Austin Bicycle Advisory Council

Welcome to the BAC

A quick orientation: who we are, how meetings run, and how recommendations work.

November 17, 2026

What the BAC is

“The purpose of the Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC) is to advise the City of Austin and other jurisdictions on all matters relating to the use of the bicycle, bicycle infrastructure, and individuals of all ages and abilities who utilize bicycles.”

BAC bylaws, Article I. The bylaws are six pages and worth a full read.

Advice, not advocacy

We hear briefings, discuss, and write recommendations to the City and other agencies.

Like an advocacy group, we speak for people who bike. Unlike one, our job is to give agencies advice they can use, so we weigh their needs and limits too.

Citizen-led, City-supported

We aren’t a Council-appointed board or commission. We write our own bylaws and elect our own members and officers.

City staff support gives us our reach. Fewer formalities and a narrow focus let us respond quickly and directly.

How we got here

First called for in the City’s 1995 Bicycle Plan.

Current structure set up in 2007 by City bicycle program staff, modeled on Portland’s bicycle advisory committee.

Reaffirmed in the 2014 and 2023 Bicycle Plans, both adopted by City Council.

Where we fit

Our council

Bicycle Advisory Council

Volunteer council advising the City and other jurisdictions on bicycling.

Sibling council

Pedestrian Advisory Council

Same role for walking. Same staff liaison; sometimes joint meetings and recommendations.

City commission

Urban Transportation Commission

Council-appointed; advises Council and City staff on all of transportation. Spencer, the liaison it appoints to the BAC, links the two bodies.

Elected officials

City Council

Sets City policy, adopts plans, and approves budgets. City staff carry them out.

Mobility Committee: four Council members who meet regularly on transportation.

Austin Transportation and Public Works

The City department we work with most closely, and home of our staff liaison, Meredith Rusin. The groups we hear from most include Active Transportation and Street Design, Sidewalks and Urban Trails, Capital Project Delivery, Vision Zero, and Safe Routes to School.

Regional and other agencies (a few of many)

CapMetro
Transit and bikeshare

ATP
Austin Transit Partnership: building Project Connect light rail

Travis County
County roads and bike safety work

CAMPO
Regional transportation planning

TxDOT
State-owned roads: highways and some major city streets

How a meeting runs

A typical agenda

1. Call to order
2. Public communication: up to three speakers, three minutes each
3. Approval of last month's minutes
4. Local fatalities report
5. Discussion items: briefings and presentations
6. Discussion and action items: recommendations
7. Future agenda items: open floor for topics, events, and announcements
8. Adjournment

When and where

Third Tuesday, 6–8 pm, Permitting and Development Center, Room 1401. Webex available. We'll go over the 2027 calendar later tonight.

Getting something on the agenda

Any member can request an item: a speaker, a topic, or a recommendation. Email Meredith, Drake, and Mitch. For a specific meeting, try to ask at least two weeks ahead; otherwise, anytime.

Prep ahead

Meredith sends the agenda a few days before. Read it, bring your questions, and review and comment on draft recommendations, usually shared as Google Docs. There's rarely time in the meeting for deep discussion or reading documents together.

Full versus alternate members

Generally, there’s no practical difference. We decide by consensus, and that includes all members.

Everyone

- Takes part in discussion and in reaching consensus
- Votes in member and officer elections
- Can propose agenda items and chair subcommittees

Full members only

- Can serve as officers
- Cast the formal vote if consensus fails, which almost never happens

If a full member leaves before their term ends, the BAC votes on which alternate member takes over the rest of that term.

How recommendations work

A core job. Making recommendations is the first responsibility in our bylaws. The other big one is the feedback we give presenters at meetings.

Writing one: know your audience, focus on the what, not the how, and write for a reader with zero context.

Anyone can draft one. Care about a topic? We'll help, and templates and past examples are in the Google Drive.

Example: West 24th Street road diet, adopted in 2025

WHEREAS, data from the 2017 report documented West 24th Street as a major pedestrian and bicycle route, with PM peak hour traffic counts showing hundreds of people on bikes and approximately 7,500 pedestrians crossing Guadalupe Street …

WHEREAS, … the Barton Springs Road safety pilot … [resulted] in a 17% decrease in total crashes, a 64-70% reduction in high-risk speeding …

WHEREAS clauses are the why: background, data, and sources that build the case

BE IT RESOLVED, the BAC formally recommends that TPW immediately program and install the long-planned road diet on West 24th Street using low-cost, quick-build materials …

BE IT RESOLVED clauses are the ask: what we want, and from whom

Life cycle of a recommendation

1	**Idea**	Most come from something already under way: a new project or design, a public comment period, a presentation to us. Sometimes a member raises an issue on their own.
2	**Draft**	A member volunteers to write it, often at a meeting, and it goes on an upcoming agenda.
3	**Review**	The author shares the draft with the full BAC as early as possible, ideally a week before the meeting, and members comment.
4	**Meet and vote**	Discussion and live edits, then a vote.
5	**Follow up**	Meredith sends it to the relevant parties and posts it on the BAC website. Sometimes staff report back or an agency replies.

Subcommittees

A few members who take on a bigger effort between meetings, like a large recommendation or a research-heavy project, and report back to the full BAC.

What the bylaws say

Purpose

To examine a project or issue more closely and bring recommendations back to the full BAC for possible action.

Who leads

The chair appoints a member, full or alternate, as subcommittee chair, with that member's consent.

Meetings

Any date or time, as long as public notice goes out at least 72 hours ahead.

There's no set timeline. A subcommittee can meet once to draft a single recommendation, or keep going for as long as it's needed.

Open for discussion: how do we want to use subcommittees going forward?

Staying connected

BAC Google Group

Public, about 340 members

Announcements, and a way for the community to reach the BAC. Low traffic.

austin-bac@googlegroups.com

BAC-Active Google Group

Current members only

Our working list: upcoming and in-progress recommendations, things to raise. Use it freely.

austin-bac-active@googlegroups.com

BAC and PAC Google Drive

Shared with the Pedestrian Advisory Council

Bylaws, member rosters, meeting documents, templates, and draft and past recommendations.

Open the Google Drive

- Every member has been added to BAC-Active and the Google Drive. Can't see one? Email Drake.
- Agendas, presentations, and minutes are posted on the City's BAC page and meetings page.
- The orientation handout in the Google Drive covers all of this in more detail.

Questions? Email us anytime.

Drake Hampton
Chair
drakehamp@gmail.com

Mitch Ferro
Vice chair
mitchferro@gmail.com

Meredith Rusin
Staff liaison
meredith.rusin@austintexas.gov