

HENNEPIN COUNTY

MINNESOTA

Active Transportation Committee

Date: Monday, June 26, 2023

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
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
- ✓ Suzy Scotty, MnDOT

Guests:

- ✓ Kristine Stehly, HC Public Works
- ✓ Julian Fernandez-Petersen, HC Public Works
- ✓ Bob Byers, former HC PW and ATC member
- ✓ Julian Fernandez-Petersen, HC Public Works
- ✓ Luke Sandstrom, HC Public Works
- ✓ Matthew Dyrdaahl, Alta Planning + Design
- ✓ Joe Gladke, HC Public Works
- ✓ JoNette Kuhnau, Kimley-Horn
- ✓ Nicolas Grothey, HC Public Works

Notes

- **Approval of the May 2023 minutes** **4:00 – 4:03**
 - Luke Van Santen moved to approve the May 2023 minutes. Billy Binder seconded. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

- **Mill Street trail project** **4:03 – 4:20**
 - Luke Sandstrom from Transportation Design introduced the Mill Street trail project. This is his third time bringing the project to the Active Transportation Committee and the committee reviewed the project several times prior to design.
 - The project Web sites are hennepin.us/millstreet and millstreetpathway.com.
 - The project is in Phase 1 engagement. We've done door hangers, yard signs, meetings, mailers, pop-up events, open house and millstreetpathway.com. We have engaged an estimated 800 residents.



- Two options were presented to the community.
 - Option 1 eliminated the shoulders, with a 6-foot boulevard and 10-foot trail. This has the least property impacts, but no shoulders for biking or parking.
 - Option 2 retained shoulders at 4 feet, 6-foot boulevard and 10-foot trail.
- 58 percent favored option 2 (shoulders) and 27 percent preferred option 1. 9 percent said either, 2 percent neither and 4 percent needed more information.
- Pedestrian and bicycling safety were the two biggest identified needs, at 25 percent and 26 percent.
- Out of about 800 residents, about 70 percent were in ZIP code 55331 and 23 percent in nearby 55317, so we knew we were talking with community members near the project.
- We are moving forward with Option 2, which is favored by residents and also was supported by the ATC with a resolution of support.
- The shoulders do not drop at the retaining walls. Previous concepts assumed the retaining wall would stay in place, but we talked with the adjacent property owner and they are open to replacing the wall and moving it to the east. Previous concepts assumed we would drop the shoulders due to the wall.
- Other considerations
 - Mail delivery, waste, recycling
 - Speed enforcement and management
 - Side slopes and grades
 - Stormwater management
 - Future projects for connections or extensions
- Schedule
 - July final geometric layout, second round of public engagement
 - August final geometric layout approval
 - September-December 2024 final design
 - Summer 2025 construction
- Dave Carlson: Thank you for engaging with the property owner with the retaining wall. I'm very glad that by a more than 2-1 margin people went for bikeable shoulders. It's a true representation of complete streets, which is still county policy.
- Courtney Costigan: I'll echo Dave's comment. I appreciate you including us as you move through the process. It's interesting to see what concerns people want addressed and what plan they opted for. I'm excited about the dedicated shoulder, then the path is great for people walking or rolling. Have we seen in other surveys, have other groups said they want just the trail. Historically, are we seeing people shift to make sure there's dedicated space for biking or does it vary project by project? Luke Sandstrom: It's project by project. Often people who didn't want the shoulder don't bike themselves and thought it was redundant to have a shoulder and a trail. Some said they don't bike but they see people commuting here. I think generally we are seeing people change their minds and don't see it as redundant and that there are other uses of shoulders.
- Lou Miranda: Thank you for your work and the county's work on getting the continuous shoulders. Just having it, no matter what, having it consistent is good for everybody. I'm not a huge fan of in urban areas having a shoulder in the sense that we don't separate bikes from cars, so it's wider for cars and feels wider and faster. I wish there were some way to keep cars off it, then I'd be a huge fan of it.

- Tammy McLemore: Thank you for the engagement. I know that's often the hardest part. I'm impressed with that and all the residents who responded.

