



Agenda
City Commission Special Joint Meeting with the Multimodal Transportation Board
Thursday, December 11, 2025 - 6:00 PM
851 S. Eton, Birmingham MI
DPS Conference Room

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Clinton Baller, Mayor

2. ROLL CALL

Mya Brown, Deputy City Clerk

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The City of Birmingham welcomes public comment limited at the Mayor's discretion to allow for an efficient meeting. The Commission will not participate in a question and answer session and will take no action on any item not appearing on the posted agenda. The public can also speak to agenda items as they occur when the presiding officer opens the floor to the public. When recognized by the presiding officer, state your name for the record, and direct all comments or questions to the presiding officer.

4. DISCUSSION TOPICS

A. Multimodal Transportation Board (MMTB) Scope

5. COMMUNICATIONS

6. ADJOURN

City boards and committees meet in person, and most have a virtual option available to the public. Members of the public may attend this meeting in person or virtually.

Link to Access Virtual Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/655079760>

Telephone Meeting Access: 877 853 5247 US Toll-free

Meeting ID Code: **655 079 760**

Persons who require mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance for effective participation in this public meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (248) 530-1880, or (248) 644-3405 (TDD) at least one day before the meeting to request help.

Las personas con incapacidad que requieren algún tipo de ayuda para la participación en esta sesión pública deben ponerse en contacto con la oficina del escribano de la ciudad en el número (248) 530-1800 o al (248) 644-3405 (para las personas con incapacidad auditiva) por lo menos un día antes de la reunión para solicitar ayuda a la movilidad, visual, auditiva, o de otras asistencias. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)



MEMORANDUM

Planning Department

DATE: December 3, 2025

TO: Jana L. Ecker, City Manager

FROM: Leah Blizinski, City Planner
Nicholas Dupuis, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Multimodal Transportation Board (MMTB) Scope

INTRODUCTION:

Although Birmingham has always been a walkable community, in 2011, the City Commission moved to formally support complete streets principles, which encouraged the City to consider all users of the right-of-way, develop multi-modal infrastructure, and support and invite active transportation with safe and ample space for pedestrians, bicyclists and users of transit. In 2013, the City's first Multimodal Transportation Plan was adopted and in 2014 the Multimodal Transportation Board (MMTB) was created. Since 2014, the City of Birmingham has built upon its walkable city brand by continuing its commitment to a safe and convenient environment for pedestrians while also installing several miles of bike lanes, introducing new bicycle infrastructure (bike racks, repair stands), and providing more space and shelter for transit users.

Fast forward to 2025, the MMTB has been struggling to understand exactly what its role is in the capital improvement project framework and what types of things are to be considered when infrastructure projects are brought to them for review. This confusion seems to, in part, stem from the enabling ordinance language for the MMTB and varied interpretations of such. For this reason, on August 25, 2025 ([Video](#) - [Minutes](#)), the City Commission moved to place a moratorium on all future MMTB meetings to allow the City Commission to review and scrutinize [Chapter 110, Article II of the Birmingham City Code](#) in order to examine and clarify the scope of authority and purpose and duties of the MMTB. The moratorium was intended to provide time for the City Commission to review the ordinance and provide direction to the MMTB on their scope of authority and purpose and duties. The Planning Department requested that the City Commission thoroughly review the MMTB's enabling ordinance and consider taking some time to revise the language to suit current and future needs. This request for a further, more comprehensive review is based on several factors including the age of the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan, remnants of the former Traffic and Safety Board in the current ordinance, current master plans, and the environment regarding capital improvements, infrastructure, and shifts in multimodal trends.

BACKGROUND:

On September 8, 2025 ([Video](#) – [Minutes](#)), as a part of the regular agenda, the City Commission held a discussion on the MMTB Ordinance. After commission discussion and public comment, the commission moved to “let the MMTB meet for the purpose of what they want to say to us at the joint meeting, no other business, to ask the City administration how they would revise this ordinance, and to set a meeting that is at least two hours long for all of us to get together.”

