

Bike Friendly Kalamazoo
Meeting Minutes
KRESA West Campus
May 14, 2014
Distributed May 27, 2014

Participants

Bobbi Welke, SW Region Engineer, MDOT
Carl Newton, Mayor, City of Galesburg
Chris Barnes, Director of Transportation & Utilities, City of Portage
Chris Chaddeden, Bronson Hospital (ret.)
Dale Krueger, Pastor (ret.)
David Dakin, Director of Campus Planning, WMU
Darrell Harden, Michigan Department of Transportation, Transportation Planner
David Warwick, Chair, Kalamazoo Bike Week; VP, Envirologic
Ed Sackley, Office of Margaret O'Brien
Ethan Alexander, Founder, Open Roads Project; Positive Behavior Support Specialist, KRESA
Geoff Wilson, Project Engineer, Kalamazoo County Road Commission
Greg Milliken, Planning Director, Oshtemo Township
Jack Urban, Commissioner, City of Kalamazoo
Jeanette Holm, Member, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club
Jeff Chamberlain, Deputy City Manager, City of Kalamazoo
Jim Hoekstra, Traffic Engineer, City of Kalamazoo & Kalamazoo Co. Rd. Commission
Jim Pearson, Councilmember, City of Portage
Joan Burke
Jun-Seok Oh, Ph.D., Director, WMU Transportation Research Center for Livable Communities
Kathy J. Schultz, Associate Planner, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Kevin Martini, Office for Sustainability, WMU
Kyle Lewis, KRVT Program Coordinator, Kalamazoo County
Lee Adams, Resource Coordinator, Kalamazoo County Department of Planning and Community Development; Administrator, Southcentral Michigan Planning Council
Lotta Jarnefelt, Director, Dept. of Planning and Community Development, Kalamazoo County
Louis Ramos, Resident Engineer, MDOT
Matt Johnson, City Engineer, City of Kalamazoo
Matt Lechel, Kalamazoo Parks Commissioner
Michael Rowe, Executive Director of Bronson's Lifestyle Improvement Research Center
Pamela Brown Goodacre, Trustee, Kalamazoo Township
Patricia Randall, Councilmember, City of Portage
Paul Guthrie, Laboratory Manager, Bronson Hospital
Paul Manstrom, Associate Vice President for Facilities Management, K College
Paul Selden, Director of Road Safety, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club; TriKats
Renee Mitchell, Education Chair, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club
Renee Newman, Director of Marketing and Communications, Discover Kalamazoo
Rick Ives, Director, Dept. of Public Safety, KVCC
Ron Reid, Supervisor, Kalamazoo Township
Sheppy Douma
Steve Stepek, Senior Planner, KATS
Ted Varas, DO, Interventional Cardiologist (ret.)

Goals and Rationale

The primary goal for this public meeting was to orient the community to key topics related to BFK's long-term place-making efforts, including: the relationship of bicycling and livability scores, engineering considerations and costs related to bicycle route signing, township perspectives on the Kalamazoo County Road Commission's bike route application process, an draft of the metropolitan planning organization-wide bike route network, and the governor's vision for making Michigan "the Trail State."

Agenda – Facilitated by Paul Selden

[Note: The speakers' PowerPoint presentations are too large to be posted on the BFK website, but are available on request. However, a number of the key illustrations are presented below in context, for convenience.]

Overview of BFK – Paul Selden

Bike Friendly Kalamazoo began in 2011.

Mission is to help make the greater community even more bicycle friendly, for all the benefits that will bring.

Representatives from range of stakeholder organizations from the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study's metropolitan planning organization generated and distilled 600+ ideas into three primary goals related to bicycling and community development: awareness building, bicycling education and infrastructure improvement.

At this time, BFK is an informal information sharing network with no dues or members. Instead, organizations whose missions overlap BFK's own act independently and at their own expense to implement ideas they think best. Meetings are ad hoc, usually an hour long, and typically focused on achieving an objective that can be reached during a single meeting.

Bicycling and Livability – Paul Selden

Fifty-five of the 2014 Top 100 Best Places to Live in the USA are also 2013 Bike Friendly Communities.

Out of the tens of thousands of communities in the US, this amount of overlap is not likely to have occurred by chance. Instead, it is due to the scoring system used by Livability.com, which favors cities that are bicycle friendly.

Unfortunately, the very cultural and natural strengths we possess in southwest lower Michigan, which is relatively rural, prevent many of our communities from achieving high so-called "walkability" scores.

The good news is that there are many ways to achieve high scores for being bike-friendly, and increase public safety at the same time. Many of these ways require little or no additional expense. Examples include using our existing road system for bike routes, encouraging use of bike helmets, and training our community in safe bicycling skills. Adjusting our plans and policies to encourage the use of bicycles as part of our overall effort to increase our quality of

life, costs little. We are fortunate in that our community is filled with creative leaders who can make this happen.

Bike Route Signs and Costs – Christopher Barnes

Chris Barnes presented an example of an engineering drawing drawn up using some of the possible routes connecting Texas Township with gateways into the Portage network of bike lanes and trails (Figure One), as well as to other connecting points. [Thanks to Dan Dombos, Senior Project Engineer, Abonmarche for preparing the drawing.]

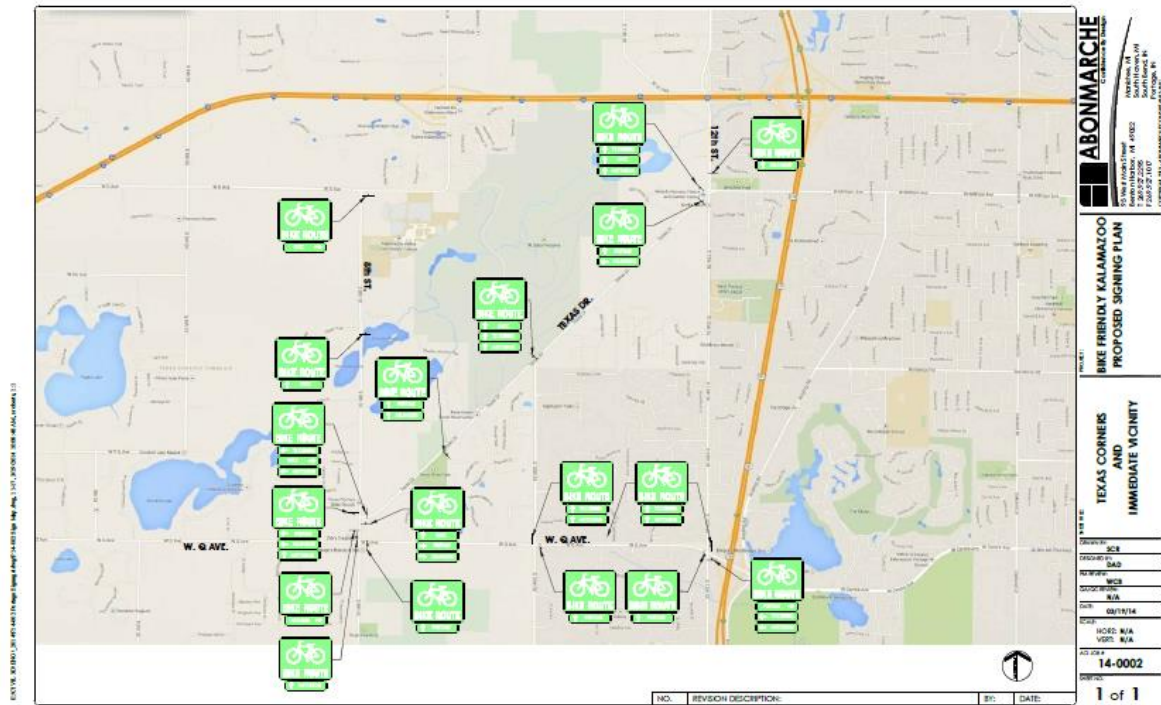


Figure One. Hypothetical Texas Township Bike Routes

Signs used are drawn from the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD), including the standard green and white “Bike Route” sign (designated in the MMUTCD as D11-1), plus one or more directional indicators (from the D1 series).

Individual signs might run between approximately \$125 and \$180, fully installed, depending on the number of directional indicators used under the “Bike Route” sign itself.

Signs are placed at locations and intervals most likely to prevent confusion when riding the route.

Approval Process – Ron Reid

Ron described a number of the ways that Kalamazoo Township is becoming even more bicycle friendly. The Township recently installed a modern bike rack in front of its township hall, which itself is located along the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail.

Per the relatively new Non-Motorized Policy adopted by the Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC), roads under KCRC authority may be posted as bike routes.

