



Bicycle Boulevard Technical Training and Workshop

- Project:** West 27th Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements
- Project No:** MOA: 13-39 R&M: 2250.01
- Purpose:** Provide educational training to transportation professionals in Anchorage about bicycle boulevards
- Date:** Wednesday, June 24th, 2015
- Time:** 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM
- Location:** MOA Training Room
- Meeting Attendance:** 45 members of the MOA, DOT, and consulting firms attended (see sign-in)
- Project Team Staff:** MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE, PM&E
Lori Schanche, PLA, Project Manager
Brooke Blessing, Project Administrator
R&M CONSULTANTS, INC.
Marc Frutiger, PE, PTOE, Project Manager
Jason Osburn, PE, Project Engineer
Van Le, AICP, Planning & Public Involvement Manager
Taryn Oleson, Planning & Public Involvement Coordinator
KINNEY ENGINEERING
Iain McPherson, PE, Traffic Engineer
BETTISWORTH NORTH
Mark Kimerer, ASLA, Landscape Architect
ALTA PLANNING & DESIGN
Joe Gilpin, Bicycle Facility Expert
Fred Young, PLA, Bicycle Facility Expert
- Meeting Reporter:** Van Le, Taryn Oleson, and Marc Frutiger
- Attachments:**
- Aerial photos of project corridor and intersections
 - Presentation posted on the project website and available upon request
 - Photos of design exercise results



MEETING SUMMARY

R&M's sub consultant, Alta, a national bicycle facility design expert, prepared the Technical Training held in the MOA Training Room. There was a sign-in table at the entryway to the room.

Lori Schanche and Marc Frutiger introduced the training and Joe Gilpin of Alta. Joe's Bicycle Boulevard training and presentation lasted about an hour and a half. The slideshow presentation can be found on the project website <http://w27thaveimprovements.com>.

The main topics of Joe's presentation were as follows:

- What is a Neighborhood Bikeway or a Bike Boulevard
- Application – route planning
- Fundamental Elements
 - Low Speeds
 - Low Volumes
- Speed Management Strategies
 - Horizontal and Vertical Deflection
- Volume Management Strategies
 - Traffic restriction
 - Street Crossings
 - Beacons
- Intersections
- Pavement Markings and Green Infrastructure
 - Shared lane markings
- Branding and Wayfinding
- Parking and Bike lanes

At the conclusion of Joe's presentation a Q&A session was held.

- Q: How do snow plows get around the mini traffic circles?
A: *Blades on plows are adjustable from 9'-16' angles and circles with an apron work well with this*
- Q: Do speed limit signs apply to both bikers and cars alike?
A: Yes
- Q: When you have vehicle traffic one-way, can bikes go two ways?
A: Yes



- Q: Some of your examples were of one-way streets- were they already one-way or did it require public involvement to get that change?
A: *Public involvement was required to get them to become one-way streets. The public saw an increase in use of the street by runners, bikers, families playing basketball in parking areas. Generally we see a “take back the street” attitude emerge*
- Q: Will crosswalks require bicycles to dismount?
A: *Yes in some cases depending on the bike laws. In our City if a cyclist is traveling at 8 mph or less they have pedestrian rights*

Following the presentation, a 15 minute break was provided to allow the project team to arrange the room for the workshop/design exercise.

An exercise using the W 27th Ave project corridor was staged along three long rows of tables. Two of the rows contained plots of the three intersections in the W 27th Ave project corridor with two copies of each intersection provided. Along the third row of tables was a large scroll plot of the entire W 27th Ave project corridor, showing aerial photographs, ROW lines, property lines, and callouts with photos of issues identified along the project corridor. The purpose of the exercise was to have the trainees examine aspects of the project corridor and identify opportunities to apply strategies or tools explained in the presentation.

Trainees gathered around either the large scroll plot or the intersection plots and spent between 20-40 minutes in smaller groups discussing the issues presented and identify potential pedestrian and bicycle improvements that could be applied. Once a strategy was identified, the groups were encouraged to draw their solution on trace paper, see the design exercise result photos attached. After about 35 minutes, trainees were instructed to move to a different plot they had not yet worked on.

The training concluded at 11:30 AM with announcements about the AMATS Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee presentation by Alta that evening as well as the W 27th Ave Pedestrian Safety Improvements Project Open House the following night, Thursday, June 25th in the REI Community Room.

Suggested solutions resulting from the exercise are available by request.



