

HENNEPIN COUNTY

MINNESOTA

Active Transportation Committee

Date: Monday, April 18, 2022

Time: 4 – 6 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams conference call meeting

Committee Members:

- ✓ Tammy McLemore, Dist. 1
- ✓ Gilbert Odonkor, Dist. 1
- ✓ Billy Binder, Dist. 2
- ✓ Jenny Ackerson, Dist. 2
- ✓ Dave Carlson, Dist. 3
- ✓ Laura Mitchell, 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
- ✓ Arman Rajaeian, Metro Transit
- ✓ Michael Samuelson, MnDOT

Guests:

- ✓ John Crawford, KLJ
- ✓ Kelly Agosto, HC Public Works
- ✓ Brigitte Bjorklund, Zan Associates
- ✓ Hokan, former BAC member
- ✓ Kelsey Fogt, Minneapolis Public Works
- ✓ John Potter, HC Public Works
- ✓ Jason Staebell, HC Public Works
- ✓ Elissa Schufman, Minneapolis BAC

Notes

- **Approval of the March 2022 minutes** **4:01 – 4:03**
 - Lee Newman moved to approve the March 2022 minutes; Lou Dzierzak seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

- **Welcome new members and committee introductions** **4:03 – 4:15**
 - Jordan Kocak introduced the newest committee member, Haley Foydel from District 4. Hokan has resigned from the Active Transportation Committee and Commissioner Conley appointed Haley Foydel. Foydel is originally from Michigan and moved to Minneapolis a year and a half ago after having lived in several cities. Foydel cannot drive or use a car and depends on biking and transit. Wants to make transportation accessible and fun for everyone. Members introduced themselves and welcomed Haley.



- **Lyndale Avenue 2022 4- to 3-lane conversion pilot**

4:15 – 4:45

- Josh Potter with Hennepin County Transportation Design introduced the Lyndale Avenue 4-3 conversion pilot with a presentation. Consultants John Crawford and Brigitte Bjorklund also were in attendance.
- <https://www.hennepin.us/lyndale-avenue-safety>
- The project goals are to 1. protect and enhance the environment; 2. preserve and modernize the transportation system; 3. improve safety, reliability and comfort for all transportation users; 4. provide affordable transportation choices and convenient access to destinations; 5. improve our transportation system to enhance quality of life, health, livability.
- John Crawford took over presenting the following bullets:
- We'll collect a lot of before and after data on such things as motor vehicle, ped and bike volumes, crashes.
- Pilot is from W. 31st Street to Franklin Avenue.
- Transit sees 2,000 riders a day at south end to 2,700 on the north end.
- 22,000 ADT at the south and 29,500 on the north end.
- Most ped activity at Lake, 22nd, 26th; bike at 24th, 26th, 22nd.
- Crash density is highest at Lake, Franklin, 24th. 1 fatal crash and 22 severe injuries over past 10 years. 13 crashes per million vehicle miles.
- It's a complex corridor with bikes, peds, transit, trucks, motor vehicles. Ordinarily a 4-3 conversion would not occur at these volumes. It is a pilot; we do anticipate some difficulties with traffic. We'll measure safety and other measures to see if it was a good change, whether there are tweaks and whether it should be made permanent.
- Project goals are to: Improve safety for all users; continued access for residents, businesses and properties; engage with community; identify key challenges and solutions; implement with goal of successful outcomes.
- Finalized design in spring, sharing design now, restriping will be in June. Once people are familiar with conditions we'll count metrics this fall and share around December.
- One general lane in each direction with a center left turn lane.
- Parking will remain on both sides of the road.
- Transit stops will stay in similar locations with very minor shifts.
- Two primary considerations to evaluate in the pilot: 1. How will restriping impact on-street parking, turn lanes, bus operations, transit, pedestrian crossings and safety for all users? 2. How will residents, businesses, property owners and users be benefited and what are the impacts?
- Median being constructed at 27th Street.
- Three lanes at 28th with left turn lanes with buffer for left turn lanes to improve visibility.
- Josh Potter had the following points:
- Summer to Fall 2022, we really want to hear feedback on the pilot. We'll collect various data on safety, speeds, volumes, number of users and document that. We'll look at any significant issues as they come up, say a significant number of people cut through neighborhood side streets, we'll look at how to improve it. We don't want to kick a problem off Lyndale onto neighborhood streets. We're figuring out how to balance it.
- We do want this to be a success. If there are challenges with this, we want to solve them to help here as well as in future 4-3s.

