Connecting Clearwater
Active Transportation Plan

Memorandum

Date: June 17, 2025

To: Richard Hartman, City of Clearwater

From: Kathrin Tellez, Fehr & Peers

Subject: Active Transportation Plan – Draft Prioritization Criteria Approach

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Introduction

The City of Clearwater Active Transportation Plan (ATP), known as Connecting Clearwater, will serve as a roadmap to enhance active transportation facilities within the city. This document outlines the criteria that will be used to prioritize projects included in the ATP that will help the city meet the Active Transportation Plan's key objectives:

1. Identify a citywide low-stress active transportation network that complements other travel modes, especially transit, supports future land use patterns, and connects to active transportation facilities in adjacent communities.
2. Improve transportation safety outcomes for people outside of motorized vehicles, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-automobile transportation system users.
3. Develop a feasible project list that can be implemented as standalone projects, as a part of other planned transportation system improvements, or as a part of the development process, that can be integrated with the 2045 Comprehensive Plan and the Advantage Pinellas Active Transportation Plan (2024).

Criteria Overview

Based on the project goals, prioritization criteria were developed in consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). A discussion of the proposed criteria is provided below.

Safety

Between 2019 and 2024, there were over 950 reported crashes in Clearwater that included someone walking or biking, including 570 crashes where people sustained minor injuries, 122 crashes where people sustained serious injuries, and 29 fatal crashes, representing over 40 percent of traffic fatalities in the city. Based on the feedback received during the public engagement activities, fear of being killed or injured while walking or bicycling is a barrier for many people to use non-auto modes of travel. As a part of this project, a High Injury Network (HIN) was developed to identify roads where a disproportionate number of fatal and severe injury crashes occurred. The network represents 60% of all roads where crashes that resulted in someone being killed or severely injured (KSI) occurred, including 68% of pedestrian KSI crashes and 46% bicyclist KSI crashes. This HIN was used to identify potential corridors where the traffic crash history might be a barrier to walking and bicycling.

Accessibility and Connectivity

The ability of people to access various goods and services within a short distance of their place of residence or place of work increases the likelihood that someone will walk or bike to a destination. The greater the density and different types of locations, the greater the potential for someone to walk or bike, especially when coupled with a low stress network.

Stress/Comfort

This criterion refers to the reduction in stress for people walking and bicycling on a given facility. A project that does not appreciably reduce the level of stress is not likely to attract new users and help people travel by walking and bicycling modes.

Ease of Implementation

Projects do not start to benefit residents until they are implemented, so prioritizing projects that can be implemented quickly will help people sooner. Questions that can help us understand potential challenges to implementation include: 1) Can a project be constructed within the existing right of way? 2) Does it require relocation of utilities? 3) Does it require relocation of the curb and reconfiguration of drainage? 4) Does it require coordination with another agency, such as Pinellas County or the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)?

Projects would be placed into one of three categories:

- **Easy to implement:** includes improvements that could be implemented within the existing right-of-way, such as lane narrowing to buffer an existing bike lane, widening a

sidewalk or constructing an urban trail within available right-of-way (with minimal utility relocation), or providing wayfinding.

- **Moderate to implement:** includes improvements on roadways where the vehicular travel lanes are already at the minimum allowed (10 feet) and there may be more trade-offs between different travel modes that need to be considered. On these roads, there may be sufficient right-of-way to construct improvements, but some utility relocation and/or some tree removal may be required.
- **Difficult to implement:** includes highly constrained roadways where either additional right-of-way is required, they are high speed, or improvements require moving of curb lines. These also include opportunities where utility undergrounding may be required and/or the potential for significant tree removal.

Considered within the ease of implementation is the **project cost** and **community support**. There are limited funds available to implement projects identified in the ATP, with low-cost projects more likely to be constructed in the near-term than higher cost projects. Some projects may require trade-offs between different travel modes, and some of the feedback from the public indicated widespread support of active transportation projects, but not at the expense of other travel modes. As additional outreach and review of all projects would need to be conducted prior to funding an implementation, ones that require a high level of community engagement to review tradeoffs or are costly may be categorized as difficult to implement.

