

# HENNEPIN COUNTY

## MINNESOTA

## Active Transportation Committee

Date: Monday, April 17, 2023

Time: 4 – 6 p.m.

Location: In person room LL 0300 Government Center and remote via Microsoft Teams

### 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
- ✓ Larissa Lavrov, 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

### Guests:

- ✓ Peter Bennett, Minneapolis
- ✓ Benjamin Klismith, MnDOT Metro
- ✓ Christina Morrison, Metro Transit
- ✓ Kelsey Fogt, Minneapolis
- ✓ Nathan Ellingson, HC Public Works
- ✓ Rachel Blaseg, Damon Farber
- ✓ Jason Staebell, HC Public Works
- ✓ Lisa Austin, MnDOT
- ✓ Aaron Warford, Bolton and Menk
- ✓ Kristopher Johnson
- ✓ Kristine Stehly, HC Public Works
- ✓ Tom Musick, HC Public Works
- ✓ Greg Lindsey, Humphrey School
- ✓ Tristan Trejo, Humphrey School
- ✓ Dan Murphy, Humphrey School
- ✓ Isak Johnson, Humphrey School
- ✓ Ryan Ackerman, Humphrey School

## Notes

- **Approval of the March 2023 minutes** **4:02 – 4:03**
  - Billy Binder moved to approve the March 2023 minutes. Laura Mitchell seconded. The minutes were approved by voice vote.
  
- **Hennepin County Pedestrian Crash Study** **4:05 – 4:49**
  - Dan Murphy, master of public policy student at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs, introduced himself and master of urban and regional planning



- students Ryan Ackerman, Isak Johnson and Tristan Trejo. They conducted a pedestrian crash study of Hennepin County roadways.
- Hennepin County had highest pedestrian deaths in 2021 since 2016.
  - Dan Murphy showed aerial and street views of Hemlock and Elm Creek Boulevard, plus Lyndale and W. Broadway. Hemlock and Elm Creek Boulevard had one pedestrian crash while Lyndale and W. Broadway had 30. His message was you can't tell what's happening at an intersection just by looking at it.
  - Study examined intersections and midblock crossing with at least one county road.
  - 1,148 crashes at intersections, 347 crashes at midblock. 3591 intersections, 4,171 midblocks.
  - They looked at which crossing have most crashes, most fatalities and serious, how do characteristics associate, what increase/decrease severity, which intersections are at higher risk.
  - Factors influencing crash risk include:
    - Street characteristics
      - Lanes, speed limit, median, signal, average daily traffic
    - Built environment
      - Land use
      - Transit
      - Bike
      - Percent of crashes in daylight
    - Demographics
      - Population
      - Percent female
      - People younger than 18
      - People older than 65
      - Percent not white
      - Percent income greater than 185 percent
      - Median income of block group
  - Tristan Trejo showed a heat map of pedestrian crashes, with hotspots on Lake Street, Franklin, downtown and north Minneapolis. He showed a heat map of midblock crossings, with similar patterns.
  - Study examined crashes 2012-2021
  - Crashes spiked in minor injuries in 2019, but generally are declining.
  - Isak Johnson described safety performance functions, which found significant influence among multiple factors, including daylight, number of lanes, traffic signal presence and signals.
  - Isak Johnson went commissioner district by commissioner district highlighting predicted high-risk locations on Hennepin County roads.
  - District 1 had higher risk locations on Brooklyn Boulevard.
  - District 2 had clustering in predicted high-risk locations, including on W. Broadway. Model predicts 15 crashes at W. Broadway and Lyndale in the next 10 years. Generally predictions have been lower than observed crashes.
  - District 3 had a few clusters on Lake Street and Lyndale.
  - District 4 had clustering Franklin Avenue and University Avenue.
  - District 5 had higher risk locations spread out, not very clustered.

