

US29 Mobility and Reliability Study - Notes
Thursday, December 16, 2021
6:30 pm
Bicycle and Pedestrian Breakout Room

We apologize that the video recording of this breakout room had issues. The following are notes documenting the discussion that occurred in the breakout room.

Discussion:

Common themes:

- Difficulty of bicycles and pedestrians to get across the Northwest Branch
- Uncomfortableness of sidewalks on US 29
- Pedestrian safety at intersections/trying to cross over Colesville Road
- New sidewalks, especially inside neighborhoods, may cause trees to get removed and that will harm climate strategy
- Need for median on Colesville Road inside Beltway
- Any idea where the people driving on US 29 are going? Do we know that transit will work for them?
- Bicycle and pedestrian bridge over I-495 next to Colesville Road

Comments:

- Speaker #1
 - Four Corners area
 - Access to transit for pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Very tricky to cross to NB Flash stop if you're on the north side of Four Corners
 - Within Woodmoor area, access between the NB and the Trader Joe's station. It was great that they put in sidewalks, but there are huge powerline poles in the middle of the sidewalk
 - Better access between those stations for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Speaker #2
 - Four Corners area
 - Stop at Timberwood is hard to access. Not good access between parking lot and platform and sidewalk is very narrow.
 - Sidewalks are bad throughout the area and need to be expanded.
 - Crossing at Lanark, there's a new traffic signal, but the permissive left turns from the mainline are a challenge. Drivers aren't looking for pedestrians. We need protected left turns. This is a general concern for signals throughout area.
 - People may ride the Flash from Fenton Street outbound toward White Oak and Burtonsville.
- Speaker #3
 - Main concern Four Corners to Lockwood. Occasionally bike from downtown Silver Spring or Forest Glen to White Oak.

- Pedestrian/bike bottleneck at Colesville, it is the only way to cross the Northwest Branch.
- Bike access from Southwood to Lockwood is dangerous because of utility poles, debris on sidewalk, uneven sidewalks.
- Not just bicycle and pedestrian access to transit, but connections through the corridor.
- The demand for travel isn't going to change. But you can change the modes that people use. If you get people on transit, you make more room on the roads.
- Speaker #4
 - There's no bicycle and pedestrian facilities north of Lockwood
 - Previously there was a discussion of closing the US 29/Musgrove intersection. Says it needs to stay open.
 - Improve pedestrian safety at all the intersections (especially with transit).
- Speaker #5
 - Concerned about area between Lockwood and Southwood. Pinch point for bikes and peds.
 - Recommend one quick fix: One part of sidewalk is in really bad shape near auto-body shop (near Trader Joe's). Slopes toward roadway.
- Speaker #6:
 - Concerned about functioning of the sidewalk- it is very narrow between Spring Street and Sligo Creek Parkway. Too narrow for two people to walk side-by-side. Vegetation makes it even narrower and it is immediately next to high speed traffic.
 - Almost impossible to cross Colesville. A median busway may make it easier to cross Colesville.
 - Noyes crosswalk is basically non-functional.
- Speaker #7
 - Concerned about sidewalks in Woodside Park. There are a number of very large trees that would be impacted. Don't want to lose any trees. Works against climate action plan to take out trees to put in sidewalks.
 - How will you keep us informed about the study of the potential environmental impacts of any proposed sidewalks in our neighborhood.
- Speaker #8
 - Concerned about sidewalks in Woodside Park. Don't know what the process is. Many of us moved into Woodside Park because of its bucolic and park-like setting. Many people use the streets and traffic has slowed down. Not aware of any pedestrian crashes.
 - How will a determination be made regarding any given sidewalk?
 - How does someone decide where to build sidewalks? Is there just a half-mile radius around downtown, and people just decide to build sidewalks?
- Speaker #9
 - Crossing the Northwest Branch is a very problematic point. No sidewalk on the SB side of roadway. Very narrow sidewalk obstructed by signs on NB side.
 - Very confident sidewalk and used the curb lane last week and was honked at and pushed aside.
 - Having this pinch point makes it impossible even for experienced riders to cross the Northwest Branch.

- Consider the induced demand of cyclists and pedestrians who would bike and walk here if there was a low-stress crossing.
- Is there a plan to add a new bridge and dedicated lanes across the Northwest Branch for pedestrians and cyclists? What's the timeline for making decisions related to the bridge?
- Speaker #10
 - Does this study include a median between downtown Silver Spring and Sligo Creek (for pedestrian refuge)?
 - Planning on keeping the reversible lanes?
 - Who do we talk to about getting a median?
 - Colesville/Dale Drive is very dangerous intersection.
 - If we want to have complete communities, walkable/bikeable communities/trees, a 6-lane highway is counter to those goals.
 - At some point, you can't add any more to the "funnel".
 - Wants trees, sidewalks and bicycle facilities, not six lanes of traffic.
 - On Georgia Ave & Bethesda, there are separate bike bridges over the Beltway. Does this study include consideration of a bike bridge over the Beltway?
 - Where are people using Colesville Road going? Have you studied it? If not, how do you know that people will even use the buses?
- Speaker #11
 - Would not walk to Fenton Street to take Flash to the Metro. Would just walk to Metro.
 - Doesn't make sense to provide a route for people to walk to Fenton Street station, because people will just walk directly to Metro.