



Traffic Circle with bike lane CREDIT: Mike Dillon

March 2025



Active Transportation Plan Update

Executive Summary

Introduction

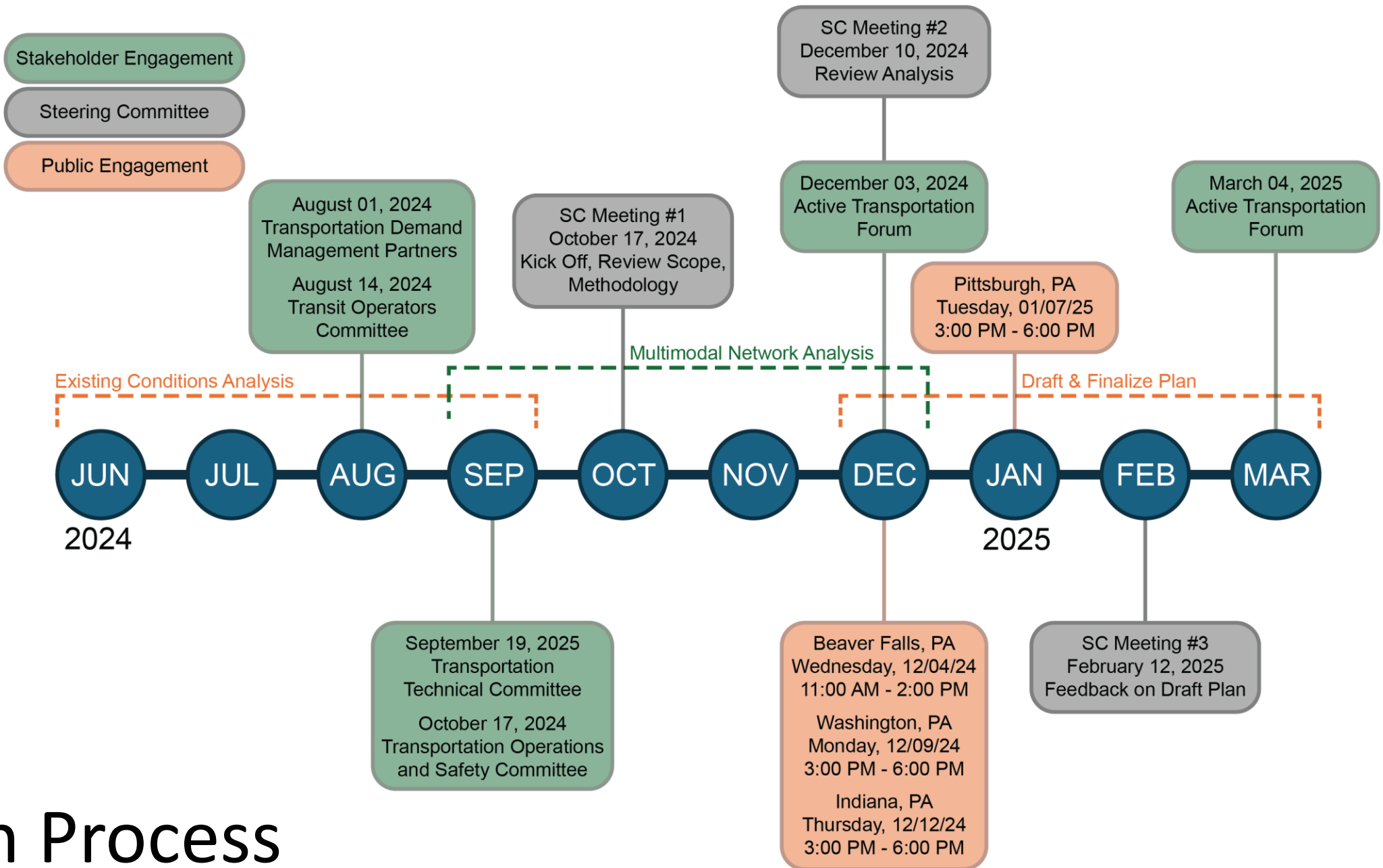
Introduction

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's updated Active Transportation Plan (ATP) includes renewed goals and a collection of web-based tools and resources. It was undertaken to address evolving trends and priorities related to active transportation.

The ATP features findings from multimodal network analyses to help local governments locate gaps and opportunities for improvements within the mobility network. The tools provided in the plan can help prioritize projects that will encourage more walking and rolling trips, which will help advance the regional vision of “connected mobility” for all.



Advisory bike lanes in Pittsburgh's South Side neighborhood (CREDIT: Bike PGH)



Plan Process

Plan Summary

This plan includes many components that can be accessed through an interactive web-application.

2025 Active Transportation Plan Update



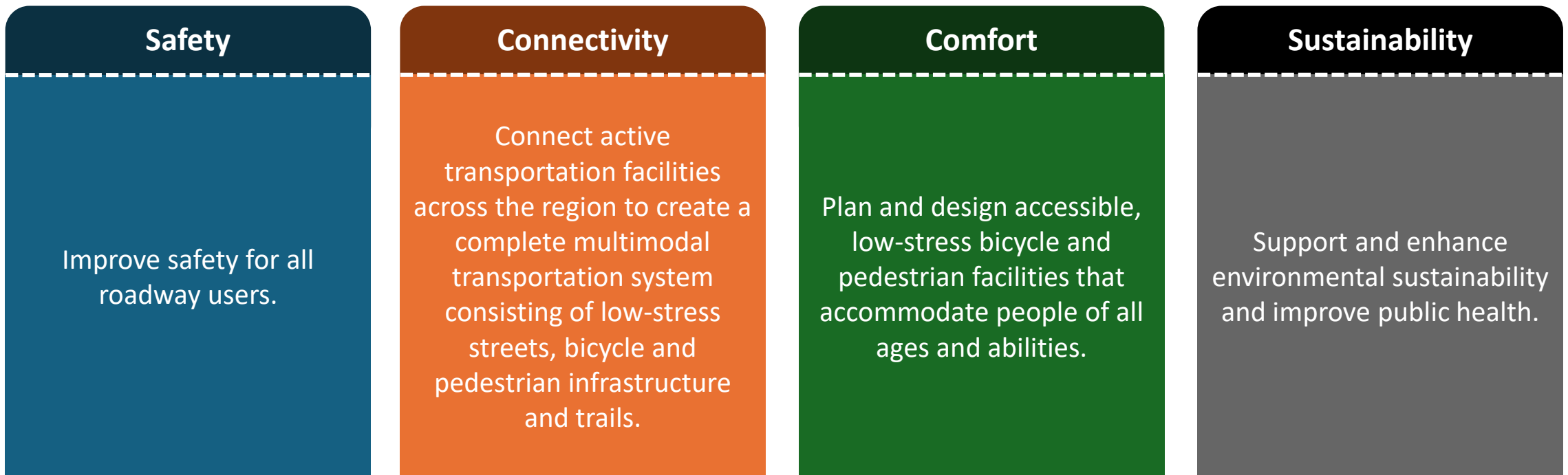
The plan components at the right are separate documents, provided as links in the web application:

- Executive Summary
- Active Transportation Profiles
- Community Engagement Summary
- Network Analysis Methodology Memo
- Active Transportation Design Toolkit
- Multimodal Plans and Policies Inventory
- Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures Table

Vision

The ATP advances the Regional Vision identified in [SPC's Long Range Transportation Plan \(LRTP\), *SmartMoves for a Changing Region*](#), which is: "A world class, safe, and well-maintained integrated transportation system that provides mobility for all".

Goals



Focus Areas

The 2025 – 2030 Regional Focus Areas identify key priorities to guide active transportation efforts over the next five years. The four Regional Focus Areas are:

Regional Trail Coordination

Establish a formal entity responsible for the planning, development and funding of trails at the regional level, to include coordination with railroads companies where applicable.

Funding

Continue to provide resources, tools, and technical assistance to help local governments access funding for active transportation initiatives.

Sidewalk Maintenance and Repairs

Expand technical assistance to help local governments address sidewalk maintenance and repair issues, where the responsibility lies with property owners, by sharing relevant data, case studies, and funding strategies.

Model Policy Development

Draft model policy language for the policy priorities listed in the Policy Toolkit.

Multimodal Plans and Policies Inventory

Multimodal Plans and Policies Inventory

Adopting and implementing multimodal policies at the local level can significantly enhance active transportation, improving safety for all road users.

While policy changes are essential, they often take time to implement. To accelerate progress, the updated ATP highlights seven plans or policies and provides a brief description of each along with an inventory of those that have been adopted by municipalities across the region.

