Updated 10/27/2026 by Eli Norlander

MIC BPAC Jurisdiction Project and Policy Review Process

Key Terms and Acronyms

***MIC** = Duluth Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council*

***TAC** = MIC Technical Advisory Committee*

***BPAC** = MIC Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee*

***B/P** = Bicycle and/or Pedestrian*

***TIP** = Transportation Improvement Program*

***30% Design** = initial design stage when key decisions impacting ROW acquisition and cost have been made*

***60% Design** = major design elements are mostly done but design is not 100% final*

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish procedures and guidelines to aid the BPAC in working effectively with jurisdictions (aka road authorities), the TAC, MIC staff, MIC Policy Board, and citizens to provide useful and timely input on jurisdiction's construction projects and policies related to improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the MIC area. Primary goals of this process are to:

- Maximize the usefulness of BPAC's input
- Minimize negative impacts to projects including letting or construction delays
- Promote information sharing and consistency across jurisdictions
- Promote implementation of projects aligned with MIC's Bicycle Transportation Plan, Pedestrian Plan, and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Promote awareness of and adherence to current best practices for B/P facility design and related policies

Process Summary

Jurisdictions will work with MIC staff to identify which projects or B/P projects or policies each jurisdiction will bring to the BPAC for review and determine the best timing for that review. MIC staff will develop a calendar of scheduled BPAC project reviews, looking out at least two years, aiming to meet jurisdictions' needs for timely input as well as spreading projects out over time. The review process will be documented, resulting in a written summary of the process, recommendations, and the jurisdiction's response to recommendations.

Related Procedures and Information

1. Which projects will be reviewed by the BPAC?
    a. High Priority: Federally funded or locally funded regionally significant construction, reconstruction, or other project with an opportunity to allocate ROW if: location is identified as major or critical priority corridors in the Bike or Pedestrian Plan, a recommended future bike facility, or are identified as a gap in the B/P network.
    b. Secondary Priority: Jurisdictions may request BPAC's input on other projects as well. Such reviews will be at the jurisdiction's discretion and subject to BPAC's capacity.

2. Project/Policy presentations: jurisdictions are encouraged to provide a brief project summary for MIC staff to share as part of the BPAC meeting packet so that attendees can come prepared to discuss it. Use the BPAC Project Input Worksheet for this purpose. The summary should include project goals and constraints such as the type of project e.g., full reconstruct; pavement preservation with some potential opportunities (e.g., 4 to 3 lane conversion); or pavement rehab with very limited opportunity for B/P improvement.

3. At the meeting: recommendations for how the BPAC and jurisdictions should approach the presentation and discussion of a project are set out in Appendix A. In developing this process, one identified need that is common to both BPAC members and jurisdictions, is to promote trust and positive working relationships. Maintaining a mutually respectful atmosphere during project reviews at BPAC meetings is key to meeting that goal.

4. Policies: Jurisdictions have internal policies that impact their contributions toward improving B/P infrastructure. These may or may not be official written policies. Example: St. Louis County, aims to pave the shoulder as feasible when doing a pavement preservation project on rural roads with gravel shoulders. Jurisdictions are encouraged to identify and share their B/P-related policies with the BPAC during reviews, even if those policies are very limited.

5. Timing: exact timing will vary by project. Typically, the BPAC's main project review will occur during the visioning, scoping, and conceptual and early design phases. Unless requested by a jurisdiction, BPAC will not review projects that are beyond the 30% design phase. At their discretion, jurisdictions have the option to check-in w/ BPAC during the 30 – 60% design stage.

6. Limitations: The BPAC needs to keep in mind that B/P needs are one of many factors that the jurisdiction must consider and balance when designing a project or establishing B/P policies. Jurisdictions need to keep in mind that the BPAC does not speak for all persons or entities interested in improving conditions and safety for people traveling by bike, walking or other "active transportation" mode. That said, getting input from BPAC can help inform a jurisdiction's general public outreach for a project. Jurisdiction consultation with BPAC is meant to represent B/P interests to the degree possible and expected to provide a consensus view to jurisdictions.

Appendix A

Recommended Format for Project Review at BPAC Meetings

A. **Facilitator:** BPAC Chair, Vice-Chair, or MIC Staff should be clearly designated as the facilitator for the project discussion. This person is responsible for getting participants to follow the following recommendations.

B. Suggested Meeting Format

1. Project proposer completes their presentation to the group. Attendees should limit questions and comments to after the presentation is complete.

2. A timer should be set to limit presentations and follow-up questions and discussion to the time allocated in the agenda. Project proposer, BPAC Chair, and MIC staff work together to determine time allocated to the presentation, Q&A, and overall agenda item.

3. Project proposer completes their presentation with questions held until the discussion period.

4. Facilitator solicits initial input from members, one at a time, and starts a summary of input on a flip chart, whiteboard, or on-screen computer. Each BPAC member should be prompted to speak at least once during this first round of input. If time remains, non-members present can be prompted to provide input

5. Facilitator uses the written summary to identify and state out loud:
    a. The key topics raised that appear to warrant further discussion
    b. Input on which there seems to be general agreement. This serves as the start of what will become the final BPAC input and consensus summary.
    c. Group agrees on topics to discuss further.

6. Facilitator coordinates discussion of one topic, concern, or question at a time, starting with project proposer who can inform discussion with related background (e.g., other options considered, data…). Attendees then share their opinions with Facilitator calling on people who indicate they wish to speak. Facilitator should attempt to get BPAC members to come to agreement on their input on that topic or table it (e.g., due to lack of information).

7. Facilitator asks if there are any additional topics to discuss and repeats step 4 as necessary/time allows.

C. Ground Rules for BPAC Members

1. Although the state of biking and walking infrastructure in the MIC area lags behind where we would like it to be, do not take your frustrations out on BPAC guests. Appreciate that, just by being at the meeting, they are taking a positive step.

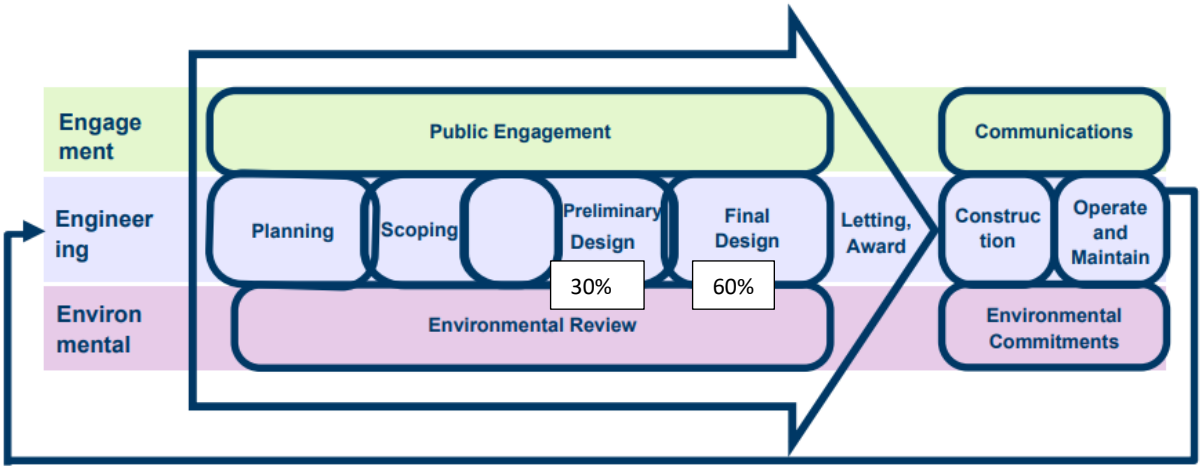
2. When sharing information and ideas use words that encourage productive discussion rather arguments caused by putting proposers in a defensive position.
3. When providing input on a project, look for positive things to say as well as concerns. Are there things you like about the plan? It is useful for project proposers to know what is "right" as well as what is of concern.
4. In order to arrive at input that best represents the majority of the group's preferences in a reasonable time frame:
    a. Cooperate with the facilitator to stay on topic.
    b. Allow equal opportunity for input; avoid one or two people overly dominating the conversation.
    c. If there is information lacking or other perspectives needed from someone/entities not present, point that out.

D. Advice for Project Proposers

1. Explain: who are the various user groups impacted by a project and how does the proposed design try to balance all user group's needs? - though also expect that BPAC members will push to maximize benefits for bicyclists and pedestrians.
2. Attendees may question the basis of decisions or ask for data or other information. In the end, regardless of whether you decide to change anything, the process of questioning and debating is part of a robust design process that should lead to the best solution.
3. If a suggestion does not seem feasible you may choose to explain why that is so at the meeting or you may want to just acknowledge the input to consider and respond later. The latter option may help diffuse an argument that is no longer fruitful (and save time). It is always important to "close the loop" and work with MIC staff and the BPAC Chair to document BPAC's input and the project proposer's responses during and following review.
4. The group may arrive at a recommendation that you disagree with despite your explanations. It is expected that you will give reasonable consideration to the recommendations, but also that the project proposer will make the final decision.

Scoping within the Context of the Project Development Process

Scoping is an early part of the project development process that follows transportation planning, often overlaps with preliminary design, and guides the rest of the project development process.



MnDOT Scoping Process 1