

**VERY ROUGH DRAFF/OUTLINE**

**PLEASE CONTACT EITHER**

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**BICYCLE, SHARED USE AND WALKING PATHS**

In the Village of Pepin, as in many other communities, the “good old days” of walking or biking downtown or to school has decreased. “Over the last 30 years, the percentage of children biking and walking to school has declined from 50% or more to now closer to about 15%.” WisDOT Programs for Local Gov’t: Wisconsin Safe Routes to School. ([www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/saferoutes.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/saferoutes.htm)). The old “Main Street” is virtually gone, businesses are spread out, and traffic is increasing. Yet, recently, more and more residents and visitors are walking or riding their bikes within the Village of Pepin. The desire for safe alternatives to going everywhere in a car is obviously increasing.

It is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s (“WisDot”) position that the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians should be considered in virtually all transportation projects. Indeed, the State of Wisconsin and Pepin County have invested in extensive bicycle trails and widened shoulders to provide for bicycle lanes. Exhibit \_\_\_\_\_. The State has created widened shoulders along Highway 35 to the Village limits to accommodate walkers and bicyclists. In the Village, the widened shoulders are considered parking spaces. Therefore, the following questions arise:

- I. Whether it is in the Village’s economic, recreational, and/or safety interests to develop bicycling, shared use, and/or walking paths throughout the Village?
- II. If so, what form should such paths take?
- III. If so, where should such paths be located?
- IV. If so, is there financing available?
- V. What ordinance changes and recommendations should be made?

**I. IS PEPIN CURRENTLY A WALKABLE COMMUNITY?**

According to AARP, (“Make Your Community Walkable” [[www.aarp.org/health/fitness/walking/a2005-01019-walking.html](http://www.aarp.org/health/fitness/walking/a2005-01019-walking.html)]) some “characteristics of walkable communities include:

- town centers—a quiet, pleasant main street with a set of hearty, healthy stores

- areas designed for people first, cars second
- neighborhoods with mixed income and mixed-use housing
- safe, adequate and appealing public space for people to gather and to sit
- main streets that are speed-controlled and interconnected, or laid out in a grid
- many people walking.”

The National Safety Council has provided the following checklist to assist a community in determining whether their community is walkable:

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## Walkable America Checklist: How Walkable Is Your Community?

**Take a walk with a child and decide for yourselves.**

Everyone benefits from walking. But walking needs to be safe and easy. Print out this checklist, take a walk with your child, and use it to decide if your neighborhood is a friendly place to walk. Take heart if you find problems; there are ways you can make things better.

**Getting started**

Pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house or just somewhere fun to go. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give an overall rating to each question. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk.

**Rating scale**

- 1 = awful
- 2 = quite a few problems
- 3 = some problems
- 4 = good
- 5 = very good
- 6 = excellent

**Location of Your Walk:**

From

To

**1. Did you have room to walk?**

- Yes** |  **Some problems (see below)**
- Sidewalks started and stopped
  - Sidewalks were broken or cracked
  - Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
  - No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
  - Too much traffic?  Something else?

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

**2. Was it easy to cross streets?**

- Yes** |  **Some problems (see below)**
- Road was too wide
  - Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
  - Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
  - Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
  - Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
  - Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
  - Something else?

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

**3. Did drivers behave well?**

- Good** |  **Some problems. Drivers ... (see below)**
- Backed out of driveways without looking
  - Did not yield to people crossing the street
  - Turned into people crossing the street
  - Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through red lights
  - Something else?

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

**4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?  
Could you and your child ...**

Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?  Yes  No

Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets?  Yes  No

Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks?  Yes  No

Cross with the light?  Yes  No

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

**5. Was your walk pleasant?**

Nice |  Some unpleasant things (see below)

Needed more grass, flowers or trees

Scary dogs

Scary people

Not well lighted

Dirty, lots of litter or trash

Something else?

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

## How does your neighborhood stack up?

Add up your ratings and decide

Question (1) \_\_\_\_\_ + (2) \_\_\_\_\_ + (3) \_\_\_\_\_ + (4) \_\_\_\_\_ + (5) \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

### Scoring

**26-30:** Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.

**21-25:** Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.

**16-20:** Okay, but it needs work.

**11-15:** It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.

**5-10:** Call out the National Guard before you walk. It's a disaster area.

Found something that needs changing? Continue through the checklist below to learn how you can begin making neighborhoods better places for walking that match up with the problems you identified.

