

**Silver Spring  
Transportation Management District  
Advisory Committee  
July 11, 2019**

**Item 1 & 2 – Introductions/Chair Comments/Minutes:** Members and guests introduced themselves and May minutes were approved.

Chair **Valerie Spencer** thanked **Julie Statland** and the Committee for compiling the comments for the Bicycle Master Plan letter to MCDOT Director.

**Item 3 – Ride On “Flex” Pilot:** **Ms. Spencer** introduced **Will Kenlaw** of MCDOT Division of Transit Services, who discussed Ride On’s new microtransit pilot called “Flex”. Flex is a specially branded 11-passenger bus with no fixed routes or stops. **Mr. Kenlaw** explained that the Ride On system is now made up of four major service routes, three of which are up and running:

- Ride On bus service in operation since 1975 – services the corridors and neighborhoods
- Ride On “Extra” service started in 2017, operating during rush hour along Rt. 355 as a supplemental service to the 46 & 55 bus lines
- The “Flex” pilot, a microtransit service started June 2019, operating as an on-demand bus service
- The “Flash” a BRT-like (no dedicated bus lanes) bus service operating from Burtonsville to the Silver Spring Transit Center along Rt. 29 coming May – June 2020, with additional dedicated bus service on Rt.355 and Veirs Mill Rd

**Mr. Kenlaw** presented microtransit as an “on demand” mobile app-based system like Uber or Pool. Users book rides on the app no later than an hour before pick up time. Other features of the program included:

- 12-month pilot with two different zones Rockville (1 sq. mile) and Glenmont (3 sq. miles) – performance measures taken to see what will be successful
- The app uses Via Bridge software – downloading of app is encouraged to critique the functions of the software and send suggestions in the app or to:  
[RideOn.flexcustomerservice@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:RideOn.flexcustomerservice@montgomerycountymd.gov)
- The system is designed to service the underserved communities in Montgomery County lacking transit access in an effort to improve ridership (due to Uber, telecommuting, low gas prices, Metro problems and safety) and connectivity by taking riders to where they want to go
- Microtransit is an option to remedy routes cut due to budgetary restraints
- Performance metrics used to measure success – as long as demand succeeds supply, an extension of the pilot is likely
- The service has no fixed stops with pick up at intersections inside the travel zones and curbside pickup provided for disabled users – space for one wheelchair on buses
- Standard fare is \$2.00 paid either by cash or SmarTrip (no on-board loading of SmarTrip card) same as Ride On and Metro buses – kids ride free all day starting July 1<sup>st</sup> and seniors free during midday
- Buses will wait one minute for riders – riders who miss up to three trips will be suspended for seven days – notices are given as the bus approach the stop.
- Can book only within the hour and no round trip bookings

- To register, provide first and last name, email, and phone number - no walk-ons; however, reservations can be made for up to six people and can be changed before bus arrives
- Wheaton & Glenmont Metro stations are located in the zones- trips are only within the zones and cannot go from one zone to the other during the pilot
- “Book & Go!” is the tagline branding for the bus, and the marketing budget has tripled to market via social media, Nextdoor.com and newspaper ads – businesses within the zones display signage in windows
- Marketing will be more youth focused in the beginning school year – Wheaton HS and Richard Montgomery HS are within the zones
- Currently one bus operating in the Rockville zone and two in Glenmont with a bus as a spare
- The app had 1300 downloads in the first 10 days of service – website: [rideonflex.com](http://rideonflex.com)
- Community groups were briefed and asked for their input

**Item 4 -Traffic/Pedestrian Circulation Issues:** **Matt Johnson** of MCDOT addressed the bike and parking issues brought up by the Committee in response to recommendations contained in the Bicycle Master Plan. In a brief overview of bike construction, he discussed:

- Plans for Spring Street bike lane upgrades, with concrete medians separating cyclist from roadway & parking lane – pilot to see if project will expand
- Some areas installing plastic stops in areas where concrete islands are too large – drivers hitting posts leading to constant reinstalling/repair
- Milling – removing top layers of asphalt and repaving, process taking two weeks to complete – temporary striping in place until project is complete
- Installing bike signal at Colesville and Wayne (first in Maryland); once Purple Line construction is completed the signal will allow overlapping of pedestrian signals, improving traffic flow

**Mr. Johnson** discussed the bans on right turns from Wayne onto Colesville, as traffic study and his own observations show cars rarely make the turn; however, during Purple Line construction buses will be able to make the turn. Discussion continued:

- The differing stop lines for motorist and cyclist allow drivers to see cyclist and pedestrians when turning – lateral lane shift slows cyclist and sharper turns slow drivers, as turns are the most dangerous for pedestrians
- The County’s Vision Zero plan to reduce all traffic deaths and serious injury by 2030 notes that speed is a critical factor in injury – speed/survival chance are as follows: 40mph/10% chance, 30mph/50%, 20mph/90%
- Slower speeds allow for more reaction time and less severe collision injuries – vehicles are not damaged turning on concrete aprons, however they slow speed

