

# **THE ANNAPOLIS BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

## **FINAL REPORT**

**11/14/08**

In November of 2007, Mayor Ellen Moyer appointed an ad hoc committee to develop a plan for bicycle transportation and the programs that will support enhanced use of alternative bicycle and scooter transportation.

When Mayor Moyer appointed the members of the Annapolis Bicycle Transportation Committee (ABTC), she said, “Alternative transportation is important to reducing our dependence on the automobile. The City of Annapolis is compact enough that mobility by foot, bicycle or scooter could be attractive to a majority of our citizens. Walking paths are marked, a sidewalk plan has been completed, parking sites for scooters are identified, even bike racks are in place. However, safe bike routes and programs to support biking to work are still elusive.”

The members of the Committee included: bike shop owners Parker Jones and Stephen Jack; Jim Claffey, the President of the Annapolis Bicycle Club, safety advocate and health professional Gale Cromwell; Jim Urban, a member of the Annapolis Planning Commission; transportation specialist Paul Foer, and Burnell Vincent and Cynthia Chess, retired citizens who live downtown and who enjoy riding bicycles on a regular basis.

In addition, the public was encouraged to participate and an extensive e-mail group was created and updated regularly so that the public could follow the work of the Committee and provide input. The Committee’s morning meetings were announced in advance and the public was always welcome to attend the meetings that were held in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room at 145 Gorman Street. Minutes of each meeting were posted on the City website and made available to the public via e-mails.

The Committee met on a bi-weekly basis from January 3, 2008 until April 1, 2008.

Between January and April, the Committee was briefed by: George Cardwell (Anne Arundel County Transportation Planner), Jon Mayer (Anne Arundel County Bicycle Coordinator), Richard Chambers (Executive Director of One Less Car), Eve DeCoursey (Executive Director of the Washington Area Bicycle Association), Michael Jackson (Maryland

Department of Bicycle/Pedestrian Access), Jim Urban (Member of the Annapolis Planning Commission), Bob Agee (City Administrator and Acting Director of the Annapolis Department of Public Works).

The Committee gathered data and information from a wide range of sources including:

**Bicycle/Pedestrian Issue Analysis for the Annapolis Neck Small Area Plan**

**6<sup>th</sup> Bicycle Symposium at the Maryland General Assembly**

**Google Mapping System for Highlighting Bicycle Concerns**

**Pedestrian Bicycle Accessibility Program Link Analysis**

**Pedestrian Accessibility Routes Map**

**Annapolis Bicycle Club's Issues & Concerns (E-mails)**

**Various regional and local maps, studies, and brochures**

**Bay Ridge Avenue Bypass (aerial map)**

**Accident analysis from the Annapolis Police Department**

**Pedestrian Accident analysis from State Highway Administration**

**(SHA) for Anne Arundel County/Annapolis**

**Photo of the bike lockers used at Metro stations**

**Right hook accident diagrams and analysis**

**Maryland State Highway Administration accidents statistics, master plans, and informational & safety brochures**

**Annapolis Planning & Zoning Bike/Ped Comprehensive Plan Goals**

**Safe Routes to School Grant**

**Annapolis City 2004 Bicycle Crash Report – John Overstreet**

**Loew's Service Road Resolution 40-83 & 2-86**

**League of American Bicyclists "Bicycle Friendly Communities - The 5 E's"**

**One Less Car Legislative Alerts**

**Google Interactive Map Link to the Baltimore Metropolitan Council**

**American Bicyclist Update**

**Race Across America Volunteer Alert**

**USDOT Bikeway Guidelines**

**City of Rockville Bicycle Master Plan**

**Critical Link Rides**

After gathering technical information for three months, the Committee, along with other interested members of the public, began a series of Critical Link bicycle rides throughout Annapolis to determine problem areas and key connections. In April the Committee covered Wards 1,2 & 3; in May they covered Wards 2 & 3; in August they covered 4,5,6,7 & 8;

and on the final ride in September Committee members covered the downtown area of Ward 1. Upon completion of the rides, the Committee prepared a list of specific recommendations for the key roads within each section. (See Critical Link Analysis)

### **Comprehensive Plan**

The ABTC was riding on a parallel time track with the Annapolis Comprehensive Plan. Committee staff met with the Planning & Zoning Department after every weekly meeting. The ABTC agreed to provide four deliverables to the Comp Plan:

1. Vision Statement
2. Legislative, Code or Policy Actions which the City should adopt;
3. Top 10 (Immediate) & Top 10 (Long-Term) action plan lists;
4. A map showing the bicycle connections needed in the city

### **Annapolis' Bicycling Vision Statement**

The City of Annapolis recognizes the many environmental, economic and health benefits of walking and bicycling for both transportation, recreation and tourism in our city. Foremost among these benefits are reduced traffic and parking pressure, stronger communities and neighborhoods, and enhanced mobility for all residents and visitors.

