

BELMONT CRAGIN NEIGHBORHOOD BIKE NETWORK

Neighborhood Taskforce Meeting #2



MEETING AGENDA

Belmont Cragin Neighborhood Bike Network

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Tuesday, April 13, 2021

5:00 – 6:30 pm

Virtual meeting; Microsoft Teams

ATTENDEES

CDOT Representatives

David Smith – Bicycle & Pedestrian Program Manager

Amanda Woodall – Divvy Program Manager

Alonzo Owens – Assistant Commissioner

Brad Huff, TY Lin – Bikeways Program Manager

John Pickering, TY Lin – Bikeways Planner

Shameka Turner, Sam Schwartz Engineering – Program Manager SAFE Ambassadors

Sid Shah, Sam Schwartz Engineering – Pedestrian Program

Jane Wilberding, Sam Schwartz Engineering - Divvy

Taskforce Members

Many young people from the NWSHC Youth Council

Many young people from Bikes & Roses

Alderman Cardona – 31st Ward

Alex Wilson – West Town Bikes

Danni Limonez – Bikes & Roses/Communities United

Fabian Cisneros – Northwest Side Community Development Corporation

Jan Gudell – Resident + Neighborhood Advocate

Joe Sislow – MBAC Representative

Julia Gerasimenko – Active Transportation Alliance

Lois Planthaber – 30th Ward Representative

Luigi Derango – Chicago Park District/Chopin Park

Lynda Lopez – MBAC Representation/Active Transportation Alliance

Jeremy Cuebas + BCYLC – Northwest Side Housing Center

Zair Menivar – 31st Ward Representative/NWSHC Youth Council

Ruth Rosa – Lurie Children's Hospital

W Robert Schultz III – Active Transportation Alliance

PROJECT UPDATES

David Smith, Bicycle & Pedestrian Manager, from the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), welcomed back the Taskforce and recapped highlights and goals from the previous meeting. New members to the taskforce voiced support for the Neighborhood Bike Network and the Divvy Bike Share expansion. Since the last meeting, CDOT has begun implementing other initiatives including:

- Contacted additional stakeholders to join the taskforce
- Held targeted meetings with additional stakeholders to discuss the Neighborhood Bike Network
- Coordinated resources to provide more bike parking locations which will be installed in 2021 & 2022
- Coordinated bike education resources for future events in Belmont Cragin
- Developed outreach material & an online survey

NETWORK INTRODUCTION

To determine a potential network of bicycle routes, CDOT, using feedback regarding opportunities and destinations from the first taskforce meeting, identified 16 miles of short-term projects which would develop a connected network of bikeways in Belmont Cragin. Short-term projects can begin installation in 2021. CDOT also identified long-term projects which could be pursued after the short-term network has been installed. CDOT also noted that short-term projects could also be upgraded in the future.

Short-term projects will be evaluated over time to understand where upgrades can be incorporated including concrete and traffic calming improvements. CDOT reiterated that the Neighborhood Bike Network is an ongoing effort and installations and route scoping will continue past 2022 to strengthen the network. The potential network discussed at the Taskforce meeting reflects only those streets identified under the short-term bucket.

Neighborhood Routes

Two types of streets were identified as part of the Neighborhood Bike Network: Neighborhood and Connector routes. Neighborhood routes are low-stress, low-volume residential streets, generally with existing signals at major intersections and can serve as an alternative to busier nearby streets. On these types of streets, people biking are prioritized and traffic calming measures are implemented to encourage safe driver behavior. Bicycle signage, green pavement, and pavement markings are installed on neighborhood routes, signaling the presence of people biking. Traffic calming which can include, shortened crossing distances, elevated crosswalks, bicycle-friendly speed humps, and traffic diverters are among some of the options that can be implemented. **No legal on-street parking will be affected by neighborhood routes.** By creating space for people biking and driving, streets become safer and more comfortable for everyone, including people walking.

Connector Routes

Connector routes are streets with higher vehicle volumes, CTA routes, and/or commercial activity where the goal is to separate people driving and people biking as much as possible. Depending on width and street characteristics, various forms of bike lanes can be installed without reducing any on-street parking. However, due to the limited street width, physically separating people biking from people driving requires tradeoffs which can include on-street parking consolidation. If protected bike lanes cannot be installed in the short-term, there are still opportunities to upgrade but will require community support and an understanding of the benefits and tradeoffs.

Forms of Bike Lanes that can be installed on Connector routes:

- **Marked shared lanes (or Sharrows):** Pavement markings (a bicycle symbol with a chevron) that denote shared bicycle and vehicle travel lanes and remind motorists that bicycle travel is prioritized. The markings encourage proper positioning by bicyclists by placing them where the bicyclist is expected to ride. Additionally, these markings can help reinforce the route along with wayfinding signage.
- **Bike Lane:** Exclusive space for people biking located on the street and designated with pavement markings and signage. Bike lanes are adjacent to the vehicle travel lane and travel in the same direction.
- **Buffered Bike Lane:** Similar to *Bike Lanes* but paired with a designated striped buffer between the travel lane and/or the parking lane to allow more space for people biking.
- **Protected Bike Lane:** Exclusive and protected space for people biking that physically separates them from people driving and/or the parking lane through the use of vertical protection that can include: concrete curbs, bollards, or parking lanes. Protected bike lanes can either be one-way, typically with the flow of traffic, or two-way, where bicycle movement is allowed in both directions on one side of the street.

