MT. VERNON ILLINOIS BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

Master Plan

May 2024

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Goals for the Mt. Vernon Bicycle Master Plan

- A connected, continuous system with loop options, especially to key destinations such as Veterans Park, Cedarhurst, and other city parks.
- The plan should accommodate all types of bicyclists, including the casual bicyclist who is interested but concerned, commuters, and non-traditional riders.
- Shared-use paths (separated from traffic) should be the priority bicycle facility whenever feasible.
- Ensuring safe places for kids to bicycle, especially opportunities to ride to school.
- Utilize the former railroad corridor (in town) as a linear park/trail and (out of town) as a connection to Rend Lake.
- Increase bicycle safety education for both cyclists and motorists.

MT. VERNON ILLINOIS BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

Who Benefits from Bike Facilities

No Way, No How

No desire to bicycle at all!

Interested but Concerned

You enjoy bicycling, but are nervous about riding in traffic. You prefer bike trails and bike facilities separated from traffic.

Enthused and Confident

You are comfortable riding in traffic, but prefer facilities like bike lanes.

Strong and Fearless

You ride in all types of traffic, regardless of whether there are bike facilities.

The majority of bicyclists (especially new bicyclists) fall within these two categories of "Interested but Concerned" and "Enthused and Confident". Bike facilities play a crucial role, not only in terms of functionality but also in creating a welcoming and inviting environment.

Planning Process

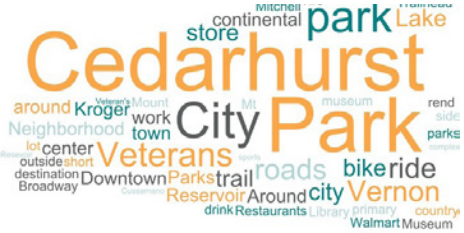
Step 1
Existing Conditions and Community Input

Through a community survey and in-person meetings, input was received on priority destinations, preferred bike facilities, and goals.

The planning team collected data, maps, and summarized existing conditions.

Above: Input at September Market Days

Above: City Council Work Session

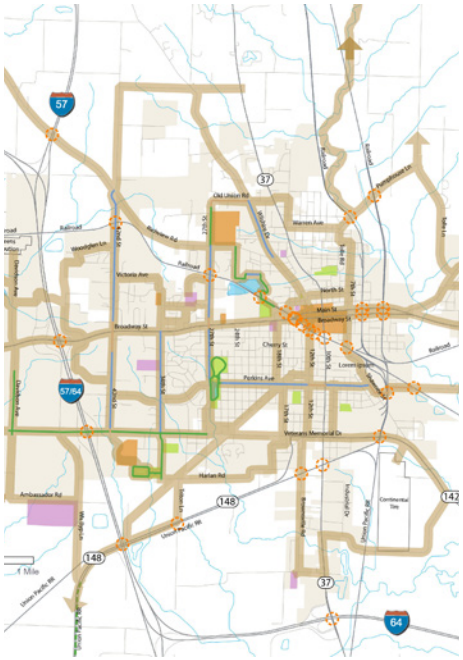


Above: Destinations from Community Survey

Step 2
Routes to Study

Based on input and data from Step 1, a network of routes to study was developed. The planning team conducted in-depth analysis of the routes including available right-of-way, width of streets, average annual daily traffic (AADT) of vehicular traffic, speed limit, on-street parking, and feasibility to have a shared use path.

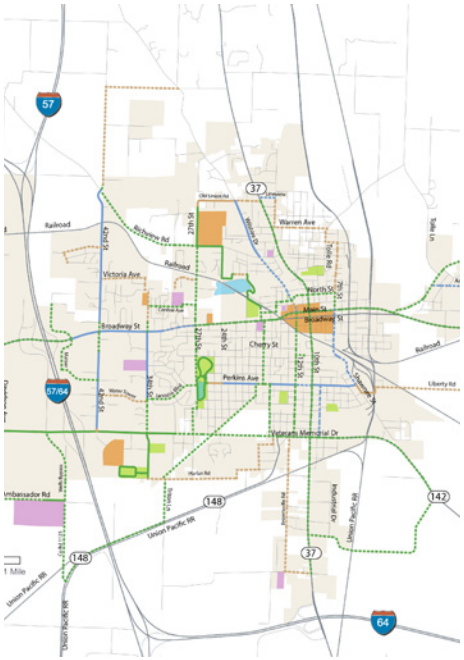
The planning team also analyzed existing and potential Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (BLTS). BLTS helps to quantify the impacts of bicycle facilities on various streets and roads.



Step 3
Draft Master Plan

The draft Master Plan includes recommendations for:

- Future Shared Use Paths
- Streets with Future Bike Lanes
- Streets to have Shared Lanes
- Options for priority projects to determine the first grant application for a first phase construction project.



Step 4
Final Master Plan and Grant Application for First Phase Project

Based on input of the draft Master Plan, the planning team finalized the overall master plan and worked with the City and Advisory Committee to select a first phase project to submit for grant funding.

How will the Bicycle Master Plan be Implemented?
The Bicycle Master Plan should be considered a ***long-term guide***.

The bicycle master plan will guide the City and other partners to improve bicycling in the City. The master plan does not commit a community to fund new projects. Instead, it is a guide to plan for the needs of bicyclists, especially when existing streets are resurfaced or reconstructed, or when new streets are built.

The master plan will help prioritize projects and leverage support and funding options such as grants from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Measuring the Comfort Level of Bicycle Facilities

An important component of the bicycle master planning process is measuring the impact (and potential priority) of different bike facilities. For example, a neighborhood street with very little vehicular volume and very low speeds is likely comfortable for most types of bicyclists. However, a busy street with high traffic speeds and / or a heavy volume of vehicular traffic is going to feel extremely uncomfortable (and unsafe) for all except the very fearless bicyclist.

This bicycle master plan utilizes the Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) methodology to gauge existing and future condition of bicycle corridors to measure the level of bicycle comfort. The BLTS approach was developed in 2012 by the Mineta Transportation Institute and San Jose State University and has been utilized extensively nationwide. Some jurisdictions have made minor refinements to the methodology based on local goals.

LTS methodology is a framework used to evaluate and classify the safety and comfort of bicycle routes within a transportation network. Developed to assist planners, engineers, and policymakers, the LTS methodology helps identify areas where improvements are needed to encourage cycling and enhance overall bicycle network connectivity.

A key advantage of LTS is its user-friendly data entry parameters. The classification is often based on factors such as traffic volume, vehicle speed, the presence of dedicated bicycle infrastructure, and the overall road design.

Another frequently used rating system is the Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS). However, a drawback of the BLOS methodology is the level of detailed data required. This level of detail is difficult to obtain for a high-level master planning effort. Additionally, BLOS relies on traffic engineering metrics that might not fully align with the needs and preferences of cyclists. Finally, BLOS often does not give sufficient attention to intersections.

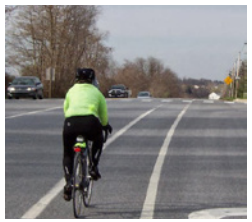
The LTS is typically classified into four levels, ranging from low stress to high stress, each representing different types of cycling environments. This plan utilizes a modified version (based on Montgomery County, Maryland) that includes a 2.5 rating since the jump from a 2 to 3 rating can be a significant step in comfort level.

STRESS LEVEL 1
Low stress, requires little attention or further improvements.
(Examples: Neighborhood streets, shared use paths.)

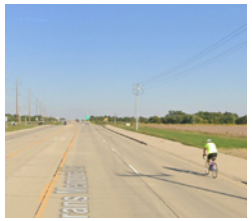
STRESS LEVEL 2
Fairly low stress. Suitable for most of the population, but may require more attention than young children would be expected to deal with. *(Examples: Neighborhood streets, bike lanes, shared use paths immediately adjacent to traffic.)*

STRESS LEVEL 2.5
Mild to moderate stress. Comfortable for most adult bicyclists, but slightly higher traffic speeds and more parking conflicts. *(Examples: Bike lanes on streets with slightly higher traffic volumes and speeds.)*

STRESS LEVEL 3
Moderate stress. Observant adult bicyclists can safely navigate, but not comfortable for a majority of bicyclists. *(Examples: Bike lanes on busy streets with higher traffic volumes and speeds.)*



STRESS LEVEL 4
High stress. Experienced and skilled bicyclists only. No bicycle facilities or facilities adjacent to high traffic volumes and speeds *(Examples: Multi-lane arterials or high speed, > 45 mph, two lane roads.)*



BICYCLE LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS (LTS) METHODOLOGY: MIXED TRAFFIC SEGMENTS

Number of Lanes	ADT (vph)[1]	Functional Class	Posted or Prevailing Speed (mph)		
			≤ 20	25	30
Unmarked Centerline	≤ 750	Local	BLTS 1	BLTS 1	BLTS 2
	750 - ≤ 1,500	Local / Collector	BLTS 1	BLTS 1	BLTS 2
	1,500 - ≤ 3,000	Collector	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 2
	> 3,000	Arterial	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3
1 through lane per direction	≤ 750	Local	BLTS 1	BLTS 1	BLTS 2
	750 - ≤ 1,500	Local / Collector	BLTS 1	BLTS 1	BLTS 2
	1,500 - ≤ 3,000	Collector	BLTS 2	BLTS 2	BLTS 2
	> 3,000	Arterial	BLTS 2	BLTS 3	BLTS 3
2 through lanes per direction	≤ 8,000	Arterial	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 3
	> 8,000	Arterial	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4
3+ through lanes per direction	Any ADT	Arterial	BLTS 3	BLTS 3	BLTS 4

*[1] ADT is both directions for two-way streets. For one-way streets use 1.5*ADT.*

Sources for LTS Methodology: Oregon Multi-Modal Analysis Procedures Manual (2020) and Montgomery County Maryland Bicycle Master Plan LTS Methodology (2018). Both sources based on "Low Stress Bicycling and Network Connectivity," Mineta Transportation Institute Report, May 2012.

BICYCLE LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS (LTS) METHODOLOGY: SEGMENTS WITH BIKE LANES

Posted Speed Limit (mph)	# of Through Lanes	Bike Lanes						
		No Parking			Parking			
		Infrequently Obstructed		Frequently Obstructed	Infrequently Obstructed / Low Parking Turnover			Frequently Obstructed / High Parking Turnover
		Bike Lane ≤ 5.5 ft	Bike Lane ≥ 6.0 ft		Bike Lane + Parking	Bike Lane + Parking = 14.0 - 14.5 ft	Bike Lane + Parking = 15.0 ft	
≤ 25	2 - 3	2	1	2.5	2.5 (2a)	2	1	2.5
	4 - 5	2.5 (2b)	2.5 (2b)	2.5	3			
	≥ 6	3			3			
30	2 - 3	2	2	2.5	2.5	2	2	2.5
	4 - 5	2.5 (2b)	2.5 (2b)	2.5	3			
	≥ 6	3			3			
35	2 - 3	3			3			
	4 - 5							
	≥ 6							
40	2 - 3	3			n/a			
	4 - 5	4 (3b)						
	≥ 6	4						
≤ 45	2 - 3	4			n/a			
	4 - 5							
	≥ 6							

Sources for LTS Methodology: Oregon Multi-Modal Analysis Procedures Manual (2020) and Montgomery County, Maryland Bicycle Master Plan LTS Methodology (2018). Both sources based on "Low Stress Bicycling and Network Connectivity," Mineta Transportation Institute Report, May 2012.

Section 2
Community Input

Advisory Committee

The role of the bicycle master plan Advisory Committee is to act as a sounding board for the planning team in providing feedback on existing conditions, potential routes and destinations, and plan recommendations.

The Advisory Committee is meeting three times during the planning process. Meeting dates included:

Meeting #1: July 18, 2023

Meeting #2: November 15, 2023

Meeting #3: March 24, 2024

The second meeting was a joint meeting with the Mt. Vernon Advisory Committee at Rend Lake College.

Above: Advisory Committee meeting #1 on July 18, 2023

Right: Joint meeting of the Benton and Mt. Vernon Advisory Committees at Rend Lake College on November 15, 2023.

Stakeholder Meeting and Council Work Session

The planning team held a stakeholder meeting and City Council work session on August 30, 2023. The stakeholder meeting was held at 2:30pm and included representatives from the Mt. Vernon Police Department, Mt. Vernon Fire Department, Cedarhurst Center for the Arts, Historical Village, Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation, and the Housing Authority of Mt. Vernon.

The City Council work session was held at 4:00pm and included attendance by members of the public.

The primary objective of both meetings was to offer an overview of the bicycle master plan process, raise awareness about the plan survey, and solicit input on potential destinations, preferred routes, and any existing barriers or challenges to biking in Mt. Vernon.

Above: City Council work session for the bicycle master plan on August 30, 2023.

Open House #1 at Mt. Vernon Market Days

The planning team had a bicycle master plan booth at Mt. Vernon Market Days on Saturday, September 9, 2023 from 8:00 am - 2:00pm. The Market Days booth was in lieu of a traditional open house or public meeting.

Market Days is Mt. Vernon's premier flea market and vendor fair, taking place on the first Saturday of every summer month at Veteran's Park. Participating in the Market Days event provided the planning team with a unique opportunity to engage with a diverse range of local residents and visitors. During the event, the planning team had the chance to discuss the bicycle master plan, promote the survey, and gather valuable input regarding potential destinations and preferred routes.

Open House #2 - February 29, 2024

The second open house for the bike master plan was held on Thursday, February 29, 2024 at the Mt. Vernon City Hall from 5:00 - 7:00 pm.

The open house did not have a formal presentation, instead attendees could stop by anytime between 5:00 - 7:00 pm.

The key focus of the open house was a review of the draft bicycle master plan, including review of potential priority projects (see details of the projects later in this document).

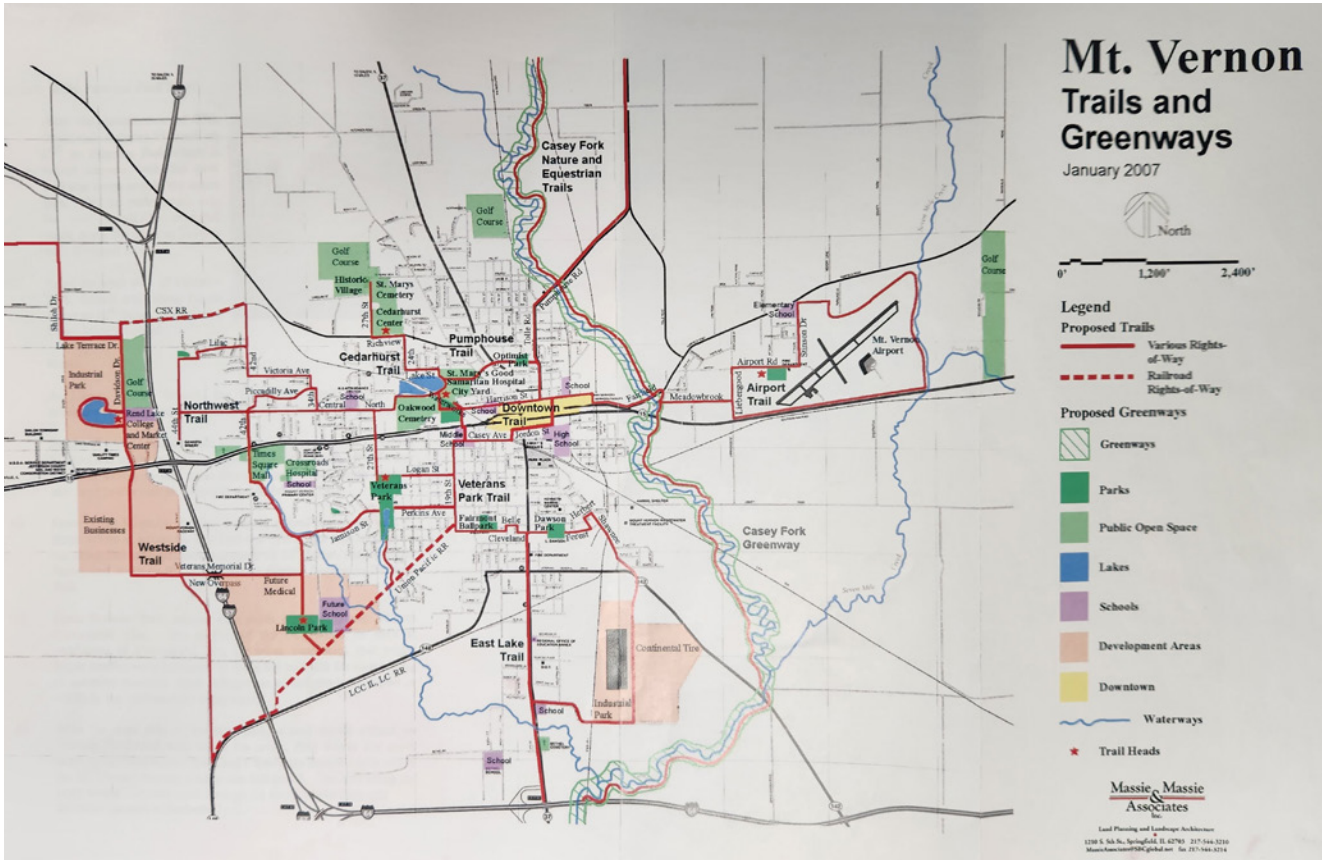
The potential priority projects were:

- Option A: Veterans Park - Cedarhurst Loop
- Option B: Center Loop
- Option C: Perkins - Veterans Loop (with Alternate)
- Option D: Veterans Park - High School - Rend Lake Connector
- Option E: Downtown via Fairfield Road
- Option F: Richview Road Connector

Option B 'Center Loop' was by far the most commented project to be the priority. Option D 'Rend Lake Connector' was a clear choice as the second preference. Attendees realized that a connection to Rend Lake would be a long-term endeavor, but were excited about the tourism and economic opportunities associated with a Mt. Vernon to Rend Lake trail.

The planning team used the feedback to work with the city and the advisory committee to choose the first phase project for the initial grant application.

Past Plans: 2007 Mt. Vernon Area Comprehensive Plan for Trails and Greenways



The 2007 Mt. Vernon Area Comprehensive Plan for Trails and Greenways was a very broad, high level assessment of trail and greenway opportunities in and near Mt. Vernon.

The plan did a good job in looking at broader connections including to Rend Lake and utilizing the Casey Fork creek as a greenway.

However, the plan did not include any analysis of right-of-way widths or property ownership. The plan also did not include substantial community engagement. The plan recommended further research, planning, and engagement.

Elements of the 2007 plan are suitable to carry forward as part of the routes to study during this current planning process. Elements include: connections to Rend Lake, Casey Fork Greenway, and the airport loop.

Community Bike Master Plan Survey

An online community wide survey to gain input for the bike master plan took place from early August 2023 to September 30, 2023.

Key Take Aways from the Survey

Potentially Large Segment of "Potential" Riders

Over half of respondents are "Interested but Concerned" and almost half only bike "a few times a year" or "hardly ever." Combined with almost three out of every four respondents that they would bike more if " There were more bike facilities separate from the street (shared use path / multi-use trail)," this suggests that there is a large untapped segment of Mt. Vernon's population that are desiring to bike.

Strong Consensus on Priority Destinations and Preferred Streets

The survey revealed a clear hierarchy of priority destinations and streets. Notably, respondents emphasized parks, with a particular focus on Veterans Park, and Cedarhurst as their preferred destinations. Understanding the preferred streets for both present and future biking is be helpful for the corridor route analysis.

Strong Consensus on Desirability of Shared-Use Paths

The survey reinforced the desirability of shared-used paths. This wasn't surprising as it was the preferred bike facility type in listening sessions. However, the survey further solidified the objective of prioritizing shared-use paths whenever feasible.

We Can't Overlook Commuters and Non-Traditional Riders

Although a relatively small portion of survey respondents (10% for each option) indicated "commuting" or "running errands" as their primary biking reasons, it's important to emphasize the significance of planning for commuters and non-traditional riders. This includes individuals who might be cycling due to lacking a driver's license or not owning a vehicle.

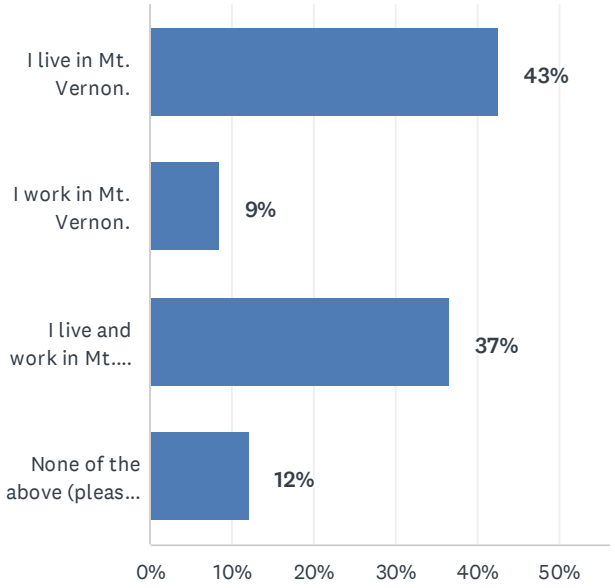
Importance of Full Width Bike Lanes

Numerous respondents expressed concerns about bike lanes being too narrow. Lanes that are less than 5 feet wide and with a longitudinal joint at the curb and gutter can pose challenges for bicyclists. Although street width limitations often restrict the possibility of wider lanes, an important aspect of the planning process should involve a thorough understanding of the distinction between "bike shoulders" and full-fledged "bike lanes."

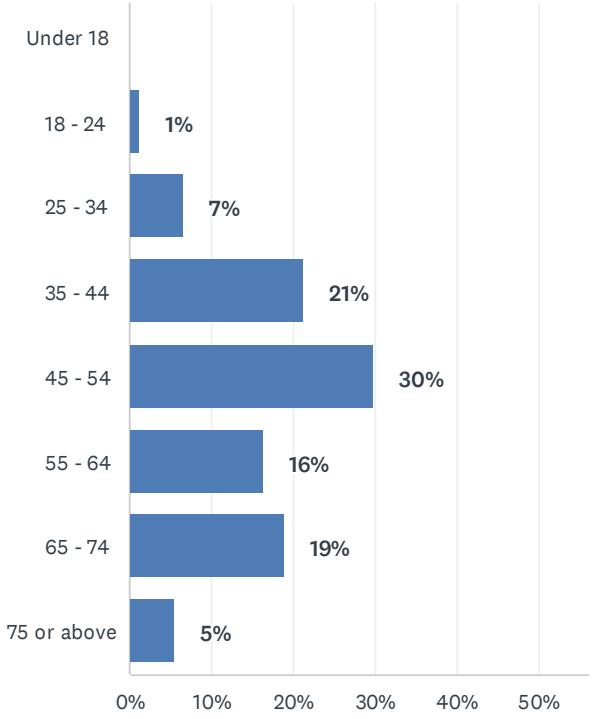
Rend Lake as a Destination

While the scope of the planning process is focused on the city limits, it is important to understand connectivity beyond the City. The survey clearly indicated the desirability of connecting to Rend Lake as a destination.

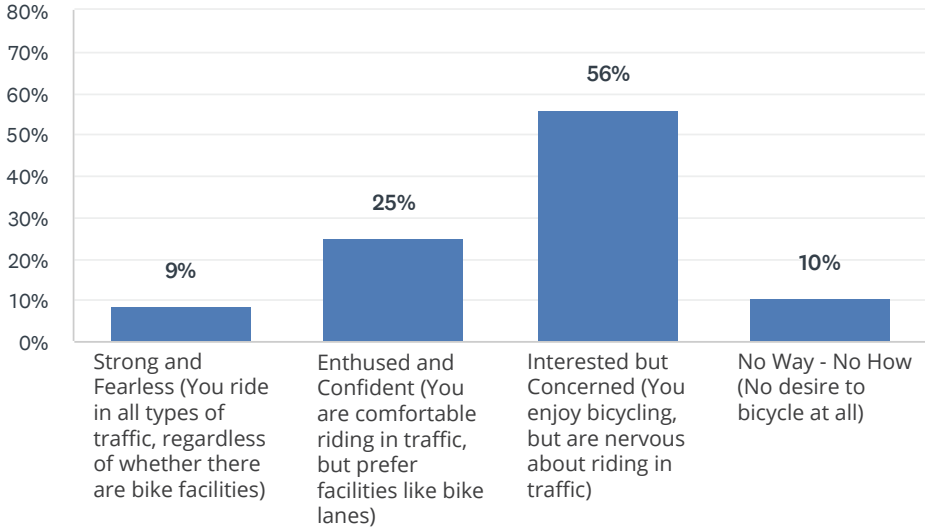
Q1. Choose what best describes you? (choose one)



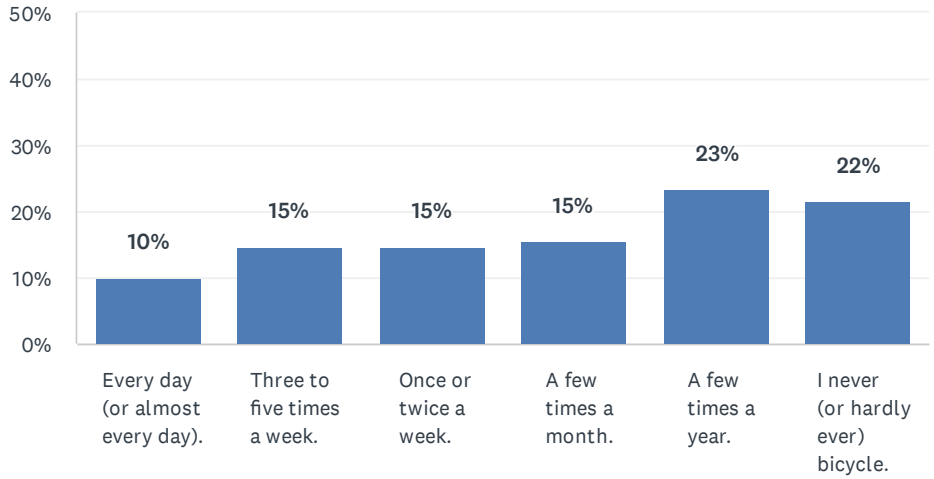
Q2. What is your age?



