1. Owen Brown Village Board Meeting - September 7, 2021
8 members of the public in attendance

Comments
- Amazed. Thrilled to see it come to fruition.
- Hope they can serve as an example and have more throughout the County.
- First protected bike lane on street in Howard County.
- Thank you for sharing the plans. It makes it more meaningful to the residents.
- Become much more real to me. Really looks exciting. What we hoped for and more.
- Thank you for listening to the community and considering everyone’s input.

Questions
1. When will the pedestrian islands go in?
   Most likely in the spring because they need to be done at the same time as the lane reconfiguration.

2. When do you expect to transition the lanes of travel east of Dobbin Road? How will the travel lanes merge?
   The travel lanes will start transitioning fairly far back towards the Oak Hall intersection, transitioning to one left turn lane and one travel lane when you reach Oakland Mills Rd/Dobbin Rd.

3. What is the impact of reducing the number of travel lanes on the vehicle traffic?
   The study is included on the project website. The travel time impact will be very little, because the volume of traffic is low for this stretch of road. The center turn lane for both directions will actually make it much safer since currently there are no turn lanes and any turning cars impact the cars traveling behind them. Overall, the impact is only expected to be a few seconds.

4. Will the traffic signals be timed to coordinate?
   We do not know at this time. We will ask the County signal engineer and can get back to you.
   Note: Additional information added since September 7 Village Board meeting – No the signals will not be timed to coordinate.

5. What is the status of the other projects in the region?
   Dobbin Road and Snowden River Parkway are two other projects in the area. Dobbin Road has several segments in different phases of design. For more information, including information on a public meeting on October 28, visit: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/transportation/dobbin-road-pathway. The pedestrian crossing improvements at Snowden River Parkway and Oakland Mills Road are currently part of the large Snowden River Parkway widening project (J4222).
   Note: Additional information added since the September 7 Village Board meeting - In reviewing the capital budget for J4222, the intersection improvements are scheduled for FY24.
6. Consider the turn lane markings between Dasher and Community Garden. You do not want drivers thinking they can make a left turn at Community Garden when in actuality they cannot. *We will pass that along to the traffic engineers.*

7. Is the speed limit 35 miles per hour and will that stay? *The County is not planning to change the speed limit. Right now vehicles tend to exceed that speed. We are hoping the new configuration will help reduce the travel speeds to the intended speed limit of 35mph.*

8. What about putting the crosswalk for Community Garden on other side of parkway? *The design was modified to address this.*

2. Oakland Mills Village Board Meeting – September 14, 2021
14 members of the public in attendance

**General comments**

- Think this is a great design. Great improvement.
- Great project.
- Thanks so much. Super excited about it.
- Huge improvement for Columbia. Provides protected bike lanes and pathways all the way to the hospital.

**Specific comments/questions**

**Any consideration of making the whole bicycle path green to be very clear it is only for bicycles?**

Green is more often used these days for conflict areas - and less for long stretches. It is a challenge to keep the paint fresh with limited resources. The flex posts will be located to make it difficult for drivers to access the path.

**For the people who live on side streets east of Oakland Mills, the change would add 9 feet of bike lane plus buffer. Where would cars pull up to see vehicular traffic along Oakland Mills Road (both signalized and unsignalized)?**

All intersections would have a signal or stop sign at the side street, and in some cases a stop bar as well, that would indicate where to stop to look for pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicular traffic before proceeding. If necessary, vehicles may need to move forward into the crosswalk after stopping and scanning before making the final entryway onto Oakland Mills Road. So in those cases it would be okay to pull into the crosswalk if it is empty after making the initial stop.

**Concerned about the left turn into Community Gardens due to the crosswalk.**

The County is still considering which side the crosswalk should be on at that intersection. Sight lines need to be considered.

**What is happening on Dobbin Road?**

There is a separate shared use path project planned for Dobbin Road. There is a public meeting scheduled for October 28. (For more information visit: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/transportation/dobbin-road-pathway)

**What is the status of the Columbia Gateway project (Robert Fulton Drive Pathway)?**
This project has only gone through preliminary design. The final design phase and construction are not yet funded. In addition, there is another project for Snowden River Parkway that will provide pedestrian crossings at the intersection of Oakland Mills Road and Snowden River Parkway. The County is hoping that grant money or federal stimulus funding might be secured to help with project funding.

**Can you add signs like “bikes may use full lane?”**

These signs are being considered for the area where cyclists may rejoin the travel lane, just before the traffic circle.

**Blandair Park has great trails. Is there any chance to create a connection to Sohap Lane (just north of the Park)?**

The County can look at that connection.

**It can be difficult navigating tight turns with a larger bike. Concerned about the proposed island that a bike would ride through at Oakland Mills Road and Dobbin Road.**

The island is actually fairly large so it won’t be as tight of a turn as it appears. Design team will look at other transition areas such as the area around the traffic circle to make sure they are not too tight for larger bicycles.

**The alignment of the bike path shifts fairly significantly at every intersection (example, Loring Drive/Fairmead Lane). Why is that?**

It was done with some intentionality. We want pedestrian and bicycle crosswalks to be next to each other so drivers are more likely to see bicyclists and pedestrians, and they are both using the same signal. We would like to give the biker some extra awareness of the intersection, so they slow down slightly and are attentive of what is happening in the intersection.

**We’ve seen raised crosswalks in other cities that aid with pedestrian safety. Is it possible to provide a raised crosswalk at the free right turn from Oakland Mills Rd onto Dobbin Road?**

We can look at this location to see if this is a possibility.