Therefore, it shall be the policy of the City of Annapolis to invite, welcome and encourage more bicycling by planning, developing and continually improving safe and accessible streets through programs like Safe Routes to School and off-road networks and amenities such as bicycle storage, signage, education, enforcement and maps.

As the capital city of Maryland and the heart of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, Annapolis should promote bicycle use in order to reduce automobile congestion as a part of its clean air strategy.

Annapolis is in a region that has been determined by the Environmental Protection Agency to be a non-attainment area because of high ozone levels directly related to automobile exhaust, and where highway funding is tied directly to specific actions undertaken by local governments to promote alternative forms of transportation.

To demonstrate this commitment, the City will hire or designate a bicycle/pedestrian planner whose short term goals will be to procure grants, enlist state support, coordinate bicycle initiatives with the county, build partnerships with bicycle and pedestrian groups, and promote safety and education programs to enhance bicycling.

The planner's long term goals will be to develop a bicycling master plan that will result in Annapolis becoming a Bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community as determined by the League of American Bicyclists by June 1, 2011 and to continue to improve thereafter and become a Silver-level Community by 2016.

As the only municipal hub in the United States where two national trails (the East Coast Greenway Trail and the American Discovery Trail) converge, and as the finish line for the Race Across America, and as a key link to international destinations via the B& Trail, the BWI Trail, BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, AMTRAK, and Greyhound/Trailways, Annapolis will be a world-renowned bicycle destination where safe bicycling is an accepted form of transportation.

### **Legislative, Code & Policy Changes**

1. The Police Department should document pedestrians or bicycles in the heading that describes an accident with a motor vehicle. Accurate reporting of accidents ensures that the locations where bicycle and pedestrian accidents repeatedly occur may be identified so that remedial action, if warranted, may occur.
2. When the City works on a road, or builds a new road, it will accommodate bicycles.
3. The City will sign alternate routes for bicyclists.
4. The City will provide information and/or training to all police officers about safety and enforcement issues related to bicycling and walking.
5. The City will assist and support city employees to choose non-automotive transportation when commuting.
6. The City will review all signage and striping of roads related to bicycling.
7. Promote better coordination between the City and the County and State on bicycle issues.
8. Bicycles and pedestrians are just as important as motor vehicles and should be given the same consideration, safety rights and accommodation along all city roadways.
9. The City shall establish standards and guidelines to promote the safest facilities for all transportation modes.
10. The City shall aggressively pursue bicycle-related grants.
11. The City shall fund the creation of a bike route map that can be used by residents and visitors alike, and then distribute this map widely.
12. The City shall actively promote bicycle safety.

### **Bicycle Commuter Benefit Act of 2008**

The benefit of up to \$20 a month begins with the new year in 2009. Employers may reimburse employees, tax free, for “reasonable” expenses related to their bike commute to work, including equipment purchases,

bike purchases, repairs, and storage if the bicycle is used as a “substantial part” of the commuter’s trip to work for the month.

## **SUPER TOP 10 LIST**

### **Immediate Action Items**

1. Provide better signage and better mapping.
2. Improve the Poplar and Spa Creek Trails and then connect the two trails.
3. Improve shoulders on Bay Ridge Avenue, from Chesapeake Avenue to Tyler Avenue.
4. Develop the Victor Parkway Connector from Bay Ridge Avenue to Edgewood Road.
5. Recommend the State install bike lanes on MD 450 between the end of the Academy Bridge and the Gate 8 traffic light.
6. Provide and encourage private investment in the installation of more bike facilities downtown – racks, lockers, showers, secure parking – and promote “Ride to Work” programs with incentives for individuals, schools and businesses who participate in commuting efforts.
7. Make the “Safe Routes to School” a key engine for providing safe cycling in Annapolis.
8. Recommend the State install non-skid grating on the Spa Creek Bridge.
9. Extend the Poplar Trail into downtown via the Lowe’s Service Road and on the other end of the existing trail to Parole, the Annapolis Mall, and the County’s South Shore Trail.
10. Expand the Bike Lending Program.

