

## Montgomery County Complete Streets Design Guidelines Work Session #2

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### RECOMMENDATION

Staff is seeking Planning Board comments on the Public Draft of the Montgomery County Complete Streets Guidelines version 1.0. Planning staff and Andrew Bossi, from the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, will summarize and review the guidelines as well as public testimony received as part of the Public Hearing held on July 23, 2020. This review is anticipated to take 4 to 5 work sessions. Work Session #2 will focus on the sidewalk zone and the street zone (Chapters 4 and 5). At the end of all work sessions and at the Planning Board's direction, staff will consolidate Planning Board comments into a letter to the County Executive and the County Council. Staff will also draft applicable revisions to the guidelines document, which will be forwarded to the County Executive and the County Council along with the letter for further review and consideration.

### INTRODUCTION

A public draft of the Montgomery County Complete Streets version 1.0 has been prepared jointly by Montgomery Planning and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation. This document was provided to the Planning Board for the June 23 Public Hearing. We recommend that Planning Commissioners bring this document to all work sessions.

### PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Public testimony received as part of the July 23, 2020 Public Hearing was provided in the September 10, 2020 staff report on Work Session #1.

## **Work Session # 2 – Summary of Chapters 4 and 5**

Work Session # 2 will focus on a summary presentation of the Sidewalk Zone and Street Zone portions of the guide (Chapters 4 and 5), and then staff will review with the comments received and proposed responses related to the Sidewalk Zone and the Street Zone. There are 33 comments in these categories. Attachment A provides a copy of the Sidewalk Zone and Street Zone-related comments received with staff's response for each comment.

The primary purpose of this work session is to solicit Planning Board feedback and comments on these portions of the guide.

**Attachment A**  
 Summary of Comments Received and Proposed Responses  
**Work Session #2**

Comment #	Who made the comment?	Page Number	Section	Subject Area	Comment	Draft Response
11	Kristy Daphnis, Chair PBTSAC			Street Zone	One thing we do not see much of is a “lean in” to possible technological improvements that may come in the next several years - including smart traffic systems and vehicle to infrastructure communications. Admittedly, that may be out of scope for this document, but it is something that should be considered, on whether the infrastructure and curbside management will need to accommodate for these types of things - including automated delivery vehicles and other technologies that may need to use precious space. At the least, the document should leave open the possibility for additional design vehicle types to be easily added as addendum to the Guide in the future, if necessary.	Curbside management will be incorporated into the CSDG in more detail after the Montgomery Planning curbside management study is complete.  CSDG is a living document and can be updated as new technology necessitates.
16	Kristy Daphnis, Chair PBTSAC			Street Zone	Please fully consider the impact of delivery vehicles, taxis, rideshare, and other similar vehicles - and build in ways to protect the space and use by other road users. Also, consider whether curbside management or infrastructure may need to accommodate different types of new technology - leaving open the possibility to easily add additional design vehicle types in the future.	Curbside management will be incorporated into the CSDG in more detail after the Montgomery Planning curbside management study is complete.
31	Melvin Tull			Sidewalk Zone	Figure 4.16 misidentifies a Bethesda location as Silver Spring	Thank you. We will change this reference.
33	Melvin Tull			Sidewalk Zone	One thing missing in the prescription for a sidewalk is consideration of signage for the businesses and shops that line the sidewalk behind the trees and bike lanes along commercial area downtown streets and boulevards. I believe part of the vitality of a commercial area, particularly a downtown, involves being able to tell you are in a commercial area, to see the shops, to identify them. If the only place Complete Streets will allow a shopkeepers sign to be seen is at a big box plaza, where the big box gets the visible signage, you should think it through again.	We will check in with DPS, which manages signs in sidewalks. CSDG is not intended to explicitly prohibit signs in the Sidewalk Zone (excluding the Ped Clear Zone, where signs would be prohibited).
35	Melvin Tull			Street Zone	Next a word about commercial downtown areas. Not all shops have an alley behind, and many do not go through to the alley, so please don't rely on a street plan that does not recognize a need for deliveries and trash/garbage pick-up from the front, across the sidewalk, through the trees, across the bike lane, etc. Please think it through, particularly the garbage storage and collection process.	Storage of trash containers should be identified as being allowed temporarily in the street buffer. See response to Comment #16 for curbside management.  In the near-term: Curbside Mgmt is referenced, and more detail will be coming as part of future efforts.  The General Plan envisions greater use of alleys over the long-term.

