

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Jim Sebastian, District Department of Transportation

**VICE-
CHAIRS:**

David Goodman – Arlington Department of Environmental Services
Jeff Dunckel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Kristin Haldeman, WMATA
Carrie Sanders, Alexandria Department of Transportation and
Environmental Services
Fred Shaffer, M-NCPPC, Prince George's County

Attendance:

Kevin Belanger	City of Rockville
Greg Billing	WABA
Jeff Dunckel	Montgomery County DOT
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT- Northern Virginia
Christine Green	Washington Region Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT (by phone)
Bill King	Loudoun County DOT (by phone)
Philip Koopman	BicycleSPACE
George Phillips	Prince William County (by phone)
Carrie Sanders	City of Alexandria (by phone)
Lee Schoenecker	American Planning Association

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Jim Sebastian	DDOT
Gail Tait-Nouri	WMATA (by phone)
Debbie Spiliotopoulos	Northern Virginia Regional Commission
Charlie Strunk	Fairfax County DOT
Pat Turner	BikeLoudoun (by phone)

COG Staff Attendance:

Sarah Crawford
Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Marco Trigueros
John Swanson

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the February 5th Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved. Mr. Farrell asked members to check the attendance roster, since not everyone signed the sign-in sheet for this meeting.

3. Jurisdictional Updates

Rockville is nearly finished with its bikeway master plan. A draft is posted on the city web site. The previous plan from 2004 was focused mostly on recreation.

Loudoun is doing a study of bicycle and pedestrian access to future Metrorail stations, to be finished in June. The stations are scheduled to open in 2018.

Prince William County will have a Street Smart press event in mid-April. Mr. Phillips hopes that the event will bring attention to pedestrian safety issues in the eastern portion of the county. This will be the regional press event for the Street Smart campaign, the first that Prince William County has hosted. Time will be 10:30 or 11 a.m.

Alexandria City Council approved bike lanes on King Street. Alexandria is also updating its pedestrian and bicycle master plan, and is developing Complete Streets design guidelines. A contractor is doing the plan update.

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WMATA is trying new style of bike lockers. WMATA is accepting bike share permit requests for bike share stations on its property. WMATA is designing additional Bike N' Ride secure bike parking facilities, which will hold approximately 100 bicycles each. Payment will move towards SmartTrip free access, with registration required.

Bike sharing is funded by the jurisdictions, but WMATA is providing the pad on which to place the station.

DDOT is waiting for cold and snow to stop, and for rain to wash away the salt, so that it can put in more bike lanes.

VDOT is 75% finished with its US Bike Route 1 study. VDOT has evaluated several alternative routes and made its recommendations, which will go out to the public in a week or so. For security reasons Fort Belvoir could not be used as a scenic route. Fairfax County has asked VDOT to stripe bikes lanes on Sherwood Hall Lane. The public feedback indicated that the neighbors did not want any parking removed. VDOT has also applied for funding to update its recommended bike route network.

4. Briefing on TCSP Grant Study: *High Impact Complete Streets Access Improvements*

Ms. Crawford spoke to a hand-out. COG is looking at access improvements around Metrorail at locations where there is significant potential to increase pedestrian access, and excess rail capacity. This study came out of a federal TIGER grant application, which was not successful.

This study will identify the needed improvements, so that when funding becomes available they can be built.

Metrorail is over-used, but mostly one way. Reverse direction trains are under-used.

The study is about half way through. The study started with 120 Metrorail and commuter rail stations. For MARC they focused on reverse commute only. For VRE they selected stations that had large numbers of alightings. For Metrorail they removed all core stations, then removed stations that are currently congested, with a volume/capacity ratio greater than 0.3.

Ms. Engelhart asked what the maximum V/C was? Ms. Crawford said that she didn't fully understand how it was measured. Mr. Sebastian said that they were just looking for a logical cut-off. Ms. Engelhart said that 0.4 as a Volume/Capacity ratio didn't make sense to her.

