

Massachusetts Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Notes
Wednesday, September 21, 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.

MassDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans – updates on Potential for Everyday Walking and Biking maps/methodology

Alissa Zimmer, Manager of Performance and Reporting within MassDOT's Office of Performance Management & Innovation (OPMI) provided an update (attached) regarding recently made changes to methodology tied directly to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan updates from 2019, including:

- [StreetLight](#) zone analysis volumes (taken from anonymized cell phone data) used for trip demand
 - Potential for Everyday Walking: trips under 3 miles
 - Potential for Everyday Biking: trips under 6 miles
- Transit access added to Potential for Everyday Walking score
- Removed crash hotspots from the methodology
- Used Streetlight for equity data instead of census data
 - Focused on People of Color and Low-Income people
 - Trip-based instead of residential-based equity

Comments and questions included:

- Are there any considerations in the data around age or older adults? MA Healthy Aging Collaborative is interested in this data: where those folks live and the trips and destinations that they're talking - about walking potential. We know there's a lot more potential for older adults and people with disabilities as well. We'd love to work on ways to try to increase that awareness and capture that potential and act on it
 - Regarding age and people with disabilities, that data is not included in Streetlight equity data for a few reasons: the current census data Streetlight uses is not optimal regarding spatial distribution of those demographic types – these groups are typically more dispersed than say, low income or people of color. What matters more is the overall quality of infrastructure for all users, including specific destinations
- Is shade or lighting taken into consideration for measuring high-comfort bicycling facilities?
 - No, MassDOT instead focuses in criteria established in the [2020 engineering directive](#) that takes into consideration such factors as roadway speeds and number of lanes for that meets the definition of high-comfort

Pete Sutton then gave an explanation and demonstration of the newly updated Potential for Everyday Walking and Biking maps/methodology located within [geoDOT's](#) Roadways Gallery section. These new maps now measure all roadways in the state, not just roads under MassDOT jurisdiction and are updated regularly in-house with new data obtained by Streetlight. This data will also inform the next generation of planning that is now taking shape with MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning. Questions included:

- How do you envision working with other DOTs across state lines to make sure you're receiving appropriate data where there is cross-border traffic?
 - MassDOT is looking forward to working with RIDOT new bike/ped coordinator Eric Weiss to launch some data collecting initiatives, such as monitoring bike/ped volumes traveling around the Fall River area
- Using this new data approach, how do projects become priorities?
 - It is already happening: MassDOT is incorporating this data into existing bridge rehabilitation and roadway maintenance (e.g. paving) projects to improve the overall efficiency of work being done. It is also being used extensively to identify network gaps and we expect that to ramp up in the coming years as it becomes further institutionalized
- It would be great to expand this methodology in the future to include potential for economic benefits, safe routes to school connections. Are there any other angles that would apply? Tourism, social benefits, or health benefits all could be considered. A good example of this is an economic impact report currently underway on completing the Mass Central Rail Trail
 - Agreed, especially with more data being collected coupled with MassDOT's increasing GIS capabilities

- Are there any examples of night mobility, i.e. what trails and roads are accessible? A good example is Southwest Corridor Park compared to the East Boston Greenway – which is unlit
 - It is a data availability issue, one that MassDOT should consider in the future. DCR also pointed out different contexts - such as trails with environmental considerations related to wildlife habitat - that must be considered. (In a later sidebar, DCR also addressed the issue of making repairs to Southwest Corridor Park at the same time as the Orange Line shutdown: after much negative feedback was made regarding the timing, spot repairs were made instead with more significant repairs to be made at a future date)
- Lighting should absolutely be considered in relation to trail roadway crossings and should be looked at further in future planning
 - Excellent point, MassDOT agrees
- Sections on Cape Cod trails that are lit are much safer than riding on-road at night, particularly with vehicle headlights causing hazardous conditions
 - Especially relevant to many seasonal workers who do not own vehicles and whose primary means of transportation are by bike or foot, especially working late shifts into the night
- Are all these new tools being made available to MassDOT staff at the district level?
 - Yes, these conversations are happening internally on a monthly basis: MassDOT updates various staff around the state regarding new initiatives related to the bike/ped plans that include district bike/ped coordinators and project development engineers

Input in prioritizing active transportation research needs to submit to National Cooperative

Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Jackie DeWolfe sought MABPAB input regarding potential active transportation research projects for submission, stating research often provides the basis of transportation decision making and planning. It's what's used when guidelines and policies and directives are set - incredibly important as a lot of the decisions that are being made today is based on research over the past few decades. There's been a huge effort for many years now to increase the amount of research centered around active transportation as well as: how do we ensure biking and walking – multimodal - and all people are considered in any of the research? Primary benefits of this research:

Reduce biases and moves away from just a car-centric to people-centric. Knowing that, a lot of research is still needed to support our work. There are a lot of different venues and avenues right now, by which research proposals make it back to NCHRP. MassDOT has the opportunity to submit ideas through a couple of national committees and councils that we participate on, and then it goes through an extensive process of collecting and prioritizing ideas, getting funding and then moving forward

I have now personally witnessed that process take place over the last few years, and there's been some great research in the works right now. What was added to the calendar invite for this meeting were six research proposals that are already funded, in progress, and we just wanted to share that to give you a sense of the types of research that's being funded right now: level of detail, who's involved as we collate ideas for MassDOT to submit to our national partners. We'd like to hear if you have any ideas or if there are things that research would be helpful to support in your work - or new research to make the case - or better understand an issue or a problem. Comments and questions included:

- One suggestion: There's a need for research into a new kind of traffic modeling - the current traffic models currently being used have embedded assumptions that there's going to be a certain growth rate in trips on an ongoing basis. Those models are often used to justify highway widenings, because as is well-known, if we plan for more cars, then we get more cars, and it's sort of a vicious cycle. This kind of modeling is inconsistent with and incompatible with a lot of the climate plans that some DOTs and many state governments are adopting
- Is it helpful to tell you which is high, medium and low needs from the Research Roadmap?
 - Yes, there's a [link](#) that includes a research roadmap, If there are certain needs that you think are more or less important, we'd love to hear that. That would be really helpful

Feedback on the recent Orange Line shutdown for future scenario planning

Pete Sutton and Ian Adams (from MassDOT's Transportation Technology Group) gave a detailed presentation (attached) on the recent Orange Line shutdown and the resultant bicycle and pedestrian route recommendations provided (as an alternative to utilizing the shuttle buses). Many policy and tactical decisions made as a result of this shutdown can hopefully be applied to future scenario planning in the event another similar type of event occurs. Alissa Zimmer then summoned the group for feedback: anyone that worked in the shutdown area and/or was impacted by it; or that's broadly interested in the effects; what research questions people might have about how the active modes changed during the shutdown, or any other prolonged effects of the shutdown. Comments included:

- WalkBoston would advocate on studying the impact of the Orange Line shutdown on people with disabilities. While it's not active transportation per se, it's a population that we work with. Often all of us do, and I think in general that their experience was probably much different than those of us that are able-bodied and were able to actually walk up the stairs on the coach buses. I would suggest reaching out to the advocates and individuals with disabilities that worked through the system during that month
- It would be nice to see this experience extended to see how walking and biking facilities can build gaps in communities that will never be transit rich
 - Excellent observation. One thing not mentioned previously was the transformative effect that Blue Bikes bikeshare had on the entire network. Free Blue Bikes memberships were made available for thirty days to anybody who wanted one, and thousands of people took advantage of that, and I think that really had a transformative effect on how many people opted out of the shuttle buses, and instead tried a bike for maybe the first time ever, maybe the first time since they were a kid. That was really a game changer
 - In addition, the fact that (since the pandemic) people, where they can, have been so used to remote working that I think a lot opted to stay home, too, which definitely cut down on the amount that were actually out there. I think quite a few were able to work remotely during that past month, plus a lot of people were on vacation. People had also not yet returned to school or college yet
- Are there any observations about conventional versus e-bike experience during the shutdown?
- Did you use multiple modes during the month-long shutdown?
- Non-English speakers and limited English speakers had a difficult time navigating the shutdown so it'd be interesting to look into that: both for people who tried to understand the shutdown and figure out how to use the shuttles, but also, maybe the other side of the board – how these same people engaged with the bike/ped alternatives
 - These would make a great survey questions. We'd like to start this work in the next month

Other Announcements

- [MassDOT's Moving Together](#). November 1 in Boston
- [MassTrails Conference](#). November 12 in Fitchburg
- List of board members in attendance (see below)
- Other attendees:
 - Christian Milneil (StreetsBlog Mass)
 - Faye Rhault (CMRPC)
 - Alexandria Papadimoulis (DPH)
 - Casey Cooper (CTPS)
 - Anthony Vona (MassDOT D1)
 - Kyle Mowatt (OCPC)
 - Grecia White (StreetsBlog Mass)
 - Ian Adams (MassDOT)
 - Tom Ruta (MassDOT D2)
 - Nicholas Russo (BRPC)
 - Beth Giannini (FRCOG)
 - Barbara LaChance (MassDOT D5)
 - Cheryl Ann Senior (MassDOT D5)
 - Martha Koch (MassDOT OPMI)
 - Rik Ahlberg (Provincetown Bicycle Committee)
 - Alexis Hosea-Abbott (MassBike)

MA BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD**Board Member Sign-In Sheet
July 27, 2022 – Teleconference**

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

Alice Brown – public member (Boston Harbor Now)	no	
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