Meeting of the School Transportation Working Group

Wednesday, March 28, 2017, 1:30 PM
SPECIAL EVENT LOCATION 26th Floor, Conference Rooms A and B

I. Call to Order & Introductions

II. Public Comment - 3 minutes per speaker, please

III. Approval of STWG February 28, 2018 Meeting Summary

IV. Agenda Items

A. State Safe Routes to Schools (Sarita Taylor, FDOT Central Office)
B. State Crossing Guard Coordinator (Dana Crosby, FDOT Central Office)

V. Share Success Stories, Updates and Results (Cindy Stuart, Chair)

A. Jurisdiction Updates
B. School District Updates: Legislative issues
C. Health Partner Updates

VI. Old Business & New Business

A. STWG Next Meeting: April 25, 2018, 1:30 p.m., 18th Floor
B. Upcoming Potential Topics

1. On site School Circulation Issues- Chris Farkas, Lorraine Duffy Suarez or Amber Dickerson HCSD)
2. MPO School Safety Methodology Report and Top Ten Field Review Results-April (Matt Weaver, Element Eng.)
3. Follow up on Crossing Guards Program Studies
4. Hunter Green Circulation Plan (Chris Farkas, SDHC or rep.)
5. School Transportation 2017 Pilot Project Results (Jim Beekman of rep, SDHC)-April
6. W. Busch Blvd. Corridor Study (Brian Shroyer, FDOT representative)
7. Painted Intersection at Cleveland School (Amber Dickerson, HCPS Staff, Vision Zero Intern support, William Porth, COT Staff))
8. Citrus Park Drive Extension (Jim Hudock, HC Public Works staff)-April
9. Transit Projects
10. High School Traffic Box Art Contest Project with Safety Messages (Alex henry, FDOT)
11. CTST Involvement (William Porth, CTST Chair and City of Tampa Staff)
12. Plans Institutionalize STWG into School District Committee, revisit Pinellas STEPS, (Chris Farkas, SDHC Staff)

13. Charter Schools (Jenna Hodges and/or non-School District Rep.)

VII. Adjournment

VIII. Addendum

A. MPO Meeting Summary & Committee Report
B. Summary of 2018 Legislative Issues
C. How Washington DC Built a Bike Boom

The full agenda packet is available on the MPO’s website, www.planhillsborough.org, or by calling (813) 272-5940.

The MPO does not discriminate in any of its programs or services. Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Learn more about our commitment to non-discrimination.

Persons needing interpreter services or accommodations for a disability in order to participate in this meeting, free of charge, are encouraged to contact Johnny Wong, 813-273-3774 x370 or wongj@plancom.org, three business days in advance of the meeting. Also, if you are only able to speak Spanish, please call the Spanish help line at (813) 273-3774, ext. 211.

Si necesita servicios de traducción, el MPO ofrece por gratis. Para registrarse por estos servicios, por favor llame a Johnny Wong directamente al (813) 273-3774, ext. 370 con tres días antes, o wongj@plancom.org de cerro electronico. También, si sólo se puede hablar en español, por favor llame a la línea de ayuda en español al (813) 273-3774, ext. 211.

In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, materials attached are for research and educational purposes, and are distributed without profit to MPO Board members, MPO staff, or related committees or subcommittees the MPO supports. The MPO has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of attached articles nor is the MPO endorsed or sponsored by the originator. Persons wishing to use copyrighted material for purposes of their own that go beyond ‘fair use’ must first obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.
CALL TO ORDER
The meeting of the School Transportation Working Group (STWG) was held in the Plan Hillsborough Room, on the 18th Floor of the County Center. Ms. Cindy Stuart called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

Ms. Stuart reminded those present of the purpose for the Working Group and stated everything the Group does (agendas, meeting summaries, presentations, etc.) are on the School Transportation Working Group page of the Plan Hillsborough website, under “Be Involved”, Boards and Committees, School Transportation Working Group.

Introductions were made.

PUBLIC COMMENT
There are no public comments.

STWG #20 JANUARY 24, 2018 MEETING SUMMARY
The STWG does not vote on or approve meeting summaries; however, if there are any corrections or additions, please inform Lisa Silva or Sharon Snyder. A Chair’s report will be forwarded to the full MPO Board for review and will be part of the MPO’s agendas.

ACTION ITEMS
A. Future Leaders in Planning (FLiP) (Lynn Merenda, Planning Commission Staff)
Ms. Merenda presented Future Leaders in Planning (FLiP), a student leadership development program which introduces future leaders in planning to the planning profession while in high school. It is for high school students in good standing in grades 9, 10, and 11 (12, if space is available). Students embark on tours on foot, bus, streetcar, and boat to experience a variety of speakers, presentations, and activities to gain a broad exposure to planning. This year, the program is being expanded to four days (May 29 – June 1) and 21 students. Applications are due by April 18th and must have a recommendation from a teacher or community leader.

Ms. Merenda will forward the information to the school district for distribution. Ms. Amato requested the flyer be translated in Spanish prior to converting to a pdf for distribution. The group would like to see more women and participants from Communities of Concern in planning. Parents and students have been polled asking what time of year to hold the program, and they feel the end of May is the best. There is also a 45-minute video on the APA Florida website, created by Planning Commission staff Tony LaColla, which provides a brief introduction to students about planning. ULI is interested in sponsoring a permanent course for the school system.

B. Painted Intersections (Amber Dickerson, Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS))
Ms. Dickerson explained how Vision Zero and STWG are teaming up to implement a Paint the Intersection project in front of Cleveland Elementary School in Tampa. She discussed the City of Tampa’s policy and the schedule for implementation at the school. A Plan Hillsborough intern has
offered to help with community outreach. This project is part of the *Paint Saves Lives* process of the Vision Zero Action Plan.

C. **School Interlocal Agreement (Amber Dickerson, HCPS, and Brandon Henry, Planning Commission Staff)**

Ms. Dickerson presented the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) for School Facilities Planning, Siting and Concurrency between the City of Tampa, the City of Temple Terrace, the City of Plant City, unincorporated Hillsborough County, the Planning Commission, and the School Board of Hillsborough County. The ILA components include the coordination and sharing of information, planning process, school siting, and school concurrency. Ms. Dickerson explained how she and Ms. Duffy-Suarez-Suarez review all residential comprehensive plan amendments, rezonings and preliminary plats to track projected students in the County to ensure capacity. They also conduct an educational plant survey and maintain a five-year district educational facilities plan. They provide input into the Comprehensive Plan Updates as well as general data sharing on population projections and development pace and occupancy.