Feedback

Members of the Taskforce were receptive to the short-term network and asked about the timeline for installation. CDOT responded that most short-term projects would be completed this year, but construction could continue into 2022. CDOT went on to explain the challenges of installing protected bike lanes on streets due to their jurisdiction and/or constrained width, which would require consolidation of parking or reduction of travel lanes – both which will require more coordination and analysis. CDOT also emphasized this will be an ongoing process where CDOT will continue to look for opportunities for new routes and upgrades to existing short-term projects. Taskforce members were receptive and eager to continue working with CDOT to install long-term projects.

PROPOSED DESIGNS

With feedback regarding streets and destinations from the taskforce, CDOT presented on some of the potential short-term installations that could be installed in 2021 & 2022 and discussed their benefits and tradeoffs.

Protected Bike Lanes

The Taskforce is excited to work with CDOT to install protected bike lanes on long-term projects. CDOT explained due to the constrained street width predominately found throughout Belmont Cragin, protected bike lanes cannot be installed without removing on-street parking or travel lanes. CDOT has found that successful protected bike lane projects take time to conduct analysis, inform the public, and build support for changes to the street. CDOT emphasized this is an ongoing process and routes will continue to be evaluated for opportunities to install protected bike lanes. Taskforce members reiterated their desire for protected bike lanes on **Cicero** and **Belmont**, but other members raised concerns about removing parking from businesses along Belmont.

Some members had concerns about the neighborhood being identified as a High Crash Corridor and the need for separation between vehicles and people biking. Other members wanted to see additional outreach and coordination, especially in commercial areas.

Neighborhood Routes

- **Wrightwood – Narragansett to Kostner** – Taskforce members confirmed this a good, low-stress neighborhood east-west route that provides access across barriers and is comfortable for families to bike on. Other members had concerns about the street width and how contraflow lanes would work. CDOT explained there is room to provide a

contraflow lane for people biking and **retain all on-street parking**. By allocating space for people biking and driving, the street is more organized and will be more calm and predictable for all users. Other members noted that the intersection of Wrightwood & Kostner experiences higher vehicle volumes. CDOT responded they will take this into consideration during design.

- **Rosoce – Narragansett to Milwaukee** – Taskforce members confirmed this is a good neighborhood route but expressed concerns about width and driver behavior. CDOT responded that there is adequate width for a contraflow lane which will better organize the street and formalize the contraflow movement for people biking. Other members noted that the street pavement isn't in great condition, especially near Chopin Park. CDOT responded that the streets will be surveyed for major defects and addressed.
- **Kilbourn – Armitage to Addison** – Members of the taskforce noted that Kilbourn is a good north-south street that connects parks and provides access to the **Grayland Metra Station** and **Milwaukee Avenue**. They noted that contraflow lanes would be a good addition. Younger members of the Taskforce noted they prefer Kostner, the busier alternative to Kilbourn.

Other streets identified by the taskforce was **Wellington** as it is a low-stress, comfortable street to bike on that is currently popular with neighbors while being an alternative to Belmont and Diversey. Wellington also provides access for people walking and biking under the Metra Tracks at Kilbourn Park and by formalizing and advertising this route, will help create additional east-west connections. Other members noted the street condition on Wellington, highlighting the need to survey the street condition. **Kilpatrick** and **Kolman**, identified as long-term projects, were also confirmed to be good neighborhood routes.

Connector Routes

- **Belmont – Narragansett to Milwaukee** – CDOT explained due to the existing street layout and width, without consolidating on-street parking, bike lanes are possible for short-term installation and there are opportunities in the future to evaluate to understand if protected bike lanes are feasible. This will require support from the community and extensive outreach to the businesses. Some members noted that many of the side streets that intersect Belmont have under-utilized free parking that could absorb any on-street parking consolidation along Belmont. Taskforce members replied they are eager for protected bike lanes and that “a safe Belmont would be a game changer”.
- **Grand/Armitage – Narragansett to Laramie/Kostner** – This route was identified as a top priority for short-term projects especially by the younger members of the taskforce. Many schools and parks are along this street. The Belmont Cragin Avenues for Growth plan recommended protected bike lanes on Grand, which can be pursued as a long-term upgraded to buffered bike lanes which would be installed this year.
- **Diversey – Narragansett to Laramie** – Taskforce members affirmed this will make a good short-term installation as it will connect into existing an existing bike route that begins at Laramie and provides access under the train tracks. Diversey was also noted as being less stressful for people biking than Belmont and Fullerton while providing similar access.
- **Laramie – Grand/Armitage to Addison** – Taskforce members confirmed this will make a good short-term installation.
- **Central – Grand to Addison** – Taskforce members confirmed this will make a good short-term installation.

OUTREACH

CDOT has developed an online survey and printed materials to be shared and promoted through each taskforce members contacts and neighborhood events. This survey will focus on understanding the state of bicycling in Belmont Cragin and take about 10 minutes. Printed materials can be provided to all Taskforce members who request them.

CDOT will also reach out to the Taskforce to begin coordinating additional outreach events and efforts in the neighborhood.