

SCOPE OF WORK

August 10, 2021

To: Mayor Kessler

Organization: City of Bexley

From: Catherine Girves

Project: Bicycle Friendly Bexley

Re: Recommendations

Bexley is well positioned to become one of the most bicycle friendly communities with the highest ridership in the region.

Bexley is a manageable 2.5 square miles with relatively flat topography. The approximately 48 miles of public roadway is primarily made up of low speed neighborhood streets. It is possible for residents to get daily needs met within the city. There are preschools, public and private schools to serve students from kindergarten through high school, and Capital University. Bexley has well supported parks, recreational facilities, and a library. The business community includes numerous restaurants, grocers, and a variety of other retail establishments including a bike shop. There are many places of worship representing a variety of faith traditions. A variety of housing types are available at many different price points, including market rate home ownership and rental, subsidized rental, and group living facilities.

Employment is available within the city boundaries and one of the largest employment centers in the region, Downtown Columbus, is within an easy bike or bus ride. That area is connected to another significant employment center, the University District by way of the Olentangy Trail and high frequency transit. Healthcare, including three world class hospitals are a short bike or bus ride outside the city limits.

There are also external supports for residents of Bexley choosing to travel by bike. High frequency transit travels through the community and each vehicle has racks for 2 bicycles. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission provides a free insurance program that will pay for a cab ride, including tip, home from work up to four times/year for people commuting by bike or other sustainable means of transportation who have an unexpected emergency. AAA provides a bicycle break down service as part of its regular membership. CoGo bike share has three bike share docking stations in Bexley that connect to a larger regional network and include standard bikes and pedal assist e-bikes. CoGo bike share offers membership at a variety of levels including one that is accessible to people with low income.

Elected leadership is supportive of bicycle friendly initiatives. Volunteer community leaders advocate for the creation of a bicycle friendly community. Children lobby for more bike parking. Many regular residents, of all ages and abilities, already regularly travel by bike.

This does not mean change will be easy. Creating a bicycle friendly community in a national and regional environment built for car travel and in a culture that regularly shames people who don't drive will not be easy. But the City of Bexley has a history of bold leadership, persistently working to address impediments, and succeeding at hard tasks.

Between the fall of 2019 and the spring of 2021, amidst many distractions, leaders and residents of Bexley dedicated time and creativity to imagine and plan for a more bicycle friendly community. Clearly creating a more bicycle friendly is a priority. Bexley is well positioned to succeed at becoming one of the most bicycle friendly communities in Central Ohio with the highest ridership in the region.

Infrastructure Recommendations

Investments in infrastructure have been shown to influence the behavior of people driving, the comfort of people biking, and the real and perceived safety of all road, sidewalk, and trail users. The goal of these infrastructure recommendations is to increase safety and comfort of all who currently bike and those who are interested in biking who don't currently feel comfortable doing so.

Create Four Bicycle Boulevard Routes

Bicycle Boulevards are streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give people traveling by bicycle priority. Bicycle Boulevards use signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures to discourage through trips by motor vehicles and create safe, convenient bicycle crossings of busy arterial streets. More information on bicycle boulevards is available here <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/bicycle-boulevards/>

The following routes cover approximately 8 miles (16% of Bexley streets) on low stress streets connecting residents to common destinations in Bexley including all public schools, the library, parks, affordable housing, and to travel directly to or within a short block of primary business districts.

Cassingham/Roosevelt route

- Cassingham Road from Delmar Drive to Fair Avenue
- Fair Avenue (both sides) from Cassingham Road to Roosevelt Avenue
- Roosevelt Avenue from Fair Avenue to Livingston Avenue
- Incorporates a loop around the school complex along Elm Avenue from Cassingham Road to Stanwood Road; and Stanwood Road from Elm Avenue to Fair Avenue

The Cassingham/Roosevelt route is 2.6 miles and runs the entire north/south length of Bexley. The route includes Cassingham Elementary, the Middle and High Schools, and is within a .4 mile of Broad Street destinations including Columbus School for Girls, several places of worship and an apartment complex. The Cassingham/Roosevelt route crosses Broad Street, Main Street, and Livingston Avenue at existing traffic lights. This route intersects with the Maryland route, the Sherwood route, and the Sheridan/Mound route.