Ms. Dickerson explained considerations given for school siting within the Urban Service Area (USA), including student population, parking and circulation of vehicles, transportation facilities, location in the residential neighborhoods, access to major roads, and co-locating parks, libraries, community centers and public safety facilities. She described how the considerations are more stringent for schools within the rural service area. The rezoning process requirements include a pre-submittal meeting, a neighborhood meeting and school facilities location review procedure. School concurrency outlines the level of service (LOS), school concurrency service areas (boundaries), applicability and capacity determination, mitigation alternatives, and amendments to concurrency components.

Mr. Henry stated the Planning Commission’s (PC) role in siting of new schools. The PC works with Development Services, Conservation and Environmental Lands Management, Water/Waste Water, Environmental Protection Commission and Transportation to review the proposed school site for consistency with Section 3.1.2 of the ILA. Section 3.1.2 states certain items will be considered in evaluating the location of new school facilities, including compatibility with the surrounding area, adequate public facilities, environmental constraints, archaeological or historic sites, flood zones, nearby airports, nearby treatment plants, adequate site size to accommodate parking and circulation, and if the location is convenient for walking to elementary schools or to the residential community with access to major roads for high schools. The PC reviews for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, the guiding document for the community to achieve its shared vision for the future, either through the review process as outlined in the ILA or through the rezoning process.

Ms. Silva asked the Group to review the list of items reviewed when considering school sitings and make suggestions for additions to the list. Ms. Amato asked if the agreement and transportation studies are available to download? Ms. Dickerson stated the agreement is, but the transportation studies aren’t. Ms. Amato asked if the traffic studies are district or County studies? They are provided from the Consultant and are part of the zoning case. Ms. Amato asked how involved in the design the school board is and does the school board approve the final plan? She feels the roundabouts in front of Dawson Elementary School are a safety issue, as are the sidewalks. At the MPO Board meeting, she asked Commissioner Kemp if there can be a law put in place that the sidewalks around a school must be a wider width than normal, to allow the students to walk safely. Ms. Dickerson stated the developers normally present a conceptual plan to the school board. Ms.
Amato asked if the school board can refuse to sign off on a school site because the developer didn’t provide the appropriate engineering? Ms. Duffy-Suarez explained the ILA is with the local government, not the developer.

Due to time constraints, Ms. Stuart asked Ms. Silva to set up a separate meeting with Ms. Amato and Ms. Dickerson.

Mr. Tait asked if the Sheriff’s office has the opportunity to comment on the school plan. Mr. Henry stated the Sheriff’s office is included on Plan Amendments, but they only responded when there are issues. Otherwise, they reply “no comment.”

Ms. Fernandez feels there needs to be a change with the process to make school sites better. She suggested an architect model be built to better show any possible issues. Ms. Dickerson stated timing and changes to the neighborhood are challenging factors. Ms. Fernandez suggested there be better coordination during the design process. Ms. Silva stated there is a bi-monthly coordination meeting between the School Board and several departments at which they discuss the design of new school sites.

Ms. Stuart asked if there is a mid-point check with the developer and the actual approved site plan. Ms. Dickerson stated there isn’t, but changes go through the same process as the initial approval.

Ms. Amato asked if a road’s rating affects the development of a subdivision. Ms. Dickerson stated that is a County decision, not the School Board’s. Ms. Silva stated the County can’t turn down a development based on the LOS of a road.

Ms. Silva will include re-zoning staff in the meeting with Ms. Amato.

Ms. Dickerson stated the ILA is updated only when there is a need for a change.

D. MPO School Safety Top Ten Field Review Results (Matt Weaver, Element Engineering)

Mr. Weaver stated the purpose of the Hillsborough MPO School Safety Study is to improve safety for students in Hillsborough County. The task was to prioritize school areas for multimodal safety and access reviews aimed at identifying opportunities to enhance the safety and comfort of getting to and from school and to complete field reviews at 10 school areas. The result was to develop stakeholder action plans. The process has been data-driven. The schools have been prioritized, and they are now conducting field reviews of the highest priority schools to identify enhancements needed.

Outreach to the schools began with a letter from Cindy Stuart to the school administrators. Element Engineering has followed up with phone calls, emails, and on-site discussions. School reviews have been completed at Coleman Middle, Ferrell Middle Magnet and Middleton High, Leto, Plant, and Sulphur Springs K-8 Community School. Meetings and field results have shown passionate people at the schools, primarily consistent topics with occasional unique requests, challenges related to on-site circulation, substantial improvements using existing tools and projects, and that everyone wants to help.

Positive outcomes include interested administration and parent organizations, ongoing and upcoming safe routes to school projects and educational programs. Mr. Weaver showed examples
of crash trends. Element Engineering staff observed security and access points, on-site walking routes and the connectivity on school properties, on-site walkability, bad driver behavior, maintenance opportunities, engineering opportunities, community outreach and community engagement. They also discovered unexpected stakeholders, such as CSX, when they discovered students are walking along railroad tracks on their way to and from school.

The next steps are to visit Chamberlain High, Young Middle Magnet, King, Muller, Pierce and Van Buren Middle School (which is being combined in the fall with Cahoon Elementary to form Dr. Carter G. Woodson K-8 School). They will complete the meetings and field reviews, coordinate with stakeholders, finalize the draft report, seek feedback and verify implementation plan for recommendations, finalize the report and present the findings to the School Board. Mr. Weaver is planning to provide the findings update in April.

Ms. Amato asked if Mr. Weaver can assist with making it a priority to adjust the green light timing near East Bay High School. She also stated not all crashes are reported by the Sheriff’s Office if the injuries weren’t severe.

SHARE SUCCESS STORIES, UPDATES AND RESULTS

A. Jurisdiction Updates – no updates

B. School District Updates:
Ms. Stuart stated she is trying to put together a meeting with the Sheriff’s Office to discuss the crossing guard program and guard placement. Crossing guards currently are placed based on parent’s requests, not incidents.

