

# Equitable Investment in Montgomery County's Bicycling Network

A proposal to fund and build Tier 1 Bicycle Master Plan projects in four of the County's equity focus areas.

Prepared by Peter Gray at the Washington Area Bicyclist Association



# What does an equitable investment in Montgomery County's bicycling network look like?

## **The status quo won't meet the County's safety, climate, or equity goals.**

Montgomery County should allocate \$110<sup>1</sup> million in the FY23-28 CIP budget to build out all of the Tier One Bicycle Master Plan projects in four of the County's [Equity Focus Areas](#), resulting in safe bikeable/walkable networks within denser neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup> By allocating funding to the projects listed below, Montgomery County will make significant strides towards implementation of the County's Bicycle Master Plan and will make biking and walking much safer in the four Equity Focus Areas identified here. This will enable those who cannot afford to have a car, safer ways to walk, bicycle and access public transit within these Equity areas.

The May 2021 Council's Transportation CIP discussion highlighted the need to prioritize bikeway funding to address inequitable access to safe biking and walking in Montgomery County. With around \$110 million, the County could build all of the Tier 1 bikeway projects in most of the equity emphasis areas in the County. This dollar amount spread over the FY 23-28 six year CIP period is consistent with current commitments to biking and walking in the FY22-26 CIP. While some of these projects are already in the County Capital Budget, most are not, but could be funded over a six year period. At the end of those six years (Fiscal years 2023-2028), the County will have built bikeable networks within all of the equity areas listed below.<sup>3</sup>

## **Invest in Equity Focus Areas to maximize the impact of this funding.**

By investing in these Equity Focus Area projects, the County will enable those who cannot afford to buy and operate automobiles the ability to bike and walk safely, both to arrive at and move within those areas.<sup>4</sup> This will enable those County

---

1 MCDOT created an estimate of costs for each Bicycle Master Plan Segment. Access the spreadsheet linked [here](#).

2 Funding to build out Breezeway connections between the four Equity Focus Areas listed in this proposal would cost approximately an additional \$143 m in capital funds.

3 The Council should also consider investments in the Bicycle Master Plan Breezeway networks that would connect all of the Equity Focus Areas discussed herein.

4 [Here](#) is a 2021 study showing that placement of new protected bike infrastructure does not result in displacement of lower income residents.

residents with less economic means to safely bike, walk, access transit and generally move around the County without needing to spend money on gas, parking and maintenance of a car. It will also make it possible for many people not using cars to safely reach more employment opportunities and commercial centers in the County, and to shop, get their children to school, and access medical services.<sup>56</sup>

Building these projects will also allow many residents to make trips of less than 2-3 miles in length by biking in and around those Equity Areas.<sup>7</sup> This will enable people to go out to eat, go shopping, access entertainment opportunities, visit a doctor and get their kids to school and other activities without having to use a car.

### **Safer streets are more sustainable, more equitable streets.**

In addition, by providing safe access to those who walk, bike and access transit, there will be a significant reduction in vehicle miles travelled, resulting in large reductions in emissions from cars.<sup>8</sup> These reductions will not only result in less congestion on our roads but will also help the County achieve its climate goals by reducing the amount of carbon released into the air. Moreover, by making access to buses, BRT and Metro Rail safer, it will further enhance the County's ability to meet its sustainable transportation goals.<sup>9</sup>

Below is a list of all Tier 1 bikeway projects that fall within four of the County Equity Focus Areas broken down by Policy areas as outlined in the 2018 Countywide Bicycle Master Plan. The individual project costs can be found in MCDOT's cost estimate spreadsheet for the Bicycle Master Plan, link, with each line of the cost spreadsheet identified.

#### **EFA Quick Facts:**

- Residents of Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) are twice as likely to not have access to a car.
- Residents of EFAs are 34% more likely to use public transportation.
- EFAs contain some of the deadliest roads for people walking and biking.

