

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Dennis		The plan should indicate that over the long term there should be trails paralleling Georgia Avenue on both sides, both east and west.	Agreed. This was our intent but in rereading the introduction it is clear that this was not stated.
Dennis		As there will likely be insufficient funds for some time to do both, safe bike/ped crossings at every intersection on Georgia that has a traffic light should be a high priority.	Agreed.
Dennis		<p>Suggest the Red route be modified and improved along the following lines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. retain the northern section from Glenmont Metro south as far as Plyers Mill. This avoids the problems with the Wheaton CBD which may be surmountable someday, but not readily at this time. 2. Have the Red route continue along the route of the Green route east of Georgia Ave. from Plyers Mill to Forest Glen Road. This provides a safe, simple and relatively flat route without the complications and step hill that make this stretch of proposed Red line less desirable. 3. The Red route should cross Georgia at Forest Glen taking advantage of the safe bike/ped crossing that should be there. This eliminates the costly building of a new pike/ped bridge over the Beltway that the (proposed) Green line would require and allows the route to take advantage of the existing bike/ped bridge along Georgia Avenue that the proposed Blue and Red routes enjoy. 4. The Red line would then continue south as proposed. 	We agree with these comments and plan to incorporate them into our draft bikeway recommendations.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Dennis		<p>In the interest of building a better route (some day) along the western side of Georgia, I suggest that a small group of bike advocates meet with the management of the Westfield Wheaton Mall to discuss the possibility of having a Conventional Bike Lane along the eastern perimeter of the Mall. This could be the hardest nut to crack in devising a continuous western route. We should argue that the use of the bikes racks at the Mall indicates that customers do want to bike to the Mall for shopping and recreation, and that the provision of a perimeter bike land would both be good for public relations and bring more customers without more cars.</p>	<p>We have no objections, however, I believe a separated bikeway may attract more users.</p>
Dewey		<p>Of the four options, I like the Eastside route the best due to the additional I495 crossing and the directness of the route. The other three options seemed to either have arduous hills and many turns, both of which would discourage many riders.</p>	<p>Okay.</p>
Gray		<p>I would suggest some changes as follows to the route, mainly to have fewer turns in a route that has way too many IMHO. Once on Amherst, continue all the way to Evans, which means going through the park there. Head left/west to Gardiner, which already is partly marked as a bike route. Take Gardiner to its end, go left/east on Kimball Pl to go right/south to Darcy to FG road to GA. Continue on GA to a much easier right onto Locust as opposed to a 35 degree right onto Landsdowne. Take Locust west to 2d and continue the rest of the way on 2d etc...</p>	<p>This concept plan is intended as a route that can be implemented in the short term. This recommendation would require a new traffic signal at the intersection of Georgia Ave & Evans Parkway, which could take a long time to implement.</p> <p>While a route along Gardiner Ave requires a few less turns, we did not recommend it because there is a greater grade change and it is slightly longer.</p>

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Gray		I like most of Paul's comments (below), but some are unnecessary if you follow the route I suggest. I have not made specific suggestions for going on Amherst a few more blocks and for Evans and Gardiner, but making them Greenways alone would make the lack of several turns much easier and more pleasant for many cyclists.	Okay.
Gray		I like a lot of the amenities you are making on the Greenway.	Thanks.
Punga		Andrew P: Would the Eastside route actually go through the medical complex at Dennis? The concern there (at the time) was that unless the owner gave an easement it just forces bike traffic back onto the sidewalk on Georgia going the wrong way. Also does Eastside have a dedicated beltway overpass? The current pedestrian bridge at the Beltway is less than ideal for Northbound bike traffic.	This options would travel along Georgia Ave until the medical center redeveloped.
Punga		Andrew P: I doubt anyone is going to bother with the 2nd ave alignment, its way to twisty and crosses Georgia too often to be useful.	Disagree -- I would expect most people travel along only part of the route and many would not need to cross Georgia Ave at all.
