

## **Summary of Origins of Bicycle Safety Task Force and Adopted Bicycle Safety Report**

The issue of bicycle safety has been a topic of interest by various County groups over the past several years, including discussions by the OUTBoard, the BOCC, and citizen groups that have consulted with authorities at the Sheriff's Department, the Highway Patrol, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). Discussions regarding bicycle safety have increased over the past several years following incidents between motorists and bicyclists. There has been interest in developing policies and procedures for enhancing bicycle safety, reviewing State laws, promoting the development of safer bike lanes, and clearly identifying agencies/departments for addressing the problems. Because counties in North Carolina do not maintain roads, the County's focus looks more towards safety policies, procedures and public education rather than new laws and enforcement.

At the Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) November 6, 2014 regular meeting, a petition regarding bicycle safety was brought forth by Commissioners requesting Planning staff to review policies related to pedestrian bicycle access and begin working with cyclist groups, law enforcement and transportation officials to develop a culture of sharing the road. In response, Planning developed its plan to address the petition. The Staff Plan addressed representation from the BOCC, citizen participation, public outreach, task objectives, and ultimately a report back to the BOCC in June with recommendations/a plan. These tasks were addressed through the work of an Orange Unified Transportation Board (OUTBoard) subcommittee group consisting of three OUTBoard members and four interested citizens over the course of approximately three months. The full OUTBoard discussed the issues relative to the development of the report at its March, April and May 2015 meetings.

The subcommittee's final Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Report was reviewed and edited by the OUTBoard at its May 20 meeting. The OUTBoard unanimously voted to approve the Report with minor edits, and forward the Report to the BOCC with a request for endorsement and implementation of the recommended policies and procedures for advancing bike and pedestrian safety in the county.

At its June 16, 2015 meeting the BOCC accepted the OUTBoard Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Report and directed staff to return with information relevant to next steps.

On January 11, 2016, the County Manager met with staff, the OUTBoard Chair, and the Sheriff. It was agreed that the best way to implement recommendations of the Bicycle Safety Report would be through a Task Force with a defined charge and set term. It was also agreed that the general focus of the Bicycle Safety Task Force should be on education and communication. The Manager requested that the OUTBoard develop recommendations for the membership composition, charge and initial term of a Bicycle Safety Task Force. Staff was instructed to bring the OUTBoard's recommendations back to the BOCC.

At its February 17, 2016 meeting the OUTBoard made the recommendations regarding the Bicycle Task Force membership, charge and term and forwarded it on to the BOCC for review. The recommendations were included in a recommended Bicycle Safety Task Force Resolution.

The Resolution authorizing the creation of a Bicycle Safety Task Force and future appointment of members to serve on the task force was approved by the BOCC at its March 1, 2016 meeting. The BOCC requested that staff work with the OUTBoard and return with a recommended list of names to be appointed to the Task Force.

At its March 16, 2016 meeting the OUTBoard finalized the application form for the Bicycle Safety Task Force. With the assistance of OUTBoard members and County staff, Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for the task force application process were:

- Circulated on social media;
- Included in the County newsletter;
- Provided to multiple local newsgroups and other media sources;
- Provided to the chambers of commerce;
- Provided to the school system;
- Provided to membership groups identified in the Resolution; and
- Provided to other groups previously expressing interest in the topic of bicycle safety

The OUTBoard reviewed the applications and recommended appointment of the members. Then on June 2, 2016 the BOCC approved a revised Resolution increasing the membership from 15 to 18, which included 2 OUTBoard members, and appointed all 18 members.