



City of Bloomington Common Council

Legislative Packet – Addendum

Posted on Wednesday, 12 April 2023

Wednesday, 12 April 2023

Regular Session at 6:30 pm

Navigable Sidewalks for All

Devta Kidd
Innovation Director

April 12, 2023



Presentation

- Project context and process
- Ranked ideas and recommendations
- Action Plan
- Questions

The Team



Tim Fife, CPI
Coach



Devta Kidd,
Mayor's Office -
Innovation



Mallory Rickbeil,
Planning and
Transportation



Zac Huneck,
Bloomington Transit



Emily Herr,
Engineering



Clarence
Boone, Parks



Gabriel Holbrow,
Planning and
Transportation



Nathan Herr, City of
Bloomington Utilities



Brent Pierce, Housing
and Neighborhood
Development



Rick Dietz, Information
and Technology
Services



Beth Cate, Legal



Shannon Riley,
Innovation Fellow



Joe Bergin,
Innovation Intern

Why Sidewalks?



- 2020 Sidewalk Equity Audit + 2021 validation by Bike/Ped Coordinator
- ~ 1 uReport/day about sidewalks
- Community Survey says high value
- Multiple City strategic plans prioritize pedestrian safety
- ***Bloomington residents have said sidewalks are important to them. We've told them it is a priority for us.***

Our Process



- Human-centered Design
- No known solution? → Innovation
- Know solution? → Project Management

Our Problem to Solve



*There are multiple barriers to residents being able to complete their journey by sidewalk without having to step into traffic. **Our aspiration is for all sidewalks to be always navigable for everyone.***

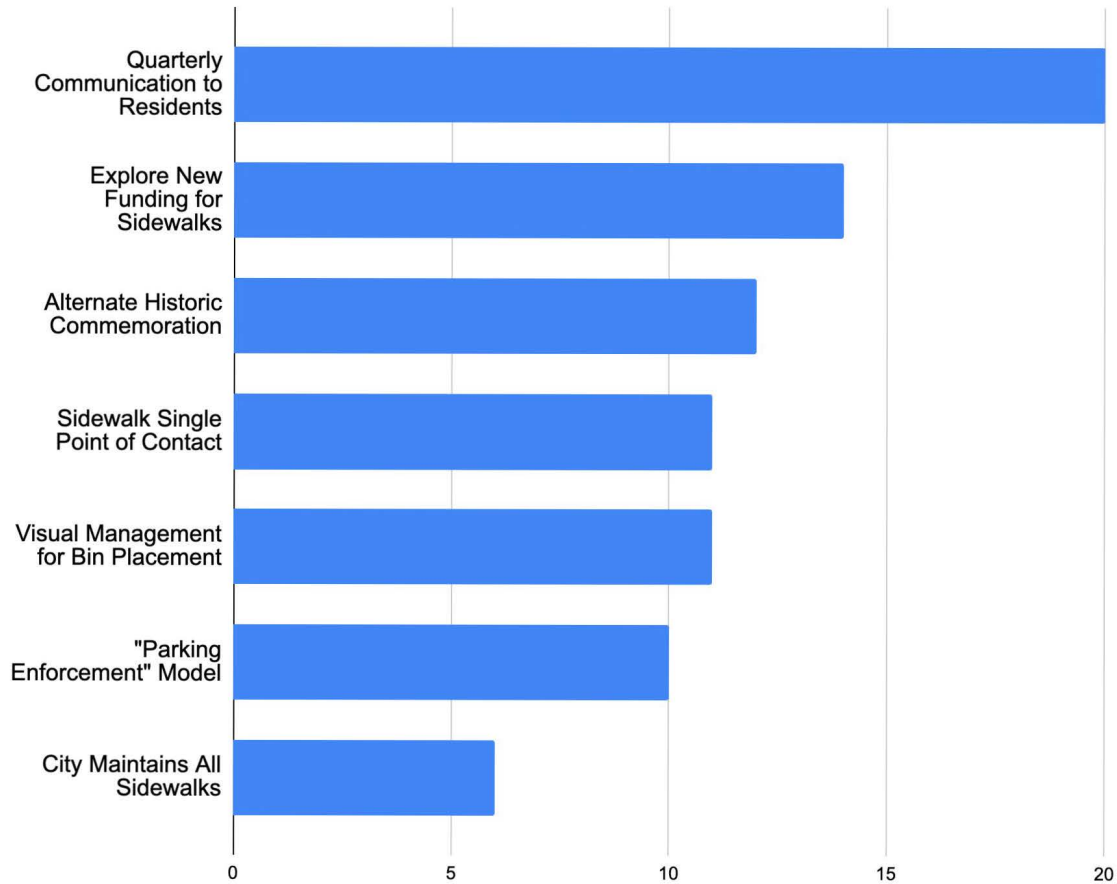
Resident Perspective :: Barriers



Idea Generation



107
IDEAS!!!



1. Quarterly Communications to Residents

High Support
20/20

Just do it!

“It’s that time of year again...”

- City News
- Utilities Bill Insert
- Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Newsletter



