

ITEM 17 - Action
January 16, 2008

Review of Priority Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Staff

Recommendation: Receive briefing on the updated list of priority regional bicycle and pedestrian projects recommended for consideration in the FY 2009-2014 TIP by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee.

Issues: None

Background: The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee developed its list considering the goals in the TPB Vision and regional bicycle plan and using seven criteria as described in the attached memorandum. The TPB Technical Committee reviewed this list at its January 4, 2008 meeting. The Subcommittee last presented a recommended list of priority projects to the TPB in December 2006.

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 15, 2007

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Michael Farrell
Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: Updated List of Priority Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects Recommended for Consideration in the FY 2009-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee

In accordance with the FY 2008 UPWP, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee recommends the list of bicycle and pedestrian projects shown on page three as priorities for consideration in the FY 2009-2014 TIP. Project descriptions are on pages 4-7.

The Subcommittee developed the priority list using the following criteria:

- **Bicycle Network Connectivity:** priority was given to projects that enhanced connectivity of facilities on the regional bicycle facilities network.
- **Pedestrian Safety:** priority was given to projects that promoted pedestrian safety, especially in areas with documented pedestrian safety problems and no pending road project that could address them.
- **Access to Transit:** priority was given to projects that enhanced access to Metrorail stations and other major transit stops or facilities.
- **Time Frame:** all projects should be able to be completed by 2014, the end of the TIP time frame.
- **Local Support:** the project is a priority for the jurisdiction or jurisdictions in which it is located.
- **Still seeking funding:** the project does not yet have full construction funding committed to it.
- **Reasonable Cost:** the total cost of the list should be a reasonable fraction of the total spending in the region on highways and bridges. Staff estimates that the total cost of the attached projects is less than two percent of the total highway funding in the first year of the TIP.

Some of the projects included on the list have appeared in previous TIPs as being funded for only partial amounts, usually for study only or for initial phases of a multi-phase project.

The Subcommittee's last priority list was submitted in December, 2006. Three of the projects on that list have received full funding totaling \$19,482,000, and four more have been partially funded. Funded projects from the 2006 list and funding status of projects on the current list are shown on page three.

The Subcommittee sees this short list as a very modest investment in bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Washington region. In trying to reach the adopted goals of the TPB vision and the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan, the Subcommittee supports the funding of bicycle and pedestrian projects over and above this list. In addition, the Subcommittee encourages the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in all transportation projects as recommended in policy guidance by the U.S. DOT and VDOT.

1/8/2008

Priority Unfunded Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects Proposed for the FY2009-14 TIP

All projects are included in approved local plans and/or supported by the local government
 Although some have been funded for study, none have received a full funding commitment.

| State | Jurisdiction | Project Name | Funding | Bicycle | | Action | Funding Allocated | |
|-------------|--------------|---|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | Requested (thous.) | Transit Access | Network Connectivity | Safety | Since 2006 Priority List | Since 2006 Priority List |
| DC | DC | Metropolitan Branch Trail | 2,500 | Y | Y | Y | partially funded | 2,500 |
| MD | MC | Falls Road Shared-Use Path | 15,000 | | Y | | not funded | 0 |
| | PGC | Henson Creek Trail | 750 | Y | Y | | partially funded - design | 490 |
| VA | ALX | Holmes Run Greenway Shared-Use Path Improvements | 510 | | Y | Y | new item on the list - study | 0 |
| | ARL | Arlington Boulevard Bikeway Improvements | 2,000 | Y | Y | Y | partially funded | 60 |
| | FFX | Enhanced Bicycle Parking/Access Improvements at Vienna Me | 1,000 | Y | Y | Y | new item on list | 0 |
| | LDN | Loudoun County Parkway Shared-Use Path | 1,000 | Y | Y | | not funded | 0 |
| ALL | WMATA area | WMATA Bicycle Parking Project | 600 | Y | | | partially funded | 600 |
| Total Cost | | | \$23,360 | | | | | \$3,650 |
| Annual Cost | | | \$3,893 | | | | | |

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| D.C. Total | \$2,500 |
| Maryland Total | \$15,750 |
| Virginia Total | \$4,510 |

