

CITY OF AUSTIN
BICYCLE ADVISORY COUNCIL (BAC)
MEETING SUMMARY

City Hall, Boards and Commission Room
301 W. 2nd
July 16, 2013
6:00PM

PARTICIPANTS:

Allison Kaplan – BAC Chair
Tommy Eden – BAC Vice Chair
Noni Jarnagin – Alt BAC

Tom Thayer – BAC
Mike Kase – BAC
Eileen Nehme – BAC

Chris LeBlanc - BAC
Tom Wald - Alt BAC
Alan Garcia – Alt BAC

GUESTS:

Larry Murphy
Patrick Jones

David Orr
Rich Hollenbeck

Allison Mills
Boone Blocker - UTC

STAFF PRESENT:

Nadia Barrera
Nathan Wilkes

Shannon Wisner

Aleksiina Chapman
Adrian Lipscombe

1. Introductions – Ms. Kaplan begins the meeting with introductions
2. Review and Approval of June Minutes – Mr. Kase made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. LeBlanc seconded. The minutes are approved.
3. Items from BAC –
 - **Briefing**- Shared Lane Markings – Mr. Wilkes clarifies the usage and placement of sharrows. They are generally used for gap projects and on slow streets with less traffic. As a rule, they cannot be used on roadways that have a speed limit of more than 35 mph. Where there is on-street parking, sharrows are to be placed no closer than 11 feet from the face of curb to the center of the sharrow marking. This gives approximately 3 feet from the door of a parked motor vehicle to the center of the sharrow. The decision to right justify or center the sharrow is usually determined from the width of the travel lane. For example, on Nueces there is only a 12 foot wide travel lane, so the centered marking makes more sense there. The Designers do their best to think through the roadway and what would work best given the context. However, they do appreciate feedback on what works best for cyclists. For Nueces, Mr. Wilkes would anticipate placing the sharrow roughly in the center of the lane, 6 feet from parking and 6 feet from the centerline. Mr. Jarnagin asks about alternative iterations of sharrows. Mr. Wilkes speaks to the markings on Guadalupe with the “cat-tracks” on both sides of the sharrow marking. There is general approval from the group regarding the sharrows on Guadalupe with the cat-tracks on either side. Mr. Wald asks, “why not sharrows everywhere?” Mr. Wilkes responds that it is mainly a factor of time and cost. He is, however, interested in using them more often for wayfinding as is done in Portland.
 - **Briefing** - Technical Subcommittee about Rainey St – Ms. Kaplan updates the group regarding the recommendations by the BAC. There was confusion regarding the lettered name of the different options. When the options were presented to a different group, they were given different letters, which lead to confusion. Ms. Kaplan reads a proposed

resolution “regardless of what happens to in the near term to Rainey Street, the BAC recommends physically separated facilities in the long term.” The resolution passes.

- **Briefing** - Possible City Council Action Regarding Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) and BAC – Mr. Wald updates the group that Council Member Riley is interested in putting forth a resolution in August regarding official recognition of the BAC and a potential PAC. Mr. Wald explains that the resolution may also include the potential to have a BAC and PAC representative on the UTC. Ms. Beaudet asks what “formally recognized” by City Council means. Ms. Beaudet asks if Mr. Wald believes the intent was actually to place members of the BAC or PAC on the UTC. She would prefer that a representative from CM Riley’s office be available for the discussion before any decision is made. Mr. Orr would like the BAC to be cautious about the BAC having a representative on the UTC due to the potential of bicycle-unfriendly representatives that council could appoint. Mr. Kase would like to know the potential of pedestrian community joining with the BAC due to the strength in numbers. Mr. Blocker, as a representative of the UTC mentions that the BAC is nice because it has a good recognition. Mr. Blocker mentions that the UTC would likely abolish the Bike/Ped Sub-Committee if there were to be a PAC. Ms. Beaudet states that there has been discussion for a long time about formalizing the BAC but the purpose of the group is to connect directly with the cycling community without needing a formalized process. Her opinion is that a PAC set up in the same manner could be equally valuable. She also mentions that it would not necessarily have to be the Neighborhood Connectivity Division that acts as staff support to the PAC. It could be Urban Design, or other staff. Ms. Beaudet mentions that a potential representation could also be that a member of the BAC or PAC could act as an “ex-officio” to the formalized UTC. Mr. Kase clarifies that there are enough issues to have a completely separate PAC versus having just one “active-transportation” group. Mr. Wald states that he brought up the PAC item because he thinks there is potential interest from this group. He also thinks the relationship to the UTC is important and that the relationship could be formalized and more consistent. Ms. Beaudet states that because the Sidewalk Master Plan passed as a resolution, it could be amended to include a PAC. Mr. LeBlanc states that if pedestrian issues were included in the BAC it may be difficult to keep the BAC meetings two hours long and just once a month. Ms. Nehme would like to have a joint meeting quarterly and she also likes the idea of having representation on the UTC. Mr. Wald asks if the BAC feels the issue is important enough to form a sub-committee, or asks if anyone wants to provide a BAC opinion to CM Riley. Mr. Kase states that he is curious about combining the BAC and the PAC together. Mr. Wald proposes that a sub-committee of the BAC meet with CM Riley to discuss the resolution. Mr. Wald offers to head up this sub-committee. Mr. Kase asks Mr. Wald to clarify what the BAC component would be. Mr. Wald states that a representative from the BAC would sit on the UTC. Ms. Beaudet states that she is not sure if allowing a member of the BAC to sit on the UTC would be legal. Mr. Kase and Mr. LeBlanc are interested in forming the sub-committee with Mr. Wald to speak with CM Riley regarding the proposed resolution.
- **Briefing and Possible Action** – I-35 Cut and Cap – Ms. Walker presents the Reconnecting Austin vision. Mr. LeBlanc asks the timeframe. Ms. Walker states that it will be at least five years until TXDOT would complete its plan. Mr. LeBlanc also asks what the

