Union Park District Council Transportation Committee Meeting

Monday, 03.11.2024, 6:30pm - 8:30pm, Via Zoom

# Committee Members Present: Lisa Nelson, April King, Barb Thoman, James Johnson, Allen Saunders, Amy Gage, KC Cox, Scott Berger, Jerome Benner, Lisa Meuller, Austin Wu

# Guests: Lynn Ihlenfeldt (MCCC board member), Hugo Bruggeman (MGCC)

# **Staff:** Leah Timberlake Sullivan, Paul Nguyen

# Agenda and Minutes

* March Agenda and Minutes approved

# 2. Follow-ups and UPDC updates

* Meeting at Allianz Field to discuss project @ March 14, 7-8:30pm, please RSVP
* Mitra Jalali is friendly to the idea of the branded bike rack project in Union Park
* CLUED and the board went through a list of variances for the hotel, board of zoning approved them “with conditions”
* [Star Tribune article](https://www.startribune.com/st-pauls-midway-neighborhood-still-waiting-for-united-village-spurred-renaissance/600349432/) about the superblock
* Both UPDC and Hamline-Midway CC are attending the project, also working with Midway Chamber of Commerce
* UPDC will be sharing office space in Spruce Tree Center, cost about 40% less than current office space
* Letter for Concordia conversion on lanes, letter about automated speed enforcement (being voted on), letter about safety on Snelling
* MnDOT meeting on variance on Concordia is Thursday the 21st
* Updates on joint transportation committee
* Discussions of speed on Marshall, especially across the bridge

# 3. Walkability (Lynn Ihlenfeldt and Hugo Bruggeman)

* Started process because of poor sidewalk walkability
* [Walkability Survey](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeaIu8roe8R-fMwztkCoIwH5hd_DnP_IXZoHOvlaRO2scxRIw/viewform) started with winter study, in 2022/2023
* Understanding good times of the year is essential to understand bad times of the year, winter walkability study will be next stage
* Two month duration, 172 respondents: where do you walk, need accessories, etc.
* When do people walk?
	1. Pretty stable across the year except for winter which is -21%
	2. Daytime and evening are common, nighttime is about 70% less than during the day
* Who do you walk? Exercise is greatest (87%), followed by errands (56%) and pet exercise (44%), transit (13%), school/daycare (12%), work (8%)
* Accessories: 42% wear cleats, 28% wear lights, 36% wear lights – higher percentage if looking at only winter walkers
* Biggest concerns: slippery/snow covered sidewalks and street crossings, as well as uneven (or missing) surfaces and unsafe traffic (high speeds particularly)
* 1/3rd of respondents in paper, 2/3rds online
* Plan is to scale up, maybe even do it city-wide
* Want to collect sites of concern
* Didn’t break down why not walk at night (comments on lighting)
* City does a poor job of addressing sidewalk heaving, half of respondents have fallen in the last three years
* Not yet talked to public works about doing the survey city-wide
* [Current survey ends](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeaIu8roe8R-fMwztkCoIwH5hd_DnP_IXZoHOvlaRO2scxRIw/viewform) on May 10th
* Report unsafe sidewalks [through the city](https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/safety-inspections/report-incident)

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# 4. Stop Over Salting (Barb Thoman)

* All of the capitol region watershed drains into Mississippi, salinity in Mississippi is going up by 1-4% per year
* Road salt is greatest contributor at 42%, of which half is roads and bridges, and rest is parking lots and sidewalks
* One tablespoon of salt pollutes 5 gallons of water permanently
* Pollutes both surface and ground water, prevents water from “turning over” and favors invasive species
* 67 lakes, rivers, and streams in the Metro are impaired, and 38 are at high risk
* Changes chemistry of soil and impairs ability of trees to take up water, also reduces drought tolerance, and doesn’t get washed out
* Salt should be used above 0F, try to avoid use if warm weather is coming up
* More salt doesn’t mean more safety, does not protect against liability risk
* Chloride is acidic and eats away at pavement, creating tripping risks
* Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (PCA) has courses about smart salting
* Can hire Smart Salt Certified Contractor, model contract for snow and ice management to not incentivize more salt use
* Consider using snow sweeper
* Proper snow storage to prevent snow melting and refreezing downhill
* Alternative salts (calcium chloride) aren’t safe for the environment either
* Scatter salt on ice only
* Brining helps reduce salt quite a bit
* Winter tires work great with ice handling on roads
* Can we put the salt presentation in the newsletter?

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# 4. Other Things To Do

* Capital Improvements Budget deadline is March 24th
* Takes about a half day to fill out one of the surveys
* Need to talk about adopting bus stops
* Bicycle Benefits program by Amy Gage
	1. All of bicycle benefits is being updated by Our Streets
* MnDOT has been very busy, many meetings
	1. Reported on community survey
	2. Most people liked the at grade alternatives
	3. Did not reach a particularly broad audience
	4. Community response to how flawed the survey was
* Our Streets will be releasing a report on the I-94 corridor, created by Toole Design Group and Visible City
	1. Highway removal (economic, land reclamation, traffic evaporation impacts) study will be released in the next week
	2. Predict hundreds of new housing units could be built
	3. 230-2450 new jobs
	4. Market value of the real estate in reclaimed land is up to $470M dollars
	5. Street grid could absorb capacity without much impact to neighborhoods
* Possible cancellations (or meeting move) next month due to many members being out of town due to the eclipse
* Please contact

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

# Next Meeting:

Next meeting Monday April 8th, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm via videoconference.