



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Bicycle Advisory Council

Recommendation 20240319-006: Shoal Creek Connectivity Gaps

WHEREAS, the purpose of the City of Austin Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC) is to advise the City of Austin and other jurisdictions on all matters relating to the use of the bicycle;

WHEREAS, the Transportation and Public Works (TPW) and Parks and Recreation departments have announced their intention to move forward with preliminary engineering for the Shoal Creek Trails Gaps, including the gap along West 31st Street from Lamar Blvd to Shoal Creek Blvd;

WHEREAS, the gap along West 31st Street and Shoal Creek Blvd is planned to be a shared street with traffic calming, shared lane markings, on-street parking on the north curb, and a widened sidewalk on the south curb—removing the previous pilot shared-use path available to bicyclists and pedestrians;

WHEREAS, during the [first round of public engagement on the trail gaps in 2020](#), the least supported option for 31st Street was a neighborhood bikeway with a walking lane on the south curb and on-street parking on the north curb with only 26% support, while 49% of respondents indicated support for options that removed a general travel lane or on-street parking;

WHEREAS, of the 669 respondents to the [City of Austin's survey](#), 41.5% indicated they “use the Shoal Creek Trail along West 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard for visiting the parks, walking, running, biking,...” while only 9.27% indicated they “use on-street parking on West 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard”;

WHEREAS, none of the options presented in the latest round of public engagement included options that removed on-street parking;

WHEREAS, the Bicycle Advisory Council acknowledges that the current 7ft Shared-Use Path is not an adequate long-term facility for bikes and pedestrians, and leads to frequent conflicts with oncoming motor vehicle traffic when bicyclists enter the vehicle lane to pass pedestrians;

WHEREAS, the Bicycle Advisory Council shares TPW's goal of separating bicycle and pedestrian traffic given the high volume of both on the trail but does not believe the current plan provides a safer alignment;

WHEREAS, of the time of the adoption of this Recommendation, 1,020 people signed the [petition from Safe Streets Austin](#) to "Save the Shoal Creek bike & pedestrian path between Lamar & 34th St";

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bicycle Advisory Council does not believe the current TPW and PARD recommendation along West 31st Street meets the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) standard, nor the Urban Trails Design Guide, and therefore recommends that TPW and PARD take all necessary steps to ensure that a protected bicycle facility is installed on 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard as soon as feasible;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the shared street design is not changed, the BAC recommends that TPW and PARD consider additional measures during the preliminary engineering phase to bring the segment in line with the AAA standard for Neighborhood Bikeways, particularly to ensure motor vehicle volumes are kept between 500 and 1000 vehicles per day, per the 2023 Bicycle Plan and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NATCO) [Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#); including:

- Removing on-street parking (particularly on the East segment where ROW is most constrained), restricting travel to one-way on all or parts of the segment, and options for modal filtering at Wabash and West 31st.
- Extending a two-way protected bikeway from North Lamar onto West 31st further away from the North Lamar intersection and past the first speed cushion in order to ensure merging into a shared street occurs after motor vehicles have lowered speeds.
- Remove the proposed left turn lanes from North Lamar to West 31st from the plan, as they will encourage increased traffic onto the shared street space of West 31st;
- Include modal filtering and traffic diversion to further reduce traffic volumes and speed, such as making the East portion of W 31st one way from Lamar to Wabash, with no thru vehicle traffic past Wabash.
- Prohibit on-street parking for a minimum distance of half a block between North Lamar and Wabash St, to provide additional right-of-way for a longer transitional period between a protected bike lane and the shared street environment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC acknowledges that 31st Street will always have very constrained ROW with high volumes of pedestrian, bicyclist, and motor vehicle traffic, and therefore encourages TPW and PARD to consider extending the two-way shared-use path up Lamar to 34th Street, and improving the 34th Street Bike Lanes and associated intersections.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BAC recommends that once all other sections of the Shoal Creek Trail meet the Urban Trails Design Guide standard, TPW and PARD prioritize revisiting this segment and building a protected bicycle facility.

Record of the vote: Unanimous

Attest: Natalie Lorne