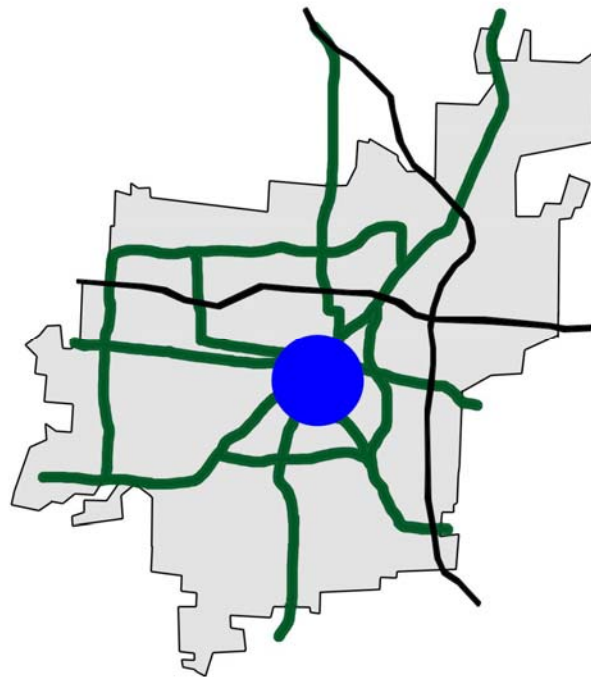


# PedNet

## COLUMBIA, MISSOURI



## POINT OF VIEW DOCUMENT

### NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PILOT PROGRAM

DECEMBER, 2005

# Preamble

In July, 2005, Columbia was selected by the Federal Highway Administration to receive a \$25 million Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program grant (see press release and legislative language below). As a result, the PedNet Coalition expects that the City of Columbia will soon assemble a group of citizens to assist it in visioning and planning the further development of our local bike/ped/wheelchair network (PedNet). The PedNet Coalition is quickly beginning its own visioning process to gather input from PedNet members and other interested parties so that it is well prepared to contribute to the formal City visioning and planning process. There is concern within the PedNet Coalition that Pilot Program monies could be diverted to uses other than those that best serve the development of the network.

## **Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program**

(language from 2005 federal transportation bill – “SAFETEA-LU”)

A complete network of bikeways and pedestrian facilities that lead to important destinations can make walking and bicycling competitive with automobile travel for many trips. This program would fund pilot projects to complete comprehensive bicycling and walking networks in four communities, in order to demonstrate this potential. The program would help construct sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails that would help people on foot and bicycle reach transit stations, businesses, schools, homes, recreation areas, and other destinations. Introducing the non-motorized mode in balance with the personal auto and public transportation modes brings multiple and substantial benefits. Bicycling and walking are affordable, healthy, non-polluting modes that can help alleviate traffic congestion. This has been demonstrated in other countries. It must now be convincingly demonstrated in the U.S. The pilot would document how the four communities increased the frequency of bicycling and walking, decreased congestion and energy use, and promoted better health and a cleaner environment.

# Background

PedNet has played a major role in laying the groundwork that resulted in Columbia being chosen as one of four Pilot Program sites in the country. It has been PedNet leadership and initiatives that have typically catalyzed changes in City policy and/or behavior regarding bike/ped/wheelchair issues. Our mission, since founding, has been to build a comprehensive bike/ped/wheelchair network that will allow citizens to travel in a safe, smooth and serene environment that continuously interests and attracts new users. The Pilot Program combined with Model Street Standards and additional revenue sources generated in the November 8, 2005 elections insures that Columbia will have the resources to build a world-class, comprehensive network.

It is the opinion of the PedNet Coalition, Inc. Board of Directors that PedNet's mission and history requires that it take a strong leadership and oversight role to protect the purity of the project, to insure that resources are allocated properly, that the citizenry is deeply involved in the planning process, and that the project is driven by those with the greatest passion and knowledge to give it the best possible chance of success.

