

**Memorandum: February 5, 2016**

**City of Jacksonville Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan**

**Task One: Vision, Goals and Performance Measures**

**Vision Statement**

***The City of Jacksonville Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan provides a roadmap for the transformation of Jacksonville into a city that is recognized as one of the most walkable and bike-friendly in the Southeast.***

**Background**

The City of Jacksonville has many of the necessary characteristics of walkable and bicycle-friendly communities. The region is topographically flat and enjoys weather that is conducive to walking and bicycling year-round. There are hundreds of miles of waterfront affording attractive views and popular social and recreational opportunities – where people love to walk and ride. There are some older neighborhoods, such as Springfield, Riverside and Avondale, where the street and land use pattern makes active transportation modes relatively popular and convenient choices.

Jacksonville also has a sizeable population that is unable to drive because of age (22.4% of the population is age 14 or less), or for whom the costs of driving are a significant economic burden (17.8% of individuals live below the poverty line). This means that for a significant number of people, walking and biking is a necessity rather than a choice, especially in combination with transit services.

At the same time, Jacksonville has many of the characteristics that contribute to a less than safe, comfortable and convenient walking and bicycling experience. The City has developed with very low density suburban land use patterns dominated by a lot of multi-lane, high-speed roadways that offer few safe crossing points and limited access for people on foot or bike. There are many miles of streets and roadways in the City that have no sidewalks or sidewalks on just one side of the road. Where sidewalks do exist, they are often narrow, discontinuous and in a poor state of repair. There are very few dedicated facilities to accommodate bicyclists, leading many people on bikes to use the sidewalk.

The same waterways that provide terrific amenities also create tremendous barriers for movement. Bridges are few and far between, especially over the larger bodies of water, and were frequently built without appropriate access for bicyclists and pedestrians. The city is also crisscrossed with major highways and busy rail corridors that create barriers to non-motorized travel.

The result of these factors is an alarmingly high number of fatal and serious roadway crashes, particularly involving pedestrians. More than 100 people are killed on Jacksonville roadways each year, and between a quarter and a third of the victims are pedestrians or bicyclists – mostly people on foot. Each life lost or affected by serious injury on the roadways of the City is a terrible tragedy for the victim and their friends and family.

**Jacksonville, Fla. Traffic Fatalities**

	All	Pedestrian	% pedestrian	Bicyclist	% bicyclist	% nonmotorized
2011	96	17	18%	5	5%	23%
2012	126	30	24%	8	6%	30%
2013	141	37	26%	7	5%	31%
2014	117	29	25%	1	1%	26%
2015	119	37	31%	2	2%	33%

Source: FDOT Signal4

*Figure 1. Traffic fatalities recorded in the City of Jacksonville 2011-2015 showing a high percentage of non-motorized fatalities. Nationally, 16% of traffic fatalities are pedestrians or bicyclists<sup>i</sup>.*

These crashes also impose a serious burden on the resources of the City, and have a significant economic cost. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that the lifetime economic cost to society for each traffic fatality in the United States is \$1.4 million, and each critically injured survivor costs society an average of \$1 million<sup>ii</sup>. (These costs include medical costs, property damage, lost productivity, congestion etc.)

In addition to the direct cost of crashes, Jacksonville has an image problem: a reputation as a dangerous place for walking and bicycling. Cities across the country are competing for an increasingly mobile workforce, and we know from demographic data, real estate studies and directly from elected officials that “quality of life, as defined by millennials”<sup>iii</sup> is driving the location decisions of individuals, families and companies large and small. Walkability and bike-friendliness are critical components of quality of life and it is essential for Jacksonville to change the reality and perception of the city as a hostile environment for walking and bicycling.

Jacksonville needs a roadmap to quickly and effectively close the gap between the potential for bicycling and walking in the area and the reality of a dangerous, inconvenient and unattractive environment for bicycling and walking today. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan is that roadmap.

The City of Jacksonville Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan should be the turning point; the moment when the City decided that an annual loss of 30-40 pedestrians and bicyclists on its roadways was simply unacceptable.

**Figure 2. Levels of Walking and Bicycling in Jacksonville**

The American Community Survey<sup>iv</sup> collects annual data on a wide range of economic and demographic data, including the mode of transportation used by people to get to and from work. The data for Jacksonville, Fla., shows a general decline in the number and percentage of people walking to work since 2010. There is a small increase in the share of people bicycling to work.

<b>Jacksonville, Fla. Mode Share</b>						
	All	Pedestrian	% pedestrian	Bicyclist	%bicyclist	%nonmotorized
2010	388,067	6209	1.6	1552	0.4	2
2011	386,527	5025	1.3	1546	0.4	1.7
2012	382,986	5362	1.4	1532	0.4	1.8
2013	378,200	4917	1.3	1513	0.4	1.7
2014	380,698	4949	1.3	1903	0.5	1.8

Source: ACS 5-yr estimates

By way of comparison, data is also provided for Charlotte, N.C. – a southeastern city with a similar population. Since 2010, Charlotte has seen a steady increase in both walking and bicycling

<b>Charlotte, N.C. Mode Share</b>						
	all	pedestrian	% pedestrian	bicycle	% bicyclist	% nomotorized
2010	354,478	6735	1.9	354	0.1	2
2011	357,349	7147	2	715	0.2	2.2
2012	364,855	7662	2.1	730	0.2	2.3
2013	367,443	8084	2.2	735	0.2	2.4
2014	378,456	8326	2.2	1135	0.3	2.5

Source: ACS 5-yr estimates

## Goals

In order to be that turning point, we recommend that the City of Jacksonville Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan embrace four goals. The Plan should:

- 1. Create a roadmap for the City to follow to close the gap between reality and the potential for biking and walking;***
- 2. Identify short, medium and long term safety actions for the City in the areas of engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation;***
- 3. Recommend specific strategies for addressing particular challenges and opportunities in Jacksonville; and***
- 4. Establish a series of benchmarks and performance measures for the City to use in assessing progress over the next five years.***

### Goal 1. Create a Roadmap for Change

The City of Jacksonville Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan builds upon, rather than replaces, planning initiatives that have already taken place at the local and regional level. For example, the city developed a Bicycle Plan in 1999; the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization has a 2006 Trails Plan and a [2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan](#) that have already helped to identify key non-motorized corridors and projects that need attention.

The Plan complements, rather than competes with, ongoing work of agencies such as the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA), Downtown Development Agency and Public Works Department. For example, the JTA is studying 14 key transit corridors for improvements that include pedestrian and bike safety components as well as extensive public input; there is no need for this pedestrian and bicycle planning process to replicate the ongoing work of the JTA. Equally, there are Capital Improvement Projects and road resurfacing projects already scheduled that, with only minor adjustments, can be a tremendous benefit to addressing pedestrian and bicycle safety needs, for no extra cost.

The Plan also identifies future development and redevelopment opportunities in the city that can be used to deliver a more walkable and bike-friendly community over time. The Plan identifies those opportunities and lays out a process that will increase the likelihood that such development occurs with pedestrian and bicyclist safety to the fore. For example, as the downtown waterfront is redeveloped, it is essential that a trail or pathway be maintained for walking and bicycling and that access from that trail to key streets and bridges is enhanced as part of these larger redevelopment projects. That won't happen overnight or as part of one project...but without a process and a long term vision for such infrastructure that informs each smaller development project along the way, it's all too easy to have one or two key projects miss the opportunity to connect to the larger vision, and leave a gap that will be regretted for a generation.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan articulates a series of guiding principles that establish the importance of dramatically improving the walking and bicycling environment in Jacksonville, to save lives and to ensure a bright and sustainable economic future for the community. These guiding principles should have relevance to the City, regional and state government as well as to developers, the business community and community groups throughout the city.

Similarly, the Plan has the opportunity to sound a clarion call for action in the face of the terrible toll of death, injury and crashes on area roads. The death toll is just the tip of the iceberg: hidden beneath the surface is a level of fear and danger on Jacksonville roads that stifles demand for active transportation, poorly serves a population that has no choice but to walk or ride regardless of conditions, and which provides little incentive for drivers, cyclists, or pedestrians to follow the rules or respect each other.

Public and stakeholder input into this plan will establish a snapshot of conditions for bicycling and walking in 2016, and a vision for the future. Most importantly, the Plan establishes the process by which we move from reality to vision. Part of that process will be creating mechanisms and tools by which the City can prioritize projects and programs to ensure progress and success.

Finally, as part of the roadmap, the Plan presents a series of benchmarks and measures that define what success really means, and to which the City can hold itself accountable. Both the bicycle- and walk-friendly community programs at the national level identify the presence of performance measures and targets as critical indicators of success.

## **Goal 2. Identify Action Items**

Our assessment of the scope of work, feedback from the kick-off meeting and steering committee, and urgent need to address the high-profile crash record in the city, is that more than anything, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan must identify concrete actions that can be taken in the immediate short, medium and long term. For example, this plan and planning process is not designed to create – or recreate – another list of potential bicycling and walking improvement projects, it's designed to identify a more data-driven prioritization process for already identified needs and project lists...so that they actually happen.

We also recognize that while engineering issues and solutions are critical in improving the environment for walking and bicycling in Jacksonville, there must be a more holistic approach that identifies action items and needs in the areas of education, enforcement, encouragement and evaluation. These areas of activity may not ultimately be the responsibility of the Planning or Public Works Departments to implement, but are essential complements to the work of those departments.

During the course of the planning process, we will identify opportunities for progress in these other areas and seek to engage those responsible for carrying out the recommended activities.

## ***Engineering***

The Plan will:

- Review existing design guidance, standards and operating practices and recommend updates or improvements to those documents and policies;
- Identify potential pilot/demonstration projects to eliminate or reduce roadway designs that are known to increase the vulnerability of pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Recommend training opportunities to learn about the latest roadway designs and techniques;
- Complete a Bicycle Level of Service Analysis on a sample of area roadways; and
- Review existing projects in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), JTA, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pipelines to determine how they can improve the walkability and bike-friendliness of area roadways

## ***Education***

The Plan will:

- Identify opportunities for appropriate public information and education campaigns to address ongoing safety and operational issues; and
- Recommend targeted education programs for particular audiences (e.g., professional drivers, school students, law enforcement officers).

## ***Enforcement***

The Plan will:

- Assess the role of law enforcement in post-crash situations, (i.e. crash reporting, crash reconstruction, and prosecutions); and
- Identify opportunities for proactive enforcement campaigns to prevent crashes

## ***Encouragement***

The Plan will:

- Identify opportunities for community events that can start to change the way Jacksonville residents experience the public realm – and in particular, streets; and
- Recommend engagement strategies for community groups to promote walking and bicycling in the community

## ***Evaluation***

The Plan will:

- Establish baseline data from existing sources
- Identify additional data collection needs and strategies
- Establish benchmarks and performance measures (see Goal 4)

### **Goal 3. Develop Specific Strategies in Key Areas**

From the outset, the City, the Steering Committee and the consultant team have identified a small number of critical issues that warrant additional attention and a specific set of action items and strategies.

During the course of crafting the Plan, specific action plans will be developed for addressing:

- FDOT, because of the huge impact their roads have on the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in the area;
- Developers, because of the enormous potential they possess to shape and implement the future of the built environment in Jacksonville;
- Human factors around the behavior of drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists and the ways they interact on area roadways; and
- Bridges, because of the limited opportunities to build and rebuild these critical links in the city infrastructure

### **Goal 4. Establish Benchmarks and Performance Measures**

The ultimate success of this planning process and the Master Plan that results is quite simple. Did the Plan establish meaningful, measurable targets that guided decisions that resulted in fewer traffic fatalities and crashes and more walking and bicycling in Jacksonville?

The Steering Committee had a brief and lively discussion about a realistic date by which Jacksonville might achieve zero traffic fatalities, with 2030 posited as a potential timeframe. If that is indeed a desired, albeit ambitious, target, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan should be built around benchmarks and performance measures that get us there. These might include:

#### **2016 Goals**

- Fewer pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious crashes than 2015
- Adoption of specific fatality and use targets
- Prioritization process used to inform Mobility Plan Project List

## **2017 Goals**

- Continued decline in pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious crashes
- Investment (i.e. project completion) in pilot/demonstration projects that show the broader change that is going to be needed in street design, community development and traffic safety

## **2018-2020 Goals**

- Continued decline in pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious crashes
- Implementation of the bikeway network and Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

## **2020 Goals**

- Continued decline in pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious crashes
- Update of the next Mobility Plan focuses projects primarily on traffic safety and the active travel modes, especially in combination with transit.
- Jacksonville is a Bronze level Bicycle Friendly Community and is NOT included in Dangerous by Design (or equivalent reports).

## Endnotes

---

<sup>i</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis (DOT HS 812 124 and DOT HS 812 151)

<sup>ii</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes 2010 (revised). DOT HS 812 013

<sup>iii</sup> Mayor's Perceptions on Bicycling: Benefits, Challenges and Opportunities, League of American Bicyclists, 2014

<sup>iv</sup> American Community Survey, US Census Bureau