



MT. VERNON
ILLINOIS
BICYCLE
MASTER
PLAN

IN-PROGRESS

Existing Conditions, Survey Results, Routes to Study

November 13 , 2023

Note to Readers:

This 'Existing Conditions Report' is the first deliverable (product) in the process of developing the Bicycle Master Plan. It represents the end of the first phase of the planning process. This document focuses on:

- Community Engagement
- Existing Conditions
- Routes to Study

This report should be considered an "In-Progress" document and will be updated and edited, as needed, for inclusion in the draft and final master plan. The intent of this document is to provide a foundation of existing conditions.

Future deliverables include:

- Draft Bicycle Master Plan (Spring 2024)
- Final Bicycle Master Plan and Grant Application (Late Spring 2024)

Updates during the planning process are available at:
www.MtVernonBikePlan.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mt. Vernon City Council

John Lewis, *Mayor*
Ray Botch, *Councilman*
Joe Gliosci, *Councilman*
Donte Moore, *Councilman*
Mike Young, *Councilman*

Mt. Vernon City Staff

Mary Ellen Bechtel, *City Manager*
Nathan McKenna, *Assistant City Manager*
Kendra Donoho, *Executive Assistant*
Matt Fauss, *Public Works Director*
Brad Ruble, *City Engineer*
Chelise Bray, *Parks*
Angela Schrum, *Tourism Director*

Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development Commission

Mt. Vernon Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee

Bill Beck
Joe Fatheree
Patrick Keyser
Michael Lenz
Stephanie Mings
Monika Najselova
Carrie Nelson
Desiree Stumpf
Ryan Swan
Tara Swan
Robert White
Tyler Wishau

Planning Team

The i5Group

Stephen Ibendahl, ASLA, AICP
Katie McLaughlin

Oates Associates

Jody Shaw, P.E.

Round Table Design

Kevin Phillips, P.E.

Who Benefits from Bike Facilities



No Way, No How

No desire to bicycle at all!



Interested but Concerned



You enjoy bicycling, but are nervous about riding in traffic. You prefer bike trails and bike facilities separated from traffic.



Enthused and Confident



You are comfortable riding in traffic, but prefer facilities like bike lanes.



Strong and Fearless



You ride in all types of traffic, regardless of whether there are bike facilities.

The majority of bicyclists (especially new bicyclists) fall within these two categories of "Interested but Concerned" and "Enthused and Confident". Bike facilities play a crucial role, not only in terms of functionality but also in creating a welcoming and inviting environment.

Advisory Committee

The role of the bicycle master plan Advisory Committee is to act as a sounding board for the planning team in providing feedback on existing conditions, potential routes and destinations, and plan recommendations.

The Advisory Committee is meeting three times during the planning process. Meeting dates included:

Meeting #1: July 18, 2023

Meeting #2: November 15, 2023

Meeting #3: TBD



Above: Advisory Committee meeting #1 on July 18, 2023

Stakeholder Meeting and Council Work Session

The planning team held a stakeholder meeting and City Council work session on August 30, 2023. The stakeholder meeting was held at 2:30pm and included representatives from the Mt. Vernon Police Department, Mt. Vernon Fire Department, Cedarhurst Center for the Arts, Historical Village, Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation, and the Housing Authority of Mt. Vernon.

The City Council work session was held at 4:00pm and included attendance by members of the public.

The primary objective of both meetings was to offer an overview of the bicycle master plan process, raise awareness about the plan survey, and solicit input on potential destinations, preferred routes, and any existing barriers or challenges to biking in Mt. Vernon.

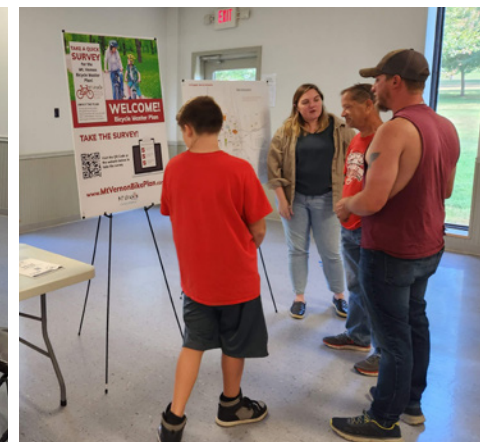


Above: City Council work session for the bicycle master plan on August 30, 2023.

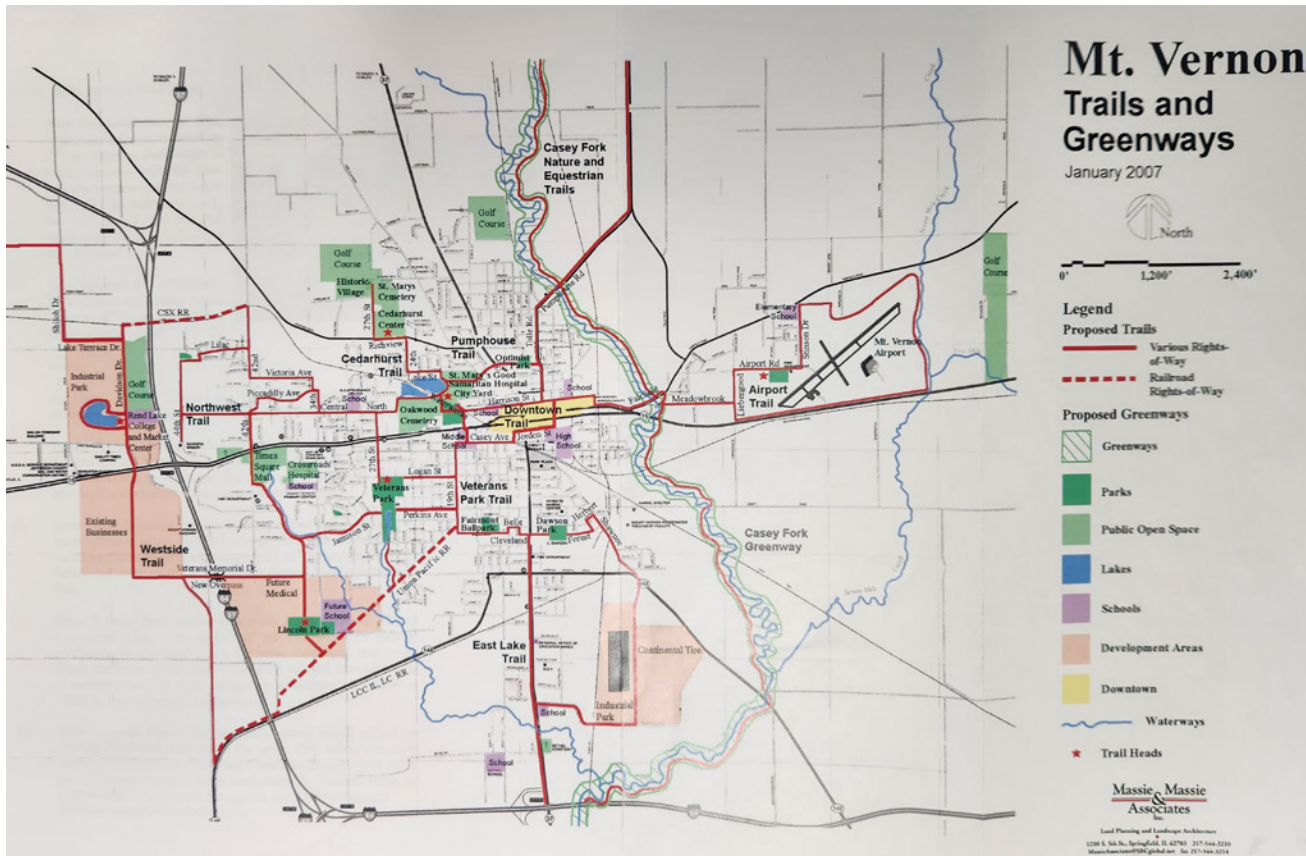
Open House #1 at Mt. Vernon Market Days

The planning team had a bicycle master plan booth at Mt. Vernon Market Days on Saturday, September 9, 2023 from 8:00 am - 2:00pm. The Market Days booth was in lieu of a traditional open house or public meeting.

Market Days is Mt. Vernon's premier flea market and vendor fair, taking place on the first Saturday of every summer month at Veteran's Park. Participating in the Market Days event provided the planning team with a unique opportunity to engage with a diverse range of local residents and visitors. During the event, the planning team had the chance to discuss the bicycle master plan, promote the survey, and gather valuable input regarding potential destinations and preferred routes.



Past Plans: 2007 Mt. Vernon Area Comprehensive Plan for Trails and Greenways



The 2007 Mt. Vernon Area Comprehensive Plan for Trails and Greenways was a very broad, high level assessment of trail and greenway opportunities in and near Mt. Vernon.

The plan did a good job in looking at broader connections including to Rend Lake and utilizing the Casey Fork creek as a greenway.

However, the plan did not include any analysis of right-of-way widths or property ownership. The plan also did not include substantial community engagement. The plan recommended further research, planning, and engagement.

Elements of the 2007 plan are suitable to carry forward as part of the routes to study during this current planning process. Elements include: connections to Rend Lake, Casey Fork Greenway, and the airport loop.

Community Bike Master Plan Survey

An online community wide survey to gain input for the bike master plan took place from early August 2023 to September 30, 2023.

Key Take Aways from the Survey

Potentially Large Segment of "Potential" Riders

Over half of respondents are "Interested but Concerned" and almost half only bike "a few times a year" or "hardly ever." Combined with almost three out of every four respondents that they would bike more if "There were more bike facilities separate from the street (shared use path / multi-use trail)," this suggests that there is a large untapped segment of Mt. Vernon's population that are desiring to bike.

Strong Consensus on Priority Destinations and Preferred Streets

The survey revealed a clear hierarchy of priority destinations and streets. Notably, respondents emphasized parks, with a particular focus on Veterans Park, and Cedarhurst as their preferred destinations. Understanding the preferred streets for both present and future biking is helpful for the corridor route analysis.

Strong Consensus on Desirability of Shared-Use Paths

The survey reinforced the desirability of shared-used paths. This wasn't surprising as it was the preferred bike facility type in listening sessions. However, the survey further solidified the objective of prioritizing shared-use paths whenever feasible.

We Can't Overlook Commuters and Non-Traditional Riders

Although a relatively small portion of survey respondents (10% for each option) indicated "commuting" or "running errands" as their primary biking reasons, it's important to emphasize the significance of planning for commuters and non-traditional riders. This includes individuals who might be cycling due to lacking a driver's license or not owning a vehicle.

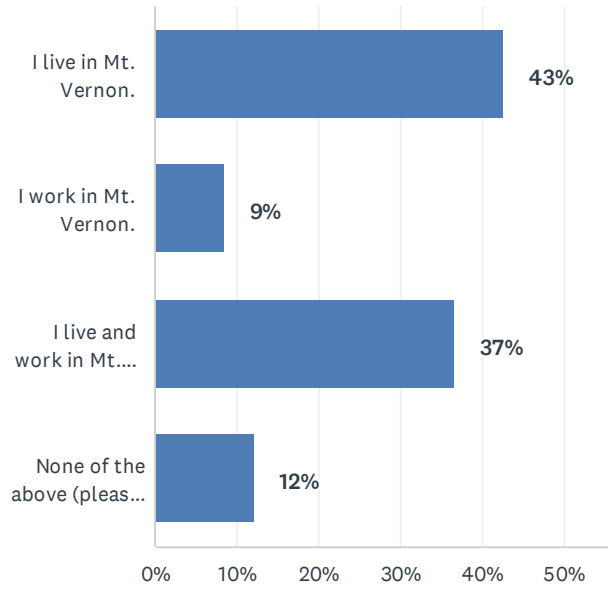
Importance of Full Width Bike Lanes

Numerous respondents expressed concerns about bike lanes being too narrow. Lanes that are less than 5 feet wide and with a longitudinal joint at the curb and gutter can pose challenges for bicyclists. Although street width limitations often restrict the possibility of wider lanes, an important aspect of the planning process should involve a thorough understanding of the distinction between "bike shoulders" and full-fledged "bike lanes."

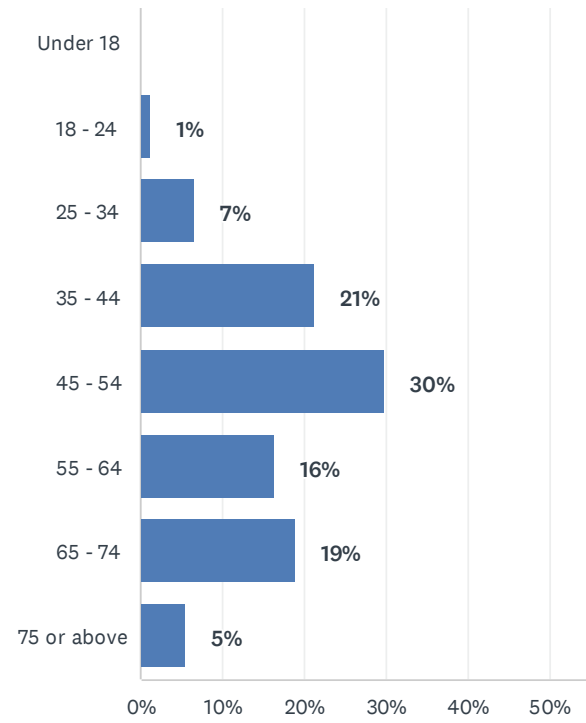
Rend Lake as a Destination

While the scope of the planning process is focused on the city limits, it is important to understand connectivity beyond the City. The survey clearly indicated the desirability of connecting to Rend Lake as a destination.

