

OUTREACH

Conducting a long-term master plan can be demanding. Keeping the public engaged in the planning effort for more than two years can be difficult. How do you ensure your stakeholders are actively involved after the initial rush of outreach efforts winds down? How do you keep your plan's outreach exciting and relevant while also building support with the bicycling community?

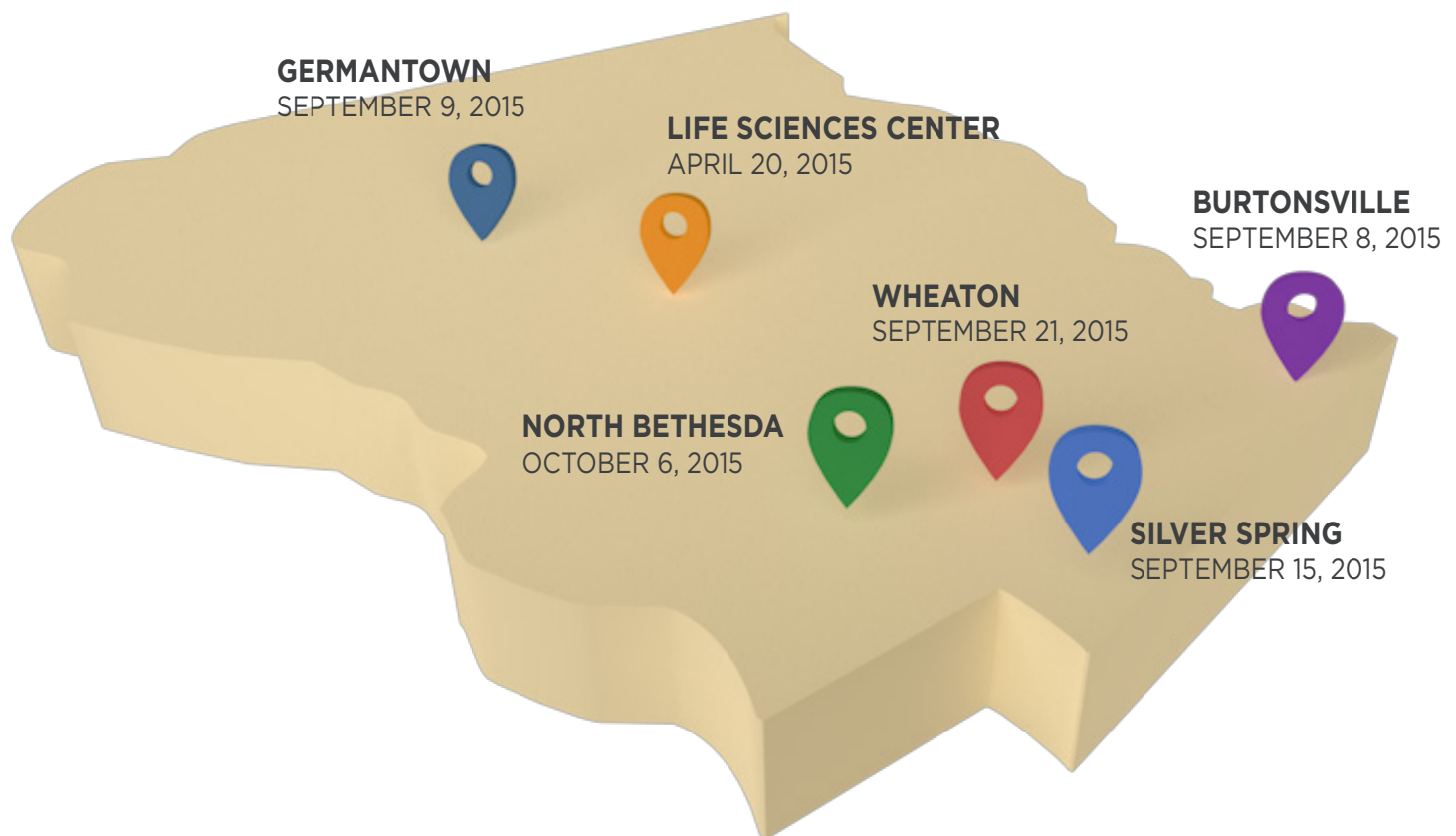
The outreach program for the Bicycle Master Plan has been strategic, thoughtful and effective in its comprehensive approach to innovative community engagement. By implementing a strategic communication plan, staff followed a "road map" focused on audience, messaging and deliverables in order to create a strong and consistent brand for the plan.

The resulting feedback from stakeholders and media exposure showed the communication plan worked. The following pages outline the tools used to achieve the communication goals for the Bicycle Master Plan.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Public meetings are an important way to engage broad cross section of community members in a master plan. They allow staff to engage directly with the public, explain concepts that are difficult to convey on paper and allow for informative conversations among planners and residents. When you conduct a countywide effort such as the Bicycle Master Plan, one or two meetings are insufficient. In 2015, the Bicycle Master Plan team conducted six public meetings in different areas of the county to engage a broader cross section of the public. In 2017, five public meetings were held to discuss the preliminary recommendations of the plan.

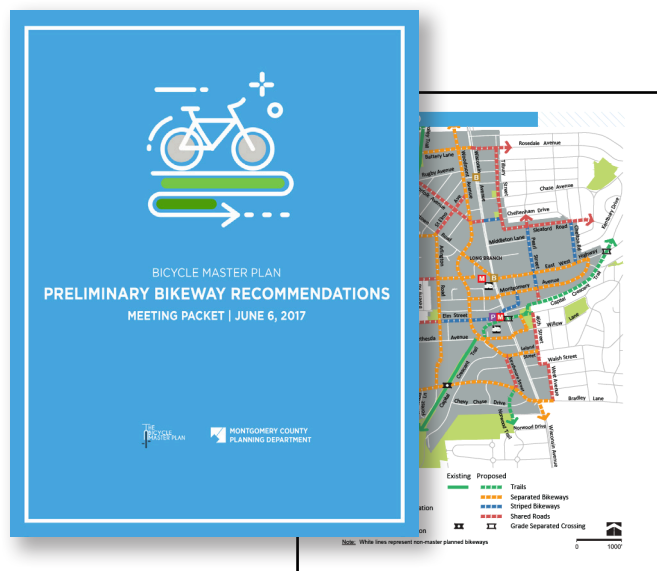
Kick-off Meetings



Preliminary Bikeway Recommendations

Five public meetings to review the preliminary bikeway recommendations for the Bicycle Master Plan were held in June 2017.

Each event consisted of an open house and informal discussion from 4 to 7 p.m. when attendees met with Planning Department staff to review and discuss the bikeway recommendations. The open house was followed by a bikeway recommendations presentation and a question-and-answer session.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community events enabled the public to engage with the Bicycle Master Plan team in informal settings. From community-led bike rides that allowed the public to identify bicycling concerns in their neighborhoods to Park(ing) Day where the staff demonstrated bicycle corrals and separated bike lanes, the events were fun and informative for planners and county residents.

Great MoCo Bike Summits

The annual Great MoCo Bike Summit provided a fantastic opportunity to update the community on the progress of the Bicycle Master Plan. In 2015, the Planning Department created a gigantic wall map of Montgomery County. Attendees wrote their thoughts and concerns about bicycling on the map. This document was the foundation for the online, GIS-based Cycling Concerns

Feedback Map where comments were collected electronically. Bike summits were held in Silver Spring (2015) and Rockville (2016), when the planning team continued to inform the public about the Bicycle Master Plan.





Community Bike Rides



The planning team wanted to “ride the talk” so they held community bike rides that toured various areas of Montgomery County.



OLNEY



SATURDAY, MAY 7, 2016



BURTONSVILLE/ FAIRLAND



SATURDAY, JULY 24, 2016



COLESVILLE



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2016



WHEATON



SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 2017



The Wheaton Community Bike Ride

Park(ing) Day

In 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Bicycle Master Plan team took to downtown Silver Spring to transform parking spaces into educational and interactive displays of bicycle concepts. In 2015, the team chose to feature the benefits of bicycle parking and, in 2016, the team created a simulated separated bike lane using stationary bicycles and potted plants (pictured right). In 2017, the team featured poster-sized pages from their low-stress coloring book (see page 224 for more details).

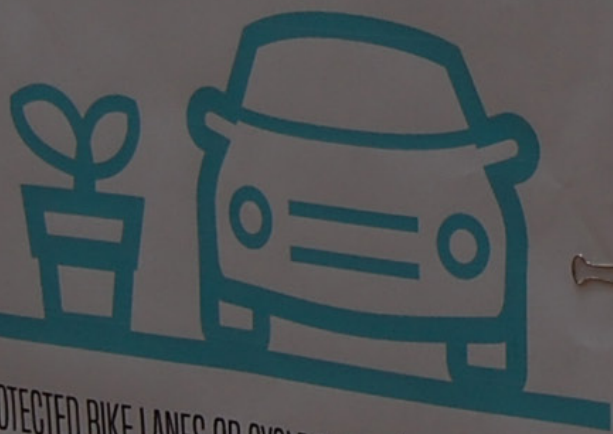


Photos: (clockwise from top right) Bike corral in 2015, simulated separated bike lane in 2016, low-stress coloring book in 2017





IT'S LIKE TO RIDE IN A
PROTECTED BIKE LANE!



PROTECTED BIKE LANES OR CYCLE TRACKS) PROVIDE A SAFER,
RIDE YOUR BICYCLE. THESE BIKEWAYS PROVIDE A LOW-STRESS
AND PHYSICAL SEPARATION FROM BOTH MOTOR VEHICLES AND