During your walk, how did you feel physically? Walking is a great form of exercise. But if you could not go as far or as fast as you wanted because you were short of breath, tired, or had sore feet or muscles, there are suggestions for dealing with that, too.

## Improving Your Community's Score

	What you and your child can do IMMEDIATELY	What you and your community can do with more time:
<p><b>1. Did you have room to walk?</b>            ...Sidewalks or paths started and stopped            ...Sidewalks broken or cracked            Sidewalks blocked</p>	<p>...pick another route for now            ...tell local traffic engineering or public works department about specific problems and provide a copy of the checklist</p>	<p>...speak up at board/development meetings            ...write or petition city for walkways            ...gather neighborhood signatures            ...make media aware of problem</p>
<p><b>2. Was it easy to cross streets?</b>            ...Road too wide            ...Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross            Crosswalks/traffic signals</p>	<p>...pick another route for now            ...share problems and checklist with local traffic engineering or public works department            ...trim your trees or bushes that block the street and ask</p>	<p>...push for crosswalks/signals/parking changes/curb ramps at city meetings            ...report to traffic engineer where parked cars are safety hazards            report illegally parked cars to the</p>
<p><b>3. Did drivers behave well?</b>            ...Backed without looking            ...Did not yield            ...Turned into walkers            ...Drove too fast            Sped up to make traffic</p>	<p>...pick another route for now            ...set an example: slow down and be considerate of others            ...encourage your neighbors to do the same            ...report unsafe driving to police</p>	<p>...petition for more enforcement            ...ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas            ...request protected turns            ...ask schools about getting crossing guards at key locations            organize a neighborhood speed</p>
<p><b>4. Could you follow safety rules?</b>            ...Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen            ...Stop and look left, right, left before crossing</p>	<p>...educate yourself and your child about safe walking            ...organize parents in your neighborhood to walk children to school</p>	<p>...encourage schools to teach walking safety            ...help schools start safe walking programs            ...encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school</p>

<p>where you could see and be seen  ...Stop and look left, right, left before crossing  ...Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic  ...Cross with the light</p>	<p>neighborhood to walk children to school</p>	<p>programs  ...encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school</p>
<p><b>5. Was your walk pleasant?</b>  ...Needs grass, flowers, trees ...Scary dogs  ...Scary people  ...Not well lit  ...Dirty, litter</p>	<p>...point out areas to avoid to your child; agree on safe routes  ...ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced  ...report scary dogs to the animal control department  ...report scary people to the police  ...take a walk with a trash bag  ...plant trees, flowers and bushes in your yard</p>	<p>...request increased police enforcement  ...start a crime watch program in your neighborhood  ...organize a community clean-up day  ...sponsor a neighborhood beautification or tree-planting day</p>
<p><b>A quick health check.</b>  ...Could not go as far or as fast as we wanted  ...Were tired, short of breath or had sore feet or muscles</p>	<p>...start with short walks and work up to 30 minutes of walking most days  ...invite a friend or child along  ...replace some driving trips with walking trips</p>	<p>...get media to do a story about the health benefits of walking  ...call parks and recreation department about community walks  ...encourage corporate support for employee walking programs</p>

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December 19, 2002

***THE SMART GROWTH COMMITTEE WELCOMES YOUR INPUT WITH THIS CHECKLIST. PLEASE COMPLETE AND SEND TO MARY SEYMOUR, PO BOX 146, PEPIN WI 54759-0146 OR BY EMAIL TO maryfseymour@msn.com.***

**II. IT IS IN THE VILLAGE'S ECONOMIC, RECREATIONAL, AND SAFETY INTEREST TO DEVELOP BICYCLING AND WALKING PATHS THOUGHOUT THE VILLAGE AND TO CONNECT TO THE SCHOOL, THE BUSINESS DISTRICT, AND HIGHWAY 35 FOR ULTIMATE CONNECTION TO THE STATE-WIDE PATHS.**

**NOTE: NEED TO DEFINE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PATHWAYS**

A. Economic.

1. Connection to the state-wide trail—more tourism. **TO DO: Talk to Terry Mesh and go on State Trail System site.**
2. Easy access to businesses.

B. Recreational.

We are fortunate to live in a community with such rare beauty. The walk along First Street increasingly attracts residents and tourists as a recreational and health-enhancing activity. To be able to watch the river go by while one walks, soothes the soul, rests the mind, and enhances good health. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has recognized that, “[w]alking is an important part of a healthy lifestyle and can provide a range of benefits. People are healthier and stay healthy longer when they get regular exercise. Physical activity can help prevent heart disease, obesity, and even some types of cancer and diabetes. Exercise such as walking 30 minutes per day can have a positive effect on depression and anxiety and help to improve one’s mood.” [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/motorist/pedestrians/index.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/motorist/pedestrians/index.htm). Indeed, walking is encouraged by the Mayo Clinic to prevent and to help many types of conditions. See, [www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org).

C. Safety.

1. According to WisDOT, about “60 pedestrians are killed each year in Wisconsin, and more than 1,600 suffer injuries. Children ages 5-9 and adults over 75 years old are particularly vulnerable to these collisions.” [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/motorist/pedestrians/index.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/motorist/pedestrians/index.htm).

2. In our Village, people sometimes walk on the street. The reasons for this may include the following: in some areas there are no sidewalks, the sidewalks not in good repair, the sidewalks are obstructed, or they are too narrow. In many areas, it is not possible to walk with a companion or with your dog on an existing sidewalk. The Village has had requests for more street lights in certain areas where there are not sidewalks because of speeding traffic.

Possible Solutions:

- a. The Village could widen and repairing existing sidewalks. The standard width of a sidewalk is 5 feet as provided under WisDOT Facilities Development Manual (FDM) 11-20-1.
- b. Ordinances could be enforced and obstructions could be removed.

- c. Speed limits could be enforced.
- d. Walkways could be built and maintained.

2. Children to school, beach, park. The sidewalk from First Street to the school on the West side of Pine Street is designated as the school crossing over Highway 35.

**Do we need to designate and/or develop additional designations? For example, do we need an east/west connection? Do we need to designate from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to 6<sup>th</sup> Street on Lake Street as a crossing over Highway 35?**

### **III. THE FORM OF SUCH PATHWAYS SHOULD BE DONE IN THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE, SAFETY-CONSCIOUS WAY.**

A. "IN QUIET RESIDENTIAL AREAS WITH LITTLE TRAFFIC AND SLOW SPEEDS, BICYCLISTS AND MOTORISTS CAN GENERALLY CO-EXIST WITH LITTLE DIFFICULTY." Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook (WisDOT, January, 2004) at 2-1.

In quiet residential areas, minimal improvements may be sufficient. These improvements include:

1. Bicycle-safe drainage grates: Typical problems with drainage grates and utility covers include: (a) slots that can trap or divert bicycle wheels; (b) slippery covers or grate surfaces; (c) surfaces not flush with the roadway; (d) collection of debris and water; and (e) grates placed in driveways or curb cuts. Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook WisDOT, January, 2004 at 2-9.

2. Proper sight distance at intersections: The Village needs to be aware of the sight lines at intersections when approving new construction. For example, the railing on the building at Pine Street and Highway 35, while probably necessary for the safety of the patrons of the building given the way it is constructed, obstructs the view from Pine Street to Highway 35.

3. Smooth pavement and proper maintenance: To the extent practicable, the pavement should be free of irregularities. The right lane or shoulder should be generally uniform in width. Concrete slabs or asphalt overlays with gaps parallel to the bicycle wheel can cause loss of control. Holes and bumps can cause bicyclists to swerve into traffic. Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook (WisDOT, January, 2004) at 2-7.

When dealing with older pavement, the DOT makes the following suggestions:

- a. Fill joints, if necessary, or in extreme cases, overlay the pavement.
- b. When adding an overlay, mill the old pavement and feather the overlay to

prevent a longitudinal lip.

- c. Use chip sealing to extend the life of the pavement.
- d. When patching the roadway, it should be flush with surrounding pavement, and, if possible, longitudinal joints should be located away from the bicyclist's typical path. Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook (WisDOT, January, 2004) at 2-8.

4. Use bicycle route shared/use designation signs. These signs may be used to: (a) route bicyclists through the Village to reconnect with the bicycle paths already provided for on Highway 35, to downtown and/or to school.

#### B. SHARED-USE AND WALKING PATHS SUPPORT NON-MOTORIZED USERS SUCH AS BICYCLISTS, WALKERS, PEOPLE WITH STROLLERS OR PEOPLE WALKING DOGS.

Generally, shared-use paths are not necessary for bicyclists when redirected through a rural community.

The Village does have a problem with pedestrians and dog-walkers using the roadway when there is no sidewalk available, when the sidewalk is too narrow or obstructed, or when the sidewalk is in disrepair.

Shared-use and walking paths are largely non-motorized facilities built on the Village right-of-way. These paths serve the following purposes in a rural community:

1. A shortcut to a destination or through a neighborhood.
2. An enjoyable travel opportunity for individuals and families.
3. A place to exercise, recreate, or rehabilitate from injury.
4. A safe way to connect to sidewalks, the business district, and to the school.
5. A way to enhance our economic development.

Sidewalks should not be used as shared-used paths, and state law prohibits bicycling on sidewalks unless permitted by local ordinance (Wis. Stat. §346.804). The Village of Pepin prohibits operation of bicycles on sidewalks or walkways (§72.01) Shared-use paths should not be built along highways because of the safety problem that they may cause. Similarly, shared-use paths may cause safety problems where there are high volumes of pedestrian traffic such as along rivers or to school.

Shared-use and walking paths have generally been built: (a) along rivers or near lakes; (b) to connect new development to the Village and the children to school; (c) on or next to utility easements; and/or (d) on Village right-of-ways. Any walking path or sidewalk that utilizes federal funding must be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any shared use path must also comply with the Wisconsin DOT *Bicycle Facility Design Handbook*.

**IV. THE PATHWAYS SHOULD BE LOCATED, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, ON VILLAGE LAND AND SHOULD CONNECT HIGHWAY 35 WITH THE BUSINESS SECTION, NEW DEVELOPMENT WITH DOWNTOWN, AND CHILDREN TO THE SCHOOL.**

**A. CONNECTING HIGHWAY 35, BUSINESSES, NEW DEVELOPMENT DOWNTOWN AND THE SCHOOL.**

1. Pavement and Structure: CHART
2. Vegetation Control and Soil/Drainage Preparation.
3. Maintenance.
4. Obstruction removal and ordinance enforcement

**B. MAP AND DESIGNATIONS NEEDED.**

***SUGGESTIONS AND DESIGNATIONS WANTED AND NEEDED.***

Some places for walking paths may be:

1. From Highway 35 past the new condos to just past Locust Street (where the sidewalk starts) probably on the River side. Physical problems: (a) encroachment(s) on Village land, and (b) not enough space on river side by the Laehn's house.

2. From Highway 35 at the intersection of County Road CC on second street just past Locust Street (where the sidewalk starts), probably on the River side. Physical problems: (a) resident's use of Village land for parking and (b) hill just past Seymour land and before Locust Street.

NOTE: IF THE PROJECT CROSSES OR IS WITHIN 1,000 FEET OF A RAILROAD, THE REGION RAILRAD COORDINATOR SHOULD BE CONTACTED. THEY COORDINATE, THROUGH THE RAILROADS & HARBORS SECTION AT THE WISCONSIN DOT CENTRAL OFFICE. WHEN FEDERAL OR STATE FUNDS ARE USED, THEY MUST NEGOTIATE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENT WITH RAILROAD COMPANIES FOR STIPULATIONS, AGREEMENTS AND LAND RIGHTS.

3. From Second and Prairie Street on Second Street, probably on the River side, onto Boyd Street to Highway 35.

4. Continue on Boyd Street to Fifth Street, which could connect to the new Reisgraff development.

5. Continue on Fifth Street, east to west, past the school to the campground.

6. Then on Locust Street, probably on the west side, to First Street.

6. Need a suggestion from Charland Estates to Highway 35 and/or County Road CC. **NOTE: LOOK AT THE PLAT OR CERTIFIED SURVEY.**

**Do we need any additional suggestions about the school. Do we need sidewalks, walkways, bike paths, shared-use paths to connect other neighborhoods to the school?**

**Do we want to suggest the use of the alleys and/or utility easements as areas for use as pathways?**

#### **IV. AT LEAST PARTIAL FUNDING MAY BE AVAILABLE.**

A. **TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.** This is part of the Statewide Multi-modal Improvement Program (“SMIP). It is designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of transportation systems by providing for the implementation of such programs as bike and pedestrian facilities, landscaping, scenic beautification. Federal regulations restrict the use of funds on trails that allow motorized users. The enhancement activities must relate to surface transportation and specifically include safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

B. The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programs provide federal funding to the state departments of transportation to encourage children ages K-8 to walk and bike to school by creating safer walking and biking routes. In Wisconsin, this program is available to help fund: (1) new sidewalks and bikeways and (2) educational and encouragement programs.

#### **V. ORDINANCE CHANGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- A. The Village should fix and widen the existing sidewalks.
- B. Existing speed limits should be enforced.
- C. Walkways should be added to the community.
- D. Ordinances should be enforced. Obstructions should be removed. For example, tree limbs and snow in winter.