

SUBJECT: BICYCLE TASK FORCE REPORT
ADDRESS: CITYWIDE

INITIATED BY: DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT

The Planning Commission will receive a report on the Bicycle Task Force Report.

BACKGROUND

The City Council in November 2010 created the West Hollywood Bicycle Task Force (BTF). The West Hollywood BTF is composed of 18 citizens, business owners and four liaisons from Transportation, Planning, Public Facilities and Safety commissions.

The BTF met once a month for the past year to discuss and learn in a public forum the current state of bicycling in the City of West Hollywood. The BTF was organized into three subcommittees; Infrastructure, Safety & Education and Programs/Implementation & Funding.

The BTF was charged with preparing a range of recommendations to improve bicycle transportation opportunities in the City, as well as develop recommendations for community education regarding bicycle safety, and further enhance the efforts of the City's Public Safety and Transportation divisions.

Some of the goals given by the City Council included: recommendation of best practices from cities that have had successful bicycle programs; identification of local routes for a variety of types of bicycle lanes; expansion and modification of existing routes; formation of citizen education programs focused on street and sidewalk safety, particularly addressing the sharing of roads and sidewalks among drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians, and identification of incentive programs.

The BTF hosted leaders from the bicycle community at each task force meeting to share information and educate them on topics ranging from innovations in bicycle infrastructure improvements, funding, safety information, local and regional bicycle developments, non-profit ventures, and examples of what is succeeding, and the drawbacks of other programs. This provided valuable hands-on knowledge in which the subcommittees could intelligently and thoughtfully base their recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the deliberations of three subcommittees of the BTF, the following key recommendations were made:

The Infrastructure Subcommittee

Proposes infrastructure modifications to the streets of West Hollywood by creating new bike lanes on:

- Fountain Avenue
- San Vicente Boulevard
- Santa Monica Boulevard
- Fairfax Avenue
- Vista & Gardner Streets

Additional recommendations include: upgrade existing bicycle markings, signage and other graphics; expand bicycle parking options; install bicycle boxes at intersections; employ reverse angle parking, and create bicycle friendly channels at existing traffic barriers.

The Safety & Education Subcommittee

Non-infrastructure recommendations are all based on Chapter 6 of the 2003 West Hollywood Bicycle & Pedestrian Mobility Plan. Chapter 6 provides numerous opportunities for public awareness, education and promotion of bicycle safety and ridership. Continued implementation of the document is recommended.

Additional key recommendations from this subcommittee include:

- Inclusion of bicycles in all City events as an alternative form of transportation
- Encourage bicycle commuting among City of West Hollywood employees by creating incentives and providing adequate bicycle storage
- Attract new riders by sponsoring first time rider events, or night or weekend rides
- Add bicycle education as a condition of approval for all Conditional Use Permits

The Programs/Implementation & Funding Subcommittee

Recommends pursuit of state and federal grant opportunities for bicycle related infrastructure and non-infrastructure bicycle projects, and pedestrian and bicycle safety projects. The subcommittee provides a list of criteria for ranking bicycle projects and strategies to help implement the recommendations.

The BTF Report recommendations have been prioritized and listed in a table as short, medium, long and on-going actions. Short-term actions are from six months to one year, medium-term actions are from one to three years, long-term actions are from three to five years. On-going actions are recommendations that are already in process, or that it would be a continuous activity, without a start/stop date.

SUMMARY

Staff is scheduled to present the BTF Report and recommendations to the City Council on December 5, 2011.

To implement the infrastructure priorities it is important that the 2003 Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan be current and updated to reflect the recently adopted changes to General Plan policies, and in order to maintain funding eligibility with Metro. Once amended and re-adopted the next step would be to undertake a more comprehensive update to the 2003 Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan that will integrate the recommendations of the BTF, and integrates new information with respect to bicycle planning best practices.

Finally, to capitalize on the BTF Report momentum staff will return to the City Council within six months to gain approval for implementation of several bicycle improvement projects.

As a recognized pedestrian-friendly city, West Hollywood has a unique opportunity to build upon what has been accomplished in that area and now become a recognized regional model for bicycle planning.

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