Public Comment at the February MPO Board meeting brought up hazardous walking conditions at Big Bend Road. Ms. Silva is requesting a presentation on hazardous walking conditions by the School Board Transportation Department at the April MPO Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Beerman provided an update on SB 188 and HB 1299, which have been presented to the Legislators. These bills make some changes to the Hazardous Walking Conditions. One change is the criteria in the past only applied to Kindergarten through 6th graders. The proposal for both bills applies the Hazardous Walking criteria through 12th grade. The other provision reduced the walking distance from 2 to 1 ½ miles. These changes would require an additional 1,700 school buses statewide (based on 28 of 67 districts that responded). Implementation would be challenging.

A state committee is being formed, which will include Transportation and Finance Directors, to develop some changes in the Hazardous Walking Condition policy. This committee will work with the Legislators to develop ideas and a long-term implementation plan.

Mr. Beerman also discussed the parent notification system, “Bus Bulletin”, being developed for updating parents on school transportation issues.

Ms. Stuart asked Mr. Warrington to provide an update from the All Hazards Recovery Plan Workshop being held on March 1st and 2nd, at a future meeting.
Ms. Stuart commended the School Resource Deputy at Rodger’s Middle School for being recognized as Resource Deputy of the Year. Rodgers PTSA also conducted a rally with parents and drivers, to remind them to slow down and look for children.

C. Legislative Issues – no other updates

D. Health Partner Updates – no updates

E. I Brake for “Mascots” Window Clings

Ms. Silva reminded the Group of the “I Brake for Mascots” window clings available. If anyone would like some, please let her or Gena Torres know.

Ms. Silva also has extra outreach materials to share if anyone would like to take some to share.

Mr. Simmons provided an update on the STEM Bridge Building competition that was held last week.

Ms. Stuart discussed upcoming presentations. Hunter Green has a new circulation plan. Ms. Silva asked Ms. Dickerson to let her know who will present and she’ll add to the June agenda. Ms. Stuart asked Mr. Alex Henry with FDOT to talk about the High School Traffic Box Art Contest at a future meeting. Ms. Silva stated the County will present on the Citrus Park Drive Extension Study soon.

Ms. Stuart asked Mr. Beerman to bring the I-pad pilot program presentation back to the April meeting.

OLD BUSINESS & NEW BUSINESS

A. STWG Next Meeting: The next meeting is March 28, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. on the 26th Floor.

Ms. Silva encouraged members of the Group to attend the special presentation from the Florida School Crossing Guard Training Program representative and the FDOT State Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.
CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & INVOCATION

Chairman Les Miller called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. He led the pledge of allegiance and invocation. The meeting was convened on the 26th floor of the County Center.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Maniscalco to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cohen and carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, ONLINE COMMENTS

Ms. Gena Torres, MPO staff, read the various MPO Committee reports. All of the MPO’s advisory committees supported the long range transportation amendment. She also shared email and Facebook comments received from the public.

Chairman Miller closed the regular meeting and opened the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING ON LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AMENDMENT FOR I-275 OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS AT HOWARD FRANKLAND BRIDGE

Mr. Rich Clarendon, MPO Assistant Executive Director, provided an overview of the proposed amendment to the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Public Comment was held.

Ms. Karen Michalski spoke in opposition of express lanes.

Ms. Josephine Amato expressed concerns about the state’s pedestrian death rates and recommended better designs for safer bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Commissioner Stacy White requested that Ms. Alden work with County staff to respond to Ms. Amato’s concerns about pedestrian safety.

Commissioner Sandra Murman requested that Ms. Amato contact her office to receive information on the location to send letters of support in Tallahassee.

The public hearing was closed for board discussion.

Commissioner Pat Kemp pointed out tolling situations that are taking place around the world.
Mr. Trent Green inquired about the width of the bicycle and pedestrian lane that was brought up by Ms. Amato. Mr. Bill Jones, Florida Department of Transportation representative, stated that it would be a 12-foot facility and it would have potential bulb outs at certain points along the bridge. In addition, he stated there would be concrete-separated from the travel lanes. Details are being worked out with Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties.

**A motion was made by Mr. Waggoner to approve amending the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan to include express lane ramps as recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Mayor Jurado and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.**

*Chairman Miller re-opened the regular meeting. Public comment was held on non-public hearing items.*

Ms. Taryn Sabia spoke regarding the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan. She would like to see the community’s vision met. She suggested that the goals that are reflected in the Imagine 2040 Plan be addressed.

Commissioner Kemp commented on Ms. Sabia’s suggestions and wanted her to provide the group additional remarks on economic development.

Chairman Miller reminded members the purpose of the public comment portion of the agenda.

Ms. Karen Michalski voiced concerns about hazardous walking conditions for children and pedestrians and the need for more school buses and sidewalks.

Ms. Josephine Amato addressed the board with concerns of the makeup of the School Transportation Working Group, which is headed by a School Board Member. She feels that the Chair is running a school district agenda and there should be more parents on the working group. She expressed concerns about the distribution of the school bus assets across the district and commented on safe routes to school.

Commissioner White stated that he wholeheartedly agrees with Ms. Amato and that he too has been very vocal that the elimination of courtesy bus service was a wrong decision. Regarding enhancing pedestrian and bicycle pathways in the FishHawk Community, that were mentioned earlier in the meeting, Commissioner White requested that MPO Staff have a discussion with County Staff about safety issues.

Commissioner Murman requested that Ms. Alden work with staff to have more parents added to the working group and stated that the Chair should be bipartisan. She also stated that Ms. Amato would be a great addition to the School Transportation Working Group.

Chairman Miller requested taking the issue of school hazardous walking conditions back to the Policy Committee for discussion.

Commissioner Kemp referenced the role of mobility fees.

Commissioner Miller reminded members if they have subjects they want to appear on the agenda for discussion to please let Ms. Alden know. He also stated that public comment is not a time for debate or discussion on an issue that a person brings up.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Committee Appointments  
B. MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee Interlocal Agreement Update  
C. General Planning Consultant Agreement Amendment.: Kittelson & Associates  
D. Letter Requested by Citizens Advisory Committee Thanking Katharine Eagan, former HART CEO
A motion was made by Commissioner Murman to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cohen and carried unanimously.

ROLL CALL VOTE: TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT FOR I-4 RESURFACING

There was no discussion on this item.