That station capacity cut-off reduced the number of stations to 74. For those station areas, a half mile radius within the beltway, and one mile outside the beltway, was analyzed for population and employment forecasts. Eight to ten stations rose to the top of the list on all factors, including transit-dependent populations.

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Staff then met with the affected jurisdictions to discuss the candidate station areas.

Working with the consultant, staff will gather information about the station areas, to identify proposed projects and gaps in the pedestrian network. The consultant will put together a list of proposed projects around each station area.

We may duplicate this study in five to ten years, using the latest data.

Mr. Schoenecker asked that if this study would produce a list of projects for all 25 chosen stations. Ms. Crawford said that it would. Mr. Schoenecker asked if the Region Forward group was aware of this study. Ms. Crawford said that there were involved in it. Mr. Schoenecker said that this was an exciting project.

Friendship Height Metro had a low concentration of transit-dependent population, and low employment growth. Ms. Engelhart said that you might still sway the local population to use more transit, though initiatives such as bike share. They use it now.

Mr. Sebastian said that another filter might be the opportunity for improvements at a given location. If an area has a complete pedestrian grid already, should it be included? Ms. Crawford said that that had been discussed. Mr. Sebastian agreed that there was almost always more that could be done.

Mr. Farrell asked if there would be a forecast of the increased transit use from the basket of projects at each stations? Forecast increase in ridership could help show cost-effectiveness. Ms. Engelhart said that that would be a hard thing to forecast.

Mr. Farrell said that there be locations that do not have much employment or many residents, but where there is a total lack of facilities, which if provided would generate more transit use. Landover, MD Metrorail is a good example – the residential neighborhood is on the opposite side of the freeway, with no bridge. Could a total lack of pedestrian infrastructure be a selection factor. Ms. Engelhart said that such a study would be fieldwork intensive, since there is not a good database of sidewalks.

The Alia Anderson, project consultant from Toole Design, called in to the meeting and said that the comments so far were helpful.

Mr. Sebastian asked about the scope of the project. There will be a study review for each of the 25 stations, and then a field scan of each area to verify that conditions have not changed. For a subset of these stations where there have not been extensive studies in the past, Toole Design will do more extensive fieldwork and will come up with a list of improvements. Mr. Sebastian asked if drawings would be provided. Ms. Anderson said that there would be no drawings, just a list. Mr. Sebastian said that pictures and drawings are easier to sell than lists. Ms. Anderson said

that for some of the stations an aerial view with lines on a map could be provided.

5. Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Database/Bike-Ped Plan Update

Mr. Farrell distributed a table showing which jurisdictions have updated their projects. Mr. Sebastian noted that there was nothing from DDOT and said he would look into it.

Mr. Phillips said that he had sent some projects by email on February 19th, and offered to answer any questions he got about the projects. Mr. Farrell thanked him.

Mr. Sebastian said that entering the data is not that difficult. Mr. Farrell said that he was willing to enter the information himself if you can send him the information.

Mr. Farrell opened the database opened a project listing, and explained the project categories. Ms. Engelhart said that the database has a few quirks but once you learn them it's not difficult to work with. Save often.

Path alignment is either on its own right of way on an existing route.

You have to manually enter the date last updated. We'll try to get that changed so it will update automatically. We'll also change some of the labels, such as "Bikenetconnect", to make them clearer.

Hit "update" at the bottom of the record to save.

Don't delete a project unless they have not been done, and they have been deleted from your plan. When a project is done, change the status to "complete", and enter the year of implementation (which can be in the future if the project is not finished).

Mr. Farrell entered a real project, the L Street Cycle Track in DC. Mr. Sebastian provided the project information. Project length is rounded to the nearest mile. Entering the agency is really important because that's how you search. Cost is in thousands. Mr. Sebastian suggested that this cycle track should be called a bike lane rather than a separated path. We do not have a separate category in the database for cycle tracks. Mr. Farrell added the record, and it is now in the database.

