

Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Meeting #1

Virtual Meeting Summary and Questions & Answers

Jan. 7, 2025

6-7pm

Attendance: City Staff (3) Jasmine Isaac, Cyrus Naheedy, Suzann Flowers / Participants (15)

General Remarks at the Beginning

- City staff presented the [presentation slide deck](#) during the first 30-minutes of the office hours.
- The second half of the Office Hours were devoted to responding to questions that were placed in the Q-A feature of Zoom. The questions are provided below with a brief response from city staff.

Questions and Answers

1. Some of the Quick Build 1.0 projects are looking a little rough. For instance, hardened centerlines at W Stadium and Liberty are coming up off the pavement. Are these going to be repaired, or made more permanent?

Yes, City staff will maintain these items through typical maintenance processes – the SS4A grant will not be used towards maintenance purposes. The best way to alert staff to these issues is utilizing the A2FixIt app. Ms. Flowers noted that she will send an email to the team regarding this inquiry following the meeting.

2. Hi, folks. I've mentioned this before -- using maps that show green space for non-public spaces like the golf courses does a disservice to citizens. I think its the Smith Group that did this last time I raised it. The Ann Arbor golf courses at State and Stadium make it look like residents have green space options and transit routes. But they are literally gated communities that we cannot access. So, I'd ask that you change those maps to reflect the walls that cut off transit across them.

We will bring this to the attention of our GIS team and see how we can better mark this information for future maps.

3. Are the dollar amounts “fixed” for each of these federal award grant elements? For example, do we have to spend X dollars on the cameras, a specific amount on planning, on installation, etc. as stipulated in the federal grant application or approval?

The amounts are not fixed for each of the grant award elements.

4. Since Vision Zero means eliminating serious injury crashes, why do the anticipated project benefits say, “reduction in severe and fatal” instead of “elimination” and “reduction in vehicle speeds” instead of “20-25 mph maximum speeds”?

While the goal of the SS4A project will be to lower vehicle operating speeds, lowering speed limits is a separate (but related) goal with different constraints and considerations. First, Michigan Vehicle Code prevents communities from establishing speed limits lower than 25 mph. Additionally, reducing speed limits in the State of Michigan depend in part on the operating vehicle speeds of a corridor. The traditional benchmark is based upon the 85th percentile speed, though there is more flexibility in this regard to use 50th percentile speed. Staff intend to collect speed data before and after projects to determine where speed limits can be lowered – if opportunities exist, they will likely be after project implementation.

5. Does the NEPA submittals this week lock us into specific treatments, locations, dollar amounts, etc.?

The NEPA document that is being submitted outlines all of the intersections and corridors by which we are exploring treatments. We would not be able to add other locations after we receive our NEPA determination. The NEPA process does not include design or dollar amounts.

6. Since Council directed staff to reconfigure all multilane roads, can we avoid multi lane roads for buffering bike lanes, bump outs, and hardened centerlines (eg Plymouth, S Main, Stadium) and focus on single lane roads?

As part of this emphasis from City Council, staff have developed a Request for Proposals [\(25-03\)](#) titled “Multi- Lane Road Reconfiguration Evaluation”. As this evaluation is underway, the SS4A grant will pursue opportunities to address safety issues before this evaluation is complete. Installations will not negatively impact future road configuration decisions.

7. Will all the new Pedestrian Crossing Gateways be removed during winter months for road snow plowing? (They're even more important to keep in the winter months with shorter days and more pedestrians' hazards.)

City staff have left several gateway treatments along Liberty to evaluate the effectiveness of these treatments during the winter months. If this proves successful then the plan would be to leave these treatments year-round.

8. Can Road diets and flex post roundabouts be considered for “quick build” projects?

As part of this grant work, this is not a feasible option for implementation.

9. I can't stay all the way to the end. How can I get answers?

Meeting notes will be provided on the project website that will include the questions placed in the Q-A section. Please provide 3-4 business days for these to be developed.

10. If we can't take away a lane, what is the plan for West Stadium between Seventh and Main? How will we create a safe corridor for cyclists without making room for bike lanes?

Treatment options are still being determined location by location. While the grant constrains staff's ability to remove travel lanes (as this would constitute a road diet), there are still locations around the City where narrowing travel lanes is an option – this has already been done on several corridors across the city, including sections of Plymouth and Packard. With narrower travel lanes there is the potential to add in a painted buffer for the bike lanes and then add protection to those spaces to improve the comfort for people who bike.

