

**Recap of the East Town Business Partnership Business Forum on
Car Lanes, Bus Lanes, Bikes – Oh My!**
[\(https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-january-17-business-forum-presentations-now-available/\)](https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-january-17-business-forum-presentations-now-available/)
Thursday, January 17, 2019, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Padilla, 1101 West River Parkway, The Falls Conference Room
Downtown East Neighborhood of Minneapolis

I. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements

Paul Mellblom, President of the East Town Business Partnership, welcomed the audience to the first business forum of the New Year and thanked Tom Jollie, Senior Vice President at Padilla, for hosting. He noted whether one is a single or multi-modal transit user, they would find today's topic relevant as it affects the quality of life in the city, the ability to navigate in and around downtown, the success of their respective businesses, and how the world views us as a community.

He thanked those who are members and, for those who aren't, advised there are several levels of membership to accommodate the spectrum of businesses in East Town. Since memberships cover over 75% of the budget, the ETBP is responsive to their needs and desires which propels it to do its good work.

Mellblom announced the annual meeting will be held in April where the new Board of Directors will be elected. Since some of the Directors will be terming off, there will be several positions open. He encouraged those interested to forward their credentials to him and/or Dan Collison, the Executive Director.

Then everyone was asked to introduce themselves:

Hannah Ady, Baby Devotions
Carina Aleckson, Catholic Charities
Kathleen Anderson, North Star Lofts
Dennis Bakken, Proverus Inc.
John Barobs, Move Minneapolis
Julie Beitler, CenterPoint Energy
Brian Braden, MacPhail Center for Music
Kevin Callaghan, Elliot Park Hotel
John Campobasso, Kraus-Anderson
Charles Carlson, Metro Transit
Robert Clapp, Bridgewater Lofts
Rick Crispino, Bridgewater Lofts
Bill Dosset, Nice Ride Minnesota
Chris Fleck, North Central University
Steve Fletcher, Ward 3 City Council Member
Megan Foley, MRA
Kim Forbes, Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge
Vanessa Haight, Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc.
Christie Rock Hantge, ETBP Staff
Cyndy Harrison, Sawatdee Thai Restaurant
Tom Hayes, Hennepin Healthcare
Neal Holleschau, MacPhail Center for Music
Kory Kingsbury, Renaissance and Residence Inn at The Depot
Julia Lauwagie, Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge
Randy Manthey, DMNA Land Use Committee
Brian Maupin, Allied Parking, Inc.
Megan McNally, Elliot Park Hotel
Peter Mihajlov, Parasole Restaurant Holdings, Inc.
Greta Tacke Peterson, Sherman Associates
Roger Raina, National Item Processing
Michael Rainville, Meet Minneapolis
Beth Shogren, Green Minneapolis

Thomas Schmid, DMNA Land Use Committee
Andrea Sobcinski, CenterPoint Energy
Carletta Sweet, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
Kaitlin Unga, Sherman Associates
Deborah Waterbury, Abittan Mill City
Matthew Weiland, Clear Channel Outdoor
Amanda Wiggins, Green Minneapolis
Erin Wolff, Clear Channel Outdoor
David Zaffrann, Council Member Fletcher's Office

While all members are important to the organization, Collison extended a special gratitude to the platinum sponsors who help to put more fuel in the tank:

- Allied Parking
- American Academy of Neurology
- CenterPoint Energy
- Clear Channel Outdoor
- Community Housing Development Corporation
- Delta Dental
- ESG Architects
- Hennepin Healthcare
- House of Charity
- Kraus-Anderson
- Minnesota Vikings
- Clearway Energy (formerly NRG Energy)
- Padilla
- People Serving People
- Thrivent Financial
- U.S. Bank
- Sherman-Williams
- Wells Fargo

Then he announced the following events which are listed chronologically:

- *Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 1:30-2:45 p.m.:* 2019 NCAA Final Four Stakeholder Information Session at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1200 Marquette Avenue (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/final-four-information-session-tickets-53756464031>).
- *Tuesday, February 12, 2019, 7:00-8:30 a.m.:* We ♥ Elliot Park Neighborhood Breakfast (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/we-elliott-park-neighborhood-tickets-53449989357>) with Hennepin County District 4 Commissioner Angela Conley (<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/4th-district>) at the Elliot Park Hotel.
- *Wednesday, February 13, 2019, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.:* Minneapolis Downtown Council Annual Meeting at The Armory (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/2019-mpls-downtown-council-annual-meeting/>).
- *Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 4:30-6:30 p.m.:* Joint MDC-ETBP Happy Hour Presentation on *Economic Drivers that will Shape the Future of Minneapolis and the Twin Cities* (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/happy-hour-presentation-economic-drivers-will-shape-future-mpls-twin-cities/>).
- *Thursday, February 21, 2019, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:* Business forum on “Ways the Social Determinants of Health are Transforming Institutions” at The Depot, 225 3rd Avenue South (<https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-february-21-business-forum-at-the-depot-minneapolis/>).

