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# Transcript of Public Hearing 

Date: December 12, 2023
Case: Amherst Avenue Bikeway Project, In Re:

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Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

Hearing held at:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF TRAFFIC ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS 100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

Before Shegaw Mekonen, Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland.

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023

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A P E A R A N C E S
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PHIL MCLAUGHLIN, Hearing Officer MCDOT
JOSE THOMMANA, Acting Chief Division of Transportation
Engineering MCDOT
REBECCA PARK, Transportation Unit Manager MCDOT
ANGEL CHENG, Project Manager MCDOT
LORI JEAN MAIN, MCDOT Coordinator
MATT JOHNSON, MCDOT
STEVE ZEENDER, Stantec
ROBERT MILSTEAD, Stantec
UMA KOTA, Stantec

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P R O C E E D I N G S
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Whereupon,
MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Okay. Good evening. Today is Tuesday, December 12, 2023, and the time is 6:38 p.m. My name is Phil McLaughlin. I am the hearing officer designee at this hearing for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation for the Amherst Avenue Bikeway Project in Wheaton, Maryland. Here with me this evening to conduct this public hearing are Mr. Jose Thommana, Acting Chief for the Division of Transportation Engineering for Montgomery County Department of Transportation; Ms. Rebecca Park, Transportation Unit Manager for MCDOT; and Ms. Angel Cheng, Project Manager for MCDOT. Mr. Thommana will be providing the information and details regarding the proposed project.

Thank you for joining us in person and on the virtual platform tonight. Although we have held quite a few virtual hearings, this is the first time holding a hybrid public hearing, so please bear with us if we encounter any technical difficulties tonight. Tonight's hearing is being held in person and simultaneously broadcasted via Zoom and it is also being recorded. A link to the recording will be posted within 48 hours after tonight's hearing on the project website for the Amherst Avenue Bikeway Project. The link to the project webpage is provided by scanning the $Q R$ code in person and at the top of the chat on the virtual
forum.
Please note your video camera is turned off by default this evening. This is to reduce the bandwidth of the meeting and maximize technical efficiency. We request that you do not turn your camera on during this hearing. Likewise, your microphones have been muted once the testimony portion of this hearing begins. Those who wish to testify can raise their hand, and you will be called on when it's your turn. For those who are attending in person, a microphone will be passed to you when it is your turn to speak. And for those who are attending virtually, you will be unmuted when it is your turn to speak. If you're joining us via telephone only, you may raise your hand by pressing star nine on your telephone keypad. Please wait until the testimony portion of this hearing to raise your hand. You may raise your hand at any time during the testimony portion of the hearing. We will call on you to provide your oral testimony when it is your turn to speak. Written testimony and comments may be submitted as well, and will be considered with the same weight as oral testimony.

Following the testimony portion of this hearing, we will hold a question and answer session, if time allows. During that time, you may raise your hand to ask a question, or you are welcome to type your question in the chat box by clicking on the chat icon at the bottom of your screen in

## Transcript of Public Hearing

the virtual platform.
Tonight's hearing is being held pursuant to Section 49-53 of the Montgomery County Code. The purpose of this public hearing is to obtain resident testimony and comments regarding the potential project to assist in determining if the project is in the best interest of the public, and whether or not it should be authorized for construction in its entirety, or any portion thereof. This forum allows you to provide testimony about the project either in support or in opposition. Testimony and comments received may influence the final design. Your testimony and comments should be focused entirely on the project, which is the topic of discussion. All interested parties are entitled to be heard at this hearing. However, the testimony portion of the hearing is not a forum for dialogue, questions and answers or cross-examination. Please direct your remarks to the specific project that is the subject of this hearing. If comments stray into areas not related to the project, I will ask that you refocus your comments on the subject of this project.

Following the conclusion of this public hearing, the record will remain open for one month to allow any person who was unable to attend this hearing an opportunity to have their comments included in the public record and be fully considered. The official closing date by which all
written testimony and comments must be received is Friday, January 12, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. Submissions should be provided by the online comment form at the following link, which is seen on your screen, or e-mailed to Angel Cheng at angel.cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov by the close of the hearing record. Please be sure to provide your name and property address on your submission. Written submissions will be considered with the same weight as oral testimony. After the hearing is concluded and the record is officially closed, I as the hearing officer will review and weigh all the information submitted into the public record and make a recommendation to the Director of Montgomery County Department of Transportation Christopher Conklin for his decision regarding the final detailed design of the project.

And now to discuss the replacement of Amherst Bikeway, I'll pass it along to Jose Thommana.

MR. THOMMANA: Good evening, Mr. McLaughlin.
Ladies and gentlemen, for the record, I am Jose Thommana with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation Division of Transportation Engineering.

The subject of this evening's public hearing is to consider a proposal to construct the Amherst Avenue Bikeway and other associated work at the approaches. For your convenience, we have posted a few downloadable displays that will aid in the visual description of this project on the
project website. We will review them as I describe the project.

Display $A$ is a project vicinity map showing Amherst Avenue in Wheaton. The blue line represents the project limits of the Amherst Avenue Bikeway on Amherst Avenue from Windham Lane to Arcola Avenue. The total length of the proposed bicycle facilities will be approximately 1.1 miles long.

Next slide. Display B shows the improvements in more detail. The large plan shown on the screen can be downloaded for review. For tonight's presentation, we will use zoomed-in images of the plan as I highlight several of the key features. The next several slides will show the Amherst Avenue Bikeway in more detail. Each of these slides include a key map in the upper left corner that shows what segment of the path we're discussing. In the upper right corner of the slide is the legend highlighting what the various colors and line styles are showing. The proposed two-way cycle track is shown along the southbound Amherst Avenue. The light green shaded area represents the grass buffer and green spaces, and the light gray shading indicates the proposed concrete. Finally, the white lines indicate the existing public right of way line.

Display B1, beginning at the intersection with Windham Lane, an eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a

Transcript of Public Hearing
three-foot wide buffer will be on the southbound side of Amherst Avenue. On-street parking area will be eight foot wide on both sides of the street, and existing parking restrictions will remain the same. In addition, the travel lanes will be narrowed down to 10.5 feet wide.

Next slide. Display C1 depicts the typical sections of Amherst Avenue corresponding to display B1 from Windham Lane to Prichard Road. The top typical section is what exists today, and the bottom typical section
illustrates the proposed eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a three-foot buffer along southbound Amherst Avenue. The on-street parking area will be eight foot wide on both sides of the street, and the travel lanes in both directions will be narrowed down to 10.5 feet wide.

Display $B 2$, the eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a two-foot-wide buffer continues on southbound Amherst Avenue through Prichard Road and Reedie Drive. On-street parking areas will be eight foot wide on both sides of the street where southbound parking will remain as long-term metered parking, and the permeable pavement will be used to construct the parking bays for residential permit parking along northbound Amherst Avenue. The sidewalk along northbound Amherst Avenue will also be reconstructed to five foot wide to comply with the ADA requirements and county standards.

Next slide. Display C2 shows the typical sections corresponding to display B2 between Prichard Road and Reedie Drive. Again, the top typical section is what exists today. The bottom typical section illustrates the eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a two-foot buffer and eight-foot parking areas on both sides of the street, as well as the travel lanes to be narrowed down to 10.5 feet wide in both directions.

Next slide. Display B3, the eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a two-foot-wide buffer continues on southbound Amherst Avenue through University Boulevard between Reedie Drive and Blueridge Avenue. On-street parking areas will be 7.5 feet wide on both sides of the street and parking meters will remain. In addition, the travel lanes will be narrowed down to 11 feet wide. Floating bus stop is proposed near the Amherst Avenue parking garage. The intersection at University Boulevard will become a protected intersection featuring corner islands, bike cue areas as well as bike signals to accommodate crossing University Boulevard on the proposed two-way cycle track. The traffic signal at this intersection will also be reconstructed with mast arm traffic signals and a new signal timing plan and phasing, as well as upgraded sidewalk and curb ramps. At the intersection northbound traffic will have one left-turn lane

Transcript of Public Hearing
and a through and a right lane, while southbound traffic will have one left-turn lane, a through lane and an exclusive right-turn lane.

Next slide. Display C3 shows the typical sections corresponding to display B3 between Reedie Drive and Blueridge Avenue beyond the intersection approach at University Boulevard. Again the top typical section is what exists today. The bottom typical section illustrates the eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a three-foot buffer on southbound Amherst Avenue, the 7.5 foot meter parking area on both sides of the street, as well as travel lanes to be narrowed down to 11 feet wide in both directions.

Next slide. Display C4 also shows the typical section corresponding to display B3 at the north leg approach with the University Boulevard intersection. Again the top typical section is what exists today. The bottom typical section illustrates the eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a three-foot buffer at the same elevation as the proposed sidewalk for southbound traffic, an eight-foot-wide right turn lane, an 11-foot-wide through lane and a 10-foot-wide left turn lane, and for northbound traffic a 12-foot-wide through lane.

Display B4, the eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a two-foot wide buffer continues on southbound Amherst Avenue through Blueridge Avenue and Elkin Street and

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
ends at Arcola Avenue. On-street parking will be 7.5 foot wide on both sides of the street. In addition, the travel lanes will be 11 foot wide. Sidewalk along southbound Amherst Avenue will also be reconstructed to five feet wide to comply with the ADA requirements and county standard. Floating bus stops are proposed near Blueridge Avenue and Elkin Street. Two proposed bioretention facilities near Arcola Avenue will treat storm water runoff during rain events and provide better drainage pattern. Finally, the Arcola Avenue intersection will be reconstructed to include bike crossing, traffic signals on mast arms with new signal timing and phasing, as well as curb ramps and pedestrian crossing.

Display 53 shows the typical section corresponding to display B4 between Blueridge Avenue and Arcola Avenue. Again the top typical section is what exists today. The bottom typical section illustrates the five-foot sidewalk, the eight-foot-wide two-way cycle track with a three-foot buffer on southbound Amherst Avenue, seven-foot-wide parking areas on both sides of the street, as well as travel lanes to be narrowed down to 11 feet wide in both directions.

This slide shows an example of a bioretention facility and permeable parking bay constructed previously in Montgomery County. The proposed bioretention facility and permeable parking bay will look similar to the pictures

Transcript of Public Hearing
shown here.
This slide shows an example of a floating bus stop in downtown Silver Spring. The proposed floating bus stop will look similar.

This slide shows a photo simulation of the proposed two-way cycle track on Amherst Avenue.

The total project cost is currently estimated at 5,900,000, including engineering, land acquisition for fee simple, perpetual easement and temporary construction easement, utility relocations, construction and construction management costs. The design of the project began in the spring of 2019 and is expected to be completed in the summer of 2024. The construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2025. The project cost, funding and schedule are subject to change as the project progresses until it is complete. Pursuant to Section 49-52 of the Montgomery County Code, there are no properties which are considered to be specially benefited by the proposed improvement. Therefore, no properties are expected to be assessed.

Several exhibits are incorporated into the public record binder for your information and consideration. The exhibits are: One, the approved Fiscal Year 2024 Project Description Form for Capital Improvement Program, CIP number 502002, Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Improvements

Wheaton CBD; two, the design plans at the level of 90

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
percent completion with the latest revisions; three, written testimony provided prior to and after this public hearing to be added following this hearing; four, Washington Times newspaper online advertisement proof, and Montgomery County governmental press release; five, list of attendees to be added following this hearing; six, hearing transcript, also to be added following the hearing. Project-related data and files can be downloaded from the project website at https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/ amherstavenue. The files will continue to be available to the public until the record for this public hearing is officially closed.

As previously stated, here with us this evening are Ms. Rebecca Park and Ms. Angel Cheng of MCDOT. In addition, we have Mr. Steve Zeender, Mr. Robert Milstead and Ms. Uma Kota from the engineering consulting firm Stantec present at this hearing. We will be available after the hearing to answer any questions regarding the construction aspects of this project. And now $I$ will turn things back to Mr. McLaughlin.

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Thanks, Jose. We will now hear your testimony. We will now hear testimony from those in attendance who wish to testify. If you wish to testify, please raise your hand both in person and virtually, and we will call on you in the order that your hand was raised.

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023

Alternatively, if you join the meeting by phone, you may dial star nine from your telephone keypad to let us know that you wish to testify. Once you are invited to speak, please clearly provide your name, address -- name and address for the record prior to beginning your testimony. We will begin with those who wish to testify now. Again, please be sure to announce your name and property address before providing your testimony. Now we are going to hear testimony. So if I can get assistance -- is Lori --

MS. MAIN: I'm here, yes. I do have a hand
raised. Did we want to alternate between people in the room on site and the Zoom?

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: I think that makes a lot of sense. Yeah.

MS. MAIN: So, Angel, do you want to start with the people on site, or do you want me to go first?

MS. CHENG: Yeah, we can start whoever wants to testify --

MS. MAIN: Okay.
MS. CHENG: You don't have to, but you probably have to speak in the mic because other people can't hear.

MR. CARLESCO: My name is Adam Carlesco. I live at 10904 Bucknell Drive, which is just on Amherst Avenue just south of Prichard. And so I rely upon walking and biking and transit for transportation. I personally don't
own a car. I'm here to express my kind of overall support for the project, but a particular dismay at the current handling of the cycle track project. What started as a forward-thinking initiative has been a drawn out, inefficient endeavor that's stretched on for six years now and won't be completed for eight. And so all this effort, amendments to like -- it will accommodate essentially 13 parking spaces. These are public spaces right next to a Metro station, an underutilized parking garage and on-street parking is on the literal other side of the street. They're being revamped at expensive utility cost, specifically to benefit personal homeowners in a low-density area right in the middle of what is designated as essentially a downtown area under Thrive 2050. So I see it a little baffling how much the county and the MCDOT is bending over backwards to accommodate low-density single family residents in a town of about 20,000. And so what we're seeing is what should have been a pretty quick cost-effective multimodal transportation project that's turned into a pretty overblown, delayed massive $\$ 5.9$ million infrastructure project. And so this cycle track, $I$ would like to see it done as quickly as possible. I thought that last time I looked at this this was going to be done this past October before it got blown out. And this cycle track's crucial to a lot of residents in the downtown Wheaton area who depend on non-automotive
means to get around, to reach the Metro, to reach groceries, to reach schools, the mall, the library. This promises the safer and more connected way to get around the county, and it's in alignment with MOCO's climate and transportation goals. This project's taken far too long. If we're going to bend over backwards to accommodate a handful of parking spaces next to massive parking garages in the middle of an urban core that's being designated by a master plan, and it's going to take nearly a decade, we are never going to meet any of our goals that we've listed out with our transportation plans, in our pedestrian master plans, and our bike master plans, and our Thrive 2050 master plans if we keep accommodating automotive infrastructure like this, and at taxpayer dollars to benefit private property. I mean, look at this. We're extending the private right of way to start purchasing from these people so we can put parking in front of their own private homes, each of which has a driveway. And it's the same thing on the other end. It's going in front of large condos that have parking lots. The Wheaton area's like 50 percent parking and car infrastructure. This is not the way to do it. I would like to see this project done as quickly as possible and to benefit anyone who doesn't want to be in a personal automobile or tethered to the costs of what it takes. We are connected to a Metro system. We have a bus depot in the

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023
middle of downtown. This is within the downtown area. This needs to get done, and we need to cut the cost of trying to put in complete utility reroutes to accommodate private parking. Thank you.

MS. CHENG: Thank you.
Lori?
MS. MAIN: Yes. Next we'll hear from Glen

Burnett. Glen, can you unmute yourself?
MR. BURNETT: Hi. Yeah, my name is Glen Burnett.
I live at 1017 Loxford Terrace in, I guess, the -- our neighborhood's got a really funky designation in terms of names, but we're probably about a mile off of the planned route. I pretty regularly, when I get the opportunity to be able to bike, I bike my kid to school. I've been able to bike my other kid to daycare and things like that. And we actually cross this route. Like we're obligated to do that every time that we want to go somewhere. And I just want to once again come on and really voice my support for this infrastructure that's being built, and also support the last speaker in terms of just saying like this is a great opportunity for Wheaton to become a little bit better. This allows people to be able to -- this allows people to be able to have access that they -- that, frankly, is not a very complicated thing. And I think that it's really important that we actually just allow people to have this.

