

Minutes

DVD No. 327

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Meeting at City Hall, 4800 Town Center Drive, at 6:00 P.M., on Monday, July 7, 2014. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: James Azeltine, Jim Rawlings, Lou Rasmussen, Andrew Osman, Tom Robinett, Carrie Rezac and Julie Cain

Councilmembers Absent: Debra Filla

Staff Present: Scott Lambers, City Administrator	Patty Bennett, City Attorney
Brian Anderson, Supt. of Parks	Mark Andrasik, IS Director
Joe Johnson, Public Works Director	Mark Klein, Planning Official
Richard Coleman, Comm. Dev. Director	Chris Claxton, P&R Director
Cindy Jacobus, Asst. City Clerk	Deb Harper, City Clerk

Others Present: Dan Holloway, CFS Engineers
Martin [Marty] Shukert and Joe Kotulak, RDG Planning & Design
Bicycle Friendly Committee Members: Bill Day, Len Corsi, Robert Crowell,
Bill Blessing, Dave Hill and Alicia Jennings
Caroline Bauman, Kansas City Star

Presentation of Pedestrian/Bicycle Friendly Plan

Mayor Dunn called the meeting to order at 5:37 P.M. Introductions were made by those present.

Mayor Dunn recognized the following individuals for their work throughout the process: Councilmembers Julie Cain and Debra Filla; City Staff Brian Anderson, Chris Claxton, Joe Johnson, David Ley, Richard Coleman and Mark Klein; Bicycle Friendly Committee Members Alicia Jennings, Bill Blessing, Brian Neilson, Bill Day and Bob Crowell; Steering Committee Members Jeff Williams, Dave Hill, Len Corsi and Tucker Trotter; and Police Officer Erik Butler.

Opening Remarks – Brian Anderson, Supt. of Parks

Mr. Anderson expressed gratitude to the Steering Committee and their major contributions to the project. He introduced Mr. Shukert from RDG Planning & Design, to present a summary highlighting the components of the plan. Mr. Anderson asked for input from the Council, with the goal of placing a revised plan on a future Council agenda for adoption.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Introduction / Chapter 1 – Active Transportation Environment

Mr. Shukert expressed gratitude to Staff and Committees in creating the overall Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan for Leawood. The plan has been named “Self-Propelled Leawood” and it creates transportation options that allow people to move about under their own power or with minor assist. The plan, main findings, resources and financing will be reviewed.

The City of Leawood is already on the radar as a bicycle friendly community. Street connectivity is important with both pedestrian and bicycle systems. The layout of parks and other factors, including schools and other primary destinations, also affect the system. Three different types of movement frame the quality of the system:

1. Principal Routes: Primarily north-south longer through routes, such as Lee Boulevard, Mission Road and Nall Avenue.
2. Cross-Town: Leawood is a long, narrow geographic entity and is host to a number of cross-town movements between Overland Park and Kansas City.
3. Internal Streets: Destinations and walks to schools.

Leawood is part of a significant metropolitan trail system, which must be integrated. Streets, trails, destinations, parks and similar facilities are the framework for the active transportation network.

Chapter 2 – Markets for Active Transportation

This includes the number of people who walk or cycle now, the number of people that may do so in the future, how realistic these future expected numbers are, and perceptions of needs.

Alta Planning & Design is a leading firm in active transportation planning, with a very clear methodology and a variety of established data sources, the most important of which is the American Community Survey (ACS). Using ACS 2008-2012 average computations, it is projected that 8,700 pedestrian trips occur daily in Leawood; purpose-driven trips to shops, work, parks, schools, etc. Given relatively modest assumptions about increase in mode share population over 20 years and with an increase in trips being driven by better facilities, elimination or minimization of barriers, strategic sidewalk development and increased trips to school, the number could increase to about 22,000 individual trips per day. The same analysis was performed for bicycles. An estimated 2,700 purpose-driven bicycle trips occur daily, which could increase to about 10,000 trips per day in 20 years.

Leawood is loosely defined as a bedroom community with nearby employment destinations, but the City has many active transportation trips and could reasonably aspire to more, given the experience of comparable communities. Many employment and shopping destinations are within easy distances of one mile for pedestrians and under five miles for cyclists.

Comparable Cities’ Bicycle Mode Share [Plan Page 15]

Bethesda, Maryland	2.00%
Fargo, North Dakota	1.08%
Shorewood, Wisconsin	3.60%
Hopkins, Minnesota	0.67%
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin	0.59%

Leawood's current Bicycle Mode Share is 0.80% and target range is 1.5% - 1.8% within 10 to 20 years. Additionally, technological changes will have some impact as well, including the concept of an e-bike which has electric assist for added power for hills and difficult portions of the ride.

An online survey was conducted and nearly 300 people responded. With regard to cycling, only a small portion of respondents, 1.5%, were fearless riders, 46% were committed and supportive of new infrastructure, 52% were interested in recreational cycling and concerned about safety, and only 4% would not ride at all. The highest priority destinations were recreational trips to trails or parks, and school trips. Cyclists were generally comfortable with quiet local streets and with separate facilities on busy streets like the west side of Nall, which was well-rated. Cyclists are not comfortable with sharing the road on busy streets. Multi-use trails like Tomahawk and Indian Creek were highly rated. Some streets in Leawood that have been converted, or could be converted to be more bicycle friendly, received reasonable scores on level of comfort.

Pedestrians were a little different in that only a small portion of respondents, 4%, consider themselves to be pedestrians under any circumstances, 48% of respondents would probably walk more with better facilities, about 30% were interested in walking and concerned about safety, and 2.8% were unlikely to walk at all. Specific issues that keep people from walking include lack of sidewalks or concerns about crossing a major street. Additionally, one of the things most important to respondents in terms of infrastructure was visible crosswalks. When rating different settings, the cyclists highly rated bike lanes, better signage and more bicycle friendly infrastructure, while pedestrians highly rated construction of sidewalks or filling sidewalk gaps. With improvements, the number of pedestrian trips could increase 2 times and the number of bicycling trips could increase by 2.5 times.

Chapter 3 – Active Transportation Network: Principles and Structure

Criteria for Pedestrian/Bicycle System

The proposed plan adapts the highly-regarded design principles established by the Netherlands Centre for Research and Contract Standardization in Civil and Traffic Engineering, for six guiding requirements:

1. Integrity: Should not leave a pedestrian/cyclist stranded in the middle of nowhere.
2. Directness: Should be able to move from Point A to Point B reasonably direct, without diverting more than 0.25 mile in any direction.
3. Safety: Should feel safe walking/cycling in an environment designed for different levels of capability.
4. Comfort: Should not be in a situation that causes stress.
5. Experience: Should be a pleasant and positive user experience.
6. Feasibility: Should be able to maximize benefits and minimize costs.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Routes as a System [Plan Page 36]

- Principal Routes – Primary routes.
- Cross-Town Streets – Connect neighboring cities.
- Active Boulevards [previously termed “Bicycle Boulevards”] – Provide access for local trips and give continuity on routes over one mile.
- Neighborhood Connections – Short routes that link different elements of the system together.
- Multi-Use Trails.

The system was developed by riding every mile of every street in Leawood and by conducting three sectional workshops [north, central and south] with people to discuss how they move.

Examples of Cross-Town Streets are 133rd and 137th, that already or will eventually run edge-to-edge, east-west. Rosewood is an Active Boulevard for north-south transportation, without getting into major infrastructure.

Page 40 presents four Principal Routes: Lee Boulevard, which connects with Mission Road to the south, a corridor on the east side that uses State Line, the Nall side path, and connecting Ward Parkway Center with Ranchmart.

The idea of Walking and Biking Circle Routes was launched by how people use quiet streets like Overbrook, which really do not have a prescribed destination but are nice for leisurely travel. There is a north Circle Route and a south Circle Route that meet at Leawood Park and connect to the regional trail system there. These routes would be specially marked like a trail within the City.

Chapter 4 – On Foot in Leawood

Using the methodology of Walkscore.com to rate different parts of the City for overall walkability, Town Center ranks the highest. Leawood was not built on a traditional grid with a complete network of sidewalks. A full sidewalk inventory identified repair and Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] issues, as well as the need for sidewalk construction. Sidewalks are most present in the post-1970 or post-1980 part of the City, and tend to be least present in areas built 1950 to 1960.

The plan presents different types of applications to address specific problems, such as the mid-street refuge median that allows a pedestrian to only deal with traffic on one side during a light cycle. Curb radiuses have an impact, as do bump-outs, which reduce the distance a person has to walk in a conflict area with traffic. A detailed analysis of each school site showed connections that need to be made to provide safe pedestrian access to all schools. The plan considers how to improve intersections that have strategic importance in the overall system.

Setting Priorities

The plan has established three priority levels:

1. High Priority: The primary access routes and the immediate areas around school sites.
2. Priority: A variety of streets that would be considered bicycle friendly.
3. Everything else.

The plan has established three cost improvement categories:

1. New sidewalks that fill gaps or that involve the major priority routes.
2. Replacement of damaged sidewalks.
3. ADA compliance at intersections.

If all the high priority items were done at one time, the cost would be about \$2.5 Million. The priority and high priority items done together would cost approximately \$7 to \$7.5 Million. Cost-sharing or funding mechanisms would most likely be utilized. The remaining routes are more for private benefit and would typically not be publicly financed.

The plan also considers the emerging Town Center downtown of Leawood that includes Camelot Court, Hawthorne Place, Town Center Plaza and Park Place, and how those areas might link together internally. This may include linking City Hall and the Library together with Town Center Plaza and connecting pedestrian improvements in a unified district. From an overall perspective, regional linkages make the entire area much more pedestrian friendly and produce an environment that goes to a number of destinations. Another benefit is keeping extraneous vehicular trips out of the system.

Chapter 5 - Bicycle Infrastructure: Design Concepts and Guidelines

The plan considers design standards and a variety of facilities that might be used, including street shared lane markings in different settings. There are different ways of using the shared lanes, the most frequently used component of the bicycle system.

Another component is sidepaths, which is a widened sidewalk or multi-use path along a major street. The most important of these is the Nall Avenue sidepath. People feel comfortable with sidepaths until intersections, and then a variety of issues arise including having a car turn in front of the pedestrian or cyclist. Sidepaths also have right-of-way priority ambiguity. The plan includes a variety of intersection standards to make cyclists and pedestrians more visible to automobiles.

Chapter 6 - Route Details and Sequencing

The plan details how the individual routes would correspond to different types of infrastructure. Each route has suggestions for what could be done in the short term and with unconstrained resources. Sidewalk conditions are spotlighted, as well as bicycle conditions, which will hopefully assist subsequent planners develop future infrastructure.

In the long term buffered bike lanes are suggested, which would be through lanes on a two-lane framework, with a crosshatched or striped buffer and then a bike lane in the shoulder to make a relatively narrow facility truly comfortable for all users. With regard to grading on Lee Boulevard, a reasonable option would be a climbing shoulder. The area from Ward Parkway to Ranchmart uses interesting ideas, such as taking the parking lot for Ward Parkway Center on the west side of State Line and simply striping a path along the outside of the parking lot, helping to make the connection to the bridge and over the creek.

The plan looks at potential cross-town routes, now called Active Boulevards. One of these connects to Mission Farms and uses 105th Street and Sagamore. On the south side, Mission Road is an opportunity; north of 135th Street it has sufficient width to be striped with bike lanes and would create a safer environment for all users. The system at 133rd and 137th provides rear roads that could be multi-modal and serve the shopping centers and higher density development along the 135th Street Corridor. The proposed west side Active Boulevard extends north of 151st using Rosewood and Juniper, then ties into Roe Avenue and continues north on that route.

Trails are also important and in the proposed system; short gap-fillers or little pieces can add a lot in terms of connectivity. A good example of these would be a trail link from State Line across the bridge to 89th Street, and ultimately connecting to Lee Boulevard and Ranchmart. Another is a road north of College that leads down to Indian Creek Trail and provides interesting access to that entire part of the City from the central east side. The connection of the Ironwoods Trail system to State Line and points south is another. All of these will add a lot in overall utility.

Each project is rated on level of difficulty to build. This rating system was used to create a sequenced 5-year phase, followed by a second 5-year phase. In today's dollars, the entire system is estimated at \$4.5 Million with some projects being either deferrable or unnecessary. For example, a project on Lee Boulevard is unnecessary if the street is reconstructed as planned. It would drop out and go to another funding source, namely, the reconstruction as a complete corridor of that street. Nall Avenue is a split cost with Overland Park and is in Phase 2. Mission Street south of 135th Street is in Phase 2 as well. The total cost of an immediate system with a great deal of utility would be \$2.1 Million spread over 5 years. Cost of the entire system spread over 10 years is \$400,000 to \$500,000 a year, which is not a large investment to make in active transportation.

Chapter 7 – Support Systems

Support systems are identified for bicycle friendly communities under the League of American Bicycle [LAB] Friendly Community Program, but apply to pedestrian systems as well:

1. Engineering: Pertains to bicycle infrastructure, way-finding and bike parking. The goal is to install facilities at strategic locations across the City.
2. Encouragement: Includes development of a bike share system and other events that make people feel good about active transportation.
3. Education: Includes getting more people engaged, increasing the number of League Cycling Instructors [LCIs] and events such as a kick-off festival where children can learn how to correctly put on a helmet and safe biking practices.
4. Enforcement: Pertains to establishing rules, responsibilities and courtesy that are enforced by both peer groups and officers.
5. Evaluation: Includes survey techniques to gauge perceived success.
6. Policy: Includes zoning ordinances, pedestrian access to main commercial projects, civic projects, etc., and also subdivision regulations.

Mr. Shukert expressed extreme gratitude for all the help and support in putting together a sound plan for active transportation in Leawood.

Mayor Dunn thanked Mr. Shukert for the efforts and asked about the \$2.5 Million for immediate needs, wondering if those numbers included the ADA improvements and repairs. Mr. Shukert confirmed the cost includes those improvements as well as sidewalk repairs. Grants are available and are administered by the Kansas Department of Transportation as well as some that are federally-based.

Councilmember Rasmussen complimented Mr. Shukert on the comprehensive study. He asked about north Leawood, specifically the area around 103rd Street and Pawnee, where the recommendation is a connector street coming off Mission Road going south on Pawnee, across the west edge of Brookwood School, connecting to Mohawk and down into Mission Farms. He pointed out the complexity of the proposal and asked why it was necessary. Mr. Shukert replied it is to be an alternative to Mission Road and offers critically needed access to the school.

Councilmember Rasmussen recognized cost estimates are not firm and that recently the Council received estimates for sidewalk construction at \$50 a running foot, which is double the estimate provided in the plan. Mr. Shukert replied they planned \$5 to \$6 per square foot of sidewalk. Mr. Holloway commented that plan cost estimate could be higher based on complexity.

Councilmember Rasmussen asked about 117th Street from Lee Boulevard west past Park Place, and why it would even be considered if the bridge is eventually built on the creek. Mr. Shukert replied that 117th connects to Camelot Court and is somewhat more direct for pedestrians. Councilmember Rasmussen pointed out that the supporting connection path running from Roe west to Nall goes past Dean & DeLuca to all the pad sites, so it is a connecting route. Mr. Shukert stated that it would be good, considering that it will also be interrupted and will need crosswalks.

Mayor Dunn stated that Hawthorne Plaza is in Overland Park, and Town Center Crossing was left out. She also pointed out references to Overland Park that should have been Prairie Village on Pages 146 and 178. Additionally, the plan mentioned State Avenue, a street in Kansas City, Kansas, instead of State Line Road. Mr. Shukert replied these corrections would be made.

Councilmember Cain appreciated the time and deliberation during the process. She applauded the careful consideration of Town Center, because a great deal of revenue is generated in this area and it will continue to develop. Mr. Shukert agreed the Town Center area is important and is an opportunity to create a living pedestrian environment. Councilmember Cain pointed out the pedestrian plaza that Town Center is creating at their own expense is beneficial to the plan.

Mayor Dunn agreed the road map for the entire City is helpful in showing connectivity and expressed interest in the e-bike. Mr. Shukert pointed out that they are appealing to many.

Councilmember Rezac echoed appreciation for the thoroughness of the report. She asked about the walkability score for south Leawood, which she thought had more connectivity and sidewalks. Mr. Shukert replied not all the connections exist and the score will improve as gaps are filled.

Councilmember Rezac asked about gaps in all locations presented on Page 61. Mr. Shukert confirmed the north side has sidewalks on Lee Boulevard and along 83rd, but not on most residential streets. He also pointed out not all the gaps need to be filled because of low traffic.

Councilmember Rezac asked if the Priority Criteria shown on Page 83 were established by the survey, experience or guidelines. Mr. Shukert replied that it was a combination of all. The criteria deal with issues such as sidewalks on a short cul-de-sac being a low priority in terms of being part of a system. However, a sidewalk on a principal street that leads to a school or a destination such as Ranchmart is a higher priority.

Mr. Anderson pointed out he was contacted by BikeWalkKC, who submitted a grant application to add the bike share facilities at different locations, and this scored very well in the grading process. He is encouraged about potential funding as the plan's awareness increases. Mr. Shukert stated the Town Center area has good trail linkages for cyclists, which has great appeal. Bike share systems are gaining in popularity and work ideally in systems of two to three miles that focus on local circulation.

Mayor Dunn asked when to expect the plan to come before the Council. Mr. Anderson replied it should be August or September, after errors are corrected and estimates are re-evaluated. Mayor Dunn expressed gratitude to all involved.

There being no further business, the work session was adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Deb Harper, CMC, City Clerk