

THE CHARGING STATION

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF A²ZERO AND THE ANN ARBOR OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATIONS



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



The lead author for this month's feature articles is Simi Barr, Senior Analyst, Municipal Operations. Simi's work with OSI primarily focuses on decarbonizing municipal operations and supporting the adoption of Electric Vehicles in Ann Arbor.



WELCOME

Welcome from the City of Ann Arbor's Office of Sustainability and Innovations (OSI)! This month's issue of *The Charging Station* focuses on how the community is working to advance sustainable modes of transportation and reduce transportation related greenhouse gas emissions. If you are interested in learning more about A²ZERO and our carbon neutrality work, more detail can be found on our website: www.a2gov.org/sustainability. And as always, thank you for your interest in sustainability activities in Ann Arbor!

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Equity and justice are at the center of A²ZERO and staff in OSI are continuing to ground our work in these critical principles. In that light, we'd like to take a moment to honor the geographic and historic space we share. We acknowledge that the land the City of Ann Arbor occupies is the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabe and Wyandot peoples. We further acknowledge that our city stands, like almost all property in the United States, on lands obtained, generally in unconscionable ways, from indigenous peoples. The taking of this land was formalized by the Treaty of Detroit in 1807. Knowing where we live, work, study, and recreate does not change the past, but a thorough understanding of the ongoing consequences of this past can empower us in our work to create a future that supports human flourishing and justice for all individuals.

GETTING THE GREEN LIGHT ON TRANSPORTATION

MAKING TRANSPORTATION SAFER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE

The City of Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor Office of Sustainability and Innovations, and its collaborators have worked extensively to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation in our community. Transportation related emissions account for approximately 30% of GHG emissions in the US, and around 26% of emissions here in Ann Arbor. The A²ZERO plan has multiple strategies and actions which are focused on eliminating these emissions: Strategies 2 and 4 focus on the electrification of appliances and vehicles, and reduction in miles traveled in vehicles (VMT) by at least 50%, respectively. These actions have the potential to significantly reduce and eliminate GHG emissions from transportation.

MOVING TOGETHER TOWARDS VISION ZERO

THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Moving Together Towards Vision Zero elevates safety and carbon neutrality as the top goals for moving around Ann Arbor. As a Vision Zero city committed to eliminating fatal and serious crashes in our community, Ann Arbor is redesigning streets for slower vehicle speeds and comfortable spaces for all people to travel, regardless of how. Safety and comfort to walk, bike, scoot, or ride the bus influence investments which in turn opens up options for more people to choose healthy, green trips to move around Ann Arbor. Ann Arbor's Climate Action Millage supports this work and has already contributed to sustainable forms of transportation by helping fund:

- Protected bike lanes on State Street
- Sidewalks on Earhart
- [Quick build projects](#) (fast-tracked construction projects such as bike, pedestrian crosswalk improvements)

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT) REDUCTION

By investing in basic public goods, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike facilities, and frequent bus service, the City of Ann Arbor provides people real choices about how to travel in town. These choices about how to travel add up, especially as people form habits and patterns that suit their lives. Every year, multiple City departments and local organizations like TheRide, Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and Walk Bike Washtenaw all take steps to make it easier to reduce our individual VMTs. For example, in 2023 Ann Arbor commuters reported sustainable commute patterns which reduced 130,000 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions during the two-month long challenges: Conquer the Cold in January and Commuter Challenge in May. By reducing VMTs, we're increasing the good we're doing in our city!

AAATA LONG RANGE PLAN AND PROPULSION STUDY

Public Transit has a large role to play in sustainable communities and reducing our transportation related greenhouse gas emissions. The AAATA has developed, with significant community input, a [Long Range Plan](#) that covers a shared vision and strategy for transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area through 2045. The plan lays out expansions to AAATA service as well as increased frequency, express routes, and eventually 2 Bus Rapid Transit routes running North-South and East-West in TheRide's service area. TheRide is also examining how to transition to a Zero Emissions Bus fleet. The agency solicited a [propulsion study](#) to compare hydrogen fuel cell vehicles (FCEBs) with Battery Electric Buses (BEBs) to the current diesel vehicles they operate. The organization is in the process of evaluating these Zero Emissions Bus options to determine their path forward.

GETTING THE GREEN LIGHT ON TRANSPORTATION

MAKING TRANSPORTATION SAFER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE

BIKE PARKING PILOT PROGRAM

Biking to places in Ann Arbor only works if there is a way to securely park your bike at the destination. Recognizing that many places around the City lack adequate bike parking, the Business Bike Parking Pilot program will add bicycle parking racks for up to 10 areas within the public right of way (ROW) where bike parking is lacking. Bike Parking cannot block driveways, sidewalks, or transit stops and cannot be placed on private property. The City has final authority on siting of the bike parking as part of this program. This is being provided as a pilot project and the City will not be charging for installation during this pilot program. Interested residents, neighborhoods, and businesses should visit [Ann Arbor's Permitting application STREAM](#), click Apply, and type Bike Parking.

