



Much of the foundational work within the 2020 BPMP is summarized within the updated 2024 East Baton Rouge Parish Bike + Pedestrian Master Plan (2024 BPMP) to develop a simplified version of the document that addresses cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure. This update was initiated in mid-2023 as part of a planned four-year update. The 2024 Bike Ped Plan Update Steering Committee (2024 SC) reviewed the 2020 PBMP and the GIS mapped components and systematically made updates. This effort was spearheaded by BREC, with representatives from the City-Parish and other state and local entities weighing in on plan updates and assistance from HNTB.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# 2024 EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH BIKE + PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2024

0 1,000 US Feet



BREC Parks

BRCC - Mid City Campus

MOVEBR Proposed Road Projects

Jefferson - Driscoll

Phase 0 - Existing Paths

Phase 1 - 1-5 years

Phase 2 - 6-10 years

Phase 3 - 10-30 years

City-Parish

BRCC - Mid City Campus

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Cyclists on the Downtown Greenway. Image Courtesy DDD.

## GOALS:

- Increase the convenience and accessibility of the active transportation network (ATN) for users of all ages, abilities, and income levels.
- Improve the safety outcomes and minimize the stress levels for people who take trips using means other than a motor vehicle.
- Increase the number of active transportation network connections between origin areas and public destinations within the City-Parish.

**VISION:** East Baton Rouge Parish will have a safe, comfortable, and connected bicycling and walking network, with easy access to local and regional destinations, providing healthy transportation and recreation choices for everyone.

## WHAT IS IN THE UPDATED 2024 BPMP?

The 2024 BPMP comprises six chapters and Appendices, which provide information referenced within the chapters. The previous document will also be referenced throughout this update.



### Chapter 2: History of Cycling in BR

Explains the history of planning in the City-Parish, with descriptions of each plan. The focus here is on cycling, although major pedestrian achievements are recognized.



### Chapter 3: Existing Conditions

Examines various data collected and reviewed in to assess needs and priorities for cycling and walking in the parish.



### Chapter 4: Active Transportation Network

Explains the methodology, process, and results of the proposed active transportation network, both on- and off-road.



### Chapter 5: Policy + Program Recommendations

Provides recommendations of updates to existing policies and non-engineering programs to support implementation of the BPMP.



### Chapter 6: Implementation

Replaces the 2020 prioritization algorithm with an implementation approach based on feasibility, funding, and sponsorship, and classifies projects into categories based on ease of implementation.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- A high-quality ATN should accommodate the widest possible range of existing and potential vulnerable road users (VRUs) in the community—whether they are pedestrians, cyclists, pedalcyclists, or users of micromobility devices—and offer a choice of routes to access key destinations.
- The ATN should follow universal design guidelines, and all paths and bikeways must be designed to meet Americans with Disability Act (ADA) guidelines.
- The ATN is a tool to create high-quality pedestrian environments that are navigable by walking, cycling, rolling, pedalcycling, or using a micromobility device, eliminating the need to use a motorized vehicle to access basic amenities. The ATN considers a 10-minute walk (generally ½ mile) and a 20-minute bike ride (2-3 miles) to be the minimum length for each type of trip.
- ATN routes must be safe, direct, continuous, and accessible, and make it easy to reach the desired destination using maps, wayfinding, and network branding.
- The safety and low-stress levels of all ATN users must be prioritized.
- Increase the number of active transportation network connections between origin areas and public destinations within the City-Parish.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The 2024 BPMP implementation plan includes classification of projects by ease of implementation. This strategy aligns projects with City-Parish agency capacities, resources, and priorities, as well as the capacity of BREC to fund and build out the off-road greenways. Some of the other agencies involved include LADOTD, DDD, CATS, LSU, Southern, Build Baton Rouge (BBR), and Baton Rouge Area Foundation (BRAAF), to name a few. The 2020 PBMP priority projects list has been replaced to categorize projects by type. Those programmed, funded, or in-construction projects are “Near-Term” projects. The two categories for future projects are classified by the level of feasibility; those in the “Mid-Term” category are easily implementable and are slated for completion within 10 years, while those that are 30-year planning projects are given a “Long-Term” or “Vision” project designation.

