

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



Prepared by: Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc. (308500-00102)

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The development of the Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan was made possible by the leadership of:

Jim Sass	
Mark Stahl	
Mark Coppeler	
Rhonda Slauterbeck	Ottawa County Administrator

The Steering Committee, identified herein, played an important role in developing this plan by contributing their time to this effort. The Committee's knowledge of the County and their enthusiasm for this project is evident by the final result in the Executive Summary.

Executive Summary

The *Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan* was developed by the Board of County Commissioners of Ottawa County, Ohio, with collaborating private and public partners. The Plan development was funded by a 100% grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

The purpose of the planning process is to build a consensus on a clear county-wide vision for safe, user-oriented bicycle/pedestrian facilities. The plan should build on existing facilities, recreation areas, historic and natural preservation sites, and workplace destinations; develop strategies to promote a healthy lifestyle; develop strategies to enhance non-motorized transportation connections to significant destinations; and develop strategies to enhance eco-cultural and recreational tourism.

There currently is no coordinated system of bicycle and pedestrian paths in Ottawa County. The only existing separated multi-use path runs southeast from Elmore; an extension from the Villages of Elmore to Genoa is currently in design and is scheduled for construction in 2019. There is an on-road designated route in Marblehead and an on-road designated lane on Southeast Catawba Road from S.R. 163 on Catawba Island. The Portage River is currently under consideration as a River Trail for kayak and canoe travel. The County has three different ferry boat services that connect the mainland with Lake Erie Islands.

The Plan was developed with the assistance of a Steering Committee appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. Public meetings were conducted in July, 2018, at the beginning of the planning process to obtain input from residents and in August, 2018, to present the draft *Active Transportation Plan* to stakeholders and the general public.

The proposed *Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan* identifies main county corridors, connections to adjacent counties, and connections to commercial and residential areas. The Plan also recognizes local plans, including Safe Routes to Schools, in various jurisdictions within Ottawa County.

In addition to the planned NCIT, two new main corridors are proposed to connect the west and east boundaries of the County. One of the corridors parallels the Portage River using abandoned railroad right-of-way where practical. The second main corridor is proposed along the Lake Erie Shore from the City of Oregon to the City of Port Clinton. Other important corridors are proposed in the peninsula; Port Clinton to Lakeside and Marblehead. An existing bike path on Southeast Catawba Road to the north end of Catawba Island would connect the commercial and residential centers on the peninsula. It is proposed that connections to municipalities and other commercial and residential centers would be constructed from the main proposed corridors.

The *Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan* provides the long-term vision for the development of a countywide active transportation network to be used by all residents for all types of trips. The following strategies are provided to aid the strategic partners in the implementation of this plan.

Strategy 1:	Develop an active Ottawa County Parks District to manage overall implementation
Strategy 2:	Strategically pursue infrastructure projects
Strategy 3:	Continual review and evaluation of existing infrastructure for all users
Strategy 4:	Grow public awareness and bicycle safety

- Strategy 5: Update the Active Transportation Plan
- Strategy 6: Seek ongoing public input
- Strategy 7: Collaborate with ODOT
- Strategy 8: Document success
- Strategy 9: Establish measures of effectiveness

Chapter 1: Background

The Board of County Commissioners of Ottawa County, Ohio, and collaborating partners including public and private agencies in the County, recognize that the planning and construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities can be an important economic driver for additional investment in Ottawa County. Studies show that shared use trails increase property values and encourage the creation of small businesses, such as bicycle shops, restaurants, and lodging.

The partners also recognize that many residents and visitors desire safe, comfortable, and convenient routes to encourage healthy physical activity. Multi-use trails could connect significant tourist and workplace destinations in the County and surrounding areas.

Neighboring counties have successfully completed Active Transportation Plans and Bicycle Plans (Erie, Sandusky, Lucas and Wood) and have envisioned a network of routes that end at the Ottawa County line. In 2017, the Villages of Genoa and Elmore, the Community Improvement Corporation, and the County Commissioners worked together to submit an application to fund the continuation of the North Coast Inland Trail from the Village of Elmore to Genoa within Ottawa County. The Sandusky County Parks District held ownership of the proposed route to ensure the continuation of the North Coast Inland Trail that traverses Sandusky County. The extension of the North Coast Inland Trail from Elmore to Genoa is anticipated to be complete in 2019, leaving the segment from Genoa to Millbury in Wood County incomplete.

The Board of County Commissioners received grant funding from the Ohio Department of Transportation to develop an Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan for the entire County to plan safe facilities for nonmotorized modes of transportation. The purpose of the funding is to support projects that improve safety for people who walk and bike in Ohio.



The Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan recommends strategies to enhance connections and linkages by safe, user-oriented non-motorized transportation routes. The Plan encourages bicycling and walking to promote a healthier lifestyle through increased activity and addresses barriers to implementation identified by the review of accident reports, traffic counts and other available data. A Steering Committee was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners, representing a broad geographic and social economic population of the County. Gaps and barriers in the transportation system are identified and addressed in the Plan. Specific strategies and actions are recommended to increase future opportunities for active transportation in Ottawa County.

Ottawa County is bordered on the north by Lake Erie and includes four islands. More than 10 million trips are made to the Lake Erie Shores and Islands each year, making it one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Midwest. According to the Economic Impact of Tourism study conducted for TourismOhio, visitors spent \$371 million in Ottawa County alone in 2015. On the islands, the preferred method of transportation other than walking is bicycling and golf carts, making active transportation not only a great idea, but a necessity and way of life for residents and visitors. In addition, there are many communities on the mainland that want to encourage non-motorized modes of transportation to protect the delicate ecosystem in Lake Erie and the surrounding area. Ottawa County's most treasured asset is the natural environment. Reducing motorized transportation modes not only supports a healthier lifestyle, but also improves air quality and the environment.

