



Master Plan of Highways and Transitways



Larry Cole, Master Planner, larry.cole@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-495-4528



Leslie Saville, Senior Planner, leslie.saville@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-495-2194



Pam Dunn, Acting Chief, pamela.dunn@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-650-5649



Completed: 11/13/14

Description

This memo outlines the revised scope of work for a comprehensive amendment to the 1955 Master Plan of Highways, which will compile the amendments to the Plan approved and adopted since that time, as well as align the Plan with the County's Road Code, which was of a similar vintage until it was comprehensively updated in 2007.

Work on this comprehensive amendment began in July 2009 but went on hiatus from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 because of budget constraints. That hiatus was extended by three years when the County Council directed us to undertake an amendment to incorporate Bus Rapid Transit, an effort that culminated with the adoption of the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan (CTCFMP) in December 2013. With the completion of that plan, this amendment is included in our work program for FY15-16. A revised schedule for this amendment is included at the end of this memo.

Context

The first Master Plan of Highways for Montgomery County was approved and adopted in 1931, shortly after the creation of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in 1927. The last comprehensive update to the Master Plan of Highways was approved and adopted in 1955. The 1955 Plan covered our portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District as it existed at the time - roughly the area east of Georgia Avenue, east and south of the City of Rockville, and Potomac southeast of the Glen - comprising only about 1/3 of the county's area (see Attachment 1). A draft Master Plan of Highways for the entire area of both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties was proposed in 1967 but the process was never completed.

The Area Master Plans and Sector Plans that have been approved and adopted since 1955 have amended the Master Plan of Highways, as have the many limited functional Master Plan of Highways Amendments. Maps of the Master Plan of Highways for the whole county were published in 1986, 1992, and 2005 as reference documents derived from all these Plans and Amendments, rather than as standalone approved and adopted Plans.

Geography

The geography for the Plan will be the entire county, less the seven municipalities that have their own planning authority: Rockville, Gaithersburg, Laytonsville, Brookeville, Poolesville, Barnesville, and Washington Grove.

Purpose

The Amendment will:

- a. Incorporate changes to implement the Minor Arterial and Controlled Major Highway classifications developed during the 2007 update of the Road Code, as well as changes to the definitions of other classifications;
- b. Eliminate inconsistencies between adjacent area Master Plans adopted at different dates;
- c. Evaluate and potentially recommend the designation of additional candidate rustic roads; and
- d. Make the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways more readily accessible to the public by compiling the many source documents so that it can be more easily understood as a single Plan.

Issues

- The Minor Arterial classification was developed to recognize that some roadways serve an arterial function but have adjacent residential land uses that warrant the ability to implement certain traffic calming procedures such as speed humps that are prohibited on arterial roadways. In the past, the Council has classified most of these roads, such as Bel Pre Road and Redland Road, as Primary Residential Roads. Reclassifying Primary Residential Roads to Minor Arterials may create concern for some residents about encouraging through traffic; a similar concern may apply to the two roads that are now classified as Principal Secondary Residential Streets, which could be reclassified as Primary Residential Streets.
- Reclassifying roads from Arterials to Minor Arterials may create concern for Executive staff about lower target speeds on minor arterials and making them eligible for traffic-calming.
- Reclassifying Major Highways to Controlled Major Highways may create concerns about higher target speeds and adjacent property access
- Proposed changes to the Road Code may warrant a reassessment of the target speeds in Urban areas.

Goals and Objectives

A significant goal of this Amendment is to better align the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways with the current County Road Code, which was amended in 2007 to make our roads more pedestrian-friendly and context-sensitive. The following year, Executive Regulations that included new road standards consistent with the new Code were adopted.

Where new roadway classifications have been added and the descriptions for the existing classifications changed, this update would reclassify individual roads. It would not make any changes associated with the roadway standards added by Executive Regulation, such as right-of-way, since this is better addressed within the context of the area Master Plans.