- Lyndale is scheduled for reconstruction here, so the pilot will feed into that.
- 25th and 27th intersections: They're completing work this spring with beacons, medians, crosswalk striping, upgraded ramps, changing the cross streets to right-in, right-out.
- Open house 5:30 to 7 p.m. April 20; register on the Web site.
- Haley Foydel: What are the lane widths going to be; we're going four to three and keeping parking, have you thought about bike lanes instead of really wide general lanes? Josh Potter: We're focusing on getting it from four to three lanes. We're keeping the through lanes as tight as we can; we're not widening them. We will talk about biking as part of the future reconstruction.
- Haley Foydel: You mentioned getting feedback from the community, e.g. on too much traffic being rerouted... Is there any other specific feedback you're looking for, if one or two things make the project unsustainable? Josh Potter: We do plan to reconstruct this. The 4-3 pilot comes first, we do want it to be a success. Right now it is a challenge for all users, especially people walking and biking. There are known knowns and unknowns. We're prepared to react based on what comes up. It will take a few weeks for people to make adjustments and we'll see what comes up.
- Greg Anderson: We do annual counts in September; how are you going to evaluate bike and pedestrian counts? Josh Potter: We do want a little bit of time for it to settle out from the change. Our plan is to count pedestrians, motor vehicles, transit, with a focus on crash data. Crash data lags a little from when the crash occurs to when the state receives the data. We'll be in the field observing, too. John Crawford: The city and county have routine counting programs, but we're going to collect our own data, including hourly turning movements, so we'll have significantly more data than what's typically collected, including for bikes and pedestrians.
- Jenny Ackerson: What metrics you'll be looking at, are there specific goals you're trying to meet, or just observing? Josh Potter: There aren't thresholds that we're looking for; we're looking to improve safety. We'll focus on crash data and how people are moving through the corridor. A 4-3 here is going to be an adjustment. We want to see all those movements adjust. We've seen with 4-3s safety improvements; we're certainly hoping for safety improvements in particular.
- Jenny Ackerson: Aside from the pedestrian refuges, this is a paint-based pilot. Is there any talk of painting lanes or extended transit areas to get around other traffic? Josh Potter: We want to implement the pilot. We're working with Metro Transit. If transit does see delays, we'll look at what we can do to keep it moving. Let's see how the pilot does initially and if we see delays we'll look for options. Transit will, of course, be considered in the reconstruction project.
- Alissa Schufman: I'm excited to see a pilot from the county and hope to see more. I have a question on the traffic flow through the neighborhood. There are a fair number of apartments on Lyndale itself. How will you weigh the feedback from those on Lyndale and those from nearby? Josh Potter: We're not trying to heavily weigh feedback from one group or another. We want to see what the results are and hear the feedback. We want this to be a success. We wouldn't want to weight nearby residents more than those on Lyndale, we would find a balance.
- Jordan Kocak: Will data observation at the new medians include yielding rates and people's ability to get across the street? John Crawford: Absolutely. We have before data from last fall and will be doing the same after the project.

