Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Council, June 2009

Breakout Session: Safety and Share The Road
Led by Amanda Woodall (CDOT) and Jeffery Rhodes (CDOT)
Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at Daley Bicentennial Plaza Fieldhouse
Prepared by Nick Puczkowksyj

Task 1: Identify other City agencies that can make Chicago’s streets safer for cyclists.

Session 1
Police Department
Education (Chicago Public Schools, CLTV)
Law
Department of Revenue
Secretary of State
Business Affairs and Consumer Protection
Chicago Transit Authority
Chicago Park District

Session 2
Streets and Sanitation
Police Department
Office of Emergency Management and Communication
Chicago Public Schools
Chicago Park District
Department of Revenue
Secretary of State
Office of the City Clerk
Chicago Transit Authority

Task 2: List one way each agency can work to make Chicago’s streets safer for cyclists.

Session 1

Police Department- Concentrate more on traffic enforcement for both motorists and bicyclists.

Education- CLTV could air a public service announcement concerning bicycle safety, CPS should have an in-school bike safety class

Department of Revenue- if possible issue more tickets for vehicles in bikeways.
Session 2

Streets and Sanitation- Keep roads clear, including the bike lane. Educate and bring awareness to bicyclists
Police Department- Enforce cell phone rules. Increase traffic enforcement for both bicyclists and motorists.

Office of Emergency Management and Communication- Install more left turn arrows at intersections. Install traffic signal specifically for cyclists.

Chicago Public Schools- Provide a bicycle centered Rules of the Road course for children and a special program of adults

Chicago Park District- Install a Lake Front Trail Speed Limit. Possibly, expand the trail to have an additional express lane.

Comments

Session 1
The issue was brought up whether or not Traffic Enforcement/ Department of Revenue can issue such tickets.

Session 2
Who gives out permits/designates driveways, loading zones, valet parking, etc? The idea was brought up whether if there is no bikeways will there be no bikes? It was stated that many of these programs should be concentrated on low income neighborhoods.
Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Council, June 2009

Breakout Session: Off-street Trails
Led by Keith Privett (CDOT) and Chris Gent (Chicago Park District)

Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at Daley Bicentennial Plaza Fieldhouse
Prepared by Matt Villanueva

Session 1

- Introductions
  - Blake (first time attendee) Reader
  - Michael (Active Trans member) Scribe

- Open Discussion and Recommendations by group
  - Recommend extra signage for learning or novice riders on bike trails
  - Everyone agrees that the trail maintenance, especially the Lake front trail is up to par.
  - The geometry of the Oak street trail could be better and leveled.
  - Extra lighting and lights that could help with congestions especially on the lake front trail.

- Keith’s Questions
  - **Who and what are the uses of the off-street trails?**
  - Recreation, Tourists, kids, families, people training, jogger and roller bladders etc…
  - **Why do people use the off-street trails?**
  - To avoid traffic and sometimes is safer than on-street bikeways. There is more reliable pavement. There are more things to enjoy on the trails and kids are safer on trails.
  - **What can be done to improve the trails?**
  - Look at the usage of runners and cyclists and use that information to design the trails to suit them. Adding more unpaved running paths next to the paved trails would provide better accessibility for runners and joggers and they’re not in the way of cyclists.

Keith presents to the group a draft of new trails in the area. Four major trails will be connected.

Chris Gent shows his work in the Northeastern IL Greenways & Trails Plan, which consists of approximately 700 miles of proposed trails. There are currently 992 miles of existing trails.