Projects Funded from the December 2006 Priority List

| State | Jurisdiction | Project Name | Funding | Bicycle | | Action | |
|-------|--------------|--|---------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------------|
| | | | | Transit Access | Network Connectivity | Safety | |
| VA | ALX | Holmes Run Pedestrian/Bicycle Crossing | 750 | | Y | Y | fully funded |
| | FFX | Route 1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvements | 18,000 | Y | Y | Y | fully funded |
| | PWC | Dumfries Road (Route 234) Bike Path | 732 | Y | Y | | fully funded |

\$19,482

Priority Bicycle/Pedestrian Project Descriptions and Background

Metropolitan Branch Trail (District of Columbia)

This 7.7 mile multi-use path will run from Union Station to Silver Spring, parallel to the Red Line of the Metro. It will link to the planned Prince Georges Connector Trail at Fort Totten. On the Montgomery County side, the trail will eventually connect to the Georgetown Branch Trail.

The Metropolitan Branch Trail has been a high priority for the District of Columbia for many years. It is in the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan and in the District of Columbia Bicycle Plan. A few short segments, notably through the New York Avenue Metro station and a bridge over Florida Avenue, have been completed. DDOT staff and the Bicycle Advisory Committee selected it as the top priority unfunded bicycle and pedestrian project for the District, and the Director of DDOT approved the selection.

Falls Road Shared-Use Path (Montgomery County)

A five-mile shared-use path, to run parallel to Falls Road in Potomac, from Dunster Road to River Road. Falls Road currently lacks sidewalks, and the need to serve pedestrians is a major reason for installing a shared-use path rather than bicycle lanes. High right-of-way acquisition costs account for a large share of the estimated \$15 million project cost. The Falls Road shared-use path is in the Montgomery County Bicycle Plan. Gail Tait-Nouri, Bicycle Planner at Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, nominated the project.

Henson Creek Trail (Prince George's County)

This project includes the extension of the existing stream valley trail to both the north and south. In the north, the trail will be extended from Temple Hill Road to the Branch Avenue Metro. To the south, this trail will be extended from Oxon Hill Road into the Broad Creek Historic District on the Potomac.

The extension of the Henson Creek Trail has been proposed on area plans including 1981 Subregion VII Master Plan and 1985 Equestrian Addendum to the Adopted and Approved Countywide Plan. This will extend the existing stream valley trail from Temple Hill Road to the Branch Avenue Metro Station.

The trail extension was identified by the County's Bicycle and Trails Advisory Group (BTAG) as the number one trail priority in Prince George's County in 2003. Based on this recommendation, the trail was listed as the number one bicycle/trail recommendation in the November 4, 2003 Joint Signature Letter. This letter identifies top County transportation priorities, including trails, and is signed by the County Executive and Chairman of the County Council.

BTAG evaluated all major master plan trail and bicycle recommendations when coming up with the top County priorities. Other stream valley trails, on-road bike facilities, and park trails were also considered. Other top priorities include the Prince George's Connector Trail, the extension of the Paint Branch Stream Valley Trail, the Cabin Branch Trail, the Chesapeake Beach Railroad Right-of-Way Trail, and several on-road bicycle routes such as the Potomac Heritage Trail and East Coast Greenway.

Trails were evaluated on the following criteria: 1) connectivity, 2) revitalization/economic development, 3) recreation value, 4) feasibility, 5) transportation value, and 6) geographic distribution. BTAG, which includes representatives from implementing agencies, civic groups, trail groups, bicycle clubs, and municipalities, rated all the major trails based on these criteria, and the Henson Creek Trail extension had the highest overall score.

Holmes Run Greenway Shared-Use Path Improvements (I-395/Van Dorn tunnels and N Ripley Street fair weather crossing)

The Holmes Run Greenway is one of the most heavily used non-roadway transportation corridors in the City of Alexandria. This approximately 3-mile linear park provides a key off-road bicycle and pedestrian connection from the high density residential and retail centers on the West End to the Eisenhower Valley and is a major connector to bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Fairfax County and Old Town Alexandria.

The trail currently provides access under Interstate 395 and Van Dorn Street via a tunnel and underpass. These facilities were originally constructed for service vehicles and have only recently been adapted for use by bicyclists and pedestrians. However, the facilities – which also include approach trails and a fair weather crossing – are in a serious state of disrepair. During periods of heavy rains, the facilities flood, ruining the lighting and depositing sediment and debris onto the fair weather crossing of Holmes Run. Seepage from adjoining concrete embankments creates water hazards. The tunnels are extremely small, presenting both real and perceived safety hazards for users and vandalism is common.

