

Expanding The Bethesda Trolley Trail

Woodglen Dr & Nicholson Ln to Twinbrook Feasibility Study



North Bethesda

Transportation Management District (TMD)

Meeting

April 19, 2023



Agenda

- Project Background
- Project Status Update
- Next Steps
- Questions & Discussion



Project Goals

**EVALUATE
ALTERNATE
ALIGNMENTS**

**IDENTIFY
GAPS**

**GATHER
FEEDBACK**

**PRESENT
POTENTIAL
ROUTES**

- . Explore alignment alternatives to expand the Bethesda Trolley Trail (BTT) and develop a wayfinding plan to connect to regional trails and neighborhoods.
- . Evaluate existing and proposed off-road and on-road bicycle facilities between Edson Lane and Woodglen Drive to Twinbrook Metro station.
- . Identify gaps in the overall bicycle network in North Bethesda.
- . Engage major stakeholders and community members to gather feedback.

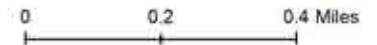
Study Area

- Area between North Bethesda (White Flint) and Twinbrook Metro Stations along and around Rockville Pike (MD 355).
- Many new and planned land development and infrastructure projects in the area.
- Several existing destinations in the study area.
- Opportunities to connect neighborhoods and regional trails.



North Bethesda to Twinbrook Bikeway Study

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, MD. Date: 2022



Trolley To Trails

—Timeline of the Trolley—

1890

- The Georgetown and Tenallytown Railway Company operated trolleys along Wisconsin Avenue in Georgetown to the DC boundary.
- The Tenallytown and Rockville Railroad operated trolleys in Bethesda.

1897-1900

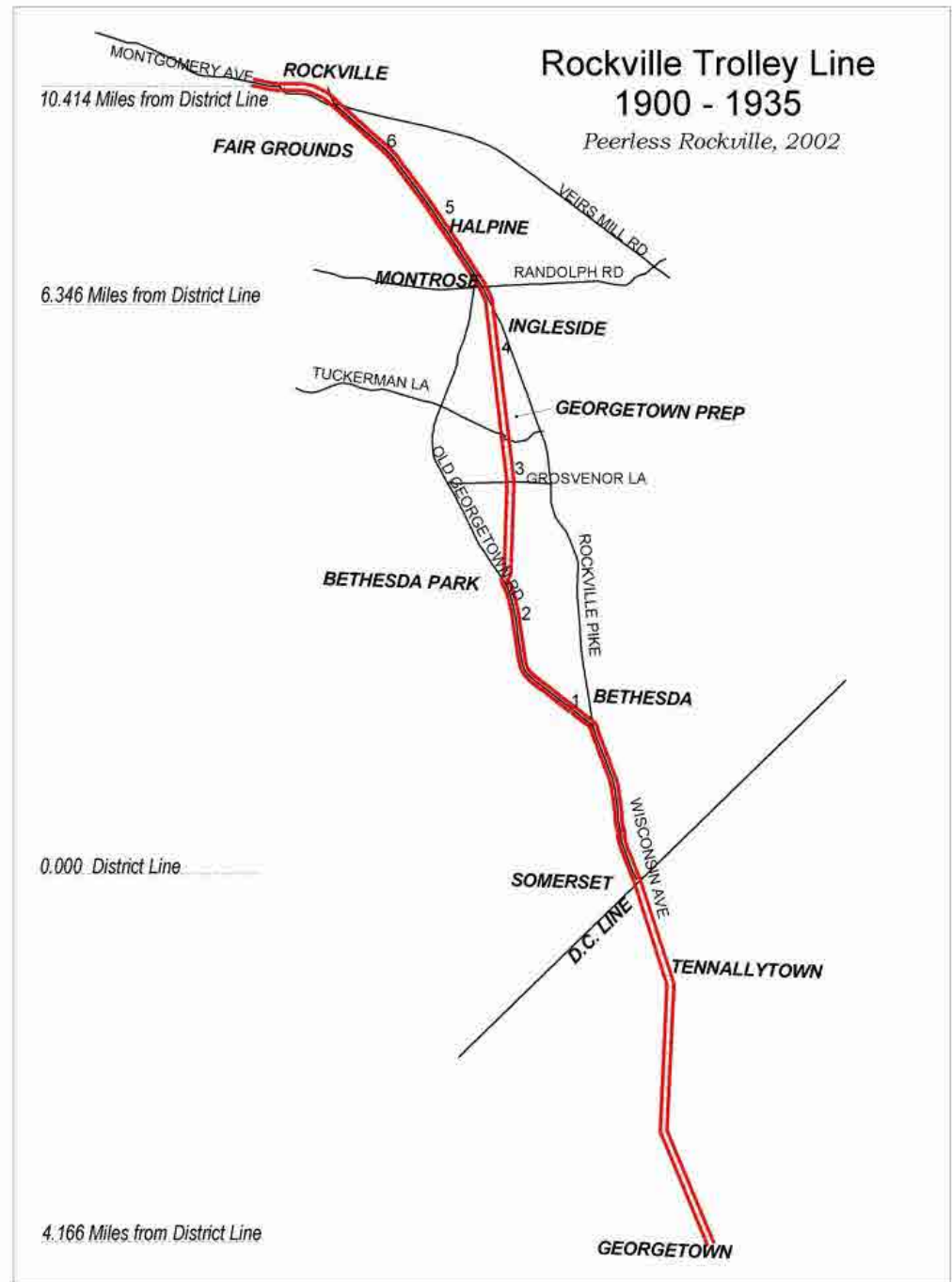
- The two railroads merged and completed an extension to the county seat of Rockville.
- Trolleys ran from Georgetown to Rockville.