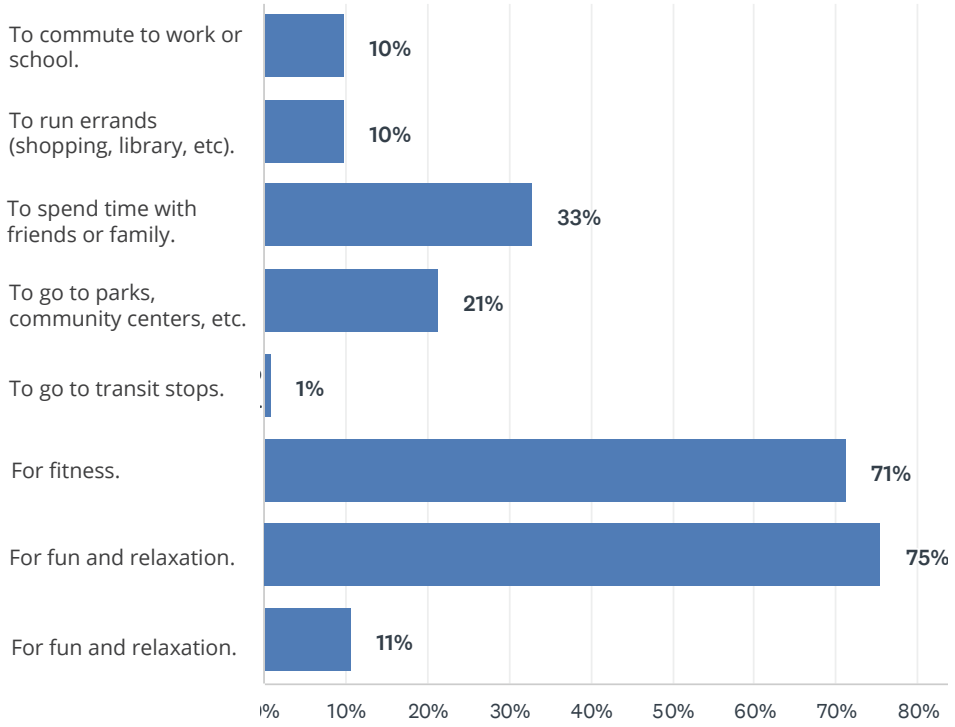
Q3. What best describes you as a bicyclist? (choose one)



Q4. How often do you currently bicycle? (choose one)



Q5. Why do you bicycle now? (choose one)



Q6. What are your top 3 biking destinations within the City? (List up to three)

Cedarhurst and city parks were by far the two top biking destinations mentioned in survey responses. Of parks, Veterans Park was the top destination. Although there was a clear heirarchy of top destinations, the word cloud shows the diversity of responses from around Mt. Vernon including workplaces (Continental Tire), shopping (Kroger, Broadway, Walmart), and entertainment (restaurants).

Q7. What are destinations outside of the City limits that you bike from the City (or would like to bike)? (List up to three)

Rend Lake was by far the top biking destination outside the city. Remember that the question included "..or would like to bike," so Rend Lake is more of a desired destination as opposed to a current destination.

Other destinations mentioned were Jaycee Lake and surrounding communities.

Q8. Currently, what streets do you frequently bicycle on?

Top streets that respondents currently bike on include:

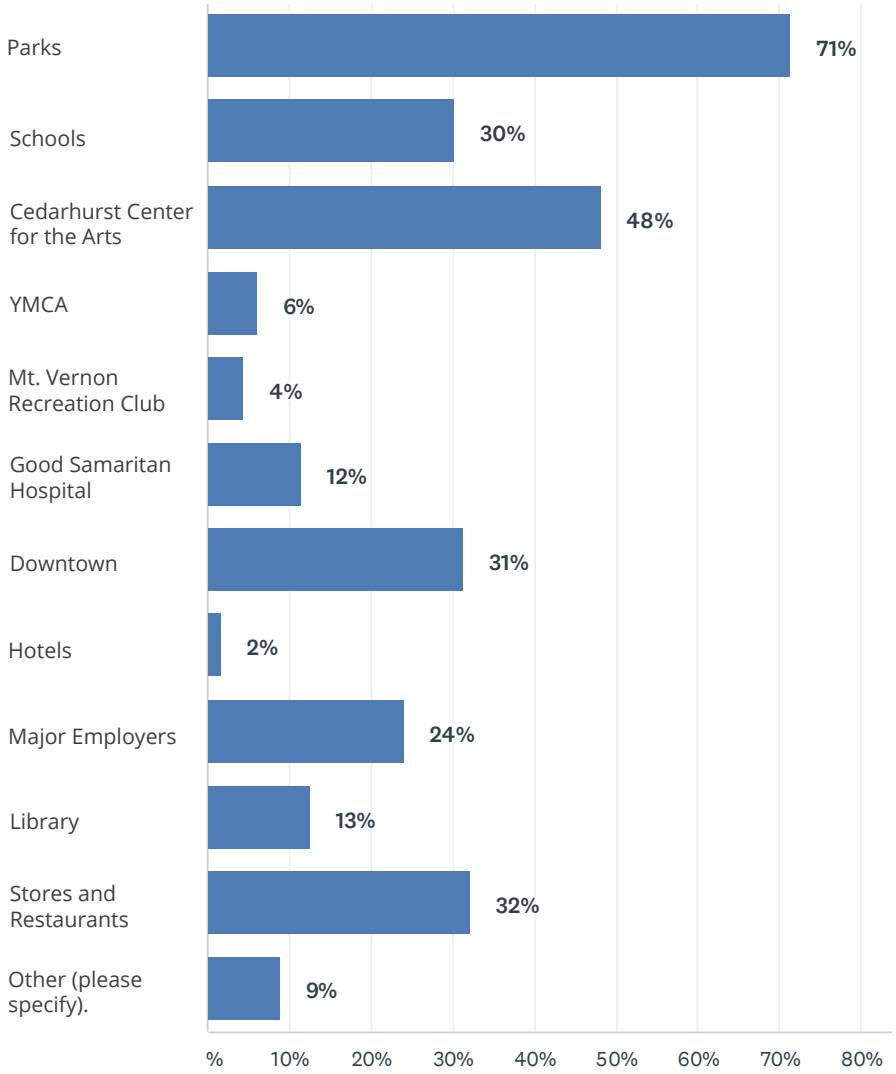
- 27th
- Richview
- 42nd
- 34th
- Veterans
- Broadway (Bway)

Q9. In the future, what streets would you like to bicycle on? (Perhaps you don't bicycle on these streets now because you feel unsafe)

Top streets that respondents would like to bike on include:

- Veterans Memorial
- Broadway / Main
- Richview
- 42nd

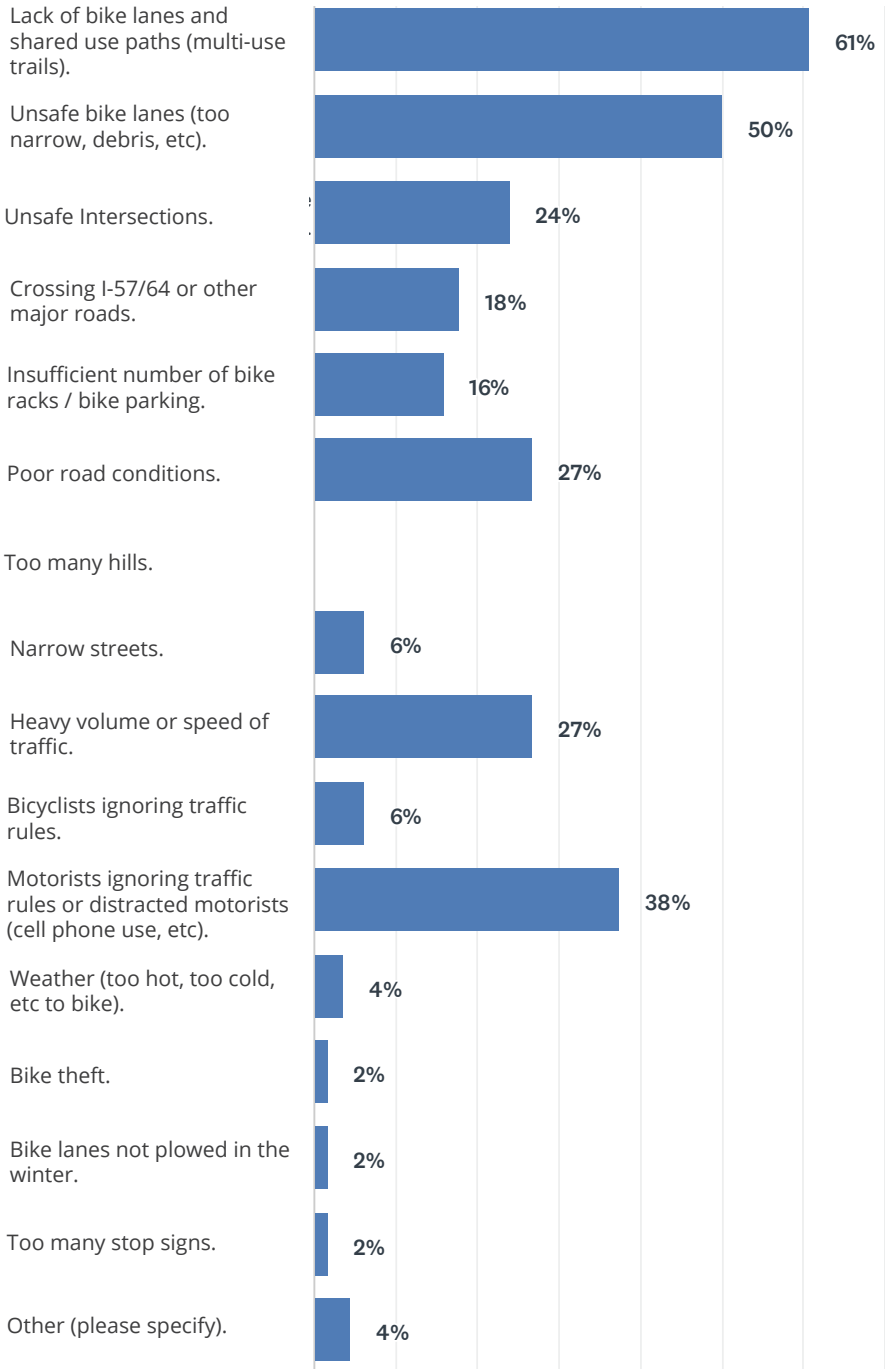
Q10. What are your top three priorities for destinations in the City that future bike facilities should connect? (Choose up to three)



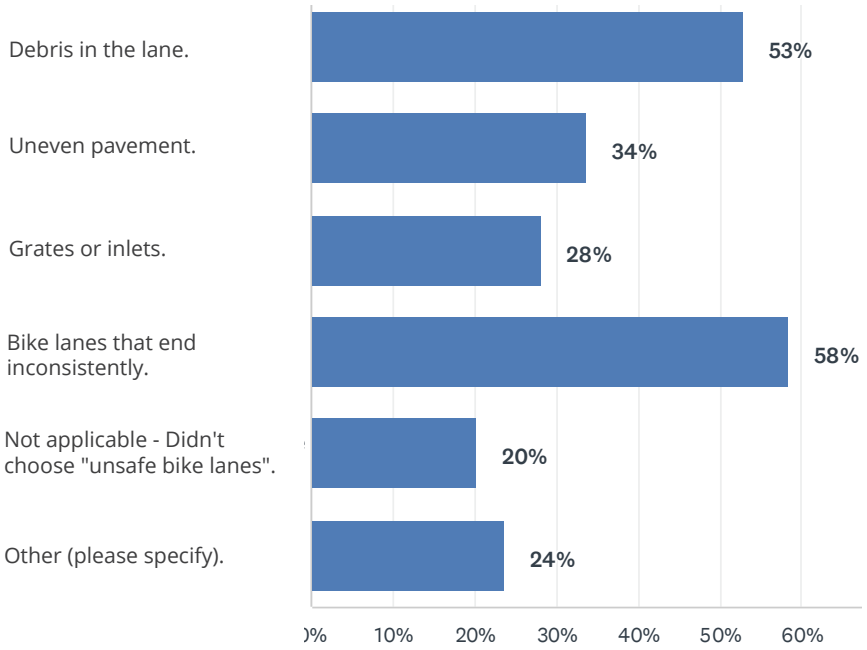
Other responses:

- Stowe, Vermont has the best bike trail I've ever seen. It connects to beautiful scenery, great restaurants, downtown, and parks.
- Crossroads Hospital too.
- Rendlake College- it would be amazing for the Higgs cool to be connected to Rlc through trails.
- Cedarhurst is #3; Library and Downtown would be #4 and #5 and the YMCA and Schools next
- We should have sidewalks or bike lanes on every street. Not just south town!
- Rend Lake
- Safe places to bike without fear of traffic.
- Continental tires
- Access for people to bike to work - Continental Tire, Walgreens
- Would be very nice to see a bike path that loops around (encircles) the whole city. Then use cut though roads to split it (i.e. 42nd & 34th Streets) & get to destinations within the city. Everything now is disconnected/disjointed.

Q11. What are the top three challenges to biking in Mt. Vernon? (Choose up to three)



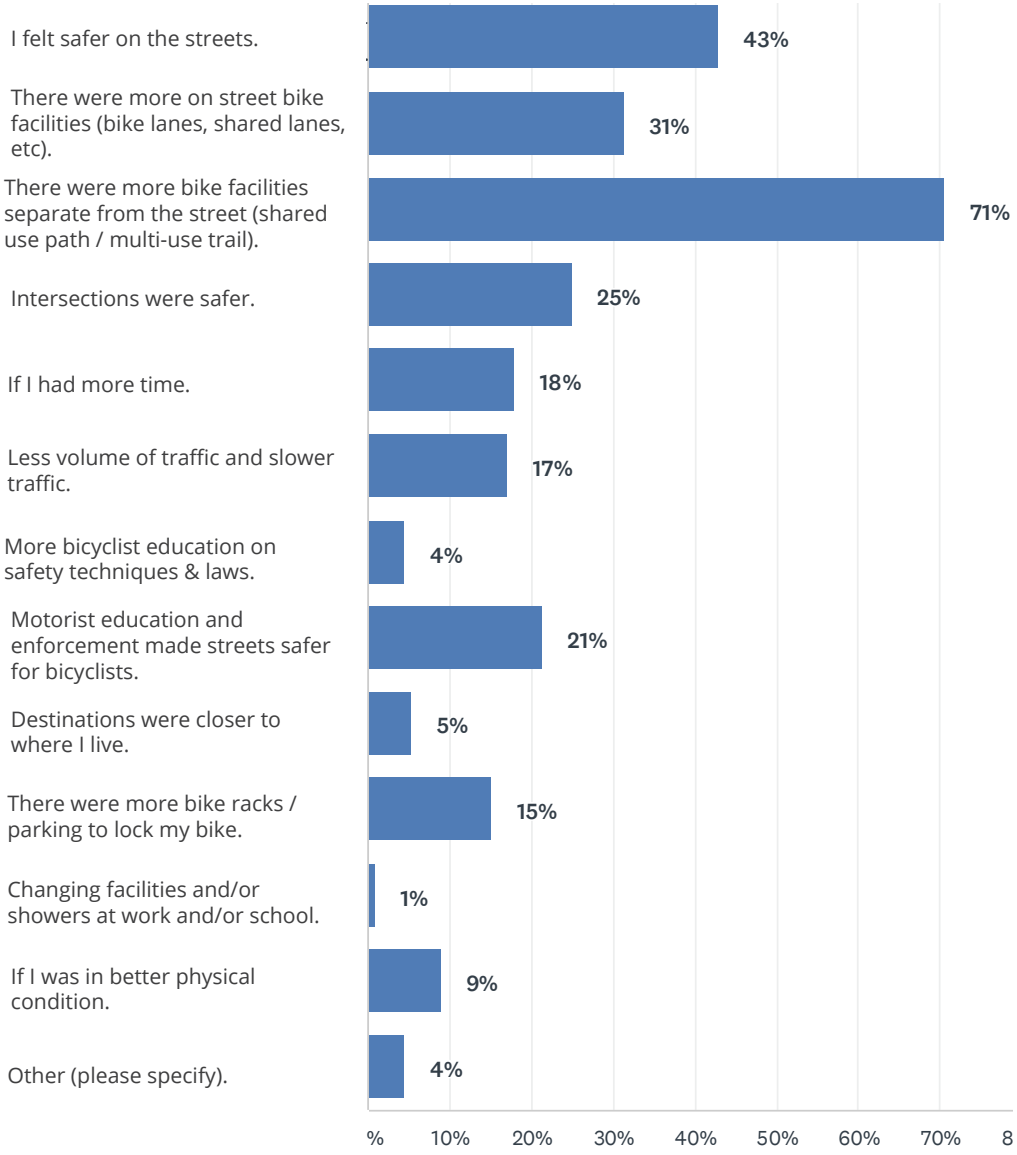
Q12. If you chose "unsafe bike lanes" in the last question, what makes the bike lanes unsafe?
(Choose all that apply)



Other responses:

- Cyclist riding the wrong direction on the wrong side of the road, especially when it is clearly marked. Please enforce the rule of the road and educate the folks on bicycles.
- Too narrow and close to traffic, people still drive in bike lanes and throw things at bikers out of their cars and scream at bikers
- Bike lanes merge with right turn lanes
- Bike paths not separated from the main road
- The bike lanes are lacking, not appropriate size, and pavement can be dangerous
- Surface damage 42nd Street
- Lanes are too narrow
- To close to cars and cars drive on bike lane. Most everyone I have ever seen have no clue how to use bike lanes or rules that they go by.
- They are connected to the road
- Too close to car lanes,
- Lane too narrow
- Lanes are not wide enough. Too close to traffic.
- Drivers driving in bike lanes
- Unsafe street crossing
- I would like for my son to be able to ride his bike to the high school if he wants (which he does) but the traffic in the mornings and afternoons is much too busy I wouldn't feel good about him doing that unless there were barricades separating the bike path from traffic
- lanes too narrow and lanes that do exist have divides right down the middle of the lane forcing the cyclist to ride close to traffic staying away from the crack divide, the other side of the lane is not available cause the bike crank will hit the curb. Some lanes have drain grates that can trap a bike.
- We do not currently have bike lanes! Painting a line down the side of the driving lane is not a bike lane! A bike lane is a paved, level lane separate/in addition to regular sized driving lanes-not part of one.
- Pretty certain every drain grate within the city is a hazard to cyclists
- The bike lanes that currently exist as way too narrow. Not much distance/ separation with road traffic...you might as well be riding out on the road then in the car lanes.
- Motorists not paying attention to bike lanes
- Too Narrow

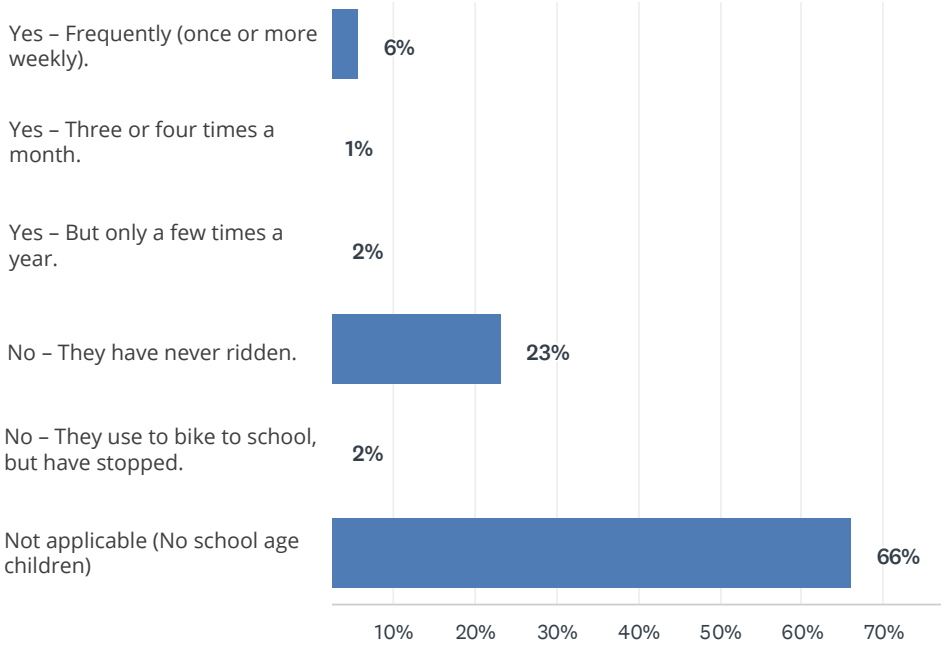
Q13. What are the top three changes would help you bicycle more often? (Choose up to three)



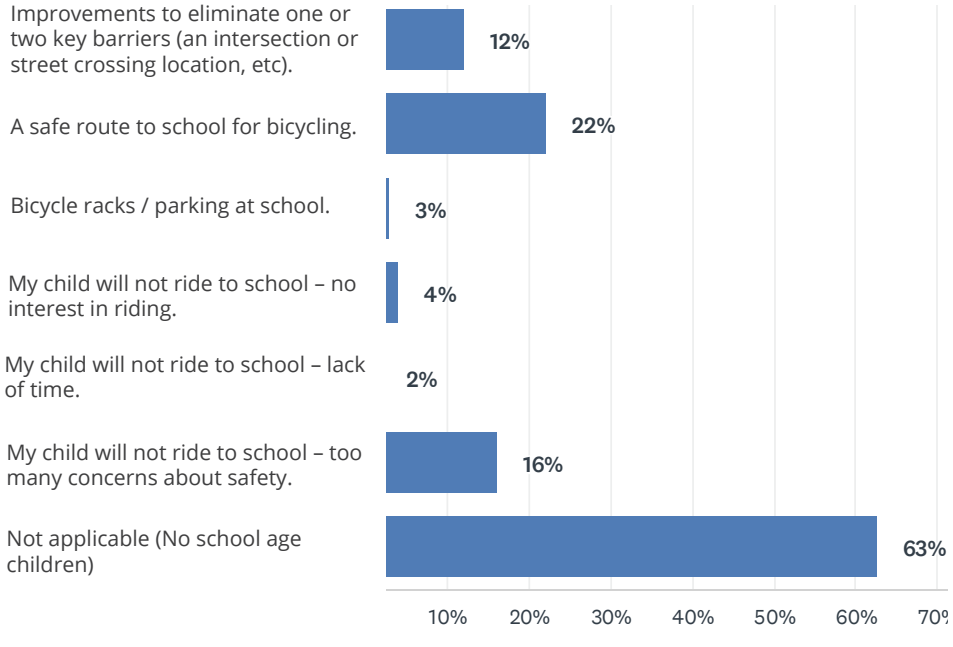
Other responses:

- Fix the roads even the neighborhoods stop laying down gravel roads
- I prefer biking off traffic. I am a slow rider, and have arthritis. Turning to watch traffic is stressful. The bike trails at rend lake thru the trees and near the lake are ideal.
- Bike paths not shared with cars
- I can't bike due to physical limitations but would love the opportunity for others
- Unsafe intersections, no traffic lights

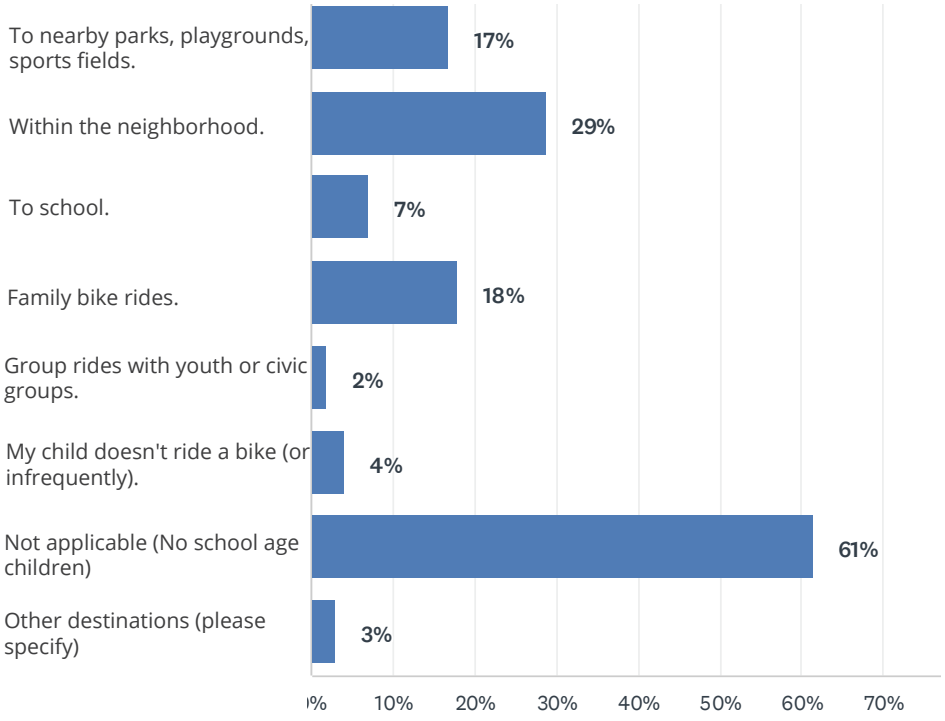
Q14. If you have school age children (grade school thru high school), do they bike to school? (choose one)



Q15. If your child doesn't ride or rides infrequently, what would help your child bike to school? (Choose all that apply)



Q16. If you have school age children, where do they bicycle?
(Choose all that apply)



Q17. What should be the top priorities for improving bicycling in Mt. Vernon?