**Mr. Johnson** discussed the plan for Spring Street when bridge construction starts, as drivers will be forced to make a right turn onto Spring Street not being able to continue north on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The Committee expressed concern for traffic congestion in the area as a result of the construction. **Mr. Johnson** explained that the construction routing is a State project/plan and neighborhood residents fought to put the restriction in place. Also discussed:

- **Mr. Johnson’s** observations and traffic study confirmed that very few drivers make the right turn onto Spring, and everyone waiting at stop signal makes the light
- Drive times will only increase by minutes during extreme periods of the peak, which is usually only 20 minutes; however, if you drive during that time there will be some delays

- Engineering construction and shortening crossing distances may delay travel time; however, it is needed to reduce traffic deaths and injuries – 40,000 deaths a year occur from crashes
- Most congestion is caused from construction
- MCDOT is also looking at signal timing to improve congestion

**Julie Statland** commented that there is no the need to get rid of biking infrastructure. However, the loss of on-street parking tends to deter business patronage. **Mr. Johnson** replied that his observations and studies confirm that, on the contrary, cyclists are actually more likely than motorists to stop for store fronts, especially if bike parking is available.

**Item 5 – TMD Meeting Schedule/Consolidation:** **Sandra Brecher** discussed conducting joint meetings between the TMD Advisory Committees for issues concerning all TMDs and asked for feedback from the Committee regarding the option. Some Committee suggestions were for quarterly joint meetings and creating a Wiki for transportation players to share information such as meeting schedules, hot topics, discussions and blogs. Commuter Services will continue to explore joint meetings.

**Item 6 – Employer Outreach Update:**

- TMD staff is conducting outreach to employers to complete the traffic mitigation plans and TMP annual reports
- E-scooter certification & traffic safety flyer – working with Captain Didone and Police Department
- Obtaining BRT survey responses

**Item 7 – County Updates:**

- On-going M-NCPPC Master Plan studies of the Montgomery Hills/ Forest Glen area
- Updates being made to the general Pedestrian Master Plan
- Silver Spring based Toole Design won an award at the Washington Council of Governments Employer Recognition Awards Ceremony in June

**Sgt. Kerry Moore** announced:

- Hi-visibility enforcement action focusing on aggressive & distracted driving for June was conducted on University and New Hampshire Avenues
- Pedestrian enforcement on Georgia between Spring & Wayne at intersections
- Hi-visibility enforcement on New Hampshire & US 29
- Pedestrian enforcement on Colesville @ East-West and Georgia and Colesville and Fenwick intersections
- Maryland’s Adapt Wave was July 19 – 28 and conducted at Georgia @ Colesville & Thayer, University & US29 – 55 hours of funded work for aggressive driving
- Silver Spring Jazz Festival – Saturday, August 24

**Sgt. Moore** explained his concern regarding the Vision Zero plan stating that it only works if all the plan is being done. The plan called for purchasing of unmarked vehicles for traffic enforcement; however, none of the vehicles have been received. Of the six Police districts in the County there are only five unmarked vehicles.

**Adjourn/ Next Meeting September 12, 2019**

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet**

**July 11, 2019**

<b>Voting Members (12)</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Chamber Members (3)</b>			
Chris Kabatt	Wells + Associates		X
Julie Statland	Statland & Katz, Ltd.	X	
Vacant			
<b>Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)</b>			
Harriet Quinn	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS		X
Vacant	North & West Sector Plan Area		
Chris Perry	CBD Resident	X	
<b>Employers less than 50 employees (3)</b>			
Valerie Spencer	MayaTech	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
<b>Employers with 50 or more employees (3)</b>			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
<b>Non-Voting Members (3)</b>			
Sandra Brecher, DOT-Commuter Services	MCDOT Director or Designee	X	
Katie Mencarini	M-NCPPC		X
Reemberto Rodriguez	Silver Spring Regional Center		X
Sgt. Kerry Moore	Montgomery County Police	X	
<b>Staff</b>			
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
<b>Guests</b>			
Firaol Bekelche	Summer Rise	X	
Jennifer Bolick	Van Eperen	X	
Sean Emerson	Councilmember Tom Hucker		X
Jay Elvove	SS Citizens Advisory Board	X	
Brook Fikre	Summer Rise	X	
Matt Johnson	MCDOT	X	
Will Kenlaw	MCDOT Ride On	X	
Christine McGrew	M-NCPPC	X	
Mel Tull	Lee Development	X	
Laura Van Eperen	Van Eperen & Co.		X