

Conclusion

SUMMARY

The US 1 corridor in Howard County was initially designated as a focus for revitalization by the Howard County 2000 General Plan. Since then, community members have articulated their concerns and vision for the corridor and the County has adopted and assigned new zoning designations to try to guide development along the corridor to meet the vision articulated by the community, which includes an improved pedestrian environment and a “Main Street” character.

The wide ranging mix of land uses and physical barriers, including several highways, environmental features, and large development parcels, divide the study area into distinct pockets of development and do not yield a cohesive sense of place throughout the corridor.

Adequate capacity exists for the existing traffic on US 1. Many intersections are approaching capacity, most notably the intersection of US 1/MD 175, where grade separation is being considered in response to anticipated capacity limitations.

Safety in the corridor has been of particular concern given the three state-designated high-accident locations. Seven reported pedestrian crashes occurred along US 1 during the three year period studied; most of these occurred at the north end of the corridor where there are steep slopes, residential land uses, and poor access control.

One MTA bus route and two Howard Transit bus routes provide service to the study area. Limited rail service is provided via three stops on the MARC train Camden Line, which runs along the eastern boundary of the study area. Continued support of initiatives to improve transit use is encouraged and expected.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are provided intermittently along US 1 and throughout the study area. Sidewalk connectivity along US 1 is poor. While sidewalk is provided in many neighborhoods, pedestrian scale connections between uses are typically lacking.

Substantial economic development is expected in the study area, and surrounding region, and high levels of development are currently underway. Much of the development underway is industrial and residential in nature. Conversely, development occurring within the boundaries of the new zoning districts is not keeping pace with desired outcomes for change.

In summary, the study area lacks consistent land use and transportation. Its physical boundaries isolate the area and limit availability of regularly spaced intersections. Adjacent, internally-oriented and sometimes incompatible land uses have fostered poor connectivity and lack of a cohesive environment. In addition to a lack of aesthetic appeal, the safety and operational stress that this arrangement of land uses places on US 1 is becoming apparent.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

A comprehensive approach that includes both the short- and long-term land use and transportation perspectives can advance the vision for US 1. Access, mobility, and safety provisions can respond to the function and aesthetic goals of residents and businesses as well as the function that US 1 serves as a regional transportation route.

The *Route 1 Manual* focuses on specific design opportunities that will begin to create some of the urban character and aesthetic appeal desired and discussed in the *Route 1 Corridor Revitalization Study*. The US 1 Corridor Improvement Strategy will provide an analysis from a systems perspective to help focus the design tools provided by the Manual. For example, the identification of future business nodes and bus service will help plan reviewers to identify where sidewalk and intersection control is most critical as they consider what to require of development teams.

The Corridor Improvement Strategy will support the development of a hierarchical transportation network that will be the framework for the land use and multifunction environment that the community desires. It will guide transportation service to commercial haulers, motorists, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Initial meetings with the Agency Management Team provided a set of Guiding Principles described in Appendix A. These principles are generally organized around both physical and process improvements. Issues relating to these principles will be further investigated and developed during the next phase of work. These issues are:

Policy and process:

- Development code review guidance and procedures
- Traffic Impact Study policy
- Access Management tools
- Functional classification roadway system

System and facility design:

- Secondary access roadways
- Multimode System Hierarchy according to area user demand
- Streetscape and building edge characteristics
- Intersection Improvements

System and facility design will engage community and business participants through the coming months. In addition to a more in depth discussion and review of all issues and opportunities, the next stage of the US 1 Corridor Improvement Strategy will include the projected future traffic volumes for the study area and a review of various network options. Those tasks will lead to the identification of future transportation solutions and tools.