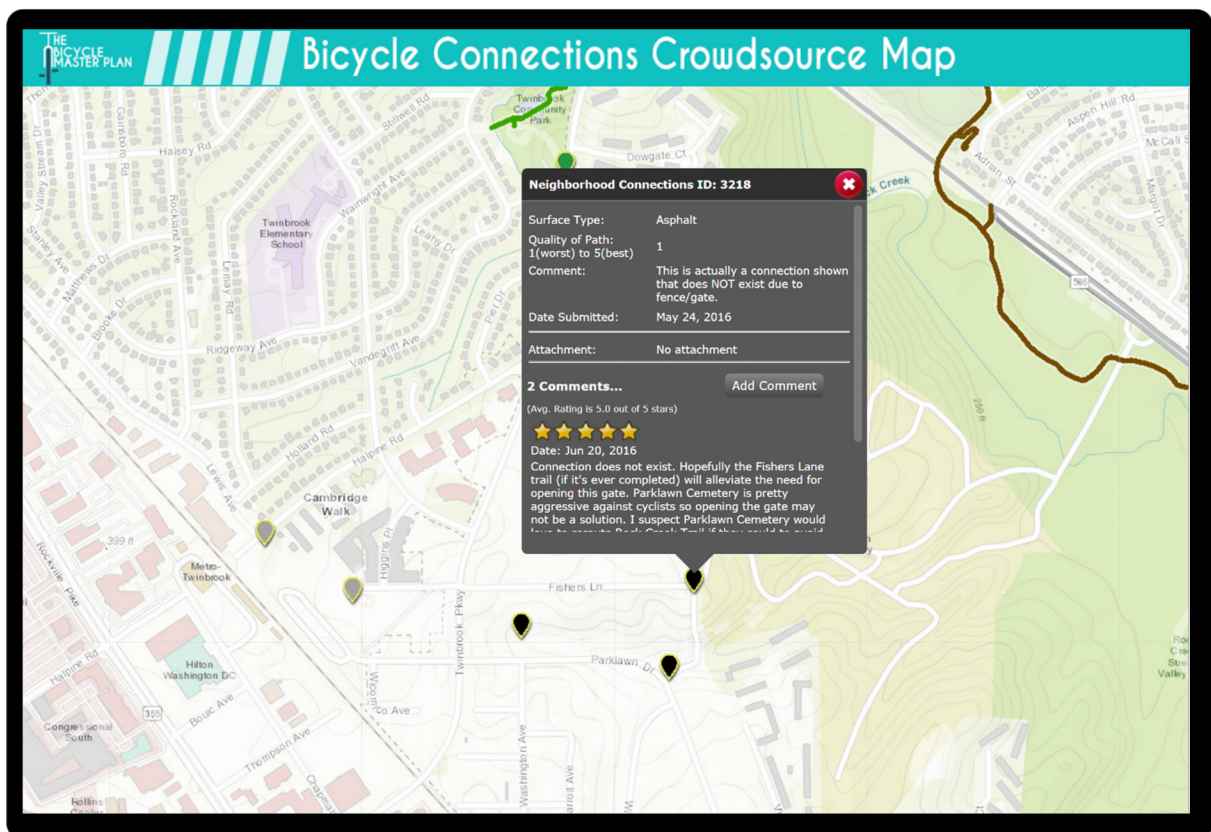
OW...
PROTECTED BIKE LANE

ONLINE OUTREACH

Online tools enable the Planning Department to engage members of the community who are unable or unwilling to attend public meetings and events. These methods include digital feedback maps, such as the Cycling Concerns Feedback Map and the Bikeway ReactMap, crowd sourcing maps, such as the Cycling Connections Map, and online tools, such as the Bicycle Stress Map.

Cycling Connections

Neighborhood connections are small bikeways that are vital for community connectivity but are often so short that they do not show up in county maps. To increase the number of neighborhood connectors in its database, the Planning Department created a crowdsourcing map and asked the public to identify locations of neighborhood connections. Nearly 200 comments indicating possible locations were received in 2016.



Media Coverage

While the Bicycle Master Plan will create a long-term vision for bicycling in Montgomery County, it is also a chance to build a strong bicycling community. Events such as the photo contest and the low-stress coloring book create fun opportunities to engage the public and to encourage them to sign up for our newsletter, while providing valuable information about in Montgomery County that is included in the plan.



If done well, the **project could do more than make life easier for cyclists**: It could ease traffic, cut carbon emissions and spur economic growth by drawing residents and visitors to newly accessible areas.

- Washington Post Editorial, June 21, 2015



NOTABLE PAPERS

“HANDY ‘STRESS MAP’ HELPS CYCLISTS AVOID THE SCARIEST OF STREETS”

-Wired, April 26, 2017

“NEW MAP SHOWS SPOTS WHERE BI-CYCLISTS STRESS OUT DUE TO DANGER LEVEL”

-Washington Post, April 7, 2016

“WITH MORE PEOPLE BIKING, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE TRYING TO MAKE IT EASIER”

-WTOP, August 13, 2015

“COUNTY PLANNERS TO APPLY BICYCLING STRESS TEST”

-Bethesda Magazine, May 21, 2015



NOTABLE BLOGS

“KEEPING A BIKE PLAN IN HIGH GEAR: MONTGOMERY COUNTY’S PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN”

-American Planning Association, May 2017

“CLOSING GAPS IN LOW-STRESS NETWORKS TO BRING BICYCLING TO MORE PEOPLE”

-Mobility Lab, June 20, 2017

“MONTGOMERY COUNTY AIMS TO BECOME A MODEL CYCLING COMMUNITY”

-Greater, Greater Washington, June 2, 2015

“THIS MAP SHOWS MONTGOMERY COUNTY’S PROPOSED BIKEWAYS”

-Technically DC, June 14, 2017

“CYCLING STRESS MAP HELPS BIKERS AVOID TRICKY STREETS”