Session 2

- Introductions
  - Chris Everson (first time attendee) Reader and Scribe

- Open Discussion and Recommendations by group
  - Lake front trail doesn’t feel complete yet, there could be improvements
  - Everyone seemed happy with the Sauganash trail and its grade separation.
- Lakefront Trail is too crowded on Saturdays with runners
- More separation is needed between the two groups (bicyclists and runners)
- Paved path segments need some improvements
- Navy Pier “flyover” would be used a lot
- The continuity of the North Shore channel between Peterson/ Lincoln is good.
- There needs to be a nice East/West off-street trail
- Signalization needed especially around 35th street where the park is located. There are plenty of kids running around. Creative signage might help attract more attention to cyclists.
- The reason why some trails are not plowed during the winter is due to the lack of use, as well as certain group who like to ski on the trails in the winter. (Sauganash Trail)

• **Users of the trails?**
  - Cyclists both fast and slow, Walkers, runners, Children, wildlife, tourists and rollerblades

• **Why do people use the off-street trails?**
  - Faster depending on time, more recreation, scenic with no trucks or buses.

• **Connectivity?**
  - People suggested a design to trails 50 miles uninterrupted, interstate connection and more East/West trails

Keith showed the second group the proposed off-street trails. No additional questions were asked.
Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Council, June 2009

Breakout Session: On-street Bikeways
Led by David Gleason (CDOT)
Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at Daley Bicentennial Plaza Fieldhouse
Prepared by John Alex Colón

Session 1
Chris Brunn (reader)
Erica (table scribe)

David Gleason provided background and history on Chicago’s bikeways.

The City’s Bicycle Program considers innovative treatments. There is still a great deal to be developed, as the Bicycle Program is relatively youthful, as are bikeways.

Some of the considered treatments are nationwide developments, as well as locally-initiated innovations and trials. There are pro’s and con’s. The Bicycle Program has ideas, but the goal of MBAC is to get the views of public.

Activity Question 1:
What factors should be considered in the planning, engineering, and construction of on-street bikeways in Chicago?

- existing Right of Way (ROW) for motorists
- usage, e.g. cyclist density
- automobile density, both parking and travel
- high auto speed, e.g. Western Ave., where a lane would not be safe
- auto speed on roads with marked lanes, e.g. Roosevelt, leading to lack of use
- cyclist must deal with dooring one side, fast cars on the other
- whether there is room for a lane on the roadway
- land use
- destinations served by the proposed bikeway
- encouraging businesses to promote less on-street parking to make room for lanes
- removing parking for a 2-way bike path
- timing of parking/bike lanes, e.g. Clark St. bus/bike lane
- whether the lane will become a shared lane during peak traffic hours
- pavement conditions
- whether the bikeway will be cost-effective

Activity Question 2:
What are the advantages and disadvantages of one of the following innovative designs for on-street bikeways? (bold was chosen)

a) Colored bike lanes
b) Separated bike lanes

MBAC Minutes for June 17, 2009
Chicago Department of Transportation

c) Bike boulevards
d) Bike boxes

Advantages:
- Cyclist visibility
- Delineates the bike and auto travel lanes
- Lane lines can fade over time—this facility would be more permanent

Disadvantages:
- Cost
- Winter maintenance, e.g. snow, ice
- Raised-separated: cyclist may fall off grade, not a real auto deterrent, dooring
- Ice and snow would deter cyclists from using in the winter
- Barrier-separated: nowhere to bail out for cyclist, passenger doors become an issue
- Complicates overall flow of traffic
- Danger to cyclist if raised pavement markers used for delineation
- May not be feasible with delivery trucks, buses, double-parking autos
- General lack of political will for new bikeway designs

SUMMARY:
1. Play with available parking and regulations to decrease the abundance of automobile parking and make room for bikeways
2. Safety for cyclists in traffic, in terms of auto speed and direct bikeway routes
3. Separated bike lanes are an issue of cost versus reward

Session 2
Lowell (scribe)
Cynthia (reader)

Activity Question 1:
What factors should be considered in the planning, engineering, and construction of on-street bikeways in Chicago?

- Destination served by bikeway
- Amount of traffic
- Width of roadway
- Capacity for treatment
- Different colors for lanes
- Lane lines will get dirty or fade over time
- Street lighting
- Pavement conditions
- Existing parking regulations
- Proximity to parked cars, e.g. dooring

Activity Question 2:

MBAC Minutes for June 17, 2009
Chicago Department of Transportation

What are the advantages and disadvantages of one of the following innovative designs for on-street bikeways? (bold was chosen)
   a) Colored bike lanes  
   b) Separated bike lanes  
   c) Bike boulevards  
   d) Bike boxes

Advantages:
   • Traffic calming features deter high auto speeds  
   • Cul-de-sac feature would be appreciated by cyclists  
   • Residential streets have less cross-traffic  
   • Cyclist density may increase with new facility  
   • Less crashes with autos  
   • Reduced speeds for autos  
   • Infrastructure exists for this design

Disadvantages:
   • Doesn’t prohibit cars on the bikeway  
   • Traffic circles are easily out-maneuvered by motorists, threat to cyclists if not seen  
   • Impatient/speeding automobiles on cross-streets could roll through a stop sign  
   • Winter maintenance, e.g. snow pile-ups in winter at cul-de-sacs, ice/snow in cut-thru

SUMMARY:
1. Visibility on the bikeway  
2. Destination of bikeway  
3. Bike boulevards would increase cyclist comfort and safety, but maintenance is a concern.
Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Council, June 2009

Breakout Session: Bike Parking
Led by Christopher Gagnon (CDOT)
Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at Daley Bicentennial Plaza Fieldhouse
Prepared by Christy Fisher

Session 1:
Martin Hazard (Bobby’s Bike Hike)
Chester Kropidkowski (Messenger service)
Dave Miller
Kathy Schubert (Active Transportation Alliance member)
Ritch Valadez (Chicago Couriers Union)
Luann Hamilton (CDOT)

Scribe: Kathy Schubert
Reader: Ritch Valadez

Session 2:
Greg Adelberg (CTA)
Heather Stratton

Reader: Greg Adelberg
Scribe: Heather Stratton

Session 1:

1. What impact will the removal of parking meters throughout Chicago have on the availability of bicycle parking?

CG: Explains bike parking issues in relation to meter removal and asks for feedback.

KG: What street furniture can we lock to?

CG: Bikes can NOT block pedestrian and vehicular circulation. We CAN lock to garbage cans, poles, and fences in the public way

MH: If a bike is locked to a fence on private property, does the owner of that property have authority to remove the bike?

CG: Yes.

RV: (bike messenger) We need parking closer to building entrances, including the rear entrances of buildings in order to perform our job as efficiently as possible. Sometimes I have to park several blocks away to make a delivery.

MBAC Minutes for June 17, 2009
Chicago Department of Transportation

CG: The Bike 2015 Plan has a chapter dedicated to bike messenger needs.

Chester: (messenger service) I am willing to conduct a bike messenger survey to find out which buildings messengers visit the most. Generally, the removal of meters is also a concern for business owners. Less bike parking could mean less business.

CG: We could reach out to community groups and ask them for advice on the need for bike parking in retail areas.

DM: Reaching out to civic organizations is a great idea.

MH: Can we just de-activate the meters so we still have bike parking?

CG: One out of every six meter poles will be retained until we create more parking. There are several pole retrofit designs we are considering. (Gives addresses of the locations with these retrofitted poles and asks for public to send him feedback).

KS: Just put more bike parking where you see bikes locked.

CG + LH: The problem is that would take a considerable amount of time for our small staff to visit every street in Chicago. You can send feedback to our website (chicagobikes.org) or to active trans (meters@activetrans.org).

KS: I’m afraid to lock my bike to a meter for fear that it won’t be there when I return.

CG: There SHOULD be a notice that is attached to bikes locked to meters slated for immediate removal that gives seven days of notice before the bike is removed.

MH: In a previous MBAC meeting, it was said that there would be more City funding towards new bike racks.

CG: I don’t deal with the City budget.

LH: Money was already programmed for 2009 before meter removal became an issue.

CK: How many bike racks do we have?

CG: About 2800 with the current contract and next years’ contract.

LH: Reminds everyone to call 311 or email us with information about meter removal.

CG: Maybe that’s one of our 3 points to share?

