

Executive Summary

- This functional master plan establishes the countywide network plan for utilitarian bicycle transportation. It serves as a comprehensive amendment to the 1978 Master Plan of Bikeways and amends all community master plans and sector plans. The plan complements the 1998 Countywide Park Trails Plan.
- The plan recommends nearly 200 bikeways totaling more than 500 miles. This include 181 miles of existing and proposed shared use paths (formerly called Class I bikeways), 81 miles of existing and proposed bike lanes (formerly called Class II bikeways) and 157 miles of proposed signed shared roadways (formerly called Class III bikeways). Two hundred and four (204) miles of bikeways are newly proposed and not included in adopted and approved master plans. Of these new miles, 21 miles are existing or proposed shared use paths, 18 miles are existing or proposed bike lanes and 97 miles are proposed signed shared roadways. The remaining 67 miles of newly proposed bikeways are “dual bikeways”.
- The plan introduces a new type of master-planned bikeway: dual bikeway. This type of bikeway meets the needs of the total range of bicyclists. Roads recommended for dual bikeways will ultimately feature both an on-road and an off-road bicycle facility. In other words, a roadway may have a shared use path and bike lanes, or a shared use path and signed shared roadway. The plan recommends 114 miles of dual bikeways.
- The plan emphasizes bikeways of countywide significance and focuses on ensuring bikeway connections to the County’s major activity centers: municipalities, central business districts, town centers, transit stations, major employment hubs, countywide park trails and regional parks. Bikeways that provide a direct, or form part of an important, connection to or between these destinations are considered highest priority for implementation under this plan.
- While focusing on countywide bikeways, the plan provides guidance to future community master plan and sector plan efforts to identify and evaluate local bikeway networks. Local bikeways supplement the countywide bikeway network, providing connections to countywide bikeways as well as to basic local destinations such as retail shopping centers, schools, community and recreation centers, libraries, post offices, and local parks.
- The plan strikes a balance between bikeways intended for beginner and intermediate skill levels (shared use paths) as well as more experienced bicyclists (bike lanes and signed shared roadways). The plan highlights the benefits of each type of bikeway and recognizes the desirable application of each type based on land uses, roadway and traffic conditions and destinations.
- The plan reflects basic design characteristics for the three major types of bikeways as recommended in the 1999 AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and supported by the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT). The plan appendix contains innovative bikeway design concepts not yet supported by DPWT, but which are currently implemented by other jurisdictions around the country and could be implemented in Montgomery County in the future.
- The plan describes related County and regional programs and policies that will help the County develop a comprehensive bicycle program, including bicycle safety, bicycle education, and bicycle encouragement and promotion.

- The plan does not evaluate bicycle suitability conditions or identify potential bikeways along all County roads and state highways, but rather focuses on ensuring bicycle access and connectivity to major countywide destinations and activity centers.
- The plan does not specify actual alignments of bikeways along roads, but rather leaves that task to the transportation agencies that are responsible for implementation or for permitting implementation by developers and others.
- The plan is consistent with existing bikeway plans (or currently proposed amendments) of municipalities and adjoining jurisdictions.