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67	Peter Gray, WABA	55		Sidewalk Zone	P.55 - we urge the setting of sidepaths as the default for County Connectors and Country Roads instead of bikeable shoulders which are far less safe for cyclists and pedestrians.	<p>This is inconsistent with the adopted 2018 Bicycle Master Plan. On these roads where there are residential clusters and proximate designations, sidepaths are likely to be desired for pedestrian and bicycle travel.</p> <p>The Bicycle Master Plan made bikeable shoulders the default on Country Connectors and did not have a default on Country Roads. The Bicycle Master Plan recommended sidepaths on three roads that are likely Country Connectors: Clarksburg Road to Boyds, Ridge Road between Clarksburg and Damascus and Woodfield Road between Redland and Damascus.</p> <p>The Master Plan of Highways and Transitways could consider additional sidepaths on Country Connectors and Country Roads.</p>
83	Dan Wilhelm, GCCA President	54-55		Street Zone	Lane width. Lane width is proposed to be 10.5 or 11 feet for many road types. We think this is too narrow for safe passage of vehicles. A school bus is 8 feet and a 40 foot-long metro bus and tractor trailer are 8.5 feet. These measurements surely don't include the side mirrors which can extend out at least another two feet (one foot on each side.) A large 10.5 foot vehicle can't often be driven in the exact center of a lane. Also, the narrower road width will slow down the traffic, which is one objective but the slower speed also adds to congestion since the slower speed reduces the road capacity. We think the lane width should be at least 11 feet.	<p>These are valid points, but these widths have been well-vetted by both MNCPPC and MCDOT.</p> <p>These widths have functioned adequately in areas where they are already in place. We have 10' lanes (including some smaller) in Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, and probably elsewhere. 11' lanes are common Countywide.</p> <p>These widths are increasingly the state of the practice nationally.</p> <p>That said, we will change left-turn lane widths for Downtowns to "10 ft default, 9 ft minimum"</p> <p>We will add school buses to the list on page 123. On corridors with high bus or truck volumes: lanes may still be wider than is shown in this guide.</p> <p>The comment re: congestion is valid, and something we have not looked at in how it affects current master plans &amp; projects. This should, however, be factored into future master plans' efforts to meet transportation metrics (including NADMS).</p>

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92	Seth Morgan, Chair, Patricia Gallalee - Vice Chair - Commissions on People With Disabilities	207		Sidewalk Zone	Continuous sidewalks should exist on main arteries to schools. As you know, this past year there were accidents regarding grade school and high school students, and it is noted that school safety issues are not specifically addressed in the document. On page 207 of the Montgomery County Complete Streets draft, there are no safety speed targets for school zones while schools are in session. The document does not specifically address having consistent school safety standards. We recommend that school safety be incorporated as part of Vision Zero planning.	A school street type does not exist in this guide, primarily because schools occur on many different street types throughout the county. It can be most effectively handled as an overlay in future versions of the CSDG.
93	Seth Morgan, Chair, Patricia Gallalee - Vice Chair - Commissions on People With Disabilities	101		Street Zone	For passengers of taxis, paratransit/Metro Access and other vehicles there needs to be safe pick-up and drop-off zones. Page 101 of the draft guide mentions them in the context of rideshare vehicles and taxis, but many drivers need to safely drop-off passengers at the curb, especially passengers who have difficulty walking. Also, Metro Access drivers leave their vehicle, place a traffic cone at the traffic side of the vehicle, and guide riders who are blind and who need assistance finding the door to the building, which may take 5-10 minutes.	Curbside management will be incorporated into the CSDG in more detail after the Montgomery Planning curbside management study is complete.
94	Seth Morgan, Chair, Patricia Gallalee - Vice Chair - Commissions on People With Disabilities			Street Zone	The current design does not address accessible street parking. The current reduction in road width makes it difficult if not impossible for the average person to safely get out of their car without being hit by an oncoming vehicle. It is impossible for drivers who exit their car on the driver side with their wheelchair and a service animal. We request that DOT revisit the policy given the fact that the 2011 Proposed Guidelines do include designs for accessible street parking.	The effort of designing Accessible Parking Standards is beyond the scope of the Design Guide. This is something we expect will be developed in coming years & can be incorporated into a future version of the guide.
122	Gil Chlewicki	54-55	3.2	Street Zone	Max # of Vehicle Thru Lanes - Context may create different answers here.	The intent of this maximum was to identify a preference for new road planning and construction. It could also be used for long-range planning for re-allocation of space for other uses, including buses, BRT, vegetated buffers and separated bike lanes.

