

Draft Framework - Bicycle Plan Update - July 21, 2017

A. Introduction, Context & Summary

(Statements below are to be fleshed out in the next draft)

How the Bike Element fits into the MTP

Overall MTP goals for transportation in Arlington

Update; making the plan current for 2018

Looking to the future; the next 10 years

Focus on: broadening the cycling population; upgrading the bicycling network – low stress routes; and making bicycling “normal”

B. Vision & Goals

Vision:

Arlington is a vibrant community where bicycling is comfortable and enhances the quality of life for individuals of all ages and abilities as an integral part of the county's transportation system.

Behind the Vision:

The vision statement captures a few important themes.

- Arlington's continued success as a thriving economy with healthy and engaged citizens cannot be achieved without continuing to build infrastructure and culture that enables people to choose active transportation for more trips.
- Comfort suggests that biking is a safe, convenient and attractive travel option.
- “All ages and abilities” is a priority for the plan, supporting the planning and building of bicycle facilities for individuals of various ages and comfort levels.
- Bicycling supports the Master Transportation Plan's general policies of integrating transportation with land use, supporting the design and operation of complete streets and managing travel demand and transportation systems.

Goals:

- A. Increase bike ridership by building culture and infrastructure that encourages more trips by bicycle
- B. Complete a bicycle network that supports community connections and complete streets
- C. Improve comfort and safety for all ages and abilities
- D. Manage an efficient and effective bike system that supports livability
- E. Promote biking as an integral part of a sustainable and equitable transportation system

KEY

Black – Existing MTP language

Purple – Working Group or BAC recommendations

Red- County staff recommendations

- ~~A. Complete the Bikeway Network~~
- ~~B. Increase Bicycle Use~~
- ~~C. Improve Bicycle Safety~~
- ~~D. Manage and Maintain the Bikeway System~~
- ~~E. Integrate All Modes of Transportation with Bicycling~~

C. Policy Statements

Policy 1 – Complete the Bikeway Network. Focus on overcoming barriers. Enhance bikeway information and way-finding. Provide a network of low-stress bicycling routes that connects residential areas with commercial centers, transit stations, schools and County facilities.

- Implement currently funded projects listed in Appendix B, Table B-1, as soon as practical.
- Fund and Implement planned projects listed in Appendix B, Tables B-2, B-3, and B-4 and also trail improvements identified in the Four Mile Run Restoration plan. Initial emphasis should be on implementation of the identified “short-term” projects. Regularly implement projects in Table B-3 as opportunities arise.
- Add grade-separated crossings of major highways where feasible, improve existing crossings of major highways, and develop improved alternatives for crossing or circumnavigating large federal institutions and properties, such as Fort Myer, the Pentagon complex, and Arlington National Cemetery.
- Plan and construct new shared-use trails and trail connections in conjunction with new development. Focus on trails, bridges, and overpasses that link with other sections of the bikeway network, thereby enhancing the connectivity of the entire network and with regional bikeways in adjacent jurisdictions.
- Work with regional partners to ensure that bikeways are provided on and across VDOT and National Park Service (NPS)-owned arterial roadways, interstate and parkway corridors, as part of all projects to improve, or reconstruct these roadways.
- Coordinate with the National Park Service to complete implementation of remaining trail-improvement projects identified in the NPS’s 1990 Paved Recreational Trails Plan. (Update with 2016 NPS Paved Trail Study)
- Evaluate, expand and upgrade the signed bike route system, and improve wayfinding information for bicyclists provided for bicyclists provided both on-site and electronically.
- Plan for new trail opportunities by targeting necessary land acquisitions.
- Develop connector trails that link low-volume streets and establish corridors.
- Expand multiuse trails
- Improve north-south routes
- Improve the connectivity of low-stress routes and public facilities such as schools and community centers
- Increase engagement with Federal landowners and regional neighbors to improve interjurisdictional bicycle facilities

- Establish project prioritization criteria for funding applications and staff support

Policy 2 – Provide high-quality bicycling facilities as part of all street improvement projects. Use marked bicycle lanes on arterial streets. Enhance on-street bicycling facilities with painted buffers or physical separation where feasible.

