



BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION

Bicycles are an important element in planning the overall transportation system. Therefore, we're including bikeway planning as a component of this plan. A plan for a bike route through the Village was completed in 1975 and the North Shore Shared Use Path, beginning with the path through Gorell Park along the North Shore Channel, has been in use since 1976. However, a comprehensive study of bicycle transportation for the Village as a whole was not completed until 2003.

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|  | <p>Bicycle – As awareness of alternative modes of transportation increases in the Chicago metropolitan region, we will work to provide and maintain a safe network of bicycle routes and paths that seek to connect parks, schools, employment, shopping centers, Downtown Skokie, recreational facilities, municipal facilities, transit, and other community destinations.</p> |
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Bikeway System Plan

The Village of Skokie Bicycle Facility Plan was completed by Schrieber/Anderson Associates, Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc., Laurie Marston Associates, and Jack Weiss Associates, in May 2003. It was the result of a planning process that included a thorough study of the Village's existing bicycling conditions, a review of the planning efforts of surrounding communities, existing regional plans affecting the Village, and extensive public involvement through a series of meetings and open houses.

 Community participation for the Skokie Bicycle Facility Plan included 3 bike planning workshops on March 19, June 25, and July 30, 2002. The workshops were open to the public and were each attended by between 15 and 25 people. The workshops were used to gather favorite routes, identify problem routes and intersections, and produced a wish list of future improvements. A bicycle tour of the Village was also conducted on May 21, 2002 and was attended by 18 people. The final plan, dated May 2003, was reviewed by the Plan Commission on April 10, 2003 and adopted by the Village Board on July 21, 2003.

The main result was the system of proposed bikeways depicted in Figure 5.3 Bikeway System Plan and a bike route guide for use by the public. The bikeway system provides for improved bicycle circulation through and within the Village, as well as connections to major community destinations. Highlights of this system include:

- Three primary east-west on-street bicycle routes with striped dedicated bike lanes: Howard Street, Main Street, and Church Street
- Four primary north-south on-street bicycle routes without dedicated bicycle lanes: East Prairie Road, Kostner Avenue/Keeler Avenue, Niles Center Road, Gross Point Road
- Bicycle route connections to all surrounding communities

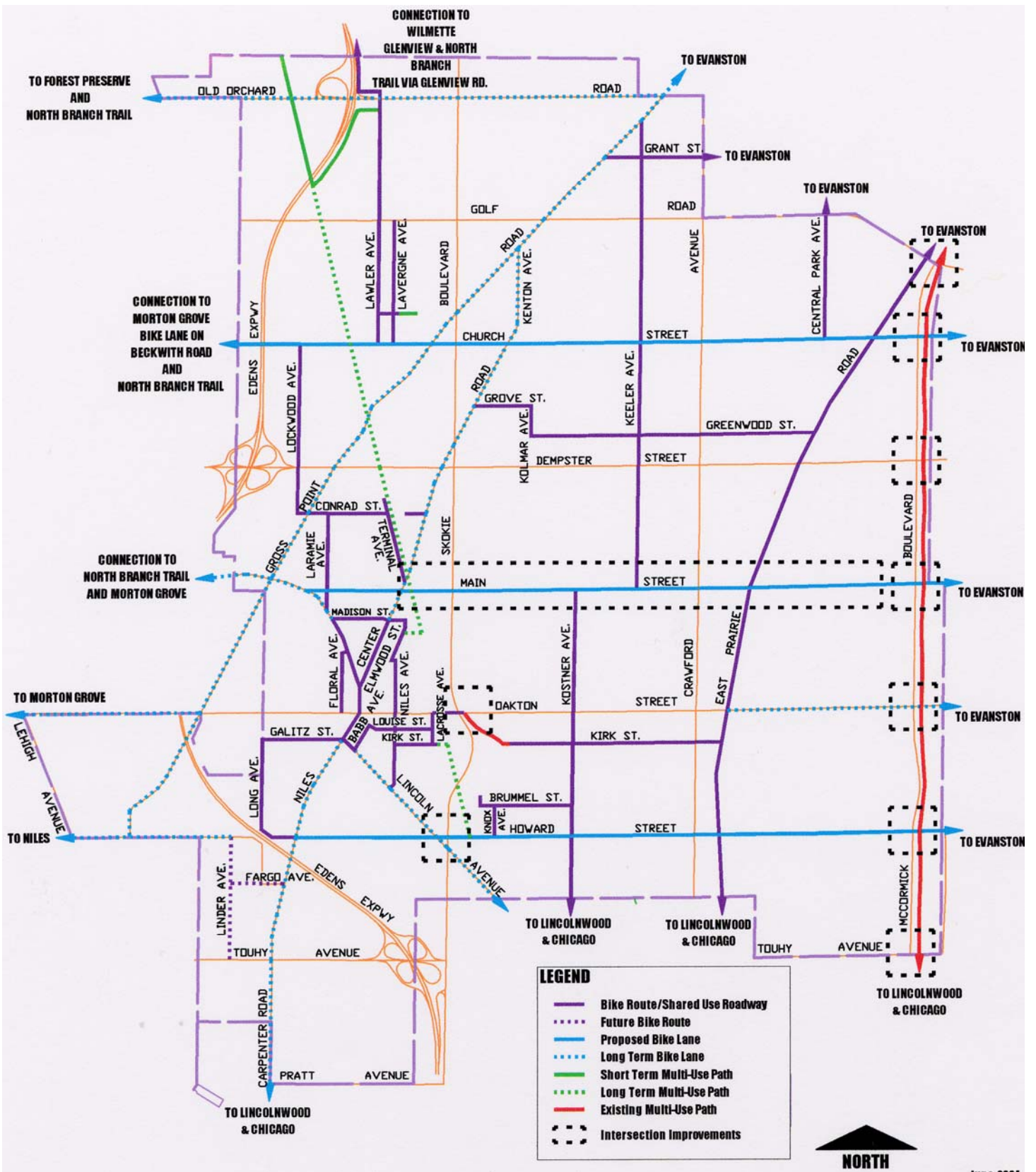
- A proposed north-south, off-street, multi-use path on or adjacent to the Union Pacific rail corridor
- Connections to parks, schools, shopping centers, downtown, recreational facilities, municipal facilities, the Skokie Swift, and other community destinations