1902

- The Washington Railway and Electric Company acquired the merged railroads in 1902, and later became part of Capital Transit.

1935

- In 1935, the Rockville trolley line ceased operation.



Trolley To Trails

Timeline of the Trail

1978

- Countywide Bikeways Master Plan recommended to design a trail along rail ROW.

Early 2000s

- Construction of The Bethesda Trolley Trail begins

2005

- Trail construction from Cedar Ln intersection to the intersection of Randolph Road begins.

2008

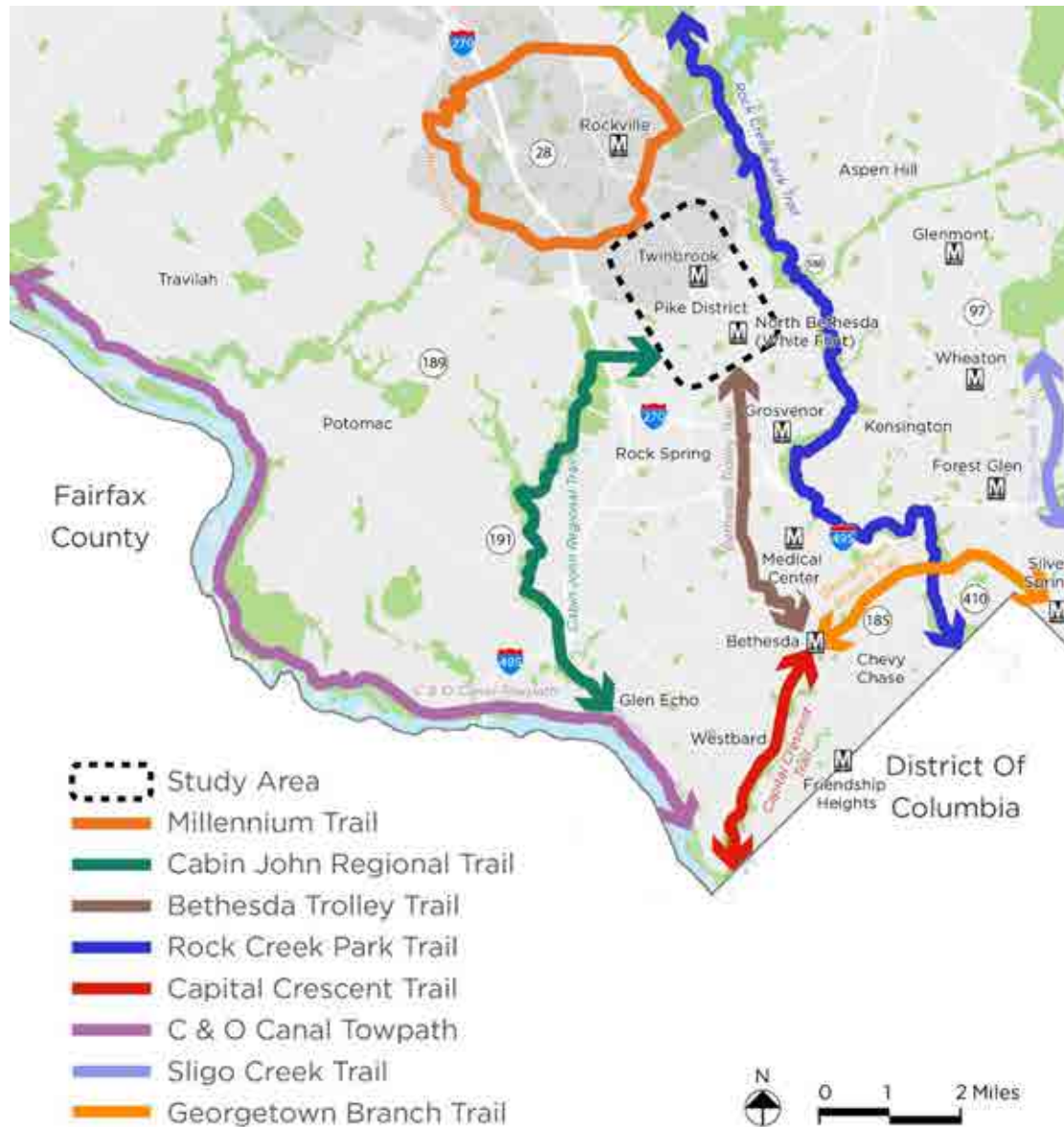
- Southern edge of the trail is built connecting Battery Lane Urban Park and Rugby Ave.

