


Local

Bicycle-pedestrian master plan will be written

 By Steve Vied Messenger-Inquirer

 04.28.16

An advisory committee with up to 20 members will be formed and begin meeting as early as July or August to aid in the development of a bicycle-pedestrian master plan for Owensboro-Daviess County, a document required by the federal government.

Keith Harpole, associate director for transportation planning at the Green River Area Development District, told a local transportation policy group on Tuesday that GRADD will produce the master plan on behalf of the Daviess County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

GRADD will continue work already performed by the city of Owensboro and Daviess County on existing plans for bicycle and pedestrian routes, including such features as the city's Greenbelt system of walking and biking trails, and routes to and from traffic generators such as Owensboro Health Regional Hospital and shopping concentrations.

"Federal regulations require that we do a bike-pedestrian master plan," Harpole said. "We will be doing it, taking what the city and county has done. There will be public meetings and we'll have a committee to come up with the master plan."

The Technical Advisory Committee, made up of a cross-section of city and county public and private officials who consider transportation issues and plans and make recommendations to the MPO's policy committee, raised no objections to GRADD taking over the bicycle-pedestrian master plan.

"It seems to need a blend of city and county officials," said Bill Parrish, city manager of Owensboro and chairman of the transportation advisory committee. "I'm glad GRADD will do it."

The local MPO is required under the federal transportation legislation to have a bicycle-pedestrian master plan in order to receive federal funds for bike and walking paths and other alternative-use routes, Harpole said.

Harpole said he has started making calls to interested groups to provide names of potential members of a committee to help create the master plan. He said he could be reached at GRADD at 270-926-4433 or (direct line) at 270-852-1326. Engineers for the city and county governments will likely be involved to provide technical advice to the committee, he said.

"The master plan will have a map of routes to traffic generators and future plans," Harpole said. "It will be kind of a wish list."

Federal officials want to know how a community intends to spend money it seeks for bike and pedestrian trails and routes. That's where the master plan comes in.

"We'll say, 'Here's our plan'," Harpole said.

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