

MATS Proposed NMT Projects

MATS local agencies were asked to identify future non-motorized project opportunities within their jurisdictions. The resulting extensive list of projects is presented on page 26, and mapped in Figure 9, **MATS Proposed Non-Motorized Projects**. The projects listed are in various stages of planning, and hence differing levels of detail are provided. Wide-ranging consultation was done in order to compile this list, which consists of projects submitted by the City of Midland, City of Auburn, Tittabawassee Township, Williams Township, and all three participating County Road Commissions.

As can be seen by the project list as a whole, specific attention has been paid to providing both local connectivity and linkages between various aspects of the regional network. The trail routes in particular (Project #s 12-16) provide a tremendous number of access points and interconnection nodes by virtue of their geographic coverage and looped design. This provides both access to recreational opportunities as well as opportunities for basic transportation. Lastly, several proposed projects (#s 5-11) provide access to growing residential and commercial areas in the City of Midland, as well as interconnection to other routes via projects on the list. Some of the proposed projects in this NMT plan will be key connectors to the statewide Iron Belle Trail (IBT). These projects include the Freeland-Midland Connector (#16 on the list of projects), the Tittabawassee Township Pathway (#20), and the Williams Township Connector (#3). In addition, other improvements may be conceived of in the future that will provide further connections between Clare and the Iron Belle Trail.

Additionally, in Figure 10, **MATS Existing and Proposed Non-Motorized Trails** we present both existing facilities and proposed projects, in order to visualize the totality of connections, linkages, and routes ultimately available in both urbanized and rural portions of the MATS area. Thereby we towards the fulfillment of our NMT goal as presented on page 9, as well as ultimately improving the quality of life for all residents. This collection of proposed projects, when viewed in the context of existing NMT facilities, presents a remarkable opportunity to leverage all the benefits of non-motorized transportation for the MATS area. An enlarged network provides direct benefits to users from improved walking and cycling conditions, and various benefits to society from increased non-motorized travel activity, reduced automobile travel, and support for more compact land use development, as well as benefits to economically, socially, or physically disadvantaged persons.

Lastly, a transit project has been added that provides for the installation of 2-position steel bicycle racks on Midland Dial-A-Ride's light-duty cutaway buses, which will accommodate both adult and children's bicycles. By adding bicycle racks to the Dial-A-Ride bus fleet, passengers will have the ability to broaden their transportation options in Midland. The option to travel with their bicycle will allow them greater flexibility in travel throughout their day, and will particularly benefit a portion of the Midland population (seniors, people with disabilities and people with low incomes) that are traditionally disadvantaged. Besides broadening the transportation options available in Midland, this will help to promote the utility of cycling and Dial-A-Ride in the community, and enhance the overall well-being of city residents.