



City of Tacoma Bicycle and Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group

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MINUTES August 28, 2023 5:30-7:30 PM

▪ **Call to order and land acknowledgment**

Chair Jenn called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM.

We gratefully honor and acknowledge that we reside on the traditional lands of the Puyallup People. The Puyallup people have lived on this land since the beginning of time. They are still here today. They live, work, raise their children, take care of their community, practice their traditional ways, and speak the Twulshootseed language – just as their ancestors did.

▪ **Introductions & Approval of Minutes**

Members Teena, Jenn, Ileana, Steve, Thomas, Matt, and Michael were present. Members Mattice, Riley, Tyler, Julian, and Dana were absent.

It was moved (Member Teena) and second by (Member Michael) to approve the July 24, 2023, minutes. The August 28, 2023, agenda was approved as presented.

▪ **Public Comment:**

Sarah Kiesler from Cascade Bicycle Club, Leon Nettels from 2nd Cycle Bicycle Shop, and Larry Leveen from ForeverGreen Trails were present.

- **Larry Leveen from ForeverGreen Trails:** On Thursday, September 28, 2023, ForeverGreen Trails will host the Pierce County Trails Conference from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Environmental Services Building in University Place, WA. This year's theme is "Connecting Paths, Partnerships and People." Anyone interested is encouraged to register by 9/20: www.forevergreentrails.org/conference
- **Sarah Kiesler from Cascade Bicycle Club:** Sarah introduced herself as a resident of South Tacoma; she shared her experience of nearly getting hit by a vehicle while cycling with BPTAG. She has been collaborating with Liz Kaster and Sound Transit to enhance safety and accessibility in South Tacoma. Sarah is specifically pushing for integrating curb ramps, curb cuts, and safe bike lanes in the South Tacoma Access Improvement initiative by Sound Transit and the City of Tacoma.
- **Leon Nettels from Second Cycle Bicycle shop:** Leon identified himself as the Interim Executive Director of Second Cycle and revealed exciting news about an upcoming event. On Sunday, September 3, 2023, Second Cycle is hosting The Steel Wheel Alley Cat Poker Ride and Anniversary Fundraiser Party at their shop from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Leon then shared the event flyer in the chat and extended an open invitation for everyone to



attend. Second Cycle's Open Shop is due to return, and Leon also shared information about the Diversion Program for youth in the Pierce County court system and his collaboration plans with BPTAG. Exciting details to come.

- **Business Items:**

- **Waterfront Signage & Outer Loop of 5 Mile Drive Updates- Joe Brady, Metro Parks Tacoma**

Joe Brady presented updated draft designs for the signage along the Waterfront walkway. He gave two sign options and explained Metro Parks Tacoma's intent based on other Park and Recreation tools and sign plans. He mentioned that the speed limit campaign has progressed to an advisory campaign. Joe presented a yellow warning sign to promote respect, responsibility, and safety for all users, including people with disabilities, cyclists, pedestrians, and pets. Chair Jenn appreciated the symbol on the sign as it can resonate well with other user groups. Member Ileana suggested using numbers on the sign for added clarity. Joe added that Metro Parks Tacoma aims to avoid sign pollution by limiting the number of yellow signs to maintain a pleasant waterfront experience. Jenn asked about pedestrian risks when drivers exit restaurant parking lots, Joe discussed working with businesses, who would be responsible for warning drivers to yield to pedestrians. Sarah K. suggested using the "Stop for pedestrians, it's state law." universal message for signs.

Joe Brady presented a brown sign with icons for the Outer Loop on the 5-mile Drive. During his presentation, Joe provided some background information about user conflicts on 5-mile Drive. He discussed the challenges of managing the dynamics between bicyclists, pedestrians, and pet owners who use the shared path and addressing concerns about blind spots. Metro Parks will conduct a Public User Survey on their website for three weeks to gather feedback on the proposal. Joe also identified several trail entrances and exits where temporary signage will be placed featuring a QR code that links to the survey for users to provide their thoughts and feedback.

