

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
THURSDAY, JULY 12, 2018**

**City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, July 12, 2018.

Chairperson Slanga convened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Johanna Slanga; Board Members Vice-Chairperson Lara Edwards, Amy Folberg, Daniel Rontal, Katie Schafer, Doug White

Absent: Alternate Board Member Daniel Isaksen

Administration: Lauren Chapman, Asst. City Planner
Jana Ecker, Planning Director
Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer
Scott Grewe, Police Dept. Commander
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

Fleis & Vanderbrink ("F&V"): Julie Kroll
MKSK: Brad Strader

2. INTRODUCTIONS (none)

3. REVIEW AGENDA (no change)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MMTB MEETING OF JUNE 7, 2018

Page 2 - Add in that Lara Edwards was nominated as Vice-Chair.

Motion by Ms. Folberg

Seconded by Ms. Edwards to approve the MMTB Minutes of June 7, 2018 with the addition.

Motion carried,

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Folberg, Edwards, Rontal, Slanga, Schafer, White

Abstain: None

Multi-Modal Transportation Board Proceedings

July 12, 2018

Page 2

Nays: None

Absent: Isaksen

5. RESIDENTIAL STREET WIDTH STANDARDS

Ms. Ecker recalled that on January 22, 2018, the City Commission considered future street widths for Bennaville, Chapin and Ruffner. Several residents appeared on behalf of Bennaville Ave., and additional residents appeared on behalf of the one block of Chapin Ave. After much discussion, the City Commission endorsed the recommendations of the Multi-Modal Transportation Board ("MMTB") with regards to the future street width. However, during the discussion, the Commission expressed confusion as to what the City's policy is for determining the width of a new street. As a result, the MMTB was asked to study the issue in further detail, and send information and policy direction back to the Commission.

Accordingly, the MMTB discussed revising street widths standards over several months and on May 18, 2018, the revised Residential Street Widths Standards were presented to the City Commission. The Commission concluded that the document should be returned to the MMTB for suggested edits to the document. An updated draft with the changes that the Commission requested shows the changes noted in red.

Ms. Folberg commented that on street design standards (1), it looks like for new and existing unimproved residential streets that are being improved that there is no variance from the 26 ft. except when the right-of-way is less than 50 ft. She did not think that was the Board's intent. That is not in agreement with the flow chart, which extends to both newly improved streets and existing but reconstructed streets that if any of the items in 4 are present, a different width for the street may be considered.

Mr. O'Meara and Ms. Ecker agreed that the intent was that a slightly wider width may be considered for new and existing unimproved residential streets that are being improved.

Ms. Ecker concluded the language for (1) should read, "When streets are improved or newly constructed, the standards below shall generally be applied. Exceptions may be considered when factors such as those described in Section 4 are evident." Also, in INTRODUCTION a T is missing.

Mr. Rontal thought the City Commission wants a standard and a means of identifying when the standard can be breached.

Ms. Ecker noted all of this will be together from start to finish in the City Commission Agenda packet when it goes back to the Commission. If approved, the new City Standard will be on the City's website.

Motion by Ms. Edwards

Seconded by Mr. Rontal to recommend approval to the City Commission of the revised Residential Street Width Standards with the changes that were discussed.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Edwards, Rontal, Folberg, Slanga, Schafer, White

Nays: None

Absent: Isaksen

6. BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

Ms. Chapman described the different bike share types. Most common is the docked or station based. There is also dockless where people need not return the bike to a kiosk. Additionally, there is another dockless service where the bike is locked to a City rack or a station.

Grant opportunities are available. MoGo (Detroit's bike share) was awarded two grants. SEMCOG awarded a Transportation Alternatives Program grant for \$495,380 to the cities of Berkley, Detroit, Ferndale, Huntington Woods, Oak Park, and Royal Oak for a multi-community bike share. In addition to that grant, MoGo also received a grant from Build a Better Bike Share for \$400,000 to support adaptable bikes that are for users who struggle to use two-wheel bikes.

There are different ways to fund bike shares:

- The entity partnering with the bike share puts up money;
- Through a third party operation;
- Through various partnerships;
- Small business sponsors.

Anyone can use a bike share for any reason, at any time. The City has several miles of trails. Several people have expressed that they would like a bike rental in the City. Ms. Chapman noted 21 potential station locations in Birmingham.

There were several questions that Ms. Chapman asked the board to consider:

If bike share is favored:

What kind would the board prefer?

- Recommendation: The City pursues docked (station based) bike share or dockless (kiosk optional). For dockless: Users would be required to lock bikes to public racks or company provided racks.

Is there interest in multi-community connections?

Multi-Modal Transportation Board Proceedings

July 12, 2018

Page 4

Recommendation: The City link with other communities in order to increase the effectiveness for Birmingham and other communities.

What company?

- Recommendation: If linking with other communities the City would have to contract with the same systems MoGo (Shift Transit) or Southfield (Zagster) use. If not, City staff has no specific recommendation.

Should we provide accessible bikes now or withhold opinion until later? -

City staff recommends that the MMTB consider accessible bikes after a bike share has been operational for at least a year.

Ms. Ecker noted there is no information that suggests you cannot have a successful bike share program without infrastructure. Or, that you cannot have successful infrastructure without a bike share program. One is not needed before the other.

Mr. Rontal had a hard time seeing people use a bike share program to get around the City of Birmingham. He could see it being useful to get to surrounding communities. In terms of intra-city bike share, he favored something more along the lines of the Lime Electric Scooter Share they have in San Francisco as being more convenient.

Ms. Ecker said with respect to locating the stations the board would lead and public input would be encouraged. Offsite parking locations would be good places to put a station so that commuters can get to Downtown. Mr. Rontal said he has a hard time visualizing people biking down Maple Rd. from some of the outlying churches, wearing their work clothes.

Discussion turned to usage and Ms. Chapman said with both Zagster and MoGo their usage data is proprietary to their participating cities.

With regard to safe bike routes to surrounding communities, Eton, and Pierce were noted.

Ms. Schafer wondered whether if other cities are using bike share and Birmingham is not, is Birmingham shutting itself out of that potential draw of people because they can't leave their bike in Birmingham.

Ms. Ecker stated there is a whole generation of folks that don't want to drive and might want to ride bike share. To Ms. Schafer's point, if surrounding cities have bike share and Birmingham doesn't, is Birmingham left out?

Ms. Chapman said in response to Mr. Rontal that the cost to go with either Zagster or MoGo depends on the number of stations and how many bikes at each station.

Multi-Modal Transportation Board Proceedings

July 12, 2018

Page 5

Ms. Slanga noted the Zagster pilot is paid for by Zagster. However, it is much more on the community with MoGo; but then there is the connectivity with surrounding cities. Ms. Chapman said the cities can bring in different sponsors. Advertising can be applied to the bikes or to the kiosks. Mr. Rontal suggested they should look at going to large businesses for sponsorship as well as small businesses. Maybe Ford, GM, and Chrysler would be interested in stepping in. Ms. Ecker advised that in the past the Surnow Group has been interested in sponsorship.

Ms. Ecker thought it would be a mistake to start something and not try to connect with surrounding communities.

Ms. Chapman asked the board members whether they feel bike share is a favorable possibility.

Ms. Folberg said to her the question is whether it is worth \$100,000 to do a feasibility study. Ms. Chapman said that other communities have not done a feasibility study and are basically signing up for bike share a year at a time to see how it goes. MoGo is planning to hold community meetings for them to consider possible station locations.

Ms. Ecker said that opportunities for grants come up every year. She added surrounding municipalities are generally more than happy to share information back and forth with Birmingham. It was discussed that being a year behind may provide Birmingham a lot of information about what might or might not work.

