

**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL (ESC) AND
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION (CACT) JOINT MEETING
BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE WEBINAR**

Thursday, March 17, 2022, Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams, 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order, Reading of Virtual Meeting Notice:** This meeting was held via electronic communications using Microsoft Teams. This meeting was held pursuant to and in compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3708.2 and state and local legislation adopted to allow for continued government operation during the COVID-19 declared emergency.
2. **Webinar: Safe Bike Infrastructure:** Andy Young, ESC member, offered introductions of the panelists and discussion of the purpose of the joint session to explore ideas and lessons learned from neighboring communities regarding implementation of bike lanes to meet safety, health, climate, and equity goals. Dave Gustafson, CACT Chair, recapped Police Chief Gavin’s presentation to the City on vehicle crash statistics, including those involving pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Guest Panelists
 - Will Handsfield, AICP, Bicycle Program Specialist, District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
 - Patricia Shepherd, AICP, Bikeways Program Manager, Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT)
 - Garrett Hennigan, Organizing Manager, Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA)

Presentation: Bicycle Infrastructure in Washington, DC, Will Handsfield, AICP, DDOT

- DDOT’s focus is to provide low-stress facilities over high-stress wherever possible to attract/retain cyclists and meaningfully influence mode share in a positive way
- Planning for facilities that can be independently used by people ages 8-80
- Approximately 8 miles of new facilities are expected to be finished this year
- Included a wide range of projects as examples from trails to shared use paths to facilities that utilize excess road space and/or take what were previously automobile lanes
- Grant Circle NW was an example project that started with tactical urbanism techniques and transitioned to more permanent installations with flex posts
- “Advisory” bike lanes have been tested as a way for all users to slow down and negotiate with others due to its narrow two-way vehicle configuration in one travel lane that enables vehicles to cross over the lines in low-volume situations
- *Question: What are the most cost-effective ways to get started and/or what are the most cost-effective solutions for jurisdictions with lower budgets?*
 - Will answers that vehicle stops used in parking lots are often laying around from other projects and can make good tactical barriers for separated bike lanes.
 - Will answers that negotiating the equipment/barriers needed into the construction cost of the bike lanes can be cost-saving particularly with increased scale or multiple projects.
 - Patricia answers that piggybacking on regularly scheduled road resurfacing projects can help economize and move bike lane projects along.

Presentation: Bikeways in Montgomery County, Patricia Shepherd, AICP, MCDOT

- A 2015 master plan focused on making connections to (at that point) a disjointed network
- Budget has grown from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million
- Education program for all users on new pavement markings that may be unfamiliar called “Lookout”
- Vehicle parkers are not accustomed to configurations where the bike lane is between the sidewalk and the vehicle parking rather than between the vehicle parking and the roadway lane
- Case study: Woodglen Drive

- Completed in 2014, first cycle track in Montgomery County
- Often the tradeoffs include on-street parking spaces on one side of the road to gain the width necessary for the bicycle facility
- Case Study: Nebel Street from Randolph Rd to Martinelli Rd
 - Light industrial context, wide travel lanes, speeding issues
 - First paired one-way protected bicycle lanes
 - Slightly reduced on-street parking; narrowed lanes intended to also discourage speeding
 - Two-stage queue boxes
- Case Study: Executive Blvd
 - Removed center turn lane (narrowed road from 3 lanes to 2 lanes) to gain necessary width
 - First pre-fabricated curb barriers
 - Educational flyers/signs to show drivers how to park
- Floating bus stops have also been introduced; improvements include better access for disabled users

