

Implementation Plan

The Pedestrian Implementation Plan outlines where to go from here. Key to this implementation is approval of the major action items proposed, including level-of-service measurements and standards, sidewalk, curb ramp and stop bar standards and policies, and pedestrian traffic impact analysis requirements. In addition, it would be desirable to modify the City statute to give the pedestrian the right-of-way at intersections. Based on interest expressed by the Cities of Boulder and Longmont, there may be some growing municipal interest to change these statutes with an effort toward a change at the state level.

There are a number of implementation issues that must be defined to make Fort Collins a "Walkable City" after the completion of this plan. One obvious implementation issue is funding, then prioritizing the projects given the limited funding. Enhancement and implementation of a traffic education and enforcement program is also critical to the success of the pedestrian plan. Finally, we recommend the selection and implementation of four demonstration projects to test some of the concepts and ideas presented in the plan.

The passage of ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) in 1991 established a number of federal and state funding opportunities for pedestrian facilities. Fort Collins may apply for these funds through the North Front Range Transportation & Air Quality Planning Council (NFRT & AQPC). These potential federal and state funds are presented in Appendix D. As an active member of the NFRT & AQPC, the City of Fort Collins should pursue pedestrian funding when the opportunity arises. Given the current financially constrained Transportation Improvement Program, these opportunities may be limited.

Funding

The City of Fort Collins does have existing funding programs or opportunities to collect funds for pedestrian improvements. These include:

- Fort Collins Street Oversizing Program
- General Obligation Bonds
- Local Sales Tax
- Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)

Regardless of source, commitment to the pedestrian plan, in part, implies funding. The Fort Collins transportation-related annual budget averages between \$23 million and \$28 million, of which \$1.25 to \$1.5 million, or five percent is specifically pedestrian-related. This funding goes toward installation or replacement of sidewalks and ramps as part of the City's street Oversizing Program, Pavement Management, Construction and Minor Street Program, Neighborhood Safety Programs,

As presented, the current Transportation Services & Programs budget related to pedestrian activity is \$120,000. This includes approximately \$100,000 for school safety programs and \$20,000 for sidewalk snow removal. Both of these programs have been cited as important and should be expanded. It is therefore recommended that this portion of the pedestrian budget be increased by fifty percent, to \$180,000. It is further proposed that the transportation services budget be increased by an additional \$200,000 to permit installation of stop bars at all signalized and stop-controlled crosswalks (includes a \$100,000 one-time budget to relocate stop signs to align with crosswalks) for a total budget of \$380,000.

The Transportation Services Street Oversizing Program, Pavement Management, and Minor Street Capital Improvement Programs all relate to street construction programs that have various elements of pedestrian improvements, including sidewalk replacement and construction of ADA ramps. Because the pedestrian improvement levels vary by project, there is no recommended change in funding for these categories.

The Street Oversizing and Construction Programs provide for some new pedestrian improvements. The Sidewalk Improvement Program allows discretion to construct missing pedestrian elements not tied to a larger public works project. Because missing pedestrian walkways, crossings, and facilities were identified as needing significant improvements, the funding recommendation for this category is proposed to increase by \$800,000 from \$400,000 to \$1,200,000. With the proposed changes, the total pedestrian budget would increase to approximately 9 to 10 percent of the total transportation budget.

Because of the overwhelming need to maintain our existing sidewalk system plus retrofit to an acceptable level-of-service, pedestrian improvements will require prioritization. The pedestrian plan calls for a two-tiered approach. The first tier of prioritization is to allocate a set percentage of funds by area of improvement. The second tier of prioritization is to identify a list of evaluation measures for assisting in the selection of improvements within a program area.

Prioritization

As identified in the Pedestrian Facilities Plan, different areas of the city require different levels of pedestrian improvement. These areas include pedestrian districts, routes to school, activity corridors, activity centers, routes to transit, and other areas within the city. One argument would be to invest all short-term funds into the highest pedestrian activity area until all facilities within that area are improved. At such time, the next pedestrian activity area is funded.

Area Prioritization

The difficulty with the above approach is that it may be in the City's interest to raise a dangerous street crossing from LOS E or F to a C to get neighborhood residents to a transit stop, then raise a street crossing in Old Town from a C to a B. Therefore, some funding has to be distributed to all programs to address the critical problems. A suggested funding target by pedestrian area and type is as follows:

Pedestrian District and Routes to School/Parks - 50 Percent

The downtown/CSU pedestrian district was identified as one of the most important pedestrian areas within the city and as such has the highest level of service targets. Similarly, safe routes to schools/parks used by children and developing routes to schools to reduce the long-term burden of busing was also deemed one of the highest priorities. Fortunately, the pedestrian district as a whole is reasonably well served and has an adequate level of service. There are but a handful of improvements that would significantly improve our routes to schools and parks. Through a concentrated implementation program and an adequate pedestrian budget, pedestrian problems within these two areas could reasonably be mitigated in the near future. Upon completion of these improvements, funds from this area could be re-diverted to other categories.

Activity Corridors, Activity Centers and Routes to Transit - 40 Percent

Although activity corridors, centers and routes to transit have LOS target levels less than the pedestrian district and routes to schools/parks, they experience major deficiencies and will require significant funding levels to retrofit. Because of the seriousness of this category, it was recognized that funding needs to begin immediately, not after the higher service area activities are mitigated.

