

SEPTEMBER 2015

THE BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

SCOPE OF WORK



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
M-NCPPC

MontgomeryPlanning.org

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introduction

Bicycling is gaining popularity as a mode of transportation, especially in urbanized areas. Driven by changing travel patterns, investments in low-stress bicycling infrastructure and increasing popularity of bikeshare programs, the share of trips by bicycling has grown steadily throughout the United States over the past 15 years. Montgomery County continues to make substantial investments in bicycling infrastructure and is well-positioned to emerge as a leader in bicycling among suburban jurisdictions.

This Scope of Work defines the context, purpose and major issues to resolve for the County's new Bicycle Master Plan and highlights the process and time line proposed by Planning Department staff to develop the Plan.

Stress Levels for Cyclists

When cyclists travel along roadways, they face varying levels of stress from traffic. A quiet residential street with a 25-mile-per-hour speed limit presents a lower-stress setting for cyclists, but a six-lane highway with a 40-mile-per-hour speed limit creates a higher-stress environment for cyclists who must share the roadway with traffic.

Stress from traffic is affected by variables such as traffic speed, traffic volume, the number of traffic lanes, frequency of on-street parking turnover and the ease of crossing intersections, among other factors. People are more likely to bicycle in low-stress environments, so improving bicycling in Montgomery County requires developing low-stress connections between activity centers, transit facilities and neighborhoods.



Rockville Pike is a high-stress setting.



The North Bethesda Trail is a low-stress setting.

planning context

The 1978 Master Plan of Bikeways was Montgomery County's first countywide functional master plan that focused solely on creating a bicycling network. Numerous master plans, sector plans and functional plans have amended the County's bicycle network over the past 35 years. The first major change to the 1978 plan came in the mid-1990s when the Planning Board requested that staff separate bikeways from park trails. This differentiation led to the 1998 Countywide Park Trails Plan and the 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan.

Major innovations of the 2005 plan were the creation of “dual bikeways” to address different user groups through on-road and off-road bikeways along the same roadway, and categorizing each bikeway as a countywide or a local bikeway. The 2005 plan is now ripe for revision due to bicycling’s resurgence, increased emphasis placed on bicycle travel as a means of transportation and new approaches to multi-modal transportation analysis.

The plan will develop a bicycling network, including bikeways and bicycle parking, for all of Montgomery County except the City of Rockville and streets owned by the City of Gaithersburg. Planning efforts will be coordinated with the cities to ensure that transitional areas at their borders are evaluated.



The Bicycle Master Plan will make recommendations for the entire County, except the City of Rockville and roads owned by the City of Gaithersburg.

This plan will be coordinated with master plans that are currently underway or that will begin prior to the Working Draft Bicycle Master Plan. These ongoing plans include the Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan, Westbard Sector Plan, Bethesda Downtown Plan, Montgomery Village Master Plan, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, White Flint II Sector Plan, Rock Spring Master Plan, MARC Rail Stations Plan, Aspen Hill and Vicinity Plan, Montgomery Hills and Forest Glen Master Plan, Shady Grove Minor Master Plan and Gaithersburg East Master Plan.

purpose of master plan

The purpose of this plan is to develop a low-stress bicycle network that can make cycling a mainstream choice for the majority of the County's residents and employees. It will bring bicycle recommendations in line with industry best practices and consolidate all non-park trail bicycle recommendations into a single plan for the first time since 1978. An emphasis will be placed on evaluating facilities that are new to Montgomery County, such as separated bike lanes, buffered bike lanes and bicycle boulevards, as well as secure, long-term bicycle storage facilities.

The plan will be developed using the best practices in data analysis and performance measures. It will reflect existing and anticipated future bicycle travel patterns, especially with respect to emerging activity centers and transit facilities, such as the planned Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway and County's bus rapid transit system.



Separated bike lanes were recently installed on Woodglan Drive in White Flint.

focus on life sciences center area

At the request of the Great Seneca Science Corridor Implementation Advisory Committee, the Planning Department began working on a subset of the Bicycle Master Plan in April 2015 that focused on the Life Sciences Center area. This effort is intended to facilitate access from the surrounding communities to the Life Sciences Center and future Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) stations, and to ensure coordination and compatibility with the Life Science Center Loop (an off-road loop trail currently under design by the

Planning Department) and development projects. A kickoff meeting was held on April 20, 2015 at the Johns Hopkins Montgomery County Campus and was attended by approximately 40 people.

issues addressed in master plan

The Bicycle Master Plan will address the following issues:

- What is the state of the practice in using data and performance metrics to develop a bicycling network?
- What are acceptable levels of traffic stress for current and potential cyclists?
- What are best practices in bicycle parking at residential and commercial locations?
- Where are long-term bicycle storage facilities needed and how much space do they require for bicycle parking and other bicycle-supportive elements (such as showers, lockers, repair facilities and changing rooms)?
- How should the plan classify bikeway recommendations, including bikeway type (such as bike lanes, shared use path, separated bike lane, etc.) and hierarchy (such as countywide bikeways and local bikeways)?
- If separated bikeways are needed to create a low-stress bicycling environment, when should they be implemented as separated bike lanes (a bike-only facility) or shared-use paths (a facility shared with pedestrians)?
- In what conditions are separated bike lanes a replacement for dual bikeways?
- What is the value of signed shared roadways in master plans?
- What are the best practices in developing signed bike routes?
- In what contexts are bike boulevards appropriate and what are the best practices for design elements?
- How can Montgomery County maintain a “living” Bicycle Master Plan that displays all current master plan recommendations in one location?
- How can Montgomery County implement on-road bikeways incrementally through a combination of private development and County-funded projects?
- Are there any hard surface park trails that should be designated as bikeways and, if so, what does that designation mean for the design, operation and maintenance of the trails?
- How can space be provided for bicyclists while maintaining and enhancing a safe, active pedestrian and urban environment?



Capital Bikeshare Was Launched in Montgomery County in September 2013

community outreach

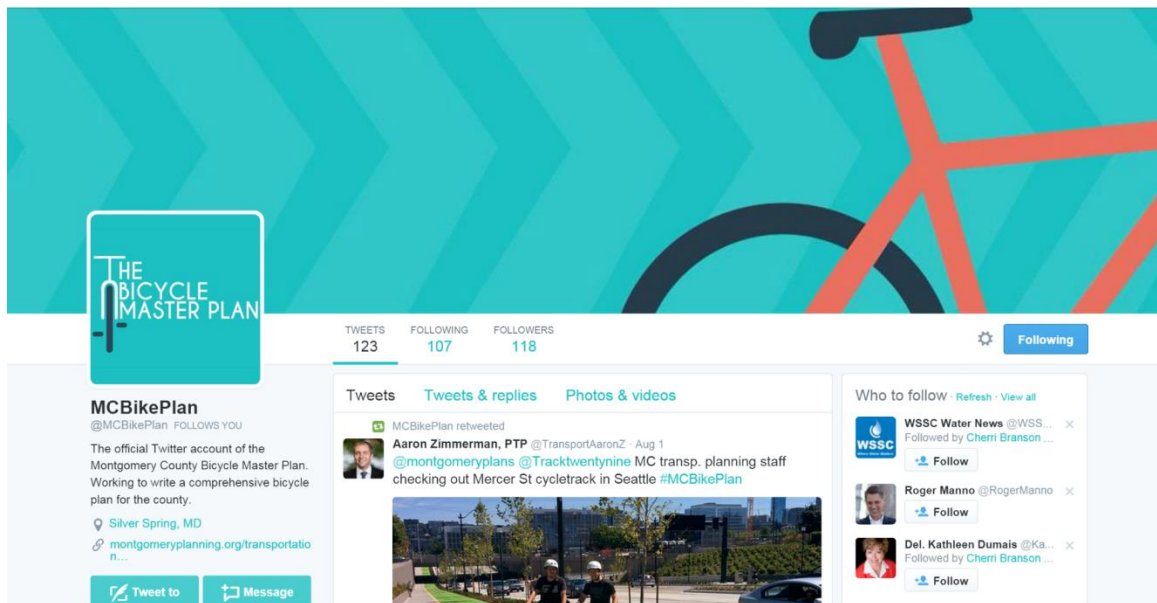
The intent of the outreach plan is to make it as easy as possible for the public to communicate with the project team, using both traditional and social media approaches.

