

Tyson's Community Circuit Design Guidance

December 6, 2022

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About this Document

In Spring 2021, staff and the development community recognized the need to provide a greater level of design guidance for the implementation of the Tysons Community Circuit (Circuit), a planned 4.75 mile recreational trail loop in Tysons. A Circuit Work Group was formed, with membership comprised primarily of Tysons Core Team members (staff) and Tysons Partnership representatives (private sector).

This document is a product of the Work Group's collaborative efforts and provides design implementation guidance based on current urban recreational trail best practices, focusing on segments of the Circuit that redevelopment will implement. This is a working document and subject to refinement to reflect conditions along the Circuit where redevelopment is not contemplated and to ensure the best outcomes for the Circuit as a recreational trail and placemaking element in Tysons.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the members of the Tysons Community Circuit Work Group who contributed their expertise, time, and talents to inform these design recommendations.

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Tysons Community Circuit

The Tysons Community Circuit (Circuit) is envisioned as a multimodal recreational trail loop that connects parks, civic uses, and major points of interest. This hallmark trail, the first of its kind in Fairfax County, will provide placemaking and economic opportunities. A proposed conceptual Circuit alignment, provided in the 2014 Tysons Park System Concept Plan, is shown on the page opposite.

The Circuit is planned along existing and future grid streets. The implementation strategy in the Tysons Park System Concept Plan describes properties along the planned route that will build the Circuit as part of their redeveloped streetscape section. In locations where redevelopment is not anticipated, segments of the Circuit could be constructed with public funds, grants, or through public-private partnerships.

Guiding Principles/Goals

The purpose of the Tysons Community Circuit Design Guidance is to provide intuitive wayfinding across the entire 4.75 miles by establishing a consistent palette of common design elements. Signage and branding will be established as part of a Tysons-wide wayfinding package.

The Circuit will connect developments, civic and cultural spaces, recreational opportunities, and other destinations that serve as activity nodes along the route.

It is critical to provide safe, comfortable, and well marked crossings at the two locations where the Circuit crosses the Capital Beltway (I-495); Leesburg Pike (Route 7), and Chain Bridge Road (Route 123). Lastly, connecting the Circuit to other trail systems, including the W&OD Trail, is important for implementing the Tysons' vision. Potential linkages are labelled as "Planned Tysons Trails" in the map opposite.

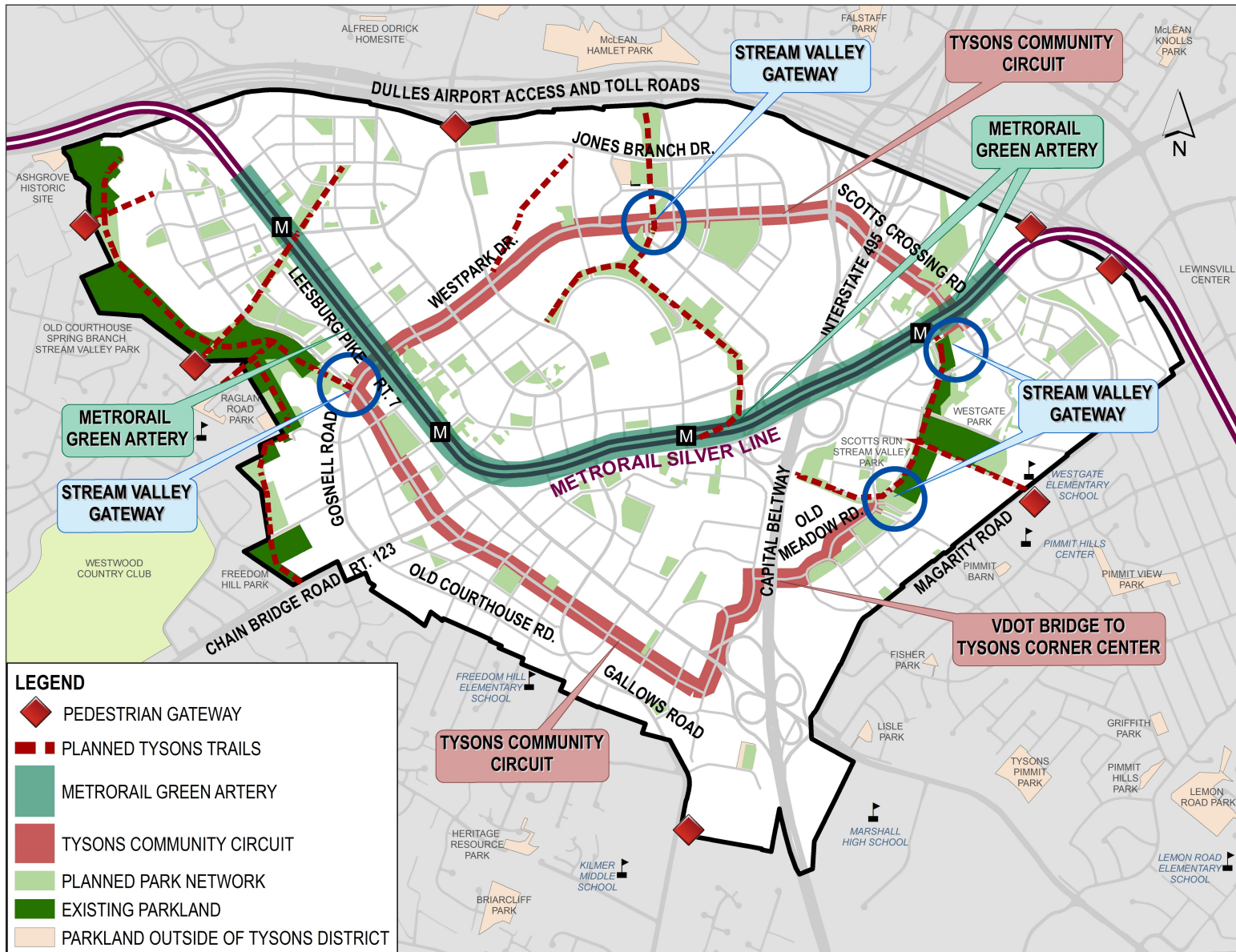
The Circuit is described further in these documents:

