UW L ON THE GO

# UW L ON THE GO Final Report

*Spring 2016*

# Acknowledgements

**Funding Sources:**
The UWL ON THE GO project was funded by a UWL Foundation Small Grant for the 2014-2015 academic year. Funding also came from UWL Undergraduate Research and Creativity, which provided two grants to three students for independent study projects affiliated with the project. James Longhurst's time on the project was made possible by a College of Liberal Studies sabbatical leave for AY 2014-2015.

Unless otherwise noted, images in this report are the work of Sue Lee, UWL University Communications or, of the author, James Longhurst.

The UWL "Green Fund" financed the purchase of new bike repair stations. The grant application was written by students Marina Dvorak and Ian Wright with assistance from James Longhurst and support from the Residence Hall Advisory Council and Student Senate.

This project received significant assistance from UWL University Communications, including poster and logo design as well as publicity. Thanks to Sanja Dojcinovic, Kjerstin Lang, and Jacob Speer.

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Thanks also to Dylan Hamel, Professor Elizabeth Knowles, Professor Joan Bunbury, Professor Gargi Chaudhuri, Matthew Habeck, Christopher Ourada, Dennis Crow, Luke Schmit

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# Problem Definitions

A foundational concept in public policy analysis is known as “defining the problem.” In other words, it is important to make certain to start by stating exactly what problems you intend to address with your research, and your eventual policy prescription.

As we see it, here are the problems to be resolved to make biking and walking better at UWL:

## Problem: Balance future transportation needs with limited resources.

Like governments and institutions big and small across the nation, the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse faces significant and increasing difficulties moving people around at a time that resources are more difficult to come by. Any recommendations for future policy action must acknowledge that reality, and work within significant budgetary constraints to achieve the greatest impact for the least investment.

Example*: Parking.* The most prominent concern of a variety of community members (on campus and off) was the availability of automobile parking. While this perception of limited resource may be overblown when compared to comparable cities or schools, it is a widely shared concern, and new parking space is limited and expensive.

## Problem: Make decisions that reflect community concerns and build for the future.

Viewpoints and preferences on transportation issues vary widely across groups -- and many different groups need to contribute to future transportation solutions on campus to make them successful. Students, transit riders, employees, neighborhood groups, auto commuters, city planners, and administrators all need to be consulted if there are to be major changes to the way that we get around. How can we include them all?

Example: *Safety*. Among students, the greatest concern regarding biking and walking is their safety crossing major automobile thoroughfares bordering campus. But automobile commuters are concerned about access to campus and trip length. What choices will work to address this conflict in the future?

## Problem: Capitalize on existing groups and institutions to improve biking and walking.

There are many different groups already at work in La Crosse and the region working on bicycling and active transportation issues. How can these groups work together?

Example: *Disconnected advocacy*. Students are committed to sustainability and active lifestyle, but have little connection to off-campus bicycle advocacy groups, and no on-campus center of gravity to coordinate existing efforts.

# Executive Summary

In 2014-15 -- funded by a grant from the UWL Foundation -- a collection of faculty, staff and students completed a number of projects meant to investigate biking, walking, and transportation issues on campus. These projects included grant writing, research, field counts, mapping, interviews and focus groups. We intend on creating a collaborative, strategic plan for future bicycle policy on campus. These are our recommendations for future action:

We're in the middle of a nationwide revolution in bicycling, walking, and urban design. **Building on existing strengths,** the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse can take **simple steps** to improve biking and walking and keep up with that revolution. With these actions, the campus can meet **future pressures of parking, sustainability, safety, and community engagement.** The following recommendations should be evaluated for inclusion in the next campus master plan; further discussion of each can be found at the end of this report.

**Recommendation 1: UWL should publicly promote its Bicycle Friendly University bronze-level recognition** from the League of American Bicyclists. This will validate existing efforts and advertise the desirability of the campus to potential students, while incorporating professional feedback and suggestions for future improvement.

**Recommendation 2:** To better organize and encourage the many disconnected efforts on campus, and to focus on education promoting safe active transportation, a **designated bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, bike program manager** or **sustainable transportation coordinator** should be appointed.

**Recommendation 3:** With the assistance of the new Bike/Ped Coordinator, future campus planning and policies **should engage the goals of existing regional and municipal transportation plans** to better integrate the campus with changing commuting behavior and transportation options.

**Recommendation 4**: Future campus construction plans should consider **bicycle-specific traffic design and infrastructure improvements** on campus, including marking lanes, signing bike routes and paths, and introducing appropriate signage.

**Recommendation 5:** A separate, long-term goal should be to provide **covered bicycle parking** as a part of dedicated support for existing campus commuters and to encourage life-long bicycle commuting among students.

# Recommendations and Discussion

**Recommendation 1: UWL should publicly promote its Bicycle Friendly University bronze-level recognition** from the League of American Bicyclists. This will validate existing efforts and advertise the desirability of the campus to potential students, while incorporating professional feedback and suggestions for future improvement.

**Discussion:**

The application for LAB Bike Friendly University Status was submitted August, 2015, and received the Bronze level recognition that fall. The completed application ran to ten pages, five image attachments and 8,000 words, and was reviewed by the ON THE GO steering committee as well as other impacted departments and offices on campus. The LAB response (see summary below and appendix) included recommendations and reviewer input.

Bike Friendly University recognition is a useful signal to incoming students about the campus commitment to healthy lifestyles, safety, and accessibility. As such, it should be promoted on University First-Year experience webpages, promotional and recruiting material, and regional news outlets. Additionally, the LAB BFU Report (excerpt below) can reinforce the ON THE GO findings:

**"The key measures University of Wisconsin – La Crosse should focus on to improve cycling on campus:**

- Work with the City of La Crosse to expand the bike network and increase network connectivity through the use of different types of bike lanes, cycle tracks and shared lane markings both on and around campus. (See Engineering)
- Develop a comprehensive bicycle education program including an ongoing safety and awareness campaign, as well as regular bicycle safety and maintenance classes. Host a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) seminar to increase the number of local LCIs qualified to teach these classes on campus. (See Education)
- Increase the number of campus security officers who patrol on bikes, and appoint a law-enforcement point person to interact with cyclists. (See Enforcement)
- Expand the Bicycle Program Manager's time focused on bicycle projects, or create a new full-time position. (See Evaluation & Planning)
- Fully implement the campus bike master plan and ensure that there is dedicated funding for the implementation, as well as ongoing bicycle infrastructure and programming needs. (See Evaluation & Planning)" – BFU Feedback Report

This recommendation addresses multiple **problems** defined at the beginning of the ON THE GO final report. Responding to expert external recommendations helps the campus plan for the future, while identifying shared priorities helps to address the problem of disconnected advocacy.

**Recommendation 2:** To better organize and encourage the many disconnected efforts on campus, and to focus on education promoting safe active transportation, a **designated bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, bike program manager** or **sustainable transportation coordinator** should be appointed.

**Discussion:**

This part-time position could be placed under a variety of different offices across campus; whatever makes the most sense administratively. But the position description might include coordinating education, advocacy, and planning projects to encourage safe and sustainable transportation options by students and employees. Additionally, this individual could contribute to transportation plans that detail parking management strategies that provide incentives for the use of mass transit and high occupancy vehicles.

The named individual would also best serve as convener or chair of a bicycle/pedestrian advisory committee, which is also lacking on campus. There have been voluntary or ad-hoc versions of this committee in the past, including a Green Transportation Council. But without institutional support or a designated convener, those groups have faded.

Just from the experience of having the ON THE GO steering committee meet and discuss matters irregularly over the 2014/15 academic year, it is clear that several different offices and individuals across campus have a stake in various bicycle projects. Simple discussion between committee members served to spur forward progress on bicycle repair stations, the bait bike program, and the LCI training grant, Having a way for interested parties to meet and collaborate will serve to bring synergy to these various projects.

This is also a meaningful response to a major LAB recommendation for the UWL campus, which states that UWL should “Develop a comprehensive bicycle education program including an ongoing safety and awareness campaign, as well as regular bicycle safety and maintenance classes. Host a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) seminar to increase the number of local LCIs qualified to teach these classes on campus.”

Recommendation 2 is a useful response to the problem defined at the beginning of this report, where any proposed solution would need to overcome current deficiencies to “capitalize on existing groups and institutions to improve biking and walking.” Creating a central coordinator for many different campus bike-related projects would help on-campus advocacy move forward, while also facilitating collaboration with off-campus groups, thus addressing the problem of disconnected advocacy.

Additionally, recommendation 2 is a useful response to campus concerns about the availability of automobile **parking**. Assigning an employee the responsibility of expanding student, faculty and staff usage of alternative transportation through education and encouragement is a better strategy than merely hoping that community members seek out these options on their own.

**Recommendation 3:** With the assistance of the new Bike/Ped Coordinator, future campus planning and policies **should engage the goals of existing regional and municipal transportation plans** to better integrate the campus with changing commuting behavior and transportation options.

**Discussion:** Campus planners should work with the regional planning commission (in this case, the La Crosse Area Planning Commission) and the local authorities of the community (including the La Crosse Common Council, the Bike/Ped Advisory Committees at both the County and City level, and the newly-appointed City Parking Manager) to evaluate the transportation needs of the campus population. Together, campus officials should develop a transportation plan for the campus to effect energy resource conservation and efficient use of transportation resources.

This means that before the next Campus Master Plan is created, the many existing regional plans should be taken into account. One example among many seems obvious: city and regional plans call for a bike route connecting north and south La Crosse through campus, and thus connecting campus to a network of bicycle routes and trails. But on campus, there is no signage, route markings, lane markings, or any indication that this route exists. This hampers both commuters to campus and those who wish to use a connected bicycle transportation network in the city.


Edited detail of map from page 3-24 of City of La Crosse Bike-Ped Master Plan (2012), showing proposed bike boulevards near campus and bike routes crossing campus.

Recommendation 3 addresses the problem of balancing future transportation needs with limited resources by working collaboratively with already-existing regional and city plans to encourage alternative transportation. These routes and boulevards either already exist or will be added in coming years; extending them on to university property leverages existing resources to lower demand for parking or automobile capacity of arterial routes.

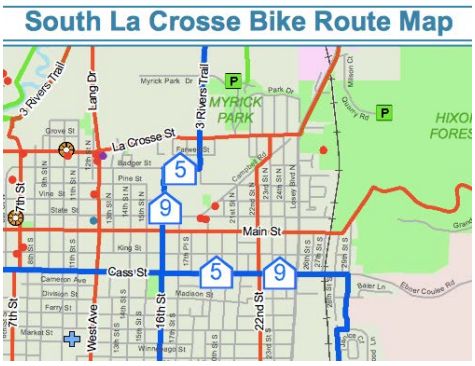
**Recommendation 4**: Future campus construction plans should consider **bicycle-specific traffic design and infrastructure improvements** on campus, including marking lanes, signing bike routes and paths, and introducing appropriate signage.

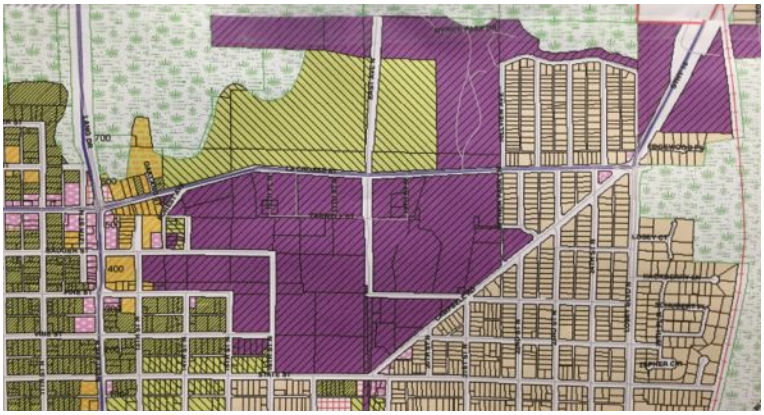
**Discussion:** These infrastructure improvements should be a part of a larger commitment to alternative transportation that will help deal with parking and commuting demands, which may include pedestrian walkways, bikeways, bike routes, bicycles storage racks, car and van pools, and, to the extent feasible, improved mass transit services.

## 4A. Marking lanes on Badger Street and 16th Street Multi-Use Corridor

Badger Street between East and West Avenues, and the 16th Street walkway between and Badger Street and Vine Street, are heavily-used commute routes. They could benefit from marked lanes for bicycle usage: to encourage right-way cycling, to disambiguate interactions between cyclists and pedestrians, to urge cyclists to ride in predictable paths, and to make bicycle transportation more attractive to commuters. Bicyclist and pedestrian safety alike can be improved by directing cyclists into predictable lanes. Design options for Badger could include buffered lanes, green lanes, two-way cycle tracks or a bicycle boulevard. The 16th Street multi-use corridor requires lateral space, marked lanes, and signage (see "Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook 4.2 for details.).

On city and regional bicycle route maps, the 16th Street walkway is seemingly designated as a bicycle route. However, there are no marked lanes, bike route signs or route-finding signs on campus. The 16th Street path is therefore planned as a bike route, but with no infrastructure. The previously-discussed plans for cross-campus bike routes differ slightly; the earlier LAPC plan designates a bike route up the 16th Street walkway, across Badger Street, and northward; the City Bike/Ped Master Plan crosses campus up the 16th Street walkway, then across Pine, then northward. It is important to note that neither of these plans are currently reflected on the ground; there is no marked bike route across campus.



On City of La Crosse Planning Department maps, the 16th Street walkway is marked as a public thoroughfare (white) while the full length of Badger Street is not.

Currently, the 16th street walkway is designed for pedestrians only while Badger Street still physically resembles a motor vehicle road but allows for bike, ped, and official vehicles. The next campus plan should add bike lanes to the 16th Street Walkway and Badger Street, creating north/south and east/west routes. Marked bicycle lanes can safely conduct traffic through heavy pedestrian areas. Many design options for shared space exist, from cycle tracks to bicycle boulevards to transit corridors:

| | |
|---|---|
|  UC Davis |  Stanford University |
| No motor vehicle Bicycle pedestrian thoroughfare, with roundabout intersection, UC Davis, via Federal Highway Administration | Bicycle / Pedestrian thoroughfare, Stanford University, via the Federal Highway Administration. |
|  |  |
| University of Arizona cycle track and pedestrian path. | Combined pedestrian / transit / bicycle corridor in Seattle; photo Adam Coppola Photography via Green Lane Project |

## 4B. Appropriately sign preferred bike paths and routes

The next campus plan should not only include wayfinding signage for bike routes, but also remove incorrect signage that improperly discourages bicycle use from these routes.


*Photo by author, Fall 2014.*

For example, this sign, currently located eastbound on Badger Street (and previously also posted westbound at Badger and East before the start of construction on the new student center building) has the unintentional effect of incorrectly excluding bicycles -- legally considered vehicles -- from use of this road. A bicycle is a vehicle; a sign that says “no vehicles allowed” bans it. The reference is apparently to UWS 18.04 (3), which specifically notes that the intended prohibition is “including bicycles”. This cannot be correct.

UWS 18.04 (3) reads:

> “All provisions of ch. 346, Stats., entitled "Rules of the Road," which are applicable to highways as defined in s. 340.01 (22), Stats., and which are not in conflict with any specific provisions of these regulations, are hereby adopted for the regulation of all vehicular traffic, including bicycles, on all roadways, including those off-street areas designated as parking facilities, under the control of the board and are intended to apply with the same force and effect. All traffic shall obey the posted signs approved by the chief administrative officer regulating such traffic.”


“No Vehicles Allowed” sign previously located westbound on Badger. It unintentionally discourages bicycles, legally considered vehicles.

That “No Vehicles Allowed” sign joins several others, intended to keep motor vehicle traffic from entering the roadway. But unintentionally, *they discourage bicycle usage on Badger*, and fail to make bicycle commuting welcome on a length of road that *should* be a major through-route for cyclists coming to campus from off-campus student housing.



Badger Street signs discouraging auto use, also unintentionally discourage bicycle use.

These signs meant to discourage automobile usage should be augmented by signs welcoming cyclists and directing their route and behavior; Badger should be marked as a “Bicycle Route” with arrows and direction finding. Alternatively, signage could begin with *MUTCD* Section 9B.08 NO MOTOR VEHICLES (R5-3), and add exceptions for transit, service, and emergency vehicles.

