

Attachment B

Oakland Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)

2020 BPAC Chair's Report to the Public Works Committee of the Oakland City Council

March 31, 2021

To the Honorable Chair of the Oakland Public Works Committee,

The Oakland Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) is pleased to present a summary of our work in the 2020 BPAC Chair Annual Report. The Oakland BPAC is an all-volunteer commission comprised of residents of the City of Oakland. The role of the BPAC is to advise the City of Oakland Department of Transportation, the Oakland City Council and other city departments on pedestrian and bicycle issues. As an advisory commission, we do not set policy for the city, but rather, contribute our expertise and community connections to promote and encourage walk and bicycle programs and projects that are safe, efficient and equitable. In this report you will find our successes for the year as well as our challenges and recommendations for improvements as we move forward in 2021. We hope these recommendations stimulate reflection and discussion between you and your peers, the public and the BPAC.

The year 2020 was marked by significant social events that were extremely disruptive. In addition to coping with the COVID-19 pandemic and mandatory shelter-in-place orders that limited social interactions for public safety, we also were witness to racial injustice protests that reinforced the need for fairness and transparency to promote equality within our society. These events presented challenges to our health and well-being and how we interact with one another as a society, and influenced the activities of the BPAC as well. We do not consider these challenges to be obstacles, but rather opportunities to make Oakland a place where persons of all ages, ethnicities and abilities can walk and bike safely and enjoyably without hesitation. We greatly appreciate the cooperative efforts of OakDOT staff and the Office of the Mayor as we proceed through these extraordinary times.

Thank you for your consideration of this report and our recommendations. We continue to look forward working with you as we strive to make the City of Oakland a great place to walk and bike for everyone.

Respectfully,

Commissioner George Naylor, (District 4) 2020 Chair

Commissioner Andrew Campbell, (District 1) 2020 Vice-Chair

Commissioner Reginald K. Burnette, Jr. (District 6)

Commissioner Grey Gardner (District 2)

Commissioner Jesse Jones (District 1)

Commissioner Phoenix Mangrum (District 5)

Commissioner Mariana Parreiras (District 1)

Commissioner Patricia Schader (District 7)

Commissioner Dianne Yee (District 3)

**2020 Oakland Bicyclist & Pedestrian
Advisory Commission Chair's Report
to the Public Works Committee
of the Oakland City Council**

The City of Oakland Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory
Commission

Submitted for the April 19, 2021 Public Works Committee Meeting

1. Summary of Recommendations

Based upon the City of Oakland Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) activities during 2020, in summary, we highlight the following new recommendations for consideration by the Oakland Public Works Committee. These recommendations were developed from the cumulative experiences of our interaction with OakDOT staff and other City of Oakland departments during 2020 through program and project reviews, coordination with agencies outside of the City of Oakland, engagement with members of the public during and outside of BPAC formal meetings and through the work of the various committees of the BPAC that focus on specific pedestrian and bicyclist issues. The recommendations are described in the following summaries:

1. Ensure more proactive coordination with BPAC on bicycle and pedestrian-related initiatives that originate from the City of Oakland Mayor's office, City Council and departments and agencies outside of OakDOT

- Oakland was at the forefront of implementing the Slow Streets Initiative, Safe Places and Flex Streets programs to address the needs of Oakland residents to freely and safely move about during the COVID-19 pandemic shelter-in-place directive.
- Outreach to BPAC on these and other initiatives was more an afterthought instead a proactive coordinated effort.
- Suspension of Public Works Committee meetings in 2020 closed off a forum for the public and BPAC to comment on bicycle and pedestrian-related items that went directly to City Council, often as consent items. This weakened public review and comment opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- BPAC should actively engage City Council members directly to reinforce our role in advocacy and community outreach and outline BPAC Strategic Plan goals.
- Timely updates to BPAC on Initiatives from the Mayor's Office need to occur. Recommend bi-annual updates at a minimum to the full BPAC.

2. Strengthen the review of OakDOT projects by BPAC, particularly timely follow-up on comments before project final design has concluded

- Every year, multiple programs and projects go to BPAC for review and advice. 2020 was no exception, as BPAC was engaged in reviewing many projects at all stages of development.
- Highlights include review of Active Transportation Projects (ATP), Sustainable Transportation Equity Projects (STEP), Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) candidate projects, Safe Routes to BART, Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 10 projects, 14th Avenue Streetscape, Fruitvale Alive! corridor and updates on the E-Bike share program.
- It is most helpful when BPAC can provide comments early on in the initial design stages of project development, before major decision had been made that preclude design revisions.
- Recommend that OakDOT make it compulsory to schedule BPAC in early project review (well prior to 35% design threshold) and respond to comments within a reasonable timeframe <45 days and not after project design has been finalized.