DM: If we call 311, what should we say?

MBAC Minutes for June 17, 2009
CG: Be explicit that this is a meter-removal-driven request.

CK: With whom do we communicate?

CG: With me by email, phone, or letter.

MH: What about the streets where all of the meters have been removed already?

CG: We will just put in more bike racks if those locations demand more bike parking. So. How many points do we have?

KS: 1. Bike messenger parking
    2. Reach out to community groups for input on meter removal and need for bike parking

CG: We have another topic

2. Given that CDOT has begun development of several new transit-based bicycle parking projects, what lessons can we learn from the recent installation of-capacity parking facilities at four CTA stations? What do cyclists most desire in transit-based bicycle parking?

CG: (shows pictures of proposed racks) Why is nobody using these facilities?

RV: Damen is so close to downtown that it makes more sense to bike the 5 miles, rather than walk your bike up a flight of stairs.

**Session 2**

1. What impact will the removal of parking meters throughout Chicago have on the availability of bicycle parking?

GA: Can we take out lots of meters and install high-capacity parking?

CG: People prefer to park close to the entrance of a building.

GA: What about one high capacity parking area per neighborhood?

Point 1: On-street bike parking is a good solution that combines the need of high-capacity parking and the lack of sidewalk space.

CG: We have to consolidate loading zones, because we can’t take away paid parking spaces.

Point 2: Signage could help direct cyclists to non-apparent bike parking.

MBAC Minutes for June 17, 2009
2. Given that CDOT has begun development of several new transit-based bicycle parking projects, what lessons can we learn from the recent installation of-capacity parking facilities at four CTA stations? What do cyclists most desire in transit-based bicycle parking?

GA: There’s no marketing for this. People don’t know about these facilities.

HS: The CTA won’t let me even bring my bike through during rush hour, even to park. A user who wouldn’t want to bike downtown wouldn’t want to carry his/her bike up a flight of stairs.

GA: What about a service/parking kiosk next to the CTA stations?

HS: There needs to be a double-decker bike parking solution to be able to lock both wheels.
Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Council, June 2009

Breakout Session: Bike 2015 Plan
Led by Ben Gomberg (CDOT)
Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at Daley Bicentennial Plaza Fieldhouse
Prepared by Frank Zurek

Ben gave a very brief overview of the plan and the three questions posed:
1. Why bother preparing a plan?
2. If you were writing Chicago’s bike plan, what would you include?
3. If you had $5 million dollars to implement the plan’s 3 key strategies, how much would you spend on each and why?

1. Why bother preparing a plan? Attendees’ comments:
   • Plans are usually afterthoughts, If you fail to plan, then plan to fail
   • They provide achievable short term measures
   • Helps you become independent from political decisions
   • Benchmark progress
   • Improves communication
   • Easier to secure funding
   • Provides realistic and measurable goals
   • Defines the agenda
   • Provides leverage and buy-in from city departments

2. What would you include? Attendees’ comments:
Cycle tracks, tourism section, safer street trails ??, dedicated bike L cars, better data gathering, lane markings, more parking, grated bridges, public meetings, more education, street signs, mapping, lower car speed limits, enforce motorist and cyclist laws, close streets to cars on Sundays.
3. $5 million to spend on three strategies. Attendees’ comments:
The prevailing thoughts were that most money should be spent on bike lanes. Safety was one of the most important factors for the attendees when cycling and bike lanes provide that. Bike lanes are also available 24/7 and seem to be the most efficient use of money. Bike lanes and riding with traffic may still intimidate beginner cyclists. Raised or separated bike lanes are needed as a stepping stone for them. “Sunday parkways” and “open streets” are also a good stepping stone to get people on their bikes. They also force cyclists to experience to new routes.

