

Bike Friendly Kalamazoo
Bike Route Funding Brainstorm Meeting Notes
Southwest Michigan First
August 11, 2016; 4-5pm

Participants

Lee Adams; Christopher Barnes; Andrew Haan; Dave Rachowicz; Paul Selden; Jodi Stefforia; Steve Stepek; Chris Tracy

Introduction

Map 7: Proposed Commuter Bike Routes was recently adopted in the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study's 2045 Plan. This network of bike routes is unprecedented in many positive ways, offering a number of potential benefits. Being new and cross-jurisdictional, currently there is no single jurisdiction in charge of, and no "traditional" source of funding for implementing the entire network. This was meeting of BFK advisors with experience in the funding arena focused on listing potential funding sources, before making further efforts to implement them.

Possible Funding Sources

After introductions, the group first brainstormed a list of possible funding sources. They then offered a general idea as to the feasibility of the ideas. A key assumption made regarding the feasibility ranking was that a highly public community marketing effort does not currently exist to support more complex approaches. Feasibility could change if a more strategic, well organized and highly visible effort was made. The list is below, grouped into the three general categories from most to least feasible.

MOST FEASIBLE

- Funding from individual jurisdictions / local units of government
- Sponsorships / Private Funding / Crowd Funding / Companies / Individual Donors
- Discounts (for sizable orders) from sign manufacturers

MODERATELY FEASIBLE

- Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grants
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funding
- State of Michigan State Police Safety Grant

LEAST FEASIBLE

- Kalamazoo Foundation
- Irving S. Gilmore Grant
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) via Downtown Development Authorities, etc.
- Jim Gilmore, Jr. Foundation
- Visitor Bureau / Discover Kalamazoo
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Other points were made throughout the meeting, that were not ranked.

- Road Commission of Kalamazoo County might provide some of the labor at competitive rates.

- Regardless, they should be regarded as one of the partners in the effort.

- Bike Club fundraising could be involved.

- Alter the local federal highway funding selection process at KATS to make/award non-motorized facilities more scoring points.

- A millage of some kind might be used.

- Michigan Economic Development Corporation matches might be used.

- Convention and Visitor's Bureau funding might be used.

A major point offered was that if "larger" dollars, say, for large portions of the entire network, or for the entire network all at once, a strategic and well organized effort would be required, clearly presenting the benefits. Portions of the network may be a more important priority to implement than others. As next steps, Paul Selden will follow up with his co-organizers of this meeting (Chris Tracy and Andrew Haan), and solicit additional ideas/have further discussions with interested parties.

Notes prepared by Paul Selden; please report corrections/additional ideas to him.

Thanks to Southwest Michigan First for providing the meeting space!
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