Existing capital projects are facilities usable by the public in 2024. Bikeways, defined as existing local streets with low traffic volumes and posted speeds of 25 mph or less, are not included in the existing capital project type. The main difference between bikeways and bicycle boulevards is that ALL streets are technically bikeways, while bikeways that are low speed, have low traffic volumes, and are designated and signed routes, are bicycle boulevards. Like designated bicycle boulevards, bikeways provide low-stress links within the ATN, but no additional treatments such as signage and traffic calming are recommended for bikeways because these are secondary routes.

Near-Term projects are in the various sponsor agency’s capital improvements, maintenance, or construction programs with obligated funding. These projects are expected to be completed in five years. Some may have already begun construction in 2024.

Mid-Term projects are easily implemented, like bicycle boulevards, which are locally owned streets that are simple to design, require little demolition and right of way acquisition, and do not contain



major barriers like crossing of high-capacity arterials. Reconstruction of ADA-compliant sidewalks adjacent to bicycle boulevards are included in this category. These will typically be on-road projects because off-road projects may be more complicated due to servitude acquisition, neighborhood buy-in, and natural resource mitigation.

Mid-Term projects are expected to be completed by 2034. Generally, potential funding sources and sponsor(s) have been identified but no commitments have been made. Although specific design issues are unknown, the designated facility type is based on existing conditions including roadway posted speeds, traffic volumes, ownership, and physical surroundings. As Mid-Term projects move into design, the facility type identified in the ATN may be revised.

The Long-Term or Vision projects will require extensive planning, design, and construction to implement. These also require intense collaboration across all participating agencies and stakeholders. Many of these projects will be off-road projects, often requiring the balancing of social, cultural, regulatory, and environmental issues. In addition, vision projects should have dedicated champions who can inspire and motivate the public, elected officials, and other supporters.

Some Vision projects may be relatively inexpensive, such as treatments at existing signalized intersections, but require time-consuming design solutions, operational studies, and regulatory approvals. A pedestrian crossing at Scenic Highway and Mason Avenue that would provide a link within the CMAQ multi-use path is an example of the difficulties related to such projects.

The categorized approach will expedite development of the ATN. By reviewing all projects based on the ease of implementation, resources can be strategically leveraged, and a realistic timeline developed. The ultimate result will be a well-rounded and robustly connected network that will not only meet the needs of the present, but also prepare for future expansion and growth.

## PRIORITIES BY AGENCY

Improving connectivity of the pedestrian and bicycle network plays a crucial role in fostering equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities that are aligned with the CSAC performance measures. The Existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities that were constructed since adoption of the 2020 PBMP were all associated with specific agencies that leveraged resources and momentum to assure implementation. Through this lens, it became clear that having an agency champion for a project is the key to getting it built.

The following local, regional, and state agencies have priorities aligned with developing the ATN including LADOTD, who is focused on safety and Complete Streets, the City-Parish Government, which has moved forward many cyclist and pedestrian facilities with the MOVEBR program and the EBR Complete Streets Ordinance passed in 2024, and BREC, who is connecting North and South Baton Rouge with greenways. Both BREC and the City-Parish have collaborated to establish a position for a professional services special assistant to oversee the implementation of the 2024 BPMP and Complete Streets initiatives.

Other agencies that have been implementing the plan include the DDD, with the Downtown Greenway, and the Capital Area Transit System (CATS), who has made significant improvements to transit services in recent years. Finally, the university systems have been making their campuses safer developing infrastructure that benefits their students who are walking and biking.

## THE 6 E'S

The following criteria from the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) have been adapted to include both walking and cycling for the purposes of this update.

- **Equity and Accessibility** – Facilitating inclusion and access across all populations
- **Engineering** – Creating safe and convenient places to walk and cycle
- **Education** – Developing skills and confidence around walking and cycling in people of all abilities
- **Enforcement** – Deter unsafe behaviors and protect pedestrians and cyclists
- **Encouragement** – Developing opportunities to use the Active Transportation Network (ATN) and develop a culture around active transportation
- **Evaluation and Planning** – Plan the ATN as a safe and viable option for cyclists and pedestrians

The purpose of the BPMP is to build out an active transportation network that is accessible, safe, and convenient for users of all ages, abilities, and economic status. The core values supporting this mission are equity, public health, environmental and economic sustainability, and public sector accountability. The implementation of this network is focused on achieving a vision of providing a viable alternative to private automobiles for trips both short and long in terms of distance and time in EBRP.