Ottawa County is also the location of state and federally-owned historic sites, i.e., Victory and International Peace Monument on Put-In-Bay, Ottawa National Refuge, Marblehead Lighthouse historic site, East Harbor State Park, and Magee Marsh, to name a few. These organizations are very interested in increasing visits to their significant sites. Ottawa County is considered one of the most important sites for birdwatching in the country bringing 90,000 visitors



to the area spending \$40 million annually. According to Jason Lewis, Director, Ottawa National Refuge, there are 334,000 visitors to the Refuge annually. Ninety percent (90%) of the visits are for wildlife observation. Migratory birds are the operation's top priority. Support of hunting in season is a minor part of the operation. A wildlife drive is open every weekend.

In 2018, Ottawa County ranked 27th in the State of Ohio for overall health outcomes. Thirty-six percent (36%) of adults were considered obese compared to 30% statewide. Nationally, 22% of children are obese. Obese children live five years less than their healthier peers.

The Active Transportation Plan is a first step in developing a safe, user-oriented infrastructure that responds to residents and visitors' desire to use alternative modes of transportation and improved opportunities for an active lifestyle.

Strategies and Policies

The following is a summary of State policies and strategies that support development of local planning efforts:

Access Ohio 2040 – Ohio Department of Transportation

Due to the steady growth of interest in active transportation, ODOT's long-range transportation plan includes strategies to identify a national and a statewide bicycle route network. It will be the first statewide bicycle network developed for Ohio. The first step in this process is adopting the National Corridor Plan developed by AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) that identifies U.S bicycle routes (USBR) connecting states throughout the country. Five of these USBR corridors pass through Ohio. The State Bike Routes developed will supplement the USBRs providing connections to the 17



metropolitan centers across the State. ODOT will work with MPOs, RPOs and local governments to complete the designation of the remaining USBRs in Ohio by 2020 and by 2040, all SBRs will be designated. Draft versions of USBRs 30 and 90 involve western Ottawa County. Future path construction should include coordination to use the route designations.

2013 Ohio Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

For Northwest Ohio, walking and biking were identified as two of the activities that are on the increase, and questions on the statewide survey used to gauge public interest were the most responded to of all of the forms of recreation options presented. In addition, the development of shared use paths for bicycling and walking is identified as a major concern by the focus group participants, including more improved trails and connectivity among trails.

Trails for Ohioans Plan – Ohio Department of Natural Resources

The plan identifies potential trail corridors such as railroad rights-of-way, utility corridors, street/road rights-of-way, riparian corridors and easements for the purpose of bicycle facility development. In addition, several sections of the plan are relevant to this plan and the development of active transportation facilities in Ottawa County. First, the goal of connecting trails identifies the following implementation strategy relevant to this plan:

Trails as transportation alternatives identifies an implementation strategy to provide "opportunities for utilizing trails for human powered transportation alternatives and commuter access" in Ohio. Transportation planners should give greater emphasis to non-motorized and multi-modal approaches to meeting congestion and air quality issues while at the same time increasing alternate transportation and recreation opportunities.

ODNR is planning an update of the *Ohio Trails Plan* last updated in 2005. They have conducted public meetings throughout Ohio to obtain information about local trail development and planning since 2005. ODNR wants to complete the plan update by the end of 2018.



The Ohio General Assembly has formed The Ohio Trails Caucus and has passed a concurrent resolution on June 18, 2018, proclaiming 2018 "The Year of the Trails". The Resolution is non-binding and has no funding for trails.

Trail Support Facilities identifies strategies to maximize recreation and transportation opportunities of trail users:

- ✓ Strategically located access points, trailheads, or staging areas are particularly important considerations when planning and developing trails. Facilities available at a trailhead can provide the user with a critical first impression before trail use. Where feasible, trailheads should be fully accessible to trail users with disabilities.
- ✓ A greater emphasis should be placed on the design and planning of staging areas that offer access to more than one type of recreational activity or participant. The integration of amenities at dual-purpose staging areas would allow participants to secure recreational equipment, thus enhancing the quality of the recreational experience.

Trails Funding strategy acknowledges that funding for trails is inadequate and the administration of existing grant programs needs to be improved:

 Trail managers should pursue private sources of funds for trail projects such as corporations, non-profit organizations and foundations. Establishing user fees for trails should also be explored. Trail managers should consider using non-traditional sources of funds, e.g., transportation, tourism, and community development funds, to finance trail projects.

Trails Accessible to All identifies that trails should be designed and constructed to be accessible to those with disabilities, to the maximum extent possible:

- ✓ Trail providers should develop their facilities and implement their programs in compliance with federal and state statutes on accessibility.
- ✓ Trail providers should expand accessible trail opportunities and continue to distribute information on these trail opportunities.

Safe Routes to Schools

Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) programs have been instrumental in making changes in communities by involving parents, schools, community leaders, and local, state and federal government to promote healthy living, safe infrastructure, and physical activity starting with bicycling and walking to school. The programs examine existing conditions around schools and conduct projects and activities that work to improve safety and accessibility by not only funding infrastructure improvements, but also safety education for kids.

The ODOT Website lists three Safe Routes to School Plans completed in Ottawa County. The plans are identified as:

- Port Clinton School Travel Plan, dated December 1, 2011
- Danbury Middle School, October, 2013
- Put-in-Bay Bikers

Completion of plan elements varies and should be coordinated with the Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan.

Planning Process

The purpose of the planning process is to build a consensus on a clear county-wide vision for safe, useroriented bicycle/pedestrian facilities. The plan should:

- Build on existing facilities, recreation areas, historic and natural preservation sites, and workplace destinations;
- Develop strategies to promote a healthy lifestyle;
- Develop strategies to enhance connections to significant destinations; and
- Develop strategies to enhance eco-cultural and recreational tourism.

The Plan should also address organization and management to implement the Plan and list potential funding sources for implementation.

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

There currently is no coordinated system of bicycle and pedestrian paths in Ottawa County. Existing connections and miles of designated trails are:

Location	Length
Elmore to Genoa	3.82 mi. extension of North Coast Inland Trail. Anticipated completion in 2019 (primarily on railroad right-of-way)
Marblehead	1 mi. on S.R. 163, east of LaFarge to Cottage Cove (on-road)
Catawba Island	4.65 mi. on S.R. 53 to Miller Ferry (on-road designated lane)

There are also interior bicycle/pedestrian paths in several parks and conservancy districts, including East Harbor State Park.

