

HENNEPIN COUNTY

MINNESOTA

Active Transportation Committee

Date: Monday, October 17, 2022

Time: 4 – 6 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams conference call meeting and the University of Minnesota, 511 Washington Ave. SE, Suite 300

Committee Members:

- Tammy McLemore, Dist. 1
- ✓ Gilbert Odonkor, Dist. 1
- ✓ Billy Binder, Dist. 2
- ✓ Jenny Ackerson, Dist. 2
- ✓ Laura Mitchell, Dist. 3
- ✓ Dave Carlson, Dist. 3
- Jay Eidsness, Dist. 4
- ✓ Haley Foydel, Dist. 4
- Lou Dzierzak, Dist. 5
- Courtney Costigan, Dist. 5
- ✓ Bob Byers, Dist. 6
- Lou Miranda, Dist. 6
- ✓ Greg Anderson, Dist. 7
- ✓ Lee Newman, Dist. 7

Ex-Officio Members:

- ✓ Jordan Kocak, HC Public Works
- ✓ Dan Patterson, HC Public Works
- ✓ Michael Samuelson, MnDOT
- ✓ John Mark Lucas, U of M

Guests:

- ✓ Eric Torgerson

Notes

- **Approval of the September 2022 minutes** **4:03 – 4:06**
 - Lee Newman moved to approve September 2022 minutes; Gilbert Odonkor seconded. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

- **Project evaluation process** **4:06 – 4:39**
 - Bob Byers described efforts of the subcommittee working on a project evaluation process.
 - The primary goal is to better organize the committee's thoughts when evaluating projects.
 - The subcommittee met in August and fleshed out some guidelines. There was interest in creating a list of questions we're interesting in answering for planners and engineers that we could give them prior to meetings.



- When Bob worked at the county, they did work through trade-offs, such as University and Fourth. The city and Simon Blenski did a good job creating a matrix on that project. We refined those criteria into questions.
- Dave Carlson: Under Level of Protection in Safety and Comfort: I'd make the case that simple bike lanes provide some safety as opposed to nothing at all. Can that be worked in? Bob Byers: The protection is pretty low. That's where we've started. Bike lanes are better than nothing. Dave Carlson: Additional striping, like and Park and Portland, that can help. On some roads you can't do more than that. You aren't going to have bollards on County Highway 6. I suggest adding it in. Bob Byers: It doesn't say anything about buffers. Jordan Kocak: Bob, are you trying to quantify this and get a score? Bob Byers: I wasn't thinking we'd go that far. Maybe high/medium/low. A qualitative thing. Otherwise you get bogged down in numbers and confused as to what criteria is important. With the questions a pattern emerges. Something like, "This one seems to be pushing more this way." It doesn't necessarily give an answer. Dave Carlson: I'd like to see it in print so people don't forget about it. Bob Byers: I can add that in.
- Lee Newman: The way I see this is these are questions we would ask of any question before us. Whether University Avenue or Minnetonka Boulevard, any of them. We want the experience of riding a bicycle in any area as safe as possible. By asking these questions and hopefully getting satisfactory answers, hopefully we can make them more safe. If a potential new member of this committee is interested in what they would be doing, these would be good questions to review. Bob Byers: I think there could be a lot of value in providing this to people before we review. They and we would have time to prepare rather than doing it off the cuff. Maybe even look at the design a little closer in some cases. Greg Anderson: We're looking at the context of what's going on, whether there's heavy transit or heavy transit or close to a stadium. You want to look at that context for a first evaluation. We spent so much time on University and Fourth going over context.
- Jenny Ackerson: What is the proposed sequence? Are we asking people who present projects to complete something and that becomes part of our packet? Which group are we trying to prepare more. Bob Byers: We're trying to give people a heads-up of what we're interested in so they can think about them and prepare an answer. Maybe this will spur us, too, to do a little more preparation. I don't think I see it as a process that's so bureaucratic that they have to answer each question in a high level of detail. Greg Anderson: These questions during discussion will lead to other questions. Jordan Kocak: I've noticed sometimes it's hard to get discussion on a project going, this can act almost as an icebreaker. Bob Byers: To answer your question, Jenny, I don't know. We can try it for a while and see how it goes. Jenny Ackerson: I like the idea of an open-ended prompt to spur discussion. The engineer knows what they're trying to solve, they might identify where they can't get everything they want, where there will be deficiencies. Bob Byers: This encourages them to tell us how they think it went, why they went this direction rather than that. To be able to see how they evaluated and came up with this thing, and the trade-offs, that would help us a lot.
- Jordan Kocak: Should we add bike/bike conflicts? Where you have a narrower facility. Or on University with a two-way bikeway. On a trail, if you eliminate a shoulder and want everyone to use the shoulder, you might get conflicts between a family out for a ride and

someone who's faster. Bob Byers: That's a good point and something I think we should add. Mixture of user types, maybe?

- Jean Mark Lucas: A lot of the criteria are functional, given the concern about environment, should you be aiming for something stronger? Bob Byers: I was thinking along those same lines, maybe I didn't word it quite right. Lou Miranda is big on that and integrating into the climate action plan. Unless we ask the question it might not come up. Jordan Kocak: Giving climate more weight. Jean Mark Lucas: It's not just design, it's how it's constructed, life-cycle cost. It becomes a greater awareness, you can't just put it with everything else at this point. Bob Byers: It happens in planning; sometimes we see this stuff sometimes we don't. For example the Complete Streets Policy. It's sort of in a different realm. How are we going to treat projects in the future.
- Dave Carlson: If you want to get specific about design elements, lanes and trails have particular design elements besides just what type of pavement. You don't want a six-foot two-way trail. Same with road widths. Bob Byers: I thought about that but didn't want to get that far into details. What we might ask is what kind of volumes, is it a residential connector or regional trail?
- Billy Binder: How between 100 and the lakes is going to be different from west of 100. How's it going to work to have two contexts. Context is really important. Bob Byers: Does it have to be consistent? I don't think we always figure that out.
- Jordan Kocak: I had a thought on design considerations that has come up a lot lately. Green stormwater infrastructure, greening on corridors. Unfortunately right now it's competing with biking and walking. Really, they should be allies. It's definitely something to think about. And it affects climate change, too, preventing flooding, infiltration, shade. Bob Byers: What happened with the streetscape guidelines Environment and Energy came up with? Jordan Kocak: I'm not sure what came of that.
- Dave Carlson: On Minnetonka Boulevard, they added that greenspace.
- Laura Mitchell: I don't think it's our job to be the experts on everything. I think this does a perfect job of giving us questions and subquestions in our back pocket to get what we need. I tend to be more quiet, I don't know what to ask. This gives me a launch point.
- Jordan Kocak: Maybe there's a second member-only one. Laura Mitchell: Yeah, we don't have to have it memorized, but it'd be helpful for follow-up.
- Bob Byers: I'll add things based on today and Jordan will share it with Public Works staff as a next step.

- **Complete streets policy draft resolution**

4:39 – 4:55

- Tammy McLemore, Greg Anderson and Jordan Kocak discussed the topic and came up with a draft resolution. Greg read the resolution.
- Dave Carlson: The county itself is asking to update this? Jordan Kocak: Yes, KC Atkins is leading that effort. She presented last meeting. I wouldn't call it an update, but a from-scratch new policy. Jordan Kocak: The old one is from 2009. This effort originated from our county engineer and Design to catch up with best practices around the country and be a little more visionary than the previous policy, which was pretty straight-forward. Dave Carlson: So you see it as a positive thing? Jordan Kocak: I think it is. It's looking to be more robust than the prior one. A modal hierarchy wasn't there before and would set direction on projects. If biking or walking is at the top of the hierarchy, it better be in the

project. The Active Transportation Committee doing a resolution is an opportunity to voice what your priorities are and can influence the outcome of the policy.

- Greg Anderson: I think capturing the hierarchy is good. Jordan Kocak: The urban/rural/suburban context came up in our conversations. We have a wide variety and between those contexts. We highlighted it to be sure they include that. Greg Anderson: In the west metro, I see what goes on in my district. The shoulders are great. Every Tuesday there are time trials out there. If those disappear, they aren't going to do time trials on trails. Jordan Kocak: A lot of times transportation is our priority, but in the rural areas it might be more recreation. Bob Byers: It seems they're trying to address that.
- Billy Binder: I like the thought of trails in western Hennepin County. We have a shared use roadway in Golden Valley. We don't have any separation between bike lanes and general lanes, but we could have if we did what Minneapolis does. Emerson and Fremont, Plymouth Avenue. That could benefit us. Glenwood is a heavily used bikeway but also has a lot of crashes. We should do more to separate bikes and cars. Jordan Kocak: In your example, when the county was making that decision, if we had a hierarchy, maybe we would have done something better with a policy pushing us. Billy Binder: The mayor and city council member were asking for separation. We said it again and again and again and still the county didn't do it.
- Billy Binder moved to adopt the resolution. Laura Mitchell seconded.
- The resolution was adopted unanimously.

- **Member Announcements** **4:55 – 4:56**
 - Jordan Kocak: During our next meeting I'm going to be out on paid time off. Dan Patterson will cover that, and we'll do a virtual meeting rather than hybrid.

- **Adjournment** **4:56**
 - The meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m. and in-person participants went for a bike ride around the University of Minnesota campus.

- **University of Minnesota platinum level bicycle friendly university tour** **4:56 – 6:00**

Next meeting:

November 21 | 4 – 6 p.m.

Remote via Microsoft Teams