Transcript of Public Hearing

I do want to flag that for where these locations are at that there needs to be continued discussion about some of the connecting lines that this cycle track will then connect up to. So there is a space in-between Amherst, and then as you're heading towards downtown Silver Spring there's a space where there's a -- I think it's a MedStar Health Facility and the Maryland Department of Health and I think it's like mental health or something like that that basically makes it -- really it goes from a passable space to something where you basically just have to go and get onto Georgia to be able to do this. I know that is not part of the exact plan that's being built here, but $I$ think it's really important that you consider the connections that these routes are taking so that when you're making these things happen you also allow people to be able to use it so we're not having a situation like we did with the bike lane on University Boulevard where it goes up to almost the place where it's useful and doesn't actually get to the -- doesn't allow the bicyclist to get where they actually need to go. So that's my point for tonight. Also, you guys rock. Just want to let you all know that. Thank you for doing this work.

MS. MAIN: Thank you, Glen.
MS. CHENG: All right. Do we have anyone
attending in person who would like to do testify orally

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
right now? You can raise your hand.
MR. ERNST: Hi. My name is Timothy Ernst. I live at 10616 Dunkirk Drive, which is about a mile south of this building. I am really glad this project is being built. I wish we had more of these projects on the drawing board in Montgomery County.

I think, to the gentleman's point, parking rules the world, especially in the United States of America where we have somewhere between two to three billion parking spaces for 330 million cars. That's about seven parking spaces for each motor vehicle in the United States. Great book by a guy named Henry Grabar, Paved Parking -- everyone, if you're my age, you know Joni Mitchell -- awesome book about How Parking Rules the World.

However, this is great stuff. I ride to the grocery store. I ride to the post office. I ride my bike to the library, the beautiful Wheaton Library and Community Center. Pedestrians we have to -- we need pedestrian safety in the county. This should be part of the vision to have fewer pedestrian deaths. These projects narrow roadways, and they slow us all down. So, if I'm in my car, I'm forced to slow down. I have to slow down. I have to start paying more attention to people on bikes, people in wheelchairs who are crossing these intersections, people walking, senior citizens. So these types of projects, which are happening

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023
in Europe, in South America, all over the world are there to help people get around safely. And, frankly, we all need to do a better job of getting out of our cars, and I'll include myself in that.

So thanks to the Department of Transportation for doing this project. I'm sorry it took so long also. But maybe this is a model for how we can move ahead. Maybe we can get a bikeway on Dennis Avenue, which would then connect Amherst from Dennis in front of the health center down to the Sligo Creek Trail. I'm sure this will eventually get us to the public library in a safe and effective way. I'm hopeful. So I think it's a great start. I think the Department of Transportation deserves our thanks. And let's keep moving forward. Thank you.

MS. CHENG: Thank you.
Lori --
MS. MAIN: Okay. Next we'll hear from Ben Jarrett.

MR. JARRETT: Hi, my name is Ben Jarrett. I live at 11101 Amherst Avenue. I live in one of the single family homes between Prichard and Reedie. I guess sort of regarding slowing down like what the last gentleman mentioned, $I$ had hoped to see maybe some crosswalks and speed humps in that section because we frequently do have a lot of fast travelers. I didn't see that in this iteration

## Transcript of Public Hearing

of the plan. I also have a concern about the permeable parking bays. And I guess I don't know. Am I able to share a screen to share a video of what it looks like whenever it rains on the northbound side of the street?

MS. MAIN: No. Sorry.
MR. JARRETT: Is there a way to submit that
afterwards?
MS. MAIN: Yes. You can e-mail it to the project manager Angel, and her contact information will be displayed on one of the upcoming slides.

MR. JARRETT: Okay. So I had corresponded with
Angel a few months ago about it, and she presented to me that there was likely going to be a gutter system that could potentially sort of separate the permeable bays from the street to take on excess storm water. I didn't see that in the diagrams here. You know, I'm not concerned necessarily about home value, but concerned about damaging my foundation and my basement. That's currently where I'm talking to you from now. I just -- I just have a concern that the permeable bays are going to allow water from the road to be absorbed, but it's not just going to segment it off. And I really hope that the team does something to address that. Thanks.

MS. MAIN: Thank you, Ben.
Okay, Angel.

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023

MS. CHENG: In person, anyone that would like to --

MR. BZDEGA: My name is Andrew Bzdega, architect owner of 11009 Amherst Avenue. First of all, I would like to say I am very much in -- I very much like this project. I support it.

However, I would like to point out that my house, along with those others that apparently are entitled homeowners, are actually outside the central business district. They're zoned residential, and to maintain that residential feel and actual zoning, generally, you have on-street parking. Regardless, we're losing our landscape buffer to give up -- to accommodate parking, which we require. I myself have a five-year-old son and an elderly mom, as I know a lot of the residents there do as well. The last thing we need is having a bunch of kids running across the street to get to our houses, along with elderly people. So, to reiterate the last speaker's comments, crosswalks would be very much helpful on that section of Amherst, as well as some sort of speed regulation, speed humps, something like that. Because we live on a hill, speeding is a huge issue. Very dangerous to get across the street there. And that's it for today. Thank you.

MS. CHENG: Thank you.
Lori?

MS. MAIN: All right. Next we'll hear from Steve Solomon.

MR. SOLOMON: Hi. My name is Steve Solomon. I live in 11605 Yeatman Terrace just down Arcola. I am not a biker myself. I am a automobile driver. I was not in favor of the bike lanes at University Boulevard. I thought they were completely put in the wrong place, and were not used and did not connect things. This project seems much more sensible going past the Metro station and connecting a major road and whatnot.

And so, as an automobile driver primarily, I am very concerned with the safety of bicyclists who are on roads and now will be much more safer. So I am in favor of this project. We also have a current project of bus lanes on University Boulevard, which don't really connect to this, but we'll go through it.

The question and issue $I$ have is that we are just on the heels of a statewide $\$ 3$ billion transportation shortfall over the next six years that looks like will cut several projects statewide and will, of course, trickle down to the county. So I'm concerned that any money we spent may mean other projects will not be allowed to happen and what this means for our county. Of course, it's the state budget, but we know that means a lot towards Montgomery County. So $\$ 5.9$ million is lot of money to me and to a
lot of people, and $I$ don't know how the county's plans over the next several years will be affected as far as any and all projects which all need to be reevaluated based on what money is coming in from the state. So that's the main concern for me too is that the money will not be coming in anymore, and what effects that will have on many countywide projects. Thank you.

MS. MAIN: Thank you.
MS. CHENG: We'll go to --
MS. KOLTNOW: I'm Nina Koltnow, 2314 Parker
Avenue. I live with my husband Louis just north of the Wheaton Library. And to the point somebody was making a few speakers ago, it would be nice to get between the library and downtown Wheaton safely. It is treacherous, as everybody knows, $I$ think, to walk, bike, roll, be a toddler on Georgia Avenue. It's really not supportable. So I'm completely in favor of this project, and I did want to mention also in terms of getting to the library this is where the bike lanes will end. The bike lanes on Arcola currently, which are great east of here, don't continue up the road to the library. But there is -- this is a county DOT right of way that $I$ know is under consideration for being paved. It's used heavily as a walking path right now, although it's not possible for anybody who's not a pretty hale soul to walk on it, but it goes north for three blocks

Transcript of Public Hearing
to connect up with Shorefield. It doesn't end at Shorefield. It ends at Henderson, which connects to Shorefield. But getting that made into a bikable and walkable right of way would go a long way toward connecting everybody really from Glenmont on down in a safe way. That's all $I$ wanted to say.

MS. CHENG: Thank you, Nina.
Lori?

MS. MAIN: I do not have anyone else right now. MS. CHENG: Do we have anyone in person? Okay. Yes, my name is Mike Zwolinski. I live at 11366 King George Drive, so I'm right off of University Boulevard. And I really appreciated that the effort was made when the bike lanes were put in when you had the sticks in the middle of the street so you could ride from, you know, over at Amherst all the way down to Sligo Creek and you were pretty much separated from the rest of the traffic. I know this is a separate issue. But what I like about this is it's taking into consideration trying to slow down the traffic, create a separate dedicated lane where the bicyclists can be. But my concern would be the trucks that are going to Safeway that are on Amherst and just the general flow of traffic over at Reedie because I walk from the Metro and I see them in the morning, I see them in the evening and I just see people going through the stop signs. What will be done with that

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
would be a consideration of mine.
Overall with the project, to the previous gentleman's point about the transportation budget being cut, I'd be curious to know what kind of studies have been done of how many people are actually going to be using this and what is the cost benefit. You're spending nearly $\$ 6$ million on this project. You look at the purple line. You look at the transportation that are in the Silver Spring. \$6 million now when it's all done will be $\$ 9$ million. It's an awful lot of money to spend for how many people are going to be benefiting from this. Even though I'm a cyclist, I like the project, but $I$ just wonder the cost benefit analysis of the whole thing.

MS. CHENG: Thank you. Do we have any one else?
MS. MAIN: We do not.
MS. CHENG: Thanks, Lori. Do we have anyone
attending in person who would like to speak? Anyone attending virtually?

Phil, we can pass it back to you.
MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Okay. Thanks. That concludes
the speakers who have expressed an interest in speaking tonight. As a reminder, written testimony and comments may be submitted as well and will be considered with the same weight as oral testimony. We appreciate all your testimony. Seeing that everyone who wishes to speak has had an

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023
opportunity to do so, this concludes the oral testimony portion of this public hearing.

Now we will move into the question and answer session. Again, please raise your hand or press star nine on your telephone keypad if you wish to ask a question. You're welcome to type your questions in the chat box. If we run out of time before answering all questions in the chat box, questions will be answered via e-mail in the coming days. Does anyone have any questions?

MS. CHENG: We have one in person.
MR. NINAN: Okay. Hi. My name's Eric Ninan at 1939 Westchester Drive. So echoing the comment made earlier, do we have any idea what the anticipated usage of the bikeway will be?

MS. CHENG: Okay. I mean, Jose, do you have any? Matt? Okay. I'd like to introduce Matt Johnson. He's our bikeway coordinator from MCDOT. He has a lot of experience with it.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Angel.
Yeah. So the question is do we have any idea what the ridership, the use will be on this project, and we don't have great modeling for bikes really at this time because we don't have a network. So I want you to imagine the Metro, right. The Metro -- I took the Metro here to this meeting this evening. I'm sure most of you in this room, probably
everyone but I don't want to hazard a guess -- probably everyone in this room and probably everyone in this Zoom has ridden the Metro and has found it useful at least at some point. We can imagine maybe the Metro going farther out being more useful to us, the purple line being useful to us. We can imagine this, even though we don't necessarily know maybe know exactly how many people, we can estimate that because we have this history. Right? But if we imagine back to 1976 when the Metro only went from Rhode Island Avenue to Farragut north, out here in Montgomery County there wasn't a Metro. People in Wheaton might have said what is this useful -- I have to drive all the way downtown before I even get on the Metro. Right? It doesn't go where I need it to go. By the time I get downtown, I'm already downtown. Why am I getting the subway? Right? And it took a good 20 years for that Metro line to get out to Wheaton, right? That's the state we have right now of bicycling in Montgomery County. We have little pieces of the network here, little pieces of the network there. Some of them connect. Some of them don't. But we're working on building that network out. And there's sort of an aphorism, a cliche in planning that says we don't judge the demand for a bridge by counting the number of people swimming across the river. Right? We can tell that people want to go from point A to point $B$ because we know that there is a major demand area
here in downtown Wheaton. There's jobs here. There's jobs in Silver Spring. There's a Metro station here. There's a lot of housing around here. So we can do the same kind of modeling we do for vehicular trips and say we know where people live, we know people work, we know people shop, we know people go to school, and we can use those numbers to get an estimate of kind of where the demand is. But until the network gets built out, it's hard to say exactly how many people are going to use this. So we're going to build this Amherst piece. But as one of the commenters mentioned, there's kind of a gap between here and Silver Spring. If someone wants to bike from Wheaton to Silver Spring, he can't easily get there yet. But we have a bicycle master plan. So over the next 30 or 40 years, we're going to be building out more and more of the network so this becomes a more useful project. So if you don't see hordes of bicyclists on day one, it doesn't mean that this is a failed project. Right? We look at this not just as a bike project, but also as a pedestrian project and as a safety project and as an accessibility project. Right? We're
doing these things to improve intersections. It wasn't really talked about, but we're building islands and corner islands at these intersections to reduce what's called the exposure so that pedestrians aren't exposed to -- even if not a single bicyclist used this, we've still improved
pedestrian safety. But bicycles will use this, and we know this because in other parts of the county when we have built separated bike facilities, even ones that are very isolated in the network, we have seen increases year over year of bicyclists. Now, unfortunately, we've been building a lot of a network that -- that part's not unfortunate. It's great that we're building the network out. But, unfortunately, a lot of the network has come online in the last two or three years. Right? And it's hard to judge numbers when we've had this global pandemic. Right? So we count bikes every year at the same locations. We usually add locations as more facilities get built. And we have a lot of great data from 2019, and then we see this huge dropoff in 2020 and this huge dropoff in 2021. Right? But we also saw that in car trips. So it's hard to say we built this bike facility and people didn't use it because people aren't commuting as much. But we know that in the future people are going to make these trips, and we know that people are going to be making trips because not every trip is -- if you think about it, most trips that you make are not your commute trip. Right? You go to work in the morning and you come home from work in the afternoon. That's two trips. But you go to the supermarket, you go to a restaurant, you go to your neighbor's house, you go to church, you go to school. These are all trips that you
make. And so bike trips -- we're not necessarily saying in order to use Amherst, you have to commute to downtown DC. You might just be biking over to Wheaton Plaza or biking down to the library up here. So all those trips are trips that people can make, whether they're working -- whether they are returning to work every day or not. So the answer is we don't have a good concrete number, but we do know that when we build low stress bike facilities it does increase, and we've seen increases of over 100 percent on some of our projects in Silver Spring where we're more than doubling the number of people who are using these facilities. But, again, the network is still very incomplete and very stunted, so it's hard to judge from that. But we know that there's demand. We can see that demand. So that was kind of a long answer, and not a very concrete answer. But, unfortunately, that's kind of the state of where things are now. But if we look at DC, we have seen huge increases where their network is much more complete than ours because they've been doing it a little bit longer than us, and they have fewer miles to build because it's a denser place. You can connect a lot more of the city with fewer miles than you can in Montgomery County. But we have seen major increases in $D C$, and we expect to see similar increases here. MR. NINAN: What's the definition of major
increase? Do you have any numbers?

MR. JOHNSON: I can't give you a number. What I can tell you is we know that there's demand here. And the question is -- I guess what you're trying to get at is kind of a value statement. And, for me, what $I$ would say is these are all safety projects. Right? We want people to be able to get out of their cars and bike. We want people to get out of their cars and walk or take transit. It's vital to the future of our planet that we reduce our reliance on cars. And for a lot of people, they don't see that option. And, because they don't have a sidewalk in front of their house, they don't have a bike lane in front of their house -- like I'll just give my parents' example. They don't live in Montgomery County, but they require a car for every trip. They can't walk anywhere. And my dad just lost his driver's license. My mom's getting older. And I say, How can you keep living here when, you know -- so people want options. And so this is not a matter of we're gonna have 5,000 cyclists a day out here, so we have to build this. Right? This is about creating mobility, and it's about saving lives. We have an endemic problem. 40,000 Americans die every year in car crashes. 40,000. It's a huge number of lost lives, lost productivity and a lost future. And there are deaths -- I don't know what the numbers are Montgomery County, but there are deaths every year in Montgomery County on our roads. And we have adopted

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023

Vision Zero. So this is about more than just saying we're getting a lot of people out here. It's about saying we're improving safety, we're improving connectivity. And it is going to take time to change the county because we spent seven decades building without any regard, really, to pedestrians and bicyclists, and so that network is incomplete. So I don't have a concrete number for you, but we do expect this to be heavily used, especially as more of the network gets built out. We have to look farther into the future for that.

MS. CHENG: Thank you, Matt.
Do we have a question online that we want to
address, Lori?
MS. MAIN: I do have someone that would like to ask a question.

MS. CHENG: Yeah. Why don't we alternate?
MS. MAIN: Okay.
MS. CHENG: Lori, would you like to call the
person --
MS. MAIN: Okay. I wasn't sure if I was. So next we'll hear from Ben Jarrett.

MR. JARRETT: Just a question regarding the presentation portion. If $I$ remember -- did I hear right that between Prichard and Reedie the sidewalks are gonna change to five feet wide to meet ADA standards?

## Transcript of Public Hearing

MS. CHENG: That is correct.
MR. JARRETT: Okay. So that's both sides of the
street, both sides of Amherst?
MS. CHANG: I think this on the single family side
of Amherst.
MR. JARRETT: Okay. On display C2 it still
shows -- I think it says 4.5 feet on there, so I just wanted to confirm that that should be five.

