



City of Mountain View

Minutes

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

6:30 PM

Plaza Conference Room and Video Conference,
500 Castro St., Mountain View, CA 94041

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair James Kuszmaul called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Staff members present: Transportation Planner Ben Pacho, Principal Planner Diana Pancholi, Assistant Public Works Director Ed Arango, Senior Traffic Engineer Carla Ochoa, Active Transportation Planner Brandon Whyte, Transportation Manager Ria Hutabarat Lo, and Assistant Public Works Director Damian Skinner.

Consultants present: Tracy McMillan and Carly Haithcock (NN Engineering), Samantha Suter (Metta Urban Design), Nathalie McCarvel, Julia Wean and Gary Hsueh (Steer)

15 members of the public were present including seven (7) in person and eight (8) online.

Present 5 - Committee Member Lada Adamic, Committee Member Terry Barton, Committee Member Valerie Fenwick, Vice Chair John Stone, and Chair James Kuszmaul

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

(00:01:50)

Bruce England noted that the webinar ID was provided in the agenda instead of the full clickable link, which would be easier for people to use.

4. MINUTES APPROVAL

4.1 Approve Meeting Minutes September 27, 2023

Motions: (00:03:45)

MOTION: Approve the BPAC meeting minutes from September 27, 2023

Fenwick/Barton - 5/0/0 - passed.

Yes: 5 - Committee Member Adamic, Committee Member Barton, Committee Member Fenwick, Vice Chair Stone, and Chair Kuszmaul

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Active Transportation Plan (ATP) Update

Whyte, McMillan, and Suter provided a presentation on the existing conditions analysis and community engagement for the Active Transportation Plan. Additionally, Arango noted that the driveway visibility triangle has been found to provide safety benefits in high density urban areas, and he also noted that the City allows trees within the sight triangle. (00:03:55)

Public comments (00:33:30):

Kiril Stoimenov appreciated the work and asked for right turn on red provisions to be abolished in Mountain View. He noted that this is a driver-first policy and requested a campaign of bus ads and billboards. He noted that there was low visibility in Palo Alto where there are many trees and that is associated with lower speed travel. He noted that having many trees makes things safer.

Chris Perry noted that the top line goal of the study is a walkable bikeable city where anyone and everyone can walk and bike to get where they need to go. He noted that safety is the most significant issue and that the continuous and extensive state of the AAA network is the most key asset. He asked for the ATP existing conditions analysis to address gaps particularly in the SRTS network. He also asked for a review of which neighborhoods a person can walk or ride to all key activities; he stated this is also an equity consideration.

Chambers applauded the impressive response rates for the project survey as well as the multiple opportunities to participate in activities such as walking and biking tours. He requested more context in the introduction including reference to the extensive work in AccessMV and the roadmap for the rest of the project. He also requested that key findings be summarized at the end of each chapter. He noted that the key issue to address is the funding gaps to address the incremental progress to move this work forward. He also asked that timed parking policy such as that on Middlefield Road be addressed.

Siamak Mirnezami praised the documentation for this update. He noted that a missing item from the report was education including education of cyclists on stopping at stop signs and traffic lights.

Emil Abraham praised the holistic work on this plan especially data on commute mode percentages. He requested more granularity in this data in relation gender, race and age. This would help with understanding increases in ridership and potential snowball effects.

Bruce England from the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition appreciated the work on this project. He expressed alarm about potential tree removal and asked that this be considered very carefully. He also appreciated out of box thinking in terms of spatial opportunities. He also requested more walkable urban structure such as shorter blocks.

Daniel Hulse noted that the analysis within the City was good, but consideration should be given to destinations beyond City borders such as routes across San Antonio to Palo Alto and linkages to Los Altos and Sunnyvale. He also requested acknowledgement of the difference between actual bike infrastructure and labels such as bike boulevards.

