



CITY OF TACOMA BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP MEETING MINUTES

DATE: October 24, 2016

GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT: Dave Cook, Anne James, Susan Reehill, Cassie Head, Dan Hansen, Leon Nettels, Jennifer Halverson-Kuehn, Janet Higbee, Jolene Rogers

OTHERS PRESENT: Jon Halvorson, Jim Parvey, Josh Diekmann, Jennifer Kammerzell, Mark D'Andrea, Jane Moore

▪ **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 5:34 PM.

▪ **Approval of Minutes**

BPTAG approved their September 26, 2016 minutes with the following changes:

- Janet Higbee was changed from present to absent
- Josh Diekmann's changes to North 21st Street Project were all accepted by the group:
 - Corrected dimension and style of new and old poles (pg. 3)
 - Added explanation of "special tension" (pg. 3)
 - Changed "peak" to "total volumes" (pg. 3)
 - Added information on what additional work would be for Option 2 (pg. 4)
 - In Option 3, mentioned that dimensions shown are flexible and will be refined during design process (pg. 4)
 - In Option 4, clarified that current widths are 10' and each option tries to provide about 11' (pg. 4)

▪ **Public Comment**

None

▪ **Draft Tacoma Bike Share Feasibility Study** – Jim Parvey (Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability)

Jim Parvey presented about the Bike Share Feasibility Study that was conducted for Tacoma. After explaining some brief background and summary of public outreach that was done, Jim explained the primary recommendations that the study provided. First, the option of finding a sponsor for the program would ease financing. Second, they would need to discuss solutions for the issue of the vertical terrain around town. Jim mentioned that the old escalades were not well used and attracted some nuisance issues. The overall suggestion of the study was to wait

and see. Waiting will allow for building more infrastructure, tuning up the Mobility Master Plan, and letting others pioneer bike share programs for more pilot programs and innovation.

- Anne mentioned that the University of Puget Sound (UPS) was looking into the option of its own bike share.

Pilot Programs:

Escalators are generally expensive; they could look into electric assisted bikes instead. There is an option to lease bikes instead of purchasing them to limit startup costs. It may be possible to partner with Seattle/Pronto. Smart lock and low tech options could be cheaper and easier than some of the current models for bike share.

The plateau could be the best place for a Pilot in Tacoma. This could generally connect Hilltop to UPS but it is also a flatter area with some of the highest density. It would also be a good option to fill in transit gaps. The waterfront could also be a good Pilot location. Jim likes the idea but mentioned they would need a way to get down to Schuster first. With the waterfront location, they could partner with local bike shops to limit some costs and there is an opportunity to partner with the City's Downtown to Defiance event.

General consideration included that the plateau doesn't have "destinations" like downtown or Point Defiance Park. It would be nice to connect to the Tacoma Dome Station with its access to multiple forms of mass transit. The vertical terrain and the lack of density in certain areas pose problems.

Planning can start now. They will be looking into planning the system despite not being ready to implement a program right now. They will mostly look to plan a connection between the plateau and downtown which would include the areas with the most density. Proctor was specifically mentioned as being a part of the plateau area.

The timeline for this planning process will start with a request for comments. Comments should be submitted by November 9th (this deadline may change). The Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee (IPS) meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. and publishes their agendas ahead of time. There will be a Final Report for the project in the end of December when the consultant's contract ends.

- Janet suggested a summer tourist program since many riders already have their own bikes and wouldn't be the target audience of the bike share program.
- Anne suggested that bike share programs ease security concerns for riders. She also thought the plateau was a good option because it could be used by students. Anne also asked if there was a chance for bike share to be implemented after the Link expansion and Jim said that they pushed back including the Tacoma Dome Station for that reason.
- Leon asked when phase 1 would start. Jim said they will look at infrastructure, costs, and look for donors. City finances are improving but they currently don't have enough to start without additional funds.
- Dan asked if there were any additional questions and said that he agrees with the findings of the study.
- Jim mentioned that chapter six and everything after it are the new parts of the study. He will send out the study again and asked for comments to be sent back to him before Monday (10/31).

▪ **Puyallup Ave corridor study** – Mark D’Andrea (Public Works)

Mark D’Andrea, Engineer with the City of Tacoma’s Public Works Department, presented the Puyallup Avenue Corridor Conceptual Design. He handed out a print out with a map, general information, conceptual drawings, and information available on their website. In June of 2016 they advertised the start of the project and asked what the future of Puyallup Ave could be. They requested submissions with the goal of having a couple options when they were ready to move forward. They had submissions from four teams with two being quite close. Selected submission was by Nelson/Nygaard (small 100 person team) who teamed up with Parsons, a firm that has worked in Tacoma before.

They have been conducting public outreach since August 2016, and that phase of the project is now finished. Puyallup Avenue gets around 15,000 vehicles per day and is a large canvass to work with. The public outreach process included street surveys at Dome Station, interviews of major stakeholders, and creation and use of their webpage. The final plan will need to be able to bring all users together. The project will continue to move forward and they will finalize their outreach. There is a design charrette event to be held on November 9th, which will be a full day event. There will also be an Open House in December but the final date is to be determined.

In 2014, they applied for a federal grant for Portland Avenue but did not receive the grant. In that process, they put together potential cross section designs. Those are now the goals of the current project.

- Dave asked how many lanes the design has. Mark explained that there will primarily be two lanes with a turning lane. There are a couple sections that will have five total lanes. The graphics that are a part of this weren’t vetted; just ideas. Once options are chosen, they want to simulate it with cones for feedback. Overall, this project is in the \$25 million range for construction. They will apply for multiple grants and he thinks it will score well because of the multi-use and creation of important connections.
- Dave asked if BPTAG should wait to see the designs in December before we make comments or should they submit comments first. Mark suggested that BPTAG members take the surveys now, and participate in the Design Charrette event including the activities there.

Mark explained that they want bike lanes to connect to Portland Avenue because it is a transit hub that needs to be accommodated. Trips per day are expected to get higher. They are using the 2016 data and projecting out to 2040. Overall suggestions are to do the survey that can be found on the City of Tacoma’s project webpage, attend the charrette event, and email specific comments to Mark. Times and locations of the events will be posted on the project webpage.

▪ **6th Ave and Pearl St. Bike Infrastructure Discussion** – Janet Higbee

Dave and Dan introduced this topic, explaining that their idea is to have one member present an intersection of interest each month. Janet is first in presenting 6th Ave and Pearl St.

Janet explained the intersection for those who weren’t familiar. It has two lanes going both ways with a turning lane. There are options to connect to the Scott Pierson (SP) Trail but the current situation leads riders into some difficult situations to navigate. The main concern is that the SP Trail lets riders out very close to the intersection and it is mostly unmarked for riders. Janet would like to see bike lanes and direction at the intersection and where cars enter to get onto 16.

- Dave suggested an opportunity to connect the Scott Pierson Trail and Tacoma Community College where there is a gap in the SP Trail.
- Cassie mentioned the option of expanding the sidewalk in that area where many people already ride.
- Dave asked the City of Tacoma representatives present about possible interim solutions. Josh Diekmann explained that there are some wayfinding devices to help bikers, but this is a complicated intersection without a lot of space, so it warrants more investigation.

Josh also mentioned that west of Pearl on 6th Ave there are not many crossing opportunities for pedestrians. With the increased pedestrian activity they are looking at bikes as well, but they need programming despite their want to look at the area. There is an option to look for solutions using staff time but a cooperative effort with BPTAG is also an opportunity.

Anne, Janet, and Cassie will coordinate, visit, and evaluate the intersection and form a more in-depth evaluation and set of suggestions for the area.

▪ **Second Phase Prairie Line Trail, trail width – Janet Higbee**

Janet explained that the final meeting has passed, Phase 2 is finished, and there was a plan but not a lot of funds. The main point was that the trail would go from 11' to 14' and then back to 11' because the City of Tacoma does not own the adjacent properties in those more narrow areas.

Dan mentioned that the AASHTO guide for multi-use paths designates a 10' wide path with shoulders as the minimum as it takes 11' for a bike to pass another bike while in the presence of a pedestrian.

- Janet asked if the surface would be kept consistent or if the rail will be kept. Josh Diekmann explained that the rail will stay on campus because they want more design and character.
- Leon asked if there was a plan to curve and cross 21st St. instead of going uphill. Josh Diekmann explained two options: first is a double median, which is unusual, and may confuse motorists and trail users; second is a hawk signal and beacon in line with the trail that would stay dark until someone comes on the trail, which can be a good alternative to a push signal.

▪ **Bike Boulevard subcommittee report: Cassie, Dave, Leon, Janet**

Cassie explained that she, Dave, Leon, and Janet wrote a set of guidelines for bike boulevards to be added as an appendix for the City of Tacoma's Pedestrian and Bicycle Design Guidelines. It is divided up into two sections. Section one describes locations and explains that bike boulevards should be parallel to major roads, they should complement and not replace the bike lane networks, and they should be on roads with relatively low traffic, less than 1,500 vehicles per day. Section two defines the safety measures that should be taken into account. Rideability should be addressed first, with potholes being filled in before painting or sharrows are added. Next, to manage speed and volume of traffic, traffic calming devices must be considered including physical infrastructure and the speed limit should be no higher than 30 mph. Finally, crossings need to be addressed and there are several options for crossings outlined in the report. NACTO has eight design elements that are all included in the appendix.

Also attached to the appendix is a list of Tacoma's current bike boulevards with concerns and solutions for each one.

- Fawcett Ave: Traffic volume and speed exceed safe levels and the right of way is not given to bicycles.
- South Park: The uncontrolled intersections need signage and traffic speed is too high.
- Yakima Ave: There are potholes that need to be repaired, uncontrolled intersections, and ineffective stop signs.
- N 24th St.: Major intersections need marked crossings, there are uncontrolled intersections, and crossing buttons need to be accessible for riders in the road.

Dave mentioned that the intersections of Proctor and N 24th St. and Thompson and 37th St. don't have bike buttons on both sides. Buttons need to be accessible for pedestrians and bikes when crossing arterials, as he has seen a couple incidents. He mentioned that on 19th St., for example, there is great infrastructure for pedestrians, but bikes can be confused there.

- Leon mentioned that bike and pedestrian signs are infrequent, but it is been better for him using the pedestrian crossings and it promotes bikes using those crossings.
- Anne explained her concern that the use of the crosswalk beacon, while crossing from the street and not in the painted crosswalk, could be an issue if cars only stop for the actual crosswalk.
- Dan summarized the issue by saying that when designing new boulevards, steps need to be taken to have these intersections work well for both pedestrians and bikes going both directions.
- Janet and Dave both mentioned more awareness for the bike boulevards was necessary and Dave added a final note on the crosswalk discussion that a push button for bikes that is accessible from the street is preferable.
- Cassie summarized that there is some work to be done to bring current bike boulevards up to this new standard. That includes lower speed limits.

Josh Diekmann said they will take a look at the concerns and proposed solutions and make comments. There are a lot of familiar ideas in there and they will continue to redo their design process. The MOMAP Guidelines can be revisited. There will be an update next year so they can be improved and then go straight to designers.

- Janet asked if it is possible to request stop signs. Jennifer Kammerzell and Josh Diekmann explained that it is possible to request a stop sign, but there are a set of rules that need to be followed. Sometimes introducing a stop sign can increase speeding and actually, uncontrolled intersections perform very well with low volume areas. Stop signs can bring about any number of other issues.

■ **Updates:**

○ **Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator**

Josh Diekmann said they completed one round of interviews and will hopefully be interviewing the finalists next week, but the Human Resources contact is out of the office. There was a good pool of candidates and they're hopeful to have someone in six to eight weeks. Dan agreed with Josh as he has been part of the interview process.

There will be tours with the final candidates coming up. They would like to have a BPTAG member and a design engineer available on Nov. 1st to show the finalists around.

It would start around 10 a.m. and last all day. It would not have to be the same BPTAG member on each tour as it is not a part of the formal interview process. The City of Tacoma agreed to put together a schedule and distribute it to the BPTAG members and ask for their responses to set up a schedule for the day.

- **Transportation Commission Monthly Update:** Jane Moore

Jane Moore said that N 21st St. has been discussed a lot lately as well as the street initiative fund. There are status updates for number of roads and number of blocks seals. They're also in the process of picking active transportation tasks to fund with a majority of funding going to bike and pedestrian tasks.

- **N 21st St. update from IPS meeting:** Cassie Head

Cassie said that she attended the IPS meeting last Thursday, which had roughly 12 members of the public in attendance. At the meeting they made a consensus choice of design option 1 over the hybrid option. The choice will go to the City Council study session on December 6th at noon. There will be no public comment at this meeting.

Dan moved to send an official BPTAG stance to the Council before the December 6th. Dave seconded the motion and the motion passed.

- **E 40th update (bike boulevard design):** Jennifer Kammerzell

The public meeting on October 11th had pretty low attendance. It was mostly residents and main concerns were speeding, speed bumps, and access to schools and driveways. The design team is taking feedback and Olivia, the project engineer, will make edits. There is no timeline for the project currently.

- **Topics for November and Good of the Order**

Jolene volunteered to present next month's intersection of interest.

There will be a Safe Routes to School event on November 16 from 5 – 7 pm. There is a public survey now open on the City of Tacoma project webpage that covers many topics to fit Tacoma.

- **Meeting Adjourned at 7:29 p.m.**