

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, May 21, 2019

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Room 1, First Floor
777 North Capitol Street NE
Washington, DC 20002

CHAIR: George Branyan, DDOT

**VICE-
CHAIRS:**

Jeff Dunckel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Cindy Engelhart, VDOT
Jamie Carrington, WMATA

Attendance:

Marty Baker	MDOT
George Branyan	DDOT
James Carrington	WMATA
Mike Doyle	Alexandria Families for Safe Streets
Henry Dunbar	BikeArlington
Jeff Dunckel	Maryland Highway Safety Office
Laura Ghosh	Loudoun County DOT (by phone)
Laurel Hammig	National Park Service
Katie Harris	WABA
Joe Kelley	Frederick County
Oleg Kotov	City of Rockville (by phone)
Christine Mayeur	City of Alexandria (by phone)
Heidi Mitter	VDOT
Peter Sotherland	MDSHA (by phone)
John Thomas	Montgomery County DOT (by phone)

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Janet Walker
John Wetmore
Rich Viola

George Mason (by phone)
Perils for Pedestrians
Arlington Department of Environmental Services

COG Staff Attendance:

Stacy Cook
Michael Farrell
Charlene Howard
Ken Joh
Andrew Meese (by phone)
Jon Schermann

- 1. General Introductions.**
- 2. Review of the March 19 Meeting Notes**

Minutes were approved, with a couple of edits.

- 3. Jurisdictional Updates**

Arlington County Board has adopted the new bicycle master plan element. There is more attention to safety and comfort levels, as well as upgrading existing facilities to make them more comfortable to use. The plan is available on line.

Bike to Work day was very successful in Arlington.

Alexandria Families for Safe Streets is looking to create chapters in Arlington and Fairfax. They are also working on a near-miss GIS database.

MDOT has launched bikes on MARC, and for Bike to Work Day expanded that service onto the Camden and Brunswick lines. MDOT also has a bike-friendly business program. Vision Zero legislation is in process. A scooter bill was passed.

The Highway Safety Summit on April 17 was very successful, except for the power outages. Maryland had 133 pedestrian fatalities in 2018, which is up from 2017. Bike fatalities are down. One quarter of traffic fatalities are now non-motorized. Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County drove the increase. MHSO will now be able to share location-specific crash data with its partner agencies. MDOT is also studying pedestrian and bicycle crashes to identify causes and possible countermeasures. MDOT is using 2016 crashes since the adjudication on those

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crashes is complete. On June 3 the Look Alive campaign will be launched in Towson. The Subcommittee can't see it now, but we can show it at the next Subcommittee meeting. The Baltimore effort is modeled on the Street Smart program.

Baltimore County is tied with Prince George's County for pedestrian fatalities, at 28 fatalities.

Mr. Dunckel distributed a hand-out with some pedestrian crash numbers.

Maryland's Vision Zero bill requires that the State establish a Vision Zero plan and hire a coordinator. MHSO plans to repackage the State Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

WMATA is ramping up its capital planning and programming, looking at its suburban station areas to improve pedestrian and bicycle access on-site. Many stations still look the way they did in 1979, even as the areas around them have changed drastically. WMATA is looking for jurisdictional feedback and suggestions.

Alexandria is working on the Metro shutdown, specifically wayfinding signs for people looking to bike around the shutdown using bike share and other non-car means.

Largo had a well-attended Bike to Work Day. Prince George's County is recruiting a new Pedestrian Safety Coordinator.

Loudoun County is developing a trails plan and is updating its comprehensive plan. Loudoun is working with COG to expand the National Capital Trail.

The City of Rockville had a 20% increase in registrations at its two pit stops for Bike to Work Day. The City is also working on a Vision Zero plan.

Jonathan Rogers has left DDOT for the Mayor's office. He is now in a position to get other city agencies on board with Vision Zero, such as law enforcement.

There is a vigorous internal debate over pushing forward with more road diets, and generally over how much to restrict traffic in order to promote safety. On Florida Avenue NE near Gallaudet there will be a jersey barrier installed in the travel lane to create a temporary ADA-compliant pedestrian passage. The existing sidewalk is not ADA-compliant. Next year the street will be completely rebuilt with a wider sidewalk.

