

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 18th, 2003

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

PLACE: COG, 777 North Capitol Street, NE
First Floor, Room 1

CHAIR: Charlie Denney,
Arlington County DPW

**VICE-
CHAIRS:** Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation,
Jim Sebastian
District Division of Transportation

Attendance:

Harry Cepeda	DDOT
Eric Gilliland	WABA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Ellen Jones	WABA
Bob Kuhns	Gorove/Slade
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Mimi Murray	Fairfax County DOT
Steve Pinkus	Gorove/Slade
Bob Schneider	Toole Design Group
Jim Sebastian	District of Columbia
Tami Sufi	Toole Design Group
Jan Vaughn	VDOT
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians
Maria M. White	City of Alexandria
Sharonlee Vogel	WMATA

COG Staff Attendance:

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Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Patrick Zilliacus

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the January 21st, 2002 Meeting

Michael Farrell announced one change to the minutes, which stipulates that the Chairmanship rotates between the States and WMATA. Minutes were approved.

3. Update of the ADC Washington, D.C. Regional Bike Map
Michael Farrell, COG

The ADC company wants to update its regional bike map. The ADC regional bike map is a fairly successful product, selling about 6400 copies over the 12-month period. Sales were up by 12% over last year, unlike sales of other paper maps. Much of the information on the map is not available on-line, which may account for the relatively robust sales. The map shows bike routes inside the beltway on one side, and outside the beltway on the other. To update this map we will be needing volunteers to take a map home with them, mark it up, write up comments, and hand these back in sometime next month. The ADC Company will not be able to put out the map until next fall, because for the 50-mile radius map they will be altering their base map.

Mr. Jackson asked if we would be getting input from the Baltimore Metropolitan Council and the Counties surrounding Baltimore. Mr. Farrell replied that while there is not much detail in Baltimore City, we would be wanting input from Baltimore County and from Anne Arundel County.

Possible items of discussion include not only the routes, but a new cover photo, new projects to highlight on the front boxes, and area covered. Mr. Farrell passed out a sign-up sheet for the ADC Map Group.

LAB or WABA would be good sources of photos. ADC has asked us for potential cover photos showing bicyclists with a well-known landmark in the background. Mr. Cepeda asked that the cover also show a pedestrian.

Mr. Sebastian suggested that we filter comments through the local bicycle committees. To that end, we might want to extend the deadline. We will need more than a month to get comments from the local committees. ADC still has lots of the old maps left. For the 50-mile radius map,

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we only see major roads, which are often not good for bicycling. Mr. Farrell interjected that with the new electronic base map it was possible to add new routes; all we need is a street name and limits. Mr. Sebastian replied that the scale of the large map would still make it difficult to add very many routes and keep readability. The inside the beltway map is the most useful and allows for the most detail; outside the beltway is good for identifying major trails but the scale is wrong for a local bike map. It does not make sense to spend much time worrying about bike routes outside the beltway.

Andrew Meese added that we should follow up this meeting with outreach to the jurisdictional representatives. Mr. Farrell agreed.

Michael Jackson asked if we could have volunteers provide input first, then have jurisdictional representatives review it. Mr. Farrell replied that he would rather have everyone provide input at the same time

It was asked if we could do a box insert of downtown Rockville or other pockets of bikability outside the beltway. However, it would have to be done at the expense of some portion of our fifty-mile radius. Mr. Sebastian noted that the last time we updated the map we decided not to do that because we did not want to leave anything out. Fairfax has a lot of inhabitants but is largely outside the beltway. A separate map might be the answer, but ADC has to be willing to do it for free, as they do with the current map.

Mr. Meese added that with the electronic base for the fifty-mile radius, we have more flexibility. But we want to have our input to the ADC people by June 1st, which could be difficult if we want to do radical changes. And the current map is a good product even without radical changes. The price will be the same. Mr. Denney asked if Arlington's electronic data might be useful. Mr. Meese replied that it would probably not be useful since the inside the beltway map is still being done the old-fashioned way, by hand.

Mr. Sebastian noted that we added one element to the legend at the last revision, the blue dash, which is a side-path. The distinction can be ambiguous. Red indicates an official route, blue an unofficial route. Another addition was the red P, to indicate trail parking. We should add any new ones. Mr. Farrell said that the legend was fairly comprehensible now, but he would be leery of adding more categories for fear of harming comprehension. Mr. Denney suggested that showing bike lanes might be beneficial, since many people prefer bike lanes to signed routes without bike lanes. Mr. Wetmore asked about showing the route of East Coast Greenway. Mr. Farrell promised to look into it. The Maine to Virginia Route is a signed AASHTO route. The route has been in place for 25 years without much change. We could talk with the people with adventure cycling regarding any changes in the American Discovery Trail or other cross-country route that happens to go through our region.

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- Assemble an ADC Map Work Group, distribute materials
- Set an initial meeting date for the group to hand in and discuss map revisions
- Gather possible cover photos from LAB, WABA
- Contact East Coast Greenway Alliance regarding their routing

4. Metro Core Cordon Counts

Michael Farrell, Patrick Zilliacus, MWCOG

Mr. Farrell distributed hand-outs showing the latest cordon counts of bicycle traffic across the beltway and into the D.C. core. Mr. Meese introduced Mr. Zilliacus, who is in charge of COG's travel-monitoring efforts. Bicycles are a part of travel monitoring on any road where they are allowed. Mr. Zilliacus explained the times and locations of traffic counts. Counts are taken during peak hours, inbound and outbound. Recently some non-peak flows have also been counted, but that data is not yet ready for release. The count takes place on one day at all the locations. Pedestrians are not counted. Counts take place in the Spring, on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. The cordon counts are not a survey; we do not ask people where they are coming from, or where they are going. Mr. Sebastian commented that even though the data was just from a single day in each year, the counts do not fluctuate much, and appear to show a steady upward trend in bicycling. Mr. Zilliacus replied that the only thing that could be said for sure is that there are cyclists. Traffic on bicycle trails is counted where they cross the cordon lines. 1986 to 1996 data is a.m. only. Table S1 shows the data from the inner cordon, while table H1 shows data from the beltway cordon. Count locations are shown in the attached maps. We will do a D.C. line cordon count this Spring, which is funded by the District of Columbia. Cordon counts do not tell us origin, destination, or trip purpose.

It was asked whether we will do a survey of bike riders. Mr. Zilliacus replied that we do such a survey of truck drivers, but they are required to stop while cyclists are not. Mr. Farrell remarked that he liked these numbers because they are simple, comparable, and show trends over a long period of time. For other purposes, there is the COG Household Travel Survey, but unfortunately COG does not generally survey enough people (only 2000) to come to meaningful conclusions about bicycling on the jurisdictional level. Mr. Sebastian, Mr. Farrell, and Mr. Zilliacus agreed that to get meaningful survey data about minority modes such as bicycling and walking, a much larger sample size would be needed. Resources are limited; there is a trade-off between frequency of the survey and sample size. Next December a new work program will be submitted, and at that time we could suggest that a household travel survey with a larger sample size be carried out.

Ms. Jones mentioned that Commuter Connections would be surveying participants in Bike to Work Day, so if we wanted to add any questions to that survey now would be the time to suggest them. While not a random sample, it does provide some information on cyclist preferences.

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- Next December for the COG work program, suggest that a household travel survey be carried out with a size adequate to produce meaningful jurisdiction-level results about minority modes such as walking and bicycling.
- Provide any suggestions for questions to be added to the survey of Bike to Work Day participants to Michael Farrell

5. **Discussion of Proposed and Past Bike/Ped Transportation Emissions Reduction Measures**

Michael Farrell, COG

Mr. Farrell discussed a list of proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian TERMS for the region that were suggested at the January meeting. Mr. Farrell agreed to investigate these proposals and determine whether they were plausible candidates for air quality evaluation by COG staff. Mr. Farrell suggested that the Subcommittee select three or four proposals from this list and have our Chair write a letter to the Chair of the TPB Technical Committee, asking that COG staff be directed to evaluate them as TERMS. Once they have been evaluated as TERMS, an implementing agency could choose to fund any of them and obtain air quality credit for doing so. Mr. Farrell explained each proposal.

#1 Regional Bike Racks is a continuation of an old TERM. A few racks are still uninstalled, but most jurisdictions have run out and would like more. Mr. Muchnick said that he did not want this program done again in Maryland the way it was done last time. Even in Virginia not all the racks were installed at optimal locations. Most big cities have a city racks program whereby the city installs a few racks each year but takes the time to install them in the right places.

Mr. Jackson suggested combining bike racks with an educational campaign aimed at employers, and employer-based parking.