Demographic Factors

Understanding who a project benefits can help prioritize projects where they are more likely to enhance mobility for residents or increase non-auto travel modes. For example, if a project is in an area where auto ownership is lower than the citywide average, people in that area might be more likely to walk or bike if improved facilities are provided. If a project is within an area of persistent poverty, people who rely more often on non-auto modes of transportation are likely to benefit. The total number of people within a project catchment area can also be a determinant of its potential future benefit.

Prioritization Criteria

Draft prioritization criteria are presented in **Table 1** for corridor projects and **Table 2** for crossing treatments, with the initial goal weights based on feedback from the TAC. Upon incorporation of feedback from the City Council into the prioritization criteria, the draft project list will be prioritized to identify projects for more detailed review as part of the ATP.

Table 1: Draft ATP Criteria for Corridor Projects

Goal Area and Weight	Evaluation Criteria		Criteria Scoring
Bicyclist and Pedestrian Safety – **30%**	If the project is on the HIN or location with bike/ped safety issues, it provides features that improve safety, such as separated and protected walking/biking facilities.	High level of treatment	100%
		Medium Level of treatment	75%
		Low Level of treatment	50%
	On low speed / low volume facility, or location with no reported safety issues that includes treatments where the facility might conflict with motor vehicle traffic.	High level of treatment	100%
		Medium Level of treatment	75%
		Low Level of treatment	50%
Stress – **20%**	Level of Traffic Stress after Project Implementation	LTS 1	100%
		LTS 2	75%
		LTS 3	25%
Access and Connectivity – **20%**	Number of schools within 1/4 -mile along the corridor? Number of transit stops within 1/4-mile along the corridor? Number of parks within 1/4-mile along the corridor? Number of key destinations within 1/4-mile along the corridor (i.e., food, jobs, shopping medical, and/or downtown).	Key destinations include schools, jobs, parks, shopping centers, including grocery stores, and transit stops. Points based on total number of destinations; maximum points allotted when there is connectivity in all categories. Once all projects have been identified, they will be evaluated for the total number of destinations within 1/4-mile of the corridor, projects with the most connectivity in all categories will receive all points available, with a scaled application to all other projects.	

Goal Area and Weight	Evaluation Criteria		Criteria Scoring
Project Feasibility -**20%**	Qualitative assessment of feasibility based on factors including right-of-way, minimal coordination with other agencies, cost, and community support.	High Feasibility	100%
		Medium Feasibility	66%
		Low Feasibility	33%
Demographic Factors -**10%**	Population in catchment area	Once all projects have been identified, they will be evaluated based on population and projects affecting the most people in each category will receive all points available, with a scaled application to all other projects.	33%
	Percent of households in the catchment area without access to a vehicle		33%
	Percent of households in the catchment area that live under the poverty line		33%

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2025.

Table 2: Draft ATP Criteria for Spot Projects

Goal Area and Weight	Evaluation Criteria		Criteria Scoring
Bicyclist and Pedestrian Safety **– 30%**	Crossing treatment is appropriate for the crash history, roadway characteristics, including number of vehicle lanes, volume and speed, based on guidance from the Federal Highway Administration.	High level of treatment	100%
		Medium Level of treatment	66%
		Low Level of treatment	33%
Access and Connectivity – **40%**	Number of schools within 1/4 -mile of the crossing? Number of transit stops within 1/4-mile of the crossing? Number of parks within 1/4-mile of the crossing? Number of key destinations within 1/4-mile of the crossing (i.e., food, jobs, shopping, medical, and/or downtown).	Key destinations include schools, jobs, parks, shopping centers, including grocery stores, and transit stops. Points based on total number of destinations; maximum points allotted when there is connectivity in all categories. Once all projects have been identified, they will be evaluated for the total number of destinations within 1/4 -mile of the crossing, projects with the most connectivity in all categories will receive all points available, with a scaled application to all other projects.	
Project Feasibility -20%	Qualitative assessment of feasibility based on factors including right-of-way, minimal coordination with other agencies, cost, and community support.	High Feasibility	100%
		Medium Feasibility	66%
		Low Feasibility	33%

Goal Area and Weight	Evaluation Criteria		Criteria Scoring
Demographic Factors -10%	Population in catchment area	Once all projects have been identified, they will be evaluated based on population and projects affecting the most people in each category will receive all points available, with a scaled application to all other projects.	33%
	Percent of households in the catchment area without access to a vehicle		33%
	Percent of households in the catchment area that live under the poverty line		33%

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2025.