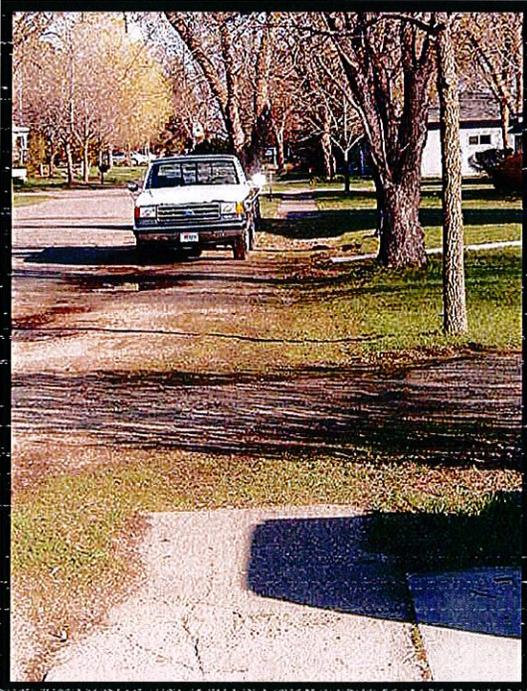




CITY OF PRESCOTT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN



City of Prescott

Safe Routes to School Plan

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VISION STATEMENT

The City of Prescott is dedicated to developing a safe and healthy community by supporting the promotion of sidewalks, paths, and bicycle trails and the benefits of each.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The City of Prescott Safe Routes to School Plan is an extension of the City of Prescott Pedestrian Network Plan (see Appendix A). The purpose of the Plan is to build upon the information already provided in the City of Prescott Pedestrian Network Plan to provide further information to reinforce the need for a safe and connected pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The proposed pedestrian network will have a positive impact on the City of Prescott in many measurable and immeasurable ways.

Economic Impact

- ✓ Trails can make the community an attraction and destination while bringing in revenue to businesses.
- ✓ Biking and walking reduces traffic, parking needs, and energy consumption.
- ✓ Bicycling and walking are quality of life indicators and this attracts new residents and visitors.
- ✓ Homebuyers rank trails as the second most important amenity.
- ✓ Biking and walking reduces health care costs.

Social Impacts

- ✓ Walking helps children decompress and process the day's events as they come home from school.
- ✓ Walking creates community interaction, pride, and connectedness.
- ✓ Elderly are more likely to walk to nearby services and socialize in their community. It allows them more independence.
- ✓ Increased community interaction.
- ✓ Sidewalks and trails encourage residents of all ages to spend time outdoors.
- ✓ Children learn navigation skills, independence, and self confidence.

Health Impacts

- ✓ Older adults near safe walking and biking paths are more likely to get enough exercise needed to maintain a healthy life.

- ✓ Residents in walk-able neighborhoods engage in 70 more minutes per week of moderate and vigorous physical activity than residents in non-walkable neighborhoods.
- ✓ Biking and walking are easy ways to get in short sessions of exercise.
- ✓ Biking and walking reduces heart and lung disease, cancer, osteoporosis, diabetes.
- ✓ Biking and walking helps fight obesity, a growing national problem.
- ✓ Active children tend to remain active.
- ✓ Biking and walking reduce automobile trips and related air pollution.

Safety Impact

Without a pedestrian network throughout the City, residents that wish to walk or run for transportation, leisure or exercise are forced to walk or run on the street creating a potential conflict with vehicles. Even in the most optimal condition, where the pedestrians and vehicle drivers are alert and aware of their surroundings and each other, this situation is less than ideal. If either party is inattentive or careless such a situation can be quite dangerous.

The pedestrian network is intended to protect pedestrians in several ways. Pedestrians on sidewalks would be protected to some extent from vehicles by the separation provided by the boulevard width and concrete curb. Bicyclists would be protected to some extent from vehicles by signage and pavement markings that are intended to increase the level of awareness of drivers as to the potential for conflicts with non-motorized traffic.

