

**Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting  
Summary Meeting Notes**

November 1, 2007  
3:00pm to 4:30 pm  
Room 333, City Hall

**Agenda**

- 3:00 pm**           **Introductions**  
**Approval of Meeting Notes**  
**Announcements**
- 3:05pm**           **Safe Routes to School – Traffic Safety** - Jim Steffel and Steve Mosing will present an overview of the Public Works-Traffic Department’s ongoing evaluation and implementation program for school traffic safety.
- 3:25pm**           **Pedestrian Traffic Safety** – Jim Steffel and Steve Mosing from Public Works-Traffic will present an overview of Minneapolis traffic policies and programs related to pedestrians, including crosswalk markings, use of stop signs and other traffic control devices, the process for responding to public concerns about pedestrian traffic safety, and related funding and maintenance issues.
- 3:45pm**           **Safe Routes to School – Health Dept. Initiative** – Alice Tibbetts will present an overview of the Health Department’s Safe Routes to School long-range planning process.
- 4:15pm**           **Pedestrian Master Plan Schedule** - Anna Flintoft will update the committee on the Pedestrian Master Plan schedule. The kick-off meeting will be held at the December PAC meeting.
- 4:25 pm**           **Review of Action Items**

**Attendees**

<b>PAC Member</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Present</b>
X	Jim Adams	Senior Citizens Advisory Committee	
X	James Andrew	Metropolitan Council	X
X	Deborah Boyd	Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board	
X	Theresa Cain	Metro Transit	X
X	Anna Flintoft	Minneapolis Public Works, PAC Chair	X
X	Anna Gillette	7 <sup>th</sup> Ward Citizen – North Loop	X
X	Loretta Grewe	Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities	
X	Stephanie Gruver	4 <sup>th</sup> Ward Citizen	X
X	Diane Hansen	12 <sup>th</sup> Ward Citizen	X

X	Sarah Harris	Walking Minneapolis Foundation	
X	Janee Harteau	Minneapolis Police Department	
X	Elizabeth Haugen	Minneapolis Communications Department	
X	Diana Hawkins	City of Lakes Chamber	
X	Steven Hay	Minneapolis CPED	X
X	Robin Hennessy	City of Minneapolis Attorney's Office	
X	Mary Jackson	Minnesota Department of Transportation	X
X	Karen Nikolai	Hennepin County	
X	David Rak	Minneapolis Dept of Health & Family Support	
X	Mike Rumppe	Minneapolis Fire Department	
X	Jan Sandberg	7 <sup>th</sup> Ward Citizen – Loring Park	X
X	Steve Sanders	University of Minnesota	
X	David Smith	Minneapolis Public Schools	X
X	Mackenzie Turner	Bicycle Advisory Committee	X
X	Mary Watson	6 <sup>th</sup> Ward Citizen	
	Roy Hallanger	Minneapolis Public Schools	X
	Steve Mosing	Minneapolis Public Works	X
	Shaun Murphy	Mpls Bicycle & Pedestrian Programs Intern	X
	Don Pflaum	Minneapolis Public Works	X
	Jim Steffel	Minneapolis Public Works	X
	Alice Tibbetts	Minneapolis Safe Routes to School	X
	Kathy Waite	Minneapolis Police Department	X

**Summary of Items Discussed**

**Introductions/Approval of Meeting Notes/Announcements**

There were no comments on the meeting notes. Anna Flintoft announced that the pedestrian website is now posted at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/pedestrian](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/pedestrian). Ideas for changes can be directed toward Anna or Shaun Murphy. The e-mail listserv is also up on the website, at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/pedestrian/pedestrian-esubscribe.asp>.

**Pedestrian Traffic Safety**

Jim Steffel and Steve Mosing gave a summary of the City's processes for handling traffic concerns. They are handled within the Traffic Division of Public Works. About 3,000 traffic requests per year are received related to speeding, crosswalks, stop signs, and other traffic issues. The Traffic Division investigates all requests and takes action on about one-third of the requests. There are 2-3 full-time staff who handle these requests. The process for responding to each request is to understand the concern underlying the request, review history files for that location, conduct a site review, call experts together to make a recommendation, and if necessary, take the recommendation to City Council.

Committee questions included:

- *Are there rules or ordinances related to the placement of crosswalks?*

The City follows state statutes, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), and guidelines which have been developed through experience and best practices. The City's objective with crosswalks is to channelize pedestrians toward safe crossings. Crosswalks are generally marked at signalized intersections, as well as at school crossings. There are approximately 4,000 painted crosswalks in Minneapolis. The Traffic Division has a finite budget for crosswalk maintenance and is, therefore, careful about adding new crosswalks.

