



**Bike To Work 2003
Washington DC Metropolitan Region
Draft REPORT
January 20, 2004**



**WASHINGTON AREA
BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION**

getting there by bike

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2003 Metropolitan Washington Bike To Work Day Steering Committee consisted of the following individuals representing their respective organizations:

Amanda Pike – Whole Foods Falls Church
Brenda Davis – Charles E. Smith
Bruce Wright – Fairfax County
Charles Denney – Arlington County
Chris Wells – Fairfax County DOT
Christina Gordon – Arlington Transportation Partners
Darlene Nader – NBTMD
Deborah Skea – Loudoun County
Fred Shaffer – Prince George’s County
James Gugel – Frederick County
James Sebastian – DC Government
Joana Bragg – Whole Foods Vienna
Joanna Burroughs – Charles E. Smith
John Brunow – Bikes@Vienna
John Hartranft – Peerless Rockville
John Telesco – City of Rockville
Karl Ingebritsen - LINK
Katie Sihler – Arlington Transportation Partners
Kerry Daly – Bethesda Transportation Solutions
Kristen Fink - Bethesda Transportation Solutions
Linda Provost – Montgomery County
Mary Breed – Arlington Transportation Partners
Michael Jones – GSA
Mirza Morris – NBTMD
Noah Simon – City of College Park
Phil Koopman – City Bikes
Sharon Affinito – Loudoun County
Shauna Brown – City of Alexandria
Sheila Lewin – Pathways Strategic Communications
Sheila Wilson – Montgomery County
Terrie O’Steen – Montgomery County

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) staff included:

Mark Hersey
Michael Farrell
Nicholas Ramfos

Washington Area Bicyclists Association (WABA) staff included:
Ellen Jones
Eric Gilliland
John Fleming

The Office of Public Affairs at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments through Karen Sibert provided the Public Relations Activities with assistance by Ellen Jones at the Washington Area Bicyclists Association.

Both COG and WABA thank all of the individuals and organizations, which helped, make the Washington DC metropolitan region Bike To Work Day 2003 a success.

BACKGROUND and EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2000, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Commuter Connections program elected to increase awareness of bicycling to work as a viable option and created a regional marketing effort that increased the number of cyclists participating in the yearly event nearly 350%. Although it accounts for a very small percentage of the overall regional commute mode split, bicycling can be a very effective measure in reducing congestion, improving air quality, and providing a healthy commute alternative for those commuters who choose to use it as a viable means of transportation to and from work.

Bicycling eliminates pollution associated with cold starts and commuting by automobiles, as well as roadway congestion. In the Washington metropolitan region, a strong emphasis has been placed on the construction and maintenance of bicycle paths. The 2001-2003 BTWD marketing strategies effort assisted in maximizing the exposure of the existing infrastructures.

Bike to Work Day has been held in the Washington metropolitan region with a main rallying or "Pit Stop" in the downtown DC. This event has been coordinated through the Washington Area Bicyclists Association (WABA) for over a decade. In September 2000, the Commuter Connections program as a part of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments partnered with WABA to form a regional Bike To Work Day 2001 Steering Committee to examine the feasibility of adding additional Bike To Work Day "Pit Stops" or rallying points throughout the region, thus creating a larger awareness of using cycling to work as a viable alternative. Besides adding four additional rallying points to the original "Pit Stop" at Freedom Plaza in DC, the Steering Committee's goal was to entice 1,000 cyclists to register and participate in the event schedule on May 4, 2001. This goal was much higher than the 300 or so cyclists attracted to Freedom Plaza each of the previous years. Four additional Pit Stops added included the City of Alexandria, Arlington County, Bethesda, and Silver Spring.

The Steering Committee's resources to reach its goal for cyclists for each successive Bike To Work Day included:

- Promoting the event through WABA's 3,000 cyclists' e-mail contact list.
- Providing links from the local TMA's web sites to WABA's site for route information.
- Commuter Connections' 18 Employer Services sales representatives attracting program participation from interested employers.
- Development and distribution of registration materials both in printed and electronic formats.
- Recruitment of event sponsors by Commuter Connections
- A print and radio media campaign.
- Outreach to employers through a direct mail marketing campaign to 5,000 human resource professionals.

- A newsletter article geared towards employers in the Commuter Connections newsletter.
- A public affairs outreach effort through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.
- The design and distribution of the giveaway items to registrants such as free t-shirts and prizes at all five rallying points.

In addition, convoy bicycling routes were identified by WABA along with leaders who were used to assist new and existing cyclists through the route(s), which needed to be taken to the “pit stops”. The routes were also posted on the WABA web site and allowed individuals to refer to the routes even if they could not join the convoys at the specified departure times. Cue sheets for the Bike to Work Day convoy route remain accessible through WABA’s web site.

The May 4th 2001 event attracted a spectacular crowd, the largest to date, with over 1,000 bicyclists joining the festivities as they biked to work. Bicyclists enjoyed breakfast, participated in prize drawings, heard live bands, and listened and talked to elected officials. Commuter Connections was able to secure \$11,000 in sponsorship cash donations that went towards the overall regional marketing efforts.

The process for the next year’s event began again in the Fall of 2001. The Steering Committee reconvened in September 2001 and set out to increase the amount of participants to 2,000 (which was met and surpassed by several hundred) for the event. Commuter Connections was able to secure \$7,000 in sponsorship cash donations and with an additional \$8,000 in product donations. Six additional pit stops were added to the event bringing the total to eleven. The eleven pit stops were as follows:

- (1) Alexandria
- (2) Arlington
- (3) Freedom Plaza in D.C.
- (4) Frederick
- (5) Rockville
- (6) Silver Spring
- (7) Reston
- (8) Leesburg
- (9) College Park
- (10) Bethesda
- (11) North Bethesda.

For the third year in a row, Bike to Work Day planning began in September 2002 for the 2003 May 2nd event. The Steering Committee's goal for the event was 3,000 registrants. Four additional pit stops were added to the previous year's event bringing the total to fifteen pit stops. The fifteen were as follows:

1. City Hall in Alexandria
2. Crystal City Water Park
3. Rosslyn Gateway Park
4. Freedom Plaza in D.C.
5. The MARC station in Frederick MD
6. Fairfax County Government Center
7. Falls Church, across from the West Falls Church Metro station
8. Reston Town Center
9. The Whole Foods supermarket parking lot adjacent to the W & OD Trail
10. Raflo Park in Leesburg
11. Reed Street by the Capitol Crescent Trail in Bethesda
12. The U.S. NRC Plaza adjacent to the White Flint Metro station
13. The NOAA Plaza in Silver Spring
14. The Red Brick Courthouse in Rockville
15. City Hall in College Park.

COLLATERAL MATERIAL

The Bike To Work Day 2003 collateral materials used included the following items:

- Registration and event brochures (30,000)
- Posters (8.5 x 11) (17,000)
- Oversize posters (22 x 28) (125)
- Street Banners (15) (4 x 8)
- T-Shirts (3,000)
- Water Bottles (3,000)
- E-mail marketing message
- Web Site

The marketing materials used for the 2003 BTWD campaign were targeted to employers and cyclists in chosen target markets through the region. The brochures and posters materials were distributed to employers and building sites through concierge services to all of the region's bicycle shops through WABA, and through a direct e-mail campaign that led to a customized Web site. The direct e-mail was sent to the 2002 registrants as a reminder. In addition, posters were sent in conjunction with a direct mail piece to 5,000 employers that highlighted the May 2nd event along with a Guaranteed Ride Home sweepstakes sponsored by Commuter Connections. The radio campaign highlighted personal and tangible benefits a commuter would realize by bicycling to work. WABA staff designed and maintained the event Web site to market the program and allow participants to register for the event. COG also designed and maintained a web site for information and registration links to the WABA site.

The success of the marketing promotion campaign relied upon the analysis of the employer and commuter markets, identification of cost-effective mediums, and key messages and giveaway items such as t-shirts and water bottles designed to attract commuters to try bicycling to work.

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board issued a regional proclamation on March 19, 2003 for Bike To Work Day. The proclamation discussed the benefits of bicycling for the region, individual communities and commuters. It also acknowledged that the month of May is Clean Air Month and national Bike Month.

SPONSORSHIPS

The Bike To Work Day Steering Committee solicited both monetary and in-kind sponsorships from a variety of companies in the metropolitan region.

Sponsorship levels for the event included four categories. The categories and associated benefits were as follows:

Platinum Partnership \$5,000

Logo on T-shirts, brochure, electronic invitation and employer mailing. Print-ads in regional and local media, mention in radio ads, link to the companies web site from WABA's Bike To Work Day Web site.

Gold partnership \$2,500

Logo on brochure, electronic invitation and employer mailing, and print ads in local and regional media.

Silver Partnership \$1,000

Logo on brochure, and electronic invitation and employer mailing.

