

Overview

This *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* draws on and has been shaped by a number of regional, state, and local policy statements, plans, and studies, including the *Vision* of the Transportation Planning Board, the *Region Forward 2050* vision of the Council of Governments, federal and state guidance on provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the Constrained Long Range Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, and state and local bicycle and pedestrian plans.

This plan is intended to help fulfill the goals of the *TPB Vision* and *Region Forward 2050* for bicyclists and pedestrians. It includes performance measures that will show progress towards the *Vision* and *Region Forward* goals.

I. Regional Planning

The Vision of the Transportation Planning Board

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Washington region. It brings key decision-makers together to coordinate planning and funding for the region's transportation system.

The TPB's official vision statement for the region, the [*Transportation Vision for the 21st Century*](#), adopted in 1998, is meant to guide regional transportation investments into the new century. The *Vision* is not a plan with a map or specific lists of projects. It lays out eight broad goals, with associated objectives and strategies that will help the region reach its goals.

*The Vision of the
TPB calls for more
Walking and
Biking*

The *Vision* is supportive of pedestrians and bicyclists. It calls for:

- Convenient, safe bicycle and pedestrian access
- Walkable regional activity centers and urban core
- Reduced reliance on the automobile
- Increased walk and bike mode share
- Including bicycle and pedestrian facilities in new transportation projects and improvements
- Implementation of a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan

Sections of the *Vision* relating to bicycle and pedestrian goals are highlighted in Table 1-1. Other goals of the *Vision* affect bicyclists and pedestrians, such as: maintaining the existing transportation system, reducing the per capita vehicle miles traveled, linking land use and transportation planning, and achieving enhanced funding for transportation priorities.

**Table 1-1:
Bicycle and Pedestrian Provisions of the Transportation Vision**

Goal 1. The Washington metropolitan region's transportation system will provide reasonable access at reasonable cost to everyone in the region.

Objective 4: Convenient **bicycle and pedestrian** access.

Strategy 3: Make the region's transportation facilities safer, more accessible and less intimidating for **pedestrians, bicyclists**, and persons with special needs.

Goal 2. The Washington metropolitan region will develop, implement, and maintain an interconnected transportation system that enhances quality of life and promotes a strong and growing economy through the entire region, including a healthy regional core and dynamic region activity center with a mix of jobs, housing, and services in a walkable environment.

Objective 2: Economically strong regional activity centers with a mix of jobs, housing, services, and recreation **in a walkable environment.**

Objective 4: Improved internal mobility with reduced **reliance on the automobile** within the regional core and within regional activity centers.

Goal 5. The Washington metropolitan region will plan and develop a transportation system that enhances and protects the region's natural environmental quality, cultural and historic resources, and communities.

Objective 3: Increased transit, ridesharing, **bicycling and walking** mode shares.

Strategy 7: Implement a regional **bicycle/trail/pedestrian plan** and include **bicycle and pedestrian facilities** in new transportation projects and improvements.

Accompanying the *Vision* is a shorter action agenda with elements to be included in the year 2000 long range transportation plan for the region. Item four on the action agenda calls for a regional congestion management system to achieve significant reduction in single occupant vehicles (SOVs) entering the regional core and regional activity centers by:

- designing and developing circulation systems that maximize the use of transit (rail, monorail, bus, jitney, etc.) and **pedestrian and bicycle** facilities

Region Forward 2050

The Council of Governments is a regional organization of Washington area local governments. COG is comprised of 21 local governments surrounding our nation's capital, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. House of Representatives.

COG provides a focus for action and develops sound regional responses to such issues as the environment, affordable housing, economic development, health and family concerns, human services, population growth, public safety, and transportation.

*Region Forward 2050
Calls for Faster
Construction of the
projects in the Bicycle
and Pedestrian Plan*

In January 2010 the Council of Governments adopted [*Region Forward*](#), a vision for the National Capital region in 2050. The goals of *Region Forward* are broader than those of the *TPB Vision*, encompassing areas such as public safety, land use, economic development, housing, and the environment. For transportation, *Region Forward* builds on the *TPB Vision*, calling for more rapid implementation of the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan, increased walking and bicycling, and reduced pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities.

Provisions of *Region Forward* relating to bicycling and walking are summarized in Table 1-2.

Table 1-2:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Provisions of Region Forward 2050

Goals:

- Transit-oriented, compact, **walkable mixed-use communities** emerging in Regional Activity Centers that will capture new employment and household growth.
- A transportation system that maximizes **community connectivity** and **walkability**, and minimizes ecological harm to the region and the world beyond.
- A broad range of public and private transportation choices for our Region which maximizes accessibility and affordability to everyone and **minimizes reliance upon single occupancy use of the automobile**.
- Safe and healthy communities

Targets:

Reduce daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.

Increase the rate of construction of bike and pedestrian facilities from the Transportation Planning Board's (bicycle and pedestrian) plan.

Prioritize walking and biking options by **improving pedestrian and bicycle networks**, especially in the regional activity centers. Planning and street improvements will focus on:

- Wide sidewalks
- Street trees
- Mixed-use development
- Pedestrian-friendly public spaces
- Bike stations near transit hubs
- Bike lanes
- Bike sharing

Increase the share of **walk, bike** and transit trips

- Give people options to meet everyday needs locally by building mixed-use developments

Reduce pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities

- Build sidewalks, bike lanes, and other improvements
- Narrower local streets
- Better crossings
- Lower speeds for vehicles on local streets and arterials
- More education and enforcement

Indicators:

- Transit, bicycle and walk share in Regional Activity Centers
- Street/node ratio for Regional Activity Centers
- Square feet of mixed-use development
- Reduced pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities

Constrained Long-Range Plan

The financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) is a comprehensive plan of transportation projects and strategies that the TPB realistically anticipates can be implemented over the next 25 years. The region's transportation agencies and jurisdictions submit projects for the CLRP, which is developed and approved by the TPB. The CLRP is the primary vehicle for realizing the *TPB Vision* and the States' long-range plans. Federal law requires that the CLRP be updated every four years; the most recent version was adopted in 2010. To receive federal funding, a transportation project in metropolitan Washington must be included in the CLRP. Because funds must be reasonably anticipated to be available for all the projects in the CLRP, the CLRP is realistic plan based upon available resources.

Bicycle and pedestrian projects in the 2010-2015 CLRP are listed in Appendix XXX. Historically, less than 1% of the capital funding in the CLRP has been specifically for stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian projects. However, since bicycle and pedestrian projects are usually small projects, they are often added to the plan later than the major highway and transit projects. Moreover, much pedestrian and bicycle spending is subsumed within larger highway or transit projects, and thus is not reflected in the amount programmed for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Therefore, the CLRP may under-estimate the amount of bicycle and pedestrian spending that will occur over the next 25 years. State Departments of Transportation may also increase funding levels in the future as they implement policies to routinely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists in all new transportation projects.

Transportation Improvement Program

The [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP) provides detailed information showing which projects in the CLRP will be completed over the next six-year period. The TIP is updated every year. Like the CLRP, the TIP is subject to federal review. Many projects in the TIP are staged, so a single CLRP project could end being split into multiple TIP projects.

The Transportation Improvement Program includes \$124 million for pedestrian and bicycle projects

Bicycle and pedestrian projects, and transportation projects that include bicycle and pedestrian accommodation, are tracked in TIP.

For example, the Fiscal Year 2010-2015 TIP includes \$124 million for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Of that, \$23 million is programmed for FY 2010, which is less than one percent of the total capital funds for all transportation projects programmed for FY 2010. As with the CLRP, funds spent on bicycle and pedestrian accommodations as part of a larger highway or transit project are often subsumed in budget of the larger project.

Top Priority Unfunded Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee advises the TPB, TPB Technical Committee, and other TPB committees on bicycle and pedestrian considerations in overall regional transportation planning.

The Subcommittee periodically selects a short list of priority unfunded bicycle and pedestrian projects, which it recommends for inclusion in the TIP. These projects are selected from the regional bicycle plan, and from state and local plans. The subcommittee has compiled and forwarded lists to TPB regularly since 1995, to be included in the solicitation document for the TIP/CLRP. In essence, the TPB urges the jurisdictions to consider funding these projects, which the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee has judged to be regionally significant, within six years.

The following selection criteria are used:

- **Bicycle Network Connectivity:** priority is given to projects that enhanced connectivity of facilities on the regional bicycle facilities network.
- **Pedestrian Safety:** priority is given to projects that promoted pedestrian safety, especially in areas with documented pedestrian safety problems and no pending road project that could address them.
- **Access to Transit:** priority is given to projects that enhanced access to Metrorail stations and other major transit stops or facilities.
- **Time Frame:** all projects should be able to be completed by 2016, the end of the TIP time frame.
- **Local Support:** the project is a priority for the jurisdiction or jurisdictions in which it is located.
- **Still seeking funding:** the project does not yet have full construction funding committed to it.
- **Reasonable Cost:** the total cost of the list should be a reasonable fraction of the total spending in the region on highways and bridges.

While considerable weight is given to the preference of the representative of the jurisdiction, subcommittee members are urged to think in terms of the regional selection criteria when nominating projects.

Projects are dropped from the list when they receive funding, or if the subcommittee and nominating jurisdiction decide that priorities have changed.

Five projects on the November 2008 list received partial funding, totaling \$2,023,000.

Projects funded since 1995 include:

- The Metropolitan Branch Trail in Washington, D.C.

- The Holmes Run Pedestrian/Bicycle crossing in Alexandria
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvements on Route 1 in Fairfax County
- The Dumfries Road (Route 234) Bike Path in Prince William County
- The Rosslyn Circle Crossing in Arlington County
- The Eisenhower Trail in Alexandria
- The Matthew Henson Trail in Montgomery County
- The Falls Road Shared-Use Path in Montgomery County
- The Henson Creek Trail in Prince George's County
- The Millennium Trail in Rockville

Bicycling, Walking, and the Regional Transportation Model

Data relevant to walking and bicycling are gathered as part of the regional [household travel survey](#), and are incorporated into [regional transportation modeling and forecasting](#).

Encouraging Bicycling and Walking: Bike to Work Day, the Bike to Work Guide, and Guaranteed Ride Home

To help realize the *TPB Vision* and reduce congestion, air pollution, and single occupant vehicle traffic, the TPB has developed several programs to encourage bicycling and walking in the Washington region. As part of its [Commuter Connections](#) program, every year on the third Friday in May the TPB sponsors a regional Bike to Work Day. This event has grown into one of the largest of its kind in the country, attracting over eight thousand riders to thirty five “pit stops” or rallying points around the region. The event is meant to encourage first-time riders to try bicycling to work.

The Commuter Connections program also supports publication of [Biking to Work in the Washington Area: A Guide for Employers and A Guide for Employees](#), which provides tips for employees and employers. For employees, there are tips on safe cycling, laws, equipment and clothing, and transit connections. For employers, the guide explains the benefits of bicycling to the employer, the types of bicycle parking, and the ways an employer can encourage an employee to bike to work.

Commuter Connections also makes available on-line a regional map of existing bicycle facilities, park and ride lots with bicycle parking, transit, and HOV lanes. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee publishes a map of regional bicycle facilities in cooperation with the ADC Map Company. Maps can be ordered at www.adcmap.com. Regional bike routing is available at www.ridethecity.com, and Google maps offers both pedestrian and bicycle routing.

People sometimes drive to work because they need to be able to get home quickly in an emergency. To meet that need and help get more people out of their cars, the Commuter Connections program offers a free taxi ride home in an emergency for commuters who

regularly (twice a week) carpool, vanpool, bike, walk or take transit to work. Commuters who sign up for the [Guaranteed Ride Home](#) program may use it up to four times per year.

**Encouraging Walkable Development:
the Transportation-Land Use Connections Program**

The [Transportation Land Use Connections](#) (TLC) Program provides support to local governments in the Metropolitan Washington region as they work to improve transportation and land use coordination. Through the program, the TPB provides communities with technical assistance to catalyze or enhance planning efforts for planning for transit and pedestrian access. Since 2007 dozens of pedestrian and transit access planning projects have been funded through the TLC program. Community response has been enthusiastic, and competition for the grants has been stiff.

II. Federal Policies

Routine Accommodation of Walking and Bicycling

U.S. Department of Transportation guidance issued in 2000 calls for bicycling and walking facilities to be incorporated into all transportation projects unless exceptional circumstances exist. Further [guidance issued in March 2010](#) urged agencies to go beyond the minimum standards to provide safe and convenient facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, set mode share targets, and collect data on walk and bike trips. Bicycling and walking are to have equal importance to other transportation modes. Transportation projects using federal funds may not sever an existing bicycle or pedestrian route, unless an alternate route exists or is provided.

[The US DOT headquarters in Washington, D.C.](#) sets an example for other employers by encouraging employee bicycling.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against people who have disabilities. Under the ADA, designing and constructing facilities that are not usable by people with disabilities constitutes discrimination. Public rights of way, including pedestrian facilities, are required by federal law to be accessible to people with disabilities.

*The ADA Requires
that all New and
Altered Pedestrian
Facilities be made
Accessible to the
Handicapped*

Both new and altered pedestrian facilities must be made accessible to persons with disabilities, including those who are blind or visually impaired. The courts have held that if a street is to be altered to make it more usable by the general public, it must also be made more usable for those with disabilities.

Government facilities which were in existence prior to the effective dates of the ADA and which have not been altered are not required to be in full compliance with facility standards developed for new construction and alterations. However, they must achieve 'program access.' That is, the program must, when viewed in its entirety, not deny people with disabilities access to government programs and services. For example, curb ramps may not be required at every existing walkway if a basic level of access to the pedestrian network can be achieved by other means, e.g., the use of a slightly longer route. Municipalities should develop plans for the installation of curb ramps and accessible signals such that pedestrian routes are, when viewed in their entirety, accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired within reasonable travel time limits.¹

Design standards for the disabled, such as smoother surfaces, adequate width, and limits on cross-slope, are also beneficial for the non-disabled pedestrian. Good design for persons with disabilities is good design for all. For more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act, contact the [US Access Board](#).

SAFETEA-LU

All Federal Transportation Funds may be used for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Under the SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: Legacy for Users) federal transportation bill signed in August 2005, bicycle and pedestrian projects remain broadly eligible for nearly all funding categories, either for projects incorporated into something larger, or for stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian projects. The bill authorized \$286 billion for highways and transit from 2005 through 2009, a 22% increase over the previous federal transportation bill, TEA-21. SAFETEA-LU was scheduled for a full re-authorization in 2009, but is currently being extended with little substantive change in its provisions.

Transportation Enhancements, half of which historically have been spent on bicycle or pedestrian projects, was funded nationally at a level of \$3.25 billion over five years. The Recreational Trails Program set aside \$110 million for non-motorized trails. SAFETEA-LU also contained a number of high priority projects, sometimes known as legislative earmarks, many of which are bicycle or pedestrian projects.² Pedestrian and bicycle projects are *not*, however, limited to set-aside

¹ American Council for the Blind, *Pedestrian Safety Handbook: A Handbook for Advocates*. www.acb.org

² See www.bikeleague.org for further information on the Bicycle and Pedestrian provisions of SAFETEA-LU.

programs and high priority projects. They are broadly eligible for funding from highway and transit funds.

Under SAFETEA-LU bicyclists, pedestrians, and people with disabilities are explicitly required to be given an opportunity to comment on metropolitan transportation plans.

Safe Routes to School

Aside from the general increase in funding under SAFETEA-LU, the most important new set-aside for bicyclists and pedestrians was the [Safe Routes to School](#) (SRTS) Program. The goals of the program are to enable and encourage children to walk and bike to school, improve safety, and reduce traffic and air pollution near schools. Eligible activities include both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. Infrastructure projects include bicycle parking, crosswalks, sidewalks, traffic calming, on and off-street bicycle facilities, etc. on any public road or trail in the vicinity of a school. Non-infrastructure projects include public awareness and outreach to encourage walking and bicycling to school, traffic education and enforcement near schools, student sessions, training, SRTS program managers, and a State Coordinator. Not less than 10% or more than 30% of SRTS funds must be set aside for non-infrastructure projects.

Funds are administered by State Departments of Transportation, with 100% federal share – no local match required. Each state is to receive funds in proportion to K-8 school enrollment, but not less than \$1 million. The budget grew from \$54 million in 2005 to \$183 million in 2009.

As this program has developed, interest, and applications for funding have varied greatly between different schools and school districts. Some school districts have embraced the program, while others have maintained bus and drive-only policies. Urban school districts have been more receptive to the program. [Growing emphasis on fighting childhood obesity](#) has helped build support.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Signed into law on February 17, 2009, the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#) of 2009 (ARRA) provided over \$48 billion for transportation, including \$27.5 billion for highway infrastructure investment, \$8.4 billion for transit capital assistance, \$8 billion for high speed rail, \$1.5 billion for a competitive grant program for surface transportation, and \$1.3 billion for Amtrak.

The District of Columbia was allocated \$123.5 million, Maryland \$431 million (\$129 million sub-allocated to urban areas) and Virginia \$694.5 million (\$208 million sub-allocated to urban areas) in

*The District of
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Stimulus funds on
Pedestrians and
Bicyclists*

highway formula funds.

ARRA is a one time, “stimulus” bill, intended to promote recovery from the economic recession. Projects funded through ARRA are supposed to be capable of implementation within a relatively short time frame, which has in practice caused funds to be directed to those projects for which design was already complete, and which did not need additional right of way.

The District of Columbia spent nearly half its \$123.5 million allocation on bicycle and pedestrian projects. Over \$50 million will be spent on streetscaping and sidewalk construction, \$4 million for [Safe Routes to School](#), and a \$3 million on an expanded bike sharing program. In addition bridge reconstruction projects will include upgraded sidewalks. Since projects are bid as a whole, the cost of the pedestrian portion of a project is not estimated separately.

Apart from \$4.6 million for ADA improvements, Maryland had no identifiable pedestrian or bicyclist projects funded under ARRA. Maryland stimulus funds largely went to resurfacing and bridge rehabilitation projects, often on limited-access highways. Out of \$160 million programmed so far in Northern Virginia, \$10 million has been allocated to identifiable pedestrian and bicycle projects, such as pedestrian bridges and underpasses, trail reconstruction, streetscaping, and traffic calming.

The degree to which pedestrians and bicyclists benefit from the Act depends to a great degree on the extent to which the Departments of Transportation have included pedestrian and bicycle facilities in their project planning and design. An effective “routine accommodation” or “complete streets” policy is critical.

III. State Policies

District of Columbia

Reflecting its urban character, the District of Columbia is doing more to encourage walking or bicycling than is currently envisioned in Maryland or Virginia. [District of Columbia Department of Transportation](#) intends to create a “walk-centric, bike-centric” city. DDOT’s two-year “[Action Agenda](#)” calls for safety, sustainability, and increasing livability and prosperity by creating great spaces that are the “living room” of the city.

Streetscaping projects and traffic calming projects are a high priority. By providing pedestrians with plenty of well-designed, safe, and comfortable space, the city hopes to increase retail sales and property values. Business Improvement Districts are to have considerable input into transportation projects.

The District of Columbia is to become a “walk-centric, bike-centric” city.

Pedestrian and bicyclist injuries are to be reduced by 10% per year. To reduce pedestrian injuries, the “Action Agenda” calls for traffic calming, traffic enforcement, speed and red light cameras, speed limits lower than 25 mph, lead pedestrian intervals at crosswalks, and reconstruction of high-crash intersections.

Due to the built-up character of the District of Columbia, DDOT rejects road widening as a means of increasing transportation capacity. Instead, DDOT aims to shift travel from less space-efficient modes, such as single occupant driving, to more space efficient modes, such as walking, bicycling, and public transportation.

DDOT’s strategy for shifting auto trips to transit, walk, and bike trips encompasses both transportation and land development elements. The District of Columbia will encourage mixed use development projects that promote and support non-auto mobility. Reduced auto parking, increased bike parking, on-site car and bike sharing, and transportation demand management plans will reduce auto trips generated by new development.

On a citywide basis there is to be car sharing, bike sharing, new transit service, streetcars, reduced off-street parking requirements, required off-street bike parking, and rapid construction of new pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure. The current [Bicycle Master Plan](#) (2005) is to be updated and expanded to reflect changed priorities.

