**MEETING NOTES**

**BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE**

**DATE**: Tuesday, July 18, 2023

**TIME**: 1:00 p.m.

**PLACE**: VIRTUAL

**CHAIR**: Stephanie Piperno, DDOT

**Attendance:**

Bryan Barnett-Woods City of Rockville

Bryce Bundens WMATA (consultant)

Bryce Barrett Prince William County DOT Bike/Ped Coordinator

Emma Blondin DDOT

Andrew Bossi Montgomery County DOT

Lisa Campbell Bike Loudoun

George Clark Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

Henry Dunbar BikeArlington

David Edmondson City of Frederick

Mike Doyle Alexandria Families for Safer Streets

Nate Evans Active Transportation Planner, Maryland Department of Transportation

Eli Glazier Montgomery Planning

Elwyn Gonzalez Transportation Planner, Arlington DES

Alex Freedman City of Takoma Park

Laura Ghosh Loudoun County DOT

David Goodman WMATA (consultant)

Michael Hackman City of Gaithersburg, Long Range Planner

Yolanda Hipski Tri County Council for Southern Maryland

Michael Jackson Prince George’s County Planning

Dwight Jenkins VA DMV, Highway Safety Office

Tiffany Jennings Bicycle & Pedestrian Program Manager, Prince George's County DPW&T

Jill Kanoff NVRC

Joe Kelley Frederick County

Aisha Khan Vision Zero Program Coordinator, Prince George's County DPW&T

Kalli Krumpos Capital Trails Coalition

Dustin Kuzan Loudoun County DOT

Brian Leckie City of Manassas

Mackenzie Love NVRC

Sean Martin City of Alexandria

Charlene Mingus BMC

Heidi Mitter VDOT NOVA District Bike/Ped Coordinator

Doug Mowbray MHSO, Data Manager

Allen Muchnick Active Prince William

Kevin O’Brien Washington Area Bicyclist Association

Daniel Paschall Mid-Atlantic Manager, East Coast Greenway Alliance

Kelly Peterson Toole Design

George Phillips Prince William County

Chloe Ritter City of Fairfax

Jon Tygret WMATA

Cynthia Spriggs MDOT/MVA/MHSO, Pedestrian/Bicycle/Speed Program Manager

Eileen Sheridan Greater Prince William Trails Coalition

Kimberly Vacca DDOT

Nicole Wynands Fairfax County

Yue Zhang, WMATA

**COG Staff Attendance:**

Michael Farrell

Tim Canan

Pierre Gaunaurd

Charlene Howard

Andrew Meese

Janie Nham

1. **General Introductions.**
2. **Review of the March meeting notes**

The May meeting notes were approved.

1. **Jurisdictional Updates**

 MDOT is doing is reviewing applications for its bikeways program.

Rockville has a separated bikeways project downtown that is under construction. Rockville will get a bike counters contract.

MDSHA recently announced some safety awards. The September Pedestrian Bicycle Emphasis Area Team meeting will be in person at SHA.

Charles County was awarded an MDOT grant for a bike/ped study in Waldorf.

Prince George’s County held a Bike N Roll Safety Day. Today and tomorrow the Street Smart display with be at the Largo MVA.

Prince William County has received a $1 million Safe Streets and Roads for All grant for a Towards Zero Deaths Action Plan. The results of the plan will be used to recommend future bike and ped safety initiatives. The zoning ordinance will also be updated to include things like bike parking for various types of land uses, showers and lockers for larger developments, etc. This will be a 1-2 year process.

Loudoun County also won a Safe Streets for All grant, and will put together a safety study. A link to the Algonquin Parkway path project has been placed in the chat. This project will allow people to ride from the W&OD to the Potomac river. Bike and paddleboard combination trips will become easier. The County has also done a study on sidewalks and trails through an equity lens.

Virgina Highway Safety Office is working on its safety grants. Pedestrian fatalties are down statewide, but bicycle fatalities are up. Next Tuesday the DMV state pedestrian safety task force will meet.

On Tuesday the 25th VDOT will host the pedestrian and bicycle advisory group will meet in Richmond and on-line. This group meets quarterly. The Northern Virginia Bicycle and Pedestrian Study is ongoing. The purpose is to come up with an estimate of what it would take to fund planned Northern Virginia Trails. The Virginia State Trails office will start a State Trails Plan. A link is provide the chat. Transform 66 project is still wrapping up. Additional segments will open later this summer. VDOT also has a vulnerable road user assessment under way; there will be a workshop on August 9. Ms. Mitter can provide further information for those who are interested.

DDOT will be hosting pre-construction meeting on the Fort Totten to Takoma section of the Met Branch Trail this evening, and a meeting on the Arboretum Bridge on July 29.

1. **National Capital Trail Network Update**

This item was deferred until September.

1. **Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

Mr. Evans spoke to a powerpoint, explaining how the State conducted its statewide bike network level of stress analysis. Level of stress analysis looks at making recommendations for improvements to create improved comfort levels for various audiences. The state developed an inventory on bicycle facility types such as bike lanes, shared use paths, protected bike lanes, and bike boulevards. Bike lanes were recorded by side of the road, and two or one-way. The state used the accessibility ratings recommended by People for Bikes. Access to various services and land uses was analyzed. Each census tract received a ”Bikescore”. There was also a gap analysis.

The facility inventory, level of stress analysis, and accessibility analysis are the basis of the statewide bicycle and pedestrian plan. It includes instructions for localities that want to do this process locally.

The draft plan will be released after Labor Day. A link to the project page is in the chat.