-Curbed, April 28, 2017

Cycling Concerns Feedback Map

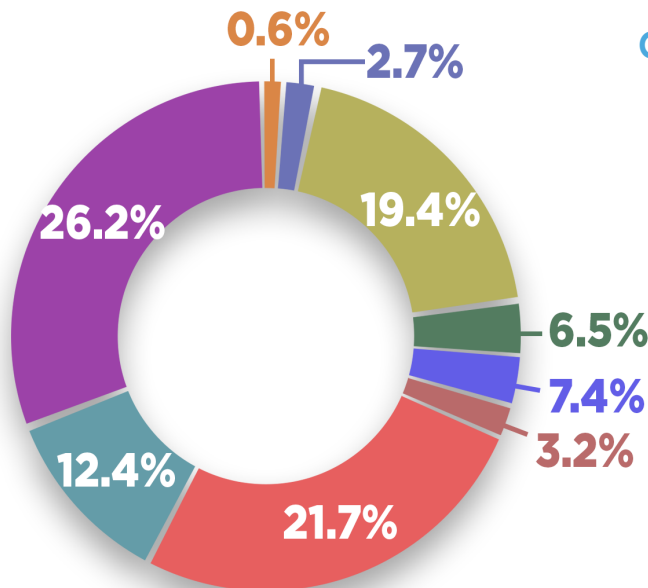
In September and October 2015, Montgomery County residents were invited to share their concerns and ideas, and provide comments on the **Cycling Concerns Feedback Map**, an interactive tool for communicating with the public.



1,896 TOTAL COMMENTS



1,191 UNIQUE POINTS OF INTEREST



COMMENTS BY THE NUMBERS

- BICYCLE-SAFE GRATE NEEDED** (12 COMMENTS)
- CARS BLOCK BIKEWAY** (51 COMMENTS)
- DIFFICULT CROSSING** (367 COMMENTS)
- HIGH TRAFFIC VOLUME** (123 COMMENTS)
- EXCESSIVE SPEED** (140 COMMENTS)
- INSUFFICIENT BICYCLE PARKING** (60 COMMENTS)
- OTHER CONCERNS** (411 COMMENTS)
- POOR PAVEMENT** (236 COMMENTS)
- POOR / NO CONNECTION** (496 COMMENTS)

TOP 12 POLICY AREAS WITH THE MOST CONCERNS

SILVER SPRING/TAKOMA PARK: 296	OLNEY: 95
BETHESDA/CHEVY CHASE: 272	NORTH BETHESDA: 86
KENSINGTON/WHEATON: 233	ASPEN HILL: 63
BETHESDA CBD: 138	FAIRLAND/COLESVILLE: 62
SILVER SPRING CBD: 126	WHITE OAK: 56
RURAL EAST: 101	ROCKVILLE CITY: 51

TOP 10 STREETS & ROADS WITH THE MOST CONCERNS

MACARTHUR BLVD: 29	VEIRS MILL ROAD: 18
CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL: 28	GEORGETOWN BRANCH TRAIL: 18
WOODMONT AVENUE: 24	COLESVILLE ROAD: 16
GEORGIA AVENUE: 22	BEACH DRIVE: 16
NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE: 20	WAYNE AVENUE: 14



VIEW THE MAP AT
MCATLAS.ORG/CYCLINGCONCERNS

TYPES OF CONCERNS

-  Difficult Crossing
-  Bicycle-Safe Grate Needed
-  Poor/No Connection
-  Cars Block Bikeway
-  Excessive Speed
-  Poor Pavement
-  High Traffic Volume
-  Other
-  Insufficient Bicycle Parking

EXISTING BIKEWAYS

-  Bike Lanes
-  Shared Use Paths
-  Separated Bike Lanes
-  Hard Surface Park Trails

Bicycle Stress Map

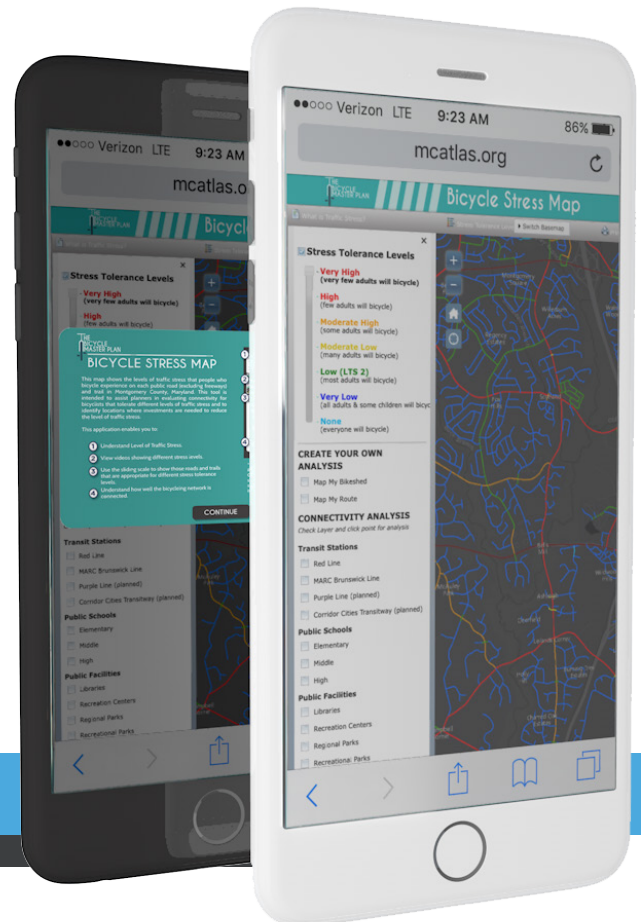


The map provides a **data-driven approach** to understanding bicycle connectivity by linking the traffic stress evaluation to the goals, objectives and performance metrics outlined in the county's Bicycle Master Plan.