- To learn more about and attend the neighborhood organizations' meetings:
 - Visit <http://www.thedmna.org/> for the DMNA Board (January 28) and Land Use Committee (February 5) meetings; and
 - Visit <http://elliotparkneighborhood.org/> for EPNI Building, Land Use and Housing Committee (January 17) and Annual (May 13) meetings.
- For help in navigating City Hall with your business questions, visit the Minneapolis Business Portal at <https://business.minneapolismn.gov/> designed to connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to the information and resources needed to plan, launch and grow a business. He noted they are part of the Chameleon Consortium.
- *Wednesdays, January 23rd-March 27th, 5:00-6:00 p.m. a.m.:* Coffee with Ward 3 Council Member Steve Fletcher at various locations (<https://mplsdowntown.com/event/coffee-ward-3-council-member-steve-fletcher/2019-01-30/>).

II. Ward 3 Update

Council Member Steve Fletcher first expressed appreciation for those who attend his coffee meetings to discuss what's on their minds as it helps him to prioritize and set his agenda. Then he reported:

- Funding has been secured to fully repair and maintain the Stone Arch Bridge (<http://www.southwestjournal.com/news/parks/2019/01/stone-arch-bridge-repairs-fully-funded/>).
- At his Central Riverfront Bridge Repair Projects meeting held on January 14th (<https://www.facebook.com/events/2344610789158617/>) he conveyed they've been working on sequencing the repairs for the 10th Avenue Bridge and 3rd Avenue Bridge to ensure they aren't simultaneously closed; the Stone Arch Bridge will remain open for pedestrians during its repairs.
- They continue to make progress in affordable housing. Investments were made to create or preserve 764 units of affordable multifamily rental housing in 10 projects located throughout the city (<http://news.minneapolismn.gov/2018/11/16/city-council-approves-12-million-affordable-housing-investments-throughout-minneapolis/>).

III. Green Minneapolis

While using a slide presentation titled *Transforming downtown from gray to green*, Beth Shogren, Executive Director at Green Minneapolis (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/beth-shogren-b31a433>), explained GM is a multi-project, multi-partner, nonprofit conservancy with multiple capabilities: fundraise, operate, program, plan and advocate to advance the vitality of downtown through parks and greening.

GM fills a critical gap in the fabric of the downtown community by being the voice between the public and private sectors to help bring about projects that otherwise would not get done. The project area for transforming downtown from gray to green is all the in between spaces in downtown wherever people live, work and recreate. Greening creates a downtown for everyone by connecting **places** in the public realm, connecting **people** to activities that strengthen community, and connecting **partners** by leveraging the passion and vision of people with the strength of government. Greening is also good for business because it increases downtown livability, the ability to attract and retain talent, property values, safety, and street level retail traffic.

In order to achieve the vision of transforming downtown from gray to green, the private and public sectors must work together. Civic leadership and investment drives new philanthropy and leveraging municipal planning with private sector interests will get bigger projects done. Shogren then gave an overview of the following projects (<http://www.greenminneapolis.org/projects/>) to exemplify their work:

- A. *The Commons*. GM did the private sector fundraising campaign that raised \$14 million and partnered that with investments from the City and Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority to enable the park to

come into existence out of a sea of parking lots.

- B. *Hennepin-Lyndale Crossroads* is an effort by neighborhood organizations working with Minnesota Department of Transportation and the City to make this right-of-way corridor between the Walker Art Center, Basilica of Saint Mary, and Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church more pedestrian friendly. There was no entity to contribute to or take on project management for stakeholders who wanted to contribute to the renovation. Enter GM which filled the gap and in 2018 took on a new planting project they installed and maintain. Plans are to expand it south towards Uptown to address loitering and panhandling, and to the north to the foreboding underpass by Dunwoody.
- C. *Peavey Plaza* is next. The \$10 million capital funds have been raised (\$4 million from City, \$2 million from state bonding, \$2 million from Target, and remainder a combination from corporate and individual philanthropic visionaries), but still need to raise funds for operations. They are looking forward to its reopening in July 2019 and are working on a programming partnership with Minnesota Orchestra.
- D. *Downtown Forest with Greening Lab* is GM's aspirational vision to have all streets in downtown lined with mature trees.

