

NEWS RELEASE: Eau Claire County and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to Hold Open House for County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Project

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Expanding opportunities for biking and walking for transportation and recreation in Eau Claire County

Eau Claire County will hold an open house to introduce the County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to the public and gather input. The open house is Thursday, December 7th at the County Courthouse in the County Boardroom (Room 1277) on 721 Oxford Avenue in Eau Claire, Wisconsin from 4-7 p.m. Staff from the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, along with members of the county advisory team, will be present to answer questions, review maps and gather feedback regarding bike and pedestrian needs throughout the county. A short presentation will take place at 4:30 p.m.

Citizen input is essential to the plan. More information about the plan is available for review prior to the open house and throughout the planning process on the plan's website, 3countybikeandped.wordpress.com. In addition, a public online survey for the plan can be found at surveymonkey.com/r/3countybikeandped and an online mapping activity can be found at: wikimapping.com/wikimap/project1605.htm, where the public can delineate their favorite routes, highlight key destinations, and note barriers to safe bicycling.

Coordination between citizens, advocacy groups, local governments, and the county will be critical to creating a successful plan and moving forward to implementation. The county plan focuses on creating bicycle and pedestrian opportunities throughout the county as well as creating connections between surrounding counties to create a regional network. The Eau Claire County Bicycle and Pedestrian plan is being overseen by a county advisory team and coordinated with the bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts ongoing in Chippewa and Dunn counties.

This planning project is funded by a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant, through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The application was submitted to fund the creation of three coordinated bike and pedestrian plans in Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire counties. This highly competitive program provides an 80% grant with a 20% local match. The \$10,000 local match for the Eau Claire plan portion is being funded by the County.

The completion of the comprehensive bike and pedestrian plan will provide the County the necessary tools and guidelines to implement priority bicycle and pedestrian policies and projects, and to assist in applying for funding to create these connections and improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the County.

The comprehensive county bike and pedestrian plan is anticipated to be completed in the fall of 2018. Additional open houses for plan review are planned for the summer of 2018. For more information regarding this project go to the project website at 3countybikeandped.wordpress.com.

Information is also available by contacting Ann Schell, Senior Transportation Planner, or Megan Will, Associate Planner at the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission at 715-836-2918.