



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 13, 2012

To: Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board

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Subject: BMP Task 3.1 – Policy Framework

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to propose an updated policy framework for the Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) Update, and communicate the rationale behind proposed changes to the 2007 Bicycle Master Plan goals and objectives. Comments on the proposed revisions will be sought from the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB) and from other project stakeholders in the coming months. This memo follows the discussion with the SBAB at the June 6 meeting (and accompanying memo) regarding the existing policy framework in the current BMP, and potential ways in which it might be changed as part of the update of the plan.

The policy framework for the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan Update is comprised of the vision, goals, and objectives within the plan. The policy framework articulates in a systematic way the Plan's purpose (*"what do we wish to accomplish?"*) and methods (*"how do we intend to accomplish it?"*). The policy framework establishes the list of implementing actions and performance measures in the plan. Revisions to these will be proposed further along in the plan update process, and will be largely based on the goals and objectives in the plan.

Once the updated BMP is adopted by the Seattle City Council the policy framework will provide the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) with a direction to undertake the work proposed in the plan. In the near term, the updated policy framework will also help provide direction on the development of the plan update, which is why these recommended updates to goals and objectives are being developed fairly early in the process. The policy framework will also provide guidance at a high level about the City's priorities, allowing the City to respond to unforeseen future issues in a consistent way.

The policy framework is not a substitute for a work plan; it is not intended to cover every action that will be recommended in the plan, or that may be undertaken by SDOT staff as they implement the plan. Instead, it is intended to be a guiding document that informs, and



is informed by, the technical work and the guidance from the public that will result in specific actions and priorities.

Process

The recommendations to update the BMP vision, goals, and objectives were developed by SDOT and the consultant team. The foundation for the updated policy framework was the current Bicycle Master Plan, which articulated two primary goals (related to ridership and crash reduction), and four primary objectives. Each goal and objective was accompanied by a performance measure related to it (see Appendix A for complete text of the 2007 goals and objectives.).

The current BMP is only five years old (having been adopted in 2007) and therefore much of the existing policy framework remains a relevant. The existing goals and objectives have provided the foundation for significant progress since the Bicycle Master Plan was adopted. However, for the Bicycle Master Plan Update, SDOT is recommending that changes and additions to the existing policy framework are warranted. The recommended changes are influenced by several factors, including:

- Direction received by the City Council when they allocated money in the 2012 budget for the BMP update;
- Comments that have been received to date from members of the community and stakeholder groups through the public engagement process;
- A review by SDOT and the consultant team of the policy framework for other Bicycle Master Plans around the country;
- A review of the policy framework in the City's modal plans that have been developed subsequent to the 2007 Bicycle Master Plan (specifically, the Pedestrian Master Plan and Transit Master Plan); and
- The comments received at the June 6 SBAB meeting.

Based on these factors, several proposed changes are being recommended to the policy framework. A comparison between the current and proposed policy framework is shown in Appendix A. Generally, the recommended changes include:

- Adding a more explicit vision statement to the plan. One of the comments by the SBAB members at the June 6 meeting was that they supported making the BMP more "aspirational" than the current plan. The current plan goals (on ridership and safety) are focused on meeting near term (10 year) targets.
- Emphasize the land use component of bicycle transportation by focusing more on connections to destinations that bicycle riders want to go. As a part of this, emphasize not just the construction of bikeways but also emphasize their function connecting where Seattle residents live, work, play, and learn.

- Emphasize the role that bicycling can play in the building vibrant communities overall (which is an important component to SDOT’s overall work program, as articulated in the Action Agenda).
- Support the City’s Climate Action Plan and Complete Streets Policy through relevant goals and objectives in the Bicycle Master Plan Update.
- Build upon the 2012 Action Agenda that was created to guide SDOT’s activities in the next two years.
- Create the policy framework needed to advance new and innovative bicycle facility types such as neighborhood greenways and separated bicycle facilities.

Proposed framework

The proposed policy framework for the Bicycle Master Plan Update is outlined below. A side-by-side comparison with the 2007 language can be found in Table 1 in Appendix A.

Vision: Riding a bicycle is a comfortable and enjoyable part of daily life in Seattle.

Discussion. The current BMP does not have an explicit vision or mission statement. The first paragraph of the Executive Summary of the current plan states that the intent of the BMP is to “define a set of actions to make Seattle the best community for bicycling in the United States”. However, this is not outlined as an explicit vision statement in the plan document. The Pedestrian Master Plan, on the other hand, has a mission statement upfront that says “Make Seattle the Most Walkable City in the Nation”. The intent of the proposed BMP vision statement is to capture the desired future outcome of the plan (and implementing the plan). The language in the proposed vision statement is intended to emphasize the vision that riding a bicycle is, or should be, a common activity for a large group of people. The word “comfortable” is intended to convey a number of things: safety, convenience, and accessibility (the term “comfort” is emphasized to a large extent in Copenhagen). The term “part of daily life” is used in different contexts in goal and vision statements in other bicycle master plans around the country.

Goals:

1. Ridership – Increase the amount of bicycle riding in Seattle for all trip purposes
2. Safety – Improve safety for bicycle riders
3. Connectivity – Create a high quality bicycle network that connects to places people want to go and is accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds, and bicycling abilities.
4. Livability – Encourage bicycle riding as a healthy, non-polluting, and affordable mode of transportation that helps build vibrant communities.

