

City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 11/08/2010		Item Number: <u>A-2</u>	
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and Adopting a Negative Declaration Relating Thereto.			
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Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒	Attachments: ☒
Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒		Date: _____	
Public Notification: (Email) Agenda and Meetings – City Council (11/03/10); (Email) Planning Commission (11/03/10); (Email) Brett Hondorp, Andrew Lee, and David Pulsipher, Alta Planning + Design (10/20/10); (Email) Jennifer Klausner and Alexis Lantz, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition (10/20/10); (Email) Public Advisory Committee (10/20/10); (Email) Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Email List (10/22/10); (Advertisement) Culver City News (10/28/10 and 11/04/10)			
Department Approval: Charles D. Herbertson (10/28/10)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (11/03/10)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (11/03/10)		City Manager Approval: John M. Nachbar (11/03/10)	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a Resolution: (1) adopting a Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study finding that the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment; and (2) approving the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2006, recognizing that a community's environment affects public health, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors created the "Policies for Livable Active Communities and Environments" (PLACE) Program. On October 22, 2007, the City Council authorized the submittal of a PLACE grant application for the preparation of the City's first Citywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP) and the implementation of the BPMP through initiating grant funded programs, review and updating of City's related plans, codes, policies and standards, and the installation of physical bikeway improvements.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors awarded a PLACE grant to the City on July 1, 2008. After the City received the grant award, Public Works Department staff in conjunction with our grant partners, the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition (LACBC) and Alta Planning and Design (Alta), began working on the BPMP. In order to ensure consistency with policies and practices and promote coordination across other City departments, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of City staff from relevant departments was formed. In order to help ensure community participation in all steps of the

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BPMP development, the City Council created a Public Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC is intended to serve to provide public input on the BPMP in coordination with the public participation process. Members of the PAC provided input on policy issues, principles, prioritization, design guidelines and standards, within the overall content and format of the BPMP. The PAC, with the assistance of Alta, LACBC, and City staff, held five community meetings between April 2009 and June 2010.

Based on the input received from the PAC, community, and TAC, as well as field studies and other data gathering, a draft BPMP was released for public comment on May 28, 2010. The comments that were received through the comment period (which ended June 18, 2010) along with staff responses have been incorporated into the BPMP (see Attachment 3 for the BPMP and attachments). The BPMP was presented to the Planning Commission for comment on October 27, 2010. The Planning Commission discussion involved the following:

- The proposed Bikeway Networks connections to the regional bikeway system, particularly the City of Los Angeles – The Culver City Network provides connections to the adjoining existing and proposed bikeway facilities identified in the City of Los Angeles 2010 Bicycle Plan.
- Bikeway connections between Downtown Culver City and the Exposition Light Rail Transit (Expo) Station Area – The discussion focused on the reasoning for pursuing a bikeway facility on Washington Boulevard, when the Venice Boulevard Bike Lane exists as an alternate route. The proposed Washington Boulevard facility provides connectivity between the Expo Station and associated future developments in the Washington/National area and downtown that was requested by community workshop participants and the PAC members. The Venice Boulevard Bike Lane alone does not provide direct access to Culver City Downtown from the Expo Station area, when compared to Washington Boulevard. In addition, the Venice Boulevard roadway characteristics (seven lanes), traffic volume and speeds, compared to those of Washington Boulevard, make it less desirable for many possible riders. Finally, Washington Boulevard provides the best connectivity between Downtown Culver City and easterly Culver City business districts.
- The use of cost/benefit analysis to prioritize the top priority projects – The PAC was asked at the beginning of the process to identify their priorities for establishing the proposed bike and pedestrian network for the City. Under the context of encouraging and improving walking and biking in the City, the PAC developed the following ranking criteria:
 1. System Gaps & Connectivity to Existing Facilities
 2. Connections to Activity Centers
 3. Proximity to Transit Hubs
 4. Proximity to Schools

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5. Collisions & Public Input

These criteria are believed to be a better guide to identifying projects that will encourage and improve walking and biking in the City than using a cost/benefit analysis.

