

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY GROUP

January 17, 2024

1:02 to 2:43 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 NOVEMBER MINUTES

The minutes from the November BPAG meeting were previously distributed to the group. Mr. Evans asked for a motion to approve, Mr. Eric Leshinsky (City of Annapolis) motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Patrick McMahon (MDOT MTA) seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

City of Annapolis was nominated for chair and Queen Anne's County for vice chair. Mr. Evans asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. None were offered. Mr. Evans called for a vote for those in support of the nominations, the response was unanimous in support of the slate offered.

4. PRESENTATION: BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN COUNTS IN HOWARD COUNTY

Mr. Chris Eatough (Howard County OOT) presented on infrastructure improvements to Montgomery Road in the Elkridge area near a middle school, elementary school, and residential area. Infrastructure improvements were made to support the expanded school walk area as students who lived south of Montgomery Road previously had to be bused to the elementary and middle schools north of Montgomery Road as there were not adequate pedestrian facilities. Infrastructure improvements included new sidewalks, a midblock crosswalk with a refuge island, and new bicycle lanes. At the request of Howard County, the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Program measured the number of people walking and biking in the area for one week before improvements were made and one week after improvements were made so the change in bicycle and pedestrian volumes could be observed. BMC staff worked with Howard County to identify specific locations in the area to count bicycle and pedestrian

volumes. These include crosswalk counts at the Montgomery Road and Steepridge Drive intersection, a midblock crosswalk count on Montgomery Road west of Steepridge Drive, screenline counts at two future/existing sidewalk locations along Montgomery Road, and on road turning movement counts of bicyclists at the Montgomery Road and Steepridge Drive intersection. The counts were conducted in spring 2022 and fall 2023 while Howard County schools were in session.

BMC staff analyzed the count data and provided this analysis and the raw count data to Howard County. [The Tableau analysis of the before and after counts can be found here](#). The average weekday volumes of people crossing Montgomery Road increased significantly with average weekday pedestrian volumes at the midblock crosswalk climbing to 180. The midblock crosswalk was not in existence during the before counts, however, the crosswalks at Montgomery Road and Steepridge Drive were used as a comparison as they were the only north and south crossings for Montgomery Road in the area before the infrastructure improvements. In the before counts, an average of less than ten people were observed crossing at the intersection which illustrates the increase in average weekday pedestrian volumes after the infrastructure improvements. Bicycle volumes did not change significantly after the infrastructure improvements were made. This may be because the improvements did not have a significant impact on the experience of biking in this section of roadway.

Time of day variation was also observed including two clear spikes during weekday mornings which is likely reflecting the earlier start time of the middle school and the later start time of the elementary school. There are also spikes in volume in the weekday afternoon counts, however, the first spike is less defined while the second spike is higher. This may be because some children stay at the school for after school programs while others leave directly after school dismissal which disperses pedestrian volumes over a larger period of time.

Main takeaways include that the infrastructure improvements were successful in supporting the expanded school walk zone and showed increased numbers of children and adults walking to the elementary and middle school on the northern side of Montgomery Road. The largest increase in pedestrian volumes was during the weekday, however, weekend pedestrian volumes also increased. Mr. Eatough noted that schools function somewhat like community centers and there is often activity at schools on the weekend as well. The count data along with observed traffic calming assist in justifying the cost of the infrastructure improvements and similar future projects.

Ms. Tanya Asman (Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation) shared that this information was really helpful especially as the county recently received a grant for permanent and short-duration count equipment.

5. PRESENTATION: REGIONAL BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN COUNTS UPDATE

Ms. Charlene Mingus presented on the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Program. The program conducts weeklong or shorter counts of bicyclists, pedestrians, scooter users, and other active transportation users at locations identified by local member jurisdiction. The

program focuses on “before” and “after” counts that measure the effect of infrastructure improvements on active transportation use, potential permanent count locations to assist in site selection, and counts at locations with identified safety concerns as well as safety assessments which can assist with quantifying exposure and the development of crash rates. Bicycle and pedestrian counts support regional, local, and state planning by informing the public and decision makers about actual usage and travel patterns, allow for the tracking and analysis of travel trends, assist in planning for new or improved facilities, measuring the impact of facility improvements, supporting funding applications, and increasing the understanding of safety concerns and exposure rates.

The consultant conducts counts using video recording units mounted to a pole, tree, or other fixed object. Conducting counts using video allows for the differentiation of mode types (bicycle, pedestrian, scooter user, assisted mobility device user, etc.), however there are data limitations since rain can obscure data collection and counting is limited to daylight hours. Count volumes can be collected for intersection or midblock crosswalks, sidewalks, trails, and on road turning movements of bicycles and scooters, as well as, roadway shoulders, the grass along a roadway, or other locations where infrastructure improvements are planned or being explored.

