



Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan Open House
Meeting Notes
21 February 2018
City Hall
4 pm – 6 pm

Topic: Transportation (*transportation choices, sustainable infrastructure, bike-share, and low emissions vehicles*)
Facilitator: Terry Amsler
Easel/Note Pad: Sonja Meintsma
Computer notes: Logan Pfeiffer
Number of participants: 10

Summary of Interests Discussed

- Appreciation expressed for improved transportation infrastructure, including the establishment of the new downtown transit center and gradually improving bicycle infrastructure. Also noted the efforts to expand public bus lines and accessibility. Additionally, private buses to Indianapolis and car-sharing to reduce the need for personal vehicles to travel.
- Concern expressed for the infrequency of evening and weekend buses, lack of respect or education on part of motorists and cyclists equally, a lack of protective infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians or a means of east-west accessibility options, and limited parking for events.
- Overarching themes: reduce cars by improving alternate transportation mode opportunities, development of east-west corridor, education of motorists and cyclists to reduce confrontation/confusion, condition municipal development with a holistic perspective and communication with county and state.
- Primary issues to address:
 - Connectivity
 - Alternatives to cars
 - Education
 - Communication/coordination

Detailed Notes

What is going well in Bloomington?

- Public transit is good for students getting to school, downtown, and home, even on weekends
- Collaboration between IU and city bus system – student ID helpful, no change/money (free for students, faculty – just show ID, don't even need pass)
- Recent trend of increasing bike lanes over time; every 6 months new bike lanes
- Campus bus ridership numbers in top-5 countrywide, according to one participant
- Like Double Map app for bus transit accessibility and scheduling
- Bike lanes north and south, especially B-Line + new Bike-hare soon to begin on campus

- Washington St. – bike lane moved from right side of street next to passenger cars to left side to prevent interaction with parked car doors opening (but only on half of street)
- Underpass at 3rd and College Mall changed willingness to ride to the east side (took 4 years to convince them to do it) – until underpass constructed, not feasible to go east-west
- New Transit Center is a definite improvement
- Rural Transit for far west-side coming into town is improving – people park on outskirts and then take transit to town (west-side bus system) because kind of cut off
- Addition of Miller Transportation buses to Transit Center to go to Chicago/Indianapolis (daily stop)
- Intercampus shuttle from IU to IUPUI – not sure if this is still ongoing, but was in past
- Rush hour in city is an exception (especially Friday evening), otherwise relatively little traffic congestion
- B-Line expansion in general is good thing, interconnectivity to Ellettsville could help with longer trips
- Shuttle system – GoExpress and Star America – reliably 60 minutes to get to airport and only \$20
- TapRide app (request to pick you up at night) – but don't know time to arrive or reliability – free for students/employees
- Zipcars on campus used by students
- 4th street parking garage has helped Buskirk-Chumley Theater

What is not going so well in Bloomington?

- Interaction between motorists/bicyclists is confusing; not sure which laws apply at which time
 - Cars upset about cyclists going through stop-lights and makes all cyclists look bad
 - Vice versa, cars roll through and cyclists shout back
- No east-west bike lanes - expansion of bike lanes needed to feel safe biking
- Friday afternoon – can't drive from 4–8 pm, exodus leaving town
- No adequate bus service on Sundays or late nights
 - especially pertinent for late-night drinking downtown (there used to be a “drunk bus” at midnight or 2 am - unsure if still in operation) – reduce public intoxication → Has Uber/Lyft impacted this?
- Zipcars only on campus – maybe convention center or hotel should have them
- More schedules needed at bus stops, especially with inclement weather – most stops don't have them and riders don't want to wait around without knowing wait time – additionally, fewer shelters now than in past
- 80% of campus parking permit users are 1 occupant single drivers driving less than 3 miles – not getting single occupant cars off road and parking remains congested
- Parking – certain times (large events) parking is over-capacity for all people attending to find space, not creating transportation options/parking for occasional attractions, especially downtown
 - This would be good opportunity to incentivize carpooling
- No transit for visitors – built around commuters, no transit to sports events
- People walking in the street because there's no sidewalk
- Intersections at 3rd and College, 10th and College, and 10th and Pete Ellis are all problematic for non-motorists

What changes would you like to see in Bloomington in the next 5 years?