- American Planning Association (APA)



» MCATLAS.ORG/BIKESTRESS



The **Bicycle Stress Map** is a publicly accessible tool located on the Montgomery County Planning Department website at www.mcatlas.org/bikestress. It shows the stress levels encountered when bicycling in different areas of Montgomery County, from very low stress (appropriate for children) to very high stress (appropriate for only about one percent of adults). Videos linked to the map explain the experience of bicycling in areas with different traffic stress conditions.

The Bicycle Stress Map was launched in April 2016 and has been widely embraced for highlighting how difficult it is for the average person to travel by bicycle in Montgomery County. While most adults can bicycle on 75 percent of the road miles in the county, only about 14 percent of trips can be completed on a low-stress bicycling network.

3,500+ MILES

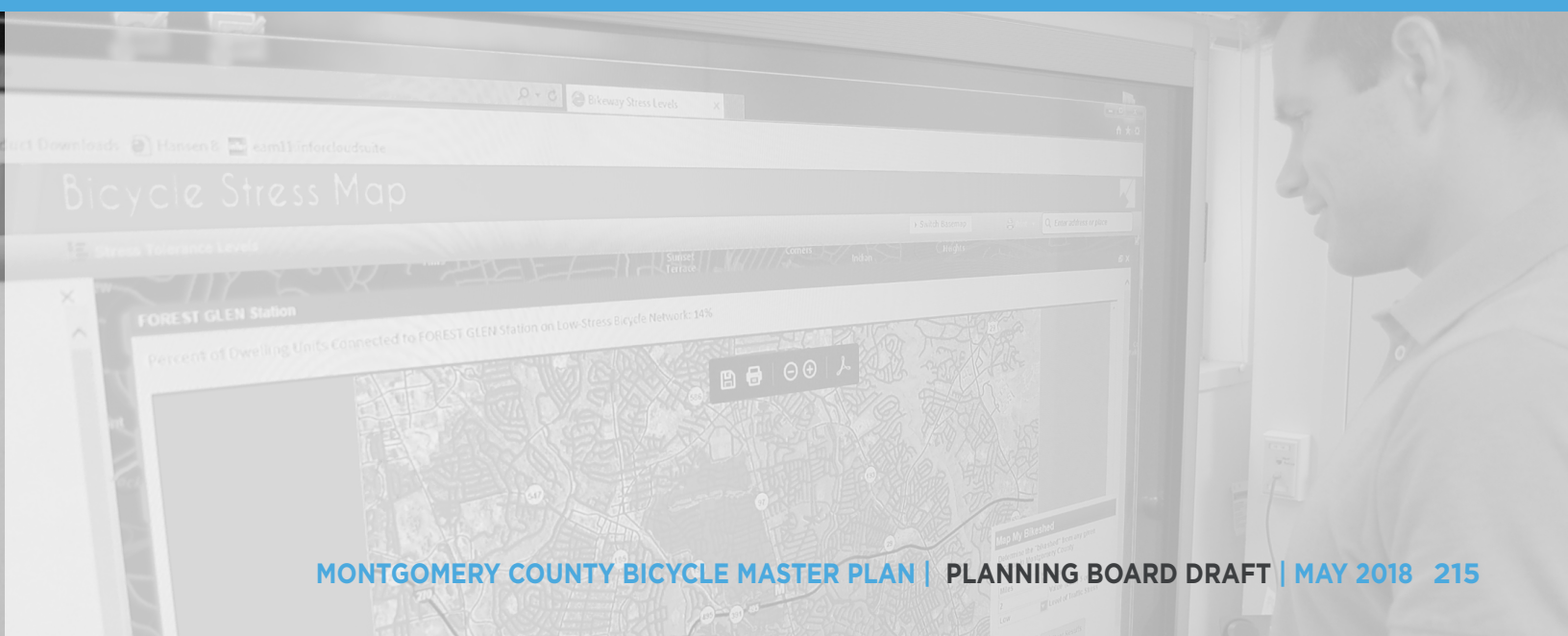
of roads and trails were assigned a level of traffic stress during the creation of the map by Montgomery County Planning Department staff. Project team members used a combination of online resources as well as site visits to evaluate the conditions of the roads.



AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION
**2017 NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING | GOLD**



AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION - NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER
**2016 AWARD FOR AN OUTSTANDING
IMPLEMENTATION TOOL**



Bikeway ReactMap

The **Bikeway ReactMap** encouraged the public to comment on the Bicycle Master Plan's preliminary bikeway recommendations. Users could view the map legend, review a brief description of bikeway facility types and add comments about the bikeway recommendations.