- Tysons Park System Concept Plan: [Tysons Park System Concept Plan \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)
- Tysons Comprehensive Plan: [2017 Edition of the Comprehensive Plan - Tysons Urban Center 2-23-2021 \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)
- Tysons Urban Design Guidelines: [tysons_udg.pdf \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

Common Design Elements

Developments containing portions of the Circuit should incorporate the following common design elements:

- Paving
- Intersections
- Crosswalks
- Site Furnishings
- Wayfinding Signage



Map provided by Fairfax County Park Authority, September 2021.

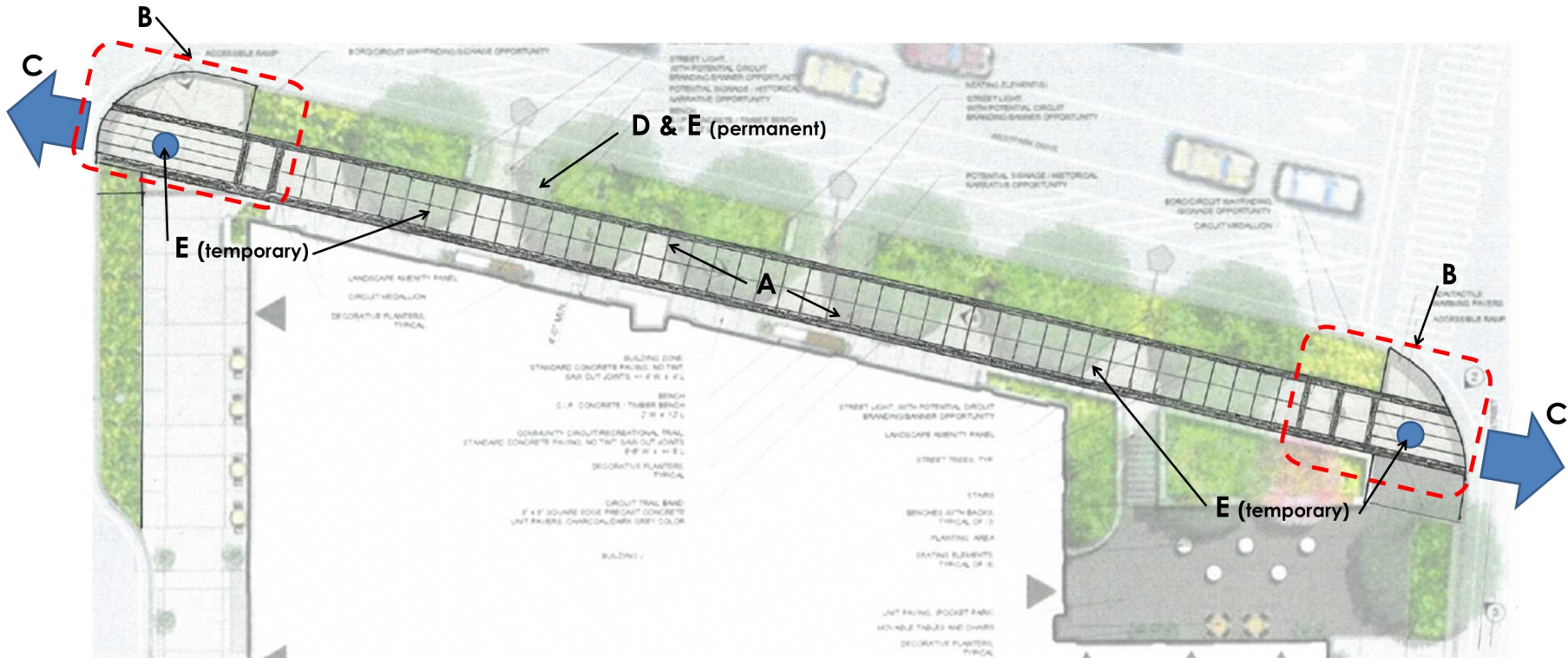
Tyson's Community Circuit

Common Design Elements

Common design elements for the entire Circuit are identified on the plan below. Each element is described in greater detail within this document.

A Paving **B** Intersections **C** Crosswalks **D** Site Furnishings and Amenities **E** Wayfinding Signage*

* Locate permanent wayfinding signage in landscape amenity panel; locate temporary wayfinding signage (decals and pavement markings) on paving, with a special focus at intersections.

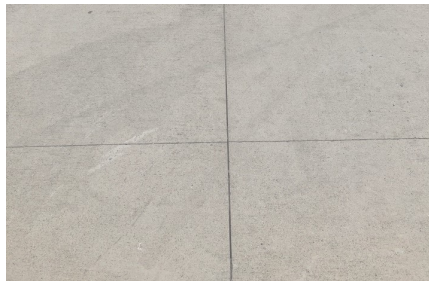


Illustrative of The Boro Blocks J, with the Conceptual Community Circuit overlaid on top. Source: FDP 2020-PR-009 (Sheet L-3.2b) with Staff Annotations

Paving

Tysons is a mix of architectural styles and development patterns that date from the 1960s to today. Providing consistent paving along the entire Circuit will unify the diverse building frontages and site conditions. The selected common paving materials are easy to match and replace and are available from multiple sources. Standard concrete is the primary material. It should be edged (or "outlined") with one of the three unit paver options shown below, or an approved equal. "Outlining" the Circuit with pavers in a contrasting color (as seen in the photos at right) helps delineate the Circuit. Paving materials are described below:

- Main Field of Paving: 8' minimum width concrete paving (standard color) with a 4' x 4' sawcut paving pattern.

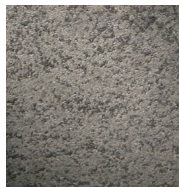


