers must understand the laws and statutes at the local and state level. Distributing safety literature at civic buildings, recreational centers, local shops, or even as a law enforcement warning, helps the public learn about traffic laws in a cost-effective way. Safety literature should be easy to read, concise, and visually appealing in order to reach the widest audience possible. The City can also increase awareness of bicycle safety by sharing online education, such as the Ride Illinois Bike Safety Quiz (https://rideillinois.org/safety/bike-safety-quiz/) or the Ride Illinois Education campiagn (https://rideillinois.org/safety/education/). The Illinois Secretary of State has developed d Illinois Bicycle Rules of the Road which is available online at https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dsd_a143.pdf

Resources

• RAGBRAI Ride Right Coloring Book: https://ragbrai.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/RideRightBook2013.pdf

Adult Bicycle Education Classes

Though most adults know how to drive a car, they may have never learned the rules of the road in terms of biking. The proper knowledge and skills make biking safer, more relaxed, and more enjoyable. Bicycle education courses can be organized through the City or through community organizations, such as the Park District or churches. In addition to the fee for hiring an instructor, a bicycle education course typically requires meeting space for 3 hours and access to an empty parking lot.

There are several trained bicycle safety instructors in Illinois. It is also possible for a local staff person to become a trained instructor by attending a three-day workshop. The League Certified Instructor's certification provides insurance, teaching materials, resources, and support for teaching bicycle safety skills. The Youth Instructor certification provides training for teaching students K–8 bicycle safety skills. Ride Illinois, the Illinois state

bicycle advocacy organization, offers workshops and training programs, and will be offering some scholarships for people interested in becoming certified instructors. Workshops are periodically held in throughout the state.

Resources

- League Certified Instructors can be found here: https://bikeleague.org/bfa/search/map?bfaq=Illinois

Youth Bicycle Safety Education

It is important to encourage children to walk and bike to school safely and educate parents, school district staff on the benefits of walking and bicycling to school. Biking and walking education in schools is the most effective way to teach children how to use the roads safely. In the Decatur region, as many children live within walking and bicycling distance to school, education will help students to improve their own safety and get exercise.

Lessons incorporated into the classroom will reach all students. These lessons can also be effective at reaching parents, who are the ones driving to and near schools. Typically, biking and walking education is incorporated into Physical Education courses. It is also possible to work with community partners such as the Park District to offer summertime camps and classes to teach bicycle safety skills to students K-12. Several model curricula are available online through the Safe Routes to School National Partnership (https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/best practices/curriculum). The national Safe Routes to School program is a major resource for biking and walking programming in schools. It was founded to educate children on safety and to encourage families to incorporate physical activity into their daily routines. Programs that help children to walk and bike safely include Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, Bicycle Rodeos, National Walk to School Day, and Safe Routes to School walking maps.

Resources

- National Center for Safe Routes to School: http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/
- FHWA Safe Routes to School: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/

Bike Rodeos

A bike rodeo is a bicycle skills event that provides an opportunity for students to practice and develop skills that will teach better bike handling skills and how to avoid typical crashes. These events teach basic rules of the road such as signaling when making a turn, stopping at stop signs, etc. Bike rodeos teach cyclist safety skills to students typically between the ages of 5 and 16.

League Certified Instructors/Youth Instructors

The Decatur region should Identify and support community members to become League Certified Instructors or Youth Instructors through the League of American Bicyclists. The League Certified Instructor's certification provides insurance, teaching materials, resources, and support for teaching bicycle safety skills. The Youth Instructor certification provides training for teaching students

K–8 bicycle safety skills. Ride Illinois, the Illinois state bicycle advocacy organization, offers workshops and training programs, and will be offering some scholarships for people interested in becoming certified instructors. The Ride Illinois Safely program is live as of summer 2021.

Public Awareness Campaigns

Raising awareness of bicycle safety issues is an effective way to help all roadway users, including motorist and pedestrians, understand their roles and responsibilities. Using compelling graphics and messaging, combined with an easy to use website, the project team recommends developing a high profile outreach campaign. Reaching road users through a variety of media, including billboards, email, printed publications, radio and TV broadcasts, can help ensure a broad audience. Paired with high profile bicycling events, this type of campaign can be particularly effective.

Resources

Example public awareness campaigns:

- We're All Drivers, Cleveland, OH http://www.bikecleveland.org/alldrivers/
- Watch for Me NC, North Carolina https://www.watchformenc.org/

Walking and Biking Routes to School

Work with the SRTS Task Force, city officials, and law enforcement to identify safe sidewalks and/or bike paths within a 1-mile radius of each school for students to use to get to/from each school. Post maps of the routes on the school district's and individual schools' websites.

Resources

- The Peoria Unified School District has created maps with routes for each elementary school within the district. https://www.peoriaunified.org/Page/359

Create a SRTS Website or Webpage*

Work with community partners to create an online location for information and access to upcoming events.

Resources

Example SRTS websites:

- IDOT, https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/safe-routes-to-school/index
- DeKalb, IL, https://www.cityofdekalb.com/540/Safe-Routes-to-Schools
- Oregon, https://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/

Bicycle Co-Op

A bicycle co-op is typically a non-profit, volunteer-driven cooperative bicycle education center offering riding and repair classes, refurbished used bikes for sale or rent, hands-on learning and shop credit for volunteering, and public shop use, advice, and assistance.

Resources

- Bike Peoria Co-Op https://bikepeoria.org/coop/
- Ohio City Bicycle Co-Op https://ohiocitycycles.org/

ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement allows residents to share in the joy of biking and walking. Creating a safe and positive environment for residents to try out active transportation is a powerful tool in becoming more bikeable and walkable. The following programs are recommendations based on the responses in the community survey, along with national best practices for encouraging walking and biking.

- Active Transportation Rewards Program
- Community Rides
- Local Bike Map
- National Bike Month
- Community Bike Advocacy Group
- Bike to School Day and Walk and Roll Day*
- Early Dismissal Policies*
- Bike Trains
- Snow Removal Program
- SRTS Task Force*
- SRTS Grants*
- Earn-A-Bike Program

Active Transportation Rewards Program

Working with local businesses to offer rewards for those who arrive on foot or by bike can be a great way to promote local businesses and active transportation. Bicycling incentives are common in communities throughout the country. For example, businesses can reward those who have a helmet to show they biked. As it's more difficult to prove that a customer arrived on foot, walking incentives are more rare. A few ways to incentivize walking and biking to local retail include:

- Retailers offer specific rewards to those who arrive by bicycle. Usually, the incentive is small, like a 5% discount at a restaurant, or a free upgrade on drink size at a café. Individual retailers can opt to offer bicycle incentives and choose to promote them on their own or work with other businesses.
- Retailers coordinate to offer rewards on a specific day. The Bike Friendly Business program in Peoria, Illinois is an example of coordination among businesses and the local bicycle advocacy group to promote local shops and restaurants, while encouraging people to bicycle, and reduce parking demand. Participating businesses are acknowledged on the Bike Peoria website. In return, they agree to offer discounts or incentives, like a free soft drink at a restaurant, to cyclists on Saturdays. A similar program could encourage residents to try bicycling, and it can also encourage them to explore local businesses.

Work with local businesses to encourage them to become certified Bicycle Friendly Businesses through the League of American Bicyclists. This program will help them identify ways to better serve cyclists, including by providing bicycle parking, or places for cyclists to store their helmets.

Community Rides

Community rides encourage residents to be active and get to know each other in a friendly and supportive environment. Community rides help residents to discover the joy of being active and help strengthen community. Events have designated routes, typically loops, which end at the starting place. The pace should be accessible for all participants. Organizing a community ride or walk is a great way to get volunteers involved in promoting walking and biking, while building community support. Community rides can also be an opportunity for partnership.

Resources

Advocacy Advance Program

- A partnership between the League of American Bicyclists and the Alliance for Biking and Walking. Includes research and policy reports on rumble strips, highway safety programs, bicycling and climate change, and other topics. https://www.advocacyadvance.org/

Ped Bike Info

- Ped Bike Info provides several ideas for promoting biking, including examples of successful programs. http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/resources/resources_details.cfm?id=4916.

Local Bike Map

Being able to safely get around the city will help encourage more people to bike and walk. The creation of a bike map will help residents understand the best routes and how to access city destinations such as schools, library, and the business district by walking, biking, or taking transit.

Resources

- A joint effort in Peoria, IL developed a preferred bike route web map. https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=3ce65d69e03840068e7a6e2d54690357
- The Rockford, IL Park District developed a regional bicycle map. https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?ll=42.23700054715953%2C-88.98243530371096&mid=1wa5k7vdcElzTdZisLcyP3DQu80Sp7m8b&z=11

National Bike Month

May is National Bike Month. The DUATS communities are encouraged to host events and activities, like National Bike to Work Day to increase biking visibility and acceptance throughout the region. The DUATS communities can encourage residents and employees of all ages to bike in and around the region for transportation and recreational purposes during National Bike Month. The municipal offices can participate in National Bike To Work Day, by working with a local café that is interested in hosting a Bike To Work Day Station.

Other common events include family group rides, adult and children cycling classes, and bike-to-school days. The League of American Bicyclists has a number of valuable online resources to help make local efforts successful, including an event organizing handbook, a calendar linking to local events and activities, and tips for people interested in commuting to work.

Photo credit: Rockford Regional Star

Resources

League of American Bicyclists

- The League of American Bicyclists is the oldest bicycling organization in the US. It works through its members to promote better education and better facilities for bicyclists. Hosts the annual National Bike Summit. https://bikeleague.org/

Community Bike Advocacy Group

Bike advocacy organizations are volunteer groups that host activities to encourage cycling in addition to promoting and/or enabling increased adoption and support for cycling and improved safety and convenience for cyclists.

Resources

- Bike Peoria was founded in 2013 and advocates for a more bike friendly city and region. https://bikepeoria.org/
- I Bike Rockford began in 2017 to advocate for better cycling conditions in Rockford and beyond. https://www.ibikerockford.com/
- Bike BloNo was founded in 2012 and promotes bicycling for everyday transportation. https://www.facebook.com/BikeBloNo/

Bike to School Day and Walk 'n Roll to School Day

Bike to School Day is a national event held the first or second Wednesday of May, which is National Bike Month, and Walk 'n Roll to School Day is an international event held each year the first or second Wednesday of October.

Early Dismissal Policies

Dismiss students walking or biking home 5-10 minutes early. This will serve a dual purpose of incentivizing those modes as well as reducing conflicts with vehicles.

Organize Bike Trains

Bike trains are a group of volunteers (parents, teachers, and/or school staff) who coordinate with interested students to meet at set pickup locations on a predetermined schedule and bike together along a safe route so that students have the option to bicycle to school with others.

Resources

- https://activetrans.org/blog/rockford-students-picked-up-by-new-type-of-school-bus

Snow Removal Program

Promote and encourage sidewalk snow removal in the winter through public awareness raising.

SRTS Task Force

Create a SRTS Task Force and Invite members of the community to participate in creating a Safe Routes to School plan and programming and actively provide a space for them.

Earn-A-Bike Program

Earn-A-Bike programs are typically a 6-week hands-on courses where students learn bike maintenance and safety. At the end of the course students earn a refurbished bike, lock, and helmet.

EVALUATION

Performance management techniques promote informed decision making by relating community goals to the measurable effects of public investments. Key steps in performance management are to decide what to measure in order to capture the current state of the system, to set targets to improve those measures, and to use the measures to evaluate and compare the effects of proposed projects and policies. The goals identified in this Plan serve as the basis for the performance measures.

The evaluation programs described in the remainder of this section are recommended for implementation in the Decatur region:

- Bicycle Program Manager
- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Annual Community Bicycle Report Card
- Annual Bicycling Activity and Attitudes Survey
- Conduct Annual Walk/Bike Counts
- Bi-Annual School Survey
- Walking and Biking Audits

Bicycle Program Coordinator

Designate a bicycle program coordinator within the municipal, MPO, or Park District staff. The bicycle program manager would be responsible for managing the implementation of this plan and its recommendations. In addition, this person would serve as a liaison between various public and private agencies to achieve the plan's objectives throughout the region.

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The creation of a bicycle pedestrian advisory committee (BPAC) is a crucial step towards implementing the recommendations of this Plan. A BPAC provides guidance to decision makers on matters related to bicycle and pedestrian investments. A BPAC also ensures advocacy, accountability, transparency, and more meaningful public engagement.

A BPAC is a formal advisory body with members appointed by the local or regional governing body. A BPAC may include members of the community along with representatives from Community Development, Park District, and Engineering. For more information on how to establish an effective BPAC, see the BPAC Best Practices report produced by Advocacy Alliance.
https://activetrans.org/sites/files/bpac_best_practices.pdf

In McLean County IL, the Greenways Advisory Committee coordinates and advises planning efforts within the county. Region 1 Planning Council in Rockford, IL has the Alternative Transportation Committee to help balance transportation interests in the region.

Annual Community Bicycling Report Card

Under the direction of the Bicycle Program Manager and with the support of the BPAC, DUATS and its member agencies should provide annual updates on the progress made toward implementing the goals, policies, and programs of Bike Decatur.

Resources

- Cincinnati Bike Report Card, https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/bikes/linkservid/BA07DB25-9B82-8137-557A671F7F053FBA/showMeta/0/

St. Louis Bike Report Card, https://stlbikeplan.wordpress.com/progress/

Annual Bicycling Activity and Attitudes Survey

Under the direction of the Bicycle Program Manager and with the support of the BPAC, conduct an annual bicycling activity and attitudes survey. Design the survey questions to elicit opinions regarding the ease or difficulty encountered by local residents in using bicycles for various transit needs and recreation, as well as the respondents' opinions regarding the local cycling infrastructure. Use the survey developed for Bike Decatur as a template and modify as needed. Readminister the survey annually as a tool to track progress toward strategic goals of Bike Decatur. Incorporate the survey results into the annual Community Bicycling Report Card.

Annual Walk/Bike Counts

With support from the Community Bicycle Advocacy Group, collect bicycle counts annually. A count program can help provide justification for more and enhanced walking amenities and can help prioritize improvements. Reliable count data is necessary for measuring trends in facility use and for putting crash data in context. Collecting counts might also be an opportunity to note pedestrian and bicyclist behavior (e.g. the age of users, crossing behavior, etc.). The results of the count can be publicly reported and incorporated into the annual Community Bicycling Report Card

Resources

- Guidebook on Pedestrian and Bicycle Volume Data Collection, http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/171973.aspx
- Exploring Pedestrian Counting Procedures, https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/travel_monitoring/pubs/hpl16026/

Bi-Annual School Survey

Utilize the free tools offered through the National Center for Safe Routes to School and Walk 'n Roll to School Day to collect data such as parent surveys, tally sheets on how students get to/from school, walkability checklists, and bikeability checklists. The travel tallies can be administered by teachers in classrooms twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, to gather data on how students are getting to and from school. The survey asks how students arrive and are expected to get home for at least two consecutive days in the middle of the week. This data is needed for successful grant application for SRTS funding through IDOT.

Walking and Biking Audits

Conduct walking and biking audits. Work with the SRTS Task Force to identify and prioritize needed sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure to provide for safe biking and walking to/from school. This data is critical to successful application for grant funding, such as Safe Routes to School grants administered through IDOT.

ENGINEERING

Multi-modal transportation networks increase quality of life for all residents. They provide safer and more accessible routes to key destinations, improve equitable transportation for all income levels, and promote active lifestyles by accommodating non-motor vehicle-oriented travel.

The desired outcome of any improvements or additions to a multi-modal network is to improve safety, convenience, and accessibility for all ages and all mobilities. Achieving this outcome involves two types of efforts; separating motor vehicle traffic from those walking or bicycling, and slowing motor vehicle traffic so speeds are compatible with walking and cycling speeds.

The engineering policies and programs described in the remainder of this section are recommended for implementation in the Decatur region:

- Implement Bike Network
- School Traffic Circulation Studies
- Adopt and implement a Complete Streets Ordinance
- Bicycle Parking Requirements
- Speed and Traffic Safety Studies
- Bike Parking Survey

Implement the Recommended Bike Network
Design and construct the proposed bicycle network as recommended.

Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance
Complete streets policies can support planners and engineers in developing roadway designs throughout their community that improve the safety of all users and provide additional opportunities for physical activity from transportation.

Resources
- In 2015, the city of Peoria, IL adopted a Complete Streets policy as Chapter 28, Article XII of the municipal code. https://library.municode.com/il/peoria/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CO_CH28TRMOVE_ARTXIICOSTPO
- In 2016, the city of Bloomington, IL adopted a Complete Streets policy as Ordinance 2016-87. The ordinance also established an annual reporting requirement to track Complete Streets improvements and investments.

School Traffic Circulation Studies
Review traffic circulation patterns around schools to reduce conflict points with walkers and cyclists. Upon review, it is often possible to redesign the arrival and dismissal traffic patterns to reduce the number of conflict points, specifically at intersections and/or driveways, to improve safety.

Bicycle Parking Requirements
Develop a bicycle parking requirement for new development and an incentive program for existing development. Existing bike parking throughout the region is lacking and limited in capacity. To increase ridership, accommodations for bicycle parking must be provided in a quantity and location commensurate to parking made available for vehicles. The city of Bloomington, IL requires the inclusion of bike parking facilities for certain residential and non-residential developments. In addition to the bike parking requirement, the code also allows for a reduction of up to 10% in off-street vehicle parking requirements.

Speed and Traffic Safety Studies
Speeding traffic is an issue that every bicyclist faces, but it can be particularly concerning for vulnerable users, including students. Speed studies along major and local roads near schools can help determine whether an area is experiencing speeding problems. Additionally, analyses of traffic crashes that involve bicyclists can help identify locations where crashes have been occurring and how to mitigate the problems.

Bike Parking Survey
Survey bike parking provided at schools and develop a plan to install bicycle parking at each school using the bike parking standards from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.

Resources
- Visit https://www.apbp.org/Publications for information on bike parking standards and other useful guides.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION

The Five E's of bicycle planning generally originate from guidance provided by the League of American Bicyclists. Effective June 9, 2020, the "Enforcement & Safety" section of the Bike Friendly Community application was taken off-line to allow the League to assess all Enforcement-related questions and begin to determine how the program can best contribute to policy and cultural changes that reduce the potential for police violence and discriminatory enforcement.

In August 2020, the League of American Bicyclist re-published an updated version of the application with key changes that fundamentally shifted how enforcement is framed in those applications. Some enforcement-related questions remained off-line while the majority were revised and integrated into other sections of the applications.

In October 2020, the League announced that these changes were to become official, including the permanent removal of "Enforcement" as its own pillar within the 5 E's Framework. Over the coming year, the League will determine what further changes are needed. To truly achieve the vision of a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) are the essential lenses through which all other elements must be viewed.

Target Environmental Justice Zones and Areas of Persistent Poverty

Work with the Bicycle Advisory Committee to identify and prioritize those schools and communities with the highest need for safe walking and biking conditions, education programs, and enforcement solutions. Equitable policies and programs are needed to address power imbalances that have led to disparate health, educational, and economic outcomes that often delineate along lines of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

Context Sensitive Training and Education

Communities of color are less likely to have positive interactions with police and may be less inclined to engage with or attend in training where police are present. Providing training and educational materials through an agency with neutral or positive association cam ensure greater levels of participation. Develop an education and safety campaign for implementation by community groups and partners (e.g. Boys and Girls Club) to expand safety training beyond the purview of the police department.

Enforcement Audit

Review citation information by location to identify where enforcement needs for bicycle violations are occurring, and prepare findings for review by the BPAC.

DEI Officer

Assign a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer within City management to coordinate city department budgets and projects and develop equity criteria for projects to match the performance measures from this plan.

5 IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

Photo credit: Curt Knapp

The proposed walking and biking networks are presented in prioritized maps and tables on the following pages. Prioritization provides a framework for phased implementation, given constrained resources. The prioritization is based on community preferences, feasibility, and impact. The prioritization methods emphasize creating a network for walking and biking to community destinations.

Strategies are the actions taken to meet objectives and achieve the goals laid out in this Plan. For every goal, a key set of performance measures is identified and provided with baselines, data sources, and timeframes for evaluation.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

The first the first five years after the plan's adoption are critical its success. Recognizing that financial resources and staff time is limited, Bike Decatur has identified five priority actions for the Decatur Region. These priority actions are designed to carry forward momentum from the planning process and provide a solid foundation for future initiatives.

Following the plan's adoption DUATS and its member agencies should take the following immediate next steps:

- Identify a Bicycle Program Coordinator
- Establish a Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Establish a Safe Routes to School Task Force
- Dedicate a portion of the City's budget for bicycle infrastructure
- Establish a community bicycle advocacy group

Immediate (Year 1)

Bicycle Program Coordinator

Upon adoption of the plan, the City of Decatur should identify and assign a staff member to function as a Bicycle Program Coordinator. That individual will be responsible for implementing the recommendations of the plan and managing the Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee. This role can be performed in-house by existing staff or as on-call service with a local planning or engineering firm. The Bicycle Program Coordinator can be expected to spend up to 20 hours per week tasks within this role.

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

The BPAC can be a natural extension of the project core team or plan advisory committee. Under the purview of the Bicycle Program Coordinator, this committee helps to set priorities, coordinate between agencies, conduct performance evaluations, and ensure the plan's recommendations are being implemented. It is advised that this committee be comprised of at a minimum of one (1) representative from the City of Decatur's community development department, one (1) representative from the Decatur Park District, one (1) representative from the City of Decatur public works department, one (1) representative from the Macon County Conservation District, one (1) representative from the Village of Mt. Zion, and three (3) representatives from the community. The BPAC should meet at least quarterly in the initial years of the plan implementation.

Safe Routes to School Task Force

To establish a Safe Routes to School Task Force, Identify people who want to make walking and bicycling to school safe and appealing for children. Sharing concerns, interests and knowledge among a variety of community members with diverse expertise can enable groups to tackle many different issues. Utilize information from the Safe Routes to School Guide to assist in organizing and establishing a good, working task force. Plan for regular meetings either monthly or quarterly.

Near Term (Year 2-3)

Establish a Community Bicycle Advocacy Group

To supplement municipal efforts to promote walking and biking and provide opportunities for general residents and riders to advance their own priorities, it is important to establish a bicycle advocacy group. Most bicycle advocacy groups are non-profit organizations supported by donations, membership dues, and volunteers. Community Bicycle Advocacy organizations play a key role in building bicycle culture, advocating to improvements, and implementing bicycle programming. Members of nearby groups in Peoria (Bike Peoria) and Bloomington-Normal (Bike BloNo) can serve as helpful resources and provide guidance on how to establish an organization in Decatur.

Mid-Range (Year 4-5)

Dedicate a Portion of City Budget for Bicycle Infrastructure

Within the first five years of adopting the plan, the City of Decatur should establish a dedicated portion of funding for bicycle infrastructure implementation. Reallocation of current resources or the establishment of new dedicated funding streams can take time and political capital, while also requiring trade-offs and negotiations. The process to identify viable funding should begin immediately upon completion of the plan, but securing dedicated funding may take years.

Establishing a dedicated funding stream is necessary to ensure the plan's goals are met in a reasonable time frame. Without dedicated funding for infrastructure, the ability to make meaningful progress will be questionable. Dedicated funding can help mitigate challenges presented by outside forces, federal funding mechanisms, administration changes, or leadership priorities.

