

## **CHAPTER 3 | POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Creating a bicycle friendly environment takes more than the adoption of a plan to improve facilities. A community must adopt policies and procedures that will increase bicycle safety and assure timely plan implementation. Public comment has noted the need for more bicycle education opportunities, more programs to encourage bicycling and better understanding and tolerance on the part of drivers.

Hinsdale is a relatively “bikeable” community. With an intricate network of local streets, a central accessible downtown and Metra and Pace public transit service, the Village is relatively bicycle friendly. Increased bicycling in combination with transit opportunities provides the possibility of reducing or eliminating some automobile travel, thereby reducing demand for parking, saving money, improving air quality and conserving energy. It is therefore desirable to encourage bicycling. The Village’s 2005 “Statement of Objectives and Policies,” encourages the maintenance of Hinsdale’s residential character, local business environment and an adequate and safe transportation system. With the implementation of this Bicycle Plan, the Village will become more accommodating to bicycle use. The following policy recommendations are intended to supplement Village policies and ordinances through incorporation in or cross reference to the Comprehensive Plan and the Village Code.

### **3.1 Current Village Policies and Ordinances**

The Village of Hinsdale has a history of bicycle planning and a very active Bicycle Task Force. A section of its Village Code (Title 6, Chapter 13), addresses bicycle use. The code establishes a requirement that bicycles must be licensed. This process is similar to bicycle registration in other municipalities. The licenses are used primarily for the identification of stolen bicycles and their return to owners.

Additional ordinances include regulations about bicycle use on roadways, sidewalk prohibitions, bicycle parking, required equipment, parental responsibility and fines and penalties. Much of this Chapter of the Village Code is consistent with the Illinois Vehicle Code but some of the parking prohibitions and licensing requirements exceed the Illinois code. It is the recommendation of this plan that the bicycle related ordinances should be maintained with the exception of those sections discussed below.

### **3.2 Objective and Policy Recommendations**

#### **BICYCLE USE AND ACCOMMODATION OBJECTIVE:**

It is an objective of the Village of Hinsdale to improve bicycle facilities and encourage bicycle transportation and recreational use for the enjoyment, health and safety of residents and visitors.



### **3.2.1. Bicycle Use and Safety**

The relative safety of bicycling is a measure of the relationship of bicycle use to bicycle related crashes and injuries. In most communities, bicycle use either is not measured at all or approximated using census generated travel data. The year 2000 Census for northeastern Illinois showed substantial increases in bicycle travel to work compared to 1990 data. Bicycling to work increased 41% for the region and 80% for the City of Chicago. During the same period walking to work decreased regionally by 23%. Even with this increase in bicycling, bicycling accounted for less than 1% of all trips to work. Census data is not an adequate measure of bicycle travel, but it is one of the only consistent measures available.

The lack of data on bicycle use makes it difficult to measure the safety impact of bicycle facilities and programs. As communities improve conditions for bicycling, regular counts of bicyclists on improved and unimproved roadways would, over time, offer some insight into the value of bicycle facility investments. Bicycle crashes are relatively rare in a community the size of Hinsdale, but over a ten year period bicycle use and crash data might reveal some significant changes.

Basic bicycle counts can be performed by volunteers, interns or Village staff. If possible, counts should be taken at various intersection locations that will be part of the proposed bicycle facility network and at several similar locations that will not be part of the network. A count taken before implementation and one year following implementation will indicate if bicycle use is increasing, if the facility network is being used in preference to the general street network and eventually, counts will indicate if the rate of bicycle crashes is increasing or falling in relation to use. A simple methodology is summarized in Appendix 3.1.

**Draft Policy:** Through the adoption and construction of the Bicycle Facility Network, Hinsdale will seek to improve the safety of bicycling while also encouraging bicycling as a complimentary form of transportation especially suitable to Hinsdale's demographics and community form. Specifically, the Village will endeavor to reduce bicycle crashes while increasing bicycle usage. Bicycle counts will be conducted each year to better understand bicycle usage in the Village.

**Draft Strategy:** Track bicycle crashes and usage. Take bicycle counts for similar streets with and without bicycle facilities at comparable times each year. Watch for changing patterns in bicycle crashes over time, using data collected by the police at the time of the crash.

### **3.2.2. Bicycles on Sidewalks**

Sidewalk bicycling in areas of pedestrian concentration is dangerous for both pedestrians and bicyclists. Sidewalk riding by young children is common and acceptable in residential areas and wherever it is not prohibited by ordinance.



Designating a sidewalk as a bicycle facility is unsatisfactory except under certain limited circumstances, such as:

- To provide bikeway continuity and access between facilities, e.g., to connect a shared use path to a street-based bikeway or path.
- To provide route continuity along high speed or heavily traveled roadways having inadequate space for bicyclists, where driveways and intersections are designed and signed to increase motorist awareness of bicyclists.
- On bridges where there is inadequate space for route continuity. Ramps should be installed at the sidewalk approaches. If approach bikeways are two-way, sidewalk facilities also should be two-way. Otherwise one-way operation should be encouraged.

Section 6-13-5 of the Village of Hinsdale Municipal Code prohibits bicycling on sidewalks in the Central Business District and provides that bicyclists on sidewalks should yield to pedestrians and give an audible signal. (See Appendix 3.2.) These provisions should be maintained with minor clarifications.

A problem with bicycle trailers on sidewalks has been identified by the Bicycle Task Force. The provision that bicyclists must yield to pedestrians on sidewalks should cover this situation but if trailers are a frequent obstacle, consideration can be given to specifically addressing this issue.

**Draft Policy:** It is Village policy to prohibit bicycling on sidewalks in the Central Business District. The first paragraph of section 6-13-5 of the Village of Hinsdale Municipal Code should be maintained. The second paragraph should be clarified as follows (original language is in italics):

*Whenever a person is riding a bicycle upon a sidewalk, such person shall maintain control of the bicycle, shall yield the right of way to any pedestrian, and shall, when passing, give an audible warning to such pedestrian.*

**Draft Strategy:** Bicyclists should be taught that riding in the street, especially in bike lanes, is safer than riding on the sidewalk. Reprimands, warnings and tickets as provided for by Section 6-13-7 of the Village Code should be issued as needed to discourage sidewalk riding in business districts but should be complimented by an effort to encourage the use of bicycles through education and appropriate facilities.

### **3.2.3. Operation of Bicycles on Roadways**

Bicyclists on a roadway are granted all the rights and have all of the duties applicable to any other operator of a vehicle as provided by the Illinois Vehicle Code:

*Sec. 11-1502. Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles. Every person riding a bicycle upon a highway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this Code, except as to special regulations in this Article XV and except as to those provisions of this Code which by their nature can have no application. (625 ILCS 5/11-1502) (From Ch. 95 1/2, par. 11-1502)*



This provision was added at the request of bicyclists who understand that the safe integration of bicycles into traffic requires that bicyclists follow traffic laws and that drivers respect the right of bicyclists to use roadways. This is an important principle that should be understood by the public and by all safety officials.

Section 6-13-4 parts A-G of the Village Code defines various duties and restrictions for bicyclists. These provisions should be maintained but should be updated to reflect changes in the Illinois Vehicle Code.

**Draft Policy:** Add a provision to Section 6-13-4 of the Village of Hinsdale municipal Code that states: persons operating bicycles are granted all the rights and have all the duties of the driver of a vehicle. Consideration should be given to modifying Section 6-13-4C which instructs bicyclist to ride on the right, by adding the following: no bicycles shall be operated on a public roadway so as to obstruct motor vehicle traffic except when reasonably necessary to avoid unsafe conditions or when roadways or traffic lanes are too narrow to provide for shared use.

**Draft Strategy:** If these changes to the Village Code are adopted, the new provisions should be publicized to the Police and to the public to encourage more awareness of and tolerance for bicyclists on Hinsdale's streets and to encourage bicyclists to follow the rules of the road. The Village may wish to publish these policies in the annual Parks & Recreation brochure along with the bicycle route map.

### 3.2.4. Complete Streets

Complete streets are those that adequately provide for all roadway users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders and motorists, to the extent appropriate to the function and context of the street. Streets are a dominant part of public space. Increasingly, communities are taking a second look at streets, including the entire right of way and re-examining the ways in which streets and roadways are used and how they might better contribute to the community's quality of life.

DuPage County has been a complete streets leader with its Healthy Roads Initiative. A resolution of the County Board states that new roadway construction projects should be safe for both the user and the community; should add a lasting value to both motorized and non-motorized users and that a sidewalk or bicycle path should be constructed where right-of-way is available.

At the state level, Illinois [Senate Bill 314](#) directs the state to establish pedestrian and bike ways in the planning and construction of state road projects. The Illinois Highway Code will be amended to provide that bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be given full consideration in the planning and development of transportation facilities, including the incorporation of such ways into State-funded transportation plans and programs. As of July, 2007, [Senate Bill 314](#) was passed by both houses and awaits the governor's signature.



