

Eau Claire Bike/Ped Times

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Local News

BPAC (Bike/Ped Advisory Committee) Update

With passage of the Comprehensive Plan, the City is poised to begin the process of creating a committee to focus on improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Eau Claire. The primary purpose of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee will be to advocate the equal opportunity to use non-automotive forms of travel and to ensure the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities into a well-designed, integrated transportation network for all Eau Claire citizens. If you are willing to help in this process or are interested in being on the BPAC please contact Brad Henderson at bhndrsn@charter.net or by replying to this message.

Tips for Safe and Comfortable Cold-Weather Bicycle Commuting

Winter bicycling is becoming more prevalent. To help with winter commuting, the trail network in Eau Claire is plowed and salted so don't let the winter weather keep you from riding, to start, all you need is:

- a bright, white, headlight
- a red rear blinking or steady tail light
- reflectors on pedals or reflective leg bands
- if you wear a dark jacket shell, consider a reflective vest for extra visibility.

From there you can consider studded bicycle tires (seriously – they make these!) for better traction. You may end cabin fever forever. For more information, see the Bicycle Commuting Guide on the Bike Fed website:

<http://www.bfw.org/btww/commuting/weather.php>. Or one of the following websites: [ICEBIKE](#), [Bike Winter](#), or [MassBike winter riding](#) for more info.

Winter Snow removal

If you know of an area that is not cleared of snow in a timely manner. You can do something about it. Most facilities can reasonably be expected to be cleared within 48 hours. If you know an area that needs attention, contact:

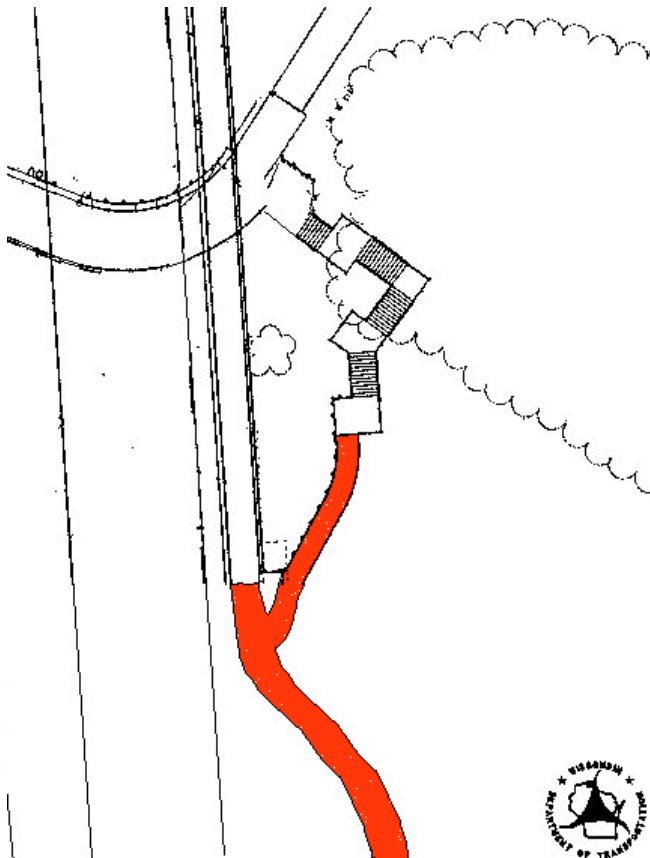
839-6075 for property owned by the Eau Claire Area School District

839-4963 for property maintained by the City of Eau Claire

839-2952 for property maintained by Eau Claire County (which includes most bridge decks and approaches)

Clairemont Avenue Bridge Completed?

If you drive across the Chippewa River south of Menomonie Street, it looks like the project to replace the bridge is completed. Walk or ride along the trail and you notice a few things still need to be done. The entire trail and staircase is open for public use but be careful, the areas shown below in red are gravel and will not be paved until warmer weather persists.



Bike Route Maps for Eau Claire

Pamphlets complete with maps and descriptions of bicycle routes in the city are now available in Eau Claire Bike Shops. The pamphlets are free and include a map of the city with suggested bike routes and descriptions. Downtown Eau Claire Inc designed the pamphlet: "Bicycle Riding in Eau Claire: Some Suggested Loops and Routes." DECI is a nonprofit organization, started in 2002, that promotes business and cultural resources in downtown Eau Claire. One goal of the pamphlet is to make people more aware of the new bicycle trailhead building at Phoenix Park. The building was completed this summer and it will be a starting point for bicyclists heading south on the 20-mile long Chippewa River Trail or heading north to connect with the Old Abe Trail at Chippewa Falls.