# SUPER TOP 10 LIST

## Long-Term Action Items

1. Hire a Bicycle Coordinator.
2. Create a Bicycle Master Plan for the City of Annapolis.
3. Establish safe and efficient routes into and out of the city.
4. Initiate better enforcement of laws for cars and bikes.
5. Implement better bicycle safety and education programs.
6. Accommodate bicycle safely on all of West Street.
7. Explore closing certain city streets at certain times to cars, as we currently do on the first block of West Street, Annapolis Street (West Annapolis), and on Maryland Avenue, in order to promote bicycle activities that can help to create more vibrant and liveable communities.
8. Re-open the Naval Academy to bicycles.
9. Dramatically expand signage, mapping, law enforcement and safety programs.
10. Make Annapolis one of the Top 10 bicycle destinations in the U.S.

**APRIL 22<sup>nd</sup> Ride – Met in the parking lot of the Annapolis Police Station and inspected the following links:**

- \* **Loew's Hotel service road to downtown, paralleling West Street** – The Committee recommended that the City pursue negotiations with the owners of the Loew's Hotel to allow a bike lane on this little used road. No parking needs to be removed, and no improvements (other than signage) need to be made. We simply let the public use the road as a bicycle route. If the bike trail is approved by the hotel, then the City should pursue negotiations with the appropriate parties to build a gate in the rear wall of the property (adjacent to Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis property at Timothy House, so the trail can be safely opened from dawn to dusk, while providing a critical link to West Street and Calvert Street.
  
- \* **Poplar Trail to Stadium** – The Committee recommended that the City pursue negotiations with the Naval Academy Athletic Association to address the inaccessibility to the stadium bike trail from adjoining streets. Specifically, there needs to be curb cut connections made at Glen Avenue and North Linden Street.
  
- \* **Poplar Trail to the Spa Creek Trail via Smithville or South Cherry Grove/McGukian** – The Committee recommended that the City connect the two trails via Cherry Grove Avenue and McGukian Street. The City should negotiate an access agreement with the owner of the Poste Haste property **and** negotiate with the State to install a signalized crossing at Cherry Grove and West Street. This would provide safe crossing for children and others trying to get across West Street from surrounding communities, while providing a direct connection to the Cheery Grove connection to Heritage and beyond.
  
- \* **South Cherry Grove to Spa Creek Headwaters** – Staff provided GIS, top, and tax maps for the Committee's review. The Committee recommended that the City designate Cherry Grove as a key link in the City's trail system and then develop a nature trail/bike trail along the stream valley corridor from the Spa Creek headwaters to Spa Road along this City-owned right-of-way. This link could connect to the Spa Creek Trail via the Bates athletic fields. This critical link would also connect the Parole Community to the rest of the city.

**MAY 28<sup>th</sup> Ride – Met at the water tower along Navy Stadium Trail next to Farragut Road and inspected the following links:**

\* **Stadium to West Annapolis** – Taylor Avenue should be the designated link between West Annapolis and the Stadium. To improve cycling in this area, the Committee recommends that the SHA install bike route signage along Rowe Boulevard from Taylor into downtown, including on the pavement itself. The Committee pointed out that it is unsafe to try and get from the stadium trail onto Farragut as you near the intersection with Rowe; they recommend that a short link be constructed at the north end of the stormwater pond by the water tower (where the trail makes a sharp turn to the right), connecting to the Courthouse service road and then ending at the sidewalk along Farragut.

\* **Poplar Trail to Jennifer Road** – The Committee supports the City’s current plans to connect to the County’s trail system in Parole and the South Shore Trail via Admiral Drive, due to the unsafe conditions on West Street and Bestgate Road (County). They recommend that the City initially re-stripe the travel lanes on Admiral in order to provide a space for cyclists right now. In addition, the Committee recommends that the City, under Phase 2, eliminate the several choke points where there is very limited or no space for a cycling lane, including the elimination of the approximately 20 parking spaces along Admiral in front of Annapolis Gardens. As part of Phase 2, the City should work with the County to have bike lanes installed along Jennifer Road from Admiral Drive to the new bike trail connection from Route 50 & Route 2 that intersects with Jennifer just south of the hospital.