Punga		Dan L: Eastside route from Blueridge to Forest Glen with easement through the complex at Dennis would be great, even if it required using the existing pedestrian bridge at the beltway the near term, then continue on 2nd street.	Thanks.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Punga		Eleanor A: One of the disadvantages listed for the Eastside route is that 2 blocks of Woodside Dr. are one-way. Just a note that 5 blocks of Grandview Ave. along the proposed routes are also one-way. I have to ask: why is Sligo Creek not part of any of the options? It's what I always use to get from Wheaton to Silver Spring. It's pleasant, relatively flat, safe from traffic, and would require less development (and \$) than the other options.	The proposed alignments would be a more direct connection between Silver Spring and Wheaton, would include lighting, and would be constructed to current standards.
Punga		Siah A.: I would suggest considering the new library/rec center in planning--crossing Georgia at that intersection is a nightmare as drivers seem to treat it as an opportunity to make up time lost at more congested spots.	This will be considered as part of the Bicycle Master Plan.
Punga		Mary S: Limiting the left turn from Blueridge onto GA is not a good idea since that is how the traffic routes from east-bound University to north-bound GA. Also, They want to remove a street parking on one side of Blueridge between Elkin and Amherst. Those apartment dwellers already have very limited parking options.	Impacts to traffic would be considered. Our intention was that on-street parking would be removed only if the apartments redevelop (and provide their own on-site parking). This will be modified.
Punga		Edith P: My tepid response is for 2nd Avenue. However, I recommend a hybrid approach--2nd Ave from the Metro to the Beltway, then Ga Ave to Glenmont.	Thanks.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Daisey	4	<p>The preferred route directions are incomplete, and use compass directions instead of turn directions. They give a general idea of the route, but are hard to follow as directions on a bicycle if you don't have a compass (in your head). I'd suggest the following revision, with or without the compass directions:</p> <p>Starting at the Glenmont Metrorail Station, the bikeway travels south along the Glenmont Greenway, located on the west side of Georgia Avenue between the Metro parking garage and the sidewalk. After crossing Randolph Road the bikeway turns right (west) onto Maston Street and then left (south) onto Grandview Avenue. Entering the Wheaton CBD, it turns left (east) onto Blueridge Avenue, crosses Georgia Avenue, and then turns right (south) onto Amherst Avenue and crosses University Blvd...</p>	We will make these changes.
Daisey	5	<p>The Glenmont Greenway is not signed at the intersection with Glenallan Avenue, but it needs to be. If you had not seen it on a map, you'd be more likely to ride down the sidewalk west of Georgia Avenue. Suggested fix is a new item 1 and renumber subsequent items: "1. Install route signs for the Glenmont Greenway crossing of Glenallan Avenue, and apply bikeway pavement markings to indicate the crossing."</p>	Let's discuss.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Daisey	7	<p>The "Amherst Avenue From University Blvd to Windham Lane" section does not address intersections. The intersection with Reddie Dr. is especially problematic because Amherst and Reddie provide access to both Metro and Wheaton Plaza from the east part of the Wheaton CBD and the eastern part of Montgomery County, with high right turn traffic volume from southbound Amherst to westbound Reddie and high left turn traffic volume from eastbound Reddie to northbound Amherst. Suggested fix:</p> <p>Treatment: Protected Intersections (specific details TBD by further analysis).</p> <p>New items for recommended intersection changes</p>	Good suggestion.