- Edge Paving: 12" wide band (each side) using a 4" x 12" or 6" x 12" charcoal gray soldier course of concrete unit pavers. Also used as accent strips. See pages 6-10 and 6-11.

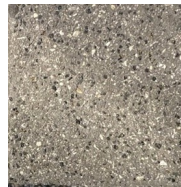
Techo Bloc,
Onyx Black



Hanover Prest Paver,
Matrix M2303



Unilock,
Dark Charcoal



Above: Hudson River Greenway, New York, NY. Image: Fairfax County Staff.



Above: Tysons streetscape adjacent to Mitre Property. Image: Fairfax County Staff.

Tysons Community Circuit

Intersections

Intersection design that focuses on pedestrians is critically important to the Circuit's future success. Decision making will occur here; users will decide whether to linger, cross the street and continue, or move away. Pedestrian comfort is a factor in decision making; comfortable environments will encourage users to linger and/or remain on the Circuit.

Circuit intersections should be designed holistically, taking functional considerations into account. Without a comprehensive approach, intersections become cluttered and confusing. Consistent design treatments simplify these environments by unifying the elements.

The photo to the right demonstrates the holistic design approach. Concepts shown that should be applied to Circuit intersections include:

- Creating a zone with seating, sculpture, special plantings, and other site amenities. Item placement should adhere to VDOT standards for site visibility at intersections.
- Using pavers to construct curb ramps to achieve a seamless appearance.
- Coordinating utility design throughout the design process to ensure that utility and traffic cabinets are not located at intersections. When they do occur, they should be considered a design element and incorporated into planning, as shown in the examples on the page opposite.



Above: Cherry Creek North, Denver, CO. Image: Design Worship [Cherry Creek North & Fillmore Plaza :: Design Workshop](#)



Above: Utility cabinets at Duke Ellington Park, Washington, D.C. Image: Fairfax County Staff.



Above: Utility cabinets at Texas Tech University, El Paso, TX. Artist: Warren Love. Image: [New Artwork Wraps Utility Boxes Around Texas Tech Campus - El Paso Herald Post](#)

Intersection paving design is described below. For plan view, see pages 6-10 to 6-11.

