



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Marc Elrich  
County Executive

Christopher R. Conklin  
Director

September 20, 2024

Artie L. Harris, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission  
2425 Reedie Drive, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Wheaton, Maryland 20902

Dear Mr. Harris,

This is in response to your June 28, 2024, letter on the Mandatory Referral comments provided for the Flower Avenue Separated Bike Lanes. Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) would like to thank the Montgomery County Planning Board and their staff for reviewing this project and providing comments. The following are the MCDOT's responses:

1. Provide raised crossings at all driveways—also called sidewalk-level driveways—in line with the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide.

***Response: MCDOT will provide raised crossings at all driveways.***

2. Provide green conflict zone striping where the bike lane merges with the roadway at the driveway on the west side of Flower Avenue (southbound), south of Piney Branch Road at Station 100+00.

***Response: MCDOT will provide green conflict zone striping (at sta: 100+00) on the west side of Flower Avenue.***

3. Tighten the curb radii at all intersections in line with the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide default radii (15 feet), but especially at the southwest corner of the Piney Branch Road intersection. Where wider turning radii may be helpful for larger vehicles or emergency operations, consider the use of mountable curbs.

***Response: MCDOT will perform a turning movement analysis and tighten the curb radii where possible at all intersections in accordance with the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide. MDSHA's approval is required at the Piney Branch Road intersection.***

Office of the Director

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4. Provide curb extensions into the parking lanes on both sides of Flower Avenue, especially on either side of driveways to increase visibility and reduce vehicle encroachment into the bike lanes, as outlined in the Planning Department's 2021 Vision Zero Community Toolkit.

***Response: The local business community explicitly requested that street parking be preserved as a priority for this location. Providing curb extensions at driveways can create drainage issues and ponding and reduce the width of on-street parking spaces. Striped lines will be added to reduce parking encroachment and provide sight distance for vehicles turning out of driveways.***

5. Provide a crossing on the north side of the Arliss Street-Flower Avenue intersection, in line with the 2023 Pedestrian Master Plan, add stop controls at all legs of the intersection, and improve the transition for the southbound bike lane.

***Response: The MCDOT Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations will evaluate warrants for an all-way stop following the construction of the Purple Line station. Based on the evaluation, stop controls will be added later. Pavement markings, curb ramps, and crosswalks will be added accordingly.***

6. Prioritize increasing Active Zone facility widths to meet the Town Center Street guidelines in the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide in the following order:
  - i. Street Buffer: widen the street buffer to six feet.
  - ii. Sidewalk: widen the sidewalk to the default 10 feet (8 feet minimum) width.
  - iii. Bikeway: widen each one-way separated bike lane to the default six- and one-half feet.
  - iv. Ped / Bike Buffer: widen the ped/bike buffer six feet default (2 feet minimum).

***Response: (i) The street buffer will be widened to 6 feet on both sides of the roadway between Piney Branch Road and Flower Avenue Urban Park and on the northbound side between Flower Avenue Urban Park and Arliss Street at all locations without a parking lane. On the southbound side between Flower Avenue Urban Park and Arliss Street, the street buffer will remain 3 feet since it provides access to residential properties. Where there is a parking lane, a 3-foot street buffer will be provided.***

***(ii) The sidewalk will be widened to an 8-foot minimum between Piney Branch Road and Flower Avenue Urban Park and on the northbound side of the road between Flower Avenue Urban Park and Arliss Street. On the residential side of the roadway between Flower Avenue Urban Park and Arliss Street, MCDOT will provide a 6-foot-wide sidewalk.***

***(iii) Bike lanes will remain a minimum of 5 feet wide to reduce impacts to parking spaces from the roadway widening into the adjacent parking lots.***

***(iv) A 2-foot minimum pedestrian/bike buffer will be provided.***

7. At the following locations, remove the median to, instead, provide sufficient width for the street buffer and sidewalk, as outlined in the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide.
  - i. Between Stations 105+00 and 106+50
  - ii. Between Stations 111+25 and 112+50

***Response: (i) The community requested traffic calming measures, so the median was installed. The complete street design guidance shall be followed in adjusting the buffer width. Right-of-way impacts (on the business premises) on each side impact the planned sidewalk width. However, the walkway width will protect the current tree planter boxes and be ADA-compliant.***

***(ii) The striped median was designed to transition traffic on the left to begin the southbound buffered bike lane. The bike lane northbound at sta:111 that is separated from the travel lane will merge with it, sharing space with vehicles. As a result, no buffer is required. The full street design guidelines shall be followed when adjusting the sidewalk width.***

8. Create ADA accessible space for pedestrians to queue at the southeast corner of the Piney Branch-Flower Avenue intersection by narrowing the parking lot driveway and converting it to right-in only.

***Response: The sidewalk will be widened to a minimum of 8 feet in accordance with the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide. Planters will be relocated where possible and streetlight 207 will be repositioned.***

9. On the west side of Flower Avenue, between Stations 103+00 and 104+00, widen the sidewalk to the 10-foot default width or eight-foot minimum width identified in the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide and reposition streetlight 207.

***Response: The sidewalk will be widened to a minimum of 8 feet in accordance with the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide. Planters will be relocated where possible, and Streetlight 207 will be repositioned.***

10. Avoid abrupt changes in the separated bike lanes by ensuring a maximum 3:1 horizontal taper, in line with the Planning Department's Bicycle Facility Design Toolkit in the 2018 Bicycle Master Plan.

***Response: MCDOT will comply with horizontal taper requirements per the 2018 Bicycle Master Plan Bicycle Facility Design Toolkit.***

11. Provide at least one accessible on-street parking space per the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) from the U.S. Access Board.

***Response: MCDOT will comply with on-street accessible parking space requirements per PROWAG.***

12. Narrow the entrance driveway on the east side of Flower Avenue at Station 102+75 to, at most, the 15-foot width of the exit driveway at Station 103+75 to reinforce the one-way vehicular traffic flow that is proposed.

***Response: MCDOT will reduce the driveway width to 15 feet.***

13. Convert the driveway on the west side of Flower Avenue (Stations 102+75/103+00) from full access to restricted left-out.

***Response: The driveway width for this property will be maintained as in the current proposed design.***

14. Shift the northbound separated bike lane (Station 106+00) further east as it crosses the driveway to allow space for a car to queue between the bikeway and the roadway.

***Response: MCDOT will evaluate the space restrictions at this location and move the bike lane if possible.***

15. Develop a wayfinding plan using the 2023 [Bikeway Branding](#) Project “Wayfinding & Sign System Standards Manual.”

***Response: MCDOT will install wayfinding signs.***

### **Environmental**

1. When replacing street trees, use native tree species specified in the Montgomery County Tree Manual.

***Response: MCDOT will provide native tree species as specified in the Montgomery County Tree Manual.***

### **Parks**

1. Provide a continuous sidewalk connection from the bus stop curb ramps at Station 106+50 directly into Flower Avenue Urban Park.

***Response: The sidewalk is provided from curb ramps at the bus stop to the edge of the decorative brick pavers in Flower Avenue Urban Park.***


2. Bollards at the entrance to Flower Ave Urban Park shall be replaced in-kind within the same footprint of the new sidewalk.

***Response: MCDOT will replace bollards in the proposed design at the entrance of Flower Avenue Urban Park.***

Thank you for your time, review, and approval of the Flower Avenue Separated Bike Lanes project. Should you have any questions regarding the responses in this letter, please contact:

Robert Gonzales  
Sidewalk Section Chief  
MCDOT Division of Transportation Engineering (DTE)  
240-777-7296  
[Robert.Gonzales@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Robert.Gonzales@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Sincerely,

  
Christopher Conklin (Sep 19, 2024 17:10 EDT)

Christopher R. Conklin  
Director

cc: Jose Thommana, Acting Division Chief, MCDOT DTE  
Eric Willis, Deputy Division Chief, MCDOT DTE  
Dan Sheridan, Planning and Design Section Chief, DTE  
Robert Gonzales, Sidewalk Section Chief, MCDOT DTE  
Khursheed Bilgrami, Capital Projects Manager, MCDOT DTE



2425 Reedie Drive  
Floor 14  
Wheaton, MD 20902



MontgomeryPlanningBoard.org

**June 28, 2024**

**Mr. Christopher Conklin, PE, Director**

Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
Executive Office Building  
101 Monroe Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

**Subject:** Flower Avenue Separated Bike Lanes  
Mandatory Referral No. MR2024013

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**Dear Director Conklin:**

At its regularly scheduled meeting on June 20, 2024, the Montgomery County Planning Board approved, by a vote of 5-0, Mandatory Referral No. 20240013 for the design of the Flower Avenue Separated Bike Lanes along Flower Avenue from Piney Branch Road to Arliss Street with the following comments:

**Transportation**

1. Provide raised crossings at all driveways—also called sidewalk-level driveways—in line with the 2024 *Complete Streets Design Guide*.
2. Provide green conflict zone striping where the bike lane merges with the roadway at the driveway on the west side of Flower Avenue (southbound), south of Piney Branch Road at Station 100+00.
3. Tighten the curb radii at all intersections in line with the 2024 *Complete Streets Design Guide* default radii (15 feet), but especially at the southwest corner of the Piney Branch Road intersection. Where wider turning radii may be helpful for larger vehicles or emergency operations, consider the use of mountable curbs.
4. Provide curb extensions into the parking lanes on both sides of Flower Avenue, especially on either side of driveways to increase visibility and reduce vehicle encroachment into the bike lanes, as outlined in the Planning Department's 2021 *Vision Zero Community Toolkit*.
5. Provide a crossing on the north side of the Arliss Street-Flower Avenue intersection, in line with the 2023 *Pedestrian Master Plan*, add stop controls at all legs of the intersection, and improve the transition for the southbound bike lane.

6. Prioritize increasing Active Zone facility widths to meet the Town Center Street guidelines in the 2024 *Complete Streets Design Guide* in the following order:
  - a. Street Buffer: widen the street buffer to six feet.
  - b. Sidewalk: widen the sidewalk to the default 10 feet (8 feet minimum) width.
  - c. Bikeway: widen each one-way separated bike lane to the default six- and one-half feet.
  - d. Ped / Bike Buffer: widen the ped/bike buffer six feet default (2 feet minimum).
7. At the following locations, remove the median to, instead, provide sufficient width for the street buffer and sidewalk, as outlined in the 2024 *Complete Streets Design Guide*.
  - a. Between Stations 105+00 and 106+50
  - b. Between Stations 111+25 and 112+50
8. Create ADA accessible space for pedestrians to queue at the southeast corner of the Piney Branch-Flower Avenue intersection by narrowing the parking lot driveway and converting it to right-in only.
9. On the west side of Flower Avenue, between Stations 103+00 and 104+00, widen the sidewalk to the 10-foot default width or eight-foot minimum width identified in the 2024 *Complete Streets Design Guide* and reposition streetlight 207.
10. Avoid abrupt changes in the separated bike lanes by ensuring a maximum 3:1 horizontal taper, in line with the Planning Department's *Bicycle Facility Design Toolkit* in the 2018 *Bicycle Master Plan*.
11. Provide at least one accessible on-street parking space per the *Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines* (PROWAG) from the U.S. Access Board.
12. Narrow the entrance driveway on the east side of Flower Avenue at Station 102+75 to, at most, the 15-foot width of the exit driveway at Station 103+75 to reinforce the one-way vehicular traffic flow that is proposed.
13. Convert the driveway on the west side of Flower Avenue (Stations 102+75/103+00) from full-access to restricted-left out.
14. Shift the northbound separated bike lane (Station 106+00) further east as it crosses the driveway to allow space for a car to queue between the bikeway and the roadway.
15. Develop a wayfinding plan using the 2023 [Bikeway Branding Project](#) "Wayfinding & Sign System Standards Manual."

## **Environmental**

1. When replacing street trees, use native tree species specified in the Montgomery County Tree Manual.

## **Parks**

1. Provide a continuous sidewalk connection from the bus stop curb ramps at Station 106+50 directly into Flower Avenue Urban Park.
2. Bollards at the entrance to Flower Ave Urban Park shall be replaced in-kind within the same footprint of the new sidewalk.

The Planning Board appreciates the opportunity to review this project and continue coordinating with your staff on future projects. If you have questions, please contact Lily Murnen at 301-495-1337 or [lily.murnen@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:lily.murnen@montgomeryplanning.org).

Sincerely,



**Artie L. Harris**

Chair

Enclosure: Mandatory Referral Staff Report

cc: Khursheed Bilgrami, Project Engineer, MCDOT  
Dan Sheridan, Design Section Chief, MCDOT  
Lily Murnen, Transportation Planning Associate, Montgomery Planning  
Eli Glazier, Acting Transportation Planning Supervisor, Montgomery Planning  
David Anspacher, Acting Chief, Montgomery Planning  
Jason Sartori, Director, Montgomery Planning