Focus areas for plan implementation include providing model policy language and tools to assist additional local governments in adopting and implementing plans and policies that prioritize safety for people who walk and bike.



Sidewalk in Slippery Rock, PA (CREDIT: SPC)

Key Plans and Policies

1. Vision Zero Plan

Vision Zero is a transportation safety philosophy that was developed in Sweden in the late 1990s to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries while increasing safety, health, and equitable mobility for all. Central to Vision Zero is the idea that people should not be killed or experience life-changing injuries simply because they were trying to get from point A to point B. Vision Zero Plans outline the vision, goals, and objectives needed to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries within a jurisdiction, region, or state.

2. Active Transportation Plan/Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan

Active transportation Plans (ATPs) and Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plans involve community engagement specific to the needs of people who walk and bicycle and outline the vision, goals, and strategies needed to support safe, convenient, and accessible active transportation options.

3. Complete Streets Policy

A strong Complete Street Policy establishes a commitment and a vision to plan, design and build safe streets for all users. It prioritizes underinvested, and underserved communities, applies to all projects, and phases, allows only clear exceptions, mandates coordination, adopts excellent design guidance, requires proactive land-use planning, measures progress, sets criteria for choosing projects, and creates a plan for implementation.

Key Plans and Policies (Continued)

4. Curbside Management Policy

A Curbside Management Policy involves inventory, optimization, allocation, and management of curbside space to ensure it is safe, accessible, and capable of meeting numerous demands.

5. Design Standards Promoting Safety & Accessibility

Adopting clear design standards ensures the consistent construction and maintenance of safe, accessible bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

6. Construction Zone Policy

Construction zone policies require maintenance of safe and accessible bicycle and pedestrian routes through construction zones or the provision of clearly marked detour routes when direct access is not feasible.

7. Bicycle Parking Ordinance

Bicycle parking ordinances guide jurisdictions in providing short- and long-term bicycle parking and can also be integrated into curbside management policies.

Multimodal Network Analyses

A series of analyses were conducted to assess the experience of getting around the SPC region by walking, biking, and using transit. These analyses measure multimodal connectivity, ease, and comfort.

Multimodal Network Analysis Summary

Analysis Question	Supporting Analysis / Data
Which areas have low-stress access to jobs, transit, businesses, and schools?	Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) Analysis
	Intersection Crossing Level of Stress Analysis (Pedestrian LTS)
	Walkshed and Bikeshed Analysis
Where can people access the trail network without an automobile?	Trail Access Walkshed and Bikeshed Analysis
Where do critical gaps exist in the bicycle and pedestrian network?	Critical Link Analysis
	Trip Potential Analysis
Where is it safe and comfortable to walk, bike, and access public transportation?	Walkshed and Bikeshed Analysis

Measuring Biking Stress

The analysis evaluates how comfortable it is to bike on streets in the region using a “Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress” (LTS) approach. This method uses roadway data to assess how stressful it feels to bike on a given street. Biking tends to be most stressful on streets with high traffic volumes, wide cross-sections, high speeds, and no dedicated bike facilities.



*Presence of on-street parking increases traffic stress

Measuring Walking and Rolling Stress

Crossing the street can be stressful for pedestrians, especially on streets with high traffic volumes, wide crossings, high speeds, and a lack of signals, crosswalks, or stop signs. The “Pedestrian Crossing Stress” analysis illustrates the stress pedestrians experience while crossing the street at all intersections in the SPC region.



How to use the Multimodal Analysis

Use these analyses by accessing them online or downloading the full dataset. The following pages walk through examples of ways to integrate the data into your work.

How to use this analysis: Define Purpose and Need

Example: PA-136 (W. Main Street) Bridge
(West Newton, PA)

