

City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee

Summer 2021 Newsletter

Please note that any opinion stated in this newsletter is the opinion of the author of the item and not necessarily the opinion or policy of the City of Ypsilanti.

Welcome To The Summer Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Committee Newsletter

This quarterly (Spring/Summer/Fall/Winter) newsletter is not only about the activities of the City Non-Motorized Advisory Committee (a Committee of the City of Ypsilanti Planning Commission), but non-motorized activities in general of interest to those who walk, bicycle or use a wheelchair in Ypsilanti. We also may report issues dealing with bus transit as to use such a service a person has to walk, bicycle or use a wheelchair to or from the bus stop.

We will try and keep news items in a brief format, devoid of hyper-technical language and also spelling out any abbreviations. Notice of the Newsletter being published will be done through City communications outlets and on social media through Nextdoor and Facebook (on the Committee's page there - www.facebook.com/YpsilantiNMAC).

Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Meetings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, regular monthly face-to-face meetings of the City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee have been suspended and are being replaced with Zoom online teleconferences. These online meetings are held approximately every month on the second Thursday of every month at 7pm. Please check the City of Ypsilanti News section - <https://cityofypsilanti.com/CivicAlerts.aspx>, and the Committee's Facebook page - www.facebook.com/YpsilantiNMAC for meeting announcements. Meeting agendas and minutes can be viewed at <http://www.cityofypsilanti.com/AgendaCenter/NonMotorized-Advisory-Committee-9>. Once COVID-19 restrictions are raised and face-to-face meetings allowed, future Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee meetings will be held at the disabled-accessible downtown Ypsilanti District Library.

Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Volunteers Needed

Anyone interested in making Ypsilanti a better place to walk, use a wheelchair, and bicycle is invited to attend Committee meetings. Interested in serving on the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee? Visit our [Committee Member Duties and General Information sheet](#), attend a Committee meeting or contact Bob Krzewinski at wolverbob@gmail.com or 734-487-9058.

City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Plan Update Approved

Non-Motorized Transportation
Master Plan - 2021 Update
City of Ypsilanti



For the past few years, a major goal of the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee has been to complete an update of the City's Non-Motorized Plan. The original City Non-Motorized Plan was approved in 2010 and was really in need of a revision.

The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan is a policy document, identifying the means to establish a cultural environment that supports and encourages safe, accessible, comfortable, and convenient non-motorized and multimodal transportation options for both people and goods throughout the City and into the surrounding communities. A multimodal transportation system will result in a greater number of individuals choosing alternative transportation modes, including not only walking and bicycling, but also taking public transportation. This increase will lead to a safer transportation system, a more environmentally sustainable City, an increased quality of life of residents and visitors, and neighborhoods and business districts that are more attractive

In 2021, the draft Non-Motorized Plan Update was approved by the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee at its May meeting, forwarded to the City Planning Commission, which at its May meeting started a one month public input period. The Planning Commission, at its June meeting voted to send the Update to the City Council who unanimously approved the Non-Motorized Plan Update at its July 13th meeting. The Update is now posted on the City web page at <https://cityofypsilanti.com/DocumentCenter/View/3068/Adopted-Non-Motorized-Plan-Update-2021-07-13> Website.

The next step for new Non-Motorized Plan Update will be for the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee to review a number of recommendations in the Update and prioritize these for action. The public is welcome to give input on this process which will begin at the Committee's September 8th online meeting. Meeting details will be listed on the City web page in the City News section - www.cityofypsilanti.com/CivicAlerts.aspx.

Cross Street Bike Lane To Re-Open

Over the summer, major water and sewage work was done on West Cross Street from Huron Street west to Summit Street by the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority. This project narrowed traffic down to one lane which also converted the Cross Street bike lane into a “all vehicle” lane. YUCA should be completing their work in early September after which the road will be resurfaced by the Michigan Department of Transportation under a separate construction contract. This resurfacing project will include re-establishing the Cross Street bike lane along with some new pedestrian improvements. This repaving work is expected to be completed by the end of October.

Where Are All The Organized Bike Rides???

When the COVID-19 pandemic first started to grow rapidly, and the only defense was staying six feet apart and wearing a mask, almost all organized bicycle rides began to postpone or cancel. This included local area bike club rides (i.e. most rides on the Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society calendar), one-day events (i.e. the Bike Ypsi Spring & Fall rides, the Bike Ypsi Taco Tour, the One Helluva Ride) and multi-day bike tours (i.e. League of Michigan Bicyclists fundraiser rides). Planning for most bicycling events and tours is immense, with overnight accommodations reserved, food orders confirmed, volunteers solicited and schedule, along with 101 other details. The cancellation order then is painful, but from a financial aspect, must be done months from the ride date so cancellation costs do not happen.

For 2021, the year started out with a feeling of hope in the cycling community with a COVID vaccine available and with a large number of people inoculated, popular bike rides and tours would return. But then just when it looked like the pandemic would end, vaccinations began to level out dramatically and a new strain of the COVID surfaced. Bike ride/tour organizers, keeping in mind not only rider safety, but also rider health, began cancelling rides all over again, or turned rides into “virtual” events where you would just ride by yourself (see the Taco Tour below). Cyclists can only hope that more people will decide to inoculate this year and 2022 will be the end of the COVID pandemic.

Taco Tour 14 – 2021 Edition



It's that time of year to think of Taco Tour again. Unfortunately, the rising tide of delta variant Covid infections renders a large group event an unwise activity. As we did last year, we are declaring September the month of tacos and encouraging individual Tours rather than a large group event. So, ride singly or in small groups to your destinations and support our great local taquerias.

Here are the rules of this year's event (not many), prizes (pint glass), and we'll put our recommendations for where to get local tacos in the comments.

