

## COMMISSION WORKSHOP MINUTES

MARCH 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023

6:00 P.M.

### PRESENT:

**Mayor:** Mark Anderson

**Mayor Pro Tempore:** John Vogel II

**City Clerk:** Marissa Morales

**Assistant to City Clerk:** Julia Fresne

### ABSENT:

**Commissioners:** Alison Cagle

Maximilian D'Water

Sarah Schrader

**MINUTES PREPARED BY:** Julia Fresne

1. Sam Benick, Pasco County Project Manager for the Orange Belt Trail project, introduced himself and his team. The project is currently focused on finding the trail route which will be about 37 miles across the entire county. The team is working with involved cities and communities to ensure an all-encompassing vision.
2. Wyatt Bowers, Consultant Project Manager, gave a brief PowerPoint presentation to provide background information and updates on status. The project is currently in the alternative development phase and the final hearing is estimated to take place by early Spring 2024. The project team expressed their understanding of the old Orange Belt corridor now consisting of private properties and other obstacles. The project team hoped to seek federal funding to maximize opportunity which will require a Project Development and Environmental study.
  - A. Public input gathered for the project showed preference for a paved trail in wooded areas including trailheads and public restrooms.
  - B. The next workshops will be held April 17-18 at which point more information regarding the project will be released. The official project website (OrangeBeltTrail.com) will provide updates.
  - C. Mr. Bowers advised the project team was looking to find out whether San Antonio would prefer to have the trail come into the heart of the city or skirt north to Pasco Road.
3. The project team and present commissioners discussed alternative routes through San Antonio.
  - A. Commissioners were in favor of the trail going through the San Antonio Athletic Complex which already has public facilities and parking and suggested using the new State Road 52 route then going through Curley Street to connect to the park.
  - B. Another suggestion was to go along Antonio Way and connect to San Antonio Elementary School to increase school pedestrian traffic safety.
  - C. Mr. Benick advised that proximity to the old railway is less of a priority than going near or through city and town centers.
  - D. Mr. Benick explained that using existing sidewalks would require acquisition for drainage improvements, path maintenance, and road buffering which is a complex process. Mayor Anderson advised that using County Road 52 would be less impactful than going through neighborhoods in the city. Mr. Bowers reiterated the public desire for wooded trails rather than going through major roads.
4. Commissioners, project team, and members of the public discussed alternative routes and areas to avoid via map marking.

- A. Commissioner Vogel expressed wanting the trail to avoid downtown and preferred the trail to spur into San Antonio via Curley Street to connect to the Depot and County Park. Going through Curley Street would incentivize needed improvements to Curley Street.
5. Mr. Bowers stated that the team wants to provide three different scenarios at the April workshops and let the public tell them what they would prefer.
  - A. Commissioners and project team discussed various options for routes considering going through Hartman Road, Pasco Road, Michigan Avenue, and Oak Street.
  - B. Commissioner Vogel advised that the school located downtown has an agreement with the city to use City Park and there is increased traffic during drop-off and pick-up hours.
6. Mr. Bowers explained that it is likely the three lines presented in April will show an eastern route, western route, and the exact old railway line.
7. Mr. Benick inquired about the whereabouts of the draining issues on Curley Street and was advised between 3rd and 7th Avenues. Commissioner Vogel advised that the city is ready to cooperate with the county to fix this drainage issue.
8. Susan Minsberg asked whether the trail would be ADA compliant and was advised it would be. The type of vehicles that would be allowed on the trail is still under consideration.
9. **ADJOURNMENT:** Workshop adjourned 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Julia Fresne, Assistant to the City Clerk