**Are raised crosswalks addressed in the Design Manual update?**

The team reviewing the Design Manual is discussing where raised crosswalks are appropriate as they do help to calm traffic.
3. Comments via Office of Transportation Email - transportation@howardcountymd.gov

Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:01 PM  
To: Eatough, Christopher <CEatough@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: OM Road Diet comments

Nice job, Chris! Good to see the community support!

I have (as always) a couple of comments:

• Will the walk signs be green for bikes/pedestrians whenever the traffic lights in the same direction are green? I think this is important, at least for the cyclists. I doubt many will stop if the traffic light is green! Also would be excellent to give pedestrian signal a 5 second head start.

• "No turn on red" signs should be at every WB signalized intersection on Oakland Mills Road to protect bikes who might be beside cars, or running the light.

• Similarly, all southbound side street intersections at Oakland Mills Road should have a sign that says yield to bikes, or some other verbiage, because cars won’t be used to looking for/seeing cross traffic from the right that close (I have this problem at Green Mountain Circle on Twin Rivers heading toward the mall)

Picky details:

• I had the same question as the audience member on the placement of the crosswalk at Community Garden. Left turning traffic EB on OM Road isn’t accommodated well. On another note, the offset of the crosswalks at the refuge could be the other way around (the one on the south side of the road could be further east than the one on the north side of the road), otherwise cyclists trying to get to or from Lake Elkhorn via Dasher Ct or from the tunnel via Elkhorn Branch trail have a wicked little zig zag to make.

• Why isn’t there a crosswalk across the fourth leg (east side of Homespun) of the OM road/Homespun intersection? Google maps shows that there is one there now; there are sidewalks on both sides, and NB cyclists on Homespun that want to get to or from Lake Elkhorn via Dasher Ct or from the tunnel via Elkhorn Branch trail could use it, I think.

• At Dobbin, westbound cyclists on OM road could use slip ramps where the red arrows are instead of having to make harder turns into the island.
- Need at least one crosswalk across OM road at Fairmead/Loring (on the bus stop side) and a fourth one at Dawn Day Drive.
- Same comment about the zig zag at the pedestrian refuge at Farewell Road—EB bikes wanting to turn left onto Farewell have an unnecessarily challenging path, I think, if they want to use the crosswalk.
- The Old Montgomery/Oakland Mills Road traffic circle is clearly challenging! I like the slip ramp. However, the sidewalks, and the little sections between the sidewalks and the crosswalks (red fuzzy lines below), are very narrow and the turns (circled) are abrupt. Probably not in the budget to add a couple hundred feet of wide enough separated bike path, huh?

Thank you for shepherding this project through, Chris. It’s going to be awesome!

OoT Twitter post 9/8/21

“This is exciting!! I’d love to see Dobbin addressed, too--there are so many folks who I have seen regularly walking the shoulders because there is no other option. If this could be connected to the Wegmans area and even the Dobbin/175 area it would be great”

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Hey there! I absolutely love your plan for Oakland Mills! I'm sure you will get a lot of push back on this, but some of us are very pleased with what you have planned. :)  

**Sent:** Thursday, September 9, 2021 9:02 AM  
**To:** Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project  

I am an avid Columbia cyclist, and this project is NOT the one that HoCo should be spending resources upon. Why? the cyclist demand is just not there. I ride Oakland Mills road all the time (multiple times per month), and the volume of cyclists is very low, and near zero.  

The Road itself is already bike friendly, as it is mostly 2 lanes in each direction, with relatively low traffic, so there is plenty of SAFE road sharing as it is right now.  

Instead, HoCo could be building out the high demand bike pathways like the Little Patuxent Trail, and improvise the cross county pathways, and Park connections - like Centennial, Patapsco, Elkhorn, Western HoCo, Blandair, Kittimiquundi....A protected Oakland Mills Rd. bike lane takes away from other higher demand projects, and will have little value add, and little usage.  

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**From:** Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 9, 2021 10:33 AM  
**Cc:** Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Oakland Mills proj complete streets  

Thank you for your comments. Where marked crosswalks are provided for crossing Oakland Mills Road at unsignalized locations, signs will be installed as an additional indicator to drivers that pedestrians crossing the street should be expected in these locations. Compliance will be monitored and additional signs and enforcement will be considered if there are ongoing concerns. Howard County Office of Transportation  

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 8, 2021 6:03 PM  
**To:** Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** Oakland Mills Complete Streets Comments  

I urge you to consider extending the project to Oak Hall Lane. I would appreciate having better access to the post office and the stores and restaurants that are in the shopping area off of Oak Hall Lane. These places are ones I have gone to by bike and on foot, but the area is not easily accessible by these forms of transportation. Thanks for considering this extension.  

Sincerely  

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 8, 2021 7:52 PM  
**To:** Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** Oakland Mills Complete Streets Comments  

I looked at the link to the slides. I am guessing the stripes on the slide mean that you intend to provide crosswalk road striping. If this is the case, I believe that the crosswalks on Oakland Mills itself need to have small signs that say stopping for pedestrians is required. The crosswalk signs at Dawn Day Drive are very visible. There's no way to mistake that this is a crosswalk given the current bright yellow green signs, but almost nobody stops for pedestrians. If one car stops, the other lanes' cars do not. The change to single lane each direction may help somewhat. But we need the additional signage to "stop for pedestrians," like the example by the schools on Kilamanjaro Rd.
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 12:59 PM  
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Re: Oakland Mills proj complete streets

I don’t think you got the point of my comments. There already re pedestrian crossing signs to indicate pedestrians at Oakland Mills and Dawn Day Drive, and 99.9% of the time cars on Oakland Mills Rd do not stop. In addition to signage for pedestrian crossing, my comment is to add the signage that stopping is required "by state law."

On Thu, Sep 9, 2021, 10:32 AM Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov> wrote:

Thank you for your comments. Where marked crosswalks are provided for crossing Oakland Mills Road at unsignalized locations, signs will be installed as an additional indicator to drivers that pedestrians crossing the street should be expected in these locations. Compliance will be monitored and additional signs and enforcement will be considered if there are ongoing concerns. (Chris Eatough)

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Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 10:57 AM  
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project

I am strongly in favor of the Oakland Mills Road Complete Streets project. I ride and drive along this road almost every day and I can clearly see how its current design exacerbates speeding and potential conflicts between people who drive and people who ride bikes. By transforming the road into a complete street, we can make it safer and more comfortable for all roadway users.

It will also help to better connect all of the neighborhoods in the Oakland Mills high school cluster by creating crosswalks and much safer connections across a road that has served as a barrier in our community.

Because of the importance of the connections along this corridor, people are going to continue to use it for all forms of transportation. So it is only fitting that we rebuild the roadway and create safe, comfortable facilities that can accommodate all users.

Thank you for all of your work on this project and I am hopeful that it can move forward soon!

Sincerely

From: Eatough, Christopher <CEatough@howardcountymd.gov>  
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 2:24 PM  
Subject: RE: OM Road Diet comments

Thanks so much. Great input. Your comments will go to the design team for consideration.

My responses below should give you an idea of which are already being addressed, which are likely to be incorporated, and which may not be feasible at this time.

Thanks again.
Nice job, Chris! Good to see the community support!

I have a couple of comments:

- Will the walk signs be green for bikes/pedestrians whenever the traffic lights in the same direction are green? I think this is important, at least for the cyclists. I doubt many will stop if the traffic light is green! Also would be excellent to give pedestrian signal a 5 second head start. Yes, the pedestrian signals across the side streets will be on recall, meaning they come on every cycle at the same time as the through traffic on OMR is on green. Because they come on every cycle, whether a cyclist or pedestrian is there or not, the 5 second head start is unlikely.

- "No turn on red" signs should be at every WB signalized intersection on Oakland Mills Road to protect bikes who might be beside cars or running the light. I will discuss with the design team, but when WB drivers are on red, the parallel bike and ped crossing will be on red also. So the right turn on red will not be a conflict. The conflict is actually WB drivers making a right turn on green at the same time that the parallel bike and ped crossings are on green. To mitigate this, the marking and flex post placement are forcing the right turning drivers to go slow and make a tight turn. The green crosswalk markings will also help raise awareness.

- Similarly, all southbound side street intersections at Oakland Mills Road should have a sign that says yield to bikes, or some other verbiage, because cars won’t be used to looking for/seeing cross traffic from the right that close (I have this problem at Green Mountain Circle on Twin Rivers heading toward the mall)
  I will discuss with the design team.

Picky details:

- I had the same question as the audience member on the placement of the crosswalk at Community Garden. Left turning traffic EB on OM Road isn’t accommodated well. On another note, the offset of the crosswalks at the refuge could be the other way around (the one on the south side of the road could be further east than the one on the north side of the road), otherwise cyclists trying to get to or from Lake Elkhorn via Dasher Ct or from the tunnel via Elkhorn Branch trail have a wicked little zig zag to make.
  The offset is there for a couple of reasons. First, it turns the pedestrian (or cyclist) to the diagonal angle when in the refuge so they are more facing the oncoming traffic. Second, it slows them down so they are not tempted to surge through into the second half of their crossing.

- Why isn’t there a crosswalk across the fourth leg (east side of Homespun) of the OM road/Homespun intersection? Google maps shows that there is one there now; there are sidewalks on both sides, and NB cyclists on Homespun that want to get to the protected lanes could use it, I think.
  There have been issues with the right turning drivers off Homespun in conflict with the current ped crosswalk. DPW prefers to move the crosswalk to the other leg.
• At Dobbin, westbound cyclists on OM road could use slip ramps where the red arrows are instead of having to make harder turns into the island.
Agreed. I will discuss with design team and see if the design of the island can accommodate this. I prefer a ramp at the bottom arrow, since it’s awkward to communicate to a cyclist that they should be in the right turn slip lane in order to keep going straight on OMR.

• Need at least one crosswalk across OM road at Fairmead/Loring (on the bus stop side) and a fourth one at Dawn Day Drive.
I will take this request to the design team but I think there is a sight line issue at Fairmead/Loring.

• Same comment about the zig zag at the pedestrian refuge at Farewell Road—EB bikes wanting to turn left onto Farewell have an unnecessarily challenging path, I think, if they want to use the crosswalk.
See previous response. The zig zag is to make the crossers look in the direction of oncoming traffic.

• The Old Montgomery/Oakland Mills Road traffic circle is clearly challenging! I like the slip ramp. However, the sidewalks, and the little sections between the sidewalks and the crosswalks (red fuzzy lines below), are very narrow and the turns (circled) are abrupt. Probably not in the budget to add a couple hundred feet of wide enough separated bike path, huh? Correct, we don’t the funds for this at this time. We are also limited by storm water management. If we had impervious, we have to mitigate with SWM facilities. For the most part, the project needs to minimize new impervious surface.
Thank you for shepherding this project through, Chris. It's going to be awesome!

Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 4:57 PM
To: Eatough, Christopher <CEatough@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Re: OM Road Diet comments

Thanks for the feedback, Chris! Good answers. I rode through the traffic circle at Blandair today, and I still think riders NB from Blandair will have challenges getting into the protected bike lane, especially if they start in the bike lane on Oakland Mills Road and enter the traffic circle. Maybe have a slip ramp south of the circle where the bike lane ends that goes onto the NB bike path with signage to direct cyclists to use the crosswalk to go east?

Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 1:59 PM
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project

I am a Columbia resident who lives in the Oakland Mills area and I would like Oakland Mills Road to be a safer road for walkers and bike riders. I drive this road several times every day. Cars drive too fast on this road. I am guessing it's because it is two lanes with no traffic calmers. I see bike riders all the time on this road and it's a terrible accident waiting to happen. We should have bike lanes on this road.

I choose to ride my bike on the sidewalk out of fear, but honestly even walking doesn't feel safe on those sidewalks because of the speeding traffic. The sidewalks also need work. They are not easy to ride bikes on and they are not wide enough.

Thank you for your time.

Sent: Friday, September 10, 2021 11:26 AM
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: RE: Complete Streets improvements to Oakland Mills Road - Public Comment Period Open Until Sept.

10
Hi, Transportation folks, Our family is very excited to see this project moving forward and fully support it.

-----Original Message-----
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2021 10:58 AM
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Oakland Mills street project

I have attended most of the meetings. Again I SUPPORT the plan for three lane, one each way, two protected bike lanes, and one center turn lane. I hope but kind of doubt this will stop the reckless, high speed driver’s, especially between Farewell and Homespun. This area has become a drag strip and raceway. I feel WE NEED SPEED CAMERAS in this area, facing both directions. Our neighbors have called numerous times about this to the Howard Co Police. They occasionally place officer at the Verizon building in a Marked car at 1-2 in the afternoon. The time of excessive speed, reckless, loud racing is between 4-7pm, 11 pm till 2am, especially on weekends. The cameras as used very efficiently In Montgomery Co. would stop the speeding and pay for themselves. The police don’t apparently have the time nor use unmarked cars to catch these speeders. I have lived at 6389 looking glass lane sines 1977, it has been terrible to get out of our road, esp. the last 1 1/2 years.

One other item for improved safety, would to NOT ALLOW RIGHT TURN ON RED, coming from Homespun onto Oakland Mills Road. It is dangerous to try to walk or drive through that intersection, because Cars and Trucks, DON'T STOP THERE BEFORE TUNING ON RED. Make it a turn light only please!
Thank you

Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 4:58 PM
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: OM Road Complete. Streets Project.

I am looking at the speed and stats and don't know whether to laugh or cry.

Ask our neighborhood police and the others who attended our neighborhood meetings re speeding on Cardlock and Homespun. Of course they go to and from Homespun onto OM Road. We can hear them. Several of us can tell you stories of the weaving in and out of traffic going a good 50-70. mph. Don't see on instance on your chart.

I don't see how the design addresses speeders. The offenders don't care about pedestrians, so they will kill someone on a bicycle in a heartbeat and never know they hit anything. It's out of control. Get the stats from Cradlerock. No difference for OM Road. There was a three week, 30 hour. monitoring where they issued 95 citations. Speeding is the norm, but these people take it to the drag race level.

Please. just talk to the police, County officials, and traffic office who worked with our neighborhood.

Sent: Saturday, September 11, 2021 4:33 PM
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project

I'm very happy that this project is getting close to being started. It will make my bike ride to the Post office, Race Pace and Home Depot so much more direct and safer. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I have also been concerned with the speed of the traffic on Oakland Mills Road, it was very challenging for cyclists and pedestrians trying to cross. This project will go a long way to making this road more enjoyable for all users.

I'm grateful for the commitment to complete streets shown by Howard County leadership and all those who work within the community to make these types of projects a reality. It really does make our community a
much nicer place to live. I look forward to hearing more about the Columbia Gateway project and how it will connect with this Oakland Mills road diet. One day I won’t even need a car to get around Columbia.

Thanks again.

Sent: Saturday, September 11, 2021 3:37 PM
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project

I like the configuration that is proposed. However, the straight stretches on Oakland Mills Road have folks speeding at 50MPH and I would suggest that the speed should also be reduced to 30mph and police enforced.

Best.
Hello Howard County Office of Transportation  

This comment is in regard to the Final Draft of the Oakland Mills Road Diet, as part of the Howard County Complete Streets Program.

First, I enthusiastically support the decision to remove one lane of traffic and replace it with a bi-directional cycle-track. I have cycled along Oakland Mills Road occasionally in the past and this will be a great improvement. There are, however, some deficiencies with the current plan I would like to comment on and provide suggestions to address. I am sensitive to limitations of public sector capital budgets, so I will present my comments in what I believe to be cheapest/easiest to fix first followed by more costly suggestions.

My three suggestions are:

1. Change the alignment of the cycle-track markings at intersections  
2. Connect the cycle-track to existing bicycling infrastructure at the northern end of the project  
3. Install curb medians between vehicle lanes and cycle-track instead of road paint and flexposts

**Change the alignment of the cycle-track at intersections.**

Additional Cost: Free

The cycle-track "bends" to the side at all major intersections. This forces bicyclists to weave back and forth as they pass through. Appropriate room exists at every intersection to have the cycle-track pass through completely straight. Here is what I mean:

![Original Design](image1) ![Suggested Alternative](image2)

This “shift to the side” design is present in all cycle-track crossings. Please re-align the cycle-track so bicyclists are not forced to weave back and forth as they pass through these intersections.

