



**PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
August 4, 2014**

The Pedestrian Advisory convened in a regular meeting on August 4, 2014 at One Texas Center, 505 Barton Springs Road (8th Floor, Conference Room 8A), Austin, Texas.

Elected Members in Attendance

Joe Almazan
Peter Baird
Janet Beinke
Luke Urie

Valerie Fruge
Girard Kinney
Ramah Leith
Nic Moe

Marva Overton
Emily Risinger
Delfin Salazar
Heyden Walker

Guests in Attendance:

Sharon Alabam (?)
Mark Bently
Charlsa Bentley
Hatty Bogucki
Sharon Ellerby

Justin Fruge
Barbara Harketts
John Dennis Harketts
Chris Heiler
Lisa Hinely
Gwen Jewiss

Kristen Munson
Daniela Radpay
Chris Tabb
Andy Webre
John Woodley

Staff in Attendance:

Robert Anderson
Jennifer Bennett-Reumuth
John Michael Vincent Cortez
Lawrence Deeter

Kristy Hansen
Leah Hilton
Steve Hopkins
Christian Malanka

Stephen Ratke
Pamela Larson
Katie Mulholland
Francis Reilly

CALL TO ORDER

1. INTRODUCTIONS (6:00 to 6:05)

Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm by Vice Chair Emily Risinger.

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL (6:05 to 6:08)

Mr. Salazar brought attention to a handout to accompany a presentation he will provide later regarding right of way obstructions.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (6:08 to 6:10)

Motion to approve by Joe Almazan, seconded by Peter Baird.

4. STAFF AND COMMISSION BRIEFINGS (6:10 to 6:15)**A. Bicycle Advisory Council / Urban Transportation Commission**

Representatives were not present to provide updates.

B. Surgeon General's Call to Action on Walking

Kristy Hansen had no updates.

5. NEW BUSINESS (6:15 to 7:35)**A. Urban Rail Update – Briefing**

Presentation by: John-Michael Cortez, Capital Metro

Mr. Cortez is presenting on Project Connect which has been endorsed by the City Council, and those of other areas such as Round Rock and Buda, which have not been hospitable in the past. The Project Connect area serves activity centers identified in CAMPO and the team has been working on what is the next set of projects. A fully-integrated system will solve our transportation issues, but not one bus route or bike route. Mr. Cortez mentioned that we need to develop the full system (just as we have to develop the full sidewalk system). The first parts of the full system include MetroRail and MetroBus. After the first 2 years it is standing room only after the first 3 stops and people are parking in the dirt. It is out of room and with a TIGER and TxDOT grants they will expand the amount of space and frequency. MetroBus was launched, and in about 3 weeks the second route line 803 will go from the Domain, through downtown to Westgate. Next will be express lanes on Mopac which will include transit opening in 2016.

Working with stakeholders in the north (Round Rock, Georgetown, Pflugerville) CapMetro plans to expand including MetroBus, congestion-resistant service that will connect with high-capacity transit and local service. They will be working also on “the last mile” connections to help people get to their final destination. Downtown people are able to walk, but, there are 50,000 home-based work trips in central Austin; there are 150,000 people who commute into central Austin. The area that makes the most sense to begin the expansion includes central business district, the capitol complex, and UT, working objectively they will first expand on the East Riverside Corridor and towards the Highland area. These are the most congested corridors through the city, and IH-35 is the most congested in the state. East Riverside is the busiest transit corridor, is in the top 10, and has a high capacity for growth. This will not be the only line, but, the first. This is the most competitive for federal funding, and began to ask community what level of service do they want, and what will meet future demand. People wanted reliability, and this means that transit needs its own right-of-way so that it is not stuck in regular traffic congestion. Secondly people need frequency, Mr. Cortez mentions that this will run every 10 minutes at peak times, 15-minutes off-peak. And there is a need to provide convenience. Most stations are within a 1/2-mile walk to destinations. The service is designed for 20mph (including stopping and boarding times) which is faster than driving at rush hour. A locally preferred alternative is presented that will connect to the regional transportation plans. Mr. Cortez detailed the route which is on the map provided. Ridership is estimated to be 18,000 per day by 2030, the largest price would be \$1.3 billion, and does not expect to need more; federal funds would be about \$600-700,000 and the City would provide the rest.

