The plan also identifies general areas within which transit oriented patterns of development should be encouraged. Proposed improvements and expansion of the transit systems serving Elgin and the surrounding area include the following:

Pace – Relocation of the Central Transfer Station. The City of Elgin and Pace are considering potential sites to relocate the central transfer station. Opportunities may exist to develop an intermodal facility providing for the convenient transfer between Pace bus service and Metra commuter rail service.

Pace – Bus Circulator System. This system would replace the existing "pulse system" which operates from the central transfer station in downtown Elgin. Instead, it would create a "circulator system" organized around the "centers and corridors" transportation/land use strategy depicted on **Figure 3.4 Land Use Plan**.

Metra – Outer Circumferential Line. The proposed use of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway corridor would provide commuter service to communities in Lake, Cook, Kane, DuPage and Will Counties in Illinois. This proposed commuter line would link Waukegan, Elgin, Aurora, Joliet, and northwest Indiana. It provides inter-suburban connectivity to complement Metra's existing suburb-to-city routes.

Metra – STAR Line. The proposed STAR Line utilizes a segment of the proposed Outer Circumferential Line and a proposed new Northwest Corridor Segment to provide a direct commuter rail link between suburban communities and O'Hare Airport.

Metra – Milwaukee District West Line. This proposed extension of the Milwaukee District West Line would extend commuter rail service to Huntley, Marengo, and possibly Rockford. An alternative West Line extension would extend commuter rail service west to Pingree Grove and Hampshire.

Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan

Bicycling and walking offer advantages over using other modes of transportation. Bicycles are cheaper to purchase, they do not burn fossil fuels, and they do not pollute. Cycling is faster than walking and healthier than riding in a motorized vehicle. Walking is the cheapest, cleanest and simplest form of transportation, but requires the most amount of time, so distances traveled are generally shorter than any other mode. Both bicycling and walking, when coordinated with transit, have increased range and functionality.

Purpose of the Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan

The purpose of the Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan is to provide a framework and guidance for the development of facilities and other accommodations to enhance safe bicycling and pedestrian travel throughout the Elgin planning area. This plan offers recommendations for both physical improvements and programs aimed at improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities and safety.

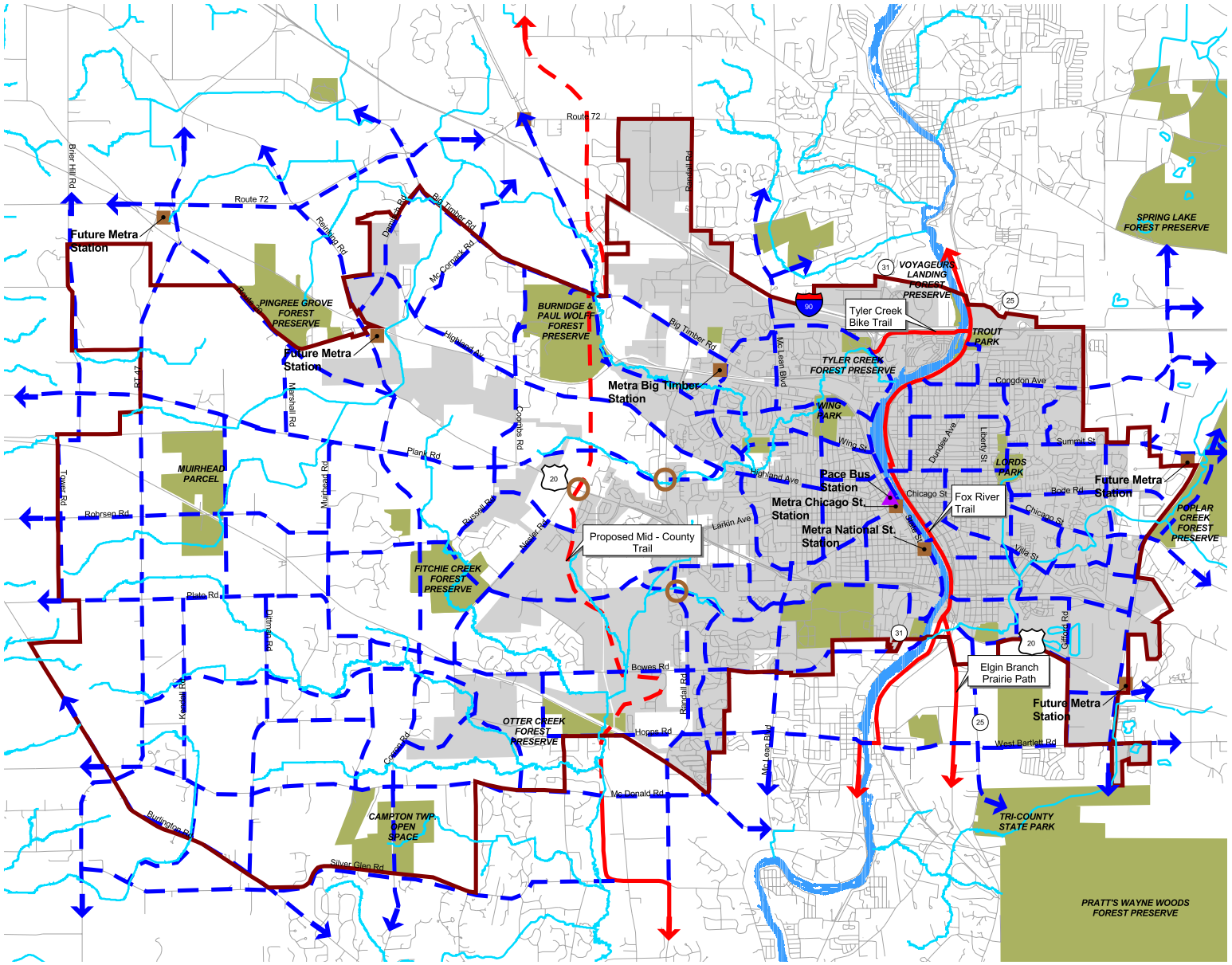

Figure 5.8
Bicycle System Plan

Map Legend

- Existing Regional/County Trails
- Proposed Regional/County Trails
- Local Bicycle System (Conceptual Routes)
- Metra Commuter Rail Station
- Pace Commuter Bus Station
- Grade Separation
- Streams
- Elgin Planning Boundary
- Park, Recreation & Open Space Site
- Elgin Municipal Boundary
- Fox River

1 Mile 1/2 Mile 0 1 Mile

City of Elgin Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines

City of Elgin
Community Development Group

HNTB Corporation • DLK Architecture
Wolff-Clements & Associates
Real Estate Planning Group

Existing Bicycle System

There is a growing system of regional bicycle facilities, which provides opportunities to link Elgin with neighboring communities, the greater Chicago metropolitan area, and areas beyond. Kane County recently adopted a *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*. DuPage County has been implementing a similar plan for a number of years. The Chicago Area Transportation Study is now engaging communities to develop a region-wide bicycle system plan.

Existing and proposed regional trails serving Elgin include the following:

The **Fox River Trail** is a 35-mile long trail which runs along the Fox River. It extends from Crystal Lake in McHenry County to the Village Of Oswego in Kendall County. It offers direct connections to numerous other trails.

The **Elgin Branch** of the **Illinois Prairie Path** extends along the former Chicago, Elgin and Aurora Railway between Elgin and Wheaton. The Illinois Prairie Path was one of the first shared use trails in the nation.

The **Grand Illinois Trail** is a proposed 475 mile loop trail from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River. Over 250 miles of this trail loop use existing regional trails. A segment of this trail loop utilizes the Elgin stretches of the Fox River Trail and the Illinois Prairie Path.

The **Mid-County Trail** will eventually link the Burnidge-Paul Wolff Forest Preserve with the Virgil Gillman Trail in Aurora. This trail system runs west of and generally parallels Randall Road through Kane County.

Several surrounding communities and townships are also working to develop or implement bicycle accommodations, including Bartlett, Gilberts, Hoffman Estates, South Elgin, and Dundee Township.

User Types and Needs

Bicyclists can generally be grouped into three categories:

Group A are advanced bicyclists with experience who can operate under most traffic conditions. They use a bicycle like a motor vehicle, and want fast, direct access to destinations. They are comfortable riding with most vehicular traffic.

Group B are basic bicyclists who are casual or new adult and teenage riders with less confidence in their ability to operate in traffic without special accommodations for bicycles. They prefer to ride on low traffic streets or on a right-of-way designated for bicycle use.

Group C are children and pre-teen riders whose roadway use is initially monitored by adults. They often travel slower and less directly than others, and require a designated right-of-way and calm, alert traffic. Where possible, these riders should use off-road facilities for maximum safety.

Cyclists, as vehicles, are allowed full use of most roadways, and must abide by the same general rules as motor vehicles. All cyclists require safe space in which to operate, a continuous route between destinations, and appropriate signage to guide them as they travel. Cyclists need to be visible to motor vehicle traffic and pedestrians. Safe zones to stop and rest are useful for every rider type. Secure parking is necessary at destinations to make sure the bicycle can provide a return trip.

Pedestrians are generally moving on foot. However, the category also includes people pushing strollers, in wheelchairs, walking pets, skating and jogging. Pedestrians range from toddlers to the very elderly, and include all social groups. Every trip begins and ends as a pedestrian action.

