

1.0 Introduction

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Tysons Corner is in the midst of a dramatic transformation from an auto-oriented suburban commercial area to a mixed-use urban downtown for Fairfax County. The development of four new transit stations, currently under construction as part of Metrorail's new Silver Line will provide the foundation for this shift, increasing transportation options, providing the framework for the redevelopment of property, and enhancing livability for residents, employers, employees and visitors in Tysons Corner.

The *Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan* (the Plan) provides a strategic and multidimensional approach for making bicycle travel a viable transportation alternative in and around Tysons. It provides detailed bicycle infrastructure recommendations to replace the conceptual bicycle network provided in the *Tysons Corner Urban Center Amendment* of the *Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan*, adopted in June 2010 (the *Comp. Plan Amendment*).

The Plan describes how bicycle planning and design can and must be integrated into all transportation improvements and private sector developments. It identifies and prioritizes both on- and off-road bicycle facilities and provides recommendations for bike parking and other support facilities. The Plan provides detailed policy recommendations to improve stakeholder and agency coordination and program recommendations to foster the development of a *bike culture* in Tysons Corner.

Along with creating more walkable environments, investing in bicycling infrastructure and programs is central to creating a more livable Tysons Corner. It will support transit use and help ensure that greater densities of development actually result in reduced levels of congestion. Serving as a major way to access the new Metrorail stations, it will enable the Fairfax community to maximize its return on investment in the Silver Line. Bicycling will also make an important contribution to the new vision for Tysons as a place where "People are engaged in their surroundings and a place where people want to be."¹

Comprehensive improvements to bicycle conditions and support programs in Tysons Corner will contribute to:

- Enhanced livability and quality of life;
- More transportation options, lower transportation costs, increased transportation safety;
- Improved air quality, reduced traffic congestion;

¹ *Tysons Corner Urban Center Amendment to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan.*

- Expanded recreational opportunities for residents, employees and visitors;
- Improved personal fitness and community health;
- Increased socialization and civic interaction; and
- Enhanced public safety.

1.2 STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

The established study area for the *Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan* is roughly a three-mile radius around the center of Tysons Corner.² For bicycle transportation purposes, up to three miles is considered to be a reasonable travel distance. The boundary line for the *Tysons Corner Urban Center* and the larger study area is shown in Figure 1.1 Major roads in the study area include I 495 (Capital Beltway), VA Routes 7, VA 123 and VA 267 (the Dulles Toll Road). Portions of the study area are included in Fairfax County’s Hunters Mill, Providence and Dranesville Supervisor Districts, which also are noted in Figure 1.1.

Project Purpose

The *Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan* is part one of a two-part bicycle transportation planning process initiated by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation’s Bicycle Program. Part two will extend the same bicycle planning effort undertaken for Tysons Corner to the rest of the County. The reason for structuring the planning process in two parts was to ensure that bicycle transportation planning for Tysons Corner was completed in a timely fashion given the recent adoption of the *Tysons Corner Urban Center Comp. Plan Amendment*.³

The *Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan* (the Plan) provides detailed bicycle facility, policy and program recommendations that, when adopted, will supersede the bicycle transportation section of the 2010 *Comp. Plan Amendment*.

The Plan describes how bicycle policies and programs can and should be incorporated into all levels of land use and transportation planning and development. It addresses the role of bicycling as a means of access to transit, as a means of commuting to Tysons area jobs, and as a means of basic transportation within, around and throughout greater Tysons Corner. It encourages safe and comfortable bicycling opportunities to and from schools, and as a recreational activity.

² The study area boundary is considered rough because the remainder of the county will be addressed in a second phase of bicycle transportation planning (see Project Purpose above). Any roads or areas not fully addressed in this plan will be looked at again in the countywide context.

³ Concurrent to this bicycle transportation planning effort the County is also initiating study of pedestrian circulation, a vehicular circulator system, development of a street grid, and other mode-specific studies to ensure that future transportation investment and infrastructure fully supports the new vision for Tysons Corner.

Specifically, the *Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan*:

- Provides a long-term vision for a connected network of on-road bicycle facilities such as bicycle lanes and shared lane markings and off-road facilities such as cycle tracks and shared use paths.
- Identifies the actions that must be undertaken on specific roads in Tysons Corner, in order to create this bicycle transportation network.
- Highlights both low-cost, immediate action projects, and long term major investments that will enhance bicycle access and connectivity both within Tysons Corner and its surrounding communities.
- Provides specific strategies to enhance safety for both cyclists and motorists.
- Provides a detailed implementation strategy that aligns the development of the bicycle network with planned transportation projects, including the Silver Line and private sector development.
- Identifies a targeted set of bike-related programs that will encourage more people to ride bicycles in Tysons Corner and in doing so, foster the development of a local bike culture.
- Recommends a series of policies to improve coordination while also encouraging all stakeholders to contribute to the long-term vision for bicycling in Tysons Corner.