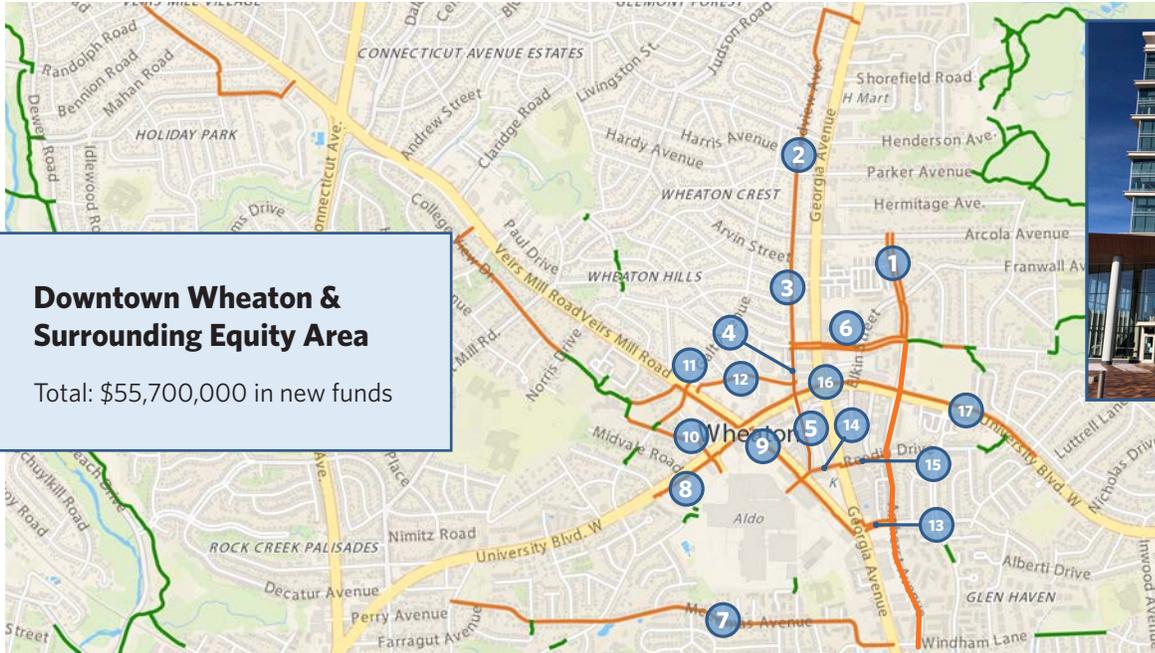
5 [This article](#) references a National Academy of Science study in 2021 that found that cities where bike infrastructure was added, biking increased up to 48 percent more than in cities that did not add bike lanes.

6 [This study](#) shows use of bicycling infrastructure by residents of low income neighborhoods, concluding that investments in infrastructure that supports active transportation will likely reduce health inequities in low income neighborhoods, such as those in the County's Equity Focus Areas.

