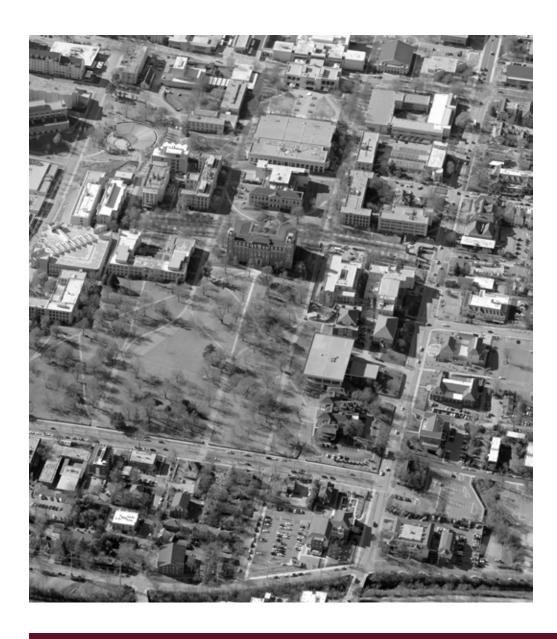


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The University of Arkansas community is larger than it ever has been, with more than 35,000 daily visitors. With traffic congestion and vehicle crashes on the rise, there is a growing interest in accessible, walkable, and bikeable infrastructure.

CAMPUS TRAVEL TRENDS

Travel trends are steadily changing, less people are driving – down 17% – and active transportation modes are increasing – up II% since 2015 – with less than 40% of affiliates purchasing parking permits.

PRECEDENT PLANNING

Campus Planning has done an excellent job of producing comprehensive planning documents that detail the transportation challenges facing our rapidly growing university. These plans identify barriers to campus access and dependence on regional transportation connections as major challenges and recommend orienting campus gateways to people, building partnerships, establishing last-mile active connections.

While the university has made improvements there are several outstanding recommendations that are catalytic in nature, including the Maple St. redesign, Dickson St. improvements, and the Oak Ridge Trail extension.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVENTORY

While the inner portion of campus generally provides for a pleasant pedestrian experience, campus is primarily auto-oriented. Affiliates traveling to campus by bike can rely on safe facilities until they get near campus, then the infrastructure deteriorates or disappears.

Despite the lack of dedicated infrastructure and heavy vehicle traffic volume, the UA and City of Fayetteville have established several routes that provide access for pedestrians and cyclists to and through campus.

Recent accomplishment include: providing free bicycles to qualified students, e-scooter share program, and the campus wide speed limit reduction – an initiative spearheaded by student government that will prevent untold crashes and injuries.

CHALLENGES

Though charming, campus is designed to primarily accommodate automobiles. Anyone outside of a vehicle is forced to navigate narrow, congested streets poorly designed crosswalks, and hilly terrain.

OPPORTUNITIES

The campus region has an extensive active transportation network, however there are few dedicated connections between campus and this resource.

LOOKING FORWARD

Now is the time for the U of A to both use active transportation infrastructure as a recruitment and retention strategy, and improve the safety and well-being of the campus community.

OVERVIEW

With a daytime population that swells to almost 35,000 affiliates, the University of Arkansas campus is a prime example of the inherent challenge of balancing transportation, parking, buildings, and green space needs while seeking to preserve the university's history and charm. The vitality of campus life demands a design approach sensitive to these multi-faceted uses.

Designed to accommodate historic travel trends, the U of A campus is primarily auto-oriented. While the inner portion of campus generally provides for a pleasant pedestrian experience, much of the campus interior allows vehicular access and parking, while all campus gateways designed to allowing vehicles to move with less delay. These orientations create vehicle/pedestrian congestion and pose safety concerns for anyone outside a vehicle.

FACULTY + STAFF TRENDS

OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT TRENDS

OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT TRENDS

OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT TRENDS

To see the second of th

commuters

Travel trends are changing, less people are driving - down 17% since 2015 - and active transportation modes are increasing - up 11% over the same time period.

The majority of students, faculty, and staff that travel to UA daily commute a mile or less to campus, and only about 45% of affiliates commute more than three miles - a distance that is very conducive to active transportation and only takes I5-20 minutes when infrastructure is accommodating.

Equitable and inclusive, by function, active transportation infrastructure improves the quality of life for UA affiliates by:

- Supporting increased physical activity which improves overall health, mental, and emotional well-being.
- Contributing to higher GPA's and workplace productivity.
- Fostering in-person interactions and relationship building.
- Being more cost-effective than vehicle ownership

Evidence shows that people choose active transportation where there is safe and pleasant infrastructure (e.g., safe street crossings, shaded sidewalks, shared-use paths) that intuitively connects key destinations.

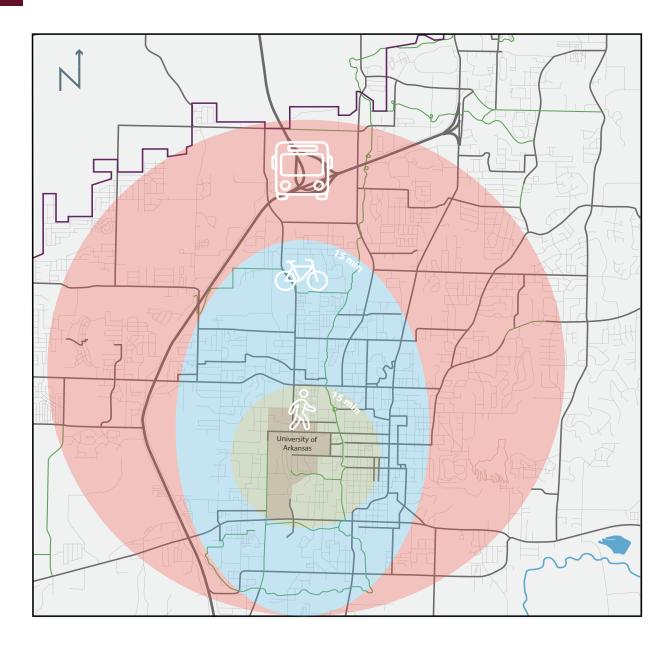
To take full advantage of the potential that the region's active transportation network represents, the University is developing on-campus facilities while collaborating with the City of Fayetteville to bridge critical barriers in order to strategically connect people that walk and bike directly to campus.

CAMPUS CONTEXT

The University of Arkansas is an urban campus in the heart of Fayetteville. Located just west of downtown, the campus is well connected to the nearby neighborhoods and Northwest Arkansas via a well-connected street network and regional transit services.

The scale and density of campus is ideal for biking, at approximately one mile from one side of campus to the other. Many of the surrounding neighborhoods where affiliates lives are within a 15 to 30 minute walk or bike ride.

