National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, May 16, 2017

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Room 1, First Floor
777 North Capitol Street NE
Washington, DC 20002

CHAIR: Karyn C. McAlister, Prince George's DPWT

VICE-CHAIRS:

David Goodman, Arlington Department of Environmental Services
Jeff Dunckel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Jamie Carrington, WMATA
Jim Sebastian, DDOT

Attendance:

Michael Alvino	DDOT
James Carrington	WMATA
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Laurel Hammig	National Park Service
Rowes Hanna	Loudoun County
Meredith Hill	MDOT
Oleg Kotov	City of Rockville (by phone)
Andrea Lasker	Prince George's County DPWT
Karyn McAlister	Prince George's County DPWT
Renee Moore	WABA
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation (by phone)
Kelly Pack	Rails to Trails (by phone)
Molla Sarros	Maryland Department of the Environment (by phone)

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Charlene Howard
Andrew Meese
C. Patrick Zilliacus

1. **General Introductions.**

Ms. McAlister chaired the meeting.

2. **Review of the March 21st Meeting Notes**

Meeting notes were approved.

3. **Jurisdictional Updates**

MDOT is rolling out its discretionary grant application windows, including the bikeways program, due by the end of May.   Safe Routes to School and Transportation Alternatives applications are also open.   Recreation Trails and BPPA applications are also open.

There is a draft bike spine network map available, and comments on the map are being requested from the jurisdictions.   The bike spine network is a long distance regional bicycle network.

Maryland is also updating its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, for adoption in January 2019.   The legislature has also passed legislation requiring the State of Maryland to study bicycle and pedestrian safety on State roads.   That work has to be presented to the legislature by the end of calendar year 2017. This effort will run concurrently with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan update.

Bike to Work Day is Friday.   WABA will have numerous pit stops throughout the region.

Prince George's County will have ten pit stops.   There will be bike parking installed at the County buildings within a few weeks.   Wheeler Road buffered bike lanes connecting to DC will be completed soon. Wayfinding signage has been done along the Potomac Heritage Trail, from Oxon Cove Park to Fort Washington to Piscataway Park.   This Thursday Prince George's County and the NPS will meet to discuss the Oxon Cove Hiker-Biker trail connector.

Montgomery County just installed its first rapid-flash beacon.   There will be ten or twelve by the

end of the year.   The County will do pre and post monitoring on the beacons.   The State will install their first HAWK signal at the Matthew Henson Trail crossing of Veirs Mill Road, where there have been fatalties.   It's an enhanced model that doesn't go to flashing red.   Montgomery County will also install a BPPA project, a bike lane on Cedar street in downtown Silver Spring.

Vision Zero is being transferred from the Office of Planning to the Office of Countystat.   There will be a two year plan leading into a ten year plan.

Ms. McAlister introduced Andrea Lasker.

4. COG Regional Data Sharing

Ms. Howard demonstrated the COG data clearinghouse. It's an ArcGIS on line open data page and a companion application that showcases data from our own programs as well as data gathered from the states.   Traditionally it highlights traffic counts, but we're trying to become more multimodal.   The bike to work day map shows the pit stops.   We are trying to get as much data as we can from our member jurisdictions, as well as our own data, and make it available at a regional level. We'd like to get Loudoun County's data especially.

Ms. Howard demonstrated the bike counts, including both the automated counts and the manual counts of bicyclists and pedestrians that COG carried out for VDOT and DDOT.

There is also some WMATA data on bike parking at their stations.

Eventually some of the data from the bicycle and pedestrian access to Metrorail will be added.

Maryland is pushing a lot of its data to Imap.   Ms. Hill asked if COG was gathering that data. Ms. Howard replied that she could use a heads up when new information is made available by the State.   Ms. Hill promised to push a list of data sources to Ms. Howard.

COG created a regional bike facilities layer some time ago, and we are working to update that. Ms. Hill asked if there was a specific deliverable due date.   Ms. Howard replied that the data clearinghouse was typically refreshed in May, but we can add data on a rolling basis.

You can search bike counts by jurisdiction and year.   The data can be exported to other formats and downloaded.   Mr. Zilliacus did the manual counts – if you have questions about the manual counts you should ask him.   Some of the manual count data very detailed, with things like helmets, etc.   For transit, there is weekly transit ridership.   The clearinghouse is sort of a one stop shop for data.

There is also an "add data" button which allows you to add data in various formats.

http://rtdc-mwcog.opendata.arcgis.com/

The link will go live right after Bike to Work Day.

Mr. Meese asked for a look at the transit data.   You can see all the bus trips aggregated for a time period, or select by route.   All the data is downloadable, but the map lets you get a quick look.

Mr. Dunckel asked if there was data by bus stop.   Ms. Howard said that there was not.   The data represents the lowest common denominator of what the agencies were able to provide. Montgomery County has geocoded data for bus stops.   Ms. Howard welcomes additional information.   We'll take any data we can get, and try to make it fit.

Mr. Meese asked if there was an instruction sheet or tutorial.   Ms. Howard said that there was a splash page with a few basic tips.   It could be improved.   Mr. Meese said that RITIS had good instruction sheets, though they have more resources than we do.   Ms. Howard replied that in the case of GIS it was resource, singular.

Mr. Dunckel asked if there was index of counting stations.   Ms. Howard replied that the automated count sites from BikeArlington are available – six counting stations in Montgomery County.   Eco-Counter was helpful in getting that information.

There is information for the W&OD in Virginia.   We have data going back to 2011.

5.   Bicycle and Pedestrian Element of the Long Range Plan

Mr. Farrell spoke to a handout on the bicycle and pedestrian projects needed to complete the National Capital Trail.   The list of projects that have been identified will fills gaps where no separated facility currently exists, upgrade an existing segment, or add short connections that will provide access from adjacent neighborhoods and trails.   Many of the National Capital Trail segments are cut off from nearby neighborhoods by limited access highways, rail lines, and bodies of water.   The National Capital Trail is more useful if you are able to access what is around it.

All the projects have been vetted with relevant jurisdictions.   Mr. Farrell said that the Subcommittee agreed he would like to present this list to the TPB Technical Committee.

Ms. McAlister asked if the map could separate what is already on the ground, versus the projects needed to complete the National Capital Trail.   Mr. Farrell agreed that an enhanced map showing project locations would be a good idea.   For spot improvements there would be a dot or a number.   The conceptual map also indicates a consistent facility, and there won't be

complete consistency.   In some places there might be a cycle track versus a paved trail, for example.

A presentation to the TPB Technical Committee could not cover every project, but would include some examples, and more details.

Ms. Howard said that we have a lot of these projects as geocoded lines already, and we can put that together.

Another suggestion was to organized the table by project purpose rather than by jurisdiction. Mr. Farrell replied that that could be done.   Mr. Dunckel suggested distributing the list in an Excel spreadsheet, which will make it easy to sort by various criteria. Costs are not available for all projects, but are available for some, at least as an order of magnitude.   Another possibility would be to add a project status column, showing the funding status.   Some of the projects are under construction, others are fully funded in a Capital Improvement Program.

The process is to take this list to the TPB Technical Committee, then to the TPB.   Mr. Farrell asked Mr. Swanson whether this would be approved as a freestanding element, or be tied to the other priority projects in the long range plan.   Mr. Swanson replied that we do not yet have a clear answer.   We will have an element in the long range plan for 2018 that consists of nonmotorized projects. One bucket could consist of trail projects, another would consist of access to transit.   These two packages would be approved by the TPB in September or October.

Mr. Dunckel asked why the Metropolitan Branch Trail was not on the list.   Mr. Farrell replied that the MBT was not on the National Capital Trail route.

This a chance to publicize these projects, as well as the concept of the National Capital Trial

6.   TPB Program Updates

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Database**

Mr. Farrell demonstrated it on line database of projects.   The bicycle and pedestrian project database is moving slowly.   The data hasn't transferred to the live version, but we can copy it back in.   You can search by project name, etc. Users will only have access to their own projects.

Ms. McAlister asked if this was internal or external-facing.   Mr. Farrell replied that this was an external-facing data input site.   You can get a user name and use it to enter your project data. Or you can send me a spreadsheet with the information and I can enter it.   This database is the foundation for the bicycle and pedestrian plan.   The prime audience is the TPB – it gives a general picture of what is going on in the region, sort of an "all-build" for bicycle and pedestrian projects in the national capital region.   It shows miles of each type of facility, planned and built.

Every two years I return to the TPB with an update of what is planned, and what has been completed. One of our goals as a region is to increase the rate of implementation of the regional plan. There is a pull-down menu of project types. We can add more project types as needed.

Once this is completed it will be public-facing and searchable.

The lead agency should fill in for you automatically. Project name and jurisdiction is mandatory. The rest is not mandatory but a lot of it is important, such as length. Ms. McAlister asked if it was being geo-referenced. Mr. Farrell replied that the database is not currently tied to lines on a map, but we are moving in that direction. The first step is to get the project information entered, then tie it to a map.

