

Pedestrian Advisory Council Recommendation:
Austin Strategic Mobility Plan Draft Policies and Maps

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) is to advise the City of Austin on pedestrian planning, policy, design, funding, education, and enforcement efforts regarding the creation, maintenance and operation of pedestrian facilities;

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WHEREAS, a final, approved Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) will provide a vital policy framework for transportation planning for decades to come and the current draft reflects significant progress in reaching important multimodal transportation goals;

WHEREAS, environmental sustainability, including climate change, is an urgent issue and providing Austinites with useful and affordable alternatives to single-occupancy vehicular use is an effective strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

WHEREAS, quality of life is positively impacted by an efficient transportation system, improving air quality and health;

WHEREAS, through the Vision Zero Action Plan, Austin has committed to eliminating the high number of fatalities and serious injuries on its roadways;

WHEREAS, people of all abilities have a right to efficient, safe, and reliable methods of transportation, including access to continuous sidewalks;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the PAC supports the overarching prioritization of safety in the ASMP and that design be stressed as the main influence on safety via the following changes:

- Safety: Safety Culture:
 - Change opening paragraph to “Reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries depends on a transportation planning culture that prioritizes safety”
- Safety: System Design: Policy 1:
 - State that design speeds should not allow for speeds exceeding 35 mph anywhere outside limited access facilities in city limits and 20 mph on neighborhood streets

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC strongly endorses the Supply: Sidewalk System section, and encourages the Austin City Council to prioritize achieving the vision of ubiquitous access for people of all ages and abilities to safe sidewalks throughout the city, including fully funding the Sidewalk Master Plan / ADA Transition Plan in the FY2020 budget, filling the estimated \$30 million sidewalk funding gap from the previous two years, and explicitly funding sidewalk construction needs in the annual budget;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC urges Council and the staff to systematically re-assess traffic signals across the city to ensure safe pedestrian crossings are appropriately prioritized in all neighborhoods at all times;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends affordability be stressed in the Demand: Land Use section:

- Policy 1: Promote affordable transit-supportive densities along the Transit Priority Network:
 - Focus on requiring or incentivizing transit-supportive densities including affordable options for all income levels along Transit Priority Network corridors through small area planning and

zoning review processes;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends the following modification for the Supply: Public Transportation System section:

- Discussions of sidewalk priorities should be tied to transit access and the plan should recognize that transit must be accompanied by safe pedestrian access;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends stressing people-carrying, rather than vehicle-carrying, capacity in the Supply: Roadway System section via these amendments:

- Policy 1: Change term from “vehicles” to “people” to emphasize people-carrying capacity
- Policy 3: Change “Increase the person-carrying capacity of the highway system” to “Increase the highway system’s person-carrying capacity without inducing greater vehicle miles traveled”
- Policy 5: Change “Roadway” to “right of way” in the policy description to emphasize that single-occupancy vehicles are not the only priority
- Make sure that the plan supports strategies for maximizing capacity through a balance of all modes
- Make sure that the plan supports providing more access to places and needs by enabling shorter trips
- Apart from rare exceptions, infrastructure decisions should be based on impacts on people-carrying capacity and these impacts be clearly and publicly stated in final recommendations
- Make sure that the plan clearly states that roadway expansions are not effective ways to reduce congestion
- Ensure that achieving travel time reductions and throughput improvements is always done without sacrificing safety;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends the Supply: Bicycle System section clarify that the bicycle system is equivalent to a broader “small, low speed vehicle” system that includes scooters and pedicabs and which will also prioritize pedestrian safety;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends that the ASMP include explicit discussion, research, and proposed solutions to all safety issues in the city regardless of jurisdictional control of facilities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends prioritizing enforcement and creative solutions to ensure that sidewalks and other rights of way are not blocked from use by the intended users by obstacles, such as vegetative overgrowth, scooters, or parked cars;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC supports the proposed goal of reducing single-occupancy vehicle commute mode share to less than 50% by 2040 and that funding decisions reflect this goal;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends that the ASMP stress the urgency of addressing climate change

- Introduction to Chapter 5: Protecting Our Health and Environment:
 - *The Protecting Our Health and Environment chapter speaks to our transportation network’s impact on our health and environment and the urgent need to address climate change.*
- Modify Health & Environment: Air and Climate: Policy 1.
 - Urgently reduce emissions generated by the transportation sector;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends explicitly including interim “quick fix” improvements in the ASMP, specifically in the following sections:

- Safety: System Design: Policy 5 [new section]:
 - Use temporary materials to quickly improve dangerous areas. Use interim materials at fatal or serious injury crash sites to eliminate or greatly reduce crashes and in other areas where speeding is common

- Community: Public Interaction: Policy 6:
 - Employ nontraditional public engagement techniques, including testing new possibilities with temporary materials, that emphasize hands-on interactions and personal experience to educate community members and facilitate adoption of travel options.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends that the ASMP include mechanisms that ensure implementation and enforcement of the proposed policies within the ASMP, such that future decisions align with the ASMP and always prioritize human life.

Date of Approval: December 3, 2018

Vote: 8-0 with Mulcahy absent

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Blazek Crossley', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jay Blazek Crossley, Pedestrian Advisory Council Chair