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125	Gil Chlewicki	54-55	3.2	Street Zone	Left Turn Lane - Dimensions under 11' can have significant safety issues for motorists and should often be used only as a last resort in constrained areas.	<p>That said, we will change left-turn lane widths for Downtowns to "10 ft default, 9 ft minimum"</p> <p>For 10' and 10.5' - these widths have been well-vetted by both MNCPPC and MCDOT.</p> <p>These widths have functioned adequately in areas where they are already in place. We have 10' lanes (including some smaller) in Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, and probably elsewhere. 11' lanes are common Countywide.</p> <p>These widths are increasingly the state of the practice nationally.</p>
126	Gil Chlewicki	54-55	3.2	Street Zone	TWLTL - Do not understand how this affects pedestrians and bicycles since crossings generally do not go over TWLTLs. Generally wider TWLTLs increase safety for motorists.	<p>Two-Way Left-Turn Lanes (TWLTLs) are only appropriate under limited circumstances as stated in Figure 3-2. Currently, TWLTLs are only implemented when it is the best solution for vehicular access to adjacent properties and safe to do so. The cross section is problematic and requires modification to provide safe crossings for pedestrians.</p>
127	Gil Chlewicki	54-55	3.2	Street Zone	Inside Travel Lane - A 10' max width is highly inappropriate when speeds are greater than 25 mph and creates significant safety concerns for motorists.	<p>This comment appears limited to Boulevards and Town Center Boulevards.</p> <p>These widths have been well-vetted by both MNCPPC and MCDOT.</p> <p>These widths have functioned adequately in areas where they are already in place. We have 10' lanes (including some smaller) in Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, and probably elsewhere.</p> <p>These widths are increasingly the state of the practice nationally.</p>

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128	Gil Chlewicki	95-97	5.3	Street Zone	Parking lanes along streets with speeds greater than 25 mph creates significant safety and operational issues. Preferable if no on-street parking is allowed on these streets. Otherwise, may consider 12'-14' parking lanes. Keep in mind that every on-street parking space is a conflict point and injury crashes are going to increase when speeds are greater than 25 mph.	<p>This comment appears limited to Boulevards and Town Center Boulevards.</p> <p>These have been vetted by MCDOT. We have plenty of cases where there is on-street parking on streets with up to 35 MPH, and there is no shortage of examples nationally.</p> <p>On-street parking (and off-peak parking) can themselves be a component of speed management &amp; changing driver behavior.</p>
129	Gil Chlewicki	66-73	4.3	Sidewalk Zone	Street Buffers - Not always feasible and/or needed depending on the context.	Buffers are important as evidenced in the Bicycle Levels of Traffic Stress and Pedestrian Levels of Comfort analyses. Buffer separating bicycles and pedestrians from vehicle travel should be a high priority.
130	Gil Chlewicki	74	4.4	Sidewalk Zone	Pedestrian Clear Zone - Consider renaming to Walkway. Clear Zone has a safety connotation and is confusing to most planners and engineers.	As part of our overall reorganization of Chapter 2, we will rename Pedestrian Clear Zone to "Pedestrian Zone" for a sidewalk or "Pedestrian-Bicycle Zone" for a sidepath
131	Gil Chlewicki	78	4.6	Sidewalk Zone	Section 4.6 - Sign Sight Distance is missing a very important element. Placement of signs near pedestrian crossings can often lead to pedestrian sight distance issues with turning vehicles. This happens a lot more often than one might think. We have this issue in Kemp Mill.	We agree, but the last sentence of the 1st paragraph on p78 addresses this. The 2nd paragraph's compliance w/ MdMUTCD and ADA also address this.
132	Gil Chlewicki	79-83	4.7	Sidewalk Zone	Section 4.7 - BRT Stations - Don't "date" the document by stating the 1st BRT is under construction.	Thank you for your comment.
133	Gil Chlewicki	84	4.8	Sidewalk Zone	Section 4.8 - Open Section Roadways needs more input. Pedestrians and bicycles are common on many of these streets and used as a shared roadway. Transit is also common along open section roadways, especially school buses (which is never mentioned in the document other than a design vehicle for right turns). Another example on how suburban and rural issues are being ignored even though more severe and fatal crashes are occurring in these contexts.	We will make edits to improve references to school buses.
134	Gil Chlewicki	94-107	5	Street Zone	Chapter 5 - This entire section is focused only on urban contexts. Complete streets need to be implemented in all contexts and arguably is most needed in the suburban context (particularly as it relates to Vision Zero), without trying to change the context to an urban one.	We think that this chapter does address all street types fairly, however, downtown and town center contexts are more complex, and hence the detail may seem to overshadow the details on the more suburban and rural settings.