The Pedestrian Traffic Committee has proposed a cooperative program with the Police Department and School District to teach elementary and middle school children the rules and customs of using sidewalks and trails safely and courteously. In conjunction with this cooperative program, the Pedestrian Traffic Committee wishes to work with the School District to determine what, if any, changes might be made to the busing policy.

EXISTING SIDEWALKS

The City of Prescott has a limited amount of sidewalk. Map 1 shows existing sidewalks classified by condition. Most of the sidewalks in the City can be found in the original "downtown" area and extending out to older neighborhoods.

The City's sidewalk can be found in various forms and conditions due to inconsistent standards and varying policies in the past. Residents were allowed to remove their sidewalk if it was in poor shape leaving gaps in the pedestrian infrastructure.



Throughout the City you can also see varying styles of sidewalk and varying widths. The photo on the right shows a solid concrete sidewalk next to a sidewalk that consists of three concrete pads placed side by side. This can be found in older parts of the City.



The photo on the left reveals a sidewalk that is approximately two feet wide. This creates space problems when people are walking past each other.

The photo on the right shows recent efforts to add new sidewalk near the High School and Elementary School with an appropriate width that allows pedestrian and bicyclists to share the multi-use sidewalk.



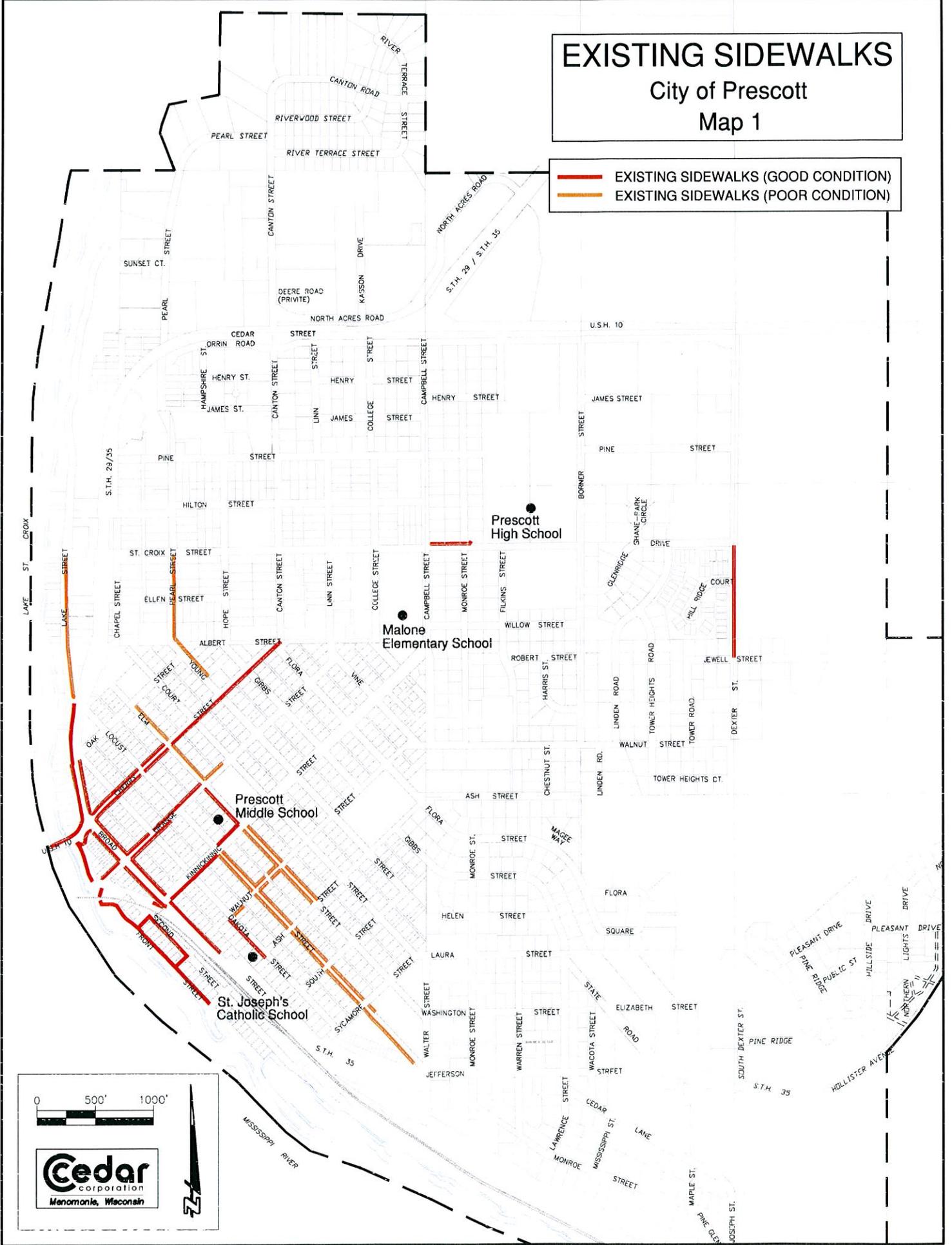
City ordinances require sidewalk in residential developments, but like many communities, this was often overlooked. The City of Prescott now requires sidewalk in new subdivisions and has created the City of Prescott Pedestrian Network Plan to address future sidewalks, bike trails/lanes and construction standards.

