

GOVERNOR'S BICYCLE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Wednesday, September 21st, 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
Stephanie Bradley Wilson, Citizen Member
Brenda Maxwell, Citizen Member

Brian Dean, Dept. of Public Instruction
Craig Heywood, Citizen Member
James Miller, Citizen Member
Scott Peterson, Citizen Member
Rep. Kristina Shelton
John Bowser, Dept. of Health Services

Others in Attendance: Travis Houle, Dept. of Transportation; Larry Corsi, Dept. of Transportation; Alesha Emmert, WI Bike Fed; Sara Rigelman, Dept. of Natural Resources; Paige Anderson, from Rep. Shelton's Office; Jake Newborn, WI Bike Fed; Kirsten Finn, WI Bike Fed; Mary Monroe Brown, Dept. of Tourism; Dave Dahms, Dept. of Transportation; Kristie Goforth, FreeBikes4Kidz; Matt Sudac, Dept. of Transportation

Meeting called to order at 9:32 am.

Minutes Approved:

David Spiegelberg moved to approve the minutes and Scott Peterson seconded the approval of the June 15th minutes. All were in favor.

Legislative Initiatives

- Sen. Agard:
 - No new updates since last meeting. There is not much happening legislatively at the moment due to the election cycle.
- Rep. Shelton:
 - No updates. This is a good opportunity to see what the next biennium will look like.
- Andy: On September 15th, the biennium budgets are submitted to the governor. By late January/early February the governor submits their budget. That is where decisions on TAP funding are made. Non-fiscal policy may be included in that document as well.

Council Business Items

- Public Safety Campaigns Discussion
 - No update at this time. Had been discussed in a few previous meetings. Will be kept on the agenda for future discussion.

- Q & A for newer Council Members
 - Andy: This is a formal opportunity for newer council members to ask questions about the role and purpose of the council. Also, for any ideas to be considered in the future, FDM updates, background on design manual.
 - Stephanie Bradley Wilson: Would like to see a more formal onboarding process to understand scope/responsibilities as a council member and how individual members can contribute. Also interested in any activities from reporting agencies that promote people of color, especially in outdoor activities.
 - Andy: I can work with DOT on formalizing an onboarding process. For the inclusion/equity item, it would be good to have a standing item to go over that. As partner agencies give their updates, try and keep that lens in mind. Could be useful to have different groups come in and talk about activities they have and promotion of bicycling in underrepresented communities.

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

- Travis gave an update on TAP solicitation efforts and BIL. Looking to get input before solicitation this fall. BIL has infused large amount of federal funds, whether to DOT/DNR/other state agencies.
- There were 2 separate program solicitations for TAP. One occurred in 2021 and a second one occurred in Summer 2022. There will be another solicitation this fall for rural project proposals.
- WisDOT still finalizing schedule from last awards cycle.
- Non-profits now, at a baseline, are eligible to apply directly for TAP funds.
- In FY22, WisDOT received an approx. 150% increase in TAP funding to just over \$17 million.
- In more rural areas, participation has been a struggle because of lack of local expertise and local resources to assemble applications. There are also differing needs for urban and rural areas.
- Based on the current schedule, there is approx. \$9 million in program availability between now and end of FY26.
- In response to the funding increase, WisDOT has developed a draft concept called Safe Transportation Alternatives for Rural Schools (STARS). This will function as a rural-only TAP initiative in practice. Will focus on non-infrastructure or smaller-scale infrastructure projects. Solicitation likely in October.
- The 20% local match requirement has been a challenge for smaller communities. There is a \$300,000 minimum federal participation limit on TAP infrastructure projects. The limit for non-infrastructure projects is \$50,000. We are recommending a lower threshold for STARS but have yet to see what that will actually look like.
- Near term will focus on planning projects, rural non-infrastructure and design projects. Longer term (2025-26) will focus more on infrastructure as well as construction.
- Rural communities have a greater need for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) due to longer distances to school, lack of sidewalks, etc. These towns may also lack local staff well-versed in bike/ped issues as well as face financial constraints.
- Regional planning commissions, non-profits and others are eligible to sponsor TAP projects. This should help to increase rural participation since that will remain a challenge.