Water Trails

A committee has been formed by Toledo Metropolitan Council of Governments to determine the feasibility of designating the Portage River as a river trail for kayak and canoe (non-motorized) travel. The committee is planning access to the river at intervals of not more than ten miles. Several communities in Ottawa County have existing access for kayak and canoe travel, including the Villages of Elmore and Oak Harbor and the City of Port Clinton. Access is also available at Ottawa National Refuge and the Ottawa County Fairgrounds. Connection



to these access points by bicycle/pedestrian paths would enhance the visitor experience.

Ferry Boat Transportation

Ottawa County has three different ferry services. There is ferry boat service that can transport vehicles from the north end of Catawaba Island Township in Ottawa County to South Bass Island (Put-in-Bay) and Middle Bass Island in Ottawa County. Ferry boat service (bicycles and passengers only) is also available from Port Clinton to South Bass Island and Kelleys Island (Erie County) and between South Bass and Kelleys Islands. A water taxi is available from South Bass Island to Middle Bass Island. The third is a ferry boat service from Marblehead (Danbury Township) to Kelleys Island in Erie County. Ferry service is also available in the City of Sandusky (Erie County to Middle Bass and Kelleys Islands). Pedestrian and bicyclists can connect to trails in Ottawa and Erie Counties by ferry.



National and Regional Trail Systems

Several opportunities exist for future connections to national and regional trail systems. In Northwest Ohio, the North Coast Inland Trail will be 105 miles from the Village of Millbury in Wood County to the City of Lorain. The Wabash Cannonball has a north branch (46 miles) and a south branch (17 miles) that could link to Ottawa County by onroad designations. The Slippery Elm Trail (13 miles) in Wood County is complete. The City of Sandusky in Erie County has future plans to extend a bike path from the City to Ottawa County. The planned numbered U.S. Bike Routes offer an opportunity to coordinate Ottawa County paths with the state and national systems.



Chapter 3: Development

Steering Committee

The Board of County Commissioners appointed a Steering Committee to work with the consultant to discuss facilitating bicycle and pedestrian connections with Ottawa County and the surrounding area. The Steering Committee met monthly and participated in public meetings to solicit input from residents. The Committee made recommendations and provided direction for the



development of an Active Transportation Plan for Ottawa County. Copies of meeting notes are included in the appendix. Members of the Steering Committee are:

Organization	Name
County Commissioners Representative	Mark Coppeler OR
	Mark Stahl OR
	Jim Sass OR
	Rhonda Slauterbeck
Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge	Jason P. Lewis
Oak Harbor Economic Development Group	Mike Shadoan
Ottawa County Park District	Gary Kohli
Ottawa County Engineer	Ron P. Lajti, Jr. OR
Ottawa County Engineer	Mike Wittman
Village of Elmore	Dean Ridner
Village of Genoa	John Lewis
Clay Township	Thomas Bergman
Danbury Township	Carolyn Adams
Resident	Dennis Patthoff
Ottawa County Improvement Corp	Gaye Winterfield
Catawba Island Marina	Jack Madison
Lake Erie Shores & Islands	Larry Fletcher
Ottawa County Regional Planning	Mark Messa
City of Port Clinton	Tracy Colston

Public Outreach and Input

The Ohio Lake Erie Shores & Islands Visitor Center conducted a survey in 2014 to determine activities of interest. The Lake Erie Islands were first (88%) followed by beaches (76%). The Marblehead Lighthouse and other historic sites also had significant interest (70% and 64%, respectively).



The Steering Committee held a public meeting on June 6, 2018, at the Ottawa County Fairgrounds to receive input about desired destinations, ideas for future expansion and other needs of trail users in Ottawa County. Attendance at the meeting was approximately 25 persons. A written survey was taken at the meeting as well as opportunities for residents to view accepted multi-use trail design, potential funding opportunities, and review potential trail destinations and connections. Ten persons submitted the written survey.

The Ottawa National Refuge and the Marblehead

Lighthouse were the most desired connection/destination for a trail. Other public input indicated a desire to connect the municipalities and business districts with a multi-use trail. Several persons attending the meeting suggested use of the abandoned OPS Interurban Railway route as a potential off-road, separate path, although many property owners may be involved.

A second public meeting was held on August 29, 2018, at the Lake Erie Shores & Islands Visitors Center located at 770 SE Catawba Road, Port Clinton. Local government elected officials were sent invitations and a notice was published in the local news media and distributed throughout the County. Nearly 50 persons attended the meeting to view the draft *Active Transportation Plan*.

Safety

Since studies indicate an increase in bicycling and walking in recent years, it would be expected that this increase would result in an increase in motor vehicle collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians, but the opposite is actually true. When bikes and pedestrians are commonplace, motorist expect them and take precautions. By providing infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians, motorists are given visual reminders to anticipate others along the route. In addition, they know where to expect them.



The most common causes of bicycle and pedestrian accidents are distraction (both driver and pedestrian), time of day, drug and alcohol use, and speed. Pedestrians are most often killed in the evening or late at night when visibility is reduced.

Pedestrian and bicycle accident data was reviewed for a five year period from 2011 to 2016 within Ottawa County. Data on collisions involving bicyclists can help planners and decision-makers identify areas in which to make improvements. Bicyclist safety is impacted by a number of variables including the design of facilities for biking, the speed of motor vehicle traffic, enforcement and education efforts. In addition, bicyclist safety tends to increase as the number of cyclists increase along a route.

Active Transportation Plan

The proposed Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan identifies main county corridors, connections to adjacent counties, and connections to commercial and residential areas. The Plan also recognizes local plans, including Safe Routes to Schools, in various jurisdictions within Ottawa County.



Two main corridors are proposed to connect the west and east boundaries of the County. One of the corridors parallels the Portage River using the old interurban roadbed, where practical. Initiatives have been started to designate the Portage River as a water trail for non-motorized watercraft. This corridor is a designated scenic route and could provide beautiful, panoramic views along a multi-use trail.

