



Countywide Master Plan of Transportation Plan 2035 Implementation

RECOMMENDED GOALS, CONCEPTS, GUIDELINES
AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

**Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department
July 2021**

Introduction

The Prince George's County Planning Department seeks to initiate a multi-year effort to develop a new and updated Master Plan of Transportation; the Countywide Master Plan of Transportation - Plan 2035 Implementation (MPOT 2035), a countywide functional master plan for guiding transportation infrastructure and network development. This plan will update and replace the 2009 Countywide Master Plan of Transportation (MPOT) as well as the transportation facility recommendations from the active area and sector master plans. The MPOT 2035 will implement conformance with the approved general plan, Plan Prince George's 2035 (Plan 2035). The countywide functional master plan will guide transportation infrastructure and network development. Stakeholder engagement for MPOT 2035 proposes a robust plan that will reflect the vision and goals contained in Plan 2035, including a focus on multimodal transportation in designated centers and sustainable transportation in existing neighborhoods. A consultant team will begin work on this project in Summer 2021, focusing on documenting existing conditions and inclusive community engagement activities. Stakeholder engagement and broader public participation for this plan will begin in Fall 2021.

Section 27-643 of the current Zoning Ordinance requires the Planning Board to prepare "a project description and recommended goals, concepts, guidelines, and a public participation program" at the time of initiation of a master plan. This document contains that information and describes the methodology through which the Planning Department will conduct and prepare the Functional Master Plan.

Purpose

The MPOT 2035 will comprehensively develop goals, strategies, and policies to better implement Plan 2035, which recommended an update of the transportation plan after ten years. This plan envisions a countywide transportation system that not only supports the safe and equitable movement of people and goods within the county and region, but also encourages economic, cultural, recreational, and social activity in Plan 2035 Centers. The plan will reassess the policies and recommendations of the 2009 MPOT, and evaluate existing and proposed County rights-of-way, scenic and historic road designations, transit corridors, pedestrian facilities, and bicycle corridors. Moreover, this plan will follow a multimodal and sustainable approach and use the Planning Department's transportation forecast model to discuss and address county traffic congestion and future transportation needs. In addition to replacing the Approved 2009 MPOT, MPOT 2035 will amend the transportation facility recommendations for all the County's approved and active area master plans.

Overview

Prince George's County is directly east of Washington, D.C., and Montgomery County, north of Charles County, and west of Anne Arundel County. The 2019 population was just over 900,000 people and the county covers just under 500 square miles. There are 4,100 miles of roadway in the County, which includes roadways maintained by the County, the Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration (SHA), incorporated municipalities, and private home and business owner associations. Prince George's County includes a spectrum of dense urban communities to rural and agricultural areas. There are 27 separate municipalities, many with their own public streets and departments of public works. Prince George's Plan 2035, the County's

