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**RICHFIELD TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING
BARTHOLOMEW ROOM, CITY HALL
Wednesday, February 4th, 2025, 7:00 PM**

Attachment

Commissioners in Attendance: Brinnon Kubista, Adam Knosalla, Eli Straub, Louis Dzierzak, David Gepner, Stella Yang, Eli Straub, Josh Kloehn, Jacob Olsen

Commissioners Absent: McKenzie Burke, Jaz Warren

City Staff: Joe Powers and Olivia Wycklendt

Liasons: Sean Hayford Oleary (City Council), Tim Brackett (RPS), Jan Matheus (Bike/Walk)

1. Call meeting to order

City Engineer Joe Powers called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

2. Election of Officers for 2026-2027 Term

- *Chair* - Commissioner Dzierzak was the sole nominee for Chair, nominated by Commissioner Knosalla. Commissioner Kubista moved to accept nomination of Commissioner Dzierzak as Chair. Seconded by Commissioner Gepner. Motion carried. Louis Dzierzak was elected Chairperson for the City of Richfield – Transportation Commission for the 2026-2027 term.
- *Vice-Chair* - Commissioner Knosalla was sole nominee for Vice-Chair, nominated by Chair Dzierzak. Commissioner Yang moved to accept nomination of Commissioner Knosalla as vice-chair. Seconded by Commissioner Kubista. Motion carried. Adam Knosalla was elected to be the Vice-Chairperson for the City of Richfield – Transportation Commission for the 2026-2027 term.

3. Review & approve agenda

Commissioner Gepner moved to approve the agenda. Second by Vice-Chair Knosalla. Motion Carried.

4. Review & approve minutes for December 3rd, 2024 meeting

Commissioner Gepner moved to approve the agenda. Second by Vice-Chair Knosalla. Motion Carried.

5. Review and Approval of Commission By-Laws

Commission members discussed the by-law amendment to have an elected commission secretary that would be in charge of taking attendance and minutes. Commissioners discussed how they appreciate city staff's role in taking minutes and attendance. Commissioner Kubista motioned to approve the By-Laws without the change of adding an elected secretary. Second by Vice-Chair Knosalla. Motion carried.

Commission requested that staff clarifies if it's within Commission's purview to discuss and make recommendations regarding fiber-optic build-out and installation projects that have occurred in recent years throughout the City.

6. Transportation Commission Overview

Presenter: Joe Powers, City Engineer

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City Engineer Joe Powers presented an overview of the Transportation Commission. This presentation included expectations and restrictions that come with being a commissioner for the City, as well as a history of projects the Commission has worked on.

Powers highlighted that new commissioners and chairs will need to attend training upcoming. New Commissioner training Wednesday March 11th from 6:00PM-7:00PM. Chair and Vice-Chair training Wednesday March 18th from 6:00PM-7:00PM.

Councilmember Hayford Oleary clarified that the commission needs to hold a quorum to vote and approve any agenda items, and to respect the chairperson during active discussion. Quorum is simple majority of 5 commissioners.

Commission requested that staff send reminders as these dates get closer. City Staff agreed with the request.

7. Consider Recommendation to City Council on Temporary Suspension of Vehicle Impoundment

Commissioner Yang led the discussion on the city ordinance regarding impoundment for cars abandoned or left on City streets for an extended period of time.

Commissioner Yang suggested to make a recommendation to City Council to edit the existing City ordinance to assist residents who have been impacted by Operation Metro Surge and/or have been forced to leave their vehicles behind.

Commissioners discussed their opinions on how the city should or should not temporarily change the ticketing and towing of vehicles in the city of Richfield. Powers clarified that city staff and the city attorney would work out the fine details of the recommendation. Powers estimated that the recommendation would be ready for council in approximately a month for either March or April council meetings.

Directly in response to Operation Metro Surge, the Transportation Commission recommended to City Council to cease the impoundment of abandoned vehicles, excluding instances where the vehicle poses a threat to public safety, and that the City does not issue associated City fines for the impoundment of the vehicle. If fees must be assigned, the Commission recommends the opportunity for fees to be retroactively waived should proof of detainment resulting in the abandonment of the vehicle be provided.

Commissioner Yang motioned the above recommendation be brought to the City Council. Second by Commissioner Kubista. Commissioner Gepner abstained. Motion carried.

8. Penn Avenue Planning & Land Use Presenter: Sam Crosby, City Planner

City Planner Sam Crosby presented on Penn Avenue from a city planning perspective, highlighting current use of the corridor, current zoning along Penn Avenue, as well as ongoing and future redevelopment projects.

Commissioners discussed differing lot sizes on the west side, which tend to be larger, versus the east side lot sizes, which tend to be smaller, off Penn Ave North of 66th Street. Chair Dzierzak mentioned the disconnect between what is being built in the public right-of-way in contrast to what has been proposed in previous comprehensive

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plans for private property along the corridor. Commissioner Gepner asked the County and planning staff if it's feasible to acquire property along the corridor to relieve some of the parking constraints.

Councilmember Hayford Oleary clarified to the commission that it is ultimately up to the landowner to decide how they want to develop their property (with some exceptions and approval processes from the city). While the plan for Penn Ave from 2008 is unlikely to come to fruition, any plans going forward for the corridor are feasible but do rely on landowners on how and if they choose to redevelop their property.