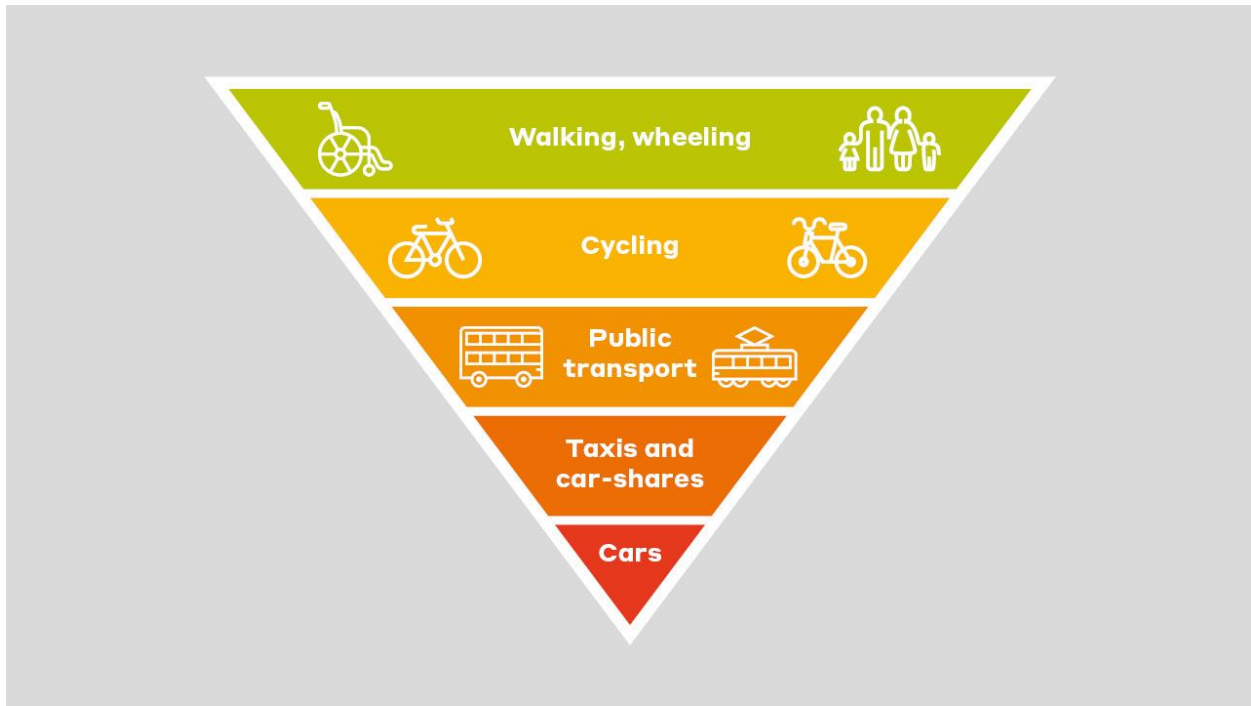
Regional Planning Discussion, Dave Snyder, Falls Church City Council

- Councilman Snyder provided an explanation of the regional planning organizations involved in bike and pedestrian planning and funding (among other transportation projects) and what is currently being proposed
- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) Transportation Planning Board (TPB) has published a draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region and the public comment period is currently open.
- The plan includes 1,880 miles of low-stress bicycle facilities, Councilman Snyder urges the attendees to provide comment to ensure Falls Church and projects that benefit the residents of the City are represented in the plans.

Panel Discussion, Garrett Hennigan, WABA

- *Question: What are good strategies for tactical urbanism and/or pilot projects?*
 - Garrett answers that it's critical to define what success looks like and what the plan is to ultimately make that pilot project permanent. A pilot could work great but at the end of the pilot period, if there's no permanence plan, the pilot installation could get removed anyway with no replacement. He also suggests that pilots are less effective on single blocks – try to connect to an existing part of the network or fill a gap.
 - Will answers that DDOT focuses on overall safety rather than strictly bike access. Bike infrastructure happens to be a good way (but not the only way) to improve overall road safety due to its ability to take space and reduce vehicle speeds. Multilane arterials are the most dangerous road types and countries that have successful Vision Zero programs have essentially eliminated them. Will suggests flipping the criteria to safety first, not vehicle capacity. If a road has a safety issue, vehicle capacity should not be a consideration when proposing an improvement.
 - Patricia suggests starting somewhere and starting small. Look for street festivals and other types of activities like that as a venue for demonstration to learn the rules of the road and to see how a facility type looks and integrates into the road use balance.
- *Question: What are the maintenance and budget challenges related to maintenance of bike facilities?*
 - Will answers that DDOT has been more focused on install but its maintenance expertise is growing. For 90-95% of days, general maintenance has worked ok, it's the 5% (mostly snow days) that require more, and are working on fitting equipment to the varied facilities for different widths, etc.
- *Question: While in Falls Church we've recently had a good record of safety with no fatalities, we shouldn't rest on our laurels. How do we get the community more involved beyond Council and boards interest to help them see the benefits of bike lane infrastructure?*
 - Garrett notes that business owners are often key to getting onboard and can be resistant if they perceive that access to their business is being made more difficult by the removal of parking space or roadway lanes. Focus on the key of getting everyone safely in the door, and research supports a positive impact on local business as a result of bike/pedestrian infrastructure.
 - Patricia recommends approaching the community as listeners. Community members have deep local knowledge and may have questions/concerns that wouldn't be as apparent to someone outside the community. Building trust and reasonably weighing pros and cons with the community can help increase buy-in.

