

CHAPTER 2: VISION, GOALS AND MILESTONES

The recommendations in this Plan are based on a long-term vision for bicycling and walking in the Baltimore region. This vision is an important statement intended to guide the overall direction of the program and create a general understanding of the results to be expected in the future.

The vision statement that follows reflects the input of participants in a series of public meetings and workshops held throughout the Baltimore region during the development of this plan.

The Baltimore region will be a place where people have the comfortable, convenient and safe option to travel on foot and by bicycle for transportation and recreation.

This vision foresees the Baltimore region ranking among the most bicycle and pedestrian friendly regions in the U.S. by the year 2025. Our region will be a place where bicycling and walking are a regular part of everyday life, and where area residents and visitors are able to use bicycling and walking to meet their transportation needs.

Public input was critical in establishing this vision. The following timeline is a summary of the extensive public input process used for the development of this Plan and the vision.

<i>July 2000</i>	<i>Project begins</i>
<i>August 2000</i>	<i>Newsletter #1 is published and distributed</i>
<i>August 2000</i>	<i>The Bicycling and Walking Survey is prepared and distributed.</i>
<i>September 2000</i>	<i>Project website goes online – includes the survey, meeting announcements, general information about the plan, contact information and project newsletters.</i>
<i>October 10, 2000</i>	<i>Livable Communities Workshop is held featuring Dan Burden of Walkable Communities, Inc. – kicks off project and serves as a regional forum to discuss bicycling and walking issues.</i>
<i>October 26, 2000</i>	<i>A second workshop is held to discuss greenway and trail issues featuring Chuck Flink of Greenways Incorporated – a national expert on greenway planning and design.</i>
<i>January 2001</i>	<i>Newsletter #2 is published and distributed.</i>

- February 7, 2001 Workshop is held with 50 elementary school students at Germantown Elementary School in Annapolis to discuss bicycling and walking concerns.*
- March 2001 Newsletter #3 is published and distributed.*
- April 4 - May 7, 2001 A series of three public forums are held throughout the region to discuss bicycling and walking concerns, preferred routing alternatives. Over 75 people attend.*
- May 2001 Survey results are tallied – over 200 responses received.*
- June 2001 Newsletter #4 is published and distributed.*
- August 2001 Final presentations on study recommendations are held.*

Public input on the development of the Baltimore Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian and Greenways Transportation Plan revealed a clear interest on the part of the local citizens to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities for transportation and recreation purposes. Their highest concern was the need for more bikeways, trails, sidewalks and safe roadway crossings. “I don’t feel safe crossing the road and cars go too fast,” said one ten year old. “There are no sidewalks in my neighborhood, and it is pretty tough to take a walk without them.”

Overall, both children and adults expressed concern that busy streets and fast traffic make bicycling and walking difficult (and sometimes impossible) in their communities.

RESULTS OF THE WALKING AND BICYCLING SURVEY

As part of the public outreach conducted for this project, a Walking and Bicycling Survey was distributed to local citizens to discern their perceptions and concerns about walking and bicycling. The results of this survey highlight the need for better conditions for bicycling and walking in the region.

Characteristics of Respondents

Over 200 survey responses were collected over the life of the project. While respondents did not constitute a random sample and may not precisely mirror the opinions of the region as a whole, they did make up a diverse cross-section of the region’s residents. For example, one misconception of such surveys is that respondents tend to be young males who are expert bicyclists, yet the results show that only slightly more males (52%) responded than females, and that respondents represented a wide cross section of age and experience. Over a third indicated they do not bicycle on a regular basis (i.e. less than once per week), and over 60% characterized themselves as “casual” or “beginner” cyclists.

A high number of respondents (42%) were between 41 and 55 years of age. About a fourth of the respondents were between the age of 22 and 36, and just under 15% were over the age of 60.

Types of Walking and Bicycling Trips

Most survey respondents participate in recreational riding (88%), however a fair number of respondents – at least a third - indicated that they use their bikes for transportation. Over half of the respondents say they make transportation trips on foot - running errands, walking to work or school, to the bus stop or to visit friends. Over 80% also indicated they also enjoy walking for recreation and exercise.

Primary Bicycling Concerns

Survey results show that over half of the respondents feel that bicycle conditions in the region are poor. Of the respondents who have children, only 20% allow them to ride on residential streets. In indicating what factors affect their decision to ride a bike, respondents confirmed national research studies: bicyclists want some degree of separation from high volumes of high speed traffic via paved shoulders, bike lanes and pathways.

Over 75% of respondents said presence of a path or shoulder affects their decision to ride. Over half said volume and speed of traffic are factors in that decision. Over 40% also indicated that truck and bus traffic affect their comfort level.

Primary Pedestrian Concerns

Among pedestrians who responded to the survey, comfort/separation from traffic, scenic value and personal safety/security were the highest ranking concerns. Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents said that their decision to walk is affected by the presence or absence of a sidewalk. Weather/time of day, and volume of traffic also ranked high in this decision (55% and 43% respectively).

Over a fourth of the respondents felt pedestrian conditions are “good,” however most of these positive responses came from Baltimore City residents, where the sidewalk network is fairly complete. The majority of respondents (65%) indicated that pedestrian conditions in their communities are “fair” or “poor.”

Opinions on Increased Spending and Anticipated Levels of Use

New bicycle lanes, trails and sidewalks are likely to be very popular in the Baltimore region. Over 85% of the respondents indicated they would

consider riding a bicycle for short trips if there were well-marked bike lanes in their communities. Perhaps most significantly, 94% of the respondents were in favor of increased spending on improvements for bicycling and walking.

Other Survey Results

Prior to the Plan survey, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council surveyed a random sample of regional residents as part of the 1998 Baltimore Regional Transportation Plan. Over 40% of respondents indicated that bike lanes and sidewalks were either unavailable or that the facilities were poor, and 61% responded that they would ride a bicycle or walk to work or for errands if it was safe and convenient. A 1995 survey of Maryland residents (conducted by PKF Consulting) indicated that 20.6% of the respondents would commute to work five days a week without using their car if they had access to a bike path system. Another 18.7% said they would do so two or three times per week.

Given the results of the Plan survey, in conjunction with previous surveys, it is clear that people in the Baltimore region value their mobility, want alternatives to motor vehicle travel, and hope that our future transportation system is designed so that they can walk and bicycle to their destinations. Continued citizen involvement will be essential to achieving this vision and ensuring that the recommendations herein are implemented.

PLAN GOALS

The following goals have been established to guide the implementation of this Plan. The goals are organized into five broad categories that reflect major themes.

GOAL 1: FACILITIES AND ENGINEERING

Construct physical improvements to the transportation system to ensure that bicycling and walking are comfortable and convenient transportation options.

- a. Create an interconnected regional network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities consisting of trails, on-road bikeways and sidewalks.
- b. Ensure that all bicycle and pedestrian projects meet the needs of persons with disabilities, in compliance with the ADA.
- c. Make improvements to intersections that provide safer crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- d. Improve pedestrian and bicycle access on bridges throughout the region.
- e. Improve linkages between bicycling, walking and transit.
- f. Address needed spot improvements, such as missing or deteriorated sidewalks.

GOAL 2: POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Revise and update local land development codes, ordinances and policies so that they encourage land development patterns and infrastructure that support bicycling and walking.

- a. Revise zoning and subdivision ordinances to require new developments to be built at densities that support bicycling and walking and to include mixed uses that make bicycling and walking viable transportation options.
- b. Take actions to develop new and protect existing greenway corridors throughout the region.
- c. Integrate bicyclists and pedestrians as standard design users in all transportation projects including new roads and road widenings.
- d. Each jurisdiction should establish a citizens bicycle and pedestrian advisory group.

GOAL 3: EDUCATION

Develop and deliver education programs targeted toward bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists that encourage safe use of all transportation modes.

- a. Work with local jurisdictions to design and implement a bicycle and pedestrian safety curriculum for elementary age children.
- b. Develop a regional education campaign promoting safe biking and walking and sharing the road, with messages for bicyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicle operators.

GOAL 4: ENCOURAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

Develop and deliver programs targeted toward bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists that promote the use of bicycling and walking as alternatives to driving.

- a. Develop a promotional campaign to educate the region's residents about the benefits of bicycling and walking.
- b. Work with employers in the region to promote biking and walking as commuting options.
- c. Work with local jurisdictions to promote bicycling and walking as a regular part of everyday life for their residents.

GOAL 5: ENFORCEMENT

Implement programs to enforce the rules of the road as they apply to bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists.

- a. Work with local police departments to increase the number of police on bicycles. Communities across the country have found that police on bicycles help raise awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- b. Assist local police departments in the development of enforcement programs targeted toward dangerous behavior by all road users.
- c. Assist local police departments in the development of positive reinforcement programs rewarding safe behavior by road users.

MILESTONES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following milestones and performance measures have been established to measure the region's progress in becoming more bicycle friendly. They will provide accountability for the various entities responsible for implementing the Plan's recommendations (see Chapter 7).

1. The current levels of bicycling and walking will double by 2010.
2. At least 50 miles of new bikeways will be constructed in the region each year in 2002-2005 and 100 miles per year in 2006-2010 (This includes trails and on-road bikeways). Result: By 2010, there will be 700 miles of new bikeways in the Baltimore region.
3. All targeted groups in the region, including elementary school students, will receive bicycle and pedestrian safety instruction by 2012.
4. All local governments will have programs and policies in place to encourage employees to walk or bike to work by 2010.
5. Twenty-five large corporations in the region will have programs encouraging employees to walk or bike to work by 2010.
6. At least 500 bicycle parking racks will be installed in public areas each year between 2002 and 2020.
7. At least 500 people will attend bike to work day events throughout the region by 2005.
8. Bicycle parking ordinances will be established in each jurisdiction by 2006.
9. All jurisdictions will have bicycle/pedestrian advisory committees established by 2004.
10. Bicycle accommodation will be available on all transit vehicles by 2006.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group, with the assistance of Baltimore Metropolitan Council staff, will prepare a yearly report card or status report tracking the achievement of these milestones and performance measures.