

How Did The Pedestrian Cross The Road? Local Citizens Find Out!

During the week of March 15th, Baltimore area community leaders, elected officials, business owners, and state and local government employees, joined together to welcome Walkable Community Workshops [WCW] to the Baltimore region.

One of the trainers was Bob Chauncey, the Director for Policy Analysis at the National Center for Bicycling and Walking [NCBW]. "We've built a society around having to get in a car," Chauncey said. One result, he suggests, is that Americans are gaining weight, especially children. "Walkable Community Workshops offer a way to recreate society in a way that's more beneficial for our physical health, mental health and the health of our kids."

The WCW program is an initiative of NCBW. The Maryland

continued on page 7

"The workshops not only placed community leaders, elected officials, engineers and planners at the same table, it put them on the streets and in the communities to develop a vision for the future."



BMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, Jamie Bridges

Workshop participants looked at examples of inviting sidewalk landscapes, as seen above. They also identified areas around Mondawmin Mall and the Baltimore Zoo where it is unsafe to cross the street.

SEEING RED? Traffic Cameras in Our Region

Red light running cameras have been in use in the Baltimore region since 1998. Today, there are almost 100 cameras in operation throughout the metropolitan area. The cameras have been installed by local jurisdictions on both local and state roads. The State Highway Administration (SHA) has drafted principles for the use of red light camera systems that local jurisdictions are asked to follow if they put cameras at a state-operated intersection. A summary of these principles is shown in *Table 1 (See page 2)*.

continued on page 2



Table 1

Draft Principles for the Use of Red Light Camera Systems

1. Use of camera system at a specific site must serve a highway safety purpose.
2. Site is studied to disclose engineering deficiencies and ascertain potential improvements, and deficiencies are corrected and improvements are made prior to red light cameras being installed.
3. Traditional enforcement has proven to be ineffective or inefficient prior to red light cameras being installed.
4. Red light camera system must use proven technology, be properly installed and maintained, be reliable, and produce high quality images.
5. Processing of images and issuance of citation are accurate, efficient, and fair.
6. Judgement of offenders who go to court is effective and fair.
7. Effectiveness is continually evaluated.
8. Public awareness is generated and maintained.
9. Camera systems are effective.

Does the use of red light running cameras affect the number of crashes?

In May 2002, SHA prepared a study that looks at red light running cameras and rates of crashes. The study considers the 41 sites where cameras were installed in 1998 or 1999, using crash data for a period of three years before the cameras were installed and one to two years after.

Table 2 shows that while the total number of crashes per year at the camera locations increased, the severity of crashes decreased. There were fewer crashes with fatalities and injuries but more crashes with property damage only.

The most common types of crashes are angle, left turn, rear-end, and sideswipe. Table 3 shows the frequency of these types of crashes before and after camera installation. Rear-end and sideswipe crashes typically cause less severe damage than angle and left turn crashes. The data show that after the cameras were installed, the more severe crashes are reduced.

Are we safer with red light running cameras?

The study shows that the installation of red light cameras results in less severe crashes. While the total number of crashes at a camera location may increase, the severity of the crashes decreased, and:

- There were fewer fatalities and injuries than expected
- There were fewer angle and left turn crashes than expected

In cost terms, the state calculated that, in 2000, this resulted in a total savings of \$8,051,500, or an average cost savings per intersection of \$196,378.