2009

- Shared use path along Rockville Pike (MD 355) is constructed.



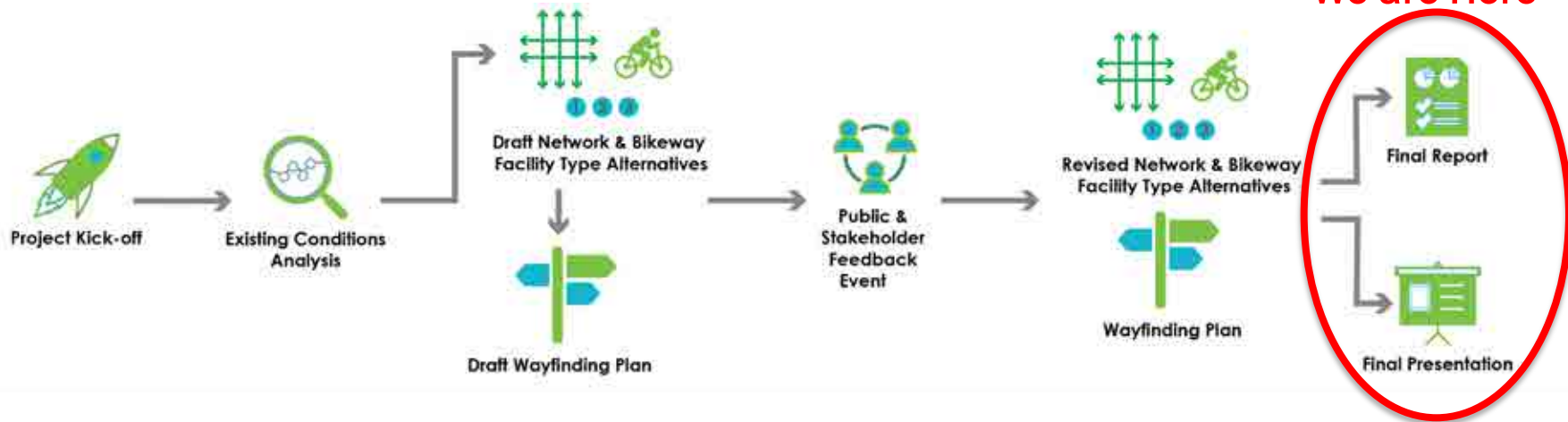
Key Link in the Trail Network



Connecting To Regional And Local Trails



Planning Process & Schedule



Task	2022		2023															
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	
1. Project Kick-Off	█																	
2. Existing Conditions Analysis		█	█	█	█													
3. Public Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
4. Alternatives Development					█	█	█	█										
5. Recommendations & Final Report										█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
6. MCDOT & MDOT Review & Project Close-Out																█	█	█

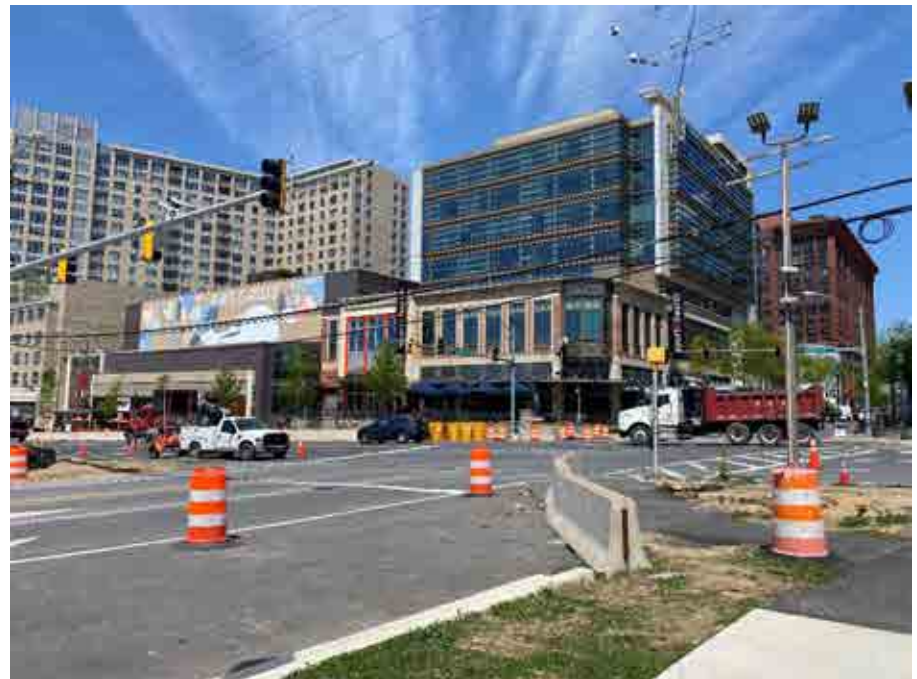
We are Here

Walking Tour

On April 29, 2022

Observed recently completed and on-going projects in the area.