The necessary authorizations are applied for by the jurisdiction in which the roads are found. Jurisdictions (such as the City of Kalamazoo and Portage) can post routes on roads that fall entirely under their own exclusive authority.

Budgeting and liability remain each jurisdiction's responsibility. Instructions for the application process are contained within the Policy.

[Note: A variety of route planning guidelines and official standards are posted on www.bikefriendlykalamazoo.org. Links to the Kalamazoo County Road Commission's Non-Motorized Policy and examples of local non-motorized plans are posted there, as well.]

Bike Route Network – Steve Stepek

The Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) is the body responsible for administering the process of Federal funding in our metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Our MPO includes all of Kalamazoo County, plus Waverly, Almena, Paw Paw, and Antwerp townships in Van Buren County.

The rationale for creating an MPO-wide bike route system includes promoting tourism, wayfinding, connecting people with jobs, promoting bike riding on “best” facilities, and promoting bicycle riding itself, for reasons related to congestion and air quality improvement, and health.

A bike route system (see Figure Two) is being developed and refined by the participants and volunteers in Bike Friendly Kalamazoo in close coordination with KATS. Development is a work in progress. Continued public involvement is encouraged.

As part of the refinement process, considerations having to do with a variety of factors will be considered, including: exiting bike routes and infrastructure, major employers, recreation, trailways, transit service areas and others.

Steve thanked the many volunteers who have worked on the routes and asked for comments to be shared via: @katsmpo and #kzooawesome. [Note: the KATS general email is info@katsmpo.org. See Appendix A for a list of to/from nodes currently included in these plans.]

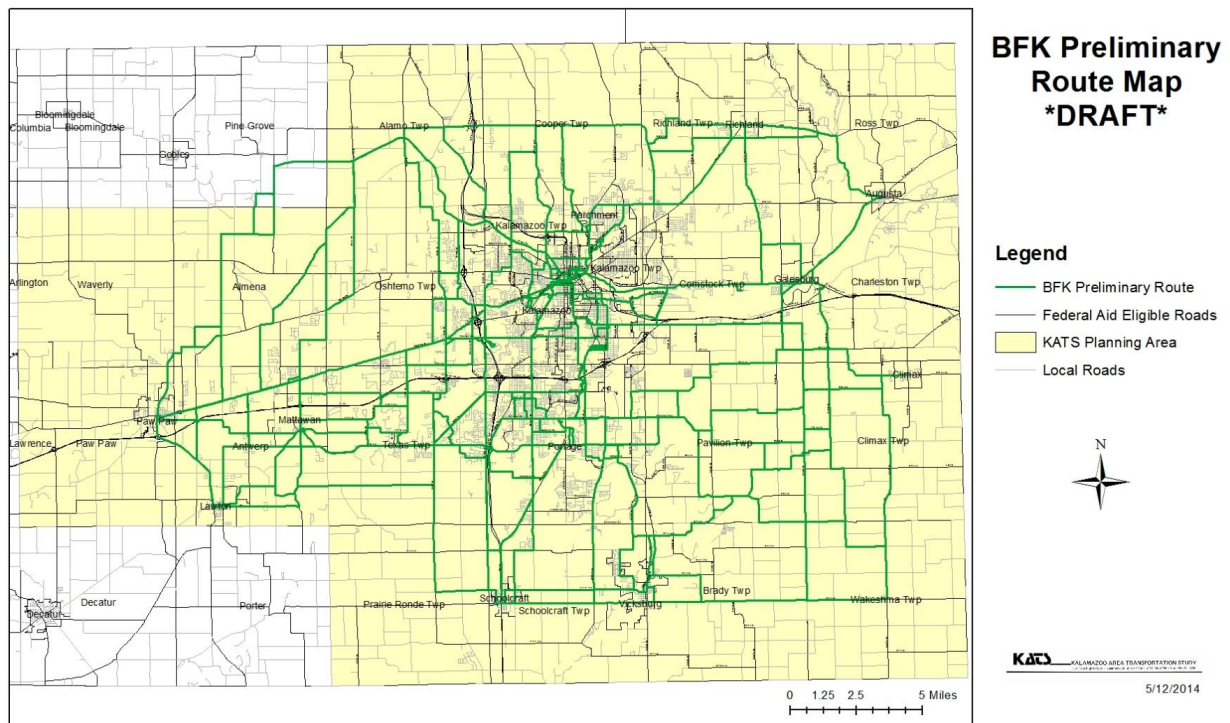


Figure Two. Preliminary MPO-wide Bike Route Map

Michigan’s Vision – Bobbi Welke

One objective of Michigan Tourism’s strategic plan is to “(s)upport the establishment and showcasing of Michigan as a state with a diverse, extensive and high quality network of motorized, non-motorized and water-based routes and trails.” Another is to “(g)row and strengthen partnership programs and communicate their success to the industry.”

