

## **Overview**

This *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* identifies the capital improvements, studies, actions, and strategies that the region proposes to carry out by 2035 for major bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This plan is an update to the 2006 *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region*, which was the first all-new regional plan specifically for bicycle facilities since 1995, and the first-ever regional pedestrian facilities plan.

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), composed of governments and agencies from around metropolitan Washington, has developed this plan with the support of its Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee. The plan incorporates the goals, targets, and performance indicators for walking and bicycling from the *TPB Vision* (1998) and the Council of Governments' *Region Forward 2050* (2010) plans.

In addition to building upon the *TPB Vision*, the *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. These include the TPB's regularly updated Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); federal and state guidance on bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and a wealth of state and local bicycle and pedestrian plans from around the region.

The *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* is intended to be advisory to the CLRP and TIP, and to stand as a resource for planners and the public. In contrast to the CLRP, the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* includes both funded and unfunded projects – projects in this plan may not yet have funding identified to support their implementation.

## **Planning Context**

A number of federal, state, and local activities, as noted above, provide the planning context (Chapter 1) for this document. At all levels the trend is to require or strongly encourage the routine inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in all transportation, a policy sometimes known as “complete streets”.

Jurisdictions and agencies around the region maintain active bicycle and pedestrian planning and coordination programs. Within this context, the TPB incorporates bicycle and pedestrian considerations into overall regional transportation planning, bike-to-work components of the Commuter Connections program, the Transportation-Land Use Connections program, and the region's Access for All Committee concerning minority, low-income, and disabled communities. The Transportation Planning Board and the Council of Governments support bicycling and

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walking and their health, community, pollution reduction, and congestion reduction benefits for the region.

### **Bicycling and Walking in the National Capital Region**

The state of bicycling and walking in the Washington region (Chapter 2) includes success stories, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Data from the 2007/2008 Household Travel Survey, the U.S. Census, surveys, and other sources provide an understanding of where bicycling and walking are found throughout the region, as well as who is walking and bicycling. These data may point to opportunities for increasing these activities, and support the need to consider bicycling and walking in overall roadway and transit planning and engineering.

### **Safety**

Bicycle and pedestrian safety (Chapter 3) is a key challenge for the region. The plan describes the scope of the safety problem, its geographic and demographic distribution across the region, and the legal rights and responsibilities of drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Unfortunately, bicycle and pedestrian safety issues are found throughout the region. The region and member agencies are actively pursuing a number of engineering, enforcement, and educational strategies to reduce deaths and injuries.

### **Existing Facilities**

The Washington region benefits from a number of popular bicycle and pedestrian facilities in place in our communities (Chapter 4). The region's transit agencies have also worked to provide access and accommodation of bicycling and walking to and on their systems. A goal of this plan is to complement and augment the existing system of facilities.

### **Goals and Indicators**

*Region Forward 2050* and the TPB's *Vision* of 1998 both encourage walking and bicycling. *Region Forward 2050* calls for more rapid implementation of the projects in this plan, increased walking and bicycling, and reduced pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities, as well as setting targets and indicators which will measure progress towards the regional goals. It also calls for specific targets and indicators which will measure progress towards the plan goals. Chapter 5 incorporates the goals in the *Vision* and *Region Forward 2050* relevant to walking and bicycling, as well as the corresponding targets and indicators from *Region Forward*. It also suggests additional indicators which could be used to measure progress.

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### **Best Practices**

Convenient and safe bicycle and pedestrian access is a key goal of the TPB's *Vision* and the Council of Governments' *Region Forward 2050* plans. To help achieve this, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee developed a set of recommended best practices (Chapter 6) for the design and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as for the incorporation of bicycling and walking considerations into overall roadway and transit design. Best practices are based upon national and state laws and guidelines.

### **Planned Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities and Improvements**

Improvements included on the plan's list of regional bicycle and pedestrian projects (overview in Chapter 7 and the full listing in Appendix A) were identified, submitted and reviewed by agency staffs of TPB member jurisdictions. The plan includes approximately 330 bicycle and pedestrian facility improvement projects from across the region. If every project in the plan were implemented, in 2030 the region will have added over 500 miles of bicycle lanes, over 625 miles of shared-use paths, hundreds of miles of signed bicycle routes (signage without additional construction), more than 80 pedestrian intersection improvements, and six pedestrian/bicycle bridges or tunnels. A new bicycle and pedestrian crossing over the Potomac would be created, at the American Legion Bridge, and bridges over the Anacostia River would be improved for pedestrians and bicyclists. In addition, 21 major streetscaping projects would improve pedestrian and bicycle access and amenities in DC, Ballston-Rosslyn, Columbia Pike, Tysons Corner and other locations.

If it implements the projects in this plan, by 2035 the region will have over 1700 miles of bike lanes and multi-use paths, more than three times the current total.

### **Progress since the 2006 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

71 projects from the 2006 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan have been completed, including the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail, the DC Bike Station at Union Station, and the College Park Trolley trail. The region added 52 miles of multiuse path, and 9(?) miles of bike lane. This does not include projects that have been partially completed, or any privately provided facilities, or projects such as sidewalk retrofits that were too small to be included in a regional plan.

The Washington region has become a national leader in innovative policies and designs, with the District of Columbia becoming the first city in the country to implement a [bike sharing](#) (public self-service bicycle rental) program.

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### **Costs**

Total estimated cost of projects in the draft plan is about \$1 billion (2010 dollars). For projects without an agency-submitted estimate, or in which the project appeared to be part of a larger transportation project, cost was imputed on a mileage and project type basis. Cost estimates should be considered as order-of-magnitude and in most cases do not reflect engineering-level estimates.

### **On-Line Resources**

Development of the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* has benefited from an on-line plan project database, a resource separate from the printed document. Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee members were able to view, enter, and edit their project listings on-line. This on-line database will facilitate keeping the regional list accurate and up-to-date, and will facilitate integration of information from this plan into the region's *Constrained Long-Range Plan* and Transportation Improvement Program as necessary. A public access version of this on-line version of this database can be found at <http://www.mwcog.org/bikepedplan/>.

### **Outlook**

The TPB's *Vision* and the Council of Governments' *Region Forward 2050* plans call for convenient, safe bicycle and pedestrian access, walkability in regional activity centers and the urban core, reduced reliance on the automobile, increased walking and bicycling overall, inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in new transportation projects and improvements, and implementation of a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan. The *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* provides a blueprint for making the region a better place for bicycling and walking.