

PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Walking is an essential part of our daily activities, whether it be trips to work, shop, school, or play. Often pedestrian facilities are overlooked or merely added onto street improvement projects. However, to preserve and enhance the quality of life in the urbanized areas of the region, consistent maintenance of the existing pedestrian system and additional facilities are needed.

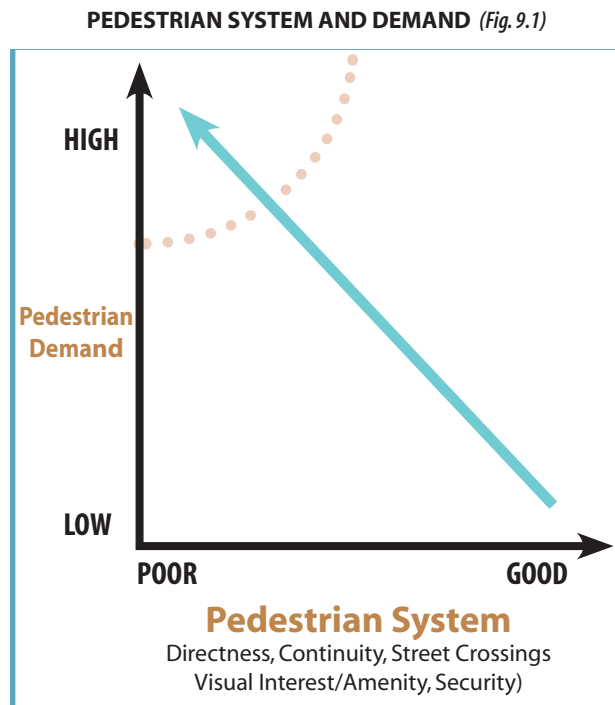
Development of a continuous, efficient pedestrian system in the Farmington MPO is dependent on many factors, most notably:

- the location of existing and anticipated activity areas and districts,
- programs to retrofit established sections of town with pedestrian-oriented activities,
- design standards and requirements for new development,
- desired pedestrian levels of service,
- funding for pedestrian improvements, and
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Pedestrian Levels of Service

If the MPO desires a multi-modal transportation system, then there needs to be some way to assess capital and land development projects to determine whether these improvements enhance the pedestrian experience or impact pedestrian mobility. National examples of pedestrian network performance measurements are limited, but include the City of Fort Collins, Colorado Pedestrian Plan, and the Kansas City, Missouri Walkability Plan.

Figure 9.1 shows the relationship between the pedestrian system's level of service and the potential demand for pedestrian travel. Areas with high potential use and low service levels should be regarded as the highest priorities for pedestrian improvements.



Directness

Distance is critical to the walking trip. As an example, research has closely correlated transit use to distance. No matter how many buses may run up and down an arterial, ridership will be low unless the pedestrian distance to and from activities and bus stops is minimized. The measure of directness is simply how well a community provides direct pedestrian connections to destinations such as transit stops, schools, parks, commercial centers, or activity areas. The grid street pattern,

DIRECTNESS

High

Medium

Low



CONTINUITY

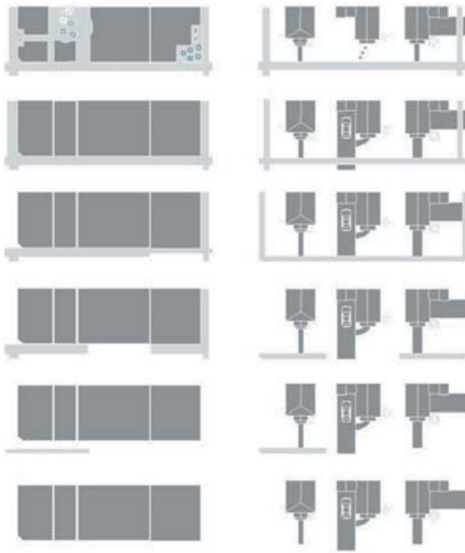
LOS

Sidewalk Continuity

High



Low



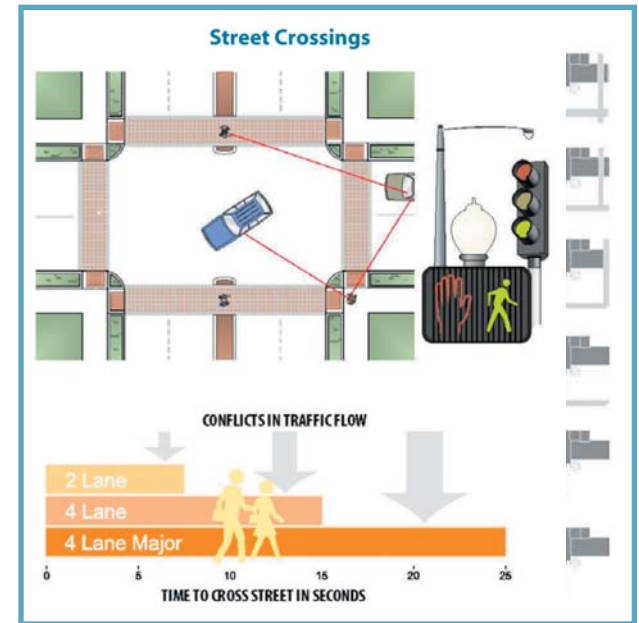
in which a pedestrian can go north, south, east, or west to easily get to a destination, typifies the ideal system with a high level of service. The common curvilinear residential subdivision, which may have cul-de-sacs that back up against a commercial center, transit stop, school, or park but do not have direct connections and instead require a circuitous route, will deter potential pedestrians. These areas have lower service levels.