EXISTING SIDEWALKS

City of Prescott

Map 1

- EXISTING SIDEWALKS (GOOD CONDITION)
- EXISTING SIDEWALKS (POOR CONDITION)



Cedar
corporation
Manomonic, Wisconsin

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The City of Prescott has several hazardous conditions that qualify all students to be picked up by school buses. The hazard conditions are:

- ✓ S.T.H. 35 and U.S.H. 10
- ✓ Lack of sidewalks
- ✓ Narrow streets

Although all students are eligible for bus transportation, approximately 400 do not use this service. These students may walk, bike, carpool, drive, or receive rides from others.

Adding sidewalks, bicycle lanes/paths, and trails will reduce the amount of hazard conditions.

TRAFFIC DATA

Traffic data, from the 2000 and 2004 Average Daily Traffic counts conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, reveals that traffic along the main transportation routes (S.T.H. 35 and U.S.H. 10) has increased dramatically while numbers inside the City have remained the same (*see Map 2*).

Traffic on S.T.H. 35 and U.S.H. 10 will continue to increase with residents driving to the Twin Cities area for work.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Overall, the number of students enrolled in the Prescott School District has remained steady. Table 1 shows the historical enrollment since the 2000/2001 school year.

Grade	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008
K-12	1,175	1,185	1,197	1,192	1,185	1,173	1,171	1,163

Source: Prescott School District

COMMUNITY DATA

The City of Prescott has seen continuous growth since 1950 (see Table 2). The Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center released a report on projected State, County, and Municipal population and household populations in 2004. The projections show the City of Prescott and Pierce County will continue to grow in the foreseeable future (see Table 3).

Municipality	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2007
City of Prescott	1,536	2,331	2,654	3,243	3,764	4,053
Pierce County	22,503	26,652	31,149	32,765	36,804	40,235

Source: Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center

Much of this growth is due to the proximity of these areas to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (TCMA). Residents in the TCMA find land and housing more affordable in Wisconsin and relocate. Though this trend has slowed, it is likely to continue.

The recent population growth has not resulted in school enrollment increases. This may be because new residents are empty nesters or are younger and have not started a family yet.

Municipality	2010	2015	2020	2025
City of Prescott	4,088	4,235	4,393	4,575
Pierce County	39,818	41,190	42,655	44,368

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center

SCHOOL FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

Students may not ride their bicycles to/from school if there is not a safe place for them to store their bikes during the day. An inventory of bicycle racks at the public schools was conducted.

Prescott High School	2 Rack/24 Bikes
Prescott Middle School	1 Rack/12 Bikes
Malone Elementary School	0 Racks

Malone Elementary School does not encourage elementary students to ride their bikes to school for safety reasons but would like bike racks if the hazard conditions were addresses.

