

CITY OF AUSTIN
BICYCLE ADVISORY COUNCIL (BAC)
MEETING SUMMARY

City Hall, Staff Bull Pen, Room 1029
301 W 2nd Street
May 19th, 2015
6:00 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS:

Christopher Stanton – BAC Chair
Tom Thayer – BAC Vice Chair
David Orr – BAC

Kathryn Flowers – Alt BAC
Sophia Benner – BAC
Tom Wald – Alt BAC
Sam Day-Woodruff, Alt BAC

Stanton Truxillo – Alt BAC
Rebecca Brenneman – Alt BAC
Tommy Eden – BAC

GUESTS:

John Woodley
Gonzalo Camacho
Jolinda Marshall
Malcom Yeatts
Thomas Butler

Patricia Schaub
Bradley Sloan
Hillary Andersen
Michael Cosper

Noni Jarnigan
John Hagar
Mercedes Feris
Preston Tyree
Jennifer

STAFF PRESENT:

Laura Dierenfield, ATD

Aleksiina Chapman, ATD
Christian Malanka, APD

Alan De Ana, PWD
Allison Dietzel, PWD

1. Citizen Communications

Mr. Gonzalo Camacho asked to speak. He shared that he is a traffic engineer and cyclist and when he was 16 he almost got into a crash with a truck. Mr. Camacho's main concern is public safety, especially with an aging population and prevalence of distracted driving. Mr. Camacho thinks that traffic fatalities are increasing. He expressed concern with the use of the term protected bicycle facilities. He is also concerned with the crossing at FM 2222 as well as bicycle facilities on Parmer Lane. Mr. Camacho thinks that money needs to be focused on maintenance of existing infrastructure.

2. Review and Approval of April Minutes – Mr. Orr moves approval of the May minutes. Mr. Truxillo seconds. No dissent. The minutes are approved.

3. Briefing and Possible Action: Update on I-35 Mobility Projects - Presenter: Dustin Elliott

Dustin Elliott is with HNTB, general engineering consultant on the Mobility 35 project. Find a link to the Mobility 35 PowerPoint Presentation to the BAC on 7-21-15 posted here:

http://austintexas.gov/cityclerk/boards_commissions/meetings/110_1.htm

Mr. Elliott provides an overview of the Mobility 35 project. This is an effort to improve 65 miles along the IH-35 corridor. It includes 25 to 30 active projects in different phases totaling \$4.3 Billion. The overarching concepts include an additional express lane on IH-35, one lane in each direction, operational improvements to address bottlenecks and improving east-west connectivity to help shift from single-occupancy vehicles to other modes. Integrated Corridor Management, consisting of information gathering and information dissemination, is another key component.

Bicycle facilities will be included alongside and at all crossings of the project. Alongside IH-35, the most desirable design will include a 12 foot shared-use pathway with a five-foot buffer. In areas where right of way is constrained this may narrow to a six foot sidewalk. The majority of the distance calls for an eight-foot pathway with a two to four foot buffer. At all crossings, the most desired design will include a five foot buffered bike lane with a two-foot buffer and a six-foot minimum sidewalk. Where right of way is constrained, this may narrow to an eight-foot shared use pathway.

There are several specific projects that are moving forward, such as the roundabout at 51st Street. Mr. Elliott explains the design of the roundabout. The project schematic is available here: <http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot/my35/capital/projects/51st-street/schematic.pdf>

Mr. Stanton says that a concern at 51st is that drivers will not yield in a continuous flow for bicyclists. Mr. Elliott says that they will use raised crosswalks which will act as speed bumps. There will also be activated push buttons. The design will not preclude a PHB and it will be looked at during final design. Mr. Woodley is concerned that for blind pedestrians flashing activated warnings will not be sufficient. Mr. Elliott says that during final design they will look at that. Mr. Woodley has a concern that bicyclists going eastbound will have to cross two free lanes which is dangerous. Mr. Elliott will be working with public works to improve the geometry at this location. It will be less of a straight shot for drivers and more of a right turn. Mr. Orr asks what the timeline is for getting the sidewalk installed. Mr. Elliott says that sidewalk goes in with each project. 51st is looking to start construction next year. Mr. Camacho asks about the traffic modeling. There are three crossings. Mr. Camacho asks about platooning. The roundabout functions so well that there are no longer platoons and downstream signalized intersections don't function as well. Mr. Elliott says that they may need to tweak signal timing at Cameron Road.

