
Bicycle Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

8 MARCH, 2016

BAC Members Present:

Ian Stude, Christopher Ackerman, Roger Averbek, Dan Bower, Dana Dickman, Reza Farhoodi, Carl Larson, Keith Liden, Kirk Paulsen, Betsy Platt, Shayna Rehberg, Evan Ross

BAC Members Absent:

Heather McCarey, Elliot Akway-Scott, Leah Benson, Maria Erb, Jocelyn Gaudi, Rithy Khut, Kari Schlosshauer

City Staff Present:

Roger Geller, Shane Valle, Cage Byrd, Steve Hoyt-McBeth

Guests:

Marvin Rambo, Terry Dublinski-Milton, Adam Herstein, Chris Eykamp, Emily Guise, Kurt Nordback, Chris Smith, Greg Haun, Jonathan Maus

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The meeting convened at 18:00

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Introductions
- Roger and Ian were at a PSC meeting to represent the BAC's support for the TDM measures under discussion
- The first of the bike parking code meetings were held
- Broadway Bridge will be closed to everything but cyclists and pedestrians beginning in March
- Sellwood Bridge biking treatment

BIKETOWN BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

Steve Hoyt-McBeth provided the BAC with an overview of the progress made on the Biketown bike share since Nike was announced as the sponsor. The day after his presentation, PBOT will release a map of 300 candidate stations for the rollout of bike share this summer. There will be a multi-week public participation process to narrow down the number of stations to 100.

Question: Are you going to combine pricing with other modes?

Answer: That might be in the future, but it's not in the short-term future

Comment: The casual user that doesn't buy the membership, there is no cap, right? You can buy as many \$2.50 trips per day as you want? I'm curious to see what happens cost/revenue-wise.

Question: would you be able to buy a monthly pass that is not part of a contract?

Answer: Yes. The challenge will be to price it right. We want to attract people to Annual membership because it makes people much more likely to use the system.

Steve talked about station placement (though the BIKETOWN bikeshare won't rely on physical stations so much) and stressed the importance of siting stations in continuously dense areas to make it as useful to as many people as possible.

Question: I was wondering given the restrictions against bicycling on sidewalks and in specific parts, how does the program propose to educate potential users?

Answer: The main way we will communicate to people is on the bike itself. There will be safety messages and “how to” messages instructing them on proper usage

Question: Have you thought about promotional pricing to encourage more people to use it at first?

Response: One of the challenges with our system is we are going to have credit card readers in just 20% of stations. So we are much more reliant on people getting that app on their phone because the physical payment stations are more sparse. Once the app is on your phone, it makes that opportunistic trip much easier to take; it’s like having the trimet app in your pocket.

Question: is helmet still part of an RFP? It could be an idea to give a free helmet with new memberships.

Response: Yes. We are going to focus on getting helmets through local bike shops and private bike rental groups

Question: Do you have a projected theft or damage percentage?

Response: Motivate is allowed a 1% loss rate

Comment: I’m fascinated by the communication between PBOT and the neighborhood. If you don’t tell them ahead of time, they get really frustrated.

Comment: Mixed feelings on the station area—as a downtown worker, I will enjoy it but as a resident I will not really be able to enjoy using it in the areas I would like to use it yet.

Question: Is there a thought to not charge people if they get to a station and it is full but allow them to park elsewhere on the block?

Response: No, we will not charge them.

Question: Is there a problem with having the application on the phone for low income folks?

Response: generally low income people are more likely to have smart phones than the average person

Question: What are the ideas for phase 2?

Response: There is another grant application out to do a bike share development plan to look at what Phase 2/3 will look like, if they have it at all.

Comment: I’m struck by the differences in bike share and transit. I hope that bike share will successfully integrate into the e-fare program. One of the equity concerns is the cost of the card and the minimum balance. Today large transit projects are being held to a standard of how they are adding to building more subsidized affordable housing.

Question: What was the rationale behind making the minimum age 18?

Response: The helmet law is 16 so none of the users have to wear a helmet.

Question: Has anyone in Europe put E-bikes into their fleet. What precedent is there and what has been learned?

Response: Birmingham has an E-bike system. There are two challenges with E-bikes—1) is charging and 2) is theft.

Question: is there anything that the BAC can do?

Response: the BAC is used to thinking analytically, so the more that you can do a bit of this yourself and give input and send it around, the better.

Question: as the potential goes from 300 down to the official 100, is there room for the BAC to give formal feedback?