Responses:

- Our family would love bike only trails through nature and forests for safety, enjoyment, and fitness reasons. Easy access points to residential neighborhoods and key places in our community.
- Bike path or multiuse path
- Bicycle safety
- Roads and bike lanes everywhere
- More bike lanes or shared use paths along main roads
- Keep off main roads, broadway, 42nd, 34th, Perkins too dangerous-narrow roads.
- Off street bicycling, bicycling in all neighborhoods.
- Safety
- "Providing safe clean and wide shared paths to all shopping, working, and learning facilities.
- Sidewalk entrances are rough around town. Some are broken, some are very narrow and some have high ledges."
- Separate bike paths or more routine traffic control
- Safety
- "Fixing the roads across the city. The addition of gravel over pavement is unsafe and eliminates the possibility of bikers using the road.
- Cutting down the high grass on property and near areas near bike lanes.
- Adding more accessible trails for cyclists, more connectivity, something to do for ppl who don't want to be indoors/on their phone like I am doing now. "
- More bike lanes and bike trails
- Wider bike lanes. I have balance issues and use a recumbent tricycle. This bike is as wide as or wider than the existing bike lanes. Thus wider lanes, or bike paths separate from the roads would be necessary for me to bike in Mt Vernon. I go to Rend Lake, Edwardsville, or St. Louis parks to ride.
- Connecting to the major employers and school. There are amazing bike trails already at Rend Lake. Having trails that connected to Rendlake would be my biggest desire. Also, if there could be a loop to Walgreens distribution center, Continental tire, the high school, and to rendlake.
- Having off street bike paths. Perhaps a circle or a path with multiple parking lots along the way.
- Bike trails or paths separate from street
- Paths not on the busy streets
- Safety
- Safety, and include more shared walking paths instead of shared automobile roads..
- Many main streets don't have sidewalks and lanes for bikes and have to share the lane with cars and semi on high speed very unsafe
- More bike paths and sidewalks
- Make trails OFF the roads. Wider shared side walk striped for both directions. For non motorized traffic and walkers.
- A dedicated bike path, separate from shared lanes.
- Safety
- Bicycle lanes should be debris free and consistent. Many end abruptly.
- specific bike lanes off the roadways
- Multi use trails
- Fixing the streets
- "Make safe multipurpose lanes to get from downtown to Walmart/ shopping area for those who don't own a vehicle.
- Do the same for north town to downtown, sour town to downtown and same as east and west."
- Make lanes safer. Lanes to more areas.
- Improve streets surface and curbs. Well marked lanes.
- Creating separate off road bike paths that extend a significant distance. This path needs to be paved and closed to all motor vehicles. This could be available to walkers/runners as well.
- Recreational bike tracks near the city like what was done around Rend Lake. Good example is what was done in O'Fallon with the old railroad tracks converted to cycling paths
- Improve roads, sewer grates, cracks, potholes, etc.
- Installation of bike lanes across town, installation of bike racks across town, installation of sidewalks where bike lanes are not available for installation.
- "Safer bike lanes. Traffic safety enforcement.
- Separate bike lanes, clean bike lanes, safe intersections
- Off street bike and walking trails
- Creating more bicycle paths or shared use paths in high traffic areas
- Off road trails. Trails that are continuous and don't just stop.
- Linking Mt Vernon bike trails to Re d Lake trails. Use the old railroad bed from the end of Wells Bypass, across Rend Lake, then to the campgrounds.
- Connect the trails. Create some loops.

- 1. Community awareness. 2. A detailed growth plan for adding bike lanes. 3. Awareness of routes in the country that are safe for cyclists. There are a lot of great roads out there. However, we need pullouts for parking or ways to connect from the city. "
- safety - good road surface
- More specific paths with minimal crossing of automobile lanes.
- Get rid of the fake “bike lanes” that are currently in the roads (driving lanes) and gutters.
- Separate lanes for bike away from main road. Not the way that is around town where they just stuff a bike lane in on a road. That’s not inviting to the biker and it feels dangerous. Separate paths like sidewalks for bikes.
- "Bike path to Rend Lake
- More bike lanes"
- Finish marking the paths around town. More paths that are separate from the vehicle traffic.
- Safety safety safety! Drivers need to understand rules of the road
- Making bike paths separate from street bike paths, in the park, around airport lake, etc.
- Connecting all the existing bike shared use paths, and/ or a grand loop all around the entire city with cut through paths in the middle to get to some inner city destinations.
- A bike route around Miller Lake would be nice for family recreation.
- Off road shared use paths, providing a bike park for kids (pump track, obstacle course); we drive to St. Louis to bike with our kids because of the availability of facilities for young riders to practice fun skills
- Better traffic law enforcement.

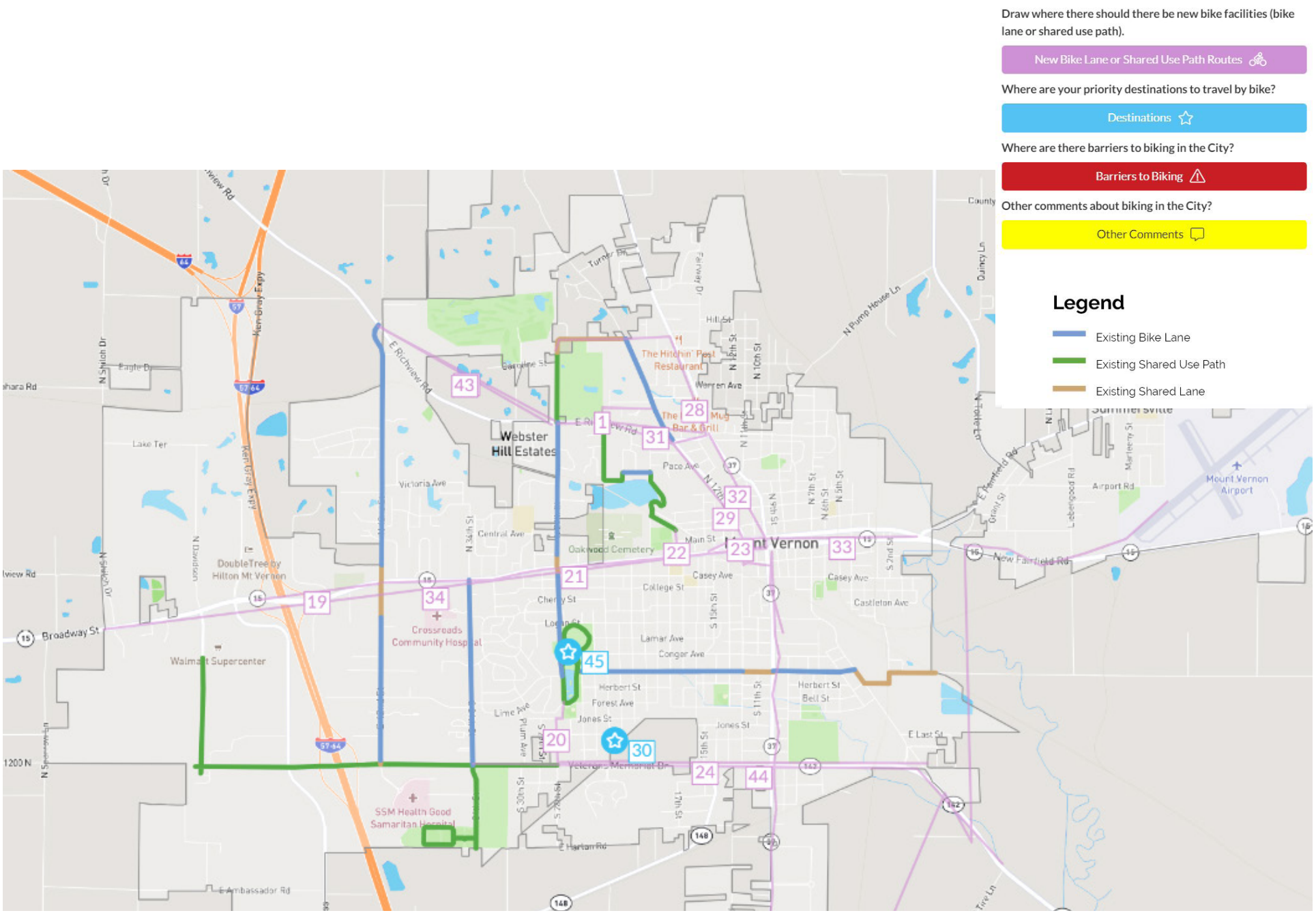
Q18. Other comments regarding the Mt. Vernon Bicycle Master Plan.

- Thank you for considering improving the biking situation in Mt. Vernon
- This should really help the town if done correctly
- Outskirts not main roads
- How about converting old rail tracks to bike trails!!!???!!!
- Must do something soon and show ppl that there is high attn to this.
- Trying to choose a scenic route on the edge of town would be ideal. I would look for natural waterways, such as creeks or any places that pass the shaded areas. I would also consider putting benches so often. And I grew up, riding my bike all over MtVernon and have long for the day or we had adequate bike trails.
- Can't wait to have!
- I would love to ride more if I felt I didn't have to dodge traffic
- No
- To much grave stones on the roads
- See answer on question 17
- Mt. Vernon is a heavy interstate hub, with a very dangerous highway. I 57 has wrecks daily, and alot of traffic diverts thru a very busy part of town. Off road smooth lanes/sidewalks would be very welcome.
- Bike paths in safe neighborhoods.
- Better connections
- Love to have connection to the Rend Lake trails. I drive to Ina and park at the college to ride Wayne Fitzgerald. Or I go to the North Sandusky area and park to ride the trails.
- I think this is far past due and happy to see that there is initiatives to make this happen.
- Scenic routes
- Thank you for striving to improve this in our community. If we could have trails in our county that meet my needs it would significantly increase how much my spouse and I exercise.
- Let's do it. Great enhancement for all ages of the community!!
- Marketing new and existing bike paths to residents...maybe add a map on city website?
- It will bring people to our area. We often stop in towns to eat, get snacks, water and use bathroom. It gets people out. Good for physical and mental health.
- I can't wait.
- Don't forget to look at abandoned railroad lines for possible bike only trails
- "I'd love to see a large scale group fall color ride near Rend Lake. I think this would be a great way to bring awareness to the community regarding the fun of cycling and bring in people from the outside for tourism dollars.
- The is also a lack of MTB courses in this region of the country. The closest one is the Touch of Nature facility in Carbondale. We should look at the work in Arkansas. I think it would be a great way to bring in tourism dollars from the outside. "
- Good to see this being addressed again. Thanks!
- Provide bike lanes separate from motorways that allow for cyclists and runners to travel safely without fear of traffic
- Education is important. Not enough people are aware of bike rules. This includes cyclists and drivers.
- Would be wonderful to use the old train tracks down Rt148 to connect to sesser and Rend Lake
- I'm sure building bike paths is not cheap, but sure would be nice if there was additional grant money available that would allow expansion of a bike path connecting Mt Vernon to Rend Lake bike trails. I have camped at Rend Lake for many years & have seen many avid cyclists who camp & bike there, so if there was a bike path connecting the 2, maybe that might attract more people/cyclists in to Mt Vernon. I am an avid cyclist myself & mostly enjoy endurance riding, so it would be very nice to have a long bike path like this right here at home as I frequently have to travel long distances (i.e. Tunnel Hill, Madison Co trail system, Katy Trail in MO) to get access to very nice bike trails.
- If the city intends to maintain easements on top of utilities, could the plan include bike trails with packed base/gravel in those area which connect to other arteries of shared use path/bike lanes? This would provide the rider access to a variety of riding options.

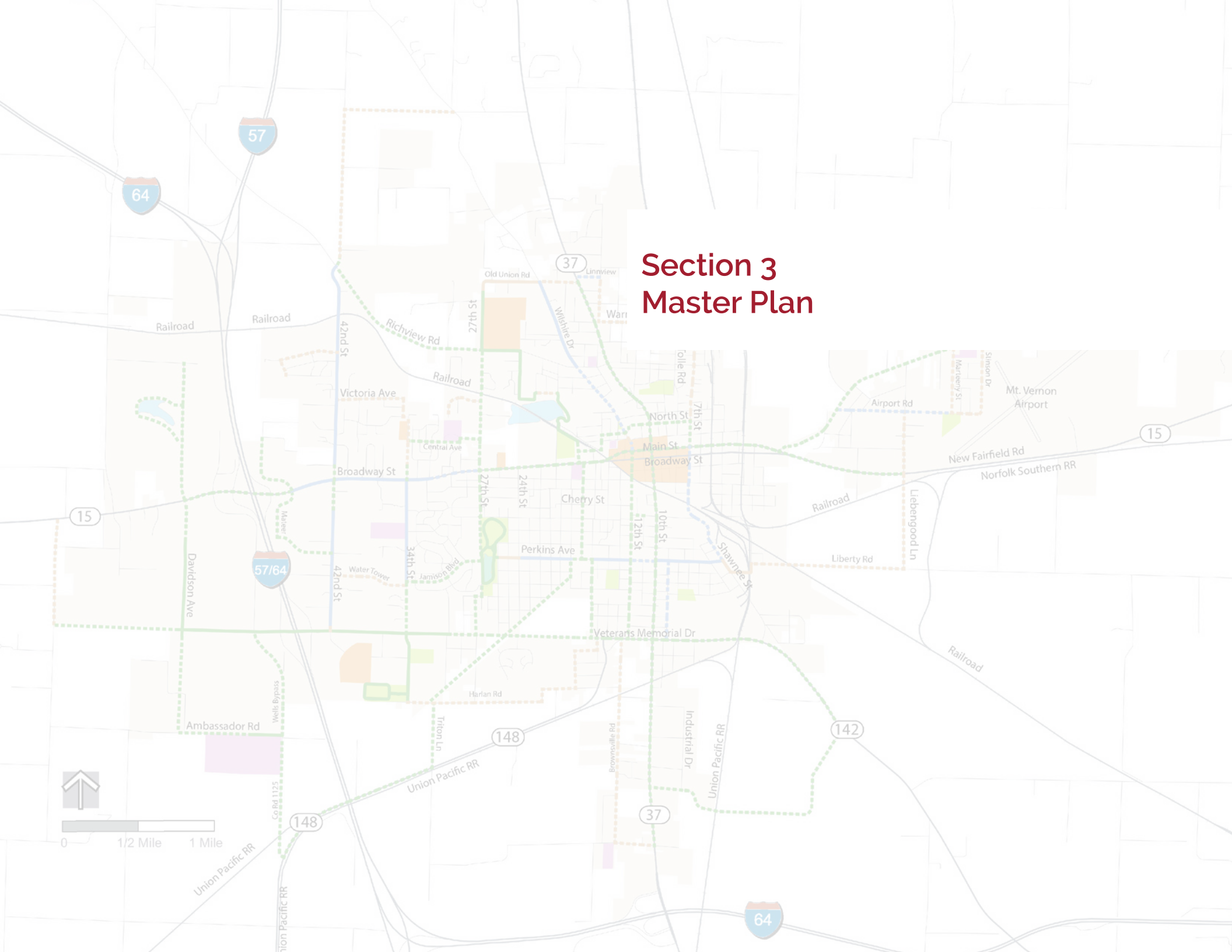
"This should really help the town if done correctly."

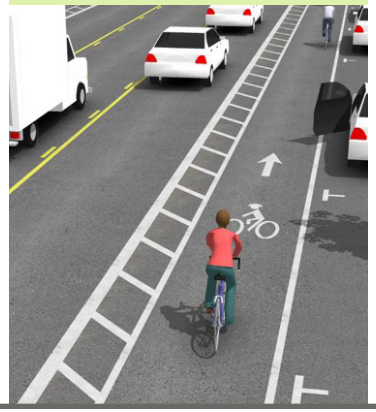
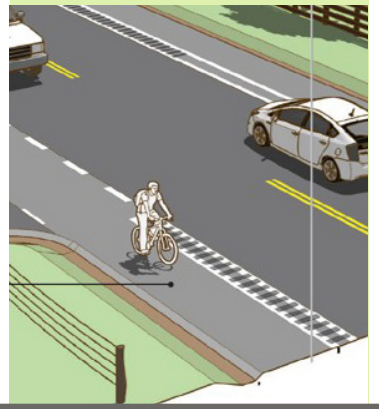
Map Tool Comments

The survey incorporated a mapping tool that allowed participants to provide location-specific comments on an online map. Below, you'll find the comments and suggestions received through this mapping tool.



Section 3
Master Plan



Most Preferred	Applicable for Plan (When Shared Used Path isn't Possible)			Least Preferred
Shared Use Path *Separated Facility*	**Buffered Bike Lane** *On-Street*	**Bike Lane** *On-Street*	**Paved Shoulder** *On-Street*	**Shared Lane** *On-Street Shared Lane*
				
				

Bicycle Toolkit: Shared Use Paths

Shared Use Paths are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic, except at road crossings. Shared use paths accommodate a variety of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and others, for both recreation and transportation purposes. Shared use paths away from roads, on easements or their own rights-of-way tend to be more pleasant and popular.

The recommended width for a shared use paths is 10 ft, in order to facilitate bi-directional and multi-modal traffic. A trail within a connected system of greenspace is often referred to as a "greenway."

Other common terms: multi-use trail, sidepath.

ADVANTAGES

- One of the most popular bicycle facility types. High demand from the public.
- Complete separation from vehicular traffic (except at street crossings).
- Path can be a catalyst for other development since it shows a fixed investment in bicycle facilities.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Available right-of-way or easements for path location.
- Long-term maintenance of trails.
- Relatively high cost compared to other facility types.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- 10 ft width minimum, with 2 ft clearance on both sides.
- 8 ft width may be allowed for short distances due to physical constraints.
- Edge of the path to be at least 5 ft from the curb face and 7 ft from the traveled way.
- High-speed rural roads require greater separation distance between path and edge of shoulder.

Example: Urban Shared Use Path

The photo below is representational of a shared use path in a city environment. The photo illustrates key criteria including a minimum of 5 ft from the edge of the path to the face of the curb.

Example: Rural or Park Shared Use Path

The photo below is representational of a shared use path in a rural or park environment.

Bicycle Toolkit: Bike Lane

Bike lanes are portions of the roadway designated for bicyclist use with pavement marking/symbols and optional signing. Bike lanes are typically between five and six feet wide (including gutter pan) on each side of the road with a stripe, signage, and pavement markings. Cyclists in each bike lane travel one-way with the flow of traffic.

Parking is not permitted in designated bicycle lanes. When a road has bike lanes and adjacent parking, the bike lanes should be striped between the parking space and the travel lanes. Regular sweeping is important, as bike lanes tend to collect debris.

ADVANTAGES

- Traffic-calming effect for motor vehicles.
- More predictable movements by both cars and bikes.
- Better cyclist adherence to laws about riding on the right side of the road.
- Dramatic increases in bike usage with lower car-bike crash rates.

CONSIDERATIONS

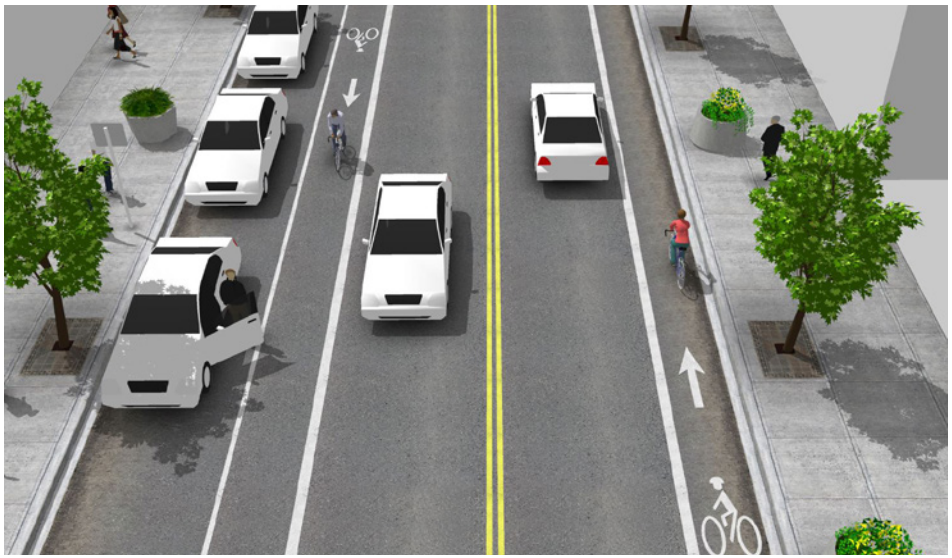
- Car door opening into bike lane can be an issue when bike lane is adjacent to on-street parking.
- Transitions through intersections or when a street narrows or important. Bicyclists can be "stuck" when a bike lane unexpectedly ends.
- Not as comfortable for many casual bicyclist because of adjacent traffic.
- Gutter pan joint edge can create a uneven surface for bicycle tires.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- Five ft is the minimum width of a bike lane (stripe-to-stripe or stripe-to curb face)
- Gutter pans are sometimes not acceptable for bicycle travel due to the presence of debris or broken pavement, and the pavement/ gutter joint can sometimes become vertically uneven or separated from the gutter and affect bicycles with narrow tires.

Example: Bike Lane (With Parking and With Curb)

Right side of graphic: Example of bike lane adjacent to curb.
Left side of graphic: Example of bike lane adjacent to on-street parking.
Source: NATCO



Bicycle Toolkit: Buffered Bike Lane

Buffered bike lanes are bicycle lanes with a designated buffer space separating the bicycle lane from the adjacent vehicle travel lane and/or parking lane. The buffer area comprises a pattern of standard longitudinal markings and added chevron or diagonal markings for larger buffer widths.

ADVANTAGES

- Similar advantages as regular bike lane, however in addition buffered bike lanes provide greater shy distance between motor vehicles and bicyclists and increase the level of comfort and safety for bicyclists.
- Placing a 2 ft 6 in. minimum buffer immediately adjacent to a parking lane can be effective in reducing dooring crashes.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Similar considerations as regular bike lane, however additional width required can be a constraint for applicability.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- Buffer areas are marked with two solid white lines (a 5 in. minimum line width is required on the vehicle traffic side) at least 12 in. apart. Where the buffer total width is 18 in or more, diagonal or chevron markings are recommended for clarity.

Example: Buffered Bike Lane (With Parking and With Curb)

Source: NATCO

Bicycle Toolkit: Shoulder

For rural roads and streets without enough available pavement width for a full bike lane, the use of a paved shoulder for bicyclists can be an acceptable bicycle facility type, especially when there are limited options for other facility types.

For these roads to have a full 5 ft width bike lane would be cost prohibitive. The roads will need to be widened which would require moving the curb line and reconstructing stormwater inlets.

In the short term, they are part of the overall bicycle network, but they are acknowledged that they do not meet the requirements of a full bike lane. Long term if the road is reconstructed, the road width should accommodate a full bike lane width or a sidepath should be added.

Sometimes these can be called "Urban Shoulder" or "Advisory Shoulder."

ADVANTAGES

- Although the striping does not meet the width requirement of a standard "bike lane", the shoulder does provide a measure of safety for bicyclists and provides traffic calming. dooring crashes.

CONSIDERATIONS

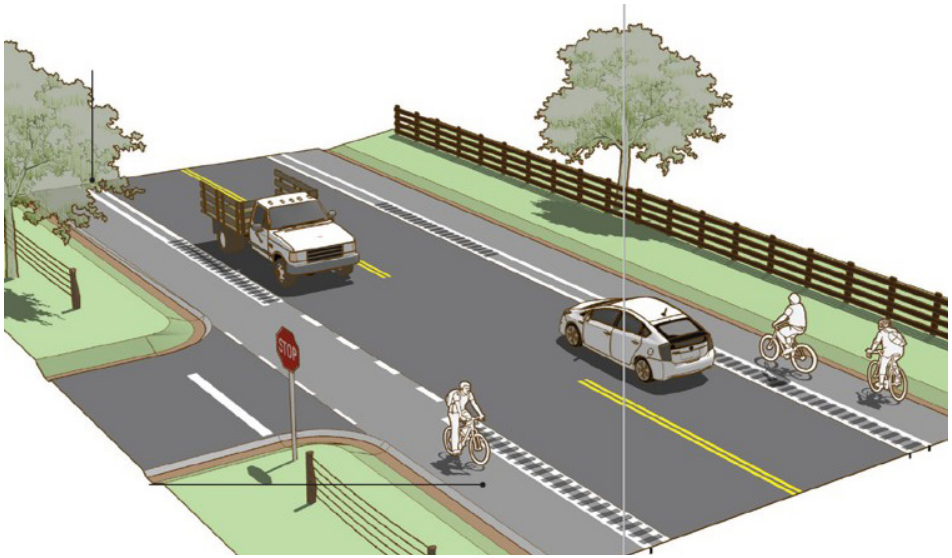
- The joint between the asphalt and gutter can create a safety issue for bicyclists, especially with the width of the lane already less than a standard bike lane. When the street is resurfaced, a portion of the gutter should be milled to allow a wider area for bicyclists.
- Shoulders cannot be called, marked, and/or signed as official "bike lanes".

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- For rural roadways, IDOT has minimum width requirements for shoulders based on various traffic volumes and vehicular speeds.

Example: Shoulder

Source: Federal Highway Administration 'Small Town and Rural Multi-Modal Networks'



Bicycle Toolkit: Shared Lane

Shared Lanes include:
- Streets with sharrows.
- Shared roadways (no pavement striping), just signage.

The Sharrow (Shared Lane Marking) is used primarily for streets with insufficient width (or need) for bike lanes. On such roads with significantly occupied on-street parallel parking, the center of the marking shall be 11 feet (or more) from the curb; with no occupied parking, the center of the marking shall be 4 feet (or more) from the curb. The markings should be placed right after an intersection and spaced at intervals of 250 feet thereafter. The shared lane marking also can be used to indicate correct straight-ahead bicycle position at intersections with turn lanes, where bike lanes or combined bike/ parking lanes have been temporarily dropped.

Shared roadways may be appropriate where there is not enough room for dedicated bike lanes and traffic volumes are low enough that sharrows are not required.

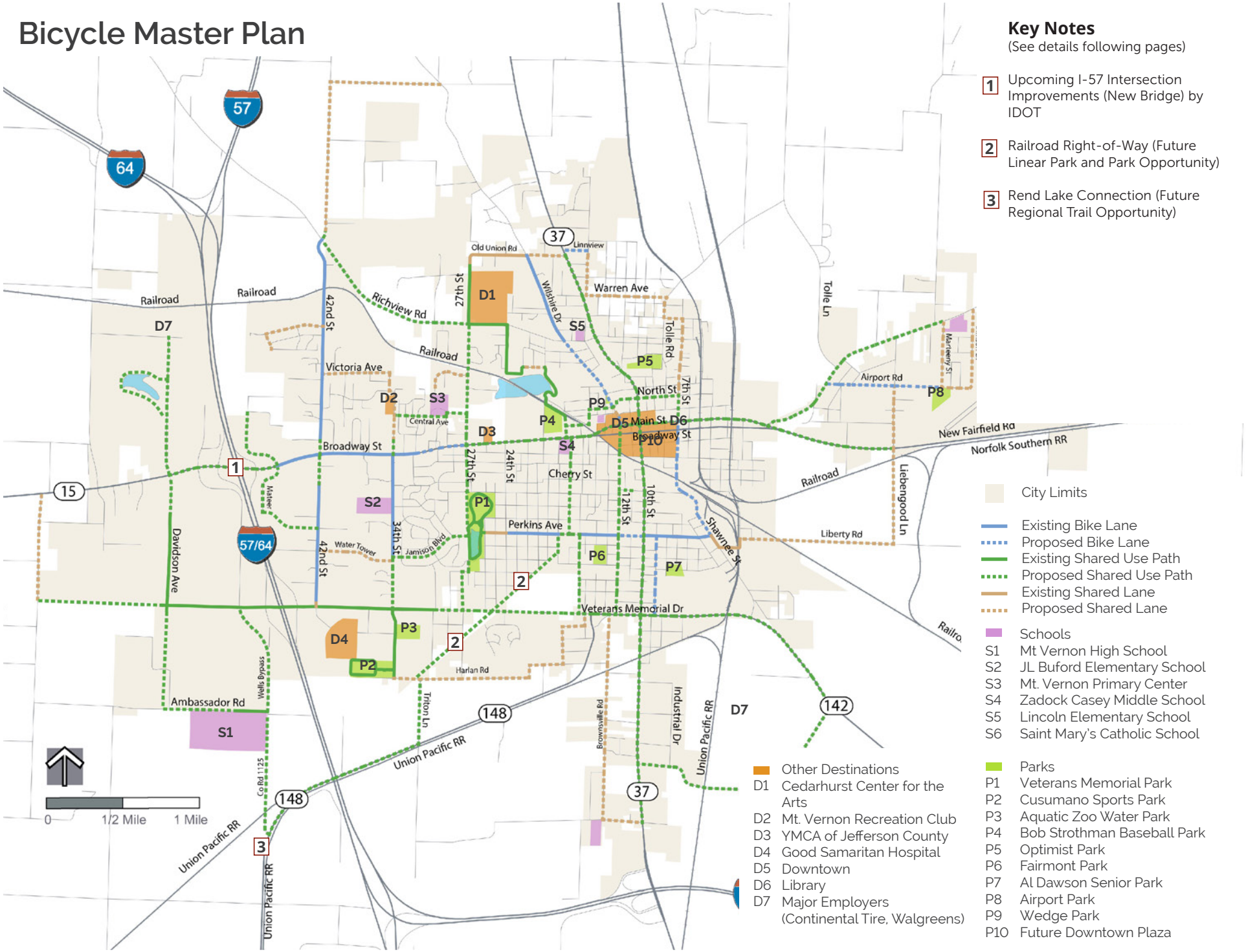
ADVANTAGES
- Sharrows can alerts motorist more effectively than signs that bicyclists are sharing a lane, positions bicyclists outside of car "door zone", and can be especially effective at intersections to better position bicyclists and alert motorists.
- Shared roadways can be used to supplement other bicycle facilities such as bike lanes, paved shoulders, sharrows, etc.