Mr. Dunckel asked about the schedule. We are trying to stay on a four year time frame. Last time the TPB adopted in October of 2010, but the work was substantially done by the end of June, 2010. The TPB has to see it twice, once for information, once to adopt. As long as we have a good draft in June, we can say we have kept our four year timetable.

Not every jurisdiction's projects have to be in the database to move forward, just most of them.

The plan will also have new information on Best Practices, and Mr. Farrell may need an advisory group to look at those best practices and make sure that they are something that the Subcommittee can approve.

6. Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign

Mr. Farrell briefed the Subcommittee on the Fall and Spring campaign waves.

The overall proportion of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities is about 26%, which is down from a few years ago when it was over 30%.

Mr. Dunckel expressed curiosity about the 2014 numbers. There was a question about correlation with VMT. We have looked at ped and bike injury rates, and we have found that they tend to track mode share pretty well across jurisdictions. Fatalities don't track mode share, though. They depend more on traffic speeds, which are low in the core.

The new creative, "tired faces", is getting a lot of interest. Transportation Alternatives from New York has asked about it, though they were mostly interested in the enforcement angle. We will probably stick with this creative for about three years, which will save some money. We can vary the messages under the images. We can do variations on the theme, such as a video version for the pumptopper ads.

Mr. Phillips asked if COG was coordinating with Ms. Spiliotopoulos at NVRC. Mr. Farrell replied that we try to coordinate with other safety efforts, especially enforcement. In terms of classroom based education, we don't coordinate closely, since our materials are pitched more for mass media, not classroom use. But materials like tips cards and images are available to be shared with other safety programs.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos called in and asked if we were talking about her grant for safety education classes. Mr. Farrell is a member of the technical advisory group for the grant. The classes for which we have an RFP out this year, for preparing materials and teaching classes for adults and teen-agers for pedestrian safety.

Mr. Farrell said that there were other good campaigns going on, such as a campaign under development by Johns Hopkins, "Don't let it be you", and a crab-themed "Walk Smart" campaign in Ocean City.

The Fall press event used a march band near the Capitol, and generated excellent press coverage.

The Spring Press event will take place on Tuesday, April 15th in Woodbridge, VA.

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Outdoor advertising will run April 14 – May 11.

Outreach will go to mobile street teams rather than fixed booths. Ms. Engelhart said that the Montgomery County street teams convinced her that they were a good idea – they could reach people who tend to avoid contact with the police. The teams are bilingual in English and Spanish.

We've gotten at least \$200,000 in PSA placement so far. Ms. Engelhart said that the new bus shelter in Fairfax has slots for posters, so they may participate this time.

More resources are going into pumptoppers to reach motorists. WMATA has given us 20 bus tails, which are effective in reaching motorists, even though none were available for purchase.

Twitter, the digital toolkit, etc. are not a major budget item.

Feedback on the campaign has generally been positive.

Mr. Koopman said that there has been some negative response from the cycling community, in that it doesn't show cyclists in a more positive light. It's not a positive communication about being a bicyclist or being a pedestrian. Mr. Farrell replied that we've always had to balance warning people to be careful, without discouraging them from walking or bicycling. Ms. Engelhart said that this isn't an encouragement campaign. Mr. Koopman said that Pittsburgh had a more positive image for bicyclists. Mr. Koopman said that encouraging bicycling would improve safety, since large numbers of cyclists would make it safer. Ms. Engelhart said that we have Bike to Work Day and Walk to Work Day events to encourage walking and bicycling.

Mr. Farrell said that the materials fared well in the focus groups.

Mr. Dunckel asked Mr. Koopman to send us a link to the Pittsburgh campaign. Mr. Sebastian brought the Pittsburgh campaign up on the web.

Mr. Farrell said that DDOT still has not signed its agreement, which COG has signed and FedExed to them.

Ms. Engelhart asked Mr. Farrell if he had received requests from colleges. Mr. Farrell replied that he had not, but that Kenna Williams was the main point of contact.

