

Active Transportation Committee

Date: Monday, July 18, 2022

Time: 4 – 5:38 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
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Sneha Arunkumar, HC Public Works
- ✓ Dan Patterson, HC Public Works
- ✓ Arman Rajaeian, Metro Transit
- ✓ Jesse Thorsen, MnDOT

Guests:

- ✓ KC Atkins, HC Public Works
- ✓ Joe Gladke, HC Public Works
- ✓ Derek Sunstrom, HC Public Works
- ✓ Stephanie Devitt, SDK Communications
- ✓ Andy Streasick, Metro Mobility

Notes

- **Approval of the June 2022 minutes** **4:00 – 4:05**
 - Billy Binder moved to approve June 2022 minutes; Lee Newman seconded. The minutes were amended to complete the sentiment that “Billy would like to connect about the problem; 25 percent of accidents occur on two percent of roadways. We should focus on enforcement in this two percent of streets with 25 percent of crashes.” The minutes were approved by voice vote.

- **Met Council Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)** **4:03 – 4:39**
 - Andy Streasick from the Metropolitan Council Transportation Accessibility Advisory committee (TAAC) described the work the committee does and the relationship with the county’s Active Transportation Committee. Streasick is the Metro Mobility staff liaison for the committee and is not on the committee itself.

- Background on the committee, its agendas and minutes are at <https://metrocouncil.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Transportation-Accessibility-Advisory-Committee.aspx>
- The TAAC has been legislatively mandated since 1994. It has 16 members, eight of whom are appointed to represent TAAC precincts A-H. The other eight are appointed as follows: two members by the Minnesota Council on Disability; two by the Minnesota Area Agency on Aging; 2 by the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities; 1 by the Minnesota chapter of AARP.
- Primary focus is on accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities for every service the council provides and every project the council touches.
- Most of the work is focused on transportation. The TAAC looks at Metro Mobility performance, accessibility of fixed route services.
- TAAC does not look only at transit. Anything the Met Council has a hand in the TAAC will review.
- Streasick has been at the council 17 years, working with the TAAC throughout that time and gave the following examples from that period:
 - Metro Mobility vehicles. Anytime you have a low floor cutaway, it has a pretty bumpy ride. A significant segment of people who use Metro Mobility has a disability that makes it more uncomfortable than it is for able-bodied people. For some it can be dangerous. The TAAC helped find a solution in an aftermarket air ride suspension, the Kelderman air ride suspension. It makes a remarkable difference.
 - North Star trains, before launched, we discovered the outlets were on a raised, step-up portion of the train. We encouraged the Met Council to modify the outlet locations so some were available below the steps and they did.
 - Worked with Metro Transit to ensure adequate personal care assistant seating in light rail transit (LRT) vehicles, with flip-up seating.
 - Instrumental in LRT station locations for accessibility. A lot of people were interested in art in the sidewalks or patterns in brick, the TAAC pointed out the mobility concerns with rolling around on a bunch of bumpy textured art or anything with a tripping hazard. At a bare minimum ensuring ADA compliance. The TAAC also helped make sure stations were designed uniformly for vision impairment and developmental disability, so people could learn one station and use that information at other stations.
- It sounds like there is some opportunity to work together between the TAAC and the county's ATC.
- Tammy McLemore: How does the funding work? Is there additional funding or partnerships? Andy Streasick: The TAAC doesn't have funding. The small expenditures we do have, like transportation reimbursement, we take that on within the Metro Mobility budget. For larger expenses, for example we have someone who uses an American Sign Language interpreter; we split that cost with our communications department.
- Jordan Kocak: We recently changed our name to the Active Transportation Committee, thinking more about pedestrians, people using mobility devices and wheelchairs. I think there's potential to learn from the TAAC, especially how to review projects from a holistic perspective. Are these meetings public, so members could sit in and hear what TAAC members are saying? Streasick: They are public, you can find a link on the Council [web](#)

[page](#). They are on the first Wednesday of the month at 12:30 p.m. and go for a couple of hours. Online you can drop in and leave at your leisure; in person you can ask questions. For your reviews, I would try to impart that Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance is the minimum possible standard to build to, to design to. It's important that you do at least the minimum, but don't expect a lot of accolades for that; nor does it mean your accessibility work should be done. A lot of engineers tend to see things as rule-based or standards based. But just because it's compliant doesn't mean it's best practice. It's peculiar in our nomenclature for this civil rights legislation, "ADA compliant." You don't often see someone opening a restaurant and boasting they're compliant with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Yet people often bring ADA compliance to the forefront in a way that it might be the end of the conversation. With Met Council employees I've had to stress patience and thick skin. With TAAC members I've emphasized that people come from different places and levels of understanding, and not to be rude to staff. People represented by TAAC members have largely been ignored, marginalized and are talked over on a regular basis. They're by and large in a precarious position economically — people with disabilities are the most underemployed. So things may get a bit heated, terse or aggressive, but it's typically not personal, it's a result of passion and the important decisions the Met Council is making. At the end of the day it's about making sure people with disabilities can use public transportation and access our civil rights.

