

HENNEPIN COUNTY

MINNESOTA

Active Transportation Committee

Date: Monday, February 27, 2023

Time: 4 – 6 p.m.

Location: Hybrid. Government Center Room LL 0300 and 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
- ✓ Dave Carlson, Dist. 3
Vacant, Dist. 4
- ✓ Haley Foydel, Dist. 4
- ✓ Lou Dzierzak, Dist. 5
- ✓ Courtney Costigan, Dist. 5
- ✓ Luke Van Santen, 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

Guests:

- ✓ Danny McCullough, Three Rivers
- ✓ Naveen Mallipaddi, HR Green
- ✓ Bob Byers
- ✓ JoNette Kuhnau, Kimley-Horn
- ✓ Jasna Hadžić-Stanek, Minneapolis
- ✓ Jason Staebell, HC Public Works

Notes

- **Approval of the January 2023 minutes** **4:01 – 4:07**
 - Greg Anderson moved to approve the January 2023 minutes; Dave Carlson seconded. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

- **Welcome new ATC members** **4:07 – 4:17**
 - Jordan Kocak introduced Luke Van Santen, recently appointed to the Active Transportation Committee for District 6. We're still waiting to hear on an appointment for the District 4 appointments.
 - Luke Van Santen introduced himself. He bikes year-round. He no longer commutes, as he works from home, but still gets out a lot. Luke works for MnDOT on the Southwest Light Rail project. Also works on the Blue Line Extension and the Gold Line in St. Paul.
 - ATC members and others went round robin to introduce themselves to Luke.

- **Lake Street B-Line aBRT project update** **4:17 – 4:39**



- Jason Staebell with Hennepin County Public Works introduced himself, JoNette Kuhnau from consultant Kimley-Horn and Jasna Hadžić-Stanek from Minneapolis.
- The project Web site is <https://www.hennepin.us/lake-street-improvements>
- The project has been in planning since 2018. Runs entire length of Lake Street in Minneapolis, including the Lake/Lagoon one-way pair then along Marshall and Selby avenues in St. Paul.
- Station construction starts east of Hiawatha Avenue and in St. Paul in 2023. Construction starts west of Hiawatha to France in 2024.
- The city and county identified additional opportunities and improvements to enhance the B Line.
 - Many sections of Lake Street existing four lanes will be converted to three general lanes and one transit lane for a transit advantage to make bus rapid transit more reliable and with fewer delays.
 - There will be accessibility improvements at many intersections, including bumpouts and accessible pedestrian signals.
 - Pavement rehabilitation.
 - In Uptown, since last time you saw this project, there have been changes. Lake Street is on the city's All Ages and Abilities network and identified for a protected bikeway on Lake and Lagoon. The city and county identified how a protected bikeway on Lake Street could work. This one-way section is quite wide. Goal was to add protected bikeway while keeping the transit lane and on-street parking.
- JoNette showed a map east of Bde Maka Ska showing a protected bikeway at sidewalk level for the first short block, then to street level from Knox to Humboldt. Curb and median protected at street level. Goes in next to existing curb. Creates pedestrian refuge at James, Irving, Humboldt. Humboldt also is on the city's bikeway network, north to the Midtown Greenway.
- The city wants to complete the bikeway from Humboldt to Hennepin. With schedule and constraints, it's not feasible with this project. They're working on how to get it built.
- County applied for federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) funding last spring and was awarded some for this project. That's a big piece of funding for these improvements. The county also got Highway Safety Improvement Program and regional solicitation funding.
- Working on final design now, finish this year for construction in 2024.
- Changes since the early concepts in early 2022: The Lagoon/Lake/Dupont intersection has a lot of pavement and it can be confusing. This design creates a separate intersection of Dupont into Lagoon to shorten pedestrian crossings, add green space and tighten turning radii.
- Dave Carlson: How wide is the off-road bike trail west of Hennepin along Lake, the two-way trail? JoNette: It is between 8 and 10 feet wide. It varies a little.
- Luke Van Santen: 1. When would construction be completed, at least for the bike lane portion? JoNette: 2024. We have an aggressive schedule. Luke: 2. Could you talk about the stormwater, is that detention, retention pond? JoNette: I would not call it a retention pond, but it is intended to infiltrate stormwater and deal with it in a more sustainable way. It reduces pavement. Luke: Sort of a raingarden? JoNette: Yes, more like that. It may have trees, native plants. We're working through that now.