Table 2

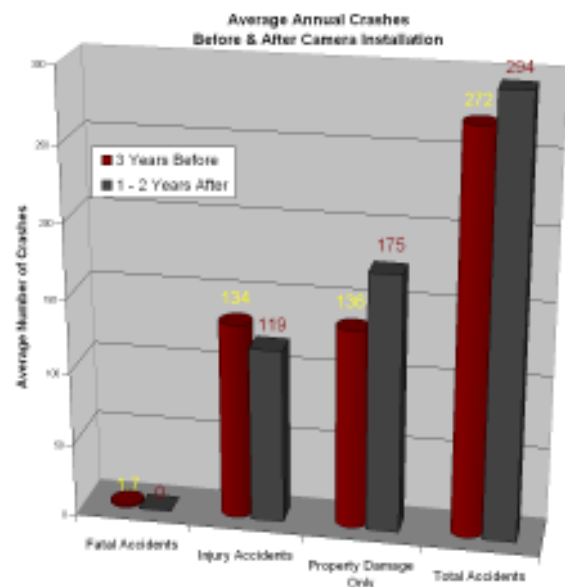
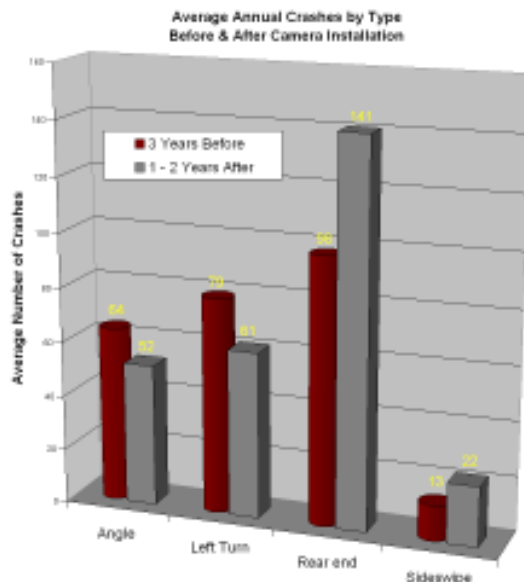


Table 3



MAY is CLEAN COMMUTE MONTH

You've heard it on the radio and seen it on posters and banners over the last seven years. Last year, the slogan was on buttons and even on Sharpie markers, but have you ever asked yourself, "Why *is* May Clean Commute Month?"

Actually, there are several reasons, but perhaps the most important is that May is the beginning of the ground-level ozone season in the Baltimore region.

That's why every May since 1998, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, the Maryland Departments of the Environment and Transportation, Clean Air Partners, and many others along the way have worked to raise awareness about the relationship between our personal transportation

choices and our air quality.

This year's initiative will feature visits by the Clean Commute Team to a number of community festivals, Bike-to-Work Day rallies in four locations throughout the region, a commuter appreciation event at an area Park-&-Ride, two clean car clinics, and a demonstration of hybrid-electric buses to local transit operators. An aggressive media campaign will complement these events.

We can all make a difference in improving the region's air quality. To get a complete calendar of Clean Commute Month events, visit www.Cleancommute.com or contact Russ Ulrich, Clean Commute Project Manager, at rulrich@baltometro.org.

OH NO! OZONE!

Ground-level ozone, our most serious pollutant, forms when emissions from tailpipes and smokestacks, as well as several other sources, mix under the hazy, hot summer sun.

Too much ozone in the air we breathe can be harmful to people who work or exercise outdoors regularly, anyone with respiratory difficulties, and especially children. Long-term exposure, even to low levels of ozone, can reduce a healthy adult's lung function by 15 to 20 percent.

Share the Groove: Bike-To-Work Day 2005

On Friday, May 6th, bicycle commuters of all ages from the Baltimore region will kick off Clean Commute Month, pedaling away for Bike-to-Work Day. More than 500 commuters are expected to attend rallies in Baltimore City at the Harbor Place Amphitheatre in the Inner Harbor; Annapolis at the City Dock; Bel Air at the County Office Building; and in Towson at Courthouse Square to share the groove and celebrate the perks of bicycle commuting.

Registered participants will be provided with an on-the-go snack, a bottomless cup of morning coffee, a free commemorative T-shirt and the chance to win commuter cycling gear – *including a brand new commuter bicycle*.

Why is Bike-To-Work Day Important?

A recent study by the Maryland Department of the Environment showed that single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) produce 20 percent of the ozone-emission pollution in the Baltimore area. Bike to Work Day 2005 will promote clean commuting. Biking to work reduces traffic congestion and commuting costs, improves personal health, is fun *and reduces air pollution*.

Join in the fun! To register for Bike-To-Work Day, visit www.Bike2WorkCentralMD.com



Highlights from 2004 Metropolitan Build



The 2004 Metropolitan Building Activity Report is now available through the Regional Information Center. The report looks at the number of residential and non-residential projects in the Baltimore metropolitan area (regionally and by jurisdiction) for the entire year, and includes both new and remodeling (additions, alterations, and repairs) building activity projects. In addition, comparisons are made to the same activity from previous years, particularly 2003. By doing so, we can see interesting trends in regional development. Here are some highlights of the report:

Investment in renovations increase, while number of new homes continues to decrease

The number of permits for new housing units declined by 11 percent across the region, from 10,912 in 2003 to 9,734 in 2004. Only Howard County registered an overall increase in the number of new housing units, with gains in both single- and multi-family units. However, the overall value of 2004 permits across the region was \$1,366,080, 2.8 percent more than in 2003.