Other - 10 Percent

This category would include education, encouragement, and implementation programs. In addition, this category includes primarily outlying residential areas not proximate to schools, parks, transit, or activity areas. As such, these areas were identified as requiring only the minimal pedestrian LOS standards. However, there are some major pedestrian improvements that should be considered and, as such, an annual budget should be provided.

Within a funding facility area prioritization category, competing projects with a limited budget require prioritization. It is recommended that the prioritization of sidewalk projects include the following factors, which would improve the city's urban and suburban walkability.

Project-Specific Prioritization Within a Facility Area

- Proximity to pedestrian destination
 - School
 - Health care, commercial or government activity
- Mobility-impaired
- Pedestrian volumes
- Potential demand from adjacent land uses
- Pedestrian accidents
- Route continuity to complete sidewalks
- Functional classification of the roadway
- Geometric conditions
 - Available walking space
 - Alignment
 - Street Lighting
 - Design Speed
 - Site distance

Education programs should be offered to people of all ages from pre-school children to senior citizens. Walking is an essential mode of transportation for school-aged children. The leading cause of death of children in the United States is motor vehicles, with the majority of children killed while walking or bicycling. As such, traffic safety education should be required for all school-aged children to teach them the critical skills and knowledge needed to safely negotiate in traffic. The elderly tend to be over-represented in pedestrian-involved traffic crashes. Education programs should stress the benefits of walking while emphasizing the safe behaviors that must be practiced. The following actions are proposed:

Traffic Education and Enforcement

- Work with school officials to bring a pedestrian safety program into the curriculum.
- Organize speakers to inform PTAs in our schools of the merits of parental reinforcement of program principles.
- Upgrade existing pedestrian education programs presently offered on a limited basis by the Fort Collins City Police.
- Enforce existing and future pedestrian laws.

Demonstration Projects

One of the objectives of the Implementation Plan is to identify a limited number of demonstration projects, which would permit the opportunity to test some of the key findings identified in the pedestrian plan. Although there are a number of different types of demonstration projects that could be explored, the following were selected for consideration:

- Retrofitting a neighborhood without sidewalks.
- Constructing an intersection median with a refuge area.
- Modifying a signal to include a dedicated pedestrian phase.
- Install a traffic-calming crossing.

Based on this list, the following selected demonstration projects are described:

Neighborhood Sidewalk Retrofit

Neighborhood bound by College, Prospect, Stuart, and Stover

This is an area selected for one of the ten case studies. The area either lacks sidewalks entirely, or has narrow two-foot sidewalks. The proposed improvement would be to strategically install two-foot sidewalks on streets where the sidewalks are missing and the daily traffic volumes are in excess of 300 daily trips. A 4 ½-foot sidewalk is proposed for Parker Street from College to Stuart, as this facility is a major east-west connection to commercial and transit on College and Barton Elementary School on Stover. (Planning Level Cost Estimate - \$150,000-\$200,000)

Intersection Median with Refuge Area

Boardwalk and Lemay

Lemay is currently a 2-lane facility south of Harmony. Lemay is proposed to be widened to its ultimate 4-lane arterial status in the near future. The intersection of Boardwalk and Lemay has a high pedestrian presence from children who travel from the east side of Lemay to Werner Elementary School. Incorporating the proposed 6-foot median standards will allow examination of the adequacy of this proposed design. (Cost - Nominal if incorporated in overall proposed improvement plan.)

Modifying a Signal to Include a Dedicated Pedestrian Phase.

College Avenue and Drake Road

This intersection is currently proposed to be widened to include a second north and southbound left turn lane, additional right turn lanes, and bike lanes on Drake. These additional lanes will further increase the width the pedestrian will need to cross College. Unfortunately, the proposed intersection design will not accommodate the wider 6' refuge island as proposed. Therefore, this intersection would be an ideal location to test a signal with a dedicated pedestrian phase, which would provide for a three to five second walk-only phase, followed by a

through movement-only phase to preclude rights and lefts from turning across the crosswalks. (Planning Level Estimate - \$25,000 additional costs)

Traffic Calming Intersection Crossing Boardwalk/Westshore Parkway

City traffic engineering has received complaints regarding crossing Boardwalk at Westshore Parkway to access the park. Because of the limited parking at the park, people park along Westshore Parkway and cross Boardwalk to get to the park. Complaints are about excessive speeds, even with a crosswalk in place. It is therefore proposed that the traffic calming proposal for mid-block crossings be modified for an intersection and installed at this location. (Planning Level Estimate - \$40,000 - \$60,000)

This plan offers no quick fix. It took Fort Collins fifty years to develop such an intense problem. It will require at least one full generation of residents (20 years) to be educated and to buy into pedestrian friendly environments and to pay sufficient transportation monies to bring existing roadways, parking lots, and other physical features up to standards. The implementation of this plan will require the collective efforts of the City of Fort Collins, its residents and businesses, developers, Larimer County, the North Front Range Transportation & Air Quality Planning Council, and the State of Colorado. This plan demands a high level of effort from all.

No Quick Fix