

AGENDA



Thursday, May 14, 2009

Item(s) to Set Public Hearing(s)
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION
Item No. 42

Subject: Set a public hearing to approve an ordinance adopting the City of Austin 2009 Bicycle Plan Update as an element of the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. (Suggested date and time: May 21, 2009, 6:00 p.m. at Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second Street, Austin, TX).

Fiscal Note: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information: Annick Beaudet 974-6505, Robin Field 974-7064

Boards and Commission Action: Reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Board, Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee, Environmental Board, Planning Commission and the Urban Transportation Commission.

Prior Council Action: February 15, 1979 Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan (ATCP) adopted by City Council (Resolution No. 790215-21)

April 11, 1996 Austin Bicycle Plan Part 1: Policies and Standards Adopted by City Council (Ordinance No. 960411-E)

May 7, 1998 Austin Bicycle Plan Part 2: Bicycle Facilities Adopted by City Council (Ordinance No. 980507-D)

June 7, 2001 Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan update adopted by Council (Ordinance No. 010607-48)

August 5, 2004 Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan amended by Council (Ordinance No. 040805-53)

April 24, 2008 Street Smarts Task Force Recommendations adopted by City Council (Resolution No. 2008424-063)

April 24, 2008 Trails Master Plan Initiated by City Council (Resolution No. 2008424-064)

November 6, 2008 ATCP Interim Update adopted by City Council (Ordinance No 20081106-026)

The Bicycle Plan and Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan (AMATP) serve as the Transportation Element of the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. This ordinance authorizes the amendment of the AMATP to include all bicycle facilities on arterials. Staff will administratively add all arterial bike facilities to Table 1-7A of the Transportation Criteria Manual. The 2009 Bicycle Plan Update replaces and supersedes the Bicycle Master Plan adopted in two parts in 1996 and 1998. The main components of the 2009 Plan provide a framework and actions necessary to build a bicycle system, including the bicycle network and supporting end-of-trip facilities, develop educational and encouragement programs, and improve policies on enforcement of bicycle-related laws to create a safe environment for bicycling.

The vision of 2009 Bicycle Plan Update, as established by the Street Smarts Task Force, is to “transform Austin into a world-class bicycling city.” Austin is already considered one of the country’s most bicycle friendly cities, proven by its Silver-level Bicycle Friendly Community status awarded in 2007 by the League of American Bicyclists, the oldest and most prominent national bicycling advocacy groups in the country. This bicycle plan will guide the City in achieving Gold, and even Platinum, the highest Bicycle Friendly Community ranking. This will require an integrated strategy of facility development, interdepartmental and interagency coordination, public education, enforcement, promotional campaigns, and supportive public policy.

The two goals of this plan are:

- To significantly increase bicycle use across the city of Austin over the next decade, and
- To increase bicycle safety across the city of Austin.

In order to achieve these goals, the Austin 2009 Bicycle Plan Update identifies four complementary goals. These goals are supported by objectives and specific actions to implement the objectives. A summary of each plan element and goal is described below. Additionally, benchmarks are established to measure progress of the plan implementation over the next 10 years.

- **Bicycle System** – To provide and maintain a comprehensive bicycle system that serves all residents and neighborhoods of Austin. The Plan recommends nearly 900 miles of bicycle lanes, 9 miles of bicycle boulevards, and 107 miles of multi-use paths, in addition to signing and marking bicycle routes on paved shoulders, wide curb lanes and shared lanes.
- **Education & Promotion** – To improve awareness and acceptance of bicycling and increase bicycle ridership throughout Austin through promotion, education, and encouragement.
- **Safety & Enforcement** – To reduce bicycle-related crashes through remedial efforts such as education of bicycle related laws and consistent enforcement of bicycle laws.
- **Implementation & Funding** – To strengthen implementation efforts through funding and adopting bicycle-friendly practices and policies.

The recommendations contained in the final report of the Street Smarts Task Force, Mayor Wynn's initiated bicycle safety task force, have been incorporated into this plan. The cost to implement the infrastructure improvements indicated in this plan is approximately \$254 million dollars. Adoption of this plan does not commit the City of Austin to that expenditure, it is mean to show overall need related to the plan. In comparison, The City of Seattle updated its Bicycle Master Plan in 2007 with an estimated cost of \$260 million dollars.

The Bicycle Advisory Council, a citizen group formalized to advise City staff on bicycle related matters, voted to approve the 2009 Bicycle Plan at their April 16, 2009 meeting. The recommendation was to recommend the plan with conditions. The conditions have been incorporated into the Plan. The vote was 9-0 in favor of the recommendation.