

BTF Meeting October 9, 2007

Attendance

David Rathbone, Del Sudkamp, Melissa Taylor, Philip Pugliese, Daisy Blanton, Hugh Worthy, Ben Taylor, Guy Beaty, R.C. Hoff, Andy Jones.

Bicycle Master Plan Review and Update

As the Bicycle Master Plan was approved in 2002, it is now time for a serious review of the plan. The Bicycle Plan also serves as the bicycle component of the Long Range Transportation Plan, which is now under review to be revised by 2009.

The plan is divided into 4 key areas: Central City, East Hamilton, West Hamilton, and North Georgia. We need to identify people in each zone who would be willing to help direct the process of reviewing the inventory of suitable facilities and move forward to make recommendations for any changes. It was recommended that a mailing be sent to Chattanooga Bicycle Club members to seek local input for these areas.

Melissa Taylor inquired as to how the congestion management and air quality programs will impact bicycle planning and the LRTP. Also, how would bicycle planning be integrated into the LRTP update process -- would consultants be used to evaluate generally or as a specific component?

Local Route Updates

Ben Taylor discussed recent work completed:

Tunnel Warning Lights became operational in September.

Bicycle route connecting Shallowford Road to Brainerd Road.

Work orders are scheduled for the following projects:

40th Street from St. Elmo to Alton Park which will go by the Recreation Center.
Workman Road from Central to Rossville Blvd.

Jersey Pike bicycle lane is still be evaluated but should move forward. Chestnut Street bicycle lane from MLK to 2nd is still pending. The Riverfront Parkway bike lane from the Waterfront to 20th may also move forward soon.

Andy Jones inquired about why bicycle lanes were not included on the recent paving of East Brainerd Road from Brainerd to Concord. There was not enough road width for a BL, but we could move forward with marking this as a Signed Shared Roadway (BR).

TDOT Enhancement Applications

Applications for TDOT Enhancement funding (80% federal, 20% local) are due on November 30. An important change for this year is that preliminary engineering and planning does NOT qualify to meet the 20% local match.

Due to revisions in the FHWA's interpretation of the Federal Enhancement Grant regulations, grants awarded in 2008 and thereafter will be unable to use preliminary engineering/design services, including the preparation of grant applications, as part of the required 20% local match. It will be the responsibility of the project sponsor to fund preliminary engineering and design activities.

Each grant application must have a municipal sponsor which is willing to commit to the 20% match but could be supplemented by private funds. Hamilton County/City of Chattanooga apparently is going to continue to pursue additional funding for the Enterprise South Wetlands Restoration (stormwater) project which will preclude a local application for bicycle facilities during this grant cycle.

We need to identify potential smaller projects in our surrounding TPO communities that might be eligible for this funding.

Signal Mountain Land Use Plan

Guy Beaty hosted a bicycle information table at a recent Town of Signal Mountain community Land Use Planning meeting sponsored by the Regional Planning Agency. There was significant interest from town council members and the town manager in pursuing the development of bicycle facilities and sidewalks on Signal. Specifically they expressed interest for the inclusion of bicycle lanes on Ridgeway Avenue/Taft Highway. This is presently included as a recommended bicycle route in the master plan. We will continue to evaluate this as a potential project. Guy also mentioned that a one-way section of Mississippi Avenue might also have the potential to include a bicycle facility.

Soddy Daisy Rail Trail Update

There continues to be interest in moving forward with the first phase of this project which would be a multi-use-trail facility running along TVA's rail line which parallels Sequoyah Access Road from US 27 in Soddy Daisy east to Dallas Hollow Road. Ultimately it would connect to Sequoyah Nuclear Facility and Lake Chickamauga. It was mentioned that this route could also potentially link in with future plans for a toll bridge across the Tennessee River from Highway 111.

Complete Streets

The National Complete Streets Coalition (www.completestreets.org) is working to encourage the adoption of complete street policies at the federal, state and local levels. TDOT does have a bicycle and pedestrian policy which requires that these facilities be considered for all new and retrofit road projects. However, we need to continue working to ensure that this policy include those with varying abilities and transit users as well, and to expand the actual construction of complete streets.

Philip Pugliese proposed a motion that the BTF review and develop language for recommendation to the TPO on adoption of a TPO endorsed complete streets policy. It was requested that a presentation be made on complete streets to the BTF and TPO to promote further discussion. This motion passed without objection.

TPO Support

Melissa Taylor inquired as to continued support and direction of the TPO staff for bicycle related projects. RC Hoff replied that the TPO staff did use the Bicycle Facilities Master Plan as a guide for activities but that they were not pursuing any specific funding for projects.

Philip asked about the status of bicycle/pedestrian data collection funds that were included in the 2007 TPO Work Plan. RC said that he would check on this for us.

Melissa continued with questions regarding the role of the BTF in responding to direction from the TPO. Many in the BTF feel that we do not have a defined role

other than general advocacy efforts. RC said that since we have a staff position on the TPO, we should use that forum to work to direct policy changes.

The next TPO meeting will be a combined session of the Executive Staff and Board on October 23rd at 1:30 PM.

SRTS Update

Melissa brought examples of the Safe Routes to School packets which have been distributed to the pilot schools. A Safe Routes Teacher Workshop was scheduled for our local PE instructors, but there was not significant interest in participating at this time. TDOT has indicated that Safe Routes Chattanooga will be receiving SRTS funding but we do not know at this time which of our applications were approved and to what extent. Rescheduling of the SRTS Teacher Workshop and other activities are pending this notification.

The next Bicycle Task Force Meeting will be Tuesday, December 11.

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