ZONING CHANGES, ELIMINATING PARKING MINIMUMS

In 2021, City Council passed an ordinance which created a new zoning district for Transit Corridors. This TC1 zoning was created to facilitate and encourage redevelopment and infill development to realize mixed use projects. More mixed-use developments can lead to more affordable housing and is a more sustainable form of development. This zoning work is aligned with Action 6 of Strategy 4 of A²ZERO: Developing Mixed-Use Neighborhoods. City Council's decision to eliminate minimum parking requirements (R-22-280) is another action taken to encourage more multi-modal transportation.

EXPANDING BIKE FACILITIES

The City continues to develop the All Ages and Abilities network of bikes that are safe and comfortable to use. There are new bike facilities on S State St, Scio Church Road, South Division St, and Platt Rd as well as quick builds on seven safety corridors and key intersections. More projects are in the works including upgrading 11 miles of buffered bike lanes to protected bike lanes (addition of vertical delineators). The City also won a Carbon Reduction Program grant from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) to develop a bicycle boulevard along W Washington St in 2026. The City continues to leverage other capital projects to improve the safety and comfort of bike facilities once the road is rebuilt to make them more accessible, safe, and comfortable for all residents.



ELECTRIFYING ANN ARBOR

A LOOK AT THE CITY'S INITIATIVES TO ELECTRIFY TRANSPORTATION

Public Charging Infrastructure. The City has made large strides in recent years to provide reliable EV charging to the public. This has included the deployment of four fast chargers at City Hall which support charging for City fleet and are available to the public. We've also deployed 40 public dual port chargers in DDA garages (80 additional units). More recently, the City worked with partners to deploy the first three publicly available



Privately owned EVs charging at City Hall.

networked curbside EV chargers in Ann Arbor. These will help the City understand their operation and use, to help pave the way for more curbside EV charging in the future. The City is also in the process of designing additional EV charging infrastructure at numerous City parks.

EV Charging at Multi Unit Developments. EV Charging in Multi Unit Dwellings (MUDs) is an important component in creating a community that fosters the adoption of electric vehicles, as the majority of EV charging happens in residential settings. Multi unit dwellings, such as apartments, can have barriers that make EV charging installations difficult, like insufficient electrical capacity or uncertainty about who's responsible for the cost of electricity and installation. Recently, [OSI worked to develop a toolkit](#) focused on EV charging and solar installations in MUDs and Home Owners Associations with information on resources, financial incentives, and technologies that can support EV charging and solar installations. In addition to the toolkit, OSI is currently looking for residents and property owners of MUDs to join us in a pilot initiative to support significantly greater EV charging deployment. Those interested will receive technical support and have access to the City's EV charger bulk buy discount programs. Anyone interested should reach out to Simi Barr to learn more.

City Fleet Electrification. For over 20 years, the City has worked to lessen the environmental impact of the City's fleet of vehicles. Since 2018, we've electrified around 20% of the light fleet, with over 35 EVs currently in service. These include hatchbacks, pickup trucks, minivans, vans, SUVs, offroad utility vehicles, and e-bikes. The City actively follows market developments and currently has one fully electric bucket truck in service, and is waiting on two electric refuse trucks, the first of which is expected in late 2023. There is also movement to order another electric refuse truck and exploration of an electric fire truck.

Contact Information

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Interested in having announcements posted in *The Charging Station*?

Contact Sheronda at SGloster@a2gov.org



A2ZERO

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AFD Electric Truck charging at City Hall.



Deputy Manager of Parks and Recreation Scott Spooner with new cargo bike used for maintenance work in Ann Arbor parks.

COLLABORATOR SPOTLIGHT

WALK BIKE WASHTENAW

This month, we are proud to feature A²ZERO Collaborator [Walk Bike Washtenaw](#)! We spoke with Larry Deck, WBW Board Member, this month to learn about Walk Bike Washtenaw's goals for their organization and community.



OSI: So, what is Walk Bike Washtenaw and what are its goals?

Deck: Walk Bike Washtenaw (WBW) is the new name of the former Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition, which became a Michigan nonprofit corporation in 2001. WBW's mission is to make Washtenaw County a national leader in bicycling and walking by improving facilities, policies, and community support through advocacy and education.