Discussed issues and opportunities for future improvements.



Existing Conditions Analysis – Datasets

Land Use & Zoning

- Existing Land Use
- Zoning
- Development Projects in Pipeline

Demographics

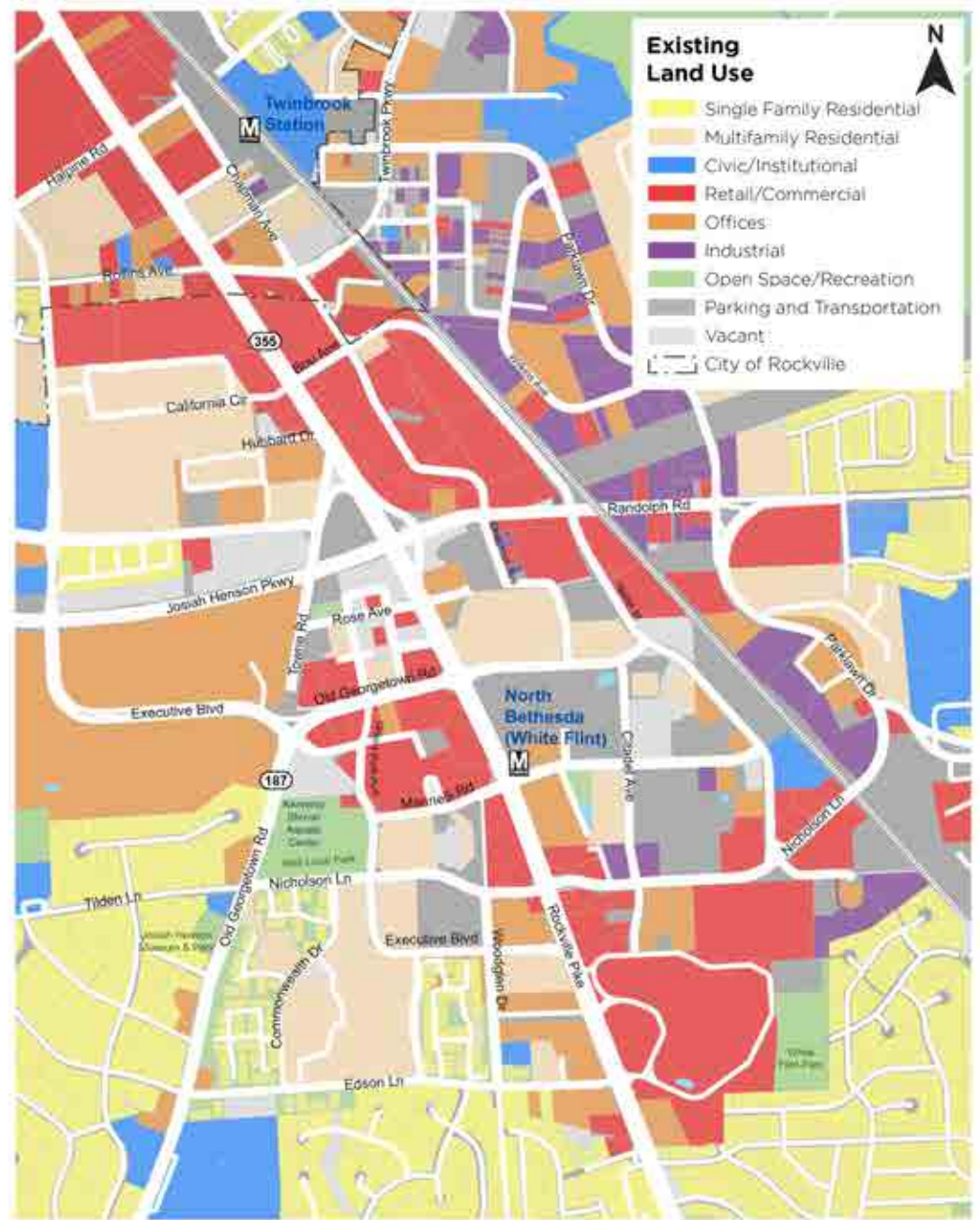
- Equity Emphasis Areas
- Youth and Senior Population
- Households in Poverty
- Households with No Vehicles

Transportation

- Road Network – Functional Classification
- Road Network – Posted Speeds
- Transit Network
- Crash Data
- Pedestrian Network
- Bicycle Network

Existing Land Use

- Mix of commercial, office, and residential land uses in the study area.
- Everyday destinations like restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations, banks, car rental facilities, large shopping centers and hotels along Rockville Pike (MD 355).
- Light Industrial land uses along rail corridor, especially on east side.
- Many large vacant parcels that are likely to redevelop.



