

# **Northern Virginia Regional Bikeway and Trail Network Study**

## **Virginia Department of Transportation**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Numerous comments/questions have been received regarding specific bikeway and trail projects or locations where bikeways are needed. A list of these projects and locations is being compiled and will be considered during the development of the Study's recommendations.**

#### **How can I be involved and keep up with the Study?**

Public input is a critical component of any planning study. The best ways to stay involved in the study are to visit this website frequently, have your name added to the email distribution list for notification of new items on the website and public meetings, and to attend public meetings.

#### **Will the Study include both on-road and off-road bicycle facilities?**

The study will include on-road facilities (signed routes, bike lanes and shoulders) and trails to develop recommendations for an integrated network of bicycle facilities in the region. Your specific suggestions will be considered in the development of these recommendations.

#### **Will the Study address maintenance of bikeways?**

Proper maintenance of bicycle facilities is critical to their success and the Study will include a section addressing maintenance issues. Recommendations regarding the frequency of sweeping, clearing brush, and inspecting trails, as well as maintaining and repairing trail and bikeway surfaces should be included.

#### **How will concerns about personal security be addressed in the study?**

Personal security is a concern on any shared use trail. There are design elements that can improve trail users sense of personal security and these can be addressed in the Study. Ultimately the best way to increase personal security on trails is to increase the number of users. The presence of other users on a trail tends to make all trail users feel more secure.

#### **How are other types of trail users being addressed in this study?**

The focus of this study is primarily bicycles and bicycle facilities that are or will be used for transportation purposes. Current design guidelines for shared use paths/trails acknowledge that there are many different types of users on trails and that the design of these facilities must take the anticipated mix of user types into

consideration. Providing additional width is recommended when high numbers of different types of users are expected on a path/trail.

**Will the study include the use of shoulder bikeways?**

The addition of paved shoulders to roadways can be extremely beneficial to cyclists, and can improve the safety of roads for all users. Paved shoulders are a recognized bicycle facility and will be incorporated into the Study's recommendations.

**Existing trails in the region are poorly signed. Will the study contain recommendations for improved signing of trails?**

Your comments regarding the lack of signage for trails in the region are supported by our field analysis of existing facilities. The Study will likely include a section on signage with recommendations for a standard sign system for Northern Virginia.

**What standards or guidelines will be incorporated into the study?**

The consultant team has extensive experience in both the planning and design of all types of bikeways. VDOT has bikeway design guidelines that are based on the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, and any project using federal funding is required to follow the recommendations of the AASHTO Guide. Both of these documents provide guidance on how to design and build bikeways, but they are not standards and some flexibility is built into the guidelines.

**Are utility easements and railroad rights-of-way going to be look at as potential trail corridors?**

Utility easements and railroad rights of way are potential locations for bikeways and are being considered by this Study.

**Will the Study include recommendations for when to provide trail lighting?**

Decisions regarding whether to provide trail lighting are difficult and often controversial. There are currently no standards or guidelines for when to provide trail lighting, but if a trail is intended to serve commuters, providing lighting, at least in the early morning and early evening, should be given serious consideration.

**Access to many existing trails in the region is poor. Will the study include recommendations for improve trail access?**

Providing frequent and convenient access to trail facilities is important if these facilities are going to be successful. Identifying and prioritizing areas where better access to existing trail facilities is needed is an important component of this Study.

**Can the W & OD Trail be connected under I-395 near Shirlington?**

Arlington County has developed plans and received funding to construct an extension of the W&OD Trail under I-395 in Shirlington connecting to the Wayne Anderson/Four Mile Run Trail near Glebe Road. Construction on this improvement should begin in 2002. If you have further questions about the project, please contact Ritch Viola, Arlington Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator at (703) 228-3699.

**Crossing roads in the Rosslyn area in Arlington is difficult/dangerous. Will the study address this?**

Arlington County is currently studying alternatives to improving trail crossing in the Rosslyn area. The project is just getting underway and is anticipated to be completed by fall of next year. If you have further questions about the project, please contact Ritch Viola, Arlington Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator at (703) 228-3699.