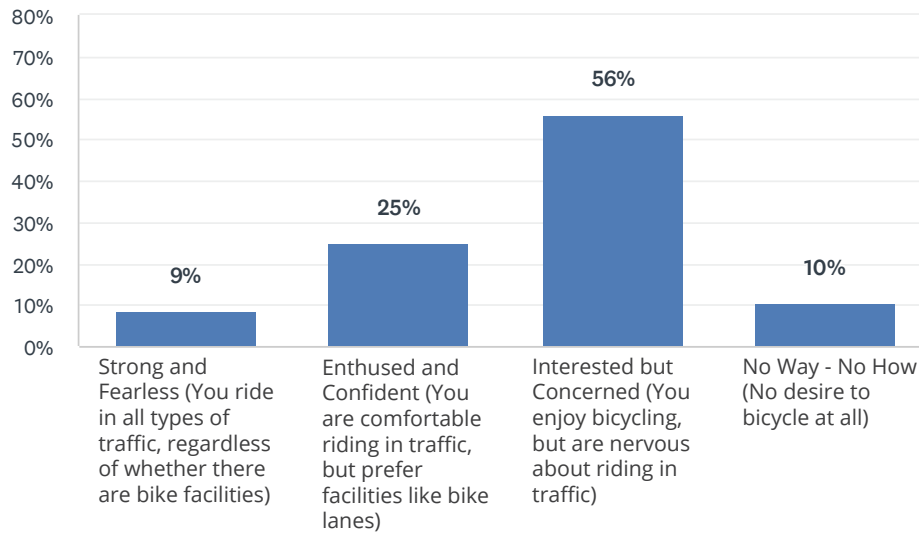
Q1. Choose what best describes you? (choose one)



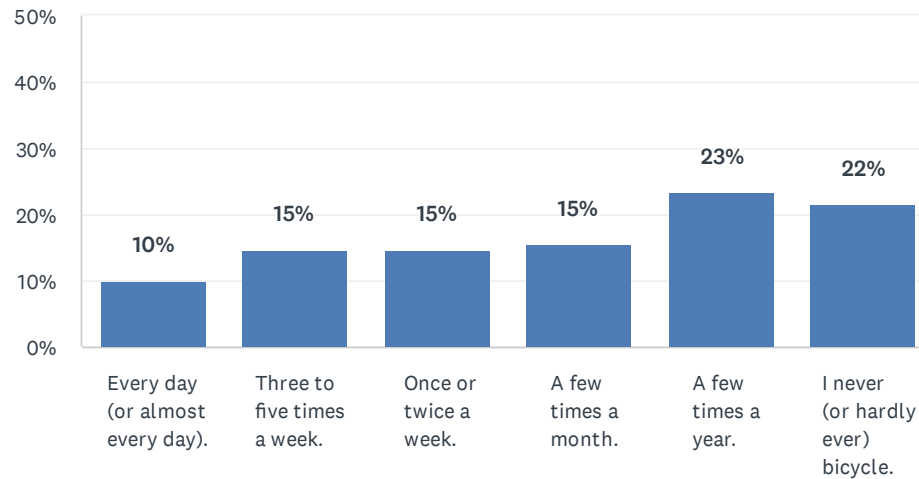
Q2. What is your age?



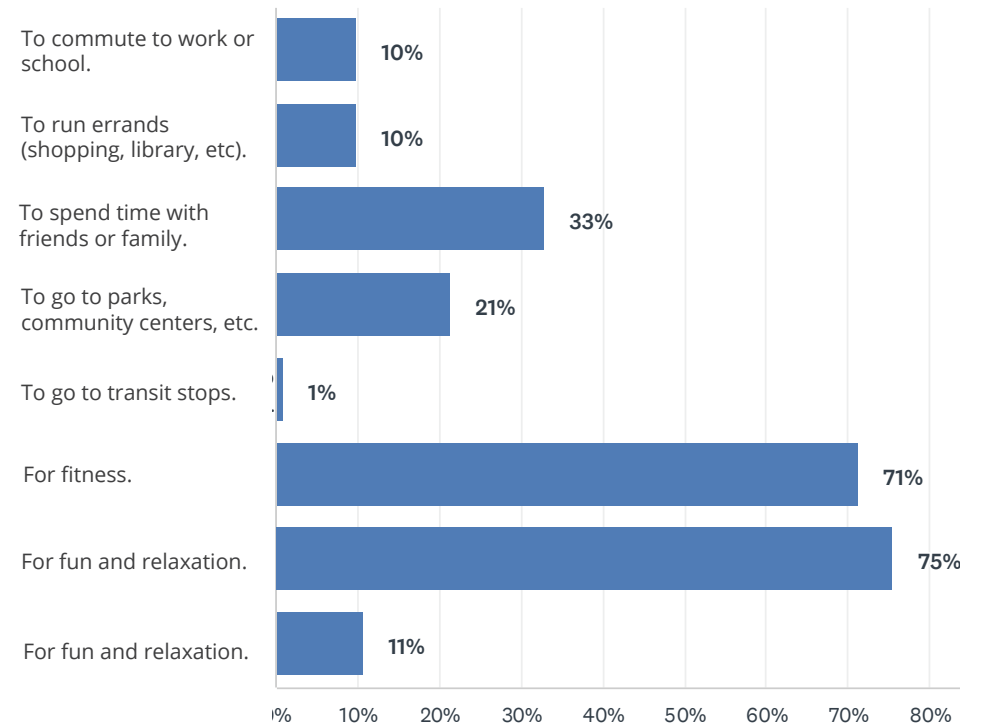
Q3. What best describes you as a bicyclist? (choose one)



Q4. How often do you currently bicycle? (choose one)



Q5. Why do you bicycle now? (choose one)



Q6. What are your top 3 biking destinations within the City? (List up to three)



Cedarhurst and city parks were by far the two top biking destinations mentioned in survey responses. Of parks, Veterans Park was the top destination. Although there was a clear hierarchy of top destinations, the word cloud shows the diversity of responses from around Mt. Vernon including workplaces (Continental Tire), shopping (Kroger, Broadway, Walmart), and entertainment (restaurants).

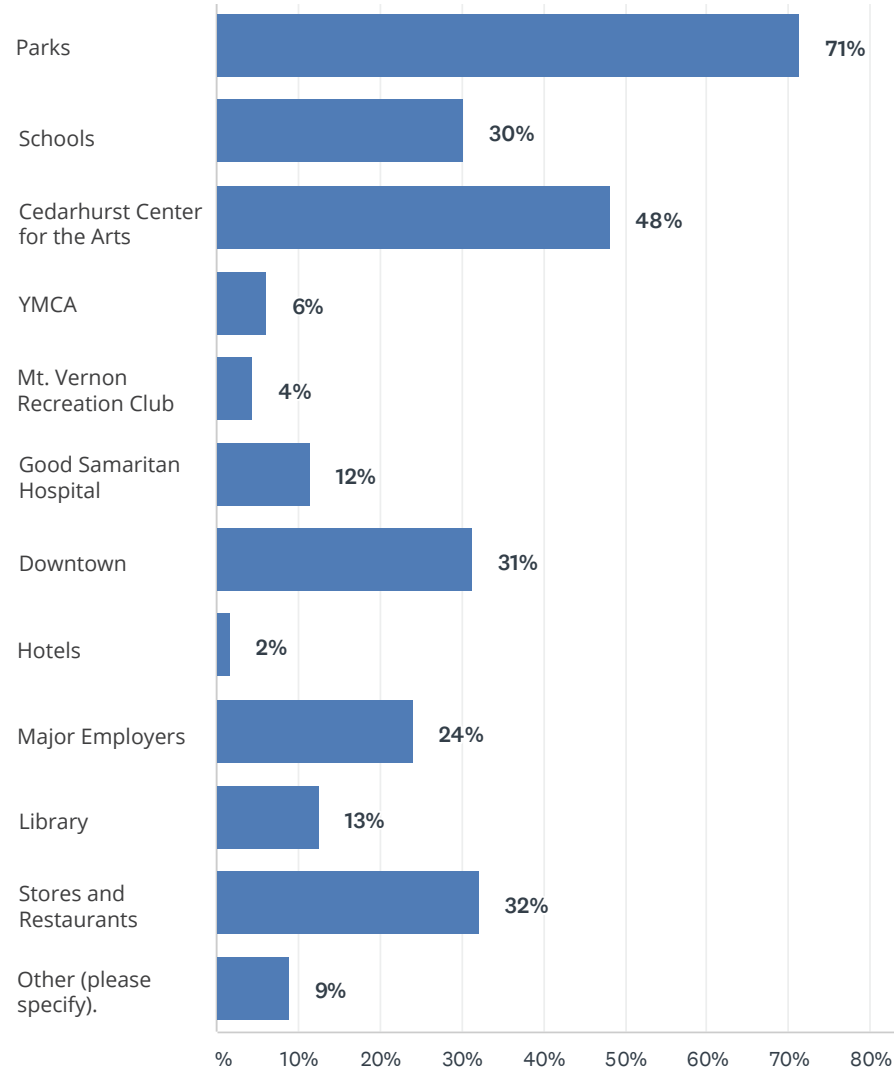
Q7. What are destinations outside of the City limits that you bike from the City (or would like to bike)? (List up to three)



Rend Lake was by far the top biking destination outside the city. Remember that the question included "...or would like to bike," so Rend Lake is more of a desired destination as opposed to a current destination.

Other destinations mentioned were Jaycee Lake and surrounding communities.

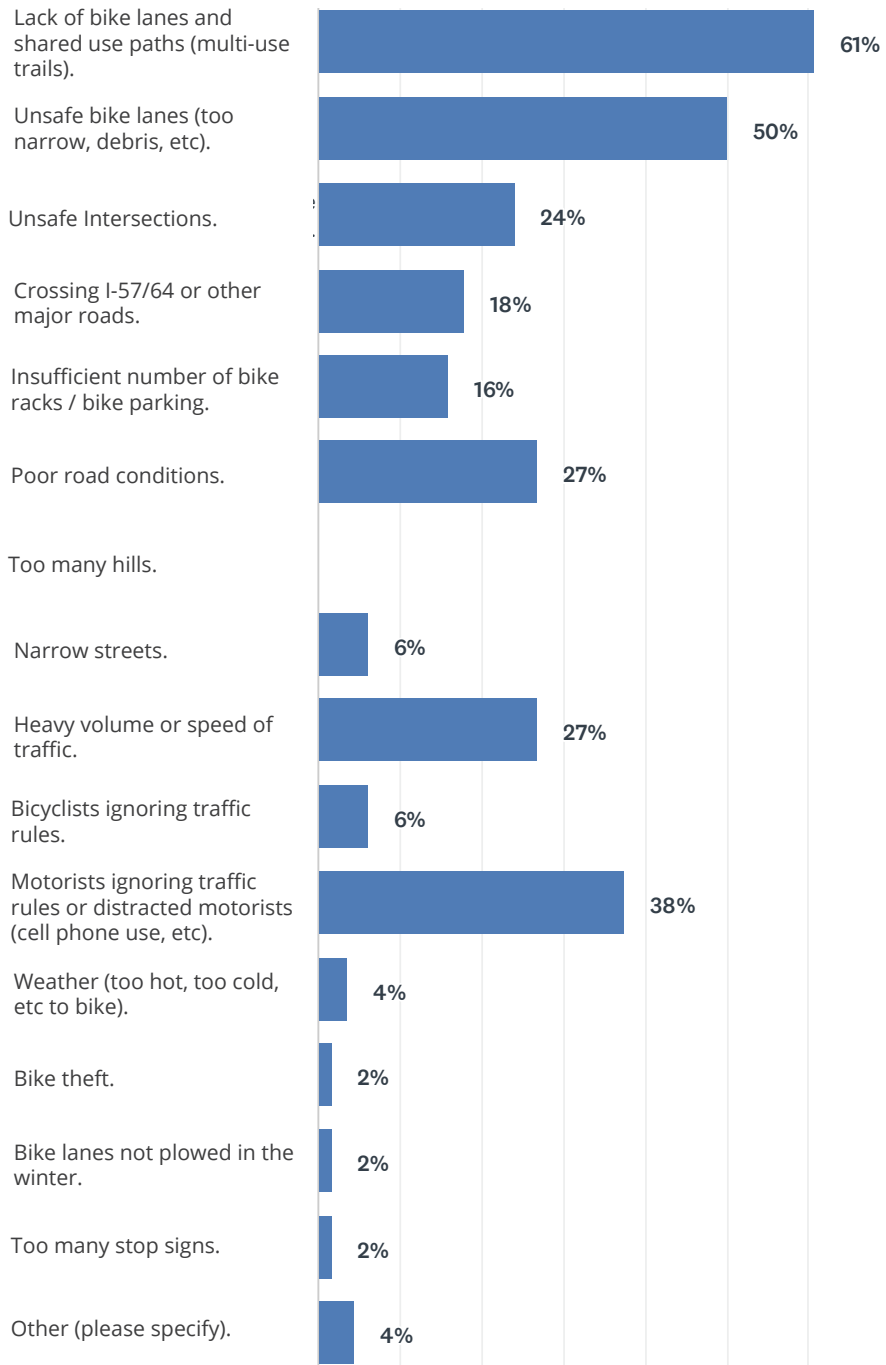
Q10. What are your top three priorities for destinations in the City that future bike facilities should connect? (Choose up to three)