Mr. Salazar asked about the number of bike racks per car; Mr. Cortez guarantees that there will be bicycle accommodation but the cars have not been chosen, and that the cars can be custom-designed. Ms. Fruge complimented Mr. Cortez for being truthful for there being problems with the bus system. She also mentioned the frustration of trying to catch a connecting bus. Mr. Cortez

discussed the difficult logistics that drivers have to meet time tables, the consequence of delaying a few seconds for future passengers, penalizations, etc. He provided potential solutions such as increased frequency, prioritized lanes, etc. The commuter rail has limited service, and Mr. Cortez mentioned that there is application for increasing service, but, it takes time. Mr. Kinney asked about why the mayor might be putting off the decision, Mr. Cortez said that what he knows would be purely speculation. Ms. Jewiss asked about at-grade crossings on the present red line. Mr. Cortez mentioned that the MetroRail line is a freight line that are limited by federal regulations due to safety for freight. Urban Rail will not have the same limitations, as it will be regulated by the FTA and not the FRA.

Mr. Cortez mentioned that with Urban Rail will see a 3:1 ROI, and it is transit-, bicycle-, and pedestrian-friendly. It will transform places which are pedestrian hostile into development which is pedestrian-oriented, whereas it otherwise wouldn't happen in this generation. Mr. Woodley asked about the trails; Mr. Cortez said that there are plans for trails along the entire Red Line, but, there is difficulty due to funding, encroachment, Boggy Creek, and the subsequent double-tracking.

B. South Shore Central Update – Discussion and Possible Action

Presentation by: Katie Mulholland, Planning and Development Review

Ms. Mulholland is providing an update on the South Shore Central project, when a draft report is complete it will be shared with the group. The South Central Waterfront (SCW) has a jobs-to-housing ratio of 3.5:1, and the 6 megablocks are equivalent to 33 downtown blocks, which are not very walkable and include a 71% impervious cover. Ms. Mulholland showed images of what the SCW appears to be today. In 2014 Austin City Council directed Planning & Development Review to look at former studies and gather community value. They have looked at the 1985 Town Lake Corridor Study, the 2000 ROMA Report, 2012 American Institute of Architect Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT), and 2013 UT Study.

Initiate comprehensive small-area plan for the SSC and three adjacent parcels in the Travis Heights sub-districts of the Waterfront Overlay.

The Waterfront Planning Advisory Board began stakeholder outreach, worked with a Technical Advisory Group, Sustainable Places Project, & additional partners brought forward 2 Walkabouts, 3 Talkabouts, and a Vision+Design Intensive charette-like event which brought in University of Kansas students. In the future will combine with ongoing projects (i.e. Project Connect). The process combines a quadruple bottom line (economic, social, environmental and place-making benefits) with Imagine Austin. The City of Austin has to be a significant financial partner to make sure this happens. SCW needs to be very strategic about what type of green space we want and where we want it, connections to the neighborhood and the city, and connectivity throughout the district. A trail is proposed along the creek which can connect South First to South Congress north of the Texas School for the Deaf. The development of the 41 acres will be done at a district-scale to coordinate with property owners to easier accommodate jobs and housing that will emerge in this area.

Ms. Mulholland asks that if people have been involved that they continue in their involvement, and to become involved if they haven't been. She pointed out the PAC could make a motion if they are interested in doing so and that the project will be going to City Council. The SCW Team will be giving a report to Council next week, and there is an ask to maintain \$200,000 which presently is in

the budget for fiscal year 2015. Mr. Kinney asked about the Crockett family, descendants of Davey Crockett who own property which is leased by TxDOT, area between South First and Congress south of Barton Springs/Riverside; Ms. Mulholland mentioned that they have been involved and 4 or 5 generations came to the Design+Vision Intensive. Ms. Jewiss mentioned that Riverside presents a significant barrier for connections, and Ms. Mulholland outlined these. Mr. Baird asked for the PAC to make a high-level motion to provide a brief recommendation of support for the high level principles embodied in to break up the megablocks into smaller, more walkable blocks and for the PAC to continue to be involved. Ms. Walker added a friendly amendment that access to the waterfront is really important. Mr. Salazar included a second friendly amendment to include more of a social life that allows economic opportunity. Ms. Risinger added that the connectivity between the rambla and transit amenities is included in graphics. Mr. Kinney would like to see portrayed the extent of non-connectivity south of Riverside. No opposition to a resolution on behalf of the PAC.

