

Hennepin County
Complete Streets Task Force Minutes
March 19, 2012 2 – 3:30 PM
Hennepin County Government Center
A23 Conference Room
300 South 6th Street, Minneapolis MN 55487

Attendees: James Andrew, Jill Boogren, Debra Brisk, Dave Carlson, Sandy Colvin Roy, Gail Dorfman, Steve Elkins, Mark Fabel, Dave Fink, Steve Gershone, Kathi Hemken, Richard Johnson, Ryan Kelley, Michael Larson, Peter McLaughlin, Karen Nikolai, Kerri Pearce Ruch, Rose Ryan, Brian Shekleton, Sarah Stewart, Craig Twinem.

1. Budget: 2013 Draft CIP and CIP line items

Craig Twinem, Hennepin County Transportation Department

Craig Twinem presented the 2012-2016 Transportation Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and described the line items that directly relate to complete streets.

- **Bikeway Development Participation: \$300,000**
 - Off-road trails on segments from Hennepin County Bicycle Plan
 - County participation: 50% of the cost of the trail
- **Bikeway Program – Discretionary (Bike Gap Fund): \$300,000**
 - Closing gaps both on and off county's bicycle system
 - County participation: 50%
- **Pedestrian Ramps: \$600,000**
 - Update existing pedestrian ramps
 - County participation: 100%
- **Roadside Enhancement Partnership Program (REPP): \$1,000,000**
 - Eligible cities must have been located wholly within the Metropolitan urban Services Area (MUSA) in 1998. Intended for cities with aging infrastructure on county corridors.
 - REPP is used to improve the streetscape: landscaping, burying power lines, making an area more pedestrian friendly.
 - REPP projects typically arise in conjunction with other projects.
 - County participation: 33% - 50%
- **Sidewalk Participation: \$200,000**
 - New program in 2012, in response to Active Living and Complete Streets policies. County did not historically contribute to new sidewalks.
 - Used to install sidewalk along county roads. Can be a stand-alone project or in conjunction with a reconstruction.
 - County participation: 25%

Questions from the task force:

- Peter McLaughlin: How do projects get on the bikeway CIP lists?
- Craig Twinem: Both Bikeway CIP programs are first-come, first served.
- Sandy Colvin Roy: How are Public Works departments notified early enough to request funding?

- Craig Twinem: The County works with city staff early on. We never have a problem spending the REPP budget. With REPP, sometimes there is a separate landscaping/streetscaping project after a street has been reconstructed.
- Steve Elkins: Bloomington looks at mill and overlays a year in advance so that we can plan ahead. We don't want to re-stripe a street. On one project, we had to grind up the stripes and ended up having the ground-up stripes right where bikes will ride.
- Peter McLaughlin: We have plans, so doing this on first-come first-served basis seems haphazard. It shouldn't depend on having conversation at elected level. At one point, we did prioritize filling bike gaps. I would like to make sure that we are strategic. We ought to aspire to stripe it right the first time.
- Gail Dorfman: We should be asking the question about to what extent we are implementing complete streets. Not just for transportation, but libraries and other development projects.
- James Andrew: Does REPP allow for curb extensions and refuge medians?
- Craig Twinem: If it's a reconstruction project, we will take care of curb extensions and medians as part of the project.
- James Andrew: For mill and overlays, is REPP an opportunity for curb extensions and for adding more pedestrian space at intersections or transit stops?
- Peter McLaughlin: Should the REPP cover bump outs? Would this make sense?
- Craig Twinem: Since curb and gutter are shared 50-50 with the city, it could make sense.
- Peter McLaughlin: The problem is that we need greater public and city participation with bump outs.
- James Andrew: We should think about how to get more out of mill and overlay projects. Maybe it is the city's responsibility to identify pedestrian enhancements, mostly at transit stops.
- Dave Carlson: I've noticed that often when a trail is added, the shoulder is removed. How can we make sure this doesn't happen?
- Craig Twinem: In some circumstances when we rebuild a two-lane road into four lanes, we don't have space to have a trail and shoulder. We are trying to do as much as possible in the confines of our right of way. On Douglas Drive in Golden Valley, we are proposing wide flat gutter pans for on road bicyclists and will still have a trail. If it makes sense and we can fit a trail and shoulder, we do.
- Jill Boogren: How far do we know in advance about mill and overlay projects?
- Craig Twinem: Our approach is to be more proactive and determine the schedule in the fall instead of spring. We are looking at potential conversions from four to three lanes.
- Peter McLaughlin: The amount of money for mill and overlay varies per year. Additional money can come in later in the year and so it's not quite predictable, but we are making progress on the timing and notification for core mill and overlay
- Sandy Colvin Roy: We need to do it right the first time. Taxpayers hate it when you have to re-do things.

Discussion of budget priorities and opportunities

- Gail Dorfman: We need to figure out other opportunities for complete streets, such coordination with approved, TOD projects that will be constructed. New Hope has a complete streets policy. How does that change how you do business?
- Kathi Hemken: We communicate regularly with Public Works about project opportunities. We just bought a Kmart site on County Road 9 and want to look at complete streets potential for redevelopment.
- Debra Brisk: We are going to look at how we market for projects for our complete streets related funding programs. We need to look at opportunities so we can see what is the best investment, in lieu of first come first served. We need to get the most for our money.