Continuity

Continuity is a measure of the completeness of the sidewalk system and avoidance of missing segments. In the highest level of service, the pedestrian sidewalk appears as a single entity within a major activity area or public space. High-level pedestrian facilities also provide a quality, continuous stretch of pedestrian network that is physically separated from other modes. Mid-level pedestrian facilities provides a continuous pedestrian network on both sides of each street, but they may vary in character and design. The low-level pedestrian service is when there is a complete breakdown in the pedestrian flow, and each pedestrian selects a different route because no pedestrian network exists.

Street Crossings

Street crossings may be the Achilles heel of the pedestrian system. Because street crossings place the pedestrian in the middle of the street and exposed to potential conflicts with automobiles, the measurement of a street crossing becomes very complex and the achievement of a high level of service requires significant investment. Improvements such as crosswalks, pedestrian count down signal heads, raised median refuge islands and street lighting can improve the pedestrian safety at intersections.



Visual Interest and Amenity

To promote pedestrian activity in an activity area, the pedestrian system needs to be aesthetically appealing. The attractiveness of the pedestrian network can range from visually attractive, with enhancements like street lighting, fountains, and benches, to an experience of discomfort and intimidation associated with the absence of amenities

Security

Pedestrians require a sense of security, both through visual line of sight with others and separation from vehicles. Street lighting is also important for walking at night.



Pedestrian Districts and Areas

Although these pedestrian design considerations can be applied throughout the region, the need will vary by the type of activity area. As an example, a high pedestrian performance level will be of greater importance in the downtown than in outlying, lower density subdivisions with light vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The following activity areas to which differential performance standards would be applied are proposed:

Pedestrian Districts

The primary areas within the Farmington MPO that qualify as pedestrian districts include downtown Farmington, Aztec and Bloomfield and the San Juan College Campus area. These areas include locations that residents consider as places to go, walk around, shop, eat, study, or conduct business. Pedestrian standards should be high in the downtown pedestrian district. In addition to the need for direct, continuous sidewalks where it is safe to cross the street, this area requires higher levels of visual interest and amenities to attract residents and visitors. Future pedestrian districts could be added to this designation where there are planned future mixed-use activity areas and districts.

Commercial Centers

These areas tend to be located along arterials and aggregated at various locations along the corridor, particularly where major arterials intersect. In the past,

these locations have been more of the strip commercial and “L” shaped neighborhood shopping center style developments, which provide relatively poor pedestrian environments. Future goals include improving the directness and safety of the pedestrian network to, from, and within these locations.



Schools

Whereas it is not necessarily critical for routes to schools to be picturesque and visually captivating, there are basic pedestrian needs for the student, including a safe and secure continuous sidewalk with safe street crossings and direct connections to neighborhoods. To that end, the City of Farmington has adopted a Safe Routes to School program.

Transit Corridors

Both ends of all transit trips are typically pedestrian trips. The most critical elements for pedestrians in transit corridors are direct and safe connections and safe, paved, lighted, and possibly sheltered bus stops.

Other Areas

Although all other areas within the city should have safe, secure, and reasonably direct pedestrian connections, the critical pedestrian trip-making characteristics of these areas are not as critical as the four areas mentioned above.

Implementation

To ensure that the multi-modal needs of the community are met, a number of broad policies and actions are needed. These actions and policies build on the successes and opportunities of the existing system and are described below.

PEDESTRIAN ACTION 1: FUND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

The region’s Transportation Improvement Program should be adjusted annually to reflect targeted pedestrian improvements based on input from the Technical Committee.



PEDESTRIAN ACTION 2: STREET DESIGN STANDARDS

Develop minimum pedestrian standards and guidelines for all new roadways and reconstruction of existing roadways. These standards shall include street crossing treatments, sidewalk design, and landscaping.

PEDESTRIAN ACTION 3: PEDESTRIAN STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Develop public and private development standards for providing pedestrian facilities that connect the development to key destinations and activity centers. These standards should also include sidewalks on both sides of all roadways where volumes exceed 300 vehicles per day in urban areas.