11. Sometime after the meeting, can you please elaborate on the specific provision in the grant that says we cannot repurpose car lanes?

Ann Arbor has decided for the purposes of NEPA processing and to meet our period of performance conditions within the grant agreement, we will not be exploring removal of travel lanes.

12. We can't take roads away with concrete infrastructure, but can we use temporary signage and delineations to implement a road diet? Low-cost and high impact — seems like we need more drastic measures to achieve Vision Zero in 2025.

Please see response to Question 11.

13. Do the Near Miss cameras record speeds? What is the rationale for using them when we have so much crash data?

One of the requirements of the system will be to capture speed data. The Near Miss system will seek to capture those events that do not result in a crash but could have. Factors that could have resulted in a crash such as speed, not yielding, running red lights, turning on red, and behaviors of people who drive, walk, and cycle.

14. Given the extensive limitations the US DOT grant imposes on the city (no lane removals, no curb moves, no concrete, etc.), will these changes prioritize or delay more significant changes (road diets, as required by Council resolution) on those same streets in the future using other funds?

Installation of improvements through the SS4A project would still allow for any future capital projects to make the changes permanent. We do not anticipate that these corridors or intersections would be deprioritized.

15. Grid Smart cameras: In addition to using them to analyze near misses, could they be used to document: 1) speeding; 2) failure to observe crosswalk laws. Such an analysis would broaden the dataset regarding where unsafe conditions are arising.

Yes, the Near Miss project would help City staff better understand conditions at these specific intersections where near miss events would have occurred, those could be speeding, failure to yield to pedestrians.

16. Could the grant funding be augmented with city funds to enable more ambitious improvements?

Additional City funds could be allocated to speed up safety improvements across the city separate from the grant. Again, more funds will not change the restrictions of the grant.

17. It sounds like we have in-house staff to maintain and repair flex posts, but do we have staff to install them and paint lines?

City staff can do maintenance on the flex posts and speed humps, but we do not have internal teams that do pavement markings. City pavement markings are handled by pavement marking contractors.

18. Is there any scope in this project for regional connectivity improvements, e.g. Plymouth Road to Dixboro, W. Huron River Dr to Dexter, Geddes Rd and E. Huron River Dr to Ypsilanti?

Unfortunately no. Funding is limited to roadways under the jurisdiction of the City of Ann Arbor.

19. Would reconfiguring one-way streets back to two-way fall under the limitations of this grant?

We do not have any one-way streets as part of our potential project locations.

20. So, to be clear: if you specify a certain location or corridor for improvements in the NEPA application being submitted this week, are we preventing that corridor from being road diets for 3 years with OTHER funds too because it's already "locked down"?

Potential improvement using these federal funds would not prevent future improvements.

21. Is it possible to do plastic or rubber speed tables, raised crosswalks, or speed humps... anything that would bring the target speed down to the desired 20-25 mph maximum?

In order to utilize these types of devices the roadway must already be set to 25 mph, many of the corridors that we are looking at do not have the posted speed limits set to 25 mph.

22. What treatments help bikers who need to turn left? E.g. a student in the (new! Hurrah!) bike lane on Stadium in front of Pioneer who is turning in the school at the flagpole. My daughter did this by getting in the left lane and sitting there until the traffic in the opposite direction has stopped. There is no light. What can be done here? Giving up the left turns should be off the table.

This grant work is not able to add these types of devices.

23. What treatments do you envision at the State north of Stimson? There's new development coming here (which is fine!) but how can we still have bus stops* but not turn the bike lanes into parking for drop-offs/delivery *After the State Street changes were done

farther north, AATA took out the northbound bus stop at Granger and State. I can walk it, but it's been a barrier for my husband

The project team has not started discussions about potential designs.

24. How can we improve connectivity between bike infrastructure at intersections? Which treatment can help there? *We need something to keep drivers from pinning cyclists to the curb). A. S. industrial and Stadium b. Packard and State-eastbound Packard right turn cyclists are pinned to curb by drivers while in the gap between the Packard and State bike lanes at intersection

When space is available through lane narrowing, the potential to add a buffer for the bike lanes can be added with pavement markings and then protection for cyclists can be added. We also must consider where bus stops are placed so that they can pull to the curb for a level boarding where bus stops exist, no bike lane protection would be added.