

The Bethesda Trolley Trail: A Vital Link in the Regional Bikeway and Trail System

- At the north end (Twinbrook Metro) the BTT connects to the recently signed **Rockville Bicycle Route System**.
- Grosvenor Lane and W. Cedar Lane provide the shortest routes to and from the **Rock Creek Trail**.
- Link to the **Capital Crescent Trail** in one of three places: (A) Downtown Bethesda; (B) near Bethesda-Chevy Chase H.S. if headed east to Silver Spring; or (C) at Little Falls Parkway if headed south into DC. See map for details.
- And, via the Rock Creek and Capital Crescent Trails, one can link to the **C&O Canal Towpath**, **Sligo Creek Trail**, and the **Metropolitan Branch Trail**.

Tips For Trail Use:

Families and Recreational Users

Enjoy the BTT between Edson Lane and Charles Street in Maplewood, while taking care at street crossings.

Fast-moving Bicycle Commuters


Reduce speed and exercise caution while using busy sidewalk and trail sections north of Nicholson Lane, along Old Georgetown Road and south of NIH.

All Users The BTT along the south edge of NIH is narrow and hilly, but recently paved, very beautiful and well lit at night.

Trail Manager Montgomery County Department of Transportation Bikeways Program. For general information, please call 240-777-7223, or visit <http://www.bikemontgomery.com>.


COMBINE A BTT RIDE WITH THE BUS—

- All METROBUSES and RIDE-ON buses transport bicycles free of charge on front-mounted racks.
- Racks are easy to use and accommodate most frame styles.
- Bus routes cross and parallel the trail throughout its length on all major roadways.



BETHESDA TROLLEY TRAIL

A new urban greenway linking Bethesda & Rockville for bicyclists, runners and pedestrians.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive

The Bethesda Trolley Trail is a dynamic urban greenway

that provides the most direct link between Bethesda and Rockville for bicyclists, runners and pedestrians. Its central Montgomery County location makes it an exceptional off-road transportation route providing access to North Bethesda (aka White Flint), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Woodmont Triangle, office towers in downtown Bethesda and the Capital Crescent Trail. Also, its proximity to residential communities such as Old Georgetown Village, the Grosvenor apartments, Maplewood / Alta Vista, Oakmont, and Glenwood make it a favorite for meeting neighbors, exercise walking, jogging, and weekend bike rides.

From Trolley to Trail: The Early Days

After the Civil War, America's cities created new transportation systems that enabled them to prosper and grow. During this time, major rail lines were built to connect Washington, DC with other cities. Smaller, electric streetcar or "trolley" lines connected Washington with its outlying areas. In 1890, the Georgetown and Tenallytown Railway Company operated trolley lines along Wisconsin Avenue between High Street in Georgetown and the DC boundary.

At about the same time, the Tenallytown and Rockville Railroad extended the line north to Bethesda (Alta Vista). At the end of the line they built Bethesda Park, a Victorian era 'trolley' park as an incentive for evening and weekend line usage. By the summer of 1893, it was one of DC's most popular amusement parks, complete with roller coasters, daredevil aeronautic performances, a dance hall and hotel. In the fall of 1896, Bethesda Park was destroyed by a hurricane and the park was closed, never to reopen.

In 1897, the two railroads merged, and by 1900 they had completed an extension to the county seat of Rockville. Trolleys transported people to DC for work, moved goods between city and county, and carried throngs of city dwellers to the county's annual agricultural fair in Rockville. The Washington Railway and Electric Company acquired the merged railroads in 1902, and later became part of Capital Transit. In 1935, the Rockville trolley line ceased operation, leaving gasoline-powered buses as the only mode of public transportation serving this corridor until the Metrorail Red Line opened in 1984.

The Bethesda Trolley Trail (BTT) utilizes much of the original trolley right-of-way. Since the opportunity for this rail-trail was first identified in the 1978 Countywide Bikeways Master Plan, the County has required new land developments to dedicate land and construct portions of the trail. The BTT is one of eight rails-to-trails conversions in the Washington, DC area. In 2004, the County Council authorized funding for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to design and construct many of the missing trail segments, including the bridges across I-495 and the I-270 Spur.

Future Development Today, the BTT is continuous over six miles through use of three trail types: off-street shared-use paths, on-street links using residential streets, and sidewalks. To meet urban bikeway standards, improvements are planned for the following areas:

- along Bou and Chapman Avenues,
- along and across Rockville Pike and future Montrose Parkway,
- between Nicholson Lane and Marinelli Road,
- adjacent to NIH and Old Georgetown Road (Charles-McKinley Sts.),
- south of NIH and in Battery Lane Park.

Wherever possible, the BTT utilizes low-impact urban design principles of environmentally-sensitive "green design."

TAKE THE BTT TO THESE METRO RAIL STATIONS—

- TWINBROOK
 - WHITE FLINT
 - GROSVENOR
 - MEDICAL CENTER
 - BETHESDA;
- all of which provide bicycle parking!