



Marc Elrich
County Executive

Christopher R. Conklin
Director

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

March 24, 2025

Mr. Artie L. Harris, Chair
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reedie Drive, 14th Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902

RE: Carroll Ave Separated Bike Lanes Mandatory Referral No. MR2025004

Dear Chair Harris:

I am pleased to respond to your letter dated November 6, 2024, outlining the Planning Board's recommendations related to the Mandatory Referral for the Carroll Avenue Separated Bike Lanes in case number MR2025004. The Planning Board heard the case on October 31, 2024, and offered a number of recommendations.

The response to each recommendation is laid out below.

- 1. Replace proposed continental crosswalks with ladder crosswalks, provide tactile warning surfaces in all curb ramps, and provide directional crosswalks at all legs of an intersection.**

MCDOT will consider use of ladder crosswalks on this project on County roadways, pending approval by the Chief of the Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations (DTEO). Ladder crosswalks are not permitted to be used on roads owned or operated by the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration. Detectable Warning Surfaces complying with the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) and the Maryland Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices will be placed at all ramps. Directional crosswalk ramps will be installed except where infeasible.

- 2. Tighten curb radii to 15 feet and provide protected intersections with corner islands as described in the 2024 Complete Streets Design Guide.**

Protected intersection corner islands will be included where feasible. Curb radii will be as small as possible at all locations, with a target of 15 feet radii. Where this cannot be achieved,

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truck aprons will be considered.

3. Reconfigure the intersection and crossings at Merrimac Drive and Carroll Avenue to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety, visibility, and connectivity.

MCDOT will reconfigure the intersection to improve connectivity, accessibility, visibility, and safety.

4. Close the two existing driveway curb cuts to the Falcon Fuel gas station (925 University Blvd E, Silver Spring, MD 20903) that are closest to University Boulevard.

MCDOT will consider closing these curb cuts.

5. Install concrete protection curbs instead of temporary flexposts between the separated bike lanes and vehicle lanes, where possible.

MCDOT will install concrete medians as the primary form of separation between the bikeway and the vehicle or parking lanes where feasible.

6. Construct two-way, protected bicycle crossings across University Boulevard to reduce bicycle travel time and extend medians to improve safety.

Unfortunately, due to the space available as a result of the Purple Line and the skew of the intersection, it is not feasible to install two-way crossings of University Boulevard. This is primarily because to avoid cyclists crossing the Purple Line tracks at a shallow angle, which is a major crash risk, cyclists riding on Carroll Avenue will merge with the University Boulevard separated bike lanes briefly before returning to Carroll Avenue. There is insufficient space on University Boulevard to have two-way bike lanes in this area. Medians will be extended where feasible to provide protection and reduce turning speeds.

7. Construct a curb extension at the southeast corner of Piney Branch Road and Carroll Avenue, at Station 39+00, to improve how the two-way separated bike lanes transition to and from the sidewalk.

The design shown in the 30% plans reviewed by the Planning Board is a placeholder pending the design of the Piney Branch Road Separated Bike Lanes, part of a separate project. MCDOT will install a protected intersection at the intersection of Carroll Avenue and Piney Branch Road.

8. Consider approaches to widen the street buffer at New Hampshire Estates Elementary School.

The right-of-way is very constrained in this area, but MCDOT will work with Montgomery County Public Schools to determine if the roadway can be widened to accommodate a wider buffer.

9. Submit a 22A-9 plan to Montgomery Planning for review and prior to issuance of Sediment Control Plan of the project.

MCDOT will submit all required plans to Montgomery Planning for approval, as required by law.

10. Use planting techniques that maximize soil volumes per tree and increase tree survivability in streets, sidewalks, and on redevelopment projects.

MCDOT will make every effort to ensure selected tree species have ample soil volume and will work with our arborists to ensure healthy trees.

11. Stormwater treatment should meet or exceed minimum standards and include application of environmental site design (ESD) to minimize impervious areas.

MCDOT will install best-practice stormwater facilities wherever possible and will exceed minimum standards where feasible.

12. Increase tree canopy coverage with native species.


MCDOT will work to include native species where feasible to increase the tree canopy.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your comments.

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation looks forward to delivering this project to improve bicyclist and pedestrian safety along Carroll Avenue and improve access to the Purple Line stations at University Boulevard & Piney Branch Road and at the Takoma/Langlely Transit Center.

Should you have further questions related to this project, please contact Matt Johnson, AICP at Matt.Johnson@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov or 240.777.7237.

Sincerely,


Christopher Conklin (Mar 24, 2025 12:26 EDT)
Christopher R. Conklin
Director

CC:je

cc: Joseph Moges, Chief, Division of Transportation Engineering, MCDOT
Matt Johnson, Bikeways Coordinator, Division of Transportation Engineering, MCDOT
Eli Glazier, Acting Transportation Supervisor, Montgomery Planning