

A VELODROME IN FREDERICK

"VISION D" DRAFT December 3, 2023

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FREDERICK IS MADE FOR HAVING A VELODROME

A velodrome is an oval track with banked curves made for bicycles. It can be used for races, training and for learning (it's a safe environment for kids and others). A velodrome in Frederick will be a hub for cyclists and cycling. It will be an arena where skilled athletes and beginners can meet, inspire and learn from each other.

A velodrome will provide recreational and lifestyle benefits to the residents but it will also attract visitors. A velodrome would bring outside money into the city/county. In addition to great cycling opportunities Frederick already has restaurants, lodging, breweries, vineyards and history. All this further justify a weekend trip to the area. Traveling cyclists also spend more on average than others while on bike trips.

Today nearest velodrome is in Trexlertown, Pennsylvania and that facility can act as inspiration and example.

When planning for a velodrome, the project can be stripped down to initially concentrating on the track only. And there are benefits for not having the total infrastructure from the beginning.

1. COSTS
2. MAINTENANCE
3. EXPECTATIONS
4. THE ORGANIC GROWTH
5. IDENTITY

A velodrome will always be a unique feature. Where there is a velodrome meeting up to international standards this will have an instant attraction. And it is the track itself which is the attraction. The "standards" are quite liberal; material (surface) and banking are not regulated. Every velodrome therefor can have its own character.



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The standards are mostly about length and markings. Track cycling has several disciplines with fixed lengths and a track, in some way, need to be divided in 1000m. The 250m velodrome makes it in 4 laps, the 333,3m velodrome in 3 laps, the 400m velodrome in 2,5 laps and the 500m in 2 laps.

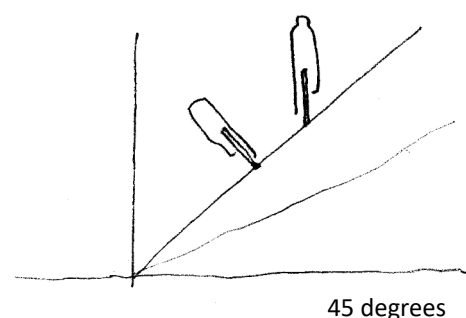
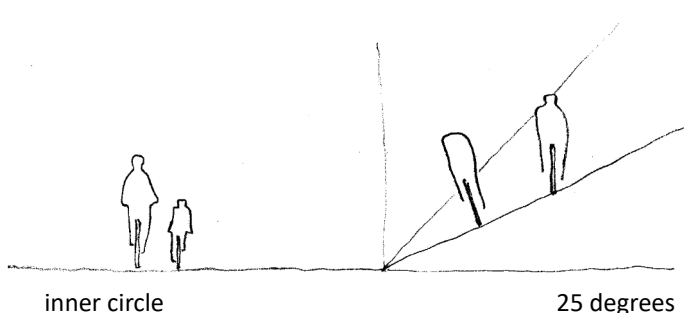
The, mostly indoor, "olympic" velodrome (made for ultimate speed) is 250m, has curves with a banking of approx 45 degrees and is made of wood or concrete. The disadvantage of this velodrome is it is not for everyone. You simply can not use it if not skilled. The solution is a longer track and less banked.

A short track need steep curves. A longer track need less banking. **The 333,3 m velodrome, with typically 30 degree banking, is the best velodrome to build.** Such design is without compromises. It can be used by both elite (world's best riders) and by amateurs/kids.

Planting something new in Frederick will need nutrition to grow. The people are the nutrition. Building a velodrome in Frederick is an opportunity to have both cycling and people growing.

If building a velodrome in Frederick, where there is no actual track experience within the community, we must be aware of it might take time to build up a culture. Maintenance costs before the velodrome is successfully used should be avoided. The solution is a sturdy construction which is there and ready whenever the city and its people are.

