To: Andrew Mogensen, Principal Planner, City of Concord  
CC: Jennifer Donlon-Wyant, Alta Planning + Design  
Re: Project prioritization criteria for the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Safe Routes to Transit Master Plan

Dear Mr. Mogensen:

Thank you for the opportunity to review staff’s proposed project prioritization criteria for the Master Plan. We are glad to see that the community’s focus on safety was heard, and safety was included as a high-value criterion.

However, we are concerned that the concept of safety reflected here is not consistent with the purpose of the Master Plan. We are also concerned that the Feasibility criterion will award the lowest priority to projects where the safety need for robust bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is greatest.

We have attempted to address these concerns with an alternative version of the criteria, presented below. Here are the significant differences from the proposed version.

**Safety**

One of the major reasons for this Master Plan process is the City’s desire to shift transportation mode share from driving to bicycling and walking. To achieve this, we must address not only safety deficits which have already caused bicycle- and pedestrian-related injuries and deaths, but in particular those which have deterred residents from bicycling and walking at all.

This “**deterrent effect**” is the major obstacle to the City’s goal of encouraging bicycling and walking - and it does not show up in collision data.

We agree that measurable data are essential for evaluating safety. Fortunately, a safety measurement which addresses the deterrent effect is relatively easy to obtain. That measurement is the volume and speed of motor traffic. Motor vehicles are almost the exclusive source of danger for bicycle and pedestrian traffic, and this danger correlates closely with volume and speed.

Although we urge a proactive approach to safety which directly addresses the deterrent effect, we also agree that a high rate of actual collisions is an indicator of particular urgency, even if not a sufficient safety metric alone. For this reason, we have retained that metric as an additional safety factor which could push one project ahead of another when motor traffic volume and speed are approximately equal between them.
Feasibility

Given a proactive understanding of safety which takes into account the deterrent effect, projects which address routes with high motor traffic should receive the highest priority.

We understand that the complexities of implementation for complete street projects on such routes will make them more costly in time and funding than others, and will require a longer process before any construction is possible. This is a reason to begin study and the funding search for these projects as soon as possible, not to delay it.

The proposed Feasibility criterion would assign exactly the opposite priority, and would delay projects where the safety need is greatest. We are therefore unable to support it.

As an alternative concept of feasibility, we propose the identification of a potential funding source for a project. Complete street funding opportunities from the state, county, and regional bodies are numerous. Bike Concord would be very pleased to donate volunteer time to help staff identify and pursue these opportunities.

Alternative criteria

The following set of project prioritization criteria would address the deterrent effect, a necessity to achieve the City’s purpose of encouraging bicycling and walking. We believe this alternative would also make the criteria consistent with the City’s policy commitments in the Transportation Element of the General Plan, especially Policy T-1.9.5. The text of the relevant policies is given at the end of this letter.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Policies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>The project addresses safety concerns identified by motor traffic volume and speed, as well as reported collisions, based on the most recent five years of data for bicycle or pedestrian related collisions. Projects are scored on a scaled ranking from zero to twenty-five with locations with the greatest motor traffic volume and speed receiving twenty points, and locations with the most collisions receiving an additional five.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>T-1.9.5, T-1.3.3, T-1.4.2, T-1.4.7, T-1.4.9</td>
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<td>Activity Generator Connection</td>
<td><em>The project improves or provides a connection to an attractor identified in the Existing Conditions memo (health care facilities, parks, community centers, top employers, shopping centers, parks, and schools).</em> Project that directly connect to activity generators receive 20 points. Projects that do not connect to activity generators receive zero points.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>T-1.1.7, T-1.3.1, T-1.3.3, T-1.4.1, T-1.4.2</td>
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<td>Transit Connection</td>
<td><em>The project improves or provides a connection to a transit stop or station.</em> Project that directly connect to a transit stop or station receive 20 points. Projects that indirectly connect to a transit stop or station receive 10 points. Projects that do not connect to a transit stop or station receive zero points.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>T-1.1.7, T-1.1.12, T-1.3.3, T-1.4.1, T-1.4.2</td>
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<td>Community Identified Challenge Area</td>
<td><em>The project is at a location identified as challenging through the community workshop, survey, tours, or other comments submitted.</em> Projects in community identified challenge areas receive 20 points. Projects that are not in community identified challenge areas receive zero points.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>T-1.3.3, T-1.4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feasibility</td>
<td><em>A potential funding source has been identified for the project.</em> Projects with secured funding sources receive 15 points. Projects with identified potential funding sources receive 10 points. Projects with no potential funding sources receive zero points.</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

Thank you for your time and effort in developing this Master Plan, and for the opportunity to participate in the process. We look forward to a successful outcome.

Kenji Yamada  
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Bike Concord  
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925-338-1562
Appendix: Relevant policies from the Transportation Element of the General Plan

**T-1.1.7** Provide a high level of multimodal connectivity in the design of the citywide transportation system, particularly in the Concord Reuse Project area. The roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit network to be developed on the Reuse Project site should provide convenient multimodal access from this area to adjoining neighborhoods, the City, and the region.

**T-1.1.12** Establish efficient linkages to the regional transportation system for all modes of travel.

**T-1.3.1** Work with employers to develop Transportation Demand Management plans to increase carpooling and encourage the use of public transportation, bicycling, and walking; consider other trip-reduction approaches such as telecommuting, shuttles, and transit passes.

**T-1.3.3** Ensure that streets are designed to balance the needs of multiple travel modes, including vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

**T-1.4.1** Create a complete street network that provides facilities for all users to travel throughout Concord.

**T-1.4.2** When prioritizing limited funds among potential complete street improvements, focus on the following types of improvements first:

1. **Safety**: Regardless of location, improvements including sidewalk connectivity projects, that enhance the safety of all roadway users, including drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.

2. **Sidewalk and Bicycle Access to schools, parks, and transit stops**: locations often accessed by children and other non-drivers.

3. **Downtown streets**: Visited by the majority of Concord residents; common places for people to walk to access businesses.

4. **Reuse Area Access**: Tie the Concord Community Reuse Area into the rest of the City.

**T-1.4.5** When planning for complete streets, include groups and individuals representing the many populations who use the City’s streets when planning for Concord’s street network; use their input in collecting data to prioritize and track implementation of complete streets upgrades.

**T-1.4.7** Incorporate neighborhood traffic management techniques such as traffic circles, narrow lanes, and bulbouts in appropriate residential areas; such techniques should be evaluated to ensure they improve bicycle and pedestrian travel without compromising the overall connectivity of the auto network.

**T-1.4.9** Design and improve streets to facilitate safe crossings, including accessible curb ramps, crosswalks, refuge islands, and pedestrian signals; design and operate this infrastructure to meet the needs of people with different disabilities and of people of different ages.

**T-1.9.5** Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile safety over vehicle speed and level-of-service at intersections and along roadways.