Pedestrians can be grouped similar to bicyclists, but the classifications have less effect on facility design. Commuters walk daily to work or school, and require reasonably direct routes to keep travel times down. General pedestrians include all people who are walking through commercial areas, to a friend's house, and typically on short purposeful trips. Special needs pedestrians include children and those with impairments. This group may require special facilities or assistance when traveling. Facility improvements for this group generally benefit all pedestrians.

Safety is the primary need for pedestrians, who are often exposed to the dangers of traffic (including bicycles). A safe system includes designated separate space for pedestrians that is free of obstacles and keeps pedestrians visible to other traffic. The width and surface of pedestrian facilities is important depending on setting. In most areas, two people walking together should be able to pass a third person comfortably, and different walking speeds should be possible. In areas with more intense pedestrian use, sidewalks and pedestrian facilities should be wider.

Locating Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes

The basic concept of this plan is to connect destinations with bicycle and pedestrian facilities so that use of these modes of travel is possible throughout the city. Routes are generally selected by the density of services and residents they connect and the usage of the corridor connecting them. Connections to existing sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and multi-use trails are also important.
The procedure for planning and designing a **bicycle facility** is as follows:

1. Select the type of bicyclist the facility is intended to serve; A, B or C, or a combination of these.
2. Select the appropriate roadway design treatment or type of facility for the users group.

3. Design the facility in accordance with AASHTO Guidelines.

Routes are determined and classified based on: connectivity to destinations, roadway geometry and classification, safety concerns, current usage, and availability of alternate routes. The following principles represent a set of ideals which should be incorporated, to some degree, into the location and design of bicycle facilities:

Continuity:	Incomplete street networks restrict continuous bicycle travel. Bikeways should be located on roads which offer good continuity.
Directness:	Bikeways should lead to destinations without wandering too far off course.
Access:	Bikeways should be accessible to the intended users.
Traffic Volume and Speed:	More of either requires more intense bicycle facilities.
Street Width:	Street width is vital to bicycle safety, and need depends on vehicular traffic.
Safety:	The fact that a street may pose significant accident potential to bicyclists should not eliminate it from the proposed system. Accident potential can be minimized through facility design. Inexperienced bicyclists will not feel comfortable on high traffic roadways, but experienced bicyclists may prefer these facilities because of directness.
Trucks and Buses:	Trucks and large vehicles adversely affect bicycle travel due to their width and aerodynamics. Buses often use the right portion of the street to pick up and drop off passengers. Streets with high volumes of either trucks or buses should be avoided if possible.
On-Street Parking:	Where it may be necessary to designate bikeways along streets with on-street parking, design measures should be used to minimize conflicts.
Attractiveness:	Scenic value is particularly important to recreational bicyclists, and facilities should be located in scenic areas to the extent practical. Greenways should be included as a part of the bicycle network.
Maintenance:	Bicycle facilities should be located in areas where they can be regularly and easily maintained.

The following principles represent a set of ideals which should be incorporated, to some degree, into the location and design of **pedestrian facilities**:

Safety: Sidewalks, pathways and crosswalks should be designed and built to be free of hazards, and to minimize conflicts vehicular and bicycle traffic.

Access: Sidewalks, pathways and crosswalks should be accessible to all pedestrians by accommodating the needs of people regardless of age or ability.

Connections: The pedestrian network should provide continuous, direct routes between destinations, including homes, schools, commercial areas, public facilities, recreation opportunities, and transit.

Easy to Use: Sidewalks, pathways and crosswalks should be designed so pedestrians can easily find a direct route to a destination and delays are minimized.

Inviting: Good design should enhance the look and feel of the pedestrian environment. The pedestrian environment includes open spaces such as plazas, courtyards and squares, as well as, building facades that frame the street. Amenities such as street furniture, banners, art, decorative landscaping, historic elements, and cultural references promote a sense of place.

Multi-Purpose: The pedestrian environment should be a place where public activities are encouraged. Commercial activities such as dining, vending and advertising may be allowed when they do not interfere with safety and accessibility.

Economical: Sidewalks, pathways, crosswalks, and other pedestrian facilities should be designed to achieve the maximum benefit for their cost, including initial cost and maintenance cost as well as reduced reliance on other modes of transportation. Pedestrian improvements in the right-of-way should stimulate, reinforce, and connect with abutting private improvements.

Bicycle System Plan

A detailed Bicycle System Plan should be developed with community and neighborhood input. **Figure 5.8 Bicycle System Plan** shows existing and proposed elements of the regional and county network of bike paths, as well as, a conceptual system of local bike lanes, routes, and paths.

Goals, Objectives , and Policy Statements