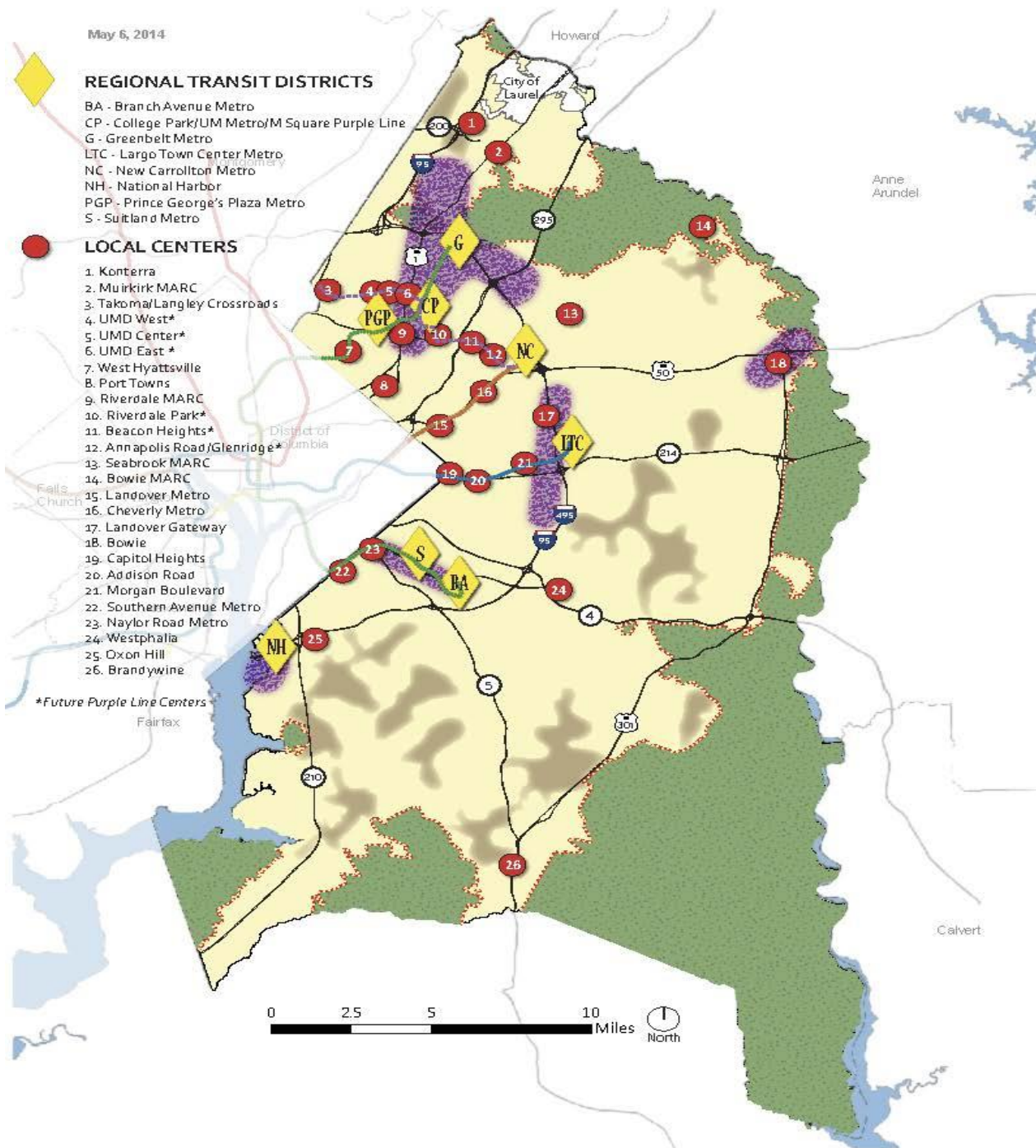
General Plan, identifies various Plan Centers, which are the nodes of activity throughout the County. Various on-going planning initiatives are occurring within the Planning Department.

The Plan 2035 framework includes six principles that guide the Plan 2035 vision, policies and strategies and they will also play an integral role in the development of MPOT 2035.

Transportation, including the built infrastructure and the modes that are used for travel both implicitly and explicitly impact the County's guiding principles, which include:

1. Concentrate Future Growth
2. Prioritize and Focus our Resources
3. Build on Our Strengths and Assets
4. Create Choice Communities
5. Connect Our Neighborhoods and Significant Places
6. Protect and Value Our Natural Resources

Map 1: MPOT 2035 Plan area



Legend

- Employment Areas
- Established Communities
- Future Water and Sewer Service Area
- Growth Boundary
- Proposed Purple Line Light Rail
- Rural and Agricultural Areas
- Metrorail

MPOT 2035

In support of Plan 2035, the objectives of the MPOT 2035 are to:

- Update the existing right-of-way recommendations Countywide
- Propose new rights-of-way recommendations Countywide
- Propose new pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facility recommendations Countywide
- Propose new multimodal, safety, equity, and sustainability policies related to transportation
- Propose transportation recommendations to support economic and transit-oriented development
- Update the existing Scenic and/or Historic roadway designations

Key Questions

Every plan should strive to answer some basic questions related to purpose of the plan and to help establish the framework for developing a plan.

