



**CITY OF AUSTIN
STREET SMARTS TASK FORCE**

MEETING SUMMARY

**CITY HALL BOARD AND COMMISSION ROOM
301 WEST 2ND ST.
AUSTIN, TX 78701**

September 20, 2007

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sara Krause, Task Force Chair, Bruce Todd Public Affairs
Darlene Berghammer, Mayor and Council
Andrew Bucknall, Urban Transportation Commission
Scott R. Cunningham P.E., Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
Rob D'Amico, League of Bicycling Voters
Kathleen Hornaday, HDR/WHM
Joan Hudson, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)
Rachel Proctor May, Mayor and Council
Chris Riley, Planning Commission
Patti Rosen, Wellness for Workers / Mayor's Fitness Council
Larry Schooler, Mayor and Council
Robin Stallings, Texas Bicycle Coalition
Lane Wimberley, Bicycle Commuter

1. Call to Order & Approval of July Minutes

Ms. Krause called the meeting to order and requested approval of the July meeting minutes. A motion was made for approval, seconded, and passed.

2. Explanation of new timeline for task force (Chair)

Ms. Krause elaborated on the new timeline and her desire to complete all work this calendar year. Several Task Force Members indicated they had not seen the revised

timeline. It was decided Mr. Dusza would forward the document to all Task Force Members.

3. Citizens Communication (3 minutes each)

None

4. Tool Box: Annick Beaudet

Ms. Beaudet discussed the Task Force request for a toolbox. She gave a brief description of its contents with examples and then distributed copies to the Task Force.

5. Presentation: The Yellow Bike Project, Pete Wall

Mr. Wall briefed the Task Force on the history and current efforts of the organization. Following his presentation, Mr. Wilkes discussed demographics of Yellow Bike's effect on bike culture in Austin. At the conclusion of the presentation, questions were received from the Task Force and answered.

6. Subcommittee updates:

a. Law enforcement and Safe Behavior

Mr. Bucknall presented the following update:

A. Bike/Car Interactions

1. *The City of Austin shall create an ordinance establishing a three-foot safe passing law that reflects the language of the Texas Bicycle Coalition's original proposal for a state law. Additionally, the City Council should consider passing a resolution supporting the TBC's efforts to enact a state law. (August 7)*
2. *The City Council shall pass an ordinance prohibiting mobile phone use while operating a moving motor vehicle or bicycle, and the council shall study an exception for hands-free cell phone use prior to implementation of an ordinance. (August 21)*
3. *The City Council shall pass an ordinance prohibiting text messaging on mobile phones or other devices while operating a moving motor vehicle or bicycle. (August 21)*
4. *The City of Austin shall develop a comprehensive strategy to preserve existing bicycle lanes, analyze and promote a seamless bicycle network, limit parking in bicycle lanes and expand lanes that promote safety and connectivity. (September 4)*

5. *The City of Austin shall require a corridor study review, which promotes safety and connectivity, to accompany any reduction of existing bicycle lanes. (September 4)*

B. *Bike/Pedestrian Interactions*

1. *The City of Austin shall establish a Downtown Pedestrian/Bicycle Zone with the following boundaries: The north curb of Cesar Chavez Street to the south curb of 15th Street, and the east curb of Lavaca Street to the west sidewalk edge of the I-35 southbound access road. (September 11)*
2. *The City of Austin shall prohibit riding a bicycle on sidewalks in the Downtown Pedestrian/Bicycle Zone. The new ordinance will replace the current prohibitions (on areas) within the boundaries of the zone. (September 11)*
3. *The City of Austin's Downtown Commission shall report to the COA Bicycle/Pedestrian program and the new ongoing city bicycle committee/commission—with consideration of changes in the Great Streets program—on ways to improve bicycle infrastructure in areas where bicycles are prohibited or discouraged from riding on sidewalks. (September 11)*

C. *Public Awareness / Education*

The City of Austin, with input from Travis County and CAMPO, shall create a pamphlet of guidelines outlining the laws/rights/responsibilities and safe practices for bicyclists and motorists. The guide—which would be based on similar pamphlets in Florida, Tucson and Nevada--would be used to educate the public, new bike owners (Pamphlets would be handed away at bike shops), the courts and the Austin Police Department. (September 4)

