

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

One Texas Center, 505 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX 78704

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, April 06, 2010

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City of Austin recommends Downtown Bicycle Boulevard on Rio Grande and Nueces streets.

MEDIA AVAILABILITY – Annick Beaudet, Program Consultant

2:30 p.m. – Tuesday, April 6, 2010

One Texas Center (front of building)

505 Barton Springs Road

Staff for the City of Austin has released its final recommendations for the Downtown Bicycle Boulevard. Stakeholders in the process will now have the chance to see results of months of input from citizens groups, traffic engineering consultants and City of Austin Bicycle Program staff.

Program Consultant Annick Beaudet was very pleased with this milestone in the project saying, “We feel this has been a great example of an open process, where Austinites were able to express how they feel about a project, and help us decide what works best in their community. The result is an excellent plan for a world class bicycle boulevard.”

The City of Austin Bicycle Program recently won the “International Innovative Transportation Solution Award” from the Women’s Transportation Seminar, an international organization with the mission of advancing women in the field of transportation. The award was given for the city’s study of experimental bicycle safety devices such as “sharrows,” that will now also be included along Nueces in the proposed bicycle boulevard configuration. Results of the study show positive outcomes, including that markings can guide bicyclists and motorists to take the safest position when sharing the road.

The infrastructure recommendations for the Downtown Bicycle Boulevard are:

Rio Grande - 4th Street to MLK, Jr. Boulevard:

Segment	Recommendation
4 th St to MLK	Street resurfacing; 25 mph speed limit; spot ADA improvements; install shared lane pavement markings; install regulatory and place making signs as appropriate; tree planting as feasible; minimal parking modification as needed related to installation of traffic calming devices
4 th St & Rio Grande	Install a new hike and bike bridge over Shoal Creek to the Lance Armstrong Bikeway/Shoal Creek Hike and Bike Trail

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5 th St & Rio Grande	Install a new traffic signal
5 th St to 6 th St	Convert angle parking to back-in angle parking (reverse angle parking)
11 th St to 12 th St	Install inset drop off/pick up zone for Pease Elementary; re-route Capital Metro Bus #3 if feasible
11 th to MLK	Re-route Capital Metro Bus No. 3 as per Capital Metro Service Plan 2020
12 St to 13 th St	Install inset drop off/pick up zone for Austin Community College
7 th St to MLK	Install traffic calming devices (an array of traffic circles, medians with speed cushions, speed cushions, and pedestrian curb-extensions); Implement "green streets" storm water treatment vegetation with traffic calming devices as feasible; minimal parking restrictions as needed
MLK & Rio Grande	Install "bicycle left only bay" for southbound bicyclists at the intersection of MLK, Jr. and Rio Grande

Nueces - 3rd Street to MLK, Jr. Boulevard:

Segment	Recommendation
3 rd St to MLK	Install regulatory and place-making signs as appropriate; 25 mph speed limit if feasible
3 rd St to 7 th St	Install a Great Streets cross-section with includes Great Streets sidewalks, motor vehicle lanes, and enhanced bicycle lanes
7 th St to 13 th St	Install shared lane markings "sharrows"; remove some north/south stop signs if feasible
13 th St to MLK	Modify on-street parking to one-side of the street only and install enhanced bicycle lanes

Cost of the proposed dual facility will be approximately \$670, 000, funded through bond specific funding for bicycle plan implementation.

Construction for Rio Grande recommendations could begin in Fall/Winter 2010. The Nueces Street recommendations from 7th to MLK, Jr. Blvd are to be installed during the final stages of an upcoming City water line project, projected for Spring 2012.

The Public Works Web site (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/publicworks/bicycle-public-input.htm>) will host the bicycle boulevard project's final recommendation report, attachments, and support materials. This staff recommendation is subject to change pending input from the City's Boards and Commissions Process.

Stakeholders who want to provide input can attend one of multiple meetings held throughout April and May, leading up to a City Council briefing in May. Dates are listed on the website.

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