

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Connecting Whitely Community
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This creative project focused on designing an equitable pedestrian network that consisted of safe pedestrian and bicycle paths and road crossings, places for social interaction, and places for economic exchange in the Whitely Community of Muncie, Indiana. This new network would serve children and adults. If implemented, the network should foster safe movement between the places where people live in the community and the destinations they need to arrive at, social interaction, and economic exchange. Existing traffic patterns and the location for a potential pedestrian network were analyzed.

The Whitely Community of Muncie, Indiana forms a unique place within the city. It is unique because it has regional and neighborhood resources that provide residents destinations in the community that include parks, trails, an elementary school, community centers, and churches. However, despite these resources, the community has physical infrastructure problems that include the absence of (a) safe and functional sidewalks, (b)

bike lanes, and (c) road crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists. These physical infrastructure problems, in addition to socioeconomic issues, create obstacles for a better life for the community members.

The following evidence-based design process was used to create the equitable pedestrian network: (a) data were collected using an existing community survey that asked residents their thoughts about the neighborhood appearance, pedestrian infrastructure, and economic and social issues within the community; interviews with local community members were conducted that asked them about the pedestrian infrastructure and economic and social issues within the community; literature was reviewed that was related to best practices in multi-modal access design to encourage physical activity, foster social interaction, and support economic exchange and gain; site observations were conducted focusing on existing pedestrian infrastructure and environmental conditions using GIS and phenomenological experiences; (b) the data collected were analyzed; (c) conceptual designs were generated based on the analysis of the data; and (d) the design was developed by generating plans, sections, and perspectives that illustrated how the equitable pedestrian network could be implemented.

Safe pedestrian movement is important for the well-being of the community as a whole as well as for each individual in the community. If a safe pedestrian environment is achieved, the expectation is that individuals in the community will be encouraged to walk or bike to places in the community.

Findings indicated that beautification, and origin/destination network improvements (both transit and pedestrian) would provide a cost effective improvement to the pedestrian accessibility throughout the community.