

**Greater Shady Grove  
Transportation Management District  
Advisory Committee  
November 2, 2022**

---

2

**Voting**

**Benjamin Garcia** / Neighborhood Representative  
**Steve Kelley** / NIH – National Cancer Institute

**Ex Officio**

**Jake Adler** / Upcounty Regional Services Center  
**Sandra Brecher** / Representing MC Dept. of Transportation (MCDOT) Director  
**Catherine Matthews** / Upcounty Regional Services Center  
**Kirk Eby** / City of Gaithersburg

**Staff**

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

**Absent**

**McClellan Quinn** / EYA  
**Paul Yanoshik** / RE/MAX Realty Services

**Guests**

**Steve Augustine** / MC Resident  
**Jennifer Bolick** / Van Eperen  
**Gary Erenrich** / MCDOT  
**Maren Hill** / M-NCPPC  
**Gehmelle Johnson** / NIH-National Cancer Institute  
**Alex Rixie** / M-NCPPC  
**Charlie Scott** / WMATA

---

**Item 1 & 2 – Introductions/ Minutes Review:** **Jim Carlson** opened the meeting; member and guest introductions. September’s joint TMD AC meeting minutes were approved.

**Item 3 – Great Seneca Plan: Connecting Life and Science:** **Maren Hill** from MC Park and Planning gave an update to the amended Great Seneca Plan, explaining that they are doing two phases of the minor masterplan amendment. In 2010 the County Council approved and adopted the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan, and Planning has since reevaluated the staging requirements and barriers to implementing the 2010 plan. They are also incorporating the Corridor Forward & Great Seneca Transit network projects into the master plan. Also discussed:

- Looking at emerging travel trends using cell phone data, telework and rideshare to create new connections
- The plan is updated to include new County policies such as racial justice & equity, Vision Zero and Thrive 2050

- The timeline for the plan has been pushed back four months to conduct a study that will contribute to final recommendations
- The current visioning & analysis is the largest part of the planning phase as it incorporates community outreach and engagement
- The Planning Board hopes to have the Great Seneca Plan adopted by Fall 2024

**Ms. Hill** discussed the boundaries of the Plan area which resemble Swiss cheese plan due to its noncontiguous layout however the Plan focuses on the eastern section as it is where development is occurring the most. The Plan is broken into sections called the whole plan area, a focus area and the Life Sciences Center which was the focus of the 2010 plan. The Life Sciences Center is the focus of the staging requirements of the 2010 plan and has twice as many life science jobs as the rest of the County as a whole. Also discussed:

- Working closely with the Cities of Gaithersburg & Rockville who have their own planning authorities for plan recommendations

**Alex Rixey**, Transportation Planner for the project, discussed the existing conditions that include many four- to six-lane roadways, which make up the main landscape. Also reported:

- Rethinking past recommended interchanges that are rarely built
- Looking more into the pedestrian experience and comfort walking level in the area, focusing on crossings, sidewalks with buffers separating traffic from pedestrians
- Crossing issues include having to cross too many lanes of traffic, unmarked or low visibility treatments – safer crossings have island refuges
- Equity Focus areas have concentrations of low income or minority groups with language barriers have more uncomfortable walkways than more affluent areas
- The plan area is 275 acres and currently has only one protected crossing
- Predictive safety assessment looks at the likelihood of crashes on a variety of County roads and shows that increased lanes contribute to more crashes
- Transit operating in the area include eight Ride On routes, two Metro stations and a private shuttle operated by National Cancer Institute
- The average commute time to the Life Sciences Center is about 44 minutes for automobiles and over one hour for transit

Q & A Discussion:

- The Corridor Connectors are deciding whether to remove the staging requirements tied to the Corridor Cities Transitway since development has stalled due to the requirements- currently none of the staging requirements have been changed
- Staging requirements will be examined for the Life Science Loop Trail; however, funding for its completion comes from private developers and the CIP
- Discussion regarding the private NCI shuttle that has increased ridership to 75% of pre-Covid numbers; however, picks up passengers who are not NCI/NIH employees – Ride On service is available for those not authorized to ride the shuttle
- Metro only has control over the shuttles it has granted permission to operate; unauthorized shuttles can use the Kiss & Ride section at Shady Grove Station
- The NCI shuttle does not check for ID; however, they will start again when Covid ridership picks up due to employees teleworking less

- Although some buildings in the area have mostly teleworking employees, there are some labs and medical centers that have many employees still coming in to work as they do not fall within the typical commuting hours

**Item 4 – Metro Operating and Capital Budget:** **Charlie Scott**, WMATA, gave an update on Metro’s operating budget. The new General Manager will propose a budget to the Metro Board in December for final approval in March for July implementation. Also discussed:

- Changing the complex fare system to increase rail ridership
- Some improvements to the system include free rail-to-bus transfers, weekend flat fares and lowering 7-day bus pass price to \$12.00
- Ridership is currently 45%, which is below pre-pandemic levels, resulting in decreased revenue for Metro’s budget
- Rail service has remained largely the same due to the shortage of 7000 rail cars
- Using a zone fare system is being considered; also a low-income program pilot
- Metro is studying parking fees, reducing bus fares, and having a free fare system
- A free fare system would leave a half billion-dollar burden on the three funding jurisdictions - DC, MD & VA
- A flat fare system causes issues due to more revenue needing to be covered by jurisdictions that fund Metro or loss of riders because of high prices
- Zone fares include problems with calculations and making them more equitable
- Fare prices specific at every station show the fares for that station only
- Making the whole Metro system accessible to the low-income population is a priority as most low-income riders use Metrobus more than rail – Metro is piloting a low-income program in DC
- The heaviest ridership is in the core of the system as Metro looks to improve connections and travel flow throughout the system
- Pocket tracks can stage extra trains to use to increase service when ridership is high
- Metro is looking at reinstating turnbacks on the red line to even out service to improve time travel for riders.
- Discussion regarding MCDOT disapproval of reversing the train turnbacks at Grosvenor and how to organize a response to Metro’s Board, including Maryland’s governor support of the turnbacks-the coming opportunity lanes will increase ridership to Shady Grove, which will be complicated by the turnbacks
- **Mr. Erenrich** asked for a response from the Committee members to oppose the turnbacks and also to present to the County Executive

**Item 5 – Metro Update:** **Gary Erenrich** reported that Metro’s Board member **Chris Abby**, who was appointed by the County Executive, submitted a resignation letter due to not being able to do the job effectively

**Item 6 – Employer TDM Plans:** **Mr. Carlson** asked the Committee to review 10 employer TDM plans.

**The Committee recommended approval for TDM plans submitted by the following employers:**

- Alta IT Services
- Always Best Care Senior Services
- BLH Technologies
- Integrated Biotherapeutics
- Johns Hopkins Community Physicians Heart Care

- Presidential Exteriors
- SPS Consulting
- Tetracore
- Connection
- Nutricia North America

**Item 7 – Marketing Outreach Update: Jennifer Bolick reported:**

- Staff is conducting outreach to the public on events such as Car Free Day, the Bike Donation Drive, and the Walk & Ride challenge
- The Commuter Survey is underway and there are weekly prize giveaways – new QR code directs smartphones to the survey site
- Promoting the scooter and bike classes- scooter classes are free

**Item 8 – Updates: Mr. Carlson** announced the west side temporary bus stop closures at Shady Grove Metro.

**Adjourn**