MS. CHENG: So I think there's a typo on the display, so yes. We apologize for that. It should be five feet wide.

MR. JARRETT: Okay. Glad to hear it, especially with some of the buffers being taken away and the sidewalks are narrow as they are now. Sometimes people even have to move out of the way into a yard or a buffer, just people walking through. So I'm glad to hear that that's extended. Thanks.

MS. CHENG: Thank you.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hi. My name is Jim, and I have been coming in and out, so I apologize. Maybe this has already been answered. But obviously this project has been in planning for a long period of time, and it's nice to see that it's moving forward. Can you or somebody give us kind of a realistic timeframe both in terms of money and timeframe for implementation, considering the cutbacks and,
you know, DOT has to make priorities, etcetera? Where are we in this process? I know originally they had tried to move it up faster a year, but now has that changed. So where are we really at with this programming? Thank you.

MS. CHENG: So this project is funded by the Wheaton BPA Program, which is the pedestrian bicycle priority area, and is fully funded for construction. We do have the money for the construction of this project.

So in terms of timeline, again, we are scheduled to finish final design by summer of 2024 , just in a couple months. And then from there we have to, you know, coordinate with utility companies that might be impacted and also, you know, with property owners that, you know, might be impacted because we're reconstructing some of their driveway that is fronting their property. So that process typically takes anywhere between nine to 12 months, and that's why construction can't really start until the spring of 2025. Now, from there, the actual construction can last anywhere between 12 to 18 months, depending on the weather. And, you know, God forbid, you know, snow or not that year, that will put us, you know, a little bit longer in terms of construction timeframe. But, because this is a linear project, not the whole Amherst will be impacted at a time. So obviously we'll, you know, construct this piece by piece so that, you know, we won't be impacting the residents and

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
people who are traveling this area during the whole construction time.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So that means that it's in the CIP and it's been approved and allocated?

MS. CHENG: Yes. So the question was whether the money is in the CIP. Yes, the money is in the CIP already. UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

MS. CHENG: Yes. So the question was about the Grandview Avenue project. So the Grandview Avenue project is currently on hold. Again, we're gonna have to rethink our budget. And, you know, we just showed everyone that, you know, the cost of this project has risen quite a bit because of inflation, you know, design and a different intricacy that we have to -- you know, in order for this project to be viable, you know, for most of the residents here. So the Grandview project is currently on hold until further notice. So thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).
MS. CHENG: That is actually four and a half feet.
Okay. So I just want to clarify the previous question about the sidewalk. And I apologize for the confusion. So
instead of by the proposed five feet, we're actually
proposing four and a half feet because of the right of way. And if you have further comments or questions, feel free to raise your hand again and we can get those.

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

Lori, do we have anyone online that raised their hand?

MS. MAIN: Actually, Ben Jarrett has another question.

MR. JARRETT: Thanks. So I noticed, if I noticed correctly, that some of the parking on different stretches were seven and a half feet, rather than eight. Did you guys consider or was it an option to, you know, take the half foot away from one or both the parking sides to widen that sidewalk a little bit? Because, like I said before, it's pretty tight.

MS. CHENG: Yeah, we understand that. So if you look into those particular sections, the travel lane for those sections is also 11 foot, instead of 10 and a half feet. Now, the reason for those sections is because those sections has both the ride-on bus and the Metro bus that goes through that area. And we've been coordinating with both our transit services and the LaMotta buses, and they requested us to keep it at 11 feet at the minimum so that their bus can safely traverse over those areas. But we understand that, you know, we kind of have to do a tradeoff between the two. And if we reduce the traveling to 10 and a half and increased it to eight feet for the parking, it would put the bus really close too. So we're just giving them a little bit more room for the bus to travel through.

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

Does that answer your question, Ben?
We'll go for a question here in person. All
right. We have to ask everyone to speak in the mic because we want the people who are attending in person to listen to you.

MR. UPJOHN-MEDTOW: This is Dan Upjohn-Medtow, 11018 Cone Lane. So I noticed you're going to be reconfiguring the University-Amherst, I guess, crosswalks there. So right now in front of the veterinary clinic that button is very hard to push. One, will that be improved? And, two, for that intersection do we even need, you know, push buttons for the pedestrians, rather than just have it automatic? Because there really is enough pedestrian traffic there to justify that being, you know, second to, you know, road traffic.

MS. CHENG: Okay. So your first question is about the push button in front of the veterinary hospital. So, yes, we are reconstructing that whole area so that the button will be accessible to anyone really, and then increasing the pedestrian area more, because I know how tight it is between, you know, the utility poles and the fence and the -- you know, the bushes. That really isn't enough to call it ADA compliant, so we will be upgrading that area in particular. Now, in terms of whether pushing a button or not, $I$ think we are designing to have a push

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
button regardless. So, you know, I think people are still used to pushing it regardless, which is -- and that's a programming thing. So we can easily turn it on if that's -you know, if we have enough demand, which is, you know -MR. UPJOHN-MEDTOW: People cross without it. MS. CHENG: Yeah, we can consider that. Matt, do you want to add? MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I just wanted to follow up on
that. Even if the signals are on recall, which is when they're automatic like in downtown Silver Spring, we still have to have a push button because someone who's deaf and blind has to know when the signal's crossing. And so those buttons, if you're deaf and blind, you push the button and you hold -- you keep your hand there, and it vibrates when the walk sign comes on. So even if the signals are on recall, meaning they're automatic, there's still a button there. And frequently, if you're in downtown Silver Spring, for example, you don't have to push those buttons. I actually had someone who complained to us one time and said I can't believe you guys make pedestrians push the button, because every time she got there she pushed the button. And I said, If you just show up and don't push the button, the walk sign is still gonna come on, but we have to have the buttons there for people who have disabilities. So you're always gonna see the buttons. There always has to be a

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023
button there. But whether they're on recall, meaning they're automatic or not, is a programming issue, which we can change. Even if it's not installed or is installed, we can change it in the future.

MS. CHENG: Lori, do we have anyone raising their
hand online?
MS. MAIN: I do not.
MS. CHENG: We'll go with someone in person.
MS. ERNST: I was wondering if maybe Matt could just talk to us and educate us about, in general, how redesigning this entire intersection at University Boulevard and Amherst Avenue will make it safer for everybody. I mean, automobile drivers, it'll be safer. It'll be safer for pedestrians, because now I use that intersection a lot as a pedestrian. I see young people, older people, I see people, you know, trying to cross this intersection, and it's very dangerous. So maybe someone could give us a big picture of why this project isn't just for bicyclists, you know. I mean, I'm a bicyclist; I'm a pedestrian; I'm a driver. I do all these things. Can someone please explain how all these things work together to make everyone safer? MS. CHENG: Yeah. So it might be hard for everyone to see, so if you would like to come closer, or you can look at it later. We can do the slide thing because we have technology, if it works, except it doesn't work. We

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
went to the wrong direction. Okay. Right here. All right. So again we're talking about the intersection at University Boulevard and Amherst Avenue. We're completely redesigning this intersection, including the traffic signal. Here we have to propose two-way cycle track on the top of the screen, which is the west side of Amherst Avenue. We're adding corner islands to heightening the curb radius for this whole intersection. Now, how does that help in terms of safety? Well, with a tighter corner radius, it forces vehicles, drivers to turn much slower. And these corner vehicle also have truck aprons where it will help a larger vehicle to make those turns. So it will make the intersection just much safer when everyone is approaching it slowly and making the turn slowly, and it will increase the time for people to look for pedestrians also. We're restriping all four corners for the crosswalk, as well as adding the bike crossing here. We're also adding a bike signal for this intersection. A bike signal is the same as a traffic signal, but it's for bikes. So basically it will give a signal, a green bike kind of like light bulb when it's ready for -- when it's safe for a bike to go. So the new of signal phasing and timing will include a phase for the cyclists to cross University Boulevard safely. And we're also adding no turn on red for this intersection so that, you know, it will be safe for both pedestrian and

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023
cyclists who will be crossing University and Amherst really.
Yeah. We're reconstructing the sidewalk approaches for
these. The curb ramps will be reconstructed so that it will
meet ADA compliance, APS signal push button will be
included. And yeah, I think that's kind of a high level of
what this intersection will look like in the future.
Any question following up?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not on that specific
intersection, but $I$ am curious about this Prichard and
Amherst intersection. Are these curb bump outs to tighten the turn radius?

MS. CHENG: Yes.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Why have the county not considered, as other people have mentioned -- are there speed tables? Because this is a downhill slope meeting a downhill slope. And $I$ have to cross this every single day, and I swear I'm gonna get hit one day, unless something is done to physically, like, curtail that. I understand it's like a narrower lane, but I went to the Netherlands. Speed tables do this. You don't even need a stop sign to do it. So like there and at the Reedie intersection it's the same story on both of those.

MS. CHENG: Yeah. And we can take a look at it and see if it is feasible, but one of the things that we have to consider when we're adding speed table or speed bump
in general is whether the drainage will work. Because a lot of times when we raise a certain area, we have to consider how the waters flow when it rains. So we don't want to make, you know, the road flood just because of that, but we can -- we can take a look at it again and see what is possible. We can potentially consider a raised crosswalk, if, you know, that could help. But again we have to look at the drainage area to make sure that the water will flow when it rains.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So as part of the master plan, once this is put in place, what is the next step that you're aware of at this point to take it and do something perpendicular that will take you west of here? Because you're mentioning Wheaton Plaza, downtown shopping; but, essentially, once you leave that bike lane and you head west, you're dealing with Reedie and you're dealing with University. They're both very unsafe for bicycles.

MS. CHENG: Yeah. So for the Wheaton CBD area, there is a planned, you know, bicycle network on both -actually, on Reedie as well as on Blueridge, which is north from University. Again, those are kind of like a long-term plan of what we're trying to do to connect. And this gentleman also mentioned Grandview, which is another piece to connect people on bikes to downtown Wheaton. And so there are so many things that we have in the plan. We only

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
have limited funding, you know, with things being more expensive. Our next piece is actually -- it will probably be the Blueridge, actually, in terms of east-west connection, so that'll be upcoming. I don't know when yet. Again, we have to relook at our budget for the whole transportation in general or just funding in general. But there is a planned network for Wheaton, downtown Wheaton in general. But that's a good question.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.
MS. CHENG: Thank you.
MR. NINAN: Following up on that and coordinating it with something else, both of these obviously intersect with an SHA property, and SHA has been promoting this University corridor thing, which will terminate right where you are here. So I guess the question is the coordination there. I know that's a longer-term plan, theoretically, if we are going to -- I don't know how that timing's going to work out. But what is the coordination between SHA and MCDOT for this particular intersection where University and Amherst is which is a terminus for their project?

MS. CHENG: Yeah. So we've been coordinating with them for this particular intersection. We have submitted our traffic impact statement to them. They have looked at our preliminary design and approved of it. So moving forward, we just have to get their blessing on the final

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
design. And then, obviously, throughout construction we have to coordinate with, you know, working in the right of way. But they are aware of this project, and they pretty much gave us the approval after, you know, coordinate -making sure that we meet their standards and their criteria in terms of for the bike signal and also reconfiguring the intersection.

MR. NINAN: So, assuming that you go first and you make your changes, whatever their requirements are won't undo what you guys have already done? In other words -- you know where I'm coming from. You know, it happens. It happens all the time.

MS. CHENG: At this point, no, but --
MR. NINAN: The left hand does not always talk to the right hand, which brings us to Blueridge, which we'll talk about separately, but that whole Blueridge-Georgia issue really gets more complicated because you want to have that west bike lane.

MS. CHENG: Yes.
MR. NINAN: But that also prevents cars that are trying to go north on Georgia from University having -- so we lose a turn lane there. So there really needs to be some community input into that --

MS. CHENG: Yes. Absolutely.
MR. NINAN: -- particular intersection because

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
nothing's happened there. It's horrendous. We've been fighting with DOT forever and a day to do something and then it gets caught. And then you talk to SHA and they're like, Well, we don't know anything about that so --

MS. CHENG: Yes, yes.
MR. NINAN: -- that needs to be high up there on
the priority list.
MS. CHENG: We understand, and we've taken note of
that.
MR. NINAN: Thank you.
MS. CHENG: Thank you.
Anyone on line, Lori?
MS. MAIN: No.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thanks. So people have mentioned linkages of other bike paths in the future. It seemed to make a lot of sense if you're going south of Windham Lane roughly more or less parallel with Georgia Avenue towards Silver Spring. Are there plans in works for that?

MS. CHENG: Yes, there is. Yeah. So there is a planned bike facility on -- I believe it's Woodland. Is it Woodland Drive beyond Windham, I think? So there is a neighborhood greenway that is planned for that section. Now, Amherst is funded by the Wheaton BPA program, and it's limited to Wheaton CBD area. And anything beyond Windham is

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023
unfortunately not part of the Wheaton CBD anymore. I don't believe we have a plan anytime soon for Woodland Drive yet, but maybe Matt knows, because Matt knows everything.

MR. JOHNSON: Not everything, just everything bike
related. So yeah, Angel's correct. I just wanted to just add a little bit. So this corridor from Arcola all the way down to Montgomery College, Fenton Street, Woodland Drive, Amherst Avenue, it's one continuous corridor with a few interruptions. So the Fenton Street project, for those of you who aren't aware, is at basically 100 percent design. We're hoping to go to construction next summer, and that will get the bikeway through downtown Silver Spring. It connects to the Metropolitan Branch Trail just south of Burlington Avenue around 410. So the Metropolitan Branch Trail is a regional trail in Montgomery County. It runs basically right next to Fenton Street down past Montgomery College. There's a gap at the DC border, but DC is actively working to connect their piece. Once you get into Fort Totten Metro, it starts up again and it goes all at a Union Station. So this is a continuous corridor that within the next few years will go all the way from Union Station in downtown Washington up to the north end of Silver Spring CBD. This Amherst project will also get built. There'll be a little bit of a gap, though, between Fenton Street and Amherst in Wheaton. But Woodland Drive and Amherst

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Avenue -- it's still Amherst just south of Windham. It's still -- it doesn't change to Woodland until a little bit further south. But those two projects that will at some point we will do a neighborhood greenway and maybe more -it may be phased. There is that medical campus that was mentioned earlier that's kind of a gap, and then there's the Beltway, which is also a gap. Now, the master plan does call for some kind of better connection across the Beltway, whether that's a wider sidewalk on Georgia Avenue underneath the bridge, whether that's a new bridge across the Beltway maybe even with Woodland Drive, we don't -- it's way too early and it would be very expensive project. But FHA does plan to rebuild that interchange in the future, and so there is some potential that we could leverage a state project to get that connection under the Beltway. And then the medical campus, it's always possible that things redevelop over time. It's in the master plan. When things redevelop, they're required to be in compliance. So, as I said before, we have a big county. We have lots of projects. It's a network that's still growing. But if anyone wants to learn more about what's in the bike master plan, you can go to montgomeryplanning.org/bikeplan, and that will take you to the whole plan. But there is a map there, which is -- I always have that map open. I mean, this is just my day job, but I always have that map open in a window on my browser

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023
because $I$ never know when someone's gonna ask me about a project. So it shows everywhere the county contemplates building low-stress bike network. So yes, there is -- it's in the works, but it's not at the stage where we're in design yet. So it's probably several years out. But once these two projects are completed, it's going to be really a high priority for us to kind of build that connection. But exactly where the funding for that comes in is a little different, because it's outside the BPA program boundaries. So figuring out where we get that money is an open question right now, but it's on our -- it's on our radar.

MS. CHENG: Thank you.
Do we have any other questions in person or virtual on Zoom?

MS. MAIN: No questions.
MS. CHENG: All right. I think we'll stick around for the next 10,15 minutes maybe. Or should $I$ just pass it back to Phil? Back to Phil. Sorry. I totally don't know what --

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: All right. Thanks, Angel. You may be sticking around, right?

MS. CHENG: Yes. I'll be here in person.
MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Okay. Seeing that all questions have been answered, we'll now conclude this hearing. As a reminder, we will be keeping the record open for one month.

## Transcript of Public Hearing

Conducted on December 12, 2023

Written testimony and comments are due by Friday, January 12, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. Additional written testimony and comments may be submitted by e-mail and must be received by the close of the hearing record. Submissions should be sent to Angel Cheng at angel.cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov, or can be submitted online using the comment form at the following link, which is seen on your screen, hopefully. We appreciate all your comments and questions tonight. At this time the public hearing is now concluded. Have a great night. Thank you.
(The hearing concluded at 7:51 p.m.)