BMC analyzes the count data in Tableau and provides the analysis to the local jurisdiction. An example is “before” and “after” counts conducted in Howard County at Montgomery Road and Steepridge Drive in spring 2022 and fall 2023. An elementary and middle school are located north of Montgomery Road and a residential area is south of Montgomery Road. The infrastructure improvements include new sidewalk, a midblock crosswalk, and bicycle lanes on Montgomery Road. Analysis showed that pedestrian volumes crossing Montgomery Road increased significantly after the infrastructure improvements were made. [View the data analysis for this count location here.](#)

Ms. Mingus announced that BMC is soliciting count location requests from local members for spring 2024. Member jurisdictions can reach out to Ms. Mingus if they have any questions about the count program or if they would like to discuss potential count locations. The deadline for submissions for spring 2024 counts is April 3.

6. PRESENTATION: THE NETHERLANDS RESILIENCY STUDY TOUR

Mayor Gavin Buckley (City of Annapolis) and Ms. Asman presented on the joint delegation trip to the Netherlands. The learning objectives were to study resiliency challenges and best practices in a county that is a leader in these areas. The Netherlands sits below sea level and the delegation learned how they have adapted. The delegation also learned about public transport to understand the return on investment on pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure improvements, multi-modal transit including making connections to microtransit to reduce cars on the road, and innovative funding strategies for resiliency projects. Ms. Asman shared the names of those who joined the delegation trip. These included; City of Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley; Maryland Secretary of Planning Rebecca Flora; Maryland Department of

Emergency Management Disaster Risk Reduction Director Sara Bender, members of the Annapolis City Council, including: Alderman Karma O'Neill, Alderman Brooks Schandelmeier, Alderman DaJuan Gay, and Alderman Rob Savidge; Annapolis City Manager Michael Mallinoff, Annapolis Deputy City Manager for Resilience and Sustainability Jacqueline Guild, Annapolis Director of Transportation Markus Moore, and Annapolis Director of Public Works Burr Vogel; Tanya Asman, Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner, Anne Arundel County Department of Transportation; Sponsor Patrick Denker, Denker Foundation; and Julien Jacques of Make Your Mark Media will documented the study tour through photography and video.

Mayor Buckley shared that the delegation trip offered the opportunity to learn best practices from a county that is leading the way in resilience which is important as the City of Annapolis is about embark on a significant resilience project. The Netherlands also leads the way on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and microtransit. Mayor Buckley emphasized that during the week the delegation was in the Netherlands that they focused on learning experientially by traveling by bicycle, even in the rain, to visit multiple major infrastructure projects that were preparing the country for not just 100 year storms but for 1,000 year storms. Mayor Buckley stated that lessons from the delegation trip emphasized the need to build safe and comfortable bicycle infrastructure to increase the number of people who bike which is part of the strategy to decarbonize.

Ms. Asman shared an [overview video of interviews and footage from the delegation trip](#). The delegation visited three cities to learn more about resiliency and bicycle practices. Ms. Asman focused on bicycle practices including learning sessions with the Dutch Cycling Embassy. The Embassy stressed that building infrastructure was the most important element to increasing the number of people who bicycle. While the Netherlands is known for the large number of people who bicycle, the country was not always that way. During World War II many of the buildings in cities were destroyed. During rebuilding after the war, planners prioritized cars to manage the increased traffic and they saw no role for bicyclists. The impact of these efforts were felt by citizens in the 1970s especially as fatalities and serious injuries of children increased. A movement to reverse car centric planning began at this time and cities build out their bicycle infrastructure over decades, eventually creating bicycle highway connections between cities. Members of the delegation also toured a bicycle parking garage that had capacity for 5,000 bicycles. An analysis of trips in the City of Annapolis showed that 70% of trips are less than 4 to 5 miles. If those trips could be converted from motor vehicles trips to another mode the traffic in the city would be reduced significantly. Members were also presented an analysis conducted in Lima, Peru to quantify the cost benefits of bicycle infrastructure. The analysis, [which can be viewed here](#), showed that for every Sol invested in Lima's bike plan, the city saves 19 Sol.

7. PRESENTATION: VISION FOR A REGIONAL BICYCLE NETWORK UPDATE

Ms. Mingus provided an overview and update on the initiative to develop a plan for a regional bicycle network which can be used to create an equitable and connected bicycle network that is comfortable for all ages and abilities. A connected network will benefit the community by improving equitable access to housing, job opportunities, transit, core services, and

recreational amenities will also increasing active transportation mode share rates. Ms. Mingus notes that broadening transportation choices and potentially increasing active transportation use can increase job opportunities, increase physical activity, reduce motor vehicle traffic congestion on roadways, provide tourism opportunities, and increase economic competitiveness.