Other responses:

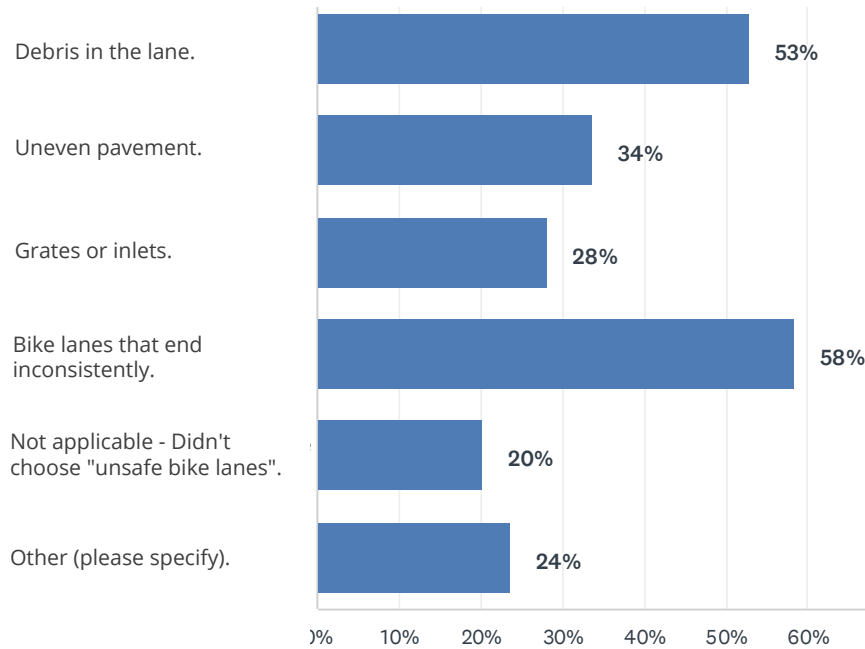
- Stowe, Vermont has the best bike trail I've ever seen. It connects to beautiful scenery, great restaurants, downtown, and parks.
- Crossroads Hospital too.
- Rendlake College- it would be amazing for the Higgs cool to be connected to Rlc through trails.
- Cedarhurst is #3; Library and Downtown would be #4 and #5 and the YMCA and Schools next
- We should have sidewalks or bike lanes on every street. Not just south town!
- Rend Lake
- Safe places to bike without fear of traffic.
- Continental tires
- Access for people to bike to work - Continental Tire, Walgreens
- Would be very nice to see a bike path that loops around (encircles) the whole city. Then use cut through roads to split it (i.e. 42nd & 34th Streets) & get to destinations within the city. Everything now is disconnected/disjointed.

Q11. What are the top three challenges to biking in Mt. Vernon? (Choose up to three)



Q12. If you chose "unsafe bike lanes" in the last question, what makes the bike lanes unsafe?

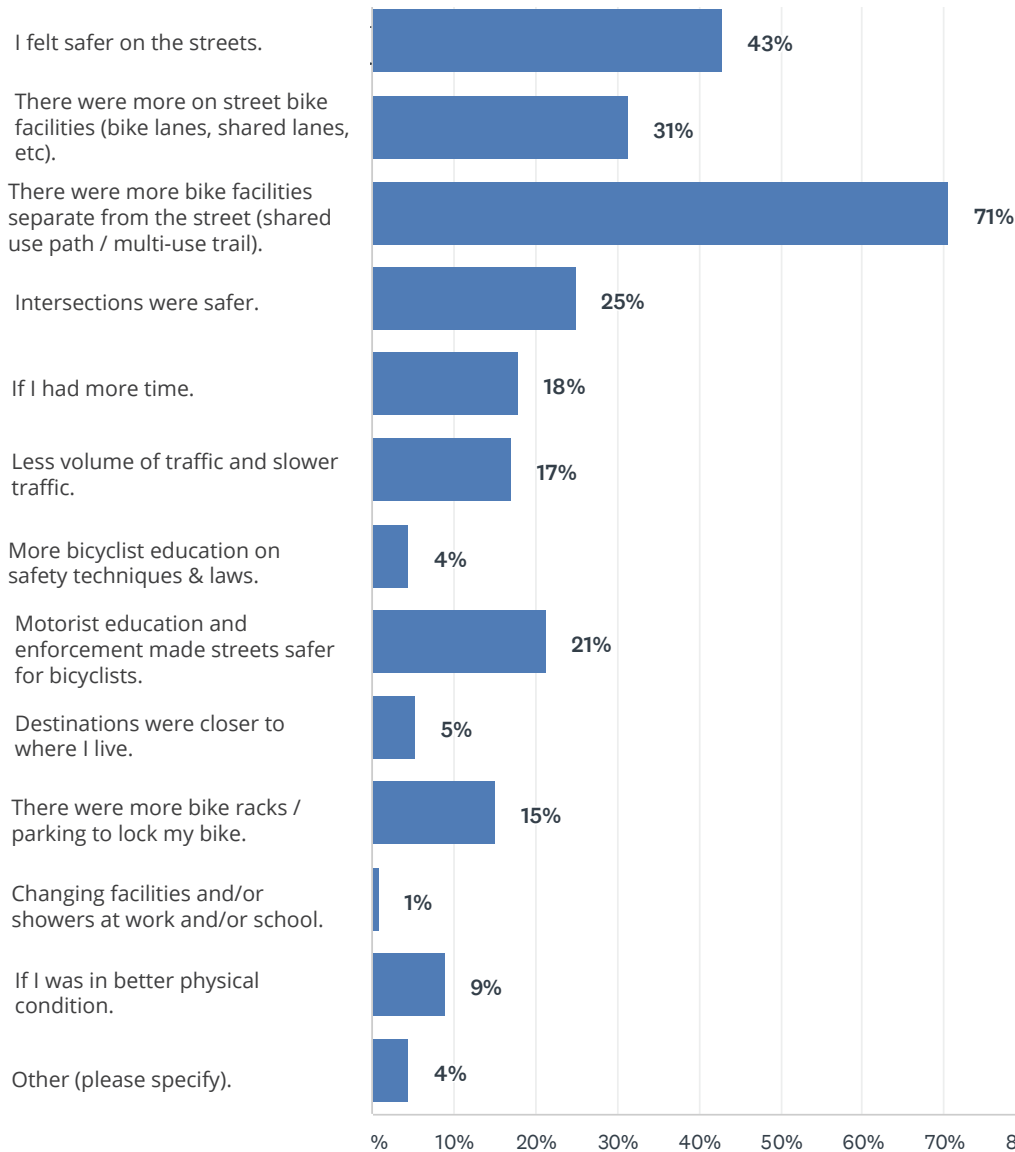
(Choose all that apply)



Other responses:

- Cyclist riding the wrong direction on the wrong side of the road, especially when it is clearly marked. Please enforce the rule of the road and educate the folks on bicycles.
- Too narrow and close to traffic, people still drive in bike lanes and throw things at bikers out of their cars and scream at bikers
- Bike lanes merge with right turn lanes
- Bike paths not separated from the main road
- The bike lanes are lacking, not appropriate size, and pavement can be dangerous
- Surface damage 42nd Street
- Lanes are too narrow
- Too close to cars and cars drive on bike lane. Most everyone I have ever seen have no clue how to use bike lanes or rules that they go by.
- They are connected to the road
- Too close to car lanes,
- Lane too narrow
- Lanes are not wide enough. Too close to traffic.
- Drivers driving in bike lanes
- Unsafe street crossing
- I would like for my son to be able to ride his bike to the high school if he wants (which he does) but the traffic in the mornings and afternoons is much too busy I wouldn't feel good about him doing that unless there were barricades separating the bike path from traffic
- lanes too narrow and lanes that do exist have divides right down the middle of the lane forcing the cyclist to ride close to traffic staying away from the crack divide, the other side of the lane is not available cause the bike crank will hit the curb. Some lanes have drain grates that can trap a bike.
- We do not currently have bike lanes! Painting a line down the side of the driving lane is not a bike lane! A bike lane is a paved, level lane separate/in addition to regular sized driving lanes-not part of one.
- Pretty certain every drain grate within the city is a hazard to cyclists
- The bike lanes that currently exist as way too narrow. Not much distance/ separation with road traffic...you might as well be riding out on the road then in the car lanes.
- Motorists not paying attention to bike lanes
- Too Narrow

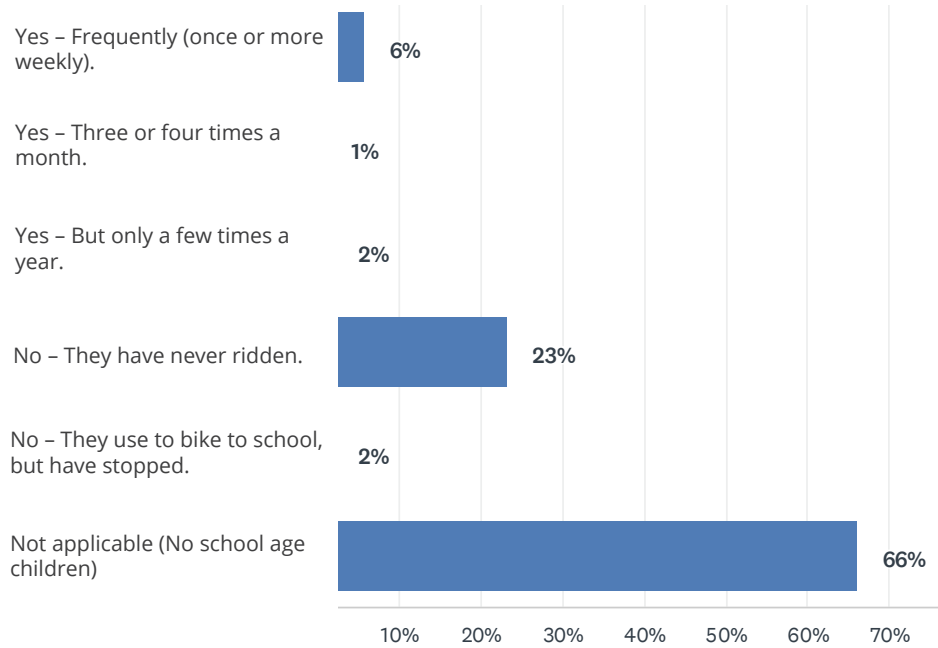
Q13. What are the top three changes would help you bicycle more often? (Choose up to three)



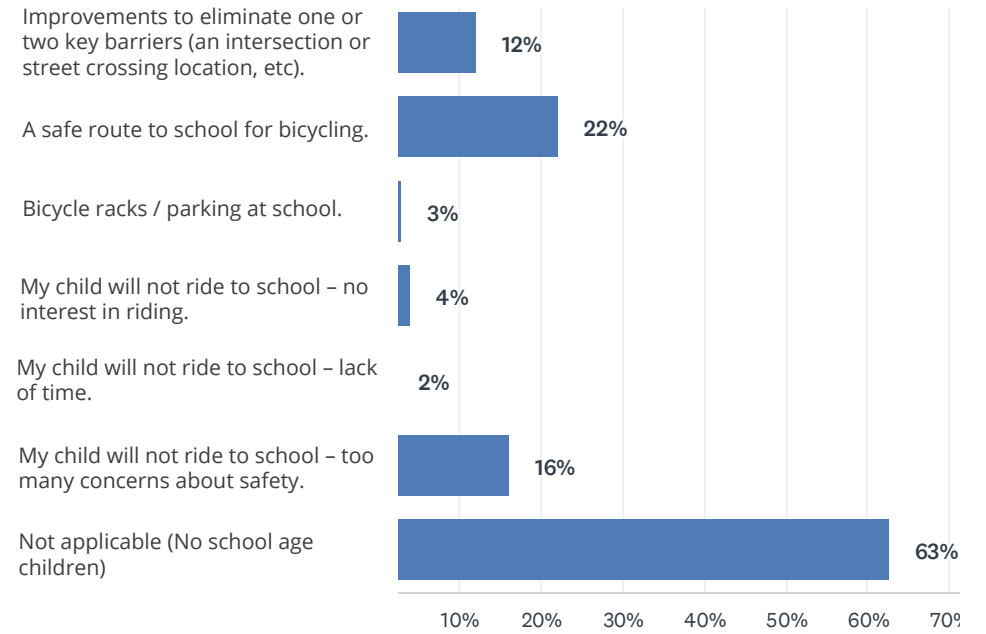
Other responses:

- Fix the roads even the neighborhoods stop laying down gravel roads
- I prefer biking off traffic. I am a slow rider, and have arthritis. Turning to watch traffic is stressful. The bike trails at rend lake thru the trees and near the lake are ideal.
- Bike paths not shared with cars
- I can't bike due to physical limitations but would love the opportunity for others
- Unsafe intersections, no traffic lights

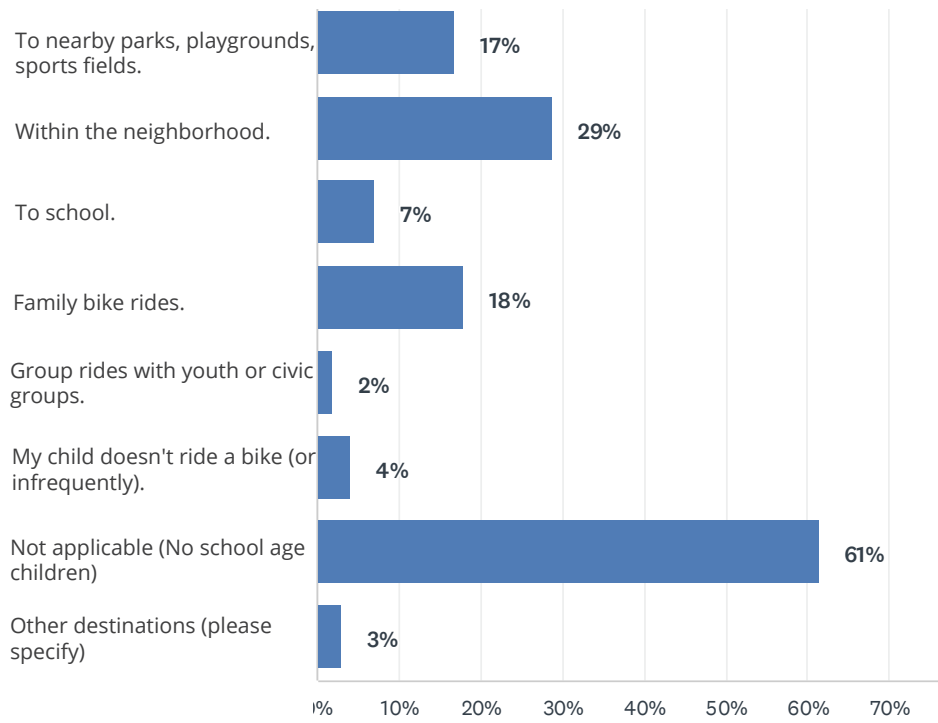
Q14. If you have school age children (grade school thru high school), do they bike to school? (choose one)



Q15. If your child doesn't ride or rides infrequently, what would help your child bike to school? (Choose all that apply)



Q16. If you have school age children, where do they bicycle? (Choose all that apply)



Q17. What should be the top priorities for improving bicycling in Mt. Vernon?