Joe presented user guidelines signage for the shared pathway, and the BPTAG group advised him on the signage icons and wording corrections.

Member Michael thanked Joe for his response and asked about the survey's purpose, including whether it would gauge community opinions and what it would look like. Joe shared that feedback from actual users on the pathway would clarify their thoughts and concerns, allowing Metro Parks Tacoma to move forward. Michael suggests all users stay to the right on the pathway and clarified expectations for everyone to use the path safely.

Member Steve supported the use of signs but asked Joe about their placement. Joe responded that the signs would be approximately 15-20 feet from the gated entrances. Steve suggested a condensed version to further remind cyclists and pedestrians of the rules and guidelines in the park.

Joe plans to continue community outreach before deciding on the sign designs. Chair Jenn offered (on behalf of BPTAG) to help push out the survey. Member Teena asked about the leash listing and whether it was appropriate to define a specific "feet/foot" or "short leash." Liz confirmed that the Tacoma Municipal Code stated, "8 feet leash." Joe agreed to include "8 feet" and reference the RCW or Tacoma Municipal Code.

Liz shared that she had some specific feedback on the signage & overall framing – for better consistency with the City's approach. Liz & Joe will meet to discuss.

- **Point Defiance Park: Loop Trail Project- Roger Stanton, Metro Parks Tacoma**



During the development of the 2015 Master Plan, Metro Parks Tacoma considered the park's multimodal features on a larger scale. Roger Stanton, the Capital Project Manager for waterfront and Point Defiance projects, presented a Point Defiance Loop Trail graphic. The goal of the loop trail plan was to improve the park entrance, provide better access to Owen Beach, and create a trail leading to the outer loop. However, the project was later scaled down to a smaller loop. Roger then explained the new Loop Trail plan, which includes the roundabout at the entrance and a safe pathway directly to Owen Beach.

Liz noticed an area where the lines showing sidewalk/trails did not connect and asked Roger about it. Roger took a closer look and explained that the existing sidewalk would be extended to enhance pedestrian access to the Zoo entrance and other parts of the park.

The project also aims to improve pedestrian safety for students at SAMI. Joe shared his discussions with Tacoma Public Schools and Safe Routes to School Coordinator Cailin Henley about ensuring students' safety while walking through the park. Specifically, during the darker daylight hours in January and February, preventing students from walking on the road is a priority.

Roger shared the plan to redesign some existing parking. The new plan will require cars to back into their designated parking stalls, reducing the two-lane traffic to a single lane and allowing cars to slow down and park safely. Additionally, a protected trail on the backside of the parking lot will separate pedestrians and bicyclists from the cars. The pedestrian and bicyclist trail continues and connects to the Owen Beach area.

Member Teena asked what the divider is between the pedestrians and the one-lane area. Roger answered the current plan is a swale.

Member Steve inquired about the number of trees to be removed and what would happen to them. Roger replied that 74 trees were planned to be removed, and half were for the Owens Beach Access project. The wood was reused by transferring them to Fort Nisqually and laid around the area. The remaining trees were used for path separation, snags, or raptor perches, and Metro Parks Tacoma utilized tree chips and branches to create mulch for maintenance. The agency makes every effort to reuse as much as possible.

Member Steve raised concerns about the compliance of proposed paths with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Roger acknowledged that certain areas posed challenges but assured that all paths would strictly adhere to the safe travel guidelines outlined in the accessibility manual without any obstructions. Steve recommended the installation of signs to caution wheelchair users about steep slopes and other potential hazards.

Member Michael asked about the added hardscape and whether the plan will require additional water handling, stormwater handling, or mostly accommodating any permitted services. Roger addressed Michael's question by stating that every bit of the water run-off is accounted for; it is not all treated, but there is enough sheet flow to manage it. Metro Parks Tacoma installed a filtering station at the entrance on Pearl Street to treat 25% of the park stormwater.

