

CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY MISSING LINKS

Primary Corridors vs. Missing Links

The previous section of this plan identified a comprehensive system of primary corridors for implementation by year 2035. This chapter identifies 17 short segments of those corridors that are desired to be completed by year 2020 to create a basic system for the region following these objectives:

- ▶ Complete missing segments of off-road pathways.
- ▶ Develop initial on-street bicycle lanes in moderately traveled roadway corridors that link to existing off-road pathways.
- ▶ Take advantage of development opportunities at community fringes to make pathway connections between jurisdictions.

Actions to complete the missing links are occurring, albeit not as quickly as anticipated. Lack of funding to build and extend pathway facilities has slowed pathway development; however, two missing link segments identified in the 2007 RPSP were completed. A one mile section of shared-use path along Pawnee St. (corridor F) now fills the gap between Woodlawn St. and Rock Road. A 1.5 mile gap between 17th and 29th streets now connects the K-96 Trail to the Canal Hike Bike Trail.

The following action plan therefore represents areas where public investments should continue to be focused based upon need. These implementation priorities will need to be balanced with opportunities and a commitment by local communities to fund and support project development.

Local vs. Regional Priorities

Urban areas over 50,000 populations are required by federal statute, as a condition for spending federal highway or transit funds, to designate a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to assume responsibility for planning, programming, and coordinating federal transportation investments.

The mission of the Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO) is to provide staffing, research, and policy analysis on a wide variety of transportation issues in the region. WAMPO has no regulatory powers, but focuses on intergovernmental cooperation and coordination. WAMPO recommends, but does not implement plans and programs. It also provides review and comment on local applications for federal and state funds.

In this manner, the WAMPO Regional Pathway System Plan represents a document that both incorporates local projects and recommends projects to local jurisdictions. Completion of the 17 missing links identified as regional pathway priorities is recommended to create connections between communities and facilities.

Individual jurisdictions may have their own list of pathway priorities internal to their community, but should also work to fund and build the identified facilities that will connect them

CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY MISSING LINKS

with their neighbors and provide longer distance travel options for residents of the region. Experience in other regions has shown that placing initial investments into a system of primary travel corridors spurs additional use and support for other, smaller pathway improvements as both the regional and individual community pathway networks grow and mature over time.

Map Details

The Action Plan for completing priority missing links is presented on pages 4-4 through 4-8. This short list of 17 projects (map on following page) was developed by examining gaps between existing pathway facilities that occur within the primary pathway corridors

Many of the missing links are projects already planned by local jurisdictions. Others are new recommendations needed for regional connectivity. Many cross jurisdictional boundaries and will require multi-community and multi-agency cooperation and coordination to implement.

Short List Action Plan of Regional Missing Links

This plan's 24 identified primary corridors (see map on page 2-6.) represent a skeletal pathway system that the region should strive to complete to provide a minimal network of non-motorized accommodation by 2035. It totals 351 miles of facilities - 90 miles of new trails, with an additional 101 miles if watershed protection corridors are created, plus 69 miles of designated on-road facilities and 89 miles of incidental shoulder improvements. This skeletal system is more achievable than the 421 miles of new trails currently shown in other existing plans with no prioritization, and provides enhanced connectivity with linkages to major destinations. Over time, the number of pathway corridors may be increased to reflect the need for such facilities, as well as connectivity with other trails within the region and to those pathways connecting the region to areas of the state.