Many local jurisdictions are adopting complete streets policies. The City of Seattle has adopted a complete streets policy and an ordinance that establishes guiding principals and practices for transportation improvements that will encourage walking, bicycling and transit while promoting safe operation for all users. (See Appendix 3.3).

**Draft Policy:** The Village of Hinsdale should adopt a Complete Streets policy which would require that all roadway improvements be examined for opportunities to address the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as, those of motor vehicles.

**Draft Strategy:** Once adopted, a complete streets policy would encourage a high level of coordination between various municipal functions, as well as continued efforts to coordinate with State and County projects. Such a policy would reinforce the Village’s commitment to better accommodate bicyclists and encourage the consideration of their needs in all roadway projects, not only those identified in the bicycle plan.

### 3.2.5. Bicycle Parking Program

Secure bicycle parking is a priority for the Village. The Village has installed some bicycle parking downtown and at the transit stations. The amount and quality of available bicycle parking might not warrant the policy set forth in section 6-13-4H of the Village Code, which prohibits parking bicycles downtown, except in bicycle racks provided by the Village. A bicycle parking program would address the need to fill in and improve bicycle parking on public property. Bicycle parking specification and location guidance are available at the website of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals at <http://www.apbp.org> under resources and links. Another useful publication is the Chicago Area Transportation Study publication, “Bicycle Parking for Your Business” at [http://www.catsmpo.com/bikeped/bike\\_parking\\_guide\\_web.pdf](http://www.catsmpo.com/bikeped/bike_parking_guide_web.pdf).

**Draft Policy:** Secure and convenient bicycle parking should be provided on Public property, as needed, throughout Hinsdale. The Village Code section 6-13-4H should be amended to encourage the use of racks where available and to prohibit the blocking of sidewalks by parked bicycles. The following changes are suggested (original language is in italics):

No person shall park a bicycle upon a public street or roadway, nor upon a sidewalk except as follows:

1. On a street or roadway or *on a sidewalk in a rack designed and installed for that purpose.*
2. *On a sidewalk*, such that the bicycle does not block the sidewalk and that a minimum of 3 feet of walkway area is maintained.

Bicycles in the Central Business District should be parked in bicycle racks where they have been provided by the Village. The Central Business District is defined as the area bounded by Chicago Avenue on the north, the west side of Grant Street on the



west, the east side of Garfield Street on the east and the south side of Second Street from Grant Street to Washington Street and the south side of First Street from Washington Street to Garfield Street on the south. Any person violating the provisions of this subsection may avoid prosecution by paying one dollar (\$1.00) to the Village. (10-16-79)

**Draft Strategy:** A Bicycle Parking Program should install bicycle parking at locations according to the priorities identified in the table below. Federal Transit Act funding is available for bicycle parking at transit stations. Other bicycle parking is eligible for CMAQ funding. Bicycle parking needs can be identified through a Volunteer Bicycle Parking Survey coordinated by the BTF and/or through the solicitation of location suggestions on the Village website and in the Village newsletter.

Priority Ranking for Bicycle Parking	
Priority 1	Metra stations; schools, parks, high use CBD locations
Priority 2	Government buildings; CBD businesses; shopping centers
Priority 3	Residential developments; non-CBD businesses

### 3.2.6. Bicycle Parking and Development

In addition to a public program to install bicycle parking facilities, the Village should consider the adoption of requirements and/or incentives for bicycle parking in conjunction with development. Some communities have adopted requirements that vary with the use of the building; others use a percentage of automobile parking requirements. Another model would allow a developer to reduce car parking if it could be shown that a certain percentage of trips could be diverted to alternative modes, including bicycles. Many variations of Bicycle Parking Ordinances and a comparison of municipal requirements can be found through the site: <http://www.bicyclinginfo.com>. The following suggested policy simplifies the requirements while incorporating the concept that bicycle parking might replace some car parking requirements. Design guidelines for recommended bicycle parking are provided in **Chapter 5, Bicycle Facility Design Guidelines**.

