



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Public Works

Date: June 23, 2015

To: Honorable Kevin Reich, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee

Subject: **Protected Bikeway Update to the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan**

Recommendation:

Approve the Protected Bikeway Update to the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan

Previous Directives:

April 21, 2015 – City Council received and filed update of the Draft Protected Bikeways Update to the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan.

April 29, 2014 – City Council received and filed update on the development of the Protected Bikeways Update to the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan.

June 28, 2013 – City Council adopted the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan.

June 22, 2011 – City Council approved the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan.

Department Information

Prepared by: Matthew Dyrdaahl, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, 612-673-3642

Approved by: _____
Steven A. Kotke, P.E., Director of Public Works

Presenters in Committee: Matthew Dyrdaahl, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

Financial Impact

Implementation of plan will require additional capital investment and maintenance funding.

Community Impact

City Goals:

- Living well: Minneapolis is safe and livable and has an active and connected way of life.
- Great Places: Natural and built spaces work together and our environment is protected.
- One Minneapolis: Disparities are eliminated so all Minneapolis residents can participate and prosper.

Supporting Information

A protected bikeway is a bicycle facility that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Off-street trails are the most common type of protected bikeway; protected bikeways may also be located within street corridors and separated from traffic lanes through parked cars, curbs, medians, bollards/flexible traffic posts, planters or other vertical feature.

There is growing commitment to implement protected bikeways in Minneapolis. Protected bikeways have been considered in a number of recent street design processes. The current Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan, approved in 2011, addresses a broad range of bikeway facility types, including off-street trails, bike boulevards, bike lanes, and shared lanes. It does not however, specifically address on-street protected bikeways. The City of Minneapolis adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2013 that recommends implementing 30 miles of on-street protected bike facilities by 2020. The Draft Protected Bikeways Update to the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan identifies near-term projects to achieve that goal.

The Protected Bikeway Update is the result of a year-long planning process that began with a public open house and online survey in spring 2014 that sought input on where protected bikeways are most needed. City staff used the public input to identify potential locations where protected bikeways could be considered, while also considering other areas with high bicycle demand, high traffic conflict and good network integration. Staff worked with the Bicycle Advisory Committee to identify 19 corridors for further evaluation.

Of the 19 corridors, 17 were further evaluated by a team of Minneapolis Public Works and Hennepin County staff. It was difficult to determine the feasibility of implementing some segments due to challenging tradeoffs with existing curb-side uses. This includes significant portions of two downtown corridors (Hennepin Ave S/1st Ave N and 5th/6th Streets S): these segments are identified as bikeway facility type "to be determined." The appendix contains the results of this feasibility analysis, including a preliminary design concept for each corridor. It also includes cost estimates based on a protected bikeway design with flexible delineator posts. Costs could be higher based on different design scenarios.

The recommended near-term protected bikeway projects in this plan update include the results of this planning process, as well as protected bikeways that were already programmed for implementation in 2015 or later.

Similar to the current Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan, it is important to note that this plan update is to be used as guidance for the design process. Community input and technical factors may result in a different design. As opportunities to implement protected bikeways arise, staff will develop engagement plans for each project based on the context of the corridor, including type of opportunity (e.g. street resurfacing, street reconstruction), level of technical challenges and the range of stakeholders.

Summary of engagement efforts

A significant amount of community engagement occurred during the development of the Protected Bikeway Update to the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan. Results of engagement efforts in 2014 and 2015 are included as an appendix to the plan.

The most recent comment period for the Draft Protected Bikeway Update was held between April 17 and May 17, 2015. Public Works staff held a public Open House on April 29th. Staff also presented the draft plan to the Downtown Minneapolis Transportation Management Organization (April 23), the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee (April 27), the Downtown Improvement District Greening and Public Realm Committee (May 8), and the Minneapolis Corporate Bike Forum (April 24). There was also a significant amount of engagement around the plan during Minneapolis Bike Week, which took place from May 11 to May 17.

A total of 1,716 comments were received during the comment period. Public Works staff collected 126 written comments and other volunteers (from the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition and the Sierra Club) collected 1,590 comments/signatures. The Minneapolis Downtown Council, Hennepin County, and the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition submitted letters in support of the draft plan. Each of the letters included recommended changes to the narrative.

All Comments on Overall Draft		
	Number	Percentage
Supportive of Overall Draft	1683	98.1
Non-Supportive Feedback	2	0.1
Neutral/mixed Feedback	3	0.2
No Comment on Overall Draft	28	1.6
Total	1716	100

Safety was the top reason people cited in support of protected bike lanes. Other notable reasons for support include health, environment, prioritization of bicycle infrastructure, and connectivity/access. Connectivity was also cited as a concern about the draft plan, along with maintenance, parking removal, and equity concerns.

All Provided Reasons for Support or Concern			
Supportive of Draft Because		Concerned About Draft Because	
Safety	358	Connectivity/Access	11
Health	67	Maintenance	9
Environment	43	Parking Removal	4
Bike Prioritization	26	Equity	3
Connectivity/Access	25	Travel Lane Removal	2
Equity	18	Safety	1
Maintenance	6	Funding/Cost	1
Design	3	Business	1
Traffic Calming	2	Signals/Signage	1
Funding/Cost	2		
Business	2		
Parking Removal	1		
Travel Lane Removal	1		
Signals/Signage	1		

Notable additions to the plan based on comments received

Protected Bikeway Map

A map was created that clearly shows the proposed protected bikeway network overlaid with the existing trail system. This map shows how the recommended protected bikeways will connect the trails with the core of downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Protected Bikeways Not Identified In The Plan

The Protected Bikeway Plan sets priorities for where the City will spend time and resources for at least the next 5-10 years. Narrative was added to clarify that this plan does not preclude protected bikeways on streets not specifically identified in the plan update. Other corridors will be considered and re-examined when other major implementation changes to the infrastructure would result or are pending (e.g. street reconstruction, etc.).

Transportation projects will be evaluated based on a variety of perspectives and will include protected bikeways if it determined to be the best treatment based on community engagement, context of the roadway, and surrounding land uses.

Project Selection/Criteria

The initial selection of the 17 corridors used three criteria categories: high bicycle demand, high traffic conflict, and good network integration. The selection and implementation of protected bikeways moving forward will also incorporate equity criteria and other considerations, such as street reconstruction projects that are already programmed, and linkages to other projects.

Routes That Are "To Be Determined"

There was significant interest in the projects that were labeled "to be determined." The attached feasibility report outlines challenges that will need to be addressed in a community engagement process. Staff feels it is appropriate to leave them as "to be determined" in the plan and work through the issues as part of the community engagement and design process.

Maintenance Narrative

Maintenance language was added to clarify the intent of including estimated costs. Maintenance of the entire transportation system in Minneapolis is important so that people can safely and comfortably move around the City regardless of how they choose to do so, including people that walk, bicycle, take transit, and drive an automobile. Maintenance considerations are very important as protected bikeway projects become more prevalent in Minneapolis. Ensuring year round use of these facilities is dependent upon adequate funding.

Washington Av (5th Ave S to 19th Ave S)

Hennepin County noted concerns about Washington Avenue from 5th Ave S to 19th Ave S being included in the Tier 1 projects. They noted that a protected bikeway would require significant island modification or removal for multiple blocks between 5th Ave and 35W that would not be within the scope of the county's restriping work for 2016. Therefore, the project was moved from Tier 1 to Tier 3 in the plan.

More information is available on the City's website: www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles

Attachments

Protected Bikeways Update to the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan and the Protected Bikeway Feasibility Analysis