

Master Plan of Highways and Transitways

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways?

The Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) is a collection of transportation recommendations made previously in individual master and sector plans as well as stand-alone amendments to the plan. The purpose of this plan is to identify proposed transportation improvements throughout Montgomery County within a single document and preserve the future rights-of way needed for these improvements.

What does the right-of-way measurement in the plan signify?

The right-of-way measurement of the planned road or transitway is shown in the MPOHT to signify the future needs of those routes. It includes space for travel lanes, parking, plantings, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and transit facilities, such as bus rapid transit (BRT) or light rail (LRT) lanes.

Why aren't RideOn and Metrobus services shown on the MPOHT?

RideOn is operated by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and Metrobus is operated by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). These bus services are subject to change and are outside the authority of the Montgomery County Planning Department. MCDOT and WMATA provide a coordinated set of local and express transit services, and will continue to do so in the future with the addition of BRT and LRT services proposed in the MPOHT.

Why are some roads proposed to be removed from the MPOHT?

Most of the roads being proposed for removal from the plan are now owned by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), including Beach Drive, Sligo Creek Parkway and Little Falls Parkway. These roads will continue to provide access to M-NCPPC park facilities and be used as part of the arterial street system. But there are no plans to widen these roads in the future, so including them in the MPOHT is unnecessary.

Why are some roads being re-classified to minor arterials?

A minor arterial is a two- to three-lane street and was added as a road classification to plans in 2007. Previously, roads were typically classified as arterials or primary residential streets. Reclassifying these roads as minor arterials was based on current operational use (including through traffic) and physical characteristics (including number of lanes and surrounding land uses).

What are the main differences between a minor arterial and a primary residential street?

A minor arterial is likely to carry higher daily traffic volumes than a primary residential street and have a higher proportion of through traffic. Traffic calming is allowed by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) for both road classifications. Through traffic restrictions, including truck restrictions, are allowed on primary residential streets, but generally not on arterial roads.

What are some ramifications of a road being reclassified?

Reclassifying a road is meant to represent the current or intended use of the road more accurately. The reclassification allows for better planning of traffic capacity needs, access needs, planned transportation facilities, and right-of-way preservation.