
MEMORANDUM

Date: September 4, 2013
To: Milly Ortiz-Pagan, Iowa DOT
From: Tom Huber
Project: Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Long-Range Plan
Re: Policy Advisory Committee Meeting Notes (September 4, 2013)

On September 4, 2013, a focus group meeting was held to discuss bicycle and pedestrian considerations as part of the Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Long-Range Plan. A total of 15 people attended the meeting, which lasted approximately two hours. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the consultant team, provide an overview of the project, explore the vision for the future of biking and walking in the state, and discuss selected policies and practices that effect biking and walking.

Meeting Attendees

The meeting began with members of the committee introducing themselves. Meeting attendees included:

Committee Members

- Whitney Davis (DNR)
- Sarah Taylor Watts (IDPH)
- Vern Willey (City of Altoona)
- Mark Wyatt (Iowa Bicycle Coalition)
- Kevin Blanshan (INRCOG)
- Craig Markley (Iowa DOT)
- Lisa Hein (Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation)

Additional Attendees

- Milly Ortiz-Pagan (Iowa DOT)
- Craig O'Riley (Iowa DOT)
- Rich Voelker (Snyder)
- Brenna Fall (Snyder)
- Tom Huber (Toole Design Group)
- Adam Wood (Toole Design Group) – By Phone
- Ciara Schlichting (Toole Design Group) – By Phone
- Tony Hull (Toole Design Group) – By Phone

Project Overview

Tom Huber of Toole Design Group (TDG) gave an overview of the scope of the project and presented a timeline for completion of the project. He discussed the team composition, with TDG's primary staff for this project located in Madison and Minneapolis and the inclusion of Snyder Associates, a sub-consultant on this project that will primarily help with coordination across the state.

The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC; this committee) will meet a total of five (5) times, including today's meeting. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will meet a total of four (4) times.

In addition, Tom provided a brief overview of the current state of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Iowa and presented exhibits depicting bike and walk mode shares across the state.

Q&A

- Tom Huber asked "Is this an Iowa DOT plan or a plan for all of Iowa? Is this a plan that focuses on the overall big picture, or a plan that guides local decision-making?"
 - The greatest need is for the local scale.
 - There are many bicycle and pedestrian initiatives on the local and regional scale currently.
 - There is a need to "get Iowa DOT on-board" with local and regional projects within Iowa DOT right-of-way.

- Another way to phrase the question is “how to we institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian transportation?”
- Does this plan have the ability to recommend changes to funding stream policies?
 - It is well within the purview of this plan to make such recommendations.
- If we have recently completed or updated plans can they be incorporated?
 - Yes, please send them to Milly Ortiz-Pagan (Iowa DOT).
 - TDG will send a status update to MPOs/RPAs to ensure we have the most up-to-date plans.
- Will there be recommendations for maintenance?
 - TDG will provide general recommendations for bikeways, paths, and sidewalks. However, we probably won't develop detailed standards and guidelines during this project, but similar standards are available for sidewalks and shared-use paths.
 - Maintenance policies should consider that in many cases, facilities like sidewalks are local jurisdiction and responsibility, even those they are along Iowa DOT roads.
- We need to schedule PAC, TAC, and public meetings in October and early November at the latest.
 - Perhaps contact organizations to invite people to public meetings (one idea is to have bike shops send postcards to all of their customers).
 - Piggy-back on already-scheduled REAP regional meetings (contact Tom Hazelton).
- Will this plan be adopted or accepted by the DOT Commission?
 - It can be presented to the Commission for consideration.

Plan in 2030

Tom asked “In 2030, you come back to a meeting just like this...what changes would you have seen between now and then.” After providing answers, meeting attendees were given 12 dots and asked to place them next to the answer they thought was most important.

- Iowa will be closer to being the “Trail Capitol of the World.” (4 dots)
- Walking and biking integrated into downtown investment projects. (no dots)
- State as a whole adopt walking and biking as a valid form of transportation. (13 dots)
- Iowa known as a great, bike-friendly state to ride in with paved shoulders (economic development implications). (4 dots)
- Bicycle-related fatalities reduced to zero. (3 dots)
- More tolerance for on-road biking (education, outreach, etc.) (1 dot)
- Enhanced on-road facilities. (2 dots)
- User education (2 dots) (Includes: People no longer ride against traffic on streets or on the sidewalk)
- Complete streets policy (statewide policy that can provide guidance for urban areas) (11 dots)(Includes: State highways and other roads should be easy to cross)
- Road riding is less stressful (1 dot)
- Minimum green time set for bikes (no dots)
- Improved standards for shoulders and design standards in general (7 dots)
- Innovation (4 dots)
- Change how people travel (3 dots)
- Equity issues (no dots)
- Better motorist acceptance (no dots)
- Improved wayfinding (5 dots) (Bike maps include level of service indications).
- Increase percentage of funding going toward bike/ped projects (11 dots)

In addition to the above identified and rated priorities, there was significant discussion on how to “get past mindset that riding on the road is unsafe and riding on trails is the only safe option (deemphasize complete reliance on sidepaths)”.

A discussion of the priorities resulting in additional points being made:

- Potential Performance Measures were identified:
 - Plan allows for innovation
 - Putting more people on bikes (increasing mode share)
 - Plan is equitable (sex and ethnicity)
- Funding – the committee expressed many concerns and issues regarding funding of bikeways.
 - Discussion regarding whether non-TA-dedicated funding should be used for bike/ped projects.
 - How to fund bikeways as part of larger projects
- Making Bicycling and Walking Work for Transportation Purposes
 - How do we change the mindset of lowans?
 - Need to emphasize this as part of plan and public meetings