

Walkable Urban Streets Act

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

[Council Bill 69, and Council Resolutions 67 and 68](#)

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HAS THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES IN THE REGION

In 2017, Prince George's County developed Urban Street Design standards, which establish safer, lower speed boulevards and local street designs for transit stations and local centers. However, since their adoption, county staff have only partially and inconsistently implemented these standards resulting in overly-wide, high-speed roads in and around mixed-use centers.



Photo: Rebuilt slip lane at Ager Road and Hamilton Street.
Credit: Dan Behrend

THIS LEGISLATION UPDATES THE STANDARDS & REQUIRES THEIR USE

The Walkable Urban Streets Act (CB 69) and resolutions (CR 67 and CR 68) update and require implementation of Prince George's County's Urban Streets Design Standards which prioritize people-friendly streets. These standards are to be used for road projects in Regional Transit Centers, like Metro station areas, and Local Centers, as identified in Plan Prince George's 2035, the county's land use plan.



Before

After

NACTO example of a redesigned downtown thoroughfare – before and after. Source: NACTO Urban Street Design Guide

IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED IN THIS BILL FOR WALKABLE URBAN STREETS

1. *Requires* use of the urban street design standards inside Regional Transit Districts and Local Centers, and *allows* them to be used elsewhere.
2. Codifies the urban street design standards into the county's Specifications and Standards for Roadways and Bridges which is the essential guidance that county agencies rely on for street design decisions.
3. Uses current traffic volumes to determine the appropriate number of vehicle travel lanes, rather than future forecast traffic, which is often flawed. This avoids an overly wide, high speed road for the context.
4. Clarifies that Urban Boulevard street types are to be applied to arterial and collector roads.
5. Converts the desired corner turning radius from a *minimum* to *maximum* of 15 feet to slow down turning vehicles and shorten crossing distances for pedestrians
6. Prohibits [slip lanes](#) (high speed right turn lanes) and multiple left turn lanes.
7. Changes the minimum travel lane width of 10 feet to a maximum, or to 11 feet maximum in the case of a bus route.
8. Adds a Transit Priority Mixed Use Boulevard 4-Lane cross-section to prepare for future bus lanes.
9. Includes reporting requirements for implementation of the urban design standards, and requirements for public posting of proposed street project designs.
10. Requires DPW&T to develop a 10-year plan to bring the streets in the county's designated Regional Transit Districts and Local Centers into compliance with the 2023 Urban Street Design Standards, and report annually on progress to the County Council on the comprehensive efforts to bring all these streets into compliance.

IT'S A GREAT BILL, BUT ONE MORE IMPORTANT CHANGE IS NEEDED

Under current law, county agencies have essentially unlimited authority to deviate from urban street design standards. The act should be amended to carefully review and limit these situations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

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