

E-Mail Messages to BikePlanUpdate@ Arlingtonva.us

David Cranor; 8/16/2017

Trail lighting i/s a good goal, especially along commuter routes (and those should be open at night), but the county should seek out dark-sky friendly lighting at all opportunities to avoid further night sky lighting pollution.

Zach Ferguson; 8/24/2017

Hello! As a local resident, I have some opinions about the bike plan I wanted to share.

I actually no longer ride a bike. I mostly drive a car or take the Metro, but I know bicycling is a wonderful, healthy, and affordable form of transit we should be investing more money into. (And I would start bicycling again if we had more protected bike lanes!)

I drive a car, but I know we've subsidized automobiles so far beyond what is reasonable, and it's been harmful to our environment, safety, to livable communities, and our health.

Here are my suggestions:

- **Funding.** I think it's really important there is a dedicated, large, and reliable source of funds going to invest in bicycling infrastructure. The best plan in the world will be ineffective if it doesn't incorporate getting the funding needed to make Arlington a safe and enjoyable place to bicycle. I think funding should come from cars who have received a disproportionate amount of funding for decades. I take advantage of free parking on Sundays, but it's unjustifiable for the city to give such valuable public land (parking spots) away on Sundays. The price of residential parking permits is also far below the value of the public land they get in return. Car drivers, like myself, should be paying far more for our fair share, and the revenue should go to the bicycle infrastructure we have neglected to build for so long.
- **Protected bike lanes and bike trails.** Too often cities just install sharrows or painted bike lanes to save money. But this still means bicyclists are riding very close to dangerous and fast-moving automobiles. People don't feel safe or protected, and you get a lot fewer people willing to bike to school, work, or for fun. The new bike plan's vision should be to create a world-class bicycling network that allows people to safely bicycle on modern, convenient infrastructure around town. This pays huge dividends to taxpayers and to residents in the form of less carbon emissions, less maintenance costs, and healthier citizens.
- Toronto, an excellent city to bicycle in, has dedicated a law enforcement officer to protecting bicyclists and bike lanes by enforcing traffic laws that often get violated at bicyclists expense. The officer is a huge viral hit on social media, and his social media posting spreads more awareness to drivers of how they should respect bicyclists and bike lanes. And it makes bicyclists feel they have a real advocate on their side who ensures that their rights are protected. I think the plan should suggest that Arlington follow Toronto's lead in this area.

Zack Sionakides; August 30, 2017

I looked at the draft framework for the master bike plan and have a few comments. As background, I bike around the Arlington/DC area quite regularly, including to work, but also drive around, so I have a good perspective from both views.

Comment 1: Bike lanes should not be placed between parked cars and vehicular traffic, unless it is unsafe to do otherwise. Many of the bike lanes in Arlington are heavily within the door zone and very unsafe to ride in. I often just end up taking the lane in those situations as the safest position to ride in, as the far left side of the bike lane is the only area outside the door zone, but leaves a cyclist open to being side-swiped by a vehicle passing too closely. Quincy St in Ballston is a good example of this poor design.

I would recommend prioritizing conversion of such bike lanes to where the parking is between traffic and the bike lane, with the Wilson/Clarendon Blvd bike lanes being the highest priority. I would also recommend further building of bike lanes between traffic and parking be banned except by exception.

Comment 2: Areas that have high volumes of off-street parking should be prime candidates for converting parking lanes in to bikeways. Good examples are the areas around Ballston Commons, Crystal City, Pentagon City, Rosslyn, and Shirlington. All these areas have significant low-cost, hourly off-street parking. Converting the parking lanes would encourage significantly more biking, and the impact to drivers would be minimal. Shifting more parking off-street would also lower traffic from cars circling looking for an on street parking space.

Comment 3: Bus stop design should be considered where bike lanes or bikeways are. If possible the bus stop should not involve the bus having to block the bike lane to make a stop. Bikes stuck behind a bus are in an unsafe road position and must inhale exhaust from the bus while waiting.

Comment 4: Trail crossings at low volume roads should give the trail users right of way over the road users and should be signed as such. A good example is the W&OD crossing of S. Oakland St where trail users have a stop sign, but IME are more voluminous than cars on Oakland St. NPS recently did this in the TR Island parking lot and it's a major improvement in safety and usability for trail users.

Comment 5: Bicycling on sidewalks should be heavily discouraged and design plans should not allow for this except by extreme exception. Cyclists on sidewalks are unsafe for pedestrians and encourages a riding habit that appears safer than it is.

