

Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan

November 6, 2006

As Adopted by the Baltimore County Council on November 6, 2006

www.baltimorecountymd.gov/go/bikeped

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
Legislative Session 2006, Legislative Day No. 20

Resolution No. 87-06

Councilmembers Gardina, Bartenfelder & Olszewski

By the County Council, November 6, 2006

A RESOLUTION of the Baltimore County Council to adopt the Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan.

WHEREAS, the Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan for the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Councilmanic Districts was developed by an advisory action committee composed of local citizens, elected officials and government staff; and

WHEREAS, the committee identified potential locations for both on-road bicycle facilities and off-road shared-use paths that together would comprise a bicycle facility network providing access to the area's major destinations, including parks, schools, shopping areas and employment areas; and

WHEREAS, the Plan includes recommendations for the construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, funding, supportive programs and regulations; and

WHEREAS, on July 20, 2006, the Baltimore County Planning Board held a public hearing on the proposed Plan and voted to approve the Plan as an amendment to the Baltimore County Master Plan 2010; and

WHEREAS, the County Council held a public hearing on the proposed Plan on October 16, 2006;
now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND,
that the Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan, a copy of which is attached hereto
and made a part hereof, be and it is hereby adopted and incorporated into the Baltimore County Master Plan
2010, subject to such further amendments as deemed advisable by the County Council.

READ AND PASSED this 6TH day of NOVEMBER, 2006.

BY ORDER



Thomas J. Peddicord, Jr.
Secretary

ITEM: RESOLUTION 87-06

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Introduction

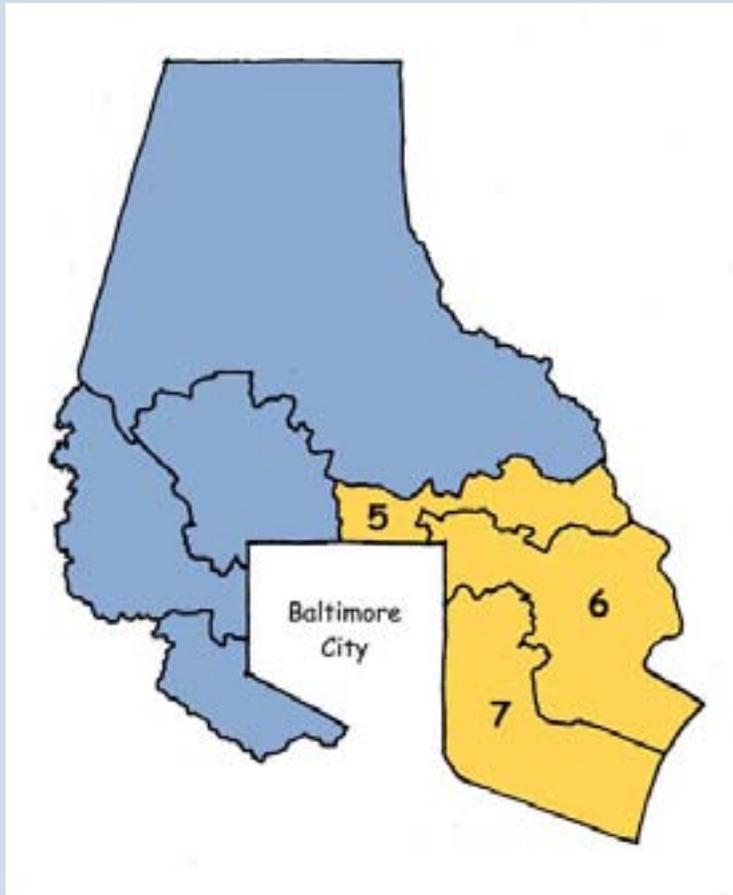
The Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan is an action plan for constructing pedestrian and bicycle improvements. The plan was developed by an advisory committee composed of representatives from the walking/bicycling community and state and county government, and is based on the needs and desires expressed by the citizens who live or work in the area. The plan identifies specific projects to be implemented, and provides recommendations for phasing and funding. It is a comprehensive, long-range plan that will ultimately integrate walking and bicycling facilities into the county's infrastructure.

Background

Both the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, the regional planning agency, have developed pedestrian and bicycle plans. This document supports and expands upon the work of these two plans. (Please see the inside back cover for more information about these plans.) However, the main impetus for undertaking this plan comes from Baltimore County's *Master Plan 2010*. The master plan describes the need to improve the variety of transportation options available to its citizens. It calls for a county-wide plan for developing and improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

As part of its work effort, the Eastern County Pedestrian and Bicycle Action Committee reviewed the master plan goals for





The first phase plan area consists of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Council Districts.

pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements, and adopted them with a minor amendment as goals to guide this plan.