Mr. Elliott explains that the 53rd Street project should be addressed and will be completed later this year. On the west side the ramps for the sidewalk are far back from the intersection. The southbound frontage road will be reconstructed as part of this project. Mr. Wald says that TxDOT is upgrading a lot of the ramps around Austin and it could have been done independently from either of these projects.

Mr. Elliott then explains the Airport Boulevard intersection. This will be designed as a diverging diamond. Cyclists would travel through the intersection using the shared use pathway that

crosses the frontage roads and travel lanes at signalized crossings. A question is asked about how is the traffic being slowed as they approach intersections on the frontage roads and what are the learning curves for these types of intersections. Mr. Elliott says that they are using geometry to control speeds and are using curves that physically slow cars down. The learning curve for a DDI is relatively low because it feels like a normal intersection. Mr. Tyree asks how bicyclists can move across the DDI. North south is difficult for bicyclists and pedestrians. Mr. Elliott says that you would have to cross twice, once to the center and once back. Mr. Thayer says there's no light for people turning right from Airport to IH-35. Mr. Elliott says there doesn't have to be, but at Airport there probably will be one.

Ms. Benner has a question on 15th Street. Ms. Benner asks for clarification on the configuration. Ms. Benner asks if it would be possible to swap the trees and the bike lane so that the bike lanes can be protected from traffic by the trees. Mr. Elliott says that they can look at that. Mr. Woodley says that putting trees on a bridge is a design flaw. Mr. Elliott says that trees can be done in planters or the beams can be designed so that they have enough depth to live, shade structures can also be used. Ms. Flowers asks if with these sidewalks and bike lanes, will it be the norm that there is something to tie into or will it be the norm that the facility is built and then all users will have to wait for the bike/ped accommodations to tie in. Mr. Elliott says that at a minimum all sidewalks will be constructed at this point. With the trees next to the road, the bike lane instantly becomes a protected bike lane instead of a buffered bike lane.

Mr. Eden says that EMS tend to dislike raised crosswalks. Mr. Elliott says that they have pushed for this and it has been agreed upon even if it isn't everyone's favorite configuration. Mr. Woodley would like to see more ADA accessibilities along IH-35 and improved crossings. Are there other redesigns for IH-35 crossings that weren't mentioned? Mr. Elliott says that these were examples. Each bridge downtown will be reconstructed as part of this project.

Mr. Wald wants to make sure that all the questions from the BAC are addressed and asks if we could have a subcommittee for this item. Mr. Elliott is happy to meet again. Mr. Orr will set up a technical subcommittee meeting 2-3 weeks from now.

5. Briefing and Possible Action: Update on Recent Bike + Transit Engagement Efforts –
Presenter: Jolinda Marshall

Ms. Marshall says Capital Metro did a survey in 2010 which asked what barriers there are for people who bicycle to use transit. The main concerns were safety and bicycle parking capacity on buses and at stations. Ms. Marshall says that they now have 3 bike racks on each bus, except 30 and these last 30 should have 3 bike racks before September. They are ordering new buses this and next year in order to add high-frequency routes to the east side.

There were a high percentage of people who said they didn't have enough bike parking and they will be looking at this in more depth shortly.

There were many suggestions for more metrobike parking shelters. They initially used medium security fencing and there were break-ins. Now all shelters have high security fencing. The only problems with the shelters now are capacity and there have been high levels of capacity increases.

Cap Metro found that they need to upgrade their marketing. Ms. Marshall says that they did a survey of other cities and found that people in Austin wanted a nominal charge to be put in place to help with security. The cost is \$30/year. At Tech Ridge the shelter can be empty with many bikes parked outside. Maybe the bus operators could sell the cards. Ms. Marshall says online is the only way she's gotten approval to sell them. Ms. Feris with Bike Austin asks how they are reaching out the bicycle community to get feedback. Ms. Marshall says that they have brochures and information is on the website but they would like to improve their outreach. Ms. Feris asks if they would be willing to work directly with organizations whose membership is made up of bicyclists. Mr. Tyree says that with the support of Cap Metro the transit operators had bike Austin come in and do a session of bike safety for all the operators. Over 200 operators were trained within a 2 week period. Ms. Marshall says to get the number of the bus, the route number, and the time, if you have a complaint and Cap Metro will be able to go back to the camera and see if there is a problem.