- Discussion
 - Jake asked about whether schools generally apply for no-match grants and is there an effort to reduce or eliminate the match amount. Travis said a few school districts have applied previously. The best success in SRTS programming has been at the RPC level. There used to be higher levels of cost share, even up to 100% federal or state participation in some cases. Not feasible right now.
 - A question came up regarding how over- or under-subscribed geographic levels were in the last round including supplemental solicitations. In the last round (last 2 solicitations), for each population area, there was enough to fund every project. The exception to this was the 5,000-50,000 population level, which had the largest need for deliberation and confirmation of projects. There happened to be a high number of project requests.

Agency Reports and Partner Updates:

- **Department of Transportation, Bureau of Planning and Economic Dev (Chris Squires):**
 - Chris: We have a minor update on the Active Transportation Plan. Toole Design was the consultant selected for that project. Contract to be finalized soon. For updates, please check the WisDOT website [here](#). There is a link near the bottom of the page to sign up for updates. We did have a change in project managers and the contact person is Matt Schreiber now.
 - Jake: Is there anything in the plan related to updating or changing the FDM and design guidelines for bike/ped facilities?
 - Chris: It could, we haven't gotten to the point of formalizing anything yet. Looking at current guidance to see what needs to be added or changed.
 - Jake: Existing WisDOT guidelines are old. DPW Milwaukee is encountering hindrances to advancements in engineering the mayor has proposed. Some of these advanced designs are not allowed or difficult to get WisDOT to approve. Seems to be a challenge to let cities have local control.
 - Chris: Current manual is from 2004. Aware of outdated guidance, such as on separated bike lanes. We look to talk with communities as well as pull from AASHTO and NACTO as needed to fill in some of the gaps there.
 - Jake: There is concern from the Bike Fed and others that certain projects are being "downscoped" to a level that doesn't allow for adequate safety improvements for vulnerable users. For example, STH 59 National Ave changed from reconstruction to a pavement replacement. Also concerns about defunding/less funding, where local governments will have to spend more for improvements. Worried about potential for other projects to have this issue.
 - Chris: Recommend contacting regional bike/ped coordinators and Planning Units for more details about scope changes on specific projects.
- **Department of Health Services (John Bowser)**
 - John: DHS is keeping an eye on the next round of grant funding. The CDC forecasted a bunch of grants in the last month or two, one of which is the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan. At one point we had funding through that plan but not in this cycle. Likely to be posted in January. Once we have a solid idea of what we're looking for, we'll be reaching out to this group for ideas on collaboration and leveraging resources.

