

**Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes June 6, 2011**

1. Roll Call

In attendance: Stephen Carr, J.D. Walker, Gary Parker, Craig Murray, Ann Domin, Jane Ziegler, Shannon Compton, Larry Mitchell, Matt Liechti, Brent Stout, Jimmie Sitz, Charlie Roop, Janette Hammack, Daphne Gaulden, Nathan Leigh, Stephen Lassiter, Mike Wozniak

2. Housekeeping Items/Updates

There were 4 Councilors that went on the BPAC bike/walk tour. The Councilors were Lakin, Patrick, Gilbert, and Cue. Councilor Steele along with the Mayor kicked off Bike to Work week by riding from Cherry Street to City Hall. In total, that's 5 Councilors. So, it's looking pretty good that we have support from the Council.

Stephen Lassiter announced that he is stepping down from Chair of BPAC after the committee presents its recommendations to City Council. Anyone interested in serving as Chair should contact Stephen or James Wagner so the transition can begin. The new Chair could help Stephen present the recommendations to City Council to get some experience in front of the Council.

3. Enforcement Subcommittee SMART goals presentation (please see attached)

How you approach bicycling on public streets depends on how you feel about that idea. When you drive behind a cyclist, do you feel the cyclist has the right-of-way? Or do you think let's get that pesky cyclist out of the way? Think about that concept and how it relates to your approach about bicycling and the laws.

The subcommittee scored on a scale of 1 to 5 how positively or negatively they felt about the ideas. The scores were added up and divided to come up with an average.

- #4 on page 2 (received a score of 5): Add "**When the lane is too narrow for both a car and a bicycle to safely share the lane**" as an exception to the Tulsa ordinance that says bicycles should ride as close as is safe to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.

The Oklahoma Drivers Manual provides this exception, so this would bring the Tulsa ordinance in line with the drivers manual.

- #9 on page 3 (received a score of 5): Recommend that every year the Tulsa City Council reissue a proclamation and public service announcement acknowledging that all Tulsa public streets are bicycle accessible and bicycle drivers receive all the rights and

responsibilities of a vehicle. This could be reissued ever year during bicycle month and accompanied by PSAs.

- #10 on page 3 (received a score of 5): Install “Stop for Pedestrians in Crosswalk” signs in areas of heavy pedestrian use. Possibly in areas like Cherry Street, Brookside, and University of Tulsa.

This has already been done in Jenks. This will create awareness for motorists to stop. Could also help in areas with exit ramps crossing trails, such as on Riverside.

- #12 on page 4 (received a score of 5): Suggest the BPAC continue to provide review of the Five E’s for Tulsa and surrounding communities.

There have been problems in the past with committees starting up and falling apart. This idea is to encourage the committee to continue for a long time. Meeting frequency can be altered.

- #13 on page 4 (received a score of 5): Eliminate the citation limitation in Section 645 related to inattentive drivers.

This idea would align city ordinance with state law. Tulsa Police can’t issue a citation for inattentive driving unless there is a crash. State law changed to allow police to issue a citation if they observe inattentive driving, even if there’s not a crash. However, the city ordinances don’t state this, so TPD would have to arrest someone or have OHP stop them to give them a citation. TPD currently can’t write a citation because there’s not a city ordinance.

A question was asked if this would apply to motorcycles and bicyclists. There are kids in neighborhood riding bicycle on cell phones and running into cars.

It was expressed that perhaps it would apply to bicyclists because bicyclists have to follow the rules of the road. If a bicyclist had a crash when on a phone, it’s possible they could be cited for inattentive driving.

- #6 on page 3 (received a score of 4.75): Recommend Tulsa ordinances apply the same rules and penalties for passing a bicyclist as State law.

In order for TPD to write citations, they need a city ordinance. So even though the state has a 3-foot passing law, TPD can’t write a citation for it because there’s no city ordinance. This idea would add the passing laws and penalties to the Tulsa ordinances.

TPD would have to arrest to charge with state law. Having an ordinance would make it easy for TPD to write a ticket.

- #7 on page 3 (received a score of 4.5): recommend the “Idaho Stop” be added to OK State statutes through the Mayor’s Legislative Contact Committee. Once it’s added to state law, then add to city ordinances.

“Idaho Stop” says a bicyclist can treat a stop sign as a yield sign, if the cyclist can determine there is no crossing traffic. There’s not any benefit for a cyclist to come to a complete stop if you have to unclip. That would be like asking a motorist to turn off its engine.

