

CITY OF MERCED
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION

MINUTES

3rd Floor Conference Room
678 W 18TH STREET
MERCED, CALIFORNIA

TUESDAY
AUGUST 22, 2017

Acting Chairperson HOTHEM called the meeting of the Bicycle Advisory Commission to order at 3:04 p.m.

(B) ROLL CALL

Present: Tom Hothem (Vice-Chairperson and Acting Chairperson)
Jules Comeyne*
Greg Friedman
Justin Hicks*
Steven Lerer
Isai Palma**
Ann Thurston

*Commissioners COMEYNE and HICKS arrived at 3:07 p.m.

**Commissioner PALMA arrived at 3:43 p.m.

Absent: (Two vacancies, two Ex-Officio)

Staff Present: Stephani Davis, Development Services Secretary I
Captain Chris Goodwin, Merced Police Department
Michael Hren, Principal Planner
Scott McBride, Director of Development Services
Ashley McComb Thanadabouth, Associate Engineer
Steven Son, Deputy Director of Public Works & Acting City Engineer
Lieutenant Jay Struble, Merced Police Department

Others Present: Alejandro Garcia
Lisa Kayser-Grant
Kendra Bridges, Alta Planning and Design

(C) APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 27, 2017

ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER THURSTON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LERER, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE (THREE ABSENT), TO APPROVE THE JUNE 27, 2017, MINUTES.

(D) ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Alejandro GARCIA, Planada, Merced County Mental Health Department and community volunteer for the Parks and Recreation Department noted that they are attempting to put together a bike ride to school activity in Planada. He asked for whatever support in the form of materials, equipment or spreading awareness that the BAC can provide. He also noted a meeting on August 24 with Caltrans on how to improve routes to school on Highway 140. The event will culminate in an event on September 11, and they hope to have different agencies on school grounds and will do a walking school bus. The Commission discussed potential funding opportunities for the organization and event.
- Lisa KAYSER-GRANT, Merced, spoke regarding the sharrows on Main Street and the wearing out that has occurred since their placement. She urged the BAC to recommend the following items when reapplying those sharrows: the use of a green box, and the increased amount of sharrows at the beginning, middle and end of the block, and the use of thermoplastic paint due to its longevity.

Ms. KAYSER-GRANT also presented the BAC with a handout regarding the Merced Gateway project. She suggested the BAC participate in the Site Plan Review Committee or being made aware of the determinations made by that Committee.

Ms. KAYSER-GRANT also asked about the status of the proposed Motel Drive Multi-Use Path Project. Principal Planner HREN gave a brief update on the project in question and stated that staff would provide a more detailed update on this project at the next meeting.

ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER FRIEDMAN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HICKS, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE (ONE ABSENT) TO MOVE THE DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEM I, BICYCLE LICENSE REGISTRATION PROCESS, TO IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM D, ORAL COMMUNICATIONS.

(I) BICYCLE LICENSE REGISTRATION PROCESS

Captain GOODWIN, of the Merced Police Department, was present to answer questions from the Commission regarding current enforcement.

Commissioner THURSTON indicated it would be helpful to survey enforcement in cities with Bronze Bicycle Friendly City status that are more similar to Merced than the listed cities; the Commission suggested Fresno, Turlock. and Davis (a Platinum city). Mr. HREN asked Alta Planning and Design Consultant BRIDGES for her recommendations with regard to registration. Ms. BRIDGES said that Alta does not recommend compulsory registration, in part because it creates a barrier to entry for cyclists. The Commission discussed other methods of tracking bicycles, including use of a National Bike Index. The Commission discussed the promotion and education component of implementing a voluntary bike registry with Captain GOODWIN.

Acting Chairperson HOTHEM opened the floor to public comment at 3:45 p.m.

Ms. KAYSER-GRANT noted that since the research on practices shows highly varied approaches, further exhaustive research might not be critical. Ms. KAYSER-GRANT suggested that if the Commission sees this Code as mostly about theft prevention or recovery, registration should be once a lifetime rather than yearly, but added that requiring in-person registration at a municipal facility may be of value to prevent people from registering stolen bicycles.

Acting Chairperson HOTHEM indicated that the two guiding concepts should be theft prevention and a sense of ownership; he encouraged the Commission to look closely at the language of this aspect of the Municipal Code to make suggestions. Commissioner THURSTON suggested striking this item of the Code entirely.

Acting Chairperson HOTHEM closed public comment at 3:48 p.m.

ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER COMEYNE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FRIEDMAN, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE, TO DIRECT STAFF TO CONTINUE TO RESEARCH CURRENT BICYCLE REGISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT PROCESSES IN THE CITY OF MERCED ALONG WITH SIMILAR-SIZED CITIES WITH BRONZE OR HIGHER BICYCLE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY STATUS.

(E) BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION REQUESTS, INFORMATION ITEMS AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Associate Engineer THANADABOUTH and Acting City Engineer SON were present to answer questions from the Commission.