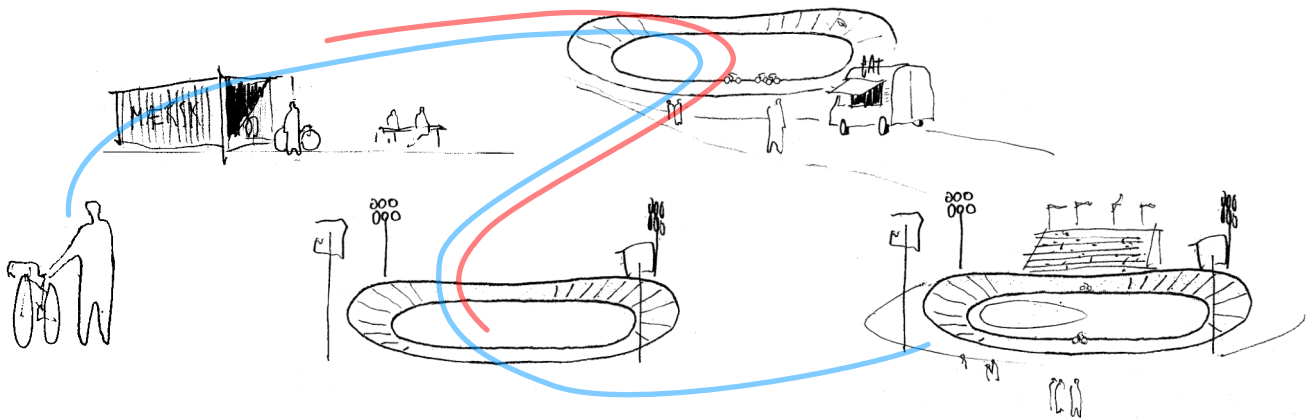
"Our" velodrome is a 333m track with 30 degrees banking. The velodrome should also include a flat inner circle where laps can be ridden without climbing the bankings. This inner circle is crucial for letting the velodrome become "everyone's track". Our quality and perfectly designed velodrome, meeting all standards, can be built for less than \$1000000.



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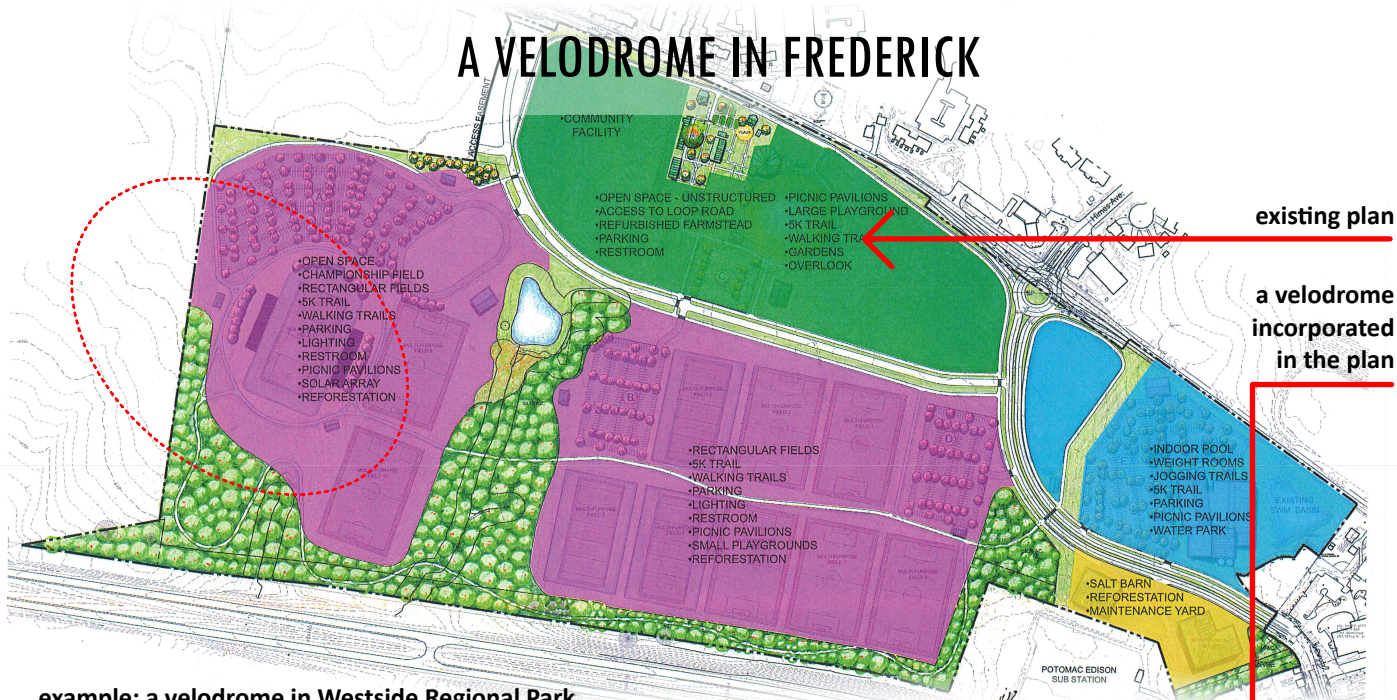


As people start to explore the facility there might be need for additional functions. The organic growth of the velodrome and its activities will let these needs be obvious and decide when and how it will happen. People's desire and energy will be the engine in such development. It might not all happen within a few years but when it happen there will be need/ understanding/experience and hopefully also fundings.