POLICIES THAT PROMOTE HEALTHY ACTIVITIES

The Prescott School District is committed to providing a healthy school environment that enhances learning and develops lifelong wellness by promoting good nutrition and regular physical activity. In May 2006, the Prescott School District Board of Education adopted a written Wellness Policy. Policy goals are:

- ✓ Engage students, staff and community members in developing and implementing district wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- ✓ Encourage K-12 physical activity on a regular basis.
- ✓ Provide qualified child nutrition professionals.
- ✓ Participate in the federal school meal programs.
- ✓ Foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.

In addition to the District's written Wellness Policy, several programs for students and staff are implemented.

Scheduled Student Events and Groups:

- ✓ Open gym 3-4 nights per week.
- ✓ Jump Rope for Heart
- ✓ May Walk for 5th-8th graders. T-shirts are distributed to students.
- ✓ Wellness Group consisting of approximately 20 students.
- ✓ FACT Group focuses on anti-smoking campaigns and health fairs.

Scheduled Staff Events and Groups:

- ✓ Bowling Night
- ✓ Golf Outings
- ✓ Weight Watchers

Staff members are eligible for a raffle based on the number of activities they participate in.

City of Prescott Comprehensive Park, Trail, and Open Space Plan

The City maintains a Comprehensive Park, Trail, and Open Space Plan that is designed to create a vision that will benefit all residents. The Plan analyzes existing parks, trails, and open space areas and recommends improvements.

There were no Prescott School District or City of Prescott policies that discourage or limit the ability to walk, bicycle, or enjoy physical activity.

Other City and Community Organization Activities

The City holds a "fun run" during Prescott Daze and will be planning a "fun run" in May for Freedom Park. The police department is putting together a bike and pedestrian safety program for the elementary school. The Boy Scouts each year hold a bike rodeo for scout members.

SURVEY RESULTS

The City of Prescott and Prescott School District conducted a Parent Survey to ask parents of K-8 grade students what issues affected their decision to allow their child/children to walk or bike to school (see Appendix B). The top concerns were:

1. Violence or Crime
2. Speed of Traffic
3. Distance from school
4. Safety at Intersections
5. Lack of Sidewalks
6. Weather
7. Amount of Traffic

Almost half of survey responses indicated that the parent would allow their child to walk or bike to school if these issues were addressed.

The survey also shows that 83% of parents said the City needs more sidewalks and/ or bike trails.

Representative survey comments are:

"Sidewalks and bike trails would be great and promote a healthy lifestyle.

"It would be great to get bike trails, so it would be safer to ride bikes in town.

"Fix the sidewalks we already have! They are dangerous – need sidewalks on Orange, Kinnikinnic, and Cherry."

"We really lack safe sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the whole town. There needs to be crosswalks on Highways 10 and 35 (Monroe Street)."

"Sidewalks would be a great improvement in Prescott. All residents would benefit."

"I feel that traffic near schools needs to slow down, especially high schoolers in the high school parking lot and nearby roads. Dropping off and picking up students at Malone and high school becomes very chaotic at times with vehicles, children, and buses all going different ways."

SIDEWALK AND TRAIL DESIGN STANDARDS

The location and design of sidewalks, trails, or bike lanes is important to ensure the improvements are user friendly.

When considering sidewalks, it is generally not advisable to install a sidewalk adjacent to a street without curb and gutter. Likewise, it is generally not advisable to install sidewalk adjacent to a street with curb and gutter that is in need of repair. In these cases, it is more cost-effective to install sidewalk at the time of curb and gutter installation or repair.

Crosswalks should be provided at each intersection. Curb ramps and detectable warning fields shall be provided at all street crossings. Crosswalks should not be provided mid-block except in rare circumstances. If such a situation is unavoidable, appropriate signage shall be provided to adequately warn drivers of the crosswalk.

Sidewalks are typically placed on the same side as existing sidewalks in the area. Other considerations such as driveway density, tree removals, crosswalk visibility, bus stop safety, and resident concerns should be taken into account when choosing which side to install sidewalk.

