Transportation

VISION:

All Bloomington citizens have access to safe, affordable, and low-carbon transportation options that support healthy, active lifestyles

The Bloomington community aspires to have a safe, efficient, accessible, affordable, and well-connected multi-modal transportation system. Although many residents bike, walk, and use public transit, the existing transportation infrastructure was designed primarily for automobile use, and commuter transportation choices continue to reflect our community's preference for automobiles. While our community's transportation modal split is much less heavily focused toward single occupancy vehicles than Indiana or the U.S., there remains room for improvement (Figure 1).

Two programs that provide transportation options for our community are Zipcar and Pace bike share. Zipcar has approximately 16 vehicles originating from the Indiana University campus and from private, off-campus student housing complexes. The City and IU recently selected Pace bike share service to provide 150 dockless bikes to community members. Zipcar provides short-term transportation options for people without cars, while the Pace bike share program provides a low-cost, low-emission transportation option that relieves traffic congestion and parking demands.

Figure 1: 2016 Bloomington Commuter Primary Transportation Mode

	Drive Alone	Carpool	Walk	Bike	Public Transit
Bloomington	62.8%	8.7%	13.6%	3.9%	6.5%
Indiana	83.0%	8.9%	2.1%	0.5%	1.1%
United States	76.3%	9.0%	2.8%	0.6%	5.1%

Source: American Communities Survey, 2016. Note from ACS methodology:"Persons who used different means of transportation on different days of the week were asked to specify the one they used most often, that is, the greatest number of days."

Fulfilling the Bloomington community's multi-modal transportation vision will require the development of urban village centers, improved safety for multi-modal transportation options, enhanced transportation infrastructure, and increased use of public transit.

URBAN VILLAGE CENTERS

The 2018 Bloomington Comprehensive Plan envisions the establishment of 21 Urban Village Centers: neighborhood-based, mixed use centers offering a variety of amenities for nearby residents. Centers are typically located near public transit stops, sidewalks, and bike trails in order to reduce traffic, air pollution, and land consumption, while improving quality of life.[1] Sample amenities include retail establishments such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and convenience stores; services such as banks, restaurants, gyms, hair salons, entertainment venues, and laundromats; and community facilities such as child care facilities, libraries, and parks.[2] The Comprehensive Plan indicates that such Village Centers should include:

- residential uses, limited to above street-level
- on-site parking for residents and on-street parking for visitors
- public transit less than a 10-minute walk from the center
- renewable energy sources
- green infrastructure elements to help filter stormwater
- nearby affordable housing
- a variety of different services and amenities
- improved walkability and accessibility through enhanced multi-modal transportation infrastructure.[3]

ENHANCED MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Multi-modal planning considers various types of and connections among travel modes (walking, bicycling, automobile, public transit, etc.). While vehicle ownership is a necessity for many community members, decreasing the community's dependence on automobiles can result in numerous benefits, including cost savings

GOAL 3.1: Ensure Five Urban Village Centers meet the criteria established in the Comprehensive Plan by 2023 [4]			
	ACTION	**LEAD PARTNERS**	**TIMEFRAME**	**COST**
3.1.a	Establish an inter-departmental team to organize resources and expertise needed to establish Urban Village Centers and identify five priority focus areas that would have maximum community impact and improve social equity	Planning & Transportation, ESD, Housing & Neighborhood Development (HAND), Public Works, City Utilities, Bloomington Economic Development Corp (BEDC)	2019	$
3.1.b	Incorporate electric vehicle charging stations into sustainable development incentives to influence common infrastructure at Urban Village Centers	Planning & Transportation	2019	$$*
3.1.c	Establish an infill development program to inventory vacant or underused lots, help ensure infill areas are build-ready when possible, and offer financial incentives to spur development of compact communities and prevent urban sprawl[5]	Planning & Transportation, ESD	2020	$$$*
3.1.d	Attract a variety of amenities to locate in or near priority Village Centers	ESD, BEDC	2023	$
3.1.e	Implement appropriate multi-modal projects in priority Village Centers, emphasizing those identified in the 2018 Bloomington Transportation Plan; with streets that provide safe access for visitors of all levels of ability[6]	Planning & Transportation, Public Works	2023	$$$$
3.1.f	Locate planned affordable housing within or nearby Village Centers or collaborate to pilot affordable housing in the vicinity[7]	Planning & Transportation, ESD, HAND, South Central Indiana Housing Opportunities	2023	$

