



**PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
*April 7, 2014***

The Pedestrian Advisory convened in a regular meeting on April 7, 2014, 721 Barton Springs Road, Austin, Texas.

Guests in Attendance:

Alan De Anda
Noelie Banner
Janet Beinke
Lauren Bennett
Ken Craig
Nancy Crowther
Betty Dickson

Valerie Fruge
Lisa Hinely
Girard Kinney
Ramah Leith
Jessica Lowry
Nathan Lynch
Carmen de la Morena

Christine Nelson
Emily Risinger
Delfin Salazar
Michael Sledge
Ed Wallace
Virginia Wilkinson

Staff in Attendance:

Robert Anderson
Lawrence Deeter
Emily Duda

Cheyenne Krause
Pamela Larson
Francis Reilly

Caitlin White
Nathan Wilkes

CALL TO ORDER

Staff called the Board Meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

Gordon Derr, Assistant Director of Austin Transportation Department; Katherine Gregor, ATD announced that an interdepartmental working group has put together a draft Complete Streets policy and has gone through one round of comments from staff. The Complete Streets policy was initiated by City Manager in a December resolution to have a policy in place by June 2014. Will have a draft policy (maybe also implementation plan) online in 2 weeks, and will come back to PAC in May to discuss. Draft policy will be distributed electronically to the PAC members within 24 hours, and staff is trying to get the policy to City Council on May 22, 2014. Mr. Anderson will send out info, and compile comments from the PAC. ATD's Annual Transportation Report will be digitally available on April 11, 2014.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4. STAFF AND COMMISSION BRIEFINGS

A. Bicycle Advisory Council/Urban Transportation Commission

No updates.

5. NEW BUSINESS**A. Your Path to Austin Plans (Urban Trails Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan Amendment) – Briefing and Possible Action**

Presentation by: Urban Trails Master Plan – Nadia Barrera, Public Works Department
Bike Master Plan Amendment – Nathan Wilkes, Public Works Department

Nadia Barrera and Nathan Wilkes (both Public Works Department) presented on the *Your Path to Austin* plans; This is the first ever Urban Trails Master Plan (UTMP) for the City, and Urban Trails are defined as “a citywide network of non-motorized, multi-use pathways that are used by bicyclists, walkers and runners for both transportation and recreation purposes”; Urban Trails accept motorized vehicles under 50cc and <20 mph.

Ms. Barrera presented on the goals of the UTMP to provide easy access, connect with on-street networks, provide adequate width for two-way traffic, incorporate amenities and features, provide funding/resources for maintenance, and be context-sensitive and environmentally sustainable.

Austin presently has 60 miles of Urban Trails, and 300 miles of all types of trails. The planning has involved significant input from five public meetings, a survey and an online open house. Survey collected information on what type of facilities preferred, and barriers to riding; respondents feel more comfortable riding on separated facilities. Urban trails will be a minimum 12’ wide with 2’ shoulders and a maximum 5% grade. Separated trails will have minimum 8’ pedestrian and 10’ bicyclist paths. Safety amenities considered include trail etiquette, speed limits, lighting, location markers, etc. Ms. Barrera mentioned the need to coordinate with developers to complete the trail network. The City has a prioritization matrix helps to determine which trails to pursue. The UTMP is scheduled to go before City Council on 5/22.

Ms. Nancy Crowther wanted to ensure that in the Plan language ADA accessibility is included and that trail signage includes braille.

Mr. Wilkes presented on the 2014 Bike Plan Update which though focused on bicycles helps to stimulate pedestrian environments. Former Bike Plan Update was in 2009, when no recommendations for physically separated facilities exist; the update changes the context of bicycling to ask what bicycling can do for the City’s goals and align with Imagine Austin. Surveys found that 40% of City’s population which is interested in biking would not use a bike lane, rather need protected facilities. With safe infrastructure, the Bicycle Program has a goal to pick up 15% of trips 3-9 miles in length, and 7% of trips greater than 9 miles. Austin’s bike mode share in central city is above 5%, and citywide just under 2%. Mr. Wilkes cited infrastructure investments as the way to increase ridership, such as Seville which captures 7% of mode-share through the installation of an 87-mile network over 3 years. The City is using cycle tracks, quiet streets, installing intersection treatments and connecting on-street infrastructure with the urban trails. The design of the infrastructure follows the “8-to-80” principle which accommodates individuals from age 8 to 80. COA uses AADT and speed to determine if it is a shared street, bike lane, or separated facility.

Bike Plan Update will include long-term and short-term recommendations. For outlying areas, the focus is for safe connections near transit stations. Transit usually has a 1/2 mile walking radius; the inclusion of a 2-mile biking radius increases the land area served by transit 16 times. The City and CapMetro are working to integrate bicycling with transit through recommendations for bicycle parking at transit stations, B-Cycle station locations, and coordination with Project Connect. Mr. Wilkes mentioned that 36% of trips going into the Central Business District are under 3-miles, which presents a high opportunity for a mode shift. From 1,400 unique comments, citizens spoke to desire to have family-friendly routes, and many requests were for safe facilities along large, high-traffic streets.

