

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposed Washington Boulevard Bike, Pedestrian and Roadway Enhancements

1. **Why are changes to the layout of Washington Boulevard being proposed right now? When are they proposed to take place?**

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is planning to resurface Washington Boulevard, between McKinley Road and Sycamore Street, because of deteriorating pavement conditions. VDOT asked Arlington if there were any changes to the new striping we would recommend to improve mobility and safety along the corridor.

The repaving would be done in 2017, typically between April and November. Shortly after the new pavement is in place, the road striping plan will be marked.

2. **What is the purpose of the public meeting?**

The meeting is to share the concept plan's detailed layouts, along with the information used to inform the proposal. It is also an opportunity for the community to provide any feedback that staff could use to help refine and improve the proposal.

3. **Will there be changes to sidewalks, pedestrian ramps, landscaped areas, traffic signals, lighting and/or speed limits?**

All of the proposed changes are limited to areas within the asphalt paved area of the roadway only. The road will only be repaved and restriped, not physically modified.

4. **The plan shows new bike lanes on Washington Boulevard. Why are bicycle lanes needed there?**

Making Arlington's streets more "multi-modal" has been an overarching goal of the County's Master Transportation Plan (MTP) "Complete Streets" policy since 2008. Specifically, in the MTP and in the 1999 Bicycle Master Plan that preceded it, bicycle improvements along this stretch of Washington Boulevard was identified. The East Falls Church area plan of 2011 also recommended bike lanes on Washington Boulevard. Bike lanes on this stretch will help connect the County's growing Capital Bikeshare system from the East Falls Church Metro Station to the multiple bikeshare stations in Westover.

5. **Why put bike lanes on Washington Boulevard if the Custis Trail is nearby?**

Just as drivers want to take the most direct route to get to their destination, so do people riding bikes. (For example - driving between the East Falls Church Metro Station and Westover without using Washington Boulevard presents an indirect route with numerous stop and turns. Then consider taking that trip using only the power of your two legs.)

The route along Washington Boulevard provides a brief, direct and fairly- level ride between Westover and the East Falls Church Metro Station. (Also, a new Capital Bikeshare station was recently installed at the East Falls Church Metro, with a new one to be installed at the Westover Library this spring). Connecting these destinations via the Custis Trail requires numerous turns on and off of neighborhood streets - a less direct route with more significant hills. Interstate 66 also forms a barrier between the trail and neighborhood streets that connect to Washington Boulevard.

6. **Has the County considered options that do not include bicycle lanes?**

Yes. All options involve various trade-offs in parking impact and public safety for cyclists, pedestrians and transit users. The current proposal addresses what the County considers to be the best balance of needs along this corridor.

7. Is there research that shows bike lanes improve pedestrian safety more than other options? How do bike lanes compare with speed bumps - or a row of parked cars - when it comes to pedestrian safety?

Bike lanes and on-street parking lanes both provide a buffer between moving vehicles and pedestrians on the sidewalk. However, the narrowing of travel lanes needed to create bike lanes and their buffers, combined with high visibility crosswalk enhancements, help change the character of the street from an automobile dominated environment to one that better accommodates other users. This helps reduce travel speeds, which does have a direct and positive effect on pedestrian safety. Speed humps are not used on arterial streets such as Washington Boulevard.

8. Is there data about pedestrian safety on Washington Boulevard between Westover and the East Falls Church Metro Station? Have there been accidents involving pedestrians?

Over the past five years, there have been 56 reported crashes between Sycamore Street and McKinley Road. Five of these involved pedestrians. More than half of the crashes took place at the intersections of Sycamore Street and McKinley Road on Washington Boulevard - the others took place at different locations between Sycamore Street and McKinley Road. Per our data, crashes tend to happen throughout the day, with no clear trends in terms of time of incident. (Speed data is being compiled and will be provided soon).

9. Would there be changes to parking on Washington Boulevard with this proposed plan? If so, how much would be lost?

The concept plan, would remove on-street parking from the street frontage of 21 of the 72 single family homes that directly front/face Washington Boulevard along this corridor. Nearly all of these homes have private parking available in driveways.

The County understands that removing parking can be difficult for people who have come to rely on it. However, we believe the impacts are manageable and the benefits to the community could be worth the tradeoffs.

10. How will the loss of parking impact residents living on side streets?

Residents may notice more cars parked on side streets than previously. However, our utilization observations (taken during the day, evenings and on weekends) show there is adequate parking available across Washington Boulevard and on side streets during even the busiest parking periods.

11. How will parking at the Lutheran Resurrection Church be affected by the proposed plan?

Twelve diagonal back in parking spaces will be permanently marked in front of the Lutheran Church. These spaces will be available for use at all times. However, parking directly across the street would be removed.

12. How will parking for the businesses at the Westover Shopping Center be affected?

There will be no changes to parking at or near the Westover businesses and library.

13. What is the timeline for finalizing a design?

March 1 – Community Open House & Presentations on draft proposal

March 8 – Deadline for community comments

Last week of March – Update meeting with community to review final plan and learn how feedback was incorporated

March 31 – Final plan submitted to VDOT for spring installation through re-paving & striping

14. How can I comment on the draft proposal?

Contact David Goodman: dgoodman@arlingtonva.us or 703-228-3709

Project webpage: Visit www.arlingtonva.us; keyword search "Washington Boulevard"