Strategies to address congestion directly include congestion pricing, variable pricing for on-street parking, and double-parking and loading zone enforcement. Nearly all the proposed congestion reduction measures will increase the monetary cost of driving. None involve allocating additional space for travel lanes.

Maryland

The State of Maryland’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Act provides that “Access to and use of transportation facilities by pedestrians and bicycle riders shall be considered in all phases of transportation planning, including highway design, construction, reconstruction, and repair.”³ The Maryland Department of Transportation is to “work to ensure” that transportation options for pedestrians and bicycle riders will be enhanced and not negatively impacted by a project or improvement. The [Twenty Year Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan](#) (2002) calls for MDOT to “strive” to integrate bicycle and pedestrian facilities into routine roadway development “wherever possible”.

*Maryland will
“strive” to provide
bicycle and
pedestrian facilities
“wherever
possible”*

³ Maryland Department of Transportation, [Twenty Year Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan](#), October, 2002. Pp. 13, 32.

A [Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee](#) advises State government agencies on issues directly related to bicycling and pedestrian activity including funding, public awareness, safety and education. MDOT has published [pedestrian design guidelines](#), [accessibility guidelines for pedestrian facilities](#), a bicyclist education video, and other materials designed to share information on best practices with respect to the engineering, education, and enforcement aspects of walking and bicycling.

Overall Maryland’s efforts to promote walking and bicycling are less ambitious than the District of Columbia’s. Provision of accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists in transportation projects is encouraged but not mandatory.

Virginia

In 2004, the Virginia Department of Transportation released its policy for [bicycle and pedestrian accommodation](#), which commits VDOT to routinely accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists as part of all new construction and reconstruction projects, unless exceptional circumstances exist.⁴

Since 2004 VDOT has developed a process to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian accommodations are provided in accordance with the policy. The [Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations Decision Process](#) gives designers a step by step process to determine if bicycle / pedestrian accommodations are appropriate for the characteristics of a particular roadway, and a [Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations](#) list and a design guide provides project managers with a menu of possible accommodations. A series of [implementation guidance documents](#) for localities have also been developed to improve communication between agencies regarding planning and accommodation of pedestrians and cyclists under terms of the 2004 policy.

VDOT maintains all roads in Virginia outside of urban areas, including thousands of miles of residential streets originally built by developers. In view of the importance of secondary streets for vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle movement, VDOT has revised its [Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements](#) (SSAR) to mandate higher levels of street connectivity in urban areas, as well as adequate pedestrian accommodation. New streets and developments are required to connect to the surrounding streets and future developments in a way that adds to the capacity of the transportation network.

Virginia requires “routine accommodation” of pedestrians and bicyclists in transportation projects

Virginia requires new developments to connect with the surrounding streets

⁴ www.virginiadot.org

The policy divides Virginia into “compact”, suburban, and rural areas, with graduated connectivity requirements for each. Narrower streets, traffic calming and “context-sensitive” design are encouraged where appropriate.

New development proposals initially submitted to counties and VDOT after June 30, 2009, must comply with the requirements of the SSAR.

Cul-de-sac development patterns have long been an obstacle to walking or bicycling in suburban areas. More direct, traffic-calmed secondary streets will allow more people to walk or bike to local destinations.

Virginia has adopted a fairly stringent set of requirements mandating accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists on both public roads and private developments which are accepted by State for maintenance, which in Virginia means almost all development. As the economy recovers, and new development applications fall under the new rules, we will be able to see the results of the new policies.

“Complete Streets”

Routine accommodation policies are sometimes known as “[complete streets](#)” policies.⁵ “Complete streets” are defined as streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, as well as senior citizens, children, and persons with disabilities. The District of Columbia, Virginia, Arlington, Alexandria, and a number of other jurisdictions have adopted or are moving towards complete streets policies.

Federal and State policies have evolved, from not requiring (or in some cases prohibiting) the use of transportation funds for pedestrian or bicycle facilities, towards requiring the provision of such facilities. These federal and state guidelines and policies have led to an increase in the number of pedestrian and bicycle facilities provided, with more facilities provided as part of larger transportation projects rather than as stand-alone projects.

Federal and State policies are also evolving away from encouraging single-use cul-de-sac development patterns typical of the last half of the 20th century, to encouraging mixed use development and a connected street grid that is far more accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists.

⁵ www.completestreets.org

IV: Local Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Nearly every jurisdiction in the region has completed a bicycle or pedestrian plan, and most have at least part time bicycle or pedestrian planner. Table 1-2 shows local and state plans and studies and the year published. Jurisdictions and agencies drew projects from these individual plans and submitted them for incorporation into the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Local plans may include unfunded projects.

**Table 1-2:
Major Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans and Studies
Of the Washington Region**

Jurisdiction/ Agency	Plan/Study	Year
Arlington County	Pedestrian Transportation Plan, Bicycle Transportation Plan, Bike Lane Plan Arlington Master Plan - Pedestrian Element	1997, 1994 2001, 2008
City of Alexandria	Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan	2008
District of Columbia	District of Columbia Bicycle Master Plan , District of Columbia Pedestrian Master Plan	2005, 2009
Fairfax County	Countywide Trails Plan, County Bicycle Map	2002, 2009
Frederick County	Frederick County Bikeways and Trails Plan	1999
City of Gaithersburg	Bikeways and Pedestrian Plan	1999
City of Laurel, Maryland	Bikeway Master Plan	2009
Loudoun County	Loudoun County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	2003
Maryland Department of Transportation	Twenty Year Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan	2002
MNCPPC – Prince George's County	Transportation Priority List (Joint Signature Letter) Countywide Master Plan of Transportation	1999 2009
Montgomery County	Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan	2005
National Planning	Capital Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital	2004

Commission		
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board	Priorities 2000: Metropolitan Washington Greenways & Circulation Systems, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region	2001, 2006, 2010
National Park Service	Paved Recreation Trails Plan	1990
Prince William County	Thoroughfares Plan (part of Comprehensive Plan), Greenways and Trails Plan	1998, 1993
City of Rockville	Bikeway Master Plan	2004
Virginia Department of Transportation, Northern Virginia Office	Northern Virginia Regional Bikeway and Trail Network Study	2003
WMATA	Metrorail Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Planning Study.	2010
Jurisdiction/ Agency	Plan/Study	Year

Table 1-3 shows the approximate number of full-time planners each agency has working on bicycle, pedestrian, and trails planning.

**Table 1-3:
Agency Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning Staff
Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's)**

Jurisdiction/ Agency	Bicycle Planner FTE's	Pedestrian Planner FTE's	Trails Planner FTE's
Arlington County	1	1	1
City of	0.5		

Gaithersburg			
City of Alexandria	0.5	0.5	
City of College Park	0.5		
City of Frederick	0.5	0.5	
City of Rockville	0.5	0.5	
District of Columbia	2	1	1
Fairfax County	1	1	2
Jurisdiction/ Agency	Bicycle Planner FTE's	Pedestrian Planner FTE's	Trails Planner FTE's
Frederick County	0.5	0.5	
Loudoun County	0.5		
Maryland Department of Transportation	1	2	1
MNCPPC – Montgomery County	0.33	0.33	1
MNCPPC – Prince George's County			1
Montgomery County	1	1	1
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board	0.5	0.5	
National Park Service			1
Prince William County			0.5

WMATA	0.5	0.5	
Virginia Department of Transportation, Northern Virginia Office	1	1	
Jurisdiction/ Agency	Bicycle Planner FTE's	Pedestrian Planner FTE's	Trails Planner FTE's

V: Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Precursors to the Current Plan

The Washington region completed its first major bicycle study, the *Washington Regional Bikeways Study* in 1977. This study, created under the supervision of the Regional Bikeways Technical Subcommittee of the Transportation Planning Board Technical Committee, provided an overview of bicycling characteristics and the potential market for bicycle commuting.

In 1988 the Bicycle Technical Subcommittee began work on a bicycle element for incorporation into the region's transportation plan. The plan identified the extent to which bicycle facilities and planning processes already existed in the region, highlighted areas of concern for the future, and drafted a set of policy principles to be applied by the region's jurisdictions in updating their own transportation plans, as well as a list of recommended bicycle projects. The *Bicycle Element* was adopted by the Transportation Planning Board as part of the region's Constrained Long-Range Plan in November 1991.

In 1995, the Transportation Planning Board adopted an update to the 1991 *Bicycle Element*, the Bicycle Plan for the National Capital Region, as an amendment to the Constrained Long-Range Plan. The revised plan emphasized bicycling for transportation and recommended project lists and policy principles produced by the Bicycle Technical Subcommittee.

In February 2001, the TPB completed the *Priorities 2000: Greenways and Circulation Systems* reports, which identified greenway and pedestrian circulation systems priorities.

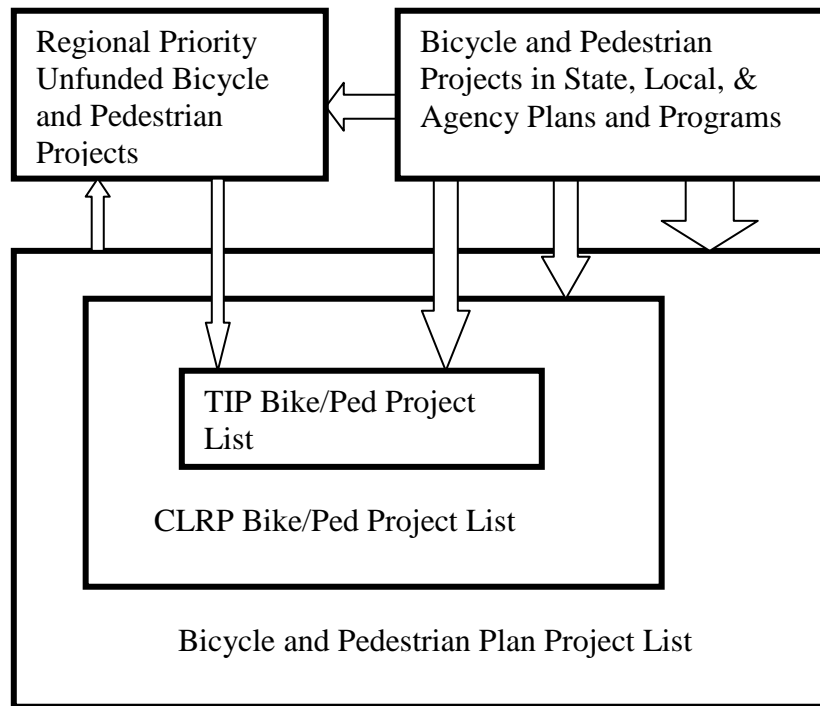
Except for the *Priorities 2000* reports, predecessors to the 2006 *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* were "bicycle" plans. The 2006 plan fully

incorporated pedestrian elements for the first time. This plan is an update to the 2006 plan.

Sources of the Regional Plan Projects

State, local, and agency bicycle and pedestrian plans are the source of the projects in this plan. All bicycle and pedestrian projects that are programmed in the TIP are also in the CLRP and in this plan. The plan, however, includes many projects that are not in the TIP or the CLRP. Figure 1-1 illustrates the relationships between the various project lists.

Figure 1-1



Outlook

The Transportation Planning Board and the Council of Governments have a continuing and growing commitment to walking, bicycling, and the concentration of future growth in walkable, mixed-use activity centers. COG’s *Region Forward 2050* shares the goals of the TPB’s *Vision* and proposes specific performance indicators and a schedule for reporting progress. Increasing the rate at which projects in this plan are constructed is an explicit goal of the Council of Governments’ *Region Forward 2050* vision.

The Federal, State, and local policy environment has been changing in ways that make it more likely that goals of the regional plans will be met. Complete Streets policies are

being adopted, strengthened and implemented. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities in most jurisdictions will no longer be “amenities” which agencies will consider providing, but facilities that they will routinely provide as part of every project. At the same time, land use, parking, and urban design policies are changing in ways that will make walking and bicycling a viable choice for more trips.

As the economy recovers and development restarts, the effects of the policy changes of the last few years will become evident in the way people live, work, and travel in our region.