



# HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS BOARD

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Cory J. Summerson, Chairperson  
Abby Glassberg, Vice Chairperson

Pedro Ramirez, Member  
Alan Whitworth, Member

## Minutes of the Howard County Public Works Board – November 9, 2021

**Members present:** Mr. Cory Summerson, Chairperson, Ms. Abby Glassberg, Vice Chairperson, Mr. Pedro Ramirez, and Mr. Alan Whitworth.

**Staff present:** Thomas J. Meunier, Executive Secretary; John Seefried, Assistant to the Director, Public Works; Emily A. Iacchei, Chief, Real Estate Services Division; Amah Binde, Chief, Bureau of Engineering; Kris Jagarapu, Chief, Bureau of Highways, Thomas Auyeung, Engineering Specialist III, Brandon Love, Chief, Transportation and Special Projects, Abdul Akbari, Engineering Specialist III, Nic Stewart, Recording Secretary, Real Estate Services Division.

Mr. Summerson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:28 p.m.

1. **Approval of minutes:** Mr. Summerson indicated that the first item on the agenda is the approval of the minutes of **October 12, 2021**. Ms. Glassberg asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes.

**Motion:** On a motion made by **Ms. Glassberg** and seconded by **Mr. Ramirez**, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of October 12, 2021.

### 2. **Complete Streets Design Manual Presentation**

**Staff Presentation:** At this time, **Mr. Christopher Eatough**, from the Howard County Office of Transportation, introduced himself and thanked the Board and audience for the opportunity to present the updates to the Howard County Complete Streets Design Manual. He explained the implementation team has been working on the updates for quite some time, and they are happy to be in the final stages. Part of the journey getting to this point began with the Complete Streets Policy which was passed by Council Resolution 120-2019 on October 7, 2019, which established a new policy for the County roadways making safety the number one priority, as well as accommodating for all users of the roadways including walking, biking, wheelchair accessibility, and people using transit. Mr. Eatough further explained the policy states the County shall establish a routine process for project delivery that reflects the Complete Streets Policy. The Department of Public Works, Department of Planning and Zoning, Office of Transportation, and all other relevant County departments and agencies will review, seek and incorporate public input and amend current design standards, including the Design Manual and the portions of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations that apply to roadway and bridge construction or reconstruction, to ensure that they reflect the best available standards and effectively implement this policy.

Updates to the Design Manual shall be finalized by the County Executive and submitted to Council within 24 months of County Council's vote to approve this policy. Therefore, with the passing of the Council Resolution in October 2019, the Office of Transportation did receive permission for some leniency for the deadline due to the process of presenting to the Public Works Board and the legislative process. Again, the policy requires updates to various Howard County regulations including the Design Manual which included an update to the appendix of the design manual as well. Mr. Eatough explained there has been a diverse team working on the Complete Streets program for the last two years which included both County staff and non-County stakeholders. The County Staff are listed as follows: Sam Sidh, Howard County Executive's Office; Chris Eatough, Office of Transportation; Kris Jagarapu, Department of Public Works, Highways; Tom Auyeung, Department of Public Works, Engineering; Chad Edmondson, Department of Planning and Zoning; Paul Walsky, Department of Recreation and Parks; and Christiana Rigby, Howard County Council. The non-County stakeholders included: Brian Nevin, Howard County Public Schools Transportation; Jessica Bellah, Columbia Association; Larry Schoen, Multimodal Transportation Board; Cory Summerson, Public Works Board; David Nitkin, Howard County General Hospital; Carl Gutschick, Private Sector Engineer; Jennifer White, Horizon Foundation. This group has met a total of 35 times since December 2019 in order to meet the deadlines for the Design Manual Updates. During that time, there has been approximately 981 comments received with regard to the policy as well. At this time, Mr. Eatough turned the presentation over to **Mr. Bryan Townsend**, Consultant from WRA, to explain the changes addressed. Mr. Townsend first noted that all of the revisions to Volume III of the Design Manual are consistent with established design guidance and best practices from various associations including American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Maryland State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA), National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). The manual is a compilation of how the guidance is incorporated in Howard County. Mr. Townsend explained that there are quite a few changes to Volume III of the Design Manual from the current manual, and the primary changes are listed below:

- Chapter 1:** New Street Types are designed to accommodate all users.
- Chapter 2:** New tools for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit design; speed management tools. Focus on safety for all users.
- Chapter 3:** New guidance on shared use pathway bridges and underpasses; revisions to retrofit standards.
- Chapter 4:** Revisions deferred to coordination with subdivision regulations and updated growth rate.
- Chapter 5:** Added quite a bit of evaluation on bicycle studies and updated pedestrian studies.

Mr. Townsend further explained all the information regarding the changes/updates to the Manual was posted October 8, 2021 for public review.

Mr. Townsend then explained that changes to Volume IV mainly involved new typical sections for new construction street types, new details for speed management measures, and revisions to existing R-series details based on the updated Volume III guidance—Primarily sidewalk widths.

Mr. Townsend proceeded with the presentation by giving a brief overview of the new street types essential to the new Complete Street Policy. The first three new street type scenarios are intended for mix-use areas followed by a fourth street type scenario intended for rural areas.

The first street type consists of boulevard, town center connector, and town center street. In these three street types there is a bike lane and a sidewalk separated from each other with a buffer zone before the traffic in the street. This scenario is due to the anticipation that mixed-use areas will have higher volumes of bicycle and pedestrian traffic and the features of each type are listed below:

Boulevard Features:

- Mixed-use/higher density areas
- Four-lane divided street
- Grass or landscaped median/ center turn lane
- Separated bikeways
- Sidewalks
- Privately owned frontage zone for additional street furniture and restaurant seating
- Options with and without parking

Town Center Connector Features:

- Mixed-use/higher density areas
- Three-lane street
- Center turn lane
- Separated bikeways
- Sidewalks
- Privately owned frontage zone for additional street furniture and restaurant seating
- Options with and without parking

Town Center Street Features:

- Mixed-use/higher density areas
- Two-lane street
- Separated bikeways
- Sidewalks
- Privately owned frontage zone for additional street furniture and restaurant seating
- Options with and without parking

The second street type would be represented in the suburban/lower density areas which would include parkways, neighborhood connectors, neighborhood streets with on-road buffered bike lanes, neighborhood streets with shared use paths on one side of the street, and neighborhood yield streets with sidewalks and shared lanes for traffic/bicycles. Mr. Townsend then described each of the street types and features of each type which are listed below:

Parkway Features:

- Suburban/lower density areas
- Four or six-lane divided street
- Grass or landscaped median/ center turn lane
- Shared use paths
- No parking

Neighborhood Connector Features:

- Suburban/lower density areas
- Three-lane street
- Grass or landscaped median/ center turn lane
- Shared use paths
- No sidewalks
- Options with and without parking

Neighborhood Street 1 (buffered bike lane)

Features:

- Suburban/lower density areas
- Two-lane street
- On-road buffered bike lanes
- Sidewalks
- Options with and without parking

Neighborhood Street 2 Features:

- Suburban/lower density areas
- Two-lane street
- Shared use path on one side of the street
- Sidewalk on the other side of the street
- Options with and without parking
- Appropriate in areas including libraries or schools

### Neighborhood Yield Street Features:

- Residential areas
- Low volume two-way traffic
- Shared lane
- Sidewalks
- On-street parking
- Curb-to-curb width based on density
  - 24' in low density areas
  - 26' in low-moderate density areas
  - 28' in moderate density areas

### Alley Features:

- Countywide
- 1-lane driveway/garage access
- Shared lane
- No sidewalks
- No on-street parking
- Privately owned

Mr. Townsend proceeded to explain the third type of street would include Industrial areas that would consist of a separated shared-use path in anticipation of more traffic volumes with heavy vehicles. The features are listed below.

