

## VDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

The Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting was held on Wednesday, March 27, 2013 in Richmond, Virginia at the VDOT Central Office Auditorium. All materials presented at the meeting will be posted on the VDOT Bicycling and Walking Webpage (<http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bk-default.asp>).

The following meeting minutes are provided using the meeting agenda format. A PDF of the agenda is available at the following link: [March 2013 VDOT BPAC Meeting Agenda](#).

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 10:05am. Reta Busher, VDOT Chief of Planning and Programming, started the meeting by welcoming the committee members. Each person on the committee introduced themselves. The following members and staff were in attendance:

1. Sulabh Aryal (for Barbara Nelson) - Richmond Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
2. Chris Berry - Blue Ridge Bicycle Club
3. John Bolecek – VDOT, Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD)
4. Tom Bowden (for Kimberly Perry) - BikeVirginia
5. Champ Burnley - Virginia Bicycling Federation
6. Reta Busher – VDOT, Commissioner's Office
7. Randy Dittberner – VDOT, Northern Virginia (NOVA) District
8. Bruce Drees - Tidewater Bicycle Association
9. Marsha Fiol – VDOT, Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD)
10. Michael Gray - VDOT Salem District
11. Robin Grier – VDOT, Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD)
12. Kelly Hitchcock - Region 2000 Local Government Council
13. Rob Hofrichter – VDOT, Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD)
14. George Homewood - City of Norfolk
15. Liz McAdory – VDOT, Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD)
16. Elliott Moore (for Martha Kapitanov) – Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
17. David Patton - Arlington County
18. Stephen Read – VDOT, Traffic Engineering Division
19. Charlie Strunk - Fairfax County
20. Michael Todd – Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT)
21. Bud Vye - Richmond Area Bicycling Association
22. Jennifer Wampler - Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
23. Rob Williams – VDOT, Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD)
24. Bruce Wright (for Shane Farthing) – Washington Area Bicycle Association (WABA)

Additional attendees included Max Hepp-Buchanan - Richmond Sportsbackers, Stephanie Smith - Safe Routes to Schools Partnership and Brantley Tyndall – RideRichmond.

### Presentations

The topics and presenters names are listed in bold, below. Agenda items one, two, three, eight, and nine are covered in the master presentation. Agenda items four through seven are stand alone presentations given by VDOT employees on various topics. PDFs of the presentations are

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

linked below the titles for easy reference, and can also be found on the VDOT Bicycling and Walking Webpage (<http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bk-progsup.asp>).

[Master BPAC Presentation](#)

**2. Committee Structure - John Bolecek, VDOT Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner**

John Bolecek gave an overview of the BPAC committee structure. John presented both the structure and purpose of the group and provided an overview of the following points:

Structure:

1. John Bolecek to serve as the BPAC Chairman
2. Meetings will be held twice a year
3. Membership comprised of cross section of Virginia bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders

Purpose:

1. Provides an official avenue of communications between VDOT's Bike/Ped Program and stakeholders
2. BPAC Committee will improve the quality of the VDOT Bike/Ped Program by soliciting public input through a variety of means:
  - a. Identifying high bicycle use road sections that would benefit from shoulders
  - b. "Gap Map" i.e. identifying small gaps in bike/ped network in each district
  - c. Sharing local issues
  - d. Providing input on priorities
  - e. Reporting maintenance needs i.e. missing US Bike Routes signs etc.

There was no follow up discussion by committee members.

**3. Status of Bicycle/Pedestrian projects at VDOT - John Bolecek, VDOT Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner**

John Bolecek presented the status of various Bicycle and Pedestrian Program projects, with emphasis on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy Plans.

**1. Recent History of the VDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program**

- a. March 2004 – The Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation is approved by the CTB
- b. 2005 to 2009 – The Policy was Implemented by the VDOT Policy Implementation Team
- c. First Audit of Policy June, 2006
- d. Fall 2006 – First edition of the Bicycling in Virginia map released
- e. January 2007 - Policy Implementation guidance documents for localities released
- f. Second Audit of Policy March, 2009
- g. Summer 2010 – VDOT Bicycling Guide Released
- h. September 2011 – VDOT State Bicycle Policy Plan released
- i. May 2012 – VDOT Community Trail Development Guide released