If this “feature” was designed to assist with turning geometry and visual hinting for vehicle traffic, consider extending the bike crossing markings, as shown in the suggested alternative above.
Connect the cycle-track to existing bicycling infrastructure

Additional Cost: Low

The addition of the cycle-track, while nice, leaves a conspicuous gap in the network and forces bicyclists to use a sidewalk path that is not wide enough to accommodate bi-directional bicyclist traffic. To illustrate this, see the below image of the current bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure at the Oakland Mills Road/Old Montgomery Road Traffic Circle. Paths 8ft or wider are colored blue and standard width sidewalks are colored green. Notice the obvious gap:

Please consider two suggestions:

1. widen the existing sidewalks marked in green in the image
2. change the six pedestrian crossing signs to 'pedestrian and bicycle crossing signs

This will fully complete the network and integrate it into the existing bike paths.
Install curb medians between vehicle lanes and cycle-track

Additional Cost: High

Blandair park is a destination for families with children and young adults. These are some of themost vulnerable road users. A curb median separating the cycle-track from vehicle traffic has a Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress 3.9/4.0. It’s the gold standard for North American bicycle infrastructure.

If it is cost prohibitive to install a median along the entire length of the road, then at minimum, please consider installing medians for the ~20ft near intersections, as these are the locations where cars are most likely to accidentally enter the cycle way. Flex posts can be placed on top of the median for extra separation. Curb medians are not just a better physical barrier, but reinforce a very strong psychological barrier between vehicles and bicyclists.

----Original Message-----

Sent: Monday, September 13, 2021 12:59 PM
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project

To whom it may concern: I feel compelled to comment on the final draft plan for the changes to Oakland Mills Road that have been proposed as part of the Complete Streets Project because, as a resident of that area, I am concerned that a full review of the live traffic pattern in 2 specific locations was not conducted when the plan was drafted. Putting aside the fact that I am not sure I am in favor of the project as a whole, which I feel might actually increase traffic congestion in this area even while attempting to provide a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists along the route, I would like to provide constructive feedback regarding the Oakland Mills Road-Dobbin Road intersection and the Oakland Mills Road-Homespun Drive-Malindy Circle intersection, particularly the proposed marking changes.
At the OMR-Dobbin intersection, there is currently a short merge lane for traffic turning right from southbound Dobbin onto northbound OMR. In the final draft plan this merge lane is eliminated in favor of road markings intended to discourage motorized traffic. The problem with this is that, since only one lane of traffic on OMR will be allowed to pass through this intersection, motorists attempting to make the turn onto NB OMR are likely to find it difficult to do so during times of heavy congestion in that area. Keeping the merge lane available to motorists should allow for better traffic flow and prevent backups on SB Dobbin. Therefore I would urge the Transportation Office to consider revising the plan to retain the merge lane in this location.

Of greater concern is the OMR-Homespun-Malindy intersection. Currently the road widens at this location from a 4-lane cross section to a 5-lane cross section, including dedicated left-hand turn lanes from NB OMR onto Homespun and SB OMR onto Malindy. In the final draft plan the 5-lane cross section is converted to a 3-lane cross section that still includes these dedicated left-hand turn lanes. As the Office is surely aware, Homespun Drive is a short but highly travelled connector between OMR and Cradlerock Way, which serves the residents of Owen Brown Village and affords easy access to many amenities, whereas Melindy Circle is a purely-residential thoroughfare that re-intersects with OMR north of Homespun. As such, I would urge the Transportation Office to reconsider the markings at this intersection to allow for creation of a right-turn-only lane from SB OMR onto Homespun while also keeping the left-hand turn lane from SB OMR onto Malindy. This could be accomplished by moving all OMR travel lanes closer to the Malindy side of the intersection, creating space for the right-turn-only lane and allowing for the possibility of a merge lane for traffic turning from the right-turn-only lane on EB Homespun to SB OMR. This would have the added benefit of making that turn easier for motorists, easing congestion along both OMR and Homespun during times of heavier-than-normal usage.

I understand that one of the main goals of the Complete Streets Project is to increase safety for non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians along the OMR corridor and I believe that my feedback above is aligned with that goal while also serving to ease potential problems that the final draft plan may cause for motorized vehicles at the 2 intersections I have mentioned. I hope that the Transportation Office will take my feedback into consideration when creating the final plan for modifications to OMR and thank you in advance for your time in this matter. Feel free to contact me via a response to this e-mail message if anything I have stated needs clarification.

Sincerely

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**Sent:** Monday, September 13, 2021 3:32 PM  
**To:** Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** Bike lanes, Oakland Mills Rd

Thanks for developing plans for Oakland Mills Rd. I love the proposal for adding bike lanes along Oakland Mills. I live off Dawn Day Drive. I am concerned that drivers coming from neighborhoods on the west side of Oakland Mills will not remember to look for and see bikers coming from the south(?!) (Cycling toward Blandair from direction of Homespun). I am concerned for the safety of bike riders from the south. Can you install signs at the neighborhood road intersections reminding drivers to "watch for cyclists" or "look both ways for cyclists?" These signs can be either at the neighborhood corners or on/near the bike lane post lane dividers, as long as they don't block car drivers' view of the road and bike lanes. Thanks. Wendy Ormont

**Sent:** Monday, September 13, 2021 6:35 PM  
**To:** Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project

I will not be able to attend the meetings. Following are my comments:
Increase width of cycle track. According to NACTO: “The desirable two-way cycle track width is 12 feet. Minimum width in constrained locations is 8 feet.” According to the FHWA Separated bike lane design guide, “Two-way separated bike lanes should have a preferred combined width of at least 12 ft.”

