

**TDOT Bike/Ped Conference Call**  
**October 20, 2010**  
**1:30 CST/2:30 EST**

**I. Introduction of new Memphis Bike/Ped Coordinator**

Last month, Memphis hired a new bicycle and pedestrian Coordinator, Kyle Wagenschutz. Click [here](#) for the article in the Commercial Appeal.

**II. ProWalk/ProBike 2010 in Chattanooga- Recap**

Also last month, TDOT staff Terrance Hill, Diana Benedict, and I attended Pro Walk/Pro Bike and really took home a lot of great information about what other cities and states are doing to advance bicycling and walking in their regions. At the conference, Leslie Meehan received the APBP (Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professional's) Professional of the Year award. Also- kudos to Philip Pugliese and the local host committee for pulling together a great conference!

**III. TDOT State Bike Route Survey**

We are still in the process of conducting our state bike network survey. That survey will close October 30<sup>th</sup>, but as of October 19<sup>th</sup>, we had over 3500 respondents with the help of social media and print media releases. So far, it appears most people are primarily cycling for health and recreational reasons, and commuting to work by bicycle accounts for approx. 10% of survey respondents. There are still some groups we need to target before the survey deadline: women and cyclists who live in rural counties. As of Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>, we still have not had anyone submit survey responses from the following counties:

- Bledsoe
- Cocke
- Hardeman
- Houston
- Humphreys
- Johnson
- Lake
- Lauderdale
- Lewis
- Morgan
- Perry
- Pickett
- Scott

- Van Buren

If you know of any cyclists or cycling groups who live in the above counties, please help get the word out to them about the survey. They can access the survey before Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> by going to our website at <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/bikeped/>

#### **IV. Bike/Pedestrian Road Safety Audit program**

As I've mentioned on recent conference calls, TDOT bike/ped staff are attending road safety audit reviews and making recommendations to improve bike/ped safety. Well up until recently, those road safety audits were identified using a crash rate over three times higher than the statewide average, largely based on vehicular traffic and crash ratios, but we thought it would be really great if we could also identify and target safety improvements at spots where a high number of bike/ped crashes were occurring. As a result, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, TDOT held its first pilot bike/ped-focused road safety audit on Harding Place.

We've collected bike/ped crash data for state roads from 2003-2008 and are now working with DOS to get crash data for local roads, as well as analyzing these crashes based on a number of attributes such as time of day, weather, etc. to see if any patterns emerge. At the last strategic highway safety committee, we discussed forming a sub-committee to begin looking at what criteria to use when determining which locations are high-crash priority spots, so that we may focus limited funds on locations with the most need. I'll be updating everyone on our progress during the next conference call, but as always, feel free to call or email if you have questions in the meantime.

#### **V. Bike Month plans**

I was speaking with our Communications office last week, and Julie Oaks- TDOT's Public Information officer, is working on a communications plan for next year and would like to go-ahead and start planning some kind of kick-off for May 2<sup>nd</sup> to spotlight Bicycle Safety month. The national message according to NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) will be "Make Bicycling Safe for Riders of All Ages" Our initial thought is to work with a bicycling advocacy group to organize a big event- possibly some kind of excursion that would tie in with a new project like the Memphis Greenline, etc. I am going to research what other states do through LAB's website and speaking with other state bike/ped Coordinator's, but please call or email me if you have any initial suggestions or ideas for partnerships/events.

#### **VI. Bike Lockers for state employees**

I recently found out from our Programming Office that back in 2005, the bike/ped program was allotted \$240,000 for bike racks and lockers in state office buildings. In 2006, lockers and racks were installed in four places in downtown Nashville as a pilot, but there is still over \$100,000 available to use for this purpose. So, I've been in contact with a TDOT employee, Julie Lamb, who was involved in the project back in 2005-2006. At that time an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) was signed by the Commissioners of TDOT, General Services, and Finance & Administration. A few weeks ago, Julie set up a conference call between TDOT and General Services to get the ball rolling. The General Services employee who currently operates the locker rental program discussed the need to expand this program because there is a waiting list of 6 people for one station, and 3 people for the station at the Tennessee Tower. She is currently in discussions with her Commissioner regarding this need. I'd like to expand this program outside of Nashville, but first I need to work with General Services and the State Architects office to see what steps I need to take for this to become a reality.

## VII. Other Business

- *Fitting it Together: Retooling for Healthier Communities (Fri., Oct 29<sup>th</sup> in Dyersburg, TN.)* The Mayor of Hernando, Mississippi will be at this free event to talk about how small towns w/ small budgets can create opportunities for healthier lifestyles through complete streets.  
[http://www.allplayers.com/g/summit\\_event/](http://www.allplayers.com/g/summit_event/)
- Tom Evans with Bike/Walk Tennessee wrote in with four questions he wanted to discuss during the call. I have provided Tom's questions in blue, with my response in red:
  - 1) The unusually high percentage of rescissions of highway funds for Tennessee from TE and CMAQ (see attachment). Typically Bike/Walk projects are supported by these funds. Can you explain why Tennessee is much higher (95%) than other states? Historically, TDOT has tried to be fair by targeting different pots of federal funding each time we have a rescission, and this time it appears TE and CMAQ had to send back a large portion of funding. Last time, federal Planning funds received the biggest hit. Also keep in mind that we are still committed to supporting bike/ped infrastructure through programs and funding pots other than CMAQ and Transportation Enhancement grants.
  - 2) America Bike is trying to collect priority bike/walk projects across the country in their "Next Mile Project" (follow this link <http://nextmile.americabikes.org/>). Tennessee has no projects listed. WHY? What can BWT do to help? As an agency TDOT does not prioritize projects. We develop and fund projects, but prioritization ultimately comes from the MPOs and RPOs executive committees which are generally comprised of mayors and elected officials. Once we receive those priorities we then send them to the legislature for approval. As a result, Tom Evans, Bike Walk TN, has offered to submit projects to America Bikes if local folks will email him their list of priority projects. Tom can be reached via email at [tom@evanscenter.com](mailto:tom@evanscenter.com) For more info on America Bikes- click [here](#).

3) What is Tennessee's current experience at funding SRTS projects? How are the projects that have received rewards progressing? TDOT's Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Diana Benedict, always gives a briefing at the beginning of each monthly Safe Routes to School- TN Network conference call. This afternoon, she couldn't join us since she is speaking about the Safe Routes to School program at the TN Safety and Incident Management Conference. However, I do know from speaking to Diana that in the last few months, we were able to hire a dedicated staffperson to reside in the Local Programs Office and work strictly on getting these projects obligated and through the contract process and as of October 1st, 40% of SRTS funds awarded for infrastructure projects are now obligated.

4) Now that we should be firmly into using TDOT's Rumble Spec, how many re-surfacing projects have been brought to your attention for review for impact on bicycling and what decisions have you made? Since the new rumble standards were adopted in March, we've only had two resurfacing lettings since then- one in April, and one in June. We're starting to gear up for next season's resurfacing and have been getting every single list of resurfacing projects from all 4 regions. Terrance goes through each list and makes recommendations and I then look over those and send them on to our regional resurfacing folks. I don't mind sharing our recommendations, but first we need to go back and see of the projects recommended, which ones were actually let.