Active transportation, as a means to get to and around campus, has grown considerably in recent years. Much of the growth is thanks in part to the infrastructure improvements made by the City of Fayetteville. Other motivating factors include cost savings, convenience, environmental considerations, health, and other quality of life benefits that self-powered transportation provides.



DEFINING ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation describes all human-powered forms of travel. Active transportation is a key way for more people to incorporate physical activity in to their daily lives, improving their health and wellbeing. Walking and riding a bike are among the most popular and can be combined with other modes, such as transit. The U of A is working to keep pace with these changes by increasing transit capacity, equipping buses with bike-racks, permitting bike and e-scooter share programs, and installing new infrastructure designed to accommodate the growing number of people that walk and ride a bike.



ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Arkansas strives to meet and exceed ADA standards to make campus accessible to everyone. Accessibility is especially challenging with our hilly landscape, but programs like Para-transit, ADA parking permits, and thoughtful street design create a more inclusive campus.



PEDESTRIANS

The U of A campus is the most pedestrian friendly place in the state. Walking is the best way to get exercise, clear your head, and take in the beauty of campus. The U of A even offers discounted remote parking lots that are walkable to campus, and serviced by transit for cold or rainy days.



E-SCOOTERS

E-Scooters are the newest micro-mobility addition to our community. These help close the "last mile" gap for many people living adjacent to campus and reduce car dependency. A good transportation ecosystem provides a wide range of options. The Office for Sustainability has deployed several e-scooter parking corrals around campus to help make finding and parking scooters more predictable. Please ride and park respectfully.

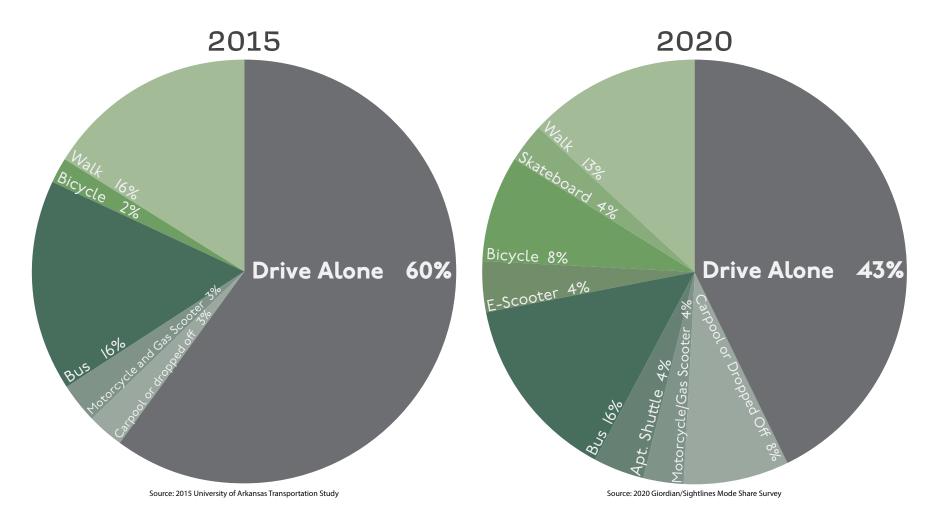


BICYCLES

Campus is home to bike infrastructure and programs–from our bike share system, mountain bike trails, and newly installed thermoplastic bicycle wayfinding. The U of A strives to be the most bike-friendly campus in the region and has taken great strides in doing so, earning Bicycle Friendly University Gold status in 2019.