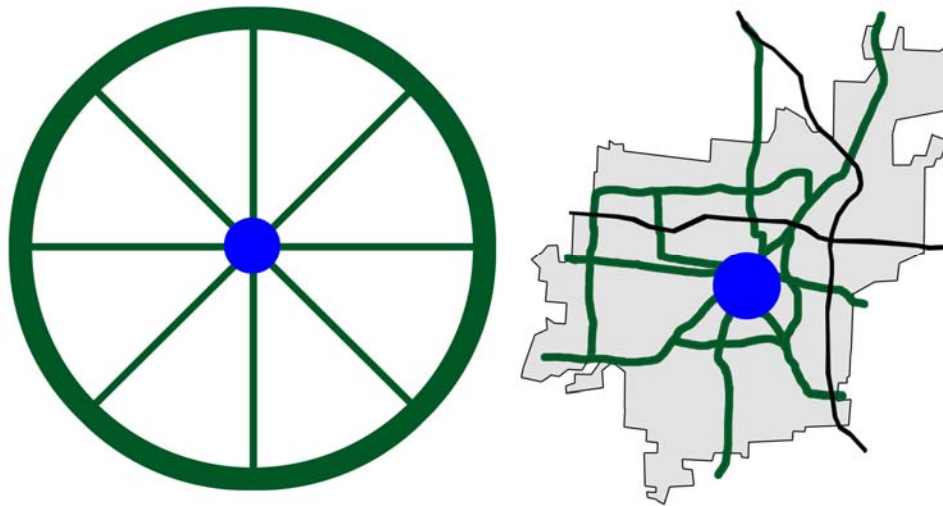
The situation we confront is a dream-come-true for the PedNet Coalition and all citizens of Columbia. However, along with this opportunity comes a tremendous responsibility to our community and communities throughout American and beyond. If we can successfully cause a meaningful shift in mode share away from automobiles to bike, ped, wheelchair and transit we will prove that it can be done. It will provide the success story that other communities will need to gain the political support necessary to move forward with their own networks. If are not successful, we will help to sentence America to the status quo. Obviously we must succeed.

Recently, the PedNet board held a series of work sessions to develop this Point-of-View Document (POV) regarding a strategy for the planning, construction, maintenance and promotion of the emerging PedNet. More sessions will follow. We will seek broader involvement from PedNet members and other interested parties as we evolve the concepts included.

# Implementation Concept

The PedNet Coalition believes that one of the key steps in building a successful network is to quickly establish a visible and useable network while investing minimal resources. This will begin to build public awareness of the presence of a true and improving network and should help to increase network use as early as possible. A potential approach to this could be to:

1. Create and communicate the concept for the network as a Hub, Spoke and Wheel paradigm. This is a simple concept that will give citizens a framework within which to think about their new network. It also provides a lexicon that will be useful in communicating about the network and using the network. The Hub, Spoke and Wheel paradigm also closely models Columbia's network of existing and anticipated pathways (see diagram and map, below).



2. Identify and name the major Spokes.

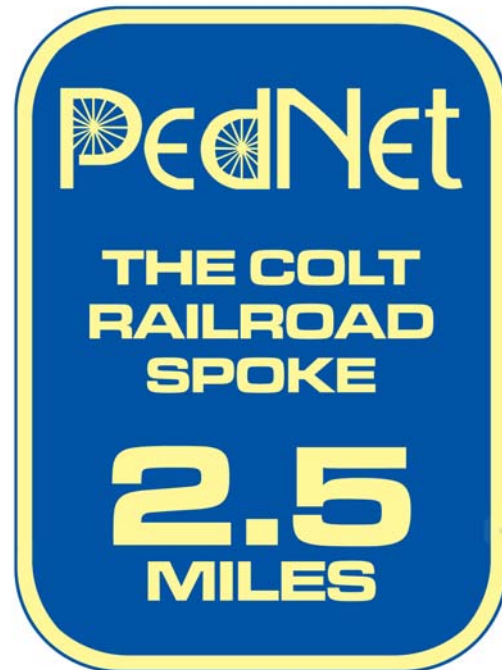
3. Mark the Spokes with a combination of Bike Lane Stripes and "Sharrows" (street surface markings that designate the lane must be shared by cars and bicycles). This allows any Spoke to be marked regardless of width or on-street parking. The use of Sharrows is found in other cities (Denver) and may be included in the MUTCD. We'll need to find out how to insure that Sharrows can be used in Columbia. Identify and repair/install short sections (1 block or less) of missing or damaged sidewalks along the Spoke routes to insure that the basic needs of cyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users have been met quickly.

4. Sign the Spokes with “Share the Road” and new PedNet signs that make it very clear that a user is “on the net”. By using the signs to also identify specific network locations (example: "Mile Marker 2.5 on the COLT Spoke"), emergencies on the network can be addressed more effectively.

