

**Silver Spring
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
July 13, 2023**

Item 1 & 2 – Introductions

Item 3 – Purple Line Construction Update: Christina Contreras provided an update of construction operations on the Purple Line, which will be opening in 2026.

- Work underway at McGee library
- Extensive work on Wayne Avenue between Fenton and Manchester Place, consisting of utility construction- MTA & MTS to complete construction outside first, then rerouting traffic to work on the inside
- Silver Spring Transit Center - working on the bridge spans, putting concrete in place
- Construction wall placed at the Silver Spring Library site – grounding grid for trains
- Sand filter near Sligo Creek for stormwater management
- Utility relocation at Sligo & Manchester
- Construction inside the Plymouth tunnel is progressing

Ms. Contreras explained that the underground sand filter is designed to catch debris of the first flush of rainwater. The concrete block is filled with sand to filter out particles and is slowly released into the streams, contributing to reducing flooding and mitigating climate change. Also discussed:

- Stormwater construction is done with larger pipes to accommodate 10-year event flooding
- Purple Line railcars are in New York and will be delivered to Prince Georges facility for storage and testing
- Bi-weekly blasting in Bethesda to accommodate an elevator shaft – soon beginning blasting to horizontally connect to the Metro station
- Material from blast being loaded with a gantry crane on to trucks to Lyttonsville for further distribution
- The east Bethesda community will be connected to East West Highway
- The anti-graffiti paint is helping to reduce unwanted paint markings
- Jones Mill Road water relocation will be switching the traffic pattern to a calmer flow within the next 2-3 months
- Massive construction in Lyttonsville can be viewed from the bridge
- Arliss Street is closed leaving access from Walden Street to Library
- Keeping access open for emergency vehicles for Flower Branch Apartments

Q&A:

- Having good oversight of ongoing construction as the project is built to head off any structural issues (as with the transit center)
- Pepco rock discovery at Colesville & Spring is slowing things down
- Discussion regarding the importance of establishing and integrating a fare structure for the Purple Line system as ridership depends on fare structure – purchasing system costs built into the project and fares are backing the contractor

- MTA separated the Baltimore Charm from the local SmarTrip card – however, they need to be seamless
- Construction at the Silver Spring Transit Center to build mezzanine connecting Purple Line to MARC and Metro opening with the PL
- Discovery staff has migrated back to the Silver Spring location from Sterling Va and use the parking garage near 8403 Colesville Road, so are not impacted by the PL construction
- Businesses along Bonifant Street are happy about the sign notifying patrons that they are open for business; however, there are difficult pedestrian crossings in the area

Item 4 – Metro Update: Gary Erenrich reported that the new Metro Lift program, offering half price fares for eligible recipients, is not offered by Ride On due to already reduced fares. Currently, the TRiPS store is not able to do in-person sign up of the Metro Lift program; however, that will soon change. Also reported:

- Metro’s fare simplification has eliminated off peak fares as riders traveling from Grosvenor and beyond will now pay \$6.00 from \$3.85 off peak a 70% increase- a flat fare of \$2 for weekend and evenings after 9pm
- Received a Federal grant for \$104 million for a zero-emissions bus system- converting one bus depot and a few buses to zero emissions
- Both Ride On and Metro are instituting a nighttime courtesy policy of not stopping at regular bus stops but somewhere safer and more convenient at customer request, provided the route does not deviate

Mr. Erenrich discussed Metro’s pending fiscal cliff in FY25 for \$750 million out of a \$ 2-billion-dollar budget. Explaining that Metro’s fare structure is depended on fare revenue and jurisdiction support as it does not have the ability to fund raise independently, the system will have to cut service by two thirds or raise fares. There are conversations at COG to reach a consensus in actions to address the shortfall as Metro will submit FY25 draft budget this November. It is unlikely a bailout will save WAMTA as have Covid pandemic assistance has in the past. Also discussed:

- FY25 budget draft will undergo public comment before final approval in April 2024
- The possibility of withdrawing funds out of the Transportation Trust Fund will only produce \$150 to \$200 million in funds, way too little to close \$750 million gap

Mr. Erenrich discussed the collaboration between Metro, MTA & MCDOT to install tactical bus lanes on Georgia Avenue from Wayne to 16th street. He explained the term “tactical”, meaning quick easy construction of one lane of traffic using flex posts and paint along some of the highest traveled corridors such as New Hampshire and Georgia Avenue. There is a marketing campaign to meet with business around the Georgia Avenue corridor. A major issue of the lanes will be keeping cars out of the pilot area.

Mr. Erenrich will be retiring in August.

Item 5 – Employer TDM Plans/Reports: Jim Carlson reported that he will send the reports to the Committee for their recommended approval to the Director DOT

Item 6 – Updates: Sande Brecher reported:

- Commuter Services was the Sales Team winner of Council of Governments (COG) award for outstanding transportation outreach

- New prohibition on recording public meetings and obtaining special permissions for webinars. She stressed careful review of meeting minutes for errors
- Starting a vanpool pilot in FY24
- Updating and reviewing collateral materials for marketing promotions - making federal program subsidy allowing up to \$300 in for employees clear
- Planning underway to improve the Commuter Services website
- Grant funds to pilot an E-cargo bike program

Item 7 – Employee Outreach Update: Jennifer Bolick reported:

- Conducting outreach to employers and residents
- Conducting Commuter Information Days (CID's) to employers- food trucks are a good draw
- Promotions for Metro Lift program for SNAP eligible recipients
- Promotions for the Walk & Ride challenge coming in the Fall

Michael Price reported that Discovery is on a 3-day in-person work week with 160 employees occupying the Silver Spring location at one time. Discovery's telework operations were saved by Zoom.

Adjourn: Next meeting : Joint meeting in September TBA

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet
July 13, 2023**

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Chris Kabatt	Wells + Associates	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Harriet Quinn	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Vacant	North & West Sector Plan Area		
Chris Perry	CBD Resident	X	
Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Vacant			
Vacant			
Vacant			
Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (3)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT-Commuter Services	MCDOT Director or Designee	X	
Larissa Klevan	M-NCPPC	X	
Jacob Newman	Silver Spring Regional Center	X	
Sgt. Kerry Moore	Montgomery County Police		X
Staff			
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Jennifer Bolick	TMD Outreach Team	X	
Christina Contreras	MCDOT	X	
Carson Henry	SS Urban District	X	
Jay Elvove	SS Citizens Advisory Board	X	
Gary Erenrich	MCDOT	X	
Nahom Tekle	SS Community Engagement Cluster	X	
Laura Van Eperen	Van Eperen & Co.	X	