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

- j. October 2012 – Second edition of the Bicycling in Virginia map released

**2. Bicycle Policy Plan overview**

- a. Completed September, 2011
- b. Develops a direction and vision for the Bike (and Ped) Program
- c. Further institutionalizes the 2004 CTB Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations
- d. Provides a list of recommendations that guides the VDOT Bike/Ped Program
- e. Action steps are listed and are currently underway
- f. Several actions steps will be combined with the Pedestrian Policy Plan recommendations

**3. Pedestrian Policy Plan**

- a. The Pedestrian Policy Plan is underway and should be completed in Summer, 2013
  - b. HNTB is the consultant assisting with the plan
  - c. The plan will outline background information on statewide pedestrian issues and provides recommendations on how to further implement the 2004 CTB Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations
  - d. The development of the plan has been aided by both an external and an internal working group
4. Development of a “Bike/Ped database project” is underway to capture bike/ped recommendations from local/regional plans. This effort was initiated through an on-call consultant task order. Both Salem and Culpeper districts have been completed, and are currently in QA/QC phase. Depending on the outcome, this process may be conducted for other districts as well.
5. Work has also begun on the Beaches to Bluegrass Conceptual Trail Plan, a corridor that will span from the Cumberland Gap to Virginia Beach.
6. John will distribute meeting materials to members. Meeting agendas and presentations will also be available on the web after they are distributed to members.

**4. Recent Bicycle Improvements in Northern Virginia – Randy Dittberner, VDOT Northern Virginia District Regional Traffic Engineer**

Presentation available [here](#).

Randy presented on a variety of recent bicycle and pedestrian improvements that have been implemented in the Northern Virginia District. Improvements include use of shared lane markings, road diets, bike lanes, bicycle signal detection, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons.

A discussion at the end of the presentation included the following questions and statements:

- 1. Question: Are urban maintenance payments being reduced if a locality implements road diets? Answer: Yes. Topic was put in the “Bike Rack” (the “Bike Rack” was a chart used

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

to document topics to revisit at the end of the meeting or discuss at future BPAC meetings).

2. Discussion: Shoulder widening and wedging (the practice of widening and reinforcing shoulders when repaving to give bicyclists and motorists more space) is used, in some instances, to help prevent raveling of the shoulder. The Department's intention is to try to use that method (wedging) where necessary.
3. Comment: The eastern shore of Maryland has many roads with wide shoulders compared to Virginia.
4. Comment: A survey of bike lane users on Lawyer's Rd in northern Virginia (NOVA) indicated that bicyclists' main concern was debris in the lane due to a lack of sweeping.
5. Discussion: Bicyclists' interaction with signalized intersections was briefly discussed. An example of a passive detection bike signal was shared. The passive detection is able to detect passing cyclists, eliminating the need for the bicyclist to stop, get off their bike and push the button to change the traffic signal.
6. Discussion: A member of the group requested that the group have access to the VDOT Maintenance Division's schedule of work and/or the list of work after its completion. Having this information would be beneficial when bicyclists are scheduling a group ride. Members stated that it would be good to know for safety reasons where maintenance projects may be or where new shoulders have been wedged. VDOT will look into the availability of that information and provide a response at the next BPAC meeting.
7. Discussion: A member of the group commented that they would like to have local and/or MPO bike/ped plans to review along with district maintenance schedules.

**5. Status of Virginia Supplement to the MUTCD – John Bolecek, VDOT Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner**

Presentation available [here](#).

John presented on the status of Virginia supplement to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) as it relates to new bicycle traffic control devices. The updated supplement includes new information on the appropriate uses of "Bikes May Use Full Lane" signs and on Shared Lane Markings. The most up to date information on the Virginia Supplement can be found here:

[http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia\\_mutcd\\_supplement.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia_mutcd_supplement.asp)

A discussion at the end of the presentation included the following questions and statements:

1. Question: If a jurisdiction installs sharrow(s) (with no road diet), would maintenance payments change? Answer: No.
2. Question: Can "Bikes May Use Full Lane" signs be used if there is a bike lane? Answer: Bikes are not legally prohibited from using the full lane when there is a bike lane, but it makes sense that if a bike lane exists, bikes will likely be in the bike lane, not using the full (conventional) lane. A member suggested that VDOT not overuse the "Bikes May Use Full Lane" signs in order to retain their effectiveness. Bikes can use the full lane if signed or not, so the goal is to put the signs where cyclists are likely to use the full lane.