Multi-use trails (biking, walking, rollerblading, etc...) will primarily be constructed in developing portions of the City and into adjacent rural areas. As such, multi-purpose trails should be constructed in conjunction with new subdivisions and/or improvements or area and regional trail plans. Multi-use trail alignment should follow the existing topography to the maximum extent practical. However, horizontal curves, vertical curves and slopes should be evaluated for excessive speed and/or visibility.

Multi-use trails will require signage to direct users to "trailheads". In addition, on-trail signage will be required for such things as street crossings.

Bike lanes typically will be located on rural area roads as they enter the City. Bike lanes shall be marked on pavement and with signage. The width of the paved shoulder bicyclists will be riding on should be based on the amount of traffic on a particular road.

The Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook provides an excellent guide for detailed bicycle facility planning.

Table 4 provides general design standards for sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails. It should be used as a starting point to plan and do initial cost estimates. Each proposed project in the City should be evaluated on an individual and already established standards.

Table 4 – General Design Standards

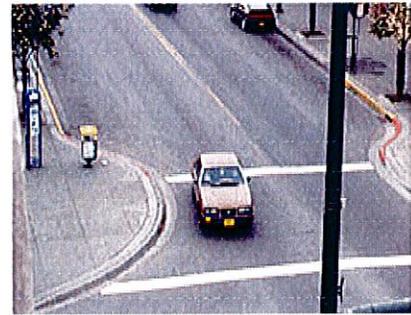
	Material	Minimum Width	Depth	Base
Sidewalk	Concrete	5', 6' (against curb)	4" typical	6" granular
Sidewalk (Driveway)	Concrete	-	6" typical	8" crushed aggregate
Bike Lane	Asphalt	5' (from curb flag)	3" typical, match street	8" crushed aggregate
Multi-Purpose Trail	Asphalt	8' (with 2' shoulders)	2" typical, 3" if service trail	8" crushed aggregate

Detailed design standards can be found in Appendix A.

TRAFFIC CALMING TECHNIQUES

Traffic calming techniques are designed to reduce the negative effects between motor vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists. The techniques listed below are from the Federal Highway Administration and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center.

Curb Extensions: Also known as bulb-outs or bump-outs, curb extensions extend the sidewalk or curb line out into the parking lane, which reduces the effective street width. Curb extensions significantly improve pedestrian crossings by reducing the pedestrian crossing distance, visually and physically narrowing the roadway, improving the ability of pedestrians and motorists to see each other, and reducing the time that pedestrians are in the street.



Crossing Islands: Also known as center islands, refuge islands, or pedestrian islands. These are raised islands placed in the center of the street at intersections to help protect crossing pedestrians from motor vehicles. Center crossing islands allow pedestrians to deal with only one direction of traffic at a time, and they enable them to stop partway across the street and wait for an adequate gap in traffic before crossing the second half of the street.

Chicanes: Chicanes create horizontal diversion of traffic and can be gentler or more restrictive depending on the design. Shifts in travel lanes can be created by shifting parking from one side to the other or by building landscaped islands.



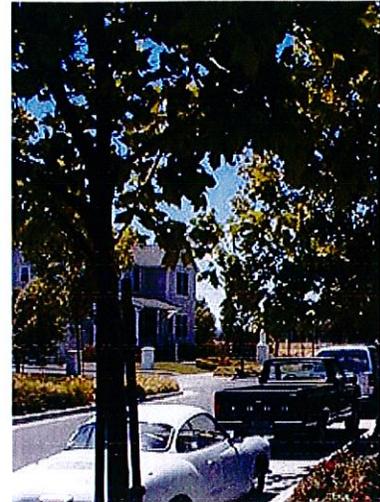
Mini-Circles: These are raised circular islands constructed in the center of residential street intersections (generally not intended for use where one or both streets are arterial streets). They reduce vehicle speeds by forcing motorists to maneuver around them. Mini-circles have been found to reduce motor vehicle crashes by an average of 90 percent in some cities.