- District 6 had light clustering in midblock risk on Blake Road.
- District 7 had spread out risk without clustering.
- Some limitations of the study:
  - They used 10-year crash data while demographic data was a single year, so there might be some change that was not picked up.
  - Police reports are somewhat subjective in what is a serious injury crash.
- Dan Murphy described their conclusions
  - Crashes resulting in fatal and serious injuries were far more common in urban areas.
  - Variables that influenced crashes were signals, transit stop, density, low income, motor vehicle traffic.
  - By estimating where future crashes might occur, the county can proactively save lives.
- Billy Binder: What effect does law enforcement have on the number of severe injury and deaths? Dan Murphy: We don't exactly know. We didn't look at that. To add that, you'd have to compare before and after results. Billy Binder: Last fall I was driving on Fremont approaching W. Broadway, heading southbound. As I approached southbound a pickup went through a red light. I had to slam on the brakes to avoid hitting the eastbound truck. I can predict someone's going to get hit. That's a real hazard. We have to do something to stop that. Dan: The problem with speed limits is that doesn't necessarily mean that's how fast people are driving.
- Luke Van Santen: Did you consider speed limits as a possible factor? You've since answered that. Dan Murphy: We didn't see a strong relationship between posted speeds and crashes.
- Greg Anderson: There is equipment to log speeds, that might be able to help your predictive model. A report on citations should be available, too. Isak Johnson: Looking at citations would be interesting. Thanks for that. One of our limitations was accessibility of data. Jordan Kocak: Hennepin County has access to a software tool Street Light, which shows average speed, speed distributions and pedestrian volumes. They might not reflect true reality, but we can put factors on them and get closer to reality. That's one area we could go in the future.
- Jenny Ackerson: Unfortunately, all these things contribute to an increased risk of pedestrian crashes. Is there a way to reframe this to ways that can reduce predicted crashes? So when we review projects we could say including such a feature would reduce crashes? Dan Murphy: There are variables I would caution against making assumptions on. We tried to find correlations, but it doesn't necessarily say why it influenced things. For example, traffic signals were correlated with more crashes, but would taking them away reduce crashes? Or is the signal there because there already were crashes, or is it correlated with higher traffic volumes? We didn't see a strong connection between number of lanes and crashes, but we did see a connection between number of lanes and fatalities.
- Tammy McLemore: I'm in District 1. Does aging infrastructure, where people traveling on certain roads have outgrown the roads we have, affect pedestrian safety? For example, 252 and 81, we have a lot of fatalities. One of our limitations was construction and changes. Dan Murphy: We didn't have particularly strong available data on when a road

was last paved or reconstructed. Isak Johnson: This was the first time this study was done in Hennepin County. A future study could add data on infrastructure age.

- **Hi/Lake interchange project**

**4:49 – 5:03**

- Jason Staebell from Hennepin County introduced himself and others working on the Hi/Lake interchange in Minneapolis: Christina Morrison with Metro Transit, Rachel Blaseg with Damon Farber, Kelsey Fogt with Minneapolis, Ben Klismith with MnDOT Metro District and Lisa Austin with MnDOT.
- The project Web site is <https://www.hennepin.us/hi-lake>
- The project will change the TH 55 (Hiawatha Avenue) / Lake Street interchange from single point to tight diamond in 2024.
- There will be intersections on either side of the bridge. On the north side there will be a bike trail from 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to Snelling Avenue, which are the limits of our project. It connects to the trails parallel 55 on east and west sides.
- The projects adds pedestrian scale lighting to replace the out of date lighting.
- Nearing 60 percent plans. MnDOT will construct the project.
- B Line bus rapid transit (BRT) is going it at the same time. Station on the south side of Lake Street is there but needs a few upgrades for BRT. Will construct station on the opposite side
- Project will add green space and trees in 2025 after construction is done.
- Christian Morrison described the major restoration of Blue Line Lake Street/Midtown station. We're looking at concepts and scope now, including the idea of a ramp to the station rather than elevators.
- City has funding to install art, possibly a mural on the bridge abutments in 2025.
- Minneapolis Park Board is looking to help activate the space under the bridge, with more pedestrian realm. They'll look at expanding the farmers market from the adjacent property. It's early on but they're discussing at the staff level.
- Tammy McLemore: I know this project is coming along and will benefit community members who will use it, has there been discussion on how to keep people safe who are using it? Jason Staebell: There has been a lot of discussion about it. There's only so much we can do as a transportation provider. If the area becomes more positive and open, that may help. But when it comes to enforcement and cleaning those things up, that's beyond our capability. Lisa Austin: People should be welcome to use the space. With activities and more people using the space legally, it should help discourage things like theft and drug dealing. We're looking into resources for street outreach workers, too.