likelihood would be that this would happen. Ms. Walker responds that she is happy about the potential and that the City Council has supported the plan. Ms. Walker also stated that other groups have provided a letter of recommendation. Mr. Thayer asks about the cost of the project. Ms. Walker is asking TXDOT for a cost benefit analysis. They have estimated \$250m to depress and approximately \$3m to cap, which would include the urban boulevard. Currently TXDOTs proposal includes gaps in the cap. Reconnecting Austin would prefer the caps be grouped. She also states that it is likely that when it is time to execute the project Austin will have reached non-attainment. There may be funding available through that avenue. Ms. Nehme asks about support from the eastside neighbors. Ms. Walker states that for the most part there has been strong support. Mr. Eden moves that the BAC authorize the Chair to write a letter in support of the Reconnecting Austin project. Mr. LeBlanc seconds. Mr. Wald states that although this will improve bicycling and walking infrastructure, there is potential to pull future Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding away from other projects. Ms. Walker would like to note that part of the purpose of this campaign is to bring awareness to the fact that TXDOT will be spending hundreds of millions of dollars to renovate I-35 through the downtown, and we should use this opportunity to make it the best it can be. Mr. LeBlanc would like to see the cap portion of the park to be a real, usable park, and not something small and insignificant. Ms. Nehme states that she is concerned that the investment may impact affordability. She would like to know if there is some way that the additional tax base could be used to create affordable housing. Ms. Nehme also asks if it is necessary to have three lanes of traffic on the cap. Ms. Walker states this is the purpose of the community conversation and that more lanes with more traffic is not necessarily the desire of the community. For this reason the community should stay engaged. Ms. Nehme would like the letter to state that the boulevard would focus on reduced capacity for motor vehicles and would prioritize bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Mr. Jones states that he likes the proposal because it ostensibly pays for itself and that it creates an improved north/south bicycle facilities and east/west bicycle facilities and while it could potentially take funding away from future projects, it would make such a large impact that it would be worthwhile. A discussion ensues about super streets, the current proposal for accommodation for bicycles and pedestrians. Mr. Wald states that there may be potential for a grade separated path along the corridor, i.e. also depressed. Mr. Wald would like to see the BAC put some energy into these public processes. Ms. Kaplan states that if there are any additional suggestions, the BAC members may send them to her via e-mail. The resolution passes.

- **Briefing** - Update on 24-Hour Trail Pilot Evaluation – Ms. Nehme states that ideally there would be a report regarding the pilot by August. After speaking with APD staff, she clarified that before the pilot, there were no reported cases. Now that APD is there, they are tracking cyclists and incidents. There is no way to track the incidents geographically. APD is also evaluating their footprint and consequently the demand for this service. She proposes using a ratio for the May and July counts based on the permanent counter. Ms. Nehme would also be interested in doing a ride-along with APD and the execution of an intercept survey to get qualitative data and to understand their experience and if they even realize the curfew had been lifted. Mr. Jarnagin wonders of

the potential of asking cyclists who use social media regarding their input on their experience using the trail. Ms. Beaudet states that we could use the City of Austin Bicycle Program Facebook page, the Google Group, Twitter, and the stakeholder list.

