

121st Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting
February 15th, 2022 – 3:00pm
Hybrid Meeting – Virtual / In-person (Metro COG Conference Room)

Members Present

Dan Farnsworth, Chair, Metro COG
Luke Mormon, City of Fargo Planning
Jace Hellman, City of Horace
Grace Puppe, Cass County
Joe Anderson, City of Fargo Police
Patrick Hollister, PartnerSHIP 4 Health
Luke Grittner, MATBUS
Andrew Wrucke, City of West Fargo Engineering
Peyton Mastera, City of Dilworth
Matt Jacobson, Clay County
Aaron Murra, NDDOT – Fargo District
Bob Walton, NDDOT – Fargo District
Cheryl Stetz, Cass County Public Health
Christine Holland, River Keepers

Others Present:

Paul Bervik, Metro COG
Ari Del Rosario, Metro COG
Terry Steen, Citizen/Flatlands Cycling Club
Justin Kristan, Bike Walk North Dakota

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 3:03 pm. Both virtual and in-person attendees introduced themselves.

2. Approve minutes from November 9th, 2022 meeting

A motion to approve the November 9th minutes was made by J. Hellman and seconded by G. Puppe. The minutes were passed unanimously with no edits.

3. Public input opportunity

Terry Steen a member of the public and a representative of Flatlands Cycling Club provided the Committee with background and information about Flatlands Cycling. Flatlands Cycling Club is a non-profit organization which began as a bicycle racing club but is looking to focus more on community bicycling events with the goal to boost cycling in the Fargo-Moorhead area. A website will be up and running from this club in a week or so.

4. Project updates

FM Metro Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

D. Farnsworth gave the group a brief update on the status of the FM Metro Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The plan was recently adopted in January. Farnsworth showed the Committee where the plan could be found on Metro COG's website and encouraged jurisdictions to refer to the plan as they plan for future bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Fargo Red River Greenway Study

A. Del Rosario and D. Farnsworth gave a 15-minute presentation on the Fargo Red River Greenway Study. The study is in final draft stage and is anticipated to be adopted in March. D. Farnsworth showed the Committee the website where the final draft study can be found. The website also includes an informational video.

DGF Safe Routes to School Plan

D. Farnsworth gave the Committee a brief update on the status of the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Safe Routes to School Plan. The plan was kicked off in the summer of 2022 and is anticipated to be complete by the summer of 2023. The plan going smoothly, however delays with the construction at the Dilworth School have caused the study team to hold off field observations at that school until construction is complete later this winter/early spring.

Clay County Heartland Trail

D. Farnsworth provided an update on the status of the Clay County Heartland Trail. Farnsworth noted that not much progress has been made on the Clay County Heartland Trail efforts in the last few years, however Metro COG has been providing technical assistance as a bonding bill is currently being put together. A bonding bill is currently being developed which is requesting \$2.25 Million for funding of the Heartland Trail between Park Rapids and Moorhead. The bill is just being introduced to the Minnesota Senate. Farnsworth also noted that Metro COG will begin a Heartland Trail study in 2024.

P. Mastera pointed out that the idea has been to construct the trail from east to west, however he's been suggesting recently that the trail should be constructed from west to east and eventually the trail could meet in the middle. The Heartland Trail is a priority for the City of Dilworth and would like to see a more formulated plan in the future to assist the Heartland Trail in receiving funding. M. Jacobson echoed P. Mastera's comments.

5. Discuss & revise criteria for TA grant scoring & ranking

A discussion to revise the scoring/ranking criteria for Transportation Alternatives (TA) grant applications was held since the Committee wished to revisit the Environmental Justice (EJ) portion of the criteria at the last meeting. At the last meeting the Committee felt that projects within close proximity to an EJ area should also receive points. Therefore, Metro COG developed several maps which showed buffers around the EJ areas. These maps included: no buffer, a 350 ft buffer, a 1/8 mile buffer, and a 1/4 mile buffer. After

discussion amongst the Committee members, the ultimate decision was to keep the criteria as-is. While members felt like a 1/4 mile buffer would be a reasonable distance to award points to a project, upon seeing the 1/4 mile buffer map much of the Fargo-Moorhead urbanized area was covered in the 1/4 mile buffer. The result of using this buffer would result in the vast majority of the project getting points, thereby not setting project apart from one another.

A motion to keep the TA scoring criteria for the EJ areas as-is was made by J. Hellman and seconded by P. Mastera. The motion was passed unanimously.

6. New bicycle/pedestrian count equipment

P. Bervik provided the Committee with a presentation on Metro COG's new bicycle/pedestrian count equipment. Bervik brought in a new bicycle/pedestrian counter to show to the Committee, and also showcased Metro COG's old counters which are no longer in service. Bervik noted the challenges the old counters faced and showed how the new ones are more discrete, user-friendly, and count more precisely. Bervik also provided the Committee with an idea of the future expansion of Metro COG's automated bicycle and pedestrian program.

J. Kristan noted that he'd like to see bicycle facilities on 9th St NE and Center St in West Fargo between Main Ave and 12th Ave. He seemed in favor of doing before and after bicycle/pedestrian counts before and after these potential reconstruction project.

7. Other business

J. Kristan noted two bicycle-related bills that are making their way through the ND legislature right now. The first is House Bill 1506 which would change the law if a person was to be pulled over intoxicated while riding a bicycle. Currently if someone is riding a bicycle while intoxicated, they can get a ticket and points which would go on their record. This proposed bill would still include a ticket for bicycling intoxicated but no points would go on the individual's record.

The next is a resolution which pertains to North Dakota share the road safety week which started in 2015 as the result of two bicyclist fatalities. Currently the third week of June is ND share the road safety week. Kristan feels this should occur in May to align with National Bike Month. This resolution is making its way through the house and senate and Kristan hopes to bring awareness to this share the road safety week.

There was no other additional business. The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm.