



## Election 2018: Candidate Information Session

### Transportation

#### **Policy Issue #1: Compliance with Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure bus stop safety and access.**

##### *Background*

- 490 RTA bus stops in Howard County of which approximately 50 have shelters leaving only “poles” in the ground for the remaining 450.
- Most stops lack basic amenities such as concrete pad to stand on, a bench, trashcan or adequate lighting.
- Many stops aren’t connected to a sidewalk; and even some that are connected are not fully accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Since 211, 140 stops have been improved but not all to fully meet ADA requirements.
- With carryover from prior years unspent Capital funding, Office of Transportation (OTA) has projected \$584,000 is available for FY 2019 improvements, sufficient to improve about 50 bus stops.

##### *Policy opportunities to address issue*

- Provide FY 2020 resources to develop and begin implementation of a Bus Stop Plan that will bring together in one place a set of coordinated recommendations from the TDP, WalkHoward and BikeHoward.
- Increase FY 2020 thru FY 2022 capital projects funding that will ensure complete Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance of all Howard County bus stops by FY 2022.

#### **Policy Issue #2: Enhancing transit options and reliability for individuals with mobility issues, such as seniors and persons with disabilities.**

##### *Background*

- \$4.3 million allotted to paratransit services in FY 2019 County budget
- County estimates \$56.33 per paratransit trip
- July 2016 paratransit ridership

	<u>Riders</u>	<u>#Trips</u>
Total	356	3,983
>20 trips in the month	66	1,805
<20 trips in the month	290	2,178

##### *Policy opportunities to address issue*

- Administration prioritization of implementation of Mobility Access Plan recommendations (anticipated to be available by February 2019).
- Ongoing integration of County services with complimentary for-profit and nonprofit agencies and organizations that provide specialized transportation services.
- Fund OTA Efforts to shift paratransit riders to fixed routes to free up resources for residents most critically in need of paratransit services, while minimizing negative impact on current ridership.
- Identify and secure State funding for improvements in paratransit services, including funding for additional buses and drivers.
- Explore paratransit service alternatives, such as taxi vouchers/subsidies, ridesharing, etc.

**Policy Issue #3: Development of approved Columbia Downtown Transit Center is almost 10 years away according to County plans.**

*Background*

- Not only a core element of improving ridership and cutting wait times but the new Multi-model Transit Center is also linked to 150 units of affordable housing promised in the Downtown Columbia Plan.

*Policy opportunities to address issue*

- 2016 Transportation Demand Management Plan for Downtown Columbia. New Transit Center location located within a 5 to 10 minute walk from downtown neighborhoods.
- Consultants advised need 20 households per acre to support the Downtown Shuttle, a proposed 2.8-mile route, capital cost \$150,000 and operating annual costs \$340 to \$420 thousand. Time frame 10-15 years.

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**Additional Background**

- Transportation Development Plan (TDP), County Council approved May 2018 (CR48-2018)
- TDP Mobility Section Excerpt