

HENNEPIN COUNTY
MINNESOTA

Active Transportation Committee

Date: Monday, December 16, 2024

Time: 4 – 6 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams conference call

Committee Members:

- ✓ Tammy McLemore, Dist. 1
- ✓ Gilbert Odonkor, Dist. 1
- ✓ Billy Binder, Dist. 2
- ✓ Jenny Ackerson, Dist. 2
- ✓ Laura Mitchell, Dist. 3
- ✓ Dave Carlson, Dist. 3
- ✓ Larissa Lavrov, Dist. 4
- ✓ Haley Foydel, Dist. 4
Lou Dzierzak, Dist. 5
- ✓ Henrik Kowalkowski, Dist. 5
- ✓ Luke Van Santen, Dist. 6
Lou Miranda, Dist. 6
- ✓ Greg Anderson, Dist. 7
- ✓ Clara Sandberg, Dist. 7

Ex-Officio Members:

- ✓ Jordan Kocak, HC Public Works
- ✓ Dan Patterson, HC Public Works
- ✓ Danny McCullough, Three Rivers Park
District
- ✓ Tristan Trejo, MnDOT

Guests:

- ✓ Tom Musick, HC Public Works
- ✓ Dan Miller, District 2 resident

Notes

- **Approval of the October 2024 minutes** **4:00 – 4:05**
 - Billy Binder moved to approve the October 2024 meeting minutes. Dave Carlson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

- **Hennepin County Toward Zero Deaths Action Plan** **4:05 – 4:35**
 - Tom Musick, the toward zero deaths coordinator for Hennepin County Transportation Planning introduced himself and the county's Safety Action Plan.
 - The plan is to complete the effort in the first half of 2025. It is funded with federal dollars.
 - Several cities in the county also are pursuing their safety action plan
 - St. Louis Park
 - Minneapolis already has one
 - Bloomington
 - Edina
 - Brooklyn Park
 - Bloomington
 - Metropolitan Council also is creating a safety action plan.
 - We're using a safe system approach.
 - Safe road users
 - Safe vehicles
 - Post-crash care
 - Safe roads
 - Safe speeds
 - Old thinking was to limit all crashes. In the past few years we and others have focused on reducing severe and fatal crashes, not necessarily chasing every fender-bender.
 - To do this, you ask Where is the risk for severe and fatal crashes?
 - Roundabouts are an example; an intersection used to be four-way. With a roundabout you still could get rear-end crashes or fender-benders, but it's less of a problem when you're trying to solve for the 50 mph red-light runner right-angle crash.
 - Plan development through 2024 into first quarter of 2025. Progress so far:
 - We've reviewed other localities' plans. What are they doing? What's working well? What can we apply?
 - Data collection with Kimley-Horn for where risk is greatest. With that data, we're identifying a high injury network. We will take it an additional step to high-priority safety network. The high injury network will be where 50 percent to 60 percent of fatal and severe crashes occur. The high-priority safety network will winnow it down with an equity lens and vulnerable user lens to make it more proactive. The high injury network is reactive, as that's the nature of crash data.
 - We've been doing community engagement with online map and comments at <https://beheardhennepin.org/toward-zero-deaths>. You can drop in a pin on the map with concerns about speeding or crossing a street. We've gotten 400 comments so far, much of which is anecdotal that our data collection won't catch; e.g. close calls that don't result in a crash.

- We've been doing stakeholder outreach, meeting with city partners, groups like the Active Transportation committee. We're showing which roads are likely candidates for our high-injury network in the particular cities.
 - We'll have a dashboard with strategies and how we're making a difference, what are we doing about it.
- Literature review included
 - Minnesota vulnerable road user safety assessment
 - Minnesota strategic highway safety plan
 - Minnesota state ped safety analysis
 - Jersey City & Hoboken, New Jersey plans
 - Alexandria, Virginia's plan
 - Montgomery County, Virginia's plan
 - Portland, Oregon's efforts
 - Denver, Colorado's efforts
- Literature review found:
 - You need the support of committed leadership
 - The importance of demonstration and quick-build projects, particularly in Hoboken. We don't do that much at Hennepin County now; maybe that will change.
 - Building a culture of safety.
 - There are many forms of data and process transparency
 - A blueprint for emerging tech adoption
- Safety analysis
 - What is happening? Who is impacted? We don't have high-injury network to share right now; our leadership is reviewing it now. I will share that it definitely leans toward the urban areas. In Minneapolis, Franklin, Lowry, Lake, Park, Portland. That's not surprising; they're busy, with a mix of modes. Proportionally fewer in suburban context. Current draft doesn't have any segments in rural areas. In the statewide effort if you look apples to apples, with vulnerable road users, it's just Minneapolis and St. Paul. We're seeing something similar with the county.
- We're using the Metropolitan Council's designation of urban, suburban and rural for the high injury network.
- High priority safety network builds off the high injury network to represent more holistic safety priorities.
 - Can be used to help determine future capital project priorities, including seeking grants. Help with federal transportation funding like the Highway Safety Improvement Program and the regional solicitation process.
- Public engagement
 - Biggest push has been the online survey and map. We want to hear what people's experiences are on our roads. Including the good experiences, say on Lyndale Avenue that Josh Potter worked so hard on. The site will be open into 2025; we don't have a date to turn it off.
 - We've gone out to community groups