Ms. Carmen de la Morena spoke to the need to provide education for bicycling and walking as Austin is growing so quickly. Mr. Wilkes referenced Portland's SmartTrips program to outreach to individual neighborhoods and assist neighborhood residents identify routes/transportation options, which has resulted in a 9% decrease in drive-alone trips. Ms. Rock mentioned that data collected from the survey can be a great asset for marketing and outreach. Ms. de la Morena expressed interest of wanting to be involved, and is interested in what Seville completed. Mr. Delfin Salazar offered that State Department of Public Safety should include a bicycle class. Ms. Barrera mentioned that BikeTexas successfully lobbied for more questions pertaining to bicycling in the exam during the previous legislative session. Ms. Crowther shared that AARP has an excellent Drive Smart driver safety class online. Ms. Risinger asked about whether installation of separated facilities exhibit increases in safety. Mr. Wilkes mentioned that local studies are being performed at three different streets across Austin, and national data supports this query.

Mr. Lawrence Deeter asked about the legality of using cycle tracks when not bicycling. Ms. Barrera clarified that it is illegal to use a cycle track if there is an existing sidewalk. Mr. Deeter elaborated that the sidewalk is an inadequate facility due to the dips, number of curb cuts, etc.

Mr. Wallace asked whether the BMP/UTMP is coordinated with the Sidewalk Program to ensure that there are adequate facilities for accessing the trails, and comparing the sidewalk to a protected bike lane for usability. Mr. Wilkes mentioned that areas like northern Burnet Rd are high priorities for the Sidewalk Program.

Mr. Kinney questioned whether we should address the illegality of using a cycle track if the existing cycle track is not adequate. Ms. Hinely brought up concern that it may be beneficial to postpone writing the letter of support until there is an elected membership. Ms. Rock asked for clarification on whether it is a concern over the "official" status of the PAC. Mr. Anderson clarified that the PAC is official, having Staff resources. Mr. Craig mentioned that there is precedent for the group making general letters of support without elected membership.

Mr. Anderson asked if there was a motion to postpone until there was elected membership; there was no second.

Mr. Anderson asked for a motion to support the UTMP/BMP given the following discussed characteristics: Trails ADA accessible, include tactile-language, increase education, support connections with Imagine Austin principles, take advantage of research; do not concentrate only on central city, but, also the areas that are growing. Ms. De la Morena seconded. Vote: 17 in favor, 0 opposed, 7 abstentions (all Staff)

B. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities along TXDOT High Speed Roadways with Limited Access (frontage roads and highways) – Briefing and Possible Action

Presentation by: Nathan Wilkes, Public Works Department

Mr. Wilkes presented on Bicycle Program meetings with TXDOT on how to accommodate bicycle facilities on TXDOT facilities, and TXDOT wanted to know PAC opinions.

TXDOT currently accommodates bicyclists through a “wide curb lane” which is a 14’ lane which is considered by TXDOT an acceptable bicycle accommodation. Bicycle Program has pushed back on TXDOT saying that this is not a safe facility for frontage roads. Propose a Shared Use Path: 5’ setback from road and 10’ path (8’ if there are permanent physical features). Bicycle Program developed cross-sections for less desired to most desired two-way Shared Use Paths and classified existing 14’ wide curb lane as “not appropriate”.

Ms. Hinely asked for clarification on when this is used. Mr. Wilkes answered that this is for when TXDOT redoes (or does planning studies to redo) corridors or managed lanes. Ms. Beinke asked if this is Austin-specific, and if so, whether it can expand across the state. Mr. Wilkes mentioned that Federal Highway Administration’s position is that engineering can include design flexibility at the local jurisdiction level. Mr. Kinney asked for clarification on wide curb lane vs. one-way SUP with buffer. Mr. Wilkes said that the preference is to have the lane striped, but also to have two-way facilities for both pedestrians and bicyclists due to TXDOT engineering. The Bicycle Advisory Council added a note that says “if pedestrian volume is expected to be significant, separate facilities are recommended”. Ms. Hinely asked whether it is worthwhile to include specific criteria for separated facilities, such as areas with multifamily development, e.g. IH-35 from 183 to Rundberg is consistent residential. Mr. Wilkes mentioned that there are feasibility restraints along all of TXDOT roadways, so the options presented are to show what is preferred. Mr. Kinney asks why we don’t have standards for 45 mph streets (since these are how frontage roads effectively function).

