
**COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONTHLY REPORT TO THE TPB**

July 15, 2026
Tim Davis, CAC Chair

The July meeting of the CAC was held virtually on Thursday, July 9. The CAC was briefed on the status of the bicycle and pedestrian plan, began a discussion on the latest developments in the DMV/Moves initiative, and held our “Act Locally” round-robin.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN UPDATE

Michael Farrell, Transportation Planner, briefed the committee on plans for updating the National Capital Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, last updated in 2022. Members held a lively discussion after the presentation.

Questions and comments included the following:

Trails have a lot of different users. Does the plan address safety enforcement?

Yes. This will be addressed in the plan. On the park-maintained trails, there are park police. We do have many park authorities in our area, and they all do patrolling and enforcement on trails. One recommendation may be to install more mile markers on trails that don't have them so you can report your location more accurately if you need to call 9-1-1. In addition to police, there are trail rangers and volunteers, to help. We also would like to see more uniform adoption of wayfinding and signage.

Do you think bike lanes are too narrow?

Some trails are now at a 10-foot width. Parts of the National Capital trail network, including the Mount Vernon trail, are too narrow for the mix and volume of users. For on-road bike lanes, cars need to be able to safely pass the bicyclist. Newer facilities on high-speed roads are tending to be wider or separated. The width of the roadway is often a constraint, but there are design features that can help.

The data on accidents is surprising. Why wasn't the accident rate lower during the pandemic? And what caused the increase lately?

The COVID pandemic reduced traffic overall. People were staying home, but there was an increase in speeding. Even after the pandemic, this behavior continued. Another factor could be the type of cars on the road. They are larger with more of a boxy front-face. This configuration seems to be more fatal because pedestrians and bicyclists get hit higher on the body. Mike Farrell referred to a recent study published in the New York Times about the relationship between vehicle size and design and the increase in pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

Is the plan going to factor in self-driving cars?

No, not in this plan. How self-driving cars will affect bicyclists and pedestrians is still unknown. There isn't enough information on them yet. We can speculate that it might be better overall, due to the liability coverage such vehicles will need to prove to operate. They will need to operate as safely as the average driver overall.

What about the overall safer features of newer cars? Will that help improve safety? What about safer street design?

We look at a lot of different factors when it comes to safety. Many of our jurisdictions have adopted a Vision Zero policy. They are also implementing Complete Streets, road diets, and lowering speeds. Newer vehicles also have features that make it safer, such as cameras for blind spots. It's a complicated question.

Regarding funding for trails: are resources matching needs?

On the capital side, one of the best ways to get a trail in is through new development. Jurisdictions are often requiring developers to put in facilities when parcels are developed or redeveloped. COG also has technical assistance programs to help motivate jurisdictions, such as Transportation-Land Use Connections. Safe Streets for All funding is also an option. There is also the maintenance and operations side. Once the trails go in, they need resources, such as police and litter pick-up. Volunteer groups sometimes help with that.

Is there any general statement in the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan about land use, and how compact land use is better for pedestrians and bicyclists?

There are the TPB adopted policies as part of the Visualize plan but we can look at writing something in about compact development patterns supporting bicycling and walking.

Are there any guidelines or best practices concerning facility operation like we have for streets? For example, a street may have a letter grade that denotes its overall operation, and that might factor into design changes.

The most recent guidance is offered through our transportation association officials at AASHTO and NACTO. There may be something that addresses overall volume and mix of users that would help guide the probable configuration of the facility. It is worth investigating further.

CAC members continued discussion of this concept in regard to the low-stress network in the plan. An idea of peak hour volume on trails, and the mix of uses might help with an ideal width.

A lot of shared use paths are on one side of the road of a high-speed roadway. That's not adequate. It can be unsafe even for short walking distances around schools, etc. Is there any effort to look at trail blazers, such as the designs in Europe and elsewhere?

Yes, planners have been studying this for a long time. Design of facilities does get back to land use. More compact, mixed uses are overall better for pedestrians and bicyclists. We are getting close to a lot of these ideas here with road diets, center median turn pockets, tree plantings, etc. but it is harder to do in the U.S. overall. In our area, it is the norm for these facilities to be part of the street design now. Most of our jurisdictions have complete street policies.

DMVMOVES REGIONAL TRANSIT INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Pierre Gaunard, TPB Transportation Planner, briefed the committee on the DMVMoves working groups currently implementing the initiative's detailed Action Plan for Regional Transit Integration. Due to the lengthy discussion on the bicycle and pedestrian plan, the committee was only able to receive some of the information. Mr. Gaunard agreed to continue the briefing at the September CAC meeting.

“ACT LOCALLY” ROUND ROBIN

Members continue to be active in several transportation initiatives around the region, including the redesign of H Street, community action on the WMATA Better Bus implementation, and writing transportation articles for a local newspaper.

ATTENDANCE

Tim Davis, Chair
Ra Amin, Vice Chair
Daniel Papiernik, Vice Chair
Heather Gaona
Dan Hardy
Kevin Jiang
Madeline Kaba
Monica Martinez Lopez
Dorothy Menelas
Asa Orrin-Brown
Jeffrey Parnes
Rick Rybeck
Gail Sullivan

Staff
Laura Bachle
Rachel Beyerle
Marc Moser
Michael Farrell
Taylor Robey
Pierre Gaunard
Tom Harrington
Janie Nham