



Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," accessed May 2015, <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislib/>.

### Analysis of Barriers

Transportation use can be disrupted by physical or perceptual barriers that restrict access, create negative user experiences, and undermine desired qualities in the built environment.

The most pervasive barrier in Nashua is **lack of continuous sidewalks (1)**, particularly along Highway 346, Greeley/Addison Boulevard, and Main Street/Diagonal area. Currently, youth and active recreation users trying to access the lakefront parks or open spaces east of town such as the fairgrounds must travel on the edge of Highway 346. Adult runners and the high-school track team use the existing partial sidewalks on 346 as a primary route. They fear being struck by a driver because of blind curves, weather conditions, and high traffic speeds. They note that there are no safer places to run that have the desired distance.

Users also noted that the new sidewalks switch sides and there are no safe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. For example, on the bridge, the sidewalk is on the "wrong side of the road" and people must cross through heavy traffic to go to parks or popular fishing spots. The lack of sidewalks south of town on Greeley/Addison Boulevard creates some difficulty for youth attending school or training after school. Sidewalks on Main Street stop before they connect to sidewalks on the bridge over the Cedar River. This lack of continuity leaves kids and adults stranded with no clear safe route to the desired destination.

**Congestion and speeding traffic affect transportation use (2).** Children walking to school are present at commuting times, a worry for parents whose children must cross primary vehicular routes. Active adults, teenagers, and parents all noted higher speed traffic on 346 and on Main Street, as well as congestion near the high school and near the bridge. Seasonally heavy truck traffic that circles the co-op east of Main Street creates an intimidating barrier for pedestrians and cyclists. The impact of congestion and traffic speed could be mitigated, participants said, by having clearly marked crossings and clearly defined continuous sidewalks. Participants want crosswalks at several locations, including near Subway and the welcome center, at the Dairy Treat, and at Chickasaw and 346.

Seasonal moisture and dryness interrupts travel. Wet and wintery conditions and dust from gravel roads complicate travel—especially pedestrians and cyclists. **Water and slush flood areas (3)** around Sample Street (Hwy 346), forcing pedestrians onto roads or into yards. On Charles City Road and Amherst Blvd, seasonal wetness and **snow drifting (8)** interrupt recreational travel to the welcome center and the lake. North of the high school, flooding on Madison and Washington



No stop signs on main street

Streets block travel to the campus. Pockets of flooding also cause problems near the bus barn on Addison Blvd; in Schluter's addition, where there appears to be only one storm drain; and near the Greeley/Livingston intersection. The dip in the diagonal also floods after heavy rains. According to users, the corner of old 218 and Amherst Blvd often ponds, sometimes to depths approaching two feet. The flooding blocks cyclists, walkers, and sometimes cars and washes out rock and other surfacing. Winter snow removal lags behind snow removal on the highways, complicating travel within the neighborhoods. Sidewalk shoveling (or lack of shoveling) can also create barriers for kids walking to school.

Recreation users and lakeside residents report that **dust from gravel roads stirred up by traffic in summer drifts onto trails and into campgrounds (4)**, making breathing difficult. Those who run and cycle on gravel for exercise also note dust as a problem. Recreation users and many other participants **would like to see a long distance trail (7)** developed to connect destinations such as Charles City (on Maple Street) and Waverly and Denver (along Hwy 346).

The Cedar Lake impoundment and the Cedar River below the dam attract people year-round for a variety of recreational uses. Trails, open spaces, canoe and boat launches, and campgrounds are valued amenities residents. In summer, people walk the shore paths, enjoy the beach, fish, and boat in pontoons. Participants noted that **vegetation management (5)** is needed along the lake paths, and that **benches and lighting (6)** would facilitate use by everyone, into the evening hours. In winter, the lake is used for snowmobiling and ice fishing, so the issues noted with **drifting (3)** affect this use.

# Nashua

## Transportation Assets and Barriers | 3. Analysis of Barriers