Table 1 suggests that the decrease in new residential units consistent with a general decline of new residential units for the Baltimore region since 1994.

While new residential construction declined, permits for residential additions, alterations and repairs (AAR) increased by 3.6 percent across the region.

Baltimore City led the region with 2,646 AAR permits, up from 2,371 a year earlier, followed closely by Baltimore County with 2,600. Carroll County issued 1,143 permits in 2004, up from 883 in 2003. The overall value of residential AAR permits increased by nearly 11 percent, from \$420,674 in 2003 to \$465,613 in 2004.

Something old, Something new

Throughout the region, new residential units are being created through the conversion of existing structures. A school in Carroll County will be converted to 85 units for senior housing. In Anne Arundel County, there are plans to convert a hospital to 79 condominium units. Two of the most significant projects in Baltimore City include interior alterations of a nursing home to result in 67 new condominium apartments, and additions and renovations of an existing structure to create 38 apartments and 12 parking spaces.

Baltimore City led the way in non-residential construction

In 2004, the value of new non-residential construction increased by 3.5 percent, totaling \$799.2 million, compared with \$772.5 million in 2003. Baltimore City was the regional leader in this area due to a number of new large-scale office projects.

For non-residential remodeling projects, Baltimore City again led the region with construction values nearly the same as those reported in 2003. However, in the overall region, the value of non-residential AARs declined by 10 percent.

The pie charts to the right show a percentage breakdown of non-residential construction value by jurisdiction for both new and remodeling activity.

233 percent increase in new office building activity, while drastic decline seen in other areas.

Office buildings, schools and retail/commercial development led the region in new non-residential construction value. Permits issued for churches and

ing Activity Report

recreational facilities remained about the same in 2004 as in 2003.

As indicated by Table 2, investment in office buildings led all other categories and demonstrated the most dramatic increase – 233 percent in 2004. The major contributor to this increase was a \$130 million ten-story office, clinical, and research laboratory building in Canton (Baltimore City).

In contrast, drastic declines in investments were seen in two other areas: hospitals, group homes, and senior centers went down 85.3 percent, while hotels/motels went down 84.8 percent. These two groups also showed the least amount of investment when compared to the other categories.

For new industrial structures, the decline in value matches recent reports. The slower growth is believed to be due to rising construction costs and the lack of land that already has services like roads and transit.

Full report includes much more data

In addition to the information presented here, the following are some of the additional data included in the report:

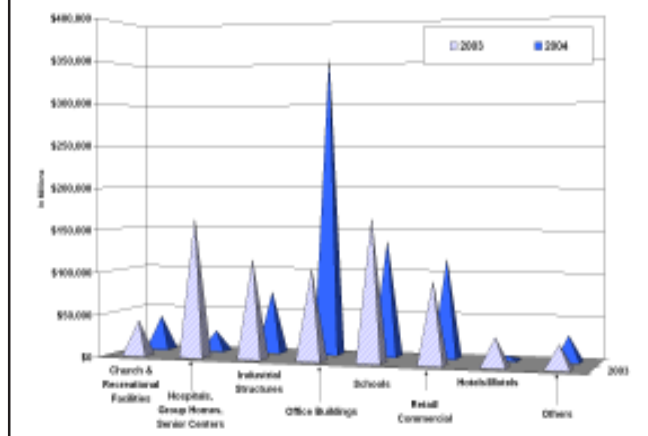
- The number of single family and multi-family homes permitted in our region;
- Residential units by Baltimore Regional Planning District (RPD);
- National data for residential building permits and sales of single family homes;
- Non-residential construction values by building type (e.g., schools, industrial buildings, retail/commercial, offices, etc.) for 2003 and 2004 in the Baltimore Metropolitan area; and
- Major new and remodeling non-residential projects in 2004 for our region.

To obtain a copy of this report and/or to subscribe to the Building Permits Data System Online, please contact Mary Logan in the Regional Information Center at 410-732-9570. There is a fee for this service.