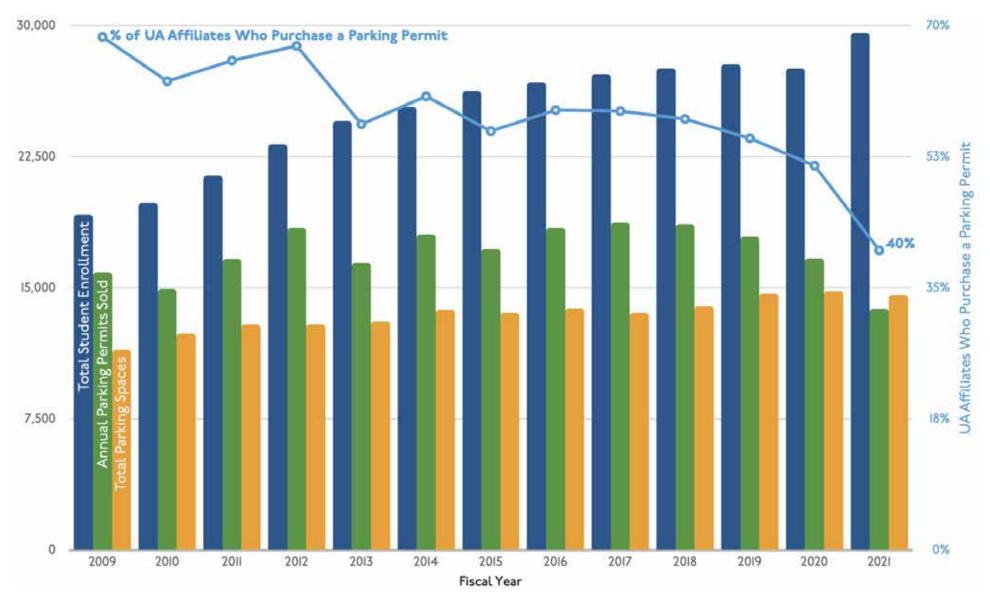


CHANGING MODE SHARE

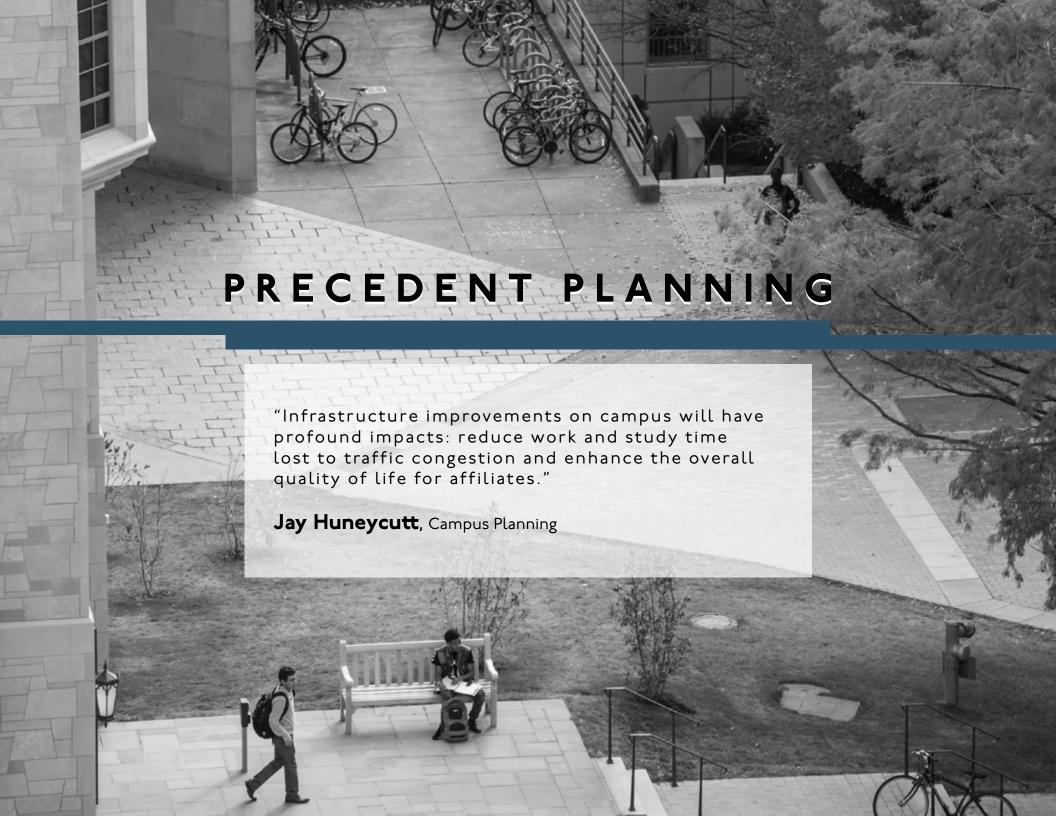


For the first time in decades it appears that driving to campus has taken a backseat to alternative transportation as drivers are now in the minority, according to the 2019 UA Mode Share Survey of more than 1,500 campus affiliates and visitors. This annual survey, conducted again in 2020, clearly indicates a strong shift toward walking, biking and transit and away from driving alone. In summary, approximately 17% fewer people are commuting by car than did in 2015. As a result, 11% more people are using active transportation as their primary tool to get to campus.

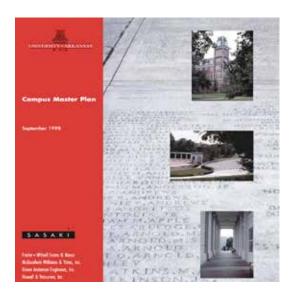
PARKING PERMIT SALES



Mode share shifts and trends can be hard to quantify, but annual parking permit sales are a key indicator of a shift away from automobiles. **As enrollment has increased, parking permits sold have stayed steady or even declined.**The percentage of UA students, faculty, and staff who purchase a parking permit every year is declining, which means that there's a large group in search of alternative ways to efficiently commute to campus.



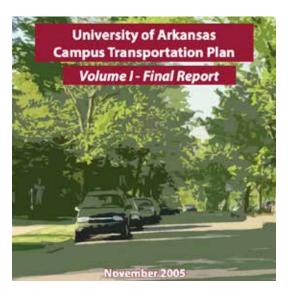
SUMMARY OF UA TRANSPORTATION PLANS



1998 U of A Campus Master Plan

"The campus is integrated into the Fayetteville network of arterial, collector and local streets... This, coupled with poor intersection signalization, generates problematic pedestrian/vehicle conflict near the core of the campus."

"Vehicular congestion in and around the campus is a serious concern. However, the inherent conflict between the desire to increase capacity and vehicular movement and the desire to improve the quality of the pedestrian and spatial setting, which is so important to the coherence of the campus, must be balanced."

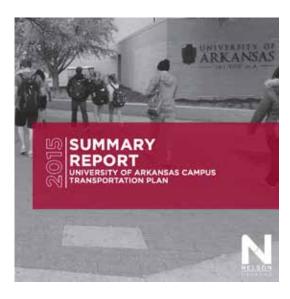


2005 U of A Transportation Plan

"The University is experiencing significant growth, which is anticipated to continue into the foreseeable future. This growth puts pressure on limited land resources and the transportation infrastructure serving the campus."

"Traffic on and around campus is congested. Pedestrian safety is compromised. Buildable land is sacrificed for parking lots. Open space opportunities are lost. And environmental conditions deteriorate."

"Campuses that pursue car-first solutions tend to lose their attractive atmosphere and culture."



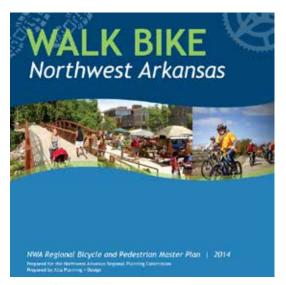
2015 U of A Transportation Plan

"UA, like its peers around the country, is looking to grow sustainably and sees the need to invest in all of its transportation infrastructure, rather than simply increasing its parking supply."

"The gap between current supply and demand is more accurately assessed through observed parking demand, which indicates that at the busiest time of day, there are more than 3,500 unused parking spaces on campus. Parking shortages are a matter of perception and convenience, not actual supply."

"Create last-mile bicycle connections."

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL PLANS



2014 NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

"The UA campus is characterized by high volumes of motorized and nonmotorized traffic, requiring careful planning across several modes of transportation to improve safety for pedestrians and bicycles."

"Thousands of students walk and bike to campus daily. The crash data highlights several corridors through campus where conflicts occur, with Garland Ave, Razorback Rd, Dickson St, Maple St, and Martin Luther King Blvd each experiencing multiple crashes."



2015 Fayetteville Active Transportation Plan

"Fayetteville endeavors to develop and promote an interconnected and universally accessible network of sidewalks, trails and on-street bicycle facilities that encourage citizens to use active/non-motorized modes of transportation to safely and efficiently reach any destination."

"The UA student population provides a strong user base for trail and onstreet bicycle facilities."

"Fayetteville's culture of active transportation plays a critical role in promoting our city's economic viability as well as the health and well being of all our residents."



