



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION

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TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY GROUP

October 25, 2017

3:00 p.m.

The George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

AGENDA

1. Opening Comments

Introductions

Council Bill 20-2017

2. Public Comment

3. New Business

Bylaws

Election of officers

Office of Transportation

 About the Office

 Key projects and work plan

 Transit Development Plan

 Walk Howard Pedestrian Plan

Member interests

Future meetings

4. Adjournment

For confirmation, please call the Office of Transportation at 410-313-4312.



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TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY GROUP MINUTES

October 25, 2017 3:00 p.m.

Members Present: Astamay Curtis Phil Dulaney Adam Eldridge Jackie Eng Marlene Hendler Bob McLaughlin David Ramsey Jen Terrasa Marian Vessels Paul Walsky Hanna Witkin	Staff: Clive Graham, Executive Secretary John Ainsley, Recording Secretary
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1. **Opening Comments** (minute 01¹)

Introductions (minute 01)

Clive Graham, Administrator of the Office of Transportation (OoT), opened the meeting introduced the office staff to the members. The group members introduced themselves and gave a brief background of their experience and interests.

Council Bill 20-2017 (minute 17)

Clive reminded the members that the Transit and Pedestrian Advisory Group (TPAG) had been formed because of the recent passing of County Council Bill 20-2017 that required two advisory groups to be formed to advise the OoT. Clive walked members through the bill's provisions and answered questions.

2. **Public Comments** (minute 25)

There were no public comments.

¹ Minute references are to the meeting audio recording; see link on the Transportation and Pedestrian Advisory Group page of the Office of Transportation webpage.

3. **New Business** (minute 26)

Bylaws (minute 26)

Clive presented a draft of bylaws for the TPAG to be reviewed and amended for adoption. There was discussion regarding several bylaw provisions that resulted in recommended changes.

After discussion, the group decided that the vote to adopt the bylaws should be deferred to the next TPAG meeting. Clive said he would forward the draft revisions to the group prior to that meeting for review.

Election of Officers (minute 62)

Clive said the TPAG will need to elect a Chair and Vice Chair once the bylaws have been adopted. Clive requested that any member that may be interested in chairing the group to please let him know prior to the next meeting.

Office of Transportation (minute 63)

Clive gave an overview of the OoT duties and current projects which included the following;

- Composition of the Office
- Key projects and work plans
- Transit Development Plan
- Upgrade of public transit fleet
- Complete Streets Plan
- Walk Howard Pedestrian Plan
- Upgrade of Pedestrian Bridge over US 29

Member Interests (minute 83)

Clive asked the TPAG members their thoughts and interests for inclusion at future TPAG meetings.

- Jen Terrasa stated that one of the main purposes of having separate advisory groups was to be able to comment on the focus of that particular groups view (BAG or TPAG) regarding future county transportation master plans.
- Another suggestion is that groups can view master plans for discussion and input while the plan is in earlier stages, prior to it being a finalized plan that is going before the council.
- It was also suggested that the TPAG communicate and interface with the Multimodal Transportation Board.

Future meetings (minute 91)


Clive reminded the TPAG that it must meet at least four times a year, of which two meetings would be a joint meeting with the Bicycle Advisory Group (BAG). Clive advised the BAG is planning to have meetings in January, March, June and September. The TPAG agreed to hold joint meetings with the BAG at the March and September meetings. The groups could hold joint a joint meeting and, if warranted, separate to hold their own meetings.

After discussion, the Group agreed to continue to generally hold meetings the 4th Wednesday of the month at 3 p.m.

The TPAG decided to hold a special meeting to review the draft Transit Development Plan. Clive said he hoped to send out a link to the Plan before Thanksgiving. The special meeting will be held on November 29, 2017. The next regular quarterly meeting will be held in January 2018.

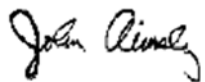
4. **Adjournment** (minute 108)

Mr. Graham adjourned the meeting at 4:55 pm. The next Transportation and Pedestrian Advisory Group meeting is scheduled for **November 29, 2017 at 3:00 pm.**



Clive Graham
Executive Secretary

11/8/17
Date



John Ainsley
Recording Secretary

11/8/17
Date

Community Services

Transportation Services

Mission Statement

The Office of Transportation's primary focus is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of public transportation services, walking and bicycling in and around Howard County and ensure that connectivity is front and center in land use planning and site development.