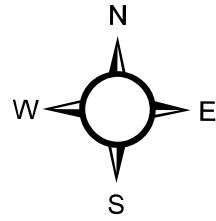
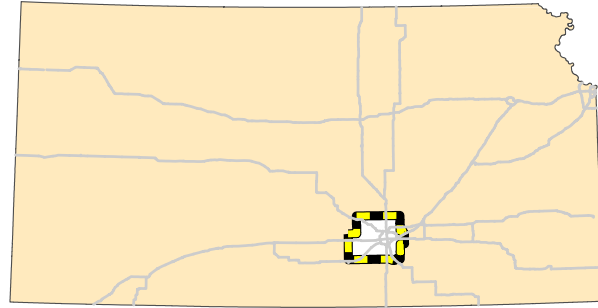
All 24 primary corridors will be important to implement, but this still represents a fairly large undertaking for the region. To further focus in on those projects that are desired to be undertaken immediately to provide a basic level of connectivity by year 2020, the following 17 missing links represent 80 miles critical for priority implementation. Each priority missing link is identified on the map on the following page and described in detail following, including rough ball-park cost estimates for completion.

Connectivity

*"Sometimes you just can't get there from here. Without connectivity you just have a trail and not a trail system."
--Cathy Barrett, Avid Omaha Cyclist.*

WAMPO is not being prescriptive in the facility types listed in this section. Rather, the projects listed were selected to fill gaps in the existing pathway system. Meanwhile, each of the facility types listed represents a typical project scenario and is shown for illustrative and cost estimation purposes.