Responses:

- Our family would love bike only trails through nature and forests for safety, enjoyment, and fitness reasons. Easy access points to residential neighborhoods and key places in our community.
- Bike path or multiuse path
- Bicycle safety
- Roads and bike lanes everywhere
- More bike lanes or shared use paths along main roads
- Keep off main roads, Broadway, 42nd, 34th, Perkins too dangerous-narrow roads.
- Off street bicycling, bicycling in all neighborhoods.
- Safety
- "Providing safe clean and wide shared paths to all shopping, working, and learning facilities.
- Sidewalk entrances are rough around town. Some are broken, some are very narrow and some have high ledges."
- Separate bike paths or more routine traffic control
- Safety
- "Fixing the roads across the city. The addition of gravel over pavement is unsafe and eliminates the possibility of bikers using the road.
- Cutting down the high grass on property and near areas near bike lanes.
- Adding more accessible trails for cyclists, more connectivity, something to do for ppl who don't want to be indoors/on their phone like I am doing now. "
- More bike lanes and bike trails
- Wider bike lanes. I have balance issues and use a recumbent tricycle. This bike is as wide as or wider than the existing bike lanes. Thus wider lanes, or bike paths separate from the roads would be necessary for me to bike in Mt Vernon. I go to Rend Lake, Edwardsville, or St. Louis parks to ride.
- Connecting to the major employers and school. There are amazing bike trails already at Rend Lake. Having trails that connected to Rendlake would be my biggest desire. Also, if there could be a loop to Walgreens distribution center, Continental tire, the high school, and to rendlake.
- Having off street bike paths. Perhaps a circle or a path with multiple parking lots along the way.
- Bike trails or paths separate from street
- Paths not on the busy streets
- Safety
- Safety, and include more shared walking paths instead of shared automobile roads..
- Many main streets don't have sidewalks and lanes for bikes and have to share the lane with cars and semi on high speed very unsafe
- More bike paths and sidewalks
- Make trails OFF the roads. Wider shared side walk striped for both directions. For non motorized traffic and walkers.
- A dedicated bike path, separate from shared lanes.
- Safety
- Bicycle lanes should be debris free and consistent. Many end abruptly.
- specific bike lanes off the roadways
- Multi use trails
- Fixing the streets
- "Make safe multipurpose lanes to get from downtown to Walmart/ shopping area for those who don't own a vehicle.
- Do the same for north town to downtown, south town to downtown and same as east and west."
- Make lanes safer. Lanes to more areas.
- Improve streets surface and curbs. Well marked lanes.
- Creating separate off road bike paths that extend a significant distance. This path needs to be paved and closed to all motor vehicles. This could be available to walkers/runners as well.
- Recreational bike tracks near the city like what was done around Rend Lake. Good example is what was done in O'Fallon with the old railroad tracks converted to cycling paths
- Improve roads, sewer grates, cracks, potholes, etc.
- Installation of bike lanes across town, installation of bike racks across town, installation of sidewalks where bike lanes are not available for installation.
- "Safer bike lanes. Traffic safety enforcement.
- Separate bike lanes, clean bike lanes, safe intersections
- Off street bike and walking trails
- Creating more bicycle paths or shared use paths in high traffic areas
- Off road trails. Trails that are continuous and don't just stop.
- Linking Mt Vernon bike trails to Rend Lake trails. Use the old railroad bed from the end of Wells Bypass, across Rend Lake, then to the campgrounds.
- Connect the trails. Create some loops.

- 1. Community awareness. 2. A detailed growth plan for adding bike lanes. 3. Awareness of routes in the country that are safe for cyclists. There are a lot of great roads out there. However, we need pullouts for parking or ways to connect from the city. "
- safety - good road surface
- More specific paths with minimal crossing of automobile lanes.
- Get rid of the fake "bike lanes" that are currently in the roads (driving lanes) and gutters.
- Separate lanes for bike away from main road. Not the way that is around town where they just stuff a bike lane in on a road. That's not inviting to the biker and it feels dangerous. Separate paths like sidewalks for bikes.
- "Bike path to Rend Lake
- More bike lanes"
- Finish marking the paths around town. More paths that are separate from the vehicle traffic.
- Safety safety safety! Drivers need to understand rules of the road
- Making bike paths separate from street bike paths, in the park, around airport lake, etc.
- Connecting all the existing bike shared use paths, and/ or a grand loop all around the entire city with cut through paths in the middle to get to some inner city destinations.
- A bike route around Miller Lake would be nice for family recreation.
- Off road shared use paths, providing a bike park for kids (pump track, obstacle course); we drive to St. Louis to bike with our kids because of the availability of facilities for young riders to practice fun skills
- Better traffic law enforcement.

Q18. Other comments regarding the Mt. Vernon Bicycle Master Plan.

- Thank you for considering improving the biking situation in Mt. Vernon
- This should really help the town if done correctly
- Outskirts not main roads
- How about converting old rail tracks to bike trails!!!!????!!!
- Must do something soon and show ppl that there is high attn to this.
- Trying to choose a scenic route on the edge of town would be ideal. I would look for natural waterways, such as creeks or any places that pass the shaded areas. I would also consider putting benches so often. And I grew up, riding my bike all over MtVernon and have long for the day or we had adequate bike trails.
- Can't wait to have!
- I would love to ride more if I felt I didn't have to dodge traffic
- No
- To much grave stones on the roads
- See answer on question 17
- Mt. Vernon is a heavy interstate hub, with a very dangerous highway. I 57 has wrecks daily, and alot of traffic diverts thru a very busy part of town. Off road smooth lanes/sidewalks would be very welcome.
- Bike paths in safe neighborhoods.
- Better connections
- Love to have connection to the Rend Lake trails. I drive to Ina and park at the college to ride Wayne Fitzgerald. Or I go to the North Sandusky area and park to ride the trails.
- I think this is far past due and happy to see that there is initiatives to make this happen.
- Scenic routes
- Thank you for striving to improve this in our community. If we could have trails in our county that meet my needs it would significantly increase how much my spouse and I exercise.
- Let's do it. Great enhancement for all ages of the community!!
- Marketing new and existing bike paths to residents...maybe add a map on city website?
- It will bring people to our area. We often stop in towns to eat, get snacks, water and use bathroom. It gets people out. Good for physical and mental health.
- I can't wait.
- Don't forget to look at abandoned railroad lines for possible bike only trails
- "I'd love to see a large scale group fall color ride near Rend Lake. I think this would be a great way to bring awareness to the community regarding the fun of cycling and bring in people from the outside for tourism dollars.
- The is also a lack of MTB courses in this region of the country. The closest one is the Touch of Nature facility in Carbondale. We should look at the work in Arkansas. I think it would be a great way to bring in tourism dollars from the outside. "
- Good to see this being addressed again. Thanks!
- Provide bike lanes separate from motorways that allow for cyclists and runners to travel safely without fear of traffic
- Education is important. Not enough people are aware of bike rules. This includes cyclists and drivers.
- Would be wonderful to use the old train tracks down Rt148 to connect to sesser and Rend Lake
- I'm sure building bike paths is not cheap, but sure would be nice if there was additional grant money available that would allow expansion of a bike path connecting Mt Vernon to Rend Lake bike trails. I have camped at Rend Lake for many years & have seen many avid cyclists who camp & bike there, so if there was a bike path connecting the 2, maybe that might attract more people/cyclists in to Mt Vernon. I am an avid cyclist myself & mostly enjoy endurance riding, so it would be very nice to have a long bike path like this right here at home as I frequently have to travel long distances (i.e. Tunnel Hill, Madison Co trail system, Katy Trail in MO) to get access to very nice bike trails.
- If the city intends to maintain easements on top of utilities, could the plan include bike trails with packed base/gravel in those area which connect to other arteries of shared use path/bike lanes? This would provide the rider access to a variety of riding options.

"This should really help the town if done correctly."

Map Tool Comments

The survey incorporated a mapping tool that allowed participants to provide location-specific comments on an online map. Below, you'll find the comments and suggestions received through this mapping tool.

Draw where there should be new bike facilities (bike lane or shared use path).

New Bike Lane or Shared Use Path Routes

Where are your priority destinations to travel by bike?

Destinations

Where are there barriers to biking in the City?

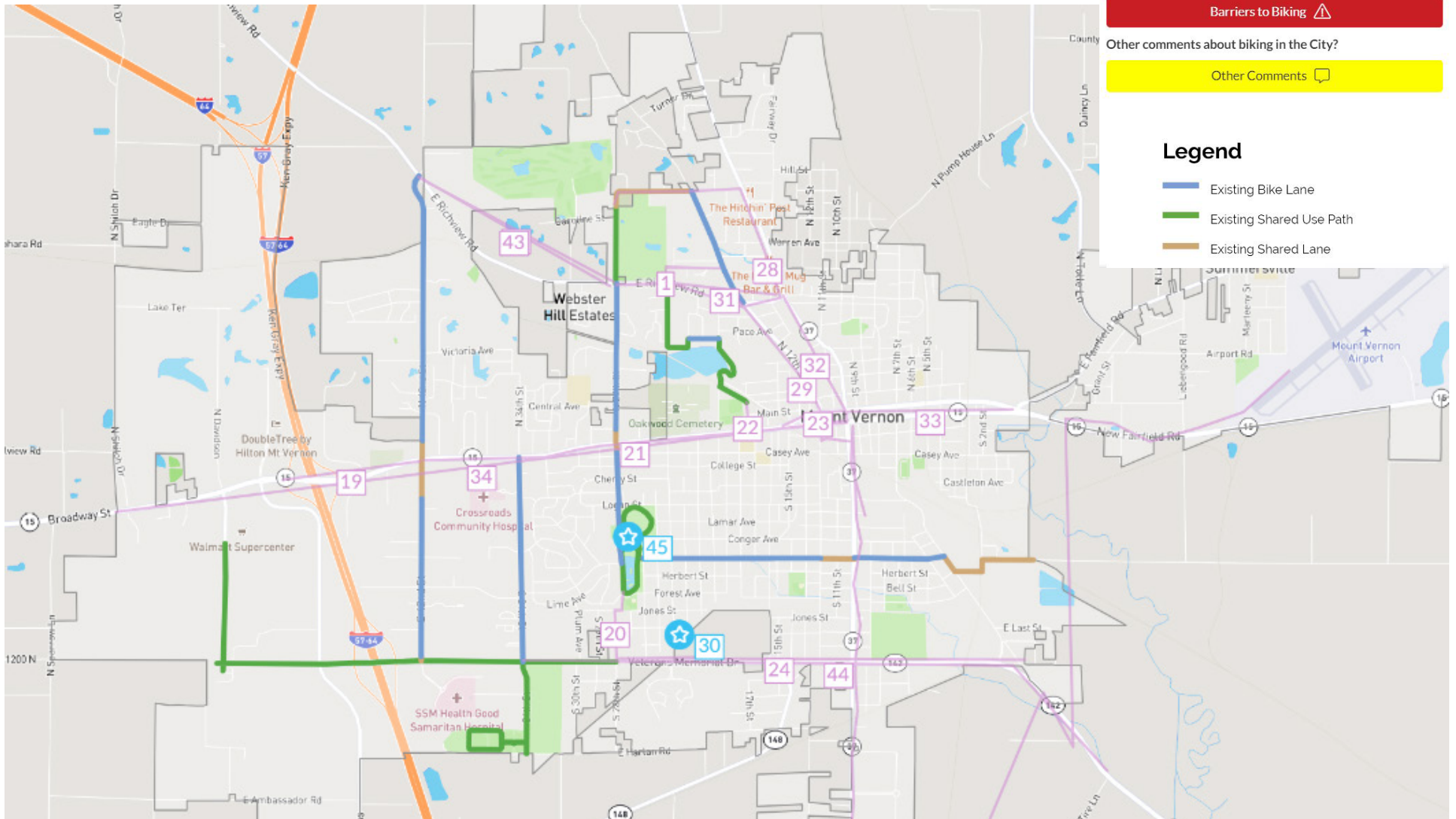
Barriers to Biking

Other comments about biking in the City?