Sherwood route

- Sherwood Road (entire length) from Gould Road to Drexel Avenue
- Drexel Avenue from Sherwood Road to Bryden Road
- Bryden Road from Drexel Avenue to Westland Avenue
- Westland Avenue from Bryden Road to Park Hill Drive
- Park Hill Drive to the Alum Creek Trail on ramp
- with a spur at Remington Road from Sherwood Road to Mound Street

The Sherwood route is 1.4 miles and runs the entire east/west length of Bexley. This route travels directly to Montrose Elementary, the Alum Creek Trail, and parallel to the Main Street business corridor. The addition of wayfinding signs at Parkview, Drexel, Dawson, Cassady, Cassingham, Remington, Roosevelt, and Gould would facilitate easy travel from this route to Main Street businesses. This route intersects with the Maryland route, Sheridan/Mound route and the Cassingham/Roosevelt route. This route also connects Bexley to downtown Columbus (via the Oak Street Bike Blvd); the Jewish Community Center (via the Alum Creek Trail); and regional recreational riders (via the Alum Creek Trail) to the Main Street business corridor. The Sherwood route includes crossing at the existing Main Street traffic light.

The addition of a drinking fountain/bottle fill station, bike fix-it station, and a larger wayfinding sign including a map of the Main Street business corridor placed at Park Hill would encourage Alum Creek Trail travelers to patronize Bexley businesses and accommodate residents.

The comfort of traveling this route would be improved by adding a bike lane on Drexel Avenue.

Sheridan/Mound route

- Sheridan Avenue (entire length) to Main Street
- Mound Street (entire length) from Sheridan Avenue to Chelsea Avenue
- with a connection to the Sherwood route via Main Street from Sheridan Avenue to Drexel Avenue, and Drexel Avenue from Main Street to Bryden Road

The Sheridan/Mound route is 1.8 miles and runs north/south in South Bexley and east/west parallel to the Main Street business corridor. This route travels directly to destinations at Schneider Park (shelter house, playground, community gardens and athletic fields), Capital University, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Montrose Elementary, and five apartment complexes as well as affordable housing on Ferndale Place and Mayfield Place. The Sheridan/Mound route includes existing traffic lights at College Avenue, Drexel Avenue and Livingston Avenue.

The addition of wayfinding signs at College, Pleasant Ridge, Euclaire, Cassingham, Montrose, Remington, Vernon, Roosevelt, Grandon, and Chelsea would facilitate easy travel from this route to Main Street businesses. This route includes two CoGo bike share stations and intersects with the Sherwood route and the Cassingham/Roosevelt route.

The comfort of traveling this route would be improved by adding a bike lane on Drexel Avenue and a bike lane or sharrows on Main Street.

Maryland route

- Cassady Avenue from the Railroad tracks to Maryland Avenue
- Maryland Avenue (entire length) from Gould Road to Parkview Avenue
- Parkview Avenue from Maryland Avenue to Main Street
- Main Street from Parkview Avenue to Sheridan Avenue
- Clifton Avenue from Parkview Avenue to the Alum Creek Trail

The Maryland route is 2.5 miles and runs the entire east/west length of Bexley. This route includes the Cassady business corridor, Maryland Elementary, Commonwealth Park destinations at Jeffrey Park (Jeffery Mansion, Historical Society, swimming pool), the Alum Creek Trail, and Cassady North Apartments. This route includes the existing traffic light at Cassady and Maryland, as well as traffic lights to cross Broad Street, Main Street, and Nelson Avenue. This route includes a CoGo bike share station and intersects with the Cassingham/Roosevelt route and the Sherwood route.

It also connects to common destinations west, south, and north of the City of Bexley. Downtown Columbus is accessible via the Greenway Avenue bike lane/Mt. Vernon traffic calming/Spring Street bike lane. The Jewish

Community Center is accessible via the Alum Creek Trail. This route connects to the Nelson Road bike lanes. Connections north are coming via the City of Columbus multi use path planned for Cassady Avenue.

The comfort of traveling this route would be improved by adding a multi-use path on Cassady Avenue and a bike lane on Main Street.

Alum Creek Trail

There is a need for surface maintenance on the section of the Alum Creek Trail that runs through the City of Bexley between Broad Street and Clifton Avenue. Tree roots have destabilized the asphalt, creating trip hazards and an uneven surface. Other jurisdictions with longer components of trail in the Central Ohio Greenway system have experience with this type of maintenance and could be a resource for solutions.

