
Arlington County Police

Trail Safety and Security
Sergeant Michael Watson
First District React Team

Bicycle Safety

Riding a bicycle in traffic can be done safely if you follow the suggestions below. Riding so that drivers can see you and predict your movements is a basic tenet of bike safety.

-  They all regulatory signs and traffic lights. Bicyclists must follow the same rules of the road as drivers of other vehicles.
-  Never ride against traffic. Motorists aren't looking for bicycles riding on the wrong side of the road. Ride with traffic.
-  Use hand signals. Hand signals tell motorists what you intend to do. Signal as a matter of law, courtesy and self protection.
-  Ride in a straight line. Whenever possible, ride in a straight line to the right of traffic and layed in a car door width away from parked cars. When in a bike lane, ride to the left of the lane to avoid car doors.
-  Choose the best way to turn left. There are two ways to make a left turn. (1) Like an auto. Look behind, signal, move into the left lane and turn left. (2) Like a pedestrian. Ride straight to the left-side crosswalk and walk your bike across.
-  Watch for cars pulling out. Make eye contact with drivers. Assume they don't see you until you are sure they do.
-  Scan the road behind you. Learn to look back over your shoulder without losing your balance or steering left. Some riders use rear-view mirrors.
-  Wear a helmet. Always wear a helmet whenever you ride a bicycle. Helmets dramatically reduce the risk of head injury in a bicycle crash.
-  Use lights at night. Always use a strong headlight and taillight at night and when visibility is poor.

Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrians should follow all safety practices such as crossing with traffic signals, using crosswalks when available, watching for vehicles before entering a roadway and walking against traffic on streets where sidewalks are not available. When crossing at locations where push-button traffic signals are provided, pedestrians should always push the button to give themselves a longer crossing time. Signs mounted on traffic signal poles provide directions on how to use the lights.

Trail Rules: Safety & Courtesy Help Prevent Accidents

Arlington trails are shared and enjoyed by bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, skaters, cross-country skiers, dog walkers, baby strollers, persons in wheelchairs and others. There is no king of the road on the shared-use trails. EVERYONE must follow the trail rules and use courtesy and common sense to avoid collisions—especially when the trails are most crowded. Here are the trail rules and guidelines for safe shared use of the trails.

- All trail users should keep to the right side of the trail, except when passing.
- Run other trail users into their left, lower at least two feet of clearance between them and you. Give an audible warning (such as "passing on your left") as you approach, at least two seconds before passing.
- Pedestrians have the right-of-way on trails and sidewalks. However, groups of pedestrians should form single file to allow bicyclists and others to pass.
- Travel only at speeds which are safe and appropriate for trail conditions. Safe and appropriate speeds will be lower in congested areas, when visibility is limited and around curves.
- Pay attention to all trail markings and safety signs.
- Move off the trail pavement whenever you need to stop.
- Bicyclists should ride single file.
- Keep pets on a short leash and under control at all times. The best place for pets is on the right shoulder of the trail, next to their owner.
- Driven motorized vehicles (except wheelchairs) are not permitted on the trails.
- If you choose to use the trails during the winter, always be alert for any snow or ice and exercise extreme care in your use of the trails.

Easy bike commutes begin here.

Bike Arlington is a program to build on an existing partnership between Arlington citizens, businesses and County staff to encourage more people to bike more often. Biking is good exercise, it's convenient, it's inexpensive, it's good for the environment and business, and it makes for a good community. Arlington is compact in size and layout with an extensive network of trails, bike lanes, and bikeable streets that make cycling to nearly any location in the County quick, safe, and convenient.

How to get started to help you ease into bike commuting and creating errands by bike, please visit www.Bike-Arlington.com/commutes.cfm

How to make your workplace bike friendly: Arlington Transportation Planning (ATP) is a free service to employers in Arlington provided by Arlington County Community Services. ATP can help your employer to make your workplace more bike friendly. Phone 703-547-3276 or visit www.CommunityPage.com/vsp/hrs-bldg.cfm

The Commuter Store - Easy commuters begin here. The Commuter Store has everything you need for getting around the Washington, D.C. area. You can obtain bike maps, transit fares, SmartTrip cards, make reservations for Arlington Transit, Metrolink, Metroliner, and other regional systems. Find out about car-sharing, ride matching, van pooling, and the Commuted Ride Home program. Call 703-228-8182 or visit www.CommuterPage.com/commutes.cfm

