

BCA Task Force on Adding Capital Bikeshare Stations

- Questions accumulated from the request for questions presented at the Task Force meeting of June 10, 2015
- Questions are directed to Paul DeMaio and Jason Hardin, representing Arlington County's Capital Bikeshare operation.

Demographics and use:

What demographic or other profile info can they share with us on casual Bikeshare users in Arlington to inform community expectations about the people who might be using these stations in Bluemont residential neighborhoods? *See slide 3 in presentation. The data is systemwide, but we don't think the demographics in Bluemont would be substantially different.*

Are user profiles different for Bikeshare users whose rides are predominantly along the Arlington loop and connector trails than along other routes? *We don't have data on this fine-grained level. I don't think the profiles would be different, as the trails are also used for utilitarian trips by many riders.*

What information do they have about bike share locations in other residential neighborhoods? I understand that there are a few in Fairlington, and another near army navy drive that is by town homes or single family homes. How have residents reacted one year or more after installation? *Some examples of Arlington stations in single family and townhome neighborhoods include stations at S. Rolfe St. & 9th St. S., S. Orme St. & Columbia Pike, and 7th St. N. & Washington Blvd. The locations can be viewed at the map at capitalbikeshare.com. We have not had complaints following the installation of these stations as we worked with the communities before each station's installation.*

I presume the Bluemont stations to be future connector stations once they build out to East Falls Church and beyond. How do they see Bluemont acting in this capacity? *See slides 13 and 20. As there are no major employment centers in the neighborhood boundary, Bluemont stations would most likely serve Bluemont residents and visitors in accessing these centers and the amenities of the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor.*

For stations that might need a concrete pad, are they willing to install one or do we need to only consider hard scaped locations? *See slide 10 and example on slide 17. Arlington will install a concrete pad if a station location is presently grass.*

Would on street parking in front of a residence be a possible location if the homeowner was on board? *Yes.*

We heard from Charlie that a quarter of a mile between stations is the ideal. Is that a goal for Bikeshare in Bluemont? If not, what is the desired distance between stations in Bluemont for the short term and long term? *Ideal distance between stations depends somewhat on context. Our goal is to keep stations to within .5 miles of each other. This provides greater access for*

residents, who overwhelmingly walk to stations, and creates a reasonable “backup” destination in case one is using a bikeshare bike and arrives at their destination station which has no open docks.

How many docks per station are they thinking would be appropriate for residential stations? Eleven docks would be the smallest, but our experience is that smaller stations frequently become empty or full. Fifteen docks would be a preferable size for the demand we expect in Bluemont.

If we find more than 2 locations that we like and recommend as a task force/BCA, would Cabi be open to installing more than 2 stations? Yes, but this will depend on available funding.

We heard that the stations are somewhat mobile. If we install a station and decide a year after installation that we want to consider an alternate location, would that be an option? Have there been any requests from nearby residents of other stations to move one after some time? Due to the cost of concrete pad construction and installation, the preference would be for a permanent station location. No neighborhoods have requested this.

Are ALL bikeshare locations in the Washington, DC area currently on County and City land, or are there any currently on leased private land? A few are on private land or land owned by other government agencies (National Park Service, VDOT, etc.). The land is not leased, but permission is obtained through a legal license agreement entered into voluntarily by a property owner who sees the station as a benefit.

Is it a reasonable presumption that all bikeshare stations are not permitted to protrude into sidewalks? Stations can be installed on sidewalks, but only if at least 5’ of the sidewalk remains clear. This eliminates most residential sidewalks from consideration.

It would also be good to know the utilization rates throughout the year. For example, what percentage of Arlingtonians use the bikes between November and March? See slides 26 and 27 in the presentation.

Currently bikeshare membership numbers in neighborhoods within walking distance of probable locations. See slide 28.

Principles, selection criteria for establishing station locations

Historic use of the station at George Mason and Wilson. See slide 19.

We understand that Capital Bikeshare prefers to locate each of stations within approximately .25 miles of the nearest station. Do you have empirical evidence that a station’s usage rate when located further than .25 miles from the nearest station? While we have ridership data from every station, we have not isolated station distance as a variable in ridership. Stations located farther than .25 miles from other stations likely have less ridership, but they also are more likely to be in less dense areas where ridership likely would be lower regardless of station proximity.