Bronze Partnership In-kind Donations

Logo on brochure

The Steering Committee was able to secure five Platinum Sponsors: CommuterPage.com, All Goode Organics, Charles E. Smith, Whole Foods, and City Bikes. There were five Gold Sponsors: Jamis Bicycles, Kryptonite, Bell Sports, Timbuktu Designs, and Specialized. Safeway Food & Drug was the sole Silver Sponsor. There were five Bronze level sponsors: Peapod, Drink More Water, WMATA, The Calvert Group, and Virginia DOT. The bronze sponsors donated assorted beverages, bicycle accessories, and prizes for event participants, and mail-out packets promoting the event.

EVENT PIT STOPS, CONVOYS, AND PRIZE DRAWINGS

Highlights from the fifteen “Pit-stops” are as follows:

Alexandria: It is estimated that over 200 cyclists attended this rally point. The pit stop was at the King Street City Hall. Alexandria Council Member K. Rob Krupicka attended the event. *The Gazette Journal*, *The Connection*, and WTOP-AM radio covered the event. Metrobus conducted a bike on bus demonstration by Metro superintendent David Crawford. Mr. Mac Dorado won the grand prize, a bike bag kit. Local sponsors included Bombay Curry Company, Great Harvest Bread Company, St. Elmo’s Coffee Pub, Spokes, Wheel Nuts, The University of Phoenix, The Nature Conservancy, and VDOT. Event volunteers included representatives from the Alexandria Bicycle Council, The Alexandria Police, and Alexandria DASH.

Arlington: Estimates show that between 300-400 cyclists attended. The pit stop was at Rosslyn Gateway Park, near Key Bridge. Participants enjoyed the music of Barrelhouse Brawl at the stop. New Arlington Board member Walter Tejada attended the event. The Mobile Commuter Store was on hand for demonstration and information. Both FlexCar and ZipCar brought cars for demonstration and donated prize membership packages for the drawings. Local sponsors included Smoothie King and Whole Foods.

Bethesda: An exuberant crowd of 170 bicyclists joined in the festivities at the Reed Street stop. A local disc jockey provided music and local sponsors included America Inn of Bethesda, Ben & Jerry’s, Bradley Food & Beverage, Griffin Cycle, Hard Times Café, Landmark Theatres of Bethesda Row, Life Path Health Center, Mon Ami Gabi, REI, and Spring Mill Bread Company. One hundred Bike to Work Day hats were made up for the event and disappeared quickly. State Representative Howie Denis, Delegate Bill Bronrott, and Marsia Kaiser of MDOT attended the event. John Demarchi was the winner of the grand prize bike drawing.

Silver Spring: Turnout was fantastic with close to 100 registrants attending and over 100 people in total. The event was held at the NOAA Plaza. Ride On conducted a bike on bus demonstration. A local disc jockey “JR” provided the music and public address system. Sean Sands from the Gazette and Chuck Kines from the Montgomery County Council attended the event. Montgomery Police offered free bicycle registration at the event. Michael Jackson of MDOT also addressed the participants at the event.

DC Freedom Plaza: Estimates bring the number to over 700 attendees for this festive rally point. DC’s US Representative, Elenor Holmes Norton,

COG's Executive Director, Dave Robertson, and Ellen Jones of WABA were among the dignitaries who spoke at the pit stop. There was excellent media coverage with a "Commuter Challenge" that was covered by Fox5 News that gave live updates on the race between a single car driver and two cyclists from West Hyattsville to Freedom Plaza. The cyclists won the race. There were 21 convoys for the event and all were "incident" free.

Crystal City: Over 120 registrants attended the event. The Jeff Watson Trio provided music. Paul Ferguson of the Arlington County Board read the County's proclamation making May 2nd Bike to Work Day in Arlington County. Prize drawings were held every twenty minutes. The pit stop managers found that many riders were very grateful to have such an event.

Fairfax County Government Center: Over forty registrants attended the event. Fairfax DOT staff assisted in getting the pit stop set up. Water bottles were handed out to riders.

Vienna: Over eighty registrants attended and were given a cornucopia of choices for food and beverages. The convenience of the location, adjacent to the Washington and Old Dominion Trail, helped in attracting riders.

Falls Church: Over thirty registrants attended the event held at the Falls Church City Park, adjacent to the West Falls Church Metro Station. A masseuse was on hand and Whole Foods Market donated food. The mayor of Falls Church, Daniel Gardner, rode to the event and spoke to the riders at the pit stop.

