

Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update *Phase III Engagement*

Background

In May 2017, County staff embarked on the process of updating the Bicycle Element, one of eight elements of the [Master Transportation Plan](#) (MTP) which provides guidance on Arlington's transportation system. As part of the engagement process, the County Manager appointed a working group of community members to support staff in outreach, draft plan review and other aspects of the plan's development. To support the efforts of the working group and County Staff, three phases of engagement were planned and implemented, with the first two phases receiving input from approximately 2,300 residents. Tactics utilized during these two phases included online feedback forms and surveys, two public workshops, six pop-up events and e-mail newsletters.

Public comment received through the final phase of engagement (Phase III) will be incorporated into the final draft of the plan. This final draft will be reviewed by the Transportation Commission, Planning Commission, the public and members of the Arlington County Board. The final draft of the MTP Bicycle Element update is expected to go before the County Board in Spring 2019.

Phase III Engagement: Executive Summary

Phase III public engagement began in fall 2018 upon the release of the draft update of the Bicycle Element. While the previous phases of engagement focused on gathering a baseline understanding of bicycling in Arlington (Phase I) or gathering public feedback on bicycle connections in Arlington (Phase II), Phase III focused on gathering feedback on the draft update. Phase III engagement included stakeholder presentations, an online feedback form, two public open houses, a webinar and pop-up engagement opportunities. Throughout the third phase of engagement, County staff engaged approximately 850 residents.

Stakeholder Presentations

Phase III public engagement began with stakeholder presentations. County staff conducted 17 presentations to a variety of County commissions, committees, community groups, business groups, and civic organizations. Many comments and suggestions received during the stakeholder presentations centered around the protection of natural areas, shared mobility devices (i.e. dockless bikes and e-scooters), and trail and protected bike lane maintenance. Business groups such as the Arlington Chamber of Commerce and NAIOP, while supportive of some of the elements goals and policies, expressed concern on Policy 5, "accommodate bicycle infrastructure as part of all street improvement projects and provide the highest-quality on-street bikeway possible" and opposition on Policy 7, "Encourage and support provision of facilities to support bicycling, including showers, lockers, and adequate bicycle parking throughout the County."

Additionally, civic associations whose boundaries included new bicycle connections identified within the Bicycle Element Update were notified and given the opportunity to provide feedback through an online feedback form, an open house or online webinar. Upon release of the draft plan to the community, County staff did hear from many residents in Alcovia Heights who expressed concern over the Arlington Hall Trail which originally proposed an off street multi-use trail to link S. Quincy Street at 6th Street South to 3rd Street South at S. Oakland Street. The residents in Alcovia Heights had many concerns on regarding

Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update Phase III Engagement

the Arlington Hall Trail such as light pollution from the Foreign Affairs training facility, impact to the tree canopy, user safety, and privacy. Because of these concerns from residents in Alcovia Heights, County staff proposed to remove the trail from the draft plan.

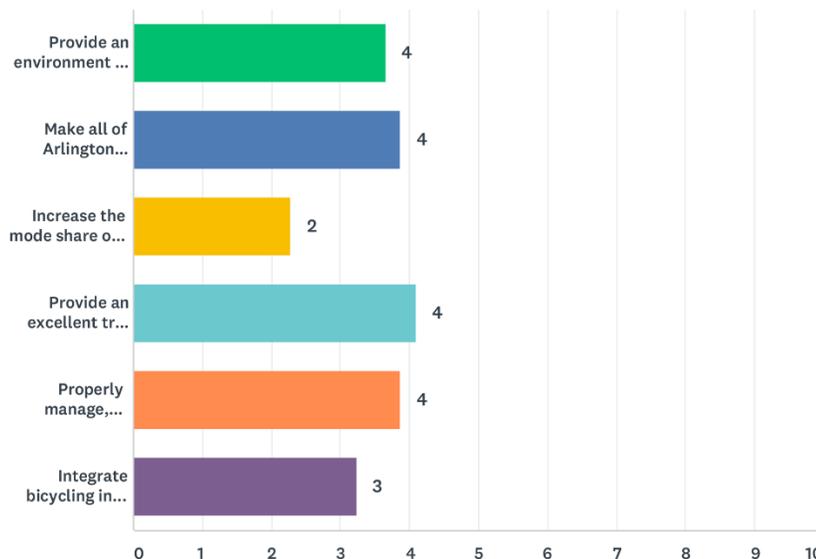
To further gather feedback from civic leaders, staff attended the December 2018 meeting of the Arlington County Civic Federation to showcase the proposed connections and collect feedback.