A motion was made by Councilman Maniscalco for approval of the TIP amendment to increase the funding to resurface I-4 from East of 50th Street to East of McIntosh Road. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Murman and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

ACTION ITEM

A. Transportation Improvement Program Amendment for Performance Measure Target-Setting: Safety

Mr. Johnny Wong, MPO Staff, provided information on the TIP amendment update that includes five safety performance measures required by FHWA.

Members expressed concerns about the five-year historical data/averages, the numbers being high in comparison with other regions, and making sure not to place an unfunded mandate on the local governments with respect to the target-setting process.

Ms. Alden stated that our number of crashes is increasing as population and traffic grows. In some cities, the rate of crashes is also increasing, faster than traffic growth, because of the rise in distracted driving. Our local governments and FDOT have worked together very hard to raise awareness of safety issues and have been able to hold the rate steady here in Hillsborough County.

Commissioner White urged Ms. Alden to work closely with County staff and assure that everyone understands what this could equate to operationally.

Ms. Alden stated that if a target of zero crashes for 2018 was adopted by the MPO that it would be an unfunded mandate.

Councilman Cohen stated that it is important in setting these types of goals to make it clear that we are not going to congratulate ourselves and pat ourselves on the back if only 177 people die next year instead of 184.

Commissioner Kemp reminded the group that Hillsborough County has, and has repeatedly had, the second most pedestrian crash deaths and bicycle deaths in the nation. She wanted to know if there would be a follow-up presentation on the information that was presented.

Mr. Wong stated that the information will be provided in the quarterly report on the Vision Zero Action Plan.

Commissioner Kemp stated that she would also like included in the information the road elements that are getting the dollars and what kinds of things are being done in different places.

Mr. Green expressed similar concerns as Councilman Cohen and Commissioner Kemp. He stated that he expressed concerns about the numbers at the Livable Roadways Committee meeting and the group has also requested information on how much is being allocated for safety. He would like to see a comparison of the metrics.
A motion was made by Commissioner Kemp for approval of the CY2018 Baseline Safety Performance Targets. The motion was seconded by Councilman Maniscalco and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

Chairman Miller reminded members to pay close attention to bills and their location in the legislative process.

**STATUS REPORTS**

**A. Tampa Bay Next Quarterly Update**

Secretary Gwynn provided an update on recent activities. There has been a lot of public engagement. A downtown/urban core community working group will take place late February/early March. In addition, the Heights Mobility Study Workshop will take place late March/early April.

Councilman Cohen said he was informed that the Streetcar Study is not considered a regional solution; but if it intersects with the proposed BRT at a shared station, wouldn’t that provide regional connectivity to Downtown Tampa? Secretary Gwynn stated that it would be part of a regional system, but all the transit in the region would ultimately become part of the regional system, and typical discussion of regional transit includes more than just within an area of a downtown.

Commissioner Kemp suggested Secretary Gwynn come back and present information on how funding from the State works in terms of transit.

Secretary Gwynn stated that they were meeting with staff following the meeting regarding transit funding.

**B. Regional Transit Feasibility Plan**

Scott Pringle, with Jacobs Engineering, provided an update on the vision for the region.

Commissioner White referenced a vote at the HART Board on the plan and inquired about stakeholder agencies conducting their own outreach.

Commissioner Kemp voiced concerns about non-endorsement and that the plan should not be moved forward. She distributed several documents in support of her opinion.

Chairman Miller stated that the MPO Board would not be taking any action on the Plan at the February meeting. He also stated that the vote at the HART Board was not an endorsement or non-endorsement of the plan and that staff will be on the sidelines as the outreach is carried forward to the community.

Mayor Lott stated that he hopes his comments do not appear negative, but until the County Commission finds the resolve to get behind a plan, which is a hard decision, the group will continue looking at pieces of paper with drawings on them and talking about numbers. He also stated that any way Plant City can support, they would love to have the conversation.

Mr. Lopano spoke on behalf of the airport and stated that something needs to be done fast.

Chairman Miller confirmed with Mr. Pringle that public comment will be incorporated into the plan by fall of 2018, and that he would be coming back to the MPO Board during that time. Mr. Pringle stated that he plans to be back several times.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Ms. Alden provided information on the PlanHillsborough Strategic Planning Retreat that is planned to focus attention on comprehensive and long range planning. The retreat will be held on Friday, March 23 from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. at the Stetson Law Center. A legislative update was included in the meeting packet addendum. The MPOAC met and discussed the recommendations of the Freight Committee of the MPOs of the state; that committee is going to make a recommendation in the spring to FDOT about significant freight projects, and we will participate and submit projects for consideration.

The Livable Roadways Committee made a motion about a bill for dockless bike sharing. The concern is restricting local governments’ ability to regulate the placement of facilities. This could be an issue with sidewalks complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act. There was an amendment to one of the two bills. The MPO Board agreed for Ms. Alden to have a conversation with the sponsors of the bill. The sponsors are Representative Toledo and Senator Young. Ms. Alden also informed the group of the upcoming Commuter Challenge that all board members are invited to participate in during the week of February 19th through the 23rd.

The Tampa Bay TMA Leadership Group added another meeting to their 2018 meeting schedule. The meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority’s administrative office, located at 3201 Scherer Drive in St. Petersburg.

The next MPO Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. on the 26th Floor of the County Center.

OLD BUSINESS & NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business conducted.

ADJOURNMENT

A quorum was maintained for the duration of the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.
Committee Reports

Meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) on February 14

The committee **approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:**
- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
- TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

They also heard reports from:
- Tampa Bay Next – a member asked how it would benefit South County;
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan – members inquired about how the recommended alternative compared to what was presented before; if any other metro area has implemented BRT as a starter project; the type of vehicles envisioned to be used; and a concern that shoulder lanes don’t function like a transit running in its own dedicated lane like the CSX corridor;
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Call for Projects – members suggested a number of safety and traffic calming planning studies for the next two years;
- Tampa Bay Partnership on the Regional Indicators Report.

Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on February 19

The committee **approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:**
- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
- TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

The TAC also received presentations on:
- Coast Bike Share
- Tampa Bay Next Quarterly Update
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan
- The Heights Mobility Plan
- UPWP Call for Projects for FY 2019-20

Meeting of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) on February 14

The committee **approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:**
- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
- TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

They also heard status reports on the:
- UPWP Call for Projects for FY 2019-20
- Tampa Bay Next update
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan
- Coast Bike Share
BPAC members expressed their support for bike share programs generally and for our area’s Coast Bikeshare in particular. With regard to bills under consideration in the legislature, members expressed that some of the dockless bikeshare proposals appear to have less accountability to local governments than do current models.

