



City of San Antonio

Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 14-1255
Type: Resolution
In control: City Council A Session
On agenda: 5/29/2014
Title: A Resolution in support of further evaluation by staff regarding bicycle helmet usage and increased bicycle safety awareness.
Sponsors:
Indexes:
Code sections:
Attachments: 1. S Flores Alt Routes_Theo-Malone_052214.pdf, 2. Resolution 2014-05-29-0018R

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
5/29/2014	1	City Council A Session	Motion to Approve	Pass

DEPARTMENT: Transportation and Capital Improvements

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Mike Frisbie

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

Bicycle Master Plan Policies

SUMMARY:

Consideration of the following items relating to the City's Bicycle Master Plan Policies:

- A. An Ordinance authorizing the redirection of a 2.3-mile segment of bicycle lanes along S. Flores to Mission Road and Padre Drive within City Council Districts 3 and 5
- B. An Ordinance restricting vehicle parking in existing bicycle lanes that can accommodate both on-street parking and bicycle lanes and in all bicycle lanes to be constructed in the future
- C. A Resolution in support of further evaluation by staff regarding bicycle helmet usage and increased bicycle safety awareness
- D. A Resolution confirming the exclusion of pedestrian and bicycle traffic counts from Traffic Impact Analysis studies

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On September 29, 2011 with ordinance 2011-09-29-0793, City Council adopted *San Antonio Bike Plan 2011 + Implementation Strategy* as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The plan is a guide for a regional bicycle network along with goals for policy, funding and staffing for implementation. Overall, the plan outlines improvements totaling approximately 1,700 miles of varying facility types.

On December 4, 2013, Transportation and Capital Improvements Department (TCI), along with the Office of Sustainability (OS), presented the *San Antonio Bike Plan 2011 + Implementation Update* during the "B" Session. As a result of the presentation, several policy issues were raised regarding bicycle helmet usage and laws, vehicular parking in bicycle lanes, reduction in vehicular lanes ("Road Diets") during bicycle lane implementation, and bicycle traffic and facilities as part of a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA).

On February 19, 2014, Transportation and Capital Improvements Department (TCI), along with the Office of Sustainability (OS), provided a briefing of the Bicycle Master Plan Policy Issues and proposed policy recommendations to the Infrastructure and Growth Council Committee. The Parks and Recreation Department also provided a briefing on the Greenway Trail Etiquette and Safety Initiatives. As a result of the briefing, the Infrastructure and Growth Council Committee motioned to forward staff's recommendations on the policy issues regarding bicycle helmet usage laws, vehicular parking in bicycle lanes, reduction in vehicular lanes ("Road Diets") during bicycle lane implementation, and bicycle traffic and facilities as part of a Traffic Impact Analysis to the full City Council for consideration.

ISSUE:

A. Bike Lanes - In 2011, Council approved the *San Antonio Bike Plan 2011 + Implementation Strategy* which included a 5.3 mile segment of bicycle facilities along the S. Flores corridor which was divided into three phases due to costs associated with the length of the segment. Phase I was constructed in 2012 at a cost of approximately \$425,000 and was 1.1 miles in length. Phase II was constructed in 2013 at a cost of approximately \$995,000 and was 2.8 miles in length. Phase III, tentatively scheduled for FY 2017, is anticipated to cost approximately \$240,000 and will be 1.4 miles in length. Phase I started at Cevallos/Nogalitos and ended at Mitchell. Phase II continued the bicycle lanes to SE Military and, when constructed, Phase III will start at SE Military and end at Ashley Road.

Due to the existing pavement width along the S. Flores corridor, bicycle lanes were the recommended facility type. Originally, S. Flores was primarily a four-lane roadway with two lanes in each direction. A "Road Diet" (reduction in the number of vehicular lanes) was completed along S. Flores to accommodate bicycle lanes during Phases I and II. The existing roadway width of S. Flores south of SE Military is wide enough to accommodate bicycle without a road diet for future Phase III.

The S. Flores corridor project improvements were implemented without project-specific community input. Upon completion of Phase II, the adjacent community voiced several concerns regarding the installation of the bicycle lanes, contrary to the lack of concerns raised upon completion of Phase I. Staff monitored the corridor after concerns were raised regarding the Phase II project. Pavement markings were modified at three intersections to further enhance the level of service of the corridor as well as signal timing modifications were implemented to improve traffic flow.

Council District 3 office held a community meeting in December 2013 to discuss the Phase II project. Prior to the implementation of Phases I and II, a traffic analysis was performed to confirm that the reduced number of

travel lanes would not adversely affect the S. Flores corridor level of service. A post-project traffic engineering study also was performed by outside consultant to further study five key community concerns of the project, below are the findings:

<u>Community Concerns</u>	<u>Traffic Engineering Findings</u>
Less Traffic Volume	No significant difference in traffic volume
Travel Time Significantly Increased	Signal timing optimization shows no significant difference in travel time through corridor
Commercial Trucks Block Travel Lanes	No vehicles observed parking in travel lanes
Vehicles Block Travel Lanes at Schools	No vehicles observed parking in travel lanes
VIA Buses Cause Significant Delay	Average delay ranged from 9 seconds to 25 seconds, 7 potential bus stop consolidations or relocations should be made to improve traffic flow between Pleasanton and SE Military

The post-project studies also have shown that the S. Flores corridor is handling the same traffic volume as pre-project; however, the roadway is operating in a safer and more efficient manner due to having more control of traffic with a single vehicular lane in each direction.

On March 17, 2014, Council District 3 office held a second community meeting to present the traffic engineering findings of the five key concerns. As a result of the overwhelming community disapproval of the project and lack of outreach prior to implementing the project, staff has re-evaluated the project. Four alternative routes have been reviewed, including a route provided by community representatives.

The following table illustrates the four alternative routes reviewed and the associated cost to implement the route, inclusive of the cost to redirect the existing bicycle lanes along S. Flores from SE Military to the identified alternative route street. The length of bicycle lanes to be redirected as a result of each alternative is also provided.

<u>Alternate Route</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Miles of Bike Lanes Redirected</u>
Sayers Route	\$478,000	1.3
Hart Route	\$623,320	1.6
Theo/Malone Route	\$700,400	2.3
Alamo/Probandt Route	\$509,000	3.9*
*1.4 miles new lanes will be added		

On April 21, 2014, Council District 3 office held a third community meeting to present the four alternative routes. The attendees conducted an informal vote and the overwhelming majority support the Theo/Malone Route. The minority of the attendees were those that either supported the existing bicycle lanes along S. Flores or did not voice an opinion as to a preferred alternate route.

Subsequent to the April 21, 2014 meeting, additional feedback was obtained from the community as well as Council District 3 and a fourth meeting was held on May 19, 2014 to present the Theo/Malone Route as the preferred alternate route. Staff stated and is recommending that this would be the alternate route presented to City Council for approval.

B. Parking in Bicycle Lanes - City of San Antonio currently does not have parking restrictions within bicycle lanes. Staff was asked to consider whether or not a law restricting parking within bicycle lanes should be adopted. Staff determined that restricting parking in bicycle lanes would eliminate all (or partial) parking on a minimum of 100 miles of current roadways and a minimum of 158 miles of future roadways once bicycle lanes are implemented. Abutting residential and commercial property owners would lose the ability to have on-street parking in these areas due to existing street widths. For the existing bicycle lanes, staff recommends restricting parking only in all those where the existing street width can accommodate both on-street parking and bicycle lanes. For those areas identified, appropriate “No Parking” signage will be installed to ensure that these areas stay free from on-street parking. Staff recommends restricting parking in all future bicycle lane projects. Future “No Parking” signage would be adopted by Council at a future Traffic Code Update Ordinance, along with other future traffic signs.

C. Helmet Usage Law - City of San Antonio currently does not have a helmet usage law. Staff was asked to consider whether or not a law requiring bicyclists to use a helmet should be adopted. Currently, there is no federal law in the U.S. requiring bicycle helmets. At present, there are twenty-one (21) states with helmet legislation, mostly limited to youths under age eighteen (18). Twenty-nine (29) states, including Texas, do not have a helmet law.

After extensive research regarding helmet usage and safety awareness, staff at this time is not recommending mandatory helmet legislation. However, a bicycle helmet is an important piece of safety equipment and staff encourages all users to wear a helmet as a measure of personal responsibility. Staff is recommending enhancing existing education and outreach initiatives regarding bicycle safety and the importance of wearing a helmet to protect against head injuries and possible fatalities.

Education and outreach measures underway by the Office of Sustainability and the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) include the following:

- SAPD helmet use monitoring at crash scenes to obtain baseline and trend data for the region (implemented April 2014)
- Youth helmet fittings at community events and SAFE Officer helmet hand-outs in neighborhoods
- Helmet use messaging through written articles and Public Service Announcements utilizing publications, websites, radio and social media
- Researching grant opportunities to continue and expand all of the above

D. Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) - City of San Antonio currently does not include pedestrian and bicycle traffic in TIAs. Staff was asked to consider whether or not pedestrian and bicycle traffic should be included in TIAs. Staff determined that including pedestrian and bicycle traffic as part of a TIA would require a multi-modal Level of Service (MMLOS) be performed and is not needed given that providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities is already a requirement of the Unified Development Code (UDC). Additional costs would be incurred to perform a MMLOS and an amendment to the UDC would also be needed.

ALTERNATIVES:

An alternative to not implementing an alternate bicycle route would be to keep the current status of the S. Flores Street Improvement Project as identified in the *San Antonio Bike Plan 2011 + Implementation Strategy*.

The S. Flores corridor has been converted to one that supports multi-modal transportation and supports the vision of SA 2020, as well as several city-wide and community plans. The *Complete Streets Policy* was adopted by City Council in 2011 to encourage all forms of transportation with an emphasis placed on encouraging active forms of transportation such as walking, biking, and transit ridership.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A. Bike Lanes - The fiscal impact associated with approval of this ordinance and implementing the Theo/Malone Route is \$700,400. Approximately \$312,600 is required to redirect the approximately 2.3 miles of bicycle lanes along S. Flores and the remaining \$387,800 is associated with implementing the alternate route. Funding sources will utilize \$480,000 from Council District 3 Tax Notes as well as \$220,400 of Infrastructure Management Program funds that will be available in Fiscal Year 2015 from Street Maintenance Program projects in Council District 3.

B. Parking in Bicycle Lanes - There is minimal fiscal impact associated with installing “No Parking” signage to restrict parking where the existing street width can accommodate both on-street parking and bicycle lanes and funding will be allocated from the TCI operating budget. Costs to install “No Parking” signage in all future bicycle lane projects will be included in the capital project cost.

C. Helmet Usage Law - There is no fiscal impact of education and outreach related to the importance of wearing a helmet when bicycling for the remainder of FY 2014 as existing programming is being enhanced with internal resources and partnerships.

D. Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) - There is no fiscal impact from this item.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

- A.** An Ordinance authorizing the redirection of a 2.3-mile segment of bicycle lanes along S. Flores to Mission Road and Padre Drive within City Council Districts 3 and 5
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