Goal for Bicycle Facilities

Develop and maintain bicycle facilities that provide an adequate level of convenience, mobility, and safety for bicyclists at all levels of experience, and encourage bicycle trips for utilitarian, recreational and commuting purposes.

Goal for Pedestrian Facilities

Develop and maintain pedestrian facilities that provide desirable levels of accessibility and safety for pedestrians, and encourage walking for both utilitarian and recreational purposes.

Plan Area

Ultimately, plans for improving pedestrian and bicycling facilities will be completed for the entire county. Because of the level of detail needed to make specific recommendations, the planning effort is being phased to focus on areas of manageable size, while being broad enough to plan for a linked bicycle network. The first phase consists of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Council Districts. This area was selected because of the opportunities to take advantage of the many investments the state and county are currently undertaking, including the Eastern Boulevard streetscape project and the extension of Campbell Boulevard. There are also significant undeveloped areas in the Perry Hall and Honeygo areas where new pedestrian and bicycle facilities can be constructed as development occurs.

Planning Process

The planning process was designed to maximize public input. The citizens who live and work in the area know best where improvements are needed, and where, if improvements are provided, they would use them.

The action committee planned the outreach efforts which included a series of four community workshops to be held at convenient locations throughout the plan area. The committee helped develop and distribute material advertising the workshops to the general public as well as specific community members and organizations. So that the workshop participants would have some ideas to get them started, the committee also prepared a preliminary bicycle route map that showed a potential regional network of bicycle lanes and trails.

The committee held the workshops in May 2003. Approximately 80 citizens attended the workshops. After a brief presentation about the planning process and the need for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, the participants were divided into small work groups. Each participant completed a questionnaire individually, and then discussed their responses with the group (see Appendix A, Sample Questionnaire). Members of the action committee facilitated and recorded each group's responses.

The participants were asked to focus on identifying the most important places where improvements to walking and bicycling



Citizens who came to workshops offered suggestions for improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities.



County staff analyzed the existing conditions of a variety of roads and potential trail locations to determine the feasibility of making improvements.

facilities are needed. Once these were recorded on a map, the groups brainstormed on what things prevented them from walking and bicycling and what things could be done that would encourage them to walk or bike more often (see Appendix B).

In addition to the workshops, a survey form was posted on the county's website that allowed citizens to input similar information. Approximately 30 citizens provided suggestions for bicycle and pedestrian improvements through the website.

Once all the data was collected, planning staff began the process of analyzing the existing conditions of the suggested areas and the feasibility of providing improvements. Citizens had identified over 200 miles of roads for bicycle improvements, 33 miles of shared use trail improvements, and 95 areas for pedestrian improvements.

The recommendations of the analysis are contained in this plan as two lists:

- Prioritized Pedestrian Projects with potential funding sources identified.
- Prioritized Bicycle Projects with potential funding sources identified.

The Action Committee reviewed the planning staff's preliminary recommendations. Their comments and suggestions were incor-

porated into the March 7, 2005 draft of the plan. The next step was a formal review with county agencies to examine the feasibility of actually implementing the plan. Projects for initial consideration were developed through a feasibility study (see the companion document, Preliminary Study of Bicycle Access, White Marsh–Middle River Plan). The next step is a formal community-wide citizen review. The plan document, as well as an interactive map and comment section, have been posted on the county's website (www.baltimorecountymd.gov/go/bikeped). Once refinements are made to the plan's recommendations based on citizen comment, the draft plan will be presented to the Baltimore County Planning Board, and subsequently, the County Council, for adoption after public hearings are held.

Why Walking and Bicycling?

There are a number of benefits that can come from encouraging Baltimore County residents to walk and bicycle. Walking and bicycling are gaining popularity nationwide as an alternative to the automobile for short trips. Promoting walking and bicycling can help address the national obesity crisis and enhance the livability of communities.