3. Strengthen OakDOT coordination with BPAC and community stakeholders during bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure implementation phases, including monitoring of effectiveness, safety and continued community engagement.

- Examples implementation issues include Telegraph Avenue/KONO, Adeline bike lane safety at intersections, Lakeside Cycletrack signals at Harrison and 21st Street, 90th Avenue Scrapper Bikeway.
- Audit of projects after implementation to ensure safe operations and effective design.
- Report back to BPAC Infrastructure Committee with findings, and
- Strengthen Complete Streets policy to ensure follow up evaluation – include evaluation efforts in initial project budget and scoping.

4. Continue the progress made towards filling OakDOT staffing vacancies, with particular attention to filling the Community Engagement & Communications Manager and Major Corridors – signal position

- OakDOT has made excellent progress towards reducing the overall vacancy rates from over 23.3% as of April 2019 to approximately 13.6% as of November 2020.
- OakDOT also has filled several key positions, including the Manager of Safe Streets.
- Staffing the Community Engagement Manager and Major Corridor signal position should continue to be priorities.

We also reiterate the recommendations from previous BPAC Chair Reports that should continue to be considered:

- Develop a strategy and culture of project continuity and succession to reduce delays that happen when project managers and staff leave (unchanged from previous years).
- Prioritize projects based on department goals and objectives as well as mandates and assign staff to projects accordingly. If staff on a priority project leaves, ensure the project does not become dormant.
- Reinforce detour guidance and enforcement—ensure that all staff understand this as policy and enforce it uniformly. Oakland is experiencing tremendous construction and unless properly designed and implemented, detours can be a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Traffic signal policy continues to be an issue, especially signal timing and walk signal operations causing many pedestrians to take matters into their hands and making for unsafe conditions. Bicycle infrastructure associated with dedicated bike signal phasing also require particular attention to ensure safe operating conditions after project implementation. Major Corridors-Signals section continues to be unstaffed this year.
- Street paving should be done completely and adequately, not leaving obstacles like abandoned rail tracks with no remediation.
- Creating a community-focused approach to implement Vision Zero program.

- Strengthening the working relationship with the Police Department and Police Commission to ensure fair and equitable enforcement of laws and treatment of cyclists and pedestrians by OPD.

2. An Overview of the BPAC Commission

The role of the BPAC is to advise the City of Oakland Department of Transportation, the Oakland City Council and other city departments on pedestrian and bicycle issues, with an overarching objective of ensuring that walking and bicycling projects and programs in Oakland are safe, efficient and equitable. 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. In addition, the BPAC reviews Transportation Development Act Article 3 funding allocations as required by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

The BPAC was officially formed by the Oakland City Council Resolution in 2014 as a formal commission with the City of Oakland, although the commission was preceded by what was then the Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Committee of the Oakland Public Works Department. The BPAC is comprised of nine commissioners. Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor of Oakland, and commissioners serve three-year terms during each appointment. The BPAC is governed by adopted By-laws¹, which can be revised and amended by a majority vote. Typically, three new commissioners are appointed each year to stagger the turnover of the commission, unless resignations require the need to appoint a new replacement commissioner to serve the remainder of an existing term. Commissioners can be reappointed for multiple three-year terms, however, they can only serve two of those three-year terms consecutively.

Commissioners devote their own time and resources when serving on the BPAC and take their advisory role with the upmost seriousness and offer freely their experiences and expertise in community outreach, advocacy, engineering and planning skills. The BPAC commissioners come from a very diverse range of backgrounds and areas of expertise and each one brings their unique experiences as a bicyclist and pedestrian in Oakland. A typical cross-section of commissioners reveal that commissioners have expertise in community outreach and advocacy, neighborhood involvement, education, transportation engineering and urban planning and design. The BPAC has been fortunate to have at least one commissioner to represent each of the seven City Council Districts in 2020, however, this is more the exception than the rule and representation from every Council district is not a requirement of the BPAC.

At the end of the summer, the BPAC began the recruitment process for new commissioner appointments, which are effective January 1 of the following year. A special BPAC New Commissioner Selection Committee was formed consisting of both current and past commissioners as well as members of the public. Members of this special committee began the recruitment process by contacting City Councilmember offices to inform staff of upcoming BPAC vacancies and began notification of advocacy and social groups associated with the BPAC. Two 'Meet and Greet' virtual meetings were advertised to

¹ <https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/BPAC-By-Laws.pdf>

the public to provide a forum where potential applicants could learn more about what is expected of commissioners and to answer questions regarding level of commitment, organizational structure and typical responsibilities. Thirteen applications were received and reviewed by the selection committee and two new commissioners and an alternate were recommended. The recommendations were approved by the full BPAC and forwarded to the Mayor's Office for consideration. Although there were many viable candidates from the thirteen applications received, there were no candidates from City Council Districts 5, 6 and 7. BPAC will strive to improve outreach efforts and advertising to increase applicants from those areas.