Speed Humps/Speed Tables/Raised Pedestrian Crossings: Speed humps are paved and usually 3 to 4 inches high at their center and extend the full width of the street with height tapering near the drain gutter to allow unimpeded bicycle travel. They are designed to reduce vehicle speed. Speed tables are flat-topped speed humps. Raised pedestrian crossings are similar to speed tables but are used for the entire intersection and enhance the pedestrian environment.



Gateways: A gateway is a physical or geometric landmark that indicates a change in environment from a higher speed arterial or collector road to a lower speed residential or commercial district. They often place a higher emphasis on aesthetics and are frequently used to identify neighborhood and commercial areas within a larger urban setting.

Landscaping: The careful use of landscaping along a street can provide separation between motorists and pedestrians, reduce the visual width of the roadway (which can help to reduce vehicle speeds), and provide a more pleasant street environment for all. This can include a variety of trees, bushes, and/or flowerpots, which can be planted in the buffer area between the sidewalk or walkway and the street.



Bike Lanes: Bike lanes are portions of roadway that have been designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. Bike lanes make bicyclist more visible to motorists.

Narrowing Streets: Decreasing the width of a street will cause drivers to slow down and be more cautious.

Education: Instructions given to the residents on safe on-street vehicle travel. Education can be in the form of newspaper article, radio or television reports, or posters. Instruction makes motorists more aware of bicyclist and pedestrian safety.

Police Enforcement: Enforcing speed and traffic laws sends a message to motorists to be aware of their driving habits and traffic signage.

STREET MARKINGS AND SIGNAGE

There are several methods to make crosswalks and school zones safer for pedestrians and bicyclist. These methods should be used to improve visibility and slow motorized traffic.



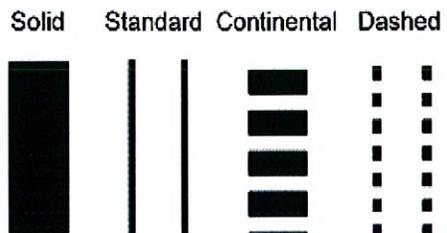
School Zone Signs: School zone signs help create awareness that children are in the area. Today, the traditional yellow sign is available in brighter colors and flashing lights to improve their visibility.

Driver Feedback Signs: Driver feedback signs increase compliance to posted speed limits. These signs also log speed data that can be used by local law enforcement. The signs can be programmed to display changeable messages.



Pedestrian Crossing Delineators or Traffic Cones: Delineators or the less expensive cones are used in crosswalks or street center lines to warn vehicle operators that pedestrians are in the area. These signs are moveable.

Crosswalk Markings: Crosswalk markings provide visible direction for pedestrians and bicyclist to cross streets. Reflective materials can be used to increase the visibility. There are several different markings that can be used. The continental pattern is preferred.





Overhead Lights: Overhead lights can be used in busier intersections where pedestrian crossing delineators or cones are not allowed. They are programmable to flash at determined times.

Crossing Guards: Crossing guards direct pedestrians and guide traffic in school zones. They can wear reflective vests and use signs to make themselves visible. Crossing guards can also be used to monitor driving habits of residents.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of grant opportunities that can be used to fund road, sidewalk, trail, signage, and marking improvements. Each grant addresses different needs and require varying financial commitments from the City.

Enhancements/ISTEA Grant (WisDOT)

- Statewide Transportation Enhancements Program (STEP)
- Maximum grant of 80% for projects that will enhance transportation projects
- Eligible projects include bike paths, landscaping, historic preservation, rail corridor preservation, outdoor advertising control
- Funding is extremely limited. Applications taken in even years

Traffic Signing and Marking Enhancement Grants Program (WisDOT)

- Grant funds to install traffic signing and roadway markings
- 75% DOT; 25% local match

Stewardship/LAWCON/Federal Recreational Trails Program (WisDNR)

- May 1 deadline for most grants
- 50% DNR; 50% local match
- Funds for land acquisition, trails, picnic areas, etc.

Community Development Block Grant Program (COMMERCE)

- Grant funds to construct streets and sidewalks
- Application deadline: continuous funding cycle. Pre-application is required
- Community survey may be required
- Low-to-moderate income requirements
- Competitive grant

Impact Fees

- New development pays their fair share of new capital improvements
- Fees can be used for sidewalk or trail development

Special Assessments

- Project costs for sidewalk improvements are assessed back to the property owners

Wisconsin Safe Routes to School Grant

- Provides funds for planning, infrastructure, and non-infrastructure projects within 2 miles of K-8 schools
- Projects are 100% fundable
- Grant program runs through 2009

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

The recommendations in this section will provide options for the City of Prescott to establish short and long term goals. The goals are what the City hopes to accomplish within a timeframe to make the Safe Routes to School Plan a success.

The recommendations will address the 5 E's (Engineering, Encouragement, Education, Enforcement, and Evaluation) and identify actions under each category the City will consider.

Engineering

- Replace sidewalks in poor condition and construct new sidewalks in vital areas identified in this plan
- Continue to update the Pedestrian Network Plan
- Plan sidewalk improvements with road reconstruction projects
- Identify dangerous crosswalks and recommend marking, signage, or traffic calming improvements
- Submit new subdivision plats to School District Transportation Office to identify bus stops and recommend sidewalks and/or concrete pads for waiting areas

- Increased bicycle racks at schools and identify future needs at other locations in the City (Library, Parks)
- Implement traffic calming techniques in street reconstruction projects and new subdivision development
- Identify and mark specific "safe routes" through the City for students to use

Encouragement

- Newspaper article explaining the Safe Routes to School Plan/Pedestrian Network Plan and goals of the City of Prescott.
- Designate a walk or bike to work day each week for students and adults
- Designate a walk to school with your child day
- Newsletters during Parent-Teacher conferences
- Provide rewards for walking or biking to school or work that are age appropriate
- Create competitions between businesses and classes
- Bicycle Rodeo

Education

- School speakers that are age appropriate
- Have students track the distances they walk or bike and research the benefits
- Walking and bicycling audits by students and adults
- Class quizzes
- Implement lessons during Summer Recreation Programs

Enforcement

- Speed trailers or driver feedback signs
- Increase police patrols near school during morning and afternoon hours
- Increase fines in school zones
- Neighborhood Watch programs
- Implement Officer Ted Mop Program (Traffic Enforcement Decoy, Mannequin On Patrol)

Evaluation

- Yearly review to evaluate the successes and challenges of implementing the Plan and revise goals as needed
- Compare results of walking and bicycling audits over several years
- Measure participation and volunteers
- Post-project survey
- Walking and bicycling attitudes survey
- Monitor participation in walk or bike to school days

FUTURE SIDEWALKS, TRAILS, AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Map 3 shows future sidewalk and trail corridors planned in the City of Prescott Pedestrian Network Plan. The Plan proposes improvements by year starting in 2007 and ending in 2012, as well as cost estimates for each project.

