



August 15, 2005

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration  
400 Seventh St. S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Attention: Jennifer L. Dorn

RE: Problems with Houston's Metropolitan Transit Authority's (METRO) Lack of Action Regarding Bike Racks on Buses

Dear Ms. Dorn,

The cycling community in Houston, Texas has tried unsuccessfully for five years to get Houston METRO to install bike racks on all METRO buses similar to what cities in Portland, Austin, Washington DC, College Station and Phoenix have done.

Five years of slow playing the cycling community is inexcusable, as Federal Programs under the TEA-21 have allowed for 80% to 90% Federal reimbursement for local money spent. Anything that you can do to persuade our local transit authority to more efficiently use the available federal dollars previously allocated to the bike racks on buses would be greatly appreciated. METRO has missed an excellent opportunity to expand ridership and remove people from single occupancy vehicles as the bike racks would allow for the extended travel factor both before and after boarding. The Federal Government would not offer eighty to ninety percent local reimbursement unless the program was worthy even if our own local authorities think otherwise.

In July 2005, Phoenix Valley Metro reported 1.2 MM bike-on-bus boardings along with a 4% increase in bus ridership from 2004 to 2005. Despite having widespread community support, Houston Metro has resisted the bike racks and continues to experience an overall decline in ridership across the entire public transportation system of 3% from the previous year.

I am enclosing historical correspondence of letters and newspaper articles from the Houston Chronicle in chronological order that documents METRO's lack of initiative. In June 2000, Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) included an amendment to the TIP to allow for METRO's federal funding for the bike racks on buses. (Exhibit 2) Since 2000, this program has been delayed and carried over into the 2006-2008 TIP with a proposed implementation date of August 1, 2006. This should be reason for optimism but once again, METRO is failing to include the local funding in their CIP. They

continue to demonstrate that they have no intention to actually implementing the bike racks on buses program.

I hope that you or someone from your staff will look at our attachments and bring whatever pressure is necessary on METRO, as they presently have narrowly defined "Multi-Modal" as only transportation initiatives that enhance a steel rail line. A recent change of thinking towards rail may be evolving, as they seem to be suddenly embracing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Our understanding is that your office helped change their thinking hence the reason for our direct appeal regarding the bike racks on buses.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this manner and best of luck to you in your new appointment at the International Bank.

Sincerely,



William W. Speer III  
Chair, BikeHouston



David Dick  
Board member, Bike Houston & Chair, Houston Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee



Dan Lundeen,  
Advisory member, BikeHouston



Regina Garcia  
Board member, BikeHouston & Chair of HGAC Bicycle Pedestrian Sub-Committee



Larry Carreker  
Member, BikeHouston

***Promoting safe bicycling and improved quality of life in the greater Houston area***

**2005 Directors**

David Dick  
Jacqueline Friedman  
Regina Garcia  
Cheryl Hensley  
Chris Holmes  
John Lewis  
Elizabeth Maxwell  
Scott Newsom  
Woody Speer  
Kathryn Spicker

**BikeHouston**

PO Box 25372  
Houston, TX 77265  
713-222-BIKE  
[www.bikehouston.org](http://www.bikehouston.org)