Transportation

GOAL 3.2: Shift the Bloomington Community transportation commute mode split to 60 percent Single Occupancy Vehicle by 2022, compared to a baseline of 62.8 percent in 2016 (as measured in the American Community Survey)			
ACTION	**LEAD PARTNERS**	**TIMEFRAME**	**COST**
3.2.a	Work with businesses to expand bicycle parking and encourage participation in the American League of Cyclists Bicycle Friendly Business program[8]	Planning & Transportation, ESD, Chamber of Commerce	2019	$$*
3.2.b	Expand the use of marketing efforts for bike share program[9]	Pace bike share, Planning & Transportation, ESD, IU	2019	$
3.2.c	Create a campaign to encourage use of car share programs in lieu of automobile ownership through marketing and incentives	IU, ESD, Planning & Transportation	2019	$*
3.2.d	Develop a program to encourage local businesses and major empolyers to establish commute trip reduction programs, including incentives for multi-modal transportation and an emergency ride home program for individuals who don't drive to work alone	ESD, Chamber of Commerce, IU	2021	$$*

averaging $8,400 per car each year,[10] improved health through increased physical activity, reduced stress levels, and improved environmental quality.

Multi-modal transportation options need to be safe and convenient. Studies show that most pedestrian and bicycle crashes occur in an urban environment.[11] Bloomington has held the American League of Cities Bicycle Friendly Community Gold Rating since 2014. Bloomington's current network of bicycle and pedestrian trails provides residents with access to many popular destinations, particularly in the downtown area. Bloomington is currently designated as a Bronze-level Walk Friendly Community due to its high walking mode share, great trail system, and ordinances that promote density and walkability.

However, opportunities for improvements in safety and connectivity still exist. While some neighborhoods are very walkable, the average walking score of Bloomington neighborhoods through Walk Score is currently 31 (out of 100).

Between 2012 and 2014, there were 12,448 total crashes in Monroe County. More than 4,000 crashes occurred in 2014, with 56 crashes involving bicycles and 68 crashes involving pedestrians.

Two of those pedestrian crashes were fatal, and 8 bicycle crashes and 12 pedestrian crahses resulted in incapacitating injuries.[12]

Safety of multi-modal transportation is influenced by infrastructure design, maintenance, education, and enforcement. Activities related to each of these four elements will be necessary to ensure that Bloomington enjoys safe and convenient transportation. Strategic investments in multi-modal infrastructure will also enhance quality of life for the whole community.

GOAL 3.3: Achieve bicycle and pedestrian fatality rates of zero by 2023				
	ACTION	LEAD PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME	COST
3.3.a	Encourage citizen use of UReport mechanism to report safety issues	Planning & Transportation	2019	$
3.3.b	Adopt a Vision Zero Policy to signal commitment to zero safety incidents in the community[13]	Planning & Transportation	2020	$$
3.3.c	Develop schedule for improvements and implement at most dangerous intersections, as identified by the Bloomington Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization[14]	Planning & Transportation	2020	$$$*
3.3.d	Implement a 4 to 5 second vehicle traffic signal delay after pedestrian lights indicate "walk" so that pedestrians and cyclists have time to become visible before automobiles are given the green light[15]	Public Works, Utility Companies	2022	$$

GOAL 3.4: Achieve the Walk Friendly Communities Platinum level designation by 2022				
	ACTION	LEAD PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME	COST
3.4.a	Host a "Walking to Platinum" community summit to identify priority actions and opportunities to enhance walkability in Bloomington	Planning & Transportation, ESD	2020	$
3.4.b	Focus priorities for infrastructure investment using Walk Scores, Urban Village Center designations and socio-economic data	Planning & Transportation, ESD, Public Works	2020	$$$$*
3.4.c	Implement recommended projects in 2018 Transportation Plan to increase the miles of pedestrian pathways and sidewalks that support multi-modal transportation	Planning & Transportation, MPO, Public Works	2020	$$$$*

GOAL 3.5: Achieve the League of American Bicyclists Platinum Rating by 2022				
	ACTION	LEAD PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME	COST
3.5.a	Develop a new Complete Streets Policy and Design Guidebook[16]	Planning & Transportation	2020	$$$
3.5.b	Develop and implement a plan for improved lighting on bicycle paths	Planning and Transportation, Parks & Recreation	2020	$$$
3.5.c	Encourage people walking and bicycling to report lighting issues and maintenance needs and issues (i.e., pothole repair and debris removal) with the UReport app[17]	Planning & Transportation	2021	$
3.5.d	Increase safe and secure bicycle parking through covered parking and indoor options[18]	Planning & Transportation	2021	$$$
3.5.e	Increase the miles of bicycle facilities, including those recommended in the 2018 Transportation Plan and Transform 2040 Plan	Planning & Transportation, MPO, IU	2023	$$$$*

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Bloomington Transit (BT) was rated as an Outstanding Public Transportation System in North America in 2010.[19] Ridership increased by 60 percent from 2.06 million rides in 2004 to 3.3 million rides in 2017. BT has 14 different routes that generally run Monday through Saturday every 30 to 60 minutes, with more frequent buses for routes that serve the IU campus. Several regional buses also offer access to other Midwestern cities, including Chicago, Evansville, Hammond, Indianapolis, Kokomo, Lafayette, and Louisville from the BT downtown transit center.