2. Explore New Funding Sources

High Support
14/20

Work with
Administration
and Grant
Managers



3. Alternatives to Historic Preservation

Moderate Support
12/20

Fix ones in poor
condition & keep
researching
options



4. Single Point of Contact

Moderate Support
11/20

Establish position
in the 2024 budget



5. Visual Management for Bin Placement



Pilot in 2025

6. “Parking Enforcement” Model

Moderate Support
10/20

Pilot in ‘23 or ‘24



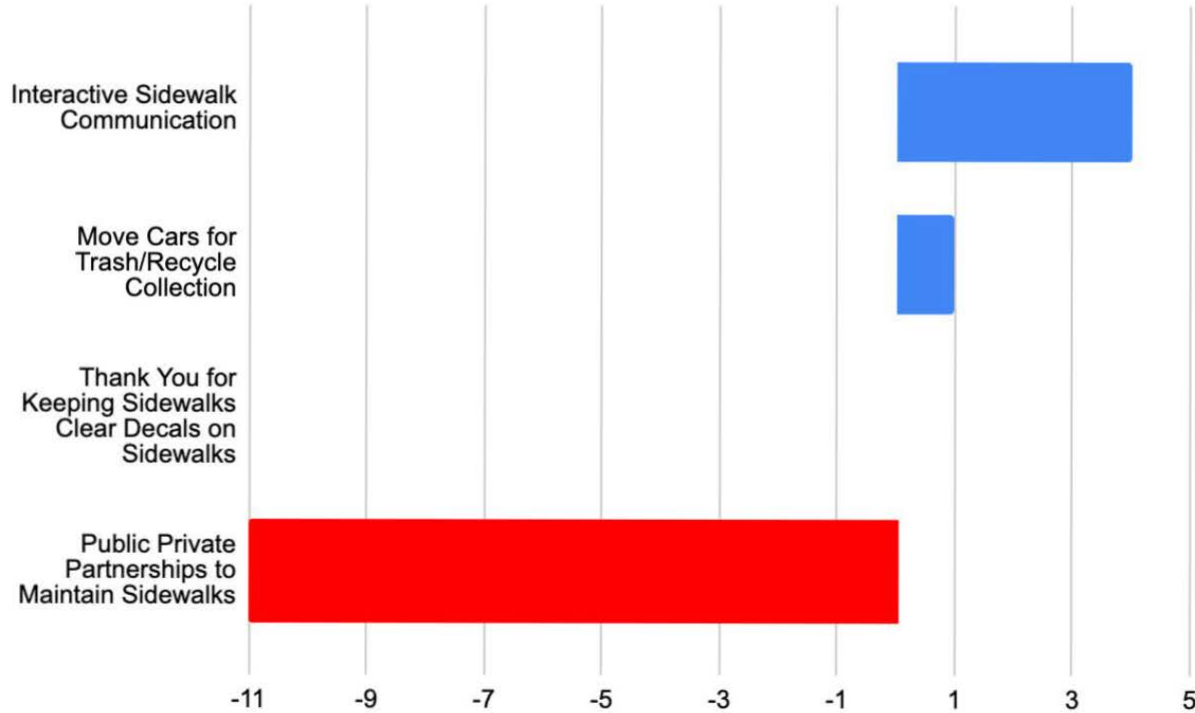
7. City Maintains all Surface Material

Low* Support
6/20

Pilot alternative
materials



Considered but Not Moving Forward



Next Steps

ITEM	OWNER	START DATE
Research and test alternative ways to commemorate historic sidewalks	Gloria Colom	Has already started and is ongoing
Quarterly communications to residents	Devta Kidd	May 2023
Pilot alternatives to concrete for sidewalks	Devta Kidd	May 2023
Sidewalk single point of contact	Adam Wason	June 2023
Structure “Parking Enforcement Model” pilot	Devta Kidd	November 2023
Connect with OOTM/Controller/ESD about existing funds that could be used for sidewalks and connect to grant researchers for additional sidewalk funding	Adam Wason	Has already started and is ongoing
Structure pilot for “Put It on the Dot”	Devta Kidd	June 2024*

THANK YOU.

<https://bloomington.in.gov/innovate/2022-sidewalks>

Questions?



Introduction

I want to thank Cm. Rollo for drawing my attention to the codified duties of the traffic commission. Engage in education, prepare reports, receive complaints, recommend improvements? That is uncanny! It is as if the authors of the ordinance had met me and decided to write a paragraph about my activities.

I don't just receive traffic complaints, I go looking for them. I will see a muddy footprint or a tree broken off at bumper height and infer a traffic complaint. I don't just prepare reports, I conduct studies too. I don't just make recommendations, I follow through with multi-faceted campaigns to try to ensure the effectiveness of the recommendation.

A small but influential political club has opposed successful safety programs. They are mad at me because I do not defer to their judgement. My duty is to hear their complaints, and use my own judgement to make recommendations.

Below, I respond to Cm. Rollo's motion in the same order as the motion.

The tweets

For the most part, my tweets are simply more profane versions of statements I already made explicitly at the public microphone at council. I expected Cm. Rollo to successfully block my re-appointment on the basis of those comments. The fact that he decided to pursue this motion instead is an unwelcome farce.

Yes, I ridiculed Ms. Moore for saying ridiculous things, including unfounded personal attacks against me. I did not threaten anyone, and she understood that.

Yes, Ms. Galvan also initiated a confrontation with me. Frank conversations between different kinds of activists is a strength of Twitter and should not be chilled.

I spoke sloppily when I said "elm heights" in these tweets. I meant a specific club. I apologize for incorrectly stating that politicians might brown-nose the approximately 75% of Elm Heights residents who are renters. Many of my closest friends are from Elm Heights.

Accusing politicians of brown-nosing is an attack on politicians, not on neighbors. Politicians are trying to distort a neighborhood association into an arm of an election campaign, to the detriment of the neighborhood. Residents did not decide to be made into a spectacle of unfair privilege. That harmful decision was made by councilmembers.

One example of something that had to be taken from this club is the ability to restrict traffic calming to residents who are being actively courted by a politician. Ordinance 20-17 took that away from them, and ordinance 22-35 would give it back to them.

Alleged bias

Cm. Rollo's motion says I am unable to "impartially discharge the duties in BMC 2.12.070," but within that ordinance, impartiality is not one of the duties. In fact, the ordinance anticipates that members will be partial to their own "councilmanic district." Nonetheless, I fulfill this requirement for impartiality that Cm. Rollo invented.