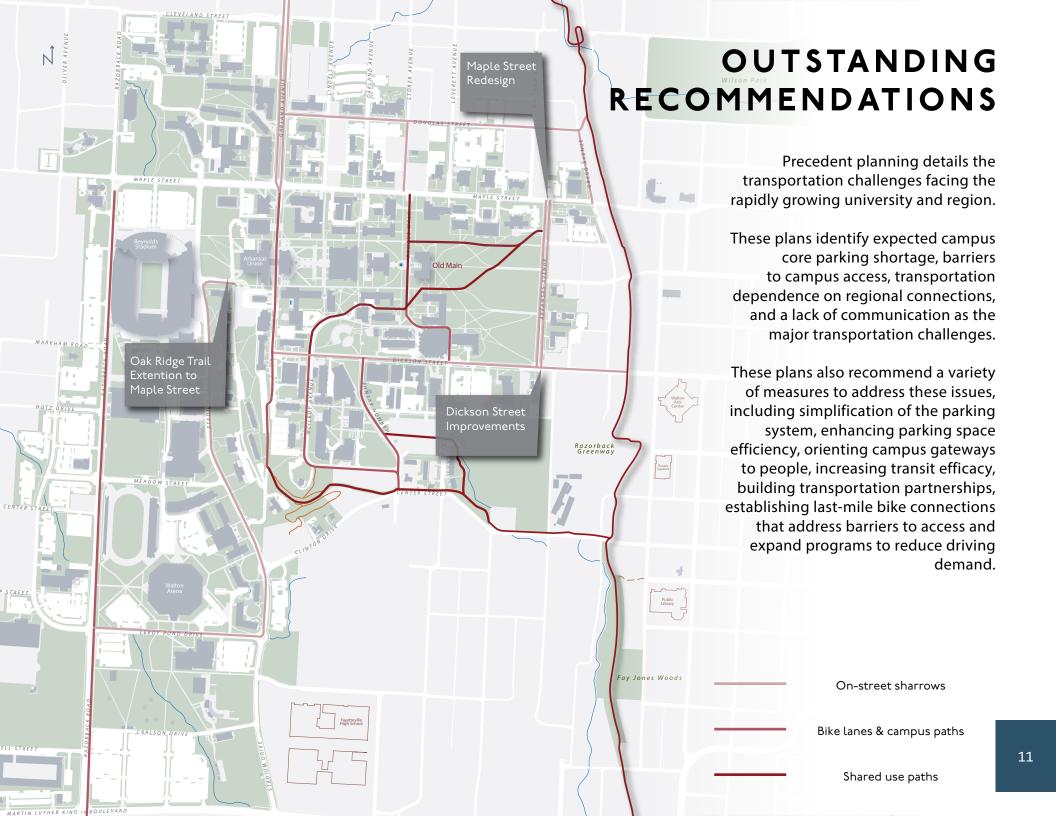
2018 Fayetteville Mobility Plan

"Fayetteville is thriving. Consistently rated one of the best places in the country..."

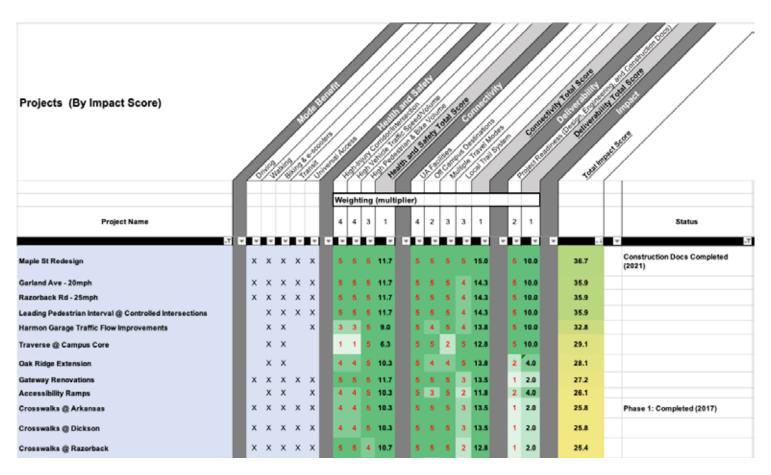
"The city's success, however, also creates problems: Traffic congestion is on the rise. There is an increasing demand for more walkable streets, safer bikeways, and more useful public transit."

"An unacceptable number of people are injured or killed on the city's streets every year."

"Fayetteville's current success threatens its future. But given the constraints on the city's road network and the intrinsic inefficiencies of the car, conventional solutions will no longer work."



PROJECT EVALUATION



Project evaluation is a critical task when planning active transportation infrastructure network. Doing so identifies which projects will have the greatest overall benefits in terms of safety, accessibility and connectivity improvements.

To this end, all projects recommended by prior planning efforts, as well as new opportunities that have emerged in the 5+ years that have passed since the 2015 UA Transportation Plan was published, have been evaluated and ranked according to:

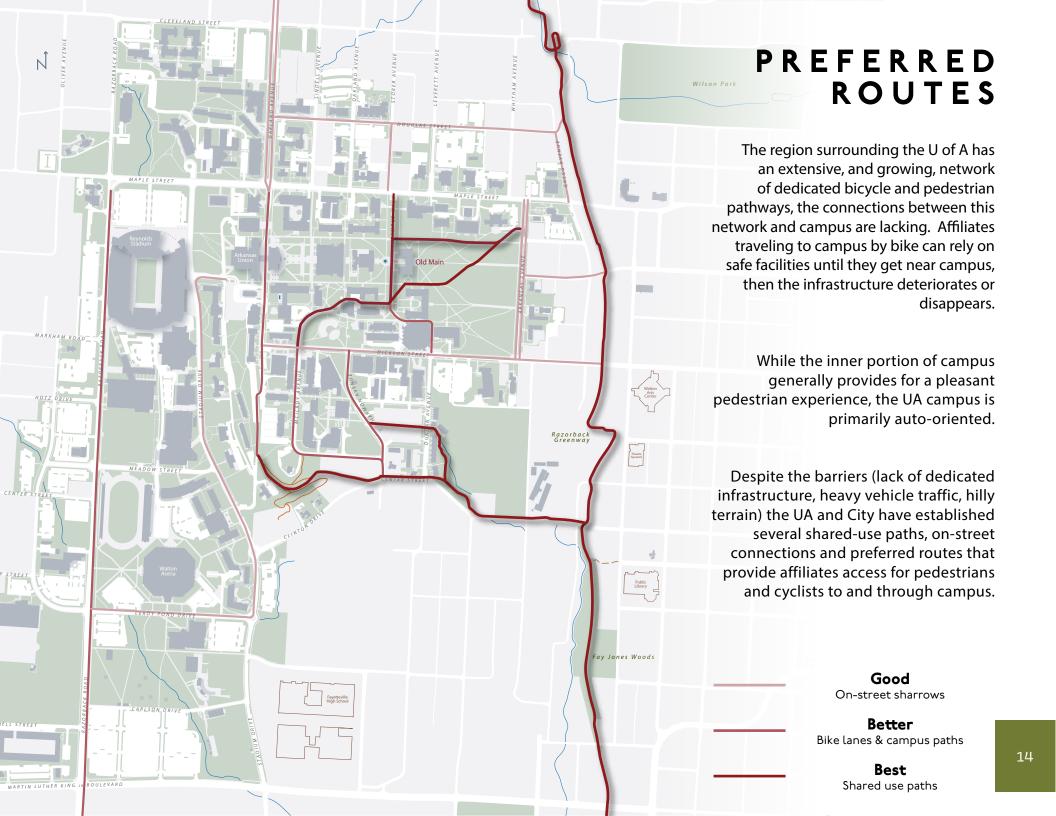
Health and Safety - are high vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle volume, speed and safety issues addressed

Connectivity - does project service UA facilities as well as off-campus destinations and connect to local/regional trails

Mode Benefit - which transportation modes benefit

Deliverability - how shovel-ready is the project in terms of design and engineering





ROUTES



On-Street Infrastructure (Good)

The UA and City have denoted several appropriate on-street routes to/from campus.

