

**96<sup>rd</sup> Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting  
March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – 3:00pm  
Metro COG Conference Room**

**Members Present**

Dan Farnsworth, Chair, Metro COG  
Bob Walton, NDDOT  
Tim Solberg, City of West Fargo  
Joe Anderson, Fargo Police Department  
Jeremy Gorden, City of Fargo Engineering  
Patrick Hollister, PartnerSHIP 4 Health  
Alyssa Johnson, Great Rides (proxy for Sara Watson Curry)  
Aaron Nelson, City of Fargo Planning (proxy for Maegin Elshaug)  
Vic Pellerano, Fargo Park District  
Christine Holland, River Keepers  
Erik Hove, Clay County

**Others Present:**

Barrett Voigt, City of Fargo Planning  
Michelle Gleason, Fargo Cass Public Health  
Courtland Miller, Kilbourne Group  
John Strand, Fargo City Commission

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting began at 3:05 pm. D. Farnsworth welcomed everyone and attendees introduced themselves.

**2. Approve minutes from December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 meeting**

A motion to approve the December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 minutes was made by T. Solberg and seconded by P. Hollister. The minutes were passed unanimously with no edits.

**3. Discuss bicycle & pedestrian park use after dark**

D. Farnsworth introduced this item by mentioning that at both a previous Metro COG Policy Board meeting and a City of Fargo Commission meeting Fargo Commissioner Strand expressed concerns about the ordinance which prohibits use of parks after dark. This means that walking or biking through a Fargo park or even along trails within park property after dark is illegal. This restricts those who may choose to commute or use these trails for transportation, especially during winter months when daylight hours are minimized.

Commissioner Strand mentioned that he wanted to bring this topic forth to this Committee for discussion. He also stated that lighting along some trails and within certain parks is worth considering if biking and walking through parks becomes legal.

There was discussion about gates that close many Fargo parks and it was stated that a bicyclist was killed when crashing into a gate after hours several years ago. It was mentioned that while these gates prohibit vehicles they also prohibit bicycle and pedestrian traffic. It was mentioned that in Bismarck they have had issues with motorcycles bypassing the gates and using the trails after dark.

There was also discussion about lighting within parks and along trails. It was mentioned that lighting along river trails could be problematic. In Moorhead there has been some lights along the river which ice chunks have damaged during floods. Meanwhile in Winnipeg lighting is provided along the river and the lights are removed during flood season.

D. Farnsworth will work with V. Pellerano in developing a list of popular parks/trails that could be candidates for lighting and thus candidates for allowing bicycle/pedestrian usage after dark. D. Farnsworth will also work with J. Gordon in developing cost estimates for such lighting. It was mentioned that Grand Forks could be a good resource in seeing how they allow/disallow usage along their Red River Greenway.

#### **4. Consider West Fargo Parks voting member**

D. Farnsworth discussed that the City of West Fargo is currently represented by one voting seat while the City of Moorhead is represented by two voting seats. As the City of West Fargo continues to grow rapidly, it only makes sense that West Fargo also has two voting seats on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee. D. Farnsworth also noted that when developing the 2016 Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, it became apparent the role that the West Fargo Park District plays in West Fargo's bicycle and pedestrian network. For these reasons, Metro COG believes that a voting seat for the West Fargo Park District on the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee is warranted.

It was asked if there are any concerns about West Fargo Parks not being able to attend meetings due to their busy schedule. D. Farnsworth mentioned that he talked to the Parks Director and it seems that she would be able to attend or at least send a proxy to most of the meetings. It was also noted that the Committee only meets on a quarterly basis so attending the meetings isn't a large commitment.

It was also asked how adding another member would affect the voting quorum. D. Farnsworth mentioned that since the voting seats would be increased from 18 to 19, this would not affect the quorum. The quorum would remain at 10.

A motion to approve adding a voting member seat for the West Fargo Park District was made by T. Solberg and seconded by V. Pellerano. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **5. Discuss completed 2016 FM Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

D. Farnsworth summarized that 2016 FM Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is complete and has been complete for several months. Metro COG has been presenting the Plan to local jurisdictions and obtaining resolutions of support from the jurisdictions. Metro COG has obtained resolutions of support from all jurisdictions except for the Moorhead City Council. Metro COG expect to receive this signed resolution March 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>. Metro COG's Policy Board has also provided a resolution of support.

Once the Moorhead resolution of support is received, the Plan will be designated officially complete and Metro COG will post the Plan to the its website, notify the public and interested persons, and will provide the Plan to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee. The Committee could: (1) request a paper copy of the Plan, (2) request the Plan via flash drive, and/or (3) download the pdf Plan via Metro COG's website. Metro COG will email the Committee at such time the Plan is officially complete. Metro COG will notify all regarding the Plan's availability within the next week or so.

