



PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL

Recommendation Number 20150706-6A – Recommendations for Allocation of the Quarter-Cent Funding Program, an Inter-local agreement between City and Capital Metro relating to regional mobility and transportation projects.

WHEREAS The Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) bylaws state that the PAC “shall 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.”

WHEREAS Under Section 1. Pedestrian Policy of the bylaws the PAC has a responsibility to review and make recommendations regarding funding priorities for the Pedestrian Program activities and Capital Improvement Projects, as they relate to pedestrianism, including ADA accessibility and safety.

WHEREAS The City’s Quarter Cent Fund was established under an Interlocal agreement between City and Capital metro relating to regional mobility and transportation projects.

WHEREAS City Management plans to work with the City Council members to determine how to best utilize this funding to address transportation infrastructure needs.

WHEREAS Approximately \$21,800,000 is available in the Quarter Cent Fund for projects that meet one or more of the following criteria: Enhances Regional mobility; Supports Public Transit; Provides Leverage for Federal or Private Funds; Adds to an Existing Program, or Expedites a Critical Mobility Project.

WHEREAS All or part of the funds are likely to be divided equitably among the 10 districts for allocation by the City Council members following recommendations from the Mobility Subcommittee of Council.

THEREFORE The PAC makes the following recommendation for allocation of funding.

As each district, or the Council as a whole, selects potential projects for funding, we urge Council members to give special consideration to giving highest priority to pedestrian connectivity and safety. The method of achieving connectivity will vary in each district and therefore we recommend that the following range of techniques are funded to the greatest extent possible and as appropriate to meet the needs of the community:

- Filling gaps in missing sidewalks and installing receiving curb ramps where these are missing - The City’s sidewalk network is a critical element in providing an equitable, accessible and safe

city for Austin's residents. In all parts of the city there are absent sidewalks which break this network and impact the effectiveness of the transit system and mobility across the city.

- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (PHB) - The PHB program has proved to be a highly successful initiative for the City. It significantly enhances connectivity, accessibility and most importantly provides pedestrian safety across some of Austin's busiest streets. This program ties in directly to creating access to transit stops and therefore supports growth in Capital Metro ridership. It also supports the City's '8 to 80' network goal. We would recommend each district consider expanding this program, including equitable outreach in seeking community PHB location requests and implementing the City's current priority list. PHB's should be used to improve access to major employment centers, commercial services and retail districts (shops and restaurants), schools, churches, amenities (libraries, community centers, parks/playgrounds, pools, and urban trails and destinations) and transit stops (existing or anticipated) within all district.
- Street Trees, trellis and benches - An important part of improving walkability is ensuring inviting, attractive and comfortable facilities. In Austin, the addition of street trees can enhance the attractiveness of a street, as well as add important shade during summer months. Districts are encouraged to identify locations where the quality of pedestrian paths and facilities would be enhanced and community experience improved through the addition of street trees, trellis and benches.
- Connecting to existing pedestrian facilities - Opportunities can be taken to enhance pedestrian connectivity to destinations, leading to amplified benefits and return on investment for the community, for example schools, bus stops, and trailheads.

In addition to the above list of recommended priorities, where other projects and studies exist which are specifically targeted at improving walkability and pedestrian environments, such as the Upper Boggy Creek Trail, we would support these being implemented. We recognize and encourage these projects and studies be funded to promote walking and the benefits of active lifestyles in Austin.

Finally, the PAC recommends that all projects be allocated sufficient funding to cover long-term operations and maintenance.

Date of Approval: July 6, 2015

Record of the vote: (21 members in attendance, no opposition)

Attest:



Pedestrian Advisory Council Staff