Their 2019 priorities are to increase awareness of GM, develop corporate champions, and secure ongoing funding for their projects. To support their work, host an event, become a programming sponsor, attend park events, volunteer, sign up for the newsletter, share ideas, and donate.

IV. **Car, Bus and Bike Lanes**

CM Fletcher thanked the ETBP for having a conversation about this topic as it impacts how many of us experience the city and the world. Downtown Minneapolis is the laboratory and model for multimodal transit, we have everything happening here, i.e.: bike and motorized scooter sharing, great bus routes, gradually expanding light rail transit, cars and district parking. As a result, we're starting to see more configurations on the ways to share the infrastructure and how they all work together.

From his personal experience, Fletcher advised he lives in a 12-unit building (<https://greenrockapartments.com/locations/washington-ave-flats/>) just a few blocks away which allows him to walk, bike or use a scooter to work and most meetings daily. In his 12-unit building with 9 parking spaces between them, there is an expectation shift happening that his building models around how much parking you have to build in order to develop housing, and more of that model is being built in the neighborhood.

In the ground level retail space of his building, there are businesses – Northern Coffeeworks, Faribault Woolen Mill – that do not have parking at all but are thriving because there's enough walkable density from nearby businesses with a large employee base and multitenant residential developments. So they have a model for how density and a good walkable neighborhood works; it's something he lives every day and would like to see more of in the city.

He was elected with a couple issues people told him were incredibly important, one of which is climate change, thus he would like to frame today's topic around it. Our neighborhood is doing one of the most important things it can do, i.e., invite density into the center of the city close to where people work, shop and whatever else they can do so they don't have to drive to the suburbs to do them. If commutes can be cut from half an hour to 5 minutes, that can have a favorable impact on the environment.

The other issue was safety, i.e., for pedestrians and commuters on bikes and in cars. To address this issue, the City adopted Vision Zero (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/TransportationPlanning/visionzero>) to eliminate deaths and life-altering injuries on our streets. Related to this issue, one of the things he's most proud of during his first year on the Council, is the innovative reconfiguration of the protected bike lane on 11th Avenue between Washington Avenue and West River Parkway to improve ingress and egress from surrounding buildings, and placement of bollards on South 2nd Street and 10th Avenue to improve pedestrian crossings to/from Gold Medal Park. He received a lot of input from the community that

influenced how Public Works redesigned how the street works for everyone and they plan to do more of that going forward.

As they're thinking about how everyone shares the streets, public spaces and public resources so that it works for everyone, there are great choices on mobility. Younger folks, for a variety of reasons, ranging from personal preferences to those who can't afford it, don't want to own cars and since the auto industry is changing, the market is trending towards multimodal transportation at a time when we want to grow density where a lot more people can live closer to downtown. This is a significant shift for a lot of people so we need to think about it as a complete system, and no matter how you personally get around, there will be parts of the system that you will not use. Rather than having the mindset "that part of the road doesn't do me any good so why invest in it," have the mindset "how do we make this system work as well as it can for everybody and I'm glad that bike lane is there even though I'm sitting in my car because all those in the bike lane are not taking up space in my car lane creating more congestion."

We need the road system to work for everybody so that trucks are able to deliver goods to Trader Joe's so we can walk there and purchase them, and figuring out how all those modes work together in a way that is safe and efficient is the challenge they're facing.

Another shift they are witnessing based on a model observed by Robin Hutcheson, Director of Public Works, who traveled to Helsinki (<https://www.myhelsinki.fi/en/info/getting-around>), is an integrated public transport ticket system. Instead of a pay-for-use model, the future will probably have on your watch or phone a membership to an integrated transit system that you pay for on a monthly basis. The amount of monthly costs that transit represents in people's budget is really going to shift and one of the many factors they're thinking about.

During Q&A, Fletcher explained how Minneapolis streets were designed for the modes of transit and how they have changed over time (http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/publicworks/gompls/comp/public-works_trans-plan_designguidelines), e.g., wide lanes in the 1960s which encouraged speeding versus more narrow lanes today to encourage safety. Figuring out how to make adjustments to make traffic move more efficiently as possible and build for the next generation of traffic is part of their process.

He discussed how they are trying to set cultural norms for how cyclists interact with motor vehicles so that encounters that occurred at Critical Mass (<https://www.twincities.com/2007/09/28/minneapolis-no-riot-at-this-months-critical-mass-ride/>) aren't repeated. Because of organizations like Our Streets Minneapolis (<https://www.ourstreetsmpls.org/>), he believes we've done better than many other cities.

Regarding the issues related to the motorized scooters, since it isn't a viable mode of transit if you can't find one, they are headed towards what was done in the case of Nice Ride, i.e., issue an RFP and have one provider where more rules can be established in the contract and try to expand the service and run it more efficiently.