Daisey	8/9	<p>Plyers Mill Rd westbound at the Georgia Ave intersection is steep, making it difficult for a bicyclist to get started after stopping for a red light. There needs to be a bike climbing lane here. Because there is a signed bike route on Plyers Mill Rd west of Georgia Ave, this climbing lane should be next to the curb. Suggested fix:</p> <p>New item #21 after existing item #19: Apply a lane diet for eastbound Plyers Mill Rd between Georgia Ave and Amherst Ave, narrowing it from 13 to 10 feet. Use the 3 foot width to add a bicycle climbing lane next to the curb on westbound Plyers Mill Rd from Amherst Ave to Georgia Ave. Restripe Plyers Mill Rd to implement these changes.</p>	We haven't had a chance to field verify this recommendation, but this recommendations seems to make sense.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Daisey	8/9	<p>After having crossed Georgia Ave westbound, a bicyclist would have to stop at the curb and wait for the traffic signal to change before crossing Plyers Mill Rd southbound to continue on this proposed bikeway. The only place to wait now is on the sidewalk. There is a parking lane with no parking and a bus stop in the first block of Plyers Mill westbound from Georgia Ave. The first 50 feet of this parking lane could be applied to this problem. Suggested fix:</p> <p>New item #22 after new item #21: Add a left turn bicycle queue box and refuge island in the existing parking lane at the northwest corner of the Georgia Ave / Plyers Mill Rd intersection. The refuge island may need an outer gradient edge to allow trucks and buses southbound on Georgia Ave to turn left onto Plyers Mill Rd.</p>	<p>I understand the issue that is raised, but am not sure I agree with the solution. Perhaps a sidepath along the south side of Plyers Mill Rd would work better.</p>
Turton		<p>This area is not my regular biking area, but one thing I noticed is that the Greenway bypasses Westfield Wheaton mall. That is one area that cyclists will probably want to get to on a regular basis, and I think we should encourage bike routes that take people where they need to go. Would it be possible to have a spur dropping south on Grandview to Reddie and then across Viers Mill into the mall? It could exit to the south with a new switchback path down the hill to Torrance Ct by the Sears outlet. This allows cyclists to feed into the Greenway by Crossing Plyers Mill at Brunswick and then going west on Evans to Douglas.</p>	<p>Yes, but this will be part of the Bicycle Master Plan recommendations.</p>

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Cochrane		I recommend defining the Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway as extending to the Matthew Henson Trail. That's how it's already signed, and it would give us more impetus to improve the dicey portion north of Glenmont Metro.	We will extend this bikeway to the Matthew Henson Trail as part of the Bicycle Master Plan.
Cochrane		The signed route unfortunately consists of narrow sidewalk on Georgia Ave from Niles St to the Matthew Henson Trail. That problem could be solved by building a direct path connection from the end of Holdridge Rd to the trail. This should be a priority.	This connection makes sense, but I will need to talk with the Parks Department about it.
Cochrane		Plyers Mill Rd, Amherst Ave and Blueridge Ave are primary roads or bigger. Improvements to these roads may be justified to increase level of comfort. Since these roads are limited to the midsection of the route, novice riders can still use the northern and southern stretches without using busier roads.	I don't understand the last sentence.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Cochrane		<p>WESTSIDE ISSUES</p> <p>It's essential for the route to avoid Westfield Wheaton mall and the adjoining portion of the Wheaton Triangle. That's why the existing signed route crosses to the east side of Georgia between Plyers Mill Rd and Blueridge Ave, just like Toole's Second Ave option. It's easy enough to bike to the mall from the south (via the cut-through path from St. Margarets Way) but navigating from the mall ring road out to Veirs Mill Rd and then across VM Rd (or vice versa) is nothing short of treacherous, given the high volume of traffic entering/exiting the mall and the short distances between intersections where cyclists must zig-zag. Also, crossing Veirs Mill Rd is dangerous even for pedestrians because of the high volume of turning traffic.</p> <p>That pretty much disqualifies Toole's Westside alternative in Wheaton. Further south, the Westside option would require a new bridge over I-495 that's hard to justify. So the Westside route isn't really a good option.</p>	Agree.
Cochrane		<p>EASTSIDE ISSUES</p> <p>We tried ourselves, but we couldn't make anything similar to Toole's Eastside route work. The north-south streets closest to Georgia Ave don't continue all the way through, being interrupted by parking lots and the Beltway itself. Building a new crossing of I-495 would be very expensive, and I can think of several places in the county where expensive new bridges are more needed.</p>	Agree.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Cochrane		<p>The existing signed route deviates from Toole's Second Avenue route slightly. The main difference is between Plyers Mill Rd and Hildarose Dr. For that segment, the Toole route adds a path along Georgia Ave, whereas the existing signed route keeps to the west, reaching Plyers Mill Rd at Hunting Place. We had our reasons for choosing that, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of an existing, sign-worthy path along Georgia Ave. Hunting Place is the nearest parallel street on the west side of Georgia. • Inability to use the other side of Georgia, since crossing is only possible at Plyers Mill Rd, Dennis Ave (which didn't connect to Amherst to the north) or Evans Pkwy (which is not signalized). • Hunting Place is the quickest option for riders coming in from the west via the signed Tuckerman/Plyers Mill route. 	<p>We avoided Hunting Place because it is somewhat out of the way and more steep.</p>
Cochrane		<p>But a new opportunity has opened up! A cut-through path was recently built to join the two disconnected segments of Amherst Ave north and south of Evans Parkway.</p>	<p>We considered this, but ultimately did not recommend it because of the very steep climb on Amherst Ave between Dennis Ave and Evans Parkway.</p> <p>In the Bicycle Master Plan we will recommend both an east side and west side route.</p>
Cochrane		<p>I recommend using Greeley and Dexter (instead of Hildarose and McKenney as Toole suggests) in order to minimize changes to the existing route. Changes to the McKenney/Darrow intersection aren't necessary.</p>	<p>This is a good point. If I recall correctly, we were trying to avoid the steep slope on Greeley.</p>
Cochrane		<p>Gardner/Evans/Haywood/Hunting could remain but that would become a spur route, useful mainly for cyclists heading west.</p>	<p>Agree.</p>

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Cochrane		[On Grandview Rd] an eight-block contraflow bike lane (and the loss of parking that entails) would be difficult to justify when there's a parallel route already.	I feel strongly that we should push for this, since the parallel route on Galt Ave is much more steep and somewhat out of the way. The fallback position could be to use the parallel route.
