



VILLAGE OF
BELLWOOD: TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE SAFETY
PLANNING

25th Avenue
and Illinois Prairie Path

OUTREACH
PLAN



Jacobs

PREPARED FOR:

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for
Planning
and Village of Bellwood

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1. Project Background

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), through a consultant contract, is providing technical assistance to the Village of Bellwood to identify and propose measures to address the safety issues at the intersection of the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP) with 25th Avenue. Additional countermeasures will be proposed at the signalized intersection of 25th Avenue and Madison Street/S. Maywood Drive is located roughly 100 feet south of the intersection of study.

Project team members will interview strategic stakeholders to assess community concerns. Stakeholders are comprised of people who have technical knowledge as well as community members who are familiar and have experience with this intersection. When interviewing stakeholders about concerns and their experiences, a variety of different topics will be discussed: the effects of the 25th Avenue bridge (located less than a mile to the north); the associated increase in traffic volumes; and other planned improvements that have the potential to increase traffic conflicts between travel modes. However, a focus will be placed specifically on conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians with motorized traffic such as cars and trucks.

This Outreach Plan lays out a roadmap to identify and engage with these diverse stakeholders.

2. Anticipated Outreach Strategy

The outreach strategy will focus on interviews with stakeholders who are familiar with the intersection of the IPP with 25th Avenue, who will be impacted by proposed changes, and who can provide a view into the current state of traffic at the intersection by all users. In general, the stakeholders can be broken up into two different groups: users and key technical staff (e.g., public works staff).

As shown below in Figure 1, the outreach strategy centers on four main components. These components aim to gather issues and experiences from the stakeholders that will be included in the Existing Conditions Report (ECR). Once included in the ECR, proven and effective countermeasures for consideration will be included in the Key Recommendations Memorandum. The Key Recommendations Report will be largely influenced by the different feedback that is obtained from the stakeholder interviews.



Figure 1 - Components of the Outreach Strategy

3. Identifying Stakeholders

A stakeholder is anyone who could provide insight on the IPP/25th Avenue intersection in both technical and user experience. Their input will assist in shaping the interventions recommended to increase safety and usability of this intersection. For this outreach effort to be successful, it is critical to receive input from stakeholders that accurately represent the population of Bellwood and the users of the intersection. This includes traditionally underserved populations who are often underrepresented or omitted in public engagement efforts.

Stakeholders should include representation from the “5E’s” of safety, which define the broad stakeholder partners who care about safety and are responsible for making the roads safe for all users. Stakeholders from the 5E’s typically fall into one of the following categories:

- **Engineering** - Highway design, traffic, maintenance, operations, and planning professionals
- **Enforcement** - State and local law enforcement agencies

- **Education** - Prevention specialists, communication professionals, educators, and citizen advocacy groups
- **EMS** - First responders, paramedics, fire, and rescue
- **Equity** - Community representatives who understand the connection between affordable mobility and equity. Ultimately, these are a community's "end-users" and include transit commuters/labor workforces, teenagers/students, business owners and their consumers, marginalized populations, and other groups.

3.1 Key Stakeholders

During the kickoff meeting, the Village of Bellwood provided the project team with the following list of stakeholders for participation in the interview process. As efforts progressed, additional stakeholders were identified and invited to participate in the interview process.

Village of Bellwood Employees

- Tonita S. LeShore, Director of Human Resources
 - tleshore@vil.bellwood.il.us
- Peter Tsiolis, MPA. JD (Strategic Project Management, Inc.), Director of Economic Development
 - ptsiolis@strategicpm.us
- Aric Swaney, JD (Strategic Project Management, Inc.), Assistant Director of Economic Development
 - aswaney@strategicpm.us
- Marty Walker, Director of Public Works
 - mwalker@vil.bellwood.il.us
- Jim Stock, Building Department Director
 - jstock@vil.bellwood.il.us
- Chief Jiminez Allen, Police Chief
 - jallen@vil.bellwood.il.us
- Chief Douglas Dombek, Fire Chief
 - ddombek@vil.bellwood.il.us
- Andre Harvey, Mayor of Bellwood
 - bellwoodfirstparty@gmail.com

Utilities

- Katrina M. Steele, External Affairs Manager – ComEd
 - Katrina.steele@comed.com
- Patricia Eaves-Heard, Regional Manager and Community Affairs – Nicor Gas
 - peaves@southernco.com
- Sam Balark, Director, External Affairs – AT&T
 - sb8658@att.com

Adjacent Property Occupants and Chamber of Commerce

- Nick Belton, Plant Manager – Borg Warner
 - nbelton@borgwarner.com
- Matt McConahy, Director of Human Resources – Borg Warner

- mmcconahy@borgwarner.com
- Mark Muto - Borg Warner
 - mmuto@borgwarner.com
- William Vadik – American Recycling & Disposal
 - american-waste@sbcglobal.net
- Joe Lazarra, Owner — Kustom Seating Unlimited
 - jlazzara95@gmail.com
- Arnetta Watkins, President — Bellwood Chamber of Commerce
 - travelwithnetta@gmail.com
- Steve Richards, Vice President — Bellwood Chamber of Commerce
 - stever@rnsi.com

IDOT

- Jonathan Lloyd, Traffic Studies Engineer/IDOT D1
 - Jonathan.Lloyd@illinois.gov

Public Transit

- David Tomzik, Manager of Long-Range Planning/Pace Suburban Bus
 - David.Tomzik@pacebus.com
- Richard Willman, Transportation Engineer/Pace Suburban Bus
 - Richard.Willman@pacebus.com
- Adam Eichenberger, Senior Service Planner/Pace Suburban Bus
 - Adam.Eichenberger@pacebus.com

Cyclists/Pedestrians

- Vito Ippolito, Board Member — Illinois Prairie Path
 - vsi2112@gmail.com
- Ken McClurg, Board Member — Illinois Prairie Path
 - kenmcclurg@gmail.com
- Maggie Czerwinski, Active Transportation Alliance
 - maggie@activetrans.org
- Benet Haller, Cook County DOTH (Bike Plan is in-progress)
 - Benet.Haller@cookcountyil.gov
- Peter Dirks, Cook County DOTH (Bike Plan is in-progress)
 - Peter.Dirks@cookcountyil.gov
- David Fletcher, General Manager, Wheel and Sprocket (Oak Park)
 - oakpark@wheelandsprocket.com

3.2 Additional Identified Stakeholders

In addition to the stakeholders Bellwood has identified, the project team worked with Bellwood to identify additional stakeholders to potentially interview in a second effort in an attempt to gather a more diverse range of experiences and points of view for users of the IPP and its intersection with 25th Avenue. These stakeholders may include local church groups, administrators and teachers from nearby schools, parents, resident groups, and others who live or operate in the surrounding areas. Proposed stakeholders are identified below.

Church Groups

- Neighborhood United Methodist — Pastor: Beverly Dukes @ (708)-684-5887
- Monroe Baptist Church — monroeighbellwood@gmail.com or (708) 544-3119
- Church of the Living God — (708) 865-9614

Education/Schools

- School representatives
- PTA groups
- Parents/guardians

Neighborhood Associations/Active Residents

- Request suggestions from Village of Bellwood team

4. Interviewing Stakeholders

To interview stakeholders, the project team will use Mural, a web-based software that is conducive for virtual interviews and collaboration. In this format, participants can verbally respond to questions and provide feedback using a desktop computer or mobile device, similar to a chat box. Figure 2 below provides an example of how questions may be posted on Mural. Participants can respond to the question using virtual “sticky notes”, shown in Figure 2 as the light green and light blue squares.

These responses can then be cataloged for summarizing in the Existing Conditions Report. Additionally, the responses will help guide the countermeasures that are proposed in the Key Recommendations Memo. Since the Mural comments in the “sticky notes” remain as the interviews progress, there is no fear of missing a comment since it is recorded within the Mural presentation.

