

**125<sup>th</sup> Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting**  
**June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – 3:00pm**  
**Hybrid Meeting – Virtual / In-person (Metro COG Conference Room)**

**Members Present**

Dan Farnsworth, Chair, Metro COG  
Cole Hansen, Cass County Planning  
Jace Hellman, City of Horace  
Cheryl Stetz, Fargo Cass Public Health  
Patrick Hollister, PartnerSHIP 4 Health  
Isabella Valenzuela, Clay County Public Health Intern  
Don Lorsung, City of Dilworth  
Jonathan Atkins, City of Moorhead Engineering  
Christine Holland, River keepers  
Forrest Steinhoff, City of Moorhead Planning  
Jeremy Gorden, City of Fargo Engineering  
Kurt Kopperud, Citizen Representative  
Leslie McGillivray-Rivas, City of West Fargo Planning  
Luke Grittner, MATBUS  
Rosemary Bruce-White

**Others Present:**

Paul Bervik, Metro COG  
Andrew Buck, Citizen  
Laurens Robinson, FM Trailbuilders  
Tim Krieg, FM Trailbuilders  
Terry Steen, Citizen/Flatlands Cycling Club  
Aiden Jung, Metro COG  
William Weightman, Citizen  
Connor Cox, Bolton & Menk

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting began at 3:02 pm. Both virtual and in-person attendees introduced themselves.

**2. Approve minutes from March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting**

C. Hansen noted that his last name was spelled incorrectly in the March 20<sup>th</sup> minutes. Metro COG noted that they'll make the correction. A motion to approve the March 20<sup>th</sup> minutes was made by C. Hansen and seconded by J. Gorden. The minutes were passed unanimously with Metro COG to make the correction noted by Mr. Hansen.

### **3. Public input opportunity**

Several members of the public were present both in-person and virtually. Laurens Robinson, representing the FM Trailbuilders provided a comment. He noted that FM Trailbuilders would be interested in providing features alongside paved trails and crushed gravel trails in the Fargo-Moorhead area. FM Trailbuilders feels these features could enhance experiences for all users and get more people excited and experienced with mountain biking. These features could include 'skinny bridges', 'rollers', etc. L. Robinson would be interested in partnering with Metro COG on such an effort. D. Farnsworth mentioned that Metro COG would follow up with him.

William Weightman (attending virtually) thanked the committee for the work they do and noted that he has comments related to agenda item 6. He provided those comments to Metro COG via email. Those comments will be discussed as part of agenda item 6. The other comment / question W. Weightman had was about the Fargo-Moorhead Bike Map App. He asked when the map might be updated again, noting that the map appears to be two years out of date. D. Farnsworth mentioned that Metro COG is aware of the map being out of date and has plans to update it. Metro COG recently received an updated aerial imagery which will be used to update the bikeways & paths on the map. Metro COG plans to do that this summer and will send it to the app developer after that. It might take a month or two for the app developer to update the app.

### **4. Project updates**

#### **Clay County Heartland Trail Study**

D. Farnsworth provided an update on the Clay County Heartland Trail Study. Farnsworth noted that Metro COG hired a consulting team to conduct this study which was kicked-off in January. The study is scheduled to wrap up in early 2025 with the outcome of having a preferred trail alignment picked out which could then advance the project into the design phase.

Metro COG is currently in the first round of public involvement. D. Farnsworth showed the committee the public input website and showed the comment mapping tool which is currently seeking comments. The public engagement website can be found on the homepage of Metro COG's website.

#### **Moorhead Safe Routes to School Study**

D. Farnsworth provided a brief update the Moorhead Safe Routes to School Study which Metro COG is conducting in-house. This study was recently kicked-off in the winter of 2024 and is anticipated to be completed toward the end of 2024. With fewer students walking and biking to school nationwide over the decades, the safe routes to school program strives to make walking and biking to school safer and more attainable for students. This study is looking at ways of making walking and biking to school safer at the five public elementary schools and middle school in Moorhead.

## 5. Future automated bicycle & pedestrian counter locations

P. Bervik discussed that Metro COG is planning to purchase 12 new bicycle/pedestrian counters sometime in 2024 as a result of additional funding available. He showed a map of the proposed areas which Metro COG is considering installing and noted that Metro COG has been and is currently working with the local cities on more exact locations.

