



ACTION PLAN 2001

***A Plan for Bicycling and Walking
in the Baltimore Region***

July 2001

The Baltimore Region Bicycle, Pedestrian and Greenway Transportation Plan

Prepared for:
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB)



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Adopted October 23, 2001

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bicycling and walking have been growing in popularity for years among residents and visitors to the Baltimore region. An increasing number of adults are bicycling for recreation and transportation purposes, and thousands of people walk to work in the Baltimore region. There are many places in the region where walking and bicycling are comfortable and convenient because of connected sidewalk networks, multi-use trails, street trees and destinations that are close to home.

In many places, however, travel by foot and bicycle is dangerous. Parents who grew up walking or riding their bikes are afraid to let their children do so today, and with good reason. The injury statistics in our region are sobering:

- a pedestrian is injured in a crash with a motor vehicle *once every 4 hours* in the Baltimore region, and a third of those injured are under the age of 16
- more than a dozen bicyclists are injured in crashes in the Baltimore region *each week*¹
- statewide statistics show that bicycle and pedestrian deaths, injuries and property damage are estimated to cost over \$850 million per year.²

The following jurisdictions participated in this Plan: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties, the City of Annapolis, and Baltimore City.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of this study are designed to provide a coordinated and strategic approach to the development of a regional network of trails, bikeways and pedestrian facilities in the Baltimore region. It should be noted that a “bikeway” is defined in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) as “A generic term for any road, street, path, or way that in some manner is specifically designated for bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are to be shared with other transportation modes.”

¹ Crash statistics provided by the Maryland Office of Highway Safety, based on an average number of crashes in 1995-1999 in Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Harford County, Howard County, Anne Arundel County and Carroll County.

² Maryland Highway Safety Office

The following is an overview of the 12 strategies (listed in no particular order) for implementation that are presented in more complete detail in Chapter 5.

Strategy 1: Physical Route Network

Immediate actions should be taken to implement high priority projects in the Baltimore region, as identified by this Plan. The region's progress in becoming bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly will be measured in large part by how many miles of new facilities are put on the ground in the coming years.

Strategy 2: Actions to Protect Greenways

Greenways are corridors of open space that can vary greatly, from narrow ribbons of green that run through urban, suburban and rural areas to wide corridors that incorporate diverse natural, cultural and scenic features. Jurisdictions in the Baltimore region should continue to actively pursue the protection of greenways by developing Greenway Master Plans, preserving greenway corridors through land protection measures, and the implementation of trail networks in conjunction with greenways where appropriate.

Strategy 3: Connections to Transit

Cooperative education, publicity and marketing should show the natural connection between walking, riding a bicycle, and transit. This strategy recommends a combination of education initiatives and physical improvements to encourage better access to and accommodations at transit stations and bus stops (e.g. bicycle racks, bicycle storage capability on rail transit cars and bicycle racks on buses).

Strategy 4: Mobility-Friendly Policies

The bicycle and pedestrian modes must become fully integrated into the transportation planning and design process in order to ensure that our future roadway network is mobility-friendly. During the development of this Plan, policies and practices of local, county, and state agencies were analyzed for their effect on bicycle and pedestrian mobility. This strategy presents recommended actions based on this analysis.

Strategy 5: Regional Practices on ADA Design

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all new construction and alterations meet the standards set forward in the Americans With Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines. This strategy would provide training for local roadway designers who are responsible for meeting ADA requirements.

Strategy 6: Maintenance and Management

Bicyclists and pedestrians are very sensitive to maintenance problems on bikeways (including on-road facilities) and pedestrian facilities. This strategy

addresses the development of a system to address both regular and remedial maintenance issues in the region.

Strategy 7: Education Initiative

One common aspect of bicycle and pedestrian-friendly communities in the U.S. is safety education programs for all users, including motorists. Safety education should go hand in hand with construction of new on-road bikeways, trails and sidewalk networks. Therefore, a key recommendation of this plan is to provide regular instruction on bicycle and pedestrian safety to area school children, adult cyclists and motorists.

Strategy 8: Wellness Initiative

The health community should be actively involved in bicycle and pedestrian programs to promote wellness and physical activity in the Baltimore region. This strategy encourages the development of bikeways, walkways and trails to promote physical activity and wellness programs for people of all ages in the Baltimore region.

Strategy 9: Encouragement Programs

Most bicycle and pedestrian-friendly communities not only provide places for people to walk and bike, but also encourage them to use these alternative transportation modes. This strategy envisions a variety of other encouragement programs that will support bicycling and walking in each jurisdiction.

Strategy 10: Safe Routes to School Program

When conditions in and around a school are hazardous for children to walk or bicycle to and from school, a Safe Routes to School program can provide needed tools to improve conditions. The program brings together key community leaders such as parents, school administrators, school and community transportation planners, and students, among others, to evaluate the school site and the surrounding area's traffic patterns, and pedestrian and bicycle conditions near the school. Area schools should institute Safe Routes to School programs, as appropriate; programs should be coordinated with the state's development of a model program.

Strategy 11: Legal and Enforcement Actions

There are a number of misconceptions regarding legal issues pertaining to bicycle and pedestrian transportation. Legal liability is an area that must be addressed in a local dialogue. In addition, the Maryland State Code can be strengthened to support bicyclist and pedestrian transportation. Law enforcement agencies will play a critical role in enforcing laws; they must be included in discussions regarding bicycle and pedestrian laws in Maryland.

Strategy 12: Continued Regional Coordination

Planning and coordination on bicycle and pedestrian activities must not end at the conclusion of this Plan. Much additional work will be needed on the part of local and state agencies and citizen advocates if this Plan is to be implemented in a timely manner. This strategy addresses the immediate need to devote staff resources to implement this Plan, as well as the critical role that citizen advocates will play in the process.