Kansas



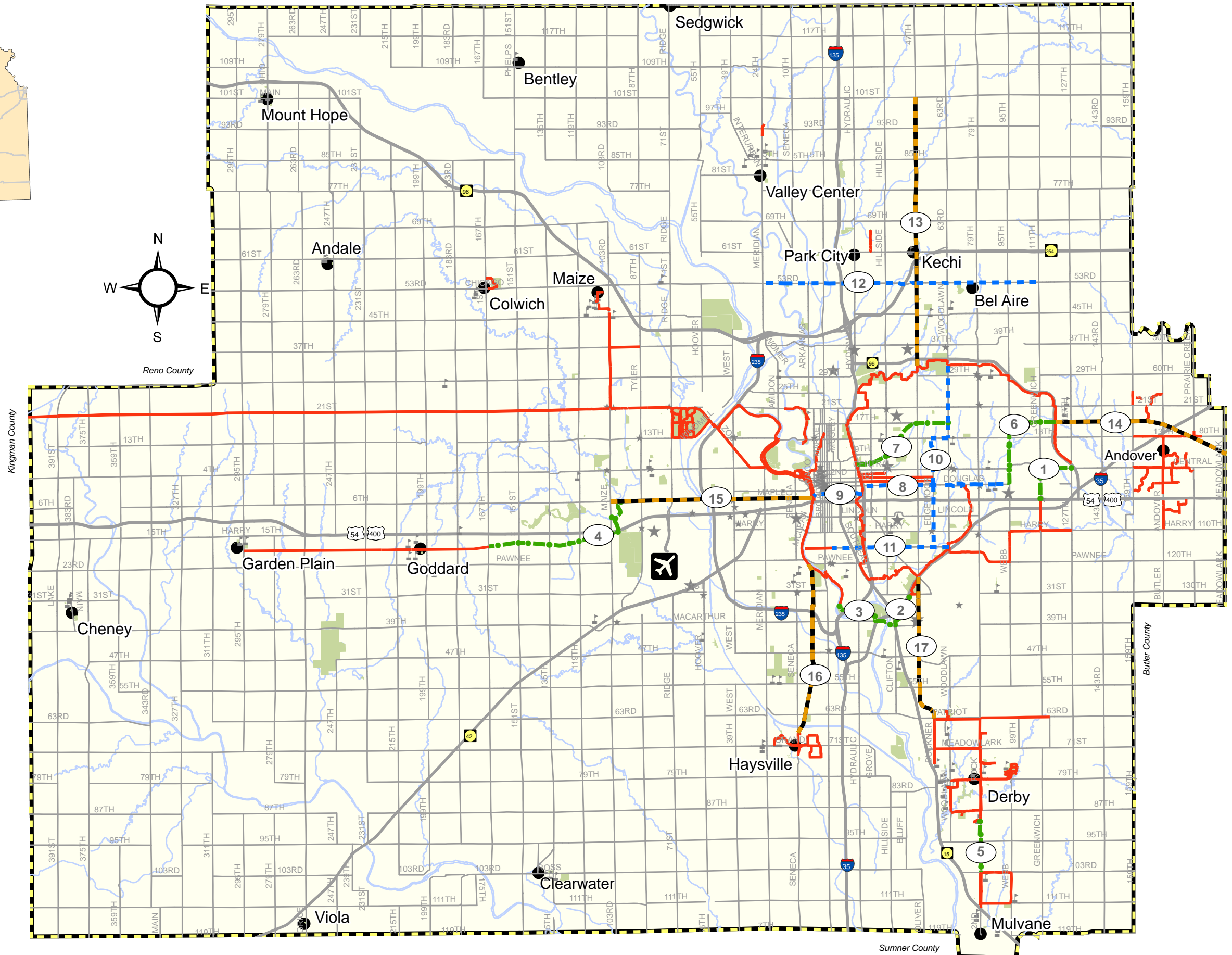
Legend

Priority Missing Links

- Off-Road Trail Link
- Roadway Corridors that Link Trail
- Community Connection

Existing Facilities

- Existing Facility
- Wichita Mid-Continent Airport
- School
- Major Employer
- Minor Employer
- City
- Highway or Interstate
- Arterial Street
- River or Stream
- Park
- WAMPO Planning Boundary



CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY MISSING LINKS

STRATEGY #1:

Complete short missing multi-use trail links between existing off-road pathways to form a continuous 45-mile trail loop.

1. Corridor M: Extension south from current K-96 Bike Path terminus at 127th E. to the intersection of Harry and Greenwich.

A 2-mile section of trail or on-road bicycle accommodation is needed along 127th E. from the K-96 Bike Path terminus south to Harry Street. To avoid conflict issues with K-96 and the I-35/Kansas Turnpike, the City of Wichita has chosen to route this connection from K-96, west one mile on Central and then south 1 mile along Greenwich to connect with the existing trail at Harry and Greenwich.

Estimated cost to be between \$316,800 - \$422,400.

2. Corridor O: Gypsum Creek Bicycle Path extension from 31st S. to the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad.

The current terminus of the Gypsum Creek Bicycle Path in Planeview Park would be extended southwest to link to other trail facilities in the vicinity of I-35, K-15 and E. MacArthur Road. The City of Wichita is actively planning this 1.5-mile missing link along the eastern side of the I-35/Kansas Turnpike exit, which will ultimately extend to Garvey Park as part of Corridor J. Estimated cost is approximately \$660,000 for design and construction using the existing bridge on MacArthur Road to cross the river.

3. Corridor J: Big Arkansas River Path extension east to link with the Gypsum Creek Bicycle Path extension.

The City of Wichita is actively planning this 2-mile missing link of a 10-foot multi-use pathway from Garvey Park to the I-35/Kansas Turnpike. Estimated cost: \$633,600

STRATEGY #2:

Extend existing off-road trails to link with other facilities or ones currently in the process of being developed for public use.

4. Corridor E: Rails-to-trails segment from 167th W. to 103rd W., with a creek-side trail up to Maple Street.

Eight miles of the former Central Kansas Railway from 167th to 295th has been developed by the Prairie Travelers advocacy group and the City of Goddard as the Prairie Sunset Trail. The next phase should continue this rail-to-trail project 4.5 miles east to the Pawnee Prairie Golf Course. From here, a 1-mile multi-use pathway under W. Kellogg Drive along the Cowskin Creek will link to the roadway network at Maple Street.

Estimated cost of rail-to-trail: \$475,200 - \$712,800. Estimated cost of Cowskin Creek Connector: \$316,800 - \$422,400.

CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY MISSING LINKS

5. Corridor N (3): Rock Road connection between Derby and Mulvane.

This 1.5-mile missing segment between Rockhill and 103rd S. will connect sidepath facilities that exist along Rock Road in both the City of Derby and the City of Mulvane. Mulvane has paths on both sides of Rock Road. In Derby, a sidepath is on the west side from Woodbrook to 87th, then on both sides north to Osage. Estimated cost of sidepath would be between \$475,200 - \$633,600.

6. Corridors D and P: Connection from the K-96 Bike path to Douglas Avenue and the northern terminus of the Gypsum Creek Trail.

Complete at an estimated cost of \$258,400-358,400 1.5 miles of the 17th Street/BNSF “Redbud Trail” from the K-96 Trail to Webb Road. This connection will also involve completing proposed sidepath facilities along Webb Road for a distance of 2 miles at a cost of \$633,600 - \$844,800 (assumes additional design at drive crossings).

7. Corridor D Redbud Trail: Hike & Bike Trail through the Ken-Mar Neighborhood.

Develop an initial section of the 17th Street/BNSF “Redbud” Trail through the Ken-Mar Neighborhood, ideally spanning between Corridor L and Corridor N. This will provide valuable linkages and serve as a community development project to assist in neighborhood revitalization efforts.

Estimated cost is \$664,800 – \$796,000 for 2.5 miles which includes pedestrian-controlled lights, signage, and pavement markings for each street crossing; may include a diagonal crossing over 13th Street, which may involve a site-specific engineering design at additional cost. The City of Wichita will need to determine exact start and end points for this pilot project based upon implementation feasibility.

The City of Wichita has identified funding for this project and is working on design for the segment between the Canal multi-use trail (Corridor L) and Oliver.

STRATEGY #3:

Implement facilities within roadway corridors that provide direct links to connect existing off-road trails.

8. Corridor E (3): Douglas Avenue bicycle lanes from the Canal Hike and Bike Trail to Webb Road.

A recommended roadway retrofit project to restripe 4.8 miles of Douglas Avenue from US-81/I-135/K-15 to Webb Road at an estimated cost of \$57,600. The City of Wichita will need to assess the feasibility of this recommendation with other alternatives to meet the intent of creating a primary corridor along Douglas Avenue. The City of Wichita is currently updating their Bicycle Master Plan and is considering additional options to make trail improvements along this corridor consistent with the Wichita Downtown Master Plan and the Douglas Street Transit Oriented Development (TOD) study currently underway.

CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY MISSING LINKS

9. Corridor E (3): Segment through Downtown Wichita connecting the Canal Multi-use Trail with the Arkansas River Path.

This 2-mile segment represents a critical link in the regional system to provide an east/west bicycle connection between trail projects through Downtown Wichita, as well as much-needed east/west access to major destinations and employers located in the region's center. The consultant's proposed pilot project includes striping on-street bicycle lanes on Waterman Street, its western terminus at the Canal multi-use trail/I-135, and the railroads. Striping these facilities would cost \$24,000.

Through the developing Arena Neighborhood, ideal accommodation would be a test project to stripe bicycle lanes and allow for on-street parking on the Waterman cross-section. If this is determined not feasible, an alternative routing will need to be accommodated within the development plans to connect to the Maple Street bridge over the Arkansas River. The City of Wichita will need to assess the feasibility of this recommendation with other alternatives to meet the intent of creating a primary east/west corridor through Downtown.

10. Corridor N (2): Accommodation along Woodlawn and Edgemoor through the City of Wichita from the K-96 Trail to Mount Vernon.

As an alternative to bicycle accommodation on Oliver/47th Street E. through the City of Wichita, the City's desired route will jog over to utilize parts of the Woodlawn, 13th Street, and Edgemoor corridors, with facility type(s) to be determined.

