



2020 BPAC Annual Report

Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission



Bill Brown—Chair, Council
Cynthia Hoyle—Vice-chair, At-large
Annie Adams - At-Large
Leonardo Covis - At-Large
Kara Dudek - Urbana Park District
Nancy Westcott - At-Large
Susan Jones - At-Large
Jeff Marino - At-Large
Sarathak Prasad - University of Illinois
Audrey Ishii - Urbana School District
Shannon Beranek- City of Urbana



Brief Background

BPAC was established in 2006 for the primary purpose of :

- Analyzing proposed bicycle routing
 - Operation and safety of bicycles
 - Recommendations on biking and walking facilities, Capital Improvement Plan and Bicycle Master Plan
 - Education and public outreach on bike and pedestrian issues
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- ◆ Urbana's first Bicycle Master Plan was adopted in 2008
 - ◆ Urbana received Bronze-level "Bicycle Friendly Community" status in 2010
 - ◆ Upgraded to Gold-level BFC in 2014
 - ◆ Latest update to Bicycle Master Plan approved in 2016
 - ◆ Re-evaluation in 2018 resulted in maintaining Gold-level BFC through 2022
 - ◆ Evaluated on Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation, and Equity
 - ◆ **Urbana's first Pedestrian Master Plan was adopted in 2020, as well as a Bicycle Wayfinding Plan**

Infrastructure Improvements

MCORE

The Green Street MCORE (Multimodal Corridor Enhancement) project completed the final phase from Lincoln Avenue to Race Street. Part of a ~\$50M overhaul of high-transit streets in Urbana and Champaign partially funded with a federal TIGER grant, this project is meant to improve mobility choices and enhance safety for people biking, walking, driving, and using mass transit.

This final phase included improved sidewalks, new bus shelters with kiosks, removal of some street parking and addition of bicycle lanes to this stretch of Green Street. The original width of the roadway was maintained.



The only thing remaining on this project at year-end was striping the new bicycle lanes.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR 2 ITEP GRANTS

1. City of Urbana Baker's Lane multi use path
2. Urbana Park District Broadway Avenue multi use path from Park Street to Kerr, including pedestrian bridge over the Saline.

Planning

Urbana Pedestrian Master Plan

The Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) completed the City's first Pedestrian Master Plan after more than two years of public input, revisions and discussion with BPAC and City staff. It was approved by the City Council in August with a minor change concerning brick sidewalks.

The final 158-page plan (not including appendices) is available on the RPC website:

<https://ccrpc.org/documents/2020-urbana-pedestrian-master-plan-final-report/>

The plan includes four "Planning Pillars" or goals: Accessibility and Connectivity, Equity, Safety, and Vibrancy. Within each of those goals are **objectives with performance measures and strategies**, with a total of 26 objectives listed.

As with the Bicycle Master Plan, the intent is to evaluate progress on an annual basis and prioritize activities toward areas that are not meeting the goals.



Pedestrian counts



Crashes & fatalities 2010-15



Missing sidewalks

Urbana Bicycle Wayfinding Plan

Following through on recommendations in the 2016 Bicycle Master Plan (BMP), CCRPC worked with a steering committee consisting of members of BPAC, City staff, and representatives from the Park District, MTD, UI, and Champaign County Bikes to complete a citywide bicycle wayfinding plan for the City of Urbana that has consistent, recognizable signage. Peer cities were identified and summaries of their implementations are included in the report. Wayfinding signs will help to brand Urbana destinations and guide cyclists to preferred routes at decision points. Recommended routes will be prioritized and signage implemented as opportunities arise to improve use of existing infrastructure and safe alternative routes.

The Wayfinding Plan was approved in June by the Plan Commission and by the City Council in August as an amendment to the 2016 Bicycle Master Plan.

The final 132-page plan is available on the RPC website:

<https://ccrpc.org/documents/urbana-bicycle-wayfinding-master-plan-final-report-2020/>



Installation of bikeway and trail wayfinding signs was a specific goal of the 2016 BMP, and several other BMP goals will be advanced once the plan is implemented, such as safety improvements, continuity of routes, bike access to employers, and establishing a “Green Loop” trail.



Figure 5-7 Confirmation Signs for Off-Street Trails

KRT Extension Study

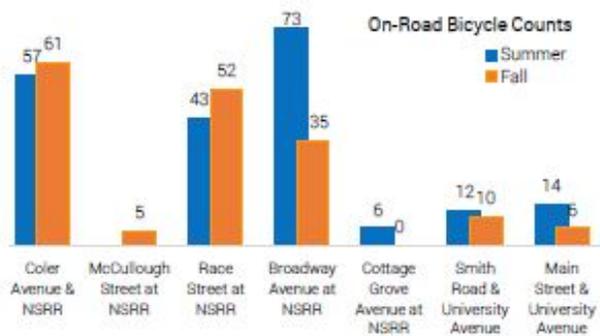
A feasibility study funded by a \$100,000 IDOT planning and research grant along with a local match from Carle, the **Kickapoo Rail Trail Extension Study** was conducted by CCRPC with community stakeholders over two years. The purpose of this study was to analyze the potential of extending the existing KRT westward from its current terminus in East Urbana through Downtown Urbana to Lincoln Avenue. Since portions of the railroad are still active in order to serve manufactures, this would be the first “Rail with Trail” project in Champaign County. This study addresses the City of Urbana City Council and Mayor Priority for 2018-2021 to “expand connectivity of the Kickapoo Rail Trail with a focus between Vine Street and Lincoln Avenue.”

The final 238-page report is available on the RPC website:

<https://ccrpc.org/urbana-krt-extension-study/>

The study was reviewed and recommended for approval by BPAC in October, and accepted by the City Council in December.

Figure 3.33: 12-hour On-Road Bicycle Count Summary



VISION ZERO URBANA

BPAC presented a request in the form of a BPAC resolution to the City Council in January along with a brief presentation about the Vision Zero approach and how communities have successfully used it to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries. The request was to adopt a council resolution making a commitment to implementing Vision Zero.

On October 26th, the City Council unanimously adopted [resolution 2020-09-049R](#), setting as official policy the Vision Zero goal of reducing loss of life or serious injury on our transportation system to zero by 2030. The resolution also directs BPAC to establish a Vision Zero task force to develop a Vision Zero Plan for the City.

- Chair Brown worked with Dr. Rahim Benekohal and Sarthak Prasad to submit a grant application for a UI CO+RE Community + Research Partnership program award for a detailed study and analysis of behavior of people walking and biking on campus. This program pairs UI researchers with community organizations and policymakers to creatively translate research to action. The implementation phase of this grant would have helped to produce a communication plan for Vision Zero. Unfortunately this project was not selected for funding.
- The Vision Zero Subcommittee of BPAC worked with a UI Community Learning Lab graduate student, Girija Bodhankar to develop a draft public factsheet to introduce the program to the public.
- BPAC members and Mayor Marlin participated in the United Nations World Day of Remembrance on November 15, 2020
- The long-term trends showing substantial increases in Champaign County pedestrian and cyclist fatalities were presented to the RPC CUUATS technical and policy committees.

TRADITIONAL APPROACH

Traffic deaths are **INEVITABLE**

PERFECT human behavior

Prevent **COLLISIONS**

INDIVIDUAL responsibility

Saving lives is **EXPENSIVE**

VS

VISION ZERO

Traffic deaths are **PREVENTABLE**

Integrate **HUMAN FAILING** in approach

Prevent **FATAL AND SEVERE CRASHES**

SYSTEMS approach

Saving lives is **NOT EXPENSIVE**

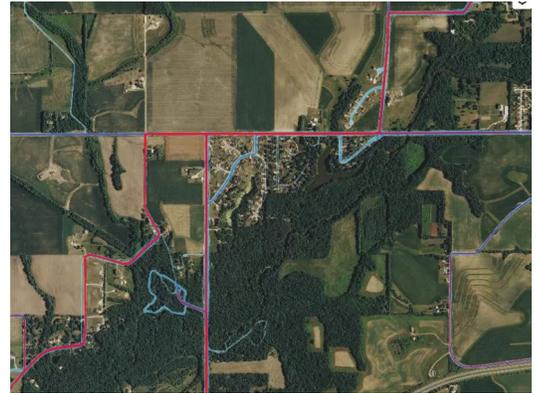
Next steps include:

- Creation of a Vision Zero Task Force that will include key stakeholders and staff to create a plan of action for Vision Zero
- Creation of a public awareness campaign that will seek to develop awareness and ownership in achieving the Vision Zero goal of zero traffic deaths and serious injuries in Urbana by 2030 among all community members, including residents, workers and visitors. The concrete steps in infrastructure engineering, enforcement, and education taken by the City and its residents should be well understood and result in sustained engagement of all participants.

Change to bylaws

At the October BPAC meeting we voted to change our bylaws to allow a youth member to serve on the Commission. A special youth application was developed with the approval of the Mayor's office.

Recognizing that Urbana residents who ride bikes frequently ride throughout the rural area, BPAC also considers advocacy for safer rural connections a part of our mission.