Reston: The Town Center event drew over 200 riders. The largest employer contingent was again from the US Geological Survey and won the free lunch donated by the Reston Whole Foods Market. Dignitaries who attended the event were Fairfax County Board Supervisor Chair Kate Hanley, US Congressman James Moran, State Delegate Ken Plum, and Fairfax County Board Supervisor Cathy Hudgins. Local sponsors included: A-1 Cycling, Great Harvest Bread Company, VDOT, and Whole Foods Market.

Frederick: Located at the Frederick MARC station in downtown Frederick, the pit stop attracted a little over 30 participants including a County Commissioner and a City of Frederick Alderman, both biked to the event. The Frederick News-Post covered the event. Food and beverages were donated from Whole Foods in Gaithersburg.

College Park: Over fifty riders attended the event at the City Hall. The Mayor, Stephen A. Brayman, spoke at the event. The staff from the City's

Committee for Better Environment helped at the pit stop and donated food and beverages. REI donated giveaways and did bike safety inspections.

Loudoun/Leesburg: The event was held at Raflo Park by the Harrison Street entrance to the W & OD Trail. Over 200 riders came to the event, many of whom were from AOL. Mark Herring, a Loudoun County Board of Supervisors member attended the event. Sponsors included: Barcelona Nuts, Bicycle Outfitters, Plum Grove, Gold's Gym, Giant, Ketterman's Jewelers, Partlow's, The Peddle Shop, Starbucks, Coffee Bean, Costco, Cloud Nine, Dunkin Donuts, Atlanta Bread Company, National Conference Center, Merle Norman, Mom's Apple Pie, Hampton Inn, WAGE Radio, VDOT, and Walmart.

Rockville: The event was held at the Red Brick Courthouse with sixty registrants attending. Nancy Floreen and George Leventhal of the Montgomery County Council bicycled to the event. Larry Giammo, Rockville's Mayor, and John Hall of the Rockville City Council also attended. REI and Topolab were among the local sponsors.

North Bethesda: The event was held again at the US NRC Plaza. Over eighty riders attended the event. Montgomery Council members Nancy Florine and George Leventhal also attended the event. Bob's Bike provided bicycle safety checks as well as Hudson Bay. A local disc jockey provided music.

Regional Synopsis:

The goal of 3,000 riders was met, with 3,015 total participating in Bike to Work Day 2003. The total cost of the program, including partner and sponsorship contributions, was approximately \$30,000, which translates into \$10 per registered event participant.

EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION

The following sampling of Employers had employees participating in the event:

Federal Employers

Bureau of Labor Statistics
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Federal Aviation Administration
Federal Communications Commission
Federal Election Commission
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Trade Commission
Foreign Service Institute
General Services Administration
Internal Revenue Service
Library of Congress
National Archives
National Capitol Planning Commission
National Institutes of Health
National Labor Relations Board
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Park Service
National Zoological Park
Office of Management and Budget
Securities and Exchange Commission
Smithsonian Institution
US Air Force
US Army
US Coast Guard
US Department of Agriculture
US Department of Commerce
US Department of Customs
US Department of Energy
US Department of Health and Human Services
US Department of Homeland Security
US Department of Justice
US Department of Labor
US Department of the Interior
US Department of Transportation
US Environmental Protection Agency
US Geological Survey
US Government Printing Office

US House of Representatives
US Housing and Urban Development
US Navy
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
US Patent and Trademark Office
US Peace Corps
US Postal Service
US Senate
USAID

State and Local Governments

Arlington County
City of Alexandria
City of College Park
City of Falls Church
City of Frederick
City of Leesburg
City of Rockville
City of Vienna
DC Council
Fairfax County
Frederick County
City of Frederick
Loudoun County
Montgomery County
Prince George's County

Private/Non-Profit Sector Employers

AARP
AES Corporation
America OnLine
American Pilot's Association
Arnold & Porter
ASAE
ASHRM
Beveridge & Diamond
Boeing Company
Booz Allen
Charles E. Smith
Congressional Quarterly
Cvent
DC Bicycle Courier Association
Digital Paper Corporation

Discovery Communications
Downtown DC BID
EDAW
Friends of the Earth
ICF Consulting
International Monetary Fund
League of American Bicyclists
MCI
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Oracle Corporation
PEPCO
Public Broadcasting Service
Quest Diagnostics
Qwest Communications
Rails to Trails Conservancy
RAND Corporation
Raytheon
Smith Barney
Social & Scientific Systems
SRA International
Suburban Hospital
Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering
World Bank

ADVERTISING

Commuter Connections, through its contractor, Pathways Strategic Communications, developed and implemented both a print and radio advertising campaign for the event.

