

127th Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting
December 4th, 2024 – 3:00pm
Hybrid Meeting – Virtual / In-person (Metro COG Conference Room)

Members Present

Dan Farnsworth, Chair, Metro COG
Cheryl Stetz, Fargo Cass Public Health
Forrest Steinhoff, City of Moorhead Planning
Kyle McCamy, West Fargo Engineering
Peyton Mastera, City of Dilworth
Tom Trowbridge, City of Moorhead Engineering
Eric Hodgson, City of Fargo Engineering
Maegin Elshaug, City of Fargo Planning
Tyler Kirchner, Fargo Parks
Cole Hansen, Cass County Planning
Rosemary Bruce-White, MnDOT - District 4
Patrick Hollister, PatnerSHIP 4 Health
Christine Holland, River Keepers
Kurt Kopperud, Citizen Representative

Others Present:

Ben Griffith, Metro COG
Paul Bervik, Metro COG
Aiden Jung, Metro COG
Terry Steen, Citizen/Flatlands Cycling Club
Jason Pike, Citizen

1. Welcome and Introductions

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

2. Approve minutes from September 11th, 2024 meeting

A motion to approve the September 11th minutes was made by E. Hodgson and seconded by K. McCamy. The minutes passed unanimously.

3. Public input opportunity

One member of the public was present at the time of the public input opportunity, however there were no public comments made.

4. Bike/Ped Committee Citizen Representative

In early September Metro COG solicited for a second citizen representative to serve on the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee. Metro COG received a total of nine applications. A selection committee comprised of representation from the jurisdictions of Horace, West Fargo, Fargo, Moorhead, and Dilworth was used to review the applications. Due to the competitive nature of the applications, the selection committee narrowed the applications down to the top three with the top three asked to participate in brief in-person interviews.

Upon interviews, Terry Steen, was the top ranked applicant. Pending approval by the Committee, Mr. Steen will serve the two-year term beginning January 1, 2025 and ending December 31, 2026.

A motion to approve Terry Steen as this solicitation's Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee's Citizen Rep was made by P. Mastera and seconded by T. Trowbridge. The motion was passed unanimously.

5. Procedure for Bike-Ped Committee Citizen Rep

D. Farnsworth described the current procedure for the two Bike/Ped Committee citizen representative seats. The current procedure allows for the citizen rep to be offered to serve another two years once their first two-year term is complete. However, Metro COG, in agreement with the citizen rep selection group felt this could be confusing for candidates and doesn't tap into the many quality interested candidates as frequently. Therefore, Metro COG is requesting this option for a two-year extension be excluded.

Another suggestion from Metro COG and the citizen rep selection group was to keep applications on-file for two years. This wouldn't require reapplying candidates to reapply every year. This would also retain interested candidates who may be discouraged from applying due to not being chosen in past years.

It was asked if applicants who've already served can reapply. After discussion, P. Mastera suggested that a person who's already served a term can't reapply immediately, but could reapply one year after their term has expired. For example, if their term expired Dec 31 2026, they could reapply in the September 2027 solicitation for the Jan 1, 2028 – Dec 31, 2029 term. Selection of that individual to serve on the Committee would be at the discretion of the representative selection group.

A motion for this new procedure was made by P. Mastera and seconded by F. Steinhoff. The motion is as follows: Omit offering a second term to citizen representatives immediately after their term, keep applications of applicants on-file for two years, and allow any serving citizen representatives to reapply one year after their term has expired.

6. Revised Transportation Alternatives (TA) Scoring

P. Bervik walked through proposed revisions to the TA as recommended by the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee in 2023. Bervik noted that a subcommittee met to revise the TA scoring criteria during the summer/fall of 2024. Bervik presented the proposed changes to the scoring criteria. These included:

- Urban TA Criteria: 5 points for maintenance projects which are not specified in a plan. This applies to the plan/study scoring criteria.
- Rural TA Criteria: 10 points for a project that maintains or rehabilitates an existing facility.
- A change to the environmental justice map. The revised map used the Census tract groups rather than the Census block groups and also broke the income groups into 'Below Median Household Income' and 'Below Environmental Justice Parameters'.