### Industrial Street Features:

- Industrial areas
- Marked centerline
- Shared use path
- Sidewalk
- Flexible configuration
  - 40' curb to curb
  - Could be striped as two lanes with outside used for parking (shown)
  - Could be striped as three lanes if needed

Lastly, Mr. Townsend began to describe the fourth type of streets that included the rural areas. These areas include county roads and the features of these types of roads are listed below:

### Country Road Features:

- Rural/low density areas
- Collector
- Two-lane street
- On-road bike lanes
- No sidewalks
- No on-street parking

### Rural Development Street Features:

- Rural/low-density residential areas
- Low volume two-way traffic
- Shared lane
- No on-street parking

Upon completion of the different types of streets and features, Mr. Townsend proceeded to summarize the public process. Mr. Townsend explained the Design Manual was Posted for Public Comment – October 8, 2021, and after the initial posting on October 8, 2021 there were two workshops. The first Design Manual Overview – Workshop was held October 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., and the recording and Q&A was posted. Sixteen members of the public attend this workshop. The second Design Manual Technical Overview – Workshop was held October 21, 2021, 2:00 pm, and the recording and Q&A was also posted. Forty-three members of the public attended the second workshop. Design Manual comments were accepted through a questionnaire until October 28, 2021 in which there were 160 combined questions and comments. Lastly, the Workshops were advertised based on requirements detailed in the Community Engagement Plan.

Mr. Townsend explained that the comments and questions were reviewed and brief answers were provided. Moving forward, Mr. Townsend then began to provide a brief overview of the revisions. The revisions are as follows below:

#### Chapter 1 Revisions

- General: Clarifications re: “Motor Vehicle Traffic”- Motor vehicle traffic refers to all modes of traffic
- Section 1.3.C – New Street Types
  - Noted intent to provide curb extensions, median refuges
  - Noted that Neighborhood Connectors are intended to have consolidated access points
  - Noted Neighborhood Street 2 has optional centerline markings for low volumes of traffic
- Section 1.3.D – Scenic Road improvement clarification that it is possible to make improvements to a scenic road due to the nature of that scenic roadway.
- Section 1.3.E – Pathways providing similar access do not need to be parallel
- Chapter 1 Appendix B (TIPS) – Removed from Manual

#### Chapter 2 Section 2 Revisions

- Section 2.2.C.8 – Added path centerline markings
- Section 2.2.E.10 (various) –
  - Speed Management devices to accommodate all users / not interrupt bicycle facilities
  - Speed Management device design must consider roadway sightlines;
  - Speed Management device spacing reset by stop conditions;
  - Speed humps not preferred in new construction
- Section 2.2.E.10.c - Clarified that DPW may install other devices when a neighborhood declines speed humps
- Section 2.2.E.10.d – Separated chart rows noting street types for 1 lane / 2 lane street narrowing
- Section 2.2.G – Added vertical offset information regarding:
  - Bikeway separation
  - Shared Use Paths

#### Chapter 2 Section 4 Revisions

- Section 2.4.B.4 – Clarified intent of “receiving lane” for turning vehicles
- Section 2.4.B.6 – Restructured auxiliary lane section and provided different types of auxiliary lanes.
- Section 2.4.B.9 – Emphasized that channelized turn lanes should be designed for low vehicle speeds
- Section 2.4.E – Pedestrian signalization and midblock crossing guidance
- Section 2.4.G –
  - Intersections should not interrupt bicycle accommodation
  - Notes re: FHWA interim approvals- do need to be approved by federal and state
  - Signal timing for bicycles
  - Signal bicycle Detection

#### Chapter 2 Other Revisions

- 2.6.B – On-Street Parking Chart revisions to be consist with new street types.
- 2.8.I – Bus Stop guidance updates
  - In-lane bus stops common
  - Continue bicycle facilities past bus pull-outs

- 2.8.J – Scenic Road improvement clarification acknowledging ability for localized improvements
- Appendix J (Speed Hump Policy) removed

#### Chapter 5 Revisions

- Section 5.2.C.1-Provided more guidance on evaluating mid-block crossing retrofits
- Section 5.2.C.2-Acknowledged shared us path crossings of freeways and rivers