In addition to the bikeway system, the plan resulted in the following recommendations:

- A system of signage including wayfinding signs on all routes and major route intersections. The signage will help identify routes, improve safety for bicyclists and motorists, and assist bicyclists and motorists with directions to major destinations
- Removal and replacement of hazardous storm grates throughout the Village in which bicycle tires can be caught
- Bicycle parking improvements including recommended rack types and locations
- Bicyclist and motorist education program recommendations to improve safety and encourage bicycling
- Estimate of implementation cost
- Special study areas that will increase bicycle safety at major intersections and along the North Shore Sculpture Park Bike Path

The last recommendation was implemented in May 2004 with the completion of a study by Schreiber/Anderson Associates, Inc. of the intersections of McCormick Boulevard from Golf Road to Touhy Avenue, Lincoln Avenue/Howard Street/Skokie Boulevard, Skokie Boulevard/Oakton Street, and the length of Main Street from Nilas Center Road to McCormick Boulevard. The improvements along McCormick Boulevard have been designed in conjunction with the *Skokie North Shore Channel Park Master Plan*, which is currently underway. These intersection improvement areas have been added to Bikeway System Plan in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3 Bikeway System Plan




Implementation of Bikeway System Plan

The Bikeway System Plan is a long-term planning tool. Recommendations from the plan are prioritized and are intended to be implemented in phases. Implementation of the plan will improve bicycling conditions for riders within the Village, giving residents more transportation choices for short trips. It will also provide clearly designated and improved routes for riders on longer trips passing through the Village to other locations.

Construction of the Howard Street bike lanes is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2004. Other items in the plan will be reviewed and prioritized for implementation.

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

As has been indicated many times in this plan, more and more Skokie households have no vehicle (almost 1 in 10 households had no vehicle in 2000, compared to 1 in 29 households in 1960). For this reason, it is becoming more and more important to consider how people walk from place to place.

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|  T4 | Pedestrian – Now that safe places to walk are again becoming important as more people are dependent on travel by a means other than car, that the number of children in the Village is again increasing, and that we begin to rethink how we move around the Village, we will work to provide a network of pedestrian places that is complete, safe, inviting, and interesting. |
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Sidewalk System

Our primary network for pedestrian movement is our sidewalk system. Although, mostly complete, there are many gaps in the system. The Village's Public Works Department is currently conducting a detailed inventory of the sidewalk system, which should be completed in 2005. After the inventory is complete, detailed plans should be developed for each sector of the Village outlining current conditions and future improvements. During the Plan Commission meetings on this issue, the Plan Commission placed particular emphasis on completing the sidewalk network on arterial streets and around schools.

Sidewalk Design Standards

Sidewalk design standards provide continuity to the sidewalk system and make sidewalks safer. The Village's Engineering Division has developed specific sets of standards for different sidewalk sections in various parts of the Village, from regular residential sidewalks to commercial streetscaping designs to sidewalks in industrial areas. After the completion of the inventory of the sidewalk system, detailed plans should be developed for each sector of the Village that apply the applicable design standards.

Sidewalk Installation Policy

The Village Code requires that missing public sidewalks be installed when a building permit is issued. However, in many cases the property is in an area where no sidewalks exist on adjacent properties, making it difficult to properly construct a sidewalk when the joining sidewalk grades cannot be properly determined. The Community Development Department is currently developing a policy and recommended Village Code amendments that would provide for the orderly construction of new sidewalks.

Crosswalk and Pedestrian Signalization

The Village's Community Department is currently conducting a detailed inventory of the improvements at different intersection. After the inventory is completed, detailed plans will be developed for each sector of the Village outlining current conditions and future improvements.

Pedestrian Intersection Design Guidelines


After the completion of the crosswalk and pedestrian signalization inventory, specific sets of standards for various intersection types should be developed that enhance pedestrian safety and minimized conflicts with other transportation types. Detailed plans should be developed for each sector of the Village indicating the location and standard of improvements for each intersection.

Pedestrian Intersection Improvement Policy

The Community Development and Public Works Departments should develop policies that indicate when intersection improvements are to be undertaken and the level of those improvements.

VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION

Even though Skokie offers multiple transportation opportunities, roads still play an importation role in getting people from place to place. The Village's grid street network has been in place for a very long time and does a good job of moving traffic within and through Skokie. There are still some problems and areas that can be improved.

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|  T5 | <p>Vehicular – Acknowledging that cars will be important in our short- and long-term future, that Skokie is part of a regional vehicular transportation network, and that not all people use a personal vehicle to move within and through the Village, we will work to maintain a comprehensive street network that is sensitive to the needs of cars, buses, and trucks that is balanced with the needs of pedestrians, bicycles, and trains.</p> |
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