Add “Bicycle may use full lane” signs to locations where bike lane ends, e.g. west end before circle at Blandair.

According to an IIHS study, two-stage turn boxes, protected intersections, and special traffic signal with phases for cyclists also could help reduce more minor injuries, - from https://www.iihs.org/news/detail/some-protected-bike-lanes-leave-cyclists-vulnerable-to-injury.

Add bicycle may use full lane sign on eastbound Oakland Mills Road. Fast cyclist through traffic will ride in the travel lane towards Snowden River Parkway and not on the two way cycle track, in part due to the difficulty of crossing OM Road from the North to South side. Cars who can safely pass can do so through the TWLT.

Maintenance of the two way cycle track, keeping it free of debris will be essential, including a plan for snow removal.

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 1:20 PM  
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project

Hello, I wanted to provide feedback on the Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project that I have seen posted on Facebook. My husband and I live off of _______ and I think the plans are excellent! I am curious though, it states about adding sidewalks and bike lanes but am I correct in assuming that this will give space for sidewalks on both side of Oakland Mills for the entire length of the project? Because if so that would be fantastic!

From: Gartner, Bruce <bgartner@howardcountymd.gov>  
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 9:57 AM  
Cc: Eatough, Christopher <CEatough@howardcountymd.gov>; Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Question about Oakland Mills Road Diet Design

Chris (copied) reports that the design team is looking at these two intersections for possible pedestrian crosswalk additions.

- Oakland Mills Road at Sewells Orchard Road does have a marked pedestrian crossing across the north leg of Oakland Mills Road already. The crossing will be shortened so that pedestrians are crossing 3 lanes rather than 4. The Design team is evaluating to see if a marked pedestrian crossing can also be added across the south leg.

- Oakland Mills Road at Loring Drive is also be evaluated for the addition of a marked pedestrian crossing.

These two locations do not meet warrants for a traffic signal, so pedestrian crossings would be marked and signed, but not signalized at these two locations. Driving speeds are also expected to be reduced throughout the corridor due to the change in configuration from 4 lanes to 3 lanes, the lane narrowing, the addition of flex posts adjacent to the travel lanes and addition of refuge islands. This will make pedestrian crossings considerably safer and more comfortable.

Please let us know if you have any other questions. Regards

From: Gartner, Bruce  
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 1:46 PM  
To: Eatough, Christopher <CEatough@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Question from __________
“I’m looking at the proposal for Oakland mills road (admittedly in my phone) and

(1) very excited to see this moving forward

(2) can’t tell what is going on exactly. Will have to look on my computer later

(3) *** I am most concerned about these two intersections in terms of pedestrians. The kids in both sides are friends and go to school together at Oakland Mills. People in the south? (Owen brown) side frequently cross over to go to the lake/pond back there to walk etc. if these are not included, can they be. And is there a way to signalize these for pedestrians?”
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 10:53 PM  
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
Cc: Eatough, Christopher <CEatough@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Oakland Mills Complete Streets Project  

Please consider the following design comments as you proceed to construction-level docs: 

- Globally: consider restricting right turn on red from all side streets at signalized intersections  
- Globally: where WALK signals are used to indicate cyclist passage, angle the ped signal head so that it is visible to both cyclists and pedestrians on sidewalk.  
- SN-2.01 consider posted speed limit reduction to 30 mph or 25 mph  
- SN-2.02 consider restricting northbound right turns on red  
- SN-2.03 it appears that an eastbound left turning bus from Farewell will be forced into the cycle track to execute a left turn  
- SN-2.04 the northbound share thru-right lane should have arrow markings indicating its designation so as to discourage OMR drivers from using the unprotected cycle track lanes to turn right onto Sewell Orchard Dr.  
- SN-2.07 there is a stop bar for southbound cyclists just north of Malindy Circle (north); this seems to be an error. Also, can a vehicle turning right from Malindy circle not encroach into the southbound left turn lane?  
- SN-2.08 is the southbound left turn a protected-only movement?  
- SN-2.09 consider wayfinding signage for cyclists to get from the cycle track to the Lake Elkhorn trail underpass under OMR. Also, consider relocating the ped refuge island south of the driveway to the community gardens, so that southbound drivers can turn left into the driveway (unless this was intentional to reduce a conflict point – is so, add a sign for a left turn restriction)  

SN-2.11 I like the cycle track terminating at a path prior to reaching Dobbin Road, but shouldn’t the path extend north to just north of the relocated bus stop? This would eliminate all bus/bike conflicts and allow bus riders a paved surface to board/alight from. Also, consider putting dashed lines along this short path segment, since it serves as a cycle track extension. Presumably, there will be WALK signal heads added – if so, sign for “bikes use ped signal.” Also, the ped refuge island may be a busy place once the Dobbin road side trail is constructed – as such, consider making it wider. Finally, the southwest quadrant shows a standard-width ped ramp and landing – this should be widened to an 8-wide ramp and landing in anticipation of the future sidewalk widening between Dobbin Road and the current termination of the Lake Elkhorn Branch trail, just south of Dobbin. Thank you for consideration of my comments.  

Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 7:47 PM  
To: Transportation <transportation@howardcountymd.gov>  
Subject: Oakland Mills Road  

I am concerned about the constant speeding down Oakland Mills Road. We live off Malindy Circle & hear speeding several times a day. I believe there was an incident where a pedestrian was hit in a crosswalk, perhaps at Farewell.  

Sometimes a large group of bicyclists race on Oakland Mills Road. They take over both lanes of traffic, especially when they start passing each other. Car drivers tried to give them space, but the bicyclists were unpredictable & didn’t seem to share the road. Most bicyclists are calmer drivers, but this club/group was acting the way some motorcyclists & sportcar drivers do...driving too fast, taking risks, & darting back & forth with very little warning or
stopping distance. Would the bike lane be additional? Hopefully we keep the four lanes of traffic, & take part of the area past the curb for bike traffic. Thanks for considering neighbors' opinions.
4. **Comments via online form posted to project webpage (Survey Monkey)**

Q4  
*What is your feedback on the plan?*

Fantastic. We have been waiting 40 years for this. We live on Dawn Day Drive and sometimes it is very dangerous to turn left out of my street. And since Covid Oakland Mills Road has become a raceway. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Q5  
*What is your feedback on the schedule?*

Asap

Q6  
*How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)*

Other (please specify): Daughter sent me a report
Q4
What is your feedback on the plan?

The plan does not appear to include crossing at the intersection of Oakland Mills and Snowden River Parkway. This intersection has a sidewalk on one side but no pedestrian crosswalk/walk signal to cross the road or sidewalk on the other side (near Stonehaven Apartments). Crossing this intersection by foot or bike is incredibly risky. A bike lane in the road and a crosswalk/walk signal, plus a sidewalk, would enhance this plan and accessibility.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

N/a

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

I reviewed the technical plans myself online.
Q4
What is your feedback on the plan?

Excellent project, will make my bike errands much more direct and safe. Cross walk by community garden may need to be adjusted. Someone driving south and turning left into the gardens would have to do so from the travel lane.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

Wish it could come sooner, but understand planning and $$$ take time to put into place. Very grateful to see this project start this fall.

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

- I attended the Oakland Mills Village Board meeting on September 14
- I reviewed the presentation myself online.
- I reviewed the technical plans myself online.
- Other (please specify):
  co-worker mentioned the plan was online
#4

What is your feedback on the plan?

I'm thrilled to see this plan materialize. I cannot thank the county enough for listening to our feedback. I'm very excited for Oakland Mills Road to host this transformative project. I do have a few small feedback items to share.

1) As a pedestrian, the crosswalk near the garden plots and Dasher Ct would be better positioned on the other side of the garden plot entrance, closer to Dasher and the tunnel under OMR. This will better serve ped/bike traffic coming to/from the tunnel, to/from the path along Dasher to the lake, and NB to the garden plot. It would only minimally lengthen the path for SB pedestrians headed to the garden plot. It also would make it easier for SB vehicle traffic to turn left into the garden plot.

2) The area between the garden plot, Dasher, and the tunnel sees a good bit of foot traffic, and I expect/hope this will increase. There are no trash cans nearby currently. A trash can in that area would be very useful. (In addition, bus stops are a great place for more trash cans too)

3) There are several stretches where the turn lane is not needed (nowhere to turn left - For example, between the garden plot crosswalk and Dasher Court). In these places, it would be great if the pedestrian islands could be extended to create a bit of a median. Where that's not possible, it would be good to paint the area differently to indicate it is just a division and not a turn lane in those areas. This would hopefully:
   -- Improve safety by preventing illegal passing
   -- Improve driver navigational awareness
   -- Improve aesthetics (where/if a median can be used)

4) Does it make sense to straighten the Kilimnjarro crosswalk, and just move the curb cut and stop-line back away from the intersection to accommodate it?

5) Beside the curb-cut that was just re-done at Dasher Court, pedestrians have worn a path across the grass toward the tunnel. Could the sidewalk get a stub here, connecting to Dasher?

What is your feedback on the schedule?

I'm excited! If "yesterday" isn't an option, I'm very happy with the schedule :)

How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

- I attended the Owen Brown Village Board meeting on September 7
- I reviewed the presentation myself online.
- I reviewed the technical plans myself online.
Other (please specify):
Followed closely since inception
Q4
What is your feedback on the plan?

I think the plan is brilliant. Specifically, the buffered bike lanes are a really good idea. They provide the necessary space between cars and bikes and greatly increase the comfort level of cyclists (and possibly even cars) when sharing roadways.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

Spring 2022 seems reasonable to me. I look forward to the improvements, so the sooner the better.

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

- I reviewed the presentation myself online.
Q4
What is your feedback on the plan?

I just wanted to say how excited I am as someone who lives in a neighborhood off of Oakland Mills. This plan seems like it will make walking, running, and biking a lot safer, as well as trying to cross the road.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

I would like more details about when exactly is expected to begin and end, just so I know to budget more transportation time if needed.

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

I reviewed the technical plans myself online.

Other (please specify):
I saw an Instagram post about it and looked into it a little further.
Q4
What is your feedback on the plan?

I love the addition of bike lanes and the poles to separate them from the car lanes. I'm very excited for this project because it will give my family a safe way to bike to bland-air park.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

N/A

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

- I reviewed the presentation myself online.
- I reviewed the technical plans myself online.
Q4
What is your feedback on the plan?

