

**Greater Shady Grove
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
March 3, 2021**

Voting

John Brandt / Universities at Shady Grove
Amy Frieder / Neighborhood Representative
Benjamin Garcia / Neighborhood Representative
Steve Kelley / NIH – National Cancer Institute
McClellan Quinn / EYA

Ex Officio

Sandra Brecher / Representing MC Dept. of Transportation (MCDOT) Director
Catherine Matthews / Upcounty Regional Services Center
Capt. David McBain / Montgomery County Police
Vacant / City of Gaithersburg

Staff

Nakengi Byrd / Montgomery County Commuter Services
Jim Carlson / Montgomery County Commuter Services

Absent

Paul Yanoshik / RE/MAX Realty Services

Guests

Jake Adler / Van Eperen
Jennifer Bolick / Van Eperen
Stacey Cook / COG TPB
Gary Erenrich / MCDOT
Gehmelle Johnson / NIH – National Cancer Institute
Laura Van Eperen / Van Eperen

Item 1 & 2- Introductions/Minutes: Members and guests introduced themselves.

The Committee approved January's minutes.

Item 3 – Visualize 2045- Stacy Cook, Council of Governments (COG) Transportation Planning Board (TPB), presented information on *Visualize 2045*, an initiative of COG and the TPB. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are Federally funded to support regional transportation planning in the Metropolitan Washington Region, such as air quality analysis and jurisdiction coordination. In the 1960s the Federal Government decided to fund transportation planning to ensure air quality and for 20-year long term future planning for the 35 million square miles that comprises the region. Projections show that another 1million will added to the transportation system.

Also discussed:

- There are no towns included in the MPOs; however, there are cities-400 MPOs in the US that are established if an urbanized population is over 200,000
- Each MPO operates differently, but must meet Federal requirements such as the Visualize 2045 plan
- The Vis2045 plan was approved in 2018, updated with a new plan -Vis 2050 to be approved in 2022
- Federal requirements include that the transportation project has a plan in place showing funding, air quality, climate change resiliency, and that land use targets are reached
- Discussion regarding the performance analysis saw an increase in traffic congestion and delays which signaled a need to refocus the seven initiative concepts, ensuring they are close to jobs & housing
- Telecommuting has had the fastest impact on improving the transportation system
- Discussion on how autonomous vehicles are being considered in the Visualize 45 plan, as there are many unknown variables making projections difficult- white paper to be presented in webinar on March 25th.

Ms. Cook asked the Committee to submit suggestions for projects to improve transportation in the Greater Shady Grove area. Some suggested micromobility projects, such as e-scooters and enhanced development near Metro. Also discussed:

- Kick-off of the next plan schedule began December 2020 with a call for projects – survey already underway & planning work to establish initiatives
- Public outreach efforts include a survey comment period from the public to finalize draft
- Some of the issues that create uncertainty of 20-year projections are climate change, rapidly changing technology, and global pandemic
- A climate resiliency study is in place and a mitigation study is to come to evaluate greenhouse gas reduction while maintaining equity
- 2,400 responses from the public on Covid impacts on transportation and the needed enhancements - focus group formed to capture marginalized communities
- Survey discussion on what would motivate usage of public transit - more efficient land use in low-income areas
- Survey results can be viewed at visualize2045.org – informational videos to share with the public
- The survey results regarding congestion were gathered during the Covid pandemic
- Challenges to overcome include funding Metro to accommodate long-term planning expenses
- Need for more housing built near Metro has seen an uptick in active travel due to increase access
- To increase walkability, commuters need to feel comfortable walking free of obstructions

Ms. Cook discussed how, although there are constrained elements to ensure effective planning projects, there are additional projects not mentioned in the plan, such as Montgomery County's Bicycle Master Plan, which points to broader work that is being done in the region. Discussion continued:

- Including the County's Thrive Montgomery 2050 plan in the next regional plan update - the regional plan is updated every four years but amended continuously. The next update will be completed by 2026 with approval by Fall 2022
- Discussion regarding coordination between the County's Climate Action Plan, master plans, the various jurisdictions and traffic analysis. especially in the projected absorption of traffic and flow

patterns. The fact that MC's County Executive does not control traffic funding for project planning, needing the approval of the County Council, further complicates progress as traffic projects depend on land use

Item 4 – Metro Update: Gary Erenrich updated the Committee on WMATA's proposed budget cuts:

- There will be hearings on the proposed budget cuts – March 9th @6pm for Maryland – comments can be provided on survey
- The cuts, if approved, will have a devastating effect on transit – new Covid bill funding, if passed, will prevent cuts
- Title 6 requires Metro to consider equity when making changes to service; however, this is circumvented by not cutting rail service which, although is accessible to all, it is not affordable to all
- There are constraints to MCDOT updating transportation projects to the Visualize 2045 plan, such as County Council not taking action to release funding - BRT corridors are in the long-range plan
- I495/270 toll lanes – working on Memorandum of Understanding w/ State Highway Administration for transit funding in lanes

Item 5 – Employer TDM Plans: Jim Carlson reported on Employer TDM Plans, stating that all companies that submitted plans or annual reports meet requirements and go beyond in most cases.

- **The Committee voted to recommend MCDOT Director approve the TDM Plans**

Item 6 – Marketing Outreach Update: Jennifer Bolick reported:

- TMD Outreach Team is working on employer TDM plans
- Virtual employer Commuter Information Days (CIDs) planned
- COG Employer Recognition Awards - working with employers to submit nominations
- Promoting the Telework/FareShare webinar- now available to view online
- Sharing information to businesses via the newsletter

Item 7 – Updates: Sande Brecher reported:

- Bike To Word Day is May 21, 2021- virtual pit stops this year-area bike shops for t-shirt pick up
- New Park & Ride guide available
- Commuter Services sponsoring WABA bike riding classes
- The County Exec operating budget due March 15
- Bike match program - need good used bike donations

Adjourn: Next meeting date May 5, 2021