CHAPTER 5: PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FACILITIES

A relatively large percentage of the population in and around Uptown commutes to work using pedestrian or bicycle modes according to the data presented in Chapter 2. Incorporating pedestrian/bicycle friendly enhancements into all future developments will aid in promoting and maintaining these modes of transportation within Uptown.

5.1 Existing Conditions

5.1.1 Pedestrians

The majority of streets within the Uptown Study Area have sidewalks on both sides creating a pedestrian friendly transportation framework. The basic infrastructure is in place; however, the large amounts of “urban clutter” detract from the pedestrian friendly nature of many sidewalks throughout Uptown. Pedestrian safety may also become a concern as many crosswalk demarcations and stop bars are faded or non-existent.

Several intersections in Uptown are very congested and provide some safety and access concerns for pedestrians. These intersections may be congested by pedestrians, cars and other vehicular traffic, bicyclists or buses; regardless the congestion creates access constraints and potential safety conflicts arise between pedestrians and all forms of vehicular traffic. These intersections include:

- Jefferson Avenue/Vine Street at ML King Jr. Drive
- Clifton Avenue at ML King Jr. Drive
- Several mid-block crosswalks on Clifton Avenue
- Multi-lane streets including Clifton Avenue, ML King Jr. Drive and Jefferson Avenue

5.1.2 Bicyclists

Roughly 250 Uptown residents use a bicycle as their primary transportation mode to get to their place of employment. The available statistics do not include the percentage of University students that may use a bicycle to attend classes, labs, and organizational meetings. The use of bicycles as a means of transportation is evident based on the amount of dedicated parking space available throughout Uptown near automobile parking garages and near the entrances to many buildings as shown in Figure 5-1. The three signed bicycle routes in Uptown include:

- Lincoln Avenue/University Avenue Corridor in conjunction with the Jefferson Avenue/ Ludlow Avenue Corridor
- Gilbert Avenue/Victory Parkway Corridor
- Central Parkway Corridor
Steep terrain between Uptown and Over-the-Rhine/Downtown presents difficulties when trying to plan a corridor to connect the two areas of Cincinnati. As such, an efficient signed bicycle route connection has not been designated. The only dedicated bicycle lanes that currently exist in the Uptown area are along Goodman Avenue between Vine Street and Eden Avenue. It should also be noted that the Metro “Rack and Ride” program promotes the use of bicycles to reach transit routes by providing bike racks on all buses.

5.2 Proposed Improvements

The enhancements projects presented below represent a wide range of potential improvements aimed at achieving the overall Study goal of improving connectivity of bike routes, identifying safe bike route locations, improving bike parking; and making Uptown more pedestrian friendly. This requires balancing the use of the existing roadway system.

Priorities should be established for use of the existing street pavement in the following order: vehicular movement, transit operation, bicycle movement, pedestrian movement and on-street parking.

As part of the Early Action Recommendations, a total of three bicycle and six pedestrian enhancements projects were presented to the Implementation Partners. Each of the projects were approved by the Implementation Partners (IP) are briefly described below and shown in Figure 5-2.

5.2.1 Bicycle Enhancements

Even though signed bicycle routes are present within Uptown, a fair amount of bicycle traffic uses the sidewalks within the study area. Creation of wide curb lanes would help reduce bicycle traffic on sidewalks, providing a safer condition for pedestrians, and minimizing conflicts with vehicular traffic. All three bicycle enhancements projects included in the Early Action Recommendations were approved by the IP with modifications.

The following locations have been identified for bike enhancements.

**B1. Clifton Avenue - Ludlow Avenue to W. McMillan Street** -- Clifton Avenue is currently configured with 2 - 20’ curb lanes that are intended to accommodate one parking/bicycle/travel lane in each direction. It is recommended that “share the road signage” and pavement markings be installed to increase awareness of bicyclists and motorists. Future capacity/safety improvements to Clifton Avenue should continue to accommodate bicycle facilities.

**B2. Jefferson Avenue – ML King Drive to Corry Street** -- Consider restriping of Jefferson Avenue to provide wide curb lanes for bicycles. “Share the road signage” and pavement markings be installed to increase awareness of bicyclists and motorists.
Figure 5-1: Existing Bicycle Routes and Parking

An additional 80-100 Bicycle Racks located on the University of Cincinnati and Medical Center Campus.

Legend
- Signed Bicycle Route with Bicycle Lanes
- Signed Bicycle Route
- Signed Alternate Bicycle Route
- Preferred Bicycle Route
- Preferred Bicycle Route - Difficult
- Alternate Bicycle Route
- Alternate Bicycle Route - Difficult
- Existing Bicycle Racks
- Cincinnati Parks
- Cincinnati Parks - Trails
- City of Cincinnati Hillside Steps

Sources: 1998 Cincinnati Bike Route Guide, Cincinnati Department of Transportation and Engineering, Cincinnati Park Board

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1,000 500 0 1,000 2,000 Feet
B3. E. University Avenue and E. Daniels Street/Oak Street -- Jefferson Avenue to Burnet Avenue -- Consider restriping of E. University Avenue and E. Daniels Street/Oak Street to provide wide curb lane (westbound on University and eastbound on Daniels). “Share the road signage” and pavement markings be installed to increase awareness of bicyclists and motorists.