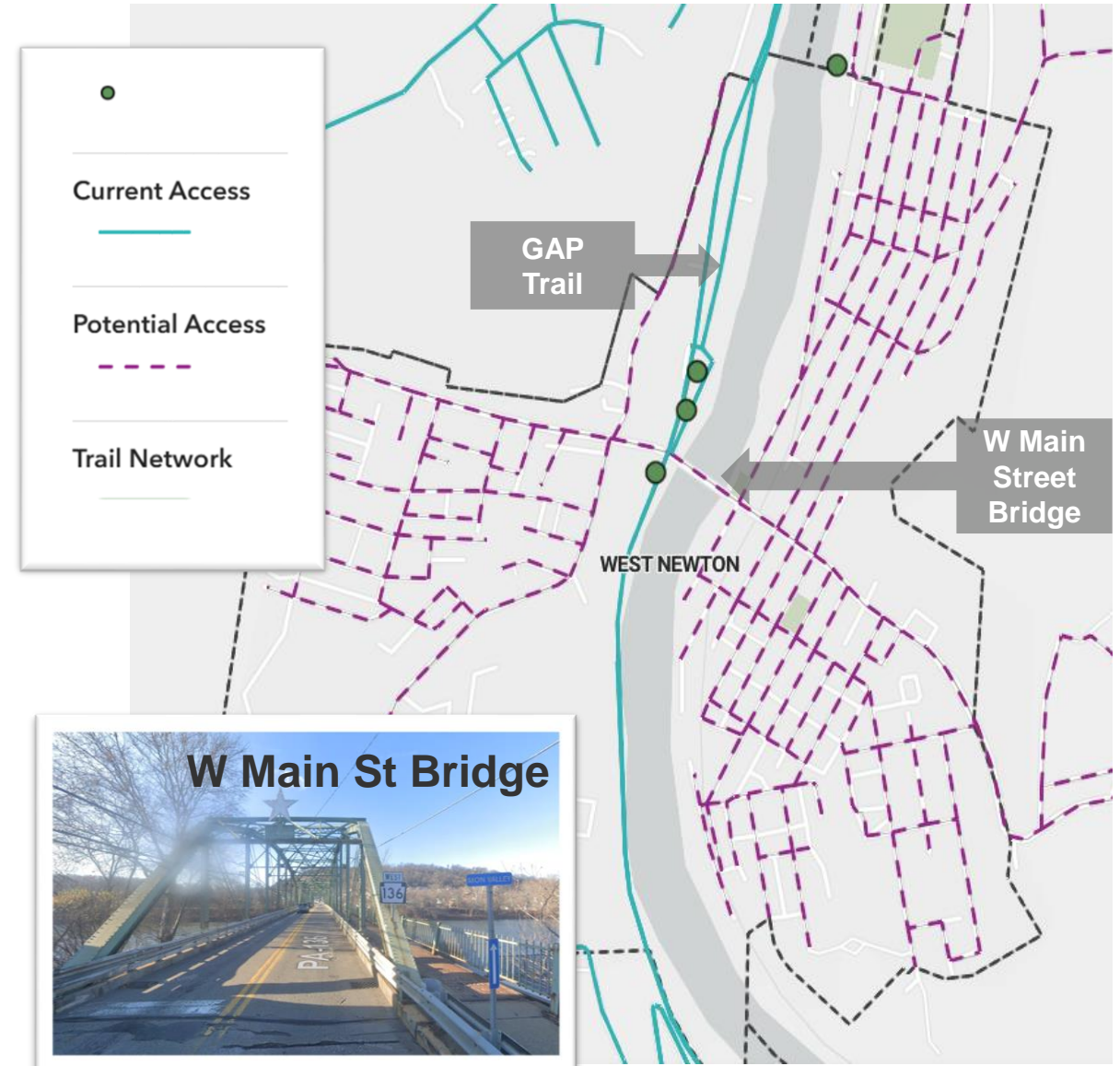
FACTS AND CONCERNS

- Currently, the PA-136 (W Main Street) bridge in West Newton does not have bike facilities, however, there are sidewalks on the north side of the bridge.

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

- Agencies can use these analyses to identify areas where infrastructure creates barriers to access—such as bridges that limit safe connections for people walking or biking.
- In this case, the lack of a designated bikeway on the bridge (indicated by a lack of Current Access), creates access gaps between the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) Trail west of the bridge and most of the city located east of the river.