CommuterPage.com - Everything you need to know about commuting in the Washington, D.C. metro area. Log on to CommuterDirect.com to purchase transit tickets, tokens, SmartTrip cards and access online. Sign up for transit alerts, commuter news, and schedules delivered to your mobile device. For information about commuting in Arlington and the Washington, D.C. metro area, visit www.CommuterDirect.com



Your Resource for Cycling in Arlington County
www.BikeArlington.com

Commuter Store
Station Commuter Mall, Level 2
Crystal Square Arcade
(Development Mall)
Rosslyn Center, Mall Level 2
www.CommuterPage.com
870-870-870

Commuter Direct
Purchase transit tickets, tokens and passes
online at
www.CommuterDirect.com



Colored and numbered marker signs have been installed along major trails to indicate safety hazards.

Security on the Trails

We should all be reminded that serious crime can occur anywhere, including our trails and parks. It is therefore important that we all make special efforts to protect ourselves and discourage crime.

Arlington County has undertaken a trail safety improvement program of increasing lighting, reducing vegetation cover, and increasing surveillance on the trails. The Arlington Police Department will give lecturers on crime prevention tactics to classes and organizations. Call the Community Response Section at (703) 228-4200 for details. Trail users can help protect themselves by following the guidelines listed below:

- Choose a safe time and place to exercise, and exercise in well-populated, well-lit places. Be aware of any personal safety problems in the area(s) in which you exercise. If in doubt, check with the Arlington Police. The WACD Trail south of Columbia Pike and the Route 50 Trail east of Glebe Road are highly visible trail sections and readily observed by neighboring residents and passing motorists.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will return; better still, exercise with a buddy. Bicycling and running clubs often organize group rides or runs and can help individuals find training partners. Bikes: www.Bike-Arlington.com/groups.cfm Runners: www.DCRunners.org
- Keep fully alert and aware of your surroundings while exercising outdoors. Refrain from wearing headphones and other devices which diminish your ability to hear.
- Immediately report any suspicious or criminal activity you may witness to the Arlington Police. Symbols on the map indicate general locations of the telephones. When calling Police or emergency services, try to be as specific as possible about the incident location. Special numbered and color-coded markers have been installed along the major trails to aid callers in identifying their location.

Arlington County Bicycle Tours

Here are six Arlington County recreational trails offering a variety of sights and terrain, with minimum motor vehicle traffic. Using the overview information, you can fine-tune the tours to your personal preferences. Have fun! For individual maps of the tours visit www.bikearlington.com/gm.cfm

- Loop A: East Falls Church/Westover Tour**
Enjoy the lovely, historic WACD Railroad Trail, 2.5 miles of moderately hilly off-street trails and secondary roads. Highlights: Madison Manor Park, Westover playground, Westover Library, Westover Shopping Center, Tuckahoe Park, East Falls Church Park and Capital Mile market store.
- Loop B: Potomac Overlook Tour**
Scenic route through Arlington's piedmont. 3.2 miles of hilly, off-street trails and secondary roads. Highlights: Potomac Overlook Park and Nature Center, Gull Branch Nature Center, Madison Community Center, Maymontoutlet and Doultonville Run.
- Loop C: Heart of Arlington Tour**
Visit quaint neighborhoods and parks.
- Loop D: Lullwater Run/Berrcroft Tour**
Scenic route through the lush and natural Four Mile Run and Lullwater Run watersheds. 5.6 miles of mostly flat off-street trails and neighborhood streets. Highlights: Lullwater Run Park and amphitheater, Glenvarlyn Park, Cattle Springs, Berrcroft Park, Arlington Career Center, Columbia Pike Library, and Thomas Jefferson Community Center.
- Loop E: Arlington Ridge/Arvinia Highlands Tour**
An easy loop of trail Four Mile Run and south Arlington. 5.8 miles of flat, mostly off-street trails and neighborhood streets. Highlights: Four Mile Run, Pentagon City

and Crystal City shopping areas, Virginia Highlands Park, Arlington Visitor Center/Kennan Hill Library, and the Arlington Historical Society Museum.

Loop F: Grand Tour of Arlington
An entertaining loop around the County. 18.2 miles of mostly flat off-street trails with a few hills. Highlights: the Potomac River shore, Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington National Monument, the Stratford shopping area, Four Mile Run, Barrack Park, Glenvarlyn Park, Shepley Park, Ron Aron Park, and rose gardens, and Rosslyn's Gateway Park. Short side trips can be made to Rosslyn's Freedom Park and Newcomer, Arlington Cemetery, Fort Myer and the two Jima Memorial.