Online Feedback

An online feedback form was posted to the project webpage and promoted via social media, email marketing, in-person events and with the help of partner organizations such as BikeArlington, Arlington

Q1 Please rank the six goals presented in the draft plan by their importance to you.

Answered: 652 Skipped: 0



	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Provide an environment in which people of all ages and abilities can get places by bicycle safely and comfortably.	20.86% 136	16.10% 105	16.26% 106	14.88% 97	18.71% 122	13.19% 86	652	3.66
Make all of Arlington accessible by bicycle using easy-to-follow, low-stress routes.	21.32% 139	21.32% 139	14.57% 95	18.87% 123	13.34% 87	10.58% 69	652	3.87
Increase the mode share of bicycle travel, aiming to have the population of persons who bicycle for transportation be demographically similar to the population of Arlington overall.	5.37% 35	4.75% 31	10.43% 68	15.03% 98	20.86% 136	43.56% 284	652	2.28
Provide an excellent trail system that serves the needs of people walking and bicycling for transportation and for recreation.	25.15% 164	20.25% 132	21.01% 137	15.03% 98	8.74% 57	9.82% 64	652	4.09
Properly manage, maintain, and operate the infrastructure that supports bicycling in Arlington.	14.42% 94	24.54% 160	20.86% 136	18.71% 122	16.10% 105	5.37% 35	652	3.86
Integrate bicycling into an efficient, sustainable and equitable transportation system.	12.88% 84	13.04% 85	16.87% 110	17.48% 114	22.24% 145	17.48% 114	652	3.24

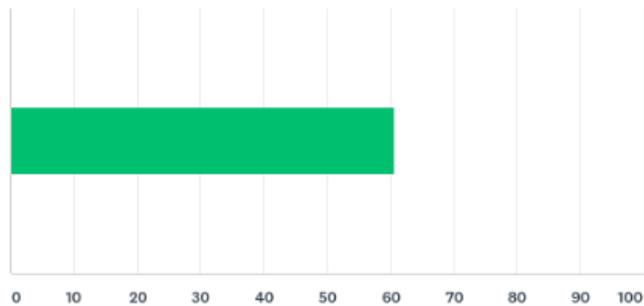
**Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update
Phase III Engagement**

Transportation Partners, Phoenix Bikes and the Washington Area Bicycle Association. The online feedback form was open from Dec. 3, 2018 – Jan. 22, 2019 and collected responses from 652 individuals. Respondents had good geographic and age diversity, and about a quarter of respondents indicated that they were not typical bike commuters, but were interested in biking more to destinations.

Respondents were asked five questions regarding the draft plan, with two being open-ended. Many of the respondents were supportive of the goals of the plan. Most respondents felt that “providing an excellent trail system that serves the needs of people walking and biking for transportation and recreation” was the most important goal. Many respondents also felt that “making Arlington accessible by bicycle using easy to follow, low stress routes,” was highly important.

Generally, many of the respondents agreed that the proposed Bikeway network adequately served their neighborhood and the destinations to which they are interested in traveling by bicycle.

Q2 Do you agree or disagree that the proposed Bikeway Network adequately serves your neighborhood and the destinations that you are interested in traveling to by bicycle?



Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update Phase III Engagement

Comment	Comment Frequency																																													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40						
Streets																																														
Columbia Pike corridor (includes east end, Columbia Heights)																																									35					
Lee Highway corridor																																											15			
Rosslyn- Ballston Corridor																																											13			
Wilson Blvd unspecified						4																																								
Carlin Springs Rd - (Kenmore/Glebe to Ballston)									8																																					
Chain Bridge approaches						4																																								
Glebe Road							6																																							
Walter Reed Drive						2																																								
N George Mason Drive							3																																							
N Quincy/Henderson							2																																							
Pershing Drive							2																																							
Crystal Drive							2																																							
Washington Blvd								3																																						
Old Dominion Drive (Cherrydale)							2																																							
Key Bridge							2																																							
Routes																																														
North Arlington (RB Corridor) to S. Arlington (Crystal City)																																														12
Crossings of I-395 (unspecified)							4																																							
Connections into Crystal City/Pentagon City								3																																						
Connections into RB Corridor (Rosslyn, Clarendon, Ballston)									6																																					
East to West travel in South Arlington								2																																						
Arlington Blvd Trail into DC								3																																						
Areas																																														
North Arlington										8																																				
South Arlington											5																																			
Northwest Arlington/East Falls Church									4																																					
Home to Metro or grocery stores									3																																					
Protected Bike Lanes																																														
More on arterial streets (unspecified)																																													21	
Glebe Road									5																																					
Wilson and Clarendon Blvds										8																																				
Washington Boulevard											5																																			
Columbia Pike												5																																		
George Mason Drive												4																																		
Ballston area													3																																	
Fairfax Drive														4																																
N Quincy Street															3																															
Lee Highway																2																														
More N/S routes (unspecified)																	2																													
*Breakout of top five categories, including all comments that received two or more responses. One-off responses in these categories: 13 for Streets, 1 for Routes, 15 for Areas and 12 for Protected Bike Lanes																																														