North Bethesda to Twinbrook Bikeway Study

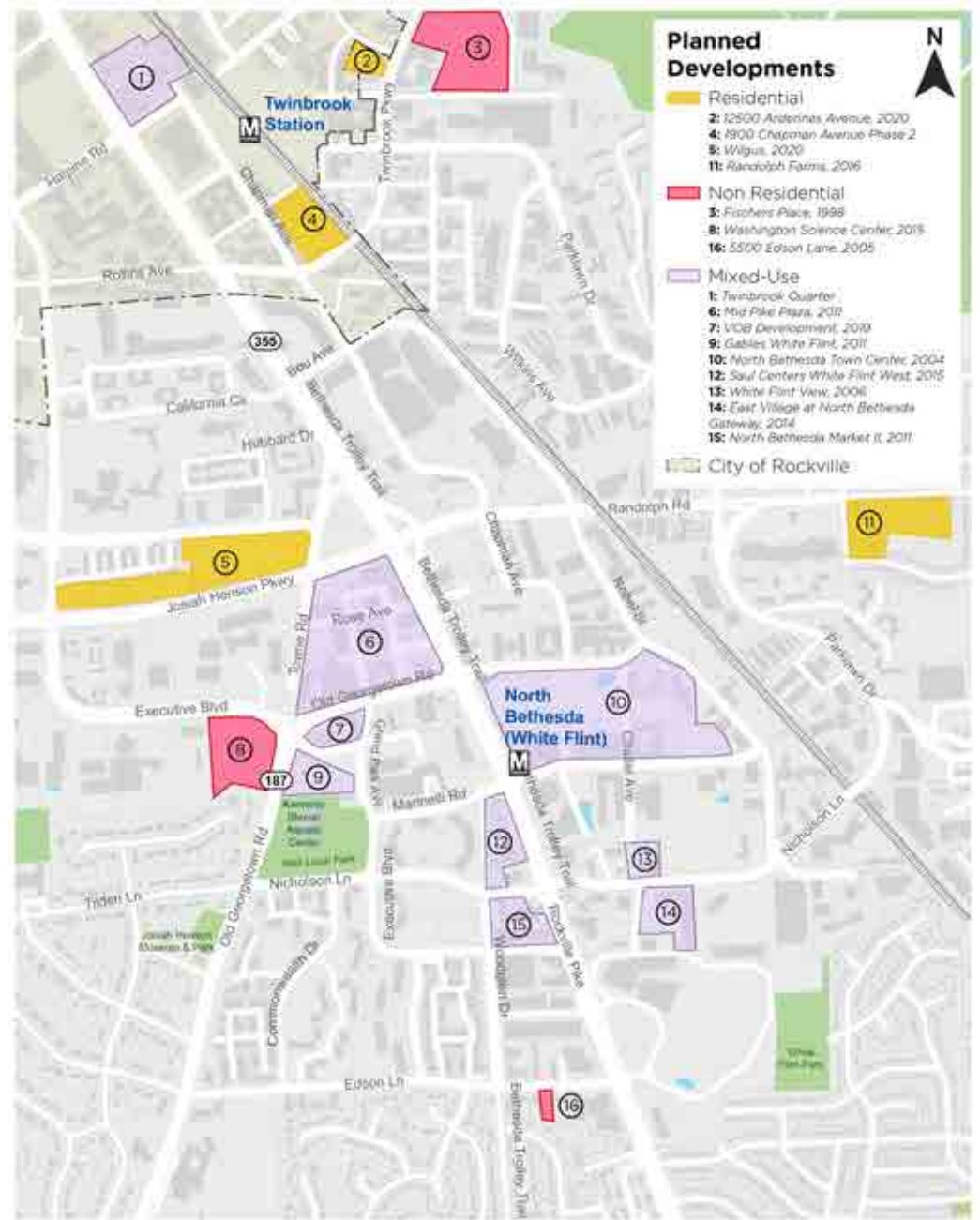
Source: Montgomery County Planning Department

0 0.2 0.4 Miles

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, MD
Date: 2022

Developments in the Pipeline

- Equity Emphasis Areas include Census tracts with higher-than-average concentration of low-income, minority populations or both.
- Neighborhoods to the northeast of the rail corridor are within Equity Emphasis Areas.
- These sub-areas have a high prevalence of youth population and BIPOC communities live in these designated areas.



North Bethesda to Twinbrook Bikeway Study

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, MD
Date: 2022

Bicycle Network

- Many new bikeway projects have been implemented in the study area including facilities along Woodglen Drive, Nebel Street, Executive Boulevard.
- New facilities are being built as part of development projects.
- MCDOT will soon begin bikeway project along Marinelli Road.
- Montgomery County's Bicycle Master Plan has recommended separated bicycle facilities and shared use paths along all major roads in the study area.