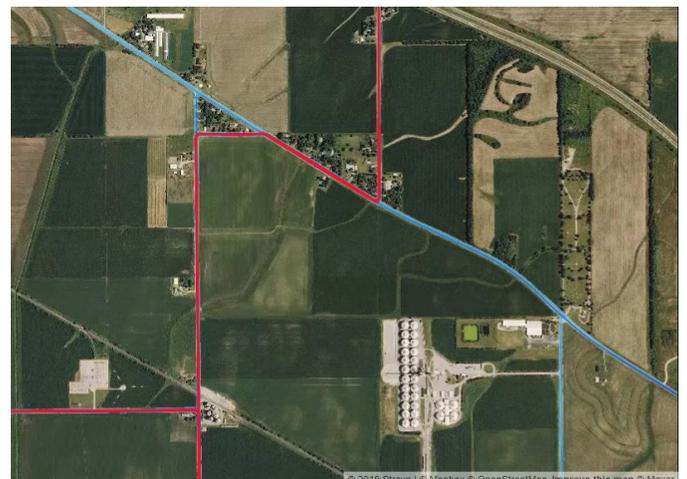
Route 10 at Sand Lake

In 2020, Champaign County had 3 cyclist fatalities, all near Urban areas on state or federal routes (2 near Mahomet and one near Gifford). At the November BPAC meeting, chair Brown made a short presentation last November for Bob Nelson of IDOT who was kind enough to join the meeting at the invitation of Lily Wilcock. We pointed out several areas on 150, Route 10, and Route 49 that are bottlenecks for recreational riders or commuters and would benefit from bicycle accommodation. We demonstrated how publically available usage data (“heat maps”) can identify these short segments where users have no safe alternative routes to make a connection to rural roads.

In most cases, a 4-foot shoulder with a rumble strip would be sufficient to provide a safer alternative on highways with little or no shoulder. The portion of 150 west of Mahomet, with no shoulder, was originally planned to be repaved with 3-foot shoulders, but IDOT has agreed to provide the 4-foot shoulders instead.



Race St extended at Cnty Hwy 18



Rising Rd at 150

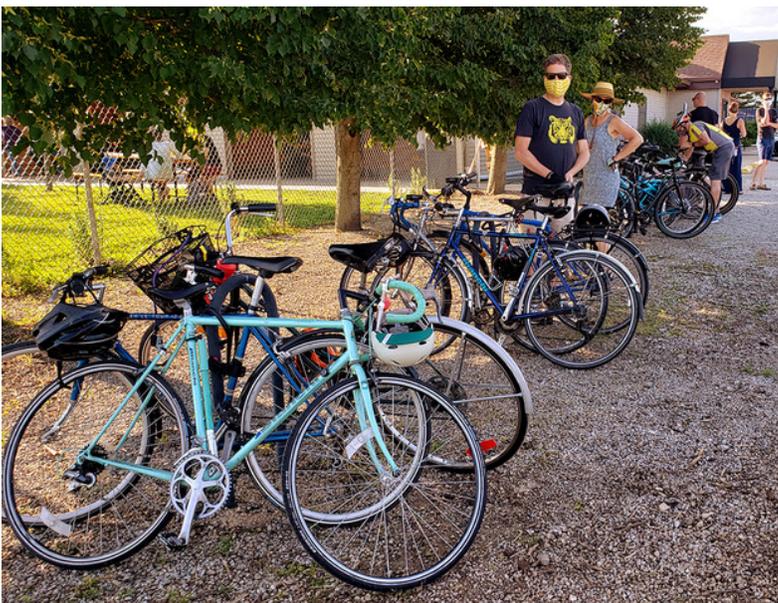
Impact of pandemic on active transportation

- Initially with the lockdown, vehicle traffic was much lower. But at the same time vehicle speeds were noticeably higher and drivers were more distracted with worries about the pandemic, creating dangerous conditions for people sharing the road while biking or walking. Nationally, crashes per vehicle mile driven increased.
- In Urbana neighborhoods with more people working at home, more people took breaks during the day or after work to go for walks in the neighborhood or nearby parks.
- Restaurants and bars looking to utilize more outdoor space took advantage of limited opportunities provided by the City to use public areas. These public outdoor uses of space adjacent to roads is something BPAC has long advocated for, to naturally reduce vehicle speeds.
- As summer approached, more people than ever took up walking and cycling for exercise, with fitness centers closed or operating at reduced capacity. Local bike shops had parts shortages and retailers sold out of bicycles.
- While MTD offered masks, many people avoided mass transit and chose to walk or bicycle instead.
- Most organized walks/runs/rides were cancelled. A few socially-distanced informal events were organized by local advocates, but people generally rode or walked alone or with a few friends. There were a few creative tours created to encourage people to explore and find sculpture or other art.

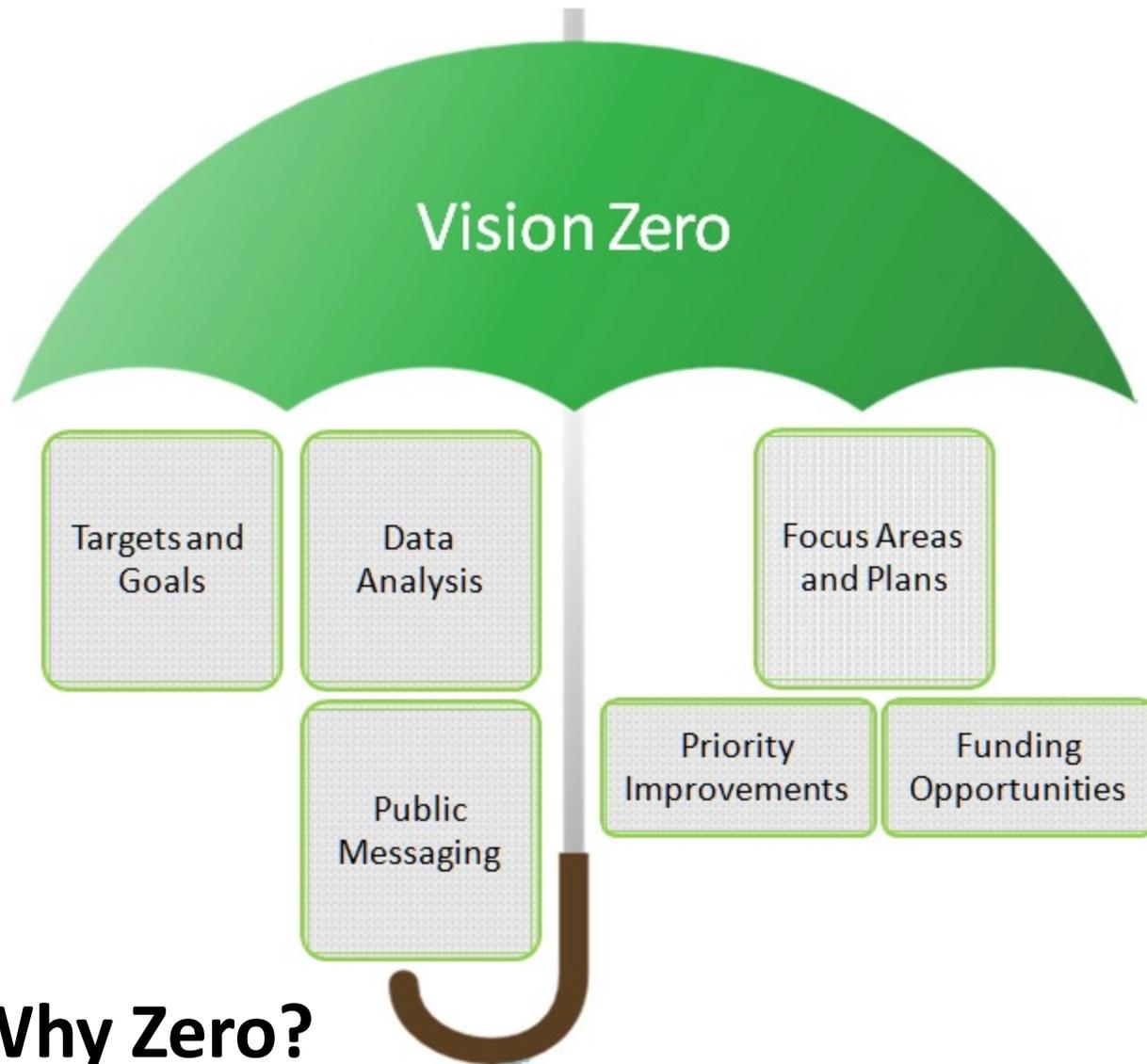


Additional Topics Discussed

- BPAC Webpage content
- Tactical Urbanism
- Regional Bicycle Registration Program – implemented by the UI and now available at the Urbana Free Library and other locations around town.
 - <https://bike.illinois.edu/register-your-bike/benefits-of-registration/>
 - <https://bike.illinois.edu/register-your-bike/>
- Vine & Main intersection report - following pedestrian fatality of Shelly Taylor in April of 2019, Fehr Graham conducted a study to compare the intersection as built to current design standards.
- Outdoor seating for bars and restaurants
- Temporary Pedestrian Streets or “Play Streets”



Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries among all road users, and to ensure safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.



Why Zero?

- Denver example - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4MuD14q7k0>
- Safety Perception. How many injuries or deaths are acceptable? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDkPSL1aCX8>