CONSIDERATIONS
- Especially for the casual bicylist, sharrows or shared roadways do not increase bicyclist comfort or safety.
- Should be the lowest ranked bicycle facility option, and only used when other bike facilities are not practical.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS
- Sharrows should not be used on roadways with posted speed limits above 30 mph, and should be considered only where traffic volumes are fairly low.

Example: Shared Lane with Sharrows
Source: NATCO

Bicycle Master Plan



Key Notes

(See details following pages)

1. Upcoming I-57 Intersection Improvements (New Bridge) by IDOT
2. Railroad Right-of-Way (Future Linear Park and Park Opportunity)
3. Rend Lake Connection (Future Regional Trail Opportunity)

City Limits

- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane

Schools

- S1 Mt Vernon High School
- S2 JL Buford Elementary School
- S3 Mt. Vernon Primary Center
- S4 Zadock Casey Middle School
- S5 Lincoln Elementary School
- S6 Saint Mary's Catholic School

Other Destinations

- D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
- D2 Mt. Vernon Recreation Club
- D3 YMCA of Jefferson County
- D4 Good Samaritan Hospital
- D5 Downtown
- D6 Library
- D7 Major Employers (Continental Tire, Walgreens)

Parks

- P1 Veterans Memorial Park
- P2 Cusumano Sports Park
- P3 Aquatic Zoo Water Park
- P4 Bob Strothman Baseball Park
- P5 Optimist Park
- P6 Fairmont Park
- P7 Al Dawson Senior Park
- P8 Airport Park
- P9 Wedge Park
- P10 Future Downtown Plaza

Priority Corridors

The priority corridors include:

- Option A: Veterans Park - Cedarhurst Loop
- **Option B: Center Loop *(Community Preferred Priority)***
- Option C: Perkins - Veterans Loop (with Alternate)
- **Option D: Veterans Park - High School - Rend Lake Connector *(Community Secondary Priority)***
- Option E: Downtown via Fairfield Road
- Option F: Richview Road Connector

The following pages provide additional details about each priority corridor. Each option includes community priorities (connecting the City's parks, future connection to Rend Lake, etc.) or greatly improves the Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress for key segments.

Based on community input, the top two priority corridors are 'Option B: Center Loop' and 'Option D: Veterans Park - High School - Rend Lake Connector.'

Implementation

Item 1. First Phase Project: A shared use path from 30th Street and Veterans Memorial Drive to Veterans Park via 28th Street corridor. See details on the following pages.

Item 2. On-Going Grant Applications: The City should continue to utilize regular grant programs (such as the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program [ITEP] to implement the priority corridors and other recommendations of the Master Plan.

Item 3. On-Going City Street Resurfacing / Reconstruction: As the City repaves, resurfaces, or makes improvements to various streets in the City, the City should use the Master Plan as a guide to incorporate the recommended bicycle facilities.

Item 4. IDOT Future Projects: As IDOT plans future improvements for state roadways in or near Mt. Vernon, the City should use the Master Plan to coordinate with IDOT for the preferred bicycle facilities.

Item 5. Regional Rend Lake Connection: A regional Rend Lake trail connection via the old railroad right-of-way southwest of Mt. Vernon near the intersection of IL-148 and Wells Bypass was a high priority for residents. Planning, design, and implementation of the trail will require multiple partners, including the City of Mt. Vernon, Jefferson County, IDOT, and the Greater Egypt Regional Planning Commission. One of the first steps should be designating the lead governmental entity (or non-profit) that could acquire the railroad right-of-way and manage fiscal requirements.

Item 6. Railroad Right-of-Way from Harlan Road to Herbert Street: The existing railroad right-of-way within the City of Mt. Vernon from Harlan Road to Herbert Street is approximately 1.25 miles in distance, which makes a great distance for a linear park / shared use path. The Planning Team contacted Union Pacific in March 2024 about steps required for the City to potentially acquire the right-of-way. Union Pacific provided an initial application form (see appendix) that would provide the correct contact information for the City and show that the City intends to pursue a potential purchase.

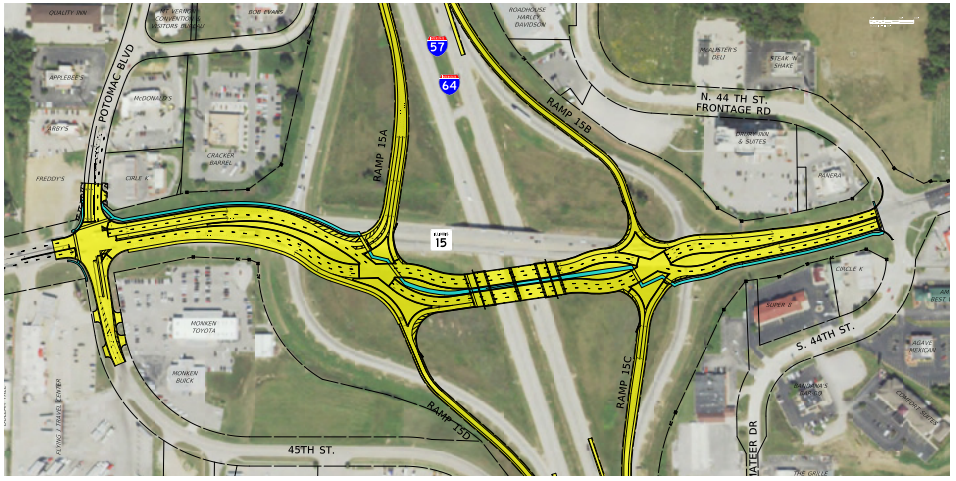
Item 7. Interstate 57 Bridge Replacement: IDOT is scheduled to replace the Route 15 bridge over Interstate 57. The exhibit on this page shows the conceptual layout of the new bridge which will include a shared use path.

Item 8. Improved Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing Across Broadway at Casey Middle School:
Improving the bicycle and pedestrian crossing at Broadway (Route 15) at Casey Middle School is important as the north side of Broadway includes an existing shared-use path connection.

In the short-intermediate time frame, an at-grade crossing should be evaluated for Broadway at Casey Middle School. The at-grade crossing should comply with IDOT requirement for signalization.

In the long term, the existing pedestrian bridge should be replaced with an ADA compliant bicycle and pedestrian bridge. The existing pedestrian bridge could potentially be modified with the existing span remaining, but with new ADA compliant ramps on both sides.

Item 9. Use the League of American Bicyclist's "Bicycle Friendly Community" (BFC) program as guide for education, enforcement, evaluation, and encouragement:
This master plan focuses on the physical ("engineering") aspect of improving bicycling in the City by recommending a network of bicycle facilities (shared use paths, bike lanes, and shared lanes) throughout the City. However, components such as education and encouragement are important in developing a bicycle friendly culture. The League of American Bicyclist's "Bicycle Friendly Community" program is a great resource. Even if the City doesn't apply to be a bicycle friendly community, the program's application checklist is an excellent resource for best practices and benchmarking current policies.

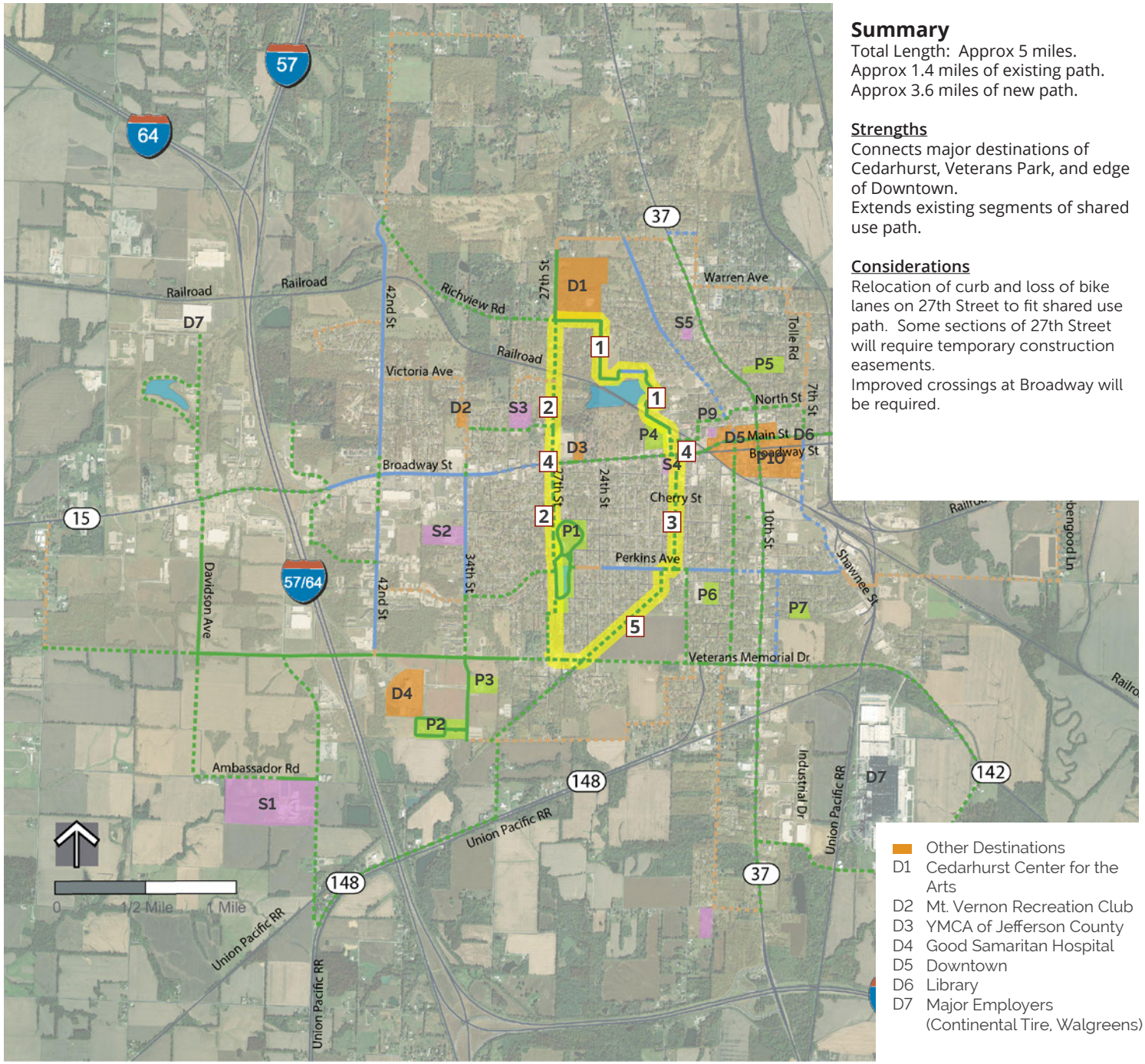


Above: Conceptual plan of the future Route 15 bridge over I-57. The planned shared use path is in blue.
Source: IDOT

Item 10. Bicycle Wayfinding Plan
As bicycle facilities are implemented, the City should develop a community-wide bicycle wayfinding signage system that identifies destinations and corridors. Bicycle wayfinding helps to further brand the City and signifies that bicyclists have the same importance as motorists.

Item 11. Continue Bicycle Advisory Committee
The Bicycle Advisory Committee should continue to meet on an annual or semi-annual basis to provide guidance to the City on future priority projects and help ensure that the City is continuing to progress on implementation.

Priority Option A: Veterans Park - Cedarhurst Loop



Summary

Total Length: Approx 5 miles.
Approx 1.4 miles of existing path.
Approx 3.6 miles of new path.

Strengths

Connects major destinations of Cedarhurst, Veterans Park, and edge of Downtown.
Extends existing segments of shared use path.

Considerations

Relocation of curb and loss of bike lanes on 27th Street to fit shared use path. Some sections of 27th Street will require temporary construction easements.
Improved crossings at Broadway will be required.

1. Existing Shared Use Path

2. Modifications to 27th Street

Most of 27th Street will require curb relocation and loss of existing bike lanes. Some segments will require temporary construction easements.

3. 18th Street

18th Street has 60' of right-of-way that can accommodate a shared use path.

4. Improve Crossings at Broadway

5. Former Railroad Right-of-Way

Near Perkins Ave, some right-of-way has been acquired by adjacent properties.

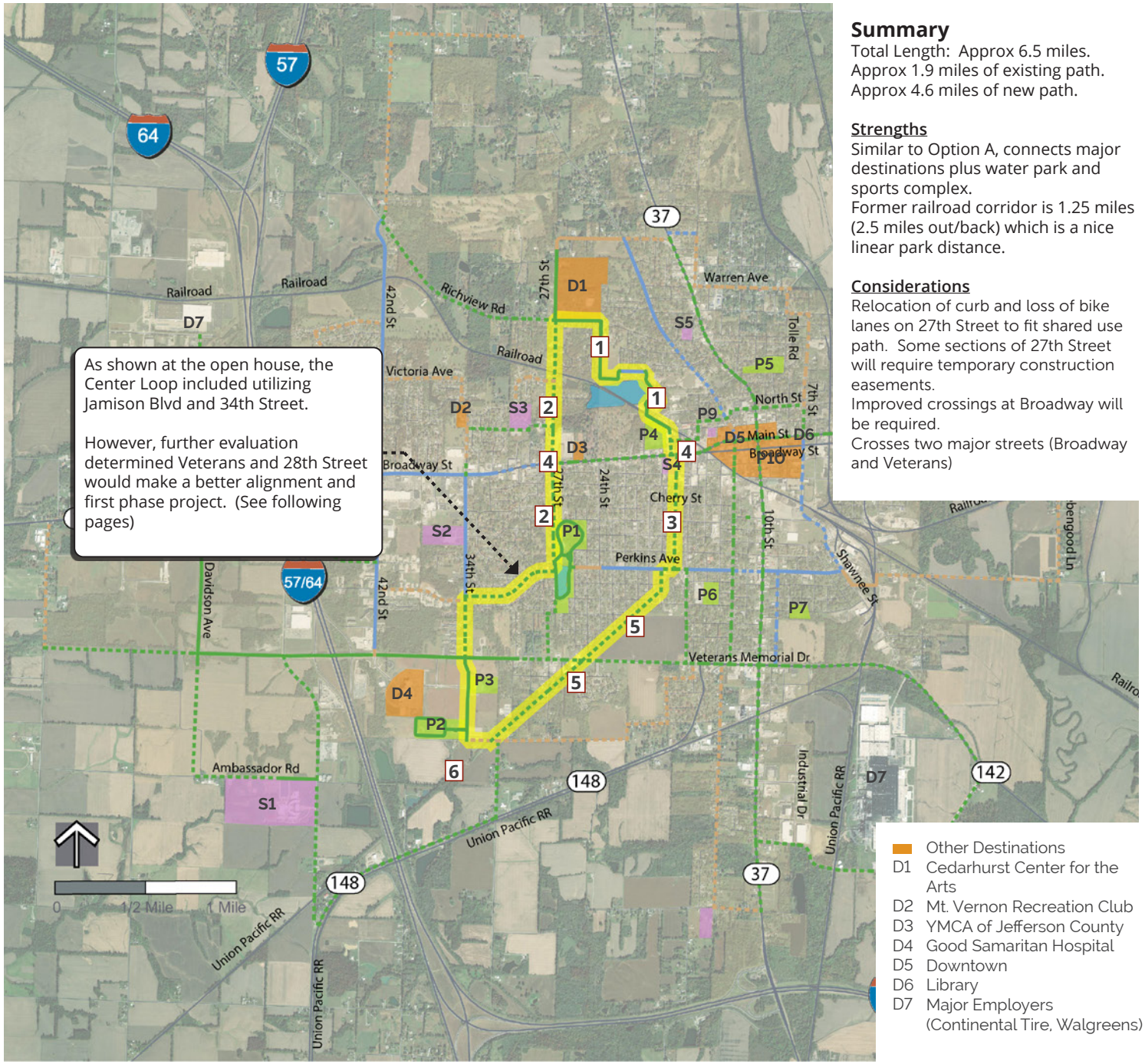
- City Limits
- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane

Schools
- S1 Mt Vernon High School
- S2 JL Buford Elementary School
- S3 Mt. Vernon Primary Center
- S4 Zadock Casey Middle School
- S5 Lincoln Elementary School
- S6 Saint Mary's Catholic School

Other Destinations
- D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
- D2 Mt. Vernon Recreation Club
- D3 YMCA of Jefferson County
- D4 Good Samaritan Hospital
- D5 Downtown
- D6 Library
- D7 Major Employers (Continental Tire, Walgreens)

Parks
- P1 Veterans Memorial Park
- P2 Cusumano Sports Park
- P3 Aquatic Zoo Water Park
- P4 Bob Strothman Baseball Park
- P5 Optimist Park
- P6 Fairmont Park
- P7 Al Dawson Senior Park
- P8 Airport Park
- P9 Wedge Park
- P10 Future Downtown Plaza

Priority Option B: Center Loop



As shown at the open house, the Center Loop included utilizing Jamison Blvd and 34th Street.

However, further evaluation determined Veterans and 28th Street would make a better alignment and first phase project. (See following pages)

Summary

Total Length: Approx 6.5 miles.
Approx 1.9 miles of existing path.
Approx 4.6 miles of new path.

Strengths

Similar to Option A, connects major destinations plus water park and sports complex.
Former railroad corridor is 1.25 miles (2.5 miles out/back) which is a nice linear park distance.

Considerations

Relocation of curb and loss of bike lanes on 27th Street to fit shared use path. Some sections of 27th Street will require temporary construction easements.
Improved crossings at Broadway will be required.
Crosses two major streets (Broadway and Veterans)

1. Existing Shared Use Path

2. Modifications to 27th Street
Most of 27th Street will require curb relocation and loss of existing bike lanes. Some segments will require temporary construction easements.

3. 18th Street
18th Street has 60' of right-of-way that can accommodate a shared use path.

4. Improve Crossings at Broadway

5. Former Railroad Right-of-Way
Former railroad corridor is 1.25 miles (2.5 miles out/back) which is a nice linear park distance.

6. No Available Right-of-way this Segment

City Limits

- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane

Schools
- S1 Mt Vernon High School
- S2 JL Buford Elementary School
- S3 Mt. Vernon Primary Center
- S4 Zadock Casey Middle School
- S5 Lincoln Elementary School
- S6 Saint Mary's Catholic School

Other Destinations
- D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
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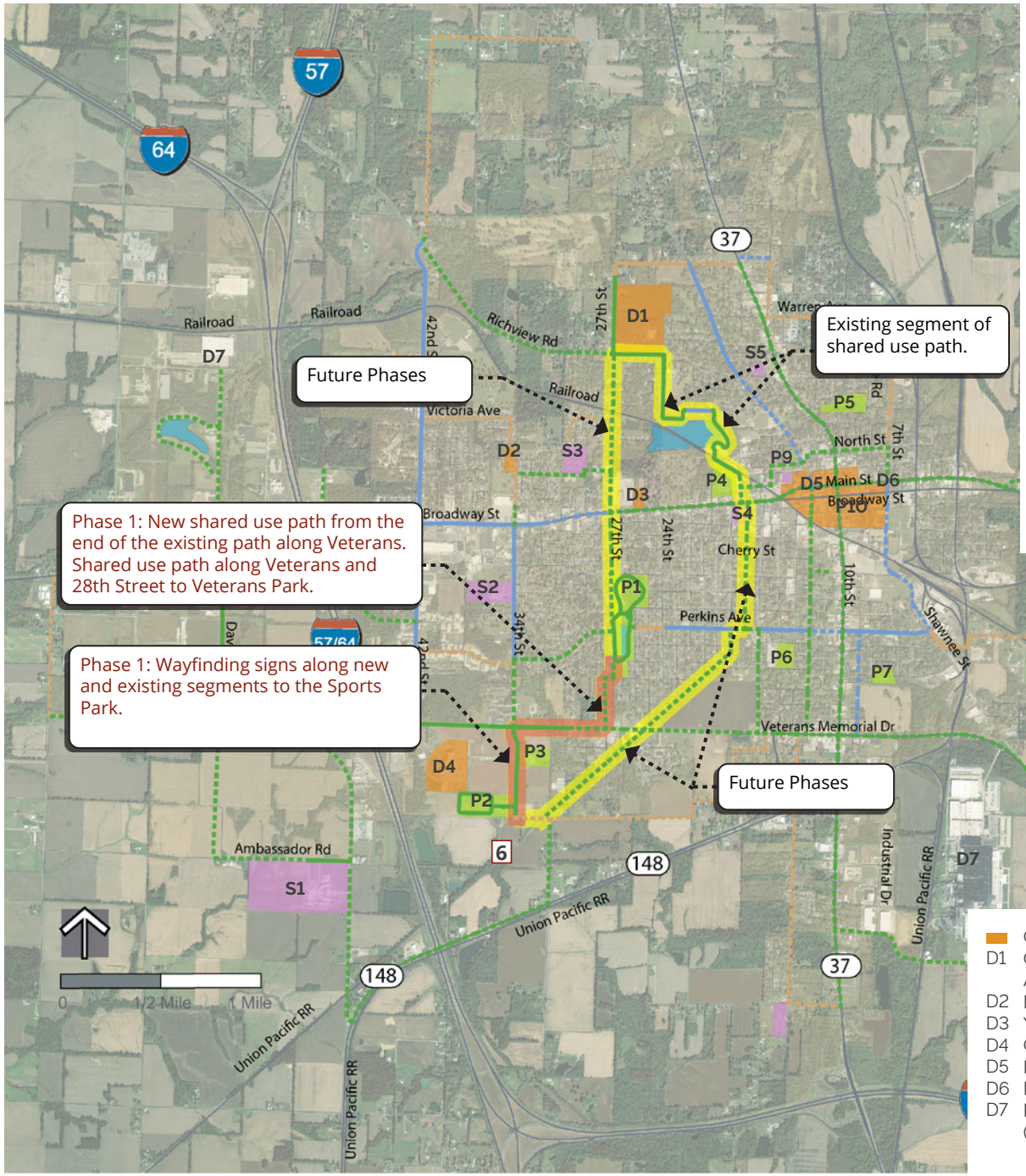
- P10 Future Downtown Plaza

Priority Option B: Center Loop - First Phase Project



The priority project corridor will take multiple phases for implementation. The exhibit on this page shows the proposed first phase and future phases. The benefits of this corridor is that it connects multiple Mt. Vernon destinations including Veterans Park, Cedarhurst, Aquatic Park, Sports Park, and several segments of existing shared use path.

See appendix for information regarding the Phase 1 grant application materials.

The general limits of the Phase 1 grant application will include:

- A shared use path from 30th Street and Veterans Memorial Drive (the end of the existing path on the south side of Veterans) to the intersection of 28th Street and Veterans Memorial Drive. Crossing of Veterans Memorial Drive at 28th Street.
- Shared use path between Veterans Memorial Drive and Veterans Park utilizing the 28th Street corridor.
- Wayfinding signs along the new shared use path from Veterans Park plus wayfinding signs along the existing path to the aquatic park and ballfields.

City Limits

Existing Bike Lane
Proposed Bike Lane
Existing Shared Use Path
Proposed Shared Use Path
Existing Shared Lane
Proposed Shared Lane

Schools
S1 Mt Vernon High School
S2 JL Buford Elementary School
S3 Mt. Vernon Primary Center
S4 Zadock Casey Middle School
S5 Lincoln Elementary School
S6 Saint Mary's Catholic School

Other Destinations
D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
D2 Mt. Vernon Recreation Club
D3 YMCA of Jefferson County
D4 Good Samaritan Hospital
D5 Downtown
D6 Library
D7 Major Employers (Continental Tire, Walgreens)

Parks
P1 Veterans Memorial Park
P2 Cusumano Sports Park
P3 Aquatic Zoo Water Park
P4 Bob Strothman Baseball Park
P5 Optimist Park
P6 Fairmont Park
P7 Al Dawson Senior Park
P8 Airport Park
P9 Wedge Park
P10 Future Downtown Plaza

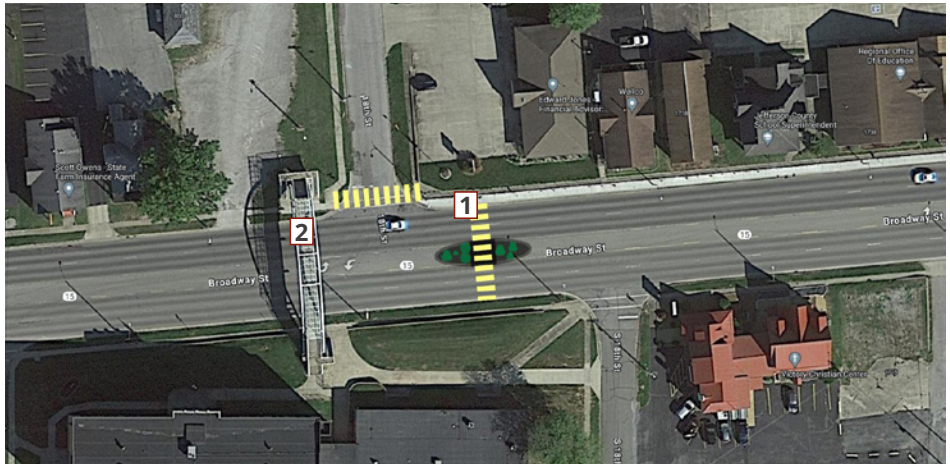
Priority Option B: Center Loop Additional Information

Improve Crossings at Broadway
An important part of the Center Loop corridor is improving the bicycle and pedestrian crossing at Broadway (Route 15). Casey Middle School is an important location as the north side of Broadway includes an existing shared-use path connection.

