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## Morgantown Monongalia MPO Bike & Pedestrian Transportation Plan

Steering Committee Kick Off | Morgantown Airport Conference Room | 12.10.2018

### Meeting Notes

#### Steering Committee / Attendees:

1. Matthew Cross, Chairman of the Pedestrian Safety Board
2. Damien Davis, City Engineer, City of Morgantown
3. Bill Austin, Executive Director, Morgantown Monongalia MPO
4. Ron Justice, WVU Government Relations, MPO Policy Board Member
5. Mike Pumphrey, DOH Design Engineer Dist. 4
6. Bill Kawecki, Mayor of Morgantown, MPO Policy Board Member
7. Matt Skiles, WVDOT Traffic Operations
8. Don Meadows, WVDOT Traffic Operations
9. Emily Muzzarelli, Asst. City Manager, City of Morgantown
10. Marc Glass, City of Westover
11. Dave Brufly, Mountain Line Transit
12. Rich Wood, Dir of Planning, Monongalia County Planning Commission
13. Don Meadows, WVDOT Traffic Operations
14. Drew Gatlin, Chair, Morgantown Bike Board (City of Morgantown staff in January 2019)
15. Consultant Team: Phil Goff and Charlie Creagh (Alta) and Corey Luzier (Stantec)

After introductions, Alta Project Manager Phil Goff (PG) began the meeting with a slide presentation summarizing the project scope of work, schedule and public engagement. Some highlights included:

- Task 1: Base maps being used to build more complex analysis
  - Full regional scale as well as the city / adjacent communities inset map
  - We've mapped existing bike facilities from GIS data we've received, sidewalks, and trails, mapped out transit routes and all of the bus stops
  - Existing Conditions Analysis: we need the Committee's help figuring out Trip Generation locations and where the key walk and bike destinations lie
  - Gaps in the sidewalk and trail network
- Task 2: Public Engagement
  - Public workshops: #1) winter meeting, #2) early/late spring options
  - Demonstration project, likely in summer 2019 (but could be late spring before students leave town)

- Question: (Matt Cross) Should we coordinate the demonstration project with an Open Streets project that is planned to take place? YES.
- Question: (Drew Gatlin) Would it only be one demonstration project or can we do more? Especially in the satellite communities? Westover has its own concerns and issues. PG Answer: YES, but we'd need your help. Especially if they are on the same day.
- Vision Goals Objectives
- Task 3: Recommendations
  - Toolkit of Options
  - Walk and bike network methodology
- Task 4: Prioritization, Implementation, Action Plan
- Task 5: Final Report and Presentations. Final presentations and report deliverable in Dec 2019.

#### Questions / Comments:

- **Bill Austin:** Currently in the urban area: 16% walk, 4% take transit for work trips (<1% bicycle)
- **Emily:** Does your map include the type of facility? **PG:** YES. They are color coded by the type of facility.
- Request for maps to include trails in White Park, pocket parks, and elsewhere
- **Matt C:** Rick Landenberger drew a map of the Greenbelt around Morgantown.
- **Mark:** Ped/Bike Stress Level 1 – 4. Where are those from? **Phil:** Mineta Transportation Institute. Methodology incorporates data including traffic volume, speed, presence of shoulder, parking, width of travel lanes.
- **Matt S:** What kind of data do we collect at the pop up project? **Phil:** TBD. Simple answer is quantifying how many people are using the facility. Understand what the typical traffic speed is on a typical traffic block. Not a very data intensive event.
- **Dave:** Wall street downtown, there are thousands of ped trips, very few car trips.
- **Matt S:** We/DOH will want data to review for a pop up demonstration project.
- **Mark:** Lots of work to do. Whose job is it to put this projected into the future for traffic and population growth? **Bill Austin** answer: Up to the MPO improvement process, alta to work with WVU capital improvement plans, which are 5 year documents. We'll need to look at a better mode split model than were doing now.
- **Emily:** Focus group meetings. Are you meeting with the Blue Zone (BZ) project? Looking at different pedestrian bike facilities. Getting out looking at projects. Spoke about pop up projects as well. **Phil:** Still TBD which stakeholders we'll be meeting with.
- **Rich Wood:** I have the blue zone information they provided and the contacts. Offer to make photocopies of cards. **Bill Austin:** Blue Zone is aware of this effort as well.
- **Ron:** Right now it's in the assessment process, a decision needs to be made as to whether we move forward as a BZ community. If the assessment is made, we move forward and make a big investment, as a community, then it would be very appropriate to talk with those folks in those circles.
- **Matt S:** Walk/Bike analysis. What kind of volume data are you planning on collecting? **Phil** answer: The ped bike counts that we have are limited. Some spots downtown where counts have been done. Much of that analysis will be qualitative, based on nearby destinations. The Live Work Play model. Density of residential units, jobs, commercial space in a neighborhood.

**Bill Austin** answer: The ACS provides data on the number of commute trips in an urban area. Walking is over 10% of the commute trips here in the Morgantown area. (*Note: per <https://datausa.io>, walk trips are 16.4% of commuter transportation in Morgantown*)

- **Drew:** Latent demand, induced demand, and “trip generator potential” is important. The demand that exists but we can’t quantify is important to consider.
- **Matt S:** If you’re going to look at a mid- block crossing, you need data to review, both pedestrian and motor vehicle. **Bill Austin:** We have lots of vehicular data.
- **Bill Austin:** There is a street at the rail trail and the park where I have witnessed woman with strollers crossing the road and there is no sidewalk there, but they are going over to get to the rail trail. It’s hard to capture those kinds of things with pure data.
- **Drew:** A question for the Alta team is whether you see major data gaps right now that are troubling to you and if so, can you identify them early on so we can show you where that data is or help you gather it? Do you have plans or do you plan to tiptoe around the difference between state and local roads and the strategies necessary to implement facilities on state V local roads? It’d be great if this plan could inform our processes re: coordination and communication. There is a major disconnect when it comes to understanding who builds or owns or maintains what facilities that we are frustrated by.