Designated through the use of pavement markings and signage, that provide visual cues to drivers - in order to increase overall roadway safety - shared travel lanes and crosswalks are accommodating spaces for bicyclists and pedestrians.



Bike Lanes & Campus Paths (Better)

UA campus is fortunate to have several established routes intended for use by pedestrians and people riding bikes.

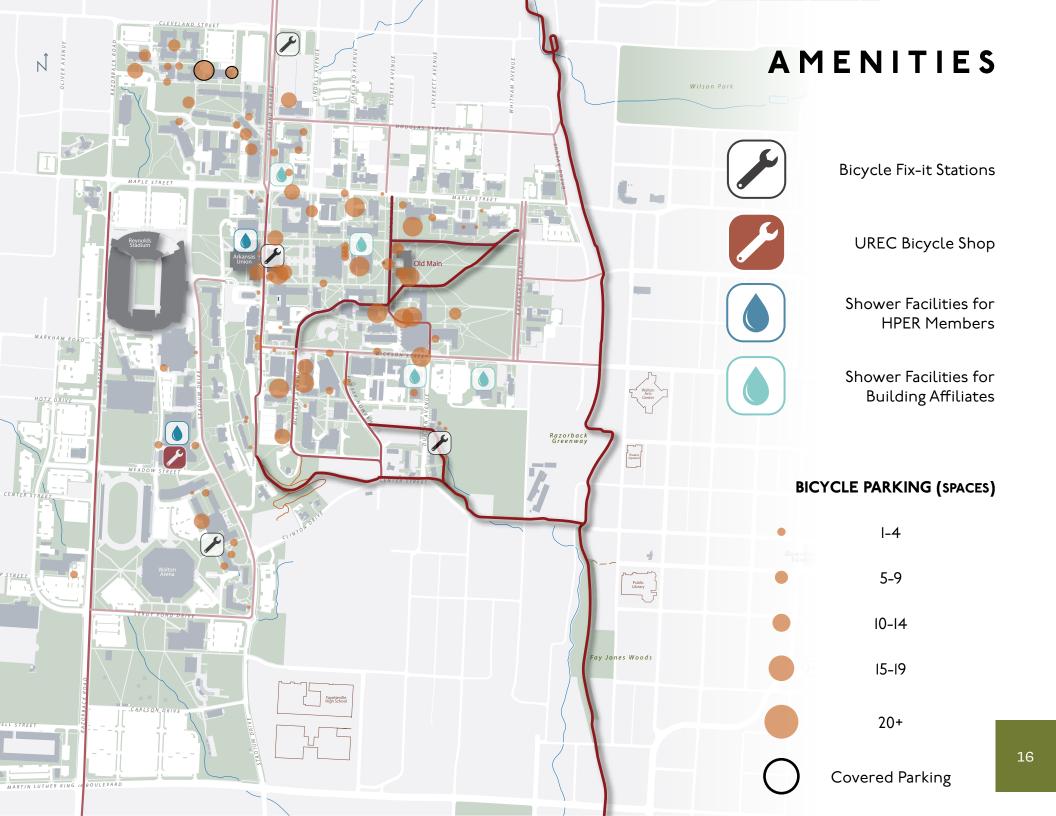
These dedicated bike lanes and paths makes walking and biking to campus safer, more practical and more desirable for affiliates.



Shared Use Paths (Best)

Shared use paths, like the Razorback Regional Greenway and the Oak Ridge Trail, are separated from motorized traffic and accommodate a variety of users both for transportation and recreation.

Shared use paths work best when connected to primary destinations wither directly, or via a safe on-street network.



AMENITIES



Wayfinding

A key component of creating a navigable environment that encourages walking and biking while also enhancing university brand, wayfinding has been installed on select preferred routes on campus in order to reduce sidewalk congestion and link primary destinations.

Strategically placed pavement marking enhance the overall experience for people on bikes by helping them confidently navigate around campus.



Bicycle Fix-it Stations

The UA has several bike fix-it stations located around campus to make it more convenient for campus commuters to make small adjustments and fixes. These bike repair stations provide a full array of hand tools and convenient work stands.

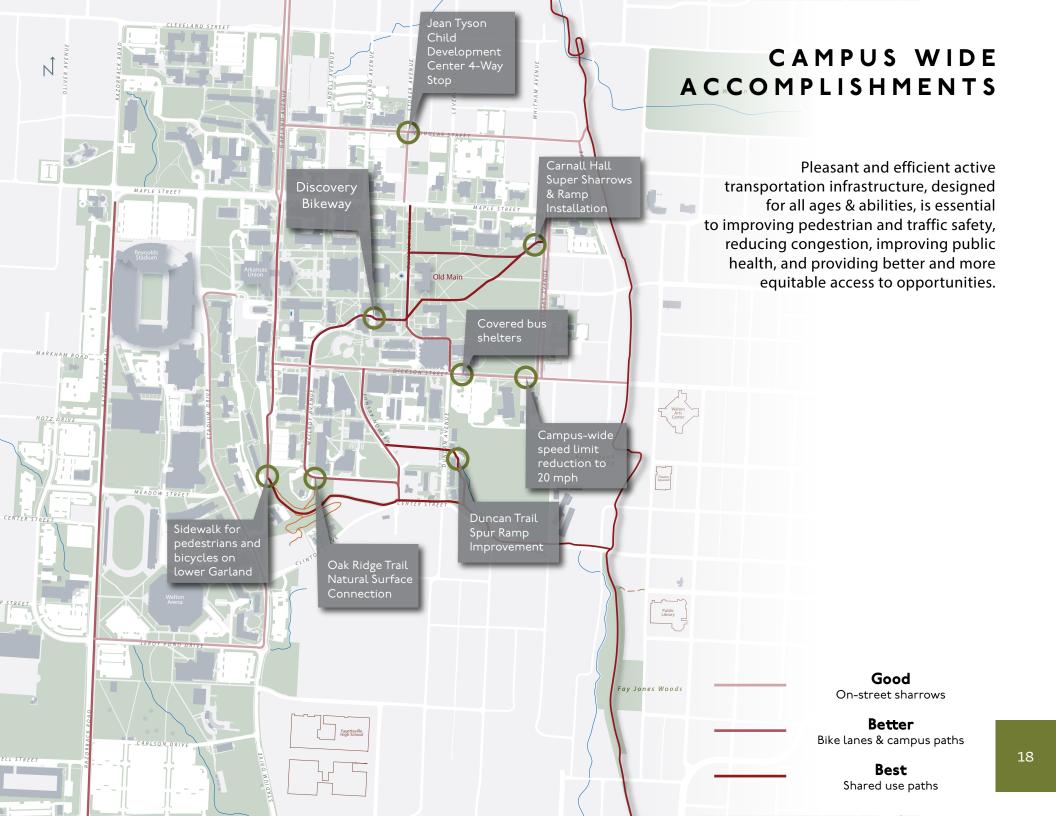
The Office for Sustainability has found these units to be challenging to maintain and has moved towards a strategy of publicly available tools and floor pumps in key locations across campus.