On October 23, 2025 ([Video](#)) a Special Meeting of the MMTB was held for the purpose of allowing MMTB board members to discuss what they would say at a future joint meeting with the City Commission. This meeting fulfilled part of the September 8, 2025 City Commission directive to staff.

This joint meeting of the City Commission and MMTB meeting fulfills a second part of the September 8, 2025 City Commission directive by providing a meeting that is at least two hours long for all parties to discuss the future scope of the MMTB. Staff continues to research the topic of city-level multimodal transportation planning and can provide draft ordinance revision language at a future regular meeting of the City Commission, with some additional direction from the City Commission. In addition to implementing and updating the MMTP as well as implementing recommendations from the 2040 Plan, the following plans and initiatives also provide opportunities for the MMTB to focus on improving safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists:

[Birmingham Plan 2040](#) – In 2023, the City Commission adopted the [Birmingham Plan 2040](#) (2023), which contains many multi-modal recommendations, one of which is to update the City’s MMTP. The City has not yet begun work on this recommendation, but staff intends to request funding for such in the next few years. The adoption of the 2040 Plan signaled a potential shift in multimodal policy, which includes a focus on shared streets across multiple types of users (pedestrians, bicycles, etc.) more so than previous plans. The 2040 plan also provides the City with some updated transportation recommendations. It reiterates the opportunity that exists to connect to the Troy Transit Center, but also elaborates on the possibilities for public mass transit along the Woodward corridor.

[Vision 2050](#) - Vision 2050 is the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Southeast Michigan. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Southeast Michigan, SEMCOG is responsible for developing the region’s long-range transportation plan. Vision 2050 serves as the policy document for regional transportation investments for the next 25 years. The plan provides a coordinated and strategic approach to transportation planning, with the goal of improving mobility, increasing safety, reducing congestion, and supporting economic growth and development throughout the region. Although this is a very broad-reaching plan, there are several policies and actions in the plan that have implications for Oakland County and the City of Birmingham.

[Oakland Transit](#) - On November 8, 2022, the residents of Oakland County approved the Oakland County Public Transportation millage. This voter-approved, 10-year, .95 millage is dedicated to maintaining and expanding public transit services throughout Oakland County. A Transit Division within the Oakland County Economic Development Department has been created and staffed with a manager and two transit planners. They have been busy connecting bus services, expanding routes, and working with the Regional Transit

Authority to make the county more attractive for transit. In addition, Oakland County Transit has worked with the RTA on grant funding that could help support bus rapid transit on Woodward Avenue.

[Vision Zero](#) & [Complete Streets](#) – Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. This framework was first implemented in Sweden in the 1990s, has been successful across Europe and is now gaining momentum in major American Cities. While Complete Streets is a policy and design approach that has been successful in ensuring streets are safe and accessible for all users, regardless of their mode of travel, age, or ability, Vision Zero is a safety-first strategy that focuses on outcomes to eliminate ALL traffic fatalities and severe injuries through a safe system approach. Complete Streets and Vision Zero efforts are not mutually exclusive, they complement each other and many cities have begun adopting Vision Zero principles to enhance their Complete Streets outcomes.

In considering the above, it could be concluded that the City has devoted many resources at the MMTB (staff time, board time, consultant fees, etc.) to vehicle-centric topics, such as the location of stop signs and traffic signs, or road widths, which affords less attention/bandwidth to move the needle on broader topics, such as envisioning a complete bicycle network, filling pedestrian gaps and enhancing existing pathways and amenities. With the knowledge that the default priority in transportation planning is vehicular travel, it is necessary to consider within multimodal transportation which modes of travel are a priority in Birmingham. Attempting to place equal priority on all modes of travel simply ensures that the default, which is cars, wins out when it comes to competing for space within road design projects. At this point, the Planning Department feels that it is worth considering which modes of travel the City should prioritize through the MMTB and how.

Questions

1. What mode or mode(s), if any, should be prioritized explicitly through the MMTB?
2. How can staff assist in ensuring a smooth and productive restart of the MMTB for all involved?
3. Where should the focus be in crafting new MMTB enabling ordinance to support the City Commission in its advisory capacity?