Public transit scores for city neighborhoods on Walk Score are generally in the Car Dependent ranges of 0 – 24 ("almost all errands require a car") or 25 – 49 ("most errands require a car"), with an average transit score of 25.6. The Elm Heights neighborhood had the highest transit score of 41, while South Griffy had the lowest score of 13 (see Appendix B for scores in each of Bloomington's 56 neighborhoods). BT has expanded service to previously underserved areas, including the Arlington Park area and Clear Creek Shopping Center, and improved service through implementation of a live bus-tracker system that allows riders to track the location and anticipated arrival time of their bus on their cell phone.[20]

BT offers monthly "Way to Go" travel training sessions to individuals new to using the transit system. The BTAccess program offers door-to-

WHAT YOU CAN DO

✔ **Choose transportation options** that reduce carbon pollution, such as walking, biking, or public transit.

✔ **Report maintenance needs** on sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and roads to UReport.

✔ **Support transit, bike, and pedestrian accessibility** when reviewing proposed developments.

Public Library also partner with BT to provide free rides for employees. Local nonprofits can receive half-price tickets, up to a value equivalent to 2 percent of fare revenue.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transform 2040 plan calls for significant improvements and investments in public transit service, including daily service (7 days a week) with extended hours, holiday service, increased service frequency, expanded service routes, and accessibility improvements over the long term.[21] In the short term, efforts to increase the use of public transit will need to emphasize promotional efforts.

door services using specially equipped vans for individuals with disabilities; bike racks are installed on all BT buses; and bike racks and bike lockers are also available at the Downtown Transit Center.

Standard one-way BT bus fares are currently $1.00. Senior citizens (60 and older), K-12 students, and individuals with disabilities receiving public assistance are eligible for reduced price fares of $0.50. These rates are comparable to many of Bloomington's peer cities (Lawrence, Kansas; West Lafayette, Indiana; and Iowa City, Iowa) and lower than fares in Ann Arbor, Michigan and Columbia, Missouri. BT fares include free transfer to Rural Transit, which provides Express Route services to Ellettsville and Spencer and door-to-door services covering Monroe, Lawrence, Owen, and Putnam counties upon request. BT partners with IU to provide free travel for University students, faculty, and staff. The City of Bloomington, Monroe County government, and the Monroe County