- Concrete paving should transition to precast concrete pavers at intersections.
- Rectangular pavers, with a minimum length of 2', should be used in a running bond pattern. The longer side should be aligned with the direction of the circuit.
- Select one of the three precast concrete color options below (or an approved equal).

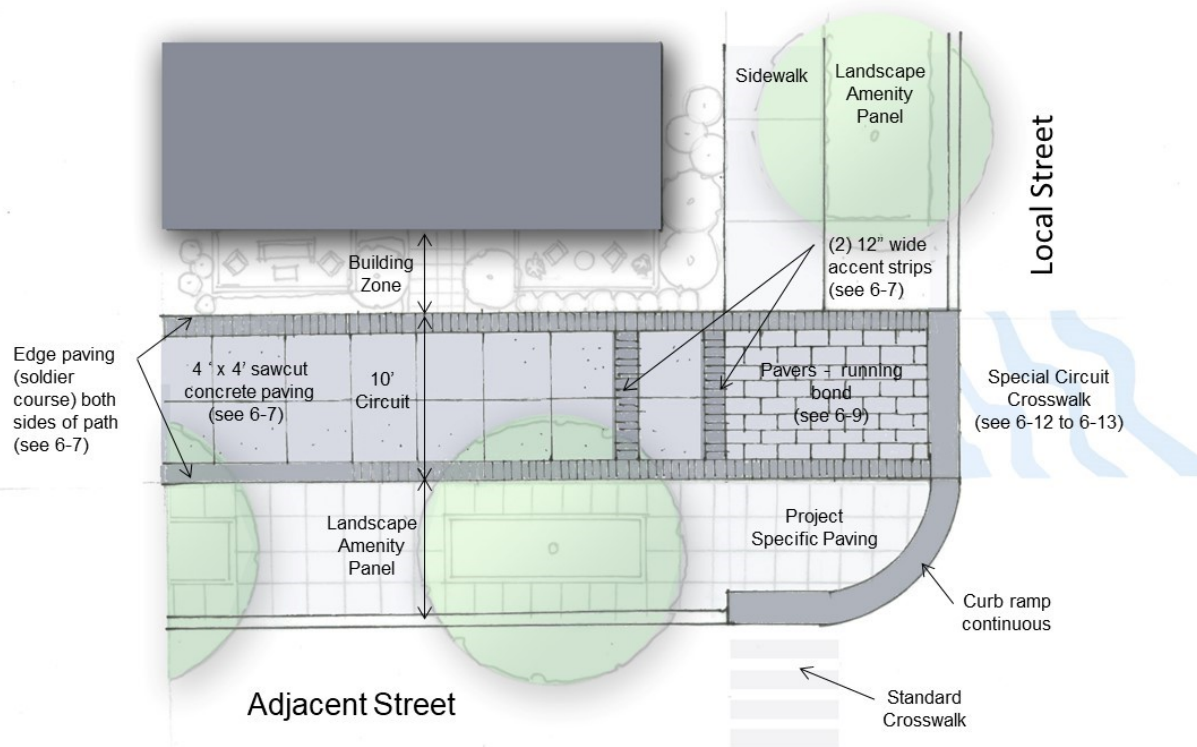


- A** Unilock, Umbriano paver, Grenada White
- B** Hanover, Prest Paver, Natural color
- C** Techo Block, HD², Beige Cream