Transportation

The road network developed over the last half-century is a remarkable transportation system, providing residents and commerce with unprecedented mobility. Americans have grown to depend on the automobile, which is reflected in the ever increasing rate of automobile use. According to the Federal Highway



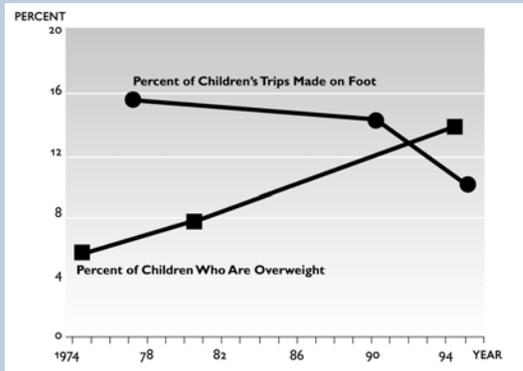
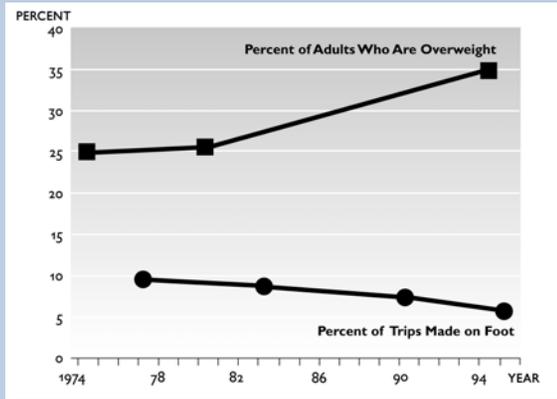
Traffic congestion costs the American public \$72 million per year in lost wages and wasted fuel.

Administration, the number of miles driven by Americans between 1980 and 1999 grew by 76 percent. Unfortunately, new roadway construction cannot keep pace with this rate of travel demand. Consequently, in urban areas such as the Baltimore region, over 32% of daily travel occurs in congested conditions — and the trend continues to climb. Annual delay per person has reached an average of 36 hours per year, costing each driver over \$900 in lost wages and wasted fuel.

Ten years ago, each household averaged about 6 trips per day. Now the average is 10 trips per day, up almost 70%. About 40% of all the trips that are made are relatively short trips, two miles or less. While less than 6% of those trips are made by walking or bicycling, studies have shown that more people would walk or bicycle if safe and convenient facilities were available. Improved facilities would also provide additional transportation choices for the 30% of the

The charts below compare the levels of obesity to the percentage of trips made by foot (from the Surface Transportation Policy Project).

Obesity in adults shows a dramatic increase overweight individuals, particularly after 1980, accompanied by a gradual decrease in the number of trips made by foot.



The statistics for children show an even greater rise in obesity over the last 30 years. Like the adults, the number of children's trips by foot decreased gradually until about 1990, but then takes a

nosedive. The most worrisome aspect of this trend is that individuals who became relatively inactive as children generally stay inactive as adults.

population that cannot or do not drive because they are too young, too old, or unable to afford a car. The high cost of gasoline provides even more incentive to consider cheaper alternatives.

Health

The national Centers for Disease Control (CDC) links obesity due to poor diet and lack of exercise to several major diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancer. Obesity has become epidemic in American society, and Maryland ranks as one of the more problematic states. More than half of Marylanders are either overweight or obese. This is a leading factor making cardiovascular disease the number one cause of death.

Health officials are encouraging a healthy diet combined with regular physical activity to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and other ailments. The CDC recommends walking, in particular, as an inexpensive activity that people can most easily and routinely incorporate into their daily lives.

An added benefit when more people use non-polluting forms of transportation is improvement in air quality, which will help reduce respiratory diseases and chronic conditions such as asthma. Air pollution is a serious problem in the Baltimore region, particularly for ozone pollution which is a result of motor vehicle emissions. It is estimated that air pollution is responsible for over 600,000 deaths annually nationwide. A short, four-mile round trip by bicycle keeps about 15 pounds of pollutants out of the air.

Livable Communities

Less easy to quantify is the impact that the prevalence of walking and bicycling can have on the quality of life in communities. Streets where people are not visible are uncomfortable and sterile. Conversely, the presence of human activity creates vibrancy and increases the perception of safety. People out in their communities create more opportunities for social interaction, get to know their neighbors, and create a stronger sense of ownership and caring.

Putting it together

Since walking and bicycling provide so many benefits, why don't more people do it?

The built environment too often makes walking and bicycling difficult. Ever-increasing dependence on the automobile has resulted in sprawling land development, with the need for wider and wider roadways to serve them. Sidewalks, bikeways and trails are absent in most communities, or, when they are provided, often have limited connections to destinations. These barriers limit walking and bicycling as viable transportation choices, and affect the ability of citizens to integrate walking or bicycling into their daily lives as a regular physical activity. The opportunity for walking and bicycling to positively affect community livability is also lost.



Land uses and streets designed with pedestrians and bicyclists in mind encourage social interaction and create a sense of community.



Commercial corridors developed in the last half-century were typically designed for quick and convenient access by automobiles and trucks, with limited regard for pedestrians and bicyclists.