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

3. Question: Is there any guidance as to when to use “Share the Road” signs? Answer: Currently VDOT is using the process of, “See bike use, install ‘Share the Road’ signs where bike use was observed.” Salem and Lynchburg districts have used this method with the MPOs and the process is working well.
4. Discussion: The difference between the MUTCD and AASHTO guidance is the MUTCD refers to “devices” and AASHTO refers to how to put all the MUTCD variables together. FHWA’s website has a list of experimental treatments that do not have to be in the MUTCD. That site is:  
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/guidance/design\\_guidance/mutcd\\_bike.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/design_guidance/mutcd_bike.cfm)
5. Discussion: DRPT’s Multimodal Design Guidelines were mentioned several times and it was requested to include a link to them in the meeting summary. The link is here:  
[http://www.vatransit.com/files/docs/Webinars/DRPT\\_Design\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.vatransit.com/files/docs/Webinars/DRPT_Design_Guidelines.pdf)
6. Question: What is the status of the Road Design Manual (RDM)? Answer: There will be a link to the DRPT guidance and if localities do a multimodal (MM) plan, they can then use the alternatives, but they do not have to do a MM plan. The RDM is updated every six months (in January & July). The RDM is currently in the update/revision cycle now.

**6. Update on the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program – Presented by Rob Williams, VDOT Safe Routes to School Coordinator**

Presentation available [here](#).

Rob presented a status report on the Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS). He outlined the program progress to date, the future plans for the grant cycle and changes made by MAP-21. MAP-21 dissolved the SRTS program and the Transportation Enhancement program and created the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Projects that improve walking and biking to school remain eligible under the TAP Program but there is no dedicated SRTS funding. The following comments and questions were made after the presentation:

1. Discussion: SRTS Website: [www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes](http://www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes)
2. Question: MAP-21 mentions, “non-drivers”; who is that referring to, specifically? Answer: FHWA is in the process of developing guidance and we have not yet seen guidance on that.
3. Discussion: SRTS applies to public and private schools; grades K – 8. Schools will continue to be eligible for funds under the MAP-21 TAP.
4. Question: How to address schools with a policy against walking? Answer: The SRTS National Center has information that parents or anyone can use to indicate what changes can be made if the school prohibits students to walk, but the school is required to sign on indicating that they allow or would change policy on walking.
5. Discussion: Application process: Local Assistance division (LAD) has an application process for the TAP and projects that improve walking and biking to school are eligible. The MAP-21 legislation indicates a 50/50 split between VDOT and the MPO’s. VDOT has approached the MPO’s on how to handle the first application cycle. The first cycle of MAP-21 will all go to previous TAP projects. Larger MPO’s will (if they choose) manage the selection process for their 50% share.

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

**7. Maintenance - Update on the 2% set-aside for shoulder paving – Robbie Prezioso, VDOT Maintenance Division, Assistant Division Administrator**

Presentation available [here](#).

Robbie gave a presentation on the paving funding used to widen and wedge shoulders in each district. Figures were presented for each district on the amount of money spent and the miles of paved shoulders added. The following comments and questions were made after the presentation:

1. Question: How is the goal assessed? Answer: The Department's funding is consistently decreasing. The focus has been on interstates, so hopefully future funding will allow for other systems. The two percent is used for new shoulders, but only for maintenance projects; not new construction projects.
2. Discussion: It was noted that VDOT will provide a shoulder that is wider than two feet, where possible.
3. Question: Does VDOT have a four-foot standard where feasible? Answer: VDOT will make the shoulder as wide as possible based on available land, funding, etc. The minimum shoulder is two feet. It is also important to consider signage if the project is on bike routes or parts of a local/regional bike plan. Consideration is also given to whether or not there is a maintenance need that the increased shoulder will help resolve, in addition to accommodating the bike need.
4. Discussion: It is noted that VDOT also looks to use pavement markings and signage to further the effect.
5. Discussion: It was requested by the group for VDOT to include other performance measures in Bike/Ped; not just the number of lane miles.
6. Question: How is the information regarding work that is done conveyed to the MPO, public, mapped, and maintained? Basically, how can the cyclists get this information? Answer: There is no process in place at this time, but hopefully this committee can help develop one.
7. Question: Are liability issues a factor during shoulder paving? Answer: A goal with maintenance is often to reduce shoulder drop off in order to reduce the incidence of run-off-the-road crashes wherein drivers overcorrect. Where space is available, it makes sense to pave shoulders to reduce this. Wider shoulders help keep shoulder drop off from becoming such an issue because pavement edge can stay flush with the adjacent ground longer.
8. Discussion: Additional questions arose regarding the two percent paving goal. The policy is linked below:  
[http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/resources/Asset\\_Mgmt\\_Best\\_Practices\\_Manual\\_BP\\_12.5.pdf](http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/resources/Asset_Mgmt_Best_Practices_Manual_BP_12.5.pdf)
9. Discussion: There was a discussion about where the additional shoulder width is most helpful. The shoulder widening that is done to address bicycle concerns occurs on roadways with higher vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