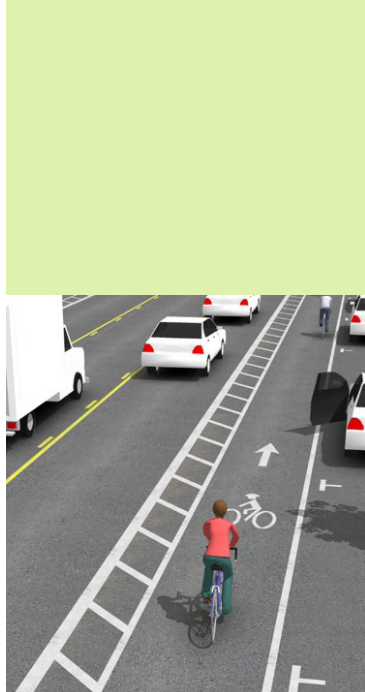

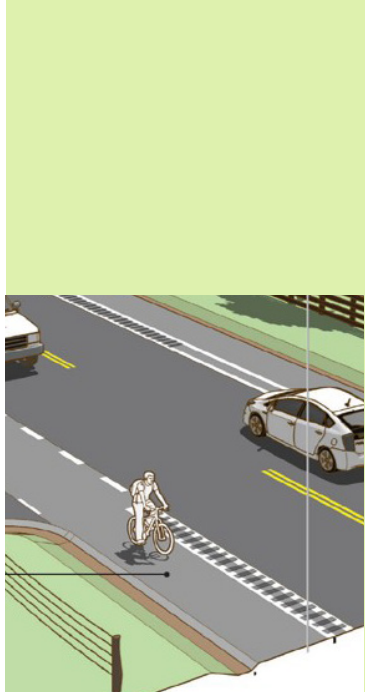

Other Comments

Legend

- Existing Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane



Bicycle Toolkit

Most Preferred	Applicable for Plan (When Shared Used Path isn't Possible)			Least Preferred
<p>Shared Use Path</p> <p><i>Separated Facility</i></p>	<p>Buffered Bike Lane</p> <p><i>On-Street</i></p>	<p>Bike Lane</p> <p><i>On-Street</i></p>	<p>Paved Shoulder</p> <p><i>On-Street</i></p>	<p>Shared Lane</p> <p><i>On-Street Shared Lane</i></p>
				

Bicycle Toolkit: Shared Use Paths

Shared Use Paths are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic, except at road crossings. Shared use paths accommodate a variety of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and others, for both recreation and transportation purposes. Shared use paths away from roads, on easements or their own rights-of-way tend to be more pleasant and popular.

The recommended width for a shared use paths is 10 ft, in order to facilitate bi-directional and multi-modal traffic. A trail within a connected system of greenspace is often referred to as a "greenway."

Other common terms: multi-use trail, sidepath.

ADVANTAGES

- One of the most popular bicycle facility types. High demand from the public.
- Complete separation from vehicular traffic (except at street crossings).
- Path can be a catalyst for other development since it shows a fixed investment in bicycle facilities.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Available right-of-way or easements for path location.
- Long-term maintenance of trails.
- Relatively high cost compared to other facility types.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- 10 ft width minimum, with 2 ft clearance on both sides.
- 8 ft width may be allowed for short distances due to physical constraints.
- Edge of the path to be at least 5 ft from the curb face and 7 ft from the traveled way.
- High-speed rural roads require greater separation distance between path and edge of shoulder.

Example: Urban Shared Use Path

The photo below is representational of a shared use path in a city environment. The photo illustrates key criteria including a minimum of 5 ft from the edge of the path to the face of the curb.



Edge of path to be a minimum of 5 ft from face of curb.

Example: Rural or Park Shared Use Path

The photo below is representational of a shared use path in a rural or park environment.



Width of path to be a min of 10 ft.

Bicycle Toolkit: Bike Lane

Bike lanes are portions of the roadway designated for bicyclist use with pavement marking/symbols and optional signing. Bike lanes are typically between five and six feet wide (including gutter pan) on each side of the road with a stripe, signage, and pavement markings. Cyclists in each bike lane travel one-way with the flow of traffic.

Parking is not permitted in designated bicycle lanes. When a road has bike lanes and adjacent parking, the bike lanes should be striped between the parking space and the travel lanes. Regular sweeping is important, as bike lanes tend to collect debris.

ADVANTAGES

- Traffic-calming effect for motor vehicles.
- More predictable movements by both cars and bikes.
- Better cyclist adherence to laws about riding on the right side of the road.
- Dramatic increases in bike usage with lower car-bike crash rates.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Car door opening into bike lane can be an issue when bike lane is adjacent to on-street parking.
- Transitions through intersections or when a street narrows or important. Bicyclists can be “stuck” when a bike lane unexpectedly ends.
- Not as comfortable for many casual bicyclist because of adjacent traffic.
- Gutter pan joint edge can create a uneven surface for bicycle tires.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- Five ft is the minimum width of a bike lane (stripe-to-stripe or stripe-to-curb face)
- Gutter pans are sometimes not acceptable for bicycle travel due to the presence of debris or broken pavement, and the pavement/ gutter joint can sometimes become vertically uneven or separated from the gutter and affect bicycles with narrow tires.

Example: Bike Lane (With Parking and With Curb)

Right side of graphic: Example of bike lane adjacent to curb.

Left side of graphic: Example of bike lane adjacent to on-street parking.

Source: NATCO



Bicycle Toolkit: Buffered Bike Lane

Buffered bike lanes are bicycle lanes with a designated buffer space separating the bicycle lane from the adjacent vehicle travel lane and/or parking lane. The buffer area comprises a pattern of standard longitudinal markings and added chevron or diagonal markings for larger buffer widths.

ADVANTAGES

- Similar advantages as regular bike lane, however in addition buffered bike lanes provide greater shy distance between motor vehicles and bicyclists and increase the level of comfort and safety for bicyclists.
- Placing a 2 ft 6 in. minimum buffer immediately adjacent to a parking lane can be effective in reducing dooring crashes.

CONSIDERATIONS

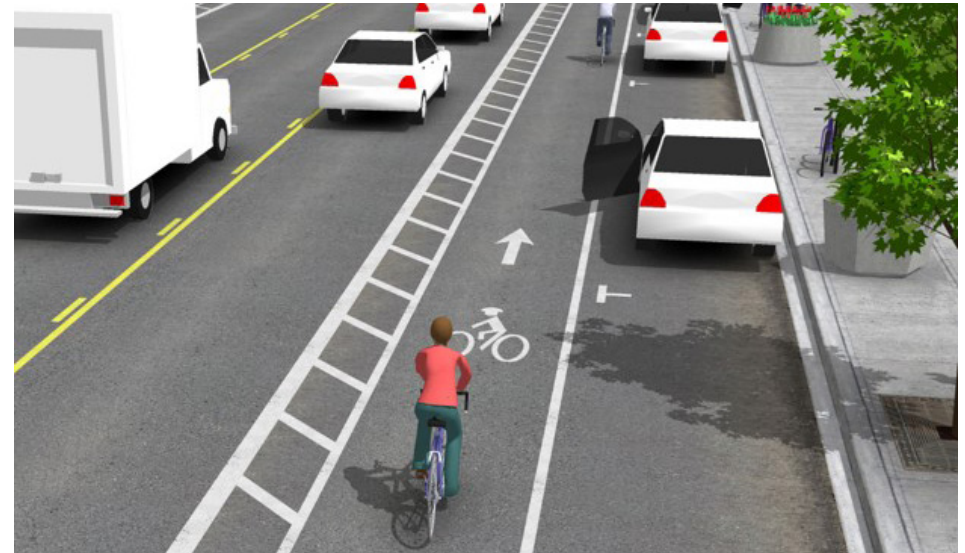
- Similar considerations as regular bike lane, however additional width required can be a constraint for applicability.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- Buffer areas are marked with two solid white lines (a 5 in. minimum line width is required on the vehicle traffic side) at least 12 in. apart. Where the buffer total width is 18 in or more, diagonal or chevron markings are recommended for clarity.

Example: Buffered Bike Lane (With Parking and With Curb)

Source: NATCO



Bicycle Toolkit: Shoulder

For rural roads and streets without enough available pavement width for a full bike lane, the use of a paved shoulder for bicyclists can be an acceptable bicycle facility type, especially when there are limited options for other facility types.

For these roads to have a full 5 ft width bike lane would be cost prohibitive. The roads will need to be widened which would require moving the curb line and reconstructing stormwater inlets.

In the short term, they are part of the overall bicycle network, but they are acknowledged that they do not meet the requirements of a full bike lane. Long term if the road is reconstructed, the road width should accommodate a full bike lane width or a sidepath should be added.

Sometimes these can be called "Urban Shoulder" or "Advisory Shoulder."

ADVANTAGES

- Although the striping does not meet the width requirement of a standard "bike lane", the shoulder does provide a measure of safety for bicyclists and provides traffic calming, dooring crashes.

CONSIDERATIONS

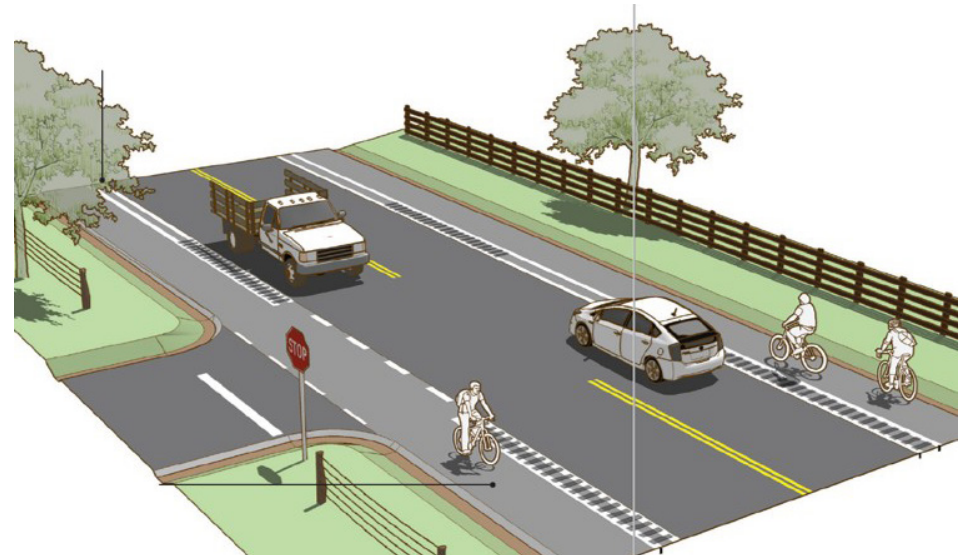
- The joint between the asphalt and gutter can create a safety issue for bicyclists, especially with the width of the lane already less than a standard bike lane. When the street is resurfaced, a portion of the gutter should be milled to allow a wider area for bicyclists.
- Shoulders cannot be called, marked, and/or signed as official "bike lanes".

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- For rural roadways, IDOT has minimum width requirements for shoulders based on various traffic volumes and vehicular speeds.

Example: Shoulder

Source: Federal Highway Administration 'Small Town and Rural Multi-Modal Networks'



Bicycle Toolkit: Shared Lane

Shared Lanes include:

- Streets with sharrows.
- Shared roadways (no pavement striping), just signage.

The Sharrow (Shared Lane Marking) is used primarily for streets with insufficient width (or need) for bike lanes. On such roads with significantly occupied on-street parallel parking, the center of the marking shall be 11 feet (or more) from the curb; with no occupied parking, the center of the marking shall be 4 feet (or more) from the curb. The markings should be placed right after an intersection and spaced at intervals of 250 feet thereafter. The shared lane marking also can be used to indicate correct straight-ahead bicycle position at intersections with turn lanes, where bike lanes or combined bike/parking lanes have been temporarily dropped.

Shared roadways may be appropriate where there is not enough room for dedicated bike lanes and traffic volumes are low enough that sharrows are not required.

ADVANTAGES

- Sharrows can alert motorists more effectively than signs that bicyclists are sharing a lane, positions bicyclists outside of car "door zone", and can be especially effective at intersections to better position bicyclists and alert motorists.
- Shared roadways can be used to supplement other bicycle facilities such as bike lanes, paved shoulders, sharrows, etc.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Especially for the casual bicyclist, sharrows or shared roadways do not increase bicyclist comfort or safety.
- Should be the lowest ranked bicycle facility option, and only used when other bike facilities are not practical.

IDOT REQUIREMENTS

- Sharrows should not be used on roadways with posted speed limits above 30 mph, and should be considered only where traffic volumes are fairly low.