Department Description & Core Services

The Office of Transportation reports to the Department of County Administration. The office promotes and enhances the county's transportation services in three key functional areas; comprehensive and regional transportation planning; oversight of the county's transit services; and bicycle and pedestrian planning and coordination. In addition, the office coordinates funding for its functional areas, conducts emergency operations planning, maintains associations with federal, state and local officials and professionals, and provides support to the Howard County Public Transportation Board which advises the County Executive on transportation issues.

Oversight of the office is through the Department of County Administration, with additional guidance and support by the Howard County Public Transportation Board.



Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator Chris Eatough shows off an example of the electric assist bicycles that will be used for Howard County's Bike Share program.

Transportation Services

Division/Program/Bureau Description



Office of Transportation

The office provides oversight of the county's transit services, coordination of funding, emergency operations planning, associations with federal, state and local officials and professionals, and support to the Howard County Public Transportation Board which advises the county executive on transportation issues. The office leads the county's five-year Transit Development Plan and bus rapid transit planning.

Comprehensive and Regional Transportation Planning

The Office of Transportation collaborates with departments of Planning and Zoning and Public Works to provide regional transportation planning for the county for all transportation modes including roads. The office partners with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, represents the county on the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB), and manages transportation plans for Howard County under the BRTB's Unified Planning Work Program. The office participates in the zoning, subdivision, and land development process, reviewing plans for consistency with county transportation plans, policies, and regulations and making recommendations for enhancements to development proposals. This work includes special focus on transportation in downtown Columbia, including bus rapid transit planning.

Transit Operations and Coordination

The Office of Transportation manages and oversees the contract under which the Regional Transportation Agency (RTA) provides fixed route and paratransit services in Howard County, Anne Arundel County, Prince George's County and the City of Laurel. Funding is shared by the partner jurisdictions with support from federal and state sources to offset the gap between farebox and other revenues and capital and operating costs. The RTA runs 15 fixed routes, provides complementary paratransit service to people with disabilities, and general-purpose transportation for both elderly people and people with disabilities. The office leads the county's five-year Transit Development Plan. The office develops transportation demand management solutions that help reduce travel time and congestion, improve air quality, reduce costs, and support livability. The Rideshare service is an element of transportation demand management and promotes alternatives to the single occupant vehicle trips including trips by transit, ridesharing, bicycling, walking, and telecommuting.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Program

The Office of Transportation plans and promotes safe, comfortable, and convenient walking and bicycling for people of all ages and abilities in Howard County. The Office directs the preparation and implementation of BikeHoward and WalkHoward, the county's master plans for bicycling and walking. The office develops and promotes the county's complete streets policy and the bike-share program, and coordinates with the Department of Public Works and other departments to implement capital projects recommended in BikeHoward and WalkHoward.

Transportation Services

2017 Accomplishments

- Obtained full funding for a Bikeshare pilot for Downtown Columbia to be launched in Spring/Summer 2017 with seven stations and 70 bikes. County funding was reduced through partnership with six community supporters.
- Took delivery of three 100% inductively charged electric transit buses. This is one of the first projects using this technology in the U.S.
- Delivered over 1.5 million fixed-route and paratransit trips across the RTA system service area.
- Seated a commission as the RTA's multi-jurisdictional policy oversight board.
- Completed construction of a Downtown Multiuse Trail connecting Howard County General Hospital and Blandair Park.
- Obtained broad community consensus for a redesigned upgrade of the pedestrian-bicycle bridge over US 29 between downtown Columbia and Oakland Mills.
- Awarded a \$99,000 Maryland Bikeways program grant to improve connections through the Howard Community College from Hickory Ridge Road to the Downtown Columbia Trail.
- Awarded a \$30,000 Maryland Scenic Byways/ Recreation Trails Program grant for bicycle and pedestrian counting equipment that will broaden and improve the accuracy of non-vehicle transportation trip counts.
- Initiated a five-year Transit Development Plan with broad-based community input including multiple surveys, focus group interviews, and stakeholder input.
- Developed a draft Howard County Complete Streets Policy with extensive stakeholder input and support.

2018 Action Plan

- Complete and begin to implement a new regional Transit Development Plan for Howard, Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties. The five-year Plan will recommend a major reconfiguration of Howard County's fixed-route bus routes with a focus on more frequent service, shorter trip times, and expanded routes. The plan will also address paratransit services focusing on long-term financial and operational sustainability.
- Place in operation 18 new vehicles for the Regional Transportation Agency (RTA). The RTA's fixed-route bus fleet is old. Buses break down frequently and need expensive repairs. The county took delivery of three electric fixed route buses in 2017. The technology is experimental and the county hopes to put them in service in 2018. The county expects to take delivery of seven new diesel fixed route buses and eight paratransit vehicles in Fall 2017.
- Adopt a complete streets policy and design manual. Complete streets serve people of all ages and abilities who travel by foot, bicycle, public transportation, or automobile. A complete streets policy describes which streets should be complete and how improvements are implemented with respect to planning, programming, street design, operation, repair and maintenance.
- Adopt WalkHoward, a new pedestrian master plan for Howard County. WalkHoward is a Plan for implementing a connected, comfortable, and safe pedestrian network that accommodates all users.
- Complete the upgrade of the pedestrian-bicycle bridge over US 29 between downtown Columbia and Oakland Mills. The bridge is a key link in the county's pedestrian-bicycle network, and crosses US 29 at a central, highly visible location.

Transportation Services

Strategic Goals and Measures

Goal - Enhance the accessibility and quality of transit operations in, to and from Howard County.

Objective - Increase the number of passenger boardings (transit ridership).

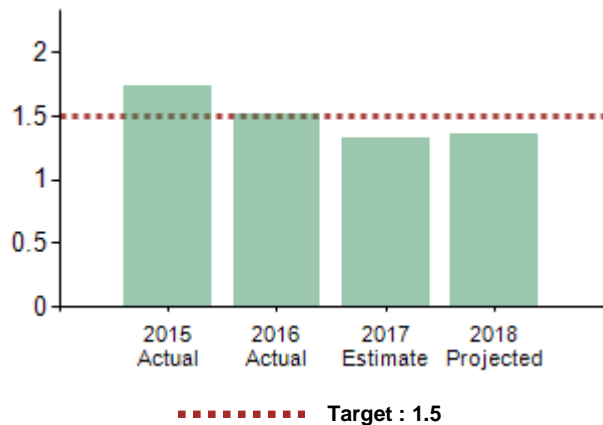
Description of Objective - Make the transit system more attractive to current and potential passengers in order to: 1) Encourage travelers to make trips by transit instead of private automobile, reducing congestion and air pollution, and 2) Provide pleasant, reliable and useful travel options for those without access to an automobile. A more efficient and reliable transit experience will encourage more people to travel by bus or commuter rail.

Strategies

- Upgrade bus stop facilities.
- Expand and adjust transit routes to improve service, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Incorporate transit-related recommendations into review comments on development applications.
- Improve the reliability of Regional Transportation Agency (RTA) service by adding 11 new buses to the fleet and maintaining older vehicles.

Measure	FY2015 Actual	FY2016 Actual	FY2017 Estimate	FY2018 Projection
Age of the transit fleet	7	8	8	5
Bus stop upgrades completed (number)	27	7	25	45
Outcome				
Number of RTA passenger boardings (in millions)	1.73	1.52	1.33	1.35

Number of RTA passenger boardings (in millions)



Trend Analysis - RTA ridership has declined slightly in each of the last two fiscal years. This trend is in line with ridership declines across the region – attributed partially to low gas prices, as well as the growth in both telecommuting and ride-hailing services such as Uber and Lyft. In the case of RTA, however, it is also believed that ridership is being lost due to unreliable service, which is the direct result of years of underinvestment in the bus fleet. The county expects to take delivery of 10 new fixed-route and eight paratransit vehicles by mid FY 2018, and hopes to purchase another 10 vehicles in cooperation with our RTA partners. These replacement vehicles should significantly improve both the reliability and comfort of the fleet, and at that point, we expect ridership trends to improve.

Office of Transportation Organization (FY 2018)

