

126th Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting
September 11th, 2024 – 3:00pm
Hybrid Meeting – Virtual / In-person (Metro COG Conference Room)

Members Present

Dan Farnsworth, Chair, Metro COG
Cole Hansen, Cass County Planning
Rosemary Bruce-White, MnDOT - District 4
Don Lorsung, City of Dilworth
Jonathan Atkins, City of Moorhead Engineering
Forrest Steinhoff, City of Moorhead Planning
Jeremy Gorden, City of Fargo Engineering
Kurt Kopperud, Citizen Representative
Leslie McGillivray-Rivas, City of West Fargo Planning
Maegin Elshaug, City of Fargo Planning
Tyler Kirchner, Fargo Parks
Matt Jacobson, Cass County
Aaron Murra, NDDOT – Fargo District
Travis Moser – Fargo Policy Department

Others Present:

Ben Griffith, Metro COG
Paul Bervik, Metro COG
Chelsea Levorsen, Metro COG
Aiden Jung, Metro COG
Terry Steen, Citizen/Flatlands Cycling Club
Connor Cox, Bolton & Menk
Sam Trebilock, Houston Engineering

1. Welcome and Introductions

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

2. Approve minutes from June 5th, 2024 meeting

A motion to approve the June 5th minutes was made by D. Lorsung and seconded by J. Gorden. The minutes passed unanimously.

3. Public input opportunity

At least one member of the public was present, however there were no public comments during the public comment opportunity.

4. 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, which began in January is roughly 40% - 50% complete with and wrap-up timeframe of March of 2025.

Two phases of public involvement have occurred so far. Phase 1, which was entirely online was opened from mid-May to mid-July and received 57 map comments. Phase 2, which was opened from late-July through late-August involved a public open house, three pop-up events, and online engagement. Three trail alignments were developed for public engagement phase 2 for the public to 'vote' on and provide feedback. Farnsworth showed the three alignment alternatives to the Committee.

Farnsworth noted that anyone interested in receiving emails pertaining to the study can sign up by visiting Metro COG's website, clicking on Projects + RFPS, clicking on Heartland Trail Study, clicking on Public Engagement, and signing up for emails on that page.

Moorhead Safe Routes to School Study

C. Levorsen provided an update on the Moorhead Safe Routes to School Study which Metro COG is doing in-house. This study began last winter and is scheduled for approval in November of 2024. Work completed thus far includes existing conditions, site observations, and public engagement. Metro COG is currently working on a draft list of recommendations.

Levorsen noted that a lot of good comments have come from parents/caregivers as part of the public engagement. 138 responses were received from the parents/caregiver surveys. Levorsen passed out a graph showing the results of the survey which consisted of both online and in-person engagement. The top reasons parents aren't comfortable having their kids walk to school are: traffic speeds, weather, distance, and intersection safety.

The next steps are for Metro COG to look put together recommendations on infrastructure, policies, and activities.

5. Other updates

Bike Map App update

D. Farnsworth gave an overview of the Fargo-Moorhead Bike Map App to those not familiar with the app. The group looked at the map on the Metro COG website. While looking at the map, K. Kopperud commented on the limited east-west bicycle routes in the Fargo-Moorhead area. D. Farnsworth responded that this lack of east-west bikeways is a concern that Metro COG has been looking into over the past several years. During the 17th Ave Corridor Study, providing a key bikeway on this corridor was a key focus. 17th Ave will be reconstructed in the next year or two between University Dr and 25th St and will include a

shared use path. It was also noted that there are ongoing plans to continue separated bike lanes along the NP Ave/Center Ave corridor connecting downtown Fargo and Moorhead. There has also been discussion and planning efforts about a continuous east-west corridor following segments of path just north of 47 Ave S in Fargo & West Fargo.

Regarding the bike map app, Farnsworth noted that the GIS files have been updated to show the most recent bikeways in the FM area and Metro COG has sent those files to the app developer to update the app. Metro COG estimates it will take the app developer two months to update the app.

Bicycle Friendly Community Application update

In 2014 Metro COG completed and submitted the Bicycle Friendly Community Application for the Fargo-Moorhead area and the area was awarded Bronze status. The application was submitted again in 2018 and Bronze status was received again. In June of 2024 Metro COG submitted that application once again. Metro COG will hear the outcome of the application submittal in December of 2024.

New Bicycle & Pedestrian citizen representative update

D. Farnsworth noted the new process for citizen representation for the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee. Two citizen representatives will now be on the Committee, as opposed to one as before. Their two-year terms will be staggered, so a 'seasoned' representative will always be on the Committee. Applications were announced in early September with a due date for all applications on September 30th. So far Metro COG has received four applications.

After the due date, Metro COG will work with a subcommittee consisting of a representative from West Fargo, Fargo, Moorhead, Dilworth, and Horace to review the applications and choose the top ranked candidate. Farnsworth asked who would be the best representative from the jurisdictions to serve on this subcommittee. The representatives will be the following: West Fargo – Leslie, Fargo – Maegin, Moorhead – Forrest, Dilworth – reach out to Peyton, Horace – reach out to Jace.

6. Upcoming TA and CRP project solicitation

P. Bervik provided an update on the TA and CRP project solicitations. TA solicitations will open in October with a due date of November 15th. In December the scoring will be approved by the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee, and in January the Policy Board will approve the project rankings and awards. Bervik noted that available funding will be roughly \$2,000,000 on the ND side in both 2028 and 2029. On the MN side, there will be roughly \$600,000 across the two years.

The schedule will be the same for the CRP solicitation. Funding for the CRP on the MN side will be \$108,000 in 2027 and 2028 with \$50,000 available in 2025.

Since it was the desire by the Committee to make some revisions to the TA scoring, Bervik will set up a meeting with the subcommittee used in the past to assist with revisions of the scoring. Bervik noted he'd set up a meeting with them in the next few weeks.

7. Downtown Fargo River Corridor Recommendations

D. Farnsworth noted the public attention recently with the river corridor in downtown Fargo. In February a Fargo City Commissioner asked Metro COG to look into ways of making the downtown river corridor more comfortable for users. As such Metro COG met with several agencies/organizations to discuss improvements to the downtown river corridor. From those meetings Metro COG developed a document which provided recommendations to improve this area of concern. Farnsworth shared those recommendations with the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee as follows:

- Realign & reconstruct river trail from the north side of NP Ave to Main Ave bridge.
- Clear overgrown brush/trees along trail corridor and under bridges.
- Replace existing non-functioning lights (under bridges and on NP Ave) with new tamper-proof lights.
- Remove existing graffiti (graffiti removal occurred in June. However, ongoing removal needed)
- Consider murals on walls and bridge piers which experience frequent graffiti.

T. Moser mentioned that, in response to the recent Fargo City Commission decision, encampment rule notifications will begin on Friday followed by cleanup efforts the following Wednesday.

8. Other business

There was no other additional business. The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 pm.