A velodrome is being built and open for everyone. Cyclists starts to explore the track. Different kind of riding sessions are developed and scheduled (the location also guarantee a constant spontaneous use). Cycling groups starts up track training and bicycle school for kids. Individuals are coming for safe workouts and for seeking company. The arena holds people together. The frequent use of the track creates a need for administration. Enthusiasts starts a "club". All the different activities creates opportunities for entrepreneurs. A food truck turns up every Tuesday evening, a mobile espresso bar every Sunday morning. One of the bike mechanics in the city brings his tools. Curious people show up and want to try. Not all of them have a cycle and the bike mechanic bring bikes and start to rent them to people. A sea container works as the very first storage unit. Cyclists starts to come from Washington and Baltimore. They are staying longer and need more service. They are bringing family and friends and there is a need for benches and tables. The barista comes more often, put up tents and also offer sandwiches and cold drinks. Now people also starts using "real track bikes" (single speed racers without brakes). Most people initially prefer not to own such bike and the bike rental guy has a new business. The Frederick bike shops realize what is going on and all want to be part of the fun. The kid's training sessions makes success and small "races" are started. Everyone are winners. Also the adults wants to race and do so. When the first elite competition is held riders from all Eastern America are coming. They are all touched by the Frederick spirit and just wait for the next race to come. The elite inspire even more beginners and experienced cyclists to use the track. To meet the need, electric lighting is installed and the track can be used when evenings getting darker. Maybe even a small building with dressing room and toilets is build. The velodrome is slowly developed. The development is driven by needs and by people's good ideas. The organic growth of the velodrome creates a steady foundation. Investments in the velodrome are "safe investments". The sponsors love the velodrome and what it gives to the people ant to the city/area.

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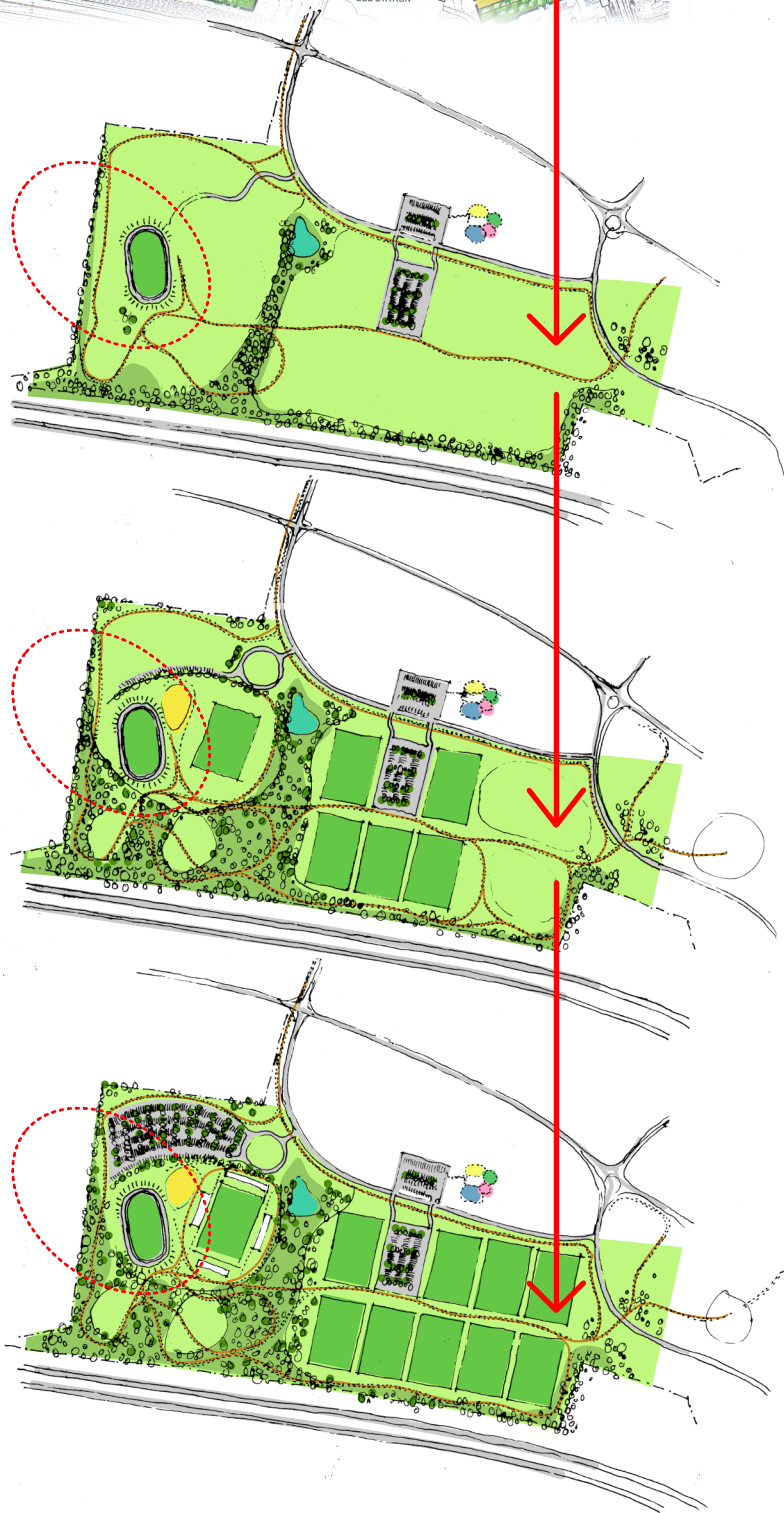
example: a velodrome in Westside Regional Park