- Develop the bikeway network by installing proposed bike lanes, signed bike routes, and other bicycle facilities on arterial roadways and neighborhood principal roadways in conjunction with street/bridge improvements or as independent bicycle projects.
- Provide bikeways on new or existing streets in conjunction with major new development or redevelopment activities in Pentagon City, Crystal City, the Potomac Yard North and South Tracts, Rosslyn and other areas.
- As appropriate, pilot innovative facility designs (see Appendix A for a description of these measures) including – shared-lane pavement markings (sharrows), colored bicycle lanes, bicycle boulevards, bicycle box markings, and bicycle-specific traffic signal heads.
- Improve bicycle access to shopping districts, employment centers, and activity centers in nearby neighboring jurisdictions including Georgetown in D.C.; Potomac Yard in Alexandria; and Bailey’s Crossroads and Seven Corners in Fairfax County.
- New and renovated shared-use trails and bike lanes should be designed and constructed in accordance with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines. The design of new or significantly widened trails should go through Arlington’s environmental assessment process early in the design stage.
- Incorporate innovative street and bikeway designs, including guidance from NACTO
- Allow for design flexibility including pilot installations and “tactical urbanism” trials.
- Ensure that adequate attention (signals, beacons, markings, etc.) is given towards getting bicyclists across challenging intersections
- Implement traffic calming and other traffic speed management as needed to provide for safer sharing of roads amongst bicyclists and motorists
- Review existing street cross-sections and look for opportunities to reallocate street space to enhance bicycling safety and access

Policy 3 - Create a community culture that embraces bicycle use as a mainstream travel mode. Raise visibility and participation of bicycling in Arlington through events, prominent facilities and encouragement activities.

- Expand the encouragement program of Bike-Arlington, including map publication, Bike-to-Work Day, the Community Bike Ride, Car Free Day, valet bicycle parking at events and route assistance. Bikeway maps, program brochures, and safety education materials should be distributed widely and include guidance for safe and courteous use of shared-use paths and streets especially those facility types that are relatively new to the public.
- Continue to promote bicycling as a part of the County’s Transportation Demand (TDM) activities aimed at businesses, employees, and residents.

- Undertake regular surveys or focus groups to determine what actions might encourage greater bicycle use. Identify new marketing approaches to reach populations that are not regular bicyclists through the provision of Bicycle Program information and encouragement messages.
- Promote bicycling as an activity that will improve citizen health and fitness and provide convenient recreational opportunities. The County should support a variety of programs to encourage bicycling for transportation, fitness, and fun which may include:
 - Incorporate information about Arlington’s bicycle registration program in County publications.
 - Undertake measures recommended for achieving Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community status, an honor awarded by the League of American Bicyclists for communities with exemplary bicycle programs and commuting usage of bicycles.
 - Enhance consideration of and outreach to the underrepresented, "non-choice riders" and “pass through cyclists.”
 - Include outreach to child cyclists and parents through school-based programs
 - Address outreach towards the less-confident cyclists.
 - Continue support for the BikeArlington programs for community outreach, education and encouragement
 - Clarify where electric-bikes can legally ride and encourage their use in particular for persons who may need physical assistance when bicycling.
 - Seek to achieve specific goals for bicycle use including: travel to work, travel to school and non-work/non-school transportation
 - Have County Police and Communications staff work together to address bike theft

Policy 4 – Require the provision of appropriate facilities to support bicycling such as showers, lockers and bicycle parking.

- Refine bicycle parking standards per detailed recommendations in Appendix D. Periodically review the bicycle parking requirements for new developments, and update as needed.
- Assist the managers/owners of retail, office and multifamily residential properties in selecting the appropriate locations and equipment needed to provide high-quality bicycle parking at existing buildings and complexes.
- Ensure that the new parking and shower facilities required in site plan conditions for developments meet minimum standards for quality and location.
- Explore whether the County’s zoning ordinance can be amended to require all commercial and multifamily residential buildings to provide convenient and secure bicycle parking.
- Review existing site plan parking conditions and adjust as needed.
- Implement measures to achieve bike parking upgrades in by-right and other existing private properties.
- Provide bike parking that can accommodate cargo bikes
- Provide more bicycle maintenance stands and maintenance programs in lower income areas.
- Allow for bike commuters to receive cash compensation for not utilizing motor vehicle parking at employment sites

Policy 5 – Annually collect bicycling data on County streets and trails.

