

# SOUTH LAWDALE NEIGHBORHOOD BIKE NETWORK

Neighborhood Taskforce Meeting #2



## MEETING SUMMARY

### South Lawndale Neighborhood Bike Network

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Tuesday, April 19, 2022

10:30 – 12:00 pm

Virtual meeting; Microsoft Teams

### ATTENDEES

#### CDOT Representatives

David Smith, Complete Streets Manager

Brad Huff, TY Lin – Bikeways Program Manager

John Pickering, TY Lin – Bikeways Planner

Angel Montalvo – SAFE Ambassadors\*

#### Taskforce Members

Alex Perez – Active Transportation Alliance

Angelica Arroyo – Chicago Youth Boxing Club\*

Brian Hacker – Department of Planning and Development

Carlos Gamboa – 22<sup>nd</sup> Ward

David Serrano – Beyond the Ball\*

Diana Martinez – Community Health Promoter/Enlace

Edith Tovar – Little Village Environmental Justice Organization

Jennifer Idrovo – Sinai Hospital\*

Jose Acosta - Little Village Environmental Justice Organization

Mario Gastelum – Latinos Progresando\*

Natali Chavez – Saucedo Elementary

Raul Garcia – Sinai Hospital\*

Ruth Rosa – Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC)

Trevor Clark – Working Bikes

\*Attending Taskforce for the first time

## NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK PROJECT UPDATES

David Smith, Complete Streets Manager from the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), welcomed back the Taskforce and recapped highlights and goals from Taskforce Meeting #1 (see Meeting Summary from Taskforce Meeting#1). This is the second of at least three Taskforce meetings.

### New Introductions

Since Taskforce Meeting #1, CDOT has contacted additional community groups to join the Taskforce. New members of the Taskforce representing Latinos Progresando and Sinai Hospital were invited to share what efforts they are working on and how bicycling might play a role. All members were excited and supportive of the South Lawndale Neighborhood Bike Network.

Additional organizations recommended for the Taskforce include **Enlace** (who was previously invited) and **Telpochcalli Community Education Project**. The Taskforce emphasized youth outreach will also be important. CDOT will continue outreach efforts and work with existing members to contact all suggested community groups.

### Progress Since Last Meeting

CDOT recapped progress made since the previous Taskforce meeting, including:

- Contacted additional stakeholders to join the taskforce
- Held targeted meetings with additional stakeholders in South Lawndale to discuss the Neighborhood Bike Network
- Coordinated bike education resources for future events in South Lawndale
- Begun developing an Outreach Plan for South Lawndale
- Begun creating outreach materials for use by the Taskforce
- Begun developing a survey for distribution
- Coordinated restriping of existing bikeways in South Lawndale
- Coordinated a survey of pavement conditions in South Lawndale

## DESTINATIONS & BARRIERS

### Destinations

The South Lawndale Neighborhood Bike Network will be developed to connect people to the places they want and need to go. Before particular streets can be recommended as bike routes, it is important to identify the destinations within South Lawndale that people need to access. Schools, parks, community spaces, and commercial corridors were identified as important destinations at Taskforce Meeting #1. At this meeting, the Taskforce discussed additional destinations, including **grocery stores, community gardens, libraries, health centers, and churches**.

Additional locations mentioned:

- High Schools: Little Village High School, Farragut Career Academy High School
- Shopping Areas: Discount Mall, 26<sup>th</sup> Street Commercial Corridor
- Libraries: Little Village Branch, Toman Branch
- Grocery Stores: Pete's, Walmart, Cermak Produce, La Chiquita
- Community Gardens: Jardincito, Hammond Community Garden, Saucedo Rain Garden, 25<sup>th</sup> Pl/Kildare, Lawndale Triangle Garden, Malinalli Garden, Mr. Keeler's Pumpkin Eaters Garden

- Health Clinics: Lawndale Christian Health Center, Sinai, Walgreens
- Churches: New Life Church, Mother of the Americas Catholic Church, St. Agnes, Epiphany, Good Shepherd, La Villita Community Church, Amor De Dios, Greater Zion Hill, Our Lady of Tepeyac, Grace Lutheran
- New development for St. Anthony Campus – Kedzie/31<sup>st</sup>

## Barriers

The Taskforce discussed barriers that make it difficult for people to get around South Lawndale. In addition to the condition of the streets, the biggest barrier reiterated by the Taskforce was **heavy motor vehicle traffic, including trucks**. This issue is further compounded by the **poor air quality** produced from these vehicles and **poor driver behavior**. South Lawndale also features a large industrial corridor which attracts truck traffic and can create stressful conditions when crossing the street.

The Taskforce stressed the importance of safe, protected bikeways to provide residents with low-stress bicycle connections. The group discussed the tradeoffs that protected bike lanes can require including parking reallocation and travel lane reductions. Both of which will require extensive community outreach to build support.