- Joe Gladke: I've worked with the TAAC a couple of times, and they've provided some insights that I don't think able-bodied people could ever have. For example, we had a textured sidewalk with a special trowel on the joints that made it more beautiful. The joints were compliant, but it was just terrible for anyone in a wheelchair, with a big jolt at every joint. Getting this perspective is invaluable, particularly when putting in infrastructure we expect to last decades and decades. Andy Streasick: That's a good example 1. Because it's so important. 2. Because for any person function is going to be more important than aesthetic. By all means beautify it and include artwork reflecting the community it's in and create a sense of place, but not if it in and of itself it's excluding people from the core functionality of the place. 3. It's so simple. Once you hear that, you're probably going to remember. There are so many things with accessibility that are that way. Diagonal curb cuts are a good example of that. A diagonal curb shoots you out into the middle of traffic, even if it is ADA compliant. It's better to have two curbs that point directly across the street they're trying to cross.
- Derek Sunstrom: This has been very helpful for me. I work for the county and am labeled the ADA implementation engineer. I'm abled-bodied but try to learn every day. On county roads there are a lot of bus stops in the middle of the grass, no sidewalk, nothing I can see to really get to. People with some disabilities are forced to wait in the street. That doesn't seem like an equitable way to meet their needs. I know there's a long history and people can't fix every problem overnight. What is the role of Met Council, Metro Transit, the county to better address that? Maybe progress is being made and I don't see it all. Andy Streasick: It is a point of focus for the TAAC and Metro Transit particularly for new stops, with concrete where a lift can be used. And accessible routes to the stop. It is tricky when you get in suburban environments. If you don't have a sidewalk, what are you going to do? You can make your stop accessible as you want, but if the only thing around is grass or the street you aren't going to have a great accessible experience. It's easy to say we should reroute the bus to somewhere accessible, but that results in a lack of service to

suburbs, which have a lot of accessible housing. The long term solution is to retrofit the entire region with accessible routes of travel. It's a huge undertaking. The ADA with its undue hardship language would not require going in and totally redoing a transit system. The unfortunate reality is the Metropolitan Council prioritizes those stops with the highest use by people with disabilities. Which by and large are in the urban core because it is sufficiently accessible. You don't have a lot of people in third-tier suburbs using transit because there aren't sidewalks and accessible facilities. We're in a Catch-22.

- Tammy McLemore: Any tips on considering shared-use paths — compliance and broader accessibility? Andy Streasick: Sometimes with competing priorities — even within the lens of accessibility — not everybody gets something that works the best for them and sometimes no one does. For example you have a narrow throughfare and you want a shelter with robust seating, but then you might not have enough space in the sidewalk for a larger mobility device, a bariatric wheelchair. So you might have to lose some seating and potentially facilities important to people with disabilities like a heater. And you might still end up with a path too narrow for someone with that larger device. It's a challenge we all have as public servants, to try to find that sweet spot as often as possible. We can't make it perfect, but we can make it as good as we can for as many people as we can.

- **Hennepin County Complete Streets policy update**

4:39 – 4:55

- KC Atkins, senior engineer in Transportation Planning, gave a presentation introducing the county's complete streets policy updates. She plans to return next month with an update.
- The county adopted its current complete streets policy in 2009, and was the first county in Minnesota to adopt one. Since then a lot has changed.
- New policy will reflect new research in mobility treatments a updated transportation vision; modal hierarchy that may differ for urban, suburban and rural contexts; connection with the county's Climate Action Plan, including reducing and managing stormwater runoff.
- Mobility 2040 is county's overarching plan for the transportation system, part of the comprehensive plan. It includes the safety plan, bike plan, ped plan.
- 2040 Goals directly relate to complete streets.
 - Enhance safety
 - Protect and enhance the environment
- Climate Action Plan
 - Reduce motor vehicle miles traveled
 - Advocate for transit buildout
 - Support transit-oriented development
 - Expand multi-modal facilities
 - Leverage technology / electric vehicle infrastructure
- Disparity reduction
 - Complete streets update will include investment driven by policies and community engage
- Will reach out to community members.

