

# National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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## MEETING NOTES

### BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 19, 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 Dunkel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
Jamie Carrington, WMATA  
Jim Sebastian, DDOT

**Attendance:**

Darren Buck	DDOT
James Carrington	WMATA
Heidi Coleman	NHSTA (by phone)
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Katie Harris	WABA
Meredith Hill	MDOT
Oleg Kotov	City of Rockville (by phone)
Andrea Laughner	Prince George's County DPWT
Kevin Mabey	Strava
Karyn McAlister	Prince George's County DPWT
Marie-Annette Otero	Safe Routes to School (by phone)
Nicky Pires	Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (by phone)
Alyssa Roff	City of Gaithersburg (by phone)

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**COG Staff Attendance:**

Andrew Meese  
Michael Farrell  
Charlene Howard  
Jessica Mirr  
Jon Schermann  
C. Patrick Zilliagus

**1. General Introductions.**

Ms. McAlister chaired the meeting.

**2. Review of the July 18 Meeting Notes**

Jurisdictional updates are missing. Meeting notes were approved.

**3. Jurisdictional Updates**

Mr. Schermann announced an October 31<sup>st</sup> regional freight forum, “Freight and Livability”. Downtown delivery is a major theme. Bicycle and pedestrian planners are welcome to attend.

I-66 parallel path is under design. VDOT is trying to minimize the length which is on the highway side of the sound wall. Where it is inside, VDOT will try to elevate the path above the level of the road. Fairfax County Parkway trail is being repaired, and an overlay will be placed on the trail. Segments will be closed for the overlay.

Prince George’s County is installing bike racks in the County office buildings in Largo. Capital Bikeshare will launch next spring. Station siting is under way. The County has applied for BPPA designation for Prince George’s Plaza area, to make the area more bike and ped friendly. The County has a Towards Zero Deaths plan to reduce highway deaths, which will be released soon.

MDOT is reconvening its task force on pedestrian and bicycle safety. It will deliver recommendations by the end of the year.

**4. Update on the Capital Trails Coalition Mapping Project**

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Ms. Harris is working with the Capital Trails Coalition to promote regional trails development. While we have great trails in the region, we need better connections. WABA and Rails to Trails have been gathering trails data from the jurisdictions, and have used that information to generate a GIS-based map. The Trail Analytics working group of the coalition has been working with that data. The September 28<sup>th</sup> of the Capital Trails Coalition will unveil the regional network map.

Mr. Zilliacus noted that Loudoun and Prince William County were not included. Ms. Harris replied that those counties were not in the initial footprint. Another question was the criteria for inclusion. Ms. Harris replied that we had developed criteria, but the data on things like width was not always available. Older 8 foot trails are being grandfathered into the system. Also, the C&O will be part of the system even though it's not paved. The Cross County Trail is not included because it is not paved. Ms. Engelhart suggested that one of the criteria for grandfathering an existing trail should be volume.

Mr. Farrell said that we were afraid that if we only asked for 8 feet, we would only get 8 feet, so we decided to ask for 10 and grandfather some critical existing trail. We also wanted trails that are passable on a road bike, so paved or firm-surface. Ms. Engelhart urged including portions of the CCT that are used for commuting.

We include some side paths, but one of the criteria is connection to the larger network. We included trails but not bike lanes.

Ms. McAlister asked about the schedule. Ms. Harris replied that the project would end when all the trails are built. There is scope for adding additional trails to the network that meet the criteria. One of the criteria is that a project had to be in an agency plan. Mr. Farrell added that this network is not the total bicycle network of every County; these are the regionally significant trail. We want neighborhood trails and unpaved trails to connect to these spine routes.

Mr. Farrell added that this whole effort was funded by REI. The initial focus is the urban core and directly adjacent jurisdictions, but he had hopes for a future phase that would include more TPB member jurisdictions.

## **5. Strava Bicyclist/Pedestrian Data**

Mr. Mabey spoke remotely to a webinar presentation.

Strava Metro is a social network for cyclists and runners. It has free app with no ads. It allows you to track your activities. People can follow you and make comments. You can upload photos as well. It was founded by cyclists who wanted to sync their training. Anyone who

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wants to track their activities using GPS and Strava can do. There are currently 200 million users globally.

The DC area is a cycling hot spot. 4 million activities were tracked in the DC area last year. There is a heat map that shows concentrations of running and bicycling.

Strava metro was formed to sell this data. In many cases the State DOT will buy the data license, and cover use for all the local agencies and MPO's in the state. Price depends on data volume, coverage area, etc.

The Strava Metro deliverable is aggregated, anonymized GIS data. Anyone with ArcGIS can use it. You can see exactly when people are using your facility.

The Streets map can be overlaid to your street layer. So you'll be able to see minute by minute reports of bicycling and pedestrian activity on every link in your network. There is also an origin and destination layer, so you can see where journeys start and end, by 350 meter hexagon, which allows precision while preserving privacy.

Intersections is another deliverable. The bigger the node, the more activity. You can get crossing time at each intersection. People upload their commutes, so there is good data on commute trips. Strava asks customers for age and gender, but not ethnicity.

Queensland, Australia, was one of the early adopters. They created a new bike trail. After the trail was built, they found that people stopped using the dangerous intersection, and started using the trail.

Tampa was able to use Strava to show where the busiest bicyclist intersections were, as an input to safety planning.

Seattle has used its bike ped counters to verify and calibrate the Strava data. They found a high level of correlation between bike use and Strava users, especially on bridges.

Data comes from Smart phones, smart watches, fitbits, etc. Anything that has GPS. When you get home it syncs with your account via wifi.