PRIORITY NETWORK

The prioritized biking network is presented in map on the following pages. Prioritization provides a framework for phased implementation, given constrained resources. The prioritization is based on community preferences, feasibility, and impact. The prioritization methods emphasize creating a network for walking and biking to community destinations.

If the opportunity to implement a project arises before the proposed phase, the phasing schedule should not prevent it from being implemented. Recommendations that require re-striping should be implemented when roads are scheduled to be repaved and painted. Likewise, shared lane markings should not be added when a street is scheduled to be repaved in the next year. Ultimately, the recommendations should be balanced by the City Engineer to ensure coordination with planned maintenance schedules.

Within Phase 1 there are five high priority projects recommended to serve as the foundation for the bicycle network in the Decatur Region.

1. Loop Around the Lake

The Loop Around the Lake was first identified as a community priority in 2011. The completion of pedestrian and bicycle facilities around Basin 2 are recommended to include physically separated bicycle facilities on the bridges of Lost Bridge Road and US-36. In addition shared roadway facilities are recommended on E. Lake Shore Drive from US-36 to Lost Bridge Road.

2. North-South Spine

The North-South Spine will be a critical link connecting the Loop Around the Lake to neighborhoods, and businesses to the north. This link will provide safe access for a underserved area of the City and provide bicycle access to two schools. Jasper Street from E. Lake Shore Drive to E. Pershing Road is recommended to have a visually separated buffered bike lane and Water Street from Eldorado to Pershing Road is proposed to have a physically separated shared use path.

3. East West Spine

The East-West Spine will serve a similar role to the North-South Spine and provide a safe bicycle connection from Millikin Campus and Fairview Park to Nelson Park. US-36/Eldorado from N. Fairview Ave to Lake Decatur is recommended to have a physically separated sidepath. When complete, the link will provide bicycle access to three additional schools, the university, and a number of civic amenities.

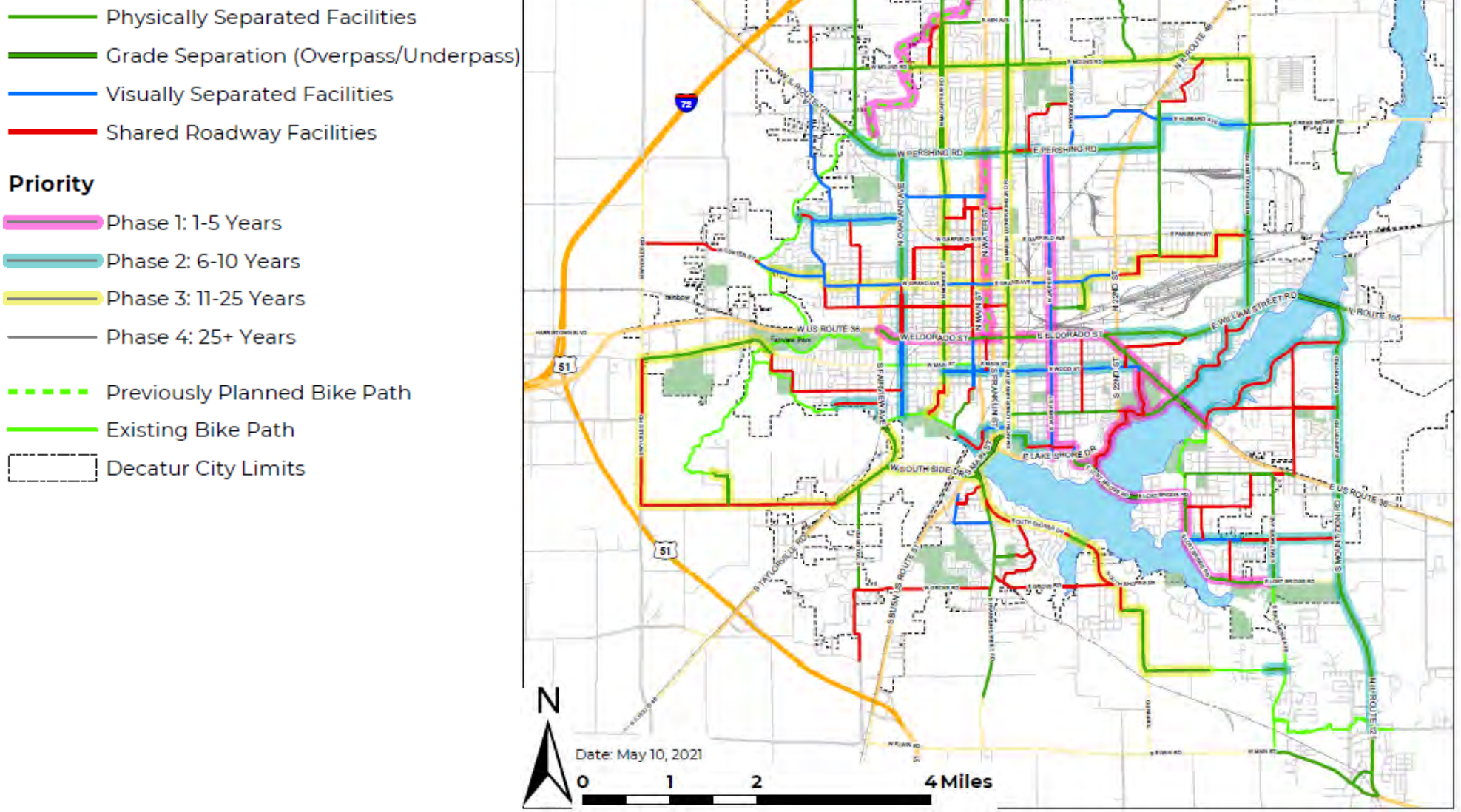
4. Link to Mt. Zion

To complete the foundational network, it is recommended to provide a physically separated sidepath on South Lost Bridge Road from the E. Maryland Street intersection to the existing bicycle network on S. Baltimore Ave. This important linkage will secure safe travel between Decatur and Mt. Zion.

5. Link to Forsyth

To build on the existing network, the Link to Forsyth will connect the existing facility that terminates just north of Pershing Road to the existing network in Forsyth just north of I-72. This link will strengthen the existing network by connecting Forsyth to the rest of the network.

Figure 5.2: Bicycle Network Priority Implementation



In addition to the prioritized network, general recommendations for implementation bicycle facilities throughout the transportation system are prioritized as follows:

- **Proposed facilities within existing right-of-way or on publicly owned land:** Access to the land where the facilities are planned, either through fee simple ownership or through easement rights is critical to implementation. Facilities that are proposed on publicly owned land such as parks or in conjunction with public rights-of-way should be given high priority.
- **Proposed facilities associated with other public or private improvements:** Planned improvements to land or along corridors where facilities are planned often provide opportunities for implementation. As plans are developed by the City of Decatur or the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for road improvements where a bicycle facility is proposed, coordination should occur to incorporate these new facilities into those improvements. Opportunities might also exist when private development occurs through coordination with the developers and the Planning and Zoning process.
- **Expansion of existing system:** Proposed trail segments which close a gap to complete existing links between neighborhoods and key destinations shall be given higher priority. Filling in these gaps will provide the maximum benefit to a greater number of existing users with minimal financial commitment.
- **Source of funding:** As funding becomes available which is most applicable to a particular project those projects will receive priority.
- **Increase safety for alternative modes of travel:** Projects which provide safe use for all users including people traveling along and across roadways, railways, waterways, and other barriers shall receive higher priority.
- **Ease of construction:** Projects where construction of the project is considered to be simple and easy to build according to criteria such as costs and design constraints such as grading and drainage and structures required for the project shall receive higher priority.
- **Public Input:** Projects which received positive public feedback during the crowdsource interactive map poll shall be given higher priority. These projects are ones for which public excitement is high and can demonstrate a functioning public participation process.

These general priorities should be considered as guidelines, with opportunity playing a major role in determining actual implementation of the facilities within the system. Opportunity can come in many forms including the funding source (i.e. grant, dedication of land, endowment, etc.) and the timing of related projects (both public and private). These opportunities may open the door for implementation of a specific facility that might have been lower on the priority list contained herein.

ESTIMATED COSTS

This section presents a planning-level opinion of probable costs for recommended bicycle facilties. Costs are based on typical IDOT pay items associated with each facility type, and are based on quantity estimates calculated using geographic data on corridors and intersections recommended in this plan. Costs reflect year 2021 construction and are considered current at the time of preparation of this plan.

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

Cost estimates include:

- Construction cost of installed infrastructure.
- Phase I: Costs associated with preparation of preliminary engineering plans and cost estimate.
- Phase II: Costs associated with the preparation of detailed plans, specifications, and estimates (PS&E).
- Phase III: Costs associated with construction engineering.

Costs for phase I, II, and III engineering are based on IDOT practices for estimating costs as a share of construction costs. A contingency is applied prior to estimating the cost of Phases I, II, and III engineering to account for items encountered during project development that cannot be estimated in detail at the planning level (e.g. floodplain and/or wetland impacts, capacity analyses, special waste excavation, present value of ROW acquisition). This approach is used to account for costs that may be anticipated as if bicycle facilities were implemented as standalone projects, and are not included as a part of a roadway improvement project.

However, it is more cost effective to implement bicycle facility projects as part of roadway resurfacing, reconstruction, water main, storm sewer, or sanitary sewer construction, or as part of a roadway widening or reconfiguration. Where feasible, roadway reconfigurations can significantly reduce project implementation costs, and may take advantage of repurposing roadway lanes or additional roadway width that do not require roadway widening or ROW acquisition.

Construction costs shown in Tables 5.1 – 5.3 include:

- New off-street asphalt paths, curb ramps
- New on-street bicycle facilities, consisting of pavement markings and flexible delineators / bollards where recommended
- Bicycle facility signage, intersection signage
- Addition of bike signals where needed
- Addition of pedestrian signal heads and push buttons
- Grade separations such as overpasses, underbridge connections, or exclusive bicycle/pedestrian bridges

Table 5.1: Base Network Cost

Category	Network Recommendations	Length (mi)/Count	Cost
Physical Separation	Shared Use Path	3.62	$3,214,800
	Sidepath	43.10	$40,966,300
	Rail to Trail	1.33	$1,501,400
	Separated Two-Way Cycle Track	1.25	$69,400
	One-Way Separated Cycle Track	18.79	$1,761,200
	Total	**68.10**	**$47,513,100**
Visual Separation	Buffered Bike Lane	7.76	$307,400
	Conventional Bike Lane	13.48	$284,600
	Total	**21.24**	**$592,000**
Shared Roadway	Bike Boulevard	16.36	$155,500
	Advisory Bike Lane	11.42	$150,700
	Marked Shared Lane	13.53	$107,100
	Signed Bike Route	1.92	$5,100
	Total	**43.23**	**$418,400**
Intersection Treatment	Curb Ramp	489	$2,445,000
	Intersection Signage	852	$383,400
	Ped. Signal Head and Push Button	138	$138,000
	Bike Signal Head (2-Way Cycle Track)	6	$36,000
	Total	**-**	**$3,002,400**
Base Network Subtotal			**$51,525,900**
Contingency (30%)			**$15,457,800**
Phase I Engineering (8%)			**$5,358,700**
Phase II Engineering (12%)			**$8,038,000**
Construction Engineering (12%)			**$8,038,000**
BASE NETWORK TOTAL			**$88,418,400**

Table 5.2: Grade Separation Enhancement Cost

Location	Network Recommendation	Length (feet)	Cost	
			Independent Structure	Bridge Retrofit
S. Franklin / S. Main @ Lake Decatur	Overpass	3,260	$13,058,800	$1,958,800
Lost Bridge Rd. @ Lake Decatur	Overpass	4,110	$16,448,100	$2,467,200
E. US Route 36 @ Lake Decatur	Overpass	560	$2,247,000	$337,100
E. US Route 36 @ Lake Shore Dr.	Overpass	160	$637,500	$95,600
E. William Street Rd. @ Lake Decatur	Overpass	3,050	$12,187,600	$1,828,100
Railroad ROW @ I-72	Overpass	940	$3,742,900	N/A
Spring Creek @ I-72	Underpass	250	$550,200	N/A
Taylorville Rd. @ Sangamon River	Overpass	0	$2,258,000	$338,700
Grade Separation Subtotal		**2.44 miles**	**$51,130,100**	**$11,318,600**
Contingency (30%)			**$15,339,000**	**$3,395,600**
Phase I Engineering (8%)			**$5,317,500**	**$1,177,100**
Phase II Engineering (12%)			**$7,976,300**	**$1,765,700**
Construction Engineering (12%)			**$7,976,300**	**$1,765,700**
GRADE SEPARATION TOTAL			**$87,739,200**	**$19,422,700**

Table 5.3: Total Cost

Type	Cost Subtotal		Total Cost (incl. contingency and engineering)	
	Independent Structure	Bridge Retrofit	Independent Structure	Bridge Retrofit
Base Network	$51,525,900	$51,525,900	$88,418,400	$88,418,400
Grade Separation Enhancements	$51,130,100	$11,318,600	$87,739,200	$19,422,700
GRAND TOTAL	**$102,656,000**	**$62,844,500**	**$176,157,600**	**$107,841,100**

FUNDING

Bicycle improvements can be funded through a variety of federal and local sources. Federal funds are well suited to higher cost infrastructure projects. Improvements that involve mainly paint, such as shared lane markings, could be implemented through routine maintenance, set-aside funds, or grouped as one federal funding application. DUATS should plan for the cost of ongoing maintenance for general maintenance (e.g. debris cleaning, snow plowing, filling potholes) and paint, as grants for maintenance are rare.

FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

The primary source of federal funds for transportation projects is the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, commonly known as the FAST Act. The FAST Act is set to expire in September 2021. It is possible that a new funding bill will replace the FAST Act, instituting new rules for funding. It is reasonable to expect that many of the same funding opportunities will exist under a new transportation bill, however the names or performance measures may change slightly. In addition to funding sources through the FAST Act, there are other federal funding options. Federal funding sources are described below in more detail.

There are several federal funds that IDOT can use. Some funds, such as the Major Bridge Fund, can be used only for bridges, while other funds are unrestricted. Certain funds, such as Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG)-Urban can be used only in an urbanized area. However, other funds, such as STBG-Rural, must be used outside an urbanized area in locations such as areas in Macon County. Counties also receive dedicated federal funds.

Macon County receives an annual allotment of federal bridge funds known as HBP (Highway Bridge Program). Each county's allotment is based on the total need of deficient local bridges in the county as compared to that which exists statewide. These funds are limited to use on existing local structures within the county which meet eligibility criteria based solely on their deficient need and only when authorized by counties in coordination with IDOT. Counties also receive an allocation of federal STBG-Rural funds which may only be used to address needs on county highways or other rural federal-aid eligible routes throughout the county that are outside of the urbanized area and only when authorized by counties in coordination with IDOT.

Municipalities do not receive automatic individual allocations of federal funds to build and maintain infrastructure. Municipalities can apply for competitive grants such as RAISE, HSIP, and HPP4 . The required match for these grant programs comes from the jurisdiction's share of Motor Fuel Tax revenues, and a combination of sales taxes and/or property taxes.

In addition to the federal funding sources discussed above, there are other, smaller sources of federal funds for multimodal transportation projects. For example, local jurisdictions can compete for funding through the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program for projects related to transportation enhancements and the former Safe Routes to School program.

STATE FUNDING SOURCES

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The HSIP emphasizes a data-driven, strategic approach to improving highway safety on all public roads that focuses on performance. Eligible projects include safety improvements for all roadway users. IDOT oversees the distribution of HSIP funds, with an emphasis on proactive, system wide improvements. Projects should align with the goals of the Illinois' Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program (Section 402)

Section 402 funds are used to support State and community programs to reduce deaths and injuries. Pedestrian safety has been identified as a national priority. Section 402 funds can be used for a variety of safety initiatives including conducting data analyses, developing safety education programs and conducting community-wide pedestrian safety campaigns. The funds must be consistent with the State Highway Safety Plan.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The RTP is a program incorporated into the FAST Act, Transportation Alternatives Program. However, funding for this program is administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Grants are available for trail development and renovation. Projects require a minimum of a 20% local match.

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency offers a variety of grants that address community health. Grants may help fund green infrastructure that can also be used enhance walkability and bikeability. These broad-based community grants require significant collaboration with local coalitions.

SRTS Grants

Apply for a SRTS grant through IDOT to fund bicycle education and encouragement programming. Two types of grants are offered – Infrastructure Grants for building bike paths, sidewalks, etc., and Non-Infrastructure Grants for doing education and training. Infrastructure grants are highly competitive, while non-infrastructure grants are sorely underutilized. The project team encourages DUATS and its partner agencies to take advantage of the opportunity to secure non-infrastructure grants to further development their SRTS program.

Non-Infrastructure grants offered through IDOT can be used to:

- Purchase equipment, such as bikes, helmets, and safety vests
- Organize events, such as Bike to School Day and bike rodeos
- Purchase educational materials
- Pay for training workshops
- Operate community awareness-raising and education campaigns
- Pay for the creation of a Safe Routes to School Plan for the school district or select schools

Photo credit: Enjoy Illinois

LOCAL FUNDING SOURCES

Local funding for bicycle projects and programs is an important component when considering developing new facilities. Many federal programs require a local match, the funding sources below can be used to fund projects in full or to be used as a local match when using federal funds.

Capital Improvement Budget Set-Aside

Decatur could make a policy decision to set aside a percentage of capital improvement budget to fund bicycle projects. These projects could be incorporated into other road work being done (complete streets) or stand-alone projects. These funds can be leveraged as a local match to secure federal funds. The League of American Bicyclists indicate the average "Bronze" level community allocates 9% of transportation budgets to bicycle projects.

Municipal Bonds

Local government units can also consider general obligation bonds and cumulative capital improvement funds for funding transportation improvement projects.

Economic Improvement Districts

Economic Improvement Districts ("EIDs") are public-private partnerships in which local property and business owners elect to make a collective contribution to the maintenance, development, and promotion of their property.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing is a government finance mechanism for development and redevelopment which captures increases in taxable assessed value within a defined area and then uses property tax revenue derived from these increases to finance public improvements within the specified area.

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

Several national and state foundations provide grants for bicycle projects. These grants can play a significant role in funding projects and providing match for federal funds.

Bikes Belong Grant Program

Bikes Belong is a national organization dedicated to putting more people on bikes. The organization funds multi-use trails with a strong desire to leverage federal funding.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)

The RWFJ offers a wide range of funding opportunities to promote healthy and active living. The website offers details on various grants and calls for proposals.

AARP Community Challenge Grants

The AARP Community Challenge provides small grants to fund “quick-action” projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages. Applications are being accepted for projects to improve housing, transportation, public space, technology (“smart cities”), civic engagement and more.

PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program

PeopleForBikes is a national organization committed to improving biking for everyone. The PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program supports bicycle infrastructure projects and targeted advocacy initiatives that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to ride.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management techniques promote informed decision making by relating community goals to the measurable effects of public investments. Key steps in performance management are to decide what to measure in order to capture the current state of the system, to set targets to improve those measures, and to use the measures to evaluate and compare the effects of proposed projects and policies. To achieve these goals, the following objectives are recommended with correlated performance measures to be evaluated annually.

The objectives set forth to achieve each of the Plan's goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based (SMART). The time frame within with each objective should be evaluated is consistent with the measure to be evaluated. Evaluations should take place a regular annual intervals and be distributed to the public through a community bicycling report card. Data collection methods include publicly available census reports, annual walk bike counts, school surveys, community surveys, walking and biking audits, municipal budgets, and capital improvement plans. This evaluation strategy will allow DUATS to complete annual performance measure assessments to track progress, and celebrate successes, throughout the lifespan of the Plan.

For each goal and their corresponding objectives, we have the identified appropriate strategies, performance measures, and time frames for evaluation.

Connectivity: Create a highly connected, convenient, and low stress bicycling network.

Objective	Performance Metric	Baseline (2021)	Target	Strategy
1.1 Increase the number of households within ¼ mile of a high quality, low stress bicycle facility	Households within 1/4 mile of a bike facility	5,290 households	6,900 total households by 2040	1.1A Prioritize network additions that serves at last 80 new households annually
1.2 Increase the miles of on-road bicycle facilities	Miles of visually separated bike facilities constructed, Miles of shared roadway bike facilities constructed	0	20 miles by 2040	1.2A Add 1 miles of new on-road infrastructure annually
				1.2B Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance
1.3 Ensure all parks, schools, hospitals, and municipal buildings are connected to the bicycle network	Number of parks, schools, hospitals and municipal building with direct access to the bicycle network	7 parks connected, 0 schools, 0 hospitals, 0 municipal buildings	100% by 2040	1.3A Prioritize network construction that connects parks, schools, hospitals, and municipal buildings
				1.3B Conduct school traffic circulation studies
				1.3C Develop Bicycle Parking Requirements
1.4 Increase the miles of off-road bicycle facilities	Miles of physically separated bike facilities constructed	23	32 total miles by 2040	1.4A Add 0.5 miles of new off-road infrastructure annually
1.5 Decrease the overall rate of high stress facilities in the network	Cyclists attitudes towards stress and safety while using the network, Bike Level of Traffic Stress	57% feel safe*	Increase the percent of residents who feel safe to 70% by 2030 and 80% by 2040	1.5A Conduct Annual Bicycling Activity and Attitudes Survey
				1.5B Host community rides
		40% of the network is high stress	Reduce the overall percent of high stress network to 35% by 2040	1.5C Prioritize high stress corridors for bicycle enhancements
				1.5D Conduct speed and traffic safety studies

*Based on Bike Decatur community survey; results may not be representative of community

Safety: Improve the safety of bicycling for all users regardless of age or ability.

Objective	Performance Metric	Baseline (2021)	Target	Strategy
2.1 Reduce the rate of bicycle crashes	Number of bicycle crashes	98	Reduce to 49 crashes by 2040	2.1A Provide physically separate bicycle accommodations wherever possible
				2.1B Identify high-risk roadway features and develop templates to simplify consistent safety redesigns
2.2 Ensure all schools have a Safe Routes to School Program	Number of schools with Safe Routes to School Program	0	Increase to 100% of schools by 2040	2.2A Develop Safe Routes to Schools program for 2 schools annually
2.3 Increase bicycle safety information campaign releases to 4 times a year for adults and children by 2040.	Number of people who complete bicycle safety training	0	Increase to 25% of total population by 2040	2.3A Develop community bicycle education materials
				2.3B Host adult bicycle education classes
				2.3C Host youth bicycle safety education classes
				4.3D Host Bike Rodeos
2.4 Increase public information campaigns to 1 time annually by 2025	Road users awareness of rights an responsibilities of all modes	0	Increase public awareness to 80% total population by 2040	2.4A Develop a public awareness campaign
				2.4B Host road user training
2.5 Eliminate bicycle deaths	Number of bicycle fatalities	1	0 bicycle fatalities by 2040	2.5A Evaluate every roadway reconstruction project for multimodal safety needs and opportunities at project inception.
				2.5B Determine vehicle speeds that are safest for all people using the street and then design the street to support that speed

Ridership: Increase the rate of bicycling in the Decatur region.