\* **Parole North to Parole South** – The Committee was unable to come up with a connection directly across West Street from Parole North to Parole south because none of the cross streets line up with one another. The Committee recommends that the City look at developing a community greenway along Chicken Bone Alley that can one day provide the north/south connection via Parole Street.

\* Left on Rosewood Street

\* Right on Hicks Street

\* Left on old Forest Drive

\* Left on Parole street

\* Right on Drew Street

\* Cross Chinquapin Round Road onto George Avenue

\* Headwaters of Spa Creek stream valley connection to Wiley Bates

Alternate: Straight on George Avenue, Left on Legion Avenue, Right on Virginia Avenue, Left on South Southwood, Right on West Street, Right on South Cheery Grove Avenue

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- \* **West Street to the Annapolis Mall** – The Committee recommends the following route between Jennifer Road/Annapolis Mall and the Parole community in the city:
  - \* County bike trail that begins just south of the hospital to Route 2 and then Sommerville Road (fix storm grates and re-stripe road for bike lanes on both sides)
  - \* Negotiate and access agreement through the fence at Coastal Resources onto Holeclaw Street
  - \* Cross Carver Street and continue on Holeclaw Street
  - \* Right on Bunche Street
  
- \* **Lincoln Drive to Bywater Road** – The Committee does not believe this can be done safely and recommends that the connection between the south side of Forest Drive with the north be made at South Cherry Grove, and then through the Heritage community to the footbridge (which needs to be reconfigured to make it more safe for cyclists to navigate).

**AUGUST 26<sup>th</sup> Ride – Met at the Chesapeake Childrens Museum and inspected the following links:**

- \* **Chesapeake Childrens Museum/Spa Creek Conservancy Foot Bridge** – The Committee feels the 90 degree left turn as you leave the bridge and enter the SCC property is dangerous and impedes safe movement. The following three options are offered for consideration:
  - #1 – Change the alignment by moving the SCC end of the bridge upstream.
  - #2 – Take out the bend on the downstream side and re-weld.
  - #3 – The bridge looks like it’s getting old and should be replaced. When that happens, it should be aligned so that it runs straight and doesn’t have such a sharp turn.A long-term goal of the City should be to explore making a bike/ped connection to the Greenway proposed along this drainage from Ritchie Court to the Spa Creek Trail at Wiley Bates.
  
- \* **Hilltop Lane** – Repaint bike lane and decals so motorists can see more clearly.  
Enforce illegal parking in bike lane.

\* **Hilltop Lane & Spa Road Intersection** – Continue the existing bike lane along the north side of Hilltop Lane from Chatham Lane to Spa Road which becomes a right turn lane as one approaches this busy intersection.

\* **Hilltop Lane & Spa Road Intersection (cont.)** –

When the commercial lot which was formerly owned by Kneseth Israel Synagogue is developed on the north side of Hilltop, the City should require that the sidewalk should be moved to the north to allow the construction of a bike lane, or a hiker/biker trail section.

Eliminate right turn on red at the Spa Road lot for traffic heading west from Hilltop Lane.

Install bike lane on Spa Road for bicyclists turning right off of Hilltop Lane.

The City should work with the Synagogue to allow the installation of a bike lane on the south side of Hilltop Lane where there is currently no accommodation for bicycles, or install a hiker/biker trail section.

Install bike lanes along Hilltop Lane on both sides of the road, from Spa Road to Merryman Road.

The City should acquire rights-of-way and install sidewalks along both sides of Spa Road after Hilltop Lane.

Given the fact that there are two schools at the Spa Road/Hilltop intersection, this should be a priority area for *Safe Routes to School* funding.

\* **Tyler Avenue between Hilltop Lane and Bay Ridge Avenue** –

Extend the existing bike lane all the way to Bay Ridge Avenue. Repaint the bike lanes so motorists can see more clearly.

\* **Primrose Lane** – Repaint bike lane and decals so motorists can see more clearly.

Enforce illegal parking in bike lane.

\* **Bumper's Bridge @ Truxtun Park on the Spa Creek Trail** –

Install bike ramps on the steps leading down to the bridge so cyclists do not have to carry their bikes.

Raise the asphalt on the trail several inches to eliminate the bump on the Silopanna side of the bridge.