Lastly, he discussed the fact that as you get further away from downtown, parking density on side streets is cyclical. A ton of businesses were killed in the 1960s-70s by reducing density across the city. If you drive through northeast you'll see all kinds of buildings that were once live-work where there was a corner bar, grocery store, etc., that served the neighborhood and relied upon a mix of people who were driving and walking. As a result of down zoning, many of those businesses died or moved away and new ones came in that rely upon a much broader geographic range. Businesses that rely upon an abundance of people walking and local traffic, such as Maeve's Cafe, are doing great, but others that need a much broader geographic range of people, such as Tiger Rose Tattoo which due to the nature of the business won't experience constant repeat business, aren't doing as great. Change produces winners and losers and we've seen that ebb and flow over the decades but the direction in which we're going is people are moving back into the city.

A. Move Minneapolis. John Barobs, Communications Manager (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-barobs-b07a556b>), advised they are the downtown Transportation Management Organization (TMO) whose charge is to sustainably get people in and out of downtown by promoting multiple modes of transit through an outreach and education program that targets downtown workers, residents and employers.

Acknowledging the friction occurring between car, bike and bus lanes mentioned earlier, he highlighted some data on factors triggering this friction which has probably intensified since they first compiled the data, e.g.:

- 90,000+ people drive alone, or approximately 59% of people who work downtown. Part of his job is to help reduce this percentage by supporting different modes of transportation.
- Loss of 2,400 parking spaces in downtown since 2014 due to the success of developments occurring on surface parking lots in downtown requiring people to find alternative places to park.
- Prices for contract parking, particularly for those coming in from the suburbs, are rising.
- Congestion increasing due to the 2-year, I-35W at I-94 project (<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/35w94/>) with traffic spilling over to side streets, State Highway 100 and Hiawatha Avenue. However, once completed it will bring in the Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (<https://www.metrotransit.org/metro-orange-line>). But then, just as this is completing, I-94 will be rebuilt between Minneapolis and St. Paul (<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/I-94minneapolis-stpaul/>).

For those who drive alone, he suggested they should want to support public transit, carpooling and biking because they remove cars away from traffic, e.g.:

- 1 bus removes 40 cars
- A 3-car LRT removes 600 cars
- Carpooling reduces 950 cars daily
- Biking reduces 4,100 cars daily
- Telecommuting reduces 840 cars daily

Supporting and using alternative modes of transit works to everyone's benefit because it reduces congestion, competition for parking and emissions into the environment.

For more information, visit <https://moveminneapolis.org>.

B. Nice Ride Minnesota. Bill Dosset, Executive Director (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bill-dossett-41785b14>), advised he represents this nonprofit that owns the green bike sharing system and contracts with Motivate to operate them as well as deliver the dockless bike system (<https://www.niceridemn.com>). Motivate has now been acquired by Lyft, a ride share company, the transition plan of which is working well because it wants to drop 1,800 electric bikes into Minneapolis next year. Since dockless bikes are working well, they'll be back next year, but get ready for electric bikes which have been launched in a number of cities across the U.S.

Electrification, autonomy and shared are the huge changes shaking the ground in transportation. Another change to take a look at is capital. Fourteen months ago, Uber changed the way it operates; it was in the mode of disrupting cities because it wanted to grow and hired as many drivers everywhere in the world. Now they are totally different; they want to operate everything and become the platform/Amazon for transportation. This means companies like Lime (<https://www.li.me>) or whoever has a new vehicle can get \$400 million in venture capital for whatever media goal so that they can start in the traffic or micromobility lane. So get ready for more, it's just going to move faster because there is so much capital in this industry (<https://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/327752/ford-scoots-further-into-micro-mobility-lane-by-bu.html>).

In the 20 largest cities in the country, you cannot find in any of them a significant number of council members who'd vote against bike lanes, but micromobility lanes are not bike lanes. Already bike lanes

have more vehicles in them that are not bikes than are and that will continue to change. Micromobility lanes are going to have deliveries in them and not going away.

For more information, visit <https://www.niceridemn.com/>.

C. Metro Transit Bus Rapid Transit. Collison advised due to time constraints, Charles Carlson, Director of BRT, will be invited back to give a more in-depth presentation.

Carlson then quickly announced within the next month they will be receiving their first battery-electric bus which will be placed on a BRT route that begins/ends on the east side of downtown (<https://www.metrotransit.org/fleet-plan-calls-for-gradual-addition-of-electric-buses>), and he looks forward to coming back to tell us more.

V. Closing Remarks. Collison thanked Padilla for hosting, the panelists for their insights on today's topic, and the audience for attending.