Ms. Sanders suggested with respect to the bicycling aspect of the campaign, that it would be helpful if this campaign could do a collaboration with WABA on a video to teach people rules of the road, such as DDOT has done. Mr. Farrell said that we can put that video up on the web page, as well as Maryland's new video. We'll check our resources page and make sure that we have those types of resources posted. ShareVAroads.org is another resource that should be

included.

Ms. Engelhart asked about safety and bike to work day. Bike to Work Day messaging focusses on promotion and increasing the numbers.

The Pittsburgh campaign has the theme “Someone you care about rides a bike”. Someone noted that the advice message was a lot smaller on the posters than the set-up. Mr. Dunckel liked the messaging, and suggested that we might be able to work some of this type of messaging into a future campaign. We may be able to borrow this messaging for free; we should ask.

7. Other TPB Program Updates

- **Proposed Bicycle Loop Route**

Mr. Farrell discussed Mr. Jay Fisettes’ comments at the January TPB meeting, asking about a regional vision for a bicycle and pedestrian loop that would connect trails. Copies of the relevant section of the minutes were distributed.

Mr. Farrell said that finding trails such as the Anacostia Trail was easy to find on Google bikes. Finding trails is not a problem. A regional route network would be of limited value unless it included signs.

Ms. Engelhart said that we have not identified a loop route around Washington, and it would be good to identify a possible loop, perhaps using a consultant to help identify existing routes that could be incorporated into it.

Mr. Schoenecker asked if Mr. Fisettes asked if Mr. Fisettes had in mind Atlanta’s Beltline project, which has helped attract people to the region and promoted development. Mr. Farrell said that Mr. Fisettes had not mentioned the beltline, but his proposal does appear to resemble the Atlanta beltline.

Mr. Koopman suggested that we should try to connect regional activity centers with routes that are safe and identifiable, including signage. Ms. Engelhart that signage would follow a decision to pursue this as a goal. AASHTO has national bike routes. If we approached them with a loop they might accept it. The national bike routes can have bypasses. It can’t be identified by AASHTO until it is under construction, but it can be recognized by Adventure Cycling.

Mr. Sebastian said that our jurisdictional plans have proposed routes for the next twenty years or so. We can stitch a loop route together out of those routes. Ms. Engelhart suggested that a consultant could look at those plans and identify a loop or loops from those routes, as well as gaps. Mr. Sebastian suggested that a work group could discuss this idea further.

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Mr. Farrell suggested taking a closer look at what was done in Atlanta, and figuring out what the structure and funding source for it might be. COG does not have a lot of uncommitted consultant money. Mr. Sebastian suggested bringing some of the interested people together in a conference call. Mr. Koopman suggested the Indianapolis Cultural Trail as a possible model.

The regional bicycle and pedestrian plan will have a map. Mr. Farrell suggested looking at Google Maps to identify the existing facilities. Mr. Sebastian said that if we got together we may (or may not) be able to come up with ideas for a route that has not already been thought of. Mr. Dunkel concurred with the idea of a work group. Mr. Sebastian asked if we were thinking of designating routes that largely already exist, or creating new facilities.

- Workshops
 - Green Streets Implementation has not yet been scheduled, but will happen in June or July.
 - A NACTO Urban Street Design Guide workshop could be done by Alta Planning, Ms. Engelhart suggested. Mr. Sebastian is part of NACTO, and promised to look into who would be good. David Vega from NACTO is knowledgeable; he would know who does the training. Alta may have a contract.

8. Other Business/Announcements

The 2014 TIGER grants are available. Don't both applying unless you've got a project that's nearly shovel-ready.

The Institute for Regional Excellence students are looking to study intersection design issues that affect disabled pedestrians. They've selected mobility, vision, and hearing disabilities. Mr. Farrell has suggested that they could do a literature search and summary. Ms. Engelhart suggested that they focus on an underserved segment, the visually impaired. Needs of the elderly, particularly crossing times, are another issue.

There will be a workshop on bike ped funding opportunities in Maryland, at MNC-PPC, Thursday 3 to 5 p.m.

9. Adjourned