Biking Access to Trails



How to use this analysis: Prioritize Signal Improvements

Example: Main Street and Jefferson Street (Butler, PA)

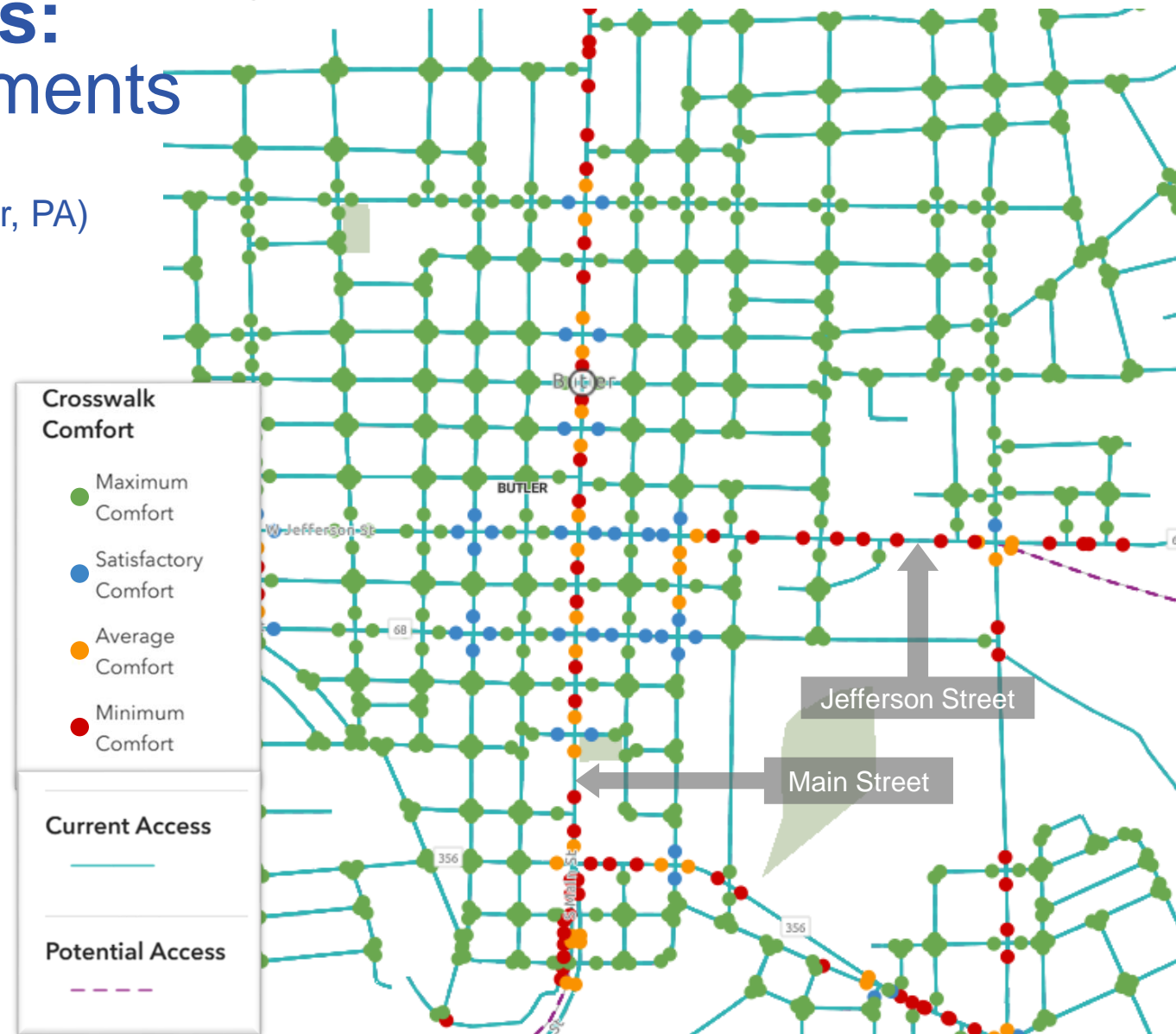
FACTS AND CONCERNS

- Main Street and Jefferson Street are surrounded by a dense grid of walkable streets and low stress intersections.
- Signalized intersections along Jefferson and Main present higher stress levels due to wide roadways, high traffic volumes, and a lack of crossing improvements.