Another goal is to reduce the confusion that has occurred over the almost 60 years since the last comprehensive amendment resulting from multiple amendments to area Master Plans; boundary changes in those Master Plans; overlapping recommendations for roads along master plan boundaries; and the occasional recommendation regarding roads outside the boundaries of a Plan. The Plan has the following objectives:

Bring the Plan Up-to-Date and Clarify Information

- Include an alphabetized table, noting the planning area, the roadway classification, the planned right-of-way width, and number of through travel lanes for each road segment, as well as noting whether there is a transitway.
- Include an overall map of highways and transitways, as well as more detailed maps of more densely developed areas showing:
 - The Urban, Suburban, and Rural areas as identified in the Road Code and by Council resolutions.
 - Display on the map the Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Areas as identified in Master Plans.
 - Master plan transit corridors and centers
 - Roads built to primary standards, but not currently in the master plan, to reflect the existing transportation network.
 - Descriptive roadway information where specified in area Master Plans, such as truck restrictions.
- Create a process for updating the Master Plan of Highways in concert with Amendments to area Master and Sector Plans and other Functional Master Plans.

Address Inconsistent Recommendations Affecting Multiple Area Master Plans

Adjacent area Master Plans often have adoption dates that differ by several years, during which time facility or project planning activities have evolved. What is adopted in the later plan may therefore not be reflected in the earlier adjacent Plan. Examples include:

- The planned number of lanes on East Gude Drive within the limits of the 2004 Upper Rock Creek Master Plan is inconsistent with the 2006 Shady Grove Sector Plan and the existing condition in the City of Rockville.
- The classification, right-of-way, and planned number of lanes on Randolph Road changes at Rock Creek, which is the boundary between the North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan (a four-lane Arterial with a 100-foot ROW) and Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan (a six-lane Major Highway with a 120-foot ROW).
- Alderton Road is classified as a Primary Residential Road in the 1994 Aspen Hill Master Plan but was not classified in the 1989 Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan.

Make Changes and Additions to Rustic Roads

- Make recommendations on roads that have been proposed to be classified as Rustic Roads as proposed by the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee (RRAC), residents and others
 - Allnutt Road, Poolesville (reported to be the “old” name of a branch of Westerly Road)
 - Mt. Carmel Cemetery Road, Brookeville
 - Kings Valley Road, Damascus
 - Lewisdale Road, Clarksburg
 - Mullinix Mill Road, Damascus
 - Halterman Road, Laytonsville
 - Emory Church Road, Olney
 - Riding Stable Road, Burtonsville
 - Aitcheson Lane, Burtonsville
 - Dickerson Church Road, Dickerson
 - Dickerson School Road, Dickerson
 - Clopper Road, Boyds Historic District
 - The farm road, Sandy Spring (status as a public road has not been established)

Describe the significant features and characteristics of Currently Designated Rustic and Exceptional Rustic Roads Which Require Descriptions (listed by Master Plan)

Road Name	Designation	Extents	Comments
<i>Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area</i> (1994)(pp. 126-130 and appendix pp. 34-42)			
Old Hundred Road (MD 109)	Rustic	I-270 to MD 355	Partial description in appendix
Frederick Road (MD 355)	Rustic	Between the recommended Hyattstown Bypass intersections with MD 355	Partial description in appendix
Hawkes Road	Rustic	Ridge Road to Stringtown Road	Partial description in appendix
<i>Cloverly Master Plan</i> (1997) (pp. 53-58)			
Avoca Lane	Rustic	Entire length	
Batson Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Bryant’s Nursery Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Johnson Road	Rustic	Entire length (or 410 feet from intersection)	
Link Road	Rustic		Entire length shows on map
Oak Hill Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Old Orchard Road	Rustic	Entire length	
<i>Fairland Master Plan</i> (1997) (pp. 96-99)			
Santini Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Dustin Road	Rustic	West of US 29	
Belle Cote Drive	Rustic	Entire length	