Meeting of the Livable Roadways Committee (LRC) on February 21

The committee approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:

✓ Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update

They moved to request the following UPWP studies in FY19-20:

- Given that FDOT’s new Complete Street Screening Tool uses adopted local government land use regulations to determine context for each roadway, analyze major roads countywide to determine if additional overlay districts or other land use regulations are needed, to support appropriate context classifications by FDOT;
- A study to determine impacts the proposed Rays Stadium will have on the existing streetcar;
- A study of limited-access highway on/off ramps for additional safety measures to reduce conflicts with non-vehicular traffic;
- A feasibility study for a trail overpass at Courtney Campbell Causeway and Rocky Point Drive.

They also heard status reports on the:
- Tampa Bay Next update
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan

Meeting of the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB), Feb. 23

The TDCB approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:

✓ Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
✓ TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

They also:

✓ Approved the annual evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator, and were pleased to see an increase in the reliability of the Sunshine Line’s fleet, resulting from the Board of County Commissioners’ investment in replacement buses.
✓ Moved to request the following UPWP studies in FY19-20: a study addressing the mobility of senior citizens.

Meeting of the School Transportation Working Group (STWG) on February 28

The working group heard presentations on:
- Future Leaders in Planning (FLiP)
- Painted Intersections
- School Interlocal Agreement
- MPO School Safety Top Ten Field Review Results

The group’s March 28 meeting will be a Special Meeting with State Coordinators for Safe Routes to School, Crossing Guard Program.
Meeting of the Tampa Bay TMA Leadership Group on February 9

The leadership group heard presentations on:

- Cost estimates for the top two projects recommended by the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan:
  - The I-275 rubber-tire project estimate of $455 million is for 11 vehicles, a BRT vehicle maintenance facility, and 15 stations and 6 intermodal centers with walk/bike and traffic signal access and parking;
  - The CSX urban rail project estimate of $621 million is for 4 vehicles, a rail vehicle maintenance facility, 6 stations and 2 intermodal centers with walk/bike access, and buying or leasing the track from CSX, refurbishing the track and adding modern train control.
- Potential processes for developing a funding strategy – including:
  - incremental investments over time, starting with express bus service as soon as possible;
  - regionwide prioritization for grants; and
  - asking local governments begin setting aside funds for transit in a future budget year;
- Potential roles and responsibilities of TBARTA in implementing the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan;
- Potential outreach by the TMA members, including potential points of group consensus, and potential partnership with the Suncoast League of Cities.

Meeting of the TBARTA MPO Directors on February 23

Informational updates were provided on:

- Tri-county long range transportation plan – development of growth scenarios, including land use, transportation, and performance measure outcomes, and timing of public outreach activities;
- Preparations for the first annual Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit;
- Regional tasks to be included in each MPO’s UPWP for FY 19-20;
- Board approvals for the CCC Interlocal Agreement update;
- Potential agenda items and speakers for the July 13 CCC Board meeting;
- Transportation Regional Incentive Program funding available, and scheduling of a staff meeting to update the regional project priority list.
UPDATE of 2018 Legislation (alphabetical order)

Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission and
Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization

March 26, 2018

Autonomous Vehicles—HB 353 (Reps. Fischer/Brodeur) and SB 712 (Senator Brandes) Although these bills are not identical, SB 712 would exempt an autonomous vehicle being operated in autonomous mode from a certain prohibition on the operation of a motor vehicle if the vehicle is actively displaying certain content that is visible from the driver’s seat while the vehicle is in motion; authorize a fully autonomous vehicle to operate in this state regardless of whether a licensed human operator is physically present in the vehicle; authorize the Secretary of Transportation to enroll the state in any federal pilot program or project for the collection and study of data for the review of automated driving systems. HB 353 Died in the House Governmental Accountability Committee and SB 712 Died in the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety—HB 117 (Rep. Stone) would revise and provide requirements for a driver of motor vehicle overtaking bicycle, pedestrian, or nonmotorized vehicle; would revise requirements for turning at intersections; would revise and provide requirements for persons riding bicycles in groups; would require Class E driver license examination to address bicycle and pedestrian safety; and would provide penalties. HB 117 Died on the House Calendar.

Budget—Governor Scott’s Recommended Budget: $1 Billion for Transportation System Expansion; $1 Billion for Maintenance and Operations; $616 Million for Resurfacing; $568 Million for Transit Program Improvements; $67.7 Million for Bridge Repairs and Replacement; $186 Million for Safety Initiatives; $151.3 Million for Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails. The State Budget includes: $3.7 billion for Transportation System Expansion; $1 billion for Maintenance and Operations; $598 million for Transit Program Improvements; $67.7 million for Bridge Repairs and Replacement; $186 million for Safety Initiatives; and $151.3 million for Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails. Local projects include: Hillsborough County Big Bend/I-75 Interchange Improvements ($5 million), TBARTA ($1 million), and Hillsborough County South Coast Trail Enhancement ($450,000). VETOED: Hillsborough County School Sidewalks & Safety Enhancements ($2 million); Hillsborough County Orient Road ($2 million).

Charter County & Regional Transportation System Surtax—HB 243 (Reps. Avila/Perez) and SB 688 (Senator Garcia) While 31 counties are eligible to levy the surtax, it is only levied in Duval and Miami-Dade counties. HB 243 and SB 688 would allow Miami-Dade County to use surtax proceeds for specified purposes related to fixed guideway rapid transit systems and bus systems; would authorize use of surtax proceeds for refinancing existing bonds; and would prohibit use of such proceeds for non-transit
purposes. HB 243 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and SB 688 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Community Redevelopment Agencies—HB 17 (Rep. Raburn) and SB 432 (Senator Lee) Although these bills are not identical, HB 17 would provide reporting requirements; revise requirements for operating community redevelopment agencies; prohibit creation of community redevelopment agencies after date certain; would provide phase-out period; create criteria for determining whether community redevelopment agency is inactive; provide hearing procedures; authorize certain financial activity from inactive community redevelopment agencies; revise requirements for use of redevelopment trust fund proceeds; revise county and municipal government reporting requirements. SB 432 would prohibit a person from lobbying a community redevelopment agency until he or she has registered as a lobbyist with that agency; authorize community redevelopment agencies to adopt rules to govern the registration of lobbyists; and would require ethics training for community redevelopment agency commissioners. HB 17 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and SB 432 Died in the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development.

Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs)—SB 1244 (Senator Lee) and HB 1151 (Rep. La Rosa) would amend statewide provisions related to existing developments of regional impact (DRIs), largely repealing most state oversight functions and shifting such responsibilities to local governments. This legislation preserves vested rights and other protections for existing DRIs. SB 1244 was substituted for HB 1151 and passed, and subject to the Governor’s veto powers will go into effect on July 1, 2018.

Dockless Bicycles—HB 1033 (Rep. Toledo) and SB 1304 (Senator Young) would largely preempt regulation of dockless sharing companies to the state, specifically prohibiting local governments from imposing taxes or requiring business licenses; would have also attempted to prohibit exclusive agreements between bike sharing companies and local governments. HB 1033 Died in the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee and SB 1304 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

Growth Management—HB 207 (Rep. McClain) and SB 362 (Senator Perry) These bills would require local governments to address the protection of private property rights in their comprehensive plans; requiring the comprehensive plan to include a private property rights element that sets forth principles, guidelines, standards, and strategies to achieve certain objectives; provide a deadline by which each local government must adopt a private property rights element; require the state land planning agency to approve the private property rights element adopted by each local government if it is substantially in a specified form. HB 207 Died in the House Agriculture and Property Rights Subcommittee and SB 362 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee. HB 883 (Rep. Ingoglia) originally filed to address
Community Development Districts was amended to include restrictions on Urban Service Boundaries and Community Redevelopment Agencies. HB 883 Died in Senate Messages.

Impact Fees—HB 697 (Rep. Miller) and SB 324 (Senator Young) SB 324 was amended to specify that a local government may not collect impact fees prior to the issuance of a building permit and to codify existing case law on the validity of impact fees. SB 324 Died on the Senate Calendar and HB 697 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

Local Tax Referenda—HB 317 (Rep. Ingoglia) and SB 272 (Senator Brandes) Although these bills are not identical, SB 272 would revise the voter approval threshold required to pass a referendum to adopt or amend local government discretionary sales surtaxes to at least 60% of the electors voting on the ballot when the referendum is held at any date other than a general election. HB 317 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and SB 272 Died in Senate Rules Committee.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations—HB 575 (Rep. Beshears), SB 984 (Senator Brandes), HB 807 (Rep. Diamond) HB 575 would reduce the maximum number of MPO voting members from 25 to 15 for those MPO’s with populations over 500,000, with the exact number determined on an equitable geographic-population ratio basis, based on an agreement among the affected units of general-purpose local government and the Governor, as required by federal regulations. All MPO’s would be required to comply with changes by July 1, 2019. SB 984 would provide an incentive to merge MPO’s by removing the cap on the maximum number of voting members (currently twenty-five) while maintaining the base number of voting members (currently five members) serving on the MPO, after July 18, 2018; and would preserve current law with the number determined on an equitable geographic-population ratio basis. HB 807 is similar to SB 984, and would provide an incentive to merge MPO’s by removing the cap on the maximum number of voting members (currently twenty-five) while maintaining the base number of voting members (currently five members) serving on the MPO, after July 18, 2018; would preserve current law with the number determined on an equitable geographic-population ratio basis. Amendments were filed late by Senator Brandes to SB 100, SB 382, and HB 141 to prohibit an MPO to adopt a weighted voting structure, among other things. A point of order was called and those amendments were then withdrawn (see Transportation). HB 575 & HB 807 both Died in the House Government Accountability Committee. SB 984 Died in the Senate Transportation Committee.

Motorcycle & Moped Riders—SB 346 (Senator Perry), HB 583 (Rep. Clemons) would increase the age at which persons who are operating or riding upon a certain motorcycle or a moped are exempt from protective headgear requirements; would require a moped registered to a person under a specified age to display a license plate that is unique in design and color. SB 346 Died in the Senate Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism & Economic Development. HB 583 Died in the House Subcommittee on Transportation & Infrastructure.
Private Property Rights—SB 292 (Senator J. Rodrigues) would exempt from the definition of “public utility” a property owner who owns and operates on that property a renewable energy source device with a capacity of up to 2.5 megawatts and who produces and provides or sells renewable energy from that device to users located on the property. **SB 292 Died in the Senate Communication, Energy and Public Utilities Committee.**

Red Light Cameras—SB 176 (Senator Hutson), SB 548 (Senator Campbell), and HB 6001 (Rep. Avila) would repeal provisions relating to the installation and use of traffic infraction detectors to enforce specified provisions when a driver fails to stop at a traffic signal, provisions that authorize the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, a county, or a municipality to use such detectors, and the distribution of penalties collected for specified violations. **SB 176, SB 548 & HB 6001 all Died in the Senate Transportation Committee.**

School Hazardous Walking Conditions—SB 188 (Senator Steube) would require district school boards to provide transportation to certain students; revise the speed and road conditions that meet the requirements for a hazardous walking condition; require a district school superintendent to request a review of a hazardous walking condition upon receipt of a written request from a parent of a student. **SB 188 Died in the Appropriations Subcommittee on Pre-K-12 Education.**

Smart City Challenge Grant—SB 852 (Senator Brandes) and HB 633 (Rep. Fischer) would create a new program within the Department of Transportation with an appropriation of $15 million to encourage communities to implement technology solutions to the most pressing mobility challenges; would qualify any governmental agency responsible for the movement of goods and services in Florida, including local governments, transportation planning organizations (TPOs) and state universities as eligible for receiving funding. **SB 852 Died on the Senate Calendar and HB 633 Died on the House Calendar.**

Statewide Alternative Transportation Authority—HB 535 (Reps. Avila and J. Grant) and SB 1200 (Senator Young) would rename the Florida Rail Enterprise (FRE) as the Statewide Alternative Transportation Authority; would revise annual allocations for the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) beginning FY 2021-22 from FRE to provide the first $60 million in documentary stamp taxes for alternative transportation systems, of which $25 million would be allocated to TBARTA for the design and construction of alternative transportation systems on a local or private fund 50/50 matching basis; and $35 million to the Statewide Alternative Transportation Authority, of which $25 million would be used in Miami-Dade County. The remaining $10 million would be available for use in any county or
counties. HB 535 Died in the House Transportation, Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee and SB 1200 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Strategic Intermodal System (SIS)—SB 1188 (Senator Rouson) and HB 1277 (Rep. Willhite) would authorize rapid bus service operating in express toll lanes on the interstate highway system as an eligible expenditure for SIS funding; would not increase SIS funding for Tampa Bay but would provide a new opportunity to access greater capacity and faster service from existing transportation assets. SB 1188 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and HB 1277 Died in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee.

