



MOBILITY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

July 16, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: David Staudt (Chair), Brian Smith, Matt Heintz, Ed Roney, Jay Dooley, Swamy Gopal

Absent: David Dismondy

Staff Present: Lindsay Bell, Director of Planning, Community Development
Jeff Muck, PRCS Director
Rebecca Runkel, Project Engineer, DPW

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Staudt called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and asked for roll call. Chair Staudt asked staff to draft a letter on behalf of the Mobility Committee to the Planning Commission Chair Pearson regarding a new appointee to replace David Dismondy, since he was filling in temporarily. Chair Staudt made motions to approve the agenda and the minutes from March 17, 2026, both of which were supported and passed 6-0.

DISCUSSION

Chair Staudt moved to Matters for Committee Discussion, turning it over to staff. Engineer Runkel gave a brief recap of the previous meeting's field trip to look at top priority sidewalk gaps in May. Engineer Runkel stated that the CIP budget submittals were coming up in September, so she would get estimates for the sidewalk gaps identified as potential candidates for an Access to Transit grant, which would be primarily along 12 Mile Rd and Grand River Ave, and maybe Napier Rd. Chair Staudt mentioned that he visited the public meeting the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) held the previous night for the proposed 9 Mile Rd/ Napier Rd roundabout, and asked if there was a segment gap between the roundabout and Villa Barr. Engineer Runkel answered yes and that segment is currently in the CIP, extending from the ITC Park to Villa Barr, and may be considered for application for a TAP grant. A brief discussion of the proposed roundabout configuration followed.

Engineer Runkel moved to the next agenda topic, e-bikes on City sidewalks and pathways, mentioning two letters in the packet from Joellen Shortley at RSJA Law. Engineer Runkel gave a summary of the letters, saying that Michigan Vehicle Code does not prohibit e-bikes or scooters on sidewalks, but the City can work restrictions into their ordinance, so it's up to municipalities to decide what is acceptable. Motorbikes and mopeds are a separate

category and are not allowed on sidewalks. Engineer Runkel mentioned that staff from Parks, Community Relations and Public Safety met Joellen recently to discuss the issue. Parks staff, Kit Keiser, provided the e-vehicle glossary and quick reference guide in the packet, which is a good summary of what's allowed where and what speeds they go. The committee discussed the challenges with knowing which category an e-vehicle is just based on looking at it, and what the differences between classes are.

Member Roney asked Director Muck what the effect on Parks is recently. Director Muck responded that they get complaints on the ITC Trail, and for e-motos, or mini bikes, at Lakeshore Park. Director Muck continued that they are getting more complaints about them on sidewalks, which is what the committee is here to discuss. Director Muck mentioned that there are mod kits out there so that Class 1 bikes can be modified to go faster. Director Muck asserted that the state legislature needs to jump in, or the state parks and rec association, which he has been pushing them to try to get something done through the advocacy group. Director Muck said this is him talking personally, but he doesn't understand why you have to get a hunter safety license or boater safety certificate but kids can jump on bikes that can go 30 miles an hour. Director Muck continued that the staff subcommittee that was put together needs to get out into the community and schools with some education. However, prior to that, we need to see through the Mobility Committee and maybe City Council if there is any appetite for modifying any of our city codes or ordinances. The Police department talked about the difficulty in determining from some of our ordinances what is a motorized vehicle, so there's still a lot of confusion about whether an e-bike is considered a motorized vehicle or not.

Chair Staudt responded that the problem is just getting worse and this is probably the appropriate time for us to start looking into it. Chair Staudt continued that it was talked about in ordinance review probably 2 or 3 years ago, so it isn't something that's just popped up. Chair Staudt mentioned a rally they're having this weekend, so it's going to go beyond young kids and there's going to be pretty strong pushback if we try to regulate them. Director Muck replied that these e-bikes started as a way for older adults to get out and go farther distances to be able to bike longer in life, but it's turned into giving 10 or 12 year olds these bikes so they can go a few miles to their friends, so I would agree that trying to put a regulation to get these off sidewalks or enforce them into the streets that's not going to go over very well. Director Muck continued that the city may want to consider some regulations as far as age groups that would help the police, like helmets or things like that. Director Muck agreed that he doesn't think we should ban them completely, but until the state legislature jumps in, there may be some opportunities to discuss, like is it 14 and under must wear a helmet or can't operate different levels of these, and again, any like that would need to be bounced off of the attorney's office. The committee discussed the challenges police would have enforcing a speed limit, Member Smith mentioned the potential for a sidewalk radar to show people how fast they are going. Member Smith also brought up the issue of pedestrians wearing ear buds and not hearing bicyclists call out. Chair Staudt mentioned signage that a neighboring community did, to try to educate people that it's not just bikers who have a responsibility, it's the walkers too.