Road Name	Designation	Extents	Comments
<i>Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan</i> (1998) (pp. 54-57)			
Haviland Mill Road	Rustic	Brinkwood Road to County line	60' ROW recommended
Tucker Lane	Rustic	Ednor View Terrace to MD 108	60' ROW recommended
<i>Potomac Subregion Master Plan</i> (2002) (pp. 110-117)			
Berryville Road	Exceptional	Seneca Road to Darnestown Road	
Boswell Lane	Rustic	Piney Meetinghouse Road to Glen Mill Road	
Glen Road	Rustic	Query Mill Road to Piney Meetinghouse Road	
Glen Road	Exceptional	Piney Meetinghouse Road to Beekman Place	
Glen Mill Road	Rustic	Red Barn Lane to Circle Drive	
Glen Mill Road	Exceptional	Red Barn Lane to Glen Road	
Poplar Hill Road	Rustic	Berryville Road to Pavev Terrace	
Query Mill Road	Rustic	Esworthy Road to Turkey Foot Road	
South Glen Road	Exceptional	Glen Road to Deepglen Drive	
Stoney Creek Road	Rustic	Travilah Road to River Road	
Turkey Foot Road	Rustic	Darnestown Road to Travilah Road	
<i>Olney Master Plan</i> (2005)(pp. 99-102)			
Batchellors Forest Road	Rustic	1,200 feet east of Georgia Avenue to Dr. Bird Road	
Brighton Dam Road	Rustic	Town of Brookeville to Bordly Drive	
Triadelphia Lake Road	Rustic	Entire length	
<i>Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan</i> (2010) (pp. 81, 85)			
Game Preserve Road	Rustic	Clopper Road (MD 117) to Frederick Avenue (MD 355)	

- Update descriptions of Rustic Roads as recommended by the RRAC and residents.
 - Hoyles Mille Road, Boyds: Note closure to vehicles at park entrance
 - Mount Ephraim Road, Dickerson: Add a reference to the unpaved section
- Consider whether this classification is applicable to older, scenic downcounty roads that pass through historic districts, such as Brookville Road, Hawkins Lane, and Capitol View Avenue.

Align the Roadway Classifications with the New Road Code

The definitions for all of the County's roadway classifications per Chapter 49 of the County Code are shown in Attachment 2.

- Reclassify two roads now classified as Principal Secondary Residential Streets to Primary Residential Streets. Current candidates are:

Road Name	From	To	Average Daily Traffic (ADT)	Year
Burdette Road	Bradley Blvd	River Road	3,431	2013
Seven Locks Road	MacArthur Blvd	I-495	4,941	2013

- Reclassify some roads as Controlled Major Highways. Current candidates are:

Road Name	From	To	ADT	Year
Father Hurley Blvd	CSX Tracks	Germantown Road	7,731	2013
Great Seneca Hwy	Middlebrook Rd	Key West Avenue	22,100	2012
Midcounty Hwy	Shady Grove Rd	Montgomery Village Ave	23,761	2013
Norbeck Road	Layhill Rd	New Hampshire Avenue	22,182	2013
Proposed Midcounty Hwy	Great Seneca Creek	Redland Road	None	Unbuilt
River Road	Capital Beltway (I-495)	Ridgefield Road	43,620	2013

- Reclassify some roads as Parkways. Current candidate: Montrose Parkway
- Delete the segment of Beach Drive classified as a Park Road in the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan. (Park Roads are not included in the Road Code.)
- Clarify the classification of roads in the Silver Spring CBD which were not classified in the 2000 Sector Plan.
- Reclassify Clopper Road between Steeple Drive and Clarksburg Road from a Major Highway to a Country Arterial. Remove the proposed realignment at the intersection with Clarksburg Road.

- Reclassify some roads currently classified as Arterials or Primary Residential Streets as Minor Arterials, a classification that was added in the 2007 Road Code update. Current candidates are:

Road Name	From	To	ADT	Year	Current Classification
Apple Ridge Road	Watkins Mill Rd	Montgomery Village Avenue	6,700	2010	Primary
Arcola Avenue	University Blv	Georgia Avenue	14,921	2013	Arterial
Bel Pre Road	Norbeck Rd	Georgia Avenue	9,400	2012	Primary
Bowie Mill Road	Cashell Rd	Olney-Laytonsville Rd	6,891	2013	Primary
Bradley Lane	Wisconsin Ave	Connecticut Avenue	9,600	2014	Primary
Brookville Road	Western Ave	East-West Highway	6,902	2013	Primary
Capitol View Avenue	Forest Glen Rd	Metropolitan Avenue	8,074	2013	Primary
Capitol View Avenue Relocated	Stoneybrook Dr	Approximately 250' south of Edgewood Rd	9,500	2012	Primary
Carroll Avenue	University Blvd	Piney Branch Rd	9,841	2013	Primary
Cashell Road	Hines Rd	Emory Lane	5,681	2013	Primary
Dale Drive	Georgia Ave	Wayne Avenue	6,924	2013	Arterial
Dale Drive	Wayne Ave	Piney Branch Road	4,271	2013	Arterial
Dennis Avenue	Georgia Ave	University Boulevard	8,471	2013	Arterial
East Village Avenue	Goshen Rd	Woodfield Road	-	-	Primary
Fernwood Road	Bradley Blv	Democracy Boulevard	8,481	2013	Primary
Flower Avenue	Franklin Ave	Arliss Street	9,925	2013	Primary
Franklin Avenue	Flower Ave	University Blvd	10,375	2013	Primary
Franklin Avenue	Colesville Rd	Flower Ave	4,985	2013	Primary

Grosvenor Lane	Cheshire Dr	Rockville Pike	8,261	2013	Primary
Heritage Hills Drive	Olney-Laytonsville Rd	Georgia Avenue	1,741	2013	Arterial
Huntington Pkwy	Old Georgetown Rd	Bradley Boulevard	5,521	2013	Primary
Jones Bridge Road	Connecticut Ave	Jones Mill Road	11,695	2013	Primary
Jones Mill Road	Jones Bridge Road	East-West Highway	6,900	2013	Primary
Kemp Mill Road	Randolph Rd	Arcola Avenue	10,501	2013	Arterial
Leland Street	Bradley Blv	Woodmont Avenue	1,550	2013	Arterial
Manor Road	Connecticut Ave	Jones Bridge Road	4,150	2012	Primary
Piney Meetinghouse Road	Cavanaugh Dr/Shady Grove Rd Extended	Travilah Road	-	-	Primary
Seminary Road	Forest Glen Rd	Capital Beltway (I-495)	-	-	Arterial
Seminary Road	Capital Beltway (I-495)	Georgia Avenue	6,542	2013	Arterial
Sligo Avenue	Woodbury Dr	Piney Branch Road	5,671	2013	Arterial
Travilah Road	Darnestown Rd	Dufief Mill Road	9,521	2013	Primary
Valley Park Drive	Ridge Rd	Woodfield Road	-	-	Arterial
Wayne Avenue	Sligo Creek Parkway	Flower Avenue	7,821	2013	Primary
Wilson Lane	Old Georgetown Rd	Bradley Boulevard	9,010	2013	Arterial
Wilson Lane	Bradley Blvd	River Road	8,802	2013	Arterial
Wilson Lane	River Road	MacArthur Boulevard	6,030	2013	Arterial

Approach

In the mid-1990's, we began working on a compilation of all the various highway recommendations in the Master Plans to create a comprehensive Master Plan of Highways and Transitways table showing the classifications and right-of-way widths for each Master Plan road. This has been used as an in-house information resource since about 2000 and has been shared with MCDOT staff as a working document, updated as new Plans are approved and adopted. This work has provided the basis for the Master Plan Amendment.

The goal of approving and adopting the Master Plan of Highways is a broad one. There are objectives in the proposed work effort that affect the whole county, such as reclassifying roads to Minor Arterials or Controlled Major Highways. But there are other objectives, such as the potential widening of a segment of Gude Drive that are more local in nature.

Outreach

The project team will provide outreach to residents of the entire county because of the global nature of this Functional Master Plan Update. Where draft recommendations would affect incorporated municipalities, elected officials will be informed and given the opportunity to comment. Civic associations will receive notice of public meetings.

Department staff held a community meeting in each of the four planning team areas in April 2010 to identify citizens' concerns with the proposed changes, during which an overview of the master plan work was provided by staff but few comments were received from the public, most likely because no concrete proposals were set forward at that time. One comment we did receive however was that we should be looking at Rustic Road designation for older, scenic downcounty roadways that pass through historic districts, such as Brookville Road in Chevy Chase and Capitol View Avenue. This will be considered, as noted in "Make Changes and Additions to Rustic Roads" above.