- **Franklin Avenue reconstruction**

**5:03 – 5:53**

- Nathan Ellingson from Hennepin Count introduced Aaron Warford from Bolton and Menk and Peter Bennet from Minneapolis.
- The project Web site is <https://www.hennepin.us/residents/transportation/franklincorridor>
- We were here last in August in 2022 talking about project goals and existing conditions. We've done engagement since then, with open houses in October and March, popup events, Our Streets, neighborhood meetings and other outreach.
- We now have concepts based on that input to share and would like to get your feedback. We'll then develop a preferred option and move forward with design.

- Aaron Warford: The corridor goes from Lyndale to just short of Chicago Avenue. It's about 1.25 miles with a lot going on.
- Right now it's a four-lane undivided with 15,000 to 20,000 vehicles a day. There's not much there today beyond the four lane road, with very little for pedestrians and not in Americans with Disabilities Act compliance. No setback, no boulevard, no bike facilities. Our job is to fix all that with a full reconstruction.
- We hope to build in a lot of safety improvements, streetscaping and stormwater improvements.
- Project goals and themes, in no particular order
  - Safe pd crossings
  - Space for all modes
  - Better community connections
  - Support businesses and institutions
  - Enhance visual character
  - Minimize traffic delays
- Planning phase started in 2019 with the study, now in design phase 2022-2025 for 2025-2026 construction.
- Popup event this Saturday with Earth Day cleanup.
- Everything is important and much is needed, but:
  - Strong support for pedestrian, transit and bike needs
  - Moderate support for green space and driving needs
  - Mixed feelings on parking and delivery needs
- Input helps inform selection criteria, targeting specific locations, building connections to follow up.
- This is a big project with a lot of needs. Varying conditions and multiple needs means too many options. We need a way to evaluation all those options.
- We're using a tiered screening process:
  - Does it fit in project scope and constraints
  - Does it meet high level needs for key travel modes
  - Does it address concerns based on priorities (we are here, moving into the next)
  - Does the design generally fit with corridor context and needs
  - Selected preferred alternative.
- Selection criteria
  - Ped safety and walkability
    - Comfort
    - Accessibility
  - Bike safety and usability
    - Level of traffic stress
    - Conflict points
  - Vehicle safety
    - Traffic calming to reduce speeds
  - Transit access
    - Safe boarding and alighting
    - Space for facilities
    - Reliability improvements
  - Vehicle mobility

- Travel times
  - Displaced trips
  - Commercial access
- Social, economic and environmental considerations
  - Whether meets 2040 plans of county and city
  - Focus on active transportation
  - Reducing vehicle miles traveled
- Segment 1 Lyndale to 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue
  - 80-foot right of way, but only 67 feet or so is usable due to retaining walls, steep slopes. We're trying to avoid having to buy properties.
- Segment 2 1<sup>st</sup> to Clinton
- Segment 3: Clinton to Portland
- Segment 4: Portland to Chicago
  - 66 feet of right of way, with a few narrower exceptions due to obstructions such as stairs.
- Segments 1 and 4, Concept 1
  - Two-lane divided with one general lane in each direction and raised median. Bikeway behind curb and boulevard. Concrete sidewalk behind that.
    - Pros
      - Separates bikes, peds
      - Space for landscaping
      - Median improves safety
    - Cons
      - Some traffic impacts
      - Restricts some left turns if medians go through intersections
  - Concept 2
    - Three lane with boulevards, separated bikeways and concrete sidewalk. Would use some of the boulevard space for the two-way center turn lanes Would be space for pedestrian median and key locations. Some potential left turn conflicts.
  - Concept 3
    - Two lane maximizing space outside the curb. Wider pedestrian and bike space. Does have some traffic and safety concerns, including rear-end crashes. If it does advance, we'll address those safety issues.
  - Segment 2, most constrained, from 1<sup>st</sup> to Clinton
    - 70 feet of right of way, working with about 59 feet.
  - Concept 1A, Segment 2
    - Two lane with center median. Pave boulevard on one side, landscaped on the other, Shared use paths
  - Concept 2A
    - Three lane with paved boulevard on one side, landscaped on the other and shared use paths.
  - Concept 3A
    - Three lane with on-street bike lanes and concrete sidewalks.
  - Concept 4A