C. CTG Walkability Assessment Results – Briefing

Presentation by: Pamela Larson and Leah Hilton, Planning and Development Review

PDR/HHSD received grant to reduce chronic disease burden. CTG grant provided funding to increase access to active transportation, healthy eating, etc. HHSD targeted funds with PDR to zip codes 78721, 78723, Dove Springs and Manor.

PDR developed walkability audit form best practice research, to develop tool that assesses for walkability. The Sidewalk Master Plan does not address the qualitative condition or level of comfort or experience. The Pedestrian Environmental Quality Index tool was developed after the San Francisco Department of Health. The forms consists of a Street Segment and Intersection tool. Data is input into database and then can be displayed via GIS for visual representation.

Leah Hilton addressed the community partners and the specific street segment and intersection forms that were used, as well as the specific elements contained within the forms. Street segment includes both sides of the street and includes such information as speed, bus stops, trees, public seating, etc. The intersection form assess for such things as whether ADA curb ramps exist, whether crosswalks exist, and whether there are pedestrian countdown devices as well as how many lanes of traffic individuals cross.

The tool was designed to produce a score out of 100. The Street segment section of the Database requires separate entering of data for the two different sides of the street but then produces unique scores once entered into GIS. The GIS visualization depicts level of scoring with higher scores in green and lower scores in red and was done using GIS layers maintained at the City of Austin.

Ms. Larson discussed potential uses of the tool. She also indicated that the variety of land uses might require different expectations for different types of streets (urban versus neighborhood residential). It can be used for advocating for health and local improvements. It also helps for awareness and engagement.

Ms. Larson discussed meetings with different departments to assess for potential uses. Safe Routes to School is interested to evaluate potential routes but would like to see a simpler tool and to use for non-traditional (non-street uses) in order to determine routes for off-street routes. She discussed the upcoming Pedestrian Master Plan and Sidewalk Master Plan update as well as the Neighborhood Partnering Program for directing Capital Improvement Project funds.

Mr. Moe asked about the time invested by the neighborhoods and cost to do. Ms. Larson said that varied by neighborhood. The community partners had other grant program elements that required attention so this didn't receive exclusive attention through the grant. The programs undertook initial training in the tool with PDR staff. She said that the amount of time to complete the tool also differed but familiarity with the tool improved the efficiency of completion. While the Manor community collected less data, the African American Alliance for Health in Central Texas did extensive collection.

Marva Overton echoed that the tool did bring to the assessor's attention sidewalk and pedestrian needs. She said that Johnston-Govalle neighborhood scored better. Airport and Bolm were also very good, and has audible pedestrian countdown device. Airport crossing MLK is very dangerous street. In her assessment she saw at least six people trying to cross against traffic. There is a bridge but its position is not convenient so people don't use.

She said the experience was great and recommends others use the tool. She said it did take time to learn the tool but it brought attention to a lot of issues.

Lisa Hinley asked if the data collection process motivated them to see improvements. Ms. Fruge said Ms. Overton was the motivation to complete.

Ms. Larson said the community was very patient due to hiccups with database and the process to weight the scores as well as to input the data and perform GIS.

Ms. Jewiss asked about use for neighborhood. Mr. Anderson pointed out issues of tool such as the complexity for general use, the time to enter the data and analyze, as well as need to modify the database to reflect any and all changes to the tool itself.

Mr. Almazan asked if PDR Land Use Review staff were consulted for possible use with sidewalk variances. Ms. Larson said that has not been done yet. Mr. Almazan said that could be really helpful to inform variance decisions.

Ms. Fruge makes motion to continue to explore use of tool. Nic seconds.

6. OLD BUSINESS (7:35 to 8:00)

A. Proposed Subcommittee on Right of Way Obstructions – Discussion and Possible Action

Presentation by: Delfin Salazar, PAC Full Member

Mr. Salazar says some individuals may have thought that Mr. Salazar's concerns have been addressed already. Mr. Salazar is open to take questions at the end. There is really nice landscaping but there's no provisions for sidewalks along 9th Street. On Kinney Street there is some sidewalk infill, but the neighborhood does not have sidewalks. The principle concern of being forced out onto the street is safety. Mr. Salazar understands that fee-in-lieu for sidewalks will cease, and if it will, we should stop the fee-in-lieu program immediately. Mr. Salazar reads from his document of neighborhood areas which have inconsistent sidewalks. Mr. Salazar proposes that a subcommittee

could investigate infill routes and how to follow up with the complaints of inconsistent sidewalks such as recommending a database for sidewalk complaints to 311. Mr. Salazar mentions that much of the landscaping and gardening is taking of the public ROW, and would like to explore no landscaping in the public ROW, so that even if there is no sidewalk present people who are able to walk would be able to use it as a path. Images shown include fencing within a few feet of the curb, retaining walls, creating on-street parking near the greenbelt, etc. This landscaping puts the pedestrian at risk by needing to walk in the street, which may be unlit or on a curve. Would like to have sidewalks on one side of the street.

Mr. Moe along with the Chair, Vice Chair and PAC Staff met to discuss the information which is available within 311. Mr. Moe showed a map of the 311 data, specific to pedestrian issues which began at the start of the year. Near 500 of the 78,000 311 calls were related to pedestrianism. Mr. Baird asked about how the reports came in. Mr. Moe clarified that people can call in, report online, and there now is an app which can be used. 311 takes the full information and will call/email you to follow up; the publicly available data is coded (and does not include the personal information). Ms. Jewiss mentioned that people can call anonymously. Mr. Moe showed a map showing concentrations of calls with duplicate calls removed. Most 311 calls are for sidewalk repair, others for new sidewalks, curb ramps, etc. Average response was 8.4 days, median 1.6 days, and 75% of calls closed within 10 days. Calls came from 78745, 78704, 78701.

Attendee asked if Mr. Moe looked up crosswalk as well; Mr. Moe responded that he looked up different terms but all terms get coded as “pedestrian” by 311 system administrators.

Ms. Hinely mentioned that if someone is blocking the ROW she calls the police non-emergency number; Officer Malanka mentioned that if someone calls a traffic hazard into 311 it gets brought over to 911, all items which are connected to an officer have a tracking number but he will have to check where that is recorded. Officer Malanka asked about when the case gets is complete/implemented; Mr. Moe mentioned that the 311 database just details when it gets closed, Mr. Anderson spoke to the limitations. Mr. Salazar asked about how the PAC can provide input to the 311 network so that they don’t lose our prioritizations; Mr. Anderson mentioned that the Sidewalk Master Plan has a prioritization matrix. Mr. Salazar asked about whether it is legal to plant in the right of way. Mr. Almazan mentioned that landscaping, mailboxes, fencing, retaining walls, etc. are all illegal, but, it would be unfavorable to remove these. These areas are also for utilities. Ms. Jewiss mentioned that the fee-in-lieu is spent in the area in which funds are received.

The request for a new subcommittee received no motion. Ms. Risinger mentioned that this can be part of an existing subcommittee.

B. Subcommittee Reports

Mr. Baird mentioned that the Technical Subcommittee can look at Wayfinding, the Technical Criteria Manual, funding, the just-presented Walkability Assessments. If you haven’t attended or expressed interest, please contact Mr. Baird.

Mr. Moe is discussing the Projects Subcommittee which had its first meeting; Projects Subcommittee would like City Council to create a Working Group for a Vision Zero policy for Austin. Vision Zero calls for no deaths for all individuals on our roadways. Projects Subcommittee

also discussed the need within the Bylaws to have Agency Representatives and will have the full PAC weigh-in on this at the PAC meeting next month. Mr. Anderson asked whether the PAC would be interested in a Vision Zero policy similar to what New York City has done. Ms. Hinely asked how extensive the PAC would be involved, Mr. Moe mentioned that City Council will form the group, and that pedestrians account for an incredible percentage of deaths on the roadway despite their small fraction of the mode share. Officer Malanka asks that we do our research and set reachable goals since there are barriers, like the Alcoholic Beverage retailers since they are significant stakeholders. He says that APD is on board, but reiterated that there are barriers for enforcement, time and policy. This would be to make a recommendation to Council by October or November, but, this may not occur before the new Council comes forward.