Three additional BIG IDEAS also emerged related to the Alum Creek Trail.

Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge

There is interest in creating improved access from south Bexley and a better connection between the Main Street business corridor and the Alum Creek Trail. This could be achieved by investing in a bicycle/pedestrian only bridge across Alum Creek south of Main Street. The bridge would connect Bexley on the east side of the bridge to a portion of the Alum Creek Trail in Columbus on the west side of the bridge. This would require a partnership with the City of Columbus.

Underpasses at Main Street and Livingston Avenue

The Alum Creek trail has an underpass at Broad Street but crosses at the street level at both Main Street and Livingston Avenue. Both these crossings are signalized but people on bikes compete with frequent motor vehicle turning activity on each end of these wide and loud intersections. Ideal improvements would include an underpass option of these streets, though the Main Street crossing could also be improved in the short term with a better alignment. Both projects fall outside of Bexley's city limits. There is interest in supporting the City of Columbus in considering these efforts.

Main Street

Main Street is approximately 50' wide destination-rich business corridor with buildings fronting the sidewalk and street. It is also a high frequency transit route, and a U.S. Route connecting the cities of Bexley, Whitehall, Reynoldsburg, and Columbus. Main Street has one regular travel lane each direction, one parking/travel in lane each direction and medians in the center lane. The parking lane typically has at least some car parking though is rarely full. Low car travel speeds make Main Street somewhat comfortable for experienced bike riders to travel alone as well as some small groups.

Bike lanes in this corridor could dramatically improve the comfort level for people riding bikes, but the appetite to remove on street parking does not currently exist. The business community has concerns that the loss of on street car parking would reduce the number of customers. Research from other communities has found that corridors where bike lanes are added experience increases in sales, (as measured by sales tax revenue).

A few conservative first steps to improving the bike friendliness of Main Street include:

Bike Parking

Increasing bike parking in the public right of way to accommodate people already willing to travel Main Street by bike. If demand increases beyond the capacity of the sidewalk, on street bike parking is an option which allows a single on street car parking space to accommodate 10 bike parking spaces.

Sharrows and “Bike May Use Full Lane” Signs

Adding sharrows and “Bike May Use Full Lane” signs to the regular travel lane. The coupling of these tools reinforces the legitimacy of bicycle traffic on the street to motorists and recommends proper lane position for riders. Research shows sharrows also reduce sidewalk riding, encourage riders to travel in a visible and predictable lane position, reduce crashes caused by people opening car doors into the path of people on bikes, and encourage safe passing behavior. This solution sends a cue to drivers, riders, and law enforcement, that bikes belong on Main Street.

Open Streets

In intermediate step would be to test the idea that accommodating people who ride bikes increases customers to businesses. This could be done through a monthly Open Streets program for one or two seasons. Open Streets look like special events but are often led by local governments and partners to accomplish policy goals like creating a culture that supports active transportation and bringing new customers to local businesses. Partnerships with the Bexley Area Chamber and other community organizations as well as a strong evaluation tool would be important components of an Open Street program designed to test the viability of bike infrastructure. If accommodating people who bike can be shown to be beneficial for businesses in the Main Street corridor, concerns about removing on street parking to accommodate bike lanes on Main Street could greatly diminish.

Broad Street

Broad Street is approximately 50’ wide primarily residential corridor with large lots. It is also home two private school campuses, and three large places of worship. Most building setbacks fall between 50’-100’ with several buildings set back 200’ from the street. It is a high frequency transit route, and a U.S. Route connecting the cities of Bexley, Whitehall, Reynoldsburg, and Columbus. Broad Street has one regular travel lane each direction, one parking/travel lane each direction, and medians in the center lane. Sharrows are placed in the parking/travel lanes closest to the sidewalks. Broad street is lined with mature trees on both sides and young trees in the relatively newly installed medians.

The parking lane is often underutilized, and Broad Street has more capacity than it needs. These conditions induce higher travel speeds and encourage the corridor to function as a cut through particularly when traffic is reported to be congested on the freeways. Broad Street is loud and stressful for even the most experienced bike riders who typically ride in the underutilized parking lanes.

