

# Arlington Boulevard Trail – Granada Street to Edison Street

Existing Conditions Outreach – December 2022

## Project Background

The Arlington Boulevard Trail is a regional multi-use trail which parallels Arlington Boulevard and serves as a critical east-west bicycle and pedestrian route through Arlington and Fairfax Counties. The trail was identified in the 2019 Master Transportation Plan (MTP) – Bicycle Element as a recommended trail improvement project.

- MTP guidance included that the project should “reconstruct portions of the Arlington Boulevard Trail, between Rosslyn and the Seven Corners area, to enhance user safety and usability,” and identified “a minimum 10-foot paved width” as a trail standard.

Multiple projects are underway to study and improve the trail, including the Arlington Boulevard Trail Study (Jackson St. to George Mason Dr.) and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Route 50 STARS Safety and Operational Improvements Study (Glebe St. and Fillmore St.). This project will improve the segment of the **Arlington Boulevard Trail between N. Granada Street and N. Edison Street on the north side.**

*For more information on the project’s background, history, goals and planning basis, please visit the [project website](#).*

## Goals and Basis

The goal of this project is to improve the north-side segment of the Arlington Boulevard Trail between N. Granada Street to N. Edison Street for people walking, biking, rolling, and accessing transit.

- The existing sidewalk will be upgraded to Arlington County standards for a multi-use trail to create a safer and more comfortable connection between the lower-stress segments of the trail to the east and west.
- Existing bicycle and pedestrian crossings at the two adjacent intersections will be upgraded to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations, improve trail user visibility, slow vehicle turning speeds and improve yielding behavior.

## Public Engagement

In December 2022, the County project team opened an online comment map to solicit feedback on existing conditions within the project area. The project team received 106 comments from 34 participants. [The comment map is available online.](#)

Existing conditions feedback, as well as other data collected by the project team, will inform the concept design. Two preliminary concept designs will be shared with the public in Spring 2023. Opportunities for

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feedback will include in-person pop-up events near the trail segment, a virtual feedback meeting, and an online feedback form.

## **What We Heard**

Overall, public response indicated that the existing concrete sidewalk feels inadequate and unsafe. The narrow width, which does not accommodate passing or opposite-direction traffic, and lack of separation from high-speed vehicle traffic creates an environment that feels dangerous, especially for users traveling with children. Respondents also expressed that the two intersections on either end of the project area feel unsafe for trail users, citing high turning speeds, large curb radii, missing or poorly aligned crosswalks, and long crossing distances as conditions in need of improvement.

## **Engagement Summary**

### **Trail Width and Buffer**

- Several respondents noted that the existing trail section is too narrow—some pointedly referred to this section as a sidewalk, not a trail. (Note: the existing sidewalk does not meet Arlington County standards for a shared-use path.) The trail is not wide enough to accommodate side-by-side walking or bicycling, and it is not wide enough for cyclists traveling in opposite directions to pass each other without stopping or dismounting. One respondent noted that the narrow trail makes bicycling with children particularly harrowing, with parents having to choose between allowing their children to ride in front without an adult guide or riding behind without the ability to monitor them.
- High vehicle volumes and speeds along Arlington Boulevard were cited by many respondents, who said that this section of trail feels scary and unsafe. Some respondents even said that they avoid the existing sidewalk altogether, preferring to cross to the south side of Arlington Boulevard at N. Edison Street or routing through neighborhood streets to the north. Comments called for a horizontal buffer between the trail and vehicle traffic.
- Some respondents who noted the lack of buffer from traffic explicitly stated that a horizontal buffer would not feel sufficient, and that proposed changes to the trail should include Jersey barriers or other protective, physical separation from traffic.

### **Intersection Design and Safety**

- Respondents noted that the “generous” curb radii at both intersections allow drivers to turn onto the side streets from Arlington Boulevard at high speeds. This feels particularly dangerous at N. Granada Street, which lacks a marked crosswalk. Respondents felt that drivers at both intersections within the project area frequently fail to look for and yield to trail users.
- Respondents noted that the crosswalk between the service road to the east of N Edison Street and the trail did not align with the existing curb ramp—instead, it directs users into a storm inlet. One respondent also noted that this does not comply with ADA regulations.
- The curb ramps at Granada Street are oriented at a 45-degree angle from the crossing orientation, directing users into Arlington Boulevard instead of in the direction of the trail. (Note: there is no crossing of Arlington Boulevard at this location.)
- Respondents also noted that the existing curb ramps at both intersections are difficult to navigate for people on bicycles, including on longer bicycles such as cargo bikes. The sharp left

turn from the service road east of N Edison Street onto the trail was noted as a particularly difficult spot to turn as a bicyclist.

### Street Trees and Natural Resources

- A few respondents noted that the proposed design should aim to preserve the existing trees to the north of the trail. Some also noted that installing new shade trees between vehicle traffic and the trail could make the trail more comfortable on hot days and add visual interest.
- Others noted that existing plants to the north of the sidewalk often create obstructions. After thunderstorms, fallen branches sometimes block the trail, and overgrown brush encroaches onto the sidewalk, effectively making it narrower.

### Bike Network Connectivity

- Several respondents requested improved wayfinding to nearby trails such as the W&OD Trail or Lubber Run Trail.
- There were also a few more general requests for improved connectivity to the surrounding bike network.

### Next Steps

The project team is looking for opportunities to incorporate what we heard during public engagement into the preliminary design. We will develop two design concepts through Winter 2023 and present these concepts to the public for feedback in Spring 2023. Public feedback, along with County and VDOT review, will help determine which concept to further refine for construction.

The next public engagement checkpoint for this project is expected to occur in Spring 2023.

### More Information

**Project Page:** <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Project-Types/Transportation-Projects/Arlington-Boulevard-Trail-Improvements-%E2%80%93-N.-Granada-Street-to-N.-Edison-Street>

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