- Another physical activity grant is based on the school level. It has previously been a collaboration between DPI and DHS. Currently being forecasted as well. We will again also look for opportunities that will be useful to the council.
- **Department of Public Instruction (Brian Dean)**
 - Brian: I would invite everyone to view Dr. Jill Underly's State of Education presentation happening tomorrow (9/22) at noon. She will go over budget initiatives and where we're going in terms of education in the state.
- **Department of Natural Resources (Sara Rigelman)**
 - Bike Trail Project Updates*
 - **Bearskin State Trail** - The project to replace the Pinewood trestle with a new recreational bridge was recently completed and the trail has been re-opened to public use in this area.
 - **Willow River State Park/Kinnickinnic State Park** - The Friends and their associated Wiki Mountain Bike Club are continuing to build and open new singletrack bike trails at both parks. At Willow, approximately 6 miles of trail were opened last fall. This year they have built and opened approximately 4.25 miles of additional bike trail and are working on another 3.25 miles to open later this fall. By fall the park should have about 13.5 miles of open singletrack trail. The Friends received a \$100,000 RTP grant so they are already working on planning an additional 6-8 miles of trail for next year. At Kinnickinnic, approximately 6 miles of trail were opened last year and they have built and opened an additional 3 miles of trail this summer with another 2 miles of bike trail to open this fall. This will give Kinnickinnic an approximate total of 11 miles with several additional miles being planned for next year.
 - **Elroy-Sparta State Trail** - The Norwalk Bridge over Moore Creek was opened for pedestrian traffic on July 22. The bridge will be open to snowmobile traffic this season and temporary crossing of Moore Creek for the Groomer is being worked on and conversations with the snowmobile clubs are ongoing.
 - **Blue Mounds State Park** - CORP and FBMSP set to begin \$100K Mt. Biking renovation and trail additions at the park starting late Sept. Existing trail will be renovated and/or relocated to improve track stability and erosion, while new track will be constructed to complete a beginner's loop at the park. Other minor track relocation will also occur this fall performed by CORP members. All work is within the scope of the Master Plan.
 - **Badger State Trail** - In July, a bucket truck crashed into the bridge located at Round Grove Road, just north of Monroe. Work continues on the bridge, with priority given to reopening the road by removing the bridge. Staff are also working with neighboring property owners in attempts to provide an at-grade crossing at this location until permanent bridge repairs are made.
 - **The Stewart Tunnel** Alternatives Analysis was finalized in July. The report analyzed nine different alternatives and a variety of considerations to formulate a recommendation. The Alternatives Analysis report recommends Alternative 4 – Corrugated Metal Pipe Lining (with bat entry) because it would provide a long-term solution for ensuring safer, year-round access to the tunnel for recreational purposes while also preserving the bat hibernaculum. A public comment period was held from April through June 17. A total of 901 comments were received. The DNR has recommended funding of Alternative 4 in the 2023-25 capital budget.

Additional information regarding the recommendation and public comments can be found in the Stewart Tunnel Alternatives Analysis available online here:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/badger/tunnel>

- **Capital Springs State Park** – In partnership with Dane County, planning is underway for a new paved trail, the Waucheeta Trail, through Capital Springs State Park that will provide connections to Goodland County Park, William G. Lunney Lake Farm Park, the Capital City Trail and the Lower Yahara River Trail.
- **Fox River State Trail** - Funding for repaving entire Brown County Section is underway.

Parks & Recreation Management Program Updates – Publications, Budgets, Visitation Data, Staffing, Policy, Friends Groups, Funding, etc.

- **Wisconsin Trails Network Plan** - The DNR has begun the process of updating the Department's [Wisconsin Trails Network Plan](#). This plan was last updated in 2003 and its purpose is to “*identify a statewide network of trails and provide guidance to the Department for effectively utilizing funding for land acquisition and trail development*”. Thus far, Recreation Management staff has gathered relevant trail data from various external partners, including regional planning commissions, counties, cities, villages, and towns. Property Planning staff has begun the process of creating a draft statewide trail network map, syncing this external data with internal Department trail data.
 - Once this draft map is completed and vetted by various relevant staff, the Department will begin the plan update public engagement process, to include online presentation of the map, as well as gathering feedback on the map and various other trail issues and opportunities.
 - Subsequent plan update phases include development of a complete plan draft, to include the aforementioned map, additional public engagement opportunities, and ultimately Plan approval by the Department and Wisconsin Legislative Trails Caucus.

Master Planning Updates (Active Master Plans)

- **Rib Mountain State Park** – The department sought public comments from June 1 to June 30, 2021 on the document [Draft Vision, Goals, Objectives and Management Options for use in the development of a revised master plan](#). Just over 400 comments were submitted, all of which are posted on the plan website, including a summary of the public input.
 - The document describes a revised vision and new goals and objectives. The department is deferring the selection of a preferred option for downhill skiing until there is a better understanding of the long-term consequences of climate change on the ski operation.
- **Central Sand Plains** – The draft master plan was released for public review and comment on June 27, 2022, for properties in this region that includes portions of Adams, Clark, Columbia, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, Marathon, Marquette, Monroe, Portage, Sauk, Waushara and Wood counties. Public open house meetings were held in July. The public input period was open through August 5, 2022 and has now closed. A summary of public input received about the draft plan is being prepared and will be posted on the plan website when complete.