General Questions

1. Are there opportunities to develop amenity-rich, connected, and high-quality places for residents, students, faculty, workers, and visitors at a new transit-oriented center?
2. Does potential exist to increase access to employment areas?
3. How does Prince George's County and partner agencies improve transportation connectivity and identify targeted opportunities to increase accessibility to key parts of the County as well as increase mobility options for all County residents, employees, and visitors?
4. Are there opportunities to protect, preserve, and enhance elements of the County's Green Infrastructure Network?
5. How does Prince George's County balance transportation need for new development and established communities?
6. How can the County's transportation network preserve and capitalize on the area's history and culture?
7. How does Prince George's County increase and/or improve access to health care, healthy food, recreational opportunities, and a safe pedestrian and bicycle network?
8. How does Prince George's County ensure that public transportation facilities exist to serve the future population?

The MPOT 2035 plan will strive to address these questions, as well as other issues and opportunities identified by the public, stakeholders, and throughout the community engagement process.

Goals, Concepts, and Guidelines

The following Goals, Concepts and Guidelines for the MPOT 2035 are to provide the framework through which the Planning Department will conduct the proposed master planning process over the next 12 months, resulting in the public release of the Preliminary *Master Plan of Transportation – Plan 2035 Implementation* in Fall 2022.

Goals

The primary goal of the MPOT 2035 Plan is to envision a countywide transportation system that supports the safe, efficient, and equitable movement of people and goods within the county and region. Together, the project team will work with the community, stakeholders, elected officials, and other interested parties to create a vision for the future of the county that meets the needs of local residents while also advancing countywide transportation goals. This new master plan will implement Plan 2035 by setting goals, developing policies, and identifying specific, realistic, and achievable strategies and actions that bring the vision to fruition.

Concepts - 2035

The 2035 Transportation and Mobility goal is to provide and maintain a safe, affordable, accessible, and energy efficient multi modal transportation network that supports the County's desired land use patterns and Plan 2035 goals. These factors will be discussed and explored through the Plan 2035 policies identified below:

1. Ensure that countywide transportation improvements are integrated with and support the Plan 2035 vision and land use pattern.
2. Expand and improve transit service, particularly on routes connecting Downtowns, the Innovation Corridor, and Regional Transit Districts in order to maximize the economic development potential and synergies between these areas.
3. Maintain levels of service standards for roads and highways as identified by Plan 2035.
4. Use complete and green street practices to design, operate, maintain, and retrofit the transportation network in order to improve travel conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and vulnerable populations consistent with the surrounding area's character.
5. Improve overall safety levels within the County's transportation network.
6. Pursue a range of transportation facility and systems funding sources and strategies to maintain and enhance the existing transportation network in order to encourage the safe and efficient mobility of all persons.
7. Ensure there are countywide transportation goals that are integrated with and support the County's Climate Action Plan and/or its blueprints, including the promotion of the use of low-carbon transportation methods countywide to improve air quality and traffic congestion. Public investment that supports innovative infrastructure systems should be targeted at Downtowns and Activity Centers.
8. Ensure that minimum and maximum parking requirements for transit-accessible areas are appropriate to advance the overall goals of Plan 2035.
9. Improve mobility options for targeted population groups, particularly our elderly, mentally and physically disabled, and low-income households, in suburban and rural areas not served on a regular basis by transit.

Guidelines

In developing this plan, the Planning Department strives to follow these important guidelines:

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

1. **Value Participants' Time:** The Planning Department strives to create a planning process that will be fun, interesting, and rewarding to the community. The public and stakeholders' time is valuable; therefore, the project team will strive to make it a rewarding experience. Community planning is a great way to learn about your community and county, to either virtually or meet in person your neighbors and others who share your interests, and to have a say in the future of your community.
2. **Inclusion:** The planning process will be inclusive as all members of the public will have an opportunity to weigh in at several stages throughout the process and their input will be accepted respectfully and addressed professionally. The project team commits to meet either in person and/or virtually or via telephone and make appropriate accommodations as necessary with any interested stakeholder to discuss MPOT 2035, provide information about the project, and to solicit feedback. Staff encourages the participation of persons with disabilities or language interpretation in all its programs and services.
3. **Transparent and Fact-Based:** The planning process will be transparent, objective, and fact-based. Policies and strategies will be based on data, demonstrable trends, and realistic implementation strategies. The project team will present information and concepts to generate discussions amongst the stakeholders with the goal of discussing all topics, even if controversial. Information will be disseminated through the project website, social media, and email distribution lists as soon as it is available. Public meetings will use a variety of platforms and be advertised using a variety of media and will be open to all.

