

Oakland Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

2017 Chair's Annual Report to the Public Works Committee of the Oakland City Council

January 26, 2018

Chair Kalb and Members of the Public Works Committee:

It is our pleasure to present this update on the 2017 activities of the Oakland Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, along with challenges and recommendations that have arisen from our meetings and work. As an all-volunteer citizen commission, we do not provide detailed policy analysis or alternatives for our recommendations nor do we expect that they be adopted “as-is”; rather, we hope that they will catalyze discussion among Council Members, their constituents, and City staff.

The BPAC consists of nine commissioners. Although not required by ordinance, the commissioners represent every Council District in Oakland. The BPAC is charged with advising the City on bicyclist and pedestrian-specific plans, policies, projects and programs, as well as the accommodation of bicyclists and pedestrians in all plans, policies, projects and programs. Additionally, the BPAC reviews Transportation Development Act Article 3 funding allocations as required by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

More information about the BPAC is available at

<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/government/o/PWA/o/EC/s/BicyclicantPedestrianProgram/BPAC/index.htm>.

Thank you for your review of this report.

Respectfully,

Commissioner Ryan Chan (District 2), 2017 Chair
Commissioner Robert Prinz (District 1), 2017 Vice Chair
Commissioner Rosa Villalobos (District 5)
Commissioner Reginald K Burnette Jr (District 6)
Commissioner Chris Hwang (District 2)
Commissioner Christopher Kidd (District 4)
Commissioner Fred McWilliams (District 7)
Commissioner Midori Tabata (District 6)
Commissioner Kenya Wheeler (District 3)

Executive Summary

The Oakland BPAC, representing all seven council districts, wrapped up its third full year of existence as a Commission and successfully fulfilled its duties under Council ordinance. The Open Forum committee has tracked comments by members of the public and the Infrastructure Committee has provided detailed project review beyond what is possible at BPAC meetings.

Challenges and Recommendations

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has resulted in improved coordination and efficiency. Growing pains still exist, however, with the restructuring and reassignments. Commissioners and members of the public find it difficult to know who is responsible for a project or program. Nomenclatures such as “great streets” vs. “safe streets” can be opaque. If our own commissioners are having a hard time finding updates, then it is next to impossible for others. Despite the hard work and innovation being implemented by staff, this leads to increased distrust of city government, and less resident engagement.

As reported last year, the lack of staff continues to be an issue. A large number of vacancies exist in the DOT for key positions. With turnover, key projects can become orphaned, especially when replacements are not identified or hired. For example, the Pedestrian Master Plan, adopted by Council in June 2017, has had no staff dedicated to implementation. The hiring pipeline needs to operate efficiently to maintain momentum for project delivery.

The new DOT should build for more “quick win” safety and mobility projects. The Harrison Street pedestrian fix serves as a model, but unfortunately, it stands as a rare example, and happened reactively after a tragic fatality rather than proactively. The DOT needs to leverage its resources to do more, especially in the historically disadvantaged and statistically less safe areas of Oakland. Four people biking or walking in Oakland were hit and killed by drivers in separate incidents within just one week between December 4 and 10.

We recommend:

- Posting up-to-date organizational charts that include details about projects, programs, and responsibilities.
- Encouraging the City Administrator's Office to reduce bottlenecks in hiring staff
- Developing a strategy and culture of project continuity and succession to reduce delays that happen when project managers and staff leave
- Embracing Vision Zero at the highest levels of City leadership, because success will mean the involvement of many city departments, not just Oakland DOT
- Using the new structure and capabilities of the DOT to deliver more quick safety wins for pedestrians and bicyclists

Meetings and Attendance

The BPAC met monthly in 2017. In addition to city staff and commissioners, the meetings were attended by an average of eight members of the public (ranging from 5 to 12). We thank City Staff for their contributions in supporting the Commission in 2017.