There was no report from the Temporary Ad-Hoc Committee.

Principal Planner HREN discussed the Wrong Way signs item, indicating that Acting City Engineer SON was willing to entertain installation of more signs that comply with the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Mr. SON and the Commission discussed signs, best practices and education. The Commission discussed signage consistency. The Commission and Mr. SON discussed sign placement, color and size. Mr. HREN asked the Commission for recommendations for locations of Wrong Way signs. The Commission recommended arterial streets (as opposed to smaller streets), the downtown area from K Street to R Street, G Street between Bear Creek and 13th Street, and areas where children are likely to ride, including near schools.

Mr. HREN introduced the concerns with the southbound traffic on G Street at Olive Avenue. He explained that staff of both the Planning and Engineering Departments are considering available options to find solutions that do not create additional problems. Among the options Mr. HREN noted were additional signs to indicate the existence of the bike lane and the start of the right-turn lane, as well as potentially reducing the width of the bike lane to clearly indicate the intended use. The Commission discussed the challenges of this intersection for all modes of transportation; other locations needing similar attention were discussed, including the M Street/Yosemite Avenue intersection and the M Street/16th intersection. Commissioner HICKS suggested that the bike lanes and green paint used in Modesto should be referenced for examples of best practices.

The Commission discussed the concept of a Bike Campus with Mr. SON, who noted that one of the biggest difficulties with projects similar to these is sustaining and funding continuing education.

Acting Chairperson HOTHEM opened the floor to public comment at 4:17 p.m.

Lisa KAYSER-GRANT discussed using part of the new bike park on Buena Vista for a bike campus to be used for cycling education. Mr. SON discussed the challenges of having a single location for the bike campus. Ms. KAYSER-GRANT proposed possible locations and strategies for cycling education to the Commission.

Ms. KAYSER-GRANT echoed the Commission's sentiments regarding Wrong Way signs on major streets and near schools.

Acting Chairperson HOTHEM closed public comment at 4:23 p.m.

(F) CAPITAL PROJECT RELATED ITEMS

Acting City Engineer SON provided an update on the Highway 59 Multi-Use Pathway Project. He stated that the design is almost complete. The project is currently waiting on Caltrans and hoping to advertise construction by October, with award by council in November or December. Mr. Son noted that if this timeline is not met, the funding may become jeopardized.

Mr. SON provided an update on the Westerly Bike Path Project. He stated that the City is waiting on a permit from Fish and Game and that the expected timeline is between 1.5 and 2 months. The Commission discussed the scope and funding realities of this project.

POLICY/BIKE PROMOTION/DEVELOPMENT RELATED ITEMS (Planning Department)

(G) BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY APPLICATION "BRONZE" GAP ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Principal Planner HREN gave a brief overview of the gap assessment for the Bicycle Friendly Community "Bronze" Application. Mr. HREN requested the Commission review the documents and complete the worksheet provided. The Commission agreed to submit their comments to the Planning Department on or before September 22, 2017. Mr. HREN indicated that the Planning Department would send a reminder email in one to two weeks.

(H) ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION/SAFE-ROUTES-TO-SCHOOL PLAN UPDATE

Clerk's Note: Development Services Director Scott McBRIDE joined the meeting at 4:47 p.m.

Alta Planning and Design Consultant BRIDGES presented a report in which she reviewed the work that has been done in the past eight months developing the Active Transportation/Safe-Routes-To-School Plan (ATP/SRTS), as well as data being used to move forward with the next steps of the process. A graphic of multi-modal intersections was presented to the Commission with the request that the Commission provide priorities

for count locations. The Commission recommended using four key points in the City core, then spreading out to North and South Merced, including school link points. The Commission also suggested using Google heat maps for bicycling to guide collection points. Director of Development Services McBRIDE discussed the ATP/SRTS plan's value as a funding-seeking mechanism.

OTHER

(J) ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Principal Planner HREN advised the Commission of the procedures for election of a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Commissioner HICKS proposed postponing the elections due to the recent appointment of two Commissioners. Mr. HREN requested that, in the event of a postponement, the Commission appoint an Acting Vice-Chairperson in the interim.

ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER THURSTON, AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PALMA, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE, TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER HICKS AS ACTING VICE-CHAIRPERSON.

ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LERER, AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TYLER, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE, TO LAY OVER THE ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON TO THE NEXT REGULARY SCHEDULED MEETING.

Commissioner PALMA noted that there was a meeting scheduled for August 23, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. to discuss design ideas related to a proposed skate park, and invited Commissioners to attend.

(K) ADJOURN TO THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017, AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER FRIEDMAN, AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COMEYNE, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE, ACTING CHAIRPERSON HOTHEM ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 5:10 P.M. TO THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017, AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 678 W. 18TH STREET, MERCED, CALIFORNIA.

BY: 

MICHAEL HREN, AICP
PRINCIPAL PLANNER/
COMMISSION SECRETARY

APPROVED:



TOM HOTHEM, ACTING CHAIRPERSON
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION