

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1
November 29, 2006; 10am - Noon
Meeting Summary

Welcome

Michelle Pourciau, Director of the District Department of Transportation, welcomed the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members to the meeting and charged them with improving pedestrian access and safety while maintaining a balanced transportation system.

Introductions

George Branyan, DDOT Pedestrian Program Coordinator, lead the introductions, asking each participant to share their key concern for pedestrians in the District. The following is the list of issues raised:

- Safety (3 times)
- Transit environment for pedestrians
- Accessibility for all (ADA) (2 times)
- Work Zones (3 times)
- Funding for implementation
- Economic development/Ped environment nexus
- Traffic calming
- How DMV can help
- Sidewalks and sidewalk maintenance
- Wayfinding
- Curbside issues that impact pedestrians
- Bus shelter location
- Risk assessment

Overview of Toole Design Group (project consultant) and Plan Purpose

Jennifer Toole, President of Toole Design Group, provided an overview of the firm's pedestrian planning and District of Columbia experience and introduced the project team. She discussed the purpose of the Pedestrian Master Plan:

- Identifying deficiencies in the transportation system, focusing on key corridors
- Updating policies, guidelines and practices to ensure they accommodate pedestrians
- Providing design guidelines and training to city staff

Public Involvement Process

Colleen Mitchell, Toole Design Group Project Manager, presented the variety of strategies that will be used to gather public input from the District's diverse pedestrians.

- Technical Advisory Committee (3 formal meetings during the planning process)
- Project website
- Online survey (also available in paper version). Meeting participants were provided with a draft of the survey questions for review and group discussion.
- Corridor-based Intercept surveys (one location in each Ward)
- Interviews with key stakeholders/community groups/hard-to-reach populations. Meeting participants were asked to contact the team with any ideas for interviewees.
- Citywide Public Meeting

Participant comments on the public involvement process:

- Concern that the intercept surveys will focus on commercial corridors and will not address pedestrian issues in residential neighborhoods. Encourage team to pick residential streets for intercept surveys.
- Need special outreach to pedestrians with vision-impairments
- Should include Advisory Neighborhood Commissions

- Include at the end of the survey a place for respondents to provide their email address for future notifications. Put an email distribution list together for planning process.
- BIDs have staff that work at the ground-level. They may be able to help with outreach.
- Include on project website information for public at the neighborhood level. So they feel they're being given resources/direction to improve conditions in their communities in terms of how to look at pedestrian conditions. Walkability checklist or links to other organizations (Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, Project for Public Space, etc.).
- Website needs to be accessible
- Suggestions/comments on the online survey:
 - Q1: include 'walking to a bus stop or metro station' as an answer choice
 - Q2: Include additional explanation or description to the term "unpleasant environment" for pedestrians that includes parking lots, blank walls, etc.
 - Q1: If we include walking to work "regularly" need to also include "occasionally" as an answer choice. Could then ask why they don't walk regularly in a separate question
 - Need to include a question in the survey about those with mobility limitations
 - Need to include "other (please specify)" as a choice for each question
 - Q3: Include "Inadequate facilities for people with disabilities" as an answer choice

Scope of Work and Project Schedule

Colleen Mitchell reviewed each of the Pedestrian Master Plan's key tasks:

- Review of existing policies, guidelines, funding and implementation processes
- Background data collection and review. Meeting participants were provided with a list of District pedestrian-related plans and projects and were asked to add any additional plans that should be reviewed.
- Identification of priority pedestrian study corridors
 - Analyze crash data
 - Review existing plans and studies
 - Pedestrian potential and deficiency analysis
 - Public input
- Field analysis in priority corridors
- Neighborhood sidewalk deficiency analysis (GIS)
- Prioritized recommendations
- Pedestrian Design guidelines
- Staff Training
- Plan Implementation

Participant comments on the scope of work:

- Need to investigate who issues permits for construction work zones, who enforces/inspects them. Who submits the traffic control plan, who is going out and checking, who follows up and most importantly **how** is it done?
- Look at physical barriers (Homeland Security) and what NCPC has done
- Bus nodes create a situation that deserves special attention in the field analysis
- Will this plan dovetail with other DDOT policies?
- Implementation plan should include short, mid and long term categories
- Jim Sebastian: This plan is a policy plan, not a separate plan for redesigning intersections
- George Branyan: There will be recommendations dealing with education, enforcement and encouragement, but program for this are up and running.
- Consider integration with land use and zoning. Work with the Office of Planning. Establishing pedestrian districts, neighborhood shopping district zones. Zoning regulations are currently weak. Be more overt in establishing pedestrian oriented requirements. Now, requirements are handled through the use of overlays (easier than changing zoning), can become hard to enforce. Incorporate into fundamental zoning code and functional classification. Need to be specific.

- Let recommendations go beyond the department
- Integrated into multi-modal street performance policy that measures pedestrian level of service as vehicle LOS is already measured
- Integrate this plan into other plans and policies DDOT is doing
- Want to plan for those individuals who really need help and are not likely to attend meetings
Plan should improve their daily experience
- Need to fundamentally reform DDOT
- Make the TAC#1 Meeting presentation available on the project website
- School districts have appointed pedestrian coordinators. Schools were invited to be part of the TAC.
- Plan should include a PR campaign oriented to drivers. DC is for pedestrians. Address driver attitudes.

Next steps

Colleen Mitchell provided a brief summary of the project's next steps.

- Launch online survey
- Complete study website
- Identify groups/communities for outreach (interviews and survey administration)
- Review existing policies, guidelines
- Background data collection

- Future Technical Advisory Committee Meetings
 - March: discuss priority study areas/corridors
 - Fall 2007: review draft plan