

# City Of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee 2015 Annual Report

## Introduction

The City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee was created out of a recommendation in the City Non-Motorized Plan and serves under the City Of Ypsilanti Planning Commission. The Committee was created in September 2010.

The Statement of Purpose of the Committee is as follows... “The City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee, working through the Planning Commission, will work to enact recommendations of the City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Plan so as to offer residents increased non-motorized transportation and recreation options as well as having the Plan creating economic and quality of life incentives to the City”.

## Operations

The Committee met every month of 2015 generally on the first Thursday of the month at the Ypsilanti District Library, 229 West Michigan Avenue.

2015 members of the Committee through the year (some terms ended, others began) were as follows...

- Tony Bedogne (City Of Ypsilanti Planning Commission member)
- Diana Gonzalez
- Kevin Hill (Downtown Development Association) Note: Alternative DDA NMAC liaison is DDA Director Tim Colbeck
- Rod Johnson (Chairman – City of Ypsilanti Planning Commission Chair)
- Bob Krzewinski (City of Ypsilanti Recreation Commission)
- Laura Shiltz
- Cheryl Weber (Full Circle Community Center & AAATA Local Advisory Council)
- Kathy Kowatch
- Lena Reeves
- Martha Cleary
- Sarah Walsh

## Non-Motorized Advisory Committee 2015 Actions

During 2015 the Committee actively worked to complete many of the goals of the Non-Motorized Plan, as listed below.

- Public Input – The Committee’s meetings always start with a public input session on the City’s Non-Motorized Plan and the work of the Committee. The Committee also maintains a Facebook page offering an opportunity for additional public input.
- Publicity/Outreach – Committee meetings are publicized though an official City notice though the City Clerks office as well as announcements over the Committee’s Facebook page as well as through other email/Facebook pages (i.e. Bike Ypsi, Ypsilanti Health Coalition, etc.). The Committee also maintains a non-motorized information rack inside Ypsilanti Cycle on Michigan Avenue.
- Bicycle Map – A new County bicycle map, which includes an updated panel for the City of Ypsilanti, was completed with copies available to the public starting in May 2015. Committee member Tony Bedogne had a large role in this map, working with the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission, City of Ann Arbor and the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS). Locally, maps are available at the downtown Convention & Visitors Bureau.
- Bike Lanes – The Committee continued to work with the City on new bike lanes on Forest, Miles and West Cross Streets, making sure these were included in the City Capitol Improvements Plan.
- Signage/pavement marking improvements – The Committee identified areas where pedestrian safety signage and markings need to be improved and continues to work with the City and the Michigan Department Of Transportation (MDOT) to make improvements.