This memo to the Board is intended not just as an update on the restart of this plan, but the inclusion of the list of candidate roads being considered is intended to elicit comments in advance of making public presentations of the draft plan with specific recommendations next year. Members of the general public will be kept informed of the progress of the project through InfoShare, as well as news releases when appropriate, and the master plan's website will be kept up to date and will provide the opportunity to leave comments:

<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/highways/mpoh.shtm>

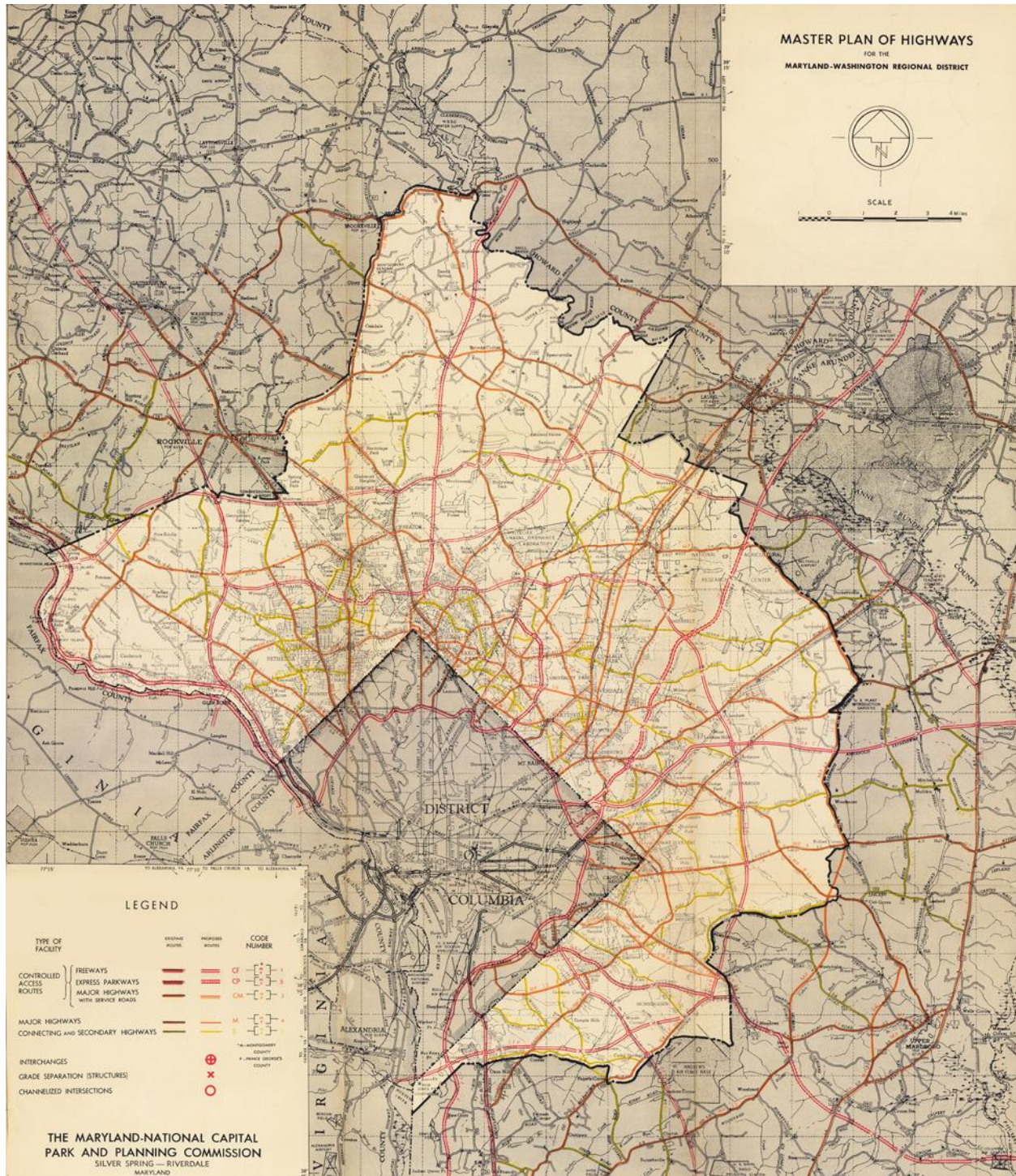
In addition to outreach to members of the general public, the team will also work with a technical advisory group, including representatives of the Parks Department, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, the Maryland State Highway Administration, the Regional Service Centers, and the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee.

