

**Bicycling, Walking and the Vision
of the Transportation Planning Board**

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board has long recognized the benefits of bicycling and walking in the region's multi-modal transportation system. The Transportation Planning Board's Transportation Vision for the 21st Century, adopted in 1998, emphasizes bicycles and pedestrians in its goals, objectives and strategies. A key part of the *Vision* is a strong urban core and a set of regional activity centers, which will provide for mixed uses in a walkable environment and reduced reliance on the automobile. The *Vision* also calls for the implementation of a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan. Recommendations in this plan will help realize the *Vision*.



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Region Forward 2050

The Council of Governments is currently developing Region Forward, a vision for the National Capital region in 2050. 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.

*The Urban Core has a
Growing Network of Bicycle
Lanes*

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Bicycling and Walking in the National Capital Region

Walking and Bicycling account for 28.3% of all trips in the region

The Washington region is nationally known for the quality, beauty, and extent of its bicycle paths. Its walkable core neighborhoods attract residents and visitors alike. The region has a strong foundation of walking and bicycling facilities to build upon.¹

Taken together, bicycling and walking ~~are~~ a significant and growing mode of transportation in the Washington region. According to the Metropolitan Washington Council of

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¹ DC Bicycle Lane Photo: COG/TPB /Michael Farrell

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region

INTRODUCTION



Governments' ~~2008+1999~~ Household Travel Survey ~~there are roughly 1.1 million pedestrian trips per day in the region, which is walking and bicycling account for 97.8% of all trips in the Washington region, up from 8.3% in 1994. - There are roughly 76,000 bicycle trips per day in the region, which is one-half of one percent of the almost 14 million daily trips for all modes of transportation.~~

Recent years have seen progress for bicyclists and pedestrians. Several major new trails ~~and bridges~~ have opened, and most local governments have adopted bicycle, pedestrian, and/or trail plans. ~~The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority~~ Most of the transit agencies in the region, ~~has eliminated the requirement for bike on rail permits, expanded bicycle boarding hours, and have~~ added bike racks to ~~their~~ buses. ~~-~~ Bicycle or pedestrian coordinators and trail planners are now found at most levels of government.

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The Woodrow Wilson Capital Crescent Trail Bridge Trail over Rock Creek, Chevy Chase, MD opened in 2009³

In accordance with federal guidance and new state policies, pedestrian and bicycle facilities are increasingly being provided as part of larger transportation projects. Employers are investing in bike facilities at work sites, and developers are including paths in new construction.² A pilot bike sharing program, Smartbike, the first such program in the United States, has been implemented in the District of Columbia, and a large-scale regional bike sharing program is in the planning phases.

Bicycling and walking could reach a greater potential in the Washington region, however. Many trips currently taken by automobile could ~~potentially~~ be taken by bicycle. The average work trip length for all modes in the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area is 16.2 miles.³ But 17% of commute trips are less than five miles, a distance most people can cover by bicycle.

² ~~Woodrow Wilson Bridge Capital Crescent~~ Trail Photo: ~~COG/TPB / Michael Farrell~~Montgomery County DPWT/ Wayne Phyllaier

³ National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, 2004 *State of the Commute Survey Report*, November, 2004, p. 22.

Many people who live far from their jobs, but closer to transit or a carpool location could walk or bike to transit or the carpool instead of driving. The average trip distance to transit or carpool is only 3.1 miles.⁴ Only 15% of transit riders and carpoolers travel more than five miles to the transit or carpool location⁵

One fourth of all driver trips in the Washington Region are less than 1½ miles long.

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The potential for shifting non-work trips to bicycling or walking is **probably** even greater than for work trips. The average non-work trip is a little more than five miles, and nearly 3/4 of all trips are non-work trips.⁶ The median auto driver trip in the Washington region, according to the 2008 COG Household Travel Survey, is four miles. The median trip for an auto passenger is only 2.8 miles. One fourth of all auto trips are less than 1½ miles in length. Destinations such as schools, shopping, and recreational facilities are often close enough to walk or bicycle. Bicycling and walking have considerable potential to displace automobile trips if suitable transportation, design, safety, parking, school siting, and land development policies are followed.

Plan Development and Organization

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This plan has been prepared by the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Washington region. The TPB is made up of representatives of 20 local governments, the departments of transportation of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, the state legislatures, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). Member jurisdictions are shown in Figure i-1 on page i-4. The area of the TPB members plus Calvert County in Maryland and Stafford County in Virginia comprises the Washington, DC-MD-VA Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

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This document presents the long-range Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the Washington Region through the year 2035⁹. The plan is a list of regional projects identified by the TPB member jurisdictions, accompanied by recommended best practices and a description of existing facilities and regional trends for bicycling and walking. This plan includes both funded and unfunded projects. It does not specify design guidelines, but refers instead to state and national guidelines

⁴ Ibid, p. 27.

⁵ Ibid, p. 27.

⁶ National Capital Regional Transportation Planning Board, 1994COG/TPB Household Travel Survey: Summary of Major Findings, January, 1998. Page 5.

for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

This update of the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* seeks to reflect the goals, objectives and strategies of the 1998 *TPB Vision and Region Forward 2050* while building on information from previous bicycle plans.

Pedestrian access and safety receives increased attention in this update, reflecting increased attention to pedestrian issues by the TPB member governments and agencies. ~~also fully incorporates pedestrian issues for the first time.~~ Pedestrian planning is most needed at the county, and neighborhood level. There is, however, a role for regional pedestrian planning. By recommending policies and keeping track of regional trends, we can help make the Washington area a better place to walk.⁷



*The New York Avenue Metro Station
Incorporates a Shared-Use Path and Bicycle Parking* city

⁷ New York Avenue Metro Station Photo: DDOT/Jim Sebastian