- Looking at creating a display at Community Connections conference in Minneapolis in February.
- Stakeholder engagement
 - County partners
 - Cities, park district, Metropolitan Council
- Next steps
 - Continue to get comments from www.beheardhennepin.org/toward-zero-deaths.
 - Finalize high injury network and high priority safety network.
 - Meet with stakeholders to share findings.
 - Finalize safety strategies.
 - Prepare final report for approval by County Board in 2025. We have until end of year to meet the federal funding requirements, but we want to wrap it up in the first half.
- The plan formalizes our safety activities to be more proactive and holistic. This will help shift things to where safety leads project selection more rather than just going by road age or condition and seeing if we can then add safety onto that.
- Tom gave a brief walkthrough of the www.beheardhennepin.org/toward-zero-deaths site with the interactive map.
 - The county can pull the comments off the map to share with capital planning or project managers in specific areas.
 - Dan Miller: Can you access that comment and add a comment below it, respond to it? Tom Musick: No, but you can create your own by dropping a pin on it or next to it. Dan Miller: I'm more familiar with it on Marshall Street, it worked well. I don't recall whether you could like or dislike comments. I think that's an interesting tool where you don't have time to write something, but you agree with it. If it isn't there, that'd be something to explore.
 - Dave Carlson: What do the numbers mean in the circles? Tom: That's the number of comments in an area. When you zoom in the dots and numbers will change.
 - Dave Carlson: You said the focus would be in the urban areas for the high injury network. But if we're looking for serious injuries and fatalities, wouldn't it be more in the suburban areas with higher speeds? Tom: We're doing it in half-mile segments. The tricky part with rural segments is they're scattered. It's hard to see it's a high-injury street; something happened here, there's a hot spot over here, but it's difficult to call that a high-injury segment. Our data team is using [kernel density estimation](#) to analyze that. Dave: Highway 65 for example, with traffic over 50 mph, and it has several pedestrian crashes. Tom: It's tricky, you go west, toward Rockford, speeds are high, more people are starting to live there and trying to cross the street but there aren't necessarily many crashes today. Will it make the high injury network? Probably not at this point. I imagine we will have some rural representation.
 - Clara Sandberg: I saw that comment about brush or trees in the map, not sure if that's the county role. Do you want the data if something's not getting plowed or there's debris on the street? Tom: If it's on a county road, yes. That's a good comment for our operations side. They'll go out and clean up brush or identify what needs to be done. And if it's not a county road we'll pass it on to the city.

- Dave Carlson: You're concentrating on county roads? Tom: Yes. Dave: So if someone comments outside the county roads? Tom: That's OK, we'll share it with city partners or MnDOT. That can be helpful, especially for smaller cities that might not have the same kind of effort. People of course don't think about what kind of road they're using, they just go where they're going.
- Billy Binder: Are you implying that in Rockford, with higher speeds, 65 mph with deaths, you're going to direct more enforcement to address that? Tom: We'll discuss that with the cities. If we're hearing of speeding we can let police know. The data from the past few years, we're not seeing a lot of fatalities and there isn't a specific pattern. Billy: Rockford with TH 55, state highway, but if on a county highway, would we direct the county sheriff to beef up enforcement? Tom: We can at least let them know if we find hot spots. Enforcement can really make a difference, especially on excessive speeding. Billy: It hasn't always been this crazy on the roads. Police aren't issuing tickets. It's crazy out there. Fremont Ave N. protected bikeway headed southbound crossing West Broadway — which is a county highway — I almost got hit. It's happening all the time. I had six instances of crazy driving pulling up to a traffic light. Tom: We've seen excessive speeding really go up the past six years or so. The judicial system has a role, too, whether someone sees consequences for a fatal or other crash. I have my eye on it what Ethan Fawley with Vizion Zero in Minneapolis and what they're doing with the red light cameras. Sometime after August they'll start their pilot project. People can then get a citation for going 10 mph or more over the limit. This kind of enforcement can make a difference, especially with excessive speeding, e.g. 55 mph in a 30. We're watching from a distance how that pilot program goes. If it goes well, there's potential to expand that to other cities or MnDOT's looking at work zones.
- Laura Mitchell: Do you plan to close the map in preparation for the report? It'd be great to have this open all the time to share close calls. It feels wrong to wait for the crashes to gather things like that. Tom: That was the plan [to close it], but it's our platform and we have the ability to keep it going. And we'll look to revise the plan about every five years, so maybe we should keep it open.
- Dave Carlson: Is this able to be proactive with new infrastructure or trails or schools going in? Can you predict problems and address it before? Tom: With the high priority safety network the idea is to be more proactive and look at where people are and where they want to go. It's tricky, but the idea is where people don't feel safe crossing the street, maybe there was only one incident in the past five years, but then maybe it's because people aren't crossing there because they don't feel safe. We're trying to be as proactive as we can. We're looking at what other cities are doing with slow zones, and not just with schools, but, for example, Denver is doing it near senior housing.
- Tom Musick: I'd love to update you more as we release the high injury network and to go over results from survey and what kind of issues people would like to see addressed.

