

ROME WASN'T BUILT IN A DAY
HOW BICYCLE FACILITIES ARE CONSTRUCTED IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY
January 2, 2013

Bicycle Access in Montgomery County

Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) constructs bicycle facilities for two different types of users; (1) commuters who prefer to ride on the road with vehicular traffic; (2) recreationalists who prefer to ride off the road on bikepaths, trails, and sidewalks. The Maryland State law allows cyclists to lawfully ride on any roadway posted 50 mph or less, irrespective of whether or not there are on-road bicycle facilities provided. The Maryland State law prohibits cyclists on sidewalks and thus, it is prohibited in local municipalities. However, Montgomery County overrode this law and permits cyclists to ride on sidewalks.

Constructing Bicycle Facilities in Montgomery County

In general, MCDOT refers to area master plans when determining future construction of transportation facilities including bicycle facilities. Master Plans play an important role in determining how the County will accommodate existing as well as future growth. They provide a policy framework to guide the development of projects and programs, advance the County's goals and objectives, and help direct investment. There are a number of various ways that MCDOT implements bicycle facilities and improves access and safety in the county:

1. Through larger Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) as we plan, design and build new roadways MCDOT always include any Master Plan provisions for bicycle improvements and pedestrian access into the design of the project. For example, Montrose Parkway West (CIP 500311), a larger roadway project, incorporated complete street features such as sidewalks and the master planned Shared Use Path.
2. Before large scale bicycle projects receive design and construction funds, they must undergo a facility planning process. Facility planning is an evaluation process that furnishes design plans which are approximately 35% complete. This evaluation allows decision makers, the public and elected officials to assess the benefits and costs of the project as it competes for funding to other needed transportation projects in the County. Some current projects in Facility Planning include:
 - a. Bradley Blvd. Dual Bikeway (Wilson Lane -Goldsboro Road)
 - b. MacArthur Blvd. Bikeway Segment 3 (Oberlin Avenue to DC Line) 2.02 miles
3. Once projects complete Facility Planning and the CE, Council, public and DOT Director determine the project shall be funded for design and construction, it becomes a stand alone CIP. Below are several MCDOT stand alone bicycle access projects that are funded for design and construction:
 - a. Falls Road Hiker Biker path (River Road to Dunster Lane)-500905
 - b. Frederick Road Bike Path (Stringtown Road to Brink Road)-501118
 - c. MacArthur Blvd. Bikepath Improvements-(I-495 to Oberlin Ave.)-500718
 - d. Met. Branch Trail (Silver Spring Transit Center-Georgia Ave.)-501110
 - e. Shady Grove Metro Access Bike Path (Redland Road to Shady Grove Road) -500600
4. Bicycle access projects may also result from developer requirements and as part of the other public Government projects (schools, civic buildings, and libraries).
5. On road bicycle access is provided when MCDOT performs road maintenance. For example, if roadways are scheduled to be resurfaced, staff coordinates the inclusion of on-road bike facilities with the Division of Highway Services. Where applicable, on-road facilities are provided by restriping the width of the existing travel lanes by making them narrower and providing the additional width to bike

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lanes, wider outside lanes and shoulders space. Below is a list of resurfaced roadways where MCDOT has taken the opportunity to install cost-effective on-road bicycle facilities:

2009/2010-COMPLETED

1. Shady Grove Rd. (I-270-Darnestown Rd)
2. Forest Glen Rd. (MD97-Brunett Av)
3. Old Columbia Pike (MD198-North of ICC) & (South of ICC-US 29)

2010/2011-COMPLETED

1. Tilden Lane (Near Luxmanor)
2. Battery Lane (Old Georgetown Road-Woodmont Avenue)
3. Muddy Branch Road (Darnestown Road-Clopper Road)

2011/2012-COMPLETED

1. Executive Boulevard (Old Georgetown Road-East Jefferson Road)
2. Medical Center Way (Medical Center Drive-Shady Grove Road)
3. Medical Center Drive (Great Seneca Hwy-Key West Avenue)

2013-PROPOSED

1. Woodglen Road (Edson Lane-Nicholson Lane)

6. The community may request bicycle access improvements through the Annual Bikeways Program (CIP 507596) whose main purpose is to discuss and implement smaller scale bicycle access improvements (such as missing sections of paths, sign and marking for bike access, bicycle rack installations, mini studies, etc.). Most recently, the Bikeways Program constructed way finding facilities along the Bethesda Trolley Trail at the intersection of Woodglen Drive and Edson Lane.

However, annual funding for the Annual Bikeways Program (CIP 507596) is relatively small (\$550 K) and thus, significantly limits our abilities to implement the many requests we receive. In this program, we tend to implement projects that do not have significant complications, and if they do, then we refer requests to #3-Facility Planning (CIP 509337) which has waiting period of several years.

Our priority in Annual Bikeways Program is provide missing links of shared use paths that tie into a larger bicycle network system, on-road facilities for small segments of roadways, installation of supplemental signage to bring greater awareness to the travelling public of bicycle facilities.

Montgomery County Bicycle Action Group (MCBAG)

MCDOT encourages those interested in bicycle facilities to join Montgomery County Bicycle Action Group (MCBAG), sponsored by MCDOT's Annual Bikeways Program. The MCBAG meets monthly to discuss and recommend positions on various issues on bicycling on a regional and local basis and has over 100 members who are contacted via e-mail.

Contact Us

1. Visit our website: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/bikeways/bwActionGroup.html>

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2. Visit Our Office:
Division of Transportation Engineering (DTE)
100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
P: 240-77-7223
3. To make a bicycle facility request: mcdot.dte.bike@montgomerycountymd.gov
4. To request bicycle maintenance (sweeping, overhang of trees and foliage, etc...):
 1. Call 311
 2. Request on-line
<http://www3.montgomerycountymd.gov/311/Search.aspx?SearchKey=bike&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>
 3. Email: mcdot.highway@montgomerycountymd.gov
5. To request traffic operational issues related to existing on-road bicycle facilities (installation of crosswalks, traffic signal timing, traffic control, etc...):
 1. Call 311
 2. Email: mcdot.TrafficOps@montgomerycountymd.gov