

## Notes

### Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee

March 17, 2022

313 Luck Ave SW, Roanoke VA

#### Present

Wayne Wilcox, Halcyon Planning  
Rachel Ruhlen, RVARC  
Carol Moneymaker, Virginia Department  
of Transportation  
Brendan Hall  
Ken McLeod, League of American  
Bicyclists  
Nathan Hilbert, National Park Service  
Kathleen Herndon  
Frank Maguire, Greenway Commission  
Phil Hobrla  
Cecile Newcomb, Roanoke County  
Bob Robillard  
Andrea Garland, RIDE Solutions

Isaac Henry, Roanoke County  
Wayne Leftwich, City of Roanoke  
Sandy Beyers  
Amanda McGee, RVARC  
Dwayne D'Ardenne, City of Roanoke  
Laura Schmidt, City of Roanoke  
David Bess, City of Roanoke  
Greg Walter, Greenway Commission  
Nathan McClung, Vinton  
Catherine Fox, Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge  
Kristine McCormick, Visit Virginia's Blue  
Ridge  
John Bolacek, Virginia Department of  
Transportation  
Barbara Duerk, Connect Now

Ken McLeod called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

1. Sidewalk Replacement Program and Asset Management – City of Roanoke  
Dwayne D'Ardenne, Laura Schmidt, and Dave Bess talked about the city's asset  
management work and sidewalk replacement program. (Laura provided additional details  
afterwards which are included here.)

The City has developed a publicly available [Sidewalk Asset Management Map](#).

Data in this map comes from three sources.

Sidewalk Condition Summary: The city hired Data Transfer Solutions which drove vans  
equipped with cameras and other sensors to assess the condition of infrastructure such as  
pavement, signs, and sidewalks. Data Transfer Solutions mapped where sidewalks exist  
and assessed their condition as good, fair, or poor.

Precision Repairs 2022: The city hired Precision Safe Sidewalks to analyze sidewalks that  
are part of the Melrose Avenue streetscape project, in the Belmont-Fallon Target Area, and  
on roads that are on the repaving schedule. Precision Safe Sidewalks rode Segways and  
identified displaced sidewalk that can be ground down smooth. This is a less expensive  
solution than tearing out and replacing sidewalk panels and can extend the life of the  
sidewalk by a few years. Precision Safe Sidewalks only looks for deficiencies that can be  
remedied by grinding down the surface; they aren't able to bring curb ramps into ADA  
compliance.

Engineering Request Ranking: Citizens submit requests for new and replaced sidewalks.  
Some requests were submitted decades ago. In the past, these have been addressed

based on when the request was submitted. Engineering is developing a scoring system to prioritize requests based on proximity to bus stops, schools, greenways, etc.

Committee members had suggestions and questions for the scoring system to prioritize sidewalk requests:

- Consider proximity to government and social services. Voter registration facilities are particularly sensitive for the Department of Justice.
- Consider pedestrian crash history.
  - City staff responded that crash history is considered for intersection treatments but isn't as relevant to sidewalks.
- Consider food desert.
  - City staff had considered this but were not able to get accurate data. Committee members have data they will share.

Funding for sidewalk replacement is about \$1 million per year and there are \$25 million in requests. Typical sidewalk lifespan is 25 years. At this funding rate, the City is not able to maintain current sidewalk condition. The sidewalk prioritization will be presented to City Council in May. City staff regularly apply for Safe Routes to School and Highway Safety Improvement Program funds and look for other funding sources for sidewalk replacement and sidewalk gaps.

2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Treatments – Virginia Department of Transportation John Bolacek presented a new VDOT resource describing bike/ped treatments that are allowable through all of their funding programs:

[https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bikeped/biking\\_and\\_pedestrian\\_treatments.asp](https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bikeped/biking_and_pedestrian_treatments.asp)

A webinar about this resource is available at

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/6787888231316032267>

Each treatment has a description, a graphic, a video, and a printable brochure that can be shared with stakeholders and decision makers.

Committee members noted that this resource could be helpful in designing and explaining bike/ped features of a roundabout at the Wasena bridge and greenway connections at Valley View.

Committee members noted that some treatments are very expensive and there is no dedicated funding stream that for bike/ped treatments.

3. Bike Safety on U.S. 11 – Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge

Kristin McCormick reported that Team TWENTY24, America's premier women's cycling team has [relocated their base of operations](#) from Idaho to Virginia's Blue Ridge. Team TWENTY24 has earned 14 Olympic and Paralympic medals, 17 world championships, and national championships and will host training camps in Virginia's Blue Ridge. The [Ironman](#) race will be held in Virginia's Blue Ridge June 1-5, 2022. And Virginia's Blue Ridge is hosting the [2022 USA Cycling Amateur Road National Championships](#). These events require safe roads for bicyclists. In response to the bicyclist fatality on U.S. 11, VDOT will deploy digital reader boards during training camps and events (U.S. 11 will be closed for the

USA Cycling time trials). Volunteers are needed for several aspects and the July 2 criterium in Downtown Roanoke will be like a festival drawing crowds and with roads closed.

#### 4. Federal discretionary grants

In January, Ken McLeod presented information about federal discretionary grants. Ken asked localities if they were aware of any planned or past applications for large infrastructure funding programs known as TIGER, BUILD, or RAISE depending on which administration was in office. The current incarnation of this program, RAISE, has a \$15 million minimum and is for construction only. The Valley View interchange was a TIGER grant. The City of Roanoke is applying for a RAISE grant for the Wasena bridge. Roanoke County is considering submitting a large greenway project involving multiple jurisdictions for a RAISE grant.

#### 5. Other updates

Rachel Ruhlen reported that the Bicycle Safety Act of 2021 has been partially repealed. The provision requiring vehicles to change lanes to pass bicycles is still intact, but bicycles will no longer be explicitly permitted by state law to ride two abreast.

Nathan McClung reported that there is a public meeting about the [Route 24 Bike/Pedestrian Plan](#) on **Thursday, March 31, 2022**, at 6 p.m., at the Vinton War Memorial, 814 Washington Avenue, Vinton.

Cecile Newcomb reported that seven community meetings for the Roanoke County 200 Plan will be held in **April** and there is a Transportation Station at all of them. The day, time, and location of each meeting is at <https://www.roanokecountyva.gov/2814/Roanoke-County-200-Plan>.

Andrea Garland reported that the [Regional Ride Smart Challenge](#) is **April 20 – May 4, 2022**.

Barbara Duerk suggested that RVARC organize a Mayors' Bike Ride during Bike Month of 2023 to celebrate completion of the Roanoke River Greenway.

Catherine Fox announced that Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge received the bronze Bicycle Friendly Business designation from the League of American Bicyclists and appreciated Jeremy Holmes' assistance.

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm.

The next meeting will be Thursday, May 19, 2022, 3:00 – 5:00 pm.