Community interest was mixed in making significant investment in the bike friendliness of Broad Street during the community engagement process. It should be noted that the street design of Broad Street is almost the same as Main Street, though land use is dramatically different. A combination of the lack of destinations and some hopelessness that anything could improve conditions for people biking may explain those with low interest. Some residents were passionate about making improvements to improve bike friendliness. Those residents indicated a preference for a multi-use path on one side of the street. If this treatment were considered, thought about how to address the many driveways in the corridor would need to be considered to address those intersections. The current sharrows are faded. If they remain, they need to be repainted and consideration should be given to moving placement those outside the parking lane to the regular travel lane and adding “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs to the corridor. Broad Street begs for traffic calming.

Broad Street is a regional corridor and ideally would be considered in a regional context. When thought about in a regional context, Broad Street might be an ideal priority corridor for dedicated transit or bike lanes through multiple jurisdictions. This would address missing east/west connectivity for those modes for the region and assist with needed traffic calming in the City of Bexley.

Drexel Avenue

Drexel Avenue between Broad Street and Main Street is a wide corridor with traffic calming initiatives planned in the next few years. Reducing travel lanes and the width of travel lanes for motor vehicles has been shown to reduce travel speeds and increase comfort for people riding bikes. Bexley has installed medians with tall vertical elements on Main Street and Broad Street which are also being considered on this corridor. Protected bike lanes are another option that would not only calm traffic, but also directly accommodate people biking.

The case for protected bike lanes includes a dramatic improvement in how comfortable people would feel riding bikes on Drexel Avenue. There is plenty of right of way to add bike lanes without having to consider widening the street or reducing travel lanes. Bike lanes on Drexel could eventually be extended to connect to Cassady Avenue which has a multi-use path planned for construction in the Columbus portion just north of Bexley. This would connect the Main Street business corridor to a wider audience of potential customers and employees traveling by bike.

The primary case against bike lanes is the loss of on street automobile parking. It would no longer be possible to park cars on both sides of the streets. On street parking appears to be highly underutilized by residents, though the Columbus School for Girls drivers regularly use of on street parking with significant activity happening during school drop off and pick up times. Other on street parking options are available in the blocks surrounding the school. Additionally, over 200 underutilized parking spaces exist in three surface parking lots within .5 mile of Columbus School for Girls during school hours. Half a mile is a 10-minute easy walk, or a 2 to 5-minute easy bike ride. Over 150 spaces can be found at two public parks: Bexley's Jeffery Park and Columbus' Wolfe Park. A bike share station is co-located at the lot at Jeffrey Park. If the primary impediment car parking for Columbus School for Girls, one potential solution is to create shared use agreements that allow the use of idle spaces.

A temporary demonstration project may be an ideal way to evaluate the impact of medians, protected bike lanes, or a combination of medians and typical bike lanes, on Drexel Avenue. Temporary demonstration projects are an intermediate step allowing community members and leaders to understand how a new street design might work before committing permanently to the change. The advantages and disadvantages to each configuration need to be more closely examined

Cassady Avenue

Cassady Avenue could be considered for a multi-use path to connect bike accommodations from the City of Columbus to the City of Bexley, particularly if bike lanes on Drexel Avenue and or Main Street are considered. Beyond increasing the comfort for people traveling by bike within Bexley, this would connect the Main Street business corridor to a wider audience of potential customers and employees traveling by bike.

Corridor Planning

Transit corridor planning examining regional east/west connections is currently underway. As Bexley leadership is engaged in this process, the impact of the comfort level of people biking on or across potential corridors should be prioritized. The interaction of transit with biking as a first or last mile solution will be an important factor in determining whether Bexley residents' access to these sustainable forms of transportation or whether transit functionally passes through the community.

Bicycle Scale Wayfinding Signs

Bicycle scale way finding signs would assist residents and visitors traveling on low stress streets and trails to destinations on the Main Street business corridor. Recommended locations include a connection from the Alum Creek Trail, and connections from two of the bicycle boulevards, specifically:

- Park Hill at the Alum Creek Trail – A tailhead style map with Main Street destinations highlighting bicycle friendly businesses, public restrooms, and public locations to refill water bottles.
- Sherwood Road cross streets with Main Street destinations on either side of that cross street
 - Parkview Avenue
 - Drexel Avenue
 - Dawson Avenue
 - Cassady Avenue
 - Cassingham Road
 - Remington Road
 - Roosevelt Avenue
 - Gould Road
- Mound Street cross streets with Main Street destinations on either side of that cross street
 - College Avenue
 - Pleasant Ridge Avenue
 - Euclaire Avenue
 - Cassingham Avenue
 - Montrose Avenue
 - Remington Road
 - Vernon Road
 - Roosevelt Avenue
 - Grandon Avenue
 - Chelsea Avenue

Fix-it Stations

Fix-It Stations assist residents and visitors with minor fixes by providing tools and pressurized air. Recommended locations include:

- Schneider Park
- Bexley high school middle school complex
- Bexley library
- Bexley swimming pool
- Park Hill at the Alum Creek Trail – In addition to accommodating local residents, a fix it station at this location would give regional trail users encouragement to stop. This connected to wayfinding signage to the Main Street business district would increase patronage at local Bexley Main Street businesses.

STOP Signs and Speeding

Concerns about STOP sign and speeding behavior was frequently in the community engagement process.

There is a perception that both people driving and people biking do not comply with STOP signs. The observed behaviors might be an indication of unwarranted or too many STOP signs which have been shown to discourage good driving habits. Studies have shown that when STOP signs are overused or are located where they don't seem to be necessary, some drivers become careless about stopping at them. Further, research has shown that

STOP signs are not effective at controlling speeds between intersections. Some drivers increase speed between STOP signs making neighborhoods more dangerous. This can be especially dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists who may have a false sense of safety from the existence of a stop sign. More information on problems related to unwarranted STOP signs can be found here:

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/other_topics/fhwasa09027/resources/lowa%20Traffic%20and%20Safety%20FS-%20Unsignalized%20Intersections.pdf

An overall examination of the use of STOP signs may be needed to evaluate existing STOP signs with consideration of other traffic control measures to address speeding like road diets, bump outs, or traffic circles.

Bike Parking

Increased bicycle parking was frequently requested in meetings and observed as a community need. Specifically, the need for increased availability, improved rack design, and better placement. An excellent, free, and short guide to bicycle parking can be found here <https://www.apbp.org/Publications> This link also has more detailed resources about bike parking available to purchase.

Availability

Adequate bike parking is necessary to encourage travel by bike, reduce theft, and prevent bikes from being locked to trees or other infrastructure that may be damaged. Locations reported to have inadequate bike parking include the: middle school and high school, Main Street business district, library, pool, City Hall, Jeffrey Mansion, recreation areas, and Cassady business district. As the need for bike parking increases beyond the capacity of the sidewalk, on street bike parking corrals replace a single car parking space with 10 bike parking spaces.

Design

Install bike racks that allow the frame of the bike to touch at two points. This creates a more stable position and reduces the possibility that a bike will fall into the right of way causing trip hazards, damaging bikes, and creating a messy appearance. This is particularly important for cargo bikes or other bikes that carry heavy loads like groceries or children. Racks that allow a lock to be attached to the frame (vs a tire) also improve security of a locked bike and reduce theft.

Placement

Placement – Place racks in visible, convenient locations, assure proper clearance of frame and tires, and place on stable surfaces. Travelers need to be able to predict where bike parking is to use it. Ideal locations are near entrances to buildings in locations that don't impede right of way of pedestrians, particularly people using walkers, wheelchairs, or strollers. Placing racks in a visible location can also reduce chance of theft. When placing bike racks assure appropriate clearance. Racks placed too close to walls or other street furniture inhibit the full use of the rack on one side or prevent the bike from being locked to the frame. Finally, make sure racks are placed on a stable surface. Racks placed in mulch or grass, lead to erosion creating unsafe and unpleasant muddy spots to park bikes.

Bike Parking Installation Program

Some communities have bike parking installation programs to meet public demand and assure appropriate design and placement. Business owners or residents make requests for bike rack locations. The city purchases the racks then places them on a quarterly to annual basis.

Special Event

Finally, special event bike parking should be considered to encourage people to ride to large community events like the annual Fourth of July celebration, Main Event, Harvest Festival, and Bexley High School sporting events.

Special event bike parking is temporary parking that is typically fenced and staffed to provide security. A local non-profit, Urban Scouts, can be hired to handle this, or the City of Bexley could invest in equipment and supplies and coordination of staffing.

Encouragement and Education Recommendations

Creating safe streets is important component of a bicycle friendly community but educational and encouragement campaigns also have a role to play. Educational and encouragement campaigns are effective tools for influencing community norms around what type of people ride a bicycle, what purposes they ride them for, and what locations and weather conditions are considered appropriate. To be effective, these campaigns need dedicated leaders. Programs can be operated by paid staff, interns, volunteers, or a combination, but consistency is necessary for success. Investment in equipment and supplies as well as insurance and training are other keys to program success. Education and Encouragement campaigns can also typically be instituted much more quickly than street infrastructure changes.

Children

Significant interest was shown in campaigns designed to serve children and families. The public elementary schools, the middle and high school, as well as the two private schools are within easy biking distance of every household in Bexley.

Encouragement

Encouragement ideas included campaigns to incentivize walking, skating, scooting, or riding a bike to school at least one day week. Campaigns that address parental concerns around time spent with children particularly as it relates to busy schedules will be important to the success of these programs. Parental concern about safety was also identified as a barrier to children biking. Encouragement campaigns like “biking school busses” led by parents or other adult volunteers help to assure safe passage for younger riders.

Education

Educational campaigns around safe riding practices, particularly experiential education, can be effective at increasing parents’ comfort with allowing children to ride to school and other places. Other types of educational content include dressing appropriately for various types of weather and solutions for carrying books, paper, and electronics in wet weather. This type of information assists with adoption of biking as a year-round activity. Incorporating bike rides into the school curriculum or as part of field trips is another way to model and encourage safe riding practices in all types of weather.

Policy

Setting a policy to create car free school zones for 45 minutes before and after school or no stopping zones where that is not possible, were also discussed as a way of discouraging parents from driving children to and from school. Significant culture change or charismatic leadership would be necessary for successful adoption of this type of policy to be successful at this time.

Adults

Encouragement

Encouragement campaigns give people a reason to ride and are important to creating a culture that normalizes biking to move from one place to another. Campaigns can focus on creating group experiences or incentivizing people to act on their own. Activities that community members showed interest in included:

- Fun weekly or monthly recreational bike rides that travel at an easy conversational pace accessible to people of a variety of abilities, with all types of bikes, and wearing their typical wardrobe. Ride themes, days of the week, time of day, and the demographics of leadership all influence the likely populations attracted to rides. Identify priority populations and engage people with those demographics to assist in planning and implementation to reach prioritized audiences. These types of rides provide outstanding opportunities for informal education among participating riders. They also help change cultural norms among both participating riders and those who observe them.
- Social media games like “photo tag” or “bicycle ride and seek” encourage people to ride on their own for fun. Increased solo riding helps to influence cultural norms among riders and those observing them.
- Social media campaigns like “show us your grocery trip” encourage people to try new activities by bike and learn from the experience of others.
- Movie nights with fun inspirational films curated by organizations like “Filmed by Bike” or book discussion groups can be helpful in connecting the bike-curious to others currently riding.
- A Mayor’s challenge ride could create friendly competition between communities to encourage cultural norms around biking. Who doesn’t want to see Mayor Kessler vs Mayor Maggard vs Mayor Ike vs Mayor Ginther?
- Bexley Bike Festival to celebrate all things biking and to invite bike people from outside of Bexley to see all that is great about living, working, and playing in Bexley.

Education

Educational bike rides teach safe riding practices and are effective at helping people interested in riding but concerned about safety increase confidence and competence biking under current conditions. Leaders and images that break stereotypes of who belongs on a bike are particularly effective at inviting new riders onto bicycles.

Transportation Demand Management

Transportation demand management campaigns have been led by workplaces, health departments, communities, and metropolitan planning organizations to increase biking or other forms of active transportation to regular destinations. Both the Columbus Health Department and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission are piloting transportation demand management campaigns and may offer support or resources to consider a similar campaign in Bexley.

Bicycle Friendly Business Programs

Bicycle Friendly Business programs are run by some communities to encourage bike travel by residents and to invite visitors as an economic development tool. Even low-cost simple programs can be effective at inviting new customers to businesses. Basic components include marketing through city and chamber websites, trail head signage, static clings on participating business windows, and earned media. At a minimum, participating businesses offer bike parking, water bottle refills, and access to toilet facilities. Some businesses also have tire pumps and patch kits available for people experiencing flat tires or provide discounts to people who bike.

Given the Alum Creek Trail’s proximity to the Main Street business corridor, a bicycle friendly business program has the potential to increase traffic to local businesses from regional trail users and bicycle tourists looking for places to rest and refuel. The Alum Creek Trail is an increasingly active regional attraction, part of a north/south connection from the Ohio River to Lake Erie, and part of a regional corridor being built across the United States. Installing a drinking fountain and fix it station visible from the trail along with signage that promotes local businesses could attract people using the trail into Bexley to spend money. Additional promotional opportunities are available through multiple bicycle tourism sources.

Drivers

There was little interest in campaigns targeted at driver behavior during this process. Driver behavior may be most effectively managed by addressing the street infrastructure.

Policy Recommendations

A variety of recommendations in this document could be augmented through changes in policy or code including fixed bicycle parking, special event bicycle parking, and car free school zones.

Other policies to increase bike friendliness and safety might include: 20 is Plenty, examination of snow removal policies, Idaho stop/Delaware yield, bicycle subsidies and abandoned bicycle removal policies.

Further examination beyond this document should be given to the maintenance and infrastructure in the blocks in the southwest and northeast corners of Bexley. Maintenance in the form of street sweeping and street signs are not consistent with the rest of the community. Infrastructure design separates the southwest corner from the larger community grid and sidewalks are missing in the northeast corner. Households in those blocks have bikes parked outside and may be more likely to need bikes as a mode of transportation for economic or developmental reasons. Equitable infrastructure and maintenance in these areas is necessary for these Bexley residents.

Evaluation Recommendations

Evaluation tools are important in understanding the actual impact of most interventions. Good evaluation tools are also useful in helping the general public to understand reasons for or against investment in making temporary infrastructure projects permanent. Evaluation tools can influence private investment in educational and encouragement programming and determine whether these programs are a good use of public dollars. A component of each intervention will be well served by an evaluation tool that guides decision making and investment.

Background on the Process to Develop Recommendations

In 2017 the Mayor of Bexley and the leader of the local bike advocacy group began talking about planning for a more bicycle friendly Bexley. By the fall of 2019, the process for understanding existing conditions, researching best practices, and gathering community expertise was designed. Public involvement was prioritized as a mechanism to drive this process. The recommendations in this document are the product of those efforts.

Public involvement began at the October 30, 2019 Green Bexley's sustainable transportation event at City Hall. By January of 2020 a steering committee was convened and met four times between January and November of 2020 to guide the process. Three publicized public meetings were hosted by Mayor Kessler, one at the Bexley Public Library in February of 2020, and two virtual meetings (November of 2020 and March of 2021). Additionally, stakeholders representing a diverse set of constituencies were invited to participate in five small group bike rides. An additional community bike ride open to the public was hosted in the fall of 2020. These planned interactions were supplemented by dozens of informal conversations with people who provided valuable input into this process. All those interactions combined represent 152 unique participants

The youngest active participant was in Kindergarten, the oldest are folks in their 70's and 80's. Quite a few middle schoolers participated, but most of the feedback came from adults - parents, working people, people looking for work, and retirees. Some participants have lived in Bexley their whole lives. Others have lived in a variety of places including some of the most bicycle friendly cities in the world.

Many participants already ride bikes and represent the spectrum of riders from recreational slow rollers, fast riders who love the long hilly Pelotonia route, and everyday people who are just trying to get to the places required in daily life. Many participants want to ride bikes in Bexley but are prevented by a real or perceived barrier. Drivers

also provided input – both those who ride bikes and those who don't. A small group of participants included people not at all interested in riding.

Participants were evenly split between men and women. Most participants represent white residents of Bexley, though several Black men and women who regularly ride in or through Bexley participated and offered feedback about their experiences riding bikes in Bexley. This document includes the best thinking of all who generously engaged in this process.

These recommendations are designed to serve all who live, work and play in Bexley, though the children of Bexley and the residents of south Bexley were identified as priority populations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Catherine Girves". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Catherine" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Girves".

Catherine Girves | Senior Planner

TOOLE DESIGN

149 N. High Street | Columbus, OH 43215

cgirves@tooledesign.com | 614.407.9122 x459