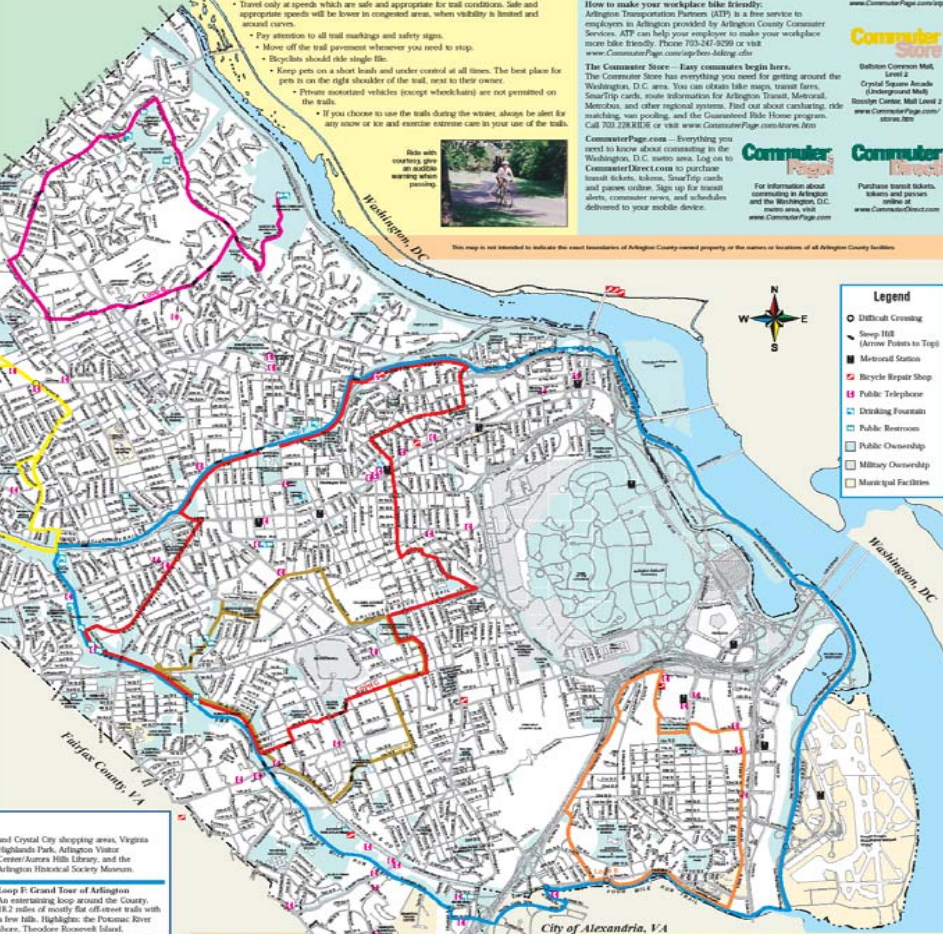
Arlington History Bicycle Tour
A 2.8 mile, self-guided tour incorporates visits to many of Arlington's most historical sites with off-street trails and neighborhood streets. Copies of the map and guide are available through the County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator at 703.228.3681.

Bicycling on Arlington's Military Reservations

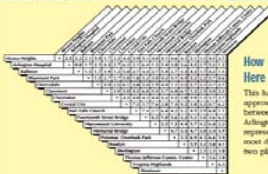
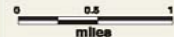
Usually, bicyclists are permitted to use certain routes within the Arlington Cemetery, Fort Myer, Henderson Hall and Pentagon military reservations. However, security and safety concerns may arise at any time that result in the closure of these facilities to non-military personnel. Bicyclists are required to have helmets, picture ID, and should remain courteous and be prepared to use alternative routes if necessary. While bicycling in military facilities, bicyclists should stay on the designated routes and obey all traffic laws and military rules.



This map is not intended to indicate the exact boundaries of Arlington County owned property on the nation or locations of all Arlington County facilities.



- Legend**
- Difficult Crossing
 - Loop 100
 - Arrow Points to Trip
 - Metrolink Station
 - Bicycle Repair Shop
 - Public Telephone
 - Drinking Fountain
 - Public Restroom
 - Public Ownership
 - Military Ownership
 - Municipal Facilities



How Far is it from Here to There?
This handy chart provides approximate distances for trips between prominent places in Arlington County. Distance measurement of the most direct trails between two places.

