

Union Park District Council Transportation Committee Meeting

Monday, 8.8.2022, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Virtual via Zoom teleconference

Committee Members Present: Scott Berger (presiding co-chair), Gene Christenson, Dan Elenbaas, Amy Gage, April King, Debbie Meister, Lisa Nelson (co-chair), Sean Ryan, Barb Thoman, Claire Warren.

Staff and Interns: Leah Timberlake Sullivan

Guests: Randy Newton (St. Paul City Traffic Engineer), Nichole Morris (University of MN HumanFIRST Lab), Kevin Dahlin, Kevin Sands, Heidi Schallberg, Anne White, Spencer Ludtke

1. Agenda and Minutes

- Meister moved, Gage seconded motion to approve August agenda and minutes from July meeting with no changes. Approved with all in favor.

2. Open Forum

- No topics.

3. Presentation by Dr. Nicole Morris, U of M HumanFIRST Lab

Preliminary results of a study of pedestrian engineering and enforcement at signalized intersections. See slides for full presentation, attached hereto.

- In Minnesota, most pedestrians are hit and killed at signalized intersections.
- In the years before Covid, drivers yielding at intersection crosswalks in St Paul had gone from 40 to 67 percent. Stop for Me was an active city program at the time and traffic enforcement was greater than today.
- In 2021, before study, drivers yielding to peds was 10% in Mpls and 40%. Preparations for study at 32 sites total in Mpls and St. Paul (signage put in place, equipment out). During study which started in July, researchers recorded approx. 6,000 crossings in each city (from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.). Study found compliance at signalized intersections in St Paul was:
 1. Driver yielding to peds when turning right was 87%
 2. Driver yielding to peds when turning left was 76%
 3. Looking percentage was 37.5%
- In 2021, St. Paul was doing better than Mpls, but still not great. Mpls does not enforce the crosswalk law and Mpls has not done Stop for Me campaigns.
- Leading pedestrian intervals (LPI) at traffic lights have been shown to help pedestrians cross safely at signalized intersections.
- Survey showed that people who drive feel safer than people who walk.

4. Presentation by Randy Newton, City Traffic Engineer, City of St. Paul

Summary of St. Paul's traffic calming and safety efforts, including processes for various types of traffic changes or safety improvements. See slides for full presentation, attached hereto.

- The city has documented a noticeable increase in speeding and aggressive driving. St. Paul currently has no resources for traffic enforcement.
- Statewide, traffic fatalities are up. City is hearing complaints about speeding on every type of street. City is focusing on improving the pedestrian and bicycle environment with mill and overlay work with goals of shorting crossing distance for peds and reducing vehicle speeds. City priority is arterial and collector streets not local streets.
- City has a flowchart to guide installation of new crosswalks. No exception even if private money will pay for installation. Residents are not allowed to install their own traffic calming devices.
- Stop signs do not reduce vehicle speeds.
- City will be updating its policy on speed humps on low volume roads.
- Minnesota needs a culture change as it relates to driver behavior.
- City has begun working on a Transportation Safety Action Plan. With a plan, the city can seek federal money. Saint Paul will review/evaluate all crashes in the city.
- When asked what city residents can do, Newton noted that the Stop for Me initiative came from a neighborhood.
- MnDOT is continuing to install curb ramps. Why did MnDOT not talk with UPDC when it made changes to pedestrian islands at I-94 and Cretin last year? Vehicles have already driven onto the new median and flattened the traffic control devices. Newton said UPDC input may have been missed and he encourages UPDC to write a letter about it and include the letter we sent to MnDOT several years ago.

5. Q&A with both speakers

6. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Next Meeting:

Monday, September 12, 2022, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom