

Advisory Committee on Transportation Choices

June 8, 2017

APS Education Center, 1426 N. Quincy Street

Room 101A/B

7-9 pm

- I. Welcome & Introductions (10 minutes)
- II. Approve Minutes from March meeting (5 minutes)
- III. Public Comment (15 minutes)
- IV. JCTC Work Plan Review and Discussion (60 minutes)
 - a. Current Program Elements & Progress (20 minutes – Staff)
 - b. Alignment with Goals and Previous Recommendations
 - c. Long Term Planning Needs
- V. iRide & Fare Communications and Distribution Strategy Discussion (25 minutes)
- VI. Wrap-up and Next meeting dates (5 minutes)

Advisory Committee on Transportation Choices (ACTC)

June 8, 2017
Approved minutes

In Attendance:

Nancy Van Doren, Chair APS School Board

APS Appointees

Kristin Haldeman, Chair (MS)
Antelmo DeLeon (HS)
Janeth Valenzuela (HS)
Rose Breyault (ES/MS)
Josh Folb (SPED)
Margaret Chung (Principal)
Catherine Frum (Teacher)
John Mickevice (APS
Commuter)

County Appointees

John Armstrong, PAC
Gillian Burgess, BAC (ES)
John Carten, TAC

Staff

John Chadwick, APS-F&O
Angel Garcia-Ablanque, APS-T
Lauren Hassel, APS –SRTS
Dennis Leach, AC-DOT
Steve Yaffe, AC-Transit
Elizabeth Denton, AC-ATP

Other attendees: Hector Ramirez & Family (Kenmore MS and Campbell ES family); Rob Vandermark (Discovery Parent)

After Introductions, the Committee approved the minutes from the March meeting with minor edits.

No persons appeared at the beginning of the meeting to offer public comment. Two speakers arrived later in the Agenda and were afforded an opportunity to speak.

I. JCTC Work Plan Review and Discussion

a. Current Program Elements & Progress

Dennis Leach noted that the overall JCTC goals and work program were presented to the County Board and School Board in December. There are five areas of focus that form the basis of the year one work program. He added that this is a “no new resources initiative” (i.e., no new FTEs or budget) and staff must figure out how to use existing resources to deliver the program.

He and John Chadwick reviewed the status of the focus areas shown on the workplan:

1) Expand coordination between APS school bus transportation & Arlington Transit

(ART, STAR, Metro) on service planning including walk zones, routes and stops

- When ART routes and capacity were overlaid with schools – results showed a lot of available capacity available on those routes
- Walk Zone Working Group (WZWG) – met 6 times for about 2 hrs each; reviewed all the walk zones with County staff with a goal to evaluate/understand the ‘considerations’ used to reduce a walk zone from the policy distance, and clean up the zone edges. For the coming year, these changes will not result in any changes to bus service.

**** (ACTC WILL REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS AT NEXT MTG)**

Ms. Burgess asked if the 'considerations' the same as those used for bus stop placement. Mr. Chadwick noted that they are different and APS wants to clarify bus stop location criteria as next step. Ms. Burgess then asked what happens if a family calls and says the stop isn't safe. (For example, a student may be asked to cross a street for a bus stop that they would not have to cross if they were a walker). Mr. Garcia-Ablanque said they do try to keep stops on 'right side' of street; but they will evaluate stops by school. Safety is supposed to come before efficiency.

2) Expand iRide Availability Eligibility

- On June 25 two new policy changes will take effect – 1) new fares on ART and MetroBus begin (\$1.75 to \$2, so \$1 for iRide); 2) elementary students are now eligible for iRide
- Mobile Commuter Store (MCS) is now able to register students and sell cards; has been to all High Schools and some Middle Schools
- Upward trend on iRide use
- Elizabeth Denton spoke to kids at Career Center and rode ART bus with them. She also conducted travel training with 6th graders at Swanson

3) Expand APS-wide walk/bike education programs

a) Champions program status–

- Swanson and Arlington Community HS achieved gold status this year
- APSGo! baseline survey has been very helpful in encouraging behavior change- much more awareness
- Oakridge esp. has shown major gains in non-SOV travel (SEE DATA)
- Many schools are showing a staff drive alone rate down by 10%
- Next survey in 2019 – will coincide with new schools coming on-line and getting baseline data on those schools
- Staff Carpooling has been successful – including as a 'social success' with teachers feeling they are getting to know teachers they did not know very well before
- Marin County, CA – has been a good model for school encouragement
- Discovery making great headway

Schools usually join the Champions program at the behest of principals. Ms. Denton is making good inroads into the schools with more schools wanting to join. Half the schools are already in it. Schools compete against their own records. They are not competing against each other. Marin does not do that either.

The schools champions program is modeled off the Business Champions program.

Ms. Denton noted that she would like to see all schools involved. She also reported that Ashlawn applied for and achieved Bicycle Friendly Business status (the application looks at how well the applicant employs the '5 Es'); Oakridge also has applied.

4) Identify opportunities for staff to bike, walk, carpool, vanpool or to use transit

- The County is adding CaBi stations at schools. While there are no CaBi incentives for students, staff get a membership for free.

5) Establish multimodal information center at each school

- Kiosks have been installed at all middle and high schools and two elementary schools have transportation bulletin boards. Ms. Denton also has developed some online materials.

Ms. Burgess asked that APS review the choices students have for identifying their dismissal method in their first day packets to ensure 'bike' is listed as an option for dismissal.

In response to a question about the number of racks available at schools, Mr. Chadwick noted that APS does not have a formal inventory of racks but with new schools going through the site plan review process, APS is required to add bike friendly equipment.