5. Create and widely distribute maps (special newspaper inserts periodically along with other distribution) of the emerging PedNet along with information about the nature of upcoming improvements and the value of the completed PedNet. The maps should include appropriate safety and legal guidance for network users. It may be most appropriate to build on existing City maps that are typically used (and saved) by all citizens and visitors. Create an online map that is regularly updated to reflect network development and a place where citizens can submit improvement suggestions or important observations to the appropriate network development interests.

6. Publicize the existence of the initial network. We must convince the community that a network in-fact does exist and it is going to be improved rapidly. The concept of the PedNet needs to be instilled into the minds and souls of Columbians just as Cosmo Park, Downtown, East Campus, etc. already is. It must quickly become part of the fabric of Columbia.

7. Along with and following the previously mentioned steps, a PedNet improvement and maintenance plan must be developed that identifies the key improvements that should be made to move the PedNet toward its ideal condition i.e. as illustrated in the new Model Street Standards and Master Trail Plan. Other facilities should be considered. For example, a Hub bike station with bike storage and showers. Obviously, the City staff will carry most of the work in this phase as only they can develop credible cost estimates and the detailed planning that is required for implementing and maintaining public works projects.



# Defining and Prioritizing the development of the PedNet

The following set of key assumptions provides the beginning of the PedNet Point of View:

1. Development will be driven by an inside/out philosophy viewing the MU campus and Downtown as the Hub of a hub, spoke and wheel network. New street standards and trail development will cause network development to continue on the City fringe. However, population density, employment centers, government centers and other important attractors lie in the center of the City. We believe that concentrating Pilot Program funds on refitting the City center to be bike/ped/wheelchair friendly makes the most sense. We also anticipate and hope that the network will assist in creating more residential density in all areas of the network. We should ask the Planning Department to help calculate the percentage of the City population that will be served by the emerging plans for network development.
2. Spokes (core routes) will be identified that feed into and out of the Hub.
3. A major goal of the network will be to generate enough traffic so that there will be visible bike/ped traffic backups at major Spoke outlets into the Hub area each workday morning.
4. The most desirable Spokes will be fairly level. Potential Spokes include:
  - \* Eastside Spoke: Woodridge Park (by Regional Hospital) to Stephens Lake Park
  - \* Northeast Spoke: The COLT railroad alignment beginning at Vandiver (or further east) and terminating next to Columbia College (a new bridge will be required)
  - \* North I Spoke: New North Providence to Broadway (may require alternative route along current Providence)
  - \* North II Spoke: 763 (from Route VV or beyond) to Blue Ridge to Garth to Broadway.
  - \* Northwest Spoke: Cosmo Park to ARC/W. Broadway (will require a ped bridge across I-70)
  - \* West Spoke: West Broadway to Providence (there is a formal City plan already in place that may help guide this route)
  - \* Southwest Spoke: The MKT Trail with many tributaries including the new trail to be built to Russell Park (and beyond?).
  - \* South I Spoke: Forum Blvd to Old Plank
  - \* South II Spoke: Rock Bridge High School to Providence to Hub.
  - \* Southeast Spoke: Old 63 South (south of Stadium) to the new trail connecting Grindstone Park and Stephens Lake Park and on to the MU campus.

Through the visioning/planning process new or different Spokes may be identified. These could include the use of parallel streets to major arterials and/or major collectors as they may be far more comfortable for network users. The PedNet POV will be further developed using field teams that will investigate the proposed Spokes and Sheds (outlined above) to determine their validity, propose alternative alignments, and develop detailed recommendations (short and long term) for each final Spoke and Shed.

5. Each Spoke will have a defined “PedShed” identified. These will be the areas, mainly residential, which surround the Spoke and will host a natural flow of people onto one of the Spokes feeding into and out of the Downtown/Campus Hub. Large numbers of Tributaries (streets and trails) within the PedShed will be identified to provide convenient access to the Spoke.

6. Connections between the Spokes will be identified. It is critical that virtually all major destinations i.e. trip generators are accessible to the network.

7. Given the importance of schools as potential trip generators (and the critical role of involving youth in active transportation), planning and development of our local Safe Routes to Schools program must be carefully interwoven with overall network planning, development and maintenance.