Objective	Performance Metric	Baseline (2021)	Target	Strategy
3.1 Increase the number of bicycle commuters in the region	Number of workers who commute to work by bicycle	0%	Increase to 10% of commuters by 2040	3.1A Develop an active transportation rewards program
				3.1B Provide a local bike route map
				3.1C Develop a snow removal program for bike facilities
3.2 Increase the rate of non-college age students in the region who travel to school by bike	Number of students who ride a bicycle to school	0%*	Increase to 10% of students by 2030	3.2A Establish a Safe Routes to School Task Force
				3.2B Provide walking an biking routes to schools
				3.2 C Develop an early dismissal policy for students who bike to school
				3.2D Organize Bike Trains
3.3 Increase the rate of transit riders who access transit stops	Number of transit riders who access transit stops by bicycle	Unknown	Increase to 10% of transit riders by 2030	3.3A Increase the number of bicycle accommodations at bus stops and on transit vehicles
3.4 Increase the number of people who have access to a bicycle at home	Number of people who have access to a bicycle at home	91%*	Increase to 95% by 2030	3.4A Develop an Earn-A-Bike program
			Increase to 100% by 2040	3.4B Establish a bicycle co-op
3.5 Increase the rate of residents in the region who bike once or more a month	Number of events and participants of bicycle encouragement actives	72%*	Increase to 85% by 2040	3.5A Develop an active transportation rewards program

*Based on Bike Decatur community survey; results may not be representative of community

Equity: Provide equal opportunity for low-stress bicycling for all members of the community.

Objective	Performance Metric	Baseline (2021)	Target	Strategy
4.1 Ensure the percent of residents in census tracts where the median income is below 60% of the county average located within 1/4 mile of a high quality, low stress bicycle facility at a rate that is equal to or greater than the regional average	Number of low-income and minority residents within 1/4 mile of high-quality, low-stress facility	41% of all census tracts are located within ¼ mile of a high-quality facility, while only 33% of low-income census tracts have similar access.	Exceed DUATS regional average by 2030	4.1A/4.2A Prioritize network additions in low-income census tracts, Environmental Justice Zones, and Areas of Persistent Poverty
4.2 Increase the overall mileage of low stress bicycle network in low income neighborhoods	Miles of visually separated bike facilities constructed in low-income census tracts	0 miles	8 miles by 2040	
	Miles of physically separated bike facilities constructed in low-income census tracts	0 miles	4 miles by 2040	
4.3 Increase the share of older adults (age 55+) who bicycle one or more times a month	Number of older adults (age 55+) who report bicycling once or more a month	Unknown**	Increase to 25% by 2030	4.3A Identify bicycle amenities and features that support the needs to older adults
				4.3B Provide targeted encouragement and education activities and events for older adults
4.4 Increase access to bicycles in-low income and minority census tracts	Number of low-income and minority residents with access to a bike	Unknown**	Exceed DUATS regional average by 2030	4.4A Develop an Earn-A-Bike program
				4.4B Establish a bicycle co-op
4.5 Increase share of minority residents who bicycle one or more times a month	Number of minority residents who report bicycling once or more a month	Unknown**	Increase to 35% by 2040	4.5A Provide context sensitive training and education
				4.5B Conduct an enforcement audit
				4.5C Assign a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer

**Establish baseline via community survey

Community: Become a League of American Bicyclist recognized bike friendly community.

Objective	Performance Metric	Baseline (2021)	Target	Strategy
5.1 Increase the number of bicycle events and activities in the Region	Number of events and bicycle activities	Unknown**	Increase 25% by 2030 and 50% by 2040	5.1A Host community rides
				5.1B Participate in National Bike Month
				5.1C Participate in Bike to Work and Bike to School Days
5.2 Ensure dedicated municipal resources to promote bicycling (e.g. staff, budget)	Annual municipal expenditures for bicycling related initiatives	$0.00 (0%)	Secured by 2025	5.2A Designate a Bicycle Program Manager
				5.2B Establish a Bicycle Advisory Committee
5.3 Increase the number of individuals and organizations who promote and advocate bicycling	Number of bicycle advocacy organizations and individuals	0 Advocacy Groups, Unknown Individuals	Establish Advocacy Group By 2025	5.3A Establish a community bicycle advocacy group
5.4 Survey the business community through the Chamber of Commerce to establish a baseline of end-of-trip facilities (bike racks, showers, comfort stations, etc.)	Number of public and civic destinations with end-of-trip facilities	Unknown**	Increase 25% by 2040	5.4A Establish bicycle parking requirements
				5.4B Conduct a bicycle parking audit

**Establish baseline via community survey

Appendix A – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

INTRODUCTION

Public participation is an important component of any planning process. A planning process should both communicate information about the process to the general public and enable residents to provide input and meaningful feedback. Effective public participation builds trust and buy-in from area residents, resulting in a better plan and a plan that is more likely to be embraced by the region.

Some of the most effective methods of public participation involve in-person, face-to-face encounters. In previous years, DUATS has been able to utilize open houses and community events to receive vital feedback from the public on regional priorities and necessary improvements. During the course of the Bike Decatur plan, a global outbreak of the COVID-19 virus made large in-person gatherings unfeasible. Various stages of social restrictions were in place throughout project period, ranging from total lockdown, crowd size limits, and mandatory mask requirements. As a result, the project team used all reasonably available means to engage the public virtually. To effectively engage the public remotely, the project team used a variety of outreach methods to maximize the number and type of opportunities for residents to become involved in the process. The public was provided the opportunity to provide feedback on the plan recommendation and influence the project prioritization process through building on previous engagement efforts, hosting virtual open houses, and providing an online survey.

CORE TEAM

The Bike Decatur core team consisted of the planning consultant team and key personnel at key agencies throughout the region. Agencies represented in the core team include:

- City of Decatur
- DUATS
- Macon County
- Decatur Park District
- Village of Mt. Zion

The core team met regularly, every two weeks, throughout the planning process to guide and ensure the plan meets the needs of all those involved.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee is responsible for advising and providing guidance for the plan. Membership comprised a larger set of important agencies throughout the region in addition to those represented on the core team. The additional agencies represented on the steering committee include:

- IDOT
- Economic Development Corporation
- Decatur School District
- Decatur Public Transit System
- Macon County Health Department
- Decatur Police Bike Task Force
- Decatur Park District Police
- Macon County Conservation District
- Decatur Running Club
- Save Our Natural Area (SONA)
- Decatur Bicycle Club
- Decatur Bicycle Shop
- Decatur Illinois Cycling Enthusiasts
- Spin City Bicycle Shop

The planning process included three steering committee meetings for which members were asked to review key milestones and provide feedback. The first steering committee meeting presented existing conditions and vision statement. The second steering committee meeting presented the goals and objectives and key infrastructure and policy recommendations. The third and final steering committee meeting presented the implementation strategy and fiscal plan.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with local experts and members of the cycling community. The interviews were held between November 2020 and February 2021 with over 25 people across 11 local public agencies. Agencies that participated in the stakeholder interviews include:

- City of Decatur – Assistant City Manager
- Decatur Park District
- Members of Community/Active Cyclists
- IDOT Bike & Pedestrian Representative
- Decatur Conservation District
- Macon County Community Foundation
- Chamber of Commerce
- Elected Officials
- Decatur School District
- Millikin University
- Boys and Girls Club of Decatur

The stakeholder interviews provided in-depth discussions on various themes that help make a successful bike plan such as:

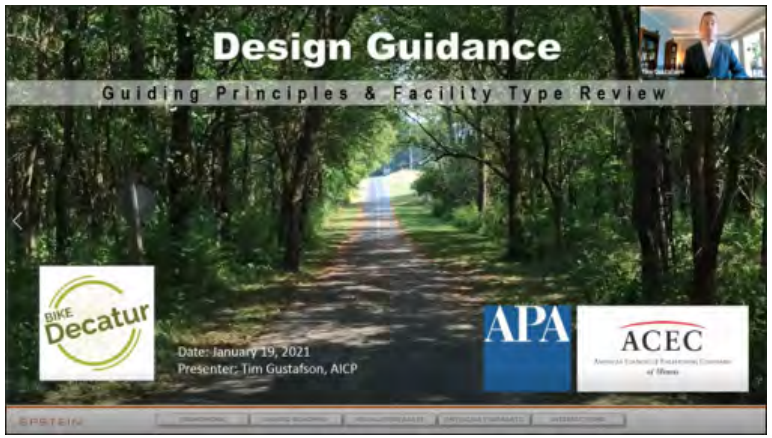
- Enthusiasm for making the region bike friendly
- Opportunities for collaboration and partnership
- Common barriers and challenges
- Equity and inclusion

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Two virtual public meetings were hosted to gather feedback and answer questions from the public regarding the bicycle improvements proposed for the region. The first community workshop was held on November 19, 2020 and the second community open house was held on March 31, 2021; both community meetings were offered in afternoon and evening sessions to maximize public involvement. All public engagement sessions were recorded and shared online.

The community workshop provided participants interactive opportunities to guide discussions about the needs of the region, review early study findings, and identify key bicycle opportunities. The community open house gave participants the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the proposed infrastructure and programmatic recommendations.

A third public presentation was hosted on January 19, 2021 as a bicycle design training workshop. This training session allowed the planning team to introduce and explain bicycle facility design concepts to city staff and stakeholders. This session was also available to all planners and engineers in both the public and private sectors who had interest in the topic.

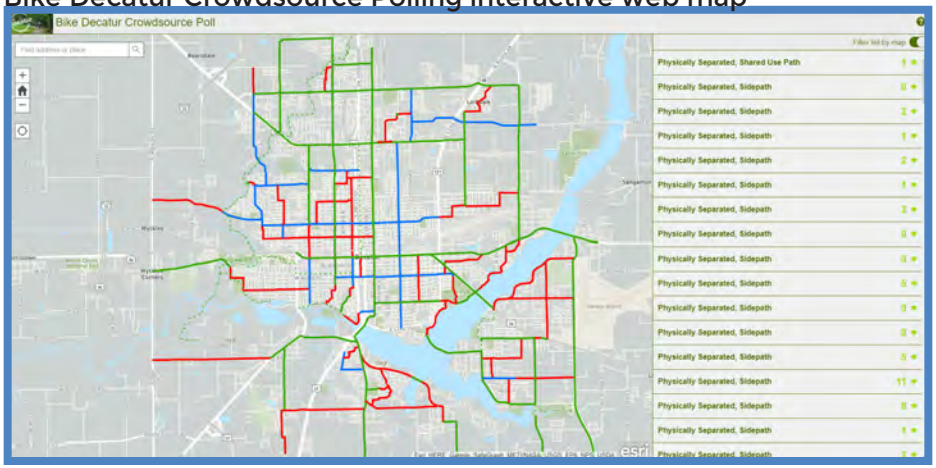


ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the traditional forms on public engagement, multiple forms of online engagement were utilized. Plan background, progress, and general information were shared on the plan's website, bikedecaturIL.com. The website provided stakeholders with a single point of contact for information throughout the planning process and allowed the planning team to continuously update the public.

Throughout the process, two interactive mapping tools were created and deployed to receive critical public feedback. The first allowed users to add features and comments to a map describing where they would like to see bicycle improvements. Then, once a proposed network was created based on the input received, a second interactive map was deployed that allowed users to vote on improvement priorities.

Bike Decatur Crowdsource Polling interactive web map



www.bikedecaturIL.com

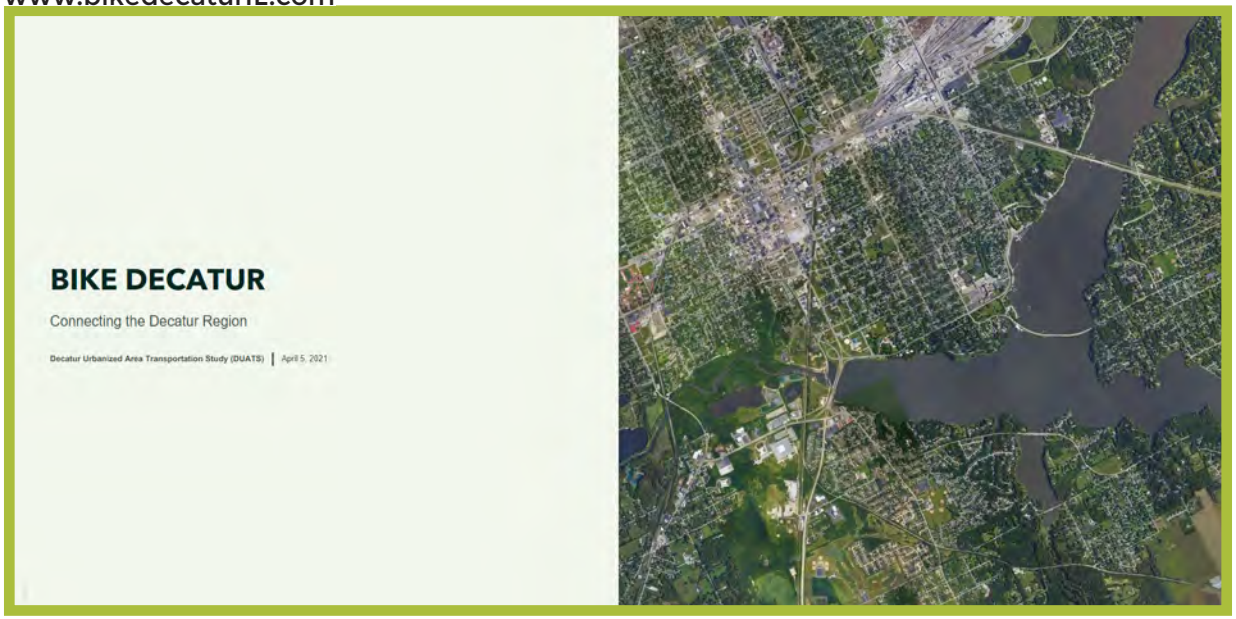
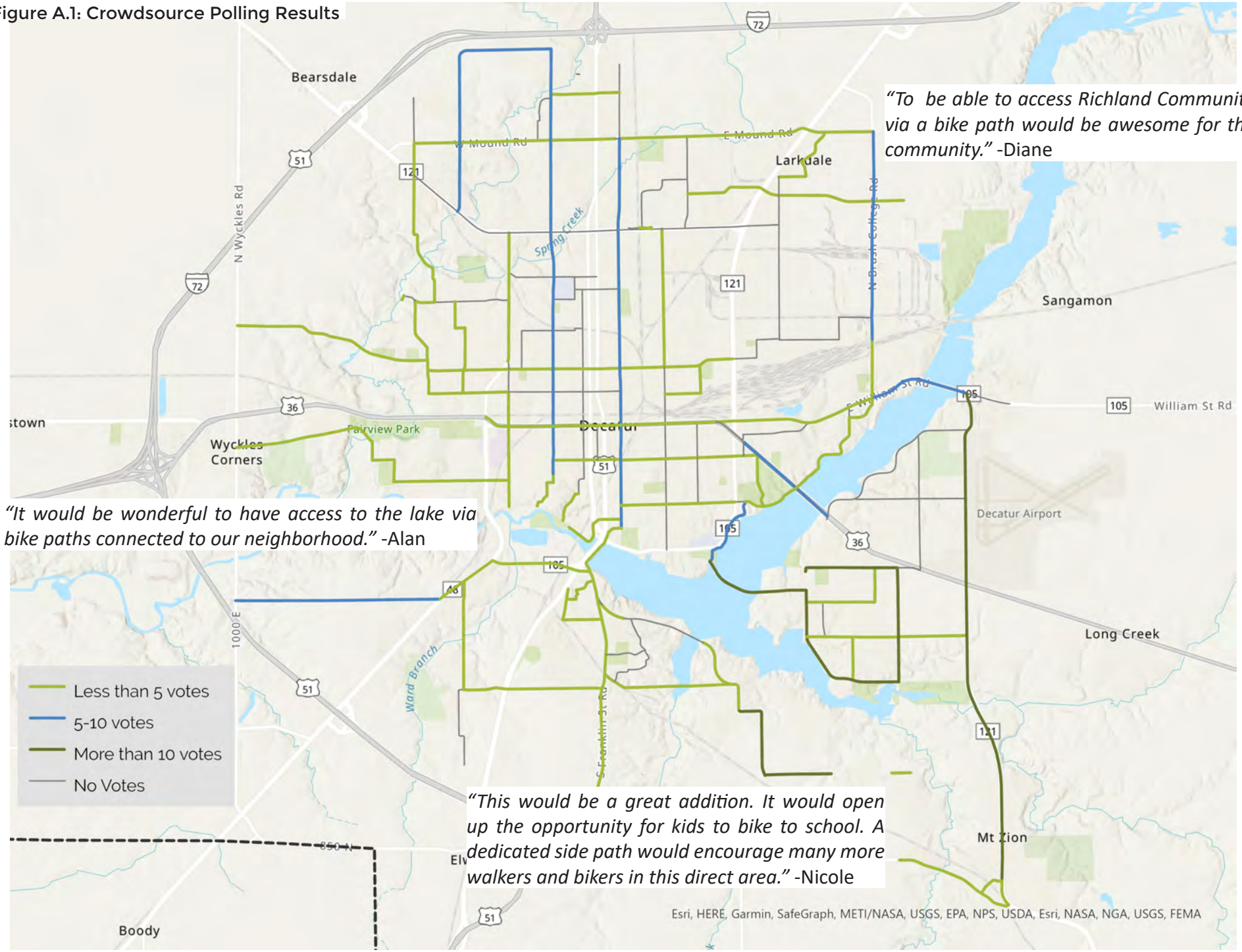


Figure A.1: Crowdsource Polling Results



"To be able to access Richland Community via a bike path would be awesome for the community." -Diane

"It would be wonderful to have access to the lake via bike paths connected to our neighborhood." -Alan

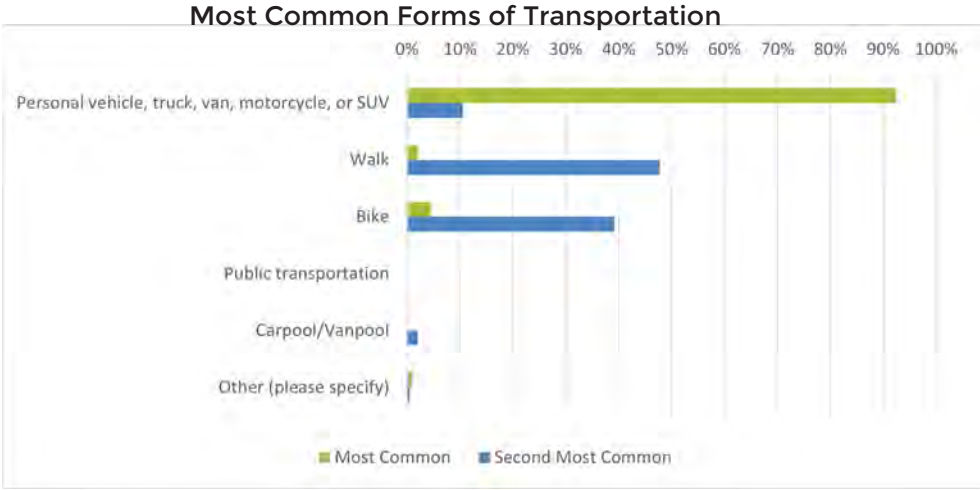
"This would be a great addition. It would open up the opportunity for kids to bike to school. A dedicated side path would encourage many more walkers and bikers in this direct area." -Nicole

COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey was created in October 2020 for the purpose of gathering bicycling behaviors and attitudes of residents in the Decatur area community. The survey provides the planning team and city staff a sample snapshot of bicycling culture. Nearly 200 responses were collected from the 33-question survey.

BICYCLE ACTIVITIES

The results of the community survey indicate that an overwhelming majority of respondents use a personal vehicle as the most common form of transportation. Given the development patterns of the region, it is reasonable for most people to use a personal vehicle as the most common form of transportation. A bicycle is the most common form of transportation for only 5% of respondents. However, most respondents have access to a bicycle (90%), live within biking distance of a park (90%), and ride their bicycle primarily for exercise or recreation (96%). Survey respondents tend to be older, have more education, and have higher incomes which may help explain high rates of bike and park access, high bike interest (47% ride a bike at least a few times a week), but comparatively low rates of bike use for non-recreation such as commuting, shopping, or running errands.

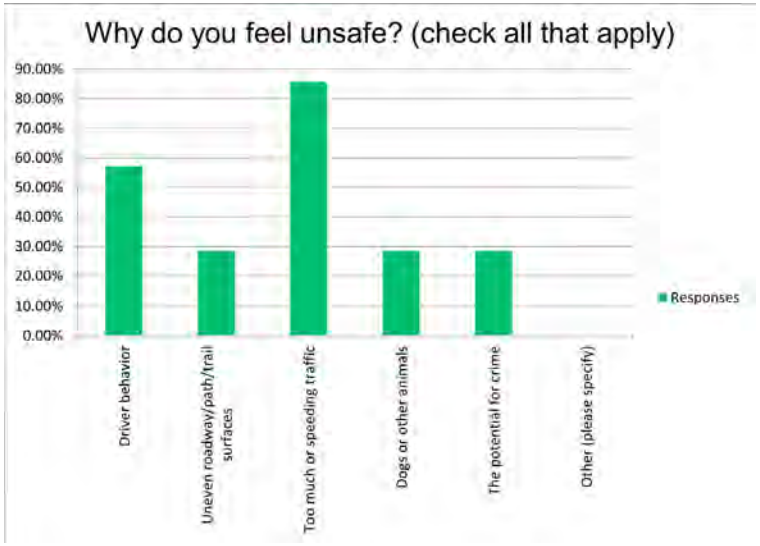


Despite the interest and access to bicycling, only a small number of respondents described themselves as comfortable bicycling on most streets. A majority expressed confidence in their biking ability, but preferred bike lanes or paths and a significant portion were interested in bicycling more often but did not feel safe biking near roads. Interestingly, this breakdown in bicycling ability and preferences is the similar for both men and women and across all age groups. Approximately, 38% of respondents typically ride in the street with traffic but only 18% describe themselves as comfortable on most streets. This suggests there may be a certain level of unease about riding in the street with traffic as there is a clear preference for bike lanes or paths. It also shows that, among survey respondents, there is a need for additional bike infrastructure.

