

110th Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting
January 29th, 2020 – 3:00pm
Metro COG Conference Room

Members Present

Dan Farnsworth, Chair, Metro COG
Jane Butzer, MnDOT
Peyton Mastera, City of Dilworth
Matt Jacobson, Clay County Planning
Bob Walton, NDDOT
Maegin Elshaug, City of Fargo Planning
Kim Lipetzky, Fargo Cass Public Health
Kim Citrowske, City of Moorhead Planning
Jonathan Atkins, City of Moorhead Engineering
Patrick Hollister, PartnerSHIP 4 Health
Malachi Peterson, City of West Fargo Planning (proxy for Tim Solberg)
Jeremy Gorden, City of Fargo Engineering
Christine Holland, River Keepers
Chris Garty, Citizen Representative (via phone)

Others Present:

Cindy Gray, Metro COG
Anna Pierce, Metro COG
Katie Kitowski, MN Green Corps
Melissa (Glaff), Fargo Cass Public Health
Luke Morman, City of Fargo Planning
John LaVoi, Citizen/Mobile Bicycle Doctor, LLC
Wayne Zacher, NDDOT Local Gov. Division (via phone)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 3:05 pm. Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Revised Committee Voting Members

A revised list of committee members was provided in the agenda packet. The revisions were as follows:

- Barrett Voigt is the new representative for the City of Horace, replacing Wade Frank
- Cass County's seat is currently vacant until the County hires a new Planner
- Matt Jacobson is the new representative for Clay County, replacing Erik Hove
- Chris Garty is the new citizen representative, replacing Jason Gates

In addition, Metro COG proposed including Dan Farnsworth, Committee Chair as a voting member. With Metro COG's other committees, the Chair is always a voting member. The quorum would remain at 11 voting members with the inclusion of Dan Farnsworth.

A motion to approve the proposed changes was made by P. Hollister and seconded by M. Elshaug. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. Approve minutes from October 16, 2019 meeting

Since a quorum wasn't present at the December 11th meeting, the October 16th meeting minutes were brought to the Committee for approval. The minutes were reviewed by the Committee. A motion to approve the October 16th minutes was made by J. Atkins and seconded by K. Lipetzky. The minutes were passed unanimously.

4. Approve minutes from December 11, 2019 meeting

The minutes were reviewed by the Committee. A motion to approve the December 11th minutes was made by M. Peterson and seconded by K. Citrowske. The minutes were passed unanimously.

5. Public input opportunity

An opportunity for public input was provided. No public input was provided.

6. FM Metro Bikeways Gap Analysis

Metro COG gave a presentation on the recently-completed FM Metro Bikeways Gaps Analysis.

In December 2018 Metro COG in cooperation with the jurisdictions of West Fargo, Fargo, Moorhead, and Clay County kicked-off the Fargo-Moorhead Bikeway Gap Analysis. Metro COG contracted with Toole Design (prime consultant) and Bolton & Menk (subconsultant) to perform the study's services.

This study looks at 16 key bikeway gaps in the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area. These gaps included three in West Fargo, seven in Fargo, two in Moorhead, one red river crossing, and three in Moorhead/Clay County. Many gaps stem from the 2016 Fargo-Moorhead Metro Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the 16 bikeway gaps by obtaining public input, review the existing conditions and local needs, and develop alternatives, costs, and implementation strategies for the gaps. The Plan was guided by a 14-member Study Review Committee and had extensive public involvement.

D. Farnsworth noted that the study can be found on Metro COG's website under the 'Projects + RFPs' section. He mentioned that upon approval by the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee, the study will be brought forward to Metro COG's TTC and Policy Board for final approval.

A motion to recommend Policy Board approval of the study was made by P. Hollister and seconded by J. Atkins. The motion was passed unanimously.

J. Gorden mentioned that he feels this study should also be brought to the Fargo City Commission for 'receive and file'. Metro COG will work with the City of Fargo to bring the study to the Commission at their Feb 10th meeting.