- Develop methods of bicycle-use data collection, establish a baseline, and continue regular measurement to monitor usage. Establish locations where regular bicycle counts are made and volumes are compared over time to determine changes in usage.
- Operate trail and bikeway data collection system in an efficient, sustainable and comprehensive manner. Continue to provide open access to collected data.
- Conduct periodic travel surveys that include bicycle use questions.
- Expand bicycle counting efforts.
- Utilize bicycle count data in project prioritization and other decision making regarding the transportation network.
- Utilize bicycle count data to develop methods for estimating future bicycle use.

Policy 6 – Expand the bike-sharing system to cover the County and coordinate with regional partners to increase the system coverage. Implement a bike sharing program in the transit corridors and other densely developed areas.

- ~~Initiate a bike sharing program. Coordinate with any programs in adjacent jurisdictions.~~
- Support privately provided loaner bicycle programs such as by businesses for their employees and hotels for their guests.
- Reduce barriers to use of Capital Bikeshare by lower-income users
- Site new and relocated bike share stations to attract more system users and improve non-motorized access to County facilities and transit services
- Consider how a GPS based, dock-less bike sharing system could be integrated with the existing Capital Bikeshare system and other transportation services.
- Promote bike sharing as a preferred travel mode for the first and last mile trips to and from regional transit services.

Policy 7 – Conduct an ongoing safe bicycle routes to school program including safety education programs for children and adults. Expand enforcement of traffic law enforcement pertaining to bicycle safety.

- Support an ongoing Safe Routes to School program that includes Education, Enforcement, Engineering and Evaluation interventions. This program should be developed in conjunction with the Arlington Police Department and Arlington County Schools, including administrators, teachers, parents and students. Over time include all public and private schools in Arlington.
- Coordinate with Arlington Public Schools to provide Arlington elementary and middle school students training in pedestrian and bicycle operations and safety, and continue offering bicycle and pedestrian training in high school physical education program.
- Designate recommended bicycling routes to school. Criteria for ‘safe’ routes should be established jointly among the staff of the Arlington Public Schools, Transportation, and Police. Continue to make necessary engineering improvements to the public infrastructure to increase the number, and distribution of routes that can be recommended for bicycling to school.

- Work with Arlington Public Schools to conduct County-wide school transportation surveys on select days and develop multimodal travel profiles of student, teacher, and staff trips to and from school.
- Develop Countywide and school-based implementation plans for Safe Routes to Schools programs.
- Conduct bicycle safety and maintenance courses through the Arlington Adult Education and BikeArlington programs, and encourage community colleges, bicycle organizations, fitness clubs, and other educational institutions to initiate safety instruction. Consider providing financial assistance to institutions or to students as an initiative to encourage participation.
- Produce Spanish-language and multilingual bicycle safety education literature and media campaigns and continue to participate in the Washington region’s multi-lingual Street Smart safety campaign.
- Promote proper shared-use trail behavior through signs, trailside displays, brochures, video education programs, and recreation program classes.
- Coordinate with local law enforcement officials to implement bicycle safety enforcement programs directed towards bicyclist and motorists who commit traffic violations including targeted efforts at locations with regular bicycle/motor vehicle or bicycle/pedestrian conflicts.
- Continue to conduct safety outreach programs such as headlight and helmet distributions that reach young cyclists and other persons of limited incomes.
- Offer training to continuously upgrade planning, engineering, law enforcement and maintenance staffs’ knowledge of best practices to improve cyclist safety.
- Initiate physical improvements to streets and bikeways and law enforcement efforts, as appropriate, to address identified bicycling safety concerns.
- Expand bicycle safety education in schools including as part of physical education and driver training.
- Put more Arlington Police on bicycles.
- Address unsafe bicyclist and motorist behaviors
- Keep cars out of bicycle lanes.
- Develop a more integrated County approach to safety.
- Coordinate bicycle safety efforts as part of more comprehensive County “Vision Zero” program

Policy 8 – Manage the trails for safety with increased use. Undertake facility improvement projects to address overcrowding and user conflicts on trails and develop instructional materials to encourage safer user practices. Design trail corridors to be “greener” reducing impervious surface area and enhancing planting opportunities.