In Idaho, after a year of the law, they saw absolutely no difference in accidents because that’s basically what bicyclists do anyway.

#8 on page 3 (received a score of (4.5):change stop signs on trails to “Yield to crossing traffic” particularly on the Creek Trail, Osage Prairie Trail, Katy Trail and Riverside.

- #1 on page 1(received a score of (3.4): Update ordinances to reflect changes in times and conditions for operating a bicycle.

Some things are out of date and some wording and language could be cleaned up.

- #2 on page 1(received a score of 3.2): Recommend Tulsa ordinances be aligned with State Statutes

City ordinances don’t say the city has the authority to regulate bicycles. Application of traffic regulations to riders.

- #3 on page 2 (received a score of 3.4) Add word “motor” to ordinance related to vehicles impeding traffic, so that only motor vehicles can impede traffic.

A comment was made that minimum speed regulation would only apply on a highway like BA expressway and we don’t really want bikes on BA.

State law has the words “motor vehicle” but city ordinance does not.

Another was comment made about case in Ohio where cyclists were cited for impeding traffic even though they were riding at a speed reasonable for a cyclist. Yes, they weren’t going with the normal flow of traffic, but they were going a reasonable speed for that vehicle. Otherwise, you could cite a tractor for not traveling with the normal flow of traffic.

A question was asked what does it mean that the city has the authority to regulate the operation of bicycles?

The city can make laws and ordinances, like whether a bicycle can be ridden on sidewalks in some places.

Another commenter said Pennsylvania law prohibits cities and towns for regulating bicycles except for business districts.

Tulsa City prosecutor does not want to add “motor” to this ordinance. The question was asked why. The presenter answered that he wanted to have that tool in his pocket to be able to stop bicyclists going too slow.

A comment was made regarding the “Stop for Pedestrians in Crosswalk” sign recommendation. The comment suggested that the sign read “Yield to Pedestrians” and leave out crosswalk because people are afraid to step into crosswalks to assert their rights in front of cars. They shouldn’t have to be in the crosswalk in order to get the rule applied.

A comment was made when we take this to city council, should say “work with city legal to revise ordinances”

#5 on page 2 (received a score of 3.4): Recommend Tulsa ordinances acknowledge the bicyclists right-of-way rights to the vehicle travel lane appropriate for the cyclist’s destination.

This would ensure bicyclists can use any vehicle travel lane as needed.

Another issue brought up is the 10mph speed limit on riverparks trail that is listed on the big signs that list rules for the park. According to the city prosecutor those rules can be enforced like laws.

4. Evaluation/Engineering Subcommittee SMART goals

Subcommittee narrowed their goals down to 7. The subcommittee feels these goals could go not only to the regional city councils but maybe even transportation policy committee of INCOG.

INCOG’s Major Street & Highway Plan map was shown to everyone. The plan identifies streets planned to have multi-modal improvements. Many of these would be road diets, which would be two lanes, center turn lane and bike lanes on either side. Part of what the subcommittee is going to ask is to implement these improvements.

A video about road diets was shown to the group. <http://youtu.be/Vcx08S11-CQ>

Evaluation Goals

- Goal #1: Conduct a transportation study to define high, medium, low priority corridors that results in a Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan by 2014.

The study will begin with INCOG’s major street & highway plan and regional trails system plan and will determine multi-modal service levels and needed improvements.

The audience for this goal would be for the transportation policy committee. Not asking for an ordinance change.

- Goal #2: Add a professional transportation engineer to INCOG to make sure bike/pedestrian plans get implemented.
- Goal #3: Attain Silver Level Bicycle Friendly Status by 2020.

Engineering Goals:

- Goal #1: All INCOG members adopt Complete Streets policies and begin implementing bike/ped master plan by 2015 and complete high priority multi-modal projects by 2025.
- Goal #2: INCOG members should have three multi-modal projects shovel-ready by 2016.

The communities that benefited the most from stimulus were the ones that had shovel-ready projects ready to go. They had already gone through planning process, environmental documentation, right-of-way acquisition, utilities relocated, and the design was done and ready to let to construction.

- Goal #3: INCOG members should dedicate at least 3% of their maintenance budget to maintaining multi-modal facilities and complete identified safety improvements on existing trails by 2014.
- Goal #4: INCOG members should provide safe construction detours for biking/walking routes.