- Stakeholder feedback will include feedback on overall purpose, vision and modal hierarchy. There are technical sessions internal staff will work on. We intend to take input from stakeholder input and incorporate it there.
- We plan to have a series of listening sessions with cities and partners, climate-friendly transportation, businesses, public health, aging and disabilities, equity and environmental justice, water and green infrastructure.
- We expect to seek input in the second and third quarters of 2022, craft the policy in the third quarter and adopt it in the fourth quarter.
- Lou Miranda: The differentiation between urban and suburban streets for the modal hierarchy. Why is that? Atkins: We're not sure what to do with that yet. We don't know if that means in a rural area a motor vehicle is at the top. But we do want to balance across the modes. They could end up all looking the same. Miranda: I wanted to make sure that it's isn't "once you're out of Minneapolis, all bets are off." Atkins: Yeah, it won't be that but there's the question of where you draw the urban/suburban/rural line.
- Tammy McLemore: You had the timeline for listening sessions, will you be soliciting their modal priorities? Atkins: Our first is this Wednesday and then over the week. We do want to hear their priorities. That is one of our intentions.
- Greg Anderson: When you're engaging with the cities, can you be a little more specific? Are you going city by city, or one big meeting? And who from the city are you talking with? Atkins: We reached out to gauge interest from cities. We're going to do that meeting virtually. We have a list within Public Works for key contacts: sometimes it's an engineer, sometimes a planner, sometimes a consultant. Those we've invited will be there to represent their agency. Greg Anderson: My concern is if the voices of citizens are being heard if it's just city council or staff. But we'll hear more from you.

- **Draft resolutions for consideration**

4:55 – 5:32

- 2023 France Avenue draft resolution
 - Bob Byers read the draft resolution. Greg Anderson moved to adopt the resolution. Lee Newman seconded.
 - Lou Miranda: It's great that bike lanes are being put in here. But I would want to have a whereas clause saying intersections are where most crashes occur and adding to the resolution that the ATC recommends having continuous bike lanes through all intersections rather than sharrows. Jordan Kocak edited the draft to reflect these sentiments.
 - Bob Byers: Maybe we want to say something to the effect that it has the greatest risk to bike riders. In traffic language, the intersections are such a problem because of the number of conflicts. We may want to say it another way, maybe "due to interactions with motor vehicle traffic." "Points of conflict" is kind of technical, but it is what's behind this. There was discussion of how far you go, this is a semicontroversial project. There are compromises here, this isn't a continuous segment we're putting in here, but I'm not sure this is the place for that discussion. Lou Miranda: Details and your thoughts? Byers: How strong of advocates do we want to be, and where do we say this is the best we can do. If we're being advocates we might say this is not an acceptable bikeway. Or do we

assume this gets completed sometime down the road. Miranda: I think it dovetails with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report being more strident, that incremental change is not what we need, we need transformational change. But how to put that in here, I'm not sure. I feel like these are fait accompli; they're going to pave it and this is what we get. Jordan Kocak: Unfortunately this one is that way. We can put it back as is or restripe it with some bike lanes. Byers: Some people already worked up would say "Aha, I see where you're going" if we leave some gaps in with the expectation that we complete it later. Miranda: Our goal is to promote safer transportation. I think it's important to point this out. It's in our bylaws; it's not a secret. Byers: It's not perfect, but it's the best we can get right now with the limitations in scope. They're playing with paint in a paving project. So, given those limitations, they're trying to do as much as they can.

