

Bicycle Advisory Committee and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

BAC-PAC Joint Meeting, held virtually using Microsoft TEAMS, Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Minutes, revision unanimously approved by PAC members present, November 8, 2023

[Meeting Recording:](#)

Attendees:

PAC Members/Staff: Eric Goodman, Vice Chair (Acting Chair for this meeting); Pamela Van Hine, Recording Secretary; Jim Feaster; Patrick Kenney; Tom Korn; Eric Malpeli; Andrea Walker; David Patton, Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner; Mary Dallao, Program Director for Active Transportation/Acting WalkArlington/Bike Arlington Program Manager

BAC Members/Staff: Cynthia Palmer, Chair; Dana Bres; Gillian Burgess; Eric Goodman; Noreen Hannigan; Elwyn Gonzales, Transportation Planner. Other BAC-attendees: David Ansell, Collier Cook, Randy Swart, Leslie Tierstein.

Invited Speakers: Dana Bres, BAC; Joshua Nicholas, Traffic Engineering Manager, TE&O; Ilana Creinin, Legislative Liaison, County Manager's Office; Other staff: Sandra Bullock, Brian Shelton; Organizational representatives: Matt Jones, National Landing BID; Kevin O'Brien, WABA; Members of the Public: Bryan De Jesus Lorenzo, Laura Castro, Anita Wallgren, Natasha Pinol

The BAC Chair called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM and welcomed BAC and PAC members, staff, speakers, and guests. She announced that Elizabeth Gallagher, the PAC Chair, could not attend, and that Eric Goodman, the PAC Vice Chair, would serve as Co-Chair for this meeting. Because of the tight meeting schedule, we delayed public comments until the end of the meeting. The Co-Chairs had no formal reports.

Dana Bres, Bicycle Advisory Committee: Planning for the Future of the Maintenance of Transportation (MOT) Panel

The speaker briefly talked about the role of the MOT, which should ensure that travelers using any mode of transportation can travel around construction sites safely, but instead, MOTs often seem to prioritize driver convenience over bicyclist-pedestrian-transit rider safety. He noted that the County's Report a Problem now has a feature for reporting construction issues, but feedback is lacking. He has drafted a MOT document that he asks the BAC-PAC members to review and suggest edits by September 30. He will compile the edits and redistribute and the BAC-PAC can decide what to do with the document. His hope is that it is approved by the BAC-PAC (with edits), is sent to the County Manager, and is used by County staff to improve their MOTs. E. Goodman raised a few concerns, but they are addressed in the draft document.

Joshua Nicholas, Traffic Engineering Manager, TE&O: Signals Policy and Operations as They Affect People Cycling and Walking (see Slide Deck)

The speaker reviewed general data on the more than 300 signals in Arlington County and how the signals and automation staff are closely integrated with Vision Zero staff within the TE&O division of transportation. Signal technology is changing rapidly; some of the intersections have not been updated in 60 years. The County is testing newer technology and gradually upgrading signals at intersections. Newer technology will detect both cyclists and pedestrians automatically. The speaker covered many signals topics, including:

- How signals are proposed and funded: Occasionally through outside agencies, such as VDOT (hot lanes, defense access); often through site plans; sometimes through specific TE&O signals projects which are usually updates to existing signals, but primarily through the CIP. Each signal replacement costs \$500,000 to 800,000.
- Talked about actuation and how "passive actuation" relies on cameras and loops. With passive actuation, the signal "knows" you are there, whereas "active actuation" requires pushing a button to bring up the walk phase. He described how the newer technology (cameras) may have higher up-front costs but ends up being cheaper because it doesn't have to be replaced each time the road gets repaved!
- How do MUTCD (CHAPTER 4E PEDESTRIAN CONTROL FEATURES) and PROWAG guidelines compare for accessible pedestrian crosswalk facilities? He also noted that County signals no longer announce the street names because that is now against guidelines, but that newer technologies, such as a vibrotactile button and a mobile app can provide the information needed by vision-impaired pedestrians to cross safely. Even waving can be detected by some newer hands-free systems!
- Displayed and explained a County map that showed locations for the 301 signals and CCTV cameras and one that showed locations for 79 RFBs and other traffic control features. He promised to update a map that showed which signals are set for automatic recall and which require active recall ("beg" button). When asked why so many Covid-time automatic recall buttons were reset to active recall, he suggested using the map to report ones that need to be on automatic recall.

