

Based on the Livable Communities Workshop in September 2014, the MPO created a final report that broke the comments and recommendations into seven categories (see their text at the end of this document. Those categories became the descriptive text here and we have added “action” words to describe how the plan will approach each of these Elements.

1. Identify the Assets

The pedestrian and bicycle networks consist of all public roadways (except the Massachusetts Turnpike) and the public multiuse paths.

2. Connect Assets into a Usable Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

The usefulness of these systems depends on the completeness and connectivity of the system elements.

3. Maintain the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

Like all physical assets, bicycle and pedestrian facilities gradually deteriorate and require regular cleaning, maintenance, and periodic reconstruction.

4. Design for Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

Standards of safe design are well known and should be implemented uniformly across the two systems.

5. Communicate Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes through Education and Signage

Information is an important tool to improve efficiency and safety.

6. Provide Seamless Links to Transit

Transit services and terminals are integral parts of the bicycle and pedestrian systems.

7. Include Bicycle and Pedestrian Access in Land Use Planning

Land use and related planning efforts affect the attractiveness of the bicycle and pedestrian modes.

TEXT FROM THE Livable Communities Workshop Document that informed the “elements” above:

ELEMENTS OF A BICYCLE-PEDESTRIAN VISION FOR FRAMINGHAM

Discussion throughout the LCW included participants’ various comments, concerns, and suggestions related to the Town of Framingham’s future of bicycling and walking. All of these comments assisted in forming a Bicycle-Pedestrian Vision for Framingham. Selected elements of this vision include:

The pedestrian and bicycle networks consist of all public roadways (except the Massachusetts Turnpike) and the public multiuse paths.

- Striping and other pavement markings are the primary method of allocating public network capacity between motorized and non-motorized modes. The appropriateness for use of arterials by the non-motorized modes should be explicit, regardless of the current condition of a particular roadway.
- Public investments in road reconstruction, improved roadway surfaces, and new or improved sidewalks should result in quality facilities for pedestrians, bicycles, private vehicles, and, as necessary, commercial trucks.
- Bicycle lanes on arterials and contraflow bicycle lanes¹ applied to one-way streets strongly complement the off-road path system. Pavement markings such as shared-use arrows and lane-edge stripes facilitating use of a well maintained road edge are also important in ensuring that the entire road network is recognized as part of the bicycle network.

The usefulness of these systems depends on the completeness and connectivity of the system elements.

- On roadways where sidewalks are absent, pedestrians are forced to walk in the road. In a municipality like Framingham, forcing pedestrians to walk in the road presents a safety hazard in all but a few locations.
- Bicyclists assume that portions of their trips will require the use of non-striped public roadways. However, opportunities to extend and connect the off-road multiuse path system should be sought and implemented where feasible. On-road and off-road connections to neighboring communities should be encouraged and developed.

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- The Town of Framingham should consider implementing a system that allows for easy public reporting of maintenance issues. Broken glass on roadways and off-road paths is a major deterrent to both bicyclists and pedestrians. Road sweepers should be utilized on paved multiuse paths, public roadways, and shoulders of state-owned highways on a regularly scheduled basis. These efforts should complement ongoing municipal street cleaning.

- Snow removal should clear the entire length of sidewalks. The Town of Framingham should ensure that snow removed from roadways is not dumped onto the sidewalks.
- Trash cans and other street furniture on public sidewalks should be thoughtfully positioned and appropriately maintained.

Standards of safe design are well known and should be implemented uniformly across the two systems.

- A complete sidewalk system, preferably on both sides of the street where applicable, should be a long-range goal.
- Intersections should be well lit and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Concurrent crossing phases provide a high level of service for both vehicles and pedestrians, and should be considered when turning analysis determines safety for all users.
- On-road bicycle accommodations should be sufficiently attractive to ensure that bicyclists refrain from using adjacent sidewalks.
- “Bike-box” pavement markings improve turning safety for bicycles at signalized intersections and should be implemented where feasible and warranted.

Information is an important tool to improve efficiency and safety.

- Off-road paths should have a complete set of wayfinding signage on the paths and also for directing users to the paths. Maps highlighting the offroad facilities should be available online and via smartphone apps.
- Pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers of private vehicles, commercial trucks, and buses must know, understand, and respect the rules of the road. Enforcement is an effective method of communicating the importance of these rules.
- Education about lawful and effective use of the bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular networks should be part of school curricula. There is also a role for the Internet and other forms of social media as part of public outreach efforts.

Transit services and terminals are integral parts of the bicycle and pedestrian systems.

- The bus and rail transit services available in Framingham allow nonmotorized travelers to cover distances that normally require use of an automobile to a number of important destinations. Improvements infrequency, hours of service, and route coverage should be part of a bicycle-pedestrian vision.
- Bike and pedestrian access to major regional and local transit terminals needs to be significantly improved. Envisioned improvements to bus circulation and park-and-ride access can serve as a catalyst for improving bike and pedestrian access.
- As transit service providers and nearby businesses improve terminal areas, these become logical locations for amenities such as bicycle racks, lockers, and rentals.

Land use and related planning efforts affect the attractiveness of the bicycle and pedestrian modes.

- The creation of major public park or recreation areas expands the off-road path system and creates attractive new destinations for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Some commercial districts can be viable without total dependence on automobile access. In these instances, bicycle and pedestrian access can be critical to maintaining commercial viability. The attractiveness of these locations for visitors using non-motorized modes can be increased by reducing on-street parking.