D. *Procedures of Enforcement*

1. *The City of Austin, with input from the bicycling community, shall review the Austin Police Department's Uniform Traffic Enforcement and Tolerance Policy to make recommendations of changes as necessary to include bicycle specific issues. (August 28)*
2. *As the City of Austin reviews the Austin Police Department's Uniform Traffic Enforcement and Tolerance Policy for bicycle-related issues, the city shall specifically consider changes to address bicyclists' safety and other practical matters in enforcement of prohibitions for riding a bicycle on sidewalks.*
3. *The City of Austin shall make enforcement of codes related to bicycle infrastructure requirements a priority.*

4. *A designated City of Austin ongoing bicycle committee/commission shall continue to review car and bicycle/pedestrian hit-and-run collisions for possible changes in enforcement and prosecution. The city should also explore innovative strategies for enforcement, such as tying insurance requirements to registration and specific civil penalty definitions.*
5. *The City of Austin shall review signage and enforcement of no-parking and tow-away zones within 20 or more feet of an intersection. An ongoing city committee/commission would designate the roadways for consideration. (September 4)*

E. Reporting Collisions and Violations

1. *The City of Austin shall conduct a pilot project with the Austin Police Department for online crash reporting and public access to crash reports. (August 28)*
2. *The City of Austin shall require the Austin Police Department to compile an annual report outlining data for bicycle-related citations, crashes, injuries and other enforcement/safety issues. The report would be submitted to the city's ongoing committee/commission for review. (August 28)*

F. Future Steps

The City of Austin should establish a permanent city-recognized diversified, bicycle committee to continue work on issues and make ongoing recommendations to the City Council and other boards and commissions related to bicycle use in the City of Austin. (August 7)

Following the presentation, a thorough discussion ensued regarding the safe passing rule. It was decided the recommendations would proceed as proposed.

b. Infrastructure and Facilities

Mr. Wimberley presented the following update:

Infrastructure and Facilities

Draft status

20 Sep 2007

Task Force Goals

- *Facilitate bicycling as a viable transportation choice;*
- *Afford citizens the opportunity to experience the City's unique scenic and natural amenities;*
- *Provide access to healthful recreational activities; and*

- *Link major parks and open spaces with Austin neighborhoods*

What is “viable transportation?”

- *Reasonable expectation of safety*
 - *Should not be, nor be perceived as being inherently more dangerous than other modes of transportation*
- *Practicable*
 - *Should not be illegal or impossible*
- *Effective*
 - *Needs to connect people with destinations*

Why don’t people ride a bike?

- *Not safe*
- *No route*
- *No showers, lockers, etc.*
- *Takes too long*
- *Don’t know how*
- *Other reasons (too hot; not fit enough; insufficient equipment; etc.)*

Infrastructure/Facilities:

Barriers

- *Comprehensive review of physical barriers and missing links in current bike infrastructure*
 - *Identify of specific barriers and gaps*
 - *Develop of methodology for ranking*
 - *Recommend solutions, modifications, etc.*

Infrastructure/Facilities:

Signage and way-finding

- *Develop a set of standards for City of Austin, to include*
 - *Shared facilities -- awareness and expectation (eg, “Bikes have full use of lane,” “Bikes yield to pedestrians,” etc.)*
 - *Clear and effective way-finding*
 - *Construction re-routing*
 - *Avoidance of sign clutter*

Infrastructure/Facilities:

Destination Facilities

- *Bike racks*
 - *Equitable and obvious locating*
 - *Sufficient capacity*

- Reliability and ease of use
- Showers and lockers in office buildings
 - Retrofits
 - New construction
- Bike stations

**Infrastructure/Facilities:
En route Facilities**

- Bike lanes, Climbing lanes
- Enhancement of certain sidewalks
- Sharrows, blue lanes, bike boxes
- Expanded use of pilot studies
- Lane diets
- Multi-use trails

**Infrastructure/Facilities:
Signature Facilities**

- Candidates include
 - Exclusive Bikeways
 - Major municipal bike station downtown
 - Bike boulevards