Figure 1

Question three asked respondents which areas need better bicycle facilities but are not included within the draft bike element update. The corridors most frequently cited by respondents as in need of improvement were Columbia Pike and Lee Highway. Many of the comments were similar and fell within certain themes. **Figure 1:** Visualization of comments grouped by facility type.

Here are some verbatim comments from members of the community:

- “Off street route on (or parallel to) Columbia Pike between Courthouse Rd. & 4 Mile Run Dr. (or thereabouts)”
- “Yes. Columbia Pike's bicycle infrastructure needs to be ON Columbia Pike. 9th and 12th Streets are inadequate for most potential bicycle trips along the Pike, being discontinuous, full of stops and tough crossings, and not directly serving the majority of businesses. The Pike serves as South Arlington's main street, and the needs of the local community must be weighted higher than the desires of vehicular through-commuters. We should lay the groundwork for a future road diet. Wilson Blvd through Ballston is another crucial place for a road diet, so that bike lanes could be continuous between Bluemont and Rosslyn.”

**Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update
Phase III Engagement**

Many respondents were also supportive of the utilization of protected bike lanes in areas. Here are some examples of comments from respondents:

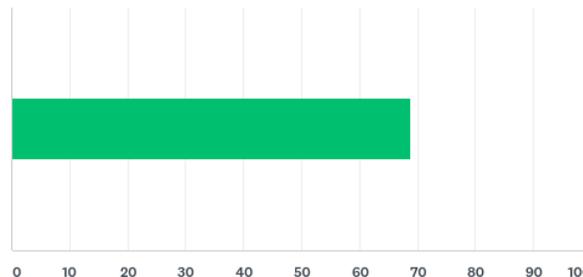
- “Having protected bike lanes on major thoroughfares would make much more of Arlington accessible to safe biking. I do not feel comfortable riding in bike lanes on major routes such like Sycamore St., Washington Blvd. Wilson Blvd., & Glebe Rd”
- “Protected lanes on Fairfax drive, Wilson Blvd., and Kirkwood.”

Finally, many respondents desired improved connections from North Arlington to South Arlington, for example:

- “Better bike connections between Pentagon City and Columbia Pike and Clarendon”
- “Would love more north south routes (specifically bike trails or protected bike lanes) from Fairlington, Shirlington, to Clarendon.”

Overall 69% of respondents supported the projects identified within the draft proposal.

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I support the bicycle facility projects identified in the plan."



Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update
Phase III Engagement

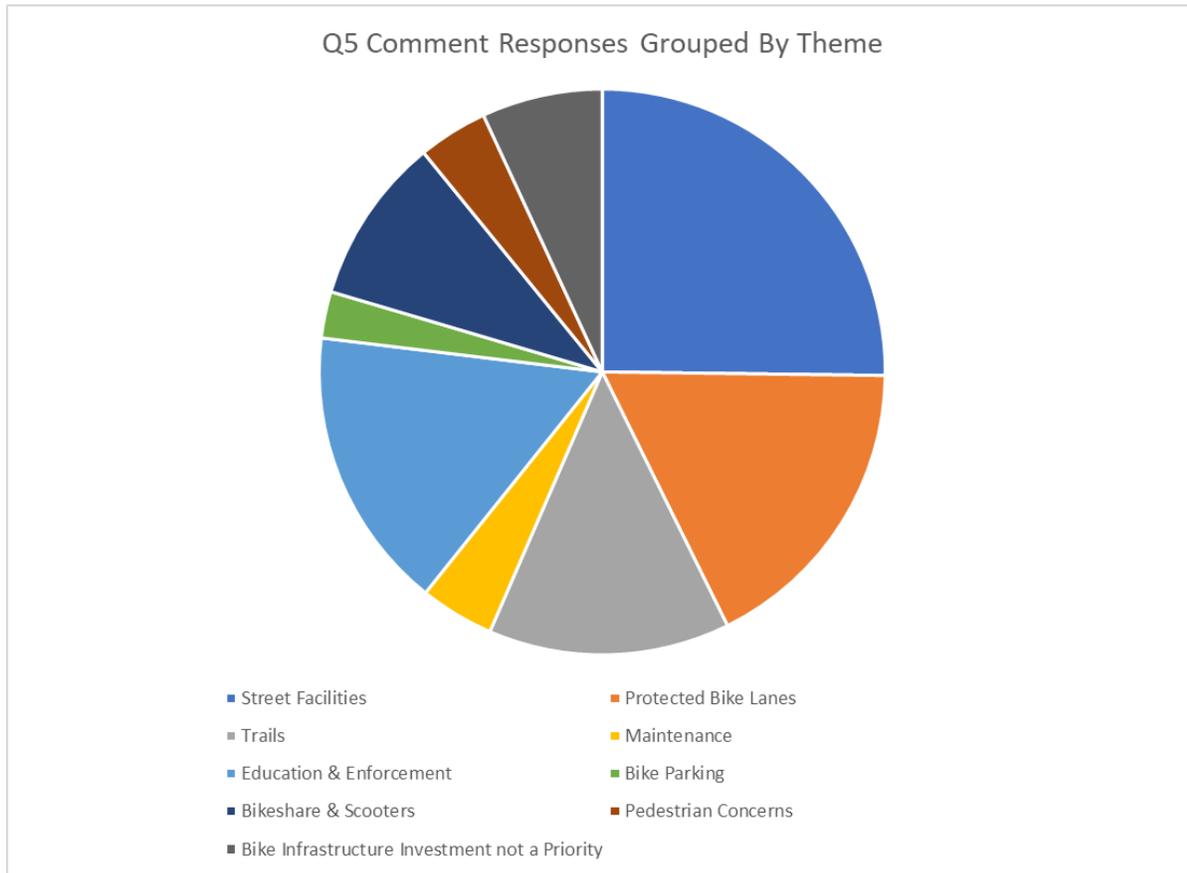


Figure 2

The last question (Question 5) of the feedback form allowed respondents to provide additional suggestions or comments relating to the bike element update. The question received a variety of different perspectives from respondents; however, most of the comments received can be grouped into nine categories or themes; Street Facilities, Protected Bike Lanes, Trails, Education and Enforcement, Bikeshare and Scooters, Protected Bike Lanes, Maintenance, Bike Parking, Pedestrian Concerns and Bike Infrastructure not a Priority. **Figure 2:** Visualization of comment responses grouped by theme.

The top three themes were on-street facilities, protected bike lanes, and education & enforcement. Regarding on-street facilities, many respondents were interested in additional investment in bike lanes, particularly protected bike lanes.

Figure 3: Visualization of comments relating to street facilities.

Here are some examples of verbatim comments related to on-street facilities:

Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update
Phase III Engagement

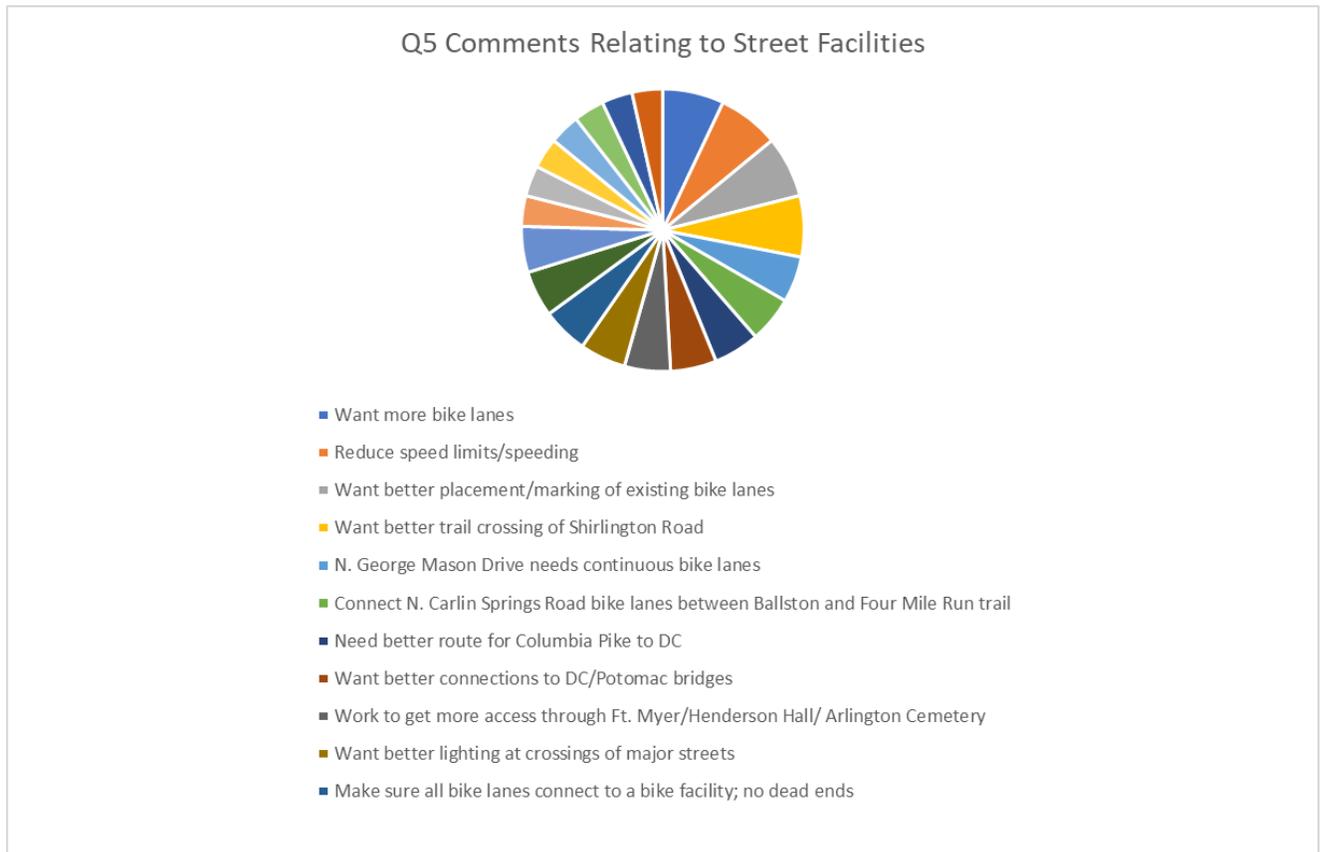


Figure 3

- “Protected bike lanes with separation of traffic are critical”
- “Better designed bicycle facilities. Bicycle facilities are much safer when they are not next to parked cars. Yet most of our bike lanes are adjacent to parking lanes. We should get this parking off the street and into garages.”

Many respondents provided feedback on protected bike lanes with most respondents expressing a desire for additional protected bike lanes.

Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update
Phase III Engagement

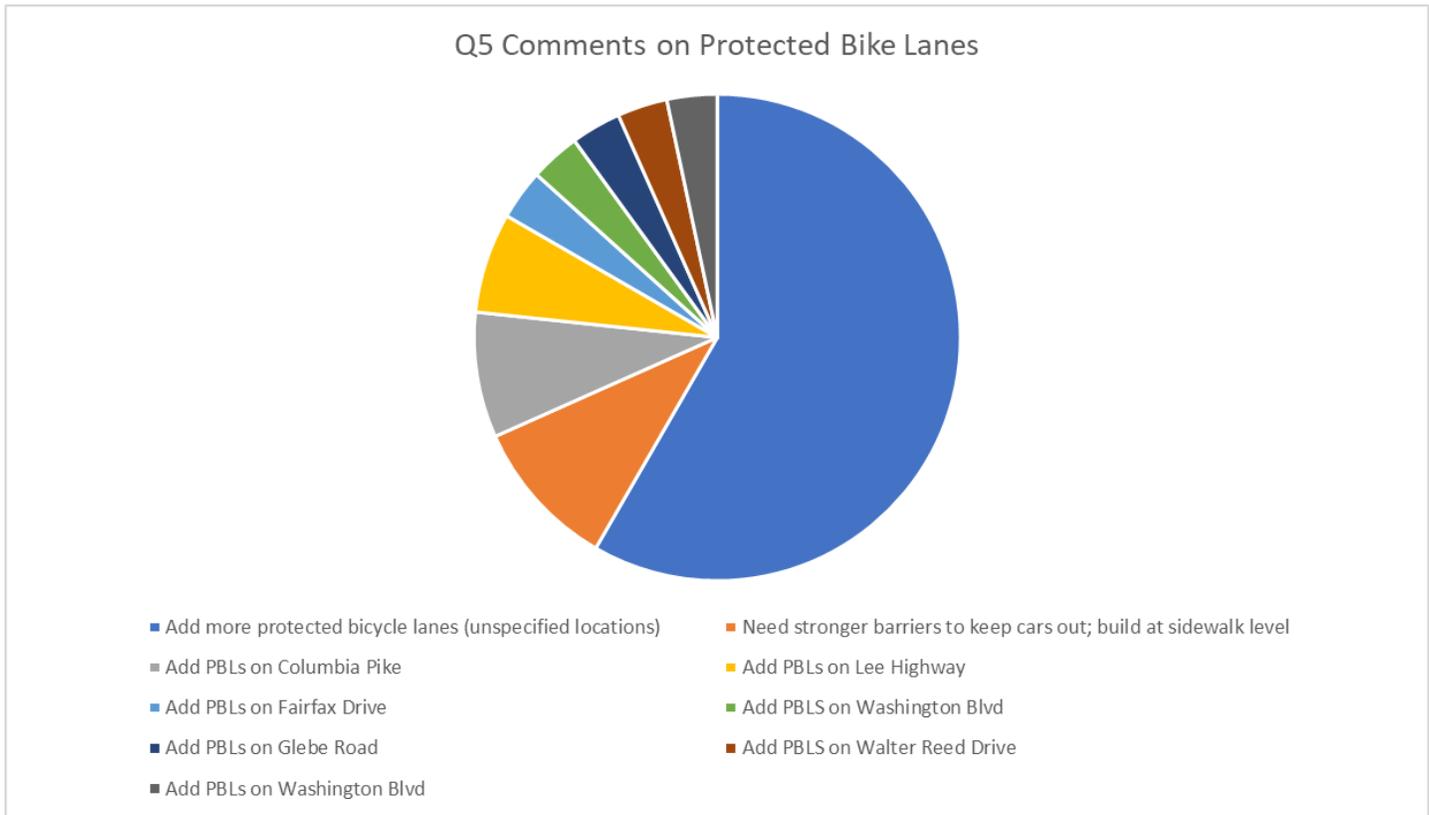


Figure 4

Figure 4: Visualization of comments relating to protected bike lanes.

Here are examples of verbatim comments relating to protected bike lanes:

- “Arlington needs to be serious about good bike lanes, and stop with the showlanes like for instance on Fairfax Dr south of I-66 in East Falls Church, or the insanity on Washington Blvd from Westover to Sycamore. Those are painted lines on the road that do nothing for bikers”
- “Have bike lanes and sidewalks side by side on same path (not on road), such as in Germany.”

Finally, many comments referenced enforcement and education as a top concern with many respondents highlighting reckless behavior by bicyclists as an area for improvement regarding enforcement.

Figure 5: Visualization highlighting areas for improvement in education & enforcement. Here are some examples of verbatim comments received:

- “Make streets more accessible to cyclists by enforcing motor vehicle laws. It is quite dangerous to cyclists on the streets of Arlington because motorists do not respect cyclists.”

**Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update
Phase III Engagement**

- “Have the bikers use the bike lanes on the roads where they are available. Give ALL OF THE BIKERS training in what it means when you come up to a STOP sign; it means STOP, NOT JUST BLOW THROUGH THE SIGN AND EXPECT THE CARS TO STOP FOR YOU. Issue \$500.00 tickets when they run STOP SIGNS; RED LIGHTS, AND WHEN THEY RIDE IN LANES GOING AGAINST THE TRAFFIC. DO THIS WITHOUT EXCEPTION.”

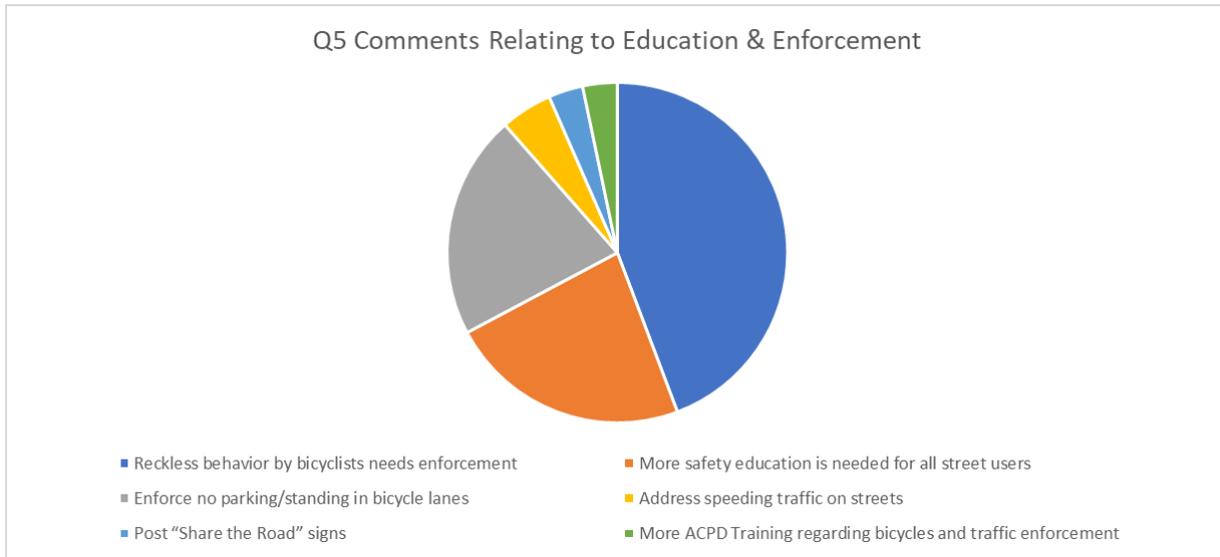


Figure 5

Open Houses & Pop Up Engagement

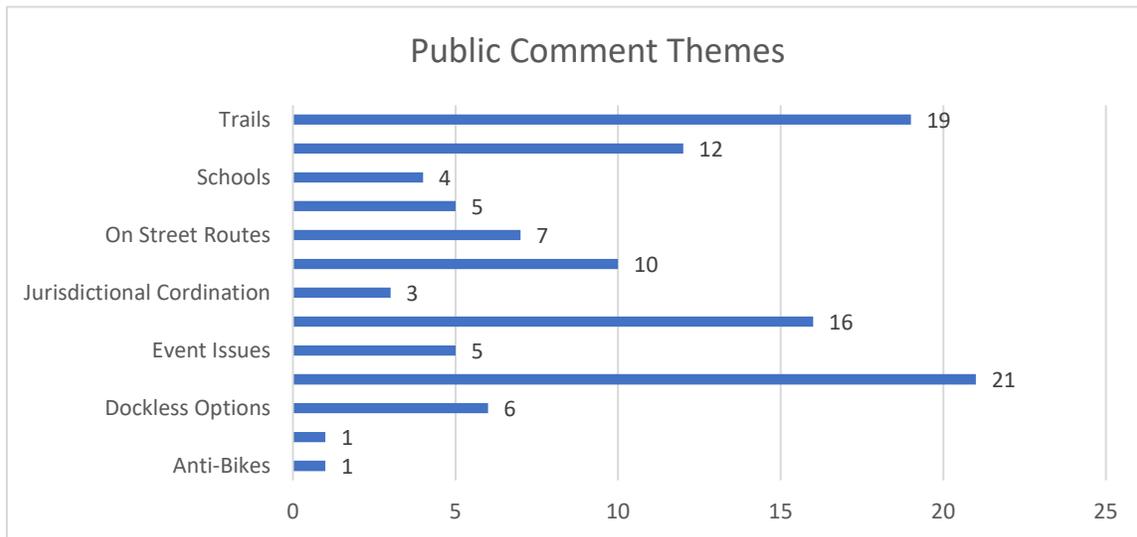
In January 2019, County staff hosted open houses, pop-up engagement activities and a webinar. Through these events, staff reached over 120 residents from neighborhoods throughout Arlington.

During these activities, most comments focused on the following themes: concern about impacts to natural areas, trails and trail maintenance, as well as concerns about enforcement, education and general safety concerns. Many public comments in opposition to certain routes dealt with environmental concerns and dwindling natural resources.

Here are some comments verbatim:

- “The trail that would go behind Campbell ES and up through the VA Hospital Center property (Figure 3) is a wooded park and a proposed conservation area in the Natural Resources Management Plan. There is a pond along this segment for teaching. It is also on a steep hill. Any construction along this path would destroy the existing salamander and tree frog breeding areas and would end their ability to survive in Arlington”

**Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update
Phase III Engagement**



- “The trail connector through the Windgate community goes through a magnolia bog and should not be in the plan because of the need to preserve the natural resource area. Also, a very steep slope.”

Attendees at the forums and pop-up engagement activities also expressed concern regarding trail maintenance, a desire for additional off-street connections, or opposition to a proposed trail. Here are some examples of comments from attendees who desired better trail connections:

- “Want to have connection through Army Navy Country Club built soon, not wait 10 years”
- “Support for proposed Long Bridge Park link to Mt. Vernon Trail.”

Several residents expressed concern over proposed off-street bicycle facilities within the draft proposal for a variety of different reasons, with a majority centered around the protection of natural resources. Some were site-specific concerns such as the following comments:

- “Bluemont Civic Association - Heading North on WO7D trail just south of Wilson Blvd, there is a trail shown on the map going to the East towards Lexington St. That trail does not exist, it is a rutted service road. It is not suitable for bicycles. Also on the East End (Lexington St.) There is a gate which is almost always closed and locked. There is no way a bike could get around the gate. 2) On the West end of Bluemont Drive a connection is shown going to N. Illinois St. to head towards Carling Springs Rd. That connection exists (asphalt ramp) but is very steep. 5' drop in 5' forward. There is room for a 20' long ramp across the end of N. Illinois St. (about #504), but it will have to be planned”
- I object to any bike trail even proposed for either easement areas being acquired from the Virginia Hospital Center along Carlin Springs Road or the green areas between those easement areas and the cement parking lot areas on the hospital site there, for at least the following reasons: 1) There is no need to affect existing natural areas give the size of the property and the large existing parking lots 2) The easement areas have by definition been designated by the placement of the easements for preservation; and 3) the slope of the land on the southern edge

Summary of Feedback of draft MTP Bicycle Element Update *Phase III Engagement*

of the hospital property makes any bike trail hazardous with switch backs that will be more expensive and as well as more damaging.”

Finally, many comments centered around safety, enforcement, and education concerns with regards to facilities and behavior. Here are some examples:

- “Consider additional signs on trails around various safety messages, such as how to use bike lights so they don’t blind other users, around calling passes and messages that clarify if/how electric scooters/vehicles can be used on the trails”
- “Biker safety education! More of it bikers to other bikers, cars and bikers, peds and bikers etc.”
- “Lee Highway & Old Dominion - It's difficult to commute west on Lee Highway because cars peel off from lee to Old Dominion pretty fast. Having any clear painted route for us at that split would be great”
- “Approve of plan and safety upgrades, want better enforcement of traffic laws on bicyclists”
“Spend some funds for cute/funny/eye catching signs along the paths. "Ride to the Right- this isn't England" "Step off the trail when baby loses binky.”

Next Steps

Upon conclusion of phase III public engagement, County staff briefed the County Manager and each County Board member on the plan in February. After the briefings, the plan went before the Arlington County [Transportation Commission](#) on February 28, 2019 and the [Arlington County Planning Commission](#) on March 4, 2019.

While both commissions supported the plan, and approved the Request to Advertise (RTA), they did approve the plan with an amendment to include the addition of the Arlington Hall Trail, located in Alcova Heights, which was identified in Phase III engagement as a controversial project due to objection from residents in the neighborhood. While both commissions supported the plan, and approved the Request to Advertise (RTA), they did approve the plan with an amendment to include the addition of the Arlington Hall Trail, located in Alcova Heights, which was identified in Phase III engagement as a controversial project due to objection from some residents in the neighborhood. The Transportation Commission felt that due to the projects benefits to the bicycle network that it would be detrimental not to include it in the plan.

The County Board will decide to advertise the draft plan to the community at the March 16, 2019 County Board meeting. Should the County Board approve the RTA, the plan will once again go before the Transportation Commission at the April 4, 2019 meeting, the Planning Commission at the April 8, 2019 meeting, and then to the County Board for final approval at the April 23, 2019 meeting. At each meeting, opportunities for [public comment](#) are available and encouraged.