Plan Development

4. **Realistic:** The planning process will be realistic and focused on achievable outcomes to meet the transportation vision: An opportunity exists to plan for a great, sustainable, dynamic future for MPOT 2035 and for participants to understand the opportunities of the plan.
5. **Focused:** The MPOT 2035 planning process is about understanding the countywide transportation process. Transportation issues facing Prince George's County affect all communities. This plan is focused on MPOT 2035 strategies and developing progressive transportation policies countywide. Broader issues identified through this process will be directed to the appropriate entity or process and be addressed at the appropriate time.
6. **Consistent with County priorities:** This planning process recognizes that MPOT 2035 is a resource for the entire County and that it will support the countywide goals for transportation and not conflict with them.
7. **Carrying Forward What Works:** This planning process will amend the existing master plans throughout the county. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and other partners have carried out multiple studies to address some critical issues while helping with the implementation of previous recommendations. Many stakeholders participated in the

development of these previous studies. Hence, relevant, and valid recommendations in prior plans and studies will be carried forward as applicable, while others will be updated or replaced. This will allow the project team to focus on areas that need up-to-date input based on current and anticipated conditions.

Anticipated Schedule

Table 1. MPOT 2035 Major Milestones and Timelines

Project Milestone	Anticipated Date
Planning Board Initiation	July 2021
Planning Board transmittal of the Goals, Concepts and Guidelines and a public participation program to County Council	July 2021
District Council Initiation	September 2021
Council approval of the Goals, Concepts and Guidelines and PPP	September 2021
Existing Conditions Analysis	Spring 2022
Public release of Preliminary Master Plan of Transportation	Fall 2022
Joint Public Hearing	January 2023
Planning Board Work session	March 2023
Planning Board Adoption/Endorsement	April 2023
District Council Approval or Amendments	May 2023
2 nd Joint Public Hearing (if necessary)	June 2023
Council Work session (if necessary)	July 2023
Plan Approval by District Council with Amendments (if necessary)	September 2023

Request for Extension

CB-39-2005 amended the time the Planning Board is allotted to prepare a Preliminary Master Plan in Section 27-644(a)(2) of the Zoning Ordinance from 18 months to eight (8) months. Eight months generally has not allowed for an appropriate amount of time to prepare a professional quality, thorough comprehensive plan with significant public engagement. Most of the recently initiated master and sector plans, including all plans initiated since 2009, have required an extension to this time frame. Even with approved extensions, many of these plans have required a significant number of amendments during the Planning Board adoption and Council approval phases, and subsequent administrative corrections, due to inadequate time for drafting, vetting, and reviewing the Preliminary Master Plan prior to public release. As this is a countywide project, staff wants to be prepared. In short, the eight-month legislated timeframe is insufficient to prepare a countywide comprehensive master plan.

Beginning in Summer 2021, Planning Department staff and consultants will conduct the extensive research, stakeholder outreach, issues identification, key stakeholder interviews, and analysis necessary to craft a comprehensive, inclusive, and holistic master plan.

The Planning Department is cognizant of the need to engage the public, partner agencies, and other stakeholders, and to thoroughly vet and review the plan prior to its release for public review and comment. The Planning Department is especially interested in ensuring that the community and stakeholders are aware of the project scope, stakeholder engagement, and the boundaries of the master plan. In the past, some planning efforts would begin the existing conditions research, outreach, and plan development well in advance of the formal plan initiation. However, initiating the plan after significant pre-planning activities had taken place caused confusion with the public and stakeholders. Consequently, staff is requesting to initiate this project now and not after a significant amount of planning activities have occurred.

The Planning Department is committed to delivering the MPOT 2035 plan for public review in Fall 2022, which allows sufficient time for thorough public review and legislative approval by September 2023. To meet this timetable, the Planning Department requests that the Planning Board grant an eight-month extension of the plan preparation timeframe pursuant to Section 27-644(a)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Public Participation Program

Introduction

Public participation is an essential element in the preparation of successful comprehensive plans. The public and key stakeholders, such as elected and appointed officials, property owners, business owners, community leaders, students, and workers provide on-the-ground eyes and ears that can identify key issues of importance, critical feedback on the feasibility or desirability of plan recommendations, and support for plan approval and implementation. Well-informed stakeholders are key to the success of a public engagement program.