The second main corridor is proposed along the Lake Erie Shore from the City of Oregon to the City of Port Clinton. Many challenges, such as wetlands, available public right-of-way, etc., will need to be resolved before construction of multi-use paths along the Lake Shore, but ownership is often large public parks and refuges. Construction of a path along the Lake Shore could have many benefits that outweigh any obstacles. This path could be the entry to Ottawa County from Lucas County and other regional trails. The City of Oregon has a multi-use path extended to Maumee Bay State Park that could connect to the many wildlife refuge areas and Howard Marsh operated by the Toledo Area Metroparks District along the Lake Shore.

Other main corridors are proposed in the Peninsula; Port Clinton to Lakeside and Marblehead. An existing bike path on SE Catawba Road to the north end of Catawba Island would connect the commercial and residential centers on the Peninsula.

The extension of the North Coast Inland Trail from Elmore to Genoa is planned for construction in 2019. An extension to the Village of Millbury in Wood County would connect the two counties and into other regional trail systems in Ohio and beyond.

It is anticipated that connections to municipalities and other commercial and residential centers would be constructed from the main proposed corridors. Interest has been shown by residents in a safe path on South Bayshore Road and an East Northshore Road connection from Lakeside to S.R. 163. Consideration could be given to cross country skiing and winter sledding when planning off-road paths. Separate trails could also be considered for mountain biking and equestrian trails based on interest and available land area. Fitness stations could be added to multi-use paths to encourage cardiovascular exercise.

Other county plans that propose connections to Ottawa County are shown on the *Active Transportation Plan* map. Any proposed connections to these regional plans should be conceptual and verified as planning progresses to determine if the information is current.



Other Improvements

Trail Amenities and Support Facilities

Trail amenities and support facilities are essential elements of trail design, as they enhance safety and convenience for bicycle riders. With these facilities in place, people are more likely to use the facilities and be drawn to the facilities for long distance rides and/or hikes. Exact locations for these have not been identified in the plan for each route, but should be evaluated as implementation of the plan progresses.

Wayfinding

Trail users may not always be locals using the trail for recreation or transportation and they may be unfamiliar with the surrounding area. Wayfinding signs can be used to direct bicyclists and pedestrians to connections such as shopping centers, cities and towns, and other relevant destinations. At trailheads and other key locations, a schematic diagram of the trail is helpful to new users unfamiliar with the trail routes.

Trailheads

Trailheads are the beginning of a trail and should provide wayfinding and parking facilities at a minimum

and even restrooms and water fountains where practicable. Parks are ideal locations for a trailhead since they typically already have these amenities.

Bicycle Parking

Bicyclists need secure and well-located bicycle parking at visible, convenient locations. If bicycle parking is not available, bicyclists will make do with what they can find – trees, street signs, street furniture, etc. These alternatives can impede pedestrian traffic and be substantially less secure.



Trail Hubs

Trail Hubs are stops along trails that, due to their location and the amenities available nearby and onsite, offer an opportunity for long distance hikers and bikers to rest, refresh, restock supplies, and communicate with others through mail or recharged personal devices.

On-site amenities at bike hubs can include:

- ✓ Trail information such as signage and paper maps
- ✓ Public water facilities
- \checkmark Restrooms and showers
- ✓ Bicycle repair stand with tools
- ✓ Seating and tables
- ✓ Charging station for electronic devices
- ✓ Public Wi-Fi
- ✓ Parking, both bicycle and motor vehicle

Amenities located nearby can include:

- ✓ Campgrounds or lodging
- ✓ Laundromat
- ✓ Post office
- ✓ Grocery store/ convenience store

By planning trail facilities with long distance travelers in mind, these facilities will attract hikers and bikers that can plan a route with the necessary stops and resources. An important piece in the planning and implementation of trail hubs will be to communicate these locations and the resources made available to those we are hoping to attract.

Mapping and Promotion of Active Transportation Facilities

Mapping provides opportunities for individuals, groups, businesses and websites to promote the use of trails for recreation and transportation purposes. Identifying the systems of trails, the recreational resources available, and towns supporting their users by providing informational maps, both online and hardcopy, enhances tourism, benefits local businesses and economies, and raises awareness of the trails, the destinations along the trails, and nearby tourist destinations, both locally and nationally. Federal funding is available for mapping bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Trail Planning and Design Considerations

Emergency Access and Trail Safety

One shared concern for trail users common to any location is trail safety and security. Providing trail users information about what to do in case of an emergency, ensuring emergency access to all trail locations, and providing adequate patrols are all keys to addressing this concern. Providing a location to the 911 operator is paramount in getting timely help.

With constant advances in technology, the *Active Transportation Plan* will not address the specifics of how this will be implemented on each project; however, providing emergency access shall be a consideration in the design of all trail sections and assisting trail users to identify their location in the event of an emergency shall be addressed during the planning and implementation of each trail section. In addition, first responders must be made aware of access points on new trails, any vehicle restrictions in accessing specific locations, and any obstructions, such as bollards, that may need to be removed or collapsed in order to gain access to trail sections.

Enforcement

Anecdotal evidence supports that there is still a lack of understanding of traffic law and principles relating to bicycles, by both motorists and cyclists. Enforcement of current traffic laws are essential for the safety and protection of both pedestrians and bicyclists, however, educating the public will help to create a safer environment as well.

Trail Maintenance

Maintenance on the developing trail system in Ottawa County is an essential practice to ensure the longevity and continued use of the trails. Agreements pertaining to trail maintenance responsibilities for future trail sections will be developed project by project with either a specific entity or the strategic partner/owner responsible for trail maintenance. For example, the extension of the North Coast Inland Trail from the Village of Elmore to the Village of Genoa, anticipated completion in 2019, will be maintained by the Villages by agreement with the Board of County Commissioners.

Chapter 4: Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities: Interagency and Interjurisdictional Coordination

Transitioning from planning to implementation requires the coordination of many stakeholders and processes. While the Ottawa County Commissioners were the lead agency in creating this plan, there are also other involved partners that will work to inform, educate, and protect bicyclists and the community. This will require different agencies to act as the lead agency and funding applicant on different projects. To implement this plan, coordination and collaboration with other agencies, neighboring governments, and entities will be essential.