Mary Dateo appreciated this work including the section on green streets. She was relieved to hear that trees are not removed as a result of sight triangles. She welcomed more opportunities for trees in various locations including buffers for protected bikeways. She requested the City adopt a policy to plant the largest tree possible appropriate for the site including the space. She also asked if upcoming ATP recommendations would be integrated into City development standards. She also asked for standards related to on-site access and circulations on private property. For example, this should include bicycle parking, walkable on-site conditions and trees on-site.

Silja Paymer requested Citywide standards for sidewalks including elements such as widths and cross slope. She noted that people often walk on streets in locations where sidewalks are too narrow. She also requested connection with the Biodiversity Strategy and a very inclusive approach beyond the 8 to 80 age range.

Eric Nordman from Palo Alto Bicycle Advisory Committee noted that trees are not really a problem but cars parked too close to the intersection is more of a concern.

Committee comments (00:58:37):

Fenwick supported comments from members of the public including written comments from Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, concerns about drivers parking too close to corners, agreement that trees don't block sight as much as low dense hedges (like at Bailey Park Shopping Plaza), and observation that no right turn on red provisions create a sense of entitlement among drivers. Additionally, she noted that the pedestrian entrance to Shoreline Park is dirt and difficult to navigate with a wheelchair and commented that all intersections in Fort Worth, Texas, are set to pedestrian recall phasing. She requested the City coordinate major repaving with PG&E utility undergrounding. She also requested shade trees along Central Expressway sidewalk and routes to school. Fenwick reiterated that ADA pinch points do not provide sufficient space or quality for pedestrians in wheelchairs and commented that placing signs well into sidewalk so drivers won't scratch their doors elevates drivers and a culture of driving over people and walking. She also stated blocking bike lanes and sidewalks by delivery drivers is a problem. And she requested consideration of event access. For example, she walks to events at Shoreline Park, but observed that leaving the venue is difficult with a lack of lighting on creek trails and conversion of park trails to car lanes after dark. Finally, Fenwick noted that many locations are not designed for people. For example, the underpass of 237 at Middlefield cannot be crossed in a signal cycle, which encourages illegal crossings.

Barton suggested reflecting on locations where walking and biking is part of the culture such as Stanford University, Davis, and Copenhagen. For examples, parking fees such as at Stanford University are more effective than incentives. He questioned the survey data that suggests 5% bike mode share. He also requested enforcements of conditions of approval related to bike parking such as at Costco in Mountain View. He stated that REI was the only place that did adult bike training in Mountain View, at Shoreline Amphitheater, bike parking is further away from the entrance than VIP car parking, and that bike parking missing at doctor's offices. He requested that culture be discussed and ways to promote a walking and biking culture. Finally he stated his belief that people who walk and cycle are more courteous as drivers when they drive so walking and biking helps build empathy. Barton also noted he likes little things such as signal preference on bike boulevards and where sensors are placed for bikes also impact the effectiveness for bicycles.

Adamic felt the report was thorough. However, she noted that the gaps identified are still almost the same since the prior Bicycle Transportation Plan. Likewise, the prioritized projects and even the "fast five" have not all occurred. She noted that time is passing by and we need to accelerate projects so children can experience a bikeable City. She appreciated public comments by Perry. She also noted that trees are part of making walking great. She also requested consideration of whether sidewalks should be used by delivery bots. She also noted the needs for water fountains, bathroom facilities, regular maintenance (like washing off vomit), minimizing dust from leaf blowers. She noted that the list of native trees is not extensive and asked for consideration of the level of community wildlife acceptance. She also noted that there are concerns with the Big Leaf Maple and California Laurel. She requested trees from other places with similar climates. Adamic concluded by asking for colors that are easier to distinguish on maps.

Stone requested consideration of gap analysis, destination analysis as not all areas have the same density of destinations.

Kuszmaul supported inclusion of recent mode share data from the SRTS program. He also supported the mention of expected growth. He appreciated the review of City codes and standard details. He also requested consideration of standards related to through access in private developments. He also requested more count data.