Section 27-643 of the Zoning Ordinance requires submittal of a public participation program for District Council review and approval. The proposed public participation plan for MPOT 2035 includes the use of traditional and electronic media to quickly gather and disseminate information, online and telephone platforms for outreach events, interviews with key stakeholders and partner agencies, a virtual field office presence, online surveys, and briefings to decision makers.

The project team consists of staff from the Prince George's County Planning Department and a supporting team of consultants.

Public Information

The MPOT 2035 Plan's public engagement efforts will be to conduct a comprehensive outreach strategy. The strategy includes conducting two sets of countywide public meetings to discuss the existing conditions findings as well as the first plan draft and recommendations. There will also be ongoing information sharing through interactive online materials, social media, and eblasts. Three geographies have been created (north, central, and south) to make the meetings geographically based to focus discussion on specific issues as well as encourage more participation throughout the County. The meeting formats have not been determined but staff is flexible enough to hold either in-person or virtual meetings based on circumstance. For in-person meetings, the locations will be arranged by the Project Team; for virtual meetings, the Project Team will arrange "hosting" of the online meeting.

The Planning Department and the Project Team will carry out the online engagement by posting and publishing materials developed by the Consultant. These materials will include surveys, story

maps, interactive maps, and meeting materials from stakeholder groups. The Planning Department and Project Team will also carry out social media engagement by posting and publishing materials developed by the Consultant and the Project Team. These materials will include short outreach messages, photographs, video, and audio. Public information will be available in both English and Spanish.

Agency and Municipal Stakeholder Engagement

The project team, with assistance from the consultant, will host three meetings and an additional “public space” training for specific stakeholders. These meetings are designed to engage agency and municipal staff in an effort to collect input, update, and educate. Representatives from the following are expected to participate on the Agency and Municipal stakeholder group:

- Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement;
- Department of Public Works and Transportation;
- Department of Parks and Recreation;
- Prince George’s County Revenue Authority;
- Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration;
- Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration;
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority;
- Municipalities within the County; and
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

Community Stakeholder Engagement

This task was designed to collect input, update, and educate a Community Stakeholder group who are representatives from civic associations, advocacy organizations, and other invested individuals in the County that are expected to participate. Along with ongoing information sharing, two community stakeholder meetings are proposed. The Project Team with support from elected officials and advocacy organizations will solicit participation from interested individuals in the County.

APPENDIX 1: PLANNING CONTEXT

Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update

New zoning and subdivision ordinances were approved by the County Council in October 2018 and are designed to support implementation of Plan 2035 and provide more progressive transportation policy as it relates to development.

Approved 2009 Countywide Master Plan of Transportation (MPOT)

The current countywide functional master plan of transportation was approved by the County Council in 2009. This plan provides recommendations for master plan roadway classifications, rights-of-way, and trail facilities throughout the County, as well as policy recommendations for Complete Streets and Transit Oriented Development. It is frequently referenced by other area and sector master plans and provides the foundation for transportation recommendations in the development review process.

Plan Prince George's 2035 (Plan 2035)

The current County General Plan was approved in 2014 and recommends a growth policy approach that stratifies the County into growth categories: Regional Transit Districts, Employment Areas, Local Centers, Established Communities, Future Water and Sewer Service Areas, and Rural and Agricultural Areas. The plan designates eight Regional Transit Districts and 26 different Local Centers throughout the County. These areas are focus points for new development in the County and are considered Plan 2035 Centers, which may require more nuanced transportation investment.

Plan 2035 also highlights the many transportation assets within the County and recommends a comprehensive multimodal network. Specifically, Plan 2035 recommends integrating transportation improvements with land use development, expanding, and improving transit service, maintaining roadway adequacy, building a multimodal network, improving safety, diversifying funding, and capital improvement opportunities, promoting low-carbon modes, revising parking standards, and improving mobility options for vulnerable populations. MPOT 2035 should build on these transportation policies and advance opportunities to implement the County's General Plan.