#### Design Manual Volume IV

Revisions have been made consistent with Volume III, primarily:

- Revised Typical Sections to the new street types
- Added Speed Management device details
- Updated pavement section chart to add new street types with classification references
- Revised sidewalk widths-There will be quite a few details that will be revised with some exceptions to process.
- Updated Tee Turnaround details

#### Volume IV detail final review

- Background growth rate-This has been a topic of great discussion which is still being reviewed in order to provide the best guidance.
- Target speed for Neighborhood Connector Street
- Distance to schools for requiring developer study showing potential bike and ped connections

Mr. Eatough then proceeded to explain the upcoming schedule and process for the Complete Streets Policy as listed below:

- November 23, 2021 – Multimodal Transportation Board Presentation
- December 14, 2021 – Public Works Board vote
- Mid-December – Pre-File with County Council
- January 2022 – County Council consideration
- Early 2022 – Design Manual Training
- 2022 – Subdivision and Land Development Regulations and related Design Manual changes (9 month timeline)

At this time Mr. Eatough and Mr. Townsend finished the initial presentation. Mr. Eatough mentioned there were many attendees in the audience from the Department of Public Works and noted their help throughout the process has been an integral part of the design manual updates to this point. Mr. Eatough then asked for any questions or comments.

**Board Comments:** Ms. Glassberg first asked why the Design Manual updates needed to be brought before the Public Works Board if passed by the resolution two years ago. Mr. Eatough explained that any updates to the Design Manual need to be brought before the Public Works Board to approve in order to present to the County Council. Mr. Summerson agreed and referenced the Storm Drainage Manual updates from 2019 that were brought before the Public Works Board to approve in order to proceed to the County Council. Ms. Glassberg then asked if Mr. Eatough had any input from trade organizations, whether it be developers or home builders if there would be an impact of additional costs to them with the new changes to the manual. Mr. Eatough responded that he had not received any specific questions regarding additional costs from developers or home builders. He proceeded to explain that the second workshop on October 21, 2021, was attended mainly by a specific community of people including developers and home builders. While there were other questions at that workshop,

the specific question regarding cost did not get brought up. Mr. Eatough further explained that a financial analysis will be reviewed before presenting to Council. Ms. Glassberg further asked about the widths of the actual driving lanes and if they would be accommodating for both cars and tractor trailer vehicles when some street models are narrower than others. Mr. Eatough explained that the width language selected for drive lanes in the models would accommodate for larger vehicles, and the narrower street types tend to have less volume of traffic in which larger vehicles would most likely not be traveling. Ms. Glassberg continued by asking if the street width types were designed with the same range to accommodate lane/space for overnight parking for as well as room for larger SUVs or trucks to pass through easily and safely. Mr. Townsend replied that some of the street types needed to be viewed individually as some street types were 11 feet and some were 10 ½ feet, although, with that being said, there are all proficient with National Guidance and it was made certain they were appropriate for the context of the street policy. Ms. Glassberg then asked how the general public nominate a road to get retrofit and used Broken Land Parkway as an example which has a lot of pedestrian traffic. Mr. Eatough stated the Design Manual does not have that process for looking at the County on a whole scale, rather it is designed to provide guidance on new roads which includes new construction. Furthermore, the Design Manual also provides new tools on retrofit, and in terms of the order or the clarity it is a similar process to before which would be through a capital project with planning and studies to show where the problem areas are. Ms. Glassberg asked if other Counties had implemented similar policies. Mr. Townsend and Mr. Eatough stated that Montgomery County is also in the process and has a draft for updates to their Design Manual as well. Ms. Glassberg then asked how it was planned to educate the public on all of the information. Mr. Eatough stated that it would be a community effort that will begin once the Design Manual updates are approved and adopted through the County outreach programs as well as the school system, advocacy groups and non-profit organizations. Mr. Eatough did explain the community effort will be an ongoing process to spread awareness about the new designs. Mr. Eatough further explained the Design Manual was really designed to make sure the project itself worked through the planning, design and structure process, but the community engagement during the updating process should help to kick off the actual correct usage of the usage.

