



## City clarifies Dallas Bike Plan implementation status and outlook

You may have heard in the news some confusion about the implementation of the Dallas Bike Plan. The City is enthusiastic about the Dallas Bike Plan and it is an important initiative. This communication to our residents should provide clarification.

Work on implementing the Dallas Bike Plan has begun in the six short months since adoption of the plan. There are currently 27 fully or partially funded public works projects in various stages of design and engineering that have been modified to include 20 miles of on-street bike facilities. This includes 70 trail-road crossings that will provide safe linkages on five existing off-street bike trails. In addition the City has sought federal funding to implement four strategic area connection projects which together would create 36 miles of on-street bike facilities.

The recent Council adoption of the Dallas Bike Plan in June, 2011 represents a good faith commitment by the City to see this plan implemented. This plan has laid a clear pathway towards accommodating a diverse range of bicycle facilities within our city streets. The Dallas Bike Plan is projected to be implemented over a ten-year time frame. City management believes that this plan is achievable and that the anticipated challenges in translating this vision on paper to real bike facilities on the ground can be overcome.

A key ingredient to success in this endeavor is a clear understanding of the challenges we will face during the implementation process. These challenges were discussed during development of the plan and are acknowledged in the adopted plan document. However, during the excitement of the final stages of the plan adoption process, they were not the focus of attention. The Council Quality of Life Committee was briefed on Monday, December 12 to reiterate these challenges and to give the Committee a sense of some of the funding priorities, policy trade-offs and processes that would need to be faced in order to facilitate implementation of the Dallas Bike Plan. Two issues in particular are worth noting:

- Street restriping and maintenance: The current street restriping budget (approved prior to adoption of the Dallas Bike Plan) is focused on fixing existing, worn out striping based on previously identified needs. It is

certainly possible to advance ongoing bike plan implementation through routine restriping, but this will require budget prioritization. The cost differential between standard street striping and bike facility markings will involve weighing the needs for maintaining existing street striping with the benefits of implementing particular bike routes along key corridors.

- Thoroughfare Plan amendments: In many instances the City's prevailing regulations controlling roadway configuration will need to be amended in order to implement on-street bike facilities. There is a legally mandated process currently laid out in the City Charter and City Code to make such amendments.

City Council discussion regarding funding priorities will be an ongoing part of advancing implementation of the Dallas Bike Plan over a ten-year period. The importance of this cannot be over-emphasized given that implementation of the Dallas Bike Plan will be dependent upon future bond programs, annual budget allocations and changes in existing regulations.