OSI: How does WBW work toward meeting those goals?

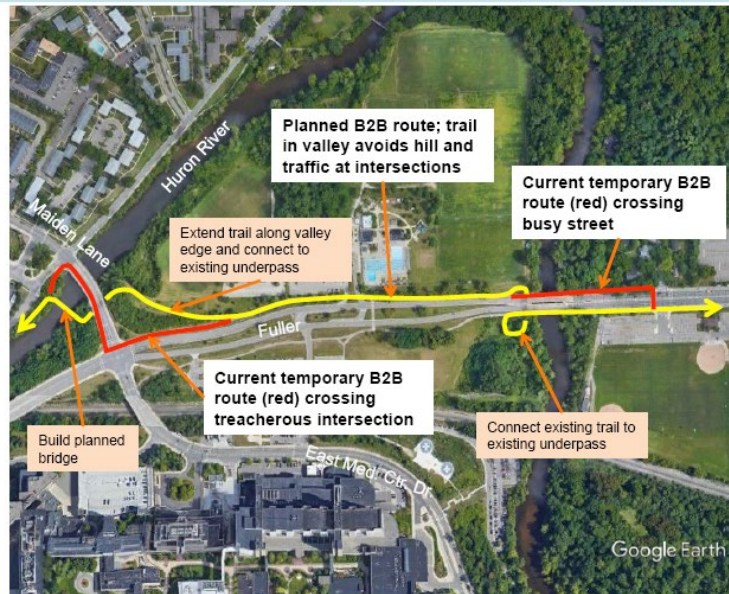
Deck: WBW seeks an interconnected network of bicycling and walking facilities. The organization has identified priority projects that will advance this network, and we work with public and private entities to advance these projects. We seek to ensure that transportation plans and projects accommodate the needs of cyclists and walkers. We communicate with officials and citizens in meetings and through our networks.

OSI: Tell us about some projects that WBW has worked on!

Deck:

- *B2B Trail -- We have long promoted the completion of the Border to Border (B2B) Trail. The emergence of the Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative, with which we cooperate, has accelerated this work. While much has been completed, much remains to be done.*
- *Ann Arbor-Saline Rd. / I-94 -- We assembled a task force of officials and organizations to improve the I-94 interchange. This led to the installation of bike lanes and a protected sidewalk several years ago where previously there had been no safe way to walk or bike on the bridge.*
- *Road diets -- We have encouraged 4-to-3-lane conversions with bike lanes where feasible, and several have been installed.*
- *Packard -- We assembled a task force a few years ago to consider extending the bike lanes on Packard to Ypsilanti. Ann Arbor subsequently extended the bike lanes from Eisenhower to the city limits, but we have not yet been successful in getting standard bike lanes extended the rest of the way to Ypsilanti.*

How to close B2B Trail gaps in central Ann Arbor



COLLABORATOR SPOTLIGHT

WALK BIKE WASHTENAW

OSI: What about some current projects?

Deck:

- *B2B gaps -- In addition to continuing work on projects like those listed above, we want to see implementation of the longstanding plans to close the B2B gaps in Ann Arbor (see accompanying map).*
- *E. Medical Bridge - the Walking and Biking Coalition identifies this planned replacement of the East Medical Center Drive as failing to address the full scope and opportunity of the long-planned trail loop around the Fuller/Maiden Lane intersection. The proposed trail-loop would allow campus-to-campus cyclists to avoid this high traffic intersection via the use of an underpass. The Coalition will continue to advocate for this critical improvement.*

OSI: How important is reducing the CO2 generated by transportation for meeting A²Zero goals?

Deck: Transportation has passed electricity generation as the largest source of CO2 emissions nationally. In 2018, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, fuels used for transportation accounted for 36% of CO2; electricity generation 33%; and industrial, commercial, and residential combined 31%. Advancing toward the A²Zero goals requires large increases in biking and walking, together with vehicle electrification and increased transit usage.