## **6. Planned bicycle education and safety efforts**

It was noted that the top priority from the 2016 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was safety, education, and driver awareness. Therefore, D. Farnsworth was pleased to announce the progress made by Austin Hauf (MN Green Corps) in cooperation with PartnerSHIP 4 Health in developing an LREN (Local Regional Education Network). This LREN program has developed a group comprised of agencies interested in bicycle safety and education and the group has been meeting regularly. Progress made thus far includes: (1) numerous bicycle education classes that will be available to the public this spring and (2) discussions about reaching out to the public via billboards and/or local bus wraps.

P. Hollister handed out Moorhead Community Education catalogs to the group which displays bicycle education on the cover. These catalogs are sent to all Moorhead residents quarterly and some Fargo residents receive these catalogs too. This is great press for bicycle education. Classes are open to all.

## **7. Discuss mobile app/interactive FM bikeways map**

D. Farnsworth discussed that he has been approached by a few people (including a Metro COG Policy Board member) regarding a mobile app for the FM bikeways map. Ideally this app would show a user's location, show all streets, and would show all the different types of bicycle facilities in the FM area. Many other features could be included in the app such as tracking routes that people use, which would be used for planning purposes.

There was discussion by the group regarding this topic. The group felt as though this app may not be necessary for numerous reasons. There are already a number of apps out there such as MATBUS mobile, Great Rides Bike Share, Strava®, and Google Maps. The group felt that adding another app may lead to confusion and may detract from existing apps.

D. Farnsworth mentioned that while Google Maps is widely used, the local bicycle routes are inaccurate. Farnsworth mentioned that three years ago, Metro COG tried to work with Google to improve the Fargo-Moorhead bicycle network but was not successful. Google was not willing to be contacted and the only way to update the local bicycle network was to log into Google, submit changes for each bicycle network segment and hope that another reviewer approves the change. Metro COG's efforts with endeavor had minimal success.

After further discussion the group felt the best route would be to promote Google Maps for the local public to use and try and work with Google once again to update their bicycle network. It was noted that we might be able to work with Nokia Here Maps which is located in Fargo.

#### **8. Discuss bike routes on 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets between 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S & 18<sup>th</sup> Ave S**

Currently 9th St and 7th St are identified as bicycle routes between 5th Ave S and 18th Ave S in Fargo. When implemented many years ago, the idea was that 7th St would function as a northbound bicycle route while 9th St would function as a southbound bicycle route. For that reason, parking is only permitted on the east side of 9th St and the west side of 7th St. These corridors are identified as bike routes via green BIKE ROUTE signs.

Neighborhood organizers from the Clara Barton and Hawthorne neighborhood associations are concerned about traffic speeds on both 7th St and 9th St due to parking on only one side of the street. It has been asked by the neighborhood organizers that parking be considered on both sides of the roadway to calm traffic speeds.

J. Gorden asked the Committee if they felt 9<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets were used often by cyclists and whether the general public even knows that those are bicycle routes. Most of the Committee members preferred taking 8<sup>th</sup> St rather than 9<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Streets because it is more direct into downtown. They also felt that these routes are unknown to the public. Data from Strava® verified that their users use 8<sup>th</sup> St more than 7<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> Streets.

J. Gorden stated that the City will look into current speeds on 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> street by potentially doing a speed study. The City may also reach out to citizens of the Hawthorne and Clara Barton neighborhoods to work with them on parking on 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets and the possible re-designation of bicycle routes in that neighborhood.

There was also discussion about other bicycle routes throughout the FM Area, namely the routes that are designated only by green BIKE ROUTE signs. It was indicated that these signs are often unnoticed and few people actually know that such routes are designated

bicycle routes. There was discussion about whether these routes should be reconsidered. Some routes that were designated many years ago may not be as relevant today. For example, 25<sup>th</sup> Ave N in Fargo has fairly heavy traffic, narrow lanes, and has parking; yet this is designated as a bicycle route. It was decided that such a discussion or study metro-wide routes will be deferred to another time, perhaps at the time of the next FM bikeways map update.

## **9. Other business and citizen comments**

There was some additional discussion regarding the 2016 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and how we intend to implement the projects proposed in the Plan. D. Farnsworth mentioned that he encourages each jurisdiction to implement the projects proposed in the Plan. Metro COG would be happy to provide assistance as staff time allows. J. Gorden suggested that a good study that Metro COG could do in the future could be to study of how to implement specific projects/gaps in the system. For example, how could bicycle facilities be installed on the Broadway N corridor? On street? Shared-use path? Would there be sufficient right-of-way, parking? Would trees need to be removed?

P. Hollister announced that Minnesota LTAP is hosting a training class on 'Design and Operations of Separated Bike Lanes' in late March. One class will be held March 29<sup>th</sup> in Minneapolis and the other will be held March 30<sup>th</sup> in St Cloud. If anyone is interested they can sign up.

P. Hollister then announced that on Sunday April 23<sup>rd</sup> the Concordia Cobber bike ride will occur. The ride will begin and end at Concordia and will travel across the river into Fargo, north of downtown, and back down to Concordia on the Moorhead side. The ride is open to all interested. Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup> will be an alternate date if the weather is unfavorable on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 pm.