The exhibit on this page shows a conceptual option for an at-grade crossing in the short-intermediate time frame (No. 1) across Broadway at Casey Middle School. The at-grade crossing should comply with IDOT requirement for signalization.

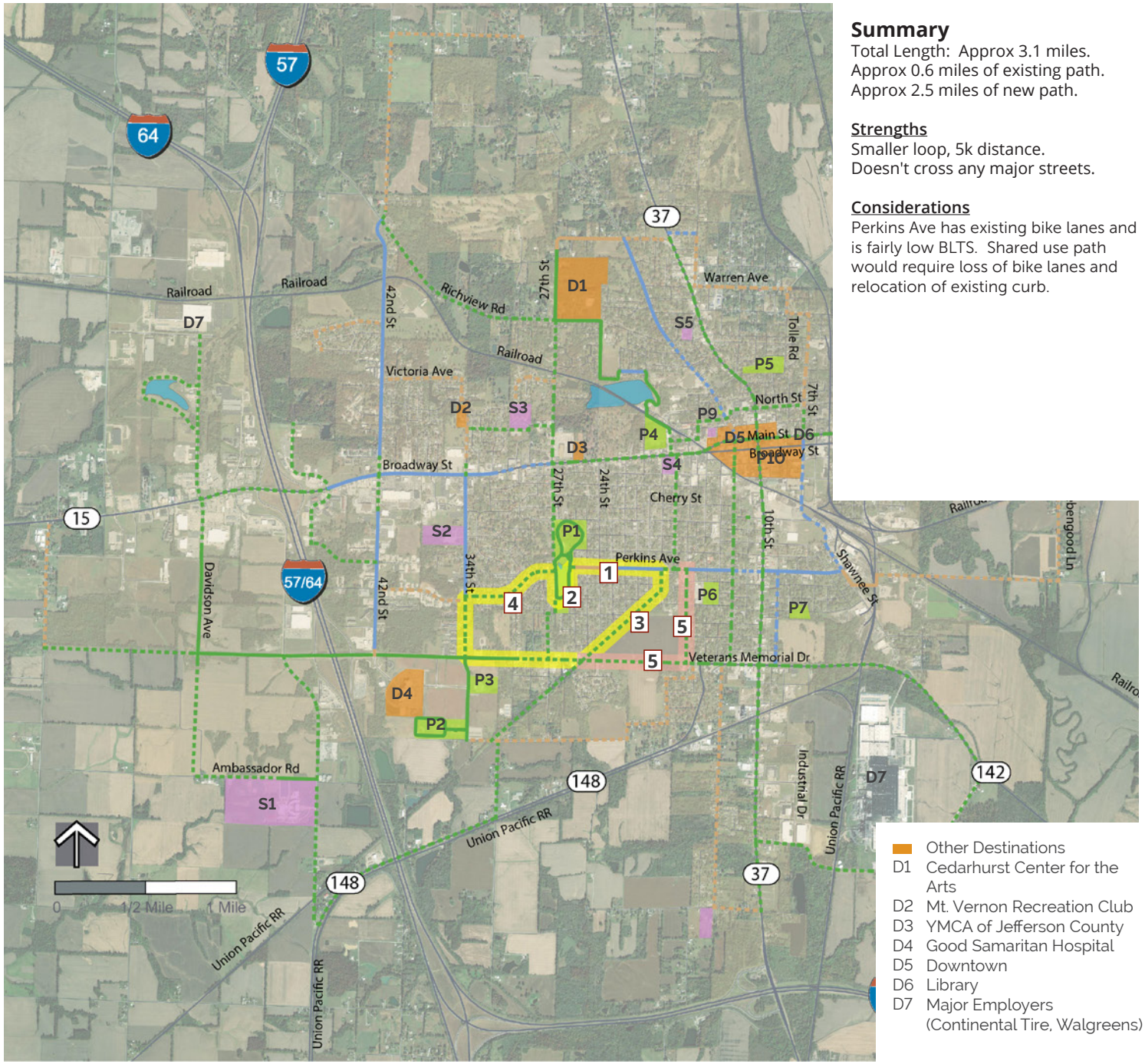
Long-term, the existing pedestrian bridge (No. 2) should be replaced with an ADA compliant bicycle and pedestrian bridge. The existing pedestrian bridge could potentially be modified with the existing span remaining, but with new ADA compliant ramps on both sides.

Either an at-grade crossing or a new ADA compliant bicycle bridge will require further study and coordination between the City of Mt. Vernon, IDOT, and the School District. The crossing options were discussed at the April 2024 School District Board meeting, and the board was supportive of the bike path moving forward and willing to take a deeper look into any modifications or pathways.



Above: Conceptual option of a bicycle/pedestrian crossing of Broadway at Casey Middle School.

Priority Option C: Perkins - Veterans Loop (with Alternate)



Summary

Total Length: Approx 3.1 miles.
Approx 0.6 miles of existing path.
Approx 2.5 miles of new path.

Strengths

Smaller loop, 5k distance.
Doesn't cross any major streets.

Considerations

Perkins Ave has existing bike lanes and is fairly low BLTS. Shared use path would require loss of bike lanes and relocation of existing curb.

1. Perkins Avenue
Plan recommends keeping existing bike lanes on Perkins, so no shared use path on this segment.

2. Existing Path in Veterans Park

3. Former Railroad Right-of-Way

4. Jamison Blvd

5. Alternate Alignment
Alternate alignment via 17th Street and Veterans Drive.

- City Limits
- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane

Schools
- S1 Mt Vernon High School
- S2 JL Buford Elementary School
- S3 Mt. Vernon Primary Center
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- S5 Lincoln Elementary School
- S6 Saint Mary's Catholic School

Parks
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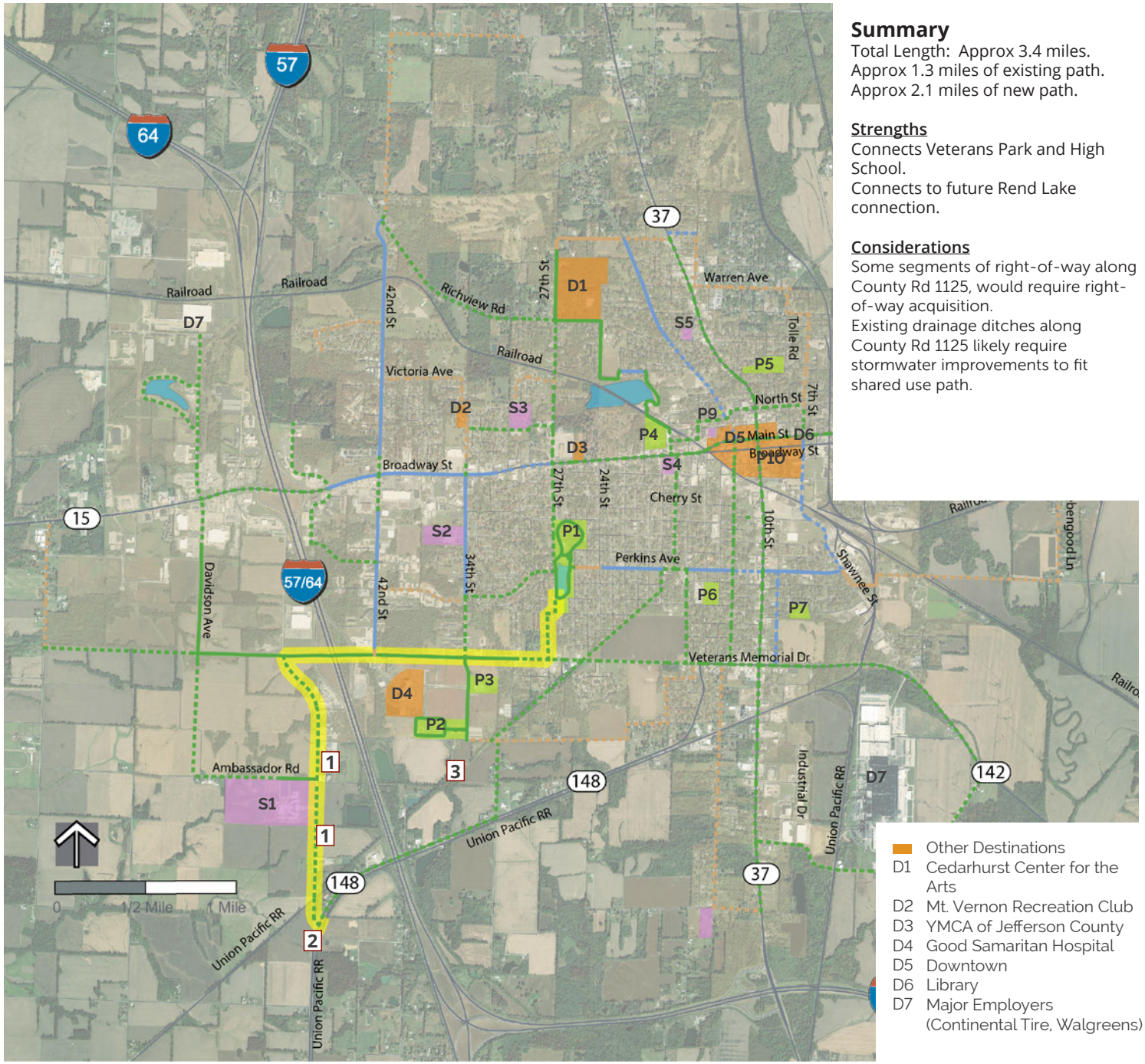
- P10 Future Downtown Plaza

Other Destinations
- D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
- D2 Mt. Vernon Recreation Club
- D3 YMCA of Jefferson County
- D4 Good Samaritan Hospital
- D5 Downtown
- D6 Library
- D7 Major Employers (Continental Tire, Walgreens)

Priority Option D: Veterans Park - High School - Rend Lake Connector



Summary

Total Length: Approx 3.4 miles.
Approx 1.3 miles of existing path.
Approx 2.1 miles of new path.

Strengths

Connects Veterans Park and High School.
Connects to future Rend Lake connection.

Considerations

Some segments of right-of-way along County Rd 1125, would require right-of-way acquisition.
Existing drainage ditches along County Rd 1125 likely require stormwater improvements to fit shared use path.

1. County Rd 1125

Some segments of right-of-way along County Rd 1125, would require right-of-way acquisition.
Existing drainage ditches along County Rd 1125 likely require stormwater improvements to fit shared use path.

2. Connection to Rend Lake

The end of the project is at the former railroad right-of-way. This railroad right-of-way is a connection to Rend Lake. The other alternative is to connect is via IL148.

3. No Available Railroad Right-of-Way

The ideal connection would be to utilized the former railroad corridor from Perkins Avenue. However, this segment, adjacent properties have acquired the former railroad ROW.

Other Destinations
- D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
- D2 Mt. Vernon Recreation Club
- D3 YMCA of Jefferson County
- D4 Good Samaritan Hospital
- D5 Downtown
- D6 Library
- D7 Major Employers (Continental Tire, Walgreens)

City Limits

- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane

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- P9 Wedge Park
- P10 Future Downtown Plaza

Priority Option E: Downtown via Fairfield Road

Summary

Total Length: Approx 1.0 miles

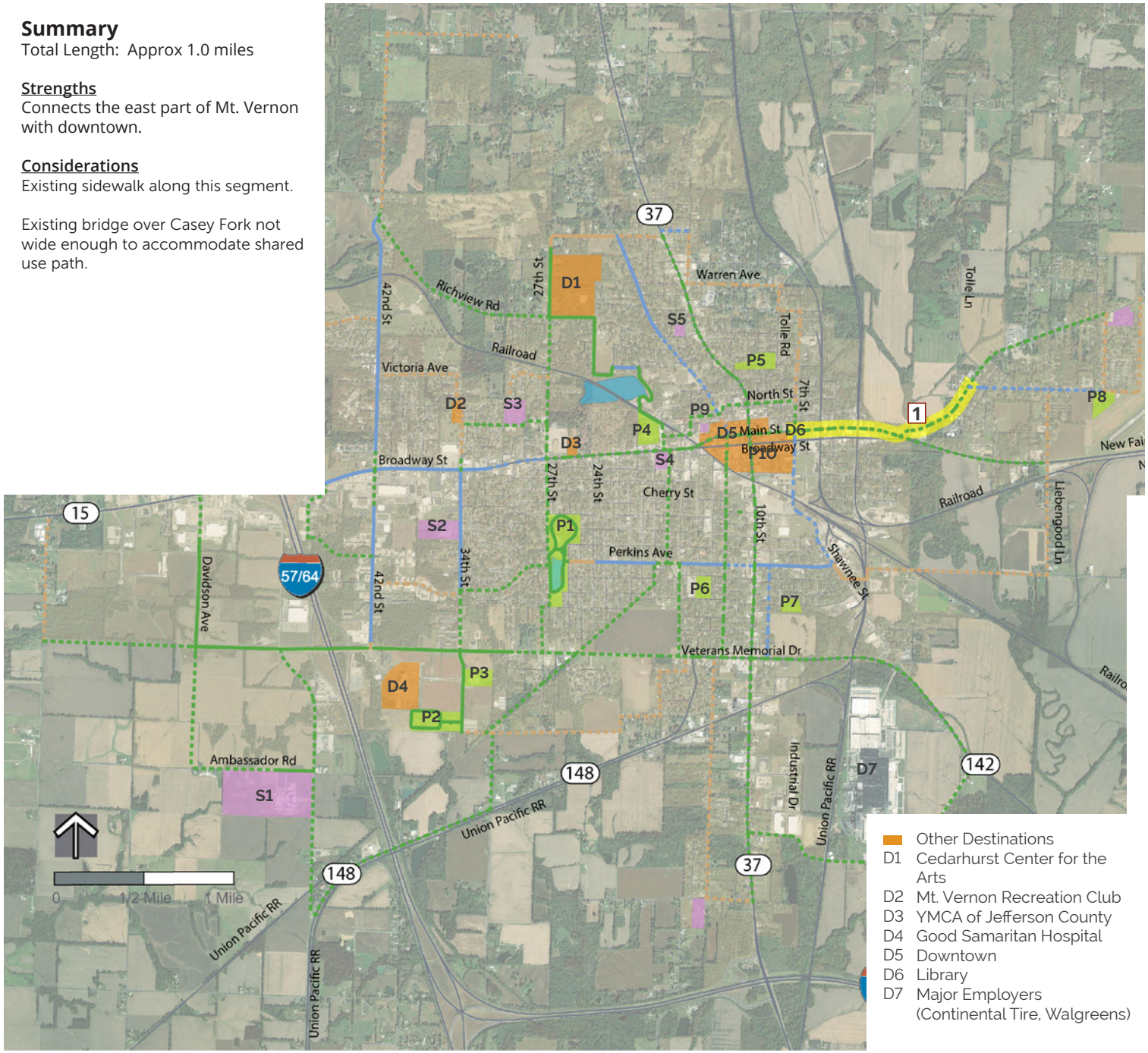
Strengths

Connects the east part of Mt. Vernon with downtown.

Considerations

Existing sidewalk along this segment.

Existing bridge over Casey Fork not wide enough to accommodate shared use path.



1. Bridge over Casey Fork

Existing bridge over Casey Fork is not wide enough to accommodate shared use path. New bridge would be a major project. Plan recommendation is to wait until bridge replacement as part of typical infrastructure replacement program.

- City Limits
- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane

Schools

- S1 Mt Vernon High School
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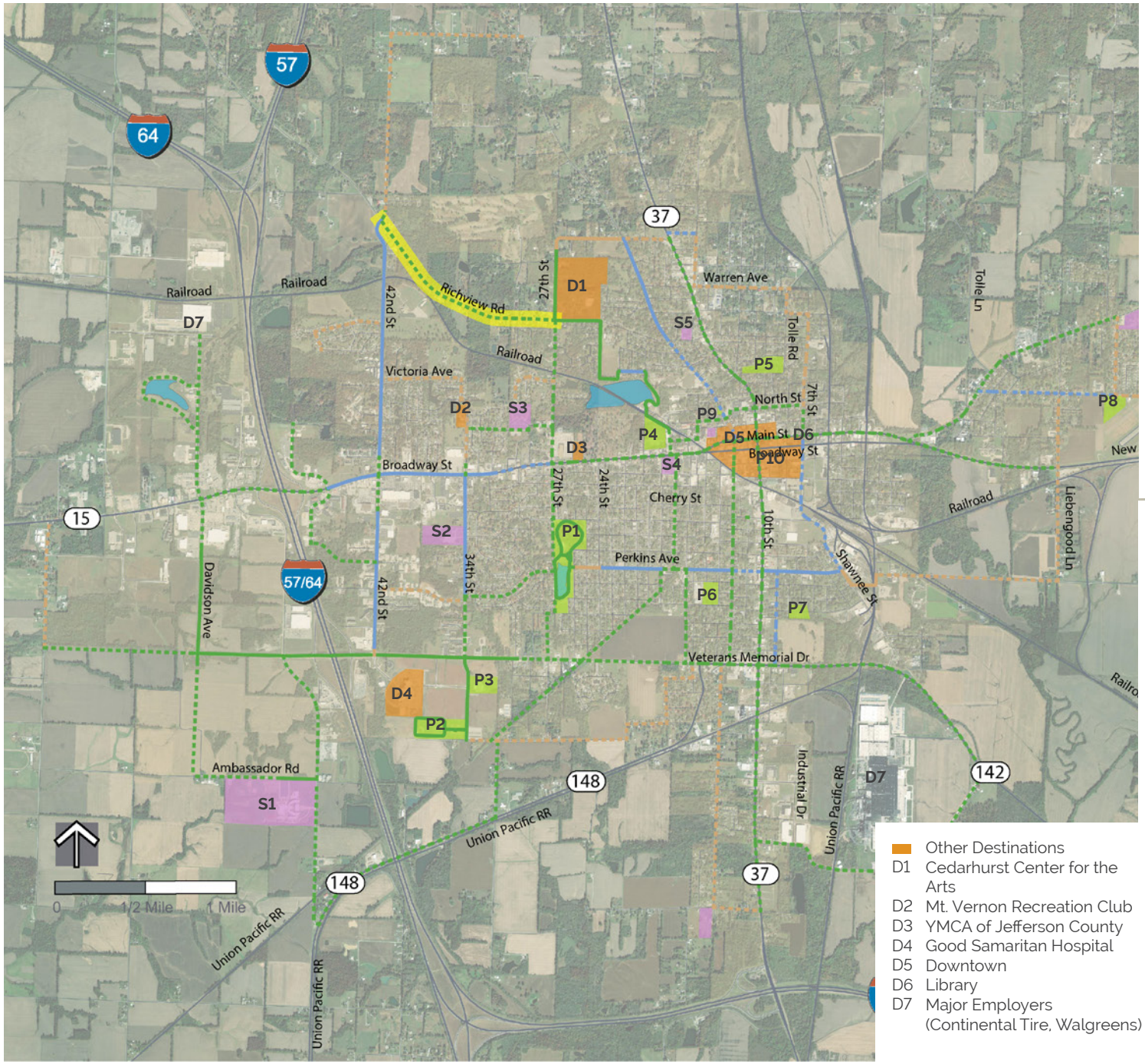
Priority Option F: Richview Road Connector



Other Destinations
- D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
- D2 Mt. Vernon Recreation Club
- D3 YMCA of Jefferson County
- D4 Good Samaritan Hospital
- D5 Downtown
- D6 Library
- D7 Major Employers (Continental Tire, Walgreens)

Summary

Total Length: Approx 1.2 miles.

Strengths

There is not an existing low stress connection in this part of Mt. Vernon. Richview Rd has no shoulders and an existing BLTS of 4 (highest stress rating). A connection here would connect roads and neighborhoods to the north and west to Cedarhurst and the core of Mt. Vernon.

Considerations

Existing drainage ditches along Richview Rd likely require stormwater improvements to fit shared use path.

City Limits

- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane

Schools
- S1 Mt Vernon High School
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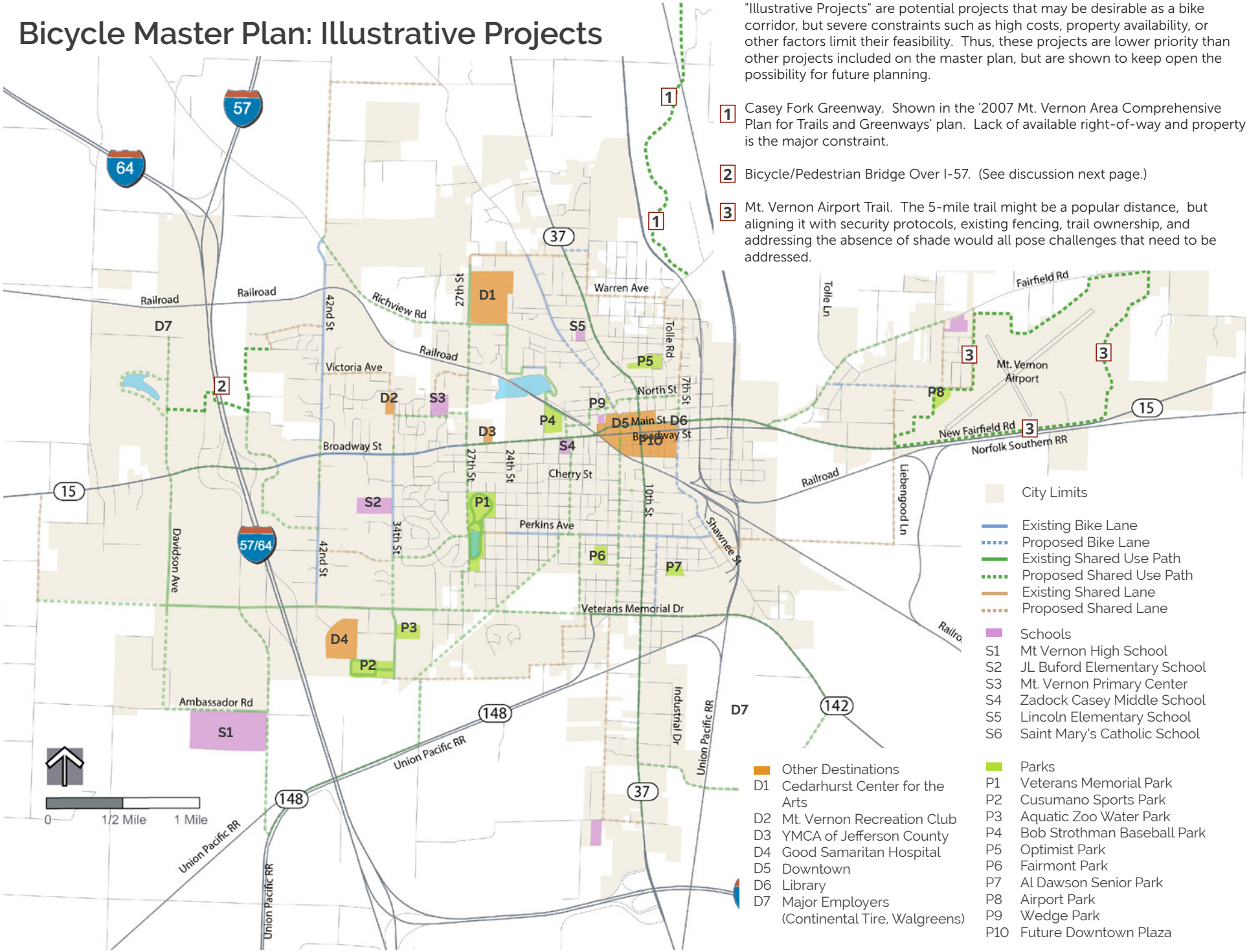
Bicycle Master Plan: Illustrative Projects

"Illustrative Projects" are potential projects that may be desirable as a bike corridor, but severe constraints such as high costs, property availability, or other factors limit their feasibility. Thus, these projects are lower priority than other projects included on the master plan, but are shown to keep open the possibility for future planning.

1 Casey Fork Greenway. Shown in the '2007 Mt. Vernon Area Comprehensive Plan for Trails and Greenways' plan. Lack of available right-of-way and property is the major constraint.

2 Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge Over I-57. (See discussion next page.)

3 Mt. Vernon Airport Trail. The 5-mile trail might be a popular distance, but aligning it with security protocols, existing fencing, trail ownership, and addressing the absence of shade would all pose challenges that need to be addressed.



City Limits

Existing Bike Lane
Proposed Bike Lane
Existing Shared Use Path
Proposed Shared Use Path
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Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge Over I-57

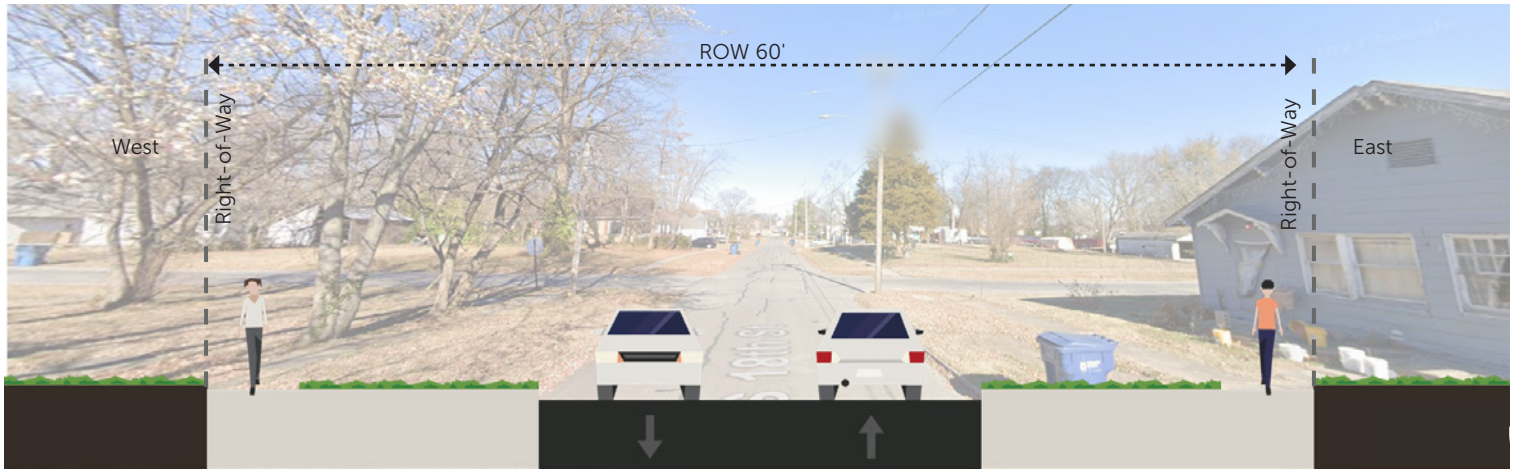
A bicycle/pedestrian bridge over I-57 north of Route 15 (Broadway) would have several benefits from a citywide bicycle network perspective. Presently, the closest I-57 crossing north of Broadway is Richview Road. However, constructing such a bridge faces a notable challenge: the absence of suitable topography for approaches on both the east and west sides of I-57. However, recent examples, such as the construction of a bicycle/pedestrian bridge near Effingham, Illinois, which addressed similar topographical hurdles through significant ramping, suggest that a bridge in Mt. Vernon may indeed be feasible.