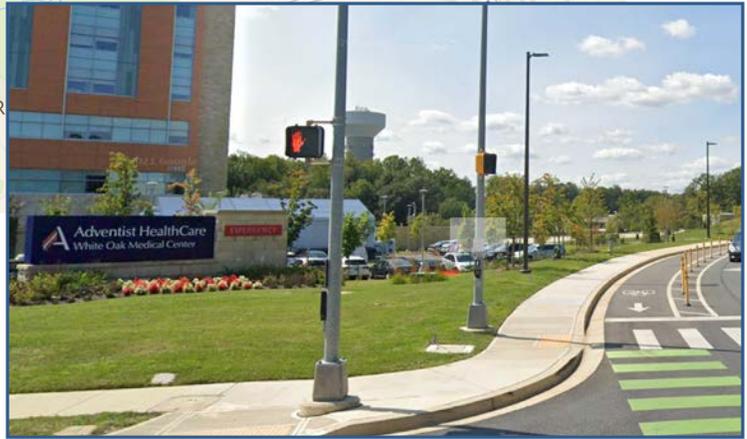
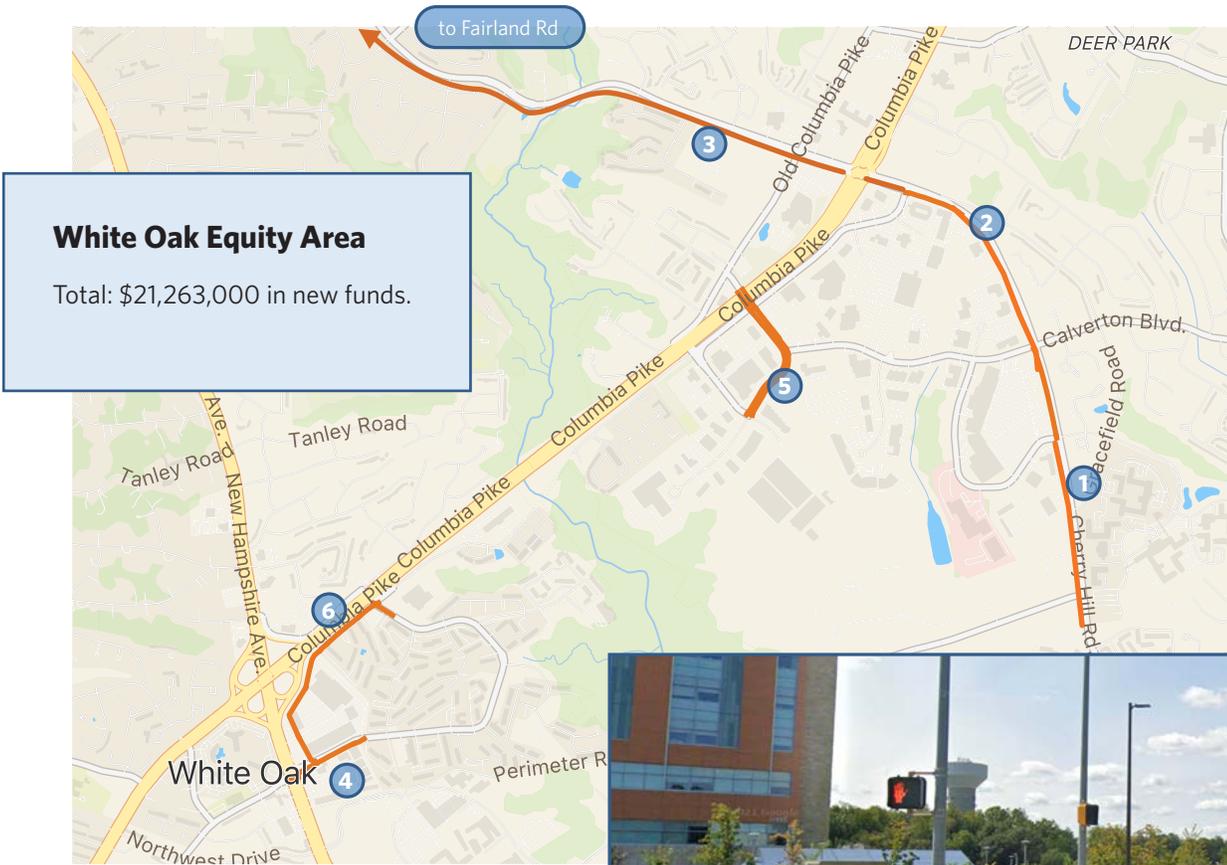
7 [This analysis](#) shows that 50% of all trips we take are less than 3 miles in length.

8 [The latest Montgomery County Climate Action Plan](#) (MCCAP), released on June 23, 2021, notes that in order to achieve the goals in the transportation area, "we must reduce the use of personal automobiles and increase use of transit and active transportation options, such as walking, biking and micromobility services with safe supportive infrastructure..." at xvi.