Route Alternatives

Western Route



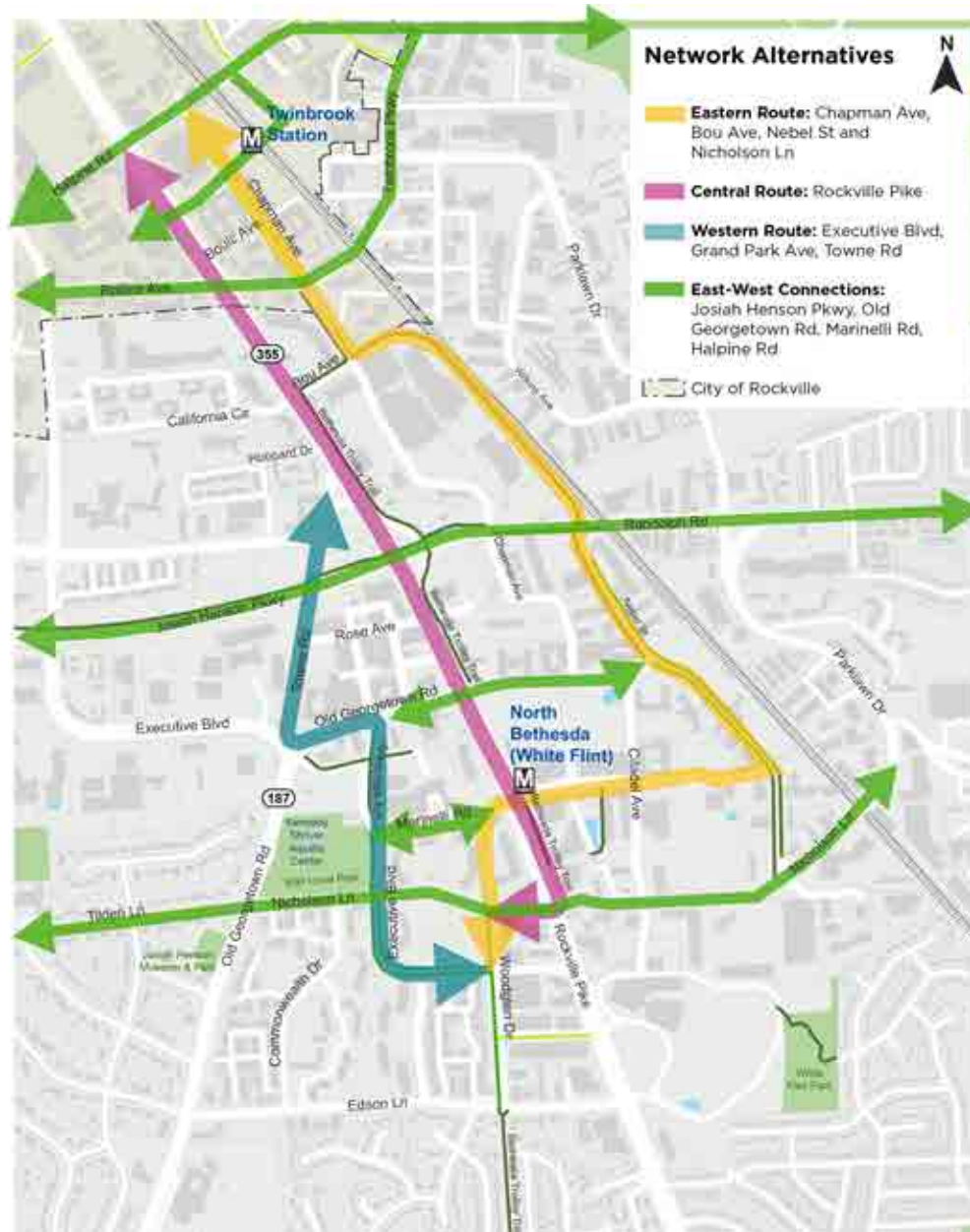
Central Route



Eastern Route



Long-Term Network Option



Potential Projects to Complete the Network



No.	Street Name	Extents	Potential Facility Type Recommendation
1	Marinelli Road	Rockville Pike to Nebel Street	Separated Bike Lanes (Design and construction funded for 2023)
2	Rockville Pike (MD 355)	North of Bou Avenue & South of Nicholson Lane	Shared Use Path (To be constructed as part of MD 355 FLASH BRT project)
3	Woodglen Drive	Nicholson Lane to Nebel Street	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path (Can be constructed as part of Saul Centers White Flint development)
4	Marinelli Road	Executive Boulevard to Rockville Pike	Separated Bike Lanes
5	Towne Road	Josiah Henson Parkway to Rockville Pike	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path
6	Nicholson Lane	Old Georgetown Road to Nebel Street	Separated Bike Lanes
7	Twinbrook Parkway	Rockville Pike to Veirs Mill Road	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path
8	Old Georgetown Road (MD 187)	Charles Street (Bethesda Trolley Trail) to Banneker Avenue	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path
9	Parklawn Drive	Nebel Street to Twinbrook Parkway	Shared Use Path
10	Randolph Road	Rail Tracks to Putnam Road	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path
11	Montrose Parkway (ROW)	Randolph Road to Veirs Mill Road	Shared Use Path/Trail
12	Executive Boulevard/Jefferson Street	Old Georgetown Road to Rollins Avenue	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path
13	Montrose Road	Josiah Henson Parkway to Towne Road	Shared Use Path
14	Old Georgetown Road	Grand Park Avenue to Nebel Street	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path
15	Tilden Lane	Danville Drive to Old Georgetown Road	Shared Use Path
16	Security Lane	Woodglen Drive to Rockville Pike	Separated Bike Lanes
17	Edson Lane	Old Georgetown Road to Rockville Piked	Separated Bike Lanes/Shared Use Path
18	Nebel Street Extension	Rockville Pike to Nicholson Lane	Separated Bike Lanes
19	Nebel Street	Nicholson Lane to Marinelli Road	Separated Bike Lanes
20	Executive Boulevard	Nicholson Lane to Old Georgetown Road	Separated Bike Lanes