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

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                                    CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER
    I, Shegaw Mekonen, the officer before whom
    the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify that
    said proceedings were electronically recorded by me; and
    that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by
    any of the parties to this case and have no interest,
    financial or otherwise, in its outcome.
    Shegaw Mekonen, Court Reporter
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Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

I, Nicole Mastrosimone, do hereby certify
that the foregoing transcript, to the best of my ability, knowledge, and belief, is a true and correct record of the proceedings; that said proceedings were reduced to typewriting under my supervision; and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

Nicole Mastrosimone
$\qquad$
Nicole Mastrosimone
December 26, 2023

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

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| 19:11, 19:15, | 23:9, 27:5, | 36:9, 37:10, | 9:11, 9:22, |
| 22:2, 33:6 | 37:19, 37:22, | 37:25, 42:2, | 12:3, 23:8, |
| about | 38:3, 40:19, | 44:5, 44:7, | 23:17 |
| 6:9, 16:17, | 44:20, 45:2, | 44:21, 45:5, | already |
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| 20:3, 20:10, | ada | age | 37:6, 46:10 |
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| 22:12, 22:17, | $34: 25,39: 23$, | ago | 4:21, 9:23, |
| 26:18, 27:3, | 43:4 | 22:12, 25:13 | 10:22, 11:13, |
| 30:22, 31:20, | adam | ahead | 12:4, 14:6, |
| 33:19, 33:20, | 15:22 | 21:7 | 18:19, 19:15, |
| 34:1, 34:2, | add | aid | 19:20, 21:6, |
| 37:8, 37:20, | 31:12, 40:7, | 7:25 | 22:1, 24:14, |
| 39:16, 41:10, | 48:6 | alignment | 25:18, 30:19, |
| 42:2, 43:9, | added | 17:4 | $31: 15,36: 13$, |
| 46:16, 47:4, | 14:3, 14:6, | all | 38:14, 42:11, |
| 49:21, 50:1 | 14:7 | 6:13, 6:25, | 42:15, 42:17, |
| absolutely | adding | 7:10, 16:6, | 42:24, 44:23, |
| 46:24 | 42:7, 42:17, | 19:21, 19:24, | $46: 6,46: 20$, |
| absorbed | 42:24, 43:25 | 20:21, 21:1, | 48:23, 49:7 |
| 22:21 | addition | 21:2, 23:4, | alternate |
| access | 9:4, 10:14, | 24:1, 25:3, | $\begin{aligned} & 15: 11, \quad 34: 16 \\ & \text { altornativelv } \end{aligned}$ |
| 18:23 | 12:2, 14:15 | 26:6, 26:16, | alternatively |
| accessibility | additional | $27: 9$, $28: 7,24$, 29:12, | $\begin{aligned} & 15: 1 \\ & \text { althouah } \end{aligned}$ |
| 30:20 | 51:2 | $\begin{array}{ll} 28: 7, & 29: 12, \\ 31: 25, & 32: 4, \end{array}$ | although $4: 16, \quad 25: 24$ |
| accessible | address $7: 7,15: 4,$ | $\left\lvert\, \begin{aligned} & 31: 25, ~ 32: 4, \\ & 33: 5, \\ & 39: 2, \end{aligned}\right.$ | always |
| $39: 19$ accommodate | $7: 7,15: 4$, $15: 5,15: 7$, | 41:20, 41:21, | 40:25, 46:14, |
| 10:20, 16:7, | 22:22, 34:13 | 42:1, 42:16, | 49:16, 49:24, |
| 16:16, 17:6, | adopted | $\begin{array}{ll} 46: 12, & 48: 6, \\ 48: 19, & 48: 21, \end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 49: 25 \\ & \text { amendments } \end{aligned}$ |
| $\begin{aligned} & 18: 3, \quad 23: 13 \\ & \text { accommodating } \end{aligned}$ | 33:25 | 50:16, 50:20, | $16: 7$ |
| $17: 13$ | 14:4 | 50:23, 51:8 | america |
| acquisition | affected | allocated | 20:8, 21:1 |
| 13:8 | 25:2 | 37:4 | americans |
| across | after | allow | 33:21 |
| $23: 16, \quad 23: 22,$ | 4:22, 7:9, | 6:22, 18:25, | amherst |
| 29:23, 49:8, | 14:2, 14:17, | 19:15, 19:19, | 1:6, 4:7, 4:23, |
| 49:10 | 46:4 | 22:20 | $7: 15,7: 22,8: 4$, |
| acting | afternoon | allowed | $8: 5,8: 14,8: 19$, |
| 3:4, 4:9 | 31:22 | 24:22 <br> allows | $\begin{aligned} & 9: 2, \quad 9: 7, \quad 9: 11, \\ & 9: 17 . \end{aligned}$ |
| actively | afterwards | allows | $9: 17,9: 22,$ |
| 48:17 | 22:7 | 5:22, 6:9, | 9:23, 10:11, |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| ```10:16, 11:10, 11:25, 12:4, 12:19, 13:6, 15:23, 19:4, 21:9, 21:20, 23:4, 23:19, 26:16, 26:22, 30:10, 32:2, 35:3, 35:5, 36:23, 41:12, 42:3, 42:6, 43:1, 43:10, 45:20, 47:24, 48:8, 48:23, 48:25, 49:1 amherstavenue 14:10 analysis 27:12 andrew 23:3 angel 3:7, 4:12, 7:4, 7:5, 14:14, 15:15, 22:9, 22:12, 22:25, 28:19, 50:20, 51:5 angel's 48:5 announce 15:7 another 38:3, 44:23 answer 5:22, 14:18, 28:3, 32:6, 32:15, 39:1 answered 28:8, 35:21, 50:24 answering 28:7 answers 6:16 anticipated 13:13, 28:13 any 4:18, 5:16,``` | 6:8, 6:22, <br> 14:18, 17:10, <br> 24:21, 25:2, <br> 27:14, 28:9, <br> 28:13, 28:15, <br> 28:20, 32:25, <br> 34:5, 43:7, <br> 50:13, 52:7, <br> 53: 8 <br> anybody <br> 25:24 <br> anymore $25: 6, \quad 48: 1$ <br> anyone $17: 23,19: 24$ $23: 1,26: 9$ $26: 10,27: 16$ $27: 17, \quad 28: 9$ $38: 1,39: 19$ <br> 41:5, 47:12, $49: 20$ <br> anything <br> 47:4, 47:25 <br> anytime <br> 48:2 <br> anywhere <br> 33:14, 36:16, 36:19 <br> aphorism $29: 21$ <br> apologize $\begin{aligned} & 35: 10, \quad 35: 20, \\ & 37: 21 \end{aligned}$ <br> apparently $23: 8$ <br> appreciate 27:24, 51:8 appreciated 26:13 <br> approach <br> 11:6, 11:15 approaches 7:23, 43:2 approaching 42:13 <br> approval <br> 46:4 <br> approved | 45:24 <br> approximately <br> 8:7 <br> aprons <br> 42:11 <br> aps <br> 43: 4 <br> architect <br> 23:3 <br> arcola <br> 8:6, 12:1, <br> 12:8, 12:10, <br> 12:15, 24:4, <br> 25:19, 48:6 <br> area <br> 8:20, 9:2, <br> 9:12, 11:11, <br> 13:24, 16:12, <br> 16:14, 16:25, <br> 18:1, 29:25, <br> $36: 7,37: 1$, <br> 38:17, 39:18, <br> 39:20, 39:24, <br> $44: 2,44: 8$, <br> 44:18, 47:25 <br> area's <br> 17:20 <br> areas <br> 6:18, 9:18, <br> 10:6, 10:13, <br> 10:19, 12:20, <br> 38:20 <br> aren't <br> 30:24, 31:17, <br> 48:10 <br> arm <br> 10:22 <br> arms <br> 12:11 <br> around <br> 17:1, 17:3, <br> 21:2, $30: 3$, <br> 48:14, 50:16, <br> 50:21 <br> aspects <br> 14:19 <br> assessed <br> 13:19 | ```assist 6:5 assistance 15:9 associated 7:23 assuming 46:8 attend 6:23 attendance 14:23 attendees 14:5 attending 5:9, 5:11, 19:25, 27:17, 27:18, 39:4 attention 20:23 authorized 6:7 automatic 39:13, 40:10, 40:16, 41:2 automobile 17:24, 24:5, 24:11, 41:13 automotive 17:13 available 14:10, 14:17 avenue 1:6, 4:7, 4:23, 7:22, 8:4, 8:5, 8:6, 8:14, 8:20, 9:2, 9:7, 9:11, 9:17, 9:22, 9:23, 10:11, 10:12, 10:16, 11:6, 11:10, 11:25, 12:1, 12:4, 12:6, 12:8, 12:10, 12:15, 12:19, 13:6, 15:23, 21:8, 21:20, 23:4, 25:11,``` |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| 25:16, 29:10, | bear | begins | beyond |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 37:9, 41:12, | 4:18 | 5:7 | 11:6, 47:22, |
| 42:3, 42:6, | beautiful | being | 47:25 |
| 47:18, 48:8, | 20:17 | 4:19, 4:21, | bicycle |
| 48:14, 49:1, | because | 6:2, 16:11, | 8:7, 30:13, |
| 49:9 | 15:21, 21:24, | 17:8, 18:19, | 36:6, 44:19 |
| aware | 23:21, 26:23, | 19:12, 20:4, | bicycle-pedestri- |
| 44:12, 46:3, | 28:22, 29:8, | 25:23, 27:3, | an |
| 48:10 | 29:25, 31:2, | 29:5, 35:13, | 13:24 |
| away | 31:16, 31:19, | 39:14, 45:1 | bicycles |
| 35:13, 38:9 | 32:18, 32:20, | belief | 31:1, 44:17 |
| awesome | 33:10, 34:4, | 53:5 | bicycling |
| 20:13 | 36:14, 36:22, | believe | 29:17 |
| awful | 37:13, 37:23, | 40:20, 47:21, | bicyclist |
| 27:10 | 38:10, 38:15, | $48: 2$ | $19: 19,30: 25,$ |
| B | 39:3, 39:13, | beltway | 41:19 |
| b1 | 39:20, 40:11, | 49:7, 49:8, | bicyclists |
|  | $\begin{array}{ll} 40: 21, & 41: 14, \\ 41 \cdot 24 & 43 \cdot 15 \end{array}$ | $49: 10,49: 15$ | $24: 12, \quad 26: 20,$ |
| \|b2 | $\begin{aligned} & 41: 24, ~ 43: 15, \\ & 44 \cdot 1 \end{aligned}$ | ben | $30: 17, \quad 31: 5,$ |
| $9: 15, \quad 10: 2$ | $\begin{aligned} & 44: 1, \quad 44: 4, \\ & 44: 13, \quad 46: 17, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 21: 17, \\ & 22: 24, \\ & 24: 21, \end{aligned}$ | $34: 6,41: 18$ |
| b3 | $46: 25,48: 3,$ | $\begin{aligned} & 22: 24,34: 21, \\ & 38: 3,39: 1 \end{aligned}$ | $\text { \|lig } \begin{aligned} & \text { big } \\ & 41: 17, ~ \end{aligned} 9: 19$ |
| 10:9, 11:5, $11: 14$ | 50:1, 50:9 | bend | bikable |
| b4 | become | 17:6 | 26:3 |
| $11: 23,12: 15$ | $10: 18, \quad 18: 21$ | bending | bike |
| back | becomes | $16: 15$ | 10:19, 12:11, |
| 14:19, 27:19, | 30:15 | benefit | 17:12, 18:14, |
| $29: 9, \quad 50: 18$ | been | 16:12, 17:14, | 18:15, 19:16, |
| backwards | $\begin{aligned} & 5: 6, \quad 16: 4, \\ & 16: 18, \quad 18: 14, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 17: 23, \quad 27: 6, \\ & 27: 12 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{array}{ll} 20: 16, & 24: 6 \\ 25: 15, & 25: 19 \end{array}$ |
| 16:15, 17:6 | $\begin{aligned} & 16: 18, ~ 18: 14, \\ & 27: 4,31: 5, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 27: 12 \\ & \text { benefited } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{array}{ll} 25: 15, & 25: 19, \\ 26: 14, & 30: 12, \end{array}$ |
| baffling $16: 14$ | $32: 19, \quad 35: 20$ | $13: 18$ | $\begin{aligned} & 26: 14, ~ 30: 12, \\ & 30: 18, \\ & 31: 3, \end{aligned}$ |
| bandwidth | $35: 21$, $38: 17$ | benefiting | 31:16, 32:1, |
| $5: 3$ | 38:17, 45:13, | 27:11 | 32:8, 33:6, |
| based | $\left\lvert\, \begin{aligned} & 45: 21, \quad 47: 1, \\ & 50: 24 \end{aligned}\right.$ | best | 33:11, 42:17, |
| 25:3 | before | $6: 6,53: 4$ <br> better | $\begin{aligned} & 42: 18, ~ 42: 20, \\ & 42: 21, ~ 44: 15, \end{aligned}$ |
| basement \|22:18 | 1:11, 2:17, | 12:9, 18:21, | 46:6, 46:18, |
| basically | 15:8, 16:23, | 21:3, 49:8 | 47:15, 47:21, |
| 19:9, 19:10 | 28:7, 29:13, | between | 48:4, 49:21, |
| 42:19, 48:10, | $38: 10, ~ 49: 18, ~$ 52.3 | 10:2, 10:12, | $50: 3$ |
| $48: 16$ | began | 11:5, 12:15, | bikeplan |
| bay | 13:11 | $\begin{array}{ll} 15: 11, & 20: 9 \\ 21: 21, & 25: 13 \end{array}$ | biker |
| 12:23, 12:25 | begin | $30: 11,34: 24,$ | $24: 5$ |
| bays $9: 21,22: 2$ | 13:13, 15:6 | $36: 16,36: 19,$ | bikes |
| 22:14, 22:20 | beginning | 38:22, 39:21, | 20:23, 28:22, |
|  | 8:24, 15:5 | 45:18, 48:24 | 31:11, 42:19, |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| 44:24 <br> bikeway $\begin{aligned} & 1: 6, \quad 4: 7, \quad 4: 23, \\ & 7: 16,7: 22, \quad 8: 5, \\ & 8: 14, \quad 21: 8, \\ & 28: 14, \quad 28: 17, \\ & 48: 12 \\ & \text { biking } \\ & 15: 25, \quad 32: 3 \\ & \text { billion } \\ & 20: 9, \quad 24: 18 \\ & \text { binder } \\ & 13: 21 \\ & \text { bioretention } \\ & 12: 7, \quad 12: 22, \\ & 12: 24 \\ & \text { bit } \\ & 18: 21, \quad 32: 19, \\ & 36: 21, \quad 37: 12, \\ & 38: 10, \quad 38: 25, \\ & 48: 6, \quad 48: 24, \\ & 49: 2 \\ & \text { blessing } \\ & 45: 25 \\ & \text { blind } \\ & 40: 12, \quad 40: 13 \\ & \text { blocks } \\ & 25: 25 \\ & \text { blown } \\ & 16: 23 \\ & \text { blue } \\ & 8: 4 \\ & \text { blueridge } \\ & 10: 12, \quad 11: 6, \\ & 11: 25, \quad 12: 6, \\ & 12: 15, ~ 44: 20, \\ & 45: 3, ~ 46: 15 \\ & \text { blueridge-georgia } \\ & 46: 16 \\ & \text { board } \\ & 20: 5 \\ & \text { book } \\ & 20: 12, \quad 20: 13 \\ & \text { border } \\ & 48: 17 \\ & \text { both } \\ & 9: 3, ~ 9: 12, \\ & 9: 13, ~ 9: 18, \\ & 3 \end{aligned}$ | 10:6, 10:7, 10:13, 11:11, 11:12, 12:2, 12:20, 12:21, 14:24, 35:2, 35:3, 35:24, 38:9, 38:16, 38:18, 42:25, 43:22, 44:17, 44:19, 45:12 bottom $5: 25,9: 9$ $10: 4, \quad 11: 8$ $11: 16, \quad 12: 17$ <br> boulevard $10: 11, \quad 10: 17$ $10: 20,11: 7$ $11: 15, \quad 19: 17$ $24: 6,24: 15$ $26: 12,41: 11$ $42: 3,42: 23$ <br> boundaries $50: 9$ <br> box $5: 24,28: 6$ $28: 8$ <br> bpa $36: 6,47: 24$ $50: 9$ <br> branch <br> 48:13, 48:14 bridge <br> 29:22, 49:10 <br> brings $46: 15$ <br> broadcasted $4: 20$ <br> browser $49: 25$ <br> bucknell <br> 15:23 <br> budget $\begin{aligned} & 24: 24, \quad 27: 3, \\ & 37: 11, \quad 45: 5 \\ & \text { buffer } \\ & 8: 21, \quad 9: 1, \\ & 9: 11, \quad 9: 16, \\ & 10: 5, \quad 10: 10, \end{aligned}$ | 11:9, 11:18, 11:24, 12:19, 23:13, 35:15 buffers <br> 35:13 <br> build <br> 30:9, 32:8, <br> $32: 20,33: 18$, <br> 50:7 <br> building <br> 20:4, 29:20, <br> $30: 15,30: 22$, <br> 31:5, 31:7, <br> 34:5, 50:3 <br> built <br> 18:19, 19:12, <br> 20:4, 30:8, <br> 31:2, 31:12, <br> 31:15, 34:9, <br> 48:23 <br> bulb <br> 42:20 <br> bump <br> 43:10, 43:25 <br> bunch <br> 23:16 <br> burlington <br> 48:14 <br> burnett <br> 18:8, 18:9 <br> bus <br> 10:16, 12:6, <br> $13: 2,13: 3$, <br> 17:25, 24:14, <br> $38: 16,38: 20$, <br> 38:24, 38:25 <br> buses <br> 38:18 <br> bushes <br> 39:22 <br> business <br> 23:9 <br> button $\begin{aligned} & 39: 10, \quad 39: 17, \\ & 39: 19, \quad 39: 25, \\ & 40: 1, \quad 40: 11, \\ & 40: 13, \quad 40: 16, \\ & 40: 20, \quad 40: 21, \end{aligned}$ |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| cbd | 45:10, 45:21, | colors | compliant |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 13:25, 44:18, | 46:13, 46:19, | 8:18 | 39:23 |
| 47:25, 48:1, | 46:24, 47:5, | come | complicated |
| 48:23 | 47:8, 47:11, | 18:18, 31:8, | 18:24, 46:17 |
| center | 47:20, 50:12, | 31:22, 40:23, | comply |
| 20:18, 21:9 | 50:16, 50:22, | 41:23 | 9:24, 12:5 |
| central | 51:5 | comes | concern |
| 23:9 | cheng@montgomery- | 40:15, 50:8 | 22:1, 22:19, |
| certain | countymd | coming | 25:5, 26:21 |
| 44:2 | 7:5, 51:5 | 25:4, 25:5, | concerned |
| certificate | chief | 28:9, 35:20, | 22:16, 22:17, |
| 52:1 | 3:4, 4:9 | 46:11 | 24:12, 24:21 |
| certification | christopher | comment | conclude |
| 53:1 | 7:13 | 7:3, 28:12, | 50:24 |
| certify | church | 51: 6 | concluded |
| 52:4, 53:3 | 31:25 | commenters | 7:9, 51:9, |
| chang | cip | 30:10 | 51:11 |
| 35:4 | 13:23, 37:4, | comments | concludes |
| change | 37:6 | 5:19, 6:5, | 27:20, 28:1 |
| 13:15, 34:4, | citizens | 6:10, 6:12, | conclusion |
| 34:25, 41:3, | 20:25 | 6:18, 6:20, | 6:21 |
| 41:4, 49:2 | city | 6:24, 7:1, | concrete |
| changed | 32:21 | 23:18, 27:22, | 8:22, 32:7, |
| 36:3 | clarify | 37:24, 51:1, | $32: 15, \quad 34: 7$ |
| changes | $37: 20$ | 51:3, 51:8 | condos |
| $46: 9$ | clearly | community | $17: 19$ |
| chat | $15: 4$ | $20: 17,46: 23$ | conduct |
| 4:25, 5:24, | cliche | commute | 4:8 |
| 5:25, 28:6, 28:8 | 29:21 | 31:21, 32:2 | cone |
| cheng | clicking | commuting | 39:7 |
| $3: 7,4: 12,7: 4$, | 5:25 | 31:17 | confirm |
| 14:14, 15:17, | climate | companies | 35:8 |
| 15:20, 18:5, | 17:4 | 36:12 | confusion |
| 19:24, 21:15, | clinic | complained | $37: 21$ |
| 23:1, 23:24, | $39: 9$ | $40: 19$ | conklin |
| $25: 9,26: 7$ | close | complete | 7:13 |
| 26:10, 27:14, | 7:5, 38:24, | 13:16, 18:3, | connect |
| 27:16, 28:10, | 51:4 | 32:18 | 19:4, 21:8, |
| 28:15, 34:11, | closed | completed | 24:8, 24:15, |
| $34: 16,34: 18$, | 7:10, 14:12 | 13:12, 16:6, | 26:1, 29:20, |
| 35:1, 35:9, | closer | 50:6 | 32:21, 44:22, |
| 35:18, 36:5, | 41:23 | completely | 44:24, 48:18 |
| $37: 5,37: 8$, | closing | 24:7, 25:17, | connected |
| $37: 19,38: 12$, | 6:25 | 42:3 | 17:3, 17:25 |
| 39:16, 40:6, | code | completion | connecting |
| $\begin{aligned} & 41: 5, \quad 41: 8, \\ & 41: 22, \quad 43: 12, \end{aligned}$ | $4: 25,6: 3,$ | $14: 1$ | $19: 3,24: 9$ |
| $\begin{aligned} & 41: 22,43: 12, \\ & 43: 23,44: 18, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 13: 17 \\ & \text { college } \end{aligned}$ | compliance $43: 4, \quad 49: 18$ | $26: 4$ <br> connection |
| 43.23, 11.18 , | $48: 7,48: 17$ | 43.4, 49.18 | $45: 4,49: 8,$ |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| 49:15, 50:7 | convenience | counsel | crossing |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| connections | 7:24 | 52:6, 53:8 | 10:20, 12:11, |
| 19:13 | coordinate | count | 12:13, 20:24, |
| connectivity | 36:12, 46:2, | 31:11 | 40:12, 42:17, |
| 34:3 | 46:4 | counting | 43:1 |
| connects | coordinating | 29:23 | crosswalk |
| 26:2, 48:13 | 38:17, 45:11, | county | 42:16, 44:6 |
| consider | 45:21 | 1:1, 2:5, 4:6, | crosswalks |
| 7:22, 19:13, | coordination | 4:11, 6:3, 7:12, | 21:23, 23:18, |
| 38:8, 40:6, | 45:15, 45:18 | 7:19, 9:24, | 39:8 |
| 43:25, 44:2, | coordinator | 12:5, 12:24, | crucial |
| 44:6 | 3:8, 28:17 | 13:17, 14:4, | 16:24 |
| consideration | core | 16:15, 17:3, | cue |
| 13:21, 25:22, | 17:8 | 20:6, 20:19, | 10:19 |
| 26:19, 27:1 | corner | 24:21, 24:23, | curb |
| considered | 8:15, 8:17, | 24:25, 25:21, | 10:24, 12:12, |
| 5:20, 6:25, | 10:18, 30:22, | 29:10, 29:18, | 42:7, 43:3, |
| 7:8, 13:17, | 42:7, 42:9, | 31:2, 32:22, | 43:10 |
| 27:23, 43:14 | 42:10 | 33:13, 33:24, | curious |
| considering | corners | 33:25, 34:4, | 27:4, 43:9 |
| 35:25 | 42:16 | 43:13, 48:15, | current |
| construct | correct | 49:19, 50:2 | 16:2, 24:14 |
| 7:22, 9:21, | 35:1, 48:5, | county's | currently |
| $36: 24$ | $53: 5$ | 25:1 | $13: 7,22: 18,$ |
| constructed | correctly | countywide | $25: 20,37: 10$ |
| 12:23 | 38:6 | $25: 6$ | 37:16 |
| construction | corresponded | couple | curtail |
| 6:8, 13:9, | 22:11 | 36:10 | 43:18 |
| 13:10, 13:13, | corresponding | course | cut |
| 14:18, 36:7, | 9:7, 10:2, | 24:20, 24:23 | 18:2, 24:19, |
| 36:8, 36:17, | 11:5, 11:14, | court | 27:3 |
| 36:18, 36:22, | 12:14 | 52:1, 52:12 | cutbacks |
| 37:2, 46:1, | corridor | crashes | 35:25 |
| $48: 11$ | $45: 14, \quad 48: 6$ | 33:21 | cycle |
| consulting | $48: 8, \quad 48: 20$ | create | 8:19, 8:25, |
| $14: 16$ | cost | $26: 19$ | 9:10, 9:15, |
| contact | 13:7, 13:14, | creating | 10:5, 10:10, |
| 22:9 | 16:11, 18:2, | 33:19 | 10:21, 11:9, |
| contemplates | 27:6, 27:12, | creek | 11:18, 11:23, |
| 50:2 | 37:12 | 21:10, 26:16 | 12:18, 13:6, |
| continue | cost-effective | criteria | 16:3, 16:21, |
| 14:10, 25:20 | 16:18 | 46:5 | 16:24, 19:3, |
| continued | costs | cross | 42:5 |
| 19:2 | 13:11, 17:24 | 18:16, 40:5, | cyclist |
| continues | could | 41:16, 42:23, | \|27:11 |
| 9:16, 10:10, | 22:13, 26:15, | $43: 16$ | cyclists |
| $11: 24$ <br> continuous | $\begin{array}{ll} 41: 9, & 41: 17, \\ 44: 7, & 49: 14 \end{array}$ | cross-examination $6: 16$ | $\begin{aligned} & 33: 18, ~ 42: 23, \\ & 43: 1 \end{aligned}$ |
| 48:8, 48:20 |  |  |  |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023


Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| ```44:8 drawing 20:5 drawn 16:4 drive 2:7, 9:17, 10:3, 10:12, 11:5, 15:23, 20:3, 26:12, 28:12, 29:12, 47:22, 48:2, 48:7, 48:25, 49:11 driver 24:5, 24:11, 41:20 driver's 33:15 drivers 41:13, 42:10 driveway 17:18, 36:15 dropoff 31:14 due 51:1 dunkirk 20:3 during 5:5, 5:16, 5:23, 12:8, 37:1 E e-mail 22:8, 28:8, 51:3 e-mailed 7:4 each 8:14, 17:17, 20:11 earlier 28:13, 49:6 early 49:12 easement 13:9, 13:10``` | ```easily 30:13, 40:3 east 25:20 east-west 45:3 echoing 28:12 edison 2:7 educate 41:10 effective 21:11 effects 25:6 efficiency 5:4 effort 16:6, 26:13 eight 9:2, 9:12, 9:18, 16:6, 38:7, 38:23 eight-foot 10:5 eight-foot-wide 8:25, 9:10, 9:15, 10:4, 10:9, 11:9, 11:17, 11:20, 11:23, 12:18 either 6:10 elderly 23:14, 23:17 electronically 52:5 elevation 11:18 elkin 11:25, 12:7 else 26:9, 27:14, 45:12 employed 52:6, 53:8 encounter 4:18``` | ```end 17:18, 25:19, 26:1, 48:22 endeavor 16:5 endemic 33:20 ends 12:1, 26:2 engineering 1:4, 2:6, 3:5, 4:10, 7:20, 13:8, 14:16 enough 39:13, 39:23, 40:4 entire 41:11 entirely 6:12 entirety 6:8 entitled 6:14, 23:8 eric 28:11 ernst 20:2, 41:9 especially 20:8, 34:8, 35:12 essentially 16:7, 16:13, 44:15 estimate 29:7, 30:7 estimated 13:7 etcetera 36:1 europe 21:1 even 27:11, 29:6, 29:13, 30:24, 31:3, 35:14, 39:11, 40:9, 40:15, 41:3,``` | 43:20, 49:11 evening <br> 4:3, 4:8, 5:3, 7:17, 14:13, 26:24, 28:25 evening's \|7:21 <br> events $12: 9$ <br> eventually 21:10 \|every $18: 17,31: 11,$ $31: 19, \quad 32: 6$ $33: 14, \quad 33: 21,$ $33: 24,40: 21,$ $43: 16$ <br> everybody $25: 1 \overrightarrow{5}, 2 \overrightarrow{6}: 5$ $41: 12$ <br> everyone $20: 12,27: 25$ 29:1, 29:2, $37: 11, \quad 39: 3$ $41: 21,41: 23$ $42: 13$ <br> everything 48:3, 48:4 everywhere 50:2 <br> exact <br> 19:12 <br> exactly $29: 7,30: 8 \text {, }$ $50: 8$ <br> example $12: 22,13: 2,$ $33: 12,40: 18$ <br> except $41: 25$ <br> excess <br> 22:15 <br> exclusive <br> 11:3 <br> exhibits $13: 20,13: 22$ <br> existing $8: 23, \quad 9: 3$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| exists | fast | 36:10, 45:25 | 11:10, 12:1, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 9:9, 10:3, | 21:25 | finally | 12:3, 38:9, |
| 11:8, 11:16, | faster | 8:22, 12:9 | 38:14 |
| 12:16 | 36:3 | financial | foot-wide |
| expect | favor | 52:8, 53:9 | 11:20, 11:21, |
| 32:23, 34:8 | 24:5, 24:13, | finish | 11:22 |
| expected | 25:17 | 36:10 | forbid |
| 13:12, 13:19 | feasible | firm | 36:20 |
| expensive | 43:24 | 14:16 | forced |
| 16:11, 45:2, | features | first | 20:21 |
| 49:12 | 8:13 | 4:17, 15:16, | forces |
| experience | featuring | 23:4, 39:16, | 42:9 |
| 28:17 | $10: 18$ | 46:8 | foregoing |
| explain | fee | fiscal | 52:4, 53:4 |
| 41:20 | 13:8 | 13:22 | forever |
| exposed | feel | five | 47:2 |
| 30:24 | 23:11, 37:24 | 9:23, 12:4, | form |
| exposure | feet | 14:5, 34:25, | 7:3, 13:23, |
| 30:24 | $9: 5, \quad 9: 14,$ | 35:8, 35:10, | 51: 6 |
| express | $10: 7, \quad 10: 13,$ | 37:22 | fort |
| $16: 1$ | $10: 15, \quad 11: 12,$ | five-foot | 48:18 |
| expressed | 12:4, 12:21, | $12: 17$ | forum |
| 27:21 | 34:25, 35:7, | five-year-old | $5: 1,6: 9,6: 15$ |
| extended | 35:11, 37:19, | 23:14 | forward |
| 35:16 | 37:22, 37:23, | flag | 21:14, 35:23, |
| extending | 38:7, 38:15, | 19:1 | 45:25 |
| 17:15 | 38:19, 38:23 | floating | forward-thinking |
| F | fence | 10:16, 12:6, | $16: 4$ |
| facilities | $\text { \| } 39: 22$ <br> fenton | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 13:2, 13:3 } \\ & \text { flood } \end{aligned}$ | found |
| $8: 7,12: 7,$ | fenton <br> 48.7.48.9 | flood | $29: 3$ <br> foundation |
| $31: 3,31: 12,$ | $\begin{aligned} & 48: 7, \quad 48: 9, \\ & 48: 16, \quad 48: 24 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 44: 4 \\ & \text { floor } \end{aligned}$ | foundation $22: 17$ |
| $\begin{aligned} & 32: 8, \quad 32: 11 \\ & \text { facility } \end{aligned}$ | few | $2: 7$ | four |
| $12: 23,12: 24$ | $4: 16,7: 24$ | flow | $14: 3,37: 19,$ |
| $19: 7,31: 16,$ | $\left\lvert\, \begin{array}{ll} 22: 12, & 25: 12, \\ 8 \cdot 8 & 40: 21 \end{array}\right.$ | $26: 22,44: 3$ | $37: 23, \quad 42: 16$ |
| $47: 21$ | fewer | 44:8 focused | $\begin{aligned} & \text { frankly } \\ & \text { 18:23, 21:2 } \end{aligned}$ |
| 30:17 | 20:20, 32:20, | 6:12 | free |
| family | $32: 21$ | follow | $37: 24$ |
| $16: 16,21: 20$ | fha | $40: 8$ | frequently |
| $35: 4$ | $49: 12$ | following | $21: 24,40: 17$ |
| far | fighting | 5:21, 6:21, | friday |
| 17:5, 25:2 | 47:2 | 7:3, 14:3, 14:6, | 7:1, 51:1 |
| farragut | figuring | 14:7, 43:7, | front |
| $29: 10$ | 50:10 | 45:11, 51:6 | 17:17, 17:19, |
| farther | files | foot | $21: 9,33: 10,$ |
| 29:4, 34:9 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 14:8, } 14: 10 \\ & \text { final } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 9: 2, \quad 9: 12, \\ & 9: 18, \quad 9: 24, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 33: 11, \quad 39: 9, \\ & 39: 17 \end{aligned}$ |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023


Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023


Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023


Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| landscape | length | literal | 23:25, 26:8, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 23:12 | 8:6 | 16:10 | 27:16, 34:13, |
| lane | less | little | 34:18, 38:1, |
| 8:6, 8:25, 9:8, | 47:17 | 16:14, 18:21, | 41:5, 47:12 |
| 10:25, 11:1, | let's | 29:18, 29:19, | lose |
| 11:2, 11:3, | 21:13 | 32:19, 36:21, | 46:22 |
| 11:20, 11:21, | level | 38:10, 38:25, | losing |
| 11:22, 19:16, | 13:25, 43:5 | 48:6, 48:24, | 23:12 |
| 26:20, 33:11, | leverage | 49:2, 50:8 | lost |
| 38:13, 39:7, | 49:14 | live | 33:14, 33:22 |
| 43:19, 44:15, | library | 15:22, 18:10, | lot |
| 46:18, 46:22, | 17:2, 20:17, | 20:2, 21:19, | $15: 13, \quad 16: 24,$ |
| 47:17 | 21:11, 25:12, | 21:20, 23:21, | 21:25, 23:15, |
| lanes | 25:13, 25:18, | 24:4, 25:11, | 24:24, 24:25, |
| 9:5, 9:13, | 25:21, 32:4 | 26:11, 30:5, | 25:1, 27:10, |
| 10:7, 10:15, | license | 33:13 | 28:17, 30:3, |
| 11:11, 12:3, | 33:15 | lives | $31: 5,31: 8$, |
| 12:20, 24:6, | light | 33:20, 33:22 | $31: 13,32: 21$, |
| 24:14, 25:19, | 8:20, 8:21, | living | 33:9, 34:2, |
| 26:14 | 42:20 | 33:16 | 41:14, 44:1, |
| large | likely | locations | 47:16 |
| 8:10, 17:19 | 22:13 | 19:1, 31:11, | lots |
| larger | likewise | 31:12 | 17:19, 49:19 |
| 42:11 | 5:6 | long | louis |
| last | limited | 8:8, 17:5, | $25: 11$ |
| 16:22, 18:19, | 45:1, 47:25 | 21:6, 26:4, | low |
| 21:22, 23:16, | limits | 32:15, 35:22 | 32:8 |
| 23:18, 31:9, | 8:5 | long-term | low-density |
| 36:18 | line | 9:20, 44:21 | 16:12, 16:16 |
| later | 8:4, 8:18, | longer | low-stress |
| $41: 24$ | $8: 23,27: 7$ | $32: 19, \quad 36: 21$ | $50: 3$ |
| latest | 29:5, 29:16, | longer-term | loxford |
| $14: 1$ | 47:12 | $45: 16$ | $18: 10$ |
| learn | linear | look | M |
| 49:20 | 36:22 | 12:25, 13:4, | made |
| least | lines | 17:15, 27:7, | 26:3, 26:13, |
| 29:3 | 8:22, 19:3 | 30:18, 32:17, | 28:12 |
| leave | link | 34:9, 38:13, | main |
| $44: 15$ | $4: 21,4: 24,$ | $41: 24,42: 15$ | 3:8, 15:10, |
| left | $7: 3, \quad 51: 7$ | $43: 6,43: 23,$ | 15:15, 15:19, |
| $\begin{aligned} & 8: 15, \quad 11: 21, \\ & 46: 14 \end{aligned}$ | linkages | $\begin{aligned} & 44: 5, \quad 44: 7 \\ & \text { looked } \end{aligned}$ |  |
| $\begin{aligned} & 46: 14 \\ & \text { left-turn } \end{aligned}$ | $47: 15$ | looked $16: 22,45:$ | $21: 17,22: 5,$ |
| 10:25, 11:2 | list | looks | 22:8, 22:24, |
| leg | listed | 22:3, 24:19 | $24: 1$, $25: 8$, $26: 9$, 27, |
| 11:14 | 17:10 | lori | $27: 15, \quad 34: 14$ |
| legend <br> 8:17 | listen | $\begin{aligned} & 3: 8, \quad 15: 9, \\ & 18: 6, \quad 21: 16, \end{aligned}$ | $34: 17,34: 20,$ |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| ```38:3, 41:7, 47:13, 50:15 maintain 23:10 major 24:9, 29:25, 32:22, 32:24 make 7:11, 31:18, 31:20, 32:1, \(32: 5,36: 1\), 40:20, 41:12, 41:21, 42:12, 44:4, 44:8, 46:9, 47:16 makes 15:13, 19:9 making 19:14, 25:12, 31:19, 42:14, 46:5 mall 17:2 management 13:11 manager 3:6, 3:7, 4:12, 4:13, 22:9 many 25:6, 27:5, 27:10, 29:7, 30:9, 44:25 map 8:3, 8:15, 49:23, 49:24, 49:25 maryland 1:12, 2:8, 2:18, 4:8, 19:7 massive 16:20, 17:7 mast 10:22, 12:11 master 17:8, 17:11, 17:12, \(30: 13\), 44:10, 49:7, 49:17, 49:21``` | $\begin{aligned} & \text { mastrosimone } \\ & 1: 25, \quad 53: 3, \\ & 53: 14 \\ & \text { matt } \\ & 3: 9, \quad 28: 16, \\ & 34: 11, \quad 40: 7, \\ & 41: 9, \quad 48: 3 \\ & \text { matter } \\ & 33: 17 \\ & \text { maximize } \\ & 5: 4 \\ & \text { maybe } \\ & 21: 7, \quad 21: 23, \\ & 29: 4, \quad 29: 7, \\ & 35: 20, \quad 41: 9, \\ & 41: 17, \quad 48: 3, \\ & 49: 4, \quad 49: 11, \\ & 50: 17 \\ & \text { mcdot } \\ & 3: 3, \quad 3: 5, \quad 3: 6, \\ & 3: 7, \quad 3: 8, \quad 3: 9, \\ & 4: 12, \quad 4: 13, \\ & 14: 14, \quad 16: 15, \\ & 28: 17, \quad 45: 19 \\ & \text { mclaughlin } \\ & 1: 11, \quad 3: 3, \quad 4: 3, \\ & 4: 5, \quad 7: 17, \\ & 14: 20, \quad 14: 21, \\ & 15: 13, \quad 27: 20, \\ & 50: 20, \quad 50: 23 \\ & \text { mean } \\ & 17: 15, \quad 24: 22, \\ & 28: 15, \quad 30: 17, \\ & 41: 13, \quad 41: 19, \\ & 49: 24 \\ & \text { meaning } \\ & 40: 16, \quad 41: 1 \\ & \text { means } \\ & 17: 1, \quad 24: 23, \\ & 24: 24, \quad 37: 3 \\ & \text { medical } \\ & 49: 5, \quad 49: 15 \\ & \text { medstar } \\ & 19: 6 \\ & \text { meet } \\ & 17: 10, \quad 34: 25, \\ & 43: 4, \quad 46: 5 \\ & \text { meeting } \\ & 5: 4, \quad 15: 1, \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ | 28:24, 43:15 mekonen 2:17, 52:3, $52: 12$ <br> mental 19:8 <br> mention $25: 18$ <br> mentioned $\begin{array}{ll} 21: 23, & 30: 10, \\ 43: 14, & 44: 23, \\ 47: 15, & 49: 6 \end{array}$ mentioning $44: 14$ <br> meter \|1:10 <br> metered $9: 20$ <br> meters $10: 14$ <br> metro $16: 9,17: 1,$ $17: 25,24: 9,$ $26: 23,28: 23 \text {, }$ $28: 24,29: 3 \text {, }$ $29: 4,29: 9,$ 29:11, 29:13, $29: 16, \quad 30: 2,$ $38: 16,48: 19$ <br> metropolitan $48: 13,48: 14$ <br> mic $15: 21,39: 3$ <br> microphone $5: 10$ <br> microphones $5: 6$ <br> middle 16:13, 17:7, $18: 1,26: 14$ <br> might $\begin{array}{ll} 29: 11, & 32: 3, \\ 36: 12, & 36: 13, \\ 41: 22 & \\ \text { mike } \\ 26: 11 & \\ \text { mile } \\ 18: 12, & 20: 3 \end{array}$ | ```miles 8:8, 32:20, 32:21 million 16:20, 20:10, 24:25, 27:6, 27:9 milstead 3:11, 14:15 mine 27:1 minimum 38:19 minutes 50:17 mitchell 20:13 mobility 33:19 moco's 17:4 model 21:7 modeling 28:22, 30:4 mom 23:15 mom's 33:15 money 24:21, 24:25, 25:4, 25:5, 27:10, 35:24, 36:8, 37:6, 50:10 montgomery 1:1, 2:5, 4:6, 4:10, 6:3, 7:12, 7:19, 12:24, 13:16, 14:4, 20:6, 24:24, 29:10, 29:18, 32:22, 33:13, 33:24, 33:25, 48:7, 48:15, 48:16 montgomerycounty- md 14:9``` |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023


Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023


Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| $36: 6, \quad 39: 13$, $39: 20, \quad 41: 15$, $41: 19, \quad 42: 25$ pedestrians $20: 18, \quad 30: 24$, $34: 6, \quad 39: 12$, $40: 20, \quad 41: 14$, $42: 15$ people $15: 11, \quad 15: 16$, $15: 21, \quad 17: 16$, $18: 22, \quad 18: 25$, $19: 15, \quad 20: 23$, $20: 24, \quad 21: 2$, $23: 17, \quad 25: 1$, $26: 24, \quad 27: 5$, $27: 10, \quad 29: 7$, $29: 11, \quad 29: 23$, $29: 24, \quad 30: 5$, $30: 6, \quad 30: 9$, $31: 16, \quad 31: 18$, $31: 19, \quad 32: 5$, $32: 11, \quad 33: 5$, $33: 6, \quad 33: 9$, $33: 16, \quad 34: 2$, $35: 14, \quad 35: 15$, $37: 1, \quad 39: 4$, $40: 1, \quad 40: 5$, $40: 24, \quad 41: 15$, $41: 16, \quad 42: 15$, $43: 14, \quad 44: 24$, $47: 14$ percent $14: 1, \quad 17: 20$, $32: 9, \quad 48: 10$ period $35: 22$ permeable $9: 20, \quad 12: 23$, $12: 25, \quad 22: 1$, $22: 14, \quad 22: 20$ permit $9: 21$ perpendicular $44: 13$ perpetual $13: 9$ person $4: 15, \quad 4: 20$, | ```4:25, 5:9, 6:23, 14:24, 19:25, 23:1, 26:10, 27:17, 28:10, 34:19, 39:2, 39:4, 41:8, 50:13, 50:22 personal 16:12, 17:23 personally 15:25 petitioner 1:5 phase 42:22 phased 49:5 phasing 10:23, 12:12, 42:22 phil 3:3, 4:5, 27:19, 50:18 philip 1:11 phone 15:1 photo 13:5 physically 43:18 picture 41:18 pictures 12:25 piece 30:10, 36:24, 44:23, 45:2, 48:18 pieces 29:18, 29:19 place 19:17, 24:7, 32:20, 44:11 plan 8:10, 8:12, 10:23, 17:8, 19:12, 22:1,``` | ```30:14, 44:11, 44:22, 44:25, \(45: 16,48: 2\), 49:7, 49:13, 49:17, 49:21, 49:23 planet 33:8 planned 18:12, 44:19, 45:7, 47:21, 47:23 planning 29:22, 35:22 plans 13:25, 17:11, 17:12, 25:1, 47:18 platform 4:16, 6:1 plaza 32:3, 44:14 please 4:18, 5:2, 5:14, 6:17, 7:6, 14:24, 15:4, 15:7, 28:4, 41:20 point 19:20, 20:7, 23:7, 25:12, 27:3, 29:4, 29:24, 29:25, 44:12, 46:13, 49:4 poles 39:21 portion 5:7, 5:15, 5:16, 5:21, 6:8, 6:15, 28:2, 34:23 possible 16:22, 17:22, 25:24, 44:6, 49:16 post 20:16``` | posted <br> 4:22, 7:24 <br> potential <br> 6:5, 49:14 <br> potentially <br> 22:14, 44:6 <br> preliminary <br> 45:24 <br> present <br> 14:17 <br> presentation <br> 8:11, 34:23 <br> presented <br> 22:12 <br> press <br> 14:5, 28:4 <br> pressing <br> 5:13 <br> pretty <br> 16:18, 16:19, <br> 18:13, 25:24, <br> 26:16, 38:11, <br> 46:3 <br> prevents <br> 46:20 <br> previous <br> 27:2, 37:20 <br> previously <br> 12:23, 14:13 <br> prichard <br> 9:8, 9:17, <br> 10:2, 15:24, <br> 21:21, 34:24, <br> 43:9 <br> primarily <br> 24:11 <br> prior <br> 14:2, 15:5 <br> priorities <br> 36:1 <br> priority $13: 24,36: 7$ <br> 47:7, 50:7 <br> private $\begin{aligned} & 17: 14, \quad 17: 15, \\ & 17: 17, \quad 18: 3 \\ & \text { probably } \\ & 15: 20, \quad 18: 12, \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| ```28:25, 29:1, 29:2, 45:2, 50:5 problem 33:20 proceedings 52:4, 52:5, 53: 6 process 36:2, 36:15 productivity 33:22 program 13:23, 36:6, 47:24, 50:9 programming 36:4, 40:3, 41:2 progresses 13:15 project 1:6, 3:7, 4:7, 4:13, 4:14, 4:23, 4:24, 6:5, 6:6, 6:9, 6:12, 6:17, 6:19, 6:20, 7:14, 7:25, 8:1, 8:2, \(8: 3,8: 5,13: 7\), 13:11, 13:14, 13:15, 13:22, 14:8, 14:19, 16:2, 16:3, 16:19, 16:20, 17:22, 20:4, 21:6, 22:8, 23:5, 24:8, 24:14, 25:17, 27:2, 27:7, 27:12, 28:21, \(30: 16,30: 18\), \(30: 19,30: 20\), 35:21, 36:5, 36:8, 36:23, 37:9, 37:12, \(37: 15,37: 16\), 41:18, 45:20, 46:3, 48:9, 48:23, 49:12,``` | ```49:14, 50:2 project's 17:5 project-related 14:7 projects 14:9, 20:5, 20:20, 20:25, 24:20, 24:22, 25:3, 25:7, 32:10, 33:5, 49:3, 49:19, 50:6 promises 17:2 promoting 45:13 proof 14:4 properties 13:17, 13:19 property 7:7, 15:7, 17:14, 36:13, 36:15, 45:13 proposal 7:22 propose 42:5 proposed 4:14, 8:7, 8:18, 8:22, 9:10, 10:16, 10:20, 11:19, 12:6, 12:7, 12:24, 13:3, 13:6, 13:18, 37:22 proposing 37:23 protected 10:18 provide 5:17, 6:9, 7:6, 12:9, 15:4 provided 4:24, 7:3, 14:2 providing 4:13, 15:8``` | public <br> $1: 10, \quad 2: 17$, <br> $4: 9, \quad 4: 18,6: 4$, <br> $6: 7, \quad 6: 21, \quad 6: 24$, <br> $7: 11, \quad 7: 21$, <br> $8: 23, \quad 13: 20$, <br> $14: 2, \quad 14: 11$, <br> $16: 8, \quad 21: 11$, <br> $28: 2, \quad 51: 9$ <br> purchasing <br> $17: 16$ <br> purple <br> $27: 7, \quad 29: 5$ <br> purpose <br> $6: 3$ <br> pursuant <br> $6: 2, \quad 13: 16$ <br> push <br> $39: 10, \quad 39: 12$, <br> $39: 17, \quad 39: 25$, <br> $40: 11, \quad 40: 13$, <br> $40: 18, \quad 40: 20$, <br> $40: 22, \quad 43: 4$ <br> pushed <br> $40: 21$, <br> pushing <br> $39: 24, \quad 40: 2$ <br> put <br> $17: 16$, <br> $24: 7$, <br> $36: 14$, <br> $36: 21$, <br> $48: 24$, <br> $44: 11$ | questions quite <br> radar <br> 50:11 <br> radius <br> 42:7, 42:9, <br> 43:11 <br> rain <br> 12:8 <br> rains <br> 22:4, 44:3, <br> 44:9 <br> raise <br> 5:8, 5:13, <br> 5:15, 5:16, <br> 5:23, 14:24, <br> 20:1, 28:4, <br> 37:25, 44:2 <br> raised <br> 14:25, 15:11, <br> 38:1, 44:6 <br> raising <br> 41:5 <br> ramps <br> 10:24, 12:12, <br> 43:3 <br> rather <br> 38:7, 39:12 <br> reach <br> 17:1, 17:2 <br> ready <br> 42:21 <br> realistic <br> 35:24 <br> really <br> 18:11, 18:18, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| ```18:24, 19:9, 19:13, 20:4, 22:22, 24:15, 25:16, 26:5, 26:13, 28:22, 30:22, 34:5, 36:4, 36:17, 38:24, 39:13, 39:19, 39:22, 43:1, 46:17, 46:22, 50:6 reason 38:15 rebecca 3:6, 4:11, 14:14 rebuild 49:13 recall 40:9, 40:16, 41:1 received 6:11, 7:1, 51:3 recommendation 7:12 reconfiguring 39:8, 46:6 reconstructed 9:23, 10:22, 12:4, 12:10, 43:3 reconstructing 36:14, 39:18, 43:2 record 6:22, 6:24, 7:6, 7:9, 7:11, 7:18, 13:21, 14:11, 15:5, 50:25, 51:4, 53:5 recorded 4:21, 52:5 recording 4:21 red 42:24 redesigning 41:11, 42:3``` | ```redevelop 49:16, 49:17 reduce 5:3, 30:23, 33:8, 38:22 reduced 53:6 reedie 9:17, 10:2, 10:12, 11:5, 21:21, 26:23, 34:24, 43:21, 44:16, 44:20 reevaluated 25:3 refocus 6:19 regard 34:5 regarding 4:14, 6:5, 7:14, 14:18, 21:22, 34:22 regardless 23:12, 40:1, 40:2 regional 48:15 regularly 18:13 regulation 23:20 reiterate 23:18 related 6:19, 48:5, 52:6, 53:8 release 14:5 reliance 33:8 relocations 13:10 relook 45:5 rely 15:24 remain 6:22, 9:4,``` | ```9:19, 10:14 remarks 6:17 remember 34:23 reminder 27:22, 50:25 replacement 7:15 reporter 52:1, 52:12 represents 8:4, 8:20 request 5:4 requested 38:19 require 23:14, 33:13 required 49:18 requirements 9:24, 12:5, 46:9 reroutes 18:3 resident 6:4 residential 9:21, 23:10, 23:11 residents 16:16, 16:24, 23:15, 36:25, 37:15 rest 26:17 restaurant 31:24 restrictions 9:4 restriping 42:16 rethink 37:10 returning 32:6 revamped 16:11``` | ```review 7:10, 8:1, 8:11 revisions 14:1 rhode 29:9 ridden 29:3 ride 20:15, 20:16, 26:15 ride-on 38:16 ridership 28:21 right 8:16, 8:23, 11:1, 11:20, 16:8, 16:12, 17:15, 19:24, 20:1, 24:1, 25:22, 25:23, 26:4, 26:9, 26:12, 28:24, 29:8, 29:13, 29:15, 29:17, 29:24, 30:18, 30:20, 31:9, 31:10, 31:14, 31:21, 33:5, 33:19, 34:23, 37:23, 39:3, 39:9, 42:1, 45:14, 46:2, 46:15, 48:16, 50:11, 50:16, 50:20, 50:21 right-turn 11:3 risen 37:12 river 29:23 road 9:8, 9:17, 10:2, 22:20, 24:10, 25:21, 39:15, 44:4``` |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| roads | said | 12:16, 12:17, | session |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 24:13, 33:25 | 29:11, 38:10, | 13:16, 21:24, | 5:22, 28:4 |
| roadways | 40:19, 40:22, | 23:19, 47:23 | seven |
| 20:20 | 49:18, 52:5, | sections | 20:10, 34:5, |
| robert | 53: 6 | 9:7, 10:1, | 38:7 |
| 3:11, 14:15 | same | 11:4, 38:13, | seven-foot-wide |
| rock | 5:20, 7:8, 9:4, | 38:14, 38:15, | 12:19 |
| 19:20 | 11:18, 17:18, | 38:16 | several |
| rockville | 27:23, 30:3, | see | 8:12, 8:13, |
| 1:12 | 31:11, 42:18, | 16:14, 16:21, | 13:20, 24:20, |
| roll | 43:21 | 17:22, 21:23, | 25:2, 50:5 |
| 25:15 | saving | 21:25, 22:15, | sha |
| room | 33:20 | 26:23, 26:24, | $45: 13, \quad 45: 18,$ |
| 15:11, 28:25, | saw | $30: 16, \quad 31: 13,$ | $47: 3$ |
| 29:2, 38:25 | $31: 15$ | $32: 14, \quad 32: 23,$ | shaded |
| roughly | say | 33:9, 35:22, | 8:20 |
| 47:17 | 23:5, 26:6, | $\begin{array}{ll}40: 25, & 41: 15, \\ 41: 23, & 43: 24,\end{array}$ | shading |
| route | 30:4, 30:8, | 41:23, 43:24, | 8:21 |
| 18:13, 18:16 | $31: 15,33: 4$ | $44: 5$ | share |
| routes | $33: 15$ | seeing | $22: 2,22: 3$ |
| 19:14 | saying | $\begin{aligned} & 16: 17, \quad 27: 25, \\ & 50: 23 \end{aligned}$ | shegaw |
| rules | $\begin{aligned} & 18: 20,32: 1, \\ & 34 \cdot 1 \end{aligned}$ | 50:23 <br> seemed | $2: 17,52: 3,$ |
| 20:7, 20:14 | $\begin{aligned} & 34: 1, \quad 34: 2 \\ & \text { says } \end{aligned}$ | seemed $47: 16$ | $52: 12$ |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { run } \\ & 28: 7 \end{aligned}$ | $29: 22, \quad 35: 7$ | seems | $30: 5$ |
| running | scanning | 24:8 | shopping |
| 23:16 | 4:24 | seen | 44:14 |
| runoff | schedule | $\begin{aligned} & 7: 4, \quad 31: 4, \\ & 32: 9, \quad 32: 17 \end{aligned}$ | shorefield |
| 12:8 | $\text { \| } 13: 14$ <br> scheduled | $32: 22,51: 7$ | $\begin{aligned} & 26: 1, \quad 26: 2, \\ & 26: 3 \end{aligned}$ |
| runs $48: 15$ | $36: 9$ | segment | shortfall |
| S | school | $\text { \| } 8: 16,22: 21$ senior | $24: 19$ |
| safe | $31: 25$ | $20: 24$ | should $6: 7,6: 12,7: 2$ |
| $\begin{array}{ll} 21: 11, & 26: 5, \\ 42: 21, & 42: 25 \end{array}$ | schools | sense | 16:17, 20:19, |
| safely | $17: 2$ <br> screen | 15:14, 47:16 sensible | $\begin{aligned} & 35: 8, \quad 35: 10, \\ & 50: 17, \quad 51: 4 \end{aligned}$ |
| $\begin{aligned} & 21: 2, \quad 25: 14, \\ & 38: 20,42: 23 \end{aligned}$ | 5:25, 7:4, | $24: 9$ | show |
| safer | 8:10, 22:3, | sent | 8:13, 40:22 |
| $17: 3,24: 13,$ | 42:6, 51:7 | 51:4 | showed |
|  | second | separate | 37:11 |
| $41: 21,42: 13$ | 39:14 | $\begin{aligned} & 22: 14, \quad 26: 18, \\ & 26: 20 \end{aligned}$ | showing |
| safety | $\begin{aligned} & \text { section } \\ & 6: 3,9: 8,9: 9, \end{aligned}$ | separated | $8: 3,8: 18$ shown |
| $\begin{array}{ll} 20: 18, & 24: 12, \\ 30: 19, & 31: 1, \end{array}$ | $10: 3, \quad 10: 4,$ | $26: 17,31: 3$ | $8: 10,8: 19,$ |
| $33: 5,34: 3,42: 9$ | 11:7, 11:8, | separately | 13:1 |
| safeway | $\begin{aligned} & 11: 14, \\ & 11: 16, \\ & 11: 17, \\ & 12: 14 \end{aligned}$ | 46:16 services | shows |
| 26:21 | 11:17, 12:14, | $38: 18$ | 8:9, 8:15, |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| ```10:1, 11:4, 11:13, 12:14, 12:22, 13:2, \(13: 5,35: 7,50: 2\) side 9:1, 16:10, 22:4, 35:4, 42:6 sides 9:3, 9:13, 9:19, 10:6, 10:13, 11:11, 12:2, 12:20, \(35: 2,35: 3,38: 9\) sidewalk 9:22, 10:24, 11:19, 12:3, 12:17, 33:10, 37:21, 38:10, 43:2, 49:9 sidewalks 34:24, 35:13 sign 40:15, 40:23, 43:20 signal 10:21, 10:23, 12:11, 42:4, 42:18, 42:19, 42:20, 42:22, 43:4, 46:6 signal's 40:12 signals 10:19, 10:23, 12:11, 40:9, 40:15 signature-b7fzp 53:12 signature-p1kal 52:10 signs 26:25 silver 13:3, 19:5, 27:8, 30:2, \(30: 11,30: 12\), 32:10, 40:10, \(40: 17,47: 18\),``` | ```48:12, 48:22 similar 12:25, 13:4, 32:23 simple 13:9 simulation 13:5 simultaneously 4:20 single 16:16, 21:20, 30:25, 35:4, 43:16 site 15:12, 15:16 situation 19:16 six 14:6, 16:5, 24:19 slide 8:9, 8:17, 9:6, 10:1, 10:9, 11:4, 11:13, 12:22, 13:2, 13:5, 41:24 slides 8:13, 8:14, 22:10 sligo 21:10, 26:16 slope 43:15, 43:16 slow 20:21, 20:22, 26:19 slower 42:10 slowing 21:22 slowly 42:14 snow 36:20 solomon 24:2, 24:3 some 19:3, 21:23,``` | ```23:20, 29:3, 29:19, 29:20, 32:9, 35:13, 36:14, 38:6, 46:22, 49:3, 49:8, 49:14 somebody 25:12, 35:23 someone 30:12, 34:14, 40:11, 40:19, 41:8, 41:17, 41:20 someone's 50:1 something 19:8, 19:10, 22:22, 23:21, 43:17, 44:12, 45:12, 47:2 sometimes 35:14 somewhere 18:17, 20:9 son 23:14 soon 48:2 sorry 21:6, 22:5, 50:18 sort 21:21, 22:14, 23:20, 29:21 soul 25:25 south 15:24, 20:3, 21:1, 47:16, 48:13, 49:1, 49:3 southbound 8:19, 9:1, 9:11, 9:16, 9:19, 10:11, 11:1, 11:10, 11:19, 11:24, 12:3, 12:19``` | space $19: 4,19: 6,$ $19: 9$ <br> spaces $8: 21,16: 8 \text {, }$ $17: 7,20: 10,$ $20: 11$ <br> speak <br> 5:11, 5:12, <br> 5:18, 15:3, <br> 15:21, 27:17, 27:25, 39:3 <br> speaker $18: 20, \quad 35: 19$ <br> $37: 3,37: 7$, <br> 37:18, 43:8, <br> 43:13, 44:10, <br> 45:9, 47:14 <br> speaker's <br> 23:18 <br> speakers <br> 25:13, 27:21 speaking <br> 27:21 <br> specially <br> 13:18 <br> specific <br> 6:17, 43:8 <br> specifically <br> 16:11 <br> speed <br> 21:24, 23:20, <br> 43:15, 43:19, <br> 43:25 <br> speeding <br> 23:21 <br> spend <br> 27:10 <br> spending <br> 27:6 <br> spent <br> 24:21, 34:4 <br> spring $\begin{aligned} & 13: 3, \quad 13: 12, \\ & 13: 14, \quad 19: 5, \\ & 27: 8, \quad 30: 2, \\ & 30: 11, \quad 30: 12, \\ & 32: 10, \quad 36: 17, \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| 40:10, 40:17, | sticks | subject | 38:8, 43:23, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 47:18, 48:12, | 26:14 | 6:18, 6:20, | 44:5, 44:12, |
| 48:22 | still | 7:21, 13:15 | 44:13, 49:22 |
| stage | 30:25, 32:12, | submission | taken |
| 50:4 | $35: 6,40: 1$, | 7:7 | 17:5, 35:13, |
| standard | 40:10, 40:16, | submissions | 47:8, 52:4 |
| 12:5 | 40:23, 49:1, | 7:2, 7:7, 51:4 | takes |
| standards | 49:2, 49:20 | submit | 17:24, 36:16 |
| 9:25, 34:25, | stop | 22:6 | taking |
| 46:5 | 10:16, 13:2, | submitted | 19:14, 26:18 |
| stantec | 13:3, 26:25, | 5:19, 7:11, | talk |
| 3:10, 3:11, | 43:20 | 27:23, 45:22, | 41:10, 46:14, |
| 3:12, 14:16 | stops | 51:3, 51:6 | 46:16, 47:3 |
| star | 12:6 | subway | talked |
| 5:14, 15:2, | store | 29:15 | 30:22 |
| 28:4 | 20:16 | summer | talking |
| start | storm | 13:12, 36:10, | 22:18, 42:2 |
| 15:15, 15:17, | 12:8, 22:15 | 48:11 | taxpayer |
| 17:16, 20:22, | story | supermarket | 17:14 |
| 21:12, 36:17 | 43:22 | 31:23 | team |
| started | stray | supervision | 22:22 |
| 16:3 | 6:18 | 53:7 | technical |
| starts | street | support | 4:19, 5:4 |
| 48:19 | 9:3, 9:13, | 6:10, 16:1, | technology |
| state | 9:19, 10:6, | 18:18, 18:19, | $41: 25$ |
| 2:18, 24:23, | 10:14, 11:11, | 23:6 | telephone |
| $25: 4,29: 17,$ | 11:25, 12:2, | supportable | 5:13, 5:14, |
| $32: 16,49: 14$ | 12:7, 12:20, | 25:16 | 15:2, 28:5 |
| stated | 16:10, 22:4, | sure | tell |
| 14:13 | 22:15, 23:17, | 7:6, 15:7, | 29:24, 33:2 |
| statement | 23:22, 26:15, | 21:10, 28:25, | temporary |
| 33:4, 45:23 | 35:3, 48:7, | 34:20, 44:8, | 13:9 |
| states | 48:9, 48:16, | 46:5 | terminate |
| 20:8, 20:11 | 48:24 | swear | $45: 14$ |
| statewide | stress | 43:17 | terminus |
| $24: 18,24: 20$ | $32: 8$ | swimming | $45: 20$ |
| station | stretched | $29: 23$ | terms |
| 16:9, 24:9, | $16: 5$ | system | $18: 11,18: 20,$ |
| 30:2, 48:20, | stretches | 17:25, 22:13 | $25: 18, \quad 35: 24,$ |
| 48:21 | $38: 6$ | T | $36: 9,36: 21,$ |
| step | studies | table | $39: 24,42: 8,$ |
| 44:11 steve | $\begin{aligned} & 27: 4 \\ & \text { stuff } \end{aligned}$ | 43:25 | $45: 3,46: 6$ terrace |
| 3:10, 14:15, | 20:15 | tables | 18:10, 24:4 |
| 24:1, $24: 3$ | stunted | 43:15, 43:20 take | testify |
| stick | 32:13 | $17: 9,22: 15,$ | 5:8, 14:23, |
| $50: 16$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { styles } \\ & 8: 18 \end{aligned}$ | $33: 7,34: 4$ | $15: 3,15: 6,$ |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| testimony | 41:20, 41:21, | 18:17, 28:7, | totally |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 5:7, 5:15, | 43:24, 44:25, | 28:22, 29:14, | 50:18 |
| 5:16, 5:18, | 45:1, 49:16, | 34:4, 35:22, | totten |
| $5: 20,5: 21,6: 4$, | 49:17 | 36:23, 37:2, | 48:19 |
| 6:9, 6:10, 6:11, | think | 40:19, 40:21, | toward |
| $6: 15,7: 1,7: 8$, | 15:13, 18:24, | 42:15, 46:12, | 26:4 |
| 14:2, 14:22, | 19:6, 19:8, | 49:17, 51:9 | towards |
| 15:5, 15:8, | 19:12, 20:7, | timeframe | 19:5, 24:24, |
| 15:9, 27:22, | 21:12, 25:15, | 35:24, 35:25, | 47:18 |
| 27:24, 28:1, | 31:20, 35:4, | 36:22 | town |
| 51:1, 51:2 | $35: 7,35: 9$, | timeline | 16:16 |
| tethered | 39:25, 40:1, | 36:9 | track |
| 17:24 | 43:5, 47:22, | times | 8:19, 8:25, |
| thank | 50:16 | 14:3, 44:2 | 9:10, 9:16, |
| 4:15, 18:4, | thommana | timing | 10:5, 10:10, |
| 18:5, 19:21, | 3:4, 4:9, 4:13, | 10:23, 12:12, | 10:21, 11:9, |
| 19:23, 21:14, | $7: 16,7: 17,7: 18$ | 42:22 | 11:18, 11:24, |
| 21:15, 22:24, | thought | timing's | 12:18, 13:6, |
| 23:23, 23:24, | 16:22, 24:6 | 45:17 | 16:3, 16:21, |
| 25:7, 25:8, | three | timothy | 19:3, 42:5 |
| 26:7, 27:14, | 14:1, 20:9, | 20:2 | track's |
| 28:19, 34:11, | 25:25, 31:9 | today | 16:24 |
| $35: 18,36: 4$, | three-foot | 4:3, 9:9, 10:3, | tradeoff |
| 37:17, 45:9, | 9:1, 9:11, | 11:8, 11:16, | 38:21 |
| 45:10, 47:10, | 11:9, 11:18, | 12:16, 23:23 | traffic |
| 47:11, 50:12, | 12:18 | toddler | 1:4, 2:6, |
| 51:10 | thrive | 25:15 | 10:21, 10:23, |
| thanks | 16:14, 17:12 | together | 10:25, 11:1, |
| 14:21, 21:5, | through | 41:21 | 11:19, 11:22, |
| 21:13, 22:23, | 9:17, 10:11, | tonight | 12:11, 26:17, |
| 27:16, 27:20, | 11:1, 11:2, | 4:16, 4:19, | $26: 19,26: 22,$ |
| 35:17, 38:5, | 11:20, 11:22, | $19: 20, \quad 27: 22,$ | $39: 14,39: 15,$ |
| 47:14, 50:20 | 11:25, 24:16, | $51: 8$ | $42: 4,42: 19,$ |
| theoretically | 26:25, 35:16, | tonight's | 45:23 |
| $45: 16$ <br> therefore | $38: 17, \quad 38: 25 \text {, }$ | 4:19, 4:22, | trail |
| therefore $13: 19$ | $\begin{aligned} & 48: 12 \\ & \text { throuqhout } \end{aligned}$ | 6:2, 8:11 | $21: 10,48: 13,$ |
| thereof | $46: 1$ | 21:6, 28:24, | transcribed |
| 6:8 | tight | 29:15 | 1:25 |
| thing | 38:11, 39:21 | top | transcript |
| 17:18, 18:24, | tighten | 4:25, 9:8, | 14:6, 53:1, |
| 23:16, 27:13, | 43:10 | 10:3, 11:7, | 53: 4 |
| 40:3, 41:24, | tighter | 11:16, 12:16, | transit |
| 45:14 | 42:9 | 42:5 | 15:25, 33:7, |
| things | time | topic | 38:18 |
| 14:19, 18:15, | 4:4, 4:17, | $6: 13$ | transportation |
| 19:15, 24:8, | 5:16, 5:22, | total | 1:1, 2:5, 3:4, |
| 30:21, 32:16, | 5:23, 16:22, | 8:6, 13:7 | $3: 6,4: 7,4: 10$, |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| 4:11, 4:12, | turn | U | unless |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 7:13, 7:19, | 5:5, 5:9, 5:10, | uma | 43:17 |
| 7:20, 15:25, | 5:12, 5:18, | $3: 12,14: 16$ | unmute |
| 16:18, 17:4, | 11:20, 11:21, | unable | 18:8 |
| 17:11, 21:5, | 14:19, 40:3, | 6:23 | unmuted |
| 21:13, 24:18, | 42:10, 42:14, | under | 5:12 |
| 27:3, 27:8, 45:6 | 42:24, 43:11, | $16: 14,25: 22,$ | unsafe |
| travel | 46:22 | $49: 15, \quad 53: 7$ | 44:17 |
| 9:4, 9:13, | turned | underneath | until |
| 10:7, 10:15, | 5:2, 16:19 | $49: 9$ | 5:14, 13:15, |
| 11:11, 12:2, | turns | understand | 14:11, 30:7, |
| 12:20, 38:13, | 42:12 | 38:12, 38:21, | 36:17, 37:16, |
| 38:25 | two | 43:18, 47:8 | 49:2 |
| travelers | 12:7, 13:25, | underutilized | upcoming |
| 21:25 | 20:9, 31:9, | 16:9 | 22:10, 45:4 |
| traveling | 31:23, 38:22, | undo | upgraded |
| 37:1, 38:22 | 39:11, 49:3, | 46:10 | 10:24 |
| traverse | 50:6 | unfortunate | upgrading |
| 38:20 | two-foot | 31:6 | 39:23 |
| treacherous | 10:5, 11:24 | unfortunately | upjohn-medtow |
| 25:14 | two-foot-wide | 31:5, 31:8, | 39:6, 40:5 |
| treat | 9:16, 10:10 | $32: 16,48: 1$ | upper |
| 12:8 | two-way | unidentified | 8:15, 8:16 |
| trickle | 8:19, 8:25, | 35:19, 37:3, | urban |
| 24:20 | 9:10, 9:15, | 37:7, 37:18, | 17:8 |
| tried | 10:5, 10:10, | 43:8, 43:13, | usage |
| 36:2 | 10:21, 11:9, | 44:10, 45:9, | 28:13 |
| trip | 11:17, 11:23, | 47:14 | use |
| $31: 19,31: 21$, | $12: 18, ~ 13: 6, ~$ 42.5 | union | 8:12, 19:15, |
| $33: 14$ trips | 42:5 type | 48:19, 48:21 | 28:21, 30:6, |
| $30: 4, \quad 31: 15,$ | $5: 24, \quad 28: 6$ | unit |  |
| $31: 18,31: 19,$ | types | 3:6, 4:12 | 31:16, 32:2, $41: 14$ |
| $31: 20,31: 23$, | 20:25 | $20: 8,20: 11$ | useful |
| $31: 25,32: 1$, | typewriting | university | 19:18, 29:3, |
| 32:4 | 53:7 | $10: 11, \quad 10: 17,$ | 29:5, 29:12, |
| truck | typical | 10:20, 11:7, | 30:16 |
| 42:11 | 9:6, 9:8, 9:9, | 11:15, 19:17, | using |
| trucks | 10:1, 10:3, | 24:6, 24:15, | 27:5, 32:11, |
| 26:21 | 10:4, 11:4, | 26:12, 41:11, | 51: 6 |
| true | 11:7, 11:8, | 42:2, 42:23, | usually |
| 53:5 | 11:13, 11:16, | 43:1, 44:17, | 31:11 |
| trying | $11: 17,12: 14,$ | 44:21, 45:14, | utility |
| $18: 2,26: 19,$ | $12: 16,12: 17$ | 45:19, $46: 21$ | 13:10, 16:11, |
| 33:3, 41:16, | typically | university-amher- | 18:3, 36:12, |
| 44:22, 46:21 | 36:16 | st | 39:21 |
| tuesday | typo | 39:8 | V |
| 1:13, 4:4 | 35:9 |  | value $22: 17,33: 4$ |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| various | 25:23, 35:16 | $30: 14,30: 20$, | 20:17, 25:12, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 8:18 | want | 30:22, 31:7, | 25:14, 29:11, |
| vehicle | 15:11, 15:15, | $32: 1,32: 10$, | 29:16, 30:1, |
| 20:11, 42:11, | 15:16, 17:23, | 33:17, 34:1, | 30:12, 32:3, |
| 42:12 | 18:17, 19:1, | 34:2, 34:3, | 36:6, 44:14, |
| vehicles | 19:21, 25:17, | 36:14, 37:10, | 44:18, 44:24, |
| 42:10 | 28:23, 29:1, | 37:22, 38:24, | 45:7, 47:24, |
| vehicular | 29:24, 33:5, | 42:2, 42:3, | 47:25, 48:1, |
| 30:4 | 33:6, 33:17, | 42:6, 42:15, | 48:25 |
| veterinary | 34:12, 37:20, | 42:17, 42:24, | wheelchairs |
| 39:9, 39:17 | 39:4, 40:7, | 43:2, 43:25, | 20:23 |
| via | 44:3, 46:17 | 44:22, 48:11, | whenever |
| 4:20, 5:13, | wanted | 50:4 | 22:3 |
| 28:8 | 26:6, 35:7, | we 've | whereupon |
| viable | 40:8, 48:5 | 17:10, 30:25, | 4:2 |
| 37:15 | wants | $31: 5,31: 10$, | whether |
| vibrates | 15:17, 30:12, | 32:9, 38:17, | 6:7, 32:5, |
| 40:14 | 49:20 | 45:21, 47:1, | 37:5, 39:24, |
| vicinity | washington | 47:8 | 41:1, $44: 1$, |
| 8:3 | $14: 3,48: 22$ | weather <br> 36.19 | $49: 9,49: 10$ |
| video | water | $\begin{aligned} & 36: 19 \\ & \text { webpage } \end{aligned}$ | white $8: 22$ |
| 5:2, 22:3 | $\begin{aligned} & 12: 8, \quad 22: 15, \\ & 22: 20 . \end{aligned}$ | webpage $4: 24$ | $8: 22$ |
| virtual | 22:20, 44:8 | $4: 24$ | whoever |
| 4:16, 4:17, | waters |  | $15: 17$ |
| $4: 25, \quad 6: 1, \quad 50: 14$ | $44: 3$ | 4:23, 8:1, 14:8 weigh | whole $27: 13, \quad 36: 23$ |
| virtually | $8: \overline{23}, 17: 3$ | $7: 10$ | $37: 1, \quad 39: 18$ |
| $27: 18$ | 17:16, 17:21, | weight | 42:8, 45:5, |
| vision | 21:11, 22:6, | 5:20, 7:8, | 46:16, 49:23 |
| 20:19, 34:1 | 25:22, 26:4, | 27:24 | wide 0.3 9.5 |
| visual | $26: 5, ~ 26: 16$, $29: 12, ~ 35: 15$, | welcome $5: 24,28: 6$ | $\begin{aligned} & 9: 1, \quad 9: 3, \quad 9: 5, \\ & 9: 12, \quad 9: 14, \end{aligned}$ |
| 7:25 | $\begin{array}{ll} 29: 12, & 35: 15, \\ 37: 23, & 46: 3, \end{array}$ | $\square$ | $\begin{array}{ll} 9: 12, & 9: 14, \\ 0.18 & 0.21 \end{array}$ |
| vital | $48: 6,48: 21,$ | 29:9, 42:1, | $10: 7, \quad 10: 13,$ |
| voice | $49: 11$ | $43: 19$ | 10:15, 11:12, |
| 18:18 | we'll | west | 11:24, 12:2, |
| W | $\begin{array}{ll}18: 7, & 21: 17, \\ 24: 1, & 24: 16,\end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 42: 6, \quad 44: 13, \\ & 44: 16, \quad 46: 18 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 12: 3, \\ & 12: 21, \\ & 34: 25 \end{aligned}$ |
| wait | 25:9, 34:21, | westchester | 35:11 |
| 5:14 | 36:24, 39:2, | 28:12 | widen |
| walk | 41:8, 46:15, | whatever | 38:9 |
| 25:15, 25:25, | $50: 16, \quad 50: 24$ | 46:9 | wider |
| 26:23, 33:7, | we're | whatnot | 49:9 |
| 33:14, 40:15, | 8:16, 16:17, | 24:10 | windham |
| $40: 23$ | $17: 5, \quad 17: 15,$ | wheaton | $8: 6,8: 25,9: 8,$ |
| walkable | $18: 12,18: 16,$ | $4: 8,8: 4,$ | $47: 17, \quad 47: 22$ |
| 26:4 <br> walking | $\begin{array}{ll} 19: 16, & 23: 12, \\ 29: 20, & 30: 9, \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{ll} 13: 25, & 16: 25, \\ 17: 20, & 18: 21, \end{array}$ | $47: 25, \quad 49: 1$ <br> window |
| 15:24, 20:24, |  | 17:20, 18:21, | $49: 25$ |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023

| wish | yeah | \$6 | 1939 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 5:7, 14:23, | 15:14, 15:17, | 27:6, 27:8 | 28:12 |
| 15:3, 15:6, | 18:9, 28:20, | \$9 | 1976 |
| 20:5, 28:5 | 34:16, 38:12, | 27:9 | 29:9 |
| wishes | 40:6, 40:8, | 1 | 2 |
| 27:25 | 41:22, 43:2, | 1.1 | 20 |
| within | 43:5, 43:23, | 8:7 | 29:16 |
| 4:22, 18:1, | 44:18, 45:21, | 10 | 20,000 |
| $48: 20$ | 47:20, 48:5 | 11:21, 38:14, | 16:17 |
| without | Year | 38:22, 50:17 | 2014 |
| $34: 5,40: 5$ | $\begin{array}{ll} 13: 22, & 31: 4, \\ 31: 11, & 33: 21 \end{array}$ | 10.5 | 7:2 |
| wonder | \|31:11, 33:21, | 9:5, 9:14, 10:7 | 2019 |
| $27: 12$ | $\left\lvert\, \begin{aligned} & 33: 25, \quad 36: 3, \\ & 36: 20 \end{aligned}\right.$ | 100 | 13:12, 31:13 |
| wondering | years | 2:7, 32:9, | 2020 |
| 41:9 | years $16: 5,24: 19$, | 48:10 | 31:14 |
| woodland | 16:5, 24:19, | 1017 | 2021 |
| 47:21, 47:22, | 25:2, $30: 14$, 29:16, | 18:10 | 31:14 |
| $48: 2, ~ 48: 7, ~$ $48: 25$, $49: 2$ | $\begin{array}{ll} 30: 14, & 31: 9, \\ 48: 21, & 50: 5 \end{array}$ | 10616 | 2023 |
| $49: 11$ | yeatman | 20:3 | 1:13, 4:4, |
| words | 24:4 | 10904 | 53:15 |
| 46:10 | young | 15:23 | 2024 |
| work | 41:15 | 110:15, 11:12, | $13: 13, ~ 13: 22, ~$ |
| 7:23, 19:22, | Yourself | $\begin{aligned} & 10: 15, ~ 11: 12, \\ & 11: 20, \\ & \hline 12: 3, \end{aligned}$ | $2025$ |
| 30:5, 31:21, | 18:8 | 12:21, 38:14, | 13:14, 36:18 |
| $31: 22,32: 6$, | Z | $38: 19$, | 2050 |
| 41:21, 41:25, | zeender | 1100167 | 16:14, 17:12 |
| 44:1, 45:18 | 3:10, 14:15 | 1:2 | 20878 |
| working | zero | 11009 | 2:8 |
| 29:20, 32:5, | 34:1 | 23:4 | 2314 |
| 46:2, 48:18 works | zoned | 11018 | 25:10 |
| works $41: 25,47: 18$, | 23:10 | 39:7 | 26 |
| 41:25, 47:18, $50: 4$ | zoning | 11101 | 53:15 |
| world | 23:11 zoom | 21:20 | 3 |
| 20:8, 20:14, | zoom 4:20 | 11366 | 30 |
| 21:1 | $29: 2, \quad 50: 14$ | 26:11 | 7:2, 30:14, |
| written | zoomed-in | 11605 24.4 | $51: 2$ |
| 5:18, 7:1, 7:7, | 8:12 | 24:4 12 | 330 |
| 14:1, 27:22, | zwolinski | 12 $13,4: 4,7: 2$ | 20:10 |
| 51:1, 51:2 | $26: 11$ | $\begin{aligned} & 1: 13,4: 4,7: 2, \\ & 11: 22,36: 16, \end{aligned}$ | $38$ |
| wrong $24: 7,42: 1$ | \$ | $36: 19,51: 2$ | $\frac{1: 14,4: 4}{4}$ |
| www | \$3 | $13$ | $\xrightarrow{4.5}$ |
| 14:9 | 24:18 | $16: 7$ | 35:7 |
| Y | 16:20, 24:25 | 50:17 | 40 |
| yard | 16.20, 24.25 | 18 | 30:14 |
| 35:15 |  | 36:19 |  |

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on December 12, 2023


