

# **Update of the Master Transportation Plan's Bicycle Element**

A draft update of the 2008 Master Transportation Plan's (MTP) Bicycle Element is currently available on Arlington County's website for public review and comment. Two open houses for the update are currently scheduled for:

- January 14, between 6:00 and 7:30 PM at the Arlington Mill Center
- January 22, between 6:00 and 7:30 PM at Westover Library

Public hearings for advertisement and approval of the draft plan are anticipated to be held by the Transportation Commission, Planning Commission and County Board at their March and April meetings.

## **What is new in this update?**

The update addresses recent changes in technologies and facilities, such as bike-sharing, electric scooters and protected bicycle lanes, that have begun to affect how people travel in Arlington. The draft plan, through inclusion of a new vision for bicycling in Arlington, places greater attention to ensuring that bicycling is a safe, reliable, convenient and comfortable travel option for persons of all ages and abilities. The plan calls for expanding Arlington's existing network of bicycle facilities to better serve the entire County with well-connected low-traffic stress bicycling routes that link all primary destinations such as transit stations, schools and commercial centers.

## **Goals and Policies:**

The proposed plan places primary emphasis on development of an environment that allows persons of all ages and abilities to travel bicycle safely and comfortably. That policy places emphasis on upgrading existing bicycle facilities to provide more separation of bicyclists from motor vehicles and in developing new bikeways on streets with lower traffic volumes. The policies also emphasize improving education of all travelers of traffic rules and responsibilities as well as targeting enforcement of traffic laws that will enhance travel safety. Multi-use trails which have been developed to provide recreational opportunities are increasingly being used for routine transportation purposes and should be upgraded to provide for all-day and year-round accessibility. The plan also incorporates new street design guidance that incorporates internationally best practices for urbanized areas. Bicycle parking, integration with transit services, route wayfinding signage and attentive maintenance are also actions called for in policy statements.

## **The Proposed Bicycle Network:**

The draft plan builds upon past planning efforts to produce a well-connected network of bicycle facilities that better serves the entirety of Arlington County. The proposal includes a framework of north-south and east-west Primary Bicycling Corridors that are the most critical for bicycling across Arlington and to nearby regional destinations. Many of the selected corridors, such as Lee Highway, Columbia Pike and George Mason Drive, are heavily traveled by other forms of transportation as they are important for all modes of local travel. Achieving significantly improved bicycling facilities on these routes will likely prove challenging, therefore it will be important to also consider enhancements to adjacent, parallel streets and trails for safer and more comfortable bike travel.

Appendix D of the draft plan includes several lists of planned bicycle improvement projects that are envisioned to improve and expand Arlington's Bikeway Network in upcoming years. The lists include a number of on- and off-street bikeway projects that are currently funded and expected to be implemented over the next few years. There are also lists of proposed projects that would either upgrade existing bicycle facilities on streets or trails, or develop new bikeways to provide key network linkages. The planned new facilities are only conceptual with detailed designs to be developed following further design and with input from affected community members. Funding to implement such projects are to be sought from local, regional, state and federal sources.

The proposed Bikeway Network has been developed and refined from recommendations submitted by community members through the many public engagement activities. In particular, the recommendations have been useful in identifying underserved destinations, insufficient facilities and community priorities for needed improvement. A large percentage of the recommended facility improvements and additions have been recommended to address inadequacies in north-south bicycling routes and in addressing safety and comfort concerns on primary travel routes such as Columbia Pike, Lee Highway and Glebe Road. Some additional trail links such as connections from Crystal City to the Potomac riverfront and National Airport, and between Rosslyn and the Roosevelt Bridge are also called out in the lists of proposed new bikeways.

## **More Information:**

The draft plan and Bikeways Network Map can be found on-line at:  
<https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/projects/master-transportation-plan-bicycle-element-working-group/>

Questions and comments may be addressed to: Mr. Ritch Viola, Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs Manager, [rviola@arlingtonva.us](mailto:rviola@arlingtonva.us) , 703 228-3699