What are your top 2 or 3 goals for biking and walking in Morgantown area?

- **Mayor:** Expect that we end up with something that is safe, given the topo, and create something achievable re: city vs. state owned roads. I want a practical plan that we can actually put into play.
- **Dave Bruffy:** Mountain Lion Transit. We have boarding and disembarking data. First mile last mile issues exist on our transit accessible corridors. Bike racks on buses exist and we have bus shelters and bike shelters too. Odd development patterns through areas that don’t connect to one another and areas that need to be connected through multiple jurisdictions. Tanglewood is right next to Suncrest town center, but you can’t walk there.
- **Mike P:** I’m a walker and biker. Concerns about topography. This is a challenging area for bike lanes.
- **Ron:** Safety, connectivity are key and we have areas that are not connected. New opportunities for the community with new programs. Look at Coastal Carolina University: the bike share and the ped environment and bus interface was unbelievable. We stayed parked and went all over campus throughout the day.
- **Rich Wood:** one thing that has been a concern of ours is the lack of pedestrian areas, particularly in the County, outside of Morgantown. Even the city has areas with no sidewalks. Walking to and from a trailer park for instance, in the road, is not safe. Even on Earl Core Road, it goes from parking lot to parking lot, which is a major commercial corridor. We need safe places to walk between these areas and parking lots. We’re forcing people to walk in the road.
- **Drew:** Bike Board’s top priority would be a proactive complete streets design process that took place with literally every road. It’s well beyond due to for each road to have some facility for every major mode that travels on it. We see this process as opportunity for moving us in that direction. Instead of a focus on just bicycling and walking, we want everyone in this process to embrace the broader concept of “light individual transport”. We also want to make sure that

these recommendations and distributed equitably. Also, we hope to take a look at paper streets for connection opportunities.

- **Mark Glass:** He's a cyclist commuter. Passionate issue for him. Most important to me are economic development and quality of life for residents. These types of transportation planning are the most potent ways to spend transportation dollars. Wants everyone to be able to bike around town. Works on Greenback Road and lives in Westover.
- **Emily:** Live one-half mile from Rail Trail but can't walk or bike there. People come to this town with ideas or proposals but we don't have anyone to champion them or get them into motion. Need a champion to push projects through. It's clear that some of the gaps don't have a good reason to exist. Maintenance of facilities, costs associated with that, the sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owners to maintain. Folks that manage our trails have a limited budget. To keep up with trails maintenance is difficult. Policy change or what is needed to address that? There is a disconnect between pedestrian and bike facilities between neighboring cities and county DOH roads. Paving program: we replace curb ramps but that's where it ends. Note: there is high ped traffic on some state roads.
- **Don:** We need to ensure that any recommendations are not only feasible economically but also constructable. Reviewing and ensuring existing facilities are up to par with current standards.
- **Matt Skiles:** Practicality with the recommendations and ability to be implemented, I'd like to see safety too. Any recommendations should be data driven to the extent possible...that way, we can spend funds on real problems that are identified.
- **Matt Cross:** Suncrest Town Center is a very active place, but you can't access the residential homes across rt. 705. Thanks to DOH for upgrading the signal systems downtown but we need more education on the signal systems. Lots of people don't know how they work. Would like PSA about signal systems and how they work and how to cross safely. Thanks to Mr. Wood for pointing out the lack of County infrastructure. I've heard complaints from hospital employees at the hospital wanting to walk to work. No sidewalk on Northwestern Avenue. With the new parking garage they are supposed to put in a pedestrian bridge at Willowdale Avenue, between Valley View and Irwin. Signal being proposed at Willowdale and Valley View.
- **(Unknown):** WVU can tell Alta about trip generation areas and facilities etc. Also, upcoming projects that that will create more walk and bike trips.
- **Mark:** Sympathetic to the load on DOH to get stuff implemented. Sometimes the solution to these problems aren't on road facilities. New legislation exists to promote new pedestrian / bike connections that come out of Economic Development projects. (Incentivizing pedestrian connections to business centers.) We could have acquisition of land that are under-utilized to get people from where they live to where they work, increasing value and desirability. Unmapped assets that I think exist: old rail lines and corridors. These don't show up on the tax maps but you can see the gradients in maps. Very flat bikeable assets on the way to Meadow Ponds. Mon Blvd Complete Streets might not be within Mon Blvd right of way – best implementation might be a sidepath or shared use path.
- **Bill Austin:** Wants this plan to empower elected officials to act. A good vision for it and a good community conversation with all of the responsible parties. Let's turn this to something we DON'T put on a shelf.

**Per Alta, the Critical, Recurring Themes:**

- Safety
- Achievability
- Constructability
- Connectivity (particularly across jurisdictions, as needed)
- Quality pedestrian environment
- Complete Streets
- Equitable distribution
- Economic development | Quality of life
- Neighborhood connections to the rail trail
- Construction practicality (economically) and feasibility (engineering)
- Need data-driven recommendations
- Better education related to pedestrian signal design (exclusive vs concurrent especially)
- Outside the box thinking (innovative toolkit)
- Community-input driven process to inform project recommendations