

101st Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting
April 18th, 2018 – 3:00pm
Metro COG Conference Room

Members Present

Dan Farnsworth, Chair, Metro COG
Patrick Hollister, PartnerSHIP 4 Health
Kim Lipetzky, Fargo Cass Public Health
Brit Stevens, NDSU
Christine Holland, River Keepers
Dylan Ramstad Skoyles, Great Rides
Hali Durand, Cass County
Jonathan Atkins, City of Moorhead Engineering
Erik Hove, Clay County Highway
Jason Gates, Citizen representative
Tyler Kirchner, Fargo Park District
Spencer McCombs, City of Moorhead GIS
Jane Butzer, MnDOT

Others Present:

Luke Champa, Metro COG

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 3:04 pm. Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Approve minutes from January 17th, 2018 meeting

A motion to approve the January 17th minutes was made by J. Atkins and seconded by D. Ramstad Skoyles. The minutes were passed unanimously with no edits.

3. Follow-up item – metro-wide interactive GIS bikeways map

D. Farnsworth followed-up with the consideration of creating a metro-wide interactive GIS map. It was mentioned that on January 26th the Metropolitan GIS Committee met and the possibility of a metro-wide interactive GIS map was discussed. The GIS Committee liked the idea but had a few reservations about this undertaking. These included: including all the park amenities for all jurisdictions would be tedious and all jurisdictions would need to have uniform amenities shown on the map and all jurisdictions would need to keep such amenities up-to-date on the map.

The GIS Committee recommended asking heads of the local parks districts to see their level of interest in such a map. Metro COG heard back from Fargo Parks and they thought it would be a good idea. T. Kirchner was a little concerned amount the number of amenities

that Fargo Parks has amongst the many parks in the district, noting that keeping this maintained could be a pretty big endeavor. No response was received from West Fargo parks on this matter. Moorhead parks already has an interactive map so no comments were necessary.

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee recommended that we start by pursuing an interactive GIS map for bikeways only and see how that goes. We can expand to park amenities if the bikeways portion is successful.

Metro COG will discuss this further at the next GIS Committee meeting anticipated for August 2018.

4. Follow-up item – discussion of bicycle commuter routes

The discussion continued regarding designating certain bicycle routes that would be swept, plowed, and maintained prior to lesser-used routes. Metro COG was able to obtain feedback from one local agency about their thoughts on this matter. West Fargo Public Works sent Metro COG a map of the shared use paths that they remove snow prior to other shared use paths. Metro COG didn't receive information from any other agencies.

J. Atkins mentioned that he talked to Moorhead Public Works about this and was informed about their procedures when it comes to snow removal. Moorhead Public Works has the following snow removal priority: (1) snow emergency street routes, (2) secondary snow street routes, (3) all local streets, (4) shared use paths.

Moorhead Public Works feels strongly that their current priority system must remain in-place. They cannot justify removing snow on shared use paths before local streets. Therefore, Moorhead Public Works will continue to remove snow in the priority that is currently established.

Fargo Parks noted that they remove snow from on their paths as soon as possible after a snow event. They prioritize paths near schools first.

West Fargo Parks removes snow on certain paths – South Elmwood path and the Service Club Park path (both adjoin Eastwood School).

It was decided by the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee that the current methods used by the various jurisdictions should remain in-place as they know what is best for their system and their abilities/budget. Therefore, this discussion will not be pursued further but will be documented for any future concerns that come up regarding this topic.

5. Follow-up item – local park/trail curfews

D. Farnsworth provided the group with an update on the actions taken on this topic since last meeting. After discussing further with Fargo City Commissioner Strand, it was decided that we sit down with the police and parks departments of West Fargo, Fargo, and Moorhead.

This meeting occurred on March 20th. The meeting included discussions about park/trail curfew ordinances, park/trail lighting, and personal safety concerns along the Red River, particularly downtown.

The local police departments felt strongly that such ordinances needed to be in place in order to legally prosecute, if necessary, those in parks/along trails after hours who are causing trouble. Without this, the Police departments could not be able to enforce ordinances within parks. The Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee understood the rationale behind this but wanted to see if the ordinance times could be adjusted and ideally match that of each other jurisdiction in the area. D. Farnsworth mentioned that this could be a possibility if the police departments are okay with it. Metro COG is currently reaching out to eight different communities throughout the country (similar in size/climate to Fargo/Moorhead) to see what their ordinances are, how they enforce them, how they patrol their parks/trails, and other lessons learned.

Once Metro COG talks with a sufficient number of similar communities about their ordinances, lessons learned, etc., Metro COG will relay this information to Commissioner Strand and go from there.

6. Latest efforts of BIKE FM

D. Farnsworth provided the group with a brief update on the progress made by the BIKE FM group since the last meeting. Progress included:

- Updated BIKE FM website
- BIKE FM is currently working with the FM Rotary Club in figuring out locations to install 5 or 6 bicycle fix-it stations in the Fargo-Moorhead area, specifically within parks
- BIKE FM set up a table with Great Rides Bike Share at the NDSU Student Union on April 11th. BIKE FM provided educational materials and maps to students

It was asked if Metro COG could send the Committee the web link to BIKE FM so that they can post it on their webpages or social media. D. Farnsworth will send the link to the group after the meeting.

There was discussion about the fix-it stations. D. Farnsworth encouraged members of the Committee to submit any preferred locations of fix-it stations to him and he will work with Rotary in requesting the most preferred locations in the area.

A discussion also took place about the Great Rides Bike Share system. It was asked if/when Great Rides Bike Share might expand into Moorhead. D. Ramstad Skoyles replied that it likely won't expand into Moorhead until there is buy-in by either or both colleges (MSUM, Concordia).

7. Bicycle Friendly Community Application

Metro COG begin the application for Bicycle Friendly Community designation. The Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area received Bronze-level designation in 2014 which is about to expire in 2018. Therefore, we need to re-apply for the designation. We feel that, given the efforts made in the past four years, specifically the achievements of Great Rides Bike Share, that the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area has a chance at a higher designation such as Silver-level.

The application will need to be due by August 9th so Metro COG has already got a good start on the application. Roughly 75% of the questions are already answers. Farnsworth noted the questions that still need to be answered, for which he is asking members of the Committee to assist with any answers that might be within their expertise. Any answers can be sent to Farnsworth between now and the next Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee meeting.

8. Center Avenue Public Input Meeting

It was announced that a public open house will be held for the Moorhead Center Avenue Study on April 25th between 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead. D. Farnsworth reminded the group that adding bicycle facilities to NP/Center Avenue was a top priority of the 2016 Fargo-Moorhead Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.

9. Other business and citizen comments

P. Hollister shared an idea he proposed for the pole vaulters at Streets Alive this summer.

P. Hollister also shared information on the ongoing Barnesville Hwy 9 study that they are doing in cooperation with MnDOT and how there could be opportunities to link Barnesville with other communities via trail.

H. Durand mentioned that the FM Sustainability Network will be meeting May 7th from 5:30 – 7:00 pm at the Front Street Taproom in Fargo. The guest speaker will focus on the North Country National Scenic Trail which runs through ND, MN and other states. D. Farnsworth will email this information to the Committee after the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.