

Massachusetts Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Notes
Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Virtual

Welcome & Introductions: Pete Sutton, ex-officio, called the meeting to order and called roll

Findings on the recently released MassDOT study Measuring Access in Relation to Public Health Vulnerabilities and Outcomes. Jonah Williams and Nicole Bilbo – both representing MassDOT's Environmental, Social, and Governance section - presented on findings (attached) from a recent study. UMass Amherst and MassDOT coordinated on a 2020 study titled *Public Health Assessment for Transportation Projects*, which assessed the current practices regarding incorporating health in transportation decision making, primarily in MassDOT Highway's project prioritization process, and proposed health-related criteria that can be included in Highway's project scoresheet. The study prompted questions about access and public health, leading to the Phase I study *Measuring Food Access to Improve Public Health* in 2023. Based on further areas of research identified in Phase I, Phase II, *Measuring Access to Improve Public Health*, commenced and was completed in 2025

- **Study Focus:** Identifying gaps in access to healthy foods across Massachusetts and policy recommendations for addressing identified gaps. The researchers included socioeconomic and demographic characteristics in the analysis to determine the relationship between these variables and food access.
- **Key findings:** The most significant determinates of food access were population density and vehicle ownership.
- **Project outcomes:** Food access metric for four different transportation modes: The square footage of supermarkets that can be reached within 10 minutes travel time walking, biking, and driving, and 30 minutes travel time by walk/transit. Conducted for the centroids (center) of each census tract within a study area.

Questions and comments included:

- A lot of this data from this study helped inform MassDOT's NextGen bike ped vision map that we just released earlier this year. We're looking at a lot of the same access points, especially to supermarkets, and where to make those investments on roads that are under MassDOT's jurisdiction. It's great that our studies are aligning, and that we're able to feed off them and help inform one or the other
- As new MassDOT staff, were there any steep learning curves to navigate through this study?
 - Yes. I did not come from a background where I was conducting research or transportation. There was some familiarity with the data/tools used such as Conveyal and Replica. This study really broadened our knowledge in new ways of utilizing these platforms. Incorporating the Level of Traffic Stress model was also a great learning experience
 - A link to the study can be found [here](#)
- DPH has a network of transportation stakeholders, both within DPH and outside - a traffic safety coalition - that some of you attend. We will be sending out information to that group, and invite all of you to attend our [Traffic Safety Coalition](#) meetings
- Pioneer Valley Planning Commission have been looking closely at the next-gen model and these tools that all went into it. It's an ambitious undertaking. Having looked at all the work MassDOT has done over the last few years, we'd love to find some ways to model for roads that are not part of the state layout
 - Due to the whole sheer study scope, MassDOT had to limit our original cut to just roads under its own jurisdiction. We did scope out far more roads than we had the capacity for, so as time goes by, hopefully we can broaden that scope and scale it down to even local roads at the regional planning agency level
- SRPEDD did a level of traffic stress in 2023 for our regional bike plan update, and interestingly enough, we're working on a public health food access to transportation project. There are certainly a lot of insights gleaned from this presentation. I think we'll be incorporating similar elements as well. So, thank you for that

Updates and discussion on MassDOT's Safe Routes to School new programs and initiatives

Miranda Briseno - MassDOT's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Federal Programs Coordinator and Rachel O'Donnell, SRTS Program Director - provided a comprehensive overview (attached) of the program's resources and guidance regarding the Signs and Lines and Infrastructure grants. Eligibility, project scope and application filing were also explained in addition to new guidelines:

- **Involvement in the MassDOT Complete Streets Program**
 - Municipalities must be a minimum Tier 2 in the Complete Streets Program (Complete Streets Policy and prioritization plan)
- **Compliance with the MBTA Communities Act**
 - Any municipality that is considered *noncompliant* with the [MBTA Communities Act](#) will not be eligible to receive any MassDOT funding, including Safe Routes to School funding
- **Limits for Municipalities That Have Already Received SRTS Funding**
 - Municipalities that have already received funding for a previous SRTS project cannot reapply until the previous project is set to advertise in the application year (~4-5 years)

Questions and comments included:

- One of the most positive elements of SRTS projects is that they are rarely controversial: everyone seems in favor of them. State-run grants like this one are also becoming more necessary as federal funding diminishes under the current administration
 - For sure. We're seeing a lot more calls for communities where the budget for busing has been cut, and now all these students who used to take the bus are within a certain radius that they are now forced to walk and bike - they don't know how to get to school
- If a project does touch a roadway under MassDOT jurisdiction, there is some additional permitting. Can you just go into briefly what those types of permitting Issues would be?
 - Standard right-of-way issues may be time consuming to municipalities that have not dealt with the MassDOT permitting process previously. This could cause additional issues for Signs and Lines projects which are under a tighter deadline for completion
- For rural communities that are trying to build out a sidewalk network, or have a very fragmented network, SRTS seems like one of those things that they can get support for, even though it doesn't necessarily fit into the bigger network building goals there
 - The heart and soul of the SRTS program is to have that holistic approach, where you are providing the education component - just by building it, do they know how to use it? We need to make sure that those kids know how to ride their bike properly, walk on that sidewalk properly, how to use walk buttons - all those different elements
 - The way that we use this infrastructure grant: it's kind of the last resort versus the starting point. We've seen communities that get the grant, don't really do much, and then we never hear from them again. We've done everything else we possibly can, and now this Safe Routes to School grant is the last puzzle piece
- Has there been any interest in establishing traffic gardens in some schools?
 - Yes, [traffic gardens](#) revolve around the concept of a mini streetscape where the kids can use these smaller-scale roadways to practice walking and biking safely without interacting with cars. We did develop a traffic garden toolkit and flyer during the last school year though interest has been limited – there are a couple of good examples in Lowell and Burlington
- Of note, there are at least a dozen MassDOT SRTS projects in the pipeline funded for construction in the next couple of years
 - MassDOT's Design Exception Review Committee reviews many of these projects: mostly limited elements, it's obvious that improvements are being made. These are generally very acceptable-type exceptions. They're built into the scope: we realize when we're scoping these projects how much we can do and what we can't do
 - The design exception is just the formal way of documenting, where we don't meet our designated standards for sidewalk presence, or bicycle lane presence - things like that

Findings on the recently released MBTA study Accessible Bus Stop Design in the Presence of Bike Lanes. Martha Koch Director of Strategic Research within MassDOT's Office of Performance Management & Innovation presented [findings](#) on recent research (attached) conducted in partnership with the MBTA and UMASS Amherst. Floating bus stops are located adjacent to separated bike lanes of other bike lane configurations to avoid bus-bike conflicts during boarding and alighting of transit passengers, especially when bicyclist volumes are high. However, floating bus stops require transit riders to cross an active bike

lane to access the bus boarding area, increasing the likelihood of bicyclist-rider conflicts, impacting the accessibility and safety of riders with visual, hearing, or mobility impairments. The goal of this project is to obtain a better understanding of the impacts of bicycle infrastructure on transit user safety (e.g., conflicts between bicyclists traveling on adjacent bike lanes and transit riders), on bus stop accessibility and the exploration of mitigation plans and designs that will ensure an accessible, equitable, and safe travel experience for all riders. The full report can be accessed [here](#)

Questions and comments included:

- Curious if the taper rates were recorded at the horizontal deflection locations to understand what taper rates were most effective in slowing cyclist e-mobility devices
 - They do have the specific geometries for each of those...there might have only been that one stop or two stops that had the horizontal deflection. That's why we wanted data from Cambridge - because we know the City has a lot of high bus ridership with all these elements, so there's more to be seen there. Will follow up
- Sharing this interesting [bus-bike project](#) in Portland, Oregon, where bus platforms are also raised bike lanes with markings that ask bikes to stop and wait when buses are stopped there
 - That same report has an image from Taipei where the municipal buses have the little pop-out stop sign, like school buses have - that reminds you if you're on a bike - that you have to stop, and I thought those were pretty slick
- Do your findings document any recorded pedestrian cyclist injuries at floating bus stops?
 - None documented but will follow up
- What is the latest activity coming from the MBTA regarding these findings?
 - MBTA's policy teams and design teams are actively involved in improvements
- From personal experience, I have conditioned myself to slow through these zones and to expect the unexpected, though not all users react the same way – particularly e-mobility devices who are focused on speed and getting through these mixing areas quickly as possible

Overview and input on MassTrail's Mass10 website spotlighting 10 shared use paths throughout MA

Adam DiBiase, who served as a Co-op over the summer within theLab@MassDOT, gave an overview of the recent launch of the [MassTrails10](#) website. Since 2019, MassTrails has been championing a growing network of over 1,000 miles of trails and paths across Massachusetts. These 10 featured rides showcase some of the state's signature trail infrastructure — connecting communities, landscapes, and experiences. Whether looking for a quick local ride or planning a weekend adventure across the Commonwealth, the website includes detailed information regarding trail location, length, type, access and other fun facts. The MassTrails 10 collection aims to increase interest in all shared-use paths in Massachusetts. By clicking on a trail tile map, users can find a curated ride, transportation information, route amenities, and links to relevant partners

Questions and comments included:

- A fun project to work on and desperately needed too. There is no one-stop shop for Massachusetts trails. Most people either go to Google Maps, put on the bicycle layer, and hope for the best, or maybe the Rails to Trails Conservancy website, but both of those are national, international companies that don't do a great job of keeping things as up to date as we can do at the local level. This website was long overdue and very happy to see it up and running
- Curious about the artwork - was that done in-house with MassDOT?
 - We had a local artist who we commissioned through funding that was provided by HubLuv
- Is there a way for users to add comments or provide other ride tips or suggestions?
 - Not yet, however we can see if we can incorporate it in the future. Adam was our resident expert regarding Ride with GPS's ins and outs - but because they're public routes, I think you can comment on them. We've certainly gotten some feedback from folks that they would prefer addresses for parking and bathrooms instead of lat-long coordinates, so we have been taking in feedback of that type and trying to make adjustments
- MassDOT deploys counters on 8 of those trails. There could be some good analytics to mine, even before and after type stuff while pushing the campaign. Data is uploaded daily

Other Announcements

- Jaclyn Youngblood announced the upcoming meeting of the Special Commission on Micromobility will be held on October 14. The Commission aims to think about a framework for how we might imagine regulation, etc, Legislation makes clear that there are three requirements for the Commission: One is to look at state and local regulations around vehicles and where they can go. The second is to make recommendations about those regulations, or various other things related to managing the usage of those devices in the Commonwealth. The third is to make recommendations about increasing the usage of those devices. A report on findings is due back to the Legislature by the end of this calendar year
- StreetsBlog Mass is reporting that the USDOT is amid canceling grant commitments that the Biden administration had previously made, and it has begun sending out letters to this effect. The City of Boston has received one such notice that the USDOT does not intend to follow through on its promises. If anyone else across the state has also received any of these notices about grant funding being at risk, please reach out if you know anything
- Pete Sutton provided an update regarding new MABPAB membership on the advocacy side: MassDOT put out a call for serving as public members on the Advisory Board - six different members representing bicycle interests and pedestrian interests each – 12 total. Pete and Jaclyn reviewed 36 applicants and made their selections for further vetting. The applications are currently being reviewed by the Governor's Office Boards and Commissions staff
- Next [Micromobility Commission](#) meeting: October 14, Virtual, 10 am-12 pm
- MassDOT's [Moving Together](#) conference is taking place October 28. All MABPAB members are granted free admission
- Next MABPAB meeting: November 19, Greenfield with hybrid option, 1-3 pm
- List of board members in attendance (see below)
- Other attendees:
 - Barbara Lachance (MassDOT D5)
 - Andrew Jennings (Billerica)
 - Lorenzo Varone (MassDOT)
 - Jon Gray (SRPEDD)
 - Jonah Williams (MassDOT)
 - Pedro Hernandez (MassDOT)
 - Emily Paskewicz (ECGA)
 - Josh Grzegorzewski (FHWA)
 - Andrea Duarte (SRPEDD)
 - Sarah Cannamela (MassDOT D2)
 - Nick Daigle (MassDOT D3)
 - Ray Guarino (OCPC)
 - Shawn Bailey (OCPC)
 - Christian MilNeil (StreetsBlog Mass)
 - Chris Sorensen (MassDOT D1)
 - Kyle Mowatt (OCPC)
 - Nick Russo (BRPC)
 - Cheryl-Ann Senior (MassDOT D5)
 - Brendan Linard (MVPC)
 - Tom Ruta (MassDOT D2)
 - Elizabeth Maldari (MVPC)
 - Adam Wriggins (CMRPC)
 - Katherine Duffy (MassDOT D4)
 - Daniel Brogan (SRPEDD)
 - Tim Paris (MassDOT D4)
 - Ian Adams (MassDOT)
 - Lee Toma (Milton)
 - Rick Plenge (VHB)
 - James Hutchison (Milton)
 - Phil Goff (VHB)
 - Max Rasbold-Gabbard (DPH)

MA BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Board Member Sign-In Sheet

September 17, 2025 – Virtual

Member Name	Attended	Notes
Tom DiPaolo MassDOT-Highway	yes	
Matt Warfield MBTA	yes	
Pete Sutton MassDOT-Planning	yes	
Kurt Gaertner EOEEA	yes	
Gerald Autler DCR	yes	
Jaclyn Youngblood MassDOT	yes	
Kirby Lecy DPH	no	
Charlie Ticotsky MOTT	no	
Andrea Papa EOPSS	no	
Jeff McCollough MARPA	yes	
Amanuel Regassa MARPA	yes	
Jackie Jones MARPA	yes	
– public member	vacant	
– public member	vacant	
Galen Mook – MassBike	yes	
– public member	vacant	
– public member	vacant	
- public member	vacant	
– public member	vacant	
– public member	vacant	
Brendan Kearney - WalkBoston	yes	
- public member	vacant	
Ed Sinofsky – public member (Cape Cod Cycling Club)	yes	
Karen Foster – public member (All Out Adventures)	no	
– public member	vacant	
– public member	vacant	