

Jacksonville BPAC Meeting Notes
Hybrid Meeting
January 11, 2023 @ 5:30 PM
Ed Ball Building – 3rd Floor Conference Room
214 N Hogan Street – Jacksonville FL

Copies of presentation materials from the January 11, 2023 BPAC meeting may be viewed or downloaded from the COJ BPAC page on the City of Jacksonville website. A link to the COJ BPAC page is [HERE](#).

Meeting Attendees:

In-person: Peter Borenstein (Chair), Lauren Rushing (Secretary), Matt Fall (COJ Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator), Stephanie McCaffrey, Monty Selim (Groundwork Jax), Wiatt Bowers (Atkins), Kelly Jones, Wiley Page (Atkins), Barry Cotter, Renee Brust (WSP), Alan Tablada (COJ), Rich Vansickle (STV), Will Stewart (STV), Ryan Daniels (STV), Len Boroughs, Logan Cross (Sierra Club), Ashante Green (Sustainability Manager COJ),

Virtual: Marlo Zarka (Blue Zones), Rick Kirkwood, Jonathan Cagel, Lee Durban (COJ)

Peter Borenstein chaired the meeting.

I. Introduction & Adoption of Minutes

Peter Borenstein moved for the adoption of the meeting minutes for the BPAC meeting that was held on December 7, 2023. Len Boroughs seconded the motion. The vote to approve the meeting notes was unanimous.

I. Officer Election

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee holds three (3) elected officer positions: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Elected officers serve for a period of one (1) year and elections are conducted during the January meeting. BPAC's current Vice Chair, Steve Tocknell, has been called to service with FEMA and subsequently stepped down from his officer role with BPAC. The Committee now has a need to fill this position and called for nominations for the Vice Chair role.

Peter Borenstein nominated Lauren Rushing (current Secretary) for the role of Vice Chair. To fill the role as Secretary, Lauren Rushing nominated Stephanie McCaffrey. Lauren Rushing nominated Peter Borenstein to maintain the role as Chair.

The vote to appoint Peter Borenstein as Chair, Lauren Rushing as Vice Chair, and Stephanie McCaffrey as Secretary was unanimous.

III. Presentation – NFTPO Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan Update, Wiley Page, AICP, AtkinsRealis

Wiley Page (AtkinsRealis) joined BPAC to present on the NFTPO Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan on behalf of Rebecca Dennis (AtkinsRealis) who is the consultant project manager contracted by the NFTPO. The project took a high-level look at bike/ped needs in the TPO region and is an official update of the 2016 Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.

Goals of the plan include providing an extensive, connected and convenient ON-ROAD network of

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bike/ped facilities, improving safety, improving multimodal transportation efficiency, and providing an equitable network.

The planning process involved a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Advocates Advisory Group (AAG), a literature review that looked at existing plans, studies, and municipal comprehensive plans, public outreach through an online survey, and spatial and data analysis. The TAC involved representatives from all the counties, cities, towns, and relevant agencies including JTA, FDOT, and NEFRC within the NFTPO region. The AAG included Clay Bikeways, Blueways, and Trails, Jacksonville BPAC, and the North Florida Bicycle Club.

The literature review brought together needs and recommendations from several different studies and plans throughout the region. The project team found that there were a lot of studies that never have follow through implementation. Recommendations were compiled from these studies. The project team then reviewed which subarea and trail studies had been completed since the 2016 version of the plan. Finally, local government comprehensive plans were reviewed based on nine bike/ped related policy categories including complete streets, safety, trails, LDRs, maintenance, regional collaboration, resurfacing, public transit, and maps.

The project team conducted a survey which received 1,803 responses to questions related to transportation mode, facility use, facility purpose, safety, etc., which was felt to be a good representation of the region. The results of the survey showed that most people use existing bike/ped facilities for recreation/exercise at least weekly and their modes were closely split between biking and walking. Most respondents felt that sidewalks and shared-use paths are safe and bike lanes were unsafe or they were hesitant to ride on. Interestingly, shared facilities were perceived as least safe. Safety and connectivity were the two biggest use barriers, while connections to parks and regional trails were ranked of the highest priority. Connections to employment was ranked the lowest priority. Multi-use paths were ranked as the highest facility priority, while sidewalks and traditional bike lanes were ranked lowest.

