

CITY OF AUSTIN
BICYCLE ADVISORY COUNCIL (BAC)
MEETING SUMMARY

City Hall, Staff Bull Pen, Room 1029
301 W 2nd Street
January 20th, 2015
6:00 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS:

Christopher Stanton – BAC	Mike Kase – BAC	Tom Wald – BAC
Chair	Sophia Benner – BAC	Stanton Truxillo – Alt BAC
Tom Thayer – BAC Vice Chair	Samuel Day-Woodruff –	Nicole Ortega – Alt BAC
Erin Katribe – BAC	Alt BAC	Larry Murphy – Alt BAC
Tommy Eden – BAC	Tomasita Louviere-Ligons –	
Chris LeBlanc – BAC	BAC	
	Erin Katribe – BAC	

GUESTS:

Javier Arguello, Capital
Metro
Ellen Ray, Capital Metro
Patricia Schaub
John Woodley

STAFF PRESENT:

Laura Dierenfield
Neil Kopper
Marissa Monroy

1. Review and Approval of December Minutes – Mr. Kase moves to approve the minutes. Ms. Louviere-Ligons seconds. No dissent. The minutes are approved.

2. Items from Other Organizations – 6:10 to 6:30

Briefing and Possible Action: Downtown Gateway Station Project Update

Mr. Javier Arguello and Ms. Ellen Ray of Capital Metro present an update of the Downtown Gateway Station. Ms. Ray announces a public meeting on Saturday, January 31st to solicit input on the Downtown Gateway Station Project. BAC members are urged to attend. Ms.

Ray also announces the Bicycle and Transit Workshop to be held Wednesday, February 18th at Cycle East on Cesar Chavez Street. *Note: This event has since been rescheduled for March 3rd.*

Mr. Arguello presents an overview of the project history, current status and future direction. The project is moving from concept development to a public outreach phase. The project planning area is defined by Neches, 5th, Trinity and 4th Streets along with the Hilton hotel and the Austin Convention Center. It is part of a larger east-west connector from the newly built Plaza Saltillo to the terminus at Trinity and 4th Street. The existing station was originally conceived as a temporary station but has since become the busiest platform on the rail route. Capital Metro is undertaking the project to meet both current and future needs of its riders served by this station. The goal is to have two platforms, three tracks, and improved queuing space. Funding is coming from the 2015 TxDOT UTP allocation, totaling \$50M. \$28M will be spent on additional cars to increase frequency on Red Line and \$22M will be used to build the permanent downtown station. An additional \$11M in TIGER funding will be used to improve crossings and signals.

Mr. Arguello presents two final options, referred to as Concept 3 and Concept 4. Concept 3 proposes to move the station a half block east to create a pedestrian plaza. The plaza would allow limited access to vehicles. The Lance Armstrong Bikeway (LAB) would stay in the same location and the design would be integrated with the pedestrian plaza. Concept 4 moves the Lance Armstrong Bikeway to the north of 4th Street and overlaps a 16 foot limited traffic access lane on the bikeway, intended only for Hilton guests or residents.

Questions/Feedback from the BAC

- When will the decision be made on concepts? *Answer: It will be a step-by-step decision process because 10% design doesn't include technical issues. Once we're done with 30% we will know which concept.*
- How will vehicle access be limited in Concept 4? *Answer: Physical barriers with a chip that reads access sticker (for example, a hotel guest in rental car) along with a permanent station attendant.*
- The view corridor on 5th St. blocked by I-35 when looking east. How will this barrier be addressed? *The project boundary ends at Service Road at I-35 – but they are looking at the extension of the corridor to Plaza Saltillo and beyond. Long-term plans call for depressing I-35. This will take a very long time. 2017-2018 is the time frame for the Gateway.*
- Do we have ped/bike crash data for this area? *Answer: Cap Metro does have stats and are documenting these incidents.*
- Will bikes still be able to use Neches to access LAB? *Answer: Yes*

- Comment: Bike lockers and parking lots would also be helpful, especially to balance with bike share space.