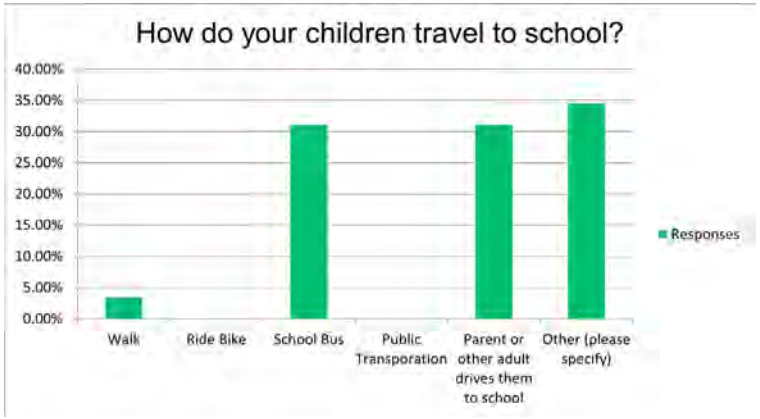
How would you describe yourself as a cyclist?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
"Strong and Fearless" - I am comfortable bicycling on most streets even if there is no bike lane or path.	18.44%	26
"Enthused and Confident" - I can get around pretty well on a bike, but prefer bike lanes or paths where available.	54.61%	77
"Interested but concerned" - I would like to bicycle more often, but don't feel very safe or comfortable except on trails that aren't near roads.	26.95%	38
"No way, no how" - I don't bicycle and wouldn't feel safe or comfortable doing so.	0.00%	0

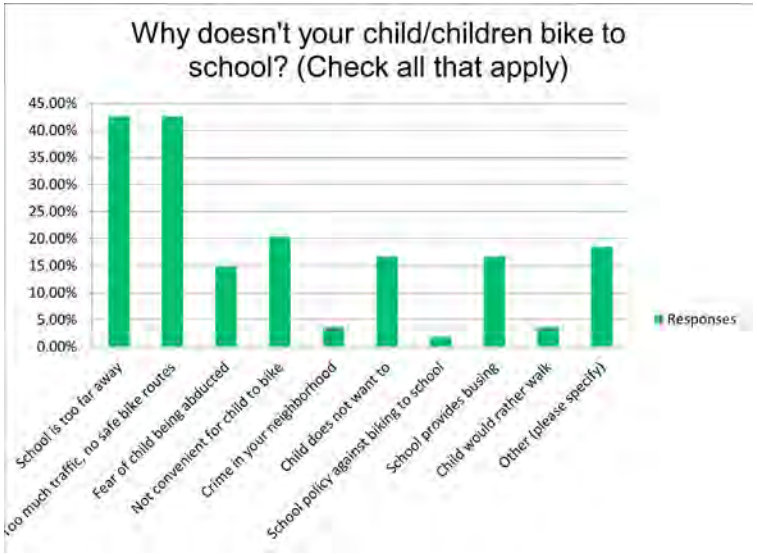
BICYCLING ATTITUDES

Survey respondents generally view bicycling as a safe activity but, 38% say that it depends on other factors. For the 38% of respondents who say safety depends on other factors, the open-ended responses largely describe biking as a safe activity but not safe to bike in the street with traffic and without dedicated bike lanes or paths. Attitudes on bike safety were similar for both men and women and for respondents both with and without children. For those who feel unsafe while biking, the top two reasons were too much traffic/speeding traffic and driver behavior.* For those who do not ride a bike, the top two reasons were not feeling safe and not feeling like there is anywhere suitable to ride a bike.

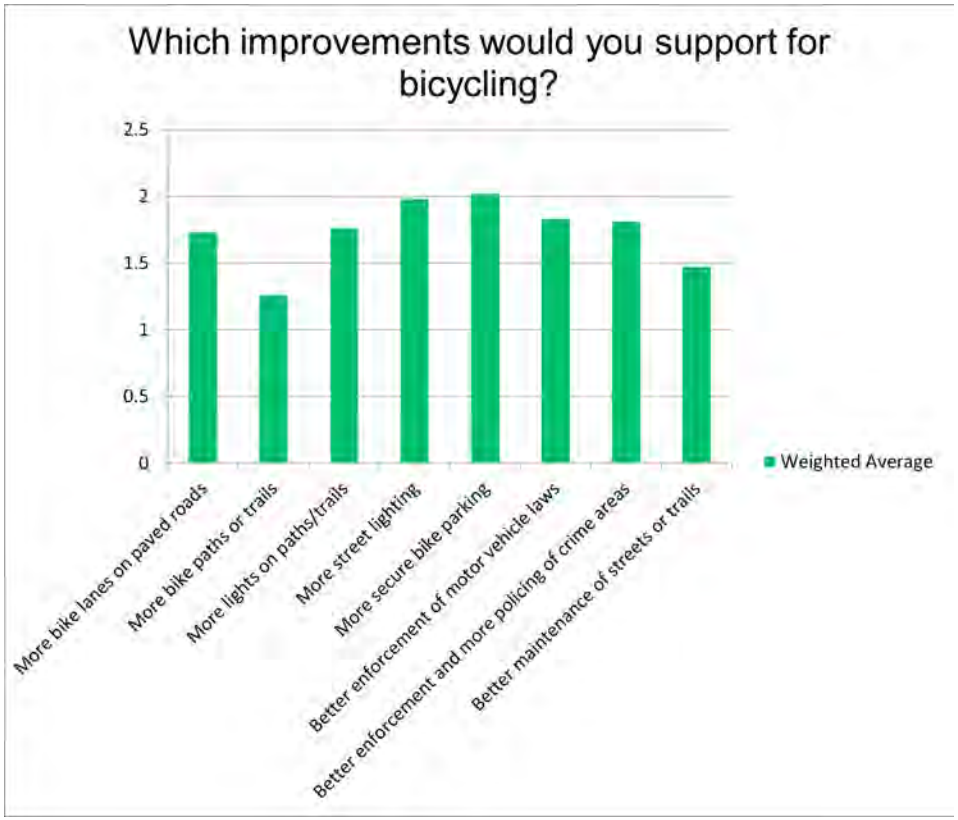


Most respondents with children (53%) say their child rides a bike at least once per week. Children ride bikes for a variety of reasons including general play and exercise. Of note, no respondents reported their children ride a bike to school. As noted earlier, there does not seem to be a large variation regarding attitudes toward bike safety for respondents with and without children. This further illustrates that while parents may generally view bicycling as a safe activity, their children do not ride a bike to school because of issues related to accessibility, convenience, and vehicle traffic.



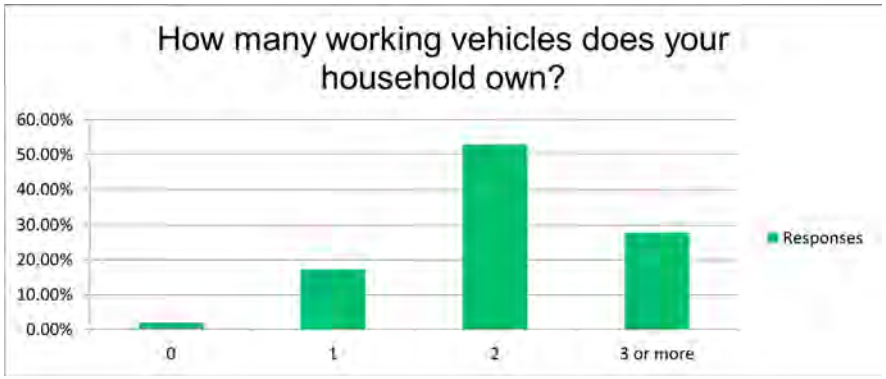


Not surprisingly, there is support for a range of bicycle improvements. Improvements related to safety were most strongly supported such as better enforcement of motor vehicle laws, more secure bike parking, and better lighting. There is also support for physical bike infrastructure such as bike lanes. Of note, many open-ended responses regarding bike improvements discussed the need to connect existing bike paths and parks to create a more connected bike network.

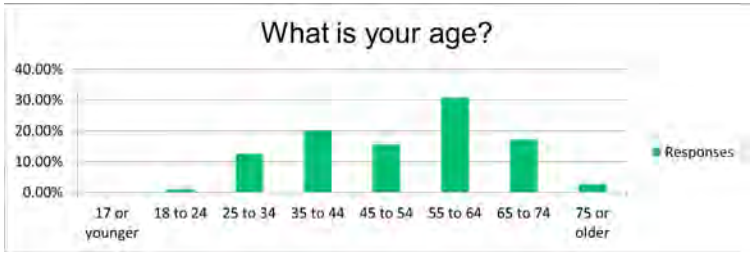


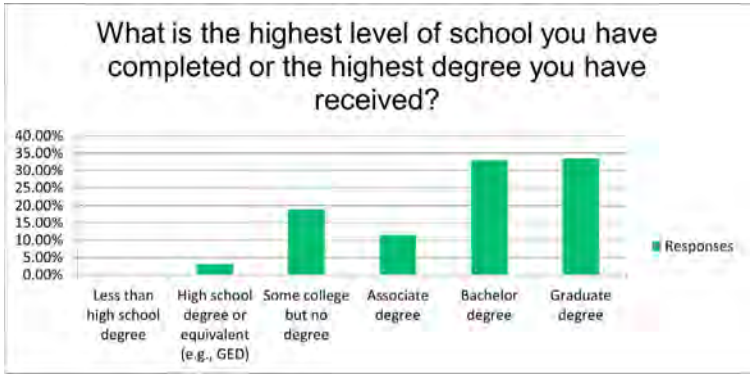
SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Approximately 93% of survey respondents live in a single-family home and a nearly identical percentage own their own home. This is unsurprising considering the most common forms of transportation are personal vehicles, a large majority of respondents live in a home with at least two working vehicles.



Survey respondents tend to be older and have more education and income.





LIST OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

1	What mode of transportation do you use MOST often?
2	What is the SECOND most common mode of transportation you use?
3	Do you have a bicycle in your home you can use?
4	Is there a park, playground, or ball field located within biking distance of your home?
5	Have you bicycled within the past six months?
6	What is your primary reason for choosing to bicycle?
7	What is your primary destination when riding a bicycle? (Check all that apply)
8	How often do you ride a bicycle?
9	How would you describe yourself as a cyclist?
10	Where do you primarily use your bike?
11	How long is your typical trip?
12	On average, do you bike more or less today than you did a year ago?
13	Do you think bicycling is a safe activity?
14	How safe do you feel biking in your neighborhood?
15	Do you feel safe biking after dark?
16	How often do you wear a helmet when biking?
17	Why do you feel unsafe? (check all that apply)
18	Why do you not ride a bicycle? (Check all that apply)
19	How many children are you parent or guardian for that live in your household (aged 18 or younger only)?
20	How often does your child ride a bike?
21	Why does your child bike? (Check all that apply)
22	How do your children travel to school?
23	Why doesn't your child/children bike to school? (Check all that apply)
24	Which improvements would you support for bicycling?
25	In what ZIP code is your home located? (enter 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 62523 or 62549)
26	How many working vehicles does your household own?
27	What is your race or ethnicity?
28	What is your gender?
29	What type of building do you live in?
30	Do you rent or own the place where you live?
31	What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
32	What is your age?
33	What is your total household income?

Appendix B - ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The analysis report is a critical piece of the multi-modal transportation plan. This report details the existing conditions of the Decatur region and their relationship to transportation and mobility. Measures such as roadway characteristics, population characteristics, bicycle facilities and more are discussed. This report is separated in three sections:

- Transportation Characteristics
- Demographics & Civic Amenities
- Existing Bicycle Infrastructure Conditions

TRANSPORTATION CHARACTERISTICS

OVERVIEW

The Decatur region is comprised of a vast network of existing roadways which connect residents to school, work, services, and recreation. This network also provides vital regional links to other communities, and destinations beyond. These roadways are composed of:

- Interstates
- US Highways
- State Highways
- County Roads
- Municipal Roads/Streets

THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM

The National Highway System (NHS) consists of roadways important to the nation's economy, defense, and mobility. All principal arterial routes that are not currently on the NHS before October 1, 2012, will automatically be added to the NHS provided the principal arterials connect to the NHS in a onetime addition. There will be no restrictions on maximum NHS mileage. The National Highway System includes the following subsystems of roadways (note that a specific highway route may be on more than one subsystem):

- Interstate: The Eisenhower Interstate System of highways retains its separate identity within the NHS.
- Other Principal Arterials: Highways in rural and urban areas that provide access between an arterial and a major port, airport, public transportation facility, or other intermodal transportation facility.
- Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET): A highway network important to the United States' strategic defense policy, providing defense access, continuity, and emergency capabilities for defense purposes.
- Major Strategic Highway Network Connectors: Highways that provide access between major military installations and highways that are part of the Strategic Highway Network.
- Inter-modal Connectors: These highways provide access between major inter-modal facilities and the other four subsystems making up the National Highway System

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

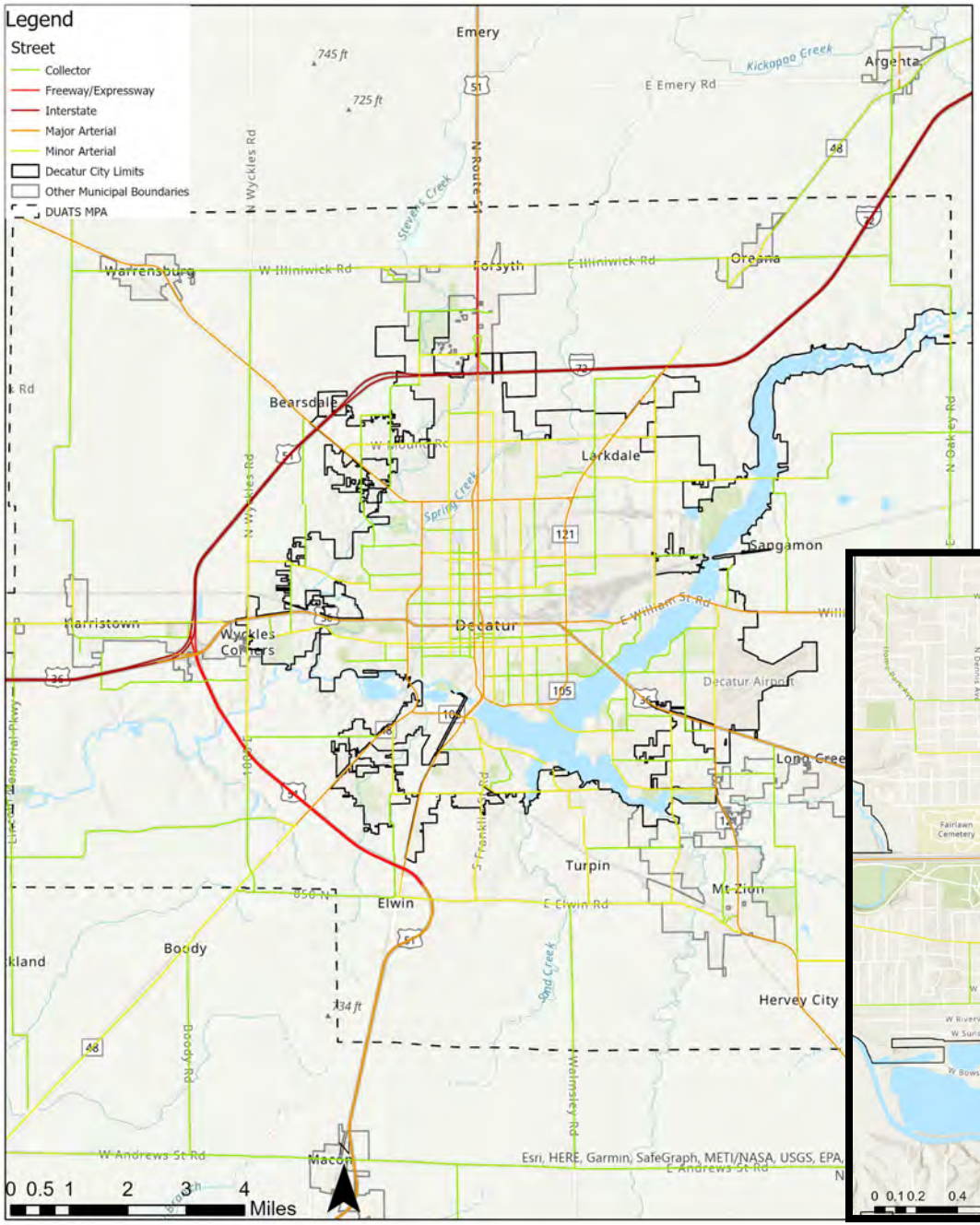
The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends grouping the roadway network into a hierarchical functional classification system based on the characteristics of the roadway, as well as the service the roadway is intended to provide. As a first step, roadways are typically identified by whether the road is urban or rural. Then, the roadways are further classified in the following categories:

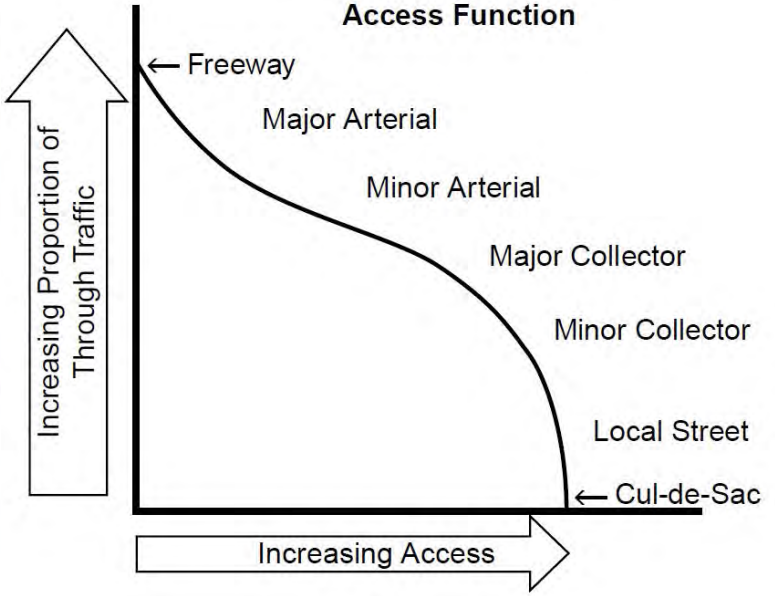
- **Interstate** – This is the highest classification of Arterials and were designed and constructed with ability and long-distance travel in mind. Roadways in this functional classification category are officially designated as Interstates by the Secretary of Transportation, and all routes that comprise the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways belong to the Interstate functional classification category and are considered Principal Arterials.
- **Freeway/Expressway** - The roads in this classification have directional travel lanes and are usually separated by some type of physical barrier, and their access and egress points are limited to on- and off-ramp locations or a very limited number of at-grade intersections. Like Interstates, these roadways are designed and constructed to maximize their mobility function, and abutting land uses are not directly served by them.
- **Principal Arterial** – The roads in this classification serve major centers of metropolitan areas, provide a high degree of mobility, and can also provide mobility through rural areas. Unlike their access-controlled counterparts, abutting land uses can be served directly.
- **Minor Arterial** - The roads in this classification provide service for trips of moderate length, serve geographic areas that are smaller than their higher Arterial counterparts and offer connectivity to the higher Arterial system.
- **Major Collector** - Collectors serve a critical role in the roadway network by gathering traffic from Local Roads and funneling them to the Arterial network.
- **Minor Collector and Local Road** - The roads in this classification account for the largest percentage of all roadways in terms of mileage. They are not intended for use in long distance travel, except at the origin or destination end of the trip, due to their provision of direct access to abutting land.

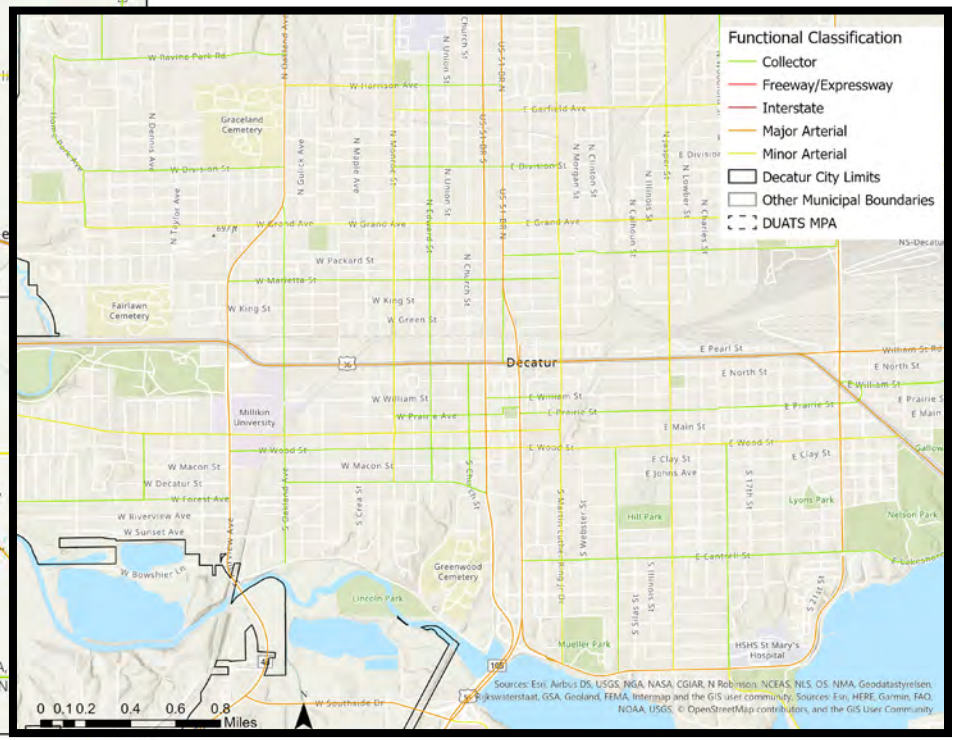
These roadway functional classifications are reviewed periodically by both IDOT and local representatives.

Roadway functional classification provides a good foundation for identifying the appropriate facility design type needed for an existing corridor. Higher functional class typically means the roadway is not appropriate, or less appropriate, for shared or visually separated facility types. For low functional classes such as local roads, shared roadway facility may be sufficient to provide the cyclist the low-stress desired design. For a more thorough analysis of the effect a roadway type has on cyclists, a bike level of traffic stress (BLTS) analysis was performed and is described below.

Figure B.1: Functional Class







VOLUME TO CAPACITY RATIO

A volume to capacity ratio is one common way to measure the congestion present along a segment of roadway. The analysis measures the ratio between the total daily volume, or amount of vehicles, by the capacity, or the maximum flow of traffic per day. Volume is typically measured by in the field data collection and/or derived from data collected from nearby locations. Capacity is measured by numerous factors including number of lanes, lane width, access control, and speed. The volume capacity (v/c) ratio can be somewhat open to interpretation, but commonly, a v/c ratio can be broken down as follow:

- Less than 0.6 means no congestion
- 0.6-0.8 means some congestion
- 0.8-1.0 means heavy congestion
- 1.0+ means severe congestion

The volume capacity analysis is an important step in a bike plan because recommendations attempt to safely accommodate cyclists in spaces often built specifically for motorists. The v/c ratio gives us a sense of the availability along corridors of used or unneeded extra space for motorists that could be reconfigured for cyclists. This approach ensures an efficient use of public space and funds.

In the Decatur region, congestion does not appear to be a major issue as there are few roadway segments with a v/c of 0.8 or more (Figure B.2). Therefore, there should be fewer challenges to reconfiguring certain corridors in order to accommodate bicycle infrastructure.

SAFETY ANALYSIS

Safety, while a goal within this Plan, is a core component of any transportation improvement project. Safety is particularly important in a bike plan because crashes involving cyclists are much more likely to result in an injury or fatality. From 2014-2018, there were 98 total crashes involving cyclists with 1 fatality. Figure B.3 shows the locations of bicycle involved crashes as well as a hot spot map. Of note, most bicycle crashes occurred in locations without dedicated bicycle infrastructure.

Perhaps more important than the number of bicycle involved crashes or their respective locations, is the risk of injury faced by cyclists involved in a crash. 97% of the crashes involving bicyclists resulted in injury. For all other crashes over the same time period, a much lower 24% of crashes resulted in injury. These factors clearly demonstrate the need for greater accommodation of cyclists in the region.