**Infrastructure/Facilities:
Existing project review**

- Review and provide recommendations on major existing projects that impact bicycles
 - CapMetro Rail-with-Trail Feasibility Study
 - Downtown Austin Plan
 - Lance Armstrong Bikeway
 - TODs
 - UT Bike Plan

**Infrastructure/Facilities:
Inter-modal Transportation**

- Inter-city buses
 - Bike racks on buses and at bus stops
- Park-and-ride Facilities
 - Secure bike storage
 - Connection to bike route network
 - Bike service stations
- Rail Stations

**Infrastructure/Facilities:
Governmental Support**

- *Bicycle/Pedestrian Program*
 - *Commitment from City*
 - *Commensurate with ridership, or better, with target ridership*
 - *Funded, empowered, held to account*
 - *Plans, Implements, coordinates, measures, reports*
- *Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission*
 - *Appointed by Council*
 - *Advisory*
 - *Liaise with public*
- *Code and Policy*

**7. Subcommittee Presentation of draft report: Education and Promotion
discussion and action to adopt.

Dr. Rosen presented the following draft report:

The Education and Promotion subcommittee of the Street Smarts Task Force recommendations for consideration by the Task Force.

A resolution to create a city sponsored commission to continue the work of the Task Force.

Whereas, the safety of the citizens traveling on the roadways of the city of Austin is crucial to the health and well-being of the city and

Whereas, the activities of the Street Smarts Task Force have generated significant and effective recommendations for change to impact that safety in numerous functions of the City of Austin, and

Whereas the type of work done by the Street Smarts Task Force needs to be continued after the task force's work is completed; now therefore be it

Resolved, the Street Smarts Task Force hereby recommends to the Mayor and City council that a bicycle advisory commission be established by the city Council to advise the council and such city departments as appropriate on matters that impact the safety of citizens traveling on the roadways of the city particularly those who choose to use bicycles, and furthermore

Be it resolved the commission should be composed of 9 members, 7 of which will be appointed by each council member with 2 members chosen at large. The number of alternative members will be determined by the commission and appointed by the city council.

A recommendation for adoption of a resolution regarding education and promotion within the City of Austin staff.

Whereas, education relating to sharing the road with all road users will enhance the safety of the citizens traveling on the roadways of the City of Austin, and

Whereas, education resources are readily available through existing curricula, trained instructors and viable non-profit organizations and

Whereas, the City of Austin employee base represents a major potential for educating and

Whereas, the city of Austin can offer incentives to vendors to have employees educated, and

Whereas, it is in the best interests of the city to have a significant number of trips made by bicycles, now therefore

Be it resolved, the Street Smarts Task Force hereby recommends to the Mayor and City council that the entire city staff be provided an on-going program of safety education related to sharing the road with all users, and furthermore

Be it resolved that traffic safety, as it relates to cycling, be incorporated into the educational program for all City of Austin employees who drive city vehicles or who drive personal vehicles on city business, and that they shall pass a specified traffic safety program including bike safety, and furthermore

Be it resolved that the wellness and physical education program for the city of Austin, will incorporate cycling into their programs and promote the use of cycling for sport and commuting, and furthermore

Be it resolved that the city of Austin will provide incentives to all vendors and other corporate, state agencies and educational institutions, and citizens of the community to provide on-going programs of safety education related to sharing the road with all users, and

Be it resolved, that the city of Austin will support a program to promote commuting and bicycling by city employees and employees of vendors and other corporate, state agency and educational institutions.

Additional recommendations on promotion that have been proposed but not yet approved by a majority of the Education and Promotion subcommittee include the following:

Potential for promoting safety by putting messages on existing traffic information signs to remind drivers to “share the road” particularly during May which is the officially recognized National Bike Month.

Promotion of the “Share the Road” message directed to cyclists and motorists through Public Service Announcements on radio, television, printed media and at movie theaters.

Incentives for retail bicycle dealers to provide bicycle safety messages and discounts to purchasers of bicycles who successfully pass a bicycle safety education class.

8. Discussion and Possible action to convene a Policy Subcommittee

Ms. Krause explained the Policy Subcommittee would compile the end product of this effort from a technical aspect. She stated the Task Force as a whole would be adopting, not the Policy Subcommittee. Ms. Krause reviewed the timeline and process of everyone reviewing the final product after compilation prior to approval.

Adjourn