- Kickoff meetings: Staff will conduct a series of public meetings throughout the County to discuss the approach to the Bicycle Master Plan and receive feedback from the community. It is envisioned that kickoff meetings will be conducted in Silver Spring, Bethesda, Wheaton, Rockville/Shady Grove, Germantown and East County.
- Technical Working Group: Staff will conduct meetings with a technical working group comprising municipal and agency representatives. Additional meetings will be scheduled with neighboring jurisdictions (District of Columbia, Prince George's County, Howard County, Frederick County) at key points during the planning process.
- Advisory Group: An advisory group will be established with approximately 20 members. Organizations that will be invited to participate in the advisory group include the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), Montgomery Bicycle Advocates (MoBike), Pedestrian Bicycle Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (PBTSAC), Montgomery County Civic Federation, CASA de Maryland, Potomac Pedalers, Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE), Action Committee for Transit, African American Advisory Group, Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County, African American Chamber of Commerce, Bethesda Transportation Solutions, Silver Spring Community Advisory Group. An additional eight members will be selected through an application process. These members will be selected to represent a variety of user groups and geographic areas of the County.
- Community meetings: As available, the planning team will meet with neighborhood groups and others on request to discuss the Bicycle Master Plan.



The 2nd Great MoCo Bike Summit held on June 6, 2015 in Silver Spring.

- Project website: A website will be maintained for the project. This site will include meeting materials and opportunities for the public to comment.
- Feedback Maps: The team will develop at least two interactive feedback maps for soliciting and displaying comments from the public. One map will request public feedback on cycling issues in Montgomery County. A second map will request feedback on draft recommendations.
- Email newsletter: The staff will provide periodic updates to the public on the development of the plan through an email newsletter.
- Social media: The project team maintains a Twitter account (@MCBikePlan) that provides updates to the community on the status of the master plan, as well as other bicycle news.



The Twitter Account for the Bicycle Master Plan

- Draft Recommendations meetings: Staff will conduct a series of public meetings throughout the County to review the draft Bicycle Master Plan recommendations and solicit feedback from the community. The meetings will review the overall recommendations in the plan, with a focus on the area surrounding the meeting location. It is envisioned that meetings will be conducted in Silver Spring, Bethesda, Wheaton, Rockville/Shady Grove, Germantown and East County.
- Planning Board Public Hearing: The public will have the opportunity to testify on the Public Hearing Draft Plan and submit comments for a period after the public hearing.

schedule

The Bicycle Master Plan will be divided into seven tasks.

Task 1: Planning Board Scope of Work

- The Planning Board will review and approve a Scope of Work.
- Anticipated completion: September 2015.

Task 2: State of Bicycling Report

- Staff will prepare a report that includes a glossary of bicycle terms and reports the lengths of existing and master-planned bikeways and ridership data, among other facts.
- Anticipated completion: September 2015.
- Product: State of Bicycling Report.

Task 3: Life Sciences Center Focus

- Specific recommendations will include bikeways and Corridor Cities Transitway station parking requirements.
- The Planning Board will review the draft Life Sciences Center recommendations.
- Anticipated completion: Fall 2015.
- Product: Draft Bikeway and Bicycle Parking Recommendations for the Life Sciences Center Area.

Task 4: Methodology Report

- Staff will prepare a methodology report that will outline the approach to the Bicycle Master Plan, with a discussion of the issues identified above.
- The Planning Board will review and approved the Methodology Report.
- Anticipated completion: March 2016.
- Product: Methodology Report.

Task 5: Working Draft Plan

Prepare the Working Draft Plan

- Specific recommendations will include goals/objectives/performance metrics, bikeway types, bicycle storage facilities, bicycle parking guidelines, required master planned right-of-ways, reduction in master-planned travel lanes, intersection treatments, typical sections, prioritization and bikeway hierarchy.
- Staff will provide one or two briefings to the Planning Board during the preparation of the Working Draft Plan.
- Staff will present the Working Draft Plan to the Planning Board.
- Anticipated completion: November 2016.
- Product: Working Draft Plan.

Prepare Public Hearing Draft Plan

- Staff will prepare the Public Hearing Draft Plan based on feedback and direction from the Planning Board.
- Anticipated completion: December 2016.
- Product: Public Hearing Draft Plan.

Task 6: Planning Board Draft Plan

Planning Board Public Hearing

- Staff will schedule and advertise the public hearing and distribute the Public Hearing Draft Plan.
- The Planning Board will hold a public hearing and receive testimony on the Draft Plan.
- Anticipated completion: January 2017.
- Product: Planning Board Draft Plan.

Conduct Planning Board Work Sessions

- Staff will prepare responses to the issues identified during the public comment period for the Planning Board work sessions.
- Anticipated completion: March 2017.
- Product: A matrix of issues and responses.

Planning Board Draft Plan

- Staff will prepare the Planning Board Draft Plan and seek Planning Board approval to transmit it to the County Council and County Executive.
- Anticipated completion: April 2017.
- Product: Planning Board Draft Plan submitted to the County Council and County Executive.



