

MARYLAND BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

Public Meeting #3 Summary

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is leading an update of the current 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 final public meeting in support of this effort was held on November 13, 2013 at the Talbot County Free Library in Easton. A draft of the new Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan had been released on November 8th. The primary purpose of the meeting was to provide updates and highlight elements of the draft Plan and to solicit public feedback on its key initiatives and implementation approach. The meeting was also made available through an online format, which included the full presentation and the moderated discussion.

MDOT and the consultant team presented an overview of the Plan update process, a summary of key themes heard from the public outreach efforts, and an overview of the Draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. The presentation also described the key initiatives and MDOT's approach to implementing the Plan. The Draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies were developed with input from the Advisory Group, input from the previous public meetings, discussions at stakeholder interviews, and in consultation with other state agencies, as well as the State Highway Administration (SHA), Maryland Transit Administration, and other MDOT staff.

The key initiatives were identified as important strategies that could be implemented by MDOT as first steps in achieving the vision and goals of the Plan. A Regional Planner with SHA also presented highlights from an on-going local coordination effort with the Town of Easton that has resulted in improvements to the planning process and physical improvements to the local bicycle and pedestrian network. Following the presentation, a moderated discussion was held at the meeting and with the online participants. In the discussions, participants were asked to introduce themselves, discuss whether they felt the goals, objectives, and strategies were comprehensive, and whether they thought the key initiatives made sense as first steps in implementing the Plan. They were also asked to suggest specific actions to be taken as a next step to advancing the goals of the Plan.

The meeting attendees and online participants reported general consensus around the draft goals, objectives, and strategies and the key initiatives. The following summarizes feedback from the discussion at the meeting and online:

- Emphasis should be on building the network and connecting the gaps.
- Partnering with local communities and regional entities to identify priorities, seek funding and implement improvements is important.
- The Plan should address funding more directly.
- Improvements should be focused on local context including gateways and transitions in local communities.
- Grassroots education efforts for elected officials and local communities are key to implementation and should include infrastructure adaptations in smaller towns.
- Expand technical and design training opportunities for local communities.
- Look for opportunities to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian improvements into larger projects and programs.

MARYLAND BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

- Encouraging local governments to include bike and pedestrian initiatives in their comprehensive plans and to enact local ordinances that address bicycle and pedestrian improvements is critical.
- More should be done at the State, regional and local level to promote bicycle tourism and assist local tourism boards (for example, explore potential to extend Trail Town Network approach to Eastern Shore).
- The statewide bicycle map should be re-evaluated and integrated with local maps into a complete network.
- A better system is needed for reporting maintenance issues at State and local levels, such as mobile based incident and maintenance applications.
- Best practice guidelines or design manuals may help address some of the above-mentioned needs and to address misconceptions about the impact of trails on local communities.

The Draft Plan is available for review on the project website and the public comment period will remain open through December 10th. Thank you for your participation in this effort and please check the project website for any updates.