1.3 BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION GOALS

The *Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan* establishes the following four goals for bicycle transportation in Tysons Corner:

1. **Fully integrate bicycle improvements into the planning and development process in Tysons Corner.** Biking will be fully incorporated into ongoing and planned Silver Line improvements, road projects, and private sector development.
2. **Improve bicycle safety, access and connectivity to, from, through and within Tysons Corner:** A connected network of on and off-road facilities will be developed over time, which will be supplemented by wayfinding and signage, intersection and access ramp improvements, integrated multimodal and intermodal services, and enhanced connections to schools, parks and regional destinations. Improvements in the Tysons Corner area will include connections to other existing and planned bicycle facilities and routes throughout the county and in neighboring jurisdictions.
3. **Foster the development of a bike culture in Tysons Corner:** A coordinated series of education and encouragement programs, public-private partnerships, and integrated Transportation Demand Management (TDM) efforts will contribute to a Tysons Corner bike culture.
4. **Make bicycle travel a viable transportation choice and thus expand the numbers of, and variety of, people bicycling for transportation--** including young and old, novice and experienced, and occasional and regular riders.

Study Area Map

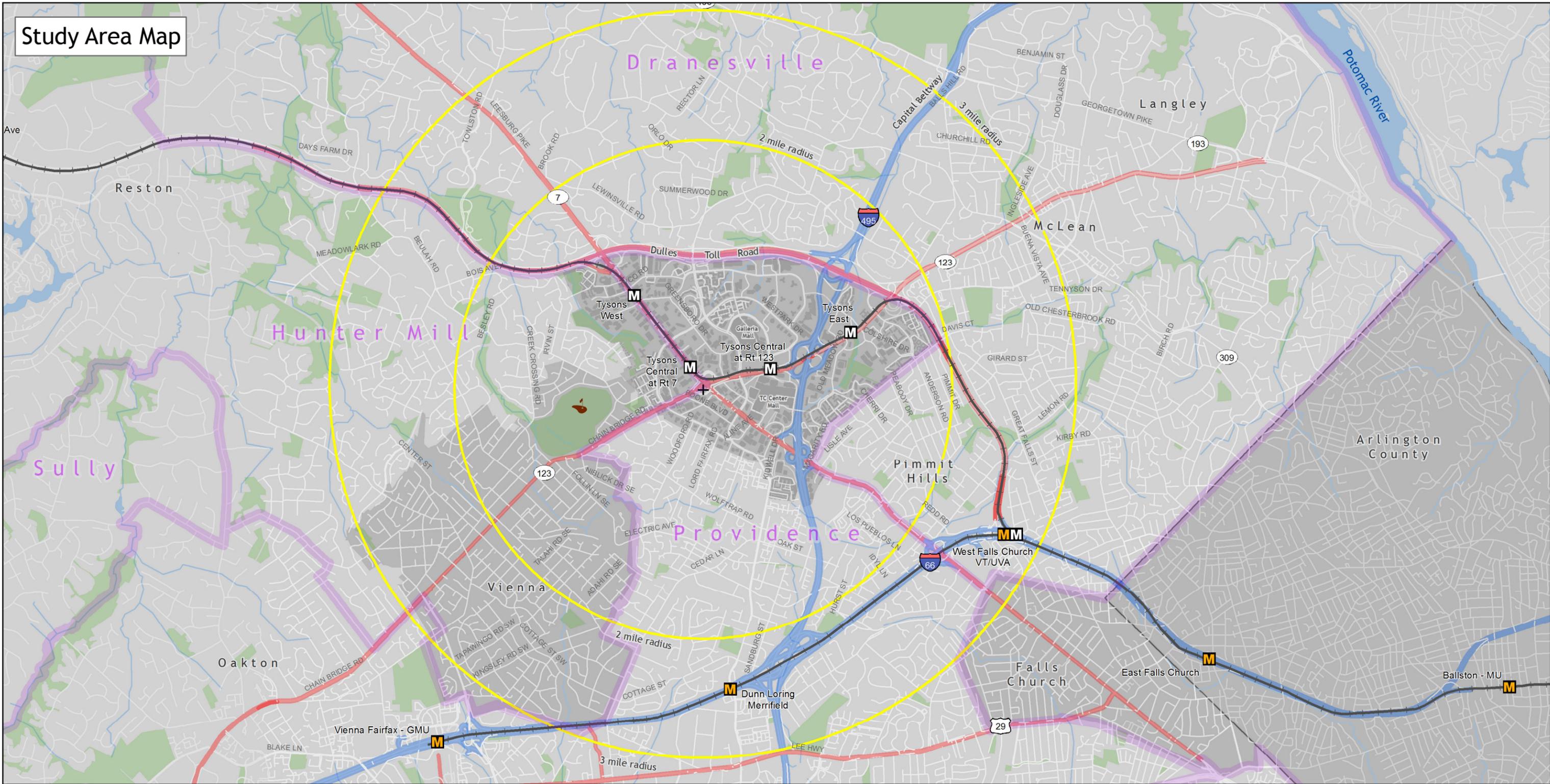


Figure 1.1



Legend

-  Interstate Highway
-  Major Road
-  Study Area
-  Supervisor District



1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

The *Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan* is a project of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, and is managed by the FCDOT Bicycle Program staff.

Fairfax County Department of Transportation Bicycle Program (FC Bicycle Program): In 2006, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved the comprehensive bicycle initiative, a program committed to making Fairfax County bicycle friendly. Four primary components of this initiative include the following: a) creating a county bicycle route map; b) establishing a full-time staff position devoted to bicycle facility coordination, planning, and implementation; c) examining roads and streets that may accommodate on-road bike lanes with minimal reconstruction; and d) establishing a pilot program for an interconnected bicycling network.⁴ Bicycle Program staff played a key role providing information, coordination and expertise throughout the planning process.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC): A Bicycle Advisory Committee was established for the project to provide additional guidance and ongoing citizen and agency input throughout the development of this Plan. The BAC met five times over the course of six months and participated in all aspects of the planning process, from identifying project goals to suggesting revisions to the proposed bicycle network and phasing strategy. The Committee included representatives from Fairfax County Departments of Transportation, Planning and Zoning, and Parks and Recreation, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Tysons