Cochrane		The Toole document says the Glenmont Greenway path will pass under the Randolph-Georgia interchange, but it looks like it will pass over Randolph.	We will double check this.
Cochrane		I agree that switching stop sign directions at Henderson Ave, etc. could make the route safer and faster for cyclists, but it might also speed up car traffic.	We will note this as a concern to be addressed.
Cochrane		Bike improvements on Blueridge Ave are certainly warranted, since it's a major connection across Georgia Ave. But Reddie Drive should be bike-friendly as well, since it's the preferred route from our route (from Amherst) to the Metro station. The same goes for Grandview Ave south of Blueridge. Bike access to Wheaton Metro is currently not easy from any direction.	We will be bringing the Advisory Group recommendations for the rest of Wheaton shortly.
Cochrane		Darcy Forest Drive seems too flat for official climbing lanes. It's not "steep".	It's a bit steep.
Cochrane		I agree that moving stop signs on Clark, etc. would save cyclists a few seconds, though other changes we're recommending (such as protected bike lanes) will cost cyclists many more seconds. We should understand why stop signs are oriented the way they are before making changes.	The reason for the stop sign placement is typically to prioritize auto travel to the major highway. The neighborhood greenway concept changes that prioritization in favor of the parallel bikeway to the major highway.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Cochrane		Getting onto the bridge across I-495 is very awkward from the north, as the Toole report notes. The entry point to the bridge is narrow and very close to the corner. Bicyclists approaching from the west on the south side of Forest Glen Road can't easily get to the entrance. Road cyclists must make an abrupt right turn, and off-road cyclists on the south side – maybe coming from Coleridge Dr – have only the narrow sidewalk on Forest Glen Rd. Pedestrians can walk from Coleridge Dr through a parking lot to a stairway leading to the bridge, but cyclists can't do that. For the \$7.7 million they spent on this bridge, they should've provided better bike access.	Agree.
Cochrane		Forest Glen Road isn't bad for experienced cyclists, but it's a four lane road. So a low stress option needs to be provided. As Toole points out, the wide sidewalk on the north side lacks a buffer separating it from the street. Improvements would be welcome but should consider the overall context. What facility type would work best for the entire road, not just these two blocks? Is a sidepath on the north side the best (or only) good option? Whatever the solution is, it should be done ASAP.	Good point. We may need to rethink this as we progress with the bike plan.
Cochrane		The route should be signed without waiting for improvements. In the short term, either put signs on Forest Glen Road itself (the sidewalk is always an option) or sign a parallel detour route using Elkon Ave, Ellis St and Coleridge Dr.	Okay.

Response to Comments on Silver Spring to Glenmont Bikeway

CAG Member	Page	Comment	Response
Cochrane		I normally use Second Ave to cross 16th Street at the signal. But then I turn left on Highland Drive and right on First Ave, because First gets less traffic and crosses Spring St without having to wait at a light. If the Second Ave protected bike lane ends up having a gap between Spring St and Fenwick Lane, then First St should be signed as the official route.	Okay.
Cochrane		If a southbound cyclist is aiming for a point east of Georgia Ave, he or she might want to cross Georgia at Seminary Rd to avoid having to cross 16th Street. But that's not a low stress route.	Agree. We will have a recommendation on Seminary.