Miscellaneous comments:
- Rich Valadez commented that there is too much messenger regulation and biases from building associations and owners.
- Sarah Miller and others believed there should be geographically spaced bike stations.
- Community cycle centers, similar to the West Town Bikes model, should be established around the city.
- Bike blackouts for public transit were brought up.
- More signage on trails and intersections.
Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Council, June 2009

Breakout Session: Bikes and Transit
Led by Dan Thomas (CTA) and Barb Nelson (Metra)

Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at Daley Bicentennial Plaza Fieldhouse
Prepared by Jack Ringness

Session 1

Metra
Barb began by asking how do cyclist know about Metra’s bikes on trains program and can it be made better?
Steve – Metra did a good job of informing riders about the program, people know from taking the trains and seeing signs posted in the train cars as well as the picture and literature in the train schedules.
Lowell – Metra could make more “on-car” announcements about the program and informing riders of the designated spot for bikes.
Rob – Problems with bikes on trains: Black-out dates, only bungee cords allowed to secure bikes, conductor attitude to bikes. Suggests “conductor discretion” at all times, would allow bikes on rush hour trains that are not full (after a few stops and people have gotten off). Also would like a pilot program with one car per train designated as a “bike car” would allow as many bikes as could be fit reasonably and safely. CMAQ money?
Barb – 31,000 bikes on Metra in 2007, 126,000 bikes on Metra in 2008. Conductor counts, so could be more.
Main points:
1) Increase ridership – inform more people, make it easier
2) Blackout dates – relax or remove and use conductor discretion
3) Designated bike car – could this happen?

CTA
Dan’s first comment was on the CTA website, he would like to improve it so that it is more convenient for cyclists to use.
Rob – Integrate CTA website/trip planner with google maps to plan multi-modal trips.
Dan – How to make bikes safer at stations and reduce theft (cameras are not feasible; every station is designed differently and not enough employees to watch cameras).
Put stickers in stations informing people how to lock most effectively.
(888) YOUR – CTA call to report abandoned bikes at stations (311 is only for bikes in right-of-way).
Rob – Heard the new bus bike holders do not accommodate bikes with front racks, needs to be fixed as more people ride commuter-style.
Dan – Buses are supposed to be inspected when they arrive at the garage every night, look for damage, including bike racks. Call (888) YOUR – CTA to report broken rack; make sure to record the bus number (4 digits). Bike racks are use at your own risk.
Steve – Put notice on bus for how to put your bike on the rack.
Rob – Would like to see CTA’s “no bikes on trains if under 14” policy relaxed for bike the drive if children with parents.
Dan – Likes this, wants to try and accommodate this idea.

Main points:
1) Stickers in stations – how to protect your bike
2) 1(888) YOUR – CTA – call for abandoned bikes or any other bike related issues and it will go to Dan’s desk.
3) Relax age policy – possibly allow children with bikes if they are with their parents for bike the drive.

Session 2

Metra
Greg – Blackout dates are much better than when the program started thinks dates blacked out all make sense
Chris – Wants a designated “bike car.”
Barb – Train platforms would need to be made longer, accommodate more cars, put in the “bike car,” would have a high cost.
Dan – Suggested a study to find the feasibility of adding a “bike car” to trains.
Greg – Wants more advertisement for “bikes on trains,” maybe a billboard on the expressway. Suggested a study for: people turned away with bikes, which train lines have the most bikes, what time are the trains full of bikes. Take this data and maybe have a pilot program on one line with a “bike car”

Barb – Would promoting “Bike to Metra” instead of drive to Metra and get on a train be a good idea? Do this during bike to work week or all year long? 230 bike parking spots have been added to the Naperville train station, BNSF line is the busiest for all commuters, not sure about bikes.

CTA
Greg – Train bus drivers how to instruct cyclist on using the bike racks, they shouldn’t help put the bike on but they should be able to tell you how to use the rack.
Dan – How to make bike parking safer at stations?
Chris – More lighting around bike racks would help, have CTA attendant include bike racks in walk of station.
Greg – Partnership with Active Trans to educate more riders. Partnership with bike companies/lock companies, donate abandoned bikes or locks (locks can be re-keyed by company), community outreach.
Chris – More partnership between Metra, CTA and Pace to better serve cyclists.