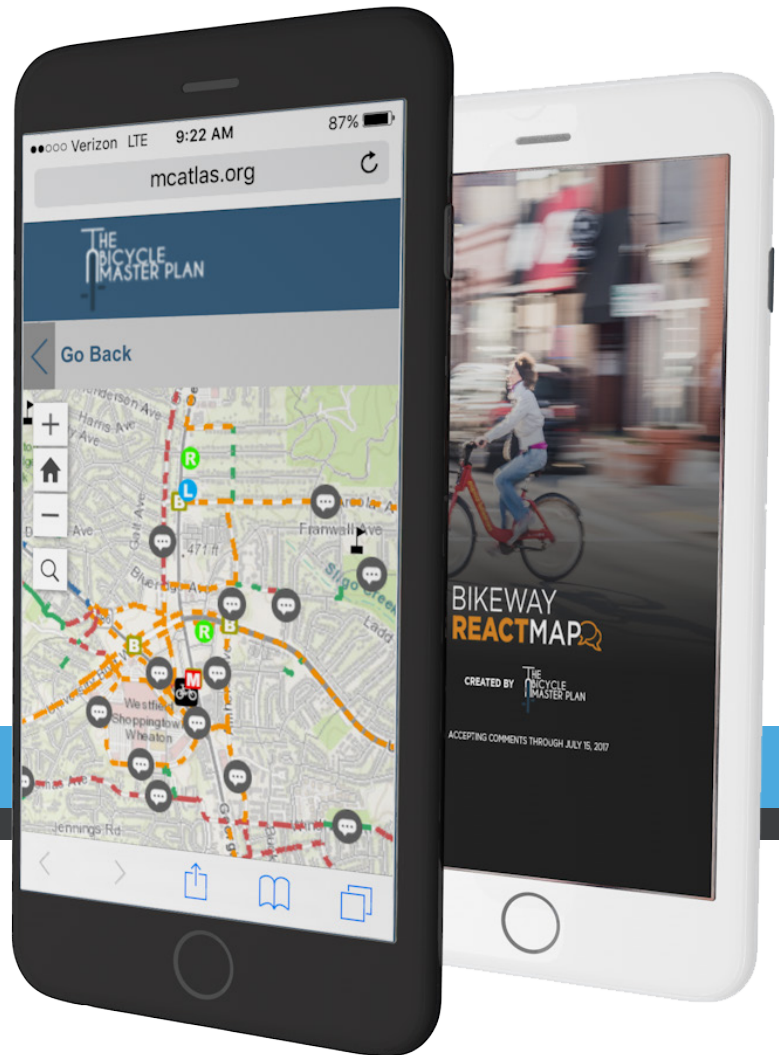


**1,489 TOTAL
COMMENTS**



**4,699 TOTAL
PAGE VIEWS**

» MCATLAS.ORG/BIKEREACT



TOP 11 LOCATIONS WITH MOST COMMENTS

Woodmont Avenue and Bethesda Avenue	12
Bethesda Trolley Trail Crossing Tuckerman Lane	10
Proposed New Bridge over I-495 at Colesville Road	9
Grosvenor Lane East of MD 355	9
Woodmont Ave Between Elm Street and Bethesda Avenue	8
Proposed Trail along I-495 between Stoneybrook Drive and Linden Lane	8
Stoneybrook Drive between Capitol View Avenue and Kent Street	6
Capital Crescent Trail at Little Falls Parkway	7
Oakview Drive at Northwest Branch Trail	6
Maple Avenue at DC line	6
Fenton Street south of Silver Spring Avenue	6



TOP 10 POLICY AREAS WITH MOST COMMENTS

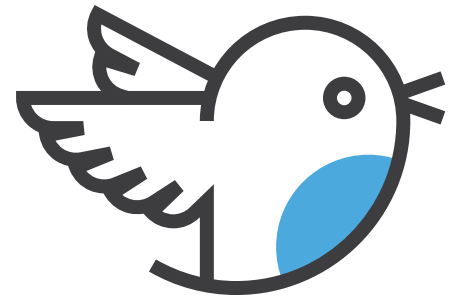
Kensington/Wheaton	251
Silver Spring/Takoma Park	187
Bethesda/Chevy Chase	173
North Bethesda	85
Silver Spring CBD	82
Bethesda CBD	80
Fairland/Colesville	78
Rural East	85
Rural West	52
Aspen Hill	49

TOP 13 STREETS AND TRAILS WITH MOST COMMENTS

Fenton Street	42
Capital Crescent Trail	33
Old Georgetown Road	26
Bethesda Trolley Trail	26
Capitol View Avenue	25
Beach Drive	20
New Hampshire Avenue	19
Intercounty Connector Trail	18
Carroll Avenue	17
Randolph Road	16
Rockville Pike	16
Maple Avenue	16
Woodmont Avenue	16

Social Media

To reach as many stakeholders as possible, the Bicycle Master Plan team launched a Twitter account and communicated information through the Planning Department's Facebook account. Posts about updates on the plan, videos and photos provided a forum that extended beyond community meetings and press releases.