Bicycle & E-Scooter Parking

To encourage cycling not only on campus, but as a means of transportation in general, bicycle parking is free and bike racks are located throughout campus.

In addition to being healthy, cheaper, and environmentally friendly, cycling helps decrease traffic congestion and makes automobile parking a little easier.



CAMPUS WIDE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Access

Fifty qualifying students at the University of Arkansas have received donated bicycles as a result of a new partnership with Pedal It Forward, a regional nonprofit that rehabilitates used bicycles for new use.

International Students and Scholars and Off- Campus Student Success have identified students who are in need of a bicycle for transportation while living and studying in Fayetteville.

The goal of this ongoing partnership is to encourage more environmentally friendly transportation options while reducing financial barriers that might exist between students and the opportunity to ride a bike.



E-Scooter Forced Parking Areas

The UA Office for Sustainability, Campus Safety and UAPD, as well as Spin, Veo and the City of Fayetteville, meet regularly to review the scooter share program current operations and strategies in order to recommend enhancements that are enhancing safety and reducing clutter.

Starting Spring Semester 2022, oncampus scooter riders must now park their scooters in designated areas, which are available throughout the campus. Scooters must be parked at marked scooter corrals, bike racks or at designated bus stops only. Scooter riders can find parking areas on the Spin and Veo app.



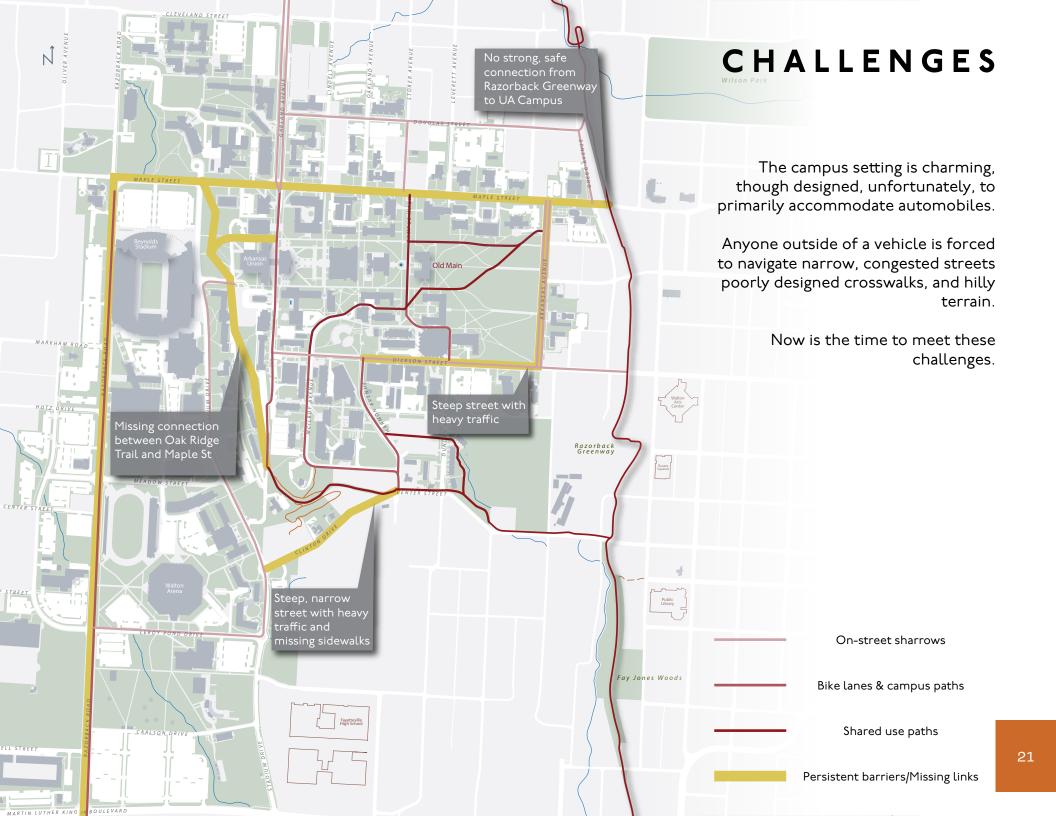
Safer Speed Limits

The UA has lowered posted speed limits on most campus streets effective January 2022. The speed limit reductions are part of a collaborative effort with the City of Fayetteville to calm streets and improve safety for drivers and pedestrians community-wide.

Speed is a critical factor in the frequency and severity of crashes, as the risk of death in a pedestrian collision increases exponentially with speed.

Speed limit signs are the most costeffective method of reducing vehicle speeds.





CHALLENGES



Car Oriented Campus Design

Designed to accommodate historic travel trends, the UA campus is primarily auto-oriented: most campus gateways are oriented toward allowing vehicles to move with less delay and much of the interior of campus maintains access for general vehicular circulation and parking access.

These orientations pose safety concerns for anyone on foot or bike and create an unattractive and unpleasant atmosphere.



Hilly Terrain

The topography poses challenges for getting to (and around) campus, and walkers and bikers choose a combination of the flattest and most direct routes, creating many unofficial pathways.

The hills generally limited east/ west bicycle and pedestrian connections.

The development of dedicated infrastructure in certain locations can provide safe connectivity that is lacking due to existing physical barriers.

