

Multimodal Transportation Recommendations

Introduction

Plan Prince George's 2035, the approved General Plan for Prince George's County provided the roadmap for making Prince George's County the community of choice for families, businesses, and workers in the region. To achieve this goal, Plan 2035 outlined a two-pronged approach to achieve change in the County—growth policy and strategic investment. This approach was laid upon a foundation of six guiding principles to help maintain and strengthen the resources already available in the County.

One of the most essential elements of this plan include connecting communities—namely in the form of a strong transportation network. Across the country, jurisdictions are facing the same crisis of fewer resources available to appropriately service the transportation needs of their citizenry. One of the most prominent factors noted is the need to rectify historic injustices brought about by unbalanced and/or biased disinvestment in communities of color leading to inferior transportation infrastructure in areas with denser populations.

Prince George's County is one of the most ethnically diverse jurisdictions within the United States. Diverse populations use a wide variety of transportation modes. The multimodal options provided by Prince George's County ought to be as robust and diverse as possible to meet the varied transportation needs of its population. As part of the study for the Master Plan of Transportation, the project team reviewed transportation documents from several jurisdictions to determine best practices as they relate to delivering a successful multimodal transportation network to the public.

Review of Existing Plans

The consultant team identified communities with similar demographic characteristics to Prince George's County, specifically as they related to racial mix, transportation commute, and age diversity. Using this data, they collected and reviewed local bike, pedestrian, and trail use master plans to determine the strategies and policies relating to multimodal transportation that may be relevant and applicable in Prince George's County.

The master plans reviewed included:

- M-NCPPC Montgomery County: Technical Update to the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
- M-NCPPC Montgomery County: Bicycle Master Plan, 2018
- Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)—Walk. Bike. Thrive. A regional vision for a more walkable, bikeable, and livable metropolitan Atlanta
- Richmond Bicycle Master Plan
- Florida-Alabama TPO Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan, 2018
- Prince George's County Plan 2035, 2019

The demographics of these jurisdictions are not equivalent to those of Prince George's County which has the highest percentage of African-American residents. They were selected due to proximity, racial diversity, age diversity, and average commute time, amongst other factors.



Table 1: 2020 Census Demographics—Race

Fact	Pensacola City, FL	Richmond City (County), VA	Montgomery County, MD	Atlanta, GA	Prince George's County, MD
Population, Census, April 1, 2020	54,312	226,610	1,062,061	498,715	967,201
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	51,923	204,214	971,777	420,003	863,420
Persons under 5 years	6.50%	5.80%	6.10%	5.4%	6.50%
Persons under 18 years	24.20%	17.20%	23.10%	17.6%	22.10%
Persons 65 years and over	17.30%	13.80%	16.10%	11.6%	13.90%
Female persons	52.60%	52.60%	51.60%	51.3%	51.90%
White alone	63.60%	47.70%	60.00%	39.75%	27.10%
Black or African-American alone	28.60%	46.90%	20.10%	47.22%	64.40%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.20%	0.50%	0.70%	0.28%	1.20%
Asian alone	1.50%	2.30%	15.60%	4.48%	4.40%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.10%	0.20%	0.10%	0.04%	0.20%
Two or More Races	5.20%	2.40%	3.50%	5.82%	2.70%
Hispanic or Latino	5.20%	7.30%	20.10%	6.01%	19.50%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	60.00%	42.20%	42.90%	38.52%	12.30%

Each of the documents reviewed were prepared by Regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) or jurisdictional planning entities responsible for the development of long-term land use and/or transportation planning. In the review of each, priority was given to identifying the desire to increase the modal split and then the strategy recommendations to achieve this goal. To help

simplify the findings, for each document below, common elements have been identified so that they can be compared and we can determine if any best practices can be ascertained from what is shared.

The documents reviewed include a combination of highway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian safety plans—all of which are imperative to understand in order to create a fully multimodal transportation network in Prince George’s County. Many policies found in these plans have been implemented by Prince George’s County in part or in whole. The purpose of this document is to identify best practices in the nation so the County can identify existing policies that are good candidates to build on or expand and new policies whose implementation should be considered. As such, the key recommendations identified are used to help inform the conceptual policy recommendations for the County to consider integrating to create a multimodal jurisdiction.

M-NCPPC Montgomery County: Technical Update to the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways



Identified Vision

Its vision is the development of a fundamentally sound, balanced, and flexible future transportation system that helps to build and maintain livable communities within Montgomery County. Transportation, when planned well, can be an asset to the quality of life in a community. This plan is multimodal and focused on serving people, not just vehicle trips.