Figure B.2: Volume Capacity Ratio

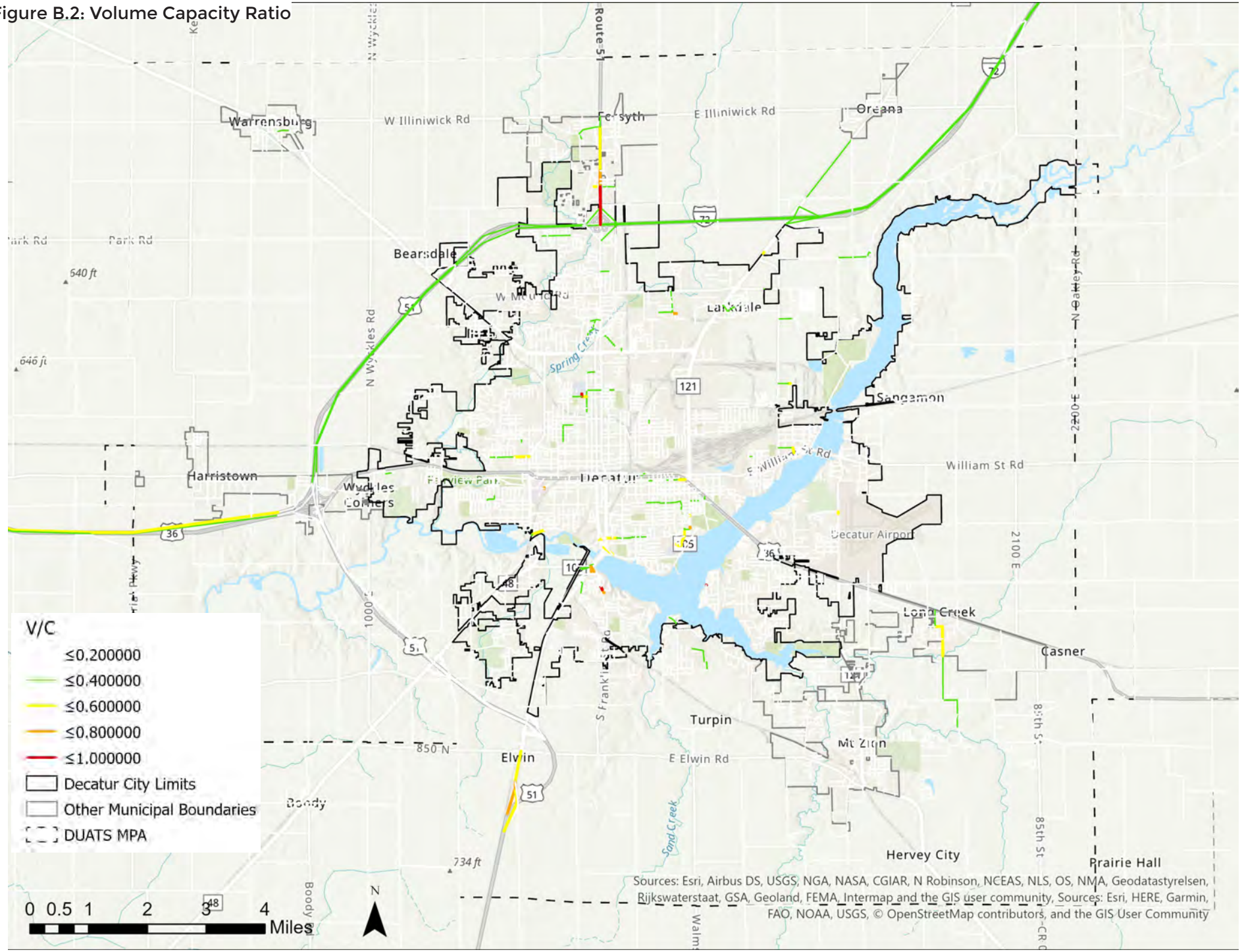
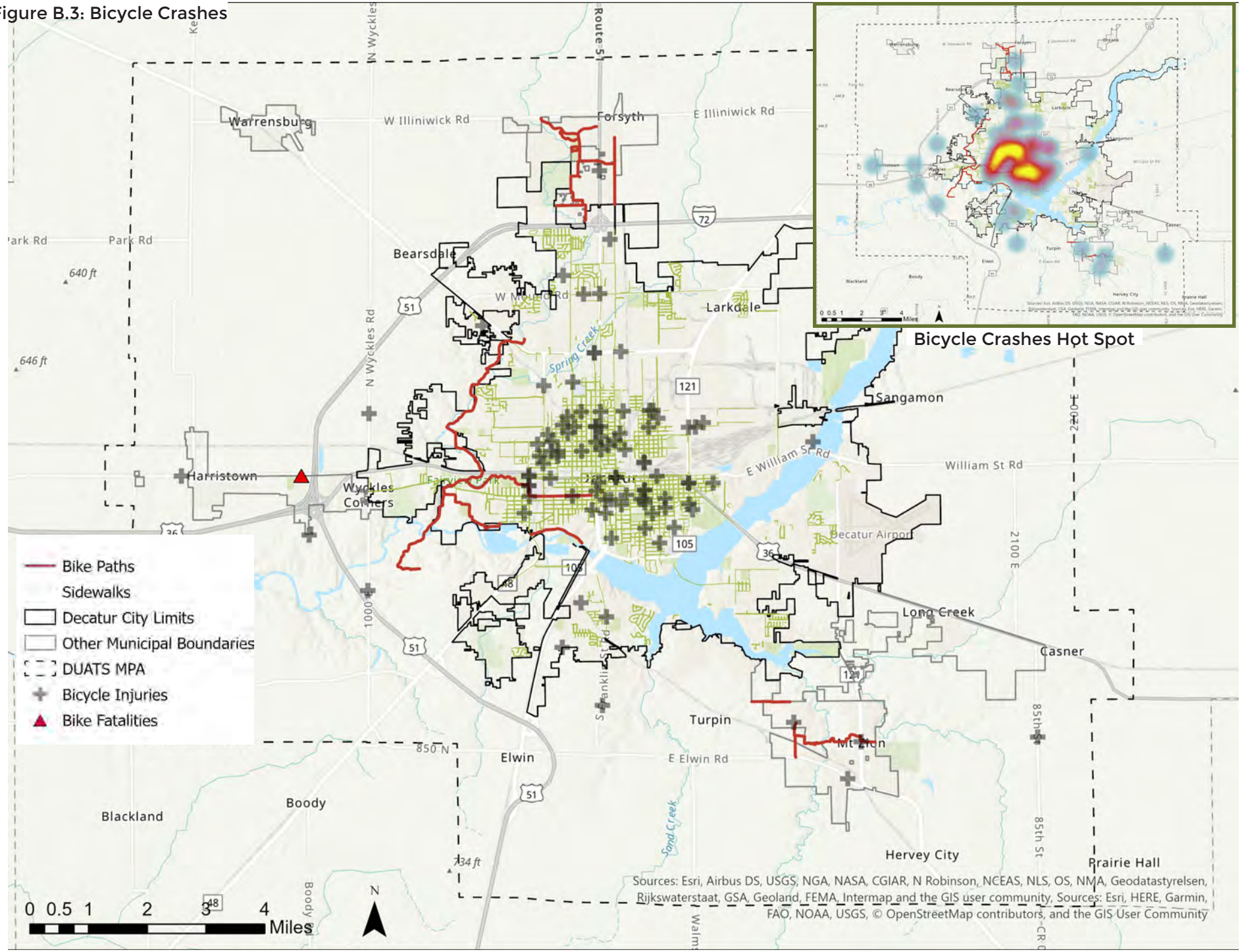


Figure B.3: Bicycle Crashes



DEMOGRAPHICS

OVERVIEW

Several factors impact transportation within the Decatur region. In this section, demographic and population analysis, economic conditions, and housing and development considerations will be addressed, particularly as they relate to their impact on transportation.

The face of the United States of America is undergoing change. The population is more ethnically diverse, is getting older, and is increasing in numbers. These trends are forecast to continue. At the same time, telecommuting and alternative work arrangements are gaining adoption, and one-person households are increasing. With dynamic changes in national and global economic activity, uncertainty about the availability and cost of energy, and rapid advances in technology, a different picture emerges of the United States in 2050.

All of these factors have significant implications for the transportation system. The sociodemographic and economic characteristics of the population influence transportation demand for different modes. Age, income, gender, ethnicity, household size, and automobile availability are some of the variables that influence travel behavior. Providing safe mobility for the aging baby boom generation, for a more ethnically diverse population, and for a larger population is critical for Decatur's economic vitality and quality of life.

KEY POINTS (2018 ACS FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE)

- 86,000 total residents
  - 74% White
  - 17% Black
  - 2% Hispanic
  - 6% Two or more races
- 36,000 total households
  - 20% in poverty
- 18,000 under age 18
- 18,000 over age 65
- 40 years old median age
- Top industries include: agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, energy, education
- 17 minute average commute time

Figure B.4: Population Over Age 65

Higher concentrations of older adults can be found south of Lake Decatur and east of Oakland Ave.

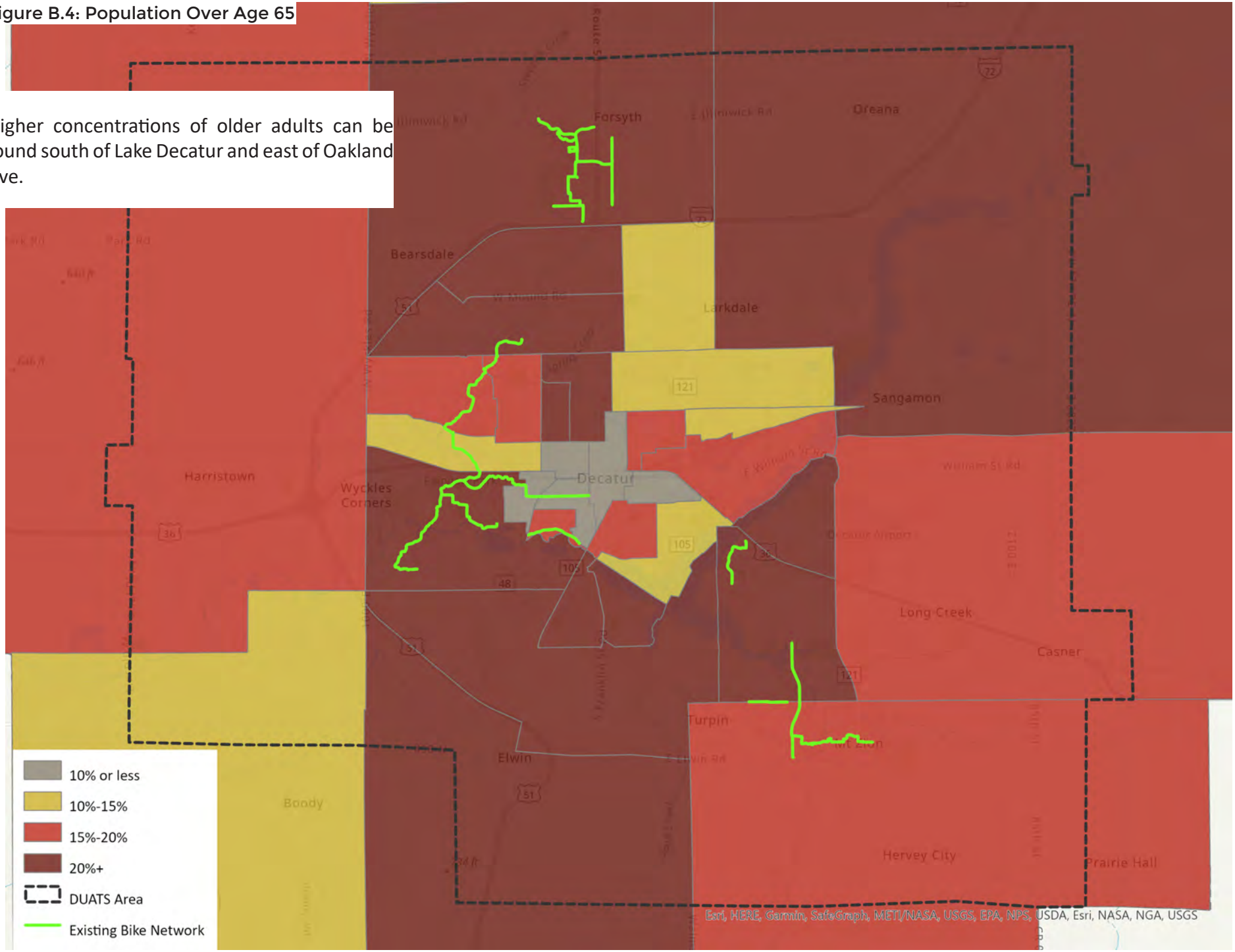


Figure B.5: Population Under Age 18

The highest concentrations of children under 18 are located in Garfield Park and Jasper Park Neighborhoods. Outside of the City of Decatur, the highest concentration of people under 18 is near Boody.

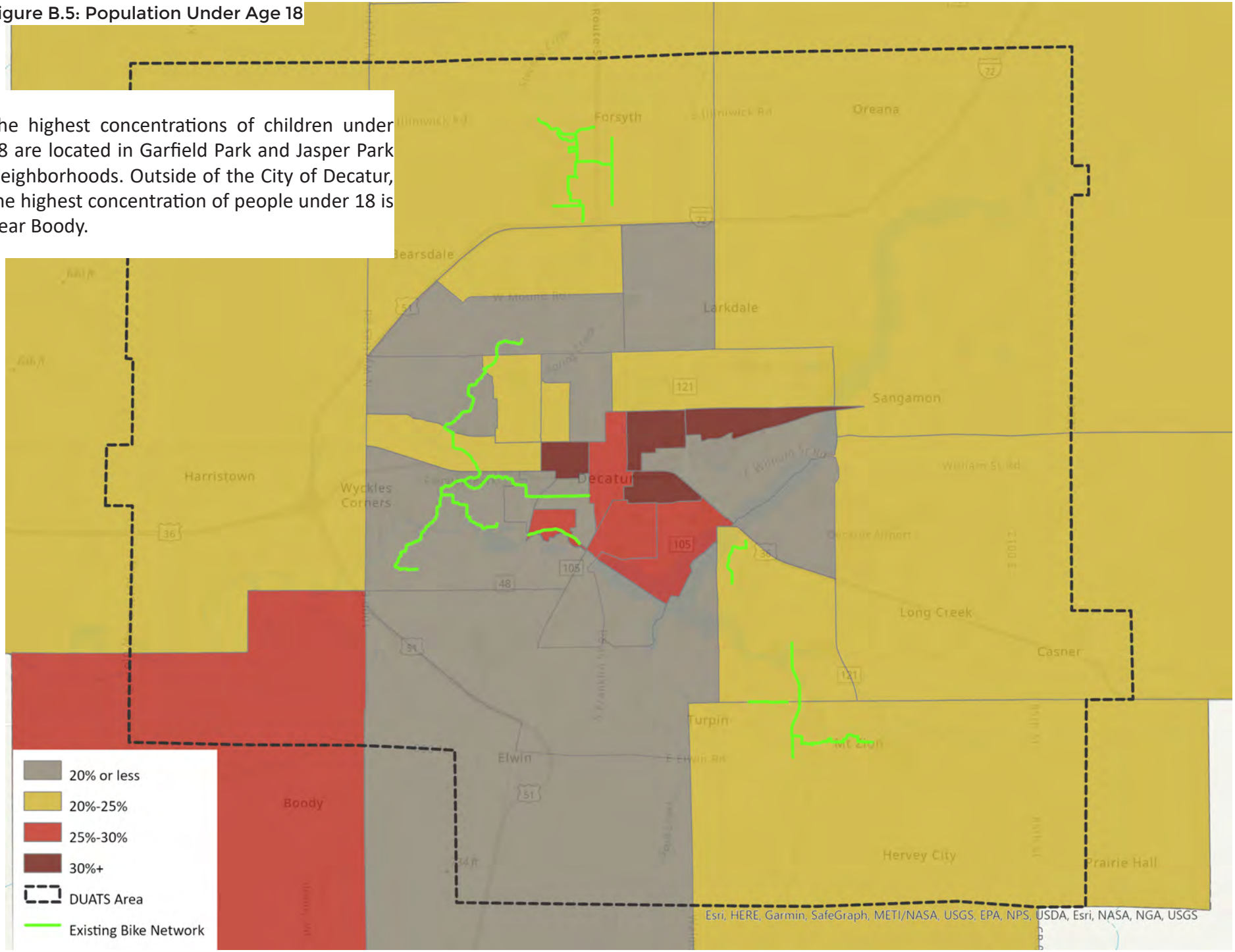


Figure B.6: Population In Poverty

Higher concentrations of poverty can be found in the central neighborhoods of Decatur.

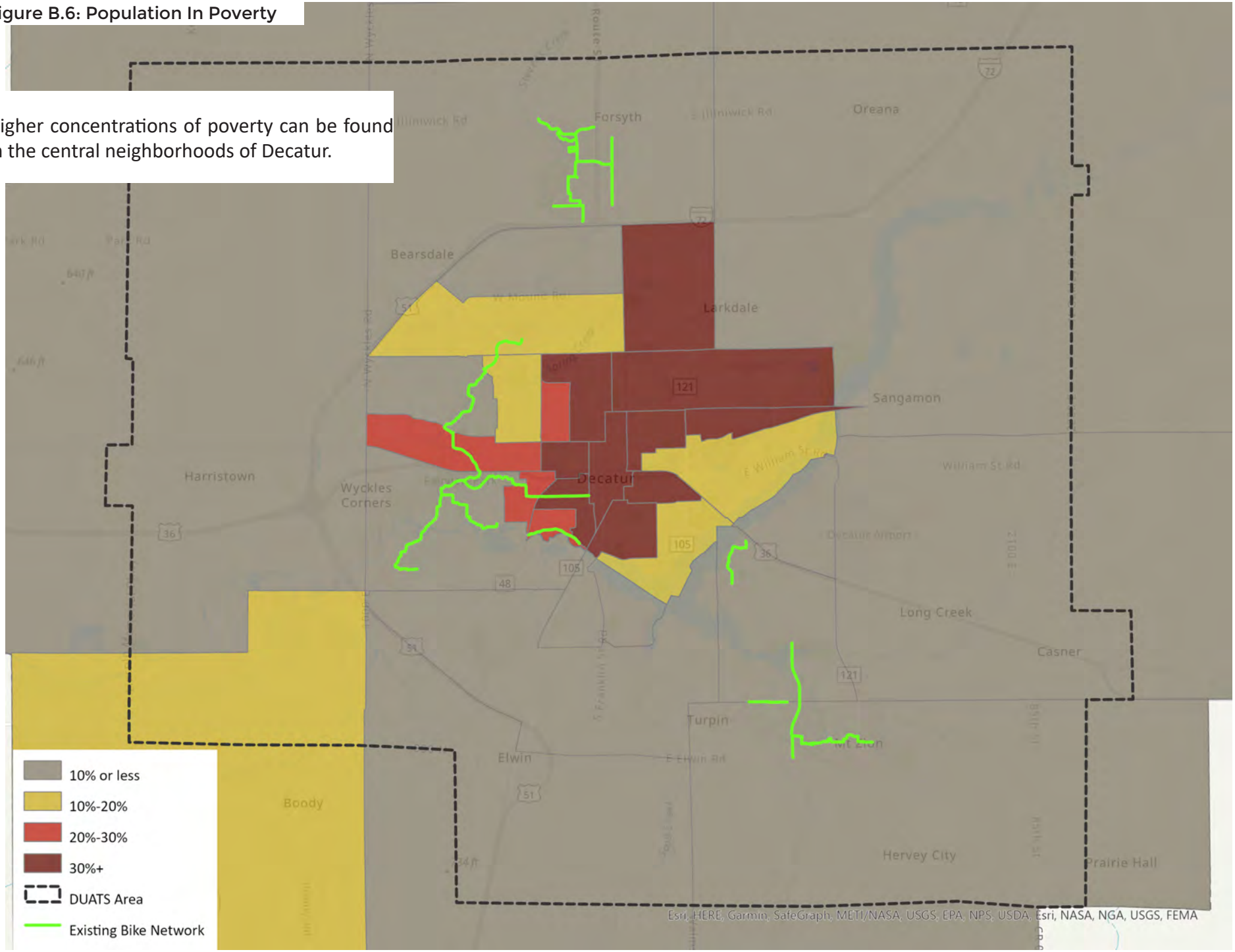


Figure B.7: Households With No Vehicle

Fewer residents in the Near West, Millikin, Old Kings Orchard, and Garfield Park have access to a car at home.

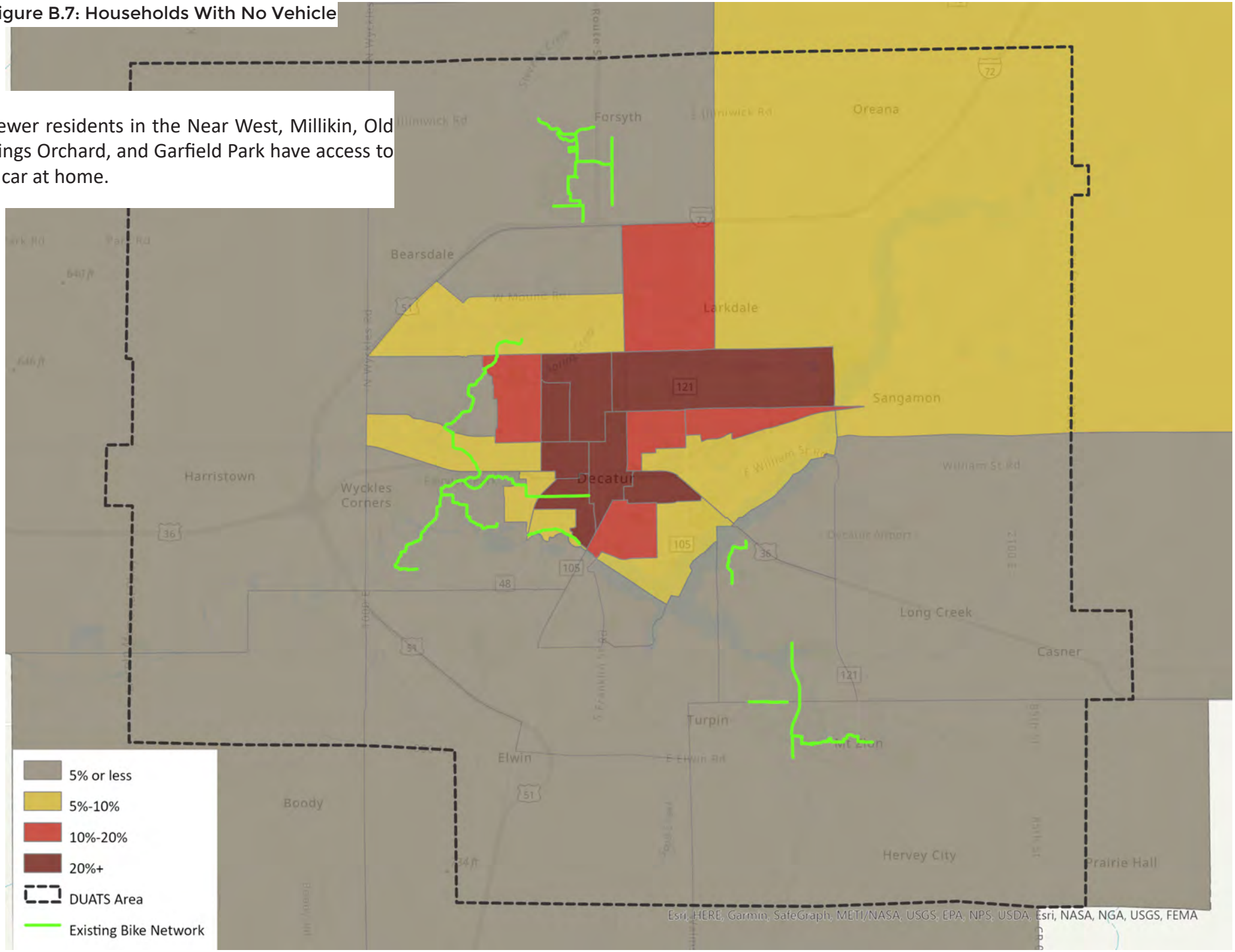


Figure B.8: Population With A Disability

The highest concentration of residents with a disability are located north of the Downtown Core and south of West Pershing Rd. between Oakland Ave. and Christmas Tree Rd.