The committee agreed that an all out ban would not be appropriate but that additional safety regulations would be warranted. Director Muck mentioned the need for some kind of licensing or color-coded sticker so it'd be easy to tell the class and continued that states are jumping on this also. Director Muck said we definitely need to do something from an education standpoint, getting our school resource officers involved and maybe putting

handlebar hangers on bikes at the school bike racks saying wear your helmet, don't speed, be aware of stop signs, etc., but what he's heard from our police department liaison is that they would like to see more teeth into our ordinance so they can enforce it, so that's where we're at with this committee at this point. Member Dooley asked if the state has any training videos, that would show what it means when you're driving these vehicles at 20 or 30 miles per hour and whether or not someone is prepared to use the brakes. Member Dooley mentioned driver's ed training classes at work, but those are adults and these kids don't know any better, they don't even have a learner's permit yet, but they're being tasked to go 30 miles an hour. Member Dooley reiterated the need for some sort of education. The committee discussed some potential education tools and other safety considerations in the city parks and trails. The committee then discussed the process for taking the issue to the Ordinance Review Committee and summarized some of the talking points thus far, such as speed and helmet regulations, reckless riding and ordinance definition, with the question coming up if it should encompass all bikes and not just e-bikes. Engineer Runkel mentioned the draft communications plan in the packet, that is slated for fall 2026 and spring 2027 roll out, geared towards middle school/high school kids.

The committee moved to the next agenda item, sidewalk prioritization update. Engineer Runkel presented the memo from Sri (former City planner), in the packet, saying that two new tier one categories were added: access to transit and active mobility plan recommendation. Engineer Runkel continued that staff is looking for feedback on if the committee thinks any of the categories should be removed or updated. The committee discussed some of the details of the categories and ratings. Chair Staudt suggested adding an environmental impact category which would consider tree removals. Other committee members agreed, and Chair Staudt brought up the issue of what's the perceived benefit versus the perceived environmental cost when residents don't want their trees cut down.

Westridge Downs resident, Sarah Lucas, brought up their subdivision's issue of not wanting trees cut down for the neighborhood sidewalk repair program. Chair Staudt said it's a fiduciary and legal responsibility for the safety of residents to repair the sidewalks, and the idea that we can do different sidewalk treatments for different places for tree preservation becomes problematic on a cost basis. Ms. Lucas replied that she understands that but they would like to see if there are alternatives like the use of flexible sidewalk panels where you want to preserve the more mature trees. Ms. Lucas mentioned other communities that have used flexible sidewalk panels. Chair Staudt restated that the City can't spend a large amount of money on every sidewalk segment in the City to do an analysis of every possible alternative. Ms. Lucas replied listing the environmental and health benefits of trees, and asked if the City could reach out to other cities that have used flexible panels. Chair Staudt asked Ms. Lucas if she would consider a special assessment for additional costs. Ms. Lucas asked for clarification on what a special assessment is, which Chair Staudt explained. Ms. Lucas said it would probably depend on the cost, some neighbors would be willing and others on fixed incomes might say no. Chair Staudt and Ms. Lucas continued to discuss how special assessments work, potential costs, and how trees are assessed. The committee and Ms. Lucas continued to discuss the nuances of assessing tree conditions and where root shaving or pruning can be used. Ms. Lucas mentioned a petition from people in the subdivision that is up to 41 signatures, and that when she was in the city council meeting she listened to the council talk about all the trees and pollinator gardens they want to put in the new subdivisions, which exists now in our neighborhood, why would you remove something that you're trying to create somewhere else? The committee discussed the reasons why the trees are problematic to the sidewalk and why different species of trees

are planted now than several decades ago. Member Heintz stated it's all about having a little balance with what's best for safety and the long term aspects of mobility. Ms. Lucas said she would send the information her husband got from Ann Arbor to Engineer Runkel.

The discussion moved back to the topic of how sidewalk segments are prioritized. Chair Staudt recalled how it was done previously and said he's open to leaving some flexibility and focusing on the top 10 segments. Chair Staudt continued that we should try to tackle as many of those as possible and take advantage of upcoming road projects and new developments as opportunities to construct sidewalk segments, such as on Grand River and how City West works out. Engineer Runkel agreed that she also wanted to focus on those segments so for the next meeting, staff would come back with those and some estimates and more of a plan on how we're going to tackle those. The committee then moved to communications which included a request for a crossing on Meadowbrook Rd between 8 and 9 Mile Rds. Engineer Runkel said a crossing is recommended in the Active Mobility Plan and that the road will be going into the CIP for rehabilitation so we could look at adding a crossing. The committee discussed existing sidewalk on that road segment and the potential to add sidewalk on the east side of the road. Engineer Runkel mentioned another communication about sidewalks on Haggerty south of the Innova development, which Engineer Runkel said she would talk to Planner Bell about.

The meeting concluded with the committee agreeing that the next meeting would take place on Thursday, October 15, 2026.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items to review.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sarah Lucas, a resident in Westridge Downs subdivision, was present for the meeting to speak on behalf of subdivision residents who signed a petition against the removal of trees in their subdivision for the sidewalk repair program. Ms. Lucas said they are appreciative that the city wants to fix the sidewalks, but we also want to maintain the trees.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.