



HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BOARD
3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2350

Ron Hartman, Chair
Jason Quan, Vice Chair

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FAX 410-313-3467
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March 24, 2016

Calvin B. Ball, Ed.D, Chairperson, County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Re: Support of Howard County's Bicycle Master Plan - Council Resolution 35-2016

Dear Dr. Ball,

On March 22, 2016, the Public Transportation Board was given a presentation of the Howard County Bicycle Master Plan (also known as BikeHoward) at its monthly board meeting. Mr. Chris Eatough of the Office of Transportation presented the plan, which is currently being reviewed by the County Council and being considered for approval.

The Howard County Public Transportation Board (PTB) emphatically and unanimously supports the Bicycle Master Plan and urges the County Council to approve Council Resolution 35-2016. This is an important step forward for Howard County and provides the vision and framework to make biking a safe, convenient transportation option for many people in Howard County.

The PTB also opposes Amendment 1, to remove a proposed pathway segment located on Columbia Association property adjacent to the Allview community. This pathway would provide a direct, car-free connection between Downtown Columbia and the Savage/Laurel area, including access to the MARC train stations. Furthermore, all projects in the Bicycle Master Plan are labeled as preliminary/proposed, so there is no need to eliminate individual projects from consideration at this time. More study and public input can determine whether this is the best option for providing this connection, but this potentially valuable project should not be taken off the table.

The PTB also supports an accelerated Bicycle Master Plan. Short term projects are considered 0-10 years, but with funding support and coordination, most of these projects could be implemented in less than 10 years. Also, some of the mid and long term projects could be implemented in the short term.

On behalf of the Howard County Public Transportation Board, I urge you to approve County Council Resolution 35-2016 adopting a Complete Streets policy and the Howard County Bicycle Master Plan in its entirety, without removing individual projects.

Sincerely,

Ron Hartman, Chair

Cc: Jon Weinstein, Vice Chairperson, County Council, Jen Terrasa, County Council, Mary Kay Sigaty, County Council, Greg Fox, County Council
Allan Kittleman, Howard County Executive
Lonnie Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer

CR 35 and Complete Streets Amendment

Nikki Highsmith Vernick [nhighsmith_vernick@thehorizonfoundation.org]

Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 10:26 AM

To: CouncilMail

Cc: Ball, Calvin B; Glenn Schneider [GSchneider@thehorizonfoundation.org]; ian.kennedy7@gmail.com

Attachments: Copy of Complete Streets ~1.xlsx (13 KB) ; Toole Memo_Need for CS Des~1.pdf (437 KB) ; CR35 Bike Master Plan and ~1.pdf (238 KB)

Dear Howard County Councilmembers:

The Horizon Foundation was very excited to see the tremendous turnout for CR-35 -the Bike Master Plan and Complete Streets Statement. Particularly the bike master plan is a culmination of years of hard work and we applaud everyone who has been involved.

We understand that Council Chairman Calvin Ball will be introducing an amendment to CR-35 after talking with each of you. The amendment is related to Complete Streets and is supported by the Horizon Foundation. The amendment would accomplish several items:

- (1) Ask the Complete Streets Implementation Team to draft a comprehensive Complete Streets policy that is consistent with national best practices. The statement of intent related to Complete Streets included in the accompanying letter to the Bike Master Plan is a visionary first step, but it is *NOT* a comprehensive Complete Streets policy. The attached Complete Streets Score Card includes 10 elements of a Complete Streets policy that meets national best practices. We hope that Howard County could further develop its Complete Streets policy to meet all 10 elements.
- (2) Direct the Complete Streets Implementation Team to develop a Complete Streets Design Manual that could stand alone and represent overarching design specifications for the County. A stand-alone Complete Streets Design Manual reconciles differences between multiple guidelines and therefore would serve as a one-stop-shop that reduces the need for developers to apply for variances to build high quality pedestrian and bicycle projects. Howard County would not be unique in adopting this approach. Cities like Alexandria, VA; Charlotte, NC; New Haven CT; Dallas, TX and others have also created new design manuals. For more information, please see the attached memo from the nationally recognized design firm, Toole Design Group. The memo outlines justifications for having a separate, stand along Design Manual and lists many cities and localities around the country that have done so.
- (3) Finally, to ensure lasting, meaningful change that will benefit our community for decades to come, the amendment would also have the Complete Streets Policy and the Complete Streets Design Manual submitted to the Council for final approval.

I hope you can support this amendment. If you have any questions for Horizon or Toole Design Group, please let us know.

Best,

Nikki Highsmith Vernick

Nikki HighsmithVernick
President and CEO

[The Horizon Foundation](#)

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Elements of Complete Streets

Policy

The following 10 elements are nationally recognized as the most important components in a Complete Streets policy. Policy Elements were developed by the

Element	Description	Grading Criteria	Value	Score
Sets a vision	The policy establishes a motivating vision for why the community wants Complete Streets: to improve safety, promote better health, increase efficiency, improve the convenience of choices, or for other reasons.	Indirect: Indirect statement (“shall implement Complete Streets principles,” etc.)	weak	1
		Average: Direct statement with equivocating or weaker language (“consider,” “may”)	medium	3
		Direct: Direct statement of accommodation (“must,” “shall,” “will”)	strong	5
All Users and Modes	The policy specifies that “all modes” includes walking, bicycling, riding public transportation, driving trucks, buses and automobiles and “all users” includes people of all ages and abilities.	“Bicyclists and pedestrians”	required	req
		“Bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit”	good	1
		“Bicyclists, pedestrians, transit,” plus one more mode	better	2
		“Bicycles, pedestrians, transit,” plus two more modes	better	3
		Additional point for including reference to “users of all ages”	better	1
		Additional point for including reference to “users of all abilities”	better	1
All projects and phases	Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way.	Applies to new construction only	weak	0
		Applies to new and retrofit/reconstruction projects	strong	3
		Additional points if the policy clearly applies to all projects, or specifically includes repair/3R projects, maintenance, and/or operations	better	2
Exceptions	Any exceptions to the policy are specified and approved by a high-level official.	No mention	weak	0
		Lists exceptions, but at least one lacks clarity or allows loose interpretation	weak	1
		Lists exceptions, none are inappropriate	medium	2
		Additional points for specifying an approval process	strong	3
Creates a network	The policy recognizes the need to create a comprehensive, integrated and connected network for all	No mention	weak	0
		Acknowledge	strong	5

Jurisdiction: All agencies and all roads	All other agencies that govern transportation activities can clearly understand the policy's application and may be involved in the process as appropriate.	Agency-owned	assumed	--
		States and regions: agency-funded, but not agency-owned	strong	3
		Counties and cities: privately-built roads	strong	3
		Additional points for recognizing the need to work with other agencies, departments, or jurisdictions	better	2
Design criteria	Directs the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines, while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs.	No mention	weak	0
		References specific design criteria or directing use of the best and latest	strong	3
		References design flexibility in the balance of user needs	medium	2
Context-sensitive	The current and planned context (buildings, land use, and transportation needs) is considered when planning	No mention	weak	0
		Acknowledge	strong	5
Performance measures	The policy includes performance standards with measurable outcomes.	Not mentioned and not one of next steps	weak	0
		Establishes new measures (does not count in implementation points)	strong	5
Implementation	Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy.	No implementation plan specified	weak	0
		Addresses implementation in general	medium	1
		Addresses two to four implementation steps	strong	3
		Additional point for assigning oversight of implementation to a person or advisory board or for establishing a reporting requirement	better	1
		Additional point for directing changes to project selection criteria	better	1



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Dou Alvin Zhang

Resolution No: CR 35-2016
Title: A Resolution Approving a Bicycle Master Plan and a Complete Streets Policy
Position: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

The Horizon Foundation is dedicated to improving health and wellness in Howard County, and it strongly believes that our county has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to lay the groundwork for a future Howard County that is designed and built to support the long-term health and well-being of those who live or work here. For that reason, the Foundation supports CR 35-2016 with amendment.

How we plan, build, operate, and maintain our streets shapes how our community functions. A comprehensive complete streets approach creates a sense of community that is accessible, sustainable, healthy, connected, and economically thriving.

The Foundation commends the County Executive and his team for championing a complete streets planning approach that is sorely needed in our County and administering the community process that led to the Bike Master Plan before you. However, the Foundation urges that the County Council strengthen CR 35-2016 to ensure that the complete streets planning process effectively leads to lasting, meaningful changes that will benefit our community for decades to come. To that end, the Foundation suggests an amendment to CR 35-2016 (see attached).

The Foundation and its many community partners hope that Howard County's complete streets policy and the design manual accompanying it will become the gold standard for the nation. This is a key moment in our county's evolution and another opportunity for you to demonstrate a true commitment to our community's health and quality of life. Please vote to approve CR 35-2016 with our proposed amendment.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

AMENDMENT #1 to CR 35-2016

(This amendment would modify the charge of the Complete Streets Implementation Team to include drafting of a comprehensive Complete Streets Policy/Design Manual and request that both be submitted to the Council for approval.)

Strike lines 27-31 on page 1 and strike lines 1-3 on page 2. Substitute the following:

WHEREAS, THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE IS ORGANIZING A WORKING GROUP, THE COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION TEAM, THAT WILL (1) DRAFT A COMPREHENSIVE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY CONSISTENT WITH BEST PRACTICES; AND (2) DEVELOP A COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN MANUAL (THE "DESIGN MANUAL") THAT IMPLEMENTS THE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY AND INCORPORATES NECESSARY ELEMENTS FROM THE CURRENT HOWARD COUNTY DESIGN MANUAL, VOLUME III, ROADS AND BRIDGES; AND

WHEREAS, UPON COMPLETION OF THE COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION TEAM'S WORK, THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE WILL SUBMIT TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL BOTH THE COMPREHENSIVE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY AND DESIGN MANUAL FOR FINAL APPROVAL; AND

Patuxent River Trail

David Reina [davidbreina@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2016 1:08 PM

To: CouncilMail

"I support the bike master plan and I support and would use the Patuxent river trail extension. Please approve the master plan as is, including the Patuxent river trail extension to downtown Columbia. I have been a county resident since 1979.

David B Reina

Bike master plan

Luann Edwards [ledwards449@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2016 9:58 AM

To: CouncilMail

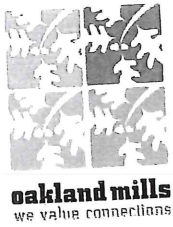
Dear Council:

I write to express our family's support for the bike master plan. We love using the pathways in Columbia and would enjoy using the Patuxent River trail extension.

My kids live half-time in Allview with their dad and stepmom; they live the other half of the time in North Laurel with me and their stepdad. We all regularly use the Columbia pathways - frequently travelling from Allview to Elkhorn to Vollmerhausen or from Stevens Forest to Kittamaquidi to Wilde Lake. We do not walk or ride on Broken Land Parkway nor would we feel safe doing so even on a dedicated bike lane. Additionally, I would not feel safe driving on Broken Land Parkway alongside bicyclists.

Please approve the master plan as is, including the Patuxent River trail extension to downtown Columbia.

Luann Edwards
443-994-4276



Oakland Mills Community Association
The Other Barn • 5851 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045
410-730-4610 • oaklandmills.org

March 14, 2016

Howard County Council Members
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Council Members:

On behalf of the Oakland Mills community, we urge you to consider the inclusion of the new bicycle/pedestrian/transit bridge over U.S. Route 29 which is also referred to as Bridge Columbia, in **CR 35-2016**, the resolution before the County Council regarding the Bike Master Plan.

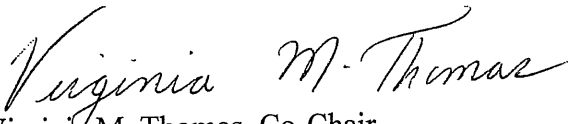
We commend the County Executive and County staff for this comprehensive plan and are equally excited that the County supports the development of Complete Streets policy and the County's commitment to seek a Bicycle-Friendly Community Designation. Omitting the proposed bridge from CR 35-2016 is contrary to the goal of a Complete Streets Policy, which will guide road design and make it both safe and convenient to travel by foot, bicycle, public transportation or automobile. Bridge Columbia fulfills the complete street design by safely incorporating pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit on the bridge.

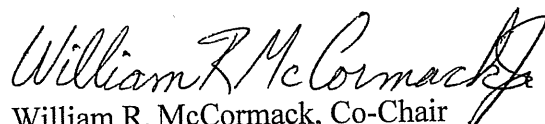
County Executive Kittleman has, on numerous occasions, voiced his support for the Bridge Columbia project, organized a "Bridge Columbia Summit, included it in his capital budget proposal, and added it to the County's Priority List for transportation projects requesting state funding last fall. It would be important to include the bridge in the Bike Master Plan when the County pursues intergovernmental assistance for funding a portion of the Bridge.

This bridge is the only dedicated bicycle crossing over Route 29 in Columbia and connects across US 29 the 98 miles of shared use paths in Columbia, paths that serve not just Columbia but other communities such as Allview, Dalton, and Beaverbrook. It is the most convenient crossing over US 29 for regional trails serving Ft. Meade and beyond. Unfortunately, the bridge is not adequate in width according to the county's own bicycle standards, and security for users has been a long standing concern. Correcting these problems will require future funding whether or not the transit component goes ahead. Being in the plan will allow the bridge to compete for the necessary money.

In closing we want to reiterate that we fully support the Proposed Bike Master Plan and the Complete Street Design. We hope that omitting the new pedestrian/bicycle/public transit bridge was an oversight and urge that you include this in CR 35-2016 - Bike Master Plan for Howard County. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Virginia M. Thomas, Co-Chair
Oakland Mills Board of Directors


William R. McCormack, Co-Chair
Oakland Mills Board of Directors

cc: County Executive Allan Kittleman
Valdis Lazdins, Director, Howard County Planning and Zoning
Chris Eautough, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, Office of Transportation