



Marc Elrich
County Executive

Christopher R. Conklin
Director

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

August 11, 2022

TO: Gwen Wright, Director
Montgomery Planning

FROM: Tim Cupples, Acting Deputy Director for Transportation Policy
Department of Transportation (MCDOT) *Tim Cupples*

SUBJECT: Pedestrian Master Plan
Draft Recommendations – MCDOT Comments

Thank you for the opportunity to review the April 2022 draft recommendations for the Pedestrian Master Plan. Attached are a set of technical comments that we reviewed with Planning staff on May 27, 2022. We have three particularly significant comments that we would like to highlight:

- 1) **PROCESS FOR ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:** These draft recommendations include a large number of items that are beyond the scope of master plans. The most appropriate place for recommendations such as these is in the Vision Zero Action Plan. The County will begin drafting the next two-year work plan, which will cover FY24-25, this fall. The County will conduct a review of all Vision Zero action items in FY25. Many of the recommendations could be further vetted and incorporated as part of one of these updates.

We strongly urge that most of these recommendations be removed from the draft master plan and instead introduced for consideration in the Vision Zero Action Plan. If there is interest in retaining some reference to these recommendations in the Pedestrian Master Plan, they should be recontextualized as suggested topics for further multiagency consideration as part of upcoming updates to the Vision Zero Action Plan.

Office of the Director

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- 2) **COST:** Some recommendations will come with particularly significant costs. While this is not necessarily a reason to oppose a recommendation, recommendations should be cognizant of the availability of County resources. There is a risk of giving the public expectations that some of these recommendations may be implemented within timeframes that may not be feasible.

Some potential high-cost items include the recommendation for the County to assume snow clearing responsibilities along substantially larger mileage of sidewalks. This would significantly impact the operating budget and adversely affect the county's ability to deliver critical services. The proposed expanded use of passive pedestrian actuation would require a significant capital investment. Including pedestrian access improvements as part of the development of transit projects would substantially increase the cost, scope, and timeline of transit projects by tying a larger number of complexities into a single effort as well as increasing environmental, utility, stormwater management, and property impacts.

- 3) **STATE ROADWAYS:** The recommendation to assume control of State roadways in Downtowns, Town Centers, and along master-planned BRT corridors may be unrealistic. Implementing such a recommendation would entail significant financial implications for both the County and the State. We believe it is more practical to focus this recommendation on expectations of the State that are more likely to be achieved, such as working with the Governor and State Legislature to embrace, fund, and maintain a strong program aimed at increasing pedestrian and bicycle safety along state roadways.

Attachments: 2022 05 27 - Draft Recommendations Comments.xlsx

cc: Earl Stoddard, CEX
Wade Holland, CEX
Eli Glazier, Montgomery Planning
Jason Sartori, Montgomery Planning
David Anspacher, Montgomery Planning