

Cumberland Bikeways Taskforce

December 28, 2006
<http://www.AdventureGovernment.com>

Outline

- Vision
- Goals
- Benefits
- Bikeways in existing plans
- Allegheny Highland and C&O Canal Towpath trails (east/west)
- Potomac Greenway Trail (south)
- Bikeway Master Plan
- Other Issues (Funding, Obstacles, Research Findings, Needs)
- References

Vision

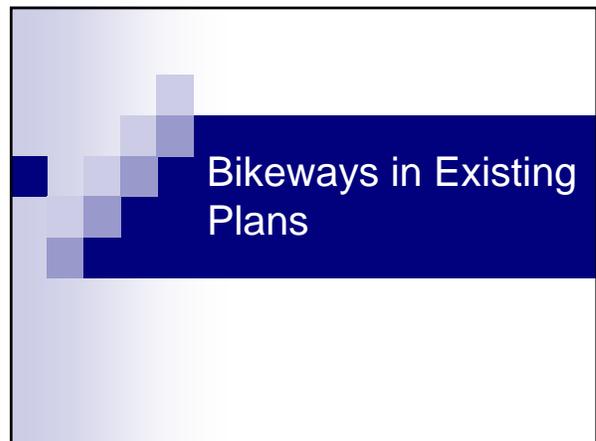
- “The City of Cumberland will, by the year 2020, be recognized as the best city in Maryland for walking and biking.”

Goal

- Obtain Bike Friendly Community designation from the League of American Bicyclists
 - “Adopt a target level of bicycle use and safety to be achieved within a specific timeframe, and improve data collection necessary to monitor progress.”
 - “Provide safe and convenient bicycle access to all parts of the community through a signed network of on- and off-street facilities, low-speed streets, and secure parking.”
 - Establish information programs to promote bicycling for all purposes, and to communicate the many benefits of bicycling to residents and businesses (e.g., bicycle maps, neighborhood rides, PR campaigns)

Benefits

- Benefits
 - Improve local residents’ health
 - Increase recreational opportunities
 - Improve the environment (decrease air pollution/fossil fuel usage/land use)
 - Improve the economy
 - Improve access to Central Business District and support local businesses
 - Make the area a more attractive place to live and start a business
 - “Recent studies on the preferences of new homebuyers indicate that there is a demand for more livable communities in general, and better bicycle and pedestrian facilities specifically.”
(Rockville Bikeway Master Plan)



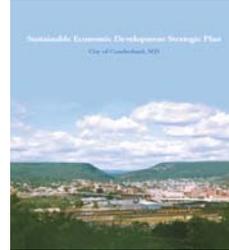
Bikeways in Existing Plans

Comprehensive Plan 1995

- Action 4.4.6 Support the development of facilities for bicyclists, including regional multi-use trails such as the proposed Allegheny Highlands Trail and consideration of establishing designated bikeways or bicycle compatible roadways where feasible as part of street reconstruction projects.
- Action 4.4.7 Where feasible, improve the compatibility of streets for bicycles by replacing older drainage grates, providing wide curb lanes and/or smooth shoulders, and eliminating roadside hazards.
- Action 4.4.8 Add a requirement to provide space for the parking of bicycles in the off-street parking and loading provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

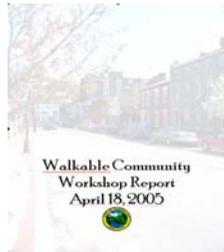
Sustainable Economic Development Committee Focus

- To develop ideas and projects for one or more city and regional environmental initiatives that may include a) **bike paths and pedestrian master plan**, b) new recycling projects, c) environmental summit and green technology exposition, d) demonstration projects in community orchards and related approaches to sustainable local agriculture and increased food capacity, e) informational and educational resources such as continuing education classes in sustainable development offered through Allegany College, and f) research and science capacity to aid sustainable development.



Walkable Community Workshop

- "Create a five to ten year Master Plan."
- "Hopefully we can begin to implement the ideas that don't require any major expenditure and begin the planning process for the long term work. A commitment to improve walking-biking in Cumberland has sort of been made, at least in words, we now need some actions."
- "Will get safe bike grates installed in downtown area and along Frederick and Bedford Streets, and continue to replace as budgets allows. A bike route is to be marked through Cumberland this spring... Walking and biking needs to be given better considered in future project and neighbor planning documents."