- **Cedar Avenue reconstruction**

4:20 – 4:44

- Luke Sandstrom from Transportation Design introduced the Cedar Avenue reconstruction project, scheduled for construction in 2026. This is the first time the Active Transportation Committee has seen this, not yet into design. This is an overview of what's to come. We'll come back as we develop concepts. The project goes from 24th Street to just north of Lake Street. The B Line improvements on Lake Street will improve just north of Cedar.
- The project Web site is <https://www.hennepin.us/cedar-avenue>.
- Today this is two lanes, one in each direction. It used to be four lanes.
- Last reconstructed almost 60 years ago. It's near the end of its useful life. Overlays and crackseals no longer are cost effective.
- We have federal funding for the project, through the regional solicitation.
- Gathering existing conditions, volume counts.
- Bike and pedestrian traffic greatest at Little Earth, 26th and Lake Street. 26th Street has a bollard-separated bikeway.
- We want to highlight community partners Banyan Community, Little Earth Residents Association and the Midtown Greenway Coalition. We're paying them to help us with engagement, hosting. We have an open house tonight hosted by Little Earth.
- High level goals, subject to change as we hear from residents.
 - Multimodal access, along and across Cedar
 - Increase greening. Tree canopy a huge amenity for residents. We might narrow the road a bit and add boulevard for greening and stormwater management.
 - Connections to destinations, along and across Cedar.
 - Replacing aging infrastructure
 - Transit friendly. It's a possible future bus rapid transit route. We want to be sure the design does not preclude BRT.
- Engagement goals. We contracted in January 2023 with the community groups, ahead of design, which got under contract this week. It helps with our credibility, that we don't have a design yet, we really do want to hear what people want.
 - Inclusive engagement
 - Multicultural process
 - Prioritize community relationships
- Engagement activities
 - Neighborhood listening session with Banyan Community March 11
 - Little Earth listening sessions May 22, June 1
 - Corridor listening session March 21
 - Business community listening session March 22
 - Open Streets pop-up listening session June 10
 - Little Earth listening session June 26
- A lot of people said they drive on Cedar but they'd like to also walk and bike on it.
- Safety is a huge concern. It's on the city's high injury network. There was pedestrian fatality a couple of weeks ago. We heard a lot about safety.
- We heard about better bus stops, the Little Earth pedestrian bridge, community impacts, climate change and emissions reductions.

- Schedule
 - Conceptual design 2023-2024
 - A couple of options in a couple of months, to be refined through 2023
 - Detailed design 2024-2025
 - Construction 2026
- Jenny Ackerson: It's great to hear about how the engagement process is starting before any sections are drawn or alternatives are created. Is that something that can be applied broadly across county projects, was it a regional solicitation requirement? Why is it being done differently? Luke Sandstrom: The city had just done a traffic study and we learned a lot from them. We came in knowing there's concern and a lack of trust in government, a lot of inequity in the area, a lot of different languages spoken. Having the community partners contracted is new for us, too. When we looked at the schedule, we thought this would give us a better product and hopefully it will go well and we'll be able to use it as a model.
- Dave Carlson: The bike counts, were those mostly crossing Cedar at 26th and 28th and the Little Earth Bridge? Were there counts of people biking along Cedar? Was there interest in biking along Cedar? Luke Sandstrom: I would say a majority was crossing. I've heard people do not bike on Cedar due to safety concerns. If there are any, they'd be few and far between. There was some interest in having bike facilities along Cedar. As we go through design, we get into discussion of tradeoffs. We'll do a parking inventory. When we look at a road section, we can't have everything without tradeoffs. If we do parking, bike lanes, then you would lose trees, for example. It affects stormwater, snow plowing. Cedar Avenue is not identified by the city or county as a bikeway. Maybe we can make the crossings safer, include some wayfinding so people know they can go two blocks over for a bikeway with a direct connection to the Greenway. Being ahead of design, we don't have plans yet. It's come up, we are going to look at it.
- Jenny Ackerson: The Little Earth bridge, is that Hennepin County's? Luke Sandstrom: The city owns and maintains the bridge. We have a good relationship with the city, they've been involved with the project. We have rolled the bridge into our engagement piece. The city knows there's a huge desire to do something with the bridge — whether it's removing it for an improved at-grade crossing, modifying it or replacing it. Because it's not county infrastructure, we can't make those decisions, but whatever happens with it, it affects our project so it needs to be coordinated. So it's in flux and part of our engagement.
- Luke Van Santen: If there's a decision that Cedar would not support any kind of bike facility — which seems kind of appropriate for how it looks now and the desire for trees — the one-way pair on 17th and 18th, could there be enhanced connection between Cedar and those two? Luke Sandstrom: On 26th and 28th, the city has identified those as future protected bikeway projects, not yet programmed. We do want to improve the safety at those intersections and make sure it's ready for improvements in the future for bikeways. There's also a two-way bikeway at 24th we'll coordinate with.
- Lou Miranda: Very impressive answer to Jenny's first question. I hope this is a new way for the county to reach out to the community. I think this is the first time I've heard motor vehicle miles traveled reduction mentioned at the beginning of a project. That's impressive.