Discussion

Ms. Breyault raised a concern that school zone flashers around her schools are not turned on early enough. Mr. Chadwick said that he will look into it and that APS is in process of taking that responsibility over from the County.

Regarding longer term planning issues, Ms. Burgess asked if the JCTC has been engaged with the JFAC process. Mr. Leach said County DOT staff has been engaged, but not the JCTC.

It was noted that over the long term, as JFAC's role evolves, we will need to ensure JCTC engagement.

Regarding the new high school seats, Ms. Burgess noted that with the hybrid option, APS will be adding more trips at the Ed Center, which analysis for the Buck site should include as well. APS also will need to evaluate safety at the Ed Center as the Buck site uses are fleshed out. It was noted that both the Ed Center and Career Center sites have good transit access and walkability.

Mr. Leach said that DES/DOT input to the 1,300 seats process was that Kenmore was least desirable. Ms. Van Doren noted that Carlin Springs will be a point of interest and concern as APS looks to use the space it has over at the Kenmore site.

Ms. Burgess asked if the JFAC scenarios included the 1,300 HS location decision. Ms. Van Doren replied that APS did send notice to the County Board that they may put seats at the Ed Center site, so it was factored into the analysis.

APS also is conducting long range scenario planning, and trying to broadly forecast facility needs vis a vis enrollment projections.

II. Public Comment

1. Hector Ramirez & Family

Mr. Ramirez told the Committee that two of his children attend schools on Carlin Springs (Campbell and Kenmore) and another child is a HS student. His family is very concerned about safety along Carlin Springs Rd. The kids enter Carlin Springs one block up from Campbell ES. The sidewalks are very narrow and kids are shoving one another as they walk along Carlin Springs. In the winter snow is not plowed from sidewalks, forcing people to walk on the road. In the morning, when kids are walking, rush hour is well underway and traffic speeds by. Parking in neighborhoods also is an issue – with many cars with MD tags. Vandalism an issue as well with cars. He sees mothers with strollers walking along Carlin Springs where it's very narrow and with kids there as well – very hard to get by. He is very worried about adding another school there.

He spoke to Kenmore's principal about the behavior issues and she spoke to the students, but it's not enough. He would like to have a bus for the kids.

Mr. Folb suggested creating a "one-stop bus" – (e.g., shuttle) for kids in that area. He also suggested considering a fence or barrier along the sidewalk to keep pedestrians from 'falling' into the road. This is done on the Las Vegas strip to protect pedestrians.

2. Mr. Vandermark – Discovery parent

In 2015, when Discovery opened, Discovery and Key elementary parents raised a safety concern with the County DOT about a bus stop they share at 25th St N & N. Buchanan Sts., requesting a 4-way stop be installed as the stop is crowded and vehicles are not slowing to accommodate the kids and their parents. DOT conducted a safety analysis at the stop in May 2016 and determined that the intersection did not 'meet the warrants' for a 4-way stop. Safety, however, continues to be an issue. Mr. Vandermark noted that there is quite a bit of cut through traffic coming through the intersection for drivers seeking to avoid Glebe Rd. and no other traffic control devices in the vicinity.

DOT striped crosswalks at the intersection in May 2017, but additional pedestrian signage has not yet been installed. Mr. Leach noted the signs would be installed the following week. Mr. Vandermark thanked Mr. Nabors (DOT) for his assistance so far, but said that to date parents have not seen change in driver behavior. Parents are frustrated and worried about their students' safety.

He is concerned that traffic safety evaluations (warrants) are based on national MUTCD standards which are not appropriate for the neighborhood/school bus stop.

Ms. Burgess asked if the police had been engaged on this matter. Mr. Vandermark said they brought their neighborhood police officer in, who acknowledged that a 4-way stop makes sense, but told the parents that police cannot endorse a solution. Ms. Burgess said that the police have told the BAC that they can advise staff on areas of concern.

Mr. Leach pointed out that there are four existing speed humps and a circle on 25th, that the vast majority of drivers are from the neighborhood and average speeds are 25 mph.

Mr. Vandermark replied that because this is a place where children are congregating and waiting, he feels this merits a different type of evaluation.

Ms. Haldeman noted that there appears to be a need to look at modifying FHWA standards to accommodate the school context and recognize the needs of 'child traveler'.

There also is an opportunity to collaborate on stop safety criteria and standards.

Ms. Burgess noted that we should be able to think outside the box on solutions, perhaps looking at something that is time bound and in effect only during bus pick up and drop off hours. Alternatively, this type of thing can be incorporated into stop siting safety criteria. Make bus system look like transit with more fixed route.

Mr. Carten asked if the SROs had conducted safety education with students –especially at Kenmore. Ms. Valenzuela replied that they had.

III. iRide & Fare Communications and Distribution Strategy

The Committee provided feedback to Ms. Denton on the best ways to communicate information on iRide and fare changes to parents:

- Peachjar
- Special Event day at middle schools with MCS
- PTA listserv
- Weekly Principal's message
- Nextdoor
- Hispanic community – WhatsApp or Text (see Yaneth!)
- Robo calls – can be done in multiple languages (also works well with Spanish-speaking parents)
- Post on APS or County FB
- Twitter
- Information at libraries
- Civic Association agendas and network
- Amharic and Mongolian communities communicate through their churches
- Back to school nights!
- Transportation
- P/T Conf. nights

Committee member offered ideas for selling the cards:

- Finding a teacher who can do sales consistently at a school, as some areas of the County have a lot of turn-over.
- Register students using a mobile app. Staff will check
- Automatically enrolling students, as some colleges do.
- Make sales available at the intake center.

Next meeting date: September 2017

Ms. Haldeman will send out a Doodle poll to determine the best date.

Meeting adjourned.