Allegheny Highlands Trail/C&O Canal Towpath

Allegheny Highlands Trail/C&O Canal Towpath



Wills Creek Avenue



Valley Street/N. Lee Street



Market Street



Baltimore Street



Elizabeth Street



Elizabeth Street



Mason Park/Mary Street



Canal Parkway/WV-28

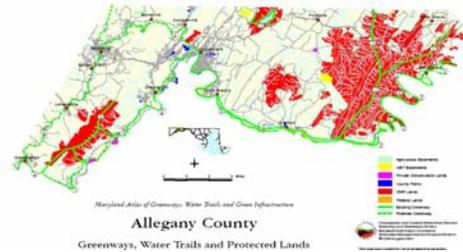


Offutt Street



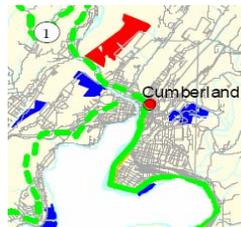
Potomac Greenway Trail

Potomac Greenway



Potomac Greenway -- Cumberland

- "The Potomac River Greenway is a partially protected greenway that primarily consists of the 184-mile C&O Canal National Historical Park. Possible extensions at both ends of the trail are being considered. In Allegany County, the greenway could be extended along the North Branch of the Potomac River, possibly utilizing inactive portions of the former Western Maryland Railway Corridor." (Maryland Atlas of Greenways, Water Trails, and Green Infrastructure)



Bikeway Master Plan

Bikeway Master Plan



Why a Master Plan?

- From Jones, Michael G. 1993 *Planning*. 59, 10
 - Bikeway master plans are frequently required to obtain state and federal funding.
 - Content: inventory of existing facilities, route descriptions, priorities, costs, phasing recommendations
 - Design standards are established by AASHTO.
 - There are no planning standards – “however, some reports suggest that in areas of average density (under 8k per sq. mile), one mile of bikeway should be provided per 1,000 people, allowing most residents to live within half a mile of the nearest segment.”

Why a Master Plan?

- Bike paths (segregated—\$90k-\$200k per mile), bike lanes (lanes on public roadways—\$3-\$30k per mile), and bike routes (identified by signs – no physical improvement—recommended only for residential areas with little traffic)
- “In many places, potential bikeway corridors have been identified in the planning process even if the land cannot be obtained immediately.
- “In 1997, Annapolis, MD, adopted an open space plan that identified several corridors—including creeks and abandoned railroad rights-of-way—to be set aside for a future 32-mile network of bikeways.

Other Issues

Funding

- Federal (SAFETEA -- Safe, Accountable, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act)
 - National Recreational Trails Program
- State
 - Program Open Space
 - Sidewalk Retrofit Program
- Local
 - Bond
 - Community Development Block Grant

Obstacles to Bicycling

- Lack of integrated network
- Narrow streets and lack of bicycle lanes
- Lack of signage
- Lack of bicycle friendly grates and other bicycle amenities (e.g. racks)
- Lack of maps and signage
- Demographics of City don't support active lifestyles (age, income levels, obesity)

Some Research Findings

- Segregated bicycling facilities increase ridership much more than street lanes; however, estimate is that this increase is not multiples of existing users. Factors influencing the propensity to cycle to work (Wardman, Tight, and Page. 2007. Factors influencing the propensity to work. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice* 41, 4: 339-350)
- "... relatively simple/inexpensive design improvements, such as stop signs and well-marked crosswalks and bike lanes along two collector streets, increased nonvehicular transportation options for children traveling to and from school in the neighborhood. The location, as well as the type of improvement makes a difference for evaluating overall neighborhood walkability/bikeability." (Lee and Cunningham 2006. *Why not walk to school today?* *Arcuser* October/December)

Needs

- Education
 - Bicycling education needs to be included in school curriculum.
- Awareness
 - Workshop(s) on bicycling/walkability issues
 - Maps/brochures that show routes within the city.
 - Special events that highlight bicycle activities (e.g., Baltimore BikeJam festival)
- Linkages with existing assets
 - Signage showing linkages to trails needs to be improved.
 - Examination of linkages to existing bike trails within the City.
- Creation of additional assets
 - Examination of possible Potomac Greenways extension to at least the edge of the City of Cumberland.
- Planning
 - Exploration of possibility of developing City-wide Bicycle Master Plan.
 - Reexamine zoning and subdivision ordinances for bicycle
- Exploration of other State/Federal/local funding sources for rail-trail and other trail development.
 - Not just a tourism project
 - Creating healthy communities
 - Sustainable development/less reliance on automobile transport for work, shopping, leisure.

References

- Maryland Atlas of Greenways, Water Trails, and Green Infrastructure
(<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/greenways/counties/allegany.html>)
- Maryland Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
(http://www.fhriplan/md_bike_ped_plan)
- Rockville Bikeway Master Plan
(<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/masterplan/bikeway/index.html>)
- National Center for Bicycling and Walking
(<http://www.bikewalk.org>)
- Bicycle Friendly Community
(<http://www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org>)