1. Ride your bike to 5 or more taquerias in September. You can ride to all your stops in a single day, or you can ride to a different one on separate days. Just so all rides are sometime in September, the official (not really) month of Taco Touring.
2. Eat at least one taco at each stop. Of course you can eat as many as you want in addition.
3. Post up pictures of you, your bike, and your tacos! Please tag Bike Ypsi (@BikeYpsi), the taquerias, and use [#tacotourypsi2021](https://twitter.com/BikeYpsi)
4. For a list of taquerias, along with suggested riding route, visit <https://tinyurl.com/TacoTour2021>

After the end of September, any rider who has gone to 5 or more Taquerias, can claim a pint glass with the Taco Tour logo on it. Details on the pickup later. Out of courtesy, please wear a mask in the taquerias. This is for your safety, the safety of the workers and for the safety of any other customers. Note though, not all taquerias require masks, or use masks. We hope to see you out there! - Your Bike Ypsi Team

Bike Friendly Community Designation Renewal



The Bike Friendly Community (BFC - www.bikeleague.org/community) program is run by the League of American Bicyclists (www.bikeleague.org) and a BFC welcomes bicyclists by providing safe accommodations for bicycling and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation. Making bicycling safe and convenient are keys to improving public health, reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality and improving quality of life.

There are also different levels of a BFC, starting off with Bronze (this is what the City of Ypsilanti was awarded in 2017), then upwards with a Silver, Gold and the highest, Platinum level, with all awards lasting four years and then need to be reapplied for. Michigan currently has 13 Bike Friendly Communities. The City of Ypsilanti's Bike Friendly Community award expires in November 2021 and the City's Non-Motorized Advisory Committee has submitted a renewal application.

Major Non-Motorized Improvements On The Horizon In Ypsilanti

Huron, Hamilton and Washtenaw – In 2022, portions of these roads that fall under Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) control will see repaving along with pedestrian, disabled and bicycle improvements including sidewalk ramps, bike lanes, safety signage and traffic calming. This MDOT project will also address the need for a safe non-motorized crossing of Huron Street over the I-94 bridge.

Public input sessions on the Huron, Hamilton, Washtenaw project in mid-August at the Ypsilanti City Hall and Ypsilanti Township Civic Center. The Ypsilanti presentation was livestreamed by the City here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jkhsq9lktlg>, and the PowerPoint presentation is available here: [MDOT presentation](#). Additional project information can be found at <https://cityofypsilanti.com/722/Lane-Reduction-Project-on-Hamilton-Huron>.

Border To Border Trail Update For Ypsilanti



Construction began in August on a Border To Border Trail project that will offer substantial improvements for Trail users on the Grove Road segment that crosses I-94. Last year, the sidewalks along the west side of Grove Road, from just north of the I-94 bridge to where the Trail turns west into the Water Street development area, were replaced with a wider, concrete, non-motorized paved path. This year, construction crews are working on non-motorized improvements to the Grove Road bridge over I-94, widening an existing sidewalk on the west side of the bridge and also building barriers to safely separate pedestrians and bicyclists from motorists. Work is expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Also, the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission has a new Border To Border Trail website at <https://b2btrail.org>. Here you will find interactive maps, construction updates, how to report problems and more on this website

Keeping Sidewalks Open In Ypsilanti



City ordinances require property owners to keep sidewalks not only in good condition, but accessible as well with sidewalks cleared of snow in the winter and free of vegetation in the warm months. This means trimming back shrubbery, trees, branches or other obstructions. In addition, items should not block sidewalks, such as motor vehicles or motorcycles.

While some property owners may think that those who encounter sidewalk obstructions can just go around them, if you are in a wheelchair, such obstructions may stop you in your tracks. So please, keep your sidewalks open all year. And for wheelchair users in particular, if you encounter a blocked sidewalk and are unable to talk with the property owner about correcting the problem, please file a report with the City at “Report An Issue” - www.cityofypsilanti.com/506/Report-an-Issue. P.S – The photo used in this news item is not in the Ypsilanti area but shows how vegetation can obstruct passage for wheelchair users in particular.

Area Contacts

City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Facebook Page

Please consider “Liking” the City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee page at <https://www.facebook.com/YpsilantiNMAC>. The page is constantly updated with local news about non-motorized issues that relate to pedestrians, bicyclists and the disabled.

Local Resources

City of Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee - www.cityofypsilanti.com/296/Non-Motorized-Advisory-Committee

Bike Ypsi – Bike rides along with other special events (pending pandemic conditions)– www.facebook.com/bikeypsi

Ypsi Bike Co-Op – Free bike repairs, and low-cost good used bikes at selected Saturday Ypsilanti Farmers Market (dates for 2021 are listed on the Facebook page) - <https://www.facebook.com/ypsibikecoop>

Bike-Bus-Walk Ypsilanti – Alternative transportation in Ypsilanti – www bbwypsi.org & www.facebook.com/bbwypsi

Program To Educate All Cyclists – Ypsilanti-based organization giving mobility to the disabled through bicycle transportation – www.bikeprogram.org & www.facebook.com/everyonecanride

Ypsilanti Wolfpack Cruiserz– Local social bicycle group, many with some very classy bikes! - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/853886304774216/>

Washtenaw Bicycling & Walking Coalition – Countywide bicycling & walking advocacy group – www.wbwc.org & www.facebook.com/WBWCgo

League of Michigan Bicyclists – Statewide bicycle advocacy group - www.lmb.org & www.facebook.com/LeagueofMichiganBicyclists

Huron-Waterloo Pathways Initiative – Border To Border Trail advocacy and information - <http://huron-waterloo-pathways.org>