

DRAFT Minutes of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)

January 22, 2020

Meeting held in
Council Chambers, Public Level, City Hall Annex
2:30 p.m.

Call to Order

Chair Maya Ford called the meeting to order at 2:37 p.m. with a quorum present.

Maya Ford, Chair

Clark Martinson, Vice Chair

Toloria Allen Absent

Kristine Anthony

Oni Blair Absent

Neil Bremner Absent

Robin Holzer

Beth Martin Absent

Yuhayna Mahmud Absent

Veon McReynolds

Amar Mohite

Alejandro Perez Absent

Ana Ramirez Huerta

Sandra Rodriguez

Mike VanDusen

Adam Williams

EXOFFICIO MEMBERS

Ian Hlavacek

Jennifer Ostlind

Juvenal Robles Absent

1. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's Report was given by Assistant Director Jennifer Ostlind. Ostlind reported that Planning & Development is scheduling a meeting between ARA, Houston Public Works, Mayor's Office of Special Events, and the Mayor's Office to discuss BAC recommendations to develop an internal city policy and a citywide ordinance to prohibit parking in bike lanes. Ostlind stated that the next round of bikeway projects is dependent on funding agreement between the City of Houston and Harris County Precinct 1.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Maya Ford and Vice Chair Clark Martinson provided the Chair's Report. Chair Ford asked the Committee to repeat this statement while looking at other members around them. "Service to others is not about me, it's about others. Thank you for serving me." Chair Ford stated that the Committee has work to do to educate the public on how to use our new bike facilities and become more multimodal safely. She said that is important to set a clear vision for 2020 and she was excited to hear from BikeHouston about what they are doing this year. She encouraged Committee members to participate

in at least one of two subcommittees on education and infrastructure.

Vice Chair Clark Martinson just came from a presentation with LINK Houston and Houston Tomorrow at H-GAC about the North Houston Highway Improvement Program.

3. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES

Committee action: Approve the October 23, 2019 Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting minutes.

Motion: **Holzer** Second: **Anthony-Miller** Vote: **Unanimous** Abstaining: **None**

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was invited after approval of the minutes and again at the end of the meeting.

Chris Jardine wrote in and Staff Member Melissa Beeler read his email into the record. Jardine stated he works downtown and lives in Museum District. "I used to commute downtown from the Northside and loved the fully dedicated trail that made it possible along White Oak. However, now that I live in the Museum District, I find myself unable to commute by bike. I'm incredibly excited about the new Austin Corridor trail but am also incredibly disappointed to learn the La Branch segment won't be a dedicated set of lanes. With parking on both sides of the street, it creates a narrow two-lane road in segments with impatient drivers squeezing through that I don't feel safe using my bike on a daily basis. Is there not a way to eliminate one of these parking lanes and create a fully dedicated trail between Downtown and the Museum District that could connect the Museums/Rice/Med Center to Midtown/Downtown? You're so close... it's only another 1-mile segment and the space appears to be there to connect these two major centers."

Ed Pettit, a cyclist with Tour de Hood and Chair of 3rd Ward Civic Club, spoke about encouraging more public engagement for bikeways. He would like to see a public formal presentation given before construction begins at a Super Neighborhood meeting. He mentioned that a bike lane on McGowen is widely supported by the community, especially after a pop-up bike lane event in June 2019 by BikeHouston and Tour de Hood. He urges coordination with METRO as they prepare to implement BOOST corridor improvements along McGowen as part of METRONext. He encouraged the City to prioritize McGowen in the next round of bike projects.

Tom Compson, long time member of BikeHouston and resident near Brays Bayou trail, heard about buying a bike lane sweeper and was interested in knowing the status of purchasing that equipment either at the Count or the City. Member Amar Mohite (Harris County Precinct 1) shared that once the facility is 100% complete and closed out with the contractor, the County will maintain the infrastructure for one year after which it will be taken over by the City. Harris County is looking into equipment to maintain the facilities.

5. BIKEHOUSTON BIKE FRIENDLY DRIVERS PROGRAM EVALUATION

Vice Chair Clark Martinson briefed the Committee on BikeHouston's Bike Friendly Drivers Program and shared an infographic on road safety for bicyclists and drivers. More information on the program can be found at <https://bikehouston.org/bicyclefriendlydriver/>. BikeHouston is also working with the State driver's education program to see how this could fit in as well. Discussion ensued, particularly around expansion of the program to fleet operators and other private sector companies. Houston Police Department is working with BikeHouston to add the program to online training for police officers.

6. HOUSTON BIKE SUMMIT

Vice Chair Martinson updated the Committee on planning efforts for the Houston Bike Summit taking place at St. Arnold's on May 11 from 5-6pm. At 6pm, speakers will begin in the hall. He would like to work with the members of the Committee to determine the message for the event and awardees (e.g. Volunteer, Bicycle Friendly Business, biggest contributor to bicycling). The message or vision would launch a large initiative to improve bicycling in Houston.

7. VISION ZERO UPDATE

Assistant Director Ostlind shared an update on Vision Zero, stating that the Vision Zero Action Plan is expected to be delivered in September. Several partners, department representatives, and outside agencies are collaborating on the Task Force that meets monthly to understand the universe of work being done around road safety and to identify and prioritize opportunities and solutions. The Communications Subcommittee is working on messaging, branding and communications strategy to launch to social media. The Data Subcommittee is meeting twice a month to identify the High Injury Network, which will show where most crashes occur on Houston's streets. Discussion ensued. Many spoke to a need to communicate the story behind why infrastructure improvements are needed.

8. HOUSTON CIP FUNDING UPDATE

Assistant Director Ostlind shared that designers are already brought on board by Houston Public Works with \$800,000 of CIP funding allocated to bike facilities. Planning is still working on getting the rest of the \$1.1 million allocated to construct the designed projects. Next fiscal year Planning will be prepared to have the rest of the \$5.5 million released for spending.

Staff Member Melissa Beeler gave an update on Build 50 projects. Corridors complete (but may be waiting on signals to be installed) include Hardy & Elysian, Lyons Avenue, Downtown Connector streets and Wheeler Side Path. Near Northside projects were funded by Harris County Precinct 1. Wheeler Side Path was funded by METRO. Facilities programmed (in design or under construction) include Gray Street (awaiting signals), Hutchins Street (awaiting striping), Cleburne Street (pavement improvements), La Branch (pavement improvements). Centerpoint Easement corridor funded by Spring Branch is going into construction and Halls Bayou in the Northeast is programmed by Houston Parks Board. The construction contract has been awarded for Polk and Cullen north of I-45. Construction expected to begin in Spring 2020. Quitman Street is in design. A portion of Cavalcade is under construction. Curb ramps are being installed on Austin Street, followed by pavement improvements. Lockwood off-street path is in design with CIP funding. 11th Street Patterson Street is still in conceptual design phase. Planning is holding a pop-up bike lane and intersection improvement on Saturday, January 25 from 11am to 1pm to gather input.

It was requested to tally the number of other improvements that are being made while the bike lane construction is underway. There were concerns of lack of signage or temporary signal/signage for contraflow section of cycle track on Gray Street to indicate to cyclists to be cautious at intersections as they are waiting for signals to be installed.

9. COMPLETE STREETS REPORT DISCUSSION

Transportation Division Manager Sharon Moses-Burnside presented an overview of the Planning Department's Complete Streets Report, 2018-2019. The report can be found here: <https://www.houstontx.gov/planning/transportation/CompleteStreets/CompleteStreetsAnnualReport2018-2019.pdf>

It was requested to allow the Committee to review the report for a week and request any edits to the Department individually.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice Chair Martinson announced a tour of White Oak Bayou and murals in Inwood starting at White Oak Conference Center on Antoine. Precinct 1 is bringing bicycles for folks to ride. The event will be held at 7:30am on Saturday, February 1. Registration is 7:30-8am with a short bike safety training before the tour.

Ana Ramirez Huerta announced that project selection will be finalized in early February for Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) TxDOT funding. The City and Committee members may want to review the projects selected to consider connectivity to future projects.

Yuhayna Muhmud announced the HGAC Bike/Ped Subcommittee put together some recommendations for the next TIP process and funding allocations for active transportation. The Subcommittee may need Committee member support later in the year to finalize recommendations.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business brought before the Committee, Chair Maya Ford adjourned the meeting at 4:47 p.m.

Maya Ford
Chair

Jennifer Ostlind
Executive Secretary