TBARTA—HB 2451 (Rep. Gruters) would provide a non-recurring appropriations of $1 million to TBARTA from the State Transportation Trust Fund. HB 2451 passed—$1 million appropriation in the Budget (see Budget).

Texting While Driving—HB 33 (Rep. Toledo) and SB 90 (Senator Perry) would strengthen the current ban on texting, emailing, and instant messaging while driving, by changing the current enforcement of the ban from secondary to primary. Any violation of the ban that causes a crash would result in the addition of six points to the offender’s driver license record. HB 33 Died in the Senate Communication, Energy and Public Utilities Committee and SB 90 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee (see Using of Wireless Devices While Driving).

Tourist Development Tax—SB 658 (Senator Brandes) and HB 585 (Rep. Fine) would authorize counties imposing the tourist development tax to use revenues from the tax to acquire, construct, extend, enlarge remodel, repair, improve, maintain, operate or finance public facilities if the public facilities are needed to increase tourist-related business activities and are recommended by the county tourist development council. SB 658 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee and HB 585 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee. The all-encompassing Tax Package, HB 7087 (Rep. Renner) was passed authorizing counties imposing a tourist development tax to use the tax revenues for public facilities if needed to increase tourist related business activities including: roads, water & sewer, solid waste, drainage, and pedestrian facilities. At least $10 million in tourist development tax revenue must be received in the prior year; must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the county governing board; no more than 70% of the cost may be paid with the revenue; at least 40% of all tourist development tax revenues must be used to promote tourism; and a positive impact on tourism must be demonstrated. Effective July 1, 2018.
**Traffic Infraction Detectors—**SB 176 (Senator Hutson), HB 6001 (Rep. Avila), SB 548 (Senator Campbell) would repeal provisions relating to the definitions of “local hearing officer” and “traffic infraction detector,” respectively and relating to the installation and use of traffic infraction detectors to enforce specified provisions when a driver fails to stop at a traffic signal, provisions that authorize the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, a county, or a municipality to use such detectors and that cap fines and provide for the deposit and use of fines, and the distribution of penalties. SB 176, HB 6001, and SB 548 all Died in the Senate Transportation Committee.

**Transportation—**SB 1104 (Senator Brandes), HB 141 (Rep. Harrison), HB 1287 (Rep. Drake) would revise provisions relating to contracting and negotiation between the Department of Transportation and local governmental entities for acquisition, construction, or operation of turnpike projects; exempting a law enforcement officer from paying a toll on a toll facility when operating an official vehicle while on official law enforcement business; and HB 1287 was amended to prohibit an MPO from adopting a weighted voting structure, among other things. HB 1287 died in the Senate Transportation Committee, SB 1104 died in House Messages, and HB 141 passed (without any MPO restrictions) and subject to the Governor’s veto powers will be effective on July 1, 2018.

**Transportation Disadvantaged—**SB 770 (Senator Garcia) would authorize community transportation coordinators, in cooperation with the coordinating board, to plan for and use regional fare payment systems under certain circumstances which enhance cross-county mobility for specified purposes for certain persons who are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation. SB 770 Died in the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development.

**Tree & Vegetation Trimming—**HB 521 (Edwards-Walpole) and SB 574 (Senator Steube) would prohibit local governments from requiring permits or other approvals for tree and vegetation maintenance within certain rights-of-way managed by water management districts, water control districts, or special districts. HB 521 Died in Senate Messages. SB 574 Died in the Senate Environmental Preservation & Conservation Committee.

**Using Wireless Communication Devices While Driving—**SB 90 (Senator Perry) is similar to HB 33 (see Texting While Driving) and would revise the legislative intent relating to the authorization of law enforcement officers to stop motor vehicles and issue citations to persons who are texting while driving; would require deposit of fines into the Emergency Medical Services Trust Fund. SB 90 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee and HB 33 Died in the Senate Communication, Energy and Public Utilities Committee.
The center bike lanes on Pennsylvania Avenue are a key spine of Washington’s downtown network. // Courtesy of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association

How Washington, D.C., Built a Bike Boom

ANDREW SMALL  DEC 26, 2017
The city’s pioneering bike-share program and growing network of lanes was key. So is “human infrastructure.”

Cycling has taken off in the American capital. Nearly 17,000 cyclists regularly rode their bikes to work in Washington, D.C. in 2016, according to Census estimates, which is about 5 percent of the city’s commuters. That’s nearly triple the “mode share” it had in 2006, putting it in second place on the list of top biking cities in the U.S., just behind famously gear-friendly Portland, Oregon.

In absolute numbers, D.C. is still a dwarf compared to, say, New York, where 48,000 people pedal to work every week (which is only one percent of commuters there). But D.C.’s growth has exploded since the city piloted one of the country’s first modern bikeshare programs, and started building an ambitious network of bike lanes.

Cycling numbers may keep climbing, with the recent boom in private companies spreading “dockless” shared bicycles around the city. But there’s no guarantee. Bikes may be a passing trend in a young and transient city. And as housing becomes less affordable, the bike’s advantages as a mode for everyone may have diminishing returns, even as lanes expand.

What shaped D.C.’s bike renaissance? How can it maintain its progress from here?

The planner: Build infrastructure for everyday people

When Jim Sebastian joined D.C.’s Department of Transportation in 2001, the city’s master bike plan hadn’t been updated since the 1970s. But with downtown densifying, gas prices peaking, and traffic worsening, “people wanted more bike facilities,” Sebastian, now the associate director for planning and sustainability at DDOT, said.

To hatch fresh bike plans, Sebastian and his colleagues traveled to famously bike-friendly European cities like Amsterdam and Copenhagen. One takeaway from over the pond: treat cycling as an activity for everybody rather than some specialized hobby for everyone else to drive around. “This whole idea of ‘the cyclist’ is almost passé,” said Sebastian. “What we’ve got is people on bikes.” Treating them accordingly meant building lanes that help everyone feel safe, not just the Spandex-clad few.

