

T&E COMMITTEE #1
July 28, 2014

MEMORANDUM

July 24, 2014

TO: Transportation and Environment Committee
FROM: Glenn Orlin, Deputy Council Administrator
SUBJECT: Briefing by the Pedestrian, Bicycle & Traffic Safety Advisory Committee

The Pedestrian, Bicycle & Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (PBTSAC) is a 17-member group appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the Council. It meets bimonthly to review transportation safety issues. Roughly half of its members are County residents and the rest are government officials—including the T&E Chair—and staff. The newly selected chair is Darrel Droblich, who will lead the briefing. Also on hand will be Erwin Mack, the prior long-time chair.

The PBTSAC wishes to highlight four of its recommendations and issues:

1. That the Council authorize a formal review process of the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, which has not been updated since 2005. The plan should be updated in order to account for county growth, new engineering best practices and to promote interconnectivity of bicycle trails and bicycle roadway accommodations.
2. That the County develop a Pedestrian Master Plan to establish overarching goals for the County regarding pedestrian mode share, crash rates, and facilities. Agreed-upon goals help guide individual projects and construction and raise awareness of the need to accommodate pedestrians equally with motorists. A master plan provides evidence of national best practices for facilities and sets the design and engineering standards for pedestrian facilities in road construction and development projects. A pedestrian master plan will not only address concerns raised by the disabled community regarding street crossings, but also about maintaining a clear path of travel on sidewalks (often blocked by utility poles and street furniture and construction projects), and improving safety in parking lots and access to bus stops.

3. That a county-wide bicycle safety education campaign be developed that meets national best practices (i.e. League of American Bicyclists) for bicyclists of all levels with consideration for less experienced bicyclists to address the anticipated increase in bicyclists due to the implementation of Bikeshare. In addition, the PBTSAC recommends that an education campaign be developed which focuses on motorists regarding safe interactions around and with bicyclists. This may include details such as: understanding the rights and responsibilities of bicyclists in using the roads, trails, and/or sidewalks; conflict mitigation with other road users; and use of protective and reflective devices to reduce risk while riding.

4. That there should be a budget line item for traffic safety enforcement that has a group of trained and dedicated officers assigned to these efforts for a sustained period going forward. The PBTSAC recently learned that the Department of Police's small budget for traffic safety enforcement was zeroed out not only for this year but last year as well. The police have been participating in pedestrian and traffic stings and other educational efforts through the use of overtime.

Staff from the Departments of Transportation and Police will also be available at this worksession should Councilmembers wish to direct questions towards them.