

CITY OF MERCED
Planning Department

TO: Bicycle Advisory Commission
FROM: Michael Hren, AICP, Principal Planner
DATE: June 26, 2018
SUBJECT: Report on Meeting Between City Staff and BAC Representatives

BACKGROUND

City staff and the Chairperson and Vice-Chair of the Bicycle Advisory Commission (BAC) met on June 12, 2018, to discuss a number of items.

DISCUSSION

Chairperson Hothem has provided a summary of the meeting, included as Attachment A. Principal Planner HREN will provide a brief recap as well.

ACTION

None required.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Summary Points from 12 June 2018 Meeting Between BAC and Engineering

Summary Points from 12 June 2018 Meeting Between BAC and Engineering

By Tom Hothem (Chairperson, Merced City Bicycle Advisory Commission)

In the Merced City Bicycle Advisory Commission (BAC) meeting of 24 April 2018, the BAC Chair and Vice Chair agreed to meet with the Merced City Engineering Department. Michael Hren contacted all parties—Steve Lerer, Tom Hothem, and Steven Son—and on 11 May 2018 circulated this de facto agenda in an email message: “Our discussion will encompass the Pilot Project, Grant Application procedures and a number of other items related to coordination between the BAC and City Departments.”

Meeting attendees included Michael Hren, Tom Hothem, Steve Lerer, and Steven Son (the Principal City Engineer). Although they were not included in the group invitation, Stephanie Dietz (Assistant City Manager) and Scott McBride (Director of Development Services) also attended the meeting.

The first half of the meeting was dedicated to discussion of City staff’s concerns about communication between Engineering and the BAC. (In some cases, these concerns were several years old and revolved around misunderstandings of the BAC’s charge, capacities, and activity.) The second half of the meeting encompassed discussion of (1) likely areas on which to base pilot projects for ATP grants; (2) ways in which the BAC might include representation pertaining to transportation as regards to pedestrians and those with disabilities; and (3) opportunities for BAC members to serve on City committees that pertain to transportation.

Here are seven takeaway points from the meeting:

- (1) There was shared support among City and BAC constituents for ATP pilot projects, beginning with pilot projects on Main Street and/or G Street.
- (2) The BAC’s mission might be broadened to incorporate related interests and extend its work to other transportation-oriented committees.
- (3) City staff suggested the possibility of changing the BAC to an ATP (Active Transportation Program) Advisory Commission.
- (4) There is significant need for better, balanced communication between City staff and the BAC, particularly as regards the volunteer/advisory nature of the BAC and the constraints under which City personnel work.
- (5) Although City staff expressed interest in holding further informal meetings about shared concerns, and the BAC members in attendance at the meeting are not necessarily opposed to the idea thereof, ultimately said BAC members feel that such an approach may not fully serve the public, as it could limit due, inclusive, official consideration in public forums.
- (6) The BAC members in attendance at the meeting trust that all of its attendees recognize that any potential action items discussed at said meeting should proceed in due process through appropriate established committee channels before action is taken.
- (7) The BAC members in attendance at the meeting expressly welcome representatives from Engineering to all of its public meetings, and hope that members of the BAC might also be welcome at some of Engineering’s meetings.