



CITY OF TACOMA BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP MEETING MINUTES

DATE: March 27, 2017

GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT: Dave Cook, Dan Hansen, Leon Nettels, Jennifer Halverson-Kuehn, Cassie Head, Jolene Rogers, Susan Reehill, Aubrey Rosevear

OTHERS PRESENT: Meredith Soniat, Josh Diekmann, Jennifer Kammerzell
Guest: Hally Bert, Downtown on the Go (DOTG)

Meeting called to order at 5:35 PM

- **Approval of Minutes**
February minutes were approved with changes.
- **Public comment:** An invitation was made to the group to attend 'Tactical Urbanism' this Friday from noon to 1 pm at the Courthouse square (old Post Office Bldg.) The author of the book will be there. The term 'Tactical Urbanism' generally means a popup in public spaces. It's the idea of using short term action to create long term conversation and change. A good example of this is the Broadway Farmer's Market.
- **Introductions:**
 1. A brief round of introductions was made by all attendees.
- **Prairie Line Trail Crossing at S. 21st St. (Josh)**

Josh said he presented to the Transportation Commission a few weeks ago and they asked that Josh share the information with BPTAG.

A Double Median (partial Road Diet) was part of the initial solution to this intersection several years ago with a grade separation being considered the ultimate solution. After a recent Traffic Study the recommendation was to look at the crossing alternatives in this location again due to growth in the downtown area. That was done and the interim solution that came out of that study was to add a HAWK signal, keeping the 2 lanes in the uphill direction and 2 lanes downhill.

Question: Does the HAWK option include the median islands? – No it does not include the median islands, but it does maintain 2 traffic lanes in each direction.

The HAWK is also being considered up the hill at Fawcett St. - just received a grant from the State's Pedestrian & Bicycle program.

The reason Josh is presenting the Grade Separation option is because we would like to do advance design work at this location to get accurate cost estimates. The Transportation Committee would like BPTAG feedback on this to see if they think it is reasonable to use Streets Initiative money to fund the study.

Question: How much money are we talking about? – This has not been completely researched. So we don't have numbers yet. It also depends on whether or not we only do a conceptual design (approx. \$100K) or a full design since the range of cost would be very different.

Question: Is it possible to partner with UWT to share the cost. – Ultimately funding will rely on other partners such as UWT since they will have a stake in funding the solution.

Question: Do we have an idea as to when the other part of the trail will be funded? – There is funding for design but not for construction.

The designs for the Double Median and the HAWK have been done. The next step would be whether or not to do a study for the long term solution. Should we do a 2 step design process where we would do the conceptual design for the grade separation option and if it looks promising take it to final design so we have all the alternatives on the shelf?

Question: Does the HAWK option include the median islands? – No it does not include the median islands, but it does maintain 2 traffic lanes in each direction.

Question: Where did the money come from to fund the initial studies? – Grant money was used for the initial studies but cannot be applied to the new studies.

Question: Does everyone know what a grade separation would be? - The trail is on the old rail grade. S. 21st St. starts out flat where it crosses the trail, then begins to get very steep, the thought was to cut a tunnel underneath. There were concerns about safety if the tunnel were created.

Dave summarized that the decision tonight is whether or not to proceed with the HAWK as an interim solution and also whether or not to fund the study for grade separation and if so, should the money come from Streets Initiative money.

Question: Do we know how much money is in Streets Initiative and what kind of projects we have funded with that money before? - This is new money from the initiatives which the voters passed so this is the first time we have had the freedom to use the money as needed.

Votes around the table – HAWK vs Median:

HAWK – 8

Median - 1

Comments –

- Uncertain since money could be spent elsewhere that it is needed
- Doesn't like the idea of raising the road and having a tunnel
- Depends how HAWK signal works because if the road is getting raised up it could affect pedestrians on 21st. Seem to be a lot of drawbacks especially if it is potentially an \$18M project
- If HAWK is effective let's stick with that

Question: Are there any funds to fix 21st St. esp. with bicycles crossing – it's a pretty battered road. -Josh is not aware of any plans to fix 21st in this immediate vicinity – there would be some improvements in conjunction with the trail work and also there is a grant that would be from Jefferson to Tacoma which would provide a better crossing treatment at the bike blvd. on Fawcett which would improve the bikeway at that location.

Dave asked if a letter with BPTAG vote should be sent to Transp. Commission – not necessary per Jane since it is captured in the Minutes.

- **Transportation Master Plan Amendments (TMP)**

The pedestrian map from the TMP was pulled up for discussion.

Anything that is purple is within a 20 minute walk of the central yellow areas (mixed use centers). There are A, B and C ratings as to what the sidewalk & crosswalks look like and the City strives to achieve. Within mixed use center areas there should be a pedestrian crossing every 300’.

It’s tough to decide where to start on the sidewalks as far as prioritization is concerned.

Dan: Maybe something be added like priority corridors for pedestrian streetscapes similar to Lincoln HS neighborhood. Would be valuable to think of other corridors such as Madrona neighborhood and Center St. that need some improvements.

Aubrey: Is there a way to determine the most widely used areas? – Jennifer said we don’t have a pedestrian count but we anticipate or assume that they are in the mixed use center area where there are apartments, a higher density of people, and more bus stops. We are working on sidewalk inventory which would be a starting point, but we couldn’t say how many people walk them. Also we are looking to add in the Pedestrian Crossing Improvement project “Talked the Walk” data. The community created the criteria for that project so we were looking to add that as an Appendix to help with prioritization. This will be brought back to BPTAG once it is ready for review.