Despite these barriers, people bike on busy commercial streets including **Pulaski, Kedzie, and 31st**. CDOT mentioned the additional challenges regarding streets under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) including Pulaski, California, Cermak, and Ogden. Streets under IDOT jurisdiction require additional coordination, meaning projects on these streets would not be possible in 2022, but could be targeted for long-term projects.

## Streets for Potential Bikeways

Taskforce members recommended a mix of commercial and neighborhood streets as potential bike routes. **Pulaski, Kedzie, and California** were all highlighted as connections providing access across the canal, but they are also stressful due to high motor vehicle volumes. Additional neighborhood streets that could be a potential bikeway include **Albany**, which connects La Villita Park to Douglas Park, and is in proximity to Discount Mall and schools. CDOT will evaluate the streets recommended and taskforce-identified destinations to create a draft network map of potential bikeways to present at the next Taskforce meeting.

## OUTREACH PLAN

CDOT discussed that it is preparing an outreach plan for this effort based on recommendations from Taskforce Meeting #1. Goals for outreach included understanding how people currently get around, important destinations people need to get to, and perceptions of biking in South Lawndale. It will also be critical to communicate to the neighborhood what CDOT is doing, why it's important, and when to expect changes. CDOT then discussed some of ways it plans to engage with the neighborhood.

## Neighborhood Survey

Since the last Taskforce meeting, CDOT has created a survey to help understand travel preferences of residents living in and around South Lawndale, as well as their perceptions of biking. The survey will be available in both Spanish and English with opportunities to provide input both at in-person events and online. CDOT will prepare physical handouts that describe the Neighborhood Bike Network and promote the survey. These materials will be distributed to the Taskforce and at community events. An in-person survey will be available for those who wish to provide input but lack access to the internet. CDOT will also provide text and graphics that can be included in Taskforce member's social media and newsletters to promote the survey.

## Outreach Methods

To notify residents and solicit feedback regarding the South Lawndale Neighborhood Bike Network, CDOT will attend community events and leverage existing contacts within the Taskforce. CDOT heard the best way to engage the community is a boots on the ground mentality by attending community events and general canvassing. Taskforce members also suggested attending a park clean-up at La Villita Park which occurs the third Thursday throughout summer. Outreach to businesses could include **canvassing commercial corridors** such as: **25<sup>th</sup>**, **26<sup>th</sup>**, **31<sup>st</sup>**, and **Central Park**. Other members suggested having materials and staff at **laundromats**, **grocery stores**, and **parks** as those are all good places to connect with residents, especially those who do not have access to the internet.

CDOT also heard the importance of outreach to young people within South Lawndale and emphasized additional efforts to engage with them. The SAFE Ambassadors will be deployed in every Saturday in summer with Learn-to-Ride events geared at anyone who wants to learn how to ride a bike. These events will also be used to distribute materials discussing the effort as well as opportunities to provide feedback. CDOT will attend Taskforce members group bike rides including those organized by: Beyond the Ball, Chicago Youth Boxing Club, Working Bikes, and Universidad Popular.

Upcoming Events attended by CDOT include:

- May 21<sup>st</sup> – Spring 2022 5K Run
- May 21<sup>st</sup> – Biking Out Negativity

Additional Potential Outreach Events:

- Community bike rides
- Beyond the Ball weekly programing
- Aldermanic events
- Back-to-School events
- Bike summits

CDOT will continue to monitor and staff community events in South Lawndale.

## Materials

CDOT has prepared a variety of materials that will be distributed to the Taskforce and be available at in-person events. Printed materials include handouts and flyers promoting the Neighborhood Bike Network and survey. CDOT will provide these at aldermanic offices, local bikes shops, and Taskforce member organizations. Text, graphics, QR Codes, and URL's will also be circulated to the Taskforce to promote the survey.

## Transparency

The Taskforce stressed the importance of transparency and communication within the community. Notifying, engaging, and educating residents will be key to the success of this effort. Taskforce members suggested a newsletter or central hub for all project updates. CDOT will utilize the Complete Streets website where all information regarding the South Lawndale Neighborhood Bike Network will be located. Additionally, CDOT can provide Taskforce groups with graphics, text, and handouts to distribute and use in their newsletters. Taskforce members suggested including updates to how outreach is going, which events have been attended, and number of people reached. These updates could be incorporated on the Complete Streets website. CDOT will conduct in-person surveys at events throughout summer. The Taskforce also recommended highlighting how this effort will improve the street for all modes including people walking, biking, and driving. Materials also need to be in both English and Spanish.

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## NEXT STEPS

CDOT will launch the South Lawndale Neighborhood Bike Network project page on the Complete Streets website and open the online survey. Printed and digital material will be given to the Taskforce for additional promotion efforts. CDOT will continue to coordinate outreach events and host targeted outreach meetings.