In 2007, the City of Alexandria began work on a \$250,000 RSTP grant to perform an engineering study of the tunnels to investigate ways to address ongoing maintenance, security and make general safety improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians. Two grants are pending for construction including a \$260,000 FY 2008 CMAQ grant and a \$560,000 FY2009 NVT A application. The City anticipates that engineering and infrastructure improvements will be more expensive than the grant funding submitted but will not have more accurate numbers until it completes the study. Additional funding is being sought from grant sources in FY10 and beyond.

Yon Lambert, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator at the City of Alexandria, nominated the project.

Arlington Boulevard Bikeway Improvements (Arlington County)

This project is for design and implementation of a series of improvements to the Arlington Boulevard Bikeway in Arlington County, from the Fairfax County line to Fort Myer Drive. Major components include intersection improvements, including the possibility of grade separations, at the Glebe Road and George Mason Drive intersections, improvements to the north side bikeway between Pershing Drive and Glebe Road where the route uses a one-way service road, and widening/reconstruction of the segment between 10th Street and Pershing Drive opposite Fort Myer. A detailed cost estimate for these improvements has not yet been developed, but a rough estimate is \$2,000,000. Some of the improvements in the vicinity of the Glebe Road intersection will be studied, designed and implemented as part of the bigger Arlington Boulevard/Glebe Road interchange improvements.

Project was nominated by Charlie Denney, Arlington Department of Environmental Services, in consultation with the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Enhanced Bicycle Parking/Access Improvements at Vienna Metro Station

Construct a new bicycle access path to the north side bicycle parking area from Vaden Drive. Construct covered/secure bicycle parking amenities. Estimated cost is \$1.0 million.

This project will provide for construction of a new shared use path accessing the north side station area from Vaden Drive. The existing bicycle parking area located northeast of the mezzanine walkway will be redesigned providing secure, covered parking amenities for 100 bicycles. An additional secure bicycle parking area will be created inside the Vienna 1 parking structure.

The existing bicycle facilities located at the Vienna Metro Station are nearing capacity and it is common to see bicycles chained to trees, sign posts, and other physical features. It is anticipated that bicycle usage will continue to grow. The location and close proximity to the existing trails network around the station (including the Town of Vienna, City of Fairfax, and Fairfax County) make it very accessible for bikers.

Charlie Strunk, the Fairfax County Bicycle Coordinator, nominated this project.

Loudoun County Parkway Shared-Use Path (Loudoun County)

Build a 4.4 mile shared-use path parallel to Loudoun County Parkway from Route 7 to Waxpool Road.

The Loudoun County Parkway is identified as a primary corridor in the Loudoun County Bicycle Plan. The primary criteria used to select these corridors included public input, roadway network analysis, latent demand analysis, and an assessment of origins and destinations. Loudoun County Office of Transportation staff selected the Loudoun County Parkway as the County's top priority unfunded bicycle or pedestrian project. John Clark, Director of the Office of Transportation, approved the choice.

WMATA Bicycle Parking Project

Bicycle Racks

This project replaces existing Type 3 racks with modern inverted U racks. The Type 3's are nearing the end of their useful lives, and are no longer manufactured.

WMATA's rack replacement plan, developed in June 2006, is unfunded, however, a limited number of racks were purchased by WMATA's Plant Maintenance Department. Department staff is replacing racks according to the plan. Additional funding in FY 2008 and FY 2009 will complete rack replacement in the plan and allow for additional racks to be installed.

Bicycle Lockers

Currently lockers are available only on a long-term basis. Since most bicyclists do not ride every day, this has led to significant under-use of the existing lockers.

This project pilots a new bike locker system at 3 stations each year using a parking technology system modeled after car sharing. The system is available from at least one vendor who sells the lockers, manages the Web-based reservation system, and collects rental fees through a smart card. Lockers would be available to anyone with a smart card on an hourly basis. It is anticipated that five to ten times as many smart cards would be issued as there are available lockers, in order to assure a high locker occupancy rate. This system should increase locker occupancy from around 50% to 80% or more, and serve far more people, including many occasional or casual riders who are currently unable (due to non-availability) or unwilling to rent lockers on a long-term basis. Each year's funding assumes 20 lockers will be installed at 3 stations.

Carol Kachadoorian of WMATA nominated the project in 2006. In 2007, WMATA's Department of Planning and Joint Development approved its continuation on the list. The Washington Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee agreed that this project is important enough to be included in the top priority unfunded bicycle and pedestrian project list.