Does Capital Bikeshare have any formal siting criteria that it would be able to share with the BCA? **Provided separately.**

What is your procedure for selecting sites and notifying neighbors around the sites? Do you have different procedures for commercial locations vs. residential location? Do you physically survey the area before notifying neighbors? If the neighbors located around the proposed site objects to placing the Bikeshare station what procedures do you use to determine if you will place the site at the location or try another site? **Procedures don't vary based on location. We begin with sites recommended on our Crowdsourcing map (available at bikearlington.com) that community members contribute. We physically survey sites and then share the best site(s) with the relevant civic association and adjacent residents/businesses for input. We also provide a link to an online survey about the proposed site to civic associations to distribute via their neighborhood mailing list for further input.**

If there are valid objections to a proposed location, we work with residents/civic associations to find an alternative.

Quality of life questions:

Does Bikeshare have quality of life measures/surveys for neighborhoods before and after Bikeshare installations and if so would they share? **We conduct a biennial survey of Capital Bikeshare members which is available at <http://www.bikearlington.com/pages/bikesharing/reports-and-analysis/>. Members report a high level of satisfaction with the service which is available in 81 Arlington neighborhoods. We have surveyed neighborhoods about their perceived impact of a bikeshare station within their neighborhood.**

What are the typical vandalism patterns for Bikeshare installations and average times in which the vandalism is rectified? **Vandalism is minimal. In Arlington, there have been no incidents of vandalism in 2015. The most recent incident in Arlington was in December 2014, when a map panel was broken. Any vandalism is addressed as soon as it is reported.**

Options to adjust the station design towards reducing its urban, and retail characteristics. **See slide 23. Not including the map frame, which has usage instructions and a map of nearby stations for trip planning, is an option.**

Options for station screening and visual buffers. **We want stations to be visible, primarily to be easy to locate for riders and for perceived/actual safety.**

Zoning approval/Use Permit process for stations in residential and S-3A zones. **Stations installed on streets or sidewalks would not need to go through this process. No special Zoning approval is needed for parkland, however, Dept. of Parks & Recreation approval is necessary.**

Concerns have been raised that Capital Bikeshare stations will attract out-of-area commuters who would congest neighborhood streets with their parked cars while they access Capital Bikeshare. Do you have any statistics as to the zip codes associated with the current users of the

Capital Bikeshare station at George Mason Drive and Wilson Boulevard? Specifically, would you have a breakdown by zip code of “local” users versus “out-of-area” users during morning commuting hours (i.e., Monday-to-Friday, 6:00 am to 9:00 am). Users with the zip codes 22201, 22203 or 22205 should be considered local users and all other users should be considered out-of-area users. [See slide 20 for an analysis of this question.](#)

Concerns have been raised that vehicles servicing Capital Bikeshare stations will be noisy and could pose safety hazards for nearby pedestrians and homeowners. Do you have any statistics as to how often individual Capital Bikeshare stations are serviced in an average week? Could you describe the type and size of Capital Bikeshare’s service vehicles. [See slide 11 for image of vehicle, which is a standard Sprinter van. Similar stations are serviced roughly once per day.](#)

Concerns have been raised that Capital Bikeshare station display panels, which sometimes have advertisements in addition to Capital Bikeshare’s standard system map, would be inconsistent with the non-commercial nature of our neighborhood parks and residential streets. Would Capital Bikeshare be willing to take steps to address this concern, such as having non-illuminated display panels, smaller panels or no panels whatsoever? [Slide 23. Stations are not illuminated. Omitting the panel is an option.](#)

Do you have any data concerning the influence of Capital Bikeshare stations on: (1) home values, and (2) crime rates? [We do not have this data.](#)

... address concerns that residents raised earlier about garbage and garbage removal around stations, people gathering around stations, noise from people using stations, noise from the station and bicycles, solicitations around stations, children misusing stations, traffic and noise from maintenance vehicles and technicians, injuries caused by people using the stations and bicycles, the amount and impact of people driving to use stations, the impact that bikeshare stations have on criminal activity, and low demand from Bluemont residents because Bluemont residents have enough space and money to store their own bicycles on their own properties.