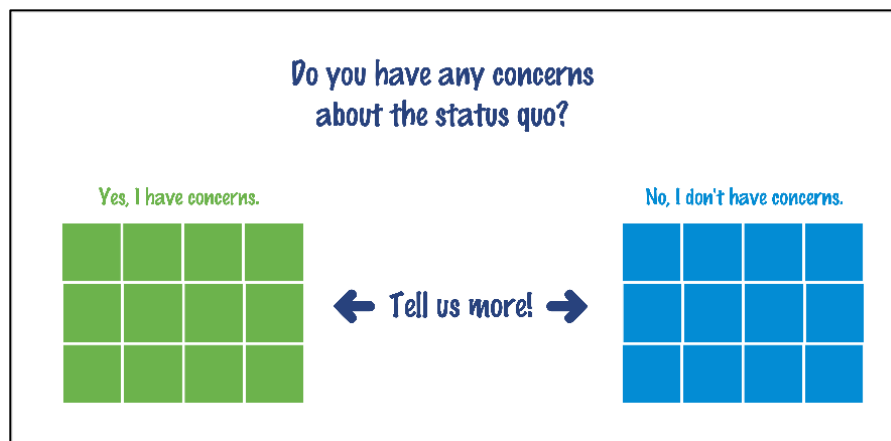


Figure 2 - Example of Question Posted on Mural

For stakeholders without access to a desktop computer or mobile device, the project team may conduct interviews via telephone.

Table 1 below contains the questions and topics that the project team may use as a guide for the interview process. This content is not final, as conversation during the interviews may lead to follow-up questions not listed below.

Table 1: Stakeholder Interview Questions and Topics

Stakeholder	Questions and Topics
Village of Bellwood Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Village of Bellwood, what transportation trends are you seeing? In terms of vehicle/traffic and pedestrian/bikes, what are your transportation priorities and emerging needs? • [Show Google Earth images of intersection] What are these images missing? What can't they tell us about the conditions at the intersection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ex: Car speed, road or path condition, visibility, weather conditions • Do you have any concerns about the status quo in both a professional and personal-use manner? If so, what are they? What are the existing issues in the study area in terms of safety, mobility, and convenience? Have you witnessed crashes or near-misses? What kind?? If you have no concerns, what makes you content or comfortable with the way you use the location now? • What opportunities do you see for improvement? • In terms of safety, what incentives, disincentives, or education has the Village tried thus far? What has and hasn't worked? • What ADA accommodations should be considered to improve the usability of the trail, especially at this intersection? • Police: What seems to be the most frequent behavior-related issue you observe and/or issue citations for? • Police: Have you observed any patterns in near misses? • Police/Fire/EMS: When responding to police/fire/EMS needs, does this intersection pose issues with congestion? If so, what has been your approach to mitigate this issue?
Adjacent Property Occupants (Including Schools, Churches, Neighborhood Associations, and Residents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Show Google Earth images of intersection] What are these images missing? What can't they tell us about the conditions at the intersection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ex: Car speed, road or path condition, weather conditions • Do you have any concerns about the status quo? If so, what are they? What are the existing issues in the study area in terms of safety, mobility, and convenience? Have you witnessed crashes or near-misses? What kind?? If you have no concerns, what makes you content or comfortable with the way you use the location now? • Do cyclists/pedestrians use your property rather than the path and crosswalk? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, what is the effect of their use of your property? ○ If so, have you implemented any measures to address the issue? • As we think about improvements for this location, we should consider both at-grade crossings at the intersection and separating bikes/pedestrians with an over/underpass. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you see any issues or opportunities with this type of improvement? ○ What should planners and designers keep in mind?
Bicyclists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What opportunities do you see for improving the 'bikeability' of this location? • [Show Google Earth images of intersection] What are these images missing? What can't they tell us about the conditions at the intersection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ex: Car speed, road or path condition, weather conditions • Do you have any concerns about the status quo? If so, what are they? What are the existing issues in the study area in terms of safety, mobility, and convenience? Have you witnessed crashes or near-misses? What kind?? If you have no concerns, what makes you content or comfortable with the way you use the location not? • Do you have any data/demographic information about users of the IPP? (families, school kids, seniors, mobility challenged) • To what extent is 25th Avenue a barrier to movements by bikes/peds? How does it rank among other IPP crossings in terms of safety, convenience? • Do you think erecting a physical barrier to prevent bicyclists from crossing at the IPP would work, if an over or underpass is constructed? • Why do you think some cyclists don't use the crosswalk? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does the time of day/year matter? • Does the crosswalk feel the safest, as safe, or less safe than crossing at the intersection of the IPP with 25th Avenue? • As we think about improvement for this location: we should consider both at-grade crossings across the intersection and separating bikes with an over/underpass. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you see issues /opportunities with any of those types of solutions?