**City Of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board
October 23, 2025**

151 Martin Street, City Commission Room 205, Birmingham, MI

Minutes of the special meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held October 23, 2025. The meeting was convened at 6:00 p.m.

A. Rollcall

Present: Chair Mark Doolittle; Board Members Gordon Davies, Josh Dobrowitsky, Laura Engelland (left 8:00 p.m.), Patrick Hillberg, David Hocker

Absent: Z. Rosie Koul

Staff: City Planner Blizinski; Planning Director Dupuis

B. Introductions & Chair Comments

C. Review of the Agenda

D. Approval of MMTB Minutes

E. Unfinished Business

F. New Business

1. Discussion on MMTB future joint meeting with City Commission

CP Blizinski explained the purpose of the special meeting. Staff answered informational questions from the Board.

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- The MMTB is facing challenges implementing the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (Plan) and Complete Streets resolution (Complete Streets) because of resident cost concerns.
- The Commission should clarify whether it will allocate funding for multi-modal improvements.
- In the present discussion, it might be most efficient to surface all of the issues and then to categorize them for discussion with the Commission.
- The discussion with the Commission should likely focus on how the City can ensure that its road design policies and plans are followed, how the MMTB can be most helpful to the Commission and the community, and how the MMTB can most expediently seek clarification from the Commission when necessary.
- Board members are encouraged to reach out to staff individually with any questions regarding published agendas prior to the MMTB meetings.
- It would likely be appropriate to update the Plan.
- The MMTB should be focusing on road design and on promoting multi-modal transit in the City rather than discussing below-grade infrastructure.
- Master Plans are necessary for guiding the MMTB's work, because otherwise the MMTB must evaluate road designs in a somewhat ad hoc way. Since the City already has a Plan, the MMTB should encourage the Commission to determine how best to fund the Plan in order to enable its execution.
- The MMTB has collaborated with staff and the Commission to gain clarification and necessary information in the past. During Wimbledon Phase 1, the MMTB was able to

recommend an evaluation framework that was implemented, for instance.

- Rather than going back and forth between the MMTB and the Commission, it may often be sufficient for the MMTB to advance either one or a few recommendations and to explain its reasoning.
- Alternatively, it may sometimes be necessary to seek further clarification from the Commission and staff on certain aspects before making recommendations.
- The MMTB could spend some time refining the evaluation framework.
- The MMTB's role and related MMTB expectations of staff should be clarified.
- The City's overall approach to road improvement and capital improvement projects impacts the MMTB.
- Some in the community have been dissatisfied with road improvements due to their impression that the improvements are not planned in a cohesive manner. Some community members have been confused about why Wimbledon was split into two separate projects, for example, or have not understood why the City does not do improvements neighborhood by neighborhood.
- The impact of sometimes dividing individual roads into separate projects, or only completing two to three streets at a time with no other connected, adjacent, and imminent, projects planned, should be evaluated.
- Alternatively, focusing primarily on how to move forward might be most efficient.
- Community members would like more information about how urgently the City's water and sewer infrastructure must be improved.
- If the water and sewer infrastructure improvements are urgent, the City should consider issuing a bond and doing them all at once.
- Alternatively, raising the possibility of a bond may not be within the MMTB's purview or the most appropriate place for the MMTB to focus its considerations.
- This present discussion should focus on acknowledging the problems facing the MMTB, and choosing what to focus on. The aim should then be to determine the most effective and practical approaches. Codifying those approaches could be done subsequently.
- The road upgrade process should be optimized. The ordinance should be updated to more clearly define the MMTB's purpose, duties, and how the MMTB can best support the Commission and community.
- The MMTB's purview includes street design, and should include directional input on costs.
- The MMTB should focus exclusively on road design. The challenge has been that the MMTB has been implicitly navigating what is more appropriately a political decision: whether costs for a road improvement should be primarily borne by the residents of that road, or primarily by the City as a whole.
- When upgrades are being considered for unimproved streets, it may be appropriate for the Commission to give the MMTB direction on whether the street should become improved or remain unimproved. It might also be appropriate for the Commission to determine whether the street should comply with Complete Streets. These changes might help reduce the frequency with which residents seek to discuss special assessments with the MMTB, which is outside the MMTB's purview. These changes might also enable the MMTB to provide the Commission with more implementable recommendations.
- Alternatively, determining whether a street should be improved or unimproved or whether it should comply with Complete Streets should remain a discussion topic for the MMTB.
- If the Commission chooses to require that Complete Streets and other policies be implemented in each road upgrade, the MMTB could narrow its focus to determining how each street experience might be optimized for the benefit of cyclists and pedestrians.

