

Joint Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
Friendship Heights/Silver Spring/Greater Shady Grove/Bethesda/North Bethesda
May 22, 2024

Item 1 – Welcome: **Jim Carlson** called meeting to order. Introductions were tabled due to the number of attendees.

Sandra Brecher, MCDOT Commuter Services Chief, announced the micro-mobility survey, designed to capture opinions from the public riders and non-riders regarding usage and impact in areas of the County that have micro mobility, is available on line. Information from the survey will help to responsibly expand the program to other areas of the County.

Item 2 – Technical Update to the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways: M-NCPPC Planner, **Steven Aldrich**, presented updates to the Highways and Transitways Master Plan and demonstrated the app. He explained that they are currently adding technical updates for a working draft to be presented to the Planning Board June 27th that will be followed by a public hearing in early September. **Mr. Aldrich** explained that the Master Plan at first looked at updating the highway system; however, as the County transportation demands are growing, the plan now includes transit improvements such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). In January 2023 two bills from County Council updated the street conditions of the Complete Streets format - part of the Master plan process - to include all modes of transit on all travel ways, expanding the street function and land use. He referred to the Complete Streets page on the Planning site. Also discussed:

- Understanding the benefits of the technical classifications of streets & travel ways
- After the Planning Board’s public hearing, then work sessions followed by a Council public hearing
- Some of the recommendations of the Task 3 area include clean up & correcting of travel speeds on roadways by constructing separating infrastructure and other structures to lower speed, and updating temporary translations in the Complete Streets code to permanent conversions
- How street classification & design impacts speed and safety, and translating those changes to the public
- Assigning target speeds, then designing to achieve them as much as possible knowing, however, that some speed goal may never be reached
- Streets are designed to encourage an intrinsic sense in drivers to reduce travel speeds
- Changing classifications of streets to include removal of some segments
- Discussion regarding a transitway recommendation to have BRT planning in alignment with Complete Streets classifications – BRT planners update the master plan placement of transit

Mr. Aldrich demonstrated features of the web map, showing the usage of the filter button that allows for comment on road segments with a click, to view recommendations for a particular travel way. Also demonstrated:

- The map includes recommendations on state roads as Planning works with State Highway Administration (SHA) in road classification - advisory mode for roads not owned by the County.

- As Smart Growth and Complete Streets programs grow, there are fewer road-focused projects for transitways master plans and more people focused on increasing bikeways, sidewalk maintenance near schools -Vision Zero, Climate Action Plan programs included
- **Andrew Bossi** is **Steven Aldrich's** counterpart at MCDOT
- On the Planning page Complete Streets web site is an alternative comment form for those who do not wish to comment using the map by clicking on road segment
- The filtering button can filter for specific recommendations, such as roads with the speed limit of 30 mph
- The legend button is used to access features on the web map
- The base map function can find recommendations for an area or a specific residence
- There is a recommendation to remove the ICC express bus, since it is not part of the BRT system
- The Legend key provides options to keep or remove projects for specific highway segments
- There were many comments for M83 as it is highly controversial

Q&A discussion:

- Discussion regarding sidewalks of the Complete Streets chart being in conflict with master plans or communities that don't want sidewalks – purpose is to make streets safe for everyone, and some communities do not want sidewalks as their neighborhood may be older with narrow streets
- Sidewalks wanted for connection streets between neighborhoods
- Traffic calming measures for curved streets are preferred
- Discussion regarding Planning input for independent municipalities such as Rockville, Poolesville and Takoma Park- no input for roads but do provide comments regarding transit
- Planning can only construct on roads it has jurisdiction over. as DOT owns and maintains their own roads, Planning in advisory mode only
- Complete assessment of master plans requires viewing of not only the transit & highway maps but also the area master plan as well
- Reducing parking in an area also reduces cars
- The decision of building sidewalks and the changing paradigm of transit
- The importance of transportation demand management (TDM) efforts in reducing single driver auto trips in the County

Mr. Aldrich concluded discussion explaining that design standards such as neck downs, recess parking assist in slowing speeds on wide roads, as the parked cars perception slows traffic while creating a pedestrian barrier.

The comment period has been extended from 30 to 70 days thru September 12th. There are no group presentations currently planned; however, he is available as he is enthusiastic to work with the community on how to fill in gaps in development connectivity.

Dave Anspacher is a good contact and Park & Planning for development and connectivity issues.

Item 3 - County Updates: Jim Carlson announced:

- Bike To Work Day was a success, with eight pit stops managed by Commuter Services and contractors - Council President Friedson attended the Friendship Heights pit stop
- Metro will shut down subway operations in five stations on the west wing of the Red Line; shuttle service and free 30-day Capital Bikeshare memberships provided for those that live within three miles of affected stations.

- Transition of Ride On bus fleet to zero emission, hydrogen fuel cell.
- BRT public open houses for Veirs Mill Road route
- **Ms. Brecher** discussed looking beyond using biking to get to work but using all alternative travel methods for all types of trips, not just to work.
- **Peggy Schwartz** (North Bethesda TMD) said that there were pit stops at NIH & FDA for Bike To Work Day

Item 4 – Around the Room Announcements:

Tom Quinn (DC ANC-3 Representative) reported that Metro Better Bus Network, which was going to extend the Route 30 line into Bethesda has now changed its decision to extending the Massachusetts line into Bethesda instead. He believes the change is a missed opportunity for bus connectivity to Bethesda.

Ms. Brecher will follow up.

Adjourn