W 27th Ave Pedestrian Safety Improvements

- Project:** West 27th Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements
- Project No:** MOA: 13-39 R&M: 2250.01
- Purpose:** Open House #1 – Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Concept and Planning Phase
- Date:** Thursday, June 25th, 2015
- Time:** 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- Location:** REI Community Room – 1200 W Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage
- Meeting Attendance:** 26 members of the public signed in and additional REI shoppers/employees stopped by the welcome table to learn more about the project
- Project Team Staff:**
- MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, PM&E**
 - Lori Schanche, PLA, Project Manager
 - Brooke Blessing, Project Administrator
 - R&M CONSULTANTS, INC.**
 - Marc Frutiger, PE, PTOE, Project Manager
 - Jason Osburn, PE, Project Engineer
 - Van Le, AICP, Planning Manager
 - Taryn Oleson, Planner & Public Involvement Coordinator
 - KINNEY ENGINEERING**
 - Jeanne Bowie, PE, PhD, PTOE, Traffic Engineer
 - BETTISWORTH NORTH**
 - Mark Kimerer, ASLA, Landscape Architect
 - ALTA PLANNING & DESIGN**
 - Joe Gilpin, Bicycle Facility Expert
 - Fred Young, PLA, Bicycle Facility Expert
- Meeting Reporter:** Van Le, Taryn Oleson, and Marc Frutiger



Attachments available on the project website www.w27thaveimprovements.com:

- Slide show slides
- Fact Sheet handout and Comment Form handout
- Display Boards of Concepts

Meeting Outreach:

- June 10, 2015; Postcard Open House invitations were sent to about 1,600 area residents, property and business owners
- June 10, 2015: Open House notice was posted on the Project Website
- June 19, 2015: Constant Contact E-Newsletter notice of the Open House was sent to the Project contact list
- June 23, 2015: Federation of Community Councils sent a notice to their contacts list
- REI had posted the Open House event within their retail store

MEETING SUMMARY

The Open House was held in the REI Community Room, located on the far end of the REI retail store where classes and public presentations are held. Directional signs were placed near the entrance of the REI store guiding members of the public to the Community Room where a welcome sign and sign-in table served as the entrance to the Open House. At the sign in table attendees were greeted by a member of the project team and asked to sign in. Available at this table were comment forms, project Fact Sheets, and 2015 Anchorage Bike Maps for Utility Cyclists. Next to the sign in table was a table of snacks and refreshments.

The public meeting was open house style, without a planned formal presentation; however, a short slide show presenting basic information on Bicycle Boulevards played repeatedly during the Open House. Members of the project team were scattered throughout the room to guide attendees through the concepts presented. Along the right half of the room was displays of the following concepts (see attachments):

- Implementation of the Anchorage Bicycle Plan through this project
- Toolkit for Speed Management
- Toolkit for Volume Management
- Toolkit for Intersections
- Area Crash, Speed, and Volume Traffic Data
- Parking Concepts
- Branding Concepts
- Wayfinding Concepts



On display along the left wall of the Community Room was a large scroll plot of the project corridor including aerial images, Right-Of-Way, property lines, and callouts with photos of issues identified along the project corridor. Attendees were encouraged to write on the scroll plot of issues they were aware of that were not already identified. A computer comment station was provided so attendees could comment on the project directly through the project website.

COMMENTS SUMMARY

Minnesota to Spenard Section

The western segment from Minnesota to Spenard and the farthest eastern segment of the corridor, from Arctic to Blueberry, received the most written comments on the scroll plot graphic.

The majority of feedback provided by members of the public in attendance was as follows:

Traffic Volume and Speeds

- 18 mph sign could provide differentiation to the corridor, so long as the road is designed to promote driving at that speed;
- Restrict vehicle access on 27th through full closure to motorists; right-in-right-out; or single direction travel or speed reduction treatments;
- Restrict vehicle access to a one-way street allowing room for bike traffic (two-way) and sidewalks; and
- Installation of speed bumps to slow traffic.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Use

- Many small children live along the 1400 block of W 27th with increasing use of streets and sidewalks for skateboarding, bike riding, etc. Current traffic volumes and speeds, their safety are a safety concern;
- Children walk or bike the corridor regularly to and from home, parent's places of work, and Stellar and Roming schools and parents do not feel safe having their children do so alone;
- Pedestrians and cyclists need more protection;
- Obstructed sidewalks and visibility near Bear Tooth; more pedestrian and cyclist protection is needed (cars often park on sidewalks);
- Add pathway or sidewalk along W 27th Ave near Stellar School by Blueberry road; work with school district due to limited right-of-way; and
- Concern about the connectivity to the bicycle network throughout the city.



Parking

- Segment of W 27th from Minnesota to Spenard is the largest parking concern;
- Recommendation of a vertical curb;
- Need to discuss parking 'dispute' with property/business owners;
- Sight distance concerns with parking near Play It Again Sports; parked cars obstructing view of oncoming traffic on Spenard Road;
- Poor driveway delineation along the corridor, especially by Jackie's Place and Play it Again Sports;
- Insufficient parking for multifamily apartments;
- Mark parking routes near Castle Apartments; and
- Concept of back-in angle parking was suggested.

Intersections

- Have intersections painted, signed, and signaled for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Pedestrians are not comfortable with the Spenard and Arctic intersections and many avoid crossing here;
- Vehicle left turn from 27th onto southbound Arctic is difficult with traffic and obstructed sightlines; and
- Suggestion of giving up left motorist turns at Arctic and possibly Spenard.

Access

- Suggested new access between W 27th Ave and W 26th Ave: north-south access on the vacant vegetated lot between W Midtown Gardens Apartments and Last Frontier Diving, across from Bear Tooth's parking lot;
- Have primary access for Bear Tooth be from Northern Lights into main parking lot ; and
- Mark connections from W 27th Ave and Northern Lights (through parking lots, between Blueberry and Arctic).

Miscellaneous Comments

- Drainage is an issue throughout the project, but prominently on 27th between Arctic and Blueberry;
- There is most likely not a one-method solution for the corridor; and
- Not owning a car is a lifestyle choice for some area residents.

The open house concluded at the advertised time of 8:00 PM.



Agency Scoping Meeting

- Project:** West 27th Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements
- Project No:** MOA: 13-39 R&M: 2250.01
- Purpose:** Provide project information and receive agency comments
- Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015
- Time:** 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM
- Location:** MOA Planning Conference Room
- Meeting Attendance:** 11 members of MOA, DOT, and ASD attended
- Project Team Staff:** MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE, PM&E
Lori Schanche, PLA, Project Manager
Brooke Blessing, Project Administrator
R&M CONSULTANTS, INC.
Marc Frutiger, PE, PTOE, Project Manager
Van Le, AICP, Planning & Public Involvement Manager
Taryn Oleson, Planning & Public Involvement Coordinator
KINNEY ENGINEERING
Jeanne Bowie, PE, PhD, PTOE, Traffic Engineer
- Meeting Reporter:** Van Le, Taryn Oleson, and Marc Frutiger
- Attachments:**
- Aerial photos of project corridor and intersections
 - Presentation slides

MEETING SUMMARY

The W 27th Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements Project team held the Agency Scoping Meeting in the MOA Planning Conference Room 170. Displays from the Open House were set up around the room and the project corridor scroll plot was mounted on the wall. Project Fact Sheets were available at the sign in table.



Lori Schanche introduced the project and project team. Marc Frutiger followed with an overview presentation, assisted by PowerPoint, of the project and the concept of the bicycle boulevard. Marc's presentation included:

- Project Goals and Objectives
- Anticipated schedule and process
- Bicycle boulevard definition
- Components of a bike boulevard
- Concepts being considered along the segments of W 27th Ave
- Concepts being considered at the intersections
- Concepts being considered to address parking

When discussing the concepts or elements of a bike boulevard that may apply to W 27th Avenue, examples of the concept implemented in other cities were used in addition to images of the Bicycle Boulevard Technical Training's Exercise results. The Exercise results were created by local professionals in the field, including MOA, DOT and consultants, some who were in attendance at this meeting, and provided an example of how the concerns on W 27th Avenue might be addressed.

After Marc's overview presentation, Van Le provided a summary of the process required through MOA's Context Sensitive Solutions and how we have complied with the process to this point. She reviewed the timeline for the scope of this project and discussed the next steps in the process. A public involvement summary was provided by Taryn Oleson. She discussed comments heard at the open house including major problems currently experienced on 27th Ave and opinions on possible concepts that could be applied to remedy those issues. Safety and parking were the main concerns expressed.