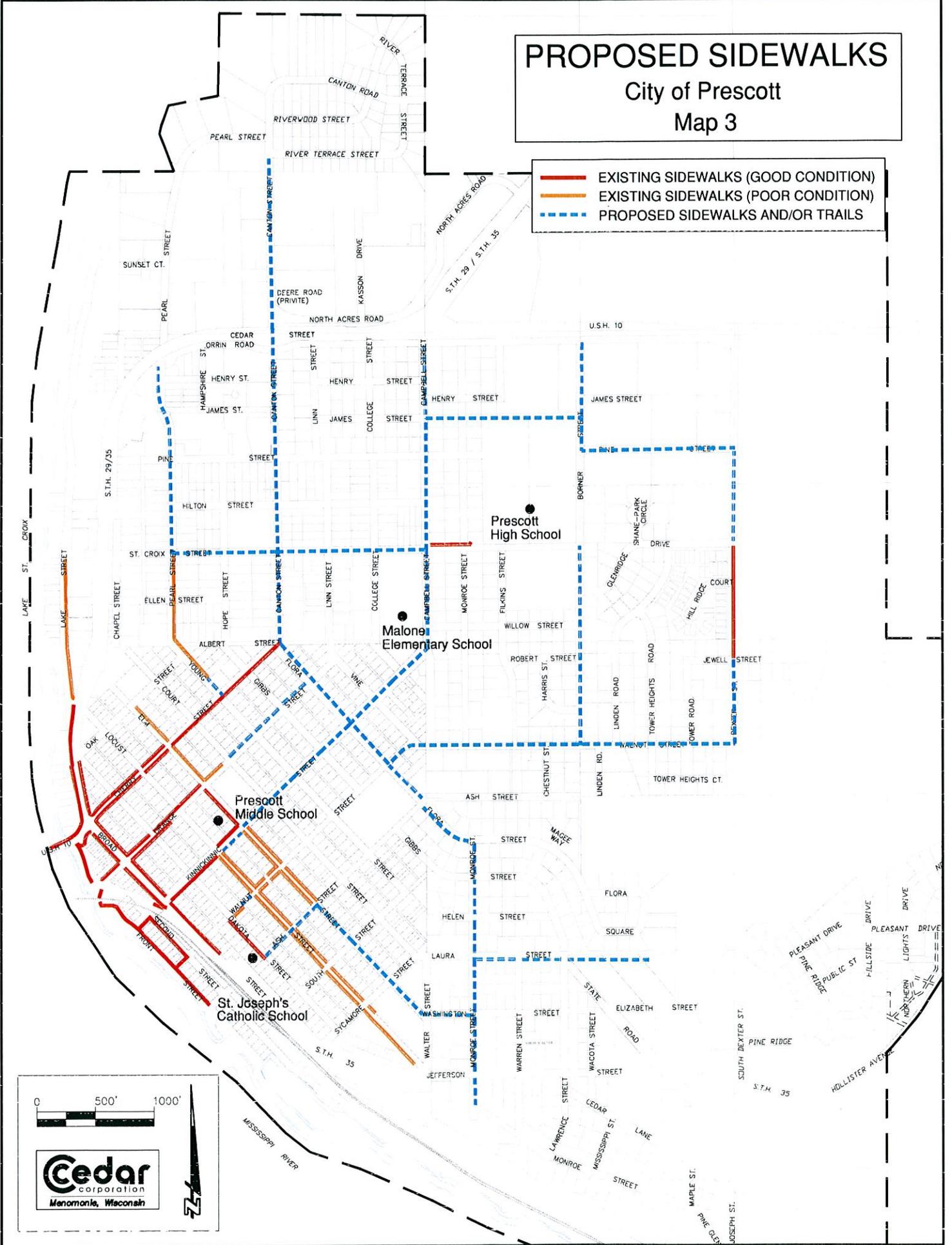
Please refer to the Prescott Pedestrian Network Plan for a complete list of proposed improvements, costs, and funding sources.

PROPOSED SIDEWALKS

City of Prescott

Map 3

- EXISTING SIDEWALKS (GOOD CONDITION)
- EXISTING SIDEWALKS (POOR CONDITION)
- PROPOSED SIDEWALKS AND/OR TRAILS



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ Require sidewalks or trails in all subdivisions.
- ✓ Merge the Pedestrian Network Plan and the Safe Routes to School Plan into one comprehensive sidewalk and trail plan.
- ✓ Pursue grants to offset the cost of sidewalks, street reconstruction, pavement markings, and signage.
- ✓ Reduce the amount of hazardous conditions in the City.

SAFE ROUTE SUCCESSES

Since the creation of the Pedestrian Network Plan and Safe Routes to School Plan, the following steps for implementation of the plans have take place.

- ✓ Sporadic pieces of sidewalk were removed along Dakota Street and replaced with new sidewalk along the south side of Dakota Street from Walnut Street to Ash Street in front of the St. Joes Catholic School.
- ✓ New sidewalks will be installed along St. Croix Street from Canton Street to Campbell Street providing sidewalk to the Malone Elementary School property. Funding was received through the 2007 Safe Routes to School grant.
- ✓ The Police Department put together a bike and pedestrian safety program for Elementary School students.