The following is a list of Strategic Partners that will play a role in the implementation of this Development Plan:

- Board of County Commissioners
- Ottawa County Parks District
- County Engineer
- Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee
- Local government elected and appointed officials
- State of Ohio and federal elected and appointed officials
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Department of Transportation
- National Parks Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Residents and business owners in Ottawa County

Implementation Costs

Based on the largest realistic construction projects of about \$3 million, there could be over 40 individual projects over several decades in the *Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan*. Total cost of construction could be over \$40 million without considering other project cost or increases due to inflation. **Below is a breakdown of conceptual projects and current year costs as conceptual information only**. Each project will need to be evaluated to determine costs and other identified challenges before being developed for construction, recognizing that on-going adjustments will be needed for funding program opportunities and to account for inflation.

Routes, Distances and Conceptual Costs

Oct 2, 2018



	Segnemt		Length		Unit	Construction	N
Route	From	То	(miles)	Assumed Type	Price	Cost (a)	Notes
egional Signifcance							
lorth Coast Inland Trail	Sandusky Co.	Elmore	2.08	Rail to Trail Path	NA	NA	Completed
	Elmore	Genoa	4.74	Rail to Trail Path	\$541,700	\$2,567,658	Design Underway
	Genoa	Millbury, Wood Co.	5.30	Rail to Trail Path	\$345,000	\$1,828,500	
ake Erie Nature Corridor	Lucas Co.	Central Connector	3.34	New Alignment path	\$452,000	\$1,509,680	In cooperation with parks & refuges
	Central Connector	Davis Besse Connector	4.87	New Alignment path	\$452,000	\$2,201,240	In cooperation with parks & refuges
	SR-19	Toussaint Creek	3.17	Rail to Trail	\$345,000	\$1,093,650	
	Toussaint Creek	Ottawa NWR / Lakeshore Dr.	7.25	New Alignment path	\$452,000	\$3,277,000	In cooperation with parks & refuges
	Ottawa NWR / Lakeshore Dr.	Port Clinton	3.08	New Alignment Sidepath	\$452,000	\$1,392,160	
ortage River Corridor	NCIT, Elmore	Central Connector	5.61	Road Shoulder	\$244,300	\$1,370,523	
	Central Connector	Oak Harbor	5.53	Road Shoulder	\$244,300	\$1,350,979	
	Oak Harbor	Muddy Bay Connector	8.18	Rail to Trail Path	\$345,000	\$2,822,100	Former interurban; new RW require
	Muddy Bay Connector	SR-2	4.51	New Alignment Sidepath	\$452,000	\$2,038,520	
	SR-2	Port Clinton	2.44	New Alignment Sidepath	\$452,000	\$1,102,880	
eninsula Corridor	Port Clinton	SR-53	4.68	New Alignment Sidepath	\$452,000	\$2,115,360	
	SR-53	Bay Bridge	2.14	New Alignment Sidepath	\$452,000	\$967,280	
	Bay Bridge	Hartshorn Road	3.88	Rail to Trail	\$345,000	\$1,338,600	Former Marblehead & Lakeside Rwy
ay Bridge Connector	Bay Bridge	Erie Co.	1.89	Major bridge invovlement	**/	TBD	Joint Project, ODOT involvement
TOTAL	New York Control (Contro)		72.69			\$26,976,130	
8.000 X X X			10.2002/992/20				
County Signifcance	Sandusky Co.	NCIT, Elmore	2.46	Road Shoulder	\$244,300	\$600,978	
ounty Signifcance		NCIT, Elmore Clay Center	2.46 3.08	Road Shoulder Road Shoulder	\$244,300 \$244,300		
ounty Signifcance Imore - Woodville	Sandusky Co.				Second Street Street	\$600,978	
ounty Signifcance Imore - Woodville	Sandusky Co. Genoa	Clay Center	3.08	Road Shoulder	\$244,300	\$600,978 \$752,444	
ounty Signifcance Imore - Woodville	Sandusky Co. Genoa Clay Center	Clay Center Martin	3.08 1.08	Road Shoulder Road Shoulder	\$244,300 \$244,300	\$600,978 \$752,444 \$263,844	
ounty Signifcance Imore - Woodville Jestern Connector	Sandusky Co. Genoa Clay Center Martin	Clay Center Martin Wiliston	3.08 1.08 3.05	Road Shoulder Road Shoulder Road Shoulder	\$244,300 \$244,300 \$244,300	\$600,978 \$752,444 \$263,844 \$745,115	
ounty Signifcance more - Woodville /estern Connector	Sandusky Co. Genoa Clay Center Martin Wiliston	Clay Center Martin Wiliston Curtice	3.08 1.08 3.05 1.53	Road Shoulder Road Shoulder Road Shoulder New Alignment Sidepath	\$244,300 \$244,300 \$244,300 \$452,000	\$600,978 \$752,444 \$263,844 \$745,115 \$691,560	
ounty Signifcance Imore - Woodville Jestern Connector	Sandusky Co. Genoa Clay Center Martin Wiliston Sandusky Co.	Clay Center Martin Wiliston Curtice Portage River Corridor	3.08 1.08 3.05 1.53 2.22	Road Shoulder Road Shoulder Road Shoulder New Alignment Sidepath Road Shoulder	\$244,300 \$244,300 \$244,300 \$452,000 \$244,300	\$600,978 \$752,444 \$263,844 \$745,115 \$691,560 \$542,346	
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Potential Funding Sources

The following table summarizes current funding sources and programs available along with the eligible projects and applicants, but most programs are subject to annual changes.