TWITTER | @MCBIKEPLAN
500+ Followers



E-LETTER
800+ Subscribers

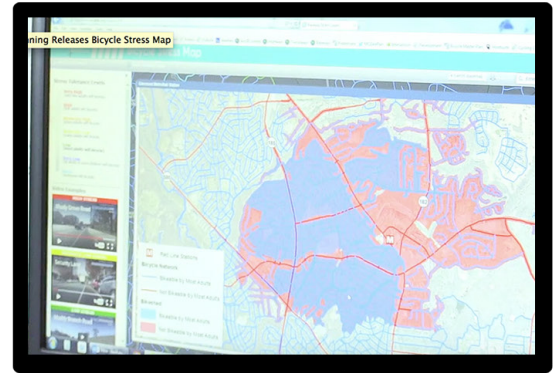


Video



BICYCLE MASTER PLAN PROMO

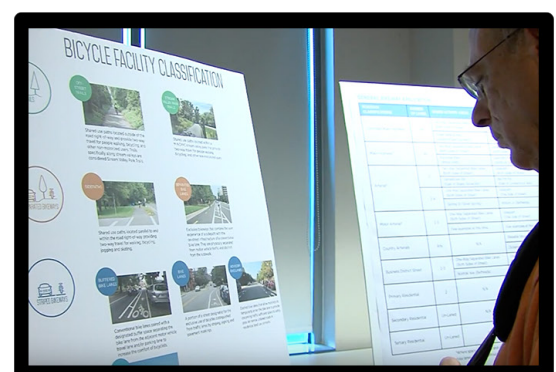
*2015 MarCom Awards
Platinum Award Winner*



BICYCLE STRESS MAP RELEASE



PARK(ING) DAY 2016



PRELIMINARY BIKEWAY RECOMMENDATIONS MEETING

VIDEOS CAN BE VIEWED AT [YOUTUBE.COM/MONTGOMERYPLANNING](https://www.youtube.com/montgomeryplanning)





COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

In 2016, the Planning Board appointed a diverse 21-member community advisory group to provide advice to the Bicycle Master Plan team. This group includes eight members representing different geographic areas of Montgomery County, as well as 13 representatives of community organizations and interest groups.

16 MEETINGS

INNOVATIVE OUTREACH

While the Bicycle Master Plan will create a long-term vision for bicycling in Montgomery County, it is also a chance to build a strong bicycling community. Outreach tools such as the photo contest and the low-stress coloring book create fun opportunities to engage the public and encourage them to sign up for our newsletter, while providing valuable information about the progress of the plan.



Photo Contest

In September and October 2016, the Planning Department held the bicycle photo contest to engage the public and choose images for the **Bicycle Master Plan** and other planning documents. The public voted on the winners using an online poll.