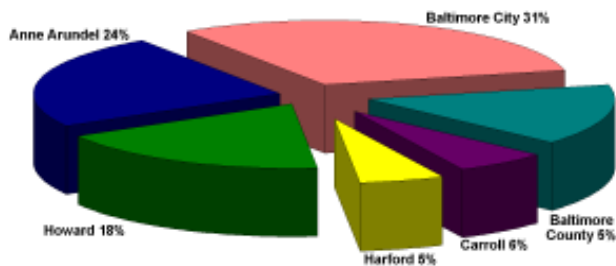
Table 1
New Residential Units Permitted
Baltimore Region 1994-2004



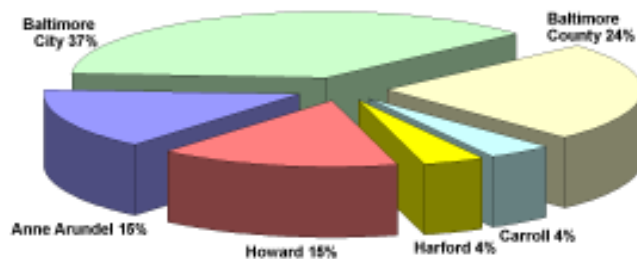
Table 2
New Non-Residential Construction by Type
Baltimore Region 2003-2004



New Non-Residential Construction (Value)
By Jurisdiction, Baltimore Region 2004



Value of Non-Residential Additions, Alterations, and Repairs
By Jurisdiction – Baltimore Region 2004



Employer Attitudes and Perceptions Influence Commuter Assistance Programs

In a recently completed survey, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council found that the commuter assistance provided by employers in the Baltimore region appears to be influenced by employer perceptions of traffic congestion and air quality, a lack of knowledge about sources of commuter assistance information, and the widespread availability of free parking.

The survey of 555 randomly selected employers in the region was conducted from mid-April until early June 2004. The survey data was analyzed by employer location, employer size, and at a regional level. The study helped Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) staff to learn more about what employers think about alternate commuting options, as well as what kinds of options they currently provide. This information can be used to encourage employers to provide more commuter options for their workers.

Key regional findings from this survey:

- Twenty-three percent of employers offer one or more commuter assistance options to their workers.
- Forty-one percent of employers rated the area's public transportation system as good (41%), fair (29%), and poor (7%).
- The majority of employers (83%) do not know of any organizations that can help with commuting issues.
- Employers that do not offer commuter assistance options believe that: employees are not interested (36%), employees don't need help (8%), not our responsibility (7%), too expensive (7%), lack of transit (4%), and a decrease in the flexibility of worker schedules (3%).

Draft 2006-2010 TIP Projects Available Online

The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board kicked-off the new 2006-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) annual cycle on January 4, 2005. The draft TIP projects will be available online for public review from April 18 - May 18, 2005. To see the projects, go to the "What's New" section of www.baltometro.org. Visitors to this online database can review draft projects with detailed project descriptions, project justifications and find information on funding amounts, and funding sources. This user-friendly format also enables visitors to view the maps associated with the projects online.

What do employers think?

- Is there a problem with traffic congestion in our area? Minimal (55%), moderate (32%), and severe (7%).
- How concerned are you about regional air quality? Concerned (55%), not concerned (22%), and somewhat concerned (17%).
- An air quality code red alert means: Air is unhealthy (48%), outside activity should be limited (25%), commuters should carpool or use transit (5%), and don't use a gasoline powered lawnmower (5%).
- Is free parking available for your employees? Yes (86%); No (10%); and some free parking is available (4%).
- How interested are you in providing free professional commuter assistance services to your employees? Not interested (45%), somewhat interested (36%), and very interested (12%).
- Are you interested in the Federal pre-tax deduction program for certain types of commuter assistance? Not interested (45%), interested (13%), might be interested (11%), need more information (11%), currently offer the program (10%), and don't know about the program (10%).

This study indicates that further coordinated marketing strategies are needed to improve employer perceptions, attitudes, and practices to increase the level of employer commitment to programs that can reduce commuting problems for their workers and improve air quality in the region.

