



Scope of Work

September 5, 2019

Montgomery Planning

Introduction



Connecticut Avenue Bus Stop

Whether walking to a bus stop on Veirs Mill Road, rolling to work on a mobility scooter in Germantown, jogging for exercise in Bethesda or making the trip to school in Burtonsville, all Montgomery County residents are pedestrians at some point during the day. A safe, comfortable and convenient walking experience is a fundamental right for Montgomery County residents, employees and visitors.

While the county has made great progress improving the pedestrian environment in recent years, conditions remain poor in many places. The Pedestrian Master Plan is an opportunity to make walking safer, more comfortable, more convenient and more equitable by developing policy and programmatic recommendations, prioritizing

infrastructure improvements and insisting on pedestrian-forward design in all communities.

This Scope of Work defines the context and purpose for Montgomery County's Pedestrian Master Plan and highlights the process and timeline proposed by Planning Department staff to develop the plan.

Planning Context



Downtown Bethesda

While Montgomery County has never adopted a Pedestrian Master Plan, the county has approved numerous master plans that describe the quality of the existing pedestrian realm and recommend future improvements, including street cross-sections, sidewalk materials and lighting.

Urban design guidelines have also been developed for several master plans, most recently for the Rock Spring and White Flint 2 Sector Plans and the Bethesda Downtown Plan. These documents guide the build-out

and character of the pedestrian network within the plan boundaries and focus on the network as part of urban design and placemaking strategies.

At a countywide level, several plans and planning efforts particularly affect pedestrians. The Countywide Park Trails Master Plan, originally adopted in 1998 and last amended in 2016, identifies a vision for future natural and hard surface park trails. It acknowledges that many trails are used for both recreation and transportation.

The 2018 Bicycle Master Plan is primarily focused on two-wheel travel, but recommendations for separated bike lanes in urban areas, sidepaths in suburban and rural areas, and neighborhood greenways on residential streets provide opportunities for enhanced and/or dedicated space for pedestrians countywide.

In 2016, Montgomery County approved a resolution adopting a Vision Zero approach to road safety. It published a Vision Zero Two-Year Action Plan in 2017 as the first step to eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2030. Among other action items, the plan recommends the development of a Pedestrian Master Plan “to address the unique issues faced by pedestrians and people with disabilities.”

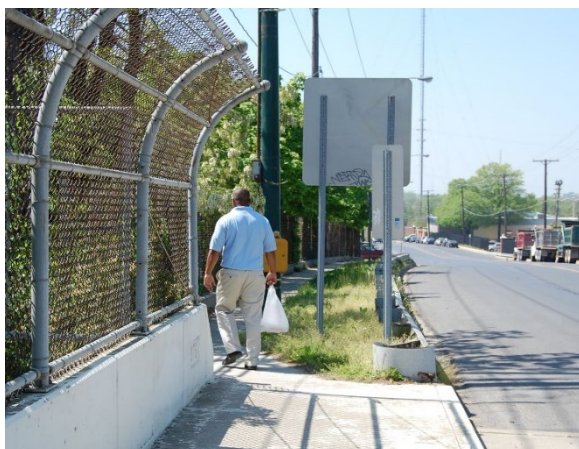
Currently, the Planning Department is working with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) on a Complete Streets Design Guide. The guide will present MCDOT’s standard street cross-sections and typologies with more context-sensitive guidance. It aims to improve the pedestrian experience countywide by identifying preferred sidewalk and street buffer widths, right-sizing travel lane widths, block lengths, protected crossing spacing, and other street dimensions.

All of these planning efforts affect pedestrians, but none center them. The Pedestrian Master Plan will draw on previous plans where applicable and provide an opportunity for the county to take serious and necessary steps to improve pedestrian safety, comfort and access in all its communities.



Sidepath along Rockledge Boulevard

Purpose of Master Plan



Running Errands in Lyttonsville

The purpose of this plan is to enhance the pedestrian experience in Montgomery County. Walking should be the preferred means of travel for all trips within a short distance, and accessibility for persons with disabilities must be paramount. Walking and rolling on a mobility scooter or wheelchair should be comfortable, convenient, safe and direct. The plan will strengthen the existing culture of walking and expand it in the years ahead.

In service of these goals, the plan will draw on national and international best practices to prioritize necessary infrastructure, provide design guidance and recommend countywide policies, regulations and programming.

Schedule

The Pedestrian Master Plan will be divided into ten tasks.

Task 0: Outreach and Engagement (Ongoing)

- The intent of the outreach and engagement effort is to make it as easy as possible for the public to help shape the development of the plan and communicate with Planning Department Staff through traditional meeting formats, the project website and social media.
- Kickoff Meetings: Staff will conduct a series of public meetings in October and November throughout the County to discuss the approach to the Pedestrian Master Plan and receive initial feedback from the community. Kickoff meetings will be held in Silver Spring, Bethesda, Wheaton, Germantown, Olney and White Oak.
- Technical Working Groups: Staff will conduct meetings with two technical working groups, one internal and one interagency. Both groups will discuss and refine the existing conditions, analysis and potential plan recommendations.
- Community Advisory Group: Staff will establish a community advisory group that meets monthly to provide plan input on all aspects of the plan. Advisory group membership will be selected through an application process with members being chosen to represent a variety of residents, community groups, advocacy organizations, and geographic areas of Montgomery County. Applications will be made public shortly after the kickoff meetings are complete.
- Community Meetings: Upon request, staff will meet with neighborhood groups and others to discuss the Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Project Website: A website will be maintained for the project. The website will include meeting materials and opportunities to engage with the plan analyses and recommendations as they are developed.
- Email Newsletter: Staff will provide periodic updates to the public on the development of the plan through an email newsletter.
- Phone/Online Survey: Staff will develop and facilitate a statistically valid survey about pedestrian conditions, perceptions, and activity countywide.
- Social Media: Staff will develop social media posts for dissemination through Department accounts and those of county agencies and elected officials to promote plan elements and events, in addition to encouraging community members to share their pedestrian stories.
- Draft Recommendations Meetings: Staff will conduct a series of public meetings throughout the county to review the draft Pedestrian Master Plan recommendations and solicit community feedback about proposed recommendations.
- Planning Board Public Hearing: The public will have the opportunity to testify about the Public Hearing Draft Plan and submit comments for a period after the public hearing.

Task 1: Planning Board Scope of Work (September 2019)

- The Planning Board will review and approve a Scope of Work for the plan.

Task 2: Identify Best Practices for Pedestrian Master Plans (May-October 2019)

- Review pedestrian master plans from around the globe to identify the components of a world-class pedestrian plan, including the organization, integration with other modes of transportation, use of goals, objectives, performance measures, visuals, implementation and other plan elements. A

consultant will provide guidance on how Montgomery Planning can learn from other jurisdictions in this country and abroad to develop a world-class plan.

Task 3: Existing Conditions, Perceptions and Best Practices Report (September 2019 -January 2020)

- Staff will prepare a report identifying existing walking conditions at a countywide level, resident perceptions of pedestrian comfort and best practices from pedestrian plans across the country. Staff will brief the Planning Board and members of the County Council when this task is complete.
- The report will draw on several sources for existing conditions information, including:
 - Montgomery County Department of Transportation data collection on the presence, dimensions and condition of curb ramps, sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals and bus stops.
 - Connectivity analyses using the Planning Department's countywide Pedestrian Level of Comfort metric.
 - Demographic data from the US Census, Montgomery County and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC).
 - County Statistics Department Crash Data and Sidewalk Repair 311 Requests
- Perceptions of resident pedestrian comfort will be derived from a statistically valid survey conducted online and over the phone by a consultant in Fall 2019. The survey will collect respondent demographic and locational information. Among other things, respondents will be asked to identify:
 - How often they walk and for what purposes
 - Factors that prevent them from walking more
 - Ranked pedestrian safety issues
 - Knowledge of traffic laws relating to pedestrians
 - Programming ideas to increase pedestrian mode share (open-ended)



Walking along a Rustic Road

Task 4: Pedestrian Infrastructure Prioritization (October 2019 – October 2020)

- Staff will develop a countywide pedestrian infrastructure prioritization approach using the Planning Department's Pedestrian Level of Comfort analysis, MCDOT's sidewalk and crossing inventory, MWCOC's Equity Emphasis Areas, Vision Zero crash analyses and other factors.
- The approach will provide guidance for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to direct their resources to improve pedestrian infrastructure.

Task 5: Progressive Pedestrian Design Toolkit (January-October 2020)

- Staff will develop a document that details specific pedestrian-oriented design treatments and operational approaches, to include traffic calming measures, accessibility features, signal timing, and public space amenities.

- Similar to the Bicycle Facility Design Toolkit, the document will be highly visual, and include definitions, dimensions, and guidance on appropriate usage of pedestrian-forward treatments.
- At a minimum, the document will help planners make thoughtful requests of private development and MCDOT officials.

Task 6: Pedestrian-Supportive Policies (January-October 2020)

- Existing county policies and regulations directly or indirectly affect the pedestrian experience in Montgomery County. Staff will review existing policy and regulations focusing on how they could be enhanced to yield a safer, more accessible and more connected pedestrian environment.
- Staff will coordinate with the ongoing General Plan effort to incorporate pedestrian-forward policies into that document where appropriate.
- After consultation with relevant county agencies, staff will develop recommendations identifying what policies/regulations should be changed, what new policies/regulations should potentially be adopted and the benefits to pedestrians that would accrue as a result.

Task 7: Pedestrian-Supportive Programming (January-October 2020)

- Staff will review existing programming that occurs in the county that affects pedestrians, either by county agencies, Montgomery County Public Schools and other groups.
- Staff will make recommendations for changes to existing programming and/or new programming. Potential programming could relate to general traffic safety, pedestrian safety and wayfinding, driver education, trip-making for those with visual disabilities, ADA compliance, police (training on appropriate enforcement), etc.



Walking in Kensington

Task 8: Planning Board Review and Transmittal (November 2020 – May 2021)

- Staff will present the Working Draft Pedestrian Master Plan to the Planning Board for its review and approval. The draft will be published as the Public Hearing Draft and the Board will hold a public hearing to receive comments from all stakeholders. The public hearing will be followed by Planning Board work sessions for the Board to discuss the issues and comments raised during testimony and make changes to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff will revise the Public Hearing Draft based on the Board's guidance and prepare the Planning Board Draft for the Board's approval. The approved Planning Board Draft will then be transmitted to the County Executive and County Council for final approval and adoption.

Task 9: Council Review and Approval (June 2021 – January 2022)

- After receiving the Planning Board Draft, the County Executive has 60 days to review the draft and prepare an assessment of fiscal impacts of implementing the draft Pedestrian Master Plan policies

and send this report to the County Council. The County Council, in the meantime, will set a date for the public hearing to be held after the County Executive's 60-day comment period.

- After receiving testimony at the public hearing, the Council's Transportation and Environment (T&E) Committee will hold work sessions and forward its recommended changes to the full Council, which will hold full Council work sessions and approve a revised plan. The approved Pedestrian Master Plan will then be adopted by the Planning Board and the full Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Project Timeline

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January
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Planning Board
Briefing/Action