

**Pedestrian Advisory Council
Technical Subcommittee
Construction Barriers – Initial Findings and Recommendations**

Construction Barriers Project Background and Activities

During 2014 the PAC explored barriers to pedestrian movement resulting from large construction projects. The purpose was to capture examples of good and bad practices where construction affects pedestrian movement and, in particular, where ADA compliance is affected. The goal was to produce a memo to the City of Austin Right of Way Management Division¹ (ROW team) with observations and recommendations for how to improve pedestrian safety and mobility near construction projects throughout the city. The PAC's short investigation included the following activities:

- Researched Austin policies to identify similarities or disparities in language resulting in challenging construction practices;
- Researched good examples of short information leaflets with check lists appropriate for contractors and public outreach on the issues; and
- Collected photos of construction projects, which may serve as either good or bad examples (as seen in attached exhibit).
- Discussed Austin 3-1-1 smart phone app² and telephone call reporting with the right of way team to identify reporting problems;
- Identified how case numbers allow the right of way team to track 311 examples;

Recommendations

The Pedestrian Advisory Council supports additional training opportunities and certification of contractors to help to prevent construction barriers and before they occur. Although all construction sites are required to have a licensed superintendent in charge of changes to the right of way, sub-consultants working on the site are not required to have such training. Therefore even if the superintendent has put in place all of the necessary actions for maintaining the right of way, issues may still occur. This problem would in part be solved by a City of Austin certification program which will give greater tracking and control over who can operate as a construction contractor on large projects in the city.

Currently there are challenges with using the Austin 3-1-1 smart phone app to successfully direct all construction barrier/obstruction issues in the ROW to the ROW team. The PAC shall continue to identify examples of both good and bad construction practices across the city as this information will be useful for ROW Division with their enforcement, site signage and education programs targeting construction contractor and other interested audiences. Barriers to pedestrian mobility will be reported to 3-1-1 using the phrase "obstruction in the Right of Way" to assist the 3-1-1 staff in getting the case to the right of way team. The PAC understands that these examples may be used to target raising awareness among the community at large about 3-1-1 reporting of construction barriers in the future. Gathering evidence and making recommendations to support

Appendix

PAC Overview

It is the purpose of the Pedestrian Advisory Council to “*advise City of Austin on pedestrian planning, policy, design, funding, education, and enforcement efforts regarding the creation, maintenance and operation of pedestrian facilities in order to ensure a safe and enjoyable circulation for both commuting and recreation within the City of Austin. The PAC’s goal is to ensure sensitivity to pedestrian issues in the design and implementation of all public and private projects impacting pedestrians.*”³

Technical Subcommittee Overview

The Technical Subcommittee investigates issues requiring technical knowledge or of a technological nature in support of the main interests of the PAC.

¹ The City of Austin Right of Way Management Division provides traffic planning and coordination for all activities in the right of way in order to ensure public safety and mobility (<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/right-of-way-management>). The City's right of way is typically the street surface, sidewalks and grassy areas between pavement and property lines.

² For more information regarding the Austin 3-1-1 smart phone app, please see <http://www.austintexas.gov/311app>.

³ Bylaws of the Pedestrian Advisory Council (Adopted April 7, 2014): <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=208280>

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Additional Reference(s):

- U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access: Best Practices Design Guide: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/sidewalk2/sidewalks210.cfm
- Texas Transportation Institute, Texas A&M University System, Investigating Pedestrian Components in Temporary Traffic Control. <http://d2dtl5nnlpfr0r.cloudfront.net/tti.tamu.edu/documents/0-5237-1.pdf>
- The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (TMUTCD). <http://www.txdot.gov/government/enforcement/signage/tmutcd.html>
- Building a True Community issued by the U.S. Access Board's Public Rights-of-Way Access Advisory Committee: <http://www.armor-tile.com/articles/pdfs/public-rights-of-way.pdf>
- Texas Accessibility Standards - <http://www.tdlr.texas.gov/ab/ab.htm>

Photograph Examples of Construction Barriers



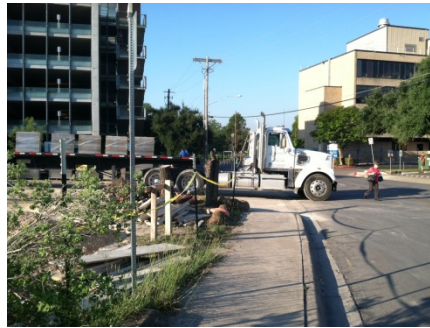
Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



Example 4



Example 5



Example 6