Question: Have we looked at the data Strava has which shows the most heavily used routes in the City?– Meredith said we could use it in conjunction with other strategies but the data is mostly for those cycling or running – not as much for walking so we wouldn’t want to rely just on Strata.

Dave commented that Bike Boulevards should be somewhere on that priority list since they can be thought of as walking corridors as well with speed limits implemented.

Question: How does SRTS tie into this? – We haven’t quite figured that out – probably in an Appendix which could be updated as needed.

Adding South I St. to the map. Take a look at the map and at the end of the map there is a Table that lists larger projects and let Jennifer know if we are missing something.

The bike map from TMP was pulled up for comment.

Dave wanted to look at Pearl and Hwy 16 – Jennifer said that it would not be a cheap project so it would be one to add specifically to the project list. Dave asked if it could be added to the TMP. We need a link between N 11th to S. 12th through a variety of means including a 2 way bike path.

Dan mentioned the need for a separated bike lane in lower downtown on A St. since we didn’t get one when Pacific was being done and Commerce wouldn’t work. The bike lane could link right up to the Prairie Line Trail on 15th. There are only 4 blocks there and you could connect to Fireman Park and work up to the Stadium Way bike lanes. That also would give you a way to get from waterfront to that corridor.

Dave had a question re J St. which is a proposed bike boulevard - could we move that to I which is quieter and not travelled by ambulances moving between the two hospitals? – Jennifer said she just denied a large development on J because it was designated a Bike Blvd. part of the review includes checking the TMP and looking for potential Bike Blvds., so it is something to keep in mind when changes are being requested.

This is a good time to look at potential changes since Meredith is reviewing Sound Transit design which could affect I or J St.

Dan asked if BPTAG needed to vote on a specific recommendation and at what point would Jennifer need to include it in the plan since BPTAG may have a lot of ideas. – Jennifer said as long as it is not a big corridor change BPTAG could e-mail their ideas and add to next Agenda as well.

Dave said between now and next meeting everyone should review on their own and come up with their thoughts. Meredith said if recommendations are sent her way a week before the next meeting she can consolidate them and send out the list prior to the meeting for everyone to review.

Jennifer requested that changes requested use the terminology listed in the TMP – i.e. the type of bike lane, bike boulevard, etc.

- **Intersection Report on S 38th St. and Pacific Ave (Leon)**

Leon had a handout with numbered changes. He felt the changes are simple and fairly inexpensive.

#1- ADA accessible ramps with Crosswalks on all 4 sides of the bridge

#2 – Signage for the crosswalks – “Yield to Ped/Bikes”

#3 – Restriping, make lanes narrower – take out center divider, add shoulders for better protection and to allow bikes to ride as well.

#4 – install a low level barrier and make a protected bike lane on either side of bridge – currently sidewalks are wide enough on one side for cyclists to ride not on the other.

Comments:

Dan asked about adding a raised crosswalk to help slow cars down.

You could also add a protected bike lane just on one side but for bikes going both ways.

Possibility of adding a HAWK signal in the future would be great – maybe add to TMP.

On the off-ramp there is a Yield sign on a lamppost but cars just fly through it, so changing the sign location could be more effective.

The group approved the recommendations to move forward for design.

Meredith said there is some funding for this work and it is a priority for the City so timing is good. She will take this back and at next meeting should have a proposed design.

There was no intersection report for S. Union & WA 16 at Scott Pierson Trail

- **Updates:**

- a. **Report from Transportation Commission: (Jane Moore) –**

Jane let everyone know that the Complete Streets Ordinance was discussed at their meeting. She asked that BPTAG write a letter in support of Complete Streets Ordinance moving forward.

Meredith will send the Memo to everyone but BPTAG members were all on board with moving forward.

Dan volunteered to draft the letter. Dan also shared with the group that his Grant for \$250K for Pierce County was approved and now they are trying to get the same for the City.

- b. **Staff Updates**

- i. **Bike Month (Meredith)**

Bike month is coming up in May, and the Bike Swap is the kickoff at UPS. The flyers will be available for everyone next month. There is a volunteer opportunity for the Bike Swap on April 29th. Map masters booth is a great opportunity for BPTAG members to get involved and help other people figure out their best bike routes.

Bike Everywhere Challenge (Meredith)

The kickoff party for this month long event will be held April 13th at Seven Seas. Not to be confused with Cascade's Bike Everywhere Challenge – this is specific to Tacoma and Pierce County. There will be prizes, gift certificates and other giveaways. This event encourages people to record their rides.

ii. **BPTAG Membership (Meredith)**

Janet has requested to step down and was unable to make it tonight. Ben will also step down since he and his wife just had a baby. We have 2 applications to fill these vacancies and informal interviews have been set up Thursday at 2 pm and 5 pm with each. It would be great if a BPTAG member could be there as well.

Term dates will change to 3 years as opposed to 2 and the term end date will always be February.

If you are interested in staying beyond your original 2 year term let Meredith know she will work with you. The group said it takes a while to understand what is going on (up to a year in some cases), so it's good to extend the term.

c. **BPTAG at other community/active transportation meetings**

- **Safe Routes to School (Leon)** – the third Stakeholder meeting is this Wednesday at Centro Latino.
- **N. 21st Meeting is next Tuesday at noon** – TMB North.

Comment: There is another organization that meets quarterly called the Pierce County coalition for Active Transp. Diane Wiatr was part of this group. It's composed of representatives from a lot of jurisdictions – planning, PW, Parks and their next meeting is Friday April 21 at noon in Lakewood. Jane is trying to get WSDOT to present.

o **Other Items:**

No additional items discussed.

▪ **Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 PM**