7. Fargo Safe Routes to School Plan

Metro COG gave a presentation on the Fargo Safe Routes to School Plan.

In November of 2018, Metro COG, in cooperation with the City of Fargo, commenced the Fargo Safe Routes to School Plan. Key stakeholders involved in the Plan's process included Metro COG, the City of Fargo, Fargo Public Schools, West Fargo Public Schools, and representatives from the private schools. The Plan was conducted in coordination with consulting firms Alta Planning + Design and KLJ.

Included in this Plan are all elementary and middle schools located within the City of Fargo (plus Liberty Middle School in the City of West Fargo). In total, 31 schools are included – all twenty Fargo Public Schools, five West Fargo Public Schools, and six Private Schools.

The purpose of the Plan is to provide information, resources, and recommendations to elected officials, city and school staff, and parents to make walking and bicycling safer and more inviting for students traveling to and from school. This Plan incorporates the "Six E's" of Safe Routes to School – Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, Evaluation, and Equity.

As part of this Plan's process, in-person community engagement was conducted, 495 student teacher tallies were completed, 1,421 parent caregiver surveys were received, and school arrival and dismissals were observed at each of the 31 schools.

Upon adoption by the City of Fargo and Metro COG Policy Board, the Plan will become publicly available for use by elected officials, city and school staff, and parents. The Fargo SRTS Plan will be available and accessible online after adoption at:

www.fmmetrocog.org/fargosrts

This was an informational item.

8. Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP)

D. Farnsworth notified the Committee about the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) STEP program. STEP stands for Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian.

In 2018, an estimated 6,227 pedestrians died in the United States, according to the Governors Highway Safety Association – the highest total number of pedestrian fatalities since 1990. Pedestrian fatalities increased by 35% between 2008 and 2017, while other traffic fatalities decreased by 6%. Of the pedestrian fatalities, 72% occurred at midblock locations.

STEP's purpose is to help transportation agencies address crashes by promoting countermeasures with known safety benefits at uncontrolled crossing locations.

D. Farnsworth encouraged local jurisdictions to consider these safety improvements at locations with pedestrian safety concerns and use the STEP program for guidance and justification for making such safety improvements.

J. Atkins was curious about the data which indicates a 35% increase in pedestrian fatalities. Some questions were brought up such as: how does this relate to increased population? How does this relate to increased pedestrian traffic? Has this number increased due to smart phone use by both drivers and pedestrians?

Links were provided for accessing the STEP tools.

9. Update on Clay County Heartland Trail

An update was provided on the status of the Clay County Heartland Trail. It was noted that, Metro COG continues to coordinate the Clay County Heartland Trail Task Force. Currently, the Task Force is working with the Becker County Heartland Trail Group and advocates of the Heartland Trail near Park Rapids in proposing a \$4.2 Million Bonding Bill for the upcoming Minnesota legislative session. Resolutions of support are in the works by all the local jurisdictions along the proposed corridor in Clay County.

The Task Force is also looking at an alternative route that may include proposing the trail along US Highway 10 between Glyndon and Dilworth. In 2024, MnDOT plans to reconstruct the westbound bridge on US 10 over the Buffalo River (between Glyndon and Dilworth). There is an opportunity for the bridge to accommodate the Heartland Trail if the trail is proposed to use that route.

C. Garty asked if it would be possible to utilize the railroad tracks or railroad land between Moorhead and Hawley. Several from the Committee noted that it is very difficult to work with BNSF and also noted that given the train traffic (~100 trains/day) these tracks will need to remain in-place.

10. Other business

P. Hollister notified the Committee that a public open house for Moorhead's Downtown Master Plan will be held on February 6th from 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm at the Moorhead Center Mall food court area.

M. Peterson notified the Committee that Governor Burgum's state of the state address occurred today and two grant opportunities were mentioned:

- The Main Street Community Vibrancy Grant program – will fund small projects that activate space or add vibrancy in other ways.
- The Partners in Planning Grant program – provides grants up to \$30,000 to fund comprehensive plans or economic development and diversification strategies.

Meeting adjourned 4:35 pm.