Response: We would be happy to come back. The decision will be made by Director Treat in May. So that's our timeline

A PERSPECTIVE ON TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

Cage Byrd, the Portland Police Bureau's liaison to the BAC spoke about the Police Bureau's observations on enforcing traffic laws and barriers to enforcing laws. His presentation is the first part of a two-part series that will conclude in April with presentations and discussion by PBOT's Vision Zero team. The intent of this series is to engage the BAC in supporting legislative and other initiatives being undertaken/considered by the City in support of Vision Zero.

Cage identified several principal barriers to increased enforcement:

1. Understaffing at the Police Bureau and Traffic Division is one of the largest barriers to effective enforcement. Officers are regularly shunted to responding to 911 calls and unable to focus on traffic enforcement.
2. Juries in Multnomah County seem to have a difficult time convicting their peers of committing crimes. There is a certain amount of leniency that jurors offer those charged with potentially dangerous violations.
3. Low staffing also compounds procedural barriers. It can take a long time to process a person stopped on suspicion of impaired driving. The fastest he's been able to process a stop is 2.5 hours. It can take significantly longer when the person rejects testing and a search warrant must be procured.
4. District Attorneys tend to be overworked and use interns or certified law students. This does not always produce the best judicial result.
5. Culturally people seem to "care less about hitting other things". That is a personal observation based on 10 years of experience. Our cars are safer (air bags) and the temptations to do other things while driving have increased.
6. Cage also sees a willingness to think that having 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 drinks and then driving is acceptable.

7. The cell phone law was adopted in 2009 and was principally designed for talking on the phone. The judiciary is unclear and not unanimous in defining “use” of a cell phone. Is checking Facebook while driving “using” the phone? Generally, yes, but not always.

Improvements the Bureau is looking at

- body cameras, though data storage is an issue
- cell phone law should be rewritten to expand the definition of what it means to “use” a cell phone; the the blood alcohol level for a DUI should be lowered.

Question: Police officer didn’t write a citation for the driver who hit a friend of mine; why is there a pattern of police officers not doing that?

Response: Lack of training on what you can and can’t cite for.

Comment: There needs to be more focus on making sure collision reports between a vehicle and cyclists are filled out with the same fidelity that vehicle-vehicle collisions are filled out.

Comment: Saying Vision Zero is easy, but implementation is very difficult, as you’ve just shown us. Police officers might not think of the fact that when vulnerable road users are involved in a collision, they usually aren’t very coherent as they are often recovering from some kind of bodily trauma—they may need more help when comes time to collect/exchange information

Question: You mentioned you are interested in seeing the blood alcohol level lowered, but they have a zero tolerance policy. It seems like there will need to be a complete cultural shift to make this change.

Response: Yes. A study was done and on average it takes someone drunk driving XX times before they are caught and cited with a DUI. We’re not sure what to do. We can’t be everywhere at once.

Cage also provided some data about Traffic Division stops. In 2015 there were 67,000 total warnings and citations issues to people driving. There were 216 warnings and citations issues to people bicycling.

20S BIKEWAY

Roger Geller led a discussion on the concerns raised by Southeast Uplift neighborhood coalition about the 20s neighborhood greenway.

PBOT decided against diversion in the Concordia neighborhood because the automobile volumes were low and diversion is a tool to decrease automobile volumes.

Comment: the standards put forth in the Neighborhood Greenway Report don’t account for roadway width, which is a crucial factor here. It would be nice to see diversion to deal with cars not being able to pass cyclists as frequently.

Also at issue was the project’s decision to use SE 32nd as the bikeway route south of Woodstock Blvd. The other principal alternative—Reed College Place—had somewhat higher traffic volumes than 32nd Avenue as well as a higher proportion of motorists driving above the posted speed limit. In addition,

because of its design (wide, planted center median), it leaves no room for people driving to comfortably pass people bicycling.

The commercial district on 28th Avenue between SE Stark and SE Sandy is 7000 AADT, much too high for neighborhood greenway treatment.

The project is already at 100 percent design and has been sent out for construction bids.

Comment: It's disingenuous to say that the 20s Bikeway Stakeholder Advisory Committee just wanted to move ahead with the 20s Bikeway as it was when they last saw it and in its current iteration.

Comment: All the neighborhood associations on the alignment were involved during the public process. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee agreed to the proposed alignment.

The BAC will draft a letter to the city stating support for the proposed alignment.

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The meeting adjourned at 20:25

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