Member Ileana would like to know how to prevent the removal of 74 trees. Ileana asked if there was any consideration of removing some of the land around the fence of the Zoo to build a path for the students who walk along the road and fenced area. She suggested taking space from the Zoo rather than the tree removal for the project completion. Metro Parks Tacoma does not plan to impede the Zoo's Master Plan and services offered for the sake of the proposed project.

Chair Jenn inquired about how a 5-foot sidewalk could fit alongside the fenced area for MuskoX. Roger presented the plan again and explained that the island near the end of the road would be reduced in size. The road will be narrowed to make room for the sidewalk. Roger continued by pointing out the extension of a trail that will allow pedestrians to access the zoo without walking through the parking lot. This trail will pass through a few trees and reconnect with the zoo entrance. Jenn pointed out that in any space where vehicles are traveling, there needs to be an accessible and safe space for pedestrians, strollers, and bicyclists. Joe ensures that this project resolves the safety concerns for students who attend the Science and Math Institute (SAMI) and



the Environmental Learning Center near the Zoo and are going to the park entrance to catch transit, Owen Beach or the pagoda. Joe is still working with the school district to build a safe connection for students to walk from Camp 6 to the Environmental Learning Center. Students currently walk through the woods and along a road to the Environmental Learning Center.

Chair Jenn continued by sharing mindfulness around the parking lot where cars will be backing into the stalls. Trucks are now very large and long and backing into a stall with a bike rack on the back may take over the area preserved for pedestrians to walk. Roger shared that the site is deep and cars should not impede the 10-foot pedestrian trail.

Chair Jenn asked Roger for clarification on whether two-way multimodal travel would be allowed. Joe suggested that it will be similar to the current situation on Ruston Way, where signs will encourage people to be courteous, nice, and safe. However, Jenn expressed concern about all bikes being routed onto a shared-use trail. She prefers to ride on the road rather than sharing a path with pedestrians. Jenn asked if bikes would still be able to use the road alongside cars or if they would be directed onto a separate path. Roger replied that they don't believe they will ever require bicyclists to ride off the roads, but they aim to make it safer for all users.

Member Ileana asked how many trees would be planted. Roger is unsure of the number because the project is still being planned. Ileana added the city is finalizing the Tree Protection Code, which should be available in September.

- **Staff Updates:**

- **Vision Zero Coordinator**

Liz announced the City of Tacoma's Transportation Division is now accepting applications for a Vision Zero Coordinator. The link to the jobs page was shared; please spread the word.

- **Reconnecting Grant (Grant details)**

The Transportation team will reapply for the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant again, specifically for the I-5-crossing study to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety access across I-5; this will be a planning study. Chair Jenn offered to submit a supporting letter for the application.

- **Report from Transportation Commission**

Chair Jenn announced the Transportation Commission did an overview of BRT, and the commission discussed the work of BPTAG and Metro Parks Tacoma regarding the safety at Waterfront Walkway, the Point Defiance Outer Loop, and the 5-mile drive. Jennifer Kammerzell reminded members that the Loop Trail is currently undergoing a Land-Use permitting process. Public comments are used by city staff as they review the permit and add mitigations. Chair Jenn had already submitted a letter before the meeting, which was included in the public comments.

- **BPTAG at other active transportation meetings**

Liz shared that Downtown on the Go is hosting their annual Pedal with the Politicians on September 7th. Liz extended an invitation to the BPTAG members as Liz & Public Works staff will share info about new and upcoming projects along the ride.

Member Ileana ran into Staff Ashley Jones at the Hilltop Street Fair, where Ileana had fruitful discussions with people about bicycle-related features in the city. Additionally, she shared her reviews on using Razor micromobility. She was dissatisfied with the high cost and faced difficulties in ending the ride.

Next meeting is scheduled for September 25th, 2023, at 5:30pm



- **Adjourn**

Chair Jenn adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.



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(800) 833-

6388.