

Opportunities to Increase **Walking and Bicycling** Edina, Minnesota

Local policy initiatives play a pivotal role in promoting the health of a community, including supporting active transportation options such as walking, rolling, and biking. A variety of policy options are available to help residents of all ages and abilities make active transportation a part of their daily lives. This document provides an overview of Edina’s municipal ordinances, policies, and plans impacting the active transportation system, and provides recommendations for improving access to active transportation through Edina’s comprehensive plan update, as well as future plans and code amendments.

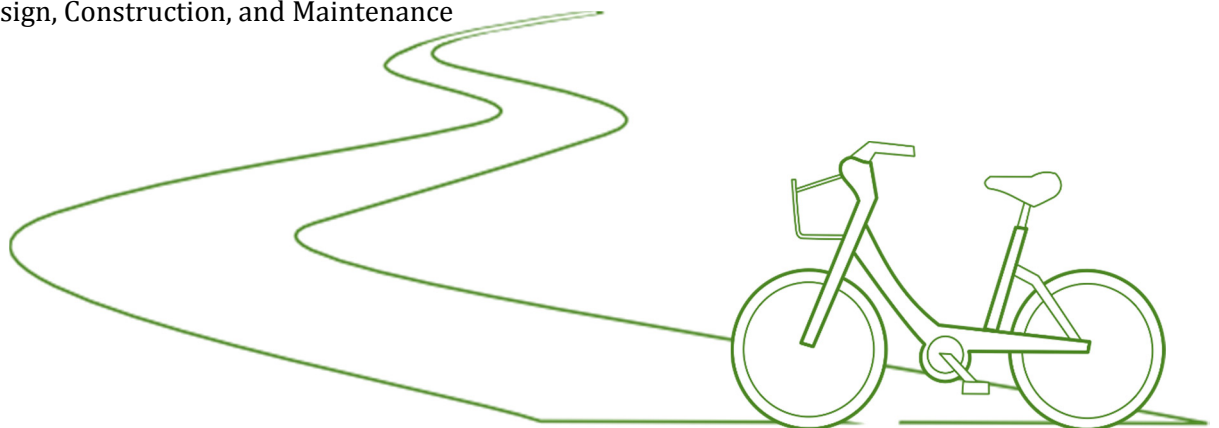
Edina’s policies primarily impact the active transportation system in the following areas:

- Active Transportation Policies and Plans
- Land Use and Local Zoning Designations
- Bicycle Parking
- Traffic Calming
- Municipal Recognition Programs

STATE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

A number of Minnesota state laws impact active transportation and how bicyclists and pedestrians move throughout the state and the authority municipal governments have to regulate certain areas. Areas impacted by state law include, but are not limited to:

- Signage
- Funding Transportation Facilities
- Speed Limits
- Pedestrian and Bicyclist Rights and Responsibilities
- Accessibility Standards for Individuals with Disabilities
- Design, Construction, and Maintenance



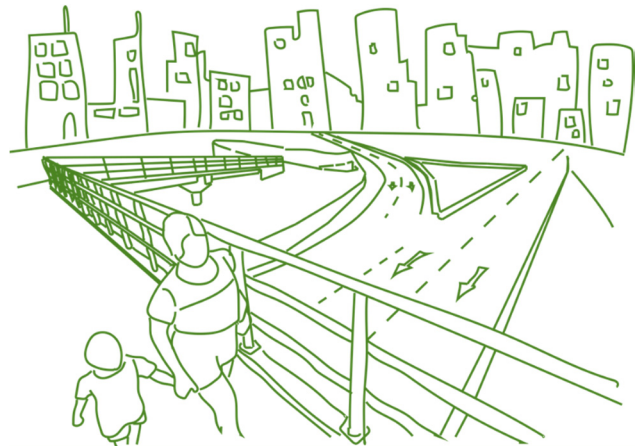
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

Active Transportation Policies and Plans

Edina promotes active transportation by maintaining a citywide network of sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. Edina's Living Streets Policy lays the groundwork for fulfilling the city's Living Streets vision by including specific implementation steps, performance measures, and benchmarks.¹ The Living Streets Plan and Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plans act as the primary implementation arms of this policy by establishing design guidelines and community engagement processes, as well as recommending specific bicycle and pedestrian network improvements.² Finally, Edina's municipal code provides requirements for sidewalk construction.³

Opportunities to improve Edina's active transportation policies and plans include:

- Guide land use and transportation sections of the Comprehensive Plan according to the visions and recommendations established in the Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan and Living Streets Plan.
- Designate specific departments or staff members accountable for implementation, performance measurement, and progress toward Living Streets benchmarks.
- Monitor trends or changes in sidewalk and trail construction over time.
- Evaluate the impact of any cases in which property owners would be assessed for street reconstruction costs not covered by the PACS fund. Explore options to reduce or mitigate property assessment costs in cases of resident financial hardship.

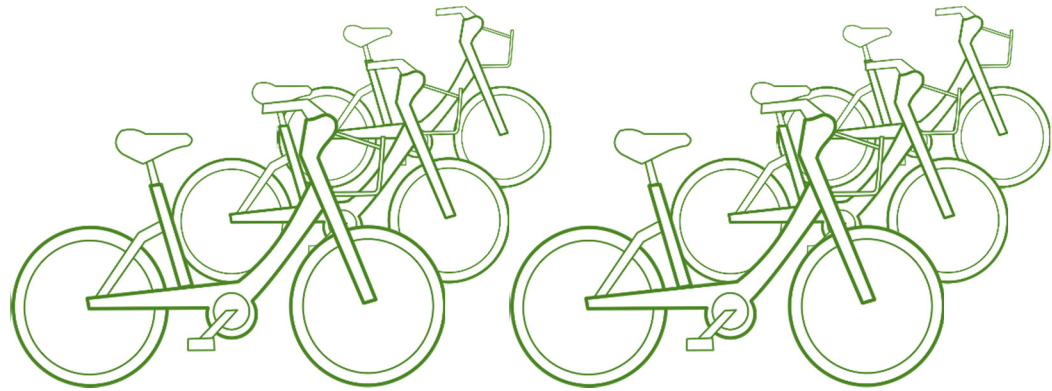


Land Use and Local Zoning Designations

In addition to transportation infrastructure, land use patterns impact the pedestrian environment by determining what destinations are available within walking or biking distance, the number and variety of available destinations, and the distance between destinations. For example, if the only buildings within a quarter-mile of a resident's home are other homes, they can't easily walk or bike to the store, work, school, or any other daily destinations. Zoning ordinances can make residents more likely to choose active transportation options by:

- Conditionally permitting duplexes and accessory dwelling units in R-1 residential districts.
- Exploring options for permitting accessory dwelling units.
- Implement a Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District, with design standards to improve bike and pedestrian accessibility.⁴
- Providing incentives for office developments that provide changing space and showers for bicycle commuters.

- Reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements where appropriate to avoid an oversupply of off-street parking and encourage more efficient use of space.
- Assessing benefits of a code amendment allowing residential uses in some commercial zoning districts (similar to Bloomington’s §21.302.02 Residential Uses in Commercial Zoning Districts).



Bicycle Parking

Secure and easily accessible bicycle parking facilities are a much-needed amenity for residents considering biking as an alternative to driving. Edina currently requires nonresidential developments with 20 or more required spaces to include bicycle racks.⁵ Opportunities to improve the availability of bike parking in Edina include:

- Amend ordinance to require bike parking at multi-family residential developments.
- Assess bike parking availability near destinations where it isn’t currently required by ordinance, such as schools and small businesses.
- Expand bike parking requirements as recommended in the Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan:
 - Tailor parking requirements by land use type.
 - Specify requirements for both short-term and long-term (overnight) parking.



Traffic Calming

In areas where traffic speeds are too high for the surrounding context, traffic calming measures may be necessary to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists. Traffic calming devices such as speed tables, bulb-outs, or traffic circles help to reduce traffic speeds, making the area safer and more welcoming to pedestrians and cyclists.

Opportunities to improve Edina's traffic calming policies include:

- Allow PACS funding for traffic calming improvements.
- Assess feasibility of funding through PACS or other sources in cases where an assessment would impose financial hardship on the benefitting residents.
- Explore additional opportunities for reducing traffic speed, such as narrower lane widths, roadside trees, and reducing the speed limit to 25 mph for eligible streets.⁶

Municipal Recognition Programs

Various nonprofit and governmental organizations offer recognition programs to municipalities to incentivize progress and recognize achievement in areas such as bicycle/pedestrian-friendly design, aging in place, or environmental sustainability. Recognition programs provide external incentives for improvement, metrics for evaluating progress, and guidance from subject matter experts, which can ultimately help cities improve policies and resident outcomes.

Opportunities for Edina to promote active transportation through recognition programs include:

- Continue to participate in Minnesota GreenStep Cities and complete the remaining two of five steps.⁷
- Participate in the Walk Friendly Communities program, administered by the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center.⁸
- Join the Network of Age Friendly Cities, administered by AARP.⁹
- Contact Smart Growth America to request that Edina's Living Streets Policy be included in their annual nationwide evaluation of Complete Streets Policies.¹⁰

¹ City of Edina Living Streets Policy.

² City of Edina Living Streets Plan. (2015); City of Edina Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan. (2007).

³ Edina, Minnesota, Code of Ordinances Sec. 36-1274. - Sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities.

⁴ An example of the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District can be found in the Minneapolis City Code. See Minneapolis Code of Ordinances Ch. 551, Art. II: Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.

⁵ City of Edina Municipal Code §36-1274

⁶ MINN. STAT. §§169.14, Subd. 2. Speed Limits; §169.011, Subd. 64. Residential roadway; §160.263, Subd. 4. Speed on street with bicycle lane.

⁷ Minnesota GreenStep Cities. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/index.cfm>

⁸ Walk Friendly Communities. <http://walkfriendly.org/about/>.

⁹ AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>.

¹⁰ Smart Growth America. (2017). *The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2016*.