- **Lowry Avenue NE reconstruction project update**

4:45 – 5:09

- Kelly Agosto from Hennepin County Transportation Design introduced the Lowry project from Marshall Street to Johnson Street in Northeast Minneapolis. Last December Kelly presented two options for the corridor. The BAC provided recommendations and resolutions. Agosto wanted to share updates on the layout.
- <https://www.hennepin.us/lowry-avenue>
- Phase I area on the east end. Biggest update is the option the ATC recommended and based on public input. Both liked bike options for the whole corridor. We shifted the multiuse trail to the north side as the BAC recommended.
- It's a two-lane roadway with boulevards and a multiuse trail on the north side and a sidewalk on the south side. 11'+2' general lanes, 7' boulevard, 6' sidewalk, 10' trail.
- We're looking at possibility of raised crossings on the trail at city side streets. We're also showing bumpouts on the side streets to shorten crossing distance.
- Looking to accommodate future aBRT services. Metro Transit plans an F Line on Central, so we're coordinating on what changes to the stops at Lowry and Central. We're looking at space on Jackson and Lowry for an unnamed future line that would be a decade or more out.
- On the western side, three lanes with medians at some locations.
- In places we're showing 8 feet to balance separation from motor vehicles and space to treat stormwater. We're also trying to avoid impacts to properties and existing retaining walls.
- Washington Street NE is the boundary between Phase I and Phase II: To the east is 2024-2025 construction and to the west will be 2025-2026 construction.
- At University Avenue, not showing such a large shift in the Lowry alignment. We were showing quite a shift to the south to accommodate truck turning movements. We've refined the truck turning templates to reduce property impacts while also accommodating truck turning movements. It'll have boulevard, sidewalk and multiuse trail. The model is working pretty well as it's depicted.
- Where there are medians a typical cross section is: 8' multiuse, 5' boulevard, 13' lane, 1'-6'-1' median, 13' lane, 5' boulevard, 5.5' sidewalk. Where it's three lanes without a median: 12' general lanes, 10' turn lane.
- Public virtual workshop will be the evening of May 11. More information will be on the Web site soon. Looking for municipal approval later in May.
- Dave Carlson: East of Johnson, why doesn't the multiuse trail continue, it becomes a sidewalk? Kelly Agosto: We're tying into existing infrastructure, which is sidewalks.
- Dave Carlson: I have the usual concerns about an off-road bike trail, and in this case a shared-use facility in a busy urban area. Especially the narrow 8' sections right up against a variety of businesses, a church, a community center, etc. Wouldn't this be a potential safety concern for those entering and exiting these buildings right up against the trail? Also, why in one section is the road lane width 14' where a narrower lane could allow for a wider bike trail. I usually advocate for an on-road bikeway, especially in busy areas. Kelly Agosto: We're looking at the multiuse trail because Lowry was identified on the city's All Ages and Abilities Network. An on-street option isn't for everyone. It's tougher to have a buffered bikeway and still have space for greening and stormwater treatment. The multi-

use path seems to balance those things pretty well. We can work with business to shift things a little to accommodate door swings and similar concerns.

- Billy Binder: Crystal Porter and I have worked with Kelly on this, I'm very happy to see what you've done with the shared use path between Central and the river, thanks. We need to look for something to connect east of Johnson to Stinson. Kelly Agosto: Our federal funding for what we're looking at in this layout would take us only to Johnson.
- Jenny Ackerson: Were any driveways considered for closure? And how did you choose where to put the medians? Kelly Agosto: We used traffic modeling to find where it would make sense to place medians. I've spoken with city contacts on driveways near intersections, such as near Washington. We haven't spoken with property owners yet and we aren't at this time anticipating driveway closure.
- Jenny Ackerson: Are the 6-foot medians considered safe for pedestrian refuge? Kelly Agosto: 6 feet is generally considered the minimum for a pedestrian refuge; there are few of those. We have a few places where the median is narrower than 6 feet, but we aren't showing those as pedestrian refuges.
- Jordan Kocak: The ATC did pass a resolution in January, when we were deciding between options. Would it be helpful to have another resolution more specific to this preferred layout? Kelly Agosto: I think that would be helpful but I don't want to create extra work. We're looking at the May 26 city council, with May 19 public works committee meeting. We're looking to get the information to them by April 26. Jordan Kocak: I don't think the committee could pass a resolution by then, but they could pass one even if it doesn't make that deadline.