5.2.2 Pedestrian Enhancements

Enhancement of pedestrian conditions at congested intersections and multi-lane streets involve taking steps to shorten pedestrian crossings and clearly define crosswalks. Pavement markings for crosswalks, stop bars and bike lanes in other areas must be regularly maintained to define pedestrian areas. Of the six pedestrian projects included in the Early Action Recommendations, four were approved (P1-P4) by the Implementation Partners with modifications. Project P5 has been modified to remove curb bumpouts, the proximity of cross streets limits the possibility of curb bumpouts, and therefore this recommendation was simplified. Project P6 was not considered feasible as an Early Action Recommendation due to the significant amount reconstruction required, and was considered to be Long Range.

The following locations have been identified for pedestrian enhancements.

P1. Clifton Avenue Mid-block Signalized Pedestrian Crosswalks Adjacent to McMicken Hall -- Clearly delineate existing pedestrian crosswalk with decorative pavement and/or create curb bumpouts to minimize length of crosswalk. This project is currently being studied by the City.

P2. Clifton Avenue and College Court Pedestrian Crosswalk -- Clearly delineate pedestrian crosswalk with decorative pavement or enhanced pavement markings and/or create curb bumpouts to increase standing space and minimize length of crosswalk.

P3. ML King Jr Drive and Jefferson Avenue/Vine Street Intersection -- Clearly delineate pedestrian crosswalks with enhanced pavement markings. This pedestrian crossing is currently being addressed by the City with the ML King Jr Drive Capacity Improvements. Any future intersection/capacity improvements to ML King Jr Drive should accommodate the safety of the pedestrians.

P4. Jefferson Avenue and University Avenue Intersection -- Clearly delineate pedestrian crosswalks with decorative pavement and/or create curb bumpouts to increase standing space and minimize length of crosswalk. Coordinate with any future improvements to Jefferson Avenue.

P5. Clifton Avenue and Straight Street/Deaconess Hospital, and McMicken Circle Intersection -- Clearly delineate existing pedestrian crosswalks with enhanced pavement markings.
P6. Clifton Avenue and ML King Jr Drive Intersection -- Maximize the size of pedestrian islands at the intersection to increase pedestrian standing space. Clearly delineate pedestrian crosswalks with pavement markings or decorative pavement. Since the large scope of this project would involve significant reconstruction of this intersection, these recommendations should be coordinated with any future capacity/safety improvements to Clifton Avenue and ML King Jr Drive.

5.2.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Best Practices

The future of Uptown is constantly evolving. New development and redevelopment will have a significant impact on the existing street system as well as pedestrian and bicycle travel. In order to adapt to these changes “best practices” or design guidelines need to be developed and considered as development and street improvements are planned. These measures are aimed at helping reduce bicycle traffic on sidewalks, providing a safer condition for pedestrians, and minimizing conflicts with vehicular traffic.

The following are examples of “best practices.”

Wide Curb Lanes
Implementing wide curb lanes involves narrowing of the inside travel lanes to provide extra space for widening the curb lanes. Bicyclists and motorists can more safely operate in a wider travel lane. A wide curb lane is an effective way to accommodate bicyclists riding in the same lane with motor vehicles. With a wide curb lane, motorists do not have to change lanes to pass a bicyclist. When no bikes are around, vehicles use the space near the curb/parking, thereby keeping it swept clean of debris. Wide curb lanes are inexpensive to install, if the installation is done during normal restriping.

A recently developed variation of the wide curb lane is a marked wide curb lane, also referred to as an unstriped bike lane. Marked wide curb lanes have the same characteristics as wide curb lanes with the addition of bicycle stencils at set intervals. The presence of these stencils indicate to motorists and bicyclists that bicycles are to share the road with vehicles.
Bicycle Route Signage and Pavement Markings
Proper signage and pavement markings inform bicyclist of bicycle routes while at the same time raising a motorist’s awareness of the presence of bicycles. Signage and pavement markings along signed bike routes particularly, increase the use of “Share the Road” signs should be upgraded and maintained. Bicycle route signage should be provided at regular intervals to clearly define routes, and increase awareness of bicycles to motorists. Signage should be designed so that it does not confuse motorists as to the route motor vehicles should follow.

Bicycle Parking
In addition to enhanced bicycle facilities and signage, supporting amenities must also be provided. Adequate and secure bicycle parking should be provided within new and existing developments. Shuttle/ transits stops and parking garages should also provide accommodations for bicycle parking.
Pedestrian Facilities
Include minimum 5 ft wide sidewalks during reconstruction of urban arterial and collector streets. Sidewalks in areas which exhibit high volumes of pedestrian traffic should be wider.

1. Mark and maintain crosswalk pavement markings at all street intersections and mid-block crossings where pedestrians are permitted to cross.

2. Consider median refuge islands for streets wider than 5 lanes. Consider curb bumpouts to minimize length of pedestrian crossings.

3. Provide ADA compliant crosswalk treatments where feasible.

4. Program pedestrian traffic signals at wide intersections to provide enough time for pedestrians to complete crossing the street before conflicting traffic movements begin. At wide intersections pedestrian detectors/buttons should be used to increase signal time when needed.

5. Pedestrians cross streets mid-block where intersection spacing is long. If intersections are wide and fast with added turn lanes, it is often safer to cross mid-block during traffic gaps than at the intersections. Raised center medians and refuge islands make mid-block crossings much safer and more convenient.

References:
NCDOT – Bicycle Facilities Guide: Types of Bicycle Accommodations – Rev. 04/17/03
Marked Wide Curb Lanes - Richard Drdul Community Transportation Planning
Bicycle Facility Design Guidelines - Richard Drdul Community Transportation Planning
Ohio Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (OMUTCD)
AASHTO Standards in Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities
Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual - Vermont Agency of Transportation