



Connor, Dylan, and Pat: A Trio of Transportation Planners from Howard County, MD



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-Connor Jett
Planning Specialist

Meet Connor, Dylan, and Pat! We had the chance to catch up with this trio of transportation planners who are working to further multimodal initiatives and programs in Howard County, MD.

Allison Calkins, a Planning Supervisor with a focus on Transportation Demand Management (TDM), says that these three transportation professionals complement each other's skills and experiences and “genuinely enjoy showing up to help the public understand all of their transportation options.” Read on to hear from them directly about their work in Howard County and what they enjoy most about it!



CONNOR JETT

Connor has been a planner with the Howard County Office of Transportation since 2022. While officially focused on comprehensive and regional planning, his work integrates all program areas, particularly the TDM program (Go Howard). His role spans bike and pedestrian programs to long-range planning and policy development and supporting projects from planning through implementation. This provides a unique perspective on how even small impacts can advance regional goals and improve the livability and sustainability of communities.

Connor enjoys merging planning work with public outreach and community interaction. He particularly values Go Howard events, which introduce the public to available programs and transportation projects. He believes direct feedback he receives through public outreach is crucial for informing his work, and he values the deep, personal conversations that result from Go Howard events.

Connor wants employers to understand that employees genuinely appreciate commuter benefit programs but often don't know how or cannot access them. As a former DC commuter, he understands the physical and mental toll of stressful commutes. Go Howard helps employees make informed decisions about their commutes, and Connor recognizes that every contribution someone makes by not driving alone in a vehicle, is important for meeting regional congestion management goals.

Looking towards the future, he's most excited about the upcoming extension of Montgomery County's Flash bus service into Howard County. Being part of regional transit expansion during a critical time for transit agencies is something he doesn't take for granted.

When asked what transportation program more people should know about, Connor emphasized the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program. He believes one of the biggest hurdles to changing commuting habits is the effort required to plan a new commute and lack of knowledge about options. Programs like GRH provide reassurance that could make their work more successful.

DYLAN GERRYTY

Dylan focuses on the operational side of Howard County's transit system, working closely with the planning team to ensure the RTA bus system runs efficiently. His work directly supports transportation demand management goals by maintaining reliable transit service that provides car-free alternatives for commuters and residents. Beyond day-to-day operations, Dylan manages critical infrastructure assets including bus stops and their amenities, maintains comprehensive databases, handles ridership reporting and funding coordination, and represents the office at public meetings.

Dylan is motivated by transit's transformative power in people's lives. He recognizes that reliable public transportation creates opportunities for individuals who previously lacked access,



"I think the thing I enjoy most about this field of work is how much it can make an impact on someone's life. Being able to provide transportation to people who need it most it creates a larger ripple effect and allows individuals opportunities that they previously didn't have the means to reach."

-Dylan Gerrity

Planning Specialist

generating positive effects throughout the community. Dylan also appreciates the unique approaches different cities take toward transit planning, finding inspiration in diverse strategies for achieving transportation goals.

Having recently returned to Maryland from Arizona, Dylan brings valuable experience to his role. He enjoys using MARC trains and DC Metro for trips to DC, appreciating both the scenic experience and practical benefits of rail travel. His personal use of transit systems informs his professional understanding of what makes public transportation attractive and effective.

In the future, Dylan is also excited about regional connectivity projects, especially the Flash bus rapid transit extension from Montgomery County into Howard County. He views this as a significant step toward improving regional mobility options. Beyond Howard County, he's enthusiastic about major rail investments like Baltimore's Red Line and the Purple Line, seeing rail infrastructure as particularly valuable for long-term transportation demand management.

Are you new to Howard County? Dylan encourages newcomers to explore the extensive network of bike and walking paths, highlighting how the WalkHoward and BikeHoward plans create smart connections throughout the county. His recommendation reflects the interconnected nature of TDM strategies—showing residents that active transportation options can be both practical and enjoyable alternatives to driving.

For employees adjusting to new commutes, Dylan suggests viewing travel time as valuable personal time for reflection and preparation, reframing the commute from burden to opportunity.

PAT SMITH

Pat serves as a planning specialist with the Howard County Office of Transportation, focusing primarily on bicycle and pedestrian programs while representing the office in the county's development review process. His multifaceted role also includes Geographic Information Systems specialization and graphic design support, providing technical expertise that enhances the office's ability to visualize and communicate transportation improvements. This combination of planning, technical, and design skills makes him uniquely positioned to advance active transportation options that are central to effective transportation demand management.

Pat appreciates how transportation systems are dynamic and truly affect everyone in the community. He said that the Office of Transportation's work feels important and impactful in the day-to-day lives of Howard County residents. Pat is clearly passionate about biking and walking, and he encourages new cyclists to use tools like OpenStreetMap to identify safe cycling routes and suggests e-bikes as an excellent investment for low-stress commuting. His technical background allows him to provide data-driven guidance for route planning and equipment selection.

Pat believes employers can promote active transportation through events like Bike to Work Day and organized walking lunches, and developers and property managers should prioritize building and maintaining quality facilities like shared-use paths.

As a bicycle and pedestrian planner, Pat is looking forward to the County's new signage system that will be implemented throughout the County to provide wayfinding for cyclists. With the first route finalized and installed, this project represents a significant step toward making cycling more accessible and intuitive for residents, directly supporting TDM goals by reducing barriers to bicycle transportation.

As for his favorite project in Howard County? He says it's the Dobbin Road pathway, which perfectly exemplifies Pat's vision for practical active transportation infrastructure. Located near popular destinations like Target, Walmart, and various restaurants, this partially completed project addresses a real need for safe bicycle and pedestrian access to commercial areas, transforming car-dependent trips into active transportation opportunities.