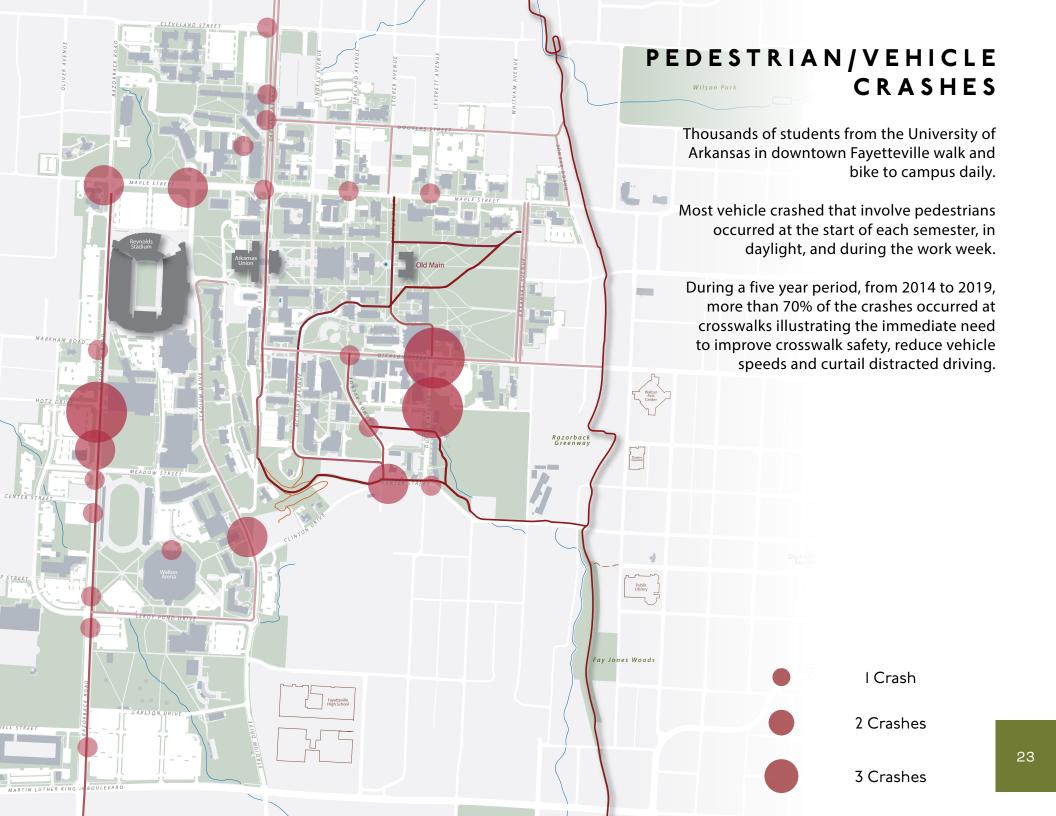


Record Enrollment

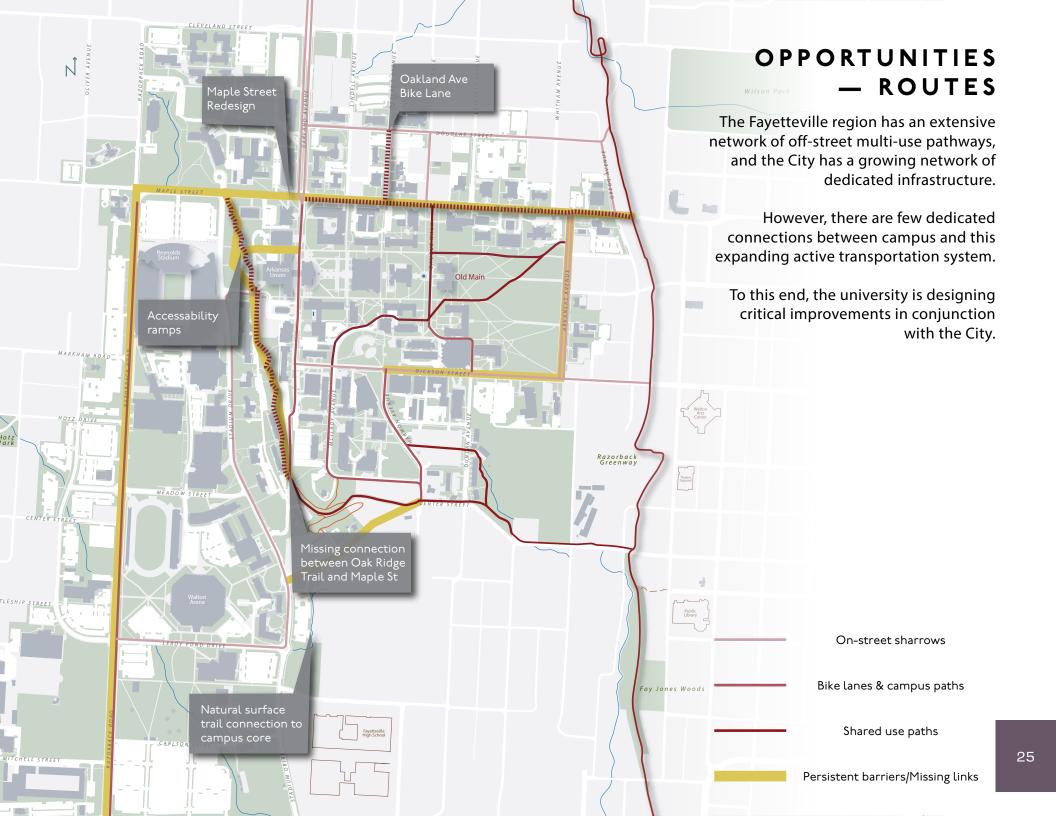
For the first time in school history, the UA welcomed more than 29,000 students to its campus for the fall 2021 semester, setting a new record.

This growth brings challenges such as traffic congestion and increased traffic-related accidents and injuries.

Simultaneously, there is a growing public demand for walkable, bike-able and transit-oriented streets.







OPPORTUNITIES—ROUTES



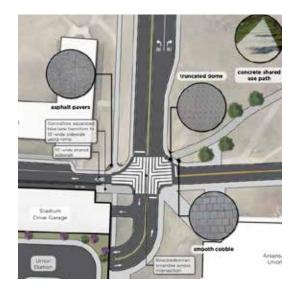
Maple Street Redesign

Maple street serves the northern boundary and the "front door" of the main campus.

The street has not has not undergone a major renovation or upgrade in more than 50 years and serves as a last-mile connection between campus and the Northwest Arkansas active transportation network via the Razorback Regional Greenway.

"This project will help the most vulnerable populations of Northwest Arkansas access the state of Arkansas's flagship educational institution."

- Bill Kincaid, Acting Chancellor, University of Arkansas



Oak Ridge Trail Extension

The highest priority "catalyst project" identified in the Northwest Arkansas Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Phase 1 of this project connected S. Garland Avenue with the Razorback Regional Greenway via a 12 ft. wide share use path. Phase 2 replaced eroded social trails with picturesque natural surface trails designed to accommodate both pedestrians and bicycles.

Phase 3 will establish an important and unique east/west route, from Maple St. to Garland Ave. in a high density area of campus with high bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular traffic.

