MEMORANDUM of MEETING

Date: January 28, 2020

Date of Meeting: January 8, 2020
Meeting Location: George Howard Building

Work Order Number: 32022-015
Project: Howard County Complete Streets

Meeting Description: Complete Streets Implementation Team Meeting #1

Participants:

Name	Company	Phone	Email
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Carl Gutschick	Gutschick, Little and Weber, P.A.	410.880.1820	cgutschick@glwpa.com
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Kristin Russell	Columbia Association	410.715.3107	kristin.russell@columbiaassociation.org
Jeff Riegner	WRA	302.571.9001	jriegner@wrallp.com
Larry Schoen	Multimodal Transportation Board	410.730.9797	larryschoen@gmail.com
Cory Summerson	Public Works Board	410.313.6142	cory.j.summerson@bge.com
Paul Walsky	Howard County Recreation and Parks		pwalsky@howardcountymd.gov
Jennifer White	Horizon Foundation	248.345.3030	jwhite@thehorizonfoundation.org

The purpose of the meeting was to introduce members of the Howard County Complete Streets Implementation Team (CSIT) to their responsibilities per Howard County's Complete Streets policy and set ground rules for the implementation process.

The participants introduced themselves. Chris Eatough thanked them for their willingness to serve as members of the group.

Jeff Riegner introduced himself as the consultant who advised the County in the development of the policy and who will facilitate the CSIT moving forward. He led the group through the presentation attached to these minutes. The first part of the presentation dealt with an overview of ground rules for the group, including how group members treat each other, communicate, and make recommendations.

Chris noted that CSIT meetings are official meetings that are publicly posted on Howard County's website. Agendas, minutes, and presentations will be posted and available to both the general public and CSIT members. Jeff noted that the website is a place the public can find information about the process but will not be the only way the public is engaged in the effort.

The CSIT agreed the proposed ground rules. Larry Schoen expressed concern that due to the proposed quorum rules that there could be as few as five members deciding for the group (16 CSIT members, 9 members for a quorum, 5 for a majority vote). Cory Summerson stated that voting works the same for the Public Works Board. Jeff and Chris stated that if an item requiring a vote was on the agenda they would ensure that all CSIT members were aware in advance of the meeting in order to encourage high attendance.

Jeff continued with the presentation, moving on to provide a review of Howard County's Complete Streets policy. He clarified that the purpose of the policy is to make Complete Streets happen in Howard County, and that the goal is to codify County processes and procedures so that the implementation continues in the long term regardless of changes in County administration and staff. He then reviewed the ten components of the Complete Streets policy.

- After an overview of section 3, exceptions, Carl Gutschick asked how the County would address projects along state roads that are not limited access. Jeff noted that the county's policy does not apply to state roads because the County does not have jurisdiction.

- Paul Walsky asked whether the State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) includes county or public feedback when they do a project. Jeff responded that in his experience the type of feedback requested varies by project, but SHA's new Complete Streets policy does have implementation tasks associated with it.

- Larry stated that historically MDOT SHA has not been supportive of multi-modal improvements and has not made any overtures to the County's Multimodal Transportation Board.

- Tom Auyeung shared that there is a quarterly meeting between MDOT SHA District 7 and the County to provide updates on MDOT SHA projects.

- Jeff suggested that WRA and the Office of Transportation could work with the Department of Public Works (DPW) to set up a conversation with MDOT SHA to establish what the County can expect moving forward considering new State guidelines.

- After an overview of section 9, performance measures, Carl asked whether the same performance measures apply throughout the County, particularly in more rural areas. Jeff responded that the policy does apply everywhere, but that the far west of the County has different land use conditions that will be reflected in the Design Manual updates. Street design will be based on land use context.

- Chris replied that certain performance measures apply much more to the Planned Service Area in the eastern part of the County. For example, the Bike Howard short-term network is concentrated in the eastern part of the County. Jeff replied that another example is sidewalks, which are not appropriate for every street in the County. He reiterated that the Design Manual will address where certain types of infrastructure are appropriate.

- The group had a brief conversation around equity and the vulnerable population index (VPI). Jeff confirmed that the data for the VPI will be updated based on the American Community Survey release schedule.

Jeff then provided more details about the CSIT's role in implementing the policy and notified members that the first update from the Design Manual team should be provided to the CSIT in March.

- Larry asked whether the CSIT will get a chance to see interim progress along the way, such as the resources being used for the new design manual. Chris replied that that is exactly the information that will be shared with the CSIT.

- Jeff noted that the CSIT may see and comment on proposed modifications to the highway classification system. He explained the new system will be more specific and related to the land use context, i.e. the density of land use will affect transportation decisions. The manual will also address Bike Howard routes as well as scenic roadways. The general public and developers will also have an opportunity to review and comment on proposed changes to the Design Manual.

- Chris reminded the group that Design Manual changes will go through public meetings, the Public Works Board, and County Council, ensuring ample opportunity for public feedback.

- Jennifer White asked for clarification on possible interim updates on the subdivision and land development regulations. Jeff responded that that WRA and OOT are working to identify items that can be addressed before the Design Manual updates are complete. The goal is to balance urgency with a thorough and inclusive process. At this early stage in the process, it is unclear what any interim items would be.

- David Nitkin asked whether public outreach procedures are specified in the Complete Streets policy and asked for clarification on the purpose of public outreach. Jeff responded that details are not specified and that public outreach will be the first substantive topic the CSIT discusses. Currently each department has different approaches to outreach depending on the project. For example, County capital projects may utilize different types of outreach depending on whether they are led by DPW or OOT. The goal for the CSIT is to identify how to reach out to the community to get their ideas before finalizing scope and budget, and how to reach out during design processes to solicit additional input.

- Chris clarified that DPW currently has a process, but the Complete Streets policy acknowledges that many people are still not aware of what is going on with transportation process. Jeff noted that every government agency has practices that are codified as well as the way they do things. He explained that this is an opportunity to codify best practices.

- David asked how project prioritization will align with the County budget. Jeff responded that ideally those processes are the same, and the goal of the CSIT is to make sure that the performance measures and project prioritization are factors that are considered during the budget process. David asked whether any changes will be in place to inform the FY21 budget. Chris responded that most decisions on the FY21 budget will be made before a new process is developed. David Ramsay added that there may be time to incorporate some of the process into the School District budget.

- Jeff noted that once a proposed process is identified, projects will be run through it to see how outcomes differ and if anything needs adjustment. Many of the criteria we mentioned earlier are considered as part of

the budgeting process but may not be consistently applied. Chris reminded the group that this process will only apply to transportation projects.

Jeff explained the semi-annual reporting process and reminded members that the CSIT will meet monthly through the completion of implementation tasks.

Larry asked Jeff for his opinion on the most challenging part of the implementation process. Jeff replied that the biggest challenge is working with stakeholders with different priorities. Larry asked whether the CSIT represents enough different groups. Jeff responded that the CSIT represents a number of stakeholder groups, but the general public will also be engaged throughout the process.

Jennifer noted that this group should look at the development of process indicators in order to define what successful implementation looks like. She noted that the implementation of the policy is a subjective process, and although the policy details performance measures and outcomes, it does not give us tools to measure success. Jeff responded that success can mean a lot of things and is difficult to gauge, but one outcome may be whether issues come up at the end of the implementation process.

Carl noted that on the exceptions slide there wasn't an indication of what happens when the objectives of this policy conflict with the objectives of other policies, i.e. if streets have to be wider to accommodate more users that will have environmental impacts. Jeff replied that one reason the process takes so long is because those conflicts need to be addressed during the implementation phase. Chris replied that the conflicting and competing needs section is not included under exceptions because the issue is how the County decides between multiple priorities.

Jeff wrapped up the meeting noting that the Design Manual will help users decide among priorities, and that there will be a lot of discussion and trade-offs among different items that will need to be discussed by the CSIT.

Jeffrey R. Riegner, PE, AICP, PTOE
Vice President