The lack of existing bicycle destinations west of I-57 poses an additional challenge. Nonetheless, a prospective bridge would facilitate better access to established businesses, restaurants, hotels, and major employers like the Walgreens Distribution Center.

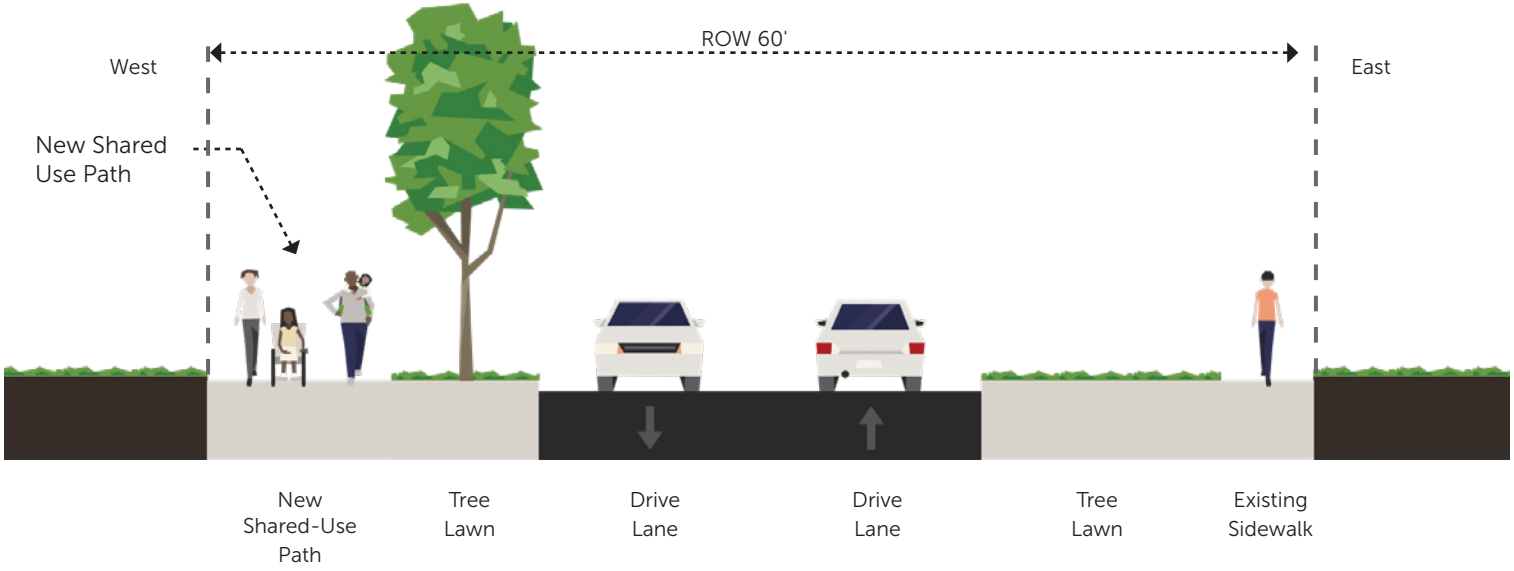
While not currently prioritized in the master plan, the bicycle/pedestrian bridge over I-57 merits further evaluation among the "Illustrative Projects," especially as higher priority initiatives progress.

Above: Example of a bicycle/pedestrian bridge over I-57 in Effingham, Illinois.

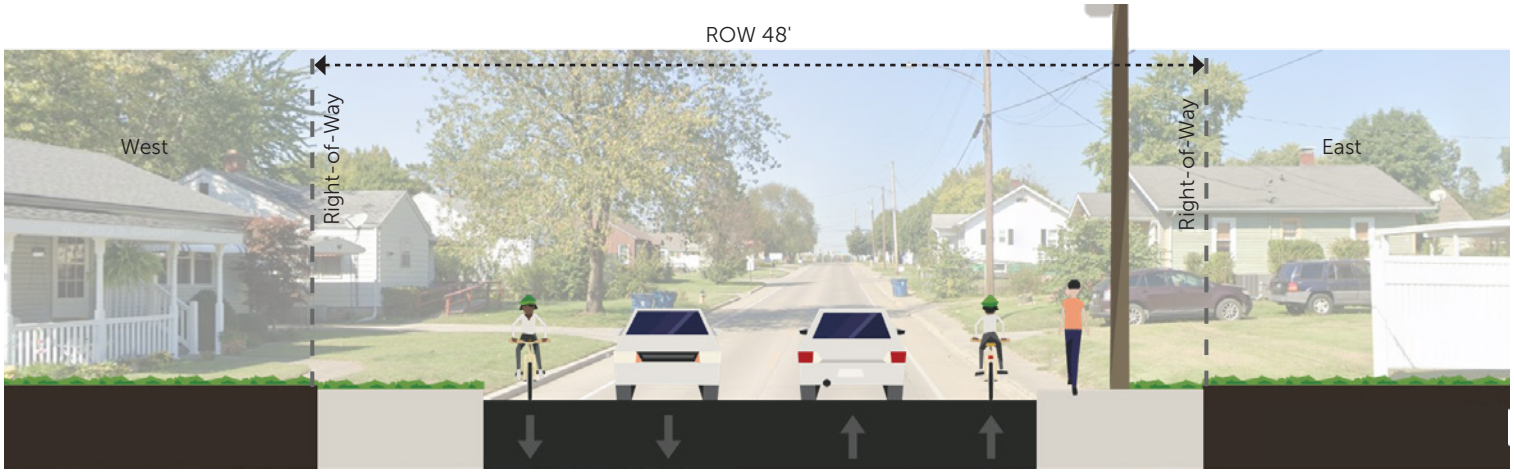
18th Street (South of Cherry): Existing Condition



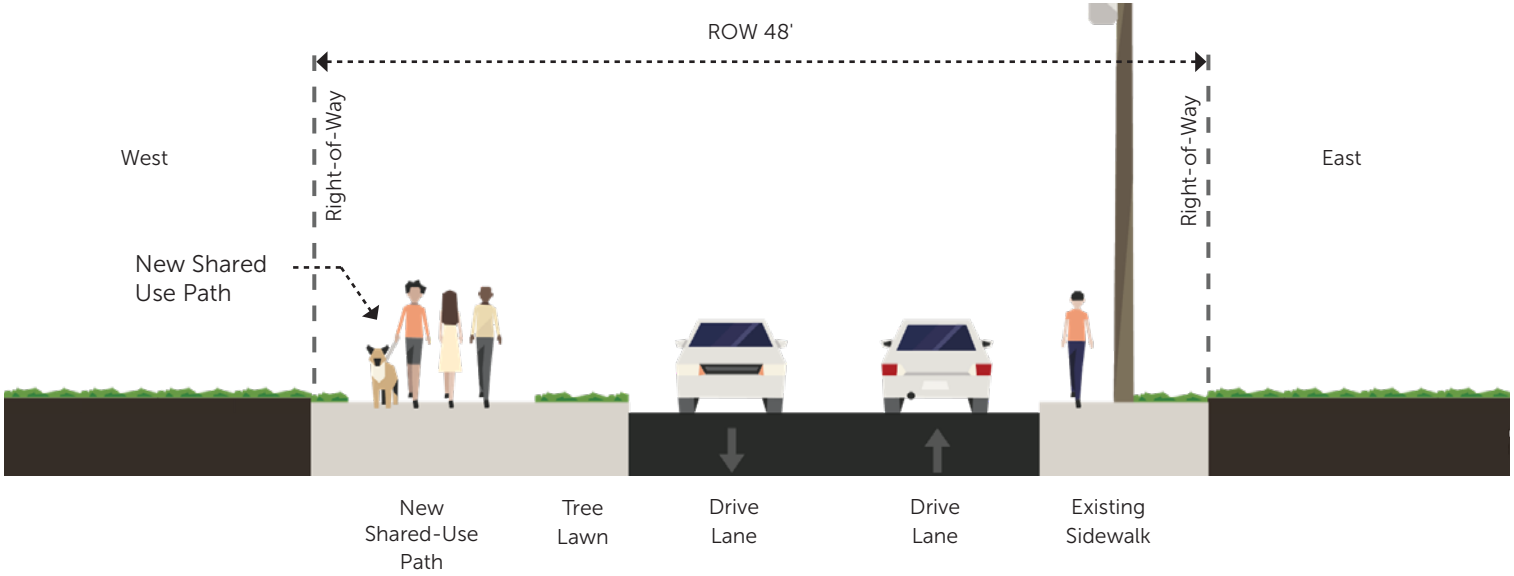
18th Street (South of Cherry): Proposed Condition



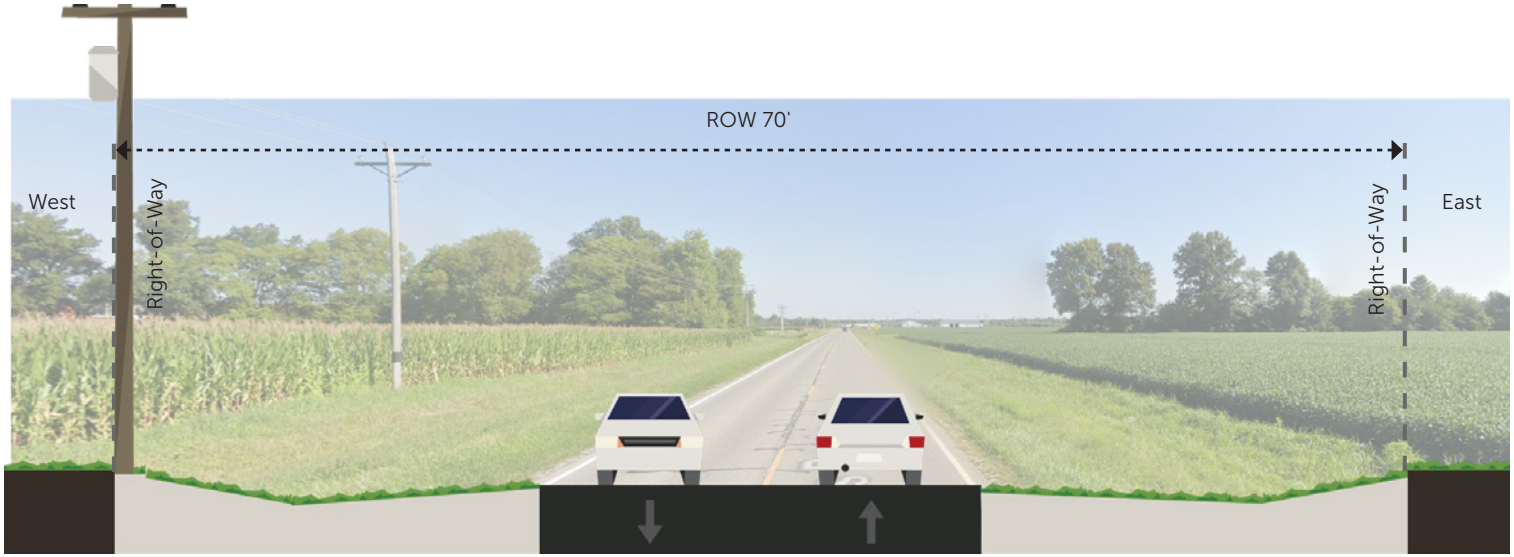
27th Street (Near Mannen): Existing Condition



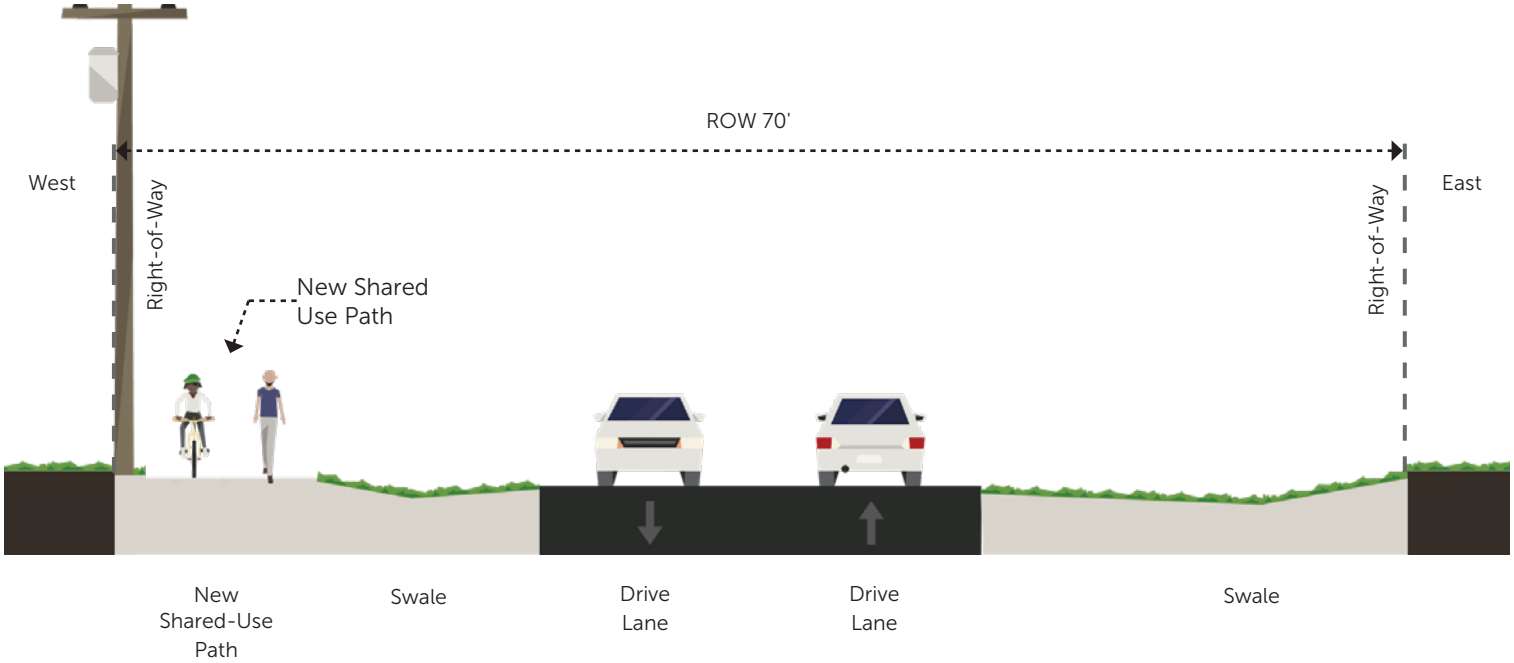
27th Street (Near Mannen): Proposed Condition



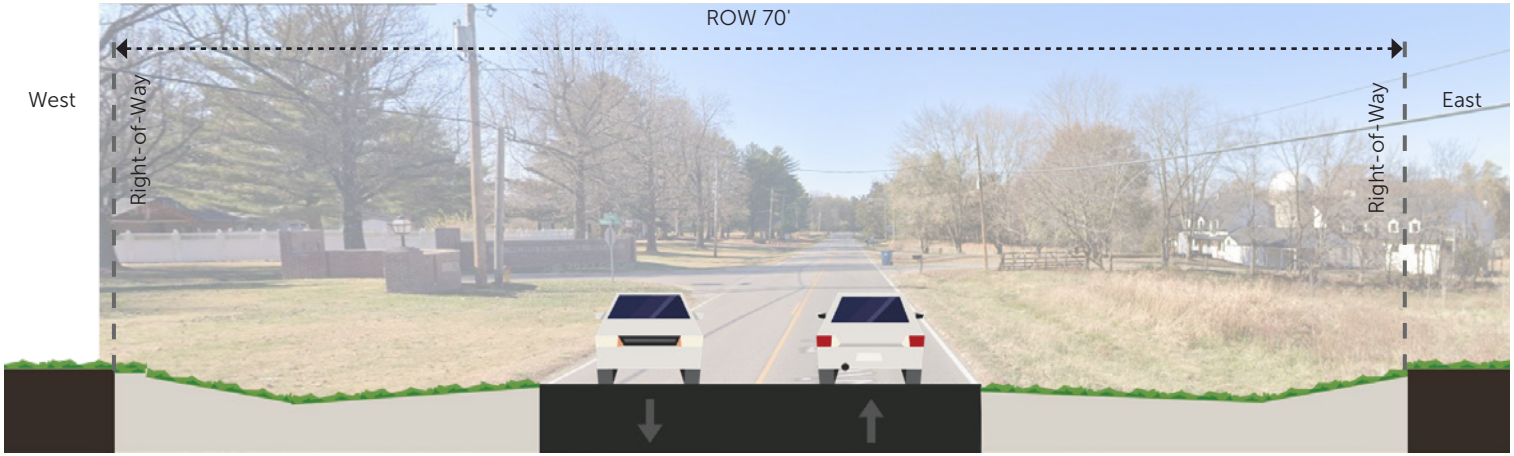
Wells Bypass (County Rd 1125) South of High School: Existing Condition



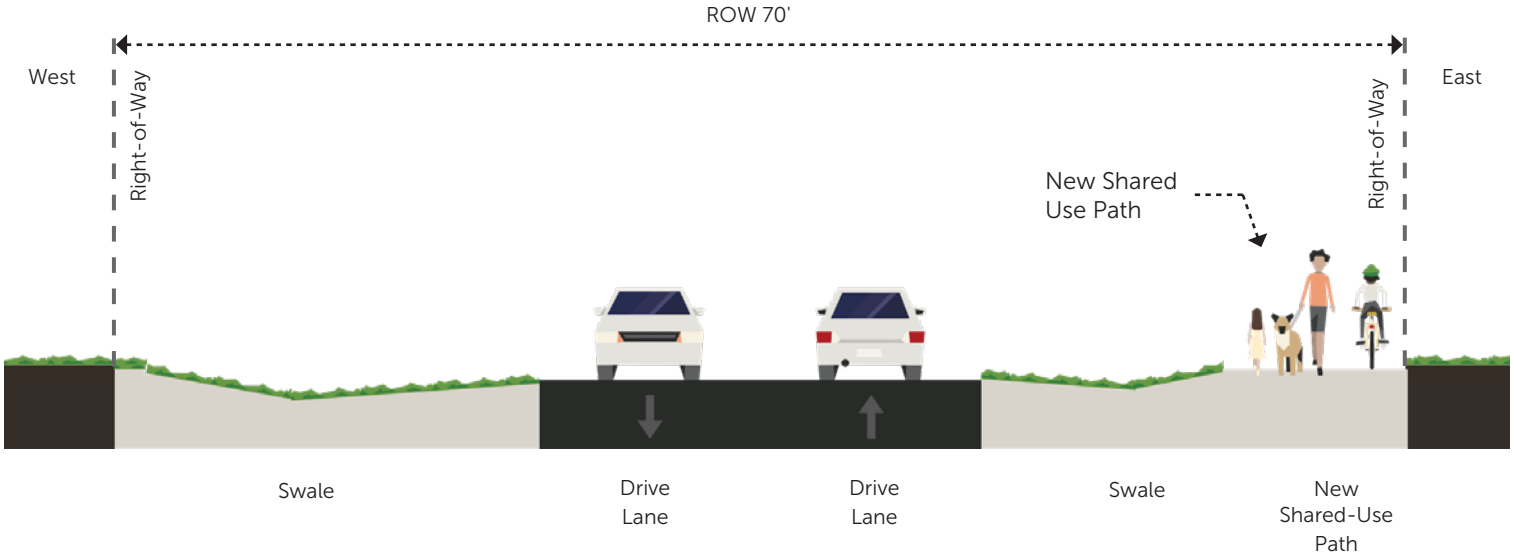
Wells Bypass (County Rd 1125) South of High School: Proposed Condition



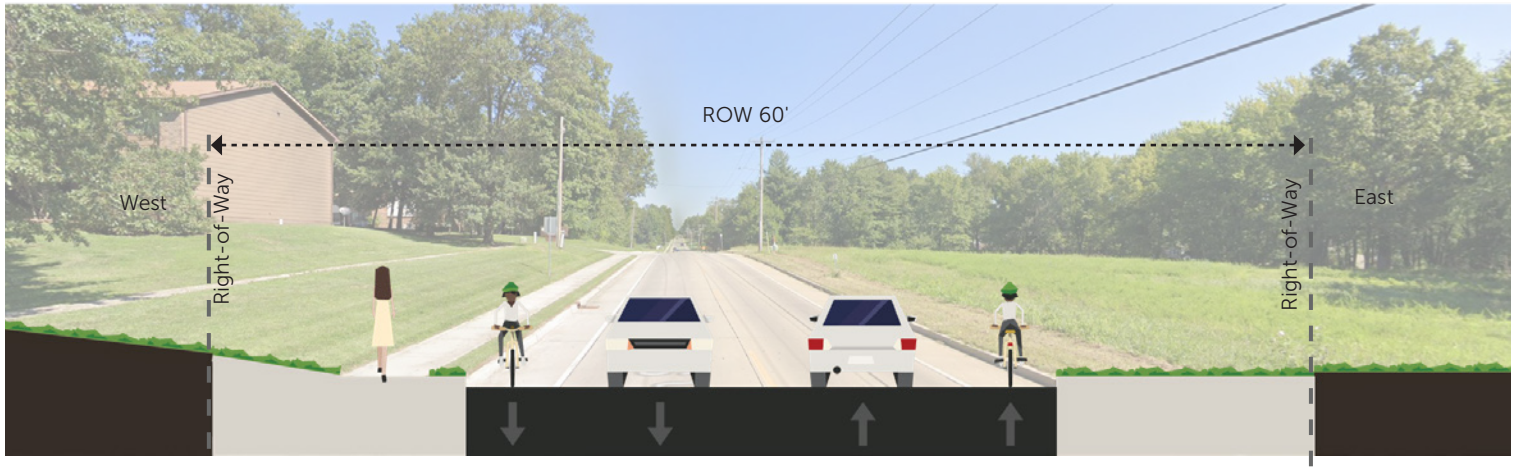
Richview Rd (West of 27th): Existing Condition



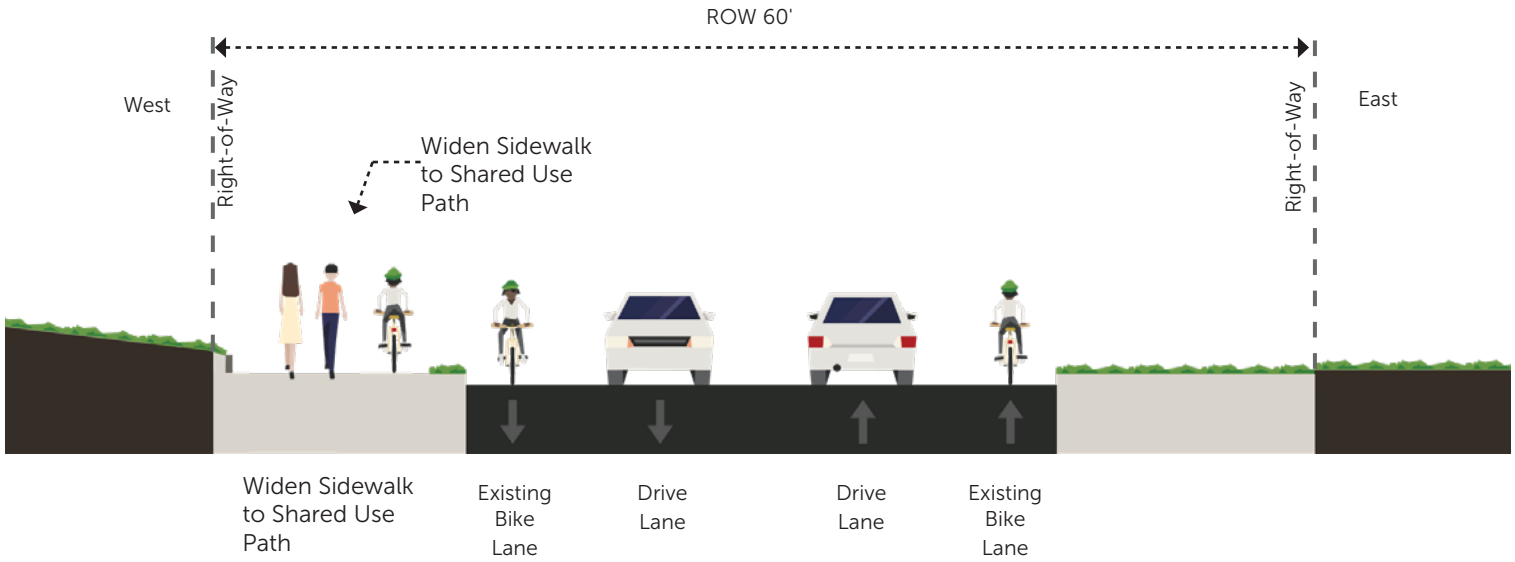
Richview Rd (West of 27th): Proposed Condition