A recent survey conducted by Michigan’s Convention and Visitors Bureaus asked, “What is Michigan’s greatest emerging tourism niche?” The answer was, “Bicycle Tourism.” Subsequently, the Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum was established with the first meeting held on April 16th, 2014.

Further, the goal of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources is for Michigan to become known as the “Trail State.” A planned showcase trail will connect Belle Isle and Ironwood.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has adopted a Complete Streets policy. Agencies working with MDOT on road and bridge projects must adopt a resolution similar to Complete Streets. MDOT will help with technical assistance upon request.

MDOT’s Southwest Region [i.e., ours] is actively engaging local non-motorized stakeholders. MDOT’s Road and Trail Bicycle Guide (2nd ed.) is now available. [Note: see http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9615_11223-146053--,00.html.] This July or August, MDOT will host a charrette to examine ways to make US-131BR (from Seneca to EB M-43 downtown) more friendly to non-motorized users; the road project is scheduled in 2016. MDOT has also released a 30-second bike safety “rules of the road” for video in partnership with the Michigan Dept. of State, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvEM3o4o08E>. The video is worth watching for motorists and bicyclists alike.

Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency (KRESA) and Ethan Alexander were thanked for making the room available for this meeting.

Questions and Answers / Comments

- The bicycling community must remember that only one percent of the total roads budget in Michigan is set aside for non-motorized, when people raise questions about whether bicyclists and other non-motorized users “pay their fair share” for non-motorized facilities. The vast majority of adult bicyclists are also motorists, paying for roads like everyone else. Non-motorized facilities are a public good similar to our public parks, and are shared by all. [Note: bicycling facilities also help improve public safety and improve the flow of traffic. We can also ask whether even that one-percent set-aside is all being used effectively.]

- Bicyclists need to be more aware about following the rules of the road, and not to ride more than two abreast. Riding more than two abreast is discourteous to others and gives bicyclists a bad reputation.

- Not all bicyclists use bicycles because they are their sole means of transportation, for economic reasons. Some adopt bicycles as their sole means of transportation even though they could afford to do otherwise, for many reasons.

- KATS is seeking public input on their proposed Complete Streets policy. For more information, visit www.katsmpo.org.

[Note: answers to most of the questions raised are provided in the Notes found throughout these minutes, in context.]

Appendix A

BFK Commuter Routes Worked on to Date

Introduction

Results of BFK's 2012 route advisory vote have driven our priorities with regard to bicycle network design: 96% of those responding favored a "county wide" (now, MPO-wide) system of bicycle routes; 85% favored assembling high-level bicycle route planning guidelines (now posted on BFK's website); and, 73% favored naming the system (or portions) to facilitate identification and building public awareness. Ongoing less formal surveys have repeatedly confirmed these results. Currently, those responding favoring an MPO-wide system of bicycle routes are approaching 99%.

To date a variety of commuter, shopping, recreational and fitness routes have been drafted and posted online. Links to these routes may be found on www.bikefriendlykalamazoo.org.

The focus in 2014 is on routes for bicycle commuting, using the most suitable on-road facilities. The focus on bicycle commuting will help KATS meet its timing goals for the next iteration of the MPO's non-motorized plan. Bicycle commuting is probably the most likely to be supported by public funding of any of the bike / non-motorized route categories.

Ongoing work on route planning will take place on a number of fronts. The routes our volunteers have drafted will be reviewed, refined, and collated. Routes will be posted to BFK's web site for convenient public access and use. Participants will work with local jurisdictions and agencies to prioritize refinement. For most of the commuter routes, the from/to points within each jurisdiction were automatically generated using Google Maps software. BFK's role is to serve as a resource for jurisdictions who welcome that support. Local jurisdictions will decide what will be implemented, and when, based on local judgment.

