

## **GOVERNOR'S BICYCLE COORDINATING COUNCIL**

Wednesday, June 15th, 2022  
9:30 am - 12:00 pm  
Microsoft Teams Conference Call

### **Council Members:**

Andrew Potts, Chair, Citizen Member  
Chris Squires, Dept. of Transportation  
David Spiegelberg, Dept. of Tourism  
Sen. Melissa Agard  
Mike Schwendau, Dept. of Transportation

Brian Dean, Dept. of Public Instruction  
Craig Heywood, Citizen Member  
Jessica Wineberg, Citizen Member  
Scott Peterson, Citizen Member  
Rep. Kristina Shelton

**Others in Attendance:** Travis Houle, Dept. of Transportation; Larry Corsi, Dept. of Transportation; Alesha Emmert, WI Bike Fed; John Bowser, Dept. of Health Services; Sara Rigelman, Dept. of Natural Resources; Paige Anderson, from Rep. Shelton's Office; Alex Gramovot, Dept. of Transportation; Jake Newborn, WI Bike Fed; Kirsten Finn, WI Bike Fed; Mary Monroe Brown, Dept. of Tourism; Dave Dahms, Dept. of Transportation; Alex Gramovot, Dept. of Transportation; Aaron Collins, from Sen. Agard's office; Alexis McAdams; Matt Sudac, Dept. of Transportation

### **Meeting called to order at 9:33am.**

### **Minutes Approved:**

Senator Agard moved to approve the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes and David Spiegelberg seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### **Introduce new Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator: Chris Squires**

- Chris Squires has been the SE Region bike/ped coordinator for the past 10+ years before taking over the statewide position in April after Jill's departure. He has a background in urban planning and prior to working for the DOT worked in a few consulting firms.

### **Legislative Initiatives**

- Sen. Agard
  - The legislature is out of session at the moment, so there are no bills moving through the process right now. Just want to reiterate an important bill, SB805: This bill would allow certain local government entities as well as DOT to use eminent domain to acquire land for recreational trails. Current law prohibits governments from exercising this power.
  - There is considerable interest from local governments and multimodal transportation groups in this. Stoughton has passed a resolution in favor of such legislation and Cottage Grove has also recently passed something similar. Would like to encourage people to reach out to local governments on this issue and hopefully this will be included in the budget next session.

- Rep Shelton:
  - Update on AB853: The Stop State bill. This bill would require vehicles to stop for pedestrians at certain intersections and crosswalks. Working closely with Walk Bike Planning Team in Green Bay on this and Sen. Agard's bill.
  - Green Bay City Council just passed \$1.6 million to fund their walk/bike plan.

**Badger State Trail: Stewart Tunnel Update** – Sara Rigelman (DNR)

- The Stewart Tunnel is a popular bicycling destination on the Badger State Trail located approximately 20 miles south of Madison. The tunnel has been closed since 2019 due to crumbling rock from the ceiling and side walls. An engineering firm, GEI Consulting, evaluated 9 different alternatives for a report last December. The analysis became available on the DNR website in April. Many factors are being considered in selecting a solution including the user experience, real estate needs, historical context, economic/community impacts, economic analysis, and endangered species habitats.
- Summary of Alternatives
  - The cost range of the alternatives is between \$140,000-\$18 million. There are 4 tunnel repair options and 3 trail re-route options. Two of the re-routes go above the tunnel and one re-route would go onto the nearby roads.
  - Alternative 1 – The standalone doors are not a permanent option. Portal doors do help to reduce freeze/thaw cycle damage. Combined with Options 2 and 3 to be an adequate solution.
  - Alternative 2 – Involves use of rock netting: This has been used as a fix in the past. Does require continual maintenance to clean out loose rock. No roosting surface for bats.
  - Alternative 3 – Similar to Alt #2 but recommends a metal scaffolding frame within the tunnel.
  - Alternative 4 – Similar to Alt #2 but uses a corrugated metal pipe lining with a bat entrance.
  - Alternative 5 – Looks at using a concrete lining in the tunnel but does not provide a bat space.
  - Alternative 6 – On-road re-routing option. The topography on Tunnel Rd & CTH CC would be challenging for cyclists with grades up to 16% grade. Alternative 7, re-routing above the tunnel, would have grades up to 10%.
  - Alternative 9 – Totally removes the tunnel and creates a trench for the trail to go through.
- Currently working through the stakeholder input process. Since the report was released, we have met with several groups to present it, and are encouraging the submission of comments. Looking to get recommendations and then will prepare a final report. See <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/badger/tunnel> for more details.
- Discussion