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

- Stress could be reduced by installing:
 - Pedestrian Crossing Islands
 - Leading Pedestrian Intervals
 - Curb extensions
- Toolkit: Multimodal Main Streets

Walking Access to Key Destinations



How to use this analysis to: Plan your Bicycle Network

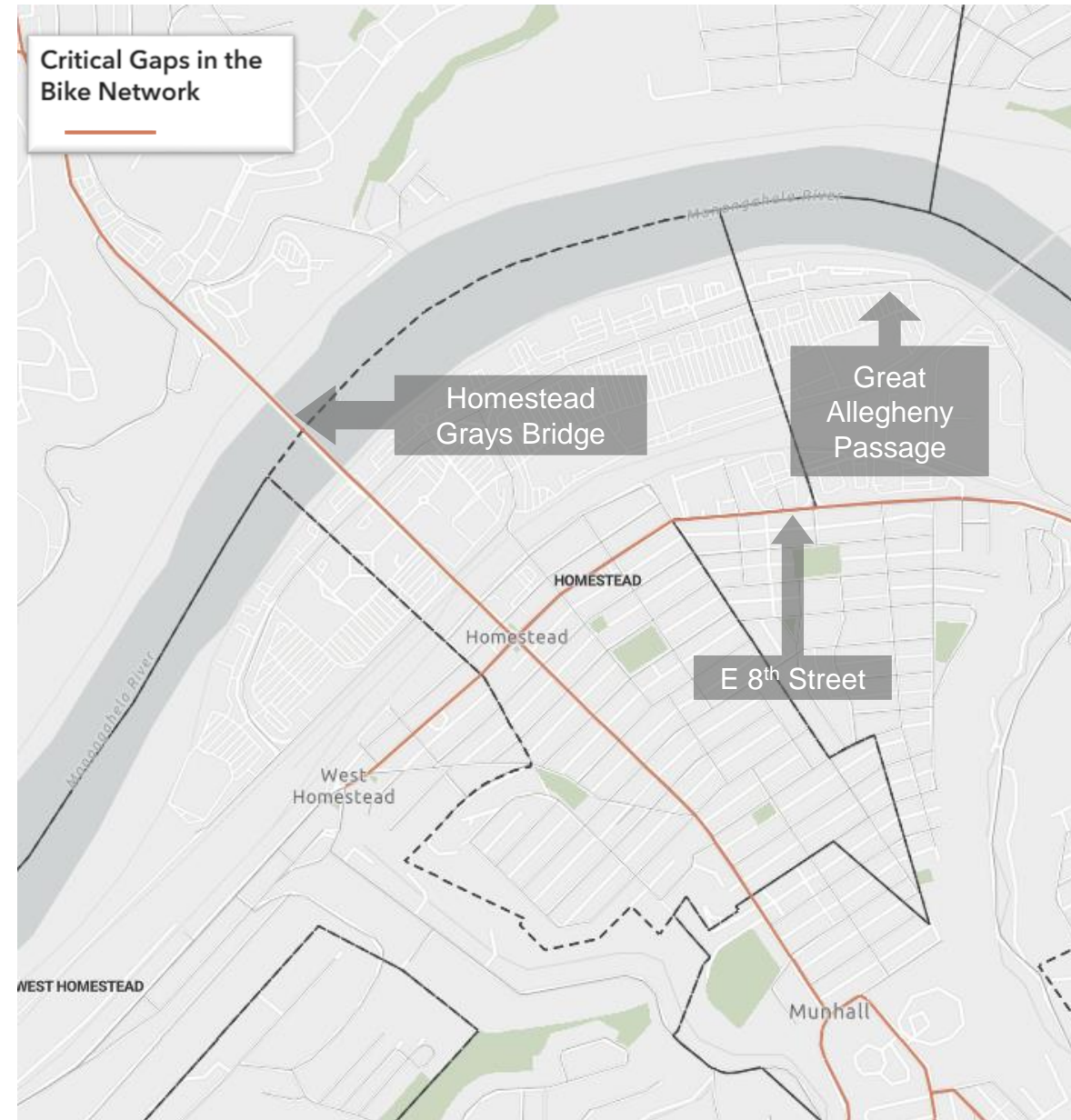
Example: Homestead Grays Bridge and E 8th Street
(Homestead, PA)

FACTS AND CONCERNS

- The Critical Gap Analysis identifies the Homestead Grays Bridge and E 8th Street as areas where many trips are under three miles, but bicyclists face high levels of stress due to challenging conditions.
- E 8th Street is also within biking distance to the trail.

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

- Improving infrastructure along this corridor could attract more trail users into town and enhance overall comfort and safety for people biking.