8. The Wheel Route (circumferential trail/route) will provide significant interconnections.

\* Need to extend Eastside trail (the one from Grindstone Park to Stephens Lake) up to Vandiver. With proper facilities along Vandiver a person can reach Parker Street which connects to the Bear Creek Trailhead. This would complete a major interconnecting route from Cosmo Park to Oakland Park to Stephens Lake Park to Grindstone Park to the MKT.

\* Will need to do identify an initial alignment to connect Cosmo/Bear Creek Trail with Scott Blvd/Scott’s Branch Trail/MKT Trail to complete the initial Wheel route.

9. Network will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Besides identifying necessary ADA-related improvements (short and long term) necessary on the Spoke routes and Shed areas, a separate effort should begin early in the process to identify ADA-related barriers and needed improvements, particularly sidewalks, in the Hub area. A City plan for the downtown area already exists and has been partially implemented. It should be reviewed to determine its current status and updated as needed.

10. Network will be designed to be attractive. Smooth, Safe and Serene. As motorists drive past visible segments of the network they should ideally be drawn to use it.

\* Asphalt pedways should be considered possibly with a distinctive color of asphalt (green) with center stripes.

\* Buffers between sidewalks/pedways and streets should be landscaped including shade trees whenever possible. Shade trees often may be better served by being planted along the pedway/sidewalk but not in the buffer area. Serious consideration must be given to the kinds of plants/landscaping that should be utilized to address ongoing maintenance/cost issues.

\* Trail/Pedway underpasses should be decorative. The placement of public art at key locations along the network should be considered.

11. Network will require an effective directional signage program. Signs should identify the individual Spoke and provide a specific location to allow users easy orientation and to facilitate emergency services.

12. Network should overlay the City bus system as much as possible and sheltered bike racks should be provided at appropriate bus stops (this is because buses only handle 2 bikes at a time and people may need to lock up their bikes, board the bus and return to their bike later.)

13. Key intersections must be brought up to acceptable standards. "Acceptable standards" must be defined early in the process. Some key intersections include:

- \* Stewart and Providence
- \* All other intersections surrounding MU
- \* Garth and Business Loop 70
- \* All intersections along 763/Rangeline
- \* Intersections along Stadium between Broadway and I-70

15. Consideration should be given to paving and lighting key sections to promote night use and a sense of safety. Such areas may be prioritized according to crime data, perceived risk, potential traffic, etc.

16. There are many very inexpensive and quick improvements that can be made almost immediately. Some of these will be on Spokes while others will not. For example, stripe bike lanes or add Sharrows on Chapel Hill Road, Creasy Springs, Texas Ave, West Broadway, Old 63, etc. (use Sharrows where on-street parking is permitted).

17. A Network Coordinator position must be established within City government to insure that City Manager's Office, Planning, Public Works, Water and Light, Parks & Rec, MoDOT, etc. are aware of the activities of each other and working together effectively to plan, build and maintain the network.

18. Planning and promotion must be included to encourage major employers and other appropriate major destinations to provide storage and shower facilities for bike/ped commuters who need to clean up from their travels in order to meet appropriate employer/business dress/hygiene standards. Failure to provide such facilities will have a very detrimental effect on efforts to move a large population of potential network users away from regular automobile use.

# Moving Forward

The continuation of this visioning/planning process will be structured to discuss and test the assumptions contained in this document. It will evolve now and the beginning of the formal City process (expected in February or March).

Once there is tentative agreement on the initial Spokes, teams will be created and sent out into the field to investigate an assigned Spoke (hopefully the one that serves their home) and related PedShed to validate the Spoke, identify short and long term projects to define and then optimize the PedShed. As the teams complete their work (about one month) the results will be compiled into a final document that will be used as the initial POV for the PedNet Coalition as it moves into the formal planning process. Having this POV will provide PedNet representatives and others a context within which to assess subsequent ideas and proposed actions. We hope that this will add value to the overall process and result in a successful network/experiment that will provide evidence to other cities that mode share can be shifted substantially with a properly designed, built and promoted network.

Very little has been included in this document, to-date, addressing the elements of programming, promotion and research design, data collection and evaluation. They are critical and will need to be included as we go forward.

This document reflects the earliest phase of visioning and planning for the network. Far more work will follow. Please read and share your insights and ideas, broad concepts and specific suggestions alike. Contact us at [pednet@pednet.org](mailto:pednet@pednet.org).