Photo Lynn Ho
Best Kid Picture
Bicycle Master Plan Photo Contest
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

- **GERMANTOWN**
  - September 9, 2015
- **LIFE SCIENCES CENTER**
  - April 20, 2015
- **NORTH BETHESDA**
  - October 6, 2015
- **WHEATON**
  - September 21, 2015
- **SILVER SPRING**
  - September 15, 2015
- **BURTONSVILLE**
  - September 8, 2015
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.
The planning team wanted to “ride the talk” so they held community bike rides that toured various areas of Montgomery County.

**Community Bike Rides**

- **Olney**
  - Saturday, May 7, 2016

- **Burtonsville/Fairland**
  - Saturday, July 24, 2016

- **Colesville**
  - Sunday, October 30, 2016

- **Wheaton**
  - Saturday, June 17, 2017
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).

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 RED BIKE LANE!

Protected bike lanes or cycle tracks provide a safer, ride your bicycle. These bikeways provide a low-stress using physical separation from both motor vehicles and

OW...
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.”


**NOTABLE PAPERS**

“HANDY ‘STRESS MAP’ HELPS CYCLISTS AVOID THE SCARIEST OF STREETS”
- Wired, April 26, 2017

“NEW MAP SHOWS SPOTS WHERE 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
- Bethesda/Chevy Chase: 272
- Kensington/Wheaton: 233
- Bethesda CBD: 138
- Silver Spring CBD: 126
- Rural East: 101
- Olney: 95
- North Bethesda: 86
- Aspen Hill: 63
- Fairland/Colesville: 62
- White Oak: 56
- Rockville City: 51

TOP 10 STREETS & ROADS WITH THE MOST CONCERNS
- MacArthur Blvd: 29
- Capital Crescent Trail: 28
- Woodmont Avenue: 24
- Georgia Avenue: 22
- New Hampshire Avenue: 20
- Veirs Mill Road: 18
- Georgetown Branch Trail: 18
- Colesville Road: 16
- Beach Drive: 16
- Wayne Avenue: 14
VIEW THE MAP AT MCATLAS.ORG/CYCLINGCONCERNS

TYPES OF CONCERNS

- Difficult Crossing
- Poor/No Connection
- Excessive Speed
- High Traffic Volume
- Insufficient Bicycle Parking

- Bicycle-Safe Grate Needed
- Cars Block Bikeway
- Poor Pavement
- Other

EXISTING BIKEWAYS

- Bike Lanes
- Separated Bike Lanes
- Shared Use Paths
- Hard Surface Park Trails
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 16 percent of trips can be completed on a low-stress bicycling network.

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

MCATLAS.ORG/BIKEREACT
### TOP 10 POLICY AREAS WITH MOST COMMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kensington/Wheaton</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Spring/Takoma Park</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethesda/Chevy Chase</td>
<td>173</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Bethesda</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Spring CBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bethesda CBD</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairland/Colesville</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural East</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural West</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspen Hill</td>
<td>49</td>
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</table>

### TOP 13 STREETS AND TRAILS WITH MOST COMMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fenton Street</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Crescent Trail</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Georgetown Road</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethesda Trolley Trail</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitol View Avenue</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach Drive</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire Avenue</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercounty Connector Trail</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carroll Avenue</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph Road</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockville Pike</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Avenue</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodmont Avenue</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.
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
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.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHADY GROVE</td>
<td>7/3 - 7/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE FLINT</td>
<td>6/5 - 7/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROSVENOR-STRATHMORE</td>
<td>6/5 - 7/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDICAL CENTER</td>
<td>6/5 - 7/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETHESDA</td>
<td>6/5 - 7/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS</td>
<td>6/5 - 7/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILVER SPRING</td>
<td>7/3 - 7/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEATON</td>
<td>6/5 - 7/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLENMONT</td>
<td>6/5 - 7/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above: Artwork for the WMATA advertising campaign.

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