The bike lane contract has been let, so on Alabama Avenue in SE DC there will be a new striping plan with bike lanes and pedestrian refuge islands. Southern Avenue, Alabama Avenue, and MLK have the highest number of fatalities, and DDOT has projects in the works for all of them.

4. TPB Regional Travel Survey Update

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Mr. Joh spoke to a PowerPoint. He gave a briefing on the survey to this Subcommittee in October of 2017, nearly two years ago, before it was launched.

The information that we collect from these surveys provide inputs into the regional travel demand models, as well as information for regional and sub-regional studies. The surveys ask for detailed information on all trips taken by a household within a limited time period.

We've carried out these types of surveys every ten years, since 1968. In 1968 the first survey was carried out face to face, which was challenging given conditions at the time. Surveys have been done since by telephone, mail, and now by internet.

The main survey was conducted over a one-year period, to capture seasonal variations in travel.

The survey consisted of two parts: a recruitment survey, and then a travel day survey, for which each household logged a detailed travel day. Recruitment was carried out by mail. There was a participation incentive in the form of a gift card. Response rate was 5%. 300,000 households were sent invitations, and 16,000 households were surveyed.

Households were randomly selected. The survey area included 22 major jurisdictions, including 11 TPB jurisdictions. The survey region was intended to cover the commute shed for the Washington region. So not just TPB member jurisdictions. MWCOG coordinated with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, since three of their surveyed jurisdictions overlapped with ours. Casa de Maryland helped with Hispanic outreach to ensure adequate representation of Hispanics. All the survey materials were translated into Spanish. Arlington County also purchased an add-on component for Arlington.

Washington County is part of a different MPO and was not included.

Questions included car share and bike share, HOT lanes, and other new developments since the last household travel survey. Changes suggested by this Subcommittee were incorporated. E-scooters were not included, since in 2017 e-scooters were not yet prevalent. There was a "please specify" option. The survey asked how many bicycles were in working order, including both child and adult bicycles.

16,000 households completed the survey, which exceeds the goal of 15,000 for this survey. This is the largest household survey that we have ever conducted. The last one had only 11,000 households. This is a costly effort, so we only do it every ten years. For the larger jurisdictions the larger sample size allows them to do their own analyses, but not the smaller ones.

"In and out" refers to inside activity centers versus outside activity centers. We over-sampled within activity centers. All the targets for the survey were met across the entire region.

Data collection ended in December 2018, and staff has been working on cleaning the data set.

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Once that work is completed the data analysis can start. Eventually the anonymized data will be made available to the public, some time in FY 2020.

Mr. Carrington asked if there were any plans to cross-reference the survey data with other data sets? Mr. Joh replied that there were. Ms. Howard mentioned Strava and other sources such as counters, bike share data, etc.

Mr. Joh said that the data analysis would continue through next Fall at least, when some initial findings can be released.

5. Regional Roadway Safety Update

Mr. Schermann spoke to a PowerPoint.

Mr. Schermann presented on the regional highway safety targets last year.

Since November the regional highway safety targets have been adopted by the Board. The targets are based on five-year averages. Unfortunately, the data has been moving in the wrong direction, resulting in targets higher than the ones set last year. Many Board members expressed concern that the staff-proposed targets were not aspirational enough. So, this year we have expressed more aspirational goals in the “whereas” clauses of the resolution. It also gives more context to the highway targets, couching them as ways of measuring the region’s progress and safety trends. Also, we are not asking the Board to endorse higher targets than they endorsed last year.

A major effect of adopting the performance measures has been to put safety in front of the Board, frequently, on their own request. The DOT’s now report progress on safety on a quarterly basis. So there is a now a safety item on the board agenda at nearly every meeting.

VDOT presented in March, then DDOT in April, and MDOT presented in May. In the first round of presentations the states reviewed their overall safety programs, budget levels, and the causes of fatalities and injuries in their States.

For a future round, the States will be asked to talk about how the TPB members can help the States meet their safety goals.

COG plans to hire a consultant to study regional transportation safety. While the States have their own safety studies, we don’t have region-level transportation safety study. The Board is supportive of a study. The study will cost \$100,000, and it will help us better analyze location-specific crash data which Maryland and the other States are now making available. Based on crash patterns, the study will help us develop as set of recommendations, especially actions that

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the Board members can take themselves.