- Two lane with landscaped boulevards and shared us paths. Part of it could fit separated sidewalk and bikeway for part of it.
- Segment 3, Clinton to Portland
  - Constraint is the bridge over 35W, which was recently rebuilt.
  - 10-foot existing sidewalk on the bridge. Could be shared, or put in bike lanes or reconfigure the deck.
  - Almost all the congestion on Franklin is here, people getting on and off 35W.
- We plan to select a preferred concept in late April or early May. We hope to have a preliminary layout in September and finalizing that by the end of the year.
- We've heard from residents there isn't one option that consistently rises to the top. We likely will have to work on some transitions from segment to segment as we accommodate all these modes.
- Luke Van Santen: Looking at the various options, it really seems striking how much of a change could be made on this corridor by dropping down to two lanes. In segments 1 and 4, how big an impact would that have on traffic? Segment 3 it looks like five lanes, two through and turn lanes. How "bad" would congestion be if you went to two lanes? Aaron Warford: The analysis so far shows if we provide turn lanes at the major intersections — and we think we can do that with a two-lane road by using the boulevard — the segments between those intersections aren't all that affected. Travel times don't blow up. The biggest impact is safety and how long people would be waiting to turn off a side street. Nathan Ellingson: The intersections that need it are going to have turn lanes, so the boulevards do go away at those intersections. Segment 3 around 35W could see multiple turn lanes. The traffic component is important on the bridge, it affects things downstream and upstream, affects safety of people walking and biking. We're still looking at how much delay we're comfortable with and what trip diversion might look like. Aaron Warford: From a traffic congestion standpoint, we're leaning toward a dual left for eastbound to northbound at Franklin. Metro Transit sees congestion there on their Route 5 going westbound.
- Kristofer Johnson: I travel this route by car for afterschool pickup by car. I don't see a lot of cyclists on the road and don't recommend people ride it. In a transitional period, going from no bike availability, to now pedestrians, cyclists. Is there any kind of study about concern the transitional period of no infrastructure to this influx. Plus the transition in driver behavior. Aaron Warford: We've heard a lot of feedback on that. Our lowest scoring option, 3A, is the one that puts bikes on the roadway. You have bikes, buses, cars turning. People generally do not like this. Most of the feedback is that if you do something for biking, it should be behind the curb. Kristofer Johnson: How does that work with being "out of sight, out of mind" then suddenly, boom, it's all brought together at 35W. Peter: We're hoping our infrastructure causes a change that increases safety. We wouldn't not do this project because for six months drivers would be surprised. The designs we're working with, we haven't gotten to any intersection design yet. The concepts with bikes behind trees, at the intersections you'll come out from behind the trees and be visible.

- Billy Binder: Franklin is a very important and unique street. It looks like you're getting rid of the power poles, that'll be very helpful if you can do that. Aaron Warford: We're going to give it a shot.

- **Mill Street trail resolution**

**5:53 – 6:04**

- District 6 member Luke Van Santen walked through a draft resolution of support for Hennepin County's Mill Street trail project presented at the March Active Transportation Committee meeting. We emphasized that it is an important north-south route today for people riding on the shoulder. It would not be ideal to have a 10-foot trail drop down to a 6-foot sidewalk on the north end.
- Greg Anderson: We were hoping to maintain shoulders as much as possible, but with a pinchpoint, is my recollection. I remember a question of whether someone could have a ramp to go from shoulder to trail, especially around the bridge. I would want to maximize support for shoulder on the road and not have the trail displace people on the shoulder.
- Jordan Kocak: We left open in the draft whether we supported shoulders. Jordan edited the draft resolution to support alternative 1.
- Greg Anderson: Do we need to include an RRFB? Luke Van Santen: If it does terminate at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street I think we do need one. Jordan edited the draft resolution to recommend an rectangular rapid flashing beacon at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.
- Tammy McLemore moved to approve the resolution and Luke Van Santen seconded.
- The resolution was approved on a unanimous voice vote

- **Member Announcements**

**6:04 – 6:06**

- Greg Anderson: BikeMN sent an email this morning that gave an update on the legislative stuff. If everybody hasn't seen that, go to their Web site ([bikemn.org](http://bikemn.org)).
- Luke Van Santen: Three Rivers Park District master plan draft for the Canadian Pacific rail trail is open for comment right now [the comment period closed April 26]. It's a very important north-south connector through the center of the county. The Web page is <https://www.threeriversparks.org/page/canadian-pacific-rail-regional-trail-master-plan>

- **Adjournment**

**6:07**

- Greg Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting, Luke Van Santen seconded.

Next meeting:

May 15 | 4 – 6 p.m.

Remote via Microsoft Teams