- **2023 Minnesota legislative update**

4:44 – 5:00

- Joe Gladke from Transportation Planning introduced himself. Joe is the legislative liaison for Transportation Planning. He said he has a lot of great things to share that happened this session.
- Go back to 2008, there was the legislation for the state to monitor and reduce that. Every year the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency sends a report. For many years the transportation sector has not made much progress. For a long time the goals would say one thing but the funding would say another.
- Transportation Advancement Account. Legislators know we need alternative funding. Right now it's gas tax, but that needs to change
 - The state is going to tax deliveries from businesses like Amazon. That money goes into a new Transportation Advancement Account. Tax will start a year from now. It will phase in over 10 years.
 - Right now about 43 percent of auto parts taxes goes to transportation, over 10 years it will go to 100 percent.
 - Metro ¾ cent sales tax. 5 percent of that will go to the Metropolitan Council. 17 percent will go to metropolitan counties for specific types of projects. They will have a process similar to the regional solicitation where cities, counties, others will get transportation funding. Much is set to go to multimodal and safety. There will be a huge emphasis on transit, bike, pedestrian.
- On the policy side funding for education and outreach.
- \$19.5 million transfer from the general account to the active transportation account. MnDOT required to create an 18-member committee to give feedback and recommendations to MnDOT.
- Jim Oberstar state bike route from St. Paul to Duluth and to Canada.
- Additional matching funding for the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to get more federal funding.
- Details on timing, exact process to come. This is the biggest thing in transportation funding since 2008.
- Gas tax will be indexed to inflation. It's been raised like once in 35 years.
- Dave Carlson: There were some great bike policy initiatives passed this year that BikeMN has pushed for years. The Bill Dooley Bicycle Safety Act included funding for safe routes to school, \$15 million in 2024 and \$10 million in 2025. Policy issues like the Idaho Stop, so people biking can treat a stop sign as a yield sign. That has some support from law enforcement, that's one less thing they have to tag people for. It never was legally allowed but people did it, but now people can bike through the right turn lane. It was a really good year for biking initiatives that we worked for for a long time.
- Billy Binder: I've seen an epidemic of traffic law violations throughout the state. Has that had an impact on the Legislature to do something about it? Is it more than a local thing?
Joe Gladke: I can't say I saw anything specific. That certainly is a concern as far as safety, so people feel safe. There's been a higher amount of people speeding, maybe it's come down a little in the State Patrol numbers, but there's definitely been very erratic behavior since the epidemic. I wouldn't be surprised if there's more discussion of that.
- Tammy McLemore: On the home delivery fee, is that for everybody? Joe Gladke: No, not everybody. There was some controversy. It's somewhat narrowly focused. There are a lot

of specifics; it's not across the board. There are definitely carve-outs for concerns identified in the process. It's a start and we'll likely see changes in the future. Right now it's only deliveries over \$100 and not on medications, things like that. Tammy: Hopefully it won't affect delivery drivers. Joe: The consumer is going to end up paying for it. Rather than going to the store, the store is coming to them. The vehicles are still using the system. Tammy: What other states are doing this? Colorado already has done it, I think that's where the idea came from. There were some challenges there. It won't be implemented here right away, they're going to take some time to work it out and take a measure approach to avoid as many problems as possible.

- Julian Fernandez-Petersen: If I remember right, counties are also now authorized to implement a wheelage tax of up to \$20 a year on vehicles kept in the county when not in use.