The Liberty Trail in Broken Arrow was closed for Creek Turnpike construction, Katy Trail was under construction, etc. People are using these routes for commuting and when they're closed we need to give them a safe detour.

A comment was made if we are truly encouraging commuting and people are committed to it and you eliminate their way to commute it's not going to work. Every time there's a trail interruption on their commute people throw their hands up and say "I quit."

Another comment was made about it being a pedestrian sidewalk safety issue. At 21st by Lee School you can't walk up to the light to get across because they're currently doing construction by the school and the sidewalk is closed. If you're a student at the school you can't get to the trail.

A question was raised for goal #2 do we need to provide more detail on which projects should be done.

An answer was that it has to involve a planning process with public involvement, which would be a bicycle and pedestrian master plan.

A comment was made that if it focused on all INCOG members, all three of those projects might not be in the city limits of Tulsa. INCOG members include 5 counties.

Another comment on Complete Streets policy for all INCOG members was made. All INCOG members may not be interested in Complete Streets. Some people who live in middle of nowhere within the INCOG area that are happy without complete streets.

The comment was made that we probably aren't going to the council right now with a list of specific projects we want done. Later, there's nothing to prevent the committee from creating a list of projects it wants completed in addition to a public involvement process, but at this time the committee is probably not going to create a list of projects for city council to consider.

Another comment said the first engineering goal regarding high priority multi-modal projects and the bicycle & pedestrian master plan would provide that list of projects. The conventional planning process would help create the list.

A concern was expressed that if we give the goal of Silver Bicycle Friendly Status that the council won't know how to do that.

There was a response that road diets would be a way to get you closer to that status.

Another response was if the bicycle friendly goal was chosen by the committee, several ideas could be included underneath that goal that would support it.

Another comment was made that too detailed would be "fix this pothole on this street," and then the other end of the spectrum could be so broad that it doesn't really mean anything. Somewhere in the middle is where we need to be.

The comment was made regarding the goal about a transportation engineer be hired to ensure plans get implemented, that maybe a professional planner would be sufficient and not necessarily a transportation engineer. An engineer is more concerned with details where a planner is more about vision.

5. Education Subcommittee SMART goals

The subcommittee wants to teach people to bike and walk safely on any street in any conditions. The goals of the subcommittee include political leader involvement, school education programs, public service announcements (PSAs), local business involvement, law enforcement involvement, and MTTA (Tulsa Transit) involvement.

- Goal #1: Political leader involvement

There has been talk of getting a bicycle/pedestrian coordinator. If we push for it now, earliest we could get one would probably be 2014 or 2015. The budget for 2013 is already in to the council.

The subcommittee suggests an Ambassador program, includes volunteers along bike routes/trails to provide information and support and have contact with emergency services to help people out.

The subcommittee also suggests increased bicycle friendly recognition and increased walkability ratings, cyclovia events, bike to work week/month proclamations, a city policy to encourage city employees to bike/walking. Another suggestion was a city policy for city employees in city owned/leased vehicles to give bicyclists a minimum of three feet when passing and yielding to all pedestrians in crosswalks.

- Goal #2: Education Programs

School education programs to teach primary and secondary students to walk/bike safely. Every student, every year in kindergarten and first grade would receive training. After that, maybe every other year. When the students are thinking about driving, incorporate the training into driver's ed. Educate college students. Also, educate adults, parents and educators.

- Goal#3: Public Service Announcements

Have a regular schedule on tv stations and radio stations with public service announcements. When school year is starting and ending, blanket media with safety messages.

- Goal#4: Local Business Involvement

Focus not only on employees but customers. Have a safe walking area in parking areas. Promote and educate employers about tax breaks available for alternative transportation. Promote MTTA employer bonus bucks, which allows employer to pay for employees bus pass and take it as a tax write-off. Recognize businesses that support cycling and walking through some sort of industry news or PSAs to let people know where they're welcome to bike to and walk to.

- Goal #5: Law Enforcement Involvement

More bicycle patrols. Can we use auxiliary officers or volunteers to do that. Have more law enforcement on trails. Many don't feel safe on a trail if it's not broad daylight or if it's not the weekend when it's busy. More officer presence would make people feel safer. Also, need to train officers on biking/walking laws. Perhaps have an hour program once a year. Or Traffic Skills 101 training as part of the academy. The academy class is dictated what to teach and what hours by CLEET (Council of Law Enforcement Education and Training). Target enforcement in high risk areas.

- Goal #6: MTTA

Every bus has a bike rack. Would like to get bus wraps that say "share the road" and get safety signs on bus shelters.