Discussion: As noted earlier, the goals in the current BMP were established fairly recently, and are still relevant in establishing a policy framework for the future. Therefore, the first two goals above are very similar to the current BMP goals. One major difference, though, is that the current goals also include specific performance measures, or targets. While it is

appropriate to have performance measures in the plan (as the current plan does), typically they are not in goal statements (for example, the goals in the Pedestrian and Transit Master Plans do not contain targets or measures). In addition, two new goals are being recommended. The first (Goal 3) is focused on connectivity, and focused on creating a network that connects to land uses and destinations both within and between neighborhoods. The second new goal (Goal 4) highlights the benefits of riding a bicycle to overall community vitality. This is also one of the main themes in the 2012 SDOT Action Agenda (“Building Healthy Communities”).

Objectives:

1. Complete and maintain a bicycle network of on-street and trail facilities throughout the city.
2. Develop state-of-the-art bicycle improvements.
 - a. Design and implement bold and leading edge bicycle facilities.
 - b. Plan and implement separated on-street bicycle facilities where analysis supports their use.
 - c. Plan and implement a network of neighborhood greenways that connect to key community destinations and are integrated with the overall bicycle system.
3. Integrate planning for bicycle facilities with all travel modes and complete streets principles.
4. Develop a prioritization framework that establishes criteria for bicycle investments throughout the city.
5. Identify and implement actions to support bicycle riding.
 - a. Collaborate with partners to provide education, enforcement, and encouragement programs
 - b. Develop convenient and secure end-of-trip facilities.
 - c. Secure funding for project implementation and maintenance.

Discussion: As shown in Appendix A, there are four objectives in the current BMP. The proposed language above generally maintains all four (although the recommended amendments merge several of the current objectives into one (Objective 5), since they are all focused on implementation). The new objectives focus on several themes that have been discussed throughout the plan update process so far:

- Developing new, state-of-the-art types of facilities (such as cycle tracks and neighborhood greenways) that are not part of the current plan;
- Integrating planning for bicycle facilities with other travel modes, and with broader complete streets goals (this was a specific suggestion at the June 6 SBAB meeting; and
- Developing a clear prioritization framework for making bicycle investments.

Next Steps

SDOT will solicit input from the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board and other stakeholders about this policy framework, and will subsequently work with the consultant team to refine them. Once the policy framework has been established after further review, the project team will focus on revising (as appropriate) the plan actions and performance measures which will correspond to the final vision, goals, and objectives.

Appendix A: policy comparison

The following table (Table 1) provides a side-by-side comparison of the vision, goals, and objectives for the 2007 Bicycle Master Plan and the 2012 proposed draft Bicycle Master Plan Update. 2012 language that is a modified/adapted version of comparable language from the 2007 Plan has been indicated in blue. 2012 language that represents new language has been indicated in green.

2007 Bicycle Master Plan	2012 Bicycle Master Plan Update - Proposed
VISION	VISION
The Seattle Bicycle Master Plan defines a set of actions, to be completed within 10 years, to make Seattle the best community for bicycling in the United States. ¹	Riding a bicycle is a comfortable and enjoyable part of daily life in Seattle. (new vision)
GOALS	GOALS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the use of bicycling in Seattle for all trip purposes. Triple the amount of bicycling in Seattle between 2007 and 2017. 2. Improve safety of bicyclists throughout Seattle. Reduce the rate of bicycle crashes by one third between 2007 and 2017. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ridership – Increase the amount of bicycle riding in Seattle for all trip purposes (similar to existing Goal 1) 2. Safety – Improve safety for bicycle riders (similar to existing Goal 2) 3. Connectivity – Create a high-quality bicycle network that connects to places people want to go and is accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds, and bicycling abilities. (new goal) 4. Livability – Encourage bicycle riding as a healthy, non-polluting, and affordable mode of transportation that helps build vibrant communities. (new goal)
OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and maintain a safe, connected, and attractive network of bicycle facilities throughout the city. 2. Provide supporting facilities to make bicycle transportation more convenient. 3. Identify partners to provide bicycle education, enforcement, and encouragement programs. 4. Secure funding and implement bicycle improvements. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and maintain a bicycle network of on-street and trail facilities throughout the city. (similar to existing Objective 1) 2. Develop state-of-the-art bicycle improvements. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Design and implement bold and leading edge bicycle facilities. (new objective) b. Plan and implement separated on-street bicycle facilities where analysis supports their use. (new objective) c. Plan and implement a network of neighborhood greenways that connect to key community destinations and are integrated with the overall bicycle system. (new objective) 3. Integrate planning for bicycle facilities with all travel modes and complete streets principles. (new objective) 4. Develop a prioritization framework that establishes criteria for bicycle investments throughout the city. (new objective) 5. Identify and implement actions to support bicycle riding. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Collaborate with partners to provide education, enforcement, and encouragement programs. b. Develop convenient and secure end-of-trip facilities. c. Secure funding for project implementation and maintenance. (similar to existing Objectives 2, 3 and 4)

¹The 2007 Bicycle Master Plan did not define a formal vision statement, but this is the first sentence in the plan, and is thus considered the vision statement for the purposes of this comparison exercise.