

**Countywide Bikeway Plan
Steering Committee Meeting Notes
September 18, 2013
12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

Name	Organization	Email	Phone
Mark Thiel	City of Lawrence		
Charlie Bryan	Lawrence/Douglas County Health Department	cbryan@ldchealth.org	785-856-7357
Keith Browning	Douglas County Public Works	kbrowning@douglas-county.com	785-832-5293
Todd Girdler	L-DC MPO Staff	tgirdler@lawrenceks.org	785-832-3155
Jessica Mortinger	L-DC MPO	jmortinger@lawrenceks.org	785-832-3165
Becky Pepper	KDOT	rpepper@ksdot.org	785-296-8593
Alli Gerth	KU-DCM		
Mary Miller	Lawrence/Douglas County Planning	mmiller@lawrenceks.org	785-832-3147
Chris Burger	BAC	Cburger@stevensbrand.com	785-843-0811
Kevin Luecke (via phone)	Toole Design	kluecke@tooledesign.com	608-663-8080
Tom Huber	Toole Design	thuber@tooledesign.com	608-663-8080
Dan Meyers	URS	dan.meyers@urs.com	612-373-6446
Jim Meyer	URS	jim.meyer@urs.com	612-802-3725

Following introductions J. Meyer covered the project schedule. The online survey started in early September and will be active through October 15th. So far 60 responses have been received. The project team will continue to promote the survey and do outreach over the next month. The committee members were encouraged to spread the word about the survey and flyers were made available. The open house is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9th. There will also be a combined steering committee meeting earlier that day. The project team is looking at early November to have a draft report ready. J. Meyer briefly covered some of the early survey results. He cautioned about the small sample size at this time but indicated it does provide some insight that can help the project team as we start to formalize the recommendations.

J. Meyer then turned the meeting over to T. Huber from Toole Design Group. T. Huber indicated that he had completed field work yesterday (September 17th) and would be out again this afternoon and tomorrow. Many of the roadways are challenging. Tom indicated they need some County traffic counts and K. Browning indicated that they have several counts and would provide this information (provided later). Tom indicated they will utilize the traffic volumes to prioritize improvements. For example, 1,000 vehicles per day (vpd) vs. 2,500 vpd will factor into the decision making process and impact the recommendations. He also indicated that they could do a sensitivity analysis that looks at the cost of constructing 4' shoulders vs. 6' shoulders.

T. Huber indicated that they are also looking at small segments of gravel roads that could potentially be improved. Todd emphasized this would be looking at small (maybe one mile or less) segments that might provide regional bikeway connections. The plan is destination driven so a focus on key connections which mainly includes the paved roadway network is important.

There was a comment that the cost estimates should consider everything needed as part of a project (for example, replace a culvert, construct proper slope, etc.). Most bikeway improvements would be made as part of larger roadway improvements. K. Browning indicated the County has good cost estimates that the project team could use for specific segments, but those are total highway reconstructions. T. Huber indicated that the roads (pavement) he observed yesterday were generally in good shape.

T. Huber indicated the project team is also looking at specific recommendations in Baldwin City and Eudora. He completed field work in Baldwin City yesterday and will complete field work in Eudora tomorrow (September 19th). The maps that were distributed to the steering committee members show initial bikeway linkages/recommendations that will be confirmed by the field work. At this point in the meeting he asked the steering committee members "What are we missing?" No further comments or questions from the steering committee members regarding the rural area analysis/recommendations were made.

T. Huber then covered the urban area bikeway recommendations. He indicated the process was to review the current bikeway recommendations included in T2040 and to identify recommendations that build on the current planning process. Seven or eight recommendations that focused on minor arterials and major collectors have been identified. One recommendation was to include bike lanes on some streets that include sidepaths. A discussion followed regarding Kansas law and the use of bike lanes and sidepaths together (is it legal to have both?). Becky Pepper indicated that a recent Attorney General decision indicated that it is acceptable as long as the sidepath is not a dedicated bicycle only facility. She also indicated that there is a movement to get the law changed to clarify this issue.

T. Huber indicated there is still a lot of work to complete and he would be doing additional field work tomorrow (September 19th). He then asked if the project team saw anything that was missing related to the urban area. A question and discussion followed regarding the definition of a sidepath vs. a shared use path. T. Girdler indicated that the term shared use path was the standard when T2040 was developed. T. Huber indicated that sidepath is a new term used in AASHTO documents, but essentially it is a subset of shared use paths.

A question was asked if sidepaths should be identified on the map. A discussion followed and it was determined that showing the difference between sidepaths and shared used paths would be good to include on the map. K. Luecke added that the primary reason to differentiate between the two is for planning analysis and that it likely would not mean a lot to the general public. The committee saw a benefit in identifying the sidepaths and shared use paths as it would help identify potential conflict areas and could be used as a future performance metric.

J. Mortinger indicated there is a desire to identify new shared use path corridors that are off the roadway network. Tom indicated that they have not identified any new (not already in T2040) shared use path alignment opportunities at this time, but this, is something that should be reviewed on an annual basis. The plan could include some recommendations for shared used paths.

A question was asked about the online survey. Specifically, there was interest in seeing the survey results analyzed for women riding bikes. One comment was that research has indicated that women prefer to ride

on shared use paths and wondered if the survey results reflected this. J. Meyer indicated that when more survey results are received that this could be looked at in greater detail. The current breakdown of male and female survey responses right now is exactly 50/50.