Lastly, Ms. Glassberg commented on how the ½ mile distance listed in the presentation on the last slide qualified for bus usage. Ms. Glassberg stated she may be wrong, but she thought the distance to qualify for a bus was actually 1 mile. Mr. Eatough stated that currently in this Design Manual the distance was not necessarily listed as the distance to the actual vicinity of the school but aimed toward developments that are close to schools and the developer would have to provide concept studies to show how connections would be made. The concept studies started at a half mile radius and was modeled to include most of the schools in Howard County. The studies showed that a half mile radius provided pretty good coverage for most schools, but the half mile distance can also be changed as there will be more studies conducted in the future as well.

Ms. Glassberg did express interest in quantifying the additional cost of the Complete Streets Policy on residential and commercial development.

**Mr. Ramirez** had a question related to the distance to the school. Mr. Ramirez asked what the rationale was for not making a developer comply with a one mile radius of a school. Mr. Eatough explained that again, when looked at coverage area countywide covers the whole of Howard County. Mr. Eatough mentioned that the question of whether developers may have to include a study for every single development was brought forward during process, and as an example, Mr. Ramirez commented that his children were at the mile line.

**Mr. Whitworth** explained that about a year ago the Highways Department came to the Public Works Board for a motion of support to approve a budget for the repaving of County roads that were going to fail in the next five years or be in need of repaving. Mr. Whitworth asked as the County roads begin to

be repaved would the new design be implemented, or would the roads be repaved and remain as they were? Mr. Whitworth further asked if more money would be asked for later with regard to the roads as well. At this time, Mr. Kris Jagarapu, Chief, Bureau of Highways, did confirm that he came before the Board last year for support for additional funding for the Road Resurfacing Program and also how the Complete Streets policy would impact road resurfacing. He indicated that existing roadways would be reviewed to see if they could accommodate additional features. Mr. Whitworth further stated a chart was shown of all the roads and culverts that were failing, and Mr. Whitworth asked if the County was planning to improve County property to update the design standards as well.


Mr. Whitworth further asked if there was a study done to determine what this may end up costing the taxpayers? Mr. Whitworth asked after the developer is gone or finished would the sidewalks, walking paths and bike paths be the responsibility of the community or would the County be responsible for the cost. Mr. Ramirez also asked if it would be a Right-of-Way. Mr. Whitworth explained a scenario where he had a contract with the County to replace the sidewalk and curb and the homeowner could either pay the County directly or have it added to their property tax. Mr. Eatough explained that sidewalks are maintained by the property owner, and Mr. Eatough further stated the he did not feel the four foot to five-foot dimension would make a major difference. Mr. Whitworth also responded by Stating that projects have been brought before the Public Works Board regarding the repaving of roads (approximately 82% of roads in Howard County) and replacing of culverts recently that require a lot of money. As a property owner in Howard County, Mr. Whitworth would like to know what the updates to Complete Streets may cost as he is concerned with all of the other potential projects. Mr. Whitworth also referenced recent water/sewer projects for Eastern part of the County for what he believed to be estimated around \$372 million that was recently approved, as the Board was informed before about water and sewer that was failing in the Eastern part of the County. Mr. Whitworth asked if there was any further information on that, and there was none. Mr. Eatough explained there would be a fiscal analysis submitted to the County Council, although he was not sure when it would be ready. Mr. Eatough further explained the retrofit aspect of the Design Manual is basically a tool to use during the process and is very instrumental.

Mr. Ramirez asked if there would be any State roads within the County subject to the policy, and Mr. Eatough State roads would not really be subject to the policy as State Highways Administration has their own policy.

Mr. Summerson asked where and to whom questions should be submitted. Mr. Eatough explained any questions or comments could be directed to him. Mr. Summerson also asked if the Board members had the most recent updated links and Mr. Eatough explained they did.

**Public Testimony:** N/A

There being no further business, the Public Works Board meeting adjourned at approximately 8:36 p.m.



Thomas J. Meunier  
Executive Secretary



Nic Stewart  
Recording Secretary