- [Central Sand Hills](#) –The DNR staff team is continuing to develop draft management objectives and options for properties in this region that includes Marquette County and portions of Adams, Columbia, Dane, Green Lake, Portage, Sauk, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago counties. When complete, a draft version of these goals and objectives along with a set of preliminary alternatives will be available for public review and comment.
- [North Central Forest](#) – The DNR has initiated a master planning process for DNR properties of the North Central Forest Ecological Landscape that includes portions of twenty counties: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Chippewa, Clark, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Marinette, Oconto, Oneida, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas and Washburn. A scoping public input period was held in July to help identify topics that should be addressed in the plan. A recorded version of the presentation from the meetings can be viewed [here](#). This public input period was open through August 15, 2022 and has now closed. A summary of public input received is being prepared and will be posted on the plan website when complete.

Recent and Upcoming Events

- **Governor Nelson State Park** –A ribbon cutting for the newly constructed segment of the North Mendota Trail through Governor Nelson State Park was held on Thursday, July 14th.
- **Bike Fed's Ride Across Wisconsin (RAW)** was held on August 20 and 21 that took place on five state trails with around 700 riders participating in the event. DNR had an informational booth at the Wisconsin Dells stop and at the finish line in Milwaukee.
- **Sugar River State Trail** – A 50th anniversary celebration will be held on October 14th, more details to come.
- **The Knowles-Nelson Friends Grant** - this year, the total amount available to fund projects has doubled with the reauthorization of the Stewardship fund to provide \$500,000 in matching state dollars to DNR Friends Groups through this grant. It is anticipated that many more groups will be interested in this opportunity for matching funds for projects from small enhancements to large development projects. Applications are due November 15th.
- **Zoom Workshop: A Walk Through the Knowles-Nelson Friends Grant Process, presented by the Wisconsin State Park System on September 7, 2022**
Please see the links to the presentation and the resources presented below.
 - Presentation recording: [A Walk Through the Knowles-Nelson Friends Grant Process](#)
 - Fact sheet: [Knowles Nelson Stewardship Friends Grants](#)
 - DNR web page with grant application materials: [Grants to Friends Groups Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program Grants](#)
- Andy says that typically, the Local Units of Government (LUG) tend to be oversubscribed, and the conservation organizations side is undersubscribed. For local governments that want bike projects that are stewardship eligible, he strongly recommends finding a non-

profit group to partner with because the pool of money there will have a higher level of success. Sara agrees.

- **Department of Tourism (David Spiegelberg)**

- David gave an overview on how bicycling is promoted on TravelWisconsin.com. The website has earned many accolades in the last few years. In terms of number of visits, it is currently ranking in the top 5 state tourism websites in the country.
- Bike events are highlighted on the website. 27 events are live on the site at this time. We are coming into the fall season, however, biking is now a 4 season sport with winter fat tire events. If you see that any events are missing, please reach out to David to get them added.
- A number of bicycling videos are on the website. A short video called "Get Ready to Shred These Trails" was filmed at 9-Mile County Park in Wausau. Two more short videos include one from a Neillsville event as well as a winter fat tire video on trails in Vilas County. There is currently nothing for road biking but we look to have some of that in our content in 2023.
- We also have a printed Wisconsin Bike guide that is published every 3 years. The current version is from 2020. We are not sure if the 2023 guide will happen or whether that will be pushed further out due to the pandemic. Please check out the Plan Your Vacation tab on our site for all of our publications.
- We also have our signature Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grant program, with a little over \$1 million to distribute to the tourism industry. Currently there are 3 active bike-related JEM projects. The Fat Bike World Championships were awarded \$10,150 for their 2022 event and we hope to see a 2nd application from them in November. Ride Across Wisconsin was a stellar success. They received a maximum award of \$39,550 for 2022. The next application round for JEM grants is November 1st. Applications are reviewed 4 times per year. Timing is key and prospective applicants should reach out to the department at least 4 months before your project. Please contact David if you are interested.
- The Dept of Tourism's Seasonal Marketing Plan was just released. You can see the video on the website. We also created shorter videos for social media sites and digital ads on sidebars. The mountain biking images are featured prominently in the ads. A series of 30-second audio ads will also be broadcast through radio, Spotify, Pandora, etc.
- Outside of Wisconsin, we have 75 billboards with the Travel Wisconsin fall mountain bike image. This is the largest market we've ever been in. Go to Industry.travelwisconsin.com to see all the ads.
 - Jim: Is the Office of Outdoor Recreation under the umbrella of Dept of Tourism?
David: Yes, the Office does fall under Department of Tourism, but it does have autonomy. Mary Monroe Brown is director of that office. Mary has a staff of 2 or 3 people. The website has a lot of robust information on there.
 - Andy: On the bike guide, regardless of whether a 2023 guide is published, would there be any use to consulting with the council on the next edition?
 - David: In the past, a draft of the guide has usually been shared with the council to get an extra set of eyes on it. Members are encouraged to check out the PDF version on the website. Please let me know if there are any errors or anything that needs to be corrected.