Cyclists using Bike Project tool-share resources

GOAL 3.6: Increase the use of the Bloomington Transit system 5 percent by 2023, relative to a baseline of 3.3 million transit users in 2017				
	ACTION	**LEAD PARTNERS**	**TIMEFRAME**	**COST**
3.6.a	Expand "Way-To-Go" user-training program offered by BT and monitor participation rates[22]	BT	2018	$*
3.6.b	Assess Walk Score ratings for public transit for Bloomington's 56 neighborhoods to determine needed route improvements	BT	2019	$
3.6.c	Create a marketing campaign to minimize first-time user apprehension, such as online "how-to" guides for safe use of public transit, a mentor program to partner first-time transit users with experienced riders, and educational campaigns designed specifically for youth riders[23]	BT	2019	$
3.6.d	Make all youth tickets on BT free[24]	BT	2020	$$$*
3.6.e	Collaborate with employers to provide transit benefits programs that promote use of public transit[25]	BT, Major Employers, Chamber of Commerce, ESD, IU	2020	$$*
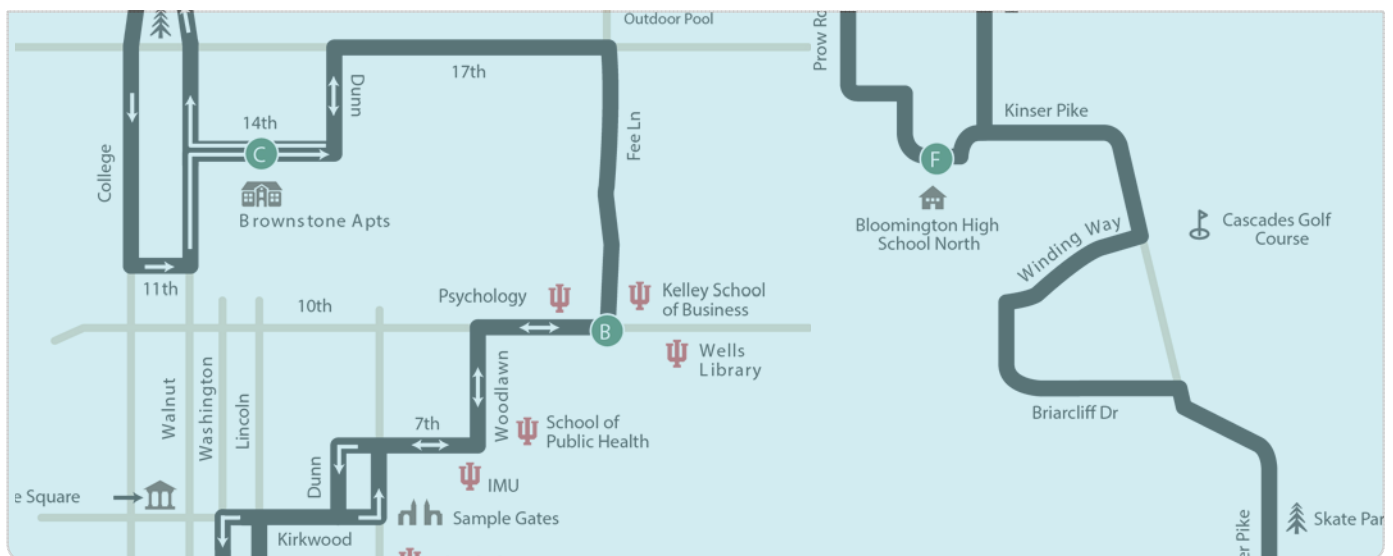
SUCCESS
Stories

BLOOMINGTON COMMUNITY BIKE PROJECT

The Bloomington Community Bike Project makes bicycling accessible for people of all ages and skill levels. Made possible by the Center for Sustainable Living, it takes donations ranging from whole bicycles to individual parts. Volunteers repair and re-assemble the bikes and distribute them to residents. Through the Earn-A-Bike program, cyclists work with volunteers to build their bikes from scratch and learn the skills necessary to maintain them. The Project is also a tools commons, available to every member of the Bloomington community during its open hours, so that anyone can learn how to fix their own bicycle.

BIKE SHARE

The Pace bike share program launched in June 2018. This collaboration between the City and IU reflects community commitment to safe and efficient cycling and offers one more sustainable alternative to travel by car. A total of 150 bikes were distributed around town, and users download an app to take advantage of on-demand bicycle transportation.

Notes

1. City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 90; STAR Community Rating System Version 1.2 (March 2015), 31.

2. STAR Community Rating System Version 1.2 (March 2015), 34.

3. City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 83.

4. Similar recommendation recommended in the City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 90; Bloomington Environmental Action Plan, 20; and in the SAP Climate Energy and Built Environment Working Group and SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

5. A similar recommendation was made during the SAP Climate, Energy, and Built Environment Working Group discussions

6. Similar recommendations were discussed during the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

7. City of Bloomington Housing Resources, Developing and Implementing an Affordable Housing Strategy for Bloomington, https://bloomington.in.gov/housing/affordable. A similar recommendation was discussed in the SAP Climate, Energy, and Built Environment Working Group discussions.

8. A similar recommendation was made during the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

9. A similar recommendation was made during the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

10. AAA, Driving Costs: How Much Are You Really Paying to Drive?, http://exchange.aaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Your-Driving-Costs-2015.pdf

11. 2018 City of Bloomington Transportation Plan, 19.

12. Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2014 Crash Report, https://bloomington.in.gov/sites/default/files/2017-12/2014%20Crash%20Report_2012%20to%202014_102615.pdf

13. Recommendation from the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

14. The Bloomington Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization identifies locations with most crashes. See for example https://bloomington.in.gov/sites/default/files/2017-05/crash_report_2008-2010.pdf.

15. This practice was implemented in Louisville, and helped reduce pedestrian accident numbers.

16. A similar recommendation was made in the 2018 Bloomington Transportation Plan, 50.

17. Recommendation from the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

18. Recommendation from the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

19. City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 71.

20. City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 71.

21. Transform 2040, 19.

22. Recommendation from the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

23. Recommendation from the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

24. Recommendation from the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.

25. Recommendation from the SAP Transportation Working Group discussions.