- *Question: How achievable is Washington DC's 75% sustainable modes goal?*
 - Will believes it is achievable. The baseline was about 50%. COVID-19 has changed a lot with respect to reaching that goal (both positive and negative). He describes a hierarchy of trips, similar to the food pyramid (see below), as a way to strive for this goal, where biking/walking trips should be taken as much as one likes, while discretionary driving trips should be limited as much as possible.



Source: <https://www.wsp.com/en-NZ/insights/food-for-thought-unpacking-the-healthy-transport-pyramid>

- *Question: How can we best merge or get the most out of the combination of road diets, bike lane projects, and neighborhood traffic calming (NTC) projects?*
 - Will suggests focusing on safety as top priority, the 4-lane to 3-lane road diet is a great example of reducing conflicts with minimal impact to overall capacity. When looking at the tradeoffs at 1,000 feet vs. street-level, the discussions often change. The number of parking spaces that may need to be removed to finish a bike network may be small overall, but on the street that has the lane, they are more impacted. He advocates for refocusing the conversation on safety for all users over storing private vehicles on public right-of-way.
 - Patricia discusses other options to balance concerns of all parties, such as two-way to one-way conversions.
 - Garrett advocates for starting from a blank slate on a street and defining priorities around access and safety first, rather than starting from the existing condition and trying to just squeeze in bike infrastructure on the edges. Is on-street parking actually critical to the success of that particular street? Or is it an option we're choosing to include over other priorities?
- *Question: Have incidents increased on streets with two-way bicycle lanes but only a one-way vehicle lane due to driver unfamiliarity?*
 - Will answers that there are known conflicts with left turns that can be mitigated with signal phasing. Right turns are also a concern but are generally lower-speed and have better sightlines, which DDOT also focuses on improving wherever possible.

Andy Young, ESC member, closed the meeting with thanks to all panelists, participants, and organizers for their time and input.

Microsoft Teams recorded this list of attendees:

Kate Walker
Jeffrey Sikes
Shepherd, Patricia
Jon Ward
Handsfield, Will (DDOT)
Dave Gustafson, CACT
Joyce & Richard
Stuart Whitaker
Lara Waldron
Lauren Young
Andy Young
jeff
Michael Trauberman
David Bloomgarden
Joseph Schiarizzi - ESC
David Snyder
Peterson, David C
George Lee
Jeff Parker (Arlington EFC)
Garrett Hennigan, WABA
Debra Roth
Adam Hunter
Jason Garman
Arthur Agin
Andrea Caumont
Olesen, Andrew
Phil Duncan
Tim Roche
Jan/Bikenetic
Tim Stevens
Farrow, Allison V.
Jess Hegenbart
Win Singleton
Debbie Hiscott
Melanie Way
Jeff Peterson
Mary Chaves
Sarah
Andrew Crawford (ESC)
Mike Shushan
Amy Crumpton
Letty Hardi
Sarah Bayldon
Erin Kampschroer
Marybeth Connelly
Leon Yacoubian
Greg
Jorge G
Ben F
Robert Puentes