C. Follow-Up on Complete Streets Recommendations

The work of monitoring complete streets will be done by the Technical Subcommittee.

7. FUTURE BUSINESS (8:00 to 8:05)

A. Establish Election Subcommittee

B. Elections for those serving partial terms

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPDATES (8:00 to 8:10)

- Summer meeting locations:
 - Sept. 8: Little Walnut Creek Branch Library, 835 W Rundberg Lane or One Texas Center 8th Floor
(NOTE: This meeting has been scheduled for September 8 because of the Labor Day Holiday).
- Land Development Code recommendations submitted to CodeNEXT.
http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/CodeNEXT/PAC_BAC_CodeNEXT_Recommendations.pdf
- Distracted Driving Study Group submitted recommendations to Council on July 28. The recommendations do not include pedestrians. The item is slated to be considered by Council on August 7, item 110.
 - 110. [Approve a resolution directing the City Manager to draft an ordinance related to distracted driving.](#)
(Notes: SPONSOR: Council Member Mike Martinez CO 1: Council Member Laura Morrison CO 2: Council Member Chris Riley)
Council Resolution can be read [here](#).
- Traffic Safety Symposium: Discuss with state and local agencies and advocacy groups ways to create safer roadways in Austin. Speaker sign-ups, 5:30-6:30pm. Public comment, 6:25-7:45pm. *Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd. Free.*
www.austinconventioncenter.com.

- Lightsey 2 Subdivision going before [Planning Commission](#) on August 12. Developer proposing to connect street through (as per Code requirement) but is facing neighborhood opposition.
- [Urban Transportation Commission](#) meets on August 12. Location to be determined.
- [Bicycle Advisory Council](#) meets August 19, 6pm. Location to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

Pedestrian Advisory Council Attendance

	Name	June 2	July 7	Aug 4	Sept 8
F	Joe Almazan	○	●	●	
F	Peter Baird	●	●	●	
F	Nancy Crowther	●	●	○	
F	Valerie Fruge	●	●	●	
F	Ramah Leith	●	●	●	
F	Nic Moe	●	●	●	
F	Emily Risinger (Vice-Chair)	●	●	●	
F	Delfin Salazar	●	●	●	
F	Heyden Walker (Chair)	●	✓	●	
A	Janet Beinke	●	✓	●	
A	Ken Craig	●	✓	✓	
A	Dan Keshet	✓	✓	✓	
A	Girard Kinney	●	●	●	
A	Jessica Lemann	✓	✓	✓	
A	Nathan Lynch	✓	✓	✓	
A	Joel Meyer	✓	●	✓	
A	Carmen de la Morena-Chu	●	●	✓	
A	Marva Overton	✓	●	●	
A	Kathy Rock	●	✓	✓	
A	Mike Sledge	○	●	○	
A	Luke Urie	✓	✓	●	
A	Virginia Wilkinson	●	✓	✓	
F = Full Member, A = Alternate Member ● Present ○ Excused Absence ✓ Unexcused Absence					

Technical Subcommittee Attendance

	Name	June 11*			
F	Peter Baird (Chair)	●			
F	Nic Moe	●			
F	Emily Risinger	○			
A	Carmen de la Morena-Chu	✓			
A	Kathy Rock	●			
A	Luke Urie	●			
A	Virginia Wilkinson	○			
C	Gwen Jewiss	✓			
C	Alix Scarborough	●			
F = Full Member, A = Alternate Member, C = Community Member ● Present ○ Excused Absence ✓ Unexcused Absence					

* Members of first Technical Subcommittee meeting will be allowed an excused absence.

Project Subcommittee Attendance

	Name	July 1*	July 23		
F	Ramah Leith	●	●		
F	Nic Moe (Chair)	●	●		
A	Janet Beinke	○	✓		
A	Virginia Wilkinson	○	✓		
C	Hatty Bogucki	●	●		
C	Capital Metro (Lawrence Deeter or Caitlin White)	●	●		
C	Christian Malanka	●	✓		
F = Full Member, A = Alternate Member, C = Community Member ● Present ○ Excused Absence ✓ Unexcused Absence					

* Members of first Project Subcommittee meeting will be allowed an excused absence due to short notice.