Initial List of Jurisdictions in Commuter Route Mapping Effort

	From	To
1	Alamo	- Lawton
2	Alamo	- Mattawan
3	Alamo	- Paw Paw
4	Augusta	- Cooper
5	Augusta	- Kalamazoo
6	Augusta	- Richland
7	Climax	- Augusta
8	Climax	- Galesburg
9	Climax	- Kalamazoo
10	Climax	- Portage
11	Climax	- Scotts
12	Climax	- Vicksburg
13	Comstock	- Augusta
14	Comstock	- Kalamazoo
15	Comstock	- Parchment
16	Comstock	- Richland
17	Cooper	- Alamo
18	Cooper	- Mattawan
19	Fulton	- Climax
20	Fulton	- Comstock

- 21 Fulton - Galesburg
- 22 Fulton - Kalamazoo
- 23 Fulton - Portage
- 24 Fulton - Scotts
- 25 Galesburg - Augusta
- 26 Galesburg - Cooper
- 27 Galesburg - Kalamazoo
- 28 Galesburg - Parchment
- 29 Galesburg - Richland
- 30 Kalamazoo - Alamo
- 31 Kalamazoo - Cooper
- 32 Kalamazoo - Mattawan
- 33 Kalamazoo - Oshtemo
- 34 Lawton - Mattawan
- 35 Lawton - Paw Paw
- 36 Mattawan - Paw Paw
- 37 Oshtemo - Alamo
- 38 Oshtemo - Cooper
- 39 Oshtemo - Lawton
- 40 Oshtemo - Mattawan
- 41 Parchment - Alamo
- 42 Parchment - Augusta
- 43 Parchment - Cooper
- 44 Parchment - Kalamazoo
- 45 Parchment - Richland
- 46 Portage - Alamo
- 47 Portage - Comstock
- 48 Portage - Galesburg
- 49 Portage - Kalamazoo
- 50 Portage - Mattawan
- 51 Portage - Oshtemo
- 52 Portage - Texas
- 53 Richland - Cooper
- 54 Richland - Kalamazoo
- 55 Schoolcraft - Lawton
- 56 Schoolcraft - Mattawan
- 57 Schoolcraft - Oshtemo
- 58 Schoolcraft - Portage
- 59 Schoolcraft - Texas
- 60 Scotts - Comstock
- 61 Scotts - Galesburg
- 62 Scotts - Kalamazoo
- 63 Scotts - Portage
- 64 Scotts - Schoolcraft
- 65 Texas - Alamo
- 66 Texas - Kalamazoo
- 67 Texas - Lawton
- 68 Texas - Mattawan
- 69 Texas - Oshtemo
- 70 Vicksburg - Portage

- 71 Vicksburg - Schoolcraft
- 72 Vicksburg - Scotts

College/University Jurisdictions

- 1 KVCC Main - Alamo
- 2 KVCC Main - Climax
- 3 KVCC Main - Cooper
- 4 KVCC Main - Kalamazoo
- 5 KVCC Main - Lawton
- 6 KVCC Main - Mattawan
- 7 KVCC Main - Oshtemo
- 8 KVCC Main - Parchment
- 9 KVCC Main - Portage
- 10 KVCC Main - Schoolcraft
- 11 KVCC Main - Texas
- 12 KVCC Main - WMU Main
- 13 KVCC Main - WMU Parkview
- 14 WMU BTR - Alamo
- 15 WMU BTR - Climax
- 16 WMU BTR - Cooper
- 17 WMU BTR - Kalamazoo
- 18 WMU BTR - Lawton
- 19 WMU BTR - Mattawan
- 20 WMU BTR - Oshtemo
- 21 WMU BTR - Parchment
- 22 WMU BTR - Portage
- 23 WMU BTR - Schoolcraft
- 24 WMU BTR - Texas
- 25 WMU BTR - WMU Main
- 26 WMU Main - Alamo
- 27 WMU Main - Climax
- 28 WMU Main - Cooper
- 29 WMU Main - Kalamazoo
- 30 WMU Main - Lawton
- 31 WMU Main - Mattawan
- 32 WMU Main - Oshtemo
- 33 WMU Main - Parchment
- 34 WMU Main - Portage
- 35 WMU Main - Schoolcraft
- 36 WMU Main - Scotts
- 37 WMU Main - Texas

Other campuses and Kalamazoo College are probably close enough to other major nodes so that adding them individually is not foreseen at this time, but is subject to change. Return routing (e.g., From Lawton-To Alamo) is not listed above, but was included in the process.