- Sidewalk Improvements – The Committee early in 2015 worked with the Planning Commission to include a number of Committee Priorities were included in the City’s Capitol Improvement Plan. The City completed sidewalk gaps at Candy Cane and Edith Hefley Parks which were both on the Committee’s 2015 Priority List. In the fall, Committee members made a tour of areas of the City in need of sidewalk improvements, especially for wheelchair users.
- City Non-Motorized Plan Update – With the current plan requiring an update for 2016, Committee members met with City Planning Department staff on a number of occasions in 2015 to work on this issue. In addition, the Committee held public input sessions on a draft update document October 2 (City Hall), October 10 (Depot Town Farmers Market) and December 3 (downtown Library). Also, Committee member Sarah Walsh created an on-line survey for input about the Plan update.
- Bike Friendly Community & Walk Friendly Community applications – For the Bike Friendly Community, the City received an “Honorable Mention” award in 2014 to which the Committee continued work in 2015 to obtain a higher status in a follow-up application. The City learned in 2015 that it did not receive a Walk Friendly award in 2015 but the report given by the organization running the Walk Friendly awards will be useful for improvements to be worked on for the next application.
- Bike Friendly Business program – The Committee, working with the Downtown Association of Ypsilanti, Depot Town Merchants Association and Downtown Development Authority, continued work on a local Bike Friendly Business (BFB) program as a way to promote active and healthy lifestyles for employees and customers in the Ypsilanti area. The campaign will honor corporations, organizations, associations, government agencies or non-profit groups located in Ypsilanti that actively promotes bicycling for transportation, recreation, exercise and sport. Rollout for the program was in the spring of 2015 with Committee members enrolling businesses and providing BFB window stickers.
- Public education outreach to encourage bicycling and walking – The Committee had information tables at the Bike Ypsi Spring Ride (5/3), Parkridge Summer Festival (8/22 – where free helmets were given away courtesy of the Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society and free bike tune-ups courtesy of Common Cycle) and the annual downtown Ypsilanti Halloween Festival (10/30 – free lighted wrist bands were given away courtesy of the AAATA). The Committee also sponsored “Cold Weather Cycling” talks at the Michigan Avenue Library on November 7 and December 14. The Committee also kept a non-motorized information kiosk at Ypsilanti Cycle stocked with free handouts on cycling safety and maps through the year.
- Bike Theft – The Committee came up with recommendations in 2015 to curb bike theft in the City.
- Border To Border Trail completion progress – The Committee continued to follow and report updates on Trail construction in the City on the Committee’s Facebook page. Committee members attended City Council meetings speaking in favor of the Trail when that was an agenda item, and attended the groundbreaking for the Water Street segment on August 20. A support letter was also sent to the City Manager for plans to improve the Trail routing along Grove Road to I-94. In late 2015, the Committee also began having conversations with the City and the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission to re-route the Trail in 2016 to use the new Trail bridge and Water Street segment.
- I-94/Huron – Hamilton Streets non-motorized project - The Committee continued to follow these items closely.
- Snow Removal – In the winter months the Committee mounted a campaign to educate area residents, thorough social media and its Facebook page, about the need to shovel sidewalks as required by City ordinance. The Committee also attended, and gave input at, a special City Council session on snow removal held November 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- AAATA Transit Center – The Committee sent a letter to the AAATA, and attended a July 7<sup>th</sup> local hearing to push for non-motorized improvements to the Ypsilanti Pearl Street Transit Center (i.e. bike racks/lockers, pedestrian improvements).

- May Bike-Bus-Walk Week (May 10-16) – The Committee again oversaw this event (which coincides with national Bike To Work Week), which encourages people to try alternative transportation in the hope that this will become a habit. As part of the week’s events, the Committee sponsored “Ghost Bikes” (white painted bikes with signs on them stating “a cyclist was injured near this spot” to encourage sharing the road) which were temporarily displayed around the City to encourage motorists and bicyclists to safely share the road. Also, the Committee appeared on the Mark Maynard radio show 5/9 to publicize the Week, held a “Basic Biking” talk at the Library on 5/14 and ran a morning Bike To Work Day (5/15) commuter station on Washington Street encouraging people to try biking to work.
- Wayfinding Signage – Committee members gave input to making any wayfinding sign program in the City also non-motorized friendly, such as signage for walking routes between downtown, EMU and Depot Town. Committee members also conducted walking tours for possible pedestrian sign locations.
- Training Wheels – The Committee Chair attended a May 19<sup>th</sup> “Training Wheels” course run by the Michigan Department Of Transportation (MDOT) in Monroe, MI designed to educate participants on the planning and design on non-motorized facilities.
- Mayors' Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets - The City Council approved signing on to the this U.S. Department of Transportation program to help reduce pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and deaths, with the Committee being the local contact.
- Traffic Calming – The Committee attended a March 17<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting and spoke in favor of a City traffic calming bump policy, which was approved later in the year by Council. The Committee continues to have traffic calming as a priority project as it directly relates to pedestrian safety.
- Runner Friendly Community – The Committee was in contact with the Ypsilanti Running Company about this program.
- Committee Priorities – The Committee started work on a list of Committee priorities for the upcoming calendar year in October and completed the list at it’s December meeting.
- Monthly Planning Department meeting – Members of the Committee met with Planning Department staff prior to most Committee meetings for input and updates.
- Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition - The Committee continues to work with this county-wide advocacy group