**Draft Policy:** Secure and convenient bicycle parking should be required in conjunction with new development and re-development projects that increase the overall floor area. The requirement will apply to all public buildings and to all private commercial and multi-unit residential buildings and include the following provisions:

- Bicycle parking will be required under any circumstance for which additional automobile parking is required.
- Bicycle parking installations should follow the Bicycle Parking Specifications and Placement Guidelines in the APBP Bicycle Parking Guide (sited above).  
Specifically bicycle parking:
  - Should provide spaces that are adequate to accommodate a bicycle that is 6 feet long by 2 feet wide



- Should provide a stable frame permanently anchored to a foundation to which the frame and both wheels may be conveniently secured using a “u” shaped lock or chain and padlock
- Should be placed near the entrance to the use being served in a visible, well trafficked location.
- If long term (more than 8 hours) use is expected, additional security and weather protection should be provided.
- The bicycle parking should be at a minimum rate of 1 bicycle parking space for every 10 automobile parking spaces.
- Adjacent uses (i.e., retail facilities, small office buildings) may provide bicycle parking collectively as long as it is still convenient to each destination.
- Some uses may be exempt from these provisions on approval of the site plan and architectural review process; exemptions must show evidence of the impossibility or inappropriateness of meeting these requirements.

**Draft Strategy:** These provisions may be implemented through the adoption of a new ordinance or through an amendment to the current parking ordinance.

**PLANNING AND COORDINATION OBJECTIVE:**

It is the objective of the Village of Hinsdale to coordinate a comprehensive approach to improving conditions for bicycling in the Village that includes infrastructure improvements, as well as education, encouragement, and enforcement programs.

**3.2.7. Bicycle Program Coordination**

The implementation of a comprehensive bicycle plan is an inter-departmental and inter-agency undertaking. In Hinsdale, the Departments involved include Parks and Recreation, Community Development (Planning and Engineering), Police and School Districts. Some communities identify one department and one individual to serve as the coordination point for plan implementation even though more than one department will be involved in funding and programming elements of the plan.

**Draft Policy:** A Bicycle Plan coordination function should be established in either, or in both, the Community Development Department (Engineering) or the Police Department to facilitate coordination between these departments and Parks and Recreation, the School Districts and interested citizens.

**Draft Strategy:** The Village should determine the best staff member to serve as a Bicycle Plan Coordinator. This person would continue to work with the Bicycle Task Force (BTF), requesting the participation of other Village staff as needed.

**3.2.8. Bicycle Task Force**

The Bicycle Task Force was established in part to oversee the development of the Hinsdale Bicycle Plan. The task force was established as a temporary body that provides a valuable venue for community wide coordination and citizen input. The plan will be completed in late 2007 and a decision must be made about any continuing activity on the



part of the task force. Many communities have an ongoing bicycle or bicycle/pedestrian advisory council. Such bodies oversee the development of the bicycle plan and work with municipal staff and public officials to identify additional opportunities for programs and improvements to encourage bicycling. Some of these, especially in the areas of encouragement and education, go beyond the usual activities of government.

**Draft Policy:** The Bicycle Task Force should continue as a sub-committee of the Village of Hinsdale Parks and Recreation Commission. It should continue to coordinate citizen/staff input; to serve in an advisory capacity for bicycle plan implementation; and, to generate ideas for the continual improvement of conditions for bicycling in Hinsdale.

**Draft Strategy:** The task force/sub-committee should be informed about and involved in an advisory capacity with plan implementation and they should initiate and provide leadership for programs such as those identified in the policy areas: Encouragement, Enforcement, Education and School Oriented Programs. They should meet quarterly to plan events, comment on plan implementation and organize and coordinate other initiatives, including Safe Routes to School activities.

#### **ENCOURAGEMENT, ENFORCEMENT AND EDUCATION OBJECTIVE:**

Encouragement, enforcement and education are needed to maximize the potential benefits that can be gained by Hinsdale's commitment to an expanded and improved bicycle facility network. Draft policies are included for an annual bicycle promotion event; bike to work initiative; expanded education and enforcement; and, a local bicycle map.

#### **3.2.9 Bicycle Promotion Activities**

An annual event can be a very effective way of informing the public of progress on the implementation of the bicycle plan and building support for the next steps. The Bicycle Task Force participated in a transit oriented event initiated by the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation in 2007. Discussion took place about whether or not this event should be repeated and how it might be improved. Additional events might include community rides, commuter challenges, bike swaps and family oriented and/or educational projects. Another way to promote bicycling is to organize bicycle parking or provide on-site bicycle valet service for other community events and publicize its availability.

**Draft Policy:** An annual event, organized by the Bicycle Task Force, with support from Village Officials and staff, should be established to celebrate and promote the role of bicycling in Hinsdale.

**Draft Strategy:** An annual event could be organized by the Bicycle Task Force that also included businesses, youth groups, schools and health advocates.



### **3.2.10 Enforcement and Education**

Hinsdale has bicycles for police use and includes bicycle safety as part of its Officer Friendly programs in the schools. A youth based bicycle ambassadors program similar to one in the City of Chicago would compliment and expand these activities. A bicycle ambassadors program involves young people in both learning and teaching safe bicycling and engages them in the community in an active and responsible way. The ambassadors give bicycle safety demonstrations at day camps, libraries and schools and even to businesses to promote bicycling to work. The City of Chicago program has received funding from the Illinois Department of Transportation Division of Traffic Safety. For more information see, <http://www.bicyclingambassadors.org> .

**Draft Policy:** Involve youth in learning and teaching about bicycle safety and the potential of bicycling as recreation and transportation. Establish a bicycling ambassadors program for Hinsdale youth modeled, as appropriate, on the City of Chicago program.

**Draft Strategy:** The Bicycle Task Force should work with the Hinsdale Police and the schools to investigate the potential for a bicycle ambassadors program.

### **3.2.11 Hinsdale Bicycle Map**

A map that shows the bicycle facility network can be helpful to local and visiting bicyclists and can also be an educational tool. Local regulations and safety information can be included. Also, significant destinations can be identified including local businesses, such as bicycle shops and restaurants which might help to underwrite printing costs.

**Draft Policy:** Develop and periodically update a Hinsdale Bicycle Map as the bicycle facility network is implemented.

**Draft Strategy:** Work with the Bicycle Task Force to conceptualize and develop a user map. Publish it on the Village website and make printed copies available at Village Hall, bicycle shops, schools and other locations. Invite local businesses to be identified on the map and help to underwrite the cost of production.

### **SCHOOL ORIENTED PROGRAMS OBJECTIVE:**

Increase the safety of bicycling for elementary and middle school children and for high school students through bicycle safety education, encouragement programs and safe routes to school infrastructure improvements.

### **3.2.12 Safe Routes to School Programs**

Creating more and better opportunities for walking and bicycling to school is the goal of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) movement and the federal funding that is now available through the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Programs that promote safe walking and bicycling to school are important for children's health, for meeting the complicated transportation demands of school families and for keeping



school transportation costs down. The Hinsdale Bicycle Task Force is currently promoting SRTS activities and should continue to provide leadership and coordination. In addition to parents, teachers, police officers and other Village staff, health advocates are natural allies for safe routes to school programs. The Police Department has submitted a grant proposal to address speed problems in the area of schools through the installation of new or improved signing and traffic control strategies.

The National Center for Safe Routes to School, <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>, is under contract with the Federal Highway Administration to provide technical information, resource material and contacts to assist with SRTS efforts. The Safe Routes to School National Partnership <http://bikesbelong.org/page.cfm?PageID=249> is a national coalition of organizations involved in SRTS efforts. It advocates for favorable safe routes funding and legislation and also provides helpful information and contacts.

**Draft Policy:** Continue to offer assistance to schools and parents' organizations in their efforts to create comprehensive SRTS projects and to seek funding for these projects from IDOT's SRTS program.

**Draft Strategy:** Work with the Bicycle Task Force to involve parents, teachers and school administrators, health advocates, representatives of the Police and the Community Development and Parks and Recreation Departments in SRTS planning and programs. Assist the SRTS Task Force with activities such as:

- A workshop or PTA program on "Safe Routes to School"
- Developing goals for a Safe Routes to School project
- A review of current school policies on bicycle use and promotion
- An assessment of bicycling conditions around individual schools
- A survey of how students are getting to school
- Exploration of resources and opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian safety instruction in school
- Supporting Walk to School/Bike to School Day events
- Determining infrastructure improvements needed to encourage safe walking and bicycling to school
- Seeking SRTS funding.

### **3.2.13 Bicycle Safety Training**

Ideally, bicycle safety training should be offered to every child. Learning how traffic operates, how traffic laws keep everyone safer and understanding how to safely handle a bicycle not only helps children bicycle more safely, but also serves as a traffic safety primer that contributes to better drivers. At the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade level, students have the motor and perceptual maturity to begin to understand traffic and learn bicycling skills. Several national initiatives have developed curricula for bicycle safety education for this age group. Ideally, the course should have an on-bike, on-street training element. The National Center for Bicycling and Walking, offers information about bicycle safety education curricula at, <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org>. District 181 in Hinsdale possesses a



bicycle safety program to students attending Oak School. This program could be expanded as a model for bicycle safety training throughout the Village.

**Draft Policy:** Work with District 181 and Hinsdale Parent and Teacher Associations to expand bicycle safety training opportunities for 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

**Draft Strategies:** Oak School has an existing bicycle safety program that could be used as a model for other school based programs.