Schedule

Meet with area transportation planners	September 22, 2014
Provide update to Planning Board	November 20, 2014
Establish Draft Recommendations	
Meet with technical advisory group*	December 2, 2014
Publish initial plan on website and solicit public comment	January 26, 2015
Revise initial plan and hold public meeting	February 23
Meet with technical advisory group	March 9
Publish Staff Draft recommendations	April 2
Present Staff Draft to Planning Board	April 9
Public Hearing Draft	
Planning Board approval to advertise Public Hearing Draft	May 21
Advertise Public Hearing Draft (30-day review)	June 1
Develop Planning Board Draft Plan	
Public hearing draft packet due	June 25
Public hearing	July 2
Planning Board Worksessions (3)	July 9 & 30, September 17
Planning Board approval to prepare PB Draft	October 8
PB Draft Packet due	November 5
Transmit Planning Board Draft to Council	November 12, 2015
Council Review	
Earliest Council public hearing date (60-day review)	January 11, 2016
Council Worksessions (3)	February-April
Council approval	April 2016
Commission adoption	June 2016

Attachment 1

Map showing boundaries of the 1955 Master Plan of Highways for Montgomery and Prince George's Counties



Attachment 2

Sec. 49-31. Classification of roads.

Each road, except those listed in subsections (m)-(n), must be classified as designated in the applicable master or sector plan. This Section defines the vehicular functions of each road classification.

- (a) A Freeway is a road meant exclusively for through movement of vehicles at a high speed. Access must be limited to grade-separated interchanges.
- (b) A Controlled Major Highway is a road meant exclusively for through movement of vehicles at a lower speed than a Freeway. Access must be limited to grade-separated interchanges or at-grade intersections with public roads.
- (c) A Major Highway is a road meant nearly exclusively for through movement of vehicles at a moderate speed. Access must be primarily from grade-separated interchanges and at-grade intersections with public roads, although driveway access is acceptable in urban and denser suburban settings.
- (d) A Parkway is a road meant exclusively for through movement of vehicles at a moderate speed. Access must be limited to grade-separated interchanges and at-grade intersections. Any truck with more than 4 wheels must not use a Parkway, except in an emergency or if the truck is engaged in Parkway maintenance.
- (e) An Arterial is a road meant primarily for through movement of vehicles at a moderate speed, although some access to abutting property is expected.
- (f) A Country Arterial is an Arterial, typically in the County's agricultural reserve.
- (g) A Minor Arterial is a 2-lane Arterial meant nearly equally for through movement of vehicles and access to abutting property.
- (h) A Business District Street is a road meant for circulation in commercial and mixed-use zones.
- (i) An Industrial Street is a road meant for circulation in industrial zones.
- (j) A Primary Residential Street is a road meant primarily for circulation in residential zones, although some through traffic is expected.
- (k) A Country Road is a road that has the function of a Primary Residential Street, typically in the County's agricultural reserve.
- (l) A Principal Secondary Residential Street is a Secondary Residential Street meant to carry somewhat more through traffic.
- (m) A Secondary Residential Street is a road meant to provide access between a residential development with fewer than 200 dwelling units and one or more higher classification roads as defined in subsections (b) through (l).
- (n) A Tertiary Residential Street is a road meant to provide direct access to a residential development with 75 or fewer dwelling units. A Tertiary Residential Street must not be built

unless the Planning Board allows its use when the Board approves a preliminary subdivision plan or site plan.

(o) A Rustic Road or an Exceptional Rustic Road means a road classified as either under Article 8.

(p) An Alley is a right-of-way intended to provide secondary service access to the rear or side of lots or buildings and not intended for transporting through traffic. An alley may be used to provide primary vehicular access if the Planning Board and the Director of Transportation concur that the dimensions and specifications proposed in a project, preliminary subdivision , or site plan would provide adequate primary vehicular access.