Mr. Phillips asked whether different types of facilities were recommended for different types of users. Mr. Evans replied that it was. Mr. Phillips said that he looked forward to looking at the plan.

Mr. Kuzan asked about the Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area. Mr. Evans replied that those were still valid, but that they were being wrapped into the context driven recommendations. So needs, not just political will.

1. **Regional RAISE Grant for the Capital Trails Network**

Ms. Krumpos and Mr. Daddio spoke to a powerpoint on the successful Raise Grant application. Mr. Daddio is with the National Park Service, and Ms. Krumpos is with the Capital Trails Coalition.

The RAISE grant process is very competitive. But the project has received a $25 million grant to fill gaps in the regional bicycle and pedestrian network. Six segments have been funded.

The Prince George’s County Executive Office applied on the behalf of DDOT and M-NCPPC Prince George’s County. Within M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks and Prince George’s Parks and Recreation held some of the segments. Compelling, ready, competitive projects were the selection criteria. So inside the beltway, trail rehab, and shovel-ready new construction. The $25 million doesn’t go far, so projects that already had some funding were prioritized, for a total of $73 million for these projects. The marquee project is the Arboretum Bridge, but the others are also very important, and serve under-served area. None of these segments are in a high-income area. Safety and crash history were considered too – where there are a lot of pedestrian and bicycle crashes on nearby roads the trails can provide a safer alternative. 600,000 people live near these projects. As a package these projects were more competitive than they would have been individually.

This is not the first try, Capital Trails Coalition applied in 2020 and did not secure funding at that time. If you have a good project, keep applying.

The funds have to be obligated by September 2027, and fully expended by 2032.

This was complicated process involving many partners.

There are other funding opportunities on the horizon, including Reconnecting Communities and Transportation Alternatives.

Ms. Love from NVTA asked how disadvantaged areas were identified. Mr. Daddio replied that there are many definitions. Suggested not to get too creative; use the USDOT definition.

Ms. Fang asked whether any of the projects cross freeway on an off ramps. Mr. Daddio replied that he wasn’t sure, but many of these projects were along state highways that did not have safe bike and ped accommodation.

Mr. Farrell noted that COG has given out money before to study the Central Avenue corridor. It crosses roads that connect to the Commanders football stadium so there are large volumes of fast traffic.

1. **DC Sidewalk Gap Filling/Prioritization**

Mr. Branyan spoke to a Powerpoint. DDOT like many jurisdictions has a program to fill sidewalk gaps. The city has provided more resources for this program, which now has a full time program manager. The Active Transportation section of DDOT has grown immensely over the last five years.

Cost per gap segment is $745,000 per mile. Total needs are $173 million for 233 miles of sidewalk gaps. Neighborhoods built after the second world war, often in outer SE or upper NW, were built without sidewalks. Ward 3 has the most sidewalk gaps.

DDOT has deployed an army of staff to assess gaps in person, and found in many cases that they were no longer gaps. Recent aerial photos were faster and sufficiently accurate. Tree, slope and utility conflicts were also assessed, and were part of the recommendation to build or not.

Each gap segment was given a score based on a number of selection criteria. Proximity to parks, transit, recreation, or schools were ranked, as well as the functional class of the roadway, since higher function classes are more dangerous to walk on.

DDOT, instead of just using race or income for equity, DDOT is using traffic safety risk, low access to transit, and low access to jobs and destinations to assess need. This method results in some high income areas being included are priorities for new sidewalks. However overall the need rating correlates with race and income.

Ms. Love asked what kinds of destinations were being considered under access to jobs and key destinations. The documentation doesn’t define those destinations, but Mr. Branyan though it referred to shopping and other needs.

Ms. Mitter asked how DDOT dealt with design challenges. How rigid are the guidelines? Mr. Branyan replied that DDOT always tries to do a 6’ sidewalk with a 4’ buffer. But as needed it may go down to 5’, 4’ in a pinch. If there’s a slope the buffer may have to be eliminated. DDOT tries not to move the curb because of the drainage implications. Retaining walls may be sued if necessary. So there typically isn’t impact on parking. DDOT owns a lot of right of way outside the curb – it’s usually 15’, and may go right up to people’s front stoop. The main constraint is topography, not right of way.

If there is no compliant landing pad for a transit stop, that would be added as part of the project.

Daniel with East Coast Greenway asked about impacts on the bike network. Is there some consideration of informal use of the sidewalk by bicyclists. Mr. Branyan replied that some sidewalks had been widened to accommodate bicycle traffic. Much of Mass Avenue will have its sidewalks widened for bike traffic. This often means widening from 6’ to 10’ so that the sidewalk can function as a shared use path.

1. **Other TPB Program Updates**

Recommendations have been made for the MD trasnporation alternatives projects. Much of the money will go for the La Plata bikeway, which will connect up all their public schools with their parks and the town of La Plata. The Forest Glen Road sidewalk connects to the Forest Glen Metro Station. The New Design Road sidepath Phase II in Frederick County will connect Fredericksburg to the C&O towpath. The Industrial Drive path connection will connect Gaithersburg and Montgomery County bicycle networks, using an existing bridge over a freeway that has no entrance ramps. Downtown Rockleville will get a streetscaping project. The town of Brunswick with get a comfort station near the C&O towpath and the park and ride for the MARC train.

Mr. Farrell announced that there would be an update both of the TPB’s long range transporation plan and the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan in 2024.

Mr. Farrell will post the chat on the Subcommittee web site.

All but one presentation from today’s meeting have been posted. Mr. Farrell promised to check the web site to make sure they were showing up.

**Adjourned**