- Danny McCullough from Three Rivers Park District introduced himself for an update on Three Rivers's work on regional trails over the coming year.
 - Snapshot of the regional trail system:
 - About 200 miles of regional trail (180 under Three Rivers Park District jurisdiction)
 - 93 miles planned and waiting on funding
 - 112 miles of search corridor
 - 405 miles for the whole system at full buildout
 - In 2025 will be working on an east-west corridor in Maple Grove and Corcoran for a regional trail alignment. We're focusing on the northwest part of the county. Corcoran developing fast. Trying to connect Crow-Hassan, Baker Creek. We're really focusing out that way. So when developers buy up tracts of land for development we can get trails built as part of that development.
- User data from visitor study
 - About 42 percent increase in visitation to regional trails since 2014. About 6.5 million trail visits every year on the system. That's about 44 percent of our park system visitation.
 - About 22 percent growth in the system over the past five years.
- In the next four or five years, a mix of reconstruction and new projects.
 - Federal funding for 2025-2027
 - Eagle Lake Plymouth 2025 or 2026; underpass of TH 55 at Hopkins Crossroad.
 - Nine Mile Creek Hopkins next summer, the little portion of it that's sidewalk or narrow trail near the light rail line at 11th Avenue.
 - Shingle Creek Regional Trail full reconstruction and partial realignment in 2027. Boardwalk around Palmer Lake, realign near border with Minneapolis. Trail is there but in poor condition and needs realignment.
 - Bryant Lake in 2027, Lake Minnetonka to Bryant Lake basically along Baker Road
 - Federal funding for 2028-2029
 - CP Rail trail in 2029
 - North Cedar Lake in Hopkins and St. Louis Park in 2029
 - Shingle Creek Noble 2026
 - CP Rail Hyland Park Reserve to across Bush Lake Road and 494.
 - New regional trailheads: Lake Minnetonka Park
- Luke Van Santen: I imagine that parks are the primary destinations out there (referencing your comment about the east west corridor including Corcoran) right now, but will your search identify other, non-park, destinations that have a higher likelihood of benefiting from having active transportation AND then select a corridor alignment that provides, in addition to an outstanding recreational trail facility, an outstanding transportation corridor? Danny: Yes, we want to connect our parks and regional trails. As we go into the plans, we'll be looking to link them together as a priority. We'll look at other destinations as well. We work with cities, we identify generally a trail will go Point A to Point B, then look at city bike/ped plans and where they align, then schools, job centers, retail, so it's not just connecting parks.