9 [MCCAP](#) at 145, the main Transportation goal includes "double the proportion of bus, rail and bicycle trips....over the base 2018 levels of total trips by 2035"

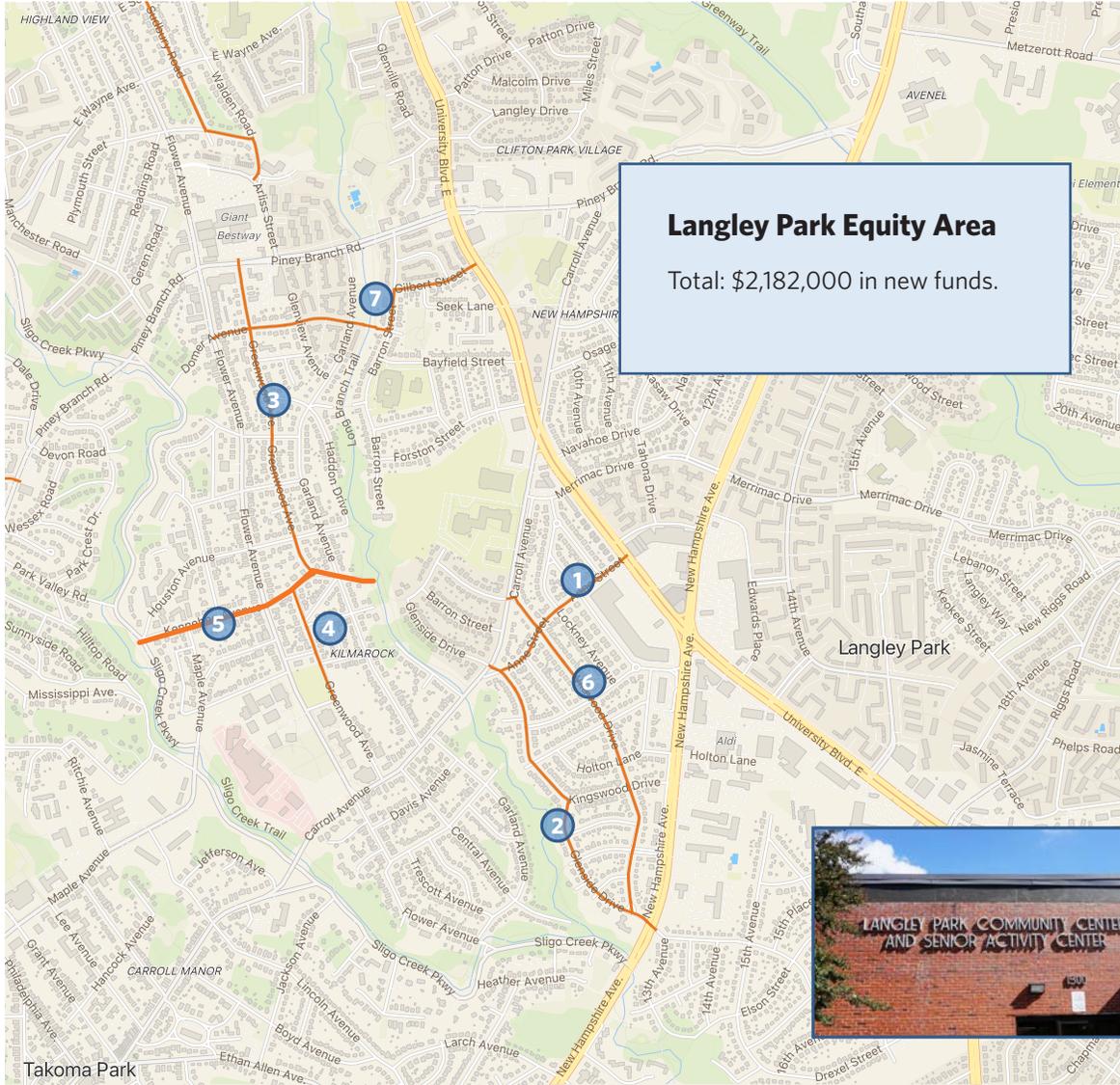


Map Reference	Corridor	Start	End	FIA Line	Cost Estimate (new funds)
1	Amherst Avenue	Windham Ln	Arcola Ave	19, 20, 190	\$1,400,000
2	Mason Street/Grandview Avenue	Georgia Ave	Arcola Ave	89	\$803,880
3	Grandview Avenue	Arcola Ave	Blueridge Ave	93	\$226,000
4	Grandview Avenue	Blueridge Ave	University Blvd	23	\$129,000
5	Grandview Avenue	University Blvd	Reedie Dr	24	\$257,000
6	Blueridge Avenue	Grandview Ave	Taber St	43	\$1,056,000
7	Douglas Avenue/ McComas Avenue/ Windham Lane	St. Paul St	Georgia Ave	75	\$903,000
8	University Boulevard	Valley View Ave	Viers Mill Rd	145	\$2,595,000
9	Viers Mill Road	College View Ave	Georgia Ave	64	\$23,364,000
10	East Avenue/Upton Drive	Upton Dr	University Blvd	76	\$150,480
11	Kensington Boulevard/Galt Avenue	Kensington Blvd	Upton Dr	103	\$75,240
12	Kensington Boulevard	Galt Ave	Grandview Ave	104	\$842,688
13	Pritchard Road	Georgia Ave	Amherst Ave	127	\$257,400
14	Reedie Drive	Viers Mill Rd	Georgia Ave	128	\$5,148,000
15	Reedie Drive	Georgia Ave	Amherst Ave	129	\$128,700
16	University Boulevard	Valley View Ave	Amherst Ave	150	\$15,576,000
17	University Boulevard	Amherst Ave	Dayton	151	\$591,360