- **Lyndale Avenue reconstruction**

5:00 – 5:15

- JoNette Kuhnau from Kimley-Horn introduced herself. She's a consultant working on the Lyndale Avenue construction for the county. We're at the very beginning of the project and are here to introduce the project to the group. Matthew Dyrdaahl from Alta Planning + Design is working on the project, too.
- We want to give a project overview, corridor context, activities and schedule and take any questions.
- It's a rebuild of Lyndale from Franklin Avenue to West 31st Street with federal funding. Construction is planned for 2026-2027. There are several city and county projects in this part of Minneapolis, county is monitoring those and may adjust timing to coordinate with those.
- Scope
 - Replace pavement, curb and gutter, drainage, signals
 - Safety improvements including curb extensions, raised medians, crossing beacons
 - Accessibility ramps and sidewalks
 - Streetscape improvements such as green boulevards and lighting.
- Lake/Lyndale intersection part of the B Line / Lake Street project in 2024. Currently has the Route 4 bus. Potential future arterial bus rapid transit line, beyond 2030.
- Connects multiple bikeways, including the Greenway, 28th, 26th, 24th, Franklin and has Bryant running parallel to the west. North of the project limits is an existing bikeway gap, on the city portion of Lyndale. The county will continue to partner with the city to maybe address that.
- Lyndale is part of the city's pedestrian priority network.
- Not on city's all ages and abilities network, not on county bike plan. Matthew Dyrdaahl: I used to work for the city as the bike and pedestrian coordinator. At the time, it seemed like Lyndale was untouchable for a bikeway, with Bryant to the west and Hennepin. Bryant has undergone significant change, Hennepin Avenue also will include a bikeway. Franklin from Hennepin to Lyndale is getting a bikeway, so a lot of changes in the area. We thought it makes sense to have the conversation about bikes with this project, since so much has changed. We are focusing on crossing Lyndale and connections to Bryant. We'll likely have different cross sections that show what those tradeoffs would be. If you include a bike lane, how does that affect the street, sidewalk, infrastructure.

- Has lots of motor vehicle traffic, connection from south Minneapolis to downtown and I-94. People use it for different things and different modes. Lots to consider when thinking about what a new Lyndale Avenue could look like.
- Engagement expected to start later this summer, concept layout approval in summer 2024 and final engineering afterward.
- Lou Miranda: As Mr. Dyrdaahl mentioned, this project and Cedar Avenue, having bikeway offset a block or two off the main corridor — there's a lot more businesses on Bryant than the one for Cedar. People want to move on the corridor where there's more density, whether by car, bus, biking, walking. Stratifying it this way a block off is problematic. Has zoning changed at all on Lyndale or Bryant? All this stuff relates together. Businesses on Bryant are there based on bus traffic coming on and off, now it's a couple of blocks away. Will there be more pressure for businesses to move to Lyndale? I think it's sticky and needs to be investigated in a systemic way — Should all transportation options occur on the main corridor or not. JoNette Kuhnau: The city and county recognize this is what the plans say, but they're a few years old and it makes sense to revisit that and the tradeoffs.

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

5:15 – 5:42

Josh Potter from Transportation Design introduced himself and the pilot. The pilot is in place on Lyndale Avenue from Franklin to 31st Street, which is one block south of Lake Street.

- The project Web site is <https://www.hennepin.us/residents/transportation/lyndale-avenue-safety>.
- The project started in fall 2021 with before-data collection ahead of July 2022 implementation of the pilot.
- We've been monitoring it through late summer, fall, winter spring. We've gotten a lot of feedback.
- Before the pilot, Lyndale was a four-lane undivided with heavy motor vehicle traffic, which is why we wanted to do a pilot. Would we impact the neighborhoods adjacent Lyndale? Transit and parking remained the same, parking on both sides, transit stops in the same locations.
- People were excited for the improvements. We added medians along with rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) at 26th — people loved that. We heard from businesses and concerns about parking, which we did not remove.
- Post pilot: Basically the same but with three lanes (two general lanes plus left turn lane).
- Received more than 1,000 responses on our interactive map. Mailed 4,500 postcards, canvassed neighborhood.
- Very positive comments on 25th and 27th streets. Before people said they avoided these intersections, now people say they seek them out. It makes the crossings safer, and the more people who use the crosswalk, the more people driving expect to see them and watch for them.
- We did hear a little bit about longer travel times, but overall a very positive response.
- Speed changes: average 39 miles per hour to 29 northbound; 35 mph to 25 mph southbound. This was a greater impact than what we typically see on a 4-3. Posted speed limit is 30 miles per hour.