Tysons Community Circuit

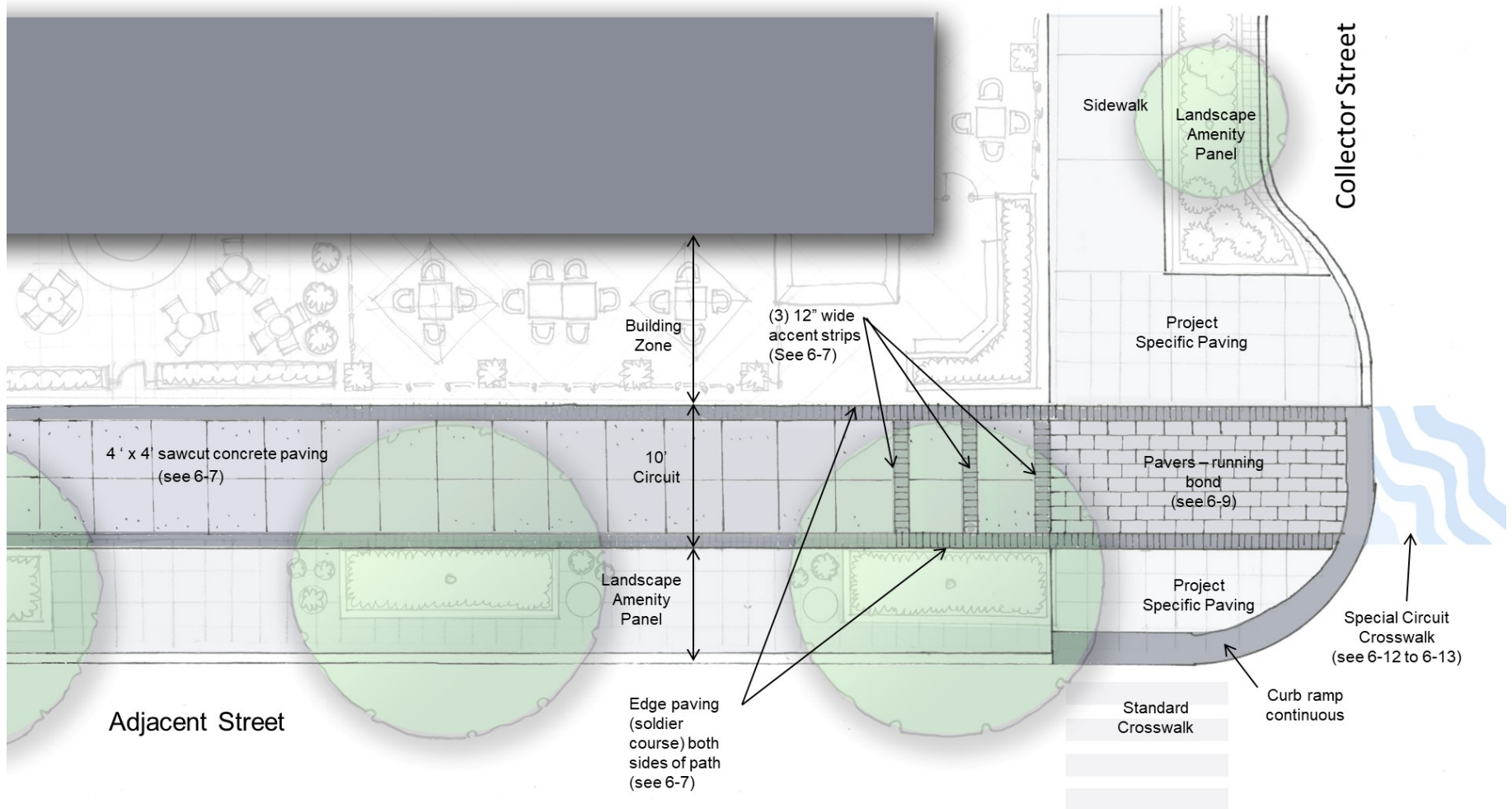
The Circuit crosses roads that are both wide with higher speeds (> 45 mph) and narrow with lower speeds (25 mph). The Circuit is intended for use by both pedestrians and other users of non-motorized transportation, making user safety a high concern. Accent strips should be incorporated at intersection approaches to alert users of potential conflict points. The changes in both color and texture will alert pedestrians to slow down as they approach intersections.

The number of strips provided should vary based on the classification of the intersecting street, with the widest streets having the most strips to provide greater warning. A 12" accent strip should be used to define the intersection zone where the concrete transitions to pavers. Additional accent strips should be added as described on the opposite page.



Intersection at Local Street, Source: DPD Staff

- Local Street: Incorporate one additional accent strip 5' from the intersection treatment (2 strips total)
- Avenue or Collector: Incorporate two accent strips 5' apart (3 strips total)
- Boulevard: Incorporate three additional accent strips 5' apart (4 strips total). This example not shown.



Intersection at Collector Street, Source: DPD Staff

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Crosswalks

Crosswalks will serve as a critical visual cue for Circuit users. Although newer Tysons streets are designed at a pedestrian scale with narrower widths, the older roads, designed to prioritize vehicular traffic flow, can be intimidating for non-motorized users to cross. Incorporating artistically designed crosswalks in high contrast colors will humanize these streets, encourage users to cross, and create visual safety cues for drivers.

The graphic on the page opposite demonstrates the intent for the treatment of Circuit crosswalks.

Crosswalks in these locations are of particular importance:

- Major roads, particularly the Capital Beltway (I-495), Leesburg Pike (Route 7) and Chain Bridge Road (Route 123)
- Locations where the Circuit switches street sides along the same street

A Tysons-wide wayfinding approach, anticipated to occur in phases, is currently in development. This wayfinding approach will incorporate a Circuit-specific crosswalk design that should be implemented on all future crosswalks along the identified route.

Incorporating crosswalks such as shown in these examples will require coordination with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Per VDOT requirements, logos cannot be incorporated within crosswalks.