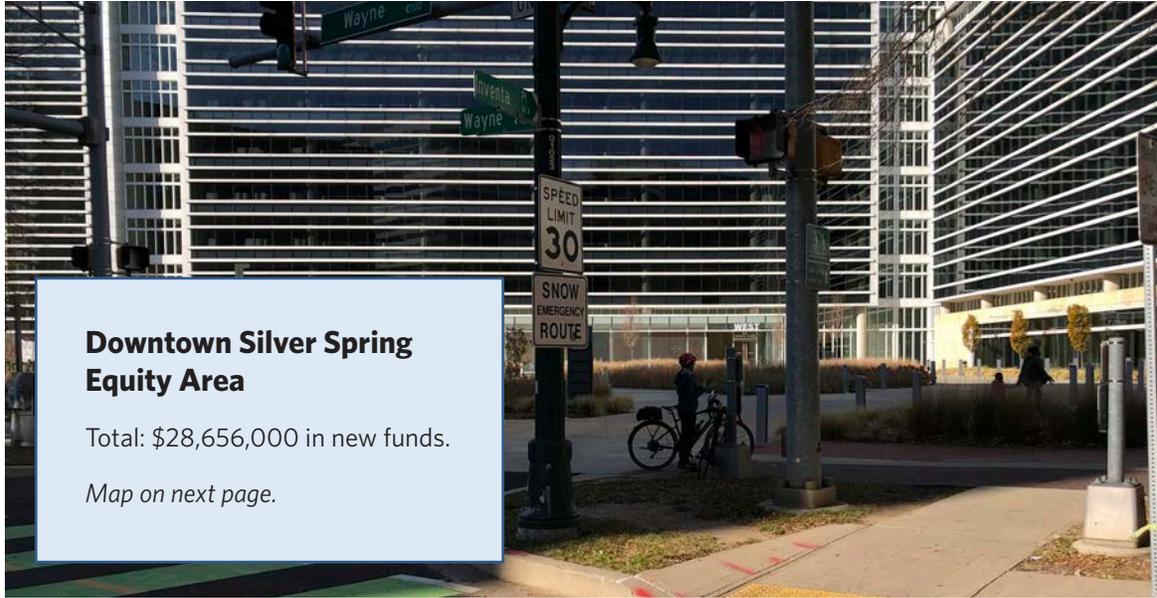


Map Reference	Corridor	Start	End	FIA Line	Cost Estimate (new funds)
1	Cherry Hill Road	Prosperity Dr	PG Cty line	9	\$11,243,000
2	Cherry Hill Road	Columbia Pike	Prosperity Dr	32	\$1,308,000
3	E. Randolph Road	Fairland Rd	Cherry Hill Rd	448, 449	\$4,576,000
4	Lockwood Drive	White Oak Driveway	New Hampshire Ave	108	\$561,792
5	Tech Road	Columbia Pike	Industrial Pkwy	141	\$7,722,000
6	Old Columbia Pike	White Oak Driveway	Lockwood	47	\$428,732

MONTGOMERY COUNTY EQUITABLE BIKEWAYS - WABA



Map Reference	Corridor	Start	End	FIA Line	Cost Estimate (new funds)
1	Anne Street	University Blvd	Glenside Dr	37	\$225,720
2	Glenside Drive/Erskine Street	Carroll Ave	New Hampshire Ave	92	\$451,440
3	Greenwood Avenue	Piney Branch Rd	Wabash Ave	95	\$225,700
4	Greenwood Avenue	Wabash Ave	Division St	96	\$376,200
5	Kennebec Avenue	Sligo Trail	Long Branch Trail	102	\$75,240
6	Wildwood Drive	Carroll Ave	Glenside Dr	152	\$451,440
7	Domer Avenue/Barron Street/Gilbert Street	Flower Ave	University Blvd	85	\$376,000



