

Salem Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Safe Routes to School Plan Draft Memorandum #3 – Evaluation Criteria

Task 4.6

CH2MHILL

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COPIES: Salem Bike/Ped Plan Project Management Team

DATE: August 20, 2010

Introduction

This memorandum presents a proposed set of criteria for evaluating alternative bicycle/pedestrian improvement concepts and specific projects as part of the Salem Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan planning process. Evaluation criteria are important for providing the City a clearly-defined implementation “roadmap,” especially in a climate where limited financial resources require establishment of implementation priorities.

Using the project goals and objectives as guidance, the Project Team developed criteria to evaluate alternative improvement concepts and specific projects against one another, and to ultimately prioritize recommendations to best meet Salem’s existing and future bicycle and pedestrian system needs. Development and evaluation of alternative improvement concepts will occur in Tasks 6 and 7 of the project. Specifically, the criteria will be used in the following ways:

- Provide guidance for laying out a premier pedestrian/bicycle network incorporating features most important to Salem’s existing and future walking and cycling community;
- Evaluate alternative improvement concepts against one another (e.g., multiple improvement options for a general area or for a specific corridor or intersection); and
- Rank projects against each other as an indication of their relative importance to establish implementation priorities.

Proposed Evaluation Criteria

The following sections list and describe the proposed Salem Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan evaluation criteria. The descriptions discuss each criterion's intent and how a particular concept or project would derive a higher "rating." Also included are questions that will be considered to assess the degree to which a concept or project could meet each criterion.

System Connectivity

To what degree would the concept or project fill a missing gap in the bicycle and/or pedestrian system? Higher ratings will be assigned to projects that would fill major network gaps.

Multi-Modal Connections

How well would the concept or project link bicyclists and pedestrians with transit and other non-single occupancy vehicle opportunities? Concepts or projects that substantially improve multi-modal connections will receive higher ratings.

User Safety and Comfort

Could the concept or project potentially improve bicyclist/pedestrian safety and comfort at locations with perceived or documented safety issues, without creating additional operational hazards? This criterion will take into account available crash data as well as feedback from Salem residents. Higher ratings will be assigned to projects with greater potential to improve user safety and comfort, and those projects that move towards meeting design standards and industry best practices.

Community Support

To what degree do Salem residents desire the proposed concept or project? This criterion will take into account oral and written feedback received at the various community outreach forums associated with this project including public workshops, listening station events, small group discussions and web-based surveys. Concepts or projects addressing documented community concerns will receive higher ratings.

Cost

What financial resources would be needed to implement the concept or project? Is the project cost prohibitive, or could it be potentially implemented through grant funding or other opportunities? Do the relative benefits outweigh the costs of the project, and are cost effective over the life cycle of the improvement? Higher ratings will be assigned to concepts or projects with lower anticipated costs, greater benefits, and as well for concepts/projects that could reasonably obtain funding through grants or other opportunities regardless of anticipated cost.

Accommodating a Broad Range of Users

How well would the concept or project address the needs of a variety of users, including families, children, mobility-impaired, seniors, or infrequent or less-confident users? Concepts or projects serving a wider variety of users will receive higher evaluative ratings.

Environmental Justice

Would the concept or project benefit minority or lower-income residents (many of whom tend to bike, walk, and use transit more than the community generally)? Higher ratings will be assigned to projects located in areas with higher concentrations of minority or lower-income residents (e.g., Title VI populations).

Land Use Connections

To what degree would the concept or project connect users with major bicyclist and pedestrian destinations such as employment centers, schools, parks, libraries, etc.? To what degree would the project support land use and development plans and would it be consistent with the community's vision for the future? Projects within close proximity of major non-motorized destinations will receive higher evaluative ratings. Projects that would be consistent or would reinforce land use and development plans would receive a higher evaluation rating.

Proposed Rating System

The alternative improvement concepts and individual projects will be rated based on the extent to which they are anticipated to meet each evaluation criterion. The following table presents the proposed rating system, including individual rating scales and descriptions. The scale is used to show which alternatives meet the criteria, which alternatives partially meet the criteria, and which alternatives do not meet the criteria. Additionally, a N/A designation will be used where the criteria do not apply.

Rating Description

●	The concept or project would fully address the criterion under focus
◐	The concept or project would partially addresses the criterion under focus
○	The concept or project would minimally addresses the criterion under focus, or would not address the criterion altogether
N/A	The criterion does not apply