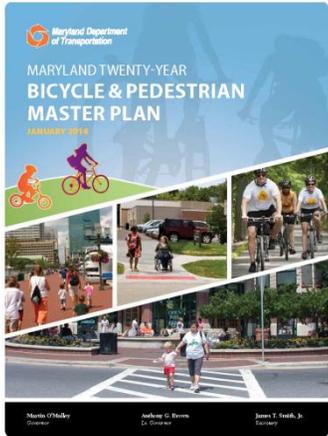


APPENDIX 1 – LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

MARYLAND BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN 2014



In 2013 the Maryland Department of Transportation revised its 2003 Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. This revision serves as a guide for decision making and prioritization of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, particularly to advance the transportation element of the state's Economic Growth, Resources Protection and Planning Policy. Furthermore, the Plan outlines objectives and strategies to evaluate and propose improvements for the pedestrian and bicycling environment in jurisdictions across the state. The Plan identifies locations in Downtown Columbia as an area with a higher potential for short

trips – trips that could be served by active transportation. This Plan specifically recommends bike share implementation as a 2013-2018 strategy to integrate active transportation and transit:

- Support installation of bike share stations at transit hubs and other high demand locations, and incorporate siting guidelines into appropriate guidance documents¹

Finally, the Plan identifies potential funding sources to implement bicycle and pedestrian projects that ostensibly could contribute to implementing a bike share system in Howard County:

- MDOT dedicated funding, Consolidated Transportation Program
- Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
- Community Legacy Program
- Program Open Space

¹ Maryland Twenty-Year Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. January 2014. Page 29.

² Plan Howard 2030, Executive Summary. February 2013. Page 7.

³ Plan Howard 2030. February 2013. Page 95.

PLANHOWARD 2030

Howard County's general Master Plan strives to establish a sustainable economic, environmental, and community focused future for the County. The Plan recognizes the difficulties in creating a well-connected bicycle and pedestrian network due to past land use and transportation decisions.² To this end, the Plan aims to emphasize the promotion of transit, bicycle and pedestrian transportation.³ Although the Plan does not discuss bike share significantly, it recommends the promotion of "rideshare and bike share systems, HOV programs, and expanded park and ride lots"⁴ to help reduce traffic congestion, energy consumption, and greenhouse gases.

PlanHoward also recommends amending the exiting Countywide design manual to include Complete Streets as an approach to building new and upgrade existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Furthermore, the Plan discusses the existing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) efforts to maximize the efficiency and sustainability of the complete transportation network.⁵

2009 HOWARD COUNTY SHORT-RANGE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This Plan is Howard County's short-term plan, approximately five years, to guide transit development in the County. The Plan examines and ranks the transit dependent areas and densities in the county.⁶ The highest ranked transit dependent populations are located in the central and eastern parts of the county. The Plan also recommends the implementation of new transit service and expanded public transportation coverage throughout these areas. Although the Plan does not mention bike share, bike share station locations could complement transit by providing first-mile and last-mile connections to-and-from bus corridors.

⁴ Plan Howard 2030. February 2013. Page 175.

⁵ Plan Howard 2030. February 2013. Page 97.

⁶ Howard County Short-Range Transportation Development Plan, February 2009. Page 1-10 – 1-18.

BIKE HOWARD – THE HOWARD COUNTY BICYCLE MASTER PLAN 2014 (DRAFT)

This draft Bicycle Master Plan provides a framework to guide policy and investments to improve the County's bicycle infrastructure and to promote bicycling as a safe and convenient travel option. Although bike share is only briefly mentioned as a possible recommendation for Howard County, achieving the Plan's goals could greatly benefit a bike share system. For instance, three of the Plan's goals which may be able to be achieved through the implementation of a bike share program include:⁷

- Create a safe and seamless network
- Increase participation and safety
- Promote active living

The document details the inventory of bicycle facilities and recommends further improvements based on facility type in order to create a complete bicycling network. The Plan also provides recommendations related to the bicycle network and active living programming, which could benefit the implementation of a bike share system, including:

- Integration of bicycle transportation with transit.⁸
- Development of "Complete Streets" design guidelines that incorporate bicycle facilities.⁹
- Expansion of the bicycling elements of the County's Transportation Demand Management program.¹⁰

By providing Howard County residents increased access to bicycling, a bike share system may be able to help achieve the Bicycle Master Plan's goals, particularly recommendations related to the encouragement of bicycling and healthier lifestyles, establishment of an active living partnership, and continuation of the Cycle2Health program, which is a non-competitive, peer-led, bicycling club for adults of all ages and riding abilities, coordinated by the Health & Wellness Division of the Howard County Office on Aging.

Finally, the Bicycle Master Plan could have a significant and beneficial impact on a bike share implementation in Howard County. This plan will

guide bicycle infrastructure investments and consequentially influence possible implementation and expansion of a bike share system throughout the County. The Plan may also help improve the bicycling environment and in turn make bicycling an easier and more convenient form of transportation throughout Howard County.

DOWNTOWN COLUMBIA PLAN

The Downtown Columbia Plan is an amendment to the Plan Howard 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Although this Plan does not explicitly mention bike share, it does promote the development of a multi-modal transportation system through transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements.¹¹ Moreover, the Plan recommends a "Complete Streets" approach to street design within the downtown grid. These recommendations may help create a better environment for bicycling, and consequentially a better environment for bike share.

This Plan also recommends that the County develop a Transportation Demand Management plan, to further improve the utility of the transportation network. Bike share can play an important role in such a transportation demand management program, especially promoting the use of the bicycle for short trips, and for first/last mile legs of a longer trip. Finally, the Plan provides a bicycle and pedestrian circulation plan to help guide where bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be located to help bicyclists and pedestrian travel throughout Downtown.¹² The Circulation Plan should be consulted by County Staff to help with the placement of potential station locations so as to be easily accessible from multiple directions.

CONNECTING COLUMBIA: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ACTION AGENDA

Connecting Columbia is Columbia Association's Plan to provide recommendations to create a more interconnected and comprehensive bicycling and pedestrian circulation system throughout Columbia. This in turn will help achieve CA's health, recreation, and transportation

⁷ Bike Howard, The Howard County Bicycle Master Plan, draft. February 2014. Page 1.
⁸ Bike Howard, The Howard County Bicycle Master Plan, draft. February 2014. Page 48.
⁹ Bike Howard, The Howard County Bicycle Master Plan, draft. February 2014. Page 11.

¹⁰ Bike Howard, The Howard County Bicycle Master Plan, draft. February 2014. Page 54.
¹¹ Downtown Columbia Plan: A General Plan Amendment. February 2010. Page 35.
¹² Downtown Columbia Plan: A General Plan Amendment. February 2010. Page 45.

goals.¹³ *Connecting Columbia* recommends studying the feasibility of implementing a bike share program and it notes that interest in bike share has grown among residents and community leaders throughout the last few years.¹⁴

Many of *Connecting Columbia's* recommendations relate to the implementation of a bike share program as they provide for improving the quality of existing bicycle lanes and shared-use pathways, implementation of new pathway connections to link neighborhoods and commercial centers, and for increasing the comfort, security and safety of path users.

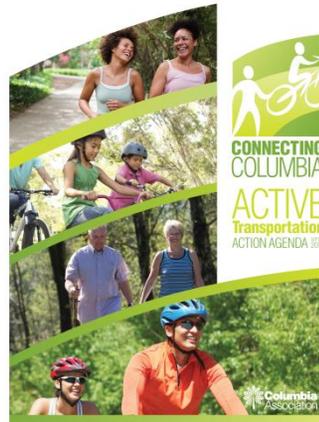
Connecting Columbia also discusses potential funding sources for active transportation projects, such as:

- Federal Transportation Enhancements¹⁵
- Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program
- Cycle Maryland
- Horizon Foundation

Implementation of *Connecting Columbia* may directly influence bike share implementation by increasing the connectivity between and within Columbia's communities and in turn make bicycling (and bike share) a more convenient option for transportation.

POLICIES AND COUNTY ORDINANCES

As bike share programs are relatively new, the form of equipment, installation, and operations are not typically codified into existing zoning, permitting, and other ordinances. Howard County must therefore consider what policies and ordinances will require some updates or modifications to allow for the implementation and promotion of bike share. Furthermore, the County will need to understand the process under which potential bike share stations will



be permitted and installed and will also need to understand whether the current regulations surrounding advertising and sponsorship will allow for such revenue generating avenues to help implementation of the program.

The following is a review of several regulations within Howard County's Zoning Ordinance that could have an impact on the potential implementation of a bike share system. There are several regulations within the Howard County Zoning Ordinance that could have an impact on the potential implementation of a bike share system.

Mixed Use Districts

Mixed use districts are established to permit flexible and efficient use of large parcels at key locations by combining housing, employment, local commercial and open space uses in accordance with a unified design.¹⁶ Setback requirements in Mixed Use Districts range from 30 to 75 feet, potentially providing enough space to install a bike share station, with cooperation of the building owner. Additionally, in these districts, minor additions and modifications to site development plans, such as minor accessory structures or parking lot additions, do not require Planning Board Approval.¹⁷

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Districts

A Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District is intended to encourage development of residential and commercial centers with safe and convenient access to public transit.¹⁸ In each TOD District, setback requirements for buildings adjacent public right-of-ways range from 10 to 30 feet, which may allow enough space for installing a bike share station in some areas, but not all.¹⁹ Bike share, which has been promoted as an additional transit mode, could be a natural component of a TOD District.

Traditional Neighborhood Center (TNC) Overlay District

The Traditional Neighborhood Center (TNC) Overlay District is intended to provide pedestrian-oriented areas with a mix of retail, service, office,

¹³ *Connecting Columbia: Active Transportation Action Agenda*. September 2012. Page 3.

¹⁴ *Connecting Columbia: Active Transportation Action Agenda*. September 2012. Page 5.

¹⁵ Since publication of *Connecting Columbia*, Federal Transportation Enhancements have been replaced with the Transportation Alternatives Program

¹⁶ Howard County Zoning Ordinance. Section 127.0.A.

¹⁷ Howard County Zoning Ordinance. Section 127.0.F.3.

¹⁸ Howard County Zoning Ordinance. Section 127.4.A.

¹⁹ Howard County Zoning Ordinance. Section 127.4.E.3.

and residential use.²⁰ Setback requirements in this type of district range from 0 to 100 feet, which will allow enough space to install a bike share station in some, but not all areas.²¹

Community Enhancement Floating (CEF) District

The Community Enhancement Floating (CEF) District is intended to encourage creative development and redevelopment to enhance surrounding uses and create a coherent, connected development.²² Property developers apply to the County to designate an area as a CEF District, by including amenities that could benefit the community. When a district is designated as a CEF District, developers are able to change the existing zoning district to another which may be more amenable to the surrounding areas. Under this ordinance, bicycle, pedestrian and/or transit improvements which provide connections to off-site destinations or other bicycle pedestrian or transit facilities are considered enhancements beneficial to the community and can be used to apply for a CEF District. The County may be able to codify bike share stations as improvements allowed under CEF District status.

Signage

Signs are a key component of a bike share operation, as they provide information and maps of the system and directions to nearby bike share locations. In Howard County commercial districts, directional signs are permitted by a variance in all areas except in Downtown Columbia, assuming the sign or signs are necessary for the public convenience and are consistent with the intent of the ordinance. These signs must be located at intersections with a maximum allowable area of 12 square feet and there may not be more than four signs for any single business.²³ These signs may be located in the public right-of-way with approval from the Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits.²⁴

In Downtown Columbia, commercial directional signs are allowed and must conform to the Downtown Neighborhood Design Guidelines.²⁵ Pedestrian directional signs can be placed on private land or in the public right-of-way and must conform to design standards that direct

and inform pedestrians.²⁶ Public signs, or signs in a non-commercial nature in the public interest, are exempt from the provisions set forth for other signs. These signs include directional, regulatory, and information signs.²⁷ In all commercial districts and in all areas within Downtown Columbia, signs used to advertise a product or service at the site and location of the sign are permitted as “accessory to the building or use.”²⁸

The code limits the size of informational signs to two square feet for each linear foot of building frontage,²⁹ suggesting that this section would need to be revisited for relevance to bike share signage. The code also limits signs from encroaching in the public right of way. Given the County Code of Ordinances, it is the consultants opinion that signs on a bike share station that provide the name or other information about bike share would be permitted by the code, pending additional interpretation of the Code.

Advertising

Howard County’s municipal code identifies outdoor advertising as billboards or poster panels which advertise products or businesses not connected with the site or building on which they are located.³⁰ Furthermore, the code limits outdoor advertising to be temporary in nature and located on unimproved property in industrial or manufacturing districts. This extends to any outdoor advertising, for example advertising on bus shelters.

General advertising (e.g., for commercial products or businesses) on a bicycle station would be considered outdoor advertising and would not be allowed by the current code. Also, in Downtown Columbia, advertising signs that are three square feet or larger and on vehicles are also prohibited by the code.³¹ Unless revised, these policies will limit the County’s ability to use advertising as an additional revenue source for implementing bike share.

20 Howard County Zoning Ordinance. Section 127.6.A.

21 Howard County Zoning Ordinance. Section 127.6.E.5-12.

22 Howard County Zoning Ordinance. Section 121.0.A.

23 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.501 (c)8.

24 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.505A (b)3.

25 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.501 (c)8.

26 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.501 (c)8c.

27 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.503 (a).

28 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.500 (b).

29 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.501 (c) (1).

30 Howard County Code of Ordinances. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.500 (d).

31 Howard County Code of Ordinance. Title 3-Buildings, Subtitle 5. Sec. 3.505 (a)10.

Please note that interpretation of all zoning and advertising regulations were based on a preliminary review. It is recommended that all County regulations and ordinances be reviewed with the County attorney prior to system implementation. Additionally, Howard County engineering, planning and permitting staff should consider creating a general blanket permit to help regulate and expedite the placement of bike share facilities. Finally, it is recommended that Howard County staff work with local officials to establish a specific set of guidelines to allow for the use of bike share sponsorship and advertising.