

RESOLUTION
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOWIE, MARYLAND
APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE APPROVED MAY 2002 CITY
OF BOWIE TRAILS MASTER PLAN CONCERNING THE OLD TOWN
BOWIE HIKER-BIKER TRAIL SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Bowie, Maryland approved a Trails Master Plan on May 20, 2002, and,

WHEREAS, the primary objective of the Trails Master Plan is to identify ways to link the various City neighborhoods and communities together and also connect them to commercial/retail areas, schools, parks and other community facilities via a network of on-road and off-road trails; and,

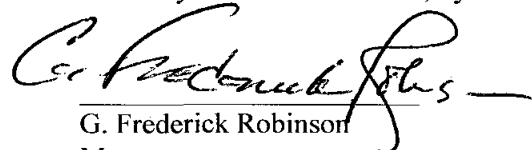
WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Economic Development has been implementing a Walkable Communities program in Old Town Bowie over the past several years and has investigated the creation of a trail system that will link the neighborhoods of Old Town Bowie and provide access to the MARC train station at Bowie State University; and,

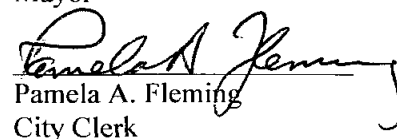
WHEREAS, two community input meetings were held regarding the Old Town Bowie Hiker-Biker Trail System, on May 6, 2008 and June 18, 2008, and a report was prepared by the City's consultant, Toole Design Group (TDG), making recommendations for the trail system, and,

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public worksession on October 13 2008 to review the consultant's recommendations and to receive further input from staff and the public, and the City Council held a public hearing on November 3 2008 concerning the recommendations, which have been formulated as an amendment to the Approved City Trails Master Plan as **Proposed Appendix III - Old Town Bowie Trail System** (attached), and, at the conclusion of the public hearing, the City Council voted unanimously to approve the proposed amendment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council that the attached text is approved as Appendix III of the City Trails Master Plan.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED on this Seventeenth day of November 2008, by the City Council of the City of Bowie.


G. Frederick Robinson
Mayor


Pamela A. Fleming
City Clerk

PROPOSED APPENDIX III
OLD TOWN BOWIE TRAIL SYSTEM

(Recommendations and Amendments Approved by City Council on November 3 2008)

I. Introduction

The Department of Planning and Economic Development has been working for the past several years to implement a Walkable Communities program in Old Town Bowie. One of the key features of the program is the creation of a pedestrian trail system that will link various neighborhoods in the Old Town Bowie area and provide access to the MARC Train Station at Bowie State University. Council first endorsed an examination of a connection between Old Town Bowie and Bowie State University (BSU) during review of the Walkable Communities program and City's Transportation Priority List in 2006. The City applied for and received funding from the Department of Housing and Economic Development's Community Legacy Program to conduct an Engineering Feasibility Study for the Railroad Avenue Hiker-Biker Trail. The feasibility study conducted by AB Consultants, Inc. was completed in late 2007 and was provided to Council in disk format and posted on the City's website. The City also engaged the services of Toole Design Group (TDG) in early 2008 to help facilitate community input regarding the trail concept and feasibility study. Funding for TDG's technical assistance to the City was supplied by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Transportation and Land Use Connections (TLC) pilot program.

II. Recommendations

1. Form a trail advisory group to support and guide development of the trail.

An informal advisory committee or working group can support the City's efforts in the following ways: a) cultivate citizen leadership, b) build grassroots public support and c) provide a focal point for public involvement in ongoing planning and facility design decisions.

- While it is not necessary for this group to be a formal citizen advisory committee, representation from key constituencies should be sought, such as the following:
 - representatives from key City departments, residents of Old Town Bowie including adjacent property owners, representatives from nearby Home Owner Associations (HOAs), and representatives from BSU
 - it should be staffed by the City Planning Department.
- Major responsibilities should include the following:
 - involvement in ongoing trail planning and design decisions;
 - development of a concept plan for historical interpretation along the trail,
 - adopting a name for the trail, and
 - ensuring an informed and constructive public dialogue about important trail development issues.

Based on the history and recent track record of citizen involvement in civic affairs in Old Town Bowie, TDG recommends formation of a trail advisory group. This group can be formal or informal, as the City desires. It should be comprised primarily of citizens from Old Town Bowie (including some from outside the city limits in adjacent neighborhoods), and representatives from BSU. It should be staffed by the City Planning Department.