The RFP was proposed in mid-January, and we received nine proposals, which were analyzed by a technical selection panel, which included representatives from the States. Cambridge Systematics won the RPF, and we are in the process of getting them under contract. An advisory panel with representatives from the States will oversee the study.

In another development, Prince George's County Councilmember Monique Anderson-Walker has developed a new safety campaign called "driving it home". She had identified a lot of the problems, and she wants to engage with the Board and our subcommittees to develop ideas. Her district is southern Prince George's County.

The Citizens Advisory Committee is also very interested in safety and we are working with them.

Kelly Melham was the Maryland representative on the selection panel.

Mr. Dunkel how these targets relate to Vision Zero. Mr. Schermann replied that it won't affect the operating goals. Mr. Branyan noted that the only rate is by VMT, not by population. If we drive more, the rate looks better even if fatalities don't go down.

Mr. Schermann replied that the federal law prescribes the measures. The original version of these goals had nothing about nonmotorized fatalities and injuries; that goal was added in response to public comment. Nothing in the federal law prevents states from considering rates per population as well, but the rate per VMT is what must be reported to the Feds. We need better exposure data for peds and bikes. But the bottom line for DC is still to reduce fatalities and serious injuries to zero, not just to reduce the rate. Mr. Branyan noted that DC's rate per population might go down just due to population growth. Mr. Farrell replied that the rate per population was a truer representation of people's risk of getting hurt or killed, rather than rate per VMT. If you can reduce your fatalities by reducing your VMT, that's good. Mr. Schermann noted that some of the federal targets were absolute numbers, not rates.

Ms. Mitter of VDOT introduced herself.

6. Expansion of the National Capital Trail – Update

Mr. Farrell spoke to a PowerPoint. The National Capital Trail is one of the aspirational elements of Visualize 2045, the TPB's long range transportation plan.

The current National Capital Trail route around the core serves quite a few people and jobs.

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However, the TPB has called for the expansion of the National Capital Trail into a regional trails plan.

The timing for this initiative has been good. We've been able to make use of four years of planning work by the Capital Trails Coalition, which was funded by REI.

Mr. Farrell recapitulated the selection criteria which were distributed at the March meeting.

Connectivity is a major goal – every trail should be connected to the regional network at least one point.

Existing or planned facilities are acceptable.

Mr. Farrell asked the Subcommittee to approve these criteria. These criteria are a lightly modified version of criteria that the Capital Trails Coalition has already spend considerable time vetting.

Ms. Melham asked about the 10' width criterion. Mr. Farrell replied that there is an exception for pretty much every rule. Existing trails can be 8' wide. And new trails can be less than 10' wide in short segments where there are design constraints. However, 10' is AASHTO width, so we should strive for 10'. It can be narrower than 10' at pinch points, but not for long sections.

There is always a provision for adding more trails, but we hope that everything that we add should meet the selection criteria. We don't want to dilute the vision, the goal of facilities that serve people of all ages and abilities. And this can be an incentive to fix your trails planning, to connect your facilities, and bring your planned facilities up to what AASHTO recommends.

Another notable criterion is density. We're looking for roughly the same density of facilities in the outer counties as has already been done in the central jurisdictions by the Capital Trails Coalition. We don't want to incorporate the entire trails plan. These are meant to be long-distance routes.

Frederick County is working on something to fill a gap in Frederick City that under the current plan won't meet these criteria. When you ask people to achieve a certain goal, it gives them an incentive to achieve that goal.

The National Capital Trail is already a scoring factor in rating Transportation Alternatives and Transportation Land Use Connections grants. There are other scoring criteria for those funds.

Mr. Farrell expressed concern about accepting facilities that don't meet the selection criteria, that aren't safe or comfortable for all ages and abilities. Ms. Melham noted that Maryland had other criteria such as heritage areas, etc. which aren't identical to the National Capital Trail selection criteria. Mr. Farrell replied that the National Capital Trail is not meant to encompass all types

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facilities; a local trails plan could include other types of facilities, such as hiking trails, mountain biking areas, or equestrian paths.

Ms. Howard added that the vision of the National Capital Trail is stimulating the Counties to change their plans so that these facilities will be connected once they are built.