- [We have not experienced complaints of garbage around stations. Stations are regularly maintained by operations staff.](#)
- [Stations are in public places where people might gather. However, users customarily take or leave their bicycle and then leave.](#)
- [We have not encountered complaints from other neighborhoods about noise around stations. Rebalancing visits are brief, roughly five minutes.](#)
- [Advertising is not permitted on stations and is removed.](#)
- [We have not had reports of injuries or other problems resulting from children misusing stations.](#)
- [There have been 22 reported crashes involving bikeshare in Arlington in the five years since service began. Most involved minor injuries. There have been no fatal crashes involving any Capital Bikeshare users.](#)
- [The strong majority – 87% - of bikeshare members live near \(within ½ mile\) of the closest station and we believe very few drive to use a station. Slide 20 provides more data on access to the existing station at George Mason and Wilson Boulevard.](#)
- [We have no data on any relationship between bikeshare and criminal activity.](#)

- Fifty-eight percent of Capital Bikeshare members in Arlington do own their own bicycle. They use the service for the value of access to a well-maintained fleet of bicycles, to make one-way trips, and to not have to locate bicycle parking.

What can be learned from experience with the station at River Rd and Landy La? Although it is in a commercial area, it is near the Capital Crescent Trail and about a mile by bike from the nearest other station. Outside of Bethesda, this is one of the more well-used stations in Montgomery County. More than 500 trips started or ended at the station in May, making it comparable to the station in Bluemont at George Mason Dr & Wilson Boulevard.

I recall during the meeting we wanted to know more about the profile of people using the GM and Wilson CABI station. Is it people from our neighborhood or commuters from Fairfax and other Northern Virginia locations? Is the capacity about right? How many rebalancing do they have to do? Is there any data about vandalism, attracting riff-raff or other problems with bike share generally? See slide 20 for the profile. Most users are coming from within Bluemont. Others come from other locations in Arlington or D.C. that are also near stations. The current capacity (15 docks) seems to be adequate. In May, the station was unbalanced (completely empty or full) 3 percent of the time, which we regard as an acceptable figure and which is lower than the Arlington average of 5 percent.

Rebalancing takes place roughly once per day, with variation depending on the season and the day of the week. We have not had reports of any problems at that location.

Cost related questions:

Can they clarify about us rage and cost recovery? I heard from a bike Arlington rep that the 60-70% cost recovery rate last week was actually for the entire year and not just the warm months. I heard that they are at 110% in the summer months. It would be good to get the right numbers. Total cost recovery (which includes staff time, but not capital costs) was 63% for fiscal year 2014. Operating cost recovery was 72% for the same period.

Any marketing surveys on cost/fee structure. Capital Bikeshare's first membership increase took place this spring.

The business/financial model of BikeShare. Arlington County owns its portion of the regional service. Overall, in fiscal year 2014, the County generated \$792,000 in operating revenues and \$102,000 from station sponsorships, for a total of \$895,000 in revenues. Expenses included \$1,114,000 in operations; \$132,000 in credit card fees, sales tax, and refunds; and \$185,000 in management and marketing for a total of \$1,431,000 in expenses.

See the attached annual report for additional information.

How does the cost to the county of the total life cycle of bikeshare compare to other modes of public transportation, including costs for equipment and land acquisition and maintenance,

replacement, operations, retirement of facilities and equipment, marketing and advertising costs, revenue from advertisers? See pages 12-15 of the attached bikeshare Transit Development Plan for a more detailed examination of capital costs. We do not have an available comparison to other modes of public transportation for total lifecycle costs, although operating cost recovery compares favorably to other forms of transit.

Additionally, because of the questions people are asking about the financial viability of bike share, it would be good if we could bring to the table data about costs and subsidies of other types of transportation (ie street widening) and any data about if bike share offsets any of those other costs. In other words, why is it that Arlington County sees bike share as beneficial from a cost perspective? Cost recovery for bikeshare compares well with other forms of public transit. (Metrorail 75%; Metrobus 28%. ART 30%. All FY14). We do not have data on subsidies for road projects. Some studies have suggested that only about half of road construction and maintenance costs in the United States are paid for by drivers.

Not appropriate questions at this time:

What areas, if any along the Custis Trail should we throw into the hat to consider?

We've been told that bikeshare wishes to have stations near or around Bluemont Park. I presume that means at least one station is desired between George Mason/Wilson and Bluemont Park, correct?

For a station at or around Bluemont Park, are there any suggestions/thoughts for locations from bikeshare?

Are there any locations on George Mason between George Mason/Wilson and the hospital that bikeshare believes might be appropriate, if the other goal is to get a bikeshare station at the hospital?

Any marketing surveys on likely members/users in neighborhoods within walking distance of probable locations.