Above: Spartanburg, SC. Image: <https://www.spartanburgdowntown.com/public-art-in-downtown-spartanburgs-cultural-district/>



Above: Madrid, Spain. Artist: Christo Guelov. Image: Rafael Perez Martinez. Image: [Artist Christo Guelov Creates Dozens of Colorfully Alternative Pedestrian Crossings in Madrid | Colossal \(thisiscolossal.com\)](https://www.colossal.com/artist/christo-guelov-creates-dozens-of-colorfully-alternative-pedestrian-crossings-in-madrid/)



Example of Urban Trail Intersecting Adjacent Street. From presentation at [National Bike Summit.pdf \(bikeleague.org\)](#) with staff annotations.

Tysons Community Circuit

Site Furnishings & Amenities

Site furnishings and other amenities will support Circuit user needs in a comfortable environment. Benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, and other street furniture should be selected per the Tysons Urban Design Guidelines. Additional amenities to support recreational usage should be included in appropriate locations. These include:

- Bike repair stations
- Capital Bikeshare docking stations
- Bike parking
- Scooter parking
- Water fountains
- Charging stations

Site furnishings and amenities should be located within the landscape amenity panel (as shown on page 6-6) and/or adjacent park spaces. Amenities should be placed in locations so as not to physically impede users.



Above: Lyft shows off its low-fi docking solution in Arlington, Virginia. Image: Andrew Small/CityLab, Image: [The Hot New Thing in Dockless Electric Scooters: Docks - Planningnerd.net](https://www.planningnerd.net)



Above: Tysons streetscape at the Capital One Campus. Image: Fairfax County Staff.



Above: University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Image: [Bike repair stations | UW Facilities Blog](#)



Above: Meet PAT The One Smart Outdoor Drinking Fountain / Drinking fountain and refill station.
Image: <https://ifworlddesignguide.com/entry/275793-meet-pat-the-one-smart-outdoor-drinking-fountain>



Above: 606 Trail, Chicago, IL. Image: [Repair sites along 606 trail to provide free bike aid - The Columbia Chronicle](#)



Above: Architectural designs for a ceramic water fountain in London from Architects journal (2014).
Image: https://www.architectureanddesign.com.au/getmedia/895e8fae-b1a4-4339-b545-245b8e7d2a1f/Hopkins-architects_1.aspx

Tysons Community Circuit

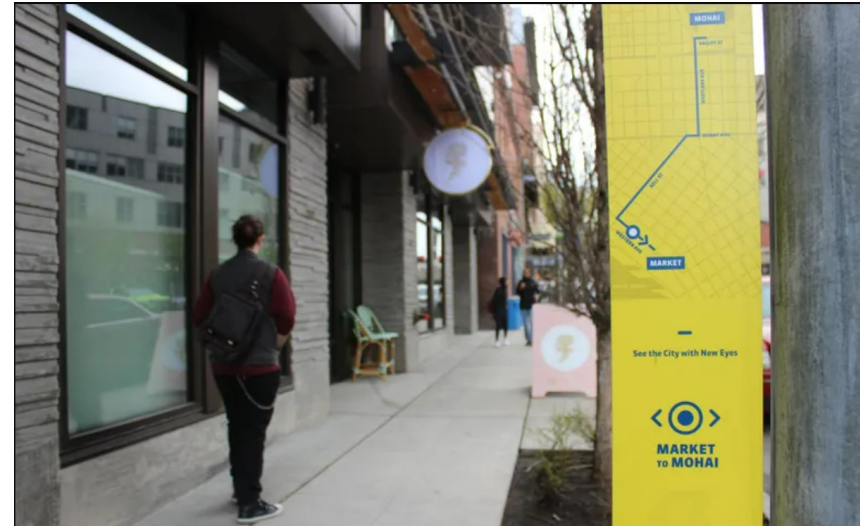
Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding includes all the tools people use to orient themselves in a physical space in order to move from place to place. The Circuit crosses several major roads, including the Capital Beltway (I-495), Leesburg Pike (Route 7), and Chain Bridge Road (Route 123). Bold, recognizable signage will reinforce the Circuit's unique character and will be key to wayfinding. In addition to permanent signage, colorful decals and pavement markings are short-term wayfinding elements that can be added to create an element of fun and surprise.

Signage and branding elements will be determined with the development of the Tysons-wide wayfinding approach. Examples on the following pages demonstrate how a "family" of signs can contribute to the overall character of a recreational trail. They include:

- Market to Mohai Seattle Trail (this page)
- Indianapolis Cultural Trail (page 6-17)
- Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis (page 6-18)
- Atlanta Beltline (page 6-19)

Examples of decals and pavement markings are included on pages 6-20 and 6-21.