Following the presentation, the room was opened up to questions and discussion. The main points of the discussion are summarized as follows:

- **Q: Who were the mailings sent to for the open house?**
A: Mailings went to property owners as well as tenants and business owners.
- **Q: What stage is the funding through?**
A: Funding is through the pre-Draft Design Study Report (DSR)
- **Q: How are businesses taking to the project?**
A: The businesses we've been in contact with seem generally open to improvements to the roadway. Since we don't have a proposed design yet they have not been very vocal and we have not experienced any opposition to this point.
- **Anchorage School District** – *any pedestrian improvements are good; we get a lot of complaints regarding high traffic speed and volume in the area. This project does meet the minimum ASD*



walkability standards and part time crossing guards are present on 26th Ave and Minnesota so many kids use that crossing, but this project would be beneficial.

- **Q: What are the traffic counts in the area; are they high?**

A: They are high, around 4,000 AADT by the Bear Tooth; the rest of the corridor is between 1,000-2,500 AADT.

- **Q: Are there complaints about Arctic Boulevard?**

A: Most of the complaints we have heard is that the intersection with 27th Ave is problematic and a safety concern for cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles.

- **Q: Did the Parking Study occur over all times of the day and week?**

A: Yes it was conducted during varying times of the day throughout the week including overnight, around noon and during business hours; Draft Parking Study was just completed today.

- **MOA Street Maintenance** – Snow storage is a concern for this project especially since it already is a problem in the area; we have 72 hours to plow and when we maintain it is sometimes Sundays at 2 AM, and the snow will easily sit for more than 10 hours before it is removed. I support this project, I just don't see how it is going to work with snow plowing and storage considering the equipment and budget I have now. The State is seriously reducing the budget for street maintenance, specifically for pedestrian and sidewalk facilities, so keep that in mind. Dumpster location and access will need to be addressed with any changes as well. I want to see pictures and specifications from other places that have used the concepts you're discussing and how they maintain them (winter city examples).

- **AKDOT&PF** – the use of ped/bike signals should be considered, but the use of back-in-angle parking won't work in the winter because people will not be able to see the lines; we all believe people will learn over time but when winter comes it just won't happen. I'm curious to see how it would work if one-ways were used (what segments, what directions, etc.).

- **MOA Traffic** – most successful back-in-angle parking is when it is on a one-way street. While destinations like Bear Tooth cause a lot of demand for parking, we can't design parking just for the businesses on the first segment because there are multifamily residential units on this street as well who require parking and currently have problems with that. I like the idea of making 27th a one-way roadway throughout the whole corridor, traveling eastbound.

- **Q: Thoughts on full use of the Right-of-Way along the first section?**

A: There would still be a need to use vertical curbs or other features to prevent vehicles from encroaching on the sidewalk. There would need to be a lot of negotiation with the property and business owners since this would force a change in their current parking situations on their property (some of the ROW is being used by private parking lots). We recognize that the MOA is 'subsidizing' private business.

- **Q: The Spenard Corridor Study and the Spenard Road Project will affect this project, has there been any coordination between your project and this one?**



A: The Spenard Corridor Study and the Road Project are not going to be conducted concurrently but we are trying to coordinate as much as possible with the limited information available.

- **MOA Traffic** – *there has been discussion in the Spenard district on the need for a parking authority. The question is should this area be a pay to park area? If the answer is yes, then a management company would purchase a lot and then manage the parking of it and we would need to decide if we should meter the street as well. A code change would be required for this. We must keep in the mind the residential facilities and their parking needs; if we make this a metered or parking authority area, we might significantly impact their parking options.*

- **Q: What type of responsibility is on the businesses for causing such high demand for parking and problems with visibility and connectivity?**

A: There isn't much of a responsibility other than the parking requirements in the code. Bear Tooth has made substantial efforts in the past to provide more parking by purchasing neighboring lots to meet their high demand.

- **Q: Has 26th Avenue been considered for a bike boulevard or for pedestrian upgrades?**

A: It was discussed and was included in the original scope to study the possibility of 26th Ave for pedestrian safety improvements, but was cut due to funding constraints. 27th Avenue contains the destinations people are traveling to and pushing the traffic onto a purely residential street only to travel down Spenard, Arctic or Minnesota, or an alternative cut through to reach those destinations would not be ideal. Additionally 26th Ave does not extend to Blueberry.

There was little discussion disputing the need for the project or the use of a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly corridor. It was agreed upon that addressing the parking issues along the corridor would be a necessary step in achieving a safer, more comfortable pedestrian and bicycle facility.

The meeting concluded at the scheduled time of 3:00 PM.