A decorative bike rack on the North Bethesda Trail.

Task 7: Outreach

Kickoff meetings:

- Anticipated completion: October 2015.

Technical Working Group:

- Anticipated completion: November 2016.

Advisory Group:

- Anticipated completion: November 2016.

Draft Recommendations meetings:

- Anticipated completion: September 2016.

Planning Board Public Hearing:

- Anticipated completion: January 2017.

Project website:

- Ongoing, started April 2015.

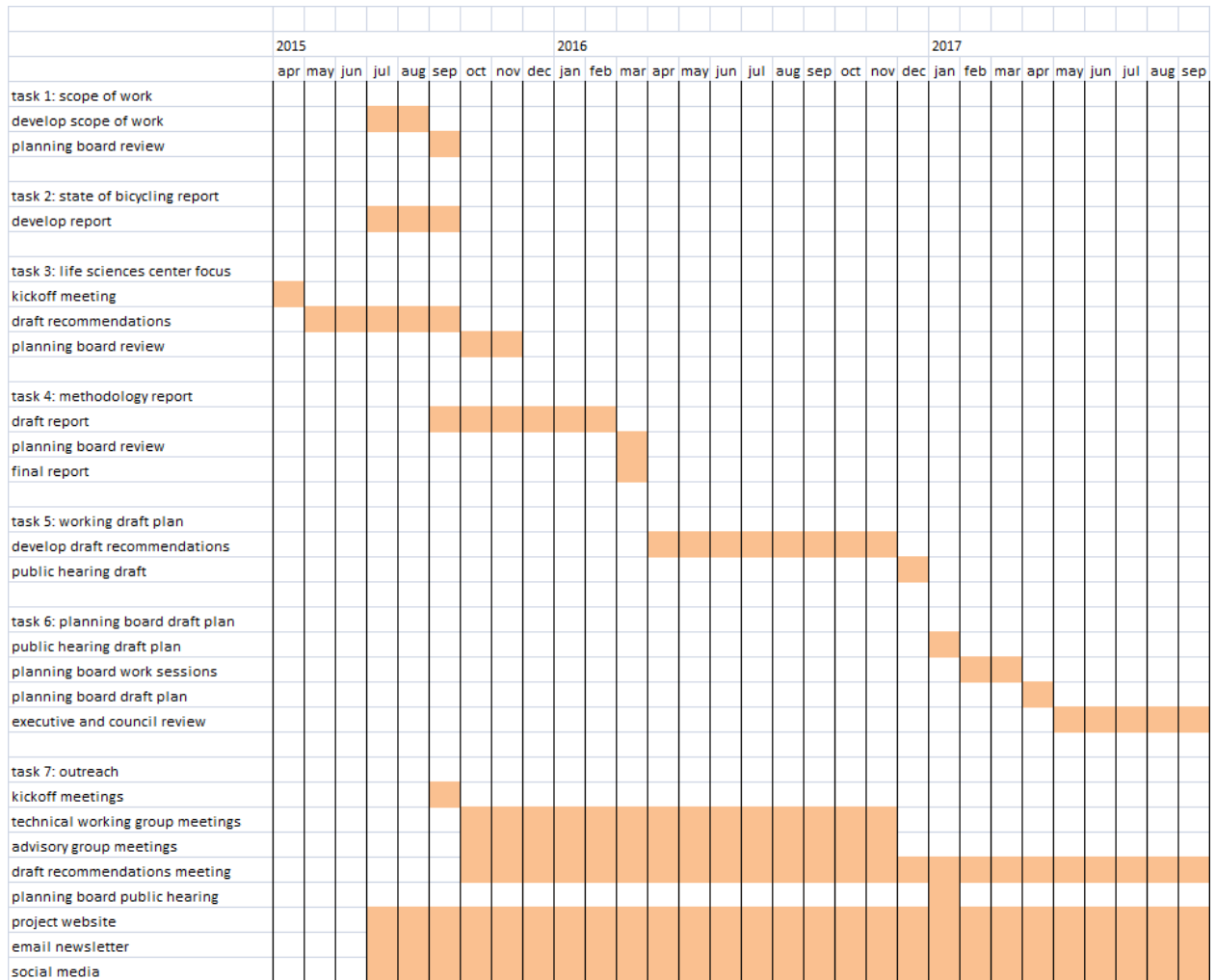
Email newsletter:

- Ongoing, started April 2015.

Social media:

- Ongoing, started April 2015.

timeline



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