7. Review & scoring of urban TA applications

P. Bervik walked through the urban TA applications by briefly describing each project for which an application was submitted. Bervik then went through the scoring with the Committee for each project, pointing out the scoring for which he wanted the Committee's concurrence. None of the scores for the projects needed adjusting, however there were a few comments from Committee members requesting changes/considerations to scoring criteria in the future. Comments/changes/considerations to the scoring criteria were as follows:

- School proximity criteria – T. Trowbridge suggested considering a range of points for various distances.
- Land use criteria – It was suggested that in the future industrial land use should also be included, similar to commercial land use.

As a result of the scoring, the projects were scored as follows:

- City of Fargo – Drain 27/Deer Creek Shared Use Path Phase 1 – 30 pts
- City of Fargo – Drain 27/Deer Creek Shared Use Path Phase 2 – 30 pts
- City of Fargo – Low Level Drain 53 Crossing – 20 pts
- City of Fargo – Drain 53 Shared Use Path (64th Ave S to 73rd Ave S) – 20 pts
- City of West Fargo – Westside Elementary Area Pedestrian Ramps – 50 pts
- City of West Fargo – 8th Street Shared Use Path Reconstruct - 50 pts
- City of West Fargo – Beaton Dr Shared Use Path – 25 pts
- City of Moorhead – Bluestem Bridge Pedestrian Bridge - 35 pts

A motion to approve the scoring of the projects as shown was made by F. Steinhoff and seconded by K. McCamy. The motion was passed unanimously.

8. Review & scoring of rural TA applications

P. Bervik described the one rural TA application – a Cass County application for the reconstruction of a shared use path in Kindred. Bervik then went through the scoring with

the Committee. The Committee concurred with the scoring as presented. The scoring yielded 55 points for the Cass County / Kindred shared use path reconstruction project.

A motion to approve the scoring of the projects as shown was made by M. Elshaug and seconded by C. Stetz. The motion was passed unanimously.

9. Project updates

Clay County Heartland Trail Study

D. Farnsworth provided an update on the Heartland Trail Study in Clay County. Farnsworth noted that the study has narrowed down the alignments to one alignment. Farnsworth described the alignment and noted the opportunities and challenges with the alignment. He pointed out that a public open house will be held on Monday Dec 9th at the MSUM Science Center for the Buffalo River State Park management plan. Farnsworth encouraged the public and those interested in attending or to participate online. The Heartland Trail Study in Clay County is anticipated to be wrapped up in March of 2025.

Moorhead Safe Routes to School Plan

D. Farnsworth provided an update on the Moorhead Safe Routes to School Plan. He noted that this plan has been moving quickly, with work kicked off in the beginning of 2024. Metro COG is wrapping up the plan right now with a draft plan anticipated to be released to the public and study review committee by the end of the week.

Bike Map App update

D. Farnsworth updated the Committee on updates & fixes to the Fargo Moorhead Bike Map app. This app, which can be found on Metro COG's website and also downloaded via Apple Store or Google Play, is in the process of being updated. Metro COG strives to update the bikeway network on the app every two years or so. He also pointed out that the app may not be working via Google Play at the time being, but they are working with the app developer to get this resolved.

Bicycle Friendly Community Application update

D. Farnsworth noted that Metro COG submitted an application for Bicycle Friendly Community in June of 2024. This application is for the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area, which includes Fargo, West Fargo, Moorhead, Horace, and Dilworth. Applicants are anticipated to hear from the League of American Bicyclists by the end of the year about any potential awards. Farnsworth pointed out that Metro COG applied and was awarded Bronze designation in 2014 and 2018. The FM Area hopes to be awarded Bronze again, or possibly even Silver.

Installation of new bicycle & pedestrian counters

Bervik provided an update on the installation of new bicycle & pedestrian counters which Metro COG ordered in 2024. Bervik mentioned the Committee's involvement in selecting locations of future counter locations in the past. Metro COG was able to order eight

counters in 2024 which are currently being installed. Of the eight counters ordered, five have been installed thus far. Metro COG plans to install the other counters by the end of 2024. Bervik pointed out that data from the counters can be provided to jurisdictions via the data dashboard. Metro COG plans to provide jurisdictions with this access after all counters are set up.

10. Other business

There was no other business. The meeting was adjourned around 4:45 pm.