- Travel time, average daily increase 43 seconds northbound, 26 seconds southbound. Peak increase (95th percentile) 101 seconds northbound and 54 seconds southbound. About 8 to 14 seconds per signal. There are some spikes, it does see some variation (e.g. snow events).
- Pedestrian crossing compliance, three intersections without signals:
 - Reduction of average and peak noncompliance by 85 percent
 - Increase in pedestrian crossing by 86 percent at the three intersections
 - Largest benefit with RRFB at 25th and 27th and three lane and medians.
- About a 57 percent decrease in crashes; 48 percent reduction in injury crashes.
- Pedestrian/bike crashes decrease and reduced severity
- Crashes are in a limited timeframe; we usually collect data over three years while this was less than a year, but this is a trend. Typically a 4-3 sees a one-third to one-half reduction in crashes.
- Motor vehicle traffic reduced 11 percent at Franklin. Did not really see people cutting through the neighborhood.
- Lessons learned
 - Important to be deliberate
 - Context sensitive
 - Resource allocation toward pilot; we had about half a million for preparation and half a million to implement the pilot
 - Covid impacts — peaks have died down a little bit and traffic is more spread out
 - Adjacent 35W construction from 2017 to 2021 we saw a jump in traffic.
- Only about 30 percent of people traveling the corridor did not have a destination in the corridor.
- This was very successful, we're very excited about the results, especially the safety results. We do plan to keep the pilot in place until reconstruction.
- Lou Miranda: I have to say I'm surprised by just how positive these results are. I've never been so giddy about a project. This is win-win-win for everybody — by mode, organization, neighborhood. I hope it sets a precedent for the county, or at least provides feedback to look at this differently even if not a template. I hope you can spread the word at conferences and the like with colleagues — this is amazing.
- Haley Foydel: Is there a threshold, is there a point where an increase in travel time is too much? A lot of discussion leading into the pilot about traffic going onto side streets. Was there negative feedback on that? Josh Potter: Certainly very positive response on this pilot. We see it as a tool in the toolbox. It's part of Vision Zero and Toward Zero Deaths. We don't have any additional pilots planned right now, we're still digesting this. For the pilot, we did not want to set a threshold and artificially bring focus to that. We were looking at safety, speed — travel times not as much. Haley: A lot of the county's discussion early on expressed concern the most about car traffic and commuter times but I'd love a world in which we are thinking about the potentials of traffic evaporation and other modes of transit, particularly knowing that 70 percent of this Lyndale traffic is so local. Josh: We did measure traffic on the side streets. We knew we'd hear from people but wanted to measure it. It wasn't really significant. We even saw speeds go down a little bit on side streets. Less on Bryant and Aldrich, more on Harriet and Garfield where it was an existing condition that has been a consistent concern. With the Franklin Avenue project, we'll work on the intersections with Harriet and Garfield with the city.

- Greg Anderson: Impressive results on Lyndale 4-3. Thanks Josh!

- **Draft resolution for 42nd Street mill and overlay** **5:42 – 5:51**
 - Larissa Lavrov, ATC District 4 member read through the draft resolution. Courtney Costigan moved to approve the resolution. Tammy McLemore seconded.
 - Dave Carlson: I thought we discussed no parking on three segments, not just 26th-29th but also Cedar-19th and 31st-32nd but they aren't in the resolution. Maybe something to discuss. Jordan: Technically there are three bike gaps here, we didn't mention the one to the east because the project won't address it. Tammy McLemore: Should we add anything about 31st or 32nd? We could to acknowledge that it exists. Jenny Ackerson: In the second whereas, we could add another clause that there will be an unaddressed bike gap.
 - The resolution was adopted by voice vote.

- **Member Announcements** **5:51 – 5:54**

Jenny Ackerson: I have my Metro Transit hat on now. Do people have experience with bike rails on stairs, do you like them, are there any around that you have used? I'd be happy to take emails or however else you'd like to get comments to me. Larissa Lavrov: Should we share this with others in our network? Jenny Ackerson: It's a pretty informal inquiry, not really a call to action, but if it comes up in conversation, it'd be great to hear what others think.

- **Adjournment** **5:54**
 - Courtney Costigan moved to adjourn; Lou Miranda seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Next meeting:

July 17 | 4 – 6 p.m.

Remote via Microsoft Teams