

## Section 7: Active Transportation

### What role should bicycles and pedestrians play in regional transportation?

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are an integral part of a future transportation system. As land use changes to more mixed development and as more of the population focuses on a healthier lifestyle, there is a growing need for alternatives to automobile travel. Demographic trends indicate that more people will desire the ability to walk or bicycle to destinations in the future. Incorporating bicycle and pedestrian elements into planned roadway and transit projects will allow these users full access to the system. And while bicycle and pedestrian facilities may not fully address the needs of people traveling regionally, the regional transportation system needs to accommodate and plan for these types of trips as they can complement regional rideshare and transit.

Nationally, funding for bike/ped programs has increased at a higher rate than general infrastructure funding over the past five years. From 1999 to 2010, spending on bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs rose from \$204 million to \$1,036 million nationally.<sup>1</sup> Within the 5-County region, many cities have created bicycle and pedestrian facilities that could serve as state-of-the-art examples. In Overland Park at the intersection of 95th Street and Antioch Road, a pedestrian connection between a building front and the sidewalk enhances the entrance of a shopping area, as does a pedestrian walkway across the property frontage and on-site.<sup>2</sup> In Lenexa, a pedestrian connection between a sidewalk and the crosswalk in a parking lot allows pedestrians to safely access an employment center.<sup>3</sup>

1 Federal Highway Administration, Office of Planning, Environment, & Realty, Bicycle & Pedestrian Program, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/bipedfund.htm>  
2 Google Map, 95th Street and Antioch Road, Overland Park, KS. <http://goo.gl/maps/yoXY>  
3 Google Map, Quivira Road and 85th Street, Lenexa, KS. <http://goo.gl/maps/4KUM>

And even in many small towns, the state highway is the commercial center of the town. People may walk or bike to that local destination if facilities are available.

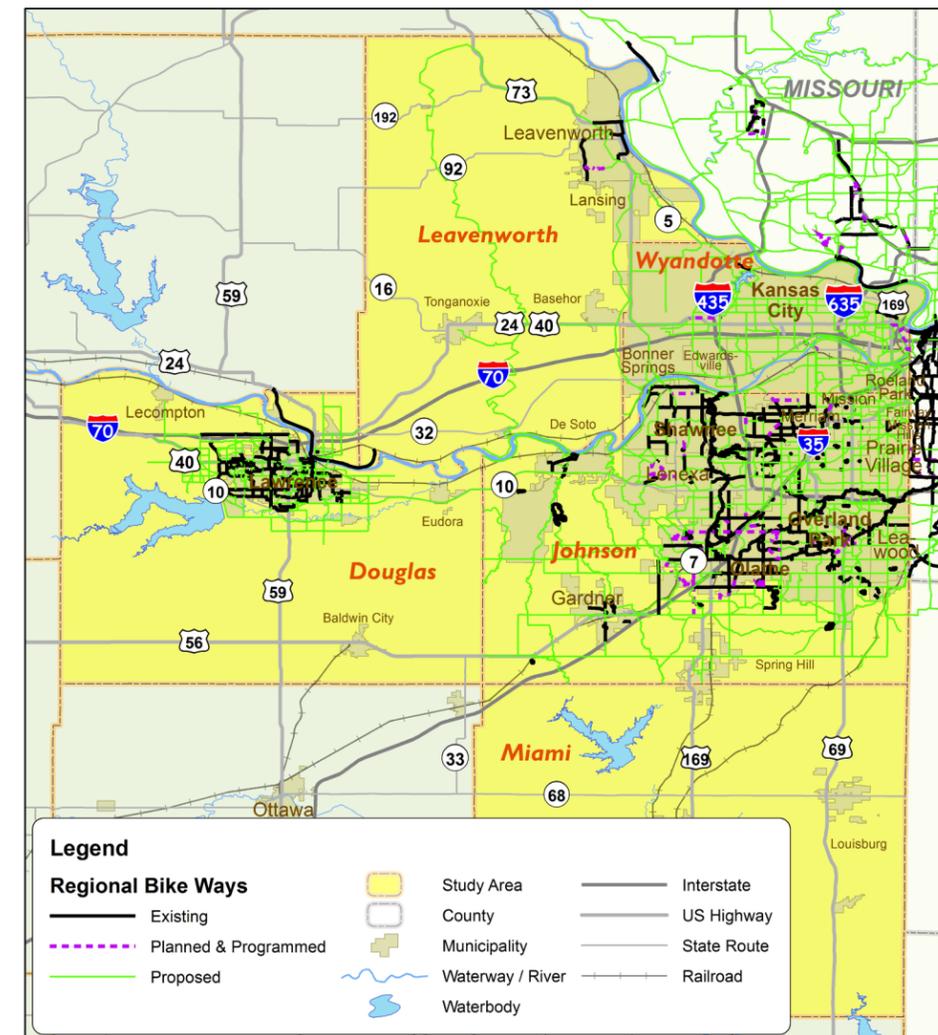
As major highway connections are widened and vehicle capacity is increased, bicycles and pedestrians may still need to cross those facilities, even if they are not using that facility. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) advises, “address the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors, as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists and pedestrians may not commonly use a particular travel corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. Therefore, the design of intersections and interchanges shall accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible and convenient.”<sup>4</sup>

“The decision not to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians should be the exception rather than the rule. There must be exceptional circumstances for denying bicycle and pedestrian access either by prohibition or by designing highways that are incompatible with safe, convenient walking and bicycling.”<sup>5</sup> Agencies should seek to “improve the conditions and opportunities”<sup>6</sup> for bicyclists and pedestrians on highways and transportation facilities where they are permitted and transportation facilities should be planned, designed and constructed with this in mind.

4 Federal Highway Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Program.  
5 Ibid.

6 Federal Highway Administration, Office of Planning, Environment, & Realty, Bicycle & Pedestrian Program, United States Department of Transportation Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/policy\\_accom.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/policy_accom.htm)

Figure 7-1: Existing, Planned and Proposed Bikeways and Trails



Sources: Kansas DOT, MARC, City of Lawrence, KS

Note: Lawrence bikeway data is draft pending MPO approval.



Current bicycle infrastructure in the 5-County region is focused in the City of Lawrence and a portion of Johnson County west of I-35 and south of I-435. This infrastructure includes both on-street bicycle route designation and off-street multi-use paths. Many facilities are orientated for recreational use rather than utilitarian or commuter use. The region has a need to remove bicycle travel barriers by facilitating additional connections across rivers and major highways. River crossings at I-435 and I-635 across both the Kansas and Missouri rivers are examples where bicyclists or pedestrians cannot cross.

Bicycle infrastructure planning and development in Johnson County, Wyandotte County and Leavenworth County are influenced by MARC's MetroGreen system. The system is a interconnected system of public and private trails, greenways, and natural areas linking communities. The trail types range from completely undeveloped in environmentally sensitive areas, to multi-use paved trails, and bike and pedestrian facilities in right-of-way.

Lawrence has an extensive bicycle network proposed throughout the city of Lawrence and reaching into Douglas County and along K-10.

Many of the roadways currently identified as bike routes could benefit from additional signage, striping, and shoulder improvements.

### Complete Streets

Complete streets refers to roadways that are designed for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. Sometimes called livable streets, these facilities are designed for safe travel along and across the road for users of all ages, abilities, and modes. Complete streets provide a range of benefits. They improve public safety by making walking and biking safer, and promote good health by promoting active transportation and connecting residents.

Complete streets provide economic benefits by creating attractive transportation corridors that make businesses more easily accessible and inviting. Environmental quality of the area is enhanced by complete streets through encouraging travel with lower greenhouse gas emissions, and by including green infrastructure that retains and treats

storm water runoff and reduces heat island effects.

In order to promote the building of complete streets within their communities, many local governments within the 5-County region are adopting Complete Street policies which encourage the integration of complete street principles and ideals into transportation policies, plans, and projects.

The 5-County region has been active in developing complete streets policies. A number of agencies and jurisdictions now have policies as reflected in Table 7-1. KDOT recognizes the importance of local complete street planning and is aware of the need for state highways to facilitate connectivity and support complete streets by not creating barriers to implementation.