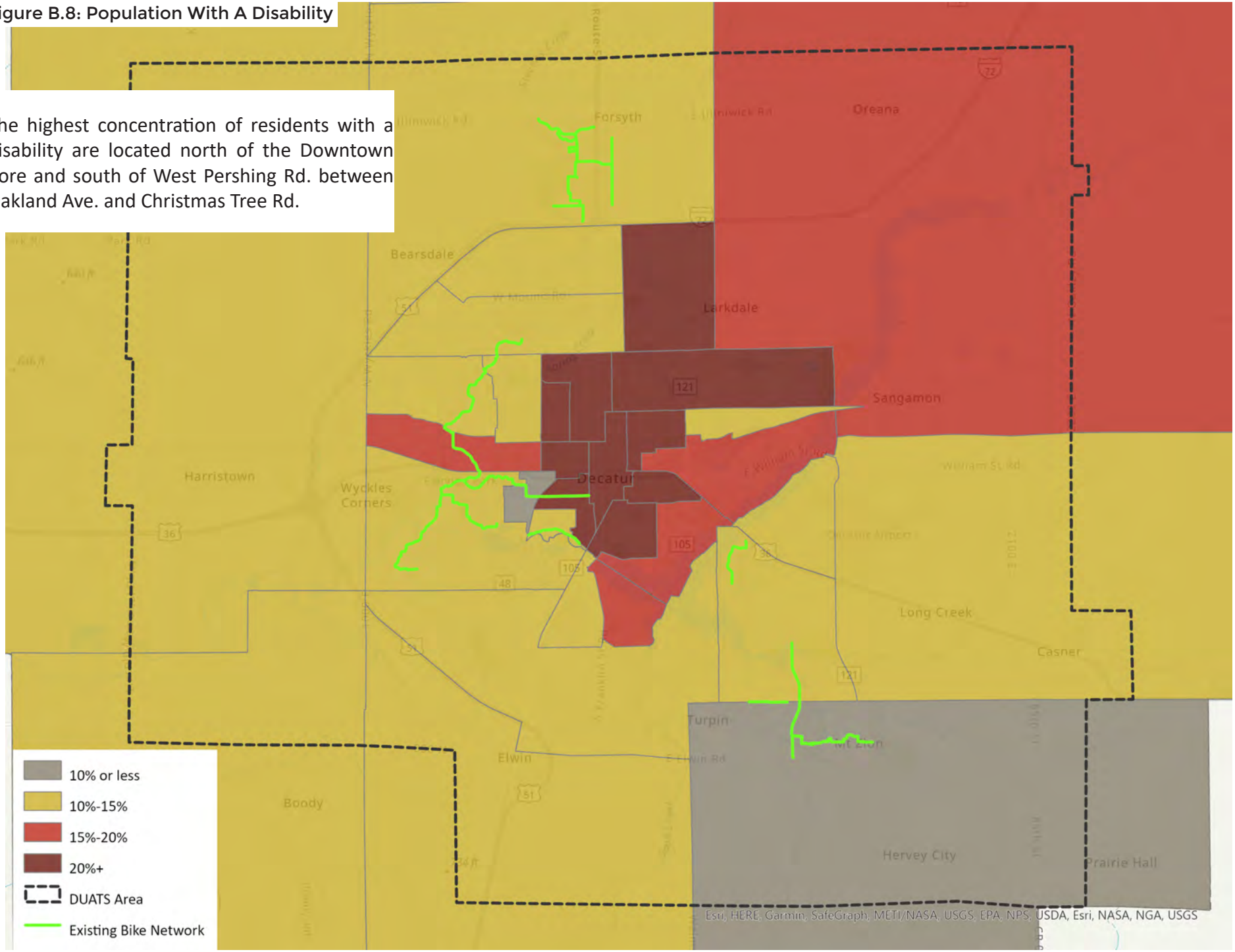


Figure B.9: K-12 School Enrollment

Many school age children reside in the areas on the outer edges of the City of Decatur. Garfield Park, Jasper Park, and Grant Park neighborhoods in Decatur also have high concentrations of school aged children.

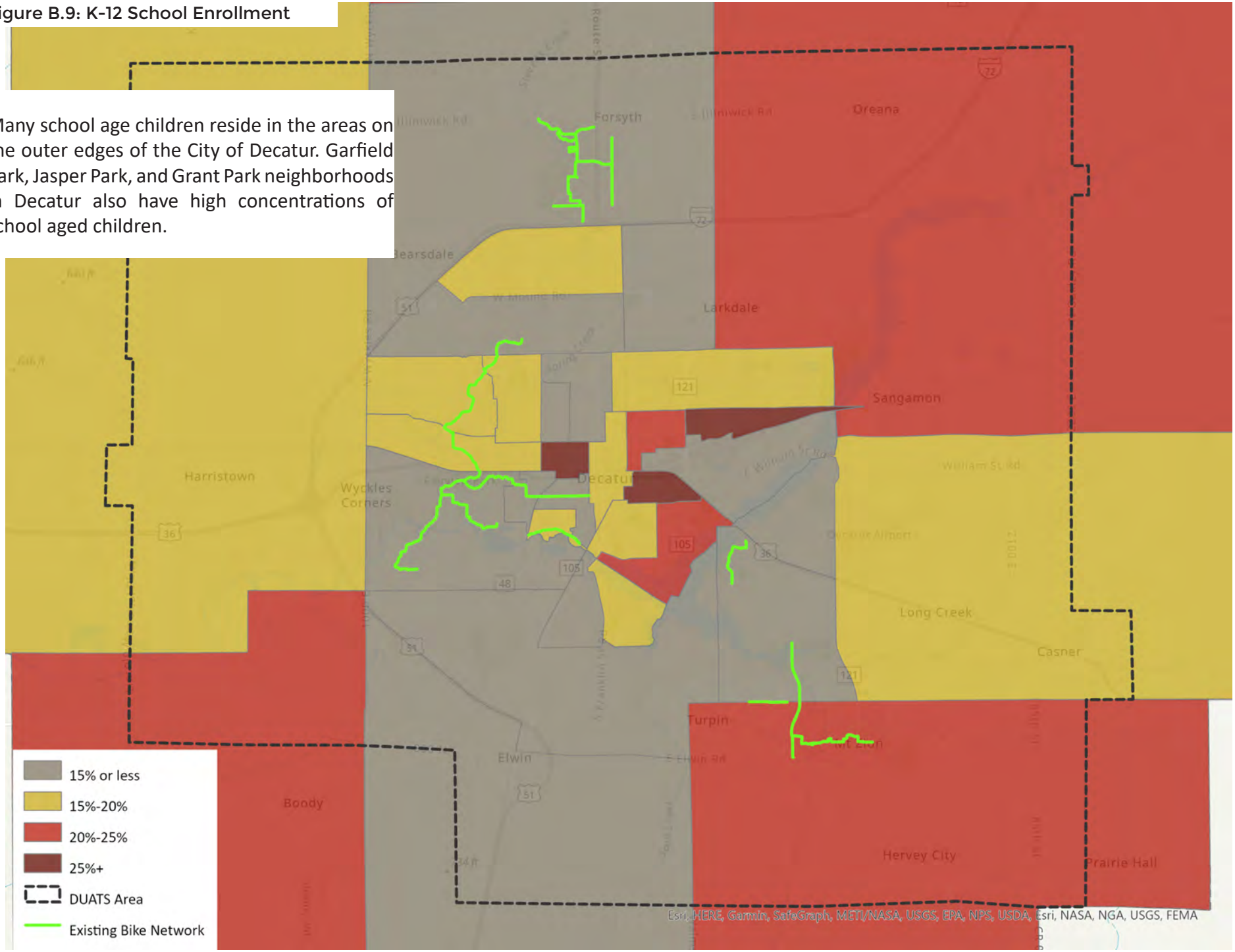
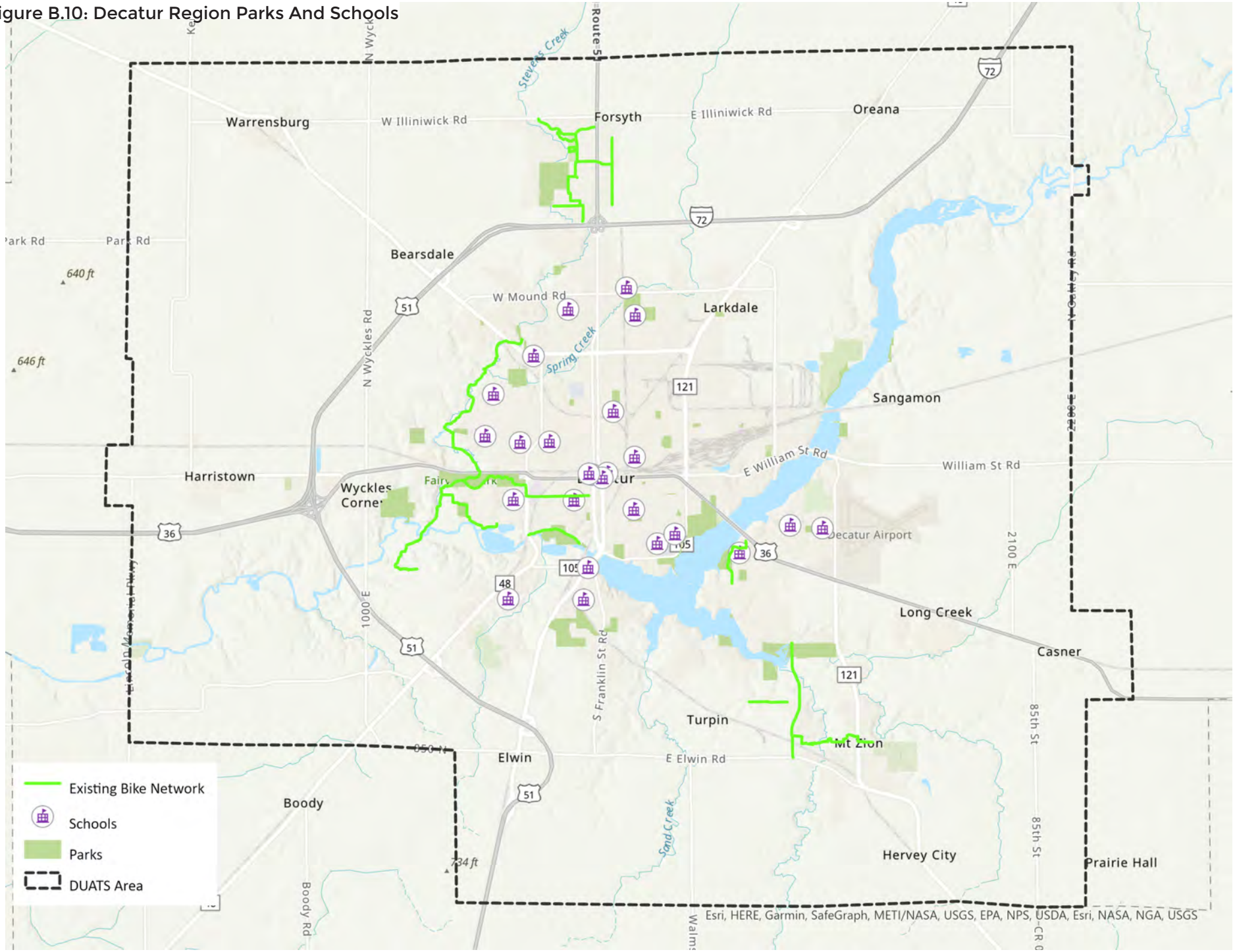


Figure B.10: Decatur Region Parks And Schools



EXISTING BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

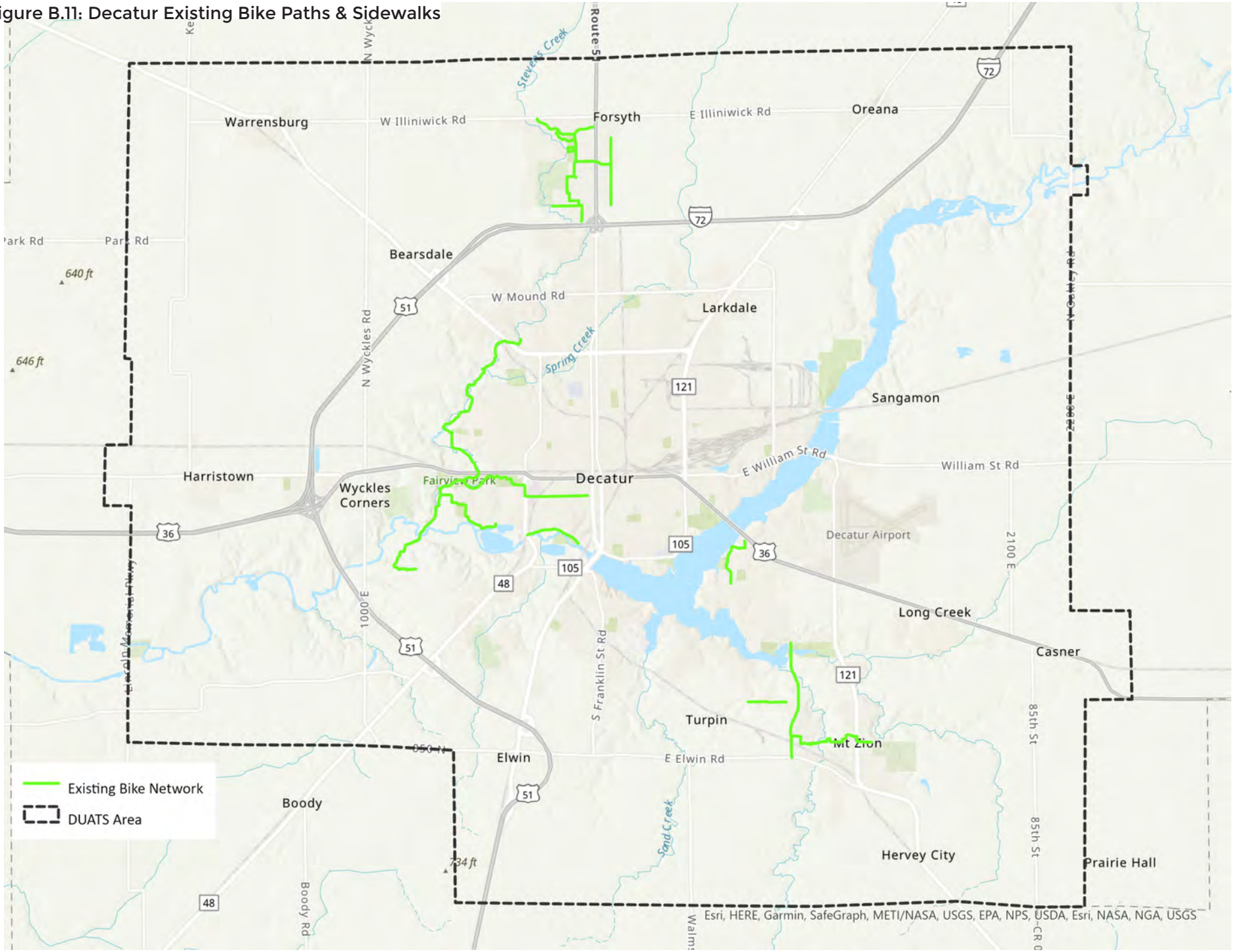
EXISTING BICYCLE FACILITIES

In Decatur, there are no designated on-road bike facilities. While slower traffic speeds within neighborhoods are comfortable for most cyclists, traveling between neighborhoods, across town, or to Downtown is not as comfortable or safe. Smaller towns and rural communities generally have different users of their roads than urban areas. It is important to recognize these differences and plan accordingly. In most small towns and rural areas, multi-modal facilities for bicycles and pedestrians are minimal. For this reason, it is imperative that any proposed facility attempts to accommodate the most tepid user.

The existing Decatur bicycle network connects the west side parks, mall, golf course, and Millikin University with the community of Forsyth. A trail connects the Scovill Park family attractions at Decatur Lake. A system of trails connections Decatur with the community of Mt. Zion.

Residents living in areas of the region without a trail network only access these trails by utilizing sidewalks and motorized roadways, or driving to the trailhead parking areas. These trails are not safely accessible for many residents, including children, older adults, or residents with disabilities. Bike Decatur will promote the use of the existing trail system by expanding it and making it accessible through all parts of the city.

Figure B.11: Decatur Existing Bike Paths & Sidewalks



BICYCLE LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS

A Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (BLTS) analysis was conducted to determine the level of stress experienced by bicyclists on any given roadway. This analysis involves reviewing road attributes, such as speed, traffic volumes, and number of travel lanes. It does not incorporate road surface condition or topography. The analysis was conducted on both the existing bicycle network and the proposed bicycle network. This tool is a great way to identify high-stress problem locations, low-stress connectivity, and evaluate progress as the network improves over time. Tables B.1, B.2, and B.3 describe the criteria for the analysis. Figures B.10 and B.11 show maps of the existing and proposed networks.

Table B.1: BLTS by Facility Type

Bicycle Facility Type	Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (BLTS)
Physically Separated	BLTS 1
Visually Separated	BLTS 1-4
Shared Roadway	BLTS 1-4

In addition to performing the analysis on the existing infrastructure, a BLTS analysis was performed on the future scenario with the proposed bicycle infrastructure improvements. Low-stress facilities are more likely to be used by a wide range of users. The proposed BLTS analysis shows the possibility of substantial improvements in terms of cyclist comfort and demonstrates the potential for the region to increase ridership and become a bike friendly community.

BLTS Level 1
comfortable for all ages and abilities

BLTS Level 2
comfortable for most adults

BLTS Level 3
comfortable for confident riders

BLTS Level 4
uncomfortable for most

Table B.2: BLTS Criteria for Mixed Traffic (Shared Use or No Facility)

Lanes	AADT	Prevailing Speed						
		20mph	25mph	30mph	35pmh	40mph	45mph	50mph+
Unlaned 2-way street (no centerline)	0-750	BLTS 1	BLTS 1	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3
	751-1,500	BLTS 1	BLTS 1	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4
	1,501-3,000	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4
	3,000+	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4
1 thru lane per direction (1-way, 1-lane street or 2-way street with centerline)	0-750	BLTS 1	BLTS 1	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3
	751-1,500	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4
	1,501-3,000	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4
	3,000+	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4
2 through lanes per direction	0-8,000	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4
	8,001+	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4
3+ thru lanes per direction	any ADT	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4

Table B.3: BLTS Criteria for Bike Lanes (Visually Separated)

Lanes	Bike Lane Width						
		25mph	30mph	35pmh	40mph	45mph	50mph+
1 through lane per direction, or unlaned	6+ ft	BLTS 1	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3
	4 to 5 ft	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4
2 through lanes per direction	6+ ft	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3
	4 to 5 ft	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4
3+ lanes per direction	any width	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4	BLTS 4	BLTS 4