Hayford Oleary also wanted to remind the commission that the City has more relaxed parking requirements than they have had historically, and with redevelopment of any property there is potential for parking needs to increase to support those businesses, which may result in more cars parking on streets adjacent to Penn Ave than current conditions. He emphasized that these impacts should also be taken into consideration when it comes to the design for the reconstruction of Penn Ave.

9. **Penn Avenue Phase 2 Engagement Results**

Presenter: Matt Huggins, Hennepin County Senior Professional Engineer

Hennepin County Senior Professional Engineer presented the results from Penn Avenue's Phase 2 Engagement. He emphasized that the actions he is looking for from the Transportation Commission are any comments on the preliminary recommendations resulting from the Phase 2 engagement results.

Major themes from the engagement were requests for controlling vehicle speeds and improving multi-modal crossings at Highway 62, as well as general support for walkability and pedestrian infrastructure.

Councilmember Hayford Oleary asked for clarification about street/pedestrian lighting discussion and engagement. Huggins answered that the comments were mostly that people want better visibility at crossings. Hayford Oleary also asked if MNDOT plans on changing any access to Penn Ave. Powers and Huggins answered that they do not believe there is a change in access from France Ave or Xerxes Ave in the foreseeable future. Huggins to follow up.

City Engineer Joe Powers mentioned that Hennepin County is doing a comprehensive review of the county's cost participation and maintenance with cities in Hennepin County. City staff will be advocating for the city's best interest during this review.

Commissioner Gepner asked if there was data showing the number of Richfield residents using Penn Ave and how many people were using Penn Ave as a thoroughfare through Richfield. Huggins answered that Hennepin County has that data, but not with him. Commission would like to see that data.

Joint Work Session Hay with Hennepin County project staff (Penn Ave) and Richfield City Council on March 10th. Huggins mentioned that project staff would like to be back for the May Transportation Commission Meeting to kick off Phase 3 engagement, which is how the project will meet the goals established in Phase 2 and provide input on the options chosen by project staff.

Huggins presented on the low demand from the community events for on-street bike lane facilities and on-street parking in residential areas (south of 68th Street).

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The preliminary recommendations to the Transportation Commission were:

- Not proceed with buffered on-street bike lane alternative
- Not proceed with on-street parking alternatives south of 68th Street

Councilmember Hayford Oleary and Commissioner Gepner asked for clarification on what on-street bike facility was not being considered. Huggins answered on-street bike lanes delineated by striping.

Commissioner Gepner disagreed with not proceeding with the buffered on-street bike lane alternative.

The Commission informally agreed to discuss proceeding with buffered on-street bike lane alternative at the upcoming work session, and agreed with not proceeding with on-street parking alternatives south of 68th St.

Commissioner Olson asked about the safety of having on-street bike facilities and if they are recommended in this area. Huggins answered that based on MNDOT's guidance and the number of vehicles on Penn Ave (ADT), it is not recommended to have on-street bike lane.

Chair Dzierzak moved to approve with not proceeding with buffered on-street bike lane alternative for Penn Avenue Reconstruction. Second by Commissioner Knosalla. Commissioner Gepner Opposed. Majority rule motion carried.

Commissioner Yang moved to approve not proceeding with on-street parking south of 68th Street. Second by Commissioner Olson. Motion carried.

10. Updates

a) City Staff – Project Updates

- Powers made note of several ramp and roadway closures along the 494 corridor. Nicollet Ave ramps are permanently closing February 23rd, Nicollet Ave Bridge will close March 13th at 10PM until August. 12th Ave Pedestrian Bridge closes March 9th until August 12th Ave bridge closes March 20th for 150 days, with 2 full weekend closures for demolition of the bridges.
- 2026 sidewalk projects are anticipated to go out to bid in early spring, with construction starting in late spring of this year. 2026 Sheridan Hill SRTS Project to be completed by end of summer before school starts. Sidewalk projects (non-SRTS) will likely finish in Fall 2026
- Metro Transit is recommending the Nicollet Ave corridor for the K-Line BRT Route. Metro Transit will be at the March Transportation Commission meeting

b) Liaisons

- City Council
Councilmember Hayford-Oleary updated the commission on the current ICE operations within Richfield. He highlighted that the city passed an ordinance stating that ICE agents are not able to use City owned parking lots for staging operations. Mayor Supple has joined the Coalition of Suburban Mayors to talk about the impact Operation Metro Surge in suburbs, smaller cities, and surrounding areas.

11. Other Business

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This happened after meeting was adjourned – request from Commission to have visiting presenters present earlier in the Commission meeting.

12. Upcoming events/meeting(s)

- a) **Wed, March 4th, 7:00pm:** Transportation Commission Meeting
- b) **Tue, March 10th, 5:15pm-7:00pm:** Joint Work Session with City Council – Penn Avenue
- c) **Wed, March 11th, 6:00pm-7:00PM:** commissioner Training
- d) **Wed, March 18th, 6:00pm-7:00pm:** Commission Chair Training

13. Adjournment

Commissioner Knosolla moved to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Kubista. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

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