Board members asked staff to come back with:

- A round number of locations with an accessibility map;
- If Birmingham were to go with MoGo in order to connect with surrounding communities it would be around \$_____. If it were \$100,000 to implement, then the \$100,000 feasibility study seems like a waste of money;
- What is the City's perspective on how it would be managed;
- With MoGo the City would have to do more of the heavy lifting than with Zagster. Is there enough resources and staff to do that;
- Provide information from surrounding cities that are starting this up;
- Some thoughts and opinions from the business community on bringing in bike share.

Ms. Ecker predicted that once a bike station is in place people will be surprised how much they might use it. Ms. Chapman said the key for locations are to place bike stations somewhere people can get to and somewhere that people want to be.

7. MAPLE RD. IMPROVEMENTS (Phase 2 of Old Woodward Ave. Project)

Mr. O'Meara noted that the City of Birmingham has committed to a three-phased program to reconstruct its major corridors in the Central Business District. Phase I construction, focusing on the central part of Old Woodward Ave., is currently nearing completion, with an expected completion in early August. The remaining two phases will consist of:

- Phase 2, Maple Rd. – Southfield Rd. to Woodward Ave. (Construction planned in 2020)
- Phase 3, S. Old Woodward Ave. – Brown St. to Landon Ave. (Construction planned in 2022)

While the Multi-Modal Transportation Board ("MMTB") assisted with the initial street designs used in Phase 1, the City Commission assisted at a high level in the final design package. Per their direction, a planning consultant (MKSK) was hired and assisted the City in the conceptual design package now being constructed. Since there is a desire to be consistent and follow the design theme started in Phase 1 into the remaining projects, MKSK has been retained to assist again in developing the conceptual plans for Phase 2. This is a particularly smooth transition, given that MKSK has now been retained and is teamed with the City's traffic engineering firm F&V. Together, they have prepared conceptual plans to assist the MMTB with all of its planning needs. It is expected that the initial MMTB comments will be taken at this meeting, and then initial comments will be taken from the City Commission. A final review by the MMTB is expected later this summer.

As plans are prepared for Phase 2, it is important to note that the City was fortunate to be awarded two federal grants to assist in covering the cost of this project. Grants include:

- A grant for \$352,000, awarded by the Oakland Co. Federal Aid Committee, to assist the City in the cost of reconstructing this major road. As a street with high traffic counts, combined with the need for general safety improvements, this segment of Maple Rd. qualified for a grant estimated at covering 80% of the cost of resurfacing this street.
- A grant for \$249,700, awarded under the Highway Safety Improvement Program, covering 80% of the cost of reconstructing the Southfield Rd. at Maple Rd. intersection.

Mr. Strader spelled out the goals of the Phase 2 project:

- Be consistent with Phase 1;
- Improve the pedestrian and bike environment using recommended design options from the MMTB and the City Commission;
- Provide reasonable traffic operations;
- Consider on-street parking options that maximize the number of spaces;
- Consider maintenance costs;
- Meet the MDOT standards;

Multi-Modal Transportation Board Proceedings

July 12, 2018

Page 7

- Consider placement of street trees and ornamental street lights;
 - A tree every other parking space interspersed with a street light every other space;
 - Trees to be columnar in nature.

Mr. Strader and Ms. Kroll covered options for the various sections of the road.

1. Southfield Rd. Intersection – The City received a safety grant to improve the geometrics. The skewed angle in which Southfield Rd. meets Maple Rd. has created a high crash environment. It is also considered unfavorable for pedestrians attempting to cross Maple Rd. at this signal. F&V studied crash histories for the City. They determined that moving the intersection to the west, therein making all turning movements to be executed at a 90° angle, would have a measurable impact on reducing crashes. The traffic signal will have to be relocated as a part of this improvement. The MMTB and City Commission will be asked to consider whether a mast arm traffic signal design is appropriate here or not. To upgrade the signal from span wire to a mast arm would be an additional \$80 to \$120 thousand, depending upon the design. The standard for Downtown is a mast arm; outside of Downtown it is not. MKSK and F&V will provide photo renderings of the appearance of the two signal designs as viewed for northbound traffic, and the visual impact they will have on the Birmingham Museum located at this intersection.