Above: Market To MOHAI-Seattle Trail Signage. Image: Gregory Scruggs, The Seattle Times



Above: Wayfinding sign family designed by Berger Partnership includes pavement decals. Image: <https://bergerpartnership.com/work/market-to-mohai/>

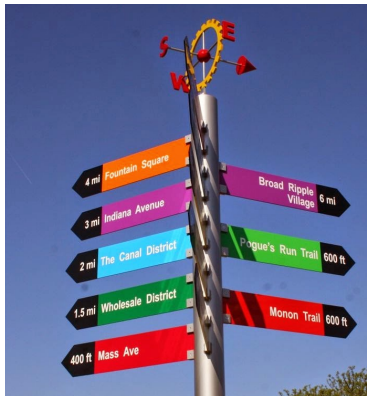
This page: Market to Mohai Seattle Trail, Seattle, WA



Above: [Indianapolis Cultural Trail \(indyculturaltrail.org\)](http://indyculturaltrail.org)



Above: https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/images/library/IndianapolisCulturalTrail_04.jpg



Above: <http://urbanplacesandspaces.blogspot.com/2015/10/comments-on-central-avenue-connector.html>

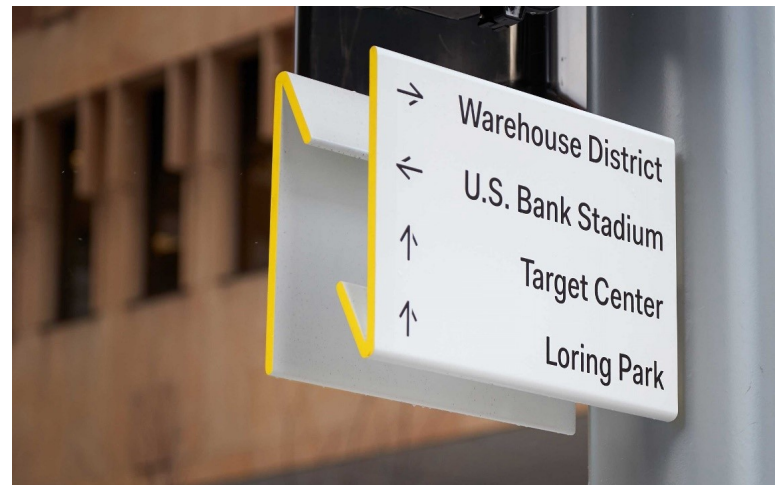


Above: www.bikeleague.org/sites/

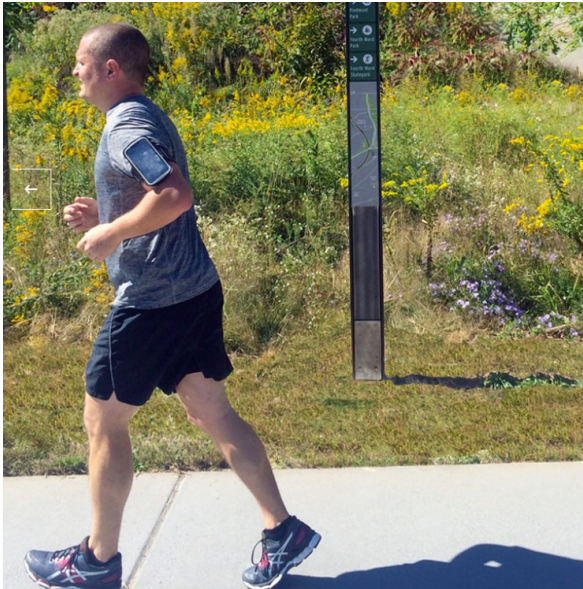


Above: [Lilly Foundation Invests in Indy Cultural Trail Expansion - Inside Indiana Business](http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/lilly-foundation-invests-in-indy-cultural-trail-expansion)

This page: Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Indianapolis, IN



All Above: Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN. Images: [New Graphic Identity for Nicollet by Pentagram — BP&O \(bpando.org\)](#)



Above: [Trail Wayfinding | MERJE DESIGN](#)



Above: [Trail Wayfinding | MERJE DESIGN](#)



Above: <https://nextcity.org/urbanist-news/atlanta-beltline-growing-with-construction-of-new-section>



Above: Darcy Kiefel, Image: <https://www.tpl.org/our-work/atlanta-beltline>

This page: Atlanta Beltline, Atlanta, GA

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Decals and Pavement Markings

Colorful decals and pavement markings should be included as part of the signing and branding package. These temporary and adaptable wayfinding elements can be used to reinforce the Circuit as a “sub-brand” of the Tyson's brand. They also provide placemaking by enlivening a space quickly.