- Andy: With the wide cost range, what is DNR looking at for funding sources and availability of funds?
- Sara: Once the recommendation is made with the cost and a report is finalized, it will be a budget request for 2023-25 biennium budget. If it's an expensive option with limited or no funding, then we would look at grants or other outside sources.
- Andy: Would you look at stewardship funding or other revenue such as trail passes, etc?
- Sara: It's to be determined. Some groups are interested in private fundraising. Still looking at options. Ultimately, looking to get funded in state budget.
- Shelton: What is the fiscal request through the budget?
- Sara: We don't know the exact amount yet. Still reviewing comments at this point. Once comments are evaluated, then a number would go in the biennium budget. We do expect to have a final report by the end of July.

#### **Agency Reports and Partner Updates:**

- **Department of Transportation (Chris Squires/Alex Gramovot):**
  - Chris is working on getting up to speed on new duties and responsibilities as statewide bike/ped coordinator. Our unit is kicking-off the process to update our existing pedestrian and bicycle plans into a combined Active Transportation Plan (ATP).
  - Alex: We posted an RFP for the ATP that closed a week and a half ago. A consultant was selected. A survey will take place this fall for stakeholders and the public for what the plan should entail. Our Statewide long-range transportation plan, Connect 2050, has been updated. There were almost 3,000 comments submitted for that plan. Also discussed a steering committee for the Active Transportation Plan.
  - Chris: We are also reviewing TAP applications currently. We continue to work on projects incorporating bike accommodations where we can. Looking at some updates to the Facilities Development Manual.
- **Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Safety (Mike Schwendau):**
  - We submitted our 2023 fiscal plan for the HSP. Significantly expanded funding for WI Bike Fed to push more media and program opportunities for safe biking. Dave Dahms has been working on grants for bike/ped safety. Looking at going to community groups for doing general grants for education. \$65,000 in grants available. Will probably drop the match requirement to enable them to get spent on time.
  - Jake: Can we contact smaller non-profits about applying?
  - Mike: Yes, send them over to Dave and I. Some agencies haven't been able to pick it up due to staffing issues. Looking for others aside from law enforcement to do some of this work.
  - Andy: What would some allowable uses be?
  - Mike: Training, education, local media, yard signs are all fine. No bumper stickers or T-shirts.
  - Andy: Would giving out lights for night use be eligible?
  - Mike: It used to be, but FAST Act changed that. May be possible if it's paired with education somehow.

- Andy notes that the council has received a donation of lights to give out at bike safety events. Law enforcement would like to take an educational approach by giving out lights to those seen riding at night without a light.
- **Department of Health Services (John Bowser)**
  - Our unit has The Wisconsin Physical Activity and Nutrition Road Map available for viewing. See it here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/nutrition/road-map.htm>
  - The CDC will be releasing funding opportunities for physical activities and nutrition, to be released in Quarter 1 or 2 of 2023. Previously, we have had funding from the Nutrition and Obesity Prevention Program from 2013-2018. Will be applying to the next round in 2023 and will be reaching out to the council for suggestions or topics for that write-up.
- **Department of Natural Resources (Sara Rigelman)**