- The City's Complete Streets remains in effect. The MMTB should be advocating for sidewalks on most streets. 26 foot wide roads should be recommended unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- The MMTB might have a better sense of how it could best fit into the City's process if it were to participate in the Commission's upcoming streets workshop.
- The upcoming streets workshop will likely consider the City's road improvement process and its attendant funding process. MMTB insights might be able to help inform that discussion.
- Redesigning the process with a homeowner's perspective in mind is essential. The goal should be to mitigate as much homeowner anxiety as possible. This might also reduce contention between the community and the MMTB.
- Given a number of factors including the obligation to promote health and safety within Birmingham, the desire to promote walkability, the desire to improve streets, and the facts of obsolete infrastructure, flooding, sewage backups, meaningful costs, and concerns about equity, an ad hoc committee should be formed to study how best to address all matters concerning the City's right-of-way. The committee should also be empowered to recommend new tax policy if necessary, and to communicate to the public about said policy in the event of a ballot initiative. If a new tax policy were recommended, providing staff with more resources to help address these issues must be a priority. This ad hoc committee and the MMTB should collaborate.
- When the MMTB is posed a question that is outside of its scope, there should be a way of receiving clarification on that matter.
- When meeting with the Commission, it seems there would be two options: to provide feedback, or to ask how the MMTB can be most helpful. Prioritizing helpfulness might be most appropriate.
- Below-grade utilities may be somewhat relevant to the MMTB because some road improvement projects occur on account of the below-grade conditions.
- It would likely be most useful to focus discussion on the problems faced by the MMTB and possible solutions rather than focusing on particular terminology.
- The MMTB can help clarify for residents what combinations of features are and are not possible when improving roads.
- Speed mitigation is more difficult to introduce once certain road surfaces and designs have been implemented.
- MMTB recommendations might be influenced by how specific road improvements would be funded. Recommending an improved major road has different cost impacts compared to recommending an improved local road.
- Complete Streets applies to improved roads, not unimproved roads.
- The MMTB could re-evaluate the City's road width standards.
- There was a lack of consensus on whether or not to characterize road improvements as 'expensive'. Royal Oak and Troy have many improved roads. The matter might be more accurately described as arising from how costs are assessed, rather than total costs.
- Discussing a Headlee override to fund improving the roads and underlying infrastructure would raise awareness of the issue, regardless of whether residents would vote to approve such an override.
- Since some other MMTB members do not believe topics such as a Headlee override are relevant for the upcoming joint MMTB-Commission meeting, it might be more appropriate to raise the topic as a member of the public at a different time.
- Some MMTB members do believe that costs, budgeting, and special assessment districts

- are relevant topics to raise at the upcoming joint MMTB-Commission meeting.
- The City should create virtual models of its underground infrastructure as the pipes are being installed.
- The Commission will be able to understand the MMTB's discussion by reviewing these minutes.
- The Chair will provide a brief opening statement at the joint meeting attempting to summarize the Board's concerns.

Public Comment

Paul Reagan commented that those paying for road upgrades would always dictate the types of upgrades, and supported creating a road improvement process template, clear explanations of the price impacts of different road improvement options, the MMTB providing the Commission with guidance, MMTB members making their participation contingent on including financing in MMTB reviews, and MMTB deliberation on road improvement issues within a virtual context.

G. Communications

H. Meeting Open to the Public for items not on the Agenda

I. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the Board adjourned at 8:24 p.m.



Leah Blizinski, City Planner

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist