

DRAFT Minutes of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)

October 21, 2020

Meeting held virtually via
Microsoft Teams 2:30 p.m.

Call to Order

Chair Tom Compson called the meeting to order at 2:32pm with a quorum present.

Tom Compson, Chair

Alejandro Perez, Vice Chair

Toloria Allen

Absent

Kristine Anthony-Miller

Oni Blair

Zion Escobar

Nick Hellyar

Lisa Graiff

Robin Holzer

Beth Martin

Absent

Yuhayna Mahmud

Veon McReynolds

Clark Martinson

Absent

Amar Mohite

Ana Ramirez Huerta

Sandra Rodriguez

Mike VanDusen

Judith Villareal

Jessica Wiggins

Adam Williams

EXOFFICIO MEMBERS

Ian Hlavacek, PE

David Fields, AICP

Juvenal Robles

Represented by Sharon Moses-Burnside, JD

Absent

1. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Sharon Moses-Burnside gave the Director's Report. The No Parking in Bike Lane Ordinance was passed by City Council on October 14, 2020. The Planning & Development Department is organizing a Gulfton Pop-Up Bike Lane Demonstration on Saturday, October 31 from 10am to 2pm along Westward Street. Meet at Benavidez Elementary School Parking Lot, wear a costume and try out the bike lane. Visit www.letstalkhouston.org/gulfton for details.

Are you interested in creating more opportunities for housing in Houston that is walkable, affordable, and equitable? Then this new Planning Department's initiative [Livable Places](http://www.letstalkhouston.org/livable-places) may interest you. For more information about the project, to engage in process, and to receive updates, visit www.letstalkhouston.org/livable-places.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Tom Compson gave the Chair's Report. Chair Compson reminded the Committee that we are trying to transform Houston to a Gold-level bike friendly city. We can get caught in the weeds and feel like things are not moving forward, but now is a good time to step back. Chair Compson remarked that 10 years ago, bayou greenways was a dream, METRO was just starting to put bike racks on buses, BCycle had three stations downtown and advocates didn't know if it was the beginning or the end of bike share for Houston. Today, Buffalo Bayou is a field of dreams and the progress made by Houston Parks Board on Bayou Greenways projects is very exciting. BCycle has a record number of people riding and over 100 stations.

Chair Compson shared [the most recent Bike League Report Card for Houston](#). We are still a Bronze-level city. While some numbers are low, there are some good things too. Chair Compson also shared [the full list of Bike-Friendly Cities rankings](#). Austin is the only Gold-level Texas city, and we should consider what we can learn from them. Overall, it can be overwhelming, but we have a vision, which comes down to giving all Houstonians a choice when it comes to transportation. We'd like two wheels to be your choice to get to store or work instead of two tons of steel. Jim Blackburn recently stated that Houston was the epitome of a 20th century city (car-oriented). Building out a bike network using the 5 E's is getting us to become a 21st century city. It is integral to Houston's relevance now and into the future.

3. Approval of July Minutes

Committee action: Approve the July 22, 2020 Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting minutes.

Motion: Mike VanDusen Second: Yuhayna Mahmud Vote: **Unanimous** Abstaining: **None**

4. Public Comment

Alejandro Perez stated bike repair stations are missing a lot of tools. How can people report missing tools from bike repair stations? METRO is placing some in Northline area along red line and will consider adding contact information on their stations. UHD Parks Board stations are missing tools.

Dan Michell of Nuro automated rideshare stated they support Vision Zero. Nuro is a safer vehicle for bicyclists because it is narrower than most other vehicles and only open on one side. You can contact Mr. Michell at Dan@nuro.ai. Chair Compson asked what self-driving testing has Nuro done with bicyclists? Michell said testing has been done in Silicon Valley and they are open to more testing. They have been testing with HPD vehicles and are open to testing with bicyclists more.

Bert Magh followed up on the maintenance of a bike trail north of Gus Wortham golf course. The problem still exists, but it looks like people or members of some organizations have trampled down some weeds so you can see farther down the path. As weather changes and weeds start dying, the overgrowth may become less of a problem, but we still have responsibility to maintain that bike path. At least two more 311 reports have been submitted in that area in the past couple weeks. Juvenal was trying to find the right group who should be maintaining the trail. Staff Member Melissa Beeler responded that she had checked with Juvenal last week and he was still trying to find the right contact. Staff agree that we need find the responsible party. She will continue to follow up with Houston Parks & Recreation.

Alonzo Mims asked for the status on the West Little York bike lane. Staff Member Melissa Beeler said the project will go into design after substantial design completion on 11th Street and Patterson corridor. Once design reaches 30%, we will be going back out to Acres Homes for more engagement.

Randall Baxley lives in 77009 (District H). He said I-45 FEIS is out and needs comments. The City is putting on meetings this week to help you make comments. Go to www.letstalkhouston.org/nhhp to find out more information. Baxley talked to Alejandro and Luis from METRO about the Cavalcade bike lane under construction. The original design and how it's going in is not the same. Armadillos are out there instead of curb. Apparently, the City of Houston is saying you can't put a curb there, so we're getting less protection. The BAC may want to weigh in. The floating bus stops have sharp corners, so look at that and see if that's something you want to change. Ian Hlavacek of HPW responded they tried to make sure the floating bus stops would not affect drainage, which may have altered the design of the floating bus stops. The City will consider addressing through reflective paint and street lighting. BAC members also discussed Leeland from Cullen to Columbia Tap in the East End and Polk Street near Cullen.

5. Crashes Involving Bicyclists in 2020 Presented by Commander Anthony-Miller

Commander Kristine Anthony-Miller of Houston Police reported that there has been one additional death since July. The death occurred September 1. 263 crashes involving a bicyclist have occurred in Houston in 2020. Five people on bikes have died in a crash in 2020, down from 14 in 2019 and 7 in 2018. Three intersections had multiple crashes occur at them in 2020: Kingwood @ Kingswood Crossing, Heights @ 15th Street, and Braeswood and 610. Both crashes on Heights Blvd resulted in a citation. Victor Peterzen was the most recent bicyclist killed in September 2020.

6. Bike Theft and Bike Registry Discussion Led by Alejandro Perez and Corporal Joe Bowden

Vice Chair Alejandro Perez led a conversation with Corporal Joe Bowden of Harris County Precinct 1 Constable's Office. With more people buying bikes during the pandemic and more people realizing theft, it is a good time to discuss how to prevent theft and recovery more stolen bikes.

Tips from Corporal Bowden and the Committee:

- Report bike theft. In addition to reporting to law enforcement, there is a Facebook page for people who recently got their bike stolen where victims can post pictures and people will keep an eye out for the bike. This is a volunteer effort that helps Corporal Bowden.
- Keep cameras around, and try to lock your bike where there are cameras
- Record your serial numbers on your bike. Take pictures of your bike to share with others if it is stolen.
- Do not lock your bike on a balcony. Don't leave your bike in a garage. People will climb up balconies 3-5 floors to get bikes.
- Always lock your bike anywhere you go, even if you think you will be away for only a minute.

Houston and Harris County could consider a Bike Task Force to share information and help recover more bikes. The Committee will discuss more about how to get these tips out to bike owners at the December Education Subcommittee meeting.

7. No Parking in Bike Lane Ordinance Education & Bike Friendly Drivers Course Incentives

Staff Member Melissa Beeler presented details on the ordinance recently passed by City Council that prohibits parking in bike lanes. Questions and discussion about implementation ensued.

8. Bikeway Project Updates

Staff Member Melissa Beeler, Yuhayna Mahmud of METRO, and Lisa Graiff of Houston Parks Board presented updates of bikeway projects in Houston. Approximately 35 miles of bikeways are in design or under construction by the City of Houston, Harris County and METRO. Houston Parks Board has another 31 miles in design or under construction.

9. Announcements

Commander Kristine Anthony-Miller stated that unclaimed property in the City's possession is sold on virtual auction sites such as propertyroom.com. The money goes into the General Fund. City of Houston ARA uses publicsurplus.com.

Amar Mohite said Harris County is studying several projects, including Hillcroft, Cavalcade/Homestead extension, Almeda trail extension from OST to Holly Hall, and El Camino.

Nick Hellyar stated that his thoughts and prayer to HPD.

Oni Blair echoed Nick and announced that LINK Houston has information to get out the vote, including maps for bike and transit routes to voting sites: <https://linkhouston.org/news/lets-get-out-the-vote/>

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business brought before the Committee, Chair Compson adjourned the meeting at 4:39pm.

Tom Compson
Chair

Sharon Moses-Burnside
Executive Secretary