- *Do you have maps of the routes that kids use to go to schools, like St Paul?*  
The Traffic Division is defining routes for certain schools that have requested it. Some of the schools in North Minneapolis, in particular, have asked for mapped routes in order to work with law enforcement in patrolling those routes. Our next round of funding applications to Safe Routes to School (SRTS) will address this.
- *If there is a 4-way stop, you don't automatically paint the lines?*  
No.
- *If there is a business district that wants crosswalks put in, how would they go about it?*  
People should call 311 for this type of request. We will then examine the location. We get a lot of requests for stop signs and crosswalks. Upon investigation, we often find that a stop sign or crosswalk is not the appropriate solution for the problem. Often there are sight line issues, requiring trimming of trees or bushes or changing the location of parking.
- *Do you consider the number of people crossing when determining where to place crosswalks? Does it matter if you would find that 300 people were using it on a weekend night, and not the rest of the week?*  
Yes. There would be a required number of pedestrians at the location to install a signal, also known as a "warrant." In that sort of a situation we might restrict parking on a Saturday.
- *Do you get a lot of requests from neighborhood associations, and if so, are they given different weight?*  
Yes, it does carry more weight when we hear from more than one person. But we still treat individual concerns equally because they could be identifying a significant traffic safety issue.
- *What could you improve upon?*  
We need to do more communication and education so that people understand why traffic control decisions are made. The handouts distributed contain examples from other cities.
- *What is the rough ratio of infrastructure put in versus taken out?*  
We get approximately 500 requests for stop signs a year. We typically install 2 or 3 stop signs and remove 1 stop sign per year. Instead of adding another stop sign, we might change parking signs, ask for police enforcement, or work with the Engineering Services Division of Public Works to change the layout of the road.

- *A lot of right turn on red signs have been taken down. How has that affected pedestrians?*  
The Traffic Division has done a fair amount of research in Minneapolis and nationally into the effectiveness of No Right Turn on Red signs, and we've developed criteria for the placement of those signs. We don't believe we have compromised pedestrian safety.
- *What are the City's guidelines for the timing of pedestrians crossing signals?*  
Signals are coordinated for vehicular flow, not pedestrian flow. The amount of time allocated for pedestrian crossing is set by nationwide standards for walk speed. We add on additional seconds, specifically in the downtown area, to give pedestrians more time to cross streets.

### **Safe Routes to School – Traffic Safety**

Jim Steffel provided an overview of the Traffic Division's efforts around Safe Routes to School (SRTS). Three to four years ago, Traffic began handling school pedestrian concerns in a different manner. Previously staff had been spending disproportionate amounts of time at certain schools (based on complaints), and this was not effective. Because elementary school age pedestrians do not have the same capabilities as adults to make safe decisions, Traffic began looking at how other cities were handling the issue.

A process and goal was created to review all Minneapolis schools, grades K-8. There was no SRTS funding at the time. The review process began in 2005. The review process for each school includes a review of the traffic history in the area, a site review, and discussions with the school principal and school patrol officers. Draft recommendations are then circulated internally and with the schools.

The City has a toolbox of traffic control options to be used at schools. These include the use of zebra crosswalks at school patrol crossings, double yellow centerlines, pedestrian only signal phases, roadway edge striping, countdown timers, bike racks and revised parent pickup-dropoff areas. The City has gone through two successful rounds of SRTS funding, and will be submitting for a third soon.

Questions and answers included:

- *Do you work with the police at schools with heavy traffic volumes?*  
We work with them and have had success in partnering with them.
- *We have talked about the idea of moving parent pick-up locations to a remote area. Do you think that is a good idea?*  
We've heard other places have done it, but haven't implemented it here.
- *Do you work with parents to encourage them to not drive their kids to school?*  
The Traffic Division has not been directly involved in SRTS education and outreach. We are partnering with the schools and other entities to encourage a mode shift. Our role is to provide the engineering solutions.

## **Safe Routes to School - Health Department Initiative**

Alice Tibbetts made a presentation to the committee on draft recommendations for an expanded SRTS program in Minneapolis. The process began in June and will end in December. An interagency group of stakeholders has been involved to date, including the Minneapolis School District, Minneapolis Public Works, Minneapolis Police, and others. The initiative is taking a critical look at the policies and costs of busing kids to school, compared with the costs of supporting kids walking and biking to school. Recommendations will be developed and presented at an 11/15/07 stakeholders meeting.

Committee questions included:

- *Why did Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) change its walk distance from 2 miles to 1 mile in 1978?*  
I'm not sure. High schools currently have a maximum 2 mile walk requirement, middle schools 1 mile, and elementary schools ½ mile.
- *Do school kids get discounted Metro Transit bus passes?*  
Schools have to apply by a certain date to qualify for the program. We need to talk more with Metro Transit, and examine the perceptions parents have of their kids riding public transportation.
- *Could community bus stops for school buses use Metro Transit stops?*  
We don't think that's likely. Minneapolis Public Schools attempts to locate bus stops on less busy streets than where Metro Transit bus stops are typically located. For next year's budget, the mayor has submitted a mini-grant program for \$15,000. Community bus stops could be one of the activities funded by the grants.
- *Who will approve the final plan?*  
It will be submitted to the mayor, and Public Works would need to approve certain parts of it. Alice expected that Minneapolis Public Schools would adopt the plan, but wasn't sure whether the Health Department would forward the plan to City Council for approval?

## **Pedestrian Master Plan Schedule**

Anna Flintoft updated the committee on the Pedestrian Master Plan. The kick off meeting will be held at next PAC meeting. The objectives and goals of the plan will be reviewed, as well as the public involvement process and schedule.

## **Next Meeting**

Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 pm, City Hall Room 333