11. Corridor F (1): Connection on Mount Vernon between the Arkansas River east to the Gypsum Creek Bicycle Path.

Develop on-street bike lanes on Mt. Vernon to link to the Arkansas River Path, the Canal multi-use trail, the Gypsum Creek Path, and Pawnee/Woodlawn. Cost for Mt. Vernon restriping for a distance of 4.5 miles: \$54,000. A one mile section of on-street bike lanes on Mount Vernon is complete between Broadway and Greenway Boulevard.

In conjunction, short segments of bike route should be signed on Drollinger to link to the Gypsum Creek Path, and on Greenway Boulevard to link to the W. Pawnee Street Bridge crossing the Arkansas River. Use of sharrow pavement markings may also be used to identify these routes.

STRATEGY #4:

Implement bicycle facilities within those corridors that directly connect outlying communities with each other and the City of Wichita.

12. Corridor B: Park City/Bel Aire Connection along 53rd N.

The link along this minor arterial represents a future east/west growth corridor in the northern suburbs. The type of pathway facility to be provided will be determined based upon the growth patterns and types of land use to be developed along the corridor. Accommodations for walking and bicycling should be included as part of future infrastructure improvements.

CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY MISSING LINKS

13. Corridor N(1): Kechi Connection along Oliver.

Future improvements to Oliver/47 E. north of K-96 should take into account bicycling and walking needs as part of future growth and resulting infrastructure enhancements. Type of accommodation to be determined with growth in the area. A wide shoulder currently exists on Oliver from just north of 37th Street N. to 53rd Street N. There currently are no bicycle facilities between K-96 and 37th Street N.

14. Corridor D: 17th/BNSF “Redbud” Rail-Trail as the Andover Connection.

The City of Wichita, City of Andover, and Sedgwick County should focus on making connection between the local Andover pathway system and the K-96 Trail through development of an initial piece of the Redbud Trail. Estimated cost of 4 miles of trail construction on the former BNSF Railroad bed: \$422,400 - \$633,600.

15. Corridor E (2): Garden Plain/Goddard/West Wichita Connection along Maple Street.

Consultant’s recommendation for Maple Street would be to turn this roadway into a 6-mile multi-modal corridor by restriping lane configurations. Estimated cost to narrow the center turning lane of the 5-lane cross-section to add on-street bicycle lanes: \$360,000. To restripe the 4-lane section to become a three lanes plus bicycle lanes: \$288,000. The City of Wichita will need to assess the feasibility of this recommendation with other alternatives to meet the intent of implementing this primary east/west corridor.

16. Corridor K: Haysville Connection.

This connection is proposed to be made using a variety of facilities including a 0.5-mile multi-use path from the Arkansas River Trail through Watson Park; segments of multi-use path to connect existing local streets; bike route signing posted on interconnecting street segments; and a potential rail-with-trail project along a short section of the Union Pacific Railroad to reach Seneca. Costs will be determined by exact routing chosen, right-of-way available, and length of new pathways constructed versus on-road routing selected.

17. Corridor N (3): Mulvane/Derby Connection along Buckner/Meadowlark Road.

The existing sidepath treatment found along Buckner/Meadowlark/Rock Road or an on-street bicycle accommodation is desired to link to the Spirit Aerosystems Campus and connect with proposed bike lanes on Oliver. Estimated cost for 4.5 miles: Sidepath ranges from \$1,425,600 - \$1,900,800. Bike lane striping estimated at \$54,000.

In addition to completing the 19 previously identified missing links, progress on the following fifth implementation strategy shall also move forward within the 2020 planning timeframe:

CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY MISSING LINKS

STRATEGY #5:

Develop fine-grained bicycle and pedestrian transportation systems within each local community.

The bicyclist and pedestrian needs of the region cannot be fulfilled focusing exclusively on primary regional corridors greater than 5 miles in length. Recognizing that bicycling and walking are local, short-distance modes of transportation, more dense facility networks need to be developed within local communities where people and activities are located. These local networks will need to evolve over time and should be designed to feed into the designated primary regional corridors. Safe Routes to Schools should be a first priority for local community systems.