Major Focus

To provides a “road map” for making transportation investments within the context of a long-range vision. It ensures the future network of transportation facilities will serve residents, businesses, visitors, and people passing through the county.

Key Relevant Recommendations

Align the road design and target speed standards for roads within urban areas so that they are designed for the safety and convenience of all users of the roadway system including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, automobile drivers, commercial vehicles freight haulers and emergency service vehicles.

M-NCPPC Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan, 2018



THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

APPROVED AND ADOPTED | DECEMBER 2018

Identified Vision

Montgomery County will become a world-class bicycling community. Everyone in Montgomery County will be able to travel by bicycle on a comfortable, safe, and connected bicycle network. Bicycling will become a viable transportation option and will elevate the quality of life in the county.

Major Focus

Identifying a series of strategies and recommendations that will enable policy and decision makers to increase bicycling rates, create a connected and low stress bicycling network, provide equal access to low stress bicycling and improve the safety of biking.



Key Relevant Recommendations

- Establish a bikeway classification system to organize bikeways based on their level of separation from traffic
- Create a low-stress bicycling network
- Establish a high-capacity network of arterial bikeways between major activity centers to enable bicycle travel with few delays in an environment where all users can safely and comfortably coexist
- Adjust roadway standards and design criteria that apply to all roadways that are designated for multimodal use which incorporate non-motorized user feelings of safety
- Establish grade separated crossings for new freeways and those undergoing major changes. Ensure stand-alone capital projects include grade separated crossings for bisecting roadway networks. Where no improvements are planned, incorporate ramp signalization to reduce conflicts.
- Provide abundant and secure bicycle parking at transit stations as well as commercial and multifamily residential developments
- Monitor performance

Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)—Walk. Bike. Thrive!



Identified Vision

The Atlanta region will be one of the most connected and safest regions in the United States for walking and bicycling and use active transportation to improve the mobility, safety, and economic competitiveness for residents and communities.



Major Focus

Developing policies for decisionmakers to use that support a walkable and bikeable region and mapping out a pathway for local and regional partners to implement and support identified policies and programs.

The framework is focused around a few regional organizing principles:

1. A focus on short trips will allow the region to maximize the benefits associated with more walking and biking.
2. An opportunistic approach to Complete Streets improvements on major streets will enable the region to make the most of limited resources
3. Create “20-minute” neighborhoods which include a mix of land uses, create a connected street grid, frequently incorporate bikeways (every half-mile) and are convenient to trails and transit

Key Relevant Recommendations

- Focus investments in areas that enable short trips for walking or bicycling to work, transit or daily needs
- Prioritize active transportation investments in parts of the regions where land use and transportation networks naturally support options for short trips
- Ensure that the regional system facilitates seamless transitions between active transportation and other modes, such as transit and driving, which are better suited to long trips
- Implement Complete Streets principles on every roadway with any project receiving federal funds
- Prioritize projects that have a positive impact on public health outcomes
- Incorporate transit access as a factor when prioritizing proposed bikeway projects
- Incorporate Active Transportation in Design Guidelines and Engineering Standards
- Create and activate pedestrian or bicycle advisory committees



Richmond Bicycle Master Plan



Identified Vision

The City of Richmond envisions a future where bicycling is an integral component of daily life. A well-connected network of bicycle infrastructure coupled with a shift in culture will create an environment that is safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

Major Focus

To create an environment which supports bicycling as a viable means of transportation, creates a safe and welcoming place for all users within the established network, connects people to destinations with a time-efficient travel option, and establishes equal access to bicycling for all.

Key Relevant Recommendations

- Ensure that all construction projects assume some accommodations will be provided for pedestrian and bicycle access
- Incorporate bicycle facilities into zoning bylaws and ordinances
- Require the construction of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, trails, and safe crosswalks during the new development efforts
- Explore opportunities to revise existing easements to accommodate public access greenway/path facilities
- Consider bicycle facilities during [transit] route reorganization and station upgrades
- Consider repaving projects as an opportunity for revising pavement markings to narrow vehicle travel lanes and create space for bicycle lanes and shoulders



Florida-Alabama TPO Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan, 2018



Identified Vision

The TPO Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan will improve the quality of life for all communities within the TPO planning area by providing education, engineering, enforcement, equity, and encouragement of multimodal transportation choices.

Major Focus

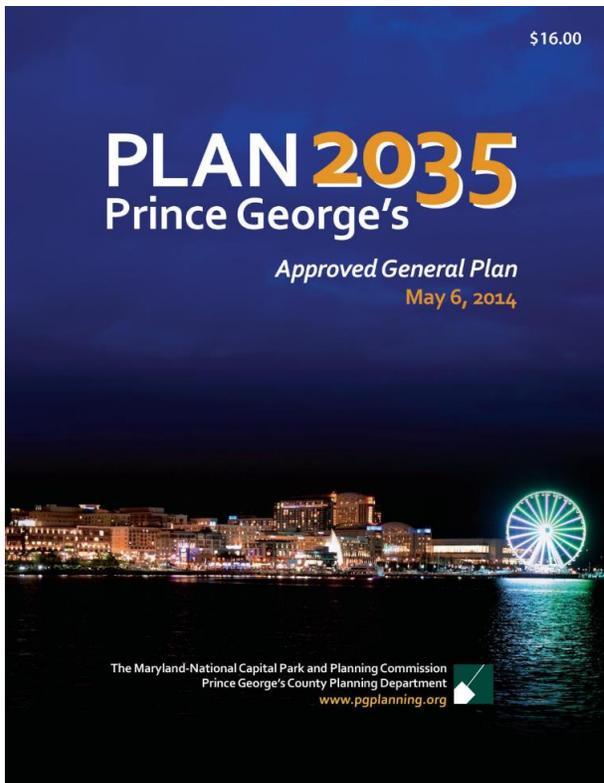
This plan was designed to help identify locations where bicycle or pedestrian projects should be constructed. It considered several factors that could be used to help the TPO determine where to focus their resources that led to overall recommendations about prioritization.

Key Relevant Recommendations

- **Prioritize projects which improve safety.** Based upon survey data, people were more deterred from walking riding a bicycle due to vehicular speed (71 percent) than by the need to transport people or things (7 percent). The perception of safety is a key issue that should be considered in prioritization.
- **Prioritize projects which are in the proximity of schools and connect people to them.**
- **Prioritize projects that are near an activity center.** These could include any one of the following: park, trail, or greenway; transit station; employment center; residential area; or hospital/medical clinic.



- **Prioritize projects in evidence-based/anecdotal need areas.** If there is a worn pathway or cut through in adjacent grass or reports of people walking in the roadway, it is clear there is a latent demand for additional infrastructure to support walking.
- **Prioritize projects in areas where there are high rates of zero vehicle ownership.** This jurisdiction had few options for those who did not have access to a private vehicle. Focusing attention here would produce notable improvements on the assessment of transportation infrastructure



Plan Prince George's 2035 Approved General Plan

Major Focus

Plan 2035 frames the path forward for Prince George's County to achieve its Vision and is the baseline for this Master Plan of Transportation 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