Finally, Badger Street is also incorrectly signed with “sharrows”. The *MUTCD* includes a “Shared Lane Marking” in section 9C.07, commonly referred to as a “sharrow” or “share arrow.” However, usage of this sign on the section of Badger Street closed to on-street parking and motor vehicle usage is incorrect, as the road is by definition not shared. Of the five recommended options for sharrow placement, only the last might conceivably be applied to a road without vehicle traffic:

A. Assist bicyclists with lateral positioning in a shared lane with on-street parallel parking in order to reduce the chance of a bicyclist's impacting the open door of a parked vehicle,
B. Assist bicyclists with lateral positioning in lanes that are too narrow for a motor vehicle and a bicycle to travel side by side within the same traffic lane,
C. Alert road users of the lateral location bicyclists are likely to occupy within the traveled way,
D. Encourage safe passing of bicyclists by motorists, and
E. Reduce the incidence of wrong-way bicycling.

On-location behavior counts reported below demonstrate a very high incidence of wrong-way cycling, meaning that if they don’t accomplish the last goal, the sharrows here are not accomplishing any purpose at all.

Instead of marking the road as a shared use facility (which it is not), a road closed to through traffic such as Badger Street would be better served by considering it a pedestrian way/transit connection/bikeway. The signage and markings should follow MUTCD Section 9B.20, Bicycle Guide Signs. This may include marked bike lanes, protected bike lanes, or cycletracks, as discussed below.

## 4C. Signage indicating preferred cyclist and pedestrian behavior

The UWL campus lacks much in the way of signage, painted lanes, or markings indicating preferred cyclist and pedestrian behavior. Except for sharrows on Badger Street, there are almost no directions to shape cyclist behavior. Encouraging walking and biking -- and enhancing safety -- should include carefully-chosen direction for preferred outcomes. This would include intended routes through campus for cyclists, and appropriate behavior for cyclists and pedestrians alike.



Guidance signs on the University of Pennsylvania campus

This signage should not be considered a priority; these types of signs have fairly low impact on behavior. Recommendations 4A and 4B should be a higher priority, as they are much more likely to increase safety, encourage bicycle commuting and reduce concern amongst pedestrians.

**Recommendation 5:** A separate, long-term goal should be to provide **covered bicycle parking** as a part of dedicated support for existing campus commuters and to encourage life-long bicycle commuting among students.

## Discussion:

Providing covered or indoor bicycle parking is a long-term goal to change bicycle commuting behavior. The League of American Bicyclists -- and bicycle commuting professionals -- recommend that a new innovation in bicycle infrastructure can significantly change commuting behavior, and encourage a larger percentage of the population to adopt bicycle commuting as a life-long pursuit. This accomplishes many goals, including health and wellness, sustainability, and managing demand for automobile parking. Particularly in the climate of Wisconsin, leaving bicycles outside on a daily basis can degrade their mechanics and discourage regular use. To facilitate lifetime usage of bicycles as practical transportation, managing them as a valued resource demonstrates a commitment to their usage. Covered bicycle parking can be a significantly less expensive investment than automobile parking, as many more bicycles can fit into the space of one parked automobile. Additionally, the covering does not have to be a free-standing building, but could be accomplished through addition of awnings, gazebos, or open-sided barns.

In previous decades, this sort of accommodation was offered at UWL through individual bike lockers; six of which can be found on the west side of Murphy Library at present. However, this amenity was only useful to a vanishingly small number of commuter cyclists on campus with covered parking making up 0.28% of available parking spots. Newer design goals, on the other hand, recommend covered bicycle parking as comprising 50% of all available bicycle parking spots.

However, as these are structures, their inclusion into the campus landscape would need to be carefully examined as a part of the next Campus Master Plan. They cannot be added piecemeal. The next Campus Master Plan should choose appropriate locations and identify design standards, so that covered parking can be added with new building construction or renovation in coming years.

*Example of covered bicycle parking in Boston, from Toole Design Group website.*

# Fact-Finding I: Online Survey

## Winter 2014 ON THE GO Online Survey

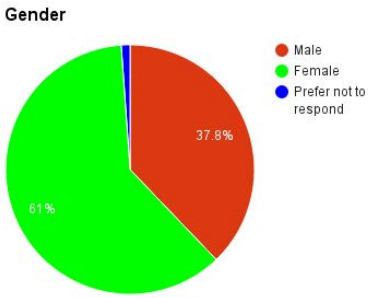
In order to gather more information about campus community behaviors and preferences, we created an online survey. With approval from the UWL Institutional Review Board and using premiums from local bike shops and manufacturers (subsidized by the UWL Foundation small grant) as a means to encourage participation, the survey went online November 22nd, 2014 and closed December 17th. In all, 526 valid sets of responses were received for the twenty-five questions about commuting behavior, preferences, and demographics.

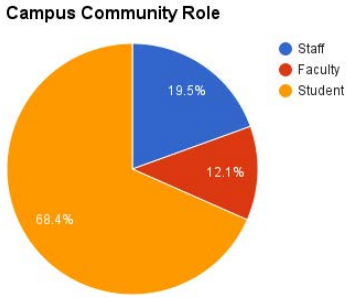

### Summary of Online Survey Results

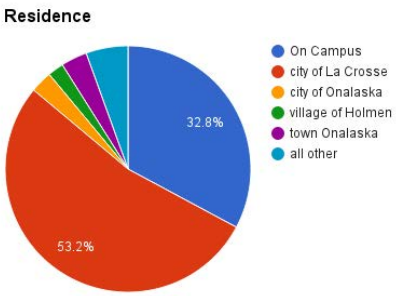
The most significant findings from the online survey are that a very **high percentage of respondents reported walking** (39%) or **bicycling** (21%) as their primary mode of transportation. Additionally, a very high number of respondents indicated that “if [they] could do things differently” they would **prefer to travel to and from campus using public transportation** (representing an increase of 360% over reported behavior) or bicycle (increase of 311%). This demonstrates an **unfilled demand for alternative transportation options** that fit these respondents’ needs. Finally, most respondents lived less than a mile off campus, making a car-free lifestyle possible for many.

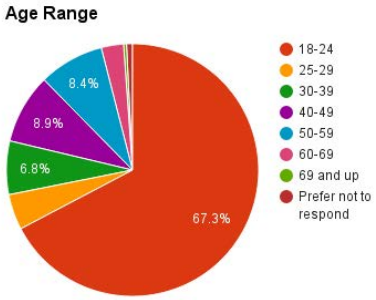
## Respondent Demographics

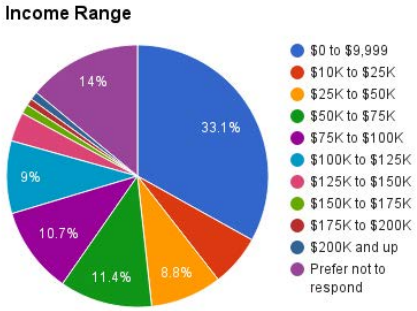
Survey respondents were representative of gender, age, and campus role demographics of the overall campus community. There was a slight over-reporting of female participants (a known phenomenon in online surveys), but since the overall student population is 57% female, this 61% female participation rate is not out of line. All respondents skew young, reflecting the student population, and the most-commonly owned vehicle is a bicycle. In addition, just 13% of respondents reported owning only a car.

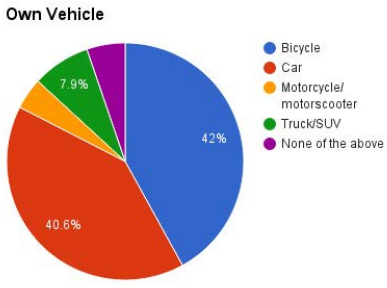


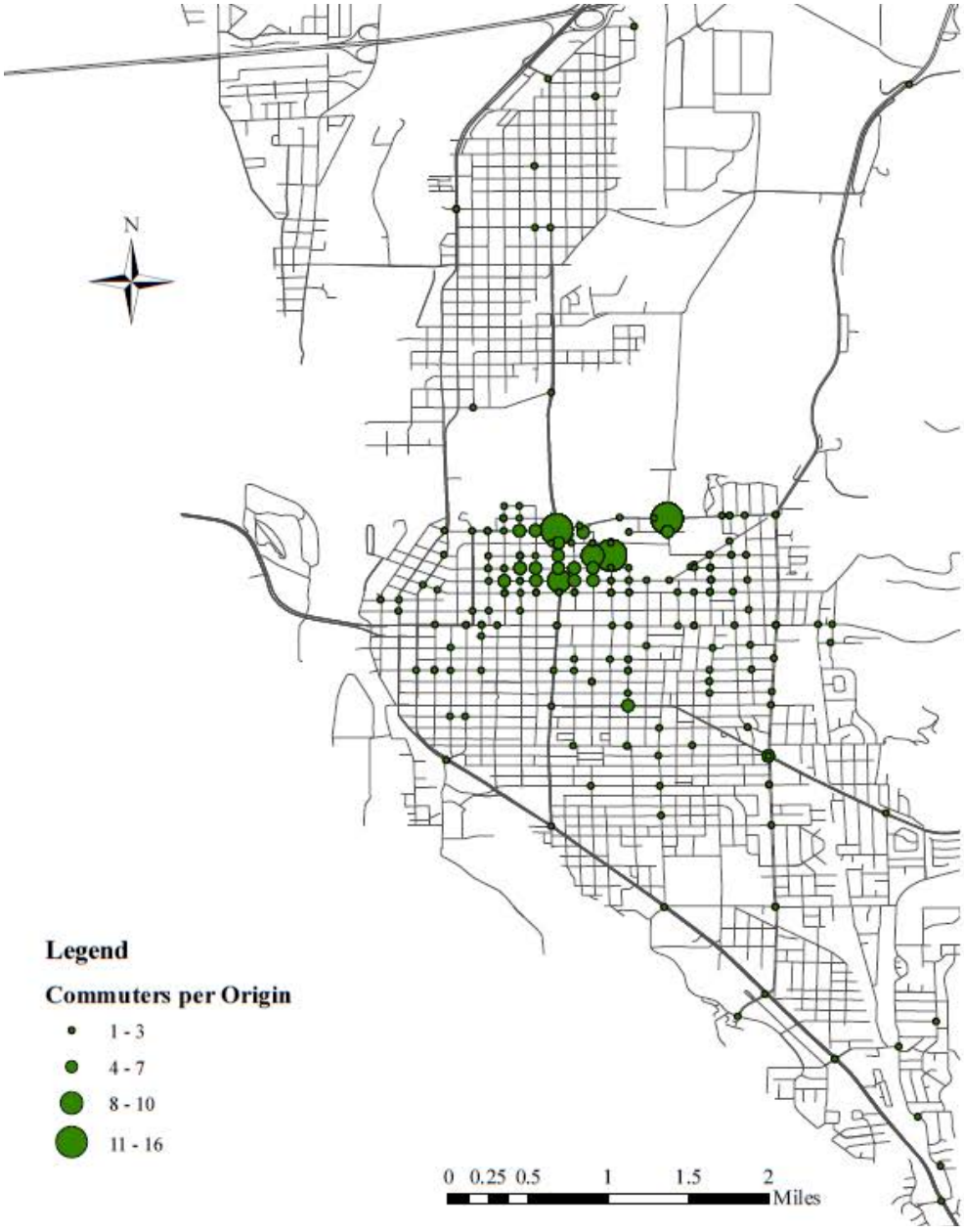



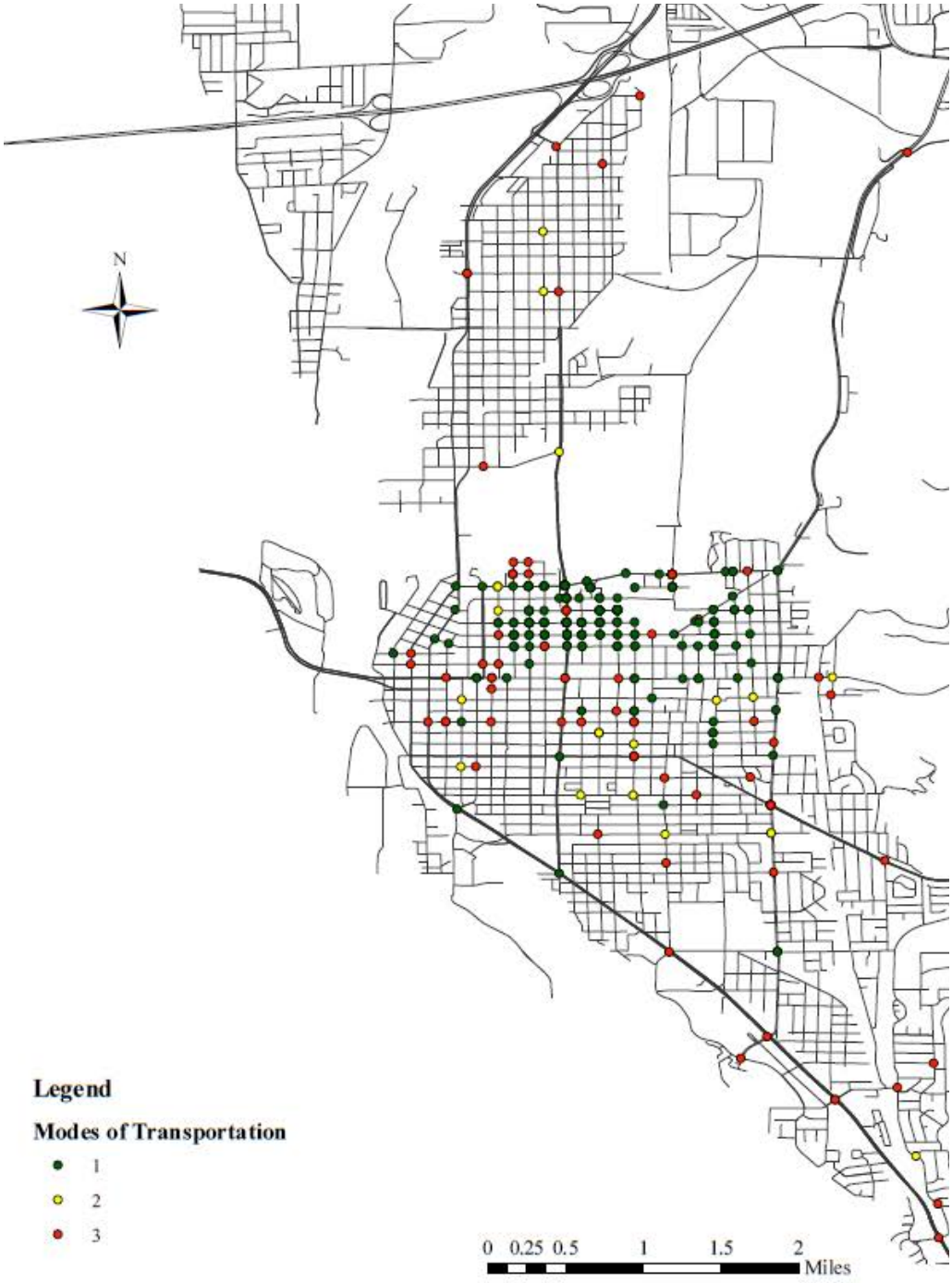
## Trip Origin Map

Student researcher Corinne Rabay analyzed the reported origins of the ON THE GO survey respondents' commute onto campus. The most significant findings include the fact that most commuters began their trip to campus within approximately 5 blocks from the edge of campus. Average commute was less than one mile. Thus, most were within easy walking or biking distance.