“Once some people ride on a separated lane, it gets their confidence up
and they become able to ride on unprotected lanes or just the streets in the city.”

In 2010, DDOT carved out two key spines of what would become a downtown cycling network: the center bike lanes on Pennsylvania Avenue and a protected cycle track on 15th Street. This created safe routes for day-trippers near the National Mall and forged a path for daily commuters in neighborhoods close to the urban core. Their effect on biking can be felt throughout the city. “Once some people ride on a separated lane, it gets their confidence up and they become able to ride on unprotected lanes or just the streets in the city,” Sebastian said.

Another key project gave an option to commuters who might want the option of, say, riding a bike to work, but taking Metro home. Capital Bikeshare, one of the first modern bikeshare programs in the United States, was launched in 2010, drawing about 115,000 trips in its first year. It ballooned from there: By the end of 2017, the program celebrated its 19 millionth trip.

Meanwhile, the city continued to expand bike lanes at about five miles per year. Some neighborhoods have seen their cycling commute share increase to over 20 percent. With 80 miles of bike lanes built since 2000, the city has a goal of expanding to 136 miles by 2040, the majority of them fully protected.

**The advocate: D.C. built “human infrastructure”**

It takes people to change behavior, according to Nelle Pierson, a longtime D.C. bike advocate—not just infrastructure, not just policy, but feet on the ground, hands on the handlebars, and faces on the sidewalk. “You have to have a network of people who are showing you that this is normal, and connecting you to the knowledge to overcome barriers to access,” she said. She cites Adonia Lugo’s concept of “human infrastructure” to describe the constellation of repeated small interventions that it takes required to get more people on bikes.

In some cases, this comes from the top. Pierson credits the work of Mayor Adrian Fenty between 2007 and 2011 for dedicating time and resources to make bike plans work. Every day, city politicians have to balance a diversity of citizen interests, including those in direct competition to bikes, like protecting parking spots and road space. But Fenty helped push the lanes through, Pierson said.
Some advocates worry the current mayor, Muriel Bowser, isn’t as strongly committed as previous administrations to making D.C. a bike city. They’ve stepped up their work in the meantime: As a former outreach and events coordinator at the Washington Area Bicycling Association, Pierson created initiatives to reach people beyond the urban core where lanes were getting built, especially in lower-income neighborhoods and suburbs. No program drew more acclaim than Women and Bicycles, which uses workshops, rides, and mentoring programs to draw women to cycling. Pierson said that stubborn perceptions, especially surrounding gender, take concerted effort to dislodge. But the cycling gender gap has decreased: In 2006, women made up less than 30 percent of the city’s bike commuters; today they make up nearly 42 percent.

From left to right: Jim Sebastian, Nelle Pierson, and Sterling Stone.

Capital Bikeshare also helped universalize the image of cycling for more District residents, Pierson said, by opening up convenient rides for suited professionals, students, and baristas alike. Now, the District is charting new frontier in open-access cycling, with a six-month trial for five new “dockless” bike-sharing companies. About 1,850 shared bikes are sprinkled around D.C. streets., unconstrained by stations or docks, but still rentable by smartphone or pre-paid account to all. Pierson, who is now working as the director of external affairs for Jump, one of the companies involved in the pilot, believes dockless bikes can speed up the spread of cycling to more neighborhoods and new riders. “This is where we all benefit from the competition,” she said. “Everyone is seeing this.”

The shopkeeper: Bikes are still a cultural battlefield

Clearly, the city has succeeded in getting more bodies on bikes. But there’s one standout statistic that shows D.C.’s cycling boom isn’t reaching everyone: In 2015, only about 2 percent of black commuters biked to work, compared to 8 percent of whites. And surveys show that the city’s black residents are less likely than other groups to view bikes as an ideal mode of transport.
The reasons for this are complicated, and touch on job barriers, class perceptions, and social norms. Sterling Stone thinks it also has something to do with D.C.’s rapid gentrification. “It goes beyond bikes,” he said.

Stone is the executive director of Gearin’ Up Bicycles, a nonprofit shop that refurbishes used bikes to sell and trains local kids as bike mechanics. Bike commuting began to gain prominence in the late 2000s, when an influx of Millennials arrived, he said. Once known as the “Chocolate City” for its majority-black population, D.C. rapidly gentrified during this period, displacing many longtime black families. Bikes became a symbol of the D.C.’s changing demographics, said Stone, who is black and a Pittsburgh transplant himself. New lanes became a rallying point against gentrification for many residents of color. That potent symbolism delayed projects like a protected bike lane in a gentrifying neighborhood, which was vigorously opposed by a local black church.

The city has a ways to go to address the needs of communities of color. African American youth have been especially overlooked, according to Stone, even when riding a bike is a rite of passage for other kids growing up in the city. That doesn’t mean they’re not interested in biking, though. In 2012, as part of the Boys and Girls Club summer program he ran at the time, Stone took a group of local kids a a build-your-own-bike workshop. It was the smash hit of the year.
“It’s still the first thing I hear about when I see the kids,” he said. The idea gave root to Stone’s store, which sits in a former church in the neighborhood of Eckington, near the recently rehabbed Metropolitan Branch Trail. But of the 67 bike shops in the greater Washington region, there are none in the predominately African American Wards seven and eight. This year, Gearin’ Up received a grant from the city to run bike repair clinics in neighborhoods without access to shops.

Stone is encouraged by these kinds of partnerships, but he still worries about the future. The question in his mind is, who will be around by the time a bike network is complete? “It’s hard to tell,” he said. “A lot of the families are already gone. The young people in my store likely won’t be counted later if they can’t afford to live here… even though [it’s where] they learned to bike.”

Displacement touches on race, income, housing access, and many thorny issues—which is to say, it goes way beyond bikes. At the very least, Stone said, if D.C. were more proactive about extending cycling amenities into diverse neighborhoods that aren’t already saturated with Millennials, they might carry less baggage—not to mention reach more people of color. “Advocates are starting to see where there’s more need for infrastructure,” he said. “Once we have a bike trail in one part of the city, people start to say, ‘I want that in my neighborhood, too.’”

About the Author

Andrew Small

Andrew Small is a freelance writer in Washington, D.C. and a former editorial fellow at CityLab.