Mr. Farrell added that we have multiple criteria for TA and TLC funding, such as serving disadvantaged areas, transit stations, activity centers, etc. It will take a long time to get this done, but it's good to have an idea of where you are going.

Mr. Branyan said that it is very reasonable to expect that bike trails should be 10' wide, and the other selection criteria look reasonable.

A resolution endorsing the proposed TPB selection criteria for the Capital Trails Network passed by show of hands. Five in favor, no opposed, one abstention.

Mr. Farrell then provided a brief update on the state of the work, including an agreement by the Subcommittee to provisionally accept the Capital Trails Coalition's network.

TPB staff have visited Frederick, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties to discuss the project and data gathering. Three of the four outer Counties have plausible networks to add. Charles County may be able to tweak the language in the South Maryland Transitway to provide a connection. Plan changes need to have Executive or at least agency head approval, not just staff approval. A formally adopted plan is strongly preferred.

Ms. Mitter asked who attended the Loudoun meeting. Mr. Farrell named Laura Ghosh as the host; the others he has written down and can provide the list. Ms. Mitter wondered if VDOT was involved. Mr. Farrell said that we may visit VDOT as well.

So far only Charles County has sent data, but we'll circle back around with them. Once we have the GIS layers, we can apply the selection criteria, vet the results with the jurisdictions, and bring the results back to the Subcommittee. We hope to have the TPB adopt an expanded National Capital Trail network in Fall 2019.

7. Other TPB Program Updates

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update**

As a follow-on to the National Capital Trail, Mr. Farrell will update the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region, completion of which was deferred to prioritize expanding the National Capital Trail. The data gathering for the National Capital Trail will help us get some of the data that we need update the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

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The project database is the core of the plan. It was developed in 2006 with no GIS layers. Only select major projects were mapped.

Mr. Farrell briefly discussed the guidelines for what should and should not be in the regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Agencies have discretion on what they put in.

The plan is closer to an “all-build” list than it is to a prioritized list. There is no funding attached to it, other than being able to note that it is in the regional plan. Projects should be removed from the regional plan if they are removed from the local plan and they will never be built. If a project is completed, the status should be changed to “complete”. That helps us track what we have built. “Complete” projects should be a layer that we can turn on and off, leave on the map or not.

We also want to get GIS layers for all the projects for which that is appropriate, so that this plan can be mapped. The original plan was paper and PDF focused, so mapping every project was not feasible, but we want to make the plan more interactive, on-line, and public-facing.

Ms. Howard noted that there was a lot of junk in the database, a lot of outdated information. We want to join every project with the geodatabase, so that we can map every project. We need common fields, and more information for certain projects.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan must be completed in FY 2020.

Come Fall 2019, as we finish the Expand the National Capital Trail, Mr. Farrell will start setting some hard deadlines and work with agency staffers to get them done.

- **Dockless Workshop III – May 30**

We have fifty registrants for the workshop. The speakers have confirmed. The agenda will be the same format as last year.

The COG parking garage will be closed on the day of the workshop to anyone who isn't a monthly parker. That doesn't affect bicyclists.

- **Other Ideas for Professional Development Workshops**

FHWA is promoting a Bikeway Selection Guide workshop. Members suggested working with Capital Bikeshare to get bikes for the workshop.

- **TLC Awards**

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TLC award winners are listed in the hand-out.

- **Governor Harry Nice Bridge**

Action on adding the Nice Bridge to the transportation improvement program was deferred at the most recent TPB meeting due to an inaccurate description. Board members expressed concern over safety of the shared lane option for the bridge.

Mr. Meese noted that the Nice Bridge was already in the TIP. The action was to change the financial assumptions in the TIP. Mr. Branyan asked if MDOT would change the language. Mr. Farrell replied that he expected that would happen. However, the Chair seemed to believe that he had some work to do in order to get a voting majority for the amendment.

Mr. Meese noted that the action was a motion from the Loudoun County member to table the motion. We can't predict what may happen between now and June.

Discussion of Street Smart and Bike to Work Day were deferred.

8. Announcements

Mr. Wetmore asked what would happen with peds and bikes in the I-270 project. Will the rebuilt interchanges be more ped-friendly, and will the American Legion Bridge include a multi-use path? There may also be some room to add bike/ped connecting paths along the beltway.

The next meeting will be July 16.

Adjourned