

Hennepin County
Complete Streets Task Force Minutes
January 23, 2012 2 - 4 PM
Hennepin County Government Center
A23 Conference Room
300 South 6th Street, Minneapolis MN 55487

Attendees: James Andrew, Jill Boogren, Dave Carlson, Steve Clark, Gail Dorfman, Dave Fink, Steve Gershon, Shep Harris, Kathi Hemken, Mary Jackson, Richard Johnson, Tom Johnson, Nick Mason, Peter McLaughlin, Karen Nikolai, Kerri Pearce Ruch, Rose Ryan, Mark Stenglein, Craig Twinem.

1. 2011 Outcomes Achieved

Commissioner Gail Dorfman welcomed the group and summarized the 2011 work of the Hennepin County Complete Streets Task Force:

- Complete Streets Design Checklist: This checklist is used from the beginning of every Hennepin County street reconstruction project. The task force reviewed the checklist and county staff added a summary page to help easily share project information with the public and elected officials.
- Sharing information about Complete Streets projects:
 - MnDOT Local Road Research Board comparative study on the planning and implementation of complete streets. Scott Bradley is the contact for this study.
 - Jack Broz presented on complete streets as a process.
 - Craig Twinem and Tom Johnson explained the Hennepin County Transportation Department's work on complete streets.
 - Peggy Reichert from MnDOT shared information on MnDOT State Aid for local roads.
 - The list of 2012 Hennepin mill and overlay projects was released early. This will allow us more time to consider 4-to-3 conversions and other striping changes.
- Meeting minutes and Complete Streets Design Checklist are available on the Hennepin County complete streets [website](#).

2. CIP and Demonstration Projects

Commissioner Dorfman asked for ideas for complete streets demonstration projects.

- Making sure that there are complete street connections within the ½ mile radius of Southwest LRT stations
- Mayor Kathi Hemken: Cities without rapid transit projects are also interested in Complete Streets
- Commissioner Peter McLaughlin: Demonstration projects could focus on elements of complete streets. Mill and overlay projects may make a “more complete” street.
- Reconstruction projects from the Hennepin County CIP

Tom Johnson, Transportation Planning Division Manager, outlined the four complete-streets related line items in the Hennepin County CIP:

- Bicycle Gap Program: \$300,000 annually to fill gaps in the bikeway system
- Bicycle CIP Program: \$300,000 annually for new bikeways
- Roadside Enhancement Partnership Program (REPP): \$1 million annually for to enhance the roadside environment. Some examples of eligible work are undergrounding of utilities, off-road bike paths, construction of sidewalks where safety of pedestrians requires action, installation of transit stops, installation of street and pedestrian lighting and to a lesser extent, roadway beautification.
- Sidewalks: a new program is proposed and waiting to be authorized by the county board for \$200,000 annually.

Gail Dorfman asked what the task force would like to see in a demonstration project:

- Kathi Hemken: On Winnetka Ave in New Hope, the city section of the road was restriped to three lanes, but becomes a four lane county road south of Bass Lake Road. New Hope is working on redeveloping the corner of Winnetka Ave and 42nd Ave N. A complete streets demonstration project here would be a good showcase project.
 - Tom Johnson: Winnetka Ave probably will be on the mill and overlay schedule soon.
 - Craig Twinem: REPP funding could be used to enhance the pedestrian environment by adding pedestrian scale lighting and moving utilities underground.
- Gail Dorfman: Could we survey cities and other key stakeholders to put together a list of opportunities for demonstration projects?
- Craig Twinem: We can look at what people would like to see and what sources of funding could match these projects.
- Tom Johnson: By releasing the mill and overlay schedule earlier, we can overlay the bike plan and identify projects where we could restripe.
- Kathi Hemken: Do Hennepin staff track what the cities are doing?
- Tom Johnson: There isn't a formal project but there is awareness. In selecting projects, we will consider moving a project forward to match a city or MnDOT project.
- Mayor Shep Harris: Are bike and sidewalk funds already earmarked? There are some immediate pedestrian crossing safety issues on Douglas Drive, but it will be reconstructed in a few years.
- Tom Johnson: Hennepin's Operations department can help with striping a crosswalk. Spot safety improvement funds can also be used for these types of issues.
- Steve Clark: Glenwood Avenue would be great place to test 10 foot lanes as part of a 2012 Bike Walk Twin Cities-funded project.

3. Communicating about Complete Streets

Gail Dorfman: We need to make sure that everyone is at the table. What is the best way to get a list of projects together? Not just road projects, but libraries and redevelopment.

- Craig Twinem: City planners and engineers need to talk to each other about redevelopment projects and street projects.
- Gail Dorfman: Could we hold complete streets open houses around the county to discuss this with cities and stakeholders? If people don't understand they will push back.
- Kathi Hemken: We need to get out to the public more than city councils.
- Karen Nikolai: Three cities in Hennepin have complete streets policies. Bloomington, Minneapolis, and other cities will be working on policies in the next 18 months.
- Gail Dorfman: We could work more aggressively with cities on adopting policies.