61 PHOTOS
SUBMITTED



400+
VOTES

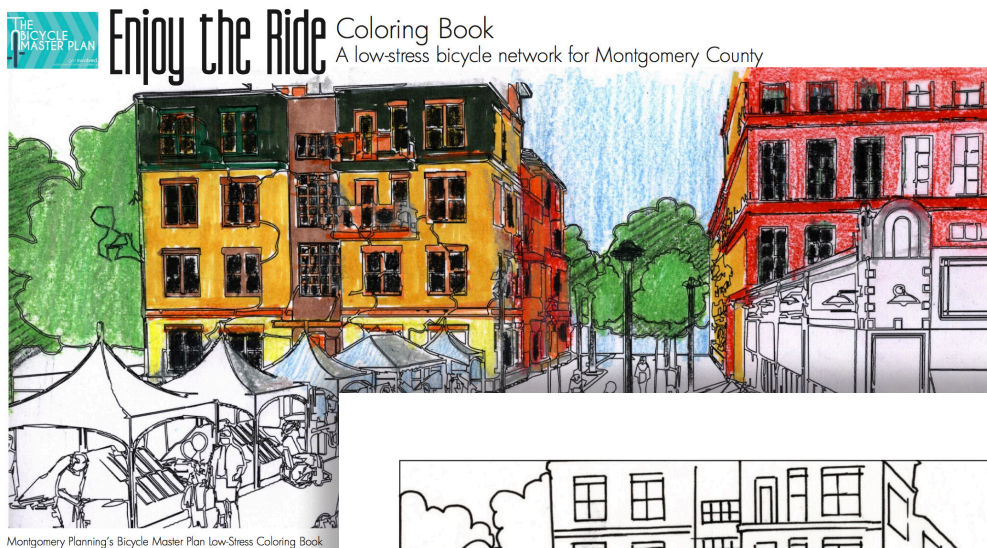


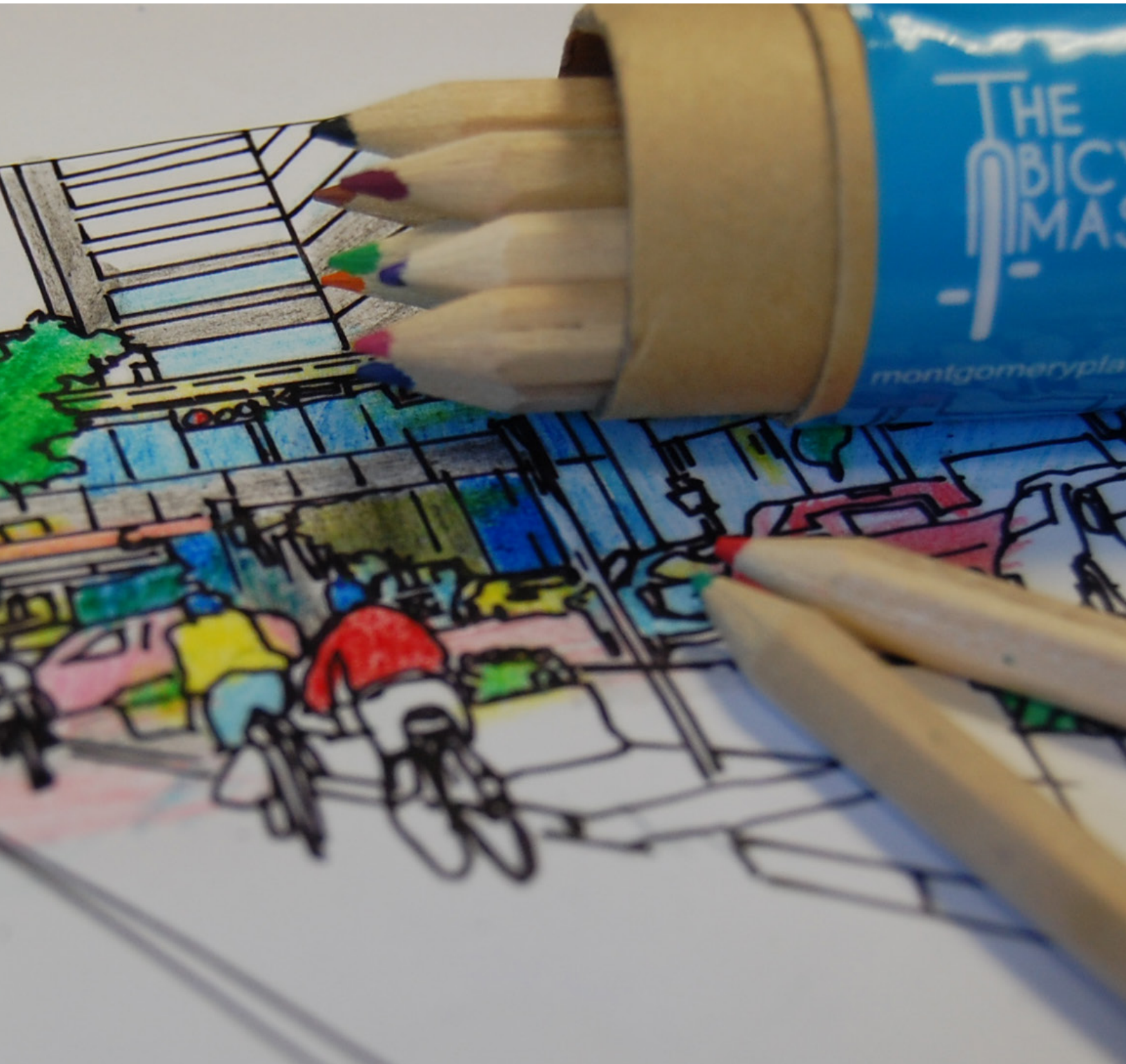
5 WINNING
SELECTIONS

Photo: Winning Recreational Bicycling Photo By Scott Wilets

Coloring Book

A 34-page coloring book, *Enjoy the Ride*, was made available online to the public in fall 2017 to present the types of bikeways included in the draft Bicycle Master Plan. Since the goal of the plan is to create a low-stress bicycle network that will let people of all ages and abilities feel comfortable riding a bike, the book seemed fitting, since coloring has also been shown to be a stress-relieving activity. Each black-and-white page depicts a different type of bikeway, such as a neighborhood greenway, a separated bike lane and a trail. The community was invited to post their completed illustrations online to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram using hashtag #lowstressbiking.





Transit Ads



WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY (WMATA) DISPLAYS

The plan used a mix of English and Spanish outreach at key Metrorail stations and bus stops to reach a wide audience.

AD RUN SCHEDULE

Ads ran in 2017

SHADY GROVE	7/3 - 7/30	○
WHITE FLINT	6/5 - 7/23	○
GROSVENOR-STRATHMORE	6/5 - 7/30	○
MEDICAL CENTER	6/5 - 7/30	○
BETHESDA	6/5 - 7/30	○
FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS	6/5 - 7/23	○
SILVER SPRING	7/3-7/30	○
WHEATON	6/5 - 7/30	○
GLENMONT	6/5 - 7/6	○



Above: Artwork for the WMATA advertising campaign.

Right: The advertisement placed on the platform at the Shady Grove Metro Station.



BUS SHELTERS



AD LOCATIONS

Ads ran from June 5 to July 2, 2017



**MONTGOMERY
VILLAGE**



WHITE OAK



ASPEN HILL



VEIRS MILL RD.



LONG BRANCH



Above: Artwork for the bus shelter advertising campaign.

Left: The advertisement placed on bus shelter at the corner of University Boulevard and Piney Branch Road.