Metrorail Access Station Access Management Study (TMSAMS), the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Fairfax County Trails and Sidewalks Committee, Fairfax County Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC), the Vienna Trails Committee, Mid Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE), Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling (FABB), local bicycle retailers, and representatives from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

⁴ <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/bike/>



Public Meetings: A public meeting was held in September 2010 to present and gather feedback on the draft bicycle network, bicycle access improvements to future Silver Line stations, and corridor and spot improvements. A final public meeting was conducted in February 2011. An on-line forum to gather public comment was provided to supplement input gathered at the public meeting and from the BAC and other stakeholders. The on-line forum was visited by approximately, 500 people who logged over 100 specific comments between September and December 2010.⁵ The comments received on line are listed in Appendix A. Feedback from the public was the source of many of the ideas that have been incorporated into the recommendations in this Plan.

Stakeholder Interviews: Additional stakeholder input was gathered through one-on-one and small group meetings with a range of stakeholders, including private developers, large employers in the area, and various Fairfax County government representatives.

Coordination with Standing Committees: The project team engaged and gathered input from various committees throughout the development of this Plan, including the Tysons Metrorail Station Access Management Study (TMSAMS), Fairfax Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC), Fairfax County Trails and Sidewalks Committee and the Planning Commission's Transportation Committee.

Bicycle Tour: The project team participated in a bicycle tour of Tysons Corner in October 2010 to supplement its understanding of existing biking conditions and to discuss proposed recommendations.

⁵ The on-line forum used is called *Community Walk*. It allows members of the public to make location specific comments that are shown on a Google Map.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN

The Plan is organized into the following sections:

- Chapter 2 provides an overview of the context for this planning effort, briefly describing existing and future conditions, and highlighting key issues, challenges and needs.
- Chapter 3 highlights general recommendations and provides the framework for the phasing and implementation plan to follow.
- Chapters 4 through 7 provide a detailed implementation strategy for the following time periods:
 - Phase 1: 2011-2013
 - Phase 2: 2012-2016
 - Phase 3: 2015-2019
 - Phase 4: 2020-2030
- Chapter 8 conclusion, summarizing the plan and the transportation and community benefits of creating a bicycle-friendly Tysons Corner.

Detailed information such as a detailed transportation and development policy recommendations, a bicycle facility and design toolbox, full size map sets, project and cost tables, and additional traffic and safety-related information is provided as appendices.