How to use this analysis by: Bringing the Data into your Project

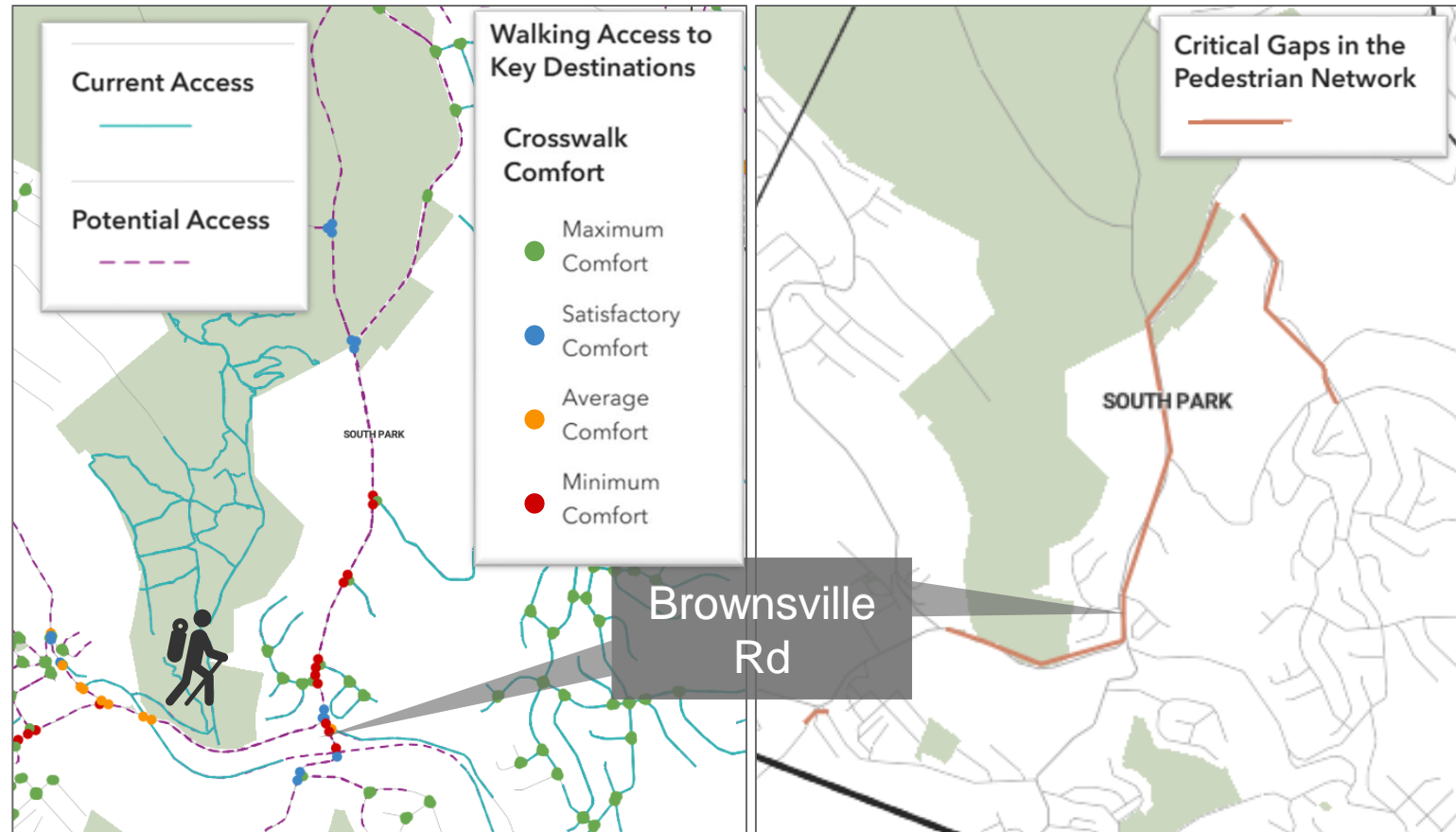
Example: Brownsville Road (leaving South Park)

FACTS AND CONCERNS

- Brownsville Road appears in the Pedestrian Critical Gap with Analysis.
- Although the road lacks sidewalks, there are many short trips under half a mile and the nearest low-stress crossing is about a mile away.
- The corridor is within walking distance of stores, restaurants, hiking trails, and other popular destinations.

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

- Increase number of low stress crossings.
- Construct sidewalks to increase access for pedestrians and other users.



Plan Links and Resources

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URL to the web-based Active Transportation Plan Update: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b82de3f8eb1e4495965f0af1b28a58be>