4. Items from staff –

- **Briefing** – Bike Parking at MetroRapid Stops – Ms. Marshall shares the MetroRapid status. The first phase will be complete later this year. The new articulated buses may be equipped with three bike racks. The racks are being tested to fit at this time, but have not been finalized. Each station has its own design with a real time arrival marquee. Buses will have 10 minute headways on-peak and 12-20 minutes off-peak. Each station has at least one bike rack, some of them have two. There are some with no racks, but those stations have bike racks in the near vicinity. Two of the MetroBike shelters will be at TechRidge and at South Congress Transit Center. The other four will be at on the MetroRail: Lakeline, Highland, MLK Jr, and Plaza Saltillo. Kramer MetroBike Shelter already exists. The shelters hold up to 42 bikes. Each shelter has work stations, tools, and air pumps. These locations also already have U-racks outside of the shelters. Other potential locations for shelters may be Westgate due to cross-town routes. The MetroRapid busses have signal priority, which means the signal does not turn green, but stays green. The articulated buses will have three doors. Cyclists will likely have to use the front door to place their bikes on the front of the bus. Mr. Kase would like to know why the MetroRapid stops at Westgate and doesn't continue south to Slaughter. Ms. Marshall states that it is a funding issue. Originally the route extended to Oak Hill. Ms. Kaplan would like to know how bike parking need is determined. Ms. Marshall responds that they are looking at pass-by numbers (when cyclists do not fit on the bus due to full racks on the bus). CapMetro uses those numbers to determine which stops may need bike racks. Ms. Kaplan would like to know how these efforts are coordinated with the City and in particular Ms. Kaplan is curious about the placement of the racks and coordination with the City for the placement of racks. Ms. Marshall states that CapMetro has been using AASHTO, ADA, and NACTO standards for bike rack placement. Mr. LeBlanc asks about the current procedure if the bike rack is full, is there a way for the rider to flag the bus to let them know they will lock up their bike and leave it. Ms. Marshall states there is not technology to flag the driver and that stopping would be the purview of the driver, dependent upon the schedule. CapMetro tries to place the racks in such a way that the driver can see the cyclist locking up their bike and can wait if possible. Mr. Wald would like to know how much the MetroBike shelters cost. Ms. Marshall states that the Kramer shelter was quite expensive and the subsequent shelters will be less expensive due to the fact that CapMetro will be using the same design and therefore will cut down the cost. Mr. Cosper would like to know if folding bikes are allowed on the bus. Ms. Marshall says they are. Mr. Thayer asks if locking to the stop pole is allowable. Ms. Marshall states that it is not preferred, but as long as it is secured and is not causing a hazard it is fine. CapMetro also takes note of those locations and often times will add a rack to stops when a bicycle is parked at the stop pole. Ms. Marshall would also like to invite the group to come to public hearings regarding fare increases and lets the group know they can comment at any time on their

website. Ms. Marshall also lets the group know there will be a grand opening of the Highland-Crestview Trail on August 2nd from 6:30-8am at Highland Station with free breakfast, a bike share demonstration, and a three-bike rack on front of the bus, and speakers at 10am. There will be a parade about 10:15am. Mr. Wilkes asks if there was a secondary wave of funding to extend the trail. Ms. Marshall responds that the Federal funding needed to be spent by September. CapMetro spent that funding for the pedestrian signals and arms at the MLK Station at the Boggy Creek Trail. Ms. Marshall also asks the group to participate in ProjectConnect.com. Three-bike racks will be on ALL fixed route buses by 2014.

- **Briefing** - Pleasant Valley Road Diet – Mr. Wilkes presented the proposed design. Mr. Wald moved to propose the following resolution:
 - *The BAC considers the Pleasant Valley Road Diet a significant and essential improvement over existing conditions and is also interested in further exploring long term solutions including a new structure over the river. A short term solution is essential given the impending Boardwalk completion and safety concerns.*

Mr. Kase seconded and the motion was passed.

- **Briefing** - Enhancements Proposals – Traffic Signals for bicycles – (on hold for next month)
- **Briefing** – Bike Share Public Outreach – Ms. Lipscombe updates the group about the public input process for bike share station locations. The press release will be launched by Monday. Mr. Eden asks when the bikes will be ready for use. Ms. Lipscombe responds the bikes should be in use by the fall. The website for input will be open until August 15, 2013.

5. Announcements:

- Mr. Wald updates the group on Bike Austin activities and asks the group to be involved in bike funding. The biggest need is to ensure that the all-ages network stays on track. The second issue is the development of the urban trail network. The third issue is keeping connections to major transit centers, including in the suburbs. Ms. Nehme states that South Lamar does not have an all-ages component and she would like to see it represented in the next bond election. Mr. Murphy states that he would like to see a rail to trail project from St. Elmo to the airport. Mr. Wald asks that staff consider this trail in the Urban Trails Master Plan. Mr. Murphy also states that when using the red line, there is poor connectivity between the mall and the rail station.
- Work from Home Day – Gwen could not make it, and hopefully she can come to the next meeting.

6. Proposed Items From Staff for Future Meetings:

- Language of 3' Law
- Enhancements Proposals – Traffic Signals for bicycles
- South Lamar as an all-ages facility

7. Mr. Kase motions to adjourn and Ms. Thayer seconds.