Comment 6: Remove stop signs or other traffic controls on trails that don't correspond to the actual law - advisory signs are fine. This is more of an issue on NPS trails in Arlington, but I've seen examples on news and message boards where signs are put up that don't correspond to the law causing confusion amongst users and disagreements if there's a conflict.

Comment 7: Conduct road diets where feasible to carve out bikeways. A good example would be on N Glebe road in Ballston where it is 3 lanes each direction. There has been significant construction the past couple years that has closed one of the southbound lanes for extended periods and from what I've seen the impact to traffic has been minimal even at rush hour. This lane would be a good target for converting to a bikeway that would connect Buckingham to the Custis and Bluemont Junction trails in a protected manner.

Gabriel Thoumi; 9/11/2017

I commend Arlington County for pursuing a more bike friendly community.

I strongly support Arlington County to do the following:

- Use standardized cost / benefit measures that include the decrease in operations and maintenance costs associated with bike transport vs. vehicle transport as it is related to road maintenance. This matters because each time I commute (now over 1,200 commuter bicycle rides), I am (up to) one less car on the road. Cars have significantly greater impact on road maintenance than cycling. By including the costs / benefits of road maintenance and operations in bicycle master planning, the county may be better informed.
- The county needs to develop an overall bicycle master plan that includes a vision for the county that includes bicycles as a major commuter type. This includes developing what / if scenarios so that the county could achieve 5%, 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%, and 35% cycle penetration. There are numerous benefits to vehicle commuters that occur when cyclists replace vehicles including obviously fewer cars on the roads that enable vehicle commuting. Hence, with much greater cycle penetration, the county could be in a situation with less financial strain on its road maintenance budget (given less wear and tear) and a more pleasant community for both cyclists and vehicle commuters. But this requires a broad vision of incorporating cycling and protected cycleways into numerous commuting trips. Ironically, by not developing a broad and deep vision for cycling - and then executing this same vision - we as cyclists are stuck with block-by-block solutions that make us literally "weave in and out of traffic", which can exacerbate the problems between vehicles and cyclists.
- Finally, I hope the county can focus on cycling as a long-term county solution to vehicle traffic commuting. As I stated earlier, I have commuted now over 1,200 times on my bicycle. Each time is up to one less car on the road (as I sold my car when I decided to bike commute). This is over 25 months. This is close to 50 less car rides per month since August 2015. The benefits to the county are enormous if the county can secure 1,000 more cyclist commuters. This would be 50,000 less car rides (up to one passenger per vehicle) per month. After reviewing the VDOT 2016 Arlington County data (here: http://www.virginiadot.org/info/2016_traffic_data_by_jurisdiction.asp), it is easy to see how developing and executing a bicycle master plan for the county - with (for example purposes only) 100 to 300 miles of separate bike lanes could enable significant vehicle commuter gains. Assuming a low cost (because of scale of bid) of \$50,000 per mile, 100 miles of separated bike lanes would cost the county \$5,000,000 (see; http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/facilities_bike_bikelanes.cfm). Road maintenance costs per lane / mile range from \$10,000 to \$50,000. Upgrading key routes to separated bike ways, could greatly reduce road maintenance costs while increasing space for vehicle commuters, and clearly decreasing bicycle / vehicle interactions.

I hope the county pursues a much a broader strategy as described above. With proper cost / benefit analysis and scenario modeling, Arlington County could both decrease costs to the county, increase bicycle commuting broadly, and improve vehicle commuting at the same time.

Nathan Kleekamp; 9/18/2017

Hi, I completed the Arlington Bike Master Plan Survey last night and sent it to my friends who also use their bicycles for commuting, dropping off/ picking up their children from school, and everything else you might imagine.

I wish there had been an empty response field so that citizens could submit an open ended comment along with the survey.

My comment is less related to the quality of the bike lanes or the need for additional bike lanes and multi-use paths (though, I want those, too). The biggest problem with the existing bike lanes are other vehicles using them to load and unload passengers or materials. This problem seems to happen most in areas that are heavily trafficked, like Clarendon, Virginia Square and Ballston. The result is me taking the lane, which puts me as a bicyclist at the greatest risk in already busy roads. In sum, I would like to see greater police involvement in getting these vehicles out of the bike lanes where they do not belong coupled with an education campaign directed at drivers.

Ed Krafsur; September 19, 2017

Just read the plan on the WashCycleBlog.

As someone who works on Lynn st, you can imagine what I'm going to say next.

FIX THE INSANELY DANGEROUS DOUBLE AND TRIPLE PARKING IN FRONT OF THE CEB BUILDING ON LYNN STREET.