Project Updates

  - DNR is in the initial stages of a large \$5 million project focused on major bridge repairs or replacements at 4 trail properties (still working on details so not including specific properties at this time in case the list needs to be adjusted). Work should occur in 2024.
  - **Elroy Sparta State Trail**
    - After completing major repairs to the Elroy-Sparta State Trail from damage that resulted from the historic storm event of 2018 a ribbon cutting event was held at the Kendall Depot on May 14.
    - A tornado touched down east of Sparta on the evening of May 19 knocking down trees across an approximate 1.3-mile section of the Elroy-Sparta State Trail. Park Staff worked to have the trail re-opened by May 22.
    - Bridge over Moore Creek in Monroe County west of Norwalk has been closed to all uses due to deteriorating structural condition. WDNR is repairing the bridge this summer in order to open it for pedestrian and bicycle use and with a plan on replacing this bridge in the near future.
  - **400 State Trail** - New water fountains were installed at the LaValle and Union Center trailheads on the 400 State Trail
  - **Badger State Trail Stewart Tunnel** - The tunnel remains closed. Tunnel Road is the official on-road detour. DNR hired an engineering firm, GEI Consultants, Inc. to prepare a report that includes an evaluation of repair alternatives for Stewart Tunnel from an engineering standpoint. The final report was completed in December. DNR used the GEI report as a starting point for developing the Draft Stewart Tunnel Alternatives Analysis that is currently available for public comment. The public comment period closes on Friday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. DNR will make a recommendation and finalize the report after comments are obtained and then submit a budget request for the selected alternative. See project website for more information: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/badger/tunnel>
  - **Governor Nelson State Park** – The DNR partnered with Dane County to construct a segment of the North Mendota Trail at Governor Nelson State Park. The gravel base was put in last fall and the trail was paved in May. A ribbon cutting for the trail will be held on Thursday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.

- **New Glarus Woods State Park** – DNR property staff are partnering with the Friends of New Glarus Woods State Park to start planning and laying out a new singletrack mountain bike trail system at the park. The Friends received a \$20,000 grant from the Stewardship Friends Grant Program for the project.
- **Ahnapee State Trail** - 5.2 miles of the Ahnapee State Trail in Door County was resurfaced in June. The rest of the trail will likely be done over the next couple years with funding assistance from the RTP Grant Program.

#### Master Planning Updates

- **Rib Mountain State Park** – DNR is seeking public comments on the next phase of the Rib Mountain Master Plan revision process. Public comments will be accepted June 1 to June 30, 2022. In addition to the public comment period, the DNR will host an open house from 4-7 p.m. on June 22, 2022, at Northcentral Technical College. The Rib Mountain State Park Draft Vision, Goals, Objectives and Management Options includes 5 potential options for bicycle trails at the park. The document and information for providing input is available on the DNR's [Rib Mountain State Park Master Plan Revision webpage](#).

#### Events

- DNR kicked off June's National Get Outdoors Month with our DNR Free Fun Weekend June 4-5, 2022. The weekend offered free trail use as well as free park admission and fishing. Campers for this weekend received Camping Courtesy passes for Saturday and Sunday nights of their stay in place of daily admission passes.
- Women's Bike Ride – The Great Sauk Trail, Tuesday, July 12, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Meet at gravel parking lot off Hwy 78 and Business 12 (by the United Coop). Event website: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/events/55116>
- WDNR continues to work in partnership with the Bike Fed on the Ride Across Wisconsin Event that is taking place on August 20 – 21 showcasing five state trails including the La Crosse River, Elroy-Sparta, 400, Glacial Drumlin, and Hank Aaron State Trails.
- Andy wanted to take an opportunity to thank the DNR for all their hard work in cleaning up the trails of downed trees and branches after the big storms we have had lately.

#### • **Department of Tourism (David Spiegelberg)**

- All are encouraged to look at TravelWisconsin.com. Nice article and photo of the Elroy-Sparta Trail on the home page. The official re-opening of the trail had great social media coverage, and the Secretary also mentioned it on a Milwaukee weekly radio show. Links to these interviews were in an e-mail sent out to the council.
- The JEM Grant program has no new projects being funded. We are in Year 2 of involvement with the Ride Across Wisconsin. Driftless Wisconsin, a tourism marketing organization, is on a Year 3 grant to promote all outdoor recreational opportunities in southwest Wisconsin.
- There is a summer campaign putting more energy behind events as they come back this year after the pandemic. People are encouraged to look at the events section of TravelWisconsin.com and we are always looking to add more bike events.