Decals and pavement markings can also:

- Provide directional information
- Mark travel distances
- Supply event information
- Celebrate the seasons
- Transmit safety messages
- Spread knowledge of history, literature, the arts, nature, science, etc.

Decals should be concentrated at intersections, but can be located anywhere on paving, as shown on page 6-6. Pavement markings can be used as appropriate.



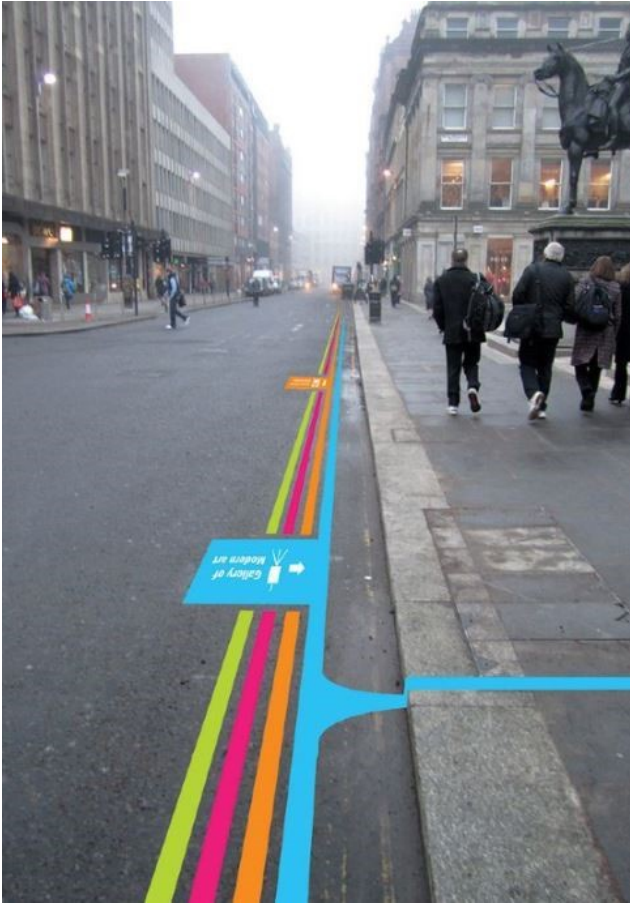
Above: Eye 4 Group, Floor and Ground Decals. Image: www.eye4group.com/floor-and-ground-decals/



Above: Wayfinding graphics by Thomas Matthews Graphic Design, Stratford Improvement District, London, England. Image: <https://thomasmatthews.com/tm-works/stratford-cultural-placemaking-part-1/>



Above: Wayfinding graphics by Thomas Matthews Graphic Design, Stratford Improvement District, London, England. Image: <https://thomasmatthews.com/tm-works/stratford-cultural-placemaking-part-1/>



Above: Glasgow Gallery of Art, Glasgow, Scotland. Image: Pinterest



Above: Rosslynn, VA. Image: Fairfax County Staff.



Above: Stairway in Japan. Image: Fairfax County Staff.



Above: Rosslynn, VA. Image: Fairfax County Staff.

Tyson Community Circuit

Using the Community Circuit Design Recommendations

The Community Circuit location and design should be considered with an appropriate level of detail at each stage of the development review process.

Pre-Application:

In consultation with DPD and FCPA, determine if the Circuit is located along property frontage.

Conceptual Development Plan (CDP):

The Pre-application elements, plus:

- Established alignment and dimensions of the Circuit within the streetscape
- Paving concepts
- Intersection concepts
- Locations for potential specialty crosswalks
- Details on additional streetscape furnishings/supporting elements
- Commitments for Circuit elements, including: consistent treatment across the site frontage, edge and center section surface materials, pedestrian and bicycle amenities unique to the circuit, and wayfinding and branding elements
- Description of the Circuit Phasing/Buildout

Final Development Plan (FDP):

The CDP elements, plus:

- Refined paving design
- Paver options
- Intersection treatment/design
- Locations for specialty crosswalk design
- Potential locations for additional streetscape furnishings/supporting elements
- Potential wayfinding sign locations
- Treatment for transit shelters along the Circuit
- Locations of any utility transformers/cabinets, manholes, that are along or adjacent to Circuit

Site Plan (SP) / Public Improvement Plan (PI):

The FDP elements, plus:

- Construction drawings for paving design, including intersection treatment
- Final paver selection
- Specialty crosswalk design detail
- All furnishings and amenities that will be included
- Wayfinding sign locations
- Locations of decals or pavement markings

At time of Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP):

For reference, identify locations for future Circuit signage within the right-of-way

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