People like Strava because they become part of a running or biking community. Strava has 1-2% of the population. But even though it is only 2% it is representative. Ms. Coleman asked how we know it's not just the strong and fearless. Colorado is pushing a citizen-facing campaign to increase use.

Ms. Howard asked how Strava identifies commute trips. Mr. Mabey said that there is a commute button on the map, so the user can flag it as a commute. On the back side, when people go from one place to another, and then stays there all day, that is also flagged as a

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commute. If you just walk your dog to the park and walk it back, that won't get flagged as a commute.

Mr. Buck mentioned that DDOT plans to acquire the Strava data, and then replicate the Seattle study to get the correlation between Strava data and actual walk/bike trips. So far Strava data looks similar to the count data. Contact DDOT if you have more questions. VDOT is interested in the Strava data as well.

Mr. Zilliacus asked if Strava could use our transportation analysis zones. Mr. Mabey replied that Strava can use custom zones. Mr. Zilliacus asked if this data can be overlaid with motorized data like Inrix. Mr. Mabey replied that it could be.

Mr. Farrell asked how many counters Seattle had available to check the Strava data. Mr. Mabey replied that Seattle had 45 counters around the city. If a city buys Strava it can spend less on automated counters.

Seattle overlaid their crash data with the Strava intersection data. The Strava data gives you the volume data at the location that you can compare with the crash data.

Ms. Engelhart thanked Mr. Mabey, and inquired into the possibility of a statewide Virginia license. Mr. Mabey replied that he had spoken with John Bolocek, who said he had no money. Ms. Engelhart suggested that Mr. Mabey speak with the safety people, and expressed interest in the pricing. Mr. Farrell will provide Ms. Engelhart's contact information to Mr. Mabey so that the conversation can continue.

DDOT is also looking at another app, called Ridereport, which sits passively on your phone, always on and gathering data. You don't have to actively start or end a trip. It might do a better job collecting short pedestrian trips. It uses an accelerometer to distinguish between walk and bike trips.

They are a start-up so they don't have the volume of data that Strava has.

Mr. Farrell asked Mr. Buck if this Ride Report start-up might be willing to present the Bike Ped Subcommittee at a future meeting. Mr. Buck replied that they would likely be willing to do that.

Mr. Farrell said that he was intrigued by the always-on aspect. Ms. Howard noted that people won't install an app at all unless they interested in ride-tracking. Mr. Farrell replied that an always-on app would still record short walk trips made by someone who signed up for tracking their runs. Ms. Engelhart asked what the carrot was if it's not a trainer or social network. She suggested that we could get bicyclists to sign up in order to provide data to get improvements made. Ms. Engelhart thought that would be an adequate incentive for bicyclists. Mr. Carrington expressed caution about amplifying a voice, bicyclists, that is often already the loudest in the room. Ms. Engelhart thought it would still be useful within homogenous areas.

Ridereport apparently is bicycle trips only. They emphasize working with governments, bike to work day events, etc.

## **6. Other TPB Program Updates**

- National Capital Trail Project Map. Mr. Farrell briefed the TPB Technical Committee on the National Capital Trail and the project map. There have been a few changes since this group last saw it. Dark green is existing, light green is an existing facility slated to be upgraded, dashed blue is a planned facility meant to fill a gap, and the solid blue are planned short connectors.

This and the list of projects are what we will try to include in the TPB's Long Range Transportation Plan.

- Bike Ped Project Database. Not everyone has put in their data. Ms. Engelhart has a new employee so she will put it in. Ms. Howard said that we will try to map all of the projects in the long range plan, including all the bicycle and pedestrian projects. So we need more information on many of these projects so as to be able to map them. We will pull completed projects into a side database.

Ms. Howard would like to see the From and To fields be required. Ms. Engelhart said yes but with an N/A option. Mr. Farrell promised to speak with Andrew Austin about how difficult that would be. When these requirements were devised Mr. Farrell wasn't thinking about having all the projects mapped. Data is currently spotty and needs to be completed, and there are still duplicate projects. If we had from and to data it would be easier to tell what is a duplicate.

We need to get this done as part of the Long Range Plan. We're trying to get as much ahead of the game as we can from a data perspective. So do it now.

- Mr. Farrell briefed the Subcommittee on the new Street Smart ads and the planned Fall campaign. Ms. Engelhart commented on diversity of the models. With additional funds we may be able to improve, but there is only so much diversity that you can represent with four models.
- Transportation Alternatives Program – Maryland projects. To be approved tomorrow at the TPB meeting. Lots of Safe Routes to School projects, plus bike share in Prince George's County
- State of the Commute Survey Report. Mr. Doug Franklin presented the report, which is hot off the press, and contains considerable information on bike and walk mode share and

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satisfaction by mode. Commuter train commuters have the highest level of satisfaction, despite the higher distance. Walk and bike have very high satisfaction and short commutes. Ms. Engelhart noted that bike and walk distances are short, but times might be longer because it is slower. Mr. Franklin replied that it an urban area, and depending on riding style, it might be faster than driving. Overall walk and bike commutes are both the shortest and the quickest commutes.

Safetrack was occurring during the survey, which harmed satisfaction with Metrorail. Drive alone had a lower satisfaction rating than bus. Lower than carpool too. Why such a low rating? Mr. Franklin replied that driving alone is very stressful.

Of the people who had bike share benefits, 25% used those benefits.

- Car Free Day is this Friday. Mr. Farrell will forward a reminder with the web link. We have 40% more pledges this year than last year. Chipotle is sponsoring with buy one get one free.

Next meeting is Thanksgiving week, which we will probably reschedule.

**7. Adjourned**