These are planned projects, regardless of whether they are funded. It also includes completed projects, and complete dates, for history, and to show what has been accomplished.

All this information will be sent out in an email to users of this database.

Over time we will create a process of updates, harmonized with the ITip. As of now we are two years out of date. The work plan currently calls for updates every two years, and a full bicycle and pedestrian plan update every two years.

Municipalities that have their own bicycle and plans are welcome to become a user and enter data. Mr. Meese suggested that if they are not TPB members Prince George's could represent their interests. Ms. McAlister suggested adding Hyattsville, College Park, and Mount Rainier. But there is a question, if they aren't members, will they take it upon themselves to enter and update project information?

Ms. Hill said that there is something to be said for a finite number of users, who are members, and agree to update. Ms. Allahdoust said that the funding agency is not necessarily the same as the implementer. Mr. Farrell replied that such double-counts were probably inevitable, and we will have to clean those up. Mr. Meese added that we have similar problems with traffic signal projects. Mr. Meese suggested that if we miss a few small projects it's not the end of the world. We just need to make sure that major projects of regional significance are included.

Mr. Farrell said that we do caveat the list by saying that it is all the major bicycle and pedestrian projects, not ALL the projects. We ask that projects be of a certain size, so that we are not inundated with thousands of micro-projects. A sidewalk program can be consolidated into a single project, with an estimated mileage and budget. This list is about the big picture, not the micro-picture. Ms. Hill said that she did not want to exclude small non-member jurisdictions that want to participate, but we do want a responsible party that is a TPB member.

The City of Laurel, MD has just joined COG and TPB. Members include College Park, Greenbelt, and Bowie. In Montgomery its Takoma Park, Rockville, and Gaithersburg. Then

there is Frederick City.   Mr. Farrell asked about a contact person at Charles.   Ms. McAlister offered to share her contacts.   Ms. Allahdoust suggested including Reston and Herndon.   In terms of listing jurisdiction we'll try to get some consistency with the TIP.

The original deadline was July, which may be a little bit tight at this point.   We need to give people at least six weeks.

We'll ask a volunteer to help debug the system, before it goes out to a broader audience.   This database works differently from the old one.   Better, for most purposes, but it still needs to be tested.

This database has been long delayed, awaiting the completion of the Itip database.

- **Professional Development Workshops**

WABA recently organized a full-day Vision Zero Workshop, which covered about two days worth of material.   Having attended that workshop, Mr. Farrell believed that a half-day DPW focused workshop would be useful.   Represenatives from the States and jurisdictions in our region that have Vision Zero or Towards Zero Deaths requirements will present, as well as other speakers from COG.   Exact date will be driven by the availability of 5-6 speakers, towards the end of June.   The subcommittee authorized Mr. Farrell to organized the workshop.

- **TLC Projects**

Mr. Farrell distributed a hand-out showing the projects that have been funded.   Mr. Swanson mentioned that the TLC program is not a grant program; we procure consultant support for the jurisdictions.   The budget has been stable.   TLC is planning and 30% design only, no construction.   Maryland allows us to use some of its technical assistance funds for TLC, with oversight from MDOT.

Ms. Hill noted that MDOT overruled the panel's recommendation for funding a project in Prince George's on grounds of readiness.   Ms. McAlister and TPB staff agree that the proposed operations and maintenance plan was premature at this time, since the final alignment has not been chosen Instead Montgomery's project was fully funded.

- **Street Smart**

DDOT has funded a pedestrian truck/pedestrian safety element, consisting of a hand-out showing truck blind spots and a presence at four public events (like the DC Bike Ride), for $80,000.   The consultant will try to get press coverage of the events. The evaluation will consist of a user survey. This is a DC-only component.   It's the same consultant as the Street Smart program, and they are using the Street Smart logo, and the same kind of outreach.   There are economies of

scale to have this be run by the same consultant under the Street Smart umbrella.   There is no cost to the other States, but there are likely to be spillover benefits.

After five years with the same "Tired Faces" creative, new creative is being developed.   Mr. Farrell showed several of the draft creative approaches, which have been reviewed by focus groups.   Two approaches, "Animals" and "Shattered Lives", have been chosen for further development.

Mr. Dunckel asked for feedback on the creative approach.   Ms. Moore said she thought Animals was attention-getting, but not very clear. "It's cute but what am I supposed to do."   Ms. McAlister said that Shattered Lives looks like a bullet hole.

Ms. Moore didn't understand what Tired Faces was until she took some time to read the ad.

Mr. Farrell said it's a tough to come up with good pedestrian safety ads.

7. Announcements and Other Business

Bike to Work Day is Friday.

8. Adjourned