Mr. Woodley asks if Cap Metro would consider changing its policy to allow bikes on buses when the racks are full and when the handicap spot is not being used. Ms. Marshall says that they have talked about this, especially for the last ride. They are looking at how they can do that. Ms. Marshall says that folding bikes are allowed. Mr. Camacho would like to suggest that a BAC member make a motion to allow bikes on the buses. Ms. Marshall says that it is an issue if there is a bike on the bus and then a disabled person enters the bus it would be difficult to ask the person with the bicycle to remove it. Mr. Wald moves that Cap Metro should look into allowing bikes on buses for the last ride home. Mr. Eden seconds. Mr. Woodley asks about adding off-peak times. Mr. Wald says that he thinks this could be a good first step. Motion does not change. No opposition. Motion passes unanimously.

4. Informational Briefing and Possible Action: CapMetro Funding Sources for Trails –
Requestor: Christopher Stanton; Presenter: Jolinda Marshall

Ms. Marshall says that Cap Metro builds trails when they receive grant money and they do some smaller trail projects to improve accessibility. In 2007 they did a feasibility study for a trail from downtown to Leander along the Red Line. They looked at where it was possible and where there were constraints. It would be part along the tracks and partially on-street but closely follows the red line trail alignment. The rail with trail study divided the trail into 11 priority segments. Each segment was about \$4-5 million each. The crestview trail was the third priority segment. Getting the trail from Crestview to Morrow was not feasible because of insufficient right of way. The trail funding was then used for the section from Crestview south to Denson. There is another piece along Lakeline will connect affordable housing to the station.

Mr. Yeatts asks what the definition of transit oriented is. Ms. Marshall says for grants, a trail needs to provide access to a CapMetro facility. Generally, ½ mile around a stop for sidewalks and now for bicycle access they can look up to 3 miles around a station. Mr. Wald asks if they are just addressing federal funding or if there are also other sources. Ms. Marshall says that most of their funding comes from federal grants and they just got money from the State. They also get money through CAMPO which is federal passed through the state. Mr. Wald says that in San Antonio they split up their sales tax between transit and trails. Mr. Wald says that because all sales tax in Austin goes to transit, has there been consideration to put money into

the Cap Metro budget for trails. Ms. Marshall says that this is where the quarter cent funding had come from. Ms. Wald says that the quarter cent funding that has gone through this round is not required to serve transit directly. Mr. Wald asks if within cap metro there would be a return to the quarter cent funding to be put towards trail connections. Mr. Eden asks about a collision at the downtown station on New Year's Eve and if there have been safety improvement. Ms. Marshall says that there haven't been substantial safety improvements but that they are working towards implementing the new downtown station as soon as possible which will improve safety.

5. Briefing and Possible Action: Update on Mobility Committee Meeting related to the Quarter Cent Fund – Facilitator: Christopher Stanton

Mr. Stanton gives an update on the quarter cent funding recommendations. Mr. Stanton presented at Mobility Committee approximately two months ago. The Mobility Committee has four city council members on the committee. The Department of Public Works and Transportation were also at the Mobility Committee meeting. The BAC was the only external organization which sent recommendations to the Mobility Committee. The Mobility Committee then sent the item to City Council with a recommendation that the funding be split equally between districts. City Council has sent the item back down to Mobility Committee to come up with a list of projects. City Staff will bring a list of projects to the Mobility Committee at a future date.

6. Discussion and Possible Action: Placement of Sharrow Symbol – Requestor: David Orr; Presenter: Aleksiiina Chapman

Mr. Orr reports that on 11th street, the sharrows are place on the right side of the right lane. Mr. Orr also saw it on Lake Creek Parkway where a sharrow is placed almost in the gutter. Mr. Orr would like clarification on what standard is being used now.

Ms. Chapman explains that older sharrows were put down 11' from the curb – per AASHTO guidance if there is parking on a street. We got feedback that this is too close to cars and have since changed the placement of sharrows to be in the center of the lane. If the lane width is 14', the sharrow is placed to the right of the center. If the lane is less than 14' the sharrow will be centered.

Ms. Chapman asks for people to send in locations where older sharrow placement is a concern. Mr. Eden asks to look at Live Oak. Mr. Stanton asks to look at Nueces. Ms. Chapman will look into these locations. She reminds the group that these adjustments will happen as time and resources allow.

Mr. Camacho suggests placement of the sharrow in the center of the vehicle tire track marks Mr. Thayer points out that there are other jurisdictions, and private developers, like the Domain, where sharrows have not been placed in the center of the lane.