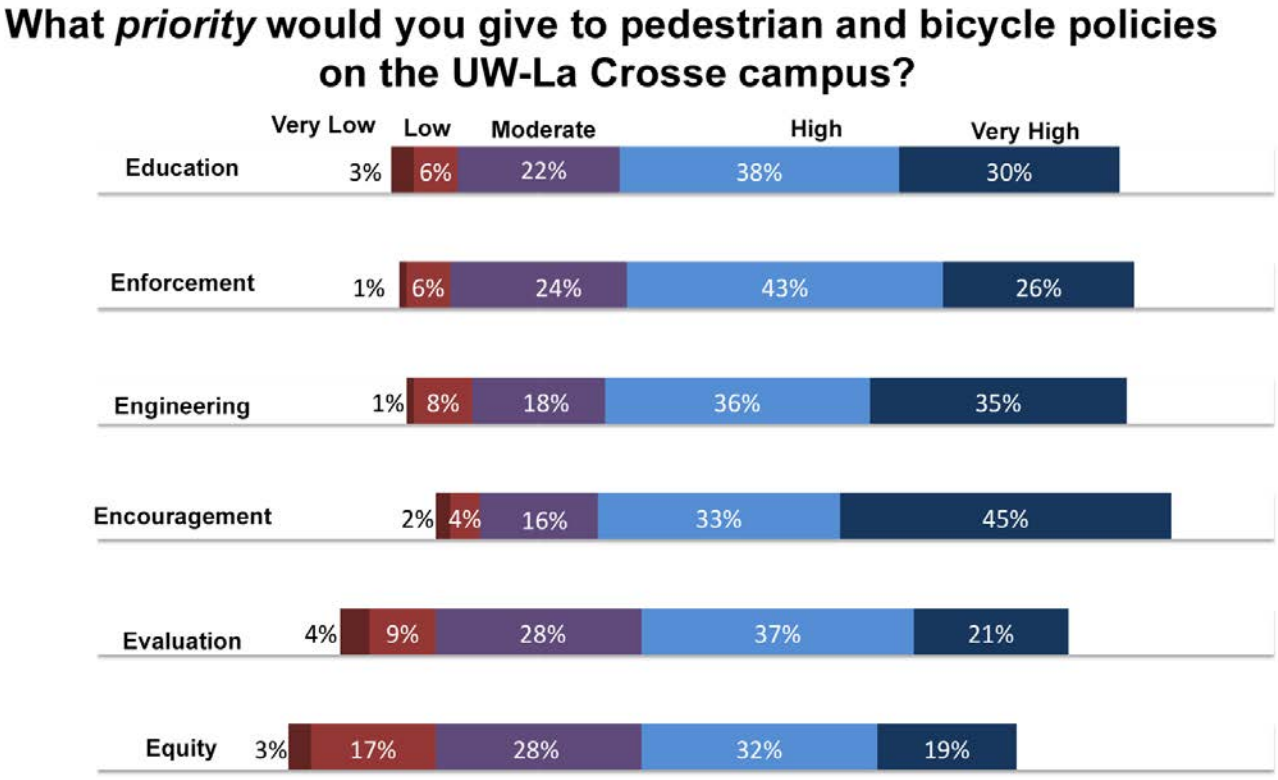
## Commute Mode Map

In Rabay's analysis, a majority of commuters traveled with sustainable modes of transportation, especially closer to campus. Farther from campus, a mix of transportation modes is observed, although they are mostly single occupancy vehicles. In the map below, sustainable modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, rollerblading, etc. were reclassified as mode1; group transit such as riding the public bus or carpooling were reclassified as 2; Single occupant vehicles were reclassified as 3.

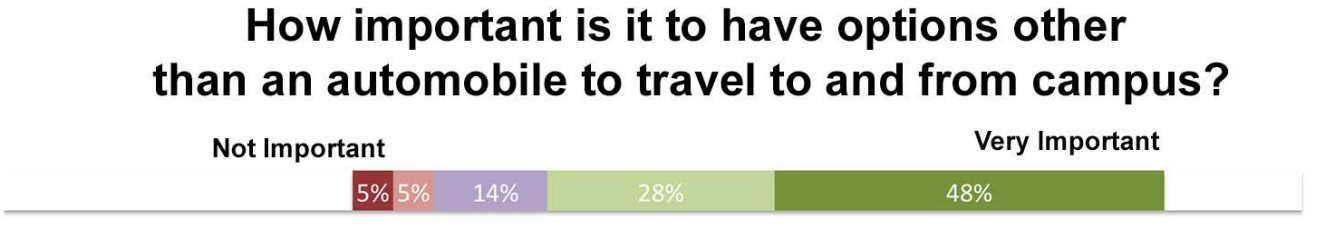


## Perceptions and Opinions

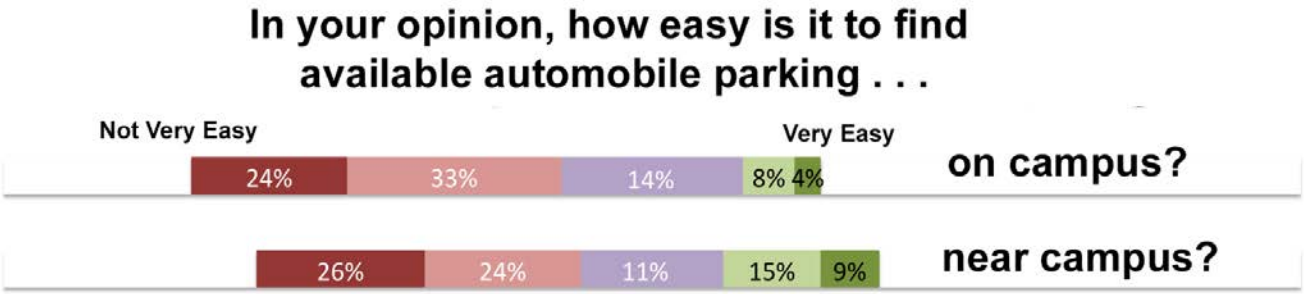
When asked their opinion about the priority of different types of advocacy to address pedestrian and bicycle issues, respondents had a noticeable preference for **encouragement**, defined as "creating a strong culture that welcomes and celebrates bicycling and walking," with an average response of 3.9 on a 5 point scale, and a greater rate of "Very High" prioritization than any other category. But respondents also highlighted **engineering**, defined as "creating safe and convenient places to walk, ride and park," with an average prioritization of 4.1 out of 5.



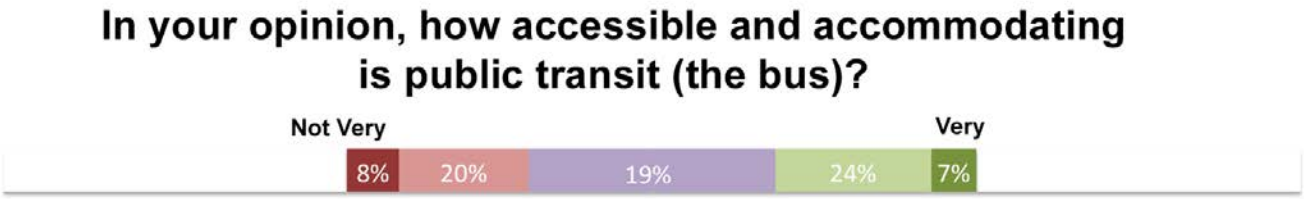

In the most statistically significant result from this section of the survey, 2/3 of all respondents indicated that they felt it was important or very important to have options other than an automobile to travel to and from campus (average response 4.1 on 1-5 Likert scale):



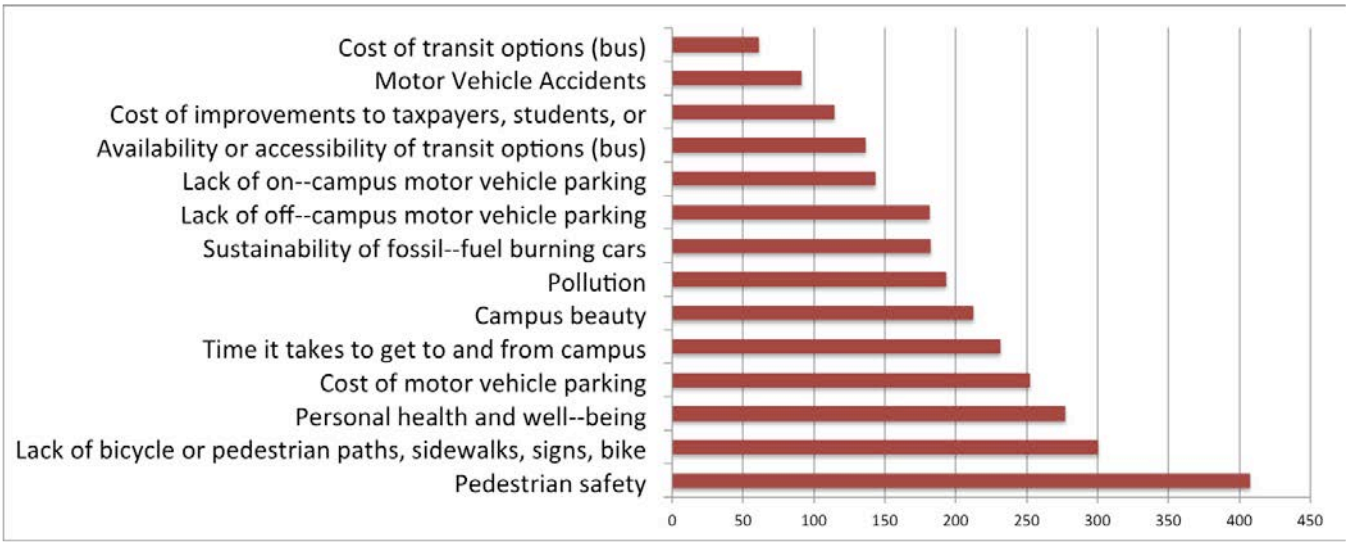
It is possible that one reason that survey respondents felt that alternative transportation was important was because they felt parking was scarce. The respondents showed great concern about the availability of automobile parking, both on and near campus. They were more concerned about campus on average, but slightly more respondents were “very concerned” about near-campus parking, resulting in similar average responses to the two separate questions (average 2.4 and 2.3):




In general, respondents did *not* feel that transit (defined as the MTU bus and the UWL Safe Ride program) was easily accessible or accommodating, although a very large percentage were neutral on the topic. (It is possible that neutral responses indicate lack of knowledge or experience with MTU.)



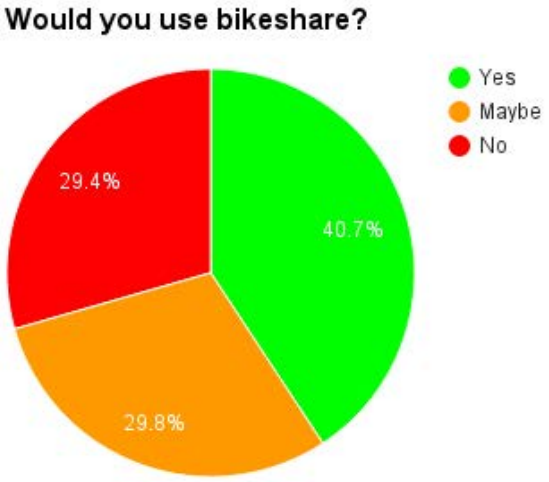
By a wide margin, when asked to “choose any topics related to transportation on or around the UW--L campus that are of most interest to you,” respondents indicated that “**pedestrian safety**” was of the greatest interest. “Cost of transit options” was the lowest; students have free use of MTU buses. While parking was of concern, it was chosen predominantly by those whose primary mode of transportation was the personal automobile; the preponderance of student respondents indicated biking or walking as their primary mode of travel, and thus did not choose parking as an issue. The second-most interesting issue was lack of infrastructure for biking and walking, a logical corollary to the issue of “pedestrian safety”.

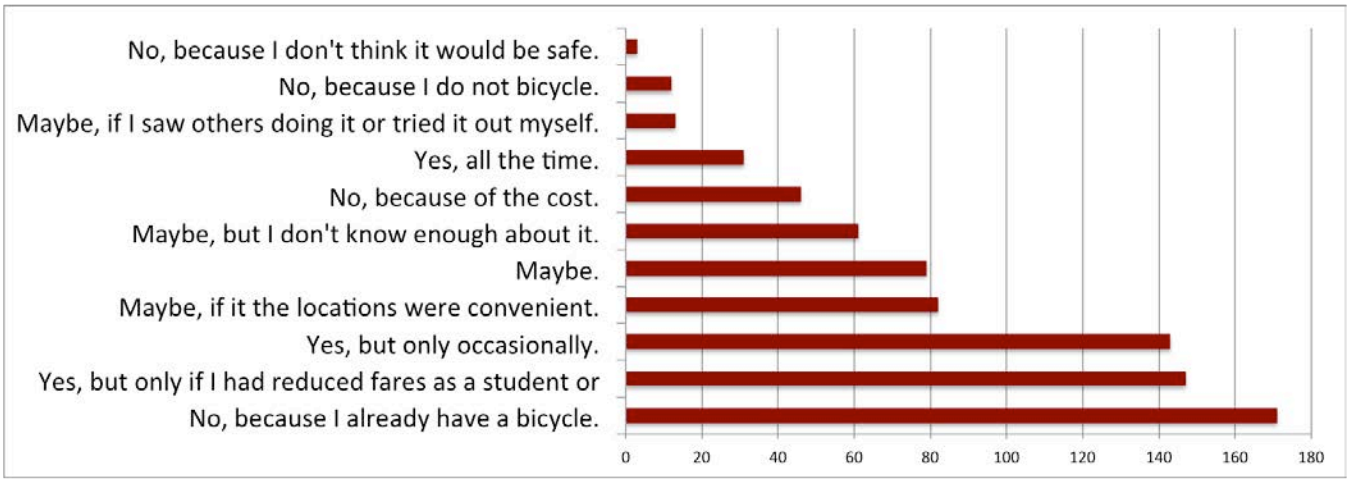



Respondents could also write in other concerns; those included thoughts about biking and pedestrian safety, bicycle-specific infrastructure, ways of managing parking, and projects to encourage carpooling:

- Bicyclists that monopolize sidewalks without regard to pedestrians and bicyclists who seem unaware that they need to obey stopsigns and rules of the road.
- Biking
- It would be cool to have bike only "roads" on campus... Right now it is scary to walk with bikes flying around you... people need to either learn proper biking signals or they need their own roads.
- bike theft around campus
- Abundance of off-campus 2 hour parking
- Why does everyone have to drive around in their own goddamn car all day? And also, LAX isn't that big!
- reducing UWL parking in nearby neighborhoods
- carpool registry
- Park n Ride or carpool options
- Crosswalk safety
- A Warm place to put my bike in the winter so it doesn't get caked with ice.

When asked “if the city of La Crosse had a bikeshare system, would you use it?” respondents were positive, with 70% choosing one or more “yes” or “maybe” options as part of their response. In the question, bikeshare was defined as “a system where, by swiping a credit card at a ‘docking station,’ users can rent a bicycle for short trips or a day to ride around town.”



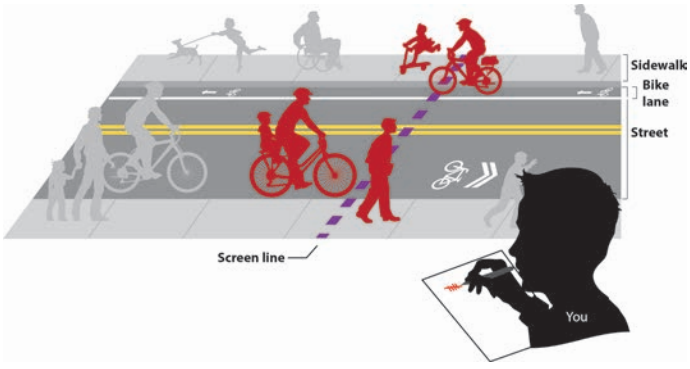

Respondents could also add “other” write-in responses:

- Yes, if the bikes were better than mine
- No, because I prefer to build and maintain my own bicycles.
- It needs to be reduced fare for all as long as the bike is returned
- physical limitations
- I might use it when I have guests in town
- If my personal bike was out of service
- La Crosse needs a network of safe protected bike lanes
- No, because I don't ride around town. I have other responsibilities when I leave campus.
- No, because I don't think it would be safe.
- Depends on the cost, have my own bike at home
- No, because if I have to leave campus for appointments, time is a factor and wouldn't want to miss too much work

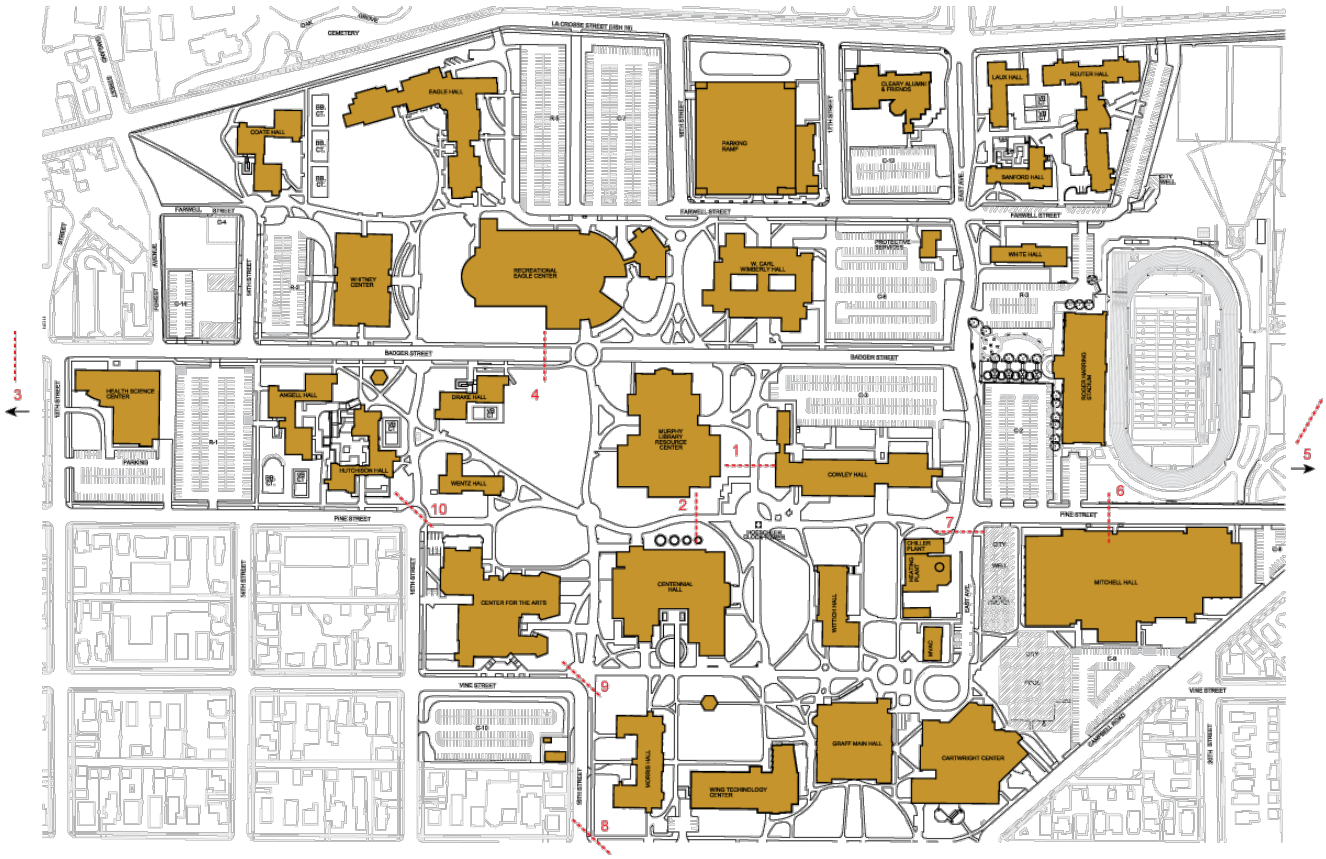
# Fact-Finding II: Bike Ped Census and Focus Groups


## Fall 2015 Campus Screenline Count

One of the first steps to planning for future needs is understanding present demands. That's why one of the first goals of the ON THE GO project was establishing a baseline count of pedestrians and bicyclists on campus, with a six-hour-long count conducted by campus community volunteers.