Mr. Rontal suggested that if the mast arm is used and it is decided this is Downtown, they should locate signage or public artwork on the SE corner of the intersection so people are notified that they are coming into Downtown. He hoped the options for street trees would include those with fall color.

Mr. Strader assured they will draw the schematics to ensure the intersection is designed for trucks to be able to make the turn onto Southfield Rd.

2. Maple Rd. Between Chester St. and Bates – The consultants looked at a median option but it did not work out because after using the MDOT and Federal funding standards the island became too small.

3. Maple Rd. and Bates - The options are to leave the intersection as it is with left turns prohibited, or to provide a left-turn lane with:

- Option A - Left turn lane with narrower sidewalk
 - Improves site distance;
 - Reduces rear-end crashes;
 - Reduces vehicle queues on Maple Rd.
- Option B - Left turn lane with eight parking spaces removed
 - Improves site distance;
 - Reduces rear-end crashes;
 - Reduces vehicle queues on Maple Rd.

Multi-Modal Transportation Board Proceedings

July 12, 2018

Page 8

In this case Ms. Kroll opined that the low volume of left turns probably does not warrant a left turn lane.

Mr. Strader said they have a little room to move the street trees out into the road and restore the sidewalk width at the east and west side of Bates. The priority is to either keep the sidewalk as wide as possible even if they sacrifice on-street parking, or is keeping the on-street parking a critical priority and then doing the best they can with the sidewalk and street trees. Option A, allowing on-street parking, benefits the businesses and street life and it buffers the pedestrian from the travel lanes on the positive side. On the downside it adds to congestion because of parallel parking maneuvers. Option B makes it much better for pedestrians and it helps the traffic flow as well. The downside is the loss of parking.

Right now Maple Rd. lanes are 12 ft. wide and they are proposed to be narrowed to 11 ft. which are the least they can be with all of the constraints of high volume of traffic, busses, and heavy vehicles.

Discussion concluded there could be an Option C that would take out both sides of left turn lanes. That may cause backups. Option D would be no left turns at Bates.

Board members leaned towards Option B.

4. Maple Rd. and Park St. –

- Option A - Channelized right-turn lane
 - A center median with a two-stage pedestrian crossing;
 - Allows free-flow right turns onto NB Park St.;
 - No queuing from right turns onto Woodward Ave.

- Option B - Reduced traffic island;
 - Typical pedestrian crossing;
 - Signal Control right turns onto NB Park St. (free-flow);
 - No queuing from right turns onto Woodward Ave.

Ms. Ecker noticed that with Option A the whole pork chop space is wasted. Whereas in Option B usable sidewalk space is being added. Mr. Strader pointed out that a diverter will be needed so that people will not continue SB from Park St. onto Peabody, and they would have to turn right.

Ms. Ecker said to keep in mind that the NE corner of Park St. and Maple Rd. is likely to be redeveloped in the near future. Pretty much everyone who is interested talks about wanting Park St. to be two-way for ease of access to that property.

Chairperson Slanga expressed the opinion that nuggets and pork chops just don't work.

It was agreed that the board needs to think a little more about this intersection.

5. Maple Rd. East of Peabody and Park St. - There is a narrow sidewalk with not a lot of room for street trees. They could do something to keep the small trees but the thought is maybe no street trees and replace them with a low ground cover or some other kind of plant material. Board members agreed.

6. Parking

- Option A-1- 20 ft. parking with 8 ft. boxes
 - No extra space at end of blocks.

- Option A-2 - 22 ft. parking
 - Bike parking;
 - Larger bumpouts;
 - Pedestrian areas.

- Option B-1 - 11 ft. lanes with 8 ft. wide parking

- Option B-2 - 11 ft. lanes with 7 ft. wide parking with 1 ft. buffer

Board members were split on these options.

8. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA
(no public was present)

9. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS (none)

10. NEXT MEETING AUGUST 2, 2018 at 6 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Jana Ecker, Planning Director

Paul O'Meara, City Engineer