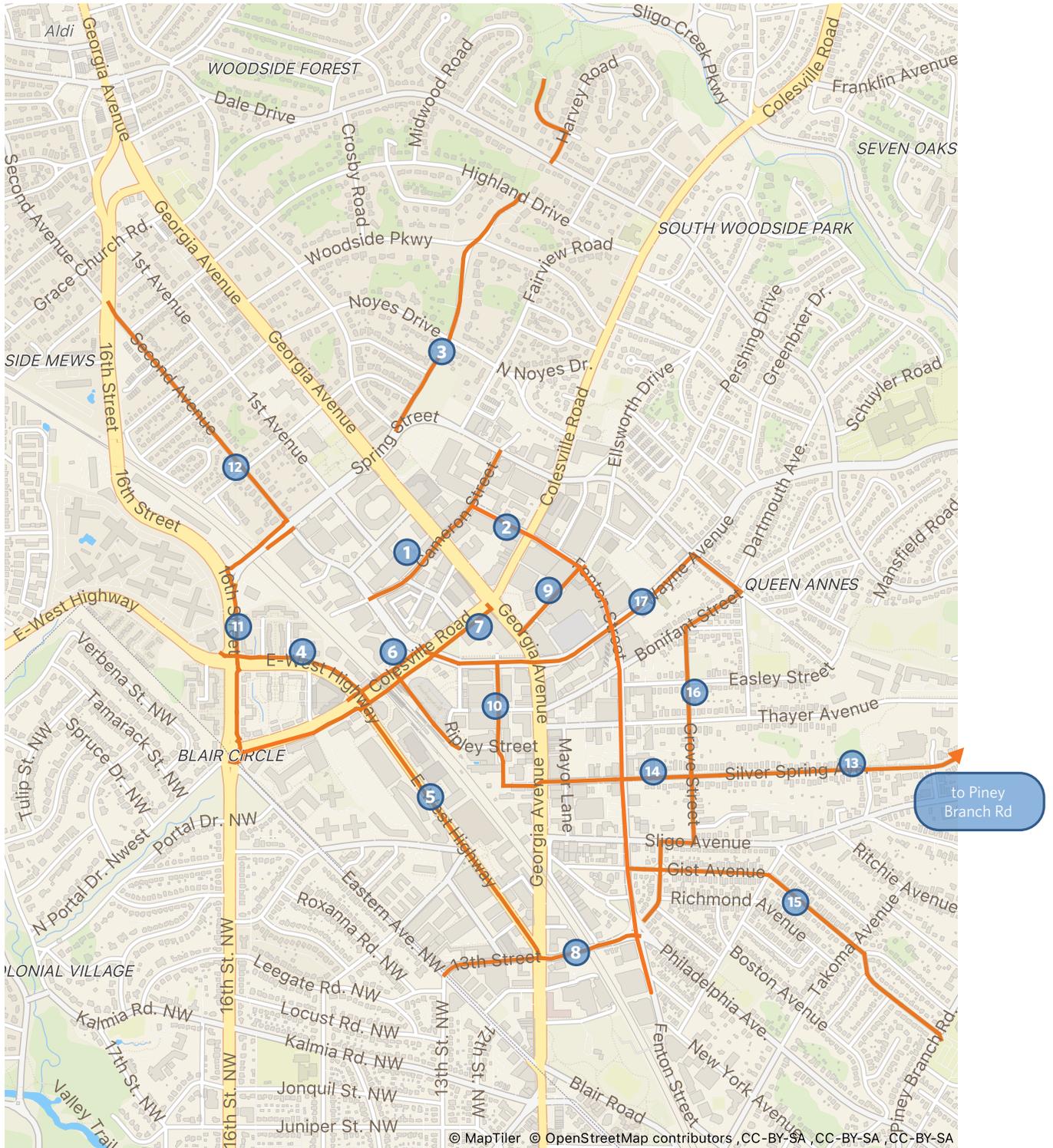
**Downtown Silver Spring Equity Area**  
 Total: \$28,656,000 in new funds.  
 Map on next page.

Map Reference	Corridor	Start	End	FIA Line	Cost Estimate (new funds)
1	Cameron Street	2nd Ave	Spring St	50	\$386,100
2	Fenton Street	Cameron St	King St	15, 16	\$5,000,000
3	Alton Parkway/Edgevale Road	Georgia Ave	Sligo Trail	36	\$451,440
4	East-West Highway	16th Street	Colesville Rd	77	\$5,148
5	East-West Highway	Colesville Rd	Georgia Ave	78	\$12,870,000
6	Colesville Road North Side	East - West Hwy	Wayne Ave	65	\$128,700
7	Colesville Road South Side	16th St	Georgia Ave	66	\$660,000
8	13th Street/Burlington Avenue	Eastern Ave	Fenton St	34	\$386,100
9	Ellsworth Drive	Fenton St	Georgia Ave	80	\$561,792
10	Dixon Avenue	Wayne Ave	Georgia Ave	73	\$386,100
11	16th Street	Spring St	Colesville Rd	35	\$386,100
12	2nd Avenue	16th St	Spring St	134	\$301,000
13	Silver Spring Avenue	Grove St	Piney Branch Rd	136	\$527,000
14	Silver Spring Avenue	Georgia Ave	Grove St	135	\$100,000
15	Gist Avenue / Ray Drive	Fenton St	Piney Branch Rd	84	\$451,440
16	Cedar Street/Bonifant Street/Grove Street/Sligo Avenue/Woodbury Drive	Wayne Ave	Philadelphia Ave	146	\$526,000
17	Wayne Ave	Georgia Ave	Cedar St	147	\$386,100

### Downtown Silver Spring Equity Area

Total: \$28,656,000 in new funds.

Legend on previous page.





For more information about this proposal,  
please contact Peter Gray at [peter@waba.org](mailto:peter@waba.org)