



722 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
617-945-2251
www.altaplanning.com

Morgantown Monongalia MPO Bike & Pedestrian Transportation Plan

Steering Committee Meeting No. 2 | West Virginia University Mountainlair - Blackwater Room

Tuesday February 5th, 2019 | 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Meeting Notes

Steering Committee / Attendees:

1. Mary Joe Thompson, Project Manager – Strategic Initiatives, WVU
2. Matthew Cross, Chairman of the Pedestrian Safety Board
3. Damien Davis, City Engineer, City of Morgantown
4. Bill Austin, Executive Director, Morgantown Monongalia MPO
5. Ron Justice, WVU Government Relations, MPO Policy Board Member
6. Mike Pumphrey, DOH Design Engineer Dist. 4
7. Brian Carr, WVDOH
8. Matt Skiles, WVDOT Traffic Operations
9. Don Meadows, WVDOT Traffic Operations
10. Emily Muzzarelli, Asst. City Manager, City of Morgantown
11. Marc Glass, City of Westover
12. Rich Wood, Dir of Planning, Monongalia County Planning Commission
13. Drew Gatlin, Chair, Morgantown Bike Board, Staff Engineer City of Morgantown
14. Heather Britton, advocate
15. Jenny Selin, Morgantown City Council and MPO Policy Board
16. Guest: Ella Belling, Mon River Trails Conservancy
17. Consultant Team: Phil Goff (Alta), Erica Ortman (Stantec) and Cory Luzier (Stantec)

Welcome & Introductions

Bill Austin began the meeting with a brief introduction discussing the project and general goals and objectives.

Approval of Kick-off Meeting Notes

After Bill's introduction, and introductions of steering committee members present at the time, Alta Project Manager Phil Goff (PG) began with discussions regarding any changes or comments that need to be addressed from the steering committee kick-off meeting (12.10.2018) formal meeting notes:

- Emily Muzzarelli: Page 4 comment “WVU can tell Alta about trip generation areas and facilities etc. Also, upcoming projects that that will create more walk and bike trips.” was not spoken by Emily. Phil is going to revise and update the formal kick-off meeting minutes accordingly and associate the proper committee member with the comment.
- No other comments were made regarding the formal kickoff meeting minutes.

Walk-thru of the Project Web Site, Input Map and Survey

- Phil led the discussion of project schedule before the formalized meeting agenda.
 - Meeting #2 moved from late January to early February (today). Student engagement in the Mountainlair and open house at Metropolitan Theater today (2/05/19); and stakeholder meetings and student government meetings on 2/06/19.
 - Demonstration project (low cost materials to create ped/bike type facility)
 - Think about possible ideas and will begin to start planning at SC meeting #3 sometime in March 2019.
 - **Matt Cross:** consider coordinating Dem. Project with open streets event.
 - “Open streets” closes (shuts down) vehicular activity
 - Use exhibit of signaling system (need to promote interaction of bikes and cars together)
 - Phil agrees: Dem Project ideally would have motor vehicles, bikes and peds co-existing within the same space
 - **Drew Gatlin:** Summer vs. Spring for Dem. Project?
 - Phil: discussions during kick-off meeting focused on May for Dem. Project. Driver of “time of year” and “location of Dem. Project” being student population (WVU)
 - **Ella:** Several events in May that could be tagged onto the Dem. Project:
 - April 13th Wharf District: national “Opening Day” for trails
 - Clay St. Area
 - Beechurst/Don Knotts Blvd intersection
 - Spring Spectacular: cycling event (First weekend in May)
 - Phil and Emily agree that to tag-on to an event is good.
 - **Bill Austin:** Perhaps we look at early Fall for Dem. Project?
 - Students back in town / Fresh start / not worrying about finals week
 - Around Labor Day...week before or after.
 - Drew mentioned students leave first/second week of May, so May probably doesn’t work well.
 - Emily: Locations and situations better suited for Fall and student interaction.
 - Phil: consensus that early fall works better, and more detail will be discussed at meeting #3 regarding location, etc.
 - **Matt Skiles:** Keep in mind utilization might be skewed during a special event / cycling event
 - Matt Cross: Weekend of March 28 – 30 is conference put on by downtown taskforce

- Keynote speakers speaking on inclusive community, connectivity and infrastructure (similar to Alta work)
 - Conference will be downtown and the creative arts center (Evansdale campus)
 - Educational / downtown artwork / creativity aspect of Morgantown
 - Jenny (City Council / MMMPO Chair): it's also about public participation, landscape architecture, etc. Good for Alta to see. "Designing the Divide" is the name of the event.

- **PROJECT WEBSITE DISCUSSION – www.bikewalkmorgantown.com**
 - Phil's description of the website:
 - Draw people to the interactive input map and the survey
 - Give public access to download materials / meeting notes / presentations
 - Want to make website live soon (next week or two)
 - Interactive map: map of Morgantown area / aerial or map view
 - Bus routes
 - PRT
 - Existing trails
 - Public interaction (input) and gathering information
 - Cycling destinations
 - Frequent routes
 - Areas that could be improved
 - Walking/biking challenges
 - Public can provide comments and respond to other comments (i.e., an ever-growing interactive site)
 - Phil: few hundred to possible thousands of comments from similar websites done in the past
 - Website will reach more of the public. Can only reach so many at public meetings.
 - Phil description of survey to the committee:
 - Emily: paper copies acceptable? Possibly have hard copies of the survey at public location (City Manager's office). Another avenue for the survey would be beneficial.
 - Bill: Libraries have been used in the past by the MPO for similar surveys. Hard copies of the survey can also be available at the MPO office.
 - Marc: City of Westover office will house copies of the survey as well.
 - Phil: we will update the website to state hard copies of the survey will be available at the MPO office, Morgantown city manager's office and city of Westover's office.
 - Phil will send PDF copies to SC members so hard copies can be made and located accordingly (*PDF was sent to SC for printing and distribution on Feb 6*)
 - Heather: Beta version – when can website link be shared to people via social media etc?
 - Bill: Fine with making it live today if ok with steering committee.
 - Drew: How was survey developed? Origin of the survey instrument? Data analysis?

- Phil: Base survey taken from other surveys done in other cities and tailored towards Morgantown.
 - Updates to the survey – delay the public launch of the website.
- Matt Cross: Student government meetings – will website, survey, etc. be available for these meetings?
 - Phil: hard copies will be available for these meetings.
- Drew: building a model as a result of the survey? Survey analysis being done?
 - Phil: summarizing the responses / gauging the community / comfortable with walking/biking and improvements. We are only getting a cross section of population demographically...hard to reach full diverse group
 - Bill: Hard to do statistical analysis since this is not a purely random sub-set of the community. Some self-selection is inevitable, as most responses will come from population that has interest in ped. and biking transportation.
- Website comments:
 - Drew: fate of the website upon completion of the project?
 - Phil: option to keep it live
 - Bill: MPO considering taking it over upon completion of study

Summary of Public Open House Display Boards

- Phil description of Open House schedule/itinerary at the Metropolitan theater (2/05/19)
 - Demographic Analysis Board
 - Population Growth
 - Changes from 2009 – 2017
 - Decline of ages 18-24 population
 - Racial Demographics
 - Mode splits
 - Jenny: Less than 10 min commute – road improvements (widening) may cause people to drive rather than walk (vehicle acts as armor)
 - Walking goes down possibly due to road widening (unsafe to walk across 4 lane road)
 - Marc: Threshold where its not quicker to drive (30-40 minutes)
 - Brian Carr: Consider parking in the community. Extra cost and time to park.
 - Damian: Driver vs. Walker times and distances disparity – Walkers use miles / drivers mostly use time (minutes)
 - Drew: Stated time of commute is perception. When stressed, travelers (driver and ped.) typically over-report amount of time.
 - Mark Cross: Currently building parking structures at Ruby Hospital - Good connective walkways at health science center/ruby hospital. Apart of combined mode use to get to work.
 - Bill: Relate national statistics to Morgantown – Morgantown/Mon County has 4X more walking commuters than national average.
 - Equity / Demand Analysis Boards