I have received complaints from Elm Heights residents at Common Council, Bike and Ped Safety Commission, Traffic Commission, and greenway meetings. Here is a list of my recommendations that I make in response to those complaints. **I request that Cm. Rollo indicate which of these substantive recommendations reflects my bias instead of my sincere beliefs about traffic safety.** If my bias is not present in my recommendations, then where does it live?

1. *Maxwell Ln near Sheridan Dr is too dangerous.* — **Yes!** Fix the design of this street. Do not repeat bad designs in the future. Stop signs are ineffective. Do not subject staff to harmful political processes. Do not unfairly prioritize this intersection.
2. *Maxwell Ln between Henderson and Woodlawn is too dangerous.* — **Yes!** Fully fund the resident-led traffic calming program. Do not re-politicize that program. Do not replace traffic calming at Woodlawn with a stop sign half a mile east of there.
3. *Traffic is too dangerous on Atwater Ave.* — **Yes!** Re-design Atwater/3rd. Demand emergency interventions in the city's high injury network. Defunding the greenways program will not fix Atwater.
4. *There are missing sidewalks.* — **Yes!** Spend **\$30,000,000** on high-priority sidewalks. Dismantling the greenways program to fund sidewalks will not provide a connected network.
5. *Sidewalks are poorly maintained.* — **Yes!** Public Works should allocate **\$1,000,000** annually to sidewalk maintenance. Do not dismantle the greenways program to maintain sidewalks.
6. *Greenways are ugly.* — **Not a traffic complaint.**
7. *Greenways will ruin the neighborhood.* — **Untrue.**
8. *Greenways are too expensive.* — **Untrue.**
9. *Greenways are unnecessary.* — **Untrue.**
10. *Staff planned and implemented greenways without public input.* — **Untrue, and not a traffic complaint.**
11. *The Hawthorne Greenway design neglects 1st St.* — **Yes!** Thank staff for already correcting this oversight.

12. *Traffic calming is harmful or bigoted.* — **Untrue.**
13. *There are too many scooters on the sidewalk.* — **Yes!** Enforce fines. Hold the Legal Department to account for their scandalous, unprofessional, and unethical behavior in this matter.

Alleged chilling

Some members of this club claim to be too intimidated to attend the Traffic Commission. They are expressing their displeasure at the existence of forums where their voices aren't privileged over all others. They are blameless in this matter: councilmembers have willfully nurtured an expectation that they will be shown unusual deference by every city body. I remind you, they do not receive the deference they desire at the Bike and Ped Safety Commission either, and Cm. Rollo has accordingly decided to bypass **all** commissions.

Cm. Rollo didn't just bypass commissions in bringing his ordinance 22-35, the ordinance itself would strip BPSC of its duties in the future. This motion against me is happening in the context of a politician systematically attacking many of the mechanisms by which the city is able to act on input from less-privileged neighborhoods.

The real thing that discourages public participation is the widespread belief that change is impossible. Empowering reactionaries to destroy programs that had been built on 20 years of multi-faceted public input does grievous harm.

If the council endorses Cm. Rollo's motion, then it will add accepting personal attacks to the formal duties of commissioners. That would discourage participation in committees.

Alleged employment

I emailed and phoned the city's HR department, and they have not replied. I did briefly speak to someone, who was unwilling to let me have a copy of the employee personnel manual because they did not believe I was an employee. I am not even permitted to see the cited document!

It is harmful when councilmembers opine on the administrative HR question of whether real employees should reasonably expect to be dismissed for responding to personal attacks on Twitter.

Does this motion really allege that my conduct represents workplace harrasment? Is Twitter my workplace? This is reckless and unserious.

Closing

I do not enjoy serving on the Traffic Commission. It takes a lot of my time to keep up to date, to conduct inspections and studies, and to prepare presentations. It is

a constant challenge for me to determine what is productive. I find it emotionally draining to simultaneously voice my sincere respect for staff members and our urgent need for reform. I am frustrated by my own failures and missed opportunities.