Figure B.12: Existing Bike Level of Traffic Stress

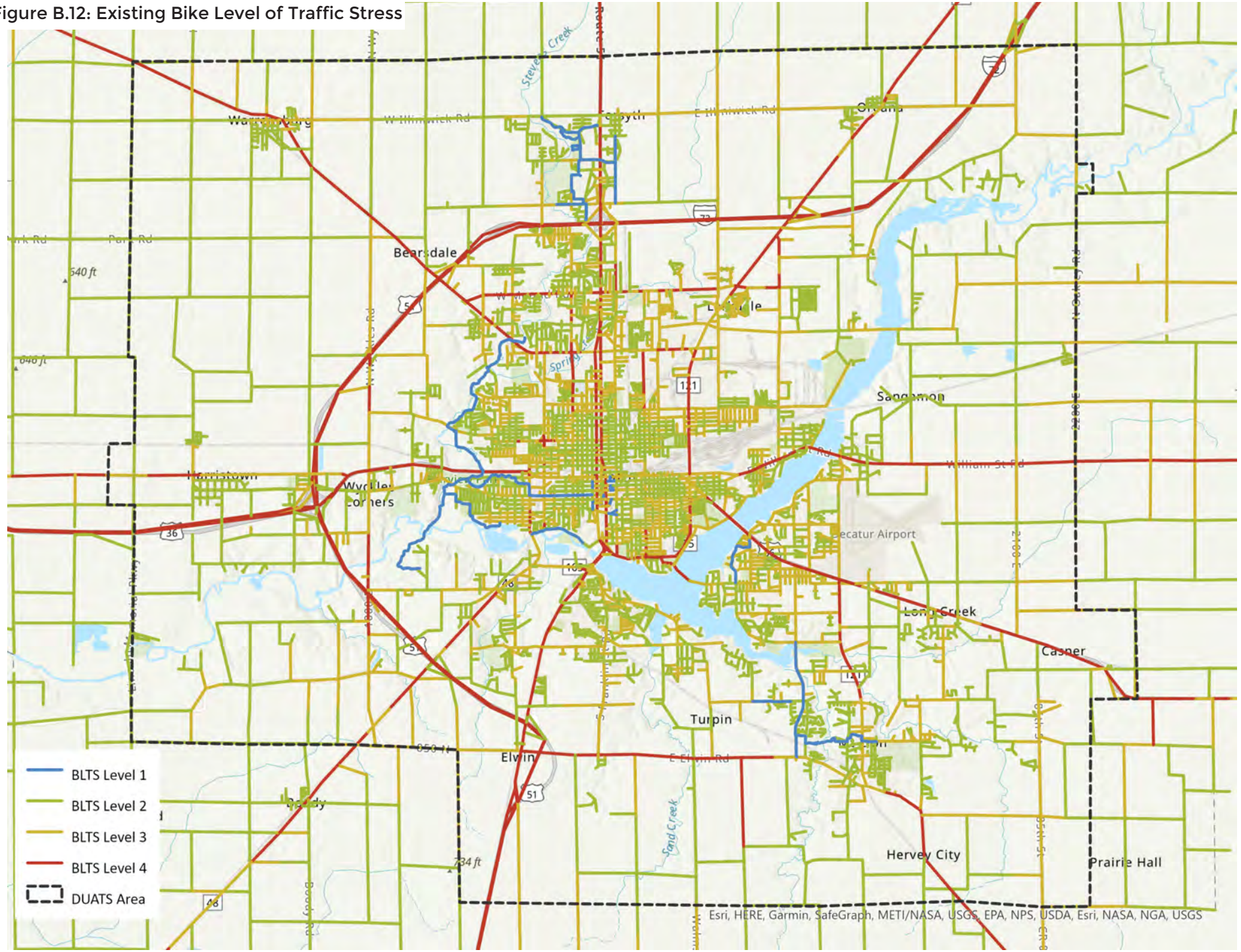


Figure B.13: Proposed Bike Level of Traffic Stress

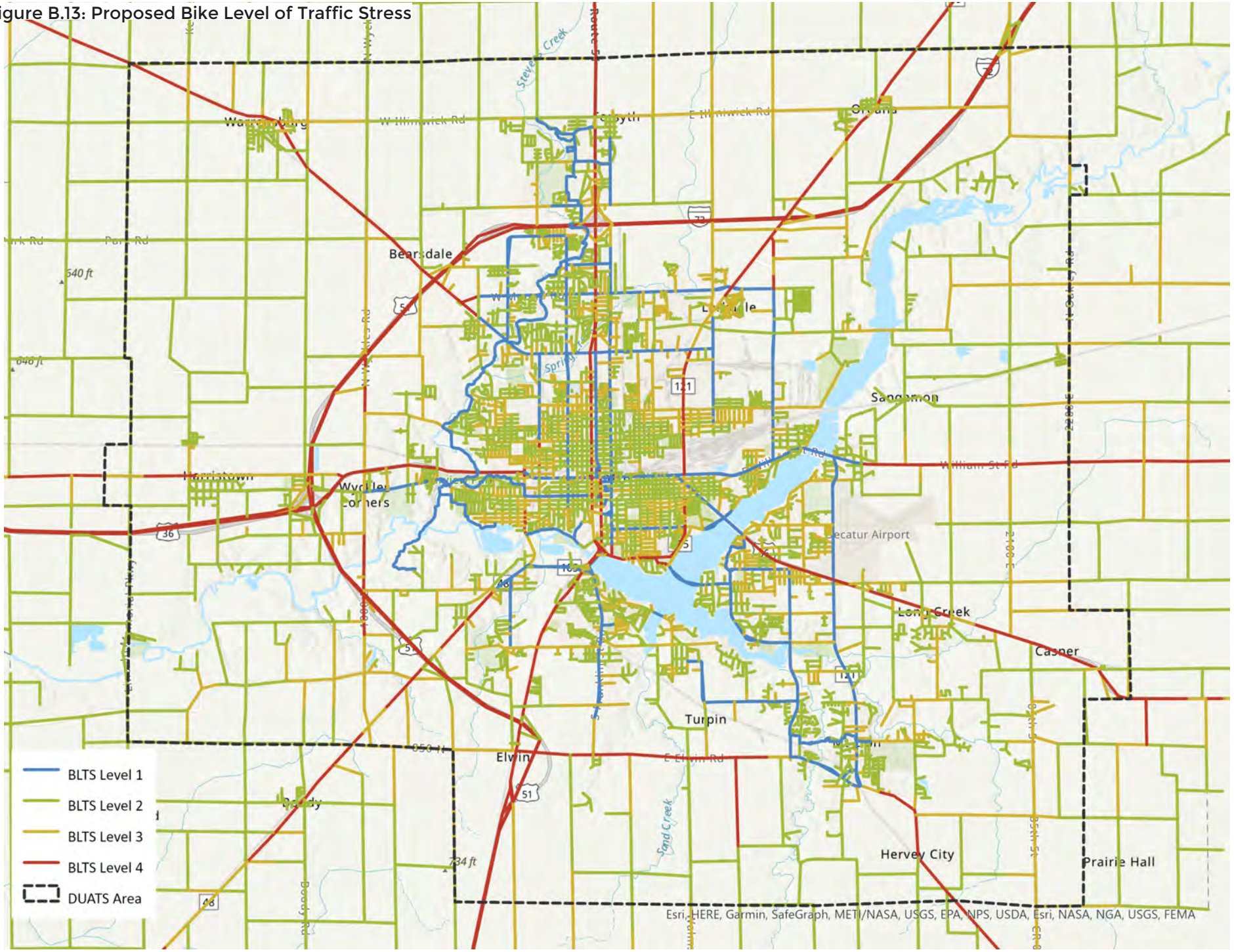


Figure B.14: Existing Low-Stress Network (BLTS 1 or 2)

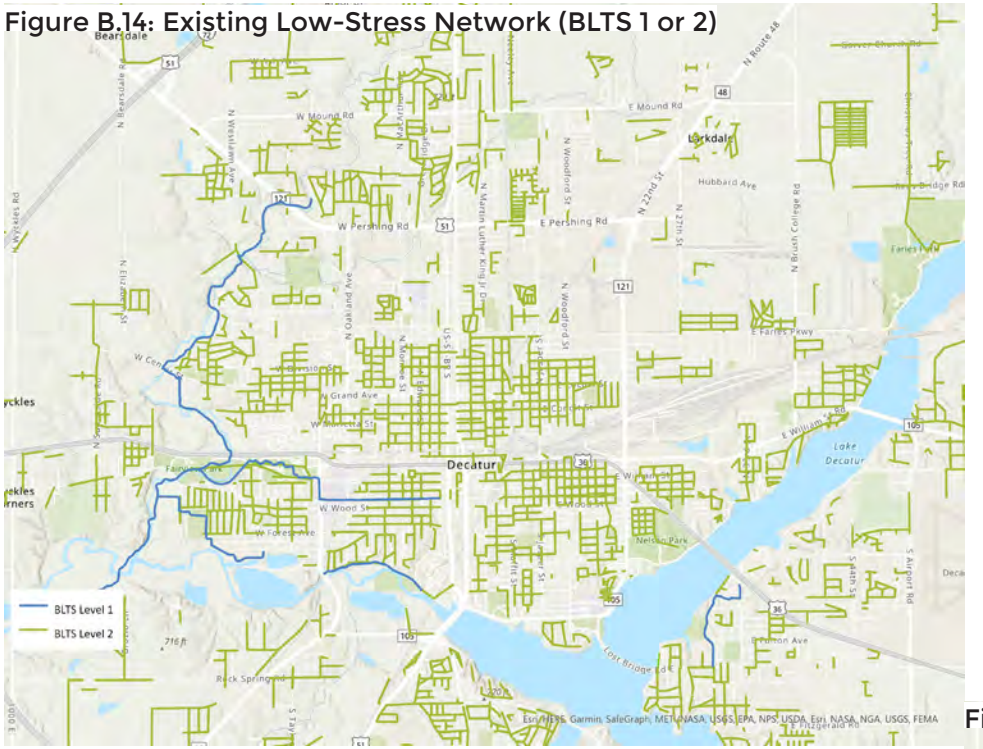
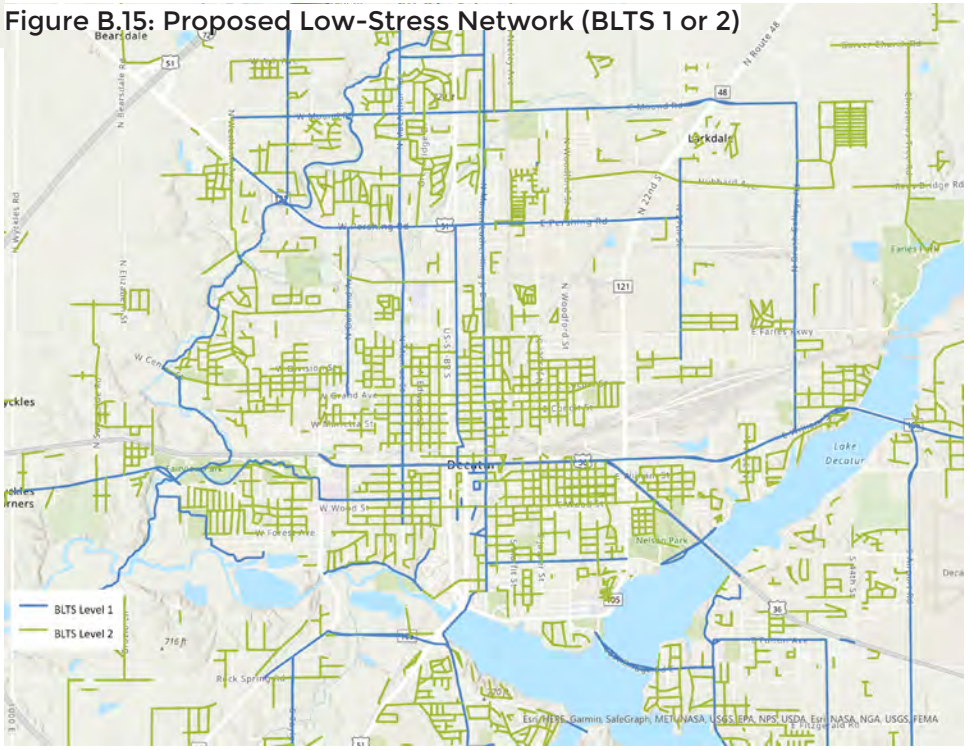


Table B.4: Low-Stress Mileage

Scenario	Miles (BLTS 1 or 2)
Existing	1,134
Proposed	1,269
Improvement	**135 (+12%)**

Figure B.15: Proposed Low-Stress Network (BLTS 1 or 2)



Appendix C – SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Bike Decatur planning process, a complete Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program analysis was performed. This report influenced the programing recommendations found in the plan. The report, created by Hoyle Consulting, is provided in its entirety in this appendix.

SRTS programs aim to make it safer for students to walk and bike to school and encourage more walking and biking where safety is not a barrier. Transportation, public health and planning professionals, school communities, law enforcement officers, community groups and families all have roles to play using education, encouragement, engineering (changes to the physical environment) and enforcement to meet a local community's needs. Traditionally underserved communities deserve particular attention, in part because they tend to have more pedestrian and bicyclist injuries. Data collection is critical to the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs.

BACKGROUND

Since the late 1960's the number of children who walk or bike to school has declined dramatically. In 1969, nearly 50% of children walked to school (McDonald, August 2011). Today, only 13% of children ages 5 to 14 walk or bicycle to and from school. One result of this change is that school districts and families spend millions of dollars on transportation. Traffic congestion around schools creates unsafe conditions for walking and biking and vehicle emissions result in unsafe levels of air pollution at drop-off and pick-up locations. The increased level of bus and vehicle traffic has also added significant wear and tear to the roadways around schools.

Childhood obesity rates have risen among children ages 6 to 11 from 4% in 1969 to 19.6% in 2007 (Ogden, June 2010). Students often do not get the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity recommended by the CDC. Studies show that children who walk and bicycle to school are more physically active (Cooper AR, 2005), have lower body mass index scores (Rosenberg DE, 2006), and have lower obesity levels than students who are driven or bused to school (Mendoza JA, May 2011).

Communities often lack infrastructure such as sidewalks and bike paths that allow students to walk or bike to and from school safely. In response to these issues, the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program was created in 2005 by Congress. The goal of SRTS is to "promote walking and bicycling to school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement, safety education, and incentives to encourage walking and bicycling to school" (National Center for Safe Routes to School, n.d.). Funding to create safer routes to school was allocated by Congress to be distributed through state departments of transportation. This funding has provided for the building of infrastructure and the creation and implementation of programming for safety education. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has allocated millions of dollars, mostly for infrastructure projects, since 2005. In 2019, IDOT awarded just over $5.1 million in Safe Routes to School grants.

In Decatur, a good system of bike paths has been created over the years through work done primarily through the Decatur Park District. This network of off-road, multiuse paths provides a foundation on which the City of Decatur and the Decatur School District can begin to build a pathway system that will provide safe and healthy access for students to bicycle, walk, and/or roll to and from school. Students who use mobility assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, or who use equipment such as scooters or skateboards, also benefit from the ability to safely roll to school.
This section of the plan offers information and recommendations for creating and implementing a SRTS program in Decatur that will help provide safe and convenient access for students to bike to and from school.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Currently there is no SRTS programming in the Decatur School District or the community. To collect information on challenges and issues in the community, a series of stakeholder interviews were held. The stakeholder interviews were held with eleven school principals and key administrative staff from the Decatur School District and the Executive Director of the Decatur Boys & Girls Club. The stakeholders were very engaged and provided invaluable insights into the issues related to students being able to walk or bike to school.

The following concerns were shared during the 1-hour virtual Zoom meeting held with the school district administrators and staff:

- Lack of safe infrastructure such as sidewalks for students to bike or walk to school, especially on the west side of town
- Wide, high-volume, and high-speed roads around schools, such as Grand Avenue and El Dorado Avenue
- Lack of safe crosswalks
- Lack of community education regarding rules of the road
- Lack of awareness by drivers of other roadway users
- Little or no street lighting
- Obstacles such as unsafe train-track crossings, industrial areas, and disconnected street/sidewalk networks
- Long distances for many students to get to the middle and high schools

During the Zoom meeting with the Executive Director of the Decatur Boys & Girls Club, Shamika Bond, Ms. Bond expressed similar concerns to the school district staff. Primary concerns were related to lack of community understanding of the rules of the road and a general lack of respect, specifically a lack of respect for people walking and biking by drivers. She particularly identified the lack of community awareness and the need for education on the rules of the road and roadways safety for all roadway users.

Additional data was collected from parents and guardians of students attending public schools via an online survey. The National Center for Safe Routes to School provides online resources, including the parental survey that was used for this analysis. The following schools participated:

- Benjamin Franklin Elementary School
- Dennis Lab School
- Stephen Decatur Middle School
- MacArthur High School
- Eisenhower High School

Parents and guardians shared information on the mode of transportation their student(s) use to travel to and from school, safety concerns and issues that impact or prevent students from walking or biking, and their perceptions regarding whether walking and bicycling to school is appropriate for their child. A total of 126 responses were collected, which is a good response rate. Relatively few responses came from the sole elementary school: Benjamin Franklin had only 2 responses. Dennis Lab School had 24 responses, Stephen Decatur Middle School had 18 responses, and the two high schools had around 40 responses each. The following is a short summary of issues and concerns gathered through the survey.
A few of the key issues identified by parents regarding the ability of students to walk or bike to school are provided. They include:

- Long distances
- Traffic speed
- Traffic volume
- Weather and climate
- Safety at intersections and crossings

Long distances are a barrier, with 41% of students needing to travel 2 miles or more to get to school and 27% traveling 1–2 miles to get to school.

The speed and volume of traffic along the route from home to school is a primary obstacle to parents allowing students to walk or bike to school.

Table C.1: Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

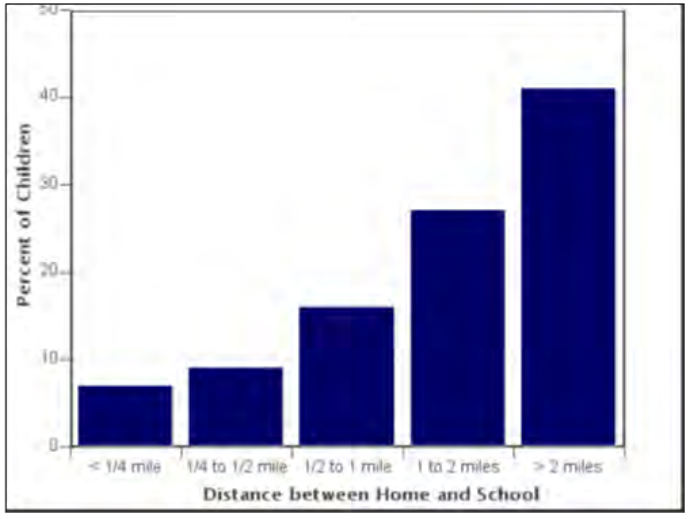
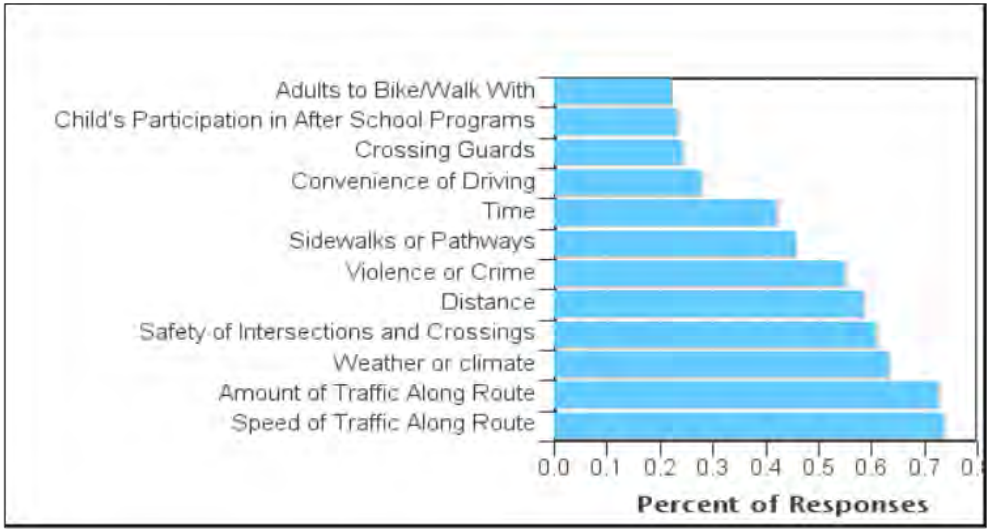
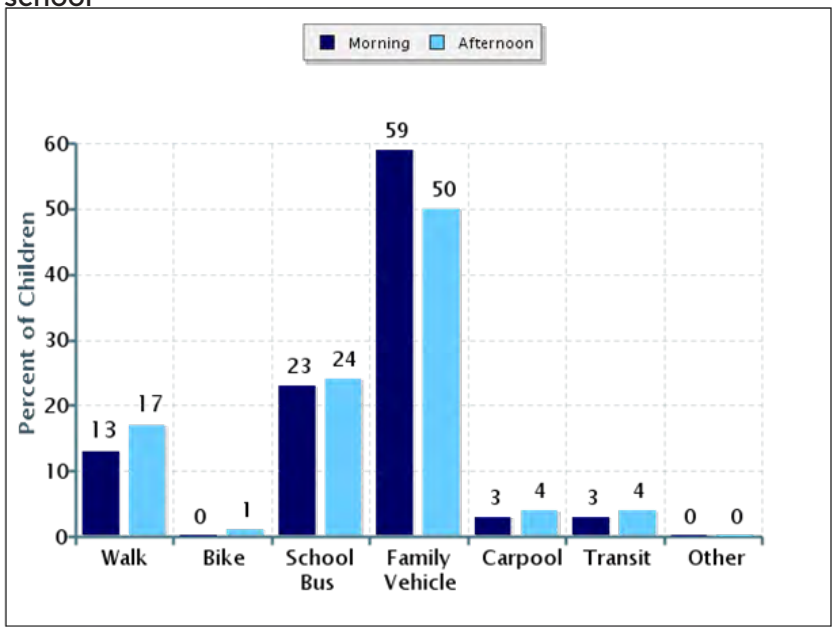


Table C.2: Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school



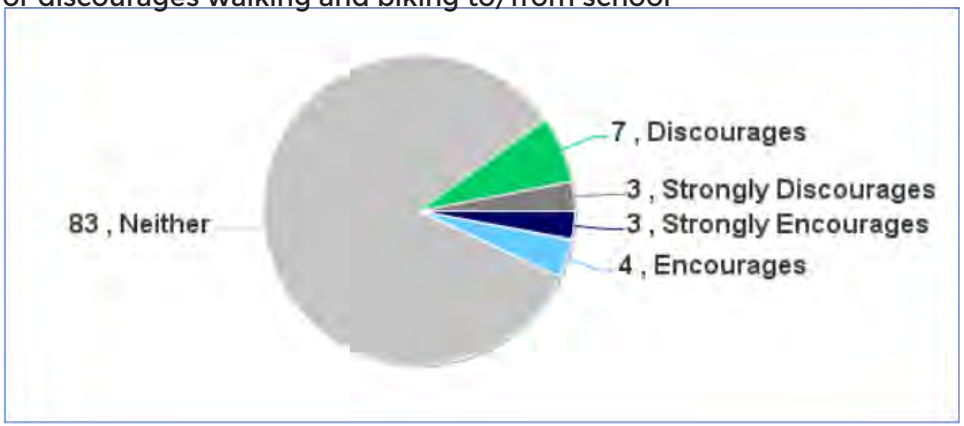
Most students are traveling to and from school via family vehicle.

Table C.3: Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school



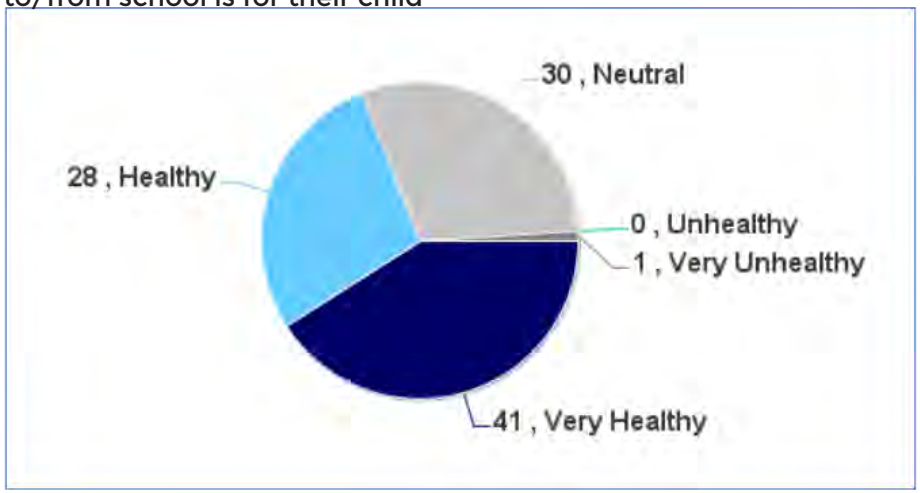
Parents did not feel that the schools either encouraged or discouraged students walking or biking to/from school.

Graphic C.1: Parents' opinions about how much their child encourages or discourages walking and biking to/from school



Parents were very positive about the health benefits of students walking or biking to school.

Graphic C.2: Parents' opinions about how healthy walking or biking to/from school is for their child



Numerous concerns were expressed by parents in the comments section. Some of the concerns expressed by parents are listed below:

- Speed of traffic along routes to school and lack of adequate sidewalks and lighting, particularly under viaducts
- Lack of safe crosswalks at major intersections
- Safety issues related to crime, including shootings in areas along the route to school or in the area around the schools
- Lack of sidewalks
- Lack of connectivity

COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

Several downstate communities that are similar in size to Decatur have SRTS programs that demonstrate the impact these programs can have. These communities can serve as examples of how to create SRTS programming and successfully apply for SRTS grants. Bloomington-Normal and Champaign-Urbana, two nearby communities, have programs that have been awarded IDOT SRTS grants and have successfully implemented SRTS programming. Both communities were featured in a report in 2019 published by the Safe Routes Partnership, titled, “Safe Routes to School Programs in Illinois”.