- The draft resolution was amended to add "The ATC understands that the proposed layout is limited by the repaving scope of work. The ATC anticipates future bikeway and bike network connections will be made as opportunities allow."
- The resolution was adopted on a voice vote with no opposing votes.
- Hennepin Avenue and First Avenue NE roadway improvement project.
 - Jenny Ackerson read the draft resolution supporting the project. Lee Newman moved to approve the resolution. Billy Binder seconded.
 - Tammy McLemore: This is not my district, but some of the language we added to France Avenue about having flexibility about any future change, are members having thoughts in that same line? Jenny Ackerson: The curb lines are mostly being maintained, but here there are some changes at the bus stops. Jordan Kocak: It's not a full reconstruction but it's not just an overlay. Maybe a couple of years ago the county did a concrete rehab here, so I hesitate to say there'll be opportunities in the near future. It doesn't mean you can't say that, but it could be a while. Jenny Ackerson: When we met to put together this resolution the temperature of the group was This has pretty much everything we want to see for peds and bikes. That's why we added commendations and said we applaud this.
 - Billy Binder: I'm enthusiastic about this project and the ability for it to link the east bank and west bank of the Mississippi River with protected bike lanes in both directions. It's a huge improvement. I'm very happy with this project.
 - The resolution was approved by voice vote with no opposing votes.
- Hi/Lake intersection reconstruction
 - Haley Foydel read the draft resolution supporting the project. Bob Byers moved to adopt the resolution. Laura Mitchell seconded.
 - Jenny Ackerson: I like how short and sweet this resolution is. I suggest in the somewhere in the therefore clause, we address that the project the bikeway stops short of 21st Avenue and a connection to the Midtown Greenway. I'm not sure how to word it, but I'd like to add something about creating a connection in the future. Jordan Kocak: I think I saw they will do that now. I think it was in a plan set I reviewed since they presented to the ATC. Lee Newman: Should we table this until next month until we can confirm? Kocak: I'm not sure I'll be able to find it. I think it's fine to include the language. If they are including it that's great, if they

aren't, it's reiterated. I know there's going to be a connection east to the Target driveway. Target put a new shared use path on private property to get to their entrance. I'm less certain whether one will go west to 21st. I thought the answer was yes but I'm not positive.

- The draft resolution was amended to add "The ATC supports a continuous bikeway connection on Lake Street beyond the project limits to connect to other bike facilities."
- Tammy McLemore: I know it's talking about continuous bikeway connections on Lake Street to other bike facilities. I was thinking beyond just bikeways, but other transportation connections to the Blue Line or B Line. The draft resolution was amended to add "and transit stops" at the end of the previous amended language.
- The resolution was adopted on voice vote with no opposing votes.

- **Member Announcements**

5:32 – 5:38

- Jordan Kocak: I'm on the project team for the county reconstruction project on Franklin Avenue. In August or September you'll get an introduction from the project manager. We have money to reconstruct Franklin from Chicago to Blaisdell. We have a regional solicitation application in for Blaisdell to Lyndale. Whether we get that money or not we're designing the whole way, from Chicago to Lyndale. They have a corridor stakeholder group. I led a prior study with a stakeholder group. They're going to invite someone from the city Pedestrian Advisory Committee and Bicycle Advisory Committee. Someone from this committee has been offered a seat as well. It would be periodic over a year to a year and a half, meeting maybe five or six times. You'd help guide the project and channel what the ATC might say about the design and bring your own viewpoint. This is in districts 3 and 4. Anyone in those districts interested? If not, we can open it to more. Laura Mitchell is interested. Jordan will talk with Laura about the details.
- Arman Rajaeian: Metro Transit is working on a bike parking plan. We're taking an inventory of the bike parking we have and where we might want to make improvements. We have a site at <https://www.metrotransit.org/bike-parking-plan> with details and a survey. I would ask that you take time to complete the survey and push it out to your contacts.
- Lou Miranda: Nine Mile Creek Trail under 169 is finally open.

- **Adjournment**

5:38

- Lee Newman moved to adjourn; Jay Eidsness seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

- **After-meeting discussion of project evaluation methods subcommittee**

5:38 – 5:47

- Several members interested in participating in a subcommittee to come up with a framework for more structured project evaluations stayed on the call to work out logistics for a future meeting of the subcommittee.
- Bob Byers: The goal of this subcommittee would be to create a systematic way to review projects. It would be good to have a history for why we said what we said.
- Byers: We need to decide when and how to have these meetings. It might be nice to have these in person and with a bike ride afterward.

- Lou Miranda: My understanding was it's a one-time thing? Byers: Yes, this right now is not an actual meeting to do some work, just throwing it out on how to best meet.
- Haley Foydel: Should we look for a time that works for everyone and set a recurring meeting? Do we want to set one meeting or recurring? And it might be different based on the format. Should we schedule one at a time?
- Bob Byers: One at a time might make sense.
- 2 p.m. August 4 will be the subcommittee meeting. Jordan Kocak will send a Teams meeting invite for a virtual meeting.
- Bob Byers will send some information ahead of time to get people thinking.

Project Evaluation Methods subcommittee meeting:

August 4 | 2 – 3 p.m.

Teams virtual meeting

Next ATC meeting:

August 15 | 4 – 6 p.m.

TBD