After understanding the civic interest for and concern about this trail proposal at two public meetings, it appears critical that leadership for this project must be drawn from the Old Town residential or business community. Key civic groups that should be invited to participate in the advisory group include: the Huntington Heritage Society, the Friends of Old Town Bowie Trail, the Historic Old Bowie Merchant's Association, the Knights of Saint John, the Adnell Woods HOA and the Northridge HOA. Representatives from Bowie State University could include students, faculty staff, and/or alumni from the Bowie State Foundation. If there are other formal or semi-formal groups based in the Huntington community or area surrounding BSU they should also be queried about their interest in participating in such a working group.

In addition to representatives noted above, there are likely to be a number of people who attended one of the public meetings associated with this project that would be willing to join the group, including adjacent property owners, bicycling enthusiasts, walkers, or other prospective trail users.

Other stakeholders that may want to participate might include a representative from either the trail or community planning offices at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and a local representative of the Maryland State Committee of the East Coast Greenway Alliance.

It may also be useful to have additional City agencies be represented such as the Community Services Department which is responsible for park planning and management, the Department of Public Works and/or Police Department.

STAFF COMMENT: Because ongoing citizen input is critical to trail planning and implementation efforts, as noted by TDG, staff concurs with the recommendation to form an informal trail advisory group. If Council endorses recommendations for an Old Town Bowie trail system, staff will solicit members from both the immediately affected neighborhoods of Old Town Bowie and the community at large to participate. The Department of Planning and Economic Development will staff the advisory group, which would meet on an as-needed basis. The work of the advisory group would include outreach efforts to create a concept plan for integration of historical elements into the trail and to suggest specific naming options for the trails. Articles or periodic newsletters and/or other public outreach communications would be issued by City staff to promote the trail system and/or summarize the work of the group. Any major milestones or issues would be reported to Council.

2. Seek City Council support for development of a trail system along the following alignments.

For a detailed discussion of the segments and alternatives considered in this study see "TDG Recommendations for Proposed Railroad Avenue Hiker/Biker Trail" dated August 5, 2008 and the October 8, 2008 Staff Memorandum.

The trail system alignment can be divided into the following segments (listed south to north) and shown on the attached map:

- 🚲 Segment A. High Bridge Road between WB&A Trail & Old Fletchertown Road. (*Amendment #1*)

- 🚲 Segment B Through Tanglewood Park, from southeast corner of park property to Zug Road. (*Amendment #2*)
- 🚲 Segment B Extension. Connect Old Fletchertown Road and Tanglewood Park via Pheasant Ridge Court and Lot 12 of Pheasant Ridge Subdivision. (*Amendment #3*)
- 🚲 Segment C Railroad Avenue ROW to Railroad Museum and under MD 564 Bridge to 10th Street cul-de-sac. This segment should be the first to move forward in the design process. (*Amendment #4*)
- 🚲 Segment C· 12th Street Trail Connection. (*Amendment #5*)
- 🚲 Segment D· New crossing of Amtrak rail line in town center adjacent to MD 564 (connection 10th Street to 9th Street).
- 🚲 Segment E. MD 564 & 9th Street to Bowie City Limit at 6th Street and Myrtle Avenue.
- 🚲 Segment F (Alternative 1): Railroad Avenue – Extend Segment C to include trail from 10th Street cul-de-sac to Myrtle Avenue. Phase construction later than completion of Segment C. (*Amendment #6*)
- 🚲 Segment F (Alternative 1): Myrtle Avenue extension. Construct trail between Railroad Avenue and 9th Street. Phase construction later than completion of Segment C. (*Amendment #7*)
- 🚲 Segment F (Alternative 1): Railroad Avenue extended. Show extension east of Myrtle Avenue on County and City plans. (*Amendment #8*)
- 🚲 Segment F (Alternative 2): Utilize Amtrak, BGE, PEPCO and public property to align trail on north side of Amtrak between Old Town Bowie and Bowie State University MARC Station. (*Amendment #9*)
- 🚲 Segment F (Alternative 3): Link through Adnell Woods to and through Jericho Park to MD 197 Construct trail on M-NCPPC parcel and within Jericho Park as soon as possible. (*Amendments #10 and #11*)
- 🚲 Segment F (Alternative 4): Show all alignments between Old Town Bowie and Bowie State University southeast of the Amtrak railroad tracks, for planning purposes on County and City plans. (*Amendment #12*)
- 🚲 Segment F (Alternative 4): WB &A intersection with Old MD 197 Install appropriate directional signage. (*Amendment #13*)
- 🚲 Segment G· Trail connections to and through prospective new development north of BSU it is likely that a new connection across the Amtrak rail line will also be desired.

