

Steering Committee #3 – Meeting Summary

The Woodlands Township Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

Overview:

The third Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting was held Tuesday evening, **May 10, 2016** from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at The Woodlands Township. There were 13 Steering Committee participants, five consultant staff members from the Jones|Carter team, and one Township staff in attendance. The Steering Committee participants in attendance at this meeting included representatives from these groups:

- ABVA – Alden Bridge Village Association
- CPVA – Creekside Park Village Association
- ISVA – Indian Springs Village Association (note: two people representing)
- BTWC – Bike The Woodlands Coalition
- Montgomery County
- TWDC/WRUD – The Woodlands Development Company and Woodlands Roadway Utility District
- The Woodlands Township
- SRVA – Sterling Ridge Village Association
- Harris County Precinct 4
- PARD – Parks and Recreation Department
- BATF – Bicycle Advisory Task Force

Not in attendance at this particular meeting but Steering Committee representatives that received meeting materials:

- CCVA – Cochran's Crossing Village Association
- PCVA – Panther Creek Village Association

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to bring together individuals that represent larger organizations with The Woodlands Township that may influence and may be impacted by this Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. By having the various entities at the table, this group is able to guide (or steer) the direction of this Plan to ensure proper buy-in and support as project recommendations are made.

Detailed Summary of the Meeting:

During this third Steering Committee Meeting, the consultant team addressed the following topics through a presentation and group discussion: 1) recap of prior meetings and events; 2) overview of the Draft Plan; 3) review of feedback received at public meeting; 4) review of project recommendations by village; and 5) next steps discussion.

1. **Recap of Prior Meetings and Events** – The consultant team reviewed material covered at the past steering committee meetings, public meeting, Board of Directors, and the online questionnaire, which garnered 1,384 responses.
2. **Draft Plan Overview** – The consultant team presented an overview of the Draft Plan, which was sent electronically prior to the Steering Committee Meeting, by each of the eight chapters:
 - Chapter 1: Introduction
 - Chapter 2: Planning Process
 - Chapter 3: Vision & Goals
 - Chapter 4: Existing Condition & Needs Assessment
 - Chapter 5: Master Plan
 - Chapter 6: Wayfinding Program
 - Chapter 7: Programs & Policies
 - Chapter 8: Implementation Strategy

The content of each chapter was outlined by the consultant in order to explain in further detail what the final product will contain.

3. **Public Meeting Feedback** – The consultants presented key feedback from the public meeting along with solutions to address issues that were repeatedly mentioned by the public. Barriers to the pedestrian and bicycle network were a common type of comment received. Crossing major roadways, condition of shoulders, curb return conflicts, and comfort level of bicyclists on existing pathways were common issues throughout the analysis of responses. Solutions to these barriers include creating separate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, completing any gaps in the existing pathway network, and clearly defining the facility types. The draft Recommended Facility Map was presented, showing the recommended locations of each facility type. The facility types included in the Draft Plan are:
 - a. **Sidepath**
 - b. **Bike Lane**
 - c. **Separated Bike Lane**
 - d. **Shared Use Path**

Update: After Steering Committee Meeting #3, the consultant team condensed the facility types into three types, eliminating Separated Bike Lane. This was due to the Steering Committee voicing concerns that there may be too much overlap and redundancy of facilities.

Another comment heard repeatedly from the public is the lack of wayfinding signage and off-street amenities. The consultant team presented draft renderings of prototype signs that may be used, trailhead maps of the overall network, benches, trash bins, bicycle storage facilities, and dog waste disposal stations.

4. **Project Recommendations by Village** – The consultant team facilitated an exercise for Steering Committee members to discuss and review the recommended projects. In order to examine and discuss the recommendations closely, the recommended projects were divided into three village groupings:

Group 1

- Creekside Park
- Sterling Ridge
- Indian Springs

Group 2

- Grogan's Mill
- Town Center
- Panther Creek
- Research Forest

Group 3

- College Park
- Alden Bridge
- Cochran's Crossing

Within each group, participants were able to mark on the map any recommendations they felt were missing, redundant, or unnecessary. The groups were asked to review the feasibility of the recommended facilities based on their knowledge of the area. Additionally, the groups were asked to prioritize the recommended projects into short, medium, and long term projects based on cost or need. The consultant team took detailed notes of the comments received on the recommended projects in order to edit the Draft Plan. The following summarizes key feedback received from the discussion groups:

- Safety is priority #1, Connectivity is priority #2.
- The network along Kuykendahl Road does not need to extend to the southern Township boundary, as there is nothing to the south to connect to.
- Grade separated crossings at school locations would be ideal; priority grade separation locations should be over IH-45.
- Should not be any overlapping facilities.

- Connection to Harper’s Landing is costly and does not serve many people.
- No facilities along Woodlands Parkway in the green space.
- Wayfinding signs should be separated from stop signs.
- Fill gaps in paths to schools.
- Include facilities to transition onto and off of bike lanes from shared-use paths.
- Short-term recommendations should be included in the Five-Year CIP.

5. **Next Steps Discussion** – The consultant team went over some upcoming dates for the Plan including the presentation of the Draft Plan to The Woodlands Board of Directors on May 25, 2016 (UPDATE: presentation to the Board was moved to June 16, 2016). After the presentation of the Draft Plan to the Board, there will be a public comment period and it is estimate that the Plan will be finalized in July.