Trail Security

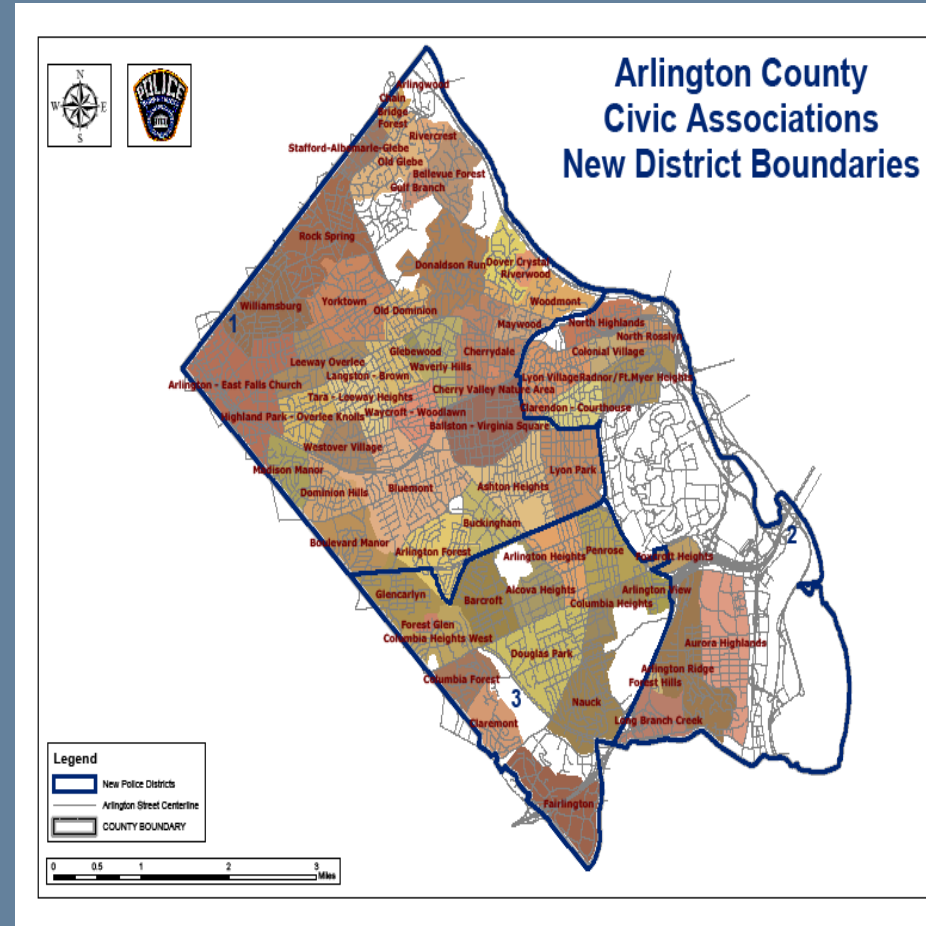
- The multi use trails are used by many as a means of travel, and recreation.
 - The off street trails are mostly accessible from the streets.
 - For safety, numerous telephones have been installed along the off street trails.
 - The trails have been marked for ease of identifying location to emergency and park personnel.
-

Trail Security

- County parks close at dark, unless lighted.
 - Overall crime rate in and along the trails is significantly lower than the surrounding communities.
-

Public Safety

- The Arlington County Police Department has divided the county into three police districts.
- Each District has a React Team, responsible for community policing services.
- The React Teams also conduct part time bike patrols.
- The React Teams are also aided by the Police Auxiliaries.



Bike Patrol

- In the late 1990's the Arlington County Police formed a full time Bike Patrol Squad.
 - The team was disbanded around 2003.
 - The responsibility of bike patrols was transferred to the React Teams and the Auxiliaries.
 - Bike patrol requires specialized training and equipment.
-

Bike Patrol

- Bike officers are able to perform most of the duties that officers in a patrol car can perform.
 - The trail system in Arlington enables the bike officers to significantly cut down the distance during a call response.
 - Bike patrol facilitates community policing and community relations.
-

Police Department Issues with Fielding a Bike Patrol

\$

Bicycling equipment and training is expensive.

Bike patrol is difficult to staff and is
geographically restricting.

Bike patrol is physically demanding.
It is not always easy to quantify success.

Conclusions

- Bike patrols are very effective means of trail security.
 - Bike patrol puts the police in areas where they are not traditionally seen. It gives the department high visibility and accessibility.
 - Maintaining a bike patrol is expensive and demanding on the officers.
 - A well managed bike patrol will pay big dividends to the department and the community.
-