Example: Shared Lane with Sharrows

Source: NATCO



Routes to Study

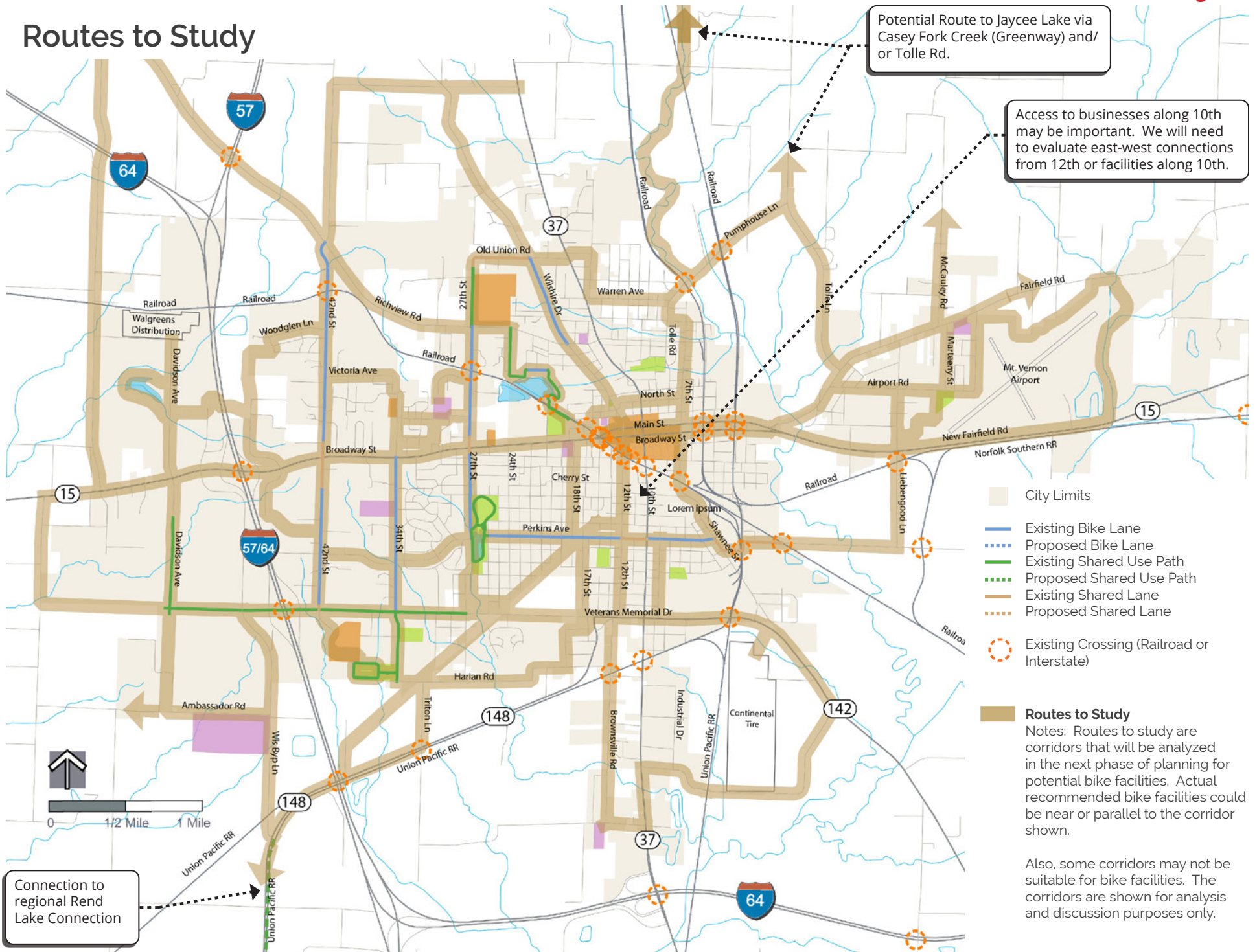
The following pages illustrate the "Routes to Study." Routes to study are **corridors that will be analyzed in the next phase of planning for potential bike facilities**. Actual recommended bike facilities could be near or parallel to the corridor shown. In addition, some corridors may not be suitable for bike facilities. The corridors are shown for analysis and discussion purposes only.

Guiding principles for selection of the Routes to Study include:

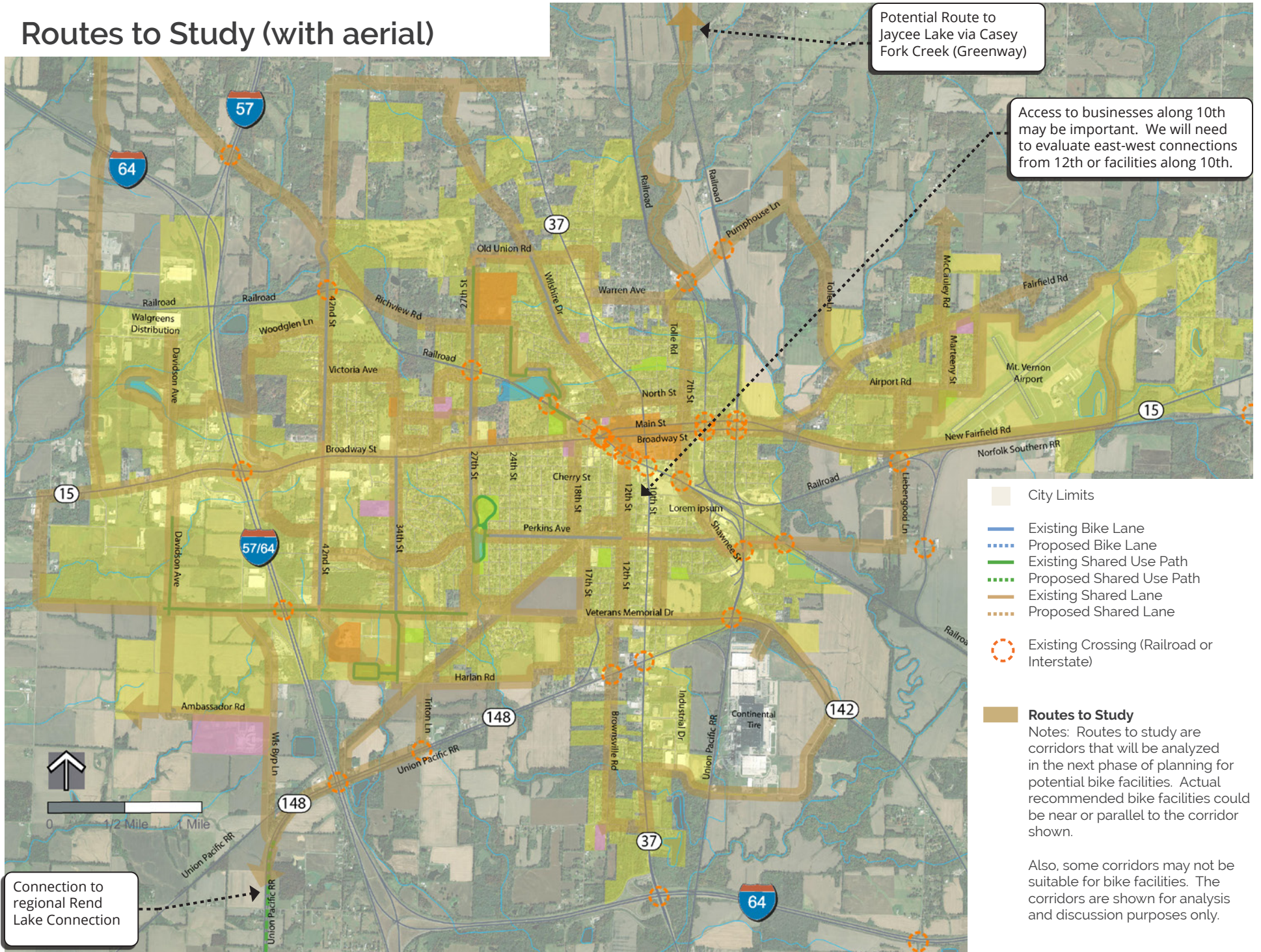
- Linking destinations.
- Providing access throughout the city to bike facilities (no more than 1/2 mile to a mile apart).
- Connecting the network (loops throughout the City and to destinations).
- Accommodating different user groups (commuters, recreational bicyclists, youth, families, casual bicyclists, etc.).

While a shared use path is the preferred bicycle facility type, with nearly 80 miles of routes to study shown, the evaluation of on-street facilities will be a crucial aspect of the upcoming planning phase from a practical implementation perspective.

