



BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN
ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF CONWAY, ARKANSAS

City of Conway

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board

2014 Annual Report

Todd Ake, Chair

Amanda Potter Cole, Vice Chair

Greg Reddin, Secretary

Members at Large

Jim Bruce

Adam Davis

Erik Leamon

Peter Mehl

Jessica Henry Spayde (began in April)

Michael Yoder

Jami Schwartz (resigned in February)

David Barber (resigned in May)

Duston Morris (resigned in August)

BPAB Mission

The mission of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board (BPAB) is to work with the city of Conway to recommend ways the city can become and remain (1) An official Bicycle-Friendly Community as designated by the League of American Bicyclists, (2) An official Walk-Friendly Community as designated by the UNC Highway Safety Research Center and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, and (3) A community that seeks to achieve the federal and state goals of the Safe Routes to Schools program.

The goals of SRTS and the assessment tools of the WFC initiative include the five Es that the League uses to certify bicycle friendly communities. The five E's are Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation. The expanded board will focus on these areas with an added focus on pedestrian issues.

Executive Summary

In 2014, BPAB started the year with eleven members, each of whom was appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. The Board met on the third Thursday of each month, excluding December. New this year was an objective setting meeting held in January to outline the focus for the board in 2014. Agreed upon objectives included updating the Bicycle Master Plan, providing Street Projects recommendations, re-start the Safe Routes to Schools initiative and focus on achieving Walk Friendly Status for the city.

BPAB revisited the Bicycle Master Plan including updates providing the background as to why bicycling is important to the community; setting the vision for bicycle routes, bike lanes, and multi-use paths; advocating funding for a City Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator; and advocating funding for bicycle infrastructure improvements as a percentage of the total City Street "Transportation" Fund. The updated master plan was presented to the City Council in December.

Also at a December City Council Committee Meeting, BPAB presented the board recommendations for 2015 Street Projects aligning with the perceived highest needs for infrastructure improvements for cyclists and pedestrians along with projects that would support a SRTS pilot effort at Julia Lee Moore Elementary School.

2014 Objectives

In January, BPAB held a special meeting to set the year's objectives and focus areas for the year. These included:

- preparing for resubmission of the City of Conway Bicycle Friendly application to the League of American Bicyclists;
- updating the Bike Master Plan;
- proposing line item funding for Bike Infrastructure, Sidewalks, & Trails;
- updating the Trail Network map;
- focusing on Walk Friendly status;
- assessing Bike & Pedestrian Infrastructure and use;
- formally recommending Streets Projects for the following year to the Streets Dept & City Council
- recommending Bike /Ped infrastructure design on Approved Streets Projects;
- increasing Enforcement efforts;
- reviewing/updating the Streets Design Guidelines;
- renewing focus on Safe Routes to School

Results against Objectives:

Objectives: Prepare for resubmission of the City of Conway Bicycle Friendly application to the League of American Bicyclists, update the Bicycle Master Plan, and Propose Line Item funding for Bike infrastructure, sidewalks and trails.

A primary focus of this year was to update the Bicycle Master Plan for preparation of 2015 submission for renewed Bicycle Friendly Status. The original Conway Bicycle Master Plan was created in 2011 as part of the Mayor's task force for Conway to become a bicycle friendly community. This update, along with the original, is one of few master plans that have been written by members of the community versus city employees and/or paid consultants. This update has grown the original plan to include the benefits of bicycling, visions for bike infrastructure,

Objective: Update the Trail Network Map

While the trail map has not been updated, the revised Bicycle Master Plan does include the stated vision to have trails throughout the city that when combined with low traffic volume streets to allow cyclists and pedestrians to safely travel to schools, the three colleges, the downtown area, all city parks, major shopping areas, and the industrial parks.

In addition, the Bicycle Master Plan identifies specific trails to be developed in the next 10 years.

Objective: Focus on Walk Friendly status

BPAB recognizes that similar to becoming a bicycle friendly the city, the first step in becoming pedestrian friendly is to develop a Pedestrian Master Plan. While the assistant city Planner stated numerous times that this was an objective, and had shown the board a table of contents mid-year, the plan has yet to be completed. BPAB recognizes that current development projects (e.g. Central Landing and Lewis Crossing) happening in the city has put an unusually high burden on the planning department. To alleviate this, BPAB has recommended in the Bicycle Master Plan that the city fund a full time, Bike Program Manager Position, who could also focus on pedestrian projects as part of their duties.

