



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

Date: July 19, 2011
To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Subject: **Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan**

Recommendation:

- a) Approve the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan.
- b) Refer to staff to work with the Bicycle Advisory Committee to achieve consensus on the attached BAC Recommendations for the Implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan or identify recommendations within that document for which staff/BAC agreement cannot be reached. Report back to Committee by end of year.

Previous Directives:

- November 30th, 2010, Receive and File; Bicycle Master Plan Update and Public Comments
- August 17th, 2010, Receive and File; Draft Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan
- May 28, 2010, Receive and File; Minneapolis Bicycle Design Guidelines.
- July 17th, 2009 Council Action: Approving the Access Minneapolis 10-Year Transportation Action Plan and directing Public Works to complete a Bicycle Master Plan.

Prepared by: Donald Pflaum, P.E., P.T.O.E., Transportation Planner 673-2129
Don Elwood, P.E., Director of Transp. Planning & Engineering 673-3622

Approved by:

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenters: Donald Pflaum, Transportation Planner 673-2129
Nick Mason, Bicycle Advisory Committee Chair

Reviews: Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Not Applicable
Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plan: Not Applicable
Policy Review Group (PRG): Not Applicable

Financial Impact

No budget impact

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification: Yes

City Goals: Integrated, multi-modal transportation choices border to border

Comprehensive Plan: Meets comprehensive plan goals and is consistent with Bike Master Plan

Zoning Code: NA

Background Information

In August 2010, the draft Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan was brought before the T and PW Committee of the City Council as a Receive and File document. After conducting an extensive public process, a thorough review by the Bicycle Advisory Committee, and numerous document changes, it is recommended that the Bicycle Master Plan be approved as presented.

Public Process

An open house for the Bicycle Master plan was held in June 2008 with over 150 people in attendance. The feedback from this meeting was used to draft the document. An additional 5 public meetings were held in August/September 2010 to solicit additional public input. The 5 public meetings were held in the four planning quadrants (North, Northeast, South, and Southwest) in addition to a meeting held for Downtown Minneapolis. Over 100 people participated in the 5 public meetings and approximately 20 people e-mailed their comments. Public Works also met with several partner agencies between August and November to resolve remaining jurisdictional issues pertaining to the plan.

Public Comments were taken from August 17, 2010 to October 1, 2010, allowing for a 45-day comment period. The city received comments through e-mail, at the public meetings, through on-line surveys, and from the project website. All public comments received were presented to the Minneapolis City Council as a Receive and File Document in November 2010. Public Comments were forwarded to the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory and to Public Works for review. Numerous changes were made to the plan between November 2010 and June 2011 to address the public comments received.

The Bicycle Advisory Committee has provided extensive input into the final version of the Bicycle Master Plan.

Content

The purpose of the Bicycle Master Plan is to establish goals, objectives, and benchmarks that improve safety and mobility for bicyclists and increase the number of trips taken by bicycle. The Bicycle Master Plan discusses existing bicycle policies, evaluates existing conditions, conducts a needs analysis, creates a list of prioritized projects and initiatives, and suggests possible funding sources to complete the plan.

The final version of the Bicycle Master Plan has been organized into the following chapters:

Chapter 1—Introduction: This section states the purpose of the plan, establishes a vision, discusses guiding principals, explains the community input process, and presents how the plan is organized.

Chapter 2—History of Bicycling in Minneapolis: This chapter looks at bicycling in Minneapolis through the past century.

Chapter 3—Policy Framework: The policy framework evaluates the various plans currently in place including the 2001 Bicycle Master Plan, the Hennepin County Bicycle Transportation Plan, the Metropolitan Council Regional Trails Plan, and the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 4—Existing Conditions: This section looks at the existing state of bicycling throughout the city as it relates to each of the E's; education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, evaluation, and equity. The section looks at bicycle program strengths and weaknesses with emphasis placed on what has been working well for the city.

Chapter 5—Needs Analysis: The needs analysis is an assessment on what is needed to make the city more bicycle friendly. Although the city has demonstrated success with the bicycle program, improvement is still needed.

Chapter 6—Goals, Objectives, and Benchmarks: Setting goals, objectives, and benchmarks are important steps in creating a bicycle friendly city. This section looks at goals, objectives, and benchmarks and how to achieve them.

Chapter 7—Project/Initiative Identification and Prioritization: This section identifies projects based on existing system gaps and discontinuities. A process has also been

identified to prioritize future bicycle projects.

Chapter 8—Funding and Implementation Strategies: The final chapter looks at what it will take in terms of funding to complete the plan with limited available resources.