- Jenny Ackerson: Where the bikeway ends at Humboldt: I know this project's scope doesn't extend the bikeway east. The bikeway is marked as continuing across Humboldt, which would leave people biking on the sidewalk, which is not preferred. JoNette: The city Bicycle Advisory Committee and Pedestrian Advisory Committee also brought this up. We're still working on the signing and markings to identify where the route goes after you cross Humboldt. It's definitely a comment we have heard and are taking a look at.
- Jordan Kocak: The bus lanes are shown as fully painted. Are any other paint schemes being considered, given how long the corridor is? JoNette: The short answer is yes. The long answer is we're looking at a few different kinds of markings. Research shows a benefit for red lanes reducing general purpose traffic in a transit lane. The pavement marking material can be quite expensive. The bidding environment has been quite volatile. We're trying to find a balance to get that benefit. We're looking at some options that use less red but may still get a transit benefit.
- Greg Anderson: Will you be investigating dedicated bike/ped signals like on Washington Avenue? JoNette: We are coordinating the signal design with Minneapolis and the county. I don't know if there will be specific bike signals. Obviously on Lake Street there will be bikes going west, so it will need some indication where there isn't one today (as Lake Street is one-way westbound). Whether that will be a bike-specific signalhead we don't know yet.
- Dave Carlson: Dedicated bus lanes are fairly new. Downtown Minneapolis, I see people bike in bus lanes. Is that legal and is that something you'd consider? Can they use the dedicated bus lanes? JoNette: We had a lot of discussion on this. Bikes are not explicitly permitted to use the bus lanes. We recognize some people will choose to bike in the bus lanes. There will not be signs or markings to specifically prohibit it. Jasna: There is no law prohibiting people from people biking in bus-only lanes.
- Luke Van Santen: How wide is the bus lane? JoNette: It varies. From lane line to curb is about 12 feet. Jason Staebell: We would typically call that 10-foot with 2-foot reaction distance.
- Tammy McLemore: Are there still opportunities for community input? Jason Staebell: Late last year we emailed a bunch of neighborhood groups and groups like this. Several took us up. At this point we're in an inform mode sharing what we're going to do. Tammy: Were you able to coordinate with the Midtown Greenway Coalition? Jasna: No.

- **Project evaluation matrix**

4:39 – 5:19

- Bob Byers gave background on the need for a matrix: Often the Active Transportation Committee is given a project by an agency and asked for community. Some of these can be bigger projects than what really can be covered in one meeting. We came up with a few ideas on what sort of questions we might ask to make sure we cover our bases.
- We formed a subcommittee last fall to refine the idea and ultimately developed a matrix, a checklist to help us sort out the discussion and interests for the project being reviewed.
- The questions and matrix don't lead to a final position of the ATC. There will be some things we can't resolve, but it may raise questions for further discussion.
- Often these large complex projects have competing objectives. Based on what you're optimizing for you will come at it differently.
- One of the benefits of organizing this approach is we're making sure the typical interests are brought up. If we go through a conversation we might not cover every question.

- It provides a historical record of how we arrived at some of the opinions we expressed. Typically the county likes to go back and look at its projects later; Did the project meet its objectives? What did we accomplish? Would we approach similar projects the same way?
- The process of asking questions, we might be able to encourage a little more innovation. We ask, What are other parts of the country doing that might be applicable here?
- Some highlights of the matrix, in particular things that are new since last fall.
 - In the safety and comfort area, we get more detail on the buffer and protection area. This is one area county staff had a comment on. Should we replace the word "barrier" with "curb"? We felt barriers still belong. There are areas in our bikeway system where we provide something more substantial than just a curb.
 - In the Modal area: I think it was significant we added the bike-bike interaction. That was something we hadn't thought about when we started talking. Take University Avenue, around the University of Minnesota, bike-bike interactions are something to consider. We also added "What is the mixture of user types?" to highlight mixture of different comfort levels and goals of users.
 - In the Design configuration area: Is the design consistent with county plans, policies and initiatives? The Climate Action Plan goal of reducing motor vehicle miles traveled usually isn't mentioned in projects or presentations but it's a pretty big deal to the county. Maybe we should go through some of these documents and what the county is trying to do with them. And are they consistent between them. Plans move at different rates and get updated at different times.
 - Dave Carlson: There're also federal guidelines and bike design manuals. Should we put that in the consistent design configuration area, under the second bullet? Bob: We'll add it. MnDOT covers it pretty well but it doesn't hurt to add it.
 - Environmental consideration under Design Configuration: Our original version did not include this. We added environmental considerations. Environment and Energy has guidelines for green infrastructure, landscaping and stormwater elements. Jordan Kocak: Minneapolis has guidelines or requirements and other cities might as well, we might want to add them, too.
 - We added a catch-all area on evaluation of trade-offs including choice of materials, life cycle cost and size and alignment of the facility.
 - We added maintenance: Who is responsible, what special effort might be needed, unique costs and schedule. This can be a factor in choosing one option over another.
- I see updating and revising this as it's used. It at least provides an organized way to evaluate things brought before the committee and provides a record on why we chose one thing or another.
- Courtney Costigan: I love this. As someone who doesn't have a background on city or county or federal projects, I don't know what to ask. This is a great framework for that, especially as a living document. I appreciate the work you did on this.
- Dave Carlson: On maintenance, which is extremely important, could we add something under unique costs saying something like dedicated budget or something to make it stronger? Bob Byers: Sure. That starts getting into a different area for us. It's not a bad conversation for county staff, but I don't know if it belongs here. Jordan Kocak: A dedicated funding source for maintenance is kind of beyond the purview of the committee. I am trying to have the staff who work on our budget and cost participation