Alta Planning + Design was selected as the lead consultant with Assedo Consulting as the public engagement and DBE partner. The project will consist of four main phases; discover, engage, develop, and produce. During the discovery phase the project team will identify existing and planned bicycle infrastructure, review existing programs and initiatives, assess the network's ability to provide low-stress connection, analyze mode share, equity, bicycle demand areas, and safety, and identify a diverse mix of stakeholder including partner agencies, local governments, community and advocacy groups, and community members. Engagement will focus on an equitable engagement approach with opportunities for authentic and meaningful public engagement with an emphasis on broad and diverse input. Engagement activities include handlebar interviews or interviews in the field with people who are biking or who would like to bike, steering and advisory committees, in-person and virtual public meetings, an online project website, StoryMaps, surveys, and a public meeting in a box. During the development phase, the project will focus on identifying a regional bicycle network that changes the way that people move in and around the Baltimore region, develop and implementation strategy, and outline policies and programs that support increasing bike mode share. The project team will also produce graphically rich and ready-to-implement document and online resources that serve as a tool for BMC and regional partners.

8. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Anne Arundel County – Ms. Tanya Asman shared the county is refining their prioritization tool that was developed as a part of Walk and Roll Anne Arundel. The county has launched a new [Vision Zero dashboard](#).

City of Annapolis – Mr. Leshinsky shared while Bird, the shared micromobility company, went into bankruptcy, but they have stated that they will continue to operate at the same level. The city is getting ready to kick off preliminary design of the Bayridge Avenue Bikeway.

Baltimore City – Mr. Jon Leishman shared that the city's lead bicycle planner Patrick Patterson took another role and is no longer employed at BCDOT. The city received the Bikeways grant agreement for the Boston Street project. The City has been coordinating with Rails to Trails to install three to four new bicycle counters at locations throughout the city.

Carroll County – Ms. Clare Stewart shared an update on the Washington Road Safe Routes to School project. The RFP was release November 2023 for construction, however, no bids were received so the county is working with the state to release another RFP in February.

Howard County – Mr. Chris Eatough shared that the annual Howard County Transportation Open House will be held January 30. [More information can be found here](#). The county is restarting their scooter permitting process with applications opening February 1. Selected vendors would start May 1.

Queen Anne's County – Mr. Steve Cohoon shared that the county is continuing work on their first Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The project team is currently identifying routes and developing recommendations. The draft plan is anticipated to be released in late January and will then be presented to county commissioners for adoption. Construction has begun to extend the South Island Trail and should be completed in six to eight months.

Maryland Department of the Environment – Ms. Catherine Salarano reported that they had no updates at this time.

Maryland Department of Planning – Ms. Tina James reported that they had no updates at this time.

MDOT MTA – Mr. McMahon reported that they had no updates at this time.

MDOT TSO – Mr. Evans shared that the 2050 Maryland Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has been finalized and can be [viewed here](#). The next Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting will be January 26. Also, MDOT will be hosting a series of grant workshops throughout the state in March.

MDOT MHSO – Ms. Cynthia Spriggs shared that Highway Safety Summit will be held May 13.

BMC – Ms. Mingus shared that the call for bicycle and count locations is open for spring 2023. The public comment period for the PRG: Guinness to Southwest Area 30% design project has closed and the project team are now developing preliminary design documents. A public meeting for the PRG: Stoney Run segment will be held Tuesday, Feb 6th at the Elkridge Branch of Howard County Library from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. The RFP was released for the PRG: Operations & Maintenance Guidelines and Branding Plan project.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 20, 2024. The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Tanya Asman – Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation
Jessie Bialek – Baltimore County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW-T)
Steve Cohoon – Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Chris Eatough – Howard County Office of Transportation (OOT)
Nate Evans – Maryland Department of Transportation the Secretary's Office (MDOT TSO)
Tina James – Maryland Department of Planning
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
Patrick McMahon – MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Catherine Salarano – Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

Cynthia Spriggs – MDOT Highway Safety Office Motor Vehicle Administration (MHSO MVA)
Clare Stewart – Carroll County Department of Planning

Staff and Guests

Daniel Allen – Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation

Regina Aris – BMC

Mayor Gavin Buckley – City of Annapolis

Kate Foster – Rails to Trails Conservancy

Victory Henry – BMC

Anna Marshall – BMC

Charlene Mingus – BMC

Mitchell Phillips – Baltimore County DPW-T

Patrick Smith – Howard County OOT

Shane Sarver – MDOT SHA

Francine Waters – MDOT TSO