Mr. Wilkes mentioned that limited access streets are also preferred for the 2-way SUP. Ms. Crowther said that there are minimum standards for facilities. Mr. Kinney asked why all options are not at the standard of cycle tracks. Mr. Wilkes mentioned that if there is not limited access and if there are a lot of driveways, cycle tracks are preferred. And though the least desired facilities are not preferred, they have reason to be presented since they each represent a 1’ smaller ROW. Ms. De la Morena mentioned that One-way SUP with buffer and wide curb lane are NOT 8-to-80 facilities, and should the PAC body not continue to ask for the facilities which we desire and not include non-desirable facilities. Mr. Salazar asked for “not appropriate” to be relabeled as “not acceptable”. Jess mentioned that a diverse set of bikeways that exist in Austin do not enable a consistent, easy-to-use system. Ms. Wilkenson

asked on possibility to include barriers or signage to be mindful to bicyclists/pedestrians using the facilities.

Ms. Beinke made a motion for a resolution in support; Ms. Wilkinson seconded. Mr. Salazar made a friendly amendment to re-label last option as “unacceptable”. Ms. Risinger proposed that the PAC supports the drafted toolkit of bicycle and pedestrian facility options. Mr. Deeter asks to include a high-level “The PAC supports pedestrian facilities on all TXDOT roadways” and therefore we find this toolkit useful to engineers as they design, rebuild, or resurface roadways. Also, an amendment was offered to retitle the recommendations to state “Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities”. Vote: 15 support, 2 oppose, 5 abstentions (4 staff).

6. OLD BUSINESS (7:00 to 7:50)

A. Bylaws – Briefing and Possible Action

Presentation by: Emily Risinger

Bylaws Working group includes PAC members Ms. Risinger, Mr. Salazar and Ms. Sereno; met in October, November, April; had a presentation 1/6/14 to PAC.

At January meeting, did not discuss number of agency representatives; Working Group brainstormed 6 members. Mr. Kinney had a concern with 9 at-large members given the redistricting will include 10 districts and 1 mayor, and asked to refer to Robert’s Rules of Order as a default. Mr. Anderson mentioned that the group tries to work as a consensus model, but, will default to Robert’s Rules if needed. Mr. Anderson clarified that a decision would not be made by 5 members, as alternate members step in from proxy pool.

Ms. Crowther asked for clarification on “agency” members; Emily clarified that this is TXDOT, CapMetro, COA, and there is flexibility to include others. Mr. Deeter asked how the Agency Representatives function; there is not required attendance presently for agency representatives, but, we do want to include certain minimum standards. Agency Representatives are asked to provide technical expertise, not to give a vote.

Section 3C: Mr. Deeter mentioned that it is important to have agency representation consistently (and can be supported through regular meeting attendees identifying an alternate) and we should hold representatives to the 75% attendance standard. Mr. Kinney asked for Travis County to be listed as an agency. Ms. Wilkinson asked for neighboring school districts to be included. Mr. Kinney mentioned the need for Community Liaison/Representatives which can be designated by neighboring communities/cities, which would be non-voting members, but eligible to serve on subcommittees (4 Community Liaisons)—to be extended at a later date.

Article IX Section 1A: Ms. Risinger asked for approval on 2 standing Subcommittees (Technical and Project) and thoughts on existing technical committees. Mr. Kinney asked why have standing “technical” and “project” subcommittees, rather allow these to pop-up

when something pertinent arises. Mr. Anderson mentioned that these subcommittees ensure that the group is focused on these areas. Mr. Salazar asked about task forces. Ms. Risinger clarified that the task forces are not expressly prohibited.

Committed to 6 Agency Reps (which is flexible), will add 4 Community Representatives (also non-voting, unless within a subcommittee), group supports the 75% attendance schedule.

Vote: 12 in favor, 0 opposed, 6 abstentions (5 staff, 1 community member).

B. Land Development Code Working Group – Briefing and Possible Action

Presentation by: Robert Anderson, Planning and Development Review

Mr. Anderson spoke with multiple departments including Planning and development Review staff from Urban Design, Development Assistance Center, Land Use Review, also staff from Public Works and the Capital Planning Office to discuss problems within current Code. Will finalize this as a Working Group, and bringing this forward.

7. FUTURE BUSINESS (7:50 to 8:00)

A. Complete Streets Policy (May 5, 2014)

Briefing to be made at May 5, 2014 meeting.

B. PAC Elections (May 5, 2014)

Applications are on the table. REVISION: Please do not fill out the hard copy, as a modification will be made. Await the electronic copy which will be emailed, on the PAC Listserv, and on the Facebook page. Deadline is April 29, 2014.

C. Other

Concern from group to develop a working group on the increase in injuries and fatalities. In 2008 15 fatalities, peak with 28 fatalities. Injuries are greatly increasing for pedestrians, and generally high as well. Those who are interested in this Working Group should stay tuned.

Ross Complex Subdivision is scheduled to appear before Zoning and Platting Committee on April 15, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT

Staff adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m. without objection.