- \* **Bay Ridge Avenue** – Fix the road surface and install bike lanes on both sides of the road from Tyler Avenue to Bay Ridge Road.
- \* **Victor Parkway to Georgetown Road** – The sidewalk is difficult for bicyclists to navigate. Put a opening in the middle of the fence, rather than on the sidewalk and install a sign that says “Bicycles/Pedestrians Only”

**September 23<sup>rd</sup> Ride – Met at the Navy Pool and inspected the following links:**

- \* **Naval Academy Bridge** – This is a state road and part of the East Coast Greenway, a national north/south trail. The bike lane ends on the Annapolis side of the bridge as you are riding into town, making for an unsafe condition. The Committee proposes better signage needs to be installed, reminding motorists to share the road with cyclists. In addition, the Committee offers two options:

**Option #1** – Change the angle of the existing sidewalk curb cut (or move to a more favorable entry angle), and allow bikes and pedestrians to share the section from the curb cut to the top of the hill where a curb cut needs to be created so that cyclists can enter the roadway. Negotiate with the Naval Academy to create a bike trail in front of the Navy Pool that connects to the wide and unused sidewalk that parallels MD 450 from Gate 8 light to King George Street traffic light. From the Gate 8 traffic light, heading out of town, create a curb cut onto the sidewalk across from Badger Road, widen the sidewalk and allow bikes and peds to share.

**Option #2** – Narrow the travel lane in both directions and paint a lane for bikes on both sides of the road with share the road signage.

- \* MD 450 from the King George Street Light – Install a bike trail on the north side of the road, running along the hillside where the old railroad tracks were located, and extending to Annapolis Street.
- \* King George Street from MD 450 to the Turn into the Navy Laundry – Heading into town, the curb should be moved six feet to the right so that cyclists can get a 3-foot lane on both sides of the road.

- \* King George Street from the Turn into the Navy Laundry to the College Creek Bridge – Narrow the travel lane and paint a bike lane on both sides of the road, with accompanying signage to warn motorists to share the road.
- \* King George Street Bridge – Narrow the travel lane and paint a bike lane on both sides of the road, with accompanying signage to warn motorists to share the road.
- \* King George Street from the end of the College Creek Bridge to Randall Street – Install one of MDOT’s new, large signs, instructing motorists to yield to cyclists. Enforce the 25 mph speed limit.
- \* King George Street from Randall to the College Creek Bridge – Install one of MDOT’s new, large yellow signs, instructing motorists to yield to cyclists. Enforce the 25 mph speed limit.
- \* Rowe Boulevard after the College Creek Bridge – Install one of MDOT’s new, large yellow signs, instructing motorists to yield to cyclists. Lower speed limit to 25 mph and enforce.
- \* Bladen Street Between College Avenue and Calvert Street – Narrow the travel lane and paint a bike lane on both sides of the road. Replace the tire-eating stormdrain on the inbound side of Bladen at the Carroll Street intersection.

## **ANNAPOLIS BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

Mr. James Claffey, President  
Annapolis Bicycle Club  
P. O. Box 224  
Annapolis, MD 21404

Staff – Stephen Carr  
Mayor's Office  
(410) 263-7997

[steve.carr567@gmail.com](mailto:steve.carr567@gmail.com)  
<mailto:stevecarr757@comcast.net>  
[o:burnellv@verizon.net](mailto:burnellv@verizon.net)

<mailto:jclaffey@erols.com><mailto:Stevecarr757@comcast.net>

Cynthia Chess  
8 Revell St  
Annapolis, MD 21401

<mailto:urbantree@toad.net>

<mailto:chchess@aol.com> Gale Cromwell

1121 Tyler Avenue  
Annapolis, Md 21403

<mailto:riverdreamg@aol.co>

Paul Foer  
921 Boucher Avenue  
Annapolis, MD 21403

Stephen Jack  
Bike Doctor of Annapolis  
160-C Jennifer Road  
Annapolis, MD 21401 <mailto:Sjack33593@aol.com>

Parker Jones  
Capital Bicycle  
436 Chinquapin Round Rd  
Annapolis MD 21401 <mailto:cbi300@yahoo.com>

James Urban  
Annapolis Planning  
Commission <mailto:urbantree@toad.net> <mailto:cweikel@mac.com> <mailto:stevecarr757@comcast.net>  
C/O Annapolis Planning & Zoning Department

(410) 263-7961

Burnell Vincent  
20 Spa View Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401