RESOLUTION: BAC member Stanton Truxillo moves to endorse Concept 3 by Resolution, seconded by _____. Further discussion amongst BAC members produces the following Resolution: *The Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC) endorses Concept 3 of the Capital Metro Downtown Gateway Station Project, as presented at the BAC meeting on January 20th 2015, because, (1) it maintains the Lance Armstrong Bikeway on the southern edge of the railroad tracks; and (2) it maintains a true pedestrian (pedestrian means pedestrians, cyclists and very limited vehicular traffic) plaza.*

Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Arguello asks that the BAC appoint someone to serve on the Technical Advisory Group (TAG).

3. Items from BAC

Briefing and Possible Action: W St Elmo Bicycle Facilities – Neil Kopper

Mr. Kopper presents an overview of this project. St. Elmo, along with Redd forms an important east-west bicycle route. St. Elmo elementary school is located on this route, at the corner of S. 1st and St. Elmo. St. Elmo is wider east of S. 1st street than west of S. 1st street where it is approximately 30' wide. Mr. Kopper notes that staff will need to perform further analysis on this street but first wanted input about existing conditions on the street and clarification about the nature of the BAC request. According to feedback from BAC members who live in the area, parking is restricted on this segment of St. Elmo but routinely ignored on the school side and residents don't use this parking. BAC members note a recent crash involving a bicyclist riding with his children and express their belief that the existing motor vehicle speeds and volumes are not appropriate for the existing shared lane conditions, especially considering the children using St Elmo as a route to school.

BAC member Larry Murphy expresses concern in particular between James Casey and Vinson streets and asks if there is any opportunity for traffic calming. Mr. Kopper explains the Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) program provides traffic calming on a prioritized request basis, although there are strict guidelines and requirements to qualify for the program. Mr. Murphy also suggested pursuing an art in public spaces type project that would achieve similar aims in slowing down traffic and foster placemaking in the neighborhood as called for in the area's neighborhood plan. **Staff will take a closer look at**

opportunities in this area to include bike lanes and traffic calming or possibility of 2-way protected bicycle lanes.

Mr. Murphy asks whether Vinson could be included in this analysis. Mr. Kopper explains that this study will include the Vinson and St. Elmo intersection but that Vinson characterizes an entirely different traffic situation and will not be included in the proposed improvements. Mr. Murphy stresses that he feels the neighborhood has become a dangerous zone and thanks Mr. Kopper for his efforts to improve facilities on West St. Elmo.

Briefing and Possible Action: Redd Street Bike Lanes – Neil Kopper

Redd Street: Mr. Kopper presents a briefing on proposed bicycle facility improvements on Redd Street between Manchaca and Mt. Vernon Drive. A public meeting will take place on Thursday at Joslin Elementary school at 6pm. Redd Street is a 30' wide street with a 25 mph speed limit and most of the houses face side streets. A study of Redd Street was done to balance the needs of cyclists with other uses such as driving, parking, walking and transit. Redd street has been increasing in traffic volume as have other streets in the vicinity. A parking study reveals that generally there is very little parking on the street. This was confirmed by BAC members who live in the area. The Capitol City Baptist Church has some parking use on Sundays and Wednesday nights. The current proposal would add bicycle lanes and restrict on-street parking. In the limited areas with residential frontage, on-street parking would only be restricted during the peak hours of 7-9am and 4-6pm (when traffic volumes are higher). Proposed parking restrictions would also allow parking all day Sundays and Wednesday from 6-10pm near the church. BAC members ask that restrictions start at 3pm in the PM peak to allow for children getting out of school. Mr. Kopper reiterates the minimal parking utilization already existing and notes that lengthening the peak hour time restrictions would leave only a short period of allowed parking mid-day. BAC members ask about the segment of Redd St west of Manchaca. Mr. Kopper explains that when this section of street gets resurfaced, it will be a candidate for bicycle improvements. Mr. Murphy shared that there has been an attempt by the neighborhood to calm traffic along Redd. He envisions an opportunity to create the city's first greenway that works for all ages and abilities. Mr. Kopper clarifies that this project would be consider a near-term improvement and would not preclude traffic calming or other future improvements. BAC members state their agreement that the current proposal would improve conditions on the street and appear to represent a reasonable balance for the various demands.