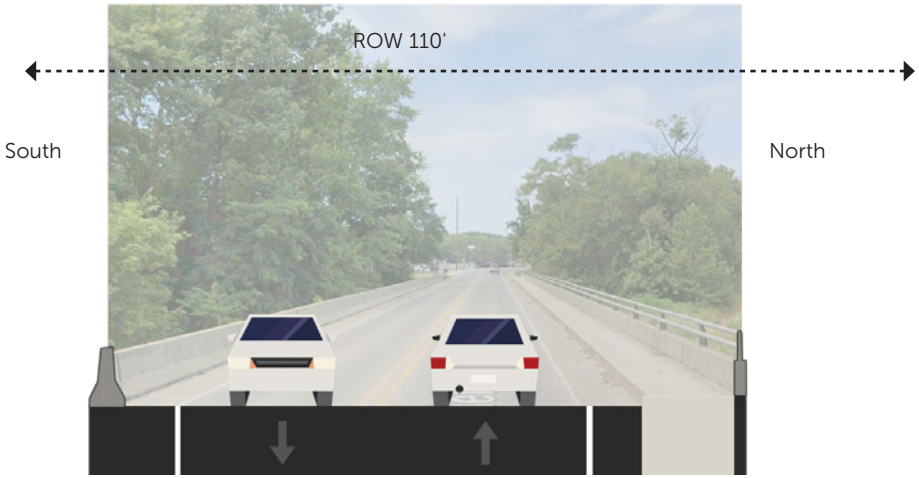
34th Street (North of Veterans): Existing Condition



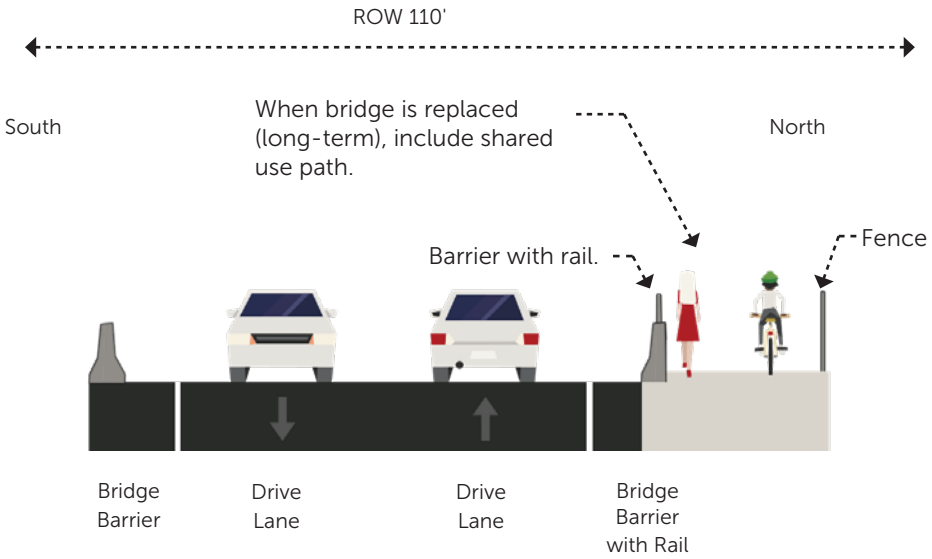
34th Street (North of Veterans): Proposed Condition



Fairfield Rd (Casey Fork Bridge): Existing Condition



Fairfield Rd (Casey Fork Bridge): Proposed Condition



Section 4
Results of Analysis of Routes

Routes to Study

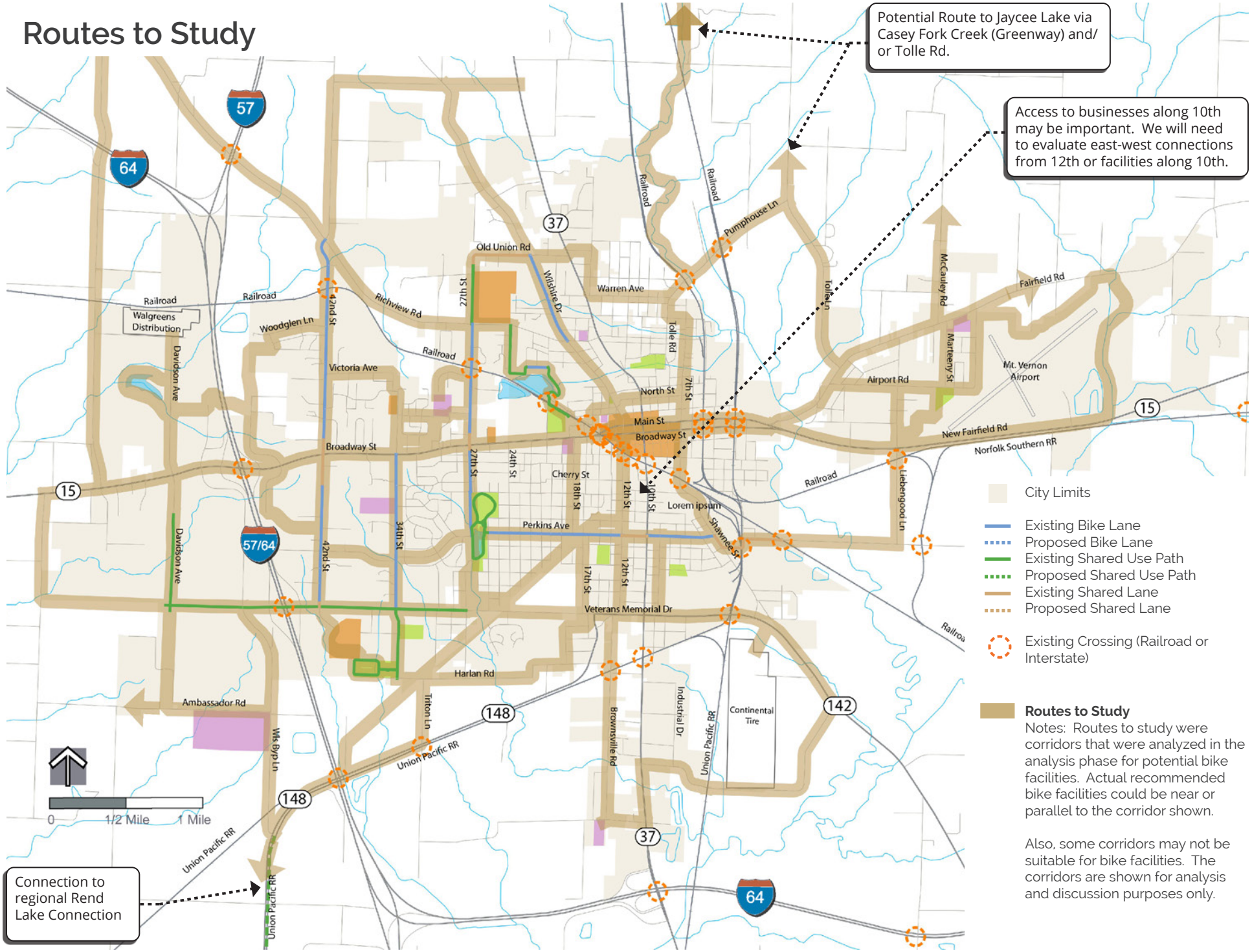
The following pages illustrate the "Routes to Study." Routes to study were **corridors that were analyzed during planning for potential bike facilities**. Actual recommended bike facilities could be near or parallel to the corridor shown. In addition, some corridors may not be suitable for bike facilities. The corridors are shown for analysis and discussion purposes only.

Guiding principles for selection of the Routes to Study include:

- Linking destinations.
- Providing access throughout the city to bike facilities (no more than 1/2 mile to a mile apart).
- Connecting the network (loops throughout the City and to destinations).
- Accommodating different user groups (commuters, recreational bicyclists, youth, families, casual bicyclists, etc.).

While a shared use path is the preferred bicycle facility type, with nearly 80 miles of routes to study shown, the evaluation of on-street facilities will be a crucial aspect of the upcoming planning phase from a practical implementation perspective.

Routes to Study

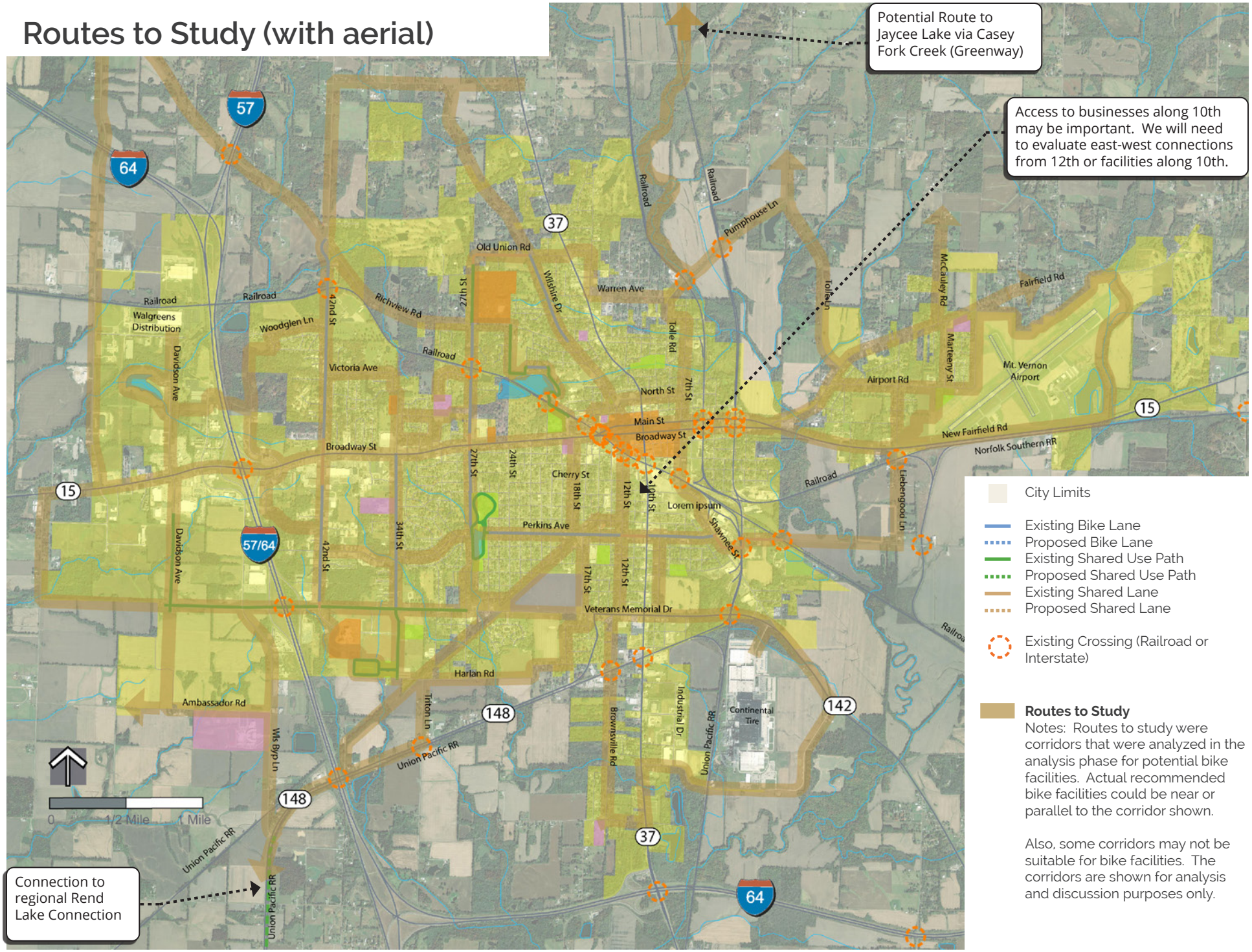


Routes to Study

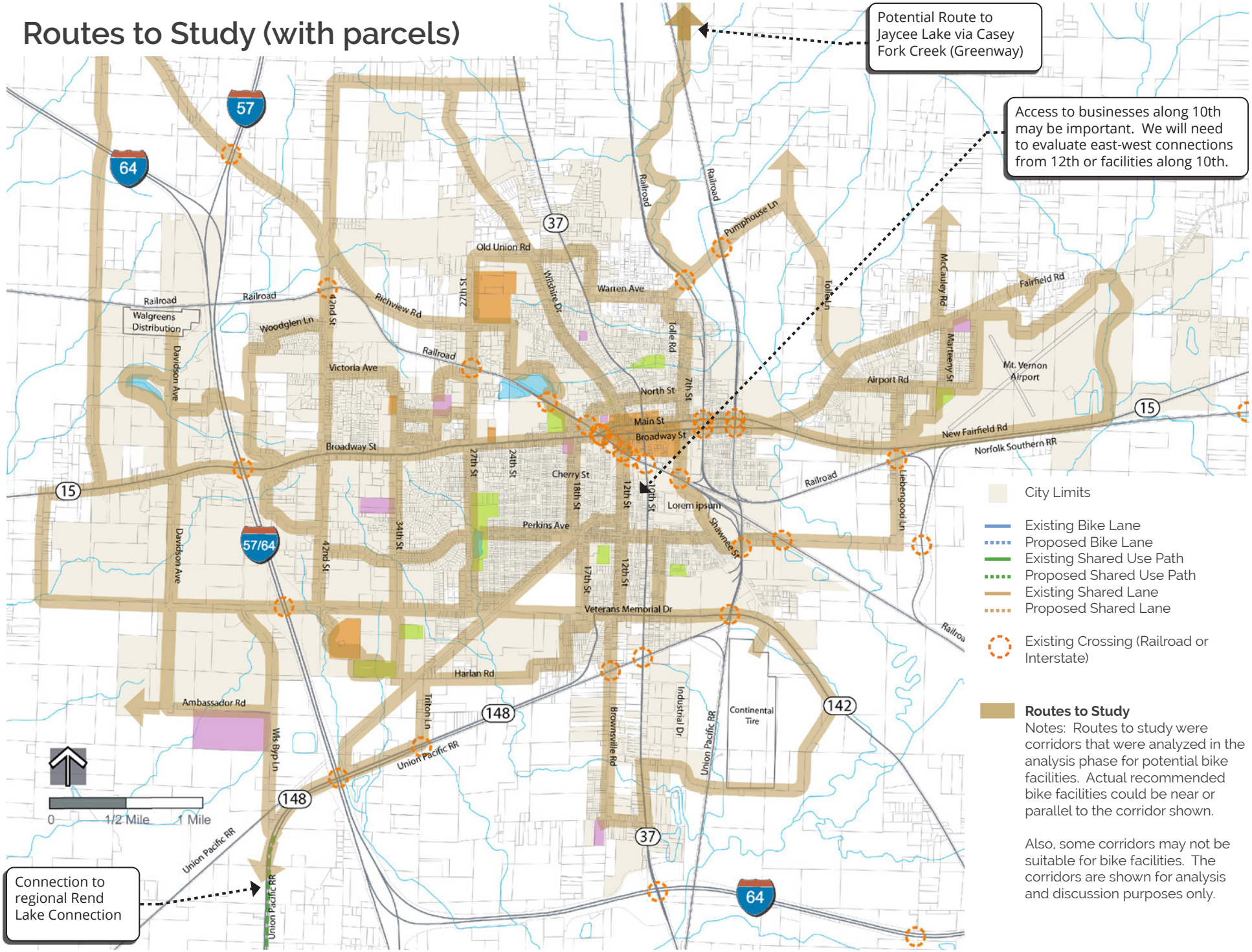
Notes: Routes to study were corridors that were analyzed in the analysis phase for potential bike facilities. Actual recommended bike facilities could be near or parallel to the corridor shown.

Also, some corridors may not be suitable for bike facilities. The corridors are shown for analysis and discussion purposes only.

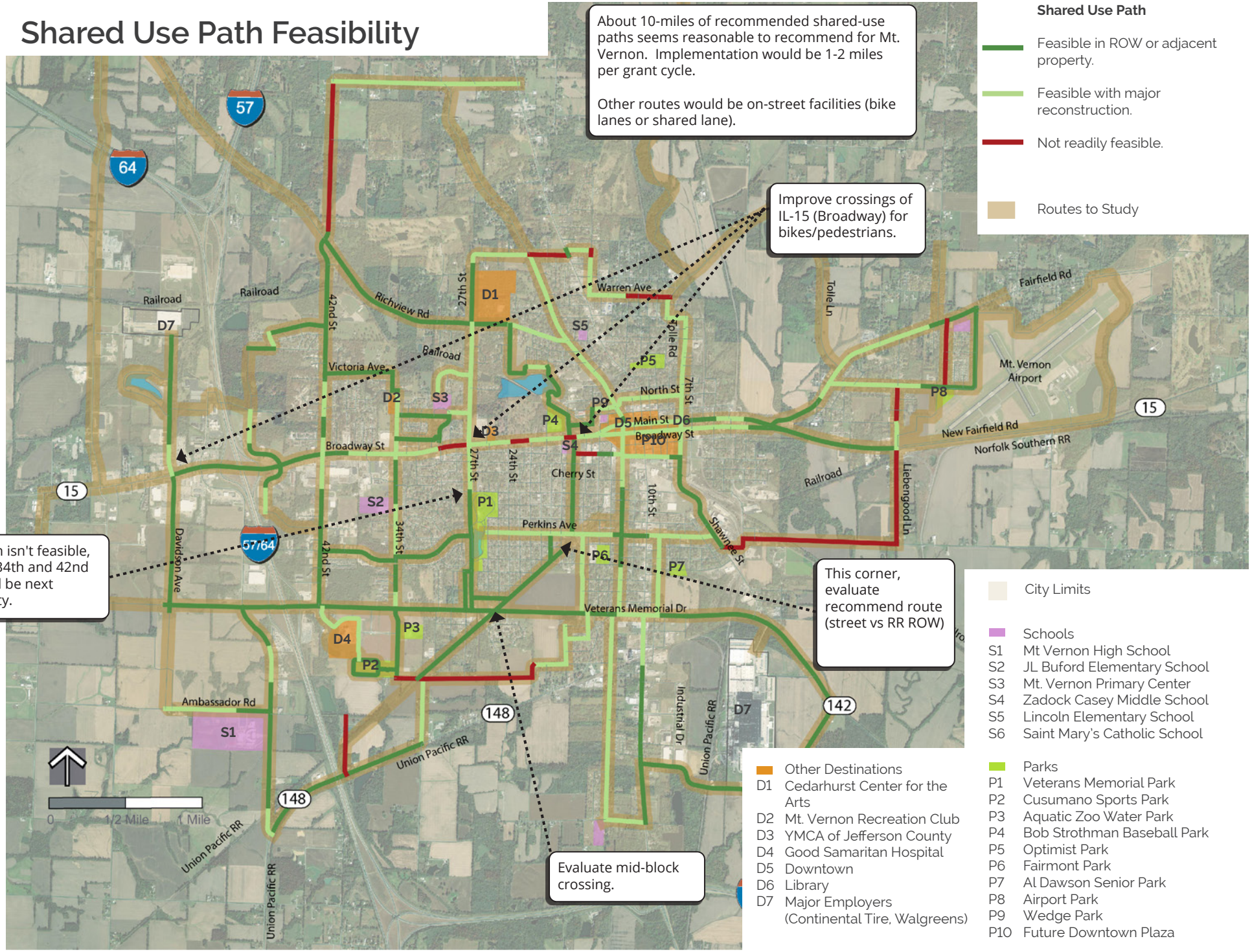
Routes to Study (with aerial)



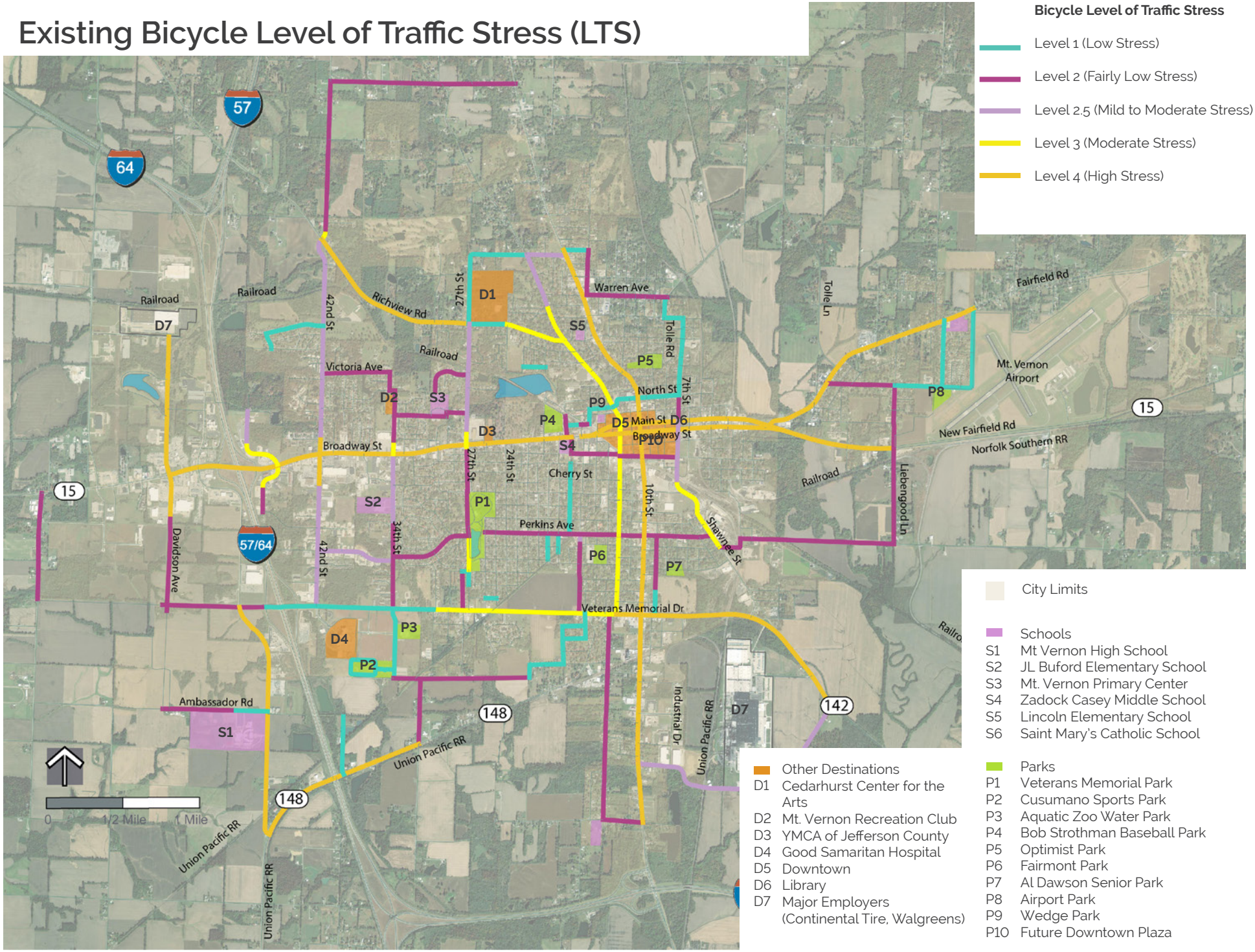
Routes to Study (with parcels)



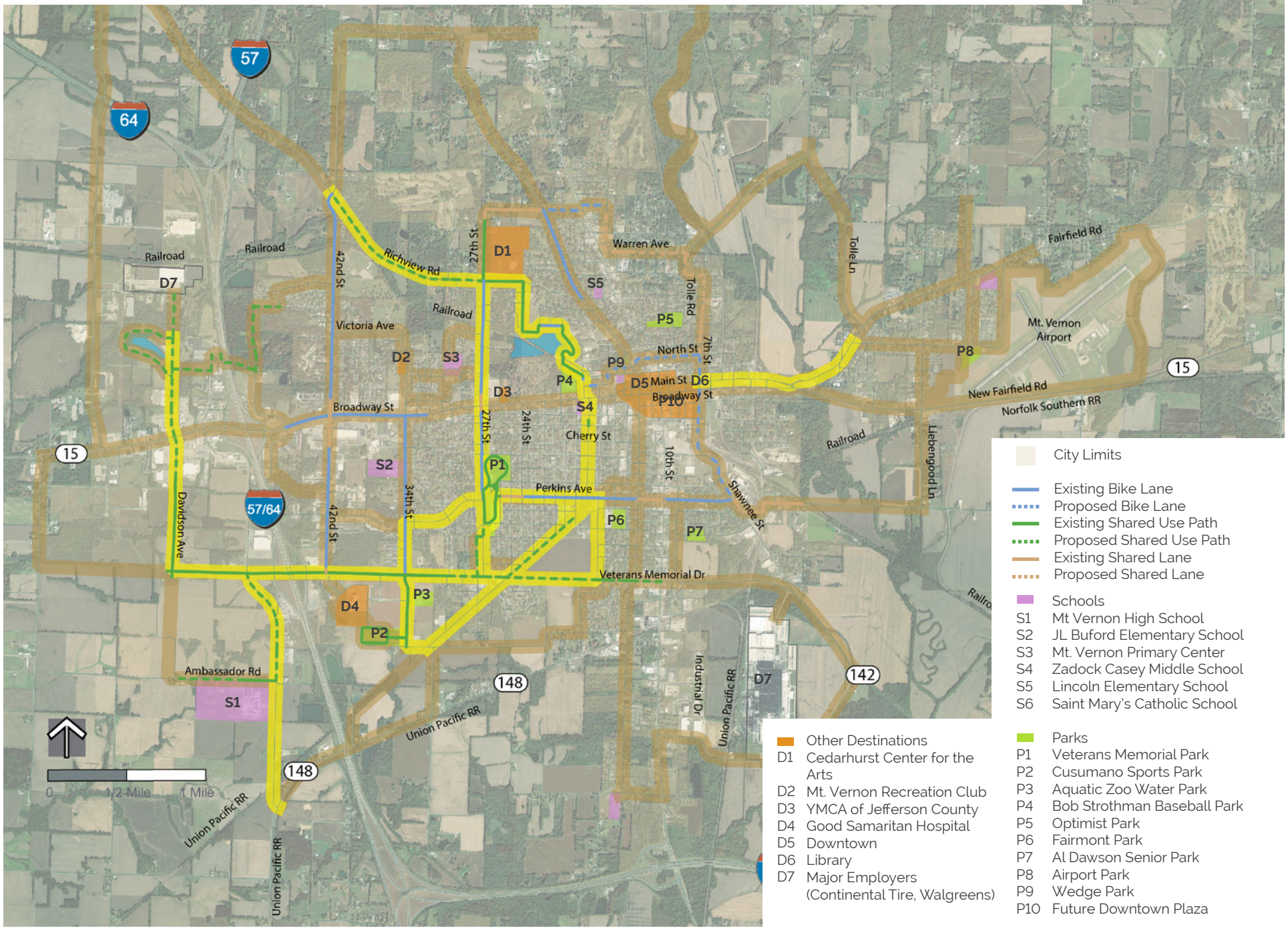
Shared Use Path Feasibility



Existing Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (LTS)

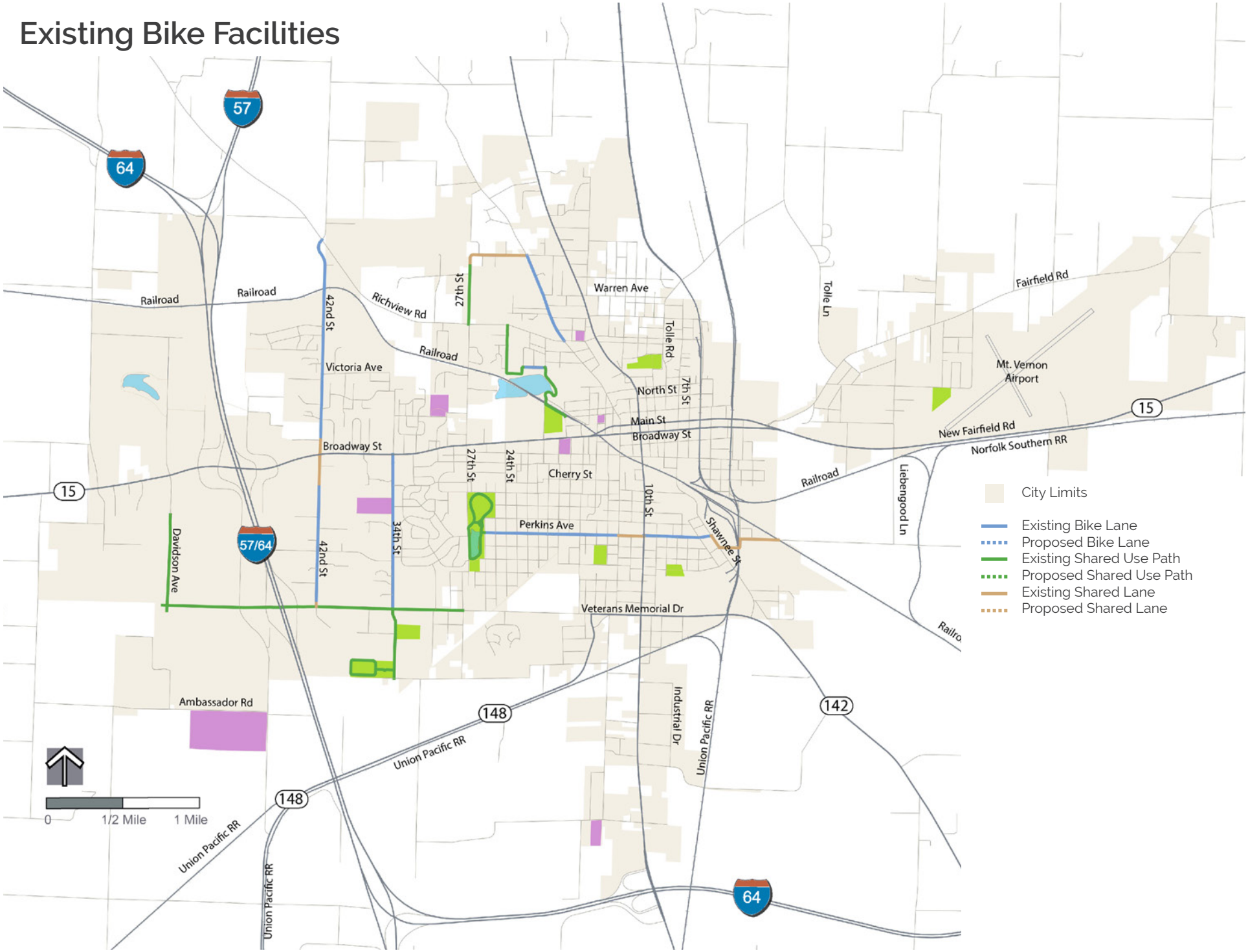


Shared Use Path Corridors with Existing Facilities (and City Proposed)

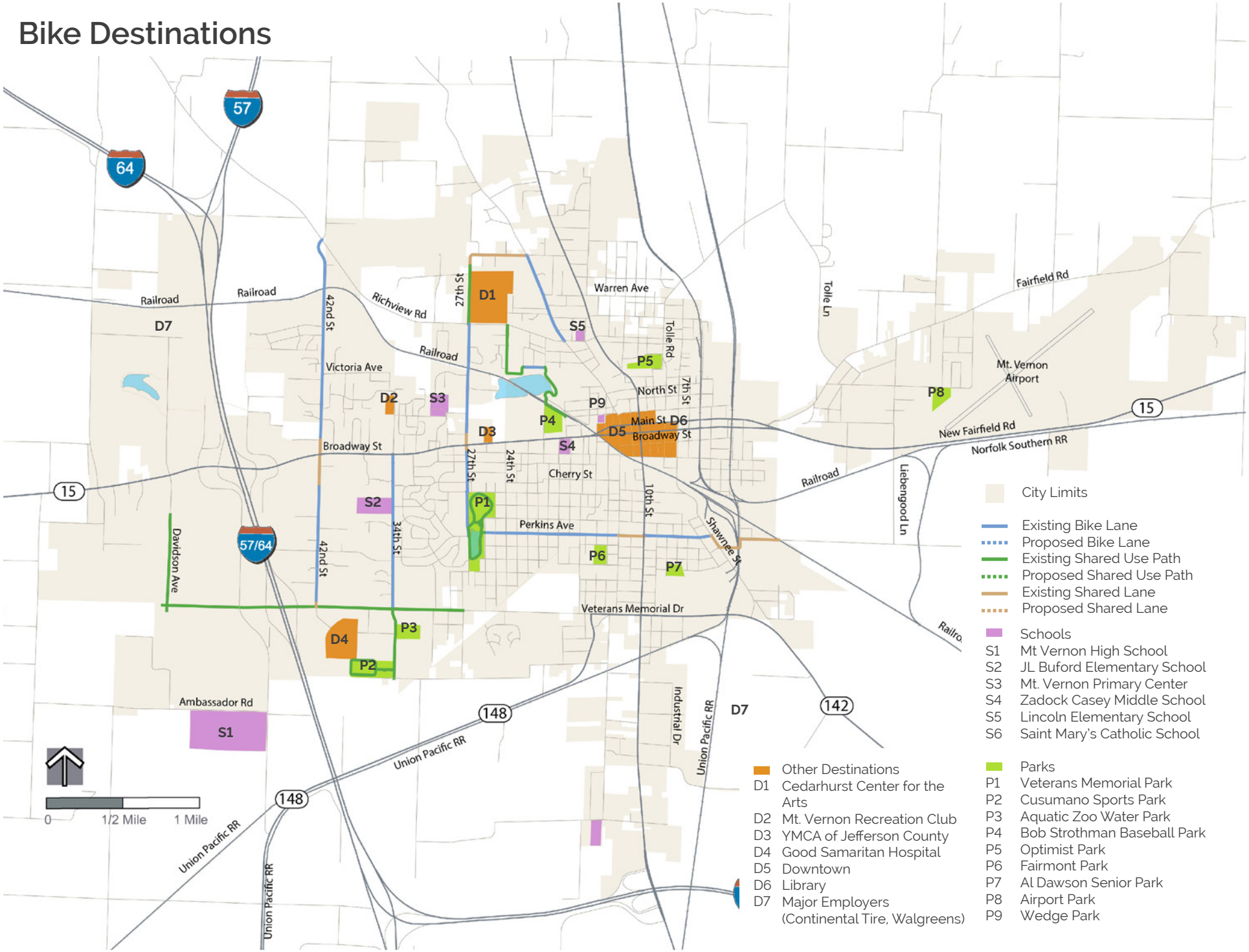


Section 5
Existing Conditions

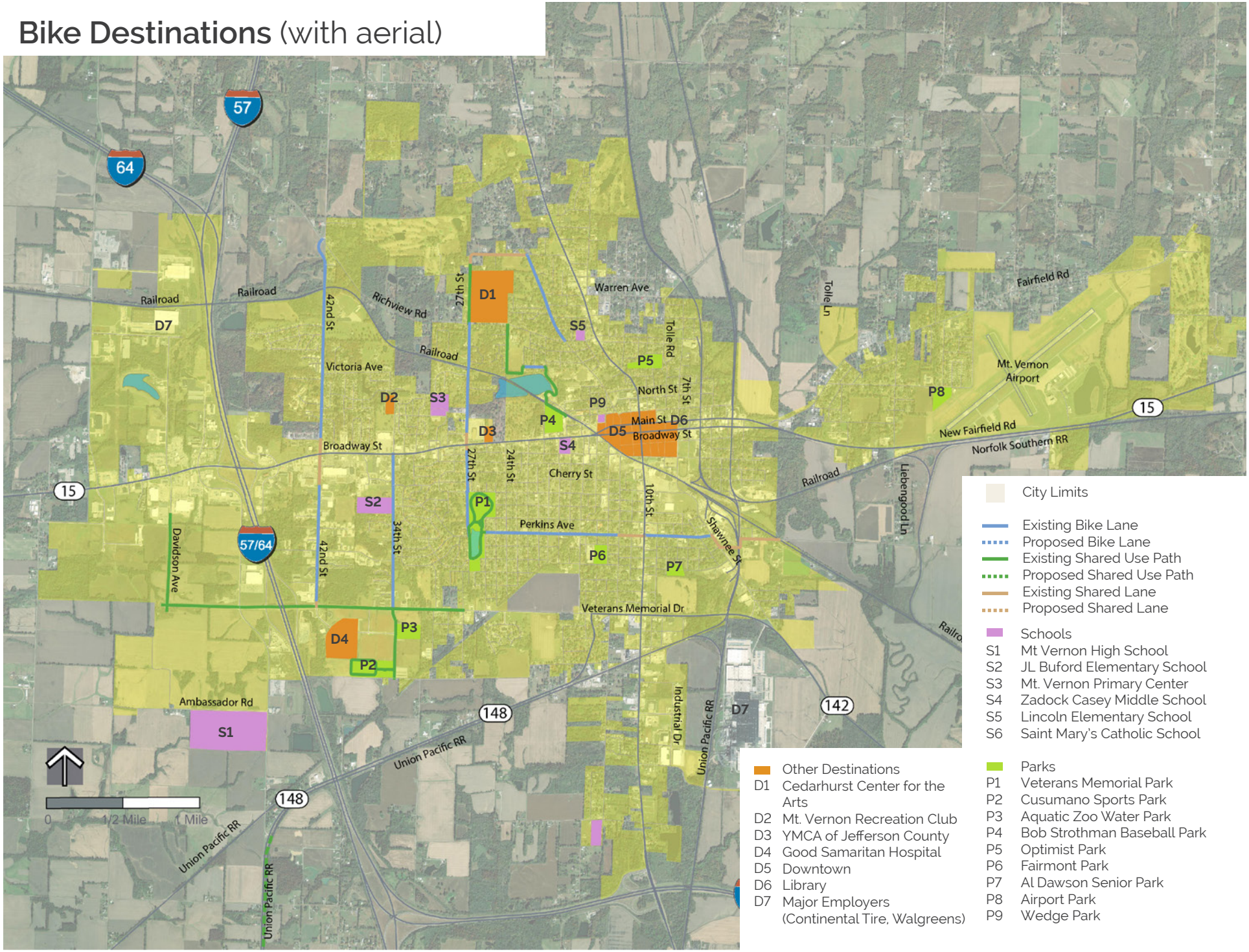
Existing Bike Facilities



Bike Destinations



Bike Destinations (with aerial)



City Limits

- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
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- Proposed Shared Use Path
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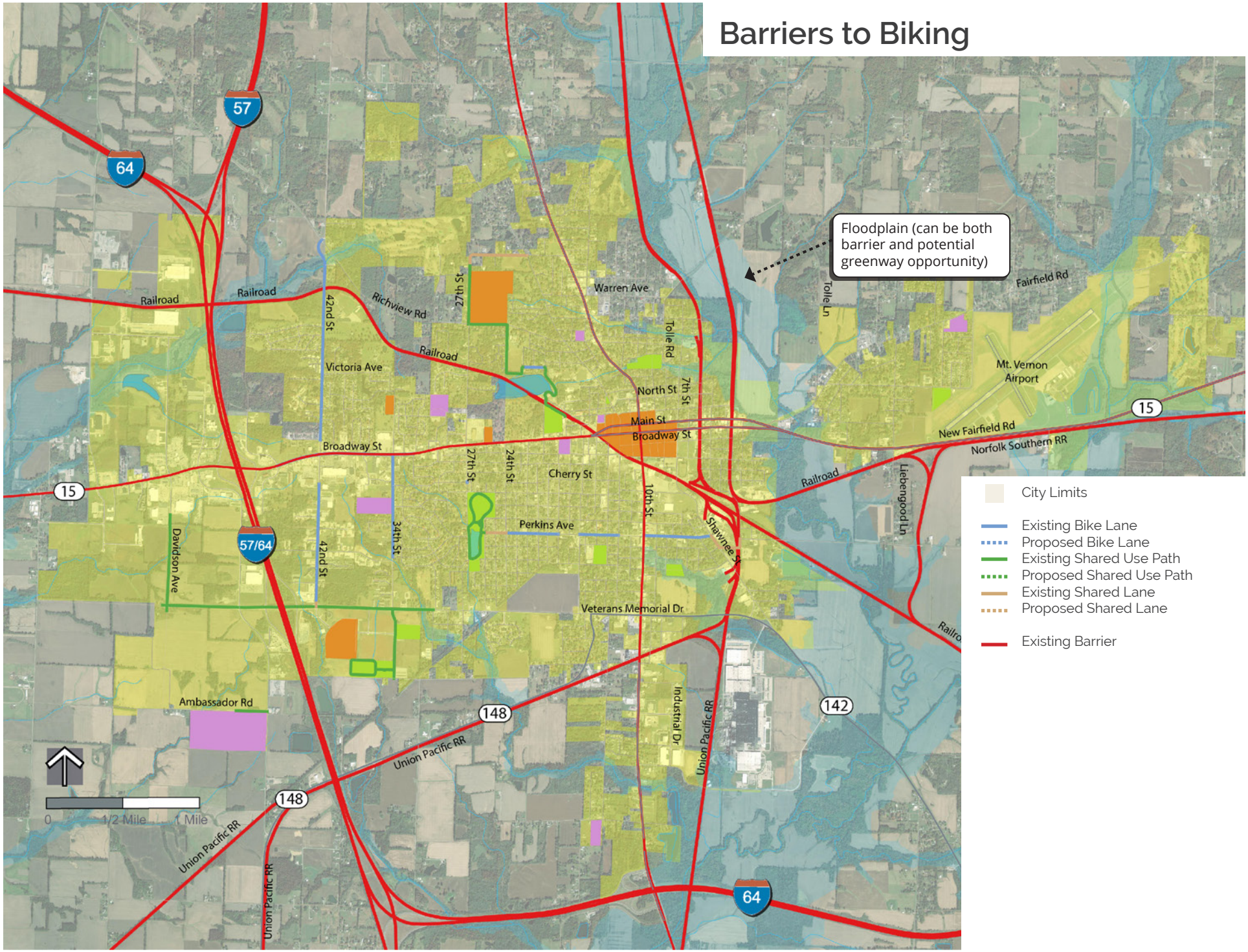
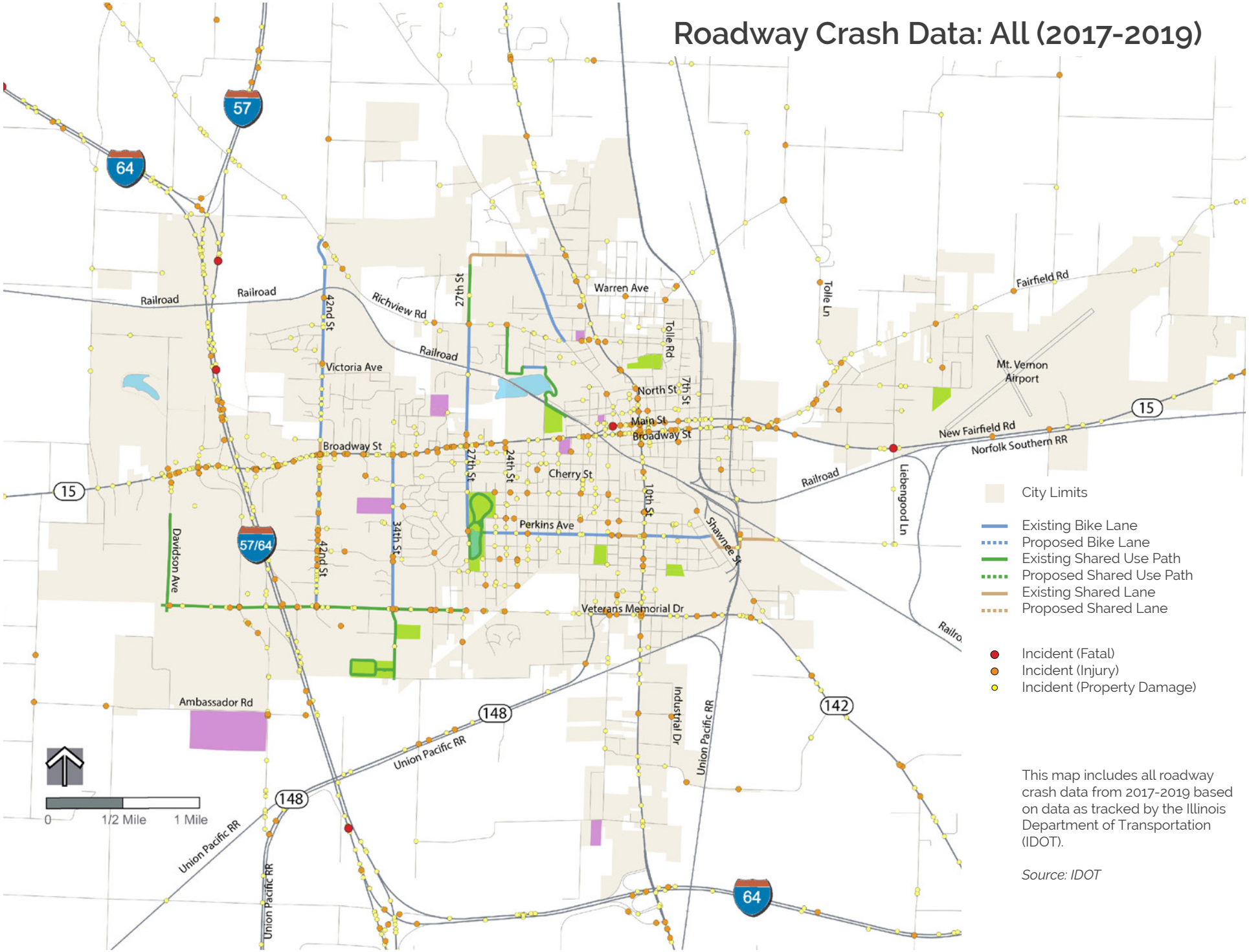
Barriers to Biking



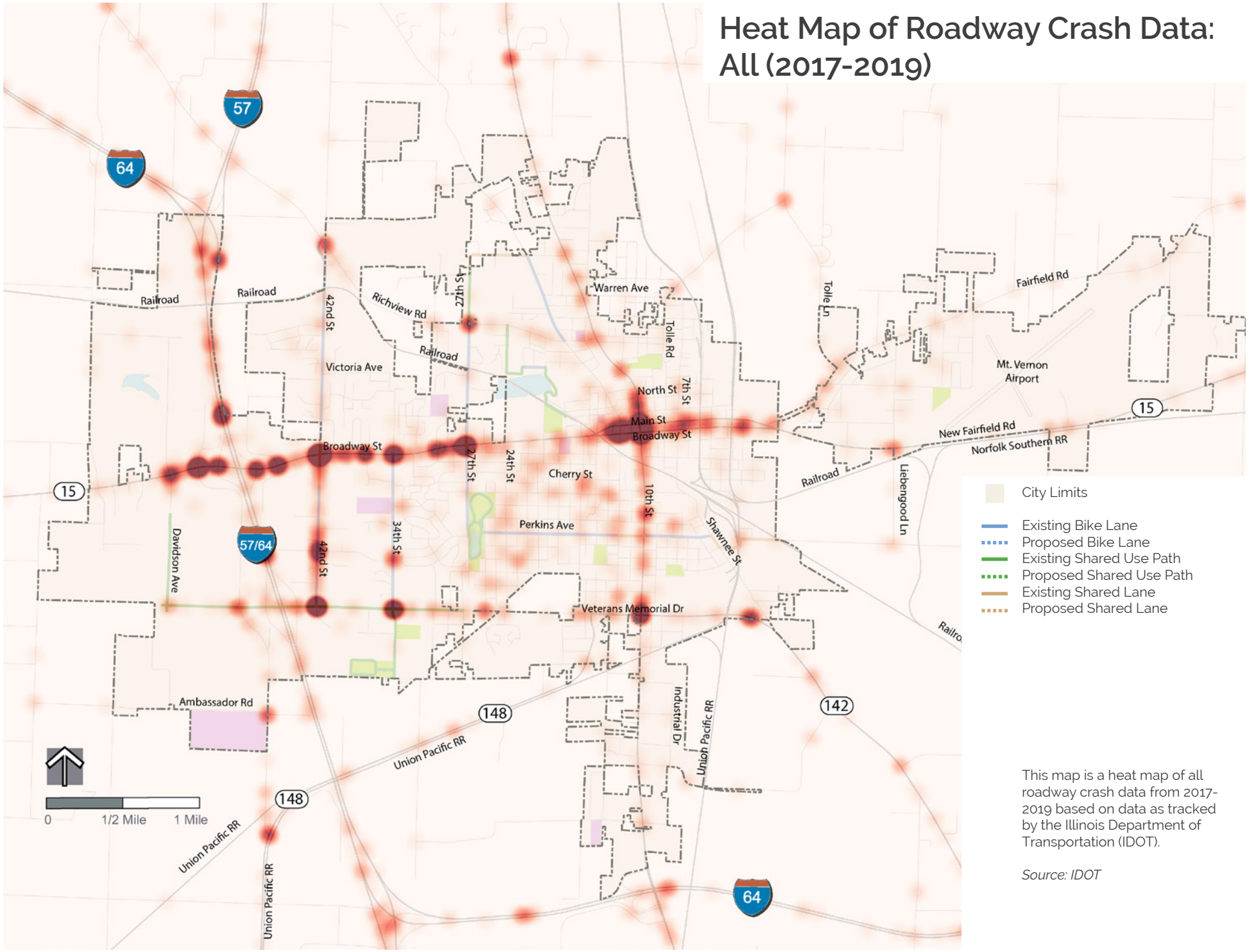
Roadway Crash Data: All (2017-2019)



This map includes all roadway crash data from 2017-2019 based on data as tracked by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Source: IDOT

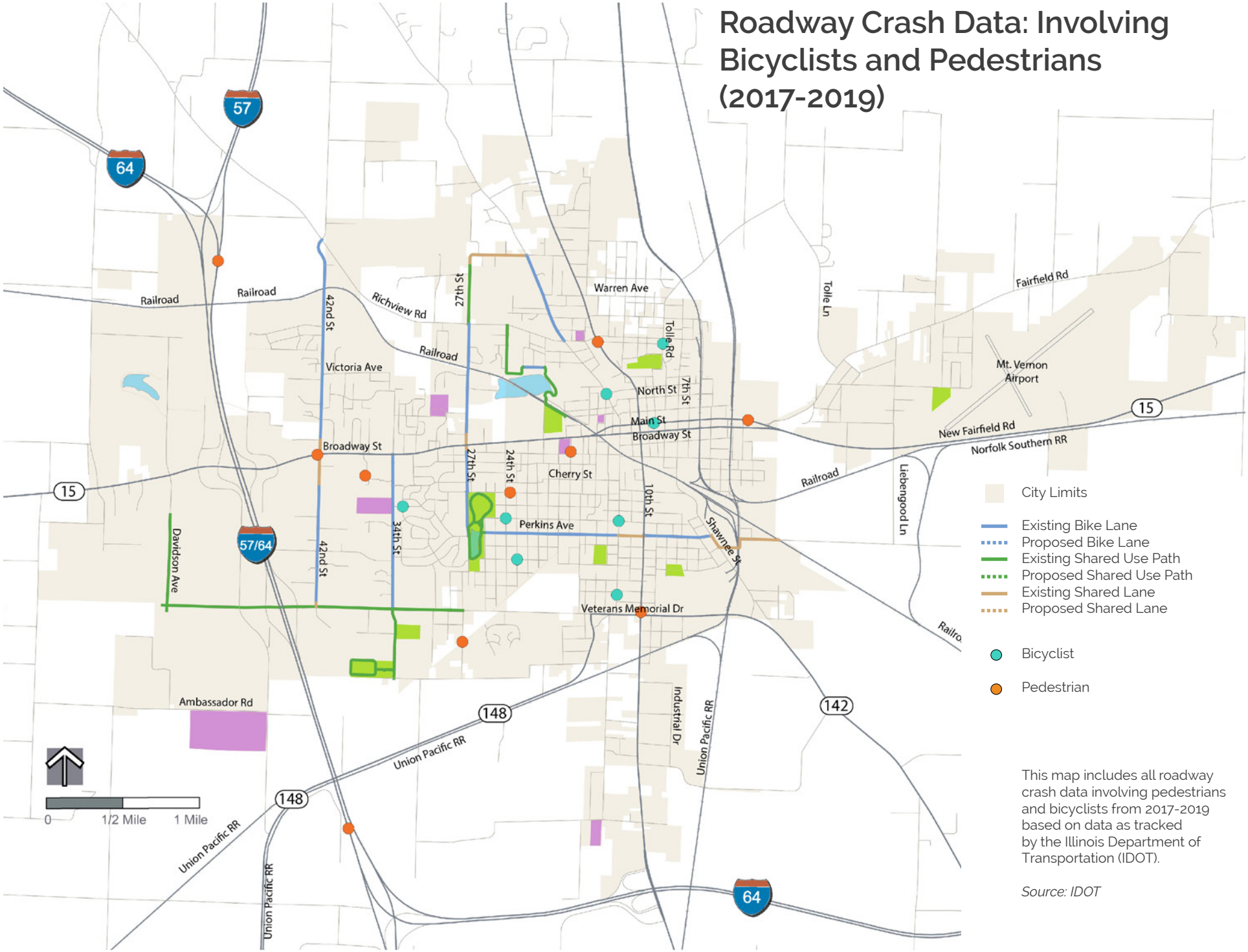
Heat Map of Roadway Crash Data: All (2017-2019)



This map is a heat map of all roadway crash data from 2017-2019 based on data as tracked by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Source: IDOT

Roadway Crash Data: Involving Bicyclists and Pedestrians (2017-2019)



This map includes all roadway crash data involving pedestrians and bicyclists from 2017-2019 based on data as tracked by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Source: IDOT

Vehicle Traffic Volumes

This map includes traffic volumes based on Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT). Years include 2014-2022 and varies based on street. Major roads have more recent traffic counts. Data is not available for every road or street.

Source: IDOT

Last Updated: May 30, 2024