J. Mortinger indicated that there is an updated plan for a 10-K path at the Rock Chalk development. She will forward this plan to the project team.

K. Browning indicated that the countywide bikeway recommendations do not currently show what has and doesn't have shoulders. T. Huber indicated that the final plan will include this information. He also indicated that he will be conducting additional field work that will help confirm this information.

T. Huber also indicated that some wayfinding should be included and that it isn't that expensive. It costs approximately \$100 per sign and has four signs per intersection. Signs could also be installed along some longer stretches of roadways to let bicyclists know they are on the correct route. He also indicated that wayfinding in an urban area should be included, but for rural Douglas County highways it is probably not necessary given the straightforward layout of the highway system. However, there may be a few rural locations like Vinland where wayfinding is needed in the rural area.

A. Gerth indicated that KU's master plan identifies a new bikeway along 19th Street (Jayhawk). The plan will generally include connections from the University to the City bikeway facilities. There is also a push to have bicycle racks on all buses. J. Mortinger indicated that the project team should contact the KU master plan consultants soon if they are to coordinate improvements. Crossing Iowa Street is a big issue. Irving Hill Road is narrow and has safety concerns.

Special Study Areas

The remaining time was spent discussing the special areas included in the bikeway plan. T. Huber provided an overview of the issues/concerns regarding the Hobbs Park to Constant Park connection. Bicyclists frequently use the sidewalk in front of City Hall to make this connection. He indicated that the project team reviewed the rail corridor behind City Hall and determined that there was not sufficient space to accommodate bikes along an active rail line. This connection is very difficult for a number of reasons which he summarized. There are some side streets in the area that are relatively low volume and could be used to facilitate part of the movement north from Hobbs Park. This connection becomes more difficult when you reach the parking structure near City Hall. Motorists exiting the parking facility don't look both ways and aren't necessarily expecting bikes on the sidewalk. There are also sight distance concerns with the large store sign near 6th and the parking lot entrance which creates potential conflicts.

T. Huber provided a couple of low volume street connection options. One possible connection is to use Delaware-10th-Rhode Island. Another option could use New Jersey and possibly 7th or 8th. However, 7th and 8th tend to have higher truck traffic which isn't the most desired bicycling condition. It was mentioned that some individuals will want a separated from the road shared use path all the way from Hobbs to Constant Park, but the committee recognizes this would be difficult and expensive to construct for the entire connection. There could be some difficult intersections to cross. Rhode Island at 7th is an example of a good way to accommodate bicyclists and reduce through motor vehicle traffic. It is possible that a short-term option could be identified and long-term (path) options could also be explored.

The committee asked if buffered bike lanes could be considered. Some discussion of maintenance issues and trucks were also discussed. T. Huber indicated that the project team did discuss a cycle track (this would be a buffered two-way bike facility) and it would be expensive. C. Bryan wondered if it would be confusing. T. Girdler indicated that pedestrians would not use the cycle track; there would be a separate

sidewalk to accommodate pedestrians. T. Huber indicated that another option would be to make it a shared use path in front of City Hall. The committee again discussed the potential conflicts and safety concerns. C. Burger mentioned that one direction of travel is good, but the reverse is not. A discussion of how motorists cross the Kansas River sometimes results in a bicyclist ending up on the wrong side of the bridge near 6th Street. Discussion of bicyclists using sidewalks, especially for two-way travel, was also a concern that was raised.

The project team discussed the possibility of using the parking structure for part of the bikeway connection. Again, there were a number of concerns including poor sight distance that the secondary parking garage exit has and concerns about possibly biking through the garage (dark, numerous cars). The committee likes the concept of this connection but would prefer to stay on top of the parking structure and look at the property just north of the parking structure. It was noted that the City owns the parking structure.

T. Huber presented one additional option which involved painting bike lanes on 9th Street from Hobbs Park to Vermont. At Vermont it might be possible to look at a cycle track, or a counter-flow bicycle lane, to connect to 6th Street. The committee thought this was an option that should be looked at in more detail. It was mentioned that this could be a short-term improvement that could be made while long-term options are explored near City Hall.

The committee discussed some of the open house materials and felt it was important to show potential improvements/concepts at the October 9th open house.

K. Browning indicated that it seemed like a relatively easy fix to the north to better connect bicyclists coming over the bridge (so they would be on the correct side crossing the river and would not need to make an additional crossing at 6th Street).

K. Browning asked if placing bike route signs in the County brings with it some liability issues. This was discussed and it was determined there is no liability, for the signs simply provide a logical connection just like directional signs directed at motorists. There was some discussion about whether any signage should be used as it may imply that a signed facility is safer than another route. T. Huber indicated as long as the roads are maintained it should not be an issue. K. Browning indicated they currently do not have the budget/equipment to sweep the shoulders. There was additional discussion of the route signage. T. Huber indicated that wayfinding signage is important. He indicated there should not be standard bike route signs without having wayfinding signs accompanying those signs. Wayfinding signs include naming routes and directing bicyclists to end destinations. Tom agreed that generally rural bike route/wayfinding signs are probably not necessary, but that urban wayfinding signs are.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 1:34 p.m. The next Steering Committee meeting will be a combined meeting that occurs on October 9th at 1:00 p.m.