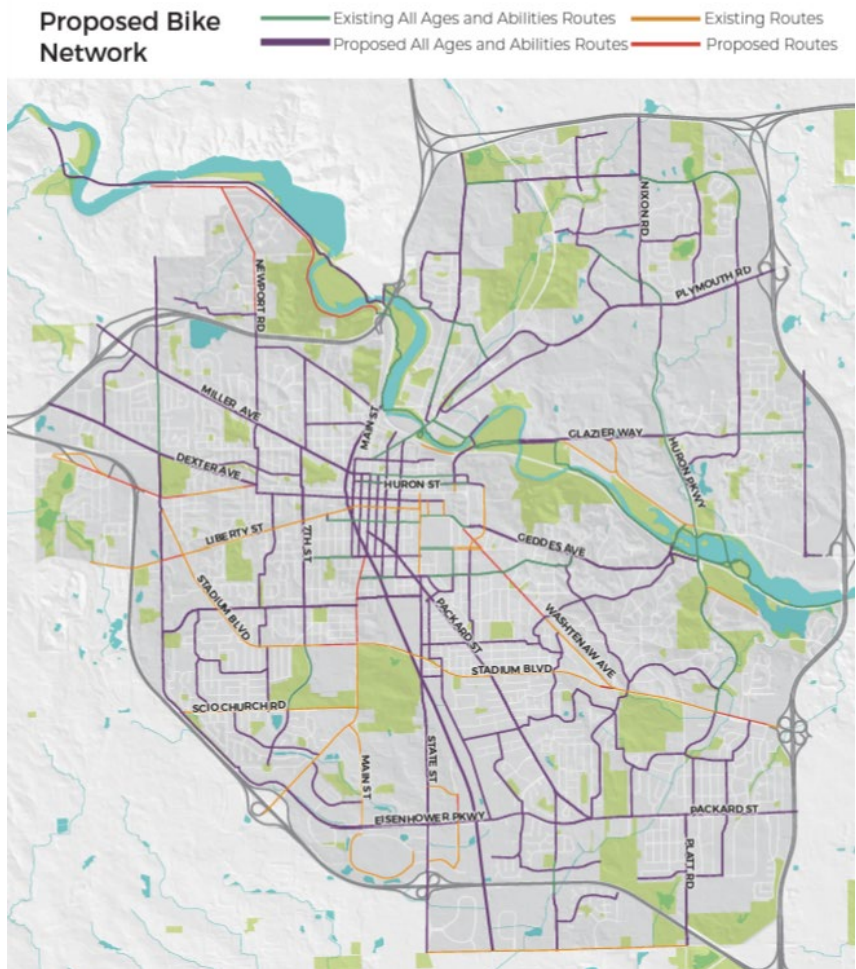
OSI: What value does high-quality bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure bring to a community?

Deck: When people can safely walk and bike to destinations, they can accomplish more of their daily activities without driving. They can get healthful exercise, contribute to cleaner air, enjoy their surroundings, and see their neighbors at a human scale.

OSI: How can others get involved?

Deck: Our website, walkbikewashtenaw.org, has information about our activities and how to participate. You can also email info@wbwc.org.

OSI: We've really enjoyed getting to learn from you. Thank you!



Proposed Bike Network, City of Ann Arbor Comprehensive Transportation Plan, 2021.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Trick or Treat on the River

Sunday, October 15th | Noon – 4 PM | Gallup Park

Visit 10 treat stations on the river by boat (receive one piece of candy per station) and five games on land at Gallup Park. \$22 / boat. No preregistration required. All ages welcome. Learn more [here](#).

Love a Park Day at Bandemer Park

Thursday, October 17th | 8:30 – 10AM | Bandemer

Join GIVE 365's Adopt-a-Park program and the City of Ann Arbor Office of Sustainability and Innovations for a monthly [workday at Bandemer Park](#)! Park stewardship tasks will include litter pick-up, invasive brush removal, and more! All tools and supplies will be provided.

Transportation Commission

Wednesday, October 18th | 7 – 9PM | Virtual

This upcoming meetings will be broadcasted live on CTN Cable Channel 19 and online at [watchCTN](#). To learn about providing public comment, visit the [Transportation Commission's website](#).

Leave Your Leaves!

Announcement from the Environmental Commission

Not all of your leaves have to be sent to compost. In the fall, leaving some leaves and other plant debris in your yard will help provide habitat for overwintering insects. To learn more and find some tips on how to best leave your leaves, as well as links to additional resources, check out our [Pollinator-Aware Yard Care program webpage](#).

For more information on our upcoming events, please visit www.a2gov.org/sustainability/events.

New OSI Staff



Stephen Christensen
Energy Assessor



Grace Franke
Communications Coordinator



Will Garcia
Sustainability Coordinator,
Circular Economy



Jordan Larson
Community Engagement Innovator



Jerrell Wylie
Energy Analyst

OSI is Hiring!

OSI is currently looking for individuals with a passion for climate action that might be interested in joining our team. To see a current list of opportunities, please check out the City's [hiring website](#).

CONNECT WITH THE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATIONS

EMAIL US (SUSTAINABILITY@A2GOV.ORG) | VISIT US ON THE WEB (A2GOV.ORG/SUSTAINABILITY)

[JOIN OUR MAILING LIST](#) | [CHECK OUT OUR YOUTUBE PLAYLIST](#)