



Complete Streets for Everyone

Imagine a Howard County where more kids walk to school safely...where you can easily bike or walk to bus stops, shopping or work...where people in wheel chairs can freely access more places...and where walkers and bikers have dedicated spaces on the streets to stay safe.

Imagine if we had “**complete streets**” - roads for everyone that accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders *and* drivers!

Complete streets make transportation healthy, affordable, and sustainable and contribute to vibrant neighborhoods and a strong local economy.

Current challenges:



Walking: We lack sidewalks and safe intersections all over the county. Residents recently identified 1,312 areas that need sidewalks, and these suggestions received 23,073 “likes” in the county’s pedestrian plan development process. We need sidewalks and safer intersections near many schools and areas of high use and/or increasing density where we’ve seen pedestrian crashes, like Dobbin Rd., Little Patuxent Pkwy., Route 1 and Route 40.



Public Transportation: Our county needs many transportation improvements, including more accessible and safe bus stops. The county assessed 494 bus stops for the pedestrian plan and found that 78% need landing pads and 51% need pedestrian lighting. Some are not connected to any sidewalks and many lack nearby safe places to cross to the opposite side of the street. Only 64 of our RTA stops have shelters; most require users to wait in the weather, rain or shine.



Disability access: People with disabilities can’t get around because our community lacks sidewalks and adequate bus stop facilities. Also, one in five intersections studied for the pedestrian plan do not have “curb cuts” that serve as ramps from streets to sidewalks. Of the curb cuts that do exist, one in four are not ADA compliant. Old Ellicott City is especially hard to access and enjoy.



Bicycling: We have too many disconnected bike lanes that lead to nowhere and spaces where families don’t feel safe cycling. The county recently publicized a three-year plan for a connected network – but the fine print shows that miles of it will be *planned* but not *built*, and there is no anticipated completion date. We need consistently higher funding like neighboring counties. We need high-quality features like off-road and protected paths so biking is more safe, easy and enjoyable.

**What will make a difference?
A complete streets policy, increased funds and active local communities.**



A complete streets policy

The Howard County General Plan (adopted in 2012) and the Bike Master Plan (passed in 2016) both called on the county to develop a complete streets policy. This policy would commit the county to consider all road users when roadways, sidewalks and paths are built or resurfaced.

Passing a complete streets policy soon is our first priority. After that, county agencies that are involved in road improvements and street design can implement the requirements.



Increased funding and action

To see sidewalk, bus stops, bike facilities and accessibility improve at a faster rate, we need more county funding and action on these issues. An analysis of cycling funds has shown we don't measure up to neighboring counties. In fiscal year 2018, Montgomery County budgeted \$24.97 in county funds per resident for bicycling infrastructure. Anne Arundel's budget had \$13.20 per resident. These numbers significantly overshadow Howard County's budget of \$1.89 per resident.

Some state roads in the county are dangerous for non-car-users, and separate otherwise bikeable and walkable communities. State representatives can encourage the State Highway Administration to make roads like Routes 1, 108, 175, 40 and 144 safer for everyone. State representatives can advocate for additional state funding for improved complete streets in our community and support projects in their districts for which the county is seeking grant funds.



Active local communities

For people who live in Howard County communities, *incomplete* streets stifle opportunity, isolate us from our neighbors and prevent us from getting simple exercise like walking to school. Residents, businesses and civic groups want improved walking, biking and bus stop facilities. We want complete streets.

The more people call for street improvements, the more improvements we'll see. Notice an improvement you want to see built in your community? We want to know about your efforts and assist as we can. Contact our coalition by emailing Katie at kdthronson@thehorizonfoundation.org.

This is an initiative of the Horizon Foundation