A VELODROME AS PART OF A RECREATIONAL AREA

A cycling track does not necessarily need a context of other sport facilities, but there are so many advantages of being integrated with other activities. An infrastructure with parkings, etc will definitely be good for the cyclists. But maybe most important for the velodrome is not being separated from other cycling activities/cyclists and from the city. The velodrome should be accessible by bike and connected to the cycling community. Such connection can also be crucial for the park as such (indicating a healthy life style as part of everyday life rather than isolated and always super arranged and planned).

A velodrome must be the perfect start for a recreational park. Actually a velodrome should be the first facility to be constructed.

The velodrome will give the park a uniqueness and instant identity. To let cyclists in among ball fields and running loops will create a dynamic. The one will inspire the other. A velodrome situated among other sport facilities will introduce cycling, not only as a sport but also, as a life style.



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THE CITY AND ITS VELODROME

The county/city of Frederick has a vision (also expressed in a report – “Parks and Recreation Master Plan”) and the velodrome fits very well into this vision.

A velodrome is a fantastic “starting point” for further development. A velodrome can and will inspire.

A velodrome can be town planning, when thinking big.

A velodrome can be an engine in a trail network and with its special “pot like atmosphere” it can also be used for concerts and other events.

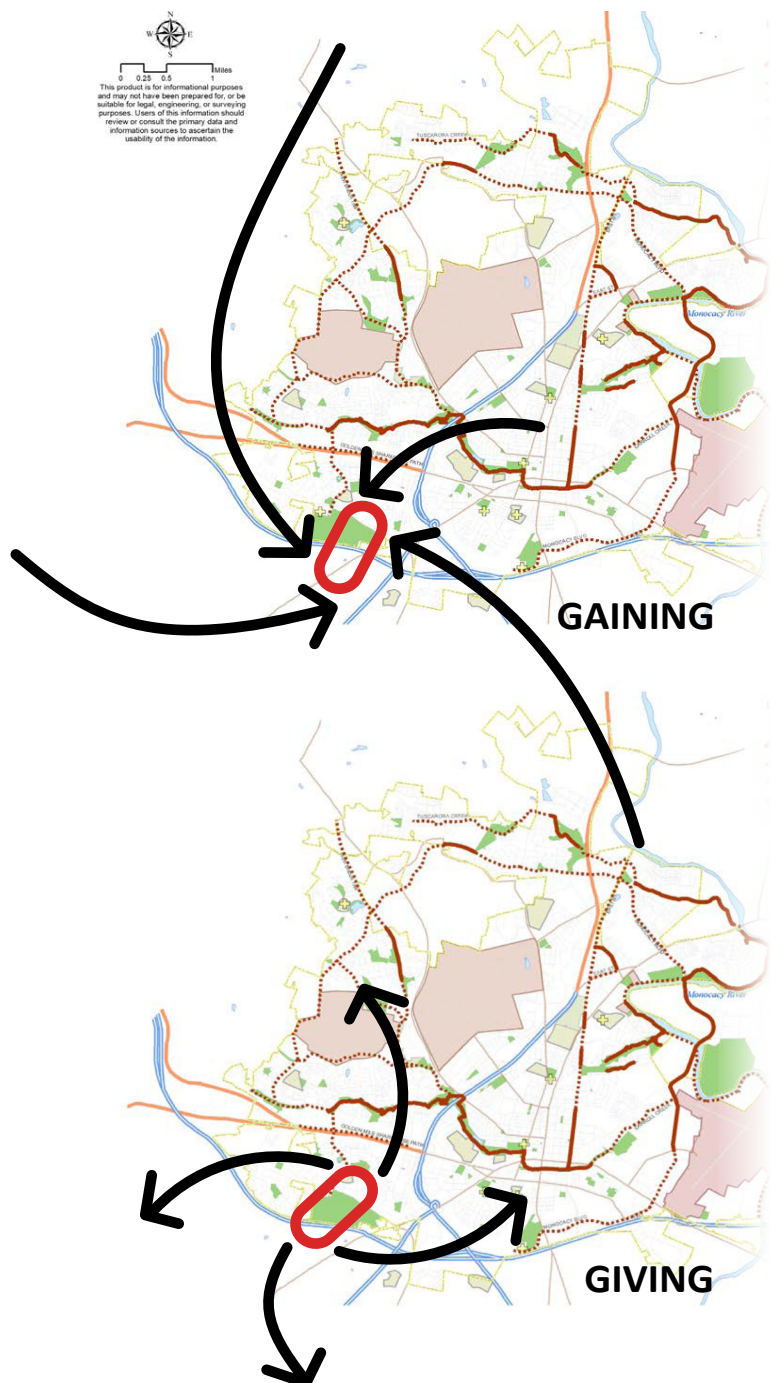
We also need to point out a velodrome doesn’t need to be (it can be, but it doesn’t need to be) a multi million investment. What it can be, is a very good investment.

A unique velodrome will both gain and give. The city will get attraction, recognition, visitors, engagement, investments, events and so on. The people of Frederick will get health, joy, friends and opportunities. A velodrome will attract existing cyclists and groups and a velodrome will also create new ones.

The velodrome will be a signature/identity/landmark. Being the only one in Maryland, the location will be known as “where the velodrome is”.

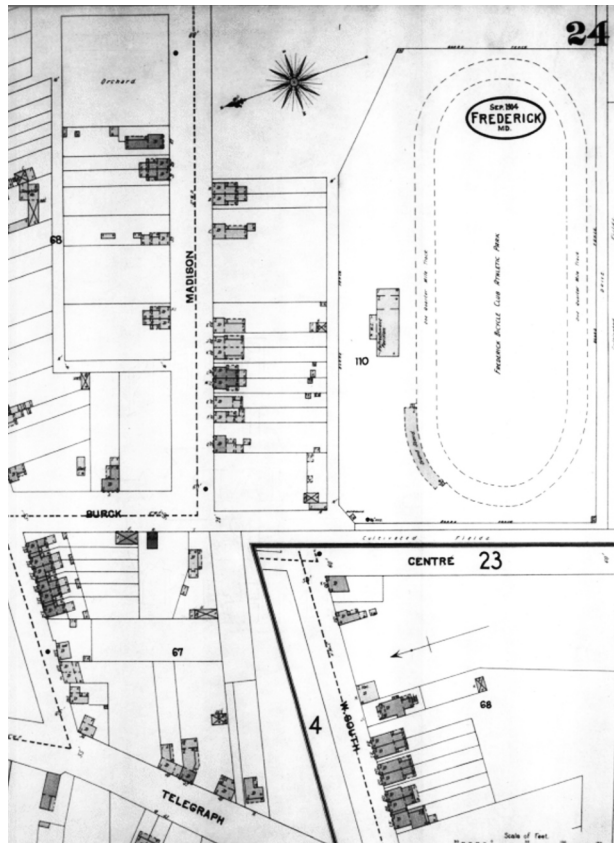


The passion for cycling is alive in Frederick; the culture and interest are more than present. A velodrome would have a strong community support.



APPENDIX

A VELODROME IN FREDERICK



Are we the first to think about a velodrome in Frederick?
No, we are not. 120 years ago Frederick actually had a
velodrome. This drawing is from 1904.

WE THINK IT'S TIME AGAIN