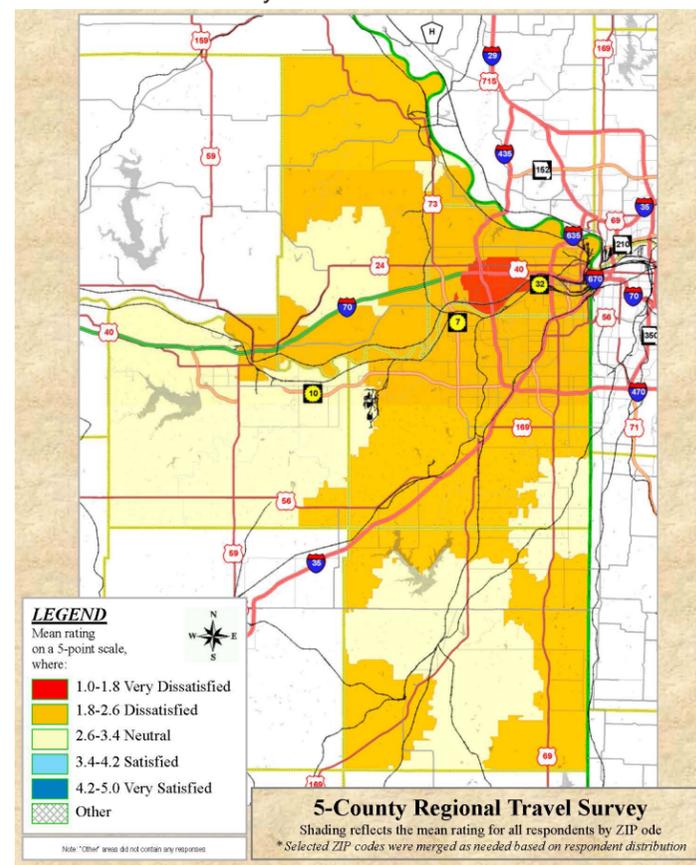
Table 7-1: Agencies and Jurisdictions with Complete Streets Policies

City of Leawood	5/16/2011	Resolution 3592
City of Overland Park	4/2/2012	Resolution 3919
City of Roeland Park	10/3/2011	Resolution 611
Johnson County	9/1/2011	Resolution 041-11
Unified Government of Wyandotte County/ Kansas City, Kan.	4/7/2011	Resolution R-22-11
State Resolution	2/23/2012	Resolution SR 1805
Lawrence-Douglas County MPO	9/15/2011	Approved resolution
City of Lawrence	3/27/2012	Approved policy
MARC	3/27/2012	Approved policy

## PUBLIC SATISFACTION WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF BICYCLE LANES AND FACILITIES IN THE 5-COUNTY REGION

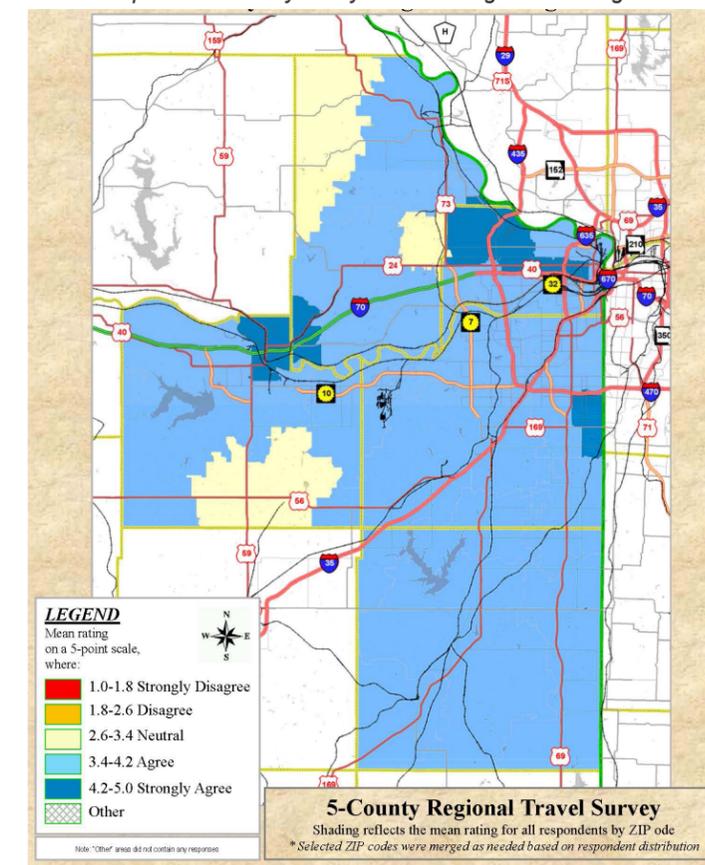
As part of Phase 1 of the 5-County Study, a random sample of residents in the study area responded to a survey regarding issues and opportunities related to transportation planning for the region. Figures 7-2 and 7-3 show the results of two survey questions. The survey was conducted in the Spring of 2009. A major finding was that one part of the region's transportation system that residents were least satisfied with was the availability of bicycle lanes and facilities.

Figure 7-2: Level of satisfaction with the availability of bicycle lanes and facilities  
Please rate your satisfaction with the availability of bicycle lanes and facilities



Source: 5-County Regional Transportation Study Phase 1 Survey

Figure 7-3: Level of agreement that transportation projects should promote healthy lifestyles  
Please rate your level of agreement transportation projects should promote healthy lifestyles like biking and walking



Source: 5-County Regional Transportation Study Phase 1 Survey