Program	Local Minimum Match	Eligible Projects	Eligible Applicants
ODOT Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)	20%*	Multi-use paths that connect destinations *Have funded projects at 95% in recent grant rounds	Local government, park district
ODOT Safety Program	10-20%	Bike/pedestrian facilities in high crash areas Environment and safety education programs	State and local governments
ODOT Surface Transportation Program (STP)	20%	Bicycle lanes on roadway	State and local governments
CDBG Allocation & CDBG Critical Infrastructure (through County)	Varies	Barrier removal for handicap accessibility, public facilities	Over 51% LMI or targeted population
OPWC Local Capital Improvement Program	10%	Bike and pedestrian facilities that are appurtenances to roadway project	Local government, sanitary districts, regional water and sewer districts
ODNR NatureWorks (allocations by County every two years)	25%	Recreation/Park projects: acquisition, development & rehabilitation	Local government, park district
ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF)	25% (Can use as local match for ODOT funding)	Urban trail linkages, maintenance of existing trails, restoration of trail areas, improving access, acquisition	Local government, special districts, state and federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations
ODNR Recreational Trails Fund (RTF)	20%	Land acquisition, trail development, trailside and trailhead facilities, engineering & design, trail safety education	Local government, special districts, state and federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations
ODNR Coastal Management Assistance Grant Program (CMAG)	50%	Grants for water related planning projects; 50/50 grant and local match	Local government, regional planning agencies, colleges, school districts, park districts, conservancy districts, port authorities, and nonprofit organizations
State of Ohio Capital Budget Appropriation (bi- annum)	Varies	Projects with political support and no other funding sources	Local government, districts, nonprofit organizations

Engineering

Additional concepts for bicycle and pedestrian facilities have been promoted and implemented throughout the United States; however, for federally funded projects, ODOT currently requires conformance to the standards in the following manuals:

- Location and Design Manual, Volumes I, II & III – Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- The Ohio Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices – Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Guide for the Development of Bicycle
 Facilities, 2012 American Association of
 State Highway Transportation Officials (AAS)

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North Coast Inland Trail - Elmore to Genoa

State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) An update is expected in the next six months.

Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities – American
 Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

In addition, the Federal Highway Administration supports taking a context sensitive approach to bicycle and pedestrian facility design, recognizing that the AASHTO bicycle and pedestrian guides are the primary resources for planning and designing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. For non-motorized transportation networks, primarily in urban areas, FHWA supports the use of the following publications:

- Urban Bikeway Design Guide National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
- **Designing Urban Walkable Thoroughfares** Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)

Design guidance and standards are constantly evolving, now more than ever. All federally funded projects will adhere to current ODOT requirements that evolve with semi-annual updates.

Implementation Strategies

The *Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan* provides a long-term vision for the development of a countywide active transportation network to be used by all residents for all types of trips. The following strategies are provided to aid the Strategic Partners in the implementation of this plan.

Strategy 1: Build an Active Ottawa County Parks District

The Ottawa County Parks District was created on September 1, 1992, to facilitate the extension of the North Coast Inland Trail from Sandusky County to the Village of Elmore in Ottawa County. There has been no activity until recently when the extension of the North Coast Inland Trail was planned and funded by the Villages of Elmore and Genoa and Ottawa County. Implementation of the *Active Transportation Plan* will take strong, committed leadership. The Ohio Revised Code grants the authority to plan and construct parks and other recreational facilities to Parks Districts so the Parks District is the logical organization to plan, fund, build and operate a county-wide trail system. Members of the Parks District are appointed by the County Probate Judge. The Park District currently has no available resources to fund its mission.

The Probate Court appointed two new members to the Park District Board on September 17, 2018. The Board is currently in the process or organizing and developing administrative policies.

Strategy 2: Strategically Pursue Infrastructure Projects

Maximize opportunities to make improvements by encouraging the Parks District and/or other strategic partners to pursue funding for projects within their jurisdictions. If available funding or construction of an improvement in conjunction with another roadway project make the construction of a lower priority project possible, then the strategic partner may advance that project, regardless of priority.

Strategy 3: Continual Review and Evaluation of Existing Infrastructure for All Users

The strategic partners should evaluate existing road facilities with excess pavement not required for vehicular capacity within their jurisdictions to determine feasibility of lane diets and road diets ahead of roadway/resurfacing projects in an effort to reconfigure lanes or reduce lane widths allowing a reallocation of pavement width to better accommodate all users (Complete Streets design approach).

Strategy 4: Grow Public Awareness and Bicycle Safety

Provide, support and fund educational programing to promote public awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety. In addition, support and encourage active transportation within the county.

Strategy 5: Update the Active Transportation Plan

Routes have been identified and included in the plan based on safety, public input, transportation benefit, feasibility and cost. It is recommended that the routes be reviewed every fiscal year, with completed projects removed, new projects added and priorities revised as the County network develops.

Strategy 6: Seek Ongoing Public Input

In conjunction with the review of the *Active Transportation Plan* every fiscal year, input should be sought from the public and the stakeholders regarding projects completed and evolving needs of the county and communities.

Strategy 7: Collaborate with ODOT

Since ODOT is the coordinating agency in the establishment and development of the State Bike Route System and the US Bike Route System that are both in the process of being developed, the Strategic Partners acknowledge the benefit of communicating, collaborating and coordinating with this agency to receive input into routes/route modifications and recommendations on prioritizing projects.

Strategy 8: Document Success

Document every policy change, educational opportunity provided, brochure produced, bike rack added, newly signed bike route, mile of shared use path constructed, or pedestrian facility installed. Take before and after pictures for every project. Collaborative Partners and Strategic Partners should meet on an annual basis for information sharing between agencies and to document progress.

Strategy 9: Establish Measures of Effectiveness

The primary goal of the *Ottawa County Active Transportation* is to develop a connected physical network of existing on-road and separated facilities that will serve all bicyclists and pedestrians for all trip types. Developing the facility network will reduce gaps and eliminate barriers, two of the main problems that prevent people from bicycling more often. Creation of both on-road and separated facilities with

appropriate markings and signage will create an environment appropriate for non-motorized traffic, increasing pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

Measures of Effectiveness are used as a quantitative way to measure the progress towards implementing the Development Plan for Active Transportation and will track progress toward meeting an agreed-upon goal within an established timeframe. Eight categories have been identified for active transportation performance

Measure	Benchmark	Target
Improve public attitudes about bicycling within the community	Have performed bike surveys documenting current attitudes	Perform surveys on a yearly basis to determine attitude shifts, positive or negative
Education programs on bicycle safety	No known education programs exist	Conduct one bicycle safety program each year
Bicycle facility improvements	Existing facilities identified in this study	Add one additional facility within two years
Economic impact	Current number of visitors and resulting revenue	Increase number of visitors and revenue by 3% each year
Establish "Bike Friendly Business" Program countywide	None exists	Establish County-wide "Bike Friendly Business" Program within two years
Trail Towns	There are currently no Buckeye Trail Towns in Ottawa County	Develop two Buckeye Trail Towns in Ottawa County in the next three years
Steering Committee Meetings	Steering Committee Meetings are currently being held monthly	Continue to meet on a quarterly basis to ensure plan implementation
Destinations	The plan identifies community destinations within the County	Provide connection to one destination per year with the development of bicycle facilities