- Peter McLaughlin: Community Works projects are a potential opportunity. Access to transit is huge issue and transitway dollars don't go very far off the corridor. It's about more complete access to key transit options.
- Gail Dorfman: We need to ask how people are getting to places by foot, transit, bike, car; every detail from where parking is and how the sidewalks connect.
- Kerri Pearce Ruch: Have we thought about expanding REPP to outer ring suburbs?
- Peter McLaughlin: This was a policy decision by the board. Older inner ring and urban county roads were designed to move cars fast. The design was not about a nice experience on the sidewalks or about how pedestrians cross the street. This priority for REPP is still important. If we had more resources, we could think about how to include outer ring suburbs, but we also want to try to encourage development inside the MUSA line.
- Sandy Colvin Roy: When project plan and layout comes forward, do you report on how the design meets the complete streets policy?
- Craig Twinem: We have the complete streets checklist and summary page, but we haven't been providing these to our partners.
- Sandy Colvin Roy: On the commissioner level, we want to make sure the policy doesn't recede. With a new policy, it's helpful to talk about it openly for a few years.
- Gail Dorfman: More and more people are going to ask, "Why are we not designing complete streets with all modes?" The public will get ahead of us.
- Kerri Pearce Ruch: We ought to get ahead of the public and show what we are doing.
- Peter McLaughlin: We should show what we are doing on our website.
- Steve Elkins: In Bloomington's Alternative Transportation Plan, we left off county roads. Now we need to go back and look at county roads because the county has a complete streets policy.
- Gail Dorfman: Maybe we should be using the complete streets design checklist on mill and overlay projects, since paint is cheap. We ought to make the checklist available to cities and others as a resource.
- Kathi Hemken: We should be advertising what we are doing and measuring wherever possible. We need to give the County credit for good work on projects in cities such as TOD grants.

2. Discussion of Task Force hiatus

The task force currently meets every two months. Peter McLaughlin asked if we need to slow down or is there enough to work on that requires meeting every two months. If we do not need to meet as frequently, should we wait until August or September to discuss the 2013 CIP and make sure the complete streets budget is adequately funded?

- Steve Elkins: If a city was interested in getting a project on the CIP map, when would it need contact the County?
- Craig Twinem: As soon a city feels it has a need, it should send a letter to the County.
- Richard Johnson: Staff develops a plan and the CIP goes to the Capital Budget Task Force in May. The CBTF starts touring projects in May and formal discussion begins in June.
- Debra Brisk: Our lump sum line items really need to be looked at: how to solicit to our partners projects of interest, how we evaluate and prioritize, and ultimately include the Board in approving a list of prioritized projects.
- Gail Dorfman: CIP projects come from staff. They screen and prioritize projects. There is an opportunity for cities to suggest projects. Some projects come in to the Commissioners, but it's difficult to get a project on the CIP in first year it's suggested. We want to keep

momentum moving forward. Internally, we need to discuss how dollars are allocated and how best to market complete streets. When will staff be ready to present to the group?

- Debra Brisk: We will be developing a draft solicitation package and going out for solicitation late Summer for recommendation to the Board early Fall for a listing to be integrated into the 2013 CIP.

Discussion of the direction of future work:

- Gail Dorfman: We need to do some strategic work to figure out how much guidance staff needs from this group. We need to develop a work plan so we have a two year action plan.
- Jill Boogren: I hope we post more information on a website. Photos and maps would help in presentations to cities and the public. We could showcase reconstruction and mill and overlay projects to show what complete streets are and what can be done.
- Karen Nikolai: Right now our Complete Streets page is under the Active Living webpage. We are working with Public Affairs to give complete streets its own webpage.
- Mark Fabel: We need to have shorter term goals and bigger goals so we can have focus with goals. Where are we going with demonstration projects?
- Karen Nikolai: If every street is a potential complete street, do we call out demonstration projects?
- Peter McLaughlin: This is a highly politicized. If everything is a complete street, people don't understand and might think it's bad. We use paint to engineer safety and need to showcase projects. There is a PR issue. It's in our interest to get out there.
- Sandy Colvin Roy: We had a long discussion about complete streets. It is not every mode on every road. We are not trying to make every road look the same, but consider road use. I would like to check in with the group in late summer. If the County is looking for guidance from the group, staff should come back and say what worked this summer and what obstacles were found.
- Gail Dorfman: A lot of complete streets elements can be highlighted all over Hennepin.
- Peter McLaughlin: We should also show the horror stories: power pole in middle of sidewalk.
- Steve Elkins: Are we working on outreach? We could bring Bloomington staff to talk about how they approach outreach.
- Peter McLaughlin: We could bring in John LaPlante in the winter to think about how we embed complete streets into Public Works.
- Gail Dorfman: We need to develop a marketing strategy and share best practices.
- Mark Fabel: Staff should meet to reiterate goals and develop more of a work plan so we are more focused when come back together.
- Peter McLaughlin: We will plan to meet next in August.

Next meeting: To be determined, anticipate in mid – late August