National News

Bicycles Outsell Autos

More bicycles than cars were sold in the United States over the past 12 months the US Chamber of Commerce reports, with rising gas prices prompting commuters to opt for two wheels instead of four. Not since the oil crisis of 1973 have bicycles sold in such big numbers, according to Tim Blumenthal, executive director of Bikes Belong, a Colorado-based industry association.

"Bicycle sales are near an all-time high with 19 million sold last year -- close to the 20 million sold during the oil embargo in the early 1970s," said Blumenthal. In a country where most of the population still relies heavily on cars, some 87 million people have climbed on a bike in the past year, Blumenthal said.

The average price of gas in the United States has increased 47.3% in the past year, according to figures recently published by the American Automobile Association. The US government has also done its part to promote a more bicycle-friendly environment. The federal government has set aside some \$3.5 million dollars to create cycling trails over the next four years. (AFP via Physorg.com, Oct. 1, 2005).

Bikes Are Changing Lives

On the Good Morning America Show, Memorial Day Monday, participants in Bicycling Magazine's Bike Town Program were presented their bikes launching the New York City Bike Town. As a bonus, the studio audience was also presented with free bikes. Learn more about Bike Town at www.bicycling.com/biketown

Pat and Don of Torrance, CA were lucky enough to be in the studio audience that morning. They've picked up their bikes and sent this note to Giant and Good Morning America.

*Dear Giant Bicycles and Good Morning America,
My husband and I were in the studio audience of Good Morning America on May 30, 2005. Much to our surprise and delight we were awarded a new Giant Bicycle! We were quite stunned and extremely delighted to say the least. We are both in our 70's and hadn't been on a bicycle since we were young pups! We decided, then and there, to take this good fortune as an omen that we needed to work on a fitness routine.*

Our bicycles arrived a couple of weeks ago. (They are handsome as all get out!), and we have begun a routine of riding for about twenty minutes a day. I guess it is true that you never forget how to ride a bicycle! Except for the fact that I forgot that my bike doesn't stop by chomping down on the pedals (I ran into the curb on my maiden voyage trying to stop) we have done very well, indeed. We are looking forward to building ourselves up to ride on the bike path at Torrance and Redondo Beaches. So far, we have been wandering all over our neighborhood looking at all the pretty houses. Attached is a picture of us beginning on our first ride.



*Thank you so much for this very nice gift.
Sincerely,
Pat and Don*

Michigan: No New Roads

Michigan's Transportation Director devotes less than six percent of the entire transportation budget to expanding road capacity.

Less than six percent of Michigan's \$6 billion road budget between now and 2009 will be used to expand the road network according to a budget submitted by Michigan Transportation Director Gloria Jeff. Governor Jennifer Granholm (D) has backed up this policy by vetoing twenty-five attempts by the legislature to add lanes or build various new roads.

Jeff maintains that the best use for gas tax money is to repair existing roads and expand mass transit, subsidizing the transportation needs of those who do not pay the tax. One of Jeff's major proposals, for example, would extend a light-rail system

from downtown Detroit to Ann Arbor. She also believes electronic message boards that warn motorists of traffic problems will relieve congestion.

Census projections suggest the state will grow by 8.6 percent over the next three decades, and some influential members of the legislature believe Jeff's policy is taking the state in the wrong direction.

"This administration needs to realize that in order for Michigan's economy to grow, we need to build roads where people live, work and pay taxes, not where we wish they'd live, work and pay taxes," House Speaker Craig DeRoche (R) told the Detroit News.

Other states such as Virginia have taken a similar approach. Between now and 2009, the largest project by far listed on the state's six-year plan devotes \$612 million to mass transit.

Source: Granholm, GOP spar over what's best for Michigan roads (Detroit News, 10/16/2005)

The Eau Claire Bike/Ped Times

Executive Editor Brad Henderson

Copy Editor Help Wanted!

Circulation Manager Help Wanted!

Past Contributors Todd Heinz, Turner Howard, Laura Plummer, Drew Brandenburg

Submission Guidelines: *The Bike/Ped Times* would love to feature your opinion, news, feature, artwork, and photographic submissions. Please submit by email and include your name, phone number, and address.

Mail to:

E-mail: bhndrsn@charter.net

Phone: (715) 831-9912