

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, May 18, 2010

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Jim Sebastian, DDOT

VICE-

CHAIRS: Kristin Haldeman
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation
David Goodman – Arlington Department of Environmental Services
Fred Shaffer, MNCPPC, Prince George's County

Attendance:

Fatemeh Alladoust	VDOT Northern Virginia (by phone)
David Anspacher	M-NCPPC Montgomery County
Gina Arlotto	WABA/Safe Routes to School
Tim Davis	City of Frederick (by phone)
Jeff Dunckel	Montgomery County DOT (by phone)
Chris Eatough	BikeArlington
RJ Eldridge	Toole Design
Dan Goodman	Toole Design
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Will Handsfield	DDOT
Michael Jackson	MDOT (by phone)
Phil Koopman	BicyclePath (by phone)
Dan Janousek	Prince George's County Park and Planning (by phone)
Yon Lambert	City of Alexandria

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Dan Malaff	Arlington DOT
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
John Thomas	Frederick County Planning (by phone)
Bruce Wright	Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling (by phone)

COG Staff Attendance:

Monica Bansal
Paul Desjardin
Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese

1. General Introductions.

Mr. Sebastian chaired the meeting. Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the March 16, 2010 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Proposed TIGER II Federal Grant Application: Regional Bike Sharing and Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to Metro

Ms. Bansal briefed the Subcommittee on the application. TIGER II is not part of the stimulus bill, but it is a competitive grant. Grants may be between \$10 and \$20 million, and unlike TIGER I they require a 20% local match.

Bike sharing was submitted as part of TIGER I, but was not funded. However, based on the funding criteria we believe there is a reasonable chance the bike sharing program would be funded in this round.

The time-line is very tight, with a pre-application due July 16th. A tight timeline indicates that the USDOT may be looking for programs that did not get funded in TIGER I.

Bike sharing would be a fairly small grant request, not much more than the \$10 million minimum.

Bike sharing will improve access to transit, and the cost-benefit analysis shows positive net benefits. The 20% match may deter some jurisdictions that participated in the previous application.

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Ms. Haldeman noted that bike program funding had been cut and restored recently. It might be possible to use this TIGER grant to fund some bicycle access improvements to bike stations at Metro. WMATA has prepared nine case studies of bike and pedestrian access to Metro stations. The case studies cover various stations across the metro region, some of which are in jurisdictions that will participate in the regional bike sharing application.

Montgomery County will participate in the regional bike sharing application.

Money that has already been programmed for bike sharing or other relevant improvements can be used as match, provided it is not federal funds.

The DOT may choose to fund only part of the program, as they did last time.

Mr. Farrell suggested that a hard improvement would make the most sense as match if it were not so much bike-only, as not pedestrian-only. So a new multiuse path connecting to a bike station should qualify.

The WMATA improvements at nine stations would cost \$6 to \$10 million.

Rough estimate for capital cost is \$3700/bicycle. Agencies should also commit to operating costs of \$155/bike/month, which includes theft and vandalism. It is anticipated that user fees and advertising, at five years, would pay the operating costs. But we can't really know for sure since bike sharing is so new to the United States.

Mr. Sebastian asked about the mechanics of distributing funds. Would federal money go through COG? Ms. Bansal replied that the funds would go through COG, and COG would have MOU's with the individual project owners.

Mr. Sebastian anticipated problems with projects that cross agency and jurisdictional lines. Will COG's involvement complicate matters, or could it help make things happen? If we win the grant, there is a dedicated funding source, which can be an incentive to overcome implementation issues.

The bike/ped plan has mostly unfunded but some funded projects. Whatever project you claim as match should have a plausible relationship to bike sharing. To claim access improvement to a station a reasonable distance ratio should be set.

Mr. Sebastian was not worried about the match for DDOT. However, he expressed some concerns about implementing projects around Metro stations in a timely manner. The grant does not set a deadline, but priority is given to projects that can be completed more quickly.

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Ms. Haldeman said that match funds might be an issue for WMATA.

COG would do MOU's with the individual jurisdictions, and with WMATA, and each agency would do the improvements on its own property.

Ms. Haldeman said that the budgetary climate was not better than at the time of Access 2000, the last major access to Metrorail study, but that the political climate is now more favorable to pedestrian and bicycle access.

Ms. Bansal said that we need to determine quickly, through a working group, who can provide match. One week from today everyone should indicate whether they can participate based on the 20% match requirements. Each jurisdiction can have as many bikes as they can provide match for, within reason.