Stakeholder	Questions and Topics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What should planners and designers keep in mind? ○ What are your past experiences with bike/pedestrian bridges? ● How influential are raised curbs in your decision to “hop” a curb (AKA: mount/dismount the curb straight-on)? ● The intersection of 25th Avenue and Madison Street has pedestrian countdown signals with push-button activators. How likely are you to use these push-button activators and obey the signals? ● Do you feel safe crossing 5 lanes of traffic on your bike? What would make you feel safer? ● How safe and/or comfortable would you be for children to bike on the path and this intersection of study? ● What education topics do you think would have a positive impact for both bicyclists and motorists? ● What do you think is an impactful way to promote safe bicyclist behavior?
Pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● [Show Google Earth images of intersection] What are these images missing? What can't they tell us about the conditions at the intersection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ex: Car speed, road or path condition, weather conditions ● Do you have any concerns about the status quo? If so, what are they? What are the existing issues in the study area in terms of safety, mobility, and convenience? Have you witnessed crashes or near-misses? What kind? If you have no concerns, what makes you content or comfortable with the way you use the location not? ● Do you think erecting a physical barrier would deter bicyclists from crossing 25th Avenue and would guide them towards crossing at Madison Street? ● Why do you think pedestrians don't use the crosswalk? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does the time of day/year matter? ● Does the crosswalk feel the safest, as safe, or less safe than crossing at the intersection of the IPP with 25th Avenue? ● How safe and/or comfortable would you be for children to walk on the path and this intersection of study? ● As we think about improvement for this location: we should consider both at-grade crossings across the intersection and separating bikes with an over/underpass. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you see issues /opportunities with any of those types of solutions? ○ What should planners and designers keep in mind? ○ What are your past experiences with bike/pedestrian bridges? ● What opportunities do you see for improving the 'walkability' of this location? ● What education topics do you think would have a positive impact for both pedestrians and motorists? ● What do you think is an impactful way to promote safe pedestrian behavior? ● What ADA accommodations should be considered to improve the usability of the trail, especially at this intersection?
IDOT District 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have there been other pedestrian overpass/tunnels incorporated in the Chicagoland area? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, what were thresholds (crashes, BC ratios, etc.) had to be met for those projects? ○ What was the cost range for those projects? ● Are there any spatial or operations considerations that should be considered for overpass/tunnels?
Truck Driver representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is your experience as a truck driver along this intersection? ● [Show Google Earth images of intersection] What are these images missing? What can't they tell us about the conditions at the intersection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ex: Car speed, road or path condition, weather conditions ● Do you have any concerns about the status quo? If so, what are they? What are the existing issues in the study area in terms of safety, mobility, and convenience? Have you witnessed crashes or near-misses? What kind?? If you have no concerns, what makes you content or comfortable with the way you use the location not? ● What opportunities do you see for improvement? ● Have you had any past experiences with pedestrians and/or bicyclists crossing 25th Avenue at IPP instead of at Madison Street? ● As we think about improvement for this location: we should consider both at-grade crossings across the intersection and separating bikes with an over/underpass. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you see issues /opportunities with any of those types of solutions? ○ What should planners and designers keep in mind? ○ What are your past experiences with bike/pedestrian bridges?

5. Preparing the Existing Conditions Report

The project team will use the Mural responses from the stakeholder’s interviews to guide the development of the Existing Conditions Report. If necessary, the project team will engage with stakeholders to provide additional interviews and/or to obtain feedback during production of the Existing Conditions Report.

6. Presenting Findings to the Village Board

The project team will create a final draft of the proposed countermeasures for the intersection of 25th Avenue and IPP for a presentation to the Bellwood elected board. The atmosphere for this presentation will resemble a public meeting. Similarly, a PowerPoint slide deck will be developed for presentation at applicable CMAP committee meetings.

7. Timeline

The following outreach activities are identified in the Village of Bellwood effort. Exact timing and format of these activities will be determined by CMAP with input from the Village team and the availability of the different stakeholders. Additional outreach activities may also be conducted, as needed.



Figure 3 - Stakeholder Timeline