Objective: Formally recommend Streets Projects for the following year to the Streets Dept & City Council

In October, BPAB developed a list of recommended street projects for 2015. These were presented to the city council in December and include projects that focus on two areas, sidewalks on College and Harkrider, where pedestrians were killed in the past year; along with a focus on safe routes to school at Julia Lee Moore elementary school.

| Location | Need | Comments |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| College Avenue from Donaghey to Salem. | Sidewalks on both sides of the street. | This is a regular pedestrian path from UCA to the Kroger shopping Area. |
| Harkrider Street from 6th Street to Dave Ward | Sidewalk on the east side. | This is a regular commuter corridor along a heavily traveled state highway. |
| Country Club from Prince To Tyler | Sidewalks on both sides of the street. | This is a route that needs to be developed to support the Safe Route To Schools (SRTS) effort the Board is piloting at Julia Lee Moore. |
| Salem Street from Prince to Tyler | Sidewalks on both sides of the street. | This supports the SRTS effort at Julia Lee Moore. |
| Riviera | Sidewalks on both sides of the street. | This supports the SRTS effort at Julia Lee Moore. |
| South Donaghey between Dave Ward and Favre | Bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street. | This supports both SRTS to Ellen Smith and is a regular cycling corridor. |
| Siebenmorgan between Harkrider to Museum Road. | Bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street. | This is a significant bicycling corridor crossing I-40 and would encourage walking in this area. |
| N. Donaghey | Bike Lanes | This has the potential to be a significant north-south cycling corridor. |
| N. Donaghey between Meadowlake and Washington | Sidewalks on the north side of the street. | It is expected that this will encourage more walking to this shopping area. |

Objective: Recommend Bike /Ped infrastructure design on Approved Streets Projects

BPAB is fortunate to be consulted when the city considers new street projects. In response BPAB made formal recommendations in 2014 for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure design for the developments at Central Landing (the old airport) and Lewis Crossing. In addition, BPAB drafted a recommendation for bike/ped infrastructure for the state project to relocate highway 25 from I-40 to Beaverfork Lake, and the University of Central Arkansas proposed development along Donaghey Street.

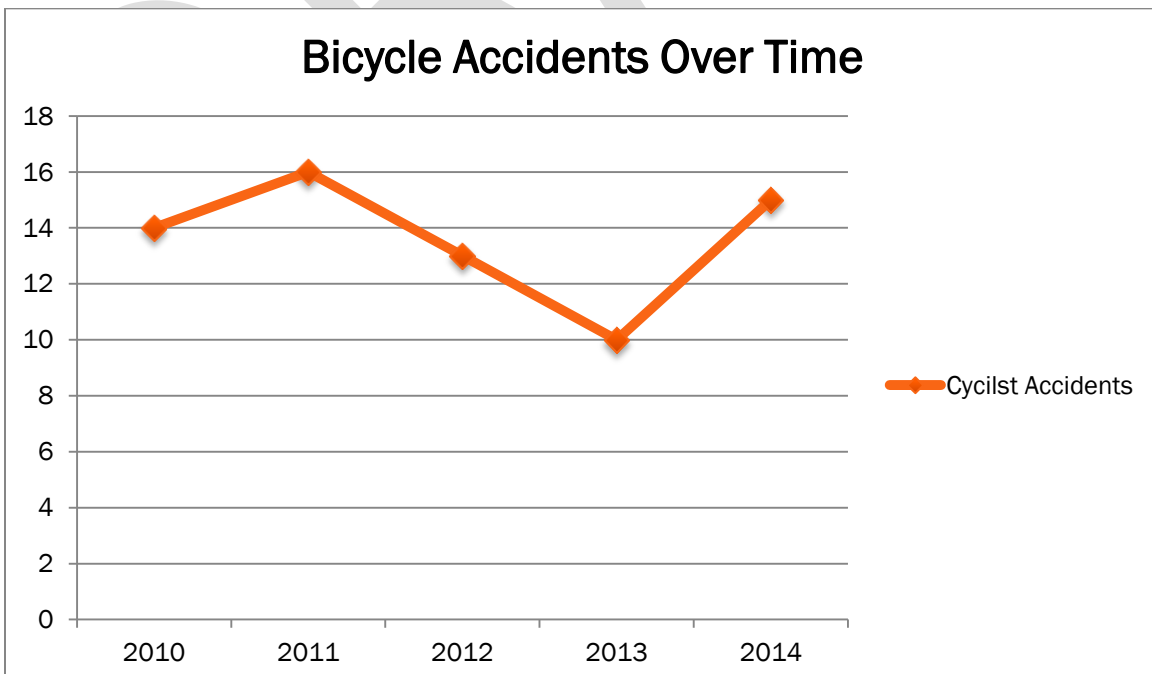
Objective: Increase Enforcement efforts

BPAB is fortunate to have a member of the Conway Police regularly attend the monthly meetings reporting on a bicycle and pedestrian related accident and enforcement initiatives.