Selected Key Accomplishments

As an advisory committee, the BPAC acknowledges that City Staff are responsible for and deserve the credit for the progress Oakland made on bicyclist and pedestrian issues in 2017. Nonetheless, we share in the pride of these accomplishments:

- Further improved City guidance on traffic control detours and diversions to benefit vulnerable populations
- Quantitatively documented safety improvements on lower Telegraph Ave
- Increased staffing for the Bicyclist and Pedestrian program and related activities (Complete Streets, Mobility Management, new engineers)
- Increased funding for Bicyclist and Pedestrian projects in the Capital Improvement Plan
- Initial planning for the East Bay Greenway is underway
- Release of the Pedestrian Master Plan update
- Creation of the Equity Dashboard to shape funding and policy decisions
- Bike-share expansion
- 23rd Street and Harrison improvements a model of accelerated safety fixes
- Oakland's hiring of a Vision Zero coordinator
- BPAC review and endorsement of state Active Transportation Program (ATP) and federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grants
- BPAC provided input on AC Transit design guidelines for bike lanes and BART guidelines for multimodal access
- Work started on Bicycle Master Plan update

Future Outlook

- The hiring of additional staff will reduce the backlog of projects and make Oakland more competitive for grant funding
- Implementation of the Pedestrian Master Plan
- Rollout of Vision Zero
- Implementation of 15 mph school zone speed limits

Open Forum Committee Report

The Open Forum Committee, convened in March 2016, tracks the issues raised by the public at

Attachment A

open Forum. (See tinyurl.com/Oakland-BPAC-OpenForumTracking.) The Committee reviews the public comments on a periodic basis to identify policy issues for discussion by the Commission.

We went back as far as September 2015 for these comments. To date, we have tracked 38 comments over 27 months, roughly 1.4 comments per month. Of the 38 issues tracked, they generally fall into these following categories:

- Signal timing
- Traffic enforcement
- Condition of approval (construction, what was approved vs what was actually built)
- Communications--People want to know what is going on in their community or at a particular site

BPAC, in coordination with staff, has recommended and achieved the following to address these issues:

- Open forum comments are tracked and posted online
- BPAC promotes the use of the Public Works Call Center and SeeClickFix as a way to track items in the City, and received a presentation on service requests
- Staff updated sections of Temporary Construction Guidelines with BPAC feedback
- Staff added new categories in SeeClickFix to better capture concerns that were misdirected
- BPAC agendas have been shaped by Open Forum comments

Infrastructure Committee Report

The infrastructure committee, with both commissioners and members of the public as participants, allows for a detailed review of specific projects beyond the scope of what is possible in BPAC meetings, allowing BPAC to focus on broader policy issues. Over the course of 2017, the committee reviewed the following projects, providing detailed comments ranging from striping plans, signage, parking, and lane configuration issues:

- Shafter Ave (51st St to Forest St)
- Market Street (Grand Ave to Berkeley border)
- Webster St (34th to 36th St)
- 69th Ave (International Blvd to San Leandro St)
- 90th Ave (International Blvd to MacArthur Blvd)
- Bancroft Ave (Vicksburg Ave to 67th Ave)
- Oakland - Alameda Access Project (OAAP)

Appendix: Detailed List of Activities

BPAC reviewed and provided feedback on the following funding and grant applications:

- TDA Article 3 funding allocations
- HSIP Grants
- Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Grants

BPAC reviewed the following plans, policies, and programs:

- Funding sources for the DOT (emphasis on B, BB, and VRF budgets)
- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Infrastructure Working Group's equity analysis for Measure KK
- Infrastructure Bond (KK) oversight
- DOT staffing levels
- Vision for the new DOT
- Bike Share
- Oakland Public Space Initiative
- AC Transit Design Guide for Protected Bike Lanes
- BART Multimodal Access Guidelines
- Stairpath Program
- SeeClickFix Service Requests for Bicyclist and Pedestrian Issues
- Bike Plan Update
- Vision Zero

BPAC provided feedback on these specific projects. This list does not include feedback on projects presented as part of a grant application package listed above.

- East Bay Greenway
- Clay Street paving/bikeway projects
- Fruitvale Ave paving/bikeway projects
- Telegraph Ave Complete Streets
- 27th St Development/Complete Streets coordination
- Harrison and 23rd St Pedestrian Safety
- Lakeside Green Street Project