Focus on “Park and Save” locations, where people can park for free and take the bus. Incorporate bike share, so people could ride their bikes to the “park and save”, ride the bus, and then have a bike share bike to use at their destination.

6. Individual members and attendees SMART goals

First presenter: Accident data analysis.

There are data collected on bike/ped accidents when police are involved. The city can access this data and use it to identify problem areas. They can download info into a GIS system and plot it on a map. But the only information the city gets is what TPD reports. A lot of times, the information from the officer isn't thorough enough to determine what is the safety issue.

A comment was made that data 5 to 6 years old might be relevant, but older might not. The safety issues could have been resolved with a stop sign, etc.

The goal would be to collect data prior to a road diet and after to see the results and show the benefits of improvements.

Second presenter: High level goals, with many supporting goals/actionable objectives

An idea would be to have 3-4 high level goals, and include many ideas underneath each. We could include all of our good ideas and not exclude any.

High level goals could be decreasing bike/ped traffic fatalities by X% in 5 years, increase bike/ped mode share by X% in 5 years.

One thing not discussed much is some kind of dedicated funding for what we want to achieve. It's easy for politicians to come on our bike rides and be pro-bike or pro-pedestrian, but we need action to back it up.

If we talk in terms of safety, and getting more people to bike and walk.. we all probably can agree that we want that.

Question was asked how long we will have to present to council. There really aren't time limits, but we should be focused and relatively quick.

A comment was made that we should give them our recommendations through their aides in advance of the presentation.

The comment was then made that whatever the committee decides are the big SMART goals, we should be bold, that will make people think “wow, if we do this, things are really going to get better.”

7. Group discussion (time permitting)

There was not enough time.

8. Meeting Debrief

Question was asked what do we envision the council is going to do with the proposals we put out there. Why don't we present to a transportation policy committee to ensure it gets implemented.

In response, a comment was made that when we present engineering goals, we should get someone from engineering to present it so it's someone the council is used to seeing all the time.

Another commenter said it was important that this has a citizen face on it.

The idea was then expressed that for the ordinances portion of our recommendations, have the city prosecutor Robert Garner there saying I support this so there's someone the council knows who they trust their judgment. And we should have our ordinances go through city legal to vet them before presenting to the council.

A committee member disagreed saying that the council cannot direct city employees, they can only be directed through the mayor's office, but they can encourage. At this point we'll be seen as laymen, not as experts, and then the council can turn to experts to get their opinions.

Another committee member said, before you take anything specific to council you would say you want to change the bicycle ordinances in Tulsa, and then you would go meet with Bob Garner. If it's something the experts can get behind, then it might actually get done.

Another person said the enforcement subcommittee discussed comments Garner made to the effect of him being the gatekeeper for laws in Tulsa, and that's not how government works. Elected officials are ones who create our ordinances. They may ask for input. But we don't need to ask Rob Garner's permission for anything.

The comment was made that it makes more sense to take transportation issues to the transportation policy committee at INCOG at let that become regional policy. You would need to craft everything you want approved into what sounds like a policy statement that they can either approve or not.

Another person made the comment wondering whether INCOG has any power to enforce that.

Another member said the council created a complete streets resolution that was approved by the mayor and TMAPC. Council can't make policy but they have strings on the budget. If they see something that needs to get funded they have the opportunity to amend the budget or make recommendations to the mayor's budget. That's why Transportation Advisory Board is pushing for mass transit, to get more funding. If you want council to fund a plan, they could put it in their budget. The ordinances are great recommendations because they don't take a lot of money to implement. It would just involve legal staff spending time with BPAC to make it happen. Council does create ordinances.

Another member then said council creates ordinances on the recommendation of the city prosecutor. If we present something, they're going to turn to him and say "Mr. Garner, how do you feel about this?"

Someone else said that ultimately it's the council that makes the ordinance.

Another member agreed saying, the council could ultimately say "we don't care."

Another commenter said the question would be "is it legal."

A committee member said one councilor was trying to get animal ordinance changes and they still had to have meetings with city legal to determine if it was even legal to change the ordinance or does it violate other state statutes.

Another member said we should just tell them what we want, then they'll figure out if it's legal. We can have an executive summary focusing on the big 3 or 4 goals, but we can include an in-depth full report, 20+ pages of all the good ideas we have that support those goals.

The suggestion was made to create a report-writing committee.

The meeting was adjourned.