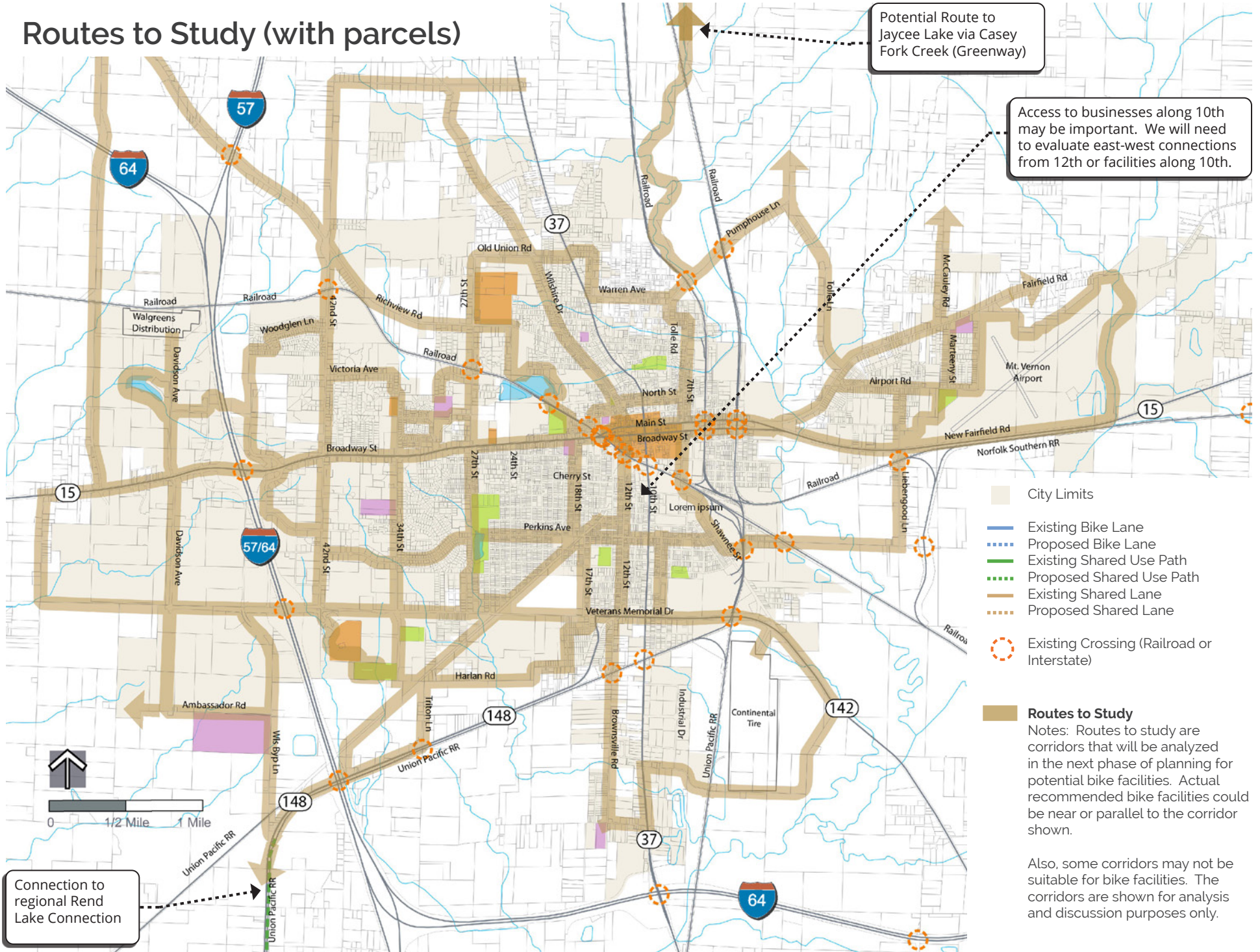
Routes to Study



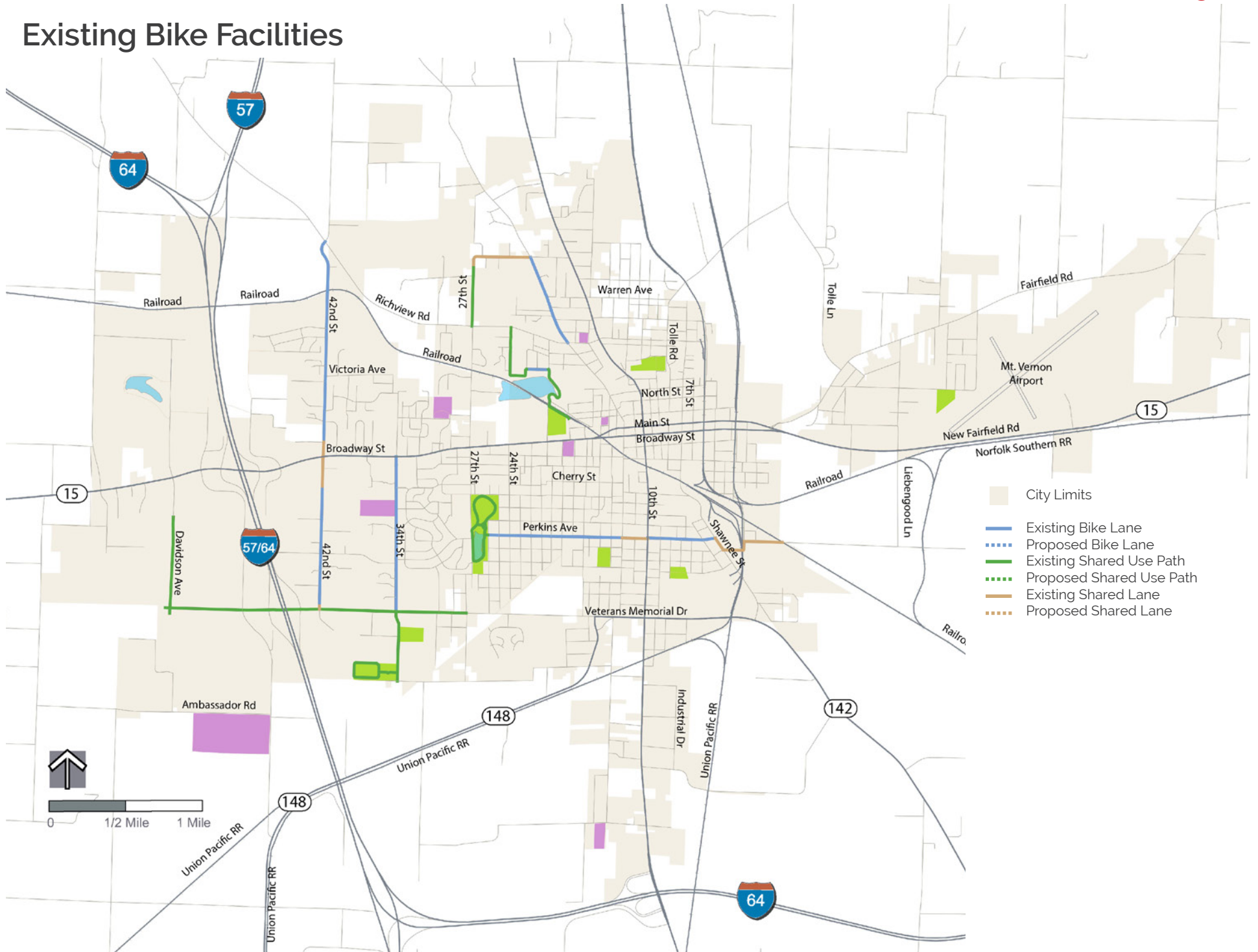
Routes to Study (with aerial)



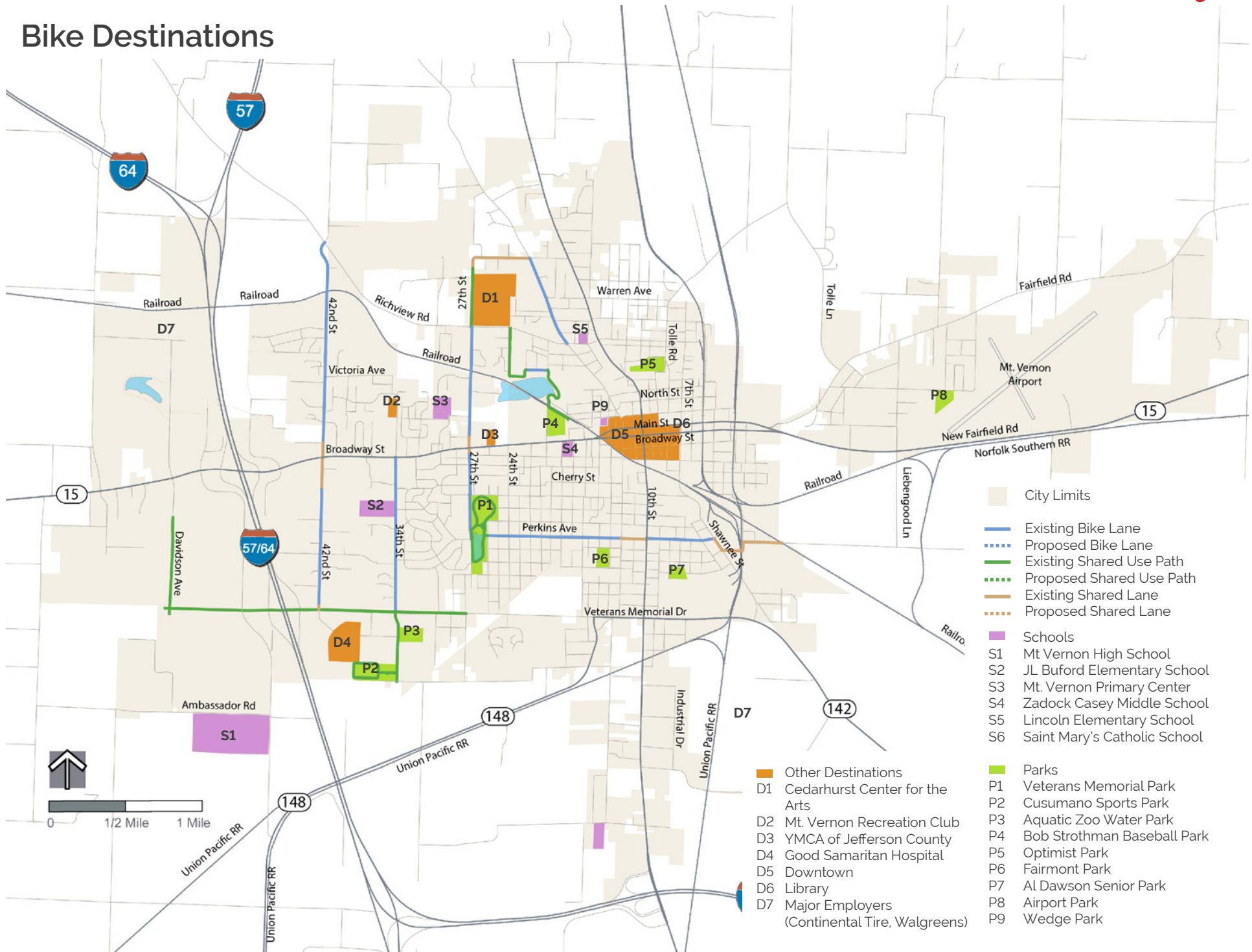
Routes to Study (with parcels)



Existing Bike Facilities



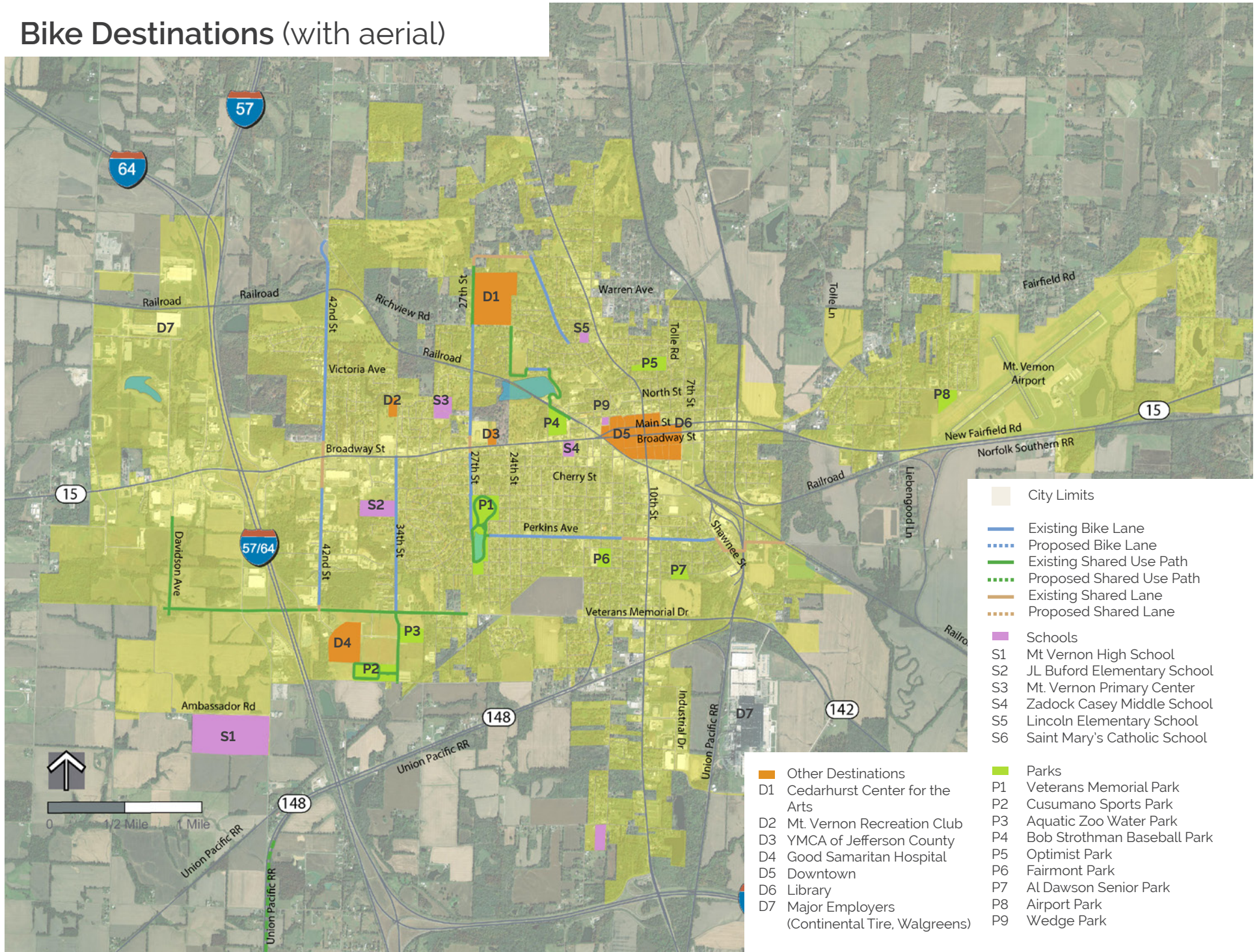
Bike Destinations



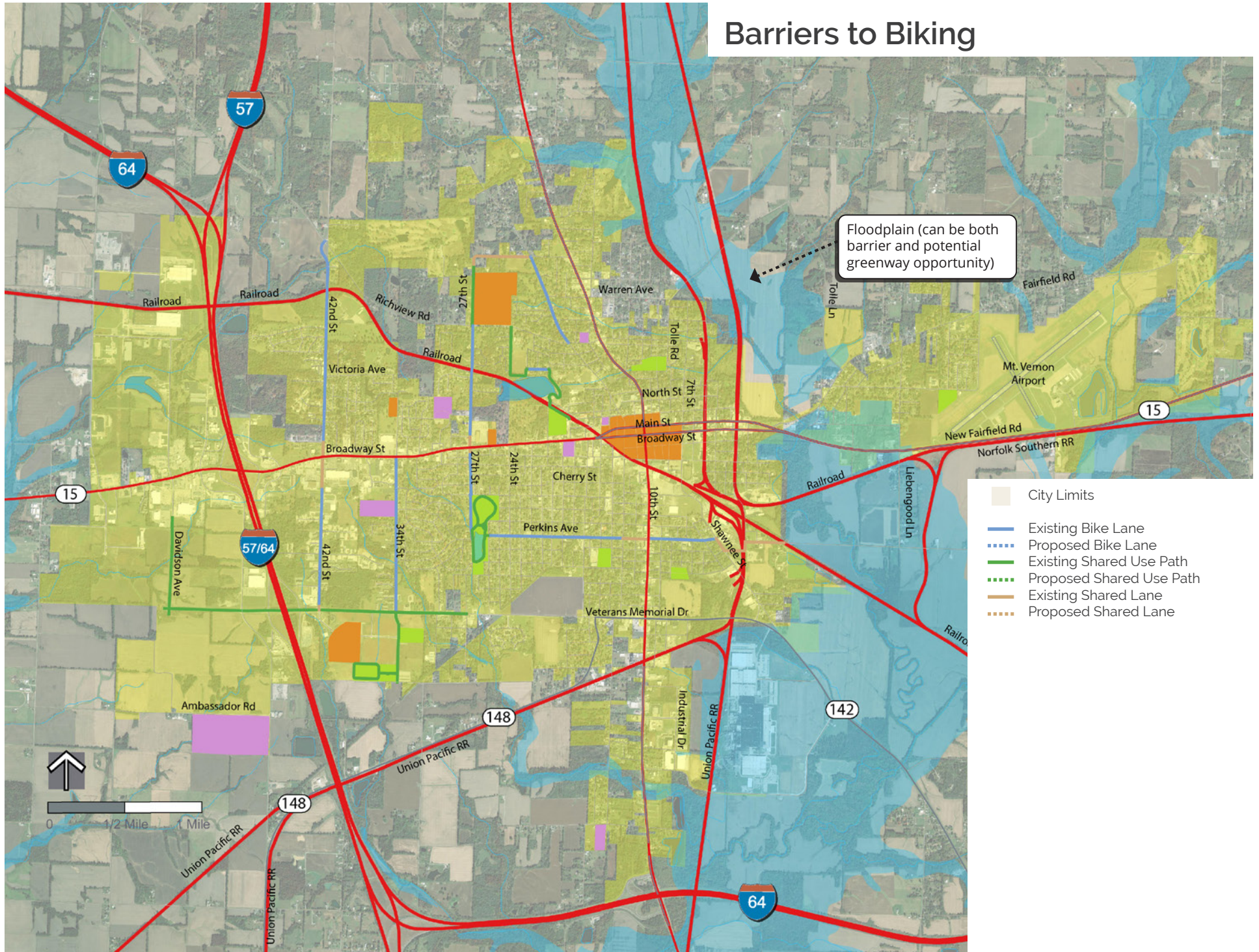
- Other Destinations
- D1 Cedarhurst Center for the Arts
- D2 Mt. Vernon Recreation Club
- D3 YMCA of Jefferson County
- D4 Good Samaritan Hospital
- D5 Downtown
- D6 Library
- D7 Major Employers (Continental Tire, Walgreens)
- Parks
- P1 Veterans Memorial Park
- P2 Cusumano Sports Park
- P3 Aquatic Zoo Water Park
- P4 Bob Strothman Baseball Park
- P5 Optimist Park
- P6 Fairmont Park
- P7 Al Dawson Senior Park
- P8 Airport Park
- P9 Wedge Park