6.2 Citywide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance Update

Pacho provided a presentation on the Citywide TDM Ordinance Update. (01:32:00)

Public comments (01:54:50):

Silja Paymer asked how the TDM Ordinance would translate to tenant actions if it is just for new development.

Mary Dateo appreciated the work so far.

Committee comments (01:57:12):

Fenwick appreciated this work and the fact that the City now has someone focused on this issue. She generally supported the vision statement and requested to add mechanisms to enforce the strategies. She would be interested to see how these agreements run with the property if ownership changes. She also requested TDM incentives to encourage existing properties to do something new, and efforts to ensure that the TDM benefits continue.

Stone appreciated the goal of reducing VMT and also requested a goal of reducing pollution including tire particulates in disadvantaged communities.

Adamic appreciated the vision statement but felt it was not nice and unfair to put this on new development. She has seen these programs have little effect at Meta because safe bike infrastructure was lacking and transit services to campus were not time efficient.

Barton noted that many small efforts help tip the scale in terms of people getting to campuses. He noted that at Meta there was substantial green washing, but they responded to the fee imposed for exceeding a specific goal. He therefore requested more specific and measurable goals. He also requested employee engagement to understand what measures would be most useful. Additionally, he requested more enforcement to ensure that transportation benefits stay in place. Low parking rates relative to office occupancy, as well as penalties for trip rates help to increase participation and shift demand. He hopes the City can help to reduce the demand for very expensive parking garages. He suggested looking at standards from further afield such as parking cash out or parking fees. Barton ended by noting that it has taken 100 years of the automobile to get to this point and will take some time to get back to a less car centric culture; stating enforceable, measurable measures with data will be part of that.

Kuszmaul appreciated the balance that the team is trying to strike between operational factors and Citywide benefits. He also appreciated elements that require less enforcement such as lower parking requirements as a TDM measure. He appreciated contributions to the MTMA, which can create a virtuous cycle for more than one company. He noted spillover parking concerns and suggested that programs such as parking cash out could be paired with parking permit programs.

6.3 Speed Limit Legislation Overview and Implementation Strategy

Ochoa provided a presentation on speed limit legislation. (2:22:35)

Public comments (2:49:00):

Siamak Mirnezami asked if there was enforcement for e-bikes going more than 25 mph.

Committee comments (2:50:28):

Fenwick appreciated the analysis and was saddened that broader implementation did not appear to be possible noting that speed kills. She requested that staff consider California Street and other locations near residential neighborhoods and schools. She also requested that staff connect with Palo Alto staff regarding how they achieved 25 mph on Middlefield Road and whether it is effective.

Barton noted that he likes to lead with infrastructure changes.

Adamic noted that bike traffic has increased on Calderon and hoped that that success could be replicated in other locations.

Kuszmaul requested that staff gain an understanding of how Palo Alto reduced speed limits.

6.4 Santa Clara Valley Transportation Agency (VTA) Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Update

Adamic provided an update on the VTA BPAC including the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, VTA 2050 project list, updates to the Countywide Bike Map. (2:54:51)

No public comment.

Committee comments (2:57:08):

Fenwick and Kuszmaul expressed appreciation for the posting of this update so that they could absorb it before the meeting.

6.5 BPAC Fiscal Year 2023-24 Work Plan

Whyte provided an update on the Work Plan and Tentative Agenda List. (2:57:38)

No public comments.

No committee comments.

7. COMMITTEE/STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS, UPDATES, REQUESTS, AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1. Staff Comments

Whyte noted that Monster Bash will held on October 28, 2023 with a Family Bike Ride, Bike Circus, and Free Bike Repair. (3:02:09)

No public comments.

No committee comments.

7.2. Committee Comments

No committee comments.

8. SET DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT MEETING:

Next meeting: November 29, 2023

9. CALENDAR

10. ADJOURNMENT

Kuszmaul adjourned the meeting at 9:48 p.m.

Submitted for approval by Ashley Winsor