Pedestrian and Bicycle Enhancements
The project objectives for the I-81 Viaduct Project call for the project to “address vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle deficiencies in the I-81 viaduct priority area.” The intention is that any new bicycle and pedestrian facilities constructed as a part of the I-81 Project be consistent with City of Syracuse and Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council plans. We’ve reviewed the available bike planning studies and we are coordinating pedestrian and bike facility improvements with the City of Syracuse. We are also aware of and are coordinating with other ongoing projects in the area.

NACTO is considered the state-of-the-art in bikeway design and this is the design standard for the project.
This image illustrates the Community Grid alternative. There are a number of existing bicycle facilities in the project area. The Onondaga Creekwalk extends south from Onondaga Lake along the Creek to Armory Square.

The Erie Canalway Trail is a statewide trail that runs from Albany to Buffalo. In the City of Syracuse, the Canalway Trail is located on Water Street through the project area.

The Connective Corridor connects the University to Downtown along University Avenue, Genesee and Fayette Streets. On-street bike lanes are in place on portions of West Street, West Onondaga Street, and Cortland, Waverly, and Comstock Avenues.

The dotted lines represent bicycle facilities that are proposed in the Syracuse Bicycle Plan of 2012.

Under the Community Grid alternative, a bicycle facility would be constructed along the new Almond Street from Burnet Avenue on the north, continuously to Martin Luther King Jr. Street on the south. This would include a raised cycle track from Burnet Avenue to Adams Street. From Adams Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Street, there would be a shared bicycle/pedestrian path along the west side of the street. A bicycle facility would be constructed on Harrison Street to connect the facility on Almond Street to the existing bike lanes on West Onondaga Street, as well as a proposed facility on Salina Street.

Bike lanes would be constructed on a portion of Butternut Street and Genant Drive and would connect to shared lane markings on Franklin and Evans streets. New shared pedestrian and bicycle paths would be constructed along the west side of Onondaga Creek from Evans Street to Erie Boulevard.

The reconstruction of I-690 within the project area would include bicycle facilities to facilitate north-south connectivity. Bicycle facilities would be constructed on Salina Street between East Laurel Street and Herald Place; on State Street between James Street and the Erie Canalway Trail on Water Street; and on West Onondaga Street between Adams Street and the Erie Canalway Trail.
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I’d now like to review the proposed bike facilities under the viaduct alternative. First, I’ll quickly review the existing bicycle facilities. These include the Onondaga Creekwalk, The Erie Canalway Trail, the Connective Corridor, and a number of on-road bike lanes. The purple dotted lines illustrate proposed bike facilities as shown in the 2012 Syracuse Bicycle Plan.

Under the Viaduct Alternative, a new bike facility would be constructed on Almond Street from the Erie Canalway Trail on Water Street to Fineview Place. Between Water Street and Genesee Street a raised cycle track would be provided. A shared pedestrian/bicycle path would be provided from Genesee Street to Fineview Place. Shared lane markings would be provided between Fineview Place and Raynor Avenue. To the north, bike lanes would be provided on McBride Street between Burnet Avenue and Water Street.

Bike lanes would be constructed on a portion of Butternut Street and Genant Drive and would connect to shared lane markings on Franklin and Evans streets. New shared pedestrian and bicycle paths would be constructed along the west side of Onondaga Creek from Evans Street to Erie Boulevard.

The reconstruction of I-690 within the project area would include bicycle facilities to facilitate north-south connectivity. Bicycle facilities would be constructed on Salina Street between East Laurel Street and Herald Place; and on Lodi Street between Burnett Street and Canal Street, and then along Canal Street and Walnut Avenue to Water Street. This summarizes the bike facility improvements under the Viaduct Alternative.
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A complete streets approach is envisioned for Almond Street and this is a sketch of what Almond Street could look like under the Community Grid Alternative. This is considered a state-of-the-art design for urban sidewalks where pedestrian activity is desired at the street level. This supports the city’s proposed land use and zoning for Almond Street, which calls for pedestrian oriented uses on the ground floor. On-street parking is envisioned, separated one-way cycle tracks would be located on both sides of the street, a landscape buffer that could include rain gardens, and a wide sidewalk that has the potential for outdoor café zones. A rain garden is a planted area that absorbs rainwater runoff from surrounding hard surfaces such as roofs and walkways and allows the water to percolate into the ground as opposed to piping the run-off to the storm water system. This relieves demand on an already overburdened stormwater system.

On the right is a plan view at a typical intersection. The following sketches will illustrate this intersection treatment.
Much attention is being given to pedestrian and bicycle safety throughout the project. This series of images illustrates some of the ways this would be done. This is a view of a typical intersection on Almond Street under the Community Grid Alternative.

Bicycle lanes are separated and delineated — this makes the cyclists more visible to drivers. Separating pedestrians and cyclists is safer for both pedestrians and cyclists.

In the same way, pedestrian crosswalks would be clearly delineated. Studies show that when crosswalks are highlighted in this way, pedestrians are more likely to stay within the designated crosswalk area, and they are more visible to motorists.

Curb bump-outs would be created at intersections. Bumping the curb out into the roadway makes the pedestrians more visible to motorists and shortens the crossing distance for pedestrians. Islands in the center of the roadway would provide a safe refuge in the event a pedestrian is not able to cross in time for the light.

This image illustrates all of these elements in place. This combination of elements would provide an environment that is more welcoming and safe to the pedestrian and cyclist.
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This is an image of the Viaduct Alternative, illustrating the same suite of bike and pedestrian treatments to enhance safety. Pedestrian and bicycle safety would be optimized under each alternative.

As a result, there would be an increase in pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety under both alternatives.