Following industry best practices, this census was conducted using "screenline" count methodologies, where observers establish an imaginary line at key choke points, then count all pedestrians and cyclists who cross the line. Where possible, two volunteers were staffed to the busiest positions, to capture both in and out traffic. In all, eleven locations across campus were established, hoping to capture different modes of travel in and out of campus on major pedestrian and bicycle routes. The decision was made to limit the count to six one-hour shifts, starting at 8AM and ending at 2PM, based on classroom scheduling, which is heaviest in those time periods and drops off significantly after 2PM. Future counts may wish to highlight just the busiest count locations from this 2014 count, since organizing this large number of volunteers was logistically quite difficult.




**Screenline count locations**

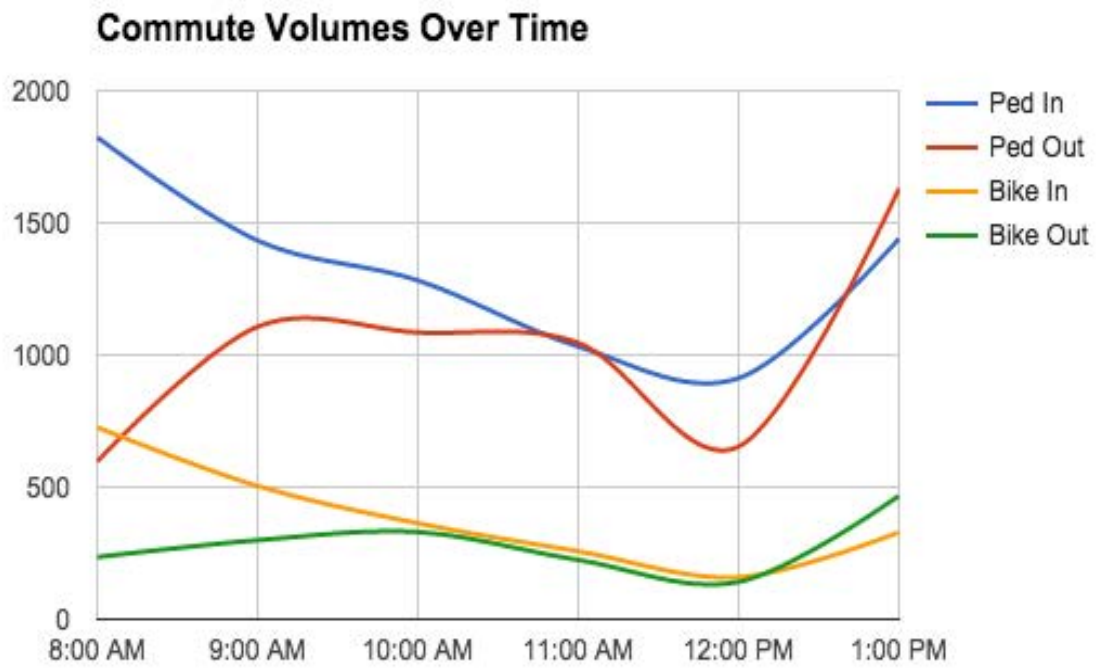
In this initial count, 78 volunteers turned in 51 tally sheets from 11 locations over 6 hours, and counted 14,040 walkers, 4,034 cyclists and 238 others (rollerbladers, skateboarders, assisted mobility) on a Wednesday with light rain. By rank, the busiest locations for pedestrians were 1, 2, 4, 9, and 10 -- that is, the busiest places for walkers were on the paths near Hoechsler tower, on Badger Street south of the Eagle REC, and at the entrances to campus from the student housing to the southwest. By far, the busiest walkway on campus was also one of the narrowest: the count location between Murphy Library and Cowley Science Center saw more than *one thousand pedestrians an hour* on two occasions. The top two pedestrian count locations, by number, were:

| PED | 8:00 AM | | 9:00 AM | | 10:00 AM | | 11:00 AM | | 12:00 PM | | 1:00 PM | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Location | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out |
| 1 | 393 | 243 | 331 | 344 | 250 | 350 | 574 | 555 | 190 | 110 | 568 | 477 |
| 2 | 206 | 128 | 273 | 188 | 255 | 78 | 140 | 60 | 116 | 124 | 212 | 233 |

The most-travelled locations for bicyclists were not entirely identical to the busiest pedestrian locations. Instead, location 4, 9, 3, and 10 were the top four count locations for cyclists, in that order. In other words, the largest numbers of cyclists were counted at the entrances to campus from the student housing to the south west, and along Badger St., coming from and heading to the off-campus student housing to the west. The top two bike count locations, by number:

| BIKE | 8:00 AM | | 9:00 AM | | 10:00 AM | | 11:00 AM | | 12:00 PM | | 1:00 PM | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Location | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out | In | Out |
| 4 | 186 | 61 | 109 | 88 | 82 | 77 | 102 | 107 | 34 | 40 | 91 | 92 |
| 9 | 136 | 50 | 73 | 33 | 86 | 74 | | | 39 | 22 | 50 | 67 |

Over the course of the day, the highest commute volumes overall were in the early morning, falling off mid morning, then increasing again in the early afternoon. Commuters in to campus were highest in the morning, but the flow of people flipped after noon, with commuters outbound overtaking commuters inbound.



## Bike Rack Occupancy Count

In addition to counting *moving* bicyclists, the September 24 census counted *parked* bicycles at buildings across campus. Building managers were asked to note the number of parked bicycles at 10:30 and 1:30, with volunteers establishing a baseline for the day at 6:30AM. In addition, managers were asked to note bikes that were unlocked, locked to trees or other things that weren't bike racks, and locked to themselves. (These behaviors are indicators that cyclists perceive the available bike parking to be full, or possibly indicators that cyclists don't know how to lock their bikes correctly.)

For 39 separate locations across campus, volunteers identified 2,179 available rack "elements," defined as possible locations to lock a bicycle. The two extant types of bike rack on campus are (1) an older metal pipe, sometimes filled with cement, and offering only a single u-shaped attachment point, and (2) a thicker, black-painted rack with a circular ring, built by DeRo. Using criteria developed in the 2002 report "Bicycle Parking Guidelines" by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, type (1) was counted as a single rack element, while type (2) was counted as a double rack element.

Type (1) older post, with unlocked bike, at Wing.

Type (2) DeRo post, outside Wimberly.

Counting the entire campus, the total number of locked bikes never exceeded the number of available racks.

| | 6:30 AM | 10:30 AM | 1:30 PM |
|---|---|---|---|
| # bikes | 815 | 1774 | 1520 |
| % of available | 37.40% | 81.41% | 69.76% |

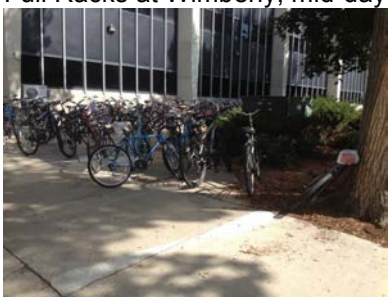
However, that total number of bikes on campus doesn't fully represent the way that cyclists were getting *around* campus. In summary, bicycles were parked at dorms in the morning, and then parked at academic buildings midday. There, they were joined by a very large number of bicycles that had appeared from off campus, more than doubling the number of bicycles on campus by noon. At specific locations at specific times, the number of bikes greatly exceeded available parking. By percentage of available rack elements occupied, the most full locations were the Center for the Arts, Mitchell, Health Science Center, and Cowley, with 195%, 166%, 139% and 138% of available bike racks occupied.

By number, the top locations for locked bicycles at 6:30AM were all dorms: Eagle, Angell, Sanford, Reuter, White, Coate, Hutchison, and Laux. The dorms in the morning had several locations where more bikes were parked than racks were available, including Hutchison's West side, which had 157% of available racks filled. But by 10:30AM, the bikes locked at dorms had vastly decreased while the academic buildings had filled with bicycles not only from the dorms but also from off campus. By rank, the locations with the most parked bikes were Centennial, Cowley, Wimberly, Graff, the Health Sciences Center, Eagle, Angell and Murphy.


Full Racks at Wimberly, mid-day


Full racks at Wimberly, morning


Full rack, Northwest Centennial


Full racks and overflow at Cowley


Heavily-used racks, Cowley, mid-winter


Full racks and overflow at Cowley

Not surprisingly, these locations had large numbers of bikes unlocked, locked to themselves, or locked to trees and other things that weren't bike racks; the most obvious problem location at 10:30 and 1:30 was Cowley Science Center, with four locations of only the older type of one-element bike racks. At 1:30 PM at Cowley, there were 63 bikes unlocked, locked to themselves, or locked to trees or benches.

| Location | | Occupied bike parking, by percent of available 6:30 AM | 10:30 AM | 1:30 PM |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Center for the Arts | N/E combined | 20.83% | 195.83% | 150.00% |
| Mitchell | Northeast | 0.00% | 166.67% | 0.00% |
| Health Science Center | N/W combined | 15.15% | 139.39% | 131.82% |
| Cowley Hall | N/S/E/W combined | 4.48% | 138.81% | 139.55% |

Perceived lack of parking availibility was a partial cause of incorrect locking behavior, with a large number of improperly locked bikes at locations where racks were mostly or totally full. Incorrect locking behavior includes locking bicycles to themselves (which is inherently insecure), locking bikes to trees (damaging the trees and getting in the way of landscape maintenace), or locking to benches, railings or other structures (blocking access to doorways for people with wheelchairs or accesibility devices, and making snow removal, maintenance, deliveries, and emergency response more difficult.)


Locked to self at Cowley


Unlocked at Eagle


Locked to self at Murphy

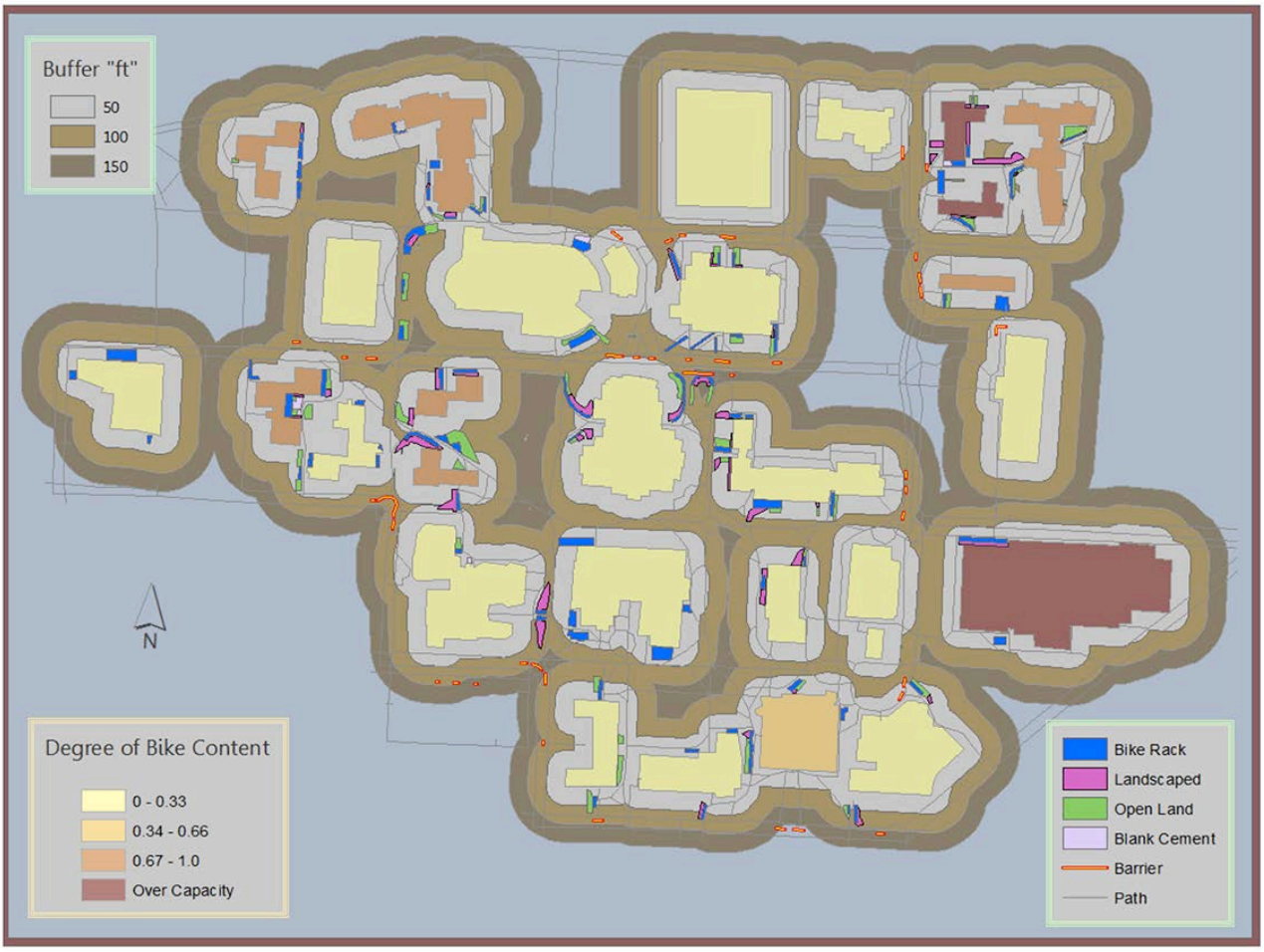

Improperly locked at Wing


Locked to bench at Murphy

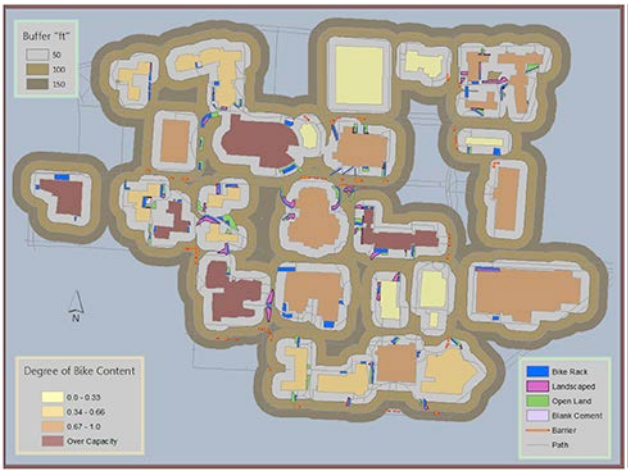

Locked to tree at Centennial

Student Ryan Sneath used this data to create several heat maps of bike parking on campus, showing the flow of parked bikes from residence halls in the morning to academic buildings at mid-day.

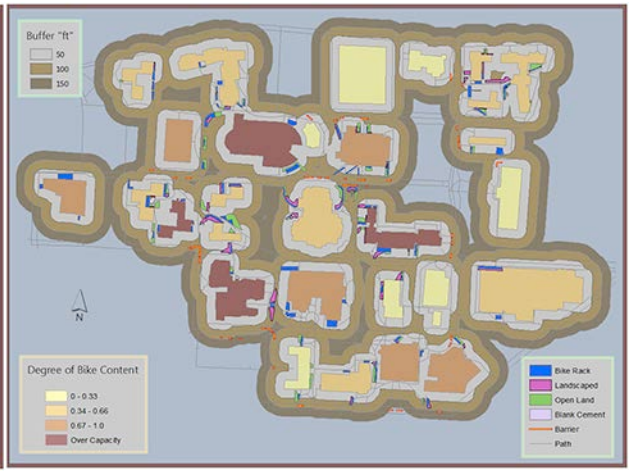
6:30AM




10:30AM



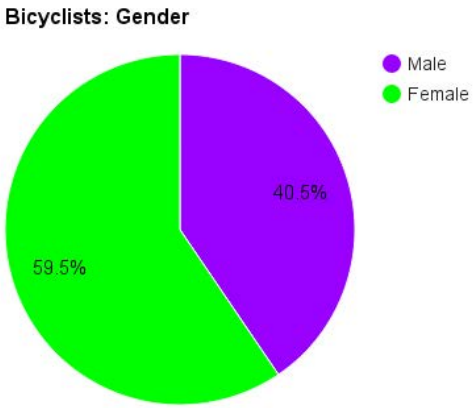
1:30PM

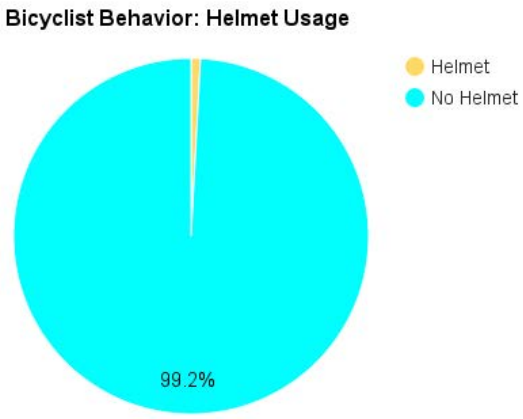


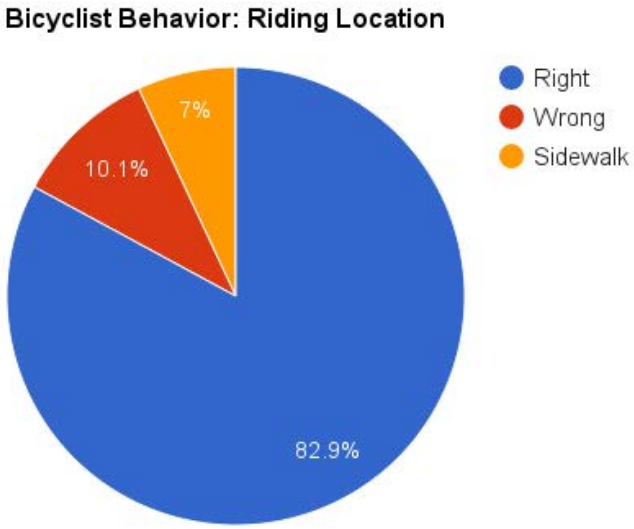
## Demographics and Behavior

As a follow-up to the September 2014 bike census, a smaller number of volunteers were assigned in October 2014 to a single location – previously determined as the busiest bicycle spot. The goal here was to examine just cyclists, and to examine a few key variables: the gender of cyclists, whether they were wearing helmets or not, and their behavior on the major east/west corridor of Badger Street. At the location of the count, Badger Street is closed to motor vehicle traffic; only authorized university vehicles and the MTU bus use that 0.49 mile length, which is a “bike boulevard” in all but name.

The data collected indicate that on-campus cyclists are very comfortable with cycling short distances as transportation without feeling a need for a helmet. Additionally, the impressive 59.5% of female cyclists actually over represents the campus population, belying the national trend for under-representation of women; by comparison, a Los Angeles count in 2011 recorded 17% female. And 2011 ACS reported a 30% rate of women cycling in Wisconsin, and a national average of 13%. Finally, the lack of bike lanes or markings on Badger lends itself to wrong-way and sidewalk cycling, with wrong-way cycling double the rate recorded in the 2011 Los Angeles count, one of the few to record that behavior.



## Crash and Injury Data

The Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS) Laboratory manages and makes available crash data to assist in transportation planning. Requested TOPSLAB data for the last five years lists 174 crashes that included a bicycle in the municipality of La Crosse. Thirteen of those are reported on or immediately surrounding the UWL campus; the total number might be inflated from that reported elsewhere, as it includes incidents that are not on university-owned property. Only one of the thirteen crashes had incapacitating injury (the most severe category below fatal). That crash occurred off campus but on a major intersection by which students commute to campus (West and La Crosse). There were no fatalities recorded among bicyclists in the reported time period. TOPSLAB data includes no reports of non-automobile/bicycle crashes on campus, though that does not mean that no such incidents occurred. Of the thirteen incidents that involved bicycles, nine incidents were on West.

| Date | On Street | At Street | Injury Severity |
|---|---|---|---|
| 06/19/2013 | West Ave N | La Crosse St | Incapacitating |
| 03/04/2011 | La Crosse St | West Ave N | Non- Incapacitating |
| 05/03/2010 | La Crosse St | West Ave N | Non- Incapacitating |
| 08/30/2012 | West Ave N | Badger St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 09/30/2014 | 12th St | La Crosse St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 07/07/2010 | 13th St | Badger St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 05/28/2013 | East Ave N | Myrick Park Dr | Non- Incapacitating |
| 05/21/2014 | Pine St | West Ave N | Non- Incapacitating |
| 07/18/2012 | State St | 17th St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 09/19/2010 | La Crosse St | West Ave N | Property Damage Only |
| 04/24/2012 | West Ave N | Badger St | Property Damage Only |
| 10/26/2012 | West Ave N | Badger St | Property Damage Only |
| 03/26/2012 | West Ave N | Badger St | Property Damage Only |

Incidents involving pedestrians have been slightly more common than those involving bicyclists in La Crosse over the last five years, with 146 incidents involving significant injury to one or more pedestrians. While six of those resulted in fatalities, only one was located near the UWL campus. In all, 15 incidents involving pedestrians occurred on or near the UWL campus over the last five years, including one fatality, two resulting in incapacitating injury, and eight resulting in severe injury. Ten of the fifteen were at or near various intersections on West Avenue.

| Date | On Street | At Street | Injury Severity |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12/10/2012 | West Ave N | State St | Fatality |
| 10/21/2014 | State St | 17th St | Incapacitating |
| 10/25/2012 | State St | Campbell Rd | Incapacitating |
| 05/14/2011 | La Crosse St | West Ave N | Non- Incapacitating |
| 09/18/2011 | West Ave N | La Crosse St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 03/16/2012 | West Ave N | La Crosse St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 03/07/2013 | State St | West Ave N | Non- Incapacitating |
| 06/06/2015 | La Crosse St | East Ave N | Non- Incapacitating |
| 12/02/2014 | West Ave N | Badger St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 09/22/2014 | West Ave N | State St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 09/27/2014 | West Ave N | Vine St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 01/27/2011 | La Crosse St | West Ave N | Non- Incapacitating |
| 10/14/2014 | 16th St | State St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 04/16/2011 | Vine St | 15th St | Non- Incapacitating |
| 09/28/2013 | West Ave N | Badger St | Property Damage Only |

## Stakeholder Interviews

Join us to make UW-L campus a friendly place for all commuters and modes of transportation.

This is a **listening session** or **stakeholder interview** with people and groups impacted by campus transportation. Please answer the following question from your perspective; I'll take notes for use in the final report, but will only attribute to general sources ("a university employee," "neighborhood association member," etc.,) and not by name.

**More information: uwlax.edu/bikeped**

**PRESENT**: What *topics* related to moving people are of greatest concern to you *now* (like equality of access, cost, livability, parking, sustainability, safety, beauty)?

What specific locations on or around the UW-L campus are of the most *concern* to you when it comes to biking and walking safely?

What specific locations on or around campus are *good examples* of ways to mix biking, walking, transit and vehicles? Why?

**FUTURE**: Of the 6 E's of bicycle and pedestrian advocacy -- Education, Enforcement, Engineering, Encouragement, Evaluation/Planning, Equity -- what is *your* highest priority for UW-L's future? Why?

What transportation *projects or priorities* would you most like to see on the UW-L campus in the next 5, 10, or 20 years?

What *groups or organizations* are most important to shaping the future?

Any additional comments?

Throughout the fall of 2014, Professor Longhurst interviewed a variety of stakeholders and groups, asking informal questions with the understanding that individuals would not be quoted by name.

The list of interviews included the Grandview - Emerson Neighborhood Association, the La Crosse County Health Department, the Neighborhood Leaders group, a representative of UWL Campus Police, the president of local advocacy group livable-neighborhoods.org, a local bicycle shop owner, the Goosetown Neighborhood Association, a representative of the UWL Office of Student Life, the La Crosse Police Department, La Crosse City Planning, representatives of many different offices and departments on campus, and many different classes of students.

**Major concerns:** The overwhelming response for all student groups was **safety**, most especially crossing West Avenue to campus, but also at other entrances to campus, including La Crosse Street at East and much of State Street. It is hard to overemphasize this concern; universally, when students were asked to choose from the list of topics of interest, they chose safety first, and began narrating stories of near-misses, incidents, and road rage directed at pedestrians and bicyclists crossing West Avenue. Campus police representatives and area bicycle business owners also stressed **safety** concerns first, highlighting recollections of past crashes, injuries or fatalities. La Crosse Police representatives acknowledged the high number of incidents on campus, but stated that they thought campus was not inherently less safe but rather had a higher volume of pedestrians and vehicles, leading to more incidents.

The secondary concern for students was often the same as the primary concern for neighborhood organizations, though for different reasons: **parking**. For many students, availability of automobile parking on campus was limited by cost, while neighborhood leaders objected to the nuisance of short-term off-campus parking. Many indicated future plans to ask the city to limit parking availability by enforcement, permits, or prohibitions. Many other interview subjects indicated that parking stresses came from insufficient scheduling of transit, or lack of regional transit combined with insufficent access or reliability.

When asked to identify locations of concern *on* campus, several respondents (including representatives of University Police and student groups) talked about **pedestrian safety** on East Avenue. Others

mentioned the uncontrolled intersections at 13th and Badger, while more talked about the southwest corners of campus at 16th and State / 16th and Vine. A general problem area was East Farwell to Pine.

The most identified problem area *off* campus was West Avenue and Badger Street – one interviewee said that all four-lane roads like West were a problem for pedestrians. That standout problem area followed by the intersections at West Avenue and Pine, and La Crosse at East Avenue.

How did the interview subjects recommend that UWL respond to these concerns? A local bicycle business owner recommended **education** and **enforcement** to inculcate safe cycling behavior, saying that campus riders showed "no knowledge of how to behave on a bicycle, and little knowledge of biking skills," reporting near-misses due to wrong-way biking or erratic behavior on West at Pine. Many on-campus groups also chose **education** as a solution, including greater education as to the availability of transit as well as better bicycle behavior. A smaller number of individuals explicitly chose **engineering** as a more meaningful response, calling for bike lanes, covered bike parking, and marked or protected paths.

Interview subjects with expertise in bicycle and pedestrian planning often talked about **engineering**, and the lack of certain types of infrastructure on the UWL campus, starting with a lack of "wayfinding" signage marking bike routes, paths, and the direction to follow to arrive at certain locations. (These interviews took place before new signs were installed on campus in the summer of 2015 which provided the name of the building; however, there are still no wayfinding signs on campus.) Many pointed out that the campus choice to paint bike racks and the new bike repair stands black served to hide them from sight. Some argued that campus design choices trained students to ride on sidewalks rather than in the roadway. For example, students regularly avoid the bike lanes on La Crosse Street for the parallel sidewalk (although that could also be because of the poor repair of the road surface.)

When asked about the future, one respondent said "It would be nice if the university would decide if it were an urban university, part of the city rather than walled off from it – I don't like all the destruction of the street grid." Another neighborhood resident said something similar, remarking that "the campus thinks it controls what happens on campus, but really they're a part of our neighborhood and what they do affects us."

## Focus Group Sessions


In addition to the stakeholder interviews, five different focus group meetings (on campus and off) allowed campus community members to add input to this project. Several themes emerged: **safety** was the greatest concern across all groups, with **access** to campus or accessibility of different transportation modes a close second. Attendees at the employee focus groups talked about many “close calls” while crossing roads from parking off or near campus, or parking in campus lots then walking onto campus itself. Some employees indicated that they were “afraid to ride [bicycles] in La Crosse” due to concerns about traffic. Employees and students talked about improved access to campus that they would like to see, like signs, bike lanes, more crosswalks, plowed trails, and more bus shelters. All three groups separately brought up the idea of a pedestrian overpass on West Avenue to avoid the snarl of four-lane traffic.

The community focus group participants talked about **parking**, but also about **safety**: one participant said that “State Street is too narrow . . . [and] needs wider sidewalks or needs bike lanes.” Participants talked about East Avenue on campus as a difficult place, with walkers displaying “no respect – pedestrian crossing from one side to another anywhere, not waiting for crosswalk . . . [they have a] cocky on campus feel, [since it] doesn’t feel like a street.”

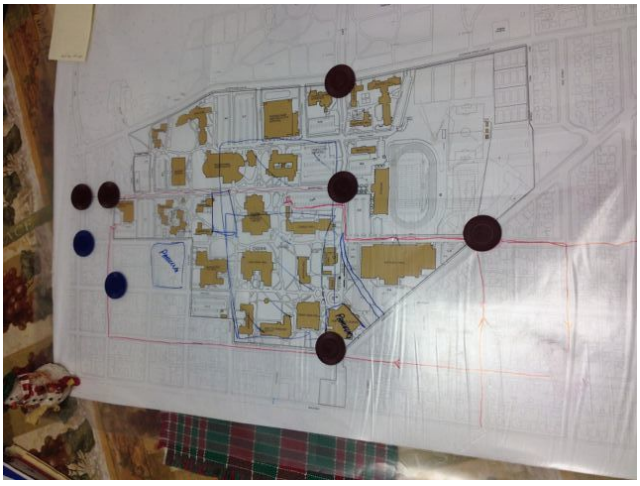
Set up for student focus group.

More than other groups, the community group showed concern for the intersection of Campbell and State Street, reporting high speeds of 35 and 45 MPH at this partially-uncontrolled intersection.

In a mapping exercise, focus group participants were asked to place red markers on a large-scale map indicating areas of concern, and blue markers indicating areas where things are working well. This was used both as a means to start discussion, and a quantitative analysis of areas of concern.

Participants identified twenty different locations of concern, defined as “specific locations on or around the UWL campus [that] are of concern to you when it comes to biking and walking safely.” One location was named in all four focus groups; four were named in three, with the rest identified less often. The top five locations of concern, in order, were:

- Campbell and State (named in all five groups)
- West and Badger
- West and Pine
- La Crosse at East
- Campbell and Pine



Sample of marked and annotated focus group map.

## Steering Committee Feedback

Throughout the 2014/15 academic year, the members of the ON THE GO steering committee were kept informed of fact-finding plans, events, and discoveries via monthly emails and a constantly-updated website. In Spring 2015, the members of the Steering Committee were asked to attend a meeting to comment on a very early draft of this final report, comprised of the draft recommendations and an outline of the completed document.

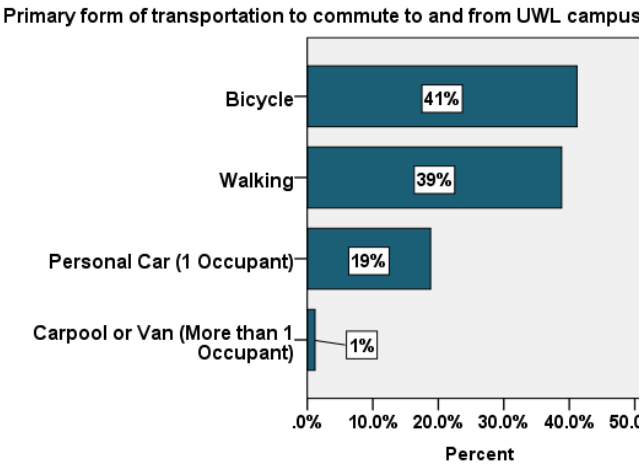
At that time, the members of the steering committee made a number of recommendations, which are reflected in this finished report. First, the committee asked for further descriptions of the “sustainable transportation coordinator” or “bike program manager” or “bike/ped coordinator” position described in Recommendation 2. Additionally, the committee asked for further investigation and emphasis on the subject of safety improvements for people who bike and walk, including plans to decrease accidents.

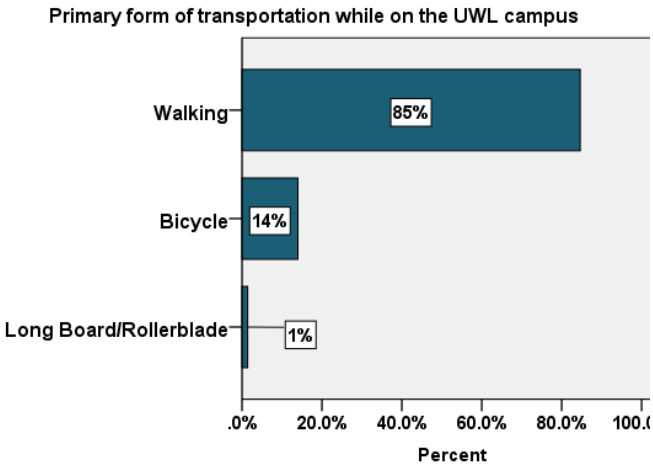
Inspired by that feedback, Professor Longhurst contacted TOPSLAB at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, and requested five years of reported bicycle and pedestrian incident data. The resulting reports were used to complete the League of American Bicyclists’ “Bicycle Friendly University” application, submitted July 2015. The application resulted in a Bronze level recognition from the LAB, received in the fall of 2015.

# Other Research Group Findings

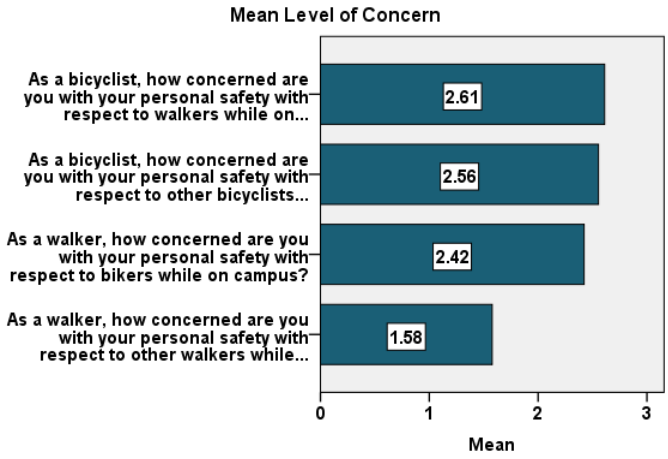
## BUS 230 - JCES/STARS pedestrian perceptions survey

In fall 2014, students from Professor Elizabeth Knowles BUS 230 class designed and implemented a survey of students asking their perceptions of safety and behavior. The results were used to help JCES fill out STARS data points. Some of the results, including a question about prioritizing policy approaches, had similar results to the ON THE GO online survey.




But one new area of questioning asked for feedback on differential level of concern for self-identified bikers and walkers, indicating that overall, bicyclists had higher levels of concern, and were most concerned about interacting with pedestrians:



## Transportation Needs – La Crosse Campus Area Survey

In the fall of 2014, the city of La Crosse commissioned a telephone survey (n=1074) of students living on campus or in the neighborhoods between the three major institutions of higher education in the city, with a particular goal of understanding transportation and parking needs. There were several data points of interest, including those that indicated discomfort or "inconvenience" of the city bus, a very high percentage of bicycle ownership, and reported concerns about on-campus automobile parking.

Types of vehicle owned:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Have a car in La Crosse | 732 | 68.2% |
| Have a motorcycle/scooter in La Crosse | 32 | 3.0% |
| Have a bicycle in La Crosse | 512 | 47.7% |

**Frequency of modes of transportation:**

| | Infrequently (Never, seldom) | Sometimes | Often | Usually |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Walk | 10.2% | 9.0% | 22.6% | 58.2% |
| Bike | 57.9% | 18.4% | 14.8% | 8.9% |
| City bus | 75.1% | 15.6% | 6.8% | 2.6% |
| Regional bus | 97.5% | 1.8% | 0.6% | 0.2% |
| Carpool | 34.5% | 36.8% | 24.1% | 4.7% |
| Personal car (alone) | 32.7% | 18.1% | 22.4% | 26.9% |

Walking and driving in a personal car alone are the two most common modes of transportation. Carpooling and biking are more frequent than city or regional bus use.

**Frequency of parking problems within the campus area (N=392):**

| Frequency | Number (percent)[1] |
|---|---|
| Never | 53 (13.5%) |
| Seldom | 56 (14.3%) |
| Sometimes | 90 (23.0%) |
| Often | 70 (17.9%) |
| Frequently | 123 (31.4%) |

[1] of those who said it applied to them

# Current Conditions

## City of La Crosse Demographic and Physical Overview

The City of La Crosse is a seat of county government, a college town, a health-care hub, and manufacturing and distribution center for the region. With a population of 51,522 inside the city limits, and a county population of 118,000, La Crosse is the largest city on Wisconsin's western border. Geographical features shape the city experience, with the Mississippi river to the west, bluffs to the east, and the La Crosse River Marsh centrally located between north and south La Crosse.

## City and Regional Plans

A variety of planning documents exist that impact the future of alternative transportation on the UWL campus. Summaries and excerpts are provided below:

*UWL Campus Master Plan (2005)*

The 2005 Campus Master Plan prioritized biking and walking. Some of the specified goals, including “Conversion of Badger, Pine, and a portion of Vine Streets to pedestrian corridors,” have seen progress. However, calls for speed tables or bike signage have not, and much of Badger is physically unchanged from its previous status as a motor-vehicle roadbed.

The report states that “Pedestrians and bicyclists make up the majority of all traffic within the interior of the UWL campus. As such, the creation of a more pedestrian-friendly, efficient and safe central campus is a guiding principle of this Master Plan. The conversions of Badger Street, Pine Street and a portion of Vine Street to pedestrian and bicycle corridors respond to this goal and give primary status to walkers and riders.”

Major goals of the plan included:

- “Conversion of Badger, Pine, and a portion of Vine Streets to pedestrian corridors.
- Use of “speed tables” to give pedestrians priority along the Badger and Pine Street corridors as they cross East Avenue.
- Creation of a “pedestrian only zone” along the central campus mall and the Pine Street corridor surrounding the clock tower. Signage should request that bicycle riders walk their bikes in this area. Bike parking areas are to be concentrated at the edge of this area and removed from inside this zone …”

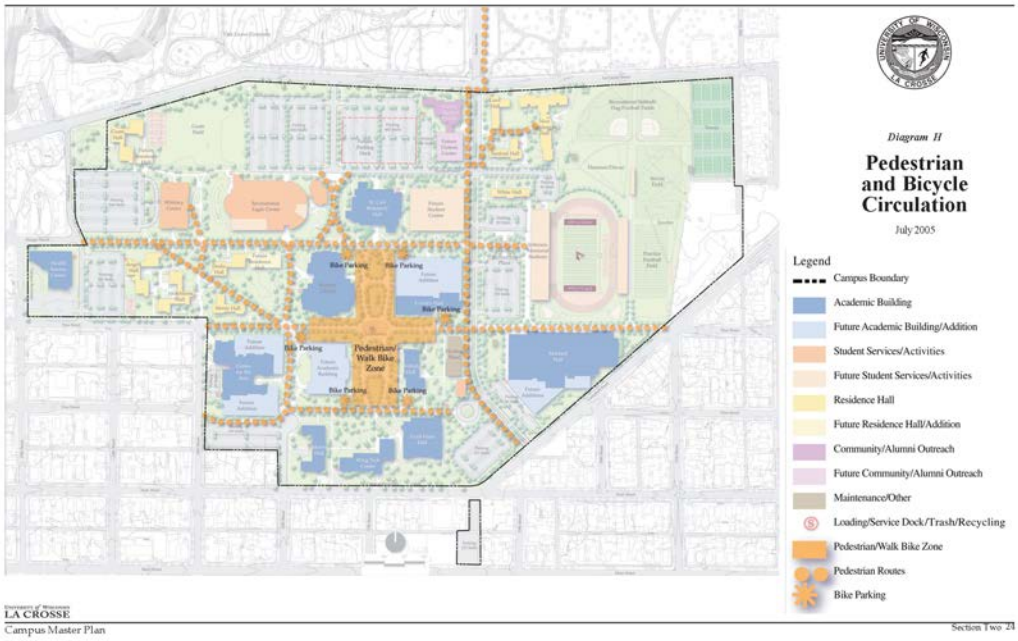



*Diagram from UWL Campus Master Plan (2005)*

*2011 City of La Crosse Green Complete Streets Ordinance*

Complete Streets is a recent reform movement in urban planning. It is intended to design roads to meet the needs of many different users, ranging from commercial vehicles to personal automobiles, buses, bicycles and pedestrians. Its policies encourage active and healthy lifestyles by supporting opportunities for children, adults, and senior citizens to walk or bike to work, school, or shops. Complete Streets policies might mean including pedestrian crossings, transit stops or bike lanes in new projects. Or, they might just mean taking the needs and safety of all road users into account in the planning process, depending on the flexibility of the language.

In 2011, the City of La Crosse passed a Green Complete Streets Ordinance, intending to build "streets that safely accommodate all users of the right-of-way, including pedestrians, people requiring mobility aids, bicyclists and drivers and passengers of transit vehicles, trucks, automobiles and motorcycles, while at the same time incorporating best management practices for addressing stormwater runoff." (City of La Crosse Municipal Code 5.18).

*National Ranking for Area Complete Streets Policies, 2014*

Complete Streets policies from the Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska, La Crosse County, and La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) were in the top 25 in each of their categories for "The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2014." This report from the National Complete Streets Coalition and Smart Growth American examined hundreds of policies passed nationwide, including 74 last year. The policies are scored on various criteria including provisions for many types of road users, complementing community needs, and allowing flexibility for possible accommodations.

The La Crosse region leapfrogged many other areas into national leadership in a very short period, first appearing in the 2012 rankings. In the 2014 rankings, the 2011 LAPC resolution was judged 4th among regional agencies. The County's complete street policy – passed the same year – ranked 7th among comparable laws. La Crosse's 2011 policy was 25th for Cities, while Onalaska's 2012 policy was 18$^{th}$.

(This section of the ON THE GO report written with assistance from student researcher Alex Parsons.)

*City of La Crosse Bike-Ped Master Plan (2012)*

This plan includes several different recommendations that impact campus: It was intended "as an important step toward advancing the transportation network of La Crosse towards one that supports and encourages transportation for all users, ages, and abilities. It is one that promotes the concept of Complete Streets, which is a transportation system that makes necessary and adequate accommodations to ensure that all bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, and transit riders are welcomed, protected, and respected."

The plan also included as a goal "Achieve Bicycle Friendly University status for all colleges and universities in La Crosse," which UWL's 2015 application for LAB BFU was meant to address. The master plan argued that "La Crosse can continue to attract quality students who are increasingly looking for a campus that accommodates students who choose not to drive. Additionally, making college campuses more accommodating for bicycling and walking improves safety for students as well as faculty, staff, and visitors."


*Edited detail of map from page 3-24 of City of La Crosse Bike-Ped Master Plan (2012), showing proposed bike boulevards near campus, and bike routes crossing campus*.

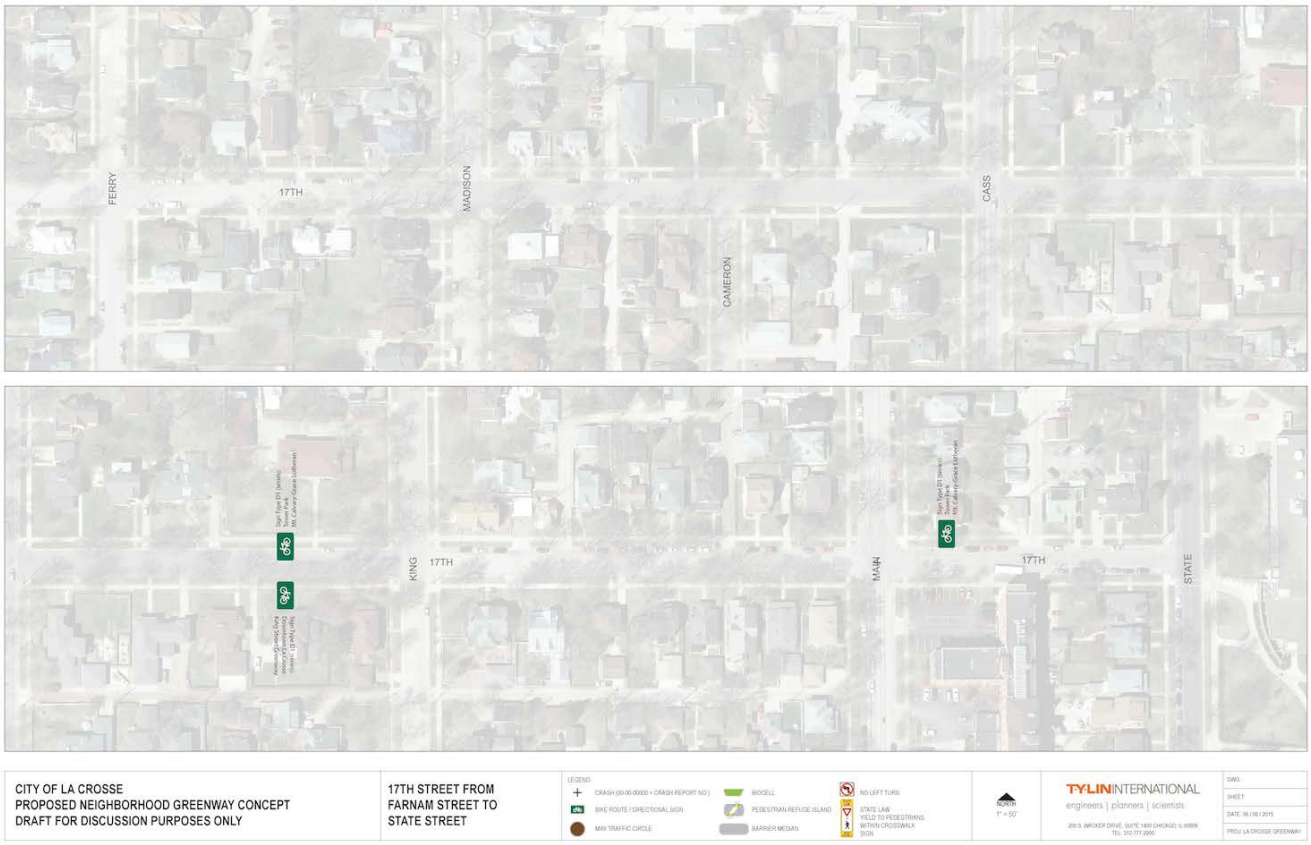
The 2012 plan also included a recommendation for bike boulevards on 17th street approaching campus from the south, further described below.

*Bike Boulevard / Neighborhood Greenway Plan (in progress, 2016)*

As a part of the 2012 Bike/Ped Master Plan, the City of La Crosse has contracted with Chicago-based consulting firm TY Linn to produce plans for “bike boulevards”. These are low-traffic roads which will be further developed through signage, engineering, and advocacy to encourage bicycle traffic. They are intended to take bikes off of the traditional “bike routes” like 16th street,which might be on higher-traffic arterial roads. The first two proposed bike boulevards are on King Street and 17th street in central La Crosse; 17th street leads directly to the UWL campus.

In recent documents, TY Linn has begun calling these projects “neighborhood greenways.” While the plans are not yet finalized, the discussion documents call for engineering and signing changes to encourage bicycle traffic on 17th all the way to the UWL campus. One block of 17th street neighborhood greenway, from State to Main, will see preliminary development under the city Green Complete Streets Ordinance in summer 2016.

Once completed, this boulevard will encourage cyclists to approach campus from a different route than before; changing traffic patterns. These projects also have the goal of increasing overall ridership. Future campus planning should take these changes into account.




*One of two maps in the current draft of the Neighborhood Greenways plan, showing the State Street end.*

*Bike Share Feasibility Study (2015)*

Completed in January of 2015, this study was commissioned by the La Crosse YMCA's Pioneering Healthier Communities (PHC) committee. The purpose of the study was "to assess if the physical environment of La Crosse, Wisconsin can support and grow a bike share program." Using " field studies and … a heat map using a weighted raster analysis of census tract data," the study concluded that "the University of Wisconsin Campus and downtown La Crosse score highly in the indicators for bicycle sharing success with a high concentration of: bicycle infrastructure, mixed use development, and contiguously high scoring census tracts. This corridor should be the first implementation area or Phase 1" of any proposed bike share program.

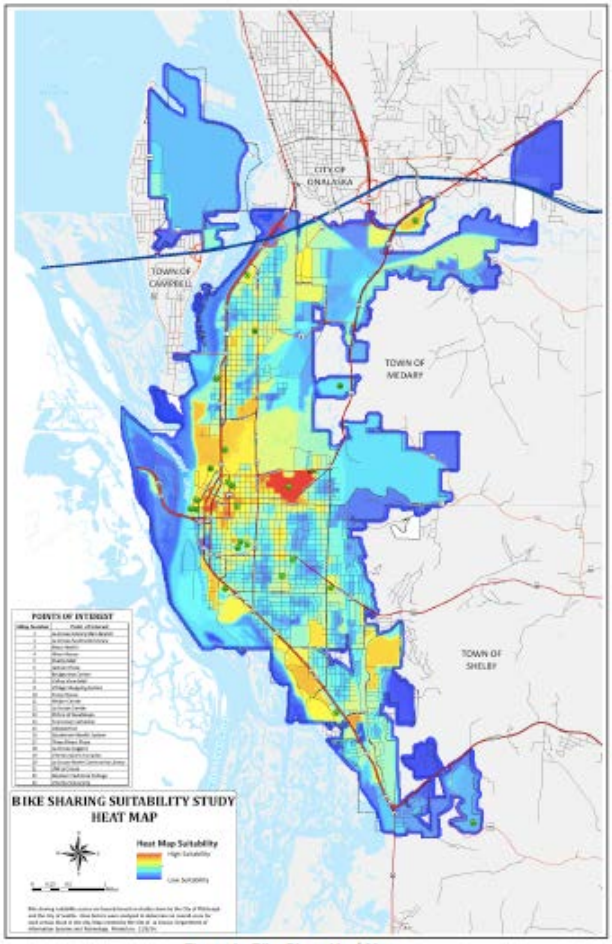


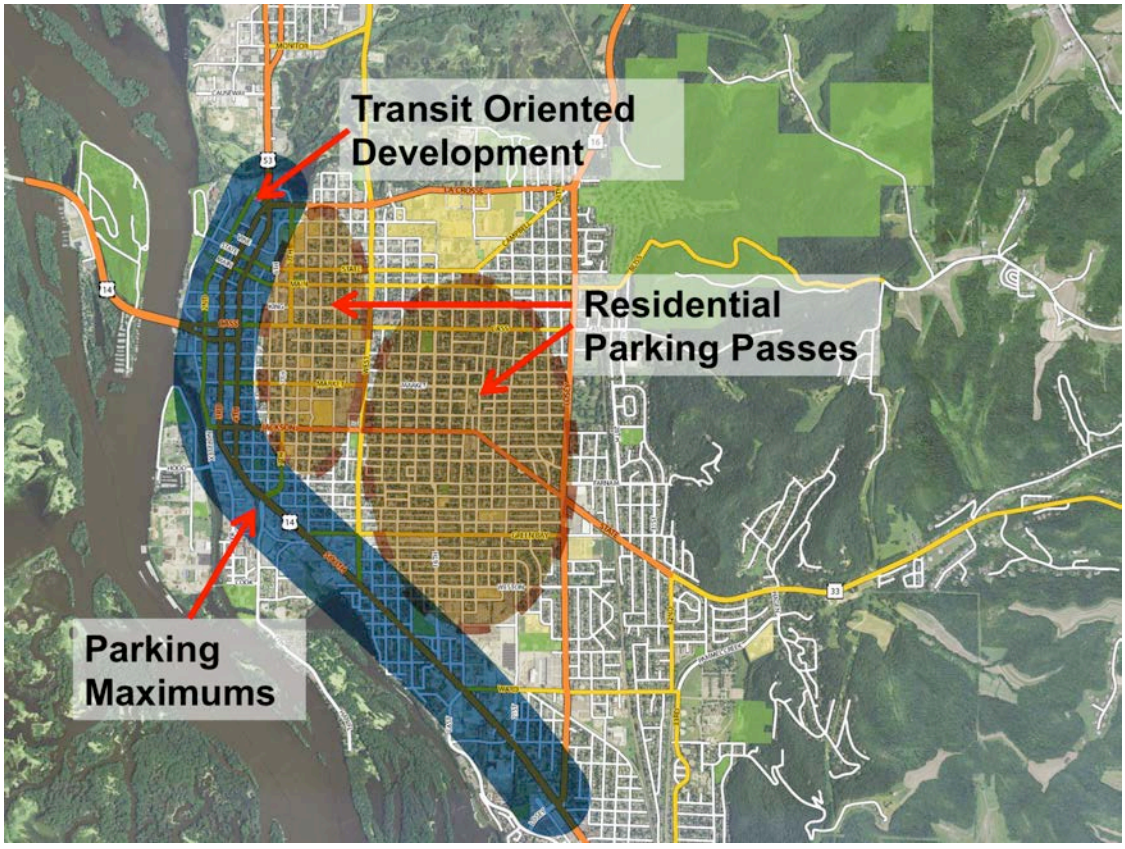
Figure 1: Bike Share Heat Map

The report found that "La Crosse has an adequate environment: bicycle infrastructure and geo-demographic density to support bike share, but to succeed and grow in the future, infrastructure improvements will be necessary before implementation. Infrastructure improvements should be prioritized in the Phase 1 area," around the UWL campus. In 2016, the PHC is continuing to investigate a possible bike share system.

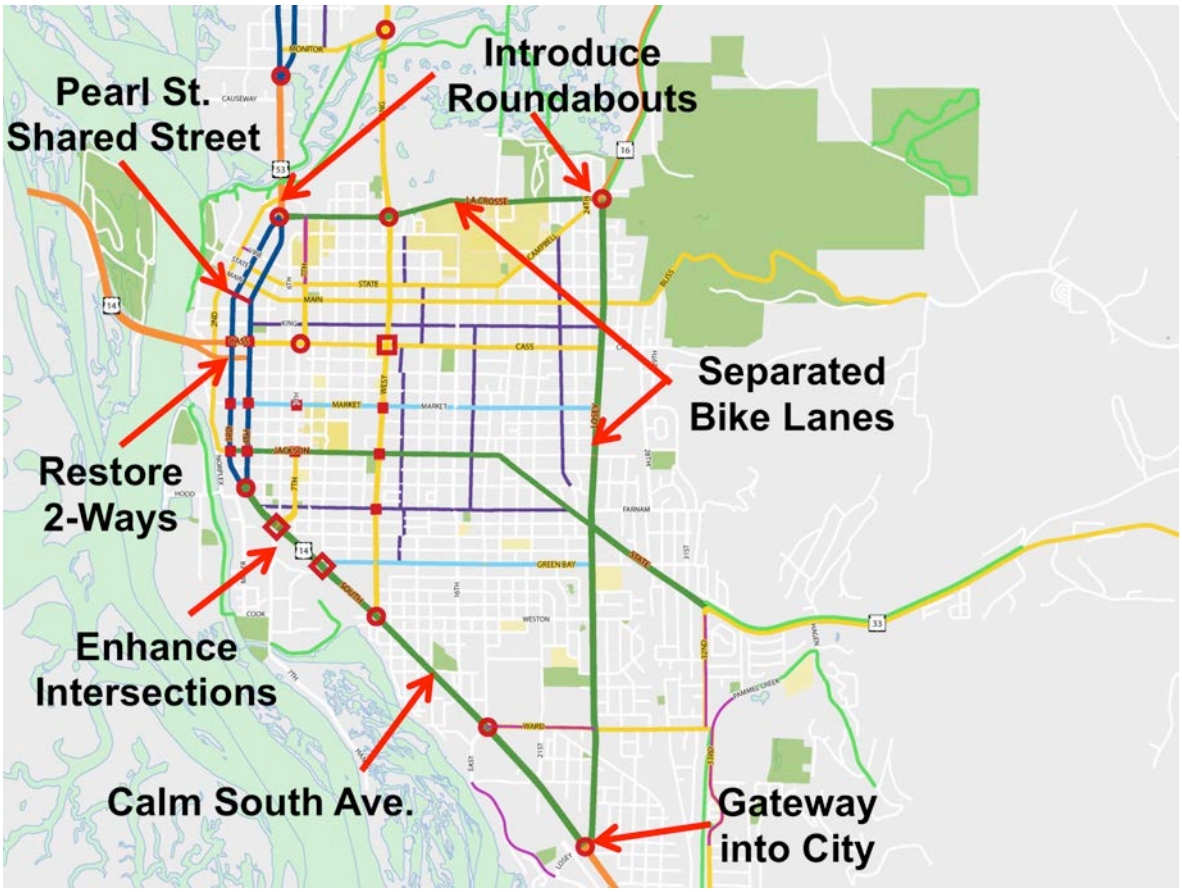
*The Streets & Highways Transportation Vision for the City of La Crosse (2015)*

Prepared by Toole Design Group at the request of the mayor's office, the City Transportation Vision was intended to produce a collaborative plan for the future. Among other goals, the final document noted that "A key component of the City's vision is to reduce our overwhelming and unsustainable dependency on the single occupant vehicle as the primary mode of transportation and prioritize cycling, walking, public and private transit, telecommuting, land use changes, parking changes, and other supportive measures."

Among many other broad goals, the *charette* process identified future policy recommendations for the areas surrounding campus, including residential parking passes for on-street parking to the south, Transit Oriented Development to the east, and Parking Maximums (policies that limit required automobile parking) near the hospitals.




Map from February 26, 2015 presentation



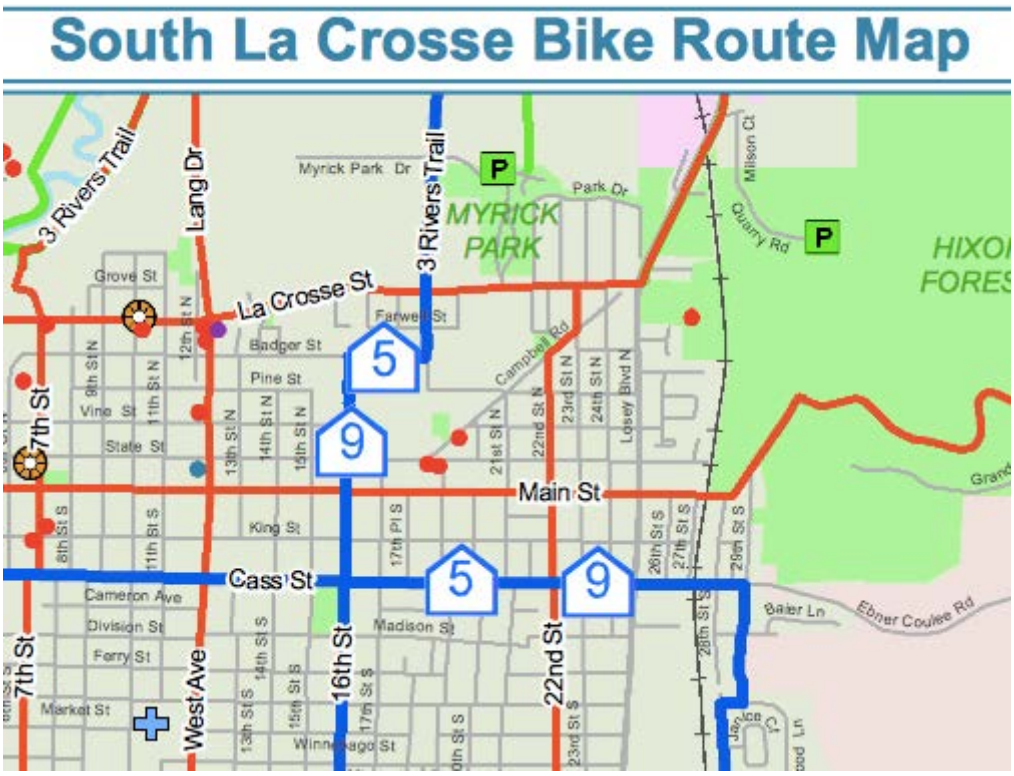

Specific traffic recommendations from the final City Transportation Vision that have the potential to impact campus include separated bicycle lanes on La Crosse street, and better management of traffic at the West and La Crosse, and Losey and La Crosse intersections.

La Crosse Street *existing* (bike lanes) and *proposed* (protected cycletrack):


*LAPC 2035 Coulee Region Bicycle Plan (2010, updated 2012)*

The La Crosse Area Planning Committee is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region. Their plan emphasized bicycle usage for regional transportation, and the necessary infrastructure improvements. “The regional routes will be signed and enumerated in a manner to be determined during implementation of the routing system. Enhanced signage will be installed at important intersections with the local system to aid in wayfinding to local destinations.” Additionally, this report recommends a list of infrastructure changes on major roads bordering campus, many of which have not yet occurred.

The mapping created in this plan, like the City of La Crosse Bike/Ped Master plan that came after it, shows regional bike routes 5 and 9 crossing campus. There is currently no signage on campus that assists cyclists in finding this route.



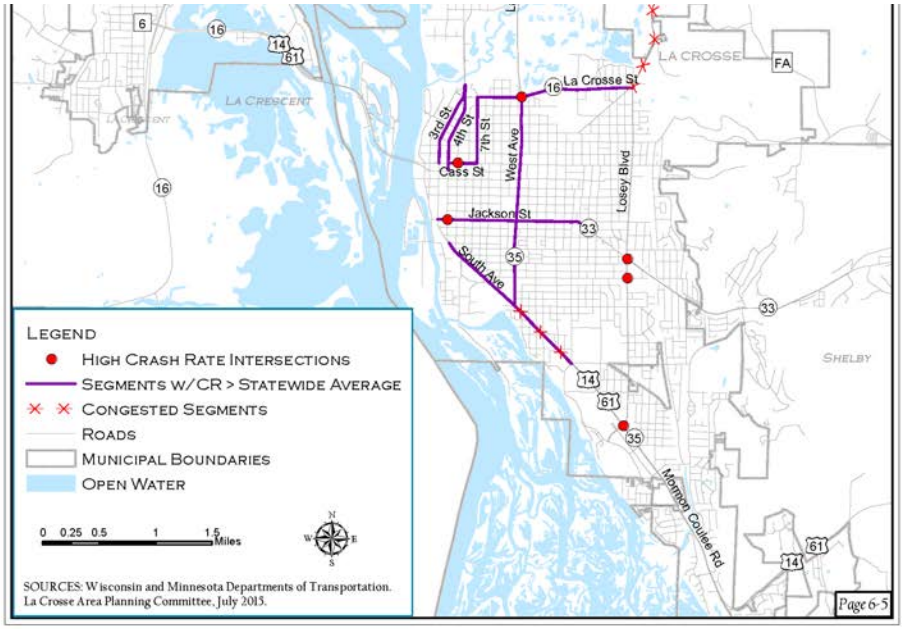

*Detail of LAPC regional map, showing regional bike routes crossing campus*

*LAPC "Coulee Vision 2050" (2013)*

This is the LAPC's long-term plan land-use and transportation plan. It specifically identifies as a goal increased use of alternative transportation: "**Bike and pedestrian facilities will become ubiquitous.** This principle supports the continued focus of the region to develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are consistent with complete street policies and support the development of healthy communities. It is the desire of the region that the ongoing development of non-motorized facilities and trail network improvements will provide safe non-motorized access to every part of the urban area." (page 11)

*LAPC "'Coulee Vision': A Long-Term Plan for Growth & Transportation in the La Crosse – La Crescent Region, 2015 – 2040" (2015)*

This report summarizes many of the existing planning documents for the city and region, and highlights areas of concern, including streets bordering the UWL campus (La Crosse Street and West Avenue).




Detail of "Figure 6-1: Roads and Intersections Identified for Safety and Mobility Concerns, 2015," draft "Coulee Vision" report.

In conclusion, the report "describes a future in which people of all ages and abilities across the La Crosse-La Crescent region have personal mobility options that fit their needs. This future includes connected bike and pedestrian facilities and a robust transit system, and it is dependent upon more compact growth patterns than currently found across much of the region." (chapter 6).

# Selected Sources and Citations

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Wisconsin Department of Transportation. “Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook.” (January 2004) http://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/multimodal/bike/facility.pdf

Wisconsin Department of Transportation. “Sponsor's Guide To Non-Traditional Transportation Project Implementation.” (December, 2015) http://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/aid/sponsors.pdf

# Appendix: LAB BFU Feedback Report

The following pages of the ON THE GO report reproduce the recommendations offered by the League of American Bicyclists reviewers for the 2015 Bicycle Friendly University application.

**Congratulations!** The League of American Bicyclists has designated **University of Wisconsin – La Crosse** as a Bicycle Friendly University at the Bronze level. Reviewers were very pleased to see the current efforts and dedication to promoting cycling for transportation and recreation on your campus.

**Highlights** of the application include: UW-L ON THE GO report and bike/ped master plan; Bicycle Repair Stands; Bait Bike Program; No-Motor-Vehicle zone around academic quad; Ride La Crosse safety ride; newly planned ambassador program; Green Bike recycling program.

Below, reviewers provided key recommendations to further promote bicycling at University of Wisconsin – La Crosse along with a menu of additional pro-cycling measures that can be implemented in the short and long term. (Short-term recommendations that often see quickest results are **highlighted in bold**.)

We strongly encourage you to use this feedback to build on your momentum and continue to improve your campus for bicyclists.

There may also be initiatives, programs, and facilities that are not mentioned here that would benefit your bicycling culture, so please continue to try new things to increase your ridership, safety, and awareness!

## The key measures University of Wisconsin – La Crosse should focus on to improve cycling on campus:

- Work with the City of La Crosse to expand the bike network and increase network connectivity through the use of different types of bike lanes, cycle tracks and shared lane markings both on and around campus. *(See Engineering)*
- Develop a comprehensive bicycle education program including an ongoing safety and awareness campaign, as well as regular bicycle safety and maintenance classes. Host a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) seminar to increase the number of local LCIs qualified to teach these classes on campus. *(See Education)*
- Increase the number of campus security officers who patrol on bikes, and appoint a law-enforcement point person to interact with cyclists. *(See Enforcement)*
- Expand the Bicycle Program Manager's time focused on bicycle projects, or create a new full-time position. *(See Evaluation & Planning)*
- Fully implement the campus bike master plan and ensure that there is dedicated funding for the implementation, as well as ongoing bicycle infrastructure and programming needs. *(See Evaluation & Planning)*

## Menu of additional recommendations to further promote bicycling:

### Engineering

**Adopt a Bicycle Accommodation policy to ensure that all pathway and building construction projects on campus consider and accommodate optimal bicycle access.**

**Provide ongoing training opportunities for engineering and planning staff related to accommodating bicyclists. Consider providing APBP memberships for one or more related staff.**

Develop a **bike parking ordinance** or campus-wide policy requiring bike parking at all new and existing buildings.

Ensure that there are easily-accessible end-of-trip facilities for all bicyclists commuting to your campus. Consider a policy requiring showers and locker rooms in all non-residential buildings. One of the most common excuses people use to not commute by bike is that they don't have a shower at their destination. Also make sure to provide showers and lockers as a benefit not as an additional cost to off-campus students and employees.

Consider increasing the parking permit fee for students and employees. The additional financial resources could be spent on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and amenities. Making it more expensive to park on campus will also encourage commuters to carpool or try alternative modes of transport.

**Increase the amount of high quality bicycle parking at popular destinations such as transit stops, class room/lab buildings, dorms, recreation and entertainment facilities, and retail and office locations on campus. More and more institutions also ensure that off-campus student housing provides secure and covered bike parking. Ensure that the standards for all bike parking conform to the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Profressionals (APBP) bike parking guidelines.**

**Provide covered bike parking on your campus, particularly near residence halls. Covered bike parking protects bikes from sun and precipitation, thus potentially adding years of life to a bike. It is more comfortable and more convenient for bike owners, and it is a great way of illustrating the administration cares about bicycling.**

Provide more secure bike parking on campus through the use of additional **bicycle lockers**, indoor bike rooms, or **bike cages**. Students and employees will feel more comfortable bringing nicer bikes to campus if they know the bike can be safely and securely stored. **Portland State University has a successful permit program** for its indoor bike rooms. **University of Wisconsin-Madison offers paid bicycle parking** via bike lockers and cages.

Consider constructing a bike station to provide centrally-located, secure and covered parking for cyclists. Like the **Bike Center at the University of Minnesota**, a bike station can serve as a hub for commuters providing repair services, shower and locker facilities, and bike route, and event information. **Check out other areas that have already implemented similar facilities**.

Work with La Crosse to expand the bike network and increase network connectivity through the use of different types of **bike lanes**, **cycle tracks** and **shared lane arrows**. On-street improvements coupled with the expansion of the off-street system **will encourage more people to cycle** and will improve safety. Ensure smooth transitions for bicyclists between the trail network and the street network. These improvements will also increase the effectiveness of encouragement efforts by providing a broader range of facility choices for users of various abilities and comfort levels. Ensure that all bicycle facilities conform to current best practices and guidelines – such as the **NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide**, **AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities** and your state or local DOT's own guidelines.

Work with local jurisdictions to lower the speed limit to 20 mph on the streets on and around your campus. Speed has been identified as a key risk factor in road traffic injuries, influencing both the risk of a road traffic crash as well as the severity of the injuries that result from crashes. For instance, pedestrians and cyclists have a 90% chance of survival if hit by a car travelling at a speed of 20 mph or below, but less than a 50% chance of surviving an impact of 30 mph or above. Studies also generally report a positive association between traffic safety (perceived and/or measured) and walking and cycling, particularly among women.

**Place way-finding signage at strategic locations around campus. Here are some best practices from the Washington, DC area council of governments.**

Make intersections safer and more comfortable for cyclists. Include elements such as color, signage, medians, signal detection, and pavement markings. The level of treatment required for bicyclists at an intersection will depend on the bicycle facility type used, whether bicycle facilities are intersecting, the adjacent street function and land use. See the **NACTO design guidelines** for recommended intersection treatments.

Adequately maintain your on and off road bicycle infrastructure to ensure usability and safety. Increase the frequency of sweepings and address potholes, snow and ice, and other hazards more quickly.

## Education

Create a comprehensive public website for your bicycle program to easily connect students, employees, and community members with information and resources related to biking on campus. Include content on your **bicycle parking**, instructions for **bike registration**, information about your **Bicycle Advisory Committee**, a calendar of upcoming **classes and events**, a



**suggestion form** to collect ideas for improvements, **safety tips** and **FAQs** about biking on campus, **maps of biking amenities** on campus, and an **outline of all the policies and rules of the road** that bicyclists should be aware of before they come to campus. Consider also creating **a blog to inform and update audiences** on new plans and developments related to bikes on campus, and **use social media** to interact with more campus bicyclists on a regular basis. Finally, **show off your status as a Bicycle Friendly University** to let incoming students and employees know to look forward to the great services and amenities for bicyclists on your campus!

**The League of American Bicyclists offers a pocket-sized *Smart Cycling Quick Guide* that can be purchased in English and Spanish for distribution on your campus. Preview the guide and learn more at bikeleague.org/quickguide.**

**The League offers a series of educational videos that can easily be downloaded or shared online. Topics range from How to Choose a Bicycle, to proper steering, signaling, and intersection positioning on a bike. Use these videos to educate your students, faculty, and staff on bicycling basics. Use the videos as part of new student orientation training, or as a prerequisite to using the campus bike share program. Make these videos available on your website and share on social media to promote bike safety education to broader audiences. View and download the videos at: bikeleague.org/ridesmartvideos.**

Incorporate bicycling into the **new student and employee orientation** program in order to reach all incoming students, faculty and staff. This can include **online videos**, distribution of bike maps, bike registration, reviews of bike laws and helmet and bike light promotions. This should also include information for cyclists and motorists on their rights and responsibilities as users. Consider also **reaching out to parents.** Everyone should know that this campus wants to be truly bicycle-friendly.

It is essential to continually make both motorists and cyclists aware of their rights and responsibilities on the road. Continue to expand your education campaign promoting the "Share the Road" message. Take advantage of your local bicycle groups for content development and volunteers. Check out some of the promotion that Emory has done to support their **Why Not? Campaign** and see **Harvard's LOOK safety campaign**. Or consider Stanford's multi-pronged approach to Bike Safety through events and programs such as a Dorm Challenge, a bike ambassador program led by **Sprocket man**, and a bike **safety pledge**.

Start a bicyclist and motorist ticket diversion program. Students given a citation are offered an opportunity to waive fees for violations by attending a bicycling education course. This should include a classroom and on-road component. **See UC Davis' Bicycle Education and Enforcement Program.**

Offer Cycling Skills classes, Traffic Skills 101 classes and bike commuter classes or contact your local bicycle group to see if there are classes in your area that could be

promoted to students and employees. Ideally the instruction would incorporate a classroom portion as well as on-road training. The classroom portion of Traffic Skills 101 is now available online as well. For more information visit: bikeleague.org/ridesmart.

**Increase the frequency of your Bicycle Maintenance classes on campus. Aim to offer these opportunities at least once each month to increase the number of students and employees reached.**

Host a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) seminar to increase the number of local LCIs. Having local instructors will enable your institution to expand cycling education, recruit knowledgeable cycling ambassadors, deliver education to motorists, and have experts available to assist in encouragement programs. Visit bikeleague.org/ridesmart for more information.

## Encouragement

**Launch a bicyclist mentorship program. A bike mentorship program that teams experienced cyclists with newcomers is a great way to encourage and educate. Mentors can offer advice on bike routes, appropriate gear, safe riding and much more. It also gives new commuters a support group to rely on and often makes them feel more secure and excited about their first few rides.**

Establish a formal incentive program for those who bike commute. This could include such benefits as cash incentives, a Guaranteed Ride Home program, car share discounts and coupons for local bike shops. Check out the University of Minnesota's Zap! program and see how Harvard encourages employees to bike to work through the Bike Commuter Tax Benefit.

Consider offering bike valets at events throughout the year to solve parking issues at well-attended events. For example, Boise State University offers bike valet service at football games. See what the University of Arizona is doing to encourage bicycling through an all year bike valet.

**Host, sponsor and/or encourage a variety of social and non-competitive bicycle-themed events on campus, or collaborate on existing community events to encourage students, staff, and faculty to attend. Make sure to widely advertise all bicycle-themed events and programs. Provide appropriate safety measures such as road closures or police escorts. Read about what UC Santa Barbara does during CycleMAYnia.**

Recreational bicycling can be promoted through nearby bicycle amenities such as a mountain bike park, a cyclocross course or a pump track. If such facilities exist, partner with local organizations to promote these resources to on-campus students.



## Enforcement

**Increase the number of Public Safety officers that patrol campus on bikes, as it gives officers a better understanding of the conditions for cyclists. Also ensure that streets as well as secluded off-road paths are regularly patrolled to improve personal safety and encourage more people to take advantage of these amenities.**

**Appoint a law-enforcement point person to interact with cyclists. This will actively facilitate stronger connections between the bicycling community and law enforcement, which will improve road safety for all users and improve fair enforcement of motorist and cyclist infractions.**

Ensure that all Public Safety officers are initially and repeatedly educated on the "Share the Road" message and traffic law as it applies to bicyclists and motorists. Training is offered by the International Police Mountain Bike Association, the Law Enforcement Bicycle Association and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Here are some recommended Law Enforcement Products: Bicycle Safety seminar; Law Enforcement's Roll Call Video: "Enforcing Law for Bicyclists"; and Enhancing Bicycle Safety: Law Enforcement's Role (CD-ROM Training). Encourage at least one of your Public Safety officers to become a League Cycling Instructor.

Have Public Safety officers distribute helmets (or coupons to a local bike shop) to encourage all types of cyclists to ride more safely and to remove the barriers to attaining this essential bike accessory. See the helmet promotions at Stanford.

**Ask police officers to target both motorist and cyclist infractions to ensure that laws are being followed by all road users. Ensure that bicycle/car crashes are investigated thoroughly and that citations are given fairly.**

**Enforcement practices can also include positive enforcement ticketing. Officers and student bicycling ambassadors could team up with local stores to reward safe cycling practices by handing out gift certificates to cyclists who are "caught" following the law.**

## Evaluation & Planning

Expand the bike program on your campus to encompass all 5 E's. See what other universities are doing and what resources are available for higher ed institutions: universitybikeprograms.org.

Expand the Bicycle Program Manager's time focused on bicycle projects, or create a new full-time position. This staff person should spend more time working closely with the Bicycle Advisory Committee, reviewing development proposals to ensure that bicycle requirements are incorporated and to assess bicycling

impacts, developing and implementing educational and promotional programs, writing grant proposals, serving as the contact for bicycling inquiries and complaints, educating other staff about state and federal facilities standards and guidelines, and coordinating with neighboring communities, transit agencies and other departments to implement policies and projects. **See this report on the importance of Bicycle & Pedestrian program staff**.

Create a new Bicycle Advisory Committee or at least a bicycle-specific subcommittee under the Joint Committee on Environmental Sustainability. Having an official **Bicycle Advisory Committee** (BAC) or subcommittee is critical to building support for bicycle improvements as it ensures that the bicycle program is held accountable to the campus population and surrounding community. It creates a systematic method for ongoing staff, faculty and student input into the development of important policies, plans, and projects. BACs should be involved in developing relevant policy and planning documents, setting priorities, reviewing annual bicycle program work plans, and reviewing major projects. Ensure that the members of the committee reflect the diversity and ability levels of cyclists on your campus, and invite representatives from student, staff, faculty, and community organizations. **See this guide to forming a Bicycle Advisory Committee**.

Invite representatives from your community's city planning department to join your campus **Bicycle Advisory Committee** to improve town-gown relations and ensure connectivity and coordination between on and off-campus bicycle planning.

Fully implement the **campus bike master plan** and continue to close gaps in the cycling network. Ensure that there is also a written plan to guide a long-term *physical and programmatic* vision for your campus. Focus on developing/ completing a seamless cycling network that emphasizes and creates short distances between residential buildings and popular destinations such as classroom buildings, cafeterias, recreational facilities and transit stops. Complement infrastructure planning with encouragement, education, and enforcement programs to increase usage. Develop a clear vision statement and set ambitious but attainable targets. The overarching goal should be to increase the percentage of trips made by bicycle on campus. **Check out University of California Berkeley's plan as an example.**

Ensure that there is dedicated funding for the implementation of the bicycle master plan, as well as ongoing bicycle infrastructure and programming needs. Dedicating a portion of automobile parking fees toward non-automobile facilities and services is a great way to establish a baseline annual budget for bicycle improvements. You can also reach outside the university for grants and private funding for specific projects.

**In addition to the periodic manual counts currently conducted, consider participating in the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project.**

Install automatic bicycle counters on your campus to better gauge ridership on an ongoing basis. Look into tools such as the **EcoCounter** for automatic electronic

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counters, or online services like the **National Bike Challenge** for self-reporting data collection. See how the University of Minnesota uses the **Zap! Program** to track and reward ridership on their campus.

Consider conducting an **economic impact study** on bicycling within your college/ university.

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**For more ideas and best practices please visit the Bicycle Friendly University Resource Page.**

*Please also see the attached document for additional comments and feedback from bicyclists on your campus.*

## Benefits of Further Improving University of Wisconsin – La Crosse for Cycling

Increasing bicycle use can **improve the environment** by reducing the impact on the community of pollution and noise, limiting greenhouse gases, and improving the quality of public spaces; **Reduce congestion** by shifting short trips (the majority of trips in cities) out of cars. This will also make campuses more accessible for public transport, walking, essential car travel, and emergency services; **Save lives** by creating safer conditions for bicyclists and as a direct consequence improve the safety of all other road users. **Research shows** that increasing the number of bicyclists on the street improves bicycle safety; **Increase opportunities** for students, faculty and staff to participate socially and economically in campus and community activities, regardless of income or ability.

Greater choice of travel modes also increases independence; **Boost the economy** by creating a campus environment and community that is an attractive destination for new students, residents, tourists and businesses; **Enhance recreational opportunities** and further contribute to the quality of life on campus; **Save university funds** by increasing the efficient use of public space, reducing the need for costly new road infrastructure, preventing crashes, improving the health of the campus community, and increasing the use of public transport; **Enhance campus safety and security** by increasing the number of "eyes on the street" and providing more options for movement in the event of emergencies, natural disasters, and major campus events; **Improve the health and well being** of the campus population by promoting routine physical activity.