

# MARYLAND BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

## Public Meeting #2 Summary

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is leading an update of the existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, which was adopted in 2002. This Plan establishes a 20-year vision to guide investments that support cycling and walking, both on-road and off-road, as part of Maryland's multimodal transportation network.

The second public meeting in support of this effort was held on June 11, 2013 at the Rockville Memorial Library. A final public meeting is anticipated this Fall to present the Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan update for public comment. The primary purpose of the second public meeting was to engage stakeholders in the Plan update process and to solicit input on the draft goals, objectives and strategies under development. The meeting was also made available through an online format. The meeting was attended by over 50 people with additional web and phone participants.

MDOT and the consultant team presented an overview of the Plan Update process, a summary of the Stakeholder Interviews conducted to date, and the results of an online Bicycle and Pedestrian Needs Survey. The presentation also included an overview of the draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies developed in the first phase of the project. The draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies had been developed with input from the project Advisory Group, input from the first public meeting, discussions at stakeholder interviews, and in consultation with State Highway Administration, Maryland Transit Administration, and MDOT staff.

Meeting participants were then asked to breakup into smaller groups to discuss the draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. In the group discussions, participants were asked to introduce themselves and discuss what objectives they and strategies they thought were most effective or promising. Comments and recommendations were recorded on flipcharts.

A straw poll was developed that invited participants to evaluate the draft objectives of the plan and to identify up to eight objectives that they considered most important to achieving the Plan's goals. After the discussions, meeting attendees completed the straw poll by placing sticky dots on poster boards displaying the objectives. Participants could vote for a specific objective more than once. The purpose of the exercise was not to eliminate those objectives not receiving strong support, but rather to help inform priorities and key focus areas as the Plan update is developed. The straw poll was also available on the project website until July 12<sup>th</sup> for web meeting participants and others to participate in the following weeks.

At the Public Meeting, forty-six people chose to participate in the poll and a total number of 261 votes were cast. All objectives received votes. The highest ranked objective was Objective 1.5: Focus on improving bicycling and walking conditions in locations with the highest demand, which received 19 votes. Based on the polling results, meeting participants prioritized building new and improving existing bicycle and pedestrian travel facilities. Three of the top five prioritized objectives were included in "Goal 1 - To create seamless-multi- modal travel networks". The top five objectives were:

- Objective 1.5 - Focus on improving bicycling and walking conditions in locations with the highest demand. (8% of the votes)
- Objective 4.1 - Provide assistance and/or incentives to local governments to improve biking and walking. (7.7% of the votes)
- Objective 1.1 - Bicycle Mobility: Address network gaps and physical barriers; build connected networks with continuous bicycle accommodations. (7.3% of the votes)
- Objective 4.2 - Support efforts to increase biking and walking to schools, colleges and universities.(6.9% of the vote)

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- Objective 1.2 - Pedestrian Mobility: Fill gaps in sidewalk and crosswalk networks, address pinch points and physical barriers. (6.5% of the vote)

The following table presents a summarized version of the objectives, the votes received, percentages, and overall ranking based on the votes received at the public meeting. Please see the project website for the complete Straw Poll results, including public meeting, advisory group and online participants.

**Goal 1. Create Seamless Multi-Modal Travel Networks:** Fill system gaps; overcome major barriers; connect bicycle and pedestrian-oriented origins and destinations; create seamless access to public transit.

Objective	Votes	Percentage	Ranking
Bicycle Mobility - Address network gaps and physical barriers; build connected networks with continuous bicycle accommodations	19	7.3%	3
Pedestrian Mobility - Fill gaps in sidewalk and crosswalk networks, address pinch points and physical barriers	17	6.5%	5
Improve integration of bicycle and pedestrian transportation with public transit systems	16	6.1%	7
Address key gaps in trail systems and improve integration of trails and on-road facilities	17	6.5%	6
Focus on improving bicycling and walking conditions in locations with the highest demand	21	8.0%	1

**Goal 2. Improve Safety:** Enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety to reduce injuries and fatalities and to make walking and biking comfortable and inviting.

