



Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan Open House
Meeting Notes
13 February 2018
City Hall McCloskey Room
4 pm – 5:45 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: 4-7

Summary of Interests Discussed

- Appreciation expressed for the efforts put forth by the city and partnerships the city engages in to improve transportation infrastructure, including the establishment of the new downtown bus terminal, city bicycle maps, and the slow gains improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Concern expressed about the infrequency of bus transit, particularly in the evenings and on weekends in high-need areas (i.e., low-income areas), lack of awareness and education from drivers regarding bicyclists and pedestrians, a lack of protective infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians, lack of ADA quality infrastructure, and “auto-centrism.”
- Interest in the connection between social equity and climate change as it relates to transportation.
- Desire to improve bus transit to have “intelligent” routes that would provide greater service for areas of highest need.
- Interest in exploring how we might anticipate future transportation needs regarding developing technologies (e.g., automated or self-driving cars).
- Desire to improve understanding of how current transportation plans were developed and how they are updated.
- Recommendations to improve the beauty of the streets and green spaces to encourage greater walking and biking around town.
- Increased efforts to improve pathway connections between IU and the City (downtown area), including improving the number of sustainable IU staff members using transport to and from work.
- Improved urban planning to create micro-communities that provide essential needs within 1-2 miles of residence, thereby decreasing the need for car transport.
- Increased and improved quality of bus transit services and promotion of efforts to dis-incentivize people from parking and driving into town, increase mode-share between walking, biking, and busing.
- Conclusions
 - Five main long-term goals:
 - Responsive transportation planning
 - Increase mode-share
 - Integrate IU and City transportation planning and efforts
 - Connect climate goals to transportation effects
 - Micro-community development

- Three main issues to address:
 - Connectivity
 - Incentives
 - Education

Detailed Notes

What is going well in Bloomington?

- Planning process - transportation plan consultants and Toole Design – the collaboration is very impressive
 - Really moving forward with some of the projects
 - Can see improvements on Woodlawn and Jordan
- Fond of looking to South Bend for improvement examples
- Slowly making gains on bike and pedestrian infrastructure and transit (trajectory in the last 5 years)
 - Long way to go
- Hopeful on connecting sustainability and transportation issues
 - We can be a climate leader by increasing mode-share
 - Need to change infrastructure and behavioral changes (education)
- Impressed by new transportation bus terminal downtown
 - Improved way for people to use the facility, be sheltered, buses flow better (though can cause some traffic issues on Walnut St.), beautified the area of town
 - Public use facility
- City bicycle maps

What is not going so well in Bloomington?

- Too auto-centric
 - Freeway effect
- Hesitant to bicycle on Walnut St. and College Ave (due to heavy and fast traffic), must go out of way to avoid these streets
- Three lane, one-way highway problems with car-centric community
- Need for education with car drivers and bicyclists
 - No good interaction between pedestrians, bikers, and drivers (and skateboards, etc.)
 - Misbehavior - especially for drivers (not checking for pedestrians or bicyclists)
- Bloomington is a good bike city”by accident”
 - No protective facilities (bike lanes)
 - B-line doesn't count because it's mostly recreational
 - Need green ways
 - Often don't meet infrastructure standards in plans
 - Tree plots lacking
 - Need for pedestrian safety infrastructure
 - Compelling social equity and climate change arguments to increase mode-sharing across walking, transit, and biking; need to consider these arguments
- Bus Transit
 - No Sunday transit service
 - No evening service
 - Negative effects on low-income workers (not being able to get to work, limited means of transportation, etc.)
 - Saturday service is not enough
 - Lack of frequency of bus service (big issue) especially in high-need areas
 - Could tailor bus routes to access needed services like grocery stores, common work places, child care, etc.
 - People don't use the bus service because of the lack of frequency
 - Must incentivize behavior you want to see – right now, incentivizing is not there

- Poor ADA-approved infrastructure
 - Need curbs for blind pedestrians
 - Roundabouts and electric vehicles could be dangerous for blind pedestrians
 - Currently hostile environment for handicapped exists

