

Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop

Meeting Documentation Form

Project Team Members (On all projects):	Mike Heiligenstein, Melissa Hurst and Sean Beal (Mobility Authority); Bonnie Lister, Heather Ashley-Nguyen, Shirley Nichols and Jon Geiselbrecht (TxDOT); Jessica Engelhardt and Lynda Rife (Rifeline)		
Project Team Members (183 North):	Mark Cissell, Abby Tomlinson, Jessica Salazar and Kyle Keahey (HNTB); Paul Schrader, Darren Dodson and Andy Atlas (CP&Y)		
Project Team Members (MoPac South & MoPac Intersections):	Abby Tomlinson, Kyle Keahey, Jessica Salazar and Loretta Schietinger (HNTB); Jimmy Robertson and Stephanie Messerli (Jacobs)		
Project Team Members (Oak Hill Parkway):	James Williams (TxDOT); Wade Strong (RTG); Carol Fajkus, Matt Johnson and Bubba Needham (Atkins)		
Organization or Group Met with:	Bike & Pedestrian Stakeholders: George Cofer and Butch Smith (Hill Country Conservancy); David Orr and Tom Wald (City of Austin Bicycle Advisory Council); Luke Urie (City of Austin Pedestrian Advisory Council); Dick Kallerman (Sierra Club); Nadia Barrera, Chad Crager, Laura Dierenfield, Marissa Monroy and Nathan Wilkes (City of Austin); Hill Abell, Preston Tyree, Allison Kaplan, Miller Nuttle, Patricia Schaub and Stanton Truxillo (Bike Austin)		
Location:	Mobility Authority - 3300 N I-35, #300, Austin, TX 78705, Board Room	Date:	February 17, 2015
# of Attendees (approx.):	41		
Elected Officials in Attendance:	None		

NOTES

Lynda Rife began the meeting by explaining that the Mobility Authority organized the workshop to provide bike and pedestrian community stakeholders with an update on four projects that are currently under study – 183 North Mobility Project, MoPac South Environmental Study, MoPac Intersections and the Oak Hill Parkway project. She then introduced the Mobility Authority’s Executive Director, Mike Heiligenstein.

Mr. Heiligenstein provided a brief history of the Mobility Authority’s commitment to and experience implementing bike and pedestrian accommodations as part of its projects. He provided a brief description of what has been done on the projects open to traffic (183A and the Manor Expressway) and is being done on its two projects under construction (Bergstrom Expressway and MoPac Improvement Project). To date, the Mobility Authority has invested approximately \$11 million in bike and pedestrian improvements on its projects that are open to traffic, is planning to invest another \$31 million for its projects under construction, and is taking feedback on proposed investments on the projects currently being studied. More than 90 miles of Shared Use Paths and sidewalks have been built or are planned by the Mobility Authority.

Sean Beal then provided an overview of the four projects under study, explaining the general constraints of each corridor and emphasizing that the proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvements for each project aim to tie into existing or proposed facilities (bicycle, pedestrian and transit) to maximize mobility.

Mrs. Rife then provided a quick overview of the format of the meeting. After the breakout sessions and report out (see notes below), Mrs. Rife thanked everyone for their time and input. She reminded them that they could provide additional input to the project teams using the comment forms provided at the meeting.

Following is a summary of the input received at each project station.

Overarching themes heard from workshop attendees across all projects include:

- Lighting on bicycle/pedestrian facilities
- Wayfinding signage
- Requests to:
 - Narrow frontage road lanes to accommodate more or improved bicycle/pedestrian facilities
 - Widen SUPs to 12 feet where possible
 - Consider and mitigate contraflow for safety issues related to bicyclists and pedestrians traveling in the opposite direction of vehicular traffic
 - Add shade (trees) to bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 - Leverage existing bicycle facilities/trails in project areas and connections to them to fill in gaps and make improvements to the overall network

Themes related to the 183 North Mobility Project include:

- The city of Austin feels that they have done about as much as they can to upgrade bike and pedestrian accommodations on Jollyville Rd. (two 5-foot bike lanes). They expressed that available pavement width has been fully utilized with 10-foot lanes and 5-foot bike lanes, and the roadway includes several sharp curves. No additional bike accommodations can be made without a major Capital Improvement Program. Connecting to Jollyville Rd. would not serve the goal of reaching a higher percentage of potential bicycle users. Stakeholders preferred a Shared Use Path (SUP) along the US 183 frontage road in lieu of a connection to Jollyville Rd. to meet travel demand.
- Pond Springs Rd. doesn't have the same challenges as Jollyville Rd. in terms of geometrics and the perceived comfort level, but stakeholders would like to see some improvements along the US 183 frontage road there as well.
- Stakeholders felt we're missing an opportunity to fix a problem with a major effort such as the 183 North Mobility Project by not building continuous a shared use path along the entire facility.
- Increase the size of sidewalks to Shared Use Path width wherever feasible, even if that means there would still be gaps that would not be considered wide enough to be a Shared Use Path.
- An 8' width does not serve two-way traffic nearly as well as a 12' width.
- Purchase control of access for some driveways to eliminate them so that fewer conflict points were present across the shared use paths, especially those with areas served by multiple driveways. If not reduced, stakeholders suggested adding warning signs at driveways for those cyclists in contraflow.
- Illumination of the SUP will be important. Trail visibility may be a problem. Add reflective pavement markers that reflect in both directions. Move the SUP off of ROW to reduce lighting issues.
- Provide signalized, diagonal crossings at intersections (Spicewood Springs Road on the southbound frontage road is an example)
- Some cyclists won't use striped bike lanes. Add green paint across driveways and cross streets to help increase path visibility.

Themes related to the Oak Hill Parkway Project include:

- 12 ft. SUP lane width where possible; 10 ft. is tight. If only sidewalk is planned and not sidewalk and SUP, make sidewalks wider now for use by both cyclists and pedestrians.
- Partner with the city to increase 6' sidewalks widths by putting in a one-way buffered bike lane (7' lane and 2' buffer).
- Make the sidewalk by the Sportsplex wider than standard to use as an alternate route for cyclists for instances when the SUP at the creek floods.
- Upstream crossing (stepping stones) to walk across with bike at stream crossing if flooding of creek occurs would be acceptable solution.
- Provide SUPs on both sides of the project roadway at FM 1826 / Circle Drive areas (especially by ACC).
- Grade separated traffic preferred.
- Would like to look at analysis of intersections in city of Austin jurisdiction; would like to see roadway typical sections. Suggested project team look at newly adopted City of Austin Bike Plan.
- Consider a path on the north side as there would be fewer conflicts.
- Consider a SUP tie in at Monterrey Oak to YBC trail (SUP on South side from William Cannon to Monterrey Oaks, then cross SUP over to North side and tie into YBC trail at Monterrey Oaks).
- Preferred Alt A – grade separate bicycle/pedestrian facility at Y.
- Appreciated that the project team is thinking outside the box for solutions.
- Suggested referencing City of Austin Urban Trail Master Plan for opportunity to tie into a future crossing at 71W/Williamson Creek area that project team pointed out on schematic plan.
- Suggested SUP/sidewalk crossings be pulled back at driveways in areas where ROW is not constrained to improve safety of SUP users intersecting with motorists. Suggested signage and green paint. (Cited example: Manor Expressway SUP at apartment complex driveway).
- Use beacons at driveway crossings (flashing signs only activated when cyclists cross a loop in the ground).
- Liked barrier on path similar to 183A (venetian blind type).
- Communicated that bikes would like to be time competitive with cars, and at an area like the Y, a dedicated crossing would alleviate a bottleneck and increase speed of travel.

Comment Forms

- Keep crossings off grade whenever possible
- Visual cues for drivers when the bike lane is broken by driveways
- Visual screens important for oncoming car headlights
- Please keep the SUP grade separated at 71 & 290; I like Alt. A that allows for this
- Keep shade trees in mind when possible with your design
- Bring SUP on North side at Monterey Oaks
- Look closely at all driveway intersections
- Make sure separate grade crossings are wide and lit

Themes related to the MoPac South Environmental Study/MoPac Intersections projects include:

- They would like to see improvements to the current bike/ped connection at Barton Springs Road.
- Pedestrian beacons are necessary at all frontage road crossings.
- Noted that it is important to set the shared use path or sidewalk away from the curb in any locations where it is possible.

- At DDI crossings, the bike/ped best practice is to create a separate grade crossing for cyclists, and at the intersection with Slaughter, look at going under the intersection.
- Several participants underscored the feeling that DDI's are dangerous for bikes/peds and that serious thought should be given to how to better accommodate in this intersection. Noted that DDI's force some cyclists to use the shoulder of the mainlanes by way of the entrance ramp, which is dangerous and not recommended, even for experienced cyclists.
- It is important to improve intersection mobility for bike/ped users to the same degree as for drivers.
- Most bike/ped traffic in the area of the MoPac bridge north and asked what would be done to widen accommodations in the area.
- 8 ft. wide paths are the absolute minimum, with 10 ft. being better, and 12 ft. being the best. Shade trees, path set back from the curb, and safety lighting are also desirable. 5 foot sidewalks, even with a tall curb, are not enough for safety.
- Explore narrowing the frontage road in some areas (specifically Tuscan Way to Zilker Park) to create a wider-than-8-foot sidewalk. Alternately, they would like to narrow the frontage road to provide a buffer between the driving lanes and the sidewalk that does not take away from the current width.
- Eliminate a frontage road lane and turn it into a two-way cycle track with a concrete barrier.
- Accommodations at Ben White were a major concern, as the current proposal is to tie-in to a 5 ft. wide sidewalk in the area. This was supported across several groups.
- A suggestion is to at least provide a tall barrier in the area and utilize a narrower frontage road to ensure that the space for the barrier is not taken out of the current 5 ft., but added to it.
 - They recognized that they would prefer more than this, but this is a minimum suggestion that could salvage the existing sidewalk.
- Examine the opportunity to provide wide sidewalks opposite from the SUP. This was supported across several groups.

Follow Up Requests:

- Nathan offered to send the 183 North Mobility Project team information about his negotiations with TxDOT on Parmer Lane improvements regarding narrowing frontage road lanes.
- Project teams will review and consider the travel demand map provided by the City of Austin.
- Project teams will review and consider the input provided today.
- Tom Wald questioned the possibility of partnering with the City of Austin to increase 6' sidewalk widths by putting in a one-way buffered bike lane (7' lane and 2' buffer). (OHP project)
- Tom Wald would like to look at analysis of intersections in City of Austin jurisdiction; would like to see roadway typical sections (OHP project)