3. Summary of BPAC Meetings Held in 2020

The BPAC holds regular commission meetings on the third Thursday of each month. Special meetings of the BPAC can be held at any time, subject to the required public notification process. The BPAC held nine formal commission meetings in 2020 and one special meeting in January to develop the BPAC Strategic Plan. Due to the mandatory statewide shelter-in-place order implemented in mid-March, BPAC meetings were suspended during the months of March, April and May, as the City of Oakland Administrator's office issued a directive to support only those Boards and Commissions deemed essential to city business, which excluded BPAC. BPAC meetings resumed in June, transitioning to a virtual format using the protocols employed by the City of Oakland for all public meetings.

During the suspension of BPAC meetings from March to May, there was continuing but limited activity. OakDOT staff provided assistance to BPAC to implement virtual meetings for BPAC standing committees to continue commissioner and public input on important projects that required action, such as review of proposed project grant applications. While working through committees allowed for a work around until BPAC Commission meetings could recommence in June, only four Commissioners could attend any given committee meeting in order to not trigger quorum restrictions. This limited the extent of comment that would have otherwise occurred with all nine Commissioners present.

While transitioning to virtual meeting formats offered implementation challenges initially, attendance at the virtual meetings was quite robust and not significantly different, if not actually higher on average, than in-person commission meetings. This bodes well for future BPAC meetings, which will likely continue to be held in the virtual format well into 2021. Attendance by public participants, not including commissioners and staff, averaged thirteen persons per meeting, with a low of seven persons in January (in-person) and a high of thirty-three persons in August (virtual).

The BPAC would like to thank City of Oakland staff at the City Administrator's office, KTOP and OakDOT for providing initial and ongoing assistance for managing the BPAC virtual meetings to ensure a smooth transition. In particular, special thanks goes to Noel Pond-Danchik and Jason Patton of the OakDOT Bike and Pedestrian Program for their continued support of the BPAC. Their help and positive attitude have been especially valuable in 2020.

Attachment B

Summary of Key Activities

- Updated the BPAC Strategic Plan for 2020 in a special January BPAC meeting
- Received an update on the implementation activities of the recently adopted Let's Bike Oakland Citywide Bicycle Plan.
- Celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.
- Received an update on the Sidewalk Certification process, Sidewalk Repair Ordinance and proposed sidewalk repair moratorium. BPAC voted to not support the sidewalk repair moratorium.
- Received a presentation and provided input on the initial roll out of the Slow Streets program.
- Received a presentation on the mid-cycle City budget amendments in response to financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Received a report on the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grant candidate projects (through the Infrastructure committee).
- Received a presentation and provided input on the Flex Streets program.
- Received a presentation and request to support the Safe Routes to BART grant candidate projects. BPAC voted to support the 12th Street bikeway project but voted to not support the 19th Street BART access project.
- Received a presentation and provided comment on the Safe Oakland Streets traffic safety program.
- Reviewed grant project applications for Active Transportation Program (ATP) and Sustainable Transportation Equity Program (STEP) and provided letters of support for all candidate projects.
- Facilitated a public forum on the Telegraph Avenue/KONO protected bicycle facility that included input from the businesses in the corridor and members of the public.
- Reviewed and approved support for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 10 candidate projects.
- Received a presentation from Commissioner Dianne Yee on the creation of a new BPAC blog.
- Received a presentation on the City of Oakland Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP).
- Coordinated with Walk Oakland/Bike Oakland on Bike to Work (Wherever) week.
- Received a report on the Oakland Shared Mobility Accessibility Study. BPAC voted to support the recommendations from the study.
- Received a report on the San Leandro Creek Urban Greenway Project. BPAC voted to support the project and provide follow on advocacy.
- Received a presentation on the Oakland Alameda Access Project.
- Received an update on the Safe Oakland Streets Initiative.
- Received a report on the 14th Avenue Streetscape and the Fruitvale Alive! Projects.
- Received and approved the final 2019 BPAC Chair's Report for submission to the Public Works Committee.
- Received an update on the Slow Streets Interim Findings Report and Implementation
- Received an update on the Expedited Safety Improvement from the BPAC Legislative Committee regarding safety-related legislation previously proposed by the committee and priorities for 2021

Attachment B

- Received and approved the draft 2020 BPAC Chair's Report for submission to the Public Works Committee.