Ms. Haldeman offered half and 3-mile GIS buffer files around its stations. FTA guidance has changed to a three mile radius for bicycles, within which a bicycle improvement is considered to be related to transit, and transit funds may be spent. Mr. Dunckel asked for the shape files.

Projects should be related to bike sharing, for coherence. A coherent application has a better chance of being funded. Not all the bike share stations have to be directly at transit stations, but may be part of a greater station area. Bike sharing is a "last-mile" solution. The bike stations are movable, so they can be tested at different locations.

4. The Region Forward 2050 Plan

Mr. Desjardin spoke to a powerpoint on the Region Forward 2050 plan.

The Region has long-term challenges. Government, business, and civic groups participated, about 35 people in all. The plan builds on the 1998 TPB Vision, the Regional Activity Centers map, and other planning efforts. A scenarios workshop was held, and an attitudinal survey was conducted. People identify with the Washington region, and want big-picture issues to be dealt with at the regional scale. Traffic/transportation, economy, and education ranked highest among concerns.

More copies of the report are due from the printer.

Region Forward is more than a transportation plan. It identifies goals and targets in a number of different areas, including transportation, the environment, housing, the economy, and land use. Short, medium, and long-term goals are set.

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Region Forward 2050 is a voluntary commitment for those agencies and jurisdictions which endorse it.

A baseline analysis will be conducted, the activity centers map will be updated, and the web site will be updated.

A new federal planning grant program is under development, called the sustainable communities program, which will provide \$100 million for smart growth planning. The Washington region could get a maximum of \$5 million.

A matrix of goals and indicators was distributed.

The transportation modeling may be revised to better account for walk and bike modes.

Ms. Allahdoust noted that we have a baseline, but the target is just “increase”. How much increase is enough? Mr. Desjarden replied that we had not chosen specific targets, but that we wanted to measure progress. The mode share target is for all trips, not just commuter trips.

Mr. Sebastian praised the vigor and comprehensiveness of this regional planning effort.

Mr. Dunkel asked if the 1991 partnership for regional excellence results had been drawn upon. Mr. Desjardin replied that it had been. Most of the goals that that effort generated are essentially the same as in Region Forward 2050. Homeland security and climate change are new goals. Mr. Dunkel noted that we continue to rely on voluntary compacts, and asked if other mechanisms were being considered. Mr. Desjardin replied that other mechanisms had been considered, but there is resistance to “regional government”, or any kind of mandatory authority.

5. Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Database and Plan Update

Mr. Farrell briefed the Subcommittee on the draft plan update. As of yesterday everyone has provided project information for the database. Summary information based on the database still has to be completed. Drafts of chapters one through four are available.

There have been considerable changes in federal and state policy, and the household travel survey gives us much better information on pedestrian and bicycle mode share than we had in the past.

Chapter 5 on goals and indicators needs to be harmonized with the recently developed goals and indicators for Region Forward 2050.

Progress towards a number of performance indicators, such as construction of bicycle and

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pedestrian projects in the plan, can be reported to the TPB on an annual basis.

A working group will meet later to discuss the plan, and a revised version will be prepared for the July Subcommittee meeting.

Having made the effort to bring the database up to date, bringing it up to date on an annual basis will not be as difficult. Mr. Thomas suggested that highlighting the top priority unfunded projects somewhere in the document would be helpful.

The draft plan materials are available on line. Comments can be posted on the Subcommittee blog.

Ms. Allahdoust asked when the remaining chapters would be made available for review. Mr. Farrell replied that updated materials would be posted later.

Mr. Meese suggested that a first draft should go to TPB Technical Committee on July 9th. The July 9th version does not need to be final, since we will present to them again in September. Ms. Allahdoust asked whether we could just go to TPB Tech in September. Mr. Meese replied that he would prefer that the TPB Tech see a draft earlier than September. The draft can be reviewed in June by a working group on June 29th. The draft that goes to the TPB Technical Committee does not have to be a final draft. The earliest the plan will go to the TPB is in September; after the July 9th Technical Committee meeting we will have time to make changes based on comments from all the committees.

Mr. Sebastian decided that one work group meeting in June would be sufficient, followed by July TPB Tech and Bike/Ped subcommittee meetings.

6. TPB Program Updates

Mr. Farrell gave a very brief update on the status of Street Smart, Bike to Word Day, and the Subcommittee listserv.

7. Adjourned