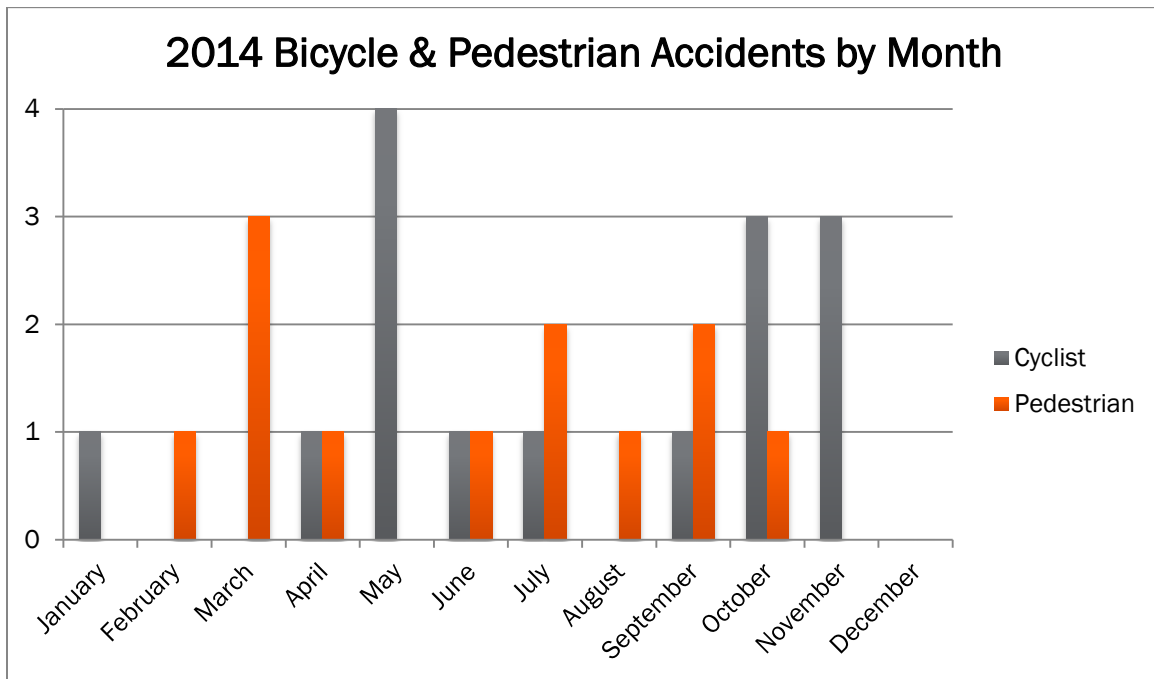
BPAB expanded the efforts of its Enforcement Committee to become more engaged with both the Conway Police and the public. Achievements included:

- Engaging a member of the Conway Police to regularly attend the monthly meetings to report on bicycle and pedestrian related accident and enforcement initiatives.
- Hosting a public event in March to discuss legal & safety matters in regards to pedestrians and cyclists as well as review incident reports from the previous months that involved pedestrians and cyclists.
- Engaging the Conway Police Chief in a discussion regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety, officer training regarding pedestrian and cyclist incidents, how to promote reporting incidents, and promoting the Three Foot Law during the month of May.

There were a total of 27 accident reports involving a vehicle and a cyclist (15) or a pedestrian (12).



Reported cyclist accidents increased from (10) reported in 2013 & (13) in 2012. Part of this increase can be explained by a more thorough approach to obtain the data for 2014. Data for previous year pedestrian accidents is not available at time of the report.



Of the accidents reported in 2014, 18 of involved injury; one involved a fatal injury. Drivers were at fault for 13 of the accidents; cyclists were at fault for five; pedestrians were at fault for three; and no fault was declared for six¹. Two of the accidents involved crosswalks; four involved sidewalks; seven involved private property and/or driveways.

¹ Note about "fault": In most cases, officers working an accident are not supposed to declare fault if the accident occurred on private property, as most traffic laws don't apply. This includes private drives and parking lots. In some of those cases, where it was clear that one party or the other was negligent to the Conway Police liaison, the data that is reported here lists a party at fault as he felt that would be more beneficial to the goals of this report, though no fault is listed on some of the accident reports involving private property/driveways.

Objective: Reviewing/update the Streets Design Guidelines

No progress was made against this objective.

Objective: Assess Bike & Pedestrian Infrastructure and use

No progress was made against this objective.

Objective: Renew focus on Safe Routes to School

BPAB is recommending an approach that makes one school the focus of safe routes to school. The expectation to hold this school as a model for SRTS in Conway driving support from the school board and parents of student at other schools.