How Did The Pedestrian Cross The Road?

continued from page 1

Highway Safety Office, State Highway Administration, contracted with NCBW to provide a team of two trainers to present four-hour workshops throughout Maryland. In the Baltimore region, workshops were held in Hunt Valley, Catonsville, Pikesville, Reisterstown Plaza area, Mondawmin Mall, West North Avenue, Glen Burnie and Westminster. The WCW program was coordinated by the BMC, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Carroll County.

During each workshop, the trainers used pictures from across the nation and around the Baltimore region to talk about the things that help make a community walkable, such as:

- continuous, attractive, well-maintained sidewalks that are wide enough for two people;
- sidewalks that are protected from traffic (trees, parked cars, etc);
- safe crossings that allow people enough time to cross the street and are well marked with bright paint visible to drivers;
- places to walk to, with buildings that face the street, are close to the street, and have multiple windows and doors; and
- transit routes every ½ mile, with safe, comfortable waiting areas.

The trainers then led participants on a walking tour, or walkabout, of their community. During the walkabout, trainers stressed the view of the pedestrian. In particular, participants were urged to think about young, old, and disabled pedestrians.

Following the walkabout, participants got together in small groups to think about and map ways they can improve the area for pedestrians. After the map exercise, the group listed their ideas and talked about what they liked and what they wanted to work on. BMC staff will continue to serve as a technical resource and encourage these new groups to meet and address the issues they raised in these sessions. To learn more or to get involved, contact Jamie Bridges at 410-732-0500 x1053 or jbridges@baltometro.org.



On Fayette Street in Baltimore City, the group admired the classic Baltimore row homes and talked about how they can improve bicycle and pedestrian access in the area.



In Catonsville, the group saw firsthand the challenges they face in making space for both vehicles and pedestrians. This section of Route 40 has no sidewalk, which causes problems for people in wheelchairs and others.

What's Going On?

May

Technical Committee (TC)	5/3	9 A.M.
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Group (BPAG)	5/4	1 P.M.
Interagency Consultation Group (ICG)	5/11	8:30 A.M.
Transportation Equity Task Force (TETF)	5/12	2 P.M.
Cooperative Forecasting Group (CFG)	5/18	10 A.M.
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)	5/18	4 P.M.
Freight Movement Task Force (FMTF)	5/19	9 A.M.
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB)	5/24	9 A.M.

June

Technical Committee (TC)	6/7	9:30 A.M.
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB)	6/7	5:30 P.M.
Interagency Consultation Group (ICG)	6/8	8:30 A.M.

Baltimore Metropolitan Council
 2700 Lighthouse Point East
 Suite 310
 Baltimore, MD 21224-4774
 Editor: Monica Haines
 Design: Lillian Bunton

Let's Hear From You!
 Send your comments to
 BRTBNotesEditor@baltometro.org
 or call 410-732-0500 ext.1047.

We're on the Web! Visit www.baltometro.org

Funding for this newsletter is provided in part by member jurisdictions, grants from the US Department of Transportation and the Maryland Department of Transportation.

Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

Member	Empowered Representative	Representative's Phone Number
Hon. Ellen O. Moyer, City of Annapolis	Jon Arason	410-263-7961
Hon. Janet S. Owens, Anne Arundel County, Vice Chair	Harvey Gold	410-222-7434
Hon. Martin J. O'Malley, City of Baltimore	Al Foxx	410-396-6802
Hon. James T. Smith, Baltimore County	J. Craig Forrest	410-887-3554
Hon. Julia W. Gouge, Carroll County	Jeanne Joiner	410-386-2145
Hon. James M. Harkins, Harford County	Pete Gutwald	410-638-3103
Hon. James N. Robey, Howard County, Chair	Carl Balsler	410-313-4310
KendI P. Philbrick, Secretary, MD Dept. of Env.	Thomas C. Snyder	410-537-3255
Robert L. Flanagan, Secretary, MD Dept. of Transp.	Marsha Kaiser	410-865-1275
Audrey E. Scott, Secretary, MD Dept. of Planning	David Whitaker	410-767-4564

in this issue . . .

- How Did the Pedestrian Cross the Road?* 1
- Seeing Red?* 1
- May Is Clean Commute Month* 3
- Share the Groove* 3
- Metropolitan Building Report* 4
- Employer Perceptions Influence Commuter Assistance* 6
- What's Going On? Upcoming Events* 7