Nonetheless, I have accomplished some small amount. While failing to get Engineering to report on traffic fatalities before Common Council, I succeeded at getting those reports delivered to the Traffic Commission. While failing to reduce speed limits systematically throughout the city, I convinced Engineering staff to reduce speed limits on Rogers St. and Indiana Ave. While failing to get Engineering to take pedestrian transportation seriously, I succeeded in getting Parks to install a (*sigh*, substandard) detour for 3 months of an 8 month closure.

Political concerns and bureaucratic inertia make it very difficult to accomplish change. But we desperately need change. The council must be a key part of progress. I am heartbroken to prove my worth by dressing up my own failures as if they were successes. But I will go one step further: these are your failures, councilmembers. Our city's continuing inability to respond substantively to traffic violence is blood on your hands. You can push me away but you cannot wash away that blood.

If Cm. Rollo offers no substantive criticism of my conduct as a Traffic Commissioner then his criticism is insubstantive.

To: Members of the Common Council

From: John Hamilton, Mayor

Date: April 11, 2023

Re: App Ord 23-02 - Appropriation of funds for Trades District EDA Tech Center Building

Councilmembers,

Please find below information responding to several questions posed by Council regarding the use of Community Revitalization Enhancement District (CRED) funds to support the US Economic Development Administration supported Tech Center building.

1) Why not use TIF funds instead of former CRED funds now residing in the General Fund?

As you are aware, the City of Bloomington Redevelopment Commission (RDC) has previously committed a substantial amount of Tax Increment Finance (TIF) funds for this project (~\$2M). The Administration is asking for former CRED funds instead of TIF funds for this remaining contribution for two main reasons: first, the RDC has significant other demands, including committed substantial TIF funding to the coming redevelopment of the former hospital site into the Hopewell neighborhood, including the remaining purchase cost along with major Phase 1 east infrastructure. And we anticipate TIF funding may be needed to address future infrastructure costs for the development of the remaining parcels (some of which may be reimbursed from future development). Second, as Council members noted last Tuesday, the use of the former CRED funds to complete the Tech Center is very appropriate and fully consistent with the purpose and prior uses of those funds. Drawing on CRED funds to complete the Tech Center follows our ongoing goal to maximize the use of all funds available to complete projects intended to spur future economic vitality.

2) How can we track the use of former CRED funds now residing in the General Fund?

The Administration recognizes and shares Council's interest in ensuring visibility to the ongoing use of CRED funds and proposes two layers of transparency: the Controller's office will track use of those funds via an ongoing regular public report, which will ensure Council updates on the funds until they have been fully disbursed. And the Administration will bring any future requests to use those funds to the Council as either a separate appropriation or as a part of the annual budget request/appropriation cycles.

3) Should we impose more restrictions on the uses of former CRED funds?

State law calls for the movement of the former CRED funds into the City's General Fund and allows their use for any legal purpose. We do not feel it prudent further to restrict the use of those funds beyond state requirements, particularly when Council will already be able to see and approve their appropriation.

4) Should we limit the geographic area(s) where former CRED funds may be used?

Similar to above, we do not feel it prudent to restrict the geographic area that these funds may be utilized beyond state law, as they now can be put towards projects that benefit all residents of the City.

5) What is the actual source of the CRED funds?

It's important to note that CRED funds represent the normal local income taxes paid by employees and sales taxes collected in the allocation areas. CRED taxes are not an additional tax, but are existing taxes that are redirected back to us from the State. Absent CRED, these funds would have been otherwise collected and used by the State for any legal purposes at the state level. Instead, we received a sort of 'rebate' through the CRED program that provided those funds back to us to promote recovery related to certain areas and thereafter for any legal purposes. By providing that residual CRED funds go to the city's General Fund, state law contemplates that those residual funds are available for beneficial projects in the entire city.