

**Massachusetts Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Notes**  
**Wednesday, January 26, 2022, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**  
**Teleconference**

**\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*:** This meeting was originally scheduled to take place in person. Due to circumstances related to COVID-19, all large out-of-office MassDOT meetings are now being held remotely via the ZOOM app until further notice.

**Welcome & Introductions:** Pete Sutton, ex-officio, called the meeting to order, called roll and motioned to accept minutes from the previous meeting. Pete then introduced three new board members: Bekah Thomas - Director of Injury Prevention and Control within the Bureau of Community Health and Prevention - will now be representing the Department of Public Health. Two new appointees for bicycling are: Ed Sinofsky, representing the Cape Cod region and is a member of the Cape Cod Cycling Club. Karen Foster is based in Northampton and is the Executive Director of All Out Adventures - a non-profit organization that provides outdoor recreation programming to people with disabilities and their family and friends, as well as senior citizens throughout Massachusetts.

**Update on MassDOT's speed management project**

Jackie DeWolfe provided an update regarding MassDOT's ongoing Speed Management to Prevent Serious Injuries and Fatalities project. Thanks to all MABPAB members who provided input resulting in this new Safe Speeds resource (attached): a website including links to learning more about speed management, a technical tool kit around roadway treatments, as well as the role of speed limits. This website was launched in conjunction with the latest round of Shared Streets and Spaces grants – which will now be able to provide communities resources such as funding and free technical assistance (courtesy of the Barr Foundation) to actually implement speed management in communities and test different treatments.

MassDOT is looking to work with more communities to address speeding and/or reevaluate current speeds or in the cases where higher vehicle speeds may make sense, ensure that we do have safe facilities for people walking, biking and accessing transit. Speed is directly related to injury severity: in 2021 our preliminary data shows that more than 400 people died (with thousands more seriously injured) due to traffic related crashes in one year – the highest in over a decade – the result of a large increase in speeding. MassDOT is asking for before and after data – which doesn't have to be a whole formal engineering study of any sort - but just looking to work and partner with more communities to learn and have more case studies and to share with others. Jackie also emphasized one of the key aspects of the new website was establishing a target speed with the roadway treatment technical toolkit.

**Update on MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces**

Cassandra Gascon, MassDOT's Community Grants Program Administrator, then provided an overview of the latest grant round of the [Shared Streets and Spaces Program](#) (attached). A municipal grant program focused on quick-build projects bringing meaningful benefits to cities and towns as they respond to COVID-19, the program has funded 310 quick-build projects totaling \$33 million since its inception in June 2020. These grants have allowed communities to quickly launch or expand improvements in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce. Some new info pertaining to this round:

- Priority will be given to speed management projects
- There is a new funding category for equipment purchase up to \$50,000, such as rectangular rapid flashing beacons (not including installation or operating costs)
- There is a limit of one award per municipality and a municipality may submit up to two applications, with the exception of equipment purchases
- Grant awards are no longer being paid up front. Instead, they will follow the same reimbursement process as MassDOT's Chapter 90 and Complete Streets funding programs
- Applications are due March 1

Questions asked included:

- When equipment such as flashing beacons are installed, does MassDOT require they be made accessible to individuals with blindness and vision disabilities? Not just push buttons but sensory features such as tactile crossing strips and audio
  - Yes, it is required through this program that any improvements are fully ADA accessible
- Regarding the reimbursement aspect, my concern there is that it favors municipalities that already have funding to buy stuff. And it might not necessarily support those municipalities who arguably don't have as much funding allocated towards traffic safety. So, in an equitable conversation in

terms of more rural communities, this might favor well-funded communities. What is the thought process now when in the past it was successful as a direct funding tool?

- MassDOT found that a majority of our awardees are not spending their money in such a speed that would actually have required them to have the money up front. We're open to reconsidering in the future if it ends up being a big problem
- Technical assistance offered by the Barr Foundation would also be helpful to facilitate conversations with local advocates. How can we better hook into the application process a feasible connection to the advocates on the ground to help facilitate that this is meaningful and sustainable as possible?
  - Public engagement is now required to mitigate possible backlash from the community, such as in the case of Northampton, where many objected that their project was not fully vetted through public process

### **Update on MassDOT's bicycle/pedestrian counting program**

Ian Adams from MassDOT's Highway Division Transportation Technology Group provided a tutorial to navigating the live [MS2 website](#) where bike/ped count data is housed. This is still officially a pilot program comprising 8 locations and 13 counters:

- Acton, Boston, Brockton, Cambridge, Fall River, Lowell, Medford and Salem
- Mix of pathway and counter types
  - Trails, intersections, roadway shoulders, bike lanes, side paths, sidewalks
- Features of the new website include
  - Maps of all counter locations
  - Reports section with the ability to pull data for individual counters (volumes, specific days, hourly profiles comparing weekdays with weekends, etc.)
  - Filter capability for in-depth analysis

Some questions asked and comments included the following:

- Is data screened for errors prior to be uploaded to the web page?
  - Yes, there are quality control network metrics for each individual location located under the Administration tab that sends notifications based on errant data findings
- It will be interesting to monitor the counts data in Lowell. Many cyclists on that road avoid the area due to its unsafe nature
  - Preliminary monitoring does show cyclists using the crosswalk in that area as opposed to riding along the roadway
- How is MassDOT handling maintenance?
  - The project consultant is currently handling maintenance however MassDOT is exploring a long-term maintenance approach
- Is there a plan to place counters on roads under local (non-MassDOT) jurisdiction?
  - As MassDOT rolls out more temporary counters, there will be an opportunity to work with communities on their local roads
- Does MassDOT coordinate with MAPC?
  - Yes, MassDOT is involved in MAPC's pilot count program and is sharing data

### **Update on MassDOT's 2021 TRACKER**

Alissa Zimmer from the Office of Performance Management & Innovation provided an update regarding MassDOT's annual performance management report. [Tracker](#) summarizes the Department's performance for each Fiscal Year. Performance is reported by the five divisions: Highway, Aeronautics, Registry of Motor Vehicles, Rail & Transit, and the MBTA. Some highlights related to bicycle and pedestrian metrics included:

- Significant increase in mode share for bike/ped travel during the second year of the pandemic
- Vehicle miles traveled compared to bike/ped travel and its implications for climate-related issues

### **Update on MassDOT's Bicycle Facility Inventory and Bike Update Reporter**

Pete Sutton provided an overview of new features included in both online mapping applications through geoDOT. The BFI now includes all MassDOT projects under construction as well as funded for construction with an interactive feature that activates a box containing additional project info by clicking on a trail or roadway segment. The BUR now allows submissions for planned and existing bicycle infrastructure outside MassDOT via a user-friendly map and accompanying pull-down menu to populate. Questions included:

- Does the map contain all the projects listed in MassDOT's Transportation Improvement Program and Capital Investment Plan?
  - Yes, there are five year's worth of funded projects corresponding with the TIP and CIP
- How should we report funded or under construction projects that aren't captured?

- Projects can be sent through the BUR or emailed directly to [peter.sutton@state.ma.us](mailto:peter.sutton@state.ma.us)
- Does this overlap with MAPC's Trails Map?
  - Yes, with a couple of distinctions: MAPC is primarily focused on the 101 communities around greater Boston (as opposed to the entire state) and their map contains walking trails and natural surface foot paths (MassDOT's BFI is primarily focused on roads and paved trails)
- Are DCR trails also mapped?
  - Yes and we plan to add additional info to those trails to distinguish jurisdiction
- Are sidewalks also being mapped?
  - Yes, again within [geoDOT](#): search for Sidewalk Inventory. That's another layer that's constantly being updated by our GIS staff as more and more projects come online, especially the Complete Streets funding programs: the past couple rounds have added several miles of sidewalks to communities all around the state, so another great resource.

### Q&A with MassDOT Secretary Jamey Tesler

After an introduction by Jackie DeWolfe, Secretary Tesler stated the importance bicycling and walking have taken on in recent years and highlighted much of the work being done, including:

- Changes in bicycle usage by municipality over the pandemic
- Bicycle facilities and infrastructure – current and future network connections
- Safety pilot project on the Mass Ave Bridge and funding announcement of Mystic bike/ped bridge
- Raising awareness on effective speed setting through the Shared Streets and Spaces
- Challenges in snow/ice clearance on sidewalks and trails

Questions and comments included:

- Thank you, Secretary Tesler, for addressing the sidewalks issue right away - that was something that was top of mind, for me, and I think others on this call as well. Looking back at the 2021 report out from the bicycle and pedestrian statewide plans: at that point there had been 35 miles of MassDOT-controlled sidewalk that were being addressed by the sidewalk and snow removal process - that's less than 3% of the sidewalks, so we have a long way to go. WalkBoston - as an advocacy organization - are really pushing for this and we'd love to work with anybody in operations, a highway administrator, whomever it is that that can really push this project forward because it's incredibly important
  - I agree MassDOT has a long way to go and can continue to work on improving in this area. There are some good examples to follow, such as the city of Boston and our partners at DCR we're also monitoring closely. It is an area we haven't made a lot of ground on this year and I wanted to acknowledge that. Any help and assistance is welcome
- Also really pleased to see that the Shared Streets and Spaces program has that equipment category this year, because you could use that funding to purchase snow removal equipment
  - Yes, and we'd love folks in this meeting to spread the word. MassDOT acknowledges the difficulty some communities have coming up with funding for equipment and other safety infrastructure and are happy to provide these resources
- I would like to see emphasis from MassDOT - regarding cities and towns – to remind them that they do have responsibility to set up a sidewalk snow removal plan and policy. A lot of towns don't see sidewalks anywhere close to be equal to roads for snow removal and upkeep when snow removal happens. In my community, we're lucky if we get treatments done once a storm
  - Good point. There are two things here that are important: Education and encouragement to our municipal partners that sidewalk snow removal become a priority. How should MassDOT communicate better with these communities? Who should we target for outreach?
- DPW, town managers and commissions on disability should be the main focus. Many think most people don't walk in the winter, which is simply not true. Educating the public on the importance of maintaining their sidewalks and prioritization of sidewalks also key
  - It is a joint responsibility MassDOT shares with municipalities to improve overall coordination going forward
- MassBike would like to recognize the value groups like MABPAB and MassTrails Team have in collaborating to achieve goals such as safer roads and reducing fatalities
  - We have a lot to be proud of here, collectively and appreciate how invested everyone is and the level of expertise brought to MABPAB. In the past two years, we've relied on our bike and ped facilities as a backbone for a lot of our outdoor needs to get through COVID.

- MassDOT is trying to share thought leadership responsibility on these issues to stimulate conversation with municipalities, rethinking speed and safety
- Appreciate how MassDOT is breaking down barriers to implementation through funding programs, design guides, pilot programs and it has a ripple effect across the state. Some of the smallest gestures, such as granting funds for bike racks in rural communities are equally important
  - Small communities are important, and MassDOT's many funding programs for signage or equipment, for example, act as a gap closure piece
- Mass Healthy Aging Collaborative thanks MassDOT in the consideration to include older adults in community design and daily life. Senior Days at the RMV have also been a great way to engage older adults and elder service organizations
  - Older adults are a great resource for advocacy and the Senior Days have been one of the biggest successes. Regarding Shared Streets and Spaces, more data is needed regarding the benefits to older adults as we rethink and reimagine our public spaces
- Have you ever ridden an e-bike? If not, Cape Cod Cycling Club would love to host a demonstration
  - Yes, as soon as winter is over
- Northampton recently had a bicycle fatality where speed was a major factor – on a roadway posted 40 mph near a school with very long crosswalks. I wanted to highlight the importance of MassDOT addressing the speed issue
  - That exact difference between design speed and target speed is what MassDOT is trying to capture, and we recognize that. Speed is a balance between engineering choices and how you design: these are your communities, and we want to reflect what is appropriate and you think is context sensitive, so we've given some tools to identify what we can do together
  - I think collectively as a community, we all need to better understand speed, because that difference between driving 39 mph versus 20 mph is the difference between an unfortunate bad crash and the loss of a life. For us as a state DOT this is a really big change as historically, we've designed for speed
- Transit hubs and ferry terminals have typically not been prioritized with the same level of service as the automobile: there's usually a gap between the initial location and existing bike/ped infrastructure. How do we make that experience better?
  - As a ferry commuter at certain times, I recognize the cycling challenges firsthand. MassDOT needs to continue to rethink that first/last mile connection at our stations, including doing more to provide better bike facilities, storage and bike share access on MBTA property
  - In the past, MassDOT and the MBTA have tended to think about our individual stations or ferry dock locations not as a connected piece to the community – the last mile, the sidewalks to/from largely ends at the station – but that's not how people experience it. That's something we always need to do a better job of as we restore and regrow ridership post-pandemic
- Can you address the current policy of allowing bikes on the commuter rail?
  - This is a really hard issue, balancing the responsibilities we have with accessibility to disabled riders. For some period, the MBTA had different rules and much more flexibility and it's really has had an impact on some ridership who were taking their bikes on the commuter rail during the AM/PM peaks. We'll continue to take feedback and try to reach a compromise in the future
- With new construction coming down the road, can MassDOT review with contractors and cities and towns, what is the correct pedestrian ADA barrier that should be used to protect the restaurants and public right of way? In 2020 and 2021, many times only yellow cones and tape were used during the quick construction; closing a sidewalk is not solution either
  - Yes, we can continue to talk with our construction teams and make that a point of emphasis: it's good feedback and I will certainly convey that and make sure it continues to be a point of emphasis. We currently have 170 active construction projects, and we don't experience feedback as a problem, more as an opportunity to fix things - so if you see something that's not right just tell us
- Previous secretaries have noted one of the biggest challenges is having new ideas permeate down to the rank-and-file staff throughout the whole agency
  - Agreed. We get the opportunity to represent, speak publicly and conduct these kinds of events, but the workforce does the hard stuff
- Strongly recommend training with cities and towns regarding what a proper pedestrian barricade is and also a real reminder - not to put their construction signs on sidewalks - this has happened to me numerous times. I realize that crews must put signage so far from the construction, but they