- The advisability of using high-visibility crosswalks – A question about the safety of high-visibility crosswalks was raised. The BPMP discusses the use of these crosswalks in selected areas where high pedestrian volumes exist. There have been engineering analyses conducted in the past regarding the use of these types of crosswalks that have found that some risks do exist, but they can be reduced or eliminated through the use of additional traffic control measures. Prior to installing any future crosswalk, the Public Works Department would conduct a traffic engineering analysis of the locations and ensure that the appropriate control measures would be provided.

Subsequently, minor editorial changes as well as some changes to the bicycle network were made. Tonight, this document is being brought to the City Council for adoption.

DISCUSSION:

The BPMP is intended to serve as an official policy document guiding the development of policies, programs and facilities that foster cycling and walking. It also ensures the City's eligibility for funding facilities and programs through various grant opportunities, including the State of California's Bicycle Transportation Account. Although the BPMP proposes a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as specific projects and programs, the majority of their implementation is contingent on the receipt of grant funding.

The BPMP begins with the articulation of a vision for the City. The vision focuses on changing the traditional transportation planning paradigm by adopting a Complete Streets policy. The PAC emphasized the importance of adopting the "Complete Streets" policy. Complete Streets, or "routine accommodation," is a movement to design roadways for all modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bike, transit and motor vehicle. This movement stems from difficulties bicyclists, pedestrians (particularly the elderly and mobility impaired persons) and others may have when using streets primarily designed for motor vehicle use.

Bicyclists have legal access to all city streets. While the BPMP identifies a specific subset of streets as existing or potential official Bikeways or Pedestrian Corridors, most bicyclists and pedestrians will need to use other streets beyond those officially recognized in this Plan in order to reach their destinations. Therefore, it is important that all roadways, to the extent possible, have features that accommodate all users of the road. The California Complete Streets Act (CCSA) of 2008 (AB 1358) provides the following:

Commencing January 1, 2011, upon any substantive revision of the circulation element, the legislative body shall modify the circulation element to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways

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for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan....

For purposes of this paragraph, "users of streets, roads, and highways" means bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors.

The CCSA lays out the minimum provisions for meeting bicyclists and pedestrian requirements. Having a "balanced" transportation network is a lofty goal because networks historically favor motor vehicle movement. The BPMP goes beyond the CCSA stipulations and recommends prioritizing efforts to create policies, programs and infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians in order to help develop a balance between the movement of people using all modes of transportation. In keeping with the Complete Streets concept, the BPMP articulates an overarching goal for the City:

Transform the City into a place with an extensive bicycle and pedestrian network that allows travelers of all levels and abilities to feel comfortable walking and biking to their destinations. In so doing, encourage more people to forgo car trips, when possible, in favor of alternative forms of transportation and become truly bicycle and pedestrian friendly.

After presenting this vision and overarching goal, the BPMP provides a summary of the process used to create the BPMP, including the role of the PAC, TAC, and larger community. It describes the current conditions in the City, including existing facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians as well as relevant policies in the Municipal Code, General Plan Elements, and other City documents. Next, the BPMP identifies bicycle and pedestrian needs based on collision data, bicycle and pedestrian counts and audits, surveys, and feedback from the community workshops described above.

In order to help meet the identified needs and the overarching goal of the BPMP, the Plan proposes bicycle and pedestrian networks. These networks are intended to facilitate non-motorized travel throughout the City by proposing facilities such as bike lanes, shared lane markings ("Sharrows"), bicycle friendly streets, and pedestrian friendly treatments on key corridors throughout the City (as feasible given existing rights-of-way and traffic conditions). The BPMP also outlines priority projects for grant funding to help make the network a reality.