The plan's recommended future study areas were determined through input from the TAC and AAG, previous studies, and spatial/data analysis. Five (5) criteria were used to prioritize areas:

1. Not recently studies
2. High bike/ped crashes
3. Demographic concentration
4. Socioeconomic concentration
5. Gaps in regional trail planning

The recommended future study areas then included 1) future sub-area studies i.e. general sub-area studies, bike/ped master plans, connectivity studies, and bike/ped safety studies; and 2) future trail studies. The plan did not provide enough funding for this project to get down into neighborhood level. Twenty four (24) future study areas were identified, including Springfield, North Jacksonville, Moncrief, Trout River, UNG/St Johns Town Center, Sunbeam, 103rd Street, and more. Six (6) trail studies were identified including Bartram Trail to Nocatee Trail, Black Creek Trail to NAS Jax, Cecil Trail to Baldwin

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Trail, Nassau County to Baldwin Trail, St Johns River Scenic Bike Loop, and the Core to Coast Loop.

An evaluation matrix scored and ranked each recommendation as a high, medium, or lower priority. Wiley mentioned that these rankings, however, should be “taken with a grain of salt” as these projects could be funded through various sources such as FDOT, COJ, NFTPO, which could move these prioritizations. It was noted that the Core to Coast Loop is already underway. The hope is that guidance from this plan will make its way into local comprehensive plans.

Additional recommendations included policy recommendations. Wiley notes that mapping and data deficiencies present a challenge to prioritizing projects and knowing where to begin. Data collection and facility mapping can be a difficult and expensive undertaking. This is a necessary, upfront task that often is not understood by the public and can add time to the process. Many municipalities are deficient in this. Wiley mentions that Nassau County has put counters on the Amelia Island Trail and they are using the data to get funding to make improvements and expand the trail. This data is needed to show demand and return on investment. This is an example of the type of recommendations that were made in the regional bike/ped plan update.

Finally, the project team developed a matrix to determine the types of facilities that are appropriate in specific contexts to provide a starting point for implementation. Next steps will include following through with recommended sub-area studies which will look specific projects in specific locations. The hope is that this plan would help local governments secure grants for sub-area studies.

Lauren asks about funding from the TPO and how we encourage municipalities to implement these small area plans. Wiley replied that the TPO’s long range plan will have a bike/ped safety bucket of funds that could go to fund projects that come out of this plan in coordination with the city requesting it. Matt Fall stated that the TPO has done a good job with receiving the City’s UPWP list and coordinating with the City to fund desired projects. Wiley stated that having a plan like this also makes local governments more likely to receive grants.

Peter Borenstein asks where to find the studies that informed the plan. The plans/studies are on the TPO website, but Wiley also offered his contact information if there are any that are difficult to find.

Matt Fall reemphasized the need for data to show demand for projects. He stated the City is making the existing count program more robust. Matt invited folks who are working on projects with bike/ped facilities to let him know and he can have the City put a counter out. Wiley emphasized how cameras are better for counting bike/ped than tubes and they are getting less costly.

Matt Fall complimented the regional bike/ped plan for stating that the TPO has done a good job in the past with trails that lead to recreational areas, but there is a need to balance that with more urban trails.

Stephanie McCaffrey asked if the survey collected demographic data. Wiley replied, yes, but questions were optional. He states that it is usually collected because the federal government likes to see this data.

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IV. Presentation – Hartley Road Widening Study (San Jose to Old St. Augustine), Will Stewart, Senior Project Manager, STV

Will Stewart, Senior Project Manager with STV, joined BPAC to present details on the Hartley Road Widening Project. He was joined by his colleagues Rich Vansickle (Lead Roadway Engineer), Ryan Daniels (Project Engineer), and Renee Brust (WSP – Public Outreach Coordinator).

Will begins by making a correction to the agenda which states that this is the project design phase - The project is in the study phase and the design phase will start in July.

Hartley Road is a cut through road between Old St. Augustine Road and San Jose Boulevard (Mandarin). It is a rural section urban collector with two 11-foot lanes, a 5-foot sidewalk on the north side, and 60 feet of right-of-way, with a 35 mph speed limit, RRFBs, and open drainage. There is currently a lack of bicycle facilities and paved shoulders. The roadway also has one pedestrian crossing at Mandarin Senior Center. The roadway is about 1.5 miles long and the daily traffic is about 11,200 vehicles per day, which Will states is heavy for a 2-lane roadway. It should also be noted that FDOT has proposed a shared-use path (SUP) on the west side of San Jose Blvd (plans nearly complete) and a 7-foot buffered, on-street bike lane. Old St Augustine Rd is also funded for unbuffered, on-street bike lanes. There are also existing unbuffered, on-street bike lanes on Hood Road which end before the intersection at Old St. Augustine Rd.