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

- Some will bike in current environment of Bloomington, but most won't until we have better, more protective biking facilities
 - Can't treat bikes like cars
 - Need improved bicycle infrastructure
- Increased mode-share in biking, walking, transit – very important
- Improve bus service (intelligent bus routes)
- Responsive and improved transportation planning - ongoing with changing needs (e.g., driverless car technology)
- Connecting climate goals and social equity goal and relations/effect of transportation
 - Better understanding connections between climate goals the city has and transportation choices
- Beautify streets
 - Walking and biking streets
 - Engaging public spaces
- Better integration and connectivity of infrastructure between walkability and bike-ability between the city and the university
 - IU: 70% faculty/staff live within 4 miles of IU, but most drive single occupant vehicle
 - Not easy to bike because of current infrastructure (unsafe streets)
 - Make streets more equitable
 - Connect walking paths between City and IU
- Complete micro-communities
 - Currently, communities are very fragmented
 - Must increase access to basic needs and destinations closer to home
 - Connect to urban planning

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

- Ask: “What are we planning for?”
 - Self-driving cars may skew most of the predictions we make now
- Improved bicycle infrastructure
 - Separated bike lanes (protected bike lanes)
 - Tree plots in-between roads and pedestrians/bike lanes – slows traffic and provides shade
 - Elevated walkways to separate traffic from pedestrians
 - Security measures for bicycles – safe parking spaces, etc.
 - Prioritized bus travel
 - More two-way streets to decrease traffic build-up (e.g., Walnut/College/Franklin streets)
- Responsive Transportation planning
 - Inquiries regarding current transportation planning:
 - How will they make changes?
 - What merits the change in-between two transportation plans? How are they justified?
 - When was the last transportation plan?
 - Improve bus transit
 - Regular survey of ridership of buses – collect user input to inform planning
 - What are you or aren't you getting out of the service?
 - Why are you using the service?
 - Intelligent bus routes - can respond to change – use to determine if we have the best routes
 - Increase bus service on roads that should have bus service but don't currently

- Provide better weekend service, especially Sunday service
- Bus infrastructure improvement
 - Spaces for buses to pull off
 - Displays that can streamline information to riders
 - Improve accessibility and safety
 - Better bus stops – placement, shelter, etc.
- Incentivizing public support
 - Transportation can attract economic development
- Streamline stoplights
 - Synchronizing traffic signals
 - Can't walk across bypasses - discontinuity of walkways - unsafe for walkers
- Decrease or eliminate parking options
 - Convert parking lots into a more useful or city-profit venture
 - Dis-incentivizing people from parking
- Increasing mode share
 - Prioritizing bus travel
 - Two-way streets - improving walkability, biking, etc.
 - Calmer streets, slowing traffic, beautifying the streets
 - Bike share programs
 - Install GPS to prevent theft
 - Increase bike parking - monitor and protect
 - One option: provide a bike parking garage with bike shop connected
 - Building up Bloomington's bicycle culture
 - Completion of better trails/pathways, education initiatives
 - City can take steps to dis-incentivize cars and ownership
 - The current standard of requiring x amount of parking per construction project at the city level is not necessary and damaging to bike culture
 - Extra parking fees for housing in downtown area
 - People shuttle on switch-way
 - Monorail
 - Connecting southern Bloomington to downtown
 - Connect to B-line to encourage use of bikes or walking into downtown
 - Will eventually lead from recreation to transportation
 - "Pedestrianization" of downtown areas
 - Close roads, get more pedestrian traffic – will improve local business economy
- Integrating IU and city
 - Bike share programs
 - Education for bicyclists and rules (can or cannot ride on sidewalks, signals, etc.)
 - Protected bike parking for apartments
 - Connecting pathways
 - Pedestrian walkways (above or along streets) at IU
- Connecting climate goals to transportation
 - Education to prevent use of cars for short-trips
 - Equitable streets - bigger bike lanes - justice for bikers
 - Reducing GHG emissions
 - CNG conversion/ electric buses
 - fuel charging stations
 - Converting waste trucks to electric
- Micro-communities
 - Encouraging communities to be a good mix of commercial and residential
 - Access to work, grocery, restaurants, and a few leisure activity options all within one mile radius
 - Multi-use apartment complexes

- More available medical facilities
- Better infrastructure for pedestrians
- Other thoughts:
 - Combine different scenarios:
 - closed street areas
 - Use of a shuttle into downtown (or institute commuter fee)
 - Move parking outside city
 - Prohibit autos downtown
 - Get ahead of technology (anticipate vs. react)
 - Put policies in place now to encourage autonomous car development now