3. Consider developing a trail implementation plan

While sufficient feasibility study and public engagement has been completed to select from among a number of alignment alternatives, a number of trail development questions have not been fully clarified. The City should consider developing a trail implementation plan to address these questions in the context of the entire trail concept:

- developing recommended facility types and cost estimates for each segment;

- prioritizing segments for development and outlining the specific actions necessary and a desired timeline for development of each segment;
- developing segment specific funding strategies;
- conducting necessary surveys, environmental reviews & documentation;
- securing “buy-in” from key agencies, stakeholders and partners;
- developing design aesthetics and standards for signage, fencing, furniture, surfaces, structures, amenities, and other features;
- developing plans for historic interpretation; and,
- providing a compelling vision around which people can rally

In the absence of an overall trail implementation plan, these issues will need to be addressed on an as needed basis, as each trail segment moves forward in the design and development process.

STAFF COMMENT: The recommendation from TDG to create a stand-alone trail implementation plan is unnecessary given the approach to public facilities planning taken by M-NCPPC via the Bowie and Vicinity Area Master Plan, the Bowie State University/MARC Station Sector Plan and the Countywide Master Plan of Transportation, all of which provide a framework for trail planning concepts. In addition, the City already has an approved Trails Master Plan, which will be amended to include some form of trail system recommendations for the Old Town Bowie area. Furthermore, a specific trail alignment between Old Town Bowie and Bowie State University was the subject of the Engineering Feasibility Study prepared by AB Consultants for the City. Thus, an implementation plan already exists for portions of the recommended trail system and can be easily adapted to the segments that are not already included. It is staff’s intention to develop funding strategies and work through the City budget to address implementation of the overall project, phase by phase.

4. Focus near term trail planning & development activities on the following tasks:

- Engage Prince George’s County elected officials and Public Works and Transportation staff regarding Segment A.
- Ensure that Segment E/F (Alternatives 1 & 2) remain in City and County Master Transportation and Trail Plans as potential alignments that may be needed in conjunction with new development in these corridors or other changes in circumstances.
- Ensure that Segment G is included in the BSU MARC Station Sector Plan, along with Segment E/F (Alternative 3).
- Engage the State Highway Administration (SHA) with regard to near term improvements for the eastern WB&A trail connection using Old MD 197 (Laurel-Bowie Road) and 11th Street/10th Street.

STAFF COMMENT: Staff has already begun to take the necessary steps to address the near term trail planning activities. Although Prince George’s County officials were previously contacted regarding High Bridge Road, it is recommended that the City send a specific letter requesting action in relation to this comprehensive trail study of Old Town Bowie. The letter should also note which recommendations from this effort, in general, should be shown on County planning documents. Staff is working with both State and County officials to accentuate the existing trail connections between Old Town Bowie and the WB&A Trail.

Appendix III – Trails Master Plan

As a result of staff's analysis, the following additional specific, near-term actions are recommended.

- 1 Staff should begin discussions with the developer of the Pheasant Ridge subdivision for acquisition of a hiker-biker trail easement across Lot 12.
2. The City's Department of Community Services should be directed to prepare a master plan for Tanglewood Park in FY 2010
- 3 Staff should send a letter to M-NCPPC requesting that the Commission include funding in its budget for construction of a trail connecting the Adnell subdivision to Jericho Park.
- 4 The City's Department of Community Services should be directed to include cost estimates for construction of a hiker-biker trail within Jericho Park, providing a connection between the proposed trail on the adjacent M-NCPPC parcel and MD 197 in the proposed FY 2010 City Budget.
- 5 Staff should continue discussions with the developer of Adnell Woods (Danner) to determine the best trail alignment and construction options to connect the trail system from Chestnut Avenue via 7th Street or 8th Street and Myrtle Avenue into the Adnell Woods development. The developer should be encouraged to construct trails along these alignments and also to construct a trail across the unbuilt portion of the Myrtle Avenue right-of-way that exists between the Adnell (PDC) and Adnell Woods development.
6. Staff should send a letter to the M-NCPPC Parks Department requesting that directional signage be installed at the WB&A Trail, where it intersects with Old MD 197 in order to make trail users aware of the proximity of Old Town Bowie restaurants, amenities and services.
- 7 Staff should send a letter to the M-NCPPC Planning Department requesting that all trail alignments endorsed by this update to the Trails Master Plan be included in the Bowie State University/MARC Station Sector Plan and the County Master Plan of Transportation.