1. Get around without owning a car
2. Increased alternative transit options or carpooling for popular events
3. Increased walkability
4. Increased bike opportunities
5. Increased east-west accessibility, particularly for biking
6. Train or light rail service connecting Louisville-Bloomington-Indianapolis-Chicago
7. Transit options for visitors

8. Reduced cars in the city
9. Communication between city and county and improved coordination
10. Greater transportation education

What can Bloomington do to move forward to address concerns and to achieve its vision for the future in the next 5 years?

- 1) Get around without owning a car**
 - Expansion of car-share off-campus (Zipcar, carpooling)
 - Trolley along B-Line
- 2) Increased alternative transit options or carpooling for popular events**
- 3) Increased walkability**
 - Campaign to “use the sidewalk” addressing issue where people walk in streets because sidewalk only on one side (also fits with goal 10)
 - Connectivity of sidewalks
 - Supportive and consistent zoning – incentivize infill, if city expands outward too much it is not walkable – maybe build up rather than out
 - Increased housing downtown increases compactness and close access to points of interest
 - Formalize shortcuts (multi-use paths) between neighborhoods or streets for connectivity – also builds community engagement
 - Pedestrian-only areas that are magnets for people – “closed-streets” idea, e.g., Kirkwood Ave. between library and Sample Gates
 - Temporary barricades – close off streets for Sunday/weekend like Paris/Chicago/San Francisco – or some sort of regular schedule
 - More and better-defined crosswalks
- 4) Increased opportunities for cyclists**
 - Use buffer to protect bicyclists from motorized traffic
 - Increased off-street bike paths
 - East-west access
 - Overpass for bikes to cross major thoroughfares – helps improve safety and reduce anxiety (“Bypass the Bypass”)
 - Increase bike parking or even bike lockers to improve ridership, improve security, and consider placement to make it usable
 - City ordinance for standard quality bike racks for new and present businesses or developers (and enforcement of standard)
 - Current bus-and-bike option is helpful – quick process to onboard
- 5) East-west accessibility in all other goal areas**
 - Transit to Ivy Tech and Cook campus
- 6) Train (or light rail) from Bloomington – Indy – Chicago - Louisville**
- 7) Transit for visitors**
 - Create public transit routes to/from events and games
- 8) Reduce cars in the city**

- Continue reducing parking space as new development is generated (historically this has been the trend downtown)
- Zoning laws that limit residential parking spaces

9) Improve coordination between city and county transportation entities

- State/county roads must enforce walkability issues
- Planning communication

10) Education – Rules of the road

- People unsure how to use the bus and embarrassed to not know so they don't use it – so educate people how to ride the bus
- Educate drivers about co-existing on the road with bicyclists and others
- Penalties for not stopping for pedestrians – and better enforcement if there is a law for pedestrian-right-of-way (especially in areas where there is high interaction between pedestrian/vehicles) – only place observed this happen is at SPEA/Kelley on Fee Lane and SPEA/Library on 10th St.
- Codify, or at least educate, drivers about 3 feet or 5 feet margin of safety when passing cyclists
- Signage or billboard for “livable Bloomington weekly safety tip” – used to educate and raise awareness – placed in key areas of town
- Make motorists aware that bicyclists benefit motorists, e.g., less congestion, share the road

Additional Notes:

- Is Uber good/bad for sustainability?? Alternative to public transit – may mean more cars on the road, but useful, but might worry about who the driver is (personal safety)
 - Lighting analogy: want to save energy with less lights, but safety trumps sustainability, so use enough lighting to be safe
 - Bottled water analogy – it's a personal choice and those who want/can pay more have the option
 - More miles potentially traveled, but maybe less car ownership – which is better?
- More holistic to look outside scope of the city to county or region (hinting at Goal 9)