- He will distribute the current map to the BAC-PAC and encourage feedback on its accuracy and recommendations for changing the settings.
- Working with Vision Zero team and tools: The Vision Zero toolbox provides many additional tools to help keep bicyclists and pedestrians safe while crossing, such as NTOR signage, protected intersections, signal phasing, and LPIs. However, he also noted that LPI timing needs to be relatively short to keep all traffic moving smoothly. LPIs are designed to get the pedestrian far enough out in the crosswalk so that turning drivers can see them. An audible push button is preferred with LPIs so that vision-impaired people will know when to start crossing. See more in the Toolbox.
- Said that there are 80 intersections with Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) in the County. Arlington generally limits the LPI time to 3 to 5 seconds because a longer LPI time “can lead to violations.”
- Gave a brief review of the timing for a Barnes dance signalized intersection, and stated that VDOT, not the County, would design the intersection and signals for the proposed Route 1 plans. He conjectured that cycle lengths could be as long as 145 seconds depending on the plan.
- Addressed specific questions: Columbia Pike & 4 Mile Run Drive – should be automatic recall (every signal on Columbia Pike should be set for automatic recall); NTOR LED at Lynn and Route 29 WB – cannot turn sign on earlier because of clearance timing; Shirlington Road & 4 Mile Run Drive: Speaker explained current improvements, then BAC-PAC asked about Shirlington and the 4 Mile Run TRAIL and noted the dangerous risk when walking-biking on the east side sidewalk when drivers come out of the driveway with their green light and cross the sidewalk. He will followup on both issues.

Other questions raised during the meeting: BAC-PAC members asked about a couple specific intersections, and he responded that one would be fixed (Shirlington Rd gas station entry) and the other might not (Gillian’s safety issue at Williamsburg and Harrison, a marked bike route where there is no safe way for bicycle riders to access the push button. The County keeps the signals on active-actuation, prioritizing motor vehicles). Also he said he thinks Fairfax/Wakefield northbound should be on auto-recall (that’s where the push button is 15 feet down the sidewalk from the intersection), as should Columbia Pike and S. Jefferson.

The speaker invited the BAC-PAC to study the maps he will provide us and to prepare a comprehensive list of problematic intersection signals that do not appear in sync with what’s on the maps.

Ilana Creinin, Legislative Liaison, County Manager’s Office: Arlington County’s Legislative Priorities: Presentation and Discussion

The speaker reviewed the time schedule for developing the 2024 County legislative priority list. Working backwards, the new legislative session runs for 8 weeks beginning in January; the final County package is therefore approved and distributed in December, 2023; and any BAC-PAC recommendations need to be sent to Ilana by September 29. [This deadline has since been extended to October 13.] If the BAC-PAC submits a combined list, we can have up to 6 items. She notes that the final County package may depend upon who wins in November and the balance of power. She encourages us to consider how and what to propose, given that the balance of power might change. Note that the 2023 package has no specific BAC-PAC recommendations included, although Vision Zero and Metro funding are supported. Continuing support for Vision Zero was also stressed.

BAC-PAC discussion:

- G. Burgess reviewed several items that she is working on with VDOT: cyclists' right to cross with LPIs, cyclists riding side by side, improving MOTs (Arlington says it lacks the authorities to enforce), and Safety Stops (rolling stops for cyclists). In the course of BAC-PAC discussion, supporting rolling stops was rejected because it’s too controversial. D. Bres suggested adding red light cameras, but clarified that the County needs to implement those already approved. Supporting specific rebates for e-bikes, as Alexandria has proposed, was also suggested. Increasing car registration fees for larger, heavier vehicles, as the District has done, was also considered. An alternative to state legislation may be using the “Decal fee.”
- The BAC Chair listed the 5 items proposed during the BAC-PAC meeting on September 14, 2022:
 1) Remove contributory negligence law. In Virginia, Alabama, NC and MD, a bicycle rider or pedestrian who is hit by a motor vehicle is barred from any recovery if s/he contributed to the crash *in any way*); 2) Include bikes in legislation for Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) so that bicyclists can use these traffic signals legally as Leading Pedestrian-and-Bicyclist Intervals. This would significantly increase cyclist safety, be in compliance with DC law, and mitigate a potential contributory negligence issue; 3) Expand current law to allow local control for implementation of automated traffic enforcement - whenever and wherever it's needed – for speed enforcement, red light running, parking violations, wrong way driving, stop sign violations, and other traffic issues; 4) Create transportation safety fund for bike-ped safety, safe routes to school, trails, and related safety initiatives. Delegate