Due to the large number of public comments received, several major changes were made to the Draft August 2010 Bicycle Master Plan after discussions with the Bicycle Advisory Committee and are now reflected in the final version:

- The Bicycle Master Plan was re-organized and re-formatted. Several chapters were ordered differently than the August 2010 version and a numbered system makes it easier for readers to find or reference a given topic.
- Many graphs and charts have been updated to reflect the most recent data available.
- Numerous changes were made to the Bicycle Master Plan Map based on Bicycle Advisory Committee input. This map may need to be amended from time to time to better reflect changing community needs and industry standards.
- Citywide bicycle policy recommendations, intergovernmental relations strategies, policy related capital program implementation strategies, and policy related maintenance program implementation strategies that were included in the August 2010 draft have been removed from the plan and are now presented in the attached DRAFT Bicycle Advisory Committee Recommendations for the Implementation of the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan. It is recommended that staff and the BAC continue discussion on these items to determine the most appropriate process within the city system to address these recommendations.
- The Needs Analysis chapter has been edited to only show existing needs in each of the 6 “E” categories (Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, Equity, and Evaluation).
- A subcommittee of the Bicycle Advisory Committee worked with city staff to re-examine the goals, objectives, and benchmarks after receiving extensive public feedback from the 5 open houses held in August/September 2010. Each objective supports a given goal that is measurable, and a responsible party must oversee the progress of a given objective.
- More detail has been added to the suggested projects and initiatives. The Project/Initiative Identification and Prioritization chapter has been modified to better understand the scope and length of the proposed bikeway improvements.
- Non-infrastructure ideas that were part of the Needs Analysis in the August 2010 version of the plan have now been refined and are now shown as initiatives in the Project/Initiative Identification and Prioritization chapter.
- The Funding and Implementation Strategy chapter has been beefed up significantly, now showing estimated capital costs, possible funding sources, estimated annual operating costs, and jurisdictional responsibilities for each infrastructure project and non-infrastructure initiative.

Many of the goals, objectives, and benchmarks that have been identified in this plan are extremely ambitious. These goals will not be achieved unless the necessary resources are allocated. There are also dozens of projects and initiatives that have been identified as part of this plan that will need to be prioritized since funding is limited. The Bicycle Advisory Committee will continue to assist in future prioritization and evaluation.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) Recommendations

Public Works is recommending the approval of this plan. There are several issues that still need to be addressed with regard to the attached DRAFT Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) Recommendations for Implementation of the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan (Attachment #1). This document includes a number of policy recommendations, funding strategies, and city positions on regional issues. City staff and the Bicycle Advisory Committee have agreed to work together to refine this document by December 2011 and return to the City Council with a final document at that time.

On June 29, 2011 the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) concluded its work on the final draft of the Bicycle Master Plan after several months of discussion. In response to BAC comments, several small changes to the non-infrastructure tables in Chapter 8 were made and the BAC unanimously passed a motion to support the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan. It is important to note however, that the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee also unanimously recommended that several corridors be added to the Bicycle Master Plan Map (Figure 1.1 and Figure 7.7 in the Bicycle Master Plan). Most of the BAC recommended changes were made. However, there are five corridors remaining that BAC recommends for inclusion on the map but that Public Works staff does not recommended for inclusion on the Master Plan Map. These routes are discussed below and are shown on Attachment #3.

The BAC recommends bicycle lanes on the following corridors:

- 38th Street West of Bloomington
- Lyndale Ave north of Plymouth Ave
- Nicollet Ave from Grant Street to 40th Street
- Johnson Street NE, north of Hennepin
- Washington Avenue between 7 Corners and 3rd Ave South

The BAC and Public Works agree that 10th Ave S should include sharrows rather than being included in the plan as a bicycle boulevard. This change has been made to Figure 1.1 and Figure 7.7 in the Bicycle Master Plan.

Staff have evaluated these requests and have provided the following recommendations for each corridor:

East 38th Street, West of Bloomington Avenue:

E 38th Street is currently a 44-foot wide street (two 12-foot traffic lanes with two 10-foot parking lanes) that would require parking removal to facilitate bicycle lanes. E 38th Street (east of Bloomington Avenue) is one of a few crossings of Hiawatha Avenue and is approximately ½ mile from the other east/west bike routes in this area, which is why it has been recommended as a bike route. Since this portion of the corridor has been identified for shared use pavement markings, parking will not need to be removed. E 35th Street and E 36th Street has been identified as the east/west bicycle route west of Bloomington Avenue (with connections to Richfield Road and to the Chain of Lakes). Placing bicycle facilities, particularly bicycle lanes on E 38th Street (west of Bloomington Avenue) would be redundant (the RiverLake Greenway is two blocks away) and placing bike lanes along the corridor would likely require parking loss to preserve its Municipal State Aid (MSA) status. For these reasons, Public Works does not recommend inclusion of bicycle lanes on East 38th Street (west of Bloomington Avenue) onto the Bicycle Master Plan Map.