The implementation plan, discussed in Chapter 6—Implementation, utilizes a strategic approach to achieving the vision of the plan.

- Goals represent specific, measurable objectives, and these provide a framework for measuring progress—they should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.
- Strategy represents how the goals will be achieved.
- The action plan represents a specific set of actions and tactics that can be used to implement the strategy.

Within this strategic system, three goals for the BPMP have been identified:

1. Increase the convenience and accessibility of the active transportation network for users of all ages, abilities, and income levels.
2. Improve the safety outcomes and minimize the stress levels for people who take trips using means other than a motor vehicle.
3. Increase the number of active transportation network connections between origin areas and public destinations within EBR Parish.

Objectives and tactics (action items) are combined to create specific strategies to reach each of the goals in the plan. Notably, coordination with transit systems must be considered to achieve the vision of providing trips within the active transportation network that cover longer distances. Transit is a transportation mode that addresses the BPMP goals by increasing convenience, minimizing stress, and increasing the number of connections for these trips.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE, AND WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

The 2020 PBMP established a vision of a connected network for bicyclists and pedestrians to meet the basic needs of VRUs traveling within the City-Parish. The 2024 BPMP carries this vision forward into implementation.

The proposed network consists of 316.9 miles of new off-road facilities or eighty-nine percent of complete build out, and 197.0 miles of on-road facilities or ninety-one percent of the complete build out. The complete build out of all on- and off-road facilities can be seen in the facing map.

Progress with on-road facilities has been steady since the adoption of the 2020 PBMP as MOVEBR, the primary program for transportation projects, and the City-Parish and LADOTD, owners of the existing roadways, have begun incorporating bicycle and pedestrian projects into their design and engineering processes. Progress has also been made with off-road facilities, as BREC has spearheaded the building of greenways connecting parks within the parish.

## FOCUSING OUR EFFORTS

### ATNGIS

The maps developed for the 2020 PBMP have been available on the EBRGIS website. This data was the foundation for the 2024 BPMP update. All cycling data across the parish was reviewed and the 2020 data was updated to reflect these facilities. As noted in the introduction, the parish data for sidewalks is incomplete, so the data for pedestrian facilities is limited to new projects, and these are mapped in the ATNGIS. A different portion of the parish was reviewed over several months by the 2024 BPMP Steering Committee with the idea that we would cover the whole parish. That said, the data is imperfect and will need to be reviewed and updated as new projects come online.

The final version of the GIS Route maps will be hosted by the City of Baton Rouge through the East Baton Rouge GIS (EBRGIS) Program and shared publicly as open data. This map will be reviewed by the CSAC annually and updates will be made before it is republished on the EBRGIS site. Annually, one meeting of this committee will be devoted to reviewing the routes and any updates will be presented to the EBRGIS coordinator and/or the Bike-Ped Coordinator. Additionally, when major network links are completed, the map will be updated by the City-Parish staff or the Bike-Ped Coordinator.

### Funding Opportunities

The availability of diverse funding sources at the federal, local, and private levels is essential for the planning, development, and maintenance of effective pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Current funding sources for the City-Parish's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects comes from a tax measure, which was used to establish the MOVEBR program. This was passed after the 2020 PBMP was adopted in 2020. In addition, there are several sources of funds that could be obtained for future project funding. A more expansive list of funding sources can be found on the [FHWA website](#).

### Partners and Support

Interagency collaboration and community engagement are integral to ensuring that the planning, design, and execution of these projects align with the needs and aspirations of the community while leveraging the expertise and resources of multiple agencies. Agency collaboration will be of particular importance, allowing agencies to collectively identify and address potential challenges, such as infrastructural constraints, regulatory requirements, and funding mechanisms. In addition, engaging diverse stakeholders, including residents, local businesses, schools, advocacy groups, and agencies can help to ensure that the implementation of projects considers the varied interests and perspectives of the community while also fostering a sense of ownership and support.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