L. Robinson asked if there are any counters installed at MB Johnson Park or Gooseberry Park to count usage on off road trails (mountain bike trails). P. Bervik noted there are none installed on mountain bike trails. D. Farnsworth noted that there are counters designed for unpaved trails from the company TrafX. P. Bervik also noted EcoCounters could be used for this too and noted that EcoCounter is more accurate but more expensive. J. Atkins noted that Moorhead could potentially partner with FM Trailbuilders about a future counter(s).

## 6. Bicycle Friendly Communities Application

D. Farnsworth mentioned that Metro COG has been working on the Bicycle Friendly Communities Application since early 2024. This application is for the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area. The FM Metro Area has been awarded Bronze status in 2014 and 2018. These designations are good for four years. With the last award in 2018, the FM Metro Area should apply again in order to keep its current status. Applications are due on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

Prior to diving into the application there was some additional discussion which included the report cards provided by the League of American Bicyclists for each community after applying. Another discussion was about the status of micromobility (scooters and bike share) in the Fargo-Moorhead community. It was noted that scooters were never implemented in Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo, however at least one company (Bird) was interested. It was mentioned that the City of Fargo has been contacted recently about potential interest in scooters. It was mentioned that Metro COG researched various ordinances around the country as well as best practices for handling micromobility and provided this information to each of the local jurisdictions. M. Eshaug will look into this research again.

D. Farnsworth then worked with the committee in reviewing the three comments they received from the citizen, William Weightman, earlier that day. The comments were as follows:

- Question A12 – It was suggested that the checkbox ‘Other seasonal or weather challenges’ could be checked. The committee concurred.
- Question B21 – It was suggested that the checkbox ‘Parallel but separated paths for bikes/pedestrians’ could be checked. D. Farnsworth felt this was implying a shared use path with a parallel path for pedestrians rather than a protected bike lane next to a sidewalk. Metro COG will ask for clarification from Natalie Gillie.
- Question B27c1 – It was noted that there is no longer a practice/educational bike rack in the GTC. It was suggested that Metro COG reach out to MATBUS managers

(Julie or Lori) to ask if they still have the practice bike rack and plan to put it back out.

## **7. Mid-block crossing activity on 13<sup>th</sup> Ave S**

When Metro COG manually counts bicycle/pedestrian traffic, one of the locations is at 13<sup>th</sup> Ave S under I-29. Metro COG has observed several pedestrians crossing mid-block between 36<sup>th</sup> St and 38<sup>th</sup> St. One reason for these crossings is the lack of a north-south crossing at 36<sup>th</sup> St. Of the 31 pedestrians counted between 3 pm – 7 pm on 9/13/22, 19% (or 7 pedestrians) crossed mid-block at this location. Also, of the 31 pedestrians, 34% (or 10 pedestrians) walked on the north side of 13<sup>th</sup> Ave which doesn't have a sidewalk. Metro COG wanted to bring this up due to the number of mid-block crossings, as well as a recent serious injury involving a pedestrian struck at this mid-block location.

There was discussion about reasons why there are so many crossings. It was pointed out that there are no north-south crosswalks on 36<sup>th</sup> St and only one north-south crosswalk located on the west leg of 38<sup>th</sup> St. Also, there are destinations on the north-east side of 36<sup>th</sup> St generating pedestrian trips.

It was also suggested that crossing at intersections may not even be that safe, due to the number of lanes required to cross, driver attentiveness with some turning movements, and the danger of slip lanes. The question was raised, could a mid-block crossing actually be safer if such a crossing was implemented?

## **8. New Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee citizen rep**

With the next Committee meeting likely occurring in early-mid September, Metro COG is bringing notice of advertising for the next citizen rep for the Committee at this meeting. Metro COG plans to solicit for applications for this rep on September 1<sup>st</sup> with applications due September 30<sup>th</sup>. This rep would serve a two-year term with the option of an additional two-years if they desire. The term would begin January 1, 2025.

## **9. Other business**

P. Hollister congratulated Moorhead on the ribbon cutting of their new library. There was no other additional business. The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 pm.