Radio Buy

The overall approach used by Commuter Connections in the advertising campaign was to promote the Bike To Work Day event along with the regional Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program. During its routine regional TDM Spring Marketing Campaign, Commuter Connections runs radio ads to promote the regional GRH program as well as the Found Time Sweepstakes. As part of the Spring Radio buy, 25 percent of the ads running between the weeks of April 7th to the 28th were used to promote both the Bike to Work Day event and GRH. In total, 130 spots ran on the following stations:

WARW – FM
WBIG – FM
WBZS/WBPS – FM
WFLS – FM
WFRE – FM
WGMS – FM
WHUR – FM
WJFK – FM
WMAL – AM
WRQX – FM
WTOP – AM

Print Buy

Print Advertisements were purchased with sponsorship dollars to promote the event locally. The placements occurred one time in April. Total circulation for these publications was 448,000. The newspapers used included:

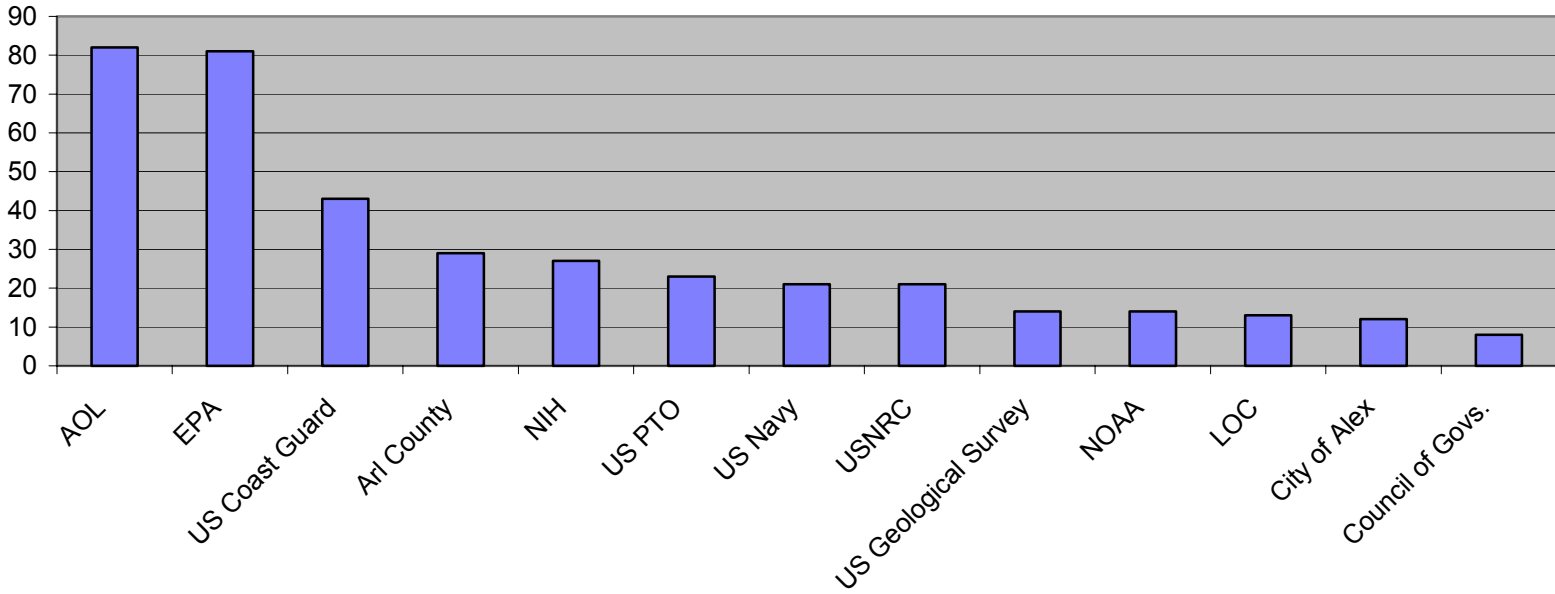
City Paper, Arlington Sun Gazette, Silver Spring Gazette, Bethesda Gazette, College Park Gazette, Frederick Gazette, Loudoun Times Mirror, Reston Times, Fairfax Times, Alexandria Gazette, Rockville Gazette, Vienna Times, and Falls Church News Press.

MEDIA COVERAGE

The event received very positive coverage from the local media. WTOP-AM covered the event in Alexandria and Silver Spring. Fox5 News followed the progress of convoys from their morning helicopter reporter and also followed the “Commuter Challenge” with live feeds during the morning newscast.

Attachments

Registrants for Bike to Work Day - By top Employer



Registrants for Bike to Work Day - By Top Originating City