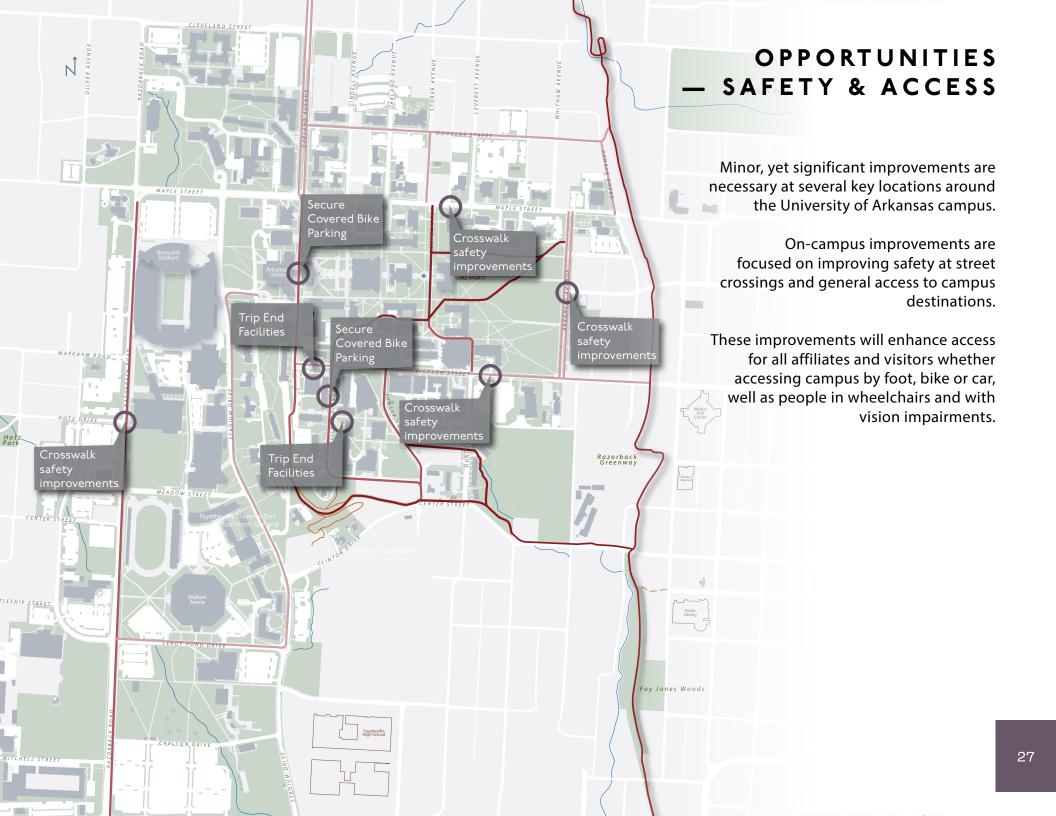


Natural Surface Trails

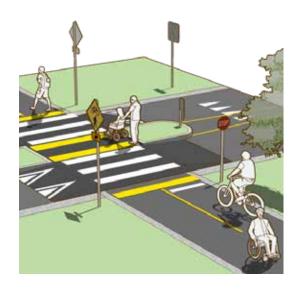
Northwest Arkansas has more than 400 miles of natural surface trails, with more than 50 miles in the City of Fayetteville, yet there is only half a mile on UA campus.

Envision a 15-20 miles trail system that starts and finishes on the campus designed to accommodate both recreation and transportation users of all ages and abilities.

The first section on UA property has been built and meanders through a restored oak savanna and includes a stone terrace that serves students as an outdoor classroom, place for reflection and connectivity to the surrounding natural environment.



OPPORTUNITIES—SAFETY & ACCESS

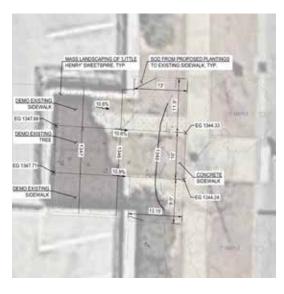


Intersection & Crosswalk Safety

The UA has many intersections and crosswalks that are in good working order yet there are still places on campus where street crossings are missing entirely and students are forced to cross ad-hoc.

Other crosswalks are improperly marked, non-ADA compliant, or have obstructed sight lines. And then there's an random array of "always on" flashing lights, passive detection activated Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFB) systems, and push button RRFB.

All intersections and crosswalks need to be assessed and a prioritized list generated of locations most in need of improvement.



Mobility Ramps

Ramps are a small but important part of making sidewalks, street crossings, and the other pedestrian routes that make up the public right-of-way more accessible to people and wheels.

Mobility ramps are needed in several key locations around the University of Arkansas campus to improve the overall pedestrian experience and bikes access as well.

All citizens benefit from mobility ramps. These ramps improve safety for people on bicycles, e-scooters, parents with strollers, and people using canes.



Shared Use Spaces

To create a safer campus and support non-driving access, the University should create an extended network of pedestrian connections, limited closures, shared streets, and targeted safety improvements within campus.

Priority projects include:

- Enhancement and extension of the current limited vehicular access area on Dickson eastward to Duncan as well as southward along Harmon to the intersection of Clinton and Center
- Extension of the shared space on McIlroy Avenue south to Yocum and north across Dickson around the amphitheater

OPPORTUNITIES—SAFETY & ACCESS



Bridge Gaps in Network

The primary mode of travel within the UA campus is on foot. Because walking tends to be taken for granted on campuses, the quality, comfort, and effectiveness of sidewalk and non-motorized pathways tends to vary.

In order to improve to the overall connectivity of non-motorized travel the UA needs to further identify and complete gaps in the campus sidewalk and pathway network.

Additional study and coordination with the City of Fayetteville on proposed modifications to the surrounding street and sidewalk network is also required.



Trip End Facilities

As more and more affiliates are choosing to walk, bike or take e-scooters to campus, the need for trip end facilities is growing.

Trip end facilities include showers, toilets, lockers and changing rooms.

The purpose of this amenity is to improve the experiences of walkers, runners and cyclists by making their commute easier and more comfortable while also increasing the likelihood that other affiliates will choose active transportation and improve their health and wellbeing also.



Secure Covered Bike Parking

Among the necessary supports for bicycle transportation, bike parking stands out for being both vital and easy.

Compared to short-term parking, long-term bike parking provides greater security and better protection from the elements. It's designed to meet the bike storage needs of daily bike commuters, housing residents, and transit users. The likelihood of an individual riding to their final destination is increased when higher-quality, sheltered bike parking is available.

Options include: bike shelters, bike lockers, and indoor bike rooms.

LOOKING FORWARD



January 31st, 2022

Leading universities and major corporations throughout the nation have realized a critical component of recruitment and retention is an inviting and modern work environment that is integrated into the surrounding community.

This understanding has fueled massive investments in company headquarters, college campuses, and active transportation systems alike. From Apple to Walmart, from Stanford to University of Texas to the University of Arkansas, and from Bentonville to Fayetteville via the Razorback Regional Greenway - college campuses, Fortune 500 companies and leading municipalities across the country are in a continual state of renewal as they compete for growth opportunities.

Accordingly, we must constantly strive to attract students, faculty, partnerships. Not only is it critical that campus be welcoming, buildings must have inspiring architecture and comfortable furniture, food choices must be diverse and healthy, and classes must be engaging. Outdoor spaces need to be inviting and comfortable, conducive to both contemplation and relationship building. To accommodate the increasing number of people choosing active ways to avoid traffic congestion, campus must be intentionally connected to its surroundings.

By establishing "last mile" connections between campus and the regional active transportation system, and by making modest investments in on-campus facilities and amenities, the university will further position itself to be attractive to the next generation of opportunities.

Active transportation is a picket on the enrollment cliff fence,

Ammen Jordan

Active Transportation Coordinator Office for Sustainability, University of Arkansas