- **ATC project evaluation process**

5:09 – 5:51

- Bob Byers, District 6 member, is looking to improve the process by which the ATC evaluates projects and presented slides on the topic.
- With big projects there are a lot of tradeoffs. Can we develop a systematic way, perhaps a checklist, to make sure we don't forget anything as we weight those tradeoffs? How much of that really resides with county staff responsibility and what's more in the ATC's bailiwick, or how can we expand on that evaluation?
- The challenge is the ATC is frequently asked for opinions on proposed options. We are typically offered several options and are asked to indicate a preference. The evaluation can be difficult when options have numerous tradeoffs, many of the considerations may not be fully quantified or are hard to measure or estimate.
- I'm looking for a systematic way to look at the considerations and how they fall out. A process like that doesn't necessarily give you an answer. For example, Simon Blenski, formerly with the city of Minneapolis, had a matrix for University and 4th. It showed where those tradeoffs are without necessarily coming up with an answer.
- There are criteria that are important to us from a pedestrian and bicycle standpoint. Much of it can be looked at from a layman's perspective. A proposed evaluation process would include a limited number of criteria based on ATC interests. Measures and estimates may be more qualitative and not have to be fully quantifiable, maybe just high/medium/low.
- The process should supplement information supplied by county engineers or other agency staff.

- Areas should be identified where ATC members can provide additional input (observations, collecting information) so we don't necessarily burden staff with collecting data.
- Example criteria: Relative level of interaction between modes; proportion of types of users anticipated (commuter, recreational, school, exercise); general volume levels of usage anticipated; if a bikeway improvement, level of importance to the overall regional system; if a walkway, level of circuitry between desired/existing travel path and proposed route.
- Take on-road bikers, as we narrow roads to make room for off-street facilities, how does that affect them?
- Example measures:
 - High-medium-low
 - More-fewer
 - Shorter-longer
 - More complex-less complex
 - More convenient-less convenient
 - Direct-indirect
 - Increase-decrease
 - High impact-low impact
- Example from University /4th in 2017 on the interaction question for a two-way bikeway versus a one-way. Breaks down interactions between each of the modes into most impact and less impact.
- Should we consider items beyond the typical ATC concerns (to include ADA, climate impacts, etc.)? We have all these plans through the years on the shelf, but how do they relate to what we're trying to do right now. I don't always hear that here.
- Should additional options or refinements be suggested by the ATC if we feel it's appropriate?
- Should the ATC members assist by performing field observations and investigation of ideas from other agencies and cities?
- Should the ATC's role be more proactive? We ask some tough questions, maybe don't get answer, we pass a resolution and move on. On some of these I think we need to go further.
- Where's the community on a lot of these questions? Our engagement tends to be at the end of the process, we're already down to a couple of options while there might be other options already discarded. If the public could talk about these at the beginning and see what their concerns are it might go differently. Observation in the field can do wonders. Can ATC members help with that?
- Greg Anderson: I tend to agree with you, especially on something like University and 4th that's more contentious. I think there we spent quite a bit of time, and did go through this process to a certain extent. I think if we had a checklist or a flowchart we could give it a shot. Could we agree on a list? Or is it more case-by-case? Site visits can work wonders.
- Billy Binder: We did go tour University and 4th and we did come up with something innovative for the most-biked street in Hennepin County. We did the two-way bikeway on University with a bikeway on 4th. I agree we should look at what Hennepin County can do that it's not doing today. Protected bikeways and maintenance of them in the right places. Glenwood Avenue from Golden Valley to downtown Minneapolis is one of those places. Pedestrians also benefit from protected bikeways by separating them. I'd love to

focus on major projects, tour them and come up with innovative strategies. Bob Byers: This all takes time, how much do we want to invest? I think it should work where something is presented to us, then we go out and look at the site, then come back with a resolution or suggestions.