#4 Subsidized off-street bike parking. A consultant would be hired to do outreach to employers to persuade them to accept bicycle parking, and install subsidized parking, which would be of the type needed at each location. The consultant is needed to ensure that the job is done right. The problem in Maryland was that it was no one's job to install the racks.

Mr. Farrell suggested that we could make the on-street racks program more request-driven. I.E. we should only fund as many racks as the jurisdictions request and promise to install. Mr. Denney said that the Virginia program worked because there was no onus on the jurisdiction to install racks; VDOT did all the work. Arlington benefited greatly from that program; its racks are well-used.

The consensus was that staffing was needed to make this work, whether it be a local bicycle advocacy organization or a contractor.

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#5. Bike lockers at Park & Ride lots. Ms. Vogel asked whether any TERM evaluation had been done on this proposal. TERM evaluation has been bike lockers at Metro Stations, but not for bike lockers at Park & Rides. The analysis should be similar. We do not need to request a study for a TERM that has already been studied.

#7. Put Trail Information on Metro's Maps. Ms. Vogel said that for only 35 stations it would be \$600,000. Mr. Farrell added that COG's internal input was that it was too small; not sufficient air quality benefit. Ms. Vogel said that the most cost-effective way to get this done would be to incorporate it into the regularly scheduled update of Metro Station area maps. Cost of doing it then would be negligible. However, you do not want to miss an update since these maps are updated only every twenty years or so. So when Metro sends the jurisdiction the map, the jurisdiction should request the inclusion of trail information. The jurisdiction must sign off on the station area map updates. Mr. Jackson asked if Metro could make the request for trail information. Ms. Vogel said that was unlikely to happen. The jurisdiction would need to ask Metro to include trail information, not vice versa. The key piece of information then is to whom at each jurisdiction the request for an update is sent, and when it will next be sent. Ms. Vogel promised to find out to whom the requests for updates were being sent at each jurisdiction, so those people can in turn be reminded to request the inclusion of trail information. The group agreed that there was no need to deal with this proposal as a TERM. Allan Muchnick suggested that sidewalks be noted on the station-area maps as well, especially in suburban-area stations where roads lack sidewalks. The hope was expressed that we could get sidewalks installed in less than the twenty-year time frame for redoing station-area maps. The next station-area map to be done will be for the new station at New York Avenue, so the District of Columbia will have a chance to get its comments incorporated.

Mr. Jackson suggested that we do more education and encouragement. Mr. Denney pointed out that we have a safety campaign

#2. On-line bicycle routing software, similar to mapquest. A sample RFP described the program costs. Mr. Farrell said that on the one hand, cost are high, but on the other hand, mapquest-type software is popular and heavily used. Metro's routing software features are heavily used. WABA has done some air quality estimates for its own commuter assistance program. The group agreed that #2 was worth analyzing.

#3. Bike racks on local buses. Arlington Transit has bike racks on some buses now. Mr. Farrell offered his opinion that we should hold off until we have data from WMATA's new racks. More promotion efforts are needed. We have not had good weather yet this year, so the racks have not had a fair test. Generally longer routes are better candidates for racks. Mr. Sebastian agreed that we should hold off until we get data on the WMATA racks.

#6. Safe Routes to School. Mr. Cepeda spoke in favor. Much morning traffic is related to

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parents bringing their children to school. Mr. Farrell pointed out that the numbers from the Marin County study were huge, both in terms of numbers of children being driven and the success rate in reducing SOV trips to school. Mr. Sebastian asked what the scale would be for modeling purposes, and how the program would be implemented. The Marin County program has been blessed by NHTSA. As for size, the program seems eminently scalable. Ms. Sufi of Toole Design discussed the State of Maryland's pilot project, which is not yet old enough to show results. Costs are high. Some physical improvements are needed, and not all jurisdictions are willing to participate.

Mr. Wetmore added that, taking the longer view, the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League found that the age of a school is highly correlated with whether or not kids walked. Old schools tend to be smaller neighborhood schools located in a neighborhood, rather than large-size, high-acreage schools located out on the highway next to the Wal-Mart. Revising the design and siting standards for new schools to promote walkability is going to make it much easier over the long run to get kids to walk to school. Ms. Jones suggested that we separate the two goals of safety and air quality. Ms. Jones suggested that driving to school was not common in the District of Columbia. Harry Cepeda disagreed, citing an informal study showing that in the District of Columbia most children live close to school parents often still prefer to drive them rather than letting them walk. Safe Routes to School also includes bicycling (although in the District of Columbia children are not allowed to ride their bikes to school).