Lyndale Ave North, North of Plymouth Ave:

Lyndale Avenue N (between Plymouth Avenue N and 42nd Avenue N) varies in roadway width, which makes the creation of a seamless north/south bike lane corridor difficult. The segment of Lyndale Avenue North between Plymouth Avenue North and Broadway Avenue North is 44-feet in width (currently four 11-foot lanes). The segment between Broadway Avenue North and 42nd Avenue N is 34-feet in width (two 12-foot traffic lanes and one 10-foot parking lane). In order to facilitate bicycle lanes along Lyndale Avenue North between Plymouth Avenue N and Broadway Avenue N a 4-to-3 conversion would be needed, thus eliminating the potential for parking for residents (currently parking is permitted along most blocks in this segment). To facilitate bike lanes along Lyndale Avenue N (between Broadway and 42nd Avenue N) residential parking would need to be eliminated. While shared use pavement markings are an option, this corridor has not been identified as a bike route due to neighborhood input, close proximity to north/south bicycle facilities along 2nd Street North and Emerson Ave N/Fremont Ave N, and a high percentage of truck traffic along this route (10% trucks at the northern end of the corridor). Lyndale Avenue N is also classified as a Minor-Arterial Reliever to the Interstate 94 corridor. For these reasons, Public Works does not recommend inclusion of bicycle facilities on Lyndale Avenue N (between Plymouth Avenue N to 42nd Avenue N) onto the Bicycle Master Plan Map.

Nicollet Ave from Grant Street to 40th Street:

The current version of the bike plan map shows bike lanes on 1st/Blaisdell from Grant to 40th and bike lanes on Nicollet from 40th to the Southern City limits. Nicollet Avenue from Grant to 40th Street is currently wide enough (50 feet in width) for two lanes in each direction (11 feet), parking on both sides (9 feet in each direction) and bike lanes (5 feet in each direction). However, there are different community needs along various portions of Nicollet that make it difficult to create a seamless bike route from Downtown to the Southern City Limits. The Whittier Neighborhood discussed bike lanes along Nicollet from Franklin to 28th Street, but felt that a middle turn lane was needed more (thereby ruling out bike lanes). While there is a direct connection to the Midtown Greenway, there is still a physical barrier at the K-Mart site that is unresolved. Residents were asked if they wanted a bike lane along Nicollet Avenue when it was reconstructed from Minnehaha Creek to 42nd and they did not want to pursue them as part of the project. Regardless, future bicycle lanes are shown in the plan. While adding bike lanes to Nicollet Avenue between Lake Street to 42nd Street is possible as part of the 2011 reconstruction project, they will likely not connect to bicycle lanes on either end of the project in the near future, providing limited value. There are no other alternative corridors between 40th Street and the Southern City Limits, so Nicollet has been identified on the bike plan map. Bicycle accommodations on 1st and Blaisdell have been funded between Downtown and 40th Street, providing an uninterrupted bicycle link. It would be redundant to add a bike lane along Nicollet Avenue from Grant Street to 40th Street. For these reasons, no change to the map is recommended.

Johnson Street NE, North of Hennepin Avenue:

Public Works recommends that Johnson Street NE (north of 18th Ave NE) be added to the map. This change has been made to Figure 1.1 and Figure 7.7 in the Bicycle Master Plan. Johnson Street NE (between Hennepin Avenue and 18th Avenue NE) was not recommended for map inclusion because of higher volumes, conflicts with freeway access, and other nearby on-street options for bicyclists.

Washington Avenue between 7 Corners and 3rd Ave South:

Washington Avenue has been identified for bicycle lanes on the Bicycle Master Plan Map between Seven Corners and 11th Avenue because there is no other good on-street connection between the Cedar Riverside Neighborhood and Downtown Minneapolis. There are numerous other east/west bike routes including 2nd Street, 3rd Street, and 4th Street that have on-street bike lanes west of 11th Avenue that bikers can use. Washington Avenue west of 11th Avenue has the highest volume of any street in Downtown Minneapolis. Adding bicycle lanes to Washington Avenue could have capacity impacts since space must be reallocated from the existing roadway configuration. Concerns have been raised about sidewalk widths in this area and adding bike lanes could inhibit the widening of the sidewalks. While land uses and roadway use is changing along this corridor, more discussion and study will be required before Washington Avenue can be added to the bike plan map. Based on existing conditions it is recommended that the corridor not be placed on the bike plan map at this time.

The BAC recognized that the following corridors were not appropriate for inclusion on the Bicycle Master Plan at this time, but asked that the city prioritize ways to “provide better access to commercial streets with many destinations” for bicycles. The BAC states that there are ways to improve community livability and vitality along these streets, in addition to improving bicycle access.

- Cedar Ave
- Lake Street
- Lyndale Ave South
- Broadway NE
- University Ave NE and SE

Public Works agrees that there are ways to improve safety and access along each of the corridors above. Staff will work with Hennepin County and MnDOT to improve the corridors listed above for bicycling as opportunities arise.

A copy of the Bicycle Master Plan can be found at the City Clerk's office and can also be downloaded at the following website address:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles/bicycle-plans.asp>

A copy of the PowerPoint Presentation to be made to the Transportation and Public Works Committee has also been attached (Attachment #4).

Attachments

Attachment #1 – Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) Recommendations for the Implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan.

Attachment #2 – BAC Recommended Changes to the Bike Plan Map

Attachment #3 – Map of BAC Recommended Changes to the Bike Plan Map

Attachment #4 – Bike Plan PowerPoint Presentation