program to come to the committee more often at least so the committee is more informed of how those decisions are made, maybe to have some input on how those decisions are made. Dave: Maintenance is often the forgotten step-child of projects. Jordan: For the moment and the foreseeable future, the county puts all maintenance on city and park agencies. Any trail, protected bikeway, we put the responsibility on the city. We still clear the on-street bike lanes we can get with a plow. It makes the maintenance conversation harder. It's almost like you need to change that policy before you can address funding.

- Bob: It would be nice if this list could be provided to county staff before they come to the group. They can be prepared and address the things they know we're going to be interested in. Is that doable? Jordan Kocak: Yes. I don't see that being a problem and can be a reference for them. Bob: I wouldn't want to make it onerous.
- Tammy McLemore: I like how it has the ATC desired actions, for support or resolution.
- Bob: I think there's been a few cases where we weren't quite ready for a resolution and needed more time. Some of these things might not get covered in a presentation but we can follow up later, right? Jordan: Everyone would have this as a reference. So if you're reviewing materials ahead of time you can pull it up. Tammy: Especially if it's in someone's district and they're taking the lead on writing a resolution. It also helps us be more engaged.
- Luke Van Santen: When I looked at this, with my maybe overemphasis on biking, I couldn't help but think of the CROW Manual. I know it's not an approved document in the state, but it has five principles that show up in the document. Do things get ranked? Is there a priority or order? Bob: We know there's a lot of good information out there that we might not work with directly. We did not order or rank them. There's isn't a score, it's more like a guide. Courtney: Things to keep in mind to help guide reviews. Bob: There's no reason we can't include other information. People around the country are doing lots of good work. Lou Miranda: This is the CROW document Luke is talking about: <https://www.crow.nl/publicaties/design-manual-for-bicycle-traffic>
- Many county roads in District 7 currently have nice wide shoulders, and are heavily used by cyclists. As growth occurs and roads are re-built, the concern is that roads previously great for bikes become less safe due to mixing fast cyclists with all other pedestrian speed users/dogs/young kids.
- Tammy McLemore: What will be our next steps. We're adopting this, what would be the next steps to put it in action? Jordan: I have a draft resolution to adopt it as a guiding document for the committee. It doesn't need to say every exact word is adopted, but that it will be updated. Jordan shared on screen the draft resolution.
- Courtney Costigan moved to approve the resolution. Lou Miranda seconded.
- Luke Van Santen: Do we want to embed language in the second whereas to say "may contain additional information as appropriate." For example, so if we saw a spot where we knew from experience with the CROW manual that an innovative solution would work perfectly, should we bring that up if we're limited in what we can ask for? Bob Byers: We're encouraging them include innovative ideas. Jordan maybe something like it's not an exclusive guide. Courtney: We could modify it to say it's just one guide, in addition to other related documents or resources. Jordan modified the text in question.
- Jordan added the phrase "as a living document" to the resolution to reflect the intent as a modifiable document.

- Tammy: We say “project managers,” but would we be working with others? Jordan: Maybe staff is more open-ended. Jordan changed the text to “agency representatives.”
- The resolution to approve the document passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- Tammy McLemore: Will the notetaker be completing this or how will we use it? Jordan: I was thinking it wouldn’t necessarily get filled out, but be more of a guide.
- Jenny Ackerson: Is this something you can save in each month’s agenda folder? Jordan: Yes, certainly.

- **Member Announcements**

5:19 – 5:20

- No announcements.

- **Adjournment**

5:20

- Lou Dzierzak moved to adjourn the meeting. Dave Carlson seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Next meeting:

March 20 | 4 – 6 p.m.

Remote via Microsoft Teams