don't think about where it goes, other than it's not in the road: it's usually on the sidewalk and I just want to make people aware of that

- o Those are good feedback points, appreciate it

FINAL THOUGHTS: Secretary Tesler thanked MABPAB for the variety of topics covered: there was a lot learned, a lot to think about and a lot we can work on together. The most important thing is, I want to say thank you to each of you here in this group. This is a volunteer group – you all have other things to do, in addition to helping us and thinking through and giving us advice on this board. We really appreciate the investment of time, energy and advocacy here. It's really appreciated, we need it and we want it.

## Other Announcements

- MassDOT's [Shared Streets and Spaces](#) funding program open until March 1
- Next MABPAB meeting on Wednesday, March 23, 2022 – **now cancelled**
- List of board members in attendance (see below)
- Other attendees:
  - o Amber Vaillancourt (MassDOT)
  - o Ben Muller (MassDOT D6)
  - o Alissa Zimmer (MassDOT OPMI)
  - o Christian Milneil (StreetsBlog Mass)
  - o Laura Hanson (MassDOT D2)
  - o Cassandra Gascon (MassDOT)
  - o Makaela Niles (MassDOT)
  - o Doug Johnson (MassDOT)
  - o Casey Cooper (CTPS)
  - o David Rothstein (MassDOT)
  - o Ian Adams (MassDOT)
  - o Jeff Owen (NMCOG)
  - o Amanda Zuretti (cycling advocate)
  - o Fay Rhault (CMRPC)
  - o Chris Kivior (MassDOT)
  - o Barbara LaChance (MassDOT D5)
  - o Lee Toma (Bike Milton)
  - o Anthony Vona (MassDOT D1)
  - o Kyle Mowatt (OCPC)
  - o Stephen Simoglou (MassDOT)
  - o Madeline Declerck (MassDOT)
  - o Josh Grzegorzewski (FHWA)
  - o David Tilton (NMCOG)
  - o Thomas Roselle (MassDOT)
  - o Kate Fichter (MassDOT)
  - o Chris Timmel (FHWA)
  - o Beth Giannini (FRCOG)
  - o Jessica Baas (MassDOT OPMI)

## MA BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD

### Board Member Sign-In Sheet

January 26, 2022 – Teleconference

Member Name	Attended	Notes
Tom DiPaolo MassDOT-Highway	yes	
Prachi Vakharia MassDOT-MBTA	no	
Pete Sutton MassDOT-Planning	yes	

<b>Kurt Gaertner EOEEA</b>	yes	
<b>Gerald Autler DCR</b>	yes	
<b>Jackie DeWolfe MassDOT</b>	yes	
<b>Rebekah Thomas DPH</b>	yes	
<b>Phyllis Cahaly MOTT</b>	yes	
<b>Jeff Larason EOPSS</b>	yes	
<b>Jeff McCollough MARPA</b>	yes	
<b>Betsy Goodrich MARPA</b>	yes	
<b>Jackie Jones MARPA</b>	yes	
<b>Bryce Hoffman – public member (Lowell Bike Coalition)</b>	yes	
<b>Keith MacDonald – public member (South Coast Bikeway Alliance)</b>	no	
<b>Galen Mook – MassBike</b>	yes	
<b>Karin Goins – public member (Walk/Bike Worcester)</b>	yes	
<b>Seun Oluwole – public member</b>	no	
<b>James Fuccione - public member (Mass. Healthy Aging Collaborative)</b>	yes	
<b>Cheryl Casper – public member</b>	yes	
<b>Sam Squalia – public member (Fitchburg City Council)</b>	yes	
<b>Stacey Beuttell - WalkBoston</b>	yes	
<b>Maureen White - public member</b>	no	
<b>Ed Sinofsky – public member (Cape Cod Cycling Club)</b>	yes	
<b>Karen Foster – public member (All Out Adventures)</b>		
<b>Meg Robertson – public member</b>	yes	
<b>Alice Brown – public member (Boston Harbor Now)</b>	yes	