- City Limits
- Existing Bike Lane
- - - Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- - - Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- - - Proposed Shared Lane
- Schools
- S1 Mt Vernon High School
- S2 JL Buford Elementary School
- S3 Mt. Vernon Primary Center
- S4 Zadock Casey Middle School
- S5 Lincoln Elementary School
- S6 Saint Mary's Catholic School

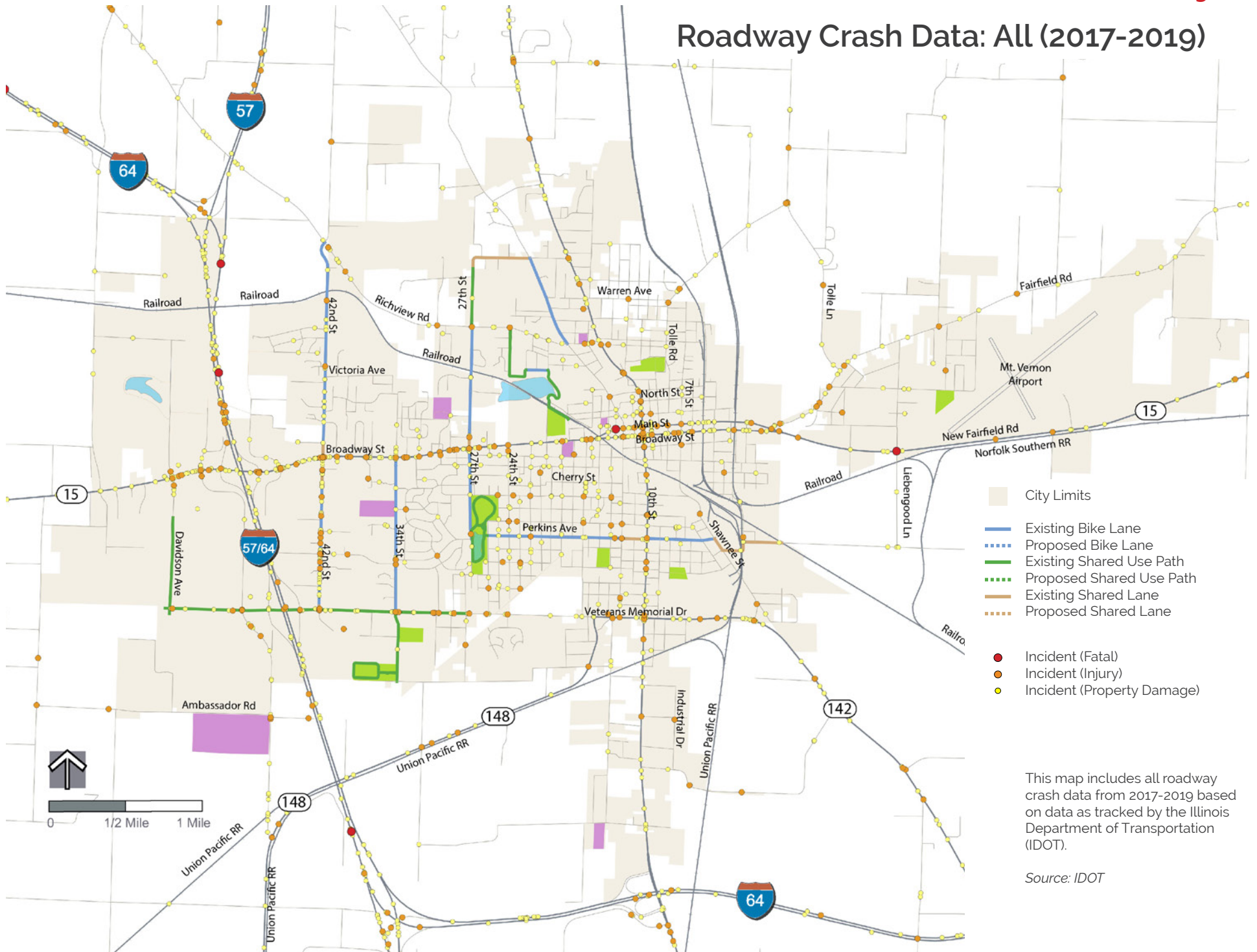
Bike Destinations (with aerial)



Barriers to Biking



Roadway Crash Data: All (2017-2019)



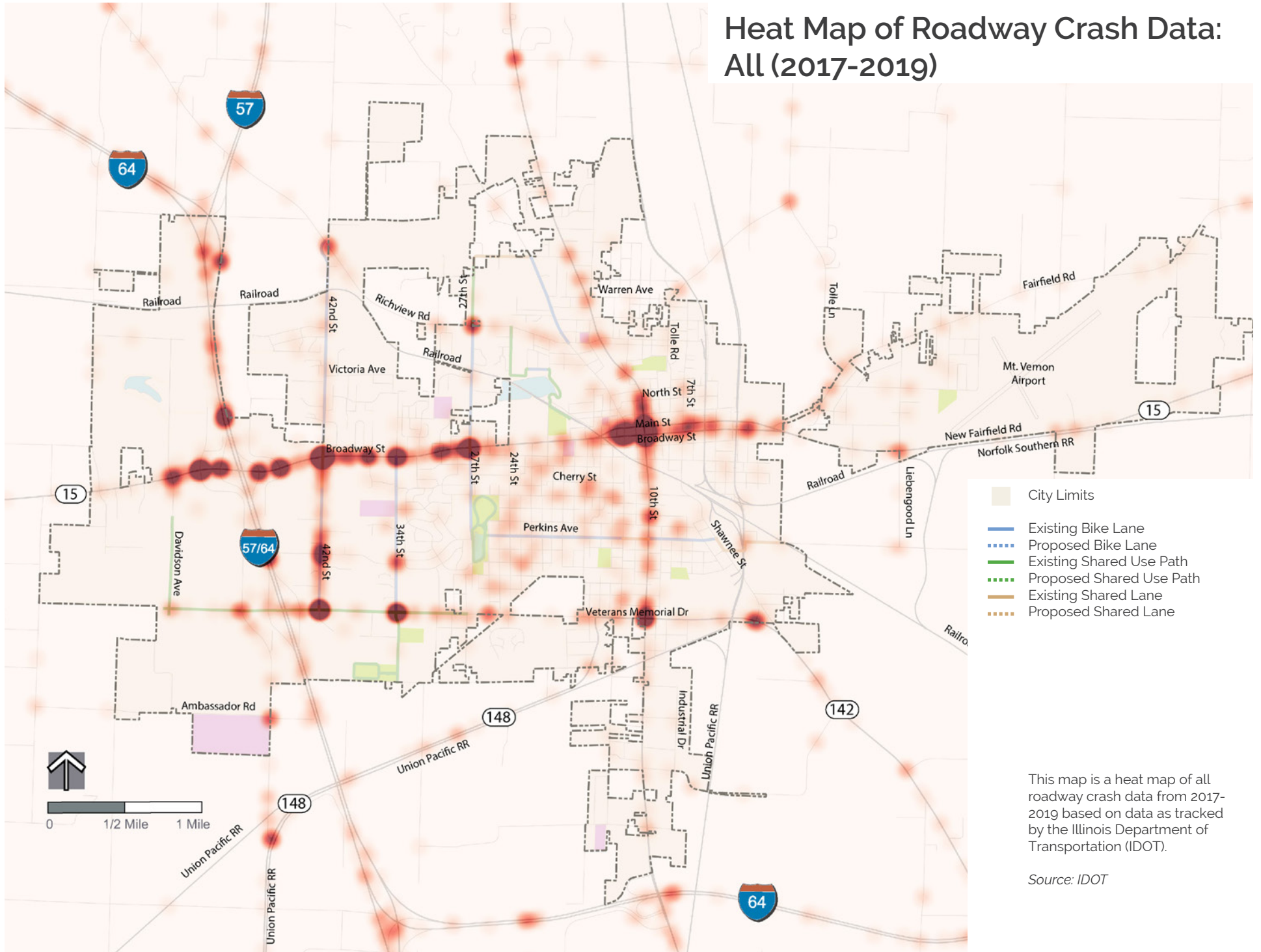
- City Limits
- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Proposed Shared Use Path
- Existing Shared Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane
- Incident (Fatal)
- Incident (Injury)
- Incident (Property Damage)

This map includes all roadway crash data from 2017-2019 based on data as tracked by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Source: IDOT



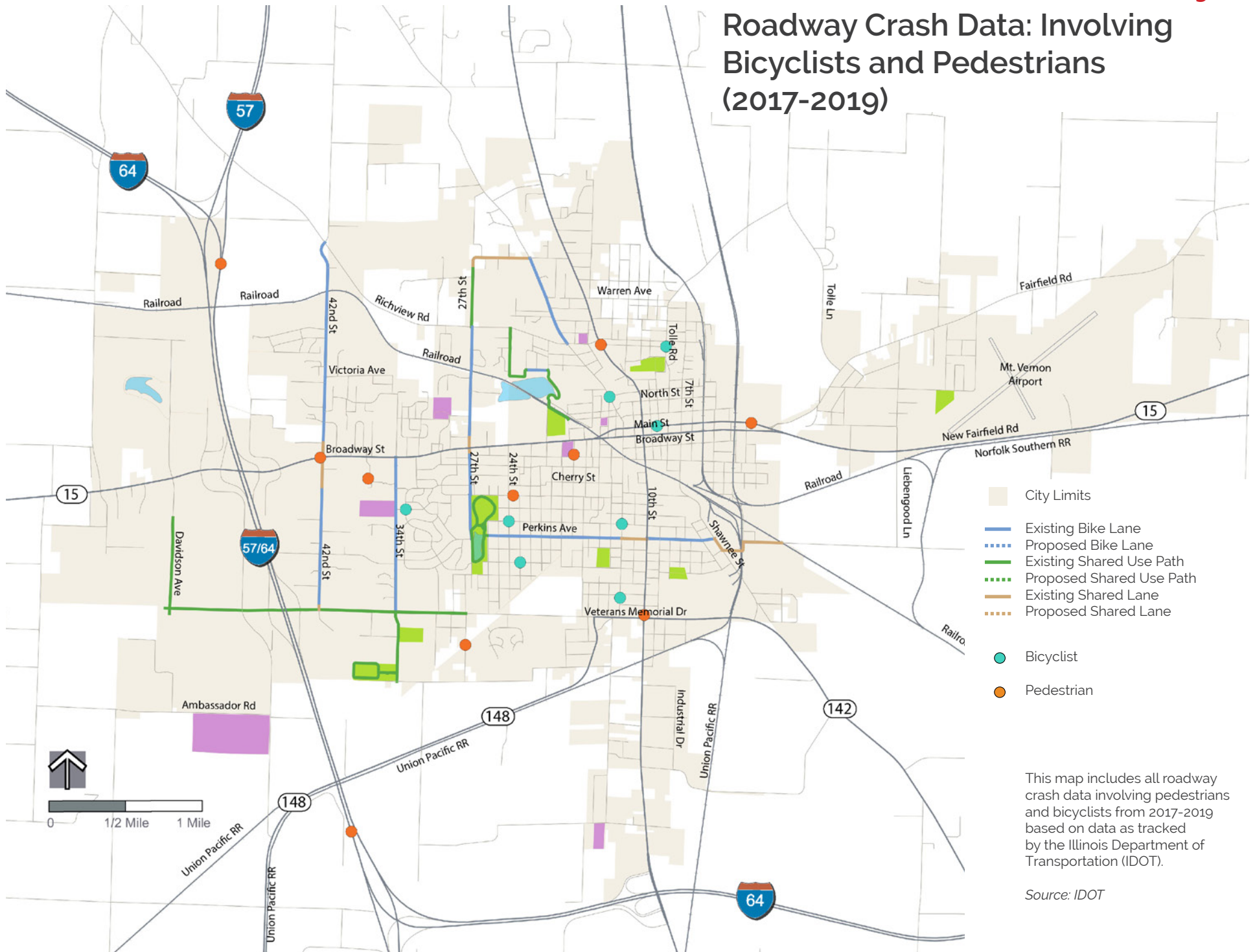
Heat Map of Roadway Crash Data: All (2017-2019)



This map is a heat map of all roadway crash data from 2017-2019 based on data as tracked by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Source: IDOT

Roadway Crash Data: Involving Bicyclists and Pedestrians (2017-2019)



This map includes all roadway crash data involving pedestrians and bicyclists from 2017-2019 based on data as tracked by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Source: IDOT

Vehicle Traffic Volumes



This map includes traffic volumes based on Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT). Years include 2014-2022 and varies based on street. Major roads have more recent traffic counts. Data is not available for every road or street.

Source: IDOT