- Expand the e-mail bicycle information/alert program to ensure that information alerts address the entire Arlington and regional bicycling networks, and incorporate additional communication methods, such as radio and television traffic reports, traffic alert Web sites, and/or other technologies.
- Continue to operate and expand promotion of the County spot-improvement request system that allows individuals to report maintenance problems in writing, over the phone, via e-mail, and by other methods.

- Adopt the maintenance program and practices in Appendix E.
- Incorporate County trail repaving/repair into a regular maintenance cycle similar to that used for County streets including periodic pavement quality assessments.
- Prioritize trail widening and trail/roadway intersection projects, especially in those areas where multiple crashes or near-crashes have been documented.
- Undertake safety evaluations of street/trail intersections. Identify how safety might be improved through traffic signals, signage, markings, traffic calming, tunnel/overpasses, or other measures.
- Implement measures such as new trail entry points and GPS Coordinates to give emergency personnel and vehicles better access to the trail system.
- Protect the trails and significant buffer areas against encroachments from adjacent roadways and new development.
- Promote volunteer maintenance and enhancements to trails including establishment of a “share the trail” program.
- Conduct regular patrolling of trails by Police, Park Rangers and volunteers particularly during early morning and evening hours.
- Change trail width standards – some wider for heavy use, some narrower for light use
- Emphasize proper trail etiquette
- Improve trail user security and safety – utilize trail lighting, mirrors and make more observable
- Integrate bicycle access and use in park design and recreational programming
- Enhance network wayfinding & trail identifiers
- Utilize pervious materials for trail surfaces
- Adjust design standards to increase the planting of trees within trail corridors
- Assess environmental impacts of bicycle and multi-use trail projects

Policy 9 - Provide convenient, covered and secure bicycle parking at transit stations, schools, public facilities and commercial centers.

- Coordinate with WMATA and private property owners to increase bicycle parking at Metrorail stations, initiate new bicycle/transit integration services, and manage existing services. The quality and quantity of bicycle parking should be upgraded at Metrorail stations, especially Rosslyn, Crystal City, Pentagon City, Ballston-MU, and Clarendon. Provide sufficient amounts of free parking that offer a high level of security and weather protection.
- Construct bicycle stations at a minimum of one of the following Metro stations – Ballston MU, Rosslyn, East Falls Church and Pentagon City.
- Ensure that new streetcar and commuter rail cars can accommodate the transport of bicycles.
- Assess the market for integration of bicycle transportation with carpools, vanpools, taxis, car-sharing programs, and commuter bus and commuter rail services.
- Improve security and quantity of bike parking at Metro stations
- Increase the supply of bicycle parking at schools to meet 1 per 10 standards. Provide secure parking for staff and locations for bike drop-off
- Enhance quality and quantity of bike parking in commercial centers. Undertake installations within streetscape – targeting “bicycle rack deserts.” Require new/better parking on private property during development and incentivize improvements at other times.

- Provide opportunities for e-bike charging at commercial, multi-family and public facilities.
- Enhance integration of bicycles with transit operations.

Policy 10 – Ensure that safe and convenient bicycle travel is maintained during/after inclement weather and with street and trail construction.

- Maintain safe continuous bicycling routes as part of construction plans
- Designate trails as transportation corridors that require snow clearance and other regular maintenance
- Enhance trail and bike lane snow/ice/debris clearance
- Vigorously enforce Maintenance of Travel (MOT) throughout the duration of construction projects

D. Facility Design Principles

(Items below are to be fleshed out in the next draft)

- Off-street
- On-street
- Bicycle Parking

E. Project Prioritization Principles

F. Street & Trail Maintenance Principles

G. Plan Performance Measures