

Summary:

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1

November 2, 2017 | 3:00-4:00pm
Ames Public Library PEO Room

Attendees

- Damion Pregitzer – COA/Traffic Engineer
- McKinlee Ritter – COA/Public Works Management Analyst
- Cathy Brown – Iowa State University Campus Planner
- Tracy Warner – COA/Municipal Engineer
- Justin Clausen – COA/Public Works Operations Manager
- Kelly Diekmann – COA/Planning & Housing Director
- Barb Neal – CyRide/Assistant Director for Operations
- Adam Wood – Toole Design Group (consultant)

Meeting Summary

The purpose of this meeting was to introduce members of the Technical Advisory Committee (CAC) to the consultants working on the project and to the project's scope of work. In addition, this meeting was an opportunity to get initial input on the key street-related issues and objectives that the Complete Streets Plan (CS Plan) should address. The consultant gave a brief presentation about the Complete Streets Plan, which focused on the following topics:

- Why Complete Streets?
- What Complete Streets Are and Aren't
- Complete Streets Program
- Complete Streets Plan Elements
- Project Timeline

Discussion

Kicking off the discussion was the question "What does 'Complete Streets' mean to you?" Attendees replied that Complete Streets means providing options, giving access, having a narrowed-down list of what works in a given context and minimum operational standards, that the car isn't prioritized in every situation, and safety and efficiency for all users.

There was discussion on the role of the Complete Streets Plan and how it should integrate with other City plans and documents. The CS Plan should become an element of the Comprehensive Plan and since the City does not have its own transportation plan (the Ames Area MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan is the primary transportation plan for the City), the CS Plan will fill some of the roles that a City-specific transportation plan might perform.

More specifically, the CS Plan should provide guidance on which aspects of street design are flexible and which are less flexible. The plan should not just be a menu of choices—it needs to guide and justify decisions. The CS Plan should be developed with enough public input that produces agreement and support for citywide street typologies and decision-making frameworks, that public input for individual street projects can be more focused on a narrower set of possible solutions. The plan should also have enough public and City Council buy-in to provide a basis for consistent and defensible design decisions made by City staff.

As far as needs for specific design guidance or process recommendations, TAC members discussed the need to identify priority corridors for various modes (on some of which motor vehicle LOS can be ignored), adopt standards for snow and ice removal on paths, a policy or plan defining where bike corridors are located, scoring that can be used to identify retrofit projects, and a checklist to evaluate street projects. The degree to which each of these can be included in the CS Plan will be determined by the project budget and other priorities for the plan.

Finally, the CS Plan should identify the degree of City commitment to the various guidelines and practices it includes— from full commitment (“We promise to do...”), to typical practice (“We will usually do...”), to target/goal (“We will try to do...”).

Next Steps

Over the next few weeks, the CS Plan’s project management team (Damion Pregitzer, McKinlee Ritter, and Tony Filippini) will review the draft Complete Streets policy, request revisions from the consultant, and eventually present the policy to City Council for consideration. The consultant will begin assessing the street design and project scoping process and propose performance measures. The consultant may need to interview individual members of the TAC for this task. Moving into December, the consultant will begin to classify Ames’ streets based on characteristics and context and develop street typologies.

The next meeting of the TAC is intended to occur in December or early January. The consultant will join via web conference. At this meeting, the TAC will review and comment network classifications and the initial assessment of the project development process.