I've worked on Lynn since 2007. Ever since the curb cut was put in place to allow parking in front that building it's been a mess. I wrote the city then and told them that would be the case. Its 10 years later and every day I ride through there I count myself lucky not to be killed because of some scofflaw cabby or uber driver.

Otherwise, nothing else has been done to provide a decent route for a cyclist to go up Lynn st from the MVT in those 10 years either.

Robert Rosholt; September 22, 2017

I have been following the BAC, [Arlington Roundabouts](#), and other transportation news and I welcome this opportunity to participate but unfortunately, I will not be able to make it to the September 22 meeting. I hope that you will use this email as my participation and take a look at some of the ideas and links, like this one https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2The_10dYs. I think it does a great job of explaining the need for cycling infrastructure and how it makes the roads, including sidewalks, safer.

On many of our roads buses (Metro, ART and schools), cars (taxi's, car share/rentals, etc.), bikes, the wheeled handicapped, and pedestrians all interact with each other with little to no room for error and with varying degrees of user ability (ahem, bad drivers in cars and bikes). In these areas bike lanes should be replaced with segregated cycle tracks (curbed: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0B3oIVr5Pk>) and the places to start this design are in our walk-to-school zones. I totally support this design and plan in our commercial areas too, but I think school zones offer the best place and the least resistance. Luckily, Arlington only needs to implementing a proven design as they have done in Ballston.

As a parent of two elementary school children, this is maybe the easiest way to get this design started and growing in Arlington. The plan would be pretty simple, on every double-yellow line road in every walk-to-school zone (so, 1 mile diameter or so), a separate cycle track would be built that would bring children directly to the [bike parking facility of the school](#) (when you watch the linked video you can see why the school bus fleet is small in the Netherlands). As every child exits a neighborhood street they should be

easily able to ride onto a cycle track so they can get to school safely without having to negotiate the roads with buses, commuters, or have to bike on the sidewalks that are used by their fellow students.

The TJ site is a perfect place to build an example of this design. It is an easy sell to the neighborhood who has been asking for better traffic infrastructure and safety measures for decades. It does not have too many traffic light intersections. It is currently under construction. And, it is hard to argue against it, not that some won't, but how can you be against child safety - plain and simple.

Who [are the users of cycling infrastructure](#)? Obviously everyone on a bike. But also, it should be there for the handicapped and elderly in slow but faster than walking electric wheelchairs, and children going to and from school, parks, sport events, etc.

Better cycling infrastructure like cycle tracks on major roads and bike lanes on our less trafficked streets is fast becoming a requirement of our traffic design. I am relieved that Arlington does not want to wait for accidents to occur and for the parents of [victim's to become activist](#) (which if you bike as much as I do, is only a matter of time). Luckily, Arlington does not need to invent anything - the [design implementations](#) have been done and the results are proven (see [Vision Zero/Systematic Safety plans](#) from [Copenhagen](#) to [New York City](#)). Even how to [treat a bus stop](#) is ready to be implemented.

Here is a quote from [Northeastern University's Professor Dr. Peter Furth](#) who has been an advocate for Systematic Safety design of transportation systems, "A system that is safe only if people don't make mistakes is not a system that is made for humans."

From BikeArlington Forum on August 31, 2017

If I may, I will offer the comment that while I appreciate the survey and think it is pretty good, it does not offer a chance to speak to an important element of what Arlington County could do to help people feel safer on bikes - enforcement.

ACPD is not on bikes (except for rare exceptions like events), and rarely cites drivers for the type of infractions like close passing that make cyclists unsafe. Bike lanes without a plastic bollards are vehicle pullover lanes. You can barely ride for 1 minute without encountering a vehicle and I have never seen enforcement of that in Arlington. Then there are things like [this](#).

Bill Pugh, September 26, 2017

Hi, I missed the survey but wanted to submit some comments on the revised draft Framework:

Overall the updated draft Framework looks great. The major omission is that there is no mention of addressing distracted driving and speeding by cars and trucks. These concerns apply to all modes but they are particularly significant to cyclists given their vulnerability on the roads. I can seek out good routes for cycling to almost all of my destinations in Arlington but I cannot avoid distracted drivers, and there are too many roads in the County that would otherwise be good cycling routes but have speeding problems.

Arlington needs to work with other Northern Virginia jurisdictions and our General Assembly delegations to get sensible laws passed that allow our communities to take action on distracted driving and speeding. A specific commitment to this regional effort and state-level lobbying needs to be in Arlington's master transportation plan and referenced in the bike chapter.

Thank you for making the County a great place for biking (and all travel modes),