- Dave Carlson: Are the dates pretty well set? Danny McCullough: We have some flexibility, they might move a little. We do have deadlines for the federal funding we'll have to meet.
- Danny McCullough: We're also working with cities on trailheads, Lake Minnetonka RT, drive to trailhead then bike or walk from their car at Manitou Park and Freeman Park.
- Jordan Kocak: I noticed the new Bassett Creek Trail isn't on your map? Danny McCullough: That's this summer for construction. Along Golden Valley Road to Theo Wirth; it's our first project next summer. It's already old news for me so I don't have it on here.
- Dave Carlson: You'll continue routine maintenance? Danny McCullough: Yes. We've been trying to wrap our heads around our ability to maintain our trails to the standard we want. Looking ahead, we're looking to add funding to make sure we keep up on maintenance as we're building it out. We have two people who work full time on trail maintenance for 200 miles plus a supervisor. It's a lot to take care of.
 - Expect future staffing needs over 10 years to add two technicians and two park keepers.
 - \$2,942 for maintenance per mile every year; \$5,193 for unpaved. Resurface every seven years or so.
 - We feel like every 35 or 40 miles of trail we need a maintenance worker.
- Billy Binder: Bassett Creek Trail is very good news for those of us in Golden Valley, Medicine Lake, Minneapolis, the 2nd District. We're very excited about it.
- Greg Anderson: Underpass of 55 in 2026? Danny: 2025, but that's a multiyear project.
- Tom Musick: Safety nerd question for you: What's your perspective on ebikes? Danny: As you all know, ebikes are exploding in popularity. I think they're great and they benefit a lot of people. But with increased volume, you have increased conflict. We've been getting a lot of public comments about ebikes, about 100 in the past year, which is a lot compared with other topics. Most of what we think people are seeing are bad actors not necessarily on ebikes but something faster or modified. Most people on ebikes are doing the right thing. We basically allow an ebike anywhere a bicycle is allowed. If a bicycle is allowed on a mountain bike trail, we allow an ebike. Dan Miller: Are the reports geographic? Danny: Mostly west Lake Minnetonka. Dakota Rail, but then also Rush Creek. Also some comments on electric scooters, but mostly ebikes. Fewer comments about the racing spandex bikers that we used to get and more about ebikes. We can enforce it at times, we do have officers, but we can't be on all 200 miles all the time. People have to get along. Ebikers have to be responsible and respectful just like everyone else. We also have some new share the trail signs going up this year.
- Dave Carlson: Winter maintenance on regional trails are with the city? Danny: We turn the option of winter plowing over to the cities and if they want to do it, we reimburse them. It would be a monumental task for us to plow the whole system. The cities can work with their schedules to try to avoid pushing snow back and forth between trails and roads. Most of the system, about 150 miles, are plowed. The only ones not maintained are further out, northwest. Clara Sandberg: If we see some not being plowed, do we contact you? Danny: Yes, and I'd get in touch with the city. We've had good luck with the program. We reimburse \$500 per mile for the season. I wish we could give more, but it's something.
- Dave Carlson: There was an article in the paper about Brookin Park northwest of 610 and 94, I noticed Rush Creek Trail, do you have a permanent easement there? Danny

McCullough: We own a lot of land up there, there's also the blue line extension. There's a lot going on up there.

• **Draft resolution of support for West Mississippi River Regional Trail grant 5:10 – 5:20**

- Danny McCullough: We are applying for a federal RAISE grant to build trail along West River Road in Champlin. I'm requesting a letter of support. We applied last year and weren't successful. Would connect 109th Avenue Mississippi Gateway area to downtown Champlin at 169. Dave Carlson: Same thing as last time you're applying for? Danny: Yes, the same thing.
- Jordan Kocak: You sent a draft letter, but could we package it so one person could sign the letter? Danny McCullough: Sure.
- Jordan Kocak showed a draft resolution and read it aloud.
- Luke Van Santen: Not a major change, but is it more accurate to call it a connection project instead of an expansion project? Danny: I think expansion is fine, we are building new trail as part of the Mississippi River Trail, which is a federally identified trail. It's also the title of the grant.
- Dave Carlson: I just hope that if West River Road lane configurations, if there are existing onroad facilities if we can retain those. Danny: I don't think there are bike lanes, but some shoulders. The intersections would be improved. We're at about 60 percent plans. Dave: A shoulder would be good. Danny: We'd be building it to county standards, which would favor a shoulder. We're going to make it safer for people in cars, too, it's not just a bike trail.
- Dave Carlson moved to approve the resolution of support for the RAISE grant application. Luke Van Santen seconded the motion.
- The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.
- Danny McCullough: There was a one-page summary of the project in your packet, too.

• **Member announcements**

5:20+

- Jordan Kocak: I'm hoping this will be the last in-person meeting in this room [the Auditorium in the Government Center basement]. The county bought the 625 Building, the old Thrivent building, and we've been moving into there. There's a space in there that used to be the dining room. It'll be on the skyway level.
- Jordan Kocak: Since it's the end of the year, everyone's invited to a happy hour at Dan Kelly's on 7th.
- Billy Binder: I think the in-person meetings are invaluable to see old friends and make new ones. It's so much better to have discussion in person without the restrictions of the online meetings. I encourage in-person meetings as much as possible.
- Luke: St. Louis Park has a safety action plan they're getting feedback on on their Web site [<https://www.stlouisparkmn.gov/government/departments-divisions/engineering/safe-streets-action-plan>] with a similar map. You can add comments. I don't know the deadline, but it might not be a bad idea to look at that.
- Minnetonka and Hennepin County are going to be working together to reconstruct Minnetonka Boulevard 101 to Williston in 2027. Similarly have interactive map. That's open through the end of the month.

- Dave Carlson: Minnetonka also is looking to construct a trail west of Williston on the north side of Minnetonka Boulevard in 2026.
- Billy Binder introduced guest Dan Miller, a longtime member of the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee. Billy: I work with him on issues in the second district. Dan's invaluable.

Next meeting: January 27 | 4 – 6 p.m.

Microsoft Teams