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136	Gil Chlewicki	103-104	5.4	Street Zone	Section 5.4 - The most common lane width is not 10 feet and should only be used in slow speed/urban environments. Otherwise it creates significant safety issues for motorists as shown in the Highway Safety Manual (HSM) and other research. Suburban and rural lanes need to be a minimum 11' in most cases and often should be 12' when speeds exceed 40 mph.	We will change the sentence to "A common lane width used in this guide is 10 ft."  We will change left-turn lane widths for Downtowns to "10 ft default, 9 ft minimum"
137	Gil Chlewicki	103		Street Zone	There is no text at all related to shoulders. Shoulders are a very important safety element for all users in rural (and some suburban) environments. Shoulder widths should be determined based on context and the HSM.	We will add in narrative on shoulders.
139	Gil Chlewicki	107	5.5	Street Zone	Section 5.5 - There are no examples currently of rural roadways with wide medians in the county, but there could be in the future such as along MD 97, MD 355, or MD 28. Wide medians are often preferable in these contexts for safety reasons on high speed roadways.	Median widths generally account for 6 ft (refuge area) plus the width of a left-turn lane.  Medians are allowed to be wider (per note on p54), but on p107 are discouraged from being such due the length of pedestrian crossings distances.
188	Jack Cochrane, Montgomery Bicycle Advocates			Sidewalk Zone	The very term "sidewalk buffer" is confusing. The only time a sidewalk buffer is present is if there's an SBL. It's essentially an "SBL-sidewalk" buffer. It could be called an "SSW buffer" or a "bike-ped buffer" or something.	We propose to use two different names, one "street buffer" for the section separating the street from the bicycle, pedestrian or shared bike/ped space, and bike-ped buffer for the space separating a bikeway from a sidewalk.
209	Jack Cochrane, Montgomery Bicycle Advocates	63		Sidewalk Zone	On p. 63, it states, "The sidewalk is comprised of three zones: the Street Buffer Zone, the Pedestrian Clear Zone, and the Frontage Zone." Replace "sidewalk" with "Sidewalk Zone" in that line.	We will make this edit.
210	Jack Cochrane, Montgomery Bicycle Advocates	66		Sidewalk Zone	That same line on p. 66 also puts the "Street Buffer Zone" between the SBL and the travel lanes – thus putting the SBL squarely in the Sidewalk Zone. This seems to confirm my understanding.	See comment 188. We will improve definitions and clarify zones.
231	Jack Cochrane, Montgomery Bicycle Advocates	55		Street Zone	Shoulder widths. Regarding Country Road and Country Collector widths, the guide says shoulders on these streets should be 4' and 8' wide, respectively. It says that if the shoulders are bikeways, width should be 8' or 10' wide, respectively. But all shoulders are in effect bikeways for the many riders who use them. A simple solution is to make the default shoulder width a minimum of 5', not 4', since 4' is inadequate (especially with striping imprecision, decaying edges, etc.).	We are proposing to make 5' the minimum shoulder width to make them useable as bikeable shoulders, with the exception of Major Highways.



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249	David Anspacher			Street Zone	Do we need more on transitions & gateway treatments; how to really get traffic to slow down? We mention transitions a few times, but I don't think we have a section specifically on it. Might be appropriate in Ch2 or Ch3?	<p>For this version, we should add a Section 3.5 on p58 that has two paragraphs:</p> <p>1st Paragraph: establish here that a slower-class roadway is expected to extend beyond its natural area by some variable distance</p> <p>2nd Paragraph: that speed reductions should be mindful of the degree of reduction and the manner in which the reductions occur.</p> <p>This might be reiterated and referenced in the examples on p220-225.</p> <p>A future version might get into more detail on transitions.</p>
254	Project Team	74	4.4	Sidewalk Zone	Consider adding a line to the 1st paragraph for the Ped Clear Zone suggesting that the Ped Clear Zone include some form of distinction along each edge, or that it be a have a distinct pavement treatment from adjacent zones.	We will make this edit.
256	Project Team			Sidewalk Zone	Don't need Maintenance Buffers if the outermost part of a roadway is a Street Buffer (such as along an open section w/o sidewalk). Check text for Maint Buff, Street Buff, and Open Section Roadways to see that we say this.	We will make this edit.
258	Project Team	54		Street Zone	Change Left Turn Lane for both Downtown columns to read 10' default, 9' minimum	We will make this edit.
259	Project Team	102		Street Zone	Need to flatten Figure 5-13	Graphics makes pdf loading slow. Image will be modified.
265	MDOT SHA			Street Zone	<p>Comments were submitted recently by the Pedestrian Bicycle Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (PBTSAC) and the County Council PTA Safe Routes to School Committee.</p> <p>[These included recommendations for] discussion regarding ... commercial vehicle curbside management and goods movement, and the future role of Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) technology.</p>	<p>Curbside management will be incorporated into the CSDG in more detail after the Montgomery Planning curbside management study is complete.</p> <p>CSDG is a living document and can be updated as new technology necessitates.</p>
277	MDOT SHA - OOTS	64	4.2	Street Zone	The pedestrian clear zone provides minimums and defaults for Country Connectors and Country Roads, making it seem like sidewalks, shared use paths, etc. are required. This does not seem feasible for these types of roadways. Perhaps, there could be a notation stating, "if facilities are provided."	<p>We have been operating under the vision that a pedestrian facility would be included on at least one side of every roadway, even Country facilities.</p> <p>We welcome Planning Board / Council discussion if this should be changed to specify "if facilities are provided"</p>

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278	MDOT SHA - OOTS	68, 70	4.3	Street Zone	It states that bike racks should be placed a minimum of 14 feet from a hydrant; however, on page 70 it states that bikeshare stations should be placed a minimum of 5 feet from hydrants. Why such a difference for similar items?	Bike racks are a less structured area for parking bikes, with bikes sometimes being oriented in a variety of directions & oftentimes also including dockless vehicles.  Bikeshare stations can only be used in one orientation, and tend to not be as much of a hub of dockless vehicles.
279	MDOT SHA - OOTS	97	5.3	Street Zone	Should MVA be spelled out to MDOT MVA?	We will make this edit.
281	MDOT SHA - OOTS	141	6.12	Street Zone	Does Montgomery County use (or will they ever use) red-colored pavement for transit lanes? If there is a possibility, it may be worth mentioning on page 141 with a link to the IA ( <a href="https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/interim_approval/ia22/ia22.pdf">https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/interim_approval/ia22/ia22.pdf</a> ).	We will make this edit, and consider whether it is best located on p106 (Dedicated Transit Lanes) &/or on p141 (Transit and Intersections).
295	MDOT SHA - OHD-ICD	55	3.2	Sidewalk Zone	(Figure 3-2. Street Design Parameters Summary), Maintenance Buffer, reads: "Structures not part of the roadway design shall not occur in the public ROW. If there is a structure abutting the property line, a maintenance buffer is required even if this table shows a dimension of 0'. Consult MCDOT."  - Please provide more information about the maintenance buffer in the CSDG.  - Consider adding information about the maintenance buffer related to its purpose, typical features within, and examples of how it is used.	We will make these edits.
296	MDOT SHA - OHD-ICD	59	3.4	Street Zone	(Figure 3-4. Street Design Features), Street Zone – Accessible Parking  - Facilities available to the general public require accessible parking.  - Recommend changing 'Accessible Parking' to 'Required' in all street type categories.	At this time we do not have any on-street accessible parking standards, and rely on direction from MVA as to where to install on-street accessible parking.  (In PLDs, accessible parking is provided in PLD facilities. And everywhere: developments are required to provide on-site accessible parking as required by other laws & policies beyond the scope of CSDG)  We anticipate developing accessible parking standards in the future, and at that time they can be incorporated into CSDG. This could allow us to revisit whether areas currently "Recommended" might change to "Required".

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297	MDOT SHA - OHD-ICD	63	4.2	Sidewalk Zone	"See County Code 5.2.3.A21"  - The County code seems to reference Animal Control. - Recommend verifying this code and other code referenced throughout the document.	We will confirm and update references.
298	MDOT SHA - OHD-ICD	65	4.2	Sidewalk Zone	Figure 4-3. Design Elements in the Sidewalk Zone), Sidewalk Zone – Pedestrian/Bicycle Wayfinding  - Please provide more information about wayfinding in the CSDG. - Recommend providing a definition and examples to ensure readers understand the purpose, intent, and limitations of wayfinding.	We will evaluate whether we can include some more narrative on wayfinding, though more detail and examples of different wayfinding formats is a larger-scale task that is likely best left to a future CSDG update.
299	MDOT SHA - OHD-ICD	81	4.7	Sidewalk Zone	"Signs indicating the transit stop should be installed 2 feet behind the curb."  - Consider adding "...behind the curb, but not interfere with the Pedestrian Clear Zone."	We will make this edit.
300	MDOT SHA - OHD-ICD	85	4.9	Sidewalk Zone	"At the driveway ramp, the sidewalk should narrow to 3 feet wide."  - Pedestrian paths can reduce to 3 feet wide for a maximum of 200 feet. - Recommend adjusting wording to say, "At the driveway ramp, the sidewalk can narrow to 3 feet wide."	We will make this edit.