

NJ Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Council (NJBPAC)

Roundtable Discussion Feedback & Best Practices

June 17, 2020 Presentation

OVERVIEW

- **Purpose:** Review/Refocus NJBPAC
- **Methods:**
 - Conducted four virtual roundtable discussions in late May/early June with 20+ participants from various sectors, entities, and organizations.
 - Research findings on BPAC best practices and more current info on state BPAC's (five other states)



FEEDBACK FROM ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

- BPAC Core Mission
- Subcommittees
- Executive Council
- Overlapping Groups



BPAC STRENGTHS + OPPORTUNITIES

*“How do we **seize the current opportunity** with bicycling expanding? We need to get ourselves more connected.*

*“We need **consistent messaging** throughout the State.”*

*“ It is good to have **other state agencies, MPOs, Counties** involved to discuss hot spots, best practices, issues that are coming up...”*

*“ Here is the strength of BPAC...it’s the only meeting that has **big players sitting in the room that are supporters of the little players...**”*

*“What if this was a **place to benchmark/track efforts throughout the State** and to provide/receive updates on implementation efforts?”*

*“BPAC should be a **central coordination spot.**”*



FEEDBACK ON CORE MISSION



Suggests one-way relationship; leaves out other agencies/entities/groups

*“To **advise NJDOT** on policies, programs, research and priorities to advance cycling and walking as safe and viable forms of transportation and **recreation** throughout the State for users of all ages and abilities.*



Minimizes role of walking/biking as essential exercise/activity (COVID-19)

What is missing?

- Equity
- Public health
- Resiliency
- Panel of experts/important role in information exchange and best practices sharing
- Other groups (State agencies, MPOs, NGOs...)



BPAC SUBCOMMITTEES

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

- **Accomplishments:** changing driver's education test, producing White paper for Murphy transition, replacing "accident" with "crash", and creating pedestrian-scale lighting materials
- **Infrastructure** is a particular strength of BPAC/Subcommittees
- **Behavioral side/educational-safety messaging needs** to be more coordinated and unified via collaboration within/beyond current BPAC
- Difficult to set **priorities** and produce actionable **results**
- Don't know what happens to **work products** once they go to NJDOT
- More **direction and support** would help Subcommittees



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

FEEDBACK

- No clear roles for Executive Council members unless they are Subcommittee Chairs
- Refocus the chair's role → **engage the Council/facilitate discussion** to coalesce ideas into recommendations
- Encourage more **collaboration/coordination**
 - *“You are in a room full of great heads with a great diversity of people but little discussion happens.”*
- **More focus on Subcommittee** work rather than presentations



LIMITED RESOURCES/OVERLAPPING GROUPS

“There are too many groups and committees with similar missions/agendas...”

- *“To have so many committees, councils, advisory groups and to have the same conversation over and over is tedious...ultimately there are not a lot of tangible results coming out of any of them.”*
- *“I feel like there are a lot of us in the room together under a different organization with a different name but the players are the same.”*



BPAC BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE & CASE STUDIES

- Prior research (2006 VTC Report/2012 Advocacy Advance)
- Recent insights from current State BPACs (CA, WA, MA, NH, OR)



BPAC MISSION/ROLE

- Provide guidance to officials/staff/entities who make decisions that impact bicycling and walking (such as BPMP, capital projects, SHSP)
- Act as historians/track progress over time & trace evolution of best practices
- Provide a process for citizens to provide input and receive responses to questions
- Experts who advise, brainstorm, create, collaborate and maintain partnership with the advocacy community
 - Insider advocates: working within existing structures to impact policies and decisions. A BPAC can ensure an “inside advocate” voice for those who walk, bike.

Oregon BPAC: “...to advise...on priorities, issues, projects and funding needs to improve biking and walking in Oregon. OBPAC members are **stewards of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (OBPP) implementation**, with a focus on the goals of safety, equity, and connectivity. OBPAC informs and advocates for effective decision making and innovation solutions to ensure the OBPP vision is achieved.”



ENHANCE BPAC EFFECTIVENESS

- Clarify purpose/mission + ensure representation reflects this
- Create/follow an Annual Work Plan that identifies priorities
- Hold regular meetings
- Structure so it doesn't overwhelm State bike/ped staff time
- Maintain/update By-laws to ensure BPAC remains focused and effective



BPAC SHOULD NOT...

- Endorse candidates
- Narrowly focus on members' pet causes
- Lose sight of the big picture
- Focus on presentations at the expense of actions



UPDATE BPAC MISSION + RESPONSIBILITIES

- Collaborative/two-way information and resource sharing
- Coordination re: resource allocation, priorities, implementation efforts
- Experts who advise beyond NJDOT to other state, regional and local agencies/entities
- Equity/Public Health/Resiliency: re-think mission
- Link to BPMP/SHSP Implementation: BPAC track/develop metrics/report back annually



EXPAND BPAC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- Review best practices examples and identify additional seats to reflect updated Mission + Responsibilities
 - Additional state agencies (DCA, Tourism, others?)
 - Seat for TMAC representative
 - Seats for other allied groups/partners, such as: CSWG, NJSRTS, Sustainable Jersey, HTSPAC, NJBWC, AAA, etc.
 - NJDOT Local Aid, Director/Assistant Commissioner seats?



MEETING FREQUENCY & FORMAT

- Refine content and format
- Clarify voting – what specific actions require formal voting vs consensus?
- Review meeting frequency



IMPROVE SUBCOMMITTEES

- Specific tasks that flow from Annual Work Plan/Priorities
- Facilitate more opportunities for information exchange
- Streamline into 2: Infrastructure/Design & Education/Safety/Equity
- Designate consultant/TMA/VTC resources to facilitate/support/research/assist with specific tasks
- Schedule regular Subcommittee meetings halfway between BPAC meetings



NEXT STEPS

- Update Mission + Responsibilities
- Refine Council membership to mesh with mission + responsibilities
- Combine/refocus/support Subcommittees
- Update Meeting format
- Re-name/Re-brand BPAC?