Since creating a bicycle and pedestrian friendly City is about more than just infrastructure, the BPMP goes beyond proposing a network and physical improvements, and also identifies potential enforcement, education, and awareness programs to help promote non-motorized transit options. And, because implementation is contingent on grant funds, the BPMP identifies potential outside funding sources. The BPMP also includes a discussion of evaluation and implementation. Finally, the BPMP concludes with a reiteration of the overarching goal of the Plan and an articulation of specific objectives, policies and actions that will help achieve this goal. The objectives identified in the plan include:

- Objective 1 - Implement the 2010 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP), by initiating funded projects and programs and pursuing grant funding for unfunded projects and programs over the next 5 years.

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- Objective 2 – Implement a “Complete Streets” Program by evaluating the needs of and/or the potential impacts on cyclists and pedestrians, including persons with special mobility needs, during planning/review of proposed public and private development and capital improvement projects.
- Objective 3 - Create a Mobility Coordinator position.
- Objective 4 - Reduce the number of bicyclists and pedestrian involved in traffic crashes.
- Objective 5 - Over the next five (5) year planning period, double the percentage of total trips made by bicycling and walking in the City as observed from the City’s 2009 bicycle and pedestrian counts.
- Objective 6 - Amend and update the bicycle and walking related sections of the Municipal Code.
- Objective 7 – Annually evaluate the outcomes of the BPMP implementation.

Areas for Future City Council Actions

As mentioned above, the BPMP identifies the specific objectives, policies and actions for achieving the goals set forth in the BPMP. These goals encompass expanding the City’s network of facilities and creating non-infrastructure programs to encourage cycling and walking, and will require modification of the Municipal Code and some City development criteria. Some of the actions identified in the BPMP are established and implemented by adoption of this Plan. In most instances, however, implementation will be dependent upon obtaining grant funding. The following is a listing of specific actions which would involve formal City Council review in the future should the City Council adopt the current version of the BPMP. The first number of each action identifies the related objective and the lower case letter identifies the related policy.

Action 2a.1 - Adopt a “Complete Streets” policy requiring that bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users needs are analyzed as part of all discretionary development review processes and capital improvement project design phases.

Action 2a.2 - Revise the City’s Traffic Study criteria to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian movements are counted along with other vehicle movements counts, and that the analysis shall include a weighing of the merits of the motor-vehicle related improvements against the needs of accommodating bicyclist and pedestrian movements.

Action 2a.3 – Consider adopting a mechanism for project related vehicle trips to be mitigated through funding of BPMP projects and/or programs or the provision of end-of-trip amenities, such as additional bicycle parking and shower and clothing locker facilities to be located at transit centers and new employment sites to promote bicycle commuting.

Action 2a. 4 – Consider establishing a trip-mitigation fee or expanding/increasing the New Development Impact Fee to fund BPMP project and program implementation.

Action 2a.5 – Consider establishing a process for payment of an in-lieu fee for use to fund BPMP projects and/or programs as a trip reduction credit.

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Action 5a.5 – Pursue grant funding for design/community outreach and construction for a separate walking path along Ballona Creek and enhancements to the Bike Path.

Action 5b.4 – Explore increasing the City's Transportation Demand Management requirements for bicycle racks, lockers, and shower amenities for non-residential projects.

Action 5b.5 – Adopt design standards for all bicycle racks on public property, right-of-way, and design requirements for private development.

Action 6a.2 – Adopt Municipal Code provisions for regulating bicyclists and pedestrian behavior on the Ballona Creek and Culver Boulevard Bike Paths and public sidewalks and plazas.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, the BPMP has been determined to have less than significant adverse impacts on the environment and thus a Negative Declaration is appropriate and has been prepared for adoption by the City Council (Attachment 2). Further implementation of the proposed bicycle and pedestrian networks and projects may require project-specific environmental review and analysis pursuant to CEQA at the time the actual projects are considered.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The BPMP is a policy level document. Although it proposes a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as specific projects and programs, it makes it clear that their implementation is contingent on the receipt of grant funding. Therefore, approval of the Plan does not require a financial commitment on the part of the City.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Resolution
2. Negative Declaration and Initial Study
3. Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and Attachments

MOTIONS:

That the City Council:

Adopt a Resolution (1) adopting a Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study finding that the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment; and (2) approving the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.