- Shep Harris: We could present to the Regional Council of Mayors.
- Jill Boogren: It can be very confusing to follow street projects. The more you can post online, the better. This could also help as jurisdictions try to work better together.
- Dave Carlson: We have been doing more 4-3 conversions and now we have a story to tell. This could be an opportunity to revisit these projects and share success stories.
- Mary Jackson: We need to show before and after images of projects on our websites. Mill and overlay lists should also be online.
- Karen Nikolai: We can put up photos as examples on the Hennepin website.
- Shep Harris: On many projects maintenance is turned over to the city. Do we consider operations and maintenance in Complete Streets?
- Gail Dorfman: We should list who maintains roads and sidewalks on our website.
- Nick Mason: If Hennepin wants to be a leader in complete streets, open houses may be the next step. We need champions for local complete streets policies.
- Peter McLaughlin: There is a role for MnDOT to be a leader. People look to MnDOT because of their funding and manuals. If this comes from MnDOT people will listen.
- Gail Dorfman: We could ask Commissioner Sorel to work with us on sending letters to Hennepin Cities. Focus on increasing number of policies.
- Kathi Hemken: We need to talk to community development people along with the engineers.
- Dave Carlson: If we mapped Complete Streets projects, how many would there be?
- Jill Boogren: A map of projects would be great. It could point to photos and show on the map where the photos are. It could also include projects on city and state roads.
- Mary Jackson: MnDOT is developing a toolbox for the Grand Rapids complete streets project. Context is really important: local communities are asking for bike lanes and sidewalks on MnDOT roads. We need to have transition zones as roads head into small towns. MnDOT is looking at context zones for their roads.

4. MinnesotaGO update

Mary Jackson provided an update on MinnesotaGO. MinnesotaGO started as statewide transportation vision for the entire family of MnDOT plans. It is the foundation for the statewide multimodal plan. The goals and objectives from MinnesotaGO seem like complete streets.

In February, the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan will have open houses and web sessions for public feedback. The plan will be complete in April or May of 2012. This is the first time that bicycle and pedestrian plans have been shown in the MnDOT scope of work. The MnDOT Bicycle Study has already started. The pedestrian plan will be separate.

Kirby Becker is the project manager. Information on the plan and open houses are available on the [project website](#). The online meeting is February 6th. The Minneapolis open house is February 8th at UROC from 4-7 pm.

5. Working across jurisdictions

Gail Dorfman: When we were developing the Hennepin policy we hosted a workshop. Turnout was quite good from across jurisdictions. We haven't done anything else like the workshop.

- Mary Jackson: There are some cities with complete streets policies inside a county and state with policies. There could be an opportunity to collaborate to share design and get engineers and planners together in the same room.

- Karen Nikolai: We could host workshops with panels and idea sharing,
- Shep Harris: Are CIP projects ranked based on CS potential?
- Tom Johnson: Most projects come into the CIP from the provisional list. The decision ultimately comes down to the board.
- Shep Harris: We could incentivize complete streets projects in the CIP.
- Kathi Hemken: We could have complete streets signs that say that you are entering a complete streets community as you cross the city lines.

6. Performance Measures

Gail Dorfman: Are we keeping track of our complete streets elements? We have a pedestrian and bicycle detour marked for the Lyndale Ave bridge over Minnehaha creek. Is anyone tracking this kind of project?

- Tom Johnson: No we don't, but we do keep track of the bike system mileage and gaps. We will be giving an annual update to the board on Hennepin Transportation Systems Plan performance measures. Some performance measures have complete streets elements, including bike crashes, pedestrian crashes, transit ridership, bicycle usage, miles of bikeways built, and system accessibility. We are not sure yet how we will measure all of these. We will be bringing together a lot of pieces
- Gail Dorfman: How do we say that we are getting results?
- Tom Johnson: A map with pictures is a good idea. It appeals differently to people and maybe has a stronger message. We could start to put together some of this.
- Karen Nikolai: What other measures would you like to see? Is there something to track about mill and overlays?
- Nick Mason: Look at the City of Minneapolis [Bicycling Account](#). The format was good with lots of images. It is short and accessible. It could be a good format to adopt.
- Steve Clark: There is a national methodology for counting pedestrians and bicyclists. It's good to see before and after count data. It makes you realize how important these investments can be. Transit for Livable Communities counts look at helmet usage, gender, and sidewalk riding. When complete streets are implemented, behavior improves and walking and bicycling increases.
- Shep Harris: Are there measures for seniors?
- Dave Fink: A lot of boomers are biking. We also want to look at walkability and rollability. Curb ramps are a good example as people live in their own homes as long as possible and neighborhood accessibility is important.
- James Andrew: We need to start thinking more about pedestrians. We could show crossings that have been improved and refuge islands installed.
- Karen Nikolai: AARP is strong supporter of complete streets. I will check if they have any measures or metrics.

Next Meeting: March 19, 2012, 2-4 PM in A-2350
