

**BPAC – July 21, 2021**  
**DRAFT Meeting Summary**

<b>Meeting Location</b>	Virtual (online) Meeting via Microsoft Teams	
<b>Meeting Chair(s)</b>	Carol Andrews	
<b>Note Taker</b>	Carol Andrews & James Gittemeier	
<b>Members Present</b>		
<b>Chair</b>	Carol Andrews	St. Louis County
	Chris Belden	DTA
	Andrea Crouse	Zeitgeist/SHIP
	Dick Haney	Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails
	Judy Gibbs	Citizen Representative
	Eleanor Bacso	City of Duluth
	Jason DiPiazza	Citizen Member
	Dena Ryan	WISDOT
<b>Members Absent</b>		* Excused
	Chris Carlson	City of Superior*
	Andrew Slade	Duluth Bikes
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth*
	Skip Williams	We Walk in Duluth*
<b>Others Present</b>		
	Prescott Morrill	Citizen Member
	James Gittemeier	MIC
	Mike Wenholz	MIC
	Anna Pierce	MnDOT
	Bobbi Retzlaff	FHWA
	Mindy Granley	City of Duluth
	Kris Liljeblad	City of Duluth
	Bryan Anderson	MnDOT

## 1. Introductions/Agenda Review

- Meeting participants introduced themselves.
- Agenda Review: James Gittemeier requested Item #3 Blatnik Crossing be changed to “Consideration and Discussion,” because an official BPAC vote is not needed, though looking for general consensus on what comments to bring forward to the MIC Policy Board.

## 2. Committee Business

Carol recognized several BPAC members for their work that’s been in the news lately including Chris Belden and the DTA for their major bus system overhaul plan, Dick Haney and FWDPT along with We Walk in Duluth and Zeitgeist for hosting bike and walking tours of the new CCT segment, Andrea Crouse and Zeitgeist for putting on several Bus Bike Walk Month events, MnDOT, MIC and Zeitgeist for all the Central Entrance planning events and Skip Williams, We Walk in Duluth, for taking much time to email his input for this meeting since we picked a date he is not available.

- **Meeting Summary from 7.21.2021** - BPAC meeting summary was approved without comment or objection (Dick Haney moved, Chris Belden seconded).
- **BPAC Chair & Vice Chair Nominations** – Carol Andrews pointed out that it is time to approve a new Committee Chair and Vice Chair at our November 2021 meeting and asked that anyone interested in serving or nominating someone speak up now or speak outside the meeting to BPAC staff member James Gittemeier. Carol Andrews mentioned that Chris Carlson (not present) offered to serve as Chair but would prefer Carol Andrews continue for another term. Others present at the meeting voiced support for Carol serving another term, noting that it seems the 2 years, with just quarterly meetings, barely gives a chair time to “settle in” before their term is up.
- **Format of Upcoming meetings discussion** - decided that BPAC staff member James Gittemeier will send out a poll by e-mail to solicit input from all participants. Discussion: Dick Haney and Prescott Morrill highly recommend that the BPAC meet in person if/when possible to maximize meeting effectiveness, opportunities to meet, and get to know people and other benefits of in-person over online only meetings.

## 3. Blatnik Crossing – MIC Policy Board Resolution of Support

Mike Wenholz shared a brief overview of the resolution and was followed by discussion. The resolution will go to the August 25 MIC Policy Board meeting for their approval. The purpose of presenting the resolution is to gain BPAC input before it goes before the MIC Policy Board for approval.

- Whereas #7 is a primary point of concern. Dick Haney called attention to the word “desired” at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> Whereas that currently reads “an improved and more useful pedestrian, bicycle, and other micro-mobility connection between Duluth, MN and Superior, WI, is desired” - in light of the long life of this bridge creating a better bike/ped/etc. connection should be required. Other options were suggested to replace desired including “necessary” and “essential.” There seemed to be general support to ask that “desired” change to “necessary.”
- James Gittemeier defined the term micro-mobility = scooters, segways, skateboards and other similar devices yet to be discovered, some of which may have motors so can’t call non-motorized.

- Dick Haney pointed out that improving ped/bike/etc. is a critical part of improving multi-modal transportation options as mentioned in Whereas #6.
- Carol Andrews shared Skip William's detailed input on the screen and read key parts. BPAC discussed Skip's recommendations and how to be included in the BPAC input as change to the resolution wording while other parts could go into the accompanying explanatory memo. Andrea Crouse pointed out some could be grouped under equity, e.g., non car owners (now and the potentially growing # giving trends, unknown future etc.); fragmented bike/ped network that does not serve users as intended; public support and redundancy for non-vehicle users, i.e., if the Bong Bridge crossing is unavailable the options are VERY limited (DTA, Oliver bridge).
- Kris Liljebblad pointed out that the primary driver for replacement is maintaining interstate commerce between the two states, with lack of bike/ped connection secondary.
- Mike Wenzholz said the MIC has made clear that improvements should focus #1 on creating viable connections for transportation purposes, not just recreation, for bike/ped/micro-mobility.
- James Gittemeier noted that he, Dena Ryan, and Bryan Anderson are on the newly formed Bike/Ped Technical Advisory Group for the bridge redesign planning effort.
- Dena Ryan talked about how they are working on the project Purpose and Need statement, with all components of the project are competing for Purpose and Need.
- Mike Wenzholz stated that he would review the resolution and change language from "desired" to "necessary" or "essential" regarding the bike and ped connection between Duluth and Superior at the Blatnik Bridge location and he would bring forward the other key points brought up by the BPAC to the MIC Policy Board before they vote on the resolution.

#### **4. Draft Duluth-Superior Metro Pedestrian Plan**

James Gittemeier said the good news is he received a lot of comments on the draft plan. The bad news is it is taking a long time to go through and revise to address them all, though he is pleased that the input, in his opinion, is leading to a better approach that includes advice to jurisdictions on priority gaps etc. Kris Liljebblad said his comments included the issue of limited resources relative to the # of miles of "suburban" style streets without sidewalks, leading to the need to find ways to continue to serve as shared use roads but in a safer manner. The next "final draft" version of the Ped Plan will be available to BPAC to review from July 30 – August 13. It will be presented in August MIC Policy Board for approval.

#### **5. Updates and Other Topics by Members**

- Chris Belden discussed the DTA Better Bus plan [Better Bus Blueprint - Duluth Transit Authority](#).
- Central Entrance Transportation Plan – Mike Wenzholz said there has been several opportunities for public input this summer, some type of public advisory committee is starting soon. Several BPAC members participated; compliments on the presenters especially the national expert who had the cool graphics showing example similar streets before and after to demonstrate some key concepts/tools.
- SLC – Rice Lake Road: Carol Andrews showed a map and announced that St. Louis County is just starting to look at a possible big project that would rebuild Rice Lake Road from Calvary to north of Martin including adding frontage roads, 1 or 2 roundabouts and bike/ped improvements to try to get ahead of expected development in that corridor. Construction year not set, maybe 2026.

- SLC – 40<sup>th</sup> Ave. West = Grand Ave to railroad crossing: this road is slated for full reconstruct; Road Engineer Steve Krasaway has requested BPAC input by July 1, 2022.
- Scheduling on-site visits for Fall – Carol Andrews asked each jurisdiction to identify upcoming projects that would be good to have a BPAC site visit.

Meeting adjourned 4:00 pm