Measures of Effectiveness

Plan Support

The Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan provides a structure of all of the elements necessary for success in implementing the plan; however, the success, in the end, comes down to people willing to work to take these vital steps to accomplish the goals set forth in this plan. The Strategic Partners identified have indicated their support for this plan by passing a resolution or issuing a letter of support, all included in Appendix B. They are as follows:

- Ottawa County Board of Commissioners
- Ottawa County Parks District
- County Engineer
- {Other Political Subdivisions to be identified}

Appendix A

Steering Committee Notes

Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee April 25, 2018



Meeting Notes

- Introductions Everyone was asked to introduce themselves and indicated their anticipated outcome from development of the Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan. Outcomes anticipated were:
 - o Plan for future funding
 - o County-wide
 - o Organization
 - First step economic tool
 - o Plan for County Marblehead to Port Clinton
 - o Working with Erie County connection to their plan
 - Where can I ride my bike infrastructure safety
 - Best thing to happen
 - Complete tie communities together
 - Related to vacationers
 - o Use to determine need for additional public land acquisitions
 - Think big and bold 100-500 years preservation
 - o Clear connections
 - o Safety
 - o Sustainability
 - o Loop east to west
- Committee Organization
 - o Contact list was distributed and corrected as necessary
 - The committee will meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month. The next meeting will be May 23, 2018, at 3:00 pm in the Commissioners' Assembly Room in the Courthouse basement.
 - The meeting will discuss preparations for the upcoming public meeting, and the roles for committee members at the meeting.
- The scope of services and proposed schedule for the plan development was distributed.
- A project logo was selected. (See above)
- The first public meeting was tentatively scheduled for June 6, 2018, at 6:00 pm. Rhonda will confirm availability of the County Fairgrounds for location of the meeting.
 - The purpose of the meeting will be to obtain input about desired destinations and amenities that would encourage alternative non-motorized modes of transportation, attract visitors, and encourage economic investment in the County.
 - Committee members were asked to review the draft power point distributed.
 Comments/additions should be send to Linda Amos at <u>amosl@poggemeyer.com</u> or bring them to the May 23, 2018 meeting.
 - Notices will be placed on the Commissioners' web site and in other locations as determined. Press release/notification in local media if practical.

Notes prepared by Linda M. Amos Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc. (30850000102) Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee May 23, 2018 Meeting Notes



- 1. There were no corrections or additions to the meeting notes from April 25, 2018
- 2. PDG will prepare a public meeting announcement for review. When approved, the announcement will be distributed to public locations and on organizations' web sites, as appropriate.
- 3. The committee reviewed the proposed PowerPoint[©] presentation for the public meeting. PDG will make revisions and forward to the committee.
- 4. The committee reviewed a proposed questionnaire to be completed by those attending the public meeting. Again, PDG will revise and forward for review.
- The base map of Ottawa County was also reviewed. It was suggested that Lake Erie Water Paths be added (similar to the Maumee River Water Trail). PDG will also add existing paths (SR163 @LaFarge to Marblehead Lighthouse) and paths in Danbury Township. Add proposed extension of North Coast Inland Trail from Elmore to Genoa – other future connections.
- 6. PDG will prepare a handout for the public meeting for review
- 7. Public meeting stations will be
 - a. Multi-use Path Design Greg Bieszczad and Steering Committee Member
 - b. Financing Construction and Maintenance/Operation Linda Amos and Steering Committee Member
 - c. Desired Destinations/Connections two Steering Committee Members
 - d. Committee members should be at public meeting about 5:30 for set up and review
 - e. Public Meeting starts at 6:00 at the Ottawa County Fairgrounds; Building B-3
- 8. Other discussion included:
 - a. Need for bike hubs parking for vehicles
 - b. Future funding
 - c. Role of Ottawa County Park District
 - d. Trail maintenance and cost (currently no state or federal funding available)
 - e. Danbury Township recently complete Use Plan. Would like paths to connect to residential areas ride to neighbors
 - f. Plan to allow Steering Committee to conduct final public meeting to present draft plan.

Next Steering Committee Meeting, June 27, 2018, at 3:00 PM, at the Ottawa County Courthouse.

Notes prepared by Linda M. Amos Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc. (30850000102) Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee Meeting June 27, 2018

- Meeting notes from 5/23/18 approved.
- Review written survey and voting from public meeting on June 6, 2018
 - Received 10 written surveys
 - Destinations of choice Ottawa National Refute (5) and Marble Lighthouse (3)
 - Destination Votes more varied. Oak Harbor received 4 votes and Ottawa National Refuge received 3 votes, followed by North Coast Inland Trail – 2 votes.
- Dennis Pathoff reported on investigations of Interurban Rail Corridor
 - o LaFarge owns most of property
 - Current value \$24,000; annual tax amount \$87.
 - Meeting scheduled on June 28, at 10:30 am. With property manager for LaFarge Gary Kohli and Dennis will attend (Commissioners not available)
 - 2 parcels owned by private individuals Dennis has contacted each property owner.
- The interurban rail corridor should be in the Active Transportation Plan to connect west to east across the County
- Genoa to Millbury would be extension of North Coast Inland Trail
 - o Railroad corridor is abandoned but need to confirm ownership
 - Congressman Kaptur indicated a desire to assist with acquiring RR corridor for trail
 - Should be included in Active Transportation Plan
- Other connections could include City of Oregon at Maumee Bay State Park to Ottawa National Refuge and continuing along the Lake Erie shore probably long term
 - o Bayshore Road to SR69
 - Connect Oak Harbor to Port Clinton
- Preference for off-road trails
- Portage River Trail Virginia Parks, representing Ottawa County on Portage River Basin Council (TMACOG)
 - ODNR has interest in development canoe/kayaking trail in the Portage River.
 - o Start at Pemberville to mouth of the Portage River
 - Plan access ramps in/out of water within 10 miles
 - In initial stage of designation
 - Committee established listing advantages and disadvantages
 - TMACOG has reviewed potential ramp sites
 - Want access and every town some already being used all current points public except for 2 private accesses
 - Little Portage River launch is very old and may not be usable without some improvements
 - Current launches include
 - Elmore (2 sites)
 - SR 590 Bridge south of SR 105
 - Ottawa Co Fairgrounds
 - Ottawa Wildlife Refuge

Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee July 18, 2018 Meeting Notes

- 1. There were no corrections/additions to meeting notes from 6/27/18
- 2. Linda Amos (PDG) and Dennis Patthoff (Steering Committee) attended Ohio Trails Plan Regional Meeting on July 17, 2018, at Oak Openings Metro Park conducted by ODNR. The State is updating the Ohio Trails Plan and is conducting meetings around the State to obtain input from the general public and other stakeholders. The Ohio General Assembly has declared 2018 The Year of the Trails. All jurisdictions should submit local trail plans to ODNR to be included in the State Plan. Funding applications are reviewed for consistency with the State Plan. Local plans should be submitted to Tom Arbour at tom.arbour@dnr.state.oh.us.
- 3. The Ottawa County Active Transportation plan was updated to include County-wide corridors as discussed at the prior meeting. Local plan connections are noted where known. A draft of the written report was distributed for review. PDG will call county townships and municipalities to attempt to have all local plans included.
- 4. PDG will develop a flyer to distribute at the Township Trustees' Meeting on July 25, 2018, in the evening. The Commissioners will present the draft plan. (The flyer was sent for review on July 24, 2018.)
- 5. A meeting of stakeholders (elected officials in the County) will be held on August 29, at 6:00pm, at the Ottawa County Visitors' Center.
- 6. Next meeting of the Steering Committee will be August 22, 2018, at 3:00 pm, in the Ottawa County Courthouse.

Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee August 22, 2018 Meeting Notes

- 1. There were no corrections/additions to meeting notes from 7/18/18.
- 2. Master Plan
 - a. Create a clearer legend on the map "user friendly"
 - b. Create more contrast in colors of proposed county routes and regional planned routes
 - c. PDG has attempted to contact several local jurisdictions (townships and municipalities) about proposed and existing bike paths. Very little response. Assume there are no proposed bike path plans. Hopefully information will be presented at public meeting.
 - d. PDG has received no comments on the written report to date. Will have final draft by September meeting.
 - e. It was noted by Ms. Fox that she talked to a group of bicyclists who took the ferry from Port Clinton to Kellys Island to Sandusky. Could be a safe route between the two cities pending future planned routes.
- 3. Public Meeting
 - a. PowerPoint presentation
 - i. Change title of meeting to "Public Meeting"
 - ii. Add slide to show typical funding for multi-use paths
 - iii. Identify areas for initial projects
 - b. Agenda
 - i. Jim Sass will be primary spokesman
 - 1. PDG will provide agenda for Mr. Sass
 - ii. Committee will sit at table together in front of room
 - c. Additional invitations/speakers
 - i. Mr. Sass will contact Mayors of Elmore and Genoa to make brief presentation about the existing and funded extension of North Coast Inland Trail and impact on community.
 - ii. Larry Fletcher will contact offices of Marcy Kaptur and Steve Arndt and invite to public meeting.
- 4. Public Meeting will be August 29, 2018, at 6:00 pm, in the Lake Erie Shores & Islands Visitor Center. Committee members should arrive at 5:30 pm if possible.
- 5. Next Committee Meeting on September 26, 2018, at 3:00 PM at the Ottawa County Courthouse.

Ottawa County Active Transportation Plan Steering Committee September 26, 2018 Meeting Notes

- 1. There were no corrections/additions to meeting notes from 8/22/18.
- 2. The Ottawa County Parks District
 - a. The Probate Court has appointed Mike Shadoan to the Park District to complete the current three year term, which will expire on December 31, 2018.
 - b. The Court also appointed Angela LeForce (replaces Carol Fox) for the current three year term, which will expire on December 31, 2019.
 - c. The Park District board members are meeting with the County Prosecuting Attorney to discuss pending administrative issues including
 - i. Setting up a 501(c)3 to accept donations and fund specific projects
 - ii. Setting up appropriations (will be done by Commissioners' office when it is determined timely)
- 3. Status of Proposed Projects
 - a. The Village of Genoa has advised that they have asked the Village Solicitor to contact the railroad about acquiring their right-of-way from the Village of Genoa to Millbury (Wood County). This would complete the west end of the North Coast Inland Trail. Would like this to be the first project for the Park District.
 - b. Sale of LaFarge property (former interurban rail right-of-way) between S. Danbury-North Road and the north-south leg of Hartshorn Road has been approved by LaFarge. This would be potential off-road path in Danbury Township.
- 4. Comments about Draft Report/Plan
 - a. Add note to consider trails for cross country skiing and winter sledding; mountain biking; equestrian trails; and fitness trails.
 - b. Add note to consider safe paths for South Bayshore Rd. in Danbury Township and connection from E. Northshore Rd. from Lakeside to S.R. 163.
 - c. Received email from Dianne Rozak, Danbury Township Trustee. Do not have available funding for projects at current time, but would add plan to township website after November 6, 2018.
 - d. Add railroad path at fishing pier on Sandusky Bay. Could be potential trail head/park.
- 5. Distribution of Report
 - a. PDG will finalize report and send to Steering Committee for final review.
 - b. The report will then be distributed to political subdivisions and other stakeholder organizations for review and approval/adoption. PDG will prepare sample resolution.
 - c. PDG will prepare draft press release.
 - d. Several organizations would like copies of the Active Transportation Plan. PDG will verify cost and remaining funding in the grant.
- 6. Next Committee Meeting would be on October 24, 2018, at 3:00 PM at the Ottawa County Courthouse. However, unless there are new issues raised with the report and plan, this meeting may not be necessary. PDG may be asked to attend meetings at the municipalities, townships, and other organizations when Active Transportation Plan is presented.

Appendix B

Resolutions / Letters of Support