Transit

The Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) developed the Transit Vision Plan in 2018, a five-year plan for improving and expanding transit within the County. The plan evaluated potential methods for improving public transportation in the County. The Transit Vision Plan reviewed local bus services, private providers, and other best practices for improving access to public transportation services, with a goal of developing a first-class public transportation system. The final plan serves as a guide for DPW&T to prioritize service enhancements and to develop new transit service initiatives.

Prince George's County presently has a fleet of ninety-five (95) transit buses and forty-seven (47) paratransit buses. The County provides TheBus fixed route service through 28 lines and demand response transportation services including Call-A-Bus, Call-A-Cab, and other municipal services. TheBus service is complemented by Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Metrorail and Metrobus service, which consists of 15 Metrorail Stations and 49 bus routes. WMATA also provides complementary paratransit service to its fixed route network, transporting qualified seniors and persons with disabilities through its Metro-Access system. Fixed route transit options are also available through the Regional Transit Agency of Central Maryland (RTA), which connects north county residents to Metrorail stations and regional transit hubs.

The construction of the Purple Line, a 16-mile, 21 station light rail transit line provides another opportunity to expand alternative travel options for Montgomery and Prince George's County residents. The light rail line will include five major activity center stations (Bethesda, Silver Spring, Takoma-Langley Park, College Park, and New Carrollton) and 16 smaller stations that serve residential communities, commercial districts, and institutional establishments. In the County, the Purple Line will have 11 rail stations and provide direct connections to three branches of the existing Metrorail system, all three MARC commuter rail lines, and Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

Vision Zero

In July 2019, Vision Zero Prince George's was adopted by the County Council and led by DPW&T as a countywide strategy in an effort to achieve zero fatalities and serious injuries on roadways by 2040. To achieve this, the Vision Zero strategy uses a multifaceted approach to create a safe transportation system. It can be achieved through a holistic approach that brings together different stakeholders within the community. Also, an action plan was developed by utilizing data-driven, innovative, and action-oriented tasks that reinforce existing policies and plans.

Complete Streets

In 2012, the Prince George's County Council in Maryland passed a Complete Streets Ordinance that requires officials to incorporate measures to manage stormwater runoff and increase access for all roadway users (bicyclists, pedestrians, etc.) on public and some private roadways. The ordinance directs county officials to incorporate environmental site design into road, trail, sidewalk, and transit construction projects to ensure that stormwater runoff is well-managed and that roads are accessible to everyone, as directed by state policy. To date, there are approximately 2,671 miles of sidewalk and 334 miles of park trails, including natural and paved surface miles.

Complete Streets are commonly defined as streets able to accommodate various users including pedestrians, bicyclists, mobility impaired, motorists, and transit riders, among others in a safe and efficient environment. Implementation of Complete Streets within the county is guided by CB-83-2012 in conjunction with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government (MWCOC) policies. MWCOC is in favor of implementing a regional approach to Complete Streets. In 2017, DPW&T developed urban roadway standards to be used in County Centers. These standards provide facilities for all modes of transportation.

Strategic Trails Plan

The 2017 Strategic Trails Plan provides more detailed guidance related to trail implementation and program development. Primarily, trails in a jurisdiction that bridge urban-to-rural densities are needed for recreation as well as transportation. This plan outlines a 500-mile trail network that connects almost all parts of the County.

TransForM 2.5 & 3.0

The Commission is currently engaged in updating the travel demand forecast model, TransForM. This project will overhaul the traditional four-step, trip-based forecasting process to a dynamic activity-based process that can better forecast travel behavior in the County. The model currently uses a 2015 base year and a 2040 horizon year for forecasting travel trends. The ongoing work of this project is to develop new interim "horizon" years for forecasting and incorporate new, large scale transportation projects into the future transportation network. Travel demand forecasts from this project will be used to inform background information and recommendations in the MPOT 2035.

Existing Master Plans

MPOT 2035 will consider the relevant transportation recommendations from the active master plans in the County. The recommendations of this plan will maintain or build on the transportation elements of previous plans and amend the transportation facility recommendations of those plans.