Memphis Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) Meeting
Tuesday, May 30, 2024, 10:00AM
GoToMeeting Online Meeting

SUMMARY OF MINUTES

The following committee members were present:

Neil Hansen	*TDOT*	William Ezzell	*Memphis*
Ashley Owens	*TDOT*	Katherine Webb	*Millington*
William Rogers	*TDOT*	Ed Courton	*Oakland*
DJ Sullivan	*TDOT*	Jared Darby	*DPD - OSR*
Thiera Taylor	*TDOT*	Leigh Huffman	*DPD - OSR*
Callie Rush	*MDOT*	Robin Richardson	*DPD – OSR*
Ethan Skaggs	*Germantown*	Gene Carkeet	*Citizen*
Ray Atkinson	*Memphis*	Jim Crook	*Shelby County*
Faria Urmy	*DPD – Comp Planning*	Findley Frazer	*Wolf River Conservancy*
Nikki Dildine	*Innovate Memphis*	Rhonda Standridge	*W. Memphis MPO*
		Guy Sawyer	*W. Memphis MPO*
Jackson McNeil	*Innovate Memphis*		

The following Memphis Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Greenprint Plan consultants were present:

Drew Gaskins	*Gresham Smith*	Kevin Thomas	*Gresham Smith*
Mary Connelly	*Gresham Smith*	Miles Carter	*Gresham Smith*

The following MPO staff members were present:

Pragati Srivastava	*Memphis MPO*	Nick Warren	*Memphis MPO*
Kate Horton	*Memphis MPO*		

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1) Welcome

Ms. Kate Horton welcomed the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) members, and the consultant team lead by Mr. Drew Gaskins.

2) Memphis Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Greenprint Plan

Mr. Gaskins gave a presentation on the development of the Memphis Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Greenprint Plan, which will build upon and synthesize the GREENPRINT 2015/2040 and the Memphis MPO's Walk & Roll Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, to create an updated document with a unified set of goals, objectives, and recommendations.

Mr. Gaskins presented the scope and timeline for the plan along with the primary components including, Plan Review and Network Evaluation, Updated Network and Program Recommendations, and Catalyst Projects. Additionally, Mr. Gaskins gave an overview of recent planning documents to be reviewed as part of the planning process as well as a composite word cloud from the planning document review to date, noting key areas of emphasis such as safety, community, and access.

ATAC committee members were asked a series of polling questions to assist with the development of the plan. Below are the list of questions and discussion.

1. Why do you – or people in your community – use active transportation?
    1) Leisure/Fitness
    2) Work/Employment
    3) Community Events
    4) Shopping
    5) Other

Leisure/Fitness was selected as the number one reason and the following was discussed:

Mr. Ray Atkinson said a big challenge to shopping via active transport is the lack of bike racks.

Mr. Jackson McNeil noted that the prevalence of bike/ped use as a leisure activity is related to most of the safe bikeways being located near major parks and far from retail/work locations.

Mr. William Ezzell noted the lack of culture of cycling to and from grocery stores and the lack of knowledge about how to do those activities safely and effectively.

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Ms. Rhonda Standridge noted the lack of safety, bike lanes, and bike racks.

Mr. Gaskins discussed some of the opportunities and challenges. Potential focus areas moving forward include the analysis of traffic stress, points of interest, equity, and anticipated conditions.

2. What are some of the biggest challenges to active transportation in your community? Of the options listed the top three selections:

1) Lack of Safe Infrastructure
2) Not Feeling Safe/Secure
3) Long Distances between destinations

Mr. Gaskins asked the committee members to expand upon their selections:

Ms. Leigh Huffman noted that walking for errands feels unsafe when crossing streets at intersections due to dangerous drivers. The poor driver behavior causes a need for heightened awareness. Ms. Callie Rush added this required hypervigilance in order to feel safe/secure is a major challenge.

Ms. Robin Richardson noted visibility concerns when out during the early morning/late evening periods of the day. Pedestrian/bikeways are not well lit.

Ms. Rhonda Standridge noted that crime is a major factor in feeling safe and secure.

Mr. Gene Carkeet noted that an intersection along Austin Peay was under construction for six months, during which time all sidewalks surrounding the intersection were closed for six months with no accommodation for pedestrians or cyclists. Mr. Carkeet noted a similar issue on Tillman. Mr. Carkeet noted the lack of consideration feels unique to Memphis when comparing to other places he has lived.

Ms. Faria Urmy note that a general lack of awareness about the needs of pedestrians and cyclists contributes to unsafe situations.

Mr. Ray Atkinson stated that he rarely sees bikes with fenders, which may stop people in Memphis stop biking in the rain.

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3. What is the greatest challenge facing active transportation in your community (open response)? Responses/discussion included:

- The greatest challenge to creating a robust active transportation network in the Memphis region is funding.
- People's perceptions of active transportation plays a huge role.
- Changing attitudes toward active transportation (viewing it as more commonplace rather than the exception) and dedicating the resources to make and promote the improvements.
- Pedestrian safety – statistically the most dangerous metro area in the county for pedestrians and are only getting worse.
- Infrastructure
- Perceptions and culture
- Convincing people that active transportation can be a viable mode of transportation and commuting, not just recreation.
- Car dependence - value the movement of people in cars over the movement of humans outside of cars.
- Lack of comprehensive and safe infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Sprawl Land Use / Single Family Zoning - prevents the density needed for good walk and bike infrastructure.
- Even though driving is also dangerous, I think people are more concerned about trying to walk or bike.

4. What is the biggest strength of active transportation in your community (open response)? Responses/discussion included:

- The inherent need.
- It's been awesome to see how much active transportation has grown in Memphis over the past decade!
- The amount of off-street network that the Memphis area has already built.
- We have some great, relatively long-distance greenways that I haven't experienced in other places I've lived.
- The huge opportunity to provide more financial freedom for people who currently depend on cars.
- The weather is great for most of the year. The only week that I have not biked over the last year was during the winter storms in January.
- The City's growing commitment to improving its infrastructure.
- Great views, wide-open spaces, and flat terrain in most places.

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5. What are the top priorities for active transportation improvements in your community?

1) Creating a safer system for pedestrians and bikeways
2) Implementing context sensitive traffic calming measures
3) Expanding the network of sidewalks and bikeways
4) Enhancing the accessibility to public transit options

Mr. Jackson McNeil noted the need for vertical traffic calming measures (physical deterrents rather than just paint).

Mr. DJ Sullivan discussed the need for more quick-build tactical urbanism intervention to get safe infrastructure out there quickly and stretch dollars further.

Mr. Ray Atkinson noted that beyond enhancing on-street accessibility to public transit, I would enhance the bus bike racks to accommodate e-bikes.

Mr. Gaskins concluded his presentation with a brief discussion of next steps.

3) Other Business

Ms. Kate Horton concluded the presentation portion of the meeting and opened the floor for any further discussion or announcements.

Mr. William Rogers mentioned that he will share some models that TDOT has developed.

Mr. Jackson McNeil shared a link to Smart Growth America's 2024 Dangerous by Design Report ranking Memphis as the most dangerous metro-area. Ms. Faria Urmy added, that on Thursday, June 6 Smart Growth America is hosting a webinar to discuss the report.

4) Adjourn
The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 AM.