4. An Overview of BPAC Committees and Liaison Roles

BPAC Committees are an important organizational element of the Commission, as they provide a forum for detailed discussion on specific topics that might otherwise be too time consuming for the full BPAC to address at regular Commission meetings. Actions originating at the committee level can be forwarded to the full BPAC for further discussion and consideration on an as-needed basis. Each committee reports back to the full commission at the monthly BPAC meetings. In addition to providing a management tool for the full BPAC, the BPAC committees are an important linkage to volunteer members of the public, as membership in each committee is open to the public, as per the BPAC By-laws. BPAC By-laws were revised in January 2020 to provide an opportunity of members of the public to chair individual committees, which was previously reserved for commissioners. This provides the public an opportunity to participate in the advisory process at a significant level within the BPAC organizational structure. BPAC actively encourages members of the public to participate on BPAC committees. Information on the BPAC committees can be accessed through the following link:

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/bicyclist-and-pedestrian-advisory-commission-bpac-committees-and-liaisons>

There are five BPAC standing committees and each is tasked with providing input on a specific subject of interest. There are also two BPAC liaisons that coordinate with other City of Oakland commissions and two select committees that meet on an irregular basis to address specific items. The following section describes the role of each of the BPAC committees and liaisons.

Open Forum Committee

Open form committee report the committee continues to track and monitor issues raised by the public during Open Forum. Open forum is an important committee of the BPAC, as an Open Forum item is included in every BPAC meeting for the public to comment on items not on the regular agenda. In many instances, this could be the only opportunity members of the public can comment on specific bicycle and pedestrian issues. Indeed, many comments BPAC hears from deal with larger transportation issues and not always specific to bicycle and pedestrian topics. All issues raised during Open Forum are tracked by the committee in a spreadsheet located here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1v0nDQC83kYuR8rW_ofuDLSTOy0LdRg9otR63Yp0u5Qw/edit?ts=573a2ece#gid=0

Attachment B

Infrastructure Committee

The committee is comprised of Commissioners and members of the public. The committee reports are available online at:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qqS46y3dWNeAxMVwU3HTwjunj-b0pwANtZix-CisiWA/edit?ts=5a30853e>

This committee has responsibility for reviewing infrastructure projects that are more appropriately handled in a smaller setting, as the review can include detailed comments on engineering and project design characteristics to develop solutions with city staff. These detailed comments range from striping plans, signal, parking, and lane configuration issues.

Legislative Committee

The Legislation Committee was formed as a venue to discuss and recommend policies to advance to the full BPAC for consideration as well as to OakDOT staff and ultimately to the Oakland City Council. The Legislative committee developed a draft resolution earlier this year that made pedestrian and bicycle safety a policy priority when developing infrastructure improvements. The draft is currently circulating with the Oakland City Council and is being coordinated with OakDOT staff for eventual presentation to the full City Council. They also are working on related safety legislation to address automated red light enforcement and lowering of school speed limits.

Bicyclist and Pedestrian Police Relations Committee

This committee of the BPAC was formed in September 2018 and works to address the impacts of traffic enforcement on bicyclist and pedestrians with particular attention towards collaboration with the Police Commission to review current police stop data and identify ways to reduce racial inequities observed in traffic enforcement. In 2020, members of the committee worked with the community to address police presence on the 90th Avenue Scrapper Bikeway, worked with the Department of Race and Equity and OPD. The committee will continue to engage members of the community to address racially biased traffic enforcement that discourages bicyclist and pedestrian accessibility.

Planning Commission Review Committee

The Planning Commission review committee is responsible for monitoring the state of development in the City of Oakland and related bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and safety issues the planning this Commission was previously involved in the review of larger city development projects such as the downtown Oakland specific plan and the Oakland A's new waterfront stadium. In 2020 activity for this committee was limited it is anticipated that the committee will become more active in 2021.

Attachment B

Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities Liaison and Infrastructure Bond – Measure KK Oversight Committee Liaison

The liaisons to the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities and the Infrastructure Bond Measure KK Oversight committee attend the regular meetings of these advisory bodies and report back to the full BPAC when there are items that are relevant to bicycling and pedestrian safety and accessibility. Both the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities and the Infrastructure Bond Measure KK Oversight committee significantly reduced the number of meetings held in 2020, which limited BPAC liaison interactions. It is anticipated there will be more BPAC liaison activity in 2021.