Objective	Votes	Percentage	Ranking
Use best practices to analyze bicycle and pedestrian crashes and identify countermeasures	7	2.7%	17
Improve education and training of professionals involved in bicycle and pedestrian safety	15	5.7%	10
Improve education and training of the public regarding safe driving, walking, and biking	13	5.0%	12
Improve maintenance and ensure consistent quality of bike and pedestrian facilities	10	3.8%	15

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**Goal 3. Build for Everyone:** Enable transportation agencies to effectively balance the needs of all roadway users to promote travel choices, recognizing that bicycle and pedestrian needs should be an equal or higher priority in some locations.

Objective	Votes	Percentage	Ranking
Incorporate Complete Streets principles in all State transportation projects, and promote Complete Streets policies at the local level	16	6.1%	8
Strengthen methodologies and data used to plan, design and evaluate bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Maryland	11	4.2%	14
Build knowledge and capacity of state and local government staff to effectively plan, design, implement and maintain infrastructure for bicycling and walking	16	6.1%	9
Increase use of innovative design solutions that address safety and accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists	15	5.7%	11

**Goal 4. Strengthen Communities:** Partner with local governments to achieve walkable and bikeable communities and the resulting sustainability, livability, health and economic benefits.

Objective	Votes	Percentage	Ranking
Provide assistance and/or incentives to local governments to improve biking and walking	20	7.7%	2
Support efforts to increase biking and walking to schools, colleges and universities	18	6.9%	4
Improve community outreach and engagement	8	3.1%	16

**Goal 5. Promote Walking and Biking in Maryland:** Support walking and biking as everyday modes of transportation and recreation and vital elements of a livable community through encouragement, marketing and information.

Objective	Votes	Percentage	Ranking
Promote bicycling and walking as normal transportation modes that have a broad diversity of participants	13	5.0%	13
Support growth in bicycle tourism throughout Maryland	4	1.5%	19
Improve access to bicycling and walking information	5	1.9%	18

The following summarizes comments and key themes from the meeting discussion, organized by goal:

### 1. Create Seamless Multi-Modal Travel Networks:

- Need more than bikeable shoulders to create network, bike lanes and physical separation is preferred
- Need to incorporate local roads and state roads to make useful networks
- Like the idea of using utility right of ways for trails
- Focus connections on activity centers

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### 2. Improve Safety:

- Need to fill gaps when there are not safe routes to major destinations, schools, etc.
- Step up enforcement particularly for aggressive drivers
- Bus drivers need to be more respectful of bicyclists and pedestrians
- Require elected officials, local staff, planners and engineers to bicycle and walk in their jurisdictions
- Better maintenance will increase safety especially along shoulders
- Building better networks of facilities that connect people with where they need to go is the best way to improve safety

### 3. Build for Everyone:

- Consider widening sidewalks and paths for shared use when there is not enough room for separate bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Set mode share goals and develop ways to estimate demand
- Evaluate level of comfort not just level of service
- Need better bike/ped count methodologies
- Need to make it safer for kids to walk to school

### 4. Strengthen Communities:

- Need funding and leadership to work together
- Provide more resources and assistance to local governments; don't mandate more for local governments without funding to support the requirements
- Increase coordination between state and local governments on projects and plans
- Need to create a vision of the communities we want to live, work, and play in
- Prioritize improvements where they are most needed instead of pursuing projects where they may be easiest

### 5. Promote Walking and Biking in Maryland:

- Promote bicycle tourism for Maryland residents, not just for people from other states
- Provide more wayfinding and access to information
- Use the economic and social benefits of biking and walking to sell the projects and plans
- Promote walking and biking to schools and improve the infrastructure to make it possible
- Increase funding for bike and pedestrian projects

The input received at the Public Meeting along with other feedback gathered during the study process will be used to refine and finalize the goals, objectives, and strategies of the plan. In the coming months, MDOT and the consultant team will be developing the Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update document and a final public meeting is anticipated this Fall to present the Draft Plan Update for public comment.