Safe Routes to School is also important to public health. The percentage of childhood obesity has tripled since 1980, while walking and bicycling to school has plummeted. The consensus of the group was in favor.

#8 Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to Transit. Mr. Farrell said that this has already been analyzed as a TERM, so there is no need to study it again.

Mr. Denney said that he heard support for 1, 2, 4, and 6. It was suggested that #5 be incorporated into #1. An objection to that is that the cost numbers are different for bike lockers than for racks. Ms. Jones asked if #8 could still be promoted as a TERM. Mr. Farrell said that it could be, but that we did not need to ask COG staff to analyze it again.

Mr. Sebastian and Mr. Jackson agreed that a bicycle and pedestrian promotion campaign deserved to be analyzed as a TERM. It's not on the current list. But the group liked the idea of getting encouragement analyzed as a TERM. We can always ask for it to be analyzed. Mr. Cepeda reiterated his support for #6.

Action Items:

- Sharonlee Vogel should let each bicycle and pedestrian representative know who within that jurisdiction receives Metro's requests for station-area map updates, and when the

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next such request is likely to go out.

- Write a letter from the Bike/Ped Chair to the Chair of the TPB Technical Committee, asking that COG staff be directed to analyze the following measures as TERMS:
 - #1 Regional Bike Racks
 - #5 Bike Parking at Park & Ride Lots
 - #2 On-line Bicycle Routing Software
 - #4 Subsidized off-street parking
 - #6 Safe Routes to School

6. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Progress and the New COG Web-Site**
Michael Farrell, COG

The web-site is unfortunately not yet live. Mr. Farrell distributed a sample of the database, which incorporates information categories suggested earlier. The web site will feature a password-protected intranet. Each jurisdictional representative will receive a password enabling him or her enter the data for his or her own jurisdiction. COG staff will check the data, then make it visible to the public. The data only has to be entered once.

The new COG web site features a committee section where agendas, minutes, and other documents available for public review will be posted.

As a phase II we will connect the database to an ARC/IMS server, which will enable users to produce customized map.

Mr. Muchnik asked if the database would describe the phase of the project. This gets especially confusing because projects often have several phases, each of which has its own progress. A status column would be helpful. Projects should be broken up by phases. Mr. Farrell asked the group to send him suggestions for improving the database in writing.

A question was asked how the accuracy of the information could be determined. Mr. Farrell replied that jurisdictional representatives would be responsible for the accuracy of their entries. Mr. Sebastian suggested that a "last updated" column be added.

Action Items

- Suggestions for improvements to the on-line database should be sent to Michael Farrell in writing.

7. **Jurisdictional Updates**

Bike to Work Day is May 2nd. Mr. Denney expressed discontent with the poster. He found the

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most important information hard to read. Ms. Jones said that in an event with fifteen pit stops, most information is now on the web. Mr. Denney argued that the poster was cluttered – Bike to Work Day May 2nd, and www.waba.org should be much plainer than they are.

Mr. Jackson said that Maryland State Highway has agreed to put an at-grade trail crossing at the intersection of Sligo Creek Trail and Ridge Road. Consideration is being given to putting up street signs for Sligo Creek Trail and Ridge Road. There will not be a signal, but there will be a refuge island/median.

Mr. Wetmore noted that in drunk driving campaigns, the message tended to be that walking is a punishment. We should try to discourage such messages.

On Thursday April 3 WABA will be having its annual meeting in Arlington.

Virginia defined bicycles and bike lanes. Bicyclists are allowed to ride on the far left on one-way streets, they are to ride as far to the right as “safely practicable” rather than practicable, and a cyclist riding the speed of traffic does not have to stay to the right. Cyclists crossing roads at shared-use path crossings have been given all the rights and duties of pedestrians.

Arlington County passed some amendments to the bicycle plan, including more bike lanes. Studies on Columbia Pike continue.

The mandatory court appearance for failure to yield to a pedestrian was discussed.

Clearing sidewalks of snow was discussed. Given that we had 18 inches of snow, people were given some leeway. Snow clearance has been very spotty. Snowplows tend to deposit piles of snow at the corner. At East Falls Church Metro three of four corners were impassable due to snow piles. It is probably that social services expenditures went up since people in wheelchairs couldn't get around for a couple of weeks.

VDOT received a supplemental appropriation to finish the Northern Virginia Regional Trails Plan.

8. **Adjourned.**

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