Briefing and Possible Action: Subcommittee Update on Bike Lanes of Substandard Width – Aleksiiina Chapman/Samuel Day-Woodruff

Mr. Day-Woodruff provides a summary of the subcommittee's work. General practice at the City of Austin is to design 8' parking lanes and 6' bike lanes, however there are legacy facilities that are smaller. The subcommittee looked at several other cities. The decision was made to endorse a qualitative scale that is based on parking demand and turnover. Please see attached report for more information. The subcommittee did not reach a conclusion on standard width of bike lanes. Chris LeBlanc expressed concern that the recommended treatment for high demand and high turnover was confusing. Tom Thayer pointed out that parking turnover and demand will demonstrate behavior. Statistics for Exposition, Dean Keaton and LaCrosse were requested but are not available. Staff will continue to monitor what works better.

Sophia Benner asks if signage was discussed. It was not discussed in this subcommittee meeting. Ms. Benner explains that signage directing motorists to watch for cyclists makes sense, in this case, to reduce dooring risk. She mentions Seattle and Chicago have good examples and that Seattle has it written in their bicycle plan. Ms. Benner suggests signage should be placed near parking meter signs.

Tomasita Louviere-Lignons asks if there is a website explaining what various markings on the street mean. Staff is undergoing an update to the Bike Program web page and will take this suggestion under advisement.

Tommy Eden suggests that we revisit in six month. Tom Wald suggests that the BAC vote to support the Subcommittee recommendations.

MOTION: *Mr. Wald motions, Chair Stanton seconds that the BAC supports the City continue to move forward with bike/parking treatments as presented.*

Motion was unanimously approved.

Briefing and Possible Action: Status tracker for BAC Recommendations

Mr. Kopper presented the spreadsheet prepared by Aleksina Chapman to track BAC issues. The BAC expressed unanimous support for the spreadsheet. Chair Stanton asked whether the BAC wished to leave open ended items, such as those that are recommendations to other bodies or ongoing projects, as open or closed status on the spreadsheet. It was the consensus of the group to do yearly updates of the spreadsheet and make a determination if items should stay closed or open.

4. Items from Staff

Briefing and Possible Action: Manchaca PER Update – Neil Kopper

Mr. Kopper provides a historical overview of the Manchaca Bicycle Feasibility Report. This matter was requested by Council in 2010 and funded by 2010 bond funding. The funding covered a study but not implementation. The study does outline costs for recommended improvements and paves the way for finding funding options. Staff is now working on funding options. Mr. Kase asks if the report includes recommendations for the intersection of South Lamar and Manchaca. Figure 9 of the report describes recommendations for this intersection. Another BAC member asked if there are any recommendations for the bridge over Williamson Creek. Mr. Kopper responds that, yes, staff in the Street and Bridge division have reviewed the existing structure and it is possible to widen the sidewalks to 10 feet wide. Mr. Kopper briefly summarizes the report findings. The northern portion is recommended for a 4-3 lane conversion. South of Ben White, traffic volumes are higher so the recommendation is a separated facility. BAC members also ask about Manchaca south of Jones Road. Mr. Murphy pointed out that the Civic Center, ACC, local high school, library, etc. is in the vicinity and asked about solutions to calm traffic in this area. The traffic volumes here are too high to allow for a 4-3 lane conversion. Mr. Kopper stresses that the feasibility report does not offer long term recommendations but rather lists solutions that are implementable in a short time frame given existing constraints and limited funding. Mr. Kase asks about the portion of Manchaca from William Cannon to Slaughter. The plan recommends installing buffered bike lanes with appropriate treatments at intersections. Mr. Kase then asks if there are any plans to look at N-S corridors, South of Ben White. Mr. Kopper responded that the Bike Program is looking everywhere. Mr. Kase stressed that cyclists are very limited in the north-south access south of Ben White (Congress to Brodie). Mr. Kopper directed Mr. Kase to the Bicycle Master Plan for recommended facilities in this area.

4. Announcements/Adjourn

A BAC member asks how one gets an item on the agenda. Chair Stanton responds that one need only email him or City staff or post on the BAC Google group page at least 2 weeks ahead of time.

Ms. Dierenfield announced that Austin was chosen to host the 2015 Designing Cities conference to be held October 28 -31, 2015. More details will be forthcoming as planning is finalized.

Mr. Truxillo moves to adjourn. Mrs. Louviere-Ligons seconds. Meeting adjourns.