Short-sighted in the fact that it really should extend from Dobbin down to Snowden River Parkway. A large disconnect. I would personally prefer a bike lane on each side of the road, not on one side, more or less bringing the road back to how it was in the early 90s - one lane each way with a shoulder.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

The sooner the better. I've been riding my bikes around HoCo for 30+ years, and when Oakland Mills turned from one lane each way to two many many years ago, I haven't ridden that road as cars go way beyond the speed limit.

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

Other (please specify): twitter
Q4
What is your feedback on the plan?

I think the bike lanes should be widened. Eight feet is the bare minimum for a 2-way bike lane. Once in, it will not be easy to widen. I believe that once this bike lane connects to businesses in Gateway and Dobbin Rd, this bike lane will become very busy and need to be wider.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

This project is a long time in coming. I am looking forward to using the bike lane next spring.

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

I attended the Oakland Mills Village Board meeting on September 14
Q4

What is your feedback on the plan?

hope that canopy tree cover can be preserved/restored throughout the project

Q5

What is your feedback on the schedule?

Respondent skipped this question

Q6

How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

I reviewed the presentation myself online.
Q4 What is your feedback on the plan?

Disclosure: I was employed by Howard County during January–July 2018 in the position of Traffic Signal Engineer.

1) The contraflow cycle track design (which is variously designated “Option B”, “Option 2”, and “Alternative 2” in the Sabra study) violates motorist expectations of bicycles riding with traffic and is generally only implemented to facilitate two-way bicycle traffic on lower-speed densely-populated urban streets with one-way motor vehicle traffic. In addition, this design adds bicycle–motor vehicle conflicts at “T” intersections having east-side legs, where southbound bicycle traffic would otherwise proceed unimpeded on the west side of the intersection. I am particularly concerned about the potential for “left hook” conflicts between southbound-to-eastbound motor vehicle left turns and southbound contra-flow bicyclists. For these reasons, I question the choice of the contraflow cycle track design over the two one-way lane design (variously designated “Option A”, “Option 1”, and “Alternative 1”), and I could find no statement or rationale from the County in the documents provided as to why the former was chosen over the latter.

2) In my judgement, the two-way center left turn lane is unwarranted for Oakland Mills between Homespun and Dobbin. This segment only has two “T” intersections, both of which are minor residential dead-ends, Downdale and Dasher—the former having only 47 left turns from Oakland Mills during 7 AM–7 PM and 19 during the peak hour. (Turning counts were not provided for the latter.) This pavement could be better put to better use as buffer zones for two one-way cycle tracks via two 12 ft driving lanes, two 3 ft buffer zones, and two 7 ft bicycle lanes.

3) I could not find any detail regarding bicycle detection at the signalized intersections. Ideally, there should be non-intrusive detection that doesn’t require cyclists to dismount and press a pedestrian push button. (This is assuming that the pedestrian signals will be actuated and not on “recall”, i.e. serviced automatically every cycle.)

4) Requiring bicycles to use pedestrian signal heads is ungainly and less than ideal, due to the different fundamental signal times (minimum, extension, change, and clearance) required for cyclists. Rather, by providing dedicated bicycle phases and bicycle signal heads, the County could send a clear and unambiguous message about their level of commitment to bicycles as a first-class mode of transportation.

5) The documents show that the southern limit of this project was originally Snowden River Pkwy but was truncated two times: first to Oak Hall and a second time to Dobbin. I could find no explanation or rationale for the change to the extents.

6) While it is understandable why adding bike lanes to the Snowden River–Dobbin segment is infeasible without roadway widening due to motor vehicle volumes and delays, it seems penny wise and pound foolish to construct this project and stop short of Snowden River Dr and its proposed shared use path (as shown in the plans for the Snowden River widening project J4222). Leaving such a relatively short missing link seems counter to the Bicycle Master Plan’s big picture mandate of providing a connected network of bicycle facilities and facilitating trips. Creative signing and marking solutions—such as “borrowing” a few feet from the inner lanes to add sharrows to the outer lanes—should be considered for this segment in the short term. For the long term, the County should have a plan for how the future Snowden River shared use path will connect with the Oakland Mills cycle track.

7) Channelized right turns such as the one from westbound Oakland Mills to northbound Dobbin are generally viewed as favoring motorvehicle convenience and speed at the expense of pedestrian and cyclist safety, which violates the tenant of Complete Streets. Consider removing it and replacing it with a small-radius “hard” right turn with a dynamic No Turn on Red restriction when there is pedestrian or bicycle demand. (I fully recognize, however, that this scope of work may not be feasible with this project’s budget.)
Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Q5
What is your feedback on the schedule?

(none)

Q6
How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

- I reviewed the presentation myself online.
- I reviewed the technical plans myself online.
What is your feedback on the plan?

I prefer bike lanes on both sides of the road. I regularly ride on Oakland Mills - either in sections or all the way from Blandair Park to Guilford. Having bike lanes on just the northbound side are fine for those traveling north, but this configuration makes it very difficult for those traveling southbound. It looks difficult to enter from the Blandair Park traffic circle and difficult to merge back into southbound Oakland Mills at Dobbin. It also makes it extremely difficult to turn right when riding southbound since you will need to cross both lanes of traffic. I expect the current plan will result in many riders to continue riding in the road southbound leading to more negative interactions with drivers.

No comment on schedule,

How did you inform yourself about the proposal? (Please check all that apply)

I reviewed the technical plans myself online