Houston Bike Plan: Goals & Tools

Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting #3

September 9, 2015
Since the last meeting:

- Completed first phase of public engagement
- Revised Vision and Goals statements
  - Based on BAC, City and Mayor’s office comments
    - Comments on goals, metrics, or strategies
- Presented to Planning Commission and City Council TTI Committee
- Developed draft toolbox of bike facilities (projects), programs and policies
Today’s Activities

- Results from Bike Plan Survey
- Review Vision and Goals
- Overview of Bike Plan Toolbox
- Developing a Bicycle Plan Map: Group Exercise
- Discussion & Debrief
Public Outreach by the Numbers

- 2,895 online surveys
- 800+ written map comments
- 387 online map ideas
Which type of bicyclist are you?

- **Strong and Fearless**: 15%
- **Enthused and Confident**: 47%
- **Interested but Concerned**: 36%
- **No Way, No How**: 2%
What Goals Stand Out?

- Public Meeting & Online Goals/Vision Comments

[Bar chart showing percentage of mentions for different goals]

- Access/Connectivity: 30%
- Infrastructure: 25%
- Safety/Enforcement/Education: 15%
- Maintenance: 12%
- Health/Environment: 10%
What Goals Stand Out?

- **Online Survey Goal Responses** *(respondents chose their top 2)*

- Provide a well-connected, lower stress bicycle network
- Improve safety for all road users
- Capture significant potential for growth in people biking
- Improve community health and wellness
- Better compete with peer cities who are setting the bar
- Provide affordable access to jobs & opportunities
- Support community benefits for everyone, not just people who bike
- Other
Which type of bicyclist are you?

Men

- Strong and Fearless: 1%
- Enthused and Confident: 20%
- Interested but Concerned: 28%
- No Way, No How: 51%

Women

- Strong and Fearless: 1%
- Enthused and Confident: 42%
- Interested but Concerned: 48%
- No Way, No How: 8%

- Men typically more concerned with facilities and infrastructure
- Women see safety (both personal safety and traffic safety) as bigger barrier to more people bicycling
Level of agreement with bike-related statements (1: Strongly Disagree 6: Strongly Agree)

- I want to live in a community where people can bike to many destinations 5.5
- I would frequently bike 10-15 minutes to a destination if I felt I could do it safely 5.4
- I think bicycles can be useful way to travel for more than just recreational trips or exercise 5.4
- I would ride my bicycle more often if the bikeway network was improved 5.4
- Improving bicycling will have a positive benefit on Houston's economy 5.2
- The bicycle network should provide options for people of all riding abilities 5.1
- On-street bike lanes should be considered for more city roadways 5.1
- Providing safe bicycling alternatives for people who can't or don't drive is critical 5.0
- I would like to see the bike share program expanded to more locations 4.6
- Better bicycle infrastructure is critical to attract a talented workforce 4.6
Level of agreement with bike-related statements (1: Strongly Disagree 6: Strongly Agree)

- There are effective maps and other trip planning tools available for people biking in Houston: 3.1
- Most places I bike to have convenient bicycle parking available: 3.1
- I am comfortable riding in mixed traffic with cars on city streets: 2.9
- The existing bicycle network effectively connects to my neighborhood: 2.9
- I feel very comfortable riding a bicycle in Houston: 2.8
- The existing bicycle network effectively connects to major activity centers: 2.7
- I feel safe riding a bicycle in Houston: 2.6
- Houston has a well-connected bicycle network: 2.4
- The existing bicycle network effectively connects to neighborhoods across all income levels: 2.3
- Houston’s transportation network effectively balances the needs of bicycles with other travel modes: 2.1
Which bicycle facility type would you prefer riding on? (respondents could pick 2)

1. Shared Use Path or Trail: 74%
2. Bike Lane: 29%
3. Separated Bike Lane: 73%
4. Shared Roadway, Neighborhood Street: 10%
5. Shared Roadway, with Marking and Signage: 11%
6. Shared Roadway, Mixed-Use Commercial Street: 3%
Which type of bicycle parking would you be happy to store your bicycle at for one hour or more? (respondents could pick any number of choices)

- **1 BIKE STATION**: 58%
- **2 BIKE LOCKER**: 62%
- **3 BIKE LID**: 45%
- **4 BIKE RACK**: 52%
- **5 SIGN POST**: 11%
- **6 WHATEVER IS AVAILABLE**: 23%
Vision & Goals

**Vision**

By 2026, the City of Houston will be a Safer, More Accessible, Gold Level Bike-Friendly City

**Goals**

- To provide a *safer bicycle network* for people of all ages and abilities through improved facilities, education, and enforcement
- To create a highly *accessible, citywide network* of comfortable bike facilities that connects neighborhoods to transit, jobs, and activity centers, including schools, universities, parks, and libraries
- To exceed average *ridership* levels in peer cities by implementing policies and programs that enable more people to ride bicycles and encourage healthy, active transportation choices
- To *develop and sustain* a high-quality bicycle network, including both bikeways and end-of-trip facilities
Final Goals

GOAL
Improve Safety
To provide a safer bicycle network for people of all ages and abilities through improved facilities, education, and enforcement

SUPPORTING INFORMATION
PUBLIC MEETINGS
20% of comments on goals were about improving safety through well-designed facilities, increasing education for both bicyclists and drivers, and enforcing laws for people who drive and bike.

ONLINE TOOLS
76% of survey responses indicated the feeling of safety was the #1 barrier to bicycling in Houston. Significant share of feedback on goals and open comments related to improving safety (facilities, education, enforcement)

EXISTING CONDITIONS
67% of bicycle crashes occur at intersections where conflicts with vehicles are highest. Houston falls below many peer cities with a higher than average bicycle fatality rate of 11.2 per 10,000 bicycle commuters.

Source: Crash Data TxDOT CRIS Database (2009-2014)
Final Goals

GOAL
Increase Access
To create a highly accessible, citywide network of comfortable bike facilities that connects neighborhoods to transit, jobs, and activity centers, including schools, universities, parks, and libraries.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION
PUBLIC MEETINGS
30% of comments on goals focused on easy access to facilities that provide connections and a seamless bicycle network throughout the city.

ONLINE TOOLS
72% of survey responses identified providing a well-connected lower stress bicycle network should be the top goal of the HBP. 33% of forum discussions identified increasing bicycle access as a priority.

EXISTING CONDITIONS
Only 38% of the population and 46% of jobs are within 1/2 mile of a high comfort bike facility. A majority of schools, libraries, community centers, and multi-service centers are not within 1/4 mile of a high comfort bike facility.
Final Goals

**GOAL**
Increase Ridership
To exceed average ridership levels in peer cities by implementing policies and programs that enable more people to ride bicycles and encourage healthy, active transportation choices.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**PUBLIC MEETINGS**
Complete streets, bike parking requirements, bike-friendly businesses, outreach programs, and increased funding were identified as important tools to improve the bicycle culture in Houston.

**ONLINE TOOLS**
42% of survey respondents indicated health as the primary reason they ride a bike, followed by recreation and commuting. Respondents indicated they would regularly bike more if there were better facilities and they felt safer.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**
Houston’s 2015 Sunday Streets program has been incredibly successful with over 26,000 attendees estimated at some events. Houston falls below peer cities with a 0.5% commute mode share and only 51% of adults meeting recommended physical activity levels.
Final Goals

GOAL

Develop and Maintain Facilities
To develop and sustain a high-quality bicycle network, including both bikeways and end-of-trip facilities

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

PUBLIC MEETINGS
Maintenance of existing facilities (improving riding surface, cracks, replace striping/signage) identified maintenance as a priority issue. A bike lane sweeping and debris removal program was identified as a needed improvement.

ONLINE TOOLS
Over 70% of survey participants selected shared use paths/trails and separated bike lanes as preferred facilities. Feedback identified a lack of bicycle parking and end-of-trip amenities, such as showers, is a barrier to increasing bicycling in Houston.

EXISTING CONDITIONS
Less than 30% of dedicated bike facilities are up to current standards. Houston ranks well below peer cities with only 1.1 miles of bike facilities per square mile.

Source Team analysis; Alliance for Biking & Walking’s 2014 Benchmarking Report
How to Reach the Goals

- Use the Bike Plan Toolbox!
  - Bridges the gap between today and getting where we want to go.

By 2026, the City of Houston will be a Safer, More Accessible, Gold Level Bike-Friendly City

Toolbox of Projects, Programs & Policies
What is in the Draft Toolbox?

1. A set of approaches and strategies that can support the city’s goals for bicycling
2. Specific implementation of toolbox items would be project specific and tailored to context and funding

- Projects
  - Bayou Greenways
  - On Street Dedicated Bikeways
  - Neighborhood Bikeways

- Policies
  - Context Sensitive Design
  - Bike Parking
  - Bike/Transit Integration

- Programs
  - Bikeshare
  - Bicycle Safety Training
  - Sunday Streets
SHARED ON-STREET
Policies

Examples

- Complete Streets Ordinance
- Parking Regulation
- Bikes on Transit
- Safe Passing Ordinance
- Design Manuals
Programs

Examples

- Bicycle Friendly Community Designation
- Maps & Apps
- Bike Safety Training
- Driver/Bicyclist Education
- Bike Repair & Maintenance Workshops
- Organized Bike Rides
- Better Block
- Open Streets, “Sunday Streets”
- Bike Count Programs
The primary reason for this bike trip is going to or from a social activity (e.g. at a friend's house, the park, a restaurant, the movies).
A small city has elected a new mayor and that mayor has asked you to design a Bike Master Plan.
Discussion: land use

- Where do people live?
- Where do people work?
- Where else might they want to go on a bike?
V/C: the traffic volume divided by traffic capacity

Number of through lanes

0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 0.6 0.7 0.8 0.9 1.0

1.0 (2)
Discussion: roads

- Which streets would be comfortable to bike on?
- Which would not?
- Does the traffic create barriers?
Separated Bike Lane
  One-Way: 1/2 lane
  Two-Way: 1 lane

Bike Lane
  One Way: 1/2 lane
  One on each side of a two-way street: 1 lane total

Neighborhood Bikeway

Off-Street Walk / Bike Path
Next Steps

- Refine Bicycle Toolbox
- Draft Bike Plan Network Development
- Bicycle Focus Groups
  - Women and Bicycling
  - Neighborhood Specific
- Next BAC Meeting
  - Targeting November/December