- The Dairy Air Ride in Kenosha County to the June Dairy Breakfast will be held Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. This is sponsored by the county parks department and is a good way of supporting the state's dairy industry.

### **Council Member Highlights**

- Craig: Ironman Wisconsin in September is running as a festival with a half distance on Saturday Sept 10<sup>th</sup> and a full distance on Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 4,000-5,000 athletes are expected. There are plenty of volunteer opportunities and ways to get involved.
  - Andy says he's marshalled before and it's an enjoyable experience.
  - Craig says this event is ranked in the top 10 of triathlons in North America.
- Andy: The State Criterium Championship in Fitchburg is coming up on July 9<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the USA Cycling-sanctioned racing event, there is a 25-mile family ride and 5K run as well.

### **Partner Highlights**

- WI Bike Fed (Kirsten Finn/Jake Newborn)
  - Kirsten: Just got back from Detroit on a Rails-to-Trails trip. We toured the Joe Louis Greenway, which is a model that we feel would be good for the 30<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor in Milwaukee. It was inspiring to see the power of trails to uplift people, remove blight and to provide recreational opportunities for those without equitable access.
  - Recently concluded a successful Bike Week. Aside from robust Milwaukee and Madison participation, we saw significant Chippewa Valley involvement as well.
  - Also released the Wisconsin Bikeways Report during Bike Week. Currently accepting comments for that and then Bike Fed is planning to meet with DNR and DOT for any necessary changes.
  - Ride Across Wisconsin has been a successful collaboration with the DNR. We are only in Year 1 of the Travel Wisconsin grant. We are seeing some success with doing a radio campaign in neighboring states, with out of staters coming here for the RAW event and providing encouragement for more trail-riding here in the future.
  - A Healthy Communities Summit, in conjunction with the Office of Outdoor Recreation, is being held in Madison on September 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Jake says the Bike Fed has "share-the-road" yard signs they've been putting up in several counties including Dane, Milwaukee, Waukesha, Brown and Outagamie. Dane and Brown Counties have distributed all their signs, but still need some help in those other counties with posting signs. If anyone is interested, please contact Jake.

### **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) update (Travis Houle)**

- Travis oversees CMAQ, TAP, and the new carbon reduction program. All these programs have seen significant increases in funding. There is a huge influx in interest for the new carbon reduction program. We are currently in the process of compiling applications for all programs and are working with partners to identify projects.
- Carbon reduction program has been solicited, application window closed, but selection of projects is on hold due to funding issues in the federal plan. Will end up being a small delay in getting the awarding finalized and announced.

- CMAQ and TAP both had a supplemental solicitation for the increased federal funding. CMAQ projects have been selected and approved. We are now in the process of getting those projects programmed and scheduled.
- TAP is under the traditional solicitation for 2023-26. With increased funding, wanted to give those who applied a chance to enhance their application. Also opened a supplemental solicitation specifically for Planning Studies and Safe Routes to School activities. All those applications are being compiled and regional staff should have those finalized mid-June. Still finalizing deadline for selection process and looking to have projects identified by July 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Discussion
  - Questions were brought up regarding changes to previous applications, existing limitations, and about supplemental 2023 solicitation.
  - Travis explained that it is WisDOT policy that cost increases are not an eligible use of federal funds on TAP projects.
  - Under BIL, funding is divided into several pools based on population size.
  - FHWA is investigating the breakdown of applications for MPO areas. There are many requests for larger MPO's, and we are looking at flexibility to fund smaller communities that fit into the larger MPO area. This seems possible but no final answer yet.
  - If residual capacity exists in 2023 after the current traditional and supplemental applications are processed, then we will solicit for 2023-26. However, the goal has been to allocate money on the forefront.

#### **Council Business Items**

- Public Safety Campaigns Discussion
  - Andy says the subcommittee has no update, so this will be held over to the next meeting.

#### **Meeting Wrap-up and Adjourn**

- Meetings will continue to be held quarterly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. Next meeting will be September 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Motion to adjourn was made by Craig. David seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:56 am.