In Champaign-Urbana, one communitywide program supports both the Champaign and the Urbana School Districts. For all but one of the grant cycles since 2008, IDOT has provided funding without local match on a reimbursement basis. During the last 12 years the community has successfully applied for and received several grants briefly outlined below:

C-U SRTS Project has been awarded non-infrastructure grants to make walking and bicycling to school safe and appealing for children and to ensure that students can use active transportation modes to get safely to and from school as follows:

- 2019 grant for $48,587
- 2014 grant for $15,840
- 2012 grant for $76,000
- 2009 grant for $62,000
- 2008: grant for $25,500

The City of Urbana has been awarded two infrastructure grants:

- 2007 grant for $85,000 to install new school zone signage at elementary and middle schools in the City of Urbana
- 2012 grant for $199,000 to expand its bicycle facilities within 1.5 miles of Urbana Middle School to facilitate more students bicycling to school

The City of Champaign has been awarded one infrastructure grant for a project on Neil Street:

- 2012 grant for $185,800 for new sidewalk and pedestrian crossing improvements, new sidewalk ramps on the south leg of the intersection, a pedestrian refuge median, and new school zone signage at one elementary school

Additionally, the Champaign Regional Planning Commission worked with the nearby Village of Rantoul and secured a SRTS grant in the last round of funding, described as:

The Village of Rantoul was awarded one infrastructure grant in 2019 for $200,000 for a new sidewalk, sidewalk repair, sidewalk gap closure, median refuge/center crossing, new pavement markings, and crossing improvements at one elementary school.

The following excerpt from the 2019 report from the Safe Routes Partnership describes the Champaign-Urbana Safe Routes to School Project program:

The Champaign-Urbana Safe Routes to School Project (C-U Safe Routes to School Project) provides a great example of deeper engagement growing out of Walk and Bike to School Day events. After four years of collaboration on annual Walk to School Days by regional agencies, health, city agencies, and school districts, stakeholders decided that a more concerted effort would bring deeper benefits for students and the community. A formal partnership was developed, led by the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District and including the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, CU Public Health District, Urbana and Champaign planning, engineering and law enforcement, Champaign County Bikes, and the Urbana and Champaign School Districts. As a smaller college area, the sister cities of Champaign and Urbana have one of the highest rates of walking to work in the country, which likely contributed to the embrace of Safe Routes to School in the region. The initiative is now 15 years old, and is active in 37 schools in Champaign and Urbana, many of which are Title I (low-income) schools.

The C-U Safe Routes to School Project runs a wide array of activities, including a regular walking school bus at one school, bicycle safety demonstrations for all fourth graders in the Champaign School District, regular bike rodeos and traffic skills classes, and more…The C-U Safe Routes to School Project received a 2019 Non-Infrastructure grant from the state program. As Hoyle explained, "We can sustain some programming without grant funding, such as bike rodeos, events like Walk & Roll and Bike to School Days, and one school continued its walking school bus program, but other programming requires funding." The new funding will allow the project to expand and improve its operations, increasing the benefits for children, youth, and the community at large. (Lieberman, 2019)

Source: C-U Safe Routes to School Project, Urbana, IL

In Bloomington-Normal, the two school districts have separate programs. In Normal, the program has been supported by the City of Normal. In Bloomington, the program has been primarily operated by the Bloomington School District. However, communitywide events, such as bike rodeos and Bike to School Day, have been conducted.

In 2019, a SRTS Non-Infrastructure grant for $27,729.18 was awarded to The Friends of the Constitution Trail to purchase a fleet of bikes and helmets, a trailer to store and move bikes, and funding for training instructors. Bike to School Day events in the community have engaged both school districts for the last seven years, with students riding anywhere from 1 to 5 miles to school. The community has been offering bike rodeos for the public, during which anywhere from 100–150 children have learned hands-on bike safety skills.

The City of Normal program has distributed hundreds of helmets to students who need them. An excerpt from the 2019 report on the City of Normal's program is provided below:

"Our bike to school day has to be one of the longest rides in the country -- it's 4.5 miles! We have kids going into their 6th and 7th year of riding this event. They just LOVE IT! When I visit the school for other reasons, kids will yell, "Hello, Bike Lady!" If we could do bike to school day every week, the kids would be thrilled. We have kids as young as 5 and 6 years old riding tiny little bikes with no gears -- we have them start at a point about 1.5 miles from the school and they finish like champs. They are so proud of themselves. The walk to school event is similarly beloved, but it's nowhere near the adventure of a bike ride. For the bike rodeo, we have repeat customers every year. We bring bikes from the local bike co-op for the kids who don't have a bike to ride -- and we give all of the bikes away by the end of the day. We have between 100 and 150 kids ride through the rodeo course every year and we give away even more free helmets (which we fit to their heads). One year we gave out 500 helmets. It was so amazing."

-Mercy Davison, Normal Safe Routes to School (Lieberman, 2019)

The City of Bloomington was awarded a SRTS Infrastructure grant in 2019 for $200,000 to install new sidewalks, repair existing sidewalks, fill in gaps in the exiting sidewalks, and fix sidewalk ramps for Sheridan Elementary School.

Source: City of Normal, Bike to School Day - Bloomington-Normal,IL

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Decatur has an opportunity to build a network of sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure that will enable more students to be able to bike to and from school by working in cooperation with the Decatur School District, Decatur Park District, and key local organizations like the Decatur Boys & Girls Club.

The current lack of safe infrastructure, concerns about personal safety, and lack of community awareness and education on the rules of the road, have created challenges that have resulted in most students being driven to school in a family vehicle. Following are the key issues identified by stakeholders and through the parent surveys:

- Need for connected and complete sidewalks along roadways, particularly the higher speed/higher volume streets, such as Grand Avenue and El Dorado Avenue
- Safe crosswalks, with crossing guards where needed, at busy intersections on key routes to school
- Improved street lighting, particularly in viaducts or underpasses
- Need for improving community awareness of rules of the road
- Need for education for all roadway users, particularly drivers of vehicles and cyclists
- Addressing the issue of crime, or perception of crime, near schools and in neighborhoods near schools

To address these challenges will require resources. Improving infrastructure, creating and conducting community education and awareness campaigns, and offering bicycle safety education all require significant funding and staffing. Creating partnerships and combining resources is key to success in creating safe routes to school. Recommendations for the community are provided in the next section.

Bike to School Day - Wiley Elementary School, Urbana, IL

RECOMMENDATIONS

Studies have shown communities with SRTS program have more children who are able to walk and bike to school. The Center for Disease Control has stated that:

SRTS programs are associated with increased active transportation, including an increase in the number of students walking or biking to and from school. Over a 3-year period, a comparative analysis based upon a national sample of school SRTS programs found that SRTS was associated with:

- *An increase in the percentage of students who walked to and from school from 7-8 percent to 15-16 percent*
- *An increase in the percentage of students who biked to and from school from one percent to two percent (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.)*

With the Decatur Bike Plan the community has an opportunity to create and successfully implement an effective Safe Routes to School program. Not only do SRTS programs improve biking and walking for students, but they also improve safety for all members of the community. Decatur can draw from the examples of other downstate SRTS programs and tailor a SRTS program for its community that will serve its unique needs and address local safety issues.

Safe Routes to School programming is organized around the six E's. Listed below are the six E's as defined by the national Safe Routes Partnerships:

ENGAGEMENT – All Safe Routes to School initiatives should begin by listening to students, families, teachers, and school leaders and working with existing community organizations, and build intentional, ongoing engagement opportunities into the program structure.

ENGINEERING – Creating physical improvements to streets and neighborhoods that make walking and bicycling safer, more comfortable, and more convenient.

ENCOURAGEMENT – Generating enthusiasm and increased walking and bicycling for students through events, activities, and programs.

EDUCATION – Providing students and the community with the skills to walk and bicycle safely, educating them about benefits of walking and bicycling, and teaching them about the broad range of transportation choices.

EQUITY – Ensuring that Safe Routes to School initiatives are benefiting all demographic groups, with particular attention to ensuring safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for low-income students, students of color, students of all genders, students with disabilities, and others.

EVALUATION – Assessing which approaches are more or less successful, ensuring that programs and initiatives are supporting equitable outcomes, and identifying unintended consequences or opportunities to improve the effectiveness of each approach. (Partnership, 2020)

The following recommendations are organized around the six E's:

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement and Evaluation are two E's that overlap but have distinctly different goals. Engaging the students, their families, teachers, community organizations, and the public is about building relationships and recognizing differences in perspective. This is critical for creating and implementing a successful SRTS program. Engagement can take many forms and has been especially challenging during the global pandemic; however, the engagement process has already begun with the Decatur Bike Plan. Discussions with key stakeholders and the parent survey that was sent out electronically through the Decatur School System are small first steps. The following recommendations offer additional tools for engagement that can be used.

Create a SRTS Task Force.

Invite members of the community to participate in creating a Safe Routes to School plan and programming and actively provide a space for them. As you extend invitations to community members and organizations, be clear about how their perspective will inform the outcomes of the plan and program and offer mutual support for shared community goals. The National Center for Safe Routes to School offers with easy-to-use guidelines for how to create a SRTS Task Force.

Collect input and gather data through the schools twice a year.

Utilize the free tools offered through the National Center for Safe Routes to School and Walk 'n Roll to School Day to collect the following data:

- Parent Surveys – online surveys emailed to parents
- Tally Sheets – classroom tallies done at each school to gather data on how students get to and from school
- Walkability Checklists – two-page checklist filled out by students and/or families to collect information on their walk to/from school
- Bikeability Checklists – two-page checklists filled out by students and/or families to collect information on biking to/from school

Create a SRTS Website or Webpage.

Work with community partners to create an online location for information and access to upcoming events. C-U Safe Routes to School Project has a website for its programming that may serve as an example.

Source: C-U SRTS Project, Bike to School Day at Urbana Middle School

ENGINEERING

Conduct walking and biking audits, work with the SRTS Task Force to identify and prioritize needed sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure to provide for safe biking and walking to/from school.

This data is critical to successful application for grant funding, such as Safe Routes to School grants administered through IDOT.

Survey bike parking provided at schools and develop plan to install bicycle parking at each school using the bike parking standards from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.

Walk 'n Roll to School Day, Carrie Busey Elementary, Champaign, IL

ENCOURAGEMENT

Plan, organize, and implement Bike to School Day and Walk 'n Roll to School Day events for students annually. Bike to School Day is a national event held the first or second Wednesday of May, which is National Bike Month, and Walk 'n Roll to School Day is an international event held each year the first or second Wednesday of October.

Establish early dismissal policies for students who bike or walk to school.

Dismiss students walking or biking home 5-10 minutes early. This will serve a dual purpose of incentivizing those modes as well as reducing conflicts with vehicles.

Organize Bike Trains.

Bike trains are a group of volunteers (parents, teachers, and/or school staff) who coordinate with interested students to meet at set pickup locations on a predetermined schedule and bike together along a safe route so that students have the option to bicycle to school with others.

Review traffic circulation patterns around schools to reduce conflict points with walkers and cyclists.

Upon review, it is often possible to redesign the arrival and dismissal traffic patterns to reduce the number of conflict points, specifically at intersections and/or driveways, to improve safety.

Snow Removal Encouragement Program.

Promote and encourage sidewalk snow removal in the winter through public awareness raising. Partner with the City of Decatur to establish a volunteer snow removal program such as the Snow Angel program in Champaign-Urbana to support and encourage residents and businesses to remove snow on sidewalks in and around schools.

EDUCATION

Create SRTS walking and biking routes.

Work with the SRTS Task Force, city officials, and law enforcement to identify safe sidewalks and/or bike paths within a 1-mile radius of each school for students to use to get to/from each school. Post maps of the routes on the school district's and individual schools' websites. The Champaign County Regional Planning Commission provides safe routes maps for all Champaign and Urbana schools and updates them every three years.

Work with SRTS Task Force to identify bicycle safety curriculum that can be incorporated into PE classes and after school programs.

Work with community partners such as the park district to offer summertime camps and classes to teach bicycle safety skills to students K-12. Active Transportation Alliance in Chicago has created free, Illinois-specific bicycle curricula by grade level for use in classrooms or PE classes.

Bike Rodeos.

A bike rodeo is a bicycle skills event that provides an opportunity for students to practice and develop skills that will teach better bike handling skills and how to avoid typical crashes. These events teach basic rules of the road such as signaling when making a turn, stopping at stop signs, etc. Bike rodeos teach cyclist safety skills to students typically between the ages of 5 and 16.

Apply for a SRTS grant through IDOT to fund bicycle education and encouragement programming.

Two types of grants are offered – Infrastructure Grants for building bike paths, sidewalks, etc., and Non-Infrastructure Grants for doing education and training. Non-Infrastructure grants offered through IDOT can be used to:

- Purchase equipment, such as bikes, helmets, and safety vests
- Organize events, such as Bike to School Day and bike rodeos
- Purchase educational materials
- Pay for training workshops
- Operate community awareness-raising and education campaigns
- Pay for the creation of a Safe Routes to School Plan for the school district or select schools

Identify and support community members to become League Certified Instructors or Youth Instructors through the League of American Bicyclists.

The League Certified Instructor's certification provides insurance, teaching materials, resources, and support for teaching bicycle safety skills. The Youth Instructor certification provides training for teaching students K–8 bicycle safety skills. Ride Illinois, the Illinois state bicycle advocacy organization, offers workshops and training programs, and will be offering some scholarships for people interested in becoming certified instructors. The Ride Illinois Safely program will be rolling out in the summer of 2021.

Bike Rodeo

EQUITY

Work with the SRTS Task Force to identify and prioritize those schools and communities with the highest need for safe walking and biking conditions, education programs, and enforcement solutions.

Equitable Safe Routes to School programs address power imbalances that have led to disparate health, educational, and economic outcomes that often delineate along lines of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

EVALUATION

Collect data from schools twice a year using travel tallies provided through the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

The travel tallies can be administered by teachers in classrooms twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, to gather data on how students are getting to and from school. The survey asks how students arrive and are expected to get home for at least two consecutive days in the middle of the week. This data is needed for successful grant application for SRTS funding through IDOT.

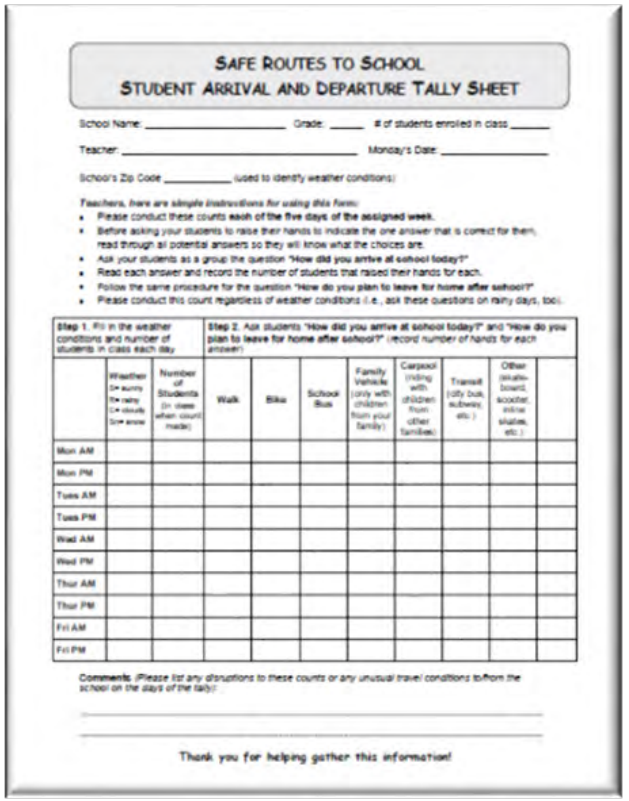
Distribute bikeability checklists to families annually as part of Bike to School Day.

The survey was created by the National Center for Safe Routes to School (NCSRTS) and is used nationwide. Survey results can be used to analyze:

- Travel mode choices
- Reasons students are not biking to school
- Opportunities to increase the safety of students by identifying challenges and hazards students encounter when biking to/from school

Speed and traffic safety studies.

Speeding traffic is an issue that students face on their commutes between home and school. Speed studies along major and local roads near schools can help determine whether an area is experiencing speeding problems. Additionally, analyses of traffic crashes that involve bicyclists can help identify locations where crashes have been occurring and how to mitigate the problems.



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TALLY SHEET

School Name: _____ Grade: ____ # of students enrolled in class _____

Teacher: _____ Monday's Date: _____

School's Zip Code _____ (used to identify weather conditions)

Teachers, here are simple instructions for using this form:

- Please conduct these counts **each of the five days of the assigned week.**
- Before asking your students to raise their hands to indicate the one answer that is correct for them, read through all potential answers so they will know what the choices are.
- Ask your students as a group the question "How did you arrive at school today?"
- Read each answer and record the number of students that raised their hands for each.
- Follow the same procedure for the question "How do you plan to leave for home after school?"
- Please conduct this count regardless of weather conditions (i.e., ask these questions on rainy days, too).

	Step 1. Fill in the weather conditions and number of students in class each day		**Step 2.** Ask students "How did you arrive at school today?" and "How do you plan to leave for home after school?" (record number of hands for each answer)							
	Weather (S= sunny R= rainy C= cloudy Sn= snow)	Number of Students (in class when count made)	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle (only with children from your family)	Carpool (riding with children from other families)	Transit (city bus, subway, etc.)	Other (skate-board, scooter, inline skates, etc.)	
Mon AM										
Mon PM										
Tues AM										
Tues PM										
Wed AM										
Wed PM										
Thur AM										
Thur PM										
Fri AM										
Fri PM										

Comments (Please list any disruptions to these counts or any unusual travel conditions to/from the school on the days of the tally):

Thank you for helping gather this information!

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

The following timeline is offered to help identify and prioritize next steps toward creating a bicycle friendly community for students to be able to bike safely and enjoyably to and from school. Nearby communities such as Bloomington-Normal and Champaign-Urbana have been working for several years toward this goal. Building good partnerships, working with the community, engaging with families, and applying for grant funding will help Decatur to build a good bicycle network over time.

Spring 2021:

Establish Safe Routes to School Task Force

- Utilize information from the Safe Routes to School Guide to assist in organizing and establishing a good, working task force.
- Plan for regular meetings either monthly or quarterly.

Celebrate Bike Month and Bike to School Day in May. Suggested activities:
Bike to School Day is May 5th. During that week:

- share information through school announcements, social media, newsletters, press releases, etc., on bicycle safety, rules of the road, and the benefits of bicycling, utilizing the information providing through Walk & Bike to School
- encourage helmet use through helmet safety demonstrations such as Melon Helmet Drops
- support parents, teachers, and/or volunteers who are willing to organize and conduct bike trains to school
- encourage students to take the Ride Illinois Bicycle Safety Quiz and offer incentives for completing the quiz
- collect data on how students are traveling to/from school utilizing National Center for Safe Routes to School Travel Tally forms

Collect data on how students are traveling to/from school utilizing National Center for Safe Routes to School Travel Tally forms after the week of Bike to School Day.

Distribute Bikeability Checklists and offer incentives for families to fill out the checklist and turn it in to the SRTS Task Force.

Summer 2021:

Work with community partners through the SRTS Task Force to create a SRTS website or webpage. Utilize this site to publicize upcoming events, to provide links to resources such as walkability and bikeability checklists, and to promote public awareness of the rules of the road.

Initiate planning for Walk ‘n Roll to School Day to be held in October.

Work with community organizations such as the Decatur Park District, local bike shops, and Decatur Boys & Girls Club to offer bicycle safety training through events such as:

- Bike rodeos
- Bike workshops – how to fix your bike, on-bike safety skills, etc.
- Bike rides – organized rides for children and families
- Bicycle classes

Plan for community events during the school year to raise public awareness of safety issues. Suggested events include:

- Participating in the Illinois Crossing Guard Appreciation Day, held annually in May on a date designated by the governor
- Encouraging sidewalk snow removal in winter

- Highlighting school zone safety and speed limits

Identify and support people who are interested in becoming League Certified Instructors through the League of American Cyclists. Work with Ride Illinois Safely to access resources to support Decatur residents becoming certified instructors.

Begin working to identify and prioritize projects that will qualify for and be competitive in winning an IDOT SRTS grant. Pull together data and other information needed to prepare for the opening of the grant program, planned for the fall/winter of 2021 .

Fall 2021:

If Illinois SRTS Grants open for applications, work with the SRTS Task Force to identify projects that qualify for the grant, identify those that are most likely to be competitive, and submit application for grant funding.

Work with local media to raise community awareness of the rules of the road as part of the resumption of in-person classes in the late summer/fall.

Meet with the SRTS Task Force monthly starting in August to plan for events for Walk 'n Roll to School Day in October

Collect data in September and October utilizing:

- Walkability and Bikeability Checklists
- Conduct classroom tallies
- Send out Parent Surveys

Winter 2021:

Encourage snow removal around schools during snow events by:

- Posting information on the SRTS website
- Working with local media to raise public awareness
- Supporting a volunteer program to help residents who are unable to clear sidewalks near schools

RESOURCES

Illinois Safe Routes to School - https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/safe-routes-to-school/index

National Center for Safe Routes to School - http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/

Safe Routes Partnership - http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/

Walk & Bike to School, National Bike to School Day - http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/

C-U SRTS Project - http://www.cu-srtsproject.com/

Bike Parking Standards, Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals - https://www.apbp.org/Publications

Walking School Buses and Bicycle Trains, Safe Routes Partnership - http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/encouragement/walking_school_bus_or_bicycle_train.cfm

Snow Angel, Snow Removal Program, C-U SRTS Project - http://www.cu-srtsproject.com/snow-removal.html

Safe Routes to School Maps for Champaign-Urbana - http://www.cu-srtsproject.com/safe-walking-route-maps.html

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education Curriculum, Active Transportation Alliance - https://activetrans.org/resources/education

Ride Illinois Bicycle Safety Quiz - https://rideillinois.org/safety/bike-safety-quiz/

Bike Rodeo Station Guide, Safe Kids Worldwide- https://www.safekids.org/sites/default/files/documents/Bike-Rodeo-Station-Guide.pdf

Guide to Bicycle Rodeos - https://rideillinois.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/GuideToBicycleRodeos.pdf

League of American Bicyclists, League Cycling Instructor and Youth Instructor programs - https://www.bikeleague.org/content/become-instructor

Ride Illinois Safely Education Program - https://rideillinois.org/safety/education/

Safe Routes to School Student Travel Tally Sheets - http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/evaluation/appendix_a_safe_routes_to_school_student_travel_tally.cfm

Bikeability Checklists - https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/bikabilitychecklist1.pdf

Safe Routes to School Guide- http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/

National Bike Month - https://bikeleague.org/bikemonth

Illinois Bike Laws, Ride Illinois - https://rideillinois.org/safety/bike-laws/

Demonstrating Helmet Effectiveness: How to Guide - https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/811110.pdf

Kids on Bikes in Illinois, Illinois Secretary of State - https://rideillinois.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/KidsOnBikesInIllinois.pdf

Organizing Bike Rides for Kids, Active Transportation Alliance - https://www.activetrans.org/sites/files/OrganizingBikeRidesforKids.pdf

EPSTEIN

600 W. Fulton Street
Chicago, IL 60661
www.epsteinglobal.com

LOCHMUELLER GROUP

201 W. Springfield Ave, Suite 1012
Champaign, IL 61820
www.lochgroup.com

HOYLE CONSULTING

2207 S. Cottage Grove Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801-6815
www.cynthiahoyle.com