

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY GROUP

September 20, 2023

1:02 to 2:35 P.M.

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

Mr. Nate Evans (MDOT TSO) welcomed attendees and then Ms. Charlene Mingus (BMC) held a roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF JULY MINUTES

The minutes from the May BPAG meeting were previously distributed to the group. Mr. Evans asked for a motion to approve, Mr. Chris Eatough (Howard County) motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Eric Leshinsky (City of Annapolis) seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved.

3. PRESENTATION: UPGRADING TACTICAL SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Ms. Emma Blondin (District Department of Transportation - DDOT) shared information on DDOT's tactical safety improvements, including how locations are selected, how quick-builds are installed, and DDOT's program to upgrade tactical improvements to permanent. Ms. Blondin explained that a curb extension is a tool that provides a variety of safety improvements to a crossing, including shortening the crossing distance, reducing motorist speed, and increasing visibility between motorists and pedestrians. Curb extensions can be tactical (made with paint and flex posts) or permanent (made from concrete). A tactical curb extension realizes safety benefits immediately, improves the construction timeline, and provides an opportunity to right-fit designs before permanent installation.

Ms. Blondin shared that the first step is identifying the need through local safety studies, which are quick, short studies that focus on short-term quick-build projects. These studies are messaged as ways to quickly improve safety, they are not large visioning studies. Tools consist of flex posts, paints, modular speed bumps, and signage. These projects are meant to be responsive to immediate needs.

Historically, after safety studies and tactical installation, most tactical locations were not converted to permanent upgrades, so DDOT implemented the Vision Zero hardening program, a systematic path for upgrading tactical locations to permanent. This was in response to community and political concerns. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds were

used to develop a hardening program, which will include a methodology and ArcGIS tool for scoring locations, a feasibility checklist, and concept designs for 20 locations. To identify priority locations, several factors are considered: state of good repair, pedestrian exposure, crash risk, crash history, and equity. A prioritized list is then analyzed for feasibility (part of an ongoing project, cars be able to make the modified turn, complexity, etc.). The top 20 locations are used to develop a work plan for the following year. Hardening can also be used to add greenspace and bioretention.

Ms. Tanya Asman (Anne Arundel County) asked how DDOT is able to get painted curb extensions approved, since they can conflict with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards. DDOT reported that once the curb is extended, it is considered pedestrian space, not roadway so it is no longer subject to MUTCD standards. Ms. Blondin shared that most of the locations are identified initially through public feedback. Additionally, when hardening is being developed, the community is engaged again. DDOT has a programmatic agreement with the historic preservation office which allows them to put in paint and flex posts without prior approval, but art and permanent installation need to be approved if they will be located in a historic area.

4. PRESENTATION: BALTIMORE COUNTY BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

Ms. Jesse Bialek (Baltimore County) shared an update on the Baltimore County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. This plan expands the geographic area of previous plans by covering the entire county. The goals of the plan are to increase safety, ensure equity, expand access and connectivity, enhance public health, protect the environment, collaborate with partners, and create economic growth. Currently, Baltimore County has 22 miles of bicycle lanes, 24 miles of unpaved shared-use paths, 9.4 miles of paved shared-use paths, and 2,425 miles of sidewalk. The plan uses a data-driven network approach, which combines analysis of the existing network with public engagement to recommend connected, comprehensive, and low-stress facilities for people of all ages and abilities. The analyses included demand, equity, and safety analyses.

The plan recommends 119 miles of shared-use paths, 70 miles of on-road bikeways, 33 miles of Complete Streets, and about 256 miles of long-term projects (projects which have been included in previous plans). The prioritization approach used data to sort projects into high, medium, and low priority. Example prioritization inputs were regional connectivity, high equity area, high demand area, and number of bicycle and pedestrian crashes. The plan also includes performance measures, targets, and annual goals for each of the plan goals. The plan includes sections on policy, programming, and education, but the main goal of the plan is infrastructure development. The next steps for the plan will be approval by the planning board and county council.

5. PRESENTATION: 2050 MARYLAND BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN 2024 UPDATE

Mr. Evans shared an update on the statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The plan is now open for public comment. The plan is updated on a five year schedule, and aims to improve and strengthen MDOT's policies, practices, and tools. This plan differs from previous plans by being much more data driven, and will also develop an implementation guide. Plan development began in January 2023. Existing conditions were assessed and needs identified in the spring, which included public comments. Over the summer, recommendations were prepared, and the plan developed, which has led to the current public comment period. The plan should be adopted in January in time for the General Assembly session.

Survey results from the first public feedback period reported that 94% of respondent's walking trips are for exercise or recreation and 93% of their bicycle trips are recreational. Respondent's reported that 62% would bike more if they could do so with less interaction with motor vehicles, 81% want more shared-use paths or wider sidewalks, and 72% want more protected bike lanes.

The vision of the plan is to provide safe and convenient active transportation that supports equitable access for all. The goals of the plan are safety, process improvements, connections in the network, and equitable and sustainable communities. The key recommendations are: a Complete Streets policy and program, implementation of the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, development of a statewide trail network and creation of a trails team, reassessment of maintenance policies and mandates, research on railbanking procedures, and the development of bicycle facility selection guidance. The plan includes an opening chapter detailing successes from the last plan, as well as an existing conditions analysis. The plan is open for public comment until November 20, 2023, and can be found at 2050marylandbpmp.com.

6. DISCUSSION: FUTURE TOPIC AREAS FOR BPAG

Ms. Mingus reported on the results of the future topic areas survey that was sent out to BPAG members in July. All respondents wanted to continue receiving updates on local bicycle and pedestrian plans. Other popular topics were quick-build projects and programs, updates on state initiatives, and updates on [Unified Planning Work Program \(UPWP\)](#) projects. Two-thirds of respondents were interested in updates on the federal Reconnecting Communities and RAISE programs, and half of respondents were interested in effective and inclusive methods for public engagement. Responses to open-ended questions included pedestrian inventories of sidewalk conditions, pedestrian level of comfort maps, improving ADA access to transit locations and identification of barriers, best practices for working with railroad companies during planning, design, and implementation, prioritization tools for projects, and a project to identify roads for road diets. The committee also suggested that hearing about innovative policy ideas that jurisdictions have passed would be helpful.

7. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

City of Annapolis – Mr. Leshinsky shared that Annapolis continues to move forward on the West-East Express, the College Creek Connector, and the Hilltop Connector, all funded by grants from the Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program. They also received another grant from MDOT SHA for the Bay Ridge Connector. Their bike and scooter share program continues to be successful, and they have partnered with Anne Arundel County to expand the footprint of the program. The comment period for the draft comprehensive plan ended on September 21, and the plan can be found here: <https://www.annapolis.gov/1446/2040-Comprehensive-Plan>

Anne Arundel County – Ms. Asman shared that Anne Arundel County received a \$6.5 million TAP grant to expand the BWI Trail Spur, and \$240,000 to continue Safe Routes to School accessibility studies. They also received a Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program grant for additional buffers for cycle tracks. The Belgrove Safety Improvement Study (formerly the Baybrook Connector) will have a public meeting soon, and Ms. Asman asked for any experience or data supporting trails as an amenity. The existing Safe Routes to School grant program is moving along, and the first trainings at schools have started. The Vision Zero action plan continues to move along, and should be available before Thanksgiving. They are also updating their design manual, and should have it complete by the end of the year. This will incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit into traffic studies.

Baltimore City – Mr. Jon Leishman shared that the Wabash Avenue Multimodal Improvements Study which was funded through the Transportation Land-Use Connections program is wrapping up, and is in the interagency comment stage.

Carroll County – Ms. Clare Stewart shared that Carroll County has several Safe Routes to School projects underway. MDOT SHA is performing an audit on Johnsville Road, which should be finalized by September. The Washington Road project has gone out to bid for final construction.

Howard County – Mr. Eatough shared that Howard County has recently completed a sidewalk and crosswalk project on Montgomery Road, and recently implemented bike lanes on several roads around the county. The next bike lane will be on Columbia Road, which will have a public meeting on October 19. The county received a \$4 million TAP grant for improvements to Dobbin Road.

Maryland Department of Planning – Mr. Scott Hansen shared that MDP continues to review local jurisdictions comprehensive plans. Regional planning and transportation planning staff review and provide comment on each plan sent to MDP. Recently submitted plans and MDP comments can be viewed [here](#).

MDOT MTA – Mr. Patrick McMahan shared that MDOT MTA ran into some challenges for the Patapsco Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge project, but have reassessed the design, and will be moving forward with the new design.

MDOT TSO - Mr. Evans shared that Walktober will be kicking off soon, with walks and Walkinars throughout the month. More information about Walktober can be found [here](#). The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is out for public comment. More than \$25 million in TAP

and Bikeways grants were awarded as shared in [this announcement](#). The next meeting of the [Maryland Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee](#) will be held on October 27.

BMC – Ms. Mingus shared that BMC will begin the process of consultant selection for the Vision for a Regional Bicycle Network in October. BMC also has a new online form for jurisdictions to request bicycle and pedestrian counts. The request form can be found [here](#).

8. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 15, 2023. The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Tanya Asman – Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation
Jessie Bialek – Baltimore County Department of Public Works
Chris Eatough – Howard County Office of Transportation (Howard County OOT)
Nate Evans – Maryland Department of Transportation the Secretary's Office (MDOT TSO)
Scott Hansen – Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)
Ryan Kivinski – Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning
Jon Leishman – Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT)
Eric Leshinsky – City of Annapolis Department of Planning and Zoning
Barry List – MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
Patrick McMahon – MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Catherine Salarano – Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Clare Stewart – Carroll County Department of Planning

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris – BMC
Emma Blondin – District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
Cindy Burch - BMC
Dan Hudson – DNR
James Kitchin – Anne Arundel County
Talya Kravitz – Greater Washington Partnership
Anna Marshall – BMC
Charlene Mingus – BMC
Mitchell Phillips – Baltimore County Department of Public Works
Shane Sarver - BMC
Michael Scepaniak – Strong Towns Baltimore
Ebrahim Seyedebrahimi – MDOT TSO
Patrick Smith – Howard County Office of Transportation (Howard County OOT)
Cynthia Spriggs – MDOT MVA MHSO
Francine Waters – MDOT TSO