Partner & Council Member Highlights

- Andy
 - Bike Fitchburg has their annual fundraising event this upcoming Friday 9/23, the Pick Me Up at the Border Ride, that includes the Badger State Trail. Participation is \$15.
 - State Criterium Championship in Fitchburg back in July had good turnout.
- Kristie
 - On Saturday Oct 8th, Free Bikes4Kidz is hosting their first bike donation drive of the fall season. It will be held from 10am-2pm with 6 donation locations throughout Dane County. We have also invested in billboards in the area as well so keep an eye out for those.
 - Andy: Does the northwest part of the state fall within the Twin Cities program?
 - Kristie: I don't know if Minnesota's program crosses the border at all. Wonderful support from folks there that did a bike donation drive. Lots of good donations including many fun bikes to add to the museum fleet. The Twin Cities program gives away 13,000 bikes per year.
- Craig reports that for Ironman Wisconsin, the Saturday half was good, but Sunday was rain all day. So there was a high dropout rate. Coming up, Cyclo-cross has really taken off for cycling in Wisconsin. Trek sponsors a big Waterloo festival. Gravel races are really taking off up north and, in some ways, are becoming more popular than the road racing. A few road races and criteriums going on. Looking forward to some excellent bike racing coming up.
- Scott wanted to give a big shoutout to the Bike Fed and Ride Across Wisconsin. He participated in the ride from La Crosse to Waterloo in the 1-day part. Really surprised on all things it touched on including the Elroy-Sparta Trail, the Dells, Baraboo, and Devils Lake. Great opportunity to get out and see the state. Great job to everyone involved in that.

Wisconsin Healthy Communities Summit Update: (WI Bike Fed)

- Alesha: The Wisconsin Healthy Communities Summit is September 29th & 30th. The Bike Fed is partnering with the Office of Outdoor Recreation to promote how outdoor recreation and cycling affects healthy communities. The keynotes are all cycling focused and include John Burke (CEO of Trek), Joe Parisi (Dane County executive), and Alexandra Houchin (world class ultra-cyclist).
- Among the activities will be a grant writing workshop, legislative trails caucus meeting, and outdoor recreation opportunities. There will also be a tour of the Madison Bike Center.
- Tickets are on sale until midnight September 25th. Members of the council can use code "GBCC" for a \$50 ticket. Feel free to share that code with others.
- Andy says it's always good to see a presentation from Trek and learn what they're up to. Their CEO is known to give very high energy speeches.

Meeting Wrap-up and Adjourn

- Meetings will continue to be held quarterly on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Next meeting will be December 21st.

- Motion to adjourn was made by Stephanie Bradley Wilson. Craig Heywood seconded. Meeting adjourned at 11:32 am.