- These factors will be used in our prioritization methodology
 - Phil: Safety hotspots / crash clusters within ¼ mi.
 - Emily: What are the grey Areas?
 - Phil: Grey areas are where demand/equity factors are close to zero.
 - Matt Cross: Focus on equity in conference in late March (Community in Need).
 - Crashes Board
 - Fatality Crash's and dates. Crash locations will be Important for prioritization methodology, as well
 - Existing Bike / Pedestrian Facilities map Boards
 - Emily: Are the features on this board available on the website interactive map? Important to see on map (existing trails)
 - Phil: Some is on interactive map. Primary missing element is sidewalks.
 - Emily: Toggle on and off various features would be helpful (street names, ped. facilities, etc.)
 - Drew: Existing map-based products (Bike Board map). Could we include link to other Morgantown based map products?
 - Emily: Access points to existing infrastructure and trail beginning and end points could help travelers plan routes better.
 - Mark Cross: Possibly add link to the previous Morgantown Pedestrian safety plan.
 - Bill: Previous plans show proposed facilities. Could cause confusion. Existing facilities (such as sidewalks) could be put on the map and have people comment on condition, improvements, etc. Let's not show the board that displays the proposed network from the Bike Board/Bike Morgantown
 - Phil: It makes sense to add sidewalks, trail start, end and access points to the interactive map. That will be done for the website launch.
 - Brian Carr: Anything on the map that designates ownership of the travel way (WVDOH, State, City, private, etc.)
 - Damian: online map available that designates ownership of roads (extents of map-only within city limits)
 - Phil: future maps will indicate whether road/right-of-way is city/state
 - Matt Skiles: Proposed facilities on previous plans could cause confusion to the public. Need to distinguish between "previous proposed facilities." Needs to be clear these are not apart of the current study.
 - Phil: Will edit and add language to distinguish and make clear on website.
 - Ped. / Bicycle Facility Toolkit Boards
 - Photographic Examples of facilities (sidewalks, crosswalks, trails, etc.)
 - Pedestrian & Bicycle Benefits Board
 - Statistics on the benefits of ped. & bike facility
 - Brian Carr: ADA accessibility? Is this accounted for in the study, survey, website, proposed improvements/facilities?
 - Phil: Good comment. Needs to be incorporated into the survey, website, etc. Can get data on ramps, sidewalks, etc. that may not be ADA compliant.

- Ron: Morgantown has done retrofit projects on existing sidewalks to gain ADA compliance.
- Jenny: ADA issues are brought up regularly by the public. Should we form/find a group to focus on specific ADA issues? Evaluation of current condition to make recommendations on compliance.
 - Damian/Emily/Drew: suggested improvements / final plan recommendations will be required to be ADA compliant.
 - Brian/Matt Skiles: Paving projects / road improvements – curb cuts/other accessible facilities need to comply in order to receive federal funding to do paving/road improvements. Sometimes not feasible to construct accessible facility due to R/W issues, utility issues, storm inlets.
- Matt Cross: ADA accessibility issue on Rt. 705 by North Elementary. Ramp and sidewalk at crossing are not compliant (no curb cut). 705 about to be repaved wanted to make DOH aware.
- Christian: Consider calling out lighting (pedestrian scale lighting) as an improvement option. Provides some safety for walkers/bikers.
 - Emily: Keep in mind the O&M of facilities. Cost responsibility of these type of facilities.

Discussion of Technical Memorandum #1A, Draft Vision, Goals and Objectives

- Phil: Primary element of Tech. Memo #1A is Vision Goals and objectives
 - Intro includes a lot of same benefits/data on the benefits board in the introduction
- Section 1.2 Discussion
 - Matt Cross:
 - Need to start giving some attention to the so-called idea of pedestrians being subordinate to vehicular traffic
 - Multiple requests from public to provide safer street crossings.
 - Provided multiple examples of unsafe street crossings, such as Suncrest Elementary School
 - Drew: We've heard that a facility can possibly provide a false sense of security (i.e. putting a crosswalk at an intersection). Should we consider that a crosswalk is a good solution at a problem area?
 - Matt Skiles: DOH tasked with balancing the various modes of transportation traffic (vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian). DOH also tasked with making sure road improvements don't significantly impact traffic flow/safety for other modes of transportation. Any pedestrian improvements need to adhere to standards and safety recommendations. Various factors: costs and effects of modes of transportation.
 - Matt Cross & Matt Skiles: Agree that driver education/behavior is an important point.
 - Phil: critical intersections and crash sites are important and will be taken into account.
- Section 1.2.2 Vision Discussion (Option 1 & Option 2)
 - The consensus of the committee agrees that Option 1 is a better vision statement.
 - Jenny: Need to emphasize and incorporate the good points and mission statement (tag line) of Option 2 into the revised vision statement.

- Emily: Option 2 is a little more convoluted. Option 1 is more vision oriented and simplified.
 - Phil: we will create a hybrid of option 1 and 2 - mix and match the two options (bring a revised “tag line” into option 1 and reword slightly with creative ways to make improvements).
- Section 1.2.3 Project Goals Discussion
 - Phil: Goals were developed using conversation and discussion from the kick-off meeting
 - Drew: Definition of safety? How to measure safety success?
 - Brian: Statewide goal of zero pedestrian fatalities. Strive to make improvements to get as close to that goal.
 - Matt Cross: Safety is perception – do you feel safe crossing the road?
 - Matt Skiles: Safety must be the #1 goal. Top priority.
 - Emily: Objective #7 – Maintenance issues down the road. Especially on larger/constructed facilities.
 - Phil: Minimizing (instead of avoiding) Engineering/Funding Challenges. Need to add maintenance to this objective as well.
 - Matt Cross: Objectives for Goal 7
 - Low cost designs for sidewalks – sidewalks are very expensive
 - 7.1 – construction costs typically very expensive
 - Matt Cross: Objective 1.4
 - Can we mention something about the need to coordinate with the insurance companies to use points/money off premiums for driver education campaigns and/or to pay for improvements?
 - Brian: Most likely something that can only be obtained on a policy level. Beyond the scope of this project.
 - Phil: Any comments on Goal 6-Economy?
 - Matt Cross: new residents are disappointed in the lack of pedestrian/ bicycle facilities.
 - Jenny: newcomers come and are saddened and end up leaving. Could have been great asset to our city.
 - Brian: Policy level (for example areas west of I-79). Policies need to be in place for that area to be developed properly to be a nice community.
 - Rich Wood: That would require a County level land-use planning which is currently not in place.
 - Emily: Need to identify goals/objectives that overlap.
 - No guiding principles related to design in some areas for new construction
 - Phil: we will embellish objective 6.2
 - Marc Glass: objective 6.3 – recommend incentive structures for voluntary participation
 - Emily: a lot of crosswalks that are in poor locations. Not good placements (cluttered, don’t line up with ramps, etc.)
 - Possibly relocating existing crosswalks as a part of the proposed recommendations.

- Drew: recommends a different “numbering” system to give a sense of priority for goals
- Phil: Should goals be equally weighted during evaluation, or weighted differently? We will discuss at the next meeting.
- Christian: Can “encourage trail-oriented design” be added to Goal 6 – Economy?
 - Phil: Yes.

Next Steps

- Matt Cross: Encourages everyone to walk more (i.e. to get groceries, etc.)
- Phil: Updates need to be made to the interactive input map, survey and website which will delay the site launch a few days. We will also continue the analysis work. And revisions and more discussions on Vision, Goals and Objectives.
- Technical Memorandum #1 that summarized analysis and summary of plans, policies and studies will be delivered over the next month or so.
- Next steering committee meeting to take place in mid-late March.
- Emily: recommends sending out via email some of the updates to the various documents (tech. memo, V/G/O, etc.) before the next meeting (giving a deadline to receive comments from the committee would be helpful).