Developing a Wayfinding Plan for The Bethesda Trolley Trail



Bethesda Trolley Trail - Wayfinding Sign (Source: MCDOT)



Frome Street Bikeway; Adelaide, Australia - Wayfinding Sign (Source: urbanandpublic.com)



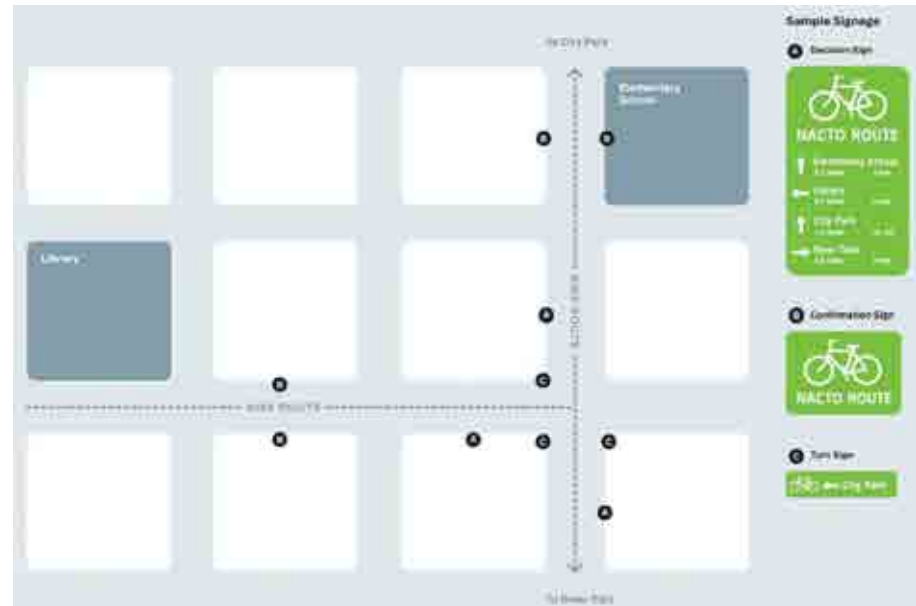
Bethesda Trolley Trail Waysides and Kiosk Sign (Source: MCDOT)



Razorback Greenway, Fayetteville, AK - Wayfinding Sign (Source: www.bikenwa.org)

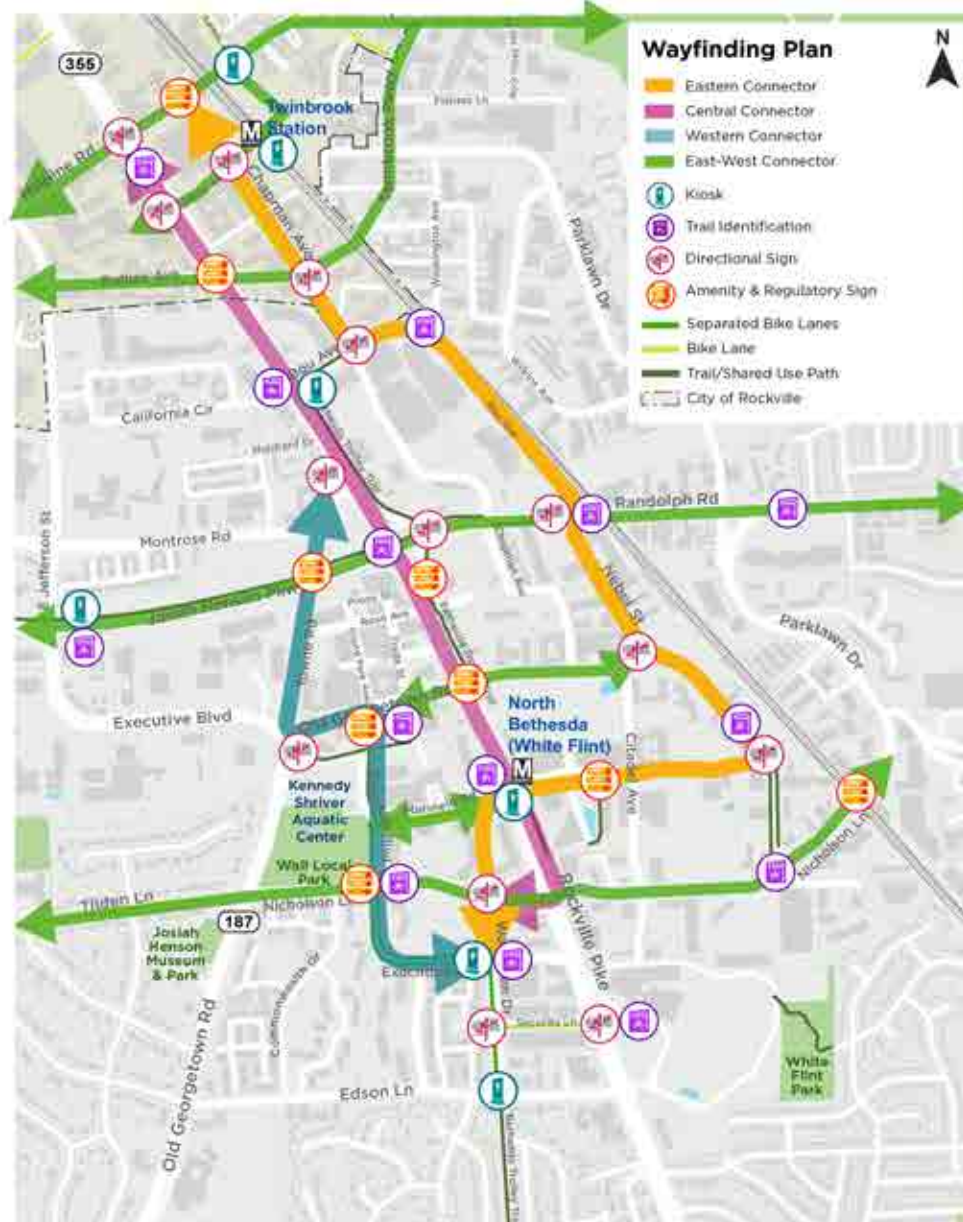


Big Dry Creek Trail; Westminister, CO - Wayfinding Sign (Source: e3signs.com)



Wayfinding Guidance from NACTO (Source: nacto.org)

Developing a Wayfinding Plan for The Bethesda Trolley Trail

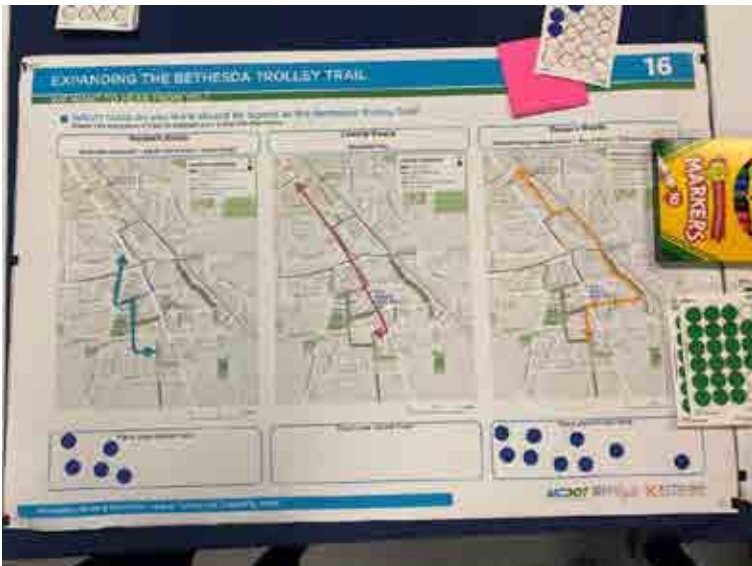


Public Meeting

On November 7, 2022

Presented existing conditions analysis and issues/opportunities

Gathered feedback on BTT alignment alternatives



Public Feedback

- Many participants responded that the entire network should be branded as the Bethesda Trolley Trail.
- Within specific routes, participants preferred Eastern and Western Routes rather than the Central (MD 355) Route.
- MD 355 does not feel safe and comfortable to walk or bike today.
- Participants expressed a need for better wayfinding connecting to nearby parks and retail destinations.
- Safety needs to be focus of multi-modal projects. People walking, biking, or rolling do not feel comfortable and safe travelling close to high-speed vehicular traffic. Physical separation is required on major roads.

Draft Recommendations

- As a long-term strategy, brand the entire network as Bethesda Trolley Trail with different routes.
 - *Bethesda Trolley Trail: Eastern Route*
 - *Bethesda Trolley Trail: Central Route*
 - *Bethesda Trolley Trail: Western Route*
- In the short- and medium-term assign Eastern and Western Routes as Bethesda Trolley Trail alternative routes, especially while MD 355 BRT project is under construction.
- Implement the new county-wide bikeways branding and signage in the North Bethesda study area as a pilot.

Next Steps

- Finalize recommendations (April 2023)
- Develop the Final Report (May 2023)
- MCDOT could implement wayfinding signage pilot near North Bethesda Metro Station area.
- MCDOT can advance additional bikeway projects in North Bethesda to complete the network in the next few years.

Questions & Discussions

Thank You!

Questions & Discussion

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