

# III. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

## The System

This system master plan was developed in coordination with The Friends board, area stakeholders and relevant agencies. It proposes prioritization of potential routing and provides planning-level cost estimates of potential construction costs. The Old Trinity Trail spine will be part of the planned “Veloweb,” a region-wide network of transportation-oriented spine trails first adopted in 1995 by the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). For detailed descriptions of the proposed segments, see Chapter IV, Master Plan Recommendations.

## Trail Evaluation Criteria

Following collaboration with area stakeholders, City of Dallas Park & Recreation Department and Trinity River Corridor Project Office staff, as well as DART and TxDOT, the proposed trail segments have been ranked to reflect present and potential development patterns, timing of thoroughfare, Stemmons Freeway and other current roadway upgrade plans, timing of other known planned or anticipated capital projects, and the degree of public interest in particular segments as expressed in stakeholder forums conducted for the project.

To provide for orderly, efficient development of this bicycle and pedestrian network, pathway routes were selected based on the following criteria:

- Connections to other existing, programmed, planned or proposed trail segments such as the Katy Trail extension and the Trinity Levee Trail
- Access from and to public transit, major public facilities, major employment, hotels, parks, residences (current & potential), and other key destinations
- Potential for adequate pathway corridor width (construction, maintenance, buffers, etc.)
- Trail corridor potential based on existing natural or topographic features
- Existing public support for making the area more accessible to non-motorized travel.

## Sidewalk Analysis

To assess sidewalks, windshield surveys were conducted, together with detailed assessments of potential sidewalk connections to the trail in order to identify opportunities and constraints. Sidewalks were scored block by block to determine approximate percentage of needed new segments or repairs.

A rough count of needed ADA ramps revealed the need for nearly 600 ramps to be replaced or added in order to provide

accessibility from access points along the trail. These ramps will connect nearly 13 miles of sidewalks, of which only 4¼ -miles currently exist. Approximately 8 miles of new or replacement sidewalks are needed within the study area.

## On-Street Bicycle Analysis

While the implementation of the Old Trinity Trail will serve the needs of many cyclists over a large percentage of their trips, most destinations will require cyclists to leave the trail and make the final approach via the street system. For this reason, bicycling conditions along the street system are very important for destination oriented transportation trips to and from work, shopping, and other errands. As this area redevelops with a mixed-use orientation, roadway improvements will be needed to support bicycling as a transportation mode.

In the study area, the following streets are signed bike routes:

- Bike Route 37 follows Lucas Drive to Market Center Blvd, then Wycliff/Sylvan across the Trinity to West Dallas.
- A portion of Bike Route 210 has been signed from Downtown to American Airlines Center, beneath Stemmons, up Hi Line Drive and along Turtle Creek Boulevard to Levee Street. This route will follow Irving Boulevard when reconstruction occurs.
- Bike Route 29, just outside the study area, connects from Irving Boulevard's future Bike Route 210, through the University of Texas Southwest Medical Center campus to Butler Street on the north.

A preliminary Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) evaluation was conducted on selected road segments within the study area to evaluate existing conditions. (See Appendix A.5) This rating assists in identifying factors that cause bicyclists stress. Assessment of these factors (traffic volume, posted speed limit, and lane width) was used to determine the bicycle level of service for each street segment (level A being least stressful, followed by B, C, D and F). Streets with a BLOS rating of D or F are considered to be inaccessible to bicyclists. BLOS B is suitable for most cyclists. BLOS C is suitable for competent cyclists.

Secondary BLOS factors (street parking turn-over rates, truck traffic levels, commercial driveway spacing) were not analyzed for this trail-planning document. Prior to any bike route signing, an on-site inspection should be conducted to confirm that secondary factors do not excessively impact conditions for bicycling.

The BLOS analysis of current conditions reveals that cycling conditions in the study area range from BLOS B to D, with many areas being accessible at least to experienced adult cyclists.

Problem areas for cycling include:

- Oak Lawn Ave from Harry Hines to southbound Stemmons service road (SBSR)
- Wycliff Avenue from Stemmons SBSR to Crow Lake
- Motor Street from Harry Hines to Stemmons SBSR
- Stemmons NBSR from Oak Lawn Avenue to Motor Street
- Stemmons SBSR from Motor Street to Oak Lawn Avenue

- Irving Blvd from Motor Street to Oak Lawn Blvd.

These streets should include 14-15' wide curb lanes when reconstructed.

Roadways that currently have an acceptable BLOS and have a high risk of degraded cycling conditions if 14' wide outside lanes are not included in any future reconstruction include:

- Oak Lawn Avenue from Stemmons SBSR to Levee Street
- Turtle Creek Blvd from Market Center Blvd to Levee Street.

Costs for providing acceptable BLOS would be incorporated into associated roadway reconstruction budgets and are not included in this master plan.

## Security

Security concerns often have been brought up during discussions about the trail. In recent years, the homeless have taken over pockets of natural open space within the corridor due to limited risk of discovery, becoming more evident in the evenings and on weekends after workers depart the area to residences outside the district. Today, residents from the growing residential base contribute to a sense of civic presence, fostering perceptions of safety and security. Trends elsewhere show reported crimes spike once a trail opens, but after a short period of increased enforcement and with more legitimate residents dwelling in the area, such encampments leave the area. The establishment of mixed-use development and the trail is anticipated to address this concern.

## Potential Property Owner Partnerships

Early in this plan's development, The Friends met with area stakeholders to forge interest in a common pedestrian connection between each of the neighborhoods along both sides of the channel. The addition of as many as seven all weather bridges will allow easier access to adjacent neighborhoods along opposite sides of the Old Trinity sump.

Owners of several railroad corridor segments have indicated willingness to donate the right-of-way for the main trail through the district.

## The Trailside Environment

As word of this project has spread, so has interest in the environmental aspect of the Old Trinity. The Friends has established an Environmental Restoration Committee to consider the ecological restoration of the trail and watercourse corridor. They intend to heed the environmental recommendations from the North Texas Master Naturalists, the local chapter of TPWD's statewide program. The Friends and Dallas city staff were introduced to the *Texas Smartscape* program, with an orientation on how to plan, design, select and care for native plant materials.

Landscaping and public art are also key components in the overall redevelopment mission. There is general consensus that the emerging vision for the trail corridor will require increased pumping capacity to allow some water impoundments in the



sump, and that this will support environmental restoration of larger aquatic systems.

## Student Visions

To provide another perspective, two senior students in the Landscape Architecture program at Texas Tech University were invited to develop a vision for the landscape and environmental restoration aspects of the Old Trinity.

Dustin Bullard and Spencer Freeman selected the channel within this plan's study area to develop a detailed site inventory and analysis, case studies, conceptual and master landscape plans for the area. The students' project included detailed drawings, an oral presentation and a written report summarizing their project, according to a February 25, 2004 letter from the university. Upon completion in May 2004, a digital copy of all drawings and the written report were provided to The Friends. Dr. Alon Kvashny, ASLA, Professor and Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, served as their advisor.