

# Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial/Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton Bridge Bicycle Access

Starting June 10, 2023, bicyclists will be allowed to cross the Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial/Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton Bridge (US 301) over the Potomac River between Newburg, Maryland and Dahlgren, VA during designated times.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) For Bicyclists & Motorists

### 1. As a motorist, what precautions should I take when bicyclists are on the Nice/Middleton Bridge?

- When warning lights are flashing, indicating that a bicyclist is on the bridge, drivers are encouraged to drive at a safe speed and stay in the left lane. Trucks over five tons must use the right lane but may use the left lane to pass bicycles safely. Share the bridge!

### 2. What time of day can I ride my bike across the Nice/Middleton Bridge?

- Saturday - Sunday, dawn to dusk
- State Holidays, dawn to dusk

*Note: Access might be restricted if high traffic volumes or inclement weather/high winds present a safety issue.*

### 3. What are the best times to cross?

- Based on projected traffic volumes, we encourage bicyclists to cross the bridge during these recommended hours:
  - Saturday- Dawn to 10 a.m., 4 p.m. to dusk
  - Sunday- Dawn to noon, 6 p.m. to dusk
  - State Holidays- Dawn to dusk

*Note: Access might be restricted if high traffic volumes or inclement weather/high winds present a safety issue.*



#### 4. Do I have to pay a toll if riding my bike?

- Yes, MDTA is prohibited from offering free passage to customers under our Trust Agreement. All motorists, including bikes, are responsible for their tolls.
- Cyclists without *E-ZPass*<sup>®</sup>, may stop at the Nice Middleton Bridge Customer Service Center at 9665 Orland Park Road, Newburg, MD 20664 and drop their check or money order payment into the drop box provided. The secondary option would be to mail a payment to our secure lockbox at:

Maryland Transportation Authority  
P.O. Box 12853  
Philadelphia, PA 19176-0853

#### 5. Is there an age requirement for bicycling across the bridge?

- Bicyclists must be 18 years of age or older OR have a valid driver's license.

#### 6. What should I do before crossing the bridge on my bike?

- Bicyclists should push the designated button prior to crossing the bridge to activate warning lights that alert drivers when a bicyclist is crossing. The lights will flash for 10-15 minutes, providing the bicyclist time to cross the bridge safely.
- Even if the lights are already flashing when you arrive at the bridge, still push the button to ensure the full 10-15 minute cycle is reactivated.
- Be visible by wearing bright clothing in the daytime. Maintain your bicycle and make sure your reflectors and lights are in working condition. Wear a helmet and wear it properly!



#### 7. Which lane do I use when riding my bicycle?

- Bicyclists must ride in the direction of traffic and should position themselves in the center of the right lane. Bicyclists should ride single file and follow all other rules of the road.

#### 8. How steep is the bridge?

- The bridge is steepest nearer the Maryland shore of the Potomac River. The bridge rises approximately 102 feet from the bridge abutment in Maryland to the highest point of the bridge. This rise in elevation is accomplished by traveling up a 4% grade for approximately ½ mile on each side.



**9. What if there is a lane closure or an incident on the bridge?**

- If there is a lane closure or incident on the bridge, bicycle riders will not be permitted to cross the bridge at that time. They will need to wait or call for assistance.

**10. Is there a place for me to stop on or near the bridge?**

- Bicyclists are NOT permitted to stop while crossing the bridge. If you need to pull over, find a safe location farther down eastbound or westbound US 301 away from the bridge.

**11. What do I do if my bike breaks down?**

- If safe to do so, move to the shoulder area and proceed off the bridge. If you are unable to safely move your bike, stay where you are and dial #77 for assistance.

**12. Whom do I contact if I have a group of cyclists?**

- Call the Nice/Middleton Bridge Toll Manager at 410-537-6811/6812 to pre-pay tolls. Call the Nice/Middleton Bridge Duty Officer at 410-537-7911 to give the MDTA Police advance notice.

**13. Can I walk across the bridge or ride my skateboard, scooter or skates?**

- Pedestrians, skateboards, scooters and skates are NOT permitted.

**14. When I get to the bridge, what if I decide that I do not want to cross on my bike?**

- Cyclists not wanting to cross the bridge by bicycle may still use a taxi or ride share to cross the bridge.

**15. Where can I go to find out more information about Maryland's bike laws?**

- Visit the Maryland Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Administration website at [www.mva.maryland.gov/safety/mhso/program-bicycle-safety.htm](http://www.mva.maryland.gov/safety/mhso/program-bicycle-safety.htm).

**16. Is lane sharing permitted everywhere necessary to get to the bridge?**

- Lane sharing is permitted in many locations throughout Maryland, but cyclists must plan ahead and check the specific laws and restrictions that apply to the routes they will be taking. Some bridge crossings permit lane sharing, like the Thomas J. Hatem Bridge on US 40 over the Susquehanna River and US 1 over the Conowingo Dam, while crossings are not permitted at other locations, like the William Preston Lane Memorial (Bay) Bridge (US 50/301).

**17. With no shoulders on the Virginia approach to the bridge, where should I ride?**

- Cyclists must obey the Commonwealth laws when riding in Virginia, including any pertinent laws and restrictions on lane sharing. Visit the Virginia Department of Transportation's website at [https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bikeped/laws\\_and\\_safety\\_tips.asp](https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bikeped/laws_and_safety_tips.asp).