The idea to improve this roadway has been around for more than a decade. This project is an old Better Jacksonville Plan (BJP) project from 2009. The purpose of the study is to recommend a preferred typical section for the City. The project is funded for both design and construction.

The design criteria/scope includes use of COJ design standards, the Florida Greenbook, and FDOT Design Manual. The proposed roadway will be an urban section with curb and gutter drainage and accommodations for bicycles. The recommendations will likely include two options:

Typical Section A:

(3) 11-foot lanes
Curb & gutter
6-foot sidewalks (both sides)
5' on-street bike lanes (both sides)
Left turn lanes/landscaped median
30 mph speed limit
High visibility crosswalks at key locations
*Requires extensive amounts of additional ROW

Typical Section B:

(3) 11-foot lanes
Curb & gutter
10' SUP (south side)
6' sidewalk (north side)
Left turn lanes/landscaped median

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30 mph speed limit
High visibility crosswalks at key locations
*Can be built within existing ROW

Both typical sections look at making the following changes:
Lowering speed limit to 30mph
High visibility crosswalks at Whole Foods and Senior Center
RRFBs or HAWKs at crosswalks
Lighting at midblock crossings
Chicanes prior to crosswalks
Median islands with landscaping

A typical section comparison showed the pros and cons of each option. The advantage to Typical Section A is that bicycles are accommodated on both sides of the roadway and would have a continuous facility without having to use midblock crossings. The biggest advantage for Typical Section B is that it does not require additional ROW which can add significant time and cost to the project.

Will stated that there have been 11 bicycle and pedestrian crashes on the corridor in the last 10 years, but no fatalities. The vast majority of these crashes occurred near the multi-family apartment complex and the Whole Foods.

The project team will be meeting with Councilman Boylan when the study is finished. The team thinks it's likely Typical Section B will be favored because it doesn't require acquiring additional ROW.

The project team does not believe that a three-lane section (two-lane divided) is necessary for the entire segment. There are only two crossroads where turn lanes would be needed: Hampton Rd and Pine Acres Rd. The team will also propose raised crosswalks and chicanes to transition the corridor to more of a neighborhood street instead of a cut-through street. The segments that do not have a turn lane will include wither a landscaped median or will be necked down so there is more of a buffer between the road and the shared-use path and/or sidewalk.

Peter Borenstein asks at what pedestrian volumes you would question mixing bikes and pedestrians. Lauren Rushing stated that this would be more of a concern in an urban context and with the bike/ped volumes expected on Hartley Rd it wouldn't be an issue.

Monty Selim asked if there is a transit route on the corridor and could the project team consider reducing the travel lanes to 10 feet. Rich Vansickle responded that it would be allowable under the FDOT context classifications, but there are concerns on the impact to drainage.

Stephanie McCaffrey asked what the condition of the existing street lighting is. Rich responded that there is some lighting provided on poles through JEA. The City not planning to add additional lighting. However, the majority of the crashes on this corridor have occurred at night.

Ashante Green asked if the existing tree canopy will be affected. Rich states that some trees will need to

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be removed from the 60' ROW but the canopy will be largely preserved and there will be new plantings in the median and within the existing ROW. Tree mitigation is a requirement.

Will notified BPAC that there will be a public meeting sometime in the Spring and the project team will keep BPAC updated.

V. Wrap-up / Announcements / Next Meeting Info

- Blue Zones is launching BIKE MOAI in January 2024. This is FREE biking event aimed at connecting residents with an opportunity to learn more about biking and biking with others in community. Every Saturday the Major Taylor Cycling Club of North Florida will serve as the mentors to the program. Blue Zones Project Jacksonville is also offering five (5) scholarship awards for residents to use a rental electric bike for the activity.
- FHWA Safe System Approach webinar scheduled for January 18th from 10:00A-12:00PM
- Kelly Jones made an announcement to get BPAC's thoughts on a bike event he would like to put on called Coffee Outside Bike Ride which is a slow, social ride. BPAC supported the idea.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.