7. Discussion and Possible Action: Trail Connection across Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority railroad tracks to enable neighborhood connection to Eastside Memorial High School and other destinations – Requestor: Christopher Stanton; Presenter: Nadia Barrera

Ms. Barrera was not able to present at the meeting but instead provided the following update to the BAC Listserv prior to the meeting:

We spoke briefly about this issue a couple of weeks ago. If you haven't seen the documentary, it is available here: <https://vimeo.com/123127559> I have sat in on multiple meetings involving the AISD school board, PARD, CapMetro, CM Renteria's office, the Mayor's office, Bike Austin, Ghisallo, concerned neighbors and others. According to CapMetro, they will not permit an at grade crossing. Chad and I went and looked at options today and (as Neil recommended months ago) the best place to cross seems to be the railroad bridge at Tannehill Branch (see attached photos). This would mean hydraulic studies and modeling, potentially cleaving off the sides of the channel to add a trail space, and potentially adding a low-water crossing on the south side of the railroad bridge to provide access to ThinkEast and the trails within the parkland. I've spoken to Christopher at length about this project. Our short term goal is to have a volunteer clean-up day, preferably in September so that the students can use it and so that they can also be involved in the clean-up. If you are interested in helping clean up the trail, please let me know. We would like to begin an Adopt a Trail Program soon and are thinking this would be a good project to launch that program.

Mr. Stanton says that we had this on a previous agenda and this is the La Loma trail connection to Ortega Elementary and East Side memorial High School. This is near the Southern Walnut Creek Trail. Mr. Stanton says that there are active meetings happening in the community and they were looking for a resolution of support from the BAC in terms of connectivity issues. Mr. Wald asks how timely the issue is. Mr. Stanton says that it is a long term project.

Mr. Orr says that the BAC could make a general motion.

Mr. Stanton moves that the BAC supports the neighborhood in their desire for development of a trail along the La Loma trail and that Cap Metro continues to look at a grade crossing of the rail tracks between the two neighborhoods.

Mr. Wald would like the motion to just be for a crossing and not whether it is at grade or not. There are trains that are stored on those tracks. Mr. Stanton says that the solution would be that the operator break the cars for an at-grade crossing and this is done at other locations.

Mr. Camacho asks about costs which were quoted. Mr. Stanton says that the three options for crossing one is an at-grade crossing (lowest cost), a flyover, or a subterranean crossing under the tracks. The neighborhood prefers an at-grade crossing.

Mr Orr moves that the BAC supports the neighborhood's desire for an at-grade crossing. No opposition. Motion passes.

8. Items from Staff

Status of 3rd Street Protected Bicycle Lane Signage – Presenter: Laura Dierenfield

Ms. Dierenfield explains that additional signage and markings have been installed on the 3rd Street protected bicycle lanes. Ms. Flowers asks about the entry points to the facility. She

has observed cars turning into the protected area by mistake, quickly realizing it and correcting their movement. Ms. Dierenfield says that ATD would consider looking at guidance markings to address this concern. Mr. Jarnagin says that on 3rd and Guadalupe, at the loading dock area for the W hotel and the ACL theater, he has seen a lot of parked cars even though there are no parking signs. Ms. Dierenfield will look into additional markings for this area, however a barrier will not be installed.

Recently Released: Redesigning the Street: A Report on Right-Sizing Streets in Austin, TX 1999-2014 – Presenter: Laura Dierenfield

Ms. Dierenfield says that the Austin Transportation Department has just released a report on Right-Sizing projects in Austin. There is data on the report on the safety benefits and the mobility benefits. It is available on the website here:

http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Lane_Conversion_Report_2015-06-01.pdf

8. Announcements/Adjourn – 7:55 - 8:00

- Little Texas Lane Proposed Improvements - Open House – Wednesday July 29th, 6-7pm - Pleasant Hill Branch Austin Public Library – 211 E William Cannon Drive
- Wooten Park Drive Proposed Improvements – Open House – Thursday July 30th, 6-7pm – North Village Branch Austin Public Library – 2505 Steck Avenue
- RM 620 Feasibility Study – Survey Open for comment
 - Information: www.620study.com
 - Direct Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/620study>
- Loop 360 Improvement Study - Survey open for comment
 - Information: www.loop360study.com
 - Direct Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Loop360>
- Hottest Day of the Year Ride – August 8th – There are three routes. More info on the Bike Austin website.
- Ms. Shaub says that there is a happy hour at Scholtz this Saturday, July 25th at 5 pm to talk about the bicycle and sidewalk master plans. It is being held by AURA, Bike Austin, and the Pedestrian Advisory Council. There will be opportunities to discuss organizing for funding.

Mr. Truxillo moves to Adjourn. Mr. Thayer seconds.