## 8. Additional Discussion / Roundtable

The committee divided into groups based on color-coded dots that were randomly, pre-assigned. The groups worked on an assignment to develop a list of focus areas that would provide the most benefit to VDOT and other Virginia bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders. The committee worked for 18 minutes. The suggestions were presented to the entire committee by a member of the breakout group.

### Group Blue Suggestions:

1. It is critical to receive and review a repaving schedule. Fairfax County gets most bike lanes through this process. It would be helpful to work with Maintenance division to see paving schedules early.
2. There is a need for more bike routes within Virginia; more connectivity.
3. Regarding the maintenance payment issue, there must be some clarification on if a road diet is implemented, is funding actually decreased? A more clear and concise answer is needed, as members indicated that they have heard the question answered in different ways.
4. During local construction projects in Northern Virginia, the trails and the sidewalks get closed without a detour. If these issues are applicable statewide, this group would like to ask for clarification on the policy and/or discuss other local issues that may be applicable statewide.
5. There should be local bicycle and pedestrian advisory committees in the VDOT construction districts.

During the Blue group's discussion of number 5, a committee-wide discussion took place on this idea. The following comments were made by members of the entire committee regarding more local bicycle and pedestrian advisory committees.

- NOVA stakeholders have asked for such a committee in the past.
- Another suggestion was that the logical place for district-scale bike/ped committees may be at the MPO's, particularly since 50 percent of Transportation Alternative funding will be managed by the MPO's.
- VDOT strives for continuing partnerships with MPOs and sees a benefit in frequent communication.
- In Salem there has been a push over the years to have the rural and MPO program to develop a bike plan.
- From a locality-specific perspective, it is not certain if the MPOs could be involved. A bike/ped plan can be taken to the MPO, but the perception is that this may not be a high priority for the MPO's.
- VDOT is working with the nine VDOT construction districts to become more engaged in the topic. This group can start providing information to them and vice versa; engaging through the districts and the MPO/PDCs.
- A comment was made that MPO's are not able to get too specific (i.e. where sidewalk has gaps). It was suggested that the VDOT residencies should also be involved. Opportunities should be regional in nature for the MPO's to be involved.

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

**Group Yellow suggestions:**

1. Norfolk has a concern with pedestrian facilities disappearing at urban interchanges. Cities' have funds to facilitate pedestrian and bike movement through these interchanges, but need to work closely with VDOT to figure out how to move these projects forward.
2. There should be increased coordination with Department of Conservation and Recreation on bike/ped routes.
3. More should be done to make Virginia a "Top 10 Bike Friendly State".
4. A prioritized list of routes for shoulder widening and existing conditions should be created/distributed.
5. Clarify the definition of 'moving travel lane' regarding the maintenance payments/road diet issue.
6. There should be urban/suburban area assessments to identify gaps in accommodations.
7. The committee could develop material(s) to educate PDCs.
8. Provide input into new funding packages for improvements with transportation bill.
9. Make a list of where the committee agrees with the Center for Disease Control for recommendations for transportation.

**Group Green suggestions:**

1. Implement a tool for stakeholders to report gaps in the bike/ped network, but make it easy for public input; maybe a mobile application.
2. Continue to support and build on the success of the national bike routes (i.e. potentially adding new USBR 11). The VDOT call center number is 1-800-FOR-ROAD.
3. Develop better messaging on the fact that streets are for more than cars; they are for people. Having the expectation from VDOT that a standing agenda item at the TAC meeting to discuss bike/ped will allow staff to focus on bike/ped issues a little more.

**Group Red suggestions:**

1. Improve communication with maintenance activities, general public, bike groups, and localities. Fairfax partners with VDOT in NOVA, and if they know of the paving schedule they can provide funding to the project to possibly add signage or add additional shoulder width to work that is being done. This helps close gaps and is a good partnership to highlight to other localities.
2. Encourage citizens to use call centers for reporting bike/ped issues like missing signage, bad shoulders, etc.
3. Engage PDC/MPOs on planning and project efforts. Additionally, districts should continue to talk and work closely with localities.

**Group Black suggestions:**

1. The committee and VDOT should: Facilitate an annual or bi-annual bike-ped conference with workshops. This has been done in the past, and was a valuable resource for information sharing, networking, momentum building, and disseminating best practices. BikeWalk Virginia (now Bike Virginia) was the sponsor / organizer in the past.



Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

2. VDOT should support and promote a very active presence not only at the League of American Bicyclist's summit, but at other national meetings and conferences. These would include (but not be limited to) Walk21, ProWalk/ProBike, TRB, RailVolution, and other meetings on the combined issues of active transportation, place-making, multi-modalism, and land use / transportation / development. A specific suggestion was to encourage district bike-ped coordinators to get exposed to the national conversations on these issues.
3. Since these modes of travel are evolving rapidly, the committee and VDOT should lead a long-term effort to increase awareness of the place of cycling and walking in healthy communities, and to help institutionalize the consideration of these modes across a broad spectrum. This would involve active, sustained collaboration with other state agencies (DRPT, DMV, research institutions, and Departments of Conservation and Recreation, Health, Education, and Tourism) on interrelated efforts to create better communities. The language and messages are still evolving. Since the Federal government has created an office of livability, bridging between the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the state can increasingly put active transportation at the center of a new vision of community health and economic vitality. The committee is a natural forum for this extended discussion. Cycling and walking are no longer a marginalized aspect of the transportation field; they are central indicators of healthy livable communities. Especially important will be cooperation with Department of Motor Vehicles and Department of Education to inform new and existing drivers about the many aspects of bike-ped presence on Virginia roadways.
4. The committee should establish a rolling agenda of the five most important technical concerns facing VDOT's Bike-Ped program. Topics that have appeared repeatedly during the meeting have included setting priorities and establishing workable effective methods for improving shoulders; resolving the issue of maintenance payment disparities for communities that would like to do road diets; changing the priorities of street maintenance so that bike lanes are regularly cleared (they are now often defacto "debris lanes"); establishing a more full-bodied method for receiving public input on bike and pedestrian facility conditions (the call center was mentioned - other public agencies have established platforms like "See Click Fix"; snow clearing priorities and methods, so the cyclist or pedestrian is not forgotten.
5. The committee should be involved in helping VDOT develop new urban standards. Curb radii, signal timing and detection, sidewalk maintenance, curb ramps, back-in parking, and more "experimental" or "provisionally accepted" devices waiting for admission to the MUTCD all deserve careful attention.

## 9. Overview of Future Agenda Items

Several potential agenda items were shared throughout the meeting. The following items were proposed:

- Railroads, railroad crossings, rails with trails, and House Document 404.
- How to provide more bike racks outside state buildings.
- Discussion on any expectations that VDOT may request of the PDCs and MPOs as they start their new work programs in June. This was also mentioned at the 3/28 MPO/PDC meeting.

## VDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 10am – 2pm Richmond, Virginia

### **Bike Rack items**

During the meeting various topics were placed on the “bike rack” as discussion points to come back to later in the meeting or address in future meetings. Below is a list of those items:

1. A discussion with Local Assistance Division regarding maintenance payments and lane/road diets.
2. Identify ways that districts can brief localities and stakeholders each year on paving schedules.
3. Desire for a presentation on how and whether shoulders can be tracked in VDOT’s Highway Performance Management System.
4. Rails with trails as an option, and a discussion on road blocks towards implementation.

### **10. Closing**

Reta Busher gave the closing remarks and thanked everyone for attending and contributing to a successful meeting.