A new board member was appointed in April to renew the focus on SRTS efforts in Conway. She has completed the Skills for Local SRTS Program Development Online Training. Working with the city planning department, a map of the Julia Lee Moore school zone was developed and areas of possibility for biking and walking to school by children were developed. An initial survey of the feasibility of biking to school from one neighborhood in the school zone was conducted by a 4th grade Cub Scout troop in October. In November the board member presented the SRTS program to the Julia Lee Moore Parent-Teacher Organization and collected parent surveys about walking and biking to school.

To support his objective, BPAB made recommendations to install sidewalks on several streets near Julia Lee Moore.

Other Bike/Ped Activities

The Conway Advocates for Bicycling sponsored these activities in 2014:

- Sponsored, participated in, or financially supported the following activities related to National Bike Month in May: The Conway Commuter Challenge, The Amazing Ride, Bike to Work Day Breakfast, Tour de Toad, CAB Ride after Dark, Bike Out to Eat, CAB Community Ride, and the Bike/Walk Arkansas Summit
- Paid for copying flyers publicizing the Women Bike AR clinic organized and managed by Tara Leamon.
- Paid the registration fee for Patsy Newton's attending the National Bike Summit in Washington DC
- Continued CAB's club memberships in the National Alliance for Biking and Walking and the League of American Bicyclists
- Continued financial and volunteer support for the Bike Share and Repair Garage directed by Erik Leamon and managed by Todd Ake and Erik on alternate Wednesday's in cooperation with City of Hope Outreach and the Soul Food Café
- League Cycling Instructors Peter Mehl and Jim Bruce offered a Traffic Skills 101 class at UCA with two students in April. Future classes will be open to the public but offered by invitation with instructional materials provided by CAB for such groups as Conway city employees. Helped with bicycle safety instruction at a 4-H Club event in Holland, AR
- Purchased and distributed 100 "Smart Cycling Quick Guides, over 300 decal stickers with CAB logo, and 50 yard signs advising motorists of the law to give cyclists at least 3 feet of clearance on roads and streets

- Peter Mehl organized group rides to supplement the monthly CAB community Sunday rides. These rides are designed for more experienced riders who wish to ride beyond the city limits at a somewhat more rapid pace than the community rides.
- Co-sponsored the Conway Fall Classic Tour fundraiser with new partner City of Hope Outreach.
- CAB recognized Jennifer Boyett, past president of CAB, as Conway Bicycle Advocate of the Year.
- Local candidates for political offices in the fall election were polled to learn of their degree of support for such bicycle-related issues as enforcement of the 3-foot law and the completion of the Tucker Creek Trail.
- CAB organized the following six socials in 2014:
 - A reception with open bar at Mike's Place in February
 - A talk by Chance Norman on nutrition at ZaZa's in April
 - Pizza and drinks at Patsy Newton's in June
 - Cookout at Salem Trailhead on Tucker Creek in August
 - A discussion with Mayor Tab Townsell on Conway's future at The Locals in October
 - A discussion with MetroPlan on the *Imagine Central Arkansas: Blueprint for a Sustainable Region* at The Locals in December

State initiatives

In 2013, the state advocacy coalition, Bike Walk Arkansas was formed with the goal to lead efforts to create a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly state. Last year, it held what is presumed to be the first annual Bicycle Summit in Little Rock. Speakers included Andy Clark, President of the League of American Bicyclists and Greg Maxted, Executive Director of the Harahan Bridge Project. The Harahan Bridge spans the Mississippi River at Memphis with the project focused to make it a point of pedestrian and cycling friendly access across the river. BPAB has had a representative occupy a board seat on the Bike Walk Arkansas coalition. For more information see: <http://bikewalkar.org/>

Also in 2013, the Arkansas Department of Highways and Transportation (AHTD), in conjunction with the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, Arkansas Department of Health and Arkansas State Police began (re-) developing a statewide bicycle and pedestrian plan. The plan is being developed over an 18 month time period and included public input across the state including meetings at the University of Central Arkansas and with leaders of the City of Conway in February. BPAP has two members who serve on the Technical Advisory Committee for the plan. For more information see: <http://www.arkansasbikepedplan.com/>

Summary

While 2014 was a productive year for BPAB with advancements made in the Bike Master redevelopment, increased Enforcement focus, and the renewal of the Safe Routes to School initiative, the board is disappointed in the lack of progress to develop a Pedestrian Master Plan and the lack of funding available to develop facilities to make Conway a Walk Friendly city. A very positive note is that both bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure now is a regular consideration with new development within the city as demonstrated in the planning the Lewis Crossing Shopping development, the Central Landing development, and the new Med Express clinic and CVS store on Oak Street.