Danica Roem proposed this for 2022, but it did not pass; and 5) Require side underrun guards on trucks. These side rails between the axles on large trucks prevent pedestrians, bicycle riders, and motor vehicles from being swept under the truck. [During our BAC-PAC meeting, the Washington Post published this article: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/09/13/underride-remembrance-demand-action/>]

The speaker suggested that the BAC-PAC submit two lists of priorities: Those that have a reasonable chance of actually passing, and those which will depend on how the political winds are blowing. We can call these “Other priorities should circumstances allow.” A third category might be, No chance right now, but save for later, AKA the “Somewhere over the rainbow category.”

Reasonable chance of passing:

Let bicyclists cross on the LPIs.

Vision zero/ transportation safety funding?

Allowing local control for automated traffic enforcement?

Enable municipalities to require side underride guards on trucks?

Are any of these realistic? What else?

Other priorities should circumstances allow:

Removing contributory negligence law in Virginia.

Requiring side underride guards on trucks, state-wide.

Enable municipalities to have e-bike rebate programs. OR introduce e-bike rebate state-wide program.

Letting bicyclists ride side-by-side??

Somewhere over the rainbow category:

Car registration by vehicle weight (could we do this with a decal fee?)

Idaho stop

- Followup – share these proposals with all BAC-PAC members, reach a consensus on proposals, and submit.

BAC-PAC Business:

- *Mary Dallao, Acting WalkArlingtoBike Arlington Program Manager :*
 - We hosted the Electric Ride Experience at the Arlington County Fair this year, giving e-bike test rides and sharing our maps and giveaways with fair-goers. We engaged with over 1,100 people thanks to the support of our PAL volunteers and local bike shops Conte’s and Pedego.
 - We are partnering with APS to promote Walk & Roll to School Day on Oct. 4. We will be refreshing (painting, replacing a broken knob) our Safe Routes to School Little Free Library, which we created with an SRTS Mini-grant in 2021, and offering it as an incentive for the school that has the highest level of participation in Walk & Roll to School Day.
 - We will be hosting another PAL Volunteer Interest Meeting on Tuesday, October 24, at Shirlington Library from 6-7 p.m. All are welcome to learn about volunteer opportunities with Bike and WalkArlington.
 - Our next community outreach event will be Lighten Up Arlington Nov. 1-3. We will hand out lights and reflective gear for cyclists and walkers. We are reprinting and updating the Arlington Loop trailside maps (there are four: two on the W&OD and two on the Custis). We will soon begin work on *updating the Bicycle Comfort Level Map and would appreciate any suggestions from the BAC.*
 - D. Patton noted that Swanson Middle School has received additional, much needed, bike racks, courtesy of H. Dunbar.
 - It’s time for Arlington to resubmit for Bike Friendly Community. Arlington is currently at the Silver level. The current application is now 98 pages, and the League is now requesting feedback from the community as well. The goalposts keep changing. This year, for example, the County will be rated on equity instead of enforcement. Please consider completing the [League of American Bicyclists survey](#).
- *Approval of [May 10, 2023](#) PAC meeting minutes and [June 5, 2023](#) Joint BAC-PAC meeting minutes:*
 - Action: Both sets of minutes were moved, seconded, and unanimously approved by PAC members present.

Public Comments: Unfortunately members of the public left before they had a chance to speak!

The BAC-PAC Chairs adjourned the joint meeting at 9:18 PM. The next BAC meeting will take place at 7 pm on Monday October 2. Details to be posted [here](#). The next PAC meeting will be on Wednesday, October 11. Watch the [PAC page](#) for details on the draft agenda and logon information.