- Lee Newman: In regard to the University and 4th project, of course that goes through a major campus, I thought it made perfect sense to look at what cities with other large campuses, such as Grand Rapids and Columbus are doing. They all have large ridership. In my time on the ATC I've learned the end goal is to produce a resolution that safeguards the safety and usability of that corridor for active transportation users. To produce a well-thought-out, concise resolution, each project has certain considerations we need to look at. If we had six or eight or 10 criteria we need to answer before we create a resolution, that would be a good template for us to develop. Bob Byers: The university is a major stakeholder on that project, and we need to listen to them. We sent them the matrix and they thought it came out a little different. Cities are critical, too. On some project cities have municipal consent they have to give before the county can do a project. I like testing and piloting; so many things we're looking at trying we don't know how people truly will react and the only way to know is to pilot it and see how it goes.
- Haley Foydel: I wanted to touch on your comment that we should be listening to groups like the university and the city. Would you want this group to be asking the city and other groups for their needs and opinions? I feel conflicted about whether that's the purpose of this committee. Bob Byers: We are appointed by commissioners and we're supposed to be giving them input, but really we're also advising county staff. I don't want to put us in a position where we're going around county staff. But we can talk with people in a way that county staff cannot. We have cities come in and present things, maybe that's our chance to see what their priorities are and how that matches with what the county is doing. Jordan Kocak: With the university, we had that connection but maybe that could be strengthened. We do have ex-officio members, and those members should be actively engaged. Sometimes those agency reps, maybe we could strengthen those relationships. Bob Byers: We've had some issues in the past where members don't take the issues we're kicking around back to the agency. They have a duty to take issues back to their folks.
- Lou Dzierzak: This is a really good idea. This committee has decades of background and there's people who've been here for decades. Doing something like this allows for some institutional knowledge to be carried on. Relying on memory and what was there opinion then for making decisions doesn't as much help inform current decisions. It would document decisions on what people were thinking why. The criteria can be different for each project, it doesn't have to be the same. Bob Byers: It's great history, too. If a year later something turns out to not be a big deal or it is a big deal, that's important to know.
- Jenny Ackerson: I generally support having a basic rubric to compare proposed alternatives. Also to have a series of questions or prompts for consistent conversation or to push the envelope — like: How safe are the crossings and is there a more safe design we can recommend for [aspect of design]? Laura Mitchell: I love that idea, questions to prompt and push our thinking and discussion
- Elissa Schufman: If anyone wants to call me, I always welcome them. Jordan has my contact information. The Minneapolis BAC had a similar conversation. We ultimately decided to move away from a formal evaluation. I'm happy to share more information on that. We landed more in a space where if what we needed was a policy document we

could do that. What the city needed from us was our experience biking, and we had to get comfortable with the ambiguity of how that looks from item to item.

- Bob Byers: Maybe we can mull this over for a while and decide what we want to do. That would give Jordan some time to see where staff is. Jordan Kocak: There's no rush, so I think that sounds good.
- Billy Binder: I have a project example: The Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority Bottineau LRT line was going to go down TH 55 then turn right at the railroad. It's changed since; it's not going along the railroad. We would have a nice trail along TH 55, but it's evaporated. How could we as the ATC could we resurrect that project? I would ask every other member to come up with landmark projects in their districts. Michael Samuelson: Jordan and I have been talking about a presentation from MnDOT on this project, it's tentatively on the agenda for next month.

- **Spring bike ride / member meetup**

5:51 – 5:56

- Jordan Kocak: 5 p.m. Monday April 25 was the most popular option for a bike ride. I put out there that it would be Richfield looking at several pieces of various projects from restriping to full reconstruction that support people walking and biking. Let's stick with Richfield. I have us meeting at the Orange Line transit station at 35W and 66th Street. The plan is to then ride bikes. Let me know if that doesn't work. I'll send a reminder email later this week with the details. I will bring the new 2022 bike maps. Some of our very own ATC members are featured on the cover and inside the map.

- **Member announcements**

5:56 – 5:59

- Billy Binder: I've enjoyed working with Hokan over the years and learning from his experience. Thank you, Hokan. Greg Anderson: Thank you Hokan, you're very knowledgeable and often bring up things no one has thought of. Hokan: I'm not totally going away; I'll still throw barbs from the sidelines occasionally.

The meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Next meeting:

May 16, 2022

4 – 6 p.m.

Microsoft Teams Meeting