Best Practice Study of Bike Friendly Universities: Sidewalks & Signage Policies

Kevin Martini, M.A.
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WMU’s Strategic Plan
WMU’s Strategic Plan

Section 4.2:

“Enhance the health and wellness of the community”
WMU’s Strategic Plan

Section 4.2:
“Enhance the health and wellness of the community”

Section 5.2:
“Advance environmental sustainability.”
WMU’s 2012 Climate Action Plan
WMU’s 2012 Climate Action Plan

“Improve infrastructure for non-motorized commuting options (mainly walking and cycling),”
WMU’s 2012 Climate Action Plan

“Improve infrastructure for non-motorized commuting options (mainly walking and cycling),”

“Improve maintenance of non-motorized routes.”
A View to the Future

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY MASTER PLAN SUMMARY REPORT
Ten fundamental Master Plan concepts form the foundation of the campus-wide recommendations.

1. **Protect the Valleys**  Preserve and enhance the open space character of Goldsworthy and Arcadia Valleys. Restrict building development and enhance natural features, landscaping and maintenance levels within these corridors.

2. **Develop Campus Edges and Entrances**  The University is to be easily identifiable. Establish visually distinctive and significant campus approaches, arrival areas, entries and edges.

3. **Ensure Wayfinding and Accessibility**  Create a friendlier campus with upgraded signage, informational kiosks and improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation, particularly at entrances and approaches to the University. Plan compliance with ADA accessibility guidelines and four-season access to all campus areas.

4. **Plan Alternate Forms of Transportation**  Place greater emphasis on safe and efficient transit, bicycle and pedestrian circulation on and off campus.

5. **Distribute Parking**  Position parking around the campus perimeter to be easily accessible from main roads and near principal centers of use. Coordinate transit and pedestrian interface in order to facilitate access to major destinations.

6. **Connect the Campuses**  Maintain and enhance visual and physical connections between the West, Oakland Drive and East Campus areas. Improve inter-campus circulation and accessibility. Protect potential bridging points connecting the campuses.

7. **Preserve Open Space**  Plan future development to preserve and optimize the use of open space to achieve a sense of community and distinctive settings.

8. **Develop Districts**  Identify and develop districts that reflect a distinct identity, share a common function or are relatively self-contained. District buildings should relate to one another, both physically and through similar functions. Consistently maintain building massing, patterns or grids, density and heights appropriate to each district.

9. **Create Campus Activity Hubs**  Create pedestrian-scale activity centers that are centrally located and visually distinct, with facilities clustered around a core open space that attracts students and visitors.

10. **Distribute Housing**  Locate housing throughout the campuses; serve a variety of housing needs and markets.
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3. Ensure Wayfinding and Accessibility
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4. Plan Alternate Forms of Transportation
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5. Distribute Parking
   Position parking around the campus perimeter to be easily accessible from main roads and near principal centers of use. Coordinate transit and pedestrian interface in order to facilitate access to major destinations.

7. Preserve Open Space
   Plan to preserve and develop open space to achieve a sense of place and settings.

8. Develop Districts
   Develop zones that reflect a distinct identity or are relatively self-contained and should relate to one of the three types through similar functional programs, building massing, lot sizes, building heights and land uses.

9. Create Campus Activity Centers
   Plan a hierarchy of visually distinct, well-connected mid-scale activity centers within the core open space that are pedestrian friendly.

10. Distribute Housing
    Plan housing distributed throughout the campuses; serve the needs of students and markets.
WMU’s Traffic, Parking, and Pedestrian Ordinance

Section 5.8:
“No person shall operate any bicycle upon other than established roadways, parking areas or bicycle paths.”
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What are the problems with the current WMU policy?
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• No actual bike paths
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• Bike rack locations create inconsistency
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- Confusion & safety issues
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- Confusion & safety issues
- Effectively a disincentive to cycling
Best Practice Source
Best Practice Source

- League of American Bicyclists:
Best Practice Source

- League of American Bicyclists: Bike Friendly University criteria (5 Es)
Best Practice Source

- League of American Bicyclists: Bike Friendly University criteria (5 Es)
  - Engineering
Best Practice Source

- League of American Bicyclists: Bike Friendly University criteria (5 Es)
  - Engineering
  - Education
Best Practice Source

- League of American Bicyclists: Bike Friendly University criteria (5 Es)
  - Engineering
  - Education
  - Encouragement
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  - Engineering
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Enforcement
  - Evaluation & Planning
BFU Contact Schools
BFU Contact Schools

Stanford University • University of California, Davis • Boise State University • Colorado State University • University of California, Berkeley • Portland State University • University of Michigan • University Wisconsin, Madison • Virginia Commonwealth University • Michigan Technological University • University of California, Santa Barbara • California State University, Long Beach • Grand Valley State University • Georgia Institute of Technology • Oregon State University • University of Arizona, Tucson • University of California, Irvine • Michigan State University • University of Minnesota, Twin Cities • University of Oregon • University of Washington, Seattle
Key Lessons from BFU Schools
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- Enforcement & modeling are critical
Key Lessons from BFU Schools

• Enforcement & modeling are critical
  – Enforcement by public safety
Key Lessons from BFU Schools

- Enforcement & modeling are critical
  - Enforcement by public safety
  - Public Safety presence on bikes
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• Consistency allows predictability
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• Consistency allows predictability

• Infrastructure carries the day
Two Recommendations
Two Recommendations
Signage Suggestions

Figure 9B-2. Regulatory Signs for Bicycle Facilities
Signage Suggestions

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- Standardized signage

R1-1
R1-2
R3-17
R3-17a
R3-17b
R4-1
R4-2
R4-3
R4-4
R4-7
R5-1b
R6-3c
R7-6
R7-9
R7-9a
R9-3a
R9-5
R9-6
R9-7
R16-3
R13-22
R15-1
Signage Suggestions

- Standardized signage

- Simplicity:
Signage Suggestions

• Standardized signage

• Simplicity:
  – “No bike” zones
Signage Suggestions

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  – Yield/shared use
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  - Bike Sharrow (on street)
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  – A-frames for events
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• Signage Inlays
  – Avoid Signage pollution
Two Recommendations
Campus Map Route Planning

• Goals:
  – Allow entry & exit from campus
  – Transportation network
  – Access to buildings
  – Protection of pedestrian-only zones
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Proposed Pedestrian Priority Zones
Proposed Pedestrian Priority Zones
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Possible Next Steps

• Development of inlay signage package
Possible Next Steps

• Development of inlay signage package

• Pedestrian/cyclist counts
Possible Next Steps

• Development of inlay signage package

• Pedestrian/cyclist counts

• Development of enforcement & education strategies
Thank you to those who supported this endeavor!

Special thanks to previous Western Michigan University students who had the wisdom & foresight to create WMU’s Student Sustainability Fund.

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- Facilities Management
- Jan Van Der Kley
- Margaret-Rose Spyker
- Christopher Scott Smith
- The League of American Bicyclists
- Our contacts at participating BFU universities
- Parking Services

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