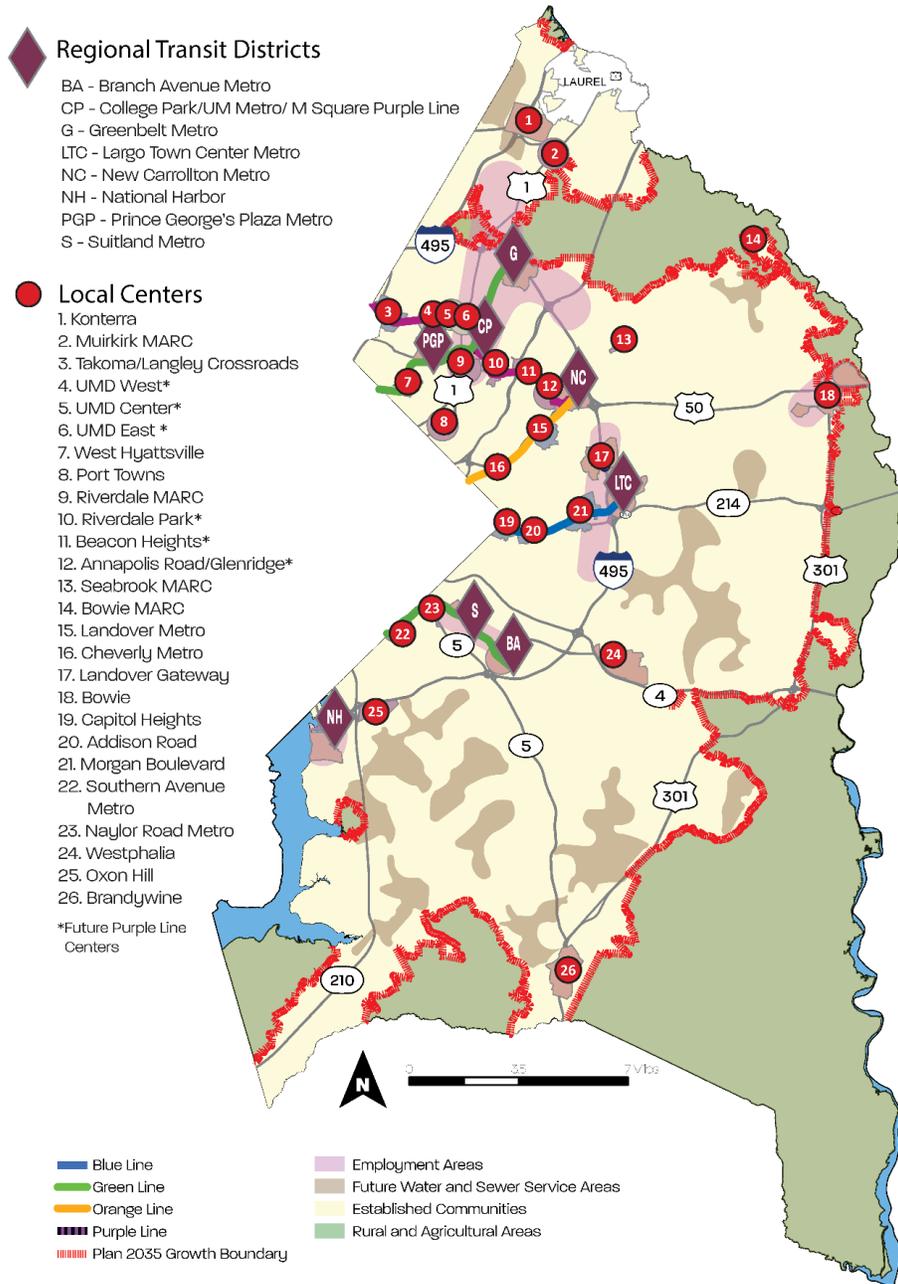


3. Build on Our Strengths and Assets
4. Create Choice Communities
5. Connect Our Neighborhoods and Significant Places
6. Protect and Value Our Natural Resources

Applying this context to the creation of a fully functional and multimodal County focuses our attention on the fifth principle of *connecting neighborhoods and significant places*. The policy recommendations built from the review of each of the existing master plans weighs heavily on the value of connections to connect Prince Georgians to each other and to the rest of the Washington metropolitan area.

Plan 2035 uses a hierarchy of designations to help focus growth throughout the County. These include regional transit districts, local centers, neighborhood centers, campus centers, town centers, employment areas, established communities, future water and sewer service areas, and rural and agricultural areas. Within these areas, it is imperative that transportation be used as a tool that can focus planned growth to support the overall vision for the County. These designations can be used to directly influence how transportation decisions are made which can support the desired outcome of a multimodal and connected county.

Figure 1: Regional Transit Districts and Local Centers (Plan 2035)





Mobility in Prince George's County

The Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) has begun the effort of addressing major gaps in the countywide transportation network through the addition of infrastructure—roadway improvements, striping, bike lane designation, road diets, and more. These improvements, while important to create a safer transportation environment for all users, has not led to the changes in the modal split desired to improve air quality, health outcomes, and increase active transportation uses.

Plan 2035 identified that within the study period (2010–2019), there was no change in the mode split between walking, biking, transit, and auto trips. This indicates that there is a need for more aggressive measures and strategic policies to help lead the County toward its goal of multimodal transportation use.

The County provides several alternatives to using a private automobile in the County. Many of these are offered through DPW&T for a low or reduced cost to many residents. These choices include:

TheBus

DPW&T provides bus service to residents and visitors on more than 28 routes which traverse over 10,000 miles of County roadways.

Paratransit

County residents have access to four types of paratransit services that can transport them to their destinations. Three of these options are administered by DPW&T (Call-A-Bus, Call-A-Cab, and Senior Transportation Services) with a focus on individuals without access to existing bus or rail service, persons with disabilities, and seniors over the age of 60.

Microtransit—PGC Link

Within the County, bus transportation provides an alternative to automobiles that is often not used to its fullest potential. One of the primary reasons for this is the gap between the locations where users board and alight and their final destinations. To combat this first and last mile gap, the County implemented a flexible, on-demand public transit service called PGC Link in 2020 for specific transit zones. This service, while shared with other users, is convenient and less expensive than for-profit rideshare services.

Bikeshare

Starting in 2017, DPW&T introduced a new transportation option for County residents by investing in bikeshare stations and bikes, currently housing 24 bikeshare stations in the County, connecting to the more than 550 stations in the Washington metropolitan area.

Policy Recommendations

Based upon a review and assessment of the master plans mentioned above, there are several recommendations that can be applied throughout the County.



1. **Revise roadway design standards to accommodate multimodal uses for every roadway undergoing major renovations and for newly designed infrastructure.** As the County continues to see changes in the urban/suburban/rural landscape, there are opportunities to update the transportation network to encourage feelings of safety and belonging for all users. The County's guidance for complete street design must reflect these changes to create an inclusive and comprehensive transportation network.
2. **Identify metrics to assess the success of the County in an increasing modal split away from single occupancy vehicles.** It should be noted that shifting the public to other forms of transportation other than single occupancy vehicles is the overall goal to improve several health and wellness outcomes. The alternative modal choice that is selected should not be of primary concern except to determine where additional infrastructure resources may be focused.
3. **Modify transportation planning and assessment metrics to reduce focus on automobile movement and increase focus on people movement throughout the jurisdiction.** Traditional planning processes consider the effect of vehicle movement through intersections, roadway segments, and traffic congestion as key indicators for roadway widening or interchange design or construction. These types of roadway improvements typically have a negative effect on nonvehicular modes of travel (i.e. speed, roadway surface conditions, etc.). Adjusting the assessment metrics to provide weight to the needs of nonvehicular users could increase feelings of safety that may impact travel mode splits.
4. **Identify minor origin-destination pairs within Neighborhood Reinvestment Areas and Downtown Areas and monitor nonvehicular travel.** Short trips via bicycle or walking (i.e. travel to school, local markets, parks, etc.) are often undercounted because they are taken by those who are not regularly part of the travel survey and assessment counts (i.e. school aged children, caregivers, etc.). Understanding these trips can help highlight their value in the planning process and identify areas where transportation resources could be reallocated in a meaningful way.
5. **Designate Complete Streets Corridors within every Local Center and Regional Transit District.** Complete Streets are designed to accommodate all users of the network, regardless of age, ability, or mode. They are also designed to increase feelings of safety by slowing automobile traffic, increasing visibility of pedestrians and cyclists, and providing a designated space for all users. Placing these in parts of the County where growth is targeted can help provide balance for all the competing interests that want to move within the transportation network.
6. **Prioritize funding of Complete Streets Corridors that connect to major destinations or job centers.** In keeping with the desire of Plan 2035 to connect neighborhoods, it is important to provide individuals with options that allow them to adjust their mode split.
7. **Address first and last mile gaps in the network in each of the eight regional transit districts.** The lack of change to the modal split identified in the Plan 2035 study period indicates that simply having additional infrastructure in place is not enough to change travel behaviors. If using an alternative mode of transportation is not convenient and does not feel safe, this trend is likely to continue.
 - Create pilot zones in each transit district for PGC Link (Prince George's County's Microtransit service)
8. **Increase County operated transit service hours to align with the needs of residents using these services.** In our public engagement surveys, we included questions around



use of transit in the County. Anecdotally and specifically, the limited hours of availability for County-provided transit was a key deterrent to increased usage.

9. **Measure transportation mobility success by lane-miles of completed construction of bikeways and supportive facilities.** Creating a more specific set of metrics to be gathered before and after project implementation by which to assess success will help the County identify key trends in transportation use and mode share. Currently, repainting a shared bike lane is given equal weight as constructing new lane-miles of bicycle infrastructure. This dilutes any attempt to assess the performance of connections within the bicycle network.
10. **Dedicate resources to educating users, marketing and promoting multimodal transportation options in